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Impact of Subjective Norms, Normative Attitudes, and Perceived Behavioral Control on Online Beauty Product Purchases During COVID-19 in the UK[3]

Birleşik Krallık'ta Covid-19 Döneminde Online Alışveriş Alışkanlıkları-Öznel Normlar, Normatif Tutumlar ve Algılanan Davranışsal Kontrol

Abstract

The UK beauty industry has faced significant changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to a noticeable shift in consumer buying behavior, with a strong move towards online purchasing. This research examines how the pandemic has impacted consumer behavior in the beauty industry, focusing on the influence of subjective norms, normative attitudes, and perceived behavioral control on online buying decisions during and after the pandemic. An explanatory research approach was used, and data were collected through an online survey of 122 consumers. The findings reveal that these Subjective Norms and Normative Attitudes have nonsignificant impact on closely linked to perceived behavioral control and ultimately on consumers' buying intentions for beauty products during the pandemic.

Keywords: Beaty Industry, Covid-19, Online Shopping, Consumer Behaviour, SEM

JelCode: M31, D12

Özet

Birleşik Krallık güzellik endüstrisi, Covid-19 pandemisi nedeniyle önemli değişikliklerle karşı karşıya kalmış ve bu durum, tüketici satın alma davranışlarında belirgin bir kaymaya yol açarak online alışverişe doğru güçlü bir yönelime sebep olmuştur. Bu araştırma, pandeminin güzellik endüstrisindeki tüketici davranışını nasıl etkilediğini incelemekte ve pandemi sırasında ve sonrasında online satın alma kararlarını etkileyen öznel normlar, normatif tutumlar ve algılanan davranışsal kontrolün etkisine odaklanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada güzellik ürünü tüketim davranışlarındaki olası değişim incelenmektedir. Açıklayıcı bir araştırma yaklaşımı benimsenmiş ve veriler, 122 tüketiciyle-çevrimiçi anketlerle toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın bulguları, bu psikolojik faktörlerin pandemi sürecinde tüketicilerin güzellik ürünleri satın alma niyetleriyle yakından ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Güzellik Endüstrisi, Covid-19, Online Alışveriş, Tüketici Davranışı, YEM (Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli)

JelCode: M31, D12

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INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 would have profound effect on our daily life since World Health Organization declared on March 11, 2020, that "COVID-19 could be regarded as a pandemic" (UN, 2020). Although humanity has many similar instances thorougout the time of human history, today's life style is in favour of creating faster infectious rate because of interconnectedness in terms of economic and social life (Nigrinová, 2022) in which transmission of the virus posed more risk on human pscyhology. This notion should have been stimulated by the way of macro powers. They were mobility restrictions and full closure. Moreover, these restrictions were applied differently on various countries, and have always critiqued by pandemists and sociologists.

In order to eliminate adverse impact of these restrictions, UK government used monetory backup in the meantime the imposing closure (GovUK, 2020). Therefore, it would be worth to re-investigate the change on several concepts about normative, subjective and behavioural controls in which there is a puzzle. This puzzle of change on consumer behaviour might be shaped by the self-isolation versus the budgetary supports. Furthermore, the change regardless the value of product over behaviour has already been studied with the intrusion of sustainability for decades (Winston, 2016) and Covid-19 (Kim et al,2022) for 2 years. In the example of luxury product, the self enhancement is part of drive at buying behaviour. There is clear similarity on this pattern over buying behaviour at beauty products. However, it could be argued that Beauty products are more necessity rather than luxury at todays society (Lim et al.,2012).

Thus, the possible change over beauty product consumption behaves is investigated at this study. The recent statistical studies are predicting that the cosmetic industry has been grown 20 to 30 per cent (Gerstel et al., 2020). Raval and Bhatt (2021) emphasised that people inclined to buy more on hair quality products. And also, skin cares are in skyrocketing sales of shampoo gels, bath items, shower gels, and hair dyeing products at this time. Adding to this type of research, we propose and investigate the severe impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the beauty industry in which it is essential for evaluating the change in the buying behaviour of consumers in the beauty industry. This problem can be addressed by analysing the extent to which the pandemic circumstances have impacted the purchasing intention of customers while buying beauty products.

To conceptualise this research draws Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) at beauty products buying intention. Moreover, Subjective norms, Normative attitude and Perceived Behavioural Control are applied on TRA theory.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Consumer Behaviour and Intention

Any consumer behaviour were interested in academic studies ranging from personality, product choice, risk taking, (Miranda et al., 2022) influencers and word of mouth. Despite all these settled background, evaluation of change on the consumer behave has been investigated yet.

In a research study by Chen (2007), the authors referenced Azjen (2014), who stated that the Reasoned Action (TRA) theory indicates that various behavioural intentions created through attitudes towards subjective norms and behaviours lead to actual behaviours when opportunities and the relevant resources are available to consumers. According to Minton and Kahle (2014), behavioural belief systems are formed through the assessment of impacts associated with performing particular actions and the amount of strength that exists between the association of the behaviour and outcomes.

The theory of Reasoned Action helps in explaining consumer intentions to purchase products within particular settings.

2.2. Sujective Norms

Subjective norms usually represent society's members' shared meaning of which acts are permissible, prohibited, or mandatory. They are the outcome of experience and observation of other people's conduct. One of their distinguishing characteristics is that social standards are usually shared within a particular society, implying the establishment of a community through which they are disseminated (Cialdini et al., 1998). As a result, people have a nearly natural proclivity to adopt norms within their specific societies (Nolan et al. 2008).

Hedonic and utilitarian actions are among those behaviours influenced by social norms. Hedonic actions are motivated by pleasure-seeking objectives. They are usually judged mainly on the basis of rewards connected to taste, enjoyment, symbolic meaning, and aesthetics (Kakar, 2017). On the other hand, utilitarian behaviours are motivated by functional purposes and are carried out and judged mainly based on instrumental, practical, and functional advantages (Chitturi et al., 2008). In addition, social norms can apply to both categories of actions. Customers can use societal norms in the rationalization of a preferred action for themselves and increase their feelings of liberty to engage in it. For hedonic behaviours, for instance, the argument that "everyone else is doing it" is frequent (Green, 1991) and can boost freedom which is perceived for partaking in these behaviours.

E-shopping retailers have increased the future and mode of shopping for the customers that helps in advertising the connection with more customers (Hashem, 2020). Moreover, UK adults seem to be more versatile in increasing online shopping that increases the order of beauty items. Such an order not only benefits the customers or the sellers but also helps in creation of awareness and trust among the e-commerce individuals. Digital tools help consumers to access the information about product size, price, packaging, and characteristic of products (Saleem et al. 2022).

A crucial factor regarding the social norms is the e-word-of-mouth (EWOM) which has been considered by Odilia, Sulistiobudi and Fitriana (2022). The researchers argue that the recommendations given by friends and relatives regarding the products and services offered by a brand significantly impacted the decisions of customers while purchasing products during the pandemic.

Odilia, Sulistiobudi and Fitriana (2022) also argue that the intention of customers towards the products has been changed according to the information they receive through EWOM during the pandemic.

Based on the above evaluation, the first hypotheses generated for the current study is as follows:

H1: Subjective norms during Covid 19 have positive but nonsignificant relation to perceived behavioural control of consumers when purchasing beauty products online.

The above review helped in identifying the role of subjective norms in consumer purchasing behaviour. The social aspects such as the recommendations given by other customers affect their decision when buying beauty products. This impact has been further facilitated by the Covid-19 pandemic as it increased the connectivity between the customers through more use of social media platforms during the lockdown. Therefore, it is determined that the aim of the research has been supported by this review which would help in achieving the objectives of the study. However, it is crucial to understand another component of the theory of reasoned action which is the attitudes of customers for which the below evaluation has been done.

2.3. Normative Attitudes

Some attitudes are formed and influenced by the value expressive characterizes that is closely related to "professed instrumentality" and "value importance". As opined by Perrotta (2019), ego defensive function is an attitude and behaviour of a person that is influenced by the external threats or inner feelings.

With the aforementioned in mind, an aspect that impacts the willingness of a customer to make purchases at an online marketplace is the customer's prior online buying experience (Nwokah, 2016). Helversen et al. (2018) indicate that this is because customers are content with their online buying experiences and believe that when particular sites have been rated positively that they will always continue shopping on a specific internet store in the future. When customers are delighted with their purchasing experiences, the risk perception of the purchase will decrease in most cases (Helversen et al., 2018).

Customers' characteristic, such as age and gender, will drive them to purchase goods and services online (Pandey and Parmar, 2019). Customers under the age of 25 are more likely to purchase beauty care products online due to their interest in exploiting developing technology breakthroughs to compare and assess options, search for product information, and make purchasing decisions (Macharia, 2019). As a result, tech-savvy customers are more likely to acquire attitudes toward beauty products congruent with that value.

Fosso-Wamba and Arnaud (2021) who argue that the attitude of customers in the online environment has been fluctuating ever since the pandemic began. They first reacted to the unexpected event which made them unable to determine their behaviour towards the products and services offered by brands. Then, they coped with the circumstances which generated an equilibrium regarding their attitudes. At last, the adaptation of customers towards the scenario happened which gave rise to increased online shopping of products.

Based on the above evaluation, the second hypotheses generated for the current study is as follows:

H2: Normative attitudes during Covid 19 has nonsignificant positive relation to perceived behavioural control of consumers when purchasing beauty products online.

From the above discussion, it can be interpreted that the attitudes of customers play a role in their purchasing behaviour. The aspects related to attitudes such as the preferences, beliefs and perceptions contribute to the purchasing patterns when it comes to the beauty industry. This review has also been successfully associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and identified the key factors that changed the purchasing behaviour during the outbreak. After reviewing the attitudinal aspect, it is essential to understand the perceived behavioural control that directly relates to consumer purchasing behaviour in the beauty industry.

2.4. Perceived Behavioural Control

Internet shopping for beauty and cosmetics products is predicted by attitudes toward secure transactions such as customer data privacy, payment security, product shipping assurance, and the specific company's return policy (Turban et al., 2015). Customers' confidence in online buying is also predicated on the security level and privacy they can expect (Turban et al., 2015).

Christelis et al. (2020) indicates that despite the experienced disparities in the emotional and environmental effects that occur throughout a crisis, studies on crisis-based behaviour have discovered that people behave more reasonably. Rather than purchasing luxury items, customers preferred to

change their priorities with regard to luxury goods, selecting products that were more pocket-friendly and targeted toward meeting their various crucial needs (Christelis et al., 2020). Customers' focus was not on the current situation; they also expressed special anxiety symptoms (Ang et al., 2000). In the long run, crises have a tendency to alter customer behaviour patterns, and these alterations might eventually develop into new habits for customers.

Based on the above evaluation, the second hypotheses generated for the current study is as follows:

H3: Perceived behavioural control during Covid 19 has nonsignificant positive relation to the buying behaviour of consumers when purchasing beauty products online.

The above evaluation has helped in interpreting the importance of behavioural control for the purchasing decisions made by consumers. This has led to the analysis of the last component of the theory of reasoned action. The aim of the research has been facilitated by this evaluation because the main factor of behavioural control has been examined to evaluate the buying behaviour of customers towards the beauty product during the pandemic. After this review, it is necessary to generate a framework that can guide the proposed study and help in achieving its objectives.

Ajzen (2015) emphasise about importance of justification related to the Behaviour. They are attitude, norms and perceived behavioral control. Therefore, it is vital to settle Theoretical frame.

2.5. Theoretical framework

To conceptualise this research Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is long facilitated to examine consumer's intention (Fitzmaurice, 2005). TRA (The Fishbein and Ajzen 1980) may serve the consumer buying behaviour which could be under volitional control that can be executed whoever the person is willing to. Furthermore, although TRA mainly used in cognitive as well as emotional driven assesment, the proposed TRA model would not disclose the emotional drives and only include subjective norm and attitude in this study. Therefore, Buying intention on Beauty products would have Moreover, Perceived Behaviour Control (PBC) is previously studied and constructed as a predictor of Buying intentions (Zolait, 2014). PBC is defined as personal perception about how it would be difficult or easy to carry on intented action (Murphy, 2009).
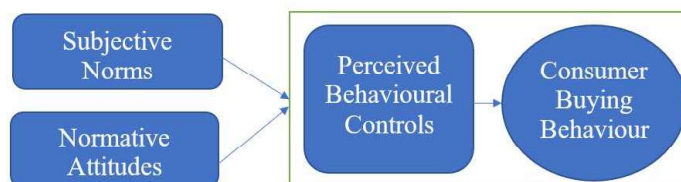

Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The current study has quantitative research approach in which numerical data will be analysed by facilitating the inferential statistics. Research has conducted in two phases. While the first phase (N = 35) facilitated to check initial reliabilty valuse and factor loadings, the second wave of data collection (N = 122) investigated final outcomes of our study. Furthermore, from explaining the customer behaviour to digitalised shopping behaviour, we have set an explanatory research designs to explain the phenomena. Therefore, this research might serve as a tool to initiate theoretical and formulate hypotheses give a thorough knowledge of variable's relationship.

3.2. Data Analysis

The survey questionnaire was divided into two categories. The first portion comprised questions concerning the respondents age, gender, location, mode of shopping. The second portion comprised five Likert scales that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Table 1). The questionnaire was shared via online mode of communication specifically WhatsApp.

Table1: Questionnaire

Measurement and Questions	Item Deletion
Subjective Norms (SN)	
SN 1: I consider my family's experiences of shopping online for beauty products during Covid 19 pandemic.	
SN 2: I consider my friend's experiences of shopping online for beauty products during Covid 19 pandemic.	
SN 3: I consider online users' experiences of shopping online for beauty products during Covid 19 pandemic.	
SN 4: During Covid 19 pandemic, I felt I was expected to buy beauty products online as everyone was doing it.	deleted
Normative Attitudes (NA)	
NA 1: During Covid 19 pandemic, shopping online for beauty products was an efficient mode of shopping.	deleted
NA 2: During Covid 19 pandemic, shopping online for beauty products was a cheaper mode of shopping.	
NA 3: Shopping online for beauty products saved my time during Covid 19 pandemic.	
NA 4: During Covid 19 pandemic, shopping online for beauty products allowed me to get delivery of products at home.	deleted
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	
PBC 1: I am afraid that someone will steal my credit card information, if I shop online.	
PBC 2: I am afraid that someone will steal my identity, if I shop online.	
PBC 3: I am afraid that someone will hack into my account, if I shop online.	
PBC 4: I am afraid that someone will misuse my personal information such as address, if I shop online.	

Customer Buying Behaviour (CBB)
CBB 1: During Covid 19 pandemic, I was willing to pay for beauty products.
CBB 2: During Covid 19 pandemic, I was positive that I would receive quality beauty products.

Note: **Questionnaire implemented from Al-Swidi et al.' study (2014) who combined original questionnaire through different authors- Ajzen and Fishbein, (1980); Misra et al., (1991); Grunert and Juhl, (1995); Lockie et al., (2004)**

Recruitment is based on research context that individuals who could give valuable information about the purchasing behaviour in the beauty industry are randomly selected. Furthermore, as per the view of van Smeden et al. (2019), sample size and sample methods were prioritised ti ensure reach reliable and valid results. Also, the research topic could be another factor as it has be feasible scale. Therefore, the research has followed general thumb rule which is suggested by Kline (2006). *"A general rule of thumb is to have at least 10 observations per estimated parameter in the model"* (Kline, 2016, p. 143). The current research included 11 measurement those explain all 2 independent and 2 dependent variables. With our final sample size of 122 sufficiently satisfies Kline's (2016) rule of thumb. The SEM in figure 2 is fit the data well, with a chi-square of $\chi2 = 62.455$, df = 37, $p < 0.06$, CMIN/DF=1.688 with Excellent, comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.932 with Acceptable, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.075 with Acceptable and PClose=0.102 with Acceptable.

This results satisfied the model's effect as many of them reaching to the acceptable level. Moreover, after second phase of the study, we have diagnosed diverse opinions about the research topic after tight Covid-19 restrictions. This shift over shopping behaviour highlightes the pandemic's profound impact over shopping decisions.
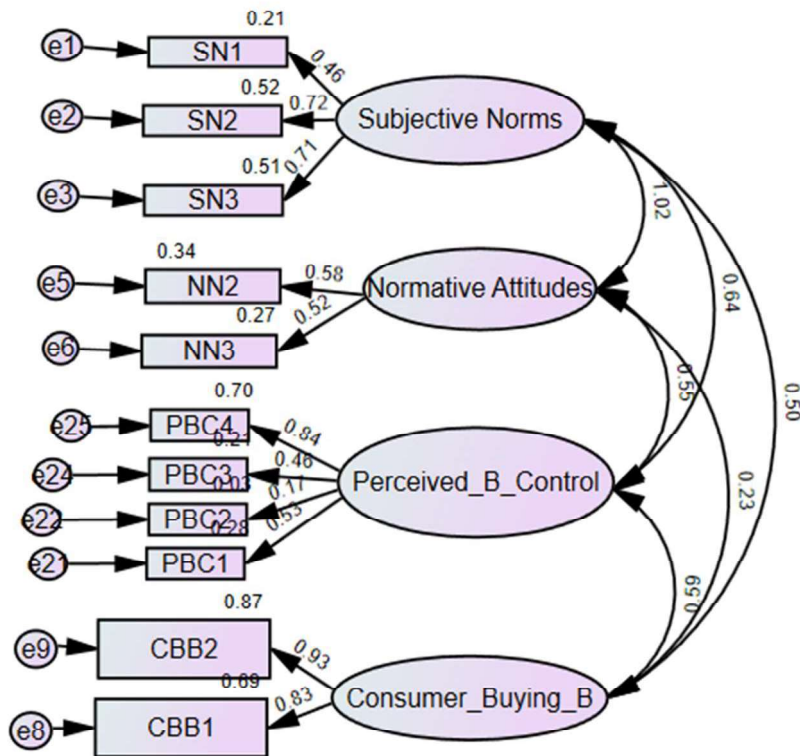
Figure 2 Theoretical Framework

An exploratory factor analysis and confirmation factor analysis was performed to corroborate the findings in Table 2. An AMOS model was developed after a data screening procedure, which included a measurement component and a structural equation model (SEM) to translate the conceptual model into a measurement component. The complicated structural relationships were evaluated using a model consisting of highly complex relationships between the various variables in Table 2.

This section starts with Descriptive and reliability analysis using Cronbach Alpha conducted to analyse the reliability of the used scales. Descriptive analysis will also be included followed by EFA representing 11-item framework. Lastly, CFA will be used for checking the fit of model and test the hypotheses.

Most of the participants aged, 26 to 35 years (60%) followed by participants having age between 18 and 25 (34.3%) and then 36 and 45 years (5.7%)

Table2: Factor Loading, Cronbach Alpha, Average Variance Extracted

Item	Loadings	Alpha	AVE	(AVE)2	CR
Subjective Norms	0.472	0.674	0.360	0.130	0.620
	0.717				
	0.583				
Normative Attitude	0.598	0.448	0.310	0.096	0.470
	0.508				
Perceived Behavioural Control	0.646	0.618	0.250	0.063	0.560
	0.471				
	0.401				
	0.449				
Consumer Buying Behaviour	0.811	0.870	0.760	0.578	0.860
	0.926				

3.2.1. Descriptive and Reliability Analysis

It is to be further mentioned that while many participants (74.3%) has opted for online shopping amidst the Covid-19, only few participants (25.7%) gone with the offline shopping. In that connection, it can be inferred that consumers utilised both offline and online channels depending on their needs while buying the beauty products.

According to the metric of Cronbach's Alpha, there are various interpretations; although a value higher than .70 shows high internal consistency (George and Mallery, 2018), we have only the Croanbach Alpha of Customer Buying Behaviour variable is 0.870 > 0.70 showing high reliability. However, Griethuijsen et al. (2014) give a sustainable reason for including reliability values under 0.70 in their cross national study. Therefore, Croanbach Alpha of Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control are implying acceptable reliability values respectively 0.674, 0.618. Although we accept that they could be considered weak, based on Griethuijsen et al. (2014), these values are considered marginially reliable. Whereas the Croanbach Alpha of Normative Attitude measures still yielded very low as 0.448.

To assess, convergent and discriminant validity, the current study probed Fornell et al.'s method (1981). Their method is based on following the squared root of AVE as indicator which should be both greater than any value in horizontal and vertical directions in Table 3.

Although it has been realised that both lower bound reliability and implication over discriminatory analysis, the remaining scales and factor loading (in next section) encourge researchers to proceed the next stage of data analysis.

Table3: Fornell & Larkers Criterion

	SN	NA	PBC	CBB
SN	**0.130**			
NA	1.016	**0.096**		
PBC	0.643	0.547	**0.063**	
CBB	0.502	0.231	0.585	**0.578**

Note: Bold Numbers are (AVE)^2

3.2.2. Explanatory Factor Analysis

This technique is used to reduce the data to a smaller data set of summary variables (Yong and Pearce, 2013). In this analysis, 11-item are run with Maximum-likelihood for Goodness Fit Text and Maximum likelyhood for the rest of the test.

The Initial Eigenvalues Cumulative % is always higher than Extraction Sums of Squared Cumulative % as Extraction Sums of Squared Cumulative explore specific factors (Weaver and Maxwell, 2014). The Extraction Sums of Squared Cumulative % of factor 4 is 46.296, this indicates that the Total Variance Explained (TVE) is accounted for by 46.296% retained line. TVE explains over 46.296% of loading with the 4-factor account.

KMO (Kaise-Meyer-Olkin) values are expected between 0.8 and 1. Those indicate the sampling is adequate. However, the value of KMO could be amendable to 0.5 (Pallant, 2020). Therefore, the model's output at the KMO value is over this level of 0.746.

The most Communalities of extracted values are lower down to 0.227, it, therefore is not allowed to be said that high variance in the variables has been accounted for. As other values are significantly supporting factor loading, the researcher carries on next step.

After these 11-items and their loadings with 4 factors are conducted at Goodness of Fit Test Chi-square 38.410 df and Sig .042 Thereby, a significant value is <0.05 means fit covariance of the model with the data.

Pattern matrix is included with over 0,400 and items are dropped if they are under 0.400 (Appendix I). Factor loadings are extracted through Maximum likelihood with Promax with Kaiser Normalisation.

The data analyse generated that three factors that confirm the convergence and discrimination issue at some degree that 4 different factor loading are violated. However, the researchers forwards the study into the next step of Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

3.2.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The CFA followed just after EFA. The researcher is in line with a procedure recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999) and Gaskin, J. & Lim, J. (2016) in Table 4, where the reliability and validity of the scales were assessed by using the fit of the measurement models.

Table 4: Cutoff Criteria Note: Hu and Bentler (1999) and Gaskin, J. & Lim, J. (2016)

Measure	Terrible	Acceptable	Excellent
CMIN/DF	> 5	> 3	> 1
CFI	<0.90	<0.95	>0.95
RMSEA	>0.08	>0.06	<0.06
PClose	<0.01	<0.05	>0.05

The CFA was configured using the maximum likelihood parameter estimates with standard error (MLR). We used modification indices to achieve a better fit of the CFA model. Overall, the results demonstrate in Table 5 that the model had overall adequate fit to the data, as evidenced ($\chi 2$ = 62.455, df = 37, p < 0.06, CMIN/DF=1.688 with Excellent, comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.932 with acceptable, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.075 with Acceptable and PClose=0.102 with Acceptable).

In summary, the model is accepted with a successful fit to the data. Therefore, the researcher starts to test the hypotheses.

Table 5: Macro Model with Cutoff Criteria

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	62.455	--	--
DF	37.000	--	--
CMIN/DF	1.688	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.932	<0.90	Terrible
RMSEA	0.075	0.06< ..<0.08	Acceptable
PClose	0.102	>0.05	Excellent

After testing and partly approving Theoretical Framework. Researchers start to investigate hypothesis.

3.3. Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the postulated hypotheses, the researchers extended confirmatory factor analysis by using modification indices on SPSS-AMOS report. This futher has consolidated and improve model fitness.

The above conceptual framework [figure 1] is developed in AMOS. And SN (Subjective Norms) and NA (Normative Attitudes) explain PBC in that approximately $R^2 = 35\%$ of the variance. It means the dependent variable could explained 35% by the SN and NA in the model. This means different variables should be taken account to improve this percentage. Furthemore, perceived behavioural controls explain approximately 50% of ($R^2 = 50\%$) CBB (Consumer Buying Behaviour).
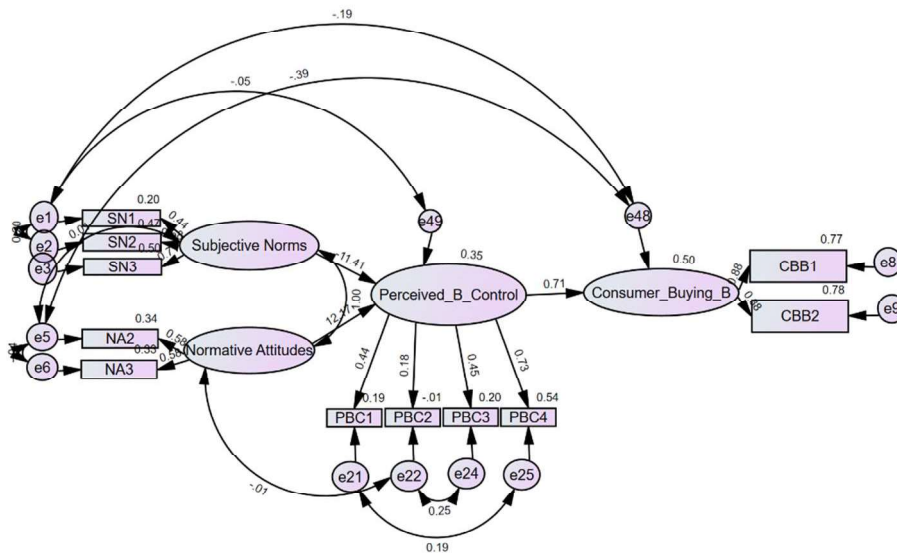

Figure 3 Structural Equation Model

After creating an improved model data set with the help of correction indicies in Figure 3, this specific model has been re-checked according to Hu and Bentler (1999) and Gaskin, J. & Lim, J. (2016) in Table 6.

Table 6: Micro Model with Cutoff Criteria

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	54.394	--	--
DF	31.000	--	--
CMIN/DF	1.755	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.937	>0.95	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.079	<0.08	Acceptable
PClose	0.088	>0.05	Excellent

H1: Subjective norms during Covid 19 have positive but nonsignificant relation to perceived behavioural control of consumers when purchasing beauty products online.

This hypotheses *H1* is rejected as regression is yielded negative (ß=-11.521, p>0.93).

Table 7: Hypotheses' Table

Estimate (ß)	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypotheses
-11.521	13.75	-0.088	0.93	H1
12.248	127.49	0.096	0.923	H2
1.626	0.46	3.518	0.00	H3

H2: Normative attitudes during Covid 19 has nonsignificant positive relation to perceived behavioural control of consumers when consumer purchase the beauty products online.

This hypotheses *H2* is accepted standardised ß=12,248, p>0.923 because it has been statistically proven that both variable regressed but not significantly.

H3: Perceived behavioural control during Covid 19 has nonsignificant positive relation to the buying behaviour of consumers when purchasing beauty products online.

This hypotheses *H1* is rejected standardised ß=1.626, p>0.00 because it has been statistically proven that there is significant regression in the last structural equation model.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Subjective Norms and Customer Buying Behaviour

The result of ß=-11.521, p>0.93 [Table 7] indicates that subjective norms led to negative changes in the buying attitude of customers in the UK beauty industry but not as significant effect. Based on the results, it can be indicated that consumers consider the opinions of others but ultimately depends on own judgement and experiences has negative impact but non- significant level for making a correct and appropriate buying decisions while buying beauty products during the pandemic.

The study carried out by Mehta, Saxena and Purohit (2020) who interestingly indicated that there is significant change in the personalities of buyers during the Covid-19, which brought change in their buying behaviour. The pandemic situation has provided opportunity to the consumers to spend time on researching the products and review the feedback of the users before making decisions so that they can avail the expected quality at reasonable rate. According to current study, this is valid consumer with more social norms involement. It is to be further mentioned that the situation of the pandemic has changed the perception and attitude towards both online and offline shopping. The online shopping has provided significant opportunities to companies in the beauty industry to shift to e-commerce platform to reach out to large number of customers. As a result, consumers have various options to easily place the required products online without having any physical movement. This enabled consumers to easily share their experiences with others that influences the buying behaviour of customers in the beauty industry. Apart from that, the confirmatory factor analysis has proved Subjective Norms should be counted in the framework.

4.2. Normative Attitudes and Consumer Buying Behaviour

The findings of the survey have shown that online shopping during the covid-19 pandemic is increased and considered as the efficient mode of shopping. It is studied that when the consumers have easy options to shop the required products then it brings positive (but non significant) change in the attitude of customers while buying the products. However, it is also found that not all consumers

believe that online shopping to be an efficient mode of purchasing goods. In that relation, the study of Pandey and Parmar (2019) can be taken into consideration where consumers have a trust issue with the product quality but most importantly its delivery related implications. As a result, consumers believe that they can be forged by the companies and may not receive the accurate and authentic products.

It is to be further pointed out based on the hypotheses testing that there is a positive relation of normative attitudes ß=12.048, p>0.10 with the buying behaviour of consumers in the UK beauty sector during the Covid-19. In that positive connection, it is understood that consumers would buy any beauty products if they could find the e-commerce service to be effective as per their expectations. When customers are able to place the order without any hazard or get the timely delivery of the placed order then it is highly likely that it brings a positive shift in their behaviour. In addition, we may suggest to investigate further about positive impact of word-of-mouth as well as the topic of consumers who share their experiences with others, overall phenomena could be triggered with different aspect of variables. This has been confirmed by Turban et al. (2015) who indicated that it is not only about placing and timely delivery of orders but there are other concerns, which are considered by the customers while buying online beauty products. It has been determined that organisations offering products need to ensure there is proper customer data privacy, payment security, return policy, etc.

4.3. Perceived Behavioural Control and Consumer Buying Behaviour

The regression values ß=1.626, p<0.05 indicates that there is high internal consistency in the items considered to determine the perceived behavioural control in consumers while buying beauty products online. Based on the result, it can be pointed out that before buying the required products, consumers focus on determining the loss they can suffer online, which can further affect their overall shopping experiences. Apart from that, it is to be pointed out that due to the pandemic, consumers highly preferred to purchase beauty items online as the crisis led to the closure of physical stores. The study carried out by Pikoos et al. (2020) indicated that at the time of Covid-19, the control on the behaviour of the consumers influenced based on obtaining either appearance-focused products or value-based products. It is also identified that because of the lockdown in the country due to the pandemic, the consumers majorly relied on the online platforms to get the desired information about the products. This in turned, formed their buying perception about the brands and making buying decisions. On the other hand, the hypotheses testing also revealed that there is impact of perceived control behaviour on consumers' buying behaviour in the UK beauty sector during the pandemic. In that relation, it can be analysed that consumers considered various aspects while buying beauty products online, which shape their buying intention towards the brand.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION and LIMITATIONS

This study aimed to find out the various factors which influenced the consumer buying behaviour of beauty products during the covid 19 pandemic using the Theory of Reasoned Action using the variables for example Normative Attitudes, Perceived Behavioural Control and Subjective Norms. Also, this study has been statistically proven that how the variables are correlated but not significantly related.

The first objective was to explore the subjective norms regarding the choices made in society. Pandemic severity had metaphorically affected the economic scenario and that is related to the consumer styles and behaviours to choose the patterns that were suitable for purchasing the cosmetic brands (Sehgal et al., 2021). During the epidemic, recommendations from friends and family about a

brand's products and services had a substantial impact on customers' purchasing decisions. A sense of insecurity and fear was predominant at that period and the majority of the people took time to get out of lockdown phobia. Free and social mixing was prohibited and therefore, the generation of leads was constricted to that of the limited consumers of a particular class.

Normative attitudes define the acceptable standard in behaviours, norms, and standards in society. After covid-19, the social norms have been changed and the transformation has revolutionised the map of various industries (Boceva et al., 2021). As a result, the buying patterns of consumers have changed due to the changes in society and the patterns of restrictions imposed on society. After the emergence of the virus and the transmission of the disease, consumers turn from the trends of cosmetics. The norms of social distancing and restrictions have disrupted the shopping experiences of the consumers.

The third objective was to explore the perceived behaviour controls human behaviours triggered by the prescience controls on the behaviouristic patterns. The perception of risks is assumed by the public and the subjective opinions vary from person to person. Particularly, after the pandemic period, personal beliefs were crucial to map out the sales and productivity of the business. The restrictions on the national level spread down the levels of the individual levels and people become very conscious of maintaining health and societal norms (González-Cabrera et al., 2021). More particularly, the consumers are shifting to the sustainable brand of cosmetics that are composed of natural products.

Future researchers could be advised about identifying differences in the shopping behaviours and personalities of laggards, late majority, early majority, and early adopters of online beauty shopping. This can be done by comparing the early majority to early adopters to laggards to the late majority. The businesses will be able to build distinct strategies for the aforementioned categories with the assistance of this information. The purchasing decisions of consumers regarding beauty items are also heavily influenced by marketing methods. Therefore, additional studies should be directed toward identifying the impacts of these tactics on the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

This study could have core data such as the opinion of managers from the beauty industry through conducting the interview. Due to the restrictions are about the reduced, the time limitation constrained the study, therefore extensive data collection as well as having interview have been missed out. The research project focuses on the researchers' analytical skills, critical judgement, and patience to engage in the multiplicities of the methods. Even though the findings of the current research show that customers are open to online shopping of beauty products and have high scores in attitudes and subjective norms, it is not entirely feasible to eliminate the chance that the used scales would not be appropriate for a group of customers who are from other geographic location, have less education, and have lower incomes. Furthermore, the research output has been derived under issues named as convergence and discriminant validity. Although researchers have reached sufficient reliability values at first stage of study, this initial test did not prevent further discriminant validity on the second phase. Therefore, it would be suggested that used measurement and applied scales could be investigated further.

It is also impossible to totally rule out the potential that the findings of this research would be the same for other demographic categories of customers with lower levels of education and lower levels of discretionary spending. The personal and professional-both the skills have been developed that will be triggering the confidence of the researcher in taking future daring endeavours. The project borders on the sensitive and global issues that are destined to reach success (Aman, Respati and Natsir,

2021). The research will reveal the international emerging players in the beauty industry and new innovative brands.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

The author(s) declare that all processes of the study comply with research and publication ethics, adhering to ethical standards and principles of scientific citation.

The Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of University of Worcester deemed the study ethically appropriate with its decision dated 28.06.2022 and guideline of ethic/integrity is BERA 2018.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Design: Author 1, Author 2; Data Collection: Author 1; Data Processing: Author 1; Analysis and/or Interpretation: Author 1, Author 2; Literature Review: Author 1, Author 2; Manuscript Writing: Author 1, Author 2; Critical Review: Author 2

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest among the authors

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