



Behavioural Change in People Due to COVID-19 Situation

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ABSTRACT

Key Words: Human behaviour, challenge to human life, attitude, purchase behaviour

Behaviour is conceptualised and defined in several ways. It is a way one acts in various situations.

Human behaviour is known to be complex in nature. Organisms with more complex nervous systems have a greater ability to learn new responses and thus amend their behaviour depending on various factors. A huge range of factors influences human behaviour.

COVID-19 pandemic: The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has affected every segment of life. It led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide; there was an unprecedented challenge to human life, public health, food and the way world works.

COVID-19 situation led to various changes in daily activities, which is termed as 'New Normal'.

This study is conducted to understand the behavioural change in people due to COVID-19 situation including that of attitude, purchase behaviour, individual behaviour.

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1 . Introduction

Behaviour is conceptualised and defined in several ways. Human behaviour is known to be problematic in nature. Organisms with more complex nervous systems have a greater capacity to learn new responses and adjust their behaviour depending on various factors. A vast range of factors influences human behaviour.

According to Peter G. Ossorio, behaviour is described as an attempt on the part of an individual to bring about some state of affairs either to effect a change from one state of affairs to another or to maintain a current one. In simple words- it is a way one acts in various situations.

There are various social-psychological models, which can explain human behaviour. To simplify, below are the three levels that explain the factors in most of them:

1. **Personal:** These are micro factors, which are inherent to the individual. Example:

level of knowledge, certain beliefs, etc.

2. **Social:** These are Meso level factors, which are to do with social activities like the relationship of individuals, other people's influence, etc.
3. **Environmental:** These are factors that the individual has little or no control. Example: economy, pandemic, technology, etc.

2. COVID-19 pandemic: The COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, has altered every segment of life. Everyone and everything has been impacted and changed due to the pandemic. It was a surprising shock, which hit us all. It led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide; there was an unprecedented challenge to human life, public health, food, and how the world works. From the extinction of daily commute to avoiding outside food, COVID-19 changed many aspects, and in some ways, it is set to get better.

It has changed our personal lives, boosted our hygiene practices; home is our school/workplace. COVID-19 situation led to various changes in daily

activities, which is termed as 'New Normal'. In this case, COVID-19 is an environmental factor over which the individual had no control.

This study was conducted to understand people's behavioural change due to the COVID-19 situation, including attitude, purchase behaviour, and individual behaviour.

3. OBJECTIVE

- 1 To understand the behavioural change in people due to the COVID-19 situation
- 2 To understand the situation how to handle it.
- 3 To understand people mentality during the different types of period

4. METHODOLOGY

The paper is based on primary research data, and few references are made from secondary data.

- Type of Research: Descriptive
- Sampling Method: Non-probability

convenience method

- Sample size: 143
- Data collection method: Primary research through a survey
- Data analysis tool: MS Excel

5. LIMITATIONS

No method is 100% perfect; every process has its advantages and limitations. The limitations felt during the work is:

1. The study is at the micro-level

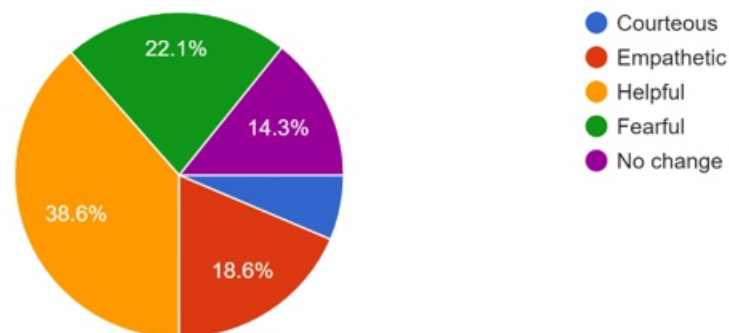
6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Data analysis is a process of scrutinizing, cleaning, converting, and modeling data to discover and learn useful information, suggesting inferences, and helping in decision-making.

This study conducted using a survey method with the help of Google forms was carried out from November 2020.

1. Change in Behavioural Approach

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed your behavioural approach to being more:
140 responses



Analysis and interpretation

Courteous	6.4%
Empathetic	18.6%
Helpful	38.6%
Fearful	22.1%
No change	14.3%



COVID-19 happened to change the behavioural approach of people.

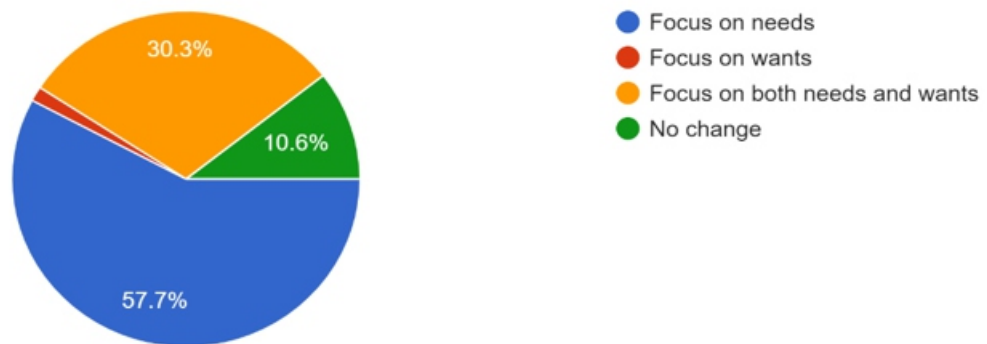
- 38.6% found themselves to be more helpful.
- The contagious nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has made 22.1% of the respondents to be more fearful. The fear instinct has increased in them

- A considerable number of people, i.e., 26 out of 143, which is 14.3% of the respondents, found no behavioural change in their approach due to the COVID-19 situation.

Being helpful, which is pro-sociality, is because of generous behaviour in humans.

2.Change in Shopping/Buying Behaviour

2. The COVID-19 situation has changed your shopping/buying behaviour to:
142 responses



Analysis and interpretation

Focus on needs	57.7%
Focus on wants	1.4%
Focus on both needs and wants	30.3%
No change	10.6%

Needs are always to be placed before wants, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs explains that very well.

COVID-19 left many people with fear, pay cuts, no work, and no pay. The impact it created was massive.

- Almost 58% of people changed their buying behaviour to focus on needs and

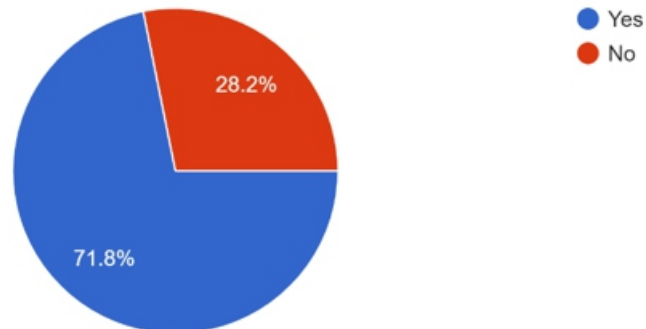
- only 1.4% focussed on their wants
- 30.3% managed to focus both on needs and wants
- 10.6% found no change in their buying behaviour during this unprecedented condition

In psychology, focussing on needs and not wants is the key to happiness.

3. Change in Purchase Behaviour

3. The COVID-19 situation has inclined your purchase behaviour to local preferences:

142 responses



Analysis and interpretation

With personal observations, during the COVID-19 lockdown, many preferred local vendors and local Kirana stores (grocery stores) due to no other choices available and because of ease of availability. Also, Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, announced the 'Vocal to Local'

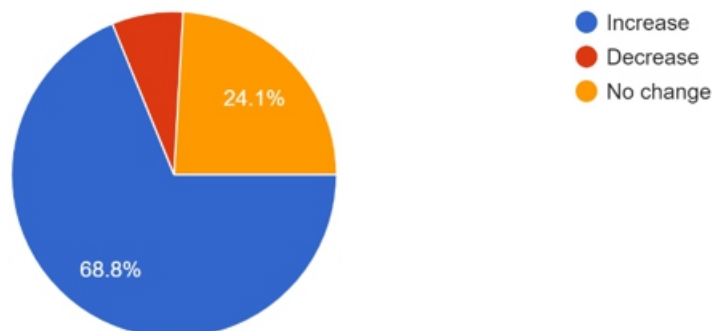
campaign.

We do not know if these factors influenced the behaviour, but overall due to the COVID-19 situation, 71.8% of respondents found their purchase behaviour inclined towards local preferences.

4. Change in Savings habit

4. The COVID-19 situation has made your savings habit to:

141 responses



Analysis and interpretation

Increase	68.8%
Decrease	7.1%
No change	24.1%

Most of the time, people cannot save money because they do not control their spending. A consistent effort needs to be made to spend less and save more, aiming at future security.

- 68.8% of respondents mentioned that there was a rise in their savings habit due to the

COVID-19 situation, while 7.1% saw a decrease in their savings habit

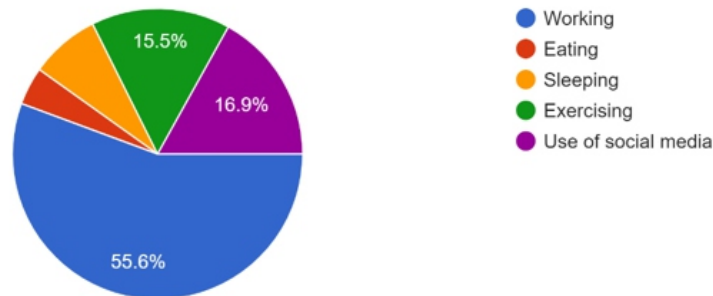
COVID-19 led to many uncertainties, including that of work/jobs, salary/wages. Importance of savings was realised.

5. Change in daily individual activities

i. Doing more

5. Which of the following are you doing MORE of because of COVID-19 situation? (Select one)

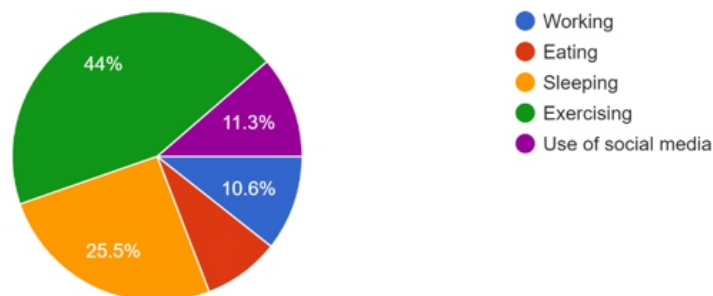
142 responses



ii. Doing less

6. Which of the following are you doing LESS of because of COVID-19 situation? (Select one)

141 responses



Analysis and interpretation

Individual activities	Doing more (%)	Doing less (%)
Working	55.6	10.6
Eating	4.2	8.5
Sleeping	7.7	25.5
Exercising	15.5	44
Use of social media	16.9	11.3

A comparative analysis of both the cases show that:

- 55.6% of respondents found themselves working more because of the COVID-19 situation, while 44% of respondents found themselves exercising less because of

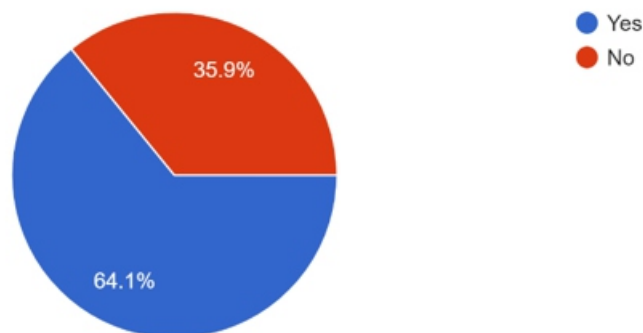
COVID-19, and 25.5% of respondents found themselves sleeping less

- The use of social media saw a negligible difference in both cases, so we can say that this activity remained constant in both cases.

6. Addition of new habit

7. Did you inculcate any new habit or skill during the COVID-19 situation?

142 responses



A comparative analysis of both the cases show that:

- 64.1% believe that they have taught new

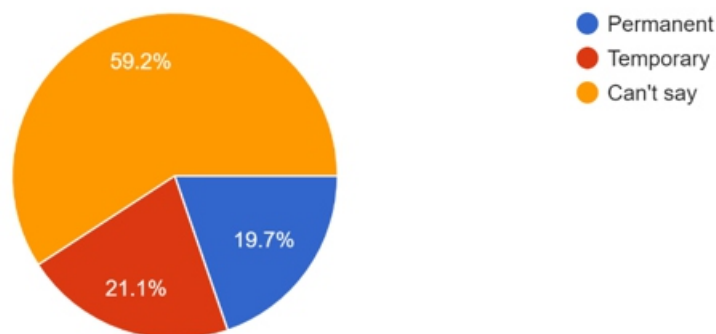
habits/skills.

- 35.9% have not taught any new habit/skills during the COVID-19 situation

7. Behavioural change is

8. Your behavioural change is:

142 responses



Analysis and interpretation

Permanent	19.7%
Temporary	21.1%
Can't say	59.2%

A process of behaviour change needs perseverance, knowledge about behaviour, and flexibility.

- *Close to 20% believe that the behavioural change due to COVID-19 is permanent, while 21% believe that it is temporary*
- *59.2% are not sure if their behavioral change would be permanent or temporary.*

7. CONCLUSION

A vast range of factors influences human behaviour. A process of behaviour change needs perseverance, knowledge about behaviour, and flexibility. Change in habits and routine influences behaviour. Globally, the COVID-19 situation led to many unprecedented changes.

Some key inferences of the research:

- People have become more helpful and are giving more importance to needs than wants
- They are saving more due to the COVID-19 situation
- They have utilized the time to teach new habit/skill

With the mentioned sample size of 143, we can say that the COVID-19 situation led to Positive behavioural change in people. Urgent action is needed to mitigate the potentially devastating effects of COVID-19, an activity that can be supported by the behavioural and social sciences. However, many of the implications outlined here may also be relevant to future pandemics and public health crises. A recent report from the World Health Organization declared that “health communication is seen to have relevance for virtually every aspect of health and well-being, including disease prevention, health promotion and quality of life. The study was conducted to understand people's behavioural change due to the COVID-19 situation, including attitude, purchase behaviour, and individual behaviour.

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