ABSTRACT
India has witnessed a boom of etailing industry in the twenty first century with more and more number of Indians going online for their shopping needs. Though this upward trend in etailing spells good news for the economy, it has ominous repercussions for the environment in many unimaginable ways. The rosy picture of economic development as usual has its ugly underside in the case of the etailing industry as well. Therefore the need for an ecocritical perspective to understand the ecological cost of the growth in etailing. Ecocriticism is that interdisciplinary branch of critical inquiry which deals with questions of how literary arts can enable humankind to tackle the questions of fatal climate changes taking place all over the world. One very significant aspect of ecocriticism is its focus on the role that an individual plays in restoring and maintaining the ever-fragile ecological balance. This paper tries to explain the direct but not so obvious impact of these market trends on Ecology in Indian context and the role that ecocriticism can play in reducing as well as negating these ill-effects, thus highlighting the role that an individual customer can play in the collective efforts of ecological conservations. It is a humble effort to provide a new direction to the interdisciplinary research that brings together the insights of literary theory in the domain of trade and commerce.

Keywords: Ecommerce, Etailing, Ecocriticism, Ecological Conservation, Eco-consciousness

INTRODUCTION
The first two decades of the new millennium has seen overwhelming changes taking place in all the spheres of Indian life - on personal as well as national level. Digital technology has made such deep inroads in India that were unthinkable at the turn of the century. Digital gadgets are no more the considered the privilege of the creamy layer that they were in the last decade of the twentieth century; in fact they have literally become toys in the hands of little children. According to the Telecom Ministry of India estimate, India had 337 million internet users by the end of 2016 and the same estimate projects this number to be a whopping 528 million by the end of 2019 (Vamsi). With such a huge number of its populace having access to internet services, it's a given that India has changed drastically in this century. One of these changes can be prominently seen in the changing shopping habits of the digitally inclined Indians i.e. their tendency to opt for online shopping over conventional brick-and-mortar markets.

Online shopping has come to be known as variedly but interchangeably as e-commerce or e-tailing, the term that is used in this paper. Oxford Living Dictionaries defines e-tailing as "retail activity conducted via electronic media, especially the Internet", while Cambridge Dictionary terms it as "a business that uses the internet to sell its products”. E-tailing encompasses all the possible forms of buying and selling that is carried out with the help of internet which remains the constant in all the definitions of the term. In their insightful exposition of e-tailing, Cavallone and Modina have thus elaborated on its classification:
Business to Consumer (B2C) which entails the sale of goods and/or services by the company to the end customer. It represents the most significant quota of the market and includes specialized and generic operators, click and mortar, virtual outlets; b) Business to Business (B2B) which entails the sale of goods and/or services from one company to another; c) Consumer to Consumer (C2C) which entails the sale or the exchange of goods and/or services between private individuals; d) Consumer to Business (C2B) which entails an exchange of information and/or knowledge between private individuals and companies”.

However, this paper deals with only the B2C avatar of e-tailing. focuses on the role of the individual customer on bringing down the ecological impact of this type of retail marketing.

OBJECTIVES
This study focuses on the role of the individual customer on bringing down the ecological impact of this type of retail marketing in regards with the following objectives:

1. To understand the impact of rapidly increasing volume of etailing industry on the environment in India
2. To explore the notion of ‘etailer miles’ on the lines of ‘food miles’ to create eco-consciousness among e-shoppers
3. To delineate the role of individual e-shoppers in ecological conservation vis-à-vis rampant growth of etailing industry.

HYPOTHESIS
1. Rising volume of the etailing industry has various adverse effects on the environment
2. Individual e-shopper has a significant role to play in arresting and reversing these adverse effects caused by etailing

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
A great many studies have taken stock of the present volume and the future potential of the etailing industry in India. Vijetha Mukkelli’s "Growth and Challenges of E-tailing in India" is one of such prominent efforts which make the etailing scenario in India quite clear. Raghu Ramachandran’s "Yet another Perspective on eCommerce in India" is an effort to suggest measures to improve the etailing industry in India apart from reviewing its present situation. However, none of these studies, like their countless counterparts bother to look into the havoc that this burgeoning industry is wrecking upon the environment in India. They seem to be complacent with the economic side of the issue without paying any heed to its ecological aspect. This paper aims to fill this lacuna in the academic discourse pertaining to etailing industry in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The basic research method employed in the proposed study is analytical research in which the analysis, observations, interpretations and insights of the researcher have significant roles. It also employs the ecocritical method of literary inquiry to gain perspectives in the field of etailing industry. As such, this study is interdisciplinary in nature combining the forces of literary theory with that of commerce. All the data used in this study is collected from secondary sources available online as well as in print.

FINDINGS/RESULTS
With etailing leader Flipkart claiming to have hit $1 billion in sales in 2014, one can imagine the ever-increasing volume of e-tailing in India (Srivas). Dr. Vijetha Mukkelli has observed in her study of e-tailing in India: "India has reached close to 10 million online shoppers and is growing at an estimated 30% CAGR vis-à-vis a global growth rate of 8–10%" (20). With such a burgeoning volume of this field also come never-seen-before business models and market strategies. In order to stay ahead of the competition, the e-tailing firms in India have adopted a lot many unconventional business strategies-

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logistics being one of them. Along with other factors, what matters to the customer shopping online is the delivery time taken by the e-tailer. This has led to a number of innovations in the field of B2C (Business to Customer) logistics in India as explained herein:

"Each of the online retailers have tens of thousands of suppliers (not exclusively that I am aware of) selling their wares. The suppliers, located all over India, move goods from their warehouse to that of the logistics company. The online retailer makes the time in transit commitment (hopefully based on logistics provider’s capabilities)” (Ramchandran).

Eco-criticism informs us: "human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it" (White 21). From this vantage point, an ecocritical perspective enables us to see the miles (or kilometers) that the product must be travelling to and fro before reaching the end-user. When juxtaposed with the concept of 'food miles', this distance travelled by the product from the supplier to the customer via the e-tailer speaks volumes about its environmental repercussions. Wikipedia defines food miles as "the distance food is transported from the time of its production until it reaches the consumer. Food miles are one factor used when assessing the environmental impact of food, including the impact on global warming” (Wikipedia). Similar assessment of the impact of the 'etailer miles' on the environment need to be carried out before it becomes too late to take the corrective steps in this regard. Regulating policies regarding the logistics aspect of e-tailing to bring down the 'etailer miles' do not exist as of now and do not seem to be in the offing anytime soon. In such a situation it falls on the individual customer to be aware of the ecological damage that is caused by their shopping habits which result in higher 'etailer miles' and make necessary changes accordingly.

Yet another aspect of the e-tailing from ecocritical perspective is the packaging of the parcel by the e-tailer before the product is delivered to the end-user. Amazon is an obvious culprit in this regard, although the same has been practiced by all the players in the e-tailing market, with its oversized boxes even for as tiny items as lipsticks. As the UK newspaper The Sun reports: "Although Amazon’s global head of sustainability, Kara Hurst, claims the company usually gets things right to begin with, she admits things could be improved after seeing some of the pictures customers have posted online.” These oversized parcels result in larger quantity of waste generated in the form of packaging material as well as higher number of vehicles needed to make the deliveries. Also in order to cut down the time taken for delivery, e-tailers break down the customer orders and ship the products as and when they are made available by the suppliers. This results in more parcels and more delivery visits, which directly results in extravagantly larger amounts of packaging waste apart from incredibly (and quite unnecessarily) swollen up 'etailer miles'.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, one just needs to take a look at the experiences of other countries with etailing industry and the disastrous scenario arising in order to avoid having to face the same terrifying situation at home. The Daily Mail gives a horrific picture of the volume of the waste that is generated by such packaging material: "At least 12.5 million tonnes of paper and cardboard are produced in the UK every year, which on average is around 200kg per person". It will not take long for the Indian scenario to look much similar taking into consideration the speed at which the e-tailing market is growing here. Add to this the gigantic demographic aspect of our country and the picture becomes acutely nightmarish. The only way out from this frighteningly dystopic scenario seems to be looking at the whole e-tailing concept from an ecocritical perspective and not just from economic perspective. In this regard, the role that the individual customer would have to play would be much more significant than the role played by either the market players or the regulating government bodies. A bit of eco-conscious change in one’s e-shopping habits can make huge positive difference in relation with ‘etailer miles’ as well as the ‘etailer waste’ which will be reduced considerably which will augur well for our collective efforts towards ecological conservation.
FUTURE STUDY

A comparative study of the major etailers in India can be conducted in relation with the ‘etailer miles’ that each of them requires to execute an average order by an e-shopper. This will throw significant light on their carbon footprint and the ecological impact thereof. Similarly, a comparative study can be conducted focusing on the packaging material used by each etailer which will bring forth the menace caused by the ‘etailer waste’.

REFERENCES