

The Impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on Consumers Purchase Intention towards Handloom Clothes in Eastern Province, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Nowadays, Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a powerful promotional tool for influencing consumers' purchase intention. The aim of this study is to explore the impact of SMM activities such as entertainment, customization, interaction, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth on consumers' purchase intention in the context of the handloom clothing businesses in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. The research used an online survey of 176 suitable responses. The respondents were selected based on the convenient sampling technique. Multiple regression analysis was conducted. The findings of this study revealed that customization, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth have significant impact on consumers' purchase intention, while entertainment and interaction have no impact on consumers' purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. The main implication of this research is that handloom clothing businesses should perform effectively the social media marketing activities which pave the ways to stimulate consumers' purchase intention. Future researchers may investigate how social media marketing activities influence other businesses or industries. Furthermore, age, gender, income and cultural differences may be used as moderators in the future regarding this topic.

Keywords: Consumer Purchase Intention, Handloom Clothing, Social Media Marketing Activities

1. INTRODUCTION

Until a few years ago, most companies used mass media including television, newspaper, and radio for marketing and advertising activities to convey the messages to their stakeholders. Nowadays, the technological advancement and the digital revolution connects people to each other and makes it easier to access information related to people, businesses, products, brands, and

services. In this regard, one of the interactive technologies is social media which allows businesses to do external promotions, marketing, communicate with employees, and customer engagement (Troise & Camilleri, 2021; Seo & Park, 2018).

Customers are considered to be concrete assets that need to be developed, sustained, and used wisely. Therefore, for organizations, inducing customers to purchase products or

consume services from them is the crucial part. Das (2014) stated that consumer purchase intention is a positive feelings and attitude on a product or service or brand. Consumer purchase intention is not only influenced by friends and relatives but also by unknown persons on social media (Poturak & Softic, 2019). Therefore, the way consumers make buying decisions is changing due to the development of social media sites and forcing marketers to reevaluate their marketing strategies (Shah, Zahoor, & Qureshi, 2019). Organizations that do not adopt social media marketing strategy may lose the chance to build customer relationship (Wang & Kim, 2017).

In the fashion industry, handloom clothing is generating more interest as there is a growing concern about the exploitation of production and the contribution to the economy through trade (Wanniarachchi, Dissanayake, & Downs, 2020). Sri Lankan handloom industry is a labor inducement and deconcentrated industry. Primarily most of the production sections are found in rural areas and it is an important cottage industry and thousands of rural women and men depend on it for their livelihood (Export Development Board, 2013). It is evaluated that there are about 6,500 handlooms operating in Sri Lanka, delivering about 15,000 immediate jobs which includes a substantial number of women in the country (Export Development Board, Sri Lanka, 2020).

Handloom industries are concentrated in Sri Lanka, particularly in the Western, Eastern, North Western, and Southern Provinces (Costa, Fernando

& Yapa, 2018). This study focused Eastern Province which consists of districts namely Ampara, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee. The reason behind the selection of Eastern Province for this study was the dispersion of multi ethnic people such as Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, and Christens live together in this Province. Therefore, the study findings will be more generalizable to the handloom businesses based on the perspectives of all the group of people who live in Sri Lanka.

Since customers' intention to purchase handloom products due to the usage of social media lead to the handloom business retention (Guha, Mandal & Kujur, 2021), this study was conducted based on this idea in the context of Eastern Province, Sri Lanka.

Based on the past studies on social media marketing, researchers have categorized social media marketing activities inside five components, entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Lee, 2017; Yadav and Rahman, 2017; Kim & Ko, 2012). According to Balasubrahmanyam & Muthumeenakshi (2021), in the current scenario, social media serves as a vital promotional tool for handloom products and generates customer satisfaction. Furthermore, this research helps to realize how social media assist marketers to provide clear and uncomplicated information about their products to customers without any confusion in promoting their brands.

Rani & Bains (2014) stated that buyers prefer handloom brands regardless of

the fashion trend going on. They consider handloom clothes to be medically good for human skin and give it an attractive and royal look. Consumers of handloom clothes gain awareness about handloom clothes through trade fairs and exhibitions (Varghese, 2019), which are the traditional means of promotions done by marketers. However, it is better that handloom businesses are focusing more on digital marketing means for example Social media marketing, which motivates consumers to buy handloom clothes immensely nowadays. In this regard, Humbe & Bhalerao (2018) stated that handloom clothing businesses have many benefits through social media because they can interact directly with customers on social media in minutes. Therefore, the aim of this research is to investigate the impact of social media marketing activities on consumers purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.1. Research problem

In general, the promotion of handloom products is limited to exhibitions and fairs with limited outlets (Dineshkumar, 2018; Sivasakthi & Basariya, 2018; Nadh, Rao, & Harshavardhan, 2013). Therefore, the handloom industry needs constant marketing campaign through social media than traditional media promotions to get the lasting and constructive influence of handloom items on the customers purchasing decisions (Guha, Mandal & Kujur, 2021). These handloom producers face few challenges in selling handloom clothes by reason of

structure of the industry changes and lack of access to markets and information (Wanniarachchi, Dissanayake & Downs, 2020). In addition, there are a lack of advertising in handloom products, but after adopting social media marketing, handloom businesses are slowly increasing sales volume of handloom products (Balasubrahmanyam & Muthumeenakshi, 2021).

Prior research has discovered and endorsed the significance of social media marketing in numerous areas or industries for example operations, services, finance, and human resource management. (Seo & Park, 2018). In the context of marketing, most studies have assessed the impact of social media marketing on customer satisfaction or consumer behavior (Godey, Manthiou, Pederzoli, Rokka, Aiello, Donvito & Singh, 2016). There have been few studies conducted to discover the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer purchase intention in the foreign context (Alfeel, 2019; Gautam & Sharma, 2017; Godey et al., 2016). To the knowledge of the researcher, scant researches have been conducted in the Sri Lankan context including Eastern Province of Sri Lanka on the present research topic (Sandunima, Bandara, Viduranga, & Kodagoda, 2019). Therefore, in order to fill the empirical gap, this research is conducted to inspect the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

Furthermore, this study will help in effectively selling and buying handloom clothes through social

media marketing by providing proper awareness to the customers of handloom clothes. It is expected that the results of this study will help academics, handloom business owners and strategy makers to understand how the social media marketing activities affect consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.2. Research Objective

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.3. Research question

This research study aimed to answer the following research question:

“At what extent do social media marketing activities impact on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka?”

1.4. Related literature

1.4.1. Social media and social media marketing

The widely accepted definition for the social media was said by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) who described social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”. Howard and Parks (2012) also defined social media through three parts such as “(a) the information infrastructure and tools used to produce and distribute content;

(b) the content that takes the digital form of personal messages, news, ideas, and cultural products; and (c) the people, organizations, and industries that produce and consume digital content”. Currently, few social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and content sharing website YouTube are widely adopted (Pham and Gammoh, 2015). Though the social media has been emerging immensely in the technological world, the definitions for it also has been being modified with new keywords but for the purpose of this study, the above said two definitions are appropriately selected by the researchers.

Social media enables interactive two-way direct communication by removing all restrictions related to time, place, medium (Gautam & Sharma, 2017), which allows customers and companies around the world to connect at any time (Harris & Rae, 2009) and becomes a crucial factor in determining several features of consumer behavior, plus consciousness, ideas, attitudes, purchasing behavior, and evaluation (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Social media marketing is defined by Felix et al. (2017) as “an interdisciplinary and cross-functional concept that uses social media, often in combination with other communications channels, to achieve organizational goals by creating value for stakeholders” Social media marketing can be portrayed as the interaction that enables advancement of websites, items, and contributions through internet based social channels that incorporate activities identified with promoting and advertising, for example, writing

for a blog, sharing pictures and posts on the web (Yazdanparast, Joseph & Muniz, 2016).

1.4.2. Consumer purchase intention

Purchase intention refers to the probability that a consumer will purchase a product after the evaluation on purchasing decision

(Kian et al., 2017). Moreover, purchase intention is a pre-purchase motivation, which provides the customer a willingness in purchasing goods and services (Meskaran, Ismail & Shanmugam, 2013).

Social media gives businesses incredible opportunity to connect with customers in their social networks and develop closer relationships with them (Kelly, Kerr, & Drennan, 2010), for pre-purchase motivation. Prior research from Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012), and Kim & Ko (2010) described social media marketing efforts or activities that has impact on consumer purchase intention in social media. Therefore, the social media marketing activities is discussed below.

1.4.3. Social media marketing activities

There are five aspects of social media marketing activities available such as entertainment, customization, interaction, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth (Godey et al., 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012).

1.4.3.1. Entertainment

Muntinga, Moorman & Smit (2011) stated that entertainment strongly encourages users to engage in social media and create user-generated content (UGC). Based on the involvement of social media, users

utilize social media for the purpose of entertainment, relaxation, passing the time, and combating boredom from seeking related content on social media (Lee & Ma, 2012). Entertainment has positive impact on consumers purchase intention in social media in the fashion industry (Gautam & Sharma, 2017; Kim & Ko, 2012; Kim & Ko, 2010). Therefore, following hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H1: Entertainment has significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.4.3.2. Customization

Customization is meant that how far the products, services and information are tailored to satisfy the target customers. Companies can build brand loyalty and relationships by customizing social media networks (Martin & Todorov, 2010). Furthermore, Tam & Ho (2006) stated that customization enhances the quality of the purchase decision away from the information load. Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012), and Kim & Ko (2010) found that customization has significantly positive influence on consumer purchase intention in social media. Therefore, following hypothesis was developed:

H2: Customization has significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.4.3.3. Interaction

Godey et al. (2016) described that interaction is conversation and discussion between users and others.

According to Hajli (2013) and Nolcheska (2017), customers' social interaction has a huge influence on purchase decision. According to Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012) and Kim & Ko (2010), interaction as one of the social media marketing activities that has a significant positive effect on consumers' purchase intention. Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H3: Interaction has significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.4.3.4. Trendiness

Social media delivers to the latest messages and hot topics (Naaman, Becker, & Gravano, 2013). According to Cheung, Pires, & Rosenberger (2020), trendiness indicates the ability for social media to spread the trendy information. Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2010), and Kim & Ko (2012) found that trendiness has significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention in social media. Therefore, following hypothesis was developed:

H4: Trendiness has significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

1.4.3.5. Electronic word of mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) is meant that spoken interaction where information is shared in social setting or circle. Customers suggest or share their personal experiences on social media (Godey et al., 2016). According to BrownBritish (2011), electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) is

greater dependable than traditional marketer-generated content on the Internet. Therefore, social media users can create, send, or recommend brand, product, or service-related information to their friends, contacts, colleagues and family members. Electronic word of mouth produced through social media, helps in consumer buying decisions (Pan & Chiou, 2011). Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012), and Kim & Ko (2010) found that electronic word of mouth in social media has a significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention. Hence the ensuing hypothesis was formulated:

H5: Electronic word of mouth has significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

Research design is a structure that is concerned with guiding this research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This research adopts quantitative method. The quantitative research strategy is best suited for this study to examine the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer purchasing intention.

2.2 Sampling design and data collection

The population of this research study is Eastern Province of Sri Lankan consumers who are purchasing handloom clothes through social media sites. The samples in this study were selected using a convenient

sampling technique. Target respondents were reached through an online data collection technique, an online Google form. Data were collected from 176 respondents who live in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka and purchased handloom clothes through social media.

A structured questionnaire consisting of twenty-two indicators according to the dimension of the study. The questionnaire was first developed in English, then translated into Sinhala and Tamil, then formulated by using the Google form.

The pilot test was conducted with 10 potential respondents to assure the standard and clarity before administering the actual questionnaire. Through the pilot study, it was found that the language used was stated to be clear and direct and the length of the questionnaire was reasonable. Finally, the questionnaire was distributed through email, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Viber. The survey was opened for data collection from mid-May 2021 to mid-June 2021.

2.3. Research instrument

To evaluate social media marketing activities indicators were adopted from prior research. Three indicators were adopted from Godey et al. (2016) and Luo (2002) to measure the entertainment. Three, four, and four indicators, respectively, were adopted from Godey et al. (2016) to estimate customization, interaction, and trendiness. Four indicators were adopted from Godey et al. (2016) and Kim & Ko (2012) to measure the electronic word of mouth. Finally, four indicators were adopted from

Kim & Ko (2012) to measure the customers purchase intentions.

A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree, was used for indicators or items operationalizing all the constructs. Operationalization of variables are shown in Table 1 in the Appendix.

3. RESULTS

Data were analyzed using computer aided software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25.0) to meet the objectives of the study. There were few analyses conducted using SPSS such as; demographic description, reliability analysis, validity analysis, collinearity test, descriptive statistics, and multiple regression analysis.

3.1. Demographic description

A total of 176 valid responses were obtained. The demographic profile of the responses is presented in Table 2, given in the Appendix. The respondents were relatively female, young, and had degrees. Most respondents, 69%, 89%, and 96%, were female, educated with holding under graduate or post graduate qualifications, and age between 20 to 45, respectively. Also, most respondents, 64% were employed with government employment or private employment. 78% of the respondents earns above Rs. 25000.

The responses came from districts Ampara (55.7%), Batticaloa (23.3%), and Trincomalee (21%). Responses mother tongues either Sinhala or Tamil were equally at the rate of 50%. The majority of respondents were Buddhist with 40.9%, 25.6% were

Hindu, 19.9% were Muslims and 13.6% were Christian. The respondents.

Nearly, half (50.6%) of the respondents were married. The percentage of unmarried respondents were 47.2%. Widows and divorcees were the lowest with 0.6% and 1.7%, respectively.

The survey further determined that most of the respondents, 92%, had been using the social media, for example Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter for more than 6 months. Also, the respondents' use of social media in a day were (7%) all the time, (32%) often, and (51%) a few times. This indicates that respondents are well versed in dealing with social media sites.

3.2. Reliability Analysis

Reliability test is used to test the internal consistency of variables. Each social media marketing activities constructs or variables had a high level of internal consistency, as determined by Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.767 to 0.877, as shown in Table 3.

The reliability coefficient of entertainment was 0.767, customization was 0.750, interaction was 0.840, trendiness was 0.877, electronic word of mouth was 0.843, and consumer purchase intention was 0.784. Since the recommended Cronbach's alpha value is 0.7 or higher (DeVellis, 2003; Kline, 2005), all coefficients were acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Thus, social media marketing activities constructs validity was established.

3.3. Validity Analysis

The validity test is used to assess the trustworthiness of variables in a research study. Table 4 shows that Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin measurement is 0.804, indicating that there are adequate inter-correlations. The test value of Bartlett's Sphere is significant (Chi-square = 218.304, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, variables are more valid in this study (Heppner & Heppner, 2004).

3.4. Multi-Co linearity

Based on Table 5, the tolerance level is neither greater than nor equal to 1 and the VIF values are below 10. Values of tolerance and VIF range from 0.590 to 0.888 and 1.126 to 1.694, respectively. Therefore, there were no multi-collinearity problems in this study.

3.5. Descriptive statistics

Table 6 shows that interaction has the highest mean value of 4.49 while electronic word of mouth has lowest mean value of 4.24. The mean value indicates that all the respondents' purchasing intention towards handloom clothes is favorable due to the social media marketing activities put forth by these businesses. Moreover, according to Hair et al. (2010), if the values of skewness or kurtosis are within the range of plus or minus 2.56, normality of a data distribution is satisfied. The results of this study show that the value of skewness or kurtosis are within the standard range and most of the variables are correlated significantly

with each other, as showed in Table 7, and all the dependent variables are correlated to consumers purchase intention from 0.192 to 0.424. Moreover, it was proved that the association of customization, interaction, trendiness and electronic word of mouth with customers purchase intention was at the 99% of the significant level but entertainment which was proven at 95% of the significant level.

According to the table 8, significant value (p value) is 0.000 which is less than the significant level 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the independent variables have 46.2% of the impact on the dependent variable in the significant level.

3.6. Hypotheses testing

The multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses developed in this study. Furthermore, this multiple regression analysis was helped to predict a dependent variable by more than one independent variables (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). According to the Table 9, customization ($\beta=0.155$, $P< 0.05$), trendiness ($\beta=0.182$, $P< 0.05$) and electronic word of mouth ($\beta= 0.288$, $P< 0.05$) had positive and significant influences on consumers purchase intention in purchasing handloom clothes, hence H2, H4, H5 were ratified. Nevertheless, entertainment ($\beta = -0.013$, $P> 0.05$), interaction ($\beta= -0.058$, $P> 0.05$) had not contributed significantly in the consumers' purchase intention towards handloom

clothes purchases, thus H1 and H3 were not confirmed.

4. DISCUSSION

This study's objective was "to investigate the impact of social media marketing activities on consumer purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka". This was achieved through the regression analysis, given in Table 8, where the value of adjusted R^2 was 0.4620. This conveys that the 46.20% variance in consumer purchase intention can be explained by the social media marketing activities, including entertainment, customization, interaction, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth, taken in this study. This finding is in line with the study of Gautam & Sharma (2017).

Further, the finding that customization, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth had significantly positive impact on consumer purchase intention.

The results revealed that entertainment did not significantly ($\beta = -0.013$), as showed in Table X, affect consumer purchase intentions towards handloom clothes, indicating that the handloom clothing businesses did not use much of the entertainment activities associated with social media sites. However, contrast to this finding, Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012) and Kim & Ko (2010) found a positive influence of entertainment on consumers purchase intention.

Therefore, it is recommended to the handloom business people to conduct more entertainment activities such as conducting contests, create how-to videos, develop user-generated content, promote “tag a friend” contest, write behind-the photos as well as videos, use more emojis, create Polls, and run live events. Conducting these activities through the social networks can develop closer relationships with audience (Kelly, Kerr, & Drennan, 2010), and may enhance the pre-purchase motivation.

Customization ($\beta = 0.155$) activity of social media marketing was significant in creating customers purchasing intention towards handloom clothes. Consistent with the findings of Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012), Kim & Ko (2010) who found that the customization had significant impact on consumers purchase intention. Interaction ($\beta = -0.058$) in the social media marketing had no notable impact on consumers purchase intention because most of the handloom businesses may fail to interact well through social media marketing to induce the consumer’s purchase intention towards handloom clothes. However, according to Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012) and Kim & Ko (2010) interaction had a significant positive impact on consumers’ purchase intention.

Results of this study proved that trendiness ($\beta = 0.182$) has significant and positive effects on consumers purchase intention of handloom

clothes. This finding shows that the trend has become a crucial step in social media marketing because consumers are looking for trendy features in everything in the current world. Therefore, it is inevitable that the handloom clothing businesses will also focus on maintaining the trend in marketing on social media sites, in which they will be sufficiently successful. This finding is supported by Gautam & Sharma, (2017), Kim & Ko, (2012), and Kim & Ko, (2010).

As the results indicates, electronic word of mouth supports significantly ($\beta = 0.123$) and positively impact on consumers purchase intentions in purchasing handloom clothes. This finding suggests that through social media, customers act as advertisers by spreading positive or negative words regarding the handloom clothing businesses that they are satisfied or dissatisfied with. This finding is accordant with the past studies of Gautam & Sharma (2017), Kim & Ko (2012), and Kim & Ko (2010).

In summary, through the multiple regression analysis, it was found that customization, trendiness and electronic word of mouth have a positive and significant impact on consumer purchase intention and entertainment as well as interaction don’t have significant impact on consumers purchase intention towards handloom clothes in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Also, the multiple regression analysis proved that the research study model is indicated as significant at 0.01 levels ($F = 10.093$; P

< 0.01). Moreover, 46.2 % of the variation (which is in the significant level) in consumer purchase intention is explained by customization, trendiness and electronic word of mouth.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Implications

This study found that social media marketing activities help to strengthen the strong consumer purchase intention for handloom clothing in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Thus, handloom businesses can focus more on continuing to invest in social media initiatives. Moreover, a significant social media marketing activities will boost the image of the handloom businesses in the minds of the target consumers and create positive words about the businesses which are considered as a source of competitive advantages.

The result of this research will help the handloom businesses to develop customer-driven marketing strategies. Also, the handloom clothing businesses can put more effort into practicing social media marketing activities to improve consumer purchase intention within the handloom businesses in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

In this study, it is suggested that through social media marketing, handloom businesses can communicate and serve consumers in a personalized way compared to conventional mass media marketing. Furthermore, using the social media,

handloom clothing businesses can share ideas, upload attractive photos and videos, form interest-based groups and participate in exciting discussions for entertainment activities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemics.

Moreover, handloom businesses can create interactions in developing and managing long term dyadic customer relationship, and they can build more productive and responsive customer service on social media platforms. In addition, the interaction with customers can be reactive and proactive. Proactive interactions are the most powerful trick for handloom businesses to build visitor relationships, create targeted web clicks and find opportunities.

5.2 Limitations and future research directions

Due to the time constraints of this study, only 176 customers in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka were taken as respondents and it was expected that respondents to this survey would respond to closed questionnaires. And the "COVID-19" pandemic is one of the limitations of this research because there are travel restrictions everywhere. Thus, the researcher was unable to collect in-depth data by providing face-to-face questionnaires and was unable to conduct qualitative research by conducting face-to-face interviews. Therefore, the data were collected using the online mode of data collection.

Furthermore, only five dimensions of social media marketing activities

were taken into account in this study. Accordingly, the SMM activities such as entertainment, customization, interaction, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth on consumers' purchase intention is explained by only 48% (R Square value is .477, showed in Table 8). But other than these SMM activities taken into this study also could contribute to the purchase intention. For example, the SMM activities such as informativeness and personalization as suggested by Guha, Mandal, & Kujur, (2021) can be taken to study the impact of SMM activities on consumers' purchase intention in the context of the handloom clothing businesses. This limitation should be

conducive to future researches to consider these variables as well.

Since, the technological environment that changes drastically with time, future researchers can identify new dimensions of social media marketing activities and consumer purchase intention and consider mixed method that can be applied to reveal new findings. For example, future researchers may find related factors such as trust, privacy, and the perceived risk to go into depth.

Furthermore, future studies can analyze other industries beyond the handloom industry and expand the large sample size to obtain new findings.

APPENDIX

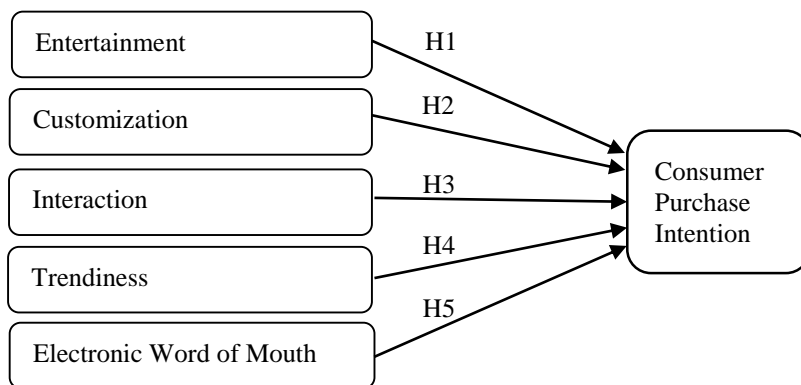


Figure 1: Proposed conceptual model

Sources: (Gautam & Sharma, 2017; Godey et al., 2016)

Table 1: Operationalization of variables

Code	Item Description	Source
Entertainment (1-5 Likert scale, 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
E1	I believe that the contents on the social media pages of handloom clothing businesses are interesting.	Godey et al. (2016) and Luo (2002)
E2	I feel relaxed when i am viewing the social media pages of handloom clothing businesses.	
E3	I see the pictures of handloom clothes on social media for the entertainment purpose.	
Customization (1-5 Likert scale, 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
C1	I believe that the social media pages of handloom businesses offer customized service for me as a customer.	Godey et al. (2016)
C2	I believe that customized information search is available on the social media pages of handloom businesses.	
C3	I believe that the social media pages of handloom businesses provide the information that I need.	
Interaction (1-5 Likert scale, 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
I1	I believe the social media pages of handloom businesses interact with its followers/ customers.	Godey et al. (2016)
I2	I believe the social media pages of handloom businesses provide platforms for customers to share their reviews about handloom clothes.	
I3	I believe that it is easy to find customer's reviews/ratings on the social media pages of handloom businesses.	
I4	I believe that handloom businesses pay attention to customer's comments on their social media pages	
Trendiness (1-5 Likert scale, 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
T1	I believe that the social media pages of handloom businesses are trendy.	Godey et al. (2016)
T2	I believe that the social media pages of handloom businesses offer up-to-date information.	
T3	I believe that handloom businesses use latest content (pictures/videos) on its social media pages.	
T4	I believe that the social media pages of handloom businesses offer timely information.	
Electronic Word of Mouth (1-5 Likert scale, 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
EW1	I believe that information sharing is possible on the social media pages of handloom businesses.	Godey et al. (2016) and Kim & Ko (2012)
EW2	I believe that it is easy to give my opinion on the social media pages of handloom businesses.	
EW3	There is high likelihood that I recommend my friends/family/ acquaintances to purchase the handloom clothes on the social media pages of handloom businesses.	
EW4	I get opinion about the handloom clothes from people on the social media platforms.	
Consumer Purchase Intention (1-5 Likert scale, 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		

PI1	The probability that I will buy the Handloom clothes is very high on social media pages of handloom businesses.	Kim & Ko (2012)
PI2	I plan to purchase handloom clothes that are promoted on social media.	
PI3	I will buy the handloom clothes on social Medias next time when I need it.	

Table 2: Demographic profile of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	54	30.7
Female	122	69.3
Age category		
Below 20	1	0.6
20 - 25	56	31.8
26 - 35	54	30.7
36 - 45	58	33
Greater than 45	0	0
Education Level		
Primary Level	1	0.6 %
Secondary Level	19	10.8 %
Graduate	125	71.0 %
Post Graduate	31	17.6 %
District		
Ampara	98	55.7
Batticaloa	41	23.3
Trincomalee	37	21.0
Mother tongue		
Sinhalese	88	50
Tamil	88	50
Religion		
Buddhist	72	40.9
Hindu	45	25.6
Muslim	35	19.9
Christian	24	13.6
Marital status		
Single	83	47.2
Married	89	50.6
Widowed	1	0.6

Divorced	3	1.7
Employment		
Self-Employment	15	8.5
Government Employment	36	20.5
Private Employment	50	28.4
Professionals (Government / Private Sector)	26	14.8
Student	49	27.8
Monthly Income		
Below 10000	14	8.0
10001 - 25000	25	14.2
250001 -50000	90	51.1
50001- 75000	28	15.9
Above - 75000	19	10.8
Experience with Social Media usage of Facebook/ Instagram/ Twitter		
Less than 6 months	14	8
6-12 Months	21	11.9
1-5 Years	95	54
More than 5 years	46	26.1
Use of social media with in a day		
All the time	13	7.4
Often	56	31.8
A few times	90	51.1
Seldom	17	9.7

Table 3: Reliability Test

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha value	Number of Items
Entertainment	0.767	3
Customization	0.750	3
Interaction	0.840	4
Trendiness	0.877	4
Electronic Word of Mouth	0.843	4
Consumer Purchase Intention	0.784	4

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.804
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	218.304
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 5: Test of Co linearity

Variable	Tolerance	VIF
Entertainment	.888	1.126
Customization	.707	1.414
Interaction	.667	1.499
Trendiness	.653	1.531
Electronic Word of Mouth	.590	1.694

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	M	SD	SKE	KUR
Entertainment	4.28	.37	.568	.161
Customization	4.29	.36	.878	-.686
Interaction	4.49	.38	-.038	-1.360
Trendiness	4.31	.40	.711	-.996
Electronic Word of Mouth	4.24	.36	1.058	-.265
Consumer Purchase Intention	4.34	.37	.580	-1.043

Where: M=Mean, SD=Std.Deviation, SKE=Skewness and KUR=Kurtosis

Table 7: Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Entertainment	1					
Customization	.228**	1				
Interaction	.222**	.440**	1			
Trendiness	.298**	.375**	.441**	1		
Electronic Word of Mouth	.251**	.472**	.496**	.525**	1	
Consumer Purchase Intention	.192*	.333**	.232**	.373**	.424**	1

*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 8: ANOVA^a

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.678a	.477	.462	.33001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entertainment Average, Customization Average, Interaction Average, Trendiness Average, Electronic word of mouth Average.

Table 9: Regression analysis and hypotheses testing

Model	Coefficients (β)	t-value	Sig.	Conclusion
(Constant)	1.989	4.573	0.000	
Entertainment	-0.013	-0.198	0.843	H1: Rejected
Customization	0.155	1.915	0.047	H2: Accepted
Interaction	-0.058	-0.733	0.464	H3: Rejected
Trendiness	0.182	2.389	0.018	H4: Accepted
Electronic word of mouth	0.288	4.195	0.001	H5: Accepted
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer purchase intention				
Note: The relationship can be illustrated in a regression formula as follows:				
$\text{CPI} = \beta_0 + \beta_1\text{ENT} + \beta_2\text{CUS} + \beta_3\text{INT} + \beta_4\text{TRE} + \beta_5\text{EWM} + e$				
CPI = 1.989 + -0.013 + .155 + -.058 + .182 + .288 + e				
CPI - Consumer Purchase Intention; β_0 - Intercept;				
β_1 - is the coefficient of the explanatory x variables;				
ENT – Entertainment; CUS – Customization; INT – Interaction; TRE –				
Trendiness; eWOM – Electronic Word of Mouth;				
e - Error term				

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