

## A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

*Consumers play a vital role in the economic system of a nation. As they are considered as the nucleus of marketing process, the study of consumers behavior help to know about consumers, and the process they use to choose, consume, and dispose of products and services including consumers emotional, mental and behavior responses .The Covid 19 pandemic has permanently altered consumer's behaviors. In current marketing scenario the study of consumer behavior has become necessary. Covid 19 pandemic and the lock down and social distancing mandates have disrupting the consumer's habits of buying as well as shopping. Consumers are learning to improvise and learn new habits while consumers go back to old habits. New habits will also emerge by technology advances, changing demographics and innovative ways. Consumers have learned to cope with bumming work, leisure and education boundaries. So present study "Impact Of Covid 19 On Consumer Behavior" in Ernakulum is necessary.*

**Key Words** *Covid Pandemic, Consumer new habits, Factors consider while purchasing and Problems of Consumers.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

As the world begins its slow pivot from Covid 19 crisis management to recovery and the re-opening of economies it's clear that lockdown has a

bad profound impact on how people live. The period of contagion, self isolation and economic uncertainty will change the way of consumers. Covid 19 has changed the daily life of consumers in the world. All are deeply concerned about health and economic perspectives. Most of the purchases are centered on the basic needs. Consumers are more mindful of what they are buying. Consumer behavior are setting into a new normal as people everywhere learn to live with reality of Covid 19 changed their habits into shift to value and essentials flight to digital and omni channel, shock to loyalty ,health and caring economy or home body economy. The consumer survival mood is temporary and after the lifting of lockdown the customer will start their purchases with precautions. Time spent indoor however, has caused us to spend more on home entertainment and groceries. They are striving to limit food waste shop more consciously and buy more sustainable options. Covid 19 changed the consumer buying pattern to panic buying and stocking of essentials avoiding luxury shopping. Shopping through online and mobile services increased.

## **II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Consumer behavior is the study of how individual customers, groups or organizations select, buy, use and dispose ideas goods and services to satisfy their needs and wants. Knowledge of consumer behavior directly affects marketing strategy. The corona virus fear has penetrated the consumers mind and psychology which may affect his/her ways of buying. The brands have to exploit the new brand communication which minimize the psychological impact of the consumers mind .The Covid 19 pandemic has fundamentally change the world as we know it. Peoples are deeply concerned about the impact of Covid 19 both from a health and economic perspective. Hence the study on impact of Covid 19 on consumer buying behavior in Ernakulam district is relevant.

## **III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1) To study the change in consumer buying behavior during Covid 19
- 2) To analyze the factors influencing consumer buying pattern during this pandemic situation.

- 3) To analyze the problems faced by consumers while making purchases during Covid 19

#### **IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Consumer buying behavior refers to the study of customers and how they behave while deciding to buy a product that satisfies their needs. It is a study about the actions of the consumers that drive them to buy and use certain products. It is most important to understand the expectations of the consumers. Thus consumer buying behavior has become an essential part of tactical market planning. In current marketing scenario, the study of consumer buying behavior has become necessary Covid 19 has changed nearly every aspect of our daily lives and consumer spending has no exception. Here an attempt is made to achieve to better idea about consumer buying process and problems faced by them during the pandemic situation Covid 19.

#### **V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of Covid 19 pandemic on consumer behavior. Will the consumers permanently change their consumption habit due to lock down and social distancing? All consumptions are location and time bound. Consumer develops habits over time about what to consume, when and where. The present study on impact of Covid 19 pandemic on consumer buying behavior in Ernakulam district help us to understand the most influencing factors or problems faced by customers during this situations. It helps the marketers to take effective measures to satisfy the needs of customers.

#### **VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study's core objective is to find out the consumer buying behavior during Covid-19 with Special Reference to Ernakulam district of Kerala. A survey was conducted during 1st June to July 31st, 2020.

**Sample and sampling technique:**

The present research purely based on Questionnaire method using Google forms. The data have been collected from 250 respondents.

#### **Sources of Data**

The primary data were collected through structured questionnaire from 250 respondents using Google form and secondary data was collected through the secondary sources like Websites, report, and Newspaper.

#### **Data Analysis**

The Statistical Package for social science tools used in the researches is percentage analysis and Garrett's Ranking Method.

### **VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- Convenience sampling method has been used for the study. If other method is applied the result may differ.
- The research is carried out on Ernakulum district. Hence parameters are taken on consideration may differ at the different places.

### **VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **1. Gender of the Respondents**

The following table shows gender wise distribution of respondents.

**Table 1**

**Gender of the Respondents**

Gender	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Female	130	52
Male	120	48
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

The table shows that 52% of the respondents belong to female category and 48% belongs to male.

## **2. Age of Respondents**

The following table shows the age wise distribution of respondents.

**Table 2**

### **Age of the Respondents**

Age	No. Of respondents	Percentage
18-25	72	29
26-35	92	37
36-45	46	18
46-55	23	9
Above 55	17	7
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

The table shows that 37% of the respondents are between the age 26-35 and 29% are between the age of 18 to 25 and only 7% are above 55.

## **3. Monthly Income of respondents**

The following table shows the monthly income of the respondents

**Table 3**

### **Monthly income of respondents**

Monthly Income	No. Of respondents	Percentage
Below 5000	76	30
5001-10000	87	35
10001-15000	43	17
15001-20000	33	13
Above 20000	11	5
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above table, 35% of the respondents are having monthly income 5001-10000.

#### **4. Occupation of the respondents**

The following table shows the occupation of the respondents.

**Table 4**  
**Occupation of the respondents**

Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage
Govt. employee	62	25
Private employee	103	41
Businessman	48	19
Farmer	12	5
Others	25	10
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above 41% of the respondents are private employees and 5% of the respondents are farmers.

#### **5. Consumer concern level on impact of Covid 19.**

The following table shows the concern level of respondents towards impact of Covid 19.

**Table 5**  
**Consumer concern level on Covid 19**

Scale	No. of respondents	Percentage
Not concerned	12	5
Slightly concerned	18	7
Somewhat concerned	32	13
Very concerned	83	33
Extremely concerned	105	42

Total	250	100
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*Source: Primary data*

From the above 42% of the respondents are extremely concerned about the impact of Covid 19. 33% very concerned about Covid 19 and only 5% are not concerned about the impact of Covid 19.

## 6. Changes in spending habit of respondents.

The following table shows the changes occurred in the spending habit of the respondents due to the impact of Covid 19.

**Table 6**

### **Change in spending habit due to impact of Covid 19.**

Particular	No. of respondent	Percentage
Not at all	35	14
Changed drastically	142	57
Somewhat	73	29
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above 57% of the respondents says that spending habit changed drastically due to Covid 19 and only 14% says that their habit doesn't change.

## 7. Frequency of purchasing.

The following table shows the frequency of purchasing of the respondents.

**Table 7**

### **Frequency of purchasing.**

Particulars	No .of respondents	Percentage
Daily purchasing	20	8
Once in a week	45	18
Twice in a week	40	16
Once in a month	83	33

Twice in a month	62	25
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above 33% of the respondents purchase once in a month, 25% say as twice in a month and only 8% of the respondents say that, they purchase daily.

## 8. Consumer preference for shopping.

The following shows the consumer mostly preferred shopping method in covid 19 situation.

**Table 8**

### Consumer preference for shopping due to Covid 19.

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Online	165	66
Offline	85	34
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above 66% of the respondent prefer online purchasing due to Covid 19.

## 9. Mostly preferred products

The following table shows the mostly preferred products by the respondents during Covid 19.

**Table 9**

### Preferred products

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Necessity products	147	59
Healthy & hygiene products	86	34
Highly branded	9	4



products		
Spending on luxury products	8	3
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary Data*

From the above 59% of the respondents prefer to buy necessity products. Only 3% wanted luxury products and 4% want highly branded products.

### **10 Spending of customers over different categories**

The following table shows the spending nature of customers in the various categories.

**Table 10**

#### **Spending of customers over different categories.**

Particulars	No. of respondent	Percentage
Food and grocery	112	45
Apparel	8	3
Household appliances	93	37
Recreational activities	15	6
Restaurants / Hotel	12	5
Travel and transportation	10	4
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above 45% of the respondents spend their income to buy food and grocery items, only 5% of them spend for eating food from hotels and restaurants and only 4% of respondents spend for travel and transportation.

### **11. Most influencing factor of shopping during Covid 19**

The following table shows in the influencing factors of shopping by the respondents during Covid 19 situation.

**Table 11**

### Most influencing factor of shopping during Covid 19

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Quality	42	17
Availability and convenience	62	25
Health conscious	118	47
Cost conscious	18	7
Offers	10	4
Total	250	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the above 47% of respondents say that most influencing factor while shopping is health consciousness and only 7% of the respondents are cost conscious and 4% influence by offers.

### 12. Problems faced by consumer during Covid19

Following table shows the problems faced by the consumers during Covid 19.

**Table12**

#### Problems faced by consumers

Particulars	Mean Rank	Rank
Product unavailability	7.65	1
Likely to purchase same product from different retailers	6.42	2
Buy different brand of a product from same retailer	4.25	4
Increase in price of goods	4.12	5
Huge rush in shop	5.32	3

*Source: Primary Data*

From the above, The major problem faced by the consumers are product unavailability with a mean rank of 7.65, purchase same product from different retailer with a mean score of 6.42, Experienced huge rush in shop with a mean score of 5.32, Buy different brand of a product from same retailer with a mean score of 4.25 and price increase is the problem with a mean score 4.12.

## **IX. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- Majority of the respondents are between the ages 26-35.
- Majority of the respondents belongs to female category.
- Majority of the respondent's income level is between 5001-10000.
- 42% of the respondents are extremely concerned about the impact of Covid 19.
- Majority of the respondents drastically changed the spending habits due to Covid 19.
- Majority 33% of the respondents purchase once in a month.
- Majority of the respondents prefer online shopping due to Covid 19.
- Majority 59% of the respondents want necessity products.
- Majority of the respondents spend their income to buy food and grocery items.
- 47% of the respondents look for health conscious products while shopping.
- Majority of the respondents faced the problem of unavailability of products while shopping.

## **X. SUGGESTIONS**

- Covid 19 has driven consumers indoor and online. Offers should be given to increase online shopping facilities.

- Personal health is the top priority for the consumer during shopping. So health care measures to be taken to increase health safety.
- People fear to shopping in a crowd during Covid 19. So proper steps to be taken to avoid huge rush in the shops (public places).
- Consumers are scared of unavailability of products and services. So care must take to avoid out of stock of goods and services, measures should be taken to provide the necessities.
- Online Covid 19 health care awareness programs must be organized to overcome the fear of customers during shopping.

## **XI. CONCLUSION**

The Covid 19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the world. People are living differently, buying differently and thinking differently. Consumers are looking at products and brands through a new lens. The Covid 19 outbreak has slowed the pace and changed the daily life of many consumers and this is having a profound impact on the way and view personal hygiene and health and how we engage with our communities, friends and families.

The study lay an insight into change in consumer buying behavior due to Covid 19. From the study it is understood that consumers are deeply concerned about the impact of Covid 19 and it highly influenced their buying behavior and spending habits. They prefer online shopping than offline, due to this pandemic situation. Consumers are more health conscious and it is the most influencing factor. Consumer spending habits are drastically changed. They spent very low for luxury goods and recreation activities and started stockpiling essential products like food and groceries from local market. Demand for health care and hygiene products are increasing. Consumers face new problems like product unavailability and rush in the shop. The corona virus fear has penetrated

the consumer's mind and their buying behavior. So new technology and strategies should be adopted to influence consumer behavior.

## **XII. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

As per the current situation of COVID-19 most of the consumers are concerned, they have no idea about the government future action on lockdown, the market place is changing in a very fast face, this research can give an insight about the consumer buying behavior due to COVID-19, we can still study with what other parameters will influence the consumer buying behavior

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