

Consumerism vs. Minimalism

Jayanth S Kashyap

Introduction and Background

Marketing is no more the promotion of goods and services, the definition of marketing has reached boundaries beyond expression. It is an understatement that marketing is restricted to the typical traditional marketing techniques in today's era. It has far and wide stretched its ambit and penetrated to the nerves of every human.

Effects of hyper marketing on today's world.

Consumerism is acquiring of more of goods and services in order to keep the wheel of economy moving. How far has consumerism taken away our life. The modern day words such as anxiety, cravings, mid night cravings, FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), First come first serve basis, Offer closes soon, end of season sale, early bird offer, buy 1 get 1 free, 50 percent discount, 1 left in the stock, so on and so forth are some of the examples of marketing gimmicks that lure consumers too consume more of the goods and services.

Effects of Consumerism on daily life

From clothes, packaged drinking water, plastic bags, wrappers, and endless crockeries, cutlery, fashion disposable items. The amount of products that we purchase on everyday basis has no foreseeable end.

The science of self discipline in terms of purchase of goods and services is diminishing, to give few examples are, companies like Zudio, Ajio, Trends clothing stores, H & M, have changed the way fashion is accessible and also affordable. The problem doesn't stop here, these businesses also have a after sale contact with the customer. Ajio and Trends issues consumer coupons to ensure consumer visits back the store again. Westside the new consumer style product store ensure the customer takes the membership and revisits the stall atleast once a month. Would you see the super rich class visiting the stores regularly or the middle class. Of course it's the middle class that visits the stores to have the gratification of wearing the 'costly clothing'. Chaayos the outlet that sells tea, usually found in malls across India, just doesn't sell tea and keep quite, they sell snacks and sell their offers, and send personalized whatsapp messages and notifications to revisit the store again. An average consumer earning around fifty thousand rupees per month (50000/-) spends an average of eight to ten thousand rupees on things that he think is necessary as part of consumerism and this is a worrying factor.

Crime rate also increases as wants to possess expensive gadgets increase. Thefts become common and daylight robberies take place. Personal relationships also get affected as people are busy trying to earn more to maintain their standard of living. Consumerism has also resulted in ecological imbalances

Everybody has to earn material wealth in order to prove someone that we are better, there are two things that drive a human being. The feeling of importance and the desire or various urges. The market has understood this in a subtle manner, their every actions lie under the ambit of convincing the customer, why he needs to purchase a particular product or buy a certain service. This amounts to the increase in consumerism.

Where does this need to consumerism arise from? Do we have an end to this consumerism? An honest answer is, there is no end. In accumulation of the things, or material things, there is no end. There will definitely be new trends in clothes, new cinemas releasing, new food culture, new drinks that pops up, new tobacco product or any other new instagram reels viral sensation that keeps popping up.

Culture of Instagram influencers urging the customers to visit the best food chain, most amazing food, best Chinese food, delicious continental food etc have just increased the consumerism. Recently in Bengaluru I had the opportunity to visit 'Avare Kaal Mela' the fair that sells a local beans that gives unique taste to consumers, the consumers were willing to wait for 2 to 3 hours to just get the coupon and an hour to taste the food. The question is, would you not get the food elsewhere? Or is it the fear of missing out? (FOMO).

V V Puram food street, Church street, M G road shopping, Avenue roads and Sunday market are all examples of hyper consumerism that exists in the society today. Where are we heading to, falling trap for offers and discounts.

Now we arrive at the important question. Are we happy? We can question this economically i.e we are deriving the utility from the product and its not stopping there, the product is only moving ahead to create more desires. If this is how the way system progress, then the country would be left with consumers and not happy people. India has ranked 139 in the World Happiness Rankings 2021 published in the 9th World Happiness Report. So where is all the consumerism and economy boosting the happiness of the citizens? Is there a solution ?

MINIMALISM

I heard the concept of minimalism a few months back on a YouTube channel named The Minimalist. Two friends are creating awareness about why minimalism eases life. Minimalism is about avoiding the unnecessary , it's about simplicity, utility and elegance. It's all about "LESS IS MORE" in terms of embracing the most of fewer things. The most common misconception is that minimalists "suffer" and "sacrifice" while having less things and less interesting experiences.

A minimalist lifestyle is intentionally living with fewer possessions — focusing only on the ones you need. Living with less may be the right choice if you're feeling overwhelmed with clutter, if you're looking for fewer distractions, or if you're looking to cut back on spending.

Minimalism might be a tool that helps you in finding the much needed freedom from the need to acquire things. We assign ourself too much to the things around us, example, he must be rich he owns a SUV, he must be kind because he donates crores of rupees to the charity. She must be from elite class as she purchase only products

from A listed stores. There is nothing wrong in owning the material things but why should we attach our entire life in acquiring it. So minimalism is not the opposite of consumerism but the cap to tell how much is enough.

Some of the tips to feel satisfied and completed, Minimalism has helped us to Eliminate our discontent, Reclaim our time, Live in the moment, Pursue our passions, Discover our missions, Experience real freedom, Create more, consume less, Focus on our health, Grow as individuals, Contribute beyond ourselves, Rid ourselves of excess stuff, Discover purpose in our lives.

Conclusion

Consumerism has wrecked havoc in the lives of teenagers, adults and more importantly with the working class, they seem to be lost in the chaos created by marketer, consumerism has created more credit cards, more apps that provide free credit, purchase of things that do not absolutely is a requirement. Birthdays, to wedding and pre wedding photo shoots to Maternity shoot everything has becoming a business, this article is written to just make you aware that where are we heading to ?