



# संतुला

ANNUAL JOURNAL ON CONSUMER EDUCATION

JUNE 2021



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2020-21**



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**Cover Illustration**

**Divya Choudhary**

**Back Cover**

**Divya Choudhary**

**Graphic Design and Layout**

**Surmayi Khatana**

Once you start working on something, don't be afraid of failure and don't abandon it. People who work sincerely are the happiest.

**Chanakya**



It is good to have money and the things that money can buy, but it's good too, to check up once in a while and make sure you haven't lost the things money can't buy.

**George Lorimer**

# From the Principal's Desk

The spirit of resilience and hope during the difficult times of the pandemic is aptly reflected in the name of the Journal 'Santulan' so ably created by the faculty convenors and student members of TULA- The Consumer Club of the college. While the pandemic raged in the world (continues to even now) and at home, it became impossible to maintain any kind of balance. How are we to keep a balance in these difficult times? What is the best way to avoid getting infected from Covid19? How to help family members, friends and society who were suffering immeasurably due to it? We reacted and responded to it in our own ways. Some of us hunkered down, some of us went out of our way to help others, some of us felt helpless in the face of the enormity. Yet all of us worried about one common issue: How is one to bring any sense of balance to our lives again?



Moving forward today requires us to find balance amid grief, suffering, unfathomable viruses and irretrievable loss. Moving forward necessitates us to understand the massive changes around us and adapt to them. The world is grappling to find a balance between life and death, between environmental concerns and development, between viruses and vaccines. Closer home at Miranda House we strive to balance online education with mental health concerns, digital divides, and many more. At a personal level, we are all struggling to find a balance emotively. The physical and social distance necessitated by the situation makes it difficult to remain on even keel.

Yet it is Santulan or balance that is the most important mantra for the present times. The pandemic has made it amply clear that it is our collective responsibility to maintain balance. The sentence 'choices we make today as consumers shape the world of tomorrow' is no longer a glib public speech opening line. It is our collective truths. It is therefore important for all of us to engage with the notion of balance both in theory and praxis. The Rawlsian reflective equilibrium, the Dworkinian insurance premise, Walzerian complex equality or the ethos reflected in the Indian Philosophy of Dhamma and the living values of the constitution of India enunciate the relevance of balance. The universally accepted sustainable development goals also aim at maintaining balance. Living in pandemic times we understand the significance of balance or *Santulan* more than any of the theorists or philosophers we have studied. So what does balance as collective enterprise mean to us as individuals or as a society?

Let me elaborate on certain elements which explain this concept of balance through collective enterprise:

First, it means to look beyond one's own self and recognise the importance of co-dependence. To value each and every person in your life who supports you and enables your growth.

Second, to understand the importance of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The learning of life skills of managing with limited resources and limiting one's wants is inclusive of the art of survival. Self-care in terms of eating a balanced meal, having an exercise routine and developing a strong immune system is underestimated as a value but needs to be recognised.

Third, is to reevaluate life's purpose and goals, aligning them to the present times. The goalposts have changed but your goals exist.

Creating an equal and just society will need all of us to be responsible for it by raising the right demands as consumers. Clean water, air, green energy sources, education and health for all, employment, countering discrimination and violence are our collective goals. So, as consumers, we need to raise the demands for renewable energy, say no to fossil fuels, to plastic, steel, cement and emphasise the need for alternatives. But even that is not enough. Creating a demand for alternative energy sources is not just a lifestyle change. It means that the cost of the alternative resources will be exorbitant. We therefore also need to advocate at a global level for subsidised sources which countries like ours can afford.

Fourth, to contribute to the process of healing not just of human beings, but of the animal world and the earth. This will require conscious planning and introspection. While we engage with our own growth, we can consciously choose to do so on the premises of cooperation and collective action. Plant trees, reduce waste, recycle products by all means but also plant good ideas, reduce your fears and lack of trust and recycle your knowledge. Reach out to others and spread the message.

Finally, to balance the relationship between the individual and the four important institutions: the family, society, state and market which is to be negotiated with utmost care and caution. Reflexivity, critical questions, accountability and responsibility are a two-way street. I wear a mask, I get vaccinated, I maintain 6 feet distance in a physical environment not just for myself but for you too. We make a difference just by evoking a sense of collective balance.

Many of us are familiar with the concept of the butterfly effect which refers to the idea that small things can have huge impacts on complex systems. A butterfly flapping its wings might ultimately cause a typhoon. Edward Lorenz, meteorology professor at MIT used this analogy to explain his chaos theory based on the principle of nonlinearity. He also said in one of his later writings “ If the flap of a butterfly’s wings can be instrumental in generating a tornado, it can equally well be instrumental in preventing a tornado”. We have to decide which butterfly we want to be: the butterfly that creates the tornado or the butterfly that prevents it. It will be a choice made by us as individuals.

Yet, it will have a collective impact. This is why we need to balance the flapping of our wings collectively. Let us be butterflies that prevent the tornado. Santulan with its emphasis on balancing rights with responsibilities sets the right example for all of us. No pandemic could stop its publication. It brings to us its beautiful message of hope and sustenance. It makes us believe that we are indeed the butterflies that will prevent the tornado. Let us flap our wings collectively. Congratulations to TULA union and the Editorial Team of Santulan, Bharti, K Sunaina, Surmayi, Jahnavi, Aditi, Ananya, Anju, Arshdeep, Bhairvi, Divya, Nishtha, Omja and Sakshi, faculty members Dr Hena Singh, Dr Pushpa Singh, Ms Shruti Sharma Sethi and to the founder member and convener, Dr Jayashree Pillai, for setting an example by practice. More power to your wings.

***Let us be safe, healthy, ethical and conscious consumers. This is a matter of global emergency.***

***Dr Bijayalaxmi Nanda***

**Acting Principal,  
Miranda House**



# From the Convenor's Desk

While I begin to write this note for the new edition of Santulan on this 21st year of the 21st century, I feel that things have hardly changed in the last one year since the onslaught of the Covid 19 pandemic. The fear and uncertainty the Corona virus has spread throughout the world is still lingering and life as we used to live before the virus outbreak remains like a dream. Whither now?

If you find some pessimism in my outlook, I would say it is a contagious feeling I get from my friends, family and society. We live under the prison of a facemask, we can't travel much, we restrict our meetings, we teach and study online, our recreation avenues are limited....as we have just witnessed the second wave of Covid 19 sweeping across the country. Several people we



know have been victims of the disease, including ourselves, and while many of our relatives, friends or acquaintances have survived it, some have succumbed to it. The situation that the virus has created is for real and it's worse than any experience we have lived through.

There is a change in the perception of consumers worldwide. Traditional shopping and buying patterns have witnessed a drastic change. New methods of shopping and payment have become common. Online buying, digital stores, telephonic ordering, a new breed of companies specialising in home delivery and payment through internet portals or internet banking have now become part of our lives. Forced to stay home for fear of contact and infection, the survival modes of people have embraced a new digital lifestyle, breaking the moulds of social customs and family life. Unfortunately, the earlier freedom of interaction and involvement that people were used to as consumers have disappeared in the process to meet the ends using the new technologies.

Is the vaccination the country taking up on a war-footing a solution to the horrendous effects of the coronavirus? Opinions differ on the efficacy and duration of the immunity, but worldwide this is considered the only weapon against infection. While that may be so, and more and more people get vaccinated, the trauma we have lived through the past year is not going to be erased from the human psyche soon. Consumer patterns that have come to our aid in our quarantined days may still continue for a long time. We may not be getting rid of the fear and isolation the virus has subjected us to very soon. We at TULA hope to see the restoration of normal consumer behaviour with open market places and mandis, malls and shopping complexes and neighbourhood stores and shops, restaurants and recreation centres coming back to normal in the near future.

I take this opportunity to thank all those who have had a role in bringing out the present issue of Santulan 2021, which has focussed on various innovative themes like consumerism in light of the pandemic, green lifestyle, mind hunting, stereotyping children, food as another commodity, tech-savvy consumerism and so on. I congratulate the president of TULA Bharti Khandelwal and her team members Divya, Maria and Preet who have put in tremendous work throughout this academic session 2020-21. The editorial team comprising of K Sunaina, Surmayi, Jahnavi, Aditi, Ananya, Anju, Arshdeep, Bhairvi, Divya, Nishtha, Omja and Sakshi have done very inspired work to give shape to this year's Santulan. TULA is proud of your talented efforts in designing our annual journal in style!

Our principal Dr Bijayalaxmi Nanda, a founder member of TULA, has been an inspirational force in our activities and has always taken a keen interest in making TULA a continuing success in the university. Her support and commitment makes a big difference to the functioning of our consumer club. Dr Hena Singh, co-convenor of TULA plays a major role in planning, facilitating, and mobilising resources for conducting various activities and events of TULA. We hope to see her taking the mantle of TULA soon and bring about a new resurgence in its outlook. The valuable guidance of Dr Pushpa Singh has been an important influence in the creation of this issue of Santulan. It is through her effort and constant interaction with the students that we have this issue of Santulan in our hands in spite of the adverse circumstances. Ms Shruti Sharma Sethi's valuable involvement and leadership in organising various events and activities have always been a remarkable asset for TULA. I would like to point out the excellent role played by both students and faculty members of our consumer club, which was incepted in February 2007, in sustaining the goals both inside the college and outside and keeping up the efforts in spreading consumer awareness.

With a prayer for the safety and wellness of everyone, I present you with the current edition of SANTULAN 2021. Let us hope that times will change for the better soon and we'll meet in the college, have face to face interaction and enjoy coffee together during our interactive sessions.

Thank you.

*Dr Jayashree Pillai*

**Convenor,  
TULA Miranda House Consumer Club**



# President's Note

Warm Greetings from TULA, Miranda House Consumer Club!

It is a matter of joy and pride for me to announce the release of the Annual Journal of TULA: SANTULAN, which aims at enlightening consumers by bringing in a plethora of creativity by the talents of Miranda House, throwing light on various consumer-related discourses in an original and fashionably creative style. I am extremely grateful and find myself lucky for the privilege to be the President of one of the only two Consumer Clubs in the ambit of Delhi University, working hard on its aim to create awareness and educate others, and manifest ourselves into learned students/citizens/ people. I have been a part of TULA since my first year, and it has been my family since day one. I have grown as an individual and inculcated skills here and have always put two hundred per cent effort into everything I did. I sincerely hope I have been able to pass that loyalty and passion to future office bearers.



The year 2020-21 has been novel, distinctive, and unquestionably challenging for all of us, owing to the pandemic. But the club has been successful in carrying out its functioning, programs, and activities ensuring a complete experience for its members even with everything online. We had a unique start to this year and welcomed second & third years students in the month of August. Even with the absence of first years we didn't let our spirits down and successfully organized study sessions and online competitions for our members. The Vigilance Awareness Week had a powerful execution and then we moved on to welcoming the newest editions to our family, the freshers with our Annual Orientation. We got a wonderful opportunity to celebrate National Consumer Day with our members and concluded the event with a slogan writing competition. The new year started with Freshers Talent Search and finally, in the month of February, we were able to organize our Annual Workshop on Consumer Affairs. A three-day workshop, no less than a fest for TULA members.

An unfeigned thanks to our source of strength and guidance, Dr Jayashree Pillai, our Convenor, Dr Hena Singh, Dr Pushpa Singh, and Ms Shruti Sharma, who have been our mentors in this journey. The faculty members have helped me learn, grow and manifest into a leader and individual. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my co-union members, Divya Choudhary (Vice-President), Maria Latif Trumboo (General Secretary), Preet Arora (Treasurer). Without their efforts and cooperation, this year would not have been successful or even possible.

I am also extremely thankful to the members of the Extended Union who have been my working partners and I formally applaud their contributions and spirits which were unparalleled throughout the year.

I am indebted to the respected teachers, the editorial & creative team, and everyone who contributed to Santulan for their efforts and active participation. We are especially grateful to Dr Pushpa Singh for constantly helping us through the making of Santulan. The team along with Dr Pushpa Singh has been on multiple Zoom Meetings from March to bring together every detail in the Journal. It is them who made possible the release of the magazine even in these tough and unprecedented times.

The magic of working under TULA is that it provokes your thought process, pushes you to think and criticize, and ultimately expresses yourself as vigilant consumers. I hope the members had a learning experience and enjoyed being a part of the family as much as I did.

I would like to sign off my tenure by quoting these enriching lines by John F. Kennedy,

*“Consumers by definition, include us all. They are the largest economic group, affecting and affected by almost every public and private economic decision. Yet they are the only important group whose views are often not heard,”*

We here at TULA make our voices heard!

Thank you!

***Bharti Khandelwal***  
***President TULA-MHCC***  
***2020-21***



# Editors' Note

*"The debt burden of private households is enormous. But I would not hold the individual responsible. This consumerism is based on the fact that we are a society dominated by business interests. There is massive propaganda for everyone to consume. Consumption is good for profits and consumption is good for the political establishment" — Noam Chomsky*

In today's world, we are more of consumers than citizens. When one consumes, they are not only buying a commodity for their need but also increasing the profits of a company and the growth of the nation. As Noam Chomsky puts it, the debt trap an individual is put in is in the best interest of the profits and politics. Consumption is good for all, but is it good for the consumers themselves? In times when material happiness weighs more and when ones' social status is defined by their possessions, consuming more is a necessity. We are all indoctrinated by the toxic 'consumption for happiness'.



Along the way, we have forgotten that consumers are the 'Kings' of the markets. The markets function when consumers grace them with their presence, yet we let ourselves get tricked by the evils of the markets. We have forgotten to be vigilant and we no longer remember the rights we are entitled to. TULA, Consumer Club of Miranda House, strives to bring back this idea to the world. We attempt to enlighten the youth of today about their rights and duties as a consumer. SANTULAN, the Annual Journal of TULA is one of the ways by which we bring consumer awareness to the limelight. For this edition of Santulan, we have tried to explore some contemporary issues regarding consumerism and at the same time, an attempt has been made to go beyond traditional deliberations within consumerism and related aspects. In the words of Bryant H. McGill - "The folly of endless consumerism sends us on a wild goose-chase for happiness through materialism". We have tried our best to picture the evolution from 'productive consumption' to sometimes or maybe most times 'soulless consumption'.

We extend our wholehearted thanks and gratitude to all the students and professors who have penned down their ideas for Santulan and the readers. We are very grateful for having received constant support from our Principal, Dr Bijayalaxmi Nanda and Convenor, Dr Jayashree Pillai. We are indebted to Dr Pushpa Singh for being a mentor to the team in the ideation of the Journal through multiple Zoom Meetings since March. We are grateful for Dr Pushpa Singh's immense support to the editorial team and for reviewing every detail of the Journal throughout the process of its making. We are grateful to Dr Hena Singh and Ms Shruti Sharma Sethi for being a strong support to TULA in its journey and guiding us throughout.

We also take this opportunity to thank Surmayi Khatana, a third-year Political Science student of Miranda House, for making it possible to transform the journal into its online mode. Without her, the journal wouldn't have seen the light of the day. We are hugely indebted for her constant efforts.

We are deeply obliged to the entire Editorial Team and Creative Team of TULA for coming up with innovative ideas and helping us execute the same along the way.

We hope that this edition of Santulan will be appreciated and remembered by us all as a symbiotic ray of intellectual musings in the year of pandemic and hardships and for this, we pay a sincere thanks to the hard work, patience and resilience of all those who helped us in creating this 'Green book of Consumerism'.

In the words of Emma Watson,

***“As consumers, we have so much power to change the world by just being careful in what we buy.”***

Thank You.

Have a pleasant reading!

<b><i>Kura Sunaina</i></b>	<b><i>Jahnavi Chourasia</i></b>
<b><i>Editorial Head</i></b>	<b><i>Editorial Head</i></b>
<b><i>2020-21</i></b>	<b><i>2020-21</i></b>



# Editorial Board

Who knew that compiling a journal online could be so much fun? Who knew that we could make friends without having met them physically even once? Who knew that we could learn so much from our seniors without even stepping into college? Santulan has been the ultimate project of TULA that we all worked hard for. It didn't get accomplished overnight. What it took were patience, perseverance and dedicated efforts. We are glad to have given it all and in the process to have grown personally. Research and editing that kept us awake till midnight and the rush to meet the deadlines have helped us hone our professional skills. We are glad to see that our team's efforts finally bore fruits! - *Arshdeep Kaur - B.A. (H) Political Science, First Year*

Working for Santulan was indeed a good experience! I have improved my writing skills and learned the proper process of making a journal before being published! I am too eager to see it and hoping that we had not made any mistake even unintentionally! - *Sakshi Shivhare - B.A. Programme, First Year*

Instead of running to the front lawns for a meeting, we found ourselves rushing to a digital window. A group chat morphed into the desk of the editorial board, cluttered with text messages about deadlines, bylines, and occasional joke punchlines. Phone calls, online meetings, emails, and hours of effort by every individual involved have led to Santulan 2021. Apart from being a journal that puts together the thoughts and analysis of our peers, Santulan has always been synonymous with a platform for an exchange of ideas. The discussions we have had while putting these articles together and the dialogue we hope it inspires form the drive that helped us work on this even in these trying times. - *Surmayi Khatana, B.A. (H) Political Science, Third Year*

## The Editorial Board

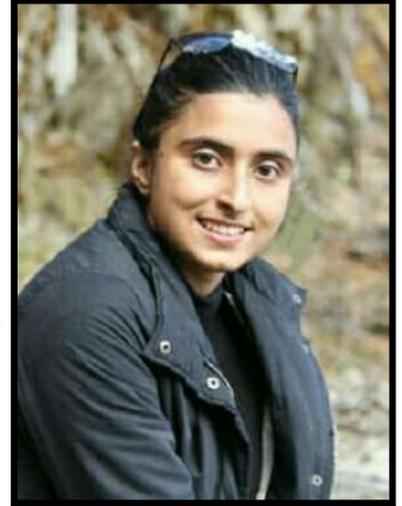
Warm Regards

<b>Aditi Choudhary</b>	<b>B. A. Programme, Second Year</b>
<b>Ananya</b>	<b>B. A. (H) Political Science, Second Year</b>
<b>Anju Thomas</b>	<b>B. A. Programme, Third Year</b>
<b>Arshdeep Kaur</b>	<b>B. A. (H) Political Science, First Year</b>
<b>Bhairvi Parashar</b>	<b>B. A. Programme, Second Year</b>
<b>Divya Gupta</b>	<b>B. Sc. (H) Mathematics, Third Year</b>
<b>Nishtha Sharma</b>	<b>B. A. Programme, Second Year</b>
<b>Omja Tiwari</b>	<b>B. A. Programme, Second Year</b>
<b>Sakshi Shivhare</b>	<b>B. A. Programme, First Year</b>
<b>Surmayi Khatana</b>	<b>B. A. (H) Political Science, Third Year</b>



# Union's Note

How important can it be? Was the first major question with which I started this journey. Before coming to Delhi, I never went out to buy agro-products or electronic items on my own. But after I came here, I had to take care of everything on my own. For the first time, I went out shopping with a long list in my hand. I randomly picked up stuff and joined the queue for the billing. While standing there I picked a newly launched product from my cart, turned it around, and started going through the details- how to use it, precautions, and other details, and went on to read the product description. As I read halfway through it, I was baffled. I don't know anything about most of the compounds, never heard of them before. Then I tried to find out what these were, why they are used, their effects, etc. Even after reading and rereading about them from different sources, I couldn't understand a word. I was infuriated. Should I buy or not? What if it's harmful? Isn't the manufacturer responsible for delivering such important information more clearly? At that time I realised one thing very clearly, I was an uninformed consumer. With all these questions in mind, I joined TULA. I wanted answers for all of them.



I am grateful that our college has a club like this, dedicated to spreading information and educating students about consumerism. Helping them evolve into a better consumer and an informed consumer. I am grateful that I could be a part of this society and that I could help people understand why it is so important.

***Divya Choudhary***  
***Vice President TULA-MHCC***  
***2020-21***

Not just a consumer, being a vigilant consumer is what I proudly say that I have learnt in TULA. TULA has played a vital role in my life, from making me aware of my rights, helping me learn how to file a complaint to be an active consumer of the nation. From a member to a treasurer, my whole journey in TULA has been full of experiences, and amazement. I learnt what I never thought would be a necessity. I experienced what I could have never. This society of Miranda House comes in as an asset for everyone who is part of it. It satisfies all our curiosity, awareness, and rights. The so cooperative teachers the fellow union members, vertical heads as well the members make the ambience of TULA as vibrant as a rainbow. Everything one learns here is instilled in the mind. This helps us be aware when cheated by the market, and more importantly what to do in such situations.



***Preet Arora***  
***Treasurer TULA-MHCC***  
***2020-21***

As the whole of humanity brawls with the ramifications of the pandemic, it has become all the more important for people to be aware of their rights pertaining to safe food, healthcare, and other products.

Also, the development of technology and the advent of sophisticated gadgets in the market, and aggressive marketing strategies in the era of globalization have not just thrown open a wide choice, for the consumer but also rendered the consumer vulnerable to a plethora of problems concomitant to such expeditious changes. There is a dire and increasing necessity to educate and motivate the consumer to be aware of their rights in a world dominated by unscrupulous market activities.



Therefore in an attempt to educate consumers, we bring to you SANTULAN 2021, which is a culmination of poems, articles, case studies, illustrations on the various nuances of Consumerism. Through rigorous case studies and profound research, it aims to chronicle our contributions to the larger consumer movement. This journal is a result of the efforts of our Principal, convenors, and our very hardworking team of students. Their constant efforts and cooperative spirit enabled us to streamline the entire process in order to achieve success. Therefore I would like to thank each one of them wholeheartedly. Kudos to the entire team of TULA MHCC.

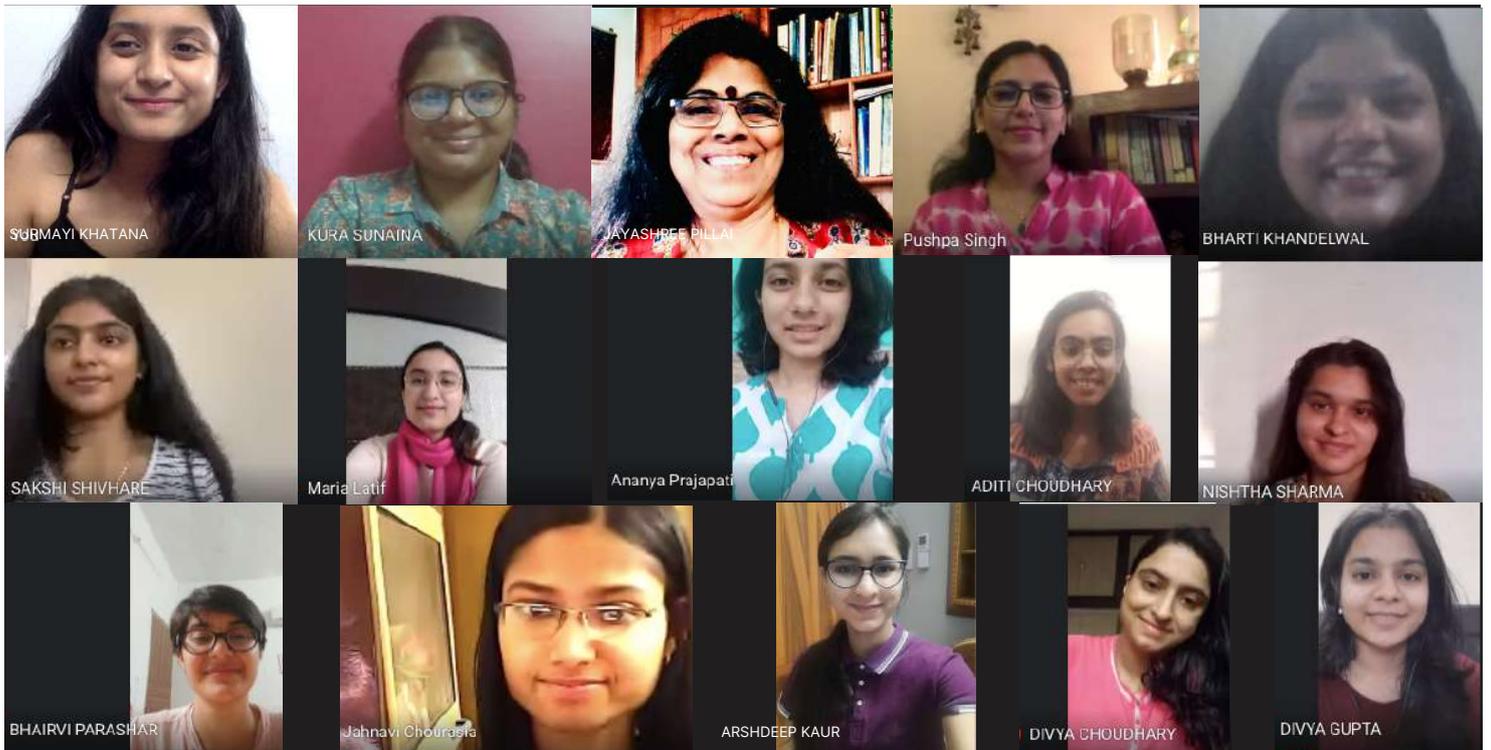
***Maria Latif Trumboo***

***General Secretary TULA-MHCC***

***2020-21***



# Work in Progress



A glimpse into the behind the scenes of Santulan 2021



*Dr Hena Singh*

*Co Convenor*

*TULA Miranda House Consumer Club*



Education plays an important role in building economic solidarity, strengthening social structure, facilitating individual growth, maintaining sustainable development, promoting harmony and creating an ethos of peace and global citizenship. In addition to strengthening and deepening such perceptions and prescriptions, the process of globalization has only underlined the idea that unlike conventional methods of teaching and learning the emphasises today should be on creativity, skill enhancement, so as to bridge the gap between academics and industry. The need, therefore, is of exploring a new paradigm that could be inclusive, environment-friendly and human resource generating, in its approach and application. Post economic reforms (1991), the Indian State has witnessed a remarkable surge in the number of higher educational institutions and thus credited to be the third-largest country in the world in terms of students, next to China and the United States. (Journal of Education and Practice, Vol.8, No.1, 2017). With this pace, it is axiomatic to say that very soon, India will emerge as one of the major education centres however, the Indian Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have been lagging behind in multiple fronts in the World Rankings.

In this article I have attempted to:

- 1) Briefly identify all the essential parameters that are required to thrive in the contemporary system.
- 2) Review the status quo in the light of the New Education Policy to suggest some possible interventions that would help the Indian HEIs to compete with the best institutions abroad and provide the state of art education to Indian students.

Accounting for around 17 percent of the world's population of which around 30 percent comprised of individuals in the age group of 10-25, and another 32 percent in the age group 25-62 the trajectory of the growth of India's population has already put it in the face with what is known as 'demographic dividend' in the literature on developmental studies. Reaping the benefits of this dividend, defined by the United Nations Population Fund as the 'economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older)



however is much dependent not just on the extent to which India is able to empower the younger minds in qualitative terms but also on the pace at which it is able to achieve the targets. This is significant given the fact that the demographic dividend is likely to last only till 2050. The next thirty years are thus monumentally significant for our future.

It is precisely for ensuring a steady supply not just of the skilled and employable workforce but also for meeting the requirements of indigenous and innovative knowledge-based interventions, that policy initiative aimed at ensuring quality and access assume significant proportions, particularly in higher education sector. The issue of equity is equally important as hitherto ignored groups such as marginalized castes, women, ethnic minorities etc need to be brought into the fold as well.

While evidentially it is heartening to note the pace at which the Indian higher education sector is galloping ahead and has already spiralled to become the third-largest in the world, the developments comes-off just as a matter of statistical delight obscuring the realities of the system that lies within. The levels of institutional unevenness both in infrastructural and academic terms are utterly disappointing indeed.

It is in this context that the need is to remove the chaff from the wheat. The better ones must be segregated and placed at higher planks not only to be the common nurseries attracting and promoting brighter talent and innovative minds but also to act as emulative models for those which have for whatever reasons not been able to do the same. To a certain extent the indigenously evolved National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) has been primarily aimed at achieving those ends but a careful look at its methodology reveals quite a few gaps that need urgent bridging-up. Or else the objective of ensuring and promoting excellence, simply may pave way for gaming particularly by the stakeholders.

## **Reviewing the System**

First, the methodology of ranking requires a complete overhaul so as to make it in sync with the context in which the institutions are operating. Given the fact that the ranking systems address both governmental and private institutions, the mechanism should be both dynamic and open to be able to map institutional commonalities and their respective uniqueness.

Second, it is a fact that for historical reasons a few institutions in India have been attracting better talents. The assessment system must have gradients to assess the reasons behind such developments. Is it really because these institutions are indeed the best or are it simply because of the age-old perceptions that give them the best feeder-cadre?



Third, the assessment must be made not on the teacher-student ratio that exists on paper but the one that exists in classrooms. This is because the government institutions have no control over that and the private ones can easily fudge the system.

Fourth, the diversity quotient of the institutions must be assessed not in terms of the number of students it has on rolls but on the kind of policies it may have enacted to encourage or discourage them.

Fifth, the appointment methods and the career promotions of the faculty members must be an important point of assessment. The assessment must put a premium on institutions with policies that not only attract but retain talent.

Sixth, an understanding of flexibility mechanisms both administrative and academic prevalent in institutions of higher learning can be a very important parameter of assessment.

### **A Possible Solution**

A plausible alternative way ahead in the direction of ensuring equity and access to qualitative learning could be by encouraging partnerships and alliances between institutions that are perceptibly recognized as higher say in terms of national rankings and those who may not be there. The collaborations could start at relatively smaller scales say, for conducting faculty development programmes, or for taking certain initiatives in pedagogy, or even allowing teachers from eminent institutions to deliver few lectures for the students of colleges in remote areas. The acceptance of online modes of teaching and learning would only bolster such initiatives. Most importantly, such initiatives would be the most cost-effective, innovative and self-sufficing, (Atma Nirbhar) way of realizing the objectives of emboldening attempts towards a knowledge-based economy and society and it will propel us to acknowledge and appreciate the unique strength of each and every human resource as Albert Einstein has beautifully illustrated that:

*“Everyone’s a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”*

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*Dr Pushpa Singh*  
*Co Coordinator*  
*TULA Miranda House Consumer Club*

As in other parts of the world, environmental troubles have been increasing in India at an alarming rate. Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation have caused irreversible changes of the landscape and loss of wildlife habitats and productive agricultural land. There has been continuous deterioration in the quality of air, water and soil due to pollutants like hazardous chemicals emitted from factories, agrochemicals, vehicles, biomass and waste burning and other human activities. The burning of biomass has been dangerously increasing the atmospheric level of carbon dioxide. With the shrinking of forest cover, this gas is increasing dangerously, thereby exacerbating global warming. The loss of biodiversity, dwindling of fossil fuels and rapid deforestation have been compounding environmental problems.



The air pollution level in most cities of India exceeds the standard set by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Metropolises like Delhi are persistently having foul air quality, due to smog and toxic gases such as sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and suspended particles. This situation is aggravating chronic bronchitis, lung cancer and other lethal diseases. At times, the situation worsens as it happened in the month of November 2017 that a health specialist declared Delhi unfit for habitation.<sup>2</sup> Some declared it as akin to a gas chamber! Slowly this condition may become a reality for many more Indian cities that are marching ahead with rapid urbanisation. The chlorofluorocarbons and halons are depleting the Ozone layer. Greenhouse gases are surging the temperature of our already hot planet. Air pollution has produced an exigency and all nations must immediately act to curb it. Kyoto Protocol monitors greenhouse gas emissions and acts on the principle of differentiated responsibility.<sup>3</sup> It implies that developed nations have the highest obligation to cut down emissions as they have been historically responsible for the current plight of the environment. Indian government has also reiterated its responsibilities of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Globally, there is the expectation of a more proactive role from rapidly developing countries like India, China and Brazil.

As in most developing nations, as well as in India, due to rapidly expanding population, there is increased pressure on resources to provide food to all people. There is extensive use of marginal land for cultivation and additional pressure on productive land.



This results in exacerbating environment problems such as deforestation, alienation, soil erosion and desertification. Intensive cultivation promotes monocultures that may be economically beneficial but ecologically disastrous due to problems of pests and pathogens. Deforestation has been happening due to clearing forest areas for agriculture, cattle ranching, for establishing plantations like rubber and cocoa and mineral extraction, and developmental activities like building of roads and dams and logging operatives. Due to deforestation, the protective tree cover that helps maintain the water cycle by absorbing the surface water is lost, thus accelerating soil erosion. Heavy monsoon rains in the mountainous regions cause floods and silting of the neighbourhood areas downstream. Climate change has emerged as a major threat since the 1980s.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change is the nodal agency of the government of India for planning, promoting, coordinating and overseeing the implementation of environmental and forestry programmes. Our Constitution mentions environment in Articles 48-A (under the provision of Directive Principles of State Policies) and Article 51-A (under the provision of Fundamental Duties). Article 48-A says that the state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country. Article 51-A(g) states that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures.

If we look at the history of environmental policies, we find that unified systematic policies on the environment were absent in India till the 1970s. In the period following independence, there was greater drive towards infrastructure development and little concern for the environment. More pertinent problems such as poverty, illiteracy and epidemics were to be eradicated by building infrastructures. Environment occupied the back seat at that time. It was only in 1980 that the Department of Environment was established by the Indian government. In a few years, it was converted into a full-fledged ministry to regulate pollution and for the conservation of forest. Environment gradually started featuring as an important part of the agenda of governance in different Five-Year Plans, beginning from the Fourth Five Year Plan. Henceforth, concerns for protecting and preserving environment started guiding developmental planning and environmental management. In 1980, the Tiwari Committee was set up by the government to review the existing environmental legislations and propose new policies that could address the incumbent situation.<sup>4</sup> A few policies as implemented by the Government of India are listed below.

**Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972<sup>5</sup>:** This Act was the first effective enactment by the government towards managing the environment concerns. It was targeted at:

- protecting the disappearing species like lions, great horned rhinoceros, birds and wild animals.
- controlling poaching and illegal trade in wildlife by imposing stringent penalty and punishment
- setting aside protected areas in the form of national parks, sanctuaries and conservation and community reserves.

Prior to the enactment of this Act, there existed the Factories Act of 1948 (amended in 1987), which laid stress on proper disposal of waste by factories, and the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals Act of 1960. However, such measures have not been compelling enough to seriously engage with the environment issues.

**Pollution Control Board:** In order to prevent and control pollution of water and air, the Indian government enacted the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974<sup>6</sup>. By then water pollution had become an increasing menace and needed to be checked urgently in the country. This Act was legislated to mitigate the ill effects of green revolution, fast industrialisation and urbanisation. The green revolution relied on the high yielding variety of seeds that put a huge demand on water for irrigation, required more fertilisers, pesticides and weedicides, which continued to harm the soil and water table. On the other hand, hazardous discharges and sewage effluents have been clogging our water bodies and contaminating it severely with nitrates and phosphates. Therefore, to bring immediate effect, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act was amended in 1988 and central and state boards were created to ensure the deliverance of all its detailed provisions.

**Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981<sup>7</sup>:** It dealt with provisions to control and prevent air pollution and also included penalties for violations. It also laid for the establishment of the board to exercise functions in this regard. To make it more effective and stringent, this Act was amended in 1987.

**Environment (Protection) Act, 1986<sup>8</sup>:** It was enacted in the aftermath of Bhopal gas tragedy of 1984 to prevent any such tragedy in future. It also laid a detailed framework prescribing the limits for emissions, effluent discharge from the industries. This umbrella Act covered all aspects of the environment. Accordingly, if found violating any of the rules, the government could close or regulate any industry, impose fine and imprison.

**National Environment Tribunal Act, 1995 and National Green Tribunal (NGT), 2011<sup>9</sup>:** It was implemented to deal with cases of mishappenings speedily and award due compensation for the damage to the aggrieved party.



However, this Act was repealed after the setting up of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in 2011 for vigilant and stricter attempts towards conservation, protection and promotion of the environment. Some of the states also became proactive in legislating policies in this regard. For example, in 1997, Maharashtra announced a policy to restore the quality of its river waters. Similarly, in 1997 again, the state of Haryana came up with a comprehensive conservation policy to improve pollution control.

**Biological Diversity Act, 2002**<sup>10</sup>: It banned transfer of genetic material outside the country, prohibited Intellectual Property Rights over biodiversity without the sanction of the government, and engaged local communities in the task of conservation of biodiversity. This Act was enacted to meet the commitment under Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to which India is a signatory.

**National Environment Policy, 2006**<sup>11</sup> (NEP): It redefined renewed environmental management. **The Forest Rights Act**<sup>12</sup> or the Tribal Rights Act was also enacted in 2006 that ensured the rights of forest dwellers over minor forest products, habitat, cultivation, etc. NEP encompasses principles such as Polluter Pays and Doctrine of Public Trust which see the state as the trustee of all-natural resources, not an absolute owner; the Doctrine of Civil Liability for environmental damage discourages environmentally harmful actions, etc. This policy aims at conserving crucial environmental resources, intra-generational equity, livelihood security for the poor, inter-generational equity, inclusion of environmental concerns in economic and social development.

The judiciary in India also has played a proactive role in matters of environmental protection, evolving four principles in imparting environmental justice. These four principles are described here:

- Public Trust Doctrine which calls upon the state to act as the trustee of natural resources.
- Polluter Pays Principle holds polluters liable for compensation to the victims and for environmental degradation.
- The Absolute Liability Principle makes inherently dangerous industries pay compensation to the victims of pollution.
- Sustainable Development Principle compels industries to stop harmful emissions.

However, when it comes to the real working of these legislations, the state displays ambivalence. Caught in a contradictory position as both the promoter of economic development and as environment regulator, the government often engages in a process of environment managerialism in which it attempts to legislate a limited degree of protection sufficient to deflect criticism but not significant enough to derail the engine of growth.<sup>13</sup> In the era of globalisation, these states operate under a lot of subtle pressure from financial institutions and transnational corporations.



Powerful global institutions have emerged as power centres. Multinational companies (MNCs) and transnational companies (TNCs) are governed by their economic agendas of profiteering. Therefore, we find that domestic environmental policies are much shaped by the logic of global capital. The state in the neoliberal era sees itself as the neutral arbiter between conflicting interests. It has virtually retreated enabling such forces to frame and manage environmental problems according to their own market interests and dynamics. But the withdrawal of state has increased the magnitude of injustice to marginalised and vulnerable sections of society. Rather than putting such issues under the carpet, state and society should creatively engage with these challenges. Alternatives have to be worked out in the field of renewable energy, wasteland development and afforestation.

The ever-increasing consumerism has been a bane for the environment. Free market economy has aided the creation of a mass consumer society, putting a huge strain on the already scarce resources in the country. The pattern of use of natural resources has been altered with the state allowing the corporate giants to gain control of land, water, forests and mines for profiteering. We are moving from a state-sponsored development paradigm to a private market economy-driven one and find both devoid of any serious commitment to environmental conservation. Slowly, these resources have been taken over by the agents of global capital, while those who were dependent on these for their livelihood have been left on the margins. Gigantic development projects like Sardar Sarovar Dam have resulted in unprecedented displacement of tribal population. This has pushed the indigenous communities to the state of desperation. In general, the large development projects have been inimical to social and environmental concerns. They have aggravated the divide between the privileged and the marginalised. Development, no doubt, has a tendency to produce asymmetrical benefits and sometimes the advancement of one region happens by disrobing the other region of its resources. If the condition of huge chunk of society is made bad to worse, is it progress for them?

The model of development that our state has imitated from the west and has been arduously following is unsustainable. Hardly do our policymakers realise that in this mission of development, what actually we are doing is centralising and homogenising. It can be explained as the Wall Mart syndrome, which means that all cities and spaces will have quite similar kinds of shops, selling very similar kinds of products, thus completely wiping out any diversity in terms of products or people's engagement with the market. Even in the west today, there is great outcry about this drive for homogenisation, which is scripted by a handful of global business houses. Those who control the global capital want to monopolise what people on this planet eat, drink, wear, and engage with. These business groups manufacture seeds for processed food products, electronics for automobiles and manoeuvre the trade policies and intellectual property rights in such a way that all global profit flows back to them without any hindrance.



The politics of accumulation continues unabated resulting in massive disenchantment among the poor people of postcolonial societies.

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# The Essential Commodities Amendment Act 2020 and its Possible Impact on Consumer



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In June 2020 the Indian government passed three Acts that have become a cause for policy contestation in India. Of these three, one act, *the Essential Commodities Amendment Act 2020*, is likely to impact the consumers more than the farmers of India. This article will look at the Act and its possible impact on the Consumer.



The Act changes the profile of limits on hoarding and stocking of essential commodities in India. Section 21 A (a) of the act mentions that stock limit on foodstuffs, cereals, pulses, potato, onions, oilseeds, oils, can be regulated only under extraordinary circumstances war, calamity, etc. This effectively lifts limits on the stocking of the given commodities. This in itself is a very counter-intuitive step as removing stock limits may lead to hoarding of these commodities and thus price rise. Every year this happens in perishable essentials like onions and tomatoes. This may happen in the case of food crops after this amendment.

21 A (b) (i) describes price rise as the only condition in which stock limits may be reapplied. 21 A (b) (ii) 50% increase in the retail price of agricultural foodstuff as a precondition for limits. Thus if there is a 100% retail rise of horticulture products limits may kick in but these conditions are impossible to achieve since the benchmark for this calculation is the price of the past 12 months and the average retail price of the past 5 years.

Further, even if such conditions are achieved the value chain participant will be exempt. In the Act, the Value Chain Participant is anyone who uses Agri products in a full processing chain. So a biscuit manufacturer is a value chain participant for wheat. Exporters are also exempt if they can stock.

The Act also says that Public Distribution System(PDS) and Targeted PDS are not going to be affected by this Act.

How does this Act affect the consumer? Stock limits were a mechanism of price control and were a primary disincentive against hoarding. So the Act essentially leads to a Price Rise situation.



It is also true that there may be some effects on PDS (combined with other Acts):

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) for a crop sets a floor price, below which markets cannot go. MSP guarantee is not written in the Acts. Even as it stands it is not a legal guarantee.

With the opening of this sector price, skimming may finish APMC Mandis altogether. So How does the government procure PDS in such a situation? Empirical evidence (Odisha) points to the need for assured prices for food sufficiency. In addition, stock limits are being lifted and may lead to further effects on the PDS which supports food sufficiency in a large section of the Indian population.

The Act also gives extraordinary influence to integrated big retail chains like Reliance etc who have integrated systems from farm to retail. This may slowly ease out small vendors who are consumer-friendly. Such scenarios have been seen to develop in the West with retail chains taking over the marketing of Agri products completely. In India, this is not a desirable scenario and again may limit consumer choice

Thus overall the Essential Commodities Amendment Act 2020 is likely to impact the consumers adversely and the main mechanism by which this will happen is price rise. The economic fabric of India is so constructed that small, local vendors play a very important role in retailing Agri products. This localization is also beneficial for the consumer as these minute social relationships define the Indian social fabric. It is in the interest of the consumers that the Essential Commodities Amendment Act 2020 is redesigned to locate solutions for problems that have been identified as a basis for policymaking which is not reflected in the same at present.

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जब एक माँ ग्राहक बनती है,  
तब उसकी सोच बदलती है,  
वो कीमत नहीं देखती,  
शीशु का आराम देखती है।

हर चीज़ अपनी नज़र से पहले है निकालती,  
कभी खुद पर परखती पहले,  
कभी संभल-संभल के इस्तेमाल करती है,  
बहुत चोक्न्नी होती है वह ग्राहक जब वो माँ बनकर खरीदारी करती है  
सबसे अच्छा,  
सबसे सुरक्षित उत्पाद लेना चाहती है,  
बच्चे के लिए कुछ भी क्रीमत माँ देना चाहती है,  
चाहे दूध का हो डिब्बा या डायपर की बात हो,  
क्रीम हो लगानी या साबुन की जांच हो।

जब एक माँ ग्राहक बनती है,  
तब उसकी सोच बदलती है,  
वो कीमत नहीं देखती,  
शीशु का आराम देखती है।

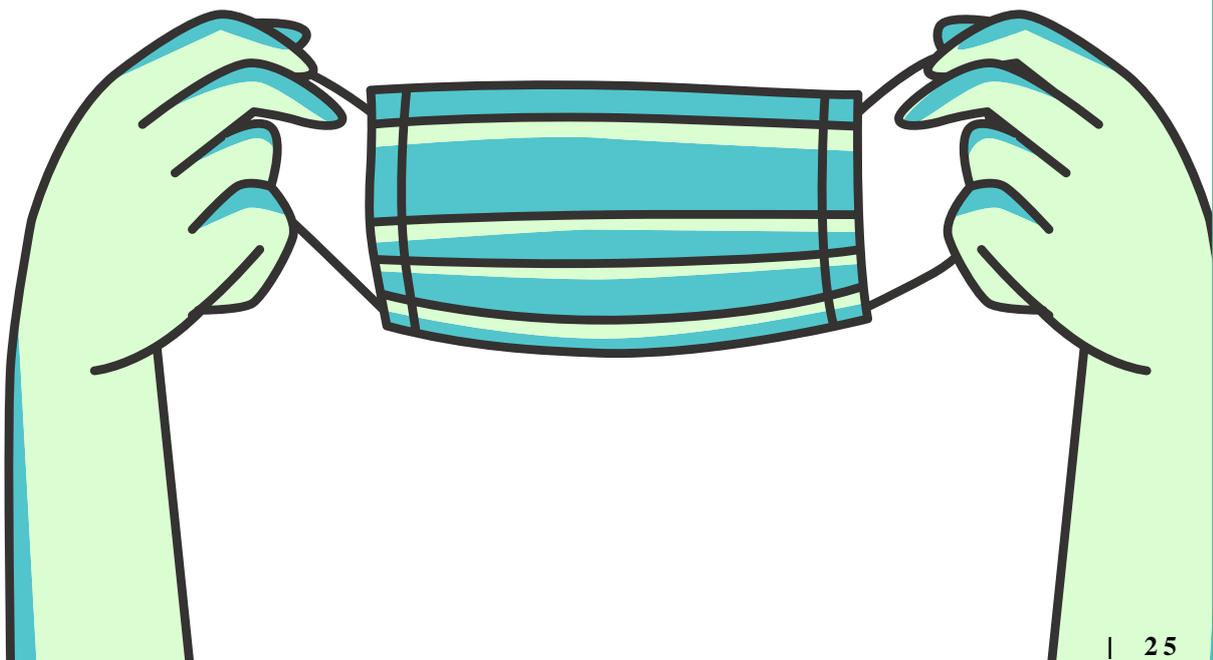
अफसोस है इस बात से की कुछ माँ चाहकर भी कुछ ले नहीं पाती,  
कुछ लेती हैं पर जानकार नहीं बन पाती,  
समझौता करना पड़ता है कभी खरीदारी में,  
कभी खरीद कर भी तसल्ली हो नहीं पाती,  
आज चुनने के लिए उत्पाद बहुत हैं,  
परंतु हर माँ जागरूक ग्राहक बन नहीं पाती,  
इसलिए हर माँ जो ग्राहक भी है,  
उसे अपने अधिकार जानने चाहिए,  
अपने बच्चे के लिए क्या सबसे बेहतर उत्पाद है,  
उसे पहचानने चाहिए।

माँ पर दोहरी ज़िम्मेदारी है इसलिए मैं कहती हूँ  
जब एक माँ ग्राहक बनती है,  
तब उसकी सोच बदलती है,  
वो कीमत नहीं देखती,  
शीशु का आराम देखती है।



**Illustration:** Nishtha Sharma, B.A. Programme, Second Year

# CONSUMERISM IN THE LIGHT OF PANDEMIC





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*Silky Jain*

*B.A. Programme*

*First Year*

Do you remember the day when the country was put under lockdown and how people rushed to the markets to buy groceries, sanitary items, etc.? Do you also remember the days when government vehicles came to societies with goods of daily use? Then came a time where people started ordering goods via online platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, etc. And now, post-lockdown as well, people are continuing to order items online to escape from going to the markets as a precautionary step. This shows how the change in the pattern of consumerism is being witnessed where people are moving from physical markets to virtual platforms with the change in time and technology.

In April alone, Inditex, the biggest fashion group in the world, which owns 'Zara' and 'Pull&Bear' among others, reported a 95% increase in online sales as its stores were closed during the coronavirus lockdown. IndiaMart, one of India's biggest online marketplaces for businesses, posted over a 100% jump in profits during the lockdown quarter of April to June. Trends like these are common to witness these days and these are going to increase as coronavirus has already altered consumer behaviour. More and more people are relying on online mediums because this ultimately reduces their labour and saves time.

Pandemic has also been responsible for the change in consumer needs. People have started spending more on goods that boost their immunity, comfort foods such as instant noodles, cereals are among other products. Chyawanprash sales across the country grew 283% in June and branded honey rose by 39%. Digital services have also seen impressive growth during this period as the country was under lockdown and there were restrictions on movement. This forced people especially students, to move to the online platforms for their studies and coaching. From needs to entertainment, everything is served online. OTT (over-the-top) saw a massive number of users as movies, daily soap, mythological shows were under great demand as people had no outside source of entertainment. Ramayana became the most-watched show during the lockdown followed by Mahabharata. Platforms such as Amazon Prime, Netflix, Hotstar saw enormous growth in terms of subscribers as people had no choice to visit cinema halls or other places.

At the same time, there were many goods and services which saw a decline in their demand during the time of lockdown.



Household products such as furniture, electronic goods, and accessories saw a decline. Cosmetic products including goods of personal care, make-up, footwear, apparel, and jewellery were also under less demand. Spending on festivities and parties was greatly affected, and this had its major consequences especially on the textile and apparel industry. Macro economically, India's energy demand was cut by 30% due to a decline in usage of electricity and transportation mediums. There was also a decline witnessed by restaurants, hotels, public transport, railways, airways, etc. due to travel restrictions. Would these habits be changed permanently?

With many negatives that the pandemic brought, it also rendered people some good habits and made them more vigilant and responsible. It promoted online shopping which is one of the most needed practices of the modern world because it forces customers to read about the product and then order it and at the same time this would protect them against all the unethical tactics that the shopkeepers used to influence people by giving them false information. This can also be understood as people changed their food habits. Fear of infection forced people to eat healthily and read all the instructions provided with a product thus giving rise to conscious consumption. Consumers also shifted from using harmful products to more organic and environment-friendly ones, as personal health has become a priority for consumers all over the world.

There were some other immediate impacts as well. Some of them include hoarding, where people started accumulating goods in a larger and unwanted quantity due to the extension of the lockdown period. This led to wastage and some people faced a shortage of food. Followed by this, there was a decrease in demand for discretionary products or services such as demand for automobiles, sports equipment, etc. went down leading to shifting demand from present to future thus resulting in the piling up of goods. Contradictory to this, there was an increase in immediate and temporary demand for several products such as masks, gloves, PPE kits, sanitizers, etc. which was initially not met by the market. Pandemic also restrained the choice of place to shop for the consumers as they did not have access to all the places due to restrictions on movement and therefore this resulted in a lot of shift in consumer demands and shopping pattern.

New buying behaviour has become new normal as all the above-mentioned factors affected consumer behaviour enormously. Covid-19 led 68% of Indians to increase online shopping shows survey. Digital marketing has gained immense importance. Everything has found a place on the online platform ranging from entertainment to education, business to shopping, health, etc. There has been an increase in awareness about healthy products and purchasing behaviour has shifted to value-based shopping. There has also been a huge scale consumption of online services especially in the field of education as students are finding it timesaving, energy-efficient, and also worth the amount spent on it.

Although some industries witnessed a huge loss, local shopkeepers and retailers gained profit as people preferred buying goods of daily use from them due to proximity. Lockdown has also given a boost to household industries and workers as now, people prefer buying homemade items especially for consumption purposes, as these have better chances of purity and are chemical-free. This has also instilled self-reliance among consumers. ‘Vocal for Local’ has also gained popularity in times of pandemic as now consumers are striving to avoid wastage of food and they have become more conscious about the cost and quality of a product. But still, the major worry remains whether people are going to continue with these healthy habits or these are going to change as we are moving towards post-covid times?



*Illustration: Priyanka Sharma, B.A. (H) Political Science, First Year*

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*Preet Arora*

*B.A. Programme*

*Second Year*

The pandemic has made us learn and see the different angles of life, the undiscovered mixtures of colours, or say a big picture painted in black and white. Now, buying any commodity or even borrowing comes with great fear of the novel coronavirus. In India, at this stage of the upsurge of positive cases, almost every family has faced this disaster. Some fought while others lost their lives. The mutants are to add to the anxiety levels, distress us, and reserve more of ourselves from everyone and everything. It has gravely impacted the youngsters who are encountering the pandemic unfurl during their early stage.

Soon Kwan Hong, associate professor of marketing in the Michigan Technological University College of Business and a member of the Institute of Policy, Ethics, and Culture, emphasises a seismic shift to our consumer habits. Purchasing habits that might have been mindless before, have come under scrutiny as household budgets have shrunk and priorities have changed. “As consumers, not so many people look at their consumption from social, political, and cultural angles,” Hong said. He added, “But I’m sure a lot of people have started evaluating their lives from different angles because of the pandemic.” (Footnote)

The pandemic has changed our social viewpoint and outlook towards things. There were instances when people were charged extensively high prices for commodities and services in pandemic times, citing unavailability. There has been reporting of profiteering through the black market. There has been an evident shift towards online shopping and e-commerce. People get more attracted to the latter. This shift has an apparent impact on the economy. The closure of actual stores has constrained buyers to scrutinize their profound situated shopping propensities. Individuals who had recently been hesitant to shop online are setting up online records and encountering an altogether new client venture. Furthermore, when they get a preference for online comfort, they may never return to their old ways. For quite a while, online business has been consuming the impact points of disconnected retail. However, the worldwide lockdown has quickened a current pattern that has been not too far off for quite a long time. Overall web-based business deals hit \$3.5 trillion in 2019, an increment of 18% from the prior year. Conversely, customary retail has been battling with terminations, work misfortunes, and single-digit yearly development rates even before the pandemic. However, regardless of the fast development of online business, the rate of cyber crimes and frauds have touched the never-ending sky that draws all our attention towards the problem of consumerism where we the consumers need to be vigil, aware, we should be with our consumer rights on tips, know the process of dealing with fraudulent cases and at the end, the solution is only in being a fully aware and vigil consumer.

With the onset of the pandemic in 2019, consumer behaviour around the globe has seen tremendous and huge diversity in patterns. The breadth and volume of purchases shot sky and data reveal a picture of more than typical geographical purchases. This may seem to negatively impact consumer behaviour as seen in the case of panic buying, herd mentality, and discretionary purchasing habits. In due course of contemplating the future crisis and crunch, the entire population tested their organisational skills and thus piling up the stocks at their places. This needs to be looked at in detail. The major role is being played by media, domestic as well as international or what we say as web trafficking. Consumers get in this vicious cycle depicted by such houses claiming scientific proof of their product as best without any evidence. This kind of practice should have an overview without creating dilemmas in the market-leading to disruptions in consumer behavioural patterns.

Here Maslow's hierarchy theory needs to be looked up. The five classifications, starting from the base of the pyramid as outlined by Lester (2013) include, (1) physiological necessities, (2) safety, consumer protection and wellbeing, (3) love and belonging, (4) self-esteem, and (5) self-actualisation or personal growth. In line with the hierarchy, consumers during crises tend to focus on satisfying basic physiological needs first, before moving onto higher levels and towards more luxury discretionary behaviours (Forbes 2017). Whilst Maslow's hierarchy is scaled according to the economic markets it is applied in, both advanced and emerging economies demonstrate similar shifts in consumer behaviour (Samli 2012). As such, Maslow's model provides a valuable platform for analysing consumer behaviour during periods of stress or anxiety, generated through emotions or more tangible stresses, such as a global pandemic. Even though it seems like we will change the way we live for eternity, things are rarely that straightforward. Regardless, we realize that individuals are not truly adept at adhering to new propensities. On an individual level, the pandemic is probably going to restrict social practices. For a segment of the populace, COVID-19 gives an ideal chance to rethink their present way of life decisions, make changes and reset their lives. We just need to investigate and utilize the newly discovered chance to work out, start another expertise or make a lifelong change. For example, deals of Peloton bicycles have bounced almost 66% and LinkedIn has announced a 3x expansion in time spent learning. What we can be sure of is that snapshots of emergencies regularly reshape our social qualities and individual mind.

In any case, snapshots of emergencies frequently prepare for social fortitude. The pandemic has managed the cost of social orders as an opportunity to join together, team up, and serve or else lead to malfunctions, cases of cheating, fraud, cybercrime. It depends on situations, on people, on companies, and the whole society in general. Seeing the force of aggregate activity that can change how people identify with others, bringing about an expanded feeling of the local area is the most appropriate solution and approach towards consumerism.

This social move from "I" to "we" could permanently affect shoppers as well as sellers. The Covid pandemic might be classified with pretty more extensive medical services emergency than has been knowledgeable about late history, for instances such as experienced during the SARS episode, it is preposterous to promptly expect that all purchaser practices ordinarily showed during more normal stuns or emergencies, particularly cataclysmic events, to apply here. A further complexity of investigating purchaser conduct during the COVID-19 period is the global extent of the pandemic, rather than the more regular, limited geographic districts, making this pandemic one of a kind in the extent of vulnerable emergencies.

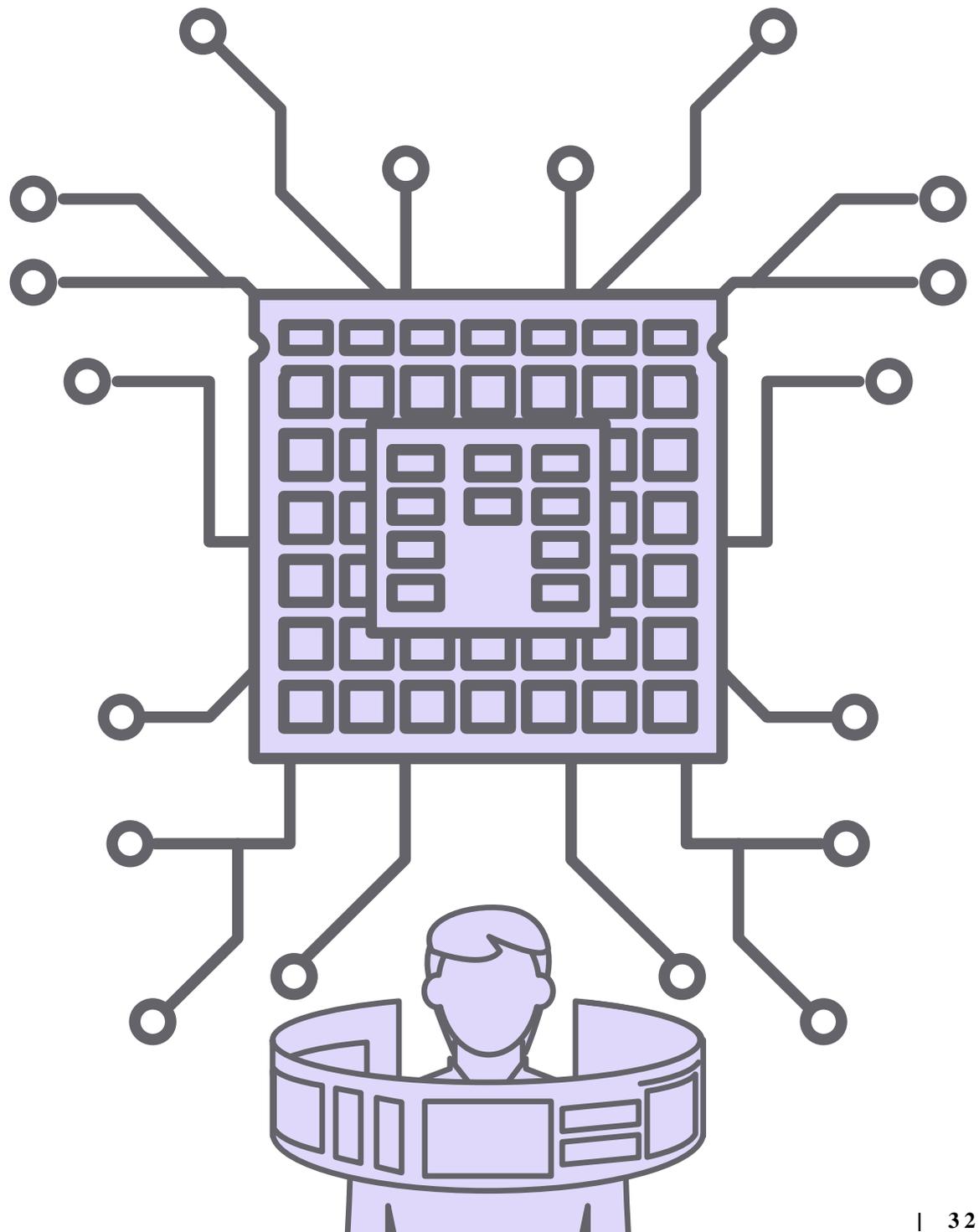


**Illustration:** Kanak Mohiley, B.A. Programme, Third Year

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# TECH-SAVVY CONSUMERISM



# Consumer Engagement and Brand Retention in the Digital Era



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*Sajneet Kaur Bagga*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*Second Year*

To enable action and change, the world of advertising is witnessing an essential role of human connection in this age of technology. In this respect, businesses are increasingly becoming experiential providers driving human-centric experiences.

For decades, several businesses have relied on customer loyalty programs that provide incentives to consumers who stay loyal and committed to their brand. However, a myriad of these programs is gradually becoming less effective drivers of long-term brand loyalty – particularly when compared to marketing strategies that specifically focus on customer experience and engagement. Traditional advertising, today, seldom commands the kind of attention it did in the past as people want more in exchange for brand loyalty, let alone a few minutes of their attention.

As technology continues to connect and proliferate every dimension of consumer lives, businesses are aiming to tap into the human-centred design in a space where more and more relations are being made with the help of technology. It is fundamentally changing the manner in which consumers interact with companies while making purchases. Although few companies are perceiving it as a problem, several others are viewing it as an opportunity to build better emotionally intelligent platforms to form deep human connections as marketers are acutely aware of the dire need to advance the human experience to improve brand retention among consumers.

Consumers are continually looking for human experiences to develop relevant connections. One of the fundamental needs of any individual is to have a sense of affinity and association. When companies take the initiative of engaging with their customers in a way that reflects their most intrinsic values, it can gradually translate to a level of brand loyalty that the majority of the brands are seeking in the present times as it can significantly fuel the growth of a business.

The task of understanding the consumer is extensive particularly concerning the complexity of turning that understanding into constructive business results. It requires embracing thought processes on how to generate possibilities rather than challenges. In this context, design thinking rightly translates human-centered insights into substantial business growth.



With a dramatic shift towards a human-centred approach, businesses are examining and re-interpreting the problems at hand, and positioning the consumer—who traditionally had been at the endpoint of any purchase—at the fore. When the design is employed along with collaboration, it can empower businesses to build a more reputable and trustworthy connection with the consumers. For instance, leading fitness companies today are successfully bringing together sports apparel, equipment, coaching, and counselling for holistic consumer experiences.

To understand what it means to enhance the customer experience and promote engagement, a look at one of today's leading businesses may help to simplify that.

Uber is one of today's best examples of a company that has managed to take advantage of both traditional taxis and black car services by combining them with an easy and engaging experience via the consumer's mobile device. The simplicity of booking a ride through Uber has allowed the company to generate a huge customer base, one which is naturally inclined to turn to them first when they need a car service. Consistent, easy, and optimized with the consumer in mind. It has been successful in removing several of the elements of taxi service that consumers found less appealing; like not knowing when the car would arrive, how to handle the tip, and even the passenger capacity, to capture a large market share and transform the industry.

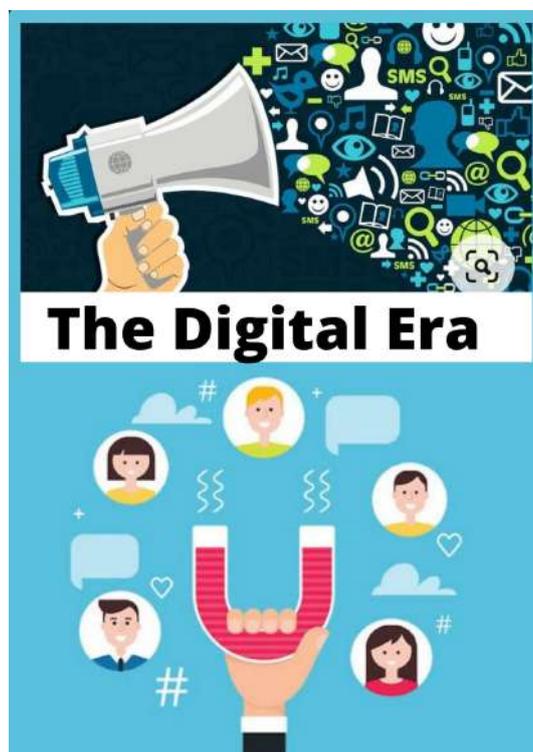
Customer loyalty should be viewed through the lens of the customer experience and brand engagement offered by the business. The process of generating long-term loyalty is less about constantly appealing to their consideration and more about making the choice familiar.

Given their crucial role, businesses that take up the initiative of simplifying the customer's purchasing experience, removing barriers that make the process more difficult, and engaging in social conversations of friends, as well as influencers, are much more likely to establish a relationship with customers and promote loyalty in today's consumer's marketplace. Undoubtedly, technological innovations ranging from cognitive marketing to social media, to machine learning and artificial intelligence, to the Internet of things (IoT) and more, are at the forefront of helping businesses deliver predictive and personalized content to customers, enhancing their experience and making engagement more seamless.

For businesses not in a position to fully deploy machine learning and artificial intelligence, consumer data can assist replicate the personalized customer experience. Employing data for optimization of marketing campaigns at each point of a customer's journey can be a cost-effective way for several companies to create better customer experiences.

A strong and engaging social media presence is another way in which businesses of all sizes can establish brand familiarity, increase loyalty, and further connect with customers by making personalized, engaging, and memorable experiences.

Conclusively, a massive shift in consumer expectations, prompt technological advancements, and innovative online strategies have all led to the current state of customer loyalty. A positive, human-oriented approach to experience is unlikely to diminish anytime soon in this digital age. And while the art of creating customer loyalty is changing, there perhaps has never been a better time to create and focus on a more personalized, one-to-one experience that drives real loyalty, than there is today.



*Illustration: Priya, B.A. Programme, Third Year*

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*Kura Sunaina*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*Third Year*

Back in the 1990s, eBay, Amazon and Dell.com were the only online stores for purposes different from today. Back in the days, there were very few internet users and hence the functioning of these websites had taken some time to pick up but it wasn't that long. People found the 'no intermediaries' policy very attractive. Apart from that, your computer was your store to either sell or buy. This made the process of selling and buying even more convenient. Customer service was personally handled by the companies to add a greater push to its success. The only problem was the exchange of money. People then depended on money drafts or demand drafts to transfer money and often time there would be a clash of payment and product delivery. This was also overcome with the arrival of an online payment site, PayPal which was later procured by eBay making its functioning easier. This process of selling and buying seems like a hassle and the scenario of the ancient world, but, it has only been in the last decade or so that online shopping has come into existence for the majority of the population.

Not even a decade ago, people walked down to stores to buy groceries and shop for festivities. Window shopping was a weekend relaxation. Going to malls was a recreational get-together for families and friends. Everything has changed during the last decade. Shopping in today's world has a new definition altogether. I can buy, sell and glance through the products anywhere and anytime. The markets are at our fingertips, one tap, and you buy the product and receive it the next day. Today, not just my computer but any device I have can be my one-stop store. Brick and mortar have significantly lost their impact. Let us look at how online stores could change the market scenario in a very short span of time.

Online shopping has provided customers with a lot of comforts. One can shop from your comfort zones like home and workplace. They can shop without any time constraints, any time of the day; you can exchange or return goods. You don't have to walk or drive down to the nearest store to find something; it is always just a tap away. Not only does it help cut downtime and travel but also provides the ability to compare the products of various brands at once. Earlier, one couldn't compare the products properly because of the constraint to travel to multiple brand stores. Oftentimes, we are just too lazy to check out multiple shops for just a single product. In online stores, you either have all the brands available at one e-commerce website or application or you can just browse through multiple e-commerce stores. This way of comparing products wouldn't take longer than a few minutes. The best part of online shopping is the reviews.



People are ready to believe a stranger's acknowledgement of the product. People have the habit of checking the reviews before they make a purchase and reviews seems to be the best way to assess a product rather than what the brand has to say about it. This was impossible in physical stores; we believed the brand blindly while making a purchase.

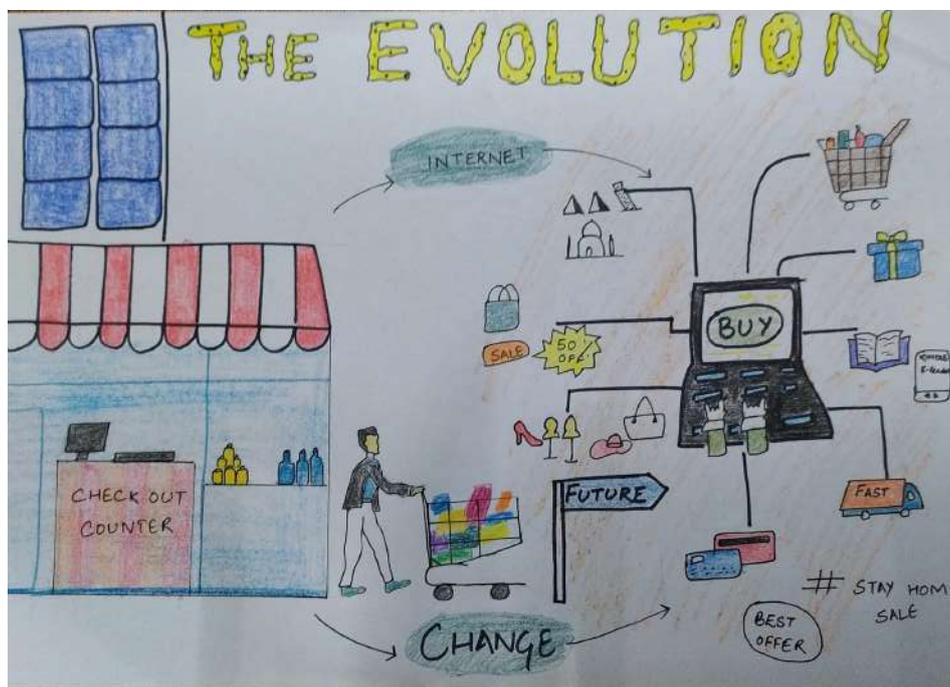
The benefits mentioned above were complimented by technological advancement. With the internet turning from luxury to a basic necessity, the e-commerce industry won a lottery. Added to this, a smartphone in every household helped everyone around to have easy access to the e-commerce sites. The advancement of mobile technology played a great role in the success of e-commerce. From the ability to access the internet on a phone, making it a smartphone to the various Applications that can be downloaded for easy shopping, has been a game-changer. To add to all these advances, the ability to pay with a finger tap has also been a boost to the industry. With the arrival of credit cards and online payment Applications, paying and receiving money has become very easy. Despite the existence of e-commerce from the 1990s, it was these catalysts that pushed its success to the present levels.

While sellers were enjoying their easy access to wider customers in a much easier way, it had its own downturns. All the sellers had to make tremendous changes in their functioning to catch up with the rat race. In the shift from physical to online structures of stores, many were left behind. The presence of online stores meant no salespersons, customers would self-help, and this meant that the companies had to work on providing every detail to the customers. Presenting details online would help the customers to access better before they make a purchase. The ability of the seller to provide personalised options to its customers depending on their search history is a vital component of online shopping. Information on the search engines of the customers should be traced and the options being provided should be similar to them. This personalised experience adds to the selling power of the stores. The future of the brand's product depends on the customer's reviews. These reviews are the ones that push the sales and hence, brands should make sure they please their customers and have excellent customer service. Customers are ready to discard a product and it wouldn't take a minute for it. Hence, sellers have to get accustomed to these new set-ups to be able to survive the rat race.

Technological advancement and globalisation have enabled the populace to have access to goods from farther regions without any obstruction. Added to this, the Pandemic has compelled us to rely on online platforms for every purchase we make. To avoid contact and keep ourselves and everyone around us safe, online shopping is the best way. Exchange of goods is easier but this certainly must have had impacts on our surroundings and environment. The closure of many brick and mortar stores and shopping complexes is one way that the online stores have impacted. We see stores that had historical relevance being shut down unable to compete with the e-commerce platforms.

It is also believed that online shopping is environmentally friendly. We might have to think over this. When we visited brick and mortar stores, we made sure to buy all the needful in one trip. We never used packaging material and were always using locally available products. In online shopping, we don't tend to buy all the needful in one go but tend to make multiple orders, meaning, several trips of deliveries and plenty of packaging. Availability of goods from across the world means we can have things delivered from the other side of the world. This not only increases carbon footprint but also discourages the local set-ups. If we think online shopping is the best for the environment, we might have to think over this.

We have had a drastic shopping evolution and continue to have. The evolution has brought a lot of changes in the lifestyles of many. Despite the drastic changes, we need to be aware as a consumer and make the right choices.



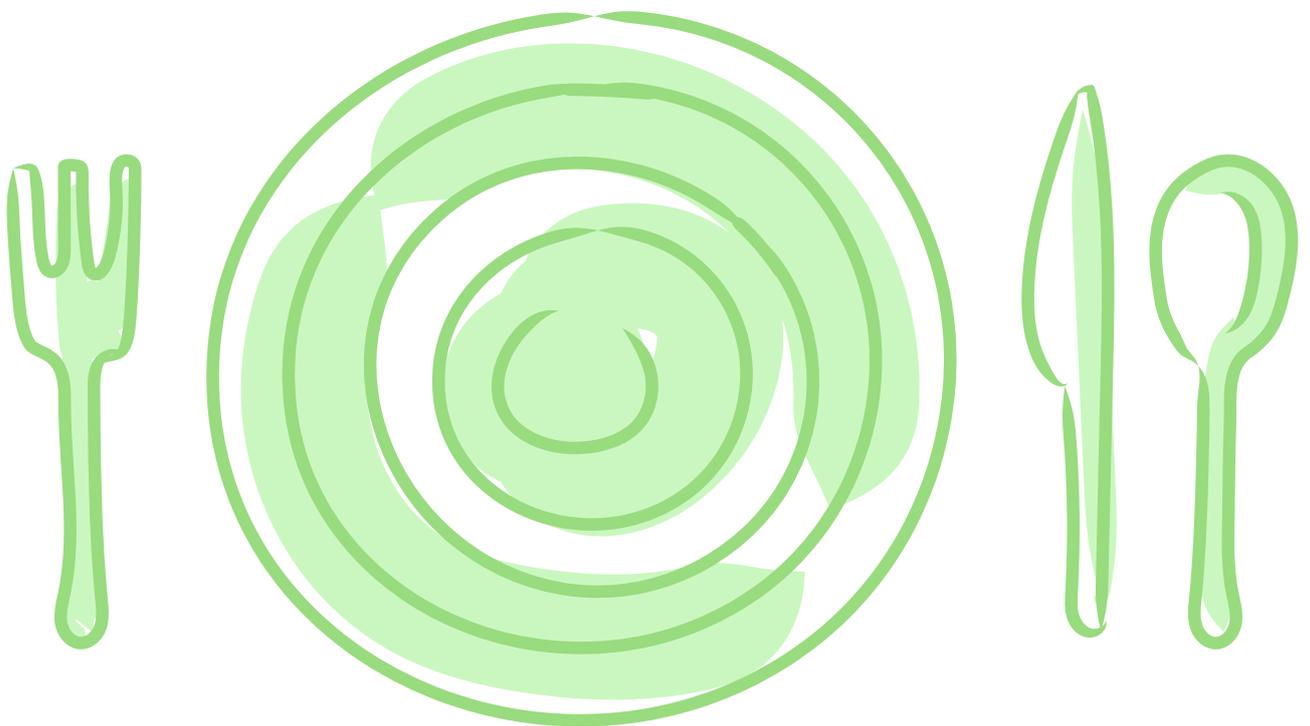
**Illustration:** Nishtha Sharma, B.A. Programme, Second Year

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# FOOD: JUST ANOTHER COMMODITY?



# Is Honey Good or Bad?



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*Aarushi Goyal*  
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*Second Year*

Sugar is a natural ingredient that has always been part of the human diet. Sugars are the basic building blocks of carbohydrates that taste sweet. It is also a quick and easy fuel for the body to use and it also helps to save energy for the future, however, Sugar has negative impacts on the body. There are two types of sugars: naturally occurring sugars and added sugars. Naturally occurring sugars are found in whole fruit, vegetables, and milk-based products and are not considered harmful for health, although they still contain calories. Added sugars include sugars that are added during the processing of foods, foods packaged as sweeteners, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices.

Added sugar is one of the most controversial ingredients in the modern diet because it can lead to many serious diseases, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. The main problem is that most people consume way too much sugar without even knowing it. This is where honey comes into play. Honey is considered to be one of the most commonly used natural substitutes of added sugar. Honey is a thick, golden liquid produced by honey bees. [1] Honey is characterized as a natural and raw foodstuff that can be consumed not only as a sweetener but also as medicine due to its therapeutic impact on human health. It is prone to adulterants caused by humans that manipulate the quality of honey. Although honey consumption has remarkably increased in the last few years all around the world, the safety of honey is not assessed and monitored regularly. Since the number of consumers of honey adulteration has increased in recent years, their trust and interest in this valuable product have decreased. Honey adulterants are any substances that are added to pure honey. Direct adulteration of honey is commonly performed by the direct addition of a certain amount of sucrose syrup into the honey. The source of sucrose syrup could be sugar beet, HFCS, maltose syrup, or industrial sugar syrups (glucose and fructose) obtained from heat, enzyme, or acid treatment of starch. [2] Adulteration increases the consumer's blood sugar, which can cause diabetes, abdominal weight gain, and obesity, raise the level of blood lipids and can cause high blood pressure. The most common organ affected by honey adulterants is the liver followed by the kidney, heart, and brain.

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) food researchers selected 13 top and smaller brands of processed and raw honey being sold in India. Samples of these brands were first tested at the Centre for Analysis and Learning in Livestock and Food (CALF) at National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) in Gujarat. Almost all the top brands (except Apis Himalaya) passed the tests of purity, while a few smaller brands failed the tests to detect C4 sugar – call it basic adulteration using cane sugar.

But when the same brands were tested using Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) – laboratory tests currently being used globally to check for such modified sugar syrups – almost all big and small brands failed. Out of the 13 brand tests, only three passed the NMR test, which was done by a specialized laboratory in Germany. Out of 22 samples tested, only five passed all the tests. 77 percent of the samples were found to be adulterated with the addition of sugar syrup. Honey samples from leading brands such as Dabur, Patanjali, Baidyanath, Zandu, Hitkari, and Apis Himalaya, all failed the NMR test. Only 3 out of the 13 brands – Saffola, Markfed Sohna, and Nature’s Nectar (one out of two samples) -- passed all the tests. The most shocking thing was that Indian standards for honey purity cannot detect adulteration. This is because Chinese companies have designed sugar syrups to bypass these standards.

Amit Khurana, programme director of CSE’s Food Safety and Toxins team said “It shows how the business of adulteration has evolved so that it can pass the stipulated tests in India. Our concern is not just that the honey we eat is adulterated, but that this adulteration is difficult to catch. In fact, we have found that the sugar syrups are designed so that they can go undetected.”[3]. We as consumers are consuming more money to fight this pandemic and Impure honey causes more damage to our health. Not only consumers, but it would also collapse the food system because this could lead to the loss of bees. So we must become more aware of the honey we eat for its goodness and not consume impure honey with added sugars.



*Illustration: Bhairvi Parashar, B.A. Programme, Second Year*

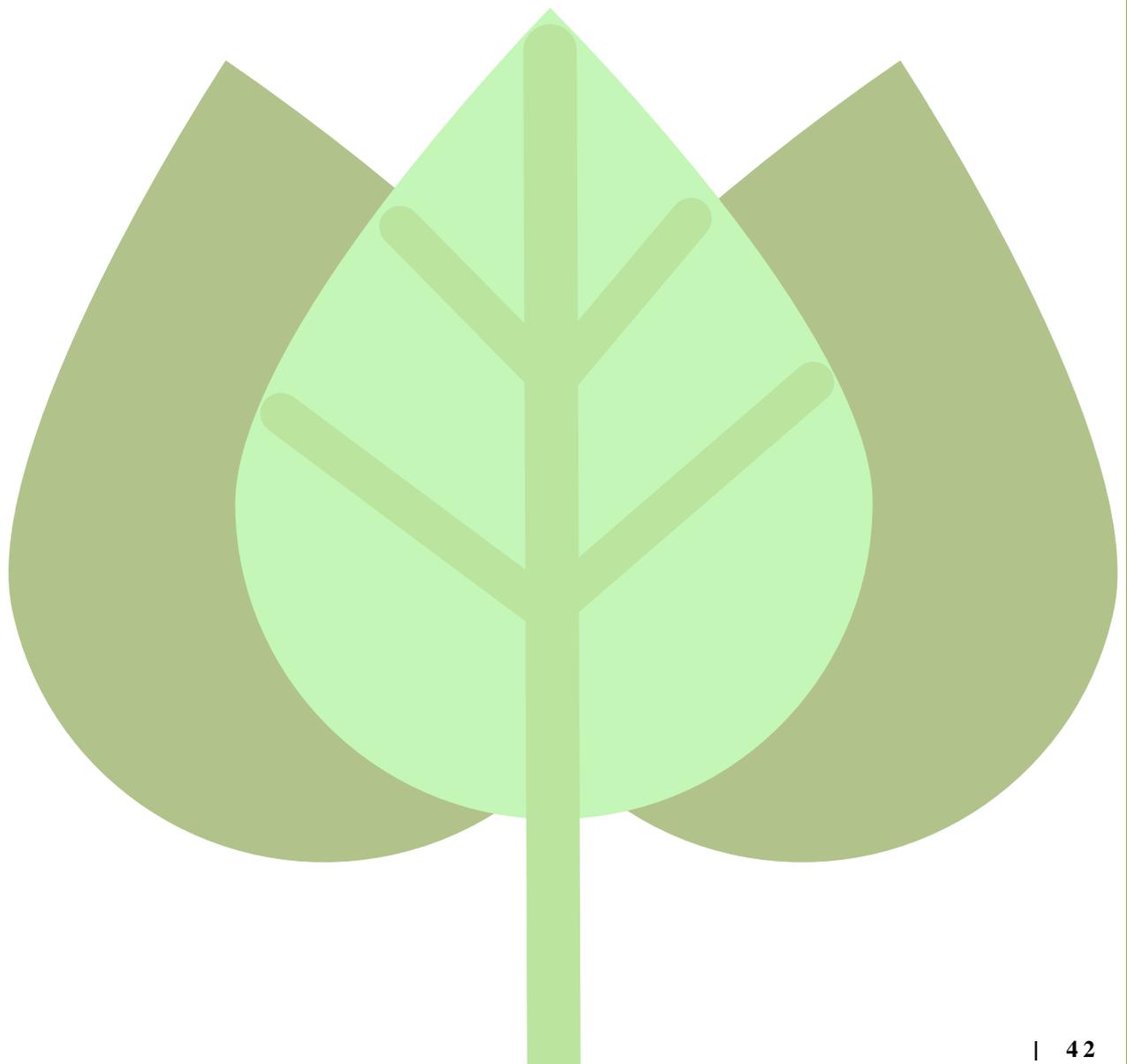
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# **GREEN LIFESTYLE!**



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*B.Sc. (H) Mathematics*

*Second Year*

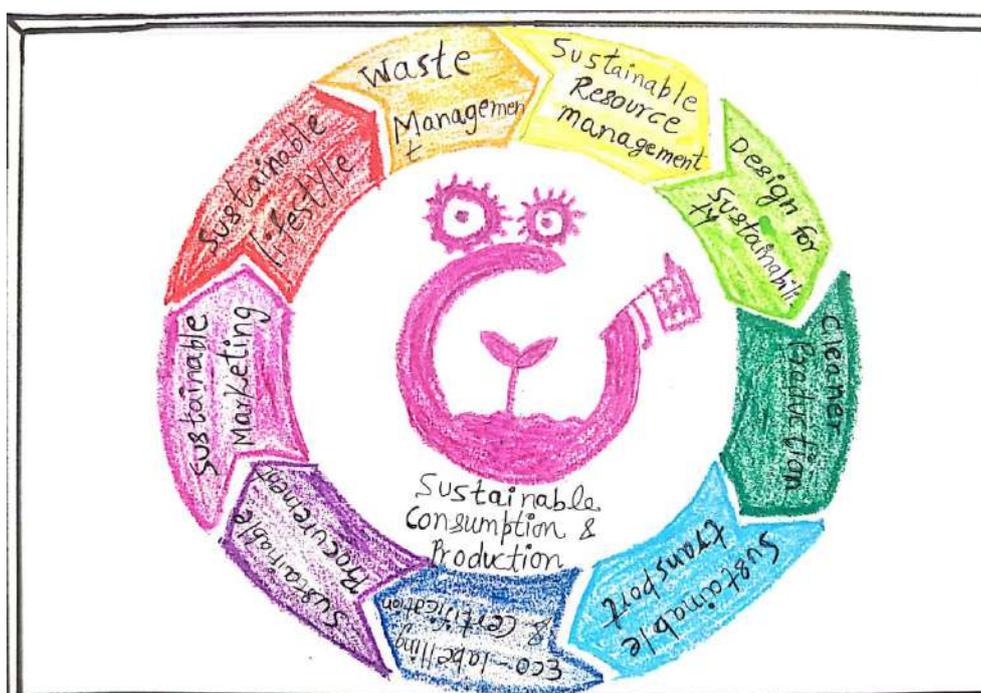
Most of us might be aware of the ubiquitous definition of Sustainable consumption - The optimum use of resources that bring us better life while minimizing the use of natural resources and not jeopardizing the needs of future generations. This entails engaging in consumption that seeks to protect various segments of the present society and that of future generations. Albeit, this definition seems ephemeral to our ears. When we are swathed by Global warming, rise in sea levels, pollution, deforestation, sustainable consumption is the need of the hour yet we choose to dabble with it. The word Sustainability whether its sustainable development, sustainable consumption, or sustainable production closely relates to the concept of eco-friendliness.

Consumption is not limited to individuals and households, but also governments, businesses, and other institutions. It brings up stakeholders' approach to consumption, wherein current consumers must factor in the effect of their consumption on the planet, people, and profit of companies, which hitherto was not the case. There is a general notion among consumers that more consumption means greater happiness. As capitalism is profit-centric, companies produce and market products that lure us in a bait and satisfy our present needs(or wants) which is a vicious cycle that adds to their profits but reinforces unsustainability by hurting the planet and eventually consumers in the long term perspective. Did you go to the supermarket to buy a jar, but end up purchasing a set of six because there was a 50% discount on that set? Or maybe you just bought a jar but also purchased a set of bottles just because the design looked appealing and was cost-effective. Well, it would appear to be cost-effective in monetary terms but there are huge hidden costs for the environment. We all face similar situations in our daily life. That's why we have to carefully define our needs and wants.

Firstly, enthroning consumer curtailment behaviour in terms of rejecting unsustainable products and promoting the adoption of consumer behaviour that engender sustainability has received wide endorsement. There are four premises of sustainable consumption behaviour: contextual forces, attitudinal factors, habits or routines, and personal capabilities. However, values, beliefs, norms, and habits result in curtailment behaviour and adoption of sustainable consumption. Secondly, policymakers are also advocating the supply-side approach for emboldening sustainable behaviour which promotes manufacturers and supply chains to adopt sustainable production to promote sustainable consumption.

But this approach poses some quagmires for developing and underdeveloped countries in which there is a dearth of viable technology. Sustainability issues like globalization have emerged as an orthodoxy regime that the emerging countries cannot afford to ignore without economic perils. Thirdly, there is a need for deliberate action to reduce the global population which is gigantically increasing. Paradoxically, the contributory factors are the man's quest to overcome various diseases, advancement in nutritional efficacies, and technologically swamped agricultural production. There has been an increase in the global mortality rate as well. More demand means more consumption of non-renewable resources. This may sound a plausible factor, but to reign over the ravaging consumption of man, reduction in the human population is a necessary condition, however not sufficient due to overconsumption.

The theme of Sustainable consumption is closely aligned to the society's level of development. For affluents, it depicts overconsumption which challenges the continued health of the planet (when excess consumption goes beyond the carrying capacity of the earth), the people (consumers who largely becomes obsessed and suffer from other health challenges that are related to overconsumption), and profit of companies (which may be affected as a result of consumers' resistance to unsustainable products). Estimates from 2007 data reveal that the average global ecological footprint (the amount of land and water capable of sustaining one person) is 2.70 ha per 70 global citizens. This means that about 1.5 earth are needed to maintain the present global level of consumption. This can soar up to 2 in upcoming years yet we have just one earth. The consumption of affluent society exceeds the world's average consumption.



**Illustration:** Jahnvi Chourasia, B.A.(H) Political Science, Second Year



On the contrary, are less affluent citizens who suffer from malnutrition because of underconsumption. According to World Wildlife estimates, if every citizen of the world were to afford the present consumption level of the average UK Citizen, three planets would be needed. Underconsumption and bad consumption clusters around poor management of wastes and overdependence on natural resources such as excessive use of firewood for domestic fuel which could result in desertification and other natural disasters. From a socioeconomic perspective, unsustainable consumption is a function of socioeconomic disposition rather than development. It implies that the occurrence of sustainable and unsustainable consumption is not linked to their geographic locations. Thus, affluent consumers in poorer societies can exacerbate unsustainability as much as their counterparts in the affluent society depending on their pattern of consumption.

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Consumerism denotes the connotation of increasing consumption of goods and services purchased in the market being a desirable goal and consequentially, the dependence of a person's well-being and happiness on possessing the consumer goods and material things. Even though consumerism is considered to be an accelerator of economic growth but in reality, is it a boon or bane?

Let us analyze:

Total number of consumers in the world at present - < 3.5 billion

Rising consumer class - 2017	2030
3.5 billion	5.6 billion

Certainly, these statistics stand testimony to the fact that the world is progressing towards new dawn where a large chunk of the population can afford goods and services beyond necessities as well as many people are being lifted out of poverty, propelling the rise of the middle class or what we call a global consumer class.

Caution! We are overusing earth's natural resources by more than 70% and it is estimated that we might need 1.75 Earth-like planets to support the rise of the global consumer class.

### **Effects of consumerism on the planet:**

High demand → Resources extraction → Manufacturing of products → Mass usage → Disposal of waste  
→ Oceans as dump pits

It depicts that the oceans are being turned into huge dump pits to dispose of the waste produced by the global consuming class with single-use plastic bags (can be broken into nearly 2 million microscopic plastic fragments) being the largest constituent.

Water supplies are being disrupted, diverted, and deflected for intensive farming techniques to meet the ever-increasing food demand. Pollutants suspended in the air are causing serious health hazards as well as accentuating the pollution levels and global warming.

Overuse of land, destruction of wildlife, deforestation, resource depletion are the direct repercussions of rapid industrialization and urbanisation. A phenomenal rise in the demand for energy, electronics, housing, furniture, etc. is putting a heavy strain on natural resources.

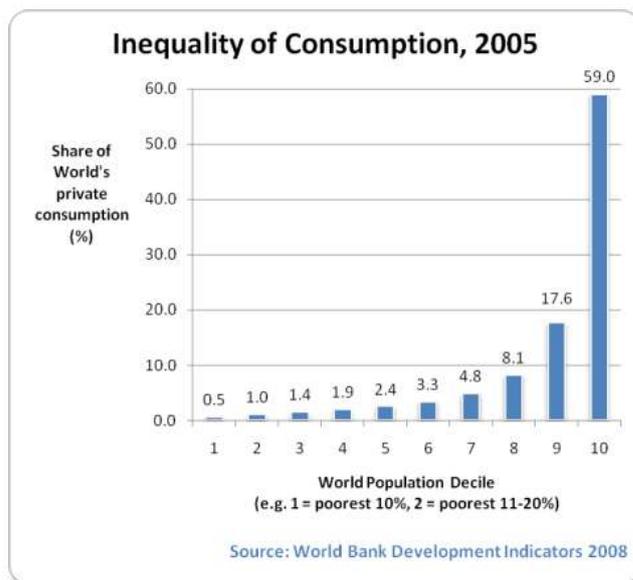
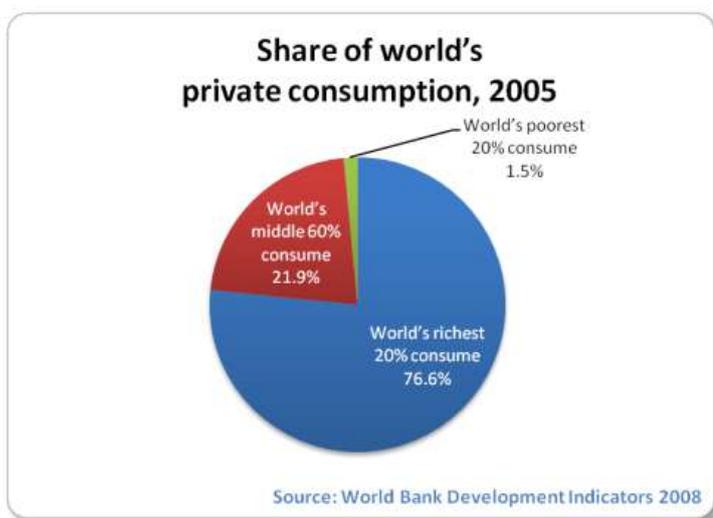
### Consumerism and Climate Change:

A study published in the Journal of Industrial Ecology reports that a whopping 60% of global greenhouse gas emissions are caused by the consumption of food and other knick-knacks, in addition to using between 50% and 80% of total land resources and excess water use. Palm oil, used in our food, cleaning products, cosmetics, and fuel, is the major cause of deforestation. 24,000 liters of water is required to produce 1 kilo of chocolate. The world might run out of seafood by 2048 if the current pattern of overfishing is not brought to halt.

It is horrifying to see how our consumption patterns are leading to climate change.

### Inequalities in society:

In terms of consumption patterns and their effects, there is a wide gulf between the rich and the poor, thereby exacerbating inequalities. Pertinently, since the rich and advanced countries have high rates of consumerism, they are also responsible for the high carbon emissions rate thereby, impacting the world.



In the words of Richard Robbins, “someone has to pay” for the way the wealthier in the world consume and spend.

### Does consumerism impact individuals?

It is expounded that sedentary lifestyles, consumption of high-calorie foods, urbanization, or in short, overconsumption could also lead to obesity and cardiovascular diseases, further leading to cultural and social problems.

### Is there a silver lining?

It is estimated that if individual spending is diverted into other needed spheres, US\$ 6 billion would provide basic education to everyone. An additional 22 billion would provide access to basic health services, sufficient nutrition, and clean water to every person on the earth. (Surprising!)

UNDP's global targets for realizing Goal 12 which is Responsible consumption and production include achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, implementation of a 10-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production among others.

3,850 billion terajoules of solar energy are captured by the Earth while we use 0.57 billion terajoules of the actual energy reaching us. In just 80 minutes, the sun could light the earth for a year.



*Illustration: Shivani Singh, B.A. Programme, Third Year*

### So where do these facts point to?

There is a dire need to raise living standards and human development across the globe in resonance with the carrying capacities of ecosystems. Isn't sustainable production and consumption the only way now?

### What can you do?

At the very outset, recognition of existing challenges and pledging to consume sustainably assume utmost importance.



Steps at individual levels like changing patterns of consumption, following the 3Rs, adopting more environment-friendly practices, a shift in mode and standard of living, among others would go a long way in bringing about positive changes.

“Without a fundamental shift in the way goods and resources are consumed, the world faces the prospect of multiple, interlocking global crises for the environment, prosperity, and security. Sustainable consumption is a prerequisite for a more prosperous, safe, and equitable global future.”

-World Economic Forum

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[1] UNDP. 2021. Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production | UNDP. [Online] Available at: <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-12-responsible-consumption-and-production.html>

[2] Globalissues.org. 2014. Consumption and Consumerism. <https://www.globalissues.org/issue/235/consumption-and-consumerism>

[3] Grist. 2016. Consumerism plays a huge role in climate change. <https://grist.org/living/consumerism-plays-a-huge-role-in-climate-change/>

[4] Theworldcounts.com. 2021. The World Counts. <https://www.theworldcounts.com/challenges/planet-earth/state-of-the-planet/number-of-consumers/story>

[5] Greentumble. 2016. The Negative Effects of Consumerism | Greentumble. <https://greentumble.com/the-negative-effects-of-consumerism/>

# Excessive Consumption: Pathway to Global Catastrophe



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*Nishtha Sharma*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*Second Year*

Doesn't the prospect of staying alone on a planet full of piles of garbage with no one around, sound disturbing on one hand and absurd on the other? Well, it was a concept very clearly portrayed in 2008, Disney animated science-fiction movie WALL-E. A consequence of human activities over the years which due to rampant consumerism and its environmental impact had turned Earth into a garbage-strewn wasteland, with no human life around.

Although an imagination, the movie does invoke self-realization for many about the consequences of our actions and how deeply consumerism worked itself into the popular landscape. It simply seems to be natural now, almost normal and while found across cultures transcending human boundaries, it is not without consequences.

## **The Rise**

It was in the 1600s, when the Global Societal Changes in Europe- Beginning of Imperialism, expanding and shifting population, urbanization along with the lessening of the impact of Church on society, made people bereft causing them to look into different avenues of self-fulfilment to fill the gap, and with the use of goods becoming popular the seeds of consumerism was sown. However, it was still curtailed because of the poor communication and large distances, and the traditional social mindset of leisure rather than spending the extra income for selfish pleasure. But with time there was a redefinition of what was understood as natural and the concept of "basic necessities" changed.

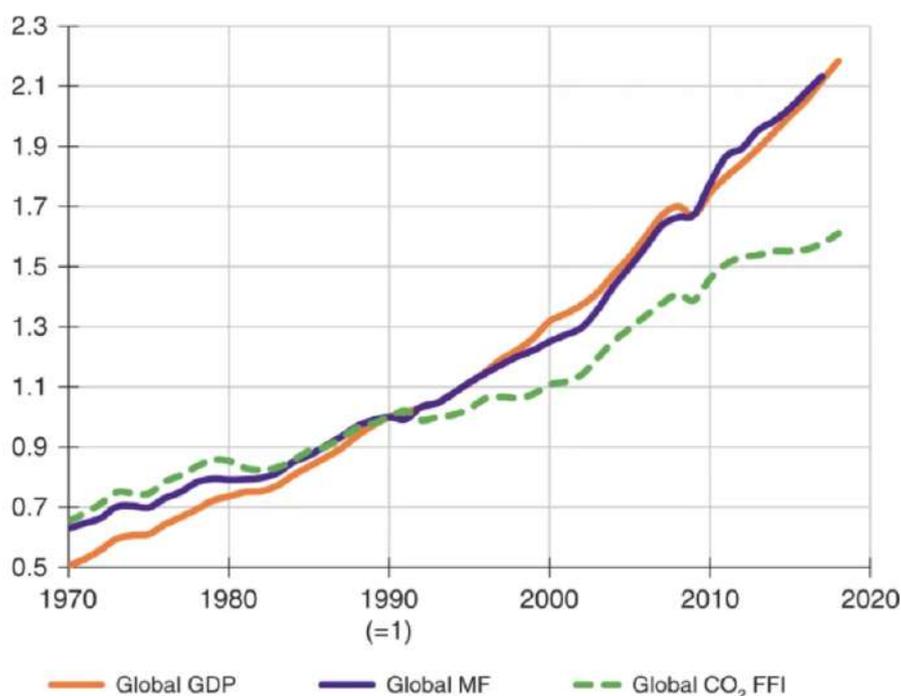
It was after the Industrial revolution that the consumerist orientation spread in the social landscape. Big changes however came in the latter half of the 19th century with innovations of television, rapid communication, phones, the internet, etc. that the big boom happened.

Like a plague, consumerism has flooded and seeped into the pores of human culture and destroyed the environment. A study published in 2015, in the Journal of Industrial Ecology shows that the effects of human consumption could be seen through various indicators going as back as the 1970s-emissions, biodiversity loss, air pollution, etc. and they all had similar causes- it was the rampant consumption that was at the forefront of the global impact caused by human activities surpassing other socio-economic factors.

Using the below-mentioned table as an indicator, it is unmistakable that the changes in global material footprint and global carbon emissions compared to the global GDP are not very positive.

This table also very clearly says that the gains are cancelled out by the losses.

**Figure 1: Relative change in main global economic and environmental indicators from 1970 to 2017 from “Scientist’ warning on affluence” by Wiedmann, T., Lenzen, M., Keyßer, L.T, Nat Commun 11, 3107 (2020)**



Shown is how the global material footprint (MF, equal to global raw material extraction) and global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil-fuel combustion and industrial processes (CO<sub>2</sub> FFI) changed compared with global GDP (constant 2010 USD). Indexed to 1 in 1990. Data sources:

<https://www.resourcepanel.org/global-material-flows-database>, <http://www.globalcarbonatlas.org> and <https://data.worldbank.org>.

Income has clearly been seen as to be very strongly linked with consumption and consumption with impact, so any changes in income will have an impact.

Income -> Consumption -> Impact

This means that the world’s top 10% earners are responsible for approximately 45 percent of environmental impact while the bottom 3-5 percent - clearly proving that environmental impact is caused by the world's rich and considering their lifestyle of comfort, convenience, luxury, and affluence, it is very much so.



Another factor very clearly linked to the emergence of the new middle class with sustained and higher incomes than before and their demands for the basic necessities, all of this caused the new markets across the world to emerge. With a rapidly expanding middle class and their demands for better and cheaper alternatives - the rise of fast culture came - fast food, fast fashion, etc. all of which further contributed to the concept of excess consumerism.

### **The Fall**

“Every action has an opposite and equal reaction”- (*Newton’s Third Law of Motion*) is a statement that is often proved time and again. Today, fast fashion and plastics are the known biggest products of excessive consumerism. However, directly and indirectly, consumerism has affected and contributed to all the major environmental problems faced today. It is our greed for more that has resulted in all-natural problems culminating with the twin problems of Climate Change and Global Warming, and every disaster happening is now a further contributor.

With the rising demand in the market for all the latest technologies, the demand for metals has crossed the threshold for this poor resource-starved earth. Pollution due to excessive use of automobiles, industrial waste, household, agricultural, etc. has increased rapidly.

With the world population at around 7 billion and growing, the need to sustain such a huge population requires excessive and intensive land-use practices further starving the earth. With the consumer demand in the wealthier countries growing, it all comes down to the less developed, financially backward countries to strip off their natural resources and sustain their demands.

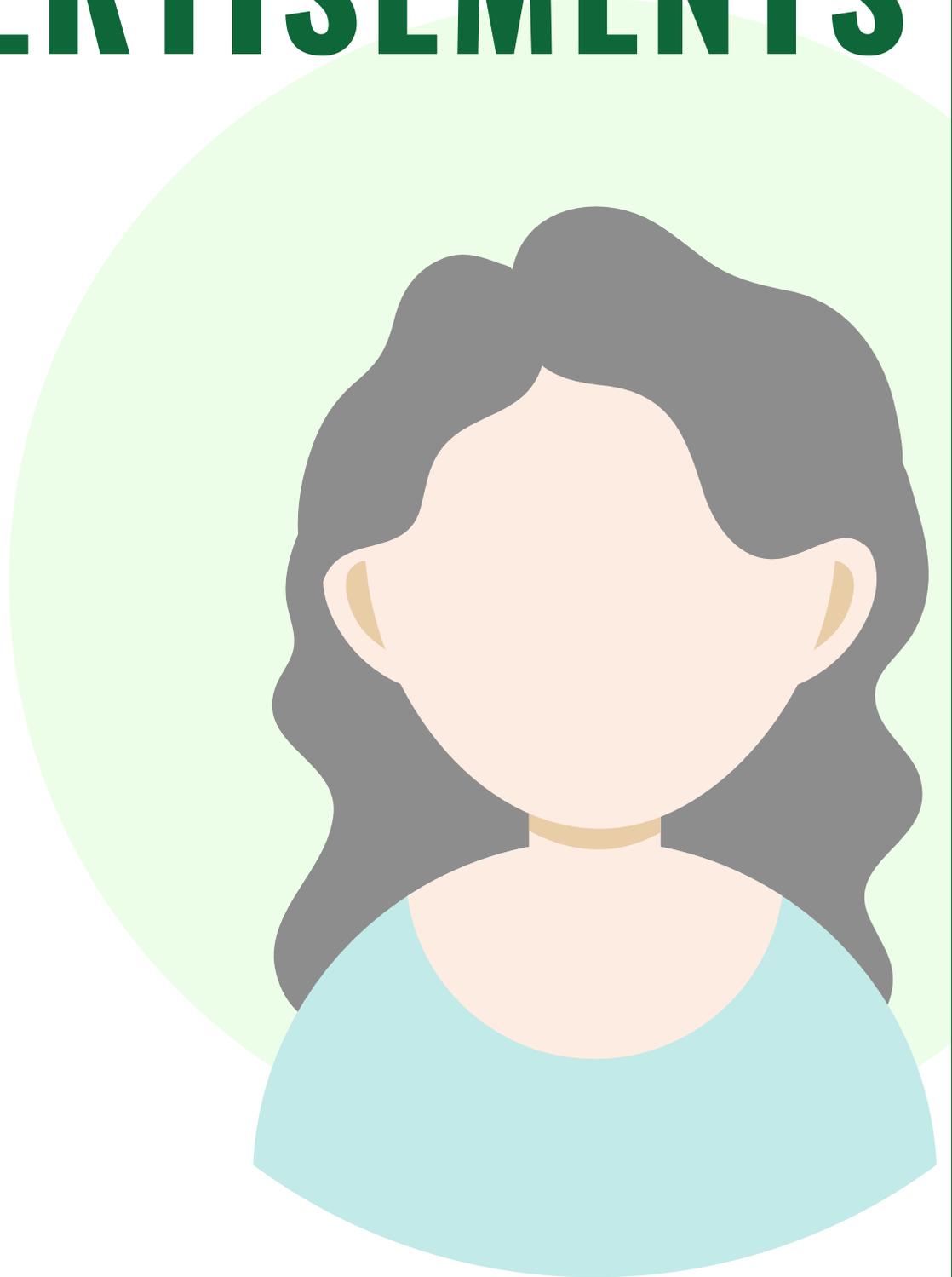
For the most part, one thing is very clear - the culture of excessive consumption will have to change, for we are on a borderline for a global catastrophe, for which precautionary measures have to be taken and strictly followed to prevent it before it’s too late to regret. Otherwise, who knows, a few decades down the line, maybe some aspects of the movie WALL-E might just come true.

***“To live fully, we must learn to use things and love people, and not love things and use people.” - John Powell***

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[1] Wiedmann, Thomas, Manfred Lenzen, Lorenz T. Keyßer, and Julia K. Steinberger. June 19, 2020 “Scientists’ Warning on Affluence.” *Nature Communications* 11 (1): 3107. Available on- <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-16941-y>

# MIND HUNTING BY ADVERTISEMENTS



# Influence of Advertisement on Consumer Mind



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*Tripti Mani*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*Second Year*

An advertisement is a public notice promoting a product, event, or service. Advertisements are everywhere, today everyone is surrounded by lots of advertisements from early morning newspapers to our social media platforms and also in many of our evening shows wherever we turn our eyes on Roads, Railway stations, Metro stations everywhere we find an advertisement. Today's advertisements are more based on 'Neuromarketing'.

"Neuromarketing is the study of how people's brains respond to advertising and other brand-related messages by scientifically monitoring brainwave activity, tracking and skin response."- (*Eben Harrell, 2019*). We all know that the main motive behind the advertisement of any product is to sell more and more products and make a good brand image. But today's advertisement first tries to make a social link with the consumer by giving a catchy and trustworthy message through a thirty-second advertisement which makes the consumer feel assured about the product and the brand can win the trust of the consumers. Example: Johnson & Johnson has become such a brand on which each and every mother has a blind trust that all the products of this particular brand are good for their baby.

Some brands also try to persuade the consumer's mind by using branding tools like 'Swadeshi' which somewhere emphasizes and grabs all the attention of the consumer to buy swadeshi/Indianized products. Especially in the post- corona period advertisements have started using the slogan that now the time has come "To Be Vocal for Local".

'Patanjali' is a brand that uses branding tools like 'Swadeshi' and 'Ayurveda' to influence the consumer's mind. Somehow these tools have helped the brand to form a perception of it being an Indian and herbal brand. "Swadeshi" term makes a correlation that helps us understand the attachment of the consumer to the product. We can also say that Ayurvedic products are better than other products because somehow it makes an emotional connection with the consumer's mind.

"The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself." (Peter Drucker, 1973)

Sometimes, advertisements of any product influence the consumer to such an extent that the consumer keeps on buying that product which they don't need, and this results in over expense or debt.

Many other factors influence the consumer mind like prices, the channel of distribution, promotion, preference, targeted group of consumers, psychological factors, social factors, cultural factors, and many more. Sometimes a consumer is not able to recognize how much he is influenced by the advertisement and he thinks that the product which he is buying is of his choice but in reality, it is his mind that is influenced to buy the product, and this is what is known as the impact of advertisement on the consumer mind.

We see that in all groups whether kids, teenagers, adults or old people, everyone is influenced by advertisements. When we go to a shop to buy a product the image of an advertisement of a product which we might have seen somewhere appears in our mind and considering the human behaviour, without trying to know the details about the product we put it in our basket.

To conclude, we all are subjected to this influence because we all live in the context of marketing where everything is sold and bought but it is also necessary to act as a rational consumer and buy the product carefully not to put any product in your basket randomly. Instead, we can first acquire knowledge about the product and then make a correct choice. Don't be a blind consumer, be a vigilant consumer.



*Illustration: Tripti Mani, B.A. Programme, Second Year*

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[1] "What is an Advertisement? Are mobile ads different?", Adjust.com. <https://www.adjust.com/glossary/advertisement/>

[2] Harrell, Eben "Neuromarketing: What You Need to Know", Harvard Business Review, January 23, 2019. <https://hbr.org/2019/01/neuromarketing-what-you-need-to-know>

[3] Brenner, Michael; "Marketing is Business- The Wisdom of Peter Drucker", Marketing Insider Group, December 01, 2011, <https://marketinginsidergroup.com/strategy/marketing-is-business-the-wisdom-of-peter-drucker/>

# The Annoyance Factor and Subscriptions



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**Ruchika Soni**  
**B.A. Programme**  
**Second Year**

*“Mood Lighting set thi, his favourite dish was also ready, Bollywood romance playlist jaise hi chalayi, ad aa gayi, go on have an ad-free date night with Spotify premium and enjoy uninterrupted streaming.”*

These lyrics from the infamous Spotify advertisement are well known to everyone. If you’ve used any free online music service, you know this feeling well: the infuriating moment your 90s Rock and Roll playlist is interrupted by an advertisement for a premium ad-free subscription or an investment plan for a secure future or that Zomato ad that makes you hungry and angry at the same time. This feeling of frustration is not new and is found amongst all consumers across this globe, however, this feeling of frustration and annoyance is what is intentionally constructed among the consumers which becomes a tool for these app developers to lure their consumers into buying the premiums by paying money for the service, which they had been using for free until now, just by driving an emotional factor into play i.e. to annoy the consumer by continually putting up ads in between their videos/music.

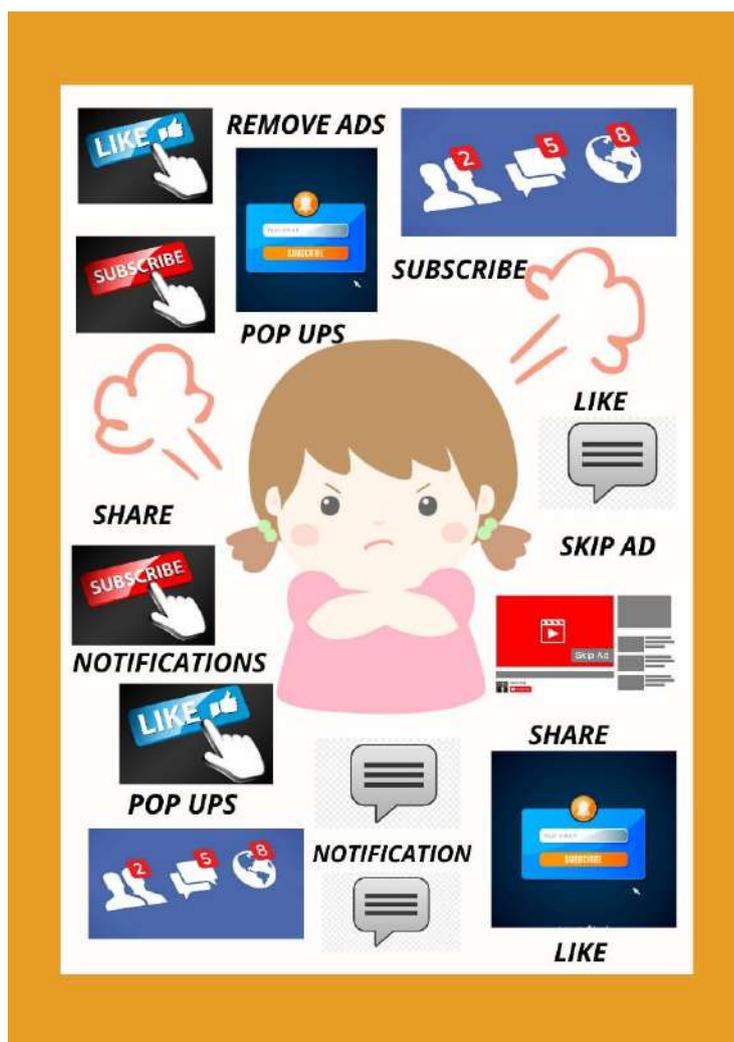
While most ads aim to elicit optimistic feelings, some advertisements are specifically intended to linger in the minds of their target audiences. Advertisers do this by using the ‘Annoyance factor’ which might feature a repetitive slogan or a dislikeable communicator of the advertisement’s message. These methods are often associated with sounds that are unpleasant to the ear, for example, terrible jingles that you can’t get out of your head or people with irritating voices screaming messages at you. Radio, perhaps more than any other form of advertisement, employs this device. To heighten the ‘annoyance factor’ repetition is often used. Recently, along with the frequent repetition of the ad, what has also been adopted is the increase in the number of ads displayed at a point in time. Now instead of one single ad, what we see is more than two ads at the same time in a loop. If you use YouTube, you must be well aware of how instead of one ad, there are two or sometimes more than two ads playing on loop without a break. Advertisers use the annoyance factor in the hopes that customers can forget about their disinclination for the commercial and remember the product instead.

However, this ad annoyance has generated another revenue source for the app companies by the act of misleading the consumers into buying what is known as the Ad-Blockers or in a layman’s lingo, Premium Accounts or Paid Subscriptions.

Under this freemium strategy, the applications reserve certain benefits for the paid consumers, such as no ad interruptions, options for downloading the music/videos, etc. The application is free for download from the app store but in general, the user of that app has only limited access to the services and is constantly interrupted by a plethora of ads while full benefits and services are reserved for the consumer who buys the premium. What is more amusing is that the apps that had initially been giving all the basic services to the consumers for free such as downloading the video/music etc have become heavily devoted to bringing consumers to buy their premium subscriptions and thus generating more revenue.

In a statement to The Verge, a YouTube spokesperson commented that “Our top priority at YouTube is to deliver a great user experience and that includes ensuring users do not encounter excessive ad loads. We do not seek to specifically increase ad loads across YouTube. For a specific subset of users who use YouTube like a paid music service today - and would benefit most from additional features - we may show more ads or promotional prompts to upsell to our paid service.”

To be sure, if they could, all of these apps would completely abandon their ad-supported companies. They'd rather make their customers pay a monthly subscription fee than deal with ad trafficking and bloated ad distribution departments. However, the free tiers also have the appropriate lead-generation mechanism.



*Illustration: Sanjeevani Chatterjee, B.A.(H) Philosophy, First Year*

They have the potential to draw consumers' interest and then upsell them to subscriptions. This alliance between advertisers and software developers generates huge profits by first showing them an array of commercials that they never asked to see in the first place, and then forcing them to pay for premium to get rid of them. Advertisers are funding the whole operation.

What are their thoughts on their material being used as a deterrent? Advertisers are charged for the luxury of using their advertisements as a stick to push subscriptions.

After the pandemic and the increasing work from home lifestyle, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of users with a premium subscription. With the surge in the number of hours spent at home, the number of hours spent using these apps has shown a sharp rise and hence, an increment in the premium accounts. According to Forbes, Spotify reached 130 million paid subscribers and had a 31% increase in the total number of consumers in the year 2020. Spotify had an increase of more than 6 million subscribers due to the changing habits during the pandemic.

This annoyance revenue model reminds us of the famous line from the movie, *The Social Dilemma* which is very apt in this contemporary world and the current patterns of consumption, “If you are not buying the product, you become the product”. Consumers have become nothing but the product of free media. We are being manipulated at every step of our actions to do something that would directly benefit the crony capitalists. The traditional way of supplying what the consumer demands have been changed to creating an intentional obstacle and then manipulating the consumer to buy the solution for that, all for the benefit of the industrialists. What is observed from the changing patterns of consumerism is that the supply curve that has been traditionally following the demand curve has reversed the algorithms and what we now see is the trend of manufacturing an induced unnecessary demand, only created to satisfy something that infuriated our emotions, following the supply curve of paid subscriptions.

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[1] Gartenberg, C., 2021. YouTube plans to annoy music listeners into subscribing by playing more ads. [online] The Verge. Available at: <https://www.theverge.com/2018/3/21/17147800/youtube-streaming-service-lyor-cohen-ads-music-industry-spotify-free> [Accessed 3 February 2021]

[2] Kelley, C., 2021. Spotify Gains 6 Million Paid Subscribers As Listening Habits Change Due To Coronavirus. Forbes, [online] Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/caitlinkelley/2020/04/29/spotify-gains-6-million-paid-subscribers-as-listening-habits-change-due-to-coronavirus/?sh=791ec3f87fba> [Accessed 2 February 2021].

[3] Advertising Unit. 2021. The Annoyance Factor. [online] Available at: <https://advertisingunit.wordpress.com/the-annoyance-factor/> [Accessed 2 February 2021].



**TULA-MHCC**  
invites  
you all to the



**ANNUAL ORIENTATION**  
25, NOVEMBER 2020  
TIME 4:30 PM  
Platform : Zoom



**AWARENESS — RESPONSIBILITIES — RIGHTS**  
we believe in striking the right balance...



**TULA**  
Miranda House Consumer Club  
and  
IQAC- Miranda House



celebrate  
**National Consumer Day**  
24 December 2020

-Interactive sessions with speakers  
-Slogan writing competition(one liner)



Dr Malay Noerav  
Associate Professor  
St. Stephens College, University of Delhi  
Consumer Protection in India A  
Historical Perspective



Prof. Ishita Rutabhasini  
Consumer Protection Act 2019 &  
Misleading Advertisement

Platform: Zoom  
Meeting ID : 936 1453 7295  
Password : y51sq1  
TIME: 1:00pm



**AWARENESS**

HARDI KHANDLWAL STUDENT PRESIDENT 9009317998 | DR JAYASHREE PILLAI TEACHER COORDINATOR | DR BIJAYALAXMI NAND ACTING PRINCIPAL



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, MIRANDA HOUSE  
AND  
TULA, MIRANDA HOUSE CONSUMER CLUB  
UNDER THE AEGIS OF  
IQAC, MIRANDA HOUSE



celebrate  
**VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK 2020**  
THEME  
" Vigilant India, Prosperous India "

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**MR. SHAKTI SINHA**  
Insenary Director, Delhi School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Delhi

EVENTS FOR THE DAY  
Integrity Pledge  
Flash Mob  
Keynote Address  
Online Quiz Competition

DATE: 26 October 2020  
TIME: 11:00 am  
Register using the link attached in the message

Bhumiya Nehraani (88724 47824) | Dr. Jayashree Pillai (Programme Coordinator) | Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda (Acting Principal) | hardi khandlwal



**TULA-MHCC**  
Presents



**ANNUAL WORKSHOP ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

Date: 25-27 February, 2021  
Time: 2:30 pm onwards  
Platform: Zoom

Bharti President 90093 17998 | Divya Vice President 6378 220 154



**TULA - MHCC**  
presents  
**ANNUAL WORKSHOP ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS**



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Date : 25-27 February 2021  
Time : 2:30 pm onwards  
Platform : Zoom



**TULA**  
Miranda House Consumer Club  
Organizes  
Short Term Certificate Workshop  
'Awareness on Consumer Issues'



Coordinators: Dr Jayashree Pillai  
Dr Hena Singh  
Ms Shiruti Sharma Sethi

**Day- 1 Thursday, 25 February 2021**

Time	Programme
Session 1 2:00pm - 3:15pm	Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda Acting Principal, Miranda House Mr Arupam Lal Das Advocate Supreme Court Ms Bernali Choudhary Advocate Supreme Court -Consumer Protection Act -2019
Session 2 3:15pm - 4:30pm	Dr. Chandrabhush Singh Associate Professor, Hindu College, University of Delhi -Indian Consumer and The State
Session 3 4:30pm - 5:30pm	Pravee Anora, Treasurer, TULA-MHCC Maha Laif Trambae, GS, TULA-MHCC -Conducting "Consumer Quiz"

**Day- 2 Friday, 26 February 2021**

Time	Programme
Session 1 2:00pm - 3:15pm	Mr Sourav Sherry Professor, School of Planning & Architecture, Delhi -Demystifying Sustainability as a way of Life in the Indian Social Context
Session 2 3:15pm - 4:30pm	Mr Arup Saxena Advocate (Counsel Supreme Court of India) -Consumerism and Consciousness
Session 3 4:30pm - 5:30pm	Members of TULA-MHCC -Enacting Mock Consumer Court

**Day- 3 Saturday, 27 February 2021**

Time	Programme
Session 1 2:00pm - 3:00pm	Dr Namini Dutta Associate Professor, Miranda House, University of Delhi - Consumer is the King - The 'Y' and the 'Me' Questions in a Neoliberal World.
Session 2 3:00pm - 5:30pm	Open House Discussion initiated by Dr Jayashree Pillai and Dr Hena Singh - "What did we learn?" Individual/Group Presentations by Participants
Session 3 3:30pm - 5:30pm	Prof Padmakul Banerjee Pro Vice Chancellor, Amity University Prof Nuzhat Farveen Khan Former Dean Law, Jamia Millia Islamia - Voluntary Session Certificate Distribution to all the Participants and Winners of the events



**TULA-MHCC**  
PRESENTS  
**"SANTULAN"**

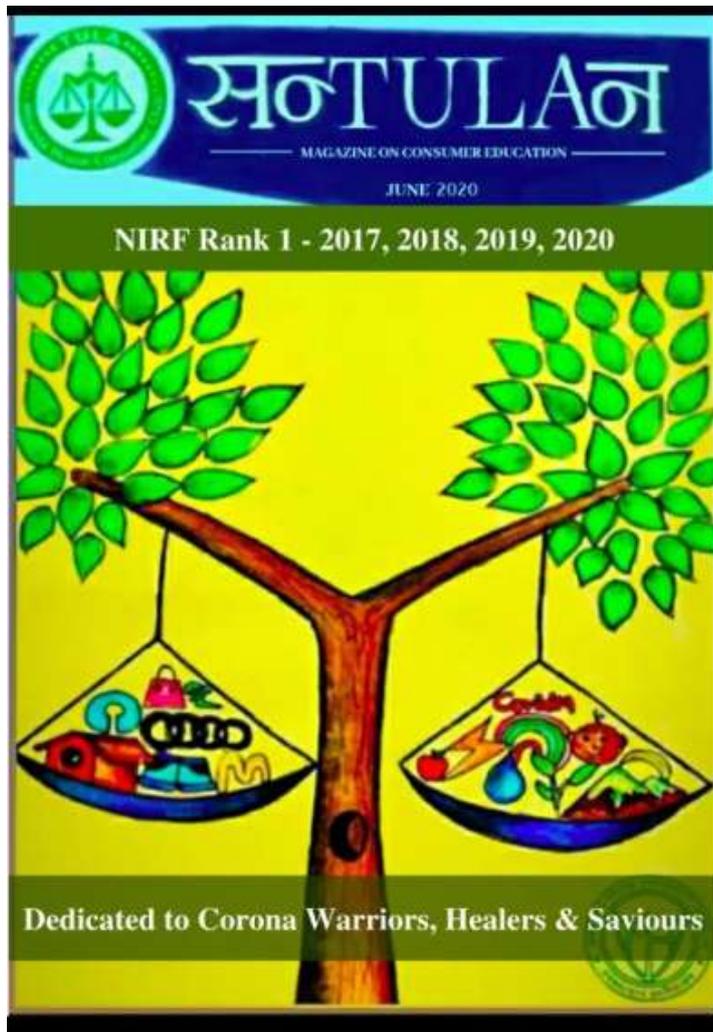


**CALL FOR ENTRIES**

"We the consumers have the power to make a choice.  
"We the consumers have the power to make a  
difference."

MAIL YOUR ENTRIES TO  
tulaconsumerclub@gmail.com





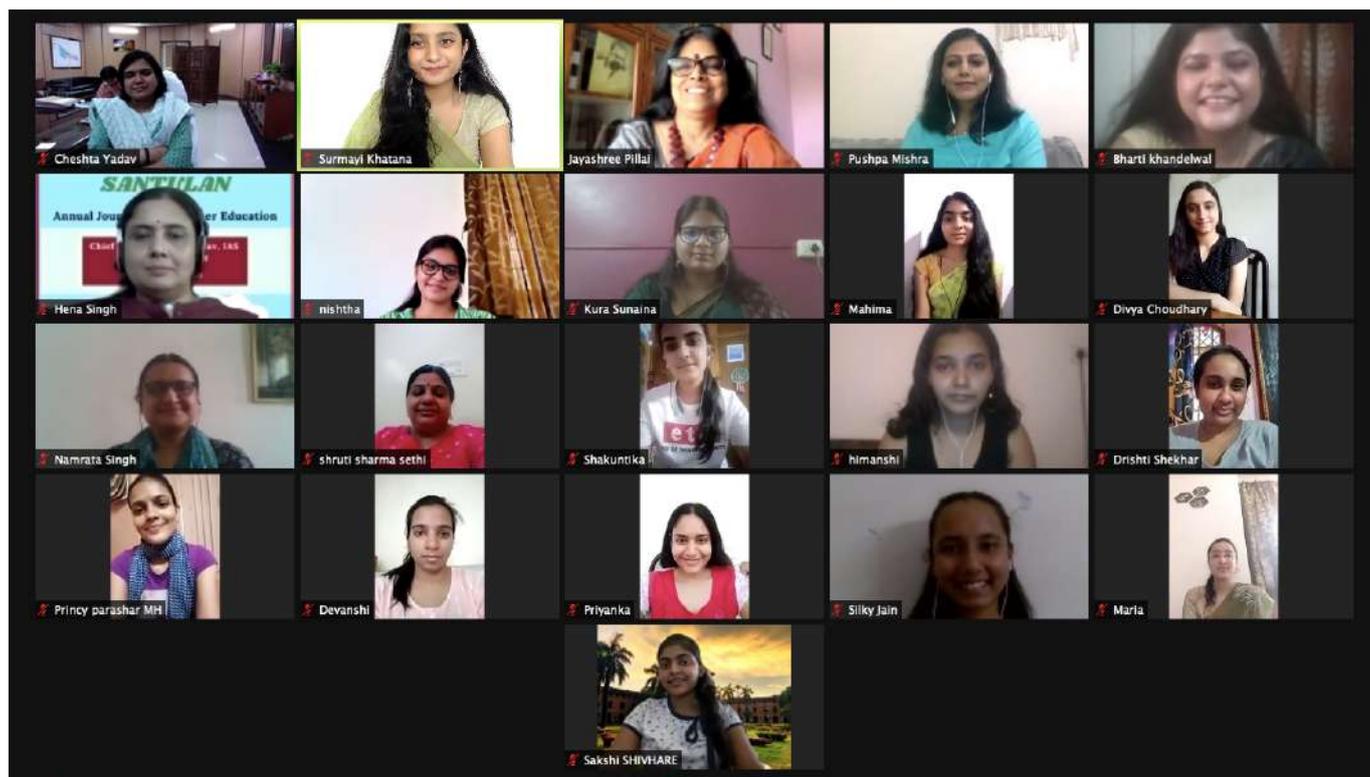
Release of SANTULAN 2020 with Chief Guest Dr. A.R. Nanda



Session with Dr. A.R. Nanda, former Secretary Ministry of Health and Family Welfare



TULA-MHCC Annual Orientation 2020-21





Questions in a Neoliberal World with Dr Nandini Dutta, Miranda House



Indian Consumer and the State with Dr Chandrachur Singh, Hindu College



Demystifying Sustainability, Dr Gaurav Shorey, School of Planning and Architecture



TULA Annual Workshop Competition: Awareness on Consumer Issues



Glimpses of Vigilance Awareness Week





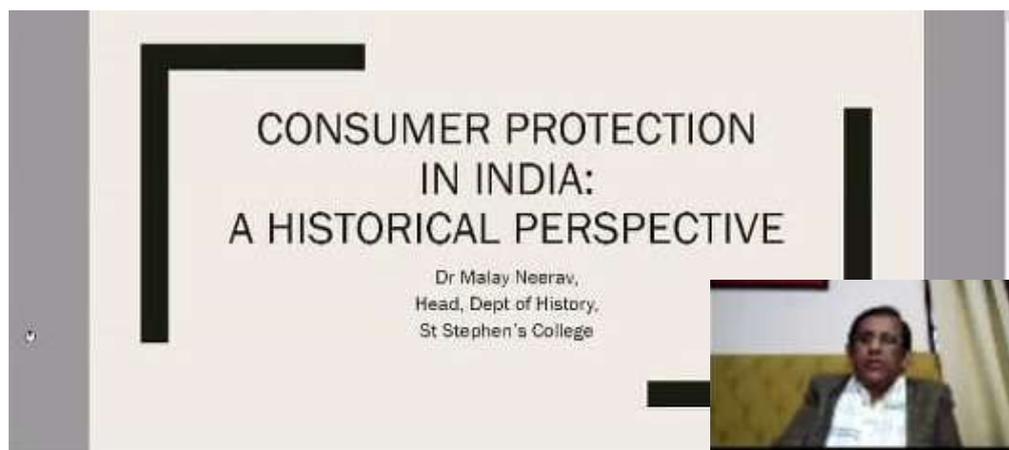
Professor Padmakali Banerjee, Pro Vice Chancellor, Amity University



Consumerism and Consciousness with Mr Anuj Saxena, Advocate



Professor Nuzhat Khan, Ex-Dean, Jamia Milia Islamia



National Consumer Day with Dr Malay Neerav, St. Stephen's College

# STEREOTYPING CHILDREN ADVERTISEMENTS



# Barbie v/s Hot Wheels - Gender Norms in Advertisements



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*Shreya Kumari*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*Second Year*

Today, advertisements are floating everywhere from print media(newspaper, magazines, etc.) to electronic media (radio, television), social media apps(Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp) to other kinds of apps such as games, business apps, music apps and many more. Advertisements are the tools to bridge the gap between customers and producers or service providers. They are also used for spreading different kinds of information to the wider population. The main purpose of the advertisement is to increase the profit of the different companies. It also led to more competitiveness in the market economy. Advertisements affect the choices of the consumer implicitly because of the time duration and frequency of the advertisements.

Apart from the economic impact of the advertisement on the consumer's choice and the market, it also depicts societal norms, sexism, gender bias, class differences, patriarchal standards, and stereotypes of the society. On one hand, the advertisements attract the consumers by depicting the traditional stereotype of things. On the other hand, advertisements try to break the so-called societal norms and try to bring equality in society.

Sex gender distinction is one of the stereotypes of the society that we always see in the advertisement, especially in the children's advertisement. First of all, we try to understand what sex gender distinction is. Sex refers to the biological differences between men and women and gender indicates the cultural meanings attached to that basic difference. It is the society that has divided the works based on the sex of the individual. From day one of the child's birth parents behave differentially with a male child and a female child. Such as if a mother gives birth to a male child the family shows a lot of enthusiasm, celebrates like a festival, and gives sweets to the whole 'mohala' but if she gives birth to a girl child the family doesn't celebrate with such enthusiasm. Girl child and boy child are given different toys(Barbie for girls & Hot wheels for boys), different colour of dresses, girls learn to cook food and how to take care of the house, while boys go to play different kinds of sports with friends.

Children's advertisements are largely governed by gender stereotyping which in several ways condition the gender roles and identities that are aligned with the same gender.



Following are some examples of advertisements that show the stereotypes of gender bias in society -

Barbie Girl and Hot Wheels were first introduced in America and later joined the mainstream market in South Asia. Barbie is depicted as a toy exclusively made for girls to play with and Hot Wheels are exclusively for boys thus making toys gendered. This activates the idea of gender and children are marked within the territories of these toys. Further, it also aggravates the expectations from both boys and girls. Hot wheels portrayed boys as active, aggressive, and authoritative while Barbie reinforced girls as passive, cooperative, and submissive. Not only behavioral standards are amplified but at the same time, bodily features are highlighted. Barbie came in a particular size, height, weight, colour, and with 'ideal beauty standards' which every girl should 'aspire' to achieve.

When it comes to colour, colours are also designated to gender. We always see that parents bring light colors such as pink, yellow, red, white, etc. dresses for the girl child and dark color such as black, blue, dark green, etc. dresses for the boy child. Later, this affects the mindset of the child and boys think that light colours are not for them and girls think that light colour suits them better. Advertisements also depict the same color distinction present in society. Famously Kinder Joy comes in pink packaging for girls and another one in blue for boys. The content of the food is the same but what lies in between is an unreasonable gender difference which disturbs the ethos of gender equality based on food.

One of the major products which show these gender stereotypes is the product that is used to increase strength such as Bournvita, Chyavanprash, etc. We often see that in these kinds of products, boys are seen playing cricket and if they take Bournvita or Chyavanprash their strength will be doubled, and boost them to win. This shows the stereotypes in sports, that is, sports are only meant for boys as they have strength and girls are too soft to play these kinds of sports.

However, some advertisements are trying to bring awareness of gender equality and breaking the stereotypes. Barbie too made changes in their series of dolls with the “You can be anything” campaign that launched Barbies who were doctors and astronauts, though it stuck with its ‘ideal body type’. Clinic Plus with its animated character Chulbuli revolutionized how girls were expected to carry themselves outdoors. Chulbuli, a fierce, carefree, and self-sufficient child can climb trees, do cartwheels, save cats and guess what? All of this without a boy telling her how it is done! Comfort Wash advertisement has sparked the conversation that a boy should also learn household chores. A girl doesn't need to know these chores by default.

As it is well known that movies, series, and advertisements have a great impact on society. Advertisements can be a very effective platform to spread the awareness of gender equality and break these baseless stereotypes of gender-specific work or abilities because the reach of advertisements is vast. Advertisements, therefore, must take charge of creating content that does not reflect the existing gendered stereotypes but destroys these assumptions and reconstructs stories that challenge such stereotypes. Lastly, I would like to say that promoting equal playing fields among both genders does not mean that if a girl likes princesses and the color pink that they should not be allowed to embrace their inner frills, just as it similarly means that if a boy is really into trucks then he could enjoy it. As Carrie Goldman, the author of the award-winning book 'Bullied: What Every Parent, Teacher, and Kid Needs to Know About Ending the Cycle of Fear' put, "Gender equality does not mean stripping the femininity from frilly girls or the masculinity from rough-and-tumble boys. A better tactic would be to encourage our girls and boys to do more cross-gender play without putting down their girly or masculine learnings" (Let Toys Be Toys). What gender equality is actually about is the banishing of stereotypes that advertisements can help in achieving.



*Illustration: Bhairvi Parashar, B.A. Programme, Second Year*

[1] "Children's Advertisements: Making Or Breaking Gender Stereotypes?". n.d. Feminism In India. <https://feminisminindia.com/2018/12/17/children-advertisements-gender-stereotypes/>.

[2] "Commercial Advertising and How It Enforces Gender Stereotypes" n.d. Digitalcommons.Sacredheart.Edu. <https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1281&context=acadfest>.

[3] Schwab, Katharine. n.d. "Beyond Blue And Pink: Will Toys Ever Be Gender-Neutral?". The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/05/beyond-blue-and-pink-the-rise-of-gender-neutral-toys/480624/>.

# Role of Advertisements in Gender Stereotyping



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***Itika Gupta***  
***B.Sc.(H) Physics***  
***Second Year***

Advertisements are not just confined to the sale of products or marketing of a brand. They play a role far beyond this. They put a stronger impact on how people of different age groups perceive various things in life. It's quite astonishing to see a particular advertisement popping up after every 5-10 mins. One can unsee them once, twice, or maybe thrice but some time or the other people start believing what all is depicted in advertisements and apply it to their personal lives and this is where the problem arises. Kids are more prone to it.

It's sad to see but most of the advertisements revolving around kids intentionally or unintentionally support stereotypes. On one side there are numerous faces working in uplifting society's mindset against gender bias and stereotypes and on another side, these ads make huge profits by exploiting these norms. This is not just the case of one or two advertisements. There are ample such cases floating around on different channels hitting the sentiments of tons of people.

For instance, Kinder Joy: made pink packaging for the girl child and blue for the boy child, SunFeast Yippee noodles: gave chance to only boys to play sport and made girls sit back and enjoy the match, Dabur Chyawanprash: where a girl had to rely on a boy to save her from getting dampened. This list of examples is never-ending.

These advertisements tend to draw a huge impact between girls and boys. Their interests in food, clothes, sports, colours, have all been channelized. When they try to choose something, which is not meant for them (due to the so-called boundaries made by society), they are let down, mocked at, discouraged, eventually leaving a negative impact on them. They are bound to remain within their worthless boundaries. As a consequence, most times people consider others as a source of fun or mockery when they don't fit in their criteria or in a way, they want them to look. Girls and boys are judged based on clothes, appearance, personality traits, and other not-so-important aspects.

"The emotional, sexual, and psychological stereotyping of females begins when the doctor says, 'It's a girl,'" said Shirley Chisholm, an American politician. We often come across news headlines highlighting women being oppressed, suppressed, and exploited.



But have we ever thought of doing something or raising our voice against it? We read it, feel uncomfortable and agitated for two seconds and then move on.

‘Stereotypes’ are ideas as to how people will react to a certain thing depending upon the group they belong to. This word is being reframed and used erroneously.

Who is responsible for all this?

The content depicted in these advertisements has drawn a line between body and mind, nature and culture, emotion and reason, object and subject, private and public. Gender stereotypes limit and put both girls and women, boys and men into narrow boxes.

We all are judged by the way we act, speak, dress, groom and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned gender. Why are women always pictured to dress in a typically feminine way, be polite, accommodating, and nurturing, while men are generally framed to be strong, aggressive, and bold? People are forced to remain in these norms otherwise the society has fallacious rights to infer or mock you.

These delusory and delusive behaviour of such a section of the community who are not only empathetic but also resistant to change their perspective, are the reason why many suffer. The fact is that it not only affects girls and women but also men and boys. Those groups who don't fit into these stereotypes are looked down. Such exaggerated stereotypes can make relationships between people difficult and don't allow them to fully express themselves and their emotions.

It's we who have to come up and raise our voice against such portrayal in advertisements. We should not get influenced by such delineations. Acceptance is the solution to everything. There are however changes in the way some companies are presenting children's advertisements.

For instance, Bourn Vita: which confined physical sports not just for boys but also gave girls a chance to come forth and show their potential, Flipkart: raised the motto- “Let us raise the generation of equals!”, Surf Excel: accepted the fact- “Daag ache hai!” and many more such examples.

Change is slow but evident. We must start on our own. Do not let kids get influenced by the stereotypes presented in the advertisements rather they should have a voice to stand against them.



*Illustration: Bhairvi Parashar, B.A. Programme, Second Year*

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[1] Vaidyanathan, Rajini; “Before Hillary Clinton, there was Shirley Chisholm.” British Broadcasting Company, January 26, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35057641>

# ENDORSEMENTS: CELEBRITIES' MINT



# Celebrity Endorsement: Sagacious or Ludicrous Approach



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*Itika Gupta*  
*B.Sc.(H) Physics*  
*Second Year*

In today's era where advancement has reached such great heights, there is cut-throat competition all around us in almost every sector. People are ready to adopt any means whether ethical or unethical to outshine their rivals. To build their brands, earn bugs and seek consumer's confidence, businessmen tend to take shortcuts. They focus on celebrity endorsement to influence the common man. Most companies still believe depending on celebrity endorsement will fetch them name and fame. It's hard to accept, but the fact is that this scheme is bringing wonders. This has been proved globally by Turkish Airlines. They even accept the fact of seeing a positive response of celebrity endorsement for most of the brands around.

Think of a day passed where you did not come across an advertisement featuring a celebrity? It's hard to recall! Be it a pop singer, television star, actor, director, politician, sportsperson, or any other influential personality, you'll find them signing for some of the other brands.

## **Why do brands go for such marketing strategies?**

Unlike older times where celebrities were mostly approached by established brands, now the trend is different. Everybody is in the race to chase celebrities. It gives them a chance to gain visibility and exposure in the market. These influencers have a big fan base. Within seconds a product is in the reach of thousands of people through social media handles. Influencers are told to depict the product in such a way that looks so appealing to the audience, that they invest their hard-earned money in buying the product. People easily accept and believe what these influencers promote, eventually helping the companies to target a larger audience.

## **Who is the sufferer?**

This strategy all-in-all strikes lucky for the brands and the reputed star. Most times consumers have a sympathetic approach towards the brand name and products. They end up buying the products in the name of celebrity. Very often it is seen people purchasing products that are of very little or no use to them. It's high time that consumers realise that the recommendation by celebrities is a mere promotion and in person, they might have never used the product.

Do you ever wonder if Hrithik Roshan's or Shikhar Dhawan's family taking White Hat Jr's tutorials or Yami Gautam applying "Glow & Lovely" or maybe Shraddha Kapoor or Sara Ali Khan preferring Veet wax strips?

They might use it but it is not 100% evident that they do, but still, they assure people of its high standards. There have been numerous cases where small companies attain the limelight overnight but eventually get criticism for selling substandard products. Celebrity endorsement has both pros and cons not just for the brand name or brand associate but for consumers too.

Still, this marketing strategy will become more prominent with increasing time because the cons are very less than pros for the companies. Sportsperson promoting footwear, actors recommending coaching institutions, or models featuring cosmetics will always go on. This is a never-ending cycle. It's for us to decide what is good & bad for us. Instead of getting influenced by celebrities, we must dig our hands and then conclude these products. We have to be more keen-eyed and vigilant and look at what is feasible and worth buying!



Illustration: Drishti Shekhar, B.A.(H) Sociology, Second Year

# Is Celebrity Endorsement A Necessity?



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***Bhairvi Parashar***  
***B.A. Programme***  
***Second Year***

What comes to your mind when you see your favourite celebrity endorsing some particular product? Maybe the desire to use that product can be your answer, but, is it really healthy consumer behaviour, or are you just a part of the flock of sheep?

Firstly, talking about Celebrities and Endorsement one thing is very clear that fame makes them credible and thus makes them responsible as well. Talking about the advertising industry it is a sea of wealth and everyone takes their share, be it an actor performing for some particular advertisement or a director for the same, it pays all but now if it pays all and gets everyone a desirable living then where things go wrong?

The answer for the same is in this article.

When you are at a platform from where you can influence people and can play a big role in changing their decision then you are expected to be ethical to your influence or else it's just called 'harmfully manipulating' the crowd. Companies hire celebrities and ask them for advertisement shoots or maybe to tell the public through their social media handles that the particular product is actually good and they have been using it so other people should also use the same. They pay them and get their sales boosted by many times but it really gets ugly when it's all a lie or is just a marketing stunt to build a wide consumer base. Celebrities many times don't realise that they are promoting something wrong or maybe a false product blindly just for the sake of their income.

People in a country like ours worship their Star (Celebrities) and see them as inspiration, so when the same person asks them to go for something they do obey it irrespective of its nature, value, and use.

Celebrity endorsement is no less than blackmailing by companies to sell their products as people also have some kind of emotional value attached because of which it helps companies that tend to take advantage of it and sell their product.

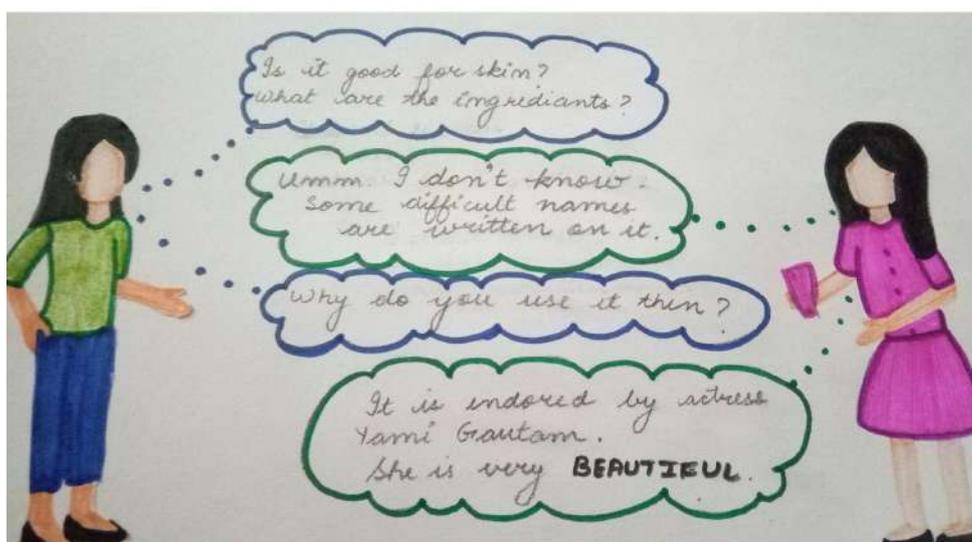
When you buy something which is not worth its actual price or maybe is an unwanted product then there is a good chance that it can be because of the ugly side of marketing. To avoid that, all three bodies i.e. the consumer, the influencer, and the company are equally responsible.

A company must see and realise whatever they are selling in the market - a service or a product - is it really necessary to fool the consumer by presenting a celebrity endorser.

Influencers must be aware of their responsibilities and should keep in mind that they possess the power to change the thought of millions and this power must not be misused in order to increase followers and make money.

Consumers are also equally responsible because, in the end, it's their decision to buy a particular product or to go for a particular service. A consumer should ponder if a product is really of their need? Will it add any value to their life in front of its monetary value? Are they only buying it because it's cheap whereas, in reality, they don't actually need it? All these questions are enough to tell one what's right for them irrespective of how much discount they get, whosoever is promoting it, and whatever brand name it carries.

At last, we can conclude is that we all can together make this material world comfortable for us by realising our needs, duties, and responsibilities.



*Illustration: Divya Choudhary, B.A. Programme, Third Year*

# How Celebrity Endorsements Add an Edge To Products

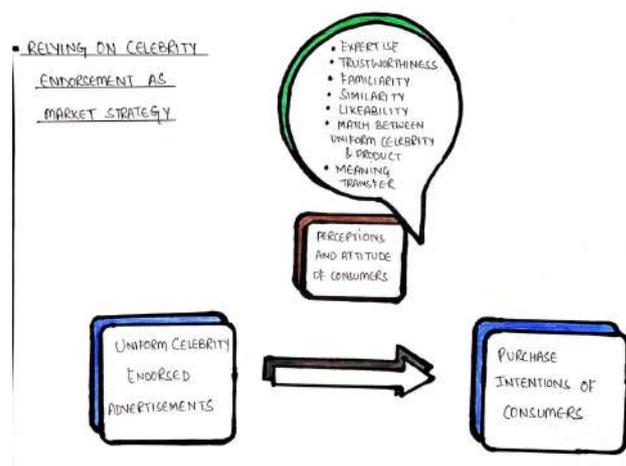


**Himanshi**  
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**Second Year**

## What is Celebrity Endorsement?

Celebrities are well-known public figures, famous for their attractiveness, expertise, talents, and credibility. Advertisers use celebrities to their advantage to make advertisements more appealing, memorable and credible. In a digital world, social media influencers and celebrities utilise social media platforms to rule the kingdom of marketing and advertising. Celebrity endorsement and influence help a brand stay memorable for a long time due to having a well-known figure attached to the brand. Celebrities help to tell you a brand story and keep you engaged. Their emotions help marketers connect with the audience and achieve the overall objective of driving buying behaviour. According to studies celebrities have perceived expertise and credibility. Brands prefer celebrities because consumers are paying attention to them since they want to be and live a celebrity's lifestyle. It is efficient to have celebrities persuade the masses about a product.

**But the question arises as to what factors drive the purchase intention of consumers that respond to celebrity-endorsed products?**



*Illustration: Deepali Rajput, B.Sc. (H) Mathematics, Third Year*

Here are the three main factors in consumer attitudes endorsements -

1) The determinants of consumer attitudes toward celebrity and those products-

***INFLUENCE + BRAND = ENHANCED AND MORE TRUSTED BRAND IMAGE***

The brand is enhanced because -

- Consumers believe the brand is reliable and successful.
- Celebrities can affect the feelings of consumers and persuade them to buy a product.
- Consumers forget 80% of the information in an advertisement within 24 hours but consumers will always remember the celebrity.



2) Congruence between the celebrity's perceived image and the products they endorse -

a) Consumers believe the celebrity would use the product.

b) Celebrity is chosen based on the best match for the product.

E.g.; Kareena Kapoor for Maybelline, being an actress it can be believed she uses the product herself.

c) Unprofessionalism on behalf of the celebrity will damage the brand, so they ensure to choose someone appropriate.

3) The dimensions of celebrity endorsement -

**a) Physical Attractiveness** - In general, attractiveness endorsers are more effective promoters than unattractive endorsers. Celebrity endorsed product advertisements are more engaging because of the attractiveness of the celebrities featured. Therefore, products are associated with beauty and physical attractiveness such as facial creams, makeup, hair colours, shampoos are influenced by the presence and the physical attractiveness of celebrities. E.g.; Aishwarya Rai for L'Oreal Paris Shampoo, Yami Gautam for Glow and Lovely, etc.

**b) Credibility/ Trustworthiness** - The 'honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser' is referred to as trustworthiness. It is generally believed that celebrities are a trustworthy source of information because:-

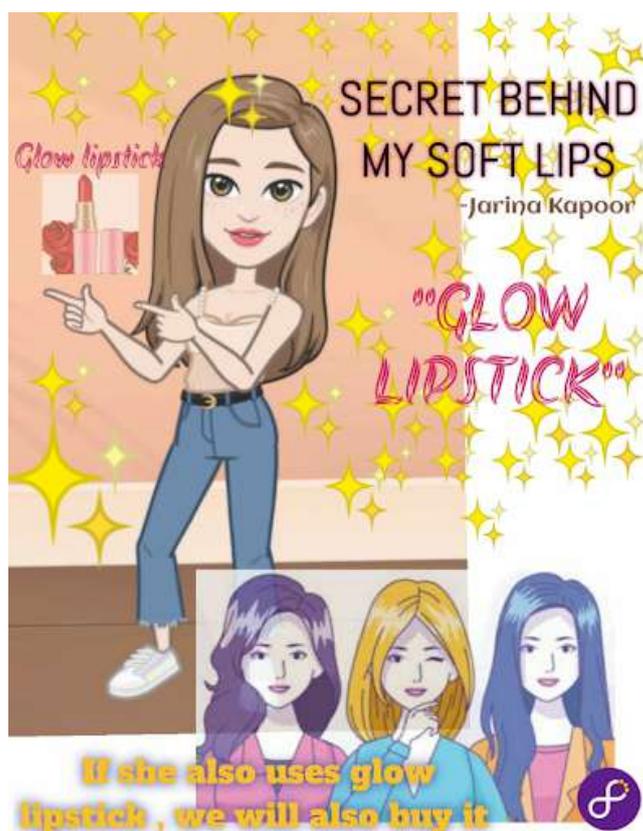
- Experts in the field from which products come from.
- Products correspond with personal image and relate to lifestyle.
- The information communicated by the endorser is unbiased.
- They have relevant knowledge and skills to access quality products.

**c) Celebrity Expertise** - Defined as "the extent to which a communication is perceived to be a source of a valid assertion." (Erdogan, 1999). Celebrities that are experts in their field have a strong power of recommendation. Celebrity expertise is one of the reasons that influence recipients of the information. For example, Saina Nehwal for Candid powder adds corn flakes, etc. to market health-related products.

## Conclusion

The determinants such as public influence, image, and fame that affect the feelings of consumers; the congruence between the product, celebrity and yourself, and the attractiveness of celebrity, their credibility and expertise are the main factors that influence consumers' attitudes towards celebrity endorsed products.

Consumers believe endorsed products will make them better off than normally advertised products, and by viewing celebrities in advertisements, they get influenced to buy the products. Celebrities can persuade people to buy a product. However, it can also pose some serious challenges to celebrities. For instance, celebrities have to face legal allegations or charges for inappropriate advertisements or advertisements in which wrong information is passed on to the consumers. All these instances pose a threat to the brand they are aligned with. Nevertheless, celebrity endorsements are an inevitable aspect of the market functioning, it is, therefore, the duty of the endorser to endorse appropriate information and the consumer should make a reasonable choice while purchasing.



*Illustration: Himanshi, B.A. Programme, Second Year*

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[1] "Consumer Behaviour-Course Outline.Docx - Consumer Behaviour Course Instructor Fatima Khalid BBA-5th Semester Course Description/Objective Consumer | Course Hero". 2021. Coursehero.Com.  
<https://www.coursehero.com/file/35706740/CONSUMER-BEHAVIOR-course-outlinedocx/>.



**IS SENSUALITY  
A NECESSITY?**

# Humans As Sexually Advertised Objects



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*Sakshi Singhvi*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*Second Year*

Change the viewpoint and the view changes. Sexual advertisement or advertising is the practice of a form of advertising where sex appeal is used in marketing a varied range of products either implicitly or explicitly related to it. The most common reason stated for the use of sexual advertising is that it draws attention. This reason may help in promoting sales of objects but certainly has a negative impact on the minds of consumers and society as a whole.

Companies and brands selling lingerie items to even cheeseburgers use sexual appeal to attract attention which surprisingly is an effective strategy, according to the statistics. Yes! You read that right. Even cheeseburgers used sexual appeal, Carl's Junior and Hardee's cheeseburger advertisement featured Kate Upton eating a cheeseburger in a very seductive manner. Major industries using this technique include beauty products, clothing, travel and leisure, health and hygiene, entertainment, etc. Victoria's Secret, Axe perfumes, Calvin Klein jeans, etc are a few famous brands on the list, which can go on and on.

The catch is- females are shown in these advertisements more often than men. It renders females as sex objects in the eyes of a wider public. Instead of the object being advertised, it is females who are usually objectified to the viewers which further deepens the already deeply embedded gender inequality all around the globe. This also negatively impacts the teenagers and young adults who internalize these stereotypes and carry them forward. Society often judges women by their clothes and the way they behave but this concern almost takes a back seat by viewing and silently promoting these advertisements.

Generally, nudes, pin-up models, and muscular males are shown in sexual advertising. The irony is that just because the "pin-up models" doesn't sound good, a slang "cheesecake" was developed. Great! I wish changing a name could change my mindset also with such similar ease.

The concept of sexual advertising has been dynamic- in the early 1900s mere exposed parts of the body would have been considered sexually oriented where today nudes have become very common. This way, it has evolved our society's thinking and mindset, the more open and inclusive we try to be, the more stereotypes began to be formulated.

The need of the hour is not just for companies to stay away from such practices but also for each individual in society to break this stereotypical mentality and widen mental horizons. Government legislation and implementation along with public awareness and mass education will go a long way in breaking these taboos and achieving an equal and respected footing in the society for every member.

Respect and dignity are everyone's right!

Let's not make it a privilege.



*Illustration: Bharti Khandelwal, B.A. Programme, Third Year*

# Effects of Sexual Advertising on Consumer Purchase Intentions



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*Jahnvi Yadav*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*First Year*

Sexual advertisement is basically 'selling via sexual appeal or imagery'. The idea behind the strategy of the companies for using sexual advertisements is that the use of such stimuli (as used in the sexual advertisements) triggers the sexual desires of the viewers by showing pinup women and muscular men in the advertisements. These products are generally perfumes, cosmetic items, etc. Advertisements play an important role in the marketing of products and the use of sexual references to attract the consumer. This has been a trend for a while now. The use of subliminal messages is also showcased. But does it genuinely promote the sale of the product?

According to many studies and research, it has been found that a large number of people remain unaffected by such advertisements. Such advertisements do not influence them. Some people get surprised and shocked after coming across such advertisements and some people get influenced in a way that they end up buying the product and some think such advertisements are wrong ways of promoting certain items. But it does trigger the feelings of consumers, especially adults who watch such advertisements. They develop a delusion of getting the same benefits and results as shown in the advertisements and ultimately feel an urge to buy the product. The companies only focus on the sale of the product by using such advertisements and do not consider their negative impacts on the minds of the consumers. The advertisements having sexual references do attract the attention of many consumers and they tend to buy it, but many perceive it negatively and avoid buying it. Companies should adopt some cautionary and introspective procedures for the advertisement. For example, brands such as 'NIKE', do not use sexual content in their advertisements and cater to the demands of both the males and females, unlike brands like 'AXE' and other deodorants which sexually objectify women and men. So if the brand offers product variants for both genders, then it somehow goes on to be offensive to either one of them.

Another issue that one cannot ignore in this regard is the diversity of customers in the market in particular and the diversity of individuals in society in general. People have different dispositions owing to the fact that they belong to different age groups, cultures, and backgrounds. Being exposed to sexual content in advertisements can have a serious impact on the minds of people belonging to vulnerable age groups.

The use of sexual advertisements does affect the consumers' purchasing intentions. It is important here to note that although such advertisements may lead to attracting certain buyers but at the same time, they act

as a force of pushing away those buyers who formulate a negative opinion about the products based on the use of sexual content in their advertisements. Therefore, the companies should take more cautionary measures in displaying such advertisements so that those people who take such advertisements in a negative sense and consequently do not pay any heed to buy the products, can at least think about buying them. In this way the companies would not have to endure losses and can avoid them.



*Illustration: Maria Latif, B.A. (H) Political Science, Second Year*

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[1] “Mahajan, Ruchika; Poddar, Aayush; Raghuram J.; “Effects of Sexual Advertising on Consumer Buying Decisions.” IOSR Journals of Business and Management, July 2015, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338115147\\_Effects\\_of\\_Sexual\\_Advertising\\_on\\_Customer\\_Buying\\_Decisions](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338115147_Effects_of_Sexual_Advertising_on_Customer_Buying_Decisions)

[2] Hedstrom, Jakob; Karlsson, Johanna; “Consumers’ Attitude towards Sexual Appeal in Advertising.” Lulea University of Technology, 2017, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1114476/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

# **MIND GAMES: PSYCHOLOGY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**



# Why Do We Buy Things? Analysing the Psychology of Consumers



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*Jahnvi Chourasia*  
*B.A.(H) Political Science*  
*Second Year*

It is a known fact that the actions of human beings have psychological reasons. Each action of ours has a motive and clear psychological motivation. Likewise, consumerism - one of the most common features of human interactions also has psychological factors behind it.

What is consumerism? Consumerism refers to the desirability of increased consumption of goods and services. With the advent of globalization and liberalization of the economy, there is a flux of products and brands available around us. People are aware of what their counterparts abroad are wearing, eating, and enjoying. That is, food, clothes, entertainment are all part of this cultural exchange. It is all a cycle - we want to watch that famous web series that everyone can't help talking about, we watch that character wearing that dress, which is now a trend that we want to catch up to, and, oh! those fancy restaurants with exotic food that the famous people go to; even we want to go there - it's cool, isn't it?

The acquisition of some brands is perceived as a representation of our social status. Media and brand advertisers know this and promote this for their own economic goals and thus play a role in manipulating us psychologically. What exactly is the psychology of the consumer? The belief that happiness is proportionate to the number of things and varieties of products that one owns. One apt word here is materialism - personal happiness is equated with material possessions and consumerism is driven by this very psychology. Then, there is the belief too that 'if you have earned it, you have to spend it, that is, if you have money, then why not spend it? It is a constant pursuit of wealth. There is another case also, people tend to cover their low self-esteem and insecurities by buying material things.

There is a whole branch of study known as Consumer Behaviour which is often used by companies, advertising agencies, and brands to influence consumers. They often study the existing behavioural patterns in consumers and, at the same time, inculcate new behaviours. Advertising is a good example here, for instance - if one sees in advertisements that those who wear a particular brand of cloth or have X brand of furniture in their homes can impress others, this might encourage the viewer to buy that concerned product which as a result may satisfy his/her need of appreciation and self-satisfaction and help in overcoming the fear of not being a part of that exclusive club. Emotional manipulation is also employed here, for instance, if a product through an advertisement is conveying a message that those who use a particular brand of soap or cereal for their kids are good mothers.

Here, the idea that the nonbuyers of this particular product are not using the best products for their children and hence are not good mothers. This emotional tool has an inherent gender stereotype, and it does impact the psychology of consumers.

In conclusion, the point of this article was to throw some light on the psychological aspect of consumerism as the concept is usually analyzed in economic terms. Psychological factors are one of the interesting ones to study this multifaceted theme of consumerism. We have to acknowledge the fact that it is not always our needs or requirements that make us buy things. Rather, sometimes, we buy what others want us to - we become consumers just for the sake of others, knowingly or unknowingly.



**Illustration:** Bhairvi Parashar, B.A. Programme, Second Year



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*Shreyati Pahuja*  
*B.A. Programme*  
*First Year*

All of us today want to possess the end number of goods like clothes, vehicles, or mobiles. These all have become a necessity of life along with food and water. People have always been fascinated by clothes; however, in contemporary times, this fascination has been translated into endless overconsumption taking a huge toll on the environment.

We, as a whole, love to shop from various brands and keep ourselves refreshed with the most recent patterns and trends that are going on in the world. Regardless of our need for clothes, we prefer to buy more. It is estimated that an average person buys 60% more items of clothing.

The big fashion industries like H&M, ZARA, FOREVER 21, and so on have a negative impact on human minds as these brands promote a toxic consumerist attitude which leads to buying 40% of clothes that are never worn. It adds to the destruction of the environment by emitting 8.1% of total greenhouse gas.

Many endangered and ancient forests are cut down and replaced by plantations of trees used to make wood-based fabrics such as rayon, viscose, and modal. The washing of clothes also releases half a million plastic microfibers into the ocean every year, equivalent to more than 50 billion plastic bottles.

Our consumeristic attitude towards clothes possess a danger to the climate and gives impetus to the industry for the abuse of labourers, especially leading to a perpetuation of the issue of child labour. Indeed, a large portion of the specialists are not given appropriate pay and worse still, female labourers are subject to verbal, physical, or psychological abuse and low pay as compared to the male counterparts.

Being conscious buyers, we need to use our power to raise our voice for a big social change against fast fashion. As said by Matt Haig, “The whole consumerism is based on us wanting the next thing rather than the present thing that we already have, this is an almost perfect recipe of unhappiness”. We, as consumers, should understand this fact and should always think clearly before we purchase anything.

*Some of the ways to make our closet sustainable are:*

**1. Buy/keep only what you love, need, and wear:**

Avoid stockpiling, buy only what you need with respect to when you need it, not when it's on sale.

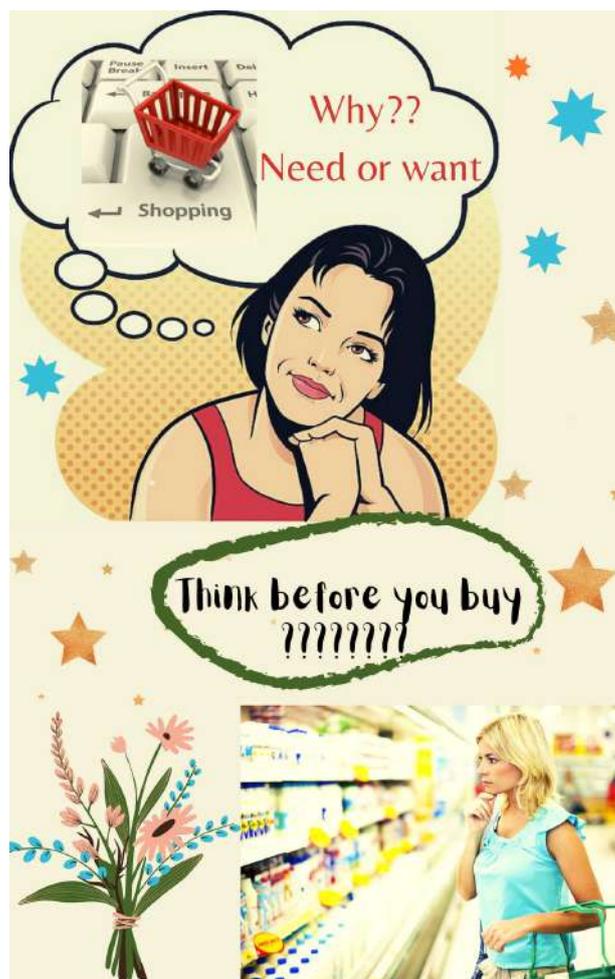
**2. Don't be afraid of letting go:** Sell or donate hardly or never used items to someone who needs it.

**3. Buy the highest quality you can afford:** Look for natural fabrics like cotton, linen, silk, and wool.

**4. Take care of your clothes:** Wear clothes and use items more than one time before washing.

**5. Question yourself before buying something:** Think about all the other items and clothes in your closet and your need to buy the new one. Think if you need to buy it.

**6. Switch to slow fashion:** We should buy local, and make our purchase worth it, appreciate them and acknowledge the resources needed to create them.



*Illustration: Shagun Panwar, B.A. Programme, Second Year*

Making little strides will unquestionably assist in finishing the evil that began with the flourishing of all the fast fashion industries. Our planet needs us to save it from these wrongs. Hence, we should take a vow to purchase less, pick well and challenge ourselves to adopt healthy consumerism.

[1] Burt, C. Fast Fashion and Its Impact on Our Planet. <https://clarissaburt.com/fast-fashion-and-its-impact-on-our-planet/>

[2] Sew Dynamic Fabrics. Microfiber Pollution. <https://www.sewdynamic.com/pages/microfibers>

[3] The Guardian. 2020. A return to suburban grounds would offer a chance to reawaken the AFL's soul | Adam Collins. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2020/apr/06/a-return-to-suburban-grounds-would-offer-a-chance-to-reawaken-the-afls-soul>

[4] The Wallet. 2020. Save money by eliminating 10 habits. <https://thewallet.today/personalfinances/Save-money-by-eliminating-10-habits-20200605-0002.html>

# Do you know what you are putting in your cart?



---

*Bharti Khandelwal and Divya Choudhary*

*B.A. Programme*

*Third Year*

Consumer Awareness is the act of making sure the buyer or consumer is aware of the information about products, goods, services, and consumers' rights. Consumer awareness is important so that buyers can make the right decision and make the right choice.

The need for the empowerment of customers as a community, class, and category can not be overemphasized and is already well recognized everywhere on the globe. The advancement of technology and therefore the advent of gadgets within the market and aggressive selling methods within the era of globalization has not solely thrown open a good selection, for the buyer, but also additionally rendered the buyer at risk of a variety of issues concomitant to such fast changes. There's a dire need and necessity to create awareness and inspire the buyer to be cautious of the standard of the merchandise/products available to them. In short, people need to be empowered with regard to their rights as a consumer and remain alert against spurious commodities and unethical practices of the companies. This would require strong institutional mechanisms, provisions of legal remedies along with free and uninterrupted access to information. Further, consumers must be very mindful of what they buy by examining the details of the goods while purchasing them i.e being aware of what they are putting in their 'cart'.

## **Survey Methodology**

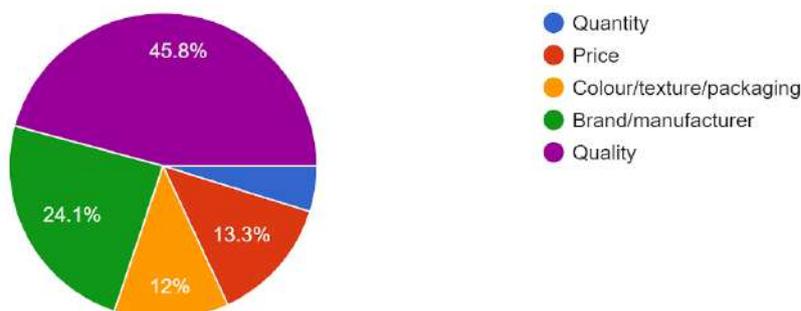
A questionnaire in the format of a google form was compiled by the authors and circulated among the students of Miranda House. The questions focused mainly on consumer awareness, vigilant consumption, consumer choice analysis. For enhanced accessibility, the survey was conducted online by circulating the link over various social media platforms. Random sampling was employed for selection of respondents and the total sample collected was 83. The objective of the survey was to analyze the consumer choices across students of Miranda house, their consciousness, their shopping /buying pattern, and awareness among them to draw broad generalisations from the data.

## **Observations**

The first segment of the questionnaire consisted of general information of respondents (name; age; email). The second segment, based on the frequency of shopping and amount of expenditure across different categories, was simply to enquire and confirm the activeness of consumers' shopping habits.

The third segment consisted of questions based on consumer choices and preferences.

**What matters to you the most when you choose between products?**

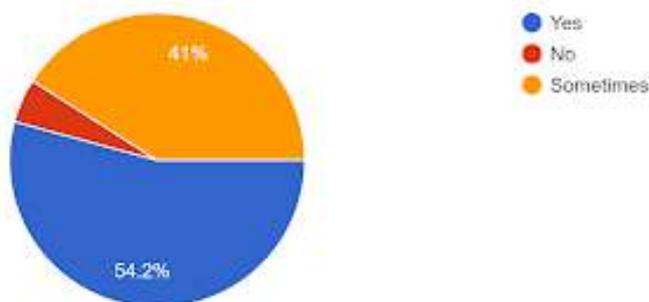


*Source: Author's Illustration*

When asked the essential details a packed product must have the maximum responses were MRP, date of expiry, manufacturer, followed by other varied details.

Responses also varied when asked about the first thing they check when buying: agro-products (40 % marked brand and company as their first preference followed by quality and price); clothes (25% quality of clothes and price while 15 % wrote they see the brand); electronic (brand standing as the leading preference). Cosmetics (Brand and ingredients leading as the preferences).

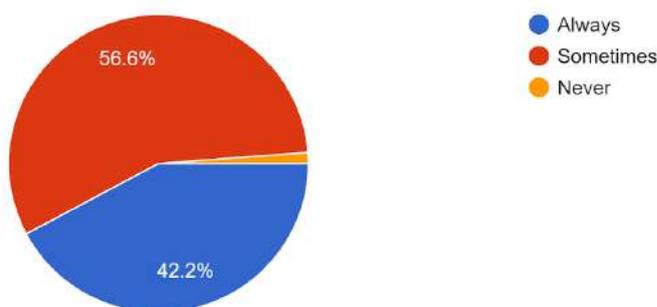
**Do you check the composition of a product before purchasing it?**



*Source: Author's Illustration*

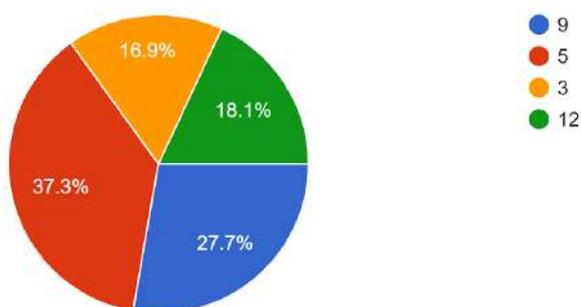
Talking about awareness regarding ingredients and constituents ( of mainly agro products and cosmetics) more than 50% of respondents replied that they have never tried to find out the meaning/properties of chemical compounds, preservatives listed in such products which they even frequently use.

**Have you ever read the user manuals and safety instructions that come with electronic products?**



*Source: Author's Illustration*

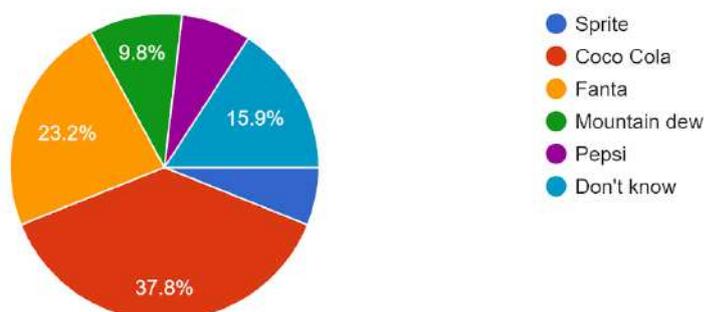
The third segment consisted of questions testing the knowledge and overall vigilance of respondents towards consumption. The questions varied from what details are present on electronic devices (which positively more than 75% of people could identify), to identifying harmful chemicals/ banned constituents (less than 20% were aware) and details present on agro products and lastly, types of food packaging (only 28% knew - 9types).



*Source: Author's Illustration*

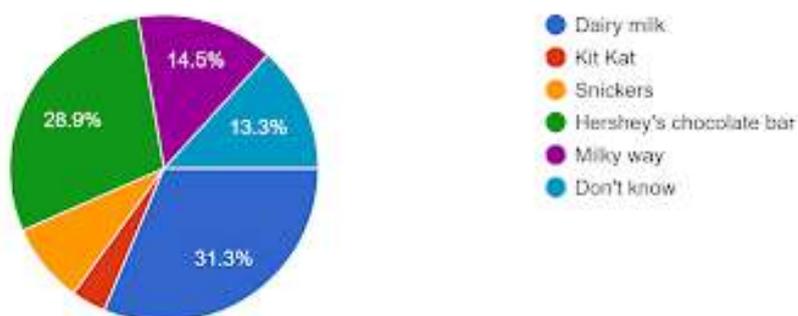
The last segment consisted of questions about everyday awareness about the popular food/products consumed/used on a daily basis. The responses to the questions asked are mentioned next.

**Which among these soft drinks have the highest sugar content? (Fanta)**



*Source: Author's Illustration*

**Which among these chocolates have the highest sugar content? (Milkyway)**



*Source: Author's Illustration*

Other questions included which shampoos are sulfate-free (50% responded correctly); which face washes are Methylparaben free (only 15% responded correctly); which sunscreens are Benzophene free (only 10% responded correctly).

The educational implication of the survey was to confirm that every consumer should be aware of different aspects of the commodities that they consume.



## Conclusion

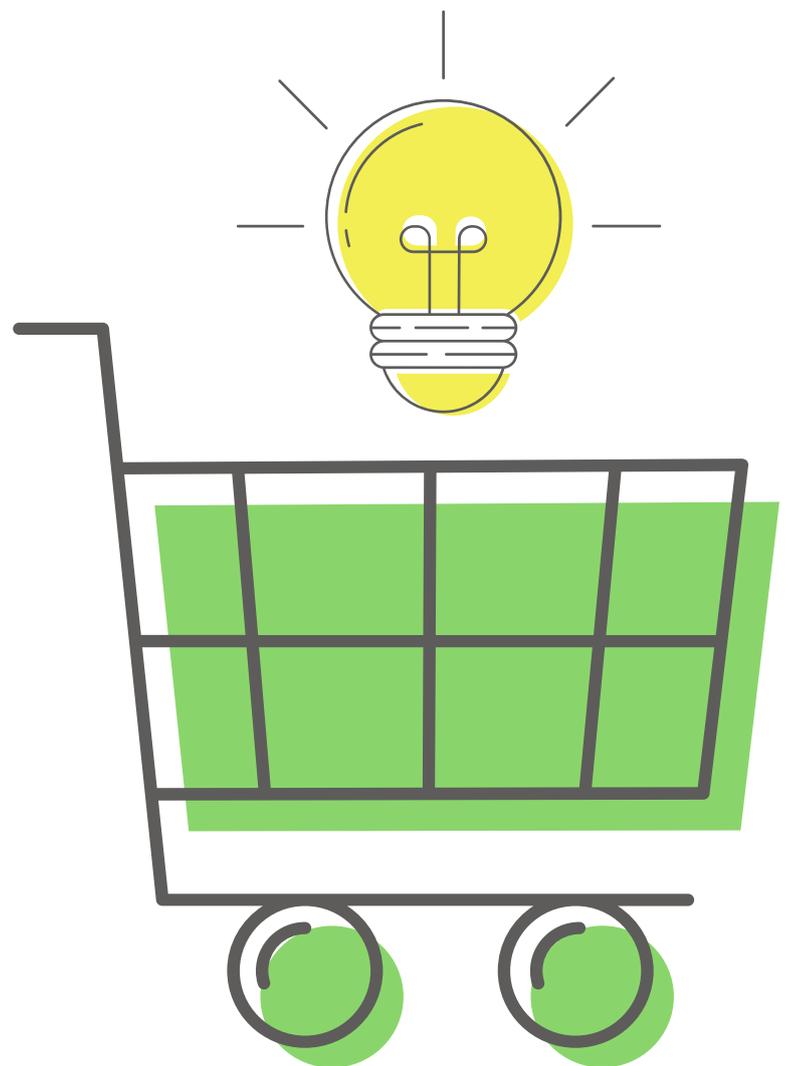
As mentioned in the beginning this survey had one aim, that is to understand and analyze consumer choices across students of Miranda house. Based on the data generated, it was found that the students were aware of a lot of aspects of the commodities and services and were also conscious about many concerned matters. However, there was a lack of awareness amongst them in terms of ingredients used in the products. Overall, the basic awareness needs to increase and students need to develop an inquisitive mindset to know more about their desired products. Knowledge is empowering!

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[1] “Consumer Awareness, Consumer Rights and Responsibilities”, Toppr, accessed February 18, 2020.  
<https://www.toppr.com/guides/business-studies/consumer-protection/consumer-rights-responsibilities/>

[2] Consumer Awareness Programme”, Research Academy for Rural Enrichment, accessed February 20, 2020.  
<http://rare.org.in/index.php/theme/consumer-protection/consumer-awareness-programme>

**SELLER,  
GROW  
AND ENLIGHTEN!**



# Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibilities and Future Prospects



*Drishti Shekhar*  
*B.A.(H) Sociology*  
*Second Year*

Corporate Social Responsibility is a type of self-regulation practised by companies in order to become socially accountable. The practice of Corporate Social Responsibility can be traced since the time of the Industrial Revolution during the mid to late 1800s when there was a concern for the welfare of workers as well as how to increase the productivity of industrialists. We also see the rise of philanthropy during this period and one of the famous philanthropists of this time was Industrialist Andrew Carnegie who was known for donating most of his wealth for education and scientific research.

The term Corporate Social Responsibility was officially coined in 1953 by Howard Bowen in his publication, '**Social Responsibilities of the Businessman**' although responsible companies have already existed for more than a century. However, it was only in 1971 that the idea of '**Social Contract**' introduced by the Committee of Economic Development led Corporate Social Responsibility to make strides in the United States. This contract made companies realise that public consent played a climacteric role in the functioning and existence of companies so the companies are obliged to contribute towards society. By the 1980s most of the companies started incorporating societal needs in their business practices and became more receptive towards the stakeholders. The 1990s marked the worldwide approval of CSR and by the 2000s it became an essential practice of many multi-million dollar companies such as Coca-Cola, Walt Disney, and Pfizer.

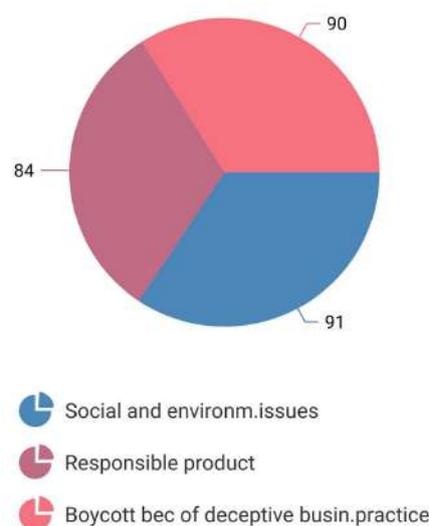
In India, we see the world's richest tradition of Corporate Social Responsibility. Though the term is comparatively new, the concept dates back to over a hundred years which has evolved through different phases like community engagement, socially responsible production, and socially responsible employee relations. Its history and evolution can be divided into four major phases.



*Illustration: Kanak Mohiley, B.A. Programme, Third Year*

Phase 1(1850-1914) is known for its charity and philanthropic nature. Phase 2 (1910-1960) comprised social independence during the independence struggle. Phase 3 (1950-1990) was characterized by the emergence of PSUs(Public Sector Undertakings) to ensure better distribution of wealth in society and Phase 4 (1980 onwards) became characterized as a sustainable business strategy. What started as charity is now understood and accepted as responsibility. The New Companies Act 2013 introduced a new section of Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR), Section 135, making CSR mandatory for all companies operating in India.

Corporate Social Responsibility is something that is not legally necessary but is definitely a good practice as the socially aware companies are sought more by the consumers. It demonstrates that the companies are more than being just profit-oriented. The 2015 Cone Communications/ Ebiquity Global CSR Study found that 91% of global consumers expect companies to take into consideration social and environmental issues, 84% seek out responsible products wherever possible and 90% would boycott a company if they learned of irresponsible or deceptive business practices. In the crisis of industrial capitalism when it lacks trust and social responsibilities, CSR will play a big role in ensuring accountability and transparency and will be seen as good corporate governance. There will be a more significant role for stakeholders who will innovate and bring forward new and challenging ideas.



*Cone Communications Global CSR Study 2015*

[1] “A Brief History of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).” Thomasnet, September 25, 2019, <https://www.thomasnet.com/insights/history-of-corporate-social-responsibility/>

[2] “Evolution of CSR in India.” Jana Foundation

[3] “The Future of Corporate Social Responsibility.” Vancouver: Coro Strandberg,September, 2002, <https://corostrandberg.com/wp-content/uploads/2002/12/future-of-csr.pdf>

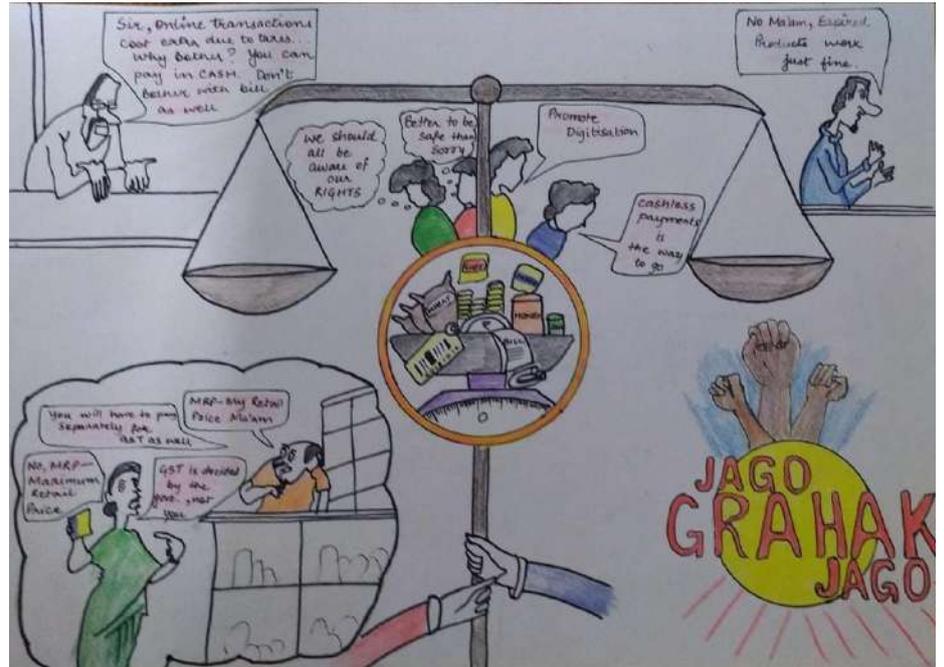
[4] “2015 Cone Communications/Ebiquity Global CSR Study.” Cone Communications | Cone | Cone PR | Cone Inc | PR Agency | Boston | NYC <https://www.conecomm.com/research-blog/2015-cone-communications-ebiquity-global-csr-study>

**Sanjeevani Chatterjee**  
**B.A. (H) Philosophy**  
**First Year**

हम से ही चलता इनका काम है,  
हम नहीं तो यह गुमनाम हैं,  
लूटते भी हमें ही हैं,  
ना जाओ तो रूठते भी यही है,  
सवाल उठाओ सामानों पर,  
तो हाजिर जवाब देते हैं,  
मोल भाव करो तो,  
मुंह बंद कर लेते हैं,  
जीएसटी पर इल्जाम लगाकर,  
ध्यान हमारा भटकाते हैं,  
किंतु भैया इन्हें कौन समझाए,  
दुनियादारी हम भी जानते हैं।

डिजिटलाइजेशन के जमाने में,  
कुछ दुकानें ऐसी हैं,  
'ग्राहक भगवान है' के नाम पर,  
उन्हीं को ठग कर जाती है,  
कार्डों का जमाना है पर,  
कार्ड नहीं यह लेते हैं,  
आपको नुकसान होगा,  
टैक्स लगेगा कह कर,  
बुद्धू हमें बनाते हैं,  
पर भैया इन्हें कोई तो समझाए की,  
दुनियादारी हम भी जानते हैं।

कब तक लूटोगे?  
कब तक झुकाओगे?  
कब तक बुद्धू बनाओगे?  
हम आज के ग्राहक हैं,  
चुपचाप सहना नहीं,  
लड़ना जानते हैं।  
आज का नारा है..  
हक हमारा है ..  
हमसे भिड़ोगे,  
तो भैया कंज्यूमर कोर्ट में मिलोगे।



**Illustration:** Nishtha, B.A. Programme, Second Year

# Brush Strokes on Consumerism

Ibrat Sandhu  
B.A. Programme  
Third Year



Sofia Bhardwaj  
B.A. Programme  
Second Year

Nishtha  
B.A. Programme  
Second Year



Mahima Yadav  
B.A. Programme  
First Year

Shweta  
B.A. Programme  
Third Year



Kanak Mohiley  
B.A. Programme  
Third Year

Shreya Kumari  
B.A. Programme  
Second Year



Sanjeevani Chatterjee  
B.A. (H) Philosophy  
First Year

Amita Singh  
B.A. Programme  
Second Year



Pallavi  
B.Sc. (H) Chemistry  
Second Year

# Annual Report



*Maria Latif Trumboo*  
*General Secretary*  
*2020-2021*

TULA-Miranda House Consumer Club commenced this Academic year of 2020-21 with all the enthusiasm to spread the word of consumerism around. TULA, which stands strong with its values and determination, began its academic year on 11 September 2020 with students joining in large numbers from the Second and Third Year respectively. Since the pandemic delayed the arrival of the First Year students to the college, the orientation date was also postponed.

Meanwhile, the second and third-year students were introduced to the Union of TULA: Bharti Khandelwal - President, Divya Choudhary - Vice President, Maria Latif Trumboo - General Secretary, and Preet Arora - Treasurer. The various verticals of TULA MHCC were also introduced: Research and Redressal, Editorial, Logistics and Creative, Public Relations and Sponsorship. Following this, the Heads of the various verticals were appointed after a rigorous interview procedure. Kura Sunaina and Jahnvi Chourasia were appointed as the Heads of the Editorial Board. Shivani Singh and Chawi Choudhary were appointed as the PR and Sponsorship Heads. Sajneet Kaur Bagga and Devanshi Aggarwal were appointed as the Heads of the Research and Redressal Vertical. Bhairvi Parashar and Nishtha Sharma were appointed as the Heads of the Logistics and Creative Verticals.

On 28th October 2021, the Vigilance Awareness Week Programme was conducted by TULA-MHCC in collaboration with the Department of Political Science. Mr. Shakti Sinha, Honorary Director, Delhi School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Delhi graced the webinar with his presence as a keynote speaker. The program started with the Integrity Pledge wherein participants promised to be vigilant consumers in today's world followed by the keynote speech by Mr. Sinha, poster presentation, and a Vigilance Awareness Quiz.

By this time, the first-year students had already arrived. TULA organized its virtual Orientation Programme on 25th of November 2020. Hundreds of students from various departments joined the orientation. Bharti Khandelwal cordially welcomed the batch of 2020-2023 and congratulated them for making it to the esteemed college of the University of Delhi, Miranda House. She then enlightened students about TULA being one of the most active Consumer Clubs in Delhi University, which has been working in making people conscious of their Consumer Rights and helping them exercise the same.

After having introduced the Conveners and the Union members; various verticals of the society were introduced to the prospective members by Bharti Khandelwal and Maria Latif Trumboo. The students were then introduced to the various kinds of activities and competitions that TULA conducts. The students were also being told about the club's past achievements and the fruitful experiences of the past members, who had a great experience by being a part of TULA.

TULA, Miranda House Consumer Club celebrated National Consumers Day on the 24th December 2020. TULA hosted speakers, Dr. Malay Neerav, Associate Professor, Department of History, St. Stephens College, University of Delhi, and Dr. Ishita Rutabhasini, Professor, Amity University. Dr. Neerav addressed the audience on one of the significant topics i.e.; 'Consumer Protection in India – A Historical Perspective' followed by Dr. Ishita's speech on yet another insightful topic, 'Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and Misleading Advertisement'.

The even semester which started in January was marked by new study sessions organized by the Research and Study vertical of TULA. A lot of deliberation and exchange of thought happened during these sessions. Topics varying from the procedure of filing complaints in Consumer Courts to debates on ethical consumerism and its implications were led by the vertical heads with utmost enthusiasm. In January, the Fresher's Talent Search was conducted, whereby activities like Creative writing and Photography Competition were organized. The entries received were jaw-dropping and the competition was thus tough. The results were finally decided and Deeksha and Silky Jain were announced as the winners.

TULA then conducted one of its most awaited events of the year, the 16th 'Annual Workshop on Consumer Affairs' from 25th February to 27 February 2021. The workshop was for the first time conducted online. Here, the students got the opportunity to interact with several experts in various fields of consumer affairs. The first day featured two sessions, with the first speaker being Mr. Anupam Lal Das- Senior Advocate in Supreme Court and Ms. Barnali Choudhary- Advocate in Supreme Court of India. Mr. Das briefed the audience about the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and showed how it has brought a sea change in the consumer welfare and protection scenario. After this, Ms. Choudhary explained the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and comprehensively compared the provisions of the Act of 2019 with that of the Consumer Protection Act of 1986. The second session was taken over by Mr. Chandrachur Singh, Professor, Hindu College, University of Delhi. The session revolved mainly around the interlinked nature of individuals, state, market, and religion with respect to the advent of welfare and then the neoliberal state. The third and the final session proceeded with a quiz of about 20 questions organized by Maria and Preet wherein many students participated. The second day proved to be very thought-provoking for the participants, as it saw speakers like Mr. Gaurav Shorey, Founder and Managing Director of Partnerships for Sustainable India (PSI) Energy, and Mr. Anuj Saxena, Advocate in the Supreme Court of India. Mr. Shorey drew on the topic of "Demystifying Sustainability as a way of life in the Indian Social Context," wherein he talked about how our current way of living is not in sync with a sustainable lifestyle.

After which, Ms. Choudhary explained the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and comprehensively compared the provisions of the Act of 2019 with that of the Consumer Protection Act of 1986. The second session was taken over by Mr. Chandrachur Singh, Professor, Hindu College, University of Delhi. The session revolved mainly around the interlinked nature of individuals, state, market, and religion with respect to the advent of welfare and then the neoliberal state. The third and the final session proceeded with a quiz of about 20 questions organized by Maria and Preet wherein many students participated. The second day proved to be very thought-provoking for the participants, as it saw speakers like Mr. Gaurav Shorey, Founder and Managing Director of Partnerships for Sustainable India (PSI) Energy, and Mr. Anuj Saxena, Advocate in the Supreme Court of India. Mr. Shorey drew on the topic of “Demystifying Sustainability as a way of life in the Indian Social Context” wherein he talked about how our current way of living is not in sync with a sustainable lifestyle. After this, the second session of the day was taken over by Mr. Anuj Saxena who spoke on “Consumerism and Consciousness”. This was followed by the enactment of a “Virtual Mock Consumer Court” by the members of the Research and Redressal team of TULA. On the third day, a session was conducted with Mrs. Nandini Datt, Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics, Miranda House on “Consumer is the King-The ‘I’ and ‘Me’ question in a neoliberal world”. After a very insightful session with Mrs. Nandini Datt, the second session of the day commenced with the welcoming of two esteemed speakers - Ms. Nuzhat Khan, former Dean, Faculty of Law, Jamia Millia Islamia, and Prof. Padmakali Banerjee, Vice-Chancellor, Amity University. Prof. Padmakali ma’am threw light on ‘Consumer Optimism’ and elaborated on how consumers are optimistic about changing times and changing shopping patterns, adapting to technology, e-commerce platforms, etc. followed by a talk on “Online Shopping” by Ms. Nuzhat Khan. This workshop concluded with a "What did we learn" session where the participants shared their experience and included all learnings of this 3-day workshop.

Meanwhile, the society had already set on to the compilation of SANTULAN- The Annual Journal of TULA by sending out a word for articles, posters, poems, and surveys. We were left astounded by the huge number of entries by students who enthusiastically put out their creativity on paper. TULA also celebrated International Consumer Rights Day on 15th March on all its social media handles making consumers aware of their rights.

Interviews for the 2021-22 union were conducted on 19th April 2021 wherein, Maria Latif Trumboo as the President; Preet Arora as the Vice president; Mahima as the General Secretary, and Himanshi as the Treasurer were selected as the upcoming union.

***The academic session 2020-21 was a fruitful venture filled with the spirit and determination to learn and grow. The ongoing pandemic didn't dampen our spirit and with the efforts and hard work of the entire team of TULA, we came out with our Annual Journal: Santulan.***

# TULA Student Union-2021-22



## President

**Maria Latif Trumboo**

**B. A. (H) Political Science, Second Year**

trumboomaria@gmail.com

## Vice President

**Preet Arora**

**B. A. Programme, Second Year**

preet.arora@mirandahouse.ac.in

## General Secretary

**Mahima**

**B. A. Programme, First Year**

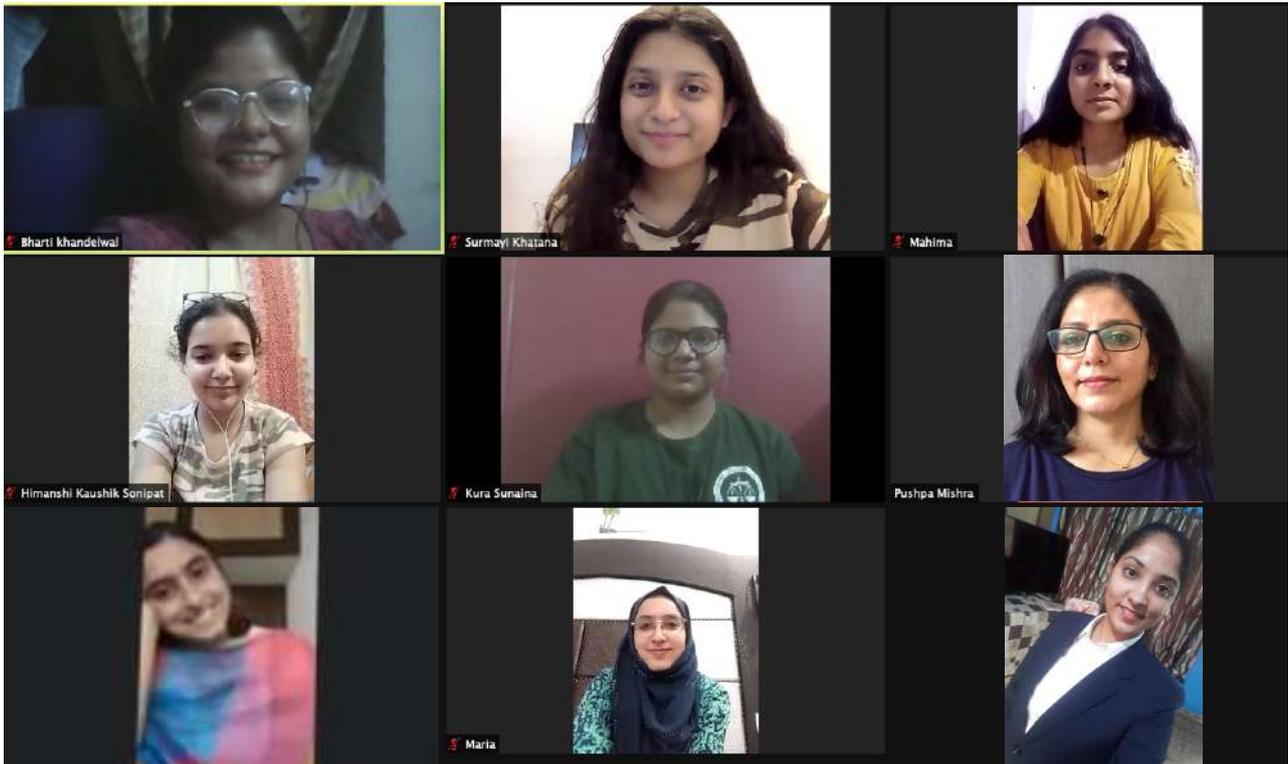
yadavmahima1000@gmail.com

## Treasurer

**Himanshi**

**B. A. Programme, Second Year**

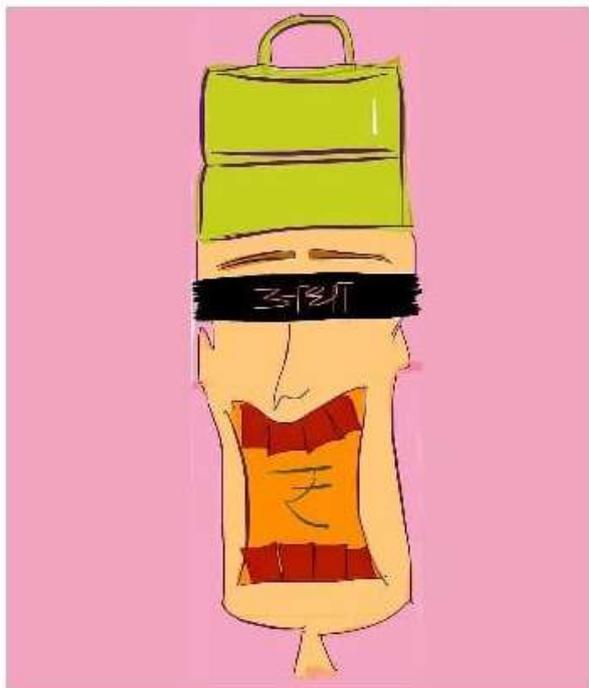
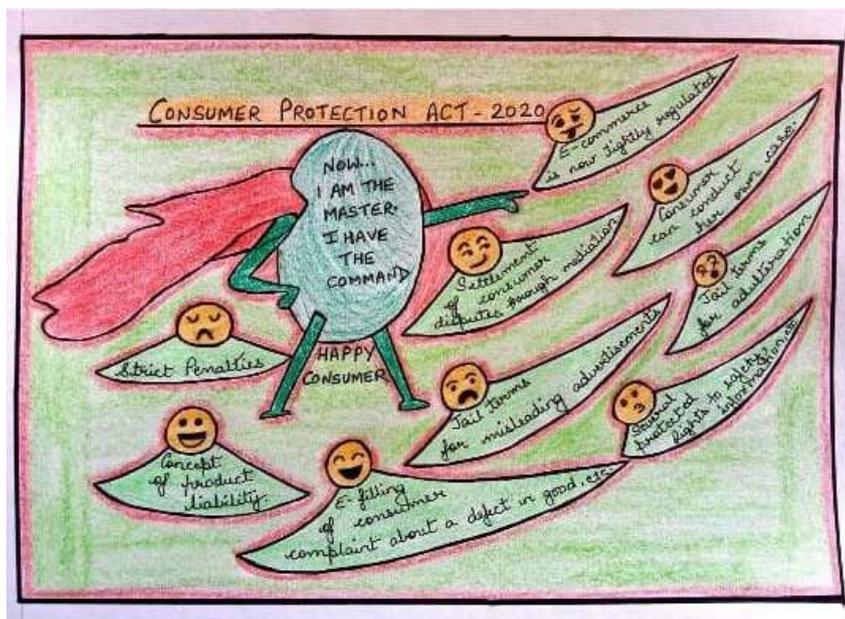
himanshik917@gmail.com



Passing the Baton to Union of Academic Session 2021-22 TULA MHCC

# Winners: Cartoon Making Competition

*Sanjeevani Chatterjee  
B.A. (H) Philosophy  
First Year*



*Ibrat Sandhu  
B.A. Programme  
Third Year*

*Sofia Bhardwaj  
B.A. Programme  
Second Year*





**TULA-MHCC**  
is happy to announce  
the winners of

## **SLOGAN WRITING COMPETITION**

ग्राहक का हक है जानकार रहना,  
और जिम्मेदारी है सतर्क रहना।  
- Divya Gupta

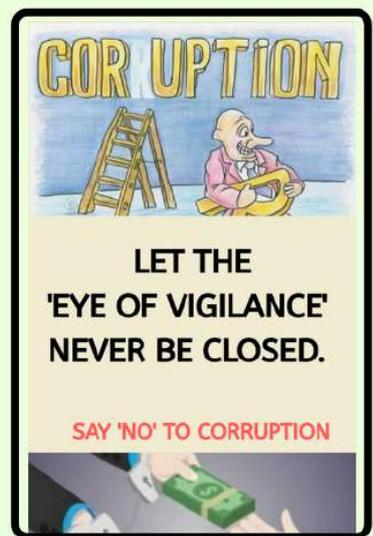
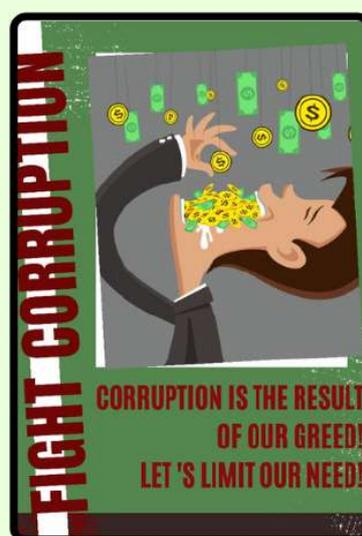
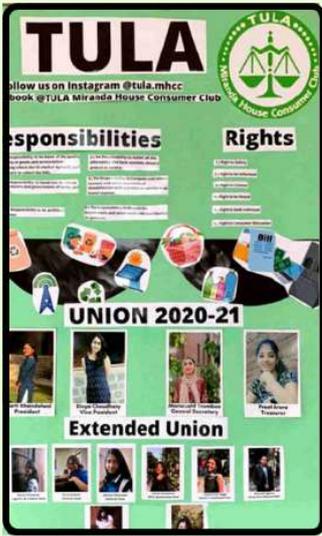
I am a sustainable Consumer, therefore I  
am.  
- Anindita Adhikari

आत्मनिर्भर भारत की यही पुकार चलो करे ऑनलाइन  
व्यापार  
- Sanjeevani Chatterjee

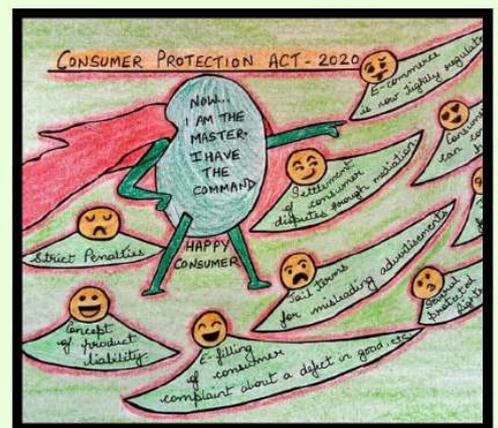
Green Consumerism is Vigilant consumer  
favouritism  
- Omja Tiwari



Illustration: Anupama Vijay, B.A. Programme, Third Year



Posters..  
slogans..  
illustrations..  
Graffiti..  
quotations  
and the many  
moods of Miranda  
House Consumers!





ग्राहकों का एक ही जीवनकार रहे

CHOOSE WISELY

सर्विक रहे!

सबका रहे

जिम्मेदारी है सतक रहना

BE VIGILANT

WE ARE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS THEREFORE WE ARE

TULA MIRANDA HOUSE CONSUMER CLUB

Green Consumerism is Vigilant Consumer Favouritism

WE ARE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS, THEREFORE WE ARE.

MIRANDA UNIVERSITY

MIRANDA UNIVERSITY