

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Dissertation – Proposal-LCBB6000

Student name: Desislava Yordanova

Student ID: 1912503

**Proposed research title: To identify the effects of social
media on organisation culture in the UK's high street
fashion industry**

Submission date: 02.09.2022

Dissertation module leader: Dr Anupam Mazumdar

Table of Contents

Chapter-1: Introduction	3
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Aim and objectives of the research	3
3.0 Research questions	3
4.0 Background of the organisation	4
5.0 Research gap and contribution	4
6.0 Rationale for the study	4
7.0 Outline of research	4
Chapter 2: Literature Review	5
Chapter -3: Methodology	6
Chapter-4: Conclusion	8
References	9

Chapter-1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Fashion has always been one of the largest business sectors in the UK as it consists of around 10.9% of the total European fashion industry. The fashion industry in the UK is characterised by fast fashion which focuses on the production of a high volume of transitional clothing which is trendy and disposable (Blaquez *et al.*, 2019). The originality of the styles and statements in designing and marketing the products have made the fashion market in the UK one of the most influential fashion centres across the globe. The study would present a dissertation proposal to identify and analyse the effect of social media on the development of the organisational culture within the UK fashion industry.

2.0 Aim and objectives of the research

Aim

The research aims to understand the impact of social media platforms on the organisational culture of the fashion industry in the UK.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows.

- To understand the importance of organisational culture in the fashion industry of the UK.
- To comprehend the relationship between the concept of fashion in the UK and social media.
- To identify the importance of social media to develop the organisational culture in the fashion industry in the UK.
- To compare and analyse different fast fashion brands like Zara, H&M, and Marks and Spencer about their usage of social media and the way this impacts their organisational culture.

3.0 Research questions

- What is the importance of organisational culture in the fashion industries in the UK?
- What is the relationship between the concept of fashion and social media platforms in the context of the UK market?
- What is the significance of social media to develop the organisational culture in the fashion industry of the UK?
- What is the difference in the usage of social media platforms for different fast fashion brands like Zara, H&M and Marks & Spencer to develop their organisational culture?

4.0 Background of the organisation

Zara

Zara is a Spanish fashion retailer that specialises in fast fashion and produces a range of products such as apparel, fashion accessories, shoes and so on. After expanding into a range of fashion markets along with the market of the UK, in 2014, the brand introduced RFID technology, and in the next year, Zara has been ranked within the first thirty integrands across the globe (Zara, 2022).

H&M

H&M is a multinational clothing company based in Sweden and is considered the pioneer in fast fashion in the UK market. The brand is characterised by continuous rotations of fashion trends and promotes disposable products by inducing overconsumption of the market (H&M, 2022).

Marks & Spencer

Marks and Spencer (M&S) is a multinational British retailer listed on the London stock exchange and known for its fast fashion in the market of UK. Although being a multinational fast fashion brand, all the raw materials of its products are ethically sourced and besides fast fashion, the company also operates in the third-party fashion industry (Marks and Spencer, 2022).

5.0 Research gap and contribution

The research gap refers to the probable limitations of the research papers (Boneva *et al.*, 2019). The research would only focus on the quantitative research of primary data. As there would not be any secondary qualitative data it can be considered a research gap. However, the research would contribute to further research on understanding the

6.0 Rationale for the study

The emergence of various social media platforms and digitisation of the overall society has induced a change in the trends and styles of the fashion industry (Bertola and Teunissen, 2018). The rationale of the study is to measure this change induced by social media in the fashion industry of the UK in terms of their organisational culture.

7.0 Outline of research

The research would present an introduction to the chosen concept and an analysis of the concept with a literature review of the existing documents. The research methodology would enunciate the overall research design filled by the collection and analysis of the data and concluding the research based on the findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Importance of organisational culture in the fashion industry of the UK

The organisational culture of a company holds immense importance as it directly reflects the nature of work and performance of the company. As per the perspective of Goworeket *al.* (2020), London has always been a leader in the international fashion market characterised by the style and sustenance of garments and other accessories. Thus, creativity is an integral part of the fashion industry and to nurture the creativity of the employees, the organisation's culture plays an important role to increase the productivity and overall work output of the organisation. Besides, the culture also focuses on providing social and economic benefits as fashion portrays the quality of life of the individual and their external and internal identities. Similarly, as opined by Goworek *et al.* (2020), an effective organisational culture reduces the stress of work and excessive loads which is one of the important features of the fashion industry as the employees need to work within an ever-changing scenario. The organisational culture infuses understanding, and comprehension of the situational demands and increases the teamwork of the organisation which is more effective for understanding the needs and expectations of the customers.

The interrelationship between the concept of fashion in the UK and social media

Media and fashion have always been interconnected with each other for creating awareness among target consumers and the emergence of social media platforms has catalysed the overall relationship. According to the opinion of Ashby (2018), digital platforms including various social media have led the target audience to make them aware and adopt the global fashion trends quicker than before, thus, creating a rush to the overall consumer satisfaction and pulling in the supply and demand of the concerning market. Social media can be a live example o the behavioural patterns and the cultural values of the audience and it has been easier for organisations to track the preferences and expectations of the consumers through these platforms. The lifestyle-related digitised content has been an immense opportunity for the organisation to understand the divergence of the target audiences. According to the opinion of Zhang *et al.* (2021), the main importance of social media is that it helps organisations to connect with potential audiences and understand their preferences, whereas the customers also directly contact the organisational managing authorities considering their issues which are effective for the customer satisfaction and increasing the brand value in the concerning market.

The importance of social media to develop the organisational culture in the fashion industry in the UK

Social media has been an integral part of human life and it also has a significant role to play in the development of the organisational culture. According to the perspective of Zhang *et al.* (2021), these social sites help the organisational workforce to stay connected with the corporate objectives and rely on them to the target consumers through an effective process of sharing and exchanging necessary information. The extended use of social networking assists in flattening the hierarchy of the organisation and empowering the workforce at all levels of the organisation. On the other hand, Zhang *et al.* (2021) are of the opinion that social networking platforms also enhance the intrinsic communication of the employees thus providing a good focus on the overall working atmosphere of the organisation. Besides, these platforms are helpful in identifying the loopholes of the organisations so the authorities would be able to increase the productivity of the overall organisation.

Differences in the fast fashion strategy of M&S, H&M and Zara in the UK

Each of the fast fashion brands in the UK is characterised by their capacities of subsumes and the attributes of the target consumers. According to the point of view of Leite (2020), for example, Marks and Spencer although a fast fashion brand, all the products are ecologically sustainable in nature not only featured by the current trends but also supporting culture by innovation and connections with the consumers. On the other hand, as opined by Le Thuy and Oe (2020), H&M, on the other hand, is characterised by the extensive production rate as it is considered the second-largest retailer of fast fashion following Zara. Both Zara and H&M use their multichannel promotional strategy to address the changing trends in the fashion industry and the expectations of the mainstream customers associated with the industry itself. Both of these brands offer trendy products at a cheaper rate to the customers.

Chapter -3: Methodology

Research philosophy

The research philosophy that would be used here is an ontology which could be either subjective or objective based on the nature of the reality which is connected to the subject of the research. Ontology refers to the process of understanding the characteristics of the chosen topics and their interrelationship with the other variables present within the context (Dallasega *et al.*, 2021).

Research paradigm

Among various research philosophies, for this research positivist research paradigm, would be taken. The Positivist paradigm can be considered a part of ontology that focuses on the realistic and fact-based subjectivism of the research topic (Chilisa, 2019).

Research approach

In this context, the research would initiate a deductive research approach that tries to find necessary answers by identifying and narrating the characteristics of the enigmatic subjects (Bonevaet *al.*, 2019). The deductive approach focuses on the analysis and interpretation of novel data collected by the researcher for the purpose of a particular study.

Research methods

For this research quantitative research method would be chosen for understanding the role of social media on the organisational culture of the fashion industry. The quantitative research method refers to the process of focusing on numerical or statistical data regarding the context (Lassonde and Galham, 2019).

Research strategy

The current study would focus on a descriptive research strategy. The aim of using this strategy is that it would describe each of the data found by the researcher and establishes a conclusion for the overall research.

Sampling techniques

In this study, a random stratified sampling method would be used. Random stratified sampling refers to the process of identifying sample populations arbitrarily although each of the samples is somehow related to the subject of the research (Chilisa, 2019).

Data collection method

The data collection method for the proposed research would focus on collecting quantitative data from eighteen sample populations who are somehow related to the fashion industry of the UK. Thus, a survey with the help of a questionnaire would be provided to the samples for collecting the primary data from them (Lassonde and Galham, 2019).

Interpretation of data

The interpretation of the data that would be applied here is cohort analysis. It refers to the process of observing a group of people and their behaviour according to the modification of the existing variables (Lassonde and Galham, 2019).

Time prospect

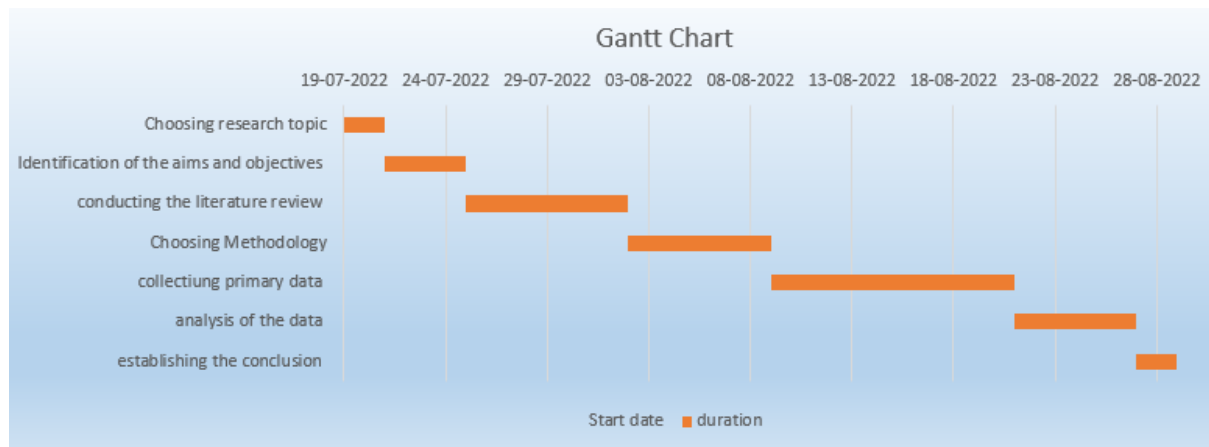


Figure 1: Gantt chart
(Source: Created by the learner)

Ethical consideration

Ethical consideration refers to the set of ethical guidance that is prevalent in the research (Bergdahl *et al.*, 2020). In this study, the answers that would be collected by the research from the target population would be collected within their interest and consent. The personal information apart from their answers would not be used in this research and their identity would be solely protected from any future implications.

Chapter-4: Conclusion

In conclusion, the study has made a proposal for research that concentrates on the topic of understanding the importance of social media platforms in developing the organisational culture in the high street fashion industry of the UK. The research proposal has pointed out the aims and objectives of the research along with a simplified literature review of the existing literature. Overall methodological guidance has been provided to understand the systems and methods that are to be used in the research. According to the proposal, the research would focus on the collection and analysis of primary quantitative data from the target samples to establish a related conclusion regarding the context.

References

- Ashby, A., 2018. Developing closed-loop supply chains for environmental sustainability: Insights from a UK clothing case study. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*.
- Bergdahl, N., Nouri, J., Karunaratne, T., Afzaal, M. and Saqr, M., 2020. Learning analytics for blended learning: A systematic review of theory, methodology, and ethical considerations. *International journal of learning analytics and artificial intelligence for education*, 2(2), pp.46-79.
- Bertola, P. and Teunissen, J., 2018. Fashion 4.0. Innovating fashion industry through digital transformation. *Research Journal of Textile and Apparel*.
- Blazquez, M., Zhang, T., Boardman, R. and Henninger, C.E., 2019. Exploring the effects of social commerce on consumers' browsing motivations and purchase intentions in the UK fashion industry. In *Social commerce* (pp. 99-115). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Boneva, L., Fawcett, N., Masolo, R.M. and Waldron, M., 2019. Forecasting the UK economy: Alternative forecasting methodologies and the role of off-model information. *International Journal of Forecasting*, 35(1), pp.100-120.
- Chilisa, B., 2019. *Indigenous research methodologies*. Sage publications.
- Dallasega, P., Marengo, E. and Revolti, A., 2021. Strengths and shortcomings of methodologies for production planning and control of construction projects: a systematic literature review and future perspectives. *Production planning & control*, 32(4), pp.257-282.
- Goworek, H., Oxborrow, L., Claxton, S., McLaren, A., Cooper, T. and Hill, H., 2020. Managing sustainability in the fashion business: Challenges in product development for clothing longevity in the UK. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, pp.629-641.
- H&M. 2022. *Trending Categories*. [online]. Available at: https://www2.hm.com/en_gb/index.html [Accessed 19 July 2022].
- Lassonde, C.A. and Galman, S., 2019. *Self-study research methodologies for teacher educators*. BRILL.
- Le Thuy, L. and Oe, H., 2020. An Exploratory Discussion of a British Apparel Brand in Relation to New Markets: Developing Actionable Recommendations Based on Network, Relationship, and Collaboration Perspectives. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute (BIRCI-Journal): Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(3), pp.1660-1675.
- Leite, B.T.D.S., 2020. *Marks & spencer out of fashion the case of an outdated brick and mortar* (Doctoral dissertation).

Marks and Spencer. 2022. *M&S*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.marksandspencer.com/> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

Zara. 2022. *Zara*. [online]. Available at: <https://www.zara.com/uk/> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

Zhang, B., Zhang, Y. and Zhou, P., 2021. Consumer attitude towards sustainability of fast fashion products in the UK. *Sustainability*, 13(4), p.1646.