

The Role of Fashion Social Commerce in Advancing Sustainable Practices in India

Akshita Srivastava and Suman Verma

Abstract

The study delves into the realm of fashion social commerce in India, scrutinizing its correlation with sustainable development. Fashion, known for its allure, faces grave sustainability challenges, prompting the emergence of practices like second-hand shopping and on-demand production. Amidst this, social commerce, conducted via social media, has evolved as a transformative force within the fashion industry. However, scant research explores its impact on sustainable development, especially in the Indian context. The research aims to unravel this relationship, examining the role of fashion social commerce in fostering youth entrepreneurship, empowering women, creating sustainable employment, and promoting environmentally conscious practices. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the study combined qualitative and quantitative methodologies. A survey was conducted with 38 entrepreneurs selling on social media platforms, followed by in-depth interviews with 17 businesses, to ascertain the relationship between social commerce and sustainability. The findings showcased a significant presence of young entrepreneurs leveraging social media to establish their businesses, marking a shift in entrepreneurship trends. Women's representation and empowerment within these ventures stood out, highlighting how social commerce enables greater participation and leadership roles for women. Moreover, these businesses predominantly consisted of micro-enterprises, contributing to job creation, especially in rural areas, aligning with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Comparing environmental practices with fast fashion e-commerce reveals stark differences. Social commerce emphasizes fewer product releases, employs make-to-order strategies, and focuses on waste management and sustainability, contrasting the high-speed turnover model of fast fashion.

The research underscores that fashion social commerce isn't solely about buying and selling; it's a platform for values, trust, and sustainable choices. It amplifies opportunities for young entrepreneurs, women, and rural employment while advocating for environmentally conscious practices. This article serves as a lens into the potential of

social commerce to reshape the fashion industry toward a more equitable, sustainable, and environmentally friendly future.

Keywords: Sustainable development, sustainable development goals, fashion social commerce, youth entrepreneurship, women empowerment

Introduction

Fashion and the environment share a complex relationship, as the apparel and textile industry has a huge ecological impact. Fashion, renowned for its allure and creativity, stands as the second-most polluting industry globally (Bliss, 2019). Its inherently unsustainable nature, extensively highlighted in recent discussions, has spurred an urgent call for transformative action within its realms (Ro, 2020; Stallard, 2022). Responding to this urgency, numerous initiatives have emerged, aiming to mitigate fashion's environmental impact and foster sustainability. Practices like second-hand shopping, on-demand production, and repair-redesign-upcycle approaches have gained traction, signifying a shift toward more responsible consumption patterns (fibre2fashion, 2020).

Amidst this landscape, fashion's integration with e-commerce has witnessed a remarkable evolution: social commerce. This novel paradigm entails commerce carried out through social media platforms, primarily by small businesses leveraging social networks for both inception and transactional purposes (Lu Fan and Zhou, 2016). While the assumption prevails that social media plays a pivotal role in promoting sustainability (Unilever, 2023), scant research delves into the domain of sustainable development within fashion social commerce, particularly within the Indian marketplace. This research seeks to untangle these complexities by delving into specific questions that underscore the correlation between fashion social commerce in India and sustainable development. As the industry grapples with its environmental and social impact, questions arise about the social responsibility intertwined with its operations (Ro, 2020), making this research an important one with a future-oriented perspective.

The study aims at exploring sustainability within fashion social commerce, focusing on specific dimensions aligned with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (unwomen.org, n.d.). The study aims to investigate four key aspects. Firstly, the research delves into the role of social commerce platforms in the Indian marketplace to foster and encourage entrepreneurial opportunities among the youth demographic in the business of fashion. Secondly, the study investigates the representation and empowerment of women in entrepreneurship and leadership roles within the domain of fashion social commerce in India, gauging the extent to which this model

supports and encourages women (Ghosh and Nath, 2016). The research examines the representation of women in influential leadership positions within these commerce platforms, contributing to the discourse on women's leadership empowerment (Sarkar and Singh, 2020). Thirdly, the study seeks to understand the opportunities created for sustainable and meaningful employment, especially in rural areas, facilitated by fashion social commerce operating in India (Prasad, 2018). Lastly, it investigates the impact of social commerce on environmental awareness and sustainable practices in India, specifically comparing its practices with prevailing unsustainable fashion models like fast fashion e-commerce.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The research design allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the correlation between fashion social commerce practices in the Indian marketplace and sustainable development. Secondary research encompassed an in-depth analysis of global and Indian trends in fashion social commerce. Various sources, including reports, books, news articles, and business publications, were utilized to gather insights into the evolving landscape of social commerce. The primary data collection involved a structured survey that was administered to 38 respondents representing India-based fashion social commerce businesses. This was followed by personal interviews with 17 businesses to get an insight into sustainable development in relation to fashion social commerce. Non-probability convenience sampling was employed to select a sample of social media-driven fashion brands. The quantitative data from the survey and the qualitative insights from the interviews were meticulously analyzed. Descriptive statistical analysis was used for the interpretation of the survey results. The findings derived from the data analysis were discussed in relation to the research questions, providing a comprehensive insight into the correlation between fashion social commerce and sustainability within the Indian context.

Ethical considerations included informed consent from participants, confidentiality, and adherence to ethical guidelines throughout the research process. The study acknowledges limitations, including the constraint of studying the entire population and potential biases inherent in convenience sampling methods. The scope of this research is also limited to exploring a select few aspects of sustainability with respect to fashion social commerce.

Literature Review

E-commerce and sustainability

In the sustainable development agenda and other development goals agreed upon internationally (unwomen.org, n.d.), the UN General Assembly stated its intentions to use Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to advance trade by 2030 (Sun, et al., 2021). It can be used to aid entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, the creation of decent jobs, and to empower women as business owners and entrepreneurs. Using ICT-based financial services like mobile and web payments, the expansion of MSMEs in developing countries can be aided, and joining supply chains and markets can be made easier. Women-owned small and micro businesses benefit from B2B, B2C, and C2C transactions that use e-commerce platforms to access domestic and international markets. Because they frequently have limited access to capital, women entrepreneurs can benefit from e-commerce's ability to increase efficiency and profitability with little investment (ibid.).

Social commerce is a subset of e-commerce (Turban, 2017), which in turn is a subset of ICT (Sun, et al., 2021). The literature review points to the relevance of ICT and e-commerce and how they can be used to aid the advancement of the sustainable development agenda.

Social commerce and sustainability

The top two categories dominant in the sector of social commerce are fashion and household needs. Currently, in India, social commerce is driven by retailers who mostly sell apparel online and have been early beneficiaries of this revolution (Arora, 2021). The fact that they have been able to make the same social strata their customers with the help of social commerce, hence being able to instill trust and serve them at zero customer acquisition cost and with a more efficient supply chain, highlights how social commerce has assisted in providing decent work opportunities and entrepreneurship opportunities at minimal costs (ibid.). In turn, they are not only growing their household income but also amplifying their social status within the community. Not only that, it also has the potential to assist thousands of small brands (MSMEs) that offer good quality products but have limited distribution reach in traditional retail channels as well as low margins to expand and grow their businesses. Also, the nature of social commerce allows businesses to showcase to customers a lot more than just products, like their sustainability claims, and offer sustainable products or services (Lehtinen, n.d.), hence creating awareness and promoting the use of sustainable products among the masses.

Results

An online survey was conducted with 38 fashion social commerce businesses and they were asked questions related to each of the four research objectives. The results indicated that around 60 percent of the social-commerce businesses surveyed are owned by people in the age group of 15–24 and 11 percent in the age bracket of 25–34 years, as shown in Figure 1. Officially, people between the ages of 18 and 24 are defined as ‘youth’ by the UN. Thus, more than 50 percent of the entrepreneurs selling through social media are young adults.

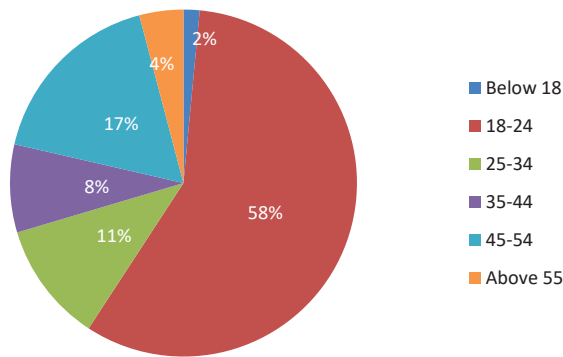


Figure 1: Count of age of fashion social commerce business owners surveyed

The respondents were asked if social media was helpful in setting up their fashion business on a scale of 0-5, from least helpful to most helpful. 65.79 percent of the business owners rated between 4 and 5, as depicted in Figure 2. Hence, a large number of businesses admitted that social media helped them significantly in setting up their businesses. Not only that, 34 out of 38 business owners rated between 3 and 5, which suggests that social media played a major role in establishing their own businesses.

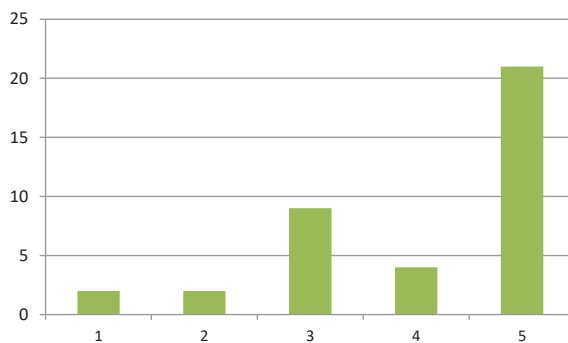


Figure 2: Usefulness of social media to set up fashion business

Of the businesses surveyed, 33 percent reported having hired 100 percent female staff, 17 percent had 75–99 percent female staff, and 25 percent had 50–74 percent female employees, as shown in Figure 3. This indicates that social commerce businesses employ a large number of women, with one-third of them having all women staff. Moreover, around 75 percent have more than 50 percent of the female workforce.

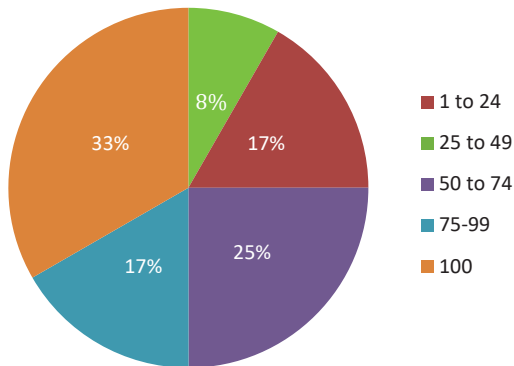


Figure 3: Count of percentage of women in team of the fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

The business owners were asked if they had hired rural labor as part of their workforce. 32 percent of the respondents reported employment in rural labor, as shown in Figure 4. The United Nations, when discussing employment generation as a subset of sustainable development, emphasizes rural and women’s employment, and the findings indicate a fair contribution of fashion social commerce towards rural and women’s employment.

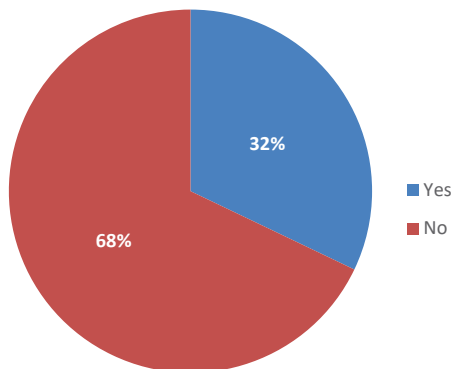


Figure 4: Count of rural labor in the fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

Analyzing the sustainable employment opportunities, it was found that around 86 percent of the social commerce businesses surveyed were micro enterprises, while the rest were small-scale enterprises, as depicted in Figure 5. Thus, 100 percent of the fashion business owners selling on social media belong to the MSME sector. The United Nations has acknowledged the role of MSMEs in creating long-term employment opportunities. MSMEs contribute to achieving the SDGs, especially reductions in poverty levels, by way of creating jobs, economic growth, respectable jobs, and entrepreneurship among women, youth, and other vulnerable groups.

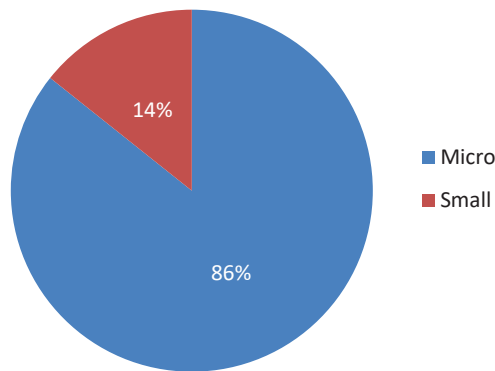


Figure 5: Count of small, medium, micro enterprises among the fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

Figure 6 denotes the number of people employed by fashion social commerce businesses. It was observed that 21 out of 38 business owners hired 2–5 people.

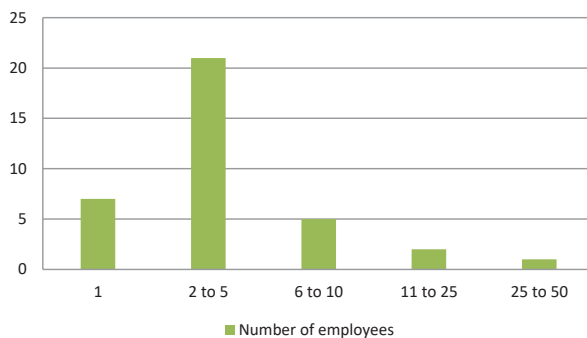


Figure 6: Number of employees hired by the fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

Major fast fashion brands release between 12 to 24 collections, with around 10 products per collection. Hence, in a year they release 120 up to 240 designs (Okafor, 2021). In contrast, 50 percent of the social commerce businesses surveyed for this research released only 1-5 designs in a month that is around 12 to 60 designs in a year (Figure 7).

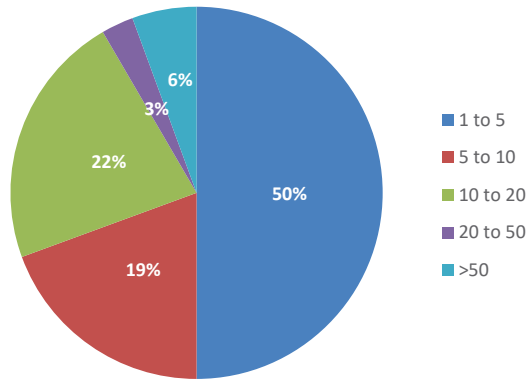


Figure 7: Count of products released by fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

The respondents were asked about the number of products they sold in a week. As per Figure 8, around 44 percent of the businesses claimed to sell only 1–10 products in a week, which is only 48–480 products sold in a year. Only 19 percent claimed to sell more than 100 products per week. Additionally, 50 percent of the businesses surveyed follow make-to-order (Figure 9), which is a sustainable inventory style and less polluting to the environment.

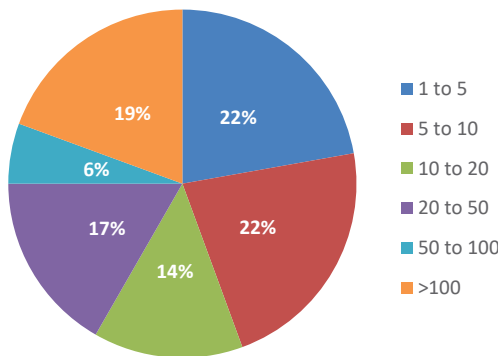


Figure 8: Count of products sold per week by fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

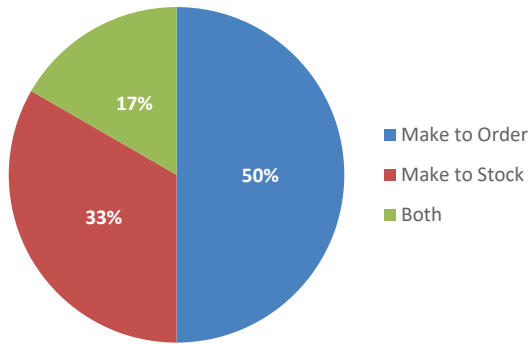


Figure 9: Type of inventory style of fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

The company owners were asked if they had an in-house manufacturing setup and, if yes, how they handled trash. As per Figure 10, 34 percent did not have their own in-house production facility, and out of the remaining 66 percent, 43 percent of the fashion entrepreneurs had a waste disposal system in their unit, which is another sustainable stance.

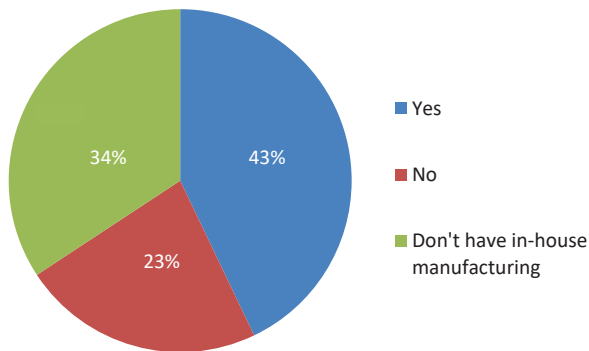


Figure 10: Waste disposal system of fashion social commerce businesses surveyed

Other than the survey, 17 fashion social commerce businesses were interviewed. These 17 were selected from the 38 who filled the form on the basis of their claims of practicing sustainability. This was done to develop a deeper understanding of the prevalent sustainability practices in fashion social commerce in the Indian marketplace and the motivation behind them. A major theme that came out of these interviews was the open nature of social media brands, giving more exposure to social commerce businesses, hence motivating them to take sustainable actions in

order to build a positive brand image. Another theme highlighted was that social media makes it easy for people to set up businesses due to low set-up and marketing costs. These have been discussed in detail in the analysis section.

Analysis

Entrepreneurship opportunities for the youth

Fashion social commerce in the Indian marketplace stands as a catalyst for fostering entrepreneurial opportunities among the youth demographic, aligning with the United Nations' recognition of youth entrepreneurship as vital for SDGs and global employment (sdgs.un.org, n.d.). As per the survey, approximately 60 percent of surveyed social-commerce businesses were owned by individuals aged 15–24, showcasing the prevalence of young entrepreneurs in this sector. Moreover, an overwhelming 65.79 percent of these youth entrepreneurs attributed their success to social media, rating it significantly helpful in establishing their businesses. It is evident that today's young, tech-savvy entrepreneurs are making use of social media platforms for promoting their brands, marketing, and selling their products. Social commerce leads to one-to-one interaction with customers, quick feedback, and the opportunity to provide personalized experiences, which aligns with the tastes of the younger generation.

Furthermore, social commerce has emerged as a boon for thousands of small brands (MSMEs), which otherwise have limited distribution reach and low margins in traditional retail channels. Social media platforms offer them avenues to expand and thrive in the market, augment their brand presence and sales, and reach out to a larger customer base. In essence, fashion social commerce in India not only provides entrepreneurship opportunities for youth but also empowers small businesses, amplifying economic growth and social mobility within communities.

Women empowerment

Fashion social commerce in India is catalyzing the representation and empowerment of women in entrepreneurship and leadership roles, addressing prevalent barriers faced by women in starting businesses and accessing formal innovative startups. Traditionally inclined toward subsistence-level necessity businesses due to familial obligations and limited resources, women often confront challenges concerning inheritance laws and property ownership (worldbank.org, n.d.). However, social commerce emerges as a transformative solution, enabling easier business initiation for women with lower capital requirements and fewer resources (Theis and Rusconi, 2019). This trend has

significantly augmented financial independence, particularly among women, leading to increased representation in positions of authority and influence within the fashion social commerce domain (ibid.).

The findings from personal interviews with fashion entrepreneurs resonate with these trends, spotlighting the prominence of women-owned fashion thrift stores on social media platforms. These ventures require less investment, inventory, and commitment, fostering greater financial autonomy for women. Moreover, the culture of mutual support among these brands, particularly in promoting women-owned businesses, fosters an environment conducive to collective growth. Many female interviewees mentioned that their basic understanding of fashion and the availability of social commerce platforms were the key factors that led them to set up their independent businesses.

Interestingly, survey data revealed the substantial presence of women in fashion social commerce ventures. About 33 percent reported 100 percent female staff, while 17 percent and 25 percent had 75–99 percent and 50–74 percent female staff, respectively. It may be noted that the fashion industry has a huge female workforce, but very few of them hold positions of power. Hence, not only the percentage of women in the team but also the percentage of women in positions of power must be noted. Furthermore, in another study, 64 percent of the authorized signatories among the 206 fashion social commerce businesses registered with the organization XYZ are female. This organization, XYZ, is a social commerce platform for fashion social commerce businesses on Instagram (Srivastava, 2022). These statistics emphasize not only the high representation of women within these businesses but also their presence in influential roles, showcasing a shift toward gender inclusivity and women's empowerment in leadership positions within the fashion social commerce landscape.

Sustainable employment opportunities

Fashion social commerce in India has substantially transformed the employment landscape, particularly within microenterprises, which form the majority (68 percent) of the sector. Notably, around 32 percent of these businesses employ rural labor, with a significant presence of female staff (75 percent). On average, these entities offer employment to 2–4 individuals, showcasing their impact on job creation.

The rise of social commerce aligns with the UN's agenda for SDGs, emphasizing the role of micro-enterprises in enhancing employment opportunities, especially in rural areas (sdgs.un.org, n.d.). Sustainable Development Goal 8 prioritizes inclusive economic

growth, full employment, and decent work for all, resonating with the significant employment contributions made by these social commerce entities (ibid.). Leveraging information and communications technology has also played a pivotal role in expanding these businesses in developing nations, facilitating transactions across markets. Furthermore, these platforms have notably supported the setting up of MSMEs, aiding their access to various markets and industries (Sun, et al., 2021).

Interviews with small and micro enterprises unveiled how social commerce eased their establishment, fostering more inclusive economic growth and providing numerous decent work opportunities. One example is a sustainable streetwear brand that emphasizes fair wages and ethical practices, reflecting the commitment of social commerce brands toward sustainability.

While social commerce isn't the sole contributor to job creation, its burgeoning growth in India has undeniably catalyzed new employment prospects. The sector's expansion indicates a robust connection with sustainability and inclusive employment practices, thereby significantly impacting the employment landscape.

Environmental impact

Fashion social commerce in India presents a contrasting approach to environmental practices when juxtaposed with fast fashion e-commerce. While major fast fashion brands churn out between 120 up to 240 designs annually (Okafor, 2021), 50 percent of surveyed social commerce businesses release merely 12 to 60 designs per year, indicating a stark difference in production frequency. Additionally, half of these businesses follow a make-to-order model (a more sustainable inventory practice), and 41 percent claim to have a waste disposal system.

The nature of social commerce inherently promotes a broader spectrum of information sharing beyond products, emphasizing sustainability claims and advocating for the use of sustainable goods (Lehtinen, n.d.). The overarching theme that social commerce enables businesses to showcase more than just products; it entails a display of values, expectations, and trust, creating a transactional atmosphere beyond mere financial exchange (Bukhari, 2011). This profound influence of social commerce on environmental practices becomes evident through the interviews as well, as brands acknowledge that it provides an environment conducive to eco-friendly choices throughout their value chain. The interviews shed light on an elevated consciousness towards ecological sustainability among brand owners. The entrepreneurs expressed pride in making ethical and sustainable products, attributing it to the smaller production scale that allows for

more ethical decision-making. This is an evident contrast to fast fashion e-commerce's relentless push for high-speed turnover.

Waste management practices among these brands vary; some minimize waste generation significantly while others repurpose or reuse the waste to craft new products. Furthermore, certain brands, though currently lacking a waste management system, have plans for upcycling the generated waste.

During the interviews, many brands expressed regarding the additional initiatives taken to embrace sustainability, such as using water-based ink for prints, employing bamboo plastic for packaging to ensure biodegradability, incorporating handloom fabrics, and striving toward becoming entirely sustainable in the future. Though these practices are becoming a general trend in the fashion industry, the nature of social commerce promoting a broader spectrum of information sharing, motivated them to take these steps. These environmentally conscious measures, although potentially seen in other forms of commerce, are accentuated in social commerce due to the platform's emphasis on transparency and brand narrative, fostering an awareness and culture of sustainability practices among these businesses.

Conclusion

The convergence of fashion and commerce within social media platforms has surfaced as a dynamic force shaping the sustainability landscape in India's fashion industry. This study, examining the correlation between fashion social commerce, and sustainable development, unraveled multifaceted dimensions aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Through this study, it is evident that fashion social commerce serves as a fertile ground for fostering youth entrepreneurship, with a substantial presence of young entrepreneurs leveraging social media for business inception. Notably, it acts as an equalizer, offering opportunities to small brands and women entrepreneurs, breaking traditional barriers, and fostering economic growth. The significant representation of women in influential roles within these businesses underscores their role in women's empowerment.

Moreover, the study revealed the transformative impact of fashion social commerce on employment, especially in rural areas. Micro-enterprises dominate this sector, reflecting a tangible contribution toward Sustainable Development Goal 8's objective of inclusive economic growth and decent work. Interviews with MSMEs bring to light their commitment to ethical practices, highlighting fair wages, sustainable working conditions, and eco-conscious decisions.

A compelling contrast emerged when juxtaposing environmental practices between fashion social commerce and fast fashion e-commerce. Social commerce exhibited a markedly slower production pace, favoring sustainable inventory models and showcasing an active pursuit of waste management and environmental consciousness.

In essence, fashion social commerce, an evolving realm, emerges not merely as a transactional platform but as a conduit for values, trust, and sustainable choices. Its transformative potential within the fashion industry, reflected in employment creation, gender inclusivity, and environmental consciousness, accentuates its role in steering the industry toward a more sustainable future. As fashion social commerce continues to burgeon, its synergy with sustainable practices may serve as a blueprint for a more conscientious and inclusive fashion landscape globally.

As a country with a thriving fashion industry, India can leverage the insights gained from this research to develop prototypes for marketing fashion social commerce in a sustainable manner. By doing so, India can not only boost the field of fashion social commerce but also enhance social commerce's brand image and perceived value.

Overall, the findings presented in this article contribute to the growing body of knowledge on fashion social commerce and its intersection with sustainability. The research provides valuable insights for businesses, policymakers, and scholars interested in fostering sustainable practices within the fashion industry. By embracing these findings, stakeholders can work towards a more sustainable future with fashion social commerce, benefiting both the environment and the economy.

References

Arora, A., 2021. Can social commerce empower micro-entrepreneurs in a post Covid Era? *The Economic Times*, [online] 13 February. Available at: <<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/entrepreneurship/can-social-commerce-empower-micro-entrepreneurs-in-a-post-covid-era/articleshow/80892379.cms?from=mdr>> [Accessed on 20 May 2022].

Bliss, D., 2019. The huge toll of 'fast fashion' on the planet – and why the answer could be circular. *National Geographic*, [online] 4 July. Available at: <<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/environment/2019/06/the-huge-toll-fast-fashion-the-planet-and-why-the-answer-could-be-circular>> [Accessed 25 May 2022].

Bukhari, S.S., 2021. Green marketing and its impact on consumer behavior. *European Journal of Business and Management*, [pdf] 3(4), Available at: <[Shttps://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234624075.pdf](https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234624075.pdf)> [Accessed 30 May 2022].

Fibre2Fashion, 2019. 5 ways to make fashion industry more sustainable in the year 2020.

- Fibre2Fashion*, [Online] Available at: <<https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/8520/5-ways-to-make-fashion-industry-more-sustainable-in-the-year-2020>> [Accessed 30 May 2022].
- Ghosh, M. and Nath, P., 2016. Empowerment of Women in Fashion Entrepreneurship. *Women's Business Journal*, 20(1), pp.78-92.
- Lehtinen, E., n.d. What Is social commerce? Why your business should consider it. *Giosg*. [blog] Available at: <<https://www.giosg.com/blog/social-commerce>> [Accessed 05 June 2022].
- Lu, B., Fan, W. and Zhou, M., 2016. Social presence, trust, and social commerce purchase intention: An empirical research. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 56, pp. 225-237.
- Okafor, J., 2021. 37 Fast Fashion Facts & Statistics. *TRVST* [online] 30 June. Available at: <<https://www.trvst.world/sustainable-living/fashion/fast-fashion-facts-statistics/>> [Accessed 15 June 2022].
- Prasad, A., 2018. Rural employment in fashion industry. *Journal of Rural Economics*, 30(4), pp.401-415.
- Ro, C., 2020. Can fashion ever be sustainable? *BBC*, [online] 11 March. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200310-sustainable-fashion-how-to-buy-clothes-good-for-the-climate>> [Accessed 17 June 2022].
- Sarkar, A. and Singh, M., 2020. Leadership roles and women empowerment in commerce. *Social Commerce Review*, 25(2), pp.201-215.
- Srivastava, A., 2022. *Sustainability in fashion social commerce in the Indian marketplace*. BFTech. National Institute of Fashion Technology.
- Stallard, E., 2022. Fast fashion: How clothes are linked to climate change. *BBC News*, [online] 29 July. Available at: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-60382624>> [Accessed 20 June 2022].
- Sun, M., Grondys, K., Hajiyev, N. and Zhukov, P., 2021. Improving the e-commerce business model in a sustainable environment. *Sustainability*, [e-journal] 13(22), 12667. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132212667>.
- Theis, S. and Rusconi, G., 2019. Social commerce entrepreneurship and new opportunities for women's financial inclusion in India and Indonesia. *World Bank Org*. [online] Available at:<https://www.womensworldbanking.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2019_Social_Commerce_Report.pdf> [Accessed 22 June 2022].
- Turban, E., Whiteside, J., King, D. and Outland, J., 2017. Overview of electronic commerce and social commerce. In: Turban, E., ed. Introduction to electronic commerce and social commerce. Springer Texts in Business and Economics. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-50091-1_1.
- UN Women, 2015. *The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*. [online] UN Women – Headquarters. Available at: <<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development>> [Accessed 22 June 2022]

Unilever, 2023. *How social media is helping make the switch to sustainability*. Unilever. [online] 17 April. Available at: <<https://www.unilever.com/news/news-search/2023/how-social-media-is-helping-people-make-the-switch-to-sustainability/>> [Accessed 27 June 2022].

United Nations (n.d). *Sustainable Development Goals*. [online] Available at: <<https://sdgs.un.org/>> [Accessed 29 June 2022].

World Bank (n.d.). *Female entrepreneurship resource point - introduction and module 1: Why gender matters*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/publication/female-entrepreneurship-resource-point-introduction-and-module-1-why-gender-matters>> [Accessed 30 June 2022].

About the authors

Akshita Srivastava graduated with a Bachelors in Fashion Technology from NIFT, New Delhi, in the year 2022. She holds a keen interest in sustainable aspects of fashion and aims to be a part of the sustainable fashion evolution. She was also a part of the National Commission for Women and the India SME Forum's program 'Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship', where she received training from the Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru. She is currently pursuing a PGDM in Human Resource Management from XLRI, Jamshedpur.

akssrivastava7467@gmail.com

Suman Verma is Associate Professor with the Department of Fashion Technology and Unit in Charge (Information Technology), Head Office, NIFT. She is pursuing her PhD in business administration and specializes in fashion e-commerce and management. She has obtained various certifications in software programming. Her passion for design and technology brought her to join NIFT in 2003 in Delhi. She has worked in the software industry and has been an academician for almost 19 years. She specializes in information technology, management, database design, enterprise resource planning, artificial intelligence, IoT (Internet of Things), e-commerce, web design, and graphic software.

suman.verma@nift.ac.in