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Consumer buying behavior is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behavior in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service. The recent pandemic by the name of COVID 19 (Corona Virus) has truly taken the world by storm. The pandemic has affected the daily lives of the people, not only in Nigeria but in the whole world. The pandemic has not only affected the social lives of the people but also the economy of the world.

With the closing of the borders for not only countries (international) but also the closing of the borders within the country from state to state, the price of goods have gone up due to the unavailability of goods. Also, because of the pandemic, many businesses have been advised to close and come industries have also been advised to stop work. And people are advised to remain within their houses by the governing powers.

It is general knowledge that the COVID 19 is transferred through droplets and it is advised for people to use either soap or an alcohol based sanitizer. Due to the information passed down about the use of soap or sanitizers by the World Health Organization (WHO), the demand in these products are now on the increase and due to the fact the suppliers know the importance of these products, the price of the product have also gone up, though this did not reduce the demand for the products.

The closing of businesses and companies which are a source of livelihood for many pose difficult to the people. Most countries have provided support to their countries’ citizens in this pandemic while some have not given much support. Though the lockdown has rendered many without a means of livelihood, the government support in most countries have helped the people get the funding to acquire goods needed for the lockdown in bulk. Basically, the consumer buying behavior for many especially in countries where the government gives adequate support, for example, the United States, the consumer buying behavior is one where the consumers buy their goods in bulk to avoid leaving the house or having to constantly order things online. In this case, mostly basic amenities are in high demand. Besides the soap and hand sanitizers, people also order things like food stuff, toothpaste and things like board games to keep them entertained, that is when their tired of using their phones or just for group fun in the period of the pandemic.

The consumer buying behavior towards already made food due to the pandemic is very poor. The consumers due to fear of the virus would rather make their food at home and patronize shelf-safe products and other products to help them make their meals at home.

In the pandemic, various industries excel more than others due to a shift in the consumers demands. Before the pandemic, the consumer buying behavior towards the food and service industries were quite high and the demand towards the sanitizers and masks in the pharmaceutical industries were not so high, especially for the masks which are generally known to be used by majorly doctors or medical personnel, but since the pandemic, the consumers despite the price do not think muck before purchasing the mask and the sanitizer. Statistics show that the demand for pharmaceutical goods have made a huge increase since the pandemic.

In this pandemic, there are various factors affecting consumer buying behavior, namely:

* Financial state of the people: the financial state of the people has to do with the money available to the people during the pandemic and the government imposed lockdown where there is no means of earning income. To some countries, their government gives available aid to the people, some in monetary terms meaning they will be able to purchase first the things necessary to them during the pandemic in a large amount then they can purchase things they want in order to make the pandemic bearable for them. On the other hand, the consumer buying behavior in some other places differ. In some countries, such as Nigeria whose government doesn’t give much visible help to its citizens during the lockdown, some citizens cannot afford to buy things in bulk and some such as some people who sell in markets who feed from some of what they make from a day of sales not only cannot afford bulk buying but can also not afford food for a day without breaking the lockdown rules. The buying behavior of the average person will be one that will enable them not leave their homes and is advisable during the pandemic which is bulk buying of goods.
* Necessity of the product: products such as edible goods are a necessity in this pandemic, also soap, tooth paste and sanitizers are necessary to the buyers in the pandemic, so all of them are bought in bulk. The people will first buy what is necessary to them in bulk before they decide to buy other not so necessary things such as new hardware devices for a computer or new furniture to replace the old. In this period, people prioritize their needs over their wants because there is no telling how bad things could get so people would rather be ready for the worst and stock up on the necessary products.
* Fear: the fear of the virus has caused people to buy what on a normal day, they will not buy so much of. Like the buying of facemasks has skyrocketed since the virus outbreak due to the people’s fear of contacting the virus. The consumers due to fear of the virus now order things they need online to have it delivered to them. Statistics state that the use of online shopping has increased 74% since March 13th in respond to the corona virus (COVID 19). Also products like some animal meat in some places which on a normal would have a high demand are now not so well bought due to the information of the virus starting in an animal market. The fear of eating such products doesn’t allow the people to buy them. The fear of the virus also caused some people to patronize some pharmaceutical goods or some medicine to prevent the virus. Fear is the cause of change in consumer behaviors because some consumers would rather do things to avoid their death or anything bad happening to them.
* Media influence: in this pandemic, the media is the main source of information for the people. The media is what informs the people of the updates or recent events regarding the virus. The people are advised to not spread false rumors on the media as people in this pandemic listen to almost whatever the media tells them. Sometime in march, there were reported deaths resulting from the overdose of some pharmaceutical good by the name of chloroquine. This was caused by the false news spread on the media about it being a preventive drug or a vaccine against the pandemic (CIVID19). The media greatly affects the consumer buying behavior during the pandemic.

The consumer buying behavior since the pandemic has surely changed and the pandemic has surely affected the consumers buying behavior. Because of the pandemic, the consumers have been moved to purchase things using different methods, such as online shopping mostly and also in different quantities, in bulk. On a normal day, not all consumers would buy canned tomatoes over freshly planted ones but due to the pandemic, the consumers now lean toward things they know can be easily preserved, things with long shelf-life rather than the freshly grown or fresh goods they would usually prepare. The pandemic has changed the customers’ attitude towards certain goods and certain categories of products.

With consumers stuck at home and the internet containing a wide possibility of options of things the consumers have interest in, and the option of the use of online transfer and shopping, the consumers may choose to satisfy their wants and the more time they have at home and the more they search the internet for things that may interest them, the more their wants grow. For those who have sufficient finances, they may satisfy those wants and indulge their wants by getting the things they desire. The things they buy may be things they would not on a normal day buy but with the free time on their hands, they decide to get the things they want. Also the things or the wants purchased by the consumers are usually purchased due to the fact that the consumers are bored and have nothing to do at home.

With the fact that the consumers of petroleum products which are vehicle users are confined to their homes in some countries and have no use of their cars, therefore have no use for the petroleum since they don’t need to go out or better said are not allowed to go out. In some other countries whose lockdown rules are not as strict, the consumers still do not patronize the petroleum as much as they did before the outbreak began and became a worldwide treat to all and a cause of fear.

The pandemic has been a recent cause for concern of the people and have caused a lot of changes to the lifestyles of people. In Nigeria today, the lockdown is being enforced and markets are being shut down alongside some businesses. The policy of no social gathering and social distancing is also being strictly enforced. The government put together a taskforce to ensure the markets do not open and to ensure the social gathering rule is being strictly followed by the law. On consumers, the effect of these measures affect their buying behavior. The closed down markets leave some sellers no alternative means to provide for them and their families besides illegally selling their products in the market with the absence of the taskforce personnel. Once this action is found out, the task force personnel usually destroy the goods of the sellers and even arrest them, sometimes they are quite brutal towards them. This attitude or course of events has its ways of affecting the consumers buying behavior because with the sight of how the sellers are treated, the consumers may have a fear of being caught patronizing the sellers at the thought of being caught and taken or being treated in the brutal or terrible way the sellers treated. Basically, this will cause the consumers to see what they would on a normal day have bought and refuse to buy it due to the fear of being caught with the seller by the task force.

Due to the pandemic, the price of goods in Nigeria have escalated due to unavailability of the product or insufficient amount of the product. Using things found in the market for example, the lockdown causes the things in the markets to increase in price and due to the understanding of the situation of the buyers, they end up purchasing the expensive products. Basically, a product that the consumer will buy of a certain price on a normal day is bought by the consumer despite his usual buying behavior.

In summary, the pandemic has made a huge shift in the consumer buying behaviors, not only in people in one part of the world but in the whole world in general. The pandemic (COVID 19) is truly a reason for concern and everyone tries their possible best to change or adapt to a lifestyle that suits the current situation despite the things it may cost. The consumer buying behavior has been deeply affected making some even have to improvise as a means of getting bye during the pandemic. People improvise in various ways, could be as a form of getting food and could be as a form of avoiding boredom. The effects of the consumer by the pandemic may be permanent or better said may last longer than most think because they may like the new ideas or innovations or improvising they bring about and may choose to continue on with the way they did things during the pandemic even after it ends.