

The Impact of COVID-19 on Economic of Oman and Omani Customer's Behaviour

Khaloud Salim Said Ambu Saidi¹, Mohammad Abu Kausar², Nour-Eldin M. Elshaiekh³

^{1,2} Department of Information Systems, College of Economics, Management and Information Systems
University of Nizwa, Sultanate of Oman

³Department of Information Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

The emerging corona virus (Covid-19) has become at the forefront of the scene around us around the world, after the disease has swept all over the earth, causing high numbers of deaths and infections, and it continues to expand terribly across countries without stopping or finding a drug that can stop it finally in an effective form yet. For sure the emergence and spread of the virus in this rapid way has effectively and strongly affected people, commerce and industries. Many researchers who were interested in the field of e-commerce around the world are more intensive to learn about the impact that the emergence of the emerging corona virus (Covid-19) has on the economic around the world, and economics of Oman in depth and whether this effect was negative or positive, and what are the aspects of Impact. The main objective of this research paper is to investigate in deep through reviewing several studies, the effect of corona virus in economics of Oman and Omani consumer's behavior as well as the aspects of the change that occurred in the behavior of Omani consumers as a result of this virus.

Keywords: corona virus, COVID-19, E-commerce, Shopping Behaviors, Oman.

1- Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has strongly change the world as we know. People are living differently, shopping differently and thinking differently. In January 2020, China confirmed reports that (COVID-19), originating in the central city of Wuhan, posed a serious threat to human health. As a result, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global health emergency. Millions of people around the world are death. The most massive outbreaks occur in the United States and Europe .most of the economics if not all are negatively affected by this virus. A rapid change has occurred in every business. It has changed the nature of trading, behavior of human, business and the way of life. The outbreak of coronavirus is not only a threat for public health, but also for economic and business growth in all countries. Virus is reshaping the industry in real-time and rapidly accelerating long-term underlying trends. Supply chains have been tested, retailers are closing, and consumers are looking to

products and brands through a new lens. Resulted that new habits will continues beyond this crisis, which permanently change what we value, where and how we shop, and how we work and live.

The pandemic of coronavirus, the social distance and continues staying at home, force people to shift to online shopping which directly affect the demand and supply chain of the e-commerce industry. The World Trade Organization (WTO), indicate that this is the right time for e-commerce to save the world economy and prove its effectiveness in the field of trade and online shopping. The most affected part of the industry due to the COVID-19 is electronics products as China is the largest producer of the electronics devices and its parts. E-commerce in such countries like Europe, America, Asia and the rest of the world has been affected by COVID-19 epidemic. Major companies affected in the market including Alibaba Group, Walmart, eBay and Amazon. The percentage of the effected people

and the effected economies and businesses by the coronavirus varied from one to another countries [1].

A period after the pandemic, we tend to become more interested in protecting our self and less interested to invest; resulting in reducing the growth of economic. The behavioral changes related to COVID outbreak seem to be related to the personal protection. Moreover, on a societal level, we seem that we were not prepare for a large scale outbreak as our countries were more open than before and more relay on importing of different products. The COVID pandemic outbreak force many businesses to close; resulting in a disruption in all industrial sectors [2].

2. Problems Statement

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives in Oman and other countries around the world. It's declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, where everyone is concern to minimize the spread of the virus to mitigate its effects and to protect them self. The impact of covid-19 in daily life can be divided into three categories; healthcare, economic and social. The research focusing on the effect of this pandemic in the global economy and mainly in Oman economy. There's a need to determine the main effects of covid-19 on economy and investigate the main aspect of Oman economy affected by this virus as well as the change on Omani consumer behaviors. Therefore, the main research problem of this study is how the economics of Oman had changed due to the pandemic of covid-19 and what are the impacted aspects of Omani consumer's behaviors?

3. Objectives of the study:

The main objectives of this study are to:

- clarify the idea of covid-19 pandemic.
- investigate the impact of covid-19 pandemic on the economic around the world.
- To investigate and study the impact of covid-19 in Oman and its economy. And how the behavior of Omani people was effected due to this pandemic.

4. Methodology

COVID-19 has impacted every field in our life, resulting in a big disruption to all businesses

around the world. The study is focusing on observing the effect of coronavirus on the glob economy and on Oman economy in depth. Moreover, the study investigates theoretically the major changes on consumer's behavior dues to the pandemic of covid-19.

5. Literature Review

5.1 *The impact of COVID-19 on the global economy*

The impact of the this virus on the economy and society can be seen from lockdown the cities, labor mobility restriction, travel bans and slowdown the economy. It's predicted that coronavirus will have a major impact on global GPD growth. Additionally, the current outbreak will cause the global foreign direct investment to shrink by 5-15%. Based on International Labor Organization (ILO), around 25 million people around the world may lose their job. This pandemic of COVID-19 is considered as the worst global crisis since the Second World War. Moreover, the impact of COVID-19 on the economic output of wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food services, vehicles repair is "high", while education, social activities and defense is "low" [3].

The most vulnerable countries to the virus are those that have a weak health infrastructure, heavily indebted and that depends on a unstable capital flows. Controlling the covid-19 outbreak is very difficult but it's required from all countries. The risk of the continues financial stress is very high even after the year of 2020. World Bank estimated that the poverty will be increased by 11 million people around the world due to this pandemic. Based on United Nations Development Programmer (UNDP), income losses in the developing countries will exceed the \$220 billion [4].

Coronavirus impact the whole ecommerce around the world. The effect of corona virus differed from one product to another. Overall, sale of the e-commerce increased because people avoid going out and shop from home, work from home taken an example of Walmart grocery online commerce which increases 74% than before. Moreover, media used during this period also increase, Facebook and Google update their services to connect more people in a single time. Furthermore, there are many products that are

significantly impacted by the virus such as disposable glove, hand soaps and sanitize. Based on Data Insider Consulting report, an increase on the personal health products like sanitizer, vitamins and supplement. While sale of snacks, luxury goods, and apparel decrease by 40%.

According to Luohan Academy in china, estimate that for every 10 days delay in return to work, the cost will be 0.39 to 0.45 percentage of quarter Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth. The longer delay in return to work, the greater impact on confidence of consumers and investors. As the unemployment rate increase, the demand and investment will decrease. Taken an example, the unemployment rate in the air transport industry which rise as a result of this pandemic. It can be said from the below figure that the Middle East showed the highest rate of the unemployment people during 2020 due to the pandemic of covid. [5]

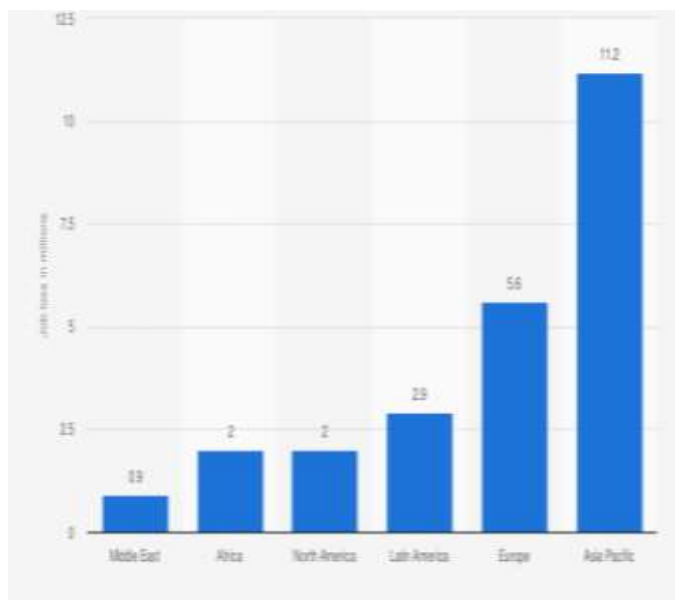


Figure 1: unemployment rate during covid-19

Moreover, the delay on factor recovery to full-production will affect the export and global supply chain. Researchers attempt to compare COVID-19 with SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) virus and they found that SARS cost \$40 billion worldwide. However, the impact of COVID-19 is still difficult to predict, many economists think that the impact of COVID-19 outbreak will exceed the impact of SARS. Comparing to SARS, COVID-19 deploy over a large scale and affect more people and countries. COVID-19 affected china economic before the Chinese New Year. Tourism and retails are the most affected sectors

by COVID-19. On the positive side, the development on the internet and electronics, made the e-commerce, the online education and the remote working easier to consumers [6].

Based on such research, travel is deeply affected, airlines cut their workforce by 90% and tourism seem that no profit in 2020. The international passenger demand decreased by 10.1% on average in February 2020 compared to the year of 2019. While around 65% decline was showed in the airline industry field in 2020 quarter 2(Q2). Revenues lost are estimated around US\$ 252 Billion for 2020. Figure below show a compression of the revenue of the 2020 and 2019 year's [7].

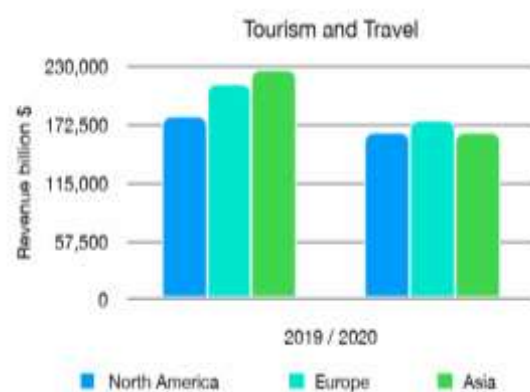


Figure 2: comparison of 2019 and 2020 years revenue

Furthermore, expos, sporting events, cultural establishments like museums are still off. Such important industries like cars, truck and electronics are still closed. However, a number of internet-based business like those which were related to the online shopping, online education, online entertainment and food delivery. Also, people have changed their demand consumption of snacks and cleaning products as they are spending more time in their home. Other industries that are doing well are those which are related to healthcare and medication. Typically, COVID-19 showed us that market are dynamic and can move rapidly. Market is not just a firm. It's a network of connected actors including: customers, firms and public organization [8].

The impacted firms are seeking to search for another marketing opportunity during the pandemic. A survey of 995 firms done by Zhu, Liu & Wei (2020), result on around 85% of them faces the risk of bankruptcy because of the drop in the operating income and the lack of cash flow.

Additionally, firms face a sharp reduction on the orders, cost pressures such as rent, insufficient demand, a general increase in the raw materials and many difficulties in finding alternative suppliers. As consumer consumption changes and consumers prefer to reduce the unnecessary expenses, this leads to a sharp decline on the firm's revenue. Overcoming difficulties during the crisis become a common choice for all firms. Therefore, many retailer and some manufacturers prefer to use e-commerce as a new channel to adopt to consumers need. Firm need to use marketing innovation as an effective and quick mechanism during COVID-19 to adopt to the new and continues change by consumers [9].

Because of the decline in Chinese supply of inputs; the productive capacity is decrease and the export of those countries which depend on the chines suppliers also decrease. For example, Japanese companies find a difficulties in obtaining some parts of digital cameras. The most impacted economics are the European Union, United States, Japan (famous countries in (machinery and automotive), Korea and Taiwan (famous countries in communication and equipment) [10].

As global pandemic hurts several countries if not all, the **gross domestic product (GDP)** is reduced due to reduction in employments which lead to lower production and export. Due to the higher cost of exporting and higher cost of input, the price of a unit of imports and exports increases. An increase on productivity loss appear due to the increased trade cost. Furthermore, inbound and outbound tourism is also decreased which result on further decline of the GDP and exports [11]. So, whole world was heading to serve a recession on the total GDP in 2020 in the magnitude of -1.0% to -6.1% based on the region and duration of the COVID. Figure below show the forecast GDP declines in 2020 [12].

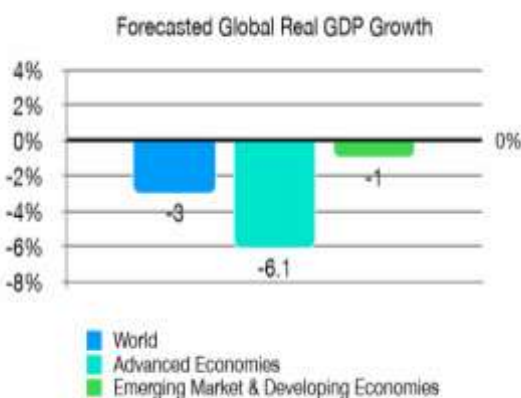


Figure 3: Forecast GDP growth in 2020

The main economic impact of COVID-19 that affect the global economy are direct impact on production, supply chain and market disruption and financial impact on firms. As mentioned before productions is already affected by the slowdown or shutdown in many countries. Many manufacturing firms relay on importing inputs from China and other affected countries. Due to the shutdown in economic activities and transaction restrictions, a direct impact on the production and profitability of global companies has seen. The disruption on inputs or production may stress some firms. Traders may not correctly understand which firm maybe vulnerable [13]. Taken an example, the figure below showed a declined on the stock market of such famous newspapers like Dow Jones and Nikkei as a result of doubts and market volatility due to this pandemic. [14].



Figure 4: The stock market declines

Oil industry is one of the most affected sectors by the pandemic of coronavirus. Because of the shock of COVID and the disruption between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), oil price goes to fall. Taken Saudi Arabia as example, it declares a discount of 20% in major market which result in a fall of 30% in oil price. Furthermore, fail in oil price and decrease in oil product demand result on revenue for such countries which depend on oil. The international travel restriction and the decrease in workers sure resulting in a big decline of the oil production rate. The decline on the oil price started from the beginning of March 2020 as the figures showed below [15].

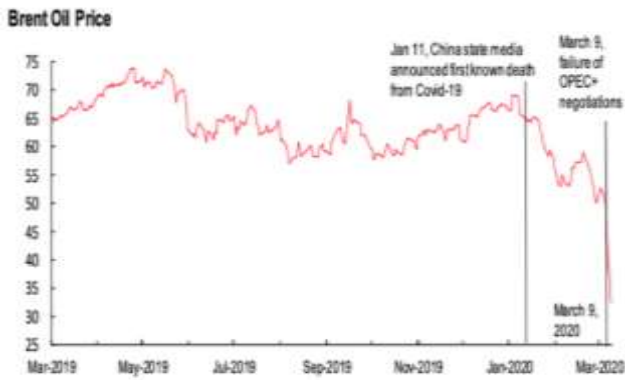


Figure 5: oil price declines march 2019-2020



Figure 6: oil price declines during 2020 [16]

Health sector which is one of the main sectors in our life is directly affected by the pandemic of COVID-19. People are trying to refrain from going to the medical centers because they fear from the risk of infection the primary care practices were facing a decline by 70% within the number of the patients. Salaries of the healthcare workers were minimized or frozen in most if not all the drugs centers and hospitals. Lynn Bar, CEO of Caravan Health Medical Organization, stated that visits to medical centers have reduced sharply especially during the primary quarter of 2020. Which end in reducing the payment to medical aid providers. Jane Garcia, CEO of los angeles Clínica de la Raza; stated that a discount in patient visits led to 25% drop by workers. Moreover, there's a fall within the coverage that's provided by employers. Now with the development within the technology, many companies try to extend the assembly of the diagnostic tests. Many of the local companies are producing medical products so as to form more profit. altogether countries round the world,

there'll be a stress on the critical care because of the continual rise on the COVID-19 positive cases. Taken Japan as an example, there might be a shortage on the qualified specialists to treat the infectious diseases. Because many factors in China are closed, many drug companies round the world didn't have stores in their warehouses, or maybe if it have it'll not sell it to other companies that it need it. This creates a shortage in the availability of medicines [17]. Across the globe, the COVID-19 outbreak led to a major change in the business conditions for Business-to-Business and Business-to-Consumer companies alike. The efforts to contain the epidemic outbreak of COVID-19 in China has changed the consumers' daily habits, the consumption patterns and the ways of thinking resulting in what's called the "home economy" and additional improvements in the online services that were appear [18]. While the impacts on Europe and Asia is high, Africa faces greater risks of the negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic because of many reasons. First, Africa is that the last region to register the COVID-19 cases, it had been already experiencing the results through its trade links with the Europe, America and China, which end in decreasing the markets for African exports. Second, while the infection rates in these regions began to flatten, the other holds for Africa. Although, the remainder of the planet is slowly reopening the companies, the trend in African economies have the likelihood of a deeper recession as they're likely to face additional production and trade restrictions if the speed of infection continues to rise. One study of Africa economics during COVID-19 indicate that Africa attempt to adopt some measures include cutting the interest rates and provide assistance to the rest households and firms. Taken South Africa an example; it set aside of US\$ 160 million to predict the vulnerable businesses and around US\$ 8.4 billion for the unemployment insurance fund. Additionally, 97.6 million Euro set for contingency plan to subject itself from the effects of COVID-19. Further, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia set US\$6.4 billion, US\$1 billion and US\$0.9 billion respectively, to enhance the liquidity during COVID-19 [19].

5.2 Online Services in Oman

The number of the web users in Oman is growing significantly. Supported the web Word Stat Report the amount of the web users in Oman was 4,011,004 as on Dec, 2019 representing 78.5% of

its population [20]. There are many barriers preventing many internet users to adopt and use different online services. A study has been conducted in Oman by AlShihi [21] highlighted some barriers affecting the adoption and therefore the usage of the e-government services in Oman including the shortage of IT Knowledge, lack of trust and confidence, awareness and motivation, absence of selling campaigns. AlRahbi, et al. [22] studied the technical factors affecting the e-government in six government agencies in Oman which are ICT infrastructure, IT security, IT standards and technical expertise. consistent with Alraja et al. [23], trust and relative advantage are significantly impacting the web intentions to use e-government in Dhofar citizens. E-business is growing rapidly in Oman et al. and everybody should cash in of this technology to contribute within the national strategy e-Oman and to be a part of the worldwide digital strategy. Limited studies are found in literature investigating the factors influencing the adoption and therefore the usage of online services in Oman. This research will contribute to the literature by exploring the main influential factors that enhance the usage and therefore the adoption of online services within the Omani society. the result of this research is predicted to help the choice makers to possess a far better and deeper understanding of the users' perception towards the usage and therefore the adoption of the web services to develop and supply simpler e-services.

5.3 Impact of COFID-19 in Oman and its economic

Oman is the pearl of Arabia. The economy of Oman continue to rising due to the rise in oil price. The outbreak of COVID-19 affect the global economy including the oil prices, airline routes, and large-scale events. As all other countries, the demand on products and services in many sectors of economy is reduced. The virus impacted more on small and medium size business. However, the big companies are facing more difficulties related to supply chain comparing with small or medium companies. As it's known that Oman is an oil-rich

country, most of its Gross domestic product (GDP) depend on oil and oil products. The figures below showed Oman GDP during the previous years, which indicated high decline on the GDP and GDP growth[24].

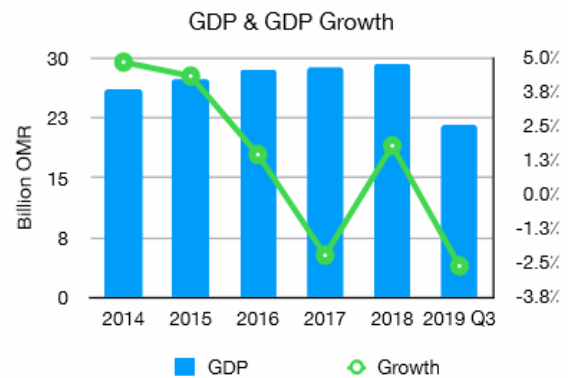


Figure 7: decline on the GDP and GDP growth of Oman

Figure 8: Oman's GDP declines [25]

The figure below shows the cured of oil from the beginning of covid-19 pandemic, indicating a huge decline especially during the first quarter of 2020. However, during the third quarter of the same year, oil price start to increase dramatically. [26].

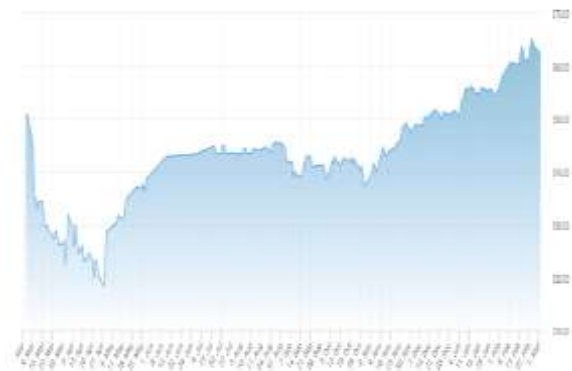
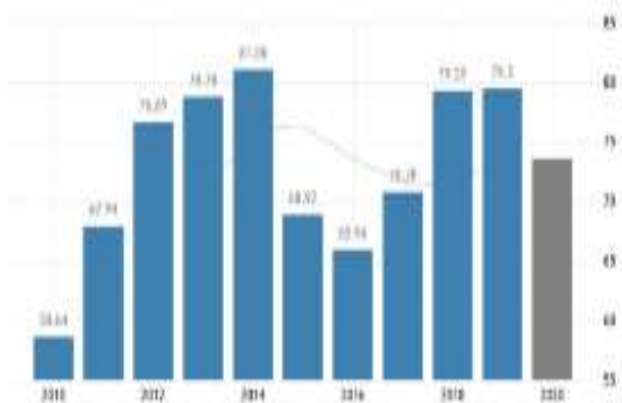


Figure 9: Oman oil price during 2020

However, the construction industry is also one of the most major part of its economy. Authorities of Oman decide to close the capital province of Muscat and set up roadblocks between the provinces to control the movement of people. This lockdown situation result in reducing the commercial activity which also leads to a large decrease in Oman construction volume [27]. From the experience of China, some countries learn that the key factor is the social distance. Another factor is responsible for the spread of the disease



is the regional and global travels. After the widespread of the coronavirus, Oman decide to take various measure to avoid spreading the infection. Taken an example; closing of school and universities, closing of different and non-essential services and offices and reducing the total number of worker in every office or institution [28]. The ministry of finance in Oman decide to reduce the budget of 2020 as possible. It decide to cut the allocations for civil ministries and government departments by 10 per cent and cut the allocations the civil, security and military entities by 5 per cent [29].

Different sectors in Oman are affected by this pandemic. Thumiki; an assistant professor at MCBS (Modern College of Business & Science), said: “ The higher education sector is impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in which all of the higher educational institutions have to function online”. Agriculture and Fisheries also affected by COVID-19. Despites its strength as it captures 580,000 fish in 2019, COVID-19 disrupts this market in the form of lack of buyers because of closing the retail market. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has less effect on the cement manufactures in Oman, as the Omani cement manufacturers are self-sufficient in raw materials. That’s because Omani cement manufacturers use eco-friendly and low-cost strategies to deal with the situation of covid-19. Three sectors in Oman were deeply affected by this pandemic; real estate, tourism and aviation. The property deals and the real estate transactions affected by this pandemic because of the restrictions on the movement of people. The real estate suffers from the rent collection as tenants are unable to pay due to the jobs impacted by the COVID-19. According to recent research, flight disruption results in two million loss in the passenger volume. With the flight restriction and people are staying at home, revenue from tourism sharply declined [30]. Anvwar Al Balushi; the chairman of the Anvwar Asian Investment, said: as many expats leave Oman, the economy is impacted largely. When many workers leave the country, their jobs will be done by others who may not skills enough. This will lead to lower the quality of the work which results in less companies' revenue . Saleh Al Badi; the Chairman of Nakheel Al Shamal International LLC, said that it’s natural for the expats to leave Oman because they had lost their jobs. Many contracting and construction companies, don’t have many projects due to the pandemic of

coronavirus. So they let their staff to go. Ahmed Al Hooti; Member of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and the Head of OCCI’s Economic Committee, added: as expats leave the country, this provides an opportunity to bring skilled workers into the country. A lot of the left expats were in sectors where more Omanisation was required, especially the construction sector, transport or the hospitality sector. These areas where more jobs should be given its priority to Omani people. Moreover, there are some sectors which are not affected by the pandemic of COVID-19 and it's still doing well. These sectors are the medical sector and the transportation and logistics sector [31].

As the other Gulf states, the effect of the global shutdown, and the plummeting price of oil have a destructive effect on the economy and finances of Oman. What increase its financial stress is that Oman does not have the vast hydrocarbon reserves in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia or the UAE. And the mid-rent state of Omani people is smaller compared with other gulf countries. However, despite public debt which rise to 77.1 percent of its GDP, The Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq ordered the formation of a committee concerned with studying the economic impacts of this pandemic [32].

Haider al lawati; in his report entitled “Coronavirus pandemic and the news media”; mentioned that within the health crisis and the deaths resulting from coronavirus pandemic, the mission of journalists and media is to deliver the right information to radio, television and daily press institutions. Workers in the media fields usually conducting interviews with patients, medical staff and public in the pandemic places, and they take live pictures from the fields, hospitals and different health centers. They may regularly travel on planes and passing through airports and checkpoints, which may lead them to be infected at any time. The important thing in this work is to protect themselves and give more priority to their health, so they can continue working with their institutions and audiences.

Regarding the food stock in Oman, which is one among the most things should tend more priority, variety of the officials valued the efforts done by the Ministry of the Commerce and Industry concerned to ensure the supply of sufficient stocks of staple foodstuff and consumer

commodities within the shopping outlets over all the governorates of the Sultanate during the coronavirus pandemic. Additional stocks of foodstuff and consumer items are regularly pouring into the Sultanate of Oman through sea, air and land checkpoints to verify that no shortage of any goods has been reported in anywhere within the Sultanate's markets. Salayum bin Ali al Hikmani; Head of the Majlis' Economic and Financial Committee, said that, by comparing the costs of the staple foodstuff (rice, sugar and wheat), it's observed that the costs of sugar and wheat remained stable while the worth of rice went up slightly. Al Hikmani called upon the owners of economic outlets to implement new, modern payments and delivery methods. Mubarak al Dohani; General Director of Commerce within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, said that the Ministry now formed a working team concerned with tackling the developments of the coronavirus. The team looks into the economic effect of the coronavirus developments and take the required steps to make sure foodstuff requirements through border outlets. By working in coordination with the govt departments and personal sectors establishments. Meanwhile, al hooti added that respective government departments and personal sectors parties made an excellent efforts to secure the essential needs of our society during the present coronavirus pandemic. Ensuring that enormous , storage areas are made available altogether the governorates to assist accommodate more stocks within the next coming period. Furthermore, The Ministry of Economic calls upon the firms specialized in home delivery to reply to the present initiative and supply their good and services online.

The ministry is currently maintaining a good inventory of a life-saving medicines, medical supplies and laboratory tests which were required to cover the needs of the health institutions". The ministry will continues to strengthen the available inventory to ensure that all the requirements to combat the pandemic of COVID-19 are available in sufficient quantities, including medicines, the medical uniforms for the healthcare staff and medical supplies. And additional number of oxygen cylinders were necessary provided to the healthcare institutions in the sultanate.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) launching a mobile medical examination bus located in

Muttrah city which is the hotspot of COVID-19 in the first period of 2020. According to the MOH, Hospitals in the private sectors have a major role to play in the national anti-Covid-19 in conjunction with the role of public hospitals and institutions. Oman have one of the best healthcare systems in the world and a dedicated medical team as well as the paramedical members.

Oman appears to be controlling the spread of coronavirus effectively; at least with the lowest numbers of deaths in the Gulf. Additionally, His Majesty Sultan Haitham announced a personal donation of about \$26 million. The government also announced a set of measures to reduce the burden on businesses, including deferment of municipal taxes and rents for factories in the industrial zones." [33].

In responding to the crisis, leaders are re-thinking on their organizations' purpose to ensure the wellbeing of their employees, and doubling their digitalization efforts. They need to renew their corporate purposes so that their organizations can contributes the suitable solutions to many difficulties that faces by the globe. According to a CEO Outlook report; over 55% of those CEO (chief executive officer) change their strategics in response to the pandemic of covid-19. Today, approximately 32% of CEOs around the world are less confident about a long-term global economic growth than they were at the beginning of the year's 2020. Most of the CEO around the globe say that the pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation, with a biggest advance in the digital operations. And around 77% of them says that they will continue to build on the digital collaboration and communication tools. There is a number of priorities when it comes to addressing the pandemic, including protecting the workforce and the operational continuity. The companies that were largely invested in technology, were better prepared for the current crisis of COVID-19, which demands flexible and digitalize operations. The widespread adoption of the digital technologies including the use of cyber security help to future proof businesses and open a new customer channel. The potential human and the operational threats have risen to the top of the perceived risks list due to the pandemic of Covid-19. Business leaders believe that looking after your physical and mental safety of your staffs and training the specialized staff can make a significant impact on the organizational

performance. Many businesses were reexamining their procurements and logistics strategies, reviewing contracts, inventory planning and materials management. They're always looking at efficiencies in the area of leading local and international practice [34].

5.4 The impact of COVID-19 on consumer behavior in Oman

Consumers are concerned about the effects of COVID-19, both from the health and the economic perspective. People are responding in different ways and they have different behaviors, attitudes, and purchasing habits. People around the world are afraid from adopting to this new situation. The fear is increased as individuals think more about their families, friends and society at all. Furthermore, some people remain indifferent to the pandemic and continue their business as usual (from their home, some open during night), despite the recommendations from the government and health professionals. Different consumer types help to understand the changes that consumers are making to their purchases. The biggest change is observed in the consumption of personal hygiene products. Worriers increased the purchase of these purchases by 50%. Moreover, consumer attitudes change as the pandemic progresses. Why, what and how consumers buy is varied due to the pandemic of COVID-19 outbreak. Consumer priorities have become centered on the most basic needs like cleaning, hygiene, and staples products bullish. However, non-essential categories slump. Financial security, personal safety, Food and medical security were also given more priorities by consumers [35]. Social distancing, frequent inventory shortages and the hassle of dealing with crowds have been increasingly frustrating people onto the web. With the rise of the coronavirus, some sellers quickly shift to online selling of their products and services which help many people to shop online [36]. The following are some of the most prominent aspects through which we can feel the influence of the emergence of the new Corona virus on the behavior of online shopping:

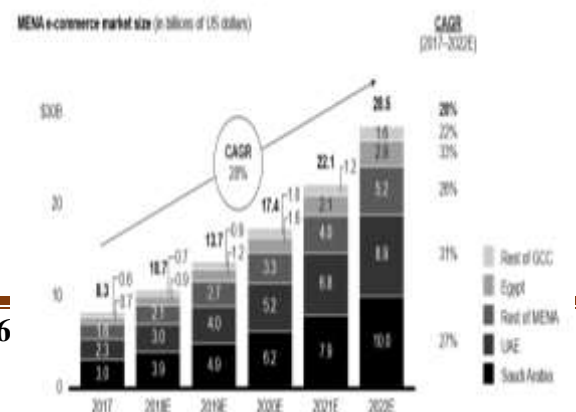
- Buying bug, or "panic buying": As soon as the new Coronavirus appeared. It was classified by the World Health Organization (WHO), as an epidemic of the most severe epidemics. People rushed to buy their supplies in a large proportions, fearing from the consequences of the

outbreak of this disease and its continuation for a long period. People rushed to buy medical supplies like masks, disinfectants, and household items such as toilet paper and foods like canned food, bread and others in great density.

- The differences within the purchasing behaviors between men and women during the emerging of coronavirus pandemic: It has been observed from the effect of the emerging corona virus on the purchasing behaviors, specifically the online shopping, that there are a large difference within the changes on the purchasing behaviors between men and women. While women were more likely to be concerned about the impacts of the Coronavirus, men were more likely to influence their shopping behaviors more than women. In relation to online shopping behavior, men avoid online store experiences more than women.
- The change in the volume of e-commerce revenue: With many resorting to sitting at home and avoiding going outside continuously, and with the protective measures that have been implemented by most countries around the world, there has a significant recession in the sales of traditional stores. This prompted an expected increase on the demands and online shopping as an effective alternative to going out of homes, resulting on a significant increase in the volume of e-commerce sales and also increases the volume of revenues [37].

As a result, the e-commerce was expected to grow up more comparing with the previous years, not only in Oman, but also on the whole Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The growth on the e-commerce of MENA described on the below figure: [38].

Figure 10: The growth



Following also some immediate effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the consumer behaviors:

- Hoarding: as the consumers are stockpiling the essential products for their daily consumption; resulting in a temporary stockouts and shortages. Hoarding is a common reaction to manage the uncertainty of the future supply of such products needed by consumers.
- The Pent-up Demand: During the time of the crisis, the general tendency is to postpone the purchases and the consumption of the unnecessary products or services. Usually, it is associated with the large products like homes, automobiles, and appliances. which results in shifting the demand from now to the future which of course impacts the GDP growth of the country.
- Blurring of Work-Life Boundaries: as the consumers are staying at home with a limited space, different discrete activities like learning, working, shopping, and socialization they don't do it as before. This seem to be with much needs and wants and with limited resources. Therefore, there is a blurring of boundaries between each of work and home, and between chats and tasks.
- Discovery of Talent: With a continues flexible time at home, consumers practiced their talent and performed a new way of sharing, learning and experiences, and a creative online shopping. So, consumers are becoming producers with commercial possibilities [39].

On the demand side, the coronavirus has changed the way during which people are purchasing and consuming foods. At the start of the epidemic of covid-19, when the understanding of the virus was limited, consumers focused on the panic buying to smooth the danger of the longer term shortages. The panic buying may be a common human response to the crisis. additionally , some consumers stockpile foods to scale back the amount of the longer term shopping trips; buying more on every trip to attenuate the shop visits; to limits their

perceived risk of COVID-19. Panic buying has led to rise the concerned about the shortages of food products like rice, pasta and long-life milk. COVID-19 also could changes the consumer's eating and dietary patterns. Further, via school closures and decreased on physical activity this might aggravate childhood obesity. The drastic changes on the lifestyles caused by the crisis could results on a negative emotions like stress, fear, boredom, and depression from the disease. consistent with a world research on the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak on the consumer's lifestyle behaviors; the unhealthy food consumptions and therefore the meal patterns, updated eating behaviors and physical activities could results in a health-compromising. Another good change because of the pandemic of COVID-19, is that the rise of the home-prepared meals; consumers are cooking and baking more reception . During the reservation, it's easy to seek out the time to practice different activities [40].

Consumer behavior is an important decision-making process of searching, purchasing, using and evaluating of products and services. Furthermore, consumer behavior is created by social issues, but it required to be researched deeply [41]. People are not the same. The most important factors which influence the consumer's behavior in crisis are risk attitude and risk perception. Risk attitude reflects consumer's interpretation concerned to the risk content and how much he or she dislikes the content of the risk. Risk perception reflects the interpretation of the people of the chance of being open to the risk content. Based one such study, new trends appear during the pandemic which include simplification of demand due to fixed offers during crisis. Moreover, the effect of the recession on consumer attitudes and trends is critical. Some of these trends are advanced by the recession, while others are completely arrested. It seems that consumers always seek uncomplicated and value-oriented products and/or services that simplify their lives. The changes in the consumer behaviors during the crisis interest the authors to deeply explore the consumer behaviors during COVID-19 [42]. It is expected that most habits/ behaviors may returns back to the normal. In contrast, it is determined that some habits will

die because consumers under the lockdown conditions have discovered an alternative habits that are much convenient and accessible [43].

6. Discussion and results

The pandemic of Covid-19 had several impacts on all aspects of our life around the world. Globally, consumer spending declined, industry has slowed down, and travel and tourism have been disrupted. Beside to that, economic activities and services has also decreased in both consumption and demand. Like other oil-exporting countries, Oman affected by the global pandemic of covid-19 and the drop in oil prices. The main affected sectors by the pandemic of covid-19 are hospitality, transportation and wholesale and retail trade [44]. Therefore, businesses and commercial companies have to modify their business strategy and the investment pattern. Considering the impacts of the covid-19 on the society, the pandemic has affected various groups of our society especially those who lost their jobs. Moreover, the elderly and children are more vulnerable during this crisis, forcing them to stop most if not all activities or seeing their relatives. This led them to a great psychological stress and anxiety [45]. However, one positive result of this pandemic is that we are seeing more social solidarity such as giving aid, charity and better initiatives by individuals. The government also try to set some policies and measures related to its economy and society to respond to the crisis [46].

7. Analysis and Result

As there were more cases; there have been more infections and deaths amongst Omani citizens. It's the responsibility of the government and the Omani people themselves to protect themselves and adopt to this pandemic in a way that it guarantees them live in a peace and safety life with respect to a continues coexists with their education, work, entertainment and families.

The effect of the global shutdown, restrictions, oil price affect the global economic and the Oman's economy and finances also. Not only the economic sector is affected, but also most of Oman sectors; Tourism, health, Education, Construction and Agriculture sectors. All of thesis's sectors were varied in its affection from the pandemic of covid-19. It's the responsibility now of all these sectors to work as it can to wake up and increase Oman economic.

8. Conclusion

The lockdown and the social distancing to fight the pandemic of covid-19 has significantly disrupt the consumer behaviors. For sure, all consumptions is a time bound and location bound. With time flexibility and location hardness, consumers learned to coexistence in a creative and innovative methods through finding an easy alternative. Our life boundaries are still blurred as some peoples still study at home, work at home, and relax at home even when our country It reopened most of the activities and services. As consumers continuously adapt to the house arrest for a long periods of time, they are more likely to adopt a new technologies which facilitates their study, work, and consumptions in a convenient way. Adapting different digital technologies is more likely to modify the consumers existing habits.

The coronavirus spreads during a rapid way round the world. The pandemic serves the economic impacts in several sectors of the economy that negatively impacts the worldwide trades, the financial markets and make demand and provide shocks. It's uncertain when the economies round the globe will get over this pandemic or how long does it fancy recover. Also, it's uncertain when all the countries round the globe will fully get over this pandemic. For sure, the recovery procedures will requires a collaborative actions from different contacts just like the governments, policy-makers, the healthcare professionals also because the common peoples.

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