



The relationship of social media with fashion consciousness and consumer buying behavior

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Abstract

People use to spend their money proportion to fashion changes as it plays a significant role in life styles. This is an exploratory research, mainly focused on Finding out the relationship of Social Media with Fashion Consciousness and Consumer Purchase (Buying Behavior). Students of Higher Educational institutes of Karachi were the targeted population of the study. A convenience sampling strategy was adopted for the collection of data. The proposed study uses standardized questionnaire and 300 questioners were distributed among respondents randomly and got back 262 responses. The results of the study indicated that there is a weak significant relationship between Social Media and Fashion Consciousness, so as between Social Media and Consumer Purchase Behavior. However results of the study do not align with the statement that Customers spend more than Rs. 4000 per shopping trip.

Keywords: Consumer, Purchase Behavior, Social Media, Fashion Consciousness

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Introduction

Overview

Social media denotes to the means of communications among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks (Halonen & Heinonen, 2008). According to Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein who define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Haenlein Michael, (2010)) Furthermore, social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. It introduces substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities and individuals. H. Kietzmann, Jan; Kristopher Hermkens (2011) Social media differentiates from traditional/industrial media in many aspects such as quality, research, frequency, usability; immediacy and permanence., the total time spent on social media in the U.S. across PC and mobile devices increased by 37 percent to 121 billion minutes in July 2012 compared to 88 billion minutes in July 2011. For content contributors, the benefits of participating in social media have gone beyond simply social sharing to building reputation and bringing in career opportunities and monetary income, as discussed in Tang, Gu, and Whinston (2012). Allowing individuals to advertise themselves and market their products has brought a new life to the business world and a large number of small businesses have emerged with a lot of local prominence and have proven highly successful and this has brought a total new dynamic to the fashion industry and the way it is impacting consumer and the fashion consciousness is remarkably high each brand of apparel has its own social media page that runs a sheer marketing campaign focused on gaining the market share and orders from customers. The very need

of customers is met online with almost no expense incurred this has resulted in a strong online demand for fashion apparel in the market. Social media is great as a brand warmer. With an ever increasing competition among fashion apparel brands to be seen and be opted for by consumers, brands are in a dire need to understand what is in the minds of their consumers, which factors influenced their shopping behavior and to what degree does social media impact their sales. The consumer research was intended to find out about these very facts. The results indicated that consumers' dependency on social media is in its preliminary phase with mostly depending on social media for their pre-purchase fashion trend research. Despite this fact, the impact of social media is still considerable and is growing. Thus fashion apparel brands can capitalize on it.

Definitions

Fashion consciousness: very interested in fashion and wanting to wear fashionable clothes, spend time in fashionable places.
Social media: forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)
Consumer: one who pays to consume the goods and services produced. The concept of a consumer may vary significantly by context, although a common definition is an individual who buys products or services for personal use and not for manufacture or resale but for the persons own or house hold use.

Statement of the problem

This report intends to study the growing influence of social media on fashion consciousness and the user and the factors involved for this change.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to have a better understanding of how social media has had an impact on fashion consciousness of the



consumer including characteristics and influencing factors of change in fashion trends. It proves to be a helpful source for understanding the importance of social media and marketing strategies put in use on it. It also emphasizes on the importance of the trend that has emerged with its boom. It helped a great deal to understand the changing fashion consciousness of the consumer and how readily people adopt a change that goes viral. It particularly focuses on how social media has come to impact the fashion trends and consumer mindfulness about a fashion trend.

Outline of the study

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is based on an overview of the study along with problem statement, purpose, outline and propositions. Chapter 2 covers the literature available through sources including articles and websites published on internet about the problem being studied. Chapter 3 gives an reader an idea about methods used to conduct and collect research. Chapter 4 is based on results including bar graphs and analysis of research and interviews, while Chapter 5 concludes this study along with implications and recommendations.

Propositions

P1: There is a strong relationship between Social Media and Consumer Purchase Behavior.

P2: There is a significant positive relationship between Social Media and Fashion Consciousness.

P3: Customers spend more than Rs. 4000 per shopping trip.

Literature review

Fashion plays an important role on lifestyle and many people spend their money proportion to fashion changes. Mohammad Reza Irvani et al. Fashion has significant impact role on people's capital spending and life style. Fashion consciousness could impact people to change people's habit and make different changes on people's belongings such as home furniture, appliances, dress, etc. (Back, 1985; Bakewell et al., 2006). Human beings are social and nowadays, consumers are participating in variety of activities, from consuming content to sharing knowledge, experiences, opinions, and involved in discussion with other consumers online (Heinonen, 2011). Today, with the growth of Internet, online social networks have become important communication channels and also virtual communities have emerged. Online world has become a new kind of social communication, connecting people to variety of online communities has been growing during past decade. Groups that may never meet in the physical world but nevertheless they are able to affect behavior including purchasing decisions (Evans, Jamal & Foxall, 2009). Internet is a social place where created new forum for consumers. Virtual communities, blog, and online social networking sites provide a platform to influence consumers' purchase decisions (OTX research, 2008).

Social media

The growth of fashion industry in recent years could be contributed to consumers' changing habits towards fashion. Consumers are becoming more fashion-conscious and keeping themselves updated with the latest fashion trends (D'Aveni, 2010).

Today, social media are firmly anchored in consumers' daily communication and have assumed an important position in their everyday lives. On average, social media are already the second most important means of private communication (Sascha Armutat, et al., 2012).

Social media are now an integral part of many consumers' everyday lives. In 2012, 92.6 % of German citizens with Internet access had at least one social network account. The country-wide acceptance and application of social media, together with the increasing distribution of smart phones, indicate a fundamental and ongoing change affecting all elements of the German society. The change caused by social media in terms of consumer perceptions and behavior cannot be left to agencies or social media managers alone, but must be reflected much deeper in company value chains.

Consumer choices are made increasingly more and more on the basis of social media

information. In addition to deciphering the advertising message and reading the websites of companies, consumers use different online formats (forums, chats, blogs, etc.) to share ideas, to form communities and to contact their peers.

As pointed by Kozinets (2010) social media is increasingly seen as a more objective source of information and all these communities have a real existence to their members and therefore have effect on many aspects of behavior, including buying behavior.

Jonas War Dem et al., (2013) report shows that these days, social media constitute one of the most prominent challenges for marketing managers. A recent study by the Marketing Center Münster, which asked 146 German managers to name the most important entrepreneurial challenges over the next few years, finds that 89 % of the respondents name social media. 1

At the same time, we observe that most companies are taking only limited action in response to this enormous challenge. Social media are often treated as merely another communication channel whose value potential is unclear; companies thus have often limited their response to either doing nothing, hiring a "social media manager," or outsourcing social media communication to an agency. A holistic social media strategy that accounts for the specific characteristics of social media, and at the same time integrates this new channel deeply into the company's value chain, is often lacking. This managerial response obviously conflicts with social media's perceived importance. Previous studies have also investigated the relationship between the fashion consciousness of mature consumers and the fashion information social sources used by members of that market segment. Kaiser and Chandler (1985), for example, observed that older people implicitly use television for processing appearance and fashion-related information. Greco and Paksoy (1989) similarly found that fashion-conscious shoppers rely more on mass media information sources than do non-fashion-conscious segments. Surprisingly, the mature market represents the second fastest growing population segment engaged in Internet use (exceeded only by teens), with women primarily responsible for this surge in activity. Therefore, the Internet may also become a viable source of fashion information (Ross, 2000).

According to Angella Jiyoung Kim (2010), social media comprise five properties i-e

1. Media Entertainment
2. Customization / cultural conditions
3. Interaction (networking)
4. Word of mouth
5. Trend

Media entertainment

Media entertainments including national Television, internet or satellite TV are some of the most important factors influencing fashion awareness. Mohammad Reza Irvani et al. Research findings show that there is a meaningful relationship between mass media and fashion consciousness. The ratio of $r^2=0.124$, which means having access to mass media such as national TV, internet or Satellite could describe approximately 12.4% of fashion oriented requirements.

The results indicated that there was a strong and positive correlation between economical, cultural and social conditions (social media) and fashion.

These results correspond to a DEI Worldwide report that states that consumers make a purchase decision based on the information posted on social media sites, and consumers using those sites pass along information to others (DEI Worldwide, 2008). While marketing can be characterized as an investment in improving a firm's performance (Meenakshi Handa, Arpita Khare (2013)), marketing activities using social media have proven their effectiveness. With the growing interest of luxury fashion brands in providing luxurious value to customers in every way possible, using social media appears to be appropriate for retaining old customers and attracting cross-shoppers.

Customization and cultural conditions



Research findings show that customs and cultural conditions substantially impact on fashion and life style. The ratio of $r^2=0.508$, which means culture could describe approximately 51% of fashion oriented requirements Mohammad Reza Irvani, (2012).

Social interaction (networking)

While social interactions are critical to understanding consumer behavior, the relationship between social and commerce networks has not been explored on a large scale.

Use of personal social networks to gather information is fundamental to purchasing behavior (P. DiMaggio and H. Louch, 1998). It is something so common in our daily routine that we usually do not even make a note of it. When we make a purchase from a retail store, we often speak beforehand to the shopkeeper about suitable products. When wanted to purchase something we are unfamiliar with, we consult our friends and family for advice. When we purchase a popular product, we have an urge to tell everyone we know about it.

Although personal social networks are implicit in the offline shopping experience, their introduction to the online world is a relatively new phenomenon. E-commerce websites, such as Amazon, eBay and Epinions, have successfully integrated product reviews, recommendations, search and product comparison, but they have been much slower at adopting social networking features as a part of customer experience. Recommendation engines and product comparison sites help consumers discover new products and receive more accurate evaluations, however they cannot completely substitute for the personalized recommendations and information that one receives from a friend or relative. Basic behavioral psychology drives consumers to value and trust their friends' purchasing decisions more than anonymous opinions. For example, a Lucid arketng survey found that 68% of individuals consulted friends and relatives before purchasing home electronics K. Burke,(2003). Understanding how social networks are used and how they shape purchasing decisions is one of the fundamental interests of e-commerce. Only recently social networks been used in e-commerce applications to some success. For example, group purchasing companies such as Groupon and Living Social allow consumers to come together to buy products in bulk and save money, while social shopping sites such as Kaboodle provide consumers the ability to share shopping lists with each other. The use of social networks in online shopping provides marketers and businesses with new revenue opportunities, while providing consumers with product information and both economic and social rewards for sharing T. Hennig-Thurau, (2004).

The online social networks provided facilities for consumers to interact with one another, accessing to information, comments, reviews, and rates that can help them for purchasing decisions in different ways (Heinrichs, Lim & Lim, 2011). Online social networks (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, virtual communities, etc.), where individuals as members, construct public profiles to share their knowledge and their experiences, to post information about themselves and have contact with others who exchange and share similar interests (Cheung & Lee, 2010). Online social networks change the way we think about marketing, companies and consumers have direct interaction and relationship with one another (Solomon, et al, 2010). "Much of humanbehavior is not best characterized by an individual acting in isolation" (Bagozzi, 2007, p247). Online social networks have become more credible and relevant information source than direct information from companies, therefore consumers seek products and companies on online social networks (Bernoff & Li, 2008). Since consumers enjoy the interaction and communication with each other and like to receive advice either positive or negative about different products or services, virtual communities have an impact on consumers' purchasing decision (Evans, et al, 2009).

The growth of online social networks around the world has created a new place of interaction and communication among people. Individuals can share their knowledge, opinions, and experiences with one other due to the online social networks provided features and may have an impact on people's behavior in terms of communication and purchasing. Research study found out that online social networks impact every step of consumers' purchasing decision process to

different extent regarding food retailer shops. The reasons are mainly because Facebook's features bring convenience to people, consumers spend more time on it, and Facebook's features allow consumers to interact with supermarkets and other consumers and see comments from other consumers on supermarkets' Face book pages. The market share of different online social networking websites have been grown for instance Face book grew by 0.22 percent from November 2011 to October 2011. YouTube has the strongest growth among online social networking site with a 0.67 percent from November 2011 to October 2011. These measurements showed the membership of online social networks websites have been grown (Hitwise, 2011)

There are different social network groups that possess the power to influence consumers' purchase decision (Evans, et al, 2009):

1. Primary groups: are characterized by the size and the close relationship with--- in individuals (e.g. family members, close friends)
2. Secondary groups: are made up of more than one primary Groups (e.g. wider Social system within organizations or university)
3. Informal groups: are made up of individuals with common interests or cultures
4. Formal groups: are organized with a more rigid structures
5. Virtual groups (communities): online social networks, blogs

Word of mouth

There are two types of information sources; internal and external information search. Internal search involves the consumers' memory about the products, and external search includes word of mouth, stores visit, trial and online social networking and social media (Kardes, et al, 2011).

An informal means of communication (such as communication with friends, family members and co-workers), much of what you discuss is related to products and information about different products or services. Once you ask your co-workers where they bought their dress or recommend new restaurant to your friends, you are involving in Word-Of-Mouth (WOM) communication (Solomon, et al, 2010). Many choices of consumers are made within different social groups and even once consumers decide on their own, Word-Of-Mouth from other people can influence them (East, et al, 2008).

Word-Of-Mouth in traditional communication theory considers as possessing powerful

Influence on consumers' purchasing decision behavior in every steps especially information

Search, evaluation of alternative, and product choice (Silverman, G, 2001).Word-Of-Mouth is also can be described as an engagement of consumers in positive or negative communication or an outcome of satisfaction or dissatisfaction experiences. WOM is person-to-person communication, regarding to brands, products, services, companies, and organizations that have an impact on consumers' purchase decision (Evans, et al, 2009).

We note therefore the obvious tendency of decreased consumer's confidence in brands, displayed simultaneously with that of increasing their confidence in the opinions of others i-e word of mouth advertisement. Consumers credit less and less the brand message transmitted through TV commercials, they are more inclined to take into account what others tell environments, especially online. These are the conclusions drawn from the study "The New Consumer Study", conducted in 2009 by the Euro RSCG Worldwide; showing that the new consumer clearly have increasingly higher confidence in online content generated by their peers and therefore uses the most of online tools to connect with others and to document in order to make the best purchase. Word-Of-Mouth communication is cheaper, faster, and more effective than the other marketing tools (Dellarocas, 2003).

Fashion consciousness

Fashion consciousness refers to a person's degree of involvement with the styles or fashion of clothing. An individual does not have to be either a fashion opinion leader or a fashion innovator to be



considered fashion conscious. Rather, fashion consciousness is characterized by an interest in clothing and fashion, and in one's appearance (Summers, 1970; Jonathan and Mills, 1982). Walsh et al. (2001) found that fashion consciousness among German consumers was related to a desire for up-to-date styles, frequent changes in one's wardrobe and pleasurable shopping experiences. Obviously, fashion consciousness is a convenient consumer attribute for apparel marketers, in that this pre-existing interest in clothing can increase consumer receptivity to apparel product promotions (Richards and Sturman, 1977; Kaiser and Chandler, 1984). Lumpkin (1985) found that a high proportion of active mature consumers were relatively heavy spenders on clothing, and therefore concluded that fashion-conscious segments do exist among older apparel shoppers. Similarly, Barak and Stern (1985) noted that fashion-conscious women often feel younger than their chronological age. However, no relationship was found between age perception and fashion consciousness in Chowdhary's (1988) study. She also observed that although 80% of persons aged 65–91 said that they preferred to wear 'stylish clothing'; only 25% actually chose apparel that was currently fashionable. The remaining 75% selected classic styles more fashionable in previous decades, suggesting that perceptions of what is fashionable may vary with age.

Consumer behavior

Consumer behavior defined as "The study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires." (Solomon, et al, 2010, p6). Another definition of consumer behavior is "The dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behavior, and environmental events by which human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives" (Bennett, 1989). Study of consumer behavior has shifted from why people purchase to consumption behavior (Blythe, 2008).

Everyday people buy things that are relevant to their needs. At the same time they are making purchasing decisions. Specific consumer behavior is defined as "the activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services" (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2001, p6). Consumer behaviors are influenced by personal and environmental factors (Blyth, 2008). A central part of consumer behavior is, consumers' purchasing decision that included several steps. Generally social networks such as groups or individuals who own the power over consumers can affect consumers' purchase decision (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg, 2010).

Consumer behaviour has changed greatly over the last 25 years, but it has been evolutionary and the seeds of change have been apparent for generations (Kar, 2010).

Mutations occurring in the new consumer's perception of goods quality should not be

understood as a quickly process or easy to locate in time. In any case, we believe that the origin of these changes in consumer behavior is found through the introduction of the US Consumer Bill of Rights in 1963, which gave the consumer a higher status, because the Government took on the responsibility of protecting his rights: the right to safety, the right to be informed, the right to choose and the right to be heard.

From that moment, manufacturers could no longer simply produce, because the consumer needs and wants needed to be taken into account. Consumers had choice for the first time and were aware of it (Kar, 2010). Underlying the consumption choices is a desire to feel good, not only physical, but also emotionally. But, in the last decades, consumers have faced an explosion of product choices and it is causing so called "consumer vertigo." The consumer became increasingly anxious about choices and sometimes he chooses not to buy something for fear he will make the wrong selection. What makes people feel good emotionally is changing now. Thus, the consumers are seeking more purposeful pleasures that last longer and offer deeper satisfactions. Impulse shopping gives way to a more considered and conscientious form of consumption. All these announce a new era: the era of mindful consumption and of new consumer.

Conceptual framework

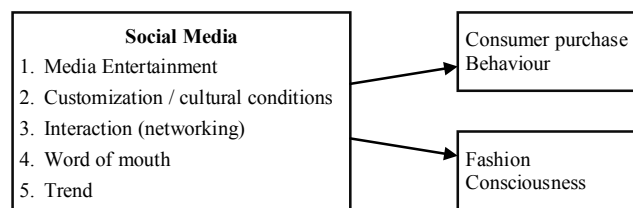


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Universe and sample

The population consisted of HEC recognized public and private Higher Educational Institutes of Karachi. The universe selected for this study is Higher Education industry or Universities of Karachi. There are 34 HEC recognized Higher Educational Institutes located in Karachi out of which 9 are public where as 25 are private.

Sampling techniques

A convenience sampling technique was applied for the selection of Higher Educational Institutes. This study sample consisted of 10 Higher Educational Institutes, out of which 3 are public and 7 are private sector.

Selected universities (higher educational institutes of Karachi)

Higher Educational Institutes selected for the current study are as follow:

Public sector higher educational institutes

1. DOW University of Health Sciences, Karachi
2. Institute of Business Administration, Karachi
3. University of Karachi, Karachi

Private sector higher educational institutes

1. Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Sc. & Technology (SZABIST), Karachi
2. Textile Institute of Pakistan, Karachi
3. Zia-ud-Din University, Karachi
4. Preston University, Karachi
5. KASB Institute of Technology, Karachi
6. Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, Karachi
7. Institute of Business Management, Karachi

Research design

Research design gives the complete information regarding to the collection of data from the population. Design serves as a bridge between data and the research questions. It helps moulds or shaping the data into a meaningful form to find the answer of research question. The design consisted of sample, data and the strategies. It also describes about the tools to gather the data and that are used for analysis. The study is based on primary data and to collect data standardized questionnaire is used.

Questionnaire

The research question "Do the social media influence the fashion consciousness and consumer, is to investigate the relationships between Social Media, Fashion Consciousness and Consumer buying behavior i-e Students of higher educational institutes of Karachi. In the field of social sciences it is a common practice to collect data through questionnaires. The cost associated with this methodology compared to other techniques is low; this can be one of the reasons to collect the data by this technique. Another reason behind this type of technique, in the light of the studies is that when the research objectives are clear and is not that much complex then it is always fine and preferred to use questionnaires for data collection (Bourque and Fielder, 1995). Standardized questionnaire is taken from relevant literature that



attempted to gather information regarding all the variables i-e Social Media, Fashion Consciousness and Consumer Buying Behavior.

Scale

Multiple scales were used in this study in order to gather data for different variables. 5 point likert scale, Multiple Options Scale, Yes/No Scale etc.

Data collection

The students of different department's i-e Management Sciences, Computer Science, Environmental Sciences, Medical, Engineering etc of HEC recognized Higher Educational Institutes of Karachi were the participants in this study. The survey was conducted on random basis that is questionnaires were distributed without any discrimination/bias. 300 questionnaire were distributed among participants and got back 262 responses. It is a cross-sectional study. It is expected that all of the respondents have given the response correctly and honestly up to their understanding of the questionnaire and briefing.

Results

Demographics

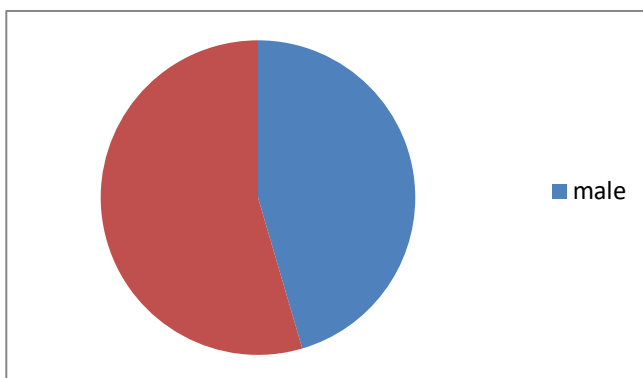


Fig. 2. Gender

Data has been acquired from random individuals of both genders. The ratio of female respondents is more than males, as females are more fashion conscious and the ones who spent more time on social media shopping pages and websites as compared to males. Certain males were also taken into consideration while collecting data as their view cannot be overlooked regarding the captioned subject.

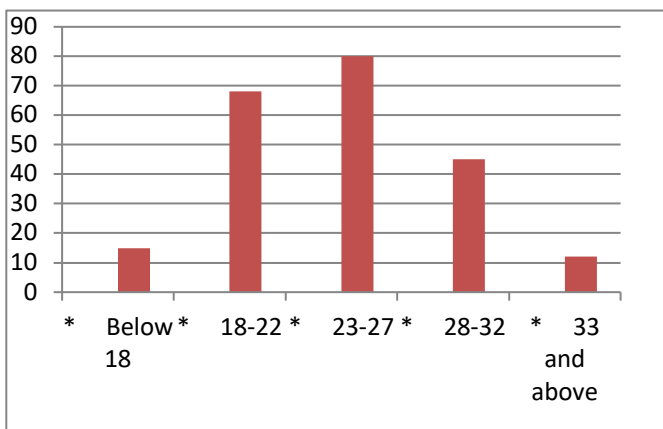


Fig. 3. Age

Age groups taken into consideration while conducting research were with a class width of five years. This was done in order to observe the influence social media has on different age groups. This information was helpful in identifying the age group that is most active on social media and consequently is the most influenced by it. As our sample consisted upon random individuals the results have a high validity and

can be generalized. The age group was left skewed with a majority (57%) of respondents in the age group of 23-27 years, so the results represent the opinion of mostly young population.

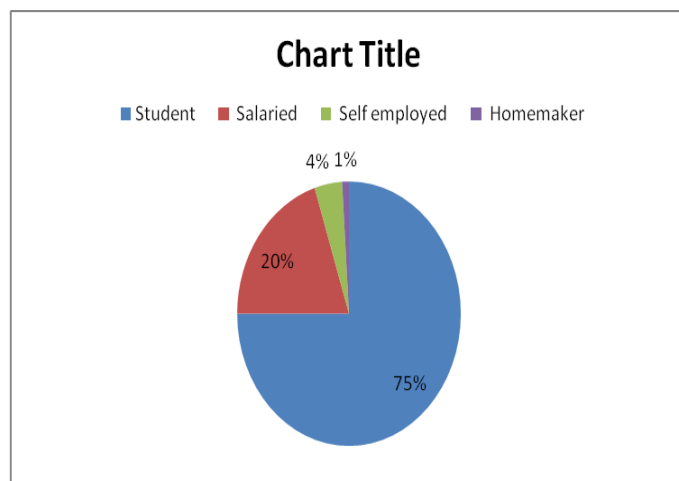


Fig. 4. Occupation

Since the age group of the respondents was limited, most of them were a student (75%) which indicates their limited ability to spend. Therefore, the results could have been different if the salaried population was a majority especially for questions on the frequency of online shopping and expenditure per online shopping trip.

Proposition testing

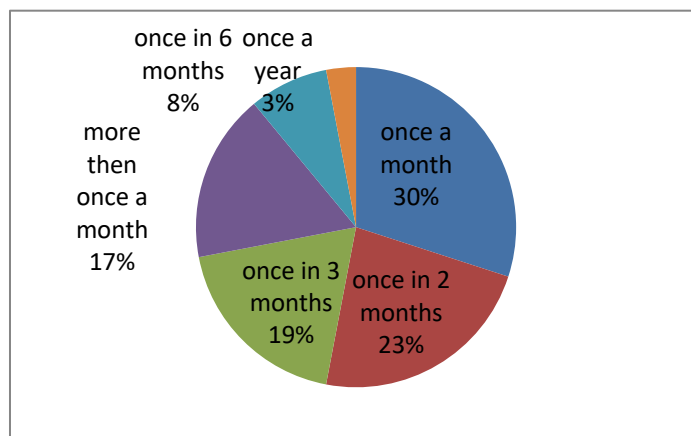


Fig. 5. How Often Do You Shop for Apparels?

The results indicate little effect of Social Media on purchasing decisions or Consumer Buying Behavior. So, H1 is accepted that there is significant positive relationship between Social Media and Consumer Buying Behavior. But this relationship is quite weak. So there is a weak positive relationship between these two variables. The respondents are mostly young people who are active on social media but the results does not show any change in their buying habits. A person who used to shop once a month does not shop twice in the same month which shows social media has not been effective in persuading them to shop more than usual.



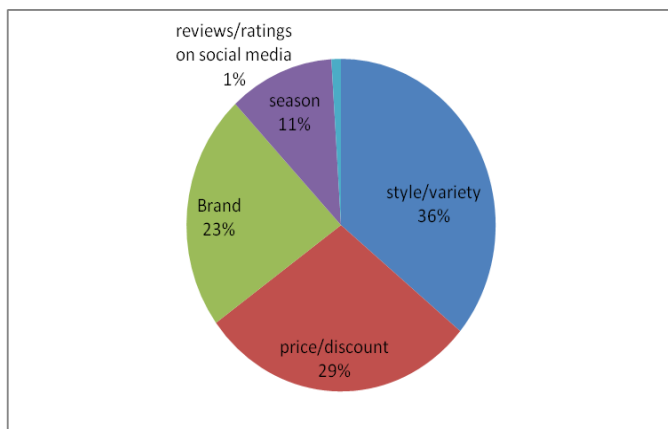
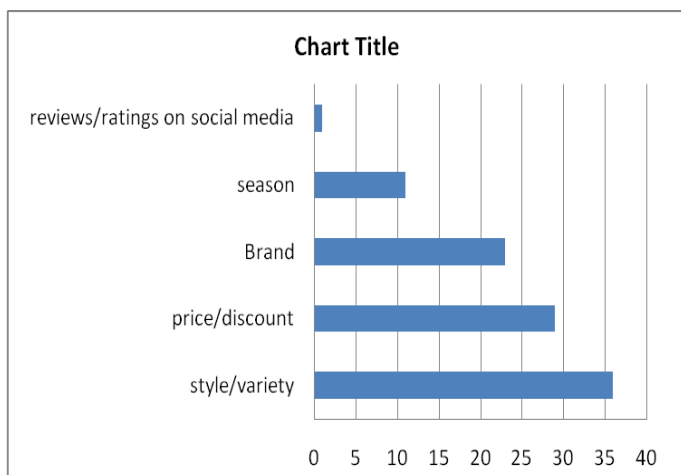


Fig. 6. Factor (s) Influence Buying Decision

The shopping behavior of consumers is changing. They are shopping more often though not as much in monetary terms, but the impact of social media on their shopping behavior is still limited. The awareness about online fashion apparel advertisements on social media is increasing with social media being one of the most prominent medium of knowledge for the consumers to know about fashion trends that increases fashion consciousness. Consumers are more inclined towards relying on their own experience of the product as indicated by the fact that the respondents are not as much influenced by the reviews/ ratings on social media than they are by the style, brand and price of the product.

So, H2 is accepted that Social Media has significant positive relationship with Fashion Consciousness. But this relationship is also weak. Social media has little influence on Fashion Consciousness.

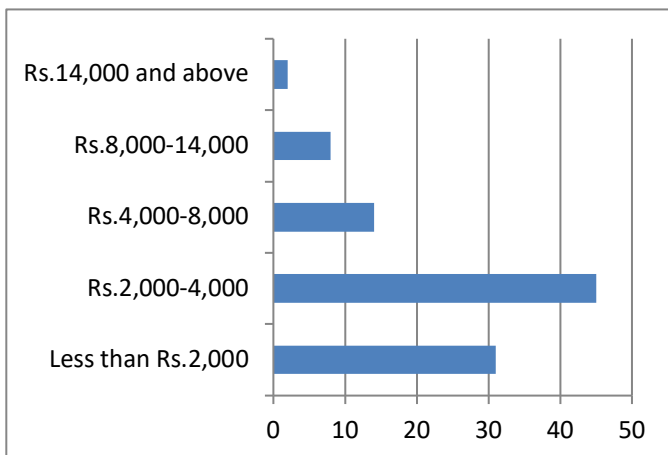


Fig. 7. How Much Do You Spend per Shopping Trip?

Consumers believe in seeking value for money as they shop often but spend less per shopping trip (majority spending below Rs.4000/month) indicating a lack of willingness to buy premium brands. Thus fashion apparel brands should utilize social media to influence the decision of its consumers in buying their product, making their product known or for acting as a catalyst to positively influence its audience and convincing the consumers to spend more per shopping trip. Hypothesis 3 is rejected because as per the research, the customers shop often and shop for lesser amount than Rs. 4000.

How do you get to know about a new brand/Designer collection? Rank the following in the order of its accuracy for you

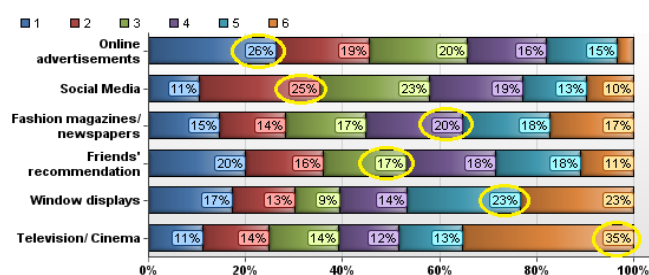


Fig. 8. Rank New Brand Design

Yellow circle indicate the highest scoring source of information for a consumer about a brand/designer collection.

Have you noticed fashion apparel advertisements on social media?

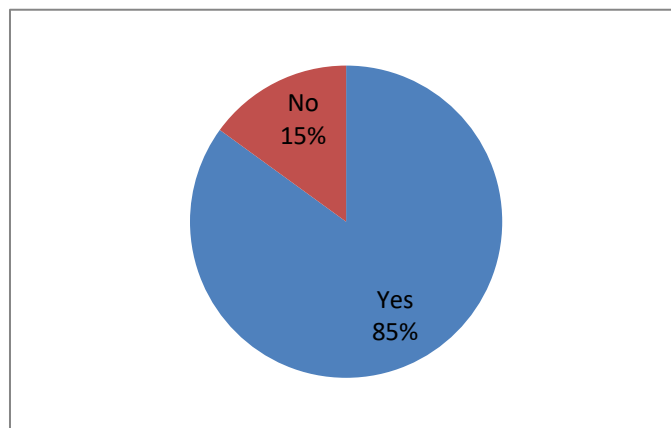


Fig. 9. Social Media Advertisement

A staggering 85% of the respondents said yes to exposure to advertisement on social media which shows a comprehensive coverage of market by the advertisers and the strong use of social medias different tools to advertise effectively.

How often do the online fashion apparel advertisements influence you to purchase apparels (from a store/online)?

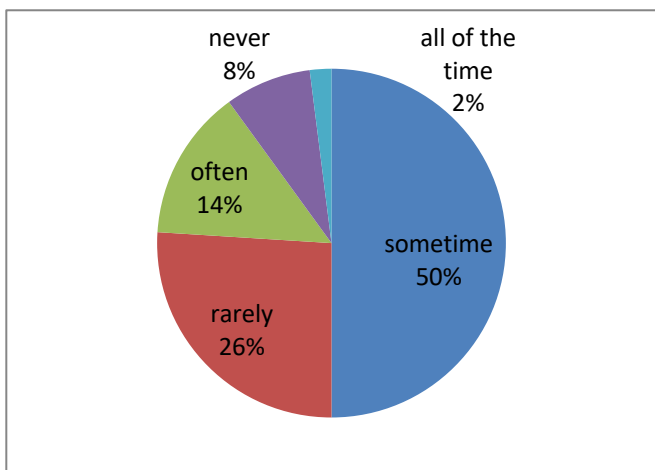


Fig. 10. Advertisements Apparels

Half of the respondents showed acceptance to influence by online fashion apparel advertisements and a minority did had often and rare influence that indicates slight influence on the consumers mind did exist. Only 8% of the respondents replied that they were never influenced by the online fashion apparel advertisement. This does prove to some extent that social media has indeed influenced people to some extent by online marketing.

You have been more influenced in which of the following ways

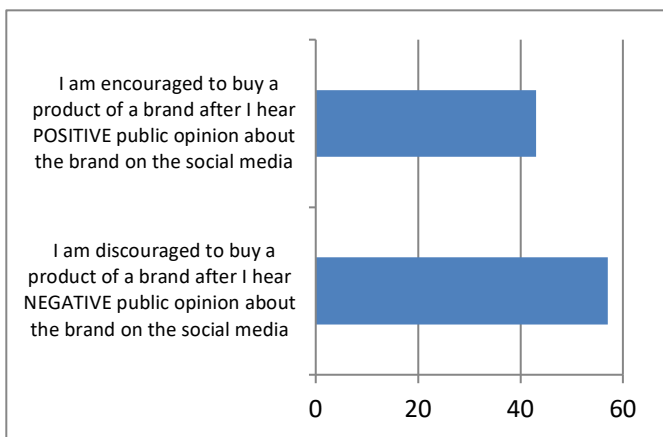


Fig. 11. Ways to Influence of Social Media

Respondents did prove that positive public opinion of a product or brand encouraged them to buy a product which proves that the public relation campaign and consumers reviews do play a role in influencing a consumer while purchasing online as they provide a testimony to the product and a positive result would mean that the chances of reselling have increased. At the same time if a product suffers from negative fame and disapproval by customers a larger number of customers are moved away from buying that product thus creating the need for online marketers to have an excellent customer service and after sale help in order to excel in the market.

What is the role of social media in your decision to buy apparels?

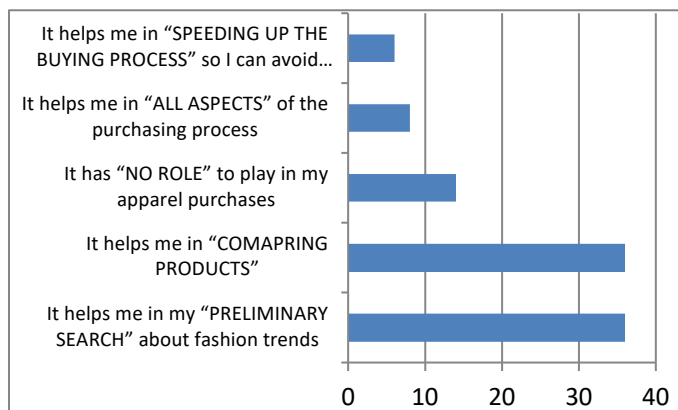


Fig. 12. Role of Social Media in Your Decision

This response clearly shows that social media is still growing up to reach its potential a very small minority disagreed that social media played no role in helping them form a buying decision but a large number responded that it did help compare products and make a better choice in online shopping and further that it helped the shopper form an initial opinion about the fashion trend.

Do you refer to social media platforms to know about new offerings by fashion apparel brands?

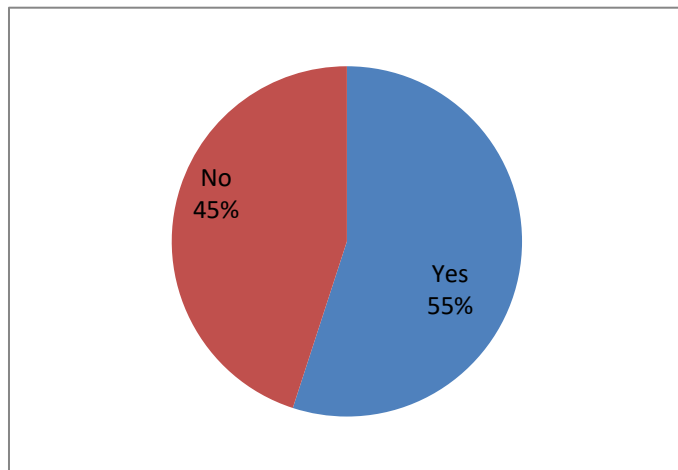


Fig. 13. Social Media Platforms

Majority of the respondents said that they did refer to social media platforms to know about the new offerings that fashion apparel brands had for the consumers which proves that social media has become an tool for the consumer to check what is new for him/her in the market and they comfortably get an insight by different social media platforms this also comes as a reminder for fashion apparel brands that to stay away from any type of social media engagement with the consumer would lead them to lose an edge and as well as stay behind the market leaders who would act swiftly by media reviews.

Do buyer reviews/online ratings on social media affect your buying decision for a particular brand?



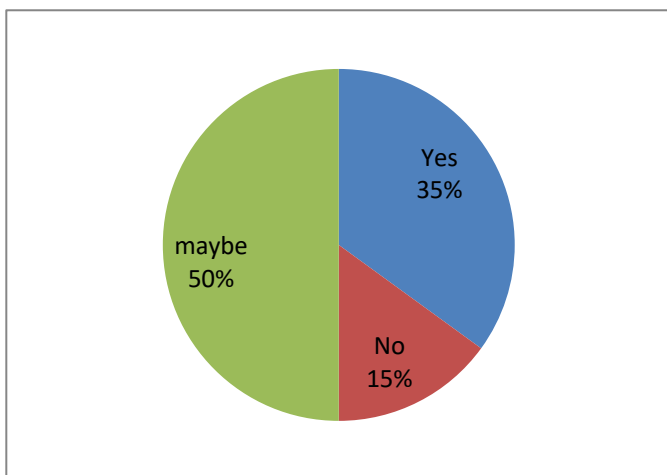


Fig. 14. Reviews

On informational basis it does prove helpful to the consumer to refer to online ratings and a majority did say it somewhat helped them in forming a buying decision to some extent.

Hypotheses summary

Table 1: Summary of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Findings
P1: There is significant positive relationship between Social Media and Consumer Purchase Behavior.	Accepted
P2: There is a significant positive relationship between Social Media and Fashion Consciousness	Accepted
P3: Customers spend more than Rs. 4000 per shopping trip	Rejected

Conclusion and limitations

Conclusion

The study was mainly focused on the influence of Social Media on Fashion Consciousness and Consumer Behavior. The role of social media in the process of purchase is in its preliminary phase with it being mostly informational. Dependency of consumers on social media to know about latest fashion is high. Findings show that Social Media affects both the Consumer purchase Behavior and Fashion Consciousness of Consumer but weakly as it shows weak significant positive relationships. So it is revealed that Social media has little bit influence on Consumer Purchase Behavior as well as Fashion Consciousness of Consumer. Consumers believe in seeking value for money as they shop often but spend less per shopping trip (majority spending below Rs.4000/month) indicating a lack of willingness to buy premium brands.

Limitations of the study

The study respondents were mainly students; it can be conducted on different population other than students as well that can give a better picture of the impact that social media is having on the people on the overall scale.

Data sample was quite small that shows limited generalizability of the research. Sample size should be increased in order to make the results more generalize able as it would cover a wider section of the society and help facilitate to create a more generalized picture.

As fashion changes culture to culture, so people consciousness and consumer behaviors may also vary likewise. Cross cultural research would also be conducted regarding this topic to understand the magnitude of this change.

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