



SPECIAL ISSUE – CALL FOR PAPERS

Guest Editors

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Future Trends in Consumer Behaviour

Successful organizations build their marketing strategies with consumer behaviour insights as the foundation. They predict future trends in consumer behaviour and prepare for them. Understanding and responding to consumer trends is the essence of creating a positive customer experience. A recent report (Sales Force, 2020) indicates that 76% of consumers expect companies to understand their needs and expectations. This means that if organizations do not recognize what consumers want before they can tell the organization, consumers probably take their business elsewhere. No wonder why organizations that lead in customer experience outperform laggards on the S&P 500 index by nearly 80%. As such, it is pertinent for organizations in any industry and context, from the higher education to healthcare, retail, and manufacturing to understand factors that drive change in consumer behaviour and expectations and to be prepared for what is to come. Such change drivers include the growing reliance on digital technology and its consequent mindset and lifestyle changes, the increasing appeal of Generation Z as a major target market, and the shared experiences of living through a global pandemic (i.e., COVID-19 pandemic). Also, the increasing importance of sustainability, ethical consumption, social responsibility, and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are important considerations in examining changes in consumer behaviour (Nguyen and Johnson, 2020).

Recent technological advances have fundamentally changed the way consumers interact with the world and work through their consumption-related problems (Zolfagharian and Yazdanparast, 2019). Digitalization, artificial intelligence, and mobile technology have, for instance, influenced the customer journey and consequently, consumer decision making processes (Pascual Nebreda, Díez Martín, and Blanco González, 2021). These changes pose a major conceptual challenge in understanding *if* and *how* these technological changes affect consumption (Malter *et al.*, 2020). Researchers have discussed the presence of a multifaceted shift in consumer mindsets that has given rise to a consumer immediacy pandemic (Zolfagharian and Yazdanparast, 2019, 2017). In a similar fashion, the generational changes in the consumer base have been accompanied with shifts in consumer mindsets, priorities, and preferences (Johnstone and Lindh, 2018). Generation Z consumers, projected to reach 2.56 billion by end of 2021, have challenged marketers given their fundamentally different expectations and preferences compared to the next strong group of consumers, the Millennials (Gala *et al.*, 2018).

If these change drivers were not enough, the COVID-19 pandemic has added to the complexity of understanding and decoding the modern consumer behaviour and decision making (e.g., Chiu, Oh, and Cho, 2021; Kirk and Rifkin, 2020). The pandemic has had undeniable impacts on consumers' mental and physical health, priorities, goals, and future planning. From a micro perspective, online purchases have led to an increase in isolation of consumers, where in, all they interact with is their digital devices. The reduced physical movement given the pandemic related limitations, the reliance on online shopping, and work from home practices, have had ripple effects on consumer wellbeing (e.g., isolation, depression, vulnerability, and obesity; Clemmensen, Petersen, and Sørensen, 2020; Galanti *et al.*, 2021; Sirgy, 2021). Some consumers have moved to healthy patterns of food choices, while economic and financial burdens have pushed others to consume inexpensive, unhealthy food choices.

Along with the changing dynamics of work-life balance, healthy lifestyle, and eating habits, there has also been an increase in global awareness about sustainable and ethical consumption (Cheung, and To, 2020; Nguyen and Johnson, 2020). The rise in sustainable product use (Miotto and Seounmi 2020), willingness to pay higher prices for ethical goods (Lundblad and Davies, 2016), product disposal and reuse (Wang, Tian, Sarigöllü, and Xu, 2020), and positive consumer responses to firm's green marketing initiatives (Barbarossa and Pelsmacker, 2016; Waites, Stevens, and Hancock, 2020). have been highlighted by extant research. The trend has exponentially increased with Gen Z consumers, known to have high purchasing power, opinionating more about sustainable products (Forbes, 2021). Thus, future trends in marketing should see promise in sustainable consumption and rather already promote products with sustainable values.

The change in consumer generations coupled with the growing reliance on digital technology, the recent COVID-19 pandemic, and the rising importance of sustainable and ethical consumption (Lim, 2017) are expected to result in new trends in consumer behaviour, demanding marketers and consumer researchers to act proactively. The objective of this special issue, thus, is to push the boundaries of consumer behaviour research and draw the urgent attention of academics and practitioners to future trends in consumer behaviour and consumption patterns of the future consumers.

The topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Use of augmented reality, virtual reality, and voice assistants in shaping consumer experiences
- Artificial Intelligence and consumer behaviour
- Future of non-tech savvy consumers
- Big data and increased privacy concerns in consumer marketing
- Consumer well-being in the digital era
- Digital technology reliance and consumer behaviour
- Gamification and consumer engagement
- Generation Z and consumer behaviour
- Sustainability and consumer marketing
- Diversity trends in consumer behaviour
- Challenges in the future of consumer behaviour
- Post pandemic consumer behaviour trends
- Luxury consumption in light of sustainable consumption initiatives
- Ethical consumption

Submissions focusing on scale development of consumer behaviour constructs, systematic reviews of consumer behaviour theories, proposing new theories, or extending previous theories from other fields into the consumer behaviour realm are highly encouraged.

Submission Criteria

- First author should be a current doctoral student or a PhD graduate during/after Spring 2020.
- The submissions need to clearly specify how their research contributes to consumer behaviour theory and practice.

Submission

All manuscripts submitted must not have been published, accepted for publication, or be currently under consideration elsewhere.

Manuscripts should be submitted in accordance with the JCB author guidelines online at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14791838/homepage/forauthors.html>

All submissions should be made via the online submission system <https://submission.wiley.com/journal/cb> and should be made to the special issue, which is identified on the submission site.

Submission Deadline: June 30th, 2022

About the Guest Editor

Dr. Atefeh Yazdanparast is an associate professor of marketing at Clark University School of Management. She earned her Ph.D. in marketing from the University of North Texas. Her research focuses on sensory marketing and the interplay of consumers and digital technology. Her work has been published in *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Journal of Advertising*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *Psychology & Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Management*, and *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* among others. She is the Chair of the American Marketing Association Marketing for Higher Education Special Interest Group and serves on the editorial review boards of *Journal Global Marketing* and *International Journal of Bank Marketing*. She is a recipient of the Master Scholar Award from Marketing Management Association, Excellence in Teaching Award from the National Society of Leadership and Success, and the Outstanding Teacher of Year from the University of Evansville.

Dr. Prachi Gala is an Assistant Professor of Marketing in the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University of Georgia, USA. She earned her Ph.D. in marketing at the University of Mississippi, Mississippi, USA and her MBA from Mumbai University, India. Her research interests lie in marketing strategy and marketing-finance interface. Her current research agenda addresses topics such as the behavioural traits and compensation of the leadership like chief executives and their impact on marketing outcomes of the firm. Her research has appeared in the *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *Marketing Management Journal* and *Marketing Education Review*. She also serves on the editorial board for *Marketing Management Journal* and serves as an Ad-hoc reviewer for *Psychological Reports*, *Marketing Management Journal*, *Marketing Education Review* and *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*. She also serves as Vice Chair of Special Events, Marketing for Higher Education SIG in

American Marketing Association. She is the recipient of Lou E. Pelton Award for Early Career Excellence in Marketing.

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