# Business Recovery and Sustainability at Lidl After COVID-19

Posted on November 4, 2026

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## Introduction

The global COVID-19 pandemic has left a profound impact on numerous businesses across the world. In response to the spread of the pandemic, firms have been compelled to devise innovative strategies to address the multifaceted challenges encompassing socioeconomics, culture, and health crises (Kaur, 2020). An equally pressing concern for corporations is charting their course for the future. While the pandemic's effects on businesses have varied due to a myriad of social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors, drawing insights from successful enterprises offers valuable lessons for policymakers and business leaders seeking innovative and effective strategies to mitigate the pandemic's adverse effects on their operations (Turner and Akinremi, 2020).

The influence of the COVID-19 pandemic extends to a multitude of industries worldwide, including the UK retail sector. Measures such as lockdowns, social distancing, and reduced consumer spending, which were implemented to contain the virus's spread, have significantly impacted the operational and financial performance of retail businesses (Burt and Sparks, 2020). Consequently, comprehending recovery and sustainability plans for businesses in the post-COVID-19 era has become imperative, especially for companies like Lidl within the UK retail industry.

The COVID-19 pandemic, stemming from the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, emerged towards the end of 2019 and swiftly disseminated globally, precipitating substantial ramifications on both health and the economy. In response to this crisis, the UK government enforced a series of restrictions, encompassing business closures, reduced operating hours, and social distancing measures (Smith, 2020). These actions have exerted a profound influence on the UK retail sector, molding consumer behavior, causing disruptions in the supply chain, and affecting financial performance.

The COVID-19 epidemic has unleashed an unparalleled economic and societal catastrophe (Méndez, 2020; Harvey, 2020), underscoring concerns that had been foreseen at the outset of the twenty-first century, highlighting the vulnerability of contemporary capitalism and the persistent challenges of globalization. Notably, the economic consequences of COVID-19 have been substantial. In the early stages of the crisis, as COVID-19 cases surged, major stock exchanges, including the FTSE, Dow Jones Industrial Average, and Nikkei, witnessed significant declines in their values (BBC News, January 2021). The year 2020 witnessed a record-breaking decline in GDP. To address the economic

challenges, central banks maintained historically low interest rates to facilitate economic recovery (Bloomberg, January 2021), and governments enacted substantial stimulus packages to aid severely impacted sectors such as retail, travel, hospitality, and tourism. In the United States, individuals who had lost their livelihoods due to the coronavirus outbreak also received stimulus grants (New York Times, 2021).

## Research Aim

The present study aims to investigate the business recovery and sustainability strategies in the UK retail industry after COVID-19, using Lidl stores as a case study.

## Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

What effect has COVID-19 had on Lidl's business operations and financial performance in the UK retail industry?

What sustainability strategies have helped the UK retail industry and Lidl stores post-COVID-19?

## Research Objectives

To evaluate the effects of COVID-19 on Lidl's business practices and financial results within the UK retail industry.

To examine business resilience and sustainability strategies for Lidl and the wider UK retail sector.

To offer advice to Lidl and other retailers in the UK on how to implement successful business recovery plans for long-term success.

# Literature Review

The COVID-19 health crisis significantly affected trading conditions for businesses of all sizes worldwide (Roggeveen and Sethuraman, 2020). Its wider effects also disrupted local economies and communities. Lockdowns, border closures, social-distancing requirements, increased home working and shifts towards online shopping and service delivery changed everyday activities. Examples include click-and-collect, kerbside collection, home delivery, online meetings, consultations and classes. These changes affected both retail and consumer-service industries (Roggeveen and Sethuraman, 2020).

More information is available to consumers than ever before about brands, products, and companies

(Hagen et al., 2022), and they are more knowledgeable, have more options, and have higher expectations for individualised offerings, convenience, and the overall shopping and service experience (Paul and Rosenbaum, 2020). There is now a clear need for research to address both the problems and the tactics required by merchants and service businesses for survival and success in a world where people are "learning to live with the pandemic" (Beckers et al., 2021; Paul and Rosenbaum, 2020; Pantano et al., 2020).

Scholars have identified several themes from consumer and managerial perspectives: operating amid global and local uncertainty, responding to abrupt changes in demand such as panic buying and scarcity effects, understanding changing purchasing behaviour, and adapting access to services. Pantano et al. (2020) identify four areas for retail and consumer-service responses: agile retailing, retailers' changing social role, customer-centred approaches and digital communication.

As more employees continued to work from home and customers were forced into periods of lockdown, it became crucial for SME businesses to "pivot" their operations and adapt quickly regarding the delivery of goods and services (Beckers et al., 2021). The importance of retailing (in particular) in enabling consumers to obtain common home products and services was heightened when the shopping environment changed due to the earlier issues. In addition, many companies had to embrace new technologies to connect with their clients and customers through social media marketing and digital communications simultaneously (Salam et al., 2021).

Many companies could continue operating despite stringent lockdowns, requirements for working from home, and customer reluctance to visit physical business premises during various pandemic phases because of their ability to respond appropriately to these themes (Hagen et al., 2022). The competitiveness of the trading environment has been significantly impacted in Australia by shifting consumer demographics, shifting purchasing patterns, such as short-term panic buying and stock shortages, significant growth in online shopping, and the emergence of new technologies and digital marketing (Salam et al., 2021).

## Business Recovery Strategies

Numerous retail companies in the UK have undertaken several business recovery strategies post-COVID-19. These recovery and rebuilding initiatives were developed to accelerate digital transformation, which includes increasing e-commerce capabilities and fusing online and offline channels (Salam et al., 2021). Retailers have also focused on enhancing the customer experience through targeted advertising, reward schemes, and omnichannel fulfilment options to regain customers' confidence and loyalty (Salam et al., 2021). The omnichannel was found to satisfy customer preferences by combining online and offline channels to meet the needs of the consumers. With this method, businesses may reach clients through a variety of touchpoints while also enhancing ease and accessibility (Hagen et al., 2022). When a crisis like the COVID-19 outbreak strikes, resilience strategies are crucial in helping businesses recover. Likewise, product line diversification,

another recovery strategy for Lidl stores, has helped the businesses improve their inventory control and build robust supply chain networks (Hagen et al., 2022). These strategies help business owners adjust to shifting market conditions and reduce the likelihood of future disruptions.

## Business Sustainability

Sustainability concerns continuity, resilience and ongoing development. In retail, it involves maintaining a business's operations and capacity to develop (Park, 2019). Business continuity initially focuses on the resources and processes needed to sustain an operating model rather than on the model itself (Pizzi et al., 2021). Business survival therefore requires a holistic strategy that considers both the model and the elements supporting it (Barbosa et al., 2020). Wong and Ngai (2021) describe an approach that identifies potentially disruptive effects and develops resilience and response capabilities to protect stakeholders, brands, credibility and value-creating activities.

Business planning and development must account for unforeseen problems so that operations can continue fully or partially. An effective Business Continuity Management (BCM) programme is therefore important. Asriati et al. (2022) report that more than 50% of businesses without effective continuity strategies eventually fail following a major disruption. Continuity planning develops strategies, plans and alternative operating arrangements for activities whose interruption could produce severe losses. Its goal includes restoring critical processes (Asriati et al., 2022; Park, 2019). Risk management aligns these capabilities with potential threats and business priorities. Businesses of different sizes may be insufficiently prepared for events that interrupt operations for extended periods.

Documented disruptions show that inadequate preparation can cause substantial financial losses for individual businesses and entire sectors (Asriati et al., 2022; Wong and Ngai, 2021). Business continuity involves maintaining critical activities with the human, material and financial resources available during an adverse event. The theoretical discussion draws on functional analysis, which views society as interconnected components, Parsons' (1938) Theory of Action Systems and the adaptation-strategy concept discussed by Lages et al. (2008). Cultural adaptation is learned through the development and exchange of ideas and symbolic activity rather than inherited genetically. As technologies become integrated into businesses, continuity planning must address the associated risks and vulnerabilities. Identifying these challenges can help businesses operate more effectively (Asriati et al., 2022).

## Lidl in the UK Retail Industry

A case study on Lidl might reveal important details about the company's unique business recovery and sustainability strategies. This entails looking at Lidl's initiatives to increase its digital skills, enhance supply chain effectiveness and expand its e-commerce business (Asriati et al., 2022). Following COVID-19, Lidl stores in the UK have created unique business recovery and sustainability

strategies. The development of Lidl's online presence, which has included the introduction of an e-commerce platform and the fusion of online ordering and home delivery services, has been one important strategy (Lidl, 2023). By reducing its use of plastic packaging, increasing energy efficiency, and working with local British suppliers, Lidl has also prioritised sustainability measures (Lidl, 2023). Lidl also emphasises waste reduction, community involvement, and sustainable sourcing as part of their sustainability activities.

# Research Methodology

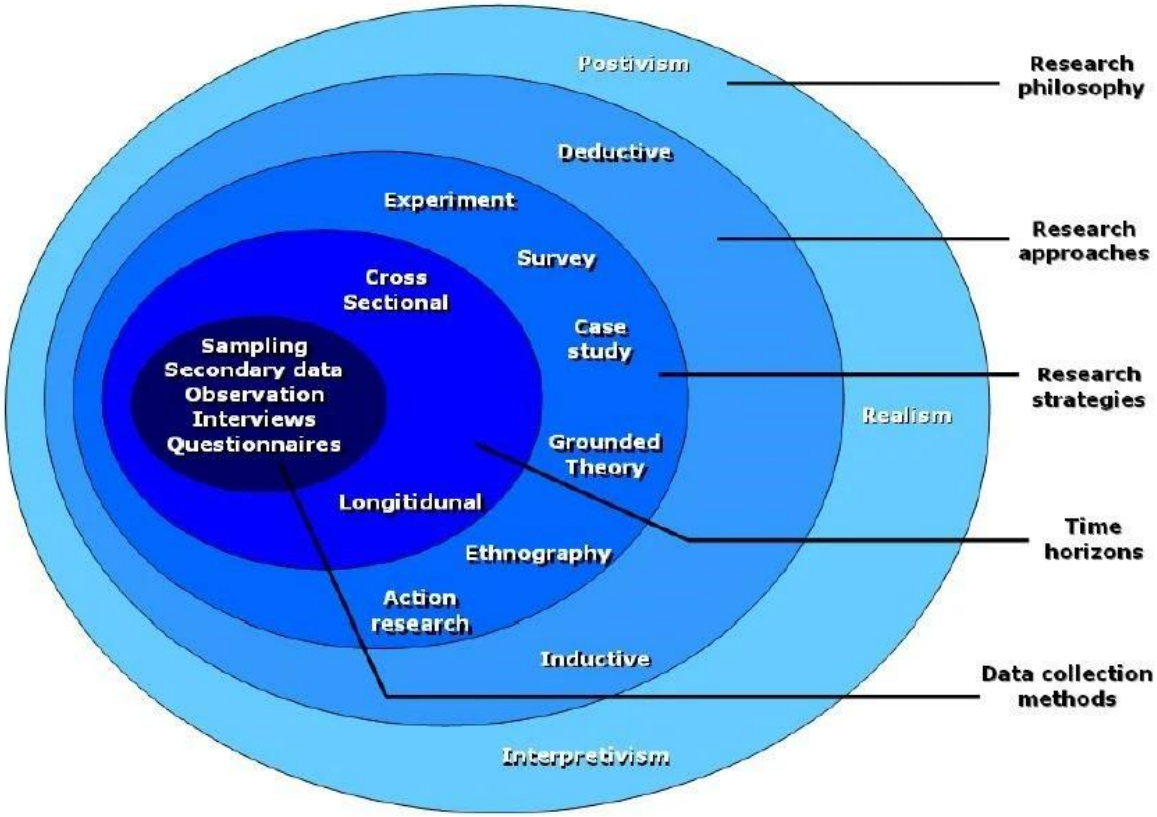



Figure 1: Onion Framework

The study uses secondary research and follows a document-based research process.

# Research Aim

The aim of the present study is to investigate the business recovery and sustainability strategies in the UK retail industry after COVID-19, using Lidl stores as a case study.

# Research Questions

The research questions are restated below to guide the methodological discussion:

What effect has COVID-19 had on Lidl's business operations and financial performance in the UK retail industry?

What are the sustainability strategies that have helped the UK retail industry and Lidl stores post-COVID-19?

# Research Objectives

To evaluate the effects of COVID-19 on Lidl's business practices and financial results within the UK retail industry.

To examine business resilience and sustainability strategies for Lidl and the wider UK retail sector.

To offer advice to Lidl and other retailers in the UK on how to implement successful business recovery plans for long-term success.

# Research Design

The study adopts a qualitative design based on secondary data. Qualitative research can provide "rich theoretical insights" into the subject under investigation (Graue, 2015). Ryan (2018) explains that it allows researchers to connect and develop information from existing knowledge. The sources used here include books, journals, public records, and technical and trade publications. Qualitative methods are widely used in market research and other academic fields (Graue, 2015). The study also uses descriptive case-study analysis to examine Lidl's recovery and sustainability strategies in detail.

# Research Philosophy

Positivism derives from the empiricist school of thought, which holds that hypotheses must be tested experimentally before being considered true. Ryan (2018) explained positivism to mean a scientific investigation of social phenomena in societies. Ryan (2018) goes on to assert that positivism upholds the idea of natural science, that there must be logical relationships both inside and amongst things, and that the overall purpose is always the discovery of relationships and the provision of scientific justification for them using logical techniques. This directs the researcher to make generalisations and laws based on recurrent statistical findings. Furthermore, the ultimate goal of positivism is the establishment of complete abstract laws that direct social behaviour in societies (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022). Further studies show that the positivism philosophy, which is founded on logical thinking and practical experience, makes the replication of data in research easier as well as more objective (Junjie

and Yingxin, 2022). Likewise, positivism enables it enables the researcher to quickly look at a variety of situations. But it's also important to consider the related constraints of positivism; for instance, positivism views experiences as a trustworthy source of knowledge. Likewise, the positivist research approach has the advantage of allowing the researcher to swiftly examine a wide range of circumstances (Ryan, 2018).

Interpretivism holds that people's understandings shape their experience of reality and that knowledge is not neutral with respect to values or theory. Its roots include phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Reality is understood as complex, variable and socially constructed; interpretations may differ according to historical and social circumstances. Advantages include attention to individual meanings, motivations and experiences, detailed qualitative understanding and investigation in natural settings (Ryan, 2018). Limitations include restricted generalisability and difficulties with replication under different conditions (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022). The report adopts positivism as its stated philosophical orientation while interpreting documentary evidence qualitatively.

## Research Approach

The recommended research approach includes inductive and deductive research approaches (Ruggiano and Perry, 2019). The deductive research approach analysis starts with theoretical hypotheses derived from a review of the literature, which are then applied to gathering and analysing data (Armat et al., 2018). Likewise, the attractiveness of deductive qualitative analysis is clear in its suggested usage, particularly in case studies research studies (Pearse, 2019). On the other hand, the inductive research method requires the usage of qualitative research methods like ethnography and case studies to answer several questions and detect different processes within the organisation (Pearse, 2019). Ultimately, the researcher employs the deductive research approach for the present study (Armat et al., 2018). The deductive approach is chosen with the goal of validating or refuting existing takes and theories related to the business recovery and sustainability strategies in the UK retail industry post-COVID-19 with the case study of Lidl stores.

## Data Collection

Data collection strongly influences research quality (Barrett and Twycross, 2018). The study uses an interpretive approach to examine existing material and understand actions and their consequences in the Lidl case. This approach relies on human understanding and interpretation of documented information (Mohajan, 2018).

A case-study approach supports examination of Lidl's recovery and sustainability strategies in the UK retail industry (Mohajan, 2018). It considers company-specific evidence such as financial outcomes, operational changes and strategic choices. The exploratory design aims to identify useful responses in an area where evidence is developing. Such work requires flexible analysis of the available qualitative

material (Mohajan, 2018).

## Data Sources

The study's evidence comes from secondary sources accessed through online library research and critical review of books, journal articles, research findings, conventions and laws. Surveys, questionnaires and focus-group experiments are considered through existing studies rather than conducted anew. Search platforms include Google Scholar and Sage Publications (Ruggiano and Perry, 2019).

## Time Horizon

The research focuses on material from 2022 to 2023 to examine recovery following the pandemic's effects on UK retailing and Lidl stores. This time horizon supports analysis of the recovery and sustainability strategies discussed in the report.

## Research Sampling and Sample Size Estimation

Several factors influence sample-size decisions in qualitative research, including the study's scope and purpose, the quality and amount of relevant information, and the point at which additional material no longer develops the analysis (Gill, 2020). Broader studies can require more time and evidence to reach saturation, while narrow sampling risks overlooking important aspects of the subject. The quality of underlying primary evidence also depends on collection methods and respondents' understanding of the research objectives (Shaheen and Pradhan, 2019). These considerations guide assessment of the secondary sources selected for the report.

In primary qualitative research, respondents' ability to reflect on their experiences and their familiarity with the subject affect data quality. Researchers should select suitable informants and consider further interviews when existing responses are insufficient. Observations may help address gaps, but potential bias requires attention (Shaheen and Pradhan, 2019). These principles inform the report's discussion of source quality and future research.

## Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis brings "order, structure and meaning" to collected information (Graue, 2015). This report analyses secondary material descriptively through content analysis. Its methodological discussion also considers documentary study, observations and semi-structured interviews as approaches found in the underlying literature. The analysis identifies relationships between categories and themes relevant to the research questions (Shaheen and Pradhan, 2019), requiring both care and flexibility in interpreting the available evidence.

# Research Findings

This section brings together secondary-source evidence relevant to the research questions. The analysis examines Lidl's business recovery initiatives and sustainability measures in the UK retail industry following COVID-19.

## Lidl Stores in the UK

The present study investigates the case study of Lidl, a German-based retail company in the UK. Lidl supermarket has been given the title of the fastest-growing supermarket, with 16.3% in sales in 2018 (Raj et al., 2022; Retail Insight Network, 2018). Lidl is a member of the Schwarz Unternehmens Treuhand KG company, which ranked sixth among the top 250 worldwide retailers in terms of sales growth in 2012 (Retail Insight Network, 2018). Lidl is a hard discounter highly feared by competitors, which went global for the first time in the 1990s (Grimmer, 2022; Lidl, 2023). As a result, Lidl's low pricing strategy draws customers from its home country and the nations where it operates, for instance, the UK. Presently, Lidl operates over 12,000 stores and employs more than 26,000 persons in the UK and over 376,000 people across 31 countries. Amidst the growth and expansion, Lidl has experienced major market setbacks. For instance, the company chose to leave Norway after less than four years there in 2008. A similar story was recorded in Lithuania in 2001 when Lidl only had a brief presence in the market (Retail Insight Network, 2018). Additionally, Sweden and the UK were difficult for the corporation to access, but in the following years, it boosted its market adoption to draw clients and grow its market shares. Lidl attracted customers' attention by running a TV ad in the UK to persuade them of the retailer's high-calibre goods (Grimmer, 2022; Retail Insight Network, 2018). Lidl has become globally known as a fiercely competitive retailer in the European Union for decades (Retail Insight Network, 2018).

Among other retail businesses, Lidl dominates the retail chains in the UK food retail sector. For Lidl, the company's focus is on offering the best pricing strategy while seeking to offer products that are set apart in terms of price, quality, product positions and communications like sustainable sourcing and monitoring (Raj et al., 2022; Asriati et al., 2022). For instance, the findings show that Lidl strongly emphasises low pricing of products compared to other retail companies in the industry, such as Waitrose and Marks & Spencer, which focus on upmarket quality. Post-COVID-19, Lidl retail stores in the UK have been found to focus more on sustainability and business recovery strategies, just like they do their low-pricing initiatives (Grimmer, 2022).

The review of secondary sources identifies several elements of Lidl's sustainability, business recovery and marketing approach following COVID-19. These are summarised below.

## Cost Reduction

The research findings show that Lidl's primary recovery and sustainability strategy is cost reduction or being a hard discounter. This allows the company to enjoy cost savings across multiple operating markets through the company's standardisation policies (Lidl, 2023). These policies or codes helped the researcher gather research findings that define the company's business recovery and sustainability strategy through price reduction.

## Competition

In the UK food retailing market, competition is high. Thus, Lidl must adjust its marketing strategies and business approach in the post-COVID-19 era to ensure it stays competitive in the market. Adjusting the company's strategies in a way adaptable to survive post-COVID-19 allows Lidl to progressively manage its business recovery and sustainability strategies effectively (Lidl, 2023; Grimmer, 2022).

## Performance

The findings from this research show that one of the primary goals of Lidl is to grow its customer base and increase its market share. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and post-COVID-19 period, Lidl's approach emphasised the ability to provide customers with the best quality products at competitive prices. This strategy was found to be adapted to the UK retail market and has proved effective in helping the company recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the market (Lidl, 2023; Asriati et al., 2022).

## Customer Focus

The findings from the research showed that Lidl is truly invested in its customers and thus focuses on meeting their needs. The research findings further showed that being customer-focused allowed the company to adapt its business recovery and sustainability strategies to benefit the customers (Lidl, 2023).

# Discussion

This section discusses the findings using the four components of the marketing mix: product, price, place and promotion.

## Product

The product section of the marketing mix as it relates to Lidl includes product range and cost reduction. In terms of cost reduction, this factor is promoted by the notion of almost identical selections across the UK. Private brands, name brands, and non-food goods are all represented by Lidl in the UK (Grimmer, 2022). Therefore, depending on the size of the Lidl shop, the product selection may fluctuate slightly. However, it remains mostly the same within a single nation (Lidl, 2023; Xia, 2023). Here, the standardisation strategy has been implemented in both markets, allowing the retailer to purchase goods in large quantities and offer them at lower prices in the store (Lidl, 2023). In addition, concerning product range, findings from the research show the customer portrait in the UK to always tag name brands like Lidl with high quality (Xia, 2023). Likewise, some customers in the UK mostly prefer private and home-based brands in the UK compared to German-based Lidl retail products (Balogh and Mizik, 2022; Xia, 2023).

## Price

The analysis of the price component considers the codes price-performance ratio, competition and market condition are evaluated as regards the research findings presented on Lidl retail stores (Lidl, 2023; Wichmann et al., 2022; Grimmer, 2022). The price-performance ratio means the pricing strategy of Lidl in the UK as compared to other global markets. Therefore, in terms of price-performance ratio and flexibility, Lidl seeks to undercut rival companies while maintaining a high-quality level (Asriati et al., 2022). In addition, when it comes to competition, this code is mostly assessed during pricing analysis in the marketing mix. It makes sense, given that Lidl's primary objective is to provide lower prices than its rival retailers. Lidl continuously monitors its rivals' actions and takes appropriate action. To remain competitive and keep customers from switching to rivals, Lidl adjusts its items at the same price or lowers it if a shop lowers its prices for a particular product (Wichmann et al., 2022). The highly concentrated retailing marketplace in the UK is a critical determinant of the company's pricing strategy and is thus relevant in this situation. Furthermore, the market condition is also a critical component that must be discussed (Balogh and Mizik, 2022). This is because Lidl in Germany differs from the Lidl in the UK. This means the company faces a different market condition in the UK compared to its parent country. Thus, due to this relatively more limited market experience, Lidl UK might experience some difficulty in lowering costs through long-established social ties (HR and Aithal, 2020).

## Place

By analysing the place component of the marketing mix, cost reduction and efficiency are evaluated as regards the research findings presented on Lidl retail stores (Xia, 2023). Lidl UK takes the matter of sustainability into account and also strives to give the best services to its customers at reduced costs (Grimmer, 2022; Xia, 2023). Furthermore, efficiency has developed as another code inside the place

analysis and is directly tied to cost reduction. Lidl makes shopping easier for its clients by placing its stores in easily accessible locations near or inside the centre or next to other merchants (Xia, 2023). This benefit will attract more consumers and boost the company's sales success. Based on the research findings, no distinction could be seen between the UK and other foreign markets where Lidl is operational. Thus, a conclusion can be given that consumers of Lidl are interested in quick shopping to save time and money (Grimmer, 2022; Xia, 2023).

## Promotion

To analyse the promotion category of the marketing mix, customer focus and cost reduction were critically assessed (Wichmann et al., 2022). From the research findings, Lidl is a company focused on delivering the best product quality to its customers (Asriati et al., 2022; Wichmann et al., 2022). Lidl strives to connect with consumers while marketing its groceries by attending to their demands in their native tongue and meeting their expectations about price or quality. Additionally, Lidl continuously promotes communication with its customers. Regarding cost reduction, Lidl in the UK sends clear messages which read, "Lidl is worth it" and "Good quality should not cost more" (Lidl, 2023). Therefore, the company's strategy ensures that these messages are communicated clearly through several channels. Likewise, Lidl supports the strategy of simplicity in advertising or promotion because too many messages can complicate things, and the company's goal is to help the customers get the company's core values without confusion (Lidl, 2023; Balogh and Mizik, 2022).

# Conclusion

The study examines the changes experienced by UK retailers after COVID-19, focusing on Lidl's business recovery and sustainability strategies. It discusses how retail approaches adapted to market disruption and changing consumer behaviour. The report describes increased reliance on online transactions and marketing, treating these changes as part of the transition from emergency responses to continuing business practices.

## Limitations

This exploratory study has several limitations. Its descriptive emphasis restricts its contribution to theory, and future work could apply a broader theoretical framework (Raj et al., 2022). Some underlying sources were produced during periods of business closures, restrictions, reduced trade and low response rates (Grimmer, 2022). The available time also favoured secondary qualitative analysis over new quantitative data collection. The selected time horizon limits how fully the study can assess the development of recovery and sustainability strategies (Asriati et al., 2022).

## Recommendations for Future Research

As businesses adjust to changed trading conditions, future studies could collect primary evidence from owners and managers in the UK and other markets (Asriati et al., 2022). Interviews could help compare experiences across different economies and communities. Follow-up research could also examine whether changes introduced during the pandemic have persisted and how they affect longer-term recovery.

# Reflection

## Motivation for Conducting the Research

The research project on “Strategies for Business Recovery and Sustainability Post-COVID-19 in the UK Retail Industry: A Case Study LIDL Stores” was motivated by the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses worldwide, including the UK retail industry. Understanding the experiences and strategies of retailers like Lidl and the potential long-term effects on consumer behaviour, supply chains, and business operations became imperative. The research process involved conducting a thorough literature review, identifying key themes and gaps, and developing a conceptual framework. Using qualitative data collection methods, the research argument was supported by evidence from scholarly sources, industry reports, and statistical data.

## Research Process and Quality of Research Argument

The project developed the researcher’s understanding of UK retail challenges and Lidl’s recovery strategies, alongside critical-thinking and analytical skills. Limited access to real-time evidence was a significant challenge, especially when assessing developments after the pandemic. Longitudinal research could capture how these strategies change over time.

## Problem Solving and Future Research

To address the challenges faced in the research, future work should incorporate more recent data and follow-up studies to track the long-term impacts of the pandemic on the UK retail industry and Lidl’s recovery efforts. A qualitative approach, such as in-depth interviews with retail executives and employees, could provide deeper insights into decision-making processes and experiences during the pandemic. Utilising real-time data sources and regularly monitoring industry reports and trends can provide up-to-date information on the retail industry’s recovery and sustainability progress.

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# Appendix Research Activity Plan

The following table presents the proposed research schedule. The planned activities are distinguished from the secondary evidence used in this report.

| Activities | Start Date | End Date |
|---|---|---|
| Literature Review | Week 1 | Week 2 |
| Data Collection | Week 2 | Week 4 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Data Analysis | Week 4 | Week 6 |
| Case Study Analysis | Week 6 | Week 8 |
| Comparative Analysis | Week 8 | Week 9 |
| Recommendations | Week 9 | Week 10 |
| Writing the Research Paper | Week 10 | Week 11 |
| Editing and Proofreading | Week 11 | Week 12 |
| Finalise Research Paper | Week 12 | Week 12 |

The 12-week activity plan is outlined below:

Week 1:

Commence literature review.

Identify pertinent sources and research articles.

Week 2:

Continue with the literature review.

Collect primary and secondary data.

Week 3:

Conclude the literature review.

Develop the research methodology.

Week 4:

Initiate data collection (via surveys, interviews, and observations).

Begin data analysis.

Week 5:

Proceed with data collection.

Analyze the collected data.

Week 6:

Complete data collection.

Perform case study analysis.

Week 7:

Analyze the findings from the case study.

Initiate comparative analysis.

Week 8:

Finish comparative analysis.

Commence crafting recommendations.

Week 9:

Finalize recommendations.

Start composing the research paper.

Week 10:

Continue writing the research paper.

Edit and proofread the initial draft.

Week 11:

Finalize the research paper writing.

Conduct a thorough editing and proofreading process.

Week 12:

Wrap up the research paper.

Submit the completed research paper.