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RECTOR'S MESSAGE



A heartiest congratulation is extended to the Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah, Kampus Sungai Petani, on the publication of the seventh volume of FBM Insights.

This most recent volume of FBM Insights covers 25 emerging issues related to microcredit, micromanagement, marketing, consumer behaviour, social media, disability, dark tourism, and food security. This compilation demonstrates UiTM Cawangan Kedah's commitment to disseminate business-related information and relevant content to a wider audience.

I believe that this bulletin is an apt platform for members of the Faculty of Business and Management to produce more academic materials which can benefit the faculty members themselves and also other people at large. Such an initiative is indeed laudable since as academicians, writing to share information is definitely crucial to our personal and professional development.

Again, I would like to congratulate the Faculty of Business and Management and all individuals involved in the publication of FBM Insights volume 7. May FBM Insights continue to grow from strength to strength in the future.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Roshima Haji Said
Rector
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)
Cawangan Kedah

FROM THE DESK OF THE HEAD OF FACULTY



Assalamualaikum w.b.t

Welcome to the 7th Edition of FBM Insights 2023. This edition presents 25 articles by the academics of Faculty of Business and Management UiTM Kedah Campus. The topics involved a broad range of business and management knowledge, including matters relating to Covid 19, entrepreneurship, microfinance, and gold investing. Congratulations to all authors for your endless support and valuable contribution to the newsletter.

FBM Insights was created in the year 2020 with the aspiration to inculcate the scholarly writing culture among FBM UiTM Kedah's lecturers. Thank you to the Almighty, this bulletin still receives a positive response for each of its editions. It is our hope this continues and that FBM Insights will one day progress to another level.

Publish or perish, one phrase that all academics must embrace. The importance of academic publication is evident when it is included in several of the university's Key Performance Index (KPI). We need to strive to produce scholarly work. I hope FBM Insights can become a small steppingstone for all FBM academics of UiTM Kedah, in our efforts to improve our publications numbers.

Congratulations again to all authors. Heartiest congratulations to the bulletin's editorial board who worked hard in making FBM Insights what it is today. I wish everyone the best and keep up the excellent work.

Dr. Yanti Aspha Ameira Mustapha
FBM Insights Advisor

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IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON CONSUMER CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 debuted in the world in 2019. This situation has had an impact on various sectors as well as society in general. The COVID-19 pandemic has not only caused a new economic downturn but has also forced all countries to take extraordinary measures to contain the virus, to the point where "inevitable" is no longer an option. Businesses should think outside the box, draw on their resources and creativity, and be resilient, dynamic, and proactive, adapt existing business models or develop new ones in reaction to the pandemic (Alexandru et al., 2020). Citizens were forced to remain in quarantine during this pandemic, which had impacted their food consumption habits, food sector, lifestyles, agriculture, transportation, service sector, manufacturing etc. Since crises have a significant effect on people's purchase behavior and consumption patterns, as well as on their well-being, the sociology of consumption has been particularly focusing on these times.

CHANGES IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Purchasing habits and consumer attitudes are changing, and this will continue even after the pandemic is over. During COVID-19, basic needs such as food are at the forefront of most purchases. People are purchasing more carefully, shopping locally, and embracing digital commerce because of the pandemic's various immediate effects, the impact after regulations were adjusted, and the post-pandemic effects (Sharma, 2020).

As significant changes in customers' behaviors have occurred (Prentice et al., 2020), thus understanding the factors that lead to customer retention has become critical for restaurants' success. Few recent studies on COVID-19 have addressed the changing consumer behavior and perception in diverse hospitality contexts, including the use of technology in hotels (Shin & Kang, 2020), peer-to-peer accommodation platforms (Farmaki et al., 2020), online food delivery (Mehroliya et al., 2020; Zhao & Bacao, 2020) and socially distanced dine-in services (Taylor, 2020).

FOCUS ON HEALTH AND ESSENTIAL GOODS

The pandemic has shifted the emphasis to the top priority of improvements in health. As a result, consumers' priorities have evolved toward necessities, increasing demand for hygiene, staples, and cleaning products while showing a decreasing demand for non-essential categories. Personal health is the top priority for consumers, followed by that of family and friends. Other top priorities include financial security, food, personal safety, and medical security. People are more interested in beverage and food products with health protection benefits, especially those with immunity benefits and natural products.

Retailers of essential goods such as food, groceries, and healthcare are now seeing increased demand for home delivery while dealing with inventory, supply chain management,

delivery, and maintaining a safe environment. Non-essential goods retailers, such as apparel and footwear, are facing a significant drop in sales and must find new ways to reach and engage customers who shop from home to stay in business. Some manufacturers and retailers are even pivoting and changing their product mix to meet the demand created by the COVID-19 crisis. For example, shoe manufacturers create facemasks, and spirit manufacturers produce and market hand sanitizers using the same alcohol ingredient during the current crisis (Anne & Raj, 2020).

MORE SPENDING ON LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The rule of social distancing has changed how most people spend their free time. Most people have become aware of the pandemic quickly after it began. In the United States, for example, people spent 215 percent more time online reading news in March 2020 than they did in 2019 (Oxford Business Group, 2020). Other activities, such as television consumption, saw a significant increase in the amount of time people spent watching. The fact that most people want to access current events and information contributed to the dramatic shift. In Malaysia, for example, it rises from 208 to 307 minutes per day, in Mexico from 215 to 248 minutes per day, and in the Philippines from 173 to 230 minutes per day. Others are focused on their families, while entertainment and do it yourself (DIY) projects have increased since the pandemic's outbreak (Oxford Business Group, 2020). COVID-19 has also increased the use of social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram. Through word of mouth, it has been generating information bundles. Virtual sports and video games are currently more attractive to customers than the physical world.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has had an indirect impact on several sectors, including economy, tourism, trade, transportation, food, health, social, and others. COVID 19 has altered consumer habits and lifestyles. Digital payments, also known as e-commerce, are increasingly being used by consumers to purchase goods and services. They also place a premium on aspects of health, hygiene, and personal safety. Because of the COVID-19 existence, various new norms have emerged. Hopefully, users will be able to incorporate these norms into their daily lives to live a more comfortable life in the future.

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