



# **Social Media Marketing in the Fashion Industry: A Systematic Literature Review and Research Agenda**

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## Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of fashion brands marketing and communication practices. The rapid proliferation and ubiquitous adoption of social media by both fashion brands and consumers, has remarkably increased academic scholarship on the use of social media marketing in fashion over the last decade. Despite increasing interest in understanding the use of social media for marketing in fashion, a systematic review that provides a holistic picture of current state of research, topics covered, areas addressed on social media marketing in specific context of the fashion industry remains providential. The purpose of this thesis is to address this gap by critically reviewing existing literature to synthesise and organise the main aspects in social media marketing and provide recommendation on possible future research directions. This thesis uses the systematic literature review methodological approach to collect and synthesise academic literature on social media marketing in fashion context. 92 research papers published in the peer-reviewed journals were systematically collected from Scopus and EBSCO databases, and thematically analysed to reveal social media marketing research themes in context of fashion. Five research themes were identified from literature review; (1) social media marketing tactics of fashion brands; (2) social media marketing and consumer behaviour; (3) social media marketing and electronic word of mouth communication; (4) social media marketing and consumer brand relationship; (5) social media marketing and other-brand related outcomes. The most important research issue is the emphasis of existing literature on luxury fashion brands, and little substantial research on mass-market fashion segment such as fast-fashion brands, fashion SME, online only fashion retailers, sports fashion brands. In addition, various other future research agendas have also been proposed with respect to each of the five research themes to address existing gaps in the literature and take forward the research on social media marketing in the fashion industry. The contribution and originality of this thesis is rooted in synthesising and providing a holistic view of social media marketing research in specific fashion industry context, which has not been integrated to date.

**Keywords:** social media marketing, fashion brands, systematic literature review, fashion industry, social media platforms

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

The development of internet-mediated communication technologies, particularly social media, has changed the way consumers, brands and communities, connect and interact (Hsu, 2019). The ubiquitous acceptance of social media is essentially propelled by its unprecedented use by consumers. Indeed, social media is being used by billions of people around the world. The penetration of social media in consumers life can be understood by the number of active users on social media platforms, for example, Facebook is reported to be one of the most popular platforms with approximately 2.6 billion monthly active users, followed by Instagram, YouTube, WeChat, which have all crossed 1 billion monthly active user mark (Statista, 2020b). The total number of global social media users are estimated to be 3.96 billion as of July 2020, which is approximately 56.5 % of world's population (Statista, 2020d).

Social media has primarily changed the way consumer receive information and communicate with each other. It has become an essential point of information search for consumers because of the availability of a wide variety of options, convenience and plethora of brand/product related information available at a click away from the mouse (Amed et al., 2017). According to a survey conducted on 2000 US internet users, more than fifty percent of Gen Z and Gen Y (millennial users), thirty eight percent of Gen X and twenty seven percent of baby boomers derive their fashion inspiration from social media browsing (eMarketer, 2019a). The survey study categorised consumers based on the years they were born, and defined generation Z as users born approximately after 1995, generation Y or millennials as users born approximately between 1985 and 1994, while generation X (1965-1984) and baby boomers as born approximately between 1946-1964 (eMarketer, 2019a). Although the specific years used for categorisation of users in generational cohorts varies slightly between different studies (Nash, 2019; eMarketer, 2019a), but it's evident that fashion consumers from all age groups are using social media and are also inspired by it. Different sources of fashion inspiration such as, fashion influencers and peer reviews or brand- related user-generated content are being considered as more trustworthy sources of branded information in comparison to branded marketing (Wilberg, 2018; Mintel, 2019; Boerman, 2020). Wilberg (2018) reported that interaction with other users has the ability to trigger new consumer needs and even alter consumer purchase intention, which was further corroborated by a recent survey conducted by Mintel (2019), reporting that a third of British fashion consumers are influenced to purchase a product or participate in an activity based on influencers recommendation on social media. The need for peer validation, seeking inspiration from fashion influencers, following celebrity

styles online, accompanied by a growing desire for sharing, discussing, exchanging opinion about fashion brands online as well as a need for maintaining relevance and portraying a social image online (Nash, 2019; Nelson et al., 2019), underlines the transformed consumer behaviour.

Given the presence of a large number of audience on different social media platform and a shift in consumer behaviour, it is not surprising that various fashion brands have incorporated social media as a marketing and communications channel. Aided by the ease and cost-effectiveness of social media, increased visibility, opportunity to reach and engage more frequently with potential consumer (Godey et al., 2016; Amed et al., 2018), fashion brands across different segments of the fashion industry such as fast-fashion retailers (e.g. Zara, H&M) sports fashion brands (e.g. Nike), online-only retailers (e.g. ASOS, Boohoo) and even fashion SME's are increasingly using social media in their marketing and communication activities (Rienda et al., 2020; Bonilla et al., 2019; Amed et al., 2018). As suggested by the recent industry report, social media has disrupted the fashion ecosystem by enabling fashion brands of all sizes to build a consumer base, generate brand awareness, provide support to consumers, and to engage consumers in their marketing activities, helping them to capture substantial growth (Amed et al., 2018). Clothing brand 'Reformation' has gained significant brand reach on social media amassing 1.3 million Instagram followers as of 2019; ASOS\_heretohelp account on Twitter used by the brand to personally cater to consumers queries, and Nike's campaign on Instagram that allowed its users to choose pictures and design their personalised shoes, are just a few examples demonstrating the changing fashion industry practices. Meanwhile, to stay relevant among the growing online population and to access the large audience base available on social media platforms, luxury fashion brands that previously shied from using social media, questioning the compatibility between exclusivity dimensions associated with luxury and increased accessibility presented social media (Okonkwo, 2010), are also utilising social media to connect and engage with their potential consumers (Yu and Hu, 2020; Liu et al., 2019; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Kim and Ko, 2010, 2012). Luxury fashion brands have increasingly adapted their marketing practices to exploit the potential of social media platforms, for example, Gucci, Burberry, Louis-Vuitton have started live streaming their fashion shows on social media platform such as Instagram and Facebook, as well as, using fashion influencers in front rows of their fashion shows to scale their promotion has become a common feature among fashion brands. Some luxury fashion brands are also focusing on innovative techniques to engage consumers into their marketing offerings on social media, for

example, #GucciGram campaign on Instagram, that invited illustrators online to design images to repurpose Gucci motifs (O'Connor, 2018).

According to a recent survey conducted by Statista (2020a) using a sample of 150 companies from different industries, fashion brands emerged as one of the best performing category attracting the highest user engagement rate on Instagram, suggesting that fashion brands are prioritising the use of social media in their marketing activities. Although, social media has created new opportunities for fashion brands to interact with customers in a virtual space that is open to all kinds and sizes of business (Amed et al., 2018), the marketing landscape has completely evolved as social media not only enables firms to communicate with their potential consumer but also enables user-user communication. Social media has substantially migrated the power from fashion brand to consumers, in the form of peer reviews, referrals, tags, online blogs, influencers, and other forms outside the control of brands that can alter brand image both positively and negatively (Mazzoli et al., 2019; Amed et al., 2017; Gensler et al., 2013). In this sense, fashion brands are no longer in full control of their marketing practices, as consumers power of content creation can influence how brands are created, developed and rejected in social media environment (Gensler et al., 2013; Quach and Thaichon, 2017). For example, Gucci was compelled to remove a line of recently launched sweater following virulent criticism by users of Twitter for evoking blackface imagery through its design (Hsu and Paton, 2019). The overwhelming reaction from the users reflects the rise in power of consumers, suggesting that brands custodianship no longer rests only with the firm, and consumer voice cannot be ignored. With these emerging challenges, the question is no longer whether to be present on social media but rather about how to use it in a way that positions fashion brands in the desired way and is beneficial for both users and brands alike (Amed et al., 2019a). As social media grows in size and market power, the risk of not incorporating social media in marketing and communication could be higher than the challenge of having limited control. Notably, social media is becoming the cornerstone of marketing communication, with fashion brands across segments from mass to luxury compelled to engage with different social media platforms.

Academically, an extensive body of research covering various aspects related to social media marketing in the fashion industry has been developed over the last decade (e.g. Kim and Ko, 2010, 2012; Ng, 2014, Godey et al., 2016; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Lee and Watkins, 2018; Nash, 2019; Athwal et al., 2019; Zollo et al., 2020; Boerman, 2020). Various scholars have acknowledged the social media phenomena from a marketing and communication perspective, with research spanning across various specific and isolated

marketing and communication issues such as electronic word of mouth, consumer-brand relationship as well as specific brand-related marketing initiatives (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Park and Kim, 2015; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Liu et al., 2019). Despite what scholars have studied over the last decade, there still exists a distinction between the speed at which industry practices are transforming vs growth in the academic literature on social media marketing (Ngai et al., 2015). One of the reasons for this gap is continuously evolving nature of social media, in terms of, development of new social media platforms and the changes in the features of existing social media platforms (Appel, 2019). Introduction of new social media platforms and the continuous release of new features that gain popularity among users present renewed opportunities for brands that are adept in effectively marketing to reach their consumer. However, it can be challenging and time-consuming for social media researchers to continuously develop constructs and measures to produce evidence-based results to match with the rapidly evolving and changing nature of the social media environment. Whilst, social media has existed for almost two decades now, but its application as an effective marketing and communication channel in the fashion industry is considered as a recent phenomenon (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014). In this sense, research on social media marketing in fashion can be considered in the embryonic stage. Furthermore, recent industry reports suggest that social media is being increasingly used by small and mass fashion brands (Amed et al., 2018), yet current research on social media marketing by fashion brands other than in the luxury segment, such as, small fashion retailers, fast-fashion brands, and even online-only retailers is far less researched (Arriaga et al., 2017; Rienda et al., 2020). This can be partly because of the early stage of development of this research area in the fashion context. Thus, only a small number of studies have elucidated how social media marketing is being used by fashion brands other than in the luxury fashion sector, emphasising more on its general application (Ananda et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017), with few publications focusing on more specific issues (Scuotto et al., 2017; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016; Rienda et al., 2020). Therefore, the fast-paced and emerging nature of social media, and the increasing use of social media for marketing by different types of fashion brands present a significant opportunity to conduct valuable research that can further advance this rapidly developing research area. In such as case, it is important to conduct a comprehensive systematic literature review to determine the state of knowledge developed in social media marketing in the fashion industry context, to evaluate academic growth so far, and provide venue for future research to help chart the next phase of relevant research in this domain. Reviewing the existing body of research will not only provide an

understanding of progress achieved in the particular field but also identify gaps that will help extend this field of research (Creswell, 2009).

This thesis adopts a holistic stance and aims to integrate the state of knowledge in academic research, topics covered, and significant research gaps in social media marketing research in the context of the fashion industry, in order to develop a fuller understanding and extend the knowledge accumulated from previous research in the field of social media marketing for fashion brands. This research will benefit by explicating the state of social media marketing research in fashion and identifying new research avenues, as well as benefit practitioners by spanning silos of thinking and practice within social media marketing.

## 1.1 Research Rationale

The tremendous growth of social media in the past decade has altered the way consumers and firms communicate, making it crucial for both researchers and brand managers to understand the dynamics of the new marketing environment. Social media was introduced in the early 2000s, however it's over the last decade, it started gaining importance in the fashion industry (Kim and Ko, 2010; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014). The rapid proliferation and ubiquitous adoption of social media by both fashion consumer and firm has remarkably increased academic scholarship on the use of social media marketing in the fashion industry (Kim and Ko, 2010, 2012; Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Ng, 2014; Park and Kim, 2015; Godey et al., 2016; Arriaga et al., 2017; Ananda et al., 2018; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Athwal et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2019; Boerman et al., 2020; Naeem, 2020). Although rapidly emerging, most of the existing research focus on specific issues such as social media marketing tactics (Phan et al., 2011; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014), consumer-brand relationship (Park and Kim, 2015; Kefi and Maar, 2018) or specific levels of the market (Phan et al., 2011; Arriaga et al., 2017) and even specific social media platform (Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández, 2017; Touchette et al., 2015). While these studies detail development in use of social media in the specialised area of marketing and communication within the fashion context, the knowledge in this area is scattered across isolated aspects, limiting the overall understanding of the subject (Lamberton and Stephen 2016). The fragmented body of literature and lack of holistic understanding in use of social media marketing within the fashion industry will lead to lack of comprehensive conceptualisation of future research in this domain. This provides an opportunity to integrate various findings in social media marketing research in fashion since there has been no effort, to date, to systematically review the body of research on social media marketing within the

specific context of the fashion industry. Only recently, Arrigo (2018) presented a systematic literature review on the social media marketing activities of luxury brands. Albeit valuable, Arrigo's review holds some shortcomings; First, the review focuses on luxury sector, and is not explicitly in specific context of fashion luxury brands, and as the review focuses on luxury brand sector it cover a fraction of luxury fashion brands literature, but does not include other brands such as fast-fashion, fashion SME's etc.. Therefore, to address these problems, there is a need for conducting a comprehensive review to analyse the state of research on the marketing potential of social media in the specific context of fashion.

The present thesis attempts to fill this gap by conducting a systematic literature review of social media marketing from a marketing communication and management perspective with a focus on business-to-consumer communication on different social media platforms in the context of the fashion industry. Indeed, the use of social media as marketing and communication channel to fulfil various marketing-related aims such as increase brand awareness, liking, consumer engagement, electronic word of mouth communication, brand loyalty, purchase intention in the specific context of the fashion industry are integrated to provide a holistic of the state of knowledge in the field.

## 1.2 Research Purpose and Aim

The main purpose of the current study is to systematically review the literature on social media in marketing within the fashion industry context. The research aims to synthesise and organise the main aspects related to social media marketing that has been addressed in the specific context of the fashion industry. Given the significance of social media for fashion companies marketing and communication activities, this thesis draws together fragmented literature concerned with utilisation of social media within marketing, and elucidates the current state of knowledge in the field and provides recommendation on possible future research directions.

### 1.3 Research Objectives

The research objectives of the study are:

1. To systematically collect, analyse, and synthesises main themes considered in social media marketing literature in the context of fashion
2. To comprehensively synthesise the methodologies and theoretical positions used in existing research
3. To identify significant gaps in the field and propose future research direction

This systematic literature review provides the following contribution:

1. It provides a comprehensive understanding of social media marketing in fashion by drawing together specific themes, methodologies applied, theories utilised, findings reported.
2. The findings provide avenues, direction and opportunities for future research in this emerging field of application of social media for marketing in the fashion industry, and at the same time guide fashion managers in decision making regarding effective utilisation of social media marketing

### 1.4 Research Methodology

This study adopts a systematic literature review methodology to address the research aim and objectives. As this study aims to evaluate the state of knowledge in a particular area, the systematic literature review methodology is deemed to be valuable (Synder, 2019). This study uses systematic secondary data collection from peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles to conduct a comprehensive and detailed literature review ensuring high-quality standards in order to map the development and usage of social media marketing in the fashion industry. The current review used the guidelines defined by Tranfield et al. (2003) for conducting a systematic literature review in the field of business and management and used multiple databases to extract previous literature. Additionally, the thematic analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was adopted to identify the main concepts or themes that have been previously investigated in this domain.

The remaining sections of this thesis are categorised as follows. The next chapter presents the background of the study to provide a brief overview of the field. The third chapter provides step-wise details of the method followed for conducting the systematic literature review. The fourth and fifth chapters discuss the descriptive and thematic findings derived from existing literature in social media marketing in the fashion industry. The sixth chapter provides a critical discussion of each of the five themes, highlighting gaps that emerged from the review. The final chapter concludes by presenting future research direction, managerial implication and limitation of this thesis.



## Chapter 2 Background of the study

This chapter provides a brief background on social media, how it has changed the marketing and communication landscape, highlighting a few industrial marketing practices in the fashion industry context, and finally presents the definition of social media marketing.

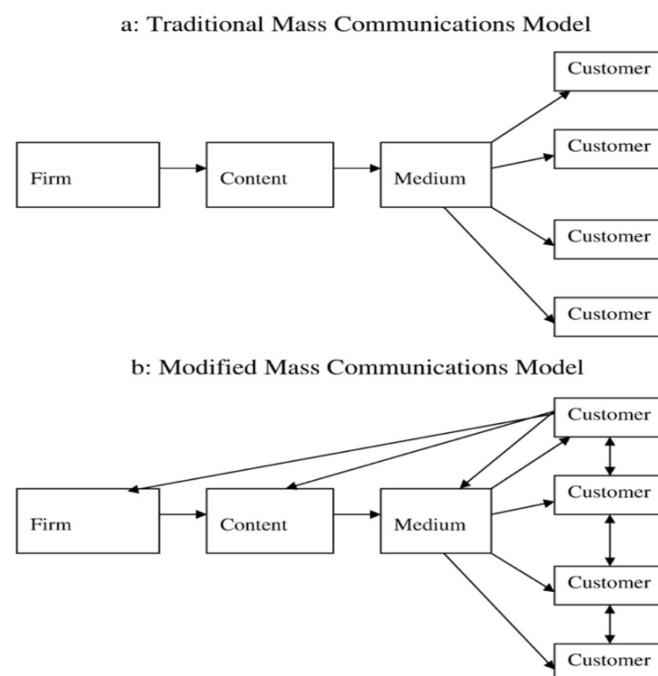
### 2.1 Social Media and Fashion

The term social media has received many conceptualisation within the existing literature, while one of the most commonly used definition of social media is ‘A group of internet-based applications that is built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content’ (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Some authors have defined social media as product of internet based applications that facilitate consumer-generated content (Berthon et al., 2012), while some have defined social media as media technologies that enable interactivity and co-creation between and among organisations and individuals through sharing of user-generated content (Filo et al., 2015). Although different definitions exist, social media landscape can broadly be considered as comprising of two key aspects; first is the internet- mediated platforms that constitute the borderless social media ecosystem (Kietzmann et al., 2011), secondly the use of these platforms by various interconnected actors such as individual and organisations (Appel et al., 2019).

The rise of social media and how it has transformed the marketing and communication landscape can largely be attributed to the development of different social media platform over the years. Lomborg (2017) indicated that technologically networked form of communication that represents the basis of social media emerged in 1990’s through bulletin board systems, email and other forms of computer-mediated communication that facilitated one-to-one and one-to-many communication and can be considered as the precursor of what today is known as the social media. The advent of social media can be traced back to the early 2000’s with the rise of MySpace and Friendster (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016), which laid the foundation for now so popular social media platforms such as Facebook (founded in 2004) and other image and video-focused platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest. The continuous emergence of new social media platforms accompanied by steep popularity and decline in the certain platform (for example, decline of MySpace from 2007, while the tremendous rise in Facebook thereof) is suggestive of rich and continuously evolving ecology of social media platforms (Lomborg, 2017). Moreover, these different social media platforms vary in their

scope and offer different functionality to their users, for example; YouTube is predominantly a video-sharing site in comparison to Facebook, which is more about networking (Kietzmann et al., 2011). In this sense, social media can be understood as comprising of different online networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, WeChat and Weibo, amongst others established and emerging platforms that allows users to connect, create, share, send and receive content/information (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Berthon et al., 2012; Appel et al., 2019).

With its distinctive characteristic such as interconnectedness, interactivity, egalitarian (Peters et al. 2013), social media has immensely transformed the marketing and communication landscape. The most fundamental change is presented by the power of content creation and feedback bestowed to the consumers in the social media environment, which was absent in the traditional marketing and communication system (Berthon et al., 2012; Gensler et al., 2013). The conventional view of marketing and communication (as shown in Fig 2.1a) is characterised by a one-way, outbound and media-oriented system, wherein marketers used one-to-many communication and were the pivotal authors of the brand narrative. In the conventional model, there was no opportunity for users to communicate with the firm or provide feedback.


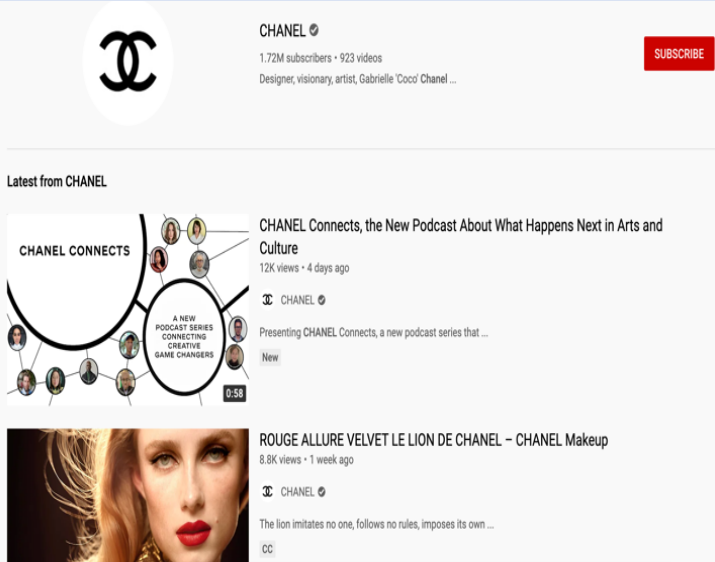

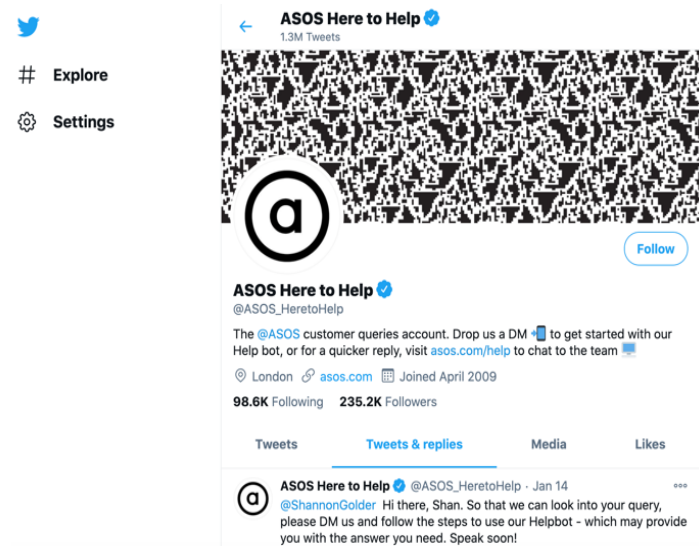


**Figure 2.1 Traditional and Web 2.0 marketing communication model based on Hoffman and Novak (1996)**

However, with the advent of social media, the nature of communication has changed. As can be seen from Figure 2.1b, social media has presented an alternative perspective on marketing and communication marked by a complex network that allows the consumer to interact with the firm, the media, as well amongst each other by creating their personal content. Multiple actors are able to communicate with each other, provide feedback, initiate dialogue and contribute to knowledge about the brand and its offerings. Therefore, marketers are no longer the pivotal authors of brand's stories, as the brands are shared among the users of social media technologies (Gensler et al., 2013; Killian and McManus, 2015). The changes have profound implications for fashion brands marketing and communication practices, as understanding the needs of customers, interacting and engaging with them, as well as integrating them in brand's marketing activities on social media has become vital to develop compelling brand narratives (Gensler et al., 2013; Chae and Ko, 2016; Amed et al., 2017). Thus, social media requires fashion brand's to adopt more consumer-centric marketing and communication practices by enabling consumer's to participate with the brand, providing entertainment to the users, seeking consumer feedback, running contests, and even co-designing products with consumers (Touchette et al., 2015; Kontu and Vecchi). This is particularly significant as consumers are more likely to trust content posted by other users over the branded messages (Jung and Kim, 2016; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018), forcing brands to involve users in their branded activities. Some fashion brands have already demonstrated the positive influence of engaging consumer in branded activities on social media, and few prominent examples includes, Tiffany & Co's story-giving campaign 'What makes love true' that encouraged consumers to share their personal love stories and gained significant attention from consumers (Hughes et al., 2016). Another recent example includes Adidas Facebook campaign which included some athletes as the brand's spokesperson to convey a strong message. The campaign gathered millions of views and thousands of likes, shares and comments within a few weeks (Socialbakers, 2020). Although fashion brands can take advantage of the increased visibility, reach, speediness and interactivity offered by social media, it does not come without challenges. Since fashion brands have no control over user-generated content, the consumer can also share negative experiences, complaints and opinions about the brands, which can prove to be detrimental to brands image (Gensler et al., 2013). For example, luxury fashion brand Dolce and Gabbana faced extreme criticism online from Chinese customers and was accused of supporting racism in one of its campaigns featuring a Chinese model. The issue was compounded as a number of screenshots were shared on Instagram and led to Chinese customers boycotting the brand.

Despite, increased complexity in the marketing and communication environment presented by social media, some astute fashion brands are leveraging social media to their benefit. For instance, consider Pretty Little Things a young fashion e-retailer (established 2012) that has grown tremendously over the years by capitalising on the reach, cost-effectiveness and timeliness of social media, earning revenue of 55 million pounds in 2017 (Intel, 2017). The retailer has a strong presence on almost all popular social media channels such as Instagram (11.1 million), Facebook (2 million followers), Twitter, YouTube, amongst others. Social media is rapidly gaining acceptance in marketing practices in the fashion industry to reach the massive consumer base present online. Table 2.1 presents a few examples of how fashion brands across different fashion industry segments are using different social media platforms. Table 2.1 discusses Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter, as they are amongst the most commonly used social media platforms by marketers worldwide (Statista, 2021a). Social media platforms have grown tremendously over the last decade, with new platforms emerging every few years and some even gaining a vast user base, for instance, TikTok, a video-sharing social networking platform that was released in 2016, and currently has 689 million global active users (Statista, 2020b). The platform allows users to watch and create the video, which is usually of five to sixty seconds, with audio effects (Sehl, 2020). However, this thesis focuses explicitly on conventional social media platforms due to their continued popularity among users and opportunity they offer for fashion brands to use them as a marketing and communication tool (Nelson et al., 2019; Perrin and Anderson, 2019).

Different Types of Social Media Platform	Global Customer Reach as of July 2020 (Statista, 2020b)	Main Features	Use of Social Media by Fashion Brands
<b>Social networking platform: Facebook</b>  	2.6 Billion	<p><b>Posting:</b> Users can post and share status updates, photos, messages, articles, videos</p> <p><b>News feed:</b> It provides updates about any likes, comments and shares made by friends.</p> <p><b>Facebook stories:</b> Allows users to share photo and videos for 24 hours, similar to Instagram stories.</p> <p><b>Facebook live:</b> Helps broadcast real-time videos</p>	<p>Fashion brands are most commonly using posts, stories and Facebook live features to promote their latest collections, for e.g. Burberry's live catwalk show with photos from behind the scene on Facebook and ASOS sale preview on Facebook.</p>
<b>Photo and video sharing social networking platform: Instagram</b>  	1.08 Billion	<p><b>Posting:</b> User can upload photos, share videos, geotag images with locations.</p> <p><b>Hashtag:</b> To discover a collection of photos, videos, trends on that particular tag.</p> <p><b>IGTV:</b> Users can upload long vertical format videos of up to 10 mins.</p> <p><b>Reels:</b> To create and share short video (15 seconds)</p> <p><b>Instagram stories:</b> Users can upload photos, videos, and upload live broadcast, all of which is available for only 24 hours.</p> <p><b>Story Highlights:</b> Helps to save stories on the profile page which can be viewed anytime</p> <p><b>Instagram live:</b> Helps broadcast real-time videos to other users</p> <p><b>Shopping tags:</b> Allows to tag products so users can directly buy from online store</p>	<p>Many fashion brands are actively using different combinations of Instagram features to promote their brand. For e.g. Burberry in collaboration with Instagram offering selected products only on the platform for limited time using the shoppable tag feature. Misguided @missguided, Everlane @everlane, Gucci @Gucci, Louis Vuitton @ Louisvuitton, to name a few, are using posts, IGTV, reels, guides, hashtags to attract customer attention. Louis Vuitton @ Louis Vuitton Instagram reels have attracted millions of views on each of their reels.</p> 

<p><b>Video sharing platform: YouTube</b></p> 	<p>2 Billion</p>	<p><b>Upload videos:</b> Enables posting and developing of series of videos called channel</p> <p><b>Live streams videos:</b> Allows creators to live stream and interact with users in real-time</p> <p><b>360 degree video:</b> Supports uploading of videos with 360 degree view</p>	<p>Fashion brands are mainly using YouTube to showcase their runway shows, backstage videos, video campaign and new product launches. Various fashion brands have brand channels on YouTube and some even having millions of subscribers. For example, Chanel currently has 1.72 million subscribers with hundreds of videos uploaded on its channel. Small fashion retailers are also using innovative themed videos, for example; Modcloth campaign using consumer ambassadors to market its product on YouTube and Primark's live 360 degree view of its collection on YouTube.</p> 
<p><b>Microblogging and social networking platform: Twitter</b></p> 	<p>326 Million</p>	<p><b>Message sharing:</b> Allows sharing of short text messages of up to 280 character, also called tweets</p> <p><b>Twitter threads:</b> Develops a series of connected messages/tweets</p> <p><b>Photo sharing:</b> Users can upload and attach photo to their tweet</p> <p><b>Polls:</b> Provides the ability to attach poll questions to tweets</p> <p><b>Video streaming:</b> Discovering and watching live streaming videos</p>	<p>Brands are actively using Twitter to update customers and offer customer service. Fashion brands such as Nike (@NikeSupport), Boohoo (@boohoo_cshelp), All Saints (@AskAllSaints) have all-time customer support accounts on Twitter. ASOS has dedicated its Twitter account named @ASOS_Heretohelp for customer queries.</p> 

**Table 2.1 A few examples of social media platforms used for marketing in the fashion industry**

The emerging industry practices suggest that fashion brand are using social media platforms for varying purposes ranging from increasing brand awareness, introducing new products, providing exclusive discounts, providing entertainment value, and providing all-time customer support to their audience. According to Ng (2014), fashion brands are also using social media to expand beyond geographic reach, to build a closer relationship with consumer (Park and Kim, 2015), and are even using electronic word of mouth by using influencers to gain consumer attention (Lou et al., 2019; Boerman, 2020). In other words, fashion brands are utilising social media in their marketing and communication practices to achieve different marketing goals (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). From this perspective, ‘social media marketing’ has been considered as a part of marketing and communications that is used by fashion brand for different marketing purposes (Hughes et al., 2016). However, various researchers from other disciplines have covered varying aspects associated to social media, each having their individual perspective on defining social media marketing (Yadav and Rahman, 2017). For the purpose of this thesis, social media marketing is considered as the use of social media by fashion brand to communicate, engage, disseminate brand/product information, interact, create electronic word of mouth, and build and maintain online consumer relationship via different social media platforms (Yadav and Rahman, 2017). This definition of social media apprehends the fundamental premises of marketing associated with social media phenomena and clearly outlines the different activities pertaining to social media marketing.

## 2.2 Chapter Summary

The use of social media for marketing in fashion is undergoing immense growth in both research and practice. The growth of this research field is further intensified by the rapidly expanding social media technological platforms, and growing practices of fashion bands and changing user behaviours. Worthwhile dimensions have been addressed and covered by researchers in the field of social media marketing for fashion, which provides a venue for initiating an integrative understanding of the current situation of social media from a marketing and communication perspective, with a specific focus on business-to-consumer communication on different social media platforms in the context of the fashion industry.



## Chapter 3 Methodology

This research adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology to achieve the research aim and objectives. SLR as a research method is used for systematically identifying, collecting, analysing and critically assessing existing literature on a particular topic under consideration (Snyder, 2019). SLR has been considered suitable to address the purpose of this research mainly due to two reasons; firstly, a broad range of studies on the use of social media marketing in the fashion industry has emerged over the last few years, and research in this field is progressively developed (Touchette et al., 2015; Scuotto et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2019; Nash, 2019; Boerman, 2020; Zollo et al., 2020). This has resulted in a body of literature that is diverse and fragmented, drawing on various issues such as consumer relationship (Kefi and Maar, 2018), electronic word of mouth (Kobia and Liu, 2017), purchase behaviour (Kim and Lee, 2019), consumer motivation (Nash, 2019), and others. However, no efforts have been made to integrate the broad range of studies on social media marketing, particularly in the fashion industry context. Although some reviews on the use of social media for marketing were found (Palmatier et al., 2018; Alalwan et al., 2017; Ngai et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2019), however, these were general reviews without a specific focus on the fashion industry context. Thus, to achieve a holistic understanding and keep track of continuously growing research findings in the field of social media marketing in the specific context of the fashion industry, SLR was deemed useful (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009). By synthesising fragmented findings and integrating conflicting evidence, SLR provides a compressive method that offers synthesised overview of the current state of knowledge, evaluates the applied methodological approaches, and offers useful insights in a particular field (Palmatier et al., 2018). These reasons appropriate the aim of this review.

Secondly, SLR provides an effective and systematised method to extract appropriate literature by eliminating biases and serves as a rigorous foundation for advancing knowledge by presenting a clear state of existing research in order to suggest for future investigation (Webster and Watson, 2002). Although other literature review approaches also exist, such as semi-systematic/ narrative review, and integrative/ critical literature review (Snyder, 2019), but SLR was deemed more appropriate because of its rigorous methodological approach, entailing a detailed description of reviewers decision to select, scan and analyse the literature, aiming at providing an evidence-based, replicable, transparent process that is wider in scope as compared to other reviews (Tranfield et al. 2003; Snyder, 2019). While SLR follows a pre-specified and explicit methodology that is highly replicable (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009), other types of



reviews (e.g. narrative and critical literature reviews) involves more selective collection of literature, as the purpose is usually not to ensure that all published papers are covered, but rather to ensure appropriate collection of articles to combine different perspectives to answer the specific research question (Snyder, 2019). Thus, the rigours approach of SLR is beneficial for research fields with large and fragmented research such as social media marketing, which is rapidly evolving and dynamic and inter-disciplinary in nature (Rowley and Keegan, 2019).

In addition, the significance of SLR as a research method in the field of business marketing and management, mainly due to its fragmented and diverse nature has already been acknowledged (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003; Palmatier et al., 2018). The evidence of using SLR approach in the specific field of social media marketing is present in the literature (Alves et al., 2016; Alalwan et al., 2017; Rowley and Keegan, 2019), which further proves application of this approach demonstrably significant in the field under consideration. Additionally, this review examines the literature to explore the main themes covered in previous literature. This perspective is considered suitable due to the emerging nature of research in the domain of social media marketing in fashion.

However, one of the primary challenge associated with SLR is to ensure appropriate collection of literature and to ensure comprehensive systematic synthesis (Palmatier et al., 2018). To ensure rigour and collect an inclusive set of literature, this research follows the SLR guidelines proposed by Tranfield et al. (2003). This approach provides a transparent and replicable account of the review procedure that allows other researchers to replicate the process and has been previously used as a guideline for conducting a review in the domain of social media (Bhimani et al. 2019). Thus, this review follows the established three stage guideline; planning, execution and reporting the review. Every stage has few sub-stages or phases; these are (1) Identification of research aim and question, (2) Developing review protocol, (3) Identification of keyword and database, (4) Research strategy and selection process, (5) Study quality assessment process, and (6) Data extraction and synthesis. Finally, followed by reporting and providing recommendation. These six phases are detailed below.

### 3.1 Review Protocol

A review protocol outlines the focus of the study and the criteria's that provide a path for conducting the study. Prior to the commencement of SLR, a review protocol was produced that particularly detailed how the review will be performed. The main purpose was to eliminate researcher bias and ensure utmost transparency (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009). Review protocol is essentially the planning stage of the SLR and involves developing a roadmap for conducting the review. It comprises crucial decisions such as the background of the study, research questions, study selection process, the research strategy, the elements of quality assessment, method for data extraction (Tranfield et al., 2003). Accordingly, for developing the criteria's of the review protocol, a scoping study was conducted to evaluate the relevance and size of existing literature and to delineate the scope of the research topic (Tranfield et al., 2003). This was deemed valuable in order to identify broad range of sources to build a comprehensive plan to undertake research on the topic. In this thesis, the research background and research aim have already been stated in the sections above.

The scoping stage also included informal browsing of existing SLR's on social media marketing (Alalwan et al., 2017; Alves et al., 2016; Ngai et al., 2015; Arrigo, 2018). Table 3.1 presents the 'research focus ' and 'industry context' that underpinned existing SLR's on social media, which facilitated the process of determining, clarifying and refining the boundaries of the current thesis (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009).

Author's	Existing SLR's Research Focus	Key Industry Context	Journal
<b>Ngai et al., 2015</b>	To review causal relationship among different social media constructs by developing a framework	Generic review	International Journal of Information Management
<b>Alves et al., 2016</b>	To synthesise field of marketing where social media marketing has been studied and identify key issues to provide implications for both management practice and theory	Generic review	Psychology and Marketing
<b>Busalim and Hussin, 2016</b>	To systematically review and synthesise studies on s-commerce concept	Generic review	International Journal of Information Management
<b>Lamberton and Stephen, 2016</b>	To provide thematic evaluation and make sense of research published from 2000-2015 on digital, social media, mobile marketing and identify key research issues for future	Generic review	Journal of Marketing
<b>Alalwan et al., 2017</b>	To synthesise and organise related studies of social media in the marketing area to highlight main aspects considered over these studies	Multiple industry context	Telematics and Informatics
<b>Arrigo, 2018</b>	To provide state of the art of research on social media marketing by luxury brands sector	Luxury brands	Management Research Review
<b>Bhimani et al., 2019</b>	To understand rapidly developing research trends on social media and innovation and identify paths for the future development of research on social media in innovation	Generic review	Technological Forecasting and Social Change
<b>Ahmed et al., 2019</b>	To synthesise current state of research regarding social media use for knowledge sharing	Different industry context (disaster management, business, health, education, professional learning )	Telematics and Informatics

**Table 3.1 Research aim and industry focus of existing SLR's on social media**

As it can be seen from Table 3.1, existing SLR's on social media cover a number of closely related but distinct aspects of social media, for example, the use of social media in marketing by organisation (Alves et al., 2016; Alalwan et al., 2017; Arrigo, 2018), the role of social media in innovation (Bhimani et al., 2019); social media for knowledge sharing (Ahmed et al., 2019), as well as the use of social media for s-commerce (Busalim and Hussin, 2016).

Secondly, most of the existing SLR's are either generic reviews and do not focus on any single industry contexts (Alves et al., 2016; Busalim et al., 2016; Alalwan et al., 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019), except Arrigo (2018) who's SLR explicitly focused on the luxury brand sector. The scoping study delineated two major aspects related to previous SLR's on social media marketing; first, there has been no SLR on the role of social media in marketing from the specific context of the fashion industry, and secondly, since the social media marketing research field is undergoing rapid development in both research and practice (e.g. Instagram shoppable tags), new interlinked streams of research associating social media as e-commerce platforms (e.g. Busalim and Hussin, 2016) or platform for knowledge search (Ahmed et al., 2019) have emerged in last few years. However, the scope of this thesis was specifically delimited to social media marketing, with emphasis on marketing, communication and management perspective, and not as an e-commerce or knowledge search channel. Other SLR's (e.g. Alalwan et al., 2017; Alves et al., 2016; Ngai et al., 2015; Arrigo, 2018) have also adopted such specific focus on the social media in marketing area although not in the context of fashion. Towards this end, coherent with the aim of collecting and synthesising the literature on social media marketing, the scope of this thesis is defined to marketing area with respect to marketing communication and management in the specific context of the fashion industry.

Finally, this step also helped in identifying relevant terms used in literatures and different databases which are dominant in the current research context. This step aided in developing a structured and comprehensive review protocol. The aim and objectives of this review have already been stated previously, while the particular details of the review plan are discussed in the subsequent sections.

### 3.2 Identification of Keyword and Databases

The SLR commenced with the recognition of keywords that were deemed appropriate to address the aims and objective of the study. Since the main aim of this study is to determine the state of knowledge in relation to social media for marketing in context of fashion, a combination of research terms from both areas were utilised. For this purpose, the preliminary scoping of previous systematic reviews on social media, as discussed in the above section, aided the process of identifying relevant keywords that can be used to achieve the results. A preliminary list of keywords that emerged after extensively overviewing existing literature is presented in Appendix 1. However, this list was subsequently refined to ensure the selection of keywords that were most relevant to address the aim of this research. 'Social media

marketing’ was one of the most highly used keyword in systematic literature review studies identified during preliminary scoping (Alves et al., 2016; Alalwan et al., 2017; Arrigo, 2018). It was also observed that researchers also used keywords with specific names of social media applications along with term marketing (e.g. Facebook marketing) as a suitable technique to reach relevant results (Dwivedi et al., 2015; Alalwan et al., 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019). Thus, keywords such as social media marketing, social network marketing, along with specific names of the most popular social media application Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, WeChat, Weibo, Pinterest were used with term ‘marketing’ to collect relevant studies. A conscious effort was made to include Chinese social media applications to achieve broader results. Although there are various terms and synonyms associated with social media, see Appendix1 (e.g. social computing, Web 2.0, social sites, interactive media, influencer marketing, E-WOM, s-commerce etc.), the selection of keywords for this thesis was grounded in the most frequently used keywords across previous SLR’s (Grames et al., 2019) in the field of social media marketing from marketing and communication perspective, that were deemed pertinent to the research question (Alves et al., 2016; Alalwa et al., 2017; Arrigo, 2018), while other terms such as crowdsourcing (Ahmed et al., 2019 ), social e-commerce (Busalim and Hussin, 2016), Web 2.0 and social computing (Ngai et al., 2015), influencer marketing, Web 2.0 etc. which were occasionally used or were context specific, are not included to improve the specificity of systematic review with respect to the scope of this research (Grames et al., 2019).

In order to obtain research results within a specific context of the fashion industry, keywords associated with fashion such as fashion clothing, luxury fashion brands, fashion brands, fashion industry, fashion apparel, fashion accessories were identified. These keywords were established after analysis of reviews in specific context of fashion ( for e.g. Rafi-Ul-Shan et al., 2018 and White et al., 2017). Although these reviews were not directly related to social media marketing, however, they provided a generic overview of fashion related keyword used in review studies conducted in the specific context of the fashion industry. Furthermore, these keywords facilitated the process of reaching more extensive literature related to fashion as it spreads across different levels of the fashion industry, as well as includes different fashion related product categories (for e.g. apparel, accessories). Overall, a total of 16 keywords were identified and were converted into the search string. These are detailed in Table 3.2.

Topic	Selected Keywords	Authors	Developed Search String
<b>Social media marketing</b>	Social media marketing, social network marketing, Facebook marketing, YouTube marketing, Instagram marketing, Twitter marketing, Pinterest marketing, Weibo marketing, WeChat marketing	Alves et al., 2016; Ngai et al., 2015; Alalwan et al., 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2015	("Social media marketing" OR "social network marketing" OR "Facebook marketing" OR "YouTube marketing" OR "Instagram marketing" OR "Twitter marketing" OR "WeChat marketing" OR "Weibo marketing" OR "Pinterest marketing")
<b>Fashion Industry</b>	Fashion, fashion clothing, luxury fashion brands, fashion brands, fashion industry, fashion apparel, fashion accessories	White et al. 2017; Rafi-UL-Shan et al. 2018	("fashion" OR "fashion clothing" OR "luxury fashion brand" OR "fashion brands" OR "fashion industry" OR "fashion apparel" OR "Fashion accessories")

**Table 3.2 Selected keywords and search strings**

The selected keywords were converted into a series of search strings using a Boolean logic search operators, for example, "social media marketing" OR "social network marketing". The two topics (see Table 3.2) were linked using Boolean operator (AND). The final search string used is ("Social media marketing" OR "social network marketing" OR "Facebook marketing" OR "YouTube marketing" OR "Instagram marketing" OR "Twitter marketing" OR "WeChat marketing" OR "Weibo marketing" OR "Pinterest marketing") AND ("fashion" OR "fashion clothing" OR "luxury fashion brand" OR "fashion brands" OR "fashion industry" OR "fashion apparel" OR "fashion accessories"). This search string was used to search in abstract, title and keyword field on multiple electronic databases.

The electronic databases selected for the current research are: Scopus and EBSCO Business Source Premier. These electronic databases have been used multiple times in previous reviews in the field of social media marketing. For instance, the Scopus database was used by (Salo, 2017; Arrigo, 2018; Ahmed et al., 2019; Bhimani et al., 2019), and EBSCO was used by (Alalwan et al., 2017; Ngai et al., 2015; Pascucci et al., 2018). Therefore, these databases have been widely acknowledged for conducting the systematic review in the field under consideration and for providing comprehensive results. Additionally, as suggested by Webster and Watson (2002), the search should not be restricted to a particular range of academic journals, thus; multiple databases allowed for searching a broad range of disciplines with

content from a large number of journals. While other databases such as Emerald and Web of Science have also been used in previous systematic reviews (Ngai et al., 2015; Alalwan et al., 2017; Arrigo, 2018), however, these two databases have been excluded because of two reasons; first, EBSCO host provides an integrated search by simultaneously searching articles on Emerald (Bhimani et al., 2019). Moreover, a quick search with the derived search string was conducted in the Emerald database to scrutinise the journals in the database. On comparing journals included in Scopus and Emerald database, it was concluded that all major marketing journals are included in Scopus, while Emerald's database extends to niche journals such as Journal of Islamic Marketing, Journal of Bank Marketing, International Journal of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing, Internal Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship which are beyond the scope of this study. Secondly, the Web of Science database has been excluded since Scopus is contented to produce more inclusive results. For instance, Mongeon and Paul-Hus (2016) and Arrigo (2018) suggested that Scopus compared to Web of Science has more comprehensive results and indexed comparatively more journals than Web of Science. Thus, Scopus is one of the largest and most comprehensives abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed journal articles.

Additionally, an increasing trend towards using Scopus and EBSCO host for conducting SLR in the social media marketing domain can also be observed in recent years (Bhimani et al., 2019; Ahmed et al. 2019). Thus, the selected databases are considered suitable for the business and marketing field, and at the same time provide a wide collection of high- quality, peer-reviews scholarly journals and inclusive collection of research papers with full-length abstracts and cited references. Thus, the 'inclusivity' principle of SLR in organisation and management field proposed by Denyer and Tranfield (2009) was established. This was followed by formulating the research strategy and selection process to obtain the most relevant set of results.

### 3.3 Research Strategy and Selection Process

This phase involves the selection strategy and process. The first step in the search strategy process includes explicitly detailing the inclusion and exclusion criteria so that the search is easily replicable (Tranfield et al., 2003). These criteria are used in the review to ensure collection of best quality scientific evidence. Thus, a combination of inclusion and exclusion criteria applied by previous SLR researchers (e.g. Watson et al., 2018; Ahmed et al., 2019;

Busalim and Hussin, 2016) informed the formation of specific criteria's necessary for achieving the aim of the study, which are listed in Table 3.3.

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
<b>Type of study</b>	Studies published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals in the selected electronic databases, empirical research papers, both quantitative, qualitative, including conceptual/theoretical papers	Textbooks and book chapters, conference papers, trade publications, editorials, reviews, doctorate and master's thesis and documentaries; Papers who have a narrow context, ill-defined methodology or data collection or analysis technique.
<b>Language</b>	Written in English	Written in any other languages
<b>Relevance of Study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses social media marketing process and practices in context of fashion</li> <li>• In the domain of fashion industry (e.g. apparel, clothing, accessories)</li> <li>• Social media marketing consistent with fashion brands both luxury and others, consumer behaviour towards social media marketing, fashion brand social media marketing (e.g. customer involvement, loyalty, firm level practices etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not directly relate to research question or objective</li> <li>• Duplicate studies</li> <li>• Full text or access 'not' available or articles in press</li> <li>• Papers referring to social media marketing without focus on fashion industry (e.g. other luxury brands, hotel, automobile etc.)</li> <li>• Social media research with multiple industry focus and referring to fashion industry as one of the various industries studied in research ( e.g. fashion and beauty)</li> <li>• Papers referring to other digital media forms and not social media in specific (e.g. websites, digital marketing etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Assurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Papers from high quality journals, ranked in Q1 or Q2 in the Scimago Journal and Country Rank (SJR) and/or listed in the Association of Business Schools (ABS) journal ranking guide 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Papers from journals that were ranked as Q3 or above in Scimago Journal and Country Rank (SJR)</li> </ul>

**Table 3.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria applied in the SLR**

These strict criterion for conducting the review were chosen for multiple reasons. Only studies published in scholarly peer-reviewed journals were adopted, while books, documents, reports etc. were excluded, because it is considered that scientific journal articles present the best evidence to represent the state of the art research output (Ngai and Wat, 2002). This criteria has been applied by previous reviews in the field of social media marketing to ensure reliability



(e.g. Ngai et al., 2015; Bhimani et al., 2019). Another justification for accepting only peer-reviewed scholarly journal is to assure the principle of ‘Exclusivity’ proposed by Denyer and Tranfield (2009), that suggests that if an SLR is aimed at informing practice and future research, then it is important to collect the best possible evidence available, and the peer-reviewed scholarly articles ensure that. In terms of the language of study, only papers written in English were included. Additionally, the literature search results obtained after applying the first two criteria’s mentioned in table 3.3 on both the databases provided documents within the time horizon of 2010-2020. The temporal view of the resulting publications suggested that the first article related to social media marketing in the fashion context was published in 2010, and academic research in this field has rapidly proliferated over the years. Although various social media sites started appearing in the early 2000’s, but social media as a tool for marketing in the fashion industry became popular only recently (Rocamora, 2017; Okonkwo, 2010). Thus, no date limitations were applied because of the nascent state of research. Finally, the relevance of study criteria’s and quality assurance standards was established to ensure appropriate collection of high-quality evidence by eliminating papers that are not suitable to the context of the study in order to ensure a relevant and comprehensive set of results.

### 3.3.1 Study Selection Process

The first round of automatic search was conducted in September 2019 using the defined keyword string in the title, abstract and keyword of selected electronic databases. The first step using keyword search string yielded a total of 1180 results which were categorised as follows; Scopus (1078), EBSCO host (102). By analysing the results obtained from automated search, it was observed that all studies in the field were published in the year 2010 or after. However, another round of automatic search was conducted in the end of June 2020, to include all latest papers published between September 2019- June 2020. The keyword string then yielded a total of 1652 results from Scopus (1535) and EBSCO host (117), respectively. In the next step, articles were limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published in the English language in full-text during 2010-2020, and the search returned the following Scopus (1128) and EBSCO host (20). At this stage, sources of publications such as trade publications, magazines, textbooks, book chapters, conference papers, editorials, reviews etc. were eliminated. A total of 1148 articles were then exported to the reference management software Endnote to check for duplication between electronic databases. Amongst the duplicates, only one article from either of the databases was retained. After the duplicates were removed, the second stage of the study

selection process, i.e. the manual check was conducted on the set of 1134 papers. During this stage, the title, keywords, and abstract of all 1134 articles were read within the Endnote application, and the inclusion and exclusion parameters described in Table 3.3 were applied. The aim of this stage is to appraise and evaluate the results produced from automatic search (Tranfield et al., 2003). It was ensured that the articles meet the pre-determined relevance criteria in order to extract the most appropriate set of results for final analysis. However, in some cases where research papers used keywords such as 'luxury brands' or 'brands' in the abstract or keywords, research methodology and conclusion were further examined to determine if the sample studied is in the specific context of fashion luxury brands or fashion brands. Only papers that explicitly specified 'fashion luxury brand' or 'fashion brand' in their methodology sample were accepted, to ensure that no significant research paper is missed. As recommended by Tranfield et al. (2003), only studies that met the inclusion criteria specified and which exhibit none of the exclusion criteria were incorporated.

Furthermore, in order to ensure the selection of high-quality academic papers, the Association of Business Schools (ABS) academic journal ranking guide 2018, along with the Scimago Journal and Country Rank (SJR) journal ranking was utilised. High quality journals in SJR journal ranking were determined if they were ranked in Q1 or Q2 which means the impact of the journals is reliable. Additionally, ABS academic journal guide, which provides the ranking and quality of marketing, business and management journals was also utilised for the aforementioned purpose. As argued by Webster and Watson (2002) that main contributions are expected to be present in leading journals, thus articles that were present in prominent journals were included.

As a result, several paper were eliminated if they were not in a specific context of fashion and social media, used multiple industry contexts, used the terms such as luxury brand or brand but did not specify if they were in the context of fashion, were not from high-quality journals, or did not meet other the pre-defined inclusion criteria's. In the final stage of the study selection process, the cross-referencing technique was followed as a means of extracting relevant studied by scanning the references of the resulted dataset (Ahmed et al., 2019). This step was conducted to ensure an all-inclusive set of studies for the final analysis. In order to assure accuracy, a manual search method was applied by carefully screening the reference list of each article. Finally, cross-referencing was conducted that helped in obtaining 8 additional papers relevant to the review. Hence, the final set for systematic review consisted of 92 articles, which are marked with asterisk (\*) in the reference list in the end of this thesis.

### 3.4 Quality Assessment

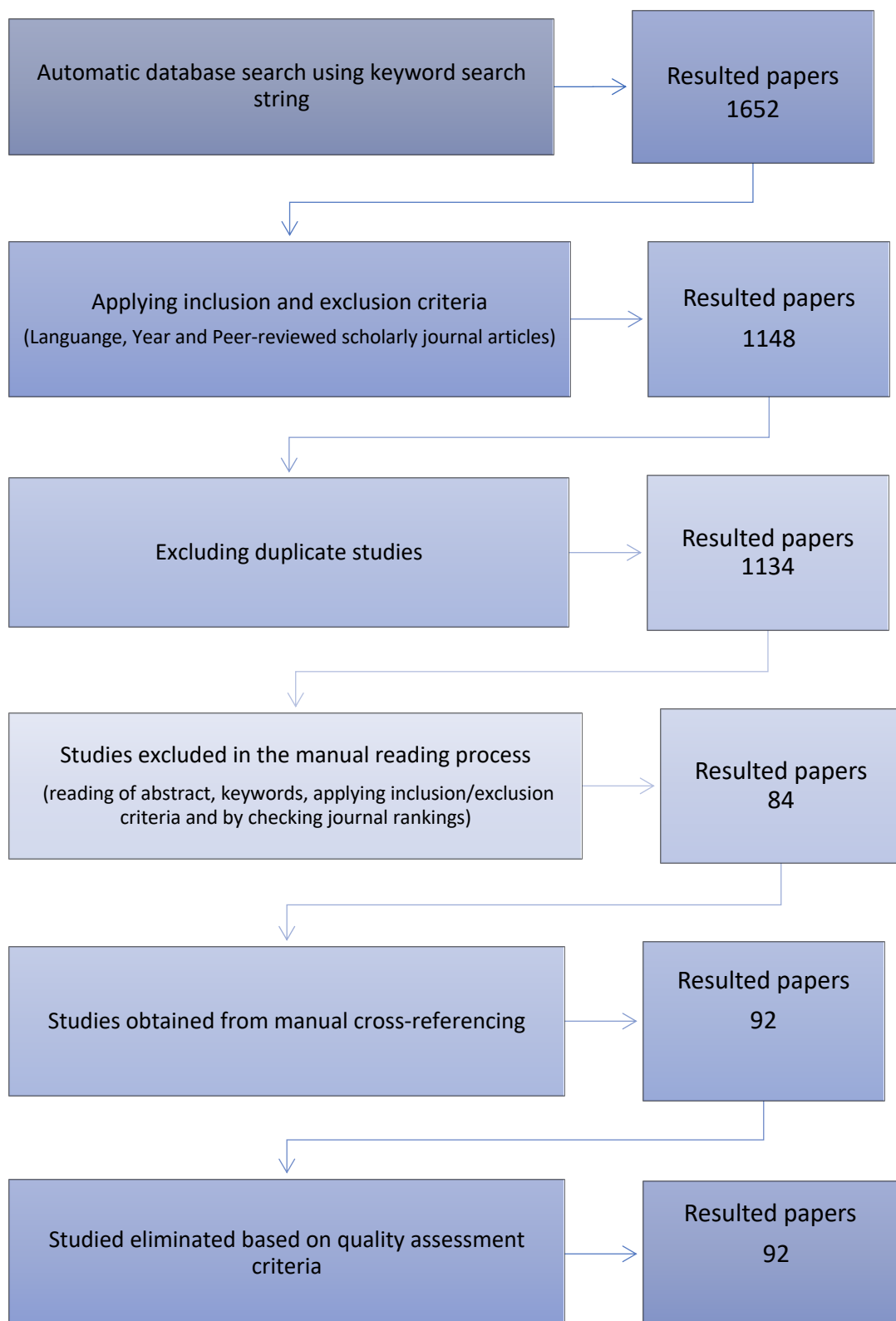
Quality assessment has been defined as the appraisal of internal validity of selected studies and the degree to which research methodology, data collection and analysis have been described by minimizing biases in the final set of resulted papers (Tranfield et al., 2003). An individual study from the final set of papers is evaluated based on the specific pre-defined quality assessment checklist. Therefore, a quality assessment process was conducted to ensure the relevance of the final set of studies. The following quality assessment criteria (Busalim and Hussin, 2016; Arrigo, 2018 ) were adopted for this study.

QA1. If the research methodology clearly described in the study?

QA2. If the data collection method is explicitly described in the study?

QA3. If the data analysis steps are clearly stated in the study?

These three criteria were employed to evaluate 92 studies, with each criteria focusing on robustness of research design, sampling, data gathering and rigour of analysis. This step was considered crucial to ensure the credibility of the final dataset. The robustness of each study was checked by ranking them amongst three levels of quality criteria: high, medium and low (Nidhra et al., 2013; Ahmed et al., 2019). The level of quality was assessed based on a score (Ahmed et al., 2019). If the study completely fulfilled the assessment criteria, it was provided with a score of 2 for that specific criteria. If a study partially fulfilled a criteria it was provided a score of 1, and if it did not meet the criteria, it was scored 0. The maximum possible cumulative score for a particular article is 6 (3 x 2), while the minimum score is 0 (3 x 0). Consequently, the quality of the paper was ranked high, if it achieved a score greater than or equal to 5. While paper with a score of 3 or 4 was considered medium quality and score equal to or less than 2 was ranked as that of low quality. Through the quality assessment process papers with low quality which did not exhibit methodological rigour, were subsequently eliminated to maintain the high-quality standards for the review. A majority of evaluated studies exhibited high quality and no studies emerged as low quality at this stage. This can also be attributed to the fact that the during study selection process, studies were evaluated based on (ABS) academic journal ranking guide 2018 and Scimago Journal and Country Rank (SJR) journal ranking. Finally, Figure 3.1 presents a flow diagram to demonstrate all the steps undertaken to reach the final set of data that will be included in the review.



**Figure 3.1 The flow diagram of systematic selection process**

### 3.5 Data Extraction

In order to organise data and reduce human-error, data extraction form was utilised to record all relevant information from 92 final sets of papers (Tranfield et al., 2003). The main purpose was to convert data from each study into a manageable set of information which can further supplement the data analysis process. This step was conducted by individually reading each paper and organizing relevant information in an Excel spreadsheet. This study adopted categorical elements proposed by Tranfield et al. (2003), along with other categories used by previous researchers such as Ahmed et al. (2019) and Bhimani et al. (2019). The categories included general information such as title of article, name of author, Journal, year, database sources, abstract, keyword and study specific aspects such as research theme, research methodology and underpinning theory. The elements of the data extraction form, as displayed in Table 3.4, essentially guided the data extraction process.

Data Extraction Categories	Description
<b>Author</b>	Includes name of all authors
<b>Title</b>	The name of the paper
<b>Year</b>	The published year of the paper, (2010-2020)
<b>Authors country Affiliation</b>	The name of first authors country
<b>Name of Journal</b>	Name of specific Journal which the paper belongs to
<b>Source</b>	The database source from which the paper was obtained
<b>Abstract</b>	The detailed abstract of particular paper
<b>Research Theme</b>	The description of the study theme for e.g. electronic word of mouth communication
<b>Methodology</b>	The use of quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodology, along with description about the country and social media platform studied in each paper
<b>Theory adopted</b>	The theoretical underpinning adopted by each paper
<b>Research question/ Aim</b>	The specific research aim or question as proposed by particular paper

**Table 3.4 Data extraction form used to organise final set of papers**

The data extraction form was utilised to record relevant data from the set of studies extracted by following the systematic review process. This led to the next important stage in the systematic review process that is data synthesis. Data extraction form simplified the literature synthesis process, which was divided into two parts. First, the descriptive analysis of data, and second is thematic analysis (Tranfield et al, 2003). The descriptive analysis essentially provides a broad descriptive account of the field based on criteria's such as; the year of publications, Journals of publication, and Authors country affiliations. However, the thematic analysis comprises of more in-depth analysis of individual study to report finding from existing literature such as; outlining the various emerging themes covered in literature coupled with synthesis of each theme, methodological and theoretical underpinnings (Tranfield et al., 2003). The process of categorisation of literature based on thematic analysis is discussed in the section below, while the results obtained from this process are discussed in the findings section.

### 3.6 The Categorisation of Final Included Body of Literature

The categorisation strategy adopted for the review involves principles applied in thematic analysis, which entails manual reading and familiarisation with data followed by producing codes to generate themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Since the aim of this study is not to just simply summarise the content of dataset, but to analyse and interpret the state of research on use of social media marketing in context of the fashion industry, thematic analysis was considered as an appropriate method for identifying, analysing and interpreting meaningful categories (themes) that emerge from a dataset of 92 papers (Tranfield et al., 2003; Braun and Clarke, 2006). In particular, the reflexive approach to thematic analysis was used (Braun and Clarke, 2006), which conceptualises thematic analysis as qualitative technique where themes essentially emerge from analysing and interpreting of patterned meaning across the dataset (Braun et al., 2019).

Thematic analysis as an approach to synthesis literature in social sciences has been used in existing SLR's related to social media, for instance; Caton and Chapman (2016) used thematic analysis as an approach to study the use and experience of social media by intellectually disabled people. The process of thematic analysis used for this SLR follows an adapted version of the six-phase guide proposed by Braun and Clarke's (2006). To structure the categorisation of literature both, deductive and inductive approaches for identifying themes is adopted. Such a two-step process has been previously used for analysing literature in systematic reviews in various fields (e.g. Koberg and Longoni, 2019 and Bhimani et al., 2019). First, base categories

were deductively established, drawing from themes established by Alalwan et al. (2017) in their SLR on social media marketing. These themes include; social media and advertising, social media and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), social media and customer relationship management, social media and brand, social media and consumer behaviour and perception, social media from organisations perspective, adoption of social media (Alalwan et al., 2017). However, since their review was not in specific the context of the fashion industry, these themes were then inductively refined during the material evaluation phase.

The inductive approach was used as it provided a process of coding data which is thoroughly grounded and linked to a specific dataset (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The data-driven inductive approach was considered beneficial for this thesis, as it is in the specific context of the fashion industry. Guided by the established principles, the first step involved data familiarisation with the 92 papers. Next, by referring to the categories adopted from Alalwan et al. (2017), the dataset was coded and further collated together by using the concept matrix proposed by Webster and Watson (2002) as a way to inductively record emerging patterns from the literature. This step helped in identifying specific themes, which were then inductively and iteratively refined and new themes emerging from selected dataset were added (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The final categorisation of the reviewed articles were hence abductively developed during the entire process. The literature was again revisited alongside preliminary analysis, which led to further improvisation and refinement of categories to create final themes. As a result, five themes emerged from this process. Three themes; social media marketing and consumer behaviour; social media marketing and E-WOM; social media marketing and consumer-brand relationship are similar to categorisation proposed by Alalwal et al. (2017) , while social media marketing and other brand related outcomes, and social media marketing tactics of fashion brands, emerged from material evaluation process. These are discussed in details in Chapter 5.

### 3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the methodological steps followed for conducting the systematic literature review for this thesis. 92 journal articles were selected from two prominent databased in the marketing, business and management field by using social media marketing and fashion related keyword search strings in order to extract the most relevant and comprehensive set of research papers. This study used a thematic analysis method on a dataset of 92 papers to categorise them in order to present the themes that reflect the state of knowledge in the field and propose future research direction. A detailed discussion of the themes about the use of social media marketing in fashion will be conducted to uncover various marketing streams in which the application of social media has been studied in the literature in fashion context. The next chapter presents the descriptive findings from the set of papers that emerged from research methodology followed in this chapter.



## Chapter 4 Overview of Literature: Descriptive Analysis

This chapter discusses the results of the descriptive analysis in terms of assessing the formal characteristics of reviewed papers with main aim of providing a general background of the identified body of literature. The characteristics assessed for each paper included in this review are: year of publication, source of publication, and author's country affiliation. In addition, this chapter also provides a brief description of the evolution of social media marketing research in fashion to demonstrate the development of this domain over the years. This chapter then continues with the synthesis of the methodology and theories applied in 92 studies. Section 4.5 synthesises different methodologies used in prior studies and highlight the most extensively used methods in social media marketing research in the fashion context, while section 4.6, titled 'Theoretical perspective' represents different theoretical lenses used in the reviewed body of literature.

### 4.1 Publication Year of Reviewed Papers

The search identified 92 papers of social media marketing in the fashion context. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of publications across the research period of 2010-2020.

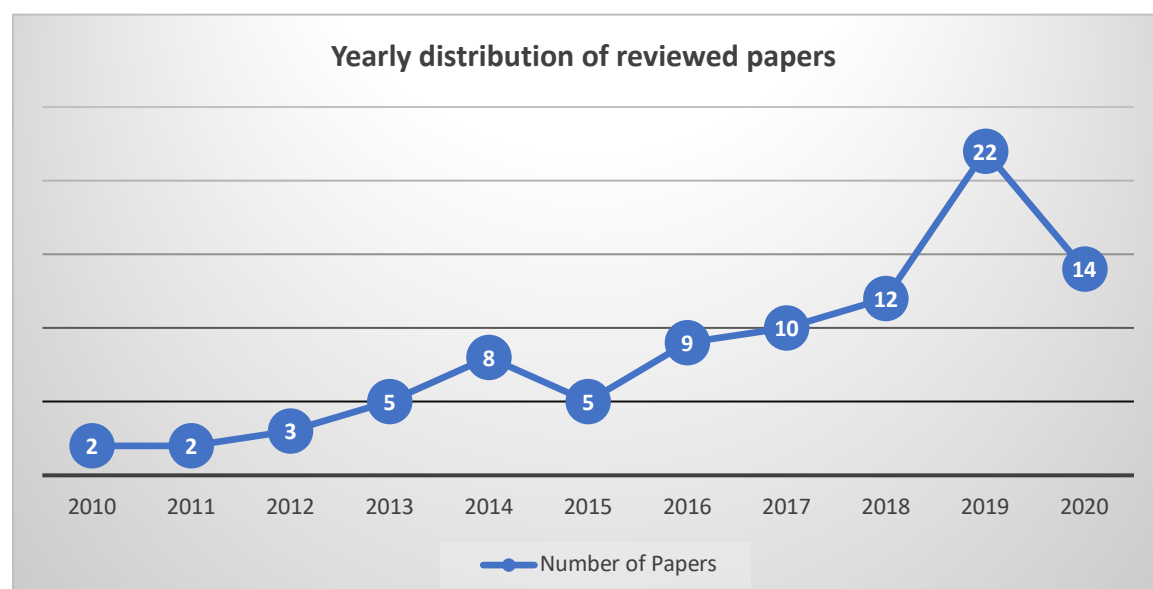


Figure 4.1 Yearly distribution of studies across reviewed timespan

The above graph represents that social media marketing research in the fashion industry context started gaining attention in the year 2010, and is still burgeoning. The first published papers concerning social media marketing in fashion were from 2010, and the number of publications in the domain has been steadily growing since then, except in 2015 with only a minimal decline. The initial years (2010-2012) saw only 7 published studies related to social media marketing in the fashion context, but the period from 2013-2014 saw a growth in publications with a total of 13 papers published during the period. However, there was a small decline during 2015, a trend which was then disrupted with continued substantial growth thereof. Over the period of last four years, nine, ten, twelve, twenty-two, fourteen research papers have been published each year between 2016-2020. The year-on-year growth in a publication from 2015 onwards is indicative of relatively nascent, but increasing development of social media marketing research in the fashion context. This is conceivably not surprising as the use of social media marketing in the fashion industry grew over the last decade (Rocamora, 2017), and it is still an emerging area. The maximum growth in the number of publication was observed in the year 2019, as the maximum number of studies were published in 2019 (22 papers), as shown in the figure above. This trend is likely to grow with an even more number of research being published in 2020, as social media marketing is a rapidly emerging area. The sudden decline in 2020 showing 14 articles is because studies published only in the first half of the year have been included (till June 2020). Thus, increasing acceptance of social media by fashion brands across various segments of the fashion industry (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014), accompanied by the continuously expanding nature of social media technology with new media application emerging every few years, scholarly research in the area is continuously developing to present day.

## 4.2 Overview of Publication Across Journal

An analysis of the journal where the reviewed papers have been published revealed that the papers are widely distributed across fashion marketing, business, management and communication journals. The detailed view of publication across journals is presented in Table 4.1. The final set of 92 papers come from 34 different journals, 22 of which provide one paper each. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, Journal of Business Research, together published most of the studies. Additional small clusters can also be observed in other marketing-related journals.

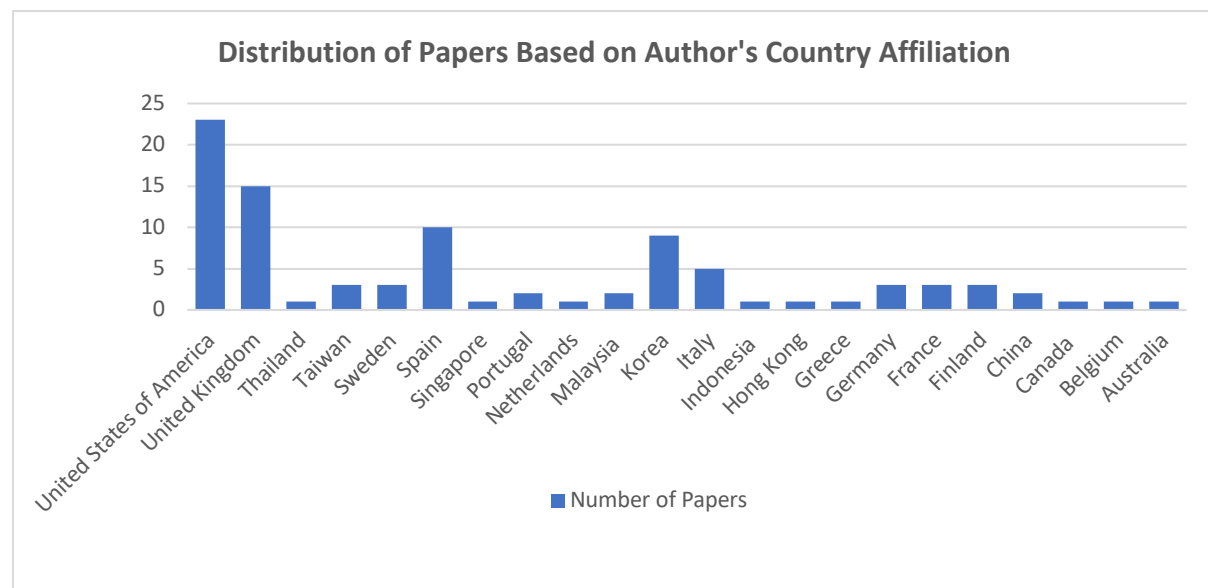
Name of Journal	Number of Papers
Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	19
Journal of Global Fashion Marketing	15
Journal of Business Research	13
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	4
Journal of Product and Brand Management	3
Journal of Brand Management	3
Computers in Human Behaviour	3
Marketing Intelligence & Planning	2
International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management	2
Electronic Markets	2
Qualitative Market Research	2
Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science	2
Clothing and Textiles Research Journal	1
Technological Forecasting and Social Change	1
Global Business Review	1
Business Horizons	1
Psychology and Marketing	1
Physiology and Behaviour	1
Journal of Global Marketing	1
Journal of Interactive Advertising	1
Information Technology and People	1
Journal of Strategic Marketing	1
Journal of Consumer Behaviour	1
Journal of Marketing Management	1
International Journal of Advertising	1
International Journal of Web Based Communities	1
Journal of Marketing Communication	1
Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing	1
International Journal of Information Management	1
Journal of Advertising	1
Journal of International Consumer Marketing	1
Journal of Interactive Marketing	1
Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	1
Journal of Internet Commerce	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>92</b>

**Table 4.1 Distribution of papers across published journals included in the review**

As shown in the Table 4.1, a total number of 76 papers have been published in marketing, communication business and management field, which shows the main focus of this research. Since this systematic review was not restricted by the journal type, it can be seen that a few research papers that were selected during the material evaluation phase are published beyond the marketing and communication field, such as physiology and behaviour, computers in human behaviour, journal of consumer behaviour, information technology and people. This indicates a recent trend in social media marketing research to considered different audience perspectives and different domains. As technology and consumer behavioural domain have also been considered in addition to marketing, communication and business and management, it highlights the inter-disciplinary nature of social media marketing research in fashion .

### 4.3 Author's Country of Affiliation

A preliminary analysis of the author's country of affiliation was also conducted, to determine the base location from where most of the studies included in the review have been conducted. The authors in the final set of studies are spread across various regions exhibiting a culturally diverse set of authors undertaking research in the particular field. A total of 24



**Figure 4.2 Authors country of affiliation**

different authors' country affiliation was observed in the analysis. As it can be seen from the figure 4.3, most authors were from United States of America (23 studies), followed by United Kingdom (15 studies). Other prominent countries were Spain (10 studies) and Korea (9 studies). Therefore, author's country affiliation suggest that research published in the US institution are dominant, followed by UK. This can possibly be attributed to the reason that the US and UK represent nations with highest social media penetration rate (Statista, 2021b). Recalling the early years of social media growth, about 44 percent of the US population used some form of social media platform by 2010 (Statista, 2019), and about 70 % of the US marketers were interested in online marketing by 2010 (Lambert and Stephens, 2016). Even today, the US is ranked the number one country in terms of social media penetration rate, followed by Northern Europe with 66 percent (Statista, 2021b). Thus, various researchers have tried to understand how social media is revolutionising the fashion marketing landscape, with most of the scholarly publications centring around these countries. However, with increased internet accessibility and mobile phone usage, accompanied by increasing purchase power and fashion consciousness among people, the use of social media in fashion has grown exponentially across the world (Godey et al., 2016). However, as shown in the figure above, research in this field still maintains a western bias (72 papers), perhaps, because the use of social media marketing within the fashion context is a relatively a new phenomenon (Okonkwo, 2010), and using social media as a marketing tool still remains an ongoing challenge for some fashion brands, due to differences in terms of different markets and cultures. With the increasing popularity of social media across the globe, it is expected that scholars with a wider geographical focus will undertake research on social media marketing in fashion to gain a better understanding of this field.

#### 4.4 Evolutionary Timeline of Social Media Marketing Research in Fashion

This section provides a descriptive overview of the evolution of conceptual trends in social media marketing research in fashion. Table 4.2 outlines the development and progress of social media marketing researches in particular context of fashion, signifying the yearly conception of research in this field.

In the past decade, various aspects related to social media marketing have been examined in context fashion in line with the rapid evolution of social media technology. An analysis of 92 research papers suggests that publications in the field of fashion started emerging only in 2010, and research in this field has evolved since then, both in terms scope and scale of

publications. Although, it is difficult to point out evolution on a year-on-year basis, it has been possible to highlight different conceptual trends that have emerged over the period of time. These conceptual trends are not exclusive to particular year but have continuously evolved and have expanded vastly over the years.

Time-Period	Research Focus	Key Authors
<b>2010-2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of social media marketing by luxury fashion brands</li> <li>• Identifying E-WOM spreading behaviour</li> </ul>	Kim and Ko, 2010; Phan et al., 2011; Kim and Ko, 2012; Jin, 2012; Wiedmann et al., 2010
<b>2013-2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding motivations for user generated brand related content</li> <li>• Potential of social media blogs and fashion bloggers as communication tool</li> <li>• Introducing the role of brand communities and development of consumer-brand relationship</li> </ul>	Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kulmala et al., 2013; Halvorsen et al., 2013; Pihl, 2014; Hahn and Lee, 2014; Park and Kim, 2015
<b>2016-2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigation of social media marketing activities for fashion brands other than luxury segment</li> <li>• Potential of social media marketing activities for brand equity creation</li> <li>• Understanding of value co-creation in social media marketing tactics of fashion brands</li> <li>• Conceptualisation and application of consumer engagement in consumer-brand relationship</li> </ul>	Schultz, 2016; Ananda et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2016; Godey et al., 2016; Chae and Ko, 2016; Arriaga et al., 2017; Quach and Thaichon, 2017; Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018
<b>2019-2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on effectiveness of social media marketing</li> <li>• Variation in media usage patterns of consumers</li> <li>• Understanding antecedents and consequences of influencer marketing and the impact of sponsored influencer marketing</li> </ul>	Athwal et al., 2019; Salem and Salem, 2019; Amatulli et al., 2019; Kusumasondjaja, 2019; Mazzoli et al., 2019; Nash, 2019; Boerman et al., 2020; Casalo et al., 2020; Naeem, 2020; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020

**Table 4.2 Timeline for evolution of social media marketing research in fashion**

Publication between 2010-2020 were individually reviewed, and it was observed that most of the initial studies between 2010-2012 started by examining the potential of social media marketing activities for luxury brands. During the initial years, a strong interest remained on understanding how social media marketing activities generated purchase intention for luxury fashion brands (Kim and Ko, 2010; Phan et al. 2011). The focus remained on understanding

the significance of social media marketing for brand, and also brought forward constructs such as user generated brand related content or E-WOM which reinforced interest in social media marketing content in forthcoming years (Wiedmann et al., 2010).

In combination with these practices, researchers and practitioners from 2012 onwards started investigating the emergence of brand-related user generated content across various social media platforms (Smith et al., 2012). There on, research on why brand-related user generated content is shared on social networking sites and the impact of fashion blogs in social network started gaining prominence (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Halvorsen et al., 2013; Kulmala et al., 2013). A good number of publications investigated the very popular aspect of electronic word of mouth on social networks, with 2013 being the popular year for introduction of this stream of studies, investigating various aspects such as motivations for brand related user generated communication as well as influence of fashion blogging on consumers behaviour (Hahn and Lee, 2014; Halvorsen et al., 2013). Additional studies during this period also analysed the successful social media marketing tactics of luxury fashion brands in terms of increasing brand awareness and reach by using specific brand case studies (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Ng, 2014).

In the ensuing years, research focus shifted towards studying the aspects of brand value co-creation on social media (Hughes et al., 2016; Scuotto et al., 2017; Pentina et al., 2018) adopting a more collaborative marketing perspective. Alongside identifying consumers value potential for marketing online, research on value creation further insinuated the importance of using social media as a medium to build consumer-brand relationship (Kang and Kim, 2017; Chang and Fan, 2017). The concepts of consumer participation on branded social media platforms and consumer engagement complemented these studies (Jung and Kim, 2016; Chae and Ko, 2016). Apart from this, another significant contribution in these years has been the investigation of the use of social media in other segments of the fashion industry such as fast-fashion (Chang and Fan, 2017; Arriaga et al., 2017), fashion apparel (Kang and Kim, 2017), fashion SME's (Ananda et al., 2018), as well as the use of social media for expansion of luxury fashion brands in other international markets also come into focus (Chen and Wang, 2017; Park et al., 2018). Therefore, 2016-2018 emerged as a significant time period in terms of scientific discovery suggesting rapid evolution of this discipline, with several marketing foci coming into consideration concurrently.

Meanwhile, the aspects related to consumer behaviour towards social media have constantly evolved over the years. The investigation of consumer behavioural issues is related to various parameters such as user lifestyle, decision-making style, motivation and attitude towards

online activity (Park et al., 2011; Kang et al., 2014; Nelson et al., 2019). While, more recent studies (2019 onwards) are focused on exploring effectiveness of marketing activities by combining firm level practices guided by users gratification (Athwal et al., 2019), adopting different techniques such as big data to determine impact of social media on consumer engagement (Liu et al., 2019), introducing the influence of demographic factors on social media usage (Nash, 2019), as well as identifying different motivations in media usage patterns of consumers (Nelson et al., 2019). The research in early part of year 2020 is primarily focused on providing a comprehensive picture of influencer marketing such as, antecedents and consequences of influencer marketing on Instagram (Casalo et al., 2020; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020), the impact of sponsored influencer marketing (Audrezet et al., 2020; Boerman, 2020). An in-depth discussion of the conceptual issues that emerged over the years in social media marketing research in fashion is presented in Chapter 5.

To sum up, social media marketing research in the fashion context is evolving continuously over the years. It is evident that social media marketing as a discipline now occupies a central role in fashion brand's practices. This evaluated position provides the discipline to expand interdisciplinary knowledge and to continuously expand to be in synchrony with the dynamic marketing environment that social media represents.

#### 4.5 Methodologies Used in Prior Research

This section elucidated the findings related to the methodology applied in the reviewed literature by emphasizing on research method, data collection technique and sample characteristics (e.g. social media platform analysed and country of study). With respect to the research method, empirical studies are categorised into quantitative, qualitative and mixed research approaches (see Table 4.3). Quantitative methods (72 %) emerged dominant across the reviewed literature, followed by qualitative (17 %) and mixed methods (9 %). In addition, there were two non-empirical conceptual studies (e.g. Phan et al., 2011; Hughes et al., 2016).

Quantitative research has been increasingly adopted in existing literature for testing hypotheses and to explain the causes and consequences of social media marketing in fashion by quantifying data (e.g. attitudes, outcomes, behaviour and other variables). For example, testing causal relationship between brands social media marketing activities and consumer purchase intention (Kim and Ko, 2010; Kim and Ko, 2012); to investigate the impact of consumer motivation on intention to forward E-WOM messages (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kobia and Liu, 2017), among others. Scholars have used quantitative methods to collect



measurable data and analyses the use of social media by fashion brands (Kim and Ko, 2012; Hahn and lee, 2014; Kefi and Maar, 2018) as well as individuals (Park et al., 2011; Chu et al., 2013; Anderson et al., 2014).

In addition to the quantitative method, other methodological approaches have also been used in literature, namely, qualitative and mixed research methods. Qualitative methods have revealed deeper and rich insight on social media marketing phenomena, for e.g. understanding consumers motivation for participating in branded social media and underlining reasons for differences in consumer behaviour (Pentina et al., 2018; Nash, 2019); to investigate why fashion brands use social media marketing as well as consumer perception of such use (Halvorsen et al., 2013; Ananda et al., 2018; Naeem, 2020), etc.. More generally, qualitative research has helped to answer questions such as ‘why’ and ‘how’ social media marketing is being used in the fashion context. The qualitative method emerged as an effective method that unfolded the different views, experiences, reasons, perspectives, and perceptions of consumers and fashion brands in existing literature (Saunders et al., 2016). Furthermore, mixed method research approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative data has also been applied in previous research. This approach has been used by a few scholars (e.g. Park and Kim, 2015; Chen and Wang, 2017; Bonilla et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2019).

However, it is well known that any research starts with a clear description of underlining research philosophy, which refers to the beliefs and assumptions of the researcher about how knowledge is developed (Saunders et al., 2016; Malhotra and Birks, 2007). These assumptions are basically related to researchers view about the nature of reality (Ontology) and human knowledge (epistemology). The ontological and epistemological stances inform researchers about methodological choices. Since social media marketing research in the fashion context suggests that different types of knowledge ranging from numerical data, factual data to interpretations, motivations, narratives all exist, researchers must have chosen different epistemological stances that have guided their methodological choices. Although it was difficult to analyse underlying philosophical assumption in the reviewed literature, as authors did not explicitly specify their research philosophies (positivism, interpretivism, critical realism, pragmatism, postmodernism), but methodologies used can help in distinguishing underling philosophies to some extent (Saunders et al., 2016). For example, quantitative methodological choices are usually associated with positivist assumptions, suggesting that objective methods that provide measurable, factual, law-like generalisations are the best form of scientific evidence, and argues that social reality (ontology) is independent of the researchers (Saunders et al., 2016; Malhotra and Birks, 2007). Alternatively, subjectivist point of view is

suggestive of multiple realities (ontological position), emphasizing that reality is socially constructed adopting interpretivist approach to knowledge creation (epistemology) focusing on people's perceptions, beliefs, narratives, and the researcher is inclined to incorporate more qualitative methods in their research. Therefore, based on the above interpretation, as most of the studies have adopted quantitative research methods it can be said that social media marketing literature in fashion, in general, is biased towards positivism.

A more detailed analysis of specific quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques used in reviewed literature is discussed in next section.

Type of Study	Research Approach	No. of Papers	% of Papers
<b>Empirical</b>	Quantitative	66	72%
	Qualitative	16	17%
	Mixed	8	9%
<b>Non-empirical</b>	Conceptual	2	2%

**Table 4.3 Research approaches adopted in the reviewed literature**

#### 4.5.1 Assessment of Data Collection Techniques

The reviewed literature shows that a wide variety of quantitative (e.g. survey questionnaires, experiments), qualitative (e.g. Netnography, interviews) and mixed (e.g. survey questionnaire and interview) data collection techniques have been used to study social media marketing in fashion, as shown in the table below. The data collection techniques used in the 90 empirical research papers are listed in Table 4.4.

As discussed above, quantitative methods were most common in the reviewed literature consequently, different quantitative data collection techniques have also been used. As it can be seen from Table 4.4, a survey questionnaire that uses structured set of questions has been most frequently applied data collection technique, as 45 out of 90 papers have used this method.

In addition, quantitative/structured online observations techniques (12 papers), experiments (4 papers) and secondary data with quantitative analysis (4 papers) have also been used. Electronic quantitative observations techniques that involve recording, measuring or counting of patterns (Malhotra and Birks, 2007) of posts, images, likes, comments, shares etc on social media is becoming a popular method of data collection. For example, Touchette et al. (2015), used a quantitative online observation technique to collect apparel brand posts on Facebook to determine the frequency of branded entertainment elements within each post. Thus, electronic quantitative observation has been used as a structured method to collect and measure the frequency of the type of posts by fashion brand (Arriaga et al., 2017), count the number of likes or comments on brand images (Bonilla et al., 2019), as well as to count the number of references of fashion brand related UGC across different social media platforms (Geissinger and Laurell, 2016), among others. More recently, researchers have also started using big data mining technique (e.g. Liu et al., 2019; Zhao and Min, 2019) to broaden the understanding of social media marketing. This data collection technique has gained traction with the rise of internet-mediated technologies and has been used to collect and extract large set of data, both textual and visual, from social media platforms (Liu et al., 2019), however, the use is very limited in the reviewed literature (only 2 papers) and research would benefit from more studies using this data collection technique as it allows systematised collection of large volume of data over a period of time. Big data mining has been categorised under the ‘secondary data collection’, along with two other studies that are completely based on secondary source of data collection, such as Rienda et al. (2020) used FAME database for collecting information regarding fashion SME’s in the UK, and Koivisto and Mattila (2018) used downloaded photographs from Instagram and quantitatively analysed them.

With regards to the qualitative method, netnography (4 papers) and interviews (4 studies) were the most common, followed by focus groups (1 study). Netnography is a form of participant observation data collection technique that relies on the internet or digital communication as a source of data to develop an ethnographic understanding of the phenomena (Saunders et al., 2016). Netnography is associated with qualitative methods and has been used to study different consumer and brand-related phenomena’s in previous literature. Netnography is different from more structured quantitative online observations, data collection techniques as it does not focus on counting frequencies or numbers but rather uses online data to understand social interactions taking place online. For example, Parrott et al. (2015), used netnography to understand characteristic’s, behaviours and perception of online brand advocates within the online fashion brand community by observing blog texts, users comments,

community interactions and activities. Similarly, netnography has also been used by fashion marketing researchers to understand the phenomena of fashion blog (Kulmala et al., 2013), as well as to understand how fashion brands are using social media to interact with their consumers by observing social media accounts of luxury fashion brands (Athwal et al., 2019). Not surprisingly, the review reveals rapid increase in the use of netnography by fashion marketing researchers, mostly after 2013. Additionally, the qualitative interview technique, which involves the use of a semi-structured interview with participant to uncover deeper meanings, experiences, attitudes, motivations, reasons on a research topic (Saunders et al., 2016), has been used by researchers to gather insights from both consumer and fashion brands (Pentina et al., 2018; Quach and Thaichon, 2017; Ananda et al., 2018; Naeem, 2020). For example, semi-structured interviews have been used to gain rich insights into fashion users motivations to produce brand-related content (e.g. Naeem, 2020) and consumer perceptions when interacting with the brand online (e.g. Quach and Thaichon, 2017).

Data Collection Techniques	No. of Papers	Key References
<b>Survey questionnaire</b>	46	Chu et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2012; Park et al., 2011; Kang et al., 2014; Chae and Ko, 2016; Anderson et al., 2014; Hsu, 2019; Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Colliander and Marder, 2018; Anselmsson and Tunca, 2019; Zollo et al., 2020; Boerman, 2020
<b>Quantitative online observations</b>	12	Schultz, 2016; Touchette et al., 2015; Ng, 2014; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Arriaga et al., 2017; Bonilla et al., 2019; Geissinger and Laurell, 2016; Kusumasondjaja et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2012; Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández, 2017; Wang et al., 2020; Quijada et al., 2020
<b>Experiments</b>	4	Jin et al., 2019; Jin and Ryu, 2020; Amatulli et al., 2019; Teona et al., 2019
<b>Secondary data</b>	4	Koivisto and Mattila, 2018; Rienda et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2019; Zhao and Min, 2019
<b>Interviews</b>	4	Pentina et al., 2018; Halvorsen et al., 2013; Quach and Thaichon, 2017; Naeem, 2020
<b>Netnography</b>	4	Kulmala et al., 2013; Pihl, 2014; Parrott et al., 2015; Mazzoli et al., 2019
<b>Multi-method (two qualitative data collection techniques)</b>	7	Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016; Helal et al., 2018; Nash, 2019; Athwal et al., 2019; Audrezet et al., 2020; Mckeown and Shearer, 2019; Liu et al., 2019
<b>Focus group</b>	1	Thomas et al., 2020
<b>Mixed method (qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques)</b>	8	Nelson et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2017; Chen and Wang, 2017; Wiedmann et al., 2010; Ananda et al., 2018; Kawaf and Istanbullo, 2019; Park and Kim, 2015; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020

**Table 4.4 Data collection techniques used in the reviewed literature**

The review also shows that different combinations of qualitative data collection techniques have also been used to provide more in-depth findings, which have been categorised under ‘multi-method’ data collection technique (7 studies) in the table below. For example, Nash (2019) used semi-structured interviews with focus group discussion to explore the influence of social media platforms on consumer decision making. Another most commonly used combination is the use of netnography with semi-structured interviews (Athwal et al., 2019; Audrezet et al., 2020; Mckeown and Shearer, 2019; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016), for example, Audrezet et al. (2020) used netnography to observe social media influencer and

brand collaboration on social media, and conducted interviews with social media influencers to provide in-depth analysis of created content and perspectives on authenticity practices in influencer marketing.

Moreover, a mixed research method that integrates different ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ data collection techniques in a single study, such as netnography and online survey (Park and Kim, 2015), semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires (Ananda et al., 2018), among others, have also been used. In mixed-method research, quantitative and qualitative research was combined in different ways (Saunders et al., 2016), for example, Park and Kim (2015) first used netnography to study fashion brand practices on online brand community followed by a quantitative questionnaire survey with consumers to analyse the link between brand practices and relational outcomes. Similarly, most of the studies adopted the sequential mixed method (Saunders et al., 2016), wherein qualitative data collection is followed by quantitative data collection and analysis to better understand research question (Nelson et al., 2019; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020), while Chen and Wang (2017) used triangulated mixed method of data collection in which they separately used quantitative observation of luxury fashion brands WeChat account to determine role of the social media in luxury fashion marketing, and used in-depth interviews with consumers to determine consumer perception of luxury fashion brand marketing to ascertain if consumer perception and brands use of social media marketing corroborate (Chen and Wang, 2017). There are in total 8 studies that have used mixed research method of data collection.

Summarising, the methodological findings clearly indicate the growth of empirical research in the field in the last decade. The dominance of quantitative studies is prevalent in the literature, and notably structured survey questionnaire has been significantly used as quantitative data collection methods for the investigated issues. The use of qualitative methods such as netnography and semi-structured interviews that provide a deeper and rich insight on the opinions of participants with respect to use of social media has also been used. In addition to the use of a mono-method of data collection, few studies have also used a multi-method data collection technique to enhance the richness of findings. The multi-method data collection is more commonly used as qualitative data collection instruments (e.g. interviews and netnography). On the other hand, the rise of quantitative electronic observation, and qualitative netnography techniques indicates that social media has also been used as data collection tool to address certain research questions. The review also concludes that mixed method of data collection has also been applied to add more rigor to academic enquiry. Furthermore, using more qualitative research methods such as interviews, focus groups and netnography, or

combining both qualitative and quantitative methods, in future could unravel a deeper understanding of different perspectives, interpretations, experiences, motivations related to social media marketing in the fashion industry context (Burnasheva et al., 2019).

#### 4.5.2 Patterns in Sample

Similar to the diversity of research methods that has been employed in the fashion social media marketing research, a number of different samples have also been examined. In this regard, diversity in geographical focus and social media platforms used in current research have been reviewed, as shown in Table 4.5. Out of the total sample of reviewed papers, only 60 studies specified about the country of data collection and the rest did not explicitly state the country of data collection.

The distribution of reviewed literature reveals that most of the studies are concentrated in western nations such as the United States of America and European countries. Sample from European countries dominates 27 out of 60, followed by the United States of America 14 out of 60. On the basis of empirical work, studies from European countries emanate majorly from UK (Parrott et al., 2015; Helal et al., 2018 Nash, 2019), Italy (Morra et al., 2018; Nadeem et al., 2015), Germany (Wiedmann et al., 2010), Finland (Kulmala et al., 2013), Paris (Pentina et al., 2018), Spain (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018), France (Kefi and Maar, 2018), Sweden (Colliander and Marder, 2018; Pihl, 2014), among a few others.

The less represented regions include non-western countries 19 studies out of 60. Countries such as Korea (Park et al., 2011; Ko et al., 2013; Chae and Ko, 2016; Kim and Ko, 2010; Kim and Lee, 2019; Kim and Ko, 2012), China (Liu et al., 2019; Ng, 2014) and Taiwan (Hsu, 2019; Chang and Fan, 2017), Thailand (Quach and Thaichon, 2017) are amongst few studied country within this sample. While only one study had cross-country sample, integrating both western and eastern countries, for instance, Godey et al. (2016) studies consumer data from four countries China, France, India, and Italy. Although, cross-country studies are important for accounting differences in perceptions and practices across countries, the findings suggest little attention has been paid in this regard, and future research will benefit from undertaking cross-country comparative studies (Hahn and Lee, 2014; Kim and Lee, 2019).

Additionally, most of the research focused on a single country context and some studies have a multi-country sample (de Lenne and Vandebosch, 2017; Ananda et al., 2018; Scuotto et al., 2017; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). For example, Ananda et al. (2018) studied

a sample from two European countries, Spanish and Italian brands, and Scuotto et al. (2017) examined data from SME fashion brands in Italy and the United Kingdom.

Pattern in Samples		No. of Papers	Key References
<b>Geographical contribution based on country of data collection in previous research</b>	Western countries	41	Anderson et al., 2014; Nelson et al., 2019; Park et al., 2018; Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Nash, 2019; Pentina et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017; Kawaf and Istanbullo, 2019; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016; Rialti et al., 2017; Anselmsson and Tunca, 2019; Pihl, 2014; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Lou et al., 2019; Zollo et al., 2020; Naeem M., 2020; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020; Rienda et al., 2020
	Non-Western countries	19	Chae and Ko, 2016; Hsu, 2019; Ng, 2014; Ananda et al., 2019; Chang and Fan, 2017; Kim and Lee, 2019; Salem and Salem, 2019; Teona et al., 2019; Salem and Alanadoly, 2020; Yu and Hu, 2020; Quach and Thaichon, 2017
	Cross-country	1	Godey et al., 2016
<b>Type of social media platform studied in previous research</b>	Facebook	23	Anderson et al., 2014; Hsu, 2019; Schultz, 2016; Ananda et al., 2018; Touchette et al., 2015; Arriaga et al., 2017; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Park et al., 2018; Kawaf and Istanbullo, 2019; Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández, 2017; Lee et al., 2018; Anselmsson and Tunca, 2019; Kim and Johnson, 2016
	Instagram	19	Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016; Bonilla et al., 2019; Kusumasondjaja et al., 2019; Colliander and Marder, 2018; Liu et al., 2019; McKeown and Shearer, 2019; Lou et al., 2019; Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020; Quijada et al., 2020; Audrezet et al., 2020; Boerman, 2020; Casaló et al., 2020; Audrezet et al., 2020; Lou et al., 2019; Jin and Ryu, 2020
	Other SNS (e.g. Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Wechat, Weibo )	11	Park et al., 2011; Kang et al., 2014; Chae and Ko, 2016; Nash, 2019; Ng, 2014; Chen et al., 2017; Mazzoli et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2019; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Teona et al., 2019; Yu and Hu, 2020
	Multiple platforms	16	Helal et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2019; Athwal et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2012; Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kim and Ko, 2010; Kang and Kim, 2017; Rialti et al., 2017; Kim and Ko, 2012; Kananukul et al., 2015; Geissinger and Laurell, 2016; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Zollo et al., 2020; Naeem M., 2020; Rienda et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020



**Table 4.5 Classification of reviewed papers based on country context and type of social media platforms**

Another categorisation focuses on analysing the most commonly used social media platforms in the reviewed literature (see Table 4.5). The papers span across an array of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WeChat, Weibo, Twitter and Pinterest. Social media platforms have either been studied individually or in combination with others (e.g. using more than one platform in a study). Therefore, research papers that have used more than one platform in their study have been categorised into ‘multiple platform’ category, and social media platform in less than four papers have been included in ‘other SNS’ category.

The most commonly examined platform in social media marketing research in context of fashion is Facebook, with about 23 papers solely discussing this particular platform. This is not surprising, as Facebook continues to be the most popular social media platform, with 2.6 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2020b), and presents a significant opportunity for fashion brands to reach their target audience. Although Facebook remains a prominent channel for academic research, but with the growing popularity of image and videos sharing platform, like Instagram (over 1 billion users) (Statista, 2020b), researchers have started exploring the potential of Instagram for fashion brands (19 papers). However, it was in the year 2016 that Instagram started gaining academic attention for social media marketing in fashion, the first paper focusing on Instagram appearing in 2016 within the selected literature (Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). This could be due to the seemingly increased usage of Instagram by fashion brands from 2016 onwards, as 98 % of fashion brands joined Instagram as of March 2016 (Statista, 2017; Lou et al., 2019). Additionally, the fashion sector has been witnessing higher engagement per post on Instagram, even higher than that on Facebook (Statista, 2020e); thus academic attention on Instagram within this domain has grown tremendously over the past few years. However, surprisingly, Twitter (Mazzoli et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2019), YouTube (Lee and Watkins, 2016), WeChat (Liu et al., 2019; Zhao et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2017) and Weibo (Ng, 2014; Yu and Hu, 2020) have received little attention in social media marketing research in the context of fashion. With an array of social media channels now available, it is important to study differences in fashion brand’s social media channel preferences and marketing initiatives. Moreover, much of the current research focused on platforms in isolation, some also used multiple platforms (Helal et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2019; Athwal et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2012). A total of 16 studies focused on multi-platform studies, for example Smith et al.

(2012) studied differences in brand related UGC consumers across Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, while Athwal et al. (2019) conducted an online observation of luxury fashion brands across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and more recent study compared social media practices of luxury fashion brand across Twitter and Weibo (Wang et al., 2020). Therefore, existing literature has considered various prominent social media platforms, yet there is still scope for expanding research on less focused platforms such as YouTube, Twitter and even considering multi-platform studies for providing more deeper and novel insights into this research domain (Ananda et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017; Quijada et al., 2020).

#### 4.6 Theoretical Perspective

This section synthesises the underpinning theories and models used in the set of 92 identified papers. The analysis of theoretical aspects can be observed in existing SLR's on general social media use (Ngai et al., 2015), social media and innovation review (Bhimani et al., 2019), social media for knowledge search (Ahmed et al., 2019), however, no review until the date has synthesised theories adopted in social media marketing in the specific context of the fashion industry.

A significant number of research papers have tried to address research problem by using different theoretical lenses from pre-existing theories (Table 4.6). The theories and models used in social media marketing literature in the context of fashion are categorised into three groups. The categorisation is based on Ngai et al. (2015) systematic literature review on social media. The three groups were deemed useful as it facilitates the process of providing systematised structure for classification of the most popular theoretical perspective used by scholars in this domain. The three groups include; (1) personal behaviour, (2) social behaviour, and (3) mass communication theories. These group of theories aim to explain social and cognitive psychological behaviour of consumers, and how marketing channel exerts influence on consumers. As social media is relatively a new phenomenon, researchers have emphasised understanding fashion consumers individual and social motivation to use and participate on brand's social media platforms, as well as the potential of using social media as a marketing and communication tool for brand's by using theories from the three categories as stated above.

As shown in Table 4.6, a total of 26 theories and models have been identified in the reviewed studies, which are categorised under specific groups, as mentioned above. It is important to note that most essential theories and models are selected and discussed in each of the aforementioned category below. First, each of the category is explained, following which the

most commonly used theories and models with their explanation and how they have been used in reviewed literature is discussed.

Theories and Models	No. of Studies	References
<b>Personal Behaviour Theories</b>		
Pollay and Mittal's (1993) Belief Model	1	Chu et al., 2013
Functional Theory of Attitude	1	Jin, 2012
Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell's (EKB) model	1	Kang et al., 2014
To et al. (2007) Shopping Motivation Model	1	Anderson et al., 2014
Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	1	de Lenne and Vandenbosch, 2017
Cognitive- Behavioural Model	1	Kananukul et al., 2015
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	1	Wolny and Mueller, 2013
Personal Construct Theory	1	Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019
Construal Level Theory	1	Park et al., 2018
Self-Congruity Theory	1	Chang and Fan, 2017
Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	1	Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020
Personality Traits Theory	1	Salem and Alanadoly, 2020
<b>Social Behaviour Theories</b>		
Social Identity Theory (SIT)	2	Helal et al., 2018; Hahn and Lee, 2014; Yu and Hu, 2020
Consumer Socialization Theory	1	Jung and Kim, 2016
Social Comparison Theory	1	Lee and Watkins, 2016
Social Resource Theory	1	Quach and Thaichon, 2017
Social Capital Theory	1	Chang and Fan, 2017
Attitude Contagion Theory	1	Hsu, 2019
Para Social Interaction Theory	4	Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Boerman, 2020
WOM theory	1	Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández, 2017

<b>Mass Communication Theory</b>		
Uses and Gratification Theory	5	Nelson et al., 2019; Nash, 2019; Athwal et al., 2019; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Zollo et al., 2020
S-D logic	4	Quach and Thaicon, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Koivisto and Mattila, 2018; Thomas et al., 2020
Elaboration Likelihood Model	1	Kobia and Liu, 2017
Play Theory	1	Touchette et al., 2015
Stimuli Organism Response (SOR)	2	Kim and Johnson, 2016; Burnasheva et al., 2019
Social Presence Theory	1	Jin et al., 2019

**Table 4.6 Theories and models used in previous literature on social media marketing in the fashion**

The first categorisation of theories/models adopted in reviewed literature aim at explaining behaviour of social media users at a personal level and are known as Personal behaviour theories. A total of twelve theories/models are included in this particular category. The second category of theories that focused on explaining individuals social behaviour on social media and were grouped under the social behavioural theory category. A total of twelve studies have discussed social behaviour theories. While the third and last category of theories that explained the influence of social media as a marketing and communication channel on users were grouped under mass-communication theories. The complete list of such theoretical lenses found in reviewed studies has been provided in Table 4.6. However, it is important to note that there were a few studies that entail just simple mentioning of theory and have not elaborate on its application to the research findings (Park and Kim, 2015; Kang and Kim, 2017). For example, Park and Kim (2017), used social penetration theory but did not provide any further explanation of its application in exploring perceived relationship investment factors. Such simple a mention of the theory that does not contribute anything substantial to research findings has not been included in the table above. The theories/models most frequently used in reviewed literature have been selected and discussed below.

The synthesis of theoretical analysis suggests that the most frequently applied theory in reviewed literature is uses and gratification theory (5 studies). It has been categorised as a theory of mass communication as it aims at understanding how media choice is based on

fulfilment of an individual's needs (Blumler and Katz 1974; Kobia and Liu, 2017). Although originally applied to understand how traditional media satisfied consumer needs, this theory has gained attention in social media research in fashion, as it provides a prospect for further understanding fashion users intention for using interactive media type. Uses and gratification theory has been used in the reviewed literature to determine fashion consumers motivation to use social networking sites (Nash, 2019), to understand their social media mediated fashion behaviour with respect to responding to fashion related social media marketing messages (Kobia and Liu, 2017), to investigate the gratification derived from following luxury fashion brands (Athwal et al., 2019), as well as to understand social media usage behaviour of specific fashion consumer cohort i.e. millennials (Nelson et al., 2019). Another most commonly used theory is the service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2008), which posits that market exchange relies on value co-creation by exchange of resources between actors involved. Traditionally used to study how value is co-created during face-to-face interaction between in-store employees and consumers (Quach and Thaichon, 2017), the understanding of service-dominant logic is now being increasingly used in social media mediated environment. Most of the studies have adopted service-dominant logic to understand value bestowed to consumers by interacting and following a brand online (Kefi and Maar, 2018; Koivisto and Mattila, 2018) as well as for value co-creation activities of fashion brands (Quach and Thaichon, 2017; Thomas et al., 2020).

Other most applied theory in social media marketing research for fashion brands is the social identity theory (SIT) and parasocial interaction theory (PSI). These social behaviour theories have been applied in two and four research paper respectively. Social identity theory posits that people allocate themselves to specific social categories, which assists them in defining their self-identity, and their response to stimuli is guided by that identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1985; Hahn and Lee, 2014). The SIT theory has been implemented by two studies which include those conducted by Helal et al. (2018) and Hahn and Lee (2014), as a way of understanding the role of social identity perspective in conceptualizing brand perception in social media mediated environment. While PSI explains the relationship between media personality and media users. PSI was initially used in television and film media to study the influence of celebrities on consumer behaviour. However, the advent of social media has produced a new domain of academic enquiry, and PSI has also been commonly used to assess the influence of social media personalities i.e. fashion influencer or bloggers on consumer brand perception and purchase intention (Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Boerman, 2020).

Additionally, a few studies used multiple theoretical lenses to understand the impact of social media marketing on fashion consumers (Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Chang and Fan, 2017; Kobia and Liu, 2017). For instance, Lee and Watkins (2016) used parasocial interaction in combination with social comparison theory to investigate the influence of fashion vloggers on fashion consumers purchase intention on social media. Similarly, Kobia and Liu (2017) integrated uses and gratification theory with an elaboration likelihood model to examine fashion consumers response towards social media marketing efforts of fashion brands. Therefore, the use of multiple theories in research is proposed to support a convincing conclusion by eliminating limitations and bias involved in using a single theory (Kobia and Liu, 2017; Chang and Fan, 2017).

Overall, it can be concluded that although theories used to span across both micro theories (i.e. individual or behavioural) and macro theories (i.e. mass communication theories), usage of theoretical lenses in studying social media marketing in fashion is still limited. Most of the theories used in the reviewed literature such as the theory of planned behaviour, theory of reasoned action, social capital theory etc. have only been used just once. The use of other theories such as stimuli organism response, social capital theory and social comparison theory is also very limited, although their application can be extended to compare impact of opinion leaders, micro influencer, and celebrities on consumers. Additionally, a few studies have incorporated multiple theories to understand a particular phenomenon, however, no study was found to incorporate a holistic theoretical perspective combining individual or behavioural perspective with organisational or mass communication theoretical perspective. Furthermore, the absence of incorporating a holistic perspective by combining micro and macro level to understand phenomena can possibly be attributed to the relatively nascent stage of discourse.

#### 4.7 Chapter Summary

This section analysed papers with respect to their year of publication and source of publication. The articles are published in different journals showing the inter-disciplinary nature of the topic under research. The time distribution graphs show a constant growth in research from 2015 to date, with 2019 being year having the number of published research. The research process began by understanding the conceptual development of topic over period of the last decade, to make sense of structure and understand the evolution of social media marketing research in fashion.

Moreover, this chapter also provides a review of methodologies and sample characteristics of reviewed papers. The methodological review should quantitative method and survey questionnaire data collection techniques that were dominant in literature. Lastly, this chapter revealed theoretical underpinning in current body of literature and identified most commonly deployed theories. The next chapter critically discusses the findings of this study by presenting the underlining themes that emerged from the review of social media marketing literature in the fashion industry context.

## Chapter 5 Literature Synthesis: Underlying Research Themes

In this chapter, five themes that emerged in literature on social media marketing in the fashion industry have been discussed. The five themes were abductively developed by coding the selected set of papers and referring to categories adopted from Alalwan et al.'s (2017) SLR on social media marketing, as also previously discussed in section 3.6. During the thematic analysis process, papers were manually read, and an initial set of codes were produced, for example, social media marketing initiatives, consumer behaviour, social influencers, electronic word of mouth, among others. A concept matrix was used to organise similarities and connections observed across different categories, and relationships were established between the selected papers and research foci to generate themes within social media marketing literature in the fashion context.

Research Theme	Description	Key References
<b>Research Theme 1</b>  Fashion brands tactical social media marketing activities	Includes papers investigating tactical utilisation of social media as a part of marketing and communication practices of various fashion brands	Phan et al., 2011; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Ng, 2014; Arriaga et al., 2017; Touchette et al., 2015; Ananda et al., 2018; Schultz, 2016; Chen and Wang, 2017; Hughes et al., 2016; Scuotto et al., 2017; Ko et al., 2013 Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016
<b>Research Theme 2</b>  Social media marketing and consumer Behaviour	Focuses on individual characteristics and psychological factors influencing consumer behaviour towards social media marketing activities	Park et al., 2011; Jin et al., 2012; Anderson et al., 2014; Kang et al., 2014 ; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Helal et al., 2018; Pentina et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2019
<b>Research Theme 3</b>  Social media marketing and E-WOM	Presents current literature related to persuasiveness of E-WOM as marketing tool, and outlines users motivations of sharing and seeking in E-WOM	Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kulmala et al., 2013; Halvorsen et al., 2013; Smith et al. 2012; Hahn and lee, 2014; Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández, 2017; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Mazzoli et al. ,2019; Lee et al. 2018
<b>Research Theme 4</b>  Social media marketing and building consumer-brand relations	Focuses on antecedents and outcomes of consumer-brand relationship on branded social media platforms	Kim and Ko, 2010; Kim and Ko, 2012; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Chang and Fan, 2017; Quach and Thaichon, 2017; Kang and Kim, 2017; Park and Kim, 2015; Burnasheva et al., 2019; Parrott et al., 2015
<b>Research Theme 5</b>  Social media marketing and other branding related outcomes	Focuses on use of social media marketing for other branding related outcomes studied in previous research such as brand equity creation	Kim and Ko, 2012; Godey et al., 2016; Morra et al., 2018; Chae and Ko, 2016 Anelmsen et al., 2019

**Table 5.1 Themes in social media marketing research in fashion**



Table 5.1 above provides the description of each theme and selected references of the studies related to each theme. The number of papers in each theme were not exclusive rather overlapped with each other at some stages. The key reference column in the table above does not include all research papers that constitute that particular theme but presents the most significant studies within each research themes. In the following section, each of the five research themes and their findings is discussed in detail to highlight the current state of research, topics and concepts covered in each theme.

## 5.1 Research Theme 1: Fashion Brands Social Media Marketing Tactics

In light of the changing marketing environment, most of fashion brands worldwide have started adjusting their communication practices to include social media in an attempt to seize the opportunities presented by a new communication medium (Kim and Ko, 2012; Liu et al., 2019). Both luxury and mass-market fashion brands are increasingly using social media in their marketing practices (Arriaga et al., 2017), rather strategically, striving to benefit from the visibility and interactivity of social media. The utilisation of social media as a part of the marketing and communication practices of various the fashion brands has been the focus of attention of a number of studies. This theme has gained importance in academic research mainly because social media marketing stands in sharp contrast with the traditional marketing system of high-control and linearity (Liu et al., 2019), thus studying how brands across various segments of the fashion industry are leveraging social media to communicate, is paramount to understand social media marketing tactics currently used in the fashion industry.

The reviewed studies investigated social media marketing practices across various segments of fashion brands ranging from haute couture brands (e.g. Dior, Burberry), high fashion brands (Coach, DKNY, Calvin Klein), to fast-fashion brands (e.g. H&M, Zara) and sports brand, fashion SME's etc.. For the purpose of the review these papers have been divided into two categories; luxury brand social media marketing practices which comprises of haute couture and high-end fashion brands, and mass-market fashion brands which comprise of fast-fashion, sports brands and fashion SME's (Arriaga et al., 2017; Bonilla et al., 2019). Table 5.2 presents few key papers in the field that illuminate the social media marketing tactics currently practiced by fashion brands, which is followed by a detailed discussion on social media marketing practices followed in the luxury and mass-market fashion sectors in the sub-sections below.

Type of Fashion Brand	Example of Social Media Marketing Tactics	Key Authors
<b>Luxury fashion brand social media marketing tactics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information related to product, brand, brand history and craftsmanship</li> <li>• Provide hyperlinks to company website</li> <li>• Livestreaming runway shows</li> <li>• Using artistic pictures, videos</li> <li>• Engaging influencers and celebrity endorsements</li> <li>• Networking by creating brand communities</li> <li>• Using innovative branded campaigns to enhance customer experience</li> <li>• Rewarding consumers by providing special offers and discounts</li> </ul>	Kim and Ko, 2010; Phan et al. 2011; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Ng, 2014; Liu et al., 2019; Zhao and Min, 2019 Jin et al., 2019; Jin and Ryu, 2020; Yu and Hu, 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-creating brand content and experience with consumers</li> </ul>	Hughes et al., 2016; Koivisto and Mattila, 2018; Quach and Thaichon, 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcasting photos and videos to disseminate product information</li> </ul>	Chen et al. 2017; Athwal et al. 2019
<b>Mass-market fashion brands social media marketing tactics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posting activities such as product promotion, presentation of new collection, events, posting photos, videos</li> </ul>	Schultz, 2016; Arriaga et al., 2017; Ananda et al., 2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using social media for knowledge search and content co-creation</li> </ul>	Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016; Scuotto et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2020

**Table 5.2 Key papers examining social media marketing tactics of fashion brands**

### 5.1.1 Luxury Fashion Brand Social Media Marketing Tactics

Literature in this theme mainly discusses the issue of how luxury fashion brands are implementing social media marketing. Adhering to the rapid utilisation of social media in luxury fashion segment, Kim and Ko (2010) initially proposed five attributes of luxury fashion brand's social media marketing; entertainment, interaction, customisation, word of mouth, and trendiness. Their study found that each of the five attributes of social media marketing practices of luxury fashion brands positively influences consumer relationship and purchase intention. The effectiveness of these five attributes was further corroborated in another study published by Kim and Ko (2012), where they confirmed that these attributes of social media marketing not only contribute to relationship equity but also have a significant positive impact on brand equity and value equity. Albeit valuable, the above studies focused on a single brand's (Louis

Vuitton) social media marketing practices (Kim and Ko, 2010, 2012). Recently, Godey et al. (2016) used Kim and Ko (2010) five dimensions to study the impact of social media marketing efforts of different luxury fashion brands on consumer belonging to four different countries, thus increasing the generalisability of these dimensions. Their research extended the previous studies by demonstrating the positive impact of the five dimension of social media marketing activities on building brand awareness, brand image, and consequently on consumer brand loyalty, brand preferences and purchase behaviour (Godey et al., 2016). Overall, prior research recognises that social media marketing activities that focus on entertainment, interaction, customisation, word of mouth, and trendiness are effective marketing tactics for luxury fashion brands.

Furthermore, scholars such as Phan et al. (2011), Kontu and Vecchi (2014) and Ng (2014) adopted a case study approach to delve deeper into social media marketing tactics adopted by specific luxury fashion brands. For instance, Phan et al. (2011), studied the social media marketing tactics used by Burberry to re-built its brand image. By deploying the potential of social media brand communities, livestreaming runway shows to online trunk shows on multiple social media sites and encouraging consumers to participate by sharing their pictures on “Art of Trench’ community, Burberry was able to successfully use social media to create customer experience and potentially increase its profits (Phan et al. 2011). Contrary to early reluctance of luxury fashion brands to join the social media bandwagon, due to concerns over losing exclusivity (Okonkwo, 2009; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014), most of the studies in this review suggest that social media is being recognised as essential marketing communication tool. Kontu and Vecchi (2014) in their exploratory study of social media marketing tactics used by three international fashion brands revealed that by utilising different approaches such as user involvement, blogger collaboration and innovative interaction techniques (e.g. persona marketing), luxury fashion brands are proactively utilising social media to expand their online brand performance. While, Ng (2014) highlighted the importance of content marketing in social media, by studying Coach’s social media marketing activities on Weibo in China. Authors revealed that a combination of tactics such as; brand-building activities like posts reflecting companies history, craftsmanship; advertisements activities like sharing product related information; sales promotion activities like offering deals and discounts on social media platform, and interaction with consumers by introducing innovative campaign helped Coach to establish itself in the Chinese market.

Reinforcing the proactive utilisation of social media for marketing in luxury fashion market, Hughes et al. (2016) and Koivisto and Mattila (2018), further suggested that luxury fashion brands are also using social media as a co-creation tool to engage consumers. According to Hughes et al. (2016), storytelling and story giving is an effective marketing technique that enables brands to create a loyal fan base, at the same time ensures high performance. One of the most famous examples of using story giving as a co-creation tool is Tiffany & Co.'s 'What Makes Love True' campaign, where the brand encouraged its users to share their personal love stories and become a part of Tiffany's community (Hughes et al., 2016). Thus, luxury fashion brands can co-create value on social media by allowing consumers to actively participate in brand-related activities. Quach and Thaichon (2017) extends the understanding of value co-creation by using the S-D logic of marketing in the social media environment. Based on the premise that value co-creation involves the exchange of resources between parties involved, their study contended that luxury fashion brand's social media marketing activities that encourage consumers to share their positive attitude and affection with the brand, develop status-boosting experiences, share brand knowledge and tips on the brand page, and brand's that offer personalised online services, can effectively lead to value co-creation (Quach and Thaichon, 2017). In addition, Koivisto and Mattila (2018), presented a new perspective on brand-consumer co-creation on social media by emphasising the importance of branded events in value co-creation. The study found that experiential events can encourage consumers to disseminate brands value proposition via the creative production of user-generated content (Koivisto and Mattila, 2018). For example, the luxury fashion brand's inviting fashion consumers to their runway shows and exhibitions, where they are encouraged to post photos, and videos of their shows on social media. The notion of value co-creation is based on mutually satisfying experiences for both the consumers and the brands, thus consumers participating in luxury fashion brands activities, usually derive social, self-expressive, hedonic and utilitarian values, which subsequently impacts brand-value in terms of high brand performance, brand loyalty and increased purchase intentions (Hughes et al., 2016). However, increased participation of customers in the value creation process can also be challenging, as it can sometimes even lead to value destruction if the brand fails to reciprocate to consumer expectation (Quach and Thaichon (2017). Therefore, understanding the needs of consumers and to encourage them to disseminate positive brand value is of utmost importance to luxury fashion brands social media marketing practices (Koivisto and Mattila, 2018).

Another social media marketing tactic that has gained attention is the use of influencer marketing, a form of E-WOM communication that harness the power of influencers network to showcase branded content and luxury visual images to increase brand trust and brand recognition (Jin et al., 2019; Lou et al., 2019; Jin and Ryu, 2020). The new category of influencers (also called opinion leaders, Instafamous, fashion bloggers) have reshaped the understanding of celebrity influence in the fashion industry, such that, using influencers compared to traditional celebrities for marketing on social media is being considered as more effective practice by brands to reach consumers who are willing to engage more with brands online (Jin et al., 2019). Influencers tend to introduce new products and trends with a personal context, and thus are perceived to be more organic, useful and credible by consumers when compared to formal marketing techniques such as using celebrity endorsement or even the branded marketing messages themselves (Halvorsen et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2019; Lou et al., 2019). In agreement with Jin et al. (2019) that highlight the effectiveness of fashion influencers, Lou et al. (2019) suggested that influencer-promoted branded content acquires more engagement and positive sentiments from users (e.g. liking, comments) than brand-promoted content. This can be explained by the relationship between the source and users, as consumers perceive influencer to be highly approachable, interactive and relatable (Jin et al., 2019), and a trustworthy source of fashion and brand related information and recommendations (Quelhas-Brito, 2018; Jin and Ryu, 2020; Lou et al., 2019), thus they are more likely to exhibit desirable behaviour towards influencers marketing. Therefore, social media marketing tactics that involve using fashion influencers as a source of communication are important in accelerating the fashion and product diffusion process as it increases brand/product recognition (Jin and Ryu, 2020) and develops a positive consumer attitude towards the brand (Jin et al., 2019). Most of the studies in this theme suggest that luxury fashion brands are proactively using social media marketing by using a combination of interactive, engaging, and participatory social media tactics.

However, in opposition to a proactive utilisation of social media marketing, a few studies argued that luxury fashion brands are using social media to just build a presence online, by adopting low interaction practices in an attempt to protect their exclusivity (Chen et al. 2017; Athwal et al., 2019). For instance, Chen et al. (2017), content analysis of luxury fashion brands WeChat accounts revealed that brands mainly use social media to build presence online. According to the authors, luxury fashion brands mainly focus on communicating brand meaning and disseminating product information. In the same lieu, a recent study conducted by Athwal et al. (2019), suggested that social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brand

is similar to traditional broadcasting approach as they simply published photos and videos, and rarely used interactive features of social media platforms such as Facebook live or Instagram live.

One of the major reason highlighted in previous studies for which luxury fashion brands refrain from engaging in conversation with consumers is to maintain their exclusive image. For instance, Park et al. (2018) found negative impact of proactive social media marketing on consumer perception of luxury. In their empirical study of the U.S consumers, they found that high level consumer-brand engagement developed through overly active social media marketing activities can have a damaging impact on consumer perception of luxury due to decreased physiological distance. Consumers physiological distance is an important factor that supports the luxury dream, and excessive brand exposure can dilute brands value perception (Park et al., 2018). This was further explicated by Athwal et al. (2019), they empirically verified that consumers are widely accepting of the distanced social media marketing practices of luxury fashion brands, which helps the brand to maintain their exclusive image, and that the mere presence of luxury fashion brands on social media can gratify luxury consumer's needs. Overall, these studies suggest that luxury fashion brands should adapt their social media marketing tactics to protect their exclusivity, emphasising on uploading highly curated videos and images to communicate the luxury dream, as highly engaging brand-consumer interaction can negatively impact luxury brand's perception (Park et al., 2018; Athwal et al., 2019). Contrary to these studies, Liu et al. (2019) empirical investigation of luxury fashion brand marketing practices in China revealed that concerns on losing exclusivity due to interactive social media practices is not relevant. Chinese consumers demand for creative, engaging and entertaining content in luxury fashion brands social media marketing (Chen et al. 2017; Liu et al., 2019), and in that way are different than their western counterpart. These studies reveal the social media marketing paradox of luxury fashion brands in allowing and restricting interactivity on social media, as well as highlight the importance of accounting for cultural variation across different market segments.

More recently, Wang et al. (2020), investigated the impact of culture in social media marketing by considering how luxury fashion brand communication practices vary across Twitter and Weibo. Their study found that luxury brand communication practices are tailored to adjust to consumer cultural background to some extent, specifically when communicating through a local platform like Weibo, where the cultural environment is collectivist, whereas, more inclusive or neutral communication practices that have global appeal are used on platforms such as Twitter that has a globally diverse audience. Moreover, with the growth of

luxury fashion consumption in emerging markets like China, luxury fashion brands are also using localised celebrity endorsement especially when marketing on Chinese social media platforms (Weibo), as it has been empirically proved to generate higher user interaction (Yu and Hu, 2020). These findings add interesting insight to existing literature, suggesting that there is no single approach to using social media in marketing, as online activities need to be altered to the specific target audience present on particular social media platform.

Overall, it can be argued that fashion brands, despite being analogous in their size, adopt different approaches to social media marketing. Previous studies suggest that social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brands span from simple representing activities such as sharing brand information to highly engaging and interactive activities such as engaging influencers and personalizing consumer experience. Besides multiple social media marketing practices of luxury fashion brands, a growing scholarly interest in of social media marketing practices of the mass-market fashion sector also emerged in the review, which is discussed in the next sub-section.

#### 5.1.2 Mass-Market Fashion Brand Social Media Marketing Tactics

The analysis of social media marketing activities has numerous precedents in luxury fashion sector, however only a few studies have paid attention to mass-market fashion segment (Schultz, 2016; Arriaga et al., 2017; Ananda et al., 2018). Most of the studies suggest that fashion brands in mass-market segment adopt a low-interaction broadcasting approach to social media marketing, for instance, by examining Primark's activities on Facebook, Arriaga et al. (2017) suggested that it mainly adopted activities such as product promotion, presentation of new collection, and did not provide feedback and interactivity to consumers. Similarly, Ananda et al. (2018) found that fashion SME social media marketing actions on Facebook brand page pivot around product promotion and representation activity, adopting a broadcasting approach with main aim of driving sales. Meanwhile, such concern was also raised by Touchette et al. (2015), who found that apparel brands fail to utilise branded entertainment in their social media marketing activities such as play themes by organising events, contests, polls, videos, among other, which indicates that apparel brands are using social media in a very limited capacity (Touchette et al., 2015). Therefore, previous literature suggest that mass-market fashion brands rarely use interactive approach to social media marketing or stimulate active user participation in their branded communication (Arriaga et al., 2017).

However, a few recent studies suggest that mass-market fashion brands are experimenting new ways to leverage the interactive features of social media to their benefit. Roncha and

Radclyffe-Thomas (2016) studied co-creation activities used in TOM'S marketing campaign on Instagram, and revealed that brands are leveraging dynamic features of social media platforms such as Instagram stories to enhance consumer participation on brand page and contribute to brand narrative. Collaboration between brand and consumers in co-creating value on social media has been address as an important social media marketing tactic that can lead to befitting outcomes for brands in mass-market fashion sector. For instance, Scuotto et al. (2017) empirical research revealed that fashion SME's are involving consumers in innovation process in terms of ideating, producing new products or testing new products. Their study showed a positive increase in return on investment (ROI) for fashion SME's using social media networks in product innovation process. In lieu with these findings, a recent study conducted by Rienda et al. (2020), on fashion SME's showed significant statistical differences in financial performance of fashion SME's who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) in their marketing communication practices compared to ones who do not (Rienda et al., 2020). Although limited, these studies suggest the growing use of social media in mass-market fashion sector.

## 5.2 Research Theme 2: Social Media Marketing and Consumer Behaviour

Another significant theme which is represented by a good range of papers, has paid attention to the intricacies of consumer behaviour within the social media context (Park et al., 2011; Kang et al., 2014; Pentina et al., 2018). Consumer behaviour is a complex phenomenon and understanding the dynamics that facilitate its development, particularly in the social media environment, has become a significant contemporary research priority. Research on 'social media marketing and consumer behaviour' corresponds to developing a rationale of 'why' consumers use social media and participate with brands social media platforms.

Besides multiple social media marketing activities of fashion brands, literature also encapsulates the factors that influence consumers responses towards these branded communication on social media, which are discussed in this theme. One of the major reasons for the growing interest in this area is that social media has not only altered the way users communicate with each other, but has also altered the way consumers search, evaluate, choose and buy goods (Pentina et al., 2018). The influence of social media on consumer's decision-making process is growing unperceptively, and it has become a primary channel for seeking information (Helal et al., 2018), and for even developing purchases intention (Kim and Ko, 2010; Anderson et al., 2014). The understanding complex set of influences guiding consumer



usage of social media has theoretical implication to better catalogue reasons for online fashion consumer behaviour towards social media marketing efforts of brands (Park et al., 2011; Chu et al., 2013; Parrot et al., 2015; Pentina et al., 2018).

This research theme focuses on differences in user attributes such as lifestyle, decision-making style, and underlines users' motivation and beliefs that influence behaviour that has been studied in the previous literature (Park et al., 2011; Ko et al., 2013; Helal et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2019). The consumer-behaviour related factors that emerged from the review were further grouped into 'personal factors' that represents consumer personality related characteristics, and 'psychological factors' that influences consumer actions on social media such as consumers motivation, for the purpose of explanation (Table 5.3). In order to discuss these findings, this theme first briefly discusses 'personal factors' influencing consumer behaviour, followed by a discussion on 'psychological factors'.

Key Topic	Factors Studied	Findings	Key Authors
<b>Personal factors influencing consumers behaviour</b>	<b>Consumer Characteristics</b>		
	SNS user's lifestyles, decision-making style and personality traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SNS user's personal life patterns such as interests and opinions, values etc., and consumers style inventory decision making style influences consumer behaviour towards brand and purchase intention</li> <li>User's personality traits influence the level of social media activity</li> </ul>	Park et al., 2011; Kang et al., 2014; Salem and Alanadoly, 2020
<b>Psychological factors influencing consumers behaviour</b>	<b>Consumer Motivation</b>		
	Utilitarian Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information seeking motivation such as new trends, following brand closely, fashion seeking, following celebrities, influencers for fashion advice, is an important motivation for consumer online brand related activities</li> </ul>	Anderson et al., 2014; Chae and Ko, 2016; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Pentina et al., 2018; Helal et al., 2018; Nelson et al., 2019; Nash, 2019; Athwal et al., 2019;
	Hedonic Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entertaining and enjoyment-oriented experiences are positively associated with consumer use of social media and their intention to engage with brand related online behaviour</li> </ul>	Martin- Consugera, 2019; Amatulli et al., 2020
	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personality enhancement, incentive seeking, relational, social interaction with friends and family, brand likeability, aesthetic appreciation</li> </ul>	Pentina et al., 2018; Helal et al., 2018 Chae and Ko, 2016; Nash, 2019
	<b>Beliefs and Attitude</b>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumer belief about social media advertising and attitude towards the brand determines consumers response towards brand's social media marketing</li> </ul>	Jin et al., 2012; Chu et al., 2013

**Table 5.3 Key papers examining social media marketing and consumer behaviour**

Although there are a number of factors influencing consumer behaviour, personal and psychological factors have been particularly studied in the context of fashion consumer social media behaviour. Personal factors such as users lifestyle (Park et al., 2011), decision-making

styles (Kang et al., 2014), personality traits (Salem and Alanadoly, 2020), and psychological factors such as consumer motivation (Anderson et al., 2014; Pentina et al., 2018) and beliefs and attitude (Jin et al., 2012; Chu et al., 2013) have been discussed in the literature. A detailed description of the preceding factors has been discussed below.

First, in terms of personal factors, Park et al. (2011) studied the impact of users lifestyle on the use of social networking service (SNS) and its impact on luxury brand loyalty. Based on a sample of Korean SNS users, they concluded that user's lifestyle significantly influences how they perceive different SNS characteristics, which in turn determines their level of brand loyalty. Thus, luxury fashion brands should specifically focus on promoting SNS characteristics that serve their target audience needs. Other than user lifestyle, consumers decision-making style was found to be a determining factor in influencing consumers online purchase intention (Kang et al., 2014). Particularly, specific decision-making styles such as brand consciousness, fashion consciousness, price consciousness and over choice drive the consumer to seek different information about the product online and develop their positive attitude towards shopping on SNS (Kang et al., 2014). Furthermore, consumer personality traits such as agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience have also been empirically proved to impact fashion consumer social media activities (Salem and Alanadoly, 2020). Therefore, consumers responses towards social media marketing activities are influenced by their underlying personal characteristics. These studies highlight the significance of segmenting consumers based on personal characteristics and to adopt more targeted social media marketing approach that could serve the need of specific consumer group based on their personal buying decisions, lifestyles and personality traits.

Consumer behaviour is also influenced by psychological factors such as consumers motivations, and beliefs and attitude (Chu et al., 2013; Ko et al., 2013; Anderson et al., 2014; Pentina et al., 2018). Understanding consumer motivation that induces users to participate on social media platform has become a crucial factor for online success, as the overall competitiveness of platform depends on the number of participants who are engaging in the branded platform (Pentina et al., 2018). Some studies have adopted the user-centric functional perspective to explain 'why' consumer use certain media (Ko et al., 2013; Helal et al. 2018; Nelson et al., 2019). Two major factors identified in previous research underlining media use are cognitive motivation, also called utilitarian motivation which is associated with task-oriented, rational, informative values that consumer seeks online, and hedonic motives involve entertaining and enjoyment-oriented experiences (Ko et al., 2013). Such motivation was also found to be applicable to brand-related activities on social media (Anderson et al., 2014).

Utilitarian motivation studied in previous research spans over an array of needs such as information about new trends, brand-related information, fashion seeking, following celebrities and influencers for fashion advice, while hedonic motivation has been mainly addressed in terms of entertaining or fun-oriented experiential value derived from social media. Along with these other consumer motivational factors such as personal identity enhancement, need for social integration, relational and incentive seeking needs have also been considered (Pentina et al., 2018; Helal et al., 2018 Chae and Ko, 2016). The main premise of these studies is that consumers not only engage in social media in general and brand communication in particular for the utility of the product, but also for additional psychological values (like hedonic and symbolic).

Authors have argued the importance of understanding consumer motivation to use social media to realise their social media based online fashion behaviours. Kobia and Liu (2017) in their empirical study argued that users select different media based on different needs, and social media messages that meet user's experiential and utilitarian needs are effective in developing favourable user attitude. Meanwhile, utilitarian and hedonic motivation were also applied in research associated with consumer adoption of Facebook platform to determine online shopping intention (Anderson et al., 2014). According to Anderson et al. (2014), utilitarian factors such as time saving in terms of convenience and information access motivates consumers to purchase with online apparel retailers, while experiential shopping such as (e.g. socialisation and entertainment) influences their positive attitude towards retailers, and indirectly lead to purchase intention (Anderson et al., 2014). This highlights the importance of motivation-behaviour co-occurrences on social media in the specific context of the fashion industry and depicts a need for fashion brands to proactively channel the motivations of their target audience. Therefore, previous literature confirms the significance of utilitarian and hedonic motivations in driving consumer fashion-related social media behaviour.

More recently, Pentina et al. (2018), examined the complexity of motivations that drives young luxury consumer active participation in branded social media. Their empirical results suggest that consumer online behaviour on social media are driven by a complex combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Besides informational, hedonic, other factors such as social status, relation, feedback seeking, self-brand identification, opinion sharing, financial, emotional attachment with brand, among others, were also identified (Pentina et al. 2018). Additionally, Helal et al. (2018) indicated that millennial motivations for online brand related activities surpasses the basic functional use. By specifically examining millennials motivation to join branded social media platform, their empirical study found that motivations

with more extrinsic focus such as social identity factors, maintaining relevance, following new trends and brands closely, and following bloggers and brand ambassadors' underlines millennials motivation to participation with fashion brand on social media.

However, Nelson et al. (2019), contended that millennials motivation for fashion related behaviour might vary across different social media platforms. For example, Millennials use Instagram and Pinterest for seeking fashion advice and to get updates about fashion trends, while Twitter and Instagram are most likely used for following celebrities and brand as compared to other platforms. Thus, millennial motivation to follow fashion social media platforms can broadly be categorised into fashion seeking (seeking fashion advice and keep-up with fashion trends), following celebrities and brands and pictorial imagery (viewing, posting pictures), and seeking entertainment (Nelson et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Chae and Ko (2016) also highlighted that driven by specific motivation consumers select the different platform, for example, motives to use social networking sites such as SNS characteristics emphasizing ease of interaction with others, brand likeability, information seeking and entertainment influences consumers participatory behaviour on SNS (Chae and Ko, 2016). Athwal et al. (2019) further categorised the gratification sought by millennials luxury fashion consumers into two overreaching needs; affective (emotional) and cognitive needs. Affective needs are further sub-divided into aesthetic appreciation (behind the scenes, appealing visuals, images of campaigns) and entertaining content, while cognitive needs include information related to needs (store location, opening time, reviews, company overview). Therefore, previous literature revealed that besides utilitarian and hedonic motives, millennial consumer is driven by broad range of inter-related motivations, as social media has become a significant part of millennials life, their motivation span beyond just simply using branded media for functional needs.

Although millennials emerge as the most researched group in terms of motivational research, scholars have shown concern that enactment of motivations both in terms of type and intensity will also vary depending on age-related demographic factors, user personality or cultural variations (Pentina et al., 2018). Only one study by Nash (2019) provided insights into the motivations of consumers for both Generation X and Y in a high-street fashion retail environment. According to the study, motivations such as enhancement of self-concept, information-search, making an informed decision and following influencers and bloggers for fashion inspiration and advice, were more common amongst Gen Y users, while Gen X users mostly used fashion retailer's social media to browse and compare brands online. Additionally, Gen Y cohort exhibited high fashion involvement and use of high-street retailers' social media,

while Gen X female in opposition to males, were more involved with fashion on social media. The finding reveals a significant difference in social media usage pattern between Gen X and Y consumers and suggests that gender reflects differences on usage pattern towards social media and requires further exploration. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that a range of factors from personal to psychological impact consumer behaviour on social media.

Another psychological factor that has been studied is consumer attitude and beliefs before using social media that underlines their responses (Jin et al., 2012; Chu et al., 2013). For instance, Jin et al. (2012) suggested that consumer perception of value expressive and social adjustive function of luxury brands before using social media page influences consumers intention to use and attitude towards luxury fashion brand's on social media. Furthermore, beliefs-attitude link in social media advertising in luxury fashion context has also been studied by Chu et al. (2013). Their empirical findings suggest that young consumers beliefs about social media advertising (product information, falsity/no sense, and value corruption) affects their attitude towards social media marketing, which in-turn influences their behavioural responses. This can also be challenging for brands as negative beliefs could lead to negative responses (Chu et al., 2013). Therefore, research supports that belief and attitude are precursors to consumer responses to brand's social media marketing.

The review of studies related to this theme suggests that adequate attention has been paid to factors influencing consumer behaviour. Further, it was observed that consumer behaviour was examined across different social media platform like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. Fashion consumers such as millennials and young (graduate and undergraduates) or Gen Y users have mostly been studied under this theme. One of the possible reason for this could be that research in that millennials are considered as most avid users of social media. The review of studies related to this theme suggest that on the one hand, researchers have identified that consumer behaviour on social media is guided by a complex set of personal and psychological factors and on the other, they have informed fashion brands on the crucial role of effectively leveraging social media marketing by creating tailored messages to meet their target audience behavioural needs.

### 5.3 Research Theme 3: Social Media Marketing and Electronic Word Of Mouth

Another significant theme that emerged in this review focuses on previous literature related to electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on social media. Social media marketing literature in context of fashion addresses two major issues associated with E-WOM; first, research stream is related to the persuasiveness of E-WOM as a marketing tool and its impact on consumer behaviour, and secondly, social media users motivation to engage (share or provide E-WOM) or seek (search or receive) E-WOM. This theme will provide an overview of E-WOM and its growing significance in fashion, followed by the finding of emerged research streams in the sub-section below.

‘Electronic word of mouth’ is often referred as brand-related user generated content (Smith et al., 2012), and has been defined as any positive or negative brand or product related statement made by the consumer which is accessible to the vast network of people online (Kulmala et al., 2013; Mazzoli et al., 2019; Ananda et al., 2019). The rise of social media over the past decade has provided fertile grounds for peer-peer communication, and more and more consumers are using social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) to openly share, discuss and express their experience about the brand with others (Smith et al., 2012; Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019).

The fashion context is particularly revealing when considering the electronic word of mouth communication as fashion itself is argued to be spread through the network effect such that fashion trends are created by consumers who perpetuate it (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). This has profound implication for user-user communication on social media, as the users are well connected with others on social media, and brand related user generated content shared within these consumer networks are considered to be more trustworthy than information shared by fashion marketers or brands, such that it has now become a crucial part of consumers information search and decision making process (Halvorsen et al., 2013; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Kobia and Liu, 2017).

In comparison to traditional word-of-mouth which generally occurred between two people, electronic word of mouth occurs between multiple users at a much faster and efficient manner having a long-lasting and influential impact (Kulmala et al., 2013; Lee and Watkins, 2016). Thus, fashion brand marketers have started exploring E-WOM for viral marketing, wherein brand related marketing message is purposefully spread through consumer’s social media networks at exponential rate creating the viral effect (Kobia and Liu, 2017). Especially, fashion bloggers or influencers on social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, among others)

who share a sizable network of audience online are being increasingly used by fashion brands to effectively diffuse brand related information, new products and popularising new trends (Jin et al., 2019; Jin and Ryu, 2019; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018). Therefore, fashion influencers have emerged as an effective E-WOM marketing channel for fashion brands to influence consumer decision making process, and represents a perfect example of progressive democratisation of fashion marketing and communication from brands to users in social media era (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Halvorsen et al., 2013).

The below sub-section reviews the findings from the research stream identified. The first sub-section discuss literature related to E-WOM marketing, followed by a discussion on motivation for E-WOM behaviour.

### 5.3.1 Persuasiveness of E-WOM Communication

Several authors agree that E-WOM has become an important source of information for consumers in their decision making process (Lee and Watkins, 2016; Jung and Kim, 2017; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018). E-WOM communication literature suggests that online opinion leaders such as fashion bloggers, influencers, celebrities, and online consumer reviews impact consumer behavioural intentions on social media, such that fashion brands have started to increasingly deploy some of these influential sources as a promotional tool to influence consumer behaviour (Halvorsen et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2019; Casalo et al., 2020). Fashion bloggers (also called fashion influencers, micro-celebrities) are fashion enthusiasts who express their opinions about the brand or product without any incentive from brand, or when encouraged by brand to promote their product/ brand in return of some incentive (Kulmala et al., 2013). It has been argued that influencer promoted branded advertising receives higher consumer engagement (likes, comments) in comparison to brand promoted advertising (Lou et al., 2019). Therefore, previous literature has explored fashion brands influencer marketing practices (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Casalo et al., 2020), by emphasising on determining factors that facilitate persuasiveness of such E-WOM communication, trying to investigate how individuals are able to influence others in the social media environment.

Literature in this category has mainly explored persuasiveness of E-WOM marketing by investigating factors such as source characteristics like the perceived interpersonal relationship with blogger (Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016), source trustworthiness and expertise (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018), message consistency (Kulmala et al., 2013; Mazzoli et al., 2019) and valence of E-WOM (Jung and Kim, 2017; Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019).



Recently, scholars have also raised concerns regarding the impact of disclosure of sponsored branded communication by influencers on source credibility (Lou et al., 2019; Boerman et al., 2020), highlighting the importance of authenticity practices that should be followed by fashion influencers (Audrezet et al., 2020).

Key Topic	Factors Studied	Findings	Key Authors
<b>Determinants of persuasiveness of E-WOM marketing</b>	Source credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Source credibility determined by psychological closeness, degree of PSI (social attractiveness, attitude homophily, physical attractiveness), ease of communication with influencer/blogger, and expertise such as originality and uniqueness, positively influences consumer attitude and purchase intention</li> <li>Sponsorship disclosure positively impacts consumer engagement with post, increases brand recall and trustworthiness in relationship with users</li> </ul>	Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Jin et al., 2019; Mckeown and Shearer, 2019 ; Lou et al., 2019 ; Casalo et al., 2020; Audrezet et al., 2020; Boerman et al., 2020
	Message credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment (misalignment) between bloggers original style and brand induced E-WOM marketing message on blog impacts E-WOM credibility and consumer-brand association</li> </ul>	Kulmala et al., 2013; Mazzoli et al., 2019; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018
	Valence of E-WOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brand related UGC has positively impacts brand trust</li> </ul>	Nadeem et al., 2015; Jung and Kim, 2017; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018; Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive brand related UGC positively influences behavioural responses (e.g. impulse buying, brand engagement)</li> </ul>	Kim and Johnson, 2016

**Table 5.4 Key papers examining E-WOM marketing on social media**

The persuasiveness of E-WOM communication is strongly influenced by consumer perception of the source (e.g. influencer) of E-WOM, for instance, Hahn and Lee (2014) examined the influence of users perceived psychological closeness towards the fashion blogger and its impact on the purchase intention. Their empirical study confirmed the positive relationship between consumers perceived similarity towards the fashion blogger, attitude towards the fashion blog

and consequent purchase intention towards the fashion product. A similar study conducted by Lee and Watkins (2016), added that parasocial interaction developed between the vlogger (YouTube blogger) and the viewers, as a result of social attractiveness, physical attractiveness and attitude homophily (the extent of similarities e.g. age, gender, social status), positively influences consumers perception about brand and their purchase intention (Lee and Watkins, 2016). In addition to the above factors, ease of communication as a social presence construct (Jin et al., 2019), content originality and uniqueness of influencer's account (Casalo et al., 2020), are considered as significant factors that contribute to the development of a closer relationship between consumers and influencers on Instagram, increases trust as well as influences user behavioural intention to follow their advice (Jin et al., 2019; Casalo et al., 2020). Therefore, most of the studies suggest that consumers assessment of credibility of blogger (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018), determined by source expertise, content originality and uniqueness, para social interaction, trustworthiness, psychological closeness, ease of communication, positively influences consumers attitude towards the blog, and consumers purchase intention towards product/brand marketed by the influencer (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Jin et al., 2019). Although previous research also evidenced the use of celebrities (e.g. Emma Watson) who enjoy huge popularity and followers on social media to raise consumer's brand awareness and attitude towards the fashion brand (McKeown and Shearer, 2019), however, fashion influencers brand posts are argued to be more trustworthy when compared to traditional celebrities on social media, as consumer develop deep connection with influencers due to ease of communication (Jin et al., 2019). Overall, the above studies confirmed the significance of fashion bloggers (also called fashion influencer or opinion leaders) as an outlet for fashion brands to influence consumer purchase intention.

Although the role of influencers as an effective source of E-WOM communication is gaining traction, recent scholarly research has raised concerns in the literature regarding the impact of sponsorship disclosure by influencers on consumer behavioural intentions (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Lou et al., 2019; Boerman, 2020; Audrezet et al., 2020). Some authors argue that brand sponsored posts on fashion influencers platform negatively impacts bloggers credibility and consumer behavioural intention (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018), while others like Lou et al (2019) and Boerman (2020) suggest that providing detailed disclosure of sponsorship advertisement can contribute to increasing consumers engagement with influencer Instagram post (e.g. share, like or comment) due to activation of persuasive knowledge, as well as increases positive perception of transparency and sentiments towards the influencer (Lou et al., 2019). In addition to increasing consumer engagement with post, sponsorship disclosure also

increases brand recall, particularly in the case of a new fashion brand (Boerman, 2020). Therefore, based on previous literature brand encroachment into fashion influencers personal media spaces can create tension about its impact on blogger credibility (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018), however, it does not impact consumer relationship with blogger (Boerman, 2020), and rather using authenticity management practices by influencers such as standardised disclosure are considered to increase transparency perception and trustworthiness in the relationship (Audrezet et al., 2020).

In addition to source credibility, the importance of ensuring message credibility in E-WOM marketing has also been addressed in previous literature (Kulmala et al., 2013; Mazzoli et al., 2019). Kulmala et al. (2013) revealed that the brand-initiated content on fashion blogs should comply with organic style and topics discussed by bloggers to ensure the success of blog marketing. Fashion blogs generally comprise information about fashion brands, retailers, designers as a portrayal of bloggers personal style, therefore it is crucial for E-WOM initiated by the brands to fit the presentation style of the blogger to influence blog audience (Kulmala et al., 2013; Esteban-Santos et al., 2018). This is particularly important as any mismatch between bloggers communication on social media and association that brand seeks to establish with its target audience, can threaten brand identity, particularly in context of luxury fashion brands (Mazzoli et al., 2019). Mazzoli et al. (2019), argued that any distortion of marketing message can seriously threaten brand's market position by altering consumer brand perception and knowledge.

The significance of valence of E-WOM message in the persuasiveness of E-WOM communication has also been studied in the context of fashion (Jung and Kim, 2016; Kim and Johnson, 2016; Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019). The relationship between brand related UGC or consumer posting and consumer behavioural responses has been studied in this regard. For instance, Kim and Johnson, (2016) examined the impact of positive brand related UGC on consumer responses using the S-O-R model. Their study revealed that positive brand related UGC that stimulates consumer positive cognitive (perceived information quality) and emotional states (pleasure) encourages positive responses such as impulsive buying, pass-along behaviour, and brand engagement (Kim and Johnson, 2016). Furthermore, Jung and Kim (2016), suggested that positive consumer posting on Facebook also develops brand trust by acting as a socialisation agent on consumer attitude towards the brand and the impact of informational support as part of brand related UGC on brand trust is stronger when compared to emotional support (Mazzuchelli et al., 2018). However, in opposition to previous findings, it was suggested that brand related UGC does not necessarily lead to purchase (Jung and Kim,

2016; Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019). Thus, consumers use reviews mainly due to its informational value to gain brand knowledge, but it does not necessarily translate into a purchase. These findings were further corroborated by Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu (2019), who suggested that consumer reviews, both positive and negative lack relevance in the context of fashion, as fashion is an individual corollary and the features such as free returns and almost free delivery options lead to reduced risk, thus, challenging the relevance of social media activities that are directed to motivate users to share positive reviews to influence other consumers purchase (Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019). The above studies were conducted in different situational context, for example (Kim and Johnson, 2016) study was conducted under the specific context of a casual encounter with brand related UGC during Facebook browsing, while (Jung and Kim, 2016; Mazzuchelli et al., 2018) was conducted with users interested in purchases online. Nonetheless, previous literature reveals that although context dependent (e.g. intentional visit vs casual browsing) valence of E-WOM in fashion might not directly impact consumer purchase due to the nature of fashion but does influence brand trust.

Overall, as the research on E-WOM continues to grow in popularity specifically in context of fashion brands, scholars have also tried to understand the possible factors that lead to E-WOM behaviour to provide complete picture of E-WOM diffusion process on social media. The next sub-section discusses the recent trends of E-WOM research pertaining to motivations of E-WOM engagement.

### 5.3.2 Motivation of Consumers to Engage in E-WOM Communication

While researchers have demonstrated the growing importance of E-WOM marketing, a number of studies have addressed the issue of ‘why’ fashion consumers participate in E-WOM communication on social media. This sub-theme mainly underlines motivations for consumers to engage (Wolny and Mueller, 2103; Kobia and Liu, 2017) and seek E-WOM on social media (Kang et al., 2014; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018). E-WOM engagement is a type of social media behavioural response that is constituted of users actions such as liking, sharing, commenting etc., while E-WOM seeking behaviour is indicative of users opinion searching behaviour on social media (Ananda et al., 2019). This section discusses the underlying motivation that stimulates E-WOM engagement and E-WOM seeking behaviour that will help fashion brand to better influence peer-peer communication on social media (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). First, the motivation for consumer engagement in E-WOM is discussed, followed by highlighting

studies on motivation for E-WOM seeking behaviour. Table 5.5 represents an overview of this sub-theme.

Key Topics	Factors studied	Findings	Key Authors
<b>Motivation for consumers to engage in E-WOM communication</b>	<b>Motivation to share E-WOM</b>		
	Intrinsic and extrinsic E-WOM motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Users individual and social capital dimensions, and specific traits such as fashion involvement and commitment towards brand positively influence E-WOM behaviour.</li> <li>Product level engagement, need for social identification and self-involvement , and intrinsic motivational factors such as need to help others increases E-WOM behaviour</li> </ul>	Wolny and Mueller, 2013 Wiedmann et al., 2010; Naeem et al., 2020; Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020
	Social media marketing message stimuli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media marketing content that provide experiential, functional, economic, social value to consumers are likely to become viral</li> </ul>	Kobia and Liu, 2017; Ananda et al., 2019
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual complexity and aesthetics influences consumers E-WOM engagement behaviour</li> </ul>	Colliander and Marder, 2018; Lee et al., 2018; Kusumasondjaja, 2019
	<b>Motivation to seek E-WOM</b>		
	Information support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy information access and support about attributes of product and brand that simplifies decision making process</li> </ul>	Kang et al., 2014; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018

**Table 5.5 Key papers examining motivation for E-WOM behaviour**

In the reviewed literature, a few studies have explored factors that motivate consumers E-WOM engagement behaviour. For instance, Wiedmann et al. (2010) argued that a combination of individual (e.g. fashion involvement, expertise and knowledge etc.) and social capital dimension (e.g. personality strength, empathy etc.) drives consumer motivation of E-WOM

referral behaviour. A similar study by Wolny and Mueller (2013) found that consumers level of fashion involvement and affective commitment towards fashion brand are key motivators for engaging in E-WOM. They also revealed a positive relation between motivational factors such as product involvement, need for social interaction and self-involvement impact frequency of E-WOM engagement. Other social motivational factors such as social responsibility, need for staying connected, inspiration from other, gaining recognition, optimising decision making and emotional connection with brand (Naeem et al., 2020), as well as intrinsic motivations such as need to help other to make better purchase decisions (Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020) are few other factors that have been found to drive exchange of brand related UGC on social media. Therefore, consumers are driven by a combination of intrinsic (individual/personal level) and extrinsic motivation (external/social level) to forward E-WOM (Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020).

The importance of marketing message stimuli in motivating E-WOM engagement behaviour has also been identified. Social media marketing messages produced by fashion brand entices consumer E-WOM participation behaviour by fulfilling specific consumer needs, for instance, Kobia and Liu (2017) emphasised consumers motivation to forward viral marketing message by combining attitude theories (e.g. Elaboration likelihood model and Uses and gratification theory). According to the authors, consumers intention to forward viral message is contingent on the ability of the message content to fulfil consumers utilitarian needs, such as, product related benefits and performance attribute, and value expressive needs such as self-enhancement or enhancement of user personality attributes, which in-turn alters consumers attitude and positively influence their response towards forwarding viral messages. While most of the studies generalise E-WOM behaviour (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kobia and Liu, 2017), only Ananda et al. (2019), categorised different E-WOM engagement behaviour into pass on and endorsement behaviour. They found that social media marketing content that offers financial benefits such as free products, products discount, giveaways, competitions as well as casual socialisation content fosters endorsement E-WOM behaviour, while pass-on E-WOM behaviour depends on specific cognitive inducing social media marketing action such as informational messages that fulfil utilitarian needs of consumers by providing pre-purchase information (e.g. information about product, brand) (Ananda et al., 2019). Therefore, these studies confirm that social media marketing messages that fulfil consumer's needs, positively motivates consumers to engage in E-WOM by developing a favourable attitude (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kobia and Liu, 2017; Ananda et al., 2019) .

In addition to textual message stimuli, studies investigated the significance of ‘visual content’ in influencing consumers intention to share E-WOM. By choosing Instagram, which is considered as one of the leading photo and video sharing social media platform, Colliander and Marder (2018), empirically examined the impact of photo aesthetic on E-WOM behaviour, and found snapshot aesthetics in comparison to traditional studio aesthetic evokes preferential response by generating higher brand attitude and motivates recommendation behaviour on Instagram. One of the possible reasons is that social media in general, and Instagram in particular reflects an informal space for communication, however, the results might vary depending on different SNS (for e.g. LinkedIn). While, Lee et al. (2018) investigated the impact of visual complexity of image on image sharing intention on Facebook for luxury fashion brands. They contended that visual complexity decreased perceived luxury perception and image sharing intention for classical luxury brands. Contrastingly, a recent study by (Kusumasondjaja, 2019), suggested that expressive aesthetics are more relevant than classical for luxury fashion brand for Instagram. In other words, visual appeal of social media marketing messages shared by fashion brand online can motivate users intention to engage in E-WOM by sharing images, however, the relevance of particular visual aesthetic varies across different platforms. This can further be corroborated by an early study conducted by (Smith et al., 2012), suggesting that different social media platforms attract a different type of brand related UGC, which can be explained by the differences in the intrinsic characteristics of different social media platforms. According to Smith et al. (2013), YouTube’s dominant characteristic is to promote oneself by allowing users to share video content, set up their own channel that others can subscribe, comment and like videos, and it is more likely to promote self-presentation type of brand-related UGC, where information about the brand is more peripheral. While Twitter’s technical design focuses on promoting conversation that allows users to post messages that may include pictures, links to videos, or other blogs and stories, thus, Twitter is more likely for UGC focusing on brand related information and news, and tends to have higher brand centrality type UGC compared to YouTube (Smith et al., 2013). In comparison to both Twitter and YouTube, Facebook is more likely to facilitate social connectedness by allowing users to set up their personal profiles, share photos, interests, make friends, participate in discussion forums; thus Facebook is more viable for UGC reflecting brand centrality compared to YouTube and is highly self-promotional when compared to Twitter (Smith et al., 2013). Therefore, different social media platforms offer different user functionality, which influences the type of consumer generated brand-related content across social media platforms. Overall, the above studies demonstrate a positive correlation between social media platforms, social

media marketing action of fashion brands (both textual and visual content) and users intention for E-WOM engagement behaviour. However, the message appeal that motivates E-WOM might vary depending on the different social media platform.

In terms of E-WOM seeking behaviour, easy information access and support that simplifies consumer decision making process has been found as a significant motivation for consumers to seek E-WOM on social media (Kang et al., 2014; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018). Kang et al. (2014) revealed that consumer decision making style such as fashion/ novelty consciousness, price consciousness, brand consciousness and over choice, act as are important motivators of opinion seeking via E-WOM. One of the major reasons for opinion seeking through E-WOM on social media is to simplify decision making process by obtaining information about different attributes of product from their peer (Kang et al., 2014; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018).

Overall, the studies mostly emphasised on different motivations of E-WOM engagement, suggesting that motivation to participate in E-WOM can potentially vary based on underlining consumer needs and social media marketing content dimensions. The studies also reveal E-WOM behaviour as a function of a positive attitude developed when message content matches consumer motivational needs (Kobia and Liu, 2017; Ananda et al., 2019). While motivations for E-WOM seeking behaviour were less in focus, suggesting information support from others as primary users motivation for E-WOM seeking behaviour.

#### 5.4 Research Theme 4: Building Consumer-Brand Relationship on Social Media

As the use of social media is being recognised as the new marketing norm, a dominant research stream has emerged, highlights the dynamics pertaining to the utilisation of social media for building consumer relationship (Kim and Ko, 2010; Kang and Kim, 2017; Chang and Fan, 2017). As fashion brands are making numerous efforts, from live streaming fashion shows to actively engaging with consumers (Phan et al., 2011; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014), exploring new ways to connect, interact, inform and build relationship with their consumers, scholarship in this areas is burgeoning within social media marketing research in fashion (Park and Kim, 2015; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Wang and Lee, 2020).

This theme reviews the current emerging body of work on the consumer-brand relationship, which attempts to develop an understanding of ‘how’ fashion brands build a meaningful and long-lasting relationship with consumers on social media. Various relationship constructs have been applied to explain how they contribute towards achieving relational outcomes on social



media platforms. Researchers in this theme have incorporated various dimensions of consumer-brand relationship that enriches this concept such as; brand trust and intimacy (Kim and Ko, 2010; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Gambo and Goncalves et al., 2014; Wang and Lee, 2020), brand love (Parrott et al., 2015; Burnasheva et al., 2019), brand relationship quality (Park and Kim, 2015), affective commitment (Chang and Fan, 2017), brand attitude (Nadeem et al., 2015; Kananukul et al., 2015; Kim and Lee, 2019). In line with these dimensions, various antecedents of consumer-brand relationship explored in previous research includes; social media marketing activities (Kim and Ko, 2010; Kim and Ko, 2012; Liu et al., 2019), consumer perception of relational benefits (Park and Kim, 2015; Kang and Kim, 2017), brand identity and self-concept (Burnasheva et al., 2019; Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020), consumer engagement (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Liu et al., 2019; Wang and Lee, 2020), brand involvement and consumer interaction (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2019). The following sub-section discusses these antecedents and their subsequent consequences in details.

#### 5.4.1 Antecedents of Building and Sustaining Consumer-Brand Relationship

Past research has explored various concepts that aid the formation of consumer-brand relationship on social media. One of the very first research on building consumer-brand relation, identifies it as an outcome of social media marketing activities of fashion brands (Kim and Ko, 2010). Social media marketing attributes such as sharing entertaining content, customised services, trendy social media sites, interactivity and electronic word of mouth were found to increase consumer trust, intimacy as well as purchase intention by fostering a level of interactivity between consumer and the brand (Kim and Ko, 2010; Kim and Ko, 2012). These are a few initial studies that establish the significance of social media marketing activities of fashion brands in developing consumer-brand relationship.

Subsequently, greater importance was directed towards understanding the dynamics of consumer-brand relationship on social media, by examining how brand communities or brand/fan pages are used for brand communication, what benefits are offered in these communities, and how consumer behaviour generated in these communities translates into relational outcomes for the brand (Park and Kim, 2015; Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018). Brand communities embedded in social media platforms are generally known as a non-geographical bound community of consumers sharing common interest and connection with brand (Brogi et al., 2013). Social media marketing activities on the brands social media page

or brand communities are considered to facilitate a strong relationship with the consumers (Gambo and Goncalves et al., 2014).

A few studies tried to understand inter-relationship between social media marketing content, consumer perceived benefits, and consumer intention to build and maintain relationship with the brand. Using the theory of reciprocal action and communicative ecology theory, authors explained how perceived benefits from brand's social media efforts effects consumer-brand relationship and behavioural intentions (Park and Kim, 2015; Kang and Kim, 2017). For instance, Park and Kim (2015) empirically tested that consumers perception of relational benefits (e.g. social benefits like branded storytelling, personalised messages, community interaction, and monetary benefits like discounts, special offers) positively influences consumers perception of relationship investment (PRI) and brand relationship quality (w.r.t consumer satisfaction and commitment) leading to a stronger relationship. For this purpose, PRI was defined as consumer perception about the extent to which a company is making efforts to maintain or enhance the relationship with the consumer (Park and Kim, 2015). Similarly, Kang and Kim (2017) found market information quality and service content quality (customer service) help in developing positive consumer perception, trust and behavioural loyalty intention. Therefore, both the above studies are suggestive of consumer reciprocity (exchange relationship) based on various relational benefits consumer derives from fashion brand communities (e.g. social benefit, monetary or economic benefit, informational and service content related benefits) that in-turn explains how satisfaction, commitment and loyalty is evoked. Furthermore, consumers perception of perceived benefits provided by brand's fan page (e.g. social interaction, information and entertainment) was also found to exert attitude contagion effects in the brand community leading to brand purchase intention (Hsu, 2019).

Within the body of work on consumer-brand relationship, the emphasis has been paid to social media content-related dimensions in driving the interactive consumer-brand relationship, brand affect, affective commitment and behavioural intentions (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Quijada et al., 2020). Within this broader perspective, the concept of 'consumer engagement', has been postulated to explain the interactive co-creative experience that occurs between brand and consumer, marked by participatory behaviour of the consumer (Brogi et al., 2013; Chang and Fan, 2017). Consumer engagement has been operationalised in different studies in different ways, for instance some authors consider it as single order construct (Chang and Fan, 2017; Giakoumaki and Kreppa, 2020), while others refer to behavioural engagement (e.g. likes, comments, shares etc.) by considering it second order construct comprising of consumer passive and active behaviour (Kefi and Maar, 2018),

or in terms of consumption (least active), contribution (moderately active), and creation (most active) behaviour (Liu et al., 2019; Wang and Lee, 2020).

Consumer engagement has been acknowledged as a catalyst for building consumer relations on social media, and to promote relational outcomes. For instance, Chang and Fan (2017), found that content related value (both hedonic and utilitarian), social ties (interactive interpersonal relationship), self-image congruence positively influences consumer engagement and affective commitment, in-turn leading to continued intention to use brand page. Their study was further corroborated by Kefi and Maar (2018), who found that both hedonic and informative content stimulates user active (liking, discussing, sharing post) and passive engagement (browsing, reading posts), thereby influences brand trust, brand effect (emotional responses) and attitudinal brand loyalty. Therefore, research suggests that consumer engagement with brand page develops emotional bond (affective commitment, brand affect), and results in the long-lasting consumer-brand relationship and brand loyalty intention.

Furthermore, interactive social media marketing activities in brand communities is also associated with the development of positive brand attitude by increasing consumer participation with brand, and others via sharing, posting, socializing, advocating the brand (Nadeem et al., 2015; Kim and Lee, 2019). The positive impact of consumer attitude on brand loyalty and purchase intention has also been established in previous research (Kim and Lee, 2019). Particularly, fashion luxury brands social media marketing content that focus on entertainment, interaction and trendiness related aspects increases consumer behavioural engagement with the brand (Liu et al., 2019). However, this study was based solely on Twitter, the results might vary on other social networking platforms (like Instagram) (Liu et al., 2019). Thus, a greater understanding of consumer motivation and preferences for engaging with brand on particular social media platform can help fashion brands to understand the use of social media marketing practices that cultivate consumer brand engagement. For instance, Martín-Consuegra et al. (2019), revealed consumer motivation and consumer involvement are antecedents of consumer interaction with brand's platform. Furthermore, a recent study by Wang and Lee (2020) extended the above findings by investigating the impact of consumer motivational factors on multidimensional behavioural consumer engagement construct (consumption, contribution and creation) on Instagram. Their study revealed that, consumer with high advice seeking motivation leads to consumer engagement in terms of increased contribution, while self-image creation motivation strongly impacts all consumer engagement dimension. Moreover, different facets of consumer engagement impacts consumer-brand relationship (brand intimacy) differently (Wang and Lee, 2020).

Another antecedent of building consumer-brand relationship that emerged in literature was self-identity-based factor (Parrott et al., 2015; Chang and Fan, 2017; Burnasheva et al., 2019). For instance, Burnasheva et al. (2019), the empirical study suggested that users want to progress a social-identity on social media mediated by a sense of association and affinity developed towards community members, which in turn leads to the formation of brand love. Brand love has further been associated with behavioural responses such as brand advocacy behaviour on social media (Parrott et al., 2015; Burnasheva et al., 2019). In this regard, brand love represents consumers emotional attachment or affection with the brand. Therefore, most emphasis has been paid to study luxury brand communities, wherein consumers association with other community members based on social identity was considered an important determinant in developing brand advocacy behaviour. Nonetheless, these studies advance the knowledge on the role of fashion brand communities and affective dimensions in consumer/brand relationship.

In addition to previous studies that have investigated the direct relationship between concepts such as self-image congruence (Chang and Fan, 2017), social identity (Burnasheva et al., 2019) on consumer behavioural intentions on social media, a recent study by Giakoumaki and Krepapa (2020) studied the impact of consumer engagement in self-concept (BESC) on consumer behavioural engagement by considering the moderating role of the source of content. Their empirical study reveals novel insights suggesting that other users triggers more engagement among individuals in brand communities compared to influencer or brand, re-corroborating the fact that consumers can be using luxury brand social media platforms for social integration, therefore, it is beneficial for luxury brands to focus on social media marketing activities that encourages brand advocates in generating positive user generated content (e.g. love story campaign by Tiffany) (Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020).

Moreover, the majority of contributions have elucidated the cause and positive consequence of consumer engagement on brand communities within the framework of consumer-brand relationship. Opposingly, only one study by Geissinger, and Laurell. (2016) reflected the challenges associated with consumer engagement on social media, by illustrating the curvilinear nature of engagement in fashion oriented social media, suggesting that fashion consumers on social media tend to be variety seekers. Therefore, consumer-brand relationship involves a series of repeated action and reciprocal exchange between the active (brand) and interdependent partner (consumer). Therefore, simply creating social media page and posting pictures is not enough, fashion brands should focus on offering content value by posting entertaining branded stories, create visually pleasing posts, personally targeted messages, and

disseminating information about discounts and promotional events and latest product launches to (Park and Kim, 2015; Liu et al., 2019).

Finally, overall relational outcomes associated with consumer-brand relationship in the literature included consumer loyalty (Gambo and Goncalves et al., 2014; Park and Kim, 2015; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Kim and Lee, 2019), brand commitment (Kang and Kim, 2017), purchase intention (Kim and Ko, 2010; Martín-Consuegra et al., 2019; Kim and Lee, 2019) and brand advocacy behaviour (Parrott et al., 2015; Burnasheva et al., 2019). All these outcomes produce value for the brand. Amongst the consequences explored, consumer loyalty which represents deeply held commitment and repurchase intention towards the brand (Kefi and Maar, 2018) have often been studied as relationship building outcome in most of the aforementioned studies. Overall, online consumer brand relationship research has emerged is a dynamic and multi-dimensional concept, with a variety of relational dimensions studied. These constructs build and strengthen consumer-brand relationship which ultimately produces favourable consequences.

## 5.5 Research Theme 5: Social Media Marketing And Other Brand Related Outcomes

This theme examines the use of social media marketing from the perspective of branding issues, reviewing papers that have focused on using social media platforms for building brand knowledge and image. Besides studying the crucial impact of social media marketing on important marketing outcomes such as consumer-brand relation and E-WOM generation (as discusses in previous sections), a few studies have also focused on other branding related outcomes such as brand equity creation.

Previous literature on the effective role of social media marketing in brand equity creation is the focus of this theme (Kim and Ko, 2012; Godey et al., 2016). The preliminary study determining the impact of social media marketing on brand equity was conducted by to Kim and Ko (2012). Their study confirmed the positive relationship between luxury fashion brands social media marketing and brand equity creation in the context of Korean luxury consumers. Their findings were further corroborated by Godey et al. (2016), confirming the positive impact of social media marketing activities on brand equity and subsequent branding goals by targeting consumers from four different countries. Their empirical results suggested that social media marketing activities positively impact brand equity by enhancing brand awareness and image, and which in-turn improves consumer responses such as consumer preference, loyalty and price premium. However, Morra et al. (2018), revealed that not only brand generated

content, but also user generated content is a positive antecedent of online brand equity creation and developing purchase intention for luxury fashion brands. Interestingly, Morra et al. (2018) revealed that in the context of luxury fashion brands user-generated content can also be a vexing challenge, as it not only stimulates purchase intention for original luxury products but also for counterfeit luxury fashion products. The authors argued pertinently that brands should focus on activities that foster interaction between firm-generated content and user-generated content, which in-turn strengthens brand equity and purchase intention for original products (Morra et al., 2018). Besides, a recent study by Zollo et al. (2020), extended previous research (Kim and Ko, 2010; 2012; Godey et al., 2016) by empirically examining the mediating effect of consumer perceived benefits and experience with luxury fashion brand social media community. Recent research on brand equity creation has adopted a more consumer-centric perspective and suggests that social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brands do not directly influence brand equity, rather it's consumer perceived online experience with brand and benefits obtained from brand page such as cognitive, social, personal that gratify consumer needs and lead to brand equity creation (Zollo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, only Anselmsson and Tunca (2019) conducted a study on brand equity creation for new and emerging fashion brand. Their study revealed that the brand personality dimension associated with excitement (hedonic) in social media marketing influences brand equity creation in term of brand quality, uniqueness and value (Anselmsson and Tunca, 2019). Therefore, the consumer who perceive social media marketing activities as exciting can lead to brand equity creation particularly for fashion brand that is new to the market.

Overall, it is apparent from the above findings that brand equity creation has been majorly emphasised in the context of luxury fashion brands. Nonetheless, the positive influence of social media marketing activities on brand equity creation and positive consumer responses is prevalent across all studies in fashion.

## 5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter elaborated the findings from the reviewed literature in social media marketing for fashion brands and categorised them into five themes; Theme 1: Focused on social media marketing tactics of different fashion brands; Theme 2: Focused on factors underlining consumer behaviour in social media marketing; Theme 3: Focused on use of social media for E-WOM communication; Theme 4: Discussed antecedents and outcome of building consumer-brand relationship on social media; Theme 5: Focused on use of social media marketing for other branding related outcomes. From the above findings, it can be seen that worthwhile, diverse dimensions and aspects of social media marketing have been covered and investigated by researchers in context of fashion brands. Yet, there are areas which require further attention, and in an attempt to uncover area to expand research in social media marketing for fashion, the next chapter addresses research gaps that emerged from reviewed literature.

## Chapter 6 Discussion: Identifying Research Gaps

The aim of this thesis was to develop an understanding of the current state of research in social media marketing in the specific context of the fashion industry and to identify areas that need further investigation. By conducting a systematic literature review of 92 articles and performing thematic analysis, this research addressed two research questions;

*Research question 1:* What is the state of research on social media in marketing in the fashion industry context?

*Research question 2:* What research gaps have been identified to guide future studies?

Given that no previous review has considered the use of social media in marketing in specific context of fashion, this research contributes to social media marketing literature by providing a structured overview of state-of-the-art research in the fashion industry. As presented in the ‘Findings section’, 5 themes have emerged from the area of interest; therefore, this section aims to provide clear and broad insight of issues considered in each theme and emerging gaps in current literature. The section is structured around key themes that emerged in the previous chapter, carefully delineating gaps in each theme on social media marketing in the fashion context. This section presents valuable insights into what has been studied so far and identifies gaps to guide what needs to be studied in future. Future researchers can further explore these significant research gaps to a gain better understanding of use of social media in marketing in the fashion industry.

### 6.1 Discussion Research Theme 1

*Research Theme 1: Focus on social media marketing tactics of fashion brands*

One of the most significant research themes in the reviewed literature is ‘social media marketing tactics of fashion brands’, encompassing the practices and initiatives applied by fashion brands to reach and connect with their potential customers. Contributions in this theme have addressed social media marketing tactics across different segments of the fashion industry, including luxury fashion brands and mass market fashion brands such as fast-fashion, online-only retailers etc.

The research in this theme shows that social media marketing practices of luxury fashion brands have been extensively studied, specifically, social media marketing attributes of luxury



fashion brands (interactivity, entertainment, E-WOM, customisation, trendiness) proposed by Kim and Ko (2010), and social media marketing initiatives of specific fashion brands (Phan et al., 2011; Ng, 2014; Kontu and Vecchi, 2014) has predominantly attracted interest of researchers so far. The importance of social media as a content co-creation tool for luxury fashion brands, has also emerged as a focus of few studies in recent years (Hughes et al., 2016; Koivisto and Mattila, 2018; Quach and Thaichon, 2017). In lieu with growing interest of scholars on luxury fashion brands use of social media marketing, the question related to compatibility between luxury brand exclusive appeal and increased accessibility (Chen et al. 2017; Liu et al., 2019; Athwal et al., 2019), has also been addressed in the reviewed literature.

Differently, social media marketing practices of mass-market fashion brands have received less attention. There is an agreement in literature regarding the enormous potential of social media for mass-market fashion brands as a cost-effective medium to reach, interact, build a brand presence online, increase brand performance and even improve ROI (Scuotto et al., 2017; Ananda et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017; Rienda et al., 2020). For instance, Scuotto et al. (2017) studied the advantages of social media for fashion SME's in terms of collecting consumer feedback and ideas for product development, and in-turn improving their ROI's. Yet, only a few studies (9 studies) have focused on social media marketing initiatives in the mass-market fashion brand segment. Additionally, most of the studies in the mass-market fashion segment until date have predominantly focused on social media marketing activities on a single social media platform i.e. Facebook (Ananda et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017). Even though such studies expand knowledge about the use of social media in the mass-market fashion brand sector, it limits the generalizability of the findings. However, only one recent study by Rienda et al. (2020) considered fashion SME's presence on different social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram), yet their study does not particularly illuminate how fashion SME brands use these platforms. Current research is bereft of studies on how mass-market fashion brands are using different social networking sites (such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest etc.) for social media marketing to engage with their potential consumers.

Secondly, research encompassing the use of social media as a value co-creation tool for increasing consumer participation in brand-related activities (Hughes et al., 2016; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016) and product development (Scuotto et al., 2017) has gained attention across different segments of the fashion industry, yet more needs to be known on identifying important success factors and challenges that affect such practices. The effective use of social media marketing as a channel for collaborating with consumers is of growing importance to fashion brands, both in luxury and mass-market sector, and evidence of the benefits of using

of value co-creation in social media marketing is present in the literature. Few examples such as Burberry use of Art of Trench campaign (Phan et al., 2011) and Coach use of ‘Red Pocket’ campaign in China (Ng, 2014), as well as in mass-market fashion sector, for example, TOMS campaign of content co-creation (Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016) present successful practical application of the concept. However, much of research to date is either a single brand case study (Hughes et al., 2016; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016) or lacks empirical enquiry (Hughes et al., 2016). Therefore, there is a paucity of empirical investigation related to what constitutes an effective social media marketing tactic that facilitates the value co-creation process on social media by considering various fashion brands and different social media platforms (Hughes et al., 2016; Scuotto et al., 2017). Moreover, previous studies have focused mainly on the benefits of co-creation activities on social media, and little attention has been paid to the downside of these emerging practices. For instance, only one study by Quach and Thaichon (2017) explored that value co-creation initiatives by luxury fashion brands on social media can also backfire and lead to value co-destruction as a result of failure to respond to customer needs. A few other managerial challenges, such as resources required in the process (e.g. time), or internal company culture that can possibly create an impediment in the successful use of co-creation activities have been recommended but have not been empirically investigated (Scuotto et al., 2017). Therefore, understanding the managerial perspective on the use of co-creation activities to enhance consumer engagement in branded communication, and the challenges and opportunities of such use according to fashion brand managers would be beneficial.

Thirdly, scholars have emphasised the limited attention paid to research on strategic social media marketing, as literature has focused on more the operational use of social media in the fashion industry (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Ananda et al., 2018), and surprisingly limited attention has been paid to research on strategic social media marketing. Existing studies focus on the more tactical side of social media marketing, especially focusing on how specific fashion brands are using social media in marketing practices (Phan et al., 2011; Ng, 2014; Hughes et al., 2016; Arriaga et al., 2017). These studies provide valuable insights into the operational aspects of using social media in fashion, addressing ‘how’ social media marketing is implemented, yet there is a deficit in the literature on what constitutes a comprehensive social media strategy for fashion brands, including their drivers, target audience, channel choice, goals as well as how brand size influences the adoption of particular social media marketing approach. Only Ananada et al. (2018) investigated social media marketing of fashion SME’s, by considering different objectives and subsequent practices, however, their study was only

initial approach to social media from a more strategic perspective (Ananada et al., 2018). Overall, the lack of formalisation of social media marketing from more strategic perspective is apparent in existing literature (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Chen and Wang, 2017; Ananda et al., 2018), and there is a need for aligning the use of social media with firms marketing goals and co-ordinating brands social media efforts for the attainment of those specific marketing objectives.

## 6.2 Discussion Research Theme 2

### *Research theme 2: Focus on consumer behaviour on social media*

The current research on consumer behaviour on social media uncovers various aspects that influence consumers use of brand's social media platform and their behavioural responses. Existing research in this area mainly encompasses users' personal characteristics, motivations, and belief and attitudes that drive consumer social media use. While different psychological and personal variables have been analysed, most of the attention has been paid to consumer motivation research. The review revealed that the literature across different attributes of consumer behaviour is unevenly distributed; for instance, consumer personal characteristics such as user lifestyle, personality traits and decision-making style has been paid very limited attention.

Currently, a number of studies have underscored consumer motivation for general social media use (Kobia and Liu, 2017; Nelson et al., 2019), participation with fashion brand (Pentina et al., 2018; Helal et al., 2018) as well as to purchase online (Anderson et al., 2014). Various social media platforms have been considered (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), and a few cross-platform studies have also been conducted (Helal et al., 2018; Athwal et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2019) to understand fashion consumer motivation across different social media platforms, however, no study has examined if existing motivations also drive consumer behaviour on social media platforms such as YouTube and other region-specific platforms such as WeChat and Weibo. YouTube, WeChat and Weibo have been considered by few authors to examine social media marketing tactics of fashion brands on these platforms (e.g. Lee and Watkins, 2016; Ng, 2014), yet studies have not examined motivational drivers of consumer behaviour on these platforms. Scholars often employed the uses and gratification theory to understand potential motivations that induce consumer social media related fashion behaviours (Kobia and Liu, 2017; Nash, 2019; Nelson et al., 2019), and have predominantly emphasised on informational and entertainment needs (Nelson et al., 2019; Athwal et al., 2019), and a few

other consumer motivations such as personal identity enhancement, need for social integration, relational and incentive seeking needs have also been identified (Pentina et al., 2018; Chae and Ko, 2016). Although, consumer motivation has been extensively researched, it will be useful to continuously developing body of research on consumer motivation, as social media platforms are continuously developing and comparing newer social media platforms can provide better insights to fashion brands to keep up with growing consumer needs (Nelson et al., 2019). There is a consistent agreement in literature for the continuous expansion of consumer motivational research to different social media platforms (Nelson et al., 2019; Ko et al., 2013), as well as to consider consumer motivation for participating with the brand on region-specific platform such as Wechat or Weibo (Athwal et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2019).

A resounding call in consumer behavioural research is to explore how demographic variables (age and gender) and cultural variations influences consumer behaviour on social media. Much of fashion consumer behavioural research in social media has investigated students and young adults, also known as the millennial generation, mainly because they are considered as one of the most active cohorts on social media (Chu et al., 2013; Helal et al., 2018). Additionally, existing literature also represents existence of gender bias in terms of overrepresentation of females Gen Y consumers in fashion-related social media studies (Kang et al., 2014; Anderson et al., 2014; Pentina et al., 2018; Athwal et al., 2019). For example, Pentina et al. (2018) study on consumer motivation that drives engagement behaviour online was demographically skewed towards young female consumer. However, recently Nash (2019) demonstrated a rise in young male consumer fashion consciousness and positive behaviour towards online fashion social media platforms. Thus, limited attention has been paid to explore heterogeneity in participants in terms of their attitude and behaviour, not only among millennial and young consumer, but also across different generational cohorts, as users from all ages 19-55 are now using fashion social media platform to fulfil different needs (Nash, 2019). It has also been acknowledged that millennial generation motivations (Gen Y) for online brand related activities surpass the basic functional use, including the need for social recognition, maintaining relevance, among other extrinsic motivations (Helal et al., 2018; Pentina et al., 2018), whereas, Gen X uses social media to browse and compare fashion brands online (Nash et al., 2019). These studies point towards remarkable differences between different generational cohorts. Despite the increasing popularity of fashion related social media use amongst the older generation, existing research is bereft of studies considering different generational cohort. Except for Nash et al. (2019), no study to date, has compared plausible differences in motivation, attitude and characteristics of fashion consumers across different

generational cohorts on social media. The contextual limitation of existing fashion consumer behavioural research on social media in terms of comparing variations in consumer behaviour based on different demographic variables (age and gender) is notable and has been called by various studies in this theme (e.g. Chu et al., 2013; Athwal et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2019; Nash et al., 2019). Thus, expanding research in this area would provide better understanding to fashion brands about their audience, as well as help in building more personalised targeted social media marketing initiatives.

Further, the impact of environmental factors such as cultural variation among different consumer group are also an important consideration that has not yet been emphasised in the existing literature on consumer motivation, characteristics, beliefs and attitude. It is known that users are influenced by cultures they belong to, and it can serve as a significant moderator in consumer behaviour towards social media marketing (Ko et al., 2013). As inferred from the previous theme on 'social media marketing tactics of fashion brand', value perception of luxury fashion brand among consumers of different countries varies (Park et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2019), suggesting a low risk of brand dilution from interactive social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brands in Asian countries (such as China), when compared to more Western countries (e.g. USA). These studies suggest that consumer perception of fashion brands can be shaped by cultural context, yet there is a lack of cross-cultural study comparing differences in consumer behaviour in terms of underlining motivations, needs, attitude, individual characteristics and perceptions towards social media marketing of fashion brands that might vary across different countries.

Particularly, previous studies considering individual consumer characteristics such as user lifestyle, decision making style, personality traits are limited to a particular sample of users, for example, Park et al. (2011) studied Korean SNS users lifestyle patterns, while Kang et al. (2014) examined decision-making styles of users from the US. These studies cannot be generalised across different countries and cultural context, as users' personal characteristics might vary across different cultures (individualistic and collectivist cultures). Additionally, most of the studies in theme 2 on consumer behaviour have focused on western countries (e.g. Europe and the USA), and were mostly single country studies (Nash, 2019; Nelson et al., 2019; Pentina et al., 2018; Kang et al., 2014), there is certainly unexplored opportunities in understanding the how cultural differences manifest in consumer behaviour across more individualistic (west) vs collectivist (east) cultures, in terms of exploring consumer characteristics and motivational differences by conducting a cross-country comparison.

### 6.3 Discussion Research Theme 3

#### *Research theme 3: Focus on social media marketing and E-WOM communication*

The reviewed literature provided a comprehensive overview of E-WOM communication, examining key areas that include; determinants of the persuasiveness of E-WOM marketing and its impact on consumer behavioural intentions, and consumers motivations to engage and seek E-WOM. Although significant attention has been paid to E-WOM communication in fashion, there are still certain aspects that require further exploration.

The current research on E-WOM suggests that persuasiveness of E-WOM communication can influence consumers attitude and purchase intention (Hahn and Lee, 2014; Lee and Watkins, 2016). The persuasiveness of E-WOM communication has received sufficient attention from researchers, who have studied the influence of E-WOM marketing or viral marketing on consumer behaviour by considering how source (e.g. influencer/blogger) and message characteristics influence consumers perception about the brand and their behavioural responses. In this regard, various source related factors such as psychological closeness towards fashion blogger (Hahn and Lee, 2014), para social interaction between blogger and user (Lee and Watkins, 2016), ease of communication with blogger (Jin et al., 2019), and expertise (originality and uniqueness) of fashion blogger (Casalo et al., 2020), as well as, E-WOM message related factors such as message alignment (misalignment) (Kulmala et al., 2013; Mazzoli et al., 2019) and valence of consumer reviews (Kim and Johnson, 2016; Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu, 2019) have been researched. A recent extension of E-WOM marketing research has also examined if and how influencers' use of sponsorship with fashion brands affects consumers (Lou et al., 2019; Boerman, 2020; Audrezet et al., 2020). Albeit valuable, most of the studies on E-WOM marketing considering the impact of the source (e.g. influencer) on consumer perception of persuasiveness of E-WOM communication were limited to a single category of opinion leaders (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018; Casalo et al., 2020) or Instafamous (Jin et al., 2019), while other types of influencers were less in focus. Based on the number of followers, online fashion influencers can be categorised into micro-influencers (up to 10,000 followers), meso-influencers (10,000- million followers) and mega-influencers (international celebrities or others with over a million followers) (Boerman et al., 2020). Most of the previous research on E-WOM marketing is limited to the category of meso-influencers or opinion leaders and very few studies also considered mega-influencers or celebrities (e.g. Jin et al., 2019; McKeown and Shearer, 2019), whereas consumer perception of the persuasiveness of E-

WOM communication by micro-influencers such as their attractiveness, credibility, expertise, trustworthiness, remains unexplored.

Additionally, previous literature examining the impact of sponsorship disclosure in influencer marketing on consumer response was limited to the perspective of luxury fashion brand's use of meso-influencers or opinion leaders on social media (Jin et al., 2019; Lou et al., 2020; Jin and Ryu, 2020). Only Boerman (2020) compared consumer's responses to sponsored posts by both micro and meso influencers for a new fashion brand. According to their study, against concerns regarding the negative impact of sponsorship disclosure in influencer marketing (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018), sponsored influencer marketing might rather help in brand making for new and emerging fashion brands by enhancing ad recognition regardless of the type of influencer (Boerman, 2020). Yet, influencer marketing research on brands in other segments of the fashion industry except for luxury and different types of influencers like micro-influencers, is limited. Some researchers have also called for expanding influencer marketing research by considering different fashion brands and different types of influencers (Lou et al., 2020; Jin and Ryu, 2020; Boerman, 2020). This reveals that influencer marketing research is burgeoning, and research on how various factors such as type of influencer, type of brand/post affects consumers responses towards sponsored influencer marketing, the influencer and the brand is in infancy.

Another issue that has received less attention in previous literature is related to negative E-WOM. Most of the studies related to persuasiveness of valence of E-WOM has emphasised positive E-WOM. However, E-WOM can be positive or negative, yet only one study by Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu (2019) considered negative E-WOM and revealed no significant impact of negative consumer reviews on consumer online shopping intention, suggesting that fashion is an individual corollary and the features such as free returns and almost free delivery options lead to reduced risk. Although this study provides interesting insights into negative reviews in the context of fashion, but Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu (2019) study was conducted on specific population of consumers who had experienced online shopping before, therefore due to a very context specific nature, the findings cannot be generalised. Therefore, research on negative E-WOM in different situational context, for example, the impact of negative E-WOM on users without any prior experience with the brand or a different situational context such as product-harm crisis is still limited. It is important to expand research on negative E-WOM to reveal more critical aspects associated with social media marketing, and as already established that consumers trust is likely to be influenced by the peer as compared to brand generated content

(Jung and Kim, 2017); thus, consumer reviews can be both a threat and opportunity for the brand (Ananda et al., 2019) and indeed impact brand's success.

Beyond E-WOM communication and influencer marketing, researchers have also investigated consumer motivations for E-WOM sharing and seeking behaviour on social media (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Kang et al., 2014). Accordingly, different factors such as consumers personal characteristics and the influence of different social media marketing content related stimuli, both textual and visual stimuli in driving consumers E-WOM engagement behaviour (Kobia and Liu, 2017; Lee et al., 2018) has been researched. However, most of the previous studies on consumer E-WOM motivation were conducted on a single social media platform. Existing E-WOM motivation research mostly relied on Facebook to determine consumer motivation for E-WOM engagement (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Lee et al., 2018; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018; Naeem et al., 2020). While, other social media platforms such as Instagram is also gaining attention (Colliander and Marder, 2018; Kusumasondjaja, 2019), but were less in focus particularly for consumer E-WOM motivation research. Moreover, findings from previous studies have suggested that the relevance of visual aesthetic that induces consumer E-WOM sharing behaviour varies across different social media platforms such as Facebook (Lee et al., 2018) and Instagram (Kusumasondjaja, 2019), implying that motivational driver for the consumer to share E-WOM message differs across different social media platform, yet current literature is bereft of research considering the role of different social media platforms in driving fashion consumer motivation to engage or seek E-WOM. Although Smith et al. (2012) content analysis revealed differences in the type of brand related UGC present across different platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube for apparel fashion retailers, however, other more visually oriented platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest that are widely used in the fashion industry need to be considered in future when undertaking multi-platform research on E-WOM motivation. The paucity of the research undertaking a comparative analysis of the relationship between different social media platform and consumers E-WOM sharing or seeking behaviour, and differences in modalities that need to be considered on specific platforms that stimulate E-WOM consumer behaviour is apparent in previous literature.



## 6.4 Discussion Research Theme 4

### *Research Theme 4: Social media marketing and consumer-brand relationship*

The research on building consumer brand relationship on social media within the context of fashion showed that this concept has its roots in various literature sources such as marketing, behavioural literature as well as business and management. Therefore, researchers have incorporated potential combinations of various relational drivers and relational outcomes in an attempt to understand the dynamics of building consumer-brand relationship on social media.

This theme revealed that the consumer-brand relationship is a multi-dimensional concept consisting of various cognitive components (e.g. relational benefits and perceived relationship investment; Kang and Kim, 2017; Park and Kim, 2015), affective components (e.g. brand affect, brand love, brand attitude e.g. Chang and Fan, 2017; Burnasheva et al., 2019), and behavioural components (e.g. loyalty, advocacy, purchase intention; Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2019; Parrott et al., 2015). Although existing literature covers various dimensions that enriches the understanding about the formation of consumer relationship via social media marketing for fashion brands, however, these studies are not conclusive since most of these constructs were studied in isolation (e.g. Park and Kim, 2015; Kang and Kim, 2017; Parrott et al., 2015). Previous research focused on either cognitive components (e.g. Park and Kim, 2015) or affective components (Parrott et al., 2015; Burnasheva et al., 2019) in isolation, for example, Park and Kim (2015), studied the impact of relational benefits on perceived relationship investment and brand relationship quality, focusing on cognitive dimensions of the consumer-brand relationship. Very few studies have attempted to integrate cognitive and affective dimensions to study the consumer brand relationship (e.g. Chang, Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2019). For example; Kefi and Maar (2018) integrated social media marketing content related antecedents to determine its impact on relational outcomes brand loyalty via developing brand trust and affect, confirming the interdependency of cognitive and affective drivers. Consumer-brand relationship is a multi-dimensional concept and paucity of research undertaking a holistic preceptive by integrating various cognitive, affective and behavioural factors and their interdependencies in a single study limits comprehensive understanding of building consumer-brand relationship on social media.

Secondly, most of the research has directly linked antecedents and consequences of a consumer-brand relationship without accounting for potential moderators. For instance, Park and Kim (2015) examined the relationship between content-related benefits and consumer

loyalty without accounting for any moderating variables that might influence this relationship. Similarly, a direct relationship can also be found in most of the other studies considering antecedents of consumer engagement and its impact on brand trust and loyalty (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018). Therefore, there is a dearth of studies examining moderating variables, despite suggestions from various researches to investigate the impact of moderating variables in consumer-brand relationship such as social media usage intensity (Kefi and Maar, 2019), consumers offline interaction with the brand (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2019), as well as the moderating influence of culture and gender on building consumer-brand relationship in social media environment (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kim and Lee, 2019; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Parrott et al., 2015). In the current literature, only one study by Giakoumaki and Krepapa (2020), considered the moderating role of source type (e.g. influencer, brand and other users) on the relationship between consumer engagement in self-concept and post engagement in social media in the luxury fashion context.

Thirdly, the importance of consumer engagement as a relational construct that influences brand-consumer relationship outcomes on social media has been emphasised in existing literature in fashion (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Liu et al., 2019; Wang and Lee, 2020). Existing literature has investigated the relationship between different content related dimensions of social media marketing activities of fashion brands and its impact on consumer engagement majorly from a behavioural perspective (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018). However, some inconsistency in the operationalisation of consumer engagement can be observed in previous literature; for example, Kefi and Maar (2018), Liu et al. (2019) and Wang and Lee (2020) operationalised consumer engagement as second-order construct, while Chang and Fan (2017) and Giakoumaki and Krepapa (2020) used consumer engagement as single order construct. According to Wang and Lee (2020) consumer engagement has three levels, consumption, contribution, and creation, and different facets of consumer engagement impact consumer-brand relationship differently (Wang and Lee, 2020), yet limited utilisation of comprehensive operationalisation makes it difficult for fashion brands to evaluate which dimension of social media marketing needs to be emphasised as different facets of behavioural consumer engagement impacts the strength of consumer-brand relationship differently.

Finally, mostly all the papers in this research theme presented drivers and beneficial outcomes (e.g. loyalty) of consumer brand relationship, however, the challenges and inhibitors of building sustained consumer-brand relationship were paid little attention. Only one study by Geissinger, and Laurell. (2016) challenged the previous results by suggesting that fashion consumers on social media tend to be variety seekers and exhibit curvilinear nature of

consumer engagement in fashion-oriented social media by conducting longitudinal research. Contrastingly, most of the research until date has undertaken a cross-sectional approach (Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018; Giakoumaki and Krepapa, 2020), thus existing literature is unable to reflect on fluctuations in the level of consumer engagement over a period of time that might challenge continuation or reflect varying degree of consumer-brand relationship on social media. In other words, links between how consumer engagement evolves over time and its impact on relationship and loyalty remains unexplored. Since most of the studies in consumer-brand relationship are cross-sectional in nature, consumer engagement as a part of social media relationship marketing research is limited to a snapshot of a specific time. Therefore, research adopting a longitudinal design could provide insights into different phases of consumer-brand engagement and its impact on the brand relationship (Martin-Consuegra et al., 2019; Kang and Kim, 2017).

## 6.5 Discussion Research Theme 5

### *Research Theme 5: Social media marketing and other brand-related outcomes*

The papers in this theme mostly focused on the impact of social media marketing on brand equity creation. Brand equity has received very limited attention in prior literature in the context of social media marketing within the fashion industry, and surprisingly this is one of the least focused research themes in social media marketing in the context of fashion. Most of the studies in this theme have considered brand equity as an individual construct without considering its constituents (Kim and Ko, 2012; Morra et al., 2018; Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018). Only Godey et al. (2016) and Anselmsson and Tunca (2019), adopted determinants of brand equity proposed by Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996) namely brand awareness, image (Godey et al., 2016), and brand quality, uniqueness and value (Anselmsson and Tunca, 2019). Therefore, relatively less attention has been paid in studying brand equity in general and by considering various determinants such as brand awareness, perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand association, perceived value, together by adopting a holistic model. Moreover, previous research shows that social media marketing content generated by the brand and user-generated content plays an important in increasing purchase intention by improving brand equity as it foster a level of interaction between the consumer and the brand (Morra et al., 2018), however, no study until the date has empirically investigated the impact of consumer engagement on

brand equity creation by considering its various dimensions in context of social media marketing in fashion.

Moreover, studies have predominantly focused on the impact of social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brands on brand equity creation (Kim and Ko, 2012; Godey et al., 2016). Only Anselmsson and Tunca (2019) considered a new fashion brand, however, their focus was not on social media marketing activities but on how brand personality on social media platform contributes to brand equity creation. Previous studies in this theme have found a statistically significant impact of different attributes of luxury fashion brands social media marketing activities on brand equity creation (Kim and Ko, 2012; Godey et al., 2016), however, there is relatively less research in the mass-market fashion sectors exploring social media marketing activities used by mass-market fashion brands for brand building and brand equity creation on social media. This has also been pointed by Martín-Consuegra et al. (2018), who suggests that differences between different sectors of fashion industry such as fast fashion, sports brands, online-only retailers, new emerging fashion brands, etc. should be considered in future studies.

## 6.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter reveals the research gaps identified from the current body of research included in the review. The most unaddressed research areas pertaining to each of the five different research themes have been discussed. The discussion on the five themes highlights areas where future research is required, mainly highlighting the need for more study in the mass-market fashion domain, to consider more diverse set of social media platforms, to account for demographic variables and cultural differences in social media marketing research, and to more comprehensively understand the impact of social media marketing activities by integrating various antecedents as well as by considering different branding related outcomes (like brand equity). The next chapter presents the future research proposition related to these avenues.

## Chapter 7 Identifying Future Research Directions and Conclusion

This study aims to systematically review previous literature on social media marketing in the fashion industry to reflect the state of knowledge in this field and suggest future research direction generated from the review. As the research concerning social media marketing in the specific context of the fashion industry is still in early stage, current literature in this area is still burgeoning, and social media marketing in fashion can be considered in the nascent stage in the areas of marketing and communication. The extensive but disintegrated body of academic research on social media marketing within fashion creates significant fragmentation. Consequently, this thesis makes first the original contribution by synthesising the fragmented and widespread body of literature, recognising current research themes, identifying significant research gaps and proposing future research direction. In order to achieve the research objectives of this thesis, a relevant keyword-based search was conducted, papers retrieved were then manually reviewed, and thematic analysis was performed to identify and categorise literature for a systematic review. Subsequently, this thesis consolidates the current body of research in the field and proposes five research agenda that highlights issues to be addressed in future.

### 7.1 Towards Future Research Agenda

This section provides future research propositions based on gaps highlighted in the discussions chapter. The direction for future research addresses the shortcomings found in the systematic review process by proposing possible ways to address unexplored aspects in the field of social media marketing in the fashion industry. The research proposition will improve existing academic knowledge on the effective utilisation of social media marketing in fashion and also enable scholars to take the first step towards expanding research in this domain. Finally, this section concludes by providing a tabular representation of proposed the research agenda.

#### 7.1.1 Research Direction for Social Media Marketing Tactics in Fashion

Research theme 1 suggests that a number of social media marketing tactics have been adopted by fashion brands, however, much of the research to date has focused on luxury fashion brands social media marketing tactics, while there is limited research in the mass-market fashion sector (Ananda et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017). As luxury-fashion brand are well-resourced, their findings cannot be generalised to more broader sample of brands in the fashion industry. Thus,

more research is required to explore social media marketing practices from mass-market fashion brands perspective, focusing on fast-fashion brands, sports fashion, fashion SME's and more generalised apparel clothing fashion retailers. Given the increasing benefits of social media for mass-market fashion sector in terms of increased sales, brand awareness, product development (Ananda et al., 2018; Scuotto et al., 2017), and rising industry practices in this sector, as evidenced by industry statistics in terms of an increasing number of followers, e.g. Nike has 75.4 million followers, H&M has 23.9 million followers on Instagram (Statista, 2018), expanding research on what social media marketing tactics are used by mass-market fashion brands on different social media platforms would add interesting insights into the existing literature. As discussed in the above section, most of the research in mass-market fashion sector is typically concentrated on Facebook, as it remains of the most popular social media platform amongst users and marketers alike (Statista, 2020b; Statista, 2021a). However, growing popularity of other social media platforms among users, such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Pinterest (Rienda et al., 2020; Nelson et al., 2019), presents a significant opportunity for mass-market fashion brands to reach their target consumers. With over 1 billion monthly active users each on Instagram and YouTube, and millions of users on Twitter and Pinterest, these platforms present key marketing channels for fashion brands. Additionally, a recent industry report highlighted that Instagram is the second most important social media platform for marketing after Facebook, and about 76 percent of marketers are using Instagram to promote their business, followed by Twitter (53 percent), YouTube (53 percent) and Pinterest (25 percent) (Statista, 2021a). Therefore, future research investigating different social media marketing tactics used by fashion brands to effectively harness the prominence of these platforms presents a significant opportunity for academic researchers.

Furthermore, considering different social media platform when studying social media marketing tactics of fashion brands will enhance theoretical understanding regarding, how the differences in features and functionalities of different social media platforms offer a unique context for marketing (Smith et al., 2013). For example, Instagram allows to market by using attractive pictures, highly curated videos, promotes users to interact with the brand and other users, create communities, while Twitter is most often used to post short messages and YouTube allows posting videos. Thus, it is likely that the unique characteristics of various social media platforms translate into differences in the way fashion brands approach specific platforms. For example, as previously highlighted, fashion brands social media marketing practices vary across different platforms, for example, ASOS\_hereto help account on Twitter to provide all-time consumer service to its users and Nike campaign on Instagram to increase

consumer engagement and interactivity with the brand. Thus, there is a need for undertaking evidence-based research addressing if/how fashion brands in the mass-market segment are approaching different social media platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Pinterest, as these are some of the most popular social media platforms in this sector. In this regard, future research can also conduct cross-platform research (e.g. Instagram and Twitter or Twitter and YouTube) to explore differences in social media marketing tactics and their varying impact on marketing outcomes for the mass-market fashion segment. Such research can add to calls in previous literature to consider different social media platforms in mass-market fashion brands social media marketing (e.g. Ananda et al., 2018; Arriaga et al., 2017; Schultz, 2016). Another social media platform that has recently gained massive attention among users is TikTok (689 million users) (Statista, 2020b). With the platform's user base majorly between the age of 16-24 years, this platform has emerged as a significant channel for fashion brands to reach Gen Z consumers (Fromm, 2020). The rapid growth of TikTok has attracted various fashion brands to participate on the platform (e.g. Burberry, Prada, Pretty Little Things, Boohoo etc.), however, it is particularly the mass-fashion brands that are gaining high amount of participation and user engagement on TikTok (Parisi, 2020). For example, brands such as Pretty Little Things and Shein have gained millions of followers, likes and views (Parisi, 2020). Although the focus of the thesis has been on conventional social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest etc.), future research can also explore more contemporary platforms, such as TikTok, due to its growing popularity among fashion brands.

Secondly, a worthwhile extension of use of social media in fashion includes focusing on various aspects related to value co-creation (Quach and Thaichon, 2017). The advantages of using social media as a value co-creation tool across luxury and mass-market fashion brands, has come into focus in previous literature. However, as discussed, most of these studies are either single brand case studies or lack empirical enquiry (Hughes et al., 2016; Koivisto and Mattila, 2018; Roncha and Radelyffe-Thomas, 2016). Although various social media marketing tactics have been studied in association with value co-creation (e.g. branded storytelling), there is still a paucity of empirical investigation related to what are the effective social media marketing tactic that facilitates the value co-creation process. Therefore, empirical research on a larger sample of fashion brands can be conducted to investigate what type of social media marketing content is effective in facilitating value co-creation on social media. A multi-stakeholder perspective, considering both fashion brand marketers perspective and consumer experience of value co-creation activities on social media can be considered in this regard. Such exploratory research can also provide an understanding of the challenges faced

by fashion brands in co-creation activities on social media, particularly when considering fashion SME's, and can advance current research in fashion. Scholars have also called for more empirical research in exploring value co-creation on social media, both in luxury and mass-market fashion brand segment (e.g. Koivisto and Mattila, 2018; Hughes et al., 2016; Scuotto et al., 2017; Roncha and Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016).

Finally, scholarly emphasis on the tactical use of social media marketing shows that recent studies seem to ignore more a strategic approach to social media in the fashion industry. Previous literature focuses on how specific fashion brands use social media marketing (Phan et al., 2011; Ng, 2014; Hughes et al., 2016; Arriaga et al., 2017), and reflects an overlap between the strategic and operational side of social media marketing, for e.g. Ng (2014) explored the use of social media for internationalisation of Coach in China mainly emphasising on practices/activities used by brand. The lack of holistic and comprehensives understanding of the use of social media marketing from a more strategic perspective, such as, what are the underlying objectives, channel choices, target segment, expected outcomes, challenges faced in using social media in marketing by fashion brands is prevalent in previous literature (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Ananda et al., 2018). Future research on how fashion brands develop and achieve different marketing objectives (e.g. brand building, enhancing visibility, increasing sales, growing brand advocates, value co-creation in brand communities etc.), choose the social media platform mix, segment consumers, as well as how firm size impacts these objectives will provide insights to academics about different dimensions of social media marketing in fashion. Therefore, the need for formalisation of social media marketing from more strategic perspective is apparent in existing literature (Kontu and Vecchi, 2014; Chen and Wang, 2017; Ananda et al., 2018), and there is a need to consider aligning the use of social media with firms marketing goals and co-ordinating brands social media efforts for the attainment of those specific marketing objectives.

### 7.1.2 Research Direction for Social Media Consumer Behavioural Research

Little research attention has been paid to explore demographic and cultural variations in the consumer behavioural research on social media. It is crucial for research to enhance contextual richness by studying differences in consumer motivations, individual characteristics, beliefs and attitudes about the use of social media across diverse groups of consumers.

The fashion consumer behavioural research in social media should emphasise conducting more contextually diverse research by understanding Generation X social media use, as well as gender differences among different generational cohorts. As discussed, most of the studies



have explored various factors that motivate students, young consumers or Gen Y behaviour in the social media environment, and fashion consumer research in the field is skewed towards female consumers (Kang et al., 2014; Pentina et al., 2018). Therefore, firstly, it is important to distinguish Gen Y behaviour from other cohorts, such as Gen X and even baby boomers. About 77.5% of Gen X (eMarketer, 2019b), and 50 % of people aged 65 or older in the US are now using social media (Perrin and Anderson, 2019). Despite popular beliefs that older consumers are less likely to be using social media, a recent survey by eMarketer (2019a) suggested that all age groups from 14 years to 55+ years are using social media and also deriving their fashion inspiration from social media browsing (eMarketer, 2019a). Although users from varying age groups are using social media, but there may be differences in their motivations, behaviours and media usage pattern, when compared to Gen Y (Nash, 2019; eMarketer, 2019b). For instance, Gen X and baby boomers are limited in their social media usage patterns, and a majority of them are primarily using Facebook (eMarketer, 2019b; Perrin and Anderson, 2019), compared to Gen Y who are active across an array of platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube (Perrin and Anderson, 2019). Moreover, a recent survey highlighted that there exist behavioural differences between users from different generational cohorts, such as, Gen X users are less likely to share their personal information with the brand and some even refrain from content sharing activities online, compared to their younger generation (Gen Y), and these concern heighten when considering older generations such a baby boomer (eMarketer, 2019b). Therefore, it is important to undertake academic research distinguishing Gen Y behaviour from other generational cohorts, for instance, a cross comparative study to understand what drives GenY, Gen X and baby boomers to interact with fashion brand on particular social media platform and why particular generational cohort has certain type of behavioural response towards fashion brands on social media. This type of research will contribute to the growing body of literature on social media by providing fashion brands with empirical evidence into whether demographic age variables influence consumers channel and brand choice, and what are the underlining preferences and motivations of users from different age groups to interact with the brand.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to understand Gen Z (born after 1995) social media behaviour, which is an under-researched area in the existing literature. Since, Gen Z consumers represent about 40% of global consumers as of 2020, and constitute about \$150 billions worth of spending power in the US alone (Amed et al., 2019b), they have emerged as another significant group of the consumer for fashion brands. Also, Gen Z users are different from their previous generations (Gen Y and Gen X) in terms of their needs and preferences, and it is

important to understand Gen Z behaviours for using branded social media platforms due to their growing significance (Tabaka, 2018). For instance, a majority of Gen Z consumers prefer brands that contribute to social issues, follow more authentic marketing practices that reflect their brand values and background, and Gen Z users are more willing to interact and collaborate with brands (Khusainova, 2020; Amed et al., 2019b; Tabaka, 2018). Therefore, this generation is bringing a change in the marketing and communication activities, and some astute fashion brands have also started responding to the needs of Gen Z by addressing social issues in their marketing campaigns on social media, for example, H&M's pride collection to support the LGBTQ+ community. Going forward, future research investigating how Gen Z consumers perceive social media marketing practices of fashion brands, their motivations to use and engage with the branded platforms, would add interesting insights into the fashion social media marketing research, as these consumers are expanding the scope of social media marketing to include principled values and views.

Secondly, it is important to consider more gender representative samples while considering different generational cohorts to reveal differences in consumer preferences and behaviours (Athwal et al., 2019; Helal et al., 2018). A recent demographic report on Instagram usage across different gender and age groups across the world, revealed increased usage of Instagram amongst male consumers (Statista, 2020c). Although, understanding fashion consumer behaviour on social media has been the focus of researchers since 2012, yet scholars call for further development of this area by considering demographic heterogeneity in social media users to reveal further insights (Helal et al., 2018). As uses and gratification theory has been extensively applied in existing motivational research, other theories such as content value theory, in combination with Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell's (EKB) model of consumer decision making, can be considered in future to study the impact of these contextual differences on consumer decision making (Martin-Consugera, 2019; Kang et al., 2014).

Additionally, most of the existing literature investigating personal and psychological factors impacting consumer behaviour on social media is limited to sample of users belonging to a specific country. Despite previous research suggesting differences in consumer perception towards social media marketing practices of luxury fashion brands across western and eastern countries (Liu et al., 2019; Park et al., 2018), current research has not accounted for variations in consumer lifestyle, personality traits, consumer motivation across users of different countries and cultural contexts. Future research can consider cross-cultural differences (individualistic vs collectivist) in consumers motivation research for social media use and behaviour towards participation with branded communications. The need for considering

cross-cultural variations in consumer behaviour has also been called by some researchers (Ko et al., 2013; Salem and Alanadoly, 2020). Most of the consumer behavioural research has been primarily studied from a western country perspective, and very little is known regarding other Eastern countries. The growing potential of eastern countries like China, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, among others, as a significant market for fashion brands, has also been suggested in the latest Business of Fashion and McKinsey report (Amed et al., 2019a). Thus, differences arising from macro factors such as culture that varies across countries cannot be ignored, as they can potentially influence consumer behaviour on social media directly, as well as indirectly by influencing their decision making style, individual traits, attitude towards brand and social media marketing in general. Therefore, understanding how cross-cultural variation could affect or moderate consumer behaviour towards social media marketing can add to growing body of research. With growing social media use in other countries and escalation of cross-cultural communication of fashion brand, understanding the differences that exist in consumer behaviour in different cultures will also help fashion brands to adapt their practices to specific user behaviour.

Finally, it will be useful to continuously develop research on consumer motivation, as social media platforms are continuously growing in both type and size; for example, WeChat has 1.2 billion and YouTube with 2 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2020b). Thus, comparing consumer behaviour across different social media platforms can provide better insights into fashion brands to keep up with growing consumer needs (Nelson et al., 2019). There is a consistent agreement in literature for the continuous expansion of consumer motivational research (Nelson et al., 2019; Ko et al., 2013), as well as to consider region-specific platform such as Wechat or Weibo (Athwal et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2019).

### 7.1.3 Research Direction for Electronic Word Of Mouth Communication

Social media marketing and E-WOM communication literature suggested that it is critical for scholars to extend research on how fashion brands in different segments of the fashion industry are using influencers in social media marketing by considering different types of influencers rather than generalising influencers to a single category. Research theme 3 revealed that persuasiveness of E-WOM communication is strongly influenced by consumer perception of the source (e.g. influencer) of E-WOM, however, most of the previous research considered only one category of influencers, i.e., opinion leaders (also known as Instafamous, fashion influencers, bloggers) and did not explicitly distinguish between the type of influencers such

as micro-influencer or meso-influencers. Given the rise in different types of influencers (like micro, meso, mega influencers), and growing industry anticipation about the significance of micro influencers as an effective source of E-WOM communication that can lead to increased participation and return on campaign due to targeted audience available on their account (Schomer, 2019; Wissman, 2018), future research providing empirical evidence on this unresearched category can significantly add to growing research on influencer marketing. In future, it would be useful to understand if the factors affecting persuasiveness of E-WOM communication of micro-influencers are same or different from the already researched opinion leaders (Casalo et al., 2020). Since, micro-influencers have distinctive characteristics in terms of number of followers, consumer perception of attractiveness, credibility, expertise, trustworthiness, and psychological closeness towards this group of influencers might provide insights to practitioners about the role of micro-influencers in influencing consumer decision making. For example, future research can compare consumer perception about both micro and meso influencers by combination different cognitive (physical attractiveness, homophily, social attractiveness) and emotional factors (social ties, psychological closeness), and determine their impact on brand perception and purchase intention. Such research can help reveal important insights for influencer marketing practices currently conducted in the fashion industry.

Influencer marketing research can further be complemented by considering impact of sponsorship disclosure by influencer on different fashion brands such as fast-fashion brand's (Zara, H&M), fashion SME's and online fashion retailers (e.g. ASOS, Missguided). As discussed in the above chapter, most of the previous literature on the impact of E-WOM marketing was in the context of luxury fashion brands; thus, future research can explore mass-market fashion brand's use of different types of influencer for marketing, impact of sponsorship disclosure on consumer behavioural intention, and benefits and challenges of influencer marketing for fashion brands in different segments of the fashion industry. This type of research is particularly revealing as brands expenditure on influencer marketing is projected to reach \$15 billion by 2022 (Schomer, 2019), and latest industry examples such as H&M use of influencer marketing to build brand awareness for its latest brand Nyden (Sweeney, 2018), or be it online clothing brand Missguided effective use of influencer collaborations that helped it in gaining consumer base, are suggestive of prevalence of influencer marketing in various segments of the fashion industry. Thus, future academic research investigating the use and consequences of influencer marketing by different types of fashion brands, and if micro-influencers are effective source of E-WOM communication for fashion SME's, online-

retailers, or other new and emerging fashion brands to influence consumer perception and purchase intention, would add significantly to the current body of knowledge.

Furthermore, few studies have focused on the negative E-WOM and the role of different social media platform in driving E-WOM behaviour. Firstly, most of the previous literature has emphasised positive consumer reviews, as previously discussed only Kawaf and Istanbuluoglu (2019) considered negative E-WOM and suggested no significant impact of negative consumer reviews on experienced fashion consumer purchase intention. Therefore, future research investigating the impact of negative E-WOM in different situational context, for example, research on product-harm crisis demonstrating the impact of negative events on brand image, performance and sales. Since consumer generated brand stories can involve negative events, for instance, luxury brand Gucci withdrawal of one of its product items following a recent criticism of its design accused of evoking blackface imagery by users on Twitter (Hsu and Paton, 2019), as well as Chinese customers boycotting luxury fashion brand Dolce and Gabbana's for supporting racism in one of its campaigns featuring a Chinese model are suggestive of negative indignation that has affected fashion brands in the past, but there is lack of strong empirical evidence in this regard. Therefore, there is much to investigate with respect to negative consumer generated content about the brands, and one possible direction is to examine the impact of product-harm crisis on brand image and sales. Different moderating variables such as type of fashion brand (e.g. what brands are most impacted by negative E-WOM), social ties with source of E-WOM, social group norms, consumer-brand loyalty, commitment, firm social media marketing characteristics (e.g. active response) can also be considered as moderating factor that can influence consumer responses towards negative E-WOM and its impacts brand image, brand trust and purchase intention. Such research will also add to the growing body of research calling for considering the impact of negative E-WOM in social media in the context of fashion (e.g. Kim and Johnson, 2016).

Finally, with regards to E-WOM sharing and seeking motivation, most of these studies were conducted on a single social media platform (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Lee et al., 2018; Mazzucchelli et al., 2018; Naeem et al., 2020), while brand related UGC might vary across different social media platforms (Smith et al., 2012). Future research considering the role of social media platform in E-WOM motivation research is required, as consumers may differently perceive social media marketing stimuli (images, text, videos etc.) depending on the platform they are published. Therefore, undertaking comparative research on the role of social media platforms in affecting consumer motivation to share or seek E-WOM by considering variables such as characteristics of the platform, the effectiveness of particular

content published on the social media platform, or consumers perceived trust of a specific platform, attitude towards the platform, platform usage frequency across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest etc. can be useful. Such research will help practitioners in determining which social media platform is effective for E-WOM activities and has maximum impact on its target audience. The need for expanding E-WOM motivation research to different social media platforms is also called by Lee et al. (2018).

#### 7.1.4 Research Direction for Building Consumer-Brand Relationship

The current body of literature on the consumer-brand relationship in fashion-oriented social media has addressed a number of antecedents for building consumer relation pertinent to fashion brands social media marketing efforts; still there is considerable potential for future research. Future research on consumer-brand relationship needs to integrate various concepts to provide a comprehensive overview of building brand relationship, for instance by considering cognitive (perceived relationship benefits), affective (brand love, affect) and behavioural components (loyalty, commitment) in a single study, as this will advance the understanding of the phenomena by integrating attitudinal and behavioural concepts. Future studies can combine various concepts such as content-related value, relational benefits, perceived relationship investment to determine their impact on consumer engagement in brand community and its consequences such as brand trust, brand advocacy, brand love, brand affect and loyalty behaviour. Moreover, additional constructs such as brand experience, self-expression, relationship orientation, which have not yet been studied in existing research, can further be investigated to explain its impact on relational outcomes as suggested by some researchers in the field (Burnasheva et al., 2019; Kefi and Maar, 2018).

Additionally, there is a need to further consider the impact of moderating variables in the casual relationship explored in the consumer-brand relationship research. For example, gender related variations such as the behaviour of male and female consumers might vary in terms of their motivations to develop a relationship with brand, perceived relational benefits, as well as the intensity of consumer-brand relation (e.g. love, brand affect), might considerably vary among different gender group (Kefi and Maar, 2018; Chang and Fan, 2017). Future research can also consider studying the influence of cultural variations among users belonging to different countries on consumer-brand relationship outcomes (Parrott et al., 2015; Kim and Lee, 2019). For this purpose, a cross-cultural study would be beneficial for fully understanding the drivers, types and meaning of consumer relationship with brand across different cultures.

Various researchers in this theme have also called for considering the moderating impact of different variables on the relationship explored to understand consumer-brand relationship development on social media (Park and Kim, 2015; Chang and Fan, 2017; Kefi and Maar, 2018).

Furthermore, as discussed in the above sections, existing literature exhibits inconsistency in the operationalisation of consumer engagement construct as some studies consider it as single order construct (Chang and Fan, 2017) while others consider it as second order construct (Kefi and Maar, 2018; Wang and Lee, 2020). Therefore, future research considering consumer engagement within the broader framework of consumer-brand relationship should adopt a more comprehensive operationalisation of consumer engagement, by distinguishing consumption, contribution, creation engagement behaviours (Liu et al., 2019). Additionally, as revealed by (Wang and Lee, 2020), different facets of consumer engagement impacts consumer-brand relationship differently, distinguishing between different types of engagement behaviours is important, rather than considering consumer engagement as single order construct.

Additionally, it is also important to reveal challenges related to building a consumer-brand relationship on social media. Since, consumer engagement has been considered as catalyst of consumer-brand relationship (Chang and Fan, 2017), and it has been acknowledged the consumer engagement with brand on social media is curvilinear in nature, future research conducting a more longitudinal research on consumer engagement is required. A longitudinal study comparing how consumer engagement evolves over a period of time (e.g. most active, moderately active and least active engagement), the reasons for such fluctuation and its consequences for the firm presents another potential avenue for future research (Liu et al., 2019). For this purpose, big data analytic method in combination with a consumer survey can be developed and leveraged to determine the evolving nature of consumer-brand relationship on social media and subsequent reasons for the same. Big data method has previously been used as a social media analytic method to determine consumer engagement on social media and has been recognised as a systematic method to gather, observe and record consumer engagement data available online, and has been previously applied in social media research to produce in-depth findings by various researchers (Parrott et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2019).

### 7.1.5 Research Direction for Other Brand-Related Outcomes

Based on a critical review on research theme 5, it can be assessed that there are still unaddressed question related to the use of social media for brand equity creation. It is essential for future research to consider various dimensions of brand equity creation, investigate various antecedents and outcomes of brand equity creation as well as to focus on the concept of brand equity creation in mass-market fashion domain.

As discussed previously, most of the studies in this theme considered brand equity as an individual construct, and there is paucity of research considering the multi-dimensionality of brand equity creation on social media in context of fashion. For the purpose of enhancing the understanding of social media marketing in brand equity creation, future research should use a holistic model by integrating different dimension of brand equity creation such as brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, brand loyalty, brand trust, brand association etc.. Moreover, since both, firm-generated and user-generated content contributes towards improving brand equity (Morra et al., 2018), future research on the role of social media marketing in brand equity creation can further be strengthened by empirically investigating how consumer engagement impacts brand equity creation dimensions (such as loyalty, awareness, brand image, perceived value). Such study would add to the growing body of literature calling for a more sophisticated understanding of the most effective social media marketing efforts of brand that facilitate brand equity creation (Godey et al., 2016; Morra et al., 2018; Zollo et al., 2020).

Additionally, taking into account the lack of theoretical and empirical knowledge in brand equity creation on social media for mass-market fashion brands, it is required that future studies should differentiate between what attributes of social media marketing activities are more effective in brand equity creation in different segments of fashion industry. Therefore, future research undertaking an empirical study on brand equity creation in mass-market fashion sector, as well as multi-brand comparative analysis, can enhance the generalizability of the concept to the entire fashion industry and add to call for research to explore differences in social media marketing activities and their effect in different segments of the fashion industry (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018). Since it has also been previously suggested that it is easier for a small-fashion brand to foster consumer engagement and interactivity in their brand communities in comparison to big fashion brands as fans feels more integrated (Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernándezand, 2017), future research on social media marketing activities of mass-market fashion brands on generation of brand equity would offer



practitioners useful insights, as it is usually small fashion brands who are more keen on achieving recognition and brand awareness amongst users. Such research will also provide significant insights into brand building activities on social media for different types of fashion brands.

Overall, this systematic literature review on social media marketing in the fashion industry argues that various dimensions have been researched, still, there are many areas that require further attention. Table 7.1 summarises the identified research gaps and future research directions.

Theme	Identified Limitation and Research Gaps	Example of Future Research Direction
<b>Social media marketing tactics of fashion brands</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Studies on social media marketing tactics are skewed towards luxury fashion brands who are generally more resourced, and it limits the generalizability of their finding to fashion SME's, online-only retailers, fast-fashion brands etc.</li> <li>2. Most of the studies in mass-market fashion segment are focused on a single social media platform, mainly Facebook</li> <li>3. The use of social media by fashion brands as value co-creation tool is limited to a single brand case study or lacks empirical enquiry</li> <li>4. Most scholarly literature has focused on more operational use of social media.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future research should consider if/ how social media marketing tactics of fashion brands in mass-market fashion segment vary across different social media platforms (such as Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest) and which is the most popular social media platform in this segment</li> <li>• To investigate what type of social media marketing content is effective in facilitating value co-creation on social media by using a larger sample of fashion brand. A multi-stakeholder perspective using both fashion brand marketers perspective and consumer experience of value co-creation activities can be used.</li> <li>• There is a need to understand fashion brands strategic use of social media marketing by investigating underlining objectives, including their drivers, target audience, channel choices, goals as well as how brand size influences adoption of particular social media marketing approach</li> </ul>
<b>Social media marketing and consumer behaviour</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Studies have focused on particular sample of students or young consumer motivational behaviour on social media</li> <li>2. Fashion consumer behaviour research in field is skewed towards female consumers</li> <li>3. Most consumer behavioural research is limited to sample of users belonging to a specific country.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future research should distinguishes between Gen Y motivational behaviour from other cohorts (Gen X, Gen Z and baby boomers), for example by conducting cross comparative study</li> <li>• Future studies should understand heterogeneity in social media users in terms of differences in gender in different generational cohorts, if female and male fashion consumer are motivated by different needs to use fashion SM platform</li> <li>• Future research on multi-cultural paradigm, focusing on how consumer motivation, attitude, behaviour and personal characteristics varies across different countries and cultures</li> </ul>
<b>Electronic word of mouth communication</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Majority of studies focused on only single category of influencer marketing i.e. opinion leaders or meso-influencer</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future research on E-WOM marketing or influencer marketing should consider if/how consumer perception of different type/ categories of influencer, e.g., micro-influencer vs meso-influencer impact consumer decision making</li> </ul>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. E-WOM communication has mainly been studied in context of luxury-fashion brands</li> <li>3. Majority of studies emphasised on positive E-WOM, only few focused on negative E-WOM</li> <li>4. Studies investigating E-WOM sharing and seeking motivation were mostly conducted on single social media platform</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies in influencer marketing can consider brands from different segments of fashion industry, e.g. fast-fashion, fashion SME's, their use of different types of influencers and impact of sponsorship disclosure in this segment</li> <li>• Research on the impact of negative E-WOM in different situational context is required, such as how does negative E-WOM generated in product-harm crisis impacts consumer-brand trust, purchase intention</li> <li>• More research is required to explore if consumer motivation to engage, share or seek E-WOM is influenced by type of social media platform, e.g. characteristics of platform, the effectiveness of particular content published on social media platform, or consumers perceived trust of specific platform, attitude towards platform, platform usage frequency etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Social media marketing and consumer-brand relationship</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Various dimensions of consumer-brand relationship were considered in isolation</li> <li>2. Majority of research has considered direct relationship between antecedents and consequences of consumer-brand relationship without accounting for potential moderators</li> <li>3. Most of the existing studies operationalisation consumer engagement as single order construct</li> <li>4. Most of the research until date have undertaken a cross-sectional approach to study consumer engagement and consumer-brand relationship</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future studies can adopt a holistic perspective by integrating cognitive (perceived relationship benefits), affective (brand love, affect) and behavioural components (loyalty, commitment) in one framework to reflect multidimensionality of the consumer-brand relation paradigm</li> <li>• The impact of moderating variables in the casual relationship between different antecedents and outcomes of consumer-brand relationship should be explored. For example, gender related variations between male and female motivations to develop relationship with brand, influence of cultural variations</li> <li>• Studied are recommended to adopt a more comprehensive operationalisation of consumer engagement, by distinguishing consumption, contribution, creation type of engagement behaviours</li> <li>• Future research should adopt a longitudinal study comparing how consumer engagement evolves over period of time and its impact on consumer-brand relationship</li> </ul>
<b>Social media marketing and other brand related outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brand equity has received very limited attention in prior literature in context of social media marketing within fashion industry</li> <li>2. There paucity of research considering multi-dimensionality of brand equity creation</li> <li>3. Studies have predominantly focused on determining the impact of social media marketing activities of luxury fashion brands on brand equity creation</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More research is required on the role of social media marketing for brand equity creation, e.g., how social media marketing and consumer engagement impacts brand equity creation dimensions</li> <li>• Future research should explore other dimensions of brand equity such as perceived quality, brand association, brand loyalty, in addition to brand awareness and image</li> <li>• To conduct empirical study on brand equity creation in mass-market fashion sector to enhance generalizability of the brand equity concept</li> </ul>

**Table 7.1 Future research direction for social media marketing in the fashion industry**

Summarising, the review revealed that a large number of studies investigate the social media marketing tactics of luxury fashion brand, whereas existing literature provides a limited discussion on social media marketing practices in mass-market fashion brand context despite increasing practical use of social media by fashion brands in the mass-market sector (Ahmed et al., 2019). Moreover, fashion brands across the fashion industry are increasingly investing in co-creating value with consumer, for example, #GucciGram project that invited illustrators to design Gucci motifs on Instagram (O'Connor, 2018), however, current research on fashion brand's use of social media as value co-creation platform is still in a nascent stage. The second research theme suggested over emphasis on young consumers, students, millennials as well as female consumer, limiting the generalisation of these studies to other generational cohorts and gender groups, which are now becoming active users of fashion related social media platforms (Nash, 2019). There is a need to extend the research to account for other generational cohorts like Gen X users and heterogeneity in social media users in terms of differences in gender in different generational cohorts. The third research theme has put forward the limitation of considering consumer perception of a new and growing category of influencer i.e. micro-influencers, as well as use of influencer marketing by mass-market fashion brands. The critical aspect of branded communication related to negative E-WOM has also been paid limited attention, particularly in different situational contexts. The fourth research theme discussed the lack of considering multi-dimensionality of consumer-brand relation paradigm and the absence of considering the moderating variables such as gender, cultural variation in the casual relationship between different antecedents and outcomes of consumer-brand relationship. Thus, future research integrating different cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural components in one framework, along with considering different moderators can help fashion brand managers to effectively use social media marketing to compete in highly complex social media environment. The fifth theme is a discussion on other brand related outcomes of social media marketing such as brand equity creation which has received very little attention in previous literature. There is clear need to undertake research on brand equity creation by considering various dimensions of brand equity and differentiate between effect of social media marketing on brand equity in different segments of fashion industry. Finally it has been observed through the due course of conducting the review that social media marketing in fashion is a field that

is undergoing significant growth both in terms of research and practice, yet, there are still some discrepancies in research and practice, as growth in research is paralleled by even greater change in consumer behaviour and industry practices, and in such a case the need for accelerating research by undertaking future research direction becomes even more significant.

## 7.2 Implication for Practice

The systematic literature review yields several valuable implications for fashion industry professionals and marketing managers. All five themes support that fashion brands should use proactive social media marketing practices to reinforce their brand via social media. First, it is highly recommended for fashion brand managers to not consider social media as another linear marketing and communication channel, rather fashion brands should focus on improving interactivity between brand and consumer by using a combination of content that provides value to the consumer, for instance, hedonic, utilitarian, social values. Social media marketing activities focusing on entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customisation, electronic word of mouth (Kim and Ko, 2010; Godey et al., 2016), effective visual and auditory effects to interactively communicate with their audience, can greatly benefit fashion brands. Secondly, the review revealed that luxury fashion brands are often beset by exclusivity related issues, and these issues are more prominent in some markets than others (Liu et al., 2019; Park et al., 2018). This implies that luxury fashion brand need to develop a balance between their global luxury image and localised consumer preferences by tailoring their social media marketing tactics to meet consumers preferences across different countries and marketplaces, for example, when marketing on more region-specific platform vs when using platforms such as Twitter, Instagram etc. which have a more global audience base. Thirdly, for fashion brand specially in the mass-market fashion segment social media presents a cost-effective and lucrative opportunity to reach consumers, however, it is important to adopt alternative combinations of promotional, interactive and engaging social media practices such as using Instagram stories, livestreaming videos, using image sharing campaigns etc., to develop rememberable consumer experiences. Fashion brand are recommended to devise ways to engage consumer both cognitively and emotionally, by collaborating with consumers through new innovative techniques such as co-creating content, asking for ideas and suggestions from consumers, and involving them in branded activities. Fourthly, the fashion industry has thus far considered fashion influencers as an effective way to reach and influence their audience, and this review suggest that fashion managers should carefully select influencers that reinforces their brand image. With the advent

of different categories of influencers, it seems promising to consider different types of influencer such as micro-influencer, particularly for fashion SME's and new emerging fashion brands who have limited resources. Following authenticity practices in sponsored influencer marketing for fashion brands has also emerged as a significant consideration when using influencer marketing, as it can potentially impact consumers trust. Fifth, the review suggest that fashion brand managers should consider social media marketing as an effective image building tool and as a way of building strong consumer-brand relation by offering relational benefits, (e.g. social benefits like branded storytelling, personalised messages, community interaction, and monetary benefits like discounts, special offers, consumer service etc.). Lastly, it is important to have an appropriate channel mix, and to constantly upgrade social media marketing practices on different platforms paralleled by growth in social media technology.

To conclude, this thesis contributes to social media marketing literature in fashion industry context. It considers social media marketing for fashion brands from marketing and communication perspective by conducting a systematic literature review, for the first time, to critically synthesis current state of art knowledge and propose future research direction in this field. This thesis indicates that social media marketing offers enormous potential to different fashion brands across fashion industry and provides a nuanced context for future research.

### 7.3 Limitation

The study has few limitations. First, the research has been limited within pre-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, this means that final body of work does not include book chapters, non-peer reviewed journals, conference papers and non- English papers. Secondly, with respect to terminology, social media marketing has occasionally been confused with myriad of other inter-related terms such as “blogs”, “virtual communities”, “s-commerce”, “social computing”, “influencer marketing”, “Web 2.0” among other, thus the scope of terms used is limited. Although the methodological rigour and use of carefully devised alternative keyword specific to topic of this thesis, it is believed that chances of omitting papers bearing critical implication for findings is very little. Also, since social media marketing is rapidly growing area, more recently published research from June 2020 onwards should be considered in future. Finally, this thesis is limited to specific context of fashion industry considering social media marketing from B2C marketing and communication perspective, however studies in other industrial context such as education, automobile, sports might reveal different results.

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## Appendix 1

	<i>Keywords</i>	<i>References</i>
<b><i>Social media</i></b>	Social media marketing; social media; social network marketing ; Facebook marketing; social computing Web 2.0, social sites, social web, interactive-media, influencer marketing, E-WOM, S-commerce; Social media advertising; virtual communities; blogs; crowd sourcing; social networks; referral marketing; user generated content; brand community; digital marketing; internet marketing	Alves et al., 2016; Ngai et al., 2015; Alalwan et al., 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2015; Tsionis and Dimitriadis, 2014; Lamberton and Stephen, 2016; Bhimania et al., 2019; Kapoor et al., 2018; Arrigo, 2018
<b><i>Fashion</i></b>	Fashion; Luxury brand; apparel brand; fashion clothing; luxury fashion brands; fashion brands; fashion industry; fashion apparel; fashion accessories	White et al. 2017; Rafi-UL-Shan et al. 2018; Arrigo, 2018

Fig 1. Preliminary list of keywords derived from reading and analysing SLR's in the field of social media and fashion.

