

THE ROLE OF FASHION INNOVATIVENESS, INVOLVEMENT, AND SELF-EXPRESSION IN ENHANCING MUSLIM FASHION BEHAVIOR INTENTION: A CONCEPTUAL PAPER

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Abstract: Muslim fashion contributes to global economic growth by encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment. Muslim fashion is considered as an industry and a societal phenomenon that has triggered strong reactions from various stakeholders in various fields (socio-cultural, business, law, politics). The literature has reported the role of identity, religion, digital platforms, influencers, and social norms on consumer behavior in the Muslim Fashion industry. Muslim Fashion fosters a homogenous image of the ideal pious, beautiful, and modest Muslim woman that serves to flatten the global differences of the world's Muslims. The increasing number of social media users can shape new marketing trends and strategies, and marketers are starting to consider social media platforms as a primary channel to communicate and interact with customers. Social media platforms have revolutionized the mindset of modern business engagement, producing innovative content to create customer loyalty and expand brand reach. Customers to repurchase a brand because their strong attitude and commitment to innovative products have an impact on brand loyalty. In addition, the level of brand innovation can increase the likelihood of customers making additional purchases. With the presence of products that can express themselves, brands will be loved more and found to increase emotional responses, provide more potential to increase consumer love and encourage post-consumption loyalty behavior.

Keywords: Behavior Intention; Fashion Innovativeness; Involvement; Muslim Fashion; Self Expression.

1. Introduction

The fashion world continues to experience dynamic and diverse developments, influenced by various factors such as technological developments, social changes, and cultural trends. Muslim Fashion contributes to global economic growth by encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment. The Global Islamic Economy Report confirms that Muslim Fashion is driven by an underlying Islamic requirement to maintain modesty and states that Muslims spent an estimated \$295 billion in 2021 on clothing and footwear and this figure is expected to increase to \$375 billion by 2025 (UKMINDONESIA.ID). With an estimated 1.9 billion followers, Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the world, encompassing almost a fifth of the entire religious population. (UKMINDONESIA.ID). Muslim countries are centered in several zones, including the Arab region, Turkey, Iran, the Sub-Saharan region, Malay, and the Indian subcontinent. Although these zones have differences, they are all united

by the concept of 'Unity' or 'brotherhood' (Younis et al., 2022). Muslim Fashion is considered as an industry and social phenomenon that has triggered strong reactions from various stakeholders in various fields (socio-cultural, business, law, politics) (Slater and Demangeot, 2021). Because this fashion industry is relevant to many religious groups and communities around the world and is not limited to a particular community. Several studies have discussed the issue of the Muslim Fashion industry as an emerging market industry (Lewis, 2013b, 2015a, 2017a; Wilson, 2016). Different terms, including 'modest', Islamic, and halal fashion, are often used interchangeably and refer to the same concept. Islamic studies (Grine and Saeed, 2017), and fashion studies (Lewis, 2015c; Lewis, 2019), which discuss the motivations for buying Muslim Fashion clothes (Zainudin et al., 2019). The literature has reported the role of identity (Hass and Lutek, 2019), religion (Aruan and Wirdania, 2020; Lewis, 2016, 2017a), digital platforms (Baulch and Pramiyanti, 2018; Lewis, 2013a), influencers (Barron, 2020) and social norms (Lewis, 2015b, 2016, 2017b) on consumer behavior in the Muslim Fashion industry. Muslim Fashion fosters a homogenous image of the ideal pious, beautiful and modest Muslim woman that serves to flatten the global differences of the Muslim world (Warren et al., 2019).

The increasing number of social media users can shape new marketing trends and strategies, and marketers are starting to consider social media platforms as a primary channel to communicate and interact with customers. Social media platforms have revolutionized the engagement mindset of modern businesses producing innovative content to create loyal customers and expand brand reach (Sajjad et al., 2020). In the context of fashion, consumer innovation is correlated with a number of variables. Researchers generally state that consumers choose fashion to enhance their image and show their identity to others (Nellisen et al., 2011). Consumption and use of products can be used to fulfill psychological needs, such as creating self-concept, strengthening and expressing self-identity, and allowing one to assert their individuality (Puiu et al., 2021). Highly involved consumers also tend to define the attributes of their chosen products more thoroughly and clearly understand the suitability of customized products to their preferences (Simonson, 2005). Franke et al., (2009) found a positive impact of product involvement on the benefits obtained from mass customization. Thus, this study assumes that more positive cognitive, affective, and conative responses will be generated in highly engaged consumers compared to those who are less engaged. According to references (Chen et al., 2020) customers' intention to repurchase a brand due to their strong attitude and commitment to innovative products has an impact on brand loyalty. Previous studies (Lin et al., 2019; Panda et al., 2020) have investigated factors that influence brand loyalty, such as perceived value, trust, satisfaction, and self-brand connection. Brand innovation can impact brand loyalty in two different ways.

According to (Lin et al., 2019) brand innovation has the potential to increase consumer satisfaction and trust by providing imaginative and effective solutions that are aligned. In addition, the level of brand innovation can increase the likelihood that customers will make additional purchases (Kang et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2017; Stock et al., 2013). Previous research also focused on the direct influence of consumer innovation on purchase intention of a particular product category (Heidenreich et al., 2017). With the existence of products that can express themselves, brands will be more loved and found to increase emotional responses and provide more potential to increase consumer love and encourage post-consumption loyalty behavior. These diverse findings make it more important to understand the mechanisms by which product involvement can influence brand loyalty.

Based on the background, this study aims to investigate the causal relationship between Fashion as Interpersonal Communication: The Role of Fashion Innovativeness, Involvement,

and Self-Expression in Enhancing Muslim Fashion Behavior Intention. This study will provide benefits both theoretically and practically.

2. Literature review

1.1. The Relationship between Fashion Innovativeness and Self Expression

Nowadays, fashion is not just about clothing. Fashion can be a small representation of oneself to others. Fashion is a dynamic and diverse form of self-expression that reflects and shapes the complexity of human identity in social life (Nair & Delhi, 2024). Consumers who have a high level of innovativeness in fashion often look for unique and different products, which allow them to show their personal side through their choice of fashion style. Innovative fashion reflects novelty, creativity, and the courage to try something different, which in turn helps consumers express their individuality and distinguish themselves from others. Self-expression in the context of fashion is often related to how someone uses clothing to reflect self-concept and personal values. individuals enjoy engaging in behaviors that help them express themselves (Mishra et al., 2021). This is in accordance with the opinion of (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006) who stated that Self-Expression is behavior that shows that individuals want to act so that these actions enhance their social or inner self. Innovation in fashion provides opportunities for consumers to express their self-identity. Innovation in fashion allows consumers to express their feelings, views, and social identities, both consciously and unconsciously. Consumers tend to use clothing as a means of communication to convey who they are to the outside world, and innovative fashion allows them to do so in a more authentic and original way. Thus, we hypothesize the following relationships:

H1: Fashion Innovativeness has a significant influence on Self Expression

1.2. The relationship between Fashion Innovativeness and involvement

In the ever-evolving fashion world, innovation in fashion is an important concept in increasing customer satisfaction. On the other hand, involvement reflects the extent to which consumers feel emotionally and psychologically involved in the process of selecting and purchasing fashion products. Innovative consumers often have a higher level of involvement in the fashion category. This is in accordance with the results of research from (Puiu et al., 2021) that high involvement also strengthens consumers' tendency to innovate in their fashion choices, because they are more motivated to find products that not only meet functional needs but also provide higher emotional and social value. Consumers with a high level of fashion innovation tend to be trendsetters, always looking for new things, and willing to take risks to be different. They are more open to changing trends and are often the first to try the latest fashion products. In addition, consumers with high involvement often act as opinion leaders in their community or social environment. This means that they not only consume the product, but also share their views and experiences with others (Choo et al., 2014). This means that the higher the level of involvement of a person in a product, the more likely they are to show innovative behavior in using or choosing the product (Vieira, 2009). Thus, we hypothesize the relationship:

H2: Fashion innovativeness has a significant effect on involvement.

1.3. The Relationship between Self Expression and Involvement

According to Belk (1988) 'We are what we have'. Implicitly, this explains that consumers consider the goods they own to be part of themselves. Consumers often make choices as a form of self-expression (Johnson and Ein-Gar, 2008). In other words, self-expression refers to an individual's ability to express something of themselves, which is related to their personality (da Silveira Espindola and Silveira, 2017). Because fashion is an expression of individual and social identity (Chang et al., 2018), self-expression can be an important factor in purchasing Muslim Fashion.

Research by Mittal (2006) shows that products that help promote certain components of a person's self-concept tend to create higher involvement, even affection, towards the product. In this context, fashion clothing becomes a relevant choice because it has the capacity to strengthen and express the consumer's self-identity. This statement is also in line with research conducted by O'Cass (2001), which states that fashion clothing is often an important symbolic consumption decision for consumers, because it can describe their personality and self-image. Thus, we hypothesize the relationship:

H3: Self Expression has a significant effect on Involvement

1.4. The relationship between fashion innovativeness and loyalty has a significant effect

Customer loyalty is one of the most valuable assets for a business. Loyalty does not only mean that consumers return to buy a product or service repeatedly, but also includes the emotional attachment and trust they build towards a brand. There are many definitions of loyalty and one of the most widely cited is the definition of (Richard L., 1999) Loyal consumers are defined as consumers who have a strong psychological commitment to repurchase a preferred product/service consistently in the future, resulting in repeat purchases with the same brand, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to cause brand switching behavior.

Understanding the factors that influence loyalty is very important, and many researchers have studied in this area (Cheung & To, 2019) Attitude orientation is influenced by cognitive factors (factors related to information processing), affective factors (factors related to emotional reactions), and behavioral factors (factors related to brand-related behavior), and ultimately This leads to repeat purchases. In marketing, customer loyalty can help businesses build a stable customer base. To encourage customer loyalty, loyalty must be built on trust and consistent positive experiences. This is where the link between fashion innovation and consumer loyalty emerges, which develops from emotional attachment and satisfaction with the brand. Thus, we hypothesize the relationship:

H4: Fashion innovativeness has a significant effect on loyalty.

1.5. The Relationship between Self-Expression and Loyalty

Self-Expression plays an important role in shaping loyalty, especially in the context of Muslim Fashion. Muslim fashion is not only fashion for functional needs, but also functions as a medium of communication, which allows individuals to convey their Islamic identity and values to others. Research consistently reveals that consumers choose fashion to enhance their

image and communicate their identity to others (Shim and Bickle, 1994; Auty and Elliott, 1998; McKinney et al., 2004).

In the context of Muslim Fashion, consumers who have high self-expression will choose styles that are relevant to themselves and represent their identity, such as pious, beautiful, and modest. When consumers feel that a brand or product can represent their identity, they tend to develop an emotional connection, satisfaction with the brand or product. Consumers who are highly satisfied, because their self-image feels represented, are more likely to be loyal to the brand (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Royo Vela and Casamassima, 2011) because they are not easily influenced by competitors' marketing efforts (Fornell et al., 1996). This is especially true for consumers who have high self-expression, where self-expression is an important component in their purchasing decisions. As a result, brands that meet their consumers' self-expression needs will be more likely to foster long-term loyalty and repeat patronage. Thus, we hypothesize the relationship:

H5: Self-Expression has a significant effect on Loyalty

1.6. Involvement relationship has a significant influence on Loyalty

Involvement is a widely studied construct related to consumer behavior. Involvement refers to the mental tendency to be interested or enthusiastic about a particular product category (Bloch., 1986). There are two types of involvement in the marketing literature, namely Situational Involvement, reflecting involvement that occurs only in certain situations, while Enduring Involvement, reflects ongoing involvement and is not related to a particular purchase situation. Involvement in Muslim fashion is the consumer's perception of the importance of Muslim fashion. It refers to the amount of time and effort consumers spend in selecting and purchasing fashion clothing (O'Cass, 2004) and can be understood through consumer-fashion clothing attachment or relationship (O'Cass, 2000).

As digital platforms become more popular, consumers can share their information, experiences, and opinions about a brand or product with companies and other consumers. These digital platforms allow marketers to tap into consumer suggestions and feedback regarding new products and their preferences for new trends. Virtual consumer environments, such as virtual communities, virtual design tools, and prototyping centers, in particular, are useful for marketers to involve their consumers in product development and supporting activities (Nambisan, 2002). Consumer involvement provides important benefits to companies because the products produced are more in line with their needs and preferences (Simonson, 2005, after utilizing information provided by consumers. Franke et al., (2009) found a positive impact of product involvement on the benefits obtained from mass customization.

Thus, we hypothesize the relationship:

H6: Involvement has a significant effect on Loyalty

The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

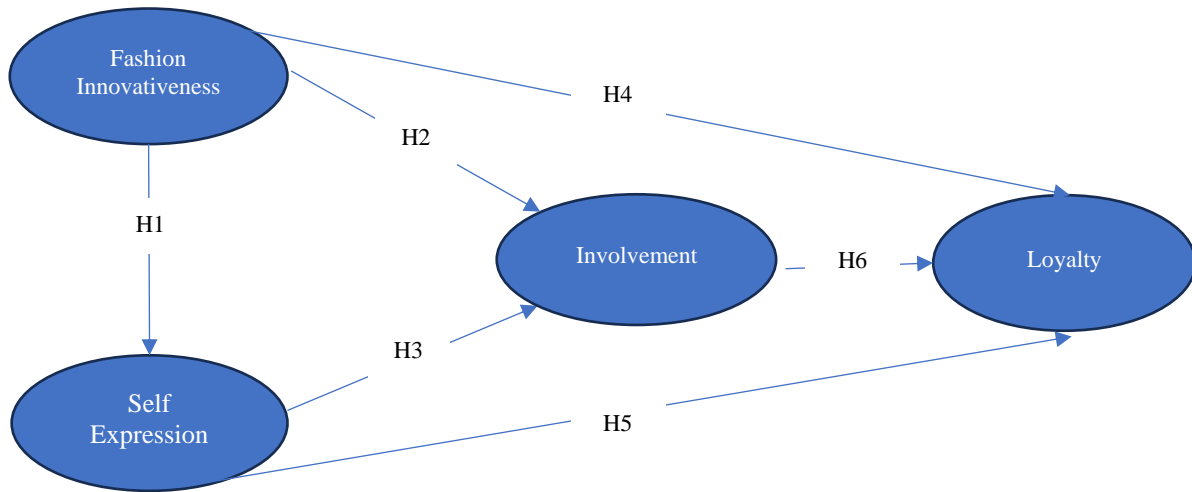


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

3. Method

This study employs the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique utilizing a Variance Based SEM approach, commonly referred to as Partial Least Squares (PLS). The PLS software utilized in this investigation is SmartPLS 3.0. The PLS analysis is performed in three phases:

1.7. Outer Model

The outer model serves as a measurement framework for evaluating the validity and reliability of the model.

a. Convergent validity

The evaluation of convergent validity in PLS with reflective indicators is determined by the loading factor, which is the correlation between the item/component score and the construct score of the indicators that assess the construct. The criterion for convergent validity stipulates that outer loading must exceed 0.7, communality must exceed 0.5, and average variance extracted (AVE) must exceed 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014).

b. Discriminant Validity.

Discriminant validity is evaluated through the cross-loading of the measurement with its construct.

c. Reliability Assessment

The reliability test assesses the internal consistency of a measurement equipment. Reliability denotes the accuracy, consistency, and precision of a measurement instrument in performing measurements. Reliability testing in PLS employs two methods: Cronbach's alpha, which assesses the minimum reliability value of a construct, and composite reliability, which evaluates the actual reliability value of a construct (Hair et al., 2014). The guideline stipulates that the alpha or composite reliability value should exceed 0.7, while a value of 0.6 remains permissible. (Hair et al., 2014).

3.2. Inner Model Evaluation.

The inner model is a structural framework employed to forecast causal interactions among latent variables. The assessment of the inner model can be observed using many metrics, including the coefficient of determination (R²) and predictive relevance (Q²). The R² value quantifies the extent of variation in the dependent variable attributable to changes in the independent variable. An R² value of 0.7 indicates that 70 percent of the variation in the dependent variable can be attributed to the independent variable, with the remaining variation accounted for by external variables not included in the model. The route coefficient score or inner model, as shown by the t-statistic, must exceed 1.96 for a two-tailed hypothesis and 1.64 for a one-tailed hypothesis when doing hypothesis testing at a 5 percent alpha level and 80 percent power (Hair et al., 2014).

3.3. Hypothesis Testing

In hypothesis testing utilizing statistical values, the t-statistic with a 5% alpha level is 1.96. The criteria for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis are that H_a is accepted and H₀ is rejected when the t-statistic exceeds 1.96. The hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than 0.05. In order to prove the hypothesis, the hypothesis testing needs to be done. The hypothesis can be analyzed by using structural equation modelling (SEM). SEM approach is deemed suitable to analyze the intrrelationships among constructs.

4. Discussion

The increasingly challenging market conditions force the fashion industry to find new ways to introduce new products, adapt, and encourage unplanned purchases in fashion stores. Fashion innovation and visual merchandising play an important role in this challenge. Fashion innovation is an important concept in consumer behavior science and is often used to study the process of fashion diffusion and the success of a new product (Anić et al., 2018). In the context of this study, innovative clothing refers to products that are combined in the production process to create high-quality products that allow consumers to have new experiences when wearing products produced using innovative materials and techniques (Puiu et al., 2021). It can be defined as a person's tendency to buy new and different fashion products and the extent to which the consumer is willing to adopt new ideas relatively faster than other consumers in the social circle. Consumers who have a high interest in fashion innovation are often emotionally connected to brands that are able to meet the need for new things. This will trigger strong loyalty, where consumers feel attached to a brand because it is able to provide new and satisfying experiences that are relevant to their lifestyle. Moreover, the first consumers who can adopt and buy the latest fashion products can be said to be fashion innovators. Fashion innovators can help marketers find new breakthroughs to determine effective marketing strategies.

Muslim Fashion fostering a homogeneous image of the ideal pious, beautiful, and modest Muslim woman, so that in choosing fashion products the expanded self-concept plays an important role. This concept shows that consumers look for products that match their sense of self (Sivadas and Venkatesh, 1995). Auty and Elliott (1998) explain that clothing can be used as a symbol or language that can convey certain messages to others. Therefore, involvement in fashion is often influenced by the desire to express themselves, so that consumers choose fashion that they think can represent their identity to the public.

Fashion consumers, especially those who always want to follow trends, have a great interest in innovation. They look for products that not only meet functional needs but also reflect their personality and identity. Brands that consistently innovate and introduce exciting new

collections have the ability to stay relevant in the eyes of consumers. This innovation generates curiosity and enthusiasm that can ultimately build strong loyalty.

In the context of fashion, involvement also plays an important role in influencing consumer behavior. Someone who has high involvement, in this case fashion, will conduct more extensive information searches, compare various brands and ultimately through brand commitment (Michaelidou et al., 2008). Involvement in fashion is often related to how consumers see and express themselves through their choice of clothing and accessories. For many people, fashion is a way to communicate with the outside world, showing personality, values, and social status. Therefore, this involvement tends to create a stronger relationship with certain fashion brands that they consider to be able to represent or strengthen their identity. Consumers who have high involvement in fashion are more likely to develop loyalty to certain brands. This is because of the feeling of being connected to the brand (Thomson et al., 2005), which is associated with a strong commitment to long-term relationships. When consumers feel that a brand can consistently meet their preferences and needs, they are more likely to remain loyal to the brand and make repeat purchases.

5. Conclusion

The fashion sector must adapt, develop new products, and stimulate unexpected purchases in stores to survive in a tough market. Visual merchandising and fashion innovation are key to this dilemma. Fashion innovativeness, a key term in consumer behavior research, is utilized to analyze fashion dissemination and product success. Fashion-forward consumers are emotionally engaged to brands that can meet their needs. This will build brand loyalty since a brand may offer new, satisfying experiences that fit their lifestyle.

Muslim fashion design promotes a uniform picture of the ideal pious, beautiful, and modest Muslim woman; therefore, self-concept is vital when picking fashion products. This suggests customers seek things that fit their identity (Sivadas and Venkatesh, 1995). Thus, customers choose fashion that they think represents their identity to the public because they want to express themselves.

Fashion lovers, especially trend-followers, love innovation. Thus, innovative brands with interesting new collections can stay current with consumers. Curiosity and enthusiasm generate loyalty with this invention. Fashion engagement also affects customer behaviour. High-involvement fashion consumers search for more information, compare brands, and commit to brands. Fashion involvement is often linked to how consumers express themselves through clothing and accessories. Many use fashion to express their personality, values, and social standing. This involvement strengthens their relationship with fashion labels they believe symbolize or strengthen their identity. Fashion-savvy consumers are more loyal to businesses. The feeling of being connected to the brand is linked to long-term connections. Brand loyalty and repeat purchases are more likely when consumers feel a brand can consistently meet their needs.

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