
PINK TAX: - A PRICE DISCRIMINATION WITH UNFORTUNATE FEMALES

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ABSTRACT:

The pink tax affects more than just the price of a single item; it affects more than just an additional expense. Low-income women are particularly burdened by this charge since it forces them to make decisions between buying necessities and taking care of other fundamental requirements. Because of this, it may become more challenging for these women to pay for additional needs like housing, medical care, and even food. This may feed a never-ending cycle of inequality and impoverishment. The pink tax has a tendency to widen economic disparities among males and females outside of the consumer market. Numerous nations have previously done away with their taxes on feminine hygiene products, such as Kenya, Australia, and India. Except in a few US states, there aren't many official regulations or rules pertaining to the pink tax. Businesses must embrace open pricing practices and accept responsibility for their activities. The pink tax will be eliminated, which will advance gender equality.

Keywords: - Pink, Tax, discrimination, females.

INTRODUCTION

One of the famous French writer sheds lights on the heavy burden that taxes place on citizens of any nation. In order to bolster this assertion, Henry Hezlitt, a well-known Wall Street Journal business and economic journalist, contends that an increase in taxes weakens wealth accumulation, hinders manufacturing, and produces problems in addition to weakening individual drive to grow

labour and income. Mr. Hezlitt clearly communicated the large-scale implications of the rising tax burden through his excellent economic research.

From a historical perspective, it is evident that the Arthashashtra and Manu smriti treatises are where the contemporary system of direct and indirect taxation in India originated. The initial Income Tax Act was passed in 1860 by Sir James Wilson, India's first finance minister, and this system was finally put into practise. The government also makes sure that its citizens are safe and secure by bolstering the police and military. Additionally, it supports important government operations like municipal and council activities, among others. It is obvious that the taxes levied on taxpayers are wisely invested in the greater interest of society when viewed logically.

Over time, the goal of taxation has undergone a significant evolution. The pink tax is an emerging trend that has drawn a lot of attention in recent years, yet it represents a persistent issue that affects women everywhere in the entire globe. The troublesome cost disparity that females experience when acquiring items and amenities that are identical to those promoted to men is referred to as the "pink tax."

For many reasons, the widespread phenomena known as the "pink tax" demands our attention. To begin with, it is an instance of subtly discriminatory gender dynamics that upholds antiquated gender roles and exacerbates disparities in gender. Women are frequently required to pay more for goods and services that are specifically targeted to them because of their gender, despite already experiencing uneven pay in numerous regions of the world.

There have been instances of gender-based pricing discrepancies throughout history for a very long time. For instance, in the early 20th century, despite the fact that the clothing was made of the same materials, dry cleaners charged women extra to clean their shirts.

The rate of impoverishment among working women would have been lowered in half, according to research, if women were paid equally to males of their status. However, it is the fact that females frequently spend far more than males for similar products and services. Cloths, detergents, toys in pink colour and dry washing are just a few examples of often advertised goods and services that are frequently more expensive for females than they are for males. There is ample evidence that there are large pricing discrepancies for nearly identical products, despite claims by manufacturers and retailers that the price difference is the result of increased costs for making women's products or offering services to women.

Despite its brief existence, the pink tax is a deeply ingrained problem that is related to larger social and economic inequities that continue to harm women in various ways. This inequitable and prejudiced approach to the cost isn't limited to a specific industry or region, and it has been observed in nations all over the world, including India. The pink tax may also be affected by gender conventions and societal expectations. Items for cleaning and personal care products may be in higher demand because women tend to expect to take on more domestic and caring duties. Companies may benefit from this by raising the price of products geared towards women.

Furthermore, because of societal conventions that typically place a higher value on men's employment, there is a gender pay difference, which makes it harder for women to pay the pink tax.

The pink tax may have a number of negative effects on people and society. Women's buying authority and availability to necessary goods, for instance, may be restricted. Additionally, it might promote unfavourable gender stereotypes and result in economic inequalities. Therefore, tackling the pink tax is essential if we are to promote gender equality and build a more just society. Despite increased knowledge of the pink tax in the past few years, the pink tax is still widely used in India. There is still gender-based price differences in several consumer goods categories. In families with few resources, where females are regularly required to choose between purchasing necessities and taking care of other fundamental requirements, the situation is especially urgent.

Gender," which aimed to increase public awareness of the unfair pricing practises practised in the beauty industry. In a video that was part of the campaign, women criticised the pink tax and argued in favour of gender-neutral pricing. As part of the campaign, 2,000 Indian women were polled, and the findings showed that 87% of the respondents had encountered price discrimination based on gender while looking for personal care items. 74% of respondents to the poll said they were willing to move to an organisation that provided neutral regarding gender pricing. Sugar Cosmetics has promised to set prices for all of its products that are gender-neutral, and Vineeta Singh, the co-founder of the business, has challenged other cosmetic firms to do the same.

The pink tax has gained traction in India in recent years as legislators and consumer advocacy organisations press for action to eliminate gender-based pricing disparities. The pink tax is, however, mostly unregulated in India because there is no explicit regulation governing it.

India's 2019 Consumer Protection Act is a significant piece of legislation that safeguards customers against dishonest business practises. Buyers have little legal recourse because the Act, on the other hand, makes no mention of according to gender pricing inequalities. Beyond product price disparities, the pink tax issue also involves the persistence of stereotypes about gender and structural discrimination. In order to achieve financial and social equity as Indian culture moves closer to gender equality, the pink tax must be addressed. According to Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, "equality between men and women is not a women's issue; it is a human issue."

The pink tax problem extends beyond differences in product prices to include the continuation of gender stereotypes and structural discrimination. As Indian culture evolves towards gender equality, the pink tax needs to be addressed in order to attain financial and social parity. The Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen asserts that "equality between men and women is not a women's issue; it is a human issue." Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate, famously said. The pink tax not only harms the financial security of women, but it also upholds damaging ideologies and archaic gender stereotypes. The government and the private sector both have a role in resolving this issue. Government must create laws and regulations to prevent gender-based pricing discrepancies, while businesses must actively work to eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality.

RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

- The present review was aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the knowledge, and attitude regarding Pink Tax among females of different age groups.

The narrative review had been divided into 2 sections. Each section examined several related studies. These sections are:

- First section deals with the knowledge regarding pink tax among females of different age groups.
- Second section deals with the attitude regarding pink tax among females of different age groups.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the knowledge regarding pink tax among females of different age groups.
- To assess the attitude regarding pink tax among females of different age groups.

METHODS

- A narrative review was designed. A systematic electronic search was used to identify relevant studies. Only original research papers were used in the study. The electronic databases searched were: Research gate, PubMed, Scopus, Google scholar and Allied Health Literature (CINHAL).
- The existing literatures were very systematically opted to recruit into this narrative review.

Inclusion criteria

1. Original research papers related to the topic.
2. The document which is available in full text and is widely accessible online.
3. Studies that are presented in English.
4. Research studies published from the year 2018 onwards.

Exclusion criteria

- 1) Poor quality journal articles.
- 2) A research articles without having ISSN number.
- 3) Research studies that are not listed in a journal data base.
- 4) Research studies for which there is an abstract accessible.

OUTCOME

KNOWLEDGE REGARDING PINK TAX

1. Kardetoft M has conducted a research study titled “The Pink Tax” An investigation of gender-based price discrimination in the Swedish market for personal hygiene products. The primary goals of this research were to evaluate the phenomena known as the pink tax. The topic was rigorously examined in markets such as the United States and the United Kingdom, where evidence of a pink tax has been discovered. As a result, women tend to spend more for the identical goods than males, even when the only difference appears to be packaging and/or aroma. The product samples were divided into five categories: razor blades, razors, shaving cream, deodorant, and soap. The samples were collected by hand from 16 separate locations in

Västra Götaland, Sweden, within a 38-kilometer radius between Skövde and Mariestad. The data supported the existence of a pink tax in the United States.

2. Dsouza L S, Nazar A has conducted a study titled “A Study on the Awareness of Pink Tax” This study investigated the social phenomena of the pink tax by gathering questionnaire responses from participants ranging in age from 18 to 28 years. The study's findings found that gender had little effect on individual expenditure and savings, and around 60% of respondents are ignorant of the Pink Tax. The study concluded that neither gender nor age influenced expenditure among respondents. To eliminate pricing disparities, it is necessary to raise awareness and enhance access to unisex products. Everyone deserves the same salary and price for the same product.
3. Sanadhya N in 2022 has conducted an Interview based research study on “Pink Tax and Pink Marketing- Understanding, Awareness, Solution”. A survey was done with 20 female and male university students. Google meet and MS Groups were used to share online and offline interviews, and messages were distributed to chosen respondents. In this study, primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data was collected through interviews using questionnaires, two questionnaires were used, one for female consumers and the other for male consumers, and secondary data was compiled from various open sources such as papers, journals, and articles. The data revealed that the majority of customers were unaware of the fundamentals of the pink tax; yet, university students were able to identify the visibility of price discrimination in simple products such as t-shirts and haircuts. As they advanced in age, they appeared to have never heard of the concept but could grasp the concept. Female candidates will stay to the skincare industry, where female consumers would prefer pay more for items than buy male skincare trendy products. The reason is that they have faith in the formulation and brands they already use. They would, however, be willing to try male body lotions, body washes, soaps, t-shirts, and other items. Male customers admitted that the ratio is skewed towards women paying more, although prejudice exists in both directions. Male customers also stated that they believed consumers were uneducated about it, Women might also be an easy target. How the beauty, fashion, and self-care industries focus on the aesthetic element of female attraction to items that women are willing to pay more for the packaging and luxury without recognising the evident price hikes. This study discovered that a few factors, such as being informed and aware of the notions of price discrimination, and comparing before purchasing, can be solutions to it. Experiencing multiple approaches to building trust and considering gender neutral possibilities.

ATTITUDE REGARDING PINK TAX

1. Allaine Bernadette S. Chua, Alyannah M. Hidalgo ,et al. has conducted a research study titled “Pink Power: The Extent of Awareness, Driving Factors, and Overall Perception of Filipina Youth Consumers in Metro Manila, Philippines on Pink Tax Caused by Pink Marketing Strategy. A qualitative descriptive research design was used in this study. Thirty people took part, and semi-structured open-ended questions were asked via Google forms. Thematic

- analysis found that respondents' personal experiences pervaded the notion, validating earlier literature and studies. According to the findings of the study, respondent Filipina Youth Consumers are aware of pink tax, but only to the level of definition and practise as noticed in various products. They are unwilling to buy things with pink taxes as a result of the pink marketing approach; yet, quality and social and cultural norms around gender schema are driving factors in purchasing. Negative perceptions outnumber good perceptions because it is perceived as discriminatory, anti-equality, and a method of deceiving and manipulating women.
2. Magnusson E, Eriksson M. has conducted a research study titles "Willing to shop like a women? A consumer viewpoint on the perception of the Pink Tax" aims to examine men and women's perceptions of the Pink Tax in Sweden, including how price effects willingness to buy, perceived price fairness, and perception of gendered items. The qualitative interview technique was utilised to obtain data from 8 respondents aged 20 to 25 years. According to the findings of this study, both Swedish men and women regard the Pink Tax as discriminatory and unethical. They also have a common grasp of the issue's potential ramifications. Gender specification of items and gender-based marketing have a strong influence on both men and women. Women are more conscious of the Pink Tax and the pricing inequality that it causes.
 3. In 2023, Reji R, Nicholas A, and Shah J.K conducted "A Study on Female Consumer Perception of Pink Tax with Special Reference to Cochin City." In order to determine the awareness, causes, and effects of the pink tax on society, 100 individuals were selected using a suitable sample approach and requested to fill out a questionnaire. For the first time, primary data was gathered through personal experiences and questionnaires, and secondary data was gathered from various sources such as government publications, censuses, books, journals, and so on. According to the study findings, 38.9% of respondents were aware of the term pink tax, while 61.1% were not, and 72.6% agreed that gender discrimination existed. Other research revealed that 56.7% of respondents had encountered pink tax in Skin Care and Cosmetics. 54.9% of those polled have prior experience with Health and Hygiene Products. Pink tax has been experienced by 40.7% of respondents in watches and 39.8% of respondents in clothing, which is the lowest. Tariffs are cited by 14.2% of respondents, while 36.3% believe the pink tax exists because women are willing to pay more. The Pink Tax was unfamiliar to 61.1% of poll respondents, yet 72.6% agreed that pricing discrimination based on gender exists. Only 29.2% of those polled believed that the prejudice had a major impact on their saving habits. Based on the survey results, it is possible to deduce that a sizable proportion of respondents support policymakers and price regulators taking the Pink Tax into account when developing policies and setting prices.
 4. Alam M M, Cropper M, et al. has conducted a research study on titled "Closing the Gap: Gender, Transport, and Employment in Mumbai" The study's target demographic was households in the Greater Mumbai Region between 2004 and 2019. A total of 3,024 households were surveyed. Based on World pop data for 2018, sampling was done in proportion to the ward level population. The questionnaire was given to a man and a woman between the ages of 18 and 45 in each household. The two respondents were picked depending on whether they were

the household's principal or secondary earner. This study discovered significant discrepancies in men's and women's mobility patterns, which reflect differences in the distribution of labour within the household. These disparities in mobility patterns, as well as their change through time, suggest an implicit "pink tax" on female mobility. Transportation appears to be simply one of many, if not the most important, impediment to women's labor-force participation.

5. P. Priyanga. Dr. R. Krishnaveni . has conducted a research study titled "Perception of Women Consumer towards Branded Cosmetics in Nagapattinam District. The purpose of this study was to look at the elements that influence female customers' purchasing intentions for cosmetics. A total of 130 current cosmetics users were reached to collect data via questionnaires. They were examined using the descriptive research method. According to the findings of the study, the perceived level of brand reputation, advertising credibility, brand origin, and experiential benefits of the cosmetic brand generates higher levels of satisfaction effects for female consumers. In order to attain consumer happiness and loyalty, marketers should focus on brand image traits, quality, and advantages, according to the findings. It will positively position the brand in the minds of consumers if the brand's images and values are maintained and strengthened
6. Dr. G. Sriparna. has conducted a research study titled "The changing perception and buying behaviour of women consumer in Urban India. The purpose of this article was to identify changing perceptions and compare purchasing behaviour among working and non-working women in urban India. A survey was done using a structured questionnaire and the direct interview method to collect data. This study discovered that women's many roles influence their own and their family members' purchasing behaviour, and that working women are price, quality, and brand concerned, as well as heavily influenced by others when shopping

CONCLUSION

Pink tax is a common practice in both service and product industries, including dry cleaning, transportation, and personal care and apparel. There's no exception when it comes to things for kids, from toys and stationery to clothes and accessories. Gender-based product and service marketing, particularly when it comes to package changes, is responsible for the pink tax. Frequently, similar products that don't need to be differentiated to match a specific gender are also categorized according to gender in order to benefit the seller from the additional money paid (known as the "pink tax") for the more expensive product. Businesses have taken action to end the pink tax and educate more consumers about it after realizing how discriminatory it is in recent years.

Publicly highlighting instances of goods and services provided by businesses that impose the pink tax is a crucial component of the pink tax awareness campaign. Customers of these businesses are more likely to seek justice and support the pink tax revolution when they become aware of the gender-based price discrimination that they were victims of. The tax paid on menstruation products, or the "tampon tax," is always brought up in discussions concerning the pink tax. The

latter is distinct from the former since it is a legally recognized tax in its literal sense. This makes it simpler for the government to alter and put into effect tampon tax policy.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The studies reported that the pink tax issue in India is made worse by the gender wage gap. The large female population in India has significant social and economic challenges. The gender pay disparity is very significant in India, where men make 82% of the labour pay and women make only 18% for similar work, according to the World Inequality Report 2022. India has a salary equality score of 0.62 and ranks 135th out of 146 countries in the World Economic Forum (WEF) report from 2022 on the gender gap index. This demonstrates how severe the gender pay gap is in India and how it affects the pink tax debate, as women may find it harder to bear the higher costs associated with gender-based pricing.

Consumer advocacy groups work to spread the word about the pink tax and put pressure on businesses and decision-makers to take action. Initiatives for consumer advocacy in India have centred on promoting gender-neutral pricing and increasing public awareness of discrimination in pricing based on gender. These campaigns have all utilised online petitions, protests, and social media efforts. The government has also been encouraged by certain efforts to address the pink tax through legislation or regulations.

While nations like Australia, Canada, the UK, and India have condemned the pink tax and accepted its unfairness, these governments have not yet taken any action to lessen or eliminate the pink tax. Since sellers do not have to charge a uniform rate of pink tax on goods and services, gathering information about the tax and developing potential ways to do away with it can be difficult and time-consuming.

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