



## HUMAN WANTS

In our daily life we see that different people are engaged in different types of activities. For example, some people are engaged in farming, some work in offices, some are selling vegetables, some are having different types of shops, some are running factories etc. These people are engaged in different types of activities to earn income. They have to earn income because they have to satisfy so many wants.

To earn income people use resources man made or natural. Wants are unlimited but the resources are limited/Scarce.



### OBJECTIVES

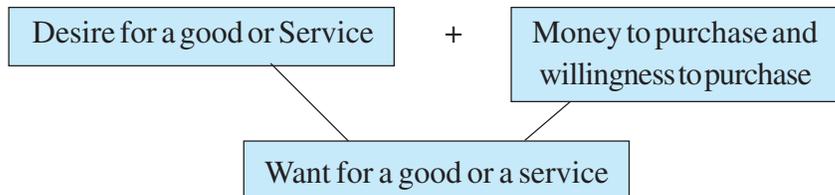
After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- *explain the meaning of wants;*
- *explain how wants arise and grow;*
- *understand that all wants can not be satisfied;*
- *state the characteristics of wants;*
- *know how resources satisfy wants;*
- *differentiate between economic and non economic wants;*
- *explain that with development wants expand and change;*
- *understand the Indian philosophy of limiting wants.*

### 2.1 MEANING OF WANTS

It is human nature to have many goods in life. There would be an endless list of such wishes. Let us call these wishes as 'desires'. One may desire a good house, a car, a computer, good food, decent clothes and so on. How can one get all of these? One may

have these things if he/she has money. If one does not have enough money, then only one or two of these or none of these could be purchased. Which of our desires are to be fulfilled depends upon our capacity to pay or purchasing power. That is why not all desires can be met as we need money to satisfy them. The desires which are backed by money and willingness to purchase may be called wants. A beggar may desire to have a car but this desire can not be called a want as it is not backed by adequate money. However, if a rich man desires to have a car and is willing to purchase it, the desire can be turned into a want.



## 2.2 HOW DO WANTS ARISE AND GROW

Wants are a part of our living. They arise with the birth of man. Man in ancient times was satisfied while living in forests, drinking water from the streams, plucking fruits from trees or eating animal flesh to satisfy hunger. He had limited wants which were related to food, Shelter and clothing. Over a period of time, these wants have grown. How did it happen?

With the discovery of fire man started cooking food. This led to the discovery of new food items. Man's taste grew and expanded. A large variety of food stuffs came into existence. Today you can find different varieties of tastes, colours and shapes in food items.

As regards clothing, man has moved from unstitched animal skins and tree leaves to a variety of clothes. In order to live better, man discovered and invented new items of clothing. As knowledge, taste and fashion are increasing, new and better products in clothing are emerging.

In a similar fashion, need for housing has also undergone a tremendous change. Man has moved from caves to huts made of straw and pucca houses made of bricks. Now a days, houses made of wood, pucca houses, bungalows and palaces with fancy doors, windows and all sorts of decorative paints and fixtures are in use.

However, some wants may be necessary for the existence of life. For example, food, clothing and shelter. These are called basic wants or necessities. There are some other wants which make our life easy and comfortable. These are called comforts. Examples of comforts may be coolers, scooter etc. Some goods give us pleasure but they are very costly. For example, luxurious cars, diamond jewellery etc. such good are called luxuries.



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## 2.3 SATISFACTION OF WANTS

Do all our wants get satisfied? No, As soon as one want is satisfied another takes its place; our wants increase because we desire to live a better and comfortable life. As new goods and service are developed, we want them. Wants can be satisfied by goods and services. Goods and services can be produced with the help of resources. Land, labour, capital and entrepreneurship are called resources which help in the production of goods and services. Wants are unlimited but the resources to satisfy them are scarce. As soon as one want is satisfied, another takes its place. Some of these wants can be satisfied by man with his limited income while for others he may not be able to do so. *It is, therefore, not possible to fulfill all our wants though a single want is satiable.*

## 2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF WANTS

The following are the most important characteristics of wants.

### (i) Wants are unlimited:

Famous economist Marshall has rightly said that human wants are countless in number and are varied in kind. As soon as one want is satisfied another want takes its place. This endless circle of wants continues through out life. For example, a person who has never used a fan would wish to have a fan. When this want is satisfied, he would wish to get an air cooler and a scooter. Once these wants are satisfied, then he would wish to have an air conditioner, a car and so on. Thus, we see wants never come to an end.

### (ii) A single want is satiable

Each want taken separately can be satisfied. It has rightly been said that there is a limit to each particular want. For example, if a man is thirsty he can satisfy his thirst by taking one, two or three glasses of water and after that he does not want water at that point of time.

### (iii) Some wants arise again and again

Most wants recur. If they are satisfied once, they arise again after a certain period. We eat food and hunger is satisfied but after a few hours, we again feel hungry and we have to satisfy our hunger again with food. Therefore, hunger, thirst etc. are such wants which occur again and again.

### (iv) Varying nature of wants

Wants vary with time, place and person. They are also influenced by many factors like income, customs, fashion, advertisement etc. For example, we want medicines only when we are sick. Ice is needed in summer season only. We need woollens even in summer at a place like Sri nagar. Similarly, people have started using things like T.V.

Sets, mobile phones, car and many other luxury goods due to increase in their income and change in fashion. Thus, wants have been found to vary and to multiply with the economic development of a country.

**(v) Present wants are more important than future wants:**

Present wants are more important. A person uses most of his limited resources for the satisfaction of present wants. He does not worry much about his future wants because future is uncertain and less urgent. For example, providing for the education of children in the present is more important than providing for old age security in future.

**(vi) Wants change and expand with development**

A simple example to show how wants are changing is the telephone. Earlier, in the rural areas there were not many telephones, but today telephone has become a necessity for everybody for keeping in touch with their near and dear ones. People using telephone earlier, are now using mobile phones. They want more and more facilities in their mobile phones such as, Camera, Internet and so on.



**INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.1**

1. How does a desire differ from a want?
2. Give one example to show that wants arise and grow.
3. Why are all wants not satiable?
4. State any two characteristics of wants.
5. When does a desire become a want?

**2.5 HOW RESOURCES SATISFY WANTS**

As stated earlier wants are satisfied with the use of goods and services. To produce these goods and services, resources are used. With ever growing wants, we have been making greater use of resources. Resource may be natural or man-made. All resources can be classified into land, labour, capital and entrepreneurship. For example, for the production of wheat, we use land, labour, tractor pump set etc. (capital). Farmer (entrepreneur) organizes all these factors to produce wheat. He also uses seeds, manure and fertilizers in this process. Thus, production of wheat involves the use of resources. Similarly, production of all other goods & services also involves the use of resources. Are the resources unlimited like our wants? The answer is 'no'. The resources that we use to satisfy our endless wants are limited/scarce. With the development, new goods



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are invented which lead to increase in our wants. But the resources do not increase accordingly. This may lead to exhaust our resources.

## 2.6 ECONOMIC AND NON-ECONOMIC WANTS

We have so far learnt that wants are unlimited. They differ from person to person. As you know many of our wants are satisfied by using certain goods, and services. These goods and services are purchased from the market by paying a price. **The wants that can be satisfied by such goods and services are called economic wants.**

**A few things that we want, are not purchased from the market by paying a price. Such wants are called non-economic wants.** For example, we want air to breathe, rain water for agriculture etc. When we want a maid to cook, it is our economic want. But if the food is cooked by mother, it becomes non-economic want.



### INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.2

1. Name the resources used in the production of wheat.
2. Which one of the following is scarce in supply?
  - (a) Resources
  - (b) Wants
3. Give any two examples of economic wants.
4. Give any two examples of non-economic wants.

## 2.7 WANTS EXPAND AND CHANGE WITH DEVELOPMENT

In ancient times, man was satisfied with simple items of food, clothing and shelter etc. But with the development these wants grew in nature and number. Our want for food we eat has changed. We want to eat not only better and nutritious food but different varieties of food. Similarly we want to wear not only a pair of clothes but we want variety as well as latest designs according to the fashion. We want to have a better house with modern facilities like, air conditioners, geysers etc. you all know that for communication we not only want a simple telephone but also a mobile phones having many facilities like camera, internet, video recording etc. Thus, man's evergrowing and changing wants lead to many inventions and discoveries which result in new and better quality of goods and services.

## 2.8 INDIAN PHILOSOPHY OF LIMITING WANTS

As we all know our wants are unlimited but our resources to satisfy these wants are limited. Hence if we keep our wants as unlimited and growing, we will not be able to

satisfy all of them with our limited resources. This will give rise to a lot of dissatisfaction. But on the other hand, if we limit our wants we will be able to satisfy most of them with our limited resources and this will give us more and more satisfaction. The Indian philosophy has always been to limit our wants so that we feel satisfied in life. This helps us to lead a happy life as we do not have to suffer any unhappiness due to unfulfilled wants.

Even the father of our nation, Gandhiji always advocated controlling of one's wants so that we can have a satisfied life and we do not have to indulge into wrong deeds or practices to satisfy unlimited wants out of our limited resources. There have been many great thinkers who have advocated the same.

**Notes****INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.3**

1. What is the Indian philosophy related to the satisfaction of wants with limited resources?
2. Give one example of communication system to prove that wants change and expand with development.

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

- The desires which are backed by money and willingness to purchase, may be called wants.
- Wants are satisfied with the use of goods and services
- Economic wants are satisfied by using goods and services purchased from the market by paying a price.
- Non-economic wants are satisfied by using goods and services which are not purchased from the market by paying a price.
- With the discovery and new inventions, new wants arise and grow.
- Some wants may be necessary for the existence of life. These are necessities.
- Wants, which make our life easy and comfortable, are called comforts.
- Some wants give us pleasure but they are satisfied by costly goods are called luxuries.
- Although a single want is satiable, all wants can not be satisfied due to the scarcity of resources.



**Notes**

- Some most important characteristics of wants are :  
wants are unlimited, a single want is satiable, some wants arise again and again, wants vary with time, place and person. Present wants are more important than future wants, wants change and expand with development,
- Wants change and expand with development
- Indian philosophy is to limit our wants to get more and more satisfaction.



**TERMINAL EXERCISE**

1. Give any two examples showing the conversion of desires into want.
2. How do wants arise and grow? Explain with the help of an example.
3. All wants can not be satisfied? Explain why?
4. State any four main characteristics of wants.
5. Prove with an example that present wants are more important than future wants.
6. How do the resources satisfy the wants.
7. Distinguish between economic and non-economic wants.
8. ‘Wants expand and change with development’ explain.
9. Why should we limit our wants?



**ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS**

**Intext Questions 2.1**

1. The desires which are backed by money and willingness to purchase are called wants.
2. With the discovery of fire man started cooking food which led to the increase of a large variety of food items.
3. All wants are not satiable because of scarcity of resources.
4. (i) wants are unlimited  
(ii) Some wants arise again and again
5. A desire becomes a want when it is backed by money and willingness to purchase.

**Intext Questions 2.2**

1. Land, labour, capital (machinery), seeds, manures, fertilizers etc.
2. (a)
3. (i) Pen (ii) Book
4. (i) Air to breath (ii) Rain water for agriculture