



## A STUDY OF CHANGE IN CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR TOWARDS TOURISM DUE TO COVID-19

P.M. Kulkarni<sup>1</sup>, P. Kumar<sup>2</sup>, S. Jana<sup>3</sup>, S. Singh<sup>4</sup> and V.Kanade<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dr.Moonje Institute of Management and Computer Studies, Nashik

<sup>2</sup>Wipro Technologies, Nashik

<sup>3,4</sup>Techmahindra Ltd.Nashik

<sup>5</sup>KTHM College, Nashik

<sup>1</sup>preetimaheshk@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>gempankaj@yahoo.com

### ABSTRACT

Coronavirus will have a lasting effect on consumer needs and preferences. The consumer is likely to spend less on discretionary products and services and buy value-for-money deals. They are more likely to stay at home and use digital channels for purchases. These changes will impact their buying behavior towards tourism products and services. The long-distance travel will continue however with more caution. Moreover, tourists are likely to choose lesser-known destinations and less likely to travel in groups. Further, hygiene and cleanliness will be of prime importance. Tourists are more likely to purchase travel insurance and they will have reduced budgets. Lastly, they will research a lot of information about the tour destination. Summarily, covid will have a temporary as well as permanent impact on the buying behavior of tourists.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Tourism, Hygiene, Destination, Budget, Digital

### Introduction

Coronavirus is having a lasting effect on consumer needs and preferences. It is being proclaimed as "the new normal". Interestingly, consumers are adjusting to this new normal, with critical changes noted in their behaviors. A recognizable change in the behaviors of consumers during the pandemic is their shift to essential buying (for example food) and a decrease in the acquisition of optional things (for example non-essential items and services). Value-based purchasing is the vital pattern during the pandemic; consumers are looking for "value for money" presently like never before. The pandemic has prompted social distancing and diminished in-person interactions, which has brought about a particular inclination for digital usage. Fortunately, digital channels have filled the gaps in the different spheres of life. Consumers have picked to experience new brands and are adopting new shopping behaviors because of the interruption in their normal purchasing designs. New propensities are forming as consumers are staying at home. Home is currently the school, coffee shop, entertainment and restaurant center for consumers. The travel industry is healing as limitations are taken out in certain nations and individuals

acclimate to the new normal. Notwithstanding, travelers' conduct is influenced by psychological and economic factors. Psychological factors include the fear of contracting the infection and the willingness to travel. The economic factor is the diminishing in family income. Both influence the decision-making process of vacationers (Al Sayegh, 2021).

### Literature Review

There is reasonable research available on the topic of consumer buying behavior towards tourism due to Corona. Below are a few abstracts from the recent literature. Im et al. (2021), have posited that, the COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed people's everyday existence because of expanded risk aversion, which has influenced their consumption patterns and preferences. To understand the impact of the pandemic on purchaser conduct through risk aversion, this review researched the relationships among the pandemic, social distancing, online information search, and firm performance in the hospitality and tourism industries. For information investigation, we created two joint models and assessed the models utilizing the fixed-effects technique. The consequences of the principal model showed that social distancing set off by

COVID-19 reports influenced firm worth. The second regional level examination uncovered that the quantity of affirmed cases and COVID-19 reports impacted people's social distancing and online information search for vacation spots and the changed social distancing and online search, thusly, influenced the volume of online hotel reviews.

Stanciu et al. (2020), have argued that, the article targets dissecting the conduct of the Romanian consumer with regards to COVID19 development. The performed research has featured the particularities of the rise of this sanitary crisis at the local economy level. Albeit the Romanian populace's contamination degree has been more decreased when contrasted with the Western states, the severe avoidance measures forced by the authorities have not really set in stone a model of conduct of the consumer near the one of different states influenced by the disease with the new Covid, SARS-CoV2. The market studies performed by particular organizations have shown that overwhelming home isolation conditions, because of the crisis state, has altogether decreased the social activities of the Romanian consumer, the activities being focused basically towards covering the essential necessities. The strength of the consumers (acquisition of meds or visit to the doctor), getting food or monetary activities at the financial units are the fundamental inspirations for leaving the home. By examination, the sports activities or the visits for supporting family members have the most reduced weight. A fragment of consumers, backer of customary business, has been forced to engage present day exchange strategies dependent on online shopping, and the experts' assessments give the upkeep of the exchange conduct. Organizations should zero in on understanding the consumer's requirements and to adjust their product offer and dissemination framework so that to diminish the new consumption limits and to work with the business act. The fundamental direction during the crisis towards the local items can address a chance for the Romanian organizations, however Government support measures are important for the Romanian producers. The research results are an oddity, being among the primary investigations led at public level on the mind-boggling effect of

COVID-19 on the strength of the populace, the public economy and consumer conduct.

According to Chebli (2020), the review plans to investigate the effect of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) on traveler conduct and recognizes goals to change vacationer conduct that will arise because of this pandemic. 308 voyagers, chosen on a non-probabilistic premise, partaken in this pilot research. The information gathered were exposed to Chi-square test of goodness of fit test statistical analysis and content analysis. The outcomes demonstrate that the current Covid-19 pandemic is relied upon to affect explorer conduct goals, as far as personal safety, economic expenditure, conviction and attitude. At last, key discoveries and functional ramifications of this review are portrayed for the management of this crisis, in view of the outcomes and impediments of this research, future research bearings are introduced. Apparently, this paper gives the main exploratory analysis of the results that the Covid-19 wellbeing crisis is relied upon to have on travel conduct.

Gallego and Font (2021), have opined that, this paper develops a methodology for the early detection of reactivation of tourist markets to help relieve the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, utilizing Skyscanner data on air passenger searches (>5,000 million) and picks (>600 million), for flights between November 2018 and December 2020, through ForwardKeys. For future travel during the May to September 2020 period, the desire to travel (based on the quantity of flight searches) has come around 30% in Europe and the Americas, and by around half in Asia, while intention to travel (the quantity of flight picks, the final selections among flight searches) has dropped a further 10–20%. Most source markets stay hopeful with regards to air travel during the last quarter of 2020, proposing a U shape recuperation. However, hopefulness has dwindled over the long haul, proposing a flatline L shape. A traffic light dashboard for homegrown and inbound air travel demand to Spain shows how objective supervisors may utilize Big Data relating to the early recuperation of key source markets to develop designated advertising systems. We show how Big Data gives timely granular data essential in highly volatile

circumstances, and we contend that objective management associations should further develop their Big Data analytical and evidence-based, decision-making skills.

According to Torres et al. (2021), the current review looked to analyze how hospitality service consumption changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Following a national review of U.S. consumers, the effects of customer influence were tested utilizing regression analysis with squared values to find out their effect on consumer conduct. Results revealed the effect of negative customer affectivity on consumer's decisions to buy hospitality and tourism services. All the more specifically, the timing, duration, and intensity of emotion influenced consumer's willingness to buy these services. Certain socioeconomics, including age, gender, and income, affected consumers' willingness to buy services. The authors lay the preparation for a behavioral-based division, enabling advertisers and managers to evaluate the consumers probably going to buy following the pandemic and devise systems to draw in them. Finally, the authors recommend that emergencies can achieve temporary and permanent consumer buying behavior changes.

Moreover, Nigar and Miall (2020), Itani and Hollebeek (2021), Ugur and Akbiyik (2020) and Rahimzhan and Irani (2020) have dealt with various aspects of consumer buying behavior towards tourism due to Corona.

### Changes in consumer buying behavior

**1) Choosing a Close Destination:** The Covid-19 pandemic has not had an impact on individuals' longing to travel away from home and continue exploring across borders. When travel limitations are lifted, long-distance travel would continue, as before. The eagerness of vacationers to continue to travel is reassuring, although individuals may be "a little more cautious and attentive" to the recuperation. Some counteraction mechanisms, like wearing a mask or disinfectant gel, avoiding gatherings, appear to be reflected in individuals' behavior.

**2) Choosing a Less Known Destination:** Many tourists agree that for their next trip, they wish to pick a less popular destination. It tends to be found that this decision is a combination of internal motivations, like anxiety and fear,

fear of being contaminated, or of catching a disease by ending up in a crowd, encircled by many strangers, whose state of health is obscure.

**3) Group Travel:** The Covid-19 emergency will have an impact on the penchant of tourists to travel in groups and on the purchase of tour packages. This can be explained as follows: the fear of being in a closed space (bus, boat, and so forth), where one cannot maintain separation, and also, the anxiety of being caught in the ocean, far from the surface, on account of a journey.

**4) Sanitary Condition and Quality of Care at the Destination:** The Covid-19 pandemic has placed hygiene and quality of public care in a vital position. One of the major impacts of this health emergency is hygiene and health awareness. This indicates that for their next trip, travelers would be more worried about the cleanliness of airports, public spaces, hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions and daily necessities, and so on, yet in addition, about the conditions of access and the quality of the care offered, by the destination.

**5) Travel Insurance:** Purchasing travel insurance isn't always a priority. Tourists will in general be reluctant to purchase travel insurance, either out of ignorance or basically out of a desire to save money. After the emergency, this indifference will change, as tourists can no longer take risks.

**6) Purchasing Power:** Another possible behavior is a decrease in the amount of income allocated to vacations. The economic emergency connected to Covid-19 will have repercussions on purchasing power. With the economic emergency, tourists will attempt to reduce their travel expenses.

**7) Search for Information:** Tourists are also willing to learn more and to follow current information about the travel destination before making a final decision about their next trip. The provision of clear, accessible and cutting-edge information is essential for attracting tourists and impacting their decisions (Chebli, 2020).

### Conclusion

Coronavirus is having a lasting effect on consumer needs and preferences. The key impacts of the pandemic are – shift to buy essentials rather than discretionary, looking for

value-for-money purchases, following social distancing norms and lower in-person interactions, inclination for digital use and propensity to stay at home. These changes have a profound impact on the buying behavior towards tourism products and services. First, post pandemic the long-distance travel will continue however with more caution and attention. Second, tourists are likely to choose a lesser know destination that is less crowded. Third, the group travel will likely reduce.

Fourth, travelers would be more worried about the cleanliness of airports, public spaces, hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions. Fifth, there will increase in purchase of travel insurance. Sixth, the travel budget will shrink. And lastly, travelers will be accessing a lot of information about their travel destination. All in all, covid will have a temporary as well as permanent impact on the buying behavior of tourists.

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