

## USING CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS TO MAP PURCHASE CRITERIA OF DIFFERENT PRODUCT CATEGORY: A STUDY ON TEENAGE SEGMENT

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**Abstract:** This study aims to evaluate product categories (Electronics, Kitchen appliances, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages) association with key purchase criteria to illustrate the relative positioning of five product categories across specific purchase criteria. The study includes a sample of 600 teenage respondents from five cities of north India - Yamunanagar, Faridabad, Hisar, Bhiwani and Karnal. Correspondence analysis was used to depict purchase criteria based comparative analysis of the top selling product categories across the Country. The findings of the study help to reflect on three aspects - (i) similarity in the positioning of five product categories, (ii) specific purchase criteria association with product categories and (iii) dominant purchase criteria. This study provides meaningful insights for multi-category players to create an efficient/effective marketing program for obtaining sustainable competitive advantage. The study also presents an opportunity to reflect on the efficacy of its current strategy and optimally reposition itself. Also, the study presents a meaningful ground for future researchers who wish to investigate the growing potential of teenage segment in Indian settings.

**Keywords:** Teenage Market Segment, Purchase Decision, Purchase criteria, Correspondence analysis.

### 1 Introduction

Due to globalization, many business opportunities have become possible for the companies located in various countries. Various brands dealing in extensive product category have diversified their businesses cross border. Usually, marketers feel succeeded in the context of achieving their business goals by targeting and diversifying their product categories in the developed nations. However, approaching developed nation further requires higher level of resources in terms of technical, financial and human as well which may not be found profitable for every company to opt/adapt. Also, the enhancement in literacy rate, increasing use of smart phones and more digital awareness among developing nations further provide the solutions to these marketers. Focusing to the nation India, which has always remained the focal point of many marketers and investors, is providing the positive figures of digital adaptability among people. As in the year 2022, there were approximately 659 million smartphone users after China which is 974.69 million (Laricchia, 2023). This figure depicts that people of these nations are becoming more digitally efficient and adapting such platforms very conveniently. Specifically focusing to the nation India, literacy rate has reached to 74% in 2018 which used to be 41 % in 1981 (Statista, 2023). Thus, it can be concluded that these positive patterns are bringing economic advancement into the country and simultaneously serving as a growth engine for the new emerging businesses. Moreover, the market in India is extremely heterogeneous contains vast range of demographic, geographic and cultural factors which is further providing the good opportunities to the marketers in creating the different segment to target each type of customer. Hence, observing these positive digital trends among Indian consumers, the companies have also shifted their marketing communication from traditional to digital platforms. For instance, brands like Apple launched "Shot on iPhone" marketing campaign and another brand Samsung also launched campaign like #IndiaReadyAction, #EpicUnboxingEvent, #GoMonster, #PoweringDigitalIndia. The increasing rate of smartphone usage, improving literacy rate, and increasing digital adaptability are impacting positively in the context of providing business opportunities for the marketers. Further, high productivity of 4G/5G services has made it more convenient to access the product knowledge for purchasing. However, this may be advantageous only if these innovative paths are convenient and adaptable by the targeted market as well. It is further needs to be investigated that which age group is more convenient in accessing these

platforms and should be the main focal point of the marketers to focus upon. The marketers need to identify the age group which further contains the ability to affect the purchasing decision of other age-group and quite techno-oriented as well. The age group that is more connected to digital platforms and would provide multiple results to marketers is also one of the complex dilemmas for marketers to identify. Thus, with the evidences the teenage segment has been found most connected age-group on the digital platform (Anderson, Faverio and Gottfried, 2023). This age group contains more efficiency and adaptability towards the electronic medium. Even in comparison to their parents also, this age group contains good calibre in adapting the techno-environment and usually found spending most of their time on social networking websites (Belch, Kretler & Flurry, 2005). Hence, digital advertising trends indirectly indulge this age group in purchasing decision, as drastic increase has been found among this age group in US nation in the year 2022. The survey conducted on US teenagers found that they spend their daily video consumption time on Netflix and YouTube which is 35% & 37% respectively (Meyers, 2016). Another study conducted by Duffett, 2017 claim that more time devotion on social media application results in accelerates the marketing channel and communication. Gone the time when children used to remain dependent on their parents' purchasing. It used to be the parents only who used to satisfy the purchasing desires of their children through their purchasing skill. However, in the period of transformation from the child phase to teenage phase, they grasp abundance purchasing skills from their environment. Moreover, the quality of tech-savvy, Internet maven, more adaptability toward electronic gadgets, convenient shopping mechanism further makes the product promotional efforts easier for the companies especially in the context of targeting teenage segment. In today's scenario teenagers are becoming more independent towards their purchasing decision, even in the same context evidence has been found out in western settings (Belch, Krentler and Willis-Flurry, 2005, Shoham and Dalakas, 2003; João and Baía, 2021). It has also been observed that teenagers are not only limited towards their personal purchasing but further giving the sound attention towards their family household purchasing as well (Kaur and Medury, 2011). Thus, this study has been conducted which will provide marketing insights regarding the purchasing criteria adopted by teenagers for five product category while taking decision for family purchasing.

## **2 Backdrop and Theoretical Perspective**

### *2.1 Purchase Criteria*

The purchasing decision of any product and services is generally not an immediate task but contains the rigorous process of thinking, analyzing the abundance alternatives, and many other factors while finalizing the product for final purchasing (Thakur and Kaur, 2020). This is the reason why consumer behavior is the focal point for every market expert. The consumer behavior is further uncertain and dependent upon various internal and external factors such as cultural, social, personal, and psychological (Rowe and Clark, 1927; Kotler and Armstrong, 2018). There are various theories which are related to this phenomenon such as Theory of Reasoned Action, Engel Kollet, Blackwell (EKB) model and Stimulus Response model.

The stimuli response model describes that the marketing stimuli and other factors enter into the customer's black box and generate various responses from him (Rowe and Clark, 1927; Kotler and Armstrong, 2018). The marketing stimulus is composed of 4Ps - product, price, place and promotion; simultaneously economical, technological, political and cultural factors also get connected with buyer's characteristics and the response results into purchasing decision. This response further helps the marketers to analyze the purchasing attitude, behavior and relation with the particular brand of customer. Throwing light into the same context EKB model propounded in 1968 which consists the five stages - information input, information processing, decision process, decision process variables and external forces (John, 2022). Under this model stimulus (information input) involve ads through radio/television, internet and word of mouth but as the study Shen, 2022 suggested there are some other factors such as reference group, family, internal motivation, demographic factors which also influence the consumer decision-making process. Theory of reasoned action is the cognitive theory which consist the theoretical framework derived for understanding the human behavior (Heller, 2013). Under this theory, intention is predicted by belief, attitude, normative belief and subjective norms. There is a study which has used this theory in order to analyze the purchasing intention of the customer (Lee and Stoel, 2014). The high discount raised by the companies simultaneously raises the risk perception related to the

retailers' trustworthiness and product quality as well (Lee and Stoel, 2014). Another study (Palalic *et al.*, 2020) has further suggested to the entrepreneur that social media is increasing rapidly and have the significant impact on consumer's buying behavior. In addition, people give more attention to Word of mouth which depicts more product credibility before buying decision (Palalic *et al.*, 2020). The positive impact of social media influencers (SMI) on every stage of consumer buying decision in travelling context has been found out (Pop *et al.*, 2022). Another study (Kang, Shin and Ponto, 2020) conducted with the objective to explore how virtual reality (VR) features affect the perceive informativeness and playfulness and found that these are the critical factors which affect the purchasing decision-making process. Moreover, the new class of Augmented Reality has also been invented named as Social AR, where two or more consumer can share, communicate and virtually increase the boundary of same physical environment (Hilken *et al.*, 2020). For instance, Akzo Nobel's visualizer decorating app which enables the customers to get the view of their redecorated and repainted wall by simply moving the smartphone or tablet around the room and also invites the others for recommendation as well (akzonobel.com). Besides this, online shopping doesn't provide opportunity to personally examine the product (Mukhopadhyay and Setoputro, 2004; Thakur and Kaur, 2020). Due to this, the return policy is further taken as the competitive weapon specifically in online purchasing which further influences the company's sales (Mukhopadhyay and Setoputro, 2004).

In order to achieve a secured competitive position marketing experts, utilize various tools, strategies and tactics for satisfying their target group (Thakur and Kaur, 2020). On the other hand, the customer also occupies the distinctive purchasing criteria while shopping any product or service. Moreover, if the customer belongs to its teenage phase, then marketers are further suggested to take this generation very cautiously. In previous literatures, many purchasing criteria have been studied which are directly influencing the purchasing decision of customer. For instance, the study conducted by Slamet, Prasetyo and Azmala, 2022 found that purchasing decision of consumer is directly influenced by brand image specifically in the context of online purchasing. It has been proven that brand image is one of the critical factor which consumer take into consideration while making purchasing online (Slamet, Prasetyo and Azmala, 2022). It is also suggested to the emerging nation India that monetary aspects should be more focused upon by the marketers such as providing free delivery services and promotional offer that actually influence the purchasing intention of the customer (Kushwah *et al.*, 2019; João and Baía, 202; Tandon *et al.*, 2021). The consumers also post their product-usage experience on many digital platforms which is becoming most popular termed as electronic word of mouth (E-WOM). The increasing trend of grabbing product reviews through E-WOM simultaneously increases the trends of purchasing intentions (Zhang and Tran, 2009; Prasad, Gupta and Totala, 2017). The study conducted by Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012 results the strong positive effect of EWOM on purchasing intention which influence directly and indirectly purchasing decision of the consumer. Apart from online review and rating the decision maker rely more upon the suggestion from friends/peer and family (Zhu *et al.* 2010; Hilken *et al.*, 2020). It has been found that product reviews taken directly from their friends and family found more trustworthy (Deloitte 2016). The Augmented reality (AR) is also one of the trending purchasing criteria which is being adopted by many companies such as Amazon, IKEA, MyGlamm and L'Oreal to give the enhanced experience to their customers. The AR has been found quite successive in providing the better feel and convenience to the customer for their actual purchasing decision (Hilken *et al.* 2017; Heller *et al.* 2019; Hilken *et al.*, 2020).

After an extensive literature review and along with the latest trends for product categories - electronics, kitchen appliances, personal care, apparel & lifestyle, food & beverages most emerging purchasing criteria have been identified which have been gained abundance weightage from previous academicians (Mann and Byun, 2010; Sarpila and Räsänen, 2011; Thakur and Kaur, 2020; Ray, Gusain and Kumar, 2020). These studies have shown the positive response among the western countries but it is yet to analyse whether significant results can be obtained in Indian nation. Thus, twenty purchasing criteria have been incorporated under this study for five product categories.

## 2.2 Teenagers involvement in consumer buying behavior model

The teenagers as an internet maven play most prominent role in the early stages as compared to the last stage (Belch, Krentler and Flurry, 2005). This study depicts that teenagers feel more interested in searching & gathering the product related aspects through internet and become aware about the brand but show their less involvement in the final purchase decision. However, considering the changes in lifestyle, purchasing/consumption pattern in Indian families, increasing trends of dual-income family etc. are some factors which have extended their participation till

final purchase. A study conducted by Singh and Singh, 2014 found that teenagers played the active role in all the three stages in the context of FMCG product. Further, Active participation in final decision stage is positively significant with the age factor (Singh and Singh, 2014). Now, teenagers are gradually showing their purchasing concern towards the actual purchase of the product which was earlier only limited till information search (Kaur and Medury, 2014). The marketers are also suggested for remaining active as far as teenagers' behaviour is concerned in the context of family purchasing. As due to their efficiency in accessing electronic-gadgets, social-media presence, understanding ability towards innovative digital advertisement, their preferences are also accepted by their parents as well. Thus, marketers are suggested to take this segment very cautiously while formulating the marketing strategy as this age group is not only showing their presence for their personal purchasing but also started indulging in showing their presence in their family purchasing decision.

Literature has focused upon the various crucial purchasing criteria but very few studies have targeted to the specific teen segment. Hence, this research paper is an attempt to bring into the light purchasing criteria followed by teen segment of tier 2 cities of Haryana. This research paper would open up the new areas for the marketer through depicting the significance of various purchasing criteria adopted by the teenager while shopping online as well as offline for his family. Under this study, authors have used purchasing criteria – price discount, exclusive offer, product rating, repetitive advertisement, social media influencer, Product quality, brand image, product appearance, usefulness in family, Product convenient level for other family member, user-generated content, product description, free gifts/rewards, cash-back services, product packaging, reviews from their peer, personal reviews of the film celebrity (without any commercial motives/paid promotions), return and warranty services.

### 2.3 Product Categories

Consumer buying behaviour has become more complex now a day as every marketer is striving to lure customers. Moreover, if the customer belongs to complex and variety seeking buying behaviour then becomes quite very challenging to make his conversion into the actual consumer. Thus, it is essential for marketers to take every phase of customer buying decision very strategically. Generally, the customer goes through five stage of purchasing decision such as problem recognizing, gathering information, evaluating and assessing the alternative product and actual purchasing (Tjiptono, 2015; Slamet, Prasetyo and Azmala, 2022). In the same manner (Kotler, Keller and Chernev, 2021) describe the buying decision which begin with recognizing the problem, seeking information, evaluating alternatives, purchasing decisions and post-purchase behaviour. The purchasing decision of the consumer is further dependent upon various factors. As the study conducted focused on factors such as social media influencers (SMIs), key opinion leader (KOL) and consumer feedback which helps in grabbing the consumer's trust that puts positive effect on their purchasing intention (Alotaibi, Alkathlan and Alzeer, 2019). In the same manner communication among peer actually play vital role in the path of purchasing any product category. The study conducted among the students of Adnan Menders University found that they feel more confident while shopping with their peer and purchase the product which is approved by their friends and peers (Armagon, 2013). It is also need to understand that same factors may not be held responsible in affecting purchasing decision of all type of product category. The teenager's purchasing decision may be influenced by discount factor in one product category for instance electronic and exclusive offer for another product category such as personal care products. Thus, it is essential to understand which purchasing criterion is adopted by this teenage segment while taking purchasing decision of any product category. Hence, under this study authors have taken five product categories which are Electronics, Kitchen appliance, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages etc. This study would provide the deep understanding regarding the association of various purchasing criteria in evaluating the product categories (Electronics, Kitchen appliance, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages). These product categories have been chosen on the basis of observing the rising demand, necessity in daily life and durability. The product categories are described as below:

- **Electronics:** This product category includes laptops, desktop computers, printers, smartphones, camera, flat screen TVs, audio/video players, remote control cares, video games etc. (Thakur and Kaur, 2020; Candidate, 2017; BlueWeave consulting, 2024).

- **Kitchen Appliances:** This category has included dishwashers, water heaters, kitchen stoves, trash compactors, water purifiers, refrigerators, microwave ovens, washing machines, induction cookers and other regular utensils (Thakur and Kaur, 2020; India kitchen appliances market size, top companies, 2024-2032; Smart kitchen appliances market, 2024).
- **Personal Care:** Cosmetics, hygiene product, skin care product, hair care products, fragrance products, bath care product (Wu et al., 2010; Ray, Gusain and Kumar, 2020).
- **Apparel & Lifestyle:** Apparels category includes wear of all ages (men, women and kids) for all occasion. (Thakur and Kaur, 2020)
- **Food & Beverages:** All raw food & beverages, Microwave meals, Dairy products, Fast foods, Packed snacks, Meat-Packaged & Fresh, all type of cereals, all types of edible oil (Kraak and Pelletier, 1998; Food and Beverages Market Statistics, Size, Growth Drivers, Forecast to 2033).

### 2.3.1 *Electronics*

The electronic category is the first one among the five product categories studied. The electronic product category is the most growing sector in this competitive era as tremendous growth can be observed in last 10 years. Due to having convenience ability this product segment has always succeeded in enticing their consumers. This category has been found quite universal and involved in other areas also such as dishwasher, durable products, smartphones, e-gadgets vehicles etc. A report “Spherical Insights & Consulting” has revealed that global consumer electronics market size which used to be \$720 billion in the year 2021 is going to reach at \$1000.90 billion by 2030 (Spherical Insights, 2023). Similarly, in Indian context also, this market is valued at \$73.73 billion and further anticipated would expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.5% till 2030 (grandviewresearch.com). Even due to rise in disposal income this market has shown its tremendous growth in Indian smaller cities. For instance, electronic market players such as Apple & Samsung are continuously adapting the innovative marketing strategy by observing the engagement of this segment in technology. As the Samsung launched digital campaign named “India Ready Action” which involved youth to represent the real India through their 60 second videos captured through their Samsung Smartphone (Mishra, 2023). On the other hand, Apple further launched “shot on iPhone” contest to engage the iPhone users to upload the clicked photograph of any object and winner further equipped with prizes. The marketers are continuously adapting such innovative strategy to create awareness among teen segment as found more tech-savvy in comparison to other age group. As this segment also contains the ability to influence purchasing decision of other age- group as well and recommend better products also. Thus, under this study, the authors have taken the electronic product category in order to analyze the purchasing criteria followed by Indian teenagers of smaller cities of Haryana.

### 2.3.2 *Kitchen Appliance*

The nation India is massively adapting the changing lifestyle due to increasing trend of nuclear family, working parents and their busy schedule. Due to this people fail to find adequate time for their conventional cooking method where high technology kitchen appliances are paving the way on such issues. Convergence of kitchen appliance with Information technology (IT) and AI enabled services not only helping in reducing their cooking workload but also provides fastest cooking facilities (Thakur and Kaur, 2020). The kitchen appliances involve the product like induction cookers, microwave oven, water purifiers, refrigerators, freezers etc. (Thakur and Kaur, 2020). The concern towards maintaining and improving health is the main priority of every household where this product category is playing an effective role for daily busy routine. The kitchen appliances such as refrigerator, blender, coffee maker, dishwashers, oven provides the quick results that save their cooking time rather ordering and becoming dependent on restaurant food. Even not only the instant cooking results but people are also becoming more conscious towards sustainable practices and adapting these smart appliances for avoiding the food wastages (Smart kitchen appliances market, 2024). The teenagers which are most available person in family contain the ability and have much time to access the product knowledge and suggest the latest technology with-in family. Even the companies are also paying much attention in providing high quality products with latest technology considering the requirement of the changing market. The gradual convergence of consumer electronics with IT companies is also

focusing on enticing the consumer through producing more latest and attractive designs (Hur, Kim and Park, 2010). Furthermore, the Indian nation is consisting with the heterogeneous market that involves people which belong to different income level, ideologies, custom, languages etc. is providing the abundance marketing opportunities to be grabbed (John and Bharathy, 2018). Hence, this product category is the basic necessity of daily routine and rising demand has also open up abundance opportunities to the marketers/ practitioners Thus, under this study authors have opted this product category (kitchen appliances) in order to analyse which purchasing criteria is followed by Indian teenagers while purchasing the kitchen appliance products.

### 2.3.3 Personal Care

The personal care market is one of the rapidly growing market which deals in daily basic needs of the consumer. This product segment is used to be only restricted towards the female segment but in the recent years sudden increasing interest of male segment have also been witnessed (Men - the new beauty industry target 2004). The one of reason of growing interest of this segment may be due to changing trends of employment as males have shifted themselves towards the white-collar job rather traditional blue-collar jobs (Beauty and personal care products market report, 2030). Thus, it can be said that males are also becoming more concerned about their hygiene, skin and beauty products which is giving a great boost to this category to rise. Personal care products ordinarily involve those products which are associated with hygiene practices such as soaps, shower gels, tooth paste etc. (Ray, Gusain and Kumar, 2020). Some personal care products are required to be rinsed off and some remains as it is which gets absorbed into the object such as moisturizing cream, sunscreen, sanitizers and Nasal spray etc. (Ray, Gusain and Kumar, 2020). Hence, it is not surprise that this product category is an essential part of consumers and they cannot ignore this category which contains their daily routine useful things. Furthermore, the revenue in beauty & personal care market has reached to \$579.20 billion in the year 2023 and further anticipated to rise by 3.53% annually by 2028 worldwide (statista.com). As the study conducted in California has found that females frequently use the personal care product which are produced for both sexes in comparison to male (Wu *et al.*, 2010). In the same study, it has further found that younger adults were excessive users of this product category except few products which are unpopular among this generation such as nasal spray, aftershave, hairspray (Wu *et al.*, 2010). Another study conducted on university students in Malaysia has found the positive influence of four variables - brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and perceived quality with purchasing intention in the context of skin care product (Lee, Goh and Mohd Noor, 2019). Similarly, in Indian settings also this market is going to provide various growing opportunities to the marketers as the people are becoming more conscious for their health and personal care. The revenue in Beauty & personal care market has reached to \$27.77 billion in the year 2023 and further anticipated to rise by 3.28 % annually by 2028 in India (statista.com). Even the expensive personal care products which used to be marketed in urban areas but now have been made available in emerging cities as well (Polaris, 2024.). Hence, observing the various growth opportunities of this product category in emerging cities and simultaneous increasing enthusiasm of teenage segment towards these products is the main reason of authors have opted this product category for this study. The Marketers/brands dealing in this product category would also get the answer regarding purchasing criteria followed by teenagers while purchasing personal care products that would also be benefitted to the marketers for formulating marketing strategies/business plan.

### 2.3.4. Apparels & Lifestyle

Apparel & lifestyle products are completely inseparable part of every consumer's day life (thebusinessresearchcompany.com). The people not only from the different profession such as office, students, teachers etc. but home maker also have their specific way of carrying themselves which enhances their confidence (thebusinessresearchcompany.com). In the recent period, this industry has faced an unpredictable increase in demand and growing global competition as well (Noor et al, 2022). The apparel involves various types of dresses of men, woman and kids with variety of threads based on occasion. People frequently adorn their bodies with articles of clothes, also referred to as dresses, outfits, or apparel. In its broadest definition, clothing refers to coverings for the hands (gloves), feet (shoes, sandals, boots), head (hats, caps), and trunk and limbs. The apparel market has reached to \$703.11 billion in 2024 from \$610.12 billion in 2022 worldwide (thebusinessresearchcompany.com). Despite of various obstacles faced during pandemic era this sector is further showing the positive signs of recovery in the market. Even due to rapid penetration of e-commerce and easy adaptation by the consumers is further opening

the growing opportunities for Apparel industry. Many brands have further adopted the virtual fitting room to provide the better experience of the clothes without touching any object. For instance, US based retail Corporation, Wallmart Inc. launched Zeekit (virtual fitting room platform) for providing better services to their customer and gained good amount of competitive advantage (thebusinessresearchcompany.com). It is further expected that this market is going to reach \$918.71 trillion in next five years. Similarly, in Indian context also, market would increase up to \$115-125 billion at compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11-12% by 2025 (Vig, 2023). The demand of apparel in developing nation India is further influenced by many factors such as age, gender, income, place and ethnicity (Mann and Byun, 2011). Turning towards the most leading target age-group, it has been found that teenagers consume more than 40 % of their budget spend on fashion category where apparel occupies the large share (fibre2fashion.com). The teen segment contains the ability to influence the purchasing decision of other age-group as well and treated as the trend setter by them (Martin and Bush, 2000). Due to remain updated with the latest fashion trends and spending more time on social media; consumers give more importance to the taste and preference chosen by the teenage segment. Hence, this segment is categorized as the trend-setter of the market whose suggestions are more prioritized by other also while taking purchasing decision (Martin and Bush, 2000). This segment actually set-up the latest fashion-trends in the market. Thus, under this study, the authors have opted apparel category observing teenagers' enthusiasm and interest. Thus, it is necessary to create awareness among marketers about the purchasing criteria followed by teenagers while taking family purchasing decision.

### 2.3.5. Food & Beverages

Food & beverages product category has been found the essential part of our daily life. This segment being a part of low involvement product categories never get high priority among people a decade ago. But with increase in various factors such as education, technology, easy availability of information, hectic schedule is indirectly giving boost to this sector. Even during election period, the consumption gets increased due to political rallies, road shows and other political events as free distribution is availed by public and participants (Pinto, 2024). Many firms also started increasing their stocks at their retail outlets due to expectation of demand increasing. Hence, retail outlets in order to meet the rising demand and to tackle with supply shortage, have also increased their stocks (Pinto, 2024). Globally, this market is expected to reach up to \$9225.37 billion in 2027 which is currently \$6729.54 & \$7221.73 billion in 2022 & 2023 respectively (Itd, 2024). Similarly, in Indian context also, due to rising income levels, continuous increase in per capital income, availability of more tech-savvy younger generation, increasing number of nuclear families, increasing ratio of women in workforce, changing lifestyle further providing the main impetus in the growth of this market (Jain, 2011). It is anticipated that Indian Food & Beverage market would reach up to \$504.93 billion by 2027 with CAGR of 11.05 % (F&B SECTOR IN INDIA, 2022). The integration of this sector with e-commerce is also the cost-saving phenomenon for the restaurants where the food order can be received without increasing their dining area and directly deliver to the customer's doorstep (Chen *et al.*, 2020). Customer may also order meal by analysing the food reviews and comments through various applications such as Swiggy, Zomato etc. This sector is the termed as the most significant because of the main driver of various sectors of the economy such as transportation, retail, agriculture (F&B sector in India, 2022). Even the market share of this industry is quite enough for achieving higher profits and to attract the foreign investors as well.

In the recent times, the children have been found as the consumer at their initial younger ages and various factors & experiences are developing the consumer habits among them. Even when these children reach to their teenage phase becomes more mature and confident in selecting their eating products. As there are many factors which influence the teenage consumer decision making behaviour which affects their food choices but T.V advertisement and prime-time programs were found most as significant which are directly influencing them in this product category (Kraak and Pelletier, 1998). As observing these rising opportunities in this sector, the authors have chosen this product category in order to assess the purchasing criteria followed by Indian teenagers of northern cities while purchasing this product category.

### 3 Research Objectives and Research Questions

Marketers are putting their best efforts in understanding the market environment and tactically forming marketing policies for positive outcomes. It is essential for marketers to understand which consumer segment should be targeted. Hence, observing the growing penetration of teenage segment in family purchasing decision the marketers

are further suggested to form innovative marketing strategy. The same marketing practices applied on other segments may not provide the optimum results to entice the teenage segment. This segment is required to be taken very cautiously by the marketers due to having tech-savvy abilities. Even the purchasing criteria preferred by this segment may vary from product to product. If teenager opts price discount for one product category, then may be looking for brand image in another product category. Thus, it is essential for marketers to know which product category is influenced by which purchasing criteria. This question requires an empirical investigation among teenagers to draw the appropriate conclusion. The main objective of this study is to examine the relative significance of various purchasing criteria in selection of different product categories – Electronics, Kitchen appliances, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages. This study would help in addressing the following research questions:

**RQ1:** Are the product categories - Electronics, Kitchen Appliances, Personal care, Apparels & lifestyle and Food & Beverages positioned similarly or differently based on the several purchase decision criteria?

**RQ2:** What are the specific purchase criteria which relate to a particular product category?

**RQ3:** Which are the purchase criteria that are discriminatory and have a dominant impact in the positioning of product categories?

#### 4 Research Methodology

##### 4.1 Data Collection and Sample Profile

The product positioning of five product categories – Electronics, Kitchen appliances, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages has been evaluated and study was conducted in five northern cities of India (Yamunanagar, Faridabad, Hisar, Bhiwani & Karnal). The non-probability sampling technique was used for conducting the sampling process where two stage sampling was done. Firstly, area sampling was conducted in which authors have selected five northern Indian cities. It is revealed under the study (Budhiraja and Gupta, 2019) that the children lying between the age-group of 14-19 years of this region are more involved in family buying decision. The highest concern for popular product (includes stationery, beverage and apparel product category) have been found out among this age group of this particular state. On the next stage, the sample has been taken by using convenient sampling technique, recommended by the previous researchers (Etikan, 2016;Thakur & Kaur, 2020). This technique helped in collecting data in much shorter time in comparison to other technique. Even this technique has been proved best alternative when researchers' face shortage of funding. Additionally, this technique has been found quite effective for conducting the pilot study. After analysing the population in each district, the districts with the highest population from each division have been taken under this study. The data was collected in the year 2023 across five cities in the period between January - April, 2023. The field researcher approached the teenage segment such as pre-teen, early teen, mid-teen, late teen, post-teen who have strong intervention in family purchase decision. The teenagers who are in the age of 11-13 years are termed as the pre-teen and those who are in the age of 13-15 years are termed as early teen. The teenagers who come under the age bracket of 15 -17 years are termed as the Mid-Teen and the rest belong to age group 17-19 years are considered as late teen. Similarly, the teenagers in the age group of 19 - 21 are categorised as the Post - Teen. The sample composed of 120 respondents from each city. Table 1 represents the sample composition consist the gender, age-group, parents, family income, education, family size of the teenage respondents.

**Table 1** Sample Profile

Socio - Demographics variables	Yamunanagar	Faridabad	Hisar	Bhiwani	Karnal
	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	56 (46.67)	71 (59.16)	72 (60)	64 (53.33)	70 (58.33)
Female	64 (53.33)	48 (40)	48 (40)	56 (46.67)	49 (40.83)

<b>Age Groups</b>					
11-13	20 (16.67)	16 (13.33)	13 (10.83)	12 (10)	9 (7.5)
13-15	26 (21.67)	32 (26.67)	36 (30)	34 (28.33)	24 (20)
15-17	24 (20)	24 (20)	27 (22.5)	29 (24.17)	40 (33.33)
17-19	23 (19.16)	21 (17.5)	25 (20.83)	28 (23.33)	27 (22.5)
19-21	27 (22.5)	27 (22.5)	19 (15.83)	17 (14.17)	20 (16.67)
<b>Parents</b>					
Single Earning Parent	75 (62.5)	68 (56.67)	46 (38.33)	44 (36.67)	48 (40)
Dual Earning Parent	45 (37.5)	52 (43.33)	74 (61.67)	76 (63.33)	72 (60)
<b>Family Income</b>					
Less than 2,50,000	31 (25.83)	19 (15.83)	15 (12.5)	13 (10.83)	16 (13.33)
2,50,000-5,00,000	6 (5)	24 (20)	34 (28.33)	30 (25)	28 (23.33)
5,00,000-10,00,000	81 (67.5)	56 (46.67)	50 (41.67)	50 (41.67)	52 (43.33)
More than 10,00,000	2 (1.67)	21 (17.5)	21 (17.5)	27 (22.5)	24 (20)
<b>Education</b>					
6th	45 (37.5)	9 (7.5)	5 (4.17)	5 (4.17)	6 (5)
8th	7 (5.83)	32 (26.67)	32 (26.67)	34 (28.33)	25 (20.83)
10th	54 (45)	31 (25.83)	34 (28.33)	33 (27.5)	32 (26.67)
12th	7 (5.83)	32 (26.67)	35 (29.17)	33 (27.5)	42 (35)
Graduation	7 (5.83)	16 (13.33)	14 (11.67)	15 (12.5)	15 (12.5)
(Cont.)					
<b>Socio-Demographics variables</b>	<b>Yamunanagar</b>	<b>Faridabad</b>	<b>Hisar</b>	<b>Bhiwani</b>	<b>Karnal</b>
	<b>Frequency (%)</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Family Size</b>					
Nuclear Family	73 (60.83)	64 (53.33)	55 (45.83)	57 (47.5)	57 (47.5)
Joint Family	47 (39.17)	56 (46.67)	65 (54.17)	63 (52.5)	63 (52.5)

#### 4.2 Survey Instrument

The field researchers have used structured questionnaire for collected the data from the respondents (teenagers). The questionnaire has been designed by keeping in mind the objectives of current study and briefly described to the respondents. The respondents (Teenagers) have been opted from various schools, colleges and from various tuition academies. Furthermore, in order to ascertain the reliability of designed structured questionnaire, the pilot study has also been taken into consideration. The pilot study identified the minor errors in the designed instruments. For rectifying, few changes were required to be made in current instrument (questionnaire) so that existence of biasness

can be avoided while analysing the collected data. Under the pilot study, 100 respondents (teenagers) have been targeted from Ambala division where the objectives of the study have been discussed briefly. The main motive of conducting pilot study is to avoid the biasness that may create complexities in analysis part. The first section of the questionnaire contains the socio-demographic information of the respondents (teenagers). In the next section, respondents were asked to evaluate the association of twenty purchase criteria (Table 2) for five product categories – Electronics, Kitchen Appliance, Personal Care, Apparel & Lifestyle, and Food & Beverages. Under this section, statement related to price discount, exclusive offer, easy return, free gifts/rewards related to each product category have been measured on a five-point liker scale (where; 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree). In order to analyse the data, this study has collected the responses from 600 respondents from five Indian northern cities (Yamunanagar, Faridabad, Hisar, Bhiwani and Karnal). The field researcher has collected 120 samples from each selected city and collected data is further compiled and coded into SPSS 24.0. The output sheet further containing results of the study are also interpreted in the next section.

#### *4.3 Statistical Analysis*

Under this study, researchers have incorporated the corresponding technique which is a statistical visualization analytical technique (Chang and Luan, 2010; Thakur and Kaur, 2020). In order to apply this technique into the study, the non-negative entries are required where the data should be on same scale (Greenacre, 2010). It is the technique through which data can be visualized and is only applicable on cross-tabular data (Greenacre, 2010). Under this analysis, in order to establish the relationship between rows and columns, numerical scores are used for assigning the row-column variables (Hoffman and Franke, 1986). This analytical technique not only depicts the relationship between variables but also represents how they are related with each other (Hoffman and Franke, 1986). For applying corresponding technique, the purchasing criteria such as price discount, exclusive offers, online rating/reviews etc. is converted into the binary form (Thakur and Kaur, 2020). For calculating the scale items, 5-point rating system has been incorporated and respondents score range between number 1 to 5. As in the scale representing higher values of scale (i.e. 3, 4, and 5) indicates the favourable tendency towards particular purchasing criteria on the other hand lower values (i.e., 1, 2) depicted an unfavourable tendency towards the same. In order to apply the corresponding technique, the collected data from five Indian northern cities was pooled for analysis. During the analysis phase, this has also been observed that there may be distortion in results due to high heterogeneity in sample profile of selected five cities. Thus, to attain the homogeneity in sample profile across five cities, the authors have incorporated cross-tabulation chi-square analysis on socio-demographic variables (age, gender, education, family income etc.). Further, it has been revealed that there is non-significant difference with respect to socio-demographic variables across all five locations. Hence, the five sub samples were deemed as homogeneous.

### **5 Research Findings**

#### *5.1 Correspondence Analysis*

Under this section, the output sheet representing corresponding technique results applied through SPSS software have been presented (Table 2). In the next section the authors have synthesized the finding by addressing the three research questions. The correspondence technique is an interdependence technique that has been evolved in France (Carroll et al., 1986; Green et al., 1983, Yavas and Shemwell, 1996). It is the technique which depicts the graphical presentation of contingency table and multivariate categorical data (Yavas and Shemwell, 1996). Under this technique, the data can be portrayed geometrically by using low-dimensional space (Yavas and Shemwell, 1996; Thakur and Kaur 2020). The results of correspondence analysis which involves correspondence table, dimensionality and mainly perceptual map are quite advantageous in understanding the underlying structure of each purchasing criterion across the product categories (Electronics, Kitchen appliances, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages). Table 2 represents the two-way contingency of frequency of attributes across product categories. It shows the counts of particular purchasing criterion associated with each product category. The first cell in the first row and first column is numbered 516 which indicate that purchasing criteria price discount influences

the teenagers more while selecting specifically electronic product category which stands 5.25 % (516/9821) of the total association comprised with particular category and almost 21.9 % of all the association with discount option (516/2352).

The row and column marginal subtotal in the mentioned table label the number of times a criterion scores for individual criterion and product category, respectively. For example, as presented in Table 2, electronics recorded the highest (column table) with a score of 9,821, this category accounted for approximately 21.16% (i.e. 9,821/ 46,412) of all the associations made with all the product categories across the 20 purchase criteria. Likewise, two of the criterion - “product appearance” and “product usefulness” were strongly related across categories with a marginal profile value of about 5 percent (i.e. 2,524/46,412 and 2,504/46,412). Further, “product review from peers” had a poor scoring with just 4% association (i.e. 1,964/46,412) across all product categories. A closer investigation finds that the case is especially poor for food & beverages with just 18% (358/1964) positive reply for this item.

**Table 2:** Correspondence Table

Purchasing Criteria	Category					Row Total
	Electronics	Kitchen Appliances	Personal Care	Apparel and Lifestyle	Food & Beverages	
Price Discount	516	496	473	472	395	2352
Exclusive Offer	499	482	460	443	396	2280
Online Rating/ Reviews	510	501	474	461	429	2375
Repetitive Advertisement	500	477	480	479	424	2360
Endorsement by Social media influencers	489	487	492	469	449	2386
Product Quality	496	487	481	471	443	2378
Brand Image	517	485	501	456	416	2375
Product Appearance	526	522	516	481	459	2504
Product Usefulness	536	524	508	486	470	2524
Convenient level for other family members	525	504	492	462	450	2433
Detailed Product Description	452	433	414	421	385	2105
Marketing Campaigns	462	429	437	415	405	2148
Product Durability	499	487	475	455	426	2342
Free gifts/ Rewards	480	479	463	455	422	2299
Cash-Back Services	508	508	495	490	452	2453
Free Delivery Services	470	457	437	442	403	2209
Product Reviews Directly From Peers	400	410	405	391	358	1964
Product Packaging	489	486	492	460	460	2387
Influence from celebrity lifestyle	489	465	477	468	441	2340

Easy Return	458	463	440	451	386	2198
<b>Column Total</b>	9821	9582	9412	9128	8469	46412

### 5.2 Dimensionality

In correspondence analysis, the maximum number of dimensions are determined by comparing the smaller number calculated by deducting minus one from total number of row and columns (Yavas and Shemwell, 1996; Kaur, Chauhan and Medury 2016; Thakur and Kaur, 2020). Hence, under this study, total numbers of rows (purchasing criteria) are 20 and columns (Product category) are 5 and after deducting both the numbers from one, the smaller number comes out 4 which represents the maximum number dimensions could be derived with this data. This technique is quite related to factor analysis where the researchers have investigated the singular values (Eigen values) and cumulative proportion of variance explained by four dimensions (Hoffman and Franke, 1986). As shown in Table 3, the first two dimensions contribute 78% of the total variance. The inclusion of the third dimension ameliorates the explained variance by 11.3%. However, two- dimensional solution is retained here for the sake of interpretability and convenience of display. In simple words, the positioning and mapping of product categories and purchasing criteria can be easily determined by two abstract underlying dimensions (Yavas and Shemwell, 1996; Thakur and Kaur, 2020).

A very important piece of information given by this technique is absolute contributions to variances of each dimension i.e. what shapes these dimensions. These statistics indicate the percentage of variance explained by each row and column item (i.e. purchase criteria and product categories) in relation to each of the dimension. Due to the similarity of the algorithms, these statistics can be used, analogous to factor loadings in factor analysis, to interpret the dimensions. The larger the absolute contribution of an item to a dimension, the more important that item is in determining the underlying structure of that dimension (Hoffman and Franke, 1986; Yavas and Shemwell, 1996)

As presented in Table 4, the dominating purchasing criteria are price discount, product packaging and exclusive offer in dimension 1. The findings reveal that discount is the main leading purchasing criteria which influence the teenagers most while taking purchasing decision in family. It has been evident from previous studies that customer actually prefer the stores which provide the products at discounts and out of them 44.86% do not feel regret on such discounted products (Yildirim and Aydin, 2012). Thus, many of the retailers have started adopting price related sales promotion technique such as premium, discount, and coupon in order to grab revenue in shorter period of time (Ing et al., 2020; Jee, 2021). Further, Product packaging also emerged as another important criterion which influences the positioning of the product. The purchasing criteria product packaging can add to the foundation of an immediate liking towards the product and ultimately influence the customer buying decision or finally a transaction is made (Koutsimanis et al., 2012; González, Parada and Miguens, 2023; Wang, Gani and Liu, 2023). Product packing not only helps in protecting the product but also grabbing the attention of the customer and serves as the selling tool (Adofo, 2014). The study also claimed that the purchasing criteria packaging usually do not guarantee the quality of the product but still helps in several other areas such as grabbing consumers' attention, product protection, describing the product identity (Adofo, 2014).

The contribution of product categories also exists in the variance of each dimension. As shown in Table 4, product categories - Food & Beverages and Electronics are having strong comparative association with Dimension 1. The criteria mentioned above are the critical impetus or determinants of the relative positioning of product categories. The corroboration of these findings with contingency table results that product packaging is the most dominating purchasing criteria while choosing Food & Beverage product category by the teenagers.

As presented in Table 4, the purchasing criteria easy return, Brand image, convenient usage of the product for family members are the most dominating in Dimension 2. The study has also found positive relation between convenience and purchasing decision (Djan and Rubbiah Adawiyah, 2020). Another purchasing criteria brand image is further found prominent aspect in purchasing decision. The study found the massive superb impact of brand image on purchasing decision (Mbetete and Tanamal, 2020). Similarly, previous studies have revealed that brand image plays very crucial role as far as teens are concerned and furthermore affects the purchasing decision of the customer while online shopping (Slamet, Prasetyo and Azmala, 2022). Another purchasing criterion is return and warranty services

which has found quite crucial especially while purchasing online. Due to adoption of instant return services in digital shopping platforms, the online sales of the company have shown tremendous growth in comparison to offline channels even though providing higher warranty period (Saha and Giri, 2023). The return policy further brings down the purchasing risk also which also embark the positive store image of the company and increases patronage intentions as well (Rokonuzzaman, Iyer and Harun, 2021)

**Table 3: Dimensionality**

Dimension	Singular Value	Proportion of Inertia	
		Accounted for	Cumulative
1	.016	.546	.546
2	.011	.236	.782
3	.007	.113	.895
4	.007	.105	1.000
Total		1.000	1.000

**Table 4: Contribution of each purchasing criteria (rows) and product categories (columns) to dimension variances**

Purchase Criteria	Co-ordinates		Dimensions	
	1	2	1	2
Price Discount	-.317	-.032	.319	.005
Exclusive Offer	-.212	.093	.139	.040
Online Rating/ Reviews	-.077	.055	.019	.015
Repetitive Advertisement	-.035	-.111	.004	.059
Endorsement by SMI	.158	-.037	.081	.007
Product Quality	.086	-.051	.023	.013
Brand Image	-.117	.180	.043	.158
Product Appearance	.032	.085	.003	.037
Product Usefulness	.051	.081	.009	.034
Convenient usage of the product for family members	.016	.169	.001	.142
Detailed Product Description	-.035	-.059	.004	.015
Marketing Campaigns	.111	.120	.036	.064
Product Durability	-.022	.057	.002	.015
Free gifts/ Rewards	.022	-.059	.001	.016
Cash-Back Services	.049	-.106	.008	.056
Free Delivery Services	-.031	-.077	.003	.027

Product Reviews Directly From Peers	.048	-.111	.006	.050
Product Packaging	.239	.041	.184	.008
Influence from celebrities lifestyle	.147	-.065	.068	.020
Easy Return	-.127	-.220	.048	.218
Active Total			1.000	1.000

Product Categories				
Electronics	-.124	.111	.202	.249
Kitchen Appliances	-.086	-.007	.095	.001
Personal Care	.035	.057	.016	.063
Apparel & Lifestyle	-.038	-.190	.018	.679
Food & Beverages	.242	.021	.669	.008
Active Total			1.000	1.000

### 5.3 Perceptual Map

Further to the discussion in the previous section, Figure 1 depicts the pictorial output developed by correspondence analysis from the data in Table 2. The perceptual map explains the underlying structure and positioning of the purchase criteria and product categories. The presented graphical output (Figure 1) also yields important knowledge about how the products are positioned in the online marketplace. This figure depicts the critical confirmation how the teenagers perceive products vis. a vis. various purchasing criteria. The closer the criterion and category are positioned the more positive is the association between them. For instance, electronics product category is positioned close to exclusive offer (2), Brand image (7); personal care to Product Appearance (8), Product Usefulness (9); Food & Beverages to Product Packaging (18); Apparel & Lifestyle close to Easy return (20); kitchen appliance to rating & reviews (3), durability (13).

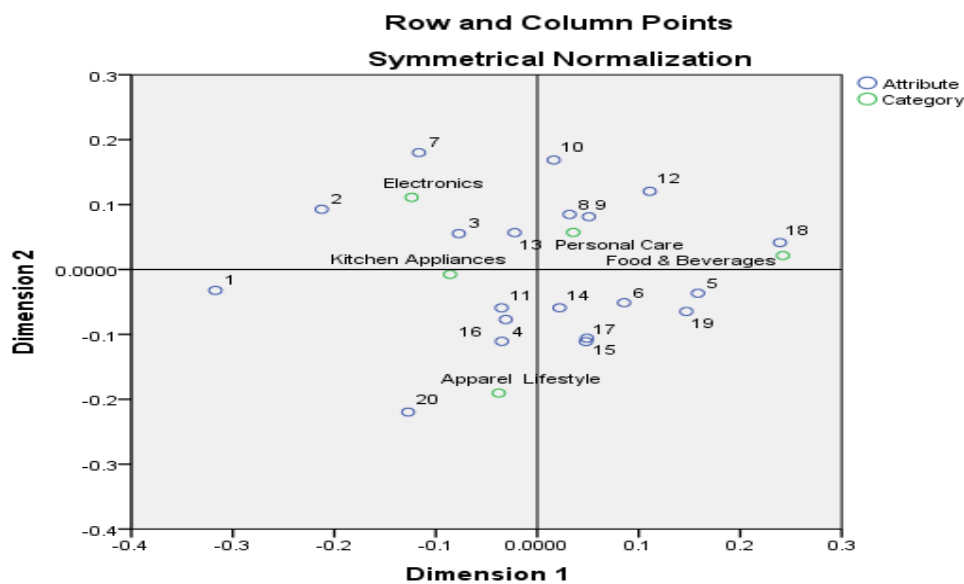


Figure 1: Correspondence map - Purchasing Criteria and Product Category

Notes: 1= Price discount; 2 = Exclusive offers; 3 = Online Rating / Reviews; 4 = Repetitive Advertisement; 5 = Endorsement by Social Media Influencers (SMI); 6 = Product Quality; 7 = Brand Image; 8 = Product Appearance; 9 = Product Usefulness; 10 = Convenient usage of the product for family members; 11 = Detailed Product Description; 12 = Marketing Campaigns; 13 = Product Durability; 14 = Free Gifts/ Rewards; 15 = Cash-back services; 16 = Free delivery services; 17 = Product reviews directly from peers; 18 = Product Packaging; 19 = Influence from celebrity lifestyle; 20 = Easy return.

#### 5.4 Summary of Findings: RQ 1, RQ 2 and RQ 3

In summary, we synthesize the findings to address the research questions specifically. **RQ1:** *Are the product categories - (Electronics, Kitchen appliances, Personal care, Apparel & Lifestyle, Food & Beverages) positioned similarly or differently based on the several purchase decision criteria?* The findings which are particularly evident from the perceptual map indicate that the manner in which respondents associate purchase criteria is quite dissimilar for different product categories. Hence, it is suggested to formulate different strategies for each product category. Thus, for other product categories market offerings have to be contextual to the kind of product categories. Such an analysis helps market aggregators to design separate strategies to engage the teenagers rather than adopting the homogeneous strategies which may not suffice all the time. It is further discussed while addressing the next question.

**RQ2:** *What are the specific purchase criteria which relate to a particular product category?* A major emphasis of this study was to showcase how teenagers perceive and associate different purchase criteria with the product categories. It is found that criteria such as exclusive offers (2) and Brand image (7) shows an association with electronic product category whereas criteria online rating/ reviews (3), product durability (13) have an association with Kitchen appliances. Criteria such as product appearance (8) and product usefulness (9) are associated with Personal care. Purchase criteria such as product packaging (18), endorsement by social media influencers (5) show an association with Food & Beverages. The product category of Apparel & lifestyle has found weak association with most of the purchase criteria and is somewhat related to easy return (20). Product/brand marketers and marketplace aggregators can draw significant insights by evaluating - which criteria are having an impact on teenagers and where the gaps are noticeable by just having a visual inspection of the perceptual map. Out of the twenty purchase criterion employed in this study, only 5 - 6 purchasing criteria are associated strongly vis. a vis. each of the product category. Possibly, it breaks down a lot of assumptions that marketers may be having about their marketing strategy such as on the efficacy of price discounts and reviews & rating. They need to pay attention on the criterion where there is a weak association e.g. personal care has a big gap with endorsement by social media (5) and several other criteria.

**RQ3:** *Which are the purchase criteria that are discriminatory and have a dominant impact in the positioning of product?* Findings from Table 4 and the perceptual map (discussed earlier) help us reflect on this question. On a visual inspection it is revealed that purchase criteria which are away from the origin in the perceptual map have a discriminatory influence meaning that they are the ones which have the most dominant role in defining the positioning of various product categories (Greenacre, 2010; Thakur and Kaur, 2020). In this study, the criteria – Price Discount (1), convenient usage of the product for family members (10), Marketing campaigns (12) fall in this zone. Marketers need to particularly focus on these aspects to gain a favourable response from the teenagers. The implications of these findings are discussed next.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Academic Implications

This study is the first one to accommodate various purchasing criteria and emerging product categories with respect to teenage segment. The main theoretical contribution of this study is to illustrate the effectiveness of correspondence analysis in generating a comparison of various online product categories based on buying criteria. The graphical output of this study facilitates a precise and thorough examination of purchasing criteria defining

various product positioning. Furthermore, the correspondence analysis offers incredible flexibility in data examining. This technique requires contingency table with non-negative entries under this method (Yavas and Shemwell,1996). Subsequent investigators may investigate this methodology for more product categories and diverse demographic cohorts. Additionally, the study fills a vacuum in the literature by concentrating specifically on the northern cities of India. Furthermore, the study by specifically focusing on teenage consumer segments of these cities would also address the gap in the scant existence of marketing literature which can provide insights on the lucrative teenage consumer segment in large.

### *6.2 Practical Implications*

Although, it is a foregone conclusion that teenagers have a very strong role in purchase decision process or influencing the purchase decision of their family yet there remain a minimal effort in designing heterogeneous marketing programs for this specific age group. The problem is further compounded due to lack of marketing insights from both academic and practitioner literatures. Thus, results of this study would provide various meaningful insights discussed under this section. It may be noted that while study is related to product categories, the findings are meaningful for different brands within each product category. The study would be quite beneficial for the marketers dealing in multiple categories to identify the most meaningful purchasing criteria for each specific product category and where the gap exists.

The first insight is for multi-category players such as Samsung, Philips etc. which are dealing in multiple product portfolios. Primarily, it can be understood that market strategies cannot be universal for products dealing with reference to specifically teen - segment. Replication has to be limited. As we see from the findings there is imminent need to design different strategies for each product category to market among Indian teenagers' settings. For instance, brands dealing in electronic products may announce the exclusive offer during Navratra seasons, Diwali season, and Valentine's sales. Further, the concerned marketers are suggested to give more importance to their online rating and reviews (3) also. As the study have not only been carried out for specifically online product categories but focused on phygital mode in general. Due to being tech-savvy, teenagers may use digital platform to gain product knowledge for their offline shopping also. Thus, in future comparative study can be conducted to check whether the same factors affect teenagers' purchasing decision for online shopping and offline shopping and new factors can also be incorporate if found or it vary in both online and offline purchasing mode. Another product category apparel and lifestyle has been found much influential by purchasing criterion easy return policy (20). Even for provide better experience the virtual fitting rooms may also be adopted to entice this age group. The US based Retail Corporation, Walmart Inc. launched Zeekit (virtual fitting room platform) for providing better services to their customer and gained good amount of competitive advantage (thebusinessresearchcompany.com). Apart from online strategy, the offline apparel marketers are further suggested to provide lenient mechanism for return policy. It is evident from Figure 1 that easy return policy (20) on apparel category positively influences the purchasing decision of the Indian teenage segment.

The findings reveal that some purchase criteria have a dominant role on shaping the position of the products – Discount (1), convenient usage of the product for family member (10) and Marketing campaigns (12). In particular Price discount (Table 4, dimension 1) emerges as the most dominant amongst all purchase criteria. Price discount is a common marketing tactic which can be used to entice customers for immediate purchasing by offering an additional benefit (Xu and Huang, 2014; Lee and Chen-Yu, 2018). Many studies have found that there is inverse relation between product quality and price discount (Zeithaml 1988; Garretson and Clow 1999). It is perceived by the consumer that high discounted products would lead to poor product quality which also affects negatively on company's sales and revenue. The study has found the positive influence of perceived value with purchase intention and resulted that increase in perceived value leads to increase in purchase intention (Lee and Chen-Yu, 2018). On the contrary, still many previous studies have investigated the similar significant positive results of consumer's perception with regard to product quality (Chebat et al. 1995; O'Neill and Lambert, 2001; Rungtrakulchai, 2013; Huang et al. 2015; Lee and Chen-Yu, 2018). The offline and online retailers are suggested to take the price discount purchasing criteria very cautiously as it has been found most dominating shown in Figure 1. The price seems to be integral part for online marketing strategies while offline marketers are still struggling to carry price discount as an effective strategic tools.

Amongst the five product categories incorporated into this study, the category food & beverages have got the least rating on price discount (1) purchasing criteria. Thus, food marketers are suggested to announce the price discount on a timely basis, as it has been found to be the most dominating criteria among teenagers while purchasing this specific category. The food marketers may opt the strategy to announce price discount on the basis of purchased quantity by the customer. As the quantity purchased by the customer increases, the price discount will be availed. The management may also take strategic action in case weaker sales found in weekdays. Thus, in order to maintain balance among all days, the weekdays' sales may also be announced.

Another dominating criterion is the convenient usage of the product for other family members (10). It is clearly indicated in perceptual map that before buying any product category, teenagers opt the product which brings convenience for their family members. The product which they are in plan to purchase should bring convenience into their daily life. From the previous literatures, five dimensions of convenient have been found which are time, place, acquisition, use, execution (Brown, 1990; Farquhar and Rowley, 2009). From customer's prospective the term convenient means to availability of product at convenient time and place. From marketer's perspective this term leads to acquisition and execution. In other words, the convenient acquisition of resources in terms of technical, financial and human resources for development and execution of the product. Thus, convenient usage of the product may further directly influence the purchasing decision of the teenagers.

Another purchasing criterion which is the marketing campaign (12) has also been found most dominating purchasing criteria among teenagers. It is advisable to the companies to adapt innovative marketing campaigns strategy for their product promotion. The teenagers actually take into the consideration the marketing campaigns run by companies. For instance, Apple & Samsung are continuously adapting this strategy. The market player Samsung dealing in electronics and other home appliance have launched various marketing campaign to entice the public. The marketing campaigns such as #IndiaReadyAction, #EpicUnboxingEvent, #GoMonster, #PoweringDigitalIndia have been launched by this company. Specifically, campaign #IndiaReadyAction was launched for teenagers where participants had to upload 60 second video of their daily life to show the real India. Further this company has also collaborated with celebrity Alia Bhatt and fashion designer Masaba Gupta for the purpose of contribution towards UN sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Another market player Apple has also launched the marketing campaigns #ShotOniPhone marketing campaign. Apple Inc. used user-generated content (UGC) to disseminate product feature information to the market as part of their digital advertising strategy. The users of the iPhone 13 series were participated where they were instructed to post macro images of any object to their Twitter and Instagram account. The winning images were used in digital ads and exhibitions. The goal of this program is to reach large bulk of audience by using user-generated content, which the customers perceive to be more authentic than company-uploaded internet portal results.

The perceptual map (as discussed – RQ 2) has provided us a meaningful insight regarding purchase criteria are being associated with product categories in varied manner. Product description (11) and product durability (13) are positively associated with most categories. Otherwise strengths and weaknesses vis. a vis. each product categories are somewhat different. There are several noticeable gaps. While, electronics and kitchen appliance are positively associated with a number of criteria such as- Exclusive offers (2), Online Rating / Reviews (3) and Brand Image (7), however for other categories particularly apparels & lifestyle the association is comparatively weak on most. Marketers have identifiable weakness placed for them that needs to be overcome. Although some common aspects have been presented we briefly discuss some aspects category wise. For instance, Product Reviews Directly from Peers (17) is a sore point in case of electronics. Marketers can face a challenging situation if they do not work towards forming a positive word of mouth among customers who later can put their experiences with their immediate known people in the form of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The online product reviews also triggers the teenagers to drop the idea of buying particular product done at "evaluation of alternatives" stage of consumer buying decision model (Yang et al., 2021). Even many businesses have started targeting the people having more product exposure who post online review (Zhang et al., 2024). In case of personal care – product description (11) and direct review from peers (17) (discussed previously) need attention. It is claimed by the study (Armagon, 2013) that this age group disseminate product information among their peer and also take their suggestion before buying any product. In case of food & beverages teenagers expect more discounts and offers. On several occasions like Diwali, Christmas, New

Year marketers may be providing heavy discounts but unfortunately it still remains the matter of concern to lure teenagers as this category requires frequent discounting strategies. Perhaps, apparels & lifestyle is a category which is not been given much attention by marketers. There is enough demand for this segment such as: home use easy clothing or office use professional cloth styling, shine & shimmery clothing for fancy functions and other multi-function items which have a very good growth potential especially a country like India which can be called as country of traditions and festivals. Most of the domestic demand is being fulfilled by the local market players (boutiques) leaving a lot of potential for fashion marketers. Yet, the findings demonstrate that all other purchase criteria are somewhat weakly associated except purchasing criteria easy return (20). Discounts on complete family purchase particularly at the time of festivals can be a very viable strategy. Thus, across several product categories a number of factors (purchase criteria) may be augmented/improved/technologically facilitated or personalized for strengthening the market position of various multi category market players.

## 7 Conclusions

In the last decade, the developing nation India and China have shown their tremendous growth in context of technology, employment, entrepreneurship and infrastructure which have given a boost in market dynamics. This rapid increase in such wide and unexplored marketplaces not only attracts the investor and business player from nation Indian but across the globe. India is having very attractive population mix which comprises a large amount of population under teenage category. These wide and unexplored marketplaces not only attract domestic players but the foreign marketers as well. Therefore, businesses perceive potential for development into unexplored markets other than metropolis cities observing the increasing global competition and simultaneous increase in purchasing power of emerging countries. The increasing marketing opportunities have not only been observed in Indian nation but same trends have also been noticed in Asian countries – Malaysia, China, Indonesia etc. (Paul and Mas, 2016).

In this immensely competitive era all marketers strive to create a niche for their brand, product or service by evaluating various purchase criteria such as price, packaging, discounts and after sale services etc. After observing the current positioning of the product, marketers can develop the distinct and value based positioning ideas and reposition if necessary. This study has provided directions for the same. As a marketer, when catering in a country like India which has all new consumer base from north Indian cities, consider teenage population it becomes more critical for them to know their consumers/shoppers who actually convince a buying decision with respect to various purchase criteria. The results of this study empower marketers by allowing them to anticipate the same. This also presents an opportunity to take to optimally redesign their strategies viewing the strengths and weaknesses vis. a vis. various factors.

The present study has endeavored to fill some gaps in the academic literature in certain ways. This study is amongst the first to measure the association of purchase criteria with different product categories among Indian teenage consumers from north Indian cities. Additionally, with the use of correspondence analysis a graphical and easily comprehensible view of the comparative positioning of the product categories is presented. As during the study, the authors have found some limitations too. Firstly, the study has predominantly male respondents and therefore an imbalanced gender ratio. Secondly the sample size is somewhat smaller (area wise) however since the data was personally collected by one of the authors it leads to a minimum of missing entries and ensured accuracy of records. Despite these limitations, the findings are very useful for multi-category marketers and practitioners, as these are the first in the line of research that provides directions for an organized approach in the marketing and focuses on the teenage group with respect to purchase criteria and decision making in India. In this research the five product categories and its association with purchase criteria have been evaluated. The study has been carried out in five different cities of northern India i.e. Yamunanagar, Faridabad, Hisar, Bhiwani & Karnal and it has an area limitation. Future studies may also include more cities from southern parts of India and comparison can be made between north and south teenage consumers on the basis of purchase criteria by employing correspondence analysis. Similarly, it can be evaluated with respect to several demographic factors like age, gender, income and occupation. A comparative study of different brand positioning may also provide interesting results.

After analysing the data, it has been revealed that some purchasing criteria have been found quite dominating in shaping the positioning of the products such as price discount (1), product packaging (18) in dimension 1 & easy return (20) and brand Image (7) in dimension 2 as shown in Table 4. The results indicated that consumer purchasing

decision is positively influenced by both benefits utilitarianism and hedonic perceived by price-quality and smart shopper self-perception of utilizing discount sales promotions technique (Jee, 2021). On the other hand, Product packaging (18) is further emerged as the key purchasing criteria. While purchasing the product, teenagers actually pay attention towards the packaging of the product especially in food & beverages category. The study conducted suggested that packaging and product attributes positively affects the consumer purchasing decision (Koutsimanis *et al.*, 2012). This has also been found that consumers are having more environmental concern and prefer the product which is having packaging consist of bio-based material (Koutsimanis *et al.*, 2012). On the other hand, teenagers also pay attention to the easy return (20) of the product. Sometimes online shopping may be riskier as customer may feel less secure in adapting the digital platforms. Thus, the strategy return policy adapted by companies dealing online is the great competitive weapon which helps to enhance the company's sales (Mukhopadhyay and Setoputro, 2004). Even in the context of offline shopping also, teenagers of smaller cities pay attention on warranty services attached with the product while taking family purchasing decision. It has been found that customer do not take any purchasing decision without evaluating total cost of ownership of the product which they are planning to buy (Kirkizoğlu and Karaer 2022). The brand image (7) of the product is another key purchasing criteria which positively affect the purchasing decision of the consumer (Slamet, Prasetyo and Azmala, 2022). Globally, teenagers spend average 2.5 hours on social media in a day similarly in Indian context 2.4 hours' devotion has been found (Chetty, 2021). The teenagers grab the various brand knowledge through these social media applications. Even the brand image of the product moderated by price discount further motivates customer for actual purchasing (Slamet, Prasetyo and Azmala, 2022). Thus, this study suggests to the various marketers and practitioners that teen-segment is now becoming the essential part of the market and their preferences further influence to the other age-group as well. This trendsetter generation is the most essential that should be taken into consideration while formulating marketing policies. Hence, through this study the authors identified the key purchasing criteria which influence the purchasing decision of this age-group with respect to each product category. Thus, this study would provide meaningful insights to the marketers dealing in these product category and build-up their marketing plans accordingly.

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