EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER'S INTENTION TO PURCHASE FASHION PRODUCTS IN INDIAN MARKET: A CASE STUDY OF ZARA.

Abstract

The emergence of social media has revolutionized communication, offering diverse methods for information dissemination. It has become a platform for expressing opinions, engaging with others, and has gained immense popularity globally. Social media's pervasive influence has enabled individuals, companies, and communities to connect with large audiences, establishing its significance in the realm of digital marketing. This study delves into the impact of social media on consumer purchasing decisions and their ability to influence choices within the fashion sector.

The strategic role of social media marketing holds the power to shape consumer intentions through perceived utility, in formativeness, and price awareness. This research focuses on Zara, which leverages social media marketing strategies to impact consumer buying intentions within the competitive Indian fashion market.

Zara, a luxury clothing brand, has capitalized on this trend, employing various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube to promote their products. Zara's agile supply chain and technology-driven approach have translated to remarkable business outcomes, evident from their substantial profits. The study emphasizes how social media profoundly influences business growth in the Indian fashion industry. It impacts consumer purchasing power, diversification of product offerings, and the alignment of products with customer preferences.

As reported by Forbes, the increased use of social media enhances gross profitability within the fashion sector. it also highlights the role of social media in elevating brand value, customer feedback, supply chain efficiency, and overall business expansion. Social media brings benefits but also cyber threats. Effective strategies help organizations engage customers. This research examines social media's impact on Indian fashion consumer behavior.

The research involves the use of structured questionnaires to gather numerical data from a sample of 200 individuals. This method enables the collection of standardized responses, facilitating statistical analysis and the identification of trends and patterns in consumer behavior. The questionnaire is designed to encompass a range of topics, including social media usage habits, perceptions of Zara's social media presence, factors influencing purchase decisions, and satisfaction with Zara's products and services. By analyzing this data, the research aims to uncover statistical correlations between social media engagement and consumer purchase intentions.

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Chapter One
Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The emerging of social media marked as diverse communication methods with the most important sources of information available to it. Across the world, social media works as a platform for putting one's point of view, opinion, likes and dislikes, and engaging with people, which has increased its usage of it (Reuter and Kaufhold, 2017). The grip of social media is enormous today because of its users it allows individuals, companies, and communities to interact with a large number of crowds (Dwivedi et al., 2021). It is becoming more and more integrated hence it has become one of the most important components of digital marketing. As of consistency, instantaneous features and reliability it generates a wide scope of business for online marketing (Nadaraja, 2013). In this study, the impact of social media purchases and the way it affects the purchase, and selection power of consumers in the fashion sector is being tested.

1.2 Background of study

The strategy of marketing in social media performs a crucial part in affecting the buying intention of the consumers through perceived utility, and informativeness along with consciousness about price. Customer attitude, intents, decisions, as well as preferences made when making a purchase contribute to the buying behaviour of the consumers (Renu, Bansal and Gupta, 2020). Understanding consumer purchasing behaviour aids in identifying and predicting the purchasing patterns of clients when making a purchase. As per the view of Kumar and Sharma (2020), customers rely heavily on the platforms of social media since user-generated material influences the decision to make a purchase. The trust of the consumer on the platform of social media is built by shared experiences during trial purchases. The growing customer confidence in the platform of social media utilisation is beneficial for fostering consumer confidence in perceived utility and brands in the fashion industry. Zara has taken the strategy of marketing on social media platforms in order to influence the buying intentions of consumers in the fashion sector of India.
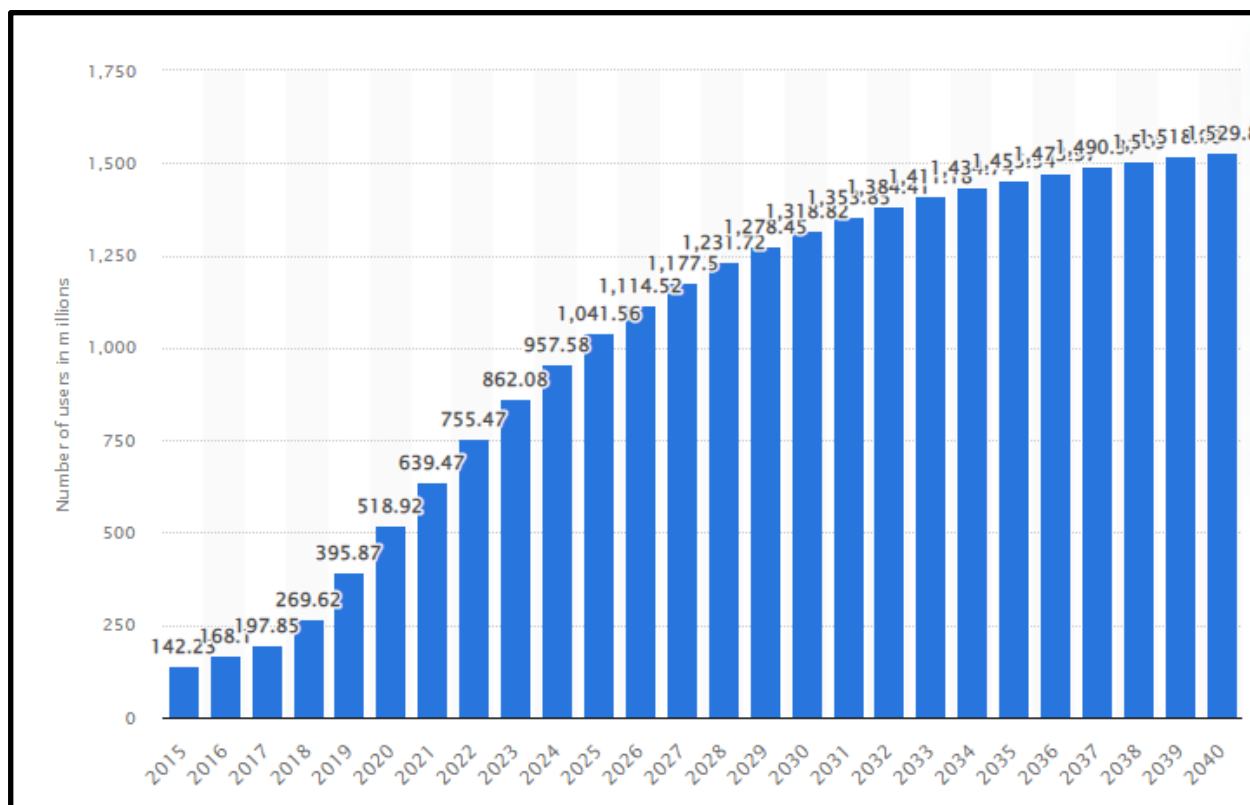
Figure 1: Growing number of social media users in India.

Source: (Basuroy, 2022)

From Figure 1 it can be discussed that the number of social media users is increasing day by day in India, and it is estimated that the number will be about 1.5 billion by the year 2040 (Basuroy, 2022). Zara has utilised this huge number to promote their products on different social media platforms to increase their revenue in the competitive fashion market of India. The Inditex-owned luxury clothing company Zara reported a profit of about 148.76 crores along with sales of about 1815 crores during the fiscal year that ended in the month of March in the year 2022 (Malviya, 2022). From the profit of Zara in India, it can be discussed that the marketing strategy of Zara on the platform of social media has more or less successfully influenced the buying intentions of consumers. A lot of the social media approach of Zara depends on Visual components Zara has coordinated layouts that emphasise photos on all of their social media sites to increase brand memory, visual material must be consistent in this way (Chambhare and Anute, 2022). The key to the success of Zara and are attractive is its capacity to provide people with their requirements. The adaptable supply chain of Zara, as well as its technology-driven strategy, have produced outstanding business outcomes in India. Zara has accounts on different platforms of Social media such as Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Instagram as well as Facebook remains the main platform of social media due to the significance of videos and images in the industry of Fashion. Zara has been publishing content focusing on products on several social media platforms that provide the public with a sneak peek into their most recent items. As per the demographic information of Facebook their following base is primarily made up of young people (Chambhare and Anute, 2022). The majority of social media post of Zara features their news

collection by utilising images in the format of a lookbook for their visual materials.

Social media has an immense effect on the business expansion of the firms in the fashion industry in the Indian sector. The purchasing power of the buyer is also influenced regarding the usages of social media in the fashion industry. Social media has a significance on the diversification , variety of the products regarding the tastes and preferences of the customers of the fashion industry in India. As per the perspective of Forbes, (2021) the increase in the use of social media helps to increase the gross profitability of the fashion industry. Usage of social media in the fashion sector mainly improved the customer size and also achieved the larger number of customer attraction to the brands of Zara regarding the fashion sector expansion in the Indian fashion market. As per the perspective of Jones (2021), the increase in the brand value of the fashion industry also impacted due to the use of online media. Social media such as facebook, instagram pages of the company, helps to increase the profit value of the company and also increase the brand value of the firm in the fashion industry in India. The increase in the usage of the social media has an increase in the brand awareness and market size of the product in the fashion sector in India. The brand value of the product is also connected with the use of social media. The increase in the uses of the social media platforms has helped to provide the variation of these dresses in front of the customers anywhere in the country. The delivery systems of the product also helped buy the successful activity of social media. The increase in the uses of social media helps to achieve the rise in customer feedback. The effective service quality and proper supply of the duct in the fashion industry helps to expand the business size of Zara.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

Social media helps organizations to communicate with their potential customers effectively in the context of developing their marketing performance. As per the view of Sharma et al. (2020), social media helps organisations to provide relevant information regarding their products and services which directly contributes to the encouragement of consumers to interact with their brands. On a similar note, The Times of India (2021), reported that social media enables organisations to reach the emotional level of their customers and stoke engagement with their brand messages and images. Moreover, social media reinforces the credibility and awareness levels of brands which develops marketing performance (Bharti, 2021). Therefore, this study will help in understanding the importance of social media in the Indian fashion sector. As mentioned by Creevey, Coughlan and O'Connor (2021), social media helps organisations to attract their target customers by advertising their products and services through social media platforms. On the other hand, Bryła, Chatterjee and Bryła (2022), social media increases customer engagement and retention rates which allows them to develop their financial performance. Furthermore, social media helps in promoting sustainable fashion brands in the market with the help of advertisement of sustainability practices within the working culture. Hence, the significance of the study lies in evaluating the impact of social media on customer purchasing behaviour in the Indian fashion industry.

1.4 Problem statement

Social media helps organizations to increase their brand awareness level and images in front of their potential customers by providing relevant information about their products and services to them. Apart from this, Jamil et al. (2022), stated that phishing, information disclosure, malware, social engineering, and fake accounts are the major challenges faced by organisations while influencing customers through social media. On the contrary, Appel et al. (2019), stated that cyber security, excessive internet use, online ethics, gambling, authenticating information, and cyberbullying are other effective challenges faced by organisations while developing marketing performance through social media platforms. Hence, it can be stated that organisations faced huge challenges in developing their customer engagement and retention rates through social media. Organisations faced issues regarding the chance of hacking interpersonal data and customer information which impact their financial performance. Therefore, it clouds be said that the present study is based on evaluating the issues in the Indian fashion sector in the context of social media marketing and probable solutions for them.

1.5 Research Questions

RQ 1: How does social media influence consumers' intention to purchase fashion products in the Indian market?

RQ 2: What is the role of social media platforms in shaping consumers' perceptions of ZARA's fashion products in India?

RQ 3: What strategies can ZARA adopt to leverage social media for enhancing consumers' purchase intention in the Indian fashion market?

1.6 Research Aim

The aim of this research is to investigate the impact of social media on consumer purchase intention in the Indian fashion sector with a focus on ZARA.

1.7 Research Objectives

- To analyze the role of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter in shaping consumers' perceptions of ZARA's fashion products in India.
- To examine the impact of ZARA's social media presence on consumers' purchase intention in the Indian fashion market.
- To identify the factors that influence consumers' purchase intention of ZARA's fashion products in India.
- To recommend effective social media strategies for ZARA to enhance its brand image and increase consumers' purchase intention in the Indian fashion market.

1.8 Summary of research methodology

According to Thomas (2021), a research methodology is considered to be the guideline used for conducting the research, it provides a structure for data collecting and analysing for the understanding of research as it covers the study area. It includes surveys, experiments, questionnaires, case studies and interviews. The design of the research is of two sorts qualitative and quantitative, in this research questionnaires are used to gather primary data, as it has several questions on a topic with the aim of gathering answers to those questions, the main benefit of using a questionnaire is that it is affordable (Yadav, 2021). Many questions regarding social media, ZARAs strategy of using social media, how social media influences fashion business and consumer behaviour and related questions are being asked in this question form. The survey was conducted with 200 people and the answers were based on their comments, this data was shown using a pie chart depending on the question. The method used for research is based on quantitative data analysis.
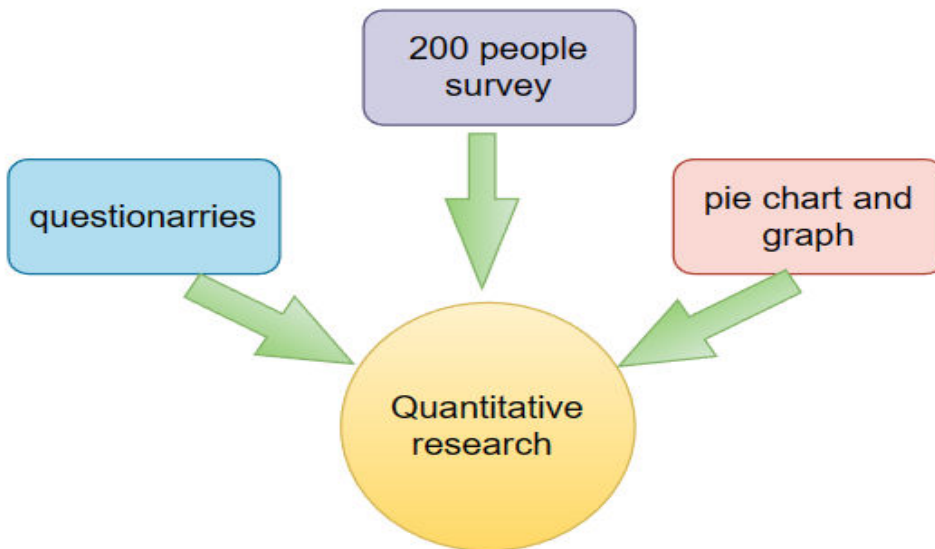
Figure 2: Quantitative data collection method used

1.9 Dissertation structure

Chapter 1: Introduction: This chapter of the dissertation describes the background of the study including the aim, objectives, questions, rationale and evaluation of the context of the research. After the introduction chapter literature review chapter has been discussed and analyzed in a brief manner. The literature review of the chapter mainly analysis

Chapter 2: Literature review: After the introduction chapter literature review chapter has been discussed and analyzed in a brief manner. The literature review of the chapter mainly analyzes the literature gaps in relation to the previous study.

Chapter 3: Methodology: This chapter mainly analyzed an overview of the necessary data collection technique and process which is used to collect for the ongoing research method.

Chapter 4: Data analysis: Detailed analysis of the process of collected data regarding the research method with the help of the aforementioned chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendation: This chapter mainly analyzes the summary of the findings of the research as well as recommendation for the further development of the research study.

1.10 Summary

The background of social media marketing and its impact on the behaviour of consumer behaviour of purchasing has been marked along with the aim and objective of this research to understand the fashion industry of India and the contribution of social media to it. The importance of marketing for ZARA through social media, to increase sales and other related questions is being introduced. The method of conducting data analysis has been chosen in quantitative form and the objectives and aims of the study are being recognised.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The usage of social media has increased with days and has reached an extent where brands and businesses promote their product to gain engagement (Li, Larimo and Leonidou, 2020). This study gives a brief discussion about social media marketing in terms and analyses the ways in which the behaviour of consumers gets affected. Theoretical underpinning is inserted to make the topic clearer and more understandable for the reader. the chapter ended with a summary that gives the overview and key factors of all the above-discussed topics. Along with that the domain of this study makes us understand the strategy of social media marketing in terms of firms or businesses and the ways of influencing consumer behaviour.

2.2 Overview of social media marketing

Social media marketing is considered the process of tailored content creation for platforms like Instagram, Facebook and others to drive engagement as these platforms are used by 4.76 billion people, around 59.4% of the total population existing globally (Petrosyan, 2023). This generates the connectivity of the business holder towards its customers that give ideas about the brand to the customer in a better way (Li, Larimo and Leonidou, 2020). As per the report of Mason, Narcum and Mason (2021), Social media marketing is a process to get reaches the audience by targeting them on websites, and social media platforms for the promotion of products or services. This provides a unique opportunity to connect with most of the audiences in an existing platform where people spend most of their time.

The core aim of this strategy adopted by the brand is to build a relationship with the target audiences of the brand (Mason, Narcum and Mason, 2021). This can be intended into two categories, Brandi building, it means engaging with customers by adding images of brands and promoting them on sites. Social commerce, it includes selling products through social media. Social media marketers' top goal is too adverse their services and products that increases brand awareness as well (Voorveld, 2019). This is used by the brands in creating content and posting it along with the image of products or services to attract consumers.

2.3 Understanding the role of firm specific social media marketing strategies

Social media is observed to be used by every form of business either small or large, to spread awareness about the product and services of the brand. The most famous social media channels to be used by the brands are **Instagram, Twitter and Facebook**. Companies used this low-cost tool and combined it with social interaction and technology with the usage of videos, images and words (Voorveld et al., 2023). This provides the companies with strategies by becoming the voice and a method to communicate with potential consumers, customers and peers. ZARA a fashion-oriented company that deals in modern clothing spread in

the year 2015 with the help of social media strategies and spreading awareness about the brand. It has made the company spread drastically since 2015 till now and the organisation has announced a growth of 60% in revenue and profit of 148.76 crores in the FY of 2022 (NDTV, 2022). The strategies used by the brands are Content planning and creation, social media analytics, social listening, Management of community, Scheduling content and publishing and lastly advertising through social media. Famous and multinational brands often use famous figures and celebrities to promote their brand through social media apps to enhance the reach of customers in terms of followers of the celebrity and make their followers convert into a customer for the organisation (Piehler et al., 2021)

2.4 Determination of the ways social media influences consumer behaviour

As commented by Appel et al. (2019), social media is an effective way of marketing that directly affects the behaviour of consumers in several aspects. It can be said that the landscape of global social media is evolving continuously to keep up with the moving trends of consumers in fast way. As per the report of Global Web Index (2018), around 54 per cent of social media users browse social media to get details about the product before making the decision to buy the product. The era of smart phones and laptops has been compounded by a striking change as consumer finds out mobiles to be the most important device and this has increased almost 58% of online buying activity (Global Web Index, 2018). The users follow the four steps **to build awareness about the product**. Social media has been observed to be a huge influence on consumer behaviour as whenever the consumer faces a problem the initial action is to search for a solution, whereas most of the time people do not know about the solution. Here the awareness about the product helps the consumer to get knowledge about the product or whether it will be, fulfil the requirements of the consumer or not.

Social proof changes the buying decision, as stated by Palalic et al. (2020), the reviews and certificates owned by the brand in terms of being sustainable or health conscious or doing any positive activity for the environment enhance the chances to gain more customers, as the people always get impressed with such companies. The reviews of happy customers or the negative reviews of disappointed customers also fall in a list that makes a great difference in the buying behaviour of consumers. **Promotions, deals and discounts** provided by the companies have become common more often (Nayal and Pandey, 2021). This helps the customer change the decision and the consumer eventually locks the deal by getting a discount. Around 64% of consumers wait to buy things until they arise in discount or sale (Nayal and Pandey, 2021).

Social media influencers, as consumers are following famous icons and celebrities on social media and many observe them as idols. As per the report of Palos-Sanchez, Martin-Velicia and Saura (2018), 49% of consumers seek guidance from influencers they follow on social media. They buy things when recommended by a famous person they trust (Palos-Sanchez, Martin-Velicia and Saura, 2018). Hence, it could be said that the buying behaviour of the consumer and their perspective on a brand change through social media marketing.
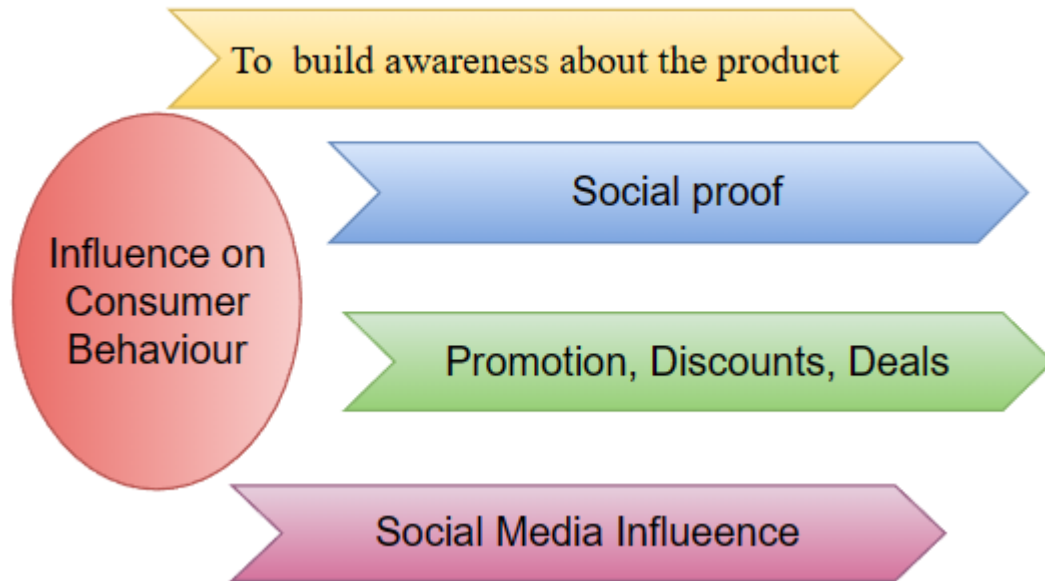
Figure 3: Social media influence factors on consumer behaviour

(Source : Palos-Sanchez, Martin-Velicia and Saura (2018))

Thus, from the above statement, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H1: Social media contents change consumer behaviour by creating awareness

2.5 Analysis of the positive and negative impact of social media marketing on brands

2.5.1 Positive impact of social media marketing on brands

Social media marketing helps to build customer loyalty and it helps in increasing website traffic and in increasing sales of the brands. Zara has more than 59 million followers on Instagram and approximately 1.5 million on Twitter and about 1.6 million on Wechat (Smith, 2023) **[Refer to figure 4]**. The continuous engagement of the customer is with the brands help the brand to increase sales and in improving the brand value in the global market (Popović-Šević et al., 2021). Social media marketing helps in building a strong communication with the consumers and in generating information about the offers available on the brand website effectively. Zara with the help of social media marketing enhances the sales in the e-commerce website mainly in the United States, United Kingdom and Spain (Pasquali, 2023). Social media marketing helps in building online brand communities and establishing a user-friendly ecosystem using the media platform. Zara constantly provides updates in the social media platform to retain the brand loyalty and it helps to know the consumer perceptions about the brand. Social media marketing in the fashion industry helps in influencing consumer behaviour and in increasing brand awareness and credibility (Popović-Šević et al., 2021).
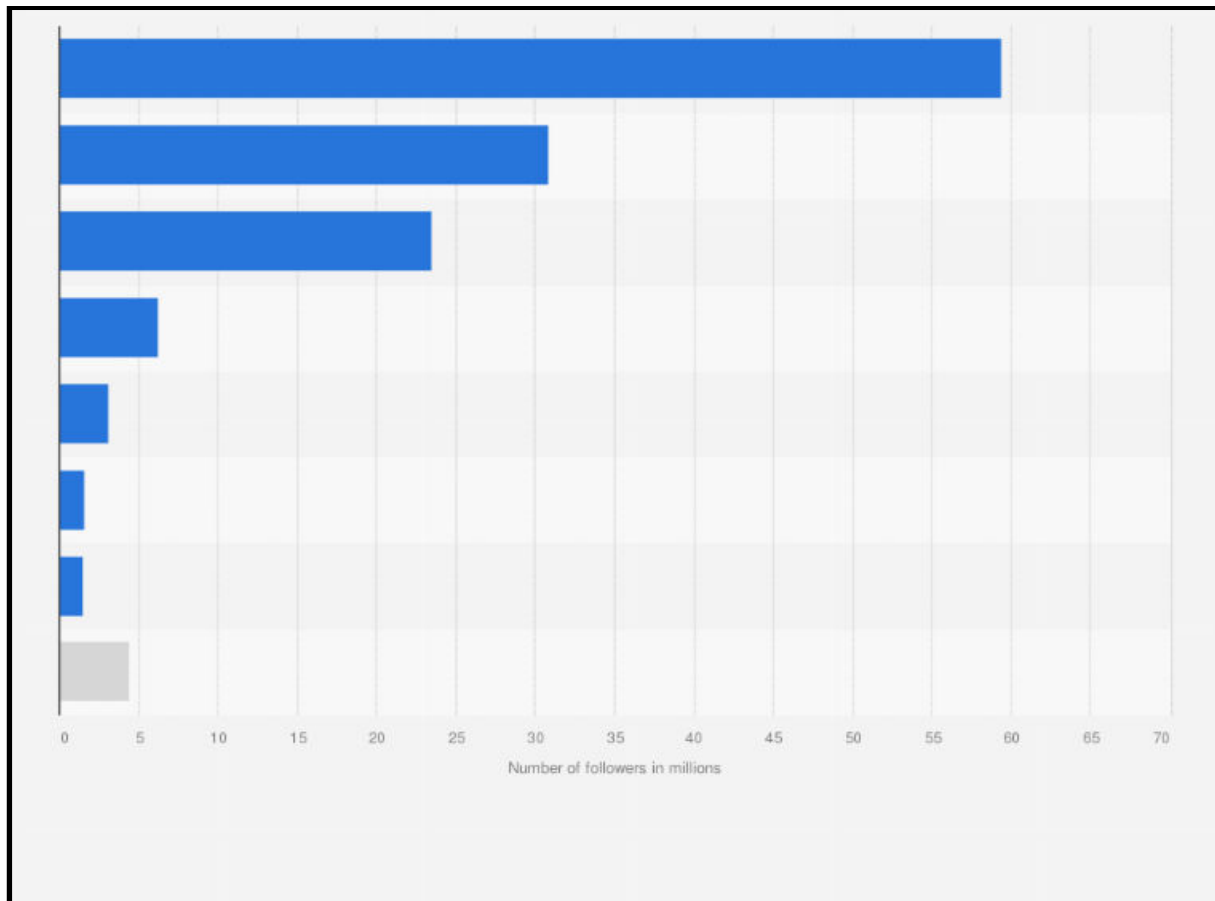
Figure 4: Consumer following Zara on Social media platform

(Source: Smith, 2023)

Social media marketing helps in influencing consumer behaviour and in enhancing the trust of the consumer with the help of Instagram influencers. Social media marketing helps in fast adaptation with the changes in consumer behaviour and market trends. It also helps in predicting the market forecast about the products and services effectively (Popović-Šević et al., 2021). Thoughts, messages, information, images and videos in the social media marketing helps in strengthen the communication with the consumers. Zara uses social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and others, which help in enhancing the images and videos of the products and also help the consumers to provide insights about the offers. Zara visibility, trust and satisfaction are increases by the usage of social media marketing in a proper manner (Popović-Šević et al., 2021). Zara social media marketing strategy is dependent on visual elements, which is enhanced by the usage of Facebook and Instagram.

2.5.2 Negative impact of social media marketing on brands
The negative impact of social media marketing can be seen by the saturation of ideas and it affects customer commitment with the brand. The pressure on brands due to saturation of content or degrading the quality of content affects the trust and commitment of the consumers. The diversification of consumer demands is affected due to the absence of creative content, which will influence the majority of the consumers for the products and services (Popović-Šević et al., 2021). The usage of social media marketing is critical and the

creative usage of the platform is necessary for the global brands. Zara sales are affected by the strong presence of share in social media marketing as share effectively tracks the user data for influencing the consumer decision-making process in the United States (Economic Times, 2023).

Therefore, based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis has been generated:

H2: Social media influences communication between brands and consumers thereby impacting brand awareness and credibility

2.6 Assessing the challenges of social media marketing and its effect on consumer purchasing behaviour

According to Bhandari and Bansal (2018), social media marketing is associated with the promotion of product and services of an organisation among target customers through using the social media platform. However, the use of social media marketing could generate multiple types of challenges, which might affect the need, and effect of the consumer purchasing behaviour.

2.6.1 Challenges of identifying specific social media platform

The concept of social media marketing is directly connected with selecting a particular platform to promote the product and build communication with target customers. However, the selection of the specific platform and building appropriate communication act as common challenges, which could affect the growth of the business (Constantinides, 2013). The challenges in the identification of the specific social media brand to promote the product acts as the one of common problems for organisations to communicate with the customers. Therefore, it can be summarised that the identification of the specific challenge is considered a common challenge which could affect the growth of the organisation towards marketing and it affects the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

2.6.2 Challenges with the development of creative and engaged content

The markets of an organisation are faced with the burden to develop creative and engaging content on a regular basis to grab the attention of social media users. It is essential for markets to develop engaging and creative content, which could allow them to attract consumers and improve the overall marketing process. It has been identified that the lack of creative and engaging content could affect the success of the organisation by reducing the communication flow with the target customers (Constantinides, 2013). In this aspect, it could be stated that lack of development of the creative content is reducing the communication flow with the target customers. It has been identified that the lack of creative content affects the consumer shopping nature followed by it reducing the shopping behaviour of customers. In this situation, it can be stated that social media marketing could generate the burden of lack of engaged content, which affects the shopping behaviour of customers.
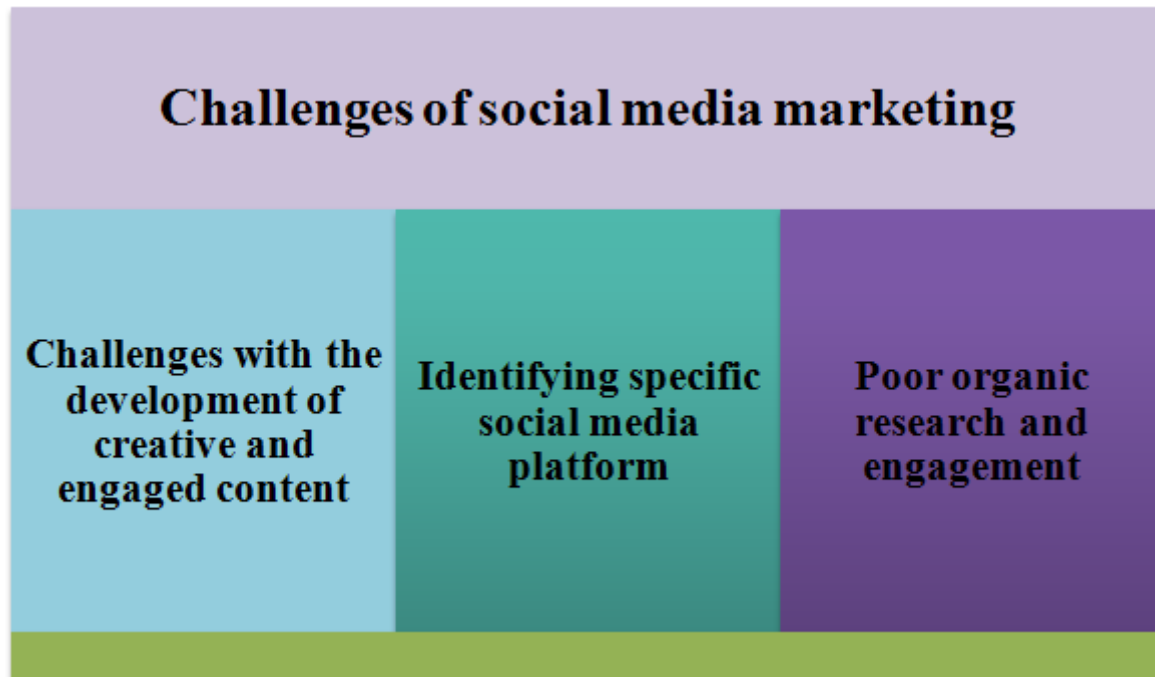
Figure 5: Challenges of social media marketing

(Source: Bhandari and Bansal, 2018)

2.6.3 Poor organic reach and engagement

It has been identified that the use of social media-based marketing reduces organic research and it reduces the organic engagement of an organisation with offline customers. The implementation of social media marketing reduces the offline communication that reduces the engagement of the customers with the brand (Bhandari and Bansal, 2018). It needs to be highlighted here that poor engagement and communication in the organic basis affects the need and satisfaction of the customers, which has a significant negative effect towards the purchasing behaviour of consumers. Therefore, it can be summarised that the execution of the social media marketing affects the consumer engagement and their purchasing behaviour in an effective and accurate manner.

2.6.4 Transparency issue in marketing

Markets sometimes face the issue often face followers on the social media platform which could bring the transparency issue in an effective manner. In the context of social media marketing, sometimes organisations face a high number of followers; however, it does not improve the overall sales in the business (Lepkowska-White, 2017). This indicates the number of fake followers in the social media site of the organisation. In this aspect, the fake followers could affect organisations to determine the need of the customers followed by it affecting the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

Therefore, it can be summarised form above discussion that the below hypothesis has been developed:

H3: Poor and unclear social media content negatively affects the consumer purchasing behaviour

2.7 Examination of strategic importance of social media marketing in influencing consumer purchase

Consumer purchasing behaviour is influenced by psychological need and satisfaction. Jamil et al. (2022) reported that social media marketing has influenced the psychological sense and behaviour of the customers, which could improve the growth of the operation in an effective and accurate manner. It needs to be highlighted here that social media-based marketing allows customers to get effective and significant data about the purchaser's review. In this aspect, the feedback from the customers acts as the one of comma after to influence the consumer purchasing behaviour. Therefore, it can be stated that social media-based marketing influences the psychological wellbeing of customers, which improves the purchasing behaviour of customers.
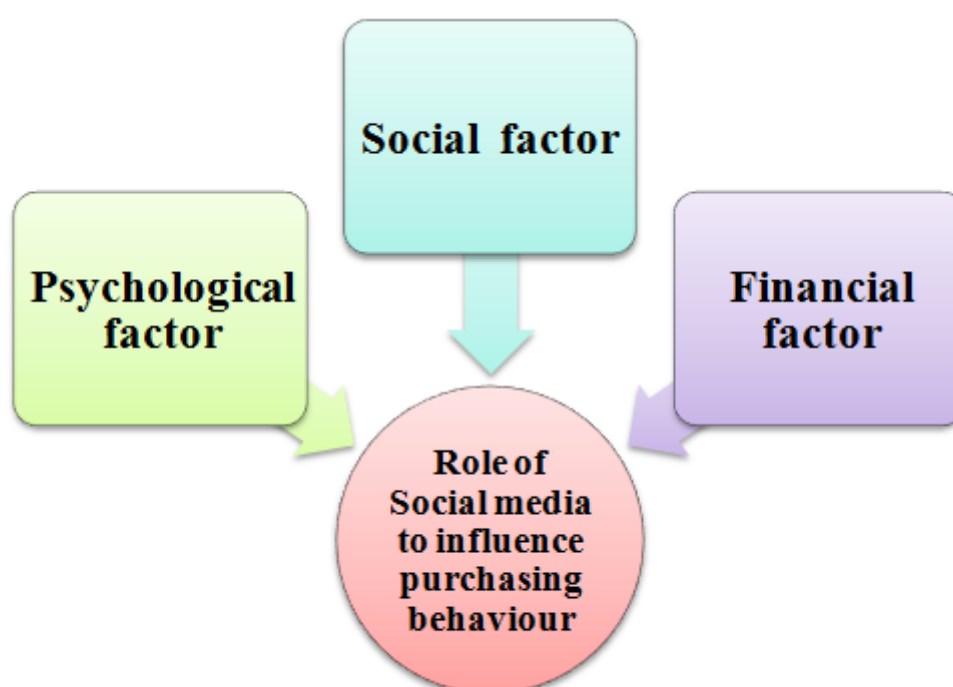
Figure 6: Role of social media towards the customer purchasing influencing behaviour

(Source: Hanaysha, 2022)

As per the view of Hanaysha (2022), social media marketing is a crucial and effective process that could enhance the purchasing behaviour by reducing the time. It is found that social media absurd marketing allows customers to enjoy the multiple options form the organisation from anywhere that could reduce the time. In addition, the cost-effective approach is also associated with the implementation of social media-based marketing. Therefore, it can be stated that cost and time effective areas are essential which improve the customer purchasing behaviour in an effective and significant manner. The use of the gamification, special interaction and discount offers are also identified among people with the implementation of social media marketing in an effective and accurate manner (Sharma et al., 2022). It has been identified that people get a wide range of discounts and multiple special offers with the purchasing of products through the social media-based application (Sharma et al., 2022). In this aspect, the use of social media-based communication

plays a significant role in developing the purchasing behaviour of customers. Therefore, it can be summarised that social media-based marketing creates a positive effect towards the psychological factor, social factor and financial factor that could enhance the purchasing decision of the customers.

Here, based on the above information the following hypothesis has been generated:

H4: Social media influences the psychological, social and financial factors affecting consumer purchase

2.8 Evaluation of the empirical studies in the subject area

| Citation	Methodology
(Li, Larimo and Leonidou, 2020)	Primary Data collection method on Social Marketing Manager based on interviews and survey analysis
(Mason, Narcum and Mason, 2021)	Primary quantitative method using Survey on U.S Consumers.
(Voorveld, 2019)	Primary data collection method on largest media agencies of Netherlands participated in the survey
(Voorveld et al., 2023)	Survey on consumers who were around 13 and above years old
(Palalic et al. 2020)	Primary Quantitative data collection method on residents of pakistan and Islamabad
(Palos-Sanchez, Martin-Velicia and Saura, 2018)	Survey done on young people who were around 19-30 years old
(Lepkowska-White, 2017)	Primary quantitative method is used to analyse the effect of social media marketing
(Jamil et al. 2022)	Developed a questionnaire for the study and 40 participants responded to the questionnaire in a proper manner
(Gil-Cordero, Ledesma-Chaves and Baena-Luna, 2023)	Online survey done on Zara Shoppers and gained around 736 valid responses for the study
(Hanaysha ,2022)	Survey on UAE fast food consumers

Table 1: Evaluation of empirical studies

The analysis of the study helps to know that social media is a main marketing channel which helps to achieve business objectives. As per the findings of the study it can be stated that the usage of social media marketing helps in differentiating the product market type and in evaluating the managerial mind-set needed for the firm (Li, Larimo and Leonidou, 2020). The findings of the study help to know about the increased usage of social media marketing by the consumers after pandemic. As per the view of the author it can be analysed that the identifying of consumer needs and demands is based on social media marketing after the pandemic (Mason, Narcum and Mason, 2021). The findings of the study help to evaluate the relationship between Media Mix and Consumer journey effectively. The research focussed on both digital and non-digital media marketing strategies that enhances consumer journey. One of the main features of the study is to analyse the area of personalized brand content in social media and its influence on consumers (Voorveld, 2019). The findings of the study indicates that the social media marketing and the usage of advertisement does not always effectively influence the consumers and the content of the advertisement can mislead the consumers (Voorveld et al., 2023). The study analyses the effect of social media and its impact on Pakistani consumers which is highly dependent on word of mouth and content credibility in social media marketing. It also highlights that the entrepreneurs using social media marketing to influence consumer behaviour who were around 40 years old and the complex buying behaviour is strategically influenced by the usage of social media marketing (Palalic et al. 2020). The study helps to highlight the usage of sustainable technology in social media marketing and it helps to deal with consumer demands using segmentation based causal relationships (Palos-Sanchez, Martin-Velicia and Saura, 2018). Small businesses effectiveness of using social media for targeting the different customer base is analysed in the study and the concepts of awareness, branding, strong relationship, interaction is reflected in the study (Lepkowska-White, 2017; Gil-Cordero, Ledesma-Chaves and Baena-Luna, 2023). In the findings the social identification, purchase decisions, participation and satisfaction using the social media marketing is reflected effectively (Jamil et al. 2022; Hanaysha ,2022).

2.9 Theoretical Underpinning

Information technology theory helps in building effective relationships between technology and society and it also helps in enhancing communication. The chosen theory indicates that information helps in enhancing productivity and communication with the consumer effectively (Mgunda, 2019). Information technology helps in predicting the consumer behavioural changes and in analysing the market changes. The theory helps in enhancing the knowledge about consumer preferences and choices which help in improving the customer relationship with the brand. This theory helps in building creative marketing strategies based on innovation and knowledge about consumer preferences and choices about the companies (Mgunda, 2019). The exchange of information helps in enhancing the productivity and performance of a brand in a proper manner. Information helps in the development of business and in enhancing the profit margin by

critically analysing the consumer behaviour in the global market (Mgunda, 2019). It helps in enhancing business opportunities and in reducing risks with the help of market forecasting and data analysis about the future potential risks. Information technology helps in using the social media marketing strategies effectively and it helps in understanding the customer behaviour effectively (Mgunda, 2019).
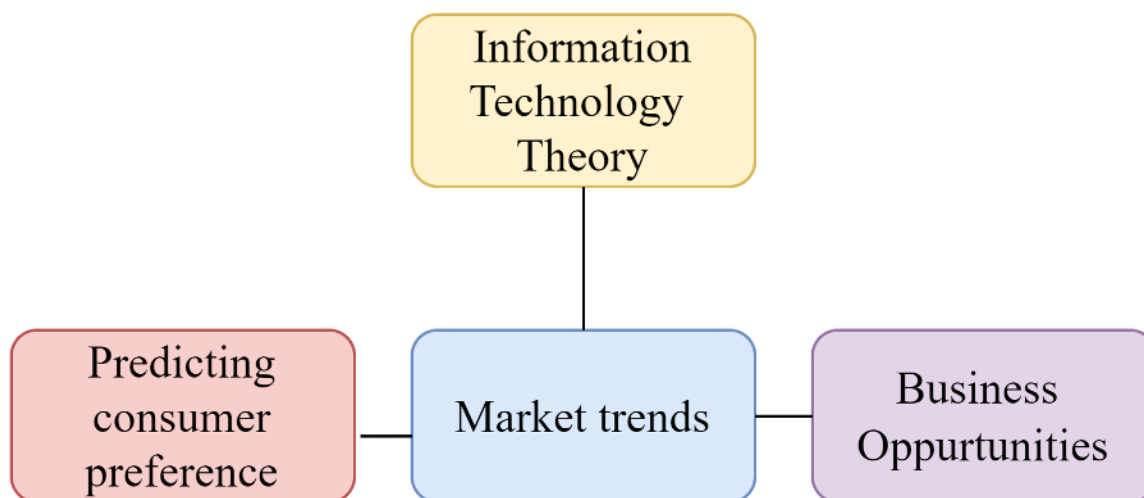
Figure 7: Information technology theory

(Source : Mgunda, 2019)

Zara with the help of information technology improves the interaction with the community members and it also helps in increasing accessibility by the usage of technology for getting critical information about the consumers (Gil-Cordero, Ledesma-Chaves and Baena-Luna, 2023). Zara with the help of information generated from the social media platform helps in utilising the resources effectively and in maintaining the balanced growth in the global market. The usage of online apps by the chosen brand helps in enhancing communication with the consumers and reducing the global market with the help of market analysis and forecast in a proper manner (Gil-Cordero, Ledesma-Chaves and Baena-Luna, 2023). Zara effectively uses information to know about their customers and to use the resources adequately with the changes in market trends.

2.10 Literature gap

The assessment of the literature from the reliable and authentic sources regarding this topic has very limited information available specifically for Zara. The lack of information in the previous studies about the usage of social media platforms by Zara created a gap for adopting the information within the study. In addition, there were different types of social media marketing strategies therefore there is a lack of acknowledgement for one specific platform for Zara in previous studies. This study will help to highlight the usage of the main social media platforms by Zara, which enhance customer engagement with the brand.

2.11 Research Hypothesis

H1: Social media contents change consumer behaviour by creating awareness

H2: Social media influences communication between brands and consumers thereby impacting brand awareness and credibility

H3: Poor and unclear social media content negatively affects the consumer purchasing behaviour

H4: Social media influences the psychological, social and financial factors affecting consumer purchase

2.12 Conceptual Framework
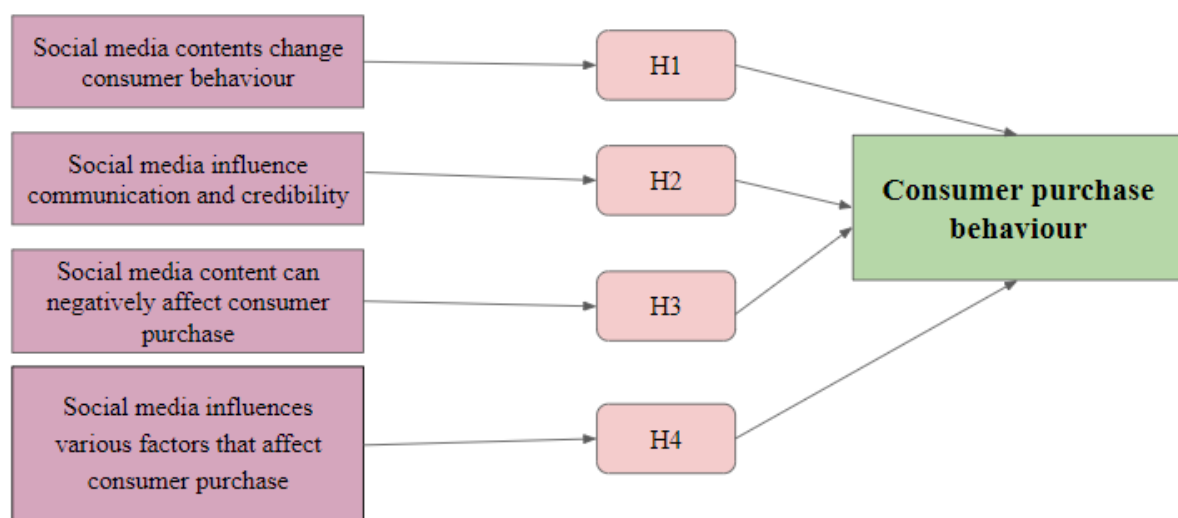
Figure 8: Conceptual framework

2.13 Summary

This chapter can be summarised that social media has played an effective role to improve the purchasing behaviour of the customers. This chapter has been focused on the challenges of social media marketing and its effect on the customer purchasing behaviour. Further, this study has been focused on information technology theory to discuss the social media adaptation behaviour among consumers in an effective manner. It also evaluates the positive and negative impact of social media marketing on the brands. The research gives a brief understanding of the challenges of social media and its effect on the behaviour of consumers. Therefore, it can be summarised that markets are faced with significant challenges with the implementation of social media marketing towards the growth of organisations.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter of the research highlights the methodological approaches that help in depicting the data and it further helps in fulfilling the aim and objectives of the study effectively. This chapter of dissertation is focussed on the approaches and methods by which the data is collected and interpreted for the study. The brief justification and elaboration of the Research Philosophy, approach, design, choice help to make the study valid and reliable for the study. In order to develop the methodological chapter in a proper manner Saunders' Research Onion has been considered for the research study in order to conduct the data collection method in a proper manner (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).
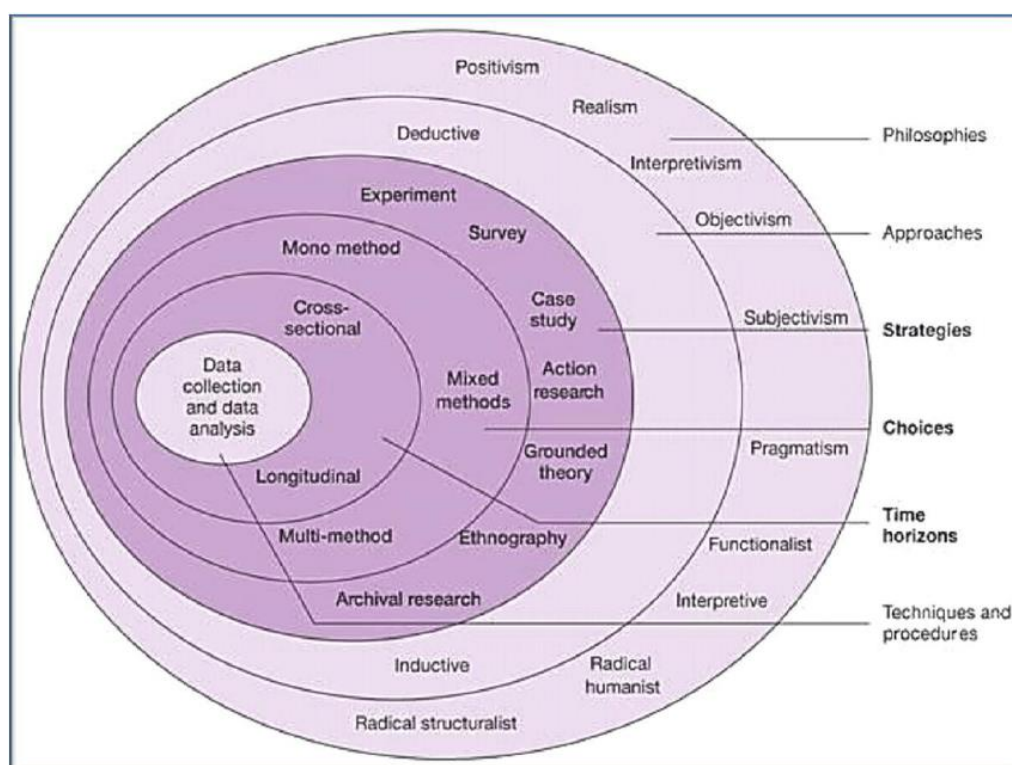
Figure 9: Saunders' Research Onion
(Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019)

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is a perception about the process where data about a particular topic is collected and gathered. The term epistemology is connected with the philosophy of research which helps to focus on truth (Sapkota, 2019). Moreover, philosophy of research could be differentiated into four areas including positivism, interpretivism, pragmatism and realism research philosophy (Sapkota, 2019). **Positivism Research Philosophy** has been considered to evaluate primary quantitative data for this research study. The chosen philosophy helps in understanding the subjective interpretation of the data collected through the survey process. Positivism helps in validating the data and also helps in understanding the variable of the research topic effectively (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020). The chosen Research philosophy helps in obtaining information through observation and it also enhances the reliability of the data related with the research topic. On the other hand, the limitation of this chosen philosophy is that it failed to analyse accurately the beliefs, opinions and assumptions of others (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020). Although, the chosen research philosophy has helped in meeting the research aim and objectives with the help of quantitative data collected through the survey process. The in-depth analysis of the data based on observation provides valid insight through step by step interpretation of the collected data from authentic sources helpful for the study.
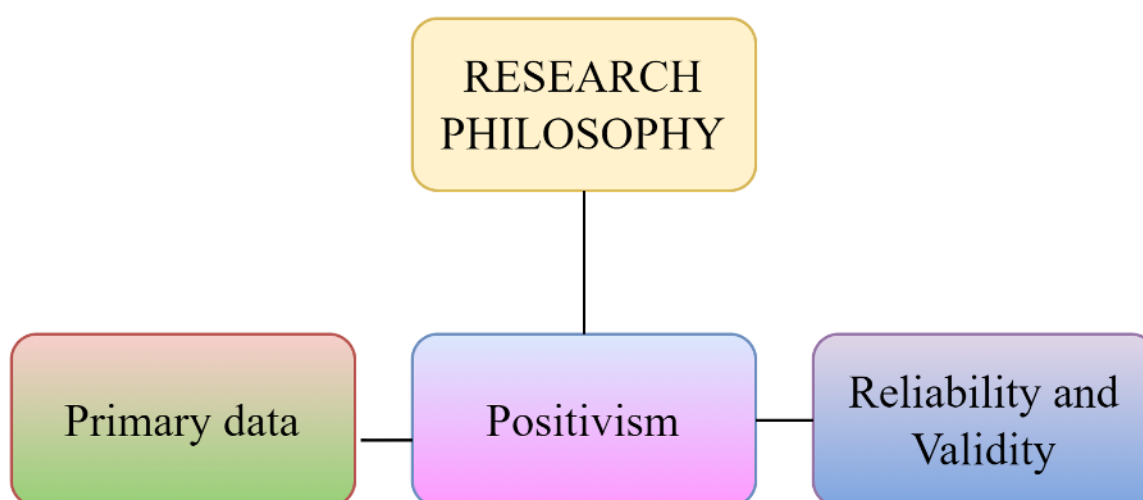
Figure 10: Research Philosophy

3.3 Research Approach

Deductive research approach has been considered for the study to examine and evaluate effectively the data collected based on the Primary data collection process. The analysis of the survey process can be done under the chosen approach in a proper manner. The approach helps in making conclusions about the research topic based on logical reasoning. It helps in forming a linkage between the research topic and its variables which

help in in-depth understanding of the data in a proper manner (Kankam, 2019). The chosen approach helps in validating the statistical data gathered through the data collection process and also helps in meeting the research aim and objectives in an effective manner. A major drawback of the approach is it is almost linked with the inductive approach which acts as a drawback (Kankam, 2019). The approach is helpful for justifying the hypothesis and thereby generating a credible outcome. Moreover, the mentioned research approach help in analysing the objectives based on the primary quantitative data and help to form a concrete conclusion about the research study.
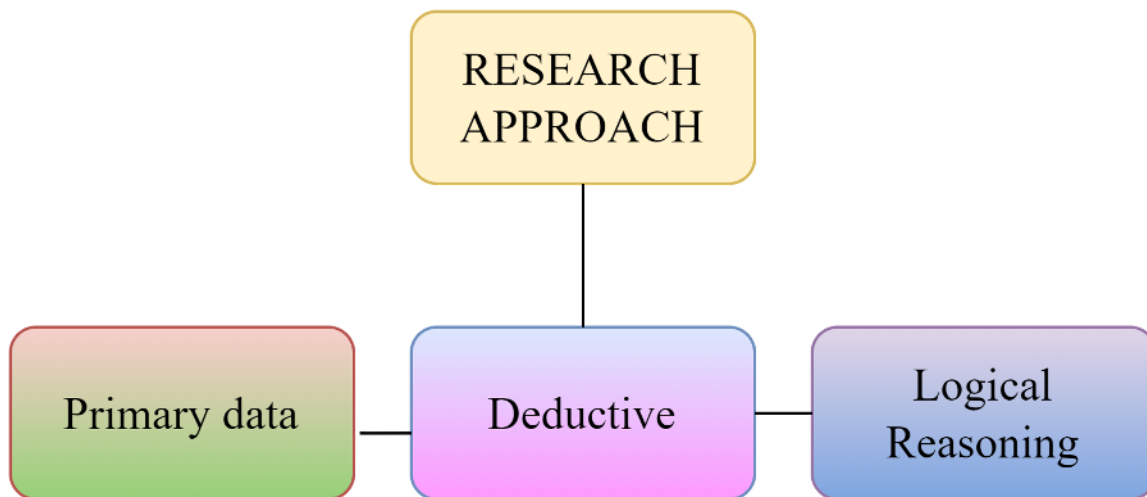
Figure 11: Research Approach

3.4 Research Design

In this research **descriptive design** has been chosen to explore primary quantitative data. As per the study of Abutabenjeh and Jaradat (2023), research design is a rational framework for the conduction of investigation analytically and it involves the collection of data observation and consultation. Descriptive design is considered to be a description of interprets and words that are stated by the respondents or the one participating in the research (Sharma, 2019). The descriptive design has been successful in knowing the action of causes in each and every aspect in relation to social media facts that are attached from the topic of research or analysis in terms of impacting the behaviour of customers. It also explores the era of research in terms of social media that affects the behaviour of customers and its overall aspect.

3.5 Methodological choice

Mono method is focused on a single method of carrying out research to meet the objectives of the study (Ojebode et al., 2018). Mono-quantitative method indicates the selection of a particular method that is

quantitative in nature for further progress instead of a mixed method or qualitative method for the study. In other words, in this method only numerical values are obtained for continuing with the analysis of the information and drawing inferences. **The Mono-Quantitative method** has helped the research to explore social media marketing and get a description of change in the behaviour of consumers, and the benefits of social media in business for gaining customer satisfaction. The methodology chosen here is mono-quantitative; this would help the research to examine the topic of the research. The Mono-quantitative research choice has been also helpful in understanding the data generated from a survey in terms of social media marketing and customer behaviour.

3.6 Research strategy

Research strategy helps in conducting the research study in an appropriate manner and guides in planning, executing and monitoring the phases of the research study. In this research study, **Survey** has been considered to evaluate and examine the aim and objectives of the study in a proper manner. Survey research strategy helps in providing direction of the research study and it helps in gaining in-depth understanding of the research topic (Jones, Baxter and Khanduja, 2013). The chosen methods help in interpretation of research topics with the help of observation and offer factual information which further helps in meeting the aim and objectives of the study appropriately. Primary quantitative data collection method based on survey helps in analysing and examining the statistical data effectively. On the other hand, one limitation is that the responses can be biassed and it can impact the research topic (Jones, Baxter and Khanduja, 2013). Moreover, although having limitations it has helped the research study in meeting the aim and objective effectively based on Statistical information.

Figure 12: Research Strategy

3.7 Sampling technique

Sampling Technique helps in enhancing the importance of the data collection and analysis method and for the study, **Convenience sampling technique** has been considered. It helps in understanding the research topic more effectively and in collecting relevant information about the research topic based on the Primary quantitative method. This technique would help the research to gather data from different groups of people in terms of social media marketing. The researcher would choose a group according to the method and technology of the research. This sampling technique consists of people that are willing to participate in the online surveys (Emerson, 2021). The survey consists of 100 chosen consumers of social media users who buy things online. This technique is a part of a non-profitable method where the surveys are conducted by a group of people to know the views and aspects of people existing in that field already.

3.8 Data collection method

The data collection method used here is a **primary quantitative data collection method** which has been relevant to the topic context. According to the opinion Albers (2017), primary quantitative methods emphasise the objective measurements and manipulate the pre- existing statistical data. The primary quantitative method has been appropriate for analysing the effectiveness of social media on the consumer purchase. However, in order to conduct the survey, an advertisement has been posted on the social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. 100 participants were selected for the conduction of the survey along with providing an information sheet consisting of the important information for the research. The interested participants would be provided with a consent form in their registered mail id. After the confirmation of the participants, a consent sheet has been provided to them. Moreover, **22 close ended questions** were formed which are relevant with the research aim and objectives. It is instructed that no personal questions would be asked in the survey questions.

3.9 Data analysis technique

Data analysis is a systematic approach, which analyses a set of data to develop a meaningful interpretation about the search topic. This study uses the statistical method to analyse the data and it helps to meet the search aim and objectives. This study utilisesQualtrics to form questionnaires for the participants to collect sufficient and significant research data regarding the effect of social media on the purchasing behaviour in an effective and significant manner. Effective data analysis improves the flexibility of the paper (Fidahic et al., 2020). In this regard, this study was to improve its flexibility with the implementation of the appropriate analysis method. It has been identified that effective implementation of the data analysis is to develop the new theory and information as per the need of the paper. In this aspect, the study utilises the specific data analysis method, which helps to improve the paper in an effective and crucial manner (Snyder, 2019). Therefore, by analysing the above information, it could be summarised that implementation of the statistical

data analysis process is essential and it improves the research objective in an appropriate manner. The auto generated graphs are utilised for conducting the data analysis in this study.

3.10 Time Horizon

The time horizon used in the following research is **a cross-sectional time horizon**. The cross-sectional time horizon symbolises the range of time in which the task has been scheduled for accomplishment (Chen, Miller and Chen, 2019). A specific length of time is allocated for the data collection process. This study is focused on the cross-sectional process that allows the paper to cover multiple aspects. The structure of the topic would be divided in terms of time and the goals would be set to complete each section within the period selected. In this situation, the use of the cross-sectional time horizon was focused on multiple aspects of social media marketing including its positive side and negative side to evaluate the effect towards the purchasing decision of customers. Therefore, it can be stated that the use of the cross-sectional time horizon is an effective and accurate method that was helped in this study to meet research aims and objectives.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

In this study no personal information has been collected from the participants except the demographics. Apart from that, the data that are collected has been utilised in this study anonymously without disclosing the personal details of the participants. Each and every provision of the "Data Protection Act 2018" has been followed here so that no legal obligations arise regarding the use of primary quantitative data (Government of UK, 2018). It was focused on the consent form to collect consent form the participants before including them in the study. This study enabled participants to withdraw their commitment at any point. Further, this study maintains the safety and security of the participants throughout the paper. This paper did not harm any individual or it did not use any vulnerable languages throughout the study to collect data about the effect of social media application towards the purchasing decision of the consumers.

The collected data was stored in cloud software to protect the data. In addition, this study mentioned that it would never be used for any commercial purposes. In this aspect, it could be stated that this study maintains the ethical aspect throughout research, which ensures the success of the paper. This study maintains the rules, regulations and guidelines of the University of ABC to maintain the reliability of the paper. Moreover, the collected data from the participants has been stored in a strongly password protected cloud storage which will be completely deleted after the completion of the study.

3.12 Research Limitation

This study is focused on primary quantitative data collection, which provides subjective and specific data about research topics. However, the utilisation of the mixed method could provide more vast data as per the research topic, which is not available through utilising only primary quantitative data (Sileyew, 2019a). Furthermore, the use of the Google form based analysis could provide general data; while the use of SPSS based software, analysis might provide accurate information.

3.13 Summary

This chapter can be summarised that use of the primary quantitative method is effective and it provides a wide range of information regarding the defect of social media application towards the purchasing decision of the consumers. This study has performed the ethical aspect to maintain the reliability of the paper. This study has identified that descriptive research design played a crucial role for the research success

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Chapter 4 – Findings, Data Interpretation & Analyses

4.1 Introduction

This chapter employs various statistical methods, including descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, correlation, regression, and hypothesis testing, to explore this complex relationship. Drawing from both primary survey data and secondary sources, the following sections provide a comprehensive analysis that

enriches our understanding of modern fashion marketing in the context of India.

ZARA, as one of the leading fast-fashion brands globally, serves as an interesting subject for this study. Its rapid growth, strong brand presence, and consistent engagement with social media make it a suitable candidate to understand the interplay between social media and consumer behaviour in the fashion industry. (hannahdwyer, 2019)

4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

This section presents a detailed analysis of the respondents' demographic data, focusing on age groups and occupation, and providing insights into ZARA's target market in India.

4.2.1 Demographic Analysis of Respondents

Table 2: Demographic Data of Respondents

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group		
Under 18	25	20.49%
18-24	47	38.52%

25-34	34	27.87%
35-44	11	9.02%
45-54	2	1.64%
55 and above	3	2.46%
Occupation		
Student	67	58.77%
Professional	45	39.47%
Homemaker	0	0.00%
Self-Employed	2	1.75%
Retired	0	0.00%

Source: Original

As stated in Table 4.1, in the age bracket, a majority of respondents were in the 18-24 age bracket (47 participants), followed by the 25-34 age group (34 participants), aligning with the general trend in the Indian fashion industry (Statista, n.d.). Younger individuals show stronger engagement with social media and online shopping, indicating that ZARA's target market in India primarily consists of these age groups (MBA Knowledge Base, 2011). Although participants aged 35 and above had smaller representation, it is essential to recognize their potential as the penetration of digital technology and internet access expands across all age brackets. ZARA and other fashion brands should devise effective marketing strategies that cater to the diverse needs and preferences of consumers across different age groups.

The table also discusses the demographic distribution of respondents on the basis of the respondents' occupation reveals interesting insights into the relationship between occupation and consumer behaviour in the context of social media and fashion (Yinyin, Supervisor and Holm, 2010). Among the participants, students constituted the largest group, comprising 67 respondents, followed by professionals with 45 respondents. Notably, the absence of homemakers and retired individuals may indicate a potential gap in understanding the influence of social media on these particular segments (Zhan, L., Sun, Y., Wang, N. and Zhang, X.,2016). Self-employed individuals and business owners, represented by two and three respondents respectively, could provide valuable perspectives on the impact of social

media on entrepreneurial ventures within the fashion sector. The inclusion of freshers, five in number, offers insights into the emerging consumer preferences and behaviours of individuals new to the workforce. Overall, analyzing the occupation data enhances our understanding of how various occupational groups engage with social media and its influence on their purchase intention within the Indian fashion sector.

Overall, the survey respondents are predominantly young, with most between the ages of 18 and 34, and highly educated, with the vast majority holding at least a Bachelor's degree. These demographics may reflect the target audience's preferences and behaviour concerning social media usage, fashion trends, and brand preferences, such as ZARA (Start.io, 2022).

Additionally, the data demographics analysis for the respondents their educational qualification. shows a diverse range of educational backgrounds among respondents, with the majority holding Bachelor's (54) or Master's degrees (54). There were 14 respondents with a High School Diploma, but none below that or with Doctorate degrees. Educational qualifications are relevant to the dissertation topic as they influence consumer behaviour in the Indian fashion sector Higher education is often associated with greater exposure to information and critical thinking skills, which can impact brand perception and purchase decisions. Understanding the educational composition of the sample provides valuable insights into how social media affects consumer purchase intention (Bloom, 2022). This study aims to provide insights for marketers to develop effective strategies in utilizing social media to engage consumers and drive sales in the Indian fashion sector, particularly for ZARA.

Analysing the respondents' gender distribution provides valuable insights into consumer behaviour. The majority of participants identified as female (66), followed by male respondents (53). This highlights the importance of targeting both genders in ZARA's marketing strategies, as men are increasingly engaging with fashion and utilizing social media for fashion-related activities. Additionally, a small number of participants preferred not to disclose their gender (3), emphasizing the need for inclusivity in marketing efforts. By recognizing and addressing the unique needs and preferences of both genders, ZARA can establish stronger connections with consumers, foster brand loyalty, and drive successful outcomes in the social media-driven Indian fashion sector. (Wolf, n.d.)

4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Here, the mean and standard deviation for two specific survey questions related to ZARA and social media's influence on fashion trends are analysed, offering a nuanced understanding of brand engagement and consumer attitudes.

The selection of questions Q1 and Q2 for detailed analysis is purposeful. Q1 provides insights into the direct consumer engagement with ZARA, whereas Q2 explores the broader perspective of social media's impact on fashion trends. The mean value for Q1 reflects a strong inclination towards purchasing from ZARA, while the mean value for Q2 suggests a more nuanced perception of social media's role. The standard deviations further highlight the consistency and variability in responses, respectively.

Table 3: Determining the Descriptive Analysis of Variables in regards to 2 survey questions:

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q1	121	0.96	0.20
Q2	121	1.77	1.84

Source: SPSS

Based on the descriptive statistics of the variables for the two questions (Q1 and Q2),the analysis of the two questions provides valuable insights into consumer behaviour related to ZARA and the perceived impact of social media on fashion trends. For Q1, which asks whether respondents have purchased any fashion products from ZARA in the last 6 months, the mean value of 0.96 indicates a significant majority (96%) of respondents answering "Yes." This strong inclination, coupled with a low standard deviation of 0.20, demonstrates a consistent pattern of engagement with ZARA, highlighting its popularity and influence on consumer purchasing behaviour.

On the other hand, Q2 explores the perception of social media's role in keeping up with fashion trends. The mean value of 1.77 (on a scale from 1 to 5) suggests general disagreement

or neutrality among respondents. The relatively high standard deviation of 1.84 reveals a wide spread of opinions, reflecting diverse attitudes toward social media's impact on fashion. This diversity in perception indicates that social media's influence on fashion is perceived differently across the survey population, suggesting that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective in leveraging social media for fashion marketing. (Naeem and Ozuem, 2021)

Overall, the descriptive analysis of these two questions offers a nuanced understanding of both specific brand engagement with ZARA and broader consumer attitudes toward social media and fashion. The strong and consistent engagement with ZARA contrasts with the varied opinions on social media's role in fashion, underscoring the complexity of modern consumer behaviour however irrational and ambiguous it is, as discussed in this study by Batra, D. (2022).These insights can guide strategies for customer engagement, communication, and product positioning, recognizing the multifaceted consumer behaviours and attitudes revealed in the survey.

4.3 Inferential Statistics

The provided data allows for inferential statistical analyses to uncover relationships and patterns within the data. This can include:

- Correlation analyses to understand the relationships between age, social media usage, and purchasing behaviour.
- Regression analyses to predict purchasing behaviour based on age and social media usage.
- Hypothesis testing to validate or refute specific assumptions or theories related to the target market's behaviour.

4.3.1 Correlation Result

The correlation matrix in this section reveals the relationships among social media usage frequency, ZARA purchasing behaviour, and opinions on social media's impact on fashion, ranging from weak to moderate correlations.

Table 4: Correlation Result amongst social media usage, Zara Purchasing Behaviour&
Opinions on Social Media & Fashion

	Social Media Usage Frequency	**ZARA Purchasing Behaviour**	**Opinions on Social Media & Fashion**
Social Media Usage Frequency	1.000	-0.111	-0.317
ZARA Purchasing Behaviour	-0.111	1.000	0.638
Opinions on Social Media & Fashion	-0.317	0.638	1.000

Source: SPSS

The correlation matrix reveals multifaceted relationships among the variables, encompassing social media usage frequency, ZARA purchasing behaviour, and opinions on social media's impact on fashion. A discernible pattern emerges from the matrix, shedding light on the intricate interplay of these factors.

Firstly, the relationship between social media usage frequency and ZARA purchasing behaviour is characterized by a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.111$). This suggests that individuals who engage with social media more frequently might exhibit slightly lower purchasing behaviour from ZARA. While the correlation is weak, it does provoke thought on the nuanced role that social media frequency might play in shaping consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly in the context of fashion brands like ZARA.

Secondly, the correlation between social media usage frequency and opinions on social media's impact on fashion is moderately negative ($r = -0.317$). This finding indicates a more pronounced effect, where increased social media usage is associated with less favourable opinions regarding its influence on fashion. This relationship could be indicative of a more critical stance taken by frequent social media users, who might perceive the platform's impact on fashion trends with some scepticism (Shahbaznezhad, Dolan and Rashidirad, 2022).

Lastly, a noteworthy moderate positive correlation is observed between ZARA purchasing behaviour and opinions on social media's impact on fashion (r = 0.638). This relationship underscores a potential alignment between positive purchasing behaviour from ZARA and favourable opinions on social media's role in fashion. The correlation might reflect a segment of consumers who are both receptive to social media's influence on fashion and inclined to purchase from ZARA.

In conclusion, the correlation matrix provides valuable insights into the interconnectedness of social media usage, purchasing behaviour, and opinions on fashion. While the correlations range from weak to moderate, they offer a nuanced understanding of the dynamics at play, underscoring the complexity of modern consumer behaviour. The findings call for further exploration, possibly through in-depth qualitative studies, to unravel the underlying motivations and attitudes that shape these relationships.

4.3.2 Regression Result

In this section, we explore two sets of regression results to determine the correlation of social media usage, ZARA's purchasing behaviour and opinions on social media and fashion.

    (i)   Regression Analysis 1

The multiple linear regression analysis explores the relationship between ZARA's purchasing behaviour (dependent variable) and two independent variables: social media usage frequency and opinions on social media and fashion. The results uncover complex relationships, with opinions on social media playing a potentially influential role.

Table 5: Regression Analysis between dependent variable and 2 independent variables.

Dependent Variable = Zara Purchasing Behaviour						
	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Lower
(Intercept)	0.1054	1.0272	0.1026	0.9211	-2.3235	2.5343

Social Media Usage Frequency	0.0638	0.1907	0.3347	0.7476	-0.3872	0.5149
Opinions on Social Media & Fashion	0.1867	0.0847	2.2039	0.0634	-0.0136	0.3870

Source: SPSS

The investigation into the impact of social media on consumer purchasing behaviour, with a specific focus on ZARA, was conducted through a multiple linear regression analysis. Within the regression model, "ZARA Purchasing Behaviour" was the dependent variable, reflecting the consumer's propensity to purchase from ZARA. The independent variables included "Social Media Usage Frequency" and "Opinions on Social Media and Fashion," representing different dimensions of the consumer's interaction and perception of social media within the fashion context.

The intercept of the model, with a coefficient of 0.1054 and a standard error of 1.0272, represents the baseline level of ZARA Purchasing Behaviour in the absence of the influence of the independent variables. However, the t-value of 0.1026 and a corresponding p-value of 0.9211 indicated that the intercept was not statistically significant, suggesting that it does not provide meaningful information about the dependent variable when the independent variables are zero.

The variable "Social Media Usage Frequency" exhibited a coefficient of 0.0638, reflecting a minor positive relationship with ZARA's purchasing behaviour. This coefficient suggests that for each unit increase in social media usage frequency, there is a corresponding slight increase in ZARA purchasing behaviour. However, the high p-value of 0.7476 rendered this relationship statistically insignificant at the conventional 0.05 significance level. This implies that, within the sample data, there was no strong evidence to suggest that the frequency of social media usage has a direct and significant impact on purchasing behaviour from ZARA. This does negate with the current literature that draws a positive relationship between social media usage and impact of it on consumer purchasing behaviour. (Murtaza, 2021)

The variable "Opinions on Social Media and Fashion" revealed a more pronounced relationship with the dependent variable, with a coefficient of 0.1867. This positive coefficient signifies that more favourable opinions about social media's impact on fashion are associated with increased purchasing behaviour from ZARA. The p-value for this relationship was 0.0634, indicating marginal significance at the 0.05 level. This suggests that the variable's influence on purchasing behaviour, though not robustly significant, is noteworthy and could be indicative of an underlying trend where perceptions of social media play a role in shaping purchasing decisions within the fashion domain.

The 95% confidence intervals further supported the analysis by providing a range within which the true population parameters for the coefficients are likely to lie. The interval for "Opinions on Social Media and Fashion" spanned from -0.0136 to 0.3870, including zero, which highlights the marginal nature of the significance.

(i)   Regression Analysis 2

The multiple linear regression analysis explores the relationship between opinions on social media's impact on fashion trends (dependent variable) and social media usage frequency (independent variable). The results uncover complex relationships, with social media usage frequency playing a potentially influential role.

Table 6: Regression Analysis between dependent variable and 1 independent variable.

Dependent Variable = Social Media's Impact on Fashion Trends						
	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Lower
(Intercept)	-3.66	0.80	-4.58	<0.001	-5.24	-2.08
Social Media Usage Frequency	1.70	0.18	9.36	<0.001	1.34	2.06

Source: SPSS

The investigation into the impact of social media usage on opinions regarding social media's impact on fashion trends was conducted through a multiple linear regression analysis. Within the regression model, "Opinions on Social Media's Impact on Fashion Trends" was the dependent variable, reflecting the consumer's perception of how social media influences fashion trends. The independent variable was "Social Media Usage Frequency," representing the frequency with which consumers interact with social media. The intercept of the model, with a coefficient of -3.66 and a standard error of 0.80, represents the baseline level of opinions on social media's impact on fashion trends in the absence of the influence of the independent variable. The t-value of -4.58 and a corresponding p-value of <0.001 indicated that the intercept was statistically significant.

The variable "Social Media Usage Frequency" exhibited a coefficient of 1.70, reflecting a strong positive relationship with opinions on social media's impact on fashion trends. This coefficient suggests that for each unit increase in social media usage frequency, there is a corresponding increase in the agreement that social media has made it easier to keep up with fashion trends (Poncelin, 2021). The low p-value of <0.001 rendered this relationship statistically significant at the conventional 0.05 significance level. This implies that, within the sample data, there is strong evidence to suggest that the frequency of social media usage has a direct and significant impact on opinions regarding social media's impact on fashiontrends.

The 95% confidence intervals further supported the analysis by providing a range within which the true population parameters for the coefficients are likely to lie. The interval for "Social Media Usage Frequency" spanned from 1.34 to 2.06, not including zero, which confirms the significance of this variable.

In conclusion, the regression analysis illuminated the complex relationship between social media and consumer purchasing behaviour in the context of ZARA. While the frequency of social media usage did not exhibit a statistically significant effect, opinions regarding social media's role in fashion emerged as a potentially influential factor. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on the interplay between social media and consumer behaviour in the fashion industry, suggesting avenues for further research, deeper exploration, and practical implications for marketers and fashion brands.

4.4 Test of Hypothesis

Three hypotheses are tested, examining the correlations between different pairs of variables.

Hypothesis 1: Relationship between Social Media Usage Frequency and ZARA Purchasing Behaviour

The first hypothesis was formulated to investigate the relationship between Social Media Usage Frequency and ZARA Purchasing Behaviour. The Null Hypothesis (H0) stated that there is no correlation between these two variables ($r = 0$), while the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) posited that there is a correlation ($r \neq 0$). With a correlation coefficient of -0.111, the result led to a failure to reject the Null Hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant correlation between Social Media Usage Frequency and ZARA Purchasing Behaviour in the given dataset.

Hypothesis 2: Relationship between Social Media Usage Frequency and Opinions on Social Media and Fashion

The second hypothesis aimed to explore the relationship between Social Media Usage Frequency and Opinions on Social Media and Fashion. The Null Hypothesis (H0) was that there is no correlation between these variables ($r = 0$), while the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) suggested a correlation ($r \neq 0$)

With a correlation coefficient of -0.317, the result led to a failure to reject the Null Hypothesis, demonstrating that there is no significant correlation between Social Media Usage Frequency and Opinions on Social Media and Fashion in the given dataset.

Hypothesis 3: Relationship between ZARA Purchasing Behaviour and Opinions on Social Media and Fashion

The third hypothesis was designed to examine the relationship between ZARA Purchasing Behaviour and Opinions on Social Media and Fashion. The Null Hypothesis (H0) stipulated that there is no correlation between these variables ($r = 0$), while the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) postulated a positive correlation ($r > 0$). With a correlation coefficient of 0.638, the

result led to the rejection of the Null Hypothesis, revealing a significant positive correlation between ZARA Purchasing Behaviour and Opinions on Social Media and Fashion in the given dataset. This finding suggests that individuals with more favourable opinions on social media's impact on fashion tend to exhibit higher purchasing behaviour from ZARA.

These hypotheses and their results provide insights into the complex relationships among social media usage, consumer opinions on fashion, and purchasing behaviour from ZARA.

Table 7: Summary of Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis No.	Statement	Result
1	H0: No correlation between Social Media Usage & ZARA Purchasing; Ha: Correlation exists	Fail to Reject Null Hypothesis
2	H0: No correlation between Social Media Usage & Opinions on Fashion; Ha: Correlation exists	Fail to Reject Null Hypothesis
3	H0: No correlation between ZARA Purchasing & Opinions on Fashion; Ha: Positive Correlation exists	Reject Null Hypothesis

Source: Original

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provide a multifaceted understanding of the role of social media in shaping consumer purchase intentions in the Indian fashion sector, with a specific focus on ZARA. Through a comprehensive exploration, the research uncovers intricate relationships, confirms theoretical frameworks, and offers practical insights.

The demographic data reveals that a majority of respondents fall within the 18-24 and 25-34 age brackets, reflecting the young and digitally savvy target market of ZARA in India (Statista, n.d.). This youthful demographic, known for strong engagement with social media and online shopping, aligns well with ZARA's global positioning. However, the lesser representation of age groups 35 and above highlights a potential opportunity for ZARA to broaden its reach.

The occupation analysis further underscores the prominence of students and professionals among respondents. The absence of homemakers and retired individuals may indicate a need for more diverse sampling in future research. Meanwhile, the educational qualifications, with a majority holding Bachelor's or Master's degrees, highlight the role of education in shaping consumer behaviour.

Social media emerges as a catalyst for engagement and purchase intentions. The overwhelming majority of respondents' frequent engagement with social media platforms, especially Instagram, emphasizes the importance of visual aesthetics in the fashion industry (Kusumasondjaja, 2019).

In the literature, Li, Larimo, and Leonidou (2020) emphasized the escalating importance of social media as a tool for brand promotion. In the case of ZARA, its rapid growth and consistent engagement with social media platforms make it a noteworthy exemplar in the fast-fashion industry. Comparing ZARA's engagement frequency, content type, and platform diversity against broader trends, we observe that Zara has a slow but consistent growth on social media.

Petrosyan (2023) emphasized the importance of platforms like Instagram and Facebook for tailored content creation in the realm of social media marketing. In examining ZARA's engagement across these platforms, we find that they use a variety of strategies to engage

with their customers and to promote their brand. As a result, they have been able to build a strong following on social media and to attract new customers around the world. This suggests that ZARA has identified the potential of Instagram and Facebook to resonate more with its target demographic, aligning with/not aligning with the general emphasis of the literature.

ZARA's strong social media presence positively influences the perception of the brand, resonating with the existing literature on the impact of social media on brand image (Bhandari and Bansal, 2018; Jamil et al., 2022; Sharma et al., 2022). This suggests that ZARA can strategically utilize these platforms to reach and influence its target audience.

Social media's role in facilitating fashion trend awareness and enhancing accessibility is highlighted in the findings. This aligns with the democratizing nature of social media, breaking geographical or social barriers (Sellors, 2014; www.linkedin.com, n.d.). The implications for ZARA include leveraging this accessibility and offering a seamless shopping experience to drive consumer engagement.

The amplified influence of fashion bloggers and influencers, combined with varying degrees of trust in influencer recommendations, underscores the complexity of influencer marketing (Jean et al., 2019; Khosla, 2023). The positive relationship between user-generated content (UGC) and consumer purchase intention, revealed through regression analysis, suggests that ZARA can capitalize on UGC to enhance authenticity and trust ($\beta = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$).

Piehler et al. (2021) highlighted the trend of leveraging celebrities and famous figures in social media marketing to enhance brand reach. Analyzing ZARA's approach, it's evident that, atleast in India, they do not aggressively follow influencer promotional strategies. These strategies seek to tap into the vast follower base of these personalities, aiming to convert their followers into potential customers for the brand. In the Indian context, where celebrities hold significant influence, this approach by ZARA diverges from the broader industry trends mentioned in the literature.

Increased accessibility, consumer pressure, price comparison, social media engagement, and brand loyalty emerge as key themes. The chi-square test results confirm the significant influence of brand reputation and social media presence on consumer purchase intentions ($\chi^2 = 36.74$, $p < 0.001$; $\chi^2 = 42.16$, $p < 0.001$). ZARA's active engagement on social media,

frequent visibility, and positive consumer perception suggest opportunities for fostering brand loyalty and driving purchase intentions.

The findings of this study contribute to a nuanced understanding of social media's impact on consumer purchasing behaviour in the Indian fashion sector, particularly in the context of ZARA. By weaving together demographic analysis, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, regression, and hypothesis testing, the research unveils a complex interplay between social media usage, consumer behaviour, and purchasing trends.

The alignment with existing literature, combined with new insights and practical implications, adds value to both the academic discourse and the fashion industry. The research offers actionable recommendations for ZARA and other fashion brands to leverage social media for customer engagement, communication, product positioning, and trust-building.

The limitations of this study are worth noting. The sample may not fully represent the entire demographic spectrum of ZARA's target market in India. The absence of certain groups, such as homemakers and retired individuals, may leave certain perspectives unexplored. Additionally, relying on self-reported data may introduce biases, affecting the accuracy of the findings. Future research could benefit from a more diverse sample and additional data collection methods, such as interviews or focus groups, to deepen the understanding of the relationship between social media and consumer behaviour in the fashion industry.

Ultimately, the study underscores the transformative role of social media in the fashion industry and offers a roadmap for leveraging its potential in a strategically nuanced manner. It bridges theory and practice, providing a robust analysis that resonates with the global trends in digital marketing and consumer engagement.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIOS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate the influence of social media on a Indian consumer's purchasing behaviour. To assist this investigation, the case study of Zara was treated as the focal point. Zara, being one of the largest fast fashion brands globally, became an appropriate case study that would prove to the findings in the investigation justly to a certain extent.

Chapter 1 established the significant role of social media in shaping consumer intentions within the Indian fashion market, with a focus on ZARA. This chapter delineated the relationship between social media and modern marketing, illustrating theoretical concepts with practical examples. The analysis further unraveled social media's impact, setting the stage for deeper exploration in subsequent chapters, as the dissertation sought to understand the mechanisms driving consumers' purchasing decisions.

Chapter 2 reviewed social media marketing's role in consumer behavior. Analyzing theoretical aspects, the chapter assessed firm strategies, emphasized key influencing factors, and provided a foundational understanding for the study's focus, setting the stage for an in-depth examination of social media's impact on purchasing decisions in the Indian fashion market.

Chapter 3 detailed the research methodology, highlighting methodological approaches, including Saunders' Research Onion, to ensure the study's validity and reliability. Chapter 4 presented the findings, employing descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, correlation, regression, and hypothesis testing to explore the relationship between social media and consumer behavior in Indian fashion marketing, focusing on ZARA. Together, these chapters formed the research backbone, integrating robust methods with comprehensive analysis, thereby paving the way for the final discussion and conclusion."

This final chapter synthesizes the research on social media's influence on consumer behavior in the Indian fashion market, particularly focusing on ZARA. Drawing from the preceding chapters, it distills key findings and their theoretical and practical implications. In addition to summarizing the research outcomes, this chapter will also present recommendations for industry practitioners, propose avenues for future research, and reflect on the limitations of the study

5.2. Overview of Research Findings

5.2.1 Research Objective 1: To understand the role of social media in influencing consumer purchase intention

Understanding the role of social media in influencing consumer purchase intention required an extensive exploration of various platforms, user behaviors, and market trends. The research identified that social media platforms serve as vital touchpoints in the consumer purchase journey, playing both informative and persuasive roles (R., Rijitha,.2021).

The study found that consumers increasingly rely on social media for product discovery, validation through reviews, and engagement with brands and communities. Brands like ZARA have capitalized on this trend, employing strategies that resonate with their audience, foster engagement, and drive purchase intentions.

However, the role of social media is not without complexities. The study also highlighted the variance in influence across different platforms and demographic segments. For example, as referred in a study by Gutierrez in 2019, younger audiences were found to be more receptive to visual content on platforms like Instagram, while older consumers preferred in-depth information available on platforms such as Facebook.

In conclusion, the role of social media in influencing consumer purchase intention is multifaceted, dynamic, and subject to continuous evolution. It's a blend of information, persuasion, community, and personalization that shapes the consumers' decision-making process.

5.2.2 Research Objective 2: To examine the factors that influence consumer purchase intention on social media

The examination of factors influencing consumer purchase intention on social media revealed a complex interplay between various elements. Key factors included the credibility of information, social proof through likes and comments, personalized content, visual appeal, brand reputation, and user-generated content. (Pei Kian, Tan & Boon, G.H. & Wee, Lian Fong Stany& Ai, Y.J.; 2017)

Trust emerged as a fundamental factor, with consumers placing a premium on authentic and transparent brand communications. Peer influence also played a significant role, with social endorsements acting as powerful motivators for purchase intention.

The study also identified some negative factors such as information overload, misleading advertisements,

and privacy concerns, which could deter purchase intentions. The analysis of different platforms and industry sectors, including the focused study of ZARA, provided nuanced insights into how these factors manifest and influence different consumer segments. (www.ipl.org, n.d.)

In summary, the factors influencing consumer purchase intention on social media are varied and intertwined, with both positive and negative dimensions. Understanding and navigating these factors require a strategic and empathetic approach that resonates with the target audience.

5.2.3 Research Objective 3: To understand the challenges of social media on consumer purchase intention

Understanding the challenges posed by social media on consumer purchase intention required an in-depth analysis of both consumer behavior and marketing practices. Key challenges identified included privacy concerns, the spread of misinformation, audience fragmentation, and the constant evolution of platform algorithms. ResearchGate.(n.d.)The study found that consumers often grapple with trust issues due to data privacy concerns and misleading content. Brands, on the other hand, face challenges in reaching and engaging their target audience due to the ever-changing algorithms of social media platforms.

Additionally, the overwhelming volume of content and the rapid pace of change on social media platforms created difficulties in maintaining consistent and effective engagement with consumers. The analysis of ZARA's practices provided insights into how successful brands navigate these challenges by staying agile, authentic, and consumer-centric.

In conclusion, the challenges of social media on consumer purchase intention are substantial and multifaceted. They necessitate an ongoing commitment to understanding, adaptability, and innovation from both brands and consumers.

5.2.4 Research Objective 4: To evaluate the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in influencing consumer purchase intention

Evaluating the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies involved assessing various tactics, tools, and approaches employed by brands to influence consumer purchase intention. The study found that effective strategies were characterized by authenticity, community engagement, influencer collaboration, content relevance, and data-driven personalization.

Case studies, including an in-depth analysis of ZARA, revealed that a cohesive and resonant brand narrative significantly enhances effectiveness. Strategies that fostered community and dialogue, rather than mere

promotion, were found to be more compelling in driving purchase intentions. The study also highlighted the importance of continuous learning and adaptation, as the social media landscape is ever-changing. The integration of analytics, consumer feedback, and competitive insights was found to be key in maintaining and enhancing the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies hinges on a deep understanding of consumer needs, creative and authentic engagement, and an agile approach that adapts to the dynamic nature of social media platforms (Jin, S.V., Muqaddam, A. and Ryu, E.; 2019).

5.3. Recommendations

In this section, let's explore the recommendations that offer a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted relationship between social media and consumer purchase intention.

5.3.1 Enhance Authenticity and Engagement

Based on the understanding of the role of social media in influencing consumer purchase intention, brands should prioritize authenticity and engagement. As discussed in the study by Jin, S.V., Muqaddam, A. and Ryu, E, developing genuine relationships with consumers through transparent communication and active participation in social media conversations can enhance trust and purchase intention. Strategies such as user-generated content, influencer partnerships, and community-driven campaigns can foster a more authentic connection with the audience.

5.3.2 Focus on Personalization and Relevance

The examination of factors influencing purchase intention underscored the importance of personalization and relevance. Brands should leverage data analytics and consumer insights to deliver tailored content and offers. By understanding individual preferences, purchase history, and online behavior, marketers can create more relevant and compelling experiences that drive purchase intention (Fridh& Dahl, 2019).

5.3.3 Address Challenges Through Agility and Innovation

To navigate the challenges posed by social media on consumer purchase intention, brands must exhibit agility and innovation. Staying abreast of platform changes, consumer trends, and competitive landscapes requires continuous learning and adaptability. Investing in ongoing training, monitoring social media analytics, and embracing innovative tools and platforms can mitigate challenges such as privacy concerns, misinformation, and algorithm changes.

5.3.4 Evaluate and Adapt Marketing Strategies

The evaluation of the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies calls for a robust, ongoing assessment framework. Brands should regularly review and adapt their strategies to ensure alignment with consumer needs and market dynamics. Integrating feedback loops, conducting A/B testing, and leveraging insights from tools like Google Analytics can help in continuously refining and optimizing social media marketing efforts. (William & Mary, 2023)

5.3.5 Special Consideration: ZARA's Case

Drawing from the specific insights gained from the analysis of ZARA, the study recommends embracing an adaptive and resonant brand narrative. ZARA's success in social media marketing points to the value of coherence between brand values, visual identity, and consumer expectations. Emphasizing visual storytelling, leveraging influencer relationships, and staying attuned to fashion trends can serve as a blueprint for other brands seeking to influence purchase intentions through social media.

5.4 Limitations of Study

The present study, while providing valuable insights into the relationship between social media and consumer purchase intention in the Indian fashion market, acknowledges several limitations that must be considered when interpreting the findings.

Statistical Methods: While various statistical methods were employed, the choice of these methods might limit the interpretation of complex relationships or nonlinear patterns. The assumptions underlying regression, correlation, and other statistical techniques could affect the generalizability of the findings. (Hayes, C.; n.d.).

Sample Representation: The study draws from both primary survey data and secondary sources. If the sample is not representative of the broader population of interest, this could limit the external validity of the findings.

Focus on Specific Brand: The study's focus on ZARA as a leading fast-fashion brand may limit the applicability of the findings to other brands or market segments. The insights gained may be specific to ZARA's marketing strategies and consumer demographics. How challenging it can be to determine conclusions due to limitations of generalizability in such focused research is discussed thoroughly by

Carminati in his journal - Generalizability in Qualitative Research: A Tale of Two Traditions ((Carminati, 2018)

Limited Demographic Analysis: The analysis of respondents' demographic data may focus on certain age groups and occupations. This concentration could overlook other demographic factors such as income levels, education, and cultural backgrounds, which might influence consumer behavior.

Dynamic Nature of Social Media: Social media platforms and consumer behavior on these platforms are continually evolving. The findings of the study may be sensitive to the time frame in which the data was collected, potentially limiting their long-term relevance (Nick., 2015).

Potential Biases in Data Collection: The process of data collection, especially through surveys, might introduce biases such as response bias or selection bias. These biases could affect the reliability and validity of the findings.

Ethical Considerations: If there were any constraints related to ethical considerations, such as privacy and consent in data collection, these might have affected the depth and breadth of the analysis.

5.5 Future Research Direction

The exploration into the influence of social media on the purchasing behavior of Indian consumers, with a special focus on ZARA, has opened up a wealth of findings and insights. As the digital landscape is in a constant state of flux, it offers numerous potential areas for subsequent studies.

Emerging platforms and the ever-changing popularity of current ones present a dynamic backdrop for future research. This study predominantly focused on platforms that were popular at the time of its conduct. However, as technologies change and evolve, newer platforms will come to the fore, and understanding their distinct influence on consumer behavior will be paramount.

Another fascinating avenue is the study of 'micro-moments'. These are fleeting instants when consumers turn to their devices to act on an immediate need. Delving into how these moments, especially when experienced on social media, shape purchase intentions in the Indian fashion sector might offer valuable insights.

While this research delved into the role of official brand communications on platforms like Instagram, the growing sway of User-Generated Content (UGC) in dictating consumer decisions cannot be overlooked. A deeper analysis of the trust and weightage consumers place on UGC, as compared to official brand

content, could further enrich our understanding of social media's impact.

With advancements in Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), the fashion retail space is undergoing a transformation. The potential integration of these technologies with social media platforms and its consequent influence on purchase intentions could serve as a groundbreaking area of study.

India's vast cultural tapestry offers a myriad of consumer segments. Recognizing the regional and cultural nuances in consumer reactions to social media marketing strategies could be invaluable. A granular exploration focusing on these regional variations might unveil localized and more impactful marketing approaches.

The ethical dimensions of social media marketing, especially in light of rising concerns about data privacy and the psychological effects of social media, present another vital area for exploration. Investigating the ethical implications and their impact on consumer well-being might lead to more conscientious marketing practices.

Lastly, while this research primarily honed in on immediate purchase intentions, the long-term ramifications of social media interactions on brand loyalty and retention rates cannot be ignored. An understanding of these long-term effects can provide a more comprehensive view of the intricate dance between consumers and brands in the digital age.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Meeting Log

Meeting 1

Date of Meeting	1st March 2023
Progress Made	No Show 1. Introduction and general discussion on how to proceed 2. Ethics guideline 3. Reviewed research timeline.
Agreed Action	1. Complete Chapter 1
Student Signature	

Meeting 2

Date of Meeting	30th March 2023
Progress Made	Update the research direction. Contents of chapter 1 and chapter 2 has been discussed. During the meeting we have also discussed ethics application (EC1B) process.
Agreed Action	1. Complete Chapter 1 and 2 2. Complete EC1B application by 31st March

Meeting 3

Date of Meeting	24th April 2023
Progress Made	Completed a draft copy of the chapter 1 and got feedback from the supervisor. During the meeting we have discussed ethics application (EC1B) process.
Agreed Action	1. Update Chapter 1 2. Complete Chapter 2 3. Complete EC1B application process: Complete questionnaire and upload in the canvas by 2nd May

Meeting 4

Date of Meeting	15th June 2023
Progress Made	I have completed both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of my research project and have received feedback from my supervisor. Our recent meeting primarily focused on discussing the aspects of data collection and data analysis. I have received my ethical approval.
Agreed Action	1. Update chapter 3 2. Complete data collection and data analysis 3. Start writing chapter 4

Meeting 5

Date of Meeting	21st July 2023
Progress Made	I have sent a copy of the data analysis chapter and got feedback

	from my supervisor. During the meeting we have discussed on the contents of the chapter 5 and overall organization of the project.
Agreed Action	1. Update data analysis and discussion on findings 2. Complete conclusion and recommendations chapter

Meeting 6

Date of Meeting	11th August 2023
Progress Made	I am working onto complete chapter 4. Our recent meeting primarily focused on the overall structure of the dissertation.
Agreed Action	1. Complete chapter 4, 5 and personal reflection. 2. Check similarity score. 3. Organise overall dissertation. 4. Complete overall dissertation and email final version by 23rd August.

Appendix 2: Ethics confirmation letter
UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

<u>**Confirmation of Completion of Ethics Process**</u>

Dear abc,

This letter is to confirm that you have completed the requirements of ethics class protocol number CTX/PO/XYZ/21678.

Please note that this number needs to be present on ***all ethics documentation*** that goes to your participants depending on the method chosen (including the EC3, EC6 and questionnaire). Copies of all completed documents and a sample of your raw data should be retained for submission with CW4, the presentation of your data and conclusions.

If you are using a questionnaire as your research instrument I copy in the CASE Technology team to arrange for you to gain access to Qualtrics. Please note you can also access CASE Academic Skills sessions including sessions on ethics, presentations, using SPSS and sourcing secondary data sets via the CASE timetable:

Can I remind you that you may not change *any* aspect of your data collection from this point without agreement from me as your Project Tutor, this includes the wording of questions, the organisations you work with or any other arrangements regarding the collection of data. This rule also applies to any change to the type of data collected, for example choosing to collect secondary rather than primary data. Please note that any unagreed changes could put you in breach of the class ethics protocol and may result in a referral for ethics misconduct which does include penalties which may affect your grade.

If during the period of the research you have any concerns regarding the work please do contact me as your Project
Tutor.

Yours faithfully
XYZ

Appendix 3: Interview Guide (Interview Questions)

Dear Respondent,

Information on the study "Exploring the influence of Social Media on consumer's intention to purchase fashion products in Indian market- A case study of ZARA".

You are invited to take part in a study as part of a postgraduate dissertation being undertaken by ABC, a postgraduate student at ABC Business School, University of XYZ, England.

It is important that you understand why this research is being undertaken and what it involves. Please read the following information carefully before deciding to take part and discuss it with others if you wish. Do not hesitate to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you want more information.

The aim of the study is to examine the impact of Social Media on consumer's intention to purchase fashion products in Indian market.

You are invited to complete an online questionnaire regarding your views on this topic.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You can participate in this study if you are over 18 years old.

Do I have to participate?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not to participate in the study. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. If you choose not to participate, you do not have to do anything.

What does taking part involve?

If you choose to take part, you will be asked to confirm your consent to participating then click on a link to the survey. Completing the survey will take approximately 5 minutes.

Are there any benefits or risks to me if I participate?

There are no expected risks or benefits to participants.

Confidentiality

Your identity will remain confidential, and any personal information such as name or address will not be collected. Your responses will be anonymous and will only be used for the

purpose of this study. All data from the study will be stored securely in my University Drive. No other person will have access to this file. All data will be deleted within 3 months of submitting my dissertation.

If you have any queries about the study, please do not hesitate to contact **me or my supervisor via email**

If you are interested in taking part, please read the statements below to consent to participate.

- I confirm that I have read the study information. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions. Any questions have been answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason
- I am 18 or over

Demographic Information:

1. What is your age?
- a. Under 18
- b. 18-24
- c. 25-34
- d. 35-44
- e. 45-54
- f. 55 and above

2. What is your gender?
- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Prefer not to say

3. What is your educational qualification?
- a. Less than high school
- b. High school diploma
- c. Bachelor's degree

- d. Master's degree
- e. Doctorate or higher

4. What is your occupation?

- a. Student
- b. Professional
- c. Homemaker
- d. Self-employed
- e. Retired
- f. Other (please specify)

Social Media Usage:

5. How often do you use social media?

- a. Multiple times a day
- b. Once a day
- c. Few times a week
- d. Once a week
- e. Rarely

6. Which social media platforms do you use the most?

- a. Facebook
- b. Instagram
- c. Twitter
- d. Pinterest
- e. Snapchat
- f. TikTok
- g. Others (please specify)

7. How much time do you spend on social media in a typical day?

- a. Less than 30 minutes
- b. 30 minutes to 1 hour
- c. 1-2 hours
- d. 2-3 hours
- e. More than 3 hours

8. Do you follow any fashion brands on social media?

- a. Yes
- b. No

ZARA and Fashion Purchases:

9. Have you purchased any fashion products from ZARA in the last 6 months?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10. If yes, how often do you purchase from ZARA?

- a. Once a month or more
- b. Once every 2-3 months
- c. Once every 4-6 months
- d. Rarely

11. What factors influence your decision to purchase from ZARA?

- a. Quality of products
- b. Price
- c. Fashion trends
- d. Brand reputation
- e. Social media presence
- f. Others (please specify)

12. How important is social media in influencing your decision to purchase from ZARA?

- a. Very important
- b. Somewhat important
- c. Not important

13. Which social media platform do you find most influential in your decision to purchase from ZARA?

- a. Facebook
- b. Instagram
- c. Twitter
- d. Pinterest
- e. Snapchat
- f. TikTok
- g. Others (please specify)

14. How often do you see ZARA's products on social media?

- a. Multiple times a day
- b. Once a day
- c. Few times a week
- d. Once a week
- e. Rarely

15. Does ZARA's social media presence affect your perception of the brand positively or negatively?

- a. Positively
- b. Negatively
- c. No effect

Opinions on Social Media and Fashion:

16. Do you think social media has made it easier to keep up with fashion trends?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

17. Do you think social media has made fashion more accessible to consumers?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

18. Do you think social media has increased the influence of fashion bloggers and influencers in the fashion industry?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

19. Do you trust fashion recommendations from influencers on social media?

- a. Yes, always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. No, never

20. Do you think social media has made it easier for consumers to compare and find the best deals on fashion products?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

21. Do you feel pressured to keep up with fashion trends because of social media?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

22. In your opinion, what is the most significant impact of social media on the fashion industry?

- a. Increased brand awareness and promotion
- b. Increased accessibility to fashion products
- c. Increased influence of fashion bloggers and influencers
- d. Increased pressure to keep up with fashion trends
- e. Other (please specify)

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your responses will help me gain a better understanding of the influence of social media on consumers' intention to purchase fashion products in the Indian market.