



VAASAN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU  
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

NITISHA MAHARJAN AND PUJA BHATTARAI

The Factors of Social Media That Influence Purchase Behaviour of Gen Z in Apparel  
in Kathmandu Valley

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**VAASAN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU  
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

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**ABSTRACT**

Author Nitisha Maharjan and Puja Bhattarai  
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The competitive environment amongst apparel retailers is increasingly volatile and changing. The need for differentiation and update has never been more important. There is a new generation on the rise, 'Generation Z'. Understanding the factors of social media that influence the consumption behaviour of fashion clothing amongst Generation Z consumers will provide marketers with valuable insight into developing effective marketing programs to appeal to the youth market. This research paper seeks to investigate factors that are believed to influence the consumption behaviour of apparel amongst Generation Z consumers in Kathmandu Valley. In this study, awareness, price, convenience, and customer satisfaction have been used to analyse consumer purchase motivation or decision toward apparel shopping.

Further, it investigates the way in which influencers, reviews, discounting, and promotions affect consumers purchasing decisions. This research study intends to generate actionable insights for marketers by studying people's preferences in apparel, their purchasing modes, and problems encountered, such as quality and fit issues. Findings will assist marketers in modeling target strategies for engagement with a tech-savvy consumer segment within a highly competitive retail environment.

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Keywords Online Apparel Shopping, Consumer Purchase Behaviour, Gen Z, Price, Convenience, Customer Satisfaction, Kathmandu Valley

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AR	Augmented Reality
e-Commerce	Electronic Commerce
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
Gen Apha	Generation Alpha
Gen Z	Generation Z
GRWM	Get Ready with Me
p-Value	Probability Value
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
T-Test	Student's T-Test
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
TV	Television
SIT	Social Influence Theory
UGC	User-generated content

## 1. Introduction

With the fast growth of technology, particularly social media, people now connect, communicate, and make purchasing decisions in entirely different ways. The introductions of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have altered how people communicate with one another and how companies market their products and services (Saravanakumar, 2012). With the proliferation of digital platforms, marketers can now engage with consumers directly in ways never possible before. The most tech-savvy generation, Generation Z (those born 1995–2010), is also the one most impacted by internet while making purchases (Nakay, 2017). For them, this transformation is very significant.

Compared with the apparel sector of the past, traditionally based on physical stores and obsolete types of advertising, the emergence of e-commerce and online marketing has led to a plethora of changes. Fashion brands use this online sites to interact directly with potential customers and send them interesting content (Kamaldeen, 2024). However, thanks to these media, companies nowadays are able to grow the brand awareness, to determine the consumers' purchasing mood, and a good customer loyalty, which were seemingly unreal before.

The Kathmandu Valley in Nepal is a growing city with a market culture that changes all the time. This trend is very important there. Social media is helping young people in Nepal to get fashion styles in a way that other countries are having, and fashion companies can now reach young people directly (Begum, 2015). People all over the world are affected by social media in different ways. However, there aren't many studies that look at how Gen Z acts in poor countries like Nepal, especially when they're shopping for clothes. This dissertation explores the use of social media in shaping the clothes purchasing habits of Generation Z in Kathmandu Valley.

## **1.1 Background and Context**

The way people buy things and do business around the world have both changed. Peoples used to mostly see ads for things in newspapers, on billboards, and on TV, and they didn't have much of a say in the matter. Businesses can connect with potential customers more personally when they use digital media, especially social media (Chaney, 2009). It gets rid of the problems that come with normal ads. Many types of businesses, like clothing and fashion, now use sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok as important parts of their marketing plans.

"Digital natives," or Generation Z, grew up in a world where social media was pervasive. Since Gen Z had access to the internet earlier than previous generations, they have firsthand experience with the quick growth of online platforms. Their purchasing habits have been significantly impacted by these websites. Indeed, research indicates that social media substantially influences Gen Z's purchasing decisions. They can also speak directly with brands, peers, and influential people.

In Nepal, social media use has grown a lot in the last few years. Nepal's business and cultural center is the Kathmandu Valley. Social media is being used by more and more young people to meet new people, have fun, and do business (Liechty, 2006). A report from Data Report says that 13 million people in Nepal used social media in 2023. There are more than 41% of people who use social media (Team, 2022). As this significant growth shows, there is a growing demand for social media marketing services. The clothes business has grown a lot around the world because of social media and online shopping. What Nepalese Gen Z wears is still not well studied because it is a big part of their daily lives. There is a lot of new digital media in Nepal, so this study is important to find out how these sites affect what young people in the Kathmandu Valley buy.

## 1.2 Research Problem and Gap

A lot of research in both academia and marketing has been done on how social media changes the way people act, particularly in industrialized countries. Generation Z is people who were born between 1995 and 2010. There have been a lot of studies that look at how social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube affect what people buy (Stahl, 2023). Young people in Gen Z are the first to have grown up with the internet and social media. Because of this, they rely on these digital tools to learn new things and connect with brands. But most of the research that has been done so far has been on markets in the West. Thus, we don't know how Gen Z uses social media to modify their purchases in Nepal, where economic, social, and cultural elements differ from the West.

However, the relationship between consumers' behavioral patterns and social media has been previously studied extensively in Western markets with a major focus on young people's decision to buy (Godey, 2016). It was proven through numerous studies that social media platforms helped influence the attitude and behavior of people. Instead, marketing changed with influencers, peer recommendations, personalized ads, user-created content, and all the other things that influenced us, and traditional advertising is becoming less and less successful. Social media is beyond communicating, it's now an active part of brand awareness and innovation. Gen Z uses these platforms to socialize, have fun, and buy goods, especially in the tech, fashion, and beauty sectors.

North American and European consumer behavior, cultural contexts, and social media use patterns are well-known and consistent, therefore these findings are mostly from those locations (Bolton, 2013). There is very few research on how social media affects developing nations like Nepal, where economic realities, cultural norms, and digital infrastructures may differ. Nepal's youth internet and social media connectivity is

slower than in established markets, however multiple platforms can be used. Another distinction between Nepal and the West is the greater influence of family, cultural standards, and regional traditions on the buying patterns of Gen Z in Nepal.

Nepal's fashion and clothing business has grown quickly in the last few years, and social media is a big reason for that (Dhakal, 2014). It gets people more involved with the business and makes more people aware of it. In order to reach younger people, businesses are increasingly using social media marketing. But not a lot is known about how these marketing activities change the choices of Gen Z customers about what to buy. Nepal is not like other markets in many ways, such as its culture, society, and economy. So, it's important to know how social media impacts the choices Gen Z makes in Nepal's clothes industry.

This study stands out by focusing specifically on Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, a context that has been underexplored in being research on social media marketing. The dearth of research on emerging nations more broadly is another aspect of the literature gap. The majority of the work that has been done thus far is either general or focuses on nations that are roughly at the same level of development because research into social media marketing in emerging markets is still in its infancy. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the ways in which social media influences Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley (Zulfikar, 2024). The impact of peer recommendations, local influencers, cultural factors that influence purchasing decisions, price sensitivity, and online shopping will be investigated. Additionally, the emphasis on online shopping within Nepal adds to the originality of the research, given the rapid digitalization occurring in the region and the distinct challenges and opportunities this presents.

### **1.3 Research Aims and Objectives**

In the Kathmandu Valley, the primary aim of this study is to investigate what motivates Gen Z to purchase clothing on social media sites. Some parts of social media affect how Gen Z feels about clothes and what they buy. The study will also look at how these parts affect their choices. These are the clear goals of this work:

1. Identify the key social media factors that influence Gen Z's purchase decisions for apparel.
2. Analyze the relationship between different factors (e.g., awareness, price sensitivity, convenience, customer satisfaction, influencer marketing, peer influence) and the purchase decisions of Gen Z.
3. Investigate how Gen Z's purchasing behavior through social media platforms in Kathmandu Valley compares to similar studies conducted in other countries or cultural contexts, focusing on the differences and similarities in social media influence on purchasing decisions.

By achieving these objectives, the research will provide insights into the purchasing behaviors of young consumers in Nepal, specifically focusing on the impact of social media in shaping these behaviors.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This dissertation is significant in multiple dimensions, academic, practical, and socio-economic contributing to both theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

In the first place, it fills in a big research gap by thoroughly and situationally studying how social media sites affect Generation Z's choices about what to buy in developing countries. Not nearly as much study has been done on countries like Nepal that are still growing as there has been on countries that are already very well off. Because it

looks at a group of people in Nepal's towns who are both economically important and tech-savvy, our study adds new ideas to the global conversation about buyer behavior and digital marketing.

A second use of the study is for companies, especially clothing shops that want to get Gen Z customers. What this group wants from brands and how they use technology make them different from other groups. By researching and figuring out the main things that affect Gen Z's buying choices, marketers can make more targeted and effective ways to get their attention. Some examples are user-generated content, online reviews, celebrity marketing, and features that are only available on certain platforms, such as Instagram Stories or TikTok trends. For instance, the study could stress how important it is for people to have support from their peers and see stories in pictures. This would make companies more likely to spend money on real, original material that this audience likes.

The third thing that this study has found is very helpful for Nepalese clothing stores in the area that want to stay competitive in a market that is becoming more and more digitalized. These businesses will be able to make sure that their digital marketing plans meet the needs of Gen Z, who wants personalized suggestions, easy online shopping, and brands with morals. This could help more people learn about your brand, make them more loyal, and finally bring in more money. It's also helpful for businesses to know about platform-specific habits and trends. For example, they can find out how popular short-form video material is or how much people want websites that work well on mobile devices.

In a bigger picture, the study also changes society and the business. There are still a lot of unemployed and underemployed young people in Nepal, but the growth of digital trade and influencer groups has made it possible for the country to make more money. The study may add to larger conversations about digital change, youth

entrepreneurship, and sustainable development by showing the link between using technology and doing business.

This dissertation adds to the body of academic research on how people behave in developing countries and gives marketers and lawmakers in Nepal useful information. It talks about how important it is to understand how different generations and cultures interact in the digital age and shows how to use social media to help businesses grow and get people involved in the economy.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following important study topics will be talked about in this dissertation:

1. What parts of social media do Gen Z user use to decide where to shop for clothes in the Kathmandu Valley?
2. How do things like price, how easy something is to use, how happy the customer is, and how aware they are affecting what Gen Z buys?
3. How do people in the Kathmandu Valley who are part of Gen Z buy things and use social media?

These questions will help us plan the study and find out how Nepalese Gen Z's use of social media changes the way they shop.

## 2. Literature Review

Social media has changed how businesses talk to people and get to know them. It's now an important part of modern marketing. More and more people use social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and YouTube. These sites have a bigger impact on how people act because they are good ways to promote brands and products and build communities.

For the past few years, there has been a growing amount of academic research on how social media changes the way people behave, especially digital native groups like Generation Z. Content for digital marketing on social media sites can cause a lot of different mental and behavioral changes. Some of these are trust, social proof, emotional link, and perceived value (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Appel et al., 2020). Businesses can easily get people to connect with their ads on these sites by letting them like, share, comment, and talk about their brand.

When it comes to the fashion and clothing business, where style, character, and trends are very important, social media is a place where customers can help give brands meaning. Influencer marketing, user-generated content (UGC), and ideas from other people have become important parts of brand loyalty and plans to buy (De Veirman et al., 2017). People also feel more like they fit in online groups when they can see other people doing the same things and taking part in the newest trends (Kozinets et al., 2010). People are more likely to buy something when they see this.

For example, Instagram and TikTok are harder to tell the difference between buy and content. Shoppable posts and live stream shopping have been helped by these apps to grow social commerce. Gen Z shoppers really care about being real, interacting, and being active in real time. This means that simply, what they see and do online, greatly impacts what they buy (Priporas et al., 2017). We will discuss how social media

marketing is transformed over the years in Nepal fashion and how it influences people's behavior in the most essential norms. At the same time, it will also highlight the particular likes and habits of Gen Z customers in Kathmandu for the up next empirical study.

## **2.1 Introduction to Social Media Marketing**

Digital advertising used to work from the top down, but social media marketing has completely changed that. It's now a very dynamic, consumer-driven environment (Quesenberry, 2020). People used social media at first as a casual way to talk to each other. It's now a full-fledged marketing tool that businesses use to do more than just sell their products. They build brand communities, establish identities, and work together with the people who want to buy from them to make value.

Social media marketing is different because it can help people connect with each other. In contrast to print or broadcast media, social media lets users react, leave comments, and help shape the brand's story. This kind of active contact between brands and customers can help them form stronger emotional bonds that keep them involved and loyal (Weber, 2009).

In the fashion industry, the rise of visually rich and trend-driven platforms like Instagram and TikTok has had a transformative impact. These platforms allow brands to showcase their products through curated feeds, influencer collaborations, live events, and user-generated content. The visual-centric nature of fashion content aligns perfectly with the functionalities of social media platforms, making them ideal for promoting apparel, styling inspiration, and lifestyle branding (Kim & Ko, 2012).

For Gen Z consumers in Kathmandu, social media is not merely a source of entertainment but a primary avenue for discovering fashion trends, evaluating brand credibility, and making purchase decisions. This demographic, characterized by their

digital fluency, preference for authenticity, and social awareness, often relies on influencers, peer reviews, and viral content to guide their consumption choices (Rachmad, 2024). Their constant interaction with platforms like Instagram Reels and TikTok challenges brands to maintain relevance through fast, creative, and socially resonant content.

People also like to shop directly with other people on social media sites like Facebook Marketplace, Instagram Shops, and TikTok Shop. They do this by making it simple for people to find things and buy them. You talk to other people while you buy things online. This is known as "social commerce." It changes the way people buy things and helps clothing shops make more money in new ways. Social media marketing has changed the way businesses and buyers talk to each other in a lot of ways. People who are younger and more interested in fashion are more likely to buy things this way in cities like Kathmandu that are still growing. Businesses need to be smart about how they use these tools in the digital world we live in now. As an example, they should connect with leaders, post interesting material, and use targeted ads.

### **2.1.1 Social Media Marketing Overview**

Social media marketing, according to Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014), is when businesses use social networks to get the word out about their goods and services, connect with customers, and build brand loyalty and recognition. It's a big part of modern digital marketing because it lets companies connect with customers in a unique, fun, and inexpensive way. There are different kinds of advertising, but social media marketing is unique because it lets brands do more than just advertise. For a long time, people can talk back and forth and work together to make things (Kaur, 2016).

Social media sites like Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are always getting better for business. These systems can now handle videos, live streams, short movies,

high-resolution photos, and short "stories" (Haenlein et al., 2020). Companies can make marketing plans that look good and also fit with how people feel and what they think because it is flexible. When marketers look at popular TikTok videos or Instagram posts with styled product shots, they can find out what their customers like and how they like to spend their time.

When you use social media for marketing, you can change your plan if you learn something new. Platform algorithms keep track of what users do, what they like, what they're interested in, and how they connect with others to show them more relevant ads and information (Dilshodovna, 2023). They can now divide their groups very accurately and send the right message to the right person at the right time. This is a great way to reach tech-savvy people, especially Generation Z, in developing places like Nepal where traditional ads might cost more or not reach as many people. It's also very easy and cheap to use.

This allows marketers to segment audiences with great precision and deliver the right message to the right person at the right time. In emerging markets like Nepal, where traditional advertising avenues may have limited reach or higher costs, social media presents an affordable and highly scalable alternative for reaching tech-savvy audiences especially Generation Z.

Generation Z in urban centers such as Kathmandu is deeply immersed in digital culture. Their high social media usage, short attention spans, and desire for authenticity demand a new approach to marketing one that prioritizes engagement over promotion and storytelling over direct selling (Ferreira, 2022). For example, Instagram's visual storytelling capabilities are ideal for fashion brands to present lookbooks, behind-the-scenes content, and customer spotlights. Meanwhile, TikTok's rapid, trend-based format enables brands to go viral through dance challenges, influencer collaborations, and humorous, relatable content. These platforms not only

serve as spaces for product discovery but also as cultural hubs where trends are created and shared in real-time.

Because of this change, Nepal's clothing business has both chances and problems. Some big brands already have strong online presences, but many small businesses are just now realizing how useful it can be to sell on social media. Nepalese clothes stores might be able to get a lot more sales and attention from young people if they use strategies that work best on certain platforms. In order to make a brand seem more real and earn trust, it can help to work with local leaders who share the brand's style and beliefs. Also, getting people to share their own content, like pictures of their outfits, can increase community involvement and word-of-mouth promotion.

One more great thing about social media is that it lets you talk to people right now. These help companies quickly answer customer questions, settle disagreements, and join conversations about culture that are already going on. Gen Z likes things that are open and quick, which is what this gives them. Fast communication has made the advertising business more open to everyone, says Kayyali (2024). It has helped small and medium-sized companies compete with bigger ones by putting speed and new ideas ahead of money. When it comes to brands that aren't very well known, viral efforts can help them get a lot more attention without having to spend a lot of money on traditional media.

It is also very important for companies to use social media to build communities. People are more likely to stick with a business if they feel like it understands their views, goals, and way of life. Companies can make online groups that help with sales and organic marketing by using tools like polls, live Q&As, comment threads, and branding hashtags. In Nepal's price-conscious and competitive market, it's just as important to keep customers as it is to get new ones. These community-based methods can pay off in the long run.

When it comes down to it, social media marketing has really changed how groups talk to their clients. A more honest, open, and interesting relationship between a brand and a customer can be made by giving each customer personalized content, encouraging real-time involvement, and helping to build communities. Nepalese clothes stores that cater to Generation Z might be able to get more customers, make more friends, and stay ahead of the competition online if they know how to use Instagram and TikTok well.

### **2.1.2 Social Media's Impact on Consumer Behavior**

Today, the link between social media and how people act is more important in the field of business. Many people in business and academia are interested in how social networks influence brand loyalty, how people think about brands, and what they choose to buy (Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu, & Tichindelean, 2013). People connect with each other, talk to each other in real time, and share company stories on social media. This has completely changed how people deal with brands. The generation that has been most affected by this digital shift is Generation Z. They grew up with technology and use social media for lots of things every day.

People in Kathmandu and other places in Nepal who are in Gen Z use social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube a lot to find brands and decide what to buy. People can connect with sponsored content, follow influencers, read reviews, and get to real user-generated content (UGC) on these immersive platforms. They think about all of these things a lot when they decide what to buy. Instead of traditional ads, Gen Z chooses which brands to support based on material that is interactive, visual, and community-driven (Smith, 2022). This is different from older generations.

Research has consistently shown that consumers form brand attitudes and make purchase decisions based on the social proof they encounter online. Hollebeek, Glynn,

and Brodie (2014) suggest that social media fosters consumer engagement through emotional, cognitive, and behavioral connections, which are reinforced by peer validation and community interaction. In Kathmandu, this is reflected in the rising popularity of local fashion influencers, who serve as trendsetters by promoting brands, reviewing fashion items, and providing styling inspiration that is culturally relevant and geographically accessible.

Local Instagram influencers particularly Nepali fashion bloggers, stylists, and lifestyle content creators have a strong impact on shaping consumer preferences. These individuals often collaborate with small fashion boutiques or emerging designers, helping them gain exposure among Kathmandu's youth. Through features such as Instagram Reels, Stories, and TikTok trends, influencers demonstrate how to wear products in everyday life, often incorporating elements of Nepali identity and style. According to Begum (2015), such localized content resonates more deeply with Gen Z, as it reflects their lived experiences and aesthetic sensibilities. This shift has enabled even small-scale Nepali brands to compete with global fashion giants by building meaningful, relatable connections with consumers.

What Zulfikar (2024) also says about user-generated content (UGC) is that it is "peer-driven trust capital." Pictures, videos, and reviews that regular people post about goods are all examples of UGC. Teenagers and young adults are more likely to listen to tips from small groups of people they trust than to believe marketing messages from large companies. Sharing digital experiences and reviewing products online is becoming more and more popular very quickly in Nepal. User-generated content (UGC) is a big part of getting people to trust you and buy your goods.

Another emerging trend is the integration of social commerce, where shopping is embedded directly into the consumer experience on social media platforms. Features like Instagram's "Shop Now" tab, TikTok's shoppable video links, and Facebook

Marketplace allow users to move seamlessly from content consumption to product purchase within a single platform. This not only shortens the customer journey but also enhances convenience, especially in urban areas like Kathmandu where mobile commerce is on the rise (Bolton et al., 2013).

Social commerce transforms platforms from mere promotional spaces into fully functional sales channels, offering personalization through algorithmic targeting and convenience through mobile-integrated payment systems. For example, a Nepali fashion brand can now launch a TikTok challenge using a trending song, collaborate with a local influencer to showcase its latest collection, and enable direct purchases via a link embedded in the video. This level of integration appeals to Gen Z's preference for frictionless shopping and visually engaging content.

The way brands and buyers talk to each other has also changed because of social media. No longer are brands neutral things; they talk to customers, listen to what they have to say, and change their products based on what those customers say. People in this relationship believe each other and feel loyal to the brand, especially younger customers who like brands that are open, responsive, and have strong brand advocates (Ladhari et al., 2020). Young people in Kathmandu are learning more about social and environmental issues. This means that brands that talk about these issues on social media have a better chance of becoming more well-known. In the end, social media changes the way people act in many ways. It changes not only what people buy, but also how they find, rate, and talk about brands. Social media sites are cultural hubs that set trends and make it easy to do business for Gen Z customers in Kathmandu. Nepal's fashion market is very competitive, so local companies that know how to make good use of social media's tools for connecting, shopping, and telling stories will do very well.

### **2.1.3 The Role of Social Media in the Apparel Industry**

The apparel industry is one of the most dynamic and socially-driven sectors in the global economy, and it has been among the earliest and most enthusiastic adopters of social media marketing. As digital technologies continue to evolve, social media platforms have emerged as essential tools for fashion brands to promote products, shape consumer perceptions, and cultivate brand loyalty (Weber, 2009). The shift from traditional, static advertising mediums such as print and television to dynamic, real-time social platforms has revolutionized the way clothing brands communicate with consumers. This transition has enabled brands to engage in more personalized, visually compelling, and interactive marketing strategies that align with the fast-paced, image-driven nature of fashion consumption.

At the heart of social media's effectiveness in the apparel industry is its visual appeal. Fashion is inherently visual centered on aesthetics, styling, and trends and platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest offer ideal environments for showcasing collections in creative, lifestyle-oriented contexts. According to Chaney (2009), visual branding enables fashion companies to convey complex messages about style, identity, and values through curated images and videos. For instance, a clothing brand can communicate a bohemian, minimalist, or urban streetwear identity through the tone and composition of its social media posts. These visual narratives contribute not just to the sale of individual products, but to the cultivation of aspirational lifestyles that consumers want to associate with.

Instagram is very important for people who work in the clothes business. Lots of great pictures, posts and reels that tell stories, and an easy way to add e-commerce make it a good way to sell clothes. A lot of fashion brands use Instagram to talk to their fans through quizzes and Q&As, run ads with famous people, and show off their new collections. Influencers are helpful because they give honest advice that people can

relate to. This makes business talk less like a "sales pitch" (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). Folks who write about fashion blogs trust them more and want to buy the clothes they talk about. People are also more likely to believe, relate to, and care about fashion ads that come from well-known people.

Meanwhile, TikTok has rapidly gained traction as a powerful marketing tool for fashion brands, particularly those targeting Generation Z. With its short-form video format, viral challenge culture, and algorithm-driven content feed, TikTok allows apparel brands to engage audiences through creative storytelling, humor, and music-driven fashion content (Dhakal, 2014). Popular campaigns often involve influencers or everyday users showcasing outfits, participating in dance or style challenges, or providing quick styling tips, all of which contribute to organic brand exposure. TikTok's "For You Page" algorithm provides an opportunity for content to go viral with minimal investment, making it a cost-effective platform for small and large fashion brands alike.

A significant advantage of social media for apparel marketing lies in social commerce, the integration of shopping features directly into the platforms. Instagram's "Shop Now," Facebook Shops, and TikTok's in-app purchases streamline the path from discovery to purchase, enabling users to browse collections, view prices, read reviews, and buy products without leaving the platform. This ease of transaction not only improves the user experience but also enhances conversion rates for brands. It reflects the growing consumer expectation for seamless and personalized digital shopping experiences, especially among younger demographics who value convenience and interactivity (Bolton et al., 2013).

One thing that is becoming more obvious is that social media does have an impact on the textile sector in Nepal. Social media is being used by fashion firms from all over the world and Nepal to communicate with the young people of Nepal who are

proficient in technology. This is particularly true for individuals who reside in Kathmandu, Pokhara, and other towns where the use of the internet and smartphones is increasing. However, Facebook and Instagram continue to be the most popular social networks, despite the fact that users of the Gen Z generation are rapidly growing more interested in TikTok. Because normal advertising does not reach as many people or have the same cultural significance for younger people, these platforms have become very significant for discovering new items, keeping up with trends, and getting involved in the community. This is especially true in a market where these platforms are becoming increasingly important.

Nepali fashion brands both emerging designers and established labels are using social media not just for promotion, but also for brand storytelling and community building. Through curated content, influencer partnerships, giveaways, and behind-the-scenes posts, these brands humanize their identity and foster emotional connections with consumers. Social media allows them to respond to customer feedback in real time, demonstrate responsiveness, and show alignment with consumer values such as sustainability, inclusivity, and local pride (Ferreira, 2022). These engagements are particularly meaningful for Gen Z consumers, who prioritize transparency and authenticity over flashy advertising.

In addition to branding, social media also levels the playing field for small and medium-sized apparel businesses in Nepal. Unlike traditional media, which is expensive and centralized, social media offers cost-effective, scalable marketing solutions that empower even the smallest retailers to reach national and sometimes international audiences. According to Stahl (2023), this democratization of marketing has allowed boutique fashion labels, second-hand clothing stores, and local designers in Nepal to compete alongside global brands, provided they can create engaging, relevant, and visually appealing content.

Additionally, Nepalese fashion companies are increasingly utilizing social listening and data analytics solutions from websites such as Facebook Analytics and Instagram Insights. These products are becoming increasingly accessible. By utilizing these technologies, they are able to monitor the preferences of their clients, evaluate the effectiveness of their campaigns, and modify their content strategies in accordance with the manner in which individuals engage with their content. Consequently, marketing strategies become more effective and are based on data as a result. The way fashion marketing was done changed a lot when social media was brought into the clothes business. Businesses were given the tools they needed to create fun, customer-centered events that led to more sales and trust. The shopping business in Nepal is getting tougher to beat as more and more people use the internet. A big part of clothing shops' marketing plans will still be social media if they want to reach more Gen Z customers and do well in Nepal's retail sector.

## **2.2 Theories of Consumer Behavior**

If you want to know how social media affects the clothes that Gen Z buys, you should look at theories that show how attitudes, perceptions, and actions are linked. There are outside things that affect what people buy, and there are also social and psychological factors that affect how people act. Theories help us understand both of these. The main ideas that this study looks at are the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Social Influence Theory (SIT).

This is a very important way to think about how social media changes people's actions, especially the actions of young tech-savvy people like those in Generation Z. They talk about the inside and outside factors that affect behavior and give a thorough way to look into how the clothes that Generation Z wear are affected by the social media they use.

### **2.2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**

In 1991, Icek Ajzen came up with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It is one of the most well-known psychology models for figuring out planned behavior, especially when it comes to how people choose what to buy. According to TPB, people act based on three main factors: how they feel about the activity, what they believe are the right and wrong ways to do it, and how much control they believe they have over their actions. (Sommer, 2011). These elements jointly shape an individual's intention to perform a behavior, which in turn strongly predicts actual behavior. In the realm of social media marketing especially within the fashion industry, TPB provides a structured way to understand how Gen Z consumers interpret social cues, develop purchasing intentions, and make apparel choices based on content and interactions on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook (De Cannière, 2009).

#### **Attitude Toward Behavior**

In the context of social media and apparel purchases, the attitude component of TPB refers to a consumer's overall evaluation of buying a product (Arora, 2018). A person's feelings about purchasing clothing from a particular brand are influenced by the amount of money they believe the purchase will cost them as well as the amount of assistance they believe it will provide them. What they see on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, which present fashionable things in visually appealing ways, is a significant source of inspiration for members of Generation Z. Customers who are members of Generation Z are more likely to purchase apparel labels when they see influencers or celebrities endorsing those products. This is especially true if the product aligns with their perceptions, preferences, or ideal way of life.

For example, if a Gen Z individual follows a fashion influencer whose style resonates with their own, they may develop a favorable attitude toward the brand that influencer promotes (Bonnievie, 2020). There is a possibility that a client will be more

likely to purchase a product from that company if it is recommended by a person who is influential in the industry. The posts, reviews, and advertisements that people make on social media platforms can also reveal their personal and social values, such as the importance of cost, sustainability, and quality. One's feelings can be altered as a result of these factors.

### **Subjective Norms**

Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressures or expectations from peers, family, and society that influence whether an individual chooses to engage in a specific behavior. For Gen Z who are highly socially connected and driven by peer validation these norms are particularly influential (Ham, 2015).

Social media platforms act as amplifiers of subjective norms by broadcasting the behaviors, opinions, and endorsements of influential figures and peer groups. On Instagram or TikTok, fashion trends spread rapidly through reposts, likes, comments, and viral content. When users see their peers or favorite influencers repeatedly endorsing a particular style or brand, they may experience a bandwagon effect, prompting them to conform to perceived social expectations (Critikián, 2022).

Within the realm of digital media in Kathmandu, micro-celebrities and fashion leaders have emerged as powerful normative influences. It is possible that the normative expectations of a fashion blogger's followers are altered when the blogger frequently discusses firms such as Vama Clothing or Juju Wears. This may cause the followers to feel as though they are required to conform to the line in order to be considered socially acceptable. Social evidence for excellent consumer behavior is provided by the number of likes, comments, and follows that are visible to the general public. This provides support for the subjective norms that are being discussed.

### **Perceived Behavioral Control**

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) is when someone thinks they can do something even though they know they can't or don't have the tools to do it. Some of these are money, the number of goods available, tech know-how, and how easy it is to buy things on Twitter and when shopping for clothes (Zolait, 2014).

Gen Z buyers in Nepal now feel like they have a lot more control over how much they spend thanks to the rise of mobile banking, e-wallets (like eSewa and Khalti), and social shopping on Facebook and Instagram. There are now more ways for people to buy things. Now they can shop whenever they want.

People can quickly find goods on social media, compare prices, ask questions, and get feedback from other users about the quality of products. This makes PBC better still. People can pick good items if they read reviews, talk to buyers, and look at what other people have said about them (Dhakal, 2014). If a Gen Z user in Kathmandu sees a friend buy something and get it through Instagram, they are more likely to think the process is easy and doable. Things that make them want to buy are more likely to happen. A clear sign that the price is low may also make people think the buy is more affordable and less of a problem. This could be done with influencer codes, price tags in articles, or lower prices. Because of this, more people from a wider range of social groups like shopping.

### **2.2.2 Social Influence Theory (SIT)**

Herbert Kelman came up with the idea of SIT in 1953. SIT stands for "Social Influence Theory." Kelman (2016) says this is one of the most important ideas in social psychology because it looks at how the people around us change what we think, do, and pick. To make this idea work, people need to act like other people in three main ways by internalizing, connecting, and complying. Thanks to social media, it's easier to share impact and connect with other people these days. It's very important to SIT, especially for younger groups like Gen Z.

Check out SIT if you want to learn more about how social ties, online groups, and peer support affect how people act online, especially when they buy clothes (Fischer, 2011). Of course, sites like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are fun, but they are also very important places to connect and gain influence. People connect with user generated content, which affects and supports their decisions, makes them want to copy celebrities and make them feel like they are following social norms.

### **The Role of Influencers in Social Influence**

People who have a lot of followers on social media are now very important in the fashion industry and other areas of digital marketing. Because how you look and your own style are big parts of the fashion business as ways to connect with a brand. A lot of people watch someone on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. In this way, they have power. What Gen Z gets is really changed by this group. Some people look up to them and believe them as experts in fashion, beauty, and culture. They also set trends. One idea called Social Impact Theory (SIT) says that these jobs can change the way people think and act by interacting with them and making them follow the rules (Stahl, 202).

Influencer marketing works best with Generation Z teens and young adults because they see a lot of material promoted by influencers on social media. It's not enough to just follow stars for fun; people look to them for help, ideas, and product tips. Influencers are more trustworthy than regular celebs or brand ambassadors because the content they create is useful and motivating, and it's often based on things they've seen or done in real life.

People in Gen Z may feel like they are accepted or liked when they make choices that are similar to those of important people in their lives. This is what we call "social validation." A clothing brand or style trend is often seen as cool and acceptable by people who look up to the person. People who follow the boss are more likely to do what the boss wants. When someone likes, comments on, or shares a post, it means

they want the product. This process works better when these social cues are used. Trends in fashion change quickly, and it's important to be yourself. This makes influencer marketing one of the best ways to spread the word about a business and get people to care about it. Other countries are learned about through important people. It's up to them to decide what Generation Z wears and how important things are run. This is especially true in places like Nepal where being young and good-looking are very important.

### **Peer Recommendations and User-Generated Content**

Peer recommendations and user-generated content (UGC) have emerged as essential components of social influence in the digital purchasing experience of Generation Z. This is in addition to peer recommendations, which are also considered to be influential. In accordance with the Social Influence Theory (SIT), individuals are deeply influenced by the actions, preferences, and viewpoints of others who are inside their immediate social circles (Ferreira, 2022). As a result of the proliferation of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, users are now able to readily share their product experiences, fashion advice, and brand reviews with their peers. This effect has been amplified.

For members of Generation Z, who place a high value on authenticity, openness, and relatability, the importance of UGC in their decision-making process cannot be overstated. In contrast to traditional commercials, which frequently lack an unfiltered perspective, content such as clothing hauls, styling lessons, outfit-of-the-day (OOTD) posts, and honest reviews made by actual customers offer a perspective that is not filtered. The fact that this kind of material represents real experiences rather than polished brand tales contributes to the perception that it is more genuine and trustworthy. For people in Generation Z, it's nice to see a friend who looks or lives like

them showing off a neat product. It looks more reliable and appealing than other items because of this.

You can also feel emotionally supported by suggestions from your friends, especially if the product fits in with the social identity of your group. People in the same social group are more likely to follow the trend if they want to stay in touch with their college friends in Kathmandu who blog about wearing the same Nepali fashion brand every day. The social influence theory (SIT) says that people change how they act to fit in with what they think are the rules in their group. Liebetty (2006) says that this fits with the SIT's focus on normative social influence. Today, Generation Z trusts brand a lot more because of what their friends say and user-generated content (UGC). People in Nepal are very close to each other and still use word-of-mouth promotion a lot. This means that peer pressure plays a big role in how people buy clothes.

### **Social Media as a Community**

However, the Social power Theory (SIT) also underscores the importance that social groups or communities have in molding behavior. This is in addition to the fact that it places an emphasis on the power of individual influencers and peer recommendations. (Kamaldeen, 2024) Social media platforms are in a position that is uniquely positioned to enable the establishment of such communities. These platforms offer venues where members of Generation Z may communicate with one another, feel like they belong, and take part in collective identities. These online communities function as important ecosystems in which individuals share values, styles, and opinions that shape behavior, including decisions on fashion-related purchases.

Online communities offer more than simply material to members of Generation Z, who place a high importance on connection, expression, and purpose. These communities also provide a sense of belonging and social identity. Young customers

are continuously connecting with micro-communities that reflect their preferences and values. This participation can take the form of following a fashion influencer, participating in hashtag campaigns such as #OOTD (Outfit of the Day), or being a part of the online fan base of a company. For example, sustainable fashion aficionados, body-positive advocates, or local fashion lovers in Nepal are examples of communities that fall into this category. These communities can range from global fashion tribes to specialized that are motivated by values.

For example, a Nepali apparel brand that champions eco-friendly fashion can cultivate a digital community around sustainability by sharing educational content, collaborating with like-minded influencers, and encouraging user participation through branded hashtags (e.g., #WearGreenNepal). As more members engage with such content and contribute their own voices, a group norm begins to form one that promotes environmentally conscious consumption (Rachmad, 2024). This, in turn, encourages other Gen Z individuals to conform to the group's shared values and practices.

These dynamics within the community strengthen brand loyalty and impact customer behavior by reinforcing the normative demands that these dynamics create. The Social Identity Theory (SIT) proposes that people frequently adopt the attitudes and actions of the groups with which they identify. Therefore, businesses who are able to successfully develop and nurture online communities have the potential to dramatically impact the purchasing decisions of Generation Z by embedding themselves within the digital social world of the customer.

### **2.3 Social Media Influence on Purchase Behavior**

Gen Z gets new clothes and fashion items because of social networking sites. There are both big and small changes. This is very true in the fashion business. Gen Z grew up in a world ruled by technology, which is different from the world that came before

them. People find new things and talk to each other on social media. It helps you decide what to do and how to feel about new things. Sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are used by a lot of people. People now use these sites a lot when they want to buy something. Gen Z buys and gets things in different ways because of these networks. They also have different reasons for liking one company more than another.

Social media has changed the way people buy things in many important ways. Two of the most important are pictures and word of mouth. Gen Zers buy things based on what they see on their feeds, like paid content, tips from their friends, or reviews from well-known people. A lot of people want something because it looks good, like a fashion trend that goes viral or a fashion challenge that goes viral. Not only that, but Instagram and TikTok both have "swipe-up" links and "shop now" buttons that make it simple to buy something after seeing it. Gen Z can buy things whenever they want or just because they look cool.

Due to the fact that authenticity and relatability are extremely important to Generation Z, user-generated content and peer reviews are more compelling than traditional marketing. During the process of product evaluation, they look for genuine voices and experiences from real people. With the rapid growth of digital interaction in the Nepali apparel market, these aspects are becoming increasingly important in determining how Generation Z chooses to shop, how they connect with companies, and how they express their unique style.

### **2.3.1 Social Media as a Source of Product Information**

One of the most transformative aspects of social media in modern consumer culture is its role as a primary source of product information, particularly for Generation Z. Unlike older generations who relied heavily on television commercials, print advertisements, or in-store consultations, Gen Z consumers actively seek out and

engage with product-related content on social media platforms. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Pinterest have become essential tools for product discovery, brand evaluation, and purchasing decisions, especially in the fashion industry, where aesthetics, lifestyle, and personalization play a major role (Nakay, 2017).

Gen Z is able to explore fashion trends, learn about new clothing collections, and evaluate how garments look and function in real-life settings thanks to the real-time, visual, and interactive content that is provided by social media platforms. The participatory character of this medium is what makes it particularly effective; users are not merely passive consumers but rather active participants to the ecosystem of material. They provide their peers with useful sources of knowledge by posting outfit inspiration, leaving comments, sharing reviews, and engaging with branded and influencer content. All of these activities serve as valuable sources of information.

One of the most compelling formats through which social media delivers product information is user-generated content (UGC). This includes personal reviews, outfit-of-the-day (OOTD) posts, unboxing videos, and styling tutorials. Because this content is created by everyday users rather than corporations, it is often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy. When a Gen Z user sees someone from their social network or someone with similar style and values reviewing or wearing a product, they are more likely to perceive the information as credible and relevant to their own purchasing decisions. According to Godey et al. (2016), UGC fosters brand trust and purchase intention because it resonates with consumers on a personal level, especially when compared to traditional advertising.

A good illustration of this is the widespread popularity of fashion haul films on websites such as YouTube. These movies feature influencers and content creators showcasing their most recent purchases, attempting to put on various articles of

clothing, and providing candid opinion regarding the fit, quality of the material, comfort, and cost of the products. They are a go-to resource for Gen Z customers who are looking for deep, experience-based insights, and these long-form movies frequently offer a comprehensive analysis of many things. TikTok and Instagram have also contributed to the rise in popularity of short-form formats, such as "Get Ready With Me" (GRWM) and "Outfit Inspo" videos, which demonstrate how people style their clothing in real time. In these videos, amusement and practicality are combined, and viewers are given the opportunity to picture how particular pieces might be worn in day-to-day living experiences.

This change in consumer behavior gives fashion firms with opportunities as well as problems and presents them with both. The possibility resides in the capacity to tap into organic reach and peer-to-peer influence by fostering user-generated content and collaborations between influencers. When companies are featured in genuine content that is made by individuals that are trusted, they receive exposure in the form of word-of-mouth, which has the potential to greatly increase the level of interest and engagement among consumers. It is necessary for organizations to ensure that they are providing quality products and customer service, as negative experiences and reviews may quickly spread throughout social media platforms. The issue, however, lies in relinquishing some control over the narrative. Within the setting of Nepal, and more specifically within the Kathmandu Valley, the rise of social media as a source of product knowledge is becoming increasingly apparent. As the number of people who have access to the internet and use smartphones continues to increase, young people in urban areas of Nepal, particularly students and young professionals, are increasingly turning to social media not just for pleasure but also as a main resource for discovering and evaluating local fashion brands. As a result of the proliferation of Nepali clothing brands like Juju Wears, Vama, Timro Concept Store, and NeTen Boutique, social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook have emerged as essential components of interactions between brands and their potential customers.

When it comes to launching collections, highlighting client testimonials, and running focused advertising campaigns, these firms frequently rely on social media. This allows them to reach Gen Z audiences, who spend a large amount of time online.

A further point to consider is that Nepali influencers and micro-content creators are increasingly showcasing local products in hauls, styling videos, and "outfit idea" posts. This helps bridge the gap between traditional Nepali apparel and global fashion trends. The material that they produce not only educates customers on the availability and desirability of local companies, but it also increases the cultural significance and social exposure of the things that customers are interested in. The effect of this is that social media is contributing to the reshaping of the perception of Nepali fashion, positioning it as fashionable, aspirational, and in line with the lifestyle of Generation Z.

### **2.3.2 Influencer Marketing and Peer Recommendations**

In the age of digital consumerism, influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most effective and persuasive strategies for driving purchasing behavior, particularly among Generation Z. Unlike traditional advertising, which is often perceived by Gen Z as impersonal, intrusive, or lacking in authenticity, influencer content offers a more relatable and trustworthy source of product endorsement (Vinerean, 2013). Influencers, especially those active in the fashion and lifestyle niches, play a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and brand preferences. The material, style, and tone of voice they use are carefully chosen, and it helps them build strong relationships with the people who follow them. Because of this, the products they recommend seem real and trustworthy.

People in Generation Z believe that people are who they say they are. Children and teens today can easily tell the difference between real information and clear ads because they grew up in a world full of them. This makes it more possible for people

to interact with influencers whose views, habits, and tastes are like their own. Fashion influencers do more than just promote goods. They post fashion lookbooks, outfit-of-the-day pieces, styling tips, and unboxing videos, among other things. They also show people who follow them how to be driven while still being easy to talk to. Tolfikar (2024) says that lifestyle-based purchasing is when a person's views, personality, and ways of expressing themselves are closely linked to the way they shop. These events have an impact on this event.

Influencer marketing really works when it comes to fashion. Because fashion is so based on how you feel and look, Instagram and TikTok are great places to show off your clothes. It's like having a fashion icon because they show people how to wear clothes every day or with certain themes like simplicity, sustainability, or streetwear. People and companies can connect through influencers, who give people the social proof and background information they need to choose what to buy. They do this with product ads, reviews that happen in real time, and trend ideas. People look up to influencers because they are real people who can show how a product works in the real world. That's not the same as star ads, which often sound cold or too good to be true.

People often share ideas with each other through user-generated content (UGC). These suggestions work well with influencer marketing because they show how real people's experiences with a product are. It is believed that people are more likely to act in ways that are backed by other people in their social groups. Micro-influencers are people like friends, acquaintances, and other people you might see online who share their thoughts through posts, reviews of goods, and stories. Young people in Gen Z care a lot about this kind of digital word-of-mouth. Before they buy something, they often read what other people have already bought. People always want "real" ideas from people they can trust, like a friend or a well-known influencer on apps like Instagram and TikTok. This method has become very popular because of this.

As more Nepalese people become fashion icons, Gen Z's style has changed a great deal. This is very true in places where young people use social media a lot, like the Kathmandu Valley. Some of these leaders aren't well known outside of their own society, but the people who follow them have a strong bond with them. The things they share that are important show how they feel about and follow local tastes, attitudes, and trends. The fashion brands in Nepal have started to work with these stars to get their lines in front of Gen Z customers more directly. People who might buy from the company feel like it is friendlier and more real after using this regional influencer marketing plan. It also gets more people to interact with the business.

An Instagram star from Kathmandu might work with a nearby clothing company to make a video showing how to wear a traditional shirt in a cool, modern way for the street. By mixing local culture with trendy urban fashion, the influencer shows how useful the brand is and gets their fans to see it as useful in their own lives. This shared cultural background makes the influencer and audience feel closer to each other and also increases the trustworthiness of the idea (Zolait, 2014).

Micro-influencers are people who have a small but active following. Their followers often think they have even more power because they are easy to reach and can talk directly to their followers. People who follow them are more likely to believe what they say, and it reads more easily. These people have a lot of power in the Kathmandu Valley when it comes to spreading hyper-local fashion trends. They often wear new brands and styles before anyone else in their town.

Finally, Gen Z buyers make big decisions about what to buy based on what their friends recommend and what influencers say about a product. Local and international influencers offer a sense of sincerity, lifestyle compatibility, and being able to relate

to that which is being sold that is different from traditional marketing channels. Their content's power to inspire, teach, and involve fans makes people much more aware of their brand and more likely to want to buy. Working with local fashion labels and influencers has become a strong way to connect with Gen Z in Nepal, especially among young people in Kathmandu, and increase clothing sales in a way that is important to them and shows respect for their culture.

### **2.3.3 Social Media Advertising and Targeted Campaigns**

The material, style, and tone of voice they use are carefully chosen, and it helps them build strong relationships with the people who follow them. Because of this, the products they recommend seem real and trustworthy. People in Generation Z believe that people are who they say they are. Children and teens today can easily tell the difference between real information and clear ads because they grew up in a world full of them. This makes it more possible for people to interact with influencers whose views, habits, and tastes are like their own. Fashion influencers do more than just promote goods. They post fashion lookbooks, outfit-of-the-day pieces, styling tips, and unboxing videos, among other things. They also show people who follow them how to be driven while still being easy to talk to. Tolfikar (2024) says that lifestyle-based purchasing is when a person's views, personality, and ways of expressing themselves are closely linked to the way they shop. These events have an impact on this event.

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#### **2.4 Social Media Marketing in Nepal**

Nepal's the web has changed a lot since 2008. This is because more people use social networks, smartphones are cheaper, and it's easier to link to the internet. The number of people using the internet on their phones has increased a lot in places like Kathmandu Valley over the last few years. Many teens now regularly use Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. These sites have become very important to the daily lives of Nepali youth because they are the main ways they talk to each other, have fun, and more and more, make purchases (Saravanakumar, 2012).

There have been big changes in social media marketing because of this digital shift, especially in the fashion and clothes business. As more Nepalese people use social media to connect with brands and find new goods, fashion companies, both small ones in Nepal and big ones from around the world, are spending a lot of money on digital marketing. When these businesses post about their new collections on social media, they can talk to Gen Z customers directly. They can also work with influencers and start projects that reflect the fashion styles, values, and culture of the area.

People in the Kathmandu Valley are becoming more aware of fashion and better at using the internet. Social media is a strong way to change how people act in this area. Nepalese in Gen Z follow international fashion trends, but they also interact with local leaders, take part in hashtag challenges, and look for goods that mix modern design with a touch of the style of the area. This has helped a new wave of Nepalese fashion brands go up against big names from around the world, build online communities, and make people love their brands even more. To sum up, social media has grown into an important part of marketing in the Nepali clothing business. It's changed how people and brands talk to each other and how young people who grew up with technology shop for clothes.

#### **2.4.1 Growth of Social Media in Nepal**

Nepal has experienced a significant rise in the number of internet users over the past decade, particularly among the youth in urban areas like Kathmandu. This increase can be attributed to several factors, including the affordability of internet services, the expansion of mobile networks, and the proliferation of smartphones. According to recent reports, mobile phones have become the primary device for internet access in Nepal, with social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube dominating the digital landscape (Rachmad, 2024). These platforms offer an easy way

for users to stay connected, interact with peers, and access entertainment, all of which have contributed to the widespread adoption of social media in the country.

The affordability of mobile data plans has played a crucial role in accelerating internet usage, particularly among young consumers. Data packages are now more accessible to a broader segment of the population, enabling social media engagement at a low cost. As a result, platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have seen widespread adoption, especially among younger generations like Gen Z those born between the late 1990s and early 2010s. Gen Z is the first generation to grow up with internet access and digital media, making them more likely to use social media for a variety of purposes, including product discovery and online shopping.

In this digital age, smartphones have become ubiquitous, further driving social media use in Nepal. The younger demographic, especially in Kathmandu Valley, is increasingly using their smartphones not just for socializing and entertainment but also for shopping, particularly through social media channels (Quesenberry, 2020). As the digital divide narrows, the accessibility of mobile phones and the internet has made social media a dominant force in the lives of many young Nepali consumers.

As internet access continues to grow, social media has emerged as an essential tool for communication, entertainment, and even shopping. Gen Z, which is known for its digital fluency, now relies heavily on these platforms for information on trends, products, and services, and increasingly for making purchases. This marks a shift from traditional methods of shopping such as in-store visits or relying on TV ads toward online browsing and purchasing, often directly via social media platforms.

The rise of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok has provided fashion brands with new avenues to engage with consumers. These platforms, which have become the preferred social media channels for younger generations, allow brands to reach a dynamic audience of young Nepali consumers who are interested in the

latest trends and are highly influenced by digital content (Nakay, 2017). The ability to share engaging visuals, videos, and product information in real-time has allowed fashion brands to create direct connections with their target demographic.

For fashion brands in Nepal, social media offers an efficient and cost-effective way to increase visibility, build brand awareness, and drive sales. Brands are leveraging these platforms to showcase new apparel collections, provide styling ideas, and engage with their audience in a more interactive and personalized manner. Social media provides an opportunity for brands to tell their stories, connect with consumers on a deeper level, and ultimately convert online interactions into sales. Given the nature of the apparel industry, where visual appeal is key to consumer interest, social media is an invaluable tool for presenting products in a compelling and engaging way.

### **3. Methodology**

Gen Z in the Kathmandu Valley use a realistic research method that gives a lot of weight to how important the research is to the real world. This study wants to see how their use of social media and shopping habits change over time. In digital marketing, it's important to use a scientific method that mixes descriptive insights and empirical analysis. This is because digital marketing is always changing, and Gen Z customers are very sensitive to this. This method emphasizes how important it is to carefully and methodically look at how different things, like price awareness, ease of use, influencer marketing, and platform interaction, change the way people buy things.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study adopts a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of social media on the purchasing behavior of Generation Z consumers in the apparel sector within Kathmandu Valley. A quantitative approach is well-suited for this research as it allows for the systematic collection and numerical analysis of data, enabling the researcher to identify patterns, correlations, and causal relationships among key variables related to social media marketing and consumer behavior (Ghanad, 2023). By using structured instruments such as surveys, the study aims to capture the perspectives of a larger sample, increasing the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

The research employs both descriptive and explanatory research approaches, providing a comprehensive framework to achieve the study's objectives:

- Descriptive research will be used to outline and summarize the primary factors that influence Gen Z's apparel purchasing behavior on social media platforms. These factors include, but are not limited to, brand awareness, pricing,

convenience, influencer endorsement, social media promotions, customer engagement, and perceived product value. Descriptive analysis will help in identifying the frequency and distribution of these factors within the sample population, offering insights into consumer preferences and behaviors specific to the Kathmandu Valley context.

- Explanatory research will be used to examine the relationships between independent variables (such as influencer marketing, promotional content, product visibility, and peer recommendations) and the dependent variable (purchase behavior). This part of the study is hypothesis-driven and aims to test assumptions about how and to what extent these social media factors influence Gen Z's decision-making. Statistical tools such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing will be employed to establish the significance and strength of these relationships.
- This dual approach not only enhances the depth and clarity of the research findings but also allows for a robust interpretation of how social media functions as both an informational and influential tool in shaping the purchasing behavior of digitally active youth in Nepal's apparel market.

### **3.2 Population and Sample**

People in the Kathmandu Valley which is made up of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur are being asked to take part in the study. People in this group are from Generation Z and are 15 to 30 years old. The people in this group were chosen for a study on how social media affects clothing sales because they use technology and social media a lot. It's clear that more and more Nepalese people are shopping online and on their phones. This is especially true in the fashion and clothing industries, especially in places like Kathmandu Valley. This makes them a good group to look at

to see how people's choices are affected by social media marketing tactics in a more digital world.

### **3.2.1 Sampling Technique**

A method known as non-probability purposive picking is used in this work. This method was chosen because the study wants to hear from Gen Zers who are involved on social media and have bought clothes on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Instead of picking people at random, purposeful sampling lets the researcher focus on people who can give replies that are useful, insightful, and based on experience. This is important for reaching the goals of the study. One issue with purposeful sampling is that it might cause selection bias. This would mean that the group is not as representative of all Gen Z people, which would make the results less useful for them.

People will be chosen online through fashion boards, university networks, neighborhood pages for young people, and social media groups that post Google Forms. This will make the survey easier for people in the target group to find and fill out, which will lead to more replies.

### **3.2.2 Sample Size**

Nanjundeswaraswamy (2021) says that Cochran's formula was used to figure out the sample size for this study. This formula is often used to figure out how big a sample should be to get a good picture of a large community. That is, this formula looks at the amount of confidence, the error margin, and the predicted share of the thing being measured.

The study wants to get about 100 answers because there are a lot of Gen Z users on social media in the Kathmandu Valley. The goal is to be 95% sure of what you know with a 5% mistake range. It's thought that that number is big enough to make sure

the results are scientifically valid and true to life, while still letting the study collect useful data. Having this many observations is also good for regression models, correlation analysis, and easy descriptive statistics. These need a lot of observations to give useful results. The sample number picked is a good balance between getting accurate data and making the study easy to run. This makes sure that the results of the study are correct and useful for Gen Z people in the Kathmandu Valley.

### **3.3 Data Collection Method**

There are two types of data that will be used in this study to fully look into how social media changes how Gen Z shoppers in the Kathmandu Valley choose what to wear. To back up your analysis, you can use both first-hand answers and data from past studies that show how the responses fit into the bigger picture.

#### **3.3.1 Primary Data Collection**

The poll form sent through Google Forms was the main source of data for the study. The survey was shared on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, targeting Gen Z users within Kathmandu Valley. The structured questionnaire included three key sections, Demographic Information, Social Media Influence Factors, and Purchasing Behavior. Under the Social Media Influence Factors, variables such as brand awareness, influencer marketing, price sensitivity, convenience, trust, and customer satisfaction were measured.

The structured questionnaire will include closed-ended questions to allow for ease of response, data standardization, and effective quantitative analysis. The question formats will consist of:

- Likert scale questions (e.g., strongly agree to strongly disagree) to measure attitudes and perceptions;

- Multiple-choice questions to capture preferences and behaviors; and
- Ranking questions to understand the importance of various factors influencing purchasing decisions.

The questionnaire will be divided into the following three key sections:

**1. Demographic Information:**

This section will gather basic respondent details such as age, gender, occupation, education level, and frequency of social media usage. This data will help categorize the respondents and enable subgroup analysis based on demographic variables.

**2. Social Media Influence Factors:**

This section will include questions focused on the key variables identified in the literature review, such as:

- Awareness (e.g., "How often do you discover new apparel brands through social media?")
- Price sensitivity (e.g., "Do you look for discounts or promotions on social media before purchasing?")
- Convenience (e.g., "Do you prefer shopping on social media because of ease of use?")
- Influencer marketing (e.g., "How much do influencers affect your decision to buy apparel online?")
- Brand engagement (e.g., "Do you follow your favorite clothing brands on social media?")

**3. Purchase Decision and Behavior:**

This section will measure actual purchase-related behavior, including:

- Purchase frequency (e.g., "How often do you buy apparel through social media?")
- Purchase intent (e.g., "How likely are you to purchase from a brand you see advertised on Instagram?")
- Platform preferences (e.g., "Which platform do you most frequently use for apparel shopping?")

The questionnaire will be pre-tested with a small group of participants to ensure clarity, relevance, and reliability before it is launched for large-scale data collection.

### **3.3.2 Secondary Data Collection**

To complement the primary data and provide contextual support, the study will also gather secondary data from a variety of credible sources. These include:

- Academic literature on consumer behavior, digital marketing, and social media usage patterns, particularly focusing on Gen Z and fashion retail.
- Industry reports and market studies related to Nepal's e-commerce and social commerce sectors, including growth trends, consumer preferences, and platform usage statistics.
- Government and private sector publications that provide insights into Nepal's digital transformation, including data from the Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA) and Nepal Rastra Bank on internet usage, mobile penetration, and digital payment trends.
- Published journal articles, books, and case studies exploring social media marketing strategies, the role of influencers, and cross-cultural studies on Gen Z's shopping behavior.

The integration of secondary data will not only support the interpretation of survey findings but also help situate the study within the broader academic and practical landscape of digital marketing and consumer engagement in Nepal.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Technique**

To derive meaningful insights from the collected data, this study will employ a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. These techniques will allow the researcher to explore patterns, test relationships between variables, and evaluate the impact of various social media factors on the purchasing behavior of Gen Z consumers in Kathmandu Valley. The goals of the study will be met by making sure that the results fully answer the main research questions as they are looked at.

#### **3.4.1 Software and Tools**

Google Sheets is the main program that will be used to work with data. Kurian (2023) says that many small and medium-sized study groups use Excel to keep track of their survey data because it is easy to use, has strong statistical tools, and is close by. As you add data and clean it up, do difficult statistical calculations, and make graphs of the results, this tool will help you with many parts of the analysis process.

The following functions and features of Microsoft Excel will be employed:

- **Descriptive Statistics:**

Simple statistical tools, such as the mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation, will be used to summarize the survey data. These numbers will help you see the big changes and trends in things like how people use social media, what platforms they choose, and how often they buy things.

- **Pivot Tables:**

There will be comparisons made between answers based on age, gender, how often people use social media, and other broad factors. This will allow for subgroup comparisons and the identification of patterns across different segments of the Gen Z population.

- **Charts and Graphs:**

Bar charts, pie charts, line graphs, and histograms will be generated to visually represent key findings. These visuals will aid in presenting trends, such as the most influential social media platforms or the most common reasons for purchasing apparel online.

- **Correlation Analysis:**

To measure the strength and direction of relationships between a dependent variable (purchase behavior) and independent variables (e.g.; influencer marketing, convenience, brand engagement), Pearson's correlation coefficient will be used. This will identify the most crucial factors that Gen Z looks at while purchasing.

- **Regression Analysis:**

We are going to use both simple and multiple linear regression models to see how well the factors that are not the dependent variable can predict it. With regression analysis, you can see how much of a difference in buying habits can be attributed to things like how price conscious someone is or how much an influential person likes a product.

By using Microsoft Excel, the study ensures that the data analysis process is both efficient and transparent, enabling the clear presentation of results and facilitating actionable insights for marketers and apparel brands targeting Gen Z in Nepal.

### **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

When people are used as subjects in a study, especially when personal information is gathered, ethics must be thought through. There are rules about how to do this study in an ethical way so that the people who take part are treated right, with respect, and with dignity while the study is going on. To keep the research's privacy safe and to follow legal rules, the steps below will be taken.

People who want to take part in the study will be asked to give their permission first. It will be clearer to them in the short explanation at the start of the questionnaire what the study is about, how they will be involved, how long it will take to complete, and that they can quit the study at any time without being punished. Responses won't be changed by rewards or punishments because everyone who takes part is doing so on their own free will.

Second, the study will make sure that no one else knows what people say and that their answers are kept hidden. You won't be asked for your name, address, or phone number, or anything else that could be used to find out who you are. Every answer will be kept in a safe place with a password and will only be used for the study's academic and research goals. The researcher and certain college leaders will be the only ones who can see the raw data.

Third, all data collection, storage, and analysis must be done in a way that is ethical and follows the rules of the organization. The data will be kept safe so it doesn't get misused or shared by mistake, and it won't be shared with anyone else. The school may have rules about whether the raw data should be kept safe or thrown away when the study is over and the final report is turned in.

There will also be a note at the end of the form that thanks people for their time and participation and goes over how their data will be used again. People who took part

might also be able to see a summary of the results if they ask. This keeps things honest and helps the researcher and subjects trust each other. The study hopes to protect the rights and privacy of all volunteers by following these moral rules. This will also help make sure that the research results are accurate and true.

## **4. Analysis and Findings**

People from Generation Z in the Kathmandu Valley gave us information, which is what this part is about. There are major themes that run through the data, such as demographic profiles, data on how people use social media, and data on how different social media features affect people's decisions about what clothes to buy. A lot of quantitative tools were used to carefully figure out what the data mean. These included hypothesis testing, regression analysis, correlation analysis, and descriptive statistics. The study's results help us figure out why and how Gen Z's buy clothes on social media. In this chapter, the real-world data is linked to the study topics that were already talked about. This is done to give a full picture of the link between using social media and how people act in the fashion industry.

### **4.1 Introduction**

Based on what people said in the poll, this chapter analyses the study and comes to some conclusions. What makes Gen Z buy clothes on social media sites is the main thing that needs to be looked into. This part looks at the data to find the most important ideas, tastes, and trends that people think about when they shop online through social media. We can use the results to figure out how ads, fame, deals, and trust make people act.

A organized questionnaire was given to the people who took part in this study so that accurate data could be gathered. People were asked about their pasts, what they buy, how they use social media, and what they think about ads, influencers, and marketing tactics. People looked through the answers very carefully to find trends and links that showed how Gen Z's use of social media changes the way they buy things. Statistical methods that are both descriptive and inferential were used to look at the data and get results that made sense.

The main ideas that came up when the data were looked at were used to write this chapter. First, it looks at the interviewees' ethnicity, age, gender, and job, among other things. What sites they visit most often, how long they stay on each one, and the main reasons they do so are some of the things that are looked at. The next part of the chapter talks about how social media changes what people buy. It looks at the roles of sales, reviews, and trust, as well as how ads, fashion brands, and leaders affect people. How often and how people buy things on social media are talked about next. After the sale, things like apologizing and what could be done better are also talked about. At the end of the chapter, the main results are looked at, along with what they mean for marketers and companies that want to improve shopping on social media.

#### **4.2 Demographic Analysis**

Once the demographic summary is done, a more in-depth look at the individuals' traits is needed to get a better sense of how the sample group is put together. What kind of social and economic backgrounds do Generation Z shoppers in the Kathmandu Valley come from? You can find out by looking at their age, gender, job, and level of education. This information not only tells us more about the users' shopping habits, but it also lets us look more closely at patterns and trends in how people use social media. These groups will be used to separate the data so that the study can find out if there are changes in what Gen Z customers like and how social media affects these groups.

### 4.2.1 Age Distribution

**Table 1.** Age Distribution

Age Group	Total
18-22	30
23-27	47
28-30	30
30-35	3
Grand Total	110

**Figure 1.** Age Distribution



Table 1 and Figure 1 show how old the people who answered the poll were. This tells you a lot about the age group that is most affected by social media-driven fashion trends. It is made up of people between the ages of 18 and 35. There are a mix of younger Millennials and people from Generation Z. Both of these groups are known for being tech-savvy and busy online.

There were 47 people in the group who were between the ages of 23 and 27. This age group makes up the largest part of the study. This group of people, who often have to work early, go to school, and keep up with their changing fashion tastes, is at the center of how e-commerce and social media are coming together. Lifestyle content that makes them want to live a certain way, star endorsements, and shopping apps

that work on phones like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook Marketplace may help them decide what to buy.

Thirty people were in each of the age groups 18–22 and 28–30, which are the next two important parts. Teenagers and college students (18–22 years old) make up most of this age group. What they buy might depend on price, what their friends are wearing, and how the clothes look on social media. People between the ages of 28 and 30 may be pickier about what they buy, though. This might be because it's easier, they like the brand, or they make more money, even though they are still very online.

Only three of the people who answered, or 0.01%, were between the ages of 31 and 35. Younger Millennials are less likely to be affected by social media trends when it comes to buying clothes because they don't see as many of them. This might be because they have different life goals, don't know much about new platforms, or like to shop in stores and on well-known online stores.

For the most part, this age spread shows that young people, especially those in their early to mid-20s, are the ones who want to buy clothes on social media the most. Online marketers should pay attention to this age group because these people are open to visual stories, suggestions from well-known people, and buying features that are only available on certain platforms. Businesses should make sure that their campaigns and material fit the tastes, values, and online habits of this large group of people if they want to get a bigger share of this market.

#### 4.2.2 Gender Distribution

**Table 2.** Gender Distribution

Gender	Total
Female	63
Male	42
Prefer not to say	5
Grand Total	110

**Figure 2. Gender Distribution**

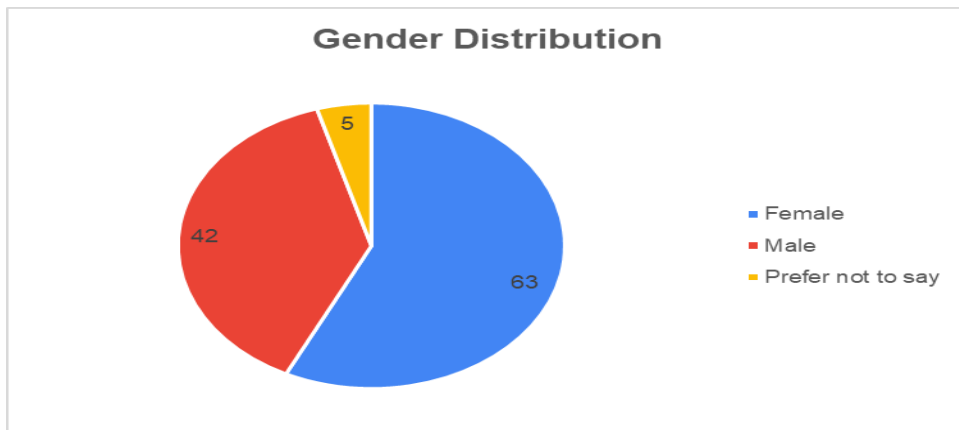


Table 2 and Figure 2 show how the poll respondents were split up by gender. This tells us a lot about how people act in the clothes business that is based on social media. 63 people said they were female, 42 said they were male, and 5 said they didn't know. This means that answers were more likely to come from women.

The predominance of female participants reflects broader consumer trends in fashion and online shopping, where women consistently exhibit higher engagement with social media platforms in relation to style inspiration, product discovery, and brand interaction. Platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and TikTok are particularly popular among women for exploring the latest fashion trends, following influencers, and participating in brand-related content like giveaways, try-on hauls, and discount campaigns. This elevated level of interaction often translates into a higher frequency of purchases driven by social media exposure.

The participation of 42 male respondents indicates a growing interest among men in social media-based apparel shopping, though their engagement appears to be less intense than that of their female counterparts. While traditionally male consumers have been seen as more utilitarian in their shopping habits, the rise of male fashion influencers, streetwear culture, and targeted advertising through platforms like

Instagram and YouTube is gradually reshaping this pattern. However, their relatively smaller representation in the sample may suggest that men still engage with online fashion retail to a lesser degree, or perhaps in different ways, compared to women.

The 5 individuals who preferred not to disclose their gender reflect an important and increasingly recognized segment of the consumer base. This group highlights the need for inclusivity in both research and marketing practices. As awareness around gender diversity grows, brands are beginning to adopt more gender-neutral marketing strategies, inclusive product lines, and advertising that speaks to a broader spectrum of identities.

Overall, this gender breakdown underscores the significant role that female consumers play in the social media apparel shopping ecosystem. Their higher levels of engagement with fashion content and social platforms point to the importance of tailoring marketing campaigns toward their interests, preferences, and behaviors. Nevertheless, the participation of male consumers and gender-diverse individuals also signals an opportunity for brands to broaden their messaging and product appeal, thereby tapping into a more inclusive and potentially lucrative customer base.

### 4.2.3 Occupation

**Table 3.** Occupation Distribution

Occupation	Total
Entrepreneur	13
Freelancer	18
House wife	1
Housewife	1
Student	48
Working Professional	29
Grand Total	110

**Figure 3.** Distribution of occupation among respondents

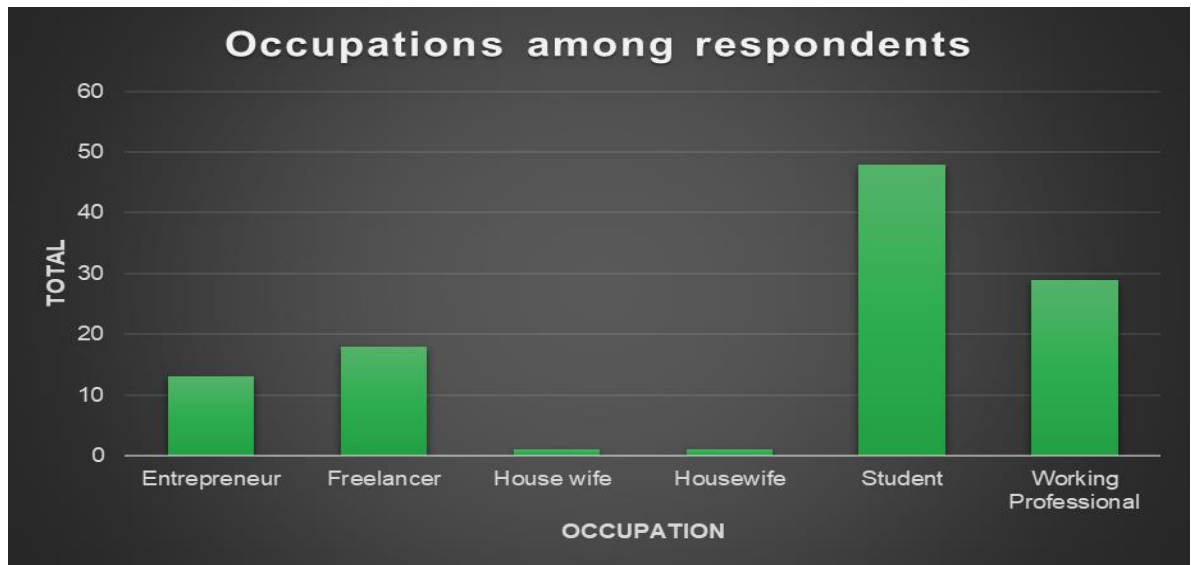


Table 3 and Figure 3 present the occupational breakdown of the survey respondents, offering further insights into the socio-economic factors that may influence social media-driven apparel shopping behaviors. The data indicates that the largest share of participants (48 respondents) are students, followed by working professionals (29 respondents), freelancers (18 respondents), and entrepreneurs (13 respondents). Only one respondent identified as a housewife, pointing to a relatively low level of engagement from this category within the scope of this study.

The dominance of students in the sample is consistent with earlier demographic trends, especially the age distribution. Students, particularly those in higher education, are typically more immersed in digital environments and frequently use social media platforms for entertainment, self-expression, and social interaction. This demographic is highly responsive to influencer marketing, fast fashion trends, and limited-time offers commonly promoted via Instagram, TikTok, and other visual-heavy platforms. Moreover, students often seek affordability and trendiness, both of which are widely accessible through social media-driven e-commerce channels.

Working professionals, the second-largest group, also demonstrate significant participation in online apparel shopping. This group often consists of young adults in the early stages of their careers, balancing busy schedules and leaning toward the convenience of digital shopping. Their higher disposable income compared to students may allow for more discretionary spending, particularly on fashion items that align with workplace attire, social activities, or personal branding. For this group, brand identity and perceived quality may also play a larger role in their purchasing decisions.

The presence of freelancers (18 respondents) and entrepreneurs (13 respondents) reflects the influence of flexible and digitally connected work environments. These individuals are often deeply embedded in creative or tech-savvy industries, where personal image and professional appearance intersect. Their online presence whether for networking, branding, or showcasing work may contribute to a stronger incentive to stay fashion-forward, thus increasing engagement with social media-based apparel retailers.

The low representation of housewives (1 respondent) suggests a limited engagement from this occupational category in the context of social media fashion shopping. This could be attributed to a range of factors such as generational differences, platform usage habits, or a preference for traditional shopping methods. However, this does not imply a lack of purchasing power, and marketers should be cautious not to overlook this group, especially given their influence in household decision-making and brand loyalty.

The occupational distribution reinforces the conclusion that social media apparel shopping is most prevalent among students and early-career professionals, who are both digitally native and highly impressionable to online fashion trends. For marketers, this signals the importance of aligning content and campaign timing with

the digital habits and lifestyle needs of these active consumer segments, while also recognizing emerging opportunities to engage freelancers, entrepreneurs, and underrepresented occupational groups through tailored outreach strategies.

### 4.3 Social Media Usage Patterns

To better understand the dynamics of Generation Z's apparel purchasing behavior, it is essential to first examine their patterns of social media usage. Social media has become an integral part of daily life for Gen Z consumers, influencing not only how they communicate and socialize but also how they discover, evaluate, and purchase products. In Kathmandu Valley, the widespread adoption of smartphones and affordable mobile internet access has amplified social media engagement among youth, making platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok central to their lifestyle. Recognizing which platforms are most frequently used and how much time is spent on them provides critical context for assessing how these interactions translate into purchase motivations and decisions within the apparel sector.

#### 4.3.1 Most Frequently Used Social Media Platforms

**Table 4.** Social media usage

Social Media ▾	Total
Facebook	52
Instagram	49
Tiktok	9
Grand Total	110

**Figure 4.** Platforms used by respondents

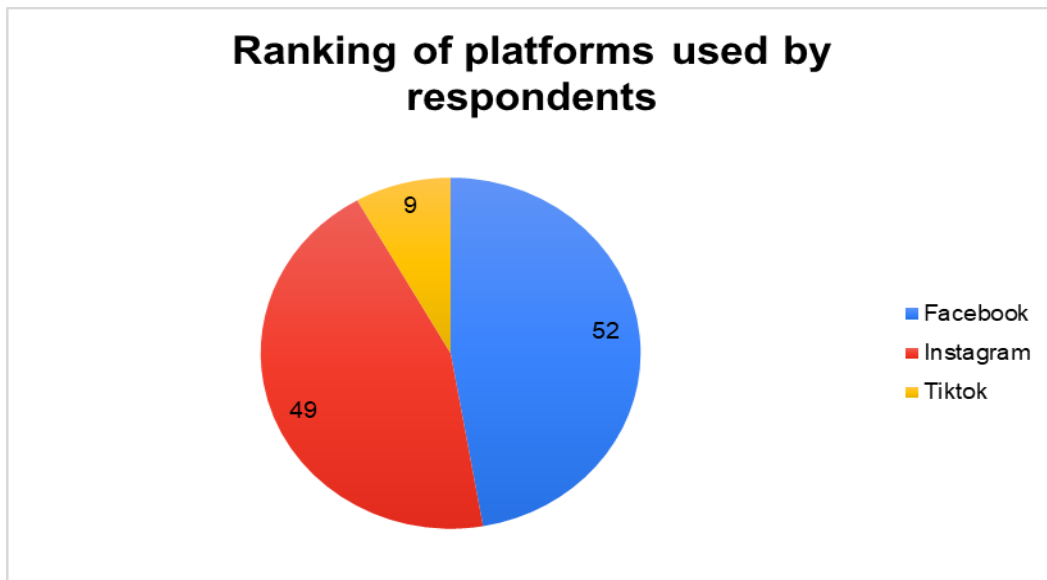


Table 4 and Figure 4 illustrate the distribution of social media platform usage among respondents, shedding light on the digital environments that most significantly shape consumer interactions with fashion content. The data reveals that Facebook remains the most commonly used platform, with 52 respondents, followed closely by Instagram, with 49 respondents. In contrast, TikTok despite its explosive global growth was used by only 9 respondents in this sample, indicating a lower penetration among the surveyed population.

The prominence of Facebook may be attributed to its broad user base, multifunctional capabilities (including Marketplace, Groups, and brand pages), and longstanding presence in the digital landscape. For many users, Facebook serves not just as a social networking site but also as a platform for discovering sales promotions, joining fashion-related communities, and following apparel brands. Its integrated e-commerce features and targeted advertising tools make it a valuable channel for marketers aiming to reach a wide demographic, including both digital natives and older consumers.

Instagram, nearly tied with Facebook in usage, plays an equally vital role in influencing fashion-related decisions. Its image-centric design and influencer-driven ecosystem are particularly conducive to apparel marketing. The use of Reels, Stories, and shoppable posts provides brands with a dynamic toolkit to engage users, promote collections, and drive conversions. For users, Instagram acts as a real-time fashion lookbook, offering inspiration, peer influence, and direct purchase pathways.

The relatively low engagement with TikTok (9 respondents), while surprising in a global context, suggests regional or demographic variation in adoption. In this study, despite the youth-dominated sample, TikTok has not yet reached the critical mass observed in markets like the U.S. or Southeast Asia. However, this should not be mistaken for irrelevance. The platform's unique algorithm, viral content capabilities, and creative format have made it a powerful tool for brand storytelling and trend creation especially among Gen Z. Its low usage in the current data may indicate an emerging opportunity for fashion brands to grow their presence and audience on TikTok through localized content and influencer partnerships.

In summary, the findings affirm that Facebook and Instagram are currently the most impactful platforms for apparel marketing within the surveyed population, offering both reach and engagement. Nonetheless, TikTok represents a potential growth area, particularly if leveraged strategically to appeal to younger, trend-conscious consumers. For marketers, this calls for a diversified social media strategy that capitalizes on the established dominance of Facebook and Instagram while exploring the creative and viral potential of newer platforms like TikTok.

### 4.3.2 Time Spent on Social Media Daily

**Table 5.** Correlation analysis between time spends and purchase apparel on social media

	Time spend on social media daily	Purchase apparel through social media platforms
Time spend on social media daily	1	
Purchase apparel through social media platforms	-0.012912325	1

A correlation analysis was run on results within Table 5 to view the relationship between how much time a day is spent on social media and how often apparel is purchased through social media platforms. The intent of this paper was to investigate if individuals that spend more time on social media platforms are more inclined to purchase via the same platforms, for apparel.

The correlation coefficient of -0.0129 indicates a very weak and statistically insignificant negative correlation between the two variables. In practical terms, this means there is no meaningful linear relationship between the amount of time respondents spend on social media each day and their likelihood of purchasing clothing items through these channels. Despite common assumptions that heavier social media users may be more susceptible to online marketing and, therefore, more likely to shop via social platforms, the data does not support this notion.

This finding has several implications. First, it underscores the importance of quality and relevance of content over the mere quantity of exposure. Users may spend

considerable time browsing social media for various purposes entertainment, communication, or information but that time is not necessarily spent engaging with fashion content or shopping-related stimuli. For example, someone may be active on Facebook or Instagram primarily for personal interactions or news consumption, rather than following influencers or browsing brand pages.

Second, the result suggests that purchase behavior is influenced more by targeted content, peer recommendations, and platform features such as easy checkout or influencer promotions rather than by how much time is spent online. This shifts the focus from general engagement to effective engagement. Marketers should therefore prioritize personalized marketing, retargeting strategies, and interactive content, which are more likely to convert viewers into buyers than relying on overall user activity levels.

Additionally, the weak correlation highlights that consumer intent plays a crucial role. Some users may be highly active on social media yet prefer in-store shopping, while others with limited screen time may still make occasional but high-value purchases when the right product or offer appears. While social media remains a powerful tool for reaching potential customers, the time users spend online does not automatically lead to higher purchasing rates. For apparel brands and marketers, this insight emphasizes the importance of content strategy, user targeting, and conversion optimization over simply increasing screen time exposure.

### 4.3.3 Primary Purpose for Using Social Media

**Table 6.** Primary purpose of using social media

Primary purpose for using social media	Total
Entertainment	40
Following trends and influencers	12
Shopping and exploring products	5
Socializing with friends and family	53
Grand Total	110

**Figure 5.** Purposes of using social media

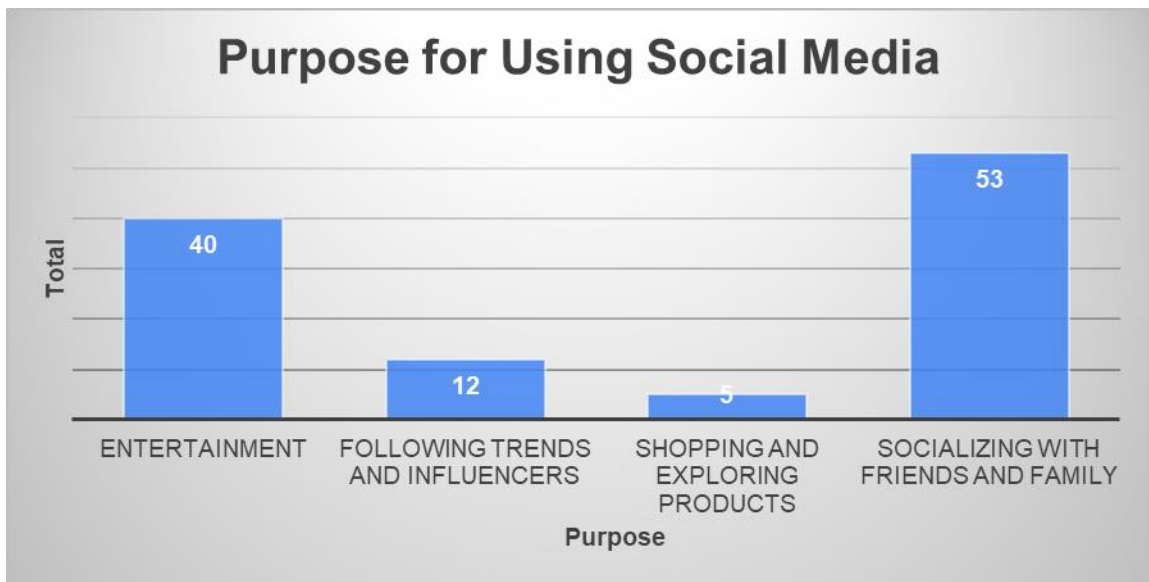


Table 6 and Figure 5 illustrate the primary reasons respondents engage with social media platforms, providing valuable insights into the underlying motivations behind users' online behavior. According to the data, the two most common purposes for using social media are socializing with friends and family (53 respondents) and entertainment (40 respondents). These results reflect the core functions for which social media platforms were originally designed facilitating personal connections and providing easily accessible digital content.

The dominance of social interaction as a primary purpose suggests that users are driven by the need to maintain relationships, share experiences, and remain connected with their personal networks. This aligns with the continuing relevance of platforms like Facebook and Instagram, which provide features such as messaging, story sharing, and tagging tools that reinforce real-time social connectivity. Entertainment, the second most common use, further underscores the popularity of short-form video content, memes, live streams, and reels that capture attention and foster passive engagement. This is especially prominent among younger users, who often browse social media for relaxation, humor, or trend discovery rather than for commercial intent.

In contrast, only 12 respondents reported using social media primarily for following trends and influencers, and a mere 5 respondents indicated that shopping and product exploration was their main reason for using these platforms. This sharp decline highlights that direct commercial motivations remain secondary, and most users are not actively logging into social media with the explicit intention to shop. However, this does not diminish the potential of social media as a powerful marketing tool. Rather, it suggests that fashion and brand content must be seamlessly woven into users' social and entertainment experiences to gain traction.

These findings emphasize the importance of indirect and immersive marketing strategies. Brands should focus on content integration rather than direct advertising, using influencer collaborations, lifestyle storytelling, behind-the-scenes footage, and interactive features such as polls, filters, and live sessions. By aligning with users' primary interests namely, entertainment and social interaction fashion marketers can better position their products within the digital ecosystem where users already spend time.

Moreover, the relatively low percentage of users who follow trends or shop through social media signals an opportunity for growth. Brands that succeed in making their content entertaining, relatable, and community-oriented can shift passive users into engaged shoppers. For instance, fashion brands might benefit from developing content that combines humor, challenges, or influencer-led narratives that both entertain and subtly promote products. The data indicates that social media users primarily seek social connection and entertainment, but this also presents a strategic opening for apparel brands. By embedding product promotions within entertaining, shareable, and socially relevant content, marketers can increase visibility and engagement without disrupting the user experience.

#### **4.4 Influence of Social Media on Apparel Purchasing Decisions**

Social media sites have completely changed how people buy clothes because they always show new brands, trends, and content made by users. People in the Kathmandu Valley who are teens or young adults can buy things quickly and often right away thanks to ads on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, as well as visual stories and reviews from other buyers. This setting not only helps people learn more about the brand, but it also helps them mentally connect with the styles and values shown online. People in Gen Z want things to be honest, easy, and quick. So, they buy things without giving it much thought and just because they see them, instead of making a plan to learn more. Tech-savvy young people are being targeted by more and more clothing brands. If they want to stay in business, they need to understand these changes in how people act.

#### 4.4.1 Exposure to Apparel Advertisements & Following Influencers

**Table 7.** Correlation analysis between see apparel ads, follow influencers and customer reviews

	See apparel ads or promotions on your social media feed	Follow fashion influencers or brands on social media	Customer reviews influence to purchase
See apparel ads or promotions on your social media feed	1		
Follow fashion influencers or brands on social media	-0.04665	1	
Customer reviews influence to purchase	0.422147	0.133826	1

There was a study that looked at the relationship between seeing clothes ads, following fashion influencers, and reading customer reviews. It was found that there was a weakly negative link (-0.04665) between following fashion stars and seeing shopping ads. This means that you might not see more clothing ads just because you follow stars. On the other hand, customer reviews and decisions to buy were linked in a good way (0.4221). It looks like social proof plays a big role in how people act.

#### 4.4.2 Factors Influencing Apparel Purchases

**Table 8.** Regression analysis between factor influencing purchase decision and promotional discounts

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.166032
R Square	0.027567
Adjusted R Square	0.018563
Standard Error	0.696646
Observations	110

ANOVA								
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F			
Regression	1	1.485841145	1.485841145	3.061593415	0.083003382			
Residual	108	52.41415886	0.485316286					
Total	109	53.9						
	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	1.646275284	0.159496085	10.32172848	8.62885E-18	1.330126383	1.962424185	1.330126383	1.962424185
Factors influencing decision to buy apparel through social media	0.100394672	0.057376877	1.749740957	0.083003389	-0.013336249	0.214125593	-0.013336249	0.214125593

A linear regression analysis was performed to identify the key factors influencing purchase decisions, including brand reputation, influencer endorsements, fashion trends, and promotional discounts. The results yielded an R-squared value of 0.0275, indicating a weak explanatory power. However, the p-value (0.083) suggests that these factors do have a marginal influence on purchasing behavior. Among these factors, influencer endorsements and promotions appear to have a higher impact on purchase decisions, reinforcing the importance of strategic marketing through social media influencers.

#### 4.5 Role of Discounts, Reviews, and Trust in Social Media Shopping

Trust plays a pivotal role in social media shopping, especially among Generation Z consumers who are highly attentive to authenticity and transparency. As social commerce grows, the reliance on peer reviews, influencer endorsements, and brand interactions becomes crucial in shaping perceptions of trustworthiness. Gen Z buyers often read customer reviews, look for information made by other users, and see how often a brand shows up online to see if what they say is true. People are more likely to buy something if they read positive reviews or tips from reliable sources. On the other hand, reviews that aren't honest or reliable can quickly turn off potential customers. So, clothing shops in the Kathmandu Valley that want to get young people to trust them and come back need to know how trust works online.

#### 4.5.1 Discounts and Customer Reviews

**Table 9.** Anova test between promotional discounts and customer reviews

Anova: Single Factor				
SUMMARY				
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Discounts and promotional offers	110	263	2.390909091	0.38707256
Customer reviews influence	110	260	2.363636364	0.398665555

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.040909091	1	0.040909091	0.104129073	0.747239024	3.884468692
Within Groups	85.64545455	218	0.392869058			
Total	85.68636364	219				

ANOVA (Chatzi, 2024) was used to see how deals and customer reviews affect various groups of people. Deals and customer reviews are both very important when deciding what to buy, even though there isn't a substantial difference between them (mean score: 2.39 vs. 2.36). Buyers value ratings from other customers just as much as sales when they're buying clothes online. People in Gen Z were more likely to buy something when there were sales or good reviews from other customers, according to the study. People who read honest, good reviews were more likely to trust brands. People who saw lots of sales were more likely to buy things without giving them much thought. This says that Gen Z is less likely to be hesitant to buy something on social media sites when they see clear group approval and think discounts are worth it.

#### 4.5.2 Trustworthiness of Social Media Advertising

**Table 10.** T-test between social media advertisements and those who had regretted a purchases or had not

	Social media advertising is trustworthy	Ever regretted a purchase
Mean	2.972727273	1.581818182
Variance	0.577231026	0.245537948
Observations	110	110
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	187	
t Stat	16.08259535	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.07575E-37	
t Critical one-tail	1.653042828	
P(T<=t) two-tail	4.1515E-37	
t Critical two-tail	1.97273099	

To find out how much trust people had in social media ads, a t-test was used to compare groups of people, like those who had and had not recalled a purchase. People who later felt bad about purchases were much less likely to trust ads on social media, with a p-value of 4.15E-37 showing a significant difference in mean trust levels. What this study says is that brands should do to gain long-term trust is to make their customer service, products, and ways of being open better.

#### 4.6 Purchase Behavior and Post-Purchase Reflections

Customers from Generation Z often have bad feelings about shopping after buying clothes on social media. A lot of different things are covered in these reviews, such as how satisfied the customers are with the quality of the goods, how well they match up with the item descriptions on the website, the delivery times, and the general service experience. People are angry and may even publish reviews or social media posts about their problems when they have bad experiences, like buying bad goods or seeing ads that aren't what they seem to be. Conversely, when customers have good experiences after buying something, they trust the business and stick with it. Therefore, the stage after the purchase is very significant for figuring out how to keep customers for a long time, how to affect promotion through word of mouth, and how

to affect plans to buy again in the future. Without these views, it's harder to see how customers' actions change over time in the digital market.

#### 4.6.1 Frequency of Apparel Purchases & Preferred Methods

**Table 11.** T-test between frequency of apparel purchases & preferred methods

	Purchase apparel through social media platforms	Preferred method of purchasing apparel
Mean	1.890909091	2.554545455
Variance	0.868723937	0.634612177
Observations	110	110
Hypothesized Mean	0	
df	212	
t Stat	-5.676733057	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.24057E-08	
t Critical one-tail	1.65207286	
P(T<=t) two-tail	4.48113E-08	
t Critical two-tail	1.971216964	

A t-test was used to look at the differences between how often and how people liked to buy clothes. There was a statistically important difference between the groups (p-value = 4.48E-08). This means that people who buy clothes more often are more likely to like certain outlets, like brand websites or social media sites with direct checkouts. The variation in purchase frequency also indicates that factors like ease of payment, delivery speed, and return policies play a role in shaping consumer preferences. Understanding the frequency of apparel purchases and preferred shopping platforms is crucial for marketers and fashion brands because it highlights when and where Gen Z consumers are most active, enabling businesses to strategically time promotions, launch new collections, and prioritize investment in the most popular online channels.

#### 4.7 Recommendations for Improving Social Media Shopping

Based on survey feedback, several recommendations can be made to enhance the social media shopping experience:

- Improved Authenticity: Brands should ensure that product descriptions and images accurately represent the items being sold.
- Better Customer Support: Faster response times and improved return policies can help address post-purchase concerns.
- Influencer Transparency: Influencers should disclose paid promotions to increase consumer trust.
- Enhanced Security Measures: Implementing better fraud prevention techniques can reduce cases of misleading advertisements.

#### **4.8 Summary of Findings**

This chapter analyzed the data collected from 110 respondents to assess the impact of social media on apparel purchasing behavior. The findings indicate that while social media is widely used for entertainment and socializing, it also serves as a key platform for apparel marketing. Facebook and Instagram remain the most influential platforms for fashion purchases. The study also reveals that while advertisements and influencer endorsements play a role, customer reviews and trust in the platform are more significant determinants of purchase behavior. However, post-purchase regret is a major concern, highlighting the need for better transparency and customer service. These insights can help brands refine their social media marketing strategies to improve customer satisfaction and drive sales. Overall, the findings indicate that social media plays a pivotal role in influencing Gen Z's apparel purchasing decisions in Kathmandu Valley, with platforms like Instagram and TikTok being the most influential. Peer recommendations, influencer endorsements, and promotional discounts were identified as the most significant factors driving purchase behavior. These insights set the foundation for a deeper discussion of how digital marketing strategies can be optimized for this tech-savvy demographic.

## **5. Discussion**

The study's goals are talked about and so are the theory framework of the study and what others have researched prior to it. The rest of it argues that social media as it is today dictates how Generation Z spends its money. We also discuss what the results imply and what they relate to.

### **5.1 Interpretation of Findings**

According to the study, some social media features, including friend suggestions, engaging content and features that are available only from certain platforms, literally affect what Generation Z purchases. According to Chen (2024), believing and trusting influencers is very large for making purchases decisions. Given earlier research that shows how much value is yielded from an influencer's suggestions, this helps. Many of the ideas as to how people buy things indicate that people are judgmental and the important things to consider when choosing are ideas coming from other people (Rachmad, 2024).

Another key finding is the importance of interactive and immersive content (e.g., short-form videos, AR filters, and live shopping). The study supports the notion that Generation Z values authenticity and engagement over traditional advertising, echoing prior research that social media fosters a sense of connection and relatability (de Macedo, 2023). Moreover, the study finds that platform choice impacts engagement levels, with TikTok and Instagram being dominant in shaping purchasing behaviors due to their algorithmic personalization and visually driven content.

### **5.2 Comparison with Existing Literature**

The findings of this study are consistent with past research emphasizing the growing influence of social commerce on Generation Z. However, it expands on these insights by highlighting platform-specific variations for instance, Instagram is preferred for

aesthetically appealing brands, while TikTok is more effective for virality-driven purchases. This finding contrasts with earlier studies that generalized social media's impact without accounting for platform nuances (Stahl, 2023).

Moreover, the study confirms that trust issues with influencer marketing remain a significant concern, with respondents expressing skepticism toward overly promotional content. This supports the findings of Evans, who argues that influencer credibility is vital for persuasion.

A study by Godey (2016) also found that young people who are involved on social media are much more likely to buy a brand. These results support what Godey found. This study in the Kathmandu Valley shows how important reliable people are for getting people to buy something (Bonnievie, 2020). Bolton (2013) also looked at how ideas from peers affect Gen Z's decision to buy something online and found that it is important. This study also found that peer-driven trust capital is important.

### **5.3 Practical Implications**

For businesses targeting Generation Z, the findings emphasize the need to adopt authentic storytelling, personalized content, and real-time engagement. Brands should leverage micro-influencers, prioritize user-generated content, and optimize their presence on high-engagement platforms. Additionally, companies must be mindful of ethical considerations, ensuring transparency in influencer partnerships and customer data usage. Based on these findings, local apparel businesses in Kathmandu should prioritize collaborations with micro-influencers who have strong community engagement rather than focusing solely on celebrity endorsements. For example, a local clothing brand could partner with Kathmandu-based fashion bloggers to create limited-edition collections promoted through Instagram Reels and TikTok videos, targeting niche youth communities to drive organic engagement and sales.

#### **5.4 Theoretical Contributions**

This study adds to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Social Impact Theory (Intra, 2024) by showing that how products affect the community and how emotionally connected people are to companies affect Generation Z's buying decisions. How useful the products seem and how easy they are to get also play a role. We also learn more about how to connect users in a way that works for the platform because it suggests that marketing tactics be changed to fit how the platform works. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study shows that how Gen Z consumers feel about social media content, how easy it is for them to control their behavior through online shopping, and how their subjective standards are affected by influencers all work together to show that they are likely to buy clothes. It adds to the Social Influence Theory (SIT) by showing that what young Nepali consumers' friends say and how active they are in online groups has a big impact on the brands they choose and how they act.

## **6. Conclusion & Recommendations**

Before going over all of the main points, it's important to note that this study is mostly about how social media has greatly altered the shopping habits of Generation Z in the Kathmandu Valley. Based on the data collected, digital platforms have become important stops along the customer journey, from becoming aware of a company to planning to buy and being happy with their purchase. Another thing that the results show is that social media isn't just a way to advertise things. It's now a living environment where trust, approval from peers, and the ability to connect with others have a big impact on what customers choose. There are pros and cons for fashion companies that want to reach people who are tech-savvy, culturally aware, and socially sensitive. Three important things were found in the study: First, a lot of what Gen Z in the Kathmandu Valley wears is based on what their friends and other influential people say. Second, people are much more likely to buy when they see real customer reviews and special deals. Third, TikTok and Instagram are the ones that really change the way people buy things. What these results show is that social media has a bigger impact on how people in poor nations like Nepal buy things.

### **6.1 Summary of Key Findings**

Based on the study, the main things that impact Generation Z's buying habits on social media are experiences that are unique to the platform, suggestions from peers, how trustworthy influencers are, and interesting content. Trust and authenticity significantly impact engagement, while interactive content formats (e.g., reels, live shopping, and AR filters) enhance purchase likelihood. TikTok and Instagram emerge as the dominant platforms due to their personalization algorithms and user interactivity. Given that many respondents rely on local influencers for fashion inspiration, it is recommended that apparel brands collaborate with micro-influencers who resonate culturally with Kathmandu youth. Additionally, since discounts and peer

reviews were key drivers, brands should focus on offering exclusive social media promotions and actively encourage user-generated reviews and testimonials. Finally, investment in visually rich, short-form video content on Instagram and TikTok should be prioritized to align with Gen Z's content consumption habits.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for businesses and marketers:

### **1. Leverage Micro-Influencers and Authentic Content**

Brands should prioritize partnerships with micro-influencers those with 10,000 to 100,000 followers due to their typically higher engagement rates and stronger, more authentic relationships with niche audiences. Customers in Gen Z care more about real and honest business than traditional ads. They are most interested in micro-influencers because, unlike macro-influencers or celebrities, they often support real relationships and faith. Brands can join small, close-knit groups where tips feel real and personal when they work with these leaders. Real-life events, behind-the-scenes looks, and user-generated stories that tell stories should be given more attention by businesses than content that is obviously trying to sell something. Not only does this make the brand more emotional, but it also makes it seem more like a real person, which brings buyers closer to the brand. Businesses can connect with their customers and build brand loyalty by using realistic, story-driven content from reliable sources. This also meets the needs and wants of today's digital-first audience

### **2. Enhance Interactivity and Engagement**

Retail clothing companies should stop using static ads and switch to engaging content forms if they want to attract and keep the attention of tech-savvy

customers. There is short-form video content like shoppable ads on TikTok and live shopping on Instagram that provides fun, real-time experiences that not only entertain but also get people to buy something. These dynamic forms, which are real and up-to-date, work well with the quick ways that people today like to consume information. In this way, augmented reality (AR) features like virtual try-ons for clothes and other things can really improve the experience of shopping online. AR makes shopping in stores and online more connected by letting people picture what they want to buy in a new and interesting way. People from Generation Z may be most interested in this if they like to use their phones and value ease of use, creativity, and individuality. Clothing brands can trust their customers more, connect with them more deeply, and stay competitive in the world of digital commerce, which is getting more and more involved, by using these cool technologies.

### **3. Optimize Platform-Specific Strategies**

Marketers have to change how they do things to fit how people use and post content on each social media platform. This is because each platform gives people different ways to connect with brands. Instagram is a great way to show off products, keep a brand's look consistent, and work with stars to get more people to interact and build a community. It's great for sharing stories visually. TikTok is a great app for getting the word out about goods and short videos that do really well on the site. User-generated content, popular sounds, and popular jobs are all honest ways for brands to reach more people. LinkedIn is a good tool for businesses that want to reach young workers or business-to-business people right now. Insights from experts, thought leadership, and behind-the-scenes stories can be shared here. This helps build credibility and shows that the company values things like social duty and creativity. By taking advantage of what each site does

best, advertisers can make ads that are more interesting and reach more people. This will also make people more interested in the business on all digital platforms.

#### **4. Ensure Transparency and Ethical Marketing**

Customers trust brands that sell clothes online more than any other type of business these days. All sponsored partnerships in influencer marketing need to be made public for the sake of customers and fair advertising. Also, brands have to follow global data protection laws like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This means they have to be honest about how they use data. Not only is it the law to follow rules about user privacy and data control, but it also builds trust with customers. Ethics and clarity when it comes to data should be at the top of the list. This helps businesses stay competitive in the digital market, which is getting more regulated, and builds trust over time.

#### **5. Utilize Data-Driven Marketing Strategies**

In today's crowded digital market, tactics based on data are needed to customise and keep customers interested. Companies can make ads and content more relevant to users by using AI-powered tools to learn about their tastes, watching habits, and buying habits. Social listening tools also let marketers know about new trends and how customers feel in real time, so they can change their efforts before they even happen. By letting marketing strategies get better over time, these tools make sure that brands stay relevant and popular with tech-savvy and trend-conscious Gen Z customers. When brands make content that is relevant to their audience, they can connect with them better and stay ahead of the competition in a digital world that changes so quickly.

### **6.3 Limitations and Future Research**

Some problems with this study exist, but it still tells us a lot about how Gen Z in the Kathmandu Valley shops for clothes because of social media. First, the sample only includes towns in the Kathmandu Valley. This means that it might not really show how young people in Nepal's less developed or rural areas feel and act online. This means the data can't be used for all of Gen Z in the US. An upcoming study should either compare people from different places or include people from rural areas to look at differences in how people get online and how they use it.

Secondly, the study exclusively focuses on Generation Z, which restricts the applicability of the findings to other age groups. A comparative study involving Millennials or Generation Alpha could provide valuable insights into how social media influences purchasing behavior across different generational cohorts, especially as platform usage and preferences vary significantly between them.

Respondent bias, like social desirability or wrong recall, may also be added when self-reported poll data is used. If we use a mix of eye-tracking technology, behavioural analytics, and observational data to check what people say they are doing and learn more about how they are interacting and making choices, this problem might be solved in the future. The last thing is that because social media sites and features change so quickly, the ways people acted that were seen in this study might change over time. A fuller picture of how Nepal's digital clothing market is changing can be gained by following changes in platform choices, the impact of influencers, and buying habits over time.

### **6.4 Conclusion**

Generation Z in the Kathmandu Valley gets clothes in very different ways now than they did before this study. The study says that Gen Z decides what to do by looking at

a lot of important digital factors, like what their peers say, how trustworthy leaders are, promotions, and interactive features. Traditional marketing channels aren't as important to customers as they used to be because of things like personalised content, real brand contact, and user-generated content on Instagram and TikTok. The findings add to and support theories like the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the Social Influence Theory (SIT). They show that teens who are good with technology are more likely to follow through on their behaviour plans and social forces that are seen as normal.

When it comes to clothes, this study shows how important it is for businesses, especially Nepalese companies, to quickly change their marketing strategies to fit Generation Z's digital tastes and habits. Some things that can help build brand trust are working with influencers, asking users for reviews, and making sure that social shopping works well. In this case, strategies for getting involved with the community and knowing the cultural importance of influential people in the area worked really well.

The study is helpful, but it also shows how dynamic and quickly digital marketing changes, which makes it even more important to do more research. Future research should use longitudinal approaches to examine how platform usage changes and how AI is being used to improve marketing. Digital environments are changing the way people act, and marketers in the clothing industry, both in the US and abroad, will need to understand these changes if they want to stay competitive and important.

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