

Study of Corona Pandemic Influence on Online Purchase Intention in Libya

DR. Husain Emhemad Tariki Faculty of Economic and commerce Al-Khoms, El-Merqib University hosenatriki@elmergib.edu.ly

Abstract:

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have a large impact on online purchase intention, and affected everyone's daily lives. This study aims to study online purchase intention among Libyan consumers. Specifically, this study investigates factors that influence online purchase intention during pandemic COVID 19 among Libyan consumers. In achieving this objective, the study applied one phase of data collection; quantitative, a total of 400 self-administered questionnaire survey were distributed using the non-probability convenience sampling technique, only 228 were returned questionnaires for analysis descriptive, exploratory factor analysis, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS. The results indicate that Libyan consumers Corona pandemic influence their emotional motivation and rational motivation, which consequently leads to the individual online purchase intention. The present study also contributes to important theoretical literature of online purchase intention by including emotional motivation and rational motivation as mediators between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention. The study provides a useful source of information to marketers and managers in dealing with electronic marketing issues among Libyans' consumers. Finally, the results of this study provide an extension in understanding the factors that affect online purchase intention, guidelines for policy makers, suggestions for regulators, and practical solutions based on the model tested for Facebook channel managers.

Keywords: Corona pandemic influence, Emotional motivation, Rational Motivation, Online Purchase Intention.



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1. Introduction:

The Corona pandemic has contributed to changing the lives of people all over the world, and they spend most of their day at home, and this has an impact on manufacturers and marketers as well, turning their work into virtual workplaces by adapting to digital transformation such as Google meet and zoom. From here, the focus began to reach consumers in the same way, and here we are talking about e-marketing, so marketers turned to social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, in marketing their products electronically. Marketing via social media is one of the branches of digital marketing, and is the most popular social media, the second most visited website in the world (Alexa, 2018).

On the other hand, e-marketing focuses on the merging between regular marketing and technological development, as e-marketing is part of e-commerce, and e-marketing requires strategies for companies to reach the consumer. Social media has become a space for individual expression, a tool for easier searching and better choices, and a marketing intelligence source to anticipating users' preferences and behaviour (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). Nowadays, almost everyone who goes online will have his/her own Facebook account. Facebook is a new face of e-commerce in the twenty-first century by providing new value of services to Internet users to express themselves and network with others (Laudon KC. Traver CG. 2010).

Today, electronic marketing has become individually, and that companies are setting up special campaigns for each customer, and that the volume of digital ads in the world has reached 333 billion dollars, which is 50% of shopping in the world in light of the Corona pandemic. In 2019, it's estimated there are 1.92 billion digital buyers, and e-Commerce sales account for 14.1% of retail purchases worldwide. Since online shopping, in general, is growing so fast, In 2023, e-Commerce retail purchases are expected to rise from 14.1% to 22%. Moreover, the dramatic rise in e-commerce amid movement restrictions induced by COVID-19 increased online retail sales' share of total retail sales from 16% to 19% in 2020, according to estimates in an UNCTAD report published on 3 May.

In Libya, the subject of the study, electronic marketing through social media has witnessed a good movement recently with the spread of the Corona pandemic influence to keep pace with what is happening in the world, and Small and medium-sized shops, to serve their customers, have started to accept home delivery orders through email or social media like Facebook, but this idea did not rise to the level required of it compared to the developed world, which may be due to a set of reasons being discussed in this study. A recent study showed that Libya tops the Maghreb countries in the percentage of the population who use the Internet, 74% of Libyans use the Internet, compared to 26% who do not deal with this method. Another study expected that, around 21% of Libyan consumer used online purchase.





Although many studies examined various factors affecting on online shopping behaviour independently, most of them isolated a few major factors, usually between three and six factors (Chen, 2009). The drawback of ignoring some factors is that the compound effects resulted from the interactions among the factors included in the research and those not included are often ignored and missing, which thus leads to the findings to be lack of generalizability.

This study contributes to enlarging the knowledge on consumers' decision to buy online, by exploring the Corona pandemic influence and emotional, rational motivations. In particular, using a convenience sample, this study investigates this phenomenon in Libya. After this introduction, the paper reviews the research questions, research objectives and the relevant literature of the Corona pandemic influence, motivations and online purchase intention. The next section illustrates the methodology used to conduct the analysis and presents the results obtained. The paper ends with a discussion of the results and offers opportunities for the future evolution of online grocery purchases. The conclusion provides insights into the development of strategies for Facebook managers to better fulfil their consumers' shopping needs.

2. Research Questions:

This study attempts to develop such a research questions to study the effects of several major factors which are identified by prior studies on online purchase intention. The main question of the study is what is the role of corona pandemic influence on the online purchase intention in Libyan consumers, the research questions are thus stated as followed:

- 2.1 What is the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and emotional motivation, and rational motivation among Libyan consumer?
- 2.2 What is the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention among Libyan consumers?
- 2.3 What is the relationship between emotional motivation and online purchase intention among Libyan consumers?
- 2.4 What is the relationship between rational motivation and online purchase intention among Libyan consumers?
- 2.5 Do emotional motivation, and rational motivation as a mediating variable strengthen or weaken the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and consumer online purchase intention among Libyan consumers?

3. Research objectives:

3.1. To examine the impact of Corona pandemic influence on emotional motivation, and rational motivation among Libyan consumer.





- 3.2. To examine the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention among Libyan consumers.
- 3.3. To determine the influence of emotional motivation on online purchase intention among Libyan consumers.
- 3.4. To determine the influence of rational motivation on online purchase intention among Libyan consumers
- 3.5. To determine the mediating influence of emotional motivation and rational motivation between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention among Libyan consumers.

4. Literature Review and Research Hypotheses:

The conceptual framework designed for the study is presented in Figure 1, with the determinants of consumer online purchase intention. The framework is developed on the basis of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) that illustrates the Behavioural intention which refers to the motivational factors that influence a given behaviour where the stronger the intention to perform the behaviour, the more likely the behaviour will be performed. The study's conceptual model is presented in Figure 1. The sub-section provides a discussion of the research hypotheses in four parts; first the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and emotional motivation, rational motivation and online purchase intention, the second relationship between emotional motivation, rational motivation and online purchase intention, the third; mediating effect of an emotional motivation and rational motivation between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention.

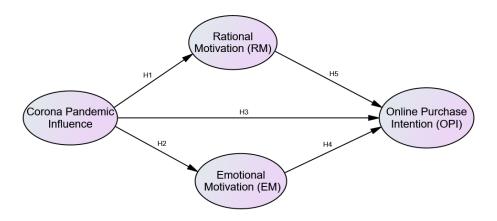


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses. Source: Author's conceptualization

4.1. Online Purchase Intention:

Online shopping has been increasing worldwide. Close and Kukar- Kinney (2010) defined online purchase intention as the intention of online shoppers to buy goods and services via the internet or virtual shopping carts. Besides that, Iqbal et al. (2012) also defined online purchase intentions as the customers' willingness to use internet





services, making an actual purchase of goods and services or comparing the prices of products. Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce that enables consumers to purchase goods or services directly from retailers via the Internet using a web browser (Aldhmour & Sarayrah, 2016).

Online purchase intention tends to have a positive relationship with the actual online purchase behaviour (Lim, Y. J., Osman, A., Salahuddin, S. N., Romle, A. R., & Abdullah, S Lim, 2016). Thus, the stronger the online purchase intention of an individual, the more likely s/he is to perform the online purchase behaviour.

Accordingly, the study have focused on investigating the factors that influence consumer intention to purchase online as a determinant of actual behaviour. The following literature attempts to explore the relationships among Corona pandemic influence, emotional motivation, rational motivation and online purchase intention.

4.2 Situational Influences (Corona Pandemic Influence):

Situational factors can influence the decision to buy online (Hand et al., 2009; Perea y Monsuw'e et al., 2004). Belk (1975) described five types of situational factors: physical surroundings, social surroundings, temporal perspectives, task definition, and antecedent states.

Situational factors are usually ignored in consumer behaviour research, both in general and in the specific contexts of the adoption of technology and of internet shopping (Hand C, et al. 2009). Accordingly, Dominici, Andrea (2021) conducted a study in Italy and demonstrated that situational influence have an effect on online grocery services. In addition, the Corona pandemic influence has a significant impact on consumer intention toward online book shopping (Nguyen, et al. 2020). Moreover, in Morganosky and Cude (2000) study, convenience was a particularly relevant motive when there were situational constraints such as ill health in the household. This suggests that situational factors (Corona pandemic influence; in this study) may be important in shaping and enhancing online shopping motivations. Therefore, on the basis of the above findings, this study proposes the following hypotheses for testing;

- H1. There is a positive relationship between Corona pandemic influence and rational motivations.
- H2. There is a positive relationship between Corona pandemic influence and emotional motivations.
- H3. There is a positive relationship between Corona pandemic influence and consumers' online purchase intention.



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4.3 Emotional Motivation:

The emotional purchasing motive is related to the emotional needs of individuals for a pleasant and interesting shopping experience (Bhatnagar and Ghosh, 2004). Emotional motivations have been elaborated as the festive or even pleasure-seeking side of shopping by Scarpi (2006).

Emotional motivations have a role in online purchase intention that has been extensively acknowledged in literature (Khare, Singh & Khare, 2010; Chen 2012; Singh, D. P. 2014; Novela, Y. O. et al., 2020). Hence, this study proposes the following hypothesis for testing;

H4. There is a positive relationship between emotional motivation and consumers' online purchase intention.

4.4 Rational Motivation:

Rational value is defined as an overall assessment (i.e., judgment) of functional benefits and sacrifices. Rational value is relevant for task-specific use of online shopping, such as purchase deliberation (i.e., considering the product, service, and price features before actual purchase) (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). The rational aspects in online shopping are linked to value, information, ease of use (Khare & Rakesh, 2011) and convenience (Chen 2012; Khare & Rakesh, 2011). Add Çebi Karaaslan, K. (2021) on his study finding that, the influence of situation on online purchase intention. On the basis of studies in literature, this study proposes the following hypothesis to be tested:

H5. There is a positive relationship between rational motivation and consumers' online purchase intention.

4.5 Emotional motivation as mediator:

In this study, the emotional motivation is used to mediate the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention. As such, it is expected that effects of both pandemic situational influence on the online purchase intention would be larger when the impact of emotional motivation is higher. This study expects that may the increase in emotional motivation levels is compounded by the Corona pandemic influence of Libyan consumers' online purchase intention. Based on this, the following hypothesis are proposed:

H6. Emotional motivation will mediate the effect of Corona pandemic influence on online purchase intention.

4.6 Rational motivation as mediator:

This is the variable which explains the relation between independent and dependent variable of a framework. In this study, the rational motivation is used to mediate the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention.





Therefore, this study intends to expand on the findings of available literatures mentioned, by hypothesizing that rational motivation will mediate the relationships between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention as follows;

H7. Rational motivation will mediate the effect of Corona pandemic influence on online purchase intention

5. Research Methodology:

The questionnaire was conducted to test the research model and hypotheses based on survey data collected from Tripoli and Al-Khoms cities in Libya. According to the conceptual framework, the questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part included measures of the variables, which were identified in the literature review section: Corona pandemic influence, rational motivation, emotional motivation and online purchase intention. The second part included demographic variables (Age, Gender, Marital Status, education, and Occupation), which were measured by scale. The total questionnaires distributed for this study were 400 self-administered questionnaire survey and questionnaire online survey, only 177 were returned from self-administrated with 233 were missing, and 51 received from online survey, and considered suitable for the analysis. Additionally, the use of SPSS Version 21, and AMOS Version 22 were employed for the data analysis. Also this study used pilot study, a survey questionnaire was distributed to 23 Libyan consumers in Al-Khoms city.

Also, this study adopts the constructs of previous literature and measurement of 5-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 depicting strongly disagree to 5 depicting strongly agree. More specifically, the construct of online purchase intention items were adopted including its modified from (Nguyen, et al, 2020; San Martn H, Herrero 2012), and rational motivation and emotional motivation items were adopted including its modified version from the study of (Jahn and Kunz, 2012), vis a vis the Corona pandemic influence items adopted including its modified version from (Nguyen, et al, 2020).

6. Results:

6.1 Demographic profile of respondents

The respondents' profiles in light of their gender, level of education, cities and state are presented in Table 1. With regards to respondents' gender, majority of them (53.5%) were male, while the rest (46.5%) were female respondents. Moving on to their education level, majority of respondents were degree holders (63.2%). Moving to the cites, majority of respondents were from Tripoli (56.1%), following by Al-Khoms city (32.1%).





Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N=228)

Chanastaniatia	Cohonomi	Sample (228)	
Characteristic	Characteristic Category		%
Gender	Male	122	53.5
	Female	106	46.5
	Total	228	100%
Age	18-25	157	68.9
	26-35	20	8.8
	36-45	36	15.8
	46-55	12	5.3
	56 and more	3	1.3
	Total	228	100%
	Student	156	68.4
	Employer	68	29.8
Occupation	Self employed	2	.9
	Housewife	2	.9
	Total	228	100%
	Undergraduate	2	.9
	Graduate	41	18.0
Level of education	Degree	144	63.2
	Postgraduate	41	18.0
	Total	228	100%
State	Al-Khoms	73	32.0
	Tripoli	128	56.1
	Misrata	12	5.3
	Tajora	4	1.8
	Marj	2	.9
	Other	9	3.9
	Total	228	100%

6.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

As stated earlier, the use of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was employed in this study in order to determine the relationship level of the observed variables, including the underlying factors. Basically, as suggested by Straub (1989), the EFA analysis was carried out in this study, in order to determine the validity of the items contained within the survey questionnaires. In which the data collected for this analysis were fit for the EFA based on several reasons, such as (i) the majority of the correlation coefficients scores were over 0.3, and (ii) the values of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was higher than 0.60 (the cut-off value) – particularly **CPI** KMO value is 0.663, **EM** is 0.778, **RM** is 0.791, and **OPI** is 0.673. Finally, the





Bartlett's Test of Sphericity achieved the statistical significance level required and confirmed the data appropriateness to be exposed to analysis (Pallant, 2005).

Moreover, it was discovered that the EFA value of SI shows that they were successfully loaded on a single component, with CPI3, CPI4 and CPI5 and (CPI1, CPI2) being dropped owing to low factor loading, CPI1= (Many markets close during the COVID-19 pandemic), CPI2= (There are significant health risks associated with visiting markets during the COVID-19 pandemic). In terms of the EM items, the EFA shows that they were successfully loaded on a single component, with EM1, EM2 and EM3, and EM4 being dropped owing to low factor loading, EM4= (Facebook shopping is entertaining). Similarly, the items of RM were loaded on one component, with RM1, RM2, RM3, and RM4. The OPI items was also loaded on one component, with OPI1, OPI2 and OPI3. Finally, the help of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of SEM was employed to test the hypotheses proposed for this study. Below Table 2 shows the measurement model standard loadings as employed in this study with the critical ratios.

Table 2. Measurement Model

Items	Standardized loadings	Critical ratios			
Corona Pandemic Influence					
CPI3 . Online markets extend their product portfolio during the COVID-19 pandemic	.779	N.A			
CPI4 . Online markets offer more sales promotions during the COVID-19 pandemic.	.768	8.068			
CPI5 . Online shopping is a trend during the COVID-19 pandemic.	.550	6.991			
Emotional Motivation					
EM1. Facebook shopping is fun	.786	N.A			
EM2. Facebook shopping is exciting	.874	13.151			
EM3. Facebook shopping is pleasant	.805	12.414			
Rational Motivation					
RM1. Facebook shopping is helpful.	.782	N.A			
RM2. Facebook shopping is useful.	.888	14.227			
RM3 . Facebook shopping is functional.	.816	13.012			
RM4. Facebook shopping is practical	.718	11.196			
Online Purchase Intention					
OPI1 . I will probably buy by Facebook in the near future.	.784	N.A			
OPI2 . I intend to buy by Facebook shortly.	.918	14.019			
OPI3 . I am decided to buy by Facebook in my next purchase.	.743	11.667			





6.3 Measurement and Structural Model

The structural model is used to test the hypothesized relationships between latent variables (refer to Figure 2). The measurement model's reliability and validity were confirmed and each construct and the measurement model's details are displayed in Figure 2. Moreover, the SEM analysis using AMOS demonstrated the following obtained Goodness-of-Fit outcome; Chi –Square $\chi 2$ (CMIN) = 162.152, df = 60, Relative $\chi 2$ (CMIN/df) = 2.703, p .000, GFI = .902, CFI = .932, RMSEA = .087, IFI = .933, TLI = .912.

Based on the values in Table 3, the SEM analysis indicated that the entire standardized path coefficients were consistent with the hypotheses, which shows the significant relationships between the predictor and criteria variables. The proposed hypotheses of the study were tested using structural equation modelling software AMOS 22.

Hypothesized relationships Estimate T-value Result H1 **CPI** 4.375 *** RM .568 Supported H2 **CPI** EM2.762 ** 366 Supported H3 .195 CPI → OPI 1.978 * Supported H4 $EM \rightarrow OPI$.272 4.953 *** Supported H5 RM → OPI .451 6.145 *** Supported

Table 3: Hypotheses Testing

6.4 Result of Mediating Effects:

Hypotheses H6 and H7 were used to test the mediating effects of emotional motivation and rational motivation. The mediating effects, otherwise referred to as indirect effects, are the effects mediated by each of the variables that intervene between the independent and dependent variables.

This is because as expected through the significance of the indirect effects, the relationships of Corona pandemic influence towards the online purchase intention were mediated through emotional motivation (CPI \rightarrow EM \rightarrow OPI: Z = 2.498, p < .05; (.012). On the other hand, the relationships of Corona pandemic influence towards the online purchase intention were mediated through rational motivation CPI \rightarrow RM \rightarrow OPI: Z = 4.685, p < .05). (.000), Thus, hypothesis 6 and 7were supported

Table 4: Mediation Hypotheses Result

Hypothesized relationships		T-value	P-Value	Result
Н6	CPI → EM → OPI	2.498	.012**	Supported
H7	CPI → RM → OPI	4.685	.000***	Supported





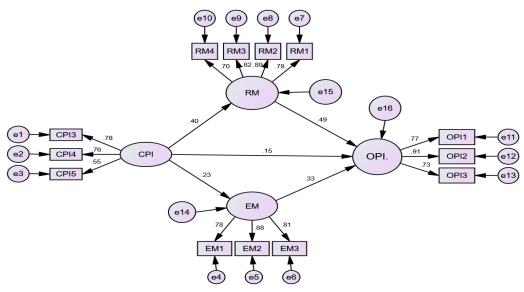


Figure 2 Structural Model of Study

7. Conclusion:

Based on the aim of the study, the results obtained in this study have supported the effects in several ways. Firstly, the study examined the Corona pandemic influence role in influencing on rational motivation, the result of this construct supported the proposed relationship that the COVID-19 pandemic situation has a significant impact on rational motivation. The meaning of this is that the Corona pandemic influence has an effect on Libyan consumer rational motivations, so it may then will effect on their online purchase intention.

Secondly, this study examined the effect of situational influences on emotional motivation, and the findings show that the data of this study supported the proposed hypothesis. Based on this, Libyan emotional motivation is also positively associated to their Corona pandemic influence, having a greater harmony between individual situational influence actions of the COVID-19 pandemic situation and the emotional motivation.

Thirdly, this study examined the Corona pandemic influence on online purchase intention, because consumers are influenced by situational influences, thereby ending up in them online purchase intention. Therefore, there exists a consistency with the report from Dominici, Andrea (2021), and Nguyen, et al. (2020) that there is a positive relationship between situational influences (Corona pandemic influence) and online purchase intention, which in this case, online purchase intention will increase.

Fourthly, this study examined hypothesis that is related to the role of emotional motivation on consumers' online purchase intention, findings obtained show support to developed hypothesis and is consistent with prior studies that reported the positive impact of emotional motivation on consumers' online purchase intention are, (Singh & Khare, 2010; Chen 2012; Singh, D. P. 2014).



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Fifthly, this study supported the relationship between rational motivation and consumers' online purchase intention. This result is in line with those reported in prior studies, including (Khare & Rakesh, 2011; Çebi Karaaslan, K. 2021).

Sixthly, The results of this research show that the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention is partially mediated by emotional motivation. This assumes that Corona pandemic influence causes online purchase intention, but the impact is mediated by emotional motivation. Moreover, the relationship between Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention is also partially mediated by rational motivation. This assumes that Corona pandemic influence causes online purchase intention, but the impact is mediated by rational motivation.

In effect, these hypotheses postulated that individuals who have high Corona pandemic influence would develop strong emotional motivation and rational motivation, therefore increase their online purchase intention. These results however, cannot be compared with those of previous studies, as this research is the initial development of a framework for understanding the mediation of emotional motivation and rational motivation on the relationship between the Corona pandemic influence and online purchase intention.

7.1 Contributions and Practical Implications of the Study:

Based on these findings, the researcher used the multiple mediator model to further compare the mediating power of emotional motivation and rational motivation. The results of Z statistics for the two mediators using the Sobel test were shown in Table 4. Clearly, emotional motivation and rational motivation are more powerful mediator of the relationship between situational influences and online purchase intention. These results suggest that consumers' Corona pandemic influence is integrated into their emotional motivation and rational motivation rather than their situational influences direct to online purchase intention. However, consumers' Corona pandemic influence is integrated into both the evaluation of emotional motivation and rational motivation during online purchase intention. By comparing the differential expression of mediators in the model, this research provides empirical evidence on a number of issues that are important for online purchase intention and contributes to a better understanding of the factors affecting consumers' online purchase intention.

The findings obtained in this study can assist Facebook managers to develop suitable strategies to incentivise those consumers to buy online by increasing their motivation. On the other hand, managers of Facebook need to understand the consequences of various situational factors (Corona pandemic influence) so that managers can plan to benefit Corona pandemic influence, whether in-store or online".





7.2 Limitation and Future Work

The first limitation in the research is that the study focuses on only individual consumers, while it may be better to also study Facebook organizers and understand how they prepare for Facebook promotion campaigns as well as how they can affect individuals.

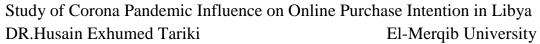
Another limitation is that, this study conducted in Libya, which is a single country that have less of used online purchase between consumers, future studies may can study in developed country or compare between Libya and developed country.

Future studies are suggested to further explore other variables that influence shopping motivation towards purchase intention, for examples brand personality, brand loyalty, and customer satisfaction. Future research might explore the impacts of pandemic COVID 19 on specific product, for example; clothes, mobiles.

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دراسة تأثير وباء كورونا COVID 19 على نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت في ليبيا

د. حسين إمحمد التريكي كلية الاقتصاد والتجارة الخمس – جامعة المرقب hosenatriki@elmergib.edu.ly

الملخص:

يؤثر وباء فيروس كورونا (COVID-19) بشكل كبير على النية الشرائية عبر الإنترنت، ويؤثر على الحياة اليومية للجميع. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت بين المستهلكين الليبيين. على وجه التحديد تبحث هذه الدراسة في العوامل التي تؤثر على نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت أثناء جائحة كورونا COVID 19 بين المستهلكين الليبيين. لتحقيق هذا الهدف طبقت الدراسة مرحلة واحدة من جمع البيانات؛ دراسة كمية. تم توزيع ما مجموعه 400 استبيان تدار ذاتيًا باستخدام تقنية أخذ العينات الملائمة غير الاحتمالية، وتم استرجاع 228 استبيانًا فقط للتحليل الوصفي والتحليل العاملي الاستكشافي، ونمذجة المعادلات الهيكلية (SEM) باستخدام برنامج AMOS. تشير النتائج إلى أن التأثير الظرفي المتمثل في جائحة كورونا للمستهلكين الليبيين يؤثر على دوافعهم العاطفية ودوافعهم العقلانية، مما يؤدي بالتالي إلى نية الشراء عبر الفيس بوك. تساهم الدراسة الحالية أيضًا في الأدبيات النظرية المهمة لنية الشراء عبر الإنترنت من خلال تضمين الدافع العاطفي والدافع العقلاني كوسطاء بين التأثير الظرفي المتمثل في جائحة كورونا ونية الشراء عبر الفيس بوك. توفر الدراسة مصدرًا مفيدًا للمعلومات للمسوقين والمديرين في التعامل مع قضايا التسويق الإلكتروني بين المستهلكين الليبيين. أخيرًا، توفر نتائج هذه الدراسة امتدادًا لفهم العوامل التي تؤثر على نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت، وارشادات لصانعي السياسات، واقتراحات للمنظمين، وحلول عملية تستند إلى النموذج الذي تم اختباره لمديري قنوات الفيس بوك.

الكلمات الدالة: وباء كورونا كوفيد 19، الدوافع العاطفية، الدوافع العقلانية، نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت.

