

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTION OF GEN Z CONSUMERS TOWARD DUPE SHOPPING

Prof. Shatabdi C. Nannaware

Assistant Professor, Pune Institute Of Business Management, Pune

Prof. G Pravin

Assistant Professor, Pune Institute Of Business Management, Pune

Prof. Mahendra More

Assistant Professor, Pune Institute Of Business Management, Pune

Prof. Gurpreet Kaur

Assistant Professor, Pune Institute Of Business Management, Pune

ABSTRACT

“Dupe” in the fashion industry makes sense in a global context; Countries and fashion brands are developing strategies to transition away from non-renewable materials a failure of consumption and business models to move towards a more circular economy. Still the question of Dupe. The younger members of Generation Z are an active and relevant fashion consumer segment with significant support; therefore, Marketers need to analyze the retention and behaviour of these young consumers. This paper aims to explore the perceptions and attitudes of young people Members of Generation Z are moving towards Dupe products in various segments for various reasons. The research was qualitative, with 25 active participants were also included in the semi-structured interviews Fashion buyers aged 18-25. The study examined concepts and. Sustainable fashion pieces with positive design and results mean Health and environmental values need to be focused on to make young people happier Customers. Restrictions and good keywords can serve as the basis for decision making Effective communication strategies and marketing messages. The findings of the study that is, in their buyer journey, younger consumers are more likely to gather information E-commerce retailer’s product descriptions, product labels, filter systems, peer reviews, and point-of-sale communication assets acquired at the point of sale.

1. INTRODUCTION

DUPE: The term "dupe product" usually refers to a substantial replica or imitation of another product, usually more expensive or more acceptable This practice is common in a variety of industries, including cosmetics, fashion, electronics and pharmaceuticals, where some unscrupulous companies commit fraudulent practices e.g. In the industry, a brand may well mimic the colour and texture of its high-end counterpart but sell at a higher price Some of the best-known products associated with fraud include: Makeup Revolution: Popular luxury brands were recognized for making affordable makeups. NYX Professional Makeup: Offers a variety of affordable products at affordable prices. H&M: Known for fashionable clothing that often draws inspiration from luxury brands, while maintaining an affordable price range. Anker: In electronics, Anker offers affordable alternatives to high-end electronics without compromising on quality. Generic Drugs: Many generics offer cost-effective generic alternatives, offering the same potency at a lower price Consumers tend to gravitate towards these scams because they allow for easy options without sacrificing much in terms of quality or aesthetics. This trend reflects a conscious decision among consumers to prioritize high-priced products when they are interested in products with

preferred products, it's important to note that not all dupe products are the same, and buyers should be cautious and research before buying (Speight,2023).

As global institutions and organizations place more emphasis on corporate sustainability, its effects are evident not only in developed markets but also in emerging countries. Currently, development remains a goal particularly followed by stakeholders in the entire value chain including manufacturers, intermediaries and distributors with the aim of reducing their impact on ecosystems and working conditions equal access to employees. The rise in consumption in the apparel sector occurs primarily due to the growing global population and the rapid growth of affordable fashion. This trend leads to increased textile waste and the production of pollutants associated with manufacturing processes (Kovacs ,2021).

Currently, marketing strategies place primary priority on achieving adequate sales volumes and staying abreast of the rapid changes in fashion trends. This emphasis tends to lead to an increased focus on secondary production, exacerbating the challenges associated with mass consumerism and rapid fashion changes (Šajn 2019) (Speight, 2023).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Considering the tremendous demographic impact of Generation Z on society, to examine the growing trends formed by this generation and the potential impact on social behaviour is important. Understanding the growing dominance of Generation Z the increase is important not only for current understanding but for potential changes before full adulthood in 2030. Given the increasing emphasis in current marketing strategies on achieving high sales volumes and adapting to rapid fashion changes, the proliferation of secondary products is particularly interconnected. According to a Pew Research Center (2019) report, Generation Z is characterized by its diversity and digital connectivity, with different attitudes and values from previous generations. While this generation slowly adopts lifestyle in more important roles, it is important to examine their unique characteristics and experiences. Expanding through prevalence, how it can shape behaviour, and contribute to social change (Pew Research Center, 2019). Furthermore, a study by Sparks & Honey (2020) highlights the role of technology in Generation Z's worldview, impact on their aspirations, and create a sense of global connectivity. The study highlights the importance of examining the impact of these technological effects on social attitudes and values, as well as the proliferation of fraudulent factors, providing valuable insights into changes related to the aging of Generation Z (Sparks& Honey, 2020).

Eileen Briggs, product analyst at Morning Consult, said: "The phenomenon of buying counterfeit goods in online culture, particularly rapidly in recent years through platforms such as TikTok, said: is really changing the situation." The impact of dupe shopping on social media, especially TikTok, is growing exponentially. On TikTok, videos with the hashtag #dupe have amassed an impressive six billion views to date. This highlights the tremendous impact of social media on brand popularity and acceptance among consumers. This growing trend not only highlights the multidimensionality of social media, but also its transformative role in reshaping consumer behaviour and preferences. The democratization of information and trends on platforms like TikTok allows fraudulent content to spread quickly, creating a culture that allows cheap options to quickly gain traction. The impact is not it only applies to famous brands; It also reveals a paradigm shift in consumer engagement, and emphasizes the influential role of user factors in shaping purchase decisions. Furthermore, the prevalence of deceptive purchases on TikTok demonstrates the democratization of fashion and beauty, providing consumers with accessible options that keep pace

with trends This trend has created an inclusive and dynamic environment with consumers actively participating in brand identity development. Specifically, increased growth. The study by Wang and Kim (2021) examines the psychological aspects behind dupe shopping, emphasizing the role of social media platforms in shaping consumer behaviour. Research reveals how the visual characteristics of a platform such as TikTok help attract fraudulent content, influencing users' purchasing decisions (Wang & Kim, 2017). Additionally, the explosive growth of fraudulent posts on TikTok has prompted active engagement of communities created by those who deliberately attract customers. Research from a report by Statista (*Only Fans Creators Worldwide 2021*) reveals that 70% of deliberate fraudsters manage TikTok accounts Leach (2023).

This suggests that there is a strong correlation between social media participation, especially on TikTok, and the tendency to search for and share information about fraudulent content in online communities (Statista, 2022). As dupe shopping continues to gain traction, it is important to recognize the growing role of social media platforms, especially TikTok, in shaping consumer preferences and driving trends in the marketplace. This intersection of social media and fraud culture not only affects individual purchasing behaviour Instead, it also helps to create vibrant online communities that focus on it.

The concept of the "dupe" has crossed its origins in the fashion industry and has expanded its influence to include a variety of industries from new restaurant proposals to online marketing groups including perfume, automotive, etc. In today's digital landscape, many others "the best." One may come across extended recommendations such as "Chilis bottle dupe", "Best Ninja Air Fryer dupe", "Best Beauty dupe" etc. Notably, the current popular search includes "Dyson Airwrap dupe.", "Skims dupe", "baccarat rouge 540 dupe" and other words (Speight,2023) showing the extensive use of the word this trend indicates that broader consumer behaviour is shifting toward seeking alternatives and cost-effective alternatives to familiar, high-quality products The types of tests that are widely discussed in online forums reflects the growing interest and demand for such innovations. According to a study by Nast (2023), the widespread dupe culture has been facilitated by social media platforms, where users actively share and seek suggestions for alternatives with price is not difficult to adopt a survey of popular products to shape consumer preferences and online It focuses on the impact of information on brands that create deceptive appeal (Jones et al. 2020). Furthermore, the increasing demand for specific product testing, as shown in the examples presented, highlights the impact of customer reviews and recommendations in guiding purchasing decisions A report from TrendWatch (2023) highlight the role of online communities and forums in facilitating the spread of fraud - context. It provides a dynamic space to explore and evaluate trends (BV, n.d).

Environmental Awareness and Sustainability: Gen Z's improved environmental awareness contributes to their interest in insidious products that stand as sustainable alternatives to their upper-class counterparts (Johnson et al., 2021). Dope's sustainability-focused products are in line with Gen Z's eco-conscious ethos, in line with their commitment to responsible shopping (Di Segni et al. 2018).

Social media impact and community growth: The ubiquity of social media platforms, especially TikTok and Instagram, are the ones that significantly change Gen Z consumer behaviour, allowing communities to drive discovery (Jones et al.2023). Sharing and exploring counterfeit products in those platforms creates a sense of community solidarity, and influences the aspirations of Gen Z consumers.

The impact of influencer culture: Prominent influencers in Gen Z's digital landscape play an important role in generating interest in deceptive products (García-Madariaga et al., 2021). Recommendations and recommendations from influencers capitalize on the influencer culture prevalent among Gen Z, contributing greatly to the popularity of fake products.

Technologically savvy consumer behaviour: Gen Z, with its rich and distinctive digital language, uses online platforms to access product information, conduct research that informs consumer behaviour (Johnson et al., 2021). The dupe products that are frequently reviewed and recommended online fit seamlessly with the tech-savvy nature of Gen Z's consumer habits.

Consumer socialization theory suggests that individuals learn consumer attitudes and behaviours through interactions with various social stakeholders including family, peers, and media. For Generation Z, whose consumer behaviour is largely through digital meetings and interactions by peer-driven experiences, customer engagement through online communities and influencers, contributing to the emergence and popularity of deceptive buying practices. Online community and peer influence: Gen Z is known for their high level of interaction and engagement on social media platforms. Online communities, forums, and social media groups provide a place for individuals in Gen Z to share their experiences, likes, and suggestions. These digital spaces are powerful tools for shaping consumer behaviour, introducing members to perceptions of fraudulent products, and promoting a culture of cost-effective innovation. For example, Gen Z individuals searching for fashion groups on platforms like TikTok or Instagram. Influential backers: The influencers that most influence Gen Z play an important role in customer engagement. Influencers often promote and promote products in a deceptive manner, emphasizing their value, usefulness, and uniqueness. These recommendations help to normalize and accept Gen Z consumers' fraudulent purchasing behaviour. For example, a beauty influencer could show a video comparing a premium skincare product to a cheap distraction, influencing their followers to consider alternatives including learning and adoption.

3. METHOD

In line with the research objective, this study adopts an exploratory and qualitative approach, presenting findings from semi-structured personal interviews. The study delves into the perceptions and attitudes of Generation Z towards dupe products used within the various industries. Using a dual approach of purposeful sampling and snowball sampling, the study mainly targets individuals actively involved in the fashion industry. Sample criteria include demographic characteristics as the main criteria, requiring respondents to actively participate in casual clothing, buying at least once a month along with having to participants receive a fixed personal budget dedicated to acquiring clothing. A total of 25 interviews were conducted using a snowball sampling method to recruit participants, with an equal distribution of 10 males and 15 females. Data collection included the use of a semi-structured interview schedule to ensure comprehensive insights into Gen Z attitudes and behaviours regarding Dupe consumption.

“Participants from Gen Z consistently recommended dupe products, emphasizing reasons for preferring these with budget options”

“I like to buy dupe products in makeup because it gives a similar look to higher end options”

“It's Easy to find and have easy access too”

“I feel proud that I can find a dupe of almost any clothing brand and can flex it”

“I don’t feel guilty if I am not able to use lipstick or foundation again as its not that high-end”
“At times I find more colour variety in Dupe than the Original”

4. WORD CLOUD

A word cloud is a visual representation of text data in which words are displayed in varying sizes, typically based on their frequency or importance within a given body of text. In a word cloud, the most frequently occurring words are usually depicted in larger font or boldness, making them stand out more prominently. This type of visualization provides a quick and intuitive way to grasp the key terms or themes present in a text corpus.



Participants expressed positive attitudes toward Dupe clothing availability when asked about barriers and possibilities.

Common Terms Are Detailed in Table 1

Categories	Subcategories	Barriers/Negative Keywords	Positive Keywords
Fabrics	Natural Fabrics (Cotton and Wool)	Price	Natural, Healthy, Affordable
	Organic Fabrics	Unclear Labeling	Reusable, Attractiveness
	Sustainable Fibers and Fabrics	Status	
	Recycled Fibers, Reusable, Reused		
	Natural Coloration		
	Recycled Fabrics – Artificial		
Manufacturing	CO2 Reduction	Lack of Filter	Ethical, Social Acceptance

Categories	Subcategories	Barriers/Negative Keywords	Positive Keywords
Practices	Water Usage Reduction	Lack of Labels	Nature, Save the Environment
	Less Packaging		Save the Planet, Common Future
Dupe Products	Affordable Alternatives	Limited Variety	Unique, Trendy
	Quality Comparison	Perceived Inferior Quality	Budget-Friendly, Value for Money
	Trend Imitation	Brand Influence	Fashion Exploration, Current Trends
Self-Care Products	Natural Ingredients	Price	Healthy, Affordable, Wellness
	Cruelty-Free	Limited Availability	Compassionate, Ethical, Cruelty-Free
	Sustainable Packaging	Misleading Labeling	Environmentally Conscious
	Organic Variants	Perceived Ineffectiveness	Organic, Nourishing, Effective
Disposal	Donation	Physical Discomfort - Extra Effort	Help, Happiness, Community
	Recycle	Lack of Information on Possibilities	Share Something with Others in Need

GenZ's Perception and Attitude Towards Dupe

5. DISCUSSION

Younger generations, especially Gen Z and Millennials, contrast with their older counterparts to engage in the "lipstick effect" phenomenon at uncertain times. This trend suggests that this demographic tends to have specific consumption behaviours related to personal tastes and micro-wealth include where the "lipstick effect" stands out among Gen Z and Millennials, and psychological or social or cultural factors that can seeds affecting their eating patterns in uncertain times (*Gen Z and the "Dupe" Phenomena | Insights from Fed Up Foods*, n.d.)

In order to categorize the participants based on their involvement in fashion, the questionnaire was used to determine their fashion consumption and overall attitude towards fashion, which served as the basis for divided products. In the spectrum of purchase motivations, intrinsic factors predominated, with a strong emphasis on the desire to stay current with changing fashion. Followed closely by the tendency towards existing fashion updated, which was expressed as important as "something new to update my wardrobe". Notably, only five per-cent of respondents revealed it as a primary reason for purchasing new products. In contrast, a notable feature was the primary goal of self-disclosure, which was identified by over ninety percent of the sample. As a result, more than 30 per cent of respondents expressed impulse buying

tendencies, characterized by 'looking for something new'. Monthly shopping emerged as the most common response when participants were asked about their shopping habits, and at the same time, respondents confirmed that they wanted to receive few new items at any given time. About ten percent of female participants actively searched for new items to buy daily or several times a week. Their search for new purchases extended across digital channels, such as using Google image search, and following brands on social media platforms. In this micro landscape of fashion consumption, the role of the dupe must be considered. Products play as a driving force in these buying behaviours being a relevant aspect.

6. CONCLUSION

This study of members of Generation Z shows that they are more interested in dupe diversity in their shopping experiences. Recognizing the importance of this concept, Generation Z believes in actively monitoring how viable principles are incorporated into the operations of their choices that retailers prioritize sustainable profitability through stewardship, conservation, and preservation, enough to attract enough customers and succeed in their target market so holds the right. To realize this, it is recommended that vendors implement tangible practices. They also adhere to sustainable principles in producing environmentally friendly affordable products. Gen Z's preference for "dupe" content stems from a combination of factors, including their high levels of online engagement, preference for humour, desire for social honesty, habit innovation, and the tendency to absorb and reframe cultural influences to nuance the action's understanding of the contextual framework in which it terms.

7. FUTURE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of this research extends across a range of fields, delving into many aspects of dupe retail. The research will include detailed analysis of consumer behaviour and preferences in key sectors, including apparel, skin care, luxury goods, etc. This inclusive approach will provide researchers with valuable insights into the factors contributing to the popularity of dupe products across consumer preferences and industries, thereby providing a comprehensive view of this growing phenomenon.

Indeed, the scope of this study, which focuses on the Indian population, provides a valuable foundation for understanding deceptive marketing practices in specific cultural markets. However, extending such research to all of Asia and other global regions yields insights that reflect specific sociocultural dynamics and economic contexts. A pan-Asia study highlights differences in consumer preferences, cultural influences, and economic factors, and provides a comparative perspective on the prevalence and motivations behind fraudulent purchases. Factors such as cultural aesthetics, local fashion trends, and the impact of social media influences can vary significantly across Asia, providing nuanced insights into different consumer behaviours across the continent.

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