Consumerism is becoming the hallmark of most world economies. In the West, it is a common phenomenon, but now even developing countries in the world are resorting to it.

Consumerism refers to the consumption of goods at a higher rate. The economy is judged by the production and selling of goods. The gross national product is the sum total of goods and services produced for a specific period at a specific time. The more goods produced and consumed by society the higher the growth rate of the economy. The prosperity of a nation is judged by the per capita income of individuals residing in it. The economy is considered to be” doing well” if the purchasing power of the people is high.

In consumer society, people replace their goods with newer ones. They purchase goods, use them and throw them away. New goods when they become old are replaced by newer ones. The question of repair does not arise People have money to purchase goods in plenty. In case, they do not do so as it leads to recession and depression and also results in unemployment.

What are the effects of the consumerism?
Consumerism is appreciated in Western economies since a person’s standard of living is valued by his or her material possessions. There are certain positive effects such as:

Positive Consumerism Effects:
Primary positive consumerism effects are:
More industrial production.
A higher growth rate economy.
More goods and services available.
More advertising since goods manufactured have to be sold.
Increased production will result in more employment opportunities.
A variety of goods and services to choose from.
More comforts for a better living style.

There are always certain pitfalls to a given situation in a society. Material prosperity may be there in consumerism but, it has its negative effects on the people and society at large.

**Negative Consumerism Effects:**
Top negative consumerism effects are:
- Craving for goods is high. The wants and desires of the people increase. The better their income, the better their purchasing power. But in case, they are not able to do so, then they feel dissatisfied.
- One is in a rat race to earn more and is forced to cope up with stress and other work related tensions.
- Material wealth is the deciding factor about whether a society is highly developed or not. Spiritual values are underplayed. This may not be suitable to a person from the East, who generally is appreciative of spiritual values.
- Over-dependence on labor saving devices.
- A car for each individual would mean gradual erosion of public transport.
- Crime rate also increases as wants to possess expensive gadgets increase. Thefts become common and daylight robberies take place.
- Personal relationships also get affected as people are busy trying to earn more to maintain their standard of living.
- Cheaper goods are imported from other goods affecting the growth of locally based manufacturing industries.
- Consumerism has also resulted in ecological imbalances. The natural habitat is being destroyed to create more goods and build more buildings affecting the weather. Global warming will eventually result in health problems. Industrial pollution is affecting people in many ways.
- People lifestyles have also changed in the sense they are more lavish, full of material comforts rather than focusing on simplicity. The Eastern spiritualism and philosophy has always laid emphasis on simplicity. Gandhian principles and values favor a non-materialistic approach to life. Even well known sages such as Jiddu Krishnamurthi have also eulogized simplicity in one’s lifestyles and thinking.
- Consumerism is also depleting the natural resources of the respective country.
- Psychological health also can get affected if one’s desires are not meant such as depression. Jealousy and envy can lead to crime.

The United States is a consumer economy and is known for its material growth and prosperity. But presently, the economy is reeling under the pressure of recession. People who have lost their jobs are finding it difficult to meet both their ends. In the East, India is also progressing towards materialism, although this goes against its ancient philosophical approach towards materialism, which favors a simple, non-materialistic life.