AN EXAMINATION OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING SAMRUDDHI BENEFICIARIES PURCHASE DECISION IN SEETHAWAKA DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT DIVISION: DURING THE COVID–19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

COVID 19 is a pandemic that influences, people started to new life with adjustment. People tend to increase some items to purchase and also decrease to purchase of special items within their day–to–day purchasing. Covid 19 hardly hit on consumer decision patterns all around the world. The study focuses on purchase decisions towards Samruddhi beneficiaries during the Covid 19 pandemics. The data was collected from 50 Samruddhi beneficiaries (as a consumer) through a well–structured questionnaire administered in each and using the convenience sampling method from Seethawaka Divisional Secretariat Division. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Software. The results showed Social Media Marketing (SMM), Sales promotion(SP), and Perceived Value(PV) and were significantly impact on purchase decision of Samruddhi beneficiaries and Store environment(SE) and Corporate social responsibility(CSR) was indicated insignificant in the context of Samruddhi beneficiaries. 56.6% variation of purchase decision towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries can be explained by the proposed model. This result also reinforced the applicability of including more additional constructs in this model, as it has improved the exploratory power of the proposed model.

1. Introduction

The pandemic of COVID-19 has become the defining world health emergency (Curr Med., 2020). Although emerging economies were anticipating to be fighting, in comparison to the world's most advanced health service Sri Lanka has so far handled this pandemic quite reasonably well. It is correct to conclude that and were it not for the slightly earlier, tough government restrictions that were chosen to take and the commitment and efforts of military but mostly naturopathic doctors in fighting COVID-19, Sri Lanka would have faced a different reality.

However, The COVID-19 pandemic made big Trouble Sri Lankan Economic also (PwC, 2020). It Influences different types of income people as different. Because of this situation, various countries

provide some benefits for the low-income people to maintain their day-to-day life as usual. Among those countries, in Sri Lanka, there are so many low-income people. In Sri Lankan content the Sri Lankan government recognizes the Sri Lankan low-income people as Samruddhi beneficiaries. Then the Samruddhi benefit is the only thing they received as a benefit.

Researcher try to study the purchasing behavior of Samruddhi beneficiaries. Because their purchasing behavior is dependent on their income and it differs from other income level people. Then this research will help the marketers, the businessmen, and the entrepreneurs who targeted the low-income people in Sri Lanka to get a better idea and will help to identify how to change the low-income people's purchasing behavior because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.   Problem Statement & Objectives of the Study

2.1   *Problem Statment*

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has affected households in numerous ways, including shuttering business and schools, resulting in an economic recession and loss of employment income. (Falk, 2020)

There is a lack of literature in Sri Lanka to examine which factors that affecting mostly Samruddhi Beneficiaries" Purchase Decision in Colombo District: During the Covid-19 Pandemic. To seek an answer for the research problem, the researcher has identified the following research questions related to Samruddhi Beneficiaries" Purchase Decision in Seethawaka Divisional Secretariat Division: During the Covid 19 pandemic (Special reference to Samruddhi Beneficiaries).

2.1.1   *Research Questions*

• What is the most impact factor on purchase decisions towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries during the covid pandemic?

• What is the least impact factor on purchase decisions towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries during the covid pandemic?

• What are the factors not affecting on purchase decisions towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries during the covid pandemic?

2.1.2   *Research Objectives*

• To identify the most impact factor on purchase decisions towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries during the covid pandemic.

• To identify the least impact factor on purchase decisions towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries during the covid pandemic.

• To identify factors those not affecting on purchase decisions towards the Samruddhi beneficiaries during the covid pandemic.

3.   Literature Review

3.1   *Purchase decision:*

Purchase decision involves a sequence of choices formed by a consumer before making a purchase which starts once he/she has a willingness to fulfil a need. The consumer should reach a decision

with regard to the place of purchasing, the desired brand, model, purchase quantity, time to buy, amount of money to be spent and the method of payment. These decisions can be influenced by marketers by providing information about their products or services that may inform consumer's assessment process.(Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

3.2   Corporate Social Responsibility:
Corporate social responsibility can be conceptualized as "The continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to sustainable economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large"(Krishnan Balachandran , 2011).

3.3   Social Media Marketing:
Social media is an important marketing communication tool to reach and interact with customers at minimal cost and at different times of the day. Effective management and implementation of social media marketing is one of the key objectives and interests of several brands (Hanaysha, 2016)

3.4   Store Environment:
The importance of constructing an appealing physical environment has attained considerable attention from several scholars and business managers due to its power in attracting and satisfying customers (Ali et al., 2013; Han and Ryu, 2009)

3.5   Sales Promotion:
Sales promotion is widely accepted as an important component in marketing campaigns for inspiring and stimulating quicker and effective response (comprising purchase quantity and speed) to the sales of particular products or services (Kotler and Keller 2012).

3.6   Perceived Value:
A number of studies also showed that perceived value plays an important role in affecting consumer's purchase decision (Cheng et al., 2006; de Medeiros et al., 2016; Yee and San, 2011).
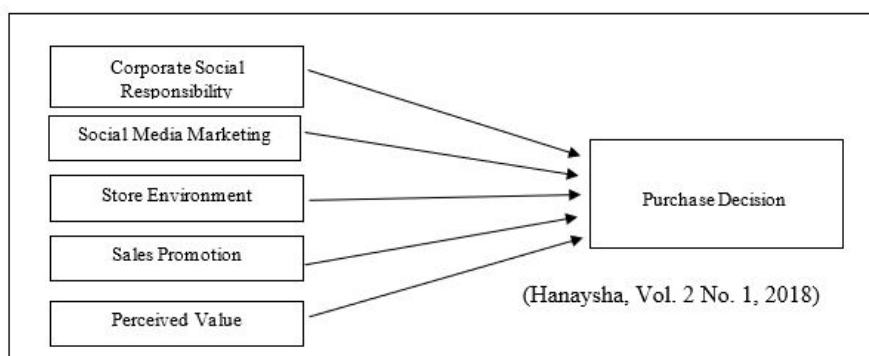
Conceptual Framework Hypothesis

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

H1. Corporate social responsibility has a positive effect on purchase decision
H2. Social media marketing has a positive effect on purchase decision
H3. The store environment has a positive effect on purchase decisions.
H4. Sales promotion has a positive effect on purchase decisions.
H5. Perceived value has a positive effect on purchase decision.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data and Sampling

Questionnaire forms with imperial declarations with the scale of Likert are collected primary data (1-5 as strongly differ, disapprove, marginal, agree, and strongly agree). The fifty Samruddhi beneficiaries charged with the use of convenient sampling techniques were identified as a sample in the Seethawaka Divisional Secretariat Division.

Table 1. Sampling Framework

Study Setting	Samruddhi beneficiaries in Colombo District
Time Horizon	Cross-Sectional Research
Unit of Analysis	Samruddhi beneficiaries in Seethwaka Divisional Secretariat Division
Sample Size	50 Samruddhi beneficiaries
Sample Method	Convenient Sampling Technique

5. Finding

5.1 Reliability Analysis

The Alpha coefficient of Cronbachs ranging from 0 to 1; the cutoff point is 0.6 (Anderson, 1998). The outcome of the alpha coefficients of Cronbachs was amazingly consistent 0.677 compared with 24 statements. All the items examined in this research should therefore be credible, which indicates that the mechanism's internal reliability was satisfactory.

5.2 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis is primarily supported out to explore the multiple relationships of Corporate social responsibility, Social Media Marketing, Store environment, Sales promotion, and Perceived value with Purchase Decision if it exists. According to the Pearson Correlation Analysis, there is a statistically linear significant and positive relationship between each independent variable with Samruddhi beneficiaries' Purchase decisions without a store environment. The store environment indicates a weak positive relationship with the Samruddhi beneficiaries' Purchase decision and it indicates insignificant.

According to the correlation analysis highest relationship indicates Samruddhi beneficiaries' Purchase decision with Perceived value. It was 0.545. second highest relationship has with Social Media Marketing. It was 0.521. Then Sales promotion indicates 0.435.

5.3 Model Summary Analysis

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.752[a]	.566	.516	.40751

According to this research, the "R Square" statistic indicates 0.566. The "R Square" statistic designates that 56.6% of the dissimilarity in the Purchase decision is illuminated by independent variables.

5.4   Coefficients Analysis

Table 3.Cofficients

	Unstandardized Coef.		Standardized Coef.	t	Sig.
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	–1.385	.786		–1.762	.085
SMM	.730	.176	.422	4.140	.000
CSR	.046	.091	.058	.508	.614
SP	.347	.142	.259	2.445	.019
SE	–.148	.094	–.177	–1.576	.122
PV	.412	.122	.434	3.381	.002

According to the Coefficients table Social Media Marketing, Perceived value, and Sales promotion impact to purchase decision of Samruddhi beneficiaries. But not Impact Store environment and Corporate social responsibility.

The highest impact is from Social Media Marketing. It was 0.73. The second–highest impact is from Perceived value. It was 0.412. The third highest impact is from Sales promotion. It was 0.347.

6.   Conclusion

According to the hypothesis Social Media Marketing, Sales promotion, and Perceived value are accepted. But Corporate Social Responsibility and Store environment are not accepted.

Finally, Covid 19 pandemic situation has a huge impact on low-income people. It changes the living condition of Samruddhi beneficiaries as well as the purchase decision. In this time, they reduced purchasing Cake, Ice cream, Sausage, Fish, Cloths, Chicken, Milk powder, Biscuits, Fruits and Vegetable products and they increase purchasing Dhal, Coriander, Decoction, Samahan, Dry fish, Rice, Onion, Potato, Panadol, Sugar, Sanitizer, Face mask, Flour, and Vitamin C tablets like products.

7.   Recommendation

Overall, Sri Lankan Samruddhi beneficiaries are concerned about the current COVID 19 issues and their purchase patterns. They have a positive attitude towards purchasing some special products for their daily use. They have to reduce some items their daily consumption. The environmental concern and environmental knowledge were identified as one of the strongest influences on Samruddhi beneficiaries in this study. The government has to be very careful regarding the purchasing pattern of Samruddhi beneficiaries in the country. Because this is a very difficult time for them. Compare with other income level people, Samruddhi beneficiaries focus on different variables. Even they do not care about store environment or corporate social responsibility. They are a very special part of society and this research helpful for the decision-making regarding low-income people. Finally, can be concluded, it is important to focus on giving them the basics of a product. That is the most important thing to them. It would be a great task if the government or anyone cold provides them with as few deprecated items as possible during this period.

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