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The term consumer behavior, refers to the buying behavior of the ultimate consumer. It encompasses the study of how consumers select, purchase, use and dispose of goods and services to satisfy their needs. It is true that consumers have various reasons why they purchase goods and different preferences when it comes to their buying behavior. The reason can be attributed to the effects of certain factors that continuously influence consumer buying behavior. Some of these factors include culture, mass media, social media, family, opinion leaders, reference groups and psychological influences.

In lieu of recent events, this writer would like to categorically add Health and disease to the list of factors affecting consumer buying behavior. Buying pattern of persons usually change following their diagnoses of certain diseases. For example, a newly diabetic patient will have to change his diet to suit his health condition and this means he will begin to purchase some certain foods that he did not usually buy in the past. The same can be said for people all over the world following the recent outbreak of coronavirus.

Coronaviruses belong to the *coronaviridae* family in the *Nivovirales* order. They are 65-125nm in diameter and contain a single-stranded RNA as a nucleic material, ranging from 26 to 32kbs in length. The subgroups of the coronavirus family are alpha, beta, gamma and delta coronavirus. They are referred to as corona due to the crown-like spikes on their outer surface. At first these viruses were believed to only infect animals until the first human infections were recorded in 2002 at Guangdong, China. At that time, there was an outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV), a pathogenic beta-coronavirus that causes pneumonia symptoms with a diffused alveolar injury leading to acute respiratory distress (ARDS). Although this was not recorded as a global pandemic, it infected over 8000 people causing about 776 deaths.

A decade later in 2012, a couple of Saudi Arabian nationals were diagnosed of another beta-coronavirus identified as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV). This type of coronavirus was very similar of SARS-CoV and was reported to have infected more than 2428 individuals causing about 838 deaths.

In December 2019, Wuhan experienced an outbreak of yet another beta-coronavirus which killed more than 1800 and infected over 70000 people within the first 50 days of the epidemic. The Chinese researchers identified it as Wuhan Virus or 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) but it was later called the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV). It is this same virus that has continued to spread worldwide and is now commonly known as Coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19).

The impact of coronavirus on consumer buying behavior can be understood in different stages; At the time the virus broke out in China around December, other parts of the world didn't necessarily take the virus seriously and continued to go about their daily lives with the belief that the virus would be controlled. Meanwhile in china, travel purchases increased as people struggled to leave china for other countries. Notably, foreign students in Chinese schools began to return to their various countries for fear of infection.

China's economy shrank by 13% within the first two months of 2020, hard-hit cities like Wuhan went into complete lockdown and millions of people stopped going to work and began working from home. The government began to focus on building new hospitals. As the virus began to cause more fatality and spread to other countries in Europe, the purchase of essentials began to increase as consumers started stocking on toilet rolls, hand sanitizers, face masks and canned food. The realization that alcohol based hand sanitizers kill the virus on the hands led to an increase in price of hand sanitizers in response to its high demand. Individuals started making homemade sanitizers and selling them to neighbors and friends. As many countries began to declare lock down to contain the virus, retail shops experience high sales as people struggled to buy enough food and snacks. In the consumer-health industry, consumers have also been purchasing the four key product types;

Treatment mainstays: these include over-the-counter respiratory and pain-relief products in case of coronavirus infection

Prevention Arsenal: these include vitamins and dietary supplements that may support overall immunity. While such products do not protect against the transmission of the virus, some people believe that they support the overall immune system.

Lock down essentials: these include gastrointestinal remedies, allergy medications, oral and eye care products and other items that consumers use regularly.

Premium discretionaries: these include cosmetic products, skin care products that consumers may not be able to acquire during the quarantine.

Considering that there is no exact cure for SARS-CoV-2, doctors have suggested that patients with strong immune system are most likely to recover if they get infected. With this in mind, people then began to buy immune system boosting products like ginger, lemon and garlic. There has also been an increase in the purchase of vitamin c tablets and other items rich in vitamin c. Hospitals are still searching for a cure for the virus. At some point Chloroquine showed promising result in France and China but there is no proper evidence to declare it as a cure considering that it has many side effects. There is also a high demand for inhalers in hospitals worldwide.

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic and by April 3, the virus had already spread to at least 170 countries, infecting over 600,000 people and killing more than 30,000. At this escalation stage affected countries began to restrict movements in and out of the country. Public gatherings were abolished and companies were advised to close down to reduce the spread of the virus. Restaurants and eateries had to close indefinitely and those ones that didn't close began to focus on delivery services. This innovation necessitated the

restaurants to purchase bicycles and motorcycles to enable fast delivery of food orders. To ensure that food ordering became easier, eateries have now created mobile apps that customers can download and order from. Those who could not create apps simply began to list their meals on popular sites like Jumia and even social media like Facebook and Instagram.

In this sense, instead of going to restaurants to eat, consumers have now began to use the delivery method and now simply order food and wait for the food to be delivered to their homes. Also instead of going to shops and boutiques to purchase clothes and jewelries, consumers now order from the stores and it will be delivered to them. In Italy, from February 23 to March 11, overall e-commerce levels were up to more than 80%. There is also an increase in online programs. Schools that shut down during this period have continued their syllabus with online classes. Universities have even began to offer free courses to interested students to ensure that education continues. Many companies have allowed their workers to work from home, holding meetings through conference calls and emailing important documents to each other. The central point is that this global pandemic has paved way for more internet innovation and allowed consumers to use social media not just for pleasure but for business.

There is also a great decrease in purchase of luxury goods and services. Most countries have closed their borders so people who travel a lot will now have to stay at home. Consumers who love travelling to Dubai or China to buy goods now have to buy those goods from their local vendors. There is an increase in the purchase of local goods as the lockdown on some countries has affected the rate of importation. A country like Nigeria that depends a lot on imported goods has been greatly affected by this such that prices of goods have increased drastically. Even the locally made goods have become expensive. A bag of rice is now almost double its usual price.

As a means of social distancing, there are no more parties and concerts so young people who usually buy concert tickets and attend events have been forced to sit at home and read books, watch movies or play games. Apple has seen an increase in downloads with 222 million game downloads in the week of February 2020. Subscription to movie apps have also been on the rise as more people subscribe to Netflix, Iflix, Showmax, IrokoTv and so on The use of social media apps has also increased because people who are usually always working or going to school are now sitting at home in most countries. Those who were previously too busy for social media, have now began to open accounts on popular sites like Instagram and twitter. The pandemic has even affected churches, causing them to have online services on youtube channels and church websites.

In this time of pandemic where thousands of people are dying all over the world, people have decided to drown their sorrows in liquor as consumers of alcohol have increased. It has become easier to buy alcohol than it is to buy toilet paper. In the USA, governors are terming alcohol sales an essential business and loosening restrictions to permit home delivery. According to Nielsen figures, in the week of March 14, sales of 3-liter boxes of wine increased by 53% and 24-packs of beer increased by 24%. There were even speculations that alcohol kills the coronavirus in some countries in the early stages of the outbreak. WHO has warned that in no way will alcohol consumption reduce the risk of COVID-19. In fact, alcohol ingestion will even weaken the immune system and increase the risk of Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) which is one of the most severe complications of COVID-19.

The roads have almost become empty because most people are at home. On one hand, kidnapping and cultism will reduce but on the other hand, boredom will cause those who usually engage in these acts to find some other thing to do. In Nigeria, online fraudster's i.e, yahoo boys have been on the increase, even resulting to calling victims while pretending to be bank officials just to get them to release important account details. There are also people who pretend to have severe illnesses and go around on social media begging people to send money to their accounts. Due to the nature in which coronavirus is transmitted, prostitutes and sex workers have also embarked on compulsory holidays. The effect of lack of usual sexual relations with these sex workers will cause a rise in the purchase of sex toys and increase in subscription to pornographic sites. Consumers of such services will now also begin to access online prostitution sites where trafficked young women are cajoled into performing sexual activities for viewer's pleasure.

The lockdown has also necessitated the purchase of large amounts of petrol and Diesel in African countries like Nigeria where power supply is unreliable. If the virus continues, there will probably be an availability of black markets where unlicensed people will sell fuel to interested parties once filling stations close down. Disney predicted that coronavirus will affect consumer behavior and disrupt its business. This turned out to be true as the company has already closed its theme parks, suspended cruises and theatrical shows, delayed film distribution and taken a hit to its supply chain and ad sales. People barely patronize cinemas and theatres anymore but rather opt to sit at home and watch movies on their television. Even the sports sector has been affected because the premier league and Olympics have been postponed, leaving sports lovers to watch old matches and games while they wait for the virus to be cured.

The question of whether or not the world will go into recession depends on how countries control the outbreak. The very existence if this virus is a threat to business as leading companies like MasterCard, Microsoft and Apple have revealed that they have been affected by the virus. Everyday recorded cases in Nigeria are on the increase and the solution will either by the discovery of a cure or the creation of a vaccine to prevent more people from getting infected. But since none of the two are available, it is advisable to continue to maintain social distance and stay at home.

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