

A Study On Fast Fashion Frenzy: Understanding Gen Z's Buying Habits And Trends

Muskan Rajput

Assistant Professor, Punjab College of Technical Education

ABSTRACT

This study investigates Gen Z's attitudes and behaviours within the fast fashion industry. It examines the influence of social media, affordability, and sustainability awareness on their purchasing decisions. Quantitative methods are used to analyse data and derive conclusions about Gen Z's consumption patterns and the implications for the future of fashion.

KEYWORDS: Gen Z, fast fashion, consumer behaviour, sustainability, social media, affordability

INTRODUCTION

The global fashion industry has been significantly influenced by the fast-fashion phenomenon. Brands produce trendy, low-cost clothing at a very high speed. This shift has profoundly altered traditional retail models, offering consumers, particularly younger demographics, an affordable way to stay on-trend. Gen Z stands out as a key consumer group driving fast fashion's explosive growth. Gen Z's unique values, influenced by digital culture, social media, and an increasing awareness of environmental and social issues, make their buying habits both fascinating and complex.

The fast fashion phenomenon encapsulates the allure and appeal of rapid-cycle fashion, but it also highlights the potentially problematic side of such consumption patterns. While Gen Z is often hailed as the most eco-conscious generation, data show they are also among the highest consumers of fast fashion, which is notorious for its unsustainable practices and environmental impact. This paradox raises critical questions about Gen Z's priorities and motivations, as well as the broader implications for the fashion industry's future.

This research aims to delve into the factors that shape Gen Z's buying habits and the trends they influence in the fast fashion sector. The study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of why fast fashion resonates so strongly with this generation by exploring their attitudes toward affordability, social media influence, personal identity, and sustainability. It also examines how brands can adapt to meet Gen Z's evolving expectations for both style and ethics, offering insights into a rapidly shifting landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kennedy et al. (2019) focused on sustainable food consumption behaviour among Gen Z university students through a quantitative survey and cluster analysis. Findings reveal that Gen Z has a varied attitude toward sustainable food consumption, with distinct clusters reflecting different levels of commitment. The study recommends exploring factors that influence sustainable consumption more deeply, as limitations included a lack of longitudinal data to assess behaviour over time.

Lestari (2019) investigated e-commerce adoption behaviour among Gen Z in Jakarta, Indonesia, using a quantitative survey with descriptive statistics and factor analysis. Findings indicate that

convenience and technology are significant drivers of e-commerce adoption among Gen Z. However, the study suggests further research on barriers to e-commerce adoption, as this aspect was not fully explored.

Chaturvedi et al. (2020) investigated factors influencing Gen Z's preference for recycled clothing. Using a quantitative survey and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the researchers found that attitudes and perceived behavioral control significantly influence sustainable behavior intentions. The study suggests that Gen Z consumers are motivated by environmental awareness and social responsibility. However, further research is recommended to explore additional social and economic factors that may also impact sustainable consumer behavior.

Kim et al. (2020) examined the unique characteristics of Gen Z consumers in the Asia-Pacific region. Through a mixed-method approach combining qualitative and quantitative analysis, they found that Gen Z in this region exhibits distinct consumption patterns, valuing digital engagement, diversity, and brand values. The study underscores the need for comparative analysis with other regions to deepen the understanding of these differences.

Gazzola et al. (2020) explored gender-based differences in the perception of sustainability and the circular economy within the fashion industry. Employing a quantitative survey, the study revealed significant gender-related differences, with women showing a greater inclination toward sustainability. The authors recommended additional research on how gender and other demographic factors influence sustainability perceptions, as these factors can vary widely across different cultures.

Hidayat et al. (2020) explored the digital behavior of Gen Z consumers in Indonesia, focusing on their self-driven consumption patterns. Through descriptive and thematic analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, the study found that Indonesian Gen Z consumers are highly influenced by digital culture and technology. The authors identified a need for comparative studies with Gen Z in other regions to see if similar patterns are evident globally.

Gustina (2020) presented a research agenda for studying Gen Z in Asia, highlighting key areas for future investigation. By synthesizing qualitative findings from existing research, the study identified gaps in understanding the unique preferences of Gen Z across Asian countries. The study stresses the importance of specific contextual research within Asia, as generational behavior may vary significantly between different cultural backgrounds.

Camargo et al. (2020) examined the management practices of fast and ultra-fast fashion supply chains through exploratory research using interviews and case studies. The findings indicate that fast fashion supply chains are highly responsive but face substantial challenges in maintaining sustainability. Comparative studies are suggested to better understand these practices across different markets, as this study was limited to a specific geographical and operational context.

Mrad et al. (2020) explored brand addiction in the luxury and fast fashion sectors using quantitative data and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Findings reveal that brand addiction is a prevalent phenomenon in both sectors, but drivers differ between luxury and fast fashion.

Comparative studies across other consumer segments are suggested to generalize these findings, as this study was limited to specific fashion categories.

Duffett (2020) analyzed the influence of YouTube marketing on Gen Z's attitudes using a quantitative survey with descriptive and inferential statistics. The study concluded that YouTube marketing significantly impacts the cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes of Gen Z. Further research on other social media platforms is recommended, as this study focused solely on YouTube.

Diasarao et al. (2021) examined Instagram's impact on Gen Z's impulse buying behavior in the fashion industry. Through a descriptive quantitative survey, they found that visual appeal and influencer content on Instagram are key drivers of impulsive purchases. This study underscores the influence of social media platforms in shaping purchasing behaviour. Nonetheless, the authors identified a research gap in assessing long-term effects on consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty, suggesting these areas for future investigation.

Zhang et al. (2021) investigated consumer attitudes toward sustainability in fast fashion within the UK. Through a quantitative survey and inferential statistics, they found that UK consumers hold varied attitudes, with some prioritising sustainability while others remain indifferent. The study calls for further comparative analysis with other countries to assess how regional differences affect sustainability attitudes, as these factors may influence consumer behaviour on a broader scale.

Munsch (2021) explored the effectiveness of digital marketing communication and advertising strategies for Millennials and Gen Z, emphasising how these groups respond differently to authenticity and engagement. The study utilised qualitative research with interviews and focus groups, analyzed thematically. Findings suggest that digital marketing strategies must vary by generation, with Gen Z showing a higher demand for authenticity. However, the study highlights the need for further quantitative validation to confirm these findings.

Goldring and Azab (2021) investigated the personality differences affecting impulsive shopping behaviour between Gen Z and Gen X in the context of social media. Using a quantitative survey with stratified sampling, the study applied factor and regression analysis.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used in the study of Gen Z's fast fashion habits is structured and includes several key components:

Research Design: This section outlines the framework for the research.

Research Problem: Clearly defines the issue being investigated (Gen Z's fast fashion habits).

Justification of the Study: Explains why this research is important.

Objectives of the Study: States the goals the research aims to achieve.

Data Collection Methodology:

Data Collection Method: Describes how the data was gathered.

Data Collection Instrument: Specifies the tool used for data collection (e.g., a questionnaire).

Hypothesis of the Study: Presents testable statements about the relationships between variables.

Sample Design:

Accessible Universe & Sampling Unit: Defines the population and the individuals/items being studied.

Sample Size: Indicates the number of participants/items included in the study.

Sampling Technique: Explains how the sample was selected.

Data Analysis: Describes the statistical techniques used to analyze the collected data.

Limitations of the Study: Acknowledges any constraints or shortcomings of the research. This structured approach ensures that the research is systematic, rigorous, and provides a clear

framework for understanding Gen Z's engagement with fast fashion.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis in the research on Gen Z's fast fashion habits involves a detailed examination of the information collected through the research instruments (likely questionnaires). The key components of this analysis, as structured in Chapter 4 of the research, are as follows:

Age Distribution: This analysis provides a breakdown of the respondents' ages, categorizing them into different age groups to understand the age spread within the sample.

Gender Distribution: This involves categorizing respondents by gender (male, female, non-binary, etc.) to analyze gender representation in the study.

Occupation: Respondents are classified based on their employment status (e.g., student, employed, unemployed) to see how occupational backgrounds might influence their fast fashion habits.

Family Income: This analysis categorizes the income levels of the respondents' families, often into income brackets, to explore the relationship between income and spending on fast fashion.

Spending Habits: This section details how frequently respondents purchase clothing and accessories, providing insights into their consumption frequency.

Factors Influencing Purchase: Here, the research identifies and analyzes the key factors that affect respondents' purchasing decisions.

Online Shopping Behavior: This analysis describes respondents' online shopping habits, including frequency of online clothing purchases and platforms used.

Brand Influence: This examines the impact of brand image and reputation on consumer choices within the fast fashion context.

Sustainability Awareness: This part assesses respondents' knowledge and concern for sustainable fashion practices, gauging their awareness of the environmental and ethical implications of fast fashion.

These components collectively aim to provide a comprehensive view of Gen Z's interaction with fast fashion, covering demographic factors, behavioral patterns, and attitudinal dimensions.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, RECCOMENDATIONS

The research provides a comprehensive analysis of Gen Z's fast fashion habits, including findings, conclusions, and detailed recommendations.

FINDINGS

The study aimed to explore Gen Z's buying habits in the fast fashion sector and to identify the psychological, social, and environmental factors that drive their consumption patterns. The research revealed several key findings:

Gen Z's relationship with fast fashion is complex, influenced by a mix of factors including affordability, social media trends, and personal expression.

While social media plays a role in shaping their fashion awareness, it is not the primary driver of their fast fashion purchases.

There's a growing awareness among Gen Z of the environmental and ethical concerns associated with fast fashion, and this awareness is starting to influence their buying habits.

Despite the awareness of negative impacts, fast fashion is still perceived by many in Gen Z as a necessary part of today's shopping culture, largely due to its accessibility and affordability.

CONCLUSIONS:

The research concludes that Gen Z's consumption of fast fashion is driven by a combination of factors, reflecting both their desire for trendiness and affordability, and a growing consciousness of sustainability issues. The paradox of Gen Z's behavior—being environmentally conscious yet still consuming fast fashion—highlights the complexities of changing consumer behavior in the face of economic and social pressures.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations for Brands and Fashion Retailers

Enhance Transparency: The study suggests that brands should be more transparent about their supply chains and production processes. This could help build trust with Gen Z consumers who are becoming increasingly interested in ethical and sustainable practices.

Adopt Sustainable Practices: Emphasizing sustainable practices is crucial. Brands are encouraged to use eco-friendly materials, reduce waste, and ensure fair labor practices.

Engage Authentically: Brands should engage with Gen Z in an authentic manner, possibly through collaborations with influencers who genuinely advocate for sustainability.

Balance Affordability and Ethics: Finding a balance between offering affordable fashion and maintaining ethical standards is key. Brands may need to explore innovative business models that do not compromise on either aspect.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS AND REGULATORS

Promote Sustainable Consumption: Policymakers can play a role in promoting sustainable consumption by implementing regulations that encourage eco-friendly practices in the fashion industry.

Support Consumer Education: There is a need for initiatives that educate consumers about the environmental and social impacts of their fashion choices.

Ensure Industry Accountability: Regulations should be in place to hold fashion brands accountable for their practices, particularly concerning environmental impact and labor rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATORS AND INSTITUTIONS

Integrate Sustainability into Curriculum: Educational institutions are encouraged to incorporate topics related to sustainable fashion and ethical consumption into their curricula.

Organise Awareness Events: Organising workshops, challenges, and eco-fashion events can help raise awareness among students and promote sustainable practices.

Foster Industry Partnerships: Collaborating with sustainable fashion brands can provide students with real-world exposure and learning opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS AND ACADEMICIANS

Conduct Longitudinal Studies: The document suggests the importance of conducting long-term studies to understand how Gen Z's consumption patterns evolve as they age and their purchasing power changes.

Explore Cross-Cultural Differences: Future research could explore how fast fashion consumption varies across different cultural and socioeconomic contexts.

Evaluate Digital Activism Effectiveness: Investigating the actual impact of digital activism and social media campaigns on consumer behavior is recommended.

These recommendations collectively aim to foster a more sustainable and ethical fashion ecosystem, with a focus on changing the fast fashion habits of Gen Z.

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