

7. Gen Z Teens as Drivers of Household Purchase Decisions: A Study of Changing Consumer Dynamics

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Abstract

This study explores the emerging influence of Generation Zoomers (Gen Z) teens on household purchase decisions. With rapid technological advancement and the prevalence of digital media, Gen Z is shaping consumer trends by advising families on categories such as food, personal care, technology, and wearables. The research employs a review of recent studies and current market data to examine how Indian parents are increasingly considering their children's preferences in purchasing decisions. The study uses a descriptive and quantitative approach, collecting primary data from 50 Gen Z respondents through a structured questionnaire, along with secondary data from research papers, journals, and online sources. Most respondents use online comparisons and social media information before recommending products to their families, and parents largely trust their suggestions. The study concludes that Gen Z plays a key role in shaping modern household purchasing behaviour and holds growing importance for marketers and brands targeting the Indian consumer market.

Keywords:

Gen Z; Social media impact; Household purchase decisions; Brand relevance; Digital influence; Indian consumers

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of Indian consumerism, Generation Z teens have emerged as powerful influencers of household purchase decisions. Traditionally, family buying choices were determined by parents, but a dramatic shift has occurred with the rise of digital media, access to information, and changing social dynamics. Today's Gen Z—those born between 1997 and 2012—command significant sway over what families buy, especially in categories such as food, personal care, technology, and wearables. This “reverse advice” trend is redefining conventional parent-child roles and shaping consumer preferences across urban and semi-urban India.

With over 377 million Gen Z individuals in the country, their digital nativity and affinity for online platforms, social influencers, and instant access to trends mean that brands must evolve rapidly or risk becoming obsolete by 2030. The growing relevance of Gen Z as household advisors highlights the urgent need for businesses to understand their expectations, values, and behaviours to remain competitive in India's dynamic marketplace. This study aims to analyse the extent and implications of Gen Z's influence on household purchase decisions, offering insights for marketers, retailers, and policymakers focused on future consumer trends.

Literature Review

Thangavel, P. (2022) examined the decision-making styles of Gen Z online shoppers using generational cohort theory. The study emphasised that Gen Z is highly tech-

savvy, research-oriented, and socially connected. They rely heavily on online reviews, peer feedback, e-commerce platforms, and social media before making any purchase recommendation. The research also highlighted that Gen Z prefers brands that offer digital experience, affordability, and innovation, which strongly influences their product suggestions to family members.

Arora, C., Pawan Diwan, S. (2022) conducted a comprehensive study on children's influence on household purchase decisions in India across different product categories. Their study revealed that children have the strongest influence on lifestyle and visible product categories such as fashion, electronics, FMCG products, and entertainment services. The researchers highlighted that children today are not just passive users but are active participants in family decision-making. The study also explained that the influence is stronger in urban families due to higher exposure to media and technology. The authors concluded that children now act as co-decision makers in household purchases rather than mere influencers.

Sangal, S. (2022) studied the post-COVID online purchase behaviour of Gen Z, especially in the beauty and personal care product segment. The study found that Gen Z consumers are highly influenced by social media content, influencer promotions, and online advertisements. The researcher concluded that Gen Z shows low brand loyalty and quickly shifts brands based on online trends, influencer reviews, and peer suggestions. This behaviour also affects household purchase decisions, where Gen Z convinces parents to try new brands.

Nain, H. (2021) focused on the concept of reverse socialisation, where children transfer market knowledge to parents. The study found that modern children influence purchase decisions mainly through information sharing, online research, and product comparisons, rather than emotional pressure. Parents depend on their children for understanding technology-driven products such as smartphones, gadgets, and online services. The study also confirmed that Indian parents show a high level of trust in their children's product knowledge, especially for digital products.

Rajput, A. (2025) explored the impact of influencer credibility and authenticity on Gen Z purchase intention in India. The study revealed that Gen Z is highly sensitive to trust, transparency, and relatability in influencer marketing. When influencers are perceived as genuine, Gen Z is more likely to adopt and recommend brands to family members. The study confirmed that influencer-led marketing campaigns indirectly affect household brand preferences through Gen Z.

Armutcu, B. (2023) studied Gen Z attitudes toward recyclable and eco-friendly products and found that moral values and environmental responsibility significantly influence purchase behaviour. The study concluded that Gen Z prefers to recommend sustainable and environmentally responsible products to their family members. This shows how Gen Z is shaping household buying behaviour toward green consumption.

Theocharis, D. (2025) analysed the relationship between digital brand experience, sustainability messaging, and Gen Z consumption behaviour. The study revealed that Gen Z is highly sensitive to ethical branding, environmental responsibility, and socially conscious marketing. Brands that communicate sustainability values digitally

receive stronger acceptance and recommendation from Gen Z. This study shows that modern Gen Z influence is not only driven by price and features but also by brand values and social responsibility.

Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive research design, which is suitable for identifying patterns, measuring influence levels, and analysing the consumer behaviour of Gen Z teens in relation to household purchase decisions. The nature of the study is quantitative, as primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using numerical techniques such as percentage analysis and graphical representation. Primary data was gathered from 50 Gen Z respondents through a structured questionnaire containing closed-ended questions, Likert scale items, multiple-choice questions, and category-based choices related to parental consultation, influence strength, social media-driven recommendations, parental trust, brand image importance, brand switching behaviour, and the impact of online comparison knowledge. Secondary data was obtained from research papers and articles from Google Scholar, academic studies by various authors, online reports, journals, and published literature on Gen Z consumer behaviour and digital influence. These secondary sources strengthened the theoretical foundation of the study and supported the interpretation of primary findings. The sampling method used was non-probability convenience sampling, chosen due to easy accessibility and willingness of respondents to participate—an appropriate approach for student-based and youth-focused research. The sample size consisted of 50 respondents aged between 13 and 28 years, with the majority belonging to the 21–24 and 17–20 age groups, reflecting the core Gen Z demographic. The data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire comprising 10 questions designed to capture behavioural and perception-based insights. The collected data was analysed using percentage analysis, tabular presentation, and graphical charts to understand the level and patterns of Gen Z influence on household purchase decisions.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. What is your age?

Age	Respondents	Percentage
13-16	1	2%
17-20	18	36%
21-24	28	56%
25-28	3	6%

The survey data collected on age shows that the sample consists of 50 respondents distributed across four age brackets. The dominant age group is 21-24, which accounts for more than half of the responses at 56% (28 people). The next largest group is 17-20 with 36% (18 people). These two intermediate age ranges (17-24) constitute most of the sample, totalling 92%. The older group, 25-28, is small, representing 6% (3 people), and the youngest group, 13-16, is the smallest category, containing only 2% (1 person).

2. How often do your parents ask for your opinion before purchasing household items?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
Always	14	28%
Often	13	26%
Sometimes	13	26%
Rarely	5	10%
Never	5	10 %

The survey results show that parents frequently consult their children before purchasing household items, with 80% of respondents reporting their parents always, often, or sometimes ask for their opinion (28%, 26%, and 26% respectively). The highest single response was "Always" at 28%. Only a small minority (20%) reported their parents rarely or never ask (10% each).

3. In which of the following categories do you influence purchase decisions the most?

(You may select more than one)

Items	Respondents	Percentage
Electronics	31	19.6%
Fashion/Clothing	39	24.7%
Food & Beverages	31	19.6%
Personal Care Products	17	10.8%
Digital Subscriptions (OTT, apps, etc.)	20	12.7%
Household Items	20	12.7%

The survey results indicate that parents frequently consult their children before making household purchases, with 80% of respondents reporting their parents ask for their opinion Always (28%), Often (26%), or Sometimes (26%). Only 20% of parents rarely or never ask for their child's opinion, with both Rarely and Never each accounting for 10% of the responses. When children do influence purchasing decisions, the greatest impact is felt in the Fashion/Clothing category, selected by 39 respondents or 24.7% of the choices. Influence is also high and tied between Electronics and Food & Beverages, both selected by 31 respondents (19.6% each). The lowest influence is reported in Personal Care Products (10.8%), and moderate influence is seen in Household Items and Digital Subscriptions (each 12.7%)

4. How strongly do you influence the purchase of electronic gadgets in your home?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
No Influence	10	20%
Somewhat Influence	25	50%
Very strong influence	15	30%

Respondents feel they have the most influence over purchase decisions in the Fashion/Clothing category, which was selected by the highest number of people (39 respondents or 24.7%). Influence is also very strong in both Electronics and Food & Beverages, with both tied at 31 respondents (19.6% each). When focusing specifically on electronic gadgets, a combined 80% of respondents report having influence: 50% (25 respondents) report a "Somewhat Influence," and 30% (15 respondents) report a "Very strong influence," leaving only 20% with "No influence".

5. How often do you recommend products to your family based on information from social media (Instagram, YouTube, influencers, etc.)?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
Very Often	5	10%
Often	14	28%
Sometimes	22	44%
Rarely	7	14%
Never	2	4%

The data reveals that social media significantly influences product recommendations within the family. The largest segment, 44% (22 respondents), reported they "Sometimes" recommend products based on information from social media. A combined 38% of respondents recommend products with higher frequency, consisting of 28% who recommend "Often" and 10% who recommend "Very Often". Overall, the vast majority of respondents (over 80%) use social media information to recommend products to their family, with only a small minority reporting they "Rarely" (14%) or "Never" (4%) do so.

6. What sources do you mainly use to gather information before suggesting a product to your family?

Sources	Respondents	Percentage
Social media	21	18.8%
Online reviews	36	32.1%
Friends/Peers	22	19.6%
Brand websites	20	17.9%
Advertisements	13	11.6%

The survey reveals that respondents rely most heavily on Online reviews before suggesting a product to their family, with 36 respondents selecting this option, making up 32.1% of the choices. The second-most popular source is Friends/Peers, selected by 22 respondents and accounting for 19.6% of the responses. Social media is the third most used source, chosen by 21 respondents (18.8%). Brand websites are used by 20 respondents (17.9%), while Advertisements are the least-used source, selected by only 13 respondents (11.6%). Overall, online reviews are used almost twice as much as the next most frequent source (Friends/Peers).

7. Do your parents trust your product recommendations?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
Yes, always	15	30%
Yes, most of the time	19	38%
Sometimes	10	20%
Rarely	3	6%
No	3	6%

The data indicates a high level of parental trust in the respondents' product recommendations. The combined majority of parents (68%) trust their children's recommendations either "Yes, most of the time" (38%) or "Yes, always" (30%). Trust is reported as "Sometimes" by 20% of respondents. Very few parents rarely or never trust the recommendations, with both "Rarely" and "No" accounting for only 6% each.

8. How important is brand image when you suggest a product to your family?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
Not important	4	8%
Somewhat important	23	46%
Extremely important	23	46%

The data shows that brand image is a highly important factor for respondents when suggesting a product to their family. A combined 92% of respondents view brand image as important, with the largest segments being equally split: 46% (23 respondents) reported it is "Extremely important," and another 46% (23 respondents) found it "Somewhat important". Only a small minority of 8% considered brand image to be "Not important".

9. Have you ever convinced your family to switch from one brand to another based on your preference?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%

The data shows that respondents have a high level of success in influencing their family's brand choices. An overwhelming majority of 80% (40 respondents) confirmed that they have successfully convinced their family to switch brands based on their personal preference.

Conversely, only 20% (10 respondents) reported they have not. This finding underscores the significant persuasive power the respondents hold in altering household consumption patterns.

10. How much does your knowledge of online product comparisons (price, reviews, features) influence your family's final purchase decision?

Perception	Respondents	Percentage
A lot	16	32%
Moderately	22	44%
Slightly	8	16%
Very little	3	6%
Not at all	1	2%

The data shows that respondents' knowledge from online product comparisons (price, reviews, features) significantly influences their family's final purchase decisions. Most respondents, 44% (22 respondents), reported that their knowledge influences the decision "Moderately," while a further 32% (16 respondents) reported influence "A

lot". Combined, 76% of respondents exert a strong or moderate level of influence based on this knowledge. Only a small minority reported low influence, with "Slightly" (16%), "Very little" (6%), and "Not at all" (2%).

Findings of the Study

1. Most respondents belong to the 17–24 age group, representing the core of Gen Z.
2. Parents frequently consult their children, with 80% saying their opinions are asked before purchases.
3. Gen Z influences the most in Fashion/Clothing, Electronics, and Food & Beverages.
4. 80% of respondents have a strong influence over electronic gadget purchases.
5. Social media plays a major role, with over 80% recommending products based on online content.
6. Online reviews are the most used source of product information.
7. Parents trust Gen Z recommendations, with 68% showing high trust.
8. Brand image is important to Gen Z, with 92% considering it significant.
9. 80% have convinced their families to switch brands based on their preference.
10. Most respondents (76%) influence family purchases through online comparisons

Discussion

The study clearly demonstrates that Gen Z teens play a significant role in influencing household purchase decisions in India. The findings show that parents frequently consult their children before making purchases, indicating a shift from traditional parent-led decisions to a more consultative and digitally driven family buying process. Gen Z influence is found to be strongest in fashion, electronics, and food & beverages, as these categories are closely linked to trends, technology, and peer preferences.

The study also highlights the powerful role of social media, online reviews, and peer networks in shaping Gen Z opinions and recommendations. Their high level of digital awareness enables them to guide family members with updated product information, price comparisons, and brand choices. Moreover, the strong parental trust in Gen Z recommendations and the high success rate in brand switching confirm that Gen Z has a meaningful impact on household brand preferences.

Overall, the discussion confirms that Gen Z has evolved from being passive consumers to active household decision-makers, supported by digital exposure, product knowledge, and growing parental confidence.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that Gen Z teens play a powerful and dynamic role in influencing household purchase decisions in India. The findings clearly show that today's teenagers and young adults are no longer passive consumers but have become active contributors, advisors, and influencers within the family buying process. Their opinions are increasingly valued by parents, especially in categories such as fashion, electronics, food & beverages, and digital products.

The study also highlights the strong impact of digitalisation on Gen Z influence. Social media platforms, online reviews, and peer feedback significantly shape their preferences and recommendations. As a result, Gen Z acts as a bridge between the digital marketplace and the family, guiding parents with updated information related to prices, features, and brand comparisons.

Moreover, the high level of parental trust in Gen Z recommendations and the strong success rate in brand switching clearly indicate that Gen Z has the power to alter traditional brand loyalty patterns in households. Their strong brand consciousness and online research behaviour further strengthen their role as informed decision-makers.

In conclusion, the study firmly establishes that Gen Z teens have emerged as influential drivers of household consumption in India, reshaping traditional family buying behaviour. For marketers, brands, and businesses, this signifies that targeting Gen Z is no longer optional—it is a strategic necessity for long-term market success.

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