

## **Social Media Engagement in Fast Fashion Retailing**

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### **Abstract**

**Objectives**– The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of social media engagement in fashion retail in order to answer the research question: what is the impact of social media in fast fashion consumption? **Data and Methods** – The paper is consisting of literature review and data analyses both on secondary (actual Romanian/global context) and primary data gathered from quantitative research. **Results and Conclusions** – Corroborating the literature review reveals and the research results, the paper recommends different strategies in social media sustainable engagement for fast fashion retailers and alternatives for enhancing collaborative consumption. Although the pandemic has generated new consumption trends even in the retail fashion area and a more responsible attitude towards waste consumption is highlighted, the influence in social media has a surprising impact in buying behavior of fashion products. Thus, the fast fashion industry is still maintained by a high shopping appetite appreciated to manifest itself especially in less developed countries as a result of the lack interest for the purpose of green consumption. In close connection with the income factor but also with age, collaborative consumption in retail fashion has an important role in the circular economy and the influence of social media must also aim at renting and the resale of fashion products.

**Keywords:** Fashion Retailing, Social Media Engagement, Social Media Influencers, Sustainable Consumption, Collaborative Consumption, Fast Fashion

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## **Who is Who on Social Networks? Shaping SNS Users' Profile according to Their Level of Participation in Fashion Product Recommendations**

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### **Abstract**

The spread of the Internet has turned e-commerce into a social phenomenon, as consumers are increasingly relying on each other and seeking online for informational support even before making purchases. In this new context, social networks have evolved to become the ideal tool for consumers to generate their purchasing opinions. Therefore, it is common for SNS users to participate and generate such opinions on them instead of doing so directly in the e-commerce web store. Since social networks have become such a revolutionary phenomenon for Internet communication, more and more companies are trying to leverage the power of online recommendations (eWOM), given their impact on consumer purchase intention. Users of social networks may adopt different levels of participation, from only reading the comments posted by others to actively contribute generating content. Therefore, the following question arises: who are the most active users in the social networks? Focusing on the Spanish fashion market, three groups have been detected through a cluster analysis carried out according to the indicators of behavior in social networks: active, moderate and passive users. While active users are female students and mostly belonging to Generation Z, passive users are male employees belonging to Generation Z and Generation X. Similarly, the profile of moderate users resembles the profile of those who participate more actively in eWOM behaviors. Moreover, active users are more present on Instagram, spending an average daily connection time of more than 120 minutes. Both moderate and passive users use Whatsapp more intensively, with the latter spending an average daily connection time

of 60 minutes. The categorization into three groups obtained in this study is interesting for marketers, as it highlights the complexity of virtual communities as spaces of interpersonal influence among consumers. Thus, it is not only a matter of information exchanges related to specific purchasing decisions, but instead it is showed that community members participate in much broader communicative acts, describing and arguing for or against products and/or brands. Given the impact of the level of participation in social networks on subsequent purchase intention, it is important for companies to know and identify the most active users of online platforms, distinguishing them from those who are mostly passive. Regarding further research possibilities, we believe that the moderating role of the participation level in social networks could be key to analyze the existing relationship between social interaction signals along with flow and future purchase intention.

**Keywords:** Participation Level, eWOM Behavior, Social Networks, Social Commerce

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### MANAGEMENT III

**Chair:** Ender Demir

**Discussant:** Virginia Bodolica, *American University of Sharjah*, U.A.E.

**Room:** Z-Room 3

#### **How Employees and Employers Perceive Information Flow, Cooperation and Relationships with Colleagues during the Prolonged Covid-19 Pandemic**

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#### **Abstract**

The aim of this article is to find out whether there are differences in how employers and employees perceive information flow, cooperation and relationships with colleagues during the prolonged conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. We use nationwide data from the pre-pandemic period (autumn 2019), early Covid-19 days (spring 2020) and the extended Covid-19 period (autumn 2020 and spring 2021). Thereby, separate surveys were conducted among employees (sample sizes around 5,000) and employers (sample sizes around 500). The employees answered whether they are satisfied with the researched aspects (from 5-completely satisfied to 1- completely not satisfied). The employers gave their estimation of whether due to (occasional) telework the situation with the researched aspects is 5- notably better, 4- better, 3- stayed the same, 2- worse, 1- notably worse. The results show that employees are quite satisfied with information flow, cooperation and relationships (estimations ranging around 3.5–4.5 on a five-point scale) and the estimations are similar in autumn 2019, spring 2020, autumn 2020 and spring 2021. These results are despite the fact that during the pandemic office workers have had to unexpectedly resort to telework or switch between telework and working in an office. What is more, the employees who worked from home had comparable or even better estimations about information flow, cooperation and relationships compared to individuals working in an office. However, the view from the employers is somewhat different. Most employers feel that the situation with information flow, cooperation and relationships has stayed the same despite the need to implement (occasional) telework. Still, up to one-quarter of the employers in spring 2020 and up to one-third in spring 2021 feel that things have gone worse or notably worse. This indicates that on average (occasional) telework caused by Covid-19 has escalated matters in some employers' eyes. The main implication from this study is that employees in Estonia cope quite well despite (occasional) telework and despite the prolonged Covid-19 situation, but some employers feel otherwise. The reason may be that employers see the bigger picture and have a better overview of the functioning of the whole organization. What is more, the constant struggle to organize work when one does not even know who can come to the office and who must isolate on a certain day takes additional toll from employers and the frustration accumulates. This signposts that not only do employees need support and help but so also do employers.

**Keywords:** Information Flow, Cooperation, Relationships with Colleagues, Covid-19, Telework

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