

# Changing Consumer Behavior During Pandemic: Going Beyond Normal for Business Sustainability

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The pandemic has significantly transformed the means and mechanisms for carrying out business operations. For example, it has re-defined business models by forcing business units to embrace technology and attune their functioning to meet the demands and expectations of changed consumer behavior. In other words, business units now need to broaden their horizon to changed normal aptly coined as new normal. This paper addresses the following research questions (a) What defines Consumer behavior in a new normal? b) What are the drivers of new normal? (c) What means and mechanisms are needed to measure the impact of these drivers? and (d) What actions are needed for sustainability of business units in the new normal? The development of the paper is based on theory of change management process Mento, A., Jones, R., & Dirndorfer, W. (2002) and protection management theory Rogers, R. W., & Prentice-Dunn, S. (1997). The development of the paper is based on primary as well as secondary data from the respondents comprising of students, housewives and working executives. The scope of the study is restricted to the application of technology in enabling them to change their behavior and whether the business units have made efforts to adjust to their changing requirements. Purposive sampling is applied and the sample size initially targeted was 500 but was later reduced to 320 due to limitations. the data was collected by means of google forms. The techniques applied for data analysis included descriptive techniques and multivariate analysis. The findings indicate that technology has proved to be a boon for the consumers as well as for business units and that both the consumers and the business units have benefitted tremendously due to changed consumer behavior in the pandemic time. One of the crucial aspects that emerged from the study is the role of supply chain mechanism which too adjusted its operations to meet and fulfil the demands of the changed behavior of the consumers. The study contributes to the literature by providing a new insight to the behavior of the consumers who are constrained to stay at home and yet need day to day essentials during restricted timeframe. The managerial implication of the study is the fact that it provides a new domain for study wherein the entire worlds is grappling under the influence of Covid. This will enable business managers to continually design and redesign strategies to meet the changed consumer behavior. The research implication of the study stems from the fact the study provides new dimension in terms of new drivers for changing consumer behavior and their implications. The study has its limitations in the form of access to the secondary literature available on the internet. The study concludes to the fact that consumer behavior is context specific in terms of managing business operations. The drivers to consumer behavior are also driven by the context and this necessitates the need for measuring the impact of these drivers and develop of actions for business sustainability.

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