

Impact of COVID 19 on Consumer Behaviour in the Food and Beverage Industry

Freya Ahlawat, Prof Sharmiladevi

Subject: Research Methodology

SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT STUDIES, PUNE

Date of Submission: 15-09-2022

Date of Acceptance: 24-09-2022

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour is the study of how individual customers, groups or organizations select, buy, use, and dispose products and services to satisfy their needs and wants. Since the very beginning of Covid 19, consumer's needs and wants have had to be curbed drastically. A major impact of this pandemic has led to major changes in the sales and revenue of the Food Industry. The uncertainty caused a serious risk to food security as capacity to produce and distribution of food products impacted buying power and intensified precautionary steps to ensure food safety at different distribution levels. This research paper aims to identify the many reasons as to why and how the consumer's behaviour radically changed since the pandemic and what strategies did a few giants in this industry use to overcome the losses they faced for the first few months of the pandemic.

Consumer Behaviour

Consumer Buying Behavior refers to the actions taken (both on and offline) by consumers before buying a product or service. This process may include consulting search engines, engaging with social media posts, or a variety of other actions. A business needs to know the profile of their target customers to personalise the product or service accordingly. There are four kinds of consumer behaviour i.e. Complex buying behavior, Dissonance-reducing buying behavior, Habitual buying behavior, Variety seeking behavior. Thus, different services/ products have to be tailor made according to the consumer's needs and wants. There are various stages involved in the buying process. A customer goes through

many phases before finally purchasing a product/service. The phases being:

Stage 1: Problem Recognition.

Stage 2: Information Gathering.

Stage 3: Evaluating Solutions.

Stage 4: Purchase Phase.

Stage 5: The Post-Purchase Phase.

Thus, it is established that there are various phases and processes that a consumer goes through while making their final purchasing decision. There exist a billion terms involved in the decision-making process such as Buying Pattern. Buying pattern refers to the consumer's purchase pattern and can be defined as "the characteristic way in which consumers purchase products or services in terms of quantity, frequency, timing, etc.

Numerous such terms help marketers to understand the psychology of a consumer and thus figure out their buying pattern and the changes they need to make in their marketing strategies and/or the product/ service.

Covid 19

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The disease is highly contagious and causes severe lung problems in the patients. The disease spreads through the very basic actions such as touching, sneezing, etc. Thus, it spread rapidly from its birth place i.e. Wuhan, China to the entire globe. The entire world came to a standstill and the economy was drastically affected. The economic impact of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic in India has been largely disruptive. India's growth in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2020 went

down to 3.1% according to the Ministry of Statistics. The Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India said that this drop is mainly due to the coronavirus pandemic effect on the Indian economy. Notably India had also been witnessing a pre-pandemic slowdown, and according to the World Bank, the current pandemic has "magnified pre-existing risks to India's economic outlook".

Impact of Covid 19 on the Food Industry

The outbreak of coronavirus has had significant impact not only on public health worldwide, but also on all stages of the supply chain and value chain of various industries. In fact, according to Fortune.com, about 94% of Fortune 1,000 manufacturers are being hit with disruptions as a result of the coronavirus. The food & beverage is one such industry that is currently experiencing impacts due to the outbreak, which was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020.

Globally, the food & beverage industry is expected to experience the differential impact of this rapid spreading COVID-19 on each stage of its value chain through the mediums of the affected workforce at industrial level, raw material supply (agricultural produce, food ingredients, intermediate food products), trade & logistics, demand-supply volatility and uncertain consumer demand at foodservice outlets—among other factors. Production, distribution, and inventory levels across the food & beverage industry spectrum are expected to be impacted.

Covid 19 basically impacted a lot of consumers and drastically changed their buying

behaviour. People went bonkers buying toilet paper and sanitizers and thus changed their priorities.

To deal with this, companies had to come up with creative and innovative solutions to communicate their sanitation measures to their respective consumers.

Thus, the entire psychology of consumers changed and their priorities shifted from a lot of different factors affecting their needs and wants to mainly hygiene and sanitation.

Companies also had to opt for an omnichannel vernacular which is basically giving the same experience to customers whether it is online or offline. Hence a lot of transactions went online and helped customers build trust in particular brands over the period of a few months.

Research Objectives

The following are the research objectives of my study:

- I. To understand the impact of covid 19 on the world economy.
- II. To analyse the effect of covid 19 on the Consumers.
- III. To understand the impact of the change in consumer's behaviour on the Food Industry.
- IV. To know more about the various strategies and innovative ideas used by certain companies to overcome the negative impact of covid 19.
- V. To find out more ways to tackle the effect of covid 19 on consumer's behaviour.
- VI. To understand how due to external situations, a consumer's psychology is impacted and leads to a change in his needs and wants.
- VII. To highlight the importance of Creativity, Innovation and Psychology in the world of business.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review has been conducted to view the various scholarly papers and articles available regarding "Impact of COVID19 on consumer behaviour in the Food Industry".

Sno.	Author	Title	Methodology used	Findings
1.	(Ngugi, O'Sullivan, & Osman, 2020)	Consumer Behaviour in Food and Healthy Lifestyle	Primary source of data – Original Research.	An introduction to consumer behaviour in the Food Industry.
2.	(Goyal, 2020)	Integrated Risk of Pandemic: Covid-19 Impacts, Resilience and Recommendations	Both primary and secondary data has been used. Secondary data has been used in the form of analysis of different case	A critical perspective of the impact of COVID 19 on different industries including the Food Industry.

			studies.	
3.	(Cucinotta D, March 2020)	WHO Declares COVID-19 a Pandemic?	Primary source of data	An insight into COVID 19 and how it turned into a pandemic for consumers all across the globe.
4.	(Singh, Kumar, & Panchal, 2020)	Impact of COVID-19 on logistics systems and disruptions in food supply chain	Empirical study where a combination of primary and secondary data has been used.	Analysis of the various reasons as to how Covid 19 disrupted the food industry.
5.	(Hailu, 2020)	Economic thoughts on COVID- 19 for Canadian food processors	Primary data obtained through quantitative survey using Random Sampling Method.	How COVID 19 impacted the food industry of Canada and analysis of case studies.
6.	(Baek, Mohanty, & Glambosky, 2020)	COVID-19 and stock market volatility: An industry level analysis	Secondary data used by compiling various articles available	A culmination of various articles showcasing the impact of COVID 19 on the stocks of different industries including the food industry.
7.	(Seetharaman, 2020)	Business models shifts: Impact of Covid-19	Primary source of data – Public Records.	Understanding as to how businesses were impacted by covid 19.
8.	(Fernandes, 2020)	Economic effects of coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) on the world economy	Secondary data collected through various sources.	Explanation of the impact of corona virus outbreak on the world economy and how its impact has been comparatively less as compared to other previous outbreaks.
9.	(Baker, Bloom, Davis, Kost, & Sammon)	The unprecedented stock market impact of COVID-19	Secondary qualitative data collected through interviews	This article showcases the impact of covid 19 on the stock market and the drastic decrease/increase in the stock prices of a few companies.
10.	(Fauci, Lane, & Redfield, 2020)	Covid-19— navigating the uncharted	Both Primary and Secondary data have been used.	The paper showcases the reality of the birth of covid 19 and how it spread from one place to all over the

				world. It also highlights facts that have not been researched upon before.
11.	(Pfefferbaum & North, 2020)	Mental health and the Covid-19 pandemic	Primary source of data	The paper focus on emphasizing the significance of mental health and how it has been affected by the sudden outbreak of the covid 19 pandemic.
12.	(Laato, Islam, Farooq, & Dhir, 2020)	Unusual purchasing behavior during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic: The stimulus-organism-response approach	Secondary data collected through experts in the field.	The article explores the unusual consumer behaviour of hoarding certain necessities in excess such as sanitizers, toilet papers, etc. They have explained as to how fear took over the consumer and thus, it resulted in an unusual buying behaviour.
13.	(Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020)	Effects of COVID-19 on business and research	Secondary source of data used.	The article provides a deep and meaningful insight on the effect of the covid 19 pandemic on the fields of business and research and how there is a scope to interact more with the consumers and grow their respective horizon.
14.	(Grashuis, Skevas, & Segovia, 2020)	Grocery shopping preferences during the COVID-19 pandemic	Primary source of data through previous record.	This article highlights the changes in preferences of the consumer while grocery shopping and how it changed due to the pandemic. It also shows how the pandemic has given an advantage to researchers to understand consumer behaviour better.
15.	(Sheth, 2020)	Impact of Covid-19 on Consumer Behavior: Will the Old Habits Return or Die?	Both Primary and Secondary data are used.	This article reviews the facts that the lockdown and social distancing mandates have disrupted the consumer habits of buying as well as shopping. Consumers are learning to improvise and learn new habits.
16.	(Wang, An,	Consumer food	Primary data used.	It gives us an insight into

	Gao, Kipro, & Geng)	stockpiling and behavior and willingness to pay for food reserves in COVID-19		the thinking and behaviour of consumers and the change in their preferences, capacity and willingness to pay for certain commodities due to the pandemic. This basically helps the government to adjust the inventory and prepare a response strategy.
17.	(Primer, March 2020)	"Where to Order Food for Take Out and Delivery Amidst Enhanced Community Quarantine"	Primary data through surveys.	The article gives a list of places to order food from online amidst the covid 19 pandemic in the era of covid 19.
18.	(IVANOVA, 2020)	"See how much business U.S. restaurants are losing because of the coronavirus"	Primary data is used.	It critically analyses all the aspects of how the businesses specifically restaurants were affected due to covid 19 in the United States.
19.	(Baker D. , March 2020)	"How Is the Grocery Supply Chain Responding to Coronavirus?"	Both Primary and Secondary data are used.	The text examines the response of grocery supply chains to the covid 19 pandemic. It basically identifies all the loopholes and ways that the grocery chains are utilizing to stabilise business during the pandemic.
20.	(Repko, March 2020)	"How grocery stores are trying to prevent 'panic buying' as coronavirus causes stockpiling, emptying shelves".	Primary data is used via interviews.	It provides a psychological and evidence-informed perspective of panic buying in the consumers due to the pandemic. The spread of corona virus has instilled fear into the minds of people which led in bulk buying of certain items such as toilet papers, sanitizers, etc.

21.	(cdc.gov, May 2020)	"What Grocery and Food Retail Workers Need to Know about COVID-19"	Secondary data is used via public database	It integrates aspects of psychology's contributions to covid 19 and informs about the ways in which grocery chains and food retailers can protect themselves from covid 19 and slow the spread during the pandemic.
22.	(LEWIS, 2020)	"Starbucks commits to paying all workers for 30 days — even if they don't go to work during coronavirus"	Secondary data was used via case studies and interviews.	It studies the case study of Starbucks and hopes to inspire companies worldwide who are laying off their employees. Starbucks paid their workers for all the days of a month even if they did not show up at work and worked from home. This was to promote a work from home culture.
23.	(MARTIN, 2020)	"Food and Beverage Industry Hit Hard by Coronavirus Outbreak"	Secondary data sources such as government websites were used.	It provides a detailed point of view of the companies in the Food Industry who have been massively affected due to the lockdown during the pandemic. It showcases the different reasons as to why the food industry was hit the hardest due to covid 19 world wise.
24.	(Mali, March 2020)	"Restaurant industry reeling under coronavirus"	Primary source of data – Government Documents.	This article comprehends as to how the restaurants are tackling the low consumer traffic due to the pandemic. It gives certain examples and case studies of a few restaurants that failed to make up for the losses and of a few restaurants that succeeded.

25.	(Naylor, 22 March 2020)	"How restaurants are scrambling to reinvent themselves in the wake of coronavirus"	Both primary and secondary data were used.	This research finds the ways and opportunities that the restaurants use to break even in the tough times of the pandemic. It also emphasises that Delivery brands may see coronavirus as an opportunity to embed themselves in our lives, making it a universal habit
-----	-------------------------	--	--	---

Research Gaps

After conducting a thorough review of 25 sources which included articles, journal publishing and papers and the 2 case studies related to Canada, the following research gaps have been discovered:

- I. There is no clear study on the impact of covid 19 on a consumer's buying behaviour.
- II. Lack of information available regarding the impact of covid 19 on particular industries.
- III. Impact of covid 19 in a sector wise distribution.
- IV. Impact of covid 19 in a country wise distribution.
- V. Change in the consumer psychology due to the pandemic.
- VI. Change in the buying pattern of the consumer.
- VII. Change in the preferences, needs and wants due to a dynamic environment.

I wish to address the following issues over the course of my study in this topic along with the aforementioned objectives.

Research Methodology

1. Type of Research

1.1 On the basis of use and audience

On the basis of use and audience, this research is a *basic research*, with the aim being to extend the existing domain of knowledge regarding the increasing importance of the impact of Covid 19 on the consumer's buying behaviour specifically in the vast food industry.

1.2 On the basis of purpose

On the basis of purpose, this research is a *causal conclusive research*. The research aims to study in depth regarding the massive impact of covid 19 on the consumer's buying behaviour and the relationship between the effect of the pandemic and the functioning of the food industry. Since this

topic has not been studied previously, there is an exploratory aspect to this study, which will be explained ahead.

1.3 On the basis of time

On the basis of time, this is a *longitudinal time-series research*, wherein the primary data collected will be analyzed over a specific period of time rather than at a certain point in time to show the gradual or drastic increase in the impact of covid 19 on consumer's behaviour taking into consideration the massive scale of the food industry.

1.4 On the basis of data collection

On the basis of the data collection method used, the research is a quantitative research with bits of a qualitative research as well and thus falls under the category of intra mixing which includes data which has been collected from a sample comprising of people under various age groups. The data has been used as the main source to draw conclusions regarding the consumer behaviour pre and post covid 19.

2. Type of Research Design

The type of research design is *Exploratory Research Design and Cross-Sectional Survey Research method*.

Exploratory research design is conducted for a research problem when the researcher has no past data or only a few studies for reference. Sometimes this research is informal and unstructured. It serves as a tool for initial research that provides a hypothetical or theoretical idea of the research problem.

Since primary data is being used to conduct this research, it will prove as a basic or informal idea for the research. The topic is new and not a lot of existing research is available. Thus, the data collected will serve as the basis for future research and to establish facts regarding the same.

3. Population

As a comprehensive community of people, organizations, artefacts, and so on, population can be explained with common characteristics that are the interest of a researcher. The population of this particular research was Finite. The survey was sent out to college students and people working in different organisations living in different parts of India in order to understand their views and understandings of the topic. This group was chosen to be the sampling units as the subject of the study applies to everyone alike since everyone has been affected by the pandemic. The survey was sent to a large group of people and a response from 116 participants was received.

4. Sampling

The sampling technique used is *Snowball Sampling*.

It is a non-probability sampling technique. The respondents were asked to submit their feedback and opinions through the online survey form sent to them. The data was collected and can be represented in the form of charts, graphs, etc.

5. Variables

The study makes use of two types of variables i.e. independent and dependent variables. The aim is to understand and describe the variability of the dependent variable by studying the impact of the independent variables on it. The following are the variables:

Dependent Variable: Consumer Buying Behaviour
 Independent Variables:

- Personal factors
- Societal factors
- Hygiene related factors
- Brand related factors

- Influential factors
- Belief
- Price
- Convenience

6. Instruments used

The instrument used for this research is an Online Survey/Questionnaire. In defining the features of a large population, surveys are beneficial. This broad ability, which ensures a more representative sample to gather targeted results to draw conclusions and make important decisions, cannot be given by any other research process. Survey benefits include having a large population and hence greater predictive capacity, the ability to collect large volumes of data and the availability of validated models. The survey was also conducted anonymously and it was clearly stated as such. The anonymity of surveys allows respondents with more candid and legitimate responses to respond. You need respondents to be as transparent as possible with their responses to get the most reliable results. Anonymously administered surveys provide an avenue for more truthful and unambiguous answers than other types of research methodologies, particularly if survey responses are explicitly specified to remain fully confidential.

7. Tools to be used

The data has been collected in an excel sheet and for further analysis statistical tools such as Mean, Median and Mode will be used to draw conclusions. The tools will be used to compare the frequency of people who used to eat and order food online before the pandemic and people who continue to do the same during and after the pandemic. The time period remains the same i.e. pre and post covid 19.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

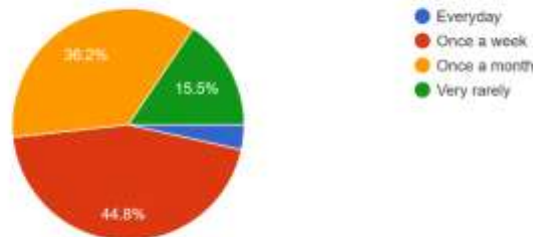
Following are the questions that were asked through the google form:

<i>Sno.</i>	<i>Questions</i>
1.	Name
2.	Email Address
3.	Gender
4.	How often would you go out and eat in a restaurant before the pandemic?
5.	How often do you go out and eat food in a restaurant since the pandemic?
6.	How often would you order food from outside before the pandemic?

7.	How often do you order food at home and eat since the pandemic?
8.	Do you get influenced by the safety measures advertised by various brands in the food industry since covid?
9.	Are you aware of the various sanitation steps taken by restaurants/cafes/eating joints
10.	What are the different factors that affect your decision in ordering food online since Covid 19?

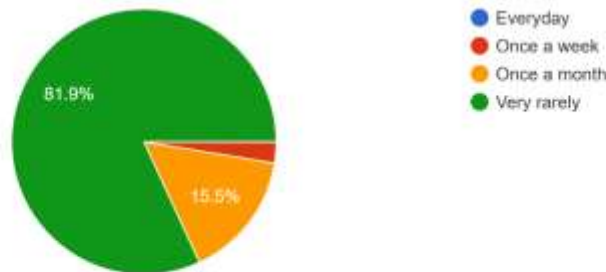
The following data was collected through the answers of the questions and have been further analysed using pie-charts and bar graphs.

How often would you go out and eat in a restaurant before the pandemic?
 116 responses



The following pie-chart shows that maximum number of people i.e. 52 people used to go out and eat in a restaurant or a food joint at least twice a month.

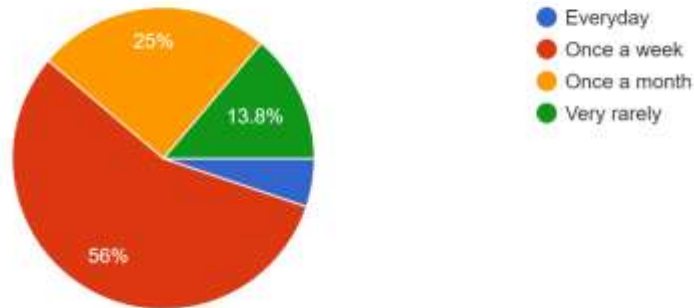
How often do you go out and eat food in a restaurant since the pandemic?
 116 responses



This pie-chart shows how the consumer’s behaviour has changed drastically from eating outside at least twice a month to going out to eat extremely rarely due to the pandemic. 81.9% of the people i.e. 95 people stopped going to eat outside since the pandemic which shows a drastic downfall in the revenue of restaurants.

How often would you order food from outside before the pandemic?

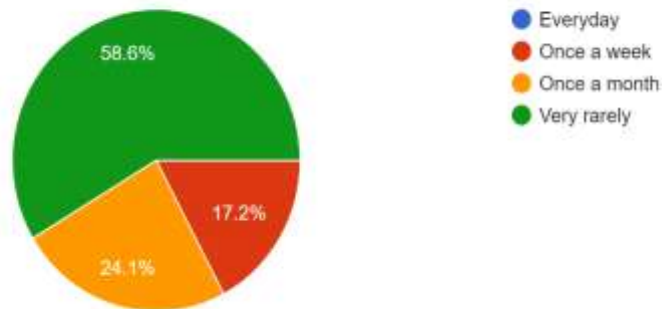
116 responses



The pie-chart represents the percentage of people that used to order food from outside before the pandemic. 56% of the people i.e. 65 people which is the majority used to order food online at least once a week which is understandable and majority of the population includes college students and employees.

How often do you order food at home and eat since the pandemic?

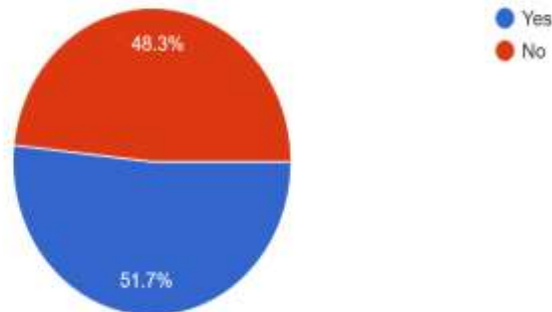
116 responses



Since the pandemic 58.6% of the people i.e. 68 people order food rarely from outside and have home cooked meals due to the lack of trust in the hygiene of the places outside. The pandemic not only affected the dine in restaurants but online orders as well.

Do you get influenced by the safety measures advertised by various brands in the food industry since covid?

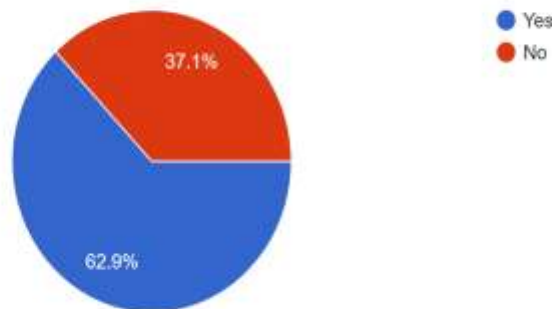
116 responses



There is a very slight percentage of people who get influenced by the safety measures advertised by food joints i.e. 60 people do believe in the safety measures advertised by companies whereas 56 people do not and are extremely health conscious. This may be due to many reasons such as family and many other external factors.

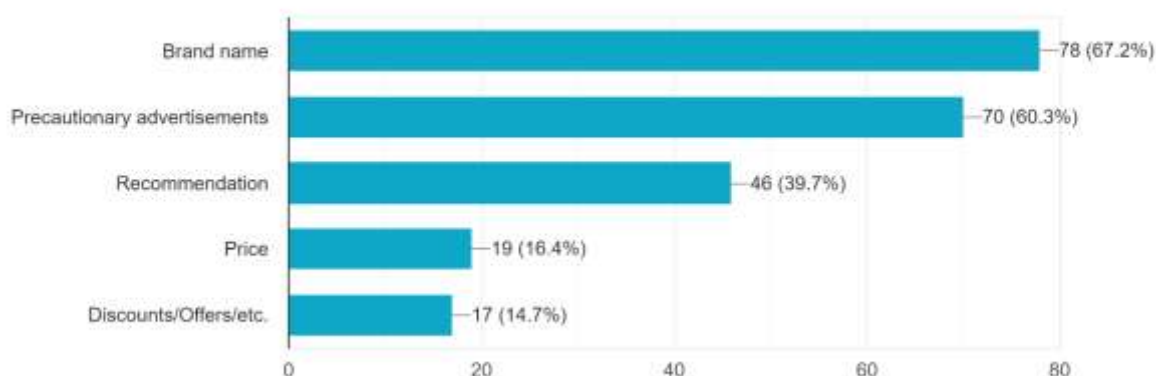
Are you aware of the various sanitation steps taken by restaurants/cafes/eating joints, etc?

116 responses



62.9% of the people i.e. 73 people are aware regarding the sanitation steps taken and the remaining i.e. 43 people aren't. This indicates the fear in the mind of the consumer even after having a lot of information available.

What are the different factors that affect your decision in ordering food online since Covid 19?
116 responses



The above graph showcases the different factors that affect a consumer's buying decision since the pandemic. Clearly, the brand name has a huge impact on the mind of the consumer. A good brand gives them reassurance and thus 78 people are affected by it. Advertisements made by brands also have a huge impact on people. The rest of the people i.e. 82 people are affected by recommendations, price and the discounts and offers that the companies have specially during covid 19.

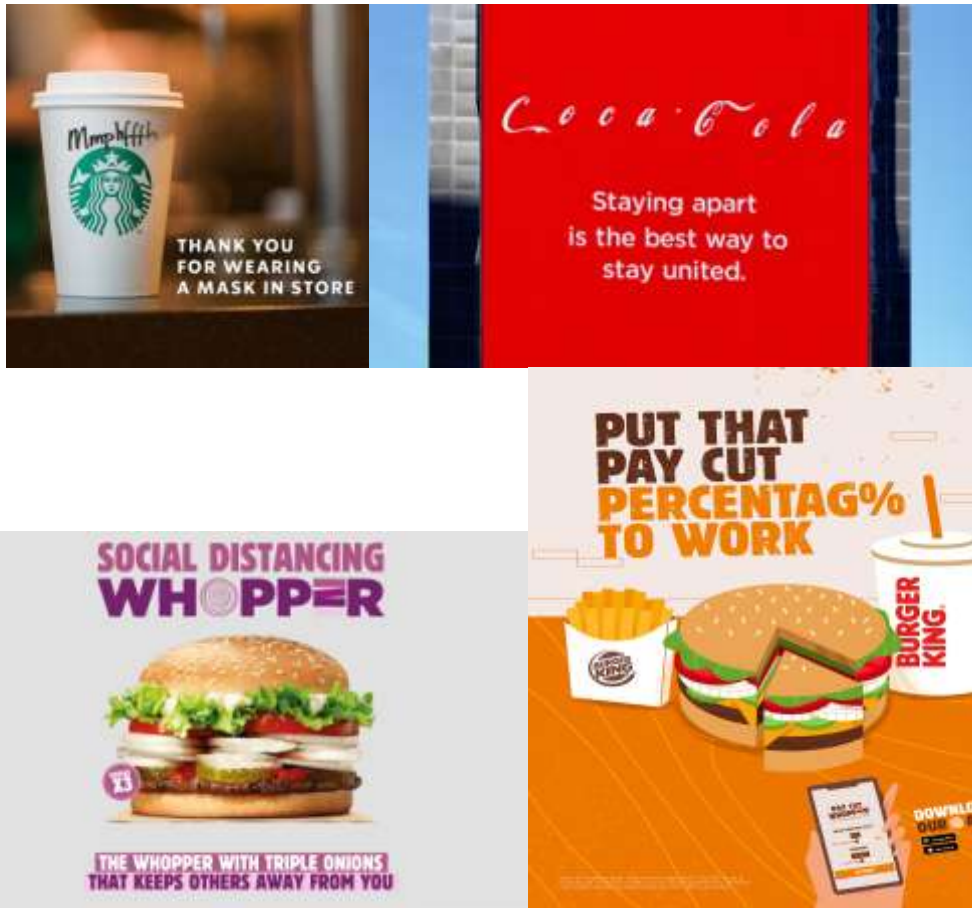
IV. DATA INTERPRETATION

From the data collected above, following are my interpretations.

- ❖ The Food Industry has been heavily impacted due to the pandemic as governments close down restaurants and bars to slow the spread of the virus. Across the world, restaurants' daily traffic dropped precipitously compared to the same period in 2019. Food traffic to restaurants and cafes declined by 75% in Latin America, where as North America and Middle East markets saw a decline of 90% by end of March. Closures of restaurants caused a ripple effect among related industries such as food production, liquor, wine, and beer production, food and beverage shipping, fishing, and farming.
- ❖ The spread of the covid 19 pandemic has created a fear in the consumer's mind regarding safety and sanitation of products

which has had a major impact on the operations of companies. This showcases how a deep psychological change in a consumer can have a humongous effect on companies.

- ❖ The fear instilled in the consumer resulted in panic buying with resulting shortages all across the globe. Consumers started hoarding toilet papers and sanitizers like their life depended on it which it did but the extent to which the fear was created in the beginning of the pandemic was quite high compared to the actual risk and usage of the product.
- ❖ The psychological impact on the consumer's mind created a huge scope for online delivery/drive thru services to begin. A lot of companies started opting for an omnichannel vernacular of marketing which basically means that the customer gets an integrated shopping experience i.e. quality of service remains the same whether the consumer buys online or makes the purchase offline. Many Multi-national corporations (MNCs) such as Starbucks, Burger King, etc had started working on omnichannel marketing before the pandemic and thus had an upper hand.
- ❖ Multiple companies came up with very interesting advertisements and concepts to promote social distancing while enjoying the services provided by them. A few examples of such advertisements are:



The Starbucks advertisement highlights the importance of wearing a mask by cleverly targeting the personalised factor due to which people mainly come to Starbucks i.e. the name on the cup. When a person wears a mask all the Starbucks employee can hear is a mumble and thus can not get the name right.

In the Coca Cola advertisement, the letters have been spread across to communicate the message of social distancing and unity through staying away from each other.

Burger King very cleverly portrayed the message of social distancing by using onions as a way of having bad breath and staying away from

people. Another interesting initiative taken by Burger King was the pay cut whopper which allowed employees who suffered from pay cuts during the pandemic to get a discount worth the percentage of their pay cut. This gained immense popularity and support across the globe and increased Burger King’s revenue comparatively.

❖ Many companies changed their taglines and released certain changes made to their logos as well to adhere to the government’s social distancing rules and regulations. A few examples of the same are given below:



KFC dropped the 'finger licking' from their tagline as it did not quite go well with the era of covid 19.



Subway changed its tagline from 'Eat Fresh' to 'Stay Safe' for a few months and added a mask to their logo to promote social distancing in the time of covid 19.

Starbucks also added a mask to the signature mermaid logo they have and used the tagline- 'One mask and One cup of Coffee at a time' to again indicate the importance of wearing masks during covid 19.



the initial few months of the pandemic, these online food delivery apps suffered losses as people lost trust completely and were not aware of the sanitary precautions taken by such companies. But in the later months beginning from August-September, people started ordering food because they still preferred having food at home instead of going outside. This also happened due to a few influential advertisements released by these two giants.

- ❖ Food Delivery Companies such as Zomato and Swiggy were also affected by the pandemic. In



❖ The pie-charts that have been used to analyse data also show that maximum people are aware about the safety measures taken by companies which also showcases the power and influence of social media marketing.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

After analysing the data, the following are the conclusions I have drawn.

The Food Industry worldwide has been massively affected due to the change in the psychological thinking of the consumers. Many companies have tried to overcome the barriers and manage to at least earn enough revenue to cover the costs which has led to a drastic decrease in profits for the big giants in the Food Industry if compared to 2019. 2020 hasn't been the best year for either stores, restaurants, eating joints, cafes, etc.

Online grocery shopping picked up pace in the beginning of the pandemic when people weren't stepping outside at all and were used to get the basic commodities for households such as wheat, pulses, etc. Companies such as Groffers and Big Basket earned a lot of revenue during this time as people considered it to be a safer option.

Online food delivery apps such as Zomato, Swiggy, Food Panda, etc. were also adversely affected in the beginning of the pandemic but slowly when the consumer's started believing and re-establishing their faith in these delivery partners, their revenue started growing.

There has been a large drop in the demand of meat as well since people had the belief that covid 29 could also be contracted from animals especially poultry animals since there was no guarantee of the sanitation of such places.

It is also pretty evident that companies can overcome such dynamic changes in the external environment by developing a good response system. The examples shared above clearly justify that companies with a good social media strategy and companies that can target the problem and find creative solutions for it did not have to suffer as much as a few others during covid 19. Thus, innovation and creatively portraying messages goes a long way.

Old habits die hard. Since the consumers were so used to eating from their favourite eating joints, restaurants, etc. they got easily influenced by advertisements and convinced themselves that a good brand name establishes their safety.

All in all, the impact that covid 19 has had on the Food Industry has been mainly due to the

loss in faith in these companies by the consumers because there was and is still a fear instilled in them.

VI. LIMITATIONS

There were a few hurdles that I came across while writing this research paper. Since this topic is new, there was no a lot of solid data or information available regarding it. The topic being very particularly about the food industry, had not a lot of exclusive information available which is why I have mainly focussed on the research conducted by me through the google forms. Also, the study being qualitative in nature where the main focus is on the consumer's behaviour, had to be written with my understanding of the data received through the online survey.

Since this study is being conducted completely online due to the pandemic, it restricts a lot of scope for research especially with companies. The pandemic proved to be a slight hinderance in the collection of data.

VII. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The following research has not been done before and hence will prove to be an asset for many companies. The research will help businessmen develop a deep understanding of how changes in the external environment impact the buying pattern and the buying behaviour of the consumer. The research will be of utmost help for companies in the food industry since it will help them analyse how to overcome such a situation. The pandemic had not been foresighted and thus came as a shock to the business world. The research will help people understand how to develop coping mechanisms and strategies to face such adversities and make an opportunity out of a pandemic.

The study also gives an insight into how strategies have to be constantly changed by companies in a dynamic environment. It also showcases as to how a consumer's needs and wants change their priority depending upon many external factors due to which companies have to make certain changes in their products and services.

It basically highlights the importance of Innovation and Creativity which is key to surviving in this always changing environment.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Baek, S., Mohanty, S., & Glamboosky, M. (2020). COVID-19 and stock market volatility: An industry level analysis.

- [2]. Baker, D. (March 2020). "How Is the Grocery Supply Chain Responding to Coronavirus?".
- [3]. Baker, S., Bloom, N., Davis, S., Kost, K., & Sammon, M. (n.d.). The unprecedented stock market impact of COVID-19.
- [4]. cdc.gov. (May 2020). "What Grocery and Food Retail Workers Need to Know about COVID-19".
- [5]. Cucinotta D, V. M. (March 2020). WHO Declares COVID-19 a Pandemic.
- [6]. Donthu, N., & Gustafsson, A. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 on business and research.
- [7]. Fauci, A., Lane, H., & Redfield, R. (2020). Covid-19—navigating the uncharted.
- [8]. Fernandes, N. (2020). Economic effects of coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) on the world economy.
- [9]. Goyal, M. K. (2020). Integrated Risk of Pandemic: Covid-19 Impacts, Resilience and Recommendations.
- [10]. Grashuis, J., Skevas, T., & Segovia, M. (2020). Grocery shopping preferences during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [11]. Hailu, G. (2020). Economic thoughts on COVID-19 for Canadian food processors.
- [12]. IVANOVA, I. (2020). "See how much business U.S. restaurants are losing because of the coronavirus".
- [13]. Laato, S., Islam, A., Farooq, A., & Dhir, A. (2020). Unusual purchasing behavior during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic: The stimulus-organism-response approach.
- [14]. LEWIS, S. (n.d.). "Starbucks commits to paying all workers for 30 days — even if they don't go to work during coronavirus".
- [15]. Mali, M. (March 2020). "Restaurant industry reeling under coronavirus".
- [16]. MARTIN, R. (2020). "Food And Beverage Industry Hit Hard By Coronavirus Outbreak".
- [17]. Naylor, T. (22 March 2020). "How restaurants are scrambling to reinvent themselves in the wake of coronavirus.
- [18]. Ngugi, I. K., O'Sullivan, H., & Osman, H. (2020). Consumer Behaviour in Food and Healthy Lifestyle. CABI.
- [19]. Pakes, F., & Pakes, S. (2009).
- [20]. Pfefferbaum, B., & North, C. (2020). Mental health and the Covid-19 pandemic.
- [21]. Primer, P. (March 2020). "Where to Order Food for Take Out and Delivery Amidst Enhanced Community Quarantine'.
- [22]. Repko, M. (March 2020). "How grocery stores are trying to prevent 'panic buying' as coronavirus causes stockpiling, emptying shelves".
- [23]. Seetharaman, P. (2020). Business models shifts: Impact of Covid-19.
- [24]. Sheth, J. (2020). Impact of Covid-19 on Consumer Behavior: Will the Old Habits Return or Die?
- [25]. Singh, S., Kumar, R., & Panchal, R. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 on logistics systems and disruptions in food supply chain.
- [26]. Wang, E., An, N., Gao, Z., Kiprof, E., & Geng, X. (n.d.). Consumer food stockpiling behavior and willingness to pay for food reserves in COVID-19.