

Exploring the post-COVID lipstick effect: a short report

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Abstract

The ‘lipstick effect’ has been referred to as increased sales of beauty products post-crisis. The phenomenon happened after the Great Recession of 2007-2009 and even after the Great Depression of the 1930s. To date, no research focused on studying the post-Covid lipstick effect. Our study aimed to explore and quantify the post-Covid lipstick effect, with three studies exploring the long impact of the pandemic on clothing and beauty practices. Using qualitative analysis, Study 1 showed an impact of the first two lockdowns on fashion and beauty practices in women but not in men. Female students spent considerable time exploring their relationship with fashion and beauty products with a link to self-identity, while male students did not change their fashion and beauty practices. Our Study 2 showed that female participants chose a more vivid and wider range of colours since the Covid pandemic. Our Study 3 highlighted that female participants used a lower quantity with less frequent makeup since Covid. Our report highlighted, for the first time, a specific lipstick effect post-Covid, namely the ‘self-centred lipstick effect’.

Keywords. Fashion marketing, Consumer behaviour, Covid crisis, Lipstick effect, Self-identity