

# Changes in Food Consumption, Lifestyle, and Shopping Preferences of Women Consumers, as an Impact of COVID-19

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## Abstract

Pandemic has impacted everyone's lifestyle significantly. The change in terms of buying habits, daily routine, and a shift to consuming healthy food was commonly observed in most families and women being the planner or controller for the house, the change began from her. Women in the families are responsible for taking good care of everyone and bringing in positive change in the family. And therefore we have considered them as our target sample segment. Our study focuses on the impact of the pandemic on lifestyle changes, eating and shopping habits of women consumers, in the city. The research is significant because it testifies the change in consumer behaviour in the pandemic. The researcher has followed a stratified random sampling method for population sample, collecting data from 120 women consumers, as they play an influential role in planning meals and also shopping for their families. The segment included working women, housewives, and girl students and Structured Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect primary data while secondary data was referred from research articles.

**Keywords:** Food Consumption, Lifestyle, Shopping Preferences, Women Consumers

## INTRODUCTION

We all live an environment which is dynamic in nature. People get affected by any minor or major changes happening around us. And as we all had witnessed a never ever situation recently in the form of COVID pandemic, how people will remain unaffected by it. In fact our lives took a 360 degree turn and every minute thing in and around us got affected. It was a panic situation for all.

And suddenly the entire focus of us shifted from leisure life to life saving. We realised the importance of health and immunity as life saviour, and the same time the pandemic also taught us life lessons as saving and live with minimalistic belongings.

People started changing their food habits from junk to Healthy. In any family women as mothers or wives play a crucial role in buying of grocery and household goods and to plan the meals for the family? The research paper therefore specifically focusses on the changes in lifestyle changes, eating and buying habits adopted by the women during the pandemic or as safety against the pandemic.

Different age groups and strata of the society responded differently, some had to quit smoking, drinking was reduced, shift to homemade simple food by middle aged and seniors, storing of food for emergency and also to avoid frequent visits to shops for buying. One of the study revealed that 49% urban consumers started eating a late breakfast and 62% ate late dinner due to increased household chores (TOI, Dec 28, 2021). Another study reported favourable changes in dietary habits with an increase in fresh produce and home cooking and reductions in comfort food and alcohol consumption (Front. Nutr. 04 March 2021 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2021.626432>).

The current research paper tries to analyse the responses received from 120 women belonging to working segment, housewives and girl students, pertaining to their eating habits and buying behaviour.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- Di Renzo et al. J Transl Med (2020), Laura Di Renzo has published a paper on the impact of the pandemic

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on eating habits and lifestyle on the Italian people. The authors have studied various age groups and over 3000 samples were collected from various regions of Italy. The view of weight gain was seen in 48.6% of the populace; 3.3% of smokers chose to stop smoking; a slight expanded active work has been accounted for, particularly for bodyweight preparing, in 38.3% of respondents; the populace bunch matured 18–30 years brought about having a higher adherence to the Mediterranean diet when contrasted with the more youthful and the old popular; 15% of respondents went to ranchers or natural, buying products of the soil, particularly in the North and Focal point of Italy, where BMI esteems were lower.

- Laura Di Renzo (2020) and her co-writers has published a paper on “Psychological Aspects and Eating Habits during COVID-19 Home Confinement: Results of EHLC-COVID-19 Italian Online Survey”. An online poll of the Italian population was conducted amid social isolation by the authors. The data analysis includes a total of 602 interviewees. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the population, with ramifications for people’s lifestyles. The study’s goal was to look at the link between eating habits and mental and emotional health. The fact that the survey was conducted rapidly at the most critical moment of the Italian pandemic lockdown was a strength of our study. Because the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, our findings will need to be confirmed and examined in bigger population studies in the future.
- Laguna and other authors (2020) wrote a research paper on “The impact of COVID-19 lockdown on food priorities. Results from a preliminary study using social media and an online survey with Spanish consumers.” The paper explains the influence of the COVID-19 health crisis on people’s food interests, opinions, and behaviour is described in this preliminary study. The evolution of people’s online searches, the characteristics of the most-watched YouTube videos, and Tweeted messages in relation to COVID-19 and food were all investigated in this study. In addition, there is an online survey of changes in food purchasing patterns during the lockdown was investigated, as well as the causes for the changes and the perceived dependability of information acquired from the media. The most popular searches and YouTube videos were about knowing what COVID-19 is and how the sickness can progress and spread, according to the results.
- Tarek Ben Hassen and his co-author’s (2021) published research paper on “Food purchase and eating behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-sectional survey of Russian adults”. To contain the spread of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 in Russia, the authorities implemented tight hygiene standards and daily life restrictions, such as social isolation and the closure of businesses and schools. While these precautions were necessary to stem the spread of COVID, many people pointed out that they had unintended psychological, social, and economic consequences on food consumption and lifestyle. As a result, the goal of this article is to determine how Russian consumers’ food-related habits have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the possible issues and opportunities this presents for the Russian food system. The research is based on an online cross-sectional survey conducted utilising the Survey Monkey platform and a standardised questionnaire administered in Russian.
- Miguel López-Moreno along with other authors (2020) have published article on “Physical and Psychological Effects Related to Food Habits and Lifestyle Changes Derived from COVID-19 Home Confinement in the Spanish Population”. A total of 675 participants, this cross-sectional study analyzed data acquired via an anonymous online questionnaire during the month before lockdown ended in Spain. Millions of households have experienced mobility constraints and lifestyle adjustments as a result of COVID-19 over the course of several months. The goal of this study is to see how COVID-19 home confinement affects the Spanish population’s eating habits, lifestyle, and emotional equilibrium. According to a survey of emotional eaters, 21.8 percent and 11% of people were classed as emotional eaters or very emotional eaters, respectively. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we underline the necessity of living a healthy lifestyle.
- Leila Cheikh Ismail and other authors (2020) wrote an article on “Eating Habits and Lifestyle during

COVID-19 Lockdown in the United Arab Emirates: A Cross-Sectional Study.” The coronavirus sickness is still spreading in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), prompting the government to impose lockdowns and social isolation. The goal of this study was to see how the UAE inhabitants’ dietary patterns and lifestyle activities were affected by the lockdown. Between April and May 2020, an online questionnaire was used to perform a cross-sectional survey among individuals in the UAE. When compared to before the pandemic, a much larger number of participants experienced physical tiredness, emotional exhaustion, irritation, and tension “all the time.” During the pandemic, 60.8 percent of the subjects reported sleep problems.

- Guo-yi Yang the main author and others (2021) published a article on “Eating Habits and Lifestyles during the Initial Stage of the COVID-19 Lockdown in China: A Cross-Sectional Study.” The Chinese government enacted severe lockdown measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus illness 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. It’s uncertain how the COVID-19 ban will affect people’s dietary patterns and lifestyles in general. This cross-sectional study used an online survey to get a snapshot of food access, food intake, and food waste. Physical activity of Chinese people during the COVID-19 lockdown’s early stages, and Look at the link between staying at home or working from home and dietary changes as well as lifestyles.
- Maria Martinez-Ferran and other co-authors (2020) wrote a review on “Metabolic Impacts of Confinement during the COVID-19 Pandemic Due to Modified Diet and Physical Activity Habits”. While the negative effects of a chronic positive energy balance as a result of a sedentary lifestyle are well known, the effects of a brief period of abruptly reduced physical activity and overeating as a result of enforced confinement due to the COVID-19 epidemic will be evident soon. We study the literature for studies that have explored the health repercussions of a reduction in physical activity and daily step-count paired with changing eating habits for several weeks in order to reasonably predict substantial consequences based on the current information. Increases in insulin resistance, total body fat, belly fat, and inflammatory cytokines are identified as the main metabolic implications in this research.

All of these factors have been linked to the development of metabolic syndrome, which raises the risk of numerous diseases.

- Luana Izzo and others (2021) wrote article on “An Italian Survey on Dietary Habits and Changes during the COVID-19 Lockdown.” The coronavirus outbreak has been labelled a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the World Health Organization; the outbreak has resulted in lockdowns in numerous regions of the world and drastic changes in people’s lifestyles. Through an online questionnaire, this study investigates the impact of the first coronavirus disease pandemic of 2019 (COVID-19) on food habits, lifestyle modifications, and adherence to the Mediterranean diet among the Italian population. Despite the fact that the epidemic is still ongoing, our research adds to the inquiry into the eating habits and changes of the Italian people during the COVID-19 lockdown. Similar research should be carried out all around the world to determine how the situation has affected people’s habits.
- Noor Rohmah Mayasari along with others (2020) wrote article on “Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Food Security and Diet-Related Lifestyle Behaviors: An Analytical Study of Google Trends-Based Query Volumes.” SARS-CoV)2 illness (COVID)-19 has had a significant impact on the worldwide economy and food trade. On a worldwide scale, there is less data on how this epidemic is altering our food and lifestyle-related behaviours. Google Trends was used to obtain worldwide relative search volumes covering a timeframe from before the COVID-19 pandemic 1 June 2019 to 27 April 2020. People’s dietary and lifestyle choices have been altered by restricted activity, as they seek out immune-boosting nutrients/herbs and have replaced outdoor activities with sedentary indoor hobbies.

## OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the change in lifestyle during the COVID-19.
- To analyze the eating and shopping preferences of consumers during COVID-19.
- To understand the impact of COVID-19 on the lifestyle of women.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This was a vital part of the research paper process. The parameters pertaining to analyzing the impact of COVID-19 on the lifestyle of people various day-to-day activities. Customers were given a questionnaire to fill out. This feedback came from a variety of people who were specifically targeted. This study was taken with the intent of evaluating and achieving the study’s objectives.

### Type of Research

A descriptive form of research was used to study people’s food consumption, Lifestyle, and shopping preferences.

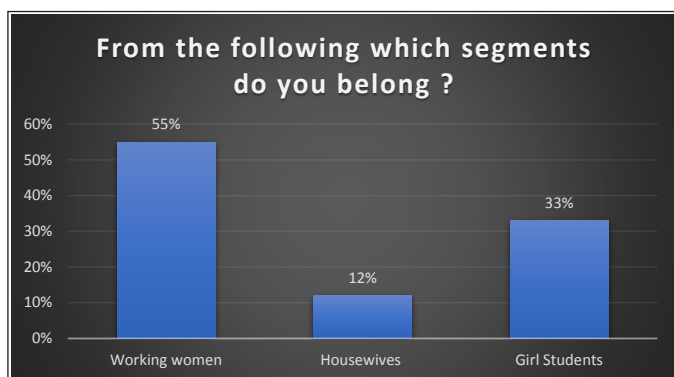
### Methods of Data Collection

*Primary Data:* It was collected from the mixed sample of various age customers from different segments. Questionnaires were prepared and distributed. Total 120 customers from different segments and ages responded. This will help to have productive and valid data.

*Secondary Data:* It was gathered from published and unpublished literature on the topic and how the concept is now emerging in the current market scenario, as well as the most up-to-date references available from journals, newspapers, research publications, and magazines, as well as past records and other relevant online sources.

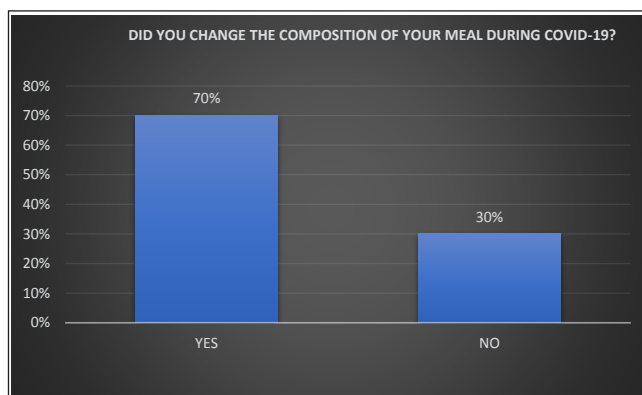
## DATA ANALYSIS

### From the Following Which Segments, Do You Belong?



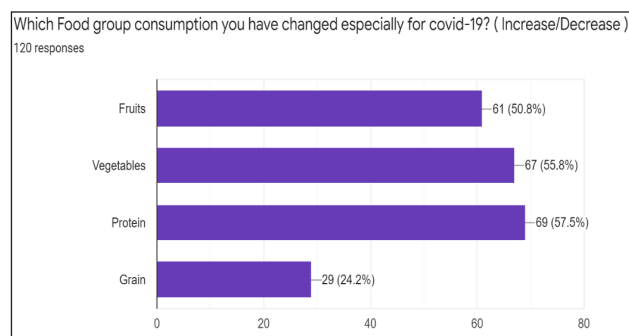
*Observation:* The data were collected from different segments of society to have more valid data. The 3 women segments include working women, housewives, and girl students. The feedback of working women percentage was higher than others, followed by girl students and housewives. The target segments were various age groups to get diversity in the data collection.

### Did You Change the Composition of Your Meal during COVID-19?



*Observation:* 70% of the women customers change the composition during the COVID-19. This suggests that people are thinking of eating healthy food because of pandemics to improve their immune power. The 30% did not change.

### Which Food Group Consumption You Have Changed Especially for COVID-19?

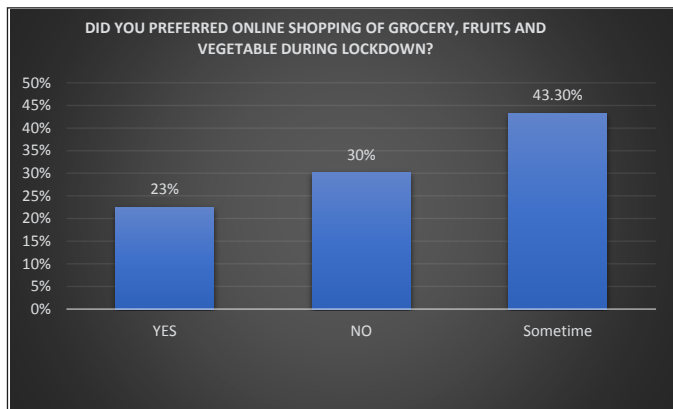


*Observation:* According to the above question, women consumers have increased their intake of protein 57%. They are 55% and 50% intake of vegetables and fruits. This reflects that people have increased their intake of protein as guided by the health ministry.

### How Many Meals Do You Take in a Day Especially during a Lockdown?

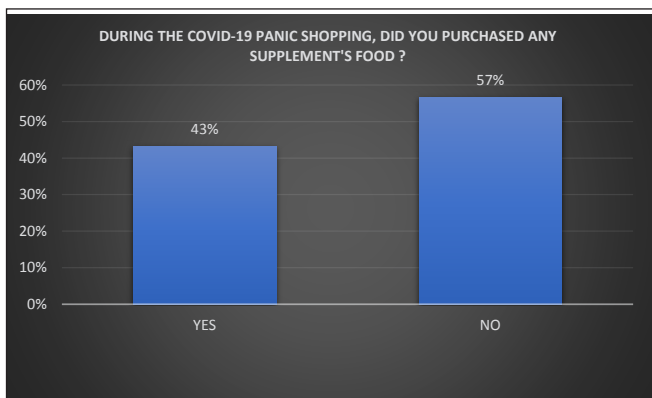
*Observation:* The result of the above question says that women consumer is having all the meals and not skipping any one of them to keep healthy and avoid deficiency of vitamin, minerals etc.

### Did You Prefer Online Shopping of Groceries, Fruits, and Vegetables during a Lockdown?



*Observation:* 43.3 % women customers prefer to purchase the food material online on occasionally. Whereas 22.5% purchased online only. 34.2% went for direct shopping. This indicates that women prefer shopping online and wherever possible directly from the market.

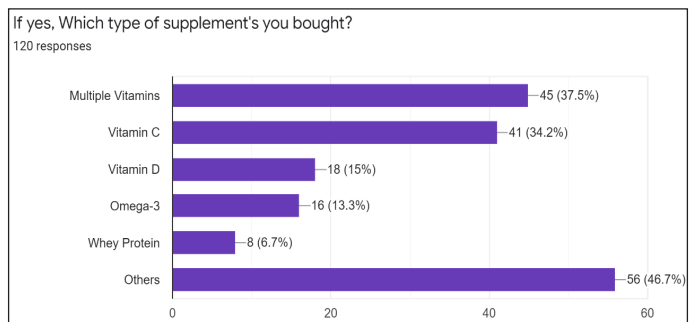
### During the COVID-19 Panic Shopping, Did You Purchase Any Supplements Food?



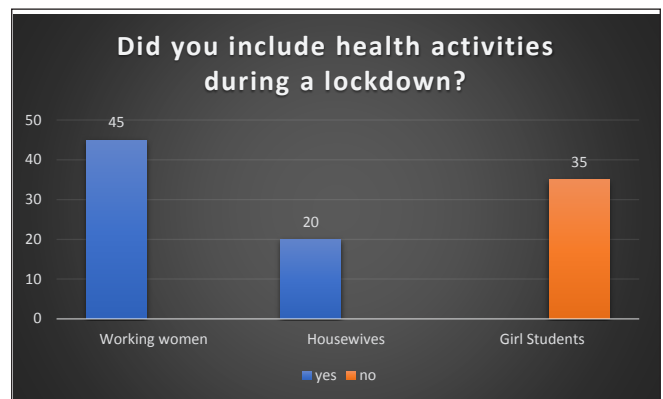
*Observation:* 56.7% of women segments preferred not to rely on supplements, whereas 43.3% purchased supplements during the lockdown.

### If Yes, Which Type of Supplements You Had Bought?

*Observation:* The continuation of the supplement question where most of the women consumers took majorly vitamins and other types of supplements such as ayurvedic, homeopathic, etc. to boost the immunity the women consumers taking the supplement.

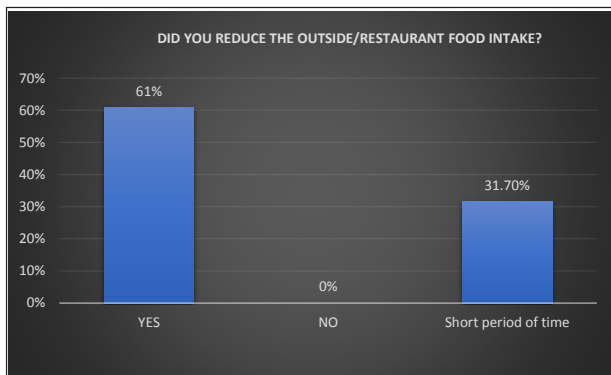


### Did You Include Health Activities during a Lockdown?



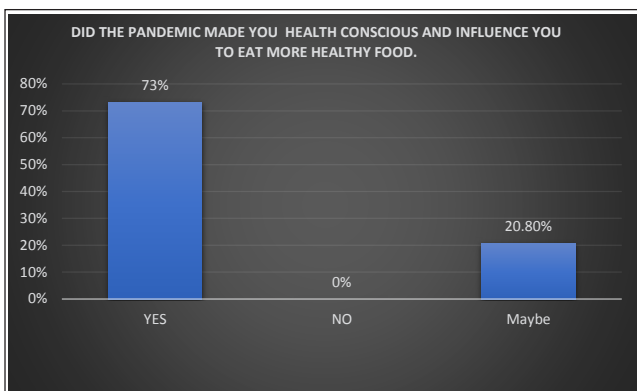
*Observation:* The women consumers change and include healthy activities in their daily routine. 45% of working women have included healthy activities, whereas 35% of girl students did not include healthy activities.

## Did You Reduce the Outside/Restaurant Food Intake?



**Observation:** 60.8% women consumers have reduced the food from a restaurant that shows that consumers are concerned about their health and eat home food so that they don't have a health issue.

## Did the Pandemic Make You Health Conscious and Influence You to Eat More Healthy Food?



**Observation:** 73.3% of consumers become more conscious eating or choosing their food because of COVID-19. They started finding information and knowledge of healthy food options. They prefer healthy food.

## CONCLUSION

The pandemic has definitely made an impact on women's food consumption, Lifestyle, and shopping preferences during the COVID-19 in Maharashtra state. Working women have changed their daily health activity, as working from home, may have given time to them. The women segment also started taking supplements and stop eating outside food to improve immunity and keep them healthy.

## Findings

- The lifestyle of the women segment has changed during the COVID-19.
- The eating and shopping preferences of consumers during COVID-19 have affected and they become health conscious.
- People have started the healthy activity in their day-to-day routine.

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