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**Dissertation**

**On**

**The Impact of Covid-19 on the Retail Sector in the UK: A Case  
Study of Guess Inc.**

## **Abstract**

Since COVID-19 is a contagious virus that may kill people, it has caused a number of issues in a variety of businesses. Due to corporate activities being halted and a decrease in consumer demand for various goods and services as a result of economic losses in life, the implementation of COVID-19 has caused issues in both human life and commercial organisations. The pandemic had the greatest effect on the retail sector as people's financial situations worsened as a result of a drop-in demand across all market segments, which exacerbated people's troubles with other causes. The research paper will be written to analyse the impact of the global pandemic COVID-19 on the productivity, success, and management of Guess Inc. in the UK. The chosen company is likely to have experienced losses, much as the UK apparel sector and the worldwide clothes and retail industries did as a result of the epidemic. This essay will examine these quantitative changes as well as various qualitative ones that have occurred inside the company, including adjustments to managerial policy, modifications to employee benefits, improvements to healthcare and safety protocols, etc. Both primary and secondary data have been used from Guess Inc. to accomplish the research. The quantitative method of research has been used to collect and analyse the data of the research. 20 surveys and 6 interviews have facilitated the research effectively. This research will find out the changes within the business due to the pandemic.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, impacts, turnover, performance, productivity.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

COVID-19 is a global pandemic which was introduced in December 2019 in China causing the death of many people around the world and still, the impact of COVID-19 is harming people and industries around the world. The introduction of this pandemic impacted different sectors and industries negatively for which the industries are suffering a lot (Albani, 2012). The pandemic caused the loss in businesses and reduced the demand for the products and expensive lifestyle of people due to economic loss. Guess incorporation is one of the most popular American brands of clothing which has 484 locations where the organisation serves diversified customers in different locations including the UK. The organisation also faced different issues due to the pandemic. The overall scenario of the organisation changed a lot during and after the pandemic (Burt and Maglaras, 2022). The whole retail sector in the UK faced challenges due to the pandemic among which Guess Inc. is significant. The impacts of COVID-19 on the retail sector especially in this organisation have been discussed effectively in this research. This research will find out the influences of COVID-19 on the business of retail which have brought long term impact on the industry (Collings et al., 2021).

### **1.2 Aim of the Research**

This research aims to explore the impacts of the pandemic of COVID-19 on the retail industry, especially on Guess Inc.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The research has been developed with some objectives to achieve for the successful completion of the research. The objectives are

- To investigate the significant issues faced by Guess Inc. due to the Covid-19 in the UK.
- To identify the severity of the impact on the profitability and performance of Guess Inc. during the Covid-19 in the UK.
- To measure and compare the before and after pandemic scenario and performance of Guess? Inc. in the UK.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

- How the global pandemic Covid-19 did affect the performance and profitability of Guess? Inc. in the UK?
- What is the extent of impact of the Covid-19 on Guess Inc. in the UK?

## **1.5 Rationale of the Research**

COVID-19 Has brought several problems in different industries due to the transferable virus which can cause death to the human being. The introduction of COVID-19 has created problems in the human life and the business organisations at the same time by stopping the operations of business and reducing the demands of people on different products and services due to the economic loss in the life (Dannenberg et al., 2020). The retail industries had been impacted the most due to the pandemic as the economic situation of people reduced due to the decrease in demand in different sections which increased the problems of people indifferent factors. Guess incorporation is one of the most popular American clothing brands which is a retail organisation as well faced Different problems regarding sell, profit, reduction of demand and employee turnover due to the pandemic which caused the reduction of business quality and to feet (Goswami and Chouhan, 2021). The impacts of the pandemic on this business are still continuous due to the long-term effect of the pandemic on the retail industry. In this research, the impacts of COVID-19 On this organisation will be explored and analyse to outline the long-term changes of the retail industry and the organisation.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 COVID-19**

COVID-19 Is a transferable Virus that was introduced in Wuhan, China in 2019. The virus can drag human being to death with different kinds of symptoms and health conditions (Grønbjerg, McAvoy and Habecker, 2021). The virus started to spread very fast which took away the life of huge people in the last two years. This issue has been announced as a global pandemic which alerted people and organisations of all over the world (Collings et al., 2021). The organisations were bound to stop the operational activities which caused different problems in the business including economic loss and employee turnover that has impacted the business for a long time in terms of the quality of the products and services.

#### **2.2 Impacts of COVID-19**

This pandemic has created different problems in the world in different sectors. The impacts of this pandemic are mostly negative on different sectors of life of people. The impacts of COVID-19 are given below:

##### **Restrictions on movement**

If the virus is transferable, the government and different local authorities of the regions within the world-imposed restrictions on the movement of people to move here and there and outside the area which created problems in different sectors of people's life (Hall et al., 2020). Terms of earning a livelihood and collecting the required products and services for daily activities had been hindered by this process which is the most devastating impact of the pandemic.

##### **Shift in demand**

The demands of customers are different products and services in the world reduced due to the unavailability of income which impacted negatively different business organisations and the lifestyle of people at the same time (Kazancoglu and Demir, 2021).

##### **Loss in the businesses**

Business organisations could not be the expected profit due to the reduced number of customers and the distractions of export and import due to the pandemic. The restrictions developed by the government of different countries hindered people to move for business which impacted negatively on the development and growth of business organisations (Kohli et al., 2020).

##### **Loss of life**

Due to the pandemic, huge number of people lost their lives which is the most dangerous impact of the pandemic. As it was not possible to find out the remedy of this health issues medical sector of the world failed to help the people to survive in the first stage of the pandemic (Kotb, 2020).

### **Employee turnover**

Organisations all around the world faced large number of employee turnover due to the pandemic as the organisations could not pay the exact salary to the employees which made them dissatisfied and reduced in the lifestyle which motivated the employees to leave the job (Burt and Maglaras, 2022). On the other hand, some organisations cut off the employees due to their vulnerable economic situation to reduce the cost and make some profit (Albani, 2012). This reduced the quality of the organisation which is stationing within the industry

## **2.3 Retail Industry**

This category of businesses sells goods and products directly to clients in small quantities. The majority of the organisations are sizable, have many stores on their own proper and sell their goods there. To service the essential clientele, these sorts of businesses have a variety of items accessible (Lee, 2021). The companies' wide range of goods entices clients to buy the items they need every day. A variety of services are also offered by the organisations, including home delivery, easy delivery, online services, offline services, etc. To meet the needs and desires of the clients, the organisations are accessible 24/7, everywhere (Loske, 2020).

## **2.4 Impact of COVID-19 on retail organisations**

Both online and offline, retail businesses provide the necessary goods and services to their clients. However, businesses weren't yet accustomed to using internet services. The implementation of COVID-19 taught organisations how to take use of internet platforms to gain efficiency and carry on business successfully (Dannenberg et al., 2020). To lower the number of COVID infections during the epidemic, rigorous guidelines were put in place that restricted people's ability to leave their homes. Because of this, clients of retail businesses were unable to pick up the necessary facilities from the businesses themselves (Maitlo et al., 2019). On the other side, the companies found it difficult to continue their activities because the organisations were unable to open the store on this vantage point, the organisations developed the notion to change. With this choice, social media really aid the company. This is because the company distributed marketing materials on social media to reach the widest audience possible. Online ordering has been used by businesses to deliver goods to customers' homes without interacting with them (Majic and Majic, 2011). The

global pandemic Covid-19 has caused losses in practically every business in the USA, according to the experts. Additionally, African American businesses had to experience a 41 percent decrease in their commercial activity. According to some academics, the GDP of rich and developing nations declined by around 1.8% and 2.5%, respectively (Goswami and Chouhan, 2021). Research of the effects of the world pandemic according to Covid-19 on commerce, merchants had to deal with a variety of immediate challenges in areas including workforce, supply chain, consumer demand, revenue, health and safety, etc. (Mitchell et al., 2020). One analysis of the effects of the worldwide pandemic when it comes to start-ups or new businesses, Covid-19 on entrepreneurship said that even if there is inadvertent harm done to the business, innovation, and growth in order to reduce financial losses and provide clients with the necessary amenities conveniently, this helped the organisations continue operating unhindered. The impacts of COVID-19 on the retail organisation are huge (Grønbjerg, McAvoy and Habecker, 2021). The business organisations of retail industry needed to cope up with several problems during the pandemic and after the pandemic as well. Some of those impacts are discussed below:

### **Reduction in sale**

Due to the restrictions on the customers to move around in different places due to the COVID which reduced the sale of the organisations drastically that impacted on the business negatively (Kazancoglu and Demir, 2021). In terms of developing the business growth, the organisations faced several issues as the sales were down and the demands of the retail products and services were also low due to the lack of income and revenue. This also impacted negatively on the profit of the organisation (Mneney and Van Belle, 2016).

### **Reduction of salary of the employees**

The salary of the employees' decreased during the pandemic as the organisations could not get the required revenue to serve the employees properly. On the other hand, the maintenance cost was the same during the pandemic. For this reason, the employees got less amount than their regular salary. Government of the UK gave a letter to the retail industry to reduce the use of electricity, energy and power to reduce the cost of the organisations to balance the cost and revenue (Alok Sharma, 2020).

### **Employee turnover**

Organisations failed to serve the customers effectively due to the restrictions of COVID-19 that reduced the revenue of retail, the organisations failed to serve the employees with their required

facilities and other resources (Hall et al., 2020). By this way, the employees felt demotivated and left the job which caused employee turnover. On the other hand, the organisations during the pandemic tried to reduce their cost to minimise the loss by reducing employees. This also caused employee turnover. This impacted on the brand image and the quality of services of the retail organisations (Collings et al., 2021). This is still impacting on the service and quality of the retail businesses around the world.

### **Increased use of technology**

Due to the pandemic, the organisations could not serve the customers with the help of festival services for which organisations started to use online business and the employees were required to perform within home office who is needed the use of modern technology and other resources of digital elements does helped help the organisation to increase the speed and productivity of the business effectively (Schleper et al., 2021). In this way, organisations increased the use of technology and enhanced the capability of the organisation by using digital technology (Kohli et al., 2020). Although there were some problems in adapting the use of digital technology within the organisation, it held the organisation in the long run to improve its capability and enhanced productivity in the long run effectively.

### **Reduced brand image**

Due to the lack of quality products and services for the reason of the pandemic and for the impacts of different factors, the brand image and reputation of the organisation reduced in the long run this negative e impact on the business growth and the image of the business which is hindering the organisations to develop the business and enhance the growth (Albani, 2012).

## **2.5 Impacts of COVID 19 on the profitability and performance**

Due to the worldwide pandemic's emergence, the social, economic, political, and environmental aspects of every economy have suffered. This head effected negatively on the productivity end performance level of the organisations which has created a negative impact on the brand image stop the detail organisations (Goswami and Chouhan, 2021). To gain a better understanding of the topic, researchers have examined these effects across a variety of businesses. Numerous researchers have suggested that multinational corporations suffered significant losses as a result of the pandemic (Opute et al., 2020).

## **2.6 Comparing the before and after Pandemic scenario in the performance level of retail organisations**

There are huge differences in the performance and productivity level in the retail organisations due to the pandemic. The pandemic changed the overall scenario of the business organisations due to different changes during the pandemic (Dannenberg et al., 2020). Before the pandemic, the retail organisations used to develop direct communication with the customers within the organisations to know the requirements and demands of the customers along with the feedback to design and deliver the products and services as part the requirements of all the customers (Hall et al., 2020). But during the pandemic the organisations failed to develop face to face communication with customers which hindered the organisations to collect information about the demands and requirements all the customers (Albani, 2012). This created problem for the retail organisations to know the perception and demands of the customers the organisation and design their services and products to serve the customers accordingly during and after the pandemic.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Philosophy**

The global crisis in the apparel and retail industries brought on by the pandemic Covid-19 has been taken into consideration while choosing the study topic "The Impact of Covid-19 on Guess In the UK." The current state of the garment sector is not very promising, as the majority of its companies have suffered greatly as a result of the global pandemic (Watson, 2015). Given that Guess Inc. is a well-known company in the apparel sector on a worldwide scale, the pandemic has also impacted the company. This study will help in the analysis of the pandemic's impact on the company's operations in the UK and the ups and downs the company has experienced since the pandemic's onset in the UK market.

#### **3.2 Research Paradigm**

This paper's study question is to ascertain the effects of the worldwide Covid-19 epidemic on the chosen company, Guess Inc. Different studies have been carried out in numerous nations to assess the influence on the economic and social sectors of an economy since the start of the worldwide pandemic. Every country's clothes and retail industries have been adversely impacted by the epidemic (Bloomfield and Fisher, 2019). The pandemic has had a detrimental effect on the garment industry's overall development, profitability, and performance, according to the research that is now available. But since 2020, this industry's internet and e-commerce services have increased. Numerous studies demonstrate that the Covid-19 required businesses in a wide range of industries to alter their value chains and other managerial practices, and that this had a negative impact on both the workers and the businesses themselves (Goertzen, 2017). The majority of studies demonstrate that the worldwide pandemic Covid-19 significantly harmed the apparel and other retail industries, and businesses throughout the world are currently paying the price for those losses.

#### **3.3 Research Approach**

In doing research for this study, a quantitative technique will be used. This technique is necessary for the study issue chosen for this article since none of the effects of the worldwide pandemic on the company of choice can be measured in terms of cash flow or profitability (Guo, 2013). The quantitative approach of research helped the research to present data and information with proper

numerical data and information to find out the exact situation of the organisation due to the pandemic.

### **3.4 Research Methodology**

The statistical methodology used in this essay will be used to assess the quantitative effects of the Covid-19 worldwide epidemic on the chosen company. The data of the chosen organisation will be represented using descriptive statistics as well as a variety of graphs and charts (Snyder, 2019). The chosen firm's before- and after-pandemic scenarios will be evaluated using a comparison methodology. In this study, the policy and administrative changes brought about by Covid-19 will also be examined.

### **3.5 Research Strategy**

In order to visualise the various effects of the global pandemic on the chosen firm, the research strategy for this paper will also involve gathering information and data about the global pandemic Covid-19's effects on the UK clothing industry. The gathered information will be analysed and presented in a suitable way to help infer specific conclusions about the study's subject (Ørngreen and Levinsen, 2017). The research has used both primary and secondary data to develop the idea and result of the research for enhancing the effectiveness of the research and get the outcome more easily from small efforts.

### **3.6 Sampling Methods**

Only one organisation, Guess Inc., is included in the sample size of the study. Due to the company's local and international influence on the clothes and retail industries, it has been chosen as the research's primary subject. Twenty surveys will be collected from the other employees of this brunch, along with six interviews with the management team of one of Guess' brunch locations in Knightsbridge, London. A questionnaire with the help of 8 multiple questions has been developed to collect data from the samples of the research. The employees of Guess Inc. have helped in this regard to collect data and information about the research (Chawla and Sodhi, 2011).

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

The necessary information will be gathered from a range of primary and secondary sources. Interviews and questionnaires will be used to gather the main data sources. There will be a variety of secondary sources consulted, including GUESS Inc.'s financial statements, news releases, research papers, books, articles, websites, etc. (Guo, 2013). Both the main data and the secondary data will be helpful in evaluating the position of the firm before and after the worldwide pandemic

crisis as the influence of Covid-19 on the performance of Guess Inc. will be examined. Primary data of this research has been collected from the selected samples from Guess and the secondary data has been collected from different online sources about the organisation.

### **3.8 Interpretation of Data**

In this article, the gathered data will be evaluated and interpreted to make conclusions about the study issue. Various sources will be used for the interpretation of the analysis that will be done in this study (Goertzen, 2017). To analyse the outcomes or study findings from the analysis, graphical tools like charts and correct methodologies will be required. The graphical representation has helped the research to develop data and information with the help of proper presentation and data interpretation.

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration of the Research**

This research has been developed with the help of proper ethical consideration and maintaining authentic data and information. The following ethical concerns will be taken into account when this work is being written:

- The data and information used in this paper will only be used for scholarly reasons.
- The secondary data and material that will be used in this study will be properly referenced and cited (Watson, 2015).
- No harm will be done to the paper's readers as a result of the research findings.
- No information that may be used to identify an individual will be gathered for this publication.
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has been followed to collect and record data for proper protection of data and the respondents.

### **3.10 Limitations of the Methodology**

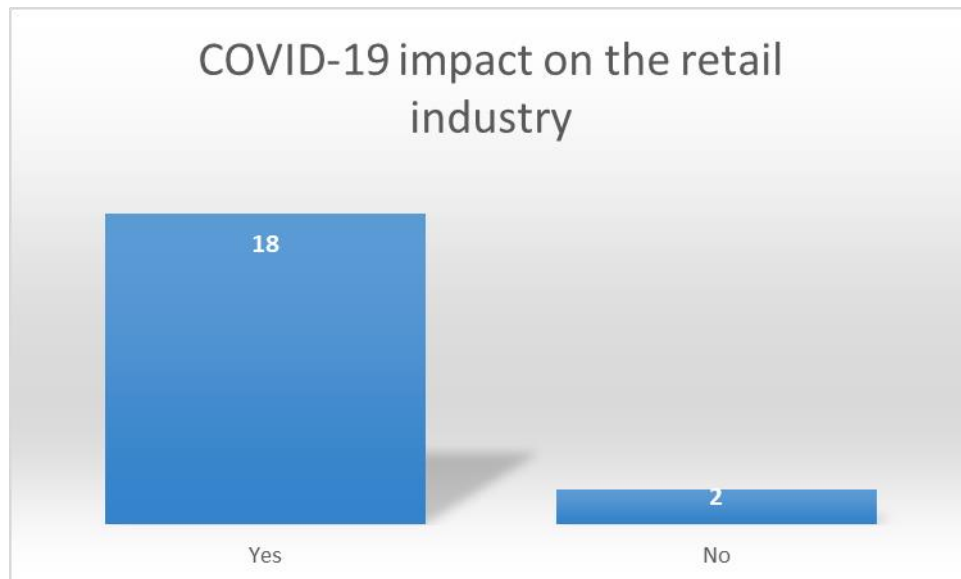
The research had some limitations in terms of the methodology. Some of them are:

- Lack of time to collect data hindered the research to accomplish the research with proper data and information (Bloomfield and Fisher, 2019).
- Privacy policy of the organisation limited the data collection process to present the required data in the research.

## Chapter Four

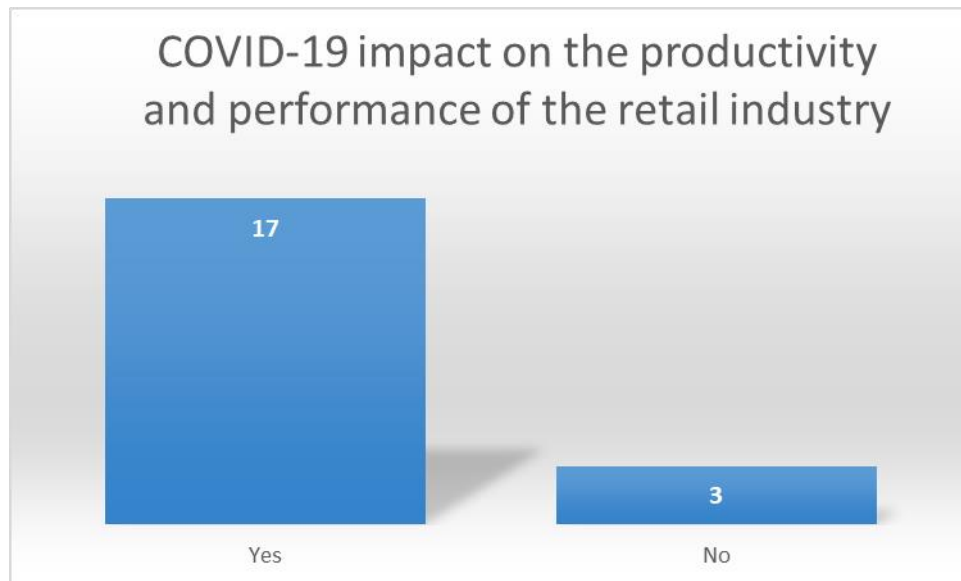
### Key Findings and Discussion

This research has been developed to identify the impacts of COVID-19 on the retail organisation, especially on Guess. American apparel and leisure company Guess Inc. sells clothing for men, women, and athletes as well as jewellery, fragrances, purses, watches, and other trendy accessories. The US Company Guess Inc. was established by Georges Marciano, Maurice Marciano, Paul Marciano, and Armand Marciano in 1981. As of 2020, Guess Inc. operates in almost 100 different nations and has 1,169 directly run stores in the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Additionally, Guess Inc. has 560 additional locations run by its distributors and partners. Data has been collected with the help of both interviews and surveys from the employees of Guess Inc. Collected data of the research has been presented in this section.

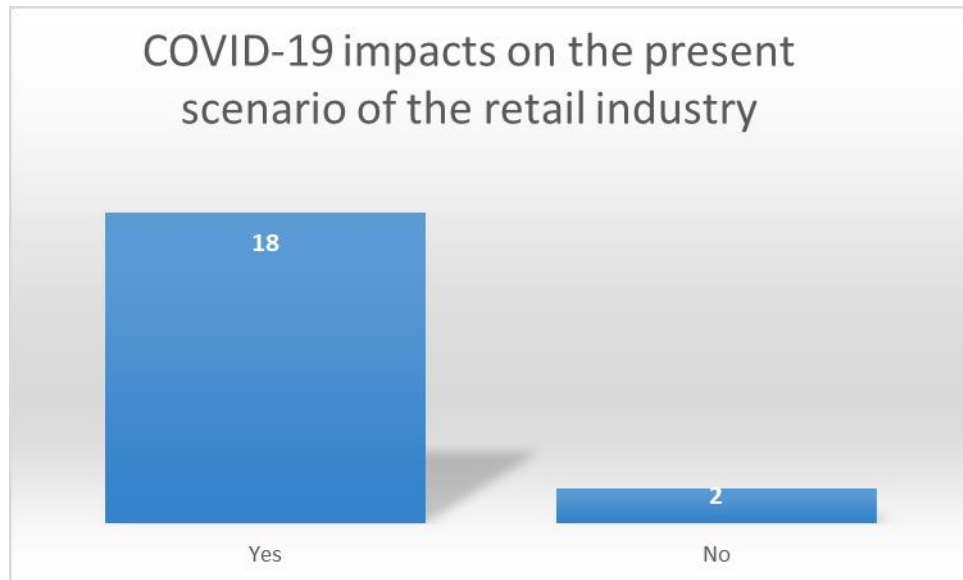


COVID-19 has intense impacts on all organisations in the world which is also the same for the s Inc. The respondents of the research were asked about their perceptions regarding the impact of the pandemic on the organisation. 18 respondents among 20 replied positively which means the pandemic has impact on the retail organisation. On the other hand, only 2 respondents of the research said no about the issue. So, it can be said that COVID-19 has impacts on the retail industry. The retail organisations faced different problems including a reduction in sales and reduced brand image. Due to the restrictions during COVID-19 to move anywhere, the customers of Guess could not move outside and collect the required products from the organisation. In the

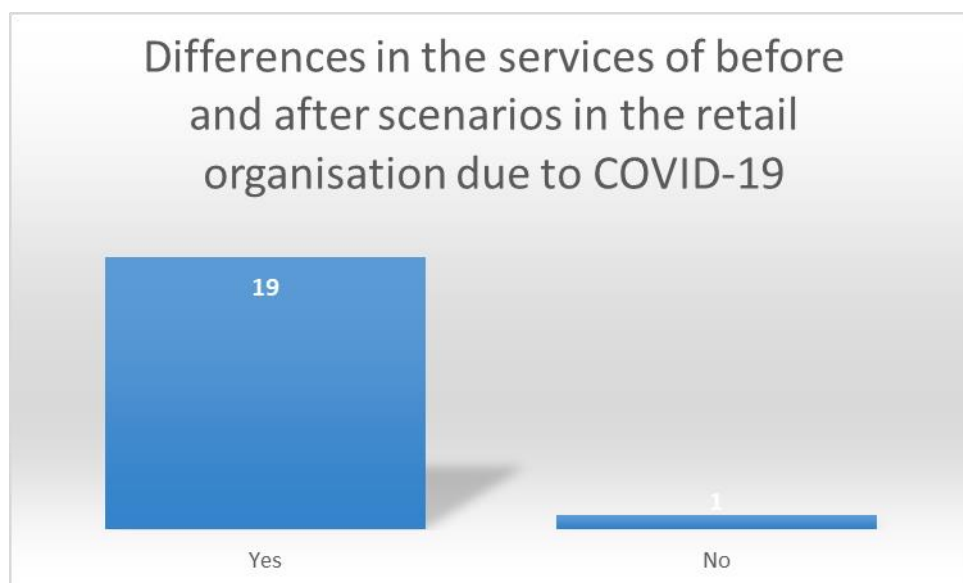
retail industry, the organisations faced several problems which is proved through the survey as maximum respondents replied positively with the question.



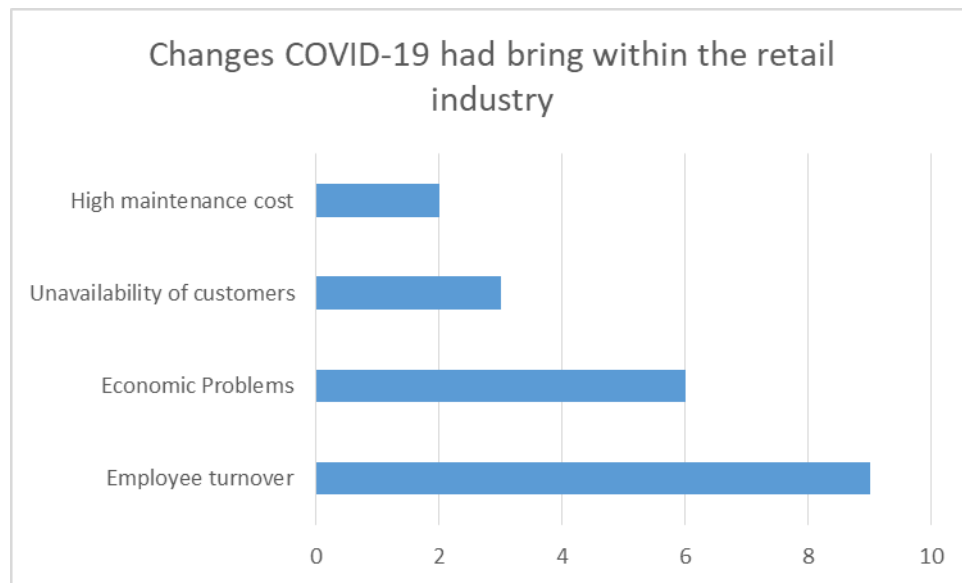
The performance and productivity level of retail organisations have been degraded according to the research. 17 respondents among 20 said that there is impacts of COVID-19 on the productivity and performance level of the retail industry. On the other hand, only 3 employees said no about the issue. So, it is proven that, the pandemic has impacts on the retail organisation so as on Guess Inc. Different issues increased due to the introduction of the pandemic. Employee turnover is one of the significant changes that occurred within Guess. This issue caused problem within Guess as the productivity and performance of the organisation reduced due to the lack of experienced employees of this large retail organisation. It is proved that; the organisation faced the reduction of productivity and performance due to the pandemic. Different reasons were behind this including high employee turnover, reduced sales and high maintenance cost.



The present scenario of Guess Inc. is different from the previous scenario according to the research as 18 respondents of the research said yes about the change in the present scenario whereas only 2 employees said no about this. So, the present scenario is different due to the impacts on COVID-19 on the organisation and the operations. In the present scenario, different changes occurred within the organisation due to the pandemic. The organisation faced different issues including reduction in the sales, employee management issue, high cost and less revenue. The impacts are still irritating the operations and performances of the organisation. For this reason, maximum respondents from the organisation said yes about the impacts of COVID-19 on the present scenario within the organisation. The result of this question represents the scenario properly.



The service quality and process of the retail organisations have changed due to the presence of COVID-19 which is also the same for Guess Inc. 19 employees of the organisation agreed with this fact whereas only 1 respondent denied it. So, there is differences according to the results of the research. Due to the created problems within the pandemic, the organisation is facing lots of differences in the operations and sales. The changes are mostly negative. The outcome of this question proved that huge changes are available in the present situation within the organisation due to the pandemic that is still creating problems within the organisation.



There are different changes those have come due to pandemic within Guess Inc. According to the employees, employee turnover is the most significant change that has come within the organisation as 9 employees replied with this option. On the other hand, there are some other changes as well according to the employees such as high maintenance cost, unavailability of customers and economic issues within the business. Different changes have been occurred within the organisation due to the pandemic. According to the respondents, employee turnover is the highest issue that has heated the organisation and the outcomes of the organisation. Economic issue is another problem that impacted on the overall financial condition of the organisation. On the other hand, high maintenance cost and unavailability of customers are other issues those have less impact but created different issues for the organisation according to the result of the research.

6 interviews had been taken with the employees of Guess Inc. for developing the research and finding out effective results of the research. The findings of the interview are presented below:

One of the employees of Guess Inc. was asked about the changes within the organisation due to the pandemic. In reply, he said that,

*“Guess Corporation, one of the most well-known apparel brands in America and a retailer, has had a variety of issues with sales, profits, a decline in demand, and staff turnover as a result of the pandemic, which has decreased the calibre of its operations. Due to the pandemic's lasting effects on the retail industry, the effects of the epidemic on this company are still being felt.”*

Another employee of the organisation also opined as the following statement regarding the issue of COVID-19 in the retail organisation,

*“We, the employees of Guess Inc. were satisfied with the incentives and benefits that the organisation used to provide to employees. But the presence of pandemics changed the scenario of the employee management of the organisation. The organisation started to cut off employees according to the reduction of profit. On the other hand, they got half their salary during the pandemic which demotivated the employees. For this reason, the efficient employees left their job and searched for better options. On the other hand, the organisation also sacked some employees to manage the cost. This overall employee turnover situation within the pandemic has affected negatively on the business process and service quality.”*

The organisation is still facing the problems of this issue. The organisation is failing to serve the exact quality of service that it could serve before the pandemic. So, the customers are finding out the huge difference in the product and service quality of the organisation. The customers are becoming dissatisfied day by day which is reducing the number of customers and the brand image is hampering day by day as well. On the other hand, the organisation is facing huge changes within the service delivery process in recent times due to the lack of experienced employees who would understand the organisation the best. This is hampering the business quality, productivity and performance. The overall business situation has changed due to the introduction of pandemic and the long-term changes and impacts due to the pandemic. Guess Inc. needs to take effective actions to recover the issues aroused due to the COVID-19.

The performance and profitability of Guess reduced a large extent due to the pandemic which continued in the long run for several reasons. There are different impacts of COVID-19 on the performance level and productivity range of the retail organisation that are discussed in this

section. The performance level and productivity of Guess reduced as the employees who are expert in the organisation left their job. New employees within the organisation and lack of exact number of employees with independent could not serve the demand of the customers with proper quality products and services. By this type of reduction in the quality of performance the productivity also reduced within Guess which created problem in many ways. The organisation is still facing problem in recovering the quality control process as the experienced workers left their job or the organisation cut off them for the reduction of cost. On the other hand, the reduction in the quality of performance also reduced the productivity of the organisation which hampered the brand image and quality of services of the organisation. On the other hand, the employees of Guess started to work from home during the pandemic for reducing the chance of getting infected by the virus which also reduced the performance level and productivity of the organisation. The employees could not manage their family time and work time properly which created mismanagement and lack of productivity within Guess. The consequences of the worldwide pandemic on several facets of the economy and social life have been the subject of numerous studies that have been carried out all across the world. One of the primary causes is that these corporations heavily relied on raw materials from other nations, and since communication between nations was cut off as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak, the corporations were unable to manage and maintain their inventory and production level. Additionally, Guess had to deal with declining worldwide market shares. In terms of serving the customers, the organisations could not develop direct communication who is created problem for organisation which caused problem for the long term in the retail organisations. Quality services and proper products are they important resources of Guess. The organisation failed to develop and serve the customers with quality products and services for many issues during the pandemic. For this reason, the organisations faced different negative issues during the pandemic and also facing after the recovery of the pandemic as well. The performance level and productivity of the retail organisations changed drastically due to the presence of COVID-19. The effectiveness and the service quality of the retail organisations reduced drastically due to lack of economic stability, unavailability of efficient and expert employees and reduced demands of customers. The organisation is facing huge loss due to the reduction of brand image in this regard. So, there is high level of changes in the performance and productivity of retail organisation due to the pandemic and the impacts of COVID-19.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

One of the biggest industries in the UK, both nationally and internationally, has been retail. One of the main earning sectors in the UK economy and one that accounts for a sizable portion of the worldwide market is the retail business. The retail sector in the UK is particularly diverse since it offers a wide range of goods and services, including food, clothes, sportswear, home essentials, electronics, and other items. The UK has more than 300,000 enterprises in the retail sector, which accounts for over 3 million employment, or approximately 8% of all occupations in the country. As of 2021, it is estimated that retail sales would be valued £465 billion. The pandemic Covid-19 has spread over the world as of the year 2020 (Collings et al., 2021). Immediately after the year 2020 was declared, this epidemic assumed a worldwide shape and caused enormous difficulty for the whole planet. The economic, social, political, and administrative facets of practically every nation in the globe have all been badly impacted by this pandemic. The epidemic has had a significant negative impact on the world's economy, and one of the many industries affected is the clothes and retail sector. The worldwide clothes and retail industry have experienced a dramatic decline in revenues, profitability, etc. (Dannenberg et al., 2020). Many businesses throughout the world were forced to permanently cease operations, and this industry, like many others, was forced to lay off thousands of workers. The epidemic has significantly reduced the local and worldwide market share of the UK garment sector, one of the top industries. One of the top retail companies in the UK is Guess Inc.; for the sake of this essay, the case of Guess Inc. will be taken into consideration. Guess Inc. experienced large losses and had to make a number of modifications to its business practices, much like other companies in this sector. The incentives and perks that Guess Inc. used to offer its staff members were acceptable in the eyes of the workforce. However, the presence of pandemics altered the organization's personnel management situation. In response to a drop-in profit, the organisation began to lay off workers. However, they only received half of their pay during the pandemic, which demoralised the workers. Because of this, the productive workers quit their jobs and looked for better opportunities. However, in order to control costs, the organisation also let go of certain personnel. The pandemic's high total personnel turnover has a severe impact on the efficiency of corporate operations and the level of customer service. The organisation is still having issues with this situation. The organisation is not providing the exact

level of service that it was capable of providing before to the epidemic. Customers are now becoming aware of the significant differences in the organization's product and service quality. The number of consumers is declining daily due to growing customer dissatisfaction, and the brand's reputation is deteriorating at the same time (Albani, 2012). On the other hand, the organisation has recently witnessed significant changes in the way services are delivered as a result of a lack of experienced workers who would best understand the organisation. This is impairing the performance, quality, and productivity of the firm. Due to the pandemic's introduction and its long-term effects, the general business environment has changed. Guess Inc. must take decisive measures to resolve the problems caused by COVID-19. Some recommendations to improve the condition of Guess Inc. are discussed below:

- The organisation can hire efficient and expert employees for the operational activities to improve the service quality and enhance the facilities of the business to attract customers.
- The adoption of effective marketing policies along with proper promotional tools can help the business to attract the customers and improve the brand image of the organisation.
- The business can develop effective strategies to deliver more effective quality services to the customers those can motivate the customers to grab the services.
- The organisation must improve the quality of products for the development of the attention of the customers.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire

1. Did COVID-19 impact on the retail industry?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
2. Do you think COVID-19 has any impact on the productivity and performance of the retail industry?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
3. What changes COVID-19 had bring within the retail industry?
  - a. Employee turnover
  - b. Economic problems
  - c. Unavailability of customers
  - d. High maintenance cost
4. Does COVID-19 contain any impacts on the present scenario of the retail industry?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
5. Which factor impacted the most on the workers of retail industry due to COVID-19?
  - a. Lack of customers
  - b. Inability to open the services
  - c. Cutting of salary
  - d. Reduced demand of the services
6. What is the most positive impact of COVID-19 on the retail industry?
  - a. Less use of energy and resources
  - b. Environmental preservation
  - c. Less maintenance cost
  - d. Break from work
  - e. Use of technology more
7. How retail industry is trying to recover the problems of COVID-19 on the business?
  - a. By appointing efficient employees
  - b. By improving the service
  - c. By ensuring health safety
  - d. By raising awareness
8. Are there any differences in the services of before and after scenarios in the retail organisation due to COVID-19?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

## Participation Consent Form



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Rhif Adnabod Cyfranogwr:

Participant Identification Number:

| FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD          | PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Teitl Y Prosiect: / Project Title:     |                            |
| Enw'r Ymchwilydd / Name of Researcher: |                            |

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |           |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1                   | I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated _____ for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. |           |
| 2                   | I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.                                                                                             |           |
| 3                   | I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team.                                                                                       |           |
| 4                   | I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations.                                                                                                                               |           |
| 5                   | I agree to take part in the above study.                                                                                                                                                                           |           |
| Name of Participant |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Signature |
| Researcher          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Signature |



You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. If you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every

You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. If you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. If you prefer anonymity, there will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of this or any interview. No one will hear any audiotapes or see any transcripts without your prior consent. All materials generated from this or any interview will remain confidential.

When completed please return in the envelope provided. One copy will be given to you and the original to be kept on the file of the research team at:

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