9 Consumer buying intention through apps

A case of fast fashion apps

Poppy Herold and Saloomeh Tabari

Abstract

Fast fashion persists as a low cost, high speed and resource intensive industry as the scale of global fast fashion continues to grow. Aiding this is the creation of mobile shopping apps that have not only simplified, but enhanced the shopping experience. In fact, fashion was the largest e-commerce segment worldwide, with a revenue of 759.5 billion dollars in 2022.

Mobile commerce (m-commerce), a subset of e-commerce, is a process in which a 'direct or indirect transaction with a monetary value is conducted through mobile devices via wireless networks'. It is coined as the fastest growing business model in the world with important implications for the fashion industry by allowing convenient purchases. Whilst research on fashion m-commerce is growing, cohesive research is lacking and there is little research into second-hand fashion m-commerce applications. Hence, this chapter will contribute to knowledge by reviewing the literature on consumer behaviour relating to fashion mobile application use. It will also investigate how this can be used to enhance the use of mobile applications that promote fast fashion alternatives. This will enable a conceptual framework to be curated that will help to increase the sustainability of the clothing sector, with recommendations of how the retail industry can benefit from developing more sustainable fast fashion alternatives through App.

Keywords: mobile commerce, fast fashion, second-hand fashion, sustainability, retail

Introduction

As we exist in the middle of a climate emergency, globalisation and commercialisation are driving consumerism to extremely unsustainable levels (Hayes, 2021). Both environmentally and socially, fast fashion is having detrimental impacts on the planet. This chapter contributes to knowledge by evaluating how to enhance the use of fast fashion m-commerce and discusses how this can be used to increase the sustainability of the fashion sector.

The clothing industry is known as the second most polluting industry, yet fast fashion persists as a low cost, high speed and resource intensive phenomenon. It represents the opposite of circularity, with $500 billion lost annually due to underutilisation (Environmental Audit Committee, 2019). As the scale of global fast fashion continues to grow and 93% of the population owns a smartphone (Federica Laricchia, 2022), mobile shopping apps have simplified and enhanced the shopping experience (Soni, Jain and Kumar, 2019). As a result, m-commerce provides an essential way of communication between business and consumer (Omar et al., 2021). M–commerce, a subset of e-commerce, is a process in which a "*direct or indirect transaction with a monetary value is conducted through mobile devices via wireless networks*" (Zheng et al., 2019). In 2022, fashion was the largest e-commerce segment worldwide, with a revenue of 759.5 billion dollars (Clark, 2022). M-commerce is coined as the fastest growing business model in the world (Almeida-Lucas, Lunardi and Bittencourt Dolci, 2023) with important implications for the fashion industry by allowing convenient purchases and tapping into users' emotional connections to their smartphones.

Through researching consumer intention to use fast fashion apps, more sustainable options can be promoted by capitalising on what drives consumers to complete m-commerce purchases (Becker-Leifhold and Heuer, 2018). Having said this, an equilibrium must be reached where m-commerce does not promote the throwaway culture that currently exists but allows people to shop more sustainably with ease. Therefore, new innovative models are needed to promote these behaviours and understand consumer intentions and needs.