

THE EVOLUTION OF FASHION CONTENT ON TIKTOK: FROM 2020 TO 2024 IN MALAYSIA

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Received: 21st May 2024

Accepted: 1st October 2024

Published: 24th October 2024

ABSTRACT

Fashion have a profound impact on TikTok, which has transformed the fashion trend generation and consumption process since 2020. This paper, therefore, tracks the development of fashion-related content on TikTok. More An analysis of how the platform has allowed fashion influencers, trends, and promotion to diverge from traditional business conventions. This analysis explores the profound impact that TikTok's technological advancements have had on the fields of fashion marketing and content generation. Additionally, the study examines the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on fashion trends as well as TikTok's contribution to the acceleration and maintenance of these trends. This research investigates the substantial transformations in industry practices and consumer behaviour prompted by TikTok, with a specific emphasis on Malaysia, by analysing critical fashion challenges and future projections.

Keywords: TikTok; Fashion Trends; Social Media Influencers; Digital Marketing; Technological Innovations; Consumer Behavior;

INTRODUCTION

TikTok is a popular platform for sharing short videos, which differs from YouTube by its time limitation and quick access to up-to-date information (Violot et al.2024). The main popularity drivers for it are user-generated content, perceived usefulness, and ease of use. The usage of TikTok as a new informational channel grows, sometimes in areas that were previously occupied only by traditional mass media. In Malaysia, there is an opportunity to use TikTok for educational purposes, including in the evolution of the learning process (Abdullah et al., 2023). The popularity of social networks analysis found that social media posts from brands showed higher odds for promotion and reach than actual users.

More outcomes can be observed to some extent using Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Still, TikTok, as a new critical social media, allows diluting low reach odds, considering that for a single post, there were millions of brand shares and views (Hao & Li, 2024). There is a difference between how brands communicate with others on TikTok, and it is echoed not only in the brand communication with clients or just the total communication on social media. Showing the latest market trends, it is likely expected that TikTok will influence the market power of the fashion industry, which should be observed accordingly (World English Journal et al., 2023).

Social media has developed into a social e-commerce platform, social e-commerce is e-commerce transactions facilitated and promoted through social media. Mobile short video apps are widely used as a marketing channel, and there is an online social e-commerce platform, and the following is the offline mobile e-commerce platform with the development of these two fields, attention can be drawn to the predicted demand for this product based on the matching models and the types of consumption in the form of SAID model (World English Journal et al., 2023).

Background of TikTok and its Growth in Malaysia

A study from market research and consulting company, Ipsos, conduct analysis of the media habits among 16-64-year-olds living in 27 markets in February 2021 showed that Malaysians and Brazilians displayed the highest percentage of TikTok usage, at 74% and 67% respectively. Within the Southeast Asia region, 17- 44-year-olds were found to have favored TikTok over any other social media platform (Choi, 2022). It was observed that TikTok usage has become part of a national trend and the country's culture. Although earlier studies have found that there has been a preference by older Malaysians towards other social media platforms compared to TikTok, MCMC reported that the app's download percentage in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic ranked highly amongst the public.

The global commercial community looks to TikTok as a potential marketing platform, primarily as a result of its active user population and how the app creates a special opportunity to reach that demographic due to the fun, fast-paced, and creative nature of TikTok. These aspects contribute to brand engagement and the sight of Malaysia's largest and youngest user market on TikTok. The most significant development and growth of TikTok as an international social media phenomenon occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (Kim et al., 2022). From 2020 to 2021, the United States of America (USA) was TikTok's top market, contributing to approximately 20% of its global total downloads.

There were about 100 million active global users, with an estimated 842.7K downloads. In 2021, Malaysia recorded over 20 million active users, making it the top

14 market with a total of 375 million downloads (Agrawal, 2023). Brands and companies have capitalized on TikTok's growth to advertise and promote their products and services to the platform's young audiences.

Significance of Fashion Content on Social Media Platforms

The acoustic elements of the TikToks influence. If TikTok were downloaded overnight in business, budget and acceptance of the trends would lead. Tagging into TikTok trends is very cheap. "Looks" potential is TikTok, and the effect can be filmic. It has reinvented and altered design and lately artists using the site. The fashion cycle of the industry is generally described as a process of trend-setting, followed by product production in line with the trends, and then the products are marketed to consumers. The increasing accessibility and purchasing of mobile and smart devices, as well as its digital lifestyle, have led digital natives as a 'fully individual era'.

The fashion business would be affected by youth and how they utilize mobile. Instagram, Snap chat and TikTok have evolved into dynamic platforms for communication and material distribution for business, promoting the interactions and challenges of fashion as well as behaviors and news of brands or influencers. Urban Outfitters, a retailer that appeals to a younger demographic, and color schemes, cool lighting and casual shots of product content is pushed out to take advantage of the aesthetic of TikTok and to mimic in-app trends. "We're focused on culture and what's in that moment rather than the perfect or slick post," said Pagano, UO.

Fashion content is a diverse genre of information and includes content such as modeling, clothing descriptions, retail displays, fashion news, segments, fashion designs and events (Ha et al., 2017). Young consumers consume an array of fashion content from a range of sources including retailers' websites, blogs, influencer content on social media and traditional media such as magazines and TV. The fashion industry has been evolving along with mobile applications and social media platforms. Social media platforms have made the fashion industry transparent and easy for customers all over the globe (David et al., 2022).

The most viewed, most 'viral' videos tend to be those related to fashion (World English Journal et al., 2023). "The TikTok fashion revolution" ended with the likes of JW Anderson designing a high fashion collection inspired by TikTokers. Through integrated shopping and shoppable links, there is a vast potential for retail in TikTok collaborations, too: Users can go from seeing a luxury bag in a video to acquiring it in a single click. The platform has brought to the forefront the elusive luxury market with submarkets of sustainable fashion and depop culture.

FASHION TRENDS ON TIKTOK IN 2020

Emerging from being a video-sharing platform, fashion on TikTok has emerged as a gateway for users to share fashion trends, fashion styles, and a creative way to show their creative side. TikTok fascinated many among the younger generation and caused them to become part of a fashion-driven video-centric platform and creating a community-centered platform where individuals around the world have joined "hashtag challenges, and fashion trends enabling them to rate modern global and cultural fashion trends (Kaufman et al., 2023). TikTok has appeared to be a content-driven platform that has been able to captivate the media and socialize its fashion content

across the globe, especially during the emergence of the global pandemic (Neves et al., 2022).

Fashion trends have been ruling the roost since day one and when it comes down to determining who or what's trending or not, TikTok has given rise to a few fashion trends that have managed to captivate enormous fanfare. This paper primarily emphasizes the idea of how production teams on TikTok have stepped up to create exciting content and have leveraged modern creativity, to beginners, designers, and other fashion influencers to market themselves through fashion trends and have initiated the emergence of "content creation" as the new fashion norm. Additionally, this research focused mainly on fashion content in Malaysia. Though the trend might have occurred earlier elsewhere in the country, in the workplace, and on social media platforms (Zou et al., 2022).

Predicting trends and understanding consumers' tastes and needs have become the core principles in the fashion industry, especially for design companies and creators to improve their businesses as well as brands through product development, fashion forecasting, and styling techniques (Lin & Yang, 2019). Traditional research used to rely on fashion shows, fashion magazines, writer's secrets, or companies like WGSN to acquire data-driven insights into current fashion trends. Recently, the US \$2.5 trillion global revenue fashion industry has been victim to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in many losses to retail businesses (Shafi et al., 2020). This is mainly due to the significant decline in sales and production which forced many well-known brands and designers to postpone or even cancel their fashion shows and physical store launches. Nevertheless, despite the prevailing pandemic, some countries saw an increase in affiliate fashion media on certain aspects of fashion due to a well-known app known as TikTok which everyone conveniently used because of the quarantine and widespread lockdown. TikTok, unlike other social media platforms, allows users to create short videos ranging from 3 to 60 seconds that enable users to explore their creativity and sense of fashion in a myriad of countless ways (Shukri and Mustaffa2023).

Key Fashion Challenges and Trends

It could be argued that Malaysia is one of the last remaining markets in Southeast Asia without an official TikTok office, although TikTok headquarters are located here. Influencers hail from various places in Malaysia, but most of them originate from the Kuala Lumpur region, the nation's economic and social center (Hassim and Mohamad 2020) As such, it represents a variety of ethnic cultures and languages that are evident in the nation's fashion styles and selections. This multifaceted nature characterizes the fashion sphere, motivating the separate policy approach toward promoting fashion production in Malaysia (Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024).

As composers and consumers congregate on social media to connect, showcase choices, and brainstorm, this dynamic discipline of trendspotting can be seen as a part of social media merriment and conscience, responding to psychological and identity needs (Anwar and Nor 2020). Social media is no longer relegated to simply influencing the way that users keep up with the news, as platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok have begun to shape culture, retail, and collectivity, particularly within the realm of fashion. Beauty and fashion brands began leveraging social media from the early nineties (Bodò et al., 2020) and has only grown in importance since. Using TikTok throughout the Covid-19 pandemic in Malaysia, consumers began to interact with fashion brands in new, different intermediary provoked by the health

crisis. Apple's App Store reported that TikTok was the most popular and downloaded app in 2020 in Malaysia, underlining its quick penetration (Kim et al., 2022). The uptake was noted not only among consumers and influencers, but by brands and retailers from the fashion and beauty industries.

IMPACT OF INFLUENCERS ON FASHION CONTENT

Influencers with a more significant number of followings are more successful in affecting the potential purchase of the products within an influencer endorsement video (Pan et al., 2022). This may induce individuals' motivation to change their business toward the recommendation of social media influencers. (Choi, 2022). The reason is that a larger number of followings will foster the likelihood of multiple individuals of a given population sharing similar preferences for fashion brands or fashion statements to subscribe to the content of the influencer.

Additionally, they exchange fashion information more the TikTok social media stars' followings and likes in endorsement videos affect viewers' spontaneous purchases of clothing (Awalia Khasanah, 2022). Those who share similar fashion preferences among social media users and who share similar fashion-related knowledge and clothing purchases as a result of endorsement videos seem to be acting in line with one another, and influencers continue to influence followers' purchases of endorsed products.

Role of Influencers in Shaping Fashion Trends

Influencers have considerably shaped not only digital fashion but also real fashion in various ways (Zou et al., 2022). Most of the influencers are from South East Asia, while the data does not reflect trends in the Muslim world as a whole, it is interesting that there are not many conservative or religious influencers (Zulian et al., 2021). There are also likely cultural and regional variations to consider, but it is beyond the scope of this study. Malaysia, where Muslims make up a large proportion of the population, has its cultural aspects and fashion styles. Students, the main target market for fashion products, always have a strong desire to look fashionable (Awalia Khasanah, 2022).

The popularity of social media platforms among students and the role of social media in shaping fashion trends and personal decisions lead to the aim of this research, to analyze records made on TikTok of the top 11 influencers, focusing on their fashion content between 2020 and 2024 with the aim to understand fashion contents (Hassan et al.). Using a theoretical framework that combined social influence theory and technology acceptance model, we aimed to predict a significant impact on students' fashion decisions based on these micro-influencers' fashion.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS AND FASHION CONTENT ON TIKTOK

It is simple to discover visually driven information and see it in the app's various interfaces making it user-friendly when you open TikTok. For designers, fashion scholars, and those interested in the history of dress, it can be especially valuable since a lot more specialized content is available (Ha et al., 2017). Branding, Mass Market, Luxury and High Fashion are some of the various styles. Technologies like shoppable posts, fitting rooms, 3D filters, and virtual experience malls promise to revolutionize online commerce in the fashion and retail industries (Alexander & Kent, 2022).

TikTok allows anyone to become a content creator, posting short videos of their daily lives and sharing anything they find interesting, including fashion items. Viewers may interact with the videos via likes, comments, and shares to help them stand out from other fashion content. Rewards like virtual presents may be given to users they like, users are given a gift that they may convert into money on a recurring basis if they prove they can produce high-quality fashion material (Awalia Khasanah, 2022). Users may network and meet others in the style, fashion, and business sectors by participating in these competitions. Fashion business geared toward other internet users new to the fashion business, helping to reveal their creative work on a bigger scale (Qian and Xie2022).

Technological breakthroughs have led to unexpected developments in the fashion industry (Zou et al., 2022). Fashion blogging has changed the manner individuals access diverse cultures and styles. New apps like TikTok enable fashion content to reach a broader audience. TikTok offers tools that are useful for editing, filters, and effects to enable individuals to upgrade their content at a low cost or even free of charge (Zulkifli & Rajandran, 2024). The social network has aided designers and creators in developing a digital strategy and producing distinct content to attract more followers. It also enables them to engage in commerce via shoppable posts (Awalia Khasanah, 2022).

FUTURE PROJECTIONS: FASHION CONTENT ON TIKTOK IN MALAYSIA (2021-2024)

Borges 2023 from World English Journal state fashion collection decisions, in the foreseeable future, have been predicted to become trendier, 70% casual, more the realization of the following prediction as the fashion trends in Malaysia will become more casual. Furthermore, with alterations to the fashion season schedule, a digital-first approach may be the way forward in the future of fashion weeks.

People will have the opportunity to mix physical events with digital and possibly biannual formats with already established campaigns such as Resort and Pre-fall to avoid overconsumption and also slow the pace of design and production of collections. This study projects that fashion content on TikTok is expected to continue to evolve from the year 2021 to 2024 in the context of Malaysia (Kim et al., 2022). It is vital to employ advanced Natural Language Processing techniques such as trend analysis and text-mining techniques to capture the up-to-date customer opinions, thoughts, and underlying concerns for the prediction of consumer behavior and business success (Choi, 2021).

This is because TIK TOK, as a digital marketing platform in fashion, provides information on whether a social media influencer in the fashion industry is transitioning her internet persona. Their identity, their apparel, as well as their gendered messages, are all important components. Their identity, their apparel, as well as their gendered messages, are all important components of fashion content on TikTok in Malaysia. In the future, we can expect to see a further diversification of styles and influences, with a focus on sustainability and inclusivity. This evolution will likely be driven by advancements in technology and the increasing popularity of sustainable fashion brands.

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