



Examining the Inter-relationship between Reference Group, Media Influence, Individual Factors and Purchase Intention of the Indian Tweenagers

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ABSTRACT

Tweenagers has become a notable segment for the marketers. Tweenagers are children in the age group of 8-12 years. Globally, prior studies have been conducted, but the potential of the segment remains unearthed in the Indian market. As India comprises the world's largest cohort of Tweenagers, it becomes pertinent to study the factors influencing the segment. The present research initiative explores the dimensions influencing the Tweenagers decision making, by investigating the research work conducted hitherto. An empirical analysis has been done to understand the influence of reference group, media and individual factors on the Tweenagers' purchase intention. Primary data has been collected from 654 Tweenagers from Delhi NCR with a structured instrument. Delhi NCR was categorized into clusters on the basis of Times survey report to identify the private schools for data collection. Considering the age-group of 8-12 years belonging to class fourth to seventh, the sample was selected from each with systematic random sampling technique. The findings of the study are indicative of an upcoming segment that requires to be catered to independently as a consumer group. The implications suggested, will have a new arena for the marketers in strategy development and academicians and researchers in their endeavor towards exploring the segment further.

Keywords: Tweenagers, reference group, media, purchase intention

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1. Introduction

Extant literature has celebrated the power of a child consumer in the market space (Kaur and Singh, 2006). Geuens *et al.* (2002) observed that the relative influence of children varies with the extent to which they get their parents' attention. Hard pressed with the present times, parents have nurtured children to become independent as well as liberated with respect to decision-making. An independent family set-up and the non-interventionist position in the decision making, have given children, enough freedom to express their preferences. Focus on children as consumers have increased both from the social and the business perspective.

This shopping savior-fair cluster is likely to participate in purchase decisions (Kuhn and Eischen, 1997). The children in the family not only take the onus of their individual decisions but are also keen to take up the responsibility of the family purchases. The buying roles in the family are changing and have been confirmed (Engel *et al.*, 1990; Lee and Beatty, 2002). The degree of influence of the child consumer on the family is dependent on the age of the child, type of the product, stage of decision making and the family structure (Rindfleisch *et al.*, 1997) concurrently, factors such as gender, composition of the family along with family communication patterns have been confirmed (Tinson and Nancarrow, 2007). As the child grows older, his influence also increases (Ward and Wackman, 1972). The segment has been receptive and responsive to all sorts of marketing communication and that has primarily been the reason why marketers want to cater to this highly profitable slice of the marketplace (Sharma and Dasgupta, 2009). The paper is divided into sections.

The initial section deals with the background and introduction to the study along with the review of the literature, followed by the rationale and conceptual framework for the study, next section is on research methodology explaining the sample design, questionnaire design, and giving insight on validity and reliability. The penultimate section comprises data analysis and discussion and the last section concludes the study and discusses the implications, closing with the limitations of present research and scope for future research.

1.1 Tweenagers

A special age-group, Tweenagers, has emerged who tend to develop their own sense of identity and expect to be treated like an individual customer. In the academic world, most researchers have delineated "Tweenagers" as "8-12-year-old" (Andersen *et al.*, 2007, p. 340-350). They have been defined by the age group of 8-12 years (Siegal *et al.*, 2004; Soltan, 2004) primarily, termed as the pre-teen or the preadolescence stage. Marketers coined the term 'Tweenagers' in the late 1980s, originally defining them as girls of 10-12 years of age, who begin to show a keen interest in fashion, shopping, music and celebrity (Palmer, 2013). Gradually, the term eventually encompassed the age-group consisting of 8-12 years. In the recent years, Tweenagers have become the apple of the marketers' eye (Chui *et al.*, 2013). Tweenage is a budding stage, where the children are considered to be grown up and start behaving like young adults.

2. Review of Literature

Authors such as Tseng and Lee (2013, p. 259-277) opine that "Tweens purchase behavior occupies a position in the current consumer market that cannot be ignored". As such, this segment is worth deliberating, as this slice of the market holds a lot of potential.

Apart from being a primary market, they are also called an influence market and future market (McNeal, 1999). Tweenagers seek information from the parents, media and peers, which help in developing a personality of their own. They are cognizant of the commodity culture, their self-image and their yearning to be a part of a social group (Hulan, 2007). Hulan (2007) opines that Tweenager is a group that exists exclusively as a lucrative market for advertisers looking for wide-scale profit. Since childhood, they have been exposed to brands, advertising and promotions.

Siegel *et al.* (2004) in their book '*The great Tween buying machine*', delineated Tweenagers' attributes and further bifurcated the group into two sections - older and younger Tweenagers. The book deliberates on the role of Tweenagers from product research to product development and from packaging to advertising. It also emphasizes on the strategies to market the Tweenagers. Further, the book by Sutherland and Thompson (2003) '*Kidfluence*', gives insight pertaining to the likes and dislikes of the said consumers and suggest a plan of action as to how to capture the market effectively. The studies in the aforementioned books demonstrate the growing interest in this segment, to be a potential market.

2.1 Research problem and the gap

Research in the field of child behaviour pertaining to marketing area is present in abundance but Tweenagers as a segment differs in their behavioral and personality related aspects. They tend to behave like young adults with attributes partially of children and Teenagers. This has been proven by studies conducted internationally. However, the dynamics of the Indian Tweenager consumption is contrary to their western counterparts. With the expansion of metropolitan settings and increase in per capita income, India is experiencing a dramatic expansion in the demand for the consumable goods. The social influences on the Tweenagers, in the Indian environment, is exceedingly diametric from the western world. The size of the Teenager market is a lucrative call for the marketers. As such, little research has been conducted pertaining to the dimensions that influence the Indian Tweenagers, which subsequently have an impact on their purchase decision making.

2.2 Rationale for the study

Euromonitor International record that India has the world's largest cohort with 286 million ranging from 8-19-year-old in 2009 and the growth rate has been persistent at the rate of four percent each year (Euromonitor International: Strategy Briefing, 2011). Central Intelligence Agency (2016) claims that according to the recent statistics, the population of the children, in the age group of 0-14 years is 28.09 percent in India; which substantiates the relevance of investigating this segment. Consequently, as the Indian Tweenager market is sizable, lures the global brands to make a foray into this profitable market. Prior studies pertaining to the Tweenagers have been conducted primarily in the international markets. According to Webster (1994), India offers an interesting and varied culture which is different from the West, in various social variables, thus meriting further research.

The research questions formulated for the study include the following:

RQ1: How does peer influence, parents influence, teachers influence and siblings influence have an impact on the purchase intention of the Tweenagers?

RQ2: How do traditional media and digital media influence the purchase intention of the Tweenagers?

RQ3: How are the individual factors related to the purchase intention of the Tweenagers?

The study proposes to investigate the dimensions influencing the purchase intention with respect to their reference group, media influence, individual factors and purchase intention. The work will offer the marketers a platform to develop marketing and communication strategies. Hence, this research will provide insights to the marketers to comprehend the Indian Tweenagers, as potential consumers. The study will be of great significance to the academicians as it will offer perceptiveness of the role played by the Tweenagers when making the family purchase decision.

2.3 Conceptual framework

The primary constructs for the model entails from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which is an expansion of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). The concept was first introduced by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975. TRA defines measures of attitudes and social normative perceptions of a specific behaviour that lead to an intention to perform the behaviour (Montano and Kasprzyk 2002). Similarly, TPB theorizes that the collection of specific behaviours across occasions will better predict the attitudes as comparison to simply analysing perceived locus of control. The model suggests that individual motivational factors within unique contexts explain the execution of a specific behaviour (Ajzen 1991). It illustrates that an intention is an indication of the effort that an individual will put in order to perform the behavior (Ajzen 1991). The stronger a person's intention to engage in a behaviour, the more likely the behaviour will be performed.

2.3.1 Purchase Intention

Spears and Singh (2004) opined that purchase intention is an individuals' conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand. The thought of an intention to purchase towards particular products or services is the final cognitive step in the decision making process of purchase intention, as stated by researchers (Agarwal and Teas, 2002; Erevelles, 1993; Fishbein, 1967; Han, 1990; Pecotich *et al.*, 1996). Higher purchase intention assures a higher consumers' willingness to buy a product (Dodds *et al.*, 1991).

2.3.2 Reference group influence

A reference group is used by an individual as a framework to identify with others (Salmon, 2008). Moschis (1978) indicated that consumers use reflective and comparative appraisal to choose products. Bearden and Etzel (1982) stated that consumers may not only apply direct and verbal interactions to attain evaluations from reference group like their friends, peers, siblings and parents but also observe reference group members behavior to make a decision related to purchase. The scope of this study is normative referents' influence on the Tweenagers. In the present study, the reference group studied are-

- Parent influence
- Peer influence
- Sibling influence
- Teacher influence

2.3.3 Media influence

Literature has proven, the more children interact with the mass media, the more consumer behavior is learned by them (Moschis and Churchill, 1978; Moschis and Moore, 1982; O'Guinn and Shrum, 1997). Children have an access to information because they are exposed to a variety of media. Two types of media influence are in the realms of the study, namely- traditional media influence and digital media influence. While the old media or the traditional media comprises print and television, the new media or the digital media broadly includes web sites, streaming audio and video, chat rooms, e-mail, online communities, web advertising, DVD and CD-ROM media, virtual reality environments, integration of digital data with the telephone, such as

internet telephony, digital cameras, mobile computing (webopedia.com).

The study focuses on two types of media influence:

- Television influence (Traditional media)
- Internet influence (Digital media)

2.3.4 Individual Factors

Individual factors have a bearing on who an individual is and what the individual does. It encompasses age, gender, self-confidence, resourcefulness, creativity, adaptability etc. (Ajzen, 1991). Researchers have confirmed that demographic factors of consumers have an influence on their purchase intention and behavior (Peter and Olson, 2010; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007).

Following are the individual factors that are in the purview of the study-

- Gender
- Age
- Type of family
- Sibling
- Personality

Objectives

Objective 1: To study the influence of peer, parents, teachers and siblings on the purchase intention of the Tweenagers

Objective 2: To analyze the impact of traditional and digital media on the purchase intention of Tweenagers

Objective 3: To explore the dimensions of individual factors on the purchase intention of Tweenagers

3 Research Methodology

The purpose of the study is to explore the dimensions that influence the Indian Tweenagers' purchase behavior. Descriptive research design has been applied for the study. The review of literature facilitated in refining the research problem, which further expedited in the design and construction of the questionnaire. While selecting the constructs, the context, the objectives of the study and the scope of the study was kept in mind. Both national and international research endeavors were referred to, for a holistic approach towards the topic. Validated scales have been used for developing the questionnaire. Pilot survey is conducted before the main study.

3.1 Dimensions and Hypotheses

Table 1: Dimensions and Hypotheses

Dimensions	Hypotheses
Reference group influence	H1: Peer, parent, teacher and sibling influence have a significant impact on the purchase intention of the Tweenagers
Media influence	H2: Television and internet influence have a significant impact on the purchase intention of the Tweenagers
Individual factors	<p>H3a: There is a significant difference between the younger (age group-8-10) and the older (age group-8-10) Tweenagers on their purchase intention</p> <p>H3b: There is a significant difference between the gender of the Tweenagers on their purchase intention</p> <p>H3c: There is a significant difference between the Tweenagers from different family types on their purchase intention</p> <p>H3d: There is a significant difference between the Tweenagers, with siblings and without siblings on their purchase intention</p> <p>H3e: There is a significant difference between the various personality types of the Tweenagers on their purchase intention</p>

3.2 Validity and Reliability

Each of these dimensions was developed with validated scales. There are five scales used in this section. Peer influence scale has been adapted from Dotson and Hyatt (2005). Parent influence was measured on a five-point scale by Dotson and Hyatt (2005). Teacher influence scale was adapted from Rich (1997) and sibling influence has been adapted from Eze *et al.* (2012). Purchase intention has been measured with the scale developed by Bower (2001), Bower and Landreth (2001). The scales have been modulated to fit the current study. Reliability of each scale has been calculated with the help of SPSS by using Cronbach alpha method. The Cronbach alpha value is more than the acceptable value of 0.6 for all constructs (Nunnally, 1978).

The peer influence dimension has been computed by adding 6 items, the value of which varies from strongly agree to strongly disagree (weight-age given from 5 to 1) and the total score was divided by the number of items. Parent influence has been calculated by adding 10 items, teacher influence, sibling influence and purchase intention has been calculated by adding 5, 5 and 6 items respectively.

Television influence scale has been adapted from Dotson and Hyatt (2005). Internet influence was measured on a five-point scale by Kaur and Medury (2011). Purchase intention has been measured with the scale developed by Bower (2001), Bower and Landreth (2001) modified for the current study. In order to study the impact of the individual factors on purchase intention, five important dimensions have been analyzed by the researcher. The first four dimensions are categorical variables. The respondents were divided into two categories of younger Tweenagers (8-10 years) and elder Tweenagers (11-12 years) of age group. The first category was coded as 0 and the second one was coded as 1. Similarly for gender males were coded as 0 and females were coded as 1. For the type of family, three categories were coded, the nuclear family was coded as 1, joint family was coded as 2 and single-parent family was coded as 3. For the sibling, two categories were coded-has at least one sibling, coded as 0 and the single child was coded as 1. For the dimension of personality validated personality scale has been taken. The dimension has been measured with the Big Five Inventory-10 (BFI-10). The BFI-10 developed by Rammstedt and John (2007) is a short version of The Big Five Inventory (BFI) which was constructed in the late 1980s (John *et al.*, 1991). The items were re-phrased for the better understanding of the respondents. The model comprises five dimensions: neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness. Each dimension had two items making a total of 10 items. Five statements were positive and the other 5 were reverse coded.

For the personality scale, individual dimension has been computed by adding two items of the particular variable, the value of which varied from strongly disagree to strongly agree (weight-age given from 1 to 5) and the total score was divided by the number of items so that the total should also indicate in the form of scale strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Further, face validity and content validity were also ensured. Every item of the questionnaire was thoroughly examined to see its relatedness with the objectives of the study. Experts reviewed the questionnaires and gave their valuable feedback which was further incorporated in the study. Cronbach Alpha was applied in order to check the reliability of each scale. It is the most common estimate of internal consistency of items in a scale. If the value of Cronbach Alpha is .60 or more, the scale is called reliable (Nunnally, 1978). As shown in Table 2.2, the value of Cronbach alpha had been found to be more than 0.60, which is higher than the value recommended, implying internal consistency.

Table 2: List of Validated Scales and Value of Cronbach alpha

Construct	Adapted from	Number of Items	Cronbach alpha
Peer influence	Dotson and Hyatt (2005)	6	.84
Parent influence	Dotson and Hyatt (2005)	10	.83
Teacher influence	Rich (1997)	5	.74
Sibling influence	Eze <i>et al.</i> , (2012)	5	.81
Television influence	Dotson and Hyatt (2005)	6	.83
Internet influence	Kaur and Medury (2011a)	7	.84
Purchase Intention	Bower (2001), Bower and Landreth (2001)	6	.84
Personality Big Five Inventory-10 (BFI-10)	Rammstedt and John (2007)	10	.67

3.3 Sample design

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. Cluster sampling and random sampling were used in the study. In the current study, the private schools in Delhi NCR were categorized into clusters on the basis of zones. The area of study for the current study is restricted to the area of National Capital Region (NCR) of India. The zone-wise distribution was taken from the annual list of best performing schools in different zones as released by Times of India (Times Group school survey, 2015). The zones in Delhi NCR are -North zone, west zone, east zone, south zone, central zone, Gurgaon, Ghaziabad, Noida and Faridabad which were the clusters from which with the help of simple random sampling few clusters were selected for the study. The schools on the list were sent an email apprising them of the research undertaken along with the request to participate in the research. An appointment was fixed with the schools willing to co-operate and consent from the deciding authority of the school was taken to get the questionnaires filled and other consent documents. Data collection was confined to 8 schools.

Considering the age-group of 8-12 years from each of class fourth to seventh a sample of 25 students were selected with systematic random sampling technique. Firstly, a consent form along with an attached questionnaire was given to the students to take home. The consent form was to be duly signed by the parents, giving their approval of their child participation in the survey. The researcher went to the school, the next day and got the questionnaire filled from the Tweenagers. After scrutinizing the questionnaires, 654 completely filled questionnaires were retained and used for data analysis.

4 Data Analysis and discussion

The analysis was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences 20.0 Version.

The sample of 654 Tweenagers is delineated on the basis of the demographic variables. Table-3 reports the description of the Tweenagers.

Table 3: Demographic Profile of the Tweenagers (N=654)

S.No.	Variable name	Options	Number	Percentage
1	Gender	Boys	335	51.2
		Girls	319	48.8
2	Age	8 years	32	4.9
		9 years	113	17.3
		10 years	204	31.2
		11 years	144	22.0
		12 years	161	24.6
3	Birth order	Youngest	264	40.4
		Eldest	243	37.2
		Middle one	59	9.0
		Single child	88	13.5
4	Type of family	Nuclear family (Parents and kids only)	241	36.9
		Joint family (Parents, kids, grandparents, other relatives)	402	61.5
		Single parent family (Single parent and kids)	11	1.7

Objective 1: To study the influence of peer, parents, teachers and siblings on the purchase intention of the Teenagers

Mean and standard deviation of the reference group dimensions are given in Table-4. The highest influence on the respondents is that of parents ($m=3.90$, $sd=.67$). A relatively lesser influence is that of teachers ($m=3.63$, $sd=.74$). Both sibling influence ($m=3.21$, $sd=.95$) and peer influence ($m=3.18$, $sd=.87$) are neutral on the respondents. Higher values of parent and teacher influence explicitly state their importance. Since parents are the primary reference group members for respondents, they have a high influence on them. After parents, it is the teachers, with whom the respondents spend a majority of their time and are also highly influenced by them. The high influence of all the reference group members substantiates that groups are important for the respondents. Lindstrom (2003) established that it is important for the Urban Tweenagers to feel part of a group. Tweenagers follow the herd rather than their own instincts, as they have a growing concern to be accepted socially.

Table-4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Reference Group Dimensions

Dimensions	Mean	SD
Peer Influence	3.18	.87
Parent Influence	3.90	.67
Teacher Influence	3.63	.74
Sibling Influence	3.21	.95

Pearson correlation coefficient has been calculated of the independent variable with dependent variable as showcased in Table-5. The dimensions of reference group including peer influence, parent influence, teacher influence and sibling influence have been correlated with purchase intention. It was found that sibling influence has the highest correlation with purchase intention ($r=.38$, $p<.05$). The second highest correlation of the respondents purchase intention was found with peer influence ($r=.34$, $p<.05$). Parent's influence had a relatively lower correlation with the purchase intention of respondents ($r=.24$, $p<.05$) and teachers' influence had the lowest correlation with purchase intention ($r=.16$, $p<.05$). All the correlations were statistically significant. High significant correlations of peer influence and sibling influence with purchase intention indicate a strong positive relationship between the variables. It is remarkable to identify that sibling and peer-group correlate highly with the respondents' purchase intention since they belong to the same cohort as the respondents, the trust and reliability is much higher than the parents and teachers.

Table-5

Relationship (Correlation Coefficient) of Independent Variable (Reference Group Dimensions) with Dependent Variable (Purchase Intention)

Independent variables	Purchase Intention
Peer Influence	.34**
Parent Influence	.24**
Teacher Influence	.16**
Sibling Influence	.38**

****significant at .001 level**

NS= Not significant

Stepwise multiple regression has been applied in order to ascertain the impact of independent variables on the dependent variables. The four reference group influences have been taken as independent variables and purchase intention has been taken as dependent variable.

The results of regression analysis as shown in Table-6 reveal that independent variables sibling influence, peer influence and parent influence except the teacher influence are the predictors for purchase intention. The purchase intention depends on these variables up to the extent of 23% ($R^2=0.23$) with β coefficients of .30, .26 and .12 respectively for sibling influence, peer influence and parental influence. The multiple R for the relationship between factors of reference group influence i.e. sibling influence, peer influence and parent influence (IV) included in the analysis and the purchase intention (DV) is .48, which is very strong. Though correlation exists between the variables, teacher influence does not regress on purchase intention. This correlation between teacher influence and purchase intention might exist due to the influence of other factors. Regression partials out the influence of other variables and present the independent variables leading to variance in the dependent variable. With respect to gauging the purchase intention of the respondents, it was found that sibling, peer and parent influence respondents' purchase intention significantly.

Though children learn basic rational aspects of consumption from parents, eventually peer group becomes important. Also, the study affirms that "parental influence decreases, and peer influence increases, with age, for a variety of purchase acts" (Ward, 1974, pp. 9). The results are consistent with the study on Malaysian respondents where peer influence was higher than the parent influence (Chui teo *et al.*, 2013). Yearning to fit in, "any item that they wear or consume in front of their peer becomes a potential risk" (Siegel *et al.*, 2001, pp. 28). In a China-based study on the children information seeking sources, it was depicted that they value friends as the most important influential factor (McNeal and Ji, 1999) among other socializing factors. Younger people readily pay premium prices if their peer certifies the fashion products as cool (Grant and Stephen, 2006). Another study of consumption pattern towards snacks and soft drinks demonstrates a positive relationship between peer influence and their purchasing behavior (Wouters *et al.*, 2010).

The study brings forth that Indian Tweenagers are more influenced by their siblings in comparison to their peer group and their parents. By the pre-school years, siblings spend more time together than with parents, suggesting the growing influence of siblings (Dunn, 1993; Larson and Richards, 1994). It is notable, that the extant literature highlighting the role of peer influence is based primarily on studies conducted in the Western world, where the culture tends to be different. Seymour (1993) found that in South Asian cultures, like India, the role played by siblings is more visibly outlined by the society when compared to the Western cultures.

Table-6
Determinants of Tweenagers' Purchase Intention among the Reference Group Dimensions

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable=Purchase Intention		
	Beta	Simple r	t-value
Sibling Influence	.306**	.384**	8.569
Peer Influence	.262**	.343**	7.409
Parent Influence	.122**	.246**	3.426
Multiple R=.487 R square=.237			

****significant at .001 level**
NS= Not significant

Objective 2: To analyze the impact of traditional and digital media on the purchase intention of Tweenagers

Mean and standard deviation of television influence and internet influence are given in Table-7. The table suggests that both television (m=3.13, sd=.76) and internet (m=3.15, sd=.93) had an almost equal neutral impact on the respondents.

Table-7

Mean and Standard Deviation of Media Dimensions

Dimension	Mean	SD
Television influence	3.13	.76
Internet influence	3.15	.93

**significant at .001 level

NS= Not significant

Pearson correlation coefficient has been calculated of independent variable with dependent variable in Table-8. The dimensions of television influence and internet influence have been correlated with purchase intention. It was found that internet influence has the highest correlation with purchase intention ($r=.45, p<.05$). Television influence had a relatively lower correlation with the purchase intention of respondents ($r=.35, p<.05$). Both the correlations were statistically significant. Higher value of correlations suggests more strength in the relationship. The higher the internet influence the more will be the purchase intention.

Table-8

Relationship (Correlation Coefficient) of Independent Variable (Media dimensions) with Dependent Variable (Purchase Intention)

Independent variables	Purchase Intention
Television Influence	.353**
Internet Influence	.450**

**significant at .001 level

NS= Not significant

Stepwise multiple regression has been applied in order to ascertain the impact of independent variables on the dependent variables. The two types of media influences have been taken as independent variables and purchase intention has been taken as dependent variable.

The results of regression analysis as shown in Table-9 reveal that television influence and internet influence are the predictors for purchase intention. The purchase intention depends on these variables up to the extent of 26% ($R^2=0.26$) with β coefficients of .251 and .384 respectively. The analysis clearly depicts that respondents' purchase intention is more influenced by the internet i.e. the digital media as compared to television i.e. the traditional media. This is in sync with the trending internet hype. The multiple R for the relationship between factors of media influence (IV) included in the analysis and the purchase intention (DV) is .51 which is very strong.

The findings of this research are consistent with the earlier research in the US where young internet followers were more likely to participate in family decision making (Belch *et al.*, 2005). The results also match the outcomes of another study done in the Indian context with adolescents as participants wherein internet exposure impacted their influence on family purchase decisions (Kaur and Medury, 2011).

Table-9**Determinants of Tweenagers' Purchase Intention among the Media Dimensions**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable=Purchase Intention		
	Beta	Simple r	t-value
Television Influence	.251**	.353	7.182
Internet Influence	.384**	.450	10.977
Multiple R=.511 R square=.260			

**significant at .001 level

NS= Not significant

The impact of individual factors on respondents' purchase intention has been studied. The individual factors are the personal factors that strongly influence consumers' buying behavior (Business Jargons, 2016). The individual factors included in the study are –age, gender, type of family, sibling and type of personality of the Tweenager.

Objective 3: To explore the dimensions of individual factors on the purchase intention of Tweenagers

Type of Personality

As shown in Table-10 mean and standard deviation were calculated to see the personality traits with which they identified themselves. The highest mean value was that of openness (m-4.23, sd-.78). Openness is reflected by the degree of imagination, creativity, curiosity, novelty and variety. Most respondents related themselves with the trait of high openness signifying the young consumers' ability to think beyond. The second highest mean value was that of conscientiousness (m-4.00, sd-.87). Conscientiousness echoes the tendency to be organized, to be dependable and to be self-disciplined. The next value was that of extraversion (m-3.80, sd-.88). Extraversion, is a trait manifested by sociability and talkativeness. The respondents tended to agree on the dimension of agreeableness (m-3.69, s.d-.90). Agreeableness is related to friendliness, compassion and cooperation. The respondents considered themselves as friendly, trusting and helpful. If practiced in extreme, agreeableness can lead to submissive behavior also. The last among all was neuroticism (m-3.36, s.d-1.06). The tendency to handle nervousness and anxiety best describes neuroticism. The respondents perceived themselves to be calm and stable.

Table-10**Mean and Standard Deviation of Type of Personality of Tweenagers (N=654)**

Dimension	Mean	S.D
Extroversion	3.80	.88
Agreeableness	3.69	.90
Conscientiousness	4.00	.87
Neuroticism	3.36	1.06
Openness	4.23	.78

Age

The respondents were categorized into two age-groups 8-10 years and 11-12 years. Independent samples t-test has been applied to study the differences between the purchase intentions of the two groups. The results in the Table-11 showcase that there is no statistically significant difference between the two age-groups. The younger and older respondents can be treated as one homogeneous group for segmentation and targeting.

Table-11

Comparison between the Purchase Intention of Younger (8-10 Years) and Older Tweenagers (11-12 Years) (N=654)

Dimension	Age-8-10 years (349)		Age-11-12 years (305)		t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Purchase Intention	3.06	.98	3.01	.81	.715NS

****significant at .001 level**

NS= Not significant

Gender

Table-12 presents a comparison between the purchase intention of the Tweenagers on the basis of gender. Independent samples t-test was also applied to investigate if there exists any difference in the purchase intention of the respondents. The results reveal that there is a difference in the purchase intention of boy and girl respondents. The boys had a higher purchase intention (m-3.10, s.d-.96) as compared to the girl respondents (m-2.96, s.d-.84) with significant t-value (t-1.91). Higher purchase intention among boys can also be attributed to the preference of Indian parents to accede to their demands.

Table-12

Comparison between the Purchase Intention of Tweenagers on the basis of Gender (N=654)

Dimension	Boys (N=335)		Girls (N=319)		t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Purchase Intention	3.10	.96	2.96	.84	1.91*

****significant at .001 level**

NS= Not significant

Type of Family

To explore if the respondents' purchase intention differs by the type of family, ANOVA was applied as shown in Table-13. It is found that there exists no statistically significant difference between the respondents from nuclear, joint family and single parent family types. This suggests that whether the respondents are being raised in a nuclear setup or a joint family set up or single parent family, it will have no influence on his/her purchase intention.

Table-13**Comparison between the Purchase Intention of Tweenagers on the basis of Type of Family (N=654)**

Dimension	Nuclear family (N=241)		Joint family (N=402)		Single parent family (N=11)		f-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Purchase Intention	2.98	.94	3.08	.88	2.81	.92	1.218NS

**significant at .001 level

NS= Not significant

Sibling

The growing trend of single-child families in India (Basu and Desai, 2016) makes it imperative to study the differences in purchase intention of the Tweenagers on the basis of the number of children in the family. The results of comparison between the purchase intention of the Tweenagers on the basis of the sibling are depicted in Table-14. Independent samples t-test has been applied to gauge if any differences subsist in their purchase intention. The results divulge that significant difference exists in the purchase intention of those who are single and those who have siblings. The respondents having a sibling have higher purchase intention (m=3.06, s.d=.92) than those who are single children (M=2.85, S.D=.81). This can be attributed to the sibling rivalry and competition. If parents listen to the request of one child they also have to give in to the request of the other. This behavior spirals to higher purchase intention among the respondents belonging to families with more than one child.

Table-14**Comparison between the Purchase Intention of Tweenagers on the basis of Sibling**

Dimension	With sibling (N=566)		Without sibling (N=88)		t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Purchase Intention	3.06	.92	2.85	.81	2.014**

**significant at .001 level

NS= Not significant

Step-wise multiple regression has been applied in order to ascertain the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. The individual factors have been taken as independent variables and purchase intention has been taken as dependent variable. The independent variables include age; gender; type of family; sibling and type of personality of the Tweenager (neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness). The results of regression analysis as shown in Table-15 reveal that among the individual factors only three dimensions- personality trait of extroversion, number of children and gender are the predictors for purchase intention. The purchase intention depends on these variables up to the extent of 2.4% ($R^2=0.024$) with β coefficients of .110, -.087 and -.080 respectively.

The analysis clearly depicts that respondents' purchase intention is more influenced by extrovert personality followed by the presence of sibling and gender of the respondent. The results reflect the impact of extrovert personality in having a higher purchase intention. With respect to the gender, it is the boys who have a higher impact as compared to the girls. Also, children with siblings impact the purchase intention. Age, type of family and other personality types do not have any impact on the purchase intention. The multiple R for the relationship is relatively low at .130 in comparison with the other dimensions. It was expected that in India, children with siblings would not differ in their purchase intention from children without siblings as the children are additionally socialized by extended family members. The results reveal vice-verse. The presence of sibling encourages purchase intention among children, whereas the purchase intention of single children remains lesser. The Table-15 indicates that an outgoing Tweenager will influence the purchase intention. Likewise, the gender of the Tweenager will have a significant impact on the purchase intention, boys having higher purchase intention than girls. The results claim that not all individual factors have an impact on the Tweenagers' purchase intention.

Table-15

Determinants of Purchase Intention among the Individual Factors

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable=Purchase Intention		
	Beta	Simple r	t-value
Extraversion	.110*	.105	2.842
Number of children	-.087*	-.079	-2.238
Gender	-.080 *	-.075	-2.053
Multiple R=.156 R square=.024			

**significant at .001 level

NS= Not significant

5 Conclusion and Implications for marketers

Tweenagers are becoming increasingly involved not only in the purchase decision making but have an unprecedented dominance in the buying process. They have become the vanguard for the young consumer market and occupy an indispensable niche in the marketplace. An understanding of the underlying dimensions investigated in the study will provide insights to the marketers, can develop their marketing and communication strategies accordingly. They can do an overhauling of their advertising and branding strategy in line with the research outcomes.

The study focuses to uncover the dimensions that influence the Tweenagers in the purchase decision making by initially having an impact on their purchase intention and then their influence strategies. For the reference group dimension, three out of four influences considerably impact their purchase intention. Sibling influence, peer influence and parent influence significantly impact the Tweenagers purchase intention. The total variance in the purchase intention, due to predictors of reference group influence is 23%. The rest of the variation can be attributed to other influences such as celebrities, role models etc. which were not within the scope of this study.

These findings are inconsonant with the findings of Drake-Bridges and Burgess (2010) where the researchers theorized that peer and parents influence the Tweenager shoppers. This work is a comprehensive effort on reference groups and their roles in influencing the Tweenagers and brings to light the finding that groups are important for the Tweenagers.

With the emergence of modern media formats and technology seeping into the daily routines, it was germane to examine whether the Tweenagers still continue to follow the more traditional medium like television. The study found that television and internet are equally important for the Tweenagers. The variance in purchase intention due to media influence was 26%. The influence of internet was found to be more than that of television. Though some focused research on television commercials claims that television influences the purchase behavior of the Indian children (Khandai and Agarwal, 2012) but simultaneously, the growing craze for internet cannot be ignored. The Internet has invaded the children lives in such a way that they sometimes watch television shows also through the means of internet. The outcome of the study is in tandem with the already existing research (Sellgren, 2011).

The findings on the individual factors influencing the Tweenagers indicate that among age, gender, type of family, sibling and type of personality, only gender, sibling and extrovert personality influence the purchase intention of the Tweenagers. The findings are in line with the results of Safiek and Hayatul (2009) who also claim that gender affects purchase intention. Besides, results indicate that the more the number of children in the family, higher the purchase intention among them. The findings are consistent with Mehrotra and Torges (1977) and Dunne (2009). The study revealed that purchase intention of the Tweenagers from various types of families remained the same. However, the results are inconsistent with the findings of Alam and Khalifa (2009) and Flurry and Burns (2005) who assert differences based on the family structure. Age was also found to have no effect on the Tweenagers purchase intention, contrary to the studies by Mc Neal (2007) and Moschis and Mitchell (1986) who indicated that with increasing age, there is more participation in purchase decisions. The group of 8-12 years of age is one segment and it can be said that the purchase intention of younger and older Tweenagers is similar. According to the results of this study, the Tweenagers who were outgoing, friendly and talkative have higher purchase intention than others.

The findings of the study imply that urban Indian Tweenagers can be effectively targeted by peer to peer marketing strategies which will encourage them to talk to their friends about products/ brands. The sibling influence has much potential. With their maximum social interaction with siblings and also a high level of influence from them, it would be great to make one Tweenager loyal towards the product/ brand, since the other sibling will follow suit. Meanwhile, the advertisements developed by the marketers need to present elements of friendship and lifestyle to capture the Tweenagers' mind. India being a collectivist society, the role of the parents cannot be ignored. Portraying siblings and parents in commercials can develop the trust of a Tweenager on family-preferred products.

As it is seen that this age-group highly favors internet, there is a clear need for advertisers and marketers to focus on the process of product searching, evaluating and purchasing over the medium and make it more user-friendly and couple it with financial alerts for adult supervision and validation. As the role of internet increases primarily in contributing to purchase decision making, the findings of the study become more relevant. This generation is also termed as the "igeneration" due to the fact that they are raised in an age of digital technology. These findings draw attention to the pervasiveness of media whether traditional or digital, will have a great impact on the Tweenagers decision making. Reckoning the fact that Tweenagers are highly influenced by the internet; the need to disseminate right information, deliver right knowledge through the medium, should be understood by the marketing communicators.

Marketers can use social networking websites and emails for online advertisements because these are frequently visited. Promotional campaigns can be run on the educational websites for products related to education and well-being of the children. Marketers must do this responsibly because this information is eventually used for purchase decision making. Hence, they should be cautious in their selling and marketing approach. Appreciating the decisions in parent domain and in Tweenager domain can facilitate the marketers in preparing their marketing-mix strategies appropriately.

Television being a viable medium for the marketers to approach children, its continuing popularity among the Tweenagers is good news for the marketers.

The results provide invaluable insights into the Tweenagers' mindset, offering new avenues for the Tweenager-oriented marketing. It will have implications for the marketers, policymakers, business strategists, academicians and researchers. The global marketers also need to understand the Indian Tweenagers attitudes and behavior in order to appropriately target and market the group.

6 Limitations and scope for future research

The sample was restricted to one geographic location- Delhi and NCR, restricting to urban Tweenagers belonging to public-private schools only. The present study was confined to the dimensions which the researchers found most suitable for the study. The study was conducted in a limited time frame. Researchers can consider replicating the study to a specific product or a service meant for the children of the said age group. Other variables may be considered as moderators- family environment, retail promotions and other socio-economic and attitudinal variables.

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