

# Research on Revenge : A Research Note

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## Abstract

The pandemic has marked huge challenges and changes in the marketing contexts across all industries. Corporate organizations are at the outset to conceive marketing strategies to address the evolving, perhaps critical consumer behaviour — revenge shopping in the market space and marketplace. Though this form of shopping emerged decades ago, the nature of the shopping pattern in these pandemic times has a distinct set of motives being witnessed among consumers. Accordingly, the research evidence in this arena is not adequately bestowed that contributes to marketing implications. Hence, this research note has been proposed to indicate the key perspectives of research possibilities in the arena of revenge shopping. Though the requirements of research outcomes are unexceptionally pondered, the most critical perspectives, such as marketing strategy, the role of hedonism, and the viability of the structural relationship between revenge shopping, consumer satisfaction, consumer engagement and loyalty, have been analyzed and inferred as research notes. The implications, primarily on the research perspectives, have been pointed out for the researchers' fraternity. The marketing implications have also been provided parallelly.

**Keywords :** revenge shopping, research note, marketplace, market space, marketing strategy, hedonism, structural relationship

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In the wake of liberalization in China in 1968, a new shopping pattern saw the light of day — revenge shopping. Revenge shopping in those times was known as shopping associated with a sudden surge of foreign goods pouring into the communist-dominated country with less exposure to alien products and upsurged interest in such extraneous products for various reasons, including status and usability. The novel revenge shopping phenomenon, however, is in a different context. The pandemic, which took birth in northern Asia, froze the shopping pattern across the globe. It was evident that the pandemic hampered all the industries and, thereby, their target customers as well. There was no shopping both in the marketplace and market space. While the nations were practically loosening up their lockdowns, the shoppers had to fill the void of lack of shopping over approximately two years of lockdown and had to do with the least necessity of buying many products, which otherwise people would buy quite frequently, for example, clothing. The trauma imposed on the consumers that 'prevented them from shopping' resulted in a massive explosion, and it came out in the form of revenge against the concussion they went through over the pandemic years. Consumers behaved as if they were taking revenge on the barricades which stopped them from their freedom to shop. Such an act has been termed revenge behavior in various sectors such as travel, shopping, food consumption, entertainment, etc. The pandemic has not only affected consumers but also

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drastically influenced marketers. The market was at the pinnacle of volatility with extreme uncertainty, with the least demand and supply.

With the doing away of restrictions for new normal business operations, a rush of shoppers towards arrestive shopping practices is being witnessed across the globe. This has led to a massive challenge for marketers to not only manage the shopper's behavior, perhaps with the increased traffic in shopping, but also to amicably use this opportunity to enhance their marketing efficiency. Also, there exists a need for the researchers to conduct research at various levels and on distinct contexts of revenge shopping to contribute not only to academic literature but also to the industries' betterment. However, unlike the other areas of marketing, this context of revenge shopping doesn't have colossal and adequate evidence to construct theories, build conceptual and hypothetical models, sophisticated research methodologies, and rigorous frameworks that enhance the scope of research and its reflection on the thereof. Considering the status of the consumers' shopping behavior, market and marketing requirements, and the need for academic research contribution, this research note has been proposed. As stated, this shopping arena is not only novel to the marketing framework but also a key societal cue for indicating the changing external contexts with reference to world economic transactions. Therefore, it is predominant for the researchers to explore and experiment with the paradigms of revenge shopping with intensive and rigorous research. However, the literature lacks evidence and theories that facilitate the effective use of revenge shopping as a key strategy for enhancing marketing efforts lucratively.

This research note emphasizes such voids where literature needs empirical and other patterns of inferences from the perspective of revenge shopping. Though there could be desperate perspectives of researching, this research note predominantly focuses on three critical, possibly interrelated aspects of research in revenge shopping. The scheme of the note initiates with the strategic approach of confronting revenge shopping, indicating the imperativeness of hedonism in revenge shopping and thereby conceiving a structural relationship (conceptually) between the customers' satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement in the lens of revenge shopping. This research note not only derives the research possibility but also infers the implications thereof on incorporating the outcomes of the research.

## **Revenge Shopping and Marketing Strategy**

The existing research on the recent COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on the consumers' evidence focuses more on the emotional perspectives of consumers, mainly the negative emotions evoked by the outbreak, and its significance on consumption patterns (Park et al., 2022). Also, inferences have been made on the criticality of shoppers' behavior that arises out of a 'state of prevention from buying' (Lins et al., 2022) and research recommendations that spotlight the temporariness of the marketing strategy aligning with it. However, the research executions have not forecasted the lifecycle of this shopping behavior. That is, revenge shopping has been seen when the consumers stay in emotions such as panic, fear, aggressiveness, and anxiety (Islam et al., 2021; Park et al., 2022; Prentice et al., 2021), and the recommendations for the marketers on formulating strategies are comprehensively based on temporary circumstances of the consumers.

Though the research inferences support the marketers in conceiving a new framework for measuring this novel anomaly and the strategies to attract the target consumers (Malhotra, 2021), it is critical to understand that the consumer's behavior in the phase of revenge shopping and the recommended marketing strategies would work till actualization of a new normal. However, the behavior of consumers would shift to normality when revenge shopping saturates, therefore, the marketing strategies and the grubstake posted on formulating strategies would not attract sales. Here exists a void in literary sources, and no research evidence has been found recommending long-term marketing strategies that are based on the ground characteristics of revenge shopping. Also, research lacks evidence to argue that the stages of revenge shopping, where the consumers traffic in market space and

marketplace is lofty, can be optimally strategized for increasing the customer base. Research on these perspectives would contribute to the marketers and the academic community to produce new post-pandemic marketing theories. The scope of this note further demonstrates how such research executions and marketing efforts can be routed.

## **Revenge Shopping and the Inclusion of Hedonism**

Having indicated the need for lucrative marketing strategies, one must understand the centrality of such strategies despite online and offline presence. Research infers that consumers' revenge shopping behavior is clouded by their emotions, evoking distinct personality traits, and intending varied preferences (Brooks et al., 2020; Challet-Bouju et al., 2020; Deng et al., 2020; Holmes et al., 2020; Mahmud et al., 2021; Naeem, 2021; Park et al., 2022). One such finding is that luxury goods buying seems to increase with the upliftment of business restrictions post-pandemic (Park et al., 2022).

Though the research hints at the buying perspectives such as compulsive, economic, hedonic, and perhaps survival has also been depicted, revenge shopping mainly focuses on the fierceness of consumers' shopping behavior (Challet-Bouju et al., 2020; Malhotra, 2021; Omar et al., 2021; Park et al., 2022). This indicates that there exists an opportunity for marketers to not only promote their cataloged products but also elevate their sales, as hedonic motives influence impulsive buying as well (Agarwal et al., 2021). However, the promotional attributes, which perhaps motivate the consumers that signify the conversion to sales, such as incentivizing the shoppers, co-created product offers, and brand choices, have not been investigated, and therefore, research lacks evidence in this context. This is critical for marketers and researchers, as this is a novel phase where consumers' purchasing power is added (Malhotra, 2021; Tzeng et al., 2021). Research has found that consumers' savings have been an inducing factor for revenge shopping with the motive of *'enjoying the desire no matter what'* (Hashmi, 2021; Malhotra, 2021). However, further research proposing the impact of the changes in consumers' budget management techniques on shopping behavior in the post-pandemic era – specific to revenge shopping has not been addressed – and thereby, a void exists.

## **Constructing a Structural Relationship Around Revenge Shopping**

As indicated in the above notes, being a short-term opportunity for producing long-term strategic marketing benefits and the how-to strategically approach towards deriving marketing benefits under the revenge shopping phase, there exists a question of whether consumers' satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty can be structurally related and validated with revenge shopping? The shopping environment could be in-store or online, influencing the shoppers' experience (Sarkar et al., 2018) and thereby determining the customers' satisfaction (Calvo-Porrá & Lévy-Mangin, 2021; Malhotra, 2021). Consumers perceive the benefits of online shopping (Tomar et al., 2018), and those benefits do influence satisfaction levels. Similarly, customer satisfaction and customer engagement have favorable significance toward each other, and this inference has been determined on online platforms (Majeed et al., 2022). Research has indicated that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are significantly related to each other (Kurup & Jain, 2018). Also, inferences suggest that customer engagement and loyalty have mediating effects, and customer trust influences these two (Hapsari et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction has been seen as an antecedent for customer engagement and loyalty (Abror et al., 2020).

Overall reviews indicate that there is a structural, perhaps conceptual, modeling possibility between the factors of customer satisfaction, customer engagement, and customer loyalty, mainly on online shopping platforms. However, there are no literary sources that induce that revenge shopping could lay as a primary independent factor for framing the structural relationship between the three factors – satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. Though

theoretical assumptions could be formed by emphasizing that revenge shopping, a time-bound phase that enhances customer traffic on shopping platforms, can positively influence customer satisfaction towards brands and products, which in turn influences customer engagement and loyalty, there is no validation of assumptions hypothetically. This void requires academic research execution to build a model based on revenge shopping and to conceive a strategic framework that utilizes the revenge shopping phase to elevate the customers' satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty.

## **Implications**

The overall ideology of this research note is to indicate the voids in the perspectives of revenge shopping, mainly on online platforms, based on the readings from literary sources. Accordingly, the three perspectives, such as revenge shopping as a key marketing strategy, the focus on hedonism in the purview of revenge shopping, and the construction of a structural model, have indicated enormous research avenues. There are a few critical pointers to ponder; though investigated in the marketing area over the decades, revenge shopping has undergone a disruptive change due to the pandemic. There is a change in context and, thereby, in its relevance for marketers. Hence, the theoretical background of revenge shopping requires varied industry views from distinct research perspectives. There exists a lack of empirical evidence with rigorous methodologies, including multivariate and structural modeling approaches in the context of revenge shopping pertaining to other marketing aspects such as customer satisfaction, engagement, loyalty, and advocacy. This void not only contributes value to the literature in terms of theories but also facilitates marketers for strategic implications. Also, the existing literature doesn't have a volume of insights for deriving a conceptual model, and therefore, hypothetically validating the model frameworks has limitations over the variables measuring the factors of mode.

The growth of marketing research has extended with the blend of psychology, sociology, economics, etc. However, the research studies on the perspectives of revenge shopping, perhaps mainly in the online shopping contexts, have even been attempted in marketing areas, including consumer buyology. Methodologically, the revenge shoppers have been looked at with the perspective of the pandemic, however, there exists the possibility of geographical and economic constraints that would significantly influence the revenge shopping behavior; this could be based on consumers' socio-demographical characteristics, but there is viability for researchers to design research targeting distinct sample frame. Consumers' socio-demographic characteristics play a vital role in online shopping and product choice (Chincholkar & Sonwaney, 2022). This would also have a significant impact in the context of revenge shopping. Also, plenty of research studies have focused on online and offline consumer buying behavior, which also refer to the urban population. However, research focusing on the rural markets and on consumers of semiurban markets revenge shopping online is unseen.

Research requires careful investigation of these avenues as these markets are equivalently demanding and could reflect on the theories and models built. Nevertheless, this research perspective would also aid marketers in designing marketing frameworks and finding micro-segments in the given market characteristics. This would facilitate the marketers in understanding the consumers' intentions and thereby sustaining them in the business (Bulsara & Vaghela, 2022).

## **Conclusion, Limitations, and the Way Forward**

This research note has been prepared based on our readings from literary sources and other relevant academic research sources and reflection on the insights acquired. Hence, the indications of research viability in the notes are entirely based on our inferences. The ultimate purpose of this research note is to evoke the research ideas that could be further penetrated and performed through qualitative and quantitative approaches; thereby, the scope

exists for extending the ideologies narrated in the notes. Also, scope exists for laboriously applying the revenge shopping context to all possible industries' outsets, thereby enhancing competitiveness.

## **Authors' Contribution**

Dr. Shivam Sakshi and Dr. Sabari Shankar R. contributed equally to the readings, generation of ideologies, qualitative inferences, and then creating the research note.

## **Conflict of Interest**

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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