

Forum:	Youth Assembly (YA)
Issue:	Managing the Rise and Impact of Consumerist Culture
Student Officer:	Georgianna Mitsia
Position:	Co-Head

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates of the Youth Assembly,

My name is Georgianna Mitsia, I am an 8th grade student and I am honored to be one of the Co-Heads of the Youth Assembly at the 12th PSMUN. The Youth Assembly, being a beginner committee, is a wonderful platform for young delegates to gain exposure to the world of Model UN and to experience the thrill of diplomatic discussions and negotiations. I believe that this committee will provide a great opportunity for you to develop your public speaking and leadership skills while also learning about important global issues.

In this study guide, you will be introduced to the topic of "Managing the Rise and Impact of Consumerist Culture", a crucial issue that requires the attention of our generation. The guide aims to assist you in understanding and familiarizing yourself with the concepts and structures associated with the topic at hand. You will find information on the background of the issue, major countries and organizations involved, and possible solutions aimed at giving you inspiration in tackling this issue effectively.

However, I strongly encourage you to conduct your own research before the conference to have a clear and holistic understanding of the topic. The Youth Assembly provides you with the opportunity to express your viewpoints and share your ideas, and I strongly encourage you to take advantage of that opportunity. Be creative with your clauses, participate actively in the discussions, and most importantly, have fun!

If you have any questions regarding the topic or the committee in general, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at georgianna.mitsia@yahoo.com. I am looking forward to seeing a fruitful debate with a variety of perspectives and opinions from all delegates.

Yours truly,

Georgianna Mitsia

INTRODUCTION

The term "consumerist culture" refers to the idea that modern society places an overwhelming emphasis on the acquisition and consumption of goods and services. This phenomenon is characterized by a relentless pursuit of material goods and services, and it has come to dominate many aspects of our daily lives. The impact of this culture extends beyond the individual level, and when viewed from a broader perspective, it is evident that it has the potential to have detrimental effects on the structure of human society as a whole.

On the one hand, consumerism has come to play a central role in the economies of the world. It provides individuals with the freedom to choose from a wide range of products and services and stimulates innovation and creativity. For instance, household consumption is the largest component of expenditure in many economies, accounting for up to 60% of Gross Domestic Product in some countries. In the UK, for example, consumption alone accounted for over 1.92 trillion pounds in 2021, a significant portion of the total GDP.¹

However, consumerism is a double-edged sword, and despite its economic benefits, there are significant drawbacks to this culture that must be acknowledged. For example, the environmental impact of consumerism is significant, with over 50 million metric tons of electronic waste generated globally every year.² This waste contains toxic chemicals, such as the chemicals released from decomposing batteries, which pose a threat to the environment and public health. Furthermore, the constant focus on material goods and services can also have negative impacts on mental health, with studies linking materialistic tendencies to issues such as hoarding, low self-esteem, fulfillment issues, and even depression.

In conclusion, consumerism, despite its undeniable economic benefits, poses serious risks to human society, the environment, and the mental health of consumers. While there have not yet been many direct actions taken to address this issue, there have been policy propositions aimed at incentivizing consumers to adopt more sustainable consumption patterns and habits.

¹ Booth, Lorna. "Components of GDP: Key Economic Indicators." *Commonslibrary.parliament.uk*, 9 Apr. 2020, commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn02787/

² "Topic: Electronic Waste Worldwide." *Statista*, www.statista.com/topics/3409/electronic-waste-worldwide/.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Consumerism culture

Consumerism culture refers to a theory according to which modern human society puts strong emphasis on the acquisition of material possessions, commodities and services and encourages overconsumption.

Commercial product

Any item/system available from regular production that is sold to the general public at established market prices.

Manufacturing technology

The term “manufacturing technology”³ means techniques and processes designed to improve manufacturing quality, productivity including quality control, inventory management, worker training, as well as manufacturing equipment and software.

Window shopping

The activity of spending time looking at different goods, though not intending to buy any of them.⁴

Degradation

The process in which the beauty or quality of something is destroyed or spoiled.⁵

Anti-consumerism movement

Anti-consumerism movement is a social ideology that expresses the need for limiting the excessive purchasing and consumption of material possessions.

Outsourcing

The process of paying to have a fraction of a company’s job done by another company.⁶

³ Definition: Manufacturing Technology from 10 USC § 2500(10) | LII / Legal Information Institute.” www.law.cornell.edu, www.law.cornell.edu/definitions/uscode.php?width=840&height=800&iframe=true&def_id=10-USC-1323066670-601268573&term_occur=2&term_src

⁴ Cambridge Dictionary. “Window Shopping.” @CambridgeWords, 30 Nov. 2022, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/window-shopping. Accessed 1 Dec. 2022.

⁵ “DEGRADATION | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Dictionary.cambridge.org, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/degradation.

⁶ Cambridge Dictionary. “OUTSOURCING | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 2019, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/outsourcing

Capitalism

An economic and political system in which businesses, property and industry are controlled by private owners, not by the state, with the aim of profit.⁷

Government intervention

“Government actions to influence financial markets or industries function.”⁸

GDP (Gross Domestic Product)

“The total value of merchandise and services produced by a country per year.”⁹

Telemarketing

“The advertising or selling goods via internet (in social media, television, radio etc.).”¹⁰

Unwholesome demand

“The desire for goods, services, and activities that are deemed to reduce individual and social welfare. [...] Examples include the desire for illegal drugs, excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages, and driving at excessive speeds.”¹¹

Consumption state

“Member State of consumption means the Member State in which the supply of services is deemed to take place according to Chapter 3 of Title V or, in the case of intra-Community distance sales of goods, the Member State where the dispatch or transport of the goods to the customer ends.”¹²

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The history of consumerism

The rise of the consumerist culture began in North America in the 18th century, partly as a result of the continual advancements in manufacturing technology. As a result, an increasing variety of clothes, food and household items became available to

⁷ Cambridge Dictionary. “CAPITALISM | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Cambridge.org*, 8 Jan. 2020, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/capitalism.

⁸ GDP | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/gdp?q=GDP.

⁹ Booth, Lorna. “Components of GDP: Key Economic Indicators.” *Commonslibrary.parliament.uk*, 9 Apr. 2020, commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn02787/.

¹⁰ Cambridge Dictionary. “Telemarketing.” *@CambridgeWords*, 30 Nov. 2022, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/telemarketing. Accessed 1 Dec. 2022.

¹¹“Unwholesome Demand.” *Monash Business School*, <https://www.monash.edu/business/marketing/marketing-dictionary/u/unwholesome-demand>.

¹² Hayes, Adam. “Consumerism.” *Investopedia*, 18 Mar. 2021, www.investopedia.com/terms/c/consumerism.asp.

consumers. Meanwhile, improvements in transportation and manufacturing contributed to making the production, distribution and transaction process faster and more efficient than ever before. The wealthy could be identified by different items, like clothing. In fact, "A single item of clothing often represented the most expensive item in a person's possessions."¹³ Continuing the trend of increasing social focus on consumerism, there was a huge increase in spending power (the amount of money people have to buy products or services) in the 1940s, resulting in an even steeper increase in consumerism.¹⁴

Advertising

Advertising is a ubiquitous part of modern society, present in various forms such as televisions, radios, posters, social media and more. Its primary objective is to generate profits for the company by enticing consumers to purchase the advertised product or service. To accomplish this, advertisers often use a range of techniques that appeal to the emotions, senses, and subconscious of the audience, such as the use of bright colors, eye-catching logos, and memorable mottos. These strategies, while effective in boosting sales, can also contribute to the rise of consumerist culture.

Consumerist culture refers to a societal emphasis on the acquisition of goods and services, leading individuals to prioritize the purchase and consumption of more than what is truly necessary. Advertising, by its very nature, reinforces this culture through its aim to drive consumer behavior and increase sales. The psychological tactics used by advertisers, such as emotional manipulation and impulse buying, contribute to this trend by encouraging individuals to prioritize their desires for material goods over their actual needs.

¹³"POSSESSION | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary." *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/possession.

¹⁴"Spending Power." *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/spending-power.

Benefits of consumerism

Economic growth

The undeniable benefits of consumerist culture on the economy cannot be disregarded. The continuous spending on goods and services creates a self-sustaining cycle of profit, leading to an expansion of the economy. This increased production leads to the creation of new job positions, allowing individuals to enhance their living standards, increase their income and purchasing power, and continue the cycle of profit.

However, it is essential to note that excessive economic growth can result in inflation, where prices surpass the actual value of goods. Although consumerist culture may not be the primary contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in all nations and overconsumption may not exist in every society, the influence of consumerist culture on the economy is still undeniable.

Boosts innovation and creativity

Consumerist culture also stimulates innovation and creativity in the market. Customers are encouraged to try and purchase new and innovative products, putting pressure on manufacturers and businesses to differentiate their offerings and maintain customer interest. This serves as a driving force behind innovation, leading companies to invest in technological advancements and create the next best-selling product in the market. As a result, not only does the quality of products improve, but customers are also presented with a wider range of choices.

Drawbacks of consumerism

Environmental degradation

Consumerism's impact on the environment cannot be overstated. The increasing demand for goods and services has put a significant strain on natural resources such as water, raw materials, and energy. The use of harmful chemicals in the production process is also a direct result of consumerism, leading to further degradation of the environment. For example, sulfuric acid, which is widely used in metal manufacturing, is a critical component in the production process but also has a significant impact on the environment. The use of such chemicals has negative consequences for air and water quality, soil health, and biodiversity. Additionally, the high level of energy consumption required to meet consumer demand contributes to the production of greenhouse gases, further damaging the environment.

Moral degradation

The focus on consumerism in society can also lead to a shift away from important moral principles and values such as integrity, kindness, and generosity. Instead, consumerism tends to promote materialism, greed, and competitiveness, leading to a reduction in moral and ethical values. People often purchase goods and services they do not need in order to feel equal to others or to achieve a higher social status, further exacerbating the problem. In modern society, success is often measured by the amount of wealth and possessions one has, rather than by one's character and contribution to society. This shift in focus away from moral values is a cause for concern, as it leads to a reduction in the overall quality of life in society.

Psychological disadvantages

Consumerist culture can also have a detrimental psychological impact on consumers. Feeling the need to keep up with the latest trends while also fearing that failing to do so may lead to social exclusion, can result in increased stress and anxiety. Teenagers and generally young people are among the most vulnerable groups in facing the adverse psychological effects brought by consumerist culture as, in their effort to feel included and fit in with their social environment, they create unrealistic expectations, which in some cases may cause anxiety or even depression. In addition, young people's excessive exposure to social media plays a key role in their increased mental need to keep up with all the latest trends.

Higher debt levels

Consumerism can also increase debt levels in society, as people prioritize spending on luxury items rather than making responsible investments or saving money. The tendency to take out short-term loans to purchase such items can lead to high levels of debt, which can have long-term consequences for the individual and society. People should be careful with their limited resources and consider the long-term consequences of their spending habits, especially those with limited financial means who need to prioritize their spending on essential items.

The victims of consumerist culture

Consumerism has become a prevalent aspect of modern society, and its effects can be seen on different individuals and demographics. While some people may view consumerism as a positive aspect of life, as it provides access to various goods and services, it can also have a negative impact on certain individuals.

Personality plays a crucial role in how people interact with consumerist culture. Extroverts tend to be more sociable and enjoy socializing with others, which means that they are more likely to be influenced by advertising campaigns aimed at a group setting. Extroverts are more likely to spend more time on social media platforms, where advertising for various products is prevalent. They are also more likely to be influenced by advertisements that feature social events or experiences, such as parties, outings, or vacations.

On the other hand, introverts are less likely to be influenced by such marketing strategies. Introverts are more solitary by nature, and they are more likely to spend more time by themselves, focusing on their own personal interests and pursuits. They are less likely to be influenced by advertisements that are geared towards group activities or experiences. Instead, they may be more likely to be influenced by advertisements that appeal to their personal interests and preferences.

The way that people in their 20s and 70s respond to consumerist culture can vary significantly. Younger adults, especially those in their 20s, tend to be more impressionable and susceptible to marketing campaigns that feature trendy and fashionable products. They are also more likely to be influenced by advertisements that feature their peers and role models, such as celebrities or influencers. Additionally, younger adults are more likely to spend more time on social media, where advertising for various products is prevalent, making them more susceptible to marketing campaigns.

Older people, on the other hand, may be more likely to be influenced by traditional advertising methods, such as television commercials. They are also more likely to be influenced by advertisements that feature products that cater to their specific needs and interests, such as health and wellness products or home improvement products. Older people are less likely to spend significant amounts of time on social media, which makes them less susceptible to advertisements targeted towards younger adults.

Impact of consumerism on Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs)

The impact of consumerism on Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) is a pressing issue that has long been overlooked in discussions surrounding the consequences of consumerist culture. In order to meet the ever-increasing demands

of consumerism, workers in the manufacturing sector of LEDCs are often subjected to inhumane and degrading working conditions. In an effort to reduce production costs and maximize profits, multinational corporations based in more economically developed nations frequently choose to locate their factories in LEDCs, leading to a widespread practice of child labour and exploitation.

The exploitation of vulnerable groups, including children, is one of the most pressing human rights violations in the contemporary world and is largely a result of the consumerist culture that exists in more developed nations. Children in LEDCs are often employed by multinational corporations and subjected to long working hours, inadequate health and safety measures, and low wages. Such conditions often result in serious injuries or even death, further exacerbating the already dire circumstances faced by workers in LEDCs.

Despite the substantial contribution of LEDCs to the global economy, the majority of the revenue generated by such economic activities does not benefit the local population. Instead, it is largely taken by the ownership of large corporations, who pay little for the manufacturing of their goods, thereby leaving LEDCs with little to no profits from their economic activities.

It can be argued that LEDCs are victims of the consumerist culture that prevails in More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs). The excessive consumption of goods in developed countries creates a demand that LEDCs must fulfill, but at a great cost to the well-being and safety of its workers. Moreover, LEDCs do not even consume or use the products they are producing, leaving the benefits to the corporations and the consumers in more economically developed nations. In conclusion, it is imperative that we acknowledge the harmful impact of consumerism on LEDCs and work towards finding solutions that benefit both the local populations and the global economy as a whole.

The laws of demand and supply in relation to consumerism

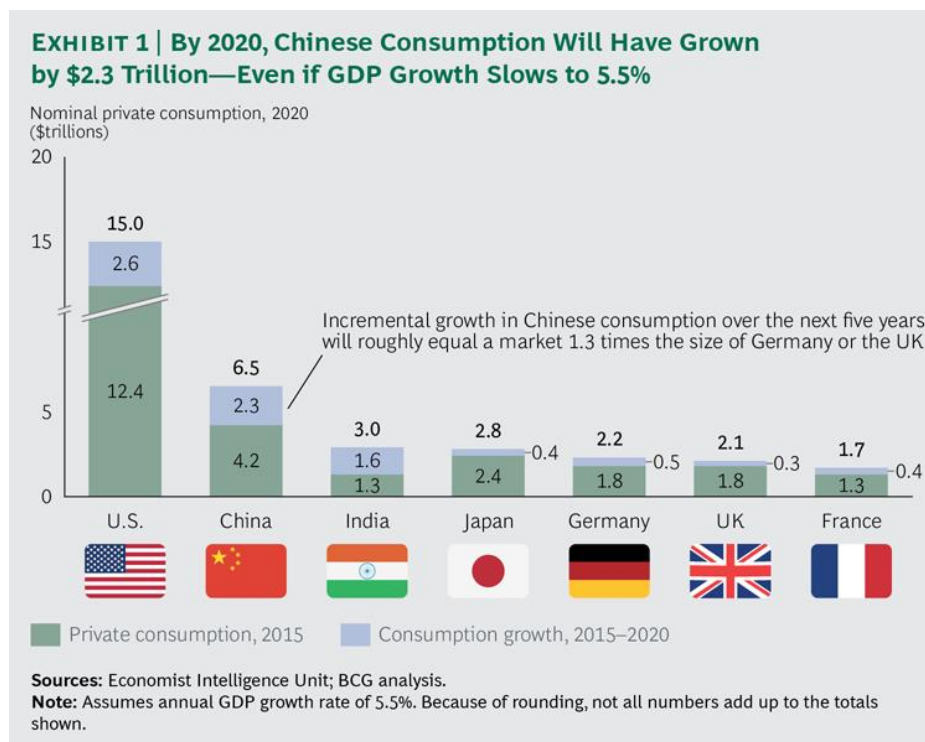
The laws of supply and demand are interdependent economic principles that govern the behavior of markets and the price of goods and services. In simpler terms, the law of supply states that the quantity of a good or service that a firm is willing and able to provide to the market is directly proportional to the price at which it can be sold. On the other hand, the law of demand states that the amount of a good or service that consumers are willing and able to purchase is inversely proportional to its price.

In a free market, the price of a good or service is determined by the intersection of the supply and demand curves. This point of intersection is known as the market equilibrium, where the price of the good or service balances the quantity demanded

and supplied. At this point, neither buyers nor sellers are worse off, and the market is said to be in a state of balance.

However, if the demand for a good or service increases faster than the supply, this creates a shortage, and the price tends to increase. Conversely, if the supply increases faster than the demand, this creates a surplus, and the price tends to decrease. It is the interplay between supply and demand that drives the market and ultimately determines the price of goods and services in a free market economy.

In the context of consumerism, the laws of supply and demand play a crucial role in determining the prices of goods and services that consumers demand. For instance, if the demand for a certain product increases, the price is likely to go up, leading to higher profits for firms. This, in turn, may attract more firms to enter the market, increasing the supply and thereby, bringing the price back down. The laws of supply and demand are essential in maintaining the stability of markets and the price of



goods and services play a vital role in shaping the global economy.

Figure 1: Consumption growth in MEDCs

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America (USA)

The United States of America is widely recognized as a major consumer nation, consuming a significant portion of the world's resources despite having only 6% of the world's population. This trend is reflective of the overall consumerist culture prevalent in the US, where individuals have a strong desire to purchase and consume goods, regardless of their necessity. The impact of consumerism on the US economy is significant, with a direct increase in economic output, job creation, and wealth for companies. This has led to a resistance to take action against consumerism, as it is seen as a driving force behind the country's economic growth. The recent incorporation of digital shopping into consumer behavior has further strengthened the consumerist culture in the US. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated this trend, with a surge in online sales. High-earners and Millennials are among the demographics that have demonstrated a significant interest in digital shopping.

China

China is a major producer of various materials and goods and is widely recognized for its advancements in the industrial, technological, and medical fields. The massive sales of products from prominent companies have greatly contributed to China's swift economic growth, which is further compounded by its massive population of approximately 1.3 billion. However, this consumption also has a severe impact on the environment and contributes to environmental degradation.

The "China Country Climate and Development Report" (CCDR) states that climate change poses a considerable risk to China's future growth and prosperity. However, the report also highlights that China has the potential to turn this challenge into an economic opportunity through the transition to a carbon neutral and resilient development path. This requires the implementation of an efficient waste management system to mitigate the environmental impact of production and consumption.

Japan

Japan boasts the second largest consumer market and purchasing power globally. The Japanese populace primarily purchases goods that are technologically advanced such as smartphones, computers, clothing, and cosmetics. Some of the most renowned Japanese companies include Nintendo, Sony, which manufacture electronic devices, and Toyota, a leading automotive producer.

However, the production and consumption of these products can have a negative impact on the environment, particularly in terms of electronic waste and environmental pollution. Companies like Nintendo and Sony are faced with the challenge of reducing their environmental footprint and promoting sustainable

business practices. This highlights the need for efficient waste management and the adoption of environmentally friendly production processes to minimize the impact of business activities on the environment.

Nigeria

Nigeria is faced with the challenge of combating harmful marketing practices, which increases the demand for dangerous substances such as drugs or weapons. This situation is addressed by only a few organized bodies scattered throughout the country with limited impact. The lack of awareness among the population of their rights leads to a general unwillingness to address the issue of unwholesome markets.

Nigeria, like many other less economically developed countries (LEDCs), has a high output rate but consumes very little of it. This creates a significant challenge in regulating the unwholesome marketing practices and safeguarding the well-being of the population. It is crucial for the Nigerian government and concerned organizations to raise awareness and empower the public to take action in combating unwholesome markets and promoting a safer society.

Germany

In 2021, Germany recorded the highest value of sold production, accounting for 27% of the total production sold in the European Union (EU).¹⁵ The consumer spending in Germany for the same year was \$2,085.15 billion, which represents a 6.88% increase from the previous year. The country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) underwent significant changes in 2021, a trend that was not unique to Germany as most nations were affected by the quarantine measures imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During this period, the population spent a considerable amount of time on social media, which encouraged them to make purchases that were not necessarily required. The ease of online shopping only compounded this trend, leading to an increase in consumer spending. It is crucial for governments and concerned organizations to understand the impact of such events on the economy and take appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse effects.

¹⁵ Eurostat, statistics explained https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Industrial_production_statistics

Australia

Australia, like many other nations, was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of consumer behavior. The restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic led to a significant shift in consumer priorities and spending patterns. As of March 2022, the level of economic optimism in Australia is lower compared to the same period the previous year, but higher than it was during the early stages of the pandemic.

To counter the price increases, households increased their spending and decreased their saving. Despite being willing to pay more in some categories, consumers changed their brand preferences or waited for products to go on sale when it came to necessities. The majority of consumers switched brands or retailers, and over 80% showed no willingness to change such patterns.

It is crucial for businesses and concerned organizations to understand the changing patterns of consumer behavior and adapt their strategies accordingly. This can help mitigate the impact of such events on the economy and promote sustainable growth.

Consumers International (CI)

Consumers International was established as the International Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU) in 1960. Over the years, it has grown to encompass over 200 member organizations from over 100 countries. The primary aim of CI is to promote the rights and interests of consumers globally.

CI works through its member organizations to influence local and international policies that have an impact on consumers. The organization also launches campaigns to promote commercial accountability and protect consumers from unscrupulous markets. To raise consumer awareness, CI publishes research on product safety issues and abuses in the marketplace.

In addition, CI reinforces the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection, ensuring that the rights and interests of consumers are protected at both the local and international levels. Through its efforts, CI aims to create a world where consumers can trust that the products and services they purchase are safe and ethically sourced.

ISWA (International Waste Management Organization)

International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) is widely recognized as the leading waste management organization in the world. It envisions a world that is clean and safe for everyone. To achieve this, ISWA has established several task forces, such as the Closing of the Largest Dumpsites Task Force and the Marine Litter Task Force.

ISWA's goal is to help reduce the amount of waste generated and to promote responsible disposal of goods that are no longer needed by consumers. The organization works towards creating a world where waste is managed in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner, and where everyone is aware of their role in reducing waste. Through its efforts, ISWA aims to create a clean and safe world for all.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
1930	Kellogg's adopts a six-hour shift to help accommodate unemployed workers.
1960	Consumers international is established as the International Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU).
1980s	The practice of outsourcing becomes increasingly popular.
16 April 1985	UN guidelines for consumer protection (UNGCP) are firstly adopted.
1994	The first ever made online commercial is published, marking the start of online advertising.
1995	The first self-driving car is successfully piloted from Pittsburgh to San Diego.
26 July 1999	UNGCP are expanded and discussed in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
2005	The "Jagriti mascot" is launched as part of a larger consumer awareness program in India.
22 December 2015	UNGCP are discussed once more in the General Assembly (GA).

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Sustainable development goals

The United Nations has established 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development, aimed at improving the world's welfare by 2030. One of these goals, Goal 12, focuses on responsible consumption and production. The UN recognizes that while economic and social progress has been made in recent history, it has come at a cost to the environment, which now threatens our future development and survival. As such, the organization is committed to promoting sustainable consumption on a global scale.

Consumerist culture, with its emphasis on constant consumption and growth, has contributed to this environmental degradation. The UN's goal of responsible consumption and production is a response to this challenge, aimed at changing the way goods and services are produced and consumed, in order to reduce their impact on the environment. The goal seeks to encourage businesses, governments, and individuals to adopt sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, increasing energy efficiency, and promoting sustainable agriculture, among others. By promoting responsible consumption and production, the UN hopes to create a more sustainable future for all.

UN guidelines for consumer protection

The United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP) is a set of principles that outline the main characteristics of effective consumer protection legislation, enforcement institutions, and redress systems. The UNGCP provides guidance to Member States in developing and enforcing domestic and regional laws, rules, and regulations that are suitable for their specific economic, social, and environmental circumstances. The guidelines also promote international enforcement cooperation among Member States and encourage the sharing of experiences in consumer protection.

The UNGCP is an important tool for promoting consumer rights and protection in the global marketplace, and is connected to consumerist culture in that it seeks to ensure that consumers are able to make informed and safe choices when purchasing goods and services. In a consumerist culture, where individuals are encouraged to consume constantly and the emphasis is placed on the sale of goods and services, it is crucial to have clear and effective guidelines in place to protect the rights and well-being of consumers. The UNGCP helps to address this challenge by establishing standards and principles that promote responsible and sustainable consumption, and by providing guidance to Member States on how to ensure that consumer protection laws are in place and are effectively enforced.

UNGA Resolution 39/248

UN General Assembly Resolution 39/248, adopted in 1984, is known as the "Declaration of the Right to Development." The resolution recognizes the right to development as an inalienable human right, and declares that it is an essential condition for the full enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms. The resolution states that the right to development must be fulfilled in a manner that is sustainable, equitable, and free from exploitation.

The resolution is connected to consumerist culture in that it addresses the impact of unsustainable consumption and production patterns on the right to development. In a consumerist culture, where individuals are encouraged to consume constantly, the environment and natural resources are often overexploited, which can have negative consequences for the right to development. The declaration recognizes that the right to development must be balanced against the need to protect the environment and ensure sustainable development.

UNGA Resolution 39/248 is important in that it raises awareness about the need to address the impacts of consumerist culture on the right to development and to promote more sustainable and equitable development practices. By highlighting the importance of balancing the right to development with environmental sustainability, the resolution helps to encourage a more responsible and sustainable approach to consumption and production.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Tax policies

Tax policy can play a role in shaping consumerist culture by influencing the incentives for consumers to purchase goods and services. For example, the imposition of higher taxes on certain products, such as luxury goods or goods that are considered to have negative environmental impacts, may serve to reduce demand for these items and discourage overconsumption. By reducing the demand for these products, the government can help to promote more sustainable and responsible consumption patterns.

At the same time, tax policy can also impact the incentives for producers to manufacture and sell certain products. For example, the imposition of higher taxes on goods and services that are deemed harmful to the environment may encourage producers to shift their focus to more sustainable and environmentally friendly products.

Price controls

Price controls refer to the government-mandated minimum or maximum prices that are set for specific goods and services. The primary purpose of price controls is to regulate the affordability of goods and services in the market, in order to ensure that they are accessible to all members of society.

Price controls can take two forms: price floors, which are minimum prices that are set for a specific good or service, and price ceilings, which are maximum prices that are set for a specific good or service. Both price floors and price ceilings can have a significant impact on consumer behavior, as changes in price controls will directly influence the demand for the product in question.

For example, the implementation of a price floor for a specific good may increase the demand for that product, as consumers are now able to purchase it at a lower price. On the other hand, the implementation of a price ceiling for a specific good may decrease the demand for that product, as consumers are no longer willing to pay the higher price.

In the context of consumerist culture, price controls can play an important role in shaping consumption patterns. By regulating the affordability of goods and services, price controls can help to ensure that everyone has access to the basic necessities, such as food, clothing, and housing. Furthermore, price controls can also help to promote responsible consumption by reducing the demand for goods and services that are deemed harmful to the environment or to society as a whole.

Cooperation with IOCU

Cooperation with the International Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU) is an important aspect of promoting responsible and sustainable consumerism on a global scale. By encouraging Member States to become members of the IOCU, consumers worldwide can be informed about their rights as consumers can have their interests represented at the international level.

Through cooperation with the IOCU, the international community can take steps to promote and regulate consumerism, particularly in Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs), where unwholesome markets often exist and where consumers may be unaware of their rights. By promoting consumer rights and awareness, cooperation with the IOCU can help to ensure that consumers are able to make informed purchasing decisions and can help to reduce the negative impacts of consumerism on the environment and on society.

In addition to promoting equality and safety for consumers, cooperation with the IOCU can also help to encourage consumers in More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) to make more conscious and responsible purchasing decisions.

This, in turn, can help to promote a more sustainable and responsible consumer culture, where consumers are more aware of the impacts of their purchasing decisions and take steps to reduce their environmental footprint.

Cooperation with ISWA

Cooperation with the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) is essential in addressing the negative impacts of consumerism on the environment. As one of the leading international organizations in the field of waste management, the ISWA aims to promote safe and sustainable waste disposal practices globally.

Through cooperation with the ISWA, the international community can work towards establishing more effective and safer waste disposal mechanisms for the increasing amounts of unwanted materials generated by consumerist culture. By ratifying or declaring cooperation with the ISWA, states can play a crucial role in reducing environmental degradation and promoting a more sustainable future.

In addition to promoting safe waste disposal, cooperation with the ISWA can also aid in fostering a safer environment for both current and future generations. By working together, the international community can reduce the negative impacts of consumerism and work towards a more sustainable future.

Information regarding the product

The promotion of conscious purchasing by consumers is crucial in achieving a sustainable and equitable economy. To achieve this, companies can play a significant role by providing transparency and accountability in the production of their products. This can be achieved by requiring companies to provide information about the carbon footprint and other environmental impacts associated with the production of their products. Additionally, the specific manufacturer and other details about the production process should be made available to the consumer. This information will assist consumers in making informed decisions about the products they purchase and will help to drive the market towards more sustainable and environmentally responsible production practices.

Moreover, this move towards transparency will not only help to mitigate environmental degradation but will also foster a culture of responsible consumption. By giving consumers the necessary information, they can evaluate the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions and make choices that align with their values. As a result, companies that are more transparent and environmentally responsible will benefit, as consumers become increasingly aware of the environmental impact of their purchases and make decisions based on these considerations.

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