

A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS A POPULAR ONLINE APPAREL RETAILER IN THAILAND

Nay Chi Khin Khin Oo¹, Sirisuhk Rakthin² and
Prattana Punnakitikashem³

^{1,2,3}College of Management, Mahidol University,

69 Vibhawadi Rangsit Rd., Samsennai, Phayathai, Bangkok 10400, Thailand

³prattana.pun@mahidol.ac.th

Abstract

Ecommerce apparel retails are booming all around the world in the 21st century. Unlike the old days, e-commerce allows humanity to be more convenient to shop since procurements and transactions can be quickly conducted through the internet anywhere. However, some shoppers are still reluctant to buy apparel and fashion products online. Thus, seeing only the product's features on the screen is not enough to decide to buy. This research aims to study the influence of factors such as fashion leadership, website attitude, need advice from personnel, shopping for fun, and quick shopping on the online clothing purchase intention of female consumers. Researchers employed a multiple regression model to conduct the research analyses, and 300 valid samples were collected from the adult female respondents who have experience with a popular apparel retail website. The analysis results showed the significant impacts of fashion leadership, website attitude, and the need for personnel's advice on the online clothing purchase intention. Apart from the main hypotheses, the researchers also found the online clothing purchase intention varies in different income levels. Thereby, the study helps online fashion apparel and clothing retailers obtain a better insight into the role of fashion leadership, website attitude, and shoppers' need for advice from store personnel in developing consumers' purchase intention.

Keywords: Fashion leadership, Hedonic shopping, Need advice from personnel, Online clothing purchase intention, Quick shopping, Website attitude

Introduction

Ecommerce businesses become popular worldwide nowadays due to the unexpected Covid-19 crisis. Unlike the

old days, e-commerce allows humanity to be more convenient to shop since procurements and transactions can be quickly conducted through the internet anywhere (Hidayat, 2008). Shopping at



the brick and motor stores is not as easy and safe as before. As lockdowns are a part of new normal amid of pandemic, businesses and consumers go digital to adapt the situation. Therefore, business owners need to be attentive to factors affecting the online purchase intention of customers now more than ever.

Thailand has always been famous as a shopper's paradise. In the present day, almost all of the apparel brands could be purchased through e-commerce platform in Thailand. However, some shoppers, especially female shoppers, are still reluctant to buy apparel and fashion products online due to the lack of physical contact. Clothing is an experience good; thus, seeing only the product's features on the screen is not enough to decide for buying (Peterson, Balasubramanian, & Bronnenberg, 1997). The clothing purchase decision could vary based on size, quality, price, personal preferences, etc. This motivates the researchers to investigate what influences online clothing purchase intention.

Cho and Workman (2011) stated that the shopping styles of males and females are often different. In general, women are the ones who make 80% of all purchase decisions (Cleaver, 2004). Many research studies showed that the female shoppers tend to shop for fun, browse thoroughly to collect information of what they want, possess more mental energy to research different options, and purchase more apparel when compared to male shoppers (Cleaver, 2004; Falk & Campbell, 1997; Hansen & Jensen, 2009). Therefore, studying what factors affecting the online purchase intention of female consumers in the context of

apparel retail in Thailand draws great attention to the researchers.

In this paper, we aim to study the influence of the factors such as fashion leadership, website attitude, need advice from personnel, shopping for fun, and quick shopping on the online clothing purchase intention of female consumers in the context of Bangkok, Thailand. Apart from our main objectives, we also investigated if the purchase intention of females varies in different age groups and income levels. The finding from our study would assist online clothing retail managers in developing strategies to attract and maintain female consumers who shop clothing online.

We organized this paper into six sections: introduction, literature review and hypothesis development, research methodology, results, discussion and conclusion, and references.

Literature review and hypothesis development

Online clothing purchase intention

Online purchase intention is originated from conventional purchase intention (Close & Kukar-Kinney, 2010). Close and Kukar-Kinney (2010) explained online purchase intention as the willingness of online buyers to make purchase of goods and services through the internet or e-commerce platform. Similar to the previous researchers, Meskaran et al. (2013) also defined online purchase intention as the intention of customers to purchase products via the



internet. According to Iqbal et al. (2012), online purchase intention is the readiness of customers to utilize internet service, make actual purchases of goods or services, or assess different product or service prices. This study focuses on the clothing purchase intention from e-commerce clothing retails. Thus, online clothing purchase intention in this study was defined as the online shoppers' intention or willingness to buy apparel via ecommerce platforms.

Fashion leadership and online clothing purchase intention

Martinez and Kim (2012) defined fashion leadership behavior as the combination of the tendency to buy up-to-date new fashion sooner than other consumers, fashion innovativeness (Sproles, 1979), and the ability to influence the successive purchaser by conveying information about new fashion, fashion opinion leadership (Workman & Johnson, 1993). Many past studies have supported fashion leadership behavior influences online apparel purchase intention. For instance, the study of Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández (2017) pointed out fashion innovativeness has a positive effect on online purchase intention. Baker et al. (2019) also found that fashion opinion leadership increases internet usage for clothing shopping. Moreover, Shang et al. (2005) claimed that fashion involvement motivates consumers to shop online. Thus, we expected the female consumers' fashion leadership behavior to positively affect their online clothing purchase intention. We hypothesized our first hypothesis as follows.

H1: Online clothing purchase intention (PI) is positively influenced by fashion leadership (FL).

Website attitude and online purchase intention

Website attitude in this study refers to the consumers' evaluation or attitude toward the characteristics of the website (Martinez & Kim, 2012). In other words, website attitude is the perceived website quality of a particular website. Huang (2003) argued that users' decision-making at a website is ultimately influenced by the user's experience and evaluations of the website's characteristics. Previous researchers proposed website attitude influences the user's trust, which affects the online purchase intention (Chang & Chen, 2008). The website attitude was also suggested as a factor that increases shoppers' online purchase intention in the study of Martinez and Kim (2012). Furthermore, Lynch et al. (2001) claimed that website attitude is imperative for high-touch product retailers, including apparel retailers. Thereby, we supposed that shoppers' positive perceived website quality might increase the online clothing purchase intention. And we developed the second hypothesis.

H2: Online clothing purchase intention (PI) is positively influenced by positive website attitude (WA).

Need advice from personnel and online purchase intention

Some apparel shoppers, especially female shoppers, need reassurance or guidance when buying clothing. Mostly, female shoppers tend to doubt their ability to choose suitable clothing for



themselves (Hansen & Jensen, 2009). Many previous research studies have found that different clothing shoppers require different advice from store personnel (Moye & Kincade, 2003; Shim & Kotsiopoulos, 1993). Shoppers who prefer to get guidance from other persons are expected to have less intention to shop from an e-commerce platform. Hansen and Jensen (2009) proposed that needing advice from personnel negatively affects online clothing purchase intention. However, they could not find the significant relationship of the two variables. We developed the following hypothesis in accordance to this literature.

H3: Online clothing purchase intention (PI) is positively influenced by need advice from personnel (NAP).

Shopping for fun and online purchase intention

Shopping for fun was defined as the shopper's orientation that perceives the shopping experience more enjoyable than others (Scarpi et al., 2014). Shoppers oriented to hedonic shopping tend to consider shopping as a recreational, fun, and pleasurable activity (Jin & Sternquist, 2004). Many researchers argued that shopping online is less enjoyable than offline shopping (Dennis & Sandhu, 2002). Therefore, clothing shoppers who like to shop for fun might have less online purchase intention (Hansen & Jensen, 2009). However, the technology in the present days is more developed and novel than that of the past few years. The e-commerce retailers become more

attentive to the users' enjoyment and make their platform more enjoyable (Lu & Su, 2009). Moreover, recent studies confirmed that the hedonic attributes of shoppers have a positive effect on online purchases (Chiou & Ting, 2011; Comrey & Lee, 1992; Moon et al., 2017; Moon et al., 2015). Thereby, we developed the following hypothesis.

H4: Online clothing purchase intention (PI) is positively influenced by shopping for fun (SF).

Quick shopping and online purchase intention

Quick shopping was explained as time-saving shopping in the study of Hansen and Jensen (2009). Shoppers with time-saving orientation tend to complete the shopping trip in the minimum amount of time (Hansen & Jensen, 2009). Due to modern-day technology development, shoppers can easily access online retail websites and do the transaction (Hidayat, 2008), from their portable electronic devices. Thereby, shopping online could save a lot of time than offline shopping. Hansen and Jensen (2009) proposed that time-saving-oriented shopping and quick shopping positively affect online clothing purchases. The findings of Kim and Kim (2004) also suggested that many consumers agree that shopping online saves more time than shopping offline. Hence, quick shopping was expected to impact online clothing buying intention positively, and we developed the following hypothesis.

H5: Online clothing purchase intention (PI) is positively influenced by quick shopping (QS).

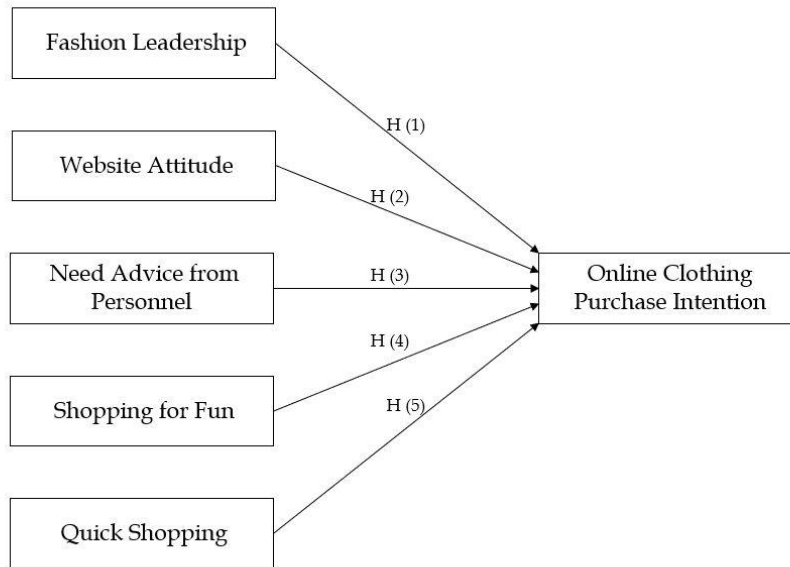


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the study

Research methodology

This paper is a quantitative research study using the self-administered survey method. The study aims to investigate the influence factors of online clothing purchase intention in the context of female customers in Bangkok, Thailand. To fulfill this aim, we chose XYZ (pseudonym) apparel brand, one of Thailand's most popular fashion apparel websites, to conduct the study. According to Statista (2021), the XYZ website obtains over 670,000 views monthly and the most visited fashion website in Thailand. The targeted population of this study is the adult female consumers (18 years old and above) from Bangkok who have experience with the XYZ clothing retail website and have purchased the clothing from the website. We employed non-

probability sampling methods, such as purposive and convenient sampling.

After reviewing the literature comprehensively, the questionnaire was developed by adapting the questionnaire items from the previous studies of Hansen and Jensen (2009) and Martinez and Kim (2012). The questionnaire was translated to Thai and collected in Thai and English since the respondents were from Bangkok, Thailand. All variables were measured in five-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaire includes 29 items organized into eight sections: screening section (1-item), fashion leadership (8-items), website attitude (6-items), need advice from personnel (3-items), shopping for fun (3-items), quick shopping (3-items), online clothing purchase intention (3-items) and



demographic profiles (2-items). The detailed questionnaire can be seen in the appendix.

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), the sample sizes between 30 and 500 can be considered proper for most research. Thus, we decided to collect at least 300 data. The samples were collected from 10 random sky train stations (BTS) located in Bangkok's central business districts, where the areas are most crowded. The self-administered survey questionnaires were distributed to the women passed by the BTS stations and female pedestrians. First, the researchers asked the screening question, then requested them to participate. The total number of 313 questionnaires were distributed by asking the respondents to scan the QR code connected to the online questionnaire. However, some of the respondents turned out to answer that they have no experience with the XYZ online store in the questionnaire. Thus, we had to remove the answers from those respondents, and only 300 valid samples were left.

For the statistical method, we used multiple regression in SPSS software to test the relationships of the variables and hypotheses. Apart from the main hypotheses, we also analyzed the variance test (ANOVA) to investigate the difference in mean values of online clothing purchase intention when segmented by different age groups and income levels. Before conducting the actual research, we distributed the questionnaire to 30 respondents for the pre-test.

Results

Among the respondents, 47.3% were from the age group of 26-35 years, 31.3% from 18-25years, and the rest from 36 and above. The majority of respondents, which was 33.3%, earn 20,001-30,000 bahts. Another 26.7% have an income level of 30,001 bahts and above. The rest 22% and 18% earn 10,001-20,000 bahts and 10,000 bahts and less respectively (see Table 1).

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Respondent's Age		
18-25 years	94	31.3%
26-35 years	142	47.3%
36 years and above	64	21.4%
Respondent's Income		
10,000 bahts and below	54	18%
10,001 – 20,000 bahts	66	22%
20,001 – 30,000 bahts	100	33.3%
30,001 bahts and above	80	26.7%

Reliability test

The internal consistency of measured items was evaluated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient values of each variable. The Cronbach's Alpha values of all variables are in the range of 0.712 to 0.953, which

exceed the critical value of 0.7 as recommended by Field (2005). On the other terms, the measured items are reliable and possess high internal consistency. The results were shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha test results

Variables (No. of Items)	Cronbach's Alpha
Fashion Leadership (8)	0.953
Website Attitude (6)	0.877
Need Advice from Personnel (3)	0.806
Shopping for Fun (3)	0.712
Quick Shopping (3)	0.875
Online Clothing Purchase Intention (3)	0.818

Hypothesis testing

For the hypothesis testing, a multiple regression model was used. The overall model was significant ($F = 89.682$, $p < 0.001$), which means that at least one out of five independent variables in the model has a significant relationship with the dependent variable. The adjusted R^2

value of 0.597 showed that the model could explain 59.7% variation in online clothing purchase intention. Moreover, the independent variables' variance inflation factors (VIF) ranged from 1.243 to 2.063. Therefore, multi-collinearity was not an issue in this study. The results from the regression analysis were shown in Table 2.

Table 3 Regression analysis results

Variables	Standardized Beta Coefficients	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Fashion Leadership (FL)	0.369**	2.063
Website Attitude (WA)	0.408**	1.453
Need Advice from Personnel (NP)	-0.140**	1.243
Shopping for Fun (SF)	0.057	1.510
Quick Shopping (QS)	0.020	1.834
R^2	0.604	
Adjusted R^2	0.597	
ANOVA-F	89.682**	

* = $p < 0.05$, significant at 95% confident level,

** = $p < 0.001$, significant at 99% confident level



The regression results showed that fashion leadership ($\beta = 0.369$, $p < 0.05$) and website attitude ($\beta = 0.408$, $p < 0.05$) have significant positive effects on female shoppers' online clothing purchase intention. Thus, hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported. Needing advice from personnel has a significant negative impact on online purchase intention as the beta coefficient was -0.140 and the p-value was less than 0.05 . Therefore, hypothesis 3 was also supported. However, the results of shopping for fun ($\beta = 0.057$, $p > 0.05$) and quick shopping ($\beta = 0.020$, $p > 0.05$) were not significant. Hypotheses 4 and 5 were inconclusive due to these findings.

Besides the main hypothesis testing, one-way ANOVA was used to analyze if female consumers' online clothing purchase intention varies in different age groups and income levels. The F statistics of online clothing purchase intention in different age groups was not significant as the p-value (0.651) was greater than 0.05 . In contrast, the different income levels showed a significant variation as the p-value (0.03) was less than 0.05 . Thereby, we conducted the Bonferroni post hoc test to identify which income level has significantly varied online purchase intention. According to the post hoc test results, the respondents from the income level of 10,000 bahts and below tend to have significantly less online clothing purchase intentions when compared to those from the other three income levels.

Discussions and conclusions

The summary of hypothesis testing results are shown in Table 4. Our analyses showed that fashion leadership has a significant positive impact on online clothing purchase intention. This finding is in line with the discoveries of Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonsón-Fernández (2017); Martínez and Kim (2012) and Baker et al. (2019). Following this result, we would like to suggest that to promote the online purchase intention, the online retailers should provide a social community, such as blogging page and social media groups, for the customers where they can share up-to-date information about fashion and influence others.

This study also found that shoppers' positive attitude towards the website promotes online clothing purchase intention. This finding is in line with Huang's (2003) and Martínez and Kim (2012) findings. We also concluded that out of five predictors, the consumers' positive attitude towards the website quality has the highest impact ($\beta = 0.408$) on apparel purchase intention via the internet. Thus, to evoke the purchase intention of online shoppers, the retailers should be attentive to improve and maintain the quality and user-friendliness of their websites consistently.

Contrary to the insignificant findings of Hansen and Jensen (2009), we found the significant result that female consumers who require advice from store personnel possess less purchase intention to buy apparel online as we expected. Employing Artificial Intelligent (AI) technology on the e-commerce platform to assist the apparel shoppers would help reduce the negative effect of shoppers' need for advice from store personnel. For example, providing a virtual shopping

assistant to whom customers can ask for information, such as apparel compatibility with hair or skin color and advice for apparel size, may help shoppers choose suitable clothing. Moreover, shoppers will feel less reluctant to ask for advice from AI than actual human personnel, thereby promoting the shopper's buying intention online.

Hypothesis 4, online clothing purchase intention is positively influenced by shopping for fun, and hypothesis 5, online clothing purchase intention is

positively influenced by quick shopping, were not supported. There was unsubstantiated evidence for the positive effects of shopper's hedonic shopping and time-saving orientations on purchase intention in this study. These results were also in line with the previous study of Hansen and Jensen (2009). The study also found that the online purchase intention of female consumers varies in different income levels. The shoppers with low income (10,000 bahts and below) tend to have the slightest willingness to purchase apparel.

Table 4 Summary of hypothesis testing

Hypotheses	Results
H1: Fashion leadership → (+) Online clothing purchase intention	Supported
H2: Website attitude → (+) Online clothing purchase intention	Supported
H3: Need advice from personnel → (-) Online clothing purchase intention	Supported
H4: Shopping for fun → (+) Online clothing purchase intention	Not supported
H5: Quick shopping → (+) Online clothing purchase intention	Not supported

Research implications

This study contributes to the literature by specifically focus on the online clothing purchase intention of female customers. The aspects of the current research findings broaden the understanding of online purchase intention of females in the context of clothing and how their shopping orientations, such as fashion leadership, website attitude, and need advice from personnel, would influence the intention. Moreover, this study reconfirms the previous finding and validates several scholars' propositions (Huang, 2003; Hansen & Jensen, 2009; Martinez and Kim 2012).

In terms of managerial contribution, the study helps online fashion apparel and

clothing retailers understand better the role of fashion leadership, website attitude, and shoppers' need for advice from store personnel in developing consumers' purchase intention. It would also assist online clothing retail managers in developing strategies to attract and maintain female consumers who shop online.

Limitation and future study

However, there are several limitations in this study. The study was conducted only in the Bangkok central business district areas. Thus, it may limit the generalizability of the entire population. Moreover, this study only focuses on female customers of XYZ online apparel



retailers. The application of convenient sampling may cause biased sample. The findings might not be consistent for other gender and online retailers of different natures. Bigger sample size is recommended for future investigation. We would like to suggest for considering more demographic factors other than age

and income level in the future study. Additionally, different independent variables, such as perceived risk, brand awareness, etc., might have different influences on the online purchase intention of female consumers. We also suggest exploring other predictors for further investigations.

References

- Baker, R., Yu, U.-J., Gam, H. J., & Banning, J. (2019). Identifying tween fashion consumers' profile concerning fashion innovativeness, opinion leadership, internet use for apparel shopping, interest in online co-design involvement, and brand commitment. *Fashion and Textiles*, 6(1), 1-17.
- Chang, H. H., & Chen, S. W. (2008). The impact of online store environment cues on purchase intention: Trust and perceived risk as a mediator. *Online information review*.
- Chiou, J.-S., & Ting, C.-C. (2011). Will you spend more money and time on internet shopping when the product and situation are right? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(1), 203-208.
- Cho, S., & Workman, J. (2011). Gender, fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership, and need for touch. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*.
- Cleaver, J. (2004). What women want: the growing economic power of women consumers is transforming today's marketplace. *Entrepreneur*, available at: <http://findarticles.com>.
- Close, A. G., & Kukar-Kinney, M. (2010). Beyond buying: Motivations behind consumers' online shopping cart use. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(9-10), 986-992.
- Comrey, A. L., & Lee, H. B. (1992). *A First Course in Factor Analysis*, 2nd Edn. Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- Dennis, C., & Sandhu, B. (2002). From bricks to clicks: understanding the e-consumer. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*.
- Escobar-Rodríguez, T., & Bonsón-Fernández, R. (2017). Analysing online purchase intention in Spain: fashion e-commerce. *Information Systems and e-Business Management*, 15(3), 599-622.
- Falk, P., & Campbell, C. (1997). *The shopping experience*. Sage.



- Field, A. (2005). *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS (Introducing Statistical Methods)* Sage Publications. In: London.
- Hansen, T., & Jensen, J. M. (2009). Shopping orientation and online clothing purchases: the role of gender and purchase situation. *European Journal of Marketing*.
- Hidayat, T. (2008). *Panduan Membuat Toko Online dengan OSCommerce*. MediaKita.
- Huang, M.-H. (2003). Designing website attributes to induce experiential encounters. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 19(4), 425-442.
- Iqbal, S., Hunjra, A. I., & Rehman, K. U. (2012). Consumer intention to shop online: B2C E-commerce in developing countries. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 12(4), 424-432.
- Jin, B., & Sternquist, B. (2004). Shopping is truly a joy. *The Service Industries Journal*, 24(6), 1-18.
- Kim, E. Y., & Kim, Y. K. (2004). Predicting online purchase intentions for clothing products. *European Journal of Marketing*.
- Lu, H. P., & Su, P. Y. J. (2009). Factors affecting purchase intention on mobile shopping web sites. *Internet Research*.
- Lynch, P. D., Kent, R. J., & Srinivasan, S. S. (2001). The global internet shopper: evidence from shopping tasks in twelve countries. *Journal of advertising research*, 41(3), 15-23.
- Martinez, B., & Kim, S. (2012). Predicting purchase intention for private sale sites. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*.
- Meskaran, F., Ismail, Z., & Shanmugam, B. (2013). Online purchase intention: Effects of trust and security perception. *Australian journal of basic and applied sciences*, 7(6), 307-315.
- Moon, M., Khalid, M., Awan, H., Attiq, S., Rasool, H., & Kiran, M. (2017). Consumer's perceptions of website's utilitarian and hedonic attributes and online purchase intentions: A cognitive–affective attitude approach. *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC*, 21(2), 73-88.
- Moon, M. A., Pakistan, P. S. S. I., Rasool, H., Pakistan, P., & Attiq, S. (2015). Personality and irregular buying behavior: Adaptation and validation of core self-evaluation personality trait model in consumer impulsive and compulsive buying behavior. *Journal of Marketing and Consumer Research*, 15.
- Moye, L. N., & Kincade, D. H. (2003). Shopping orientation segments: exploring differences in store patronage and attitudes toward retail store environments among female apparel consumers. *International journal of consumer studies*, 27(1), 58-71.



- Peterson, R. A., Balasubramanian, S., & Bronnenberg, B. J. (1997). Exploring the implications of the Internet for consumer marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing science*, 25(4), 329-346.
- Scarpi, D., Pizzi, G., & Visentin, M. (2014). Shopping for fun or shopping to buy: is it different online and offline? *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 21(3), 258-267.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2010). Research methods for business: a skill building approach. *Language*, 20(468p), 25cm.
- Shang, R.-A., Chen, Y.-C., & Shen, L. (2005). Extrinsic versus intrinsic motivations for consumers to shop on-line. *Information & Management*, 42(3), 401-413.
- Shim, S., & Kotsiopulos, A. (1993). A typology of apparel shopping orientation segments among female consumers. *Clothing and textiles research journal*, 12(1), 73-85.
- Sproles, G. B. (1979). *Fashion: Consumer behavior toward dress*. Burgess Publishing Company.
- Statista. (2021). *Most popular B2C e-commerce sites for fashion in Thailand as of 2nd quarter 2020, by monthly web visits*.
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1007040/thailand-leading-b2c-ecommerce-sites-fashion/>
- Workman, J. E., & Johnson, K. K. (1993). Fashion opinion leadership, fashion innovativeness, and need for variety. *Clothing and textiles research journal*, 11(3), 60-64.