

## **THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON E-COMMERCE TRENDS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

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### **Abstract**

COVID-19 pandemic has altered the e-commerce business and customer expectations globally. The COVID-19 outbreaks brought about the extension of social distancing and lockdown, which enhanced the proportion of e-business substituting physical stores. It is also important to note the change that has affected the businesses as well as the consumers making it easier for consumers to rely on e-shopping for not only the necessities but also the luxury products. Covid-19 has been the main accelerator of the e-commerce development as it turned out to be a strategic economic resource and continuation. However, this has translated to multiple benefits of e-commerce such as; increased product accessibility, affordable and appropriate prices to the customers, and time-saving in shopping. However, the increase in number of transactions has also had its drawbacks like increased competition, logistics problems and the need to step up security on the net. The purpose of this paper is to examine the benefits of COVID-19 for e-commerce while at the same time identifying challenges posed by the pandemic. Thus, based on the findings of various books, articles, and research papers, the study depicts the shift in the context of e-commerce during the pandemic, consumers' behavior, and prospects for post-pandemic organizations.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Coronavirus, computer aided purchases, changes in customer trends, online shopping, worldwide effects, future courses.

### **Introduction:**

The outbreak of COVID-19 came with dramatic shifts in all the sectors of the global economy, and the most affected sector is the e-commerce. When exactly, physical stores began shutting down and conventional business models evaporated, e-commerce turned into the only way to sustain economic operations. The emergence and development of the Covid19 pandemic boosted the use of digital technologies in business and shifts customers' and sellers' behaviors. This change was mitigated by forces outside the consumers' control since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic led to restriction of movement and the closure of physical stores thereby forcing the masses online. (Hayashi & Bradford, 2020)

New opportunities of e-commerce were discovered during the pandemic as it became the only option for companies to continue to function and be relevant while most interactions were limited and physical contacts were discouraged. It became crucial to be able to connect with customers online as well as to introduce home delivery services as a means not only to stay afloat, but to succeed in the new business conditions. Furthermore, the pandemic in particular induced new developments in e-commerce field and forced the companies to expand digital solutions and confirm convenience and satisfaction of consumers as well as new solutions like contactless delivery or virtual assistant for shopping. (Haider & Fasel, 2018) However, growth of e-commerce in the COVID-19 era has not come without several challenges as this paper seeks to find out. Challenges, such as the vulnerability of supply chains, blending the growing consumer security needs in a digital world, and the general need to expand operations rapidly to cater to the ever-increasing demands of the customers occurred. Also, because of the e-shopping, there is stiff market competition, making the firms to distinguish their market through superior consumer care services, product customization, and proper and effective business marketing online. (GlobalData, 2020)

### **E-commerce and Impact of COVID-19**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Change in Sales/Traffic</b>
Grocery, Food, Healthcare, Entertainment	Spike in traffic and sales due to increased online shopping.	Sales increased by 52%, shoppers increased by 8.8%.
Fashion and Accessories	Sales down by 22% due to decreased consumer demand for non-essentials.	Sales decreased by 22%.
Eyewear and Accessories	Sales down by 16% as consumer demand shifts away from non-essentials.	Sales decreased by 16%.
FMCG and Agri, Health and Pharmaceuticals	Growth due to increased demand for essential items.	FMCG grew by 33%, Health and Pharma grew by 18%.
Travel and Airlines, Apparel, Sports Goods, Arts and Crafts, Toys	Suffering due to reduced demand and restrictions from COVID-19 lockdowns.	Significant decline due to travel restrictions and reduced consumer spending.

The current research interest in India in the field of international business and management has been rising especially after 1991 the economic liberalization period. This development involves e-commerce, a type of business that overwhelms traditional business through the

use of networks such as the internet to transact business. Electronic commerce refers to selling and purchasing of merchandise, services and even transfer of cash or information over the internet. This innovation comprises of business to business, business to consumer, consumer to consumer, and the consumer to business relations. E-commerce activities employ e-mail, online catalogues, on-line shopping carts, EDI and Web services and are greater than traditional and more enhanced e-market place by the use of mail- order catalogs. E-commerce works across all managerial areas in an organisation, encompassing customer relations, marketing, product development, and organisational strategies. Most Indian companies including most of the prominent portals are now using e-commerce for revenue generation to sell everything ranging from daily items to gadget, flowers to greeting cards. (Nanda, 2021)

E-commerce has therefore gained more traction especially after the emergence of Covid 19 crisis globally declared by World Health Organisation. When countries are enforcing social distancing measures such as the use of facemasks, staying home or even total lockdown that restricts the movement of people, some industries remained useful; relevant were industries involving technology particularly digital and information technology industries as well as e-commerce industries. Due to the closure of physical shops, anything from groceries to clothes was purchased online a trend that saw a drastic increase in e-commerce business. However, this sudden increase also made the management of supply ordered strained thereby complicating of order fulfillment. Some of the sectors that experienced significant growth included grocers, food service, health and personal care and entertainment; ECommerce sales increased by 52 % year-on-year and a conversion rate of 8. Eight percent increase in the number of shoppers. On the other hand some industries such as travelling, apparel and sports equipments were heavily impacted by reduction in spending power during the pandemic. Unicommerce data revealed that sales through electronic means reduced in April by 11 percent as compared to March due to decrease consumer consumption of non-essential products in both the cities and villages. There was growth of 33% in fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), agriculture, health and pharmaceuticals while sales of fashion and accessories was down by 22% in eyewear by 16%. Such a trend proves the changes in the consumer behaviours and the continuous trends and issues and opportunities in the e-commerce segment during the pandemic.(Modi & Postaria, 2020)

**IMPACT IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA****Table 2: Impact of COVID-19 on E-commerce in Europe and North America**

Aspect	Impact	Percentage (%)
E-commerce Revenue	Increased during lockdown	90
	Decreased during lockdown	6
	Increased post-lockdown	86
	Decreased post-lockdown	4
Online Profit Margin	Increased	38
	Stayed the same	40
	Decreased	15
Workforce Adjustments	Relocated staff	44
	Hired more employees	30
	Reduced staff	26
	Reduced salaries	15
	Increased salaries	5
	No changes	21
Omnichannel Sales	Increased offline sales	23
	Maintained same level of offline sales	16
	Decreased offline sales	43
Retail Adjustments	Introduced in-store pickup	31
	Introduced home delivery	26
	Permanently closed some physical stores	20
Challenges Faced	Disrupted supply chains	-
	Increased demand fulfillment challenges	-
	Operational limitations due to lockdown	-
	Inventory management issues	-
	Reduced workforce availability	-
	Physical store closures	17
Strategic Adjustments	Increased focus on digital strategies	45
	Accelerated strategy execution	20
	Adjustments to physical stores	10
	Changes to supply chain	8
Financial Performance	Overall successful year for e-commerce	63
	E-commerce succeeded, physical stores did not	28
	Physical stores outperformed e-commerce	2

COVID-19 has had significant effects on e-commerce in Europe and North America whereby several sectors have not been alike in their results. It has been observed that during the lockdowns in 2020, which most economies of the world were exposed to due to the COVID-19 outbreak, ninety percent of the e-commerce businesses reported an improvement in their revenues, although six percent of them reported a decline. After the lifting of the lockdown, companies reported an increase in the level of online sales with 86% reporting sales while 4% reported a decline in the level of sales. This indicates that the consumer behavior was inclined towards online purchases within the period and this continued even as the restrictions measures were relaxed. (Iftikhar & Sarfaraz, 2020)

Other performance benefits for companies operating online sales also experienced positive shifts; 38% of firms experienced an increased profit margin while 40% were stable. The restructuring of the work force was frequent with 44% of firms reported having moved employees, 30% had increased their employees and 26% had downsized their employees. Notably, it revealed that 5% of the companies for the exact month had even increased the salaries this made the impact more unrestricted. However, omnichannel retailers were Responsive / Partially Responsive with the majority, 66% having unchanged online sales while 23% of them seeing an increase in offline sales, and 43% of them reporting reduced offline sales – depicting an erratic impact on physical stores. In order to do this many of the stores opened by the physical retailers closed some of their outlets (20%) while opening new avenues like in store pick-up (31%) and home delivery services (26%). (Dubey, 2021)

The key-pressure areas noted by the cross-functional teams as the most immediate and acute areas of impact included supply chain disruption, rising levels of difficulties in fulfilling demand, and inventory problems. Another measured variation in strategic response where 45% of companies weighted their strategies more towards the digital, 20% accelerated an existing plan and 10% stated a shift towards physical stores response. (Pandey, 2021)

Globally, 63% of e-commerce sellers said that despite pandemic it was a good year financially and 28% said that their e-commerce was good even if their physical shops were not doing too well. On the other hand, 2% said that their physical stores were better off than their e-commerce, showing how COVID-19 affect businesses differently, depending on their model and location. (Jha, 2020)

## **IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON E-COMMERCE IN INDIA**

### **Table: Impact of COVID-19 on E-commerce in India**

Aspect	Impact	Details
Demographics	Increased internet penetration	45% internet penetration in 2021, equivalent to 630 million users, up 45 million from 2020.
	High mobile dependency	96% of internet users own a smartphone; 79% have a mobile connection.
	Low desktop/laptop ownership	Only 56% own a desktop or laptop.
	Growth in mobile payment services	Increasing use of services like Samsung Pay for e-commerce transactions.
Categories of Spending	Travel, rideshares, and accommodations lead online spending	Largest spending category at \$35.2 billion in 2020, but down 54% due to the pandemic.
	Growth in food and personal care	Increased by 55% from 2020 to 2021.
	Electronics and physical media	Generated \$14.6 billion in revenue in 2020.
Sales Performance	Significant growth in retail e-commerce sales	Expected to reach \$66.76 billion in 2021, a 27% increase from 2020.
	Strong Q4 2020 performance	E-commerce grew 36% year-over-year; personal care, beauty, and wellness grew 95%.
	Direct-to-consumer (DTC) growth	DTC revenue grew 94% in Q4 2020 compared to Q4 2019.
Start-ups and Investments	Surge in start-ups reaching unicorn status	Many are in the e-commerce logistics sector.
	Zomato's IPO success	Raised \$1.3 billion in July 2021, valued at \$12.2 billion.
	Swiggy's funding and expansion	Raised \$3.7 billion; aims to increase grocery revenue from 25% to 50%.
	Delhivery's expansion	Raised \$402 million in three funding rounds since December 2020.
	Flipkart's growth and investments	Raised \$3.6 billion in July 2021; plans to invest in technology, supply chain, and fashion.

**Demographics:** The growth of e-commerce in India during the COVID -19 outbreak is due to the huge and a steadily growing populace of the country. India alone has 630 million internet users as of 2021 having Internet usage of 45 percent. Since most of them use mobile internet that is cheap, most of the users connect to the internet using hand held devices, 96 percent of the internet users use hand held devices. On the other hand, the

ownership of traditional computers continues to be a thing of the future as only 56% of the population own a desktop or laptop.(Ara, 2021)

**Categories of Spending:**The highest. online purchases have been in travel, ride-hailing, and accommodation but this has been a sector that has been most hit by the Covid measures recording a slump of 54% in 2021 from 2020. However, segments like food and personal care not only have increased their revenues by 55-percent, but overall shift in customers' preferences has contributed to this surge as well. Electronics and physical media were both steady again; here \$14. 6 billion in 2020.(Sanghera, 2020)

**Sales Performance:**BCC research expects retail e-commerce in India to expand as the amount of money spent on these products are predicted to increase to \$66. 74 billion in the year 2020 with up surge by 27% for the year 2021. Although, during Q4 of the year 2020, the e-commerce business grew by only 36 % YoY, and the personal care, beauty, and wellness segments grew by 95%. The pandemic has forced brands to sell products directly to the consumers, without intermediaries, and DTC revenues have surged 94% in Q4 2020 as compared to same period in 2019.(Slater & Masih, 2020)

**Start-ups and Investments:**The pandemic has boosted the increase in start-ups more especially in the e-commerce logistics. Interestingly, Zomato got listed recently in the month of July 2021 and the IPO was a very good one and company managed to raise \$1. 3 billion and that it offers the company for \$12 billion. 2 billion. Likewise, Swiggy has managed to obtain \$3. Of the 7 billion of gross sales, and it seeks to grow the grocery delivery segment as a percentage of their total earnings. Full Truck Alliance, another logistics company, received considerable funding with \$ 402m attracted since December 2020 and with assistance from FedEx. E-commerce giants Flipkart is still venturing out, it recently raised \$3. 7 billion in its most recent funding round in order to improve its technological capabilities, the efficiency of the supply chain that feeds its platforms, and improve the supporting infrastructure in the wake of its currently more than 350 million registered customers.COVID-19 pandemic push India's e-commerce sector forward, change consumers' purchase patterns, stimulate the development of almost all sectors, and attract a great amount of investments to start-ups as well as traditional firms. There is a strong shift towards mobile access and Digital to Consumer or D2C strategies which are present also in the global trend towards commerce digitalization.(Kumaraswami, 2020)

**Impact on Global Scale****Table: Impact of COVID-19 on Global E-commerce in 2020**

Category	Region/Metric	Details
UK Online Retail Sales	July 2021	Reached £10bn, highest ever for July; online spending up 18% to £64bn YTD, 56% vs. 2019.
Digital Commerce Growth	Global, Q2 2021	Stabilized to 3% growth YoY; UK retained momentum with 17% growth vs. US decline of 2%.
Shopify Performance	Global, Q2 2021	Revenue rose 57% YoY to \$1.12bn; GMV up 40% to \$42.2bn; MRR up 67% to \$95.1m.
Online Retail Prices	Global	Rose 2.3% YoY in June 2021; prior years saw average 3.9% deflation; gap narrowing with in-store prices.
Consumer Search Volumes	UK	Electrical category search volumes fell 28.9% from April/May 2020 to April/May 2021; fashion up 30.2%.
CMO Confidence in Revenue Growth	Global	91% of e-commerce CMOs expect revenue growth in next 12 months; 92% confident in attracting new customers.
European Retail Profit Margins	France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, UK	Profit margins fell from 6.4% to 4.5% over 10 years; expected to fall further to 3.2% by 2025 due to e-commerce.
Global E-commerce Company Growth	Top 10 Companies by Revenue	9 out of 10 saw double-digit growth in 2020; Pinduoduo up 97.6%, Amazon up 37.6% to \$386.1bn.
UK Online Sales Index	UK, May 2021	Sales fell 9.1% vs. May 2020; notable decline in multichannel retailers (-13.9%), but overall still 46% above May 2019 levels.

This was partly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic which saw unprecedented growth of online retail sales in the UK, with July 2021 being the record high of £10 billion for that month of consumers' reluctance to go back to stores in their purchase, especially when people went back to work. Year-to-date, on-line spending increased by 18% and this signifies a change from the earlier mode of shopping before COVID-19. Digital commerce growth was less than 10% for the first time in Q2 2021 as a result of slower-than-expected growth from most developed markets with the UK showing strong growth of 17% YoY growth in e-commerce revenue vs the same period last year while the US was flat. This trend is also reflected In Shopify's performance with total revenue for Q2 2021 increase by 57% compared to the same period of the previous year and equal to \$1. 12 billion and an



increase in gross merchandise volume by 40% reaching 42\$. 2 billion, mainly due to the new merchants sign-up activity. At the same time, there was the increase in online retail price to 2. 3% YoY in June 2021 after the period of deflation, which indicates the shift in the consumer demand and the goods trends after the post-pandemic period. Based on the regression models, as normalcy returned, search volumes of consumers also changed depending on the electronics category shrinking by 28. percent and fashion queries rose by 0. 9%, Ny agency said. 2 % indicating an increase with the increase of social activities. From e-commerce, one can display that while people are no longer as dependent on the online shopping as they were at the height of the pandemic, the new habits have been shaped and appear to be permanent. CMO Confidence in Revenue Growth: The optimism among e-commerce decision-makers remains high, with 91% of CMOs expecting revenue growth in the next 12 months. Additionally, 92% are more confident in their ability to attract new customers compared to pre-pandemic levels. This confidence is supported by a focus on direct-to-consumer opportunities, with digital marketing efforts driving traffic directly to brand websites and marketplaces like Amazon.(Yadav, 2020)

European Retail Profit Margins: In Europe, the shift towards e-commerce has put pressure on traditional retail profit margins, which have declined from 6.4% to 4.5% over the past decade. The study predicts that these margins will further decrease to 3.2% by 2025, with e-commerce identified as a key factor. Had the pandemic not occurred, the expected margins would have been slightly higher, indicating that the acceleration of online shopping has had a tangible impact on profitability.(Haidar, 2020)

During the COVID, the e-commerce industry on an international level saw impressive sales where nine out of the ten biggest companies enjoyed sales growing in double digits because of this change in life. In particular, Pinduoduo and Coupang did just little shy of tripling, with Amazon, of course, leading the way at 37. The revenues have also slightly increased rising by 6% and recorded to be at \$386. 1 billion. This speaks volumes of the fundamental change in consumer behavior towards online shopping during the pandemic, which goes in the favour of these companies. The company recorded 1% drop in its online sales in May 2021 than the same month in the previous year but the volumes were still 46% higher than the sales done in May 2019 hence proving that covid has permanently shifted the online purchasing trend higher. The decline was much more prominent in the multichannel sector since consumers started to return to the offline purchases, although the online-only sector represented much smaller decrease indicating that despite the removal of the pandemic restrictions, e-commerce remained relevant. Such reflections highlight

how COVID-19 has changed the e-commerce market for the long term by making countries accelerate in terms of digitalization, shifting the consumer behavior, and forcing the international companies to adjust to the emerging trends on the international level.(Schmall & Yasir, 2020)

(Gupta & Madhavaram, 2019) In the case of specific sectors, it is also quite clear that the crisis has brought valuable opportunities to physically located enterprises to shift to digital orders, thus benefiting from the e-commerce trend. In our case to adapt businesses can opt to invest on digital strategies in a bid to restore their sales. Some of the control activities include assessment of the market conditions, adequate inventory stock, and sound relationship with suppliers and consumers. Businesses should also ensure that they are well conversant with the laws and regulations affecting their operations and should also diversify their supplier in order to minimize the risk that come with dealing with only one supplier. (Babu & Chauhan, 2020)

Organisations can consider products which may be sold online such as e-books, online tutorials and virtual classes among others. Moreover, through the use of cheaper shipping methods, the adoption of models such as ‘click and collect’, is essential to reduce the amount of money that customers spend on shipping while at the same time enhancing sales.(Chedi & Ranjit, 2020)

It is important that the supply chain is reignited and established because the lockdowns have significantly affected business operations. Having relationships with manufacturing units and setting up of the fulfillment centers are some ways that can be used to address the issue of overcrowded orders and timely delivery. Moreover, businesses need to understand the general perception and/or feeling of the customer and employees due to the loss in business operations because of the pandemic. It is crucial to be open in all the communication platforms and flood them with accurate information and positive messages in order to build the much needed trust and show care for those affected.(Chitrao & Krishnan, 2020)

Customers can also be benefited by the coupon discounts when buying e-commerce products in which customer loyalty is built. The people should play their part and refrain from profiteering since the consumer is very loyal and will ensure that they stick with the businesses that assisted them during the crisis. Last but not least, it affects the selling of necessary products that are vital and necessary for people’s existence, such as groceries, food products, and healthcare products and services at the lowest profits ensuring the existence of communities and business continuity. This means that by focusing on the sale

of these essential products, people especially the business people can help those who are most affected by pandemic and can do something positive during the crisis. (Kumar & Annamalai, 2021)

### **Future Scope of E-commerce**

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce has been perceived as an essential bail for the consumers all over the world as they help in the sale of a variety of products ranging from basic needs to seasonal gifts. The recent disruptions led by the outbreak of COVID-19 caused a shift in the trend of e-commerce in the international market, which in the normal circumstances would take a decade, but have taken only three months, as estimated by McKinsey. This change happened not only where people have already shifted to e-commerce for the purchase of goods, but also in cultures where individuals shop frequently, for small items, physically, and on cash basis. (Mazza & Caputo, 2021)

This is not just a blip – a short period of activity – this is sustained, consistent and best of all – lasting change; a shift in consumer behaviour that, under normal circumstances, takes at least a generation to occur. The implications of this change will not only be apparent in the finance and auto industries, but also in shipping, technology advancement in physical stores, the retail business, and the relevant government authorities. COVID-19 has fast forwarded the move to e-commerce and changing the dynamics of buying and selling in ways that are unprecedented and promising for the future. (Pantano, Pizzi, Scarpi, & Dennis, 2020)

The pandemic made it compulsory for businesses to adopt the contactless shopping and online selling virtually in the blink of an eye. It was not long term strategy but survival strategy at best. Usually, changes in business structures require rationalisation planning with gradual transitions through the phases; now, companies had to skip these phases and go directly to the next phase due to the requirement to sustain operations. This rapid change has caused disruptions to supply chain systems, the latter which has not been able to grow fast enough in order to accommodate for the increased demand, especially during key seasons as the holiday season. (Fernandes, 2020)

This supply chain press has led to pressure for more accuracy and honesty while seeking the customer's payment. In order to avoid the risk of more disruptions to the shipping process and delays, B2C as well as B2B sellers have been working on enhancing their checkout processes so that all the parameters such as cost of shipping and taxes can then be

calculated accordingly. This makes the transactions to run smoothly as well as assists in dealing with the increase in volume of e-commerce sales. (Kantar, 2021)

The shifts that the pandemic brought to the consumer behavior will remain relevant even when the pandemic comes to an end. As of now, it is still hard to assess the degree of such permanence, although most of the behaviors observed during this period were already increasing in recent years, this pandemic has only made them speed up. Consumers have gradually shifted their focus on convenience, customization and freedom in terms of shopping which are well offered by the e-commerce enabler. This trend indicates that even when the world goes back to services and people regaining their confidence in physical shopping, e-commerce is set to be the leading actor. (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2019)

This has been fast-tracked by integrating e-commerce, thereby changing the consumer expectations to be able to buy anything from any channel, at any time using any device as the new norm. Therefore, the general consumer behavior map will not change and go back to the pre-COVID-19 state instead, his environment in the sphere of mobility and shopping will further transform towards even higher rates of incorporating digital solutions that customers have grown accustomed to and enjoy. (Deloitte, 2020)

It appears that a powerful impact of e-commerce will continue in the future with its increasing trend. Still, massive brick-and-mortar stores will remain relevant – yet the actual shopping experience is going to shift towards integrating more and more convenient customer choices. It is thus envisaged that customer experience enhancements such as buy online with store pick up and grocery delivery, which became prevalent due to pandemic restrictions, will become the new normal. (Bhatti, et al., 2020)

As we will see in the following chapters, industries will have to become even more in sync with these changing consumption patterns and the relentless growth of the online marketplace. This will mean much technology adoption at each stage of the supply chain to enable sustainable e-commerce that would offer the consumer an optimized shopping experience. By adopting these changes, businesses are able to not only become in line with the expectations of the consumer but also be able to grow their business for the market is shifting toward being a digital one as well as convenient. (Berman & Katona, 2020)

### **Conclusion and Suggestions**

COVID-19 has been a global disaster affecting people's lives with daily changes and business operations for more than two years. However, the consequences of the pandemic will remain in the background as it alters people's behavior or market characteristics in the future. In the context of current situation, it is high time for people to support one another

in this difficult period. Even some of the sectors that were least affected by the pandemic and can be considered as safe for small businesses can see improvements that help to reduce the risks. Being as transparent, optimistic, and adaptable as possible, it becomes possible not only to stay afloat but also to further develop solid customer and community relations.

Due to the outbreak of the pandemic, most retail shops worldwide had to shut down significantly increasing the uptake of online shopping. Due to the current pandemic, we experienced more of the shift from physical stores to online, as people could only buy goods with the help of online services because physically they were locked in their houses. The numbers showed that traditional department store format suffered severe drops, estimated to be over 60% while the e-tailer format had gains near 20% in 2020. It has also led to changes in the consumers' spending patterns as they spend more on items such as home improvements, and essentials foods enhanced goods and health related products and stand least on clothing and irrelevant items.

Online market banners such as Amazon have been significantly favored by this shift, during COVID-19, the company has posted record profits and 40% uplift in revenue. It also establishes a new yard stick for other players in the e-commerce segment as the marketplace marks the new minimum level of expectations for the market going forward. As per the National Association of Software & Services Companies (NASSCOM), the e-commerce market in India is set to sustain its growth and it is expected to grow at an estimated 5% with revenue of \$ 56. Net sales were \$6 billion in the financial year 2021 and, although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted its operations, the company's performance is strong.

COVID-19 has also affected the consumer behavior whereby those who used to shop in physical stores are now shifting towards the online markets. This transition is made possible by the usage of a variety of digital facilities and applications that make shopping from the comfort of one's home safe. In a bid to tapped into this market, e-commerce and mobile commerce platforms stood to benefit from the pandemic by providing offers including free shipping, scaled-down prices for related goods and services, and COVID-19 related updates on this health calamity and supplies cures for related ailments, more work from homes supplies, and nutrient supplementary foods.

So, as these changes occur organisations should remain flexible and respond in accordance with consumer needs and market requirements. Others are increasing e-business management, improving customer relationships arising from personalized services, and

ensuring that supply chain management can be adjusted easily to the occurrence of disruptions. Furthermore, nurturing the culture of customer-centricity that pursues customer understanding and care will not only strengthen customers' loyalty and devotion but will also help the businesses prepare for the future growth and market success in the post-pandemic reality. Through the implementation of these approaches, the coronavirus adversities are best transformed into success factors for the organizations.

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