

A Study of Consumer Animosity towards Chinese Goods in India in the Backdrop of the COVID-19 Pandemic : With Special Reference to Toys and its plausible impact on the Indigenous Toy Markets of India.

Ms. Pallavi Mishra

*Research Scholar, Commerce,
CSJM University, Kanpur*

Prof(Dr.) V. K. Tiwari

*Professor & Head Dept of Commerce,
DNPG College, Fatehgarh, U.P*

Dr. Mohit Kumar

*Assistant Professor, School of Business Management
CSJM University, Kanpur, U.P*

Abstract: Amidst the COVID-19 wave, where the humdrum was about the virus spread...there were other developments taking place all around the world diaspora, from economy to trade from culture to commerce nothing at all was left untouched. Albeit, the focus was on health but its impact was omnipresent...nearly to all the sectors, China where the viral outbreak happened was scrutinized all across the world, no less was India, a land of highly volatile consumers who are perceptually very sensitive to market dynamics. With some Chinese Apps being banned in India, a whole movement of being "VOCAL FOR LOCAL" started under the auspices of our hon'ble Prime Minister, on a well thought introspection it was realised we depend on China for imports of several products one of which is TOYS... Customers' animosity towards foreign items and brands is a normal behaviour. For decades, researchers have been interested in investigating the impact of enmity on consumer behaviour. This study aims to evaluate the impact of negative attitudes towards Chinese products on Indian consumers' purchasing intentions. Trade liberalisation and the lowering of global trade barriers have resulted in the fast rise of worldwide marketing. As a result, new markets have opened up, and foreign items are now available in local markets. China has seized the lead in global commerce due to its low production costs and technical developments. Chinese products especially toys are now available in most regions of the world. Indian consumers' perceptions have changed significantly in favour of paying extra for high-quality goods. Since the pandemic, a lot of things have happened between China and India. Customers have begun to gravitate more towards high-quality or locally produced goods since the coronavirus epidemic. Indian consumers began to steer clear of Chinese goods, which decreased the market's demand for them.

Introduction:

Despite catering to roughly 26% of the Indian population, the toy business is extremely complicated. Although Amar Chitra Katha resonates with millennials, there is a need for other franchises that tell distinct tales and serve as a foundation for future growth. Shri Hanuman Chalisa, a short 3D animated film from over a decade ago, was a huge hit in the Indian animation industry and at Oscar-qualifying film festivals worldwide. Indian studios and the film industry should expand their focus on children's programming, whether it's mythology or sci-fi, to create successful franchises. Toy designers benefit from more opportunities for social connection. As volumes increase, it also helps to reduce costs. YouTube's success among youngsters can be attributed to pricing, which is a significant element in its consumption. It is almost free for most families and provides limitless hours of 'enjoyment.' It also attracts many content developers who create innovative and different performances. Toys are often considered as having a low return on investment due to limited purchasing power in Indian cities. Approximately 80% of toys are imported from China, sometimes of substandard quality. It indicates that local manufacturing needs to grow dramatically.

It would be smart to follow India's lead in limiting electronic imports. Storytellers have a crucial role in developing a diverse ecology.

Boys and girls are fast shifting demand and developing new trends due to increased access to smartphones and smart gadgets, making segmentation challenging. Video games dominate the market, although animated material has gained popularity. India and China, with 36% of the global population and 67% of the Asian population, constitute a big market for products and services. (statisticstimes.com, June 2020). The liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991 made international items and brands available in the country, changing the lifestyle of Indian customers (Sabnavis, 2003). The image of the country influences the perceived quality of a foreign brand. Positive country-of-origin is an effective marketing technique for companies. (Vronti et al., 2006) India's growing middle class and diverse customer base lead to diverse buying behaviours. Chinese items gained popularity in India due to their low costs. According to Chen and Sun (2011), China is often associated with low-cost manufacturing in the global market. In the late 1990s, China depended less on branding and marketing communications. However, Lenova's acquisition of IBM in 2005 marked an inflection

moment (Cheang Ming et al, 2017 cnbc). According to Loo and Davies (2006), China recognises the need to transition from low-cost manufacture to higher-value-added products. In recent years, Chinese products and services have competed with top worldwide brands in terms of quality, sophisticated features, and pricing.

Consumer preference towards Chinese good in India amidst situational hostility.

According to Klein et al. (2002), consumer hostility refers to unfavourable attitudes towards items from a contested nation. Animosity arises from intense opposition and hostility towards a country owing to political disagreements and military confrontations (Averill, 1982). The Galwan Valley clash incident in June 2020 heightened tensions between India and China, prompting politicians and patriotic consumers to call for a boycott of Chinese products and services. This campaign quickly spread across social media platforms. There were disputes over excluding Chinese items from the Indian consumer and commercial markets.

The Indian government banned more than 50 Chinese applications in early July 2020, citing security concerns the issue raised several socio-economic & geo-political backlashes but was a decision well taken to safeguard the interests of the Indian sovereignty and people. The government has notified e-commerce enterprises to label the nation of origin for all items sold on their websites. According to Kenneth Rapoza (Forbes, 2020), this decision reflects the country's economic protectionism.

Customers' animosity towards foreign items and brands is a normal behaviour. For decades, researchers have been interested in investigating the impact of enmity on consumer behaviour.

The two biggest economies in the world are China and India. Both of them are expanding quickly. There are Chinese goods everywhere, even in India (OEC, 2017). In addition to being Himalayan neighbours, China and India have a long history of commercial and cross-cultural cooperation. In the past, people would frequently visit one another's countries. Following the 1962 conflict between China and India, animosity between the two nations began. Both nations enjoyed friendly relations with one another before to the war. However, because of some unavoidable circumstances, a war broke out, and the two nations' hostility began to grow. According to Klein et al. (1998), consumer hostility is a reflection of a negative view of buying goods that are imported from a country that is hated. Klein et al.

(1998) conducted the first research on the relationship between consumer hostility and purchase intention. Strong opposition or rage against a certain nation due to a military battle, international political dispute, or economic problems has been defined as animosity (Averill, 1982). Territorial disputes, trade-related conflicts, economic disputes, and bilateral diplomatic issues must be mostly held accountable for the unfavourable perception (Gupta O, SinghA 2017a).

(Gupta*, Om Jee, 2018)An analysis of Indian consumers' animosity against Chinese goods. The two largest and most important economies in the world are China and India. Both of them are growing quickly. Chinese goods are sold everywhere, even in India (OEC, 2017). In addition to being neighbours throughout the Himalayan region, China and India have a remarkable history of complex and profitable ties. People used to travel widely to one other's countries.

Nearly every economy in the globe has been impacted by the worldwide epidemic, with China being the most severely affected. Countries began moving their businesses and industrial facilities from China to other nations, mostly those in Southeast Asia, such as India. The global demand for Chinese-made goods declined as a result of the crisis outbreak, which also disrupted the Chinese manufacturing sector. Individuals are more conscious of where to spend their money and what goods are worthwhile. This has caused a shift in customer attitudes on purchasing Chinese-made goods. Eliminating Chinese goods completely from the market is challenging. However, the circumstances has evolved since people began to boycott Chinese goods during the outbreak. Customers are now more conscious of the product's manufacturing and packaging as a result of the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, such incidents did not occur. People's purchasing and buying behaviours have altered as a result of their increased concern for their own and their families' health. In addition to purchasing high-quality goods, they have begun to swap brands. Customers are becoming more open-minded and eager to try out the increasing number of high-quality products available.

Research Methodology

- To Analyse the Perception of Indian Consumers towards Chinese toys and its impact on indigenous toys post pandemic.

Research Objectives:

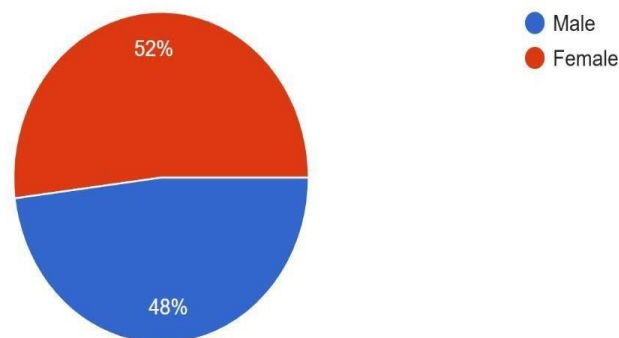
- To investigate the elements that influence consumers' perceptions
- To examine consumers' purchasing patterns
- To ascertain consumers' purchasing power
- To gauge the consumer's buyer persona during a pandemic

Primary and Secondary data collection method has been used. The data has been collected through Questionnaires and Surveys.

A study on 50 samples was done to find out the impact of COVID-19 on consumer animosity towards Chinese toys and its effect on indigenous toys.

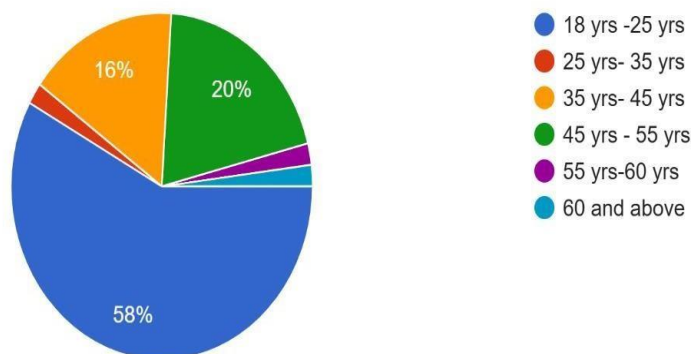
Select your gender

50 responses



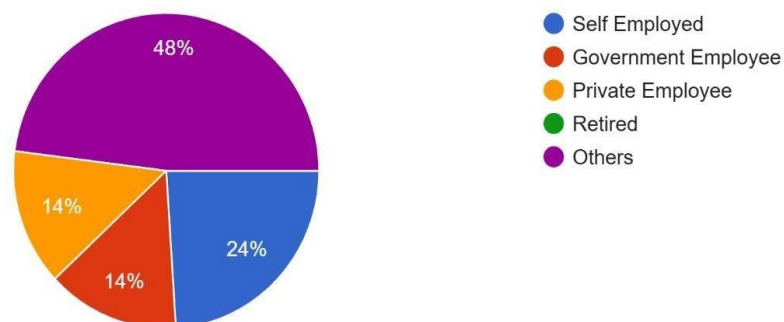
Select your age

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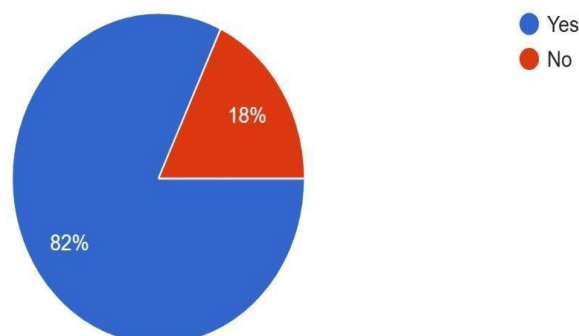
Please select your occupation.

50 responses



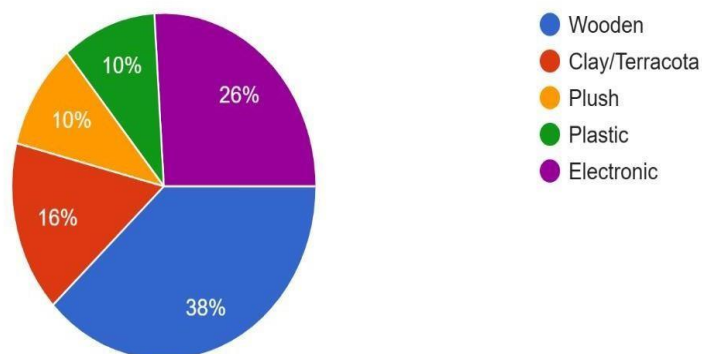
Do you purchase toys ?

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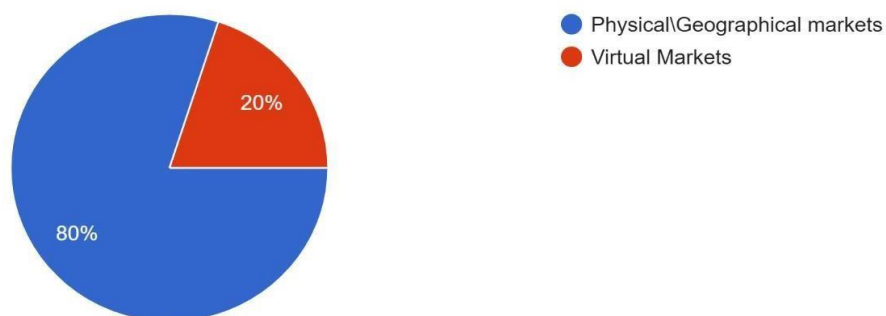
If yes , which type of toys do you like to purchase?

50 responses



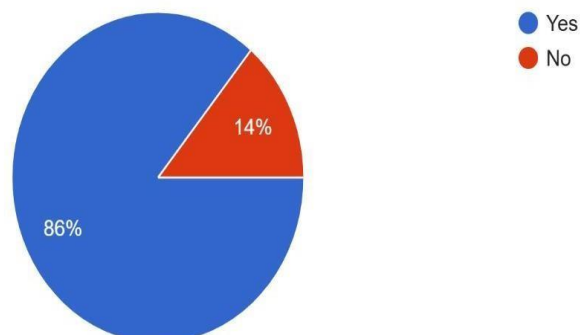
From which type of markets do you purchase toys?

50 responses



Do you know about the label of "country of Origin" on the product?

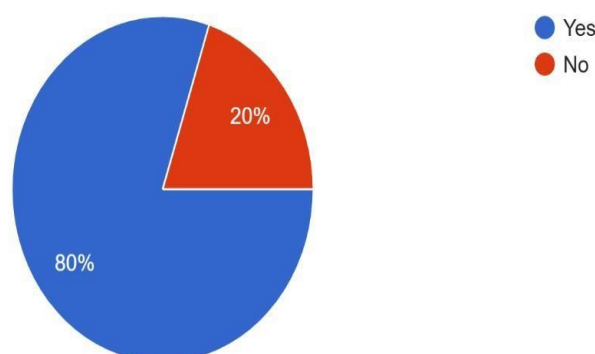
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When the data was analysed it was found that about 86% consumers are aware of the manufacturing nation ,this sensitivity can be dedicated to the growing Chinese aggression amidst the pandemic. People have become more inclined towards the “ SWADESHI” products which is a moment of merry for all of us.

Do you spare a minute to see the manufacturing nation on the product package (Country of Origin)?

50 responses

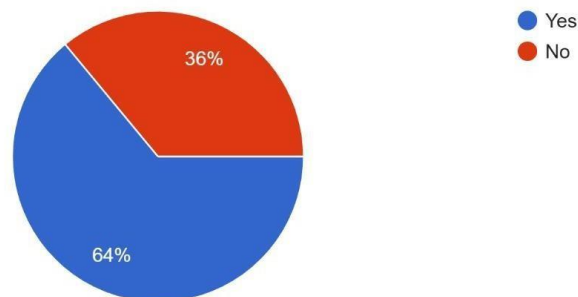


Also it has been observed from the data that about 80% of the respondents do pay attention to the label of

“ Country of origin”. This has been the desired objective of spreading information about domestically manufactured products , also it has been observed these days on several virtual shopping platforms which have made it mandatory to mention specifically the manufacturing nation. It also lays significant importance on choosing a locally made product over a foreign good. This small step can go a long way ahead in augmenting the growth and long term sustainability of local artisans and craftsmen on Indian soil as well as create a potential global market place for them .

Do you restrain to purchase a "Made in China" product?

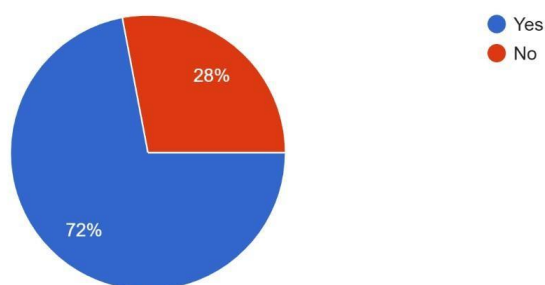
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Also it has been observed that about 64% of the respondents show up dislike and restrain to purchase Chinese toys.

If yes , has the COVID -19 affected your perception towards Chinese toys?

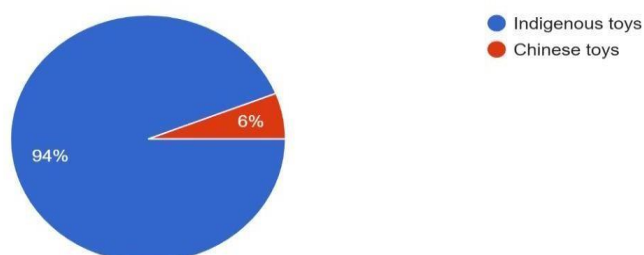
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The perception of about 72% respondents has significantly been influenced by COVID-19 pandemic , which impacted their choices when it comes to buyer behavior.

Which toys do you feel are more environmentally desirable & child safe?

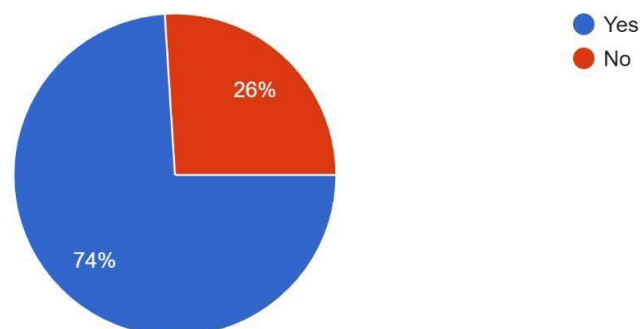
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About 94% of the respondents consider indigenous toys more environmentally safe and child friendly which is a key takeaway in favour of indigenous toys and a potential factor to spur the demand for indigenous toys over foreign toys.

If you have to pay a slight higher price for indigenous toy , would you still prefer it over Chinese toys?

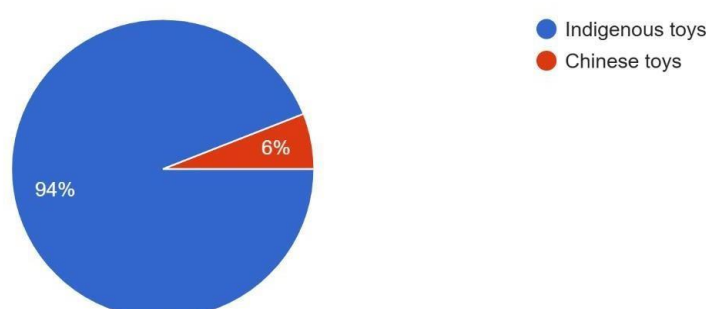
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An interesting part of the study suggests that about 74% of the respondents are willing to pay a higher price but would still prefer indigenous toys over the Chinese toys. This data can be very fruitful to help the flourishing of local artisans.

Which toys in your opinion possess a higher quality in your opinion?

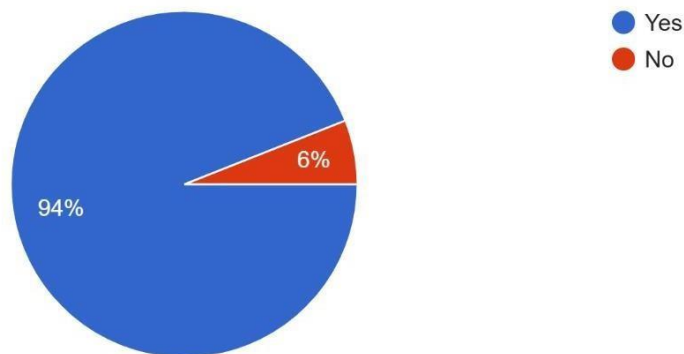
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About 94% of the respondents consider that indigenous toys are of a higher quality in contrast to Chinese toys.

Do you recommend indigenous toys among your peer groups?

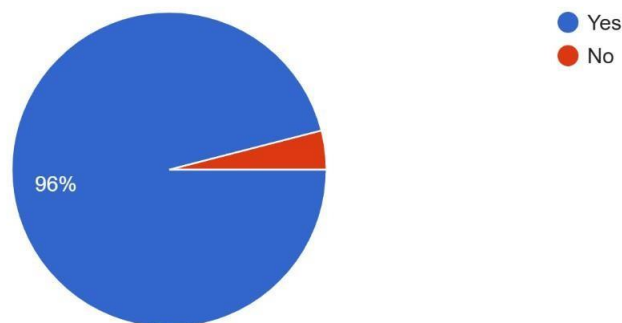
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Almost 94% of the respondents say that they would willingly recommend indigenous toys among their peer groups.

Are you aware about "Make in India", "Vocal For Local", or other government schemes to aid growth of indigenous toys?

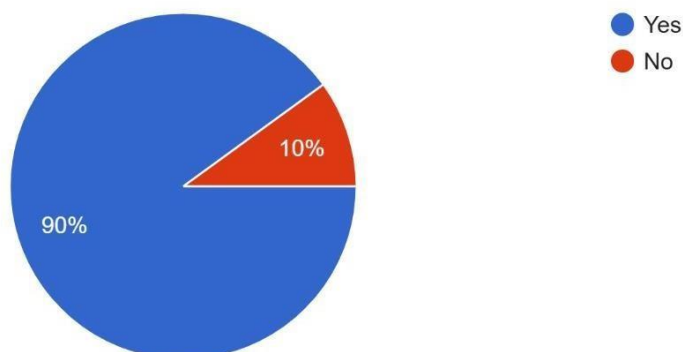
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Also about 96% of the respondents show understanding and knowledge about government schemes which have been started by the Government of India as a major initiative to help the domestic manufacturers.

Do you feel indigenous toy demand has increased post COVID-19?

50 responses



After analysis of the data it shows that about 90% of the respondents feel that the demand of indigenous toys has increased post covid-19.

The unmatched efforts of the Indian Government like organizing “Hunar -Haats” . and diverting consumer & investor attention towards initiatives such as MAKE IN INDIA , VOCAL FOR LOCAL have left a good impact on the minds of sensitive Indian consumers. The government is facilitating the Indian artisans to become domestically and internationally competitive. It is very rightly being said by our Hon’ble Prime Minister that India has the potential of soon becoming a TOYCONOMY for the whole world owing to its valuable pristine crafts.

Conclusion:

The pandemic is causing issues for every nation on the planet. India is battling the coronavirus, the economic downturn, and national security head-on. For the reasons listed above, the general public is most negatively impacted.

Purchase power and consumer behaviour have evolved dramatically. People are willing to pay more for high-quality products and won't jeopardise their health in the process. This pandemic has taught us that quality is important, among other things. The Indian populace is open to purchasing "Made in India" goods. Many local enterprises are now able to thrive in the market because to this worldwide problem.

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