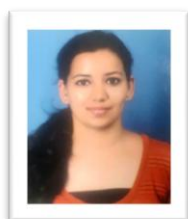


# Buying practices and food consumption Pattern during Covid-19 Lockdown: a Questionnaire based Study

Paper Submission: 15/11/2020, Date of Acceptance: 26/11/2020, Date of Publication: 27/11/2020



**Ankita Pathak**

Research Scholar,  
Dept. of Home Science,  
H.N.B.G. Central University,  
Srinagar Garhwal,  
Uttarakhand, India



**Rekha Naithani**

Head  
Dept. of Home Science,  
H.N.B.G. Central University,  
Srinagar Garhwal,  
Uttarakhand, India

## Abstract

The lockdown and social distancing mandates due to COVID-19 pandemic have affected the way people shop and their buying habits. Consumers are improvising buying habits and adapting new approaches such as online shopping. Amidst the lockdown, consumers are afraid to shop in the usual way and started considering online shopping as a safe option. With the adaptation of new buying habits, advancement of technology also plays a major role. The consumers have learned to balance out with work boundaries and household activities. This study observes the changing pattern and new adaptation of the buying process with the restrictions of lockdown.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 Pandemic, Consumer, New buying habits, Online shopping.

## Introduction

The objective of this research paper is to study the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on consumer buying practices. Will the new buying and consumption habits due to lockdown and social distancing remain the same or will it be back to the previous pattern once the global crisis is over? Will consumers adapt to a new lifestyle for a long term? Will consumers find that going to a store or attending an event in person is much of a hassle, and therefore, it is better to let the store or the event come to home? Broadcasting sports tournaments and entertainment on television and radio is a perfect example for the context.

## Review of literature

While consumption is habitual it is also contextual. Context matters and there are few major contexts which govern or disrupt consumer habits. Firstly, the social change such as life events like marriage, raising children and relocating from one city to another. The social context includes Friends, neighborhood, and community. The second context is technology. With emerging technological trends, it's breaking stereotypes, old habits and building new ones. The biggest example of technological evolution in past years are smart phones, internet and e-commerce. Ordering food, groceries, payments have drastically changed the way we shop.

Another major reason that impacts consumption habits is rules and regulations especially related to public and shared spaces as well as consumption of unhealthy products. The public policy can also be developed in order to protect health and surroundings such as healthy and environment friendly goods.

And the less predictable contexts are the ad hoc natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and global pandemics including the Covid-19 pandemic we are experiencing today; significantly affect both consumption as well as production and supply chain. According to a study by Neilsen, consumer trends were monitored with the COVID-19 news outbreak and their behavioral stages. The focus of this paper is to examine the immediate impact of Covid-19 lockdown on food consumption and consumer buying practice.

## Aim of the study

This study observes the change in pattern of the buying process and food consumption habits with the restrictions of COVID-19 lockdown.

## Remarking An Analisation

### Materials and methods

This survey was conducted among Indian respondents staying in India. The survey was prepared in the form of an online questionnaire (Google form) and was sent to 468 respondents of different age groups for three weeks; from May, 10th to 30th, 2020. A total of 300 respondents completed the survey with a response rate of 66.23 per cent. Only one person from a family was asked to respond to the questionnaire. The self administered questionnaire consists of socio-demographic questions and 12 questions based on food consumption and consumer behavior during lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic.

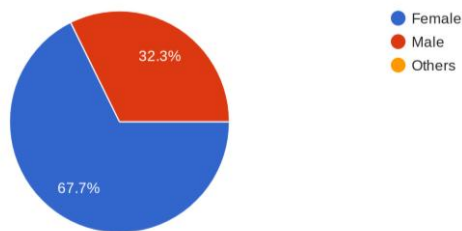
### Result and discussion

A total of 300 people responded to the survey. Out of 300 respondents, 62.3 percent respondents were from urban areas and 37.7 were from rural areas. From India the respondents belonging to Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh were included in the survey. The survey covered 67.34 percent females and 32.3 percent male respondents who were handling grocery shopping in the family. The survey included respondents in the

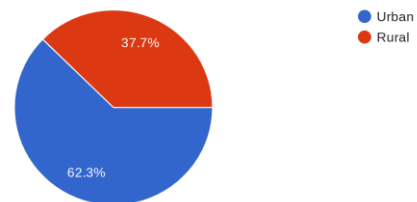
age range of 16 years to 69 years above. The data revealed that about 56.7 percent were Married, 0.3 percent were widowed and 43 percent were singles. The data revealed that about 2.3 percent were Intermediate, 27 percent were graduated in regular courses, 10.7 percent were graduated in professional courses, 27 percent graduated in professional courses, 19 percent graduated in professional courses and 14 percent were doctorates. Data revealed that out of 300 respondents, 52 percent of respondents were unemployed, 8 percent were in the government job sector, 16.3 percent were in the private job sector, 3.7 percent were doing business, 20 percent were doing other work (Contractors, Research scholar, Retired). The data revealed that about 11.6 percent were suffering from Obesity, 6 percent were suffering from Hypertension, 2 percent were suffering from Heart Disease, 2.7 percent were suffering from Diabetes and the rest of the population 80.7 percent, were not suffering from any other diseases.

Following figures summarizes immediate effects of Covid-19 pandemic on food consumption and consumer behavior.

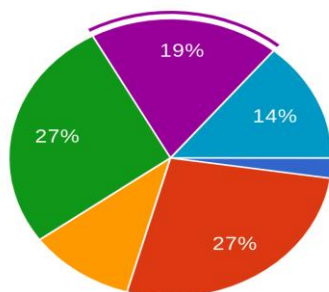
Gender  
300 responses



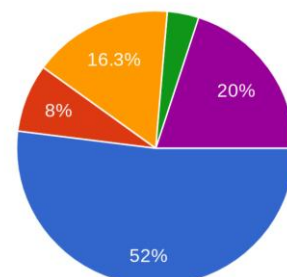
Area  
300 responses



Qualification  
300 responses



Occupation  
300 responses

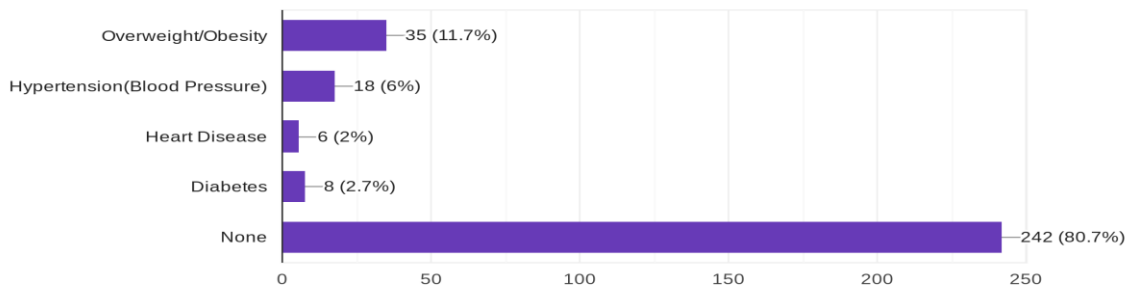


- Intermediate
- Graduate -regular
- Graduate-professional course
- Post graduate-regular
- Post graduate- professional course
- PhD

- Unemployed
- Government Job
- Private Job
- Business/Entrepreneur
- Other

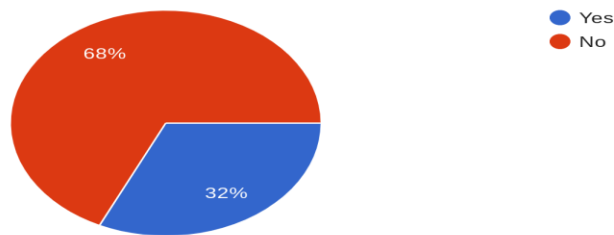
Are you suffering from any of the lifestyle disease? (Please check the boxes, if applies)

300 responses



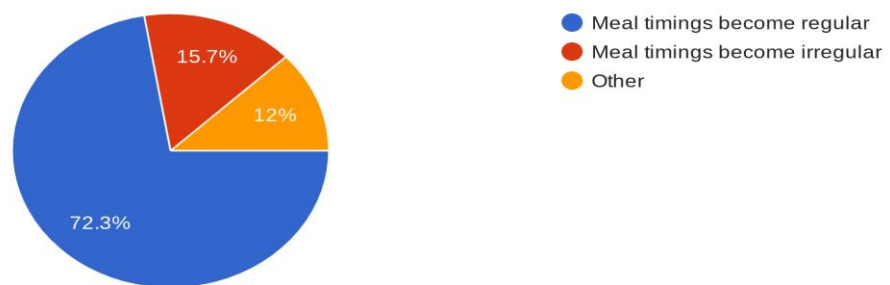
During the lock-down, are you buying monthly ration more than what you used to?

300 responses



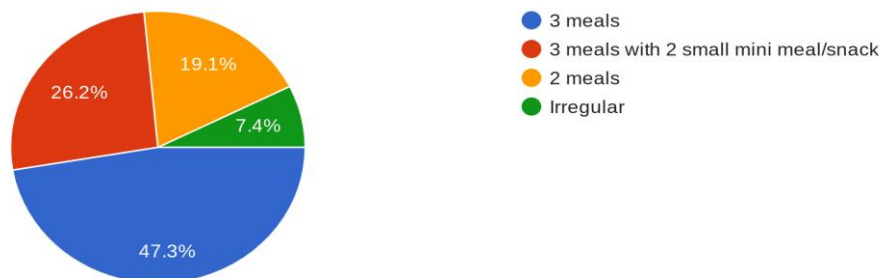
Is there any change in your meal consumption due to lock-down?

300 responses



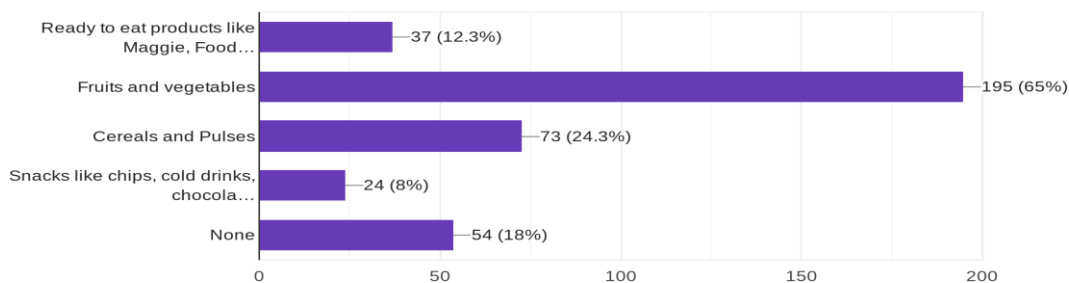
How many meals do you take in a day?

298 responses



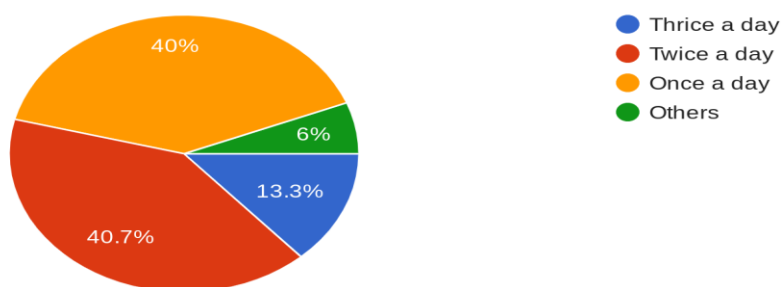
During the lock-down, what are you buying more than usual (choose one or more)?

300 responses



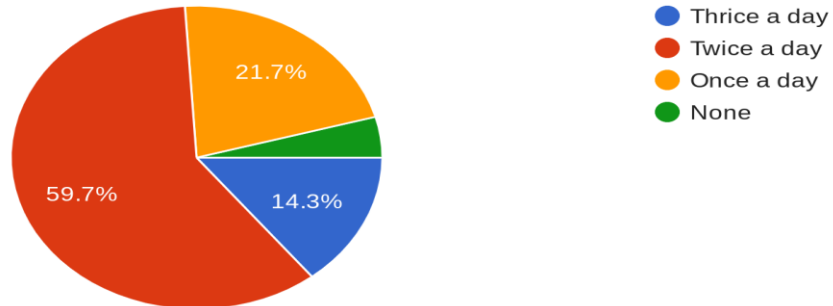
How frequent do you take whole grains, cereals & pulses in a day?

300 responses



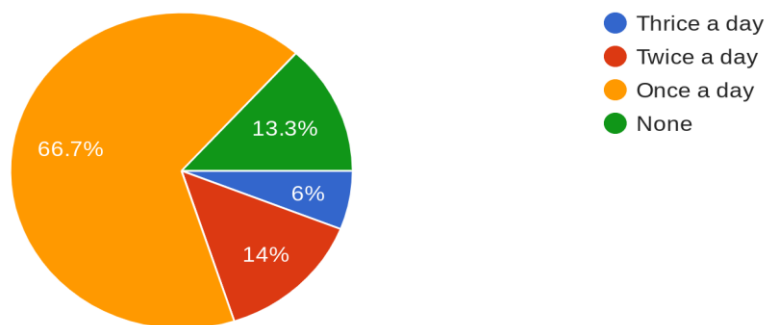
How frequent do you take vegetables in a day?

300 responses



How frequent do you take fruits in a day?

300 responses



Buying pattern: During Lockdown, 32 percent reported that they are buying more ration than they used to and rest 68 percent were still purchasing the same amount of ration pre lockdown. Data revealed that 65 percent of the respondents were buying fruits and vegetables more than usual while cereals and pulses, ready to eat, snacks & beverages were bought 24.3, 12.3 and 8 percent respectively, more than usual by the respondents. 15 percent of the respondents were not affected by the lockdown and they were not buying anything more than usual.

**Food consumption**

Data revealed that only 13.3 percent respondents were having cereals and pulses thrice a day, 40.7 were having twice a day, 40 percent were having once a day and 6 percent were having cereals and pulses irregularly.

Data revealed that only 14.3 percent respondents were having vegetables thrice a day, 59.7 were having twice a day, 21.7 percent were having once a day and 4.3 percent were not eating vegetables everyday.

The percentage of respondents who were having fruits everyday was 66.7 percent, 14 percent were having fruits twice a day, 6 percent were having

fruits even thrice a day and 13.3 percent were not having fruits at all.

Data revealed that 53.3 percent respondents were taking milk and milk products (Curd, Paneer, Cheese, Buttermilk) once a day, 27.3 percent were taking twice a day, 10 percent were taking thrice a day and 9.3 percent of respondents were not taking milk or milk products.

**Conclusion**

In the present survey, a change in usual buying practices can be seen among the respondents. Healthy eating and changes in food consumption pattern can also be seen. It's still too early to conclude that the change in consumer behavior will remain the same or will it have a long term effect even after the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

**Reference:**

1. World Health Organization. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): Situation report– 91. [internet]. WHO;2020.Availablefrom:[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200420-sitrep-91-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=fcf0670b\\_4](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200420-sitrep-91-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=fcf0670b_4)
2. WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020. (2020).<https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/wh>

- o-directorgeneral-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11*
3. Accenture. (2020). *How COVID-19 will permanently change consumer behaviour.* [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-123/AccentureCOVID19-Pulse-Survey-Research-PoV.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-123/AccentureCOVID19-Pulse-Survey-Research-PoV.pdf)
  4. *Frequently asked questions about hand hygiene for healthcare personnel responding to COVID-2019.* (2020). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/hcp-hand-hygiene-faq.html>
  5. Mckinsey. (2020). *Global surveys of consumer sentiment during the coronavirus crisis.* <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/global-surveys-of-consumer-sentiment-during-the-coronavirus-crisis>
  6. Gates, B. (2020). *The next outbreak? We're not ready.* [https://www.ted.com/talks/bill\\_gates\\_the\\_next\\_outbreak\\_we\\_re\\_not\\_ready](https://www.ted.com/talks/bill_gates_the_next_outbreak_we_re_not_ready)
  7. Solomon, M. R. (2016). *Consumer behavior: Buying, having and being* (12th ed.). Pearson. <https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&q=Solomon+M.+R.+%282016%29.+Consumer+behavior+%3A+Buying%2C+having+and+being+%2812th+ed.%29.+Pearson>.
  8. ReliefWeb. (2020). *A world at risk: Annual report on global preparedness for health emergencies—Global Preparedness Monitoring Board {EN/AR/RU/ZH}.* <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-risk-annual-report-global-preparedness-health-emergencies-global-preparedness>