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## A Study Refurbishing Confidence of Consumers in Buying Food Products After Covid-19

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### Introduction :-

Each pandemic generated significant changes in macroeconomic, regional, and worldwide policies, as well as social behaviour and citizen mentalities. Institutionalised changes have been the most substantial (over the medium or long term). COVID - 19 has wreaked havoc on all levels of modern society, much like any other pandemic. Each pandemic in recorded history has had an immediate impact on the social human's primary reactions, since they directly affected health, financial stability, life quality, and food security. The pandemic was sparked in great part by population density, increased human mobility, mass socialisation, as well as cultural, social, and tourism factors.

Every business in the world is watching to see how the COVID-19 epidemic affects the industrial industry, and the food industry is no exception. The food sector, however, differs from other industries in that it produces products that are necessary for daily life. Everyone understands that if one factory closes, a certain number of people who work there will go hungry; but, if processors and distributors become afflicted, everyone is at risk. Furthermore, the food business is an economically significant sector. However, in the event of a pandemic, the food business faces particular challenges compared to industries that are not essential to daily life, such as tourism and aviation. Maintaining employee health and providing an adequate workforce owing to those who refuse to work due to illness or fear of the coronavirus is a major concern for all food businesses. During

this time of crisis, it is critical to protect and sustain the health of those working in the food supply chain. However, supply management systems must keep the distribution network alive in order to meet consumer demands. All parties should work together to guarantee that food and commodities flow freely throughout the supply chain. For food safety and security, ensuring consumer confidence is also critical. A key worry shared by all food enterprises is maintaining employee health and ensuring a sufficient workforce due to those who refuse to work due to illness or fear of the coronavirus. During this time of crisis, it is critical to protect and sustain the health of those working in the food supply chain. However, in order to meet consumer needs, supply management methods must maintain the distribution network alive. All parties should work together to guarantee that food and commodities flow freely throughout the supply chain. For food safety and security, ensuring consumer confidence is also critical.

Agricultural production, postharvest handling, processing, distribution/retail/service, and consumption are the five steps of the food supply chain. In terms of food quality and safety, the food supply chain employs two systems. The first is based on laws and regulations that employ mandated standards that are inspected by state agencies. The second option is to rely on voluntary standards set by market legislation or international organisations.

Food employee health issues, personal hygiene, use of personal protective equipment such as helmets and gloves, sanitization of surfaces and working environments, safe handling/preparation/delivery of food, and maintaining social distance are all examples of safety measures to ensure the continuity of food flow in each stage.

Food processing plays a critical role in connecting Indian farmers with domestic and international consumers. Grain, sugar, edible oil, drinks, and dairy products are all key industries in the food processing industry.

In India, the food industry makes a significant contribution to job creation. Food processing has been identified by policymakers as a significant area for supporting labour migration from agricultural to industrial. People are worried about food, its taste, and its hygiene, therefore they can start their own business in this industry with little investment.

## **Pandemic's impact on consumer behaviour :-**

Businesses and industry in India have been hit hard by the lockdown it's not just in the country but across the globe that there's been a massive impact of virus on various sectors like tourism, entertainment, fashion, education, and all of these have been hit hard by the coronavirus and the subsequent lockdown. The behaviour of the customer completely changes now because of the lockdown where most of the people were sitting at home and that's where businesses are also trying to tweak and ensure that they reach out to consumers in a renewed and rather different way. After the pandemic, the consumers seem to be focusing a lot more on personal care as well as on food products which makes them healthy. The consumers seem to be going more for products that have a lot more nutritional value and looking into the finer details of every product they buy and also looking to see if it has any nutritional benefits because at this time of COVID - 19 where everyone is focused on the immunity so, products which have some nutritional value seem to be doing better.

During this pandemic, the loyalty of the customer before the lockdown was had on favourite brands would have chosen that over anything else but now during the lockdown that's completely vanished what's in fact been the focus is about which kind of benefits these particular products have during the lockdown also what is available that would be immediately grabbed on longer were here any sort of loyalty to brand.

When looking at how the COVID-19 pandemic influences consumer food demand, it is clear that demand fluctuates depending on food price, consumer income level, socio-demographic position, consumption, shopping preferences, and time restrictions. In addition, the number of visits to the grocery shop and the amount of money spent on food every visit have altered.

The COVID-19 outbreak disrupted everyday routines and caused ennui, which is defined as excessive calorie intake from high fat, carbohydrate, and protein consumption. Furthermore, because carbohydrate-rich meals can be used as self-medicating components due to their potential to increase serotonin production, quarantine induced tension in people and pushed them toward sweet foods to feel better. These unhealthy eating habits, on the other hand, may contribute to the development of obesity, which is connected to chronic inflammation and significant COVID-19 consequences. When the lockdown was slowly being lifted, the people seem to be now going back to their brands and that brand loyalty seems to be coming back now. The new consumers are truly omni-

channel and super happy about the online offering and quite keen to go back to physical stores.

### **Impact of Covid- 19 on the Food Supply Chain:-**

The Corona virus impact on food supply chains especially in developing countries and regions that face food insecurity, the pandemic unfolds disruption in domestic food supply chains are emerging as a pressing issue in many countries like East Africa and India. The loss of income in jobs is reducing people's ability to even afford or buy food and so that was a problem of both demand and supply of food products.

Although the current situation appears to be extraordinary, food systems have long been vulnerable to climate and disease-related issues, even before the COVID-19 catastrophe. Various crises and shocks in the past, such as the oil crisis in the 1970s, the SARS and Ebola outbreaks, and the 2006–2008 food crisis, have made food systems unstable. Just a year ago, the African Swine Fever outbreak threw global commodity markets into disarray, and it has now spread to Eastern Europe and Asia. China, the world's largest pig producer (with a third of the worldwide market) and exporter, lost 37% of its pigs by the end of 2019. (IPES, 2020). Ebola had a significant detrimental influence on some African countries' agricultural output, marketing, and trade sectors.

Some governments' food trade policies have shifted as a result of the present COVID-19 problem, with exports restricted and imports facilitated. The major reason countries set export limitations is to ensure that the quantity of products available on the domestic market remains stable. Although the export ban usually has this impact in the short term, it also has certain negative consequences. For starters, export limitations lower domestic pricing, which hurts farmers financially, resulting in lower agricultural production and less incentives in the business. Second, by losing their position in international markets, countries will lose their competitive advantage. Third, export limitations harm exporters' reputations while encouraging importers to lose faith in the global market. The majority of people rely on the food industry to provide all of their food, it's easy to disregard consumer perceptions and views about the industry as a whole. It's critical to restoring consumers' trust, which offers businesses a competitive advantage.

## Online Food Shopping and Marketing Approaches :-

The majority of studies on internet purchasing concentrate on the consequences and benefits of e-commerce. This focus is predicted to grow as more individuals are urged to purchase online in order to avoid crowded shopping centres in order to prevent getting the deadly COVID - 19 virus.

How the internet has impacted people's food shopping behaviour is defined by customer preferences and attitudes. Consumer preferences and attitudes toward buying food online differ from other items in that perceived hazards and information quality do not play a significant role in influencing their purchasing decisions. According to the study, utilising the Internet to acquire information on food services has become a popular activity among individuals today, and more people than ever before have good sentiments regarding finding food information online.

WHO's 'Strategic preparedness and response plan' details the health measures that all countries were required to take in order to prepare for and respond to the pandemic. This plan takes into account what we've learned so far about the virus and intends to turn that knowledge into strategic action that will guide all national and international partners as they construct national and regional operational strategies. Priority stages and actions are described in eight primary topics in this plan:

- Country-level coordination, planning, and monitoring;
- Community participation and risk communication
- Surveillance, rapid reaction teams, and case investigation are all things that are done.
- Points of entry;
- Laboratories national;
- Infection prevention and control;
- Situational awareness;
- Logistics and operational support

These measures resulted in the closure of workplaces and educational institutions, as well as temporary restrictions on travel and social gatherings. Working from home and holding online meetings are now standard practises. People who work in the food industry, on the other hand, do not have the option of working from home, so they must adhere to their typical office routines.

The study of the demographics of social media followers and the amount of money spent on youth-targeted food marketing Health experts are concerned about the large percentage of young followers because most marketing from these corporations are prejudiced and do not mention the harmful repercussions of eating this food. In comparison to other items, food producers are frequently exempt from restrictions that force them to disclose their negative implications. Cigarette and alcohol businesses, for example, are required to disclose their adverse consequences on all marketing materials. As a result of their widespread use of social media, teenagers are increasingly exposed to food and beverage advertising across many digital channels. However, most of the studies generalise all forms of online shopping including online food buying but it is different from shopping for other commodities.

### **Regaining Confidence of Consumer in Food Industry :-**

One-third of all food produced for human use was lost or wasted across the food supply chain stages of production, postharvest handling, processing, distribution, and consumption prior to the pandemic. As a result, in the era of the coronavirus, food waste has received greater attention than ever before. COVID-19 had a small influence on total food loss and waste generation, but it did result in a 12 percent increase in food waste creation at the home level.

Human resource management was also made more challenging as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. Changes in working circumstances, the adoption of new workplace policies, and measures to limit human contact are among the obstacles. As a result, companies must take certain steps to address the difficulties. Before entering the site, personnel, visitors, suppliers, and contractors should be monitored for COVID-19 symptoms. At the plant's entry, food safety can conduct a temperature screening of all employees. It's also

crucial to keep an eye on workers to make sure they're wearing face protection and gloves. Second, facilities should think about working hours reductions and personnel rotation.

In the COVID-19 era, decentralisation of food manufacturing might also be utilised to minimise the problems and hazards associated with the centralization paradigm. Low-scale facilities close to consumers save money on storage and transportation while also reducing environmental effects. Shortening the supply chain and reducing emissions and energy consumption during transit and storage can be accomplished by locating producing facilities closer to consumers. Customers can acquire fresh and natural products thanks to decentralisation, which allows the supply chain to be more flexible. It also aids in the simplification of administrative procedures in order to reach out to the poor and disadvantaged. The majority of studies examining online food shopping have provided sufficient evidence highlighting both the implications and benefits of e-commerce.

Demand changes are another aspect that has an impact on supply chain performance. As a result, projections and simulations should be used to determine demand. At the start of the crisis, products that are necessary for daily life, such as hand sanitizers and food, were in higher demand. Food goods, on the other hand, are more susceptible to the effects of COVID-19 on the supply chain due to their perishable nature. As a result, manufacturers can use statistical models to recommend the best course of action for dealing with supply and demand interruptions caused by the COVID-19 epidemic. Demand changes are another aspect that has an impact on supply chain performance. As a result, projections and simulations should be used to determine demand. At the start of the crisis, products that are necessary for daily life, such as hand sanitizers and food, were in higher demand. Food goods, on the other hand, are more susceptible to the effects of COVID-19 on the supply chain due to their perishable nature. As a result, manufacturers can use statistical models to recommend the best course of action for dealing with supply and demand interruptions caused by the COVID-19 epidemic.

**Conclusion :-**

During a pandemic, maintaining supply in the agriculture and food sector, which is one of the most essential sectors alongside health, is critical for avoiding a food crisis and minimising the negative impact on the global economy. Despite the fact that no serious issues have been identified in the food supply chain thus far, the future remains unknown. As a result, each country must recognise the gravity of the situation and may need to tighten or loosen restrictions in response to the pandemic's progress. The food supply chain's supply network should also be flexible enough to adjust to difficulties. Temporary or seasonal employment is popular in developing and undeveloped countries, notably for planting, sorting, harvesting, processing, or transporting products to markets. As a result of the absence of local or migrant labour owing to illness or travel restrictions imposed by lockdown, the supply chain is greatly impacted. In circumstances where the disease directly affects their health or movement, it also decreases not just others' production capacity, but also their own food safety. Labour shortages induced by the COVID-19 issue, in particular, caused serious disruptions in various labour-intensive industries such as cattle production, horticulture, planting, harvesting, and crop processing.

In India, the food industry has made a strong showing. With encouraging growth in the food retail sector, favourable economic policies, and appealing fiscal incentives, India's food ecosystem provides tremendous business potential. India's food and grocery market is the world's sixth-largest. The government of India is also taking all necessary steps to increase investments in the food processing industry through the ministry of food processing industries. Under the mega food parks project, the government has approved 41 food parks, 22 of which will open on April 1, 2021. Farmworker shortages, on the other hand, were a major issue long before the COVID-19 pandemic.

To avoid an increase in food prices, food protectionist policies should be avoided. Finally, each country must recognise the gravity of the issue and may need to tighten or loosen precautions in response to the pandemic's spread. The food supply chain's supply network should also be flexible enough to adjust to difficulties. The goal of this analysis is to assess COVID-19's impact on the agriculture and food sectors, as well as to highlight the recommendations needed to mitigate and contain the pandemic's effects.



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