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MEASURING THE SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT DIMENSIONS OF MODEST FASHION INDUSTRY IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This present study measures Social Media (SM) engagement dimensions with second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) an enabler of modest fashion brands' effort to stay engaged with their target market. A total of 400 questionnaire survey data were collected and analysed with AMOS 23.0 whereby CFA were used on the construct with four latent variables of brand usage intent, social presence, electronic word of mouth and social brand engagement. The result showed that the construct achieved adequate goodness-of-fit indices. In short, the dimension of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) is the key element in SM engagement. The implications of this paper are focused on modest fashion brand owners to have a better understanding of SM engagement trends to be well connected with consumers. Recommendation for future research to examine the connection between the latent variables of the SM engagement on employed and professional female customers, as well as the male target market.

Keywords: Confirmatory factor analysis, modest fashion, SM engagement.

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1. Introduction

It is nothing unusual for Muslim women in Malaysia to want to look good while still respecting their religious values. However, when Burberry and DKNY released their special Ramadhan collections, which coincide with the Muslim holy month in 2015, it indicated the birth of a trend. For example, British designer Hana Tajima and Uniqlo collaboration for a fusion of "contemporary design and comfortable fabrics with traditional values" fashion. Modest fashion is not monopolised by a specific religion. Although, there is a misconception in Malaysia that modest fashion is about Islam. This misconception may be because the majority of Malaysians are Muslims. The followers of the "Abrahamic faith" such as the Jews, Christians, and Islam predominantly wear modest fashion. However, women of a different faith may also choose to wear modest fashion. The definition of modest fashion may differ for every individual, but a collective understanding of the modest fashion is clothing that practically covers up but looks stylish at the same time.

1.1. Literature Review

Undergraduate students are the early adopters of SM. Undergraduate students at the age between 20 and 24 are defined as millennials with various brand loyalty compared to the generation before them (Ordun, 2015). These millennials are widely exposed to SM (Barnes & Lescault, 2011). Based on the report by the Malaysian Department of Statistics, 86.3% of Internet usage in Malaysia is to participate in SM.

Undergraduate students are a lucrative market to drive up sales. Students have been the subject to many previous studies (Duffett & Wakeham, 2016). Although students are unemployed, they are dependent on parental support and study loans, making them a lucrative market segment. University students are in a transition from university, thus marketers need to shape the potential customers' shopping behaviour before they enter the job market and are earning their income (Aliman et al., 2017).

University students in current time, who are Gen Y, have the knowledge and confidence to use the Internet extensively and are the early adopters of new technologies. It is also pertinent to note the influence of the university students have on their families' purchase decisions (Aliman et al., 2017). The students hold the key to their families spending. Hence, the outcome of this study will not only enable the marketers to shape the behaviour of the students of Higher Education Institution (HEI), the marketers can also influence the purchase decisions of the students' families.

1.2. SM engagement

SM engagement comprises aspects such as the intention to consume the brand, the expected social presence, the level of E-WOM reputation and the level of social brand engagement of the brand. SM can be used to influence the young consumers' choice of brand. Consumers will have a positive attitude towards a brand that is massively diffused in SM posting. The depth of a consumer's involvement with the brand determines the level of intention to use the brand (Kamarulzaman, 2007). Studies have been conducted to show the connection between diffusion of advertisements in SM and positive effects it has on consumers' attitudes towards a brand (López et al., 2017). In a recent study, a brand that can emotionally connect with the consumers will increase the intentions of the consumers to engage with it (Gong, 2018). The

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engagement with the brand is important as engagement creates brand loyalty and will increase repeat purchase (Dessart et al., 2015).

However, some studies reported the interactive advertisement does not contribute to attitude toward advertisement (Yang, 1996). If the consumer does not have any interest to purchase a particular brand, the consumer will not spend the time browsing the Internet for that particular brand (Tan et al., 2012). The aforementioned literature reviews indicate that to create any interest to purchase a brand, a brand needs to create positive content to engender the consumer interest to engage with the brand's SM. Due to the conflicting findings of the literature reviews, this research took off based on the following hypothesis, H1: A positive SM content have positive influence on engagement with the SM.

In traditional marketing promotion, the spread of news about a brand through word of mouth can enhance brand awareness. In the context of SM, the same principle of E-WOM can be used to increase brand awareness (Drury, 2008). E-WOM incremental has a significant effect on purchase intention (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). E-WOM in SM leads to a major increase in the cognitive and behavioural response to brands, hence, the significance in purchase intention increases (Duffet, 2017). Hereby, this study suggests the following hypothesis, H2: Electronic word of mouth has a positive effect on SM engagement.

2. Problem Statement

Modest fashion is now a lucrative industry. According to the 2016/17 State of Global Islamic Economy Report, in 2015, Muslim women spent USD44 billion on modest wear and may reach USD373 billion in 2022. The clothing industry in Malaysia is an RM5 billion industry. In 2017, Malaysia's exports of lifestyle products such as textile, clothing, and shoes valued at RM10.3 billion. One way of reaching the consumers is via SM, Department of Statistic Malaysia in its 2017 report stated. It reported that the percentage of usage of the Internet for individuals age 15 and above has increased to 80.1%, an increase of 9% compared to 71.1% in 2015. The report also stated 86.7% of Internet users in Malaysia participated in SM. Due to the proliferation and the potential of SM as marketing tools for the modest fashion brand, this research seeks to measure the SM engagement on the adoption of the modest fashion industry in Malaysia.

3. Research Questions

1. Whether positive SM content have positive influence on engagement with the SM.
2. Whether Electronic word of mouth has a positive effect on SM engagement.

4. Purpose of the Study

This paper will measure SM engagement dimensions using second-order CFA, which is seen as an enabler of modest fashion brands' effort to stay engaged with their target market.

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5. Research Methods

Quantitative method was applied on in 23 private and public universities in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The sample size is selected through the recommendations by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) of 384. The data was collected using multistage sampling; stratified and purposive sampling. With stratified sampling, the universities are divided into smaller strata based on the total student populations (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The female students are then selected using purposive sampling based on the screening questions to ensure that they have a basic knowledge of modest fashions and modest fashion brands. Based on the screening questions result, the participants who passed will proceed with the remaining of the questionnaires (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This study particularly explains the level of brand usage intent, social presence, electronic words of mouth and social brand engagement in line with the scale from existing studies (Hollebeek, 2011; Laroche et al., 2012; Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018). The dimensions consist of 22 items with 5-point Likert Scale. If we look at the reliability of the Research instrument valued at .767 which proved by the Cronbach Alpha coefficient which according to Hair et al. (2010), the value is in the high category. The questionnaire used in this Research came multiple sources, hence Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method was adopted to re-arrange the questionnaire items into the construct. CFA conducted with Structural Equation Model (SEM) were adopted as the second method in measuring and validating construct of SM engagement models (Schmitt, 2011). For the analysis using SEM techniques, a construct is said to be acceptable or fit when the index showed: (1) CMIN / df with a value between 1 and 5; (2) CFI index and TLI approaching 1.00; and (3) the RMSEA index is .08 or less.4.0

6. Findings

6.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (Principal Component Analysis)

This study involving 400 female undergraduate and postgraduate students. In this study, the Researchers had conducted Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test (KMO) to test whether the items are suitable to run the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

Table 01. KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO.	.888
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	4039.238

Table 01 shows the KMO and Bartlett's test which showed a significant value of 0.000, indicating $p < 0.05$; showed the correlation between sufficient items to be proceeded to run the EFA. In KMO test stated the value as .888 which is greater than .50 that signifies that the items are appropriate for the factor analysis performed without serious multicollinearity data issues.

Further test is to run the Matrix Component Table using Varimax rotation to examine the validity of the construct of each questionnaire. We can also see the table can sort the items according to each relevant construct. Based on this Research, the Researcher found that 4 dimensions exist after Varimax rotation. According to Hong et. al (2009) the Strength Correlation Between Factors Interpretation Table pointing out

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that the scale of (i) <.01 no correlation, (ii) .01-.30 very weak, (iii) .31-.50 weak / low, (iv) .51-.70 medium, (v) .90-.71-powerful, and (vi) .91-1.00 very strong.

Table 02. Component Matrix Table using Varimax rotation

	Brand Usage Intent	Social Presence	Electronic Word of Mouth	Social Brand Engagement
SMBUI1				.719
SMBUI2				.824
SMBUI3				.767
SMBUI4				.545
SMSP5		.733		
SMSP6		.665		
SMSP7		.683		
SMSP8				
SMSP9		.714		
SMSP10		.669		
SMSP11		.595		
SMSP12		.513		
SMEWM13			.718	
SMEWM14			.795	
SMEWM15			.733	
SMEWM16			.545	
SMSBE17	.618			
SMSBE18	.827			
SMSBE19	.847			
SMSBE20	.862			
SMSBE21	.722			

The results of the factor analysis in Table 02 showed that all the items have been re-arranged in the respective identified dimensions. However, social presence is the most outstanding from the rest of the items at .733. The social presence items are composed of SMSP5. Based on this test, the Researcher had removed Item SMSP8 because it did not appear in any given dimension.

6.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Finally, the researchers had used CFA to analyse the model and determine whether the items can measure the constructs of SM engagement as well as verify the factors and validate the constructs.

Prior to SEM, data normality test, multicollinearity, the sample size and measurement scale were implemented. Based on our analysis, this research had fulfilled all these requirements. Based on the CFA analysis, SM engagement constructs showed the positive Goodness-of-fit which the significance of the model.

The other compatible indicators that can be included is TLI = .90. The indicator showed the compatibility of more than 0.9 that signifies that the proposed model matches with the data.

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The AGFI is less than the corresponding value of (0.9), thus the Regression Weight table specifically the Critical Ratio were used to exhibit that all of the variables are well presented as a significant indicator for latent variables as per Table 3 and Table 4 respectively.

Table 03. Regression Weight

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
BUsage	<---	SocMedia	1.000				
SocPresence	<---	SocMedia	1.634	.242	6.750	***	par_17
SBrandEngag	<---	SocMedia	1.238	.200	6.186	***	par_18
EWOM	<---	SocMedia	1.780	.258	6.895	***	par_19
SMBUI4	<---	Busage	1.000				
SMBUI3	<---	Busage	1.239	.125	9.906	***	par_1
SMBUI2	<---	Busage	1.396	.138	10.143	***	par_2
SMBUI1	<---	Busage	1.346	.139	9.653	***	par_3
SMSP5	<---	SocPresence	1.000				
SMSP6	<---	SocPresence	.760	.077	9.865	***	par_4
SMSP7	<---	SocPresence	.882	.080	11.070	***	par_5
SMSP9	<---	SocPresence	1.048	.085	12.338	***	par_6
SMSP10	<---	SocPresence	1.066	.092	11.625	***	par_7
SMSP11	<---	SocPresence	1.042	.095	11.014	***	par_8
SMSP12	<---	SocPresence	1.002	.092	10.846	***	par_9
SMEWM16	<---	EWOM	1.000				
SMEWM15	<---	EWOM	1.299	.087	14.998	***	par_10
SMEWM14	<---	EWOM	1.134	.081	14.065	***	par_11
SMEWM13	<---	EWOM	.939	.078	12.004	***	par_12
SMSBE17	<---	SbrandEngag	1.000				
SMSBE18	<---	SbrandEngag	1.480	.126	11.765	***	par_13
SMSBE19	<---	SbrandEngag	1.507	.128	11.750	***	par_14
SMSBE20	<---	SbrandEngag	1.469	.126	11.668	***	par_15
SMSBE21	<---	SbrandEngag	1.219	.113	10.770	***	par_16

Table 04. Standardised Regression Weight

Estimates			
Busage	<---	SocMedia	.608
SocPresence	<---	SocMedia	.763
SBrandEngag	<---	SocMedia	.637
EWOM	<---	SocMedia	.855
SMBUI4	<---	BUsage	.552
SMBUI3	<---	BUsage	.741
SMBUI2	<---	BUsage	.787
SMBUI1	<---	BUsage	.703
SMSP5	<---	SocPresence	.649
SMSP6	<---	SocPresence	.571
SMSP7	<---	SocPresence	.655
SMSP9	<---	SocPresence	.752
SMSP10	<---	SocPresence	.696

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SMSP11	<---	SocPresence	.651
SMSP12	<---	SocPresence	.639
SMEWM16	<---	EWOM	.668
SMEWM15	<---	EWOM	.905
SMEWM14	<---	EWOM	.814
SMEWM13	<---	EWOM	.675
SMSBE17	<---	SBrandEngag	.564
SMSBE18	<---	SBrandEngag	.847
SMSBE19	<---	SBrandEngag	.845
SMSBE20	<---	SBrandEngag	.833
SMSBE21	<---	SBrandEngag	.723

The critical ratio values shown in Table 04 were not within the range of ± 1.96 and considered significant. In Table 05, the beta value (β) for every item of SM engagement are (from .608 to .905), showed that all the indicator variables positively correspond with the latent variables and all aspects of the construct.

Table 05. Squared Multiple Correlation

	Estimates
Social Brand Engagement	.405
Electronic Word of Mouth	.732
Social Presence	.582
Brand Usage Intent	.369

7. Conclusion

This Research confirms that the SM engagement comprises the aspects of intention to consume the brand, the expected social presence, the level of E-WOM reputation and the level of social brand engagement of the brand has been authenticated and proved by the CFA and supported by the Critical Ratio (C.R).

This Research confirms that E-WOM is significant in SM engagement at 73% as the mean value or Squared Multiple Correlation estimates. The significant role of electronic word of mouth is consistent with studies by Kim et al. (2013).

Based on the result of our Research, E-WOM has a positive impact to spur positive discussions and engagement in SM. The findings of this Research are helpful for the brand owners to examine consumer behaviour and trends towards SM and e-commerce (Krishnan et al., 2017). Modest fashion brand owners and businesses can use the findings of this Research to rethink their online relationship and SM customer engagement strategy.

Another interesting result of this Research was that the constructed model significantly matches with the survey data. Further research can make improvement to our model to make it compatible with their research data. This Research had shown in the modification model, the item on SM engagement is important in measuring the dimensions of SM engagement in a modest fashion industry. For future research, it is recommended for the study to be expanded to a bigger market of employed female professionals and the male whose interest has experienced an increase in the modest fashion trends.

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