

Impact of Social Media Advertising on Consumer Buying Intention in Fashion Retail Industry: Special Reference to Local Fashion Retail Chains with the Mediating Effect of Consumer Brand Relationship in Western Province of Sri Lanka

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The mass proliferation of social media and internet technology has created tremendous opportunities for both marketers and consumers. Hence, modern marketers are very keen to deepen their understanding regarding the purchasing behaviour of their consumers who buy using social media platforms. The present study aims to explore how social media marketing initiatives (such as entertainment, customisation, interaction, word-of-mouth, and trends) affect customers' intent to purchase local fashion retail brands, both directly and indirectly. The mediating impact of consumer-brand relationships is also analysed in this study. This study adopted a quantitative research approach. Hence, data was collected from 384 Facebook users by distributing a questionnaire. The findings of the analysis revealed that social media marketing and customer interactions had a noteworthy beneficial impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Furthermore, the entire mediation influence of customer relationships was also validated statistically. These findings provide valuable insight as to how fashion retailers can refine social media marketing activities to offer greater customer value and thereby generate greater traction. These findings also deepen the understanding of social media-based purchasing behaviour within the casual fashion industry in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Consumer Brand Relationship, Customisation, Entertainment, Interaction, Purchase Intention, Social Media Advertising, Trend, Word of Mouth*