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# INVESTIGATIVE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF GENERATION Z TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MARKETING STRATEGY OF PREMIUM LEVEL FASHION BRANDS IN COLOMBO

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## ABSTRACT

Generation Z, who was born immediately after the millennial, between 1995-2010 will represent a higher percentage of consumer spending and their needs and wants will directly influence the marketing strategy of fashion brands. The main objective of this research is to find the consumer needs of generation Z and how it will influence the marketing strategy of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo and to give suggestions to improve. The study is based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. In conclusion, the research will provide suggestions to improve the marketing strategy of premium level fashion brands in Colombo in order to increase sales by catering to the needs of the generation Z cohort and providing customer satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Generation Z, Marketing Strategy, Premium Market, Fashion Brands

## INTRODUCTION

This research discusses how the needs, wants and the lifestyle of the generation Z

will influence the market strategy of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo and how they can improve their strategy accordingly. Here the discussion will be only focusing on a particular group from 15-25 years who lives in Colombo. Born immediately after the millennials, between 1995-2010, generation Z are the first generation after World Wide Web making them the first true digital natives. With 92 per cent online daily and 24 per cent online constantly they went from playground to plug in short time (Beall, 2016). In the coming years generation Z will represent a higher percentage of consumer spending. For the fashion brands to sustain in the market they will have to start looking in to this and understand that they are not like the Millennials at all. Generation Z will be a higher percentage of the consumer spending all around the globe including Sri Lanka. Therefore the Sri Lankan fashion brands will have to change and improve their marketing strategies, focusing on the generation Z to cater to their needs, in order to survive in the market. This study will discuss the marketing strategies of the premium level global fashion brands such as H&M, Zara and Forever 21, which are popular among the generation Z, how they are focusing on

the consumer and catering to their needs and will give suggestions and improvement for the premium level fashion brands in Sri Lanka such as Kelly Felder, GFlock, Cotton Collection as how to improve their strategies in order to gain the customer satisfaction by providing for the needs of the generation Z consumer. Here the research will focus on the marketing mix as for the marketing strategy, which refers to the 4Ps where the discussion will be based on Product, Price, Place and Promotion and how it will be influenced by generation Z.

### **Problem identification**

In the coming years generation Z is bound to represent a higher percentage of consumer spending globally, including Sri Lanka. Therefore fashion brands have to pay attention to the needs and wants of generation Z in order to survive in the market. The main problem here is, how should the premium level local fashion brands react to the influence of the generation Z? They need to improve their marketing strategy focusing more on generation Z where eventually they would be able to increase their sales by bringing customer satisfaction, through identifying the needs of generation Z consumers. This study will analyze the needs of the Sri Lankan generation Z consumers with the marketing strategy of the global premium level fashion brands, and will give suggestions to improve the strategy of the Sri Lankan premium level fashion brands in order to bring customer satisfaction for the generation Z.

### **Objectives**

1. To give suggestions to improve the marketing strategy of the premium level fashion brands in Sri Lanka.
2. To identify the consumer needs of generation Z to increase sales through customer satisfactions by catering to the needs

### **Significance of the research**

This study will be important and a benefit for the premium level fashion brands in Sri Lanka as there is a really high potential of generation Z becoming the highest percentage of the consumer spending. And in order to sustain in the market, fashion brands will have to start focusing their strategies on generation Z. As this research investigates the needs of the generation Z in Sri Lanka and provides suggestions as to how to improve their marketing strategies accordingly, it will be very convenient and a major benefit for the decision makers and the marketing teams of the premium level fashion brands in Sri Lanka, when they want to change and improve their marketing strategies.

## ***LITERATURE REVIEW***

### **Introduction on the marketing strategy**

It has been said that an organization will be committing entrepreneurial suicide if it does not have an understanding of the target market and inevitably the business would fail due to this reason. But, will be able to attract heaps of profits if the company is aware of the needs and wants of the target consumer. Here, as the marketing strategy the main focus will be on the marketing mix. According to Asseir and Acutt (2015, p.4), the definition of the marketing mix is, "It is about putting the right product or a combination thereof in the place, at the right time and at the right price" Further, Asseir and Acutt (2015, p.13) states that marketing mix is associated with the 4Ps and as per the creation of the marketing expert, McCarthy 1960, the classification of 4Ps can be summarized as below (Refer Figure 01).



Figure 01 - Classification of 4Ps (Asseir and Acutt 2015, p.13)

When using the 4Ps model it is very important to be customer oriented. As cited by Lauterborn (1990), Luenendonk (2014) put forward his customer centric 4Cs classification.

- Product to Customer Solution
  - Price to Customer Cost
  - Place to Customer Convenience
  - Promotion to Customer Communication
- (Luenendonk, 2014, para.26)

## Product

When considering the 4Ps, Product can be simply classified as below, as mentioned by Asseir and Acutt (2015) “A product is an item that is built or produced to satisfy the needs of a certain group of people. The product can be intangible or tangible as it can be in the form of services or goods.” (Asseir and Acutt, 2015, p.6) The marketer must do an in depth research on the life cycle of the product that they are producing, in the product development phase in order to make sure they are producing the type of the product that has the highest demand in the targeted market.

The life cycle of a product includes the growth phase, the maturity phase, the sales decline phase and during the latter stage it is very important for the organization to come up with new products and innovations for them to increase their sales. It is also important to have the correct product mix and expand it along with the product cycle, by diversifying and increasing the depth of the product line in order to gain the competitive advantage. When developing the product it is important to ask the question, “What can I do to offer a better product to this group of people than my competitors?” (Asseir and Acutt, 2015, p.7)

## Price

The price of a product affects sales and demand, making a huge impact on the marketing strategy which eventually leads to the profits and the survival of the organization. During the initial stage of the product the business should price it at a lower price, although it has the potential to give a higher percentage the consumer will not be willing enough to pay a higher price for a product at the birth. The consumer will always value for their money over the product and will compare it with the competitor’s product therefore the organization needs analyze their competitor’s prices and do the pricing accordingly. The three major pricing strategies are, Market Penetration Pricing, Market Skimming Pricing and Neutral Pricing. “The price of the product is basically the amount that a customer pays for to enjoy it. Price is a very important component.” (Asseir and Acutt, 2015, p.8)

As per Asseir and Acutt (2015) there are few questions that should be asked when coming up with pricing strategies.

- “How much did it cost you to produce the product?”
- What is the customers’ perceived product value?

- Do you think that the slight price decrease could significantly increase your market share?
- Can the current price of the product keep up with the price of the product's competitors?" (Asseir and Acutt, 2015, p.9)

### **Place**

Place plays a major role in the marketing mix and it can be defined as follows, Martin (2014) as cited by Isoraite (2016, p.7) refers to Place as the process and methods by which products or services reach customers. Asseir and Acutt (2015, p.10) say that Place is about positioning and distributing the product in a place that is accessible for the potential buyers. In order to find out the most efficient positioning and distribution channels that directly speak to the target market the organization needs to do an in depth analysis of the target consumer and understand them inside out. Some of the major distribution strategies are, Intensive Distribution, Exclusive Distribution, Selective Distribution and Franchising. Asseir and Acutt (2015) have mentioned the questions the company should ask when selecting the best distribution strategy.

- "Where do your clients look for your service or product?
- What kind of stores do potential clients go to? Do they shop in a mall, in a regular brick and mortar store, in the supermarket, or online?
- How do you access the different distribution channels?
- How is your distribution strategy different from your competitors?
- Do you need a strong sales force?
- Do you need to attend trade fairs?
- Do you need to sell in an online store?" (Asseir and Acutt, 2015, p.11)

### **Promotion**

Promotion plays a major role in the marketing mix as it enhances the organization's brand recognition and increases the sales. The main elements that comes under promotion are, Sales Organization, Public Relations, Advertising and Sales Promotion. The combination of the promotional strategies and how the promotions should be carried out will depend on the budget, the message that needs to be communicated and the target market.

Asseir and Acutt (2015) also states the questions that should be asked by the organization when selecting the most effective promotion strategy.

- "How can you send marketing messages to your potential buyers?
- When is the best time to promote your product?
- Will you reach your potential audience and buyers through television ads?
- Is it best to use the social media in promoting the product?
- What is the promotion strategy of your competitors?" (Asseir and Acutt, 2015, p.12)

### **The rise of Generation Z**

Generation Z is the demographic born between 1995-2010 and they are a particularly a group of people that is hard to understand for the fashion and beauty marketers. Biron, 2017 states the following, "The 61 million members of Gen Z are defined as the first generation of truly digital natives, born into an era in which the internet had always existed and was never a novelty. As a result, more than any other generation, they are drawn to the ephemeral nature of apps like Snapchat, and shy away from owning products in favor of renting. This has translated directly to how they make purchases; Gen Z teenagers are more frugal and money-conscious than their millennial counterparts, despite growing in spending



power at a rate that surpasses millennials, reaching an estimated \$44 billion” (Biron, 2017, para.2). Further Biron (2017) has mentioned that, Kate Lewis, editorial director at Hearst Digital Media states that generation Z is a group of risk averse consumers because of their attitude of being money conscious and having to grow up in a challenging economic and political climate (Biron, 2017, para.3). “There’s a focus on rental, instead of acquisition,” says Medine, (as cited in Biron, 2017) a fashion industry notable. She also explained that Generation Z are the group of people who would rent out their prom dress rather than spend a fortune by buying it from a department store (Biron, 2017). Jeff Stapel, fashion designer and founder of Stapel Design, Inc (as cited in Biron, 2017) mentioned, “I’ve never enjoyed standing in line. But, [for Generation Z], they’re so used to getting something off of Amazon in one click or off of eBay. Now, they want to line up, because it’s an opportunity for them to hang out and socialize with their cohort.” (Biron, 2017, para.7) And according to him generation Z has a particular strong tie to street wear culture (Biron, 2017).

During the interview with Leslie Ghize, (as cited in Biron, 2017) from the trend forecasting company TOBE mentioned that, “YPulse (Youth marketing, millennial marketing and millennial research) data shows that 82 percent of consumers ages 13-17 don’t care about brand names, 75 percent enjoy testing new brands and 66 percent think brands that experiment with new ways to sell or deliver products are innovative. As a result, the Generation Z set is creating unique pairings and establishing looks in ways even the designer never thought of.” (Biron, 2017, para.9)

### **Influence of Generation Z on fashion apparel**

Because of the high potential of the generation Z being a higher percentage of

consumer spending, there will be major influence on many industries including the fashion apparel. Marcie Merriman (as cited in Zaczekiewicz, 2018) states, “The young, in this case Generation Z, influences the success of every brand and retailer, even if they are not yet the customer. Within societies, youth have always been the drivers of change — whether in fashion, social, music or use of technology. Where today’s tweens and teens, who fall into the Generation Z bracket, are different is in their ability to connect instantly and disseminate information globally. They were born into a mobile-first, omni-connected universe (all connected). Intuitive shopping experiences that put them in control — and give them the ability to make a purchase at the moment of inspiration, which is far from static — will be the winners.” (personal communication, May 23, 2018) Generation Z has marked the start of major cultural shifts and youth focused fashion brands who hold traditional views towards, race, gender, sexuality, and religion are viewed as offensive and dated. Brands who understood this early and took risky stands are winning. Apart from that generation Z appreciates the unique and flawed as authentic (Zaczekiewicz, 2018, para.9). The literature review covers a brief description on the marketing mix (4Ps), the rise of generation Z and their influence on the fashion apparel. The next chapter will describe the methodology of the study in order to give suggestions to improve the marketing strategy of the local fashion brands.

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this research the literature review will cover the introduction of the marketing mix, generation Z and their influence on fashion brands, while the data analysis will discuss the marketing strategies followed by the global premium level fashion

This research will consist of both, quantitative and qualitative data.

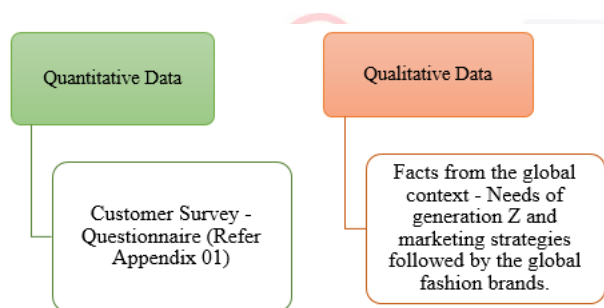


Figure 02 - Methods of data

The study will be done using primary sources, a questionnaire circulated among the age of 15-25 years old consumers in Colombo to identify their needs, as well as using secondary sources such as articles, journals and E-books in order to get the latest updated information regarding the topic in hand.

Below is a summary of how the objectives will be achieved from the research. (Refer Table 01)

## DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter will give the analysis of the preferences of Sri Lankan generation Z consumers on the premium level local fashion brands that have been extracted from the customer survey, the questionnaire (Appendix 01) and the facts from the global context. From a recent consumer survey it was found that the top fashion retailers for generation Z are the fast fashion chains, H&M, Forever 21, American Eagle, Target and Zara because of good discounts and deals. This age group do most, 50 percent or more of their apparel browsing over the phone and go in store to buy apparel because they found fulfilling purchases over the phone less satisfying than buying in store. When it comes to the fashion apps the most popular among the teens are, Amazon, H&M, Forever 21 and American Eagle. The survey also revealed that generation Z prioritized, good value products for the price, discounts and coupons as the most important qualities in a fashion retailer (Renfrow, 2017).

*Table 01- How the objectives will be achieved*

Objective 01	The marketing strategy followed by the fashion brands that is popular among Generation Z. (Premium level brands such as H&M, Zara, Forever 21)
	Suggestions to improve the 4Ps (marketing strategy) of the premium level fashion brands in Sri Lanka in order to cater to the needs of generation Z in Colombo
Objective 02	The needs of Generation Z according to the 4Ps and how to attract the Generation Z in global context
	Needs of 15-25 year olds in Colombo, when it comes to premium level fashion brands in Sri Lanka

## Product and price

In order to gather data of the preferences of generation Z in terms of premium level fashion brands in Colombo, a questionnaire (Appendix 1) was circulated among 150 female consumers who are between 15-25 years old that lives around Colombo and who shops from the premium level brands in Colombo such as Kelly Felder, Cotton Collection, and Gflock. According to the data from the questionnaire (Appendix 1), the below graph was extracted and it refers to the type of products mostly purchased from the premium level local fashion brands (Refer Figure 03).

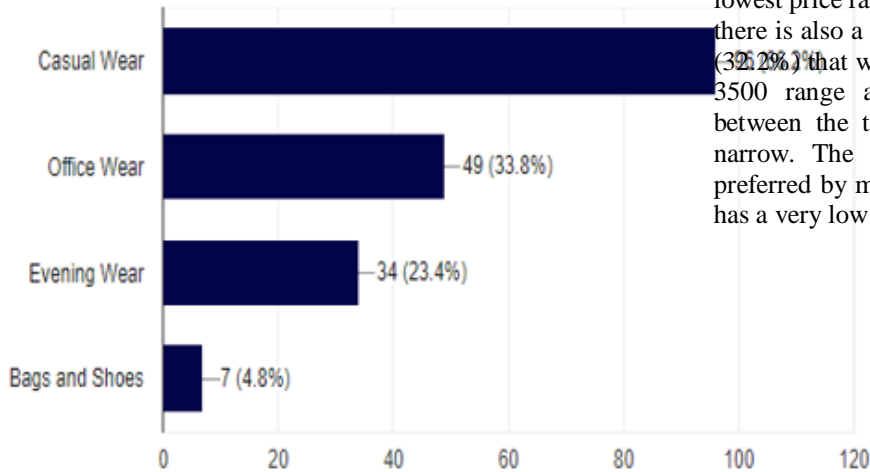


Figure 03 - Types of products mostly purchased from the premium level local fashion brands

The above data reflects that the majority of 66.2% visits these premium level fashion brands to purchase casual wear apparel while only a 33.8% purchases office wear. A 23.4% of consumers purchase evening wear while a very low percentage (4.8%) goes for bags and shoes.

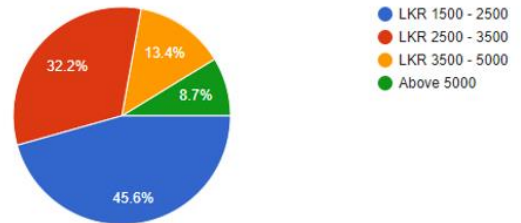


Figure 04 - General price ranges

The above pie chart shows the general price range this generation would go for. (Refer Figure 04) It is quite evident that a higher percentage (45.6%) prefers the lowest price range of LKR 1500-2500, but there is also a quite amount of consumers (32.2%) that would go for the LKR 2500-3500 range as the percentage margin between the two price ranges are quite narrow. The above 5000 range is not preferred by many of the consumers as it has a very low percentage of 8.7%.

Pleasant atmosphere and attractive ambience - 12%  
Trendy, fashionable new designs - 42.3%  
Affordable prices - 11.3%  
Quality Products - 34.5%

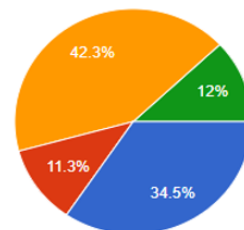


Figure 05 - Mostly expected from the premium level fashion brands in Colombo



The preference on what is mostly expected by the generation Z, from the premium level fashion brands is reflected from the above chart. (Refer Figure 05). The majority expects to have trendy fashionable new designs while most of them expect to have quality products as well. 12% of consumers expect to have a pleasant atmosphere, with an attractive ambience and a friendly staff in the store. Although there is a lower percentage of 11.3% for the preference of affordable prices, it is also one of the important expectations which the fashion brands need to pay attention to.

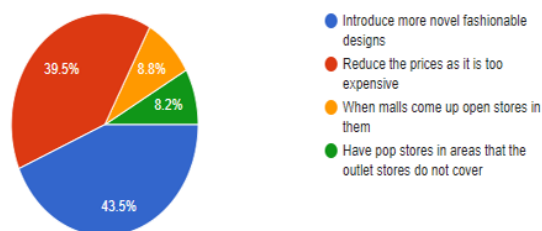


Figure 06 - How the premium level fashion brands in Colombo should be improved

The data of the above pie chart refers to the analysis on how the consumers think the local premium level fashion brands should be improved and what they would like the fashion brands to have in the future. (Refer Figure 06) A higher percentage of 43.5% shows that generation Z expects the local fashion brands to introduce more novel fashionable designs, while 39.5% would want them to reduce the prices. A similar, lower percentage of 8.8% and 8.2% expects to have stores opened up in the malls and to have pop up stores respectively.

From the above data analysis it is evident that generation Z consumers would always prefer casual wear and would go for quality products that are trendy, new, fashionable designs at an

affordable price and they expect the fashion brands to reduce prices while introducing more novel fashionable designs in the future. This can be further clarified from the below facts when considering the global context, It was mentioned by Premack (2018) that Nike, Adidas and Forever21 dominate in the list of brands of generation Z. He also stated that teens are all in to street wear, athleisure and fast fashion. Bobila (2017) stated that generation Z cares a lot about what exactly they are spending their money on and whether they are being discriminated in any way by the brands. He also mentioned in order to tap in to this market it is always successful to offer services such as customization, personalization and crowd-sourcing designs. Pruett (2018) expressed that generation z always values comfort and function. They prefer flowy fabrics over tight dresses and is more interested in taking a casual approach to style, giving out a spontaneous aesthetic look. "For them, looking different (cool!) is paramount, and looking weird (even better!) is attractive. It means you're confident enough to be unique." (Pruett, 2018, para.7) Kline (2017) declared that 66% of this age group believes the most important factors when selecting a brand over another is product quality and availability and that 65% focus on value. Below is a summary (Table 02) of the marketing strategies followed by two of the main global premium level fashion brands that are quite popular among the generation Z consumer

BRAND	PRODUCT	PRICE
ZARA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are able to respond very quickly and adapt to the needs of the customers that change all the time.</li> <li>• This is one of the major strengths of Zara.</li> <li>• The company is not outsourcing their core competency which is the manufacturing process.</li> <li>• The production takes place in house, making sure they are in fully control of the products produced.</li> <li>• Their unique way of the selling proposition is to create the latest trends.</li> <li>• They make sure their new styles are available on sales stores only for a short period of time (2-4 weeks maximum) while immediately pulling out the products that are not being sold in the stores.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They provide their products at a reasonable price to the cream of customers who would compare Zara with Hugo Boss or others, where they would find Zara products quite affordable.</li> <li>• But mostly Zara follows a Premium pricing strategy which has been made possible by optimizing development and training costs.</li> </ul>
H&M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The company focuses on quality and the latest fashions at a reasonable price which gives them the capacity to launch newer product lines at regular intervals. 25% of the company's stock includes the fast fashion products, targeting the newer generation of teens who find them reasonable, trendy and chic at the same</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have adopted a broader pricing range to meet the needs of every sphere of buyers.</li> <li>• To maintain a Median pricing strategy the company offers various discounts and schemes which results in higher volumes of sales giving larger revenues.</li> </ul>
	<p>time. Therefore H&amp;M targets the younger segment which results in higher sales of products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to make products economical the company tries to cut costs from every possible corner which makes their average selling price lower than the competitors.</li> <li>• Also the executives in the company are directed to make purchases at the lowest rates possible to maintain lower overheads.</li> <li>• One of the highlighting facts of H&amp;M is that they have been able to supply quality products at a lower price ranges because of their strategy to reduce the part of intermediary in all transactions, who purchase and sell to the company at higher margin.</li> <li>• With the exit of the intermediary the company is directly purchasing from the supplier in bulk amount which helps in reduction of cost prices because of the economies of scale leading to lower selling prices.</li> </ul>

## Product

- Always introduce more novel, trendy, chic designs and keep them included in the weekly collections.
- Launch newer product lines at regular intervals and make sure they are aligned with the upcoming trends.
- Focus more towards casual and easy to wear
- Designs should look luxurious while being comfortable.
- Usage of soft, flowy fabrics
- Oversized outfits
- Focus on Athleisure
- Leather garments (Jackets and Pants)

## Price

- Offer quality products at a reasonable, affordable price
- Have a broader price range
- Offer various discount schemes and coupons
- Have mid-year and seasonal sales

Figure 07 - Suggestions to improve the product and price strategies of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo

## Place and promotion

The below chart reflects the preference on the type of retailing (Refer Figure 08). A higher percentage of 91.3% opts for outlets stores rather than online shopping and pop stores which implies that most of the generation Z consumers prefer physical retail, simply because you can see, touch and feel the product unlike in online shopping. And also you can visit the store whenever convenient which is not possible in pop stores as they are only available for a short period

The chart below cites, whether the generation Z consumer follows these local premium fashion brands on social media and how well updated they are with the weekly collections of these brands (Refer Figure 09).

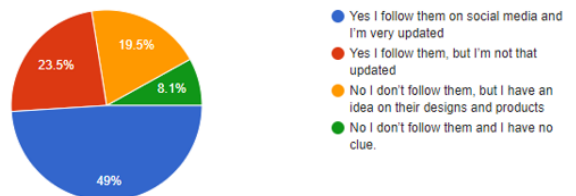


Figure 09 - Followers on social media of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo

Here most of them are following these brands on social media and are very well updated while a percentage of 23.5% are following the brands on social media but they don't check on it often making them not quite updated with the weekly collections. A very few of them (8.1%) don't follow the brands on social media and have no idea with the new designs as they are the type to visit the store and shop

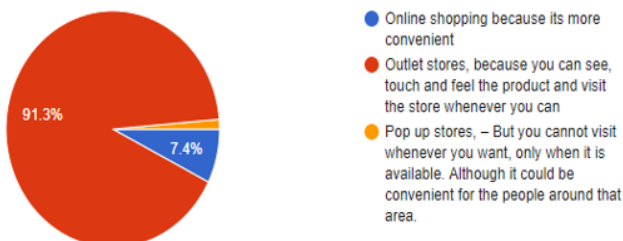


Figure 08 - The types of retailing

spontaneously. 19.5% of the consumers don't follow the brands on social media but have a somewhat of an idea on the weekly collections and the discounts.

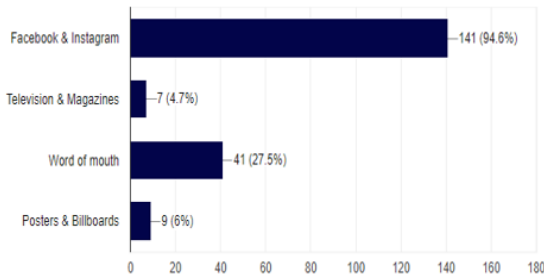


Figure 10 - Medium of source

The above graph shows the data on the medium of sources, where the consumers would get to know about a new brand/clothing line/ retail store in Colombo (Refer Figure 10). Almost 95% of the consumers' medium of sources are Facebook and Instagram which clearly reflects that social media is the most powerful medium of source among generation Z. There is also a certain amount (27.5%) of consumers who use word of mouth as a medium of source, while only a very few uses television, magazines, posters and billboards.

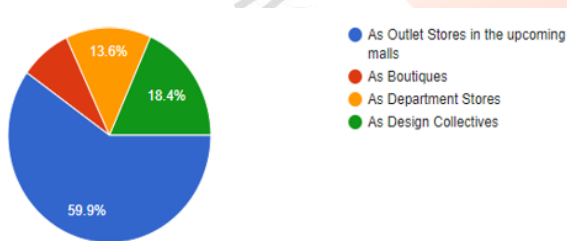


Figure 11 - How the consumers want the fashion brands to be expanded in Colombo

The above data presents how the consumers want these fashion brands to be expanded in future (Figure 11). It is quite evident that almost 60% opts for these

fashion brands to be expanded as outlet stores in the upcoming malls, implying that the generation Z consumer prefers to shop at malls. 18.4% of consumers expect the fashion brands to be expanded as design collectives while only a few prefers boutiques and department stores.

The above data can be further ratified by the facts below, in terms of the global context. Renfrow (2017) says, most of these youngest shoppers go in store to buy apparel but go through them online first. Although they are very tech savvy this group of consumers found purchasing online is less fun than buying in store. Renfrow (2017) also mentioned that department stores are quite unpopular among the generation Z. This age group would always keep sharing their lives on social media across Instagram, Snapchat and Youtube (Pruett, 2018). "The study found that 67% of Generation Z shop in bricks-and-mortar stores most of the time, with another 31% shopping in-store sometimes, which indicates 98% of this cohort shop in stores at least some of the time. The survey of more than 15,000 consumers aged 13-21 from 16 countries also found that 74% of respondents spend free time online, with 25% being online five hours or more each day." (Kline, 2017, para.5) Despite being popular among generation Z in terms of the global context, the most iconic premium level fashion brands in Colombo follow the strategies of Zara and H&M. Below is a summary of their place and promotion strategies, catering for the generation Z consumer (Refer Table 03).

Table 03 - Place and promotion strategies of global fashion brands (Bhasin, 2017)

BRAND	PLACE	PROMOTION
ZARA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company stands out as a brand because it's vertical integrated retailer, where they design, manufacture and distributes the product itself.</li> <li>The customers experience the same environment when entering in to each and every store of Zara.</li> <li>The stores are more spacious, well-lit, modern and predominantly whiter and walled with mirrors. The company makes sure to hire young designers and train them to make good decisions.</li> <li>Every mall owner is interested in providing free space for Zara clearly shows the volumes of the popularity of this brand in <u>Urban</u> areas and the long way it has travelled.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company's unique marketing strategy of, "Zero investment in marketing" is where they use the money to open stores rather in advertising.</li> <li>The key marketing strategy is based on Exclusivity, Experience, Differentiation and Affordability in order to differentiate itself from the competitors.</li> <li>The company relies heavily on the word of mouth, hence they pay attention to each and every detail of their showrooms.</li> <li>Elegancy in which the way the windows are laid out, how the shop attendants are groomed and every store manager has free access to talk to their counterparts regarding the marketing and improvement strategies.</li> <li>Apart from that bar coding, online shopping and computer aided</li> </ul>
H&M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company has followed the policy of purchasing raw materials directly from the suppliers and selling the finished goods directly to the retailers.</li> <li>They have also set up a wide network for online sales, where the consumer can go through the products at their leisure and order via internet which has resulted in higher amount of sales.</li> <li>The H&amp;M retail outlets are found to be very convenient by the consumers as they are able to shop for different products at one store.</li> <li>The company expanded itself at a faster rate on locations that are easily accessible and as well as reasonably priced.</li> <li>They have taken the advantage of slower economy to secure some high profile locations at very realistic prices.</li> </ul>	<p>purchases are designed to increase sales and make it a global brand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company has utilized the electronic media of television by sponsoring many hit and trendy shows, uses many high profile celebrities as brand ambassadors and their ads appear on famous magazines such as Vogue Netherlands, British Vogue and British GQ.</li> <li>Some of the marketing strategies that H&amp;M uses are, tweeting about their collection in parts along with Instagram pictures, uses a wide range of exclusive designers who in themselves are a unique marketing brand and they also send some of their clothes to celebrities.</li> <li>Currently the company is working on a new marketing plan through mobile phones where the clients receive a SMS that are treated as coupons that can be cashed out at any retail outlets.</li> </ul>



After analyzing the above facts, suggestions to improve the place and promotion strategies of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo are as follows;

#### Place

- Open more outlet stores in the upcoming malls
- Make sure the stores are more spacious, with good lighting, mirrors and whiter walls.
- It is important to have friendly, helpful sales persons at the retail outlets
- Give an interactive, mobile focused shopping experience
- Have smart services at the retail stores.

#### Promotion

- Mainly use social media for promotions. Specially Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook
- Use different formats such as pictures, videos and stories
- Instead of selling the product, sell the value of the product, the benefit the consumer will gain by using it. Focus on the value of the business and the social good provided.
- Communicate the message clearly, quickly in a very simple manner
- Focus on generation Z customer experiences and use them for promotions
- Have authentic, interactive entertaining activities by providing mobile app solution
- Make sure all promotions are accessible through mobiles.
- Use social media strategically in order to receive reviews, feedbacks and ratings.

Figure 12 - Suggestions to improve the place and promotion strategies of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo

The suggestions to improve the marketing strategies of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo were obtained through the analysis of the consumer survey (Appendix 01) and the strategies used by the global premium level fashion brands. These suggestions are provided for the local fashion brands to gain customer satisfaction by improving their marketing strategies, focusing more on the generation Z consumer. Stemming from the data analysis the next chapter will contain the conclusion of the study.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the conclusion of the entire study and how the objectives have been achieved from the research. The first objective is to give suggestions to improve the marketing strategy of the premium level fashion brands in Colombo. This objective has been achieved by analyzing the needs and the preferences of the generation Z consumer in terms of premium level fashion brands in Colombo with the marketing strategies followed by the popular global premium fashion brands among the generation Z, such as Zara and H&M. The second objective which is to identify the consumer needs in order to increase sales by gaining customer satisfaction is achieved by identifying the needs of the generation Z consumer in Colombo from the consumer

survey and by analyzing the needs of the consumer and how to attract the consumer from the global context based on the 4Ps model. It is important for the marketing teams of the premium level fashion brands to pay attention to the generation Z consumer as there is a very high potential of generation Z becoming a higher percentage of the consumer spending in the future. In order to sustain in the market these brands should make a few changes and improve their marketing strategies to cater to the generation Z consumer and bring customer satisfaction. The marketing teams of these brands can incorporate the above mentioned suggestions and improve their marketing strategies, focusing on the generation Z consumer.

These brands can expand themselves not only nationally but also globally if they start focusing on the generation Z consumer as they are highly influential and can make a huge impact on the fashion brands.

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- Appendix 01  
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