What Fad Apparel Generation Z Consumers Purchase in Kolkata? A Study of Selected Fast Fashion Brands

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Abstract

The emergence of product quality and ease of payment factor is an important factor influencing the purchase decision of generation z consumers in the fast fashion category. Consumers' concerns about brands sustainability are growing, and the fashion sector has a big impact on the environment. Fast fashion companies are frequently condemned for contributing to environmental destruction and worker abuse because they create low-cost, trendy items fast and on a huge scale. Youth shoppers desire to appear confident in public and to have their fashion selections praised by their peers. They want to appear fashionable and up to date, therefore they are more likely to purchase items that their friends or influential people promote. The purpose of the study is to pinpoint the major variables and factors that affect Generation Z consumers in Kolkata's decision to buy fast fashion clothes. The study revealed that among Generation Z customers in Kolkata, "Product Quality and Ease of Payment," "Brand's Eye for Sustainability," and "Social Acceptance" are the main influences on purchasing decisions for fast fashion items. The paper offers suggestions for suitable marketing and other techniques to enhance the fast fashion firms' reputations for quality and sustainability to draw in and retain customers.

Keywords: Generation Z, Fast fashion, Brands sustainability, Purchase decisions, Product quality, Ease of payment.

Introduction

With liberalization, globalization and privatization reforms (LPG) in 1991, India opened up to the entire world and welcomed enormous magnitudes of trade and commerce which over the next few decades that helped in establishing itself as a major economic power. With the change in the macroeconomic scenario over the years, the entire country has also undergone numerous changes in the micro level which in-turn impacted the overall business scenario as well as the behaviour of the consumers (1). With increase in the disposable income and the emergence of nuclear family structures, the priorities of the Indian consumer have seen variations to a great degree. Purchase of goods of fashion, personal care and entertainment has increased manifold. Purchase of apparel from various brands to be in line with the international fashion standards has also seen a stark growth (2).

While Indian consumers of all age groups seem to attach a great degree of importance to keeping up with the global standards, the generation Z, who are, people born between 1995 and 2012 arguably is the group most influenced to change or enhance their purchase behaviour based on the global trends. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) 2019-21, 52% the Indian population is below 30 years of age which indicates that the potential of fashion brands both Indian and International are practically limitless. In such a situation, luxury apparel brands do stand a strong ground owing to their master craftsmanship and unique designs but naturally they come with a colossal price-tag which might not at all be feasible for the Generation Z consumers. Solving this problematic aspect of fashion saw the emergence of "fast-fashion brands" or fads (3). The main agenda of these brands is to bring apparel from "catwalk to the stores" in the minimum possible time. The offerings of these brands are mostly chic, trendy, and comfortable and most importantly pocket-friendly (4). The amalgamation of all these factors contribute to exponential growth and popularity that the fast fashion brands are enjoying in the present time. Major fast fashion brands such as Hennes & Mauritz AB from Sweden better known as H&M or Zara from Spain or Forever21 from the United States, Uniqlo from Japan, etc. are enjoying

tremendous growth in the Indian marketplace spanning across both offline and online platforms. Hence with so much potential in the Indian market and especially with respect to the generation Z consumers, the fast fashion brands are always on the lookout to make their offerings superior in comparison their competitors and make the consumer's purchase process smooth and seamless to build brand loyalty and facilitate repeat purchases (5). Evidently, the purchase decision of the Generation Z consumers with respect to the fast-fashion brands is not driven by a single factor and hence the objective of this paper is to unearth the major underlying factors which might impact the generation z consumer's mind while making the purchase decision. This research's findings may help in understanding the purchase behavior in a better manner by tapping into the consumers' mind and have practical utility in the marketplace.

Generation Z comprises of all the individuals that are born in the timespan between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, they are also referred to as the iGen, or the "Digital Native" generation. This generation is exceptional because they were raised in a time of tremendous technological advancement, social media, and political and social change. They are the first generation whose everyday lives include the internet and social media, and as a result, their experiences and viewpoints are very different from those of earlier generations (6). Understanding Generation Z and the effects they will have on society, politics, and the workforce is becoming more and more crucial as the eldest members of this generation hit their late 20s. In addition to already influencing how we live, work, and connect with one another, Generation Z's actions, beliefs, and attitudes are also likely to have a monumental effect on emerging trends. Consequently, there is an expanding body of research on Generation Z that examines subjects including their opinions towards politics and social issues, how they utilize technology, what they want to study and do for a living, and how they behave as consumers. Marketers, educators, employers, and governments who want to engage and influence this generation must understand its distinctive traits and interests. This paper explores the consumer behaviour of Generation Z, particularly in regard to fashion and sustainability, in an effort to better understand this generation. It is crucial to understand how Generation Z, who are

renowned for their social and environmental consciousness, approach their purchase decisions as the fashion industry continues to come under scrutiny for its social practices and environmental impact.

Fast fashion is a business strategy that prioritizes efficiency and affordability to introduce fresh clothing lines to the market as soon as possible. However, to stay up with the most recent fashion trends and consumer demand, fast fashion firms often create, produce, and sell their products in a matter of weeks as opposed to months. Fast fashion brands have grown quickly thanks to this strategy, becoming some of the biggest and most successful businesses in the fashion sector. The fast fashion business model has, however, also drawn criticism for its unfavourable effects on the environment and society. Fast fashion production is frequently linked to subpar labour practices, such as low pay, lengthy hours, and hazardous working conditions. Concerns regarding exploitation and violations of human rights arise as a result of the fact that many fast fashion companies outsource their production to nations with weak labour laws (7). Fast fashion companies still control a large portion of the fashion market, and customers continue to favour their goods (7). Numerous fast fashion companies have taken action to solve these problems, enacting sustainable sourcing procedures, enhancing working conditions in their supply chains, and encouraging the recycling and upcycling of apparel (8). The highly competitive scenario in the fast fashion market due the generation Z 's increasing contact with the industry fuelled the need for this study.

Fast Fashion in the Indian marketplace

In the current times, with the internet's rise to glory and the free mixing around of cultures and preferences of people all over the world, the taste of Indian consumers especially the generation z is heavily shaped by western influences (9). Thus fast fashion brands which have been popular in the western world for quite some time already are beginning to strengthen their position in the Indian marketplace as well as the Indian consumer's psyche. The lifestyles, clothing and the social media presence of their western counterparts heavily influence the purchase decision of the Indian Generation Z consumers. With the rise in popularity of entertainment

media such TV shows, movies and web series, the fashion choices of the consumers are also influenced by those portrayed on the entertainment platforms or channels (10). Few of the major players in the Indian fast fashion market are as Zara, H&M, Forever21, Mango, Vero Moda, Only, Jack & Jones, Max Fashion, etc. Arguably two most popular brands out of all the fast fashion brands present in the market are H&M and Zara. Here, a brief introduction of these two brands given which have been able to lure in the greatest number of Indian consumers and continue to grow by leaps and bounds.

H&M

Founded in 1947, Sweden's international apparel manufacturing company H&M or Hennes & Mauritz is one the most prominent players when it comes to the fast fashion industry. It is one of the biggest fashion retailers in the world with more than 5,000 outlets spread across more than 70 nations. Millions of customers all over the world now frequently purchase at H&M because of its stylish, reasonably priced clothing and accessories (11). The company has worked with prominent designers and celebrities to produce exclusive collections, and it offers a variety of products for men, women, and children. Although H&M has previously been under fire for its effects on the environment and labor policies, it has recently made an attempt to increase sustainability and social responsibility. The goal of H&M is to offer the best in fashion and quality. The company has made efforts to do this through programs like clothing recycling and collection as well as the use of sustainable materials in its goods.

Zara

In 1975, Spain's Amancio Ortega and Rosala Mera founded Spanish fast fashion superstar brand Zara. One of the leading fashion brands across the globe, Zara has more than 2,000 stores spread over more than 90 nations. Zara, which is well-known for its fast fashion business model, provides fashionable and decently priced clothing and accessories for adults as well as children (12). The business has wide recognition for its ability to quickly introduce new ideas to the market; frequently, merchandise enters stores just a few weeks after it is designed. With a focus on vertical integration and a decentralized decision-making process that allows for a high degree of flexibility and response to consumer demand, Zara has established a reputation for its innovative approach to fashion retail. The company has won praise for its creative marketing and advertising initiatives, as well as for its dedication to social responsibility and sustainability. Zara has taken action to solve these problems and has been commended for its work in these areas, despite receiving criticism in the past for its labor methods and environmental impact (13). The goal of Zara is to provide fashion that is both inexpensive and sustainable, and the company has gained popularity among shoppers looking for stylish, high-quality clothes at competitive prices all over the world.

Literature Review

Mohammed, 2018 reported that in generation z's lives, mobile technologies, most prominently smartphones, have become an extremely instrumental part of daily lives. This study aims to derive and establish a model that might explain some of the major aspects influencing smartphone purchase intention. The results of the investigation, which used multiple regression analysis and 447 Gen Z respondents' data, revealed that some of the most common and previously utilized deciding factors, such cost, usability, and convenience of use, are no longer significant. However, Gen-z consumers' purchase intention in regards to cellphones were significantly more influenced by options available for payment, perceived enjoyment, peer and influence of societal factors, design of product and product brand.

Saut & Saing, 2021 pointed out the incorporating concern for the environmental causes and willingness to pay with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study examines Generation Z's intentions to buy environmentally friendly products in nations which are considered to be as developing, Cambodia in particular. The questionnaire survey was conducted on generation Z Cambodians who are University students. The link between the constructs is examined in the study using structural equation modelling (SEM). The findings are in favor of a model that combines TPB with concern for the environment and willingness for payment. Concern towards environmental factors affects

both attitude and intent of purchase, with willingness for payment having the most significant impact and subjective norm having the least.

Djafarova & Bowes, 2020 emphasised that considering the fashion sector in the UK, this research study examines the marketing strategies mainly aimed for Instagram that have the greatest effectiveness in influencing Generation Z's impulse-based buying behavior. The study applies the Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm to the Instagram environment. The results of this study which is mainly qualitative in nature, drawing on eight in-depth focus groups, display that there are notable variations in gender in terms of impulse purchase behavior on Instagram. Instagram had a strong impact on increasing women's impulse purchase, but not among the male participants. A revised version of the Stimulus-Organism-Response model is put out for Instagram, with the conclusion that commercials, opinion leaders, and user-generated material serve as stimuli (S) in eliciting pleasant emotions (O), which in turn cause Generation Z females to make impulse purchases (R).

Kahawandala & Peter, 2020 found that how it's crucial to look at the variables that influence these customers' traits and behaviors in order to properly cater to their needs as members of generation Z. Despite the existence of models like capacity of the standard five-stage model and the Engel-Blackwell-Kollat model, which have been used in the past to study purchasing behavior, to take into account the particulars of this market niche is under question. In order to identify the unique elements impacting the purchase behavior of Generation Z, this study designed a research model based on extending the theory of planned behavior (TPB) that includes the additional factorial constructs of market mechanism, technology self-efficacy, and social identity. The verified model can be used to help forecast possible consumer adoption behavior and develop advantageous shopping environments.

Tabassum , Khwaja, & Zaman, 2020 stressed about the goal of their study was to determine how the two knowledge sources—namely, the businesses utilizing storytelling in advertising, and peers using electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) affect consumers. Also, among the constructs, the mediated role of persuasive knowledge was looked at. Quantitative research analysis was used to empirically examine the theoretical underpinnings. A sample of 304 Pakistani Generation Z respondents served as the source of the data. Using AMOS 22.0, structural equation modelling (SEM) was utilized for ascertaining the causal linkages. This study presents fresh data on the efficient eWOM and advertising based on narratives mobilization in Generation Z's context. The findings show that, in contrast to eWOM, narrative advertising has significant effects on Generation Z's purchasing inclinations.

Pham, 2021 emphasised in his study that aims to comprehend the influencers' effects on generation Z (Gen Z) in the internet space. The source credibility, TAM, IAM, and TPB theories have all been utilized in this article to determine the traits of influencers that have an impact on Gen Z customers' purchase decisions. A questionnaire made utilizing Google Forms with 24 pre-made questions was used for this research. Vietnamese Gen Z respondents completed a total of 464 valid questionnaires between November 2020 and January 2021. The analysis's findings demonstrated that, through the mediation of argument quality, perceived usefulness, and social influence, the elements of credibility of the influencer had a favorable effect on purchasing decisions of Generation Z.

Stringer & Mortimer, 2020 discovered ways to understand the manner in which values of the consumer affect ethical consumption in fast fashion industry's setting. A web-based questionnaire was utilized to collect responses relating to concern regarding the ethical and personal aspects regarding issues with worker and welfare of animals as well as concerns regarding the environment. 350 respondents responded to the survey on Amazon MTurk. A theoretically hypothesized model was developed and tested using factor analysis method and structural equation modelling. According to this research, values of self-transcendence and openness to change values have a positive impact on consumers' degrees of concerns based on ethics for issues relating to welfare of workers, protection of animals, and protection of environmental aspects in the fashion sector. Also, a consumer's level of concern for the

environmental factors and the welfare of animals influences their propensity to buy.

Michaela & Orna, 2015 confirmed about the relationship between fashion-conscious consumers, good and negative social media talk, and increase or decrease in purchasing intent. Using Google Drive, a self-administered online questionnaire was emailed to men and women between the ages of 21 and 65. Scales were modified and a questionnaire with 276 respondents was encoded. Using Step Wise linear regression, validated tests were carried out. The hypothesis that fashion-conscious shoppers are more deterred by a negative review posted on social media was proven. The study advanced understanding based on existing theories of the fashion-conscious market, social media's impact, and consumer behavior. The industry dealing with fast fashion, which embraced social media later, will need to adjust to social media's changing impacts.

Mrad, Majdalani, Cui, & Khansa, 2020 found on the major driving forces and effects of brand addiction in the relation to the two brand categories of namely-luxury and fast fashion. To learn more about the respondents' compulsive interactions with luxury and fast-fashion businesses, the authors conducted as many as 21 in-depth interviews in the United States. Several themes were revealed discussing the causes of fast-fashion and luxury brand addiction Fast-fashion brand addiction is fuelled by rapid updating of trend-driven goods, perceived value, and product assortments, whereas luxury fashion brand addiction is fuelled by self-expression, status consumption, and perceived quality. In terms of the outcomes, selectivity of style and the desire of more working came up as motifs for fuelling addiction to specific brands of luxury, yet social connections and financial worries emerged as recurring factors for addiction to some fast-fashion and luxury companies.

Ersoy & Fu, 2021 opined at investigating the relationships between consumer sustainability awareness and consumer willingness to buy sustainable clothes. Utilizing sample data from 209 Canadian Millennials, the researchers found that consumer knowledge and Consumers' propensity to buy sustainable apparel is directly a function of marketing efforts aimed at sustainable consumption. Sensitivity to price, however,

directly influences consumers' intention to purchase apparel that are eco-friendly. Customers who display more inclination towards clothing that are sustainable also demonstrate greater likeliness pay more for sustainable clothing. Also, Customers' choices for longevity affect their price sensitivity, which in turn affects their desire to purchase eco-friendly clothing.

Suo, Lu, & Lin, 2020 affirmed that the e-commerce model of pre-sale model in terms of apparel is a type of marketing strategy used by retailers to encourage consumption in actuality utilizing either partial or full payments from online customers. Reducing inventory, forecasting production, and boosting actual revenues are all advantages of the online clothes resale model. The acquired data is analyzed using SPSS21.0 and AMOS21.0 to test the initial model of customers purchase intent under the pre-sale model hypotheses, and then changes are made based on how valuable consumers perceive the product. By examining connections among felt advantage, perceived sacrifice, and perceived value, as well as the impact on purchase, this article analyses the of pre-sale mode's influence on consumers' buying intention.

Jaskulska, 2013 opined the goal of the study was to rank the factors and determine which ones are most effective at forecasting total service and product quality as well as customer satisfaction that results from both. A theoretical and empirical study was carried out to accomplish this. To set the stage for the investigation, various ideas focused on customer happiness, quality in and of itself, as well as service and product, were reviewed. A questionnaire based on SERVQUAL and Garvin's eight characteristics of product quality was developed and disseminated using the snowball approach in order to collect the statistical data for this study. 100 respondents completed the questionnaire as a result, and the information gathered from them was entered into SPSS 15.00. The research's final two sections analyze the questionnaire data and offer some suggestions.

Aribowo & Hadiprawiro, 2013 identified the variables that affected people's decisions to buy Zara in Surabaya and identified the variables that had the most impact on consumers' decisions to buy Zara. The criteria were acquired using secondary data from a literature review and

surveys distributed to female Zara customers using a convenience sampling design. The researchers next employed the Validity Test, Reliability Test, and, last but not least, the Structural Equation Modeling to analyze the data. The ten observable variables being investigated in this study are the result of it. The factors are learning, personality and brand personality, style and design, motivation, quality, store layout and atmosphere, opinion leadership, relative price, brand image, and family, which are ranked in descending order of strength and weighted based on standardized regression.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the key factors that influence the purchase decision of apparel from fast fashion brands among Generation Z.
2. To provide insights and recommendations for fast fashion brands on how to market their offerings efficiently, effectively and target their products to Generation Z consumers based on their purchase behavior and preferences.

To come up with feasible solutions of the problems envisaged in the objectives and in the research problem, primary data was collected from the Generation z consumers who are in regular contact with fast fashion brands often make purchases. Analysing the data at hand to statistically verify and bring forward important solutions was deemed to be the best fit option.

Research Methodology

This study is based on quantitative data which was gathered from numerous generation z consumers residing in Kolkata who regularly encounter fast fashion brands that aims to identify the various qualitative, psychological and benefit-oriented factors which influence generation z's purchase intention in regards to apparel from fast fashion brands. This study uses the convenience sampling technique; a structured questionnaire was sent to 114 generation z individuals out of which 106 responses were received thus yielding a response rate of 92.98%. Entirety of the data used for this study's purpose was gathered from the individuals residing in Kolkata. The time frame for the same was between 5th of March 2023 and 20th of March 2023.Furthermore, a Likert scale containing five points has been utilized in all the questions (apart from the demographic questions) to better understand the variations in responses and facilitate sound statistical analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire. The was entered and analysed into SPSS 21.00

Results

The underlying factors and variables were explored and finally found the factors actually influencing the purchase decision of apparel brands among Generation Z consumers. The study is dependent on a sample of participants from this demographic group, and data was collected through a survey instrument. The EFA [exploratory factor analysis] were employed to identify the factors that influence the purchase decision of apparel brands. Finally, insights were provided into the reliability and validity of the factor structure, as well as limitations that might potentially arise in course of the study.

The five demographic factors studied through the questionnaire formulated for this study's purpose are Gender, Age Range, Educational Qualification, Frequency of purchase of apparel from fast fashion brands and the monthly income level of the respondents.
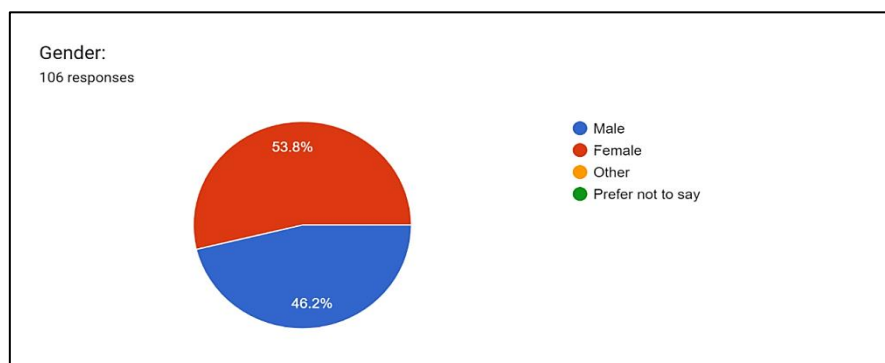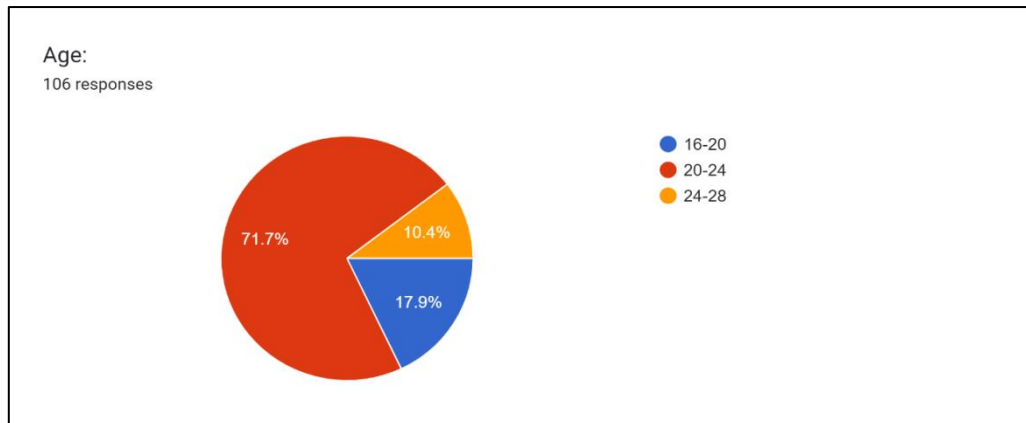

Figure1: Gender of Respondents

Figure 2: Age of Respondents

More number of females [53.8%] were the part of the study while the males stood at [46.2%] (Figure 1). Approximately 71.7% of the sample are of 23 years age (Figure 2).

Three options to choose from 16-20,20-24,24-28 keeping in mind the maximum possible age and minimum eligible age of a generation z individual.

Five options to choose from school level, pursuing graduation, graduate, post graduate and doctorate level as necessary qualification shown in Figure 3. Individuals who responded were required to showcase their level of monthly income as shown Figure 4. Figure 5 reflects the purchase frequency of respondents those interviewed.
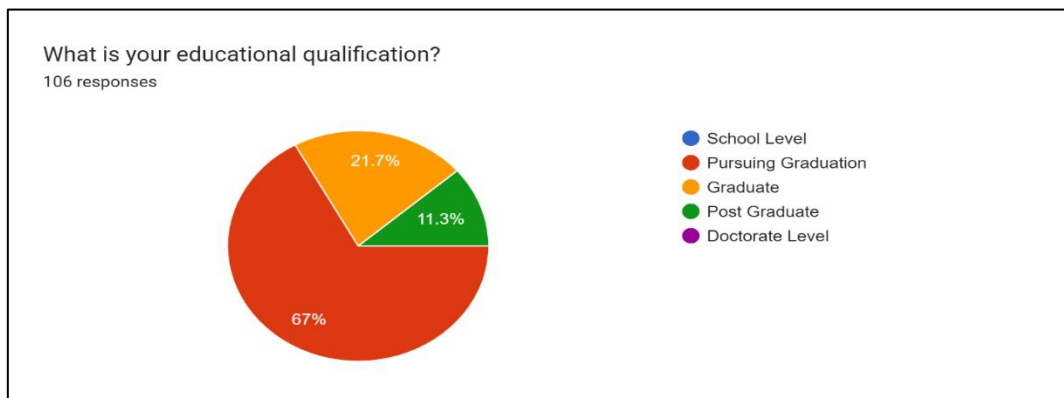

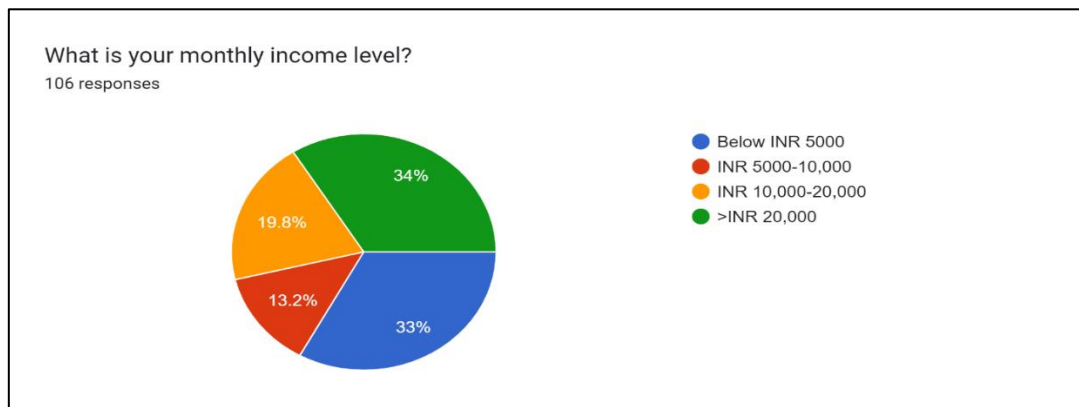**Figure 3:** Educational Qualification of Respondents
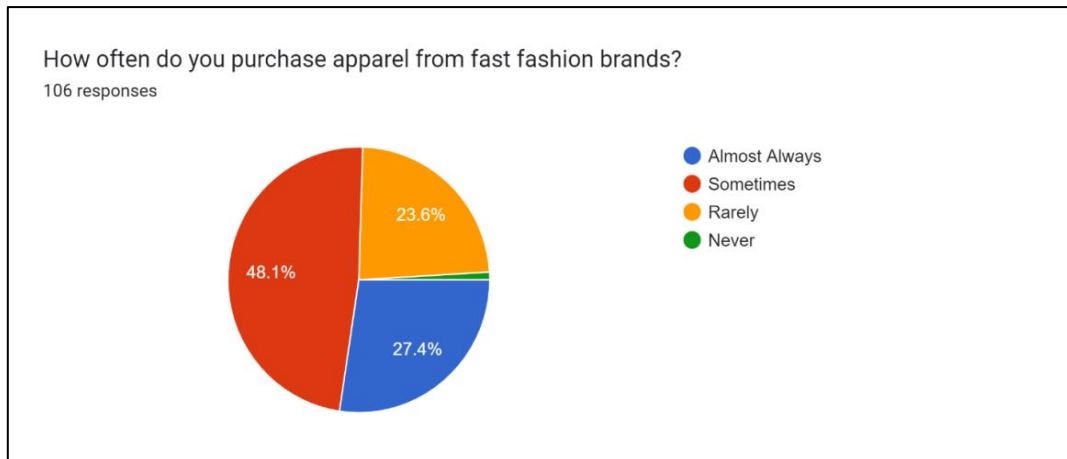

Figure 4: Income level of Respondents

Figure 5: Purchase Frequency of Respondents

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Peer_Worthy	106	4	2.8491	0.92368	0.853
App	106	4	4.2453	0.87081	0.758
Healthy_Labor_Practices	106	3	3.9245	0.82460	0.680
Good_Online_Reviews	106	3	4.3113	0.76049	0.578
Durable_Clothing	106	3	4.3396	0.70220	0.493
Public_Confidence	106	4	4.2830	0.71387	0.510
Offline_Stores	106	4	4.2830	0.83671	0.700
Waste_Reduction	106	3	3.9623	0.86106	0.741
Brand_Loyalty	106	3	4.1038	0.83870	0.703
High_Quality_Fabric	106	3	4.3491	0.81699	0.667
Social_Norms	106	4	3.2830	0.97350	0.948
Smooth_Payment	106	3	4.5283	0.73300	0.537
Less_Water_Wastage	106	4	3.7925	0.82482	0.680
PR_Position	106	3	4.0943	0.81098	0.658
Premium_Feel	106	4	4.4811	0.83073	0.690
Valid N (listwise)	106				

This question aimed at collecting data regarding the frequency of the respondents' purchase from fast fashion brands.

When examining Likert scale questions from a questionnaire using exploratory factor analysis (EFA), descriptive statistics are essential (Table 1). A method of statistically analyzing data called exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is used to find underlying factors or dimensions that explain the correlations between a group of observable data.

The distribution of answers to Likert scale questions, a crucial input for EFA, can be better understood using descriptive statistics. The measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) aid in determining the normal response to each query and show the nature and degree of the link between the observed variables. The metrics of variability (standard deviation and range) aid in determining the distribution of responses and level of data variance. Cronbach's alpha is a frequently used reliability metric. A statistical measure of internal consistency called Cronbach's alpha evaluates how well a scale or questionnaire's items connect to one another. A comparatively high Cronbach's alpha score indicates that the scale is dependable for measuring the target construct and that the scale's items are highly associated.

To ensure that the findings of a Likert scale truly reflect the attitudes, opinions, or perceptions of the participants, reliability testing is crucial. This can result in incorrect results and damage the research study's reputation. Hence, to guarantee that their Likert scale questions are reliable and can be used to precisely measure the construct of interest, researchers should do reliability testing, including Cronbach's alpha. This will improve the research study's overall quality and the validity of the research study's findings. In this study, after conducting the reliability analysis on the 15 scale questions added in the questionnaire used for the purpose of collecting data, the Cronbach's Alpha was observed to be 0.877 which reflects itself as

an acceptable value for explaining the internal consistency of the scale as shown in Table 2.

In this study's context, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) has been put to use to reduce, classify and identify the various factors which effect Kolkata's Generation z consumers' purchase decision in regards of fast fashion brands. The analysis is conducted on the gathered data through the Likert scale questions present in the structured questionnaire sent to the respondents using convenience sampling.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are generally conducted to find out if the sample is adequate to generate results from it which can be generalized for the entire population. Generally, in research, KMO test values of greater than 0.5 are considered to be acceptable and according to the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the significance value must be lesser than 0.05. Here on subjecting the collected data for the 15 Likert scale questions, the KMO test value was about to be 0.822 and the Bartlett's Test sig. value was found to be 0.000. Both these values indicate positive outlook in terms that the used sample is adequate for generating generalizable results and the significant value of Bartlett's Test is also <0.05 (Table 3).

The Likert scale questions used in the questionnaire which aimed to measure 15 different variables which may have an impact on Kolkata's Generation z consumers purchase behavior with reference to purchase from fast fashion brands, were subjected to Exploratory factor analysis in SPSS. The components were extracted by Principal Component Analysis (PCA) based on eigenvalues greater than 1. The Varimax technique of rotation with Kaiser Normalization was also used. The small coefficients of factor loadings with values less than 0.5 were suppressed to obtain the results.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.877	15

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.822
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	707.271
	df	105
	Sig.	0.000

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix			
	Component		
	1	2	3
Peer_Worthy			0.741
App			
Healthy_Labor_Practices		0.630	
Good_Online_Reviews			
Durable_Clothing	0.716		
Public_Confidence			0.717
Offline_Stores			
Waste_Reduction		0.735	
Brand_Loyalty			
High_Quality_Fabric	0.816		
Social_Norms		0.786	
Smooth_Payment	0.634		
Less_Water_Wastage		0.754	
PR_Position			
Premium_Feel	0.672		

Table 5: New Factors and Variables Involved

Name of factor	Variables involved
Product quality and ease of payment	Durable_Clothing
	High_Quality_Fabric
	Smooth_Payment
	Premium_Feel
Brand's eye for sustainability	Healthy_Labor_Practices
	Waste_Reduction
	Social_Norms
	Less_Water_Wastage
Social acceptance	Peer_Worthy
	Public_Confidence

The results of this test are enumerated with the aid of the rotated component matrix which follows.

Upon conducting the analysis, among the 15 variables subjected to the Exploratory Factor Analysis, 10 variables loaded under 3 components. With the usage of the Principal Component Analysis and Varimax Rotation along with Kaiser Normalization, the factor named "High_Quality_fabric" displayed the highest factor loading of 0.816 and factor named "Healthy_Labor_Practices" displayed the lowest degree of factor loading at 0.630 as shown in Table 4.

While observing the Exploratory Factor Analysis's results, it was seen that 10 variables loaded into 3 components, 3 major factors could be identified which each individually encompass the 10 factors. New factor names and their encompassed variables are encompassed in Table 5.

Thus, after thorough statistical analysis of the collected data of respondents of various demographic segments belonging to the population of interest to the study, three major factors emerged as the primary drivers for consumers to choose one brand over the other while purchasing apparel from any fast fashion brands. These factors namely are 'Product Quality and Ease of Payment, Brand's Eye for

Sustainability and Social Acceptance'. Improved marketing, operational efforts directed towards these factors may become the competitive strengths of the brands which already exist in the world of fast fashion or those which are eager to make an entry. The subsequent sections contain the final recommendations and observations from the researcher's point of view of how these factors can be leveraged by fast fashion brands, both established and new to grow by leaps and bounds.

Discussion

The Indian fashion industry is undergoing a drastic and tremendous changes. Thanks to the growing Gen Z and Millennials population and their purchase preferences. These two generations are influencing the future of fashion and apparel industry. They are the major contributors in the growth of online shopping. Demand for more ethical and sustainable clothing trends sets them apart from other group users. They are now acting as influencers and trendsetters of tomorrow. They always explore for new and innovative fashion trends. They opt for athleisure, personalization, diversity and inclusivity as a form of representation amongst other peer groups. The brands have to be careful and capture them by introducing new range of products, services, and well- crafted marketing campaigns with a focus on social media and other online platforms to attract and retain them. A successful marketer has to decode the four Cs pertaining to their overall well-being namely communication, comfort, community and convenience.

Conclusion

The aspirations of Generation Z consumers emphasize the necessity for fast fashion firms to concentrate on product quality, affordability, and sustainability. Companies can have a competitive advantage in the fast fashion market by putting these aspects first and communicating with consumers about them in an effective way.

This research offer insights on how the fashion industry can more effectively engage and cater to this influential generation by examining their attitudes, behaviours, and motivations towards fashion and sustainability. Gaining a thorough insight requires a grasp of how these components interact. Firms catering to Fast Fashion may want to completely rethink their offering, operational and marketing strategies and methods in order to be competitive and sustainable in the long run as consumers become more aware of the social and environmental consequences of their shopping decisions.

Abbreviations
Nil

Author contribution
Upon dwelling the available literatures, it might be concluded that previous studies are region/country specific in their findings. Very few studies are carried out in Kolkata as selected area for this topic. Therefore, this study contributes to the existing theories of knowledge and findings and laid a foundation that will guide other scholars to work in similar vertical.

Conflict of interest
There is no conflict of interest. The research paper is the original work of the author and that the paper has not been submitted for publication anywhere else. It does not infringe the rights of others and does not contain any libellous or unlawful statements & is free from conflict of interest to any parties whatsoever. Wherever required the author have taken permission and acknowledged the source. This research is not supported or sponsored by any funding agency.

Ethical approval
Not applicable

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