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ORIGINAL

## Assessing the effectiveness of social marketing strategies in regulating exploitative buying behaviour in bangalore's urban secto

### Evaluación de la eficacia de las estrategias de marketing social para regular el comportamiento de compra explotador en el sector urbano de Bangalore

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#### ABSTRACT

In the urban landscape of Bangalore, the rapid proliferation of consumerism has led to a complex web of buying behaviors, often driven by exploitative marketing tactics. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of social marketing strategies in mitigating such exploitation and fostering more responsible consumer behavior. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of consumer trends with qualitative insights from marketing experts and urban consumers. Through surveys and interviews conducted across diverse demographic segments in Bangalore, the study seeks to uncover the prevalent patterns of exploitative buying behavior and the underlying factors influencing consumer decisions. Central to the investigation are the social marketing strategies implemented by various stakeholders, including governmental bodies, non-profit organizations, and corporate entities. These strategies encompass a range of interventions, such as public awareness campaigns, regulatory measures, and corporate social responsibility initiatives. The study evaluates the impact of these strategies on consumer attitudes, awareness levels, and actual purchasing behavior. Findings indicate a widespread prevalence of exploitative buying behavior among Bangalore's urban populace, fueled by factors such as peer pressure, advertising influence, and lack of information regarding ethical consumption choices. However, the research also highlights the positive influence of social marketing initiatives in curbing such tendencies. Notably, campaigns emphasizing ethical consumption, sustainable practices, and community welfare have shown promise in reshaping consumer attitudes and preferences. Furthermore, regulatory measures aimed at restricting deceptive advertising and promoting transparency in business practices have contributed to fostering a more ethical marketplace. Overall, this study underscores the critical role of social marketing in regulating exploitative buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector. By leveraging insights from this research, policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations can devise more targeted and impactful strategies to promote responsible consumerism and create a more equitable and sustainable marketplace.

**Keywords:** Social Marketing Strategies; Exploitative Buying Behaviour; Bangalore Urban Sector; Consumer Awareness; Regulatory Measures.

#### RESUMEN

En el paisaje urbano de Bangalore, la rápida proliferación del consumismo ha dado lugar a una compleja red de comportamientos de compra, a menudo impulsados por tácticas de marketing explotadoras. Este estudio

pretende evaluar la eficacia de las estrategias de marketing social para mitigar dicha explotación y fomentar un comportamiento más responsable por parte de los consumidores. La investigación emplea un enfoque de métodos mixtos, combinando el análisis cuantitativo de las tendencias de consumo con las percepciones cualitativas de expertos en marketing y consumidores urbanos. A través de encuestas y entrevistas realizadas en diversos segmentos demográficos de Bangalore, el estudio trata de descubrir las pautas predominantes de comportamiento de compra explotador y los factores subyacentes que influyen en las decisiones de los consumidores. Un aspecto central de la investigación son las estrategias de marketing social aplicadas por diversas partes interesadas, como organismos gubernamentales, organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro y empresas. Estas estrategias abarcan una serie de intervenciones, como campañas de concienciación pública, medidas normativas e iniciativas de responsabilidad social de las empresas. El estudio evalúa el impacto de estas estrategias en las actitudes de los consumidores, sus niveles de concienciación y su comportamiento real de compra. Los resultados indican una prevalencia generalizada del comportamiento de compra explotador entre la población urbana de Bangalore, alimentado por factores como la presión de grupo, la influencia de la publicidad y la falta de información sobre las opciones de consumo ético. Sin embargo, la investigación también destaca la influencia positiva de las iniciativas de marketing social para frenar estas tendencias. En particular, las campañas que hacen hincapié en el consumo ético, las prácticas sostenibles y el bienestar de la comunidad han demostrado ser prometedoras para modificar las actitudes y preferencias de los consumidores. Además, las medidas reguladoras destinadas a restringir la publicidad engañosa y promover la transparencia en las prácticas empresariales han contribuido a fomentar un mercado más ético. En general, este estudio subraya el papel fundamental del marketing social en la regulación de los comportamientos de compra explotadores en el sector urbano de Bangalore. Aprovechando los resultados de esta investigación, los responsables políticos, las empresas y las organizaciones de la sociedad civil pueden diseñar estrategias más específicas y eficaces para promover un consumo responsable y crear un mercado más equitativo y sostenible.

**Palabras clave:** Estrategias de Marketing Social; Comportamiento de Compra Explotador; Sector Urbano de Bangalore; Concienciación e Los Consumidores; Medidas Reguladoras.

## INTRODUCTION

The urban landscape of Bangalore, often hailed as the Silicon Valley of India, has witnessed a rapid surge in consumerism over recent years, driven by factors such as economic growth, urbanization, and globalization.<sup>(1,2,3,4)</sup> However, this burgeoning consumer culture has also given rise to a complex web of buying behaviors, frequently characterized by exploitation and unethical practices perpetuated by marketing strategies.<sup>(5,6,7)</sup> Against this backdrop, this study endeavors to evaluate the efficacy of social marketing strategies in regulating exploitative buying behavior within Bangalore's urban sector. Consumer behavior in urban environments is influenced by a myriad of factors, including social norms, cultural values, and individual preferences.<sup>(5)</sup> In the context of Bangalore, the proliferation of exploitative buying behavior can be attributed to various stimuli, ranging from peer pressure to aggressive advertising tactics employed by businesses.<sup>(8,9,10)</sup> The consequences of such behavior extend beyond mere economic transactions, impacting societal values and environmental sustainability.<sup>(2)</sup> To address these challenges, stakeholders in Bangalore have implemented diverse social marketing strategies aimed at fostering more responsible consumer behavior.<sup>(6,11,12)</sup> These strategies encompass a spectrum of interventions, including public awareness campaigns, regulatory measures, and corporate social responsibility initiatives, orchestrated by governmental bodies, non-profit organizations, and corporate entities alike.<sup>(13,14,15)</sup> However, the effectiveness of these strategies in curbing exploitative buying behavior remains a subject of inquiry, necessitating empirical investigation.

Against this backdrop, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative analysis of consumer trends with qualitative insights from marketing experts and urban consumers. By employing surveys and interviews across diverse demographic segments in Bangalore, the research seeks to unravel the underlying patterns of exploitative buying behavior and the factors influencing consumer decisions. Central to the investigation are the social marketing strategies deployed by various stakeholders, with a focus on assessing their impact on consumer attitudes, awareness levels, and actual purchasing behavior. Preliminary findings suggest a prevalent culture of exploitative buying behavior among Bangalore's urban populace, driven by a multitude of factors, including peer influence, advertising persuasion, and informational asymmetry.<sup>(8)</sup> However, amidst this backdrop, social marketing initiatives have emerged as a promising avenue for intervention. Campaigns promoting ethical consumption, sustainable practices, and community welfare have demonstrated the potential to reshape consumer attitudes and preferences.<sup>(3)</sup> Moreover, regulatory measures aimed at curbing deceptive advertising and promoting transparency in business practices have shown promise

in fostering a more ethical marketplace.<sup>(14)</sup> In light of these insights, this study underscores the pivotal role of social marketing in regulating exploitative buying behavior within Bangalore's urban sector. By leveraging the findings of this research, policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations can devise more targeted and impactful strategies to promote responsible consumerism and foster a more equitable and sustainable marketplace.<sup>(11)</sup> Through collaborative efforts, stakeholders can endeavor to mitigate the adverse effects of exploitative buying behavior, thereby contributing to the socio-economic development and environmental sustainability of Bangalore's urban landscape.

### Review of literature

The literature review provides an in-depth examination of previous research on exploitative buying behavior and the effectiveness of social marketing strategies in promoting responsible consumerism, offering valuable insights for the current study in Bangalore's urban sector. Previous studies have highlighted the rapid growth of consumerism and urbanization in Bangalore.<sup>(9,4)</sup> These trends have led to a complex interplay of consumer behaviors, influenced by various socio-economic factors. Research indicates a prevalent culture of exploitative buying behavior in urban settings, driven by factors such as peer pressure, advertising influence, and lack of information regarding ethical consumption choices.<sup>(12,8)</sup> Scholars have examined the role of social marketing strategies in addressing exploitative buying behavior.<sup>(6)</sup> These strategies encompass a range of interventions, including public awareness campaigns, regulatory measures, and corporate social responsibility initiatives. Studies have explored the effectiveness of governmental and non-profit organizations' initiatives in promoting responsible consumerism and regulating exploitative buying behavior.<sup>(15)</sup> These initiatives often involve collaboration with corporate entities and other stakeholders.

Research has investigated the influence of advertising on consumer behavior in urban contexts.<sup>(12)</sup> Advertising tactics, including persuasive messaging and emotional appeals, play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes and preferences. Scholars have examined consumer perceptions and decision-making processes regarding ethical consumption choices.<sup>(8)</sup> Factors such as product labeling, brand reputation, and perceived social responsibility influence consumer preferences. Studies have explored the impact of corporate social responsibility initiatives on consumer behavior.<sup>(3)</sup> CSR activities, such as environmental sustainability efforts and community engagement programs, can enhance brand image and influence purchasing decisions. Research has investigated the effectiveness of regulatory measures in curbing exploitative marketing practices and promoting transparency in business operations.<sup>(14)</sup> Government regulations aimed at restricting deceptive advertising and ensuring consumer protection play a crucial role in shaping market dynamics. Scholars have highlighted the importance of promoting sustainable practices among businesses and consumers.<sup>(2)</sup> Sustainable consumption patterns, such as reducing waste and supporting eco-friendly products, contribute to environmental conservation and social welfare. Studies have examined the impact of community welfare campaigns on consumer behavior.<sup>(3)</sup> Campaigns focusing on social causes, such as poverty alleviation and education initiatives, can evoke positive emotional responses and influence purchase decisions.

Research has explored the role of peer influence in shaping consumer behavior.<sup>(8)</sup> Peer recommendations, social norms, and group dynamics exert significant influence on individual purchasing choices, particularly among urban youth and young adults. Scholars have discussed the concept of information asymmetry in consumer markets.<sup>(5)</sup> Information gaps between buyers and sellers can lead to exploitative practices and unethical behavior, highlighting the importance of transparency and consumer education. Studies have evaluated the effectiveness of public awareness campaigns in promoting responsible consumerism.<sup>(6)</sup> These campaigns aim to educate consumers about their rights, ethical consumption choices, and the impact of their purchasing decisions on society and the environment. Research has examined the psychological factors underlying consumer behavior, such as motivation, perception, and attitudes.<sup>(10)</sup> Understanding these factors is essential for designing effective marketing strategies and interventions to influence consumer choices. Scholars have discussed the importance of ethical business practices and marketplace ethics in fostering consumer trust and loyalty.<sup>(14, 16)</sup> Businesses that demonstrate integrity, honesty, and social responsibility are more likely to attract conscientious consumers and build long-term relationships.

The literature review offers a comprehensive exploration of exploitative buying behavior and the efficacy of social marketing strategies in fostering responsible consumerism. Previous studies underscore the complexity of urban consumer behaviors influenced by socio-economic factors, highlighting the need for targeted interventions in Bangalore's urban sector to address exploitative practices and promote ethical consumption. The literature indicates a prevalent culture of exploitative buying behavior driven by peer pressure, advertising influence, and information gaps regarding ethical consumption choices. Social marketing strategies, including public awareness campaigns and corporate social responsibility initiatives, have been identified as effective tools for shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors, but their impact varies across contexts.<sup>(1,7,13)</sup> Moving forward, policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations should leverage insights from previous research to develop tailored interventions that address the root causes of exploitative buying behavior and promote

transparency, accountability, and consumer education. Collaborative efforts are essential to create a more equitable and sustainable marketplace in Bangalore's urban sector, fostering responsible consumerism and enhancing societal well-being.

### Theoretical and conceptual framework

The theoretical and conceptual framework of this study draws upon several key theories and concepts from the fields of marketing, consumer behavior, and social marketing. These frameworks provide a lens through which to understand the dynamics of exploitative buying behavior and the effectiveness of social marketing strategies in addressing it within Bangalore's urban sector.

1. **Social Marketing Theory:** At the core of this study lies the foundation of social marketing theory, which emphasizes the application of marketing principles to promote societal welfare and behavioral change.<sup>(6)</sup> This theory posits that by leveraging marketing techniques, such as segmentation, targeting, and positioning, stakeholders can influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards socially desirable outcomes, such as responsible consumption practices and community welfare.

2. **Consumer Behavior Theories:** Drawing from theories of consumer behavior, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior and Social Cognitive Theory, this study explores the psychological processes underlying consumer decision-making.<sup>(8)</sup> These theories suggest that individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions influence their intentions and behaviors, including their propensity to engage in exploitative buying practices. By understanding these underlying mechanisms, stakeholders can design more effective interventions to promote ethical consumption choices.

3. **Ethical Consumption Framework:** Within the realm of ethical consumption, this study adopts a conceptual framework that delineates the factors shaping consumers' ethical decision-making processes.<sup>(2)</sup> This framework encompasses dimensions such as moral values, social norms, and perceived product attributes, which influence consumers' evaluations of the ethicality of their purchasing decisions. By examining these dimensions, the study aims to elucidate (explained) the drivers of exploitative buying behavior and the levers for promoting responsible consumption.

4. **Stakeholder Theory:** The study also considers the perspective of stakeholder theory, which posits that businesses and organizations have a responsibility not only to shareholders but also to a broader range of stakeholders, including consumers, employees, and society at large.<sup>(14)</sup> From this standpoint, the effectiveness of social marketing strategies in regulating exploitative buying behavior hinges on the alignment of interests among various stakeholders and the fulfillment of their respective needs and expectations.

5. **Regulatory Frameworks:** Finally, the study incorporates insights from regulatory frameworks governing consumer protection and advertising standards.<sup>(11)</sup> These frameworks encompass laws and regulations aimed at safeguarding consumers from deceptive practices, ensuring fair competition, and promoting transparency in business operations. By assessing the enforcement and efficacy of these regulatory mechanisms, the study seeks to elucidate their role in shaping consumer behavior and market dynamics.

By integrating these theoretical and conceptual frameworks, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics underlying exploitative buying behavior and the strategies for mitigating it through social marketing interventions. Through empirical analysis and theoretical synthesis, the study endeavors to contribute to both academic knowledge and practical insights for policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations striving to create a more ethical and sustainable marketplace in Bangalore's urban sector.

### METHOD

The methodology employed in this study is a robust mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of consumer trends with qualitative insights from marketing experts and urban consumers in Bangalore's urban sector. Surveys and interviews were conducted across diverse demographic segments to uncover prevalent patterns of exploitative buying behavior and factors influencing consumer decisions. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical techniques, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed to gain deeper insights. Additionally, a comprehensive literature review provided a theoretical framework. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative methods allows for a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of social marketing strategies in regulating exploitative buying behavior and fostering responsible consumerism. The sample size of 384 was determined using a stratified random sampling method to ensure representation across various demographic segments, providing sufficient statistical power for robust analysis. Efforts were made to minimize bias and ensure generalizability by adhering to rigorous sampling techniques and ethical standards.



### Objectives

1. To Assess the Prevalence and Determinants of Exploitative Buying Behavior
2. To Evaluate the Effectiveness of Social Marketing Strategies in Mitigating Exploitative Buying Behavior
3. To Provide Recommendations for Enhanced Social Marketing Interventions and Policy Development

### Data analysing

The study is dussing following theams namely; Demographic Information, Exploitative Buying Behavior, Awareness of Social Marketing Campaigns, Perceptions of Ethical Consumption, Impact of Social Marketing Strategies, Regulatory Measures and Corporate Responsibility, Suggestions for Improvement:

Demographic Information	Variables	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Age	18 - 28	53	13,8
	29 -38	89	23,2
	39 - 48	65	16,9
	49 - 58	125	32,6
	Above 59	52	13,5
Gender	Male	234	60,9
	Female	150	39,1
Level of Education	Schooling (1 to 10)	23	6,0
	Pre - University	70	18,2
	UG	139	36,2
	PG	99	25,8
	Diploma /ITI	42	10,9
	Doctorate	11	2,9
Annual Household Income (in Indian Rupees)	Below 200000	74	19,3
	200001 to 500000	149	38,8
	500001 to 800000	79	20,6
	800001 to 110000	52	13,5
	Above 110001	30	7,8
Years of Residing in Bangalore	Below 3 years	66	17,2
	4 - 8	137	35,7
	9 - 13	112	29,2
	14 - 18	49	12,8
	Above 19	20	5,2

The table 1 provides the Demographic information the largest age group of respondents falls within the range of 49 to 58 years, comprising 32,6 % of the sample. The smallest age group is above 59 years, accounting for 13,5 % of respondents. Male respondents constitute the majority with 60,9 %, while female respondents make up 39,1 %. The most common level of education is undergraduate (UG) with 36,2 %, followed by postgraduate (PG) at 25,8 %. Doctorate holders represent the smallest proportion at 2,9 %. The income bracket of 200,001 to 500,000 Indian Rupees has the highest representation at 38,8 %, while the above 110,001 bracket has the lowest at 7,8 %. The majority of respondents have resided in Bangalore for 4 to 8 years, constituting 35,7 % of the sample.

The distribution indicates a diverse representation across different age groups, allowing for insights into consumer behavior across various life stages. There is a notable skew towards male respondents, suggesting potential gender disparities in attitudes towards exploitative buying behavior. The sample consists of individuals with varying levels of education, which may influence their awareness and engagement with social marketing campaigns. The distribution reflects a mix of income levels, with the majority falling within the middle-income range, indicating potential affordability and prioritization of ethical consumption. The data indicate a mix of long-term residents and newcomers, each potentially influenced by different factors in their consumer decision-making processes.

The data show a significant proportion of respondents aged 49 to 58 years, suggesting potential influence of generational factors on consumer behavior. Male respondents outnumber female respondents, indicating potential disparities in awareness and engagement with social marketing campaigns. The distribution of educational qualifications indicates a diverse sample with varying levels of consumer knowledge and awareness

regarding ethical consumption. The majority of respondents belong to households with moderate annual incomes, suggesting a middle-income demographic targeted by social marketing interventions. Duration of residence in Bangalore reflects a mix of long-term residents and newcomers, each potentially influenced by different factors in their consumer decision-making processes.

Older age groups may exhibit more entrenched buying behaviors influenced by past experiences and societal norms. Gender differences may impact receptiveness to social marketing messages and engagement with responsible consumerism initiatives. Educational attainment levels may influence the degree of consumer awareness and engagement with ethical consumption practices. Annual household income levels may affect the affordability and prioritization of ethically sourced products and services. Duration of residence in Bangalore may influence familiarity with local market dynamics and exposure to social marketing campaigns promoting responsible consumerism.

The analysis of demographic data underscores the diverse composition of the respondent sample, offering crucial insights into consumer behavior and the efficacy of social marketing strategies in advancing responsible consumerism in Bangalore's urban sector. By examining variables such as age, gender, education, income, and residency duration, researchers gain valuable perspectives for tailoring interventions and policy measures aimed at mitigating exploitative buying behavior and cultivating a more ethical marketplace. This demographic data provides nuanced insights into the characteristics and preferences of the target population, guiding the development of effective and targeted social marketing strategies. By leveraging these demographic insights, researchers can devise more impactful initiatives to regulate exploitative buying behavior and promote responsible consumerism across diverse segments of Bangalore's urban population.

<b>Exploitative Buying Behavior</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>% of Respondents</b>
How often do you feel pressured to make impulsive purchases?	Sometimes	35	9,1
	Rarely	89	23,2
	Frequently	165	43,0
	Occasionally	44	11,5
	Never	51	13,3
Do you often find yourself buying products/services that you later regret purchasing?	Yes	74	19,3
	No	45	11,7
	Sometimes	141	36,7
	Occasionally	56	14,6
	Rarely	68	17,7
Have you ever felt manipulated by advertising into buying something you didn't need?	Yes	71	18,5
	No	98	25,5
	Occasionally	68	17,7
	Rarely	69	18,0
	Sometimes	78	20,3
To what extent do you agree with the statement: "I feel influenced by peer pressure to buy certain products/services"?	Strongly Agree	86	22,4
	Agree	96	25,0
	Neutral	69	18,0
	Disagree	96	25,0
	Strongly Disagree	37	9,6

The table 2 provides insights into exploitative buying behavior among respondents in Bangalore's urban sector. Each variable represents a different aspect of exploitative buying behavior, and the responses are categorized into different levels of frequency or agreement. The majority of respondents (43,0 %) report feeling pressured to make impulsive purchases frequently. Only a small percentage (13,3 %) indicate never feeling pressured. A significant portion of respondents (36,7 %) admit to sometimes buying products/services that they later regret. However, a notable proportion (19,3 %) affirm experiencing regret often. A considerable number of respondents (18,5 %) claim to have felt manipulated by advertising into buying unnecessary items. Additionally, a significant portion (20,3 %) admit to feeling manipulated sometimes. Responses to the statement regarding peer pressure influence are varied. While a substantial number of respondents (47,4 %) agree or strongly agree with feeling influenced by peer pressure, an almost equal proportion (34,6 %) either disagree or strongly disagree.

The high percentage of respondents reporting frequent pressure to make impulsive purchases suggests a prevalent issue of impulsive buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector. This behavior may be driven by various

factors, including advertising, social norms, and psychological triggers. The significant proportion of respondents admitting to sometimes or often regretting their purchases highlights the potential negative consequences of exploitative buying behavior. This finding underscores the need for interventions to promote more mindful and informed consumer decision-making. The data suggest that advertising plays a substantial role in influencing consumer behavior, with a considerable number of respondents acknowledging feeling manipulated into purchasing unnecessary items. This underscores the importance of regulating deceptive advertising practices and promoting consumer literacy to mitigate the impact of manipulative marketing tactics. The mixed responses regarding the influence of peer pressure on purchasing decisions indicate the complexity of social influences on consumer behavior. While a significant portion of respondents acknowledge feeling influenced by peer pressure, a considerable number also express disagreement with the statement. This suggests that individual susceptibility to peer pressure may vary, and additional research may be needed to understand the underlying factors driving this phenomenon.

The data suggest a significant prevalence of exploitative buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector, characterized by frequent impulsive purchases, regretted purchases, susceptibility to advertising manipulation, and varying degrees of peer pressure influence. These findings underscore the importance of implementing effective social marketing strategies and regulatory measures to promote responsible consumer behavior and protect consumers from exploitative practices.

**Table 3.** Awareness of social marketing campaigns

Awareness of Social Marketing Campaigns	Variables	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Have you encountered any social marketing campaigns promoting responsible consumerism in Bangalore	Yes	367	95,6
	No	17	4,4
If yes, please specify the campaigns you recall and their key messages.	Campaign 1	99	27,0
	Campaign 2	55	15,0
	Campaign 3	98	26,7
	Campaign 4	56	15,3
	Campaign 5	59	16,1
How effective do you perceive these campaigns to be in influencing consumer behavior?	Very effective	65	16,9
	Somewhat effective	48	12,5
	Neutral	105	27,3
	Not very effective	78	20,3
	Not at all effective	88	22,9
<b>Note:</b> Campaign 1: "Green Bangalore" - Message: Promoting eco-friendly products and sustainable living practices. Campaign 2: "Ethical Choices" - Message: Encouraging consumers to support fair trade and ethical brands. Campaign 3: "Think Before You Buy" - Message: Raising awareness about the environmental and social impact of consumer choices. Campaign 4: "Responsible Shopping" - Message: Advocating for mindful consumption and reducing waste. Campaign 5: "Consumer Rights Awareness" - Message: Educating consumers about their rights and responsibilities in the marketplace.			

The table 3 provides insights into the awareness of social marketing campaigns promoting responsible consumerism in Bangalore's urban sector, as well as the perceived effectiveness of these campaigns in influencing consumer behavior. The majority of respondents (95,6 %) report encountering social marketing campaigns promoting responsible consumerism in Bangalore, indicating a high level of awareness within the population. Among respondents who recall encountering social marketing campaigns, Campaigns 1, 3, and 5 have the highest levels of recall, with approximately 27,0 %, 26,7 %, and 16,1 % respectively. These campaigns focus on promoting eco-friendly products and sustainable living practices, raising awareness about the environmental and social impact of consumer choices, and educating consumers about their rights and responsibilities in the marketplace. Responses regarding the perceived effectiveness of the campaigns vary. A significant proportion of respondents (50,6 %) perceive the campaigns to be either somewhat effective, neutral, or not effective at all in influencing consumer behavior.

The high percentage of respondents reporting awareness of social marketing campaigns indicates that these initiatives have achieved significant reach and visibility within Bangalore's urban sector. This suggests that social marketing is a recognized approach for promoting responsible consumerism in the region. The varying levels of recall for different campaigns highlight differences in campaign effectiveness and message

resonance. Campaigns focusing on eco-friendly practices and consumer rights appear to have higher recall rates, suggesting that messages emphasizing environmental sustainability and consumer empowerment may be more impactful. The mixed responses regarding the perceived effectiveness of the campaigns indicate that while some respondents believe the campaigns are effective in influencing consumer behavior, a substantial portion remains skeptical or indifferent. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of social marketing campaigns to enhance their impact on consumer behavior.

The data indicate a high level of awareness of social marketing campaigns promoting responsible consumerism in Bangalore's urban sector. While certain campaigns have achieved notable recall rates and focus on key messages such as eco-friendliness and consumer rights, the perceived effectiveness of these campaigns in influencing consumer behavior varies among respondents. These findings underscore the importance of continuous evaluation and refinement of social marketing strategies to ensure maximum impact in promoting responsible consumer behavior and fostering a more sustainable marketplace in Bangalore.

**Table 4.** Perceptions of ethical consumption

Perceptions of Ethical Consumption	Variables	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
How important is it for you to support companies that engage in ethical business practices?	Very important	34	8,9
	Important	99	25,8
	Somewhat important	87	22,7
	Neutral	76	19,8
	Not very important	88	22,9
What factors do you consider when determining whether a product/service is ethically produced/sourced?	Environmental sustainability	55	14,3
	Fair labor practices	95	24,7
	Animal welfare	98	25,5
	Supply chain transparency	61	15,9
	Social responsibility initiatives	75	19,5
How often do you actively seek out information on the ethical and environmental practices of the brands you purchase from?	Always	105	27,3
	Often	47	12,2
	Sometimes	77	20,1
	Rarely	66	17,2
	Never	89	23,2

The table 4 presents data related to perceptions of ethical consumption among respondents in Bangalore's urban sector, focusing on the importance of supporting companies with ethical business practices, factors considered when determining ethical production/sourcing, and the frequency of seeking information on brands' ethical and environmental practices. Respondents express varying levels of importance attached to supporting companies engaged in ethical business practices. While a significant proportion considers it important or very important (57,7 %), a notable portion feels neutral or believes it is not very important (42,3 %). Respondents consider various factors when determining whether a product/service is ethically produced/sourced. Fair labor practices, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability are the most frequently cited factors, each receiving around 24,26 % of responses. The frequency of actively seeking information on the ethical and environmental practices of brands varies among respondents. While a considerable proportion report doing so always or often (39,5 %), a significant portion engages only sometimes, rarely, or never (60,5 %).

The data reveal a significant proportion of respondents who prioritize supporting companies with ethical practices, indicating a growing awareness and concern for ethical consumption. However, a sizable portion remains indifferent or less inclined to prioritize ethical considerations in their purchasing decisions. Fair labor practices, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability emerge as the most prominent factors influencing perceptions of ethical consumption. This suggests that respondents prioritize social and environmental responsibility in their evaluation of brands and products. The varying frequencies of seeking information on brands' ethical and environmental practices highlight differences in consumer engagement and awareness. While a substantial portion actively seeks such information, a significant proportion does so infrequently or not at all, indicating potential gaps in consumer knowledge and awareness.

The data indicate a growing awareness and concern for ethical consumption among respondents in



Bangalore's urban sector, with a significant proportion prioritizing support for companies engaged in ethical business practices. Factors such as fair labor practices, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability play key roles in shaping perceptions of ethical consumption. However, the frequency of actively seeking information on brands' ethical practices varies among respondents, suggesting opportunities for education and awareness-building initiatives to further promote responsible consumer behavior. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of addressing consumer preferences and priorities related to ethical consumption in the design and implementation of social marketing strategies and regulatory measures aimed at fostering a more sustainable marketplace.

Table 5. Impact of social marketing strategies

Impact of Social Marketing Strategies	Variables	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Have social marketing campaigns influenced your purchasing decisions in the past?	Yes	46	12,0
	No	99	25,8
	Sometimes	57	14,8
	Rarely	84	21,9
	Occasionally	98	25,5
Have you ever switched to a brand/product that aligns with your ethical values due to a social marketing initiative?	Yes	55	14,3
	No	90	23,4
	Once	108	28,1
	Multiple times	64	16,7
	Not applicable	67	17,4
Do you believe social marketing campaigns have the potential to reduce exploitative buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector?	Strongly agree	99	25,8
	Agree	86	22,4
	Neutral	65	16,9
	Disagree	43	11,2
	Strongly disagree	91	23,7

The table 5 presents data on the impact of social marketing strategies on respondents' purchasing decisions, their alignment with ethical values, and their beliefs regarding the potential of social marketing campaigns to reduce exploitative buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector. Responses indicate varying degrees of influence of social marketing campaigns on purchasing decisions. While a minority of respondents (12,0 %) report being directly influenced by such campaigns, a significant portion (62,2 %) either report no influence or occasional influence. A notable proportion of respondents (42,4 %) report having switched to a brand or product aligning with their ethical values due to social marketing initiatives. However, a substantial portion (45,5 %) either have not made such switches or find the question not applicable. Responses regarding the belief in the potential of social marketing campaigns to reduce exploitative buying behavior are varied. While a significant number of respondents (48,2 %) either strongly agree or agree, a sizable portion (35,6 %) express neutrality, disagreement, or strong disagreement.

The data suggest that social marketing campaigns have a limited direct impact on respondents' purchasing decisions, with a minority reporting direct influence. However, a significant portion of respondents may still be indirectly influenced or unaffected by such campaigns. The data indicate that social marketing campaigns have had some success in encouraging respondents to switch to brands or products aligning with their ethical values. However, a substantial portion of respondents has not made such switches or does not find the question applicable, indicating varying levels of engagement with ethical consumption. Respondents' beliefs regarding the potential of social marketing campaigns to reduce exploitative buying behavior are mixed. While a significant number acknowledge the potential of such campaigns, a notable portion expresses uncertainty or skepticism about their effectiveness in addressing exploitative behavior.

The data suggest that while social marketing campaigns have had some impact on respondents' purchasing decisions and alignment with ethical values, their overall influence and effectiveness in reducing exploitative buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector may be limited. While a significant portion of respondents believes in the potential of such campaigns, there remains uncertainty and skepticism among others. These findings highlight the need for further research and evaluation to understand the mechanisms through which social marketing campaigns can effectively address exploitative buying behavior and promote responsible consumerism in Bangalore. Additionally, insights from this analysis can inform the development of targeted and impactful social marketing strategies tailored to the specific needs and preferences of the urban population.

**Table 6.** Regulatory measures and corporate responsibility

Regulatory Measures and Corporate Responsibility	Variables	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
How important do you think it is for businesses to be transparent about their marketing practices?	Very important	54	14,1
	Important	70	18,2
	Somewhat important	87	22,7
	Neutral	97	25,3
	Not very important	76	19,8
Do you believe that regulatory measures are effective in curbing deceptive advertising and unethical business practices?	Yes	98	25,5
	No	145	37,8
	Somewhat effective	54	14,1
	Neutral	32	8,3
How much do you trust companies that actively engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives?	Not sure	55	14,3
	Completely trust	43	11,2
	Trust to some extent	45	11,7
	Neutral	56	14,6
	Do not trust much	43	11,2
	Do not trust at all	197	51,3

The table 6 presents data on respondents' perceptions regarding regulatory measures, corporate transparency, and trust in companies engaging in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Responses indicate varying degrees of importance attached to businesses being transparent about their marketing practices. While a significant proportion (55 %) consider transparency important or very important, a sizable portion (45 %) express neutrality or believe it is not very important. Views on the effectiveness of regulatory measures in curbing deceptive advertising and unethical business practices are mixed. While a significant portion (39,6 %) express skepticism or uncertainty about their effectiveness, a notable number (39,6 %) believe regulatory measures are effective to some extent or completely. Responses regarding trust in companies engaging in CSR initiatives reveal a lack of trust among a majority of respondents (62,5 %). While a small portion (23,9 %) express some degree of trust, a significant number (14,6 %) remain neutral or distrustful.

The data suggest that while a significant portion of respondent's value transparency in business practices, a considerable number remain indifferent or skeptical about its importance. This highlights potential gaps in understanding or awareness regarding the importance of transparency for fostering consumer trust and accountability. The mixed views on the effectiveness of regulatory measures reflect varying levels of confidence in the regulatory framework's ability to address deceptive advertising and unethical business practices. While some respondents believe in the efficacy of regulatory interventions, others express doubts or uncertainty about their impact. The lack of trust in companies engaging in CSR initiatives indicates a prevailing skepticism or distrust among respondents regarding corporate social responsibility efforts. This suggests a need for companies to enhance transparency and accountability in their CSR initiatives to rebuild consumer trust and confidence.

The data reveal mixed perceptions among respondents regarding the importance of business transparency, the effectiveness of regulatory measures, and trust in companies engaging in CSR initiatives. While a significant portion values transparency and believes in the efficacy of regulatory interventions, others express skepticism or lack of trust in corporate social responsibility efforts. These findings underscore the importance of enhancing transparency, accountability, and consumer education to build trust and foster responsible business practices in Bangalore's urban sector. Additionally, they highlight the need for regulatory agencies and businesses to collaborate in strengthening regulatory frameworks and implementing effective CSR initiatives that address consumer concerns and promote ethical business practices.

Table 7 provides insights into respondents' suggestions for improving responsible consumerism in Bangalore, enhancing the impact of social marketing campaigns, and identifying specific areas requiring more regulation or enforcement to protect consumers. Respondents propose various measures to promote responsible consumerism, with the most common suggestions including increased public education on ethical consumption (11,7 %), introduction of incentives for sustainable businesses (20,1 %), and strengthening consumer protection laws and enforcement (23,2 %). These recommendations emphasize the importance of education, incentives, and legal frameworks in shaping consumer behavior and fostering ethical business practices. Suggestions for making social marketing campaigns more impactful include utilizing social media platforms for wider reach and engagement (20,3 %), incorporating storytelling and emotional appeal in campaign messages (35,2 %), and partnering with local influencers and community leaders (16,9 %). These recommendations highlight the potential of leveraging

digital platforms, emotional storytelling, and community engagement to effectively communicate messages and influence consumer behavior. Respondents identify specific areas where more regulation or enforcement is needed to protect consumers, including stricter enforcement of truth in advertising laws (20,1 %), regulation of online advertising and influencer marketing (14,1 %), and oversight of product labeling related to sustainability and ethical practices (20,3 %). Additionally, respondents highlight the importance of monitoring pricing practices to prevent price gouging and unfair tactics (23,7 %) and implementing mandatory disclosure requirements for companies' environmental and social impact (21,9 %).

Table 7. Suggestions for improvement

Suggestions for Improvement	Variables	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
What additional measures do you think could be implemented to promote responsible consumerism in Bangalore?	Increased public education on ethical consumption	45	11,7
	Introduction of incentives for businesses practicing sustainability	77	20,1
	Strengthening consumer protection laws and enforcement	89	23,2
	Encouraging collaboration between government, businesses, and NGOs	86	22,4
	Implementing mandatory labeling of ethically sourced products	87	22,7
How can social marketing campaigns be made more impactful in addressing exploitative buying behavior?	Utilizing social media platforms for wider reach and engagement	78	20,3
	Incorporating storytelling and emotional appeal in campaign messages	135	35,2
	Partnering with local influencers and community leaders	65	16,9
	Tailoring campaigns to specific target demographics and consumer segments	36	9,4
	Providing actionable steps and resources for behavior change	70	18,2
Are there any specific areas where you believe more regulation or enforcement is needed to protect consumers?	Stricter enforcement of truth in advertising laws	77	20,1
	Regulation of online advertising and influencer marketing	54	14,1
	Oversight of product labeling and claims related to sustainability and ethical practices	78	20,3
	Monitoring of pricing practices to prevent price gouging and unfair pricing tactics	91	23,7
	Implementation of mandatory disclosure requirements for companies' environmental and social impact	84	21,9

The suggestions provided by respondents underscore the importance of a multifaceted approach to promoting responsible consumerism, including education, incentives, and regulatory measures. These recommendations align with the principles of social marketing and regulatory frameworks aimed at fostering ethical consumption and sustainable business practices. Respondents' suggestions for enhancing social marketing campaigns reflect a recognition of the importance of innovative and targeted approaches to effectively communicate messages and influence behavior. Leveraging digital platforms, emotional storytelling, and community partnerships can enhance the impact and effectiveness of social marketing initiatives in addressing exploitative buying behavior. The recommendations for more regulation and enforcement highlight the need for robust legal frameworks and oversight mechanisms to protect consumers from deceptive practices and ensure transparency and accountability in business operations. Strengthening enforcement of existing laws, regulating emerging digital marketing practices, and implementing mandatory disclosure requirements can help address gaps in consumer protection and promote fair and ethical business practices.

The data from Table 7 underscore the importance of a comprehensive approach to promoting responsible consumerism and addressing exploitative buying behavior in Bangalore's urban sector. Respondents' suggestions emphasize the need for education, incentives, and regulatory measures to promote ethical consumption and sustainable business practices. Additionally, recommendations for enhancing social marketing campaigns highlight the potential of digital platforms, storytelling, and community engagement to effectively communicate messages and influence behavior. Strengthening regulation and enforcement mechanisms is also crucial to protect consumers from deceptive practices and ensure transparency and accountability in business operations.

By implementing these recommendations, policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations can work together to create a more equitable, sustainable, and socially responsible marketplace in Bangalore and beyond.

## CONCLUSION

The study on “Assessing the Effectiveness of Social Marketing Strategies in Regulating Exploitative Buying Behavior in Bangalore’s Urban Sector” has provided valuable insights into the complex dynamics of consumer behavior and the role of social marketing initiatives in promoting responsible consumption. Through a mixed-methods approach, the study has examined the prevalence of exploitative buying behavior, the effectiveness of social marketing campaigns, perceptions of regulatory measures and corporate responsibility, and recommendations for improving responsible consumerism.

**Findings** indicate a widespread prevalence of exploitative buying behavior driven by factors such as advertising influence and peer pressure, highlighting the need for targeted interventions.

While social marketing campaigns have achieved significant awareness and recall, their impact on influencing purchasing decisions and reducing exploitative behavior varies. Perceptions regarding regulatory measures and corporate responsibility highlight the importance of transparency, accountability, and consumer trust-building efforts within the business community.

To address exploitative buying behavior and promote responsible consumerism, stakeholders should consider implementing a multifaceted approach. This includes:

1. Strengthening social marketing campaigns by leveraging digital platforms, incorporating emotional storytelling, and partnering with local influencers to effectively communicate messages and influence behavior.
2. Enhancing consumer education on ethical consumption and sustainability practices through public awareness campaigns, incentives for sustainable businesses, and collaboration between government, businesses, and NGOs.
3. Implementing stricter regulatory measures to enforce truth in advertising laws, regulate online advertising and influencer marketing, oversee product labeling related to sustainability, and monitor pricing practices to prevent unfair tactics.
4. Encouraging businesses to prioritize transparency, accountability, and corporate social responsibility initiatives to build consumer trust and promote ethical business practices.

The study underscores the importance of addressing exploitative buying behavior and promoting responsible consumerism in Bangalore’s urban sector. While social marketing campaigns have raised awareness and recall among consumers, their impact on behavior change varies. Recommendations for enhancing social marketing campaigns, strengthening regulatory measures, and promoting corporate responsibility can contribute to creating a more equitable, sustainable, and socially responsible marketplace. By implementing these recommendations, policymakers, businesses, and civil society organizations can work together to foster a culture of responsible consumption and contribute to positive social and environmental outcomes in Bangalore and beyond.

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None.

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