

# Have Entrepreneurs in the Family? *Treat Them Well.*

**BUSHRA ZAMAN**

As more and more young people start their own businesses, they are often subject to unfortunate and unwarranted behaviour from their family members in the guise of “support.”

Here’s how you can do better.

## ASKING FOR DISCOUNTS

Sometimes, ordering from an acquaintance who just opened a business does them a favour. If your intention is to appreciate and explain how efficient they are at serving clientele, then you would be helpful.

However, if your intention is to order a product to then gloat about how you are saving their new business from going under, and then asking for a discount using family ties, then it may be best for you to not order at all.

Ordering products and services and asking them to be free of charge can really make things difficult for the businessperson, since they may feel inclined to serve you on account of you being a family member, even if it may cost them their initial profits.

## CANCELLING ORDERS

Cancelling orders is always problematic, especially if it’s done last minute. Imagine spending hours baking a cake and after finishing, your relative calls and says they no longer want it. The thing is, it is already



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

more than nerve wracking when serving a relative as a customer.

Even the slightest “inconsiderate behaviour” on your part may just be the hot topic at any future *dawaat*. When you know a customer on a regular basis and they have

a legitimate reason for cancelling, it may be understandable. However, doing so over and over can cause the businessperson in question to suffer from losses.

This especially applies when another customer wanted the same thing you or-

dered, but the product was kept for you on a first-come-first-serve basis.

## RESCHEDULING DELIVERIES

When delivering a product, whether by personnel from the business in question or by separate delivery companies, deliveries are often done area-wise for convenience. Rescheduling deliveries can prove to be a hassle, especially if customers do so as an excuse to not take the product.

This gets even worse if you know a relative is at home, but the delivery person is called to inform you saying that they are not. Why make things unnecessarily awkward? It is always best to not order if you are not sure whether you can pay for the product, or to be direct about delivery dates if you’re worried about any changes to your plans of being at home.

Opening a new business can be daunting as is, and it is true that support from your loved ones can help make things better, even during the most confusing and frustrating times of your career as a businessperson. But such support should only be offered with the best intentions, in a way any other regular, well-mannered customer would have.

*Bushra Zaman likes books, art, and only being contacted by email. Contact her at bushra-zaman31@yahoo.com*

# Places Where Your Opinions Don’t Matter

**TANZIM NOOR TANMOY**

An opinion can be considered to be the easiest form of expression – it doesn’t have to be true, nor does it have to fulfil any purpose, except being a perspective on a matter.

That’s why everyone seems to always have one, about everything. This is not always helpful. Good or bad, understanding the nuances of forming and expressing an opinion can seem complicated.

Here is where we can start.

## YOUR SINCERE COMMENTS ON A FEMALE CELEBRITY’S SELFIE

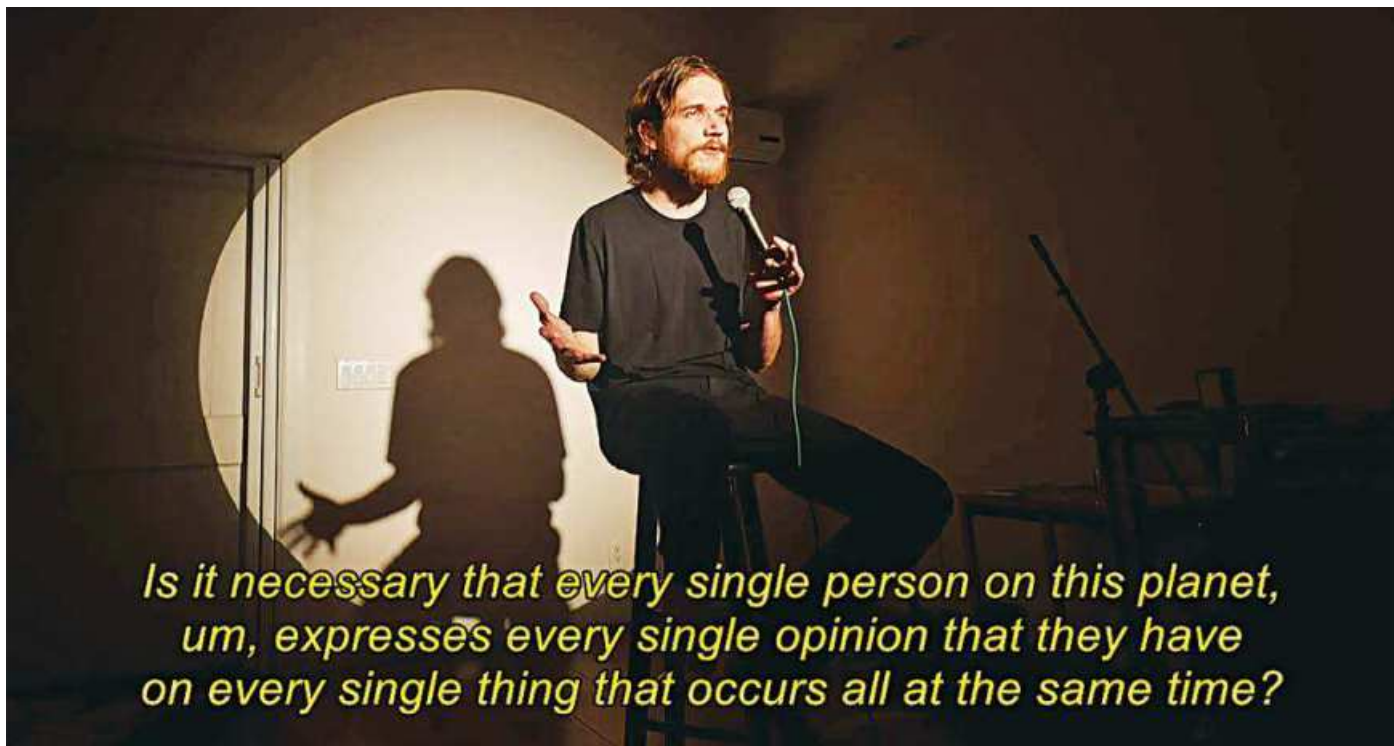
Although it might seem like you are the *only* person this entire planet who cares enough to advise a female celebrity on what she should and should not post, trust me, she already has a support system of people around her to help.

So, the next time you are brimming with an opinion about how her photo disrupts the cultural values you are the sole protector of, take a step back and re-evaluate. Frankly, the online space these celebrities occupy is already pretty intrusive and toxic, so just cut them some slack on a selfie.

## SCEPTIC REMARKS IN AN EXPOSÉ POST

A little scepticism is good, but if you’ve taken it upon yourself to pour all your life’s scepticism in a post about someone’s alleged abusers or harassers, then I hate to break it to you, that’s a solid “don’t”.

Incidents of harassment, abuse, gaslighting, cheating and such can take weeks, months, even years for a victim to come to terms with and talk about, let alone ask accountability for. Refrain from taking away what, in most cases, is the only form of capital these victims can afford and get



*Is it necessary that every single person on this planet, um, expressēs every single opinion that they have on every single thing that occurs all at the same time?*

some accountability through.

## WHATABOUTISM IN SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES

When any issue regarding some sort of injustice or oppression arises, counter questions or accusations to dilute the incident are not uncommon.

This is extremely harmful towards the victim party, whoever they may be, since not only does this not add any new narrative to help them, but also it directly leads to victim silencing. Let’s just all

agree to never do this.

## THE ONLY CONSTANT GREEN LIGHT

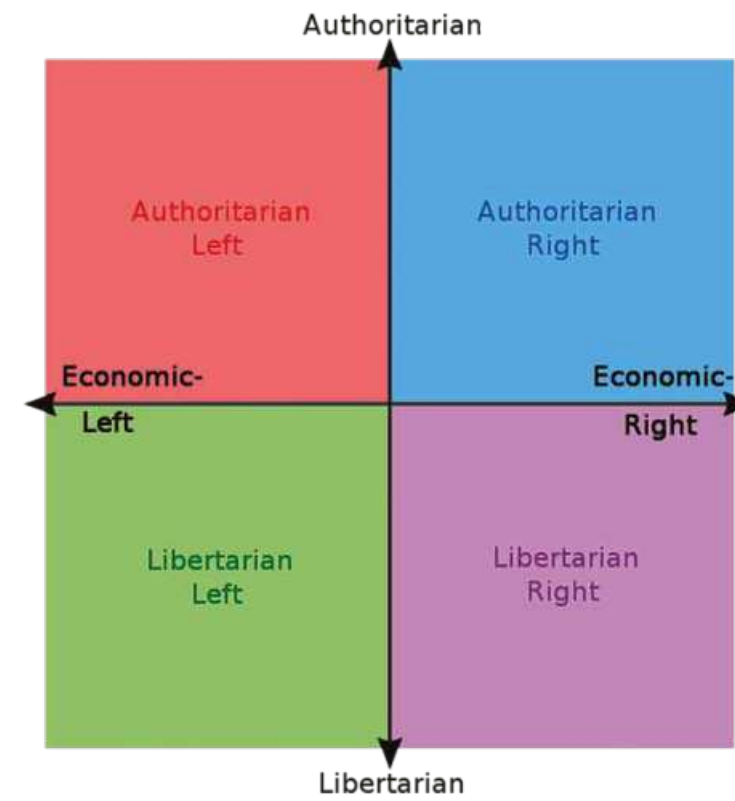
The only good idea for an opinion is when you have something nice to say or when it’s constructive criticism that was specifically asked for.

Being nice to someone doesn’t require much effort. On the other hand, a simple compliment can make a person’s day. That’s why this is the only automatic “do” in the list. Criticise someone if they specifically asked for it and it’s constructive, that’s

the only way to go about criticism.

Even this article is me expressing my opinion, so maybe take this with a grain of salt. Using empathy and filtering your biases will always lead to better decisions of when to engage and when to stay put, and that should be the takeaway from this.

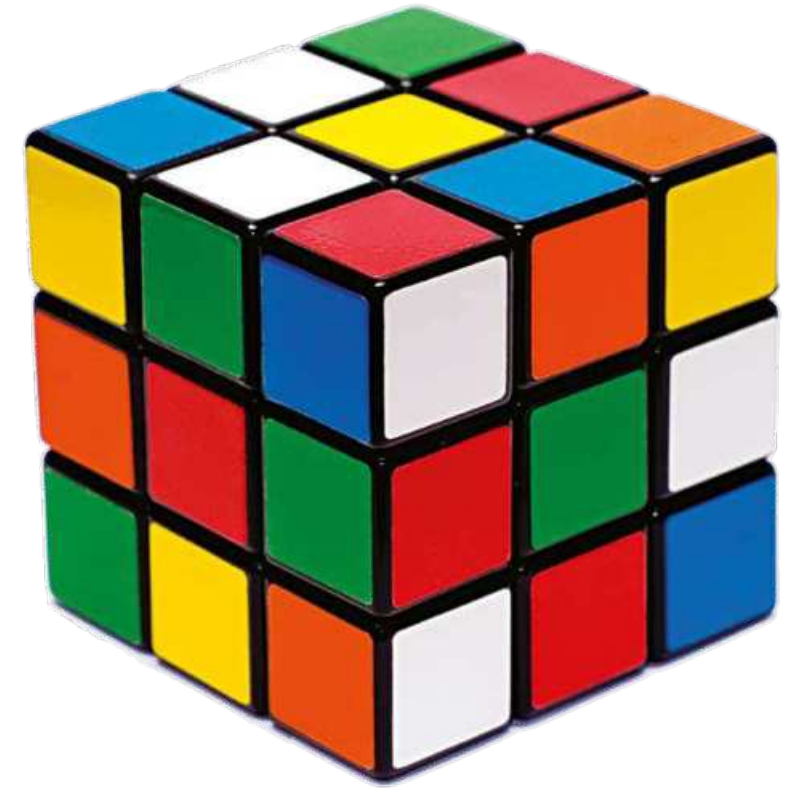
*Tanzim pretends to like anime and have a personality outside of pop-culture references, educate him at [www.facebook.com/tanzimoy.tanzim](http://www.facebook.com/tanzimoy.tanzim)*



What it looks like...

# Understanding Political Labels

What it feels like...



## ALIZA RAHMAN & FATIMA JAHAN ENA

Political labels, much like the concept of politics as a whole, may seem like faraway titles that are out of our immediate reach. As a result, we may not give much thought to the nuances of political labelling that can exist within our own spheres.

These labels exist to bring unification and solidarity. Coalescing under specific titles or labels allows people to work together towards a common goal or have a shared identity. However, the shortcomings of the labels may be ignored, which could potentially become barriers to our goals.

## WHAT LABELS MISS

A commonality in the political discourse in many countries is to conflate the left and the liberals by those who might be deemed to be on the right. This example is one that is particularly useful in explaining one of the biggest issues of labels and how labels are often used by groups or influential individuals to mark people for their base to not listen to, because those who follow even a handful of influencers, academics, or personal acquaintances identifying as leftists may see the scathing critique of neoliberalism and other systems and ideas that liberals push and ignore and vice versa.

What might eventually become obvious to anyone who keeps up with political news for a time is that labels can be used to obscure, mislead, and distract. Not only do we begin to form preconceived notions about people based on the labels they use for themselves, we also assume certain behaviours automatically indicate a person has certain political beliefs.

The umbrella effect of a label can often exclude the chance to interact with people who believe in other ideologies. Political discourse is regularly nipped at the bud when the mention of labels comes into play. This is an unfortunately common sight in popular social media platforms with Facebook being a prominent example. A user may want to begin a civilised discourse about political issues, only to be met with ridicule by

people from the opposing mindset.

This results in the formation of political echo-chambers. Regardless of political identity, these echo-chambers filled with like-minded individuals become unavoidable once labels are adopted. While it may be fulfilling to engage in discussion with people who have similar mindsets, beliefs, ideologies, etc., it can be detrimental as the sharing of new opinions and perspectives are greatly curbed.

In the daunting face of becoming politically educated, people often turn to more accessible options. More recently, a trend on the internet has been that of a *political compass* quiz. As is often the case, there are several aspects to it that warrants a closer and more critical look.

## THE QUIZ

The quiz does not have the options of “I don’t know” or “Neither”, thus pushing people to side with a position they may not be aware of or haven’t thought of clearly. Not only can this lead to a skewing in results, but this can also show that the intent behind the quiz is more to entertain than educate.

Further lacking include the complete absence of context in the questions which ignores the unique situations of each country and the highly reductive nature of the questions. This forces generalisations to be made on whole populations (“People are ultimately divided more by class than by nationality”) that requires knowledge of available data and ability to determine to a reasonable enough extent whether said data one uses to make a judgment is reliable or not.

The framing of certain questions often bypasses many layers and angles for the average person. For example, one question states, “Those who are able to work, and refuse the opportunity, should not expect society’s support.”

From underemployment to precarious jobs that pay nowhere near a decent amount for labour are just a few of the caveats ignored. Questions like these form opinions that can be dehumanising to others in unfortunate positions who might be just as unaware about the

systems exploiting them.

## WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION?

One of the most ironic questions in the quiz happens to state, “There is now a worrying fusion of information and entertainment”.

Whether one takes this to mean that this question by itself shows that the makers of the quiz are responsible or that it is a tongue-in-cheek reference to itself, one thing that most might agree on is that this quiz is the very example of the phenomenon the question is describing.

YouTube has become filled with political commentary with people both passionate and dispassionate about politics engaging in discussions about matters that are likely to have a massive impact on the lives of citizens. However, much like in the rest of the internet, especially Facebook, the conversations invariably devolve into arguments and insensible chatter. One might be tempted to turn to traditional media.

However, distrust in the traditional has been rising for a while. A *Columbia Journalism Review* report titled “The Fall, Rise, and Fall of Media Trust” asks, “Has a healthy scepticism become a civically disabling cynicism?” J.J. McCullough, a columnist at *The Washington Post*, explains in his YouTube channel that the political pundits who go on talk shows and become popular are often those who gain prominence through confidence and consistency, even if their knowledge isn’t proportional. Both of these sources also mention the dangers of the 24-hour news cycle that requires the constant churning of content to vie for people’s attention.

Schools, as nearly everyone has been saying for decades, are often outdated and unsurprisingly are likely to steer clear of educating students on matters of politics. As one half of this team can confirm from personal experience, knowledge regarding politics from educational institutions can be scant to the point where only in an introductory political science course in university did we learn about terms as basic as “unicameralism” and “bicameralism” and that our country

adheres to the former system.

The average young person nowadays is introduced to political ideologies through social media. This is in contrast to the “olden days” when political literacy had to be learned either through discourse or through academia.

As evident in the past decade or so, memes play an alarmingly important role in this context. A quick search of the word “communist” on Facebook yields dozens of results for pages titled with some iteration of certain political labels. The content that they share follows suit, ranging from the generic “if we share something it falls under communism” meme to the somewhat less frequent calls for guillotines.

The increasingly common occurrence of these posts that barely scratch the surface of the ideology have become widely accepted. As a result, the population that is exposed to them adopt these labels and ideologies as their own.

On one hand, this may be considered as a positive as they learn more about political theory, but it can be said that the negative aspects far outweigh the positives. For one, the bite-sized political content doesn’t offer much in terms of knowledge. Consequently, that responsibility of becoming educated on the “right” track falls on the shoulders of the generally young and susceptible audience.

## IN CONCLUSION

The nature of the internet not only enables but rather encourages this sort of behaviour. Expectations of instantaneous responses, greater engagement and sharing of outrageous behaviour, and subsequent dopamine hits from the increased attention no matter how negatively incentivize thoughtless behaviour in individuals who may then double down when confronted with criticism. The issue becomes murkier and more serious with political terms where dictionary definitions and actions of political actors often contradict. A look at campaign slogans of various politicians will make you aware of buzzwords such as “hope”, “change”, and “revolution” but specifics might be largely absent thus rendering the promises empty.