

CULTURE ECONOMY & WEAPON**M. Moses Antony RAJENDRAN**

Loyola College, Chennai, India

moses@loyolacollege.edu**Karthik MOHAN**

Loyola College, Chennai, India

22ubc270@loyolacollege.edu**Alexandru-Mircea NEDELEA**

Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Romania

alexandru.nedelea@usm.ro**Abstract**

The expeditious globalization, rapid expansion, swift growth in population, preferences, choices, culture, cuisine, attire and the emergence of social media and the outbreak of COVID-19, we are navigating through various challenges and complexities related to people, supply chain, health, products, finance and consumers. We are presently going through one of the most substantial changes experienced. Traditional businesses are fading away, and new businesses are popping up. However, today's businesses use this era as a weapon and money-making source. The expeditious culture and transformation over the years are forcing us to take radical steps to adopt technological advancements and modernize culture, products, structures, systems and architectures. As a result, the cultural and present-day trends are transformed in such a way that it harms the environment and people's health though it makes the process simpler, smooth, innovative, user and time friendly.

Keywords: *culture; business economy; globalization; rapid expansion; business world.*

JEL Classification: *M21, M29*

I. INTRODUCTION

The expeditious globalization, rapid expansion, swift growth in population, preferences, choices, culture, cuisine, attire and the emergence of social media and the outbreak of COVID-19, we are navigating through various challenges and complexities related to people, supply chain, health, products, finance and consumers. We are presently going through one of the most substantial changes experienced. Traditional businesses are fading away, and new businesses are popping up. However, today's businesses use this era as a weapon and money-making source. The expeditious culture and transformation over the years are forcing us to take radical steps to adopt technological advancements and modernize culture, products, structures, systems and architectures. As a result, the cultural and present-day trends are transformed in such a way that it harms the environment and people's health though it makes the process simpler, smooth, innovative, user and time friendly.

Globalization is a term that describes the economic, cultural, and political changes due to the rise in international trade and investment. It has affected many aspects of life worldwide, from food production to fashion trends. In this article, we will explore how globalization has impacted and how it has affected economies and cultures.

The economic effects of globalization are mainly positive for all nations involved, as it allows them to sell their goods and services more easily across national borders. However, there are some negative consequences, too. Due to rapid advancement and cultural changes, people are adopting luxury and intelligent products that harm health. However, it is ultimately contributing to economic advancement. New businesses use this era as a money-making source and a weapon against nature and people.

II. MODERN PRODUCTS – WEAPONS AGAINST NATURE AND PEOPLE?

Trends that are harming people and the environment are as follows:

-Charcoal toothpaste: Toothpaste is a regular household product with questionable ingredients. Many people are unaware that toothpaste can contain harmful chemicals and even menacing additives. Toothpaste contains abrasives and a few chemicals which also cause vandalization to the mouth and digestive system. Charcoal

is used universally in cosmetic products, face washes, toothpaste and scrubs. Furthermore, although applying it to our faces as a mask or scrub may be okay, using it as toothpaste is extremely abrasive and works to remove the outer layer of our teeth, damaging the enamel. Our dental enamel is essentially what keeps our teeth white and removes stains. When the enamel is removed, it leaves our teeth looking yellow and lifeless and prevents them from growing again, making our teeth more vulnerable to serious health problems. (Steber, 2019)

-*E-Cigarettes/vapes*: The use of e-cigarettes has skyrocketed among teens and young adults. They have become so popular that many believe e-cigarettes are healthier than traditional cigarettes. E-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is an addictive chemical found in tobacco products. Though e-cigarettes and vapes are safer than regular ones, it does not mean it is not harmful people now have started using them to quit smoking, but this is not the better choice. It is an unhealthy choice as it contains toxins and other harmful ingredients, including nicotine, heavy metals like lead, harmful organic compounds and cancer-causing agents (Prochaska, 2022; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

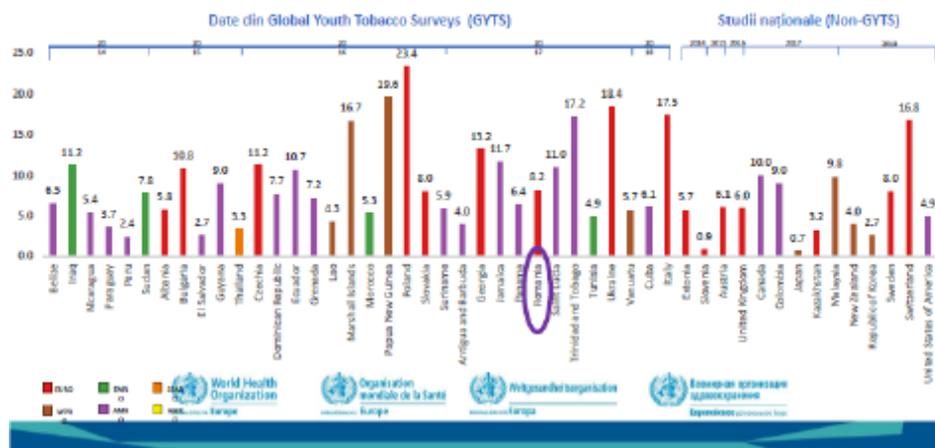


Figure 1. Prevalence of electronic cigarette use among young people in the OMS-Euro Region
Source: Situation analysis - National tobacco-free day (2019)

Current consumption of e-cigarettes is on the rise. Although compared to 2013, in 2017 there were 12.4% more fewer students have tried e-cigarettes, the percentage of current users has increased considerably: by 1.5 percentage points from 6.7% to 8.2%, representing an increase of 22.3%. Increase current use is more evident among girls than boys: in 2017, they smoked e-cigarettes by 1.4 percentage points more than boys, percentage points more girls than girls in 2013 (5.9% compared to 4.5%), representing an increase of 31.1%, while among boys the increase was lower, 1.3 percentage points (10.1% vs. 8.8%), an increase of 14.7%. In 2017, of children who tried e-cigarettes, a much higher percentage (53%) ended up using them in compared to 2013 (37.8%). These increases in the use of electronic cigarettes represent a worrying phenomenon among young people, the effects of which will be visible in the coming years.

-*Air fresheners and cleaning supplies*: They revitalise and invigorate our interior space. However, when used excessively or in a stuffy, breathless environment, these items produce harmful chemicals. This flows from two significant chemicals, ethylene-based glycol ethers and terpenes, forming in the atmosphere and retaliating with ozone to form a toxic blend. Furthermore, a lot of evaporative organic combinations, such as nitrogen dioxide, are associated with air fresheners. This substance, which can cause cancer in certain animals, is more concentrated indoors than it is outside (Conger, 2020).

-*Baby bottles & BPA*- Bisphenol-A (BPA) is a chemical used in the production of plastics. These infant bottles have the potential to emit BPA when heated. Because of its formation which is nearly identical to that of oestrogen, BPA is referred to as a “hormone disruptor.” Hormone disruptors, as the name suggests, have the ability to alter a person’s normal hormone levels, particularly in young children. may result in neurological and developmental issues for babies (Conger, 2020).

-*Natural & Herbal products*- Few products brand them as entirely herbal and natural, but those are the ones which comprise the majority of chemicals. It was discovered that a well-known Indian firm was utilising dangerous chemicals in their bases, such as sodium benzoate, sorbic acid, and methylisothiazolinone, which is linked to allergies and neurological damage and has significant evidence of being poisonous to human skin. A few items have also employed significant amounts of sugar or saccharine and are not FSSAI-certified. The majority of them were of poor quality and bad for the environment and human health (Davey, 2019).

-*Perfumes*- Exposure to perfumes and fragrances can cause various reactions, including contact dermatitis, urticaria (hives), loss of coordination, neurotoxic symptoms, photoallergy and skin discolouration (dyschromia). Fragrances can cause asthma attacks and other respiratory issues, in addition to skin contact. Fragrance products

release volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which have been linked to a number of adverse health impacts and can contribute to extremely poor indoor air quality (IAQ). For both main users and those who inhale the chemicals, these substances rank as the leading source of hypersensitive reactions to cosmetics (birger.qualitypoolsboulder.com/do-fragrances-cause-cancer). It is well known that the phthalates in scents mess with hormones. In addition, fragrance compounds have been connected to endocrine disruption, cancer, congenital defects, and other serious health issues (Watson, 2019).

-Makeup wipes- Even if makeup removal is done only once a day, the force needed to remove makeup from the skin can lead to irritation and rubbing, which exacerbates fine lines, wrinkles, and hyperpigmentation. This is why makeup wipes are rough on the skin. The skin's acid mantle and pH balance, which are delicate and essential layers that keep moisture in and debris out of the skin, are also destroyed by it. Furthermore, it harms the ecosystem and depletes the skin of its natural oils (Boehm, 2019).

-Tea bags- Tea bags have a coating/layer of dioxin or epichlorohydrin or are put down in chlorine. A single plastic tea bag can release harmful particles (microplastics), and nylon ones are terrible because of polypropylene (a type of plastic). Paper tea bags have a chemical called epichlorohydrin that is used so that the bag does not break. When this chemical leaches into hot water, it realizes a potential carcinogen (a substance that can cause cancer). Also, it has reproductive toxins and can cause many hormonal issues (Lina, 2017).

-Laundry detergents- The dangerous chemicals included in laundry detergents may cause everything from skin irritation to cancer and have a negative impact on the ecosystem. 1,4-Dioxane is one of the most dangerous substances included in laundry detergent. This is thought to be a solvent that contains carcinogens and can lead to cancer. As a solvent, 1,4-dioxane is used. Humans have experienced dizziness, headaches, sleepiness, and irritation of the skin, eyes, nose, throat, and lungs after acute exposure to high concentrations of 1,4-dioxane. Animals that have been exposed orally have shown tumours. Even though detergent is used throughout the washing process, some may still be present in your clothing. It pollutes the water and land and does not break down (Cleancult, 2017).

-Protein powders & supplements- Protein powder is a dietary supplement that may be high in added sugars and calories. It causes digestive distress and also an unhealthy spike in blood sugar. Heavy metals (lead, mercury, arsenic, and cadmium), pesticides, bisphenol-A (BPA), which is used to produce plastic, and other pollutants connected to cancer and other health issues are found in many protein powders (Harvard Health, 2018; jinja.lotusblossomconsulting.com, 2022).

-Hair dye/colouring- Over the past few decades, colouring hair has been a common practise. Ammonia and peroxides are among the numerous appropriate compounds included in hair colouring. Massive molecules used in hair dyes are large enough to pierce the cuticle. Using bleach causes the hair follicles to oxidise, which results in a colouring effect. This causes moisture to be extracted from hair follicles and harms the hair's natural condition. Additionally, it may result in breakage, split ends, and dryness, all of which may contribute to hair loss. A component called para-phenylenediamine, which is present in several contemporary goods and raises the risk of haematological and bladder cancer, causes hair loss. Additionally, some studies have shown that wearing hair dyes while pregnant might have an adverse effect on the health of the foetus. Consequently, there are negative health impacts linked to these ubiquitous colour compounds. (Wedner, 2017)

-Instant, processed and packed foods- Processed and packed food like instant noodles and ready-to-make mixes have many harmful ingredients that could cause metabolic dysfunction. MSG, Salt, and Trans Fat are not just names to throw around but actual ingredients in our instant food that could cause many problems. However, chemically processed foods, also known as ultra-processed foods, tend to be high in sugar, refined carbohydrates, trans fat and artificial ingredients. Because of this, they are a significant contributor to obesity and illness around the world. Eating 10% more ultra-processed foods was associated with above a 10% increase in the risks of cardiovascular diseases, colorectal cancer and mortality overall (Smith, 2020).

-Frozen foods- Frozen food is a trend that has been around for decades but is still going strong. Frozen food is simple: buy it at the grocery store, put it in the freezer and eat it later. There is no cooking or preparation involved—just throwing the stuff in a bag and putting it in the freezer, but this convenience has a downside. It has adverse health effects on our bodies and system. Most frozen meat products, such as sausages, kebabs, and bacon, are purchased from the market and eaten after a brief heating period. It is definitely affordable, practical, and efficient in terms of time, money, and effort. They may, however, completely disrupt our metabolism and digestive system. Foods that are frozen contain a lot of carbohydrates. Food may be kept fresh and given flavour and texture by starch. But even before it is digested, our body converts starch, which is a polymer of glucose, into sugar. For this reason, an excessive sugar intake may provide a risk to diabetes. Large amounts of cholesterol and trans fat are found in frozen meals, which can clog arteries and cause a variety of cardiac issues. It may raise the risk of developing heart disease. An adverse impact of consuming too many frozen dinners is pancreatic cancer. In actuality, frozen foods like sausages, bacon and barbecued meat raise the risk of cancer in all non-vegetarians. Several ingredients found in packaged meals have the potential to cause cancer, such as glucose-based corn syrup. Preservatives are added to frozen meals to keep them fresh. Furthermore, an excessive amount of preservatives

might be detrimental to one's health. Blood pressure levels are also at danger from these preservatives. They include a lot of salt and sugar, which can raise blood pressure. (Kharbanda, 2020)

-*Cosmetic Products*- The history of using various cosmetics dates back thousands of years. To improve quality and intensify their effects, some chemicals were added to these items, including stabilisers, shine, colour, and mineral pigments. Regrettably, a few of these compounds may also be allergenic, irritable, or detrimental to human health. Additionally, heavy metals (zinc, cadmium, and lead) are present in cosmetic items. Therefore, due to the presence of lead, a highly poisonous metal, and other hazardous substances, beauty products used for cosmetic reasons may have a negative impact on human health (Kaličanin, 2015). However, the global beauty industry has shown resilience, rapidly recovering the loss recorded during the health crisis (-7.7%) and reaching a value of approximately €378 bn in 2021. Demographic changes, rising incomes and the number of middle-class people, complemented by the penetration of online shopping experiences (testing, consulting, actual selling) are factors driving market growth, both in Romania and internationally. International retail purchases are facilitated by e-commerce and the digitisation and communication efforts made by brands still in the pandemic period. Innovations such as artificial intelligence plus online retail experiences will facilitate communication between brands and consumers, as well as gaining additional insights into consumer behaviour to streamline product innovation processes. Shops remain the main sales channel (76.4%) in 2021, but their share is declining at the expense of online, which is expected to mediate 33% of sales by 2025 (of which about 63% on mobile devices). Brands looking to establish themselves in this market need to follow a customer-centric model that combines digital and physical channels (Management PRO, 2023). Thus we can see that consumers are not influenced by the negative consequences of the cosmetics used.

III. CONCLUSION

Like this, there is a number of products and services around us created due to rapid expansion, innovation and cultural advancement. However, it is causing extreme harm to health and the environment. Therefore, education, medicine, engineering, social studies and research must be for humanity and people's well-being and not for any other purpose.

This article has mentioned a few examples to cover the research. There is a number of products which can be added upon like smartwatches, innovative products etc. and these should be eye broken for the betterment of the people, environment and society. International organizations must go for worthwhile, eco-friendly and safe products. Truth only sustains and develops eventually, and false vanishes, which is the ultimate light. The products and services created must be safe, environmentally friendly, sustainable and valuable for the country's well-being and economy. Rapid expansion, globalization and innovation are, of course, good and have to be utilized to create value and betterment.

REFERENCES

- Boehm, L. (2019). Please Stop Using Makeup Wipes--Double Cleanse Instead!. Retrieved July 31, 2023 from: lisaboehmbeauty.com/blog/2019/5/22/please-stop-using-makeup-wipes.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). About Electronic Cigarettes (E-cigarettes). Retrieved July 31, 2023 from: www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/about-e-cigarettes.html
- Conger, C. (2020). 10 Dangerous Everyday Things in Your Home. HowStuffWorks. Retrieved July 31, 2023 from: home.howstuffworks.com/home-improvement/household-safety/dangerous-home-products.html.
- Could Protein Shakes Harm Your Health? (2022). Retrieved July 30, 2023 from: jinja.lotusblossomconsulting.com/could-protein-shakes-harm-your-health.
- Davey, M. (2017). Herbal Medicines Can Have Dangerous Side Effects, Research Reveals. The Guardian. Retrieved July 30, 2023 from: www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/feb/06/herbal-medicines-can-have-dangerous-side-effects-research-reveals
- Desk, L. (2022). Can Tea Bags Cause Cancer? Here's What Experts Say. The Indian Express. Retrieved July 30, 2023 from: indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/tea-bags-toxins-cancer-experts-alternatives-8093989
- Do fragrances cause cancer? Retrieved July 30, 2023 from: birger.qualitypoolsboulder.com/do-fragrances-cause-cancer.
- Ekor, M. (2013). The growing use of herbal medicines: issues relating to adverse reactions and challenges in monitoring safety. *Frontiers in Pharmacology*, 4. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fphar.2013.00177>.
- Kaličanin, B. (2015). A Study of the Possible Harmful Effects of Cosmetic Beauty Products on Human Health. *Biological Trace Element Research*, 170, 476–484. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12011-015-0477-2>.
- Kharbanda, N. (2020). Why Are Frozen Foods Harmful for You? Here Are the Health Effects of Eating Them. Retrieved July 30, 2023 from: www.onlymyhealth.com/why-are-frozen-foods-harmful-for-you-here-are-the-health-effects-of-eating-them-1603264949.
- Lina. (2017). Can Tea Bags Cause Cancer? Ecooe Life. Retrieved July 30, 2023 from: www.ecooe.com/ecooe-life/can-tea-bags-cause-cancer.
- Prochaska, J. J. (2021). Is Vaping Safer Than Smoking? 5 Facts About Vaping. MSD Manual Consumer Version. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.msmanuals.com/enin/home/news/editorial/2021/03/18/14/08/is-vaping-safer-than-smoking.
- Situation analysis - National tobacco-free day (2019). Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: https://insp.gov.ro/download/cnepss/stare-de-sanatate/determinantii_starii_de_sanatate/tutunul/Analiza-de-situatie-ZNT-2019.pdf

14. Smith, J. (2020). How Do Processed Foods Affect Your Health?. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/318630.
15. Steber, C. (2019). 6 Trends That Can Surprisingly Do More Harm Than Good to Your Health. Bustle. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.bustle.com/p/6-trends-that-can-surprisingly-do-more-harm-than-good-to-your-health-17903011.
16. The Hidden Dangers of Protein Powders. (2018). Harvard Health. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/the-hidden-dangers-of-protein-powders.
17. The cosmetics market in Romania, 2015-2026: how demand has evolved and market trends? (2023). Management PRO. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: <https://managementpro.ro/piata-produselor-cosmetice-in-romania-perioada-2015-2026-cum-a-evoluat-cererea-si-care-sunt-tendintele-pietei/>.
18. The Cleancult Team. (2017). Is Laundry Detergent Actually Toxic. Cleancult. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.cleancult.com/blog/is-laundry-detergent-actually-toxic.
19. Do Hair Dyes/Colors Damage Your Hair Permanently? (2019). Times of India. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/do-hair-dyes/colors-damage-your-hair-permanently/articleshow/71257864.cms.
20. Watson, K. (2019). Perfume Poisoning: Symptoms, Dangers, and What to Do. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.healthline.com/health/perfume-poisoning.
21. Weder, D. (2017). Is Coloring Hair Safe? EverydayHealth.com. Retrieved August 1, 2023 from: www.everydayhealth.com/skin-beauty/coloring-hair-safe.