IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON FEMALE TWEEN'S PURCHASING

BEHAVIOR OF STYLE WEARS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the impact of the Social Media on the spending pattern on style clothing of female tweens in the age group between 8 and 12 years. The study was carried out based on a structured questionnaire to analyse the purchasing pattern of this group. A quantitative data analysis was done based on the qualitative responses from the interviews conducted. It is observed that this stage is highly style sensitive. The results of the study reveal the major decisive factors that surface while buying are based on parental and peer group endorsement, and the purchasing of style items is strongly influenced by its appearance and its overall look. The study revealed that the respondents were prepared to spend on purchasing branded wears, while placing a high emphasis on the product being deemed as cool. The study has been of extreme relevance in the present scenario and could be used by the commercial style retailers, marketers for their advertisement and campaigns to target the female Tween's category that falls under the mentioned age group.

KEYWORDS: Tween, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

The vibrant age group that falls within the range from the pre-adolescent to 14 years of age is referred to as the Tweens. The tweens comprise of a segment with a very high potential for the marketer to tap. The female tween group of ages 8 -14 is considered as one of the richest in generation who spend almost double every ten years over the last three decades. This has been due to the high rate of penetration of internet culture (Lindstorm, 2003, p.26). The tween is a niche segment and the media plays an important role in developing and carving this niche. Especially the advertising industry, the media and the marketing campaigns have seen to be exploiting the teen behavior, and have been conducting intense marketing campaigns to encourage them to dress and act like teenagers and young adults. (Linn 2004, p.131).

Teenagers have always been the target group for most of the Style related products. But, it is this new group called "Tween" that is now considered as a key group that Style retailers focus on. The term "tween" was initially coined as a marketing terminology, however there has been significant variations as to which age band these young people would be categorised. Data Monitor spectrum (200), places the "Teens" as young people between the age group 13 and 19 years and the "Tweenagers" at the younger end of this age spectrum, where they are youngsters between 11 and 13 years of age. According to Mintel International Group Limited (2001), the tweens are those between the age group 10 and 14 years. Clarke (2003) puts tweens into 8 to 12 years age group.

The age group between 8 and 12 happens to coincide with a stage where the kids part with their kids streak and start deciding what they want. This is a phase were parents stop deciding what to buy for them and they start purchasing on

their own. This "tween segment" is a rich demographic target for the marketer as it is involves niche marketing.

Dwek (1998) in his study has mentioned that today's adolescents have more money and exert more economic sway than their predecessors. In **Mintel** (August2002) it is estimated that "the total annual spending capacity of the children in United Kingdom (7 – 16 year olds) would surpass over £3 billion in 2006, rising from £2.7 billion in 2002". A survey conducted by the **Walls Pocket Money Monitor** (2001) insights that "Britain's 9 million plus children (aged 5-16 inclusive) have a total weekly expenditure power of approx. £60 million". Child Wise Insights (2001) observes the average expenditure on clothes per month by both sexes.

Is £31.70, with the top brands being Adidas, Nike, Top Shop, Tammy Girl and New Look. It is observed that girls were interested in style and would prefer to shop for r "cheaper versions of the 'right' designer clothes"

Mintel International Group Ltd (2001, p.3) in another study have observe that "Girls are predominantly prefer to spend on attire and shoes, with 24% of them have expressed such behavior in the last year. Data Monitor (2002) in its recent research concludes that tweens are "the group with high emerging expenses capacity on the High Street". It is therefore understood that this group is an arising considerable market segment. However literature exists on younger children and influences on their behavior. There has been very few academic research papers published on the factors that specifically influences female tween buying of style outfits.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tween Girls' Clothing Preferences and Purchasing Behaviors

Cotton Incorporated, **(2012)** in its study observes that the tween girls in the United States have expressed a brawny attention in style and garments shopping with 29 percent of 13 year olds reveal that they "love" clothes and shopping 3 percent of them express that they "enjoy" it. The study also insights that this attention in style is further reflected that 63percent of the 13 year olds in the in the US aspire to maintain a cutting edge of style, and on an average pay about $54 per month for the purpose.

Drake-Bridges and Burgess (2010) in their study concluded that 86 percent of the Tween girls in their sample "almost never" shopped online for clothing. However a study by the Pew Research Center recommend that 43 percent of teens with internet access do shop online (Tweens and Online Shopping, 2010), perhaps implying that young consumers' use of the internet for spending purposes increases with age. As the Tween girls navigate the contemporary marketplace, their garments shopping and spending decisions are shaped by a wide range of factors, including product attributes and reference group influences.

Earlier studies that explore the significance that tween girls allocate to a range of clothing attributes have been rather inconclusive. **Brock et al, (2010**), Cotton Incorporated (**2012), Grant and Stephen, (2005**) in their study put forward proof that tweens decisions on their purchase of clothing are highly influenced by the brand name and its associations. However the work by **Sancheti (2009)** indicates that the importance of brand name may be rather negligible in most cases.

Studies by **Brock et al. (2010) and Sancheti (2009**) also indicate that when purchasing clothing, fitting may be a significant attribute for Tween girls. However results of the study provide incompatible facts regarding to the significance of aesthetics and style and comfort. **Brock et al. (2010) and Sancheti (2009)** have explored the relative significance that

mothers assign to the various attributes while shopping for their daughters' clothing. The study conducted among the mothers who shopped for their daughters clothing observed that, fit was considered to be the most important attribute.

It was found that the results of the studies were consistent with respect to the importance that mothers gave to aesthetics and style and color but were found to be inconsistent with respect to the importance that mothers gave to the brand name.

However the market research conducted by Tweens, Teens and Social Responsibility, 2011, indicates that the tweens purchase decisions were prejudiced by a company's social responsibility. To be specific, generosity towards labor and use of recycled material used in product development.

Parental influence in developing a social responsibility among the tween choice is a possibility and is an area which has not been explored. **Drake-Bridges and Burgess, 2010; Gavish et al 2008** have mentioned in their study that parents especially mothers play a significant role in shaping Tweens Clothing consumption pattern. It is observed that mothers have a highly significant influence on the tweens decisions than any other member of the family, regarding issues as to what style to adopt particularly with respect to the decisions related to formal clothing and clothing for special occasions. **(Grant and Stephen, 2005; Sancheti 2009).**

Studies reveal that mothers play a major role in recommending to tween girls about the price and quality **(Grant and Stephen, 2005**) and serve as consumer role models to their daughters and frequently shop with them for fashion items (**Gavish et, al, 2008).**

Consumption of Garments

The study conducted by **O'Cass (2004**) defines garments participation as the degree to which consumers regard clothing as a central part of their life and as a meaningful and attractive activity. (p.870). **Goldsmith et al. 1999; O'Cass,2000** and **Tigert et al., 1976**, in their study observe that consumers vary extensively based on their involvement in understanding the pattern of consumption. Consumers with a high degree of clothing involvement view, clothing as highly pertaining to their level of intelligence of self and often reign as style view leaders among their peers.

Drake – Bridges and Burgess, 2010, in their analysis substantiate that Tween girls have a high level of participation in clothing and fashion. They further observe that younger people in general are more involved in fashion garments than the older people. **(O'Cass 2004; Viera, 2009).**

Though not much research has been done on studying the power of garments upon the buying behavior, **Viera, 2009; O'Cass (2004**) have found that garments participation influences garments knowledge , which in turn, is linked to building consumer assurance in making garments purchase decisions.

The present study focuses on studying the relationship between clothing involvement and Tween girls purchase decisions and whether their purchase intentions regard them Pretty Brainy. Further the study also analyses whether the Tween girls and their mothers are similar in regard to their level of clothing preferences and choices. Studies on how parents would influence their children relative to the importance of clothing in their lives.

Proximity of Clothing to Self

Sontag and Lee, (2004); Sontag and Schlater, (1982) in their study address the psychological closeness to self as a many- sided construct. The proximity of clothing to one's self explains and incorporates the ways of thinking of a person in terms of self structure, self process, body image and even one's self esteem. A more specific analysis of proximity to self by **Sontag and Lee, 2004; Sontag, 1979**, states that the proximity of clothing to self reflects the extent to

which individuals perceive their attire as one with self. That is one's self as structure and recognises clothing as a means by which they wish to set up authenticity and individuality and the self process. They perceive clothing as an expression of self worth and an effective response to self-evaluation and self esteem as related to the body image.

A few studies have examined the relationship between immediacy of garments to self and consumer attitudes or behavior. **Vreeman (1985)** in his study examined the relationship between a person's garments involvement and proximity of clothing to self and highlighted the differences between persons with high and low levels of proximity of clothes to self, and in particular compare individuals with a low proximity of clothing to self with those with a high proximity of clothing to self, and allocated more time to obtain information about the Apparel, assigned greater importance to brand name, and enjoyed shopping.

In an earlier study, **Schmerbauch (1993**) found that age and gender influenced the extent of proximity of clothing to self, with the ninth grade students, and the girls reporting higher proximity of clothing to self than did the older kids of grade 12 and boys.

This study analysis three dimensions of proximity to self. Firstly Clothing in relation to self as a process, Secondly, Communication of the self to others and thirdly Clothing in relation to self – esteem - evaluative process. (**Sontag and Lee, 2004).** The three dimensions were selected because as a whole they address adolescent's use of clothing to develop identity and the self. They communicate this identity to others to build their self esteem and confidence through garment involvement. Though Vreeman's work propagates that proximity of clothing to self can be related to consumption behaviours, there has been no studies regarding the proximity of clothing to self in shaping adolescents garment choices or intentions nor the possibility that mothers could impose an influence upon their daughter's proximity of clothing to self.

OBJECTIVE

- **To Analyses the key elements that influence female tween purchase patterns of style wears.**
- **To study the role of the Social Media in influencing a changing overall purchasing behavior.**

Hypothesis

H01: The key influencing elements such as family income and advertisement response on female tween buyer for style wears does not exist.

H11: The key influencing elements such as family income and advertisement response on female tween buyer for style wears exist

H02: The influence of Social media on female tween buyers for style wears does not exist

H22: Social media influence female tween buyer for style wears does exist.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive study explaining the characteristics of the research is adopted. The research design is explanatory in nature. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire. Sampling was done through identified sample using the convenience sampling technique, including snowball techniques to identify tween respondents.

The sample size was 100 for the study in Mumbai city. The variables were selected on the basis of qualitative interviews. The focus group includes 10 respondents from age group.

8 – 14. SPSS 20 has been used for analyzing data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic representation has been shown in below table.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	100	1.00	5.00	3.2700	1.37698
Family Income	100	1.00	3.00	1.9500	.72995
Board	100	1.00	3.00	1.9300	.71428
Social_Media_Uses	100	1.00	3.00	1.8300	.71145
Advertisment_response	100	1.00	2.00	1.3800	.48783
Peer_Infuence_	100	1.00	2.00	1.3000	.46057
Product__Category_purchase	100	1.00	5.00	2.5900	1.17288
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Table 2: Cross Tabulation is Showing that how Different age Group Responding To Different Degree of Social Media Uses.

Count		Social_Media_Uses			Total
		No	Yes	Under Parents Guidance	
Age	8 yrs	9	4	3	16
	9 yrs	13	2	5	20
	10 yrs	7	2	8	27
	11 yrs	0	11	12	23
	12 yrs	0	11	3	14
Total		35	47	18	100

Table 3:

Chi Square test has been conducted whether social media influence tween Buying Behaviour and result from chi-Square test clearly shows that the null hypothesis stands rejected and produce evidence that social media doe's influence the Tween Buying Behaviour.

Test Statistics	Peer_Infuence_	Product__Category_Purchase
Chi-Square	16.000[a]	23.200[b]
Df	1	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 20.0.

Table 4: This Test Results is Showing that Family Income Plays an Important Role in Advertisement Response and Social Media Uses Among the Tween Buyer.

Test Statistics	Family Income	Social Media Uses	Advertisment Response
Chi-Square	8.780[a]	12.740[a]	5.760[b]
df	2	2	1
Asymp. Sig.	.012	.002	.016

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0.

RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTIONS

The female Tween Segment is fast emerging. There lies a great future in India from this segment due its increasing internet penetration and buying capacity. The family income has been rising due to dual earning and nuclear family set up. The nuclear family supports the very cause of internet buying. Therefore the seller and the marketer can play a significant role in developing this segment with specific focus and designing specific campaign for the female tween segment.

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