EXAMINING THE ROLE OF ASPIRATION IN IMPROVING PURCHASE INTENTION OF SCHOOL BOOKS.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to explore the consumer behaviour specially in context of what role does aspiration play in purchase of school books. Detailed research carried out implementing mixed method approach and survey to examine the intricated relationships among constructs. While during these COVID times, certain governments are encouraging use of technology, other are concerned about the potential threats it poses to the health of the students. In this study, we scan through the available published papers to understand as to what pushes the sale of an eBooks viz a viz print books. And then we tend to understand as to what will be those factors that will impact the purchase intention of the consumer for school books. We further study to validate our survey findings. The constructs identified from the study may provide significant insights to marketers to define and operationalise different strategies specially for the sales of school books.

Keywords: School books, Means end chain theory, Purchase intention, Social Norms, Aspiration

INTRODUCTION

Books became a part of acknowledged academic discipline in the 20th Century. William Ivins Jr.'s Prints and Visual Communication (1953) fostered the idea of books in its present form. In the book, The Coming of the Book: The Impact of printing, a lot of insights have been provided into the elements of a book. Robert Darnton, a stalwart in the field of publishing and book printing also spoke largely about the books and how piracy and other practices impacts the book and its readers (Darnton, 2021). Before the printing press actually came into being in their form as what we see today, each article written in text was a unique handcrafted masterpiece in itself. Books slowly but gradually became such an indispensable part of our history that today History of Books in itself is a well acknowledged academic discipline in its own. If we look at the chronology of books and draw it to what we read today, one will be astonished to know that books started off with a hand written document/article i.e., development of writing led to what we read as on date and then progressed through further times which included invention of paper in the form that we see today and of course, printing which still keeps on evolving even today. Therefore,

before we go into more detail on to our work it is imperative to first understand what a book is?

(Kovač et al.) in 2019 did a research to find out what can be called a book. To give a proper definition to the word book and they pointed out the following. For a text to be considered a book it should fulfil following 4 criteria:

1. It should have a minimum length.
2. There should be proper emphasis on textual content in the object to be considered a book.
3. There has to be a well-defined boundary to the form of the object.
4. There has to be the presence of a clear-cut book information architecture to call it a book.

Only if the object fulfils the 4 criteria listed on the top will it be considered as a book (Kovač et al., 2019). The authors of the paper also found out that print books are the purest forms of books in existence at present.

Books while having been a part of the human life since time immemorial it has been used for varied purposes. For example: Academic, Religious, Curricular etc. Books have been

used in schools, at home, in libraries and in religious places too. Here, we will be referring to books more in the context of being used for school's curricular purposes be it at home as a text for reference or at school forming the core part of the curriculum.

Going to school has been widely accepted as the best public policy tool that allows to raise skill of the next generation of economic contributors. While many of us truly think that school time is fun but the reality is school time can also help students develop social skills and awareness. To be precise, school time helps a child improves his ability which in turn will add on to the economic performance of the country in future (*The Impact of COVID-19 on Education | VOX, CEPR Policy Portal*, 2021).

While the whole world had been facing the pandemic, UNESCO in its press release in last week of March 2020 highlighted that over 1.5 billion learners were impacted due to COVID - 19 pandemic across 165 countries. (UNESCO, 2020). As per UNESCO, 87% of world population was affected by school closures because of pandemic. With such a magnitude of impact on individuals' learning, it is much obvious for the governments across the world to look for alternatives that can ensure a learning continuum. Specially for a country like India which is a developing economy with the massive spread of population across Urban, semi urban and rural set ups, lack of infrastructure would have proven itself to be a big hurdle. Another important aspect to be considered globally was the role of families in a child's learning. Undoubtedly, families were always playing a critical role in a child's education and were providing major inputs in their learning(Björklund & Salvanes, 2011). It is indeed a fact as well that the concept of home schooling gained traction during pandemic and many did consider it as effective as normal schooling. But, a research conducted by Thorell et al. in 2021 to study the impact of home schooling during the pandemic across parents of 5 European countries revealed that parents found home schooling was having negative impact on parents and children as well. Many also found home schooling to be of poor quality with limited or no support from schools. Parents of children who were doing home schooling also

reported high level of stress, worry and social isolation (Thorell et al., 2021).

Oxford University Press, the department of University of Oxford conducted a study and published its finding in a report named "Addressing the Deepening Digital Divide" in the year 2021. The study was conducted across the globe including countries like UK, Italy, Spain, Pakistan and of course, India. The findings that researchers found were staggering. Researchers found out the problem was not only about digital accessibility but it was equally about digital competency too. (*Oxford University Press - Lack of Skills Holds Back Digital Learning*, 2021)

Following were highlighted in the report specially in context of India: though the researcher admitted that India has a growing access to broadband services and those are inexpensive to various other countries around the globe. At the same time, they also highlighted that one of the problems is non inclusiveness as far as availability of the quality content is concerned to the learners. They also found out that most of the quality digital learning platforms are expensive and out of reach of those belonging to the disadvantaged group. Most of the learners will dependent upon a single mobile device which was then shared by multiple learners further deepening the digital divide of those living in metros, then to small urban or rural areas.

UNESCO lately built an education coalition that allows countries to work on various strategies to ensure continuation of learning through "no tech" approaches. (UNESCO, 2020). No tech approach once again means that this population which is a large share of the current learner base depends on print materials to ensure that learning continues.
India has a massive learner base of approximately 260 million school going children studying in over 1.5 million schools (Wickham, 2019). This does not include the pre-primary domain which has so far being considered as a zone of informal education until the introduction of New Education Policy 2020 which now talks about pre-primary to be a part of formal education too (Khaitan, 2017; Wickham, 2019).

Most of the school education domain i.e., Pre-

primary, primary and secondary education are still largely done in an offline mode i.e., either total print consumption or blended products i.e., one that use both print and digital (Khaitan, 2017; Wickham, 2019).

The report also clearly demarcates the spread of population in 20 largest states of India across urban and rural set up. Since most of our population still lives in a rural set up, it became important to understand that they still depend on education delivery in a no tech/limited tech approach. To justify this statement, in "The 30% Dilemma: Is Indian Publishing Really Growing That fast?" on the Medium, Mulmi (2017) quotes Nielsen's report and states that 70% of book market in India is of the education book sector. Author further indicates that out of a total 9000 publishers active in India, 8100 approx. publish books for educational institutes i.e. a whopping 90%(*Medium*, 2017). As per Nielsen (2016) in 2013-14 Indian school books publishing market was estimated to be around USD 2.45 Bn.

A few previous research studies have tried to understand factors influencing purchase of books (Leemans and Stokmans, 1992; Zhang et al., 2017; Rao et al., 2018). The study of Leemans and Stokmans, 1992 confirmed that significance of physical attributes in influencing purchase decision regarding book. Woody et al., (2010) emphasized students are aware of additional resources like an e-book but still prefer print book due to ease in reading. Another study by Zhang et al., (2017) and Lim et al., (2021) focussed on hedonic and utilitarian aspect of books but stressed upon price as a major factor influencing purchase of books. It has been found that most of the research happened around eBook, its acceptance and its usage in comparison to print book. But no research has been carried out in India to understand as to what behavioral aspect and other parameters lead to purchase of a print book. In a country like India, which is a developing economy and majority of the population lives in rural areas, it is important for us to focus on print education solutions and to understand what drives our consumers purchase decisions.

Previous research studies identified that purchase of books is considered as a non-programmed purchase decision, which means that it is not an event that happens after a particular/specific period of time (Madan et al., 2022; Höppner et al., 2009; Li, 2016; Zhang et al., 2017a). But in case of schoolbooks purchase curriculum books are a programmed behavior that happens before the start of each academic year and are followed by some non-programmed purchases of reference books. What drives such decisions at different time spans is what needs to be understood. Many studies identified that types of books, attractiveness of the cover page, reputation of the author and publisher also impacts the purchase decision of the consumer (d'Astous et al., 2006; Hsiao & Chen, 2017; Martin, 2007). But no study specifically talks about as to how true it is in context of the K-12 education domain i.e., in context with the schoolbooks. This is certainly one area of further research. Research papers have spoken about bundling of services with product to make it more attractive but no paper talks about the impact of discounts on the purchase intention of a consumer specifically in context of K-12 domain. This is worth considering while carrying out further studies. Most of the studies that have been reviewed did not have enough sample size, so it is important to study a reasonable sample size specially in country like India to come on to a conclusive inference in the end of any study carried out in this context.

Problem Statement

Based on the research gaps identified, in the current study the focus is on identifying the factors that impact the Indian consumers purchase decision for printed schoolbooks whether it is basis a prescription given by a school or a book taken up by the consumer as a reference text. While there is of course a huge market of publishing, with 8100 publishers printing specifically for education domain, it becomes imperative for us to answer the following questions:

1. What drives the aspiration of the consumer for purchase of a school book?
2. What is the propensity that aspiration leads to purchase intention of a school book?

In this post COVID era, there has been a debate going on whether the introduction of technology in the classroom is a good decision or perhaps a decision taken in haste. While

some are happy with the shift, others are concerned about the threats it poses to the health of the student. This encouraged to undertake a study where the factors which persuade purchase of books could by studied and analyzed in a single comprehensive model. This in turn will not only help us to know the relative significance of each factor in presence of other as well as provide significant inputs to the publishers so that they can focus on significant ones. The objective of this study is therefore, to explore the intellectual development of consumer behavior in purchase of books through previous published research studies, conducting a descriptive research based on mixed method approach and while doing so to also develop a model to understand the sales of printed schoolbooks.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

To conceptualize the constructs, the research validates Means-End-Chain Theory (given by Reynold and Gutman) as a theoretical underpinning. Means- End Chain Theory –A means–end chain (MEC) has been defined as a hierarchy of goals that represents potential identities of the actions necessary for the person to reach his or her goal. In MEC Theory, two important aspects of persuasion are brought together in focus i.e.

1. Understanding the consumers' personal values/aspiration.
2. Understanding and identifying the emotional links that ties these values to a particular decision.
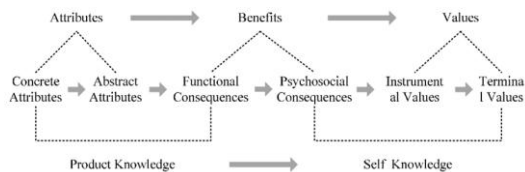
Means end research theory (Zeithaml, 1988; Gutman, 1997a, 1997b) helps to understand what series of instances goes on in a consumer's mind while making certain decisions so as to understand consumer behaviour better. It ensures that consumers actual needs are identified through various quantitative and qualitative approaches. As per this theory, there is a specific need for the consumer to reach the end, hence, they act with a definitive purpose in mind. (Hofstede et al., 1998; Kaciak & Cullen, 2006; Zhang et

al., 2017b). The theory in the past were used by authors to study the impact of aspiration and benefits leading to purchase intentions (Chiu, 2005; Christianson & Aucoin, 2005; Wang et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2017a).

Customer preference of course is one of the factors which will impact the customers' purchase decision in the end((Paul et al., 2021). Previous studies opined that cover page, price do have an impact on the customers decision to purchase books(Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Schroeder & Wright, 2011; Rønning et al., 2012; Alam, 2014; Rao et al., 2016; Hsu et al., 2017; Leitão et al., 2018; Lia, 2019; Otten et al., 2019). Customers' general preference between a textbook and an e-book based on age groups has also been stressed by previous scholarly works(Christianson & Aucoin, 2005; Woody et al., 2010; Lynch, 2012; Porion et al., 2016; Evans et al., 2017; Hsu et al., 2017; Strouse & Ganea, 2017; Lau et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2018; Leonard & Martins et al., 2018; Snyman, 2019; ; Okocha, 2019) . Researchers further noticed the impact of word of mouth while making decision for reading materials while others scholarly works reviewed the impact of perceived inconveniences while using e-books, impact of satisfaction and usability issues with eBooks and impact of lower cost on decision of a customer between a print book and an eBook. (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Das et al., 2020; Henke, 2001; Leemans & Stokmans, 1992; Leonard & Snyman, 2019; Pierard et al., 2020; K. Nageswara Rao et al., 2016; Richardson & Mahmood, 2012; Rojeski, 2012; Rønning et al., 2012; Ross et al., 2017; Tosun, 2014; Woody et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2017a). A very important market research technique i.e., means end research theory (Zeithaml, 1988; Gutman, 1997a, 1997b) to understand what series of instances goes on in a consumer mind while making certain decisions so as to understand consumer behaviour better. It ensures that consumers actual needs are identified through various quantitative and qualitative approaches. As per this theory, there is a specific need for the consumer to reach the end, hence, they act with a definitive purpose in mind. (Pieters et al., 1995; Gutman, 1997a, 1997b; Hofstede et al., 1998; Zeithaml, 1988; Kaciak & Cullen, 2006; Zhang et al., 2017b).

During literature review we came across some of the papers which helped us identify and

shortlist the factors basis which we were able to carry out the research while others helped us identify the theories which will pave the way for us to explore further in our area of research. Following are few important research studies which were conducted to comprehend the factors leading to purchase of books:

Leemans and Stokmans (1992) prepared a descriptive model to identify and explain as to what process buyers follow while making decisions to buy a particular book. They used sequential Hierarchial model of Consumer Decision making to study the consumers buying behaviour. They also considered such buying behaviour as a non-routine buying behaviour. They used the attributes of books like author, genre, themes etc as important factors impacting the purchase decisions.Very important to note was that they also considered referral to play a critical role in chosing a book which is worth considering in further studies too.

Arya et. al. (2018, 2019, 2021) also studied the relevance of SMS campaign in impacting the consumers purchase intention and found out that SMS advertising had significant impact on purchase intention of the consumer. There is seemingly a huge scope in the pandemic era to identify its importance for school books market as well.

Arya et al. (2019) also studied if digital foot print can be considered as a digital asset. This aspect holds a lot of value and relevance specially in the post pandemic domain. In the study, they found out that Digital foot prints across platform has a strong influencing impact and can definitely be considered as an asset.

Woody et al. (2010) conducted a study to find out whether the students in higher education institutions prefer to read through a print book or an e-book. Through the study they tried to understand the preference in the backdrop of availability of technology, know how of technology and students exposure to ebooks in the past.

Zhang et al. (2017) carried out another study specifically in China for Chinese readers to understand as to what drives their purchase decisions in this mobile era for eBooks. In this study we found out an extensive theoretical

background which was implemented by the researchers specifically the Means End Chain Theory and Elaboration Likelihood Model. The researchers studied how hedonic and utilitarian value that they derive from books leads to a purchase decision. It was also noted that due to lower price of an eBook the readers perceived lower risk in purchasing an eBook over a print book. They also underlined that uniqueness and convenience are two important drivers of this purchase. This study tries to cover most of the important aspects that can impact a person's purchase decision. Hence, we found it useful to keep it as a base and try to improvise its use on print books in context of Indian readers.

Nilgun (2014) determined the preferences of student-teachers on reading printed books or e-books and the reasons for these preferences. The results of the study suggested that cost as well as age has a significant impact on purchase of books.

Jie (2016) carried out a study wherein he tried to uncover if at all there is any cost differential when a consumer opts a print book over an eBook specially in context of academic titles. Jie concluded with data that for academic titles in particular the print books are most cost effective for consumer than eBooks.

Strouse & Ganea (2017) confirmed that parents give preference to reading of print book over e-book. The study confirmed that this preference of print books is related to perceived enjoyment, involvement of the child or parent-child interactions during reading. Children of ages 1-4 preferred to go for traditional books and enjoy parent-child interactions during reading of print of books.

Hung et al., (2018) studied the efficacy of the learning resources provided with print books. Results of the study confirmed that print books are found to be less effective for higher order learning needs but there is no proof for this holding true for school education.

Luis et al (2018) investigated the factors influencing the buyer while purchasing a frictional book. The study also tried to comprehend whether the decision of purchase is impulsive or not. The study highlighted that woman read more books than men and are more impulsive while purchasing a book.

Women buy books as a gift but are concerned but the fact that author and fame of book is important when purchased as a gift.

Rao et al., (2018) compared the price of print and e-book titles of the same scholarly titles from a university library. Also, this research study tried to find out whether the subject effects the preference for print or e-book. The results of the study provided significant insights into the consumer behaviour related with purchase of books. The results of the study confirmed that price of e-books are higher than their print counter parts. The study was conducted at Jawaharlal Nehru university and thereby negated the school children.

Gopal et al., (2020) and Gupta et al., (2021) investigated as to how the certain attributes impact the perception of the consumer about the attractiveness of the product and also their intention to purchase it. He considered the role of mood, whether the product is carrying a partitioned price or combined and role of persuasion skills.

Wimberley et al., (2020) empirically analysed the impact of library support in lieu of the course material cost and if it impacts the pass rate of the students in any ways which will show influence of library collection. It also validated the impact of Open education resources on buying behaviour.

Hypotheses Development
In school education domain, students are usually using books of the following types i.e., curriculum textbooks and books used as reference texts. While curriculum books are largely prescribed by the schools, we would need a framework that shall help us understand as to how that purchases decision is made by school administration. On the other hand, for reference books the decision maker is mostly the student/parent, it will be interesting to note as to how those purchase decisions are made. To understand these two processes discreetly and in detail, we are proposing the following models for the study:

During the literature review we came across papers where in the researcher identified the physical attributes like covers, page extent, illustrations etc played an important role while selection of a print and e-books.(d'Astous et al., 2006; Evans et al., 2017; Leitão et al., 2018a; Zhang et al., 2017a; Jain et al., 2021; Jhamb et al., 2021). It is then important to understand do they play an equally important role while choosing the schoolbooks as well. Hence,
H1: Physical attributes is a multi-dimensional construct significantly predicted by cover page, illustration and page extent.

H1a: Physical attributes have a positive impact on aspirations towards purchase of a schoolbook.

Further, another important factor that influences consumer decisions is perceived enjoyment(Hsiao & Chen, 2017; Hsu et al., 2017; Zeithaml, 1988; Zhang et al., 2017a; Arya et al., 2019). It is hence important to note and validate whether they play an equally important role when it comes to purchase of schoolbooks as well:

H2: Perceived enjoyment has a positive impact on aspirations that may lead to purchase of schoolbooks.

Price i.e., the amount that the customer has to pay for buying a product plays an important role for any purchase, the same impact was recorded by many researchers when they were comparing the decisions made by consumer for whether they must by an eBook or print book. It will be important to note whether the cost have the same impact when the customer has to choose for printed school books.(Embong et al., 2012; Herrmann et al., 1997; Li, 2016; K. N. Rao et al., 2018; K. Nageswara Rao et al., 2016; Wimberley et al., 2020)

H3: Price has a positive impact on aspirations that may lead to purchase of schoolbooks.

Social norms refer to the societal outlook towards a particular product or a trend. It is governed by references and word of mouth. In many research, the researchers found the social norms also impact a consumers behaviour, the same was specially found true when researchers were focusing on adoption of eBook for reading(Hsu et al., 2017; Martins et al., 2018; Okocha, 2019; Sunil, 2015; Wang et al., 2019). This also let to panic buying post pandemic (Islam et al., 2020). Will it hold true for printed schoolbooks? It is worth exploring:

H4: Social norms is a multi-dimensional construct significantly predicted by Word-of-mouth and recommendation.

H4a: Social Norms has a positive impact on aspirations that may lead to purchase of schoolbooks.

Researcher would thus want to study, whether Aspiration, which has been identified as endogenous variable, have an impact on the purchase intention of the end consumer or not. H5: Aspiration has significant positive impact on purchase intention.

On the basis of the literature review following model is being proposed:
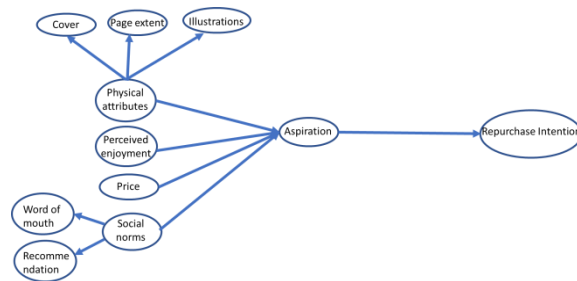
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Survey Instrument
The target population for this study were parents of the school going children for classes 1-12. The respondents were spread across the subcontinent of India. Demographic study is also attached to give more information on the respondents. The constructs identified were adapted from previous studies by Woody et al. (2010), Zhang et al. (2017), Hsu et al. (2017), Rao et al. (2016) and Leitao et al. (2018). These items were further modified to fit the context of print books as that is critical for the study carried out. The item 'cover' was adopted from previous study of Leitao et al. (2018) and Astous et al. (2006) among others. 'Illustrations' as an item was adopted from Evans et al. (2017). 'Page extent' too was adopted from a previous study done by Zhang et al. (2017). As a construct 'perceived enjoyment' were used in various previous studies specially conducted on eBooks and higher ed books by Hsu et al. (2017) and Smith et al. (2019). The same was adopted to be used in context of school books too. Tosun (2014) and Martins et al. (2019) studied the impact of social norms on adoption for e books. The

same were adopted to be studied in context of printed school books too. Rao et al. (2016), Zhang et al. (2017) and Martins et al. (2018) studied about the pricing and its impact on adoption of print book viz a viz e book. It was then considered to be adopted to study the impact of price on the adoption of school books. Rao et al. (2016) and Smith et al. (2019) also studied about the motivation that one reader has while adoption of eBooks/print books. While aspiration came as a major motivation it was important to study the item in context of school books too.

Table for scale item used is given below:

COV1	I will occasionally judge the book by its cover.
COV2	Good printing quality drive me to buy the book.
COV3	I prefer a hard cover binded over a paperback book.
COV4	It is the cover that attracts me to the book first.
ILL1	Good appealing illustrations drive me to buy the book.
ILL2	Pictures of the book influence my decision.
ILL3	A book with no illustrations/ poor illustrations does not appeal to me.
PAG1	I will prefer a book with more pages over a book with less pages.
PAG2	I prefer a book with in-depth coverage of course material
PAG3	Gripping description with proper explanation of concepts encourage me to purchase book
ENJ1	I am willing to spend more for an engaging book
ENJ2	I enjoy the book with more illustrations/ appealing illustrations.
ENJ3	If I/my kids like the name of a book, I will buy it.
ENJ7	I tend to buy more books for the subject my child likes.
ENJ8	I tend to buy books which have more fun activity, so that reader enjoys
ENJ9	Price is secondary, if I am sure to enjoy reading a particular book.
ENJ10	Book of my kids' favourite subject is always interesting for him/her
WOM1	I do market research before buying an educational product.
WOM2	I ask my friends/relatives before buying an educational product.
WOM3	I read product reviews before deciding to buy
REC1	I am more likely to buy a book recommended to me by someone known
REC2	While buying reference books, I make it a point to look at reviews/feedbacks.
REC3	I do form my opinion basis the recommendations/feedback I get for a book.
PRI1	I am price conscious when I chose the study materials I buy.
PRI2	I check for discounts before I buy an educational product.
PRI3	I will definitely check the price of the book

	before I buy it.
ASP1	I/My kids aspire to read books with good cover and illustrations.
ASP2	I/My kids aspire to read books that they are sure to enjoy reading.
ASP3	I/My kids aspire to read a book irrespective of the price I need to pay for it.
REP1	I will purchase a book only if I am sure to enjoy reading it.
REP2	If I am convinced with the cover and illustrations of the book, I will purchase it.
REP3	If by reading a book I can be successful in achieving my goals, I will purchase it.

Data Collection Procedures

The link of the preliminary questionnaire was sent to people as google form link were shared with 4 industry experts and 3 academicians in order to evaluate the face validity of the questionnaire. This pilot group suggested several amendments in the structure, language, and appropriateness of scale items (Rashid et al., 2022; Sharma et al 2021, 2022b). The scale was then modified along the suggestions made by them. According to De Leeuw (2012), the use of mixed methods reduces the bias caused by a single method, saves time, and improves the response rate of the survey. Therefore, field and online surveys were both conducted alongside. A total of 1673 questionnaires were submitted to parents of various schools across Indian states. Adequate advance permission was taken from relevant school authorities and the respondents alike. In order to ensure a representative sample for the study, respondents from urban, semi urban and rural areas were included. To increase the participation in the survey, numerous revisits were undertaken in person as well as reminders were sent through emails as well as telephonically. The same survey was available on an online link, and the link was forwarded to several social networking groups on Facebook. Through online and offline modes, 739 responses were received. After a careful examination of the returned surveys, seventy-nine responses were found to be incomplete and were discarded from data analysis, leaving a total of 671 valid responses for subsequent analysis. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their answers and the preservation of their anonymity in order to control for the social desirability bias and to motivate them to respond as sincerely as possible (De Leeuw et al., 2008; Sharma et al., 2021, 2022a, 2022b). Late responses represented the viewpoint of non-respondents and were thus classified as late responses that do also represent the perspective of non-respondents (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). We considered only those responses who responded to the survey within 30 days of sending the survey to them. The cut-off of 30 days was chosen because the response rate dropped remarkably after 4 weeks. This is analogous to the study of Chen et al. (2003) which also considered early respondents who returned the survey within 4 weeks.

Demographic profile and Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 presents respondents' characteristics and shows a fair inclusion of respondents across gender, with 52.75% males and 47.09% females; about 48.73% of the respondents were between 31-40 years of age. There was an even distribution of respondents across all categories of cities i.e., Urban, Metros, Rural etc. This shall give a good view on consumer behavior across the regions specially for a country like India. A little over half of the respondents submitted that they spend between INR 5000-INR 10000 in a calendar year on books.

Table1: Frequency Distribution for Respondents' Demographics

Demographic Characteristic N=671	Response	Percentage
Gender		
Male	354	52.75
Female	316	47.09
Education Qualification		
Undergraduates	101	15.05
Graduates	374	55.74
Postgraduates	196	29.21
Age		
20-30	113	16.84
31-40	327	48.73
Above 41	231	34.43
Place of Residence		
Metropolitan	202	30.10
Urban	141	21.01
Semi Urban	153	22.80
Rural	175	26.08
Expense on books in an year		
Under 5000	198	29.51
5001-10000	339	50.52
Above 10000	134	19.97

RESULTS

The data analysis process followed a two-step investigative approach. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out on the items to assess the reliability and validity of the proposed measurement model. CFA was performed to assess the reliability and validity of scale items, followed by structural equation modelling (SEM) to test the hypotheses empirically.

CFA, using AMOS 24.0, was conducted on all the constructs. The measurement model was validated based on convergent validity, internal consistency, and discriminant validity (Bagozzi et al., 1991; Hair et al. ,2010).

The following table i.e., table 2 displays the results of the measurement model. To evaluate the convergent validity of the exogenous and endogenous constructs, the standardized factor loadings of the constructs and average variance extracted (AVE) were considered (Hair et al., 2010). The standardized loadings of 0.6 or higher suggesting that the items exhibit validity. AVE value also exceeded 0.5 indicating adequate convergent validity, as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The internal consistency was addressed by computing composite reliability (CR). The value of CR for all the constructs was 0.7 which is above the threshold value as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Discriminant Validity

Table 2 shows that the square roots of AVE are comparatively above than inter-construct correlation. This concludes that the measurement items are more strongly correlated with their own construct than other constructs. Hence, the results designate the adequate reliability and validity of the measurement model, and model is ready for structural testing.

Table 2: Measurement Model

		Std. Estimate	Std. Error	Critical Ratio	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Cover	COV1	0.751					
	COV2	0.755	0.072	16.525			
	COV3	0.771	0.069	16.797	0.546	0.828	0.805
	COV4	0.675	0.067	15.097			
Illustration	ILL1	0.768					
	ILL2	0.672	0.058	15.646	0.517	0.762	0.765
	ILL3	0.713	0.058	16.464			
Page extent	PAG1	0.617					
	PAG2	0.847	0.075	17.321	0.642	0.84	0.822
	PAG3	0.91	0.081	18.05			
Perceived Enjoyment	ENJ1	0.792					
	ENJ2	0.796	0.043	23.257			
	ENJ3	0.798	0.043	23.311			
	ENJ7	0.649	0.048	17.975	0.621	0.919	0.913
	ENJ8	0.804	0.042	23.549			
	ENJ9	0.793	0.04	23.29			
	ENJ10	0.869	0.039	26.24			
Social Influence	SOC1	0.862					
	SOC2	0.713	0.037	21.437	0.574	0.8	0.81
	SOC3	0.686	0.035	20.559			
Recommendation	REC1	0.807					
	REC2	0.659	0.036	17.956	0.625	0.831	0.826
	REC3	0.889	0.039	26.184			
Aspiration	ASP1	0.913					
	ASP2	0.601	0.04	17.918	0.666	0.853	0.851
	ASP3	0.896	0.03	32.352			
Purchase Intention	REP1	0.846					
	REP2	0.836	0.05	20.496	0.641	0.823	0.84
	REP3	0.716	0.046	18.677			
Price	PRI1	0.798					
	PRI2	0.814	0.043	24.284	0.699	0.874	0.87
	PRI3	0.893	0.042	27.678			

Table 3: Correlations Matrix

	COV	ILL	PAG	ENJ	SOC	REC	PRI	ASP	REP
COV	*0.738*								
ILL	.558**	*0.719*							
PAG	.625**	.525**	*0.801*						
ENJ	.710**	.489**	.701**	*0.788*					
SOC	.505**	.321**	.554**	.636**	*0.754*				
REC	.663**	.587**	.685**	.713**	.569**	*0.790*			
PRI	.660**	.430**	.681**	.601**	.610**	.644**	*0.836*		
ASP	.587**	.426**	.625**	.708**	.638**	.626**	.696**	*0.816*	
REP	.046	.037	.095*	.099*	.080	.090*	.095*	.188**	*0.800*
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). COV: Cover, ILL: Illustration, PAG: Page extent, ENJ: Perceived enjoyment, WOM: Word of Mouth, REC: Recommendation, PRI: Price, ASP: Aspiration, REP: Repurchase intention									

Table 4: Structural Model

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
Cover	à	Physical Attributes	0.878			***	Supported
Illustration	à	Physical Attributes	0.636	0.041	16.063	***	Supported
Page Extent	à	Physical Attributes	0.826	0.054	18.835	***	Supported
Physical Attributes	à	Aspiration	0.235	0.043	5.331	***	Supported
Perceived Enjoyment	à	Aspiration	0.179	0.045	3.191	0.001	Supported
Price	à	Aspiration	0.205	0.04	4.003	***	Supported
Word of mouth	à	Social Norms	0.923			***	Supported
Recommendation	à	Social Norms	0.673	0.06	11.642	***	Supported
Social Norms	à	Aspiration	0.435	0.035	10.498	***	Supported
Aspiration	à	Repurchase Intention	0.163	0.043	4.264	***	Supported
Goodness-of-fit Statistics: CMIN/df=3.488, GFI=0.905, NFI=0.901, CFI=0.919, TLI=0.904, IFI=0.892, RMSEA=0.075-							

Table 4 explains the structural model explaining the results of hypothesized relationships. Regarding the first hypothesis. All the three variables namely cover (β=0.878, p=0.000), illustration (β=0.636, p=0.000) and page extent (β=0.826, p=0.000) had high loadings indicating their impact of physical attributes and accepting hypothesis H1. Further, physical attributes also had significant impact on aspiration (β=0.235, p=0.000) thereby accepting H1(a). Perceived enjoyment (β=0.179, p=0.000) and price (β=0.205, p=0.000) also emerged significant but their impact was albeit less than physical attributes. Based on these results H2 and H3 are also accepted.

Moving further, word-of-mouth (β=0.923, p=0.000) and recommendation (β=0.673, p=0.000) had high loadings indicating their

Table 5: Correlations Matrix

	COV	ILL	PAG	ENJ	SOC	REC	PRI	ASP	REP
COV	*0.738*								
ILL	.558**	*0.719*							
PAG	.625**	.525**	*0.801*						
ENJ	.710**	.489**	.701**	*0.788*					
SOC	.505**	.321**	.554**	.636**	*0.754*				
REC	.663**	.587**	.685**	.713**	.569**	*0.790*			
PRI	.660**	.430**	.681**	.833**	.610**	.644**	*0.836*		
ASP	.587**	.426**	.625**	.708**	.638**	.626**	.696**	*0.816*	
REP	.046	.037	.095*	.099*	.080	.090*	.095*	.188**	*0.800*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). COV: Cover, ILL: Illustration (Please complete by adding abbreviations of all constructs)   251

significance in enhancing social influence. Therefore, H4(a) is accepted which suggests that social influence is a multidimensional construct significantly predicted by word-of-mouth and recommendation. Social influence emerged as a strongest predictor of aspirations (β=0.435, p=0.000) thereby accepting H4.

Finally, aspiration had significant positive impact on repurchase intention (β=0.163, p=0.000). Thus, hypothesis H5 is also accepted.

Structural Model

Annexure 1 contains the CFA diagram.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS
This study tries to understand factors influencing purchase of schoolbooks. The study also tries to understand the impact of aspiration on purchase intention of books.

In riposte to the first RO, all the three sub-constructs of physical attributes (cover, illustration and page extent) loaded significantly. Cover emerged as a strongest attribute indicating that attractive cover design stimulates a parent to buy a book. This finding supports the previous studies by Leitao et al. (2018) and Astous et al. (2006) where cover had influenced purchase decision. This was followed by page extent indicating the significance of in-depth and gripping description with adequate interpretation of concepts facilitates purchase of books. Previous studies (Zhang et al., 2017; Leitao et al., 2018) also highlighted the need of comprehensive coverage of course materials. Illustrations though emerged significant had least loadings and this finding is also supported by previous studies (Evans et al., 2017; Woody et al., 2010).

Moving further, social norms emerged as strongest predictor of aspiration to purchase

the books. This finding is in sync with previous studies (Kim et al., 2021; Hsu et al., 2017; which also validated the significance of reviews, referrals and recommendations in purchase of books.

This was followed by price thereby supporting the studies of Rao et al., (2018) and Zhang et al., (2017) which highlighted that better the price perception, more is the probability that consumers will decide to purchase the book. This analysis further revealed that parents are price conscious and look for discounts while selecting a book. Price needs to corroborate with the quality of the book. If the price of the book is not as per the quality, consumers will restraint from buying it. Next in the order of priority was physical attributes including cover, page extent and illustrations which is in accordance with the previous studies (Zhang et al., 2017; Leitao et al., 2018; Evans et al., 2017; Woody et al., 2010).

Surprisingly, perceived enjoyment emerged significant but weakest of all the above-mentioned constructs. This finding demonstrates that parents tend to buy those books which they feel that their kids will enjoy reading. This finding is consistent with the previous studies where perceived enjoyment emerged as one of the significant factors leading to purchase of books (Smith et al., 2019; Hsu et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2017). The finding provides insights to the publishers to give adequate focus on quality, additional discounts, and physical attributes so as to build aspire and motivate consumers to purchase books.

Finally, aspiration had a strong impact on purchase intention thereby supporting the previous studies of Rao et al., (2018) and Smith et al., (2017). This helps us to deduce that aspirations are related with basic needs which directly influences consumer behaviour towards purchase of a product. Therefore, publishers need to impart necessary aspirational values so as to gain competitive advantage. It is also important insights for the publishing companies specially in school education that page extent, covers and perceived enjoyment of the reader are important aspects that needs to be taken in consideration while preparing a book and marketing it to the end user.

Academic Implications

This study took the Means End Chain (MEC) theory as the basis where in MEC is defined as a hierarchy of goals that represents potential identities of the actions necessary for the person to reach his or her goal. In this Theory, two important aspects of persuasion are brought together in focus i.e.

1. Understanding the consumers' personal values.
2. Understanding and identifying the emotional links that ties these values to a particular decision.

Here, we have taken "Aspiration" as the key personal values which person seems to achieve. All his actions are linked to the final achievement of aspiration. Here the action is the purchase intention of the consumer. As is substantiated by the findings. Attributes were found to have a direct impact on aspiration or on the perceived fulfilment of Aspiration.

Aspiration thereof, was found to have a significant positive impact on the purchase intention of the consumer. This substantiates that the Means End Chain theory also holds true in case of purchase intention of schoolbooks.

Managerial Implications

Managerial implications are far more deep rested as can be initially perceived. Publication as an industry is flourishing in India. And, of that 90% publisher are education book publishers. For an industry which values at 13000 crore Indian rupees, this study provides them a great insight as to what and how they can link different aspects of their books to the fulfilment of the readers aspiration. The impact that various attributes have on the final purchase intention is of great value to the industry and this shall also help the industry to identify that how price, perceived enjoyment etc. impact the reader. This will make their marketing efforts more focussed leading to higher ROIs.

Limitations and Future Research

This research attempts to explore the factors influencing purchase intention of books. Therefore, it has certain limitations. First, these factors like physical attributes, perceived enjoyment, social norms need to validated for specific cohorts like primary, secondary and higher secondary classes to confirm a generalized perception. Second, since the research was conducted in India, but there may be difference in perception of parents staying in other developing and SAARC nations. Future studies may compare these variables in other developing countries as well as developed countries. Additionally, future studies may consider variables like trust in publisher, attitude, habit, government policy, school recommendation and these may be validated as mediators also. This research didn't consider the role of moderating variables like demographic variables which may be an interesting future avenue for further studies.

Declaration on conflict of Interest.

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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