

## 9 Book Review

# WE ARE LIKE THAT ONLY Understanding the Logic of Consumer India

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WE ARE LIKE THAT ONLY- Understanding the Logic of Consumer India is a highly analytical book about the Indian market by Rama Bijapurkar.

"The Indian market is about a lot of people consuming a little bit each that adds up to a lot,... the Indian DNA is about continuity with change; it is about 'THIS as well as THAT'; about cobbling together clever and low-cost solutions that are ingenious combinations and adaptations of products available in the market".

What makes India a place of opportunities in market space is well explained by Rama in this book. Consumer India's nature, characteristics, aspirations exist in real time, having impression of emerging markets. India with significant uneven income groups must not be mistaken with other emerging markets or put in the likes of how developed markets behaved when they were emerging. Rama's demographics about India is too informative and can very well redirect to the notion that for high aspiring markets like India, without crafting optimum strategies carefully considered, can fail global marketers to enter into the country. Proper examples make the book more interesting to read and open up facts like secrets.

The book deals with the structure of the Indian consumers, the reason behind why the Indian market is 'like that only' and what it takes to stay in the market. Thousands of international brands have come to the Indian market in a hope to find a billion-plus market only to be faced by consumers who bargain for everything and anything.

The Indian market goes against the conventional perceptions of an emerging market. This leaves the seller with various questions about the Indian market. The answers to this question can be found

in this book. She sheds light on the twelve key facets of the Indian consumer. These facets include, Consumer India's logic of demand structure; Purchasing power; Consumer India's determinants of Consumption; Schizophrenic India-many Indians, Evolving differently; Cultural foundations of consumer behaviour- technological changes and liberalisation; Levers of growth and transformation - coming of age of young India, changing Indian woman and rural India; The DNA of Indian society- 'This' as well as 'That'; The contradicting Indian consumer; The rural structure of Indian consumer- the changing villager beyond agriculture; The Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) consumer India; Mixed messages of consumer India; The class and the mass consumer.

It clearly explains the total earning of the Indians, and everything else about their consumption-choice, quality, rate, and things that dictate their choices. Written with a powerful language, it presents sure shot strategies to approach the Indian markets and the Indian consumers. This book helps the reader understand the market in a better way.

Much has been said in the past decade and since 1991, about the mammoth consumer market of India and many CEOs of foreign companies have been foolish enough to think of this as a market the size of the U.S., all speaking English and reachable by television. Yet reality soon caught up with them through the slowdown in the late 1990s. What they did not have is an appropriate mental model, a picture that was true to the reality of the Indian market- in terms of both its structure and behaviour. They used analogies, of experience in countries such as Brazil and Thailand to

size the Indian consumer market. She points out that they should have looked beyond the clichés about market segmentation as many are irrelevant to India.

She beautifully points out the fallacies that foreign chief executives wanting to tap into India have as to the market and about the rural foray.

The concepts may seem repetitive for some but personally, I found the book to be very detailed and informative, and only wished that Economics books were written like this for us to be more engrossed.

