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The effect of the pandemic corona virus (Covid19 ) in Consumer buying behaviour

## What it a consumer?

Before we go into further details we need to know who a consumer is. Consumers can be a single consumer, or a consumer can be an organisation . Consumers can be any legal person that buys goods and services from you.

What Is Consumer Behaviour?

A consumer is said to be an organisation or an individual targeted by a company to sell their services or product to or we can define it an organisation or an individual that pays a price to use the services or products that are produced by your organisation, A consumer is known as the final user of the services or products of a company or organisation. With all given definitions of who a consumer is Consumer behaviour is a psychological process and the psychology of buying behaviour is deeply related to the emotions that the consumer goes through. First, the consumer will be in need of the product,They will then find some way to solve their needs. discover where they can get the product, the costs of the product ,the best vendors to purchase the product.The best time to buy it, and so on. Once satisfied with all the information they have gathered on the matter, the consumer will implement the plan and make a purchase of the product.It’s not in all cases consumers strategically plan or have time to make decisions has stated above. In fact, most buying decisions are made instantly because a lot of the things that consumers buy are neither so expensive nor so important that they need such a detailed thinking process before their purchase is considered. However, for the few things people buy that are expensive and important enough, such as a house, a car, or even an engagement risk, the actual process that they go through before they make the decision is quite similar to the one outlined.

Consumer behaviour is a psychological phenomenon that can easily change with even the slightest change in the surrounding environment or the within the consumer themselves. Several factors can be responsible for a change in consumer behaviour, one factor being outbreaks of epidemics eg Ebola , SARS etc. Infectious diseases have become more challenging and more complex to control,For example, the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, one of the deadliest occurrences of an epidemic, has killed more than 11,000 people in six countries since its first report in March 2014 and SARS, which originated in China in 2002, infecting over 2700 people and triggered an unprecedented campaign across nations to prevent its spread . Like the current epidemic the world is facing right now The corona virus (COVID 19) which has officially been designated a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO). It has gone global with cases in over 150 countries. COVID-19 could affect the global economy in three main ways: by directly affecting production, by creating supply chain and market disruption, and by its financial impact on firms and financial markets.As of April 1, 2020, almost 900,000 COVID-19 cases have been reported worldwide with a death toll of over 44,000. Note that over 185,000 of the infected patients have recovered, and almost 3,000 fatalities have already occurred in the U.S.

China’s unprecedented quarantine of approximately 600 million people in their homes or hospitals has slowed the progression of the outbreak. At the epidemic’s peak in late-January and early-February, China frequently experienced over a thousand new COVID-19 cases per day, along with 100 fatalities.

Leading to the direct medical costs of treating patients and implementing different controls for diseases, pandemics have devastating effects on the economy. Restrictions on the transportation of people and goods, commonly imposed in areas where the risk of infection is high, significantly disrupt outputs and exports, and the seeds of future growth are often hindered by undercuts in investment as investors lose their confidence in the market.consumers are advised avoid travel and shun public places in an attempt to reduce the risk of getting infected, and this disruption in consumption .

Consumer buying behaviour is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behaviour in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service. Let’s see the types of decision roles;

**The Initiator:** This is the person who first suggests a product for Consideration (something in return)

**The Influencer:** Someone whose view influences other members to in making decisions concerning a given brand;

**The Decider:**The person who makes the ultimate purchase decision; whether to buy, what to buy ,how to buy , where to buy from.

**The Purchaser:** The one who orders or physically buys it, the person that handles the paper work.

The User: the person who uses or consumes the product.

Understanding these roles it’s not always the same individual that takes the role but each of the decision roles is performed. There will be a change in Consumer buying behaviour due increase of spread of this disease (COVID 19) consumers being too scared to leave their various homes to purchase goods. The backlash in production due to Many manufacturing firms rely on imported intermediate inputs from China and other countries affected by the disease . Also so many countries are on lockdown meaning no movement, While some countries have curfew.

People are encouraged to stay home and avoid contacts with large crowds to stop the spread of the diseases. So many actions are taking place to prevent the spread of the virus. Which would mean producers finding different ways to ensure Movement of goods but also at a safe pace . Borders are being closed and travel bans and many actions are taking place to prevent the spread of the virus. The slowdown in economic activity—and transportation restrictions—in affected countries will likely have an impact on the production and profitability of specific global companies, particularly in manufacturing and in raw materials used in manufacturing. For companies that rely on intermediate goods from affected regions, and that are not able to easily switch sourcing, the size of the impact may depend on how quickly the outbreak fades. Small and medium-sized firms may have greater difficulty surviving the disruption. Businesses tied to travel and tourism are facing losses that are likely not recoverable.

For the safety of both workers and the consumers for example; Dominoes pizza implementing a contactless delivery which entails ,No payment by cash, and zero contact with the delivery man. That is one way they can still produce and keep business going but safely.

With the lock down and movement restrictions things like grocery shopping are planned strategically. Consumers take time to plan what they want , the quality, the quantity, where to purchase and how to purchase.

There are five stages to the consumer buying process.

1**.The problem recognition stage :** this stage is also known as need arousal, this stage is triggered when there are unmet needs and the consumer identifies this problem, Need or problem impels an individual to act or to buy the product. Buyer senses a difference between his actual state both physical and mental and a desired state. The need can be triggered by Internal stimuli which include basic or normal needs like hunger, thirst, sex, or comfort and external stimuli which includes external forces, for instance, when an individual sees a new tv, he desires to buy it. Marketers are expected to be able to identify the circumstances that trigger a particular need. He can collect information from a number of consumers regarding how stimuli spark an interest in products. Based on information, he can develop marketing strategies to trigger consumer interest. There are different ways in which consumers identify a problem e.g Out-of-Stock;When a consumer runs out of products and needs to replenish stocks of a consumable item e.g. ran out sugar or egg.

Regular purchase: there are products a consumer purchases a product regularly e.g. newspaper, magazine.

Dissatisfaction: When a consumer is not satisfied with the current product or service.

New Needs or Wants: changes in Lifestyle may cause the identification of new needs e.g. the offer of a new job in a different state for buying a new house.

Related products: The purchase of one product may trigger the need for accessories, spare parts or complementary goods and services e.g. the purchase of a toothpaste leads purchase of toothbrush..

Marketer-induced problem recognition

When marketing activity coaxes consumers of a problem either consciously, and subconsciously, consumed content in traditional as well as social media greatly plays the role of a stimulus for the consumer's recognition of a new need.

New Products or Categories

When consumers become aware of new, innovative products that offer a superior means of fulfilling a need. Disruptive technologies such as the advent of wireless free communications devices can trigger a need for plethora of products such as a new mouse or printer.

Understanding the indirect, but strong effects of epidemics on consumers’ willingness to buy would provide important implications and guidance for policymakers, as well as practitioners aiming to counteract disruption in the economy. Marketers will make use of the situation however they can. the marketers for toilet papers will use the need and high demand of toilet paper to produce more for consumers. Companies like Netflix, Hulu, Tiktok , Dstv etc are in high demand due to self isolation ,total lockdowns and shutting down of school.

Financial impact on firms and financial markets. Temporary disruptions of inputs and/or production might stress some firms, particularly those with inadequate liquidity. Traders in financial markets may or may not correctly anticipate or understand which firms might be vulnerable. The resulting rise in risk might reveal that one or more key financial market players have taken investment positions that are unprofitable under current conditions, further weakening trust in financial instruments and markets.

2. **Information Search:** consumer will try to seek information products they find interest in . Now, he will read magazines, watch advertisements, visit dealer, contact salesman, discuss with friends and relatives in search of information. The fact that a consumer is aware of a brand does not necessarily mean that it is being considered as a potential purchase. For instance, the consumer may be aware of certain brands, but not favourably interested towards them. The implication for marketers is that relevant brand information should try as much wide awareness as possible and included on any forum where consumers are likely to search for product or brand information, whether traditional media or digital media channels. Thus, effective communication can be prepared for the target market.

3. **Evaluation of alternative:** At this stage the consumer evaluates the brands he has selected and since he does not want them all, he will select the best one for him , which is the brand that offers maximum satisfaction for him. Here, he evaluates competitive brands to judge which one is the best, the most attractive. Evaluation calls for evaluating various alternatives with certain choice criteria.

Criteria considered will evaluating alternative

i. Profits gained from offer by the brands

ii. Qualities, attributes, and performance

iii. Difference in Prices by various brands

iv. The Background of brands

v. Popularity and reputation of brands

vi. The Product-related services offered by the brands, such as after-sales services, warrantee, and free installation

vii. The Availability of brands and dealer rating.

Different criteria are used for different product, And the brand that meets most of the criteria co reasonably is more likely to be preferred. Marketer should highlights superior features of his brand. Some companies also advertise comparative table to help consumers evaluate various brands.

4. **Purchase Decision**: This is the semi final stage when the consumer picks the one he prefers the most, the brand that fits all his criteria in different aspects and with more to offer out of several brands. The former stage helps consumers evaluate various brands in the choice set. The brand that offers maximum benefits and satisfaction is preferred.

Now, consumer makes up his mind to purchase the most preferred brand. However, three factors further affect whether buying intension result into actual purchase..

The first factor is attitudes of others, unanticipated situational factors. Purchase intension may change due to certain unanticipated situational factors like price hike, loss of job, , non-availability of the preferred brand etc, consumer’s perceived risk;Degree of risk depends on price, attribute uncertainty, entry of a new superior product, and his self-confidence.

 5. **Post-purchase Decisions:** Consumer buys the product with certain expectations. Though he decides very systematically, there is no guarantee of a complete satisfaction. There is always possibility of variation between the expected level of satisfaction and the actual satisfaction. His subsequent behaviour is influenced by degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Marketer must monitor the post-purchase experience of the buyers that includes:

a. Post-purchase Satisfaction

b. Post-purchase Action

c. Post-purchase Use and Disposal

Nigeria currently has 238 confirmed cases and 5 deaths as of this writing—the weak capacity of health care systems in these countries is likely to exacerbate the pandemic and its impact on their economies. Before the pandemic, the Nigerian government had been grappling with weak recovery from the 2014 oil price shock, with GDP growth tapering around 2.3 percent in 2019. In February, the IMF revised the 2020 GDP growth rate from 2.5 percent to 2 percent, as a result of relatively low oil prices and limited fiscal space. Relatedly, the country’s debt profile has been a source of concern for policymakers and development practitioners as the most recent estimate puts the debt service-to-revenue ratio at 60 percent, which is likely to worsen amid the steep decline in revenue associated with falling oil prices. These constraining factors will aggravate the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and make it more difficult for the government to weather the crisis.

If, due to problems caused by the COVID-19 crisis, there is widespread defaults among poor countries this would pose serious problems for the global economy. It is therefore imperative that requests for debt forgiveness or rescheduling do not fall on deaf ears.

The extent of the damage will depend on how quickly the virus is contained, the steps authorities take to contain it.