

Class Dynamics of Consumerism: A Sociological Analysis of Consumption Patterns in Kathmandu

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the patterns of consumer behavior across various social groups. It is based on how class disparities and hierarchies are created. Furthermore, it explores on how class identity is formed in Kathmandu Metropolitan. In the contemporary society, the study aims to know about the intersection of consumer behavior, class identity, and social hierarchies. It focuses on how consumption patterns are shaped by economic constraints, desire for social mobility, and social pressures. The qualitative in – depth interview method was used on twenty respondents altogether. Respondents were selected purposively from various social class, and using unstructured interview schedule for more than six months. The key findings reveal a distinction between aspirational consumption and instinctive consumption. Precisely, the findings reveal consumption driven by wish to project a higher status and consumption driven by immediate practical needs. The research highlights how economic factors influence consumption, with lower-income individuals. How economic factors influence consumption with lower – income individuals focusing on essentials was highlighted. Similarly, how higher – income groups indulge in non – essential purchases, and reinforces class divisions. E-commerce and social media play significant role to shape consumption behavior. It is due to these digital platforms. It provides access to goods and services. Furthermore, it creates new forms of social validation through trends and influencer endorsements. The study further examines about the impact of social perceptions on class identity as middle – class individuals strive to emulate upper – class ideals despite financial strain. Convenience over cost has increased the digital consumption. It further underscores the evolving nature of consumer behavior in urban environment. Lastly, the research highlights the tension between social aspirations and economic realities and underscores the role of consumption to determine the social hierarchies.

Key Words : Consumerism, Class, Consumer behavior, class identity, social hierarchy

INTRODUCTION

This study explores patterns of consumer behavior across different social classes and spending patterns and consumer choices influences class disparities and also explains the ways consumer practices and preferences influence existing class identities and social hierarchies. The capital city- Kathmandu now is multicultural and diverse due to the influx of

many people from different parts of the country. The city exhibits a unique setting for studying consumption patterns, behavior of consumer and its impact on class structure. It is because of the diverse population and varying socio-economic strata. There has been intense transformation in society in terms of social and economic landscape in these three decades. The major reason behind this transformation is due to rapid urbanization, globalization, and expansion of market and accretion of consumer goods. These factors have impacted the big changes in the culture of consumer and have affected almost all levels of society in different forms and magnitudes (Shrestha & Pandey, 2018). By using qualitative research method, the study aims to describe consumerism on class dynamics and social stratification in Kathmandu Metropolitan by analyzing patterns of consumer behavior and factors influencing consumer decisions according to class disparities and social hierarchy. Current global trends of goods consumption and social stratification are mirroring the rapid urbanization in the region. Through the lens of class analysis understanding the consumerism involves finding out the reasons that influence consumer culture and how socio-economic groups engage. On the basis of economic, cultural capital, and social, the class in this context is defined as the hierarchical distinctions between individual and group (Bourdieu, 1984)¹. These defined distinctions results in the consumption patterns, preferences, and access to goods and services among consumers that challenge existing social hierarchies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Class refers to a hierarchical social stratification based on economic capital (income, wealth), cultural capital (education, tastes), and social capital (networks, influence) (Bourdieu, 1984). Unlike caste systems, class is theoretically fluid, though in practice, mobility is often constrained by structural inequalities (Wright, 1997)². Class dynamics refer to the continuous process in which social class are formed and transformed within a society. These dynamics encompass the interplay of economy, culture, and social forces. These shape the hierarchical relationships between different class groups (Savate, 2013). The class dynamics examine how resources, opportunities, and power are distributed unevenly across social strata. Furthermore, it also examines how these inequalities are challenged over time.

¹Social class is a complex concept that has been studied and theorized about in depth in sociology, economics, and political science. Based on his historical materialism principle and critique of capitalism Marx has developed an analysis on class. For him classes are primarily based on a person's relation with the means of production (Marx 1867). Weber sees class just as one measure of social stratification together with status (which he refers to as prestige) and party (which implies political power). For him, this means that people's life chances are affected not only by where they are economically but also how they belong socio-politically (Weber, 1922). However, Bourdieu's class theory revolves around the notions of habitus, field, and diverse capital assets such as economic, cultural, social and symbolic. According to him, class represents more than mere monetary standing but also diversification of various kinds of capital and their use in different social areas.

²With Wright's (1985) identification of various modes of exploitation and degrees of control over economic resources, class positions within modern capitalism can be examined in greater detail. While recognizing the classic Marxist duality, Wright (1997) also names intermediate group that have considerable influence over the labor process but do not own the means of production, such as managers, supervisors, and small employers.

Consumerism is about an economic study that encourages people to buy goods and services. It is no more buying things but it has become the way of social standing and their happiness to the things they own. This way of life has become normal among modern societies that focus on business and money. It has affected people's actions and how they relate to each other. Interestingly it is even how countries make money. At its heart, consumerism works as a system of objects as described by Baudrillard. The system people's buys have meaning beyond what they can do. Veblen's idea of consumption is still important in today's era. It shows how people show off their wealth and status through buying things. Veblen talked about this idea back in 1899 where social class matters, people buy unnecessarily too. In contemporary society consumerism has become a dominant force and is defined as economic and cultural phenomenon that inspires the acquisition of goods and services in increasing amounts (Ritzer, 2019). The impact of consumerism is really big it affects more than the things we value who we are and the way we buy and sell things. It also changes the way our society is set up.

In places like Nepal that are still developing consumerism makes things pretty complicated. This is because big global brands and local customs are mixing together creating ways that people buy things that show both old and new ways of doing things (Liechty, 2003). In the book "Out in Kathmandu" Liechty gives us a very good understanding of consumerism and class issues, in Kathmandu Metropolitan. Liechty provides an insight into how globalization and modernity has redefined the socio-economic context of Nepalese youth culture in its capital city through his ethnography of urban youth consumption (Liechty, 2003). The way people live and what they buy says a lot about their place in society in Kathmandu. Mark Liechty found that consumer culture plays a role in how people see themselves and others in terms of social status.

Consumer culture and class differences are closely connected. What people buy and how they spend their time shows where they stand in society. A man named Bourdieu said that even small things like what clothes people wear and what they do for fun can show which class they belong to. He said that people with power use these things to separate themselves from people with less power. Another man named Veblen had a theory about "consumption". He said that rich people buy things to show off their wealth. On the hand people who are not as well off try to keep up by buying things that make them feel better about themselves. In cities like Kathmandu consumer culture is more complicated because of things like caste and people sending money back home from other countries. People in Nepal use brands and the way they live to try to move up in society or to keep others down. So consumer culture does not just reflect how society is divided. It actually helps create these divisions every day. This is why looking at how people consume things is a way to understand social inequality and class differences, in consumer culture.

Over the past three decades Kathmandu Metropolitan city has witnessed quick urbanization and rapid transformation of economics. Being a political and economic hub of

the nation, the city has seen significant growth in population and infrastructure. The city's social fabric is reshaped due to the rapid urbanization and rise in consumer culture (Shrestha & Pandey, 2018). Moreover, consumer patterns and lifestyle of people living in the city have changed as the city transformed from traditional to modern. There are many types of local and international products available to consumers in different marketplaces within the city. The rapid increase of consumer options is mirror of global trend towards increased consumerism and goods have become symbols of status and identity not only the necessities (Ritzer, 2019).

Consumerism intersects with the existing social class structures in the context of Kathmandu. It creates distinct consumption patterns within different socio-economic groups. According to Bourdieu (1984), taste and consumption pattern of individuals are determinants of social class as spending habits of people is heavily influenced by cultural, social and economical capital. The access to luxury items, modern amenities, and branded goods among different classes of people are evidence of these distinctions in Kathmandu Metropolitan city. Low income group of people tends to prioritize basic necessity goods whereas high income group people engage in show off pattern of consumption by acquiring high-end stuffs (Patsiaouras, et, al, 2016). After the pandemic of COVID – 19, the dynamics have been complicated and brought on new challenges as well as shifted the behavior of consumer. Low income group of people have been immensely affected due to disruptions of economy, loss of jobs, and decreased disposable incomes (World Bank, 2021). Due to pandemic the paradigm of consumer patterns and behavior have changed. High income groups are continually engaged in luxury consumption with more focus on health and safety whereas low-income groups are into cost saving ways (Deloitte, 2020). There is increase in use of digital technologies and e-commerce after pandemic in Kathmandu. Distance-based social restrictions led to increased online buying that changed how goods and services reach people in various socioeconomic levels. The digital divide has surfaced as a result of this change because wealthier families who maintain better access to technology receive better convenience from online shopping while poorer families encounter obstacles from inadequate digital skills and restricted internet access (Shrestha & Pandey, 2021). Global consumer culture has strengthened its impact on Kathmandu consumer desires and market behaviors since the start of the pandemic. Media along with advertisements function importantly to mold the aspirations of people by marketing a style of life focused on modern achievements and owning many possessions. The transformation demonstrates the theoretical concepts outlined by Veblen (1899) concerning the leisure class since people now use consumption to showcase their position and create distinctions in society.

Renewed Understanding of Class

Cultural capital is given prominence heavily in Bourdieu's paradigm as a factor which determines social class. This focus on things makes people forget how important money is and how it affects social inequality. Some people think that even though the things people

like and want to contribute to differences Bourdieus idea does not do a good job of explaining how big of a deal economic inequality is. People have criticized Bourdieus theory because it says that the way people are raised and the social group they are born into mostly decides what their life will be like and that does not leave room for people to change their situation or make their own decisions.

People who do not agree with Bourdieus idea say that it does not take into account how complicated peoples behaviors are and how they can change. Since Bourdieus idea mostly looks at how social classes stay the same or how they change over time some people think his idea is too simple. Bourdieus idea of inequality and his theory of social reproduction and the concept of habitus are not seen as complete by some critics, like Goldthorpe and Jenkins who think that social inequality and Bourdieus theory and the idea of habitus are more complex, than that. Savage (2000) describes that consumerism can pose a challenge to understanding the dynamics of societal change. It includes the results from economic crisis, globalization, or technological breakthroughs. This can pose a challenge to comprehending the dynamics of societal change, including those resulting from economic crises, globalization, or technological breakthroughs (Savage, 2000). Because Bourdieus theories were originally created within the framework of French society, their applicability to other cultural and social contexts may be limited. For example, his focus on high culture could not be relevant in cultures that emphasize other kinds of cultural capital or where social stratification functions differently. Critics have criticized Bourdieus work for failing to sufficiently investigate how class intersects with other dimensions of inequality, such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Even though he recognizes these elements, class itself is more important to his study than these other aspects. Class itself is contested and defined in relational terms. The renewed understanding of class used in this study developed and re-conceptualized with reference to Bourdieus understanding of the class concept goes beyond economy to involve other types of capital. These comprise economic capital which denotes monetary resources; social capital that entails connections and associations; as well as cultural capital that refers to learning, abilities and heritage (Bourdieu, 1986). This understanding demands an exploration of how people or communities build up these various forms of capital to attain their social status thereby perpetuating disparities. Bourdieus additionally elucidates the significance of symbolic force and symbolic mistreatment in sustaining social stratifications. Symbolic power is the capacity to influence perspectives, morals, and standards, mostly through cultural channels like public relations, learning institutions, and vernaculars. Alternatively, symbolic violence happens as a result of better-off communities imposing their ideals on the less fortunate ones thereby legitimizing their inferior position in life (Bourdieu, 1991). Bourdieus idea of class is dynamic and contextual, recognizing the fact that class positions can alter over time and vary across various social contexts as well as geographies. This temporal dimension and spatial dimension make a clever examination of how class overlaps with other social categories and how it is influenced by historical and geography factors (Bourdieu, 1984).

Statement of the Problem

In the study site, Kathmandu Metropolitan City Ward Number 16, the rapid expansion of consumer culture has created visible disparities in consumption patterns across different social class. The lack of research examining how these dynamics manifest in Nepales socio-cultural context is true whereas the global theories of consumerism (Veblen, 1989; Bourdieu, 1984) establish clear connections between consumption practices and class identity. Existing studies on Nepali consumer behavior (Liechty, 2003) have primarily focused on middle-class aspirations. These studies neglect proper analysis of how consumption styles differ across different social classes. It means from higher – income groups to working class lower income groups. Similarly, the gap is huge in urban place like Balaju. The place is where complex consumption landscape has formed due to globalization, remittance, and traditional caste hierarchies' intersections. Moreover, lesser focus is given to the effects of use of available technology to regular grocery shopping. The studies neither support or challenge existing class boundaries in the community. Note down that policy makers may risk implementing policies that may make social inequalities worse if they don't understand the local class consumption dynamics.

This study tries to address gaps by focusing on specific consumption patterns across all social classes. It also studies about how spending habits influence class disparities. Similarly, it also tries to study the ways in which consumer practices change social hierarchies in urban Balaju. Marx explains that commodities develop a social power over society even if the labor and other relations went into their making are hidden from the society. However, this idea plays an important role in the concept of consumerism. It helps to explain how goods are termed as tools to gain social status. Well, Weber presents a different perspective on class and consumerism. He has recognized the different faces of nature of social classification that includes class, status, and party. Similarly, Bourdieu explains that consumption choices are influenced by people's general constitution and field. Habitus are deeply rooted habits skills that individuals get through life experiences. Field is the social space. At the end, both are shaped by social class. The theory says that consumer behaviors are deeply rooted in culture and social practices including economic capital. These practices show class membership and reproduce social inequality.

In the diverse contexts like Nepal, empirical research can highlight importance of this theoretical structure in knowing consumerism and class. For example, Patsiaouras (2016) argued that low socio – economical groups may follow completely different consumption plan. These people are often influenced by needs than luxury. This tells that there are different motivations and constraints in consumption practices between different social classes. The effects of rapid urbanization and digital changes on consumers have been noted in Balaju. It should be noted however that not much is known about the effects that these changes have had on various social strata (Shrestha & Pandey, 2021). To understand the socio-economic situation of the Kathmandu Metropolitan, it is important to study consumer

behavior and its relationship with class dynamics. Class analysis is the important tool to understand disparities in wealth and their effects on consumption, lifestyles, and availability of resources. It is particularly relevant when one considers that Kathmandu is having rapid urbanization and globalization (Liechty, 2003)³. Although the intersectionality of class and other social categories such as gender, ethnicity and age result in consumer behavior patterns (Bauman 2000); this study examines specifically how class is shaped by consumption patterns and behavior. Existing literature has often overlooked the unique cultural and socio-economic transformations that have occurred in countries like Nepal, which are not Western. Thus these gaps need to be filled in order to obtain a thorough understanding of consumerism in Nepal that would be useful to both academic and non-academic domains.

Understanding how spending patterns, choices, and practices of consumers show socio – economical differences. It further reflects class identities and social hierarchies is at the heart of the research questions presented. Three specific questions are taken into account to understand how consumer behavior contributes to social inequality and differences. Investigating differences in consumer behavior among different social classes forms the focus of the first specific question. The second one tries to explore ways in which modes of spending and decision making affect. And the third question looks into how ordinary shopping practices or tastes reinforce and dispute accepted class identities as well as status levels.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to identify the patterns of consumer behavior among various social classes and to explore ways in which modes of spending and decision-making effect class disparities and also explore the ways how spending practice or behavior reinforce class identity and social hierarchies.

Methodology

This study explores the social and economic implications of consumer behaviors on class structure particularly in Kathmandu Metropolitan, Balaju, which is dynamic area located in the northern part of Kathmandu. Its geographical proximity to a major touristic hub of Nepal called Thamel, makes it vibrant and diverse locality with blend of traditional and modern influencer. The area of Balaju incorporates some parts of Ringroad which is major transportation artery connecting various parts of Kathmandu Valley, especially Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur, which makes easily accessible for both locals and tourists and facilitating people and goods. This study uses a qualitative research method since it enables a

³In the Kathmandu consumers' culture, Liechty (2003) underlines the use of owning material as a symbol of the class difference. For the middle-income class, symbolled wealth and modernity linked to the western world includes things like Smartphones, Laptops, Designers clothes among others. These objects are not just practical and necessary but are status icons and fodder for the actor's need to be affiliated with the global consumerism narrative.

thorough, contextualized study of participants' views and experiences. Both primary and secondary data sources were used in the data collection process. Primary data were those that are directly obtained through in-depth interviews and observation. In addition to the primary data, the secondary data included information obtained from a variety of literary sources, such as books, journals, and reviews obtained through various platforms like JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Academia. In this study, a sample includes twenty respondents- residents from different socio-economic classes living in neighborhoods like Balaju, from Kathmandu Metropolitan with diverse socio-economic and demographic backgrounds. This sample incorporated various age groups, genders, ethnicities, castes, religions, and social classes. The purposive sampling was used in order to identify subjects that are from different parts of the socio-economic stratum, age, gender and experience. This study went through unstructured interviews while collecting data and follow data saturation. This study sought to interact with a wide variety of people like young, middle-aged, elderly; boys and girls, men and women, rural-urban; high-, middle-, and low-caste though overall the majority of contacts were with at least minimally educated persons from families involved in some form of service or non-manual labor. Whenever possible, interviews were recorded in mobile phones whenever possible from stores, parks, tea shops, to home, offices, and even in classrooms. Once recorded, each of the interviews was transcribed and translated into English. Participant observations over six months at key consumer sites across Balaju, including Bhatbhateni supermarket, shopping malls, fast food outlets like Burger House, and local convenience stores were conducted. To understand the various classes based shopping patterns, observation was conducted during morning and evening time. Observation was made based on regular basis constantly from Sunday to Saturday. The intention of the observation was to track the weekly shopping habits and patterns on regular basis. Moreover, it was intended to track exceptional consumption patterns particularly in festivals and other special events. Information were collected and checked manually while important incidents were noted, filtered and sorted out. The gathered data were analyzed and interpreted by using thematic analysis.

Result and Discussion

The patterns of consumer behavior, class disparity, and identity and social hierarchy constructed and reconstructed by it was analyzed and discussed in the following section.

Patterns of Consumer Behavior

The study showed that consumers purchasing habits and behavior are impulsive and planned. The purchasing items bought by consumers are directly influenced by how society perceives it. The crucial role was played by online digital and social media. Mobile applications particularly remained notable medium for shopping in urban setting. It showed the popular trend directing online shopping experience. Celebrity endorsement for certain brand encouraged people to buy and consume. In addition social media influencers in tiktok, facebook, youtube, instagram were driving forces of consumption. Consumer choices and

preferences were influenced by desire to upward mobility such as status and prestige and to meet social expectations at the same time. Among teenagers and women, purchasing patterns are more shaped by peers and trend in social media. There were diverse scenarios of buying habits. Some consumer preferred quality and brand over quantity while other emphasizes luxury and aesthetics as it is treated as symbol of status. There were diverse responses on the consumption priorities and budgeting. Some respondent concerned about strict budget plan to avoid over-spending whereas other borrowed money to buy luxury and nonessential goods. Middle class consumer on the other hand made decision of what to buy depend on the social influence and their decision made for social display rather than practical and their personal needs.

Moreover, consumption priorities are influenced by financial constraints. There were clear divisions on the purchasing priorities among various social classes. For instance, low income consumer emphasized on purchasing essential goods such as foods, rent, and education rather than purchasing luxury items. The consumption patterns and items are directly influenced by tradition and modernity. As Bourdieu described, in his concept of habitus, what people purchase or desire to purchase differed by class and these habits are not innate but derived by the social influence. For all people, basic need such as foods, housing, clothes are same. By contrast, high income people's priorities go to luxury goods and services highlighting stark division in consumption based on their economic resources. Higher income groups indulged more into conspicuous consumption as described by Veblen to display social status and wealth.

On the other hand, middle class people try to emulate this through symbolic consumption. They prioritize on family expenses and education. Lower – income people face society pressures to confirm these expectations. This may create the being outcast from wealthy area. Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption explains how high-income groups purchase luxury goods as a status symbol. Similarly, Bourdieu's cultural capital theory suggests that brand preferences are regarded as social class and identity. These kinds of perceptions shape class identity. It also shows how individuals navigate the social hierarchy. Combination of social, psychological, and financial factors heavily influence consumer behavior and spending style. Modern consumer choices are directed by the social factors like peer pressure to social media. It clearly shows that consumer behavior is as much about social interaction and status as it is about personal choices. Low income level restricts lower income groups' consumption choices. It makes difficult for them to access luxury goods and services. Higher income groups enjoy more consumption decisions' flexibility.

Class Disparities and Mobility

Economic constraints greatly affect what people buy. Lower-income groups focus on needs like food, rent and education. This often means they can't spend on -essential things. People from lower-income backgrounds say they use their money for goods and services.

This shows they take an approach to spending. In contrast people from higher-income groups can afford to buy luxury items go on vacations and make non-essential purchases. Education and career growth are key to moving up the ladder especially for those moving from lower to middle-class status. Education, such as scholarships and degrees can lead to jobs and business opportunities.

However things like family wealth and connections still create barriers to mobility for those with strong educational backgrounds. In Kathmandu social identity is heavily influenced by what people buy. Education and jobs are crucial for mobility. Many people note that acquiring knowledge and skills is essential to improve their socio- standing. With educational achievements barriers like social connections and family wealth persist. These limit the ability of many to move into social classes. Social perceptions and class identity in Kathmandu are influenced by consumption patterns. People use material goods and lifestyle choices to show their status. These choices surely contribute to class divisions and social inequality. Social mobility is often constrained by rooted social and economic structures. Furthermore, economic constraints greatly affect what people buy. There's a clear difference in the buying styles of different classes of people. Lower income groups focus on needs like food, rent, and education. It means they spend their money on goods and services needed for basic survival. On the other hand, the higher income groups can add luxury goods and services' purchasing along with the basic needs' purchases. People often buy non essential things to build their social image or they feel like it. For lower income groups and middle class groups, it is the way to achieve mobility and status recognition. These actions indicate that people buy not only for personal needs but also due to social and cultural factors.

In contemporary society, we can't ignore the rise of e – commerce. It provides convenience and personalization. However, the lower income groups may not be able to cope with the demands to fulfill to project them as equals to higher income groups. Social media may drive trends and lower income groups may be tempted to follow the trend but they couldn't do due to economical constraints. It has clearly created social inequalities. However, middle class income groups seek social validation by consuming things even if it is not essential goods after purchasing basic goods and services. Overall, what people buy is definitely influenced by trends and perceived social status rather than utility.

Class Identity and Social Hierarchy

One of the major findings is the characteristics between aspirational consumption and instinctive consumption. Spending pattern is heavily influenced by class identity and social behavior. Note down that the consumption patterns are closely related to class identity. Middle – class individuals often engage in consumption to project a higher social status even if they are in financial strain. For example, they send their children to English medium schools. This clearly reflects the role of consumption to boost social hierarchies and desire for upward mobility. This shows us the idea of capital, which was talked about by Bourdieu

in 1984. Economic capital is when people have access to education and can use that to start their businesses. This gives people the things they need to get out of financial situations. There is a lot of pressure from society to be like people who have a lot of money for people who have average incomes. Because of this people often care more about how they look to others than about what they need. This causes problems because people want to look good and have a lifestyle but they do not have enough money to do this. The economic capital idea is important here as it affects how people make choices, about money and status. Economic capital is a part of this as it helps people understand why they make certain choices.

Consumption is not about buying things we need. It is also about how we see ourselves and how others see us. People believe that they need to buy things to show off that they are successful and important because of their purchases. This is especially true for people who do not have a lot of money. They want to be like people who have money so they buy things they cannot really afford. Consumption is something we do with people in mind. We think about what other people will think of us when we buy something. We want to look good to them. The internet and social media have changed how we buy things. We can buy things online. Have them delivered to our house. This is convenient. It also makes us feel like we have to keep up with what other people are buying. Sometimes people want to buy things just because they want them. They also want to look like they have a lot of money. This can be a problem because people may spend much money on things they do not really need. Consumption can help people move up in the world and feel good about themselves. It can also make it harder for people who do not have a lot of money. The internet and social media are helping to change how we buy things. They are making it easier for us to buy things. They are also making us feel like we have to buy certain things to fit in. Consumption is a thing. It is about what we need what we want and what other people think of us. Well, it has been established as normal that digital platforms like Facebook and Amazon have made accessibility to buying things easy and it is changing the way we buy.

CONCLUSION

The finding of the study showed that patterns and behavior are shaped by societal pressure. The patterns of consumption of an individual are influenced by income. Moreover, increasing usage of major social media platforms such as facebook, instagram, and titktok remained influential and also validated the consumer patterns and behavior. People's choices and preferences are highly directed towards convenience of goods and services and time saving despite higher cost. They are increasingly moving towards digital shopping habits.. Precisely, consumption patterns are not limited only in practical needs but also in subjective feeling of being of higher class, status, and prestige. Additionally, class identity particularly middle class people indulge in aspirational consumption rather than instinctive consumption. Despite their financial constraints, people try to imitate higher class through consumption patterns and habits. These are also influenced by economic capacity. Class identity therefore is constructed and reconstructed through aspiration for mobility. Consumption ahabits and

behavior remained crucial in shaping individual identity and social hierarchies in the society. It leads to create pressure between realities particularly in economic sphere and social aspiration. Eventually, it leads to the increasing consumption beyond practical needs and also causes financial burden and disorder. In conclusion, consumption patterns and behavior, individual identity constructed by consumption, and social hierarchies so formed are inextricably intertwined.

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