

Consumer Attitudes and Purchase Intentions toward Second-hand Clothing Online and through Social Media Platforms: Does Gender and Income Matter?

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Second-hand shopping as a segment in the retail industry has grown rapidly over the years. There have not been sufficient studies to show the reasoning as to why consumers started to shop at second-hand stores more frequently over the past few years than prior years nor logistic understanding of attitudes towards second-hand shopping. Apparel resale is expected to grow 6% by 2025, showcasing \$25 billion chunk of the \$425 billion retail industry in 2025 (Sutter, 2016). It would be beneficial for the leaders and influencers of the fashion industry to pinpoint the reasoning behind this expected growth of second-hand shopping by analyzing everyday consumer attitudes, behaviors, and its variances in gender and income. Second-hand shopping, specifically thrifting, has become a lifestyle for consumers of the urban city. People who shop for second-hand items tend to be conscious consumers who are aware for the negative effects of the fashion industry (Sweeny, 2016) and they have initiated to make lifestyle adjustments to make better purchasing decisions. However, younger consumers, who are believed to be behind the thrifting movement (Yan et al., 2015), also spent more time on social media today than any other media (Bell & Dittmar, 2011). In effect, about 93% of the younger population in the U. S. has mobile access to the internet through a tablet, a phone, or any other device (Statista, 2017). According to Cheung, Liu, and Lee (2015), social media has changed the way the fashion industry used to be. It is undeniable, that consumers have adopted a new way of shopping through social networking in the last decade (Kim & Ko, 2012). As e-commerce revenues from apparel continue to have a staggering growth - 72 billion dollars in 2016 with projection of 116 billion in 2021 (Statista, 2018), online shopping experience has become more and more appealing and is seen as a part of shoppers' entertainment and enjoyment (Bilgihan, 2016). However, not many second-hand retailers have embraced e-commerce and social commerce; therefore, the primary purpose of this study was to examine second-hand shopping purchase intentions online and through social media. The secondary purpose was to analyze consumer attitudes, behaviors, and purchase intentions toward second-hand shopping online and through social media based on consumers' gender and income level.

Framework and Method. The theory of reasoned action (TRA) model was used in this study to predict and explain consumer attitudes toward the act of buying (Ajzen, 2012). The sample of this study consisted of 213 participants; 65% females and 34% males. Over half (52%) of respondents were of Generation Y followed by 35% of Baby Boomers, and 13% of Generation X. The majority (80%) of participants live in urban areas and are predominantly of middle (52%) and low (33%) income categories. Statistical analyses were conducted through SPSS software and included correlation, t-testing, and chi-square analyses.

Results and Implications. Correlation testing results found statistically significant relationship between attitudes toward purchasing second-hand clothing online as well as through social media platforms and purchase intentions. Respondents indicated that they would buy secondhand clothing online and through social media if the sizing was more accurate and true to present day ($r=.695$), if the site provided images on how to best style the fashion item ($r=.445$),

and if the second-hand shopping online platform was fast and convenient ($r=.645$). Significant relationship was also found between consumers' current second-hand purchasing behaviors and purchase intentions through online and social media platforms ($r=.249$). Those consumers who currently enjoy ($r=.348$) frequent ($r=.249$) second-hand clothing purchases are also very likely to engage in purchasing second-hand clothing online and through social media platforms. When examining consumer gender differences, an independent sample t-test results showed statistically significant differences in consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward purchasing second-hand clothing online and through social media platforms based on gender. To begin with, female consumers purchase more secondhand or thrifted fashion items per month than their male counterparts ($p=.01$). Female consumers agreed more than male consumers that social media plays an important role in their clothing purchases ($p=.00$), that they are more inclined to purchase fashion items they see on social media ($p=.00$), and that they would purchase secondhand clothing through social media or an online presence ($p=.00$). Female consumers also indicated that they would buy secondhand clothing online if the sizing was accurate and true to present day ($p=.02$). To better understand the second-hand shopper, income level was also examined. Chi-square results found statistical significance in intentions toward purchasing second-hand clothing online and income level consumer groups (low income, middle income, high income). Low income consumers indicated that they buy more second-hand clothing items per month than middle and high income consumer groups. Out of the three income groups, low income consumers agreed the most (74%, $p=.00$) that they enjoy shopping at thrift stores. Low income consumers also agreed more than the other two income groups (77%, $p=.04$) that they would purchase second-hand clothing online if the sizing was accurate/true to present time, and if the second-hand retailer provided a styling image of the fashion item online (67%, $p=.05$). Low income consumers also agreed more (24%, $p=.00$) that they would like to see second-hand stores with a stronger social media presence. Study implications are further discussed.

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