The effect of Artificial Intelligence on Fashion Involvement Purchase Decision

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Abstract:

E-fashion markets are mixing cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, voice assistant and chatbots. This research investigates Artificial Intelligence's impact on replacing offline salespeople's role in the fashion industry. The objectives include discussing artificial intelligence tools, displaying the concept of artificial intelligence, identifying the importance of applying artificial intelligence in the fashion industry and showing the appropriate techniques that can be applied in fashion stores to identify the impacts of artificial intelligence on purchase involvement decisions. The quantitative research method was used in the study. A questionnaire was used to get primary data using convenience sampling. The data were analyzed using the SPSS and AMOS Software. The study demonstrated that voice assistants and chatbots positively impact involvement in purchasing decisions in fashion stores. The findings revealed a significant association between chatbots and voice assistants and consumer behaviour, as evidenced by the validity of the model's first (H1) and second (H2) hypotheses. Both theoretical and practical aspects may help managers build tactics and strategies to develop their technological infrastructure and improve customer satisfaction.

Originality: The goal of this research was first to determine what role AI technologies play in affecting fashion purchase decisions in Egypt.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, Fashion, Involvement, Voice Assistant.

1-Introduction

Fashion stores have taken a significant part and present a tremendous chance for academics to comprehend customer behaviour processes when deciding to buy or to not buy an outfit and all the elements that impact this decision. Everything has changed in recent years due to various collaborative characteristics; the shopping experience has been revolutionized. The employment of artificial intelligence (AI) is gradually growing into the central premise of innovation, and fashion stores are quickly expanding using artificial intelligence to effectively imitate human intelligence and grow to be extra competitive by reducing expenses and improving customer experiences (Mahmoud et al., 2020).

AI is restructuring fashion stores and provides many techniques in marketing intending to facilitate the consumers' buying process. In fashion stores, salespeople's tailored services might be substituted at any time by new technology. With AI tools implemented, consumers will hardly interact with salespersons in real-time (Jiang and Benbasat, 2007; Li et al., 2002). A variety of collaborative components have revolutionized the spending experience; e-fashion markets are combining pioneering technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) (Shankar, 2018), recommender systems (RS) (Zhao et al., 2015), chatbots (Pantano and Pizzi, 2020), machine learning (Xia et al., 2012), Internet of Things (IoT), into their applications and websites (Caro and Sadr, 2019; Langley et al., 2021; Ng and Wakenshaw, 2017).

Following the COVID-19 incident, International e-commerce is anticipated to increase by 31.4 % (Yeo et al., 2022). As artificial intelligence has evolved as a critical component of technological innovation, various firms have recently implemented this novel application (Wong and Liu, 2018). According to Mckinsey and Company (2019), the fashion sector has been designated as one of the most important industries, contributing a significant share of the global economy.

AI practices in Egypt have been discussed in several contents; tourism industry (Ragab and Mohamed, 2022; Gaafar, 2020), journalism (Walid and Hassoun, 2019), education (Ragheb et al., 2022) in the retailing sector (Mousa, 2020), Health care (El Hadi, 2022). Therefore, there is a gap in the literature concerning the practice of AI in the fashion sector. The fashion sector has undergone an enormous transformation into the online world; any store that does not have an application or website is losing a large segment of consumers who used to buy everything online. In addition, the features provided via a store's App or website are vital in differentiating them from other low features provided by websites. According to Bilkova and Kopackova (2013), It has the potential to attract prospective customers, boost first-time sales, maintain recurring purchases, and produce additional money (Balfagih et al., 2012; King et al., 2016),

AI contains "programs, algorithms, systems, and machines that demonstrate intelligence" (Shankar, 2018, p. 6). In the fashion setting, these algorithms function as follows: "virtual assistants", Syam and Sharma (2018) described virtual assistants as communicating dialogue between the

prospective customer and the organization with an aim to aid clients in comprehending the information presented on the App, which facilitates their decision-making (Pantano and Pizzi, 2020). According to Kozinets and Gretzel (2021), despite the fact that AI provides marketers with a strong instrument that is assured by specific conditions and may deliver spectacular results for a single campaign, it does not add to organizational or management marketing expertise, and it can diminish salespeople jobs (Hochstein, 2019).

In 2019 Chopra claimed that in recent years, the standard tools that the shops have embraced, Chatbots, voice assistants, and augmented reality, can help buyers make their selections faster (Chopra, 2019). The most recent AI-based solutions in fashion retail include magic mirrors, self-checkout kiosks, and virtual trial rooms. In addition, according to Sharma (2020), AI might help fashion companies improve supply chain efficiencies through capacity planning, customer-focused merchandising, and predictive forecasting, resulting in increased product availability and faster and more exact delivery for customers. Sharma (2020) also noted that fashion stores have begun to harness these technologies so that customers may have a smooth browsing experience, and as a result, merchants can improve customer retention and brand loyalty. Mantur and Borgaon (2020); Muruganantham and Bhakat (2013) believe that modern technology can impact customers' purchasing decisions and encourage impulsive purchases. COVID-19 pandemic also has significantly impacted consumer impulse consumption (Li *et al.*,2021). Subsequently, external stimuli, like time scarcity, information sources, and

product shortages, influenced consumer buying behaviour during pandemics (Laato *et al*., 2020; Islam *et al*., 2020).

Consumers manage to participate in interactive behaviours in order to accomplish more efficacy in their decisions and lower the perceived costs of future decisions (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). According to Ravald and Gronroos (1996), when they trust a firm, consumers feel safe with the service provider or supplier; they realize that it can meet their wants and needs in the long run. In the case of purchasing behaviour through online fashion stores, marketers need to consider the variables that consumers could perceive and engage them for the purchase. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate better the impact of chatbots and voice assistants in replacing salespeople in the e-fashion industry on consumer buy involvement decisions.

This research aims to answer the following:

Is it true that the existence of a chatbot and a voice assistant influences buying decision involvement in e-fashion stores?

2-Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Theoretical Concept of the Study

Previous research has examined fashion apparel through discussion and other research through involvement (Fairhurst et al., 1989, Flynn and Goldsmith, 1993). The defining function of fashion clothes in society demonstrates the significance of engagement in fashion apparel. Furthermore, the continuous and cyclical nature of fashion clothes suggests that individuals are frequently lured into the ‘style’ or ‘trend’ of the day, and there are many

who place a significant arrangement of importance on their fashion (Tigert et al.,1980).

Involvement research has frequently concentrated on pre-purchase situations in decision-making and advertising, with little emphasis on the construct's long-term impact on consumer behaviour (Muehling et al., 1993). Activities involved in pre-purchase research, information processing, the hierarchy of effects, attribute evaluation, and brand perception distinctions are all common places for involvement (Kallick et al., 1974; Rothschild, 1975). These pre-purchase and information-processing methodologies are lacking to clarify the whole of engagement within a larger context of repercussions because they confine involvement to a relatively narrow context and chronological realm of consumer behaviour.

There is a formal explanation in the involvement literature of what actions precede product engagement when a buy scenario or consumption is not imminent. There is no link, if any, between a consumer's engagement in a larger range of activities related to a specific product, such as advertising or consumption (Muehling et al., 1993). The degree of involvement is believed to alter solely to the extent that long-term changes in the consumer's value system occur as a result of contact with a stimulus or the environment. The long-term development of an upward or downward trend in consumer involvement is not prevented by the stability and durable character of involvement.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) discusses mainly the technology determined by techniques in which individuals utilize their brains' neurons and nervous

systems to make purpose, assumptions and decisions, even though they generally work contrarily (Mehta and Hamke, 2019). However, research in the consumer behaviour area has been attempting to comprehend consumers' digital behaviour.

Chatbots and Involvement Purchase Decision

Chatbots were a potentially cost-effective solution for customer service and a substitute for personal human service (Chakrabarti and Luger, 2015; Larivière et al., 2017; Marinova et al., 2017). While today's customers will purchase everything online, they need a 24/7 service that can provide guidance, rapid answers to their questions, and appropriate receiving for their complaints. Therefore, e-fashion stores are challenged with a growing pressure to update (Gartner, 2017) and integrate human characteristics that are essential for providing effective service encounters (van Doorn *et* al., 2017) ;). Poor online customer service impends customer loyalty (Ovum, 2016) and, in turn, will make consumers stop using online services. Thus, many e-fashion stores have started using Chatbots as a channel that gives consumers 24/7 online service and saves the store's money by minimizing the number of vital service employees (Oracle, 2016). In contrast, a recent study suggests that the humans employed behind the website will positively impact consumers' decisions, enhance their perception of the website, and encourage them to develop a stronger relationship with it.

Customers typically initiate live-chat inquiries after visiting an online store and browsing numerous goods. According to Clarkson (2010), customers

are more probable to leave their browsing and buying carts if they cannot rapidly obtain answers to their inquiries. A live-chat service enables a vendor to contact visitors who have a buying intent and answer important inquiries about purchasing decisions. Not only can live chat give more information to lessen consumers' product quality and fit doubt, but it may also assist consumers in finding a product they prefer. Live chat, like service agents in brick-and-mortar establishments, can assure quick customer assistance and efficiently convert interested visitors into purchasers as a vital component of the increased Internet-based marketing-communication mix (Bucklin et al., 2009).

Despite much investigation, it has yet to be determined how Chatbots can influence consumer decision-making involvement in fashion (Grönroos and Voima, 2013), but it has been clarified that chatbots significantly influence how customers perceive service quality (Larivière *et al.,* 2017; Verhagen *et al.,* 2014) and engage in buying decisions.

Hence the following hypothesis can be proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Chatbots positively affect purchase decision involvement in e-fashion

Voice Assistant and Purchase Involvement Decision

In 2018, Hoy defined voice assistant as another AI technology that uses a voice-based feature to recognize human voice commands and deliver answers to their questions in a virtual chat. Apple's Siri, Amazon's Alexa, and Google's Assistant are well-known voice assistants (Lopez et al., 2017).

Consumers utilize this function when purchasing to assess product options, obtain pertinent information, and process product orders (Courtney, 2017). Utilizing AI in sales channels allows shops to attract customers, adapt offers to meet their needs, and gather data on them, hence improving sales performance (Huo et al., 2019). ZARA, a well-known fast-fashion retailer, utilized AI to launch its first unique store in the United States, offering experiences that enticed consumers to return again.

However, businesses are unsure if using these technologies would cause Egyptian customers to make spontaneous purchases. Dacko (2017) claimed that further investigation of these modern technologies is essential to improve the customer experience, providing a sense of enjoyment that can eventually influence purchase choice.

Hence the following hypothesis can be proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Voice assistants positively affect purchase decision involvement in e-fashion

Theoretical Model and Framework

The following research model is proposed based on the literature review.

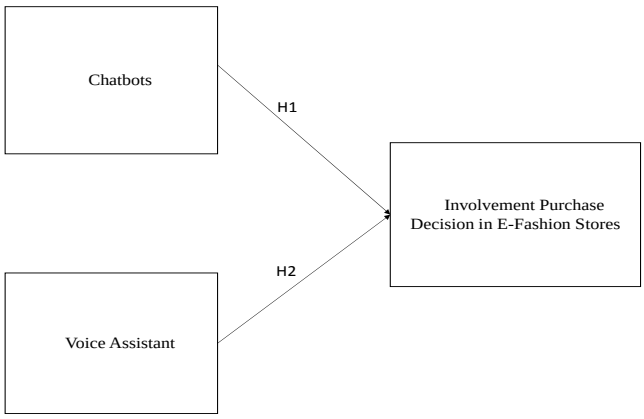

Figure 1: Research Model

3. Methodology of Research

The goal is to see if there is a link between AI technologies and involvement in purchase decisions in the e-fashion business. The researcher used a convenience sample. This study's sampling frame consists of buyers who made at least three online fashion purchases through a brand's App. This study's data using an electronic survey in which 300 people participated. There were two sections to the questionnaire. The first part included questions about the respondent's demographic characteristics (gender and age), while part two included questions about the influence of independent factors on dependent variables. The dependent variable here was the involvement in the purchase decision for fashion, and the independent variables were chatbots and voice assistants. To guarantee validity and reliability, already validated measures from prior research were adapted to meet the study setting (Table 1).

A Likert scale with one indicating strongly disagree, five indicating strongly agree, and three indicating neutral was used to rate the concept assertions. All scale items were purified using the scale purification methods and techniques listed in table 2 (DeVellis, 2003).

Table 1: Measurement Scales

Construct	**Items**	**Author**
Chatbots	1-It was simple for me to comprehend how to begin interacting with the chatbot. 2-The chatbot function was easily detectable. 3-Communicating with the chatbot was clear. 4-The chatbot maintained relevant conversation. 5-The chatbot directed me to the appropriate service. 6-I have discovered that the chatbot understands what I am looking for and assists me in achieving it. 7-The chatbot provides me with all the necessary information.	1-Balaji and Borsci (2019) 2-Silderhuis (2020).
Voice Assistants	1-I tend to buy more when there is less interaction with salespeople. 2-I look at choosing my outfit and avoiding any suggestions. 3-I tend to enjoy shopping without any human interaction. 4-I tend to avoid may I help you with questions from salespeople.	Jain and Gandhi (2021)
Purchase decision involvement	1-Making purchase decisions for Fashion Clothing is significant to me. 2-When it comes to Fashion Clothing, I give a lot of thought to My choices. 3-I place great value on making the right decision when it comes to Fashion Clothing. 4-Purchase decisions for Fashion Clothing are critical to me. 5-Making a Fashion Clothing Purchase necessitates much thought.	O'Cass (2000)

	6-I attach great importance to purchasing Fashion Clothing. 7-I enjoy being involved in the buying of Fashion Clothing. 8-The purchase of Fashion Clothing is essential to me. 9-Purchasing Fashion Clothing is significant to me.	

Table 2: Instruments' Reliability

Instruments	**Number of Items**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Chatbots	7	0.944
Voice Assistants	4	0.853
Involvement Purchase Decision	9	0.825

Profile of Respondents

According to the gender breakdown, nearly half were females, and 55% were males. Although according to age, the highest percentage belonged to the age between 30 and 39 see table 3.

Table 3: Demographic variables

Variable		Numbers	Percentage
Gender	Female Male	210 90	70% 30%
Age	20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70 and more	75 120 45 30 15 15	25% 40% 15% 10% 5% 5%
Total		300	100%

Structural Model

Table 4's findings for the structural model demonstrate that the model provides a good fit to the data with appropriate absolute, incremental, and parsimonious indices.

Table 4: Measurement of the total construct

Question code	Variable	Factor Loading	CR (T)	Probability	SMCC
Chatbots_1	← Chatbots	.992	N/A	N/A	.696
Chatbots_2	← Chatbots	.879	9.345	***	.591
Chatbots_3	← Chatbots	.896	9.896	***	.580
Chatbots_4	← Chatbots	.856	9.987	***	.614
Chatbots_5	← chatbots	.689	8.374	***	.696
Chatbots_6	← chatbots	.845	9.352	***	.584
Chatbots_7	←chatbots	.875	9.652	***	.563
Measures: RMSEA: .000; Chisq/df: .975; NFI: 0.984; TLI: 0.912; CFI: 0.895; AVE: 0.546; CR: 0.581					
Voiceassistant_1	← Voice Assistant	.840	7.839	N/A	.599
Voiceassistant_2	← Voice Assistant	.874	7.817	***	.602
Voiceassistant_3	← Voice Assistant	.835	7.921	***	.698
Voiceassistant_4	← Voice Assistant	.787	7.906	***	.696
Measures: RMSEA: .000; Chisq/df: .892; NFI: .940; TLI: .915; CFI: .931; AVE: 0.611; CR: 0.584					
Ipd_1	← Involvement purchase decision	.671	8.987	N/A	.595
Ipd_2	← Involvement purchase decision	.786	9.453	***	.499

Ipd_3	← Involvement purchase decision	.731	10.712	***	.591
Ipd_4	← Involvement purchase decision	.835	9.632	***	.571
Ipd_5	← Involvement purchase decision	.973	9.464	***	.674
Ipd_6	← Involvement purchase decision	.834	8.336	***	.562
Ipd_7	← Involvement purchase decision	.785	9.545	***	.564
Ipd_8	← Involvement purchase decision	.545	8.464	***	.547
Ipd_9	← Involvement purchase decision	.975	9.373	***	.678
Measures: RMSEA: .000; Chisq/df: .981; NFI: .981; TLI: .920; CFI: .991; AVE: 0.521; CR: 0.565					
Whole Model Measures: RMSEA: .071; Chisq/df: 1.384; NFI: .963; TLI: .984; CFI: .920; AVE>0.5 CR: >1.98					

Test of Hypotheses

Based on Table 5, the first hypothesis indicated a substantial positive association between chatbots and involvement in purchase decisions in e-fashion. Correspondingly, also the second hypothesis was approved by a statistically significant as voice assistant impacts involvement in purchasing in e-fashion.

Table 5. Test of Hypotheses

Construct	Construct	Estimate	S. E	CR	Probability
Chatbots	Involvement Purchase Decision	.132	.094	1.852	***
Voice Assistant	Involvement Purchase Decision	.309	.093	1.862	***

Discussions and Findings

Artificial intelligence has quickly emerged, and it is transforming the way we see and understand marketing. Surprisingly, AI is an asset, given its benefits and will continue to provide more and more if we use it appropriately. The main advantage is that it has improved marketers' ability to analyze and comprehend consumer purchasing behaviour. The findings of the research show that there is a positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence (Chatbots and Voice assistants) and involvement in purchase decisions, which was also supported in the previous literature that shows a significant impact of AI and consumer behaviour (by 95.8 %) in Mussa Model (2020) and supported by other researchers (Davenport et al. 2020; Avinash, 2018; Jarek and Mazurek, 2019; Qazzafi, 2019; Kietzmann, 2018).

Theoretical Implications

This research indicated some essential recommendations for theoretical implications, firstly, establishing a research focus on AI in the fashion industry in Egypt in different settings and providing more rigorous results.

Secondly, strengthen a prescriptive theory about AI in fashion to gain a sustainable competitive advantage for the Egyptian fashion industry.

In addition, Online retailers should use the structured model in this study as a strategy and guidance to make the right decisions, deliver personalized customer experiences based on customers' preferences, and understand the customer journey, which helps them predict consumer behaviour. This study advises online fashion stores to pay close attention to their customer's gender and age demographics, which should be studied to understand better how customers' perceptions of the AI systems implemented in the e-fashion stores they deal with will influence their future decisions. E-fashion stores should spend more on voice assistants, dramatically impacting consumer involvement in purchasing decisions.

Social Implications

Our empirical results have significant consequences for fashion stores in the internet marketplace. Many sellers invest in advertising strategies to enhance web traffic, but this investment may be lost if conversion rates remain poor. E-fashion stores can potentially increase their online sales conversion using AI tools. In this aspect, chatbots and voice assistants might be helpful tools. This study assists sellers in understanding the strategic value of chatbots and voice assistants in affecting consumer behaviour.

Practical Implications

From a practical viewpoint, AI can enable companies in the fashion industry to improve their performance, achieve customer satisfaction and perceptions, enhance their shopping experience, and achieve competitive advantage. Managers and employees should be ready for the future usage of AI as AI will be widely applied in all industries. It is recommended that fashion stores should select and implement the most effective AI tools, improve their technological infrastructure, and provide training courses for their employees to develop their technological skills. The use of high-performance and dependable network capabilities to fit employing AI. Identification and dissemination of best practices and fundamental concepts for AI policy and regulation in Egypt's fashion sector. Finally, a method to facilitate the implementation of best practice AI regulation and policy within Egyptian fashion contexts is being developed.

Limitations and Future Research

The current study focuses on the effect of AI on fashion involvement in buying decisions; the major disadvantage of this study is the utilization of a small sample size.

As a result, the results may not indicate the general public's perceptions. In addition, the current study focuses on the effect of chatbots and Voice Assistants only AI tools on fashion involvement in buying decisions in Egypt. Finally, future research should investigate the other AI tools affecting consumer decisions in another context or another country to determine the different influences.

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تأثير الذكاء الاصطناعي على قرار شراء الأزياء

إعداد
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مقر القرية الذكية

ملخص البحث :

تجمع أسواق الأزياء الإلكترونية بين التقنيات المتطورة مثل الذكاء الاصطناعي والمساعد الصوتي وروبوتات الدردشة. يبحث هذا البحث في تأثير الذكاء الاصطناعي على استبدال دور مندوبي المبيعات غير المتصلين في صناعة الأزياء. وتشمل الأهداف مناقشة أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي، وعرض مفهوم الذكاء الاصطناعي، وتحديد أهمية تطبيق الذكاء الاصطناعي في صناعة الأزياء، وإظهار التقنيات المناسبة التي يمكن تطبيقها في متاجر الأزياء للتعرف على تأثيرات الذكاء الاصطناعي على قرارات المشاركة في الشراء. تم استخدام أسلوب البحث الكمي في الدراسة وتم استخدام استبيان عبر الإنترنت للحصول على البيانات الأولية باستخدام العينات الملائمة. أظهرت الدراسة أن المساعدين الصوتيين وروبوتات المحادثة تؤثر بشكل إيجابي على المشاركة في قرارات الشراء في متاجر الأزياء. كشفت النتائج عن ارتباط كبير بين روبوتات المحادثة والمساعدات الصوتية وسلوك المستهلك، كما يتضح من صحة فرضيات النموذج الأولى والثاني. قد يساعد كل من الجوانب النظرية والعملية المديرين على بناء تكتيكات واستراتيجيات لتطوير بنيتهم التحتية التكنولوجية وتحسين رضا العملاء.

الأصالة: الهدف من هذا البحث هو تحديد الدور الذي تلعبه تقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي في التأثير على قرارات شراء الأزياء في مصر.

الكلمات الرئيسية: الذكاء الاصطناعي، روبوتات المحادثة، الموضة، مساعد الصوت