

## **Teenager socialization and factors effecting purchase decision of teenagers**

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### **Abstract**

The rise of social media has enabled a rapid growth in our daily interactions and has become an integral part of our system. Internet and social media have become a definite part of our lives and so it now plays an important role in consumer purchase decision where teens are considered as a crucial changing factor. This study attempt to reveal the various factors of Internet and social network that influences the purchase decision among teens of Patna and Ranchi considering online peer communication, social networking groups, Brand/company pages online and several other factors. In-depth literature reviews reveals the growth of social media and internet as a key to teenager socialization and teen profiling remains a challenge along with several other factors e.g.; Brand interaction through social media page, online social groups of brand influencers along with cultural effect on teen socialization. Hypothesis testing is done using ANOVA wherein the results show a significant trend in involvement of demographic/environmental factors as a key influencer in purchase decision making style of the teenagers. Socialization process is analyzed among 330 respondents .The result shows a positive influence of antecedent variables like age, social media and peer involvement in purchase decision making and product involvement in family decision making.

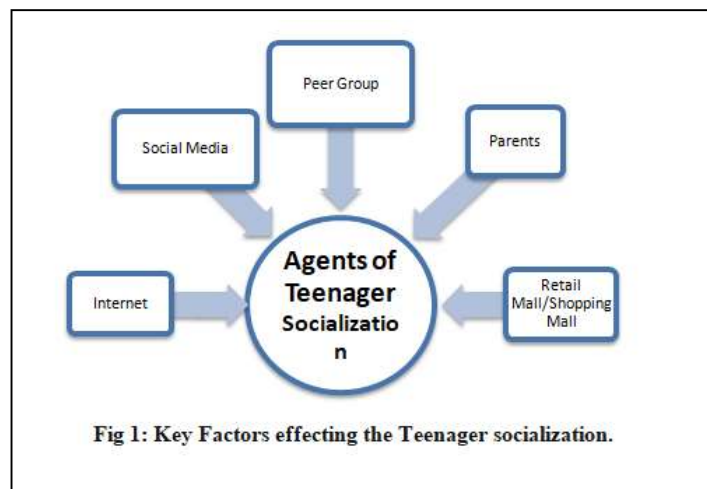
The study is significantly important for companies who are attempting to make a mark in minds of the teenagers who are not only a potential future consumer but is also a lucrative present costumer.This study will be useful for business operating online, researchers and for all those business that are connected with purchasing and selling online.

**Keywords:** Internet, social media, Teenager socialization, Family decision making, Product involvement, Peer communication

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

India is home to fifths of the world's youth population and is growing exponentially with half of its population of 1.3 billion below the age of 25, and a quarter is below the age of 14(1). India's young population is its most valuable asset and most pressing challenge. It provides India with a unique demographic advantage. Teens can be categorized as a market that is 3 in 1 i.e. it comprises of present market consumer, influences family purchases and also the potential future market consumers. Hence, the companies need to make strategies and put across their marketing ideas keeping in mind not only the present consumption pattern but also thinking in lines with the future prospective of the teen market which is adopting at a fast pace in India. This can be attributed to the growing change in the family pattern for e.g. moving from joint family culture to single/Nuclear families, along with working parents hence increase in the purchasing power .Along with the changing family pattern and growth in disposable income the growth of Internet and the digital space as a marketplace for varied products have also bought about a huge difference the way teenager .These factors can be studied under various heads; figure 1 shows the research framework for the study of factors effecting purchase decision by teenagers in a family. Traditional learning theories of socialization assumed that a developing child is a passive recipient who is non-reactive in the learning process, and to the exposure to the socializing agent, such as media, directly influences attitude (Moschis and Churchill 1978, Villiani 2001).We see that the social learning theory provides a strong theoretical framework to understand teenagers wherein teenagers learn to become a consumer; this framework needs to be updated to include unique aspects of learning through the internet. Thus, the researcher is of the opinion that with growing digitalization in our country and with high numbers of youth that forms a major part of teenager population in the country a study should be done with the purpose of increasing our understanding of how Internet and social media are effecting the purchase decision of adolescents and also explore the role of internet and social media as a socialization agent. The urban cities have shown a remarkable growth in terms of digitalization .The virtual marketplace in form of e-commerce websites have also grown in leaps and bound. Especially during these covid times when everything has gone online. The study provides empirical evidence relating to teenagers' perceptions and behavior in the virtual world on Internet as consumers, which remain under-researched in the marketing literature.



## **1. Literature Review.**

Literature review forms the backbone of any research; it is essential for laying the foundation of knowledge on the topic and further build on it. It also helps in identifying prior work on the topic thus preventing duplication. Identifying inconsistencies and gaps in research along with conflicts in previous studies and open questions left from other research helps in refining the study. This chapter reviews the related literature for the present study. It discusses the recent Internet usage convention reports, pattern of Internet usage, social media and its usage among teenagers.

### **2.1 Teenagers Influence in Family buying process & Products categories**

Researchers have studied that for almost all product categories, teenagers have an important role (Akter, 2017; Martensen & Gronholdt, 2008). Teenagers have high influence on the purchase of the product for which they are a primary consumer, like breakfast cereals, snack foods, toys, teenagers's clothes and school supplies (Mangleburg, 1990). Teenagers may have less influence on the products which require large money transactions like television, refrigerator, car (Mangleburg, 1990). Teenagers's influence in the family buying process also varies across decision stages. The Buying process has three stages: problem recognition, search for internal and external information and final decision (Davis & Rigaux, 1974).

### **2.2 Agents of Teenagers socialization:**

An extensive literature survey has been carried out in the domains of teenager socialization, online consumer behavior, factors affecting online consumer behavior among the teenagers with respect to gender, the extent of influence of teenagers in the family purchase decision, difference between online and offline shopping behavior, consumer perceptions and behavior with respect to online commerce. The role of the teenagers in family buying decision making is changing day by day. The reason behind this may be that there are fewer siblings in the family thereby influence of the children in the purchase decision process is high. In rural India, the teenagers have added influence on buying decision - making of the family because of their better exposure to education and access to the latest technology like computers and mobile penetration in the rural market. Teenagers are considered to be powerful influencers of their parents' consumption as well as consumers with a considerable direct consumption of their own (Andersen et al., 2008). According to McNeal and Yeh (1997), children influences the three markets: current market spending of their own money in order to satisfy their own needs and wants, an influential market attracting a substantial amount of parental expenditure, and a future market that eventually will constitute all the customers for a firm's services. Teenagers' influence on family purchases is directly dependent on the cultural environment of the family and the individual (Guner, Yurt, Kaplan, & Delen, 2009). According to Haynes, Burts, Dukes and Cloud (1993), the socialization agents for teenagers can be attributed to

important attributes i.e. the cognitive factors and the environmental factors (Haynes et al., 1993). Cognitive factors are age and gender-related. Environmental factors: family, media and peers. Parents have been identified as a primary source of socialization (Chaudhary & Gupta, 2014; Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Sharma, 2017; Szybillo & Sosanie, 1977; Thaichon, 2017. This is now an established fact. Fotis, et al (2012, p1), De Valck, et al (2009) suggested that 'the virtual communities are becoming important networks of consumer knowledge that influence teenagers' consumer behaviour'. Moreover, Wertine and Fenwick (2008 p31-35) added that "consumers are more likely to be participating than watching 'stating that there has been a shift in consumer behaviour from being "consumer as viewers than consumer as participants'. Consumer purchase decision appears thus to be influenced by social media in its different stages.

## 2. Research Objective

The research objectives of this study are as follow:

- To study the extent of influence played by internet and social media at different stages of purchase decision.
- To study the major differences between the genders and influence of Internet / social media on purchase.
- To study level of product involvement that affects interaction on social media.

## 3. Research Hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>**: Gender will have varying effect on purchase decision and will depend on factors that influence purchase decision

**H<sub>2</sub>**: All social media types are not equally preferred by consumers for buying decisions.

## 4. Research Methodology:

Research Design is **Descriptive cum causal in nature**.

**Target Population for the Study:** Teenagers belonging to the age group 13 to 19 in the cities of Patna and Ranchi.

**Sampling Frame & Unit:** A purposive sampling strategy was used to gain participants for this study; following this strategy meant that it was necessary for all participants of this study to be actively involved in the internet, so that they could then articulate their experiences with the internet. Thus, participants chosen were teenagers male or female aged between 13 years to 19 and who currently had accesses of internet at home through computer /Laptop/Smartphone's and work on it for at least 1 hour per day (on average) uses .

**Sample Size of the study:** In each center male and females would be in equal proportion. The total size of the study was 330.

## 6. Data Analysis and Interpretations:

The most important objective of the study was to find the varying effect of gender on the purchased decision of the teenagers. During the study it was brought to light that the gender shows a varying effect in case of certain factors which influence the decision of purchase, There are numerous factors that effect the online shopping more attractive for the teenagers namely as Variety of Products, Anytime & anywhere availability, Ease of price comparisons among various e-commerce websites. Discounts and offers, ease of return and exchange and lastly ease of mode of payment.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Gender will have varying effect on purchase decision and will depend on factors that influence purchase decision

**Table 1 : Mann Whitney**

### Test Stastics

	Gender	N	Mean Rank
<b>Variety</b>	<b>Male</b>	153	<b>178.75</b>
	Female	177	154.05
	Total	330	
<b>Anytime &amp; Anywhere</b>	<b>Male</b>	153	<b>184.37</b>
	Female	177	149.19
	Total	330	
<b>Ease of price comparison</b>	<b>Male</b>	153	<b>175.41</b>
	Female	177	156.94
	Total	330	
<b>Discounts and offers</b>	Male	153	147.34
	<b>Female</b>	177	<b>181.20</b>
	Total	330	

<b>Ease of return and exchange</b>	Male	153	159.60
	Female	177	<b>170.60</b>
	Total	330	
<b>Ease of payment i.e. COD</b>	Male	153	142.31
	Female	177	<b>185.54</b>
	Total	330	

It is clear from the above Mean rank table as shown above that Higher the rank, higher the impact. Thus gender has varying effect in case of Variety, Ease of price comparisons and anytime anywhere shopping the mean rank for the male teenagers are high reflecting than the while for female counter parts factor like Discounts and offers, ease of return exchange and COD has higher impact. Thus gender thus has varying effect on factors affecting purchase decision in online shopping.

#### **Gender Impact and purchase decision:**

- The study indicated that the females are more likely to recognize new needs on Social Media. Girls usually find factors like discounts and offers attractive factor when thinking of making purchase online. The e-commerce website do launch some schemes like Big Billion day, Amazon big festivals which have huge ,attractive offers and discounts female teens did prefer these over their male counter parts and took active participation in such *offers and discounts*.
- Girls also agreed that *the ease of return and exchange* term and conditions were a point of difference which did mattered them the most ,as the ease of return and exchange suggested value of money and trust on e-commerce sites.
- *Mode of payment i.e. COD*: This facility is the most attractive point for teens as it is evident that the source of their online purchases are mostly their parents, followed by pocket money given to them and the grandparents and sibling to join.
- In case of male counterparts *variety of products* to look for was a major influencing factor.
- *Anytime & anywhere shopping*: High use of Smartphone's have made this feature viable and easy for male teens to shop anytime & anywhere feature.

Genders seem thus to play a role in the degrees of the influence of Social Media at this stage.

**H 2:** All social media types are not equally preferred by consumers for buying decisions.

Table 2 :ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Facebook</b>	Between Groups	29.164	3	9.721	2.431	.065
	Within Groups	1303.409	326	3.998		
	Total	1332.573	329			
<b>Microblogs_Twitter</b>	Between Groups	26.734	3	8.911	4.669	.003
	Within Groups	622.263	326	1.909		
	Total	648.997	329			
<b>Blogs</b>	Between Groups	16.174	3	5.391	3.074	.028
	Within Groups	571.778	326	1.754		
	Total	587.952	329			
<b>Google</b>	Between Groups	10.825	3	3.608	3.330	.020
	Within Groups	353.299	326	1.084		
	Total	364.124	329			
<b>You tube</b>	Between Groups	8.771	3	2.924	3.377	.019
	Within Groups	282.202	326	.866		
	Total	290.973	329			

Table 2 show as that the p value of all the SNS are above 0.05 i.e.  $p > 0.05$  thus, one cannot reject the null hypothesis and conclude that all social networking sites are not equally used by respondent, some social networking sites are used more frequently than others.

#### **7. Scope for future research:**

1. Research can be done in rural areas where the mobile penetration is not as high as in urban areas to get an idea of e-commerce penetration there.
2. College students can also be researched for identifying more factors and deeper research can be done to find the factors influencing the decision of teenagers.

3. Social media and other form of communication model (i.e.T.V,Radio,Print Media) can be studied together to see the diverse effect on minds of teenagers and their purchase decision ability along with them acting as the biggest influence in family purchase decision as well.

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