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“The study on impact of Social Media on Generation Y for buying behavior of Fashion Apparel In Vadodara City”

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ABSTRACT: Consumers in a developing country like India are tech aware and have no trouble connecting with digital media platforms.

The goal of this study is to determine how internet channels influence Indian customers' decisions about Fashion products. A qualitative study was done with young Indian consumers, who are the most frequent users of internet platforms and buyers of fashion brands. In the study 25 people were interviewed in 5 focus groups in the city of Vadodara. We studied and the results a cyclical framework that projects digital media influences on Indian consumers at all stages of the purchase process, i.e., pre-purchase is digital and hedonic, purchase is enjoyable and experiential while using digital media, and post-purchase is based on lifestyles, aspirations, and virtual networks. More importantly, these customers are always connected to digital reference groups, which have a substantial impact on their purchasing behavior and subsequent fashion accessory selections.

Key Words:

Buying Behavior of Fashion Apparels, Social Media Users, Consumer behavior,

I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, fashion sales are expected to reach US\$1.5 trillion in 2020 to about US\$2.25 trillion by 2025. The Indian fashion Market grown at nearly 11% to reach US\$85 billion by 2021. The Fashion industry awareness is 20.6&3.48 billion by 2019. The people spend time in social media is average 142minutues in day. Social media has become important tool to reach to the younger generation consumers faster and more efficiently (Balakrishnan, dahnil, wong yie 2014, Bamini KPD Balakrishnan, Mohd Irwan Dahnil, Wong Jiunn Yi). Generation is a group of people born over a span of year and have similar characteristics, values and preference over there lifetime (Pew research center, Carter McNamara, Center for generational kinetics). The generation is affected by event's occur in a specific period of time (Seine Basal Berkup, 2014,). Different generations have different impact of different historical event and it's classified their behavior and characteristics (Sezin Baysal Berkup, 2014,). There are mainly three generations: Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennials or Generation Y.

Different researchers have different view over the birth period of generation y. The generation y was born between 1980 and 1984. The age group is between twenty to thirty four year old (Sezin Baysal Berkup, 2014). Kotler and Armstrong (2013) said generation y is born between 1977 and 2000. Generation y is also called as Generation Next, Digital Generation, Nexters, Echo Boomers, Trophy Kids, Generation www, Net Generation, Gen N (Jain and Pant, 2012). This generation normally does not read anything that exist in

traditional Hard copy format i.e. Newspapers, Magazine, and Brochures. All they want is everything in digital format easily available online and can be found using from internet.

Social media is a web based technology that provides a platform to the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through connecting peoples virtually from all over the world by creating social media websites and services (MAYA E. DOLLARHIDE SEP 2020, Dr. Smriti Tripathi, 2019).The register users which use social media is 376.1Millions in 2020, 351.4 million in 2019. Social media helped from retailers to manufacturers to aware about their products to a consumer by social media advertising, or social media targeting: social networking sites show advertisement according to consumers' internet activities, demographics and previous searches (Dr. Smriti Tripathi, 2019).

Social media has made easy and lowered the cost to reach the final consumers. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, whatsApp, Pinterest are one among and mostly used social media sites in the world. Most of the users of social media are from generation y. Generation y spends 30- 120 minutes daily on social media platforms (Jaclyn Cabral, Elon University, 2011). One of the major uses of social media in 21st century is advertising the products by the businesses. Development in technology helped retailers to use the more efficient platform for advertising from various traditional slower ways. Marketing via Social Media is latest platform and marketing tool use by fashion business to reach their client. According to Weinberg (2009), it is a process to promote your product/ services through online social channels and interact with direct customers and buyers.

Buying Behavior is a selection, purchase, consumption of goods and services for the satisfaction of their wants. A consumer is a person who buys goods and services for consumption. Solomon 1995 said that a person or group is involved in product selection, purchase, use or dispose of goods and services to satisfy needs is called consumer.

Consumer behavior is influenced by large numbers of factors such as cultural, social, psychological, and personal.

1. Psychological (motivation, perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes).
2. Personal (age and life-cycle stage, occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle, personality and self-concept).
3. Social (reference group, family, roles and status).
4. Cultural (culture, subculture, social class, system).

Generation y has access of technology and internet continuously. This generation is not habitual to do work manually they like to do everything online form reading to online shopping; as now the newspaper, magazines and articles are available online on various platforms and the online market is very wide and large as they can easily find anything they want or need online. Generation y holds a great purchasing power and they have easy access of internet and social media. This generation have world with emerging technologies , they use television, cell phones, internet, computer, tablets, laptop, video games, social media, etc (Omar, 2016).

Now a day's social media is more use by generation Y and they can buying fashion apparels. India's textiles industry contributed 13% of the industry production in FY20. It contributed 2.3% to the GDP of India and employed more than 45 million people in FY20. The sector contributed 12% to India's export earnings in FY20. Textiles industry has around 4.5crore employed workers including 35.22lakh handloom workers across the country. (<https://www.ibef.org/industry/textiles.aspx>) Currently the Most extensively accepted SM platforms are Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube for sharing fashion contents. Owners of Many brands have made personal twitter accounts or they upload theirs products on Facebook.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media in India

Social media is an internet based services that provide an environment where users can build their own personal accounts and networks, and at the same time allow connecting from others (Boyd and Eillison, 2007). Dr. Smriti Tripathi refers social media as a web-based technology that enables the development, deployment and management of social media solutions and services.

Before social media, we were only connected to those who were visible around. However, the environment of interactivity has shifted with the rise of social media. People can network with friends, relatives, and acquaintances and communicate with them by just pressing one click (McCarthy).

The functioning of social media marketing activities is based on marketing activities within SM platforms. Currently the most extensively accepted SM platforms are mainly “Facebook”, “Twitter”, and “YouTube”, websites designed to share different content. (Sukanya Sharma, 2020)

In 2020 India had approximately 700 million internet users and estimated to grow near 974 million till 2025 by Statista, 2020. As per Statista India have 376.1 million social media users and to be grow by 447.9 million till 2030. As India is the second largest online market after China many brands and marketers has understand the importance of social media and has build their official social media accounts. So, they can contact their current and potential customers (Weber, 2009). Companies use these brand pages to introduce and promote their products and services. The new research reveals that 77% of Fortune 500 firms use Twitter, and that 70% use Facebook, and that 69% regularly use You Tube (Barnes et al., 2013). In addition, the broadband sector is one among reasons for growth of internet users in India. According to the report of telecom regulatory authority of India (TRAI) , the broadband segment has registered 1.15% growth in just of October 2020.

2.2 Gen Y and Social Media

They are first generation which spent their entire lives in the digital environment. The information technology profoundly affected how they live and work. This generation is not willing to read any user manuals, Brochures, flyers, newspapers, magazines but they want easy access. All the information you can refer to anytime, anywhere. This generation usually does not read any content that exist in it the traditional hard copy format or books. They want is everything is easily available in digital platforms. (jccc june,2019)

This generation introduces in-generation due to environment and personal factors. The differences in the use of social media by Gen Y. Environmental factor that affect the use of social media include economy, technology, and culture and political/legal variables. Individual differences com from relatively stable factors and dynamic factor that may be affected by challenges during social media usage.(Ruth N. Bolton,2013)

The main forming feature of Generation Y is early and frequent contact with technology. Has advantage and disadvantage in term emotional and social outcomes For example, they rely heavily on technology for entertainment interact with others-even adjust emotions. (Ruth N Bolton, 2013)

More than 80% of every generation uses social media at least one a day, which makes social media a part of daily work. The generation Z 77% and generation Y 79% use of social media every day, but Millennials are more likely to allocate their time to a wider platform. (Toby cox, 2019)

2.3 Social Media's Influence on Buying Behavior

It is generally accepted that social proof is not a new concept: man is a social animal, and we have been making suggestions to each other for hundreds of years. The fact is that these suggestions and counter-proposals can now be heard by hundreds of people. It is generally accepted that social proof is not a new concept: man is a social animal, and we have been making suggestions to each other for hundreds of years. The fact is that these suggestions and counter-proposals can now be heard by hundreds of people. (Aleh Barysevich, 2020)

Generation Y has a great platform thanks to social media. Friends, people, and personalities affect them. Advertisements and other material that appears on the website social networking sites' home pages.(Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001).

Ephemeral content is a newer movement, but it's still gaining popularity among social media users and brands. While Snapchat was the first to use Stories as a format, Instagram was the one to popularise it, with over 500 million daily active users.

Instagram is a great platform for marketers because it allows you to show your product in a variety of ways, including photographs, videos, Stories, galleries, filters, and more. It currently has a monthly active user base of over one billion people. A company account is followed by 80% of Instagram users. 73 percent of American teenagers believe that the easiest way for advertisers to hit them with new items or ads is via Instagram.

2.4 Social Media and Its Influence on Apparels Segment

Social media gives a platform for consumers to recover, share and exchange different types of information. As social media is gaining popularity, marketers use this platform to connect to their potential consumers (Ger and Belk, 1999; Goldberg and Gom, 1978). Fashion brands can offer digital innovation, consumer focused, simple benefit ideas, and uninterrupted experience through social media. In addition, social media also offer an opportunity for buyers to immediately confirm their apparels purchase with their social circles in a developing country such as India.

This is achieved by uploading selfies and sharing information and photos across this platforms, which is done quickly and easily (Jain and Schultz, 2019). Brands are able to penetrate the market through likes, ratings and image updates by consumers. Brands on social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Whatsaap draw users to the new trends and there is a two way communication between apparel brands and customers. Fashion brands are shifting towards

social media ads to have a better chance of being portrayed, based on their online liking and followers, as an authentic brand (Dr. Smriti Tripathi, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of social media on consumer buying fashion appeals. Qualitative methods are used to reveal how consumers participate with social media.

The research methodology consisted of two studies conducted in vadodara with collage students at different stages of the investigation. Video recordings were made for both the qualitative studies, and notes were developed by the authors in discussion. The results of the study turned out quite well. So the objectives of the study were clearly achieved.

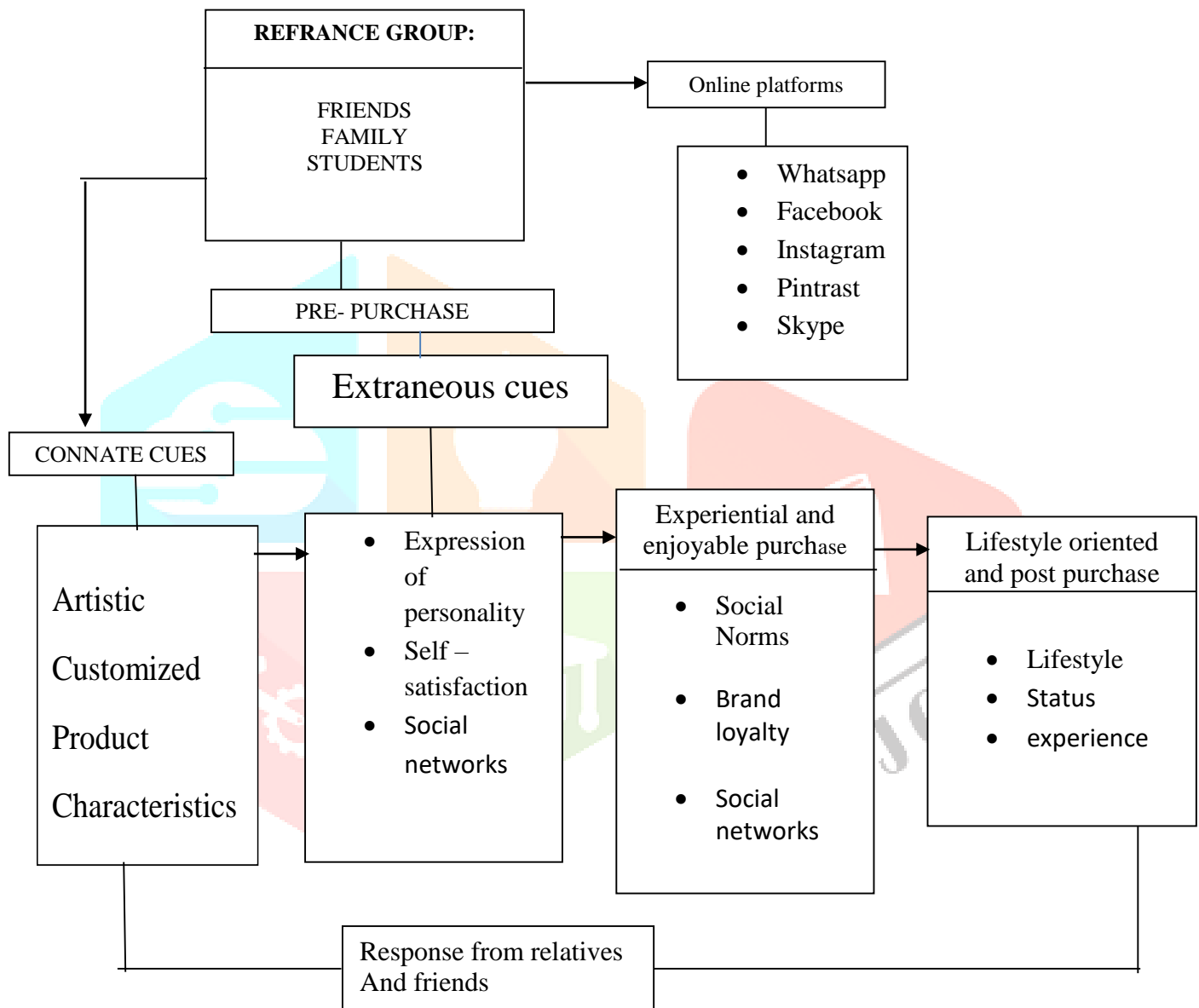
Study 1

Focus group discussion was conducted to identify thoughts, ideas, and perception of the respondents about specific topics that are being investigated. In this group discussion, respondents freely share their opinions and views regarding topics. FGDs running approximately 60 min each were conducted by the author in five stages: design, respondents' recruitment, implementation or conducting, transcribing and analysis and findings (Krueger and Casey 2009). In the design stage, background, frameworks and structured format or protocol were developed (Tharenou, Donohue, and Cooper 2007). The protocol was developed based on literature and research aims. It is divided into three stages: pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase.

The use of digital media at different stages of the buying process, such as pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase. Respondents were asked to elaborate on these topics based on their previous and current experiences. Further action was taken to understand the exact perspective. These respondents belong from generation Y and they are frequently buyers of fashion apparels. Probing also assisted in understanding their procedures and use of new media in the buying of fashion apparels as they told the story of their recent experience.

The respondents addressed their opinions and expectations of fashion apparels and digital media use in the first step. Following that, they explored the pre-purchase motivations and drives for fashion apparels purchases. Even after that, they used the word association approach to write about the specific digital and social media sites they used in their latest purchases. The respondents often used words to express how these outlets influenced their pre-purchase decisions. They discussed the actual purchase and the related procedures in the second phase. That they engaged in the area of online media platforms. The respondents addressed their post-purchase fashion apparels consumption on different digital channels in the final round. Following that, they used a word association method to describe terms related to multimedia and post-purchase. In the focus groups, we combined this process with three word association approaches. This was accompanied by a variety of research phases in order to capture both conscious and subconscious viewpoints. Participants' assumptions (as a result of projective techniques). This procedure helped us to properly understand the whole buying process, as

well as the position of digital media at different levels. Having followed that, the respondents were engaged in sufficient numbers to introduce additional information and evidence. We conducted 5 FGDs that comprised of 25 respondents, who were in the 20–30 age groups. The average age was 24 years. The focus groups were held until the data showed saturation and no new insight generated (Bowen 2008). The primary goal of these focus groups was to understand respondents’ perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward social media and fashion apparels. At the end, the respondents' queries were answered, and snacks were given as a token of gratitude.



Results

Themes that originated from these categories included interactive and hedonic pre-purchase, experiential and fun with digital media purchase, aspiration, lifestyle-oriented, and virtual post-purchase, and the high impact of friends through digital media.

4.1 Fashion apparels and pre- purchase

Through different approaches, we discovered that pre-purchase quest is symbolic and hedonic. Style, exclusivity, design, beauty, customization, and product characteristics seem to be the intrinsic clues. These were the key considerations for them to buy high-end products. A respondent said in a FGD, "Whenever I purchase fashion apparels i always consider about uniqueness in style and quality of brand and it has to be exclusive.'(Female respondent). As one respondent said in a interview "I want a fashion product to be elegant and stylish as it makes me happy" (Male, respondent)

I purchase that fashion apparels which suits my personality and make me happy (male respondents) In FGDs most discussion focus on the personality, uniqueness and, quality, of the fashion products. This seemed to be due to the fact that no one mentioned that their products really represent the buyer's identity and personality.

The respondents claimed that they conduct all pre-purchase practices on digital platforms when exploring, comparing, discussing, and evaluating fashion products with their friends. Moreover, they use social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, and Skype for these purposes, according to observations. A respondent stated in an FGD, 'I do lot of surfing on social media to find best fashion product for myself (female respondent) during the interviews, they also expressed their deeper emotions. This was shown in an interview when a respondent said I take help of my friends to purchase fashion appeals' as I always get confused in purchasing of fashion apparels so, my friends sort some product via internet for me and they send photos and videos via social media and then we discuss and i purchase from it.(female respondent)

These results were bolstered by projective methods, which revealed that they use WhatsApp for quick textual responses about fashion appeals from their reference groups, facebook and instagram for live visuals and for perfect photo, Pinterest for a collage of photographs, , WhatsApp and Google meet for any live conversations with their reference groups.

To conclude, it can be said that these generation Y consumers' pre-purchase habits are hedonic and motivated by digital platforms.

Proposition 1 Pre-purchase of the luxury consumers is hedonic and digital in nature.

4.2 Impressive and enjoyable purchase with digital media

FGD's revealed that the respondents choose to purchase fashion apparel from retail store because they enjoy the uniqueness, customization, Comfort and shopping moments that retail stores have. A respondent stated in an FGD, 'Before going to retail store I search on internet and then I go for buying fashion apparel' (Male Respondent)

Another respondent stated in an FGD, 'I like to purchase fashion apparel from retail store and then I share it with my friends through social media ' (Female Respondent). Another

respondent stated, 'I would like to compare fashion product on different social media platforms and in retail store then I decide from where I will purchase it.' (Male Respondent). A respondent mentioned, when I go for shopping they treat me very well and I love their service.' (Female Respondent). 'I love shopping but mostly I prefer shopping through online platforms' (Female Respondents).

These findings revealed differences in the purchasing strategies of the fashion apparel industries. As a result, brands are out of touch with customer desires.

As a result, it's fair to say that consumers choose to purchase brands and merchandise from a physical store, with digital media enhancing the purchasing experience. To make the purchasing process simpler, they want a digital experience in the store. Stores and employees, on the other hand, might not always be able to satisfy consumers' demands due to a lack of digitalization.

4.3. Trendy, lifestyle-oriented, and digital post purchase

Along with the buy, respondents stated in focus groups that they think advertisers should deeply investigate their interests, lifestyles, and expectations. They conclude that this would increase the appeal of luxury goods while not affecting the brands' internal cues.

Even after the buy, we discovered through focus groups that apparel designers can study the purchase processes relevant to customers' lifestyles and expectations. This will aid in the creation of innovative and more exciting goods by the marketer.

A respondent stated in an FGD, 'When we buy the fashion apparel after that we can see same type of advertisement everywhere on social media, they try selling more.' (Female Respondent). Another respondent stated in an FGD, 'After purchasing brands should try to give better service not try to sell more and more.' (Male Respondent).

For example, a respondent stated in an interview, 'When I upload a photo of a fashion product purchase on social media, the number of views, likes and comments within an hour is important to me.' (Female Respondent). Additionally, consumers mentioned in their FGD that they use these approaches to project their lifestyles and personality. Projective techniques helped strengthen these views as several respondents mentioned lifestyle projection and aspiration in FGD's and that was used to understand the digitized post-purchase of fashion apparel.

Proposition 3: Post-purchase is based on aspirations and lifestyle of the consumers that can be displayed on virtual platform

Discussion

Our studies also led to the implementation of a more comprehensive purchase model for fashion purchase behavior by incorporating more variables and integrating them into other places to the cue use and purchase behavior model (Keegan, Sandra, and Thomas 1992). Consumers depend heavily on friends and social media to make choices at various points of the shopping period, according to this report. Consumers expect apparel products to be of high quality, trendy, glamorous, and aesthetic, according to much of this analysis. This result is consistent with previous research, which showed that Indian customers desired creativity, design, and comfort (Atwal and Khan 2009; Jain, Pingle, and Daswani 2012).

However, a significant portion of this research seems to refute existing understanding. This is clearly explained by our research, which established a comprehensive measure (Figure 1) based on the different methods used in the research. It was also able to prove that customers equate fashion brands with an individual's appearance, attitude, trust, satisfaction, and happiness. These aspects have not previously been discussed in the literature. This model also makes an important contribution to the literature on branding and customer behavior by presenting a simple schema of the phenomena it examines.

Consumers use digital and social media widely to study, compare, analyze, and review fashion brands. They like to search in retail shops for fashion accessories. This seems to back up previous research (Jain, Pingle, and Daswani 2012). However, our research shows that when it comes to buying fashion products, the buyer often needs an engaging and pleasurable atmosphere.

The survey also showed that the post-purchase stage has an effect on other customers' preferences, expectations, and lifestyles, and is often reflected on digital platforms. More importantly, consumers receive constant feedback and reactions from their different social groups about their fashion purchases through digital platforms. These components can be linked to the pre-purchase intrinsic cues as well.

Previous research has often addressed the need for external and internal information sources (Shukla 2011). (Jalalkamali and Nikbin 2010).

However, no research has looked at the impact of social classes at all levels of the purchasing process. Few have also mentioned that all of them seem to have happened mainly via interactive channels. Friends play a significant role in all stages of fashion purchasing in India, according to this report.

