Role of Social Media in Success of Fashion Products: A Malaysian Consumers Perspective

[1]Mst.Nilufar Yasmin, [2]Muhammad Farooq, [3]Aneeqa Zreen
[1,2,3]PhD Scholar, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology
Corresponding Author:Mst Nilufar Yasmin

ABSTRACT: *In modern times, social media has accelerated supreme development in human communication. The social media has caught the attention of organisations, communities and individuals through their ability to facilitate the collaboration of virtual communities and to provide a productive environment for common allocation and interaction. Many corporations today have official Facebook pages, Twitter accounts as well as corporate blogs. All these are signs that social media has become a vital part of consumers" daily lives as well as the day-to-day operations of corporate organisations. Despite of so much importance there are very few researches available on role of social media in success of fashion products in context of Malaysian market. To fill this study gap and investigate the role of social media in success of clothing fashion related products in Malaysia we have interviewed 50 students of Limkokwing university of Creative Technology. It has been observed that all students (100% of respondents) use the social media. Social media is considered a very powerful tool in shaping the trends among youth. This study contains very useful insights for both practitioners and academicians. Practitioners can improve their products with the help of social media usage and academics will get insights about Malaysian consumer behaviours.*
KEYWORD: *Social media, Fashion, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube*

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACK GROUND

Malaysia is a multicultural and very diverse country. It has 50% of Malay population, 23% of Chinese, 7% of Indians, 8% of foreigners and 12% other nationals (Statistics Govt My, 2010). Therefore, we can say it's one of the most diverse counties in the world. Its diversity in so many forms brings one thing in this country, which is fashion and acceptability. This acceptability leads to creativity and creation of many fashion brands. Diversity can have many meanings like diversity in Food, Diversity in languages and Diversity in living style. Diversity in living style mean they home appliances, wearing clothes, wearing shows and celebrating events. In this article authors have only focused on fabrics/clothing fashion.

Clothing Market of Malaysia in expanding exponentially, Market demand of different types and design of fabrics is increasing. As Statistic.com the clothing market demand in Malaysia from 2011 to 2013 was approximately 3.9 Billion US dollars. (Malaysia Clothing Market Demined, 2015)**.** As Malaysia is free country, its count of foreigners is also increasing which is leading towards increase of fashion products.

Because of having so many diverse people Malaysian enjoy many events, celebrations and public events throughout the year; Most of the events are public holidays which are announced by state at federal level. Some of the celebrations which are not by larger groups (As total populations are also attributed by 12% other religion/nationalities), there role is count is not enough to declare a public holiday, there holidays are celebrated privately. Here are the celebrations they have. The furthermost famous holiday is the Nationwide Day (or Freedom Day) on 31 August in honour of the independence anniversary of the Federation of Malaya in 1957, while Malaysia Day was celebrated on 16 September to honour the formation of Malaysia in 1963. Other national day off include Labour Day (May 1), and the Sovereign's Birthday of the King (first Saturday of every June).

As a country of Muslim-majority, Islamic commemorations are very important in Malaysia, especially Hari Raya Aidilfitri , not to be missed as Hari Raya Aidiladha (or Hari Raya Haji), Awal Muharram (Maal Hijrah) and Maulidur Rasul .Chinese people usually celebrate the same festivities as Chinese around the world, especially Chinese New Year . Buddhists in Malaysia celebrate Wesak Day , a Buddhist day. The Hindu du Malaysia community welcomes the Deepavali and Thaipusam light festivals , celebrating a series of pilgrims to Batu Caves . The Sikhs celebrate their New Year's Vaisakhi festival. Christians are about the same as celebrating with Christians all over the world, especially Christmas and Easter . In East Malaysia there is a harvest festival Gawaiin Sarawak and Kaamatan in Sabah.

Chinese people usually celebrate the same festivities as Chinese around the world, especially Chinese New Year . Buddhists in Malaysia celebrate Wesak Day , a Buddhist day. TheHindu du Malaysia community welcomes the Deepavali and Thaipusam light festivals , celebrating a series of pilgrims to Batu Caves . The Sikhs celebrate their New Year's Vaisakhi festival. Christians are about the same as celebrating with Christians all over the world, especially Christmas and Easter . In East Malaysia there is a harvest festival Gawaiin Sarawak and Kaamatan in Sabah.

Although most festivals are associated with one group of people or religion, but goodwill celebrations are also nurtured to strengthen unity in Malaysia. For example, "Share Raya" when Aidilfitri collapses with the Chinese New Year; or "Deepa Raya" when Aidilfitri and Deepavali are greeted simultaneously

Appendix Table-1 shows the holidays of Malaysia in 2018. Index table-1 contains list of holidays in Malaysia. These are holidays are related to the fashion, promotion of clothes, increasing word of mouth of country and increase the brand of the country(Farooq and Jabbar 2014; Janjua and Khurshid 2016).

Contribution of internet in any countries economy is very important (Buzdar, Janjua, and Khurshid 2016). Internet has added 43% per year for the national economy and it will increase even more over the next 3 years. (Get Your Business Online, 2016). In Malaysia has >12, 000 big business are online. The increasing of the online business the government has set up a program Get Malaysian Business. Social media comes in many forms and the eight most popular are, Blogs, Microblogs, Social Networks, Media-Sharing Sites, Social Bookmarking and selection Sites, analysis Sites, forum and effective Worlds (Baruah, 2012). Marketing communication using social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have already been evaluated as business take-off tools for luxury fashion Brands. Traditional designer houses such as Louis Vuitton provide live broadcasting fashion shows on their blogs. Ralph Lauren, Chanel, Donna Karan, and Gucci have worked with Apple to create iPhone Applications (Kim & KO, 2012).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social media has advanced consummate development in human association in fashionable times. In that case, it has changed consumers" way of thinking (Mir and Zaheer, 2012). This new media helps as an over-all stage for individuals global to relay with one another and offer information and experiences known with products, activities and issues (Heinrichs et al., 2011).

It is no secret that social media dominates many facets of life as we know it. As stated prior, in the past decade particularly, social networking has grown exponentially. To say that the industry has skyrocketed would be an understatement—it has completely revolutionized the world we live in. While there are a number of different media sites, Facebook, Twitter, and most recently Instagram and Pinterest have soared and become part of the day-to-day life for many. One could say these four sites dominate the market and embody the ideas and things one associates with "social media" in conversation in less than ten years, Facebook evolved from a "fledging starts up to a $114 billion giant" (Reporter, Intime's Staff). Because of its early introduction, Facebook dominates the social media world today and encapsulates all that the industry entails. It is a place to keep in touch with friends, share content, and even obtain news and information. Although social media sites did exist prior to Facebook, they were quickly dethroned as Facebook picked up momentum. For example, in 2006, Myspace was the canter of the social media universe. However, by 2009 Facebook had more accounts open and was growing rapidly (Robertson).

Perhaps people were so drawn to Facebook in its' early years because of the newness and excitement surrounding the innovation. However, unlike many of its opponents, Facebook does not seem to be going anywhere and what has kept devotees loyal for so many years is something much more complex than a new layout, status bar, or photo feature. The first need is the central desire to belong. Humans are wired to connect with other humans, as well to feel accepted by them. Facebook encourages these connections in two steps. (Sheldon, Abad, &Hirsch, 2008). Feeling detached initially motivates individuals to use the site (essentially as a coping mechanism), and in turn, the more frequently someone uses the site, the more connections they gain. "The second social motivation Facebook responds to is self-presentation, in which user's fashion ideal — rather than accurate — versions of themselves through their profiles" (Mehta). This is manifest in, for example, the number of 'friends' in their network and photographs. Subsequently, Facebook personas that are presented online may be a more socially appealing 'self' that is aspired to in reality, but one that is not yet realized (Zhao & Zhao, 2008)" (Mehta).

Social media cannot be understood without first defining a term that labels a new way in which place where content is continuously altered by all operators in a sharing and collaborative way "It is much more to do with what people are doing with the technology than the technology itself, for rather than merely retrieving information, users are now creating and consuming it, and hence adding value to the websites that permit them to do so. It has evolved from simple information retrieval to interactivity, interoperability, and teamwork. Service quality is very important for any firm, good service quality can create a good brand image(Buzdar 2014; Buzdar, Janjua, and Khurshid 2016). The expression social networking site is often used interchangeably with

social media. However, social media is different because it allows participants to unite by generating personal information profiles and inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles. Thus, social media is the environment in which social networking takes place and has altered the way in which consumers gather information and make buying decision.

Malaysians using social media to help build their fashion brands:

These days don't have to be in the visible row to really have a good aspect at the latest runway designs. From live streams to instant snaps, fashion has become accessible to almost everyone with a smartphone. Businesses in the industry are quick to catch on. Building a presence on social media is now a must as well. No reputable fashion brand would be caught dead without at least a Facebook page or Instagram account.

- **Fashionably focused** "Social media connects us to our customers. We can receive feedback and communicate with them in an instant, at any time of the day. Everyone can access social media, regardless of their hectic schedule," Below are the Leading Top 8 Social Media in Malaysia

1. Facebook – This social network tops most lists in social networking sites throughout the world. In Malaysia, it is the very same where it is No. 1 in every ranking. It has actually been reported that Facebook delights in more than 12 million visitors monthly in this nation alone.
2. WhatsApp – A cross-platform instant messaging customer for tablets, PCs and smart devices. The app counts on the Internet to send out images, texts, files, audio and video messages to other users that have actually the app installed. Introduced in January 2010, WhatsApp Inc. was acquired by Facebook on February 19, 2004, for about $19.3 billion. Today, practically every Malaysian utilizes the service to interact with their buddies, customers as well as loved ones.
3. YouTube – As a video media sharing network, it is utilized by Malaysians daily. With about 6 million special visitors on a month-to-month basis, it is a super effective marketing tool for marketers venturing into the video marketing projects. Besides that, YouTube is utilized in politics, home entertainment and social affairs.
4. Twitter – This microblogging website is utilized by individuals throughout the world varying from world leaders to celebs. In Malaysia, Twitter is utilized by political leaders who are followed by countless Malaysians every day.
5. LinkedIn – Among the fastest increasing social media networks for specialists and working people to get in touch with others and sharing working experiences.
6. Pinterest – Enabling members to share videos and images, Pinterest is ending up being more popular as one of the leading social mediums due to its big network of members and easy-of-use.
7. Instagram – Like Pinterest, Instagram is a visual social networks platform. The site has more than 400 million active users and is owned by Facebook. A number of its users utilize it to publish details about travel, style, food, art and comparable topics. The platform is likewise differentiated by its distinct filters together with video and image modifying functions.
8. Weibo – This social media remains in Chinese language and is exceptionally popular amongst the Chinese community who gets in touch with each other in their native language not just within Malaysia but throughout the world.

To remain appropriate to the altering requirements of users, brand names are continuously innovating to engage with customers in the social media area. It is now a must to have mobile-optimized social platforms. Together with higher usage of mobile phones, lots of social media applications have actually incorporated with local payment solutions so as to offer a smooth client experience for users going shopping on their channels. For example, WeChat users can pay through 'mobile wallets', which connect their credit card to the application. Line likewise facilitates onsite transactions with merchants utilizing saved user credentials.

Investing in marketing projects can be a stressful choice for numerous little and medium sized companies. CEOs and marketing directors understand that when you have actually restricted resources, you need to be tactical with your budget plan, and every marketing financial investment needs to settle. This is why social networks projects have the tendency to be the very first thing cut. Although complimentary to setup, they take important personnel resources to handle. While releasing a social networks project most likely will not bring sales and leads gathering your door tomorrow, when you carry out a couple of social media success methods, you'll discover it a lot easier to drive a favourable ROI with social that advantages your company for several years to come.

Leveraging the power of material and social media marketing can assist raise your audience and client base in a significant way. However, beginning with no previous experience or insight might be difficult. It's crucial that you comprehend social media marketing basics. From making the most of quality to increasing your online entry points, following these guidelines will assist construct a structure that will serve your customers, your brand name and– maybe most significantly– your bottom line.

Success of clothing fashion:

Clothes have an important role in our lives; it can also place us in different social modules and probably even position. It can improvement our confidence changes our body language which can then make us more interesting to others. Clothes has its uses it keeps us from the weather and afford us with warmth. It can make us wanted and even hated. Depending on the fashion trend, Clothing can make us stand out, but it can also make us look like anyone else in the crowd. Subconsciously our choices of clothing represent our personality and how we are feeling. Some believe that different fashion trends play a part on our feeling or are it our feeling that pushes us to different fashion trends.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Interviews were conducted to get response of Limkokwing university students. Students were interviewed in the month of June 2018. Total respondents of this study were 50. Most the respondents are female which constitutes 70% of our respondents and 30% of our study respondents are male. Limkokwing university of creative technology is a very diverse university. We got response from multicultural people about their fashion preferences and use of social media.

Our first question from the respondents:
Do you use social media?
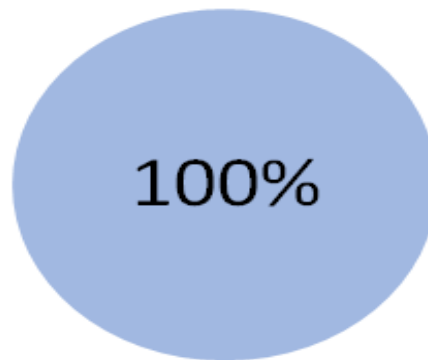Answers: 100% respondents said yes, we do use social media

Figure 1 Yes, we use social media

Second question we asked from respondents was Do they feel the social media has an impact on your buying decisions?
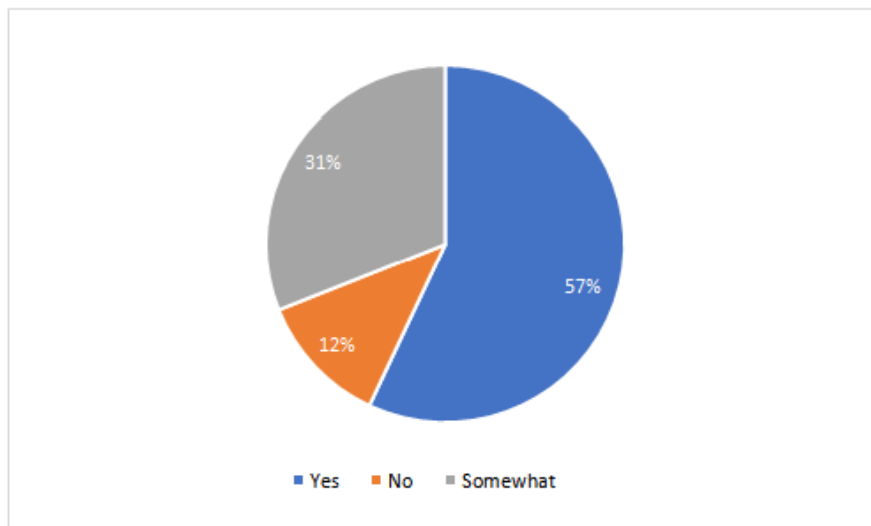

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ Somewhat

Figure 1DO you feel social media has an impact on your buying decision?

Our third question was open ended question, it was about the feedback they share online with their friends. We got qualitative data and analysed it using Nvivo-12.Answers: 100% respondents said yes, we do use social media

Figure 2 Responses customer share online

IV. CONCLUSION

In this study, after response of 50 respondents, we have observed and concluded that social media is driving the fashion trends in Malaysia. All students use social media. More than 70% respondent's choices are impacted by social media. Social media are categorised by user-generated satisfied, which has been found to be more effective than traditional marketing communications in influencing the attitudes and behaviours of other users. There are various approaches that have been used in finding answers of objectives stated in the research, such distributed questionnaires and as some of the methods used to analyze the data obtained by using validity and reliability analysis, correlation and multiple regression analysis. As a conclusion, this research is about the factors influencing the effectiveness of social media marketing among online SME performance in Melaka. It can be concluded all the independent variables gives the moderate relationship. However, customer brand attitudes show that the highest value of correlation which is 0.640 better than other factors. So, this variable is the most significant contributed to the online SME performance. This study shows that, it might be the respondents more experience about customer attitudes. This study further confirmed by Emma McDonald (2003) which says that if brand awareness was increased by management the brand attitudes also increased. These things happen might be the respondents also concern about brand awareness. Study by Chee Jung-Suh

and Younas Yi (2006) said that, brand attitudes are influenced by customer satisfaction and loyalty. It shows, respondents are fulfilled and devotion toward online offers of products supplied by the Vendor.

V. LIMITATIONS

This study only covers the response of Limkokwing university of Creative technology, future researches can expand its scope and target all walks of life

VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are thankful to all students on responding on our request and providing use their value feedback about the fashion and social media usage.

REFERENCES

[1]. Baruah, T. D. (2012). Effectiveness of Social media as a tool of communication and its potential for technology enabled connections: A micro level study. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications,2(5),1-10.
[2]. Breatharian Online. (2014). Bajer 2014: Penguin Internet Malaysia coach 25 jute orang pada 2015. Retrieved 10August 2015, fromhttp://www2.bharian.com.my/bharian/articles/Bajet2014_PenggunaInternetMalaysiacecah25jutaorangpada2015 banjara/belanjawan2014/article HTML
[3]. Buzdar, M. F., S. Y. Janjua, and M. A. Khurshid. 2016. "Customer-Based Brand Equity and Firms' Performance in the Telecom Industry." International Journal of Services and Operations Management 25(3):334–46.
[4]. Buzdar, Muhammad Farooq. 2014. "Role of Word of Mouth in Building CBBE." Elixir Marketing Mgmt. 73 (2014):26443–47. Retrieved (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275274327).
[5]. Cabildo, F., De Carlo, M., &Piccolo, G. (2014). Social media affordances: Enabling customer engagement. Annals of Tourism Research, 48, 175-192.
[6]. Castronovo, C., & Huang, L. (2012). Social media in an alternative marketing communiction model. Journal ofMarketing Development and Competitiveness, 6(1), 117-134.
[7]. Chang, K. C., Jackson, J., & Grover, V. (2003). E-commerce and corporate strategy: an executiveperspective. Information & Management, 40(7), 663-675.

[8]. Cronin, J. J., Brady, M. K., &Hult, G. T. M. (2000). Assessing the effects of quality, value, and customersatisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. Journal of retailing, 76(2), 193-218.

[9]. Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. Journal ofconsumer research, 24(4), 343-353.

[10]. Get Malaysian Business Online. (2015). Retrieved 10 August 2015, from http://ms.getmybusinessonline.com

[11]. Gretzel, U., Fesenmaier, D. R., Formica, S., & O'Leary, J. T. (2006). Searching for the future: Challenges faced bydestination marketing organizations. Journal of Travel Research, 45(2), 116-126.

[12]. Kaplan, A. M., &Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of SocialMedia. Business horizons, 53(1), 59-68.

[13]. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study ofluxury fashion brand. Journal of Business Research, 65(10), 1480-1486.

[14]. Macdonald, E., & Sharp, B. (2003). Management perceptions of the importance of brand awareness as anindication of advertising effectiveness (Doctoral dissertation, Massey University, Department of Marketing).

[15]. Musa, H., Mohamad, N., Rajani, I., Hasan, N. S. B., & Azmi, F. R. (2015). The Website Usage among PrivateSector: A Case of Malaysian Business Organization. European Journal of Business and Management, 7(6), 121-125.

[16]. Niger, B. L., Thackeray, R., Van Wagenen, S. A., Hanson, C. L., West, J. H., Barnes, M. D., &Fagan, M. C. (2012). Use of social media in health promotion purposes, key performance indicators, and evaluationmetrics. Health promotion practice, 13(2), 159-164.

[17]. Sake, L. (2010). The social media bible: tactics, tools, and strategies for business success. New Jersey, USA:

[18]. John Wiley &Sons,Saravanakumar, M., &SuganthaLakshmi, T. (2012). Social media marketing. Life Science Journal, 9(4), 4444-4451.

[19]. Aliyu, M. S., & Mahmood, R. (2014). The Relationship between Market Orientation and Business Performance of

[20]. Nigerian SMEs: The Role of Organizational Culture. International Journal of Business and Social Science, 5(9), 159-168.

[21]. Suh, J. C., &Younas, Y. (2006). When brand attitudes affect the customer satisfaction-loyalty relation: The

[22]. moderating role of product involvement. Journal of Consumer Psychology, 16(2), 145-155.

[23]. Utican Sarawak Online. (2013). ExportDallamtalian rang sangperiaguaCecil Malaysia. Retrieved 10 August

[24]. 2025, from http://www.utusansarawakonline.com/news/3916/Eksport-dalam-talian-rangsang-perniagaan-kecil-

[25]. Msiza/Weinberg, T. (2009). The new community rules: Marketing on the social web. Grave stein HighwayNorth, Sebastopol, CA, USA: O'Reilly Media Inc, Xiang, Z., &Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. Tourism