Social Implications on Conformity Purchase Intention

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Abstract:
This research focuses on studying the social implications that motivate conformity purchase intention of apparel products through an empirical analysis. Based on previous literatures on consumer conformity and purchase intention, reviews and recommendations, degree of conformity, social norms and social values, and gender, taken as independent variables are the social implications defined and tested on the dependent variable conformity purchase intention. From the variables defined, hypotheses were developed and tested on 300 people from the United Kingdom through a survey questionnaire. Correlation and regression analysis and the general linear analysis of co-variance were performed using the SPSS 22.0 software. Regression analysis showed reviews and recommendations having a p-value of significance of 0.250, not significant to conformity purchase intention. Variables social norms, social values and degree of conformity showed p-values of significance less than 0.05 which means that these variables are significant to conformity purchase intention. The general linear analysis of co-variance showed that gender having a significance value less than 0.05, significant to conformity purchase intention with males being more significant than females to conformity purchase intention.
Conclusion: The regression model shows variable degree of conformity to have the highest impact on conformity purchase intention, followed by social values, social norms defined by the society and lastly gender where male buyers have a higher conformity purchase intention than female buyers.
Key Words: apparel purchase; conformity consumption; purchase intention; social implications; degree of conformity

I. INTRODUCTION

On average, people spend about 144 minutes, or two hours and twenty-four minutes on social media[81] which shows how impactful the virtual world is on the lives of people around the world; some countries spend far more time than others, Asia being the greatest internet users[82]. Social media is the doorway to direct communication of contents to consumers in a marketer's perspective. The most common form of social media is social networking, initially introduced to keep up with friends and relatives, the platforms now offers new features like business pages, e-shops, the concept of influencers, electronic word of mouth amongst others. Statistics shows that 50% of the global population have access to internet; that makes up about 3.8 billion people worldwide, of which 50% uses social media[42]. With the rise of social media, marketers switched mass media from the conventional marketing to e-marketing to introduce and market products. Being one of the human basic needs; clothing, the fashion industry showed itself to be dominant online. Regardless of the location, people around the world follows their favourite brands on social media mainly to keep oneself up-to-date on the new product arrivals and sales, which then appears on the feed every time they log in. The users now become consumers as they are exposed to products. Researchers demonstrated that roughly 90% of Instagram users follows brands on the platform, clicked on their websites and made purchases after seeing a product on social media. In January 2020, the statistics showed about 97% of social media users were digital consumers[42]. Besides the virtual life, people spend the majority of their time in the real world where they are also exposed to different kinds of apparel products; be it on the way to work in the metro, in a coffee shop or at the mall, clothes of all kinds are seen everywhere. Unintentionally looking at products may have an impact on the consumer's purchase intention; being offered the option to choose between different clothing styles and apparel products alters people's perception of things and attitudes towards purchase intention. Moreover, being fed with informations left and right can further influence consumer's choices as being able to see products both online and offline provides even more choices and consumers get to choose what product to purchase, where to purchase and when to purchase. For this reason, brands put a lot of effort in their brand image; promoting and re-branding, mainly to satisfy the consumer demands but usually to set a new trend. Researchers demonstrated that the brand image has a significant impact on the purchase intention of consumers[27] which suggests that the way fashion brands portray their apparel products, including their brand values, does in fact influence the thought process of the consumers before making a purchase. For instance, consumers who prefer to shop consciously for the welfare of the environment would rather shop at an eco-friendly brand than anywhere else.

The trend that goes around in a cultural group or a society usually also defines the purchases the consumers would make. For example, the environmental concerns that are brought to awareness very recently became a trend around the world and people who wants to be seen as environmental friendly by their peers would shop at an eco-friendly brand, and that would lead to conformity purchase intention towards the subcultural group of people who genuinely cares about the environment. The degree to which people are ready to conform after being exposed to a trend in the society they live in for their desires to fit in, is the main interest of this paper.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behaviour is the process of searching, selecting, purchasing, using and disposing of the goods to satisfy the consumer needs and wants. The consumer buying behaviour is influenced by the consumer's decision making, whereby consumers identify their needs, collect informations on the choices on the market and evaluate the alternatives to finally make a purchase decision [BusinessDictionary]. Various studies have been done in this area with findings showing that the consumer buying behaviour is determined by the psychological and economical factors of the consumer which is influenced by the environment, cultural group and social values of the individual. In order to predict the consumers' buying behaviour, the understanding of consumer purchase intention is required. The Theory of Planned Behaviour which was introduced by Icek Ajzan in 1985, explains the roles of attitudes, social norms, personality and human behaviour on the consumer's purchase behaviour. It is considered to be the best at predicting the purchase intention of consumers[39]. The theory of planned behaviour focuses on the individual's intention to perform a behaviour, whereby the intention is assumed to be the motivational factors influencing the behaviour; 'they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behaviour.'[2]. Although the intentions engaged in a behaviour should lead to its performance, the performance may not take place as it is affected by non-motivational factors such as the availability of opportunities and the individual's resources. The non-motivational factors is defined as the consumer's ability and it represents the consumer's actual control over the behaviours. Actual behavioural control is evident and is based on the present circumstances; the resources and opportunities available to a consumer defines the likelihood of performing a purchase action. However, there is a deeper facet to behavioural control over the purchase intention which is the perceived behavioural control. Perceived behavioural control refers to 'people's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour of interest'[2] or, in other words, is the confidence in ability to perform a purchase action. When the consumer's ability is in doubt, the action of purchase is not performed. Perceived behavioural control is however, affected when the requirements or availability of resources are changed or new, unfamiliar elements entered the situation. Therefore, this states that the consumer's ability and confidence in the ability to make a purchase can affect the overall purchase intention of products towards certain brands.

Conformity Consumption

In academic research, consumer conformity refers to the acceptance of certain group norms that results in behavioural changes in the consumption behaviour of the accepting individual due to the reference group[9]. As members of the society, consumers tend to be influenced by the attitudes, opinions and beliefs of other people within the group they belong which results in a consumption behaviour ruled by society. Conformity exists as normative conformity and informational conformity; where normative conformity refers to the process of conforming to the choice of others for the desire to be praised by others, while informational conformity is conforming to the choice of others after informations about the choice is received. The two different kinds of consumer conformity can be described as compliance and acceptance respectively. Researchers identified that consumers would purchase products and brands which are popular in a group segment even though the products were viewed as wrong to conform to the expectations of others[20][6]. Researchers also argue that consumers within a group follow the consumption behaviour of others to pursue symbolic and hedonic values which explains conformity consumption behaviour as the psychological motivation of the individual[50]. Hedonic values influences decision making and gears behaviours towards pleasant experiences by guiding consumers to behave a certain way and to avoid certain behaviours[24]. Consumer conformity and conformity consumption is driven by the desire of belonging and fear; fear from being alienated, fear from being ignored, and fear from falling behind[41]. Every individual is defined by their own culture, beliefs and self-esteem which makes people different in a society, however, people are concerned about their image. The increased concerns in people develops when people are exposed to their environment or social group; the more they see things, the more they feel a certain way, and the more likely they will be willing to fit in the mainstream group from the fear from being excluded and the desire to fit in. The social ties between people was identified to be a contributing factor to the problem of personal image. The personal image of an individual is the first thing the society see and from there, the society judges who an individual is as a person. For example, someone dressed in baggy clothes and joggings can be viewed as poor, lazy or unfashionable in the eyes of the society but in reality the person just

wanted to be comfortable. Researchers identified that image concerns arises from anxiety driven by society which showed to be an influencing factor to consumer conformity and conformity consumption[41][66]. The image concerns in people sets the foundation for social comparison and self-criticism. The rise of social media is to be blamed mainly, as marketers seized the opportunity to market their products by strategic complements. The strategic complements discuss the ways consumers react to commercial activities done on social media and to plan for the introduction of news products for the coming seasons or limited edition products[18][44][80]. Every new item on the market makes the old items obsolete and so, consumers feel outdated. Feeling outdated increases anxiety on image concerns and therefore can lead to conformity consumption. Obsolete clothing items are usually defined by the society; some apparel products can be trendy on one side of the world but obsolete on the other side. So, a person who changes their place of living may also change their way of dressing as the new environment is different from the previous one. This suggests that the environment could contribute to conformity consumption and the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Environment integration has an impact on conformity purchase intention

Social Ties

Social ties are connections among people formed on the basis of information sharing, interactions and exchanges between the connected people; they can either be strong or weak based on the extent of the social interactions. In the society, humans are bound to be social and social ties is what brings the community together by forming a social network. Strong social ties exists between close members with frequent interactions such as close friends and family; and by contrast, weak ties exists between distant social relationships like between acquaintances and strangers[35]. In the context of the buying behaviour of consumers, social ties plays an important role as the rate of closeness in social ties was shown to be subjective to the purchase preferences of consumers [23][75][78]. It is argued that the strong ties among people in a society influences the weak ties as more informations are shared in between the strong ties, thereby when strong ties meets the weak ties additional informations are shared to the weak ties. In contrast, the weak ties between people influences the strong ties by the same means, making a network bridge[7][12][21][26][75]. Anne Martensen and Lars Grønholdt confirmed the relevance of tie strength with word of mouth (WOM) communication through information sharing with findings stating that WOM communications happens the most between stronger social ties than weak ties[53]. Previous studies suggested that the effectiveness of WOM communication was dependent on the social sender-receiver relationship[74] whereby it is characterised by the strength of the tie between the information receiver and the sender [8][33][43]. The involvement of WOM is the fashion industry is defined by the informations about certain products or brands that are being delivered by consumers to other consumers. It usually happens by repetition and elaboration on the subject. In today's digital era, WOM exists digitally, called the electronic word of mouth (EWOM) and it is based on a social media model [15]. EWOM comes in forms of reviews or recommendations on e-commerce websites such as Amazon and AliExpress, or on discussion platforms. Researchers who studied this area showed that WOM communication have longer carryover effect than the traditional marketing activities[76]. A high probability of remembering a brand increases the chance of the product from the brand being bought[11]. Some literatures showed that WOM significantly influences the consumer's purchase intention[1][4][45][28][29][30][77] therefore, it is considered as a great asset for building awareness in the marketing of products or introduction of new brands. Some researchers also studied the quality, quantity and credibility of WOM and it was found that the quality and quantity of word of mouth has a positive impact on the purchase intentions of consumers[79][36]. The discussion above suggests that both WOM and EWOM between social ties increases the consumers' interest on brands and products which may lead to conformity purchase intention, therefore the following hypothesis is made:

H2: Word of mouth between social ties has an influence on conformity purchase intention

Social Comparison

Social ties was identified to be promoting social comparison within a society[66]. Social comparison is a psychological aspect that initiates the social[38], competitive[34] and materialistic behaviour[17][32] of consumers. It involves the evaluation of attitudes, abilities, and traits in comparison with others[19]; in short, the evaluation of their similarities and dissimilarities relative to other people within the society they belong. Social comparison includes the behavioural cues, that is, the kind of clothes or makeup worn[40][49][72][68], the appropriateness of the consumption of certain products defined by the social values within the society[59], the social rewards and sanctions defined by the society[5] and the attributions about the reactions of the people within the society to the consumer's purchase behaviour[14]. Consumers evaluate the purchase behaviour of others by simple observation to social interactions and the collected informations about what is acceptable in the desired reference group which is defined by the social norms of the reference group or the society, is considered

and perhaps stimulates the adoption of certain brands or products[67]. Researchers also demonstrated that people in minority in a community is often affected by the majority[6][46][48]. People continuously revise their opinions about themselves when comparing with others and their future brand choices is affected[52] as consumers are ready to explore new styles out of their comfort zone[64]. Advertising and other selling techniques also contribute to social comparison through social comparison information[61]. Lennox and Wolfe[47] in their revision of Snyder's (1974) original explanation on self-monitoring, reported "attention to social comparison information" as having a high relationship with social anxiety and the fear of negative evaluation. The attention of people or consumers to social comparison information is the public self-consciousness, that is, the tendency of people to direct the attention of others towards themselves[31]. Those high in public self-consciousness is aware of others perspectives and reactions towards themselves. In a study of image management, the public self-consciousness predicted that people high in public self-consciousness is also more sensitive to the type of impression established by the social situations and therefore, they are more inclined to act according to the impressions[13][62][31]. However, some researchers proved otherwise in their research [13][62] but further studies on image management proved the same relationship between public self-consciousness and the inclination to act in accord with the impressions established by the social situations. Miller and Cox (1982), in their research found that women with higher score on the public self-consciousness scale tend to wear more make up than those with a lower scores[54]. Solomon and Schopler (1983;1982) found that the public self-consciousness of female consumer's attitude towards conformity in fashion is significantly correlated[72][68]. In other words, women high in public self-consciousness tend to evaluated clothing items more favourably. Male consumers however didn't show this correlation-ship. However, the "attention to social comparison information" is found to be internally consistent, valid and capable of causing the relative effects of interpersonal considerations[9]. Based on the discussions, the following hypotheses are made:

H3: Social comparison has an influence on conformity purchase intention
H4: Praise and punishment from society has an influence on conformity purchase intention

Gender Purchase Intention

According to Mitchell and Walsh (2004), males and females want different products and are likely to have different ways of liking and choosing the products that they want to buy[60]. For that reason, manufacturing industries over the decades sex-typed their products, that is, products takes on masculine or feminine characteristics[71]. The need for differentiating products for each gender suggests that gender plays an important role in consumer behaviour as the difference between men and women about expectations, needs and wants reflect their consumption behaviours[3]. When it comes to choosing the purchasing products, both genders handle informations about the product differently, addressing the cognitive problems and thus, generates different purchase intentions[16]. Males and females handle informations differently as it is related to their behaviour objectives[25]. Men are more receptive of informations related to understanding[51][57] and aspires to build an image in the society and to be praised and recognised[56] whereas women are focused on the pursuit of attachment and empathy[65][57]. In other words, men's purchase intention, relative to women, is heavily influenced by a creative-social identity, and women's purchase intentions is influenced by an affective-social identity. Female buyers are more likely to have a higher purchase intention than male buyers as the relationship between the brand and purchase intention is highly significant[69][55]. Contrarily, some researchers concluded that the male buyers' purchase decision are mostly influenced by the brand of the purchasing products and then the quality and lastly the price of the purchasing products. Whereas female buyers' purchase decision are mostly influenced by the price of the purchasing product, especially discounted prices[9][73]. These findings would suggest that male buyers are likely to have a higher purchase intention than female buyers. In a study of family decision-making roles, it was found that there are three stages to decision making; problem recognition, search for information and the final decision. The study found that the influence of husbands and wives differs based on the decision making stage and the product type[22][63][70][37]. Belch and Willis (2002) found that the purchase decisions related to household items such as televisions are primarily male dominated[10]. However, other studies showed that household decision making areas slowly became more influenced by females as the number of educated, working women are rising. Men and women seems to approach problems with similar goals but with different considerations. According to Krithika (2005), when it comes to make a purchase decision, males tend to make decisions faster and more efficiently than females. Females prefer to negotiate and compromise which makes them slower at making a purchase decision. Males on the other hand, do not like to ask for advice or consult people; once they are fascinated enough by a product, they are willing to pay for that product. While considering the choice of products, it is also found that female buyers are likely to search for more details than men as they are more responsive to relevant details[57] which further supports the statement that women are slow at making a purchase decision suggesting that males have higher purchase intention. Based on the discussions it can be concluded that the impact of gender on purchase

intention varies upon the product type. In the context of apparel products, the gender's impact on purchase intention have been greatly neglected, let alone on conformity purchase intention. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H5: Gender has an influence on conformity purchase intention

Research Model and Measurement Items
A model suggesting the relationship between the social implications defined and conformity purchase intention is shown in Figure 1.
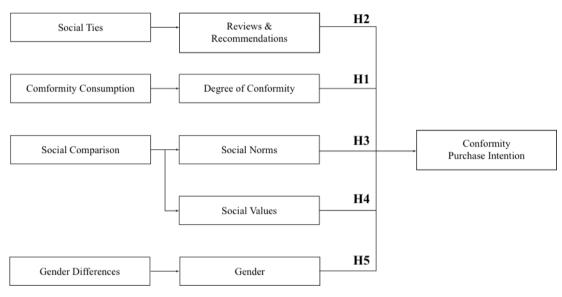

Figure 1. Research model

From previous literatures, several social implications were found to be contributing to the ways consumers behave to make certain apparel product purchases. The social implications are social ties, social comparisons, gender differences and consumer conformity consumption and the following variables are defined: *Reviews & Recommendations*, *Social Norms*, *Social Values*, *Gender* and *Degree of Conformity*. This paper hypothesise these variables as having an influence on conformity purchase intention therefore, the research model shows 5 variables in total to be investigated. Table 1 shows the measurement items designed for each variable to satisfy the goals of this study. 18 questions were designed for the 5 variables defined excluding the demographic variables. The questions listed below are the final questions used for data collection.

Table 1. Measurement Items Defined for Each Variable

Variables	Measurement Items	Ref.
Reviews & Recommendations	I trust the good reviews strangers say/put online about a brand/store before making a purchase	RR1 RR2
	I would consider shopping at brands/stores that have been recommended to me by my friends or family members	RR3
	I recently showed interests in brands/stores I never shopped at before because people have been talking about them	RR4
	I am willing to shop at brands/stores that have been well reviewed by others	
Social Norms	I tend to buy similar clothing items and styles that of the influencers I see on social media to imitate them	SN1 SN2
	I am willing to purchase the clothing items my favourite celebrit(y)ies are promoting/wearing because I want to look like them	SN3
	I tend to buy a certain clothing item or style after constantly seeing it on the internet or on the streets	
Social Values	The idea of being trash-talked by people in my community worries me	SV1
	I often find myself observing what others are wearing to know what kind of clothing items and styles to purchase	SV2

	I have purchased similar clothing items and styles as the people in my community in the past	SV3
		SV4
	I desire to be praised and recognised by the people in my community	
	I believe buying similar clothing items and styles will make me be recognised by the people in my community	DC1
Degree of Conformity	I believe buying similar clothing items and styles will make me be accepted by the people in my community	DC2
	I believe that following the trends in my community will make me be valued by the people in my community	DC3
	I believe buying similar clothing items and styles as others can help me to get along with them	DC4
	I am likely to purchase clothing items and styles that are similar to others	CPI1
Conformity Purchase Intention	I would suggest my friends to buy clothing items and styles that are similar to others	CPI2
		CPI3
	I would like to buy similar clothing items and styles as my idols to look like them	

III. METHODS

The study conducted three preliminary survey over a period of 8 weeks on a sample size of 60 people each time. The preliminary questionnaires carried out using Google Forms, was shared on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, targeting the citizens of United Kingdom. In the process, reliability and validity analysis were performed to check and revise the measurement items that showed poor capability of measuring conformity purchase intention. The survey questionnaire was then conducted on consumers residing in United Kingdom of England including Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Wales, shared by the same means using Google Forms, on social media platforms for a period of 12 weeks. The subjects of this study were consumers aged between 20 to 40 years, working either a part-time or full-time job and are familiar with using social media. The reason for choosing such subjects is believed to affect the final results as an income allow the freedom of purchase and people of the generation Y and Z are very familiar with the internet and social media. The survey questionnaire included two parts: the first part measured the basic information of the respondents: age, gender, income level on a yearly basis and occupation, and the second part of the survey questionnaire was constructed on a 5-point Likert scale, from "strongly disagree", "disagree", "neutral", "agree" and "strongly agree", assigned number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 respectively, to measure the variables defined. A total of 309 responses was obtained of which 300 were used for analysis as some of the responses showed no input towards the study. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents who agreed to partake in this study.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

		Frequency	**Percentage**
Gender	Male	123	41.0
	Female	177	59.0
Age	20 – 24 years old	134	44.7
	25 – 29 years old	105	35.0
	30 – 34 years old	39	13.0
	35+ years old	22	7.3
Annual Income in British Pound Sterling (GBP)	£ 0 - £ 9,000	115	38.3
	£ 10,000 - £ 24,999	87	29.0
	£ 25,000 - £ 49,999	83	27.7
	£ 50,000 - £ 74,999	10	3.3
	£ 75,000 - £ 99,999	5	1.7
	More than £ 100,000	0	0
Occupation	Undergraduate Student (Part-time)	44	14.7
	Postgraduate Student (Part-time)	104	34.7
	Full-time Employee	148	49.3
	Employer	4	1.3
Total Participants		300	100

The data obtained were analysed using the Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS) software version 22.0. Reliability and validity analysis were performed before further testings to determine the internal consistency and sampling adequacy of the data obtained. As the factor analysis from validity tests proved suitability, correlation and regression analysis and the general linear model analysis of co-variance was done.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Reliability and Validity Analysis

Table 2 shows the Cronbach's Alpha values obtained for each independent variable and the dependent variable conformity purchase intention. All values obtained for Cronbach's Alpha if item is deleted is less than their respective variable Cronbach's Alpha values and above 0.6 implying that the measurement items defined for each variable are reliable.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Values for both Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention.

Variables	Variable Ref.	Cronbach's Alpha if item is deleted	Variable Cronbach's Alpha
Reviews & Recommendations	RR1	0.693	0.752
	RR2	0.697	
	RR3	0.741	
	RR4	0.650	
Social Norms	SN1	0.663	0.824
	SN2	0.726	
	SN3	0.816	
Social Values	SV1	0.763	0.765
	SV2	0.677	
	SV3	0.727	
	SV4	0.665	
Degree of Conformity	DC1	0.859	0.901
	DC2	0.864	
	DC3	0.865	
	DC4	0.892	
Conformity Purchase Intention	CPI1	0.701	0.764
	CPI2	0.636	
	CPI3	0.710	

Validity analysis shows KMO values greater than 0.6 and a Bartlett's test of sphericity significance value of less than 0.005 which implies that the sampling is adequate as shown in Table 3. Table 3(a) and 3(b) shows the factor analysis for validity test obtained for the independent variables and the dependent variable conformity purchase intention respectively. Each variable is seen to belong to one component which implies that the data obtained are valid and eligible for further testings.

Table 3. KMO Values Obtained for Both Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention.

Variables	Variable Ref.	KMO Test	Bartlett's Test	Sig.	Cumulative Variance Interpretation %
Reviews & Recommendations	RR1	0.769	288.301	0.000	61.824
	RR2				
	RR3				
	RR4				
Social Norms	SN1	0.667	373.463	0.000	69.106

	SN2				
	SN3				
Social Values	SV1	0.754	310.767	0.000	54.369
	SV2				
	SV3				
	SV4				
Degree of Conformity	DC1	0.826	774.558	0.000	40.356
	DC2				
	DC3				
	DC4				
Conformity Purchase Intention	CPI1	0.691	229.290	0.000	68.105
	CPI2				
	CPI3				

Table 3(a). Rotated Component Matrix for Variables Defined by Independent Variables.

	Component			
Measurement Items	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
DC2	**0.868**	0.198	0.153	0.117
DC3	**0.853**	0.249	0.058	0.161
DC1	**0.826**	0.254	0.025	0.231
DC4	**0.708**	0.197	0.051	0.374
SV4	0.333	**0.783**	0.088	-0.008
SV2	0.186	**0.733**	0.183	0.270
SV3	0.127	**0.664**	0.348	0.161
SV1	0.216	**0.598**	0.003	0.199
RR4	0.114	0.084	**0.808**	0.081
RR1	0.075	0.109	**0.769**	0.021
RR2	-0.003	0.178	**0.760**	0.030
RR3	0.043	0.095	**0.587**	0.511
SN2	0.339	0.148	0.029	**0.814**
SN1	0.313	0.246	0.067	**0.798**
SN3	0.147	0.496	0.254	**0.573**

Table 3(b). Eigenvalues for Measurement Items Defined by Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention.

	Component
Measurement Items	**1**
CPI2	0.851
CPI1	0.815
CPI3	0.809

Correlation and Regression Analysis

The correlation between the dependent variable conformity purchase intention and each of the independent variables is shown in Table 4. The Pearson correlation shows the linearity of the correlation, the closer the number is to 1, the more ideal the model is. From the table, the correlation between CPI and RR is seen to be 0.333 which suggest that there is a positive but weak relationship between them. However, the significance value is less than 0.05 which means the relationship is highly significant. A weak but highly significant relationship means that there is enough statistical power to identify even the weak effects between the variables. Independent variable SN, DC and SV all have a Pearson correlation greater than 0.6 which suggests that their relationship with CPI is moderately ideal. The significance value for these independent variables all shows their relationship with CPI as highly significant.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation between the Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention and the Independent Variables.

		CPI	RR	SN	DC	SV
PI	Pearson Correlation	1	0.333**	0.618**	0.657**	0.613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300

The independent variables RR, SN, SV, and DC, as shown in Table 5, are analysed individually to determine which variable(s) supports the regression model. The t-value and the p-value of significance is observed. The independent variable Reviews & Recommendations denoted as RR in the table, having a p-value of significance of 0.250, suggests that there is no significance with the regression model. This indicates that the hypothesis H2 "word of mouth between social ties has an influence on conformity purchase intention" is not supported. Variables SN, SV and DC all shows high significance with the regression model meaning hypotheses H3, H4 and H1 are supported.

Table 5. Regression Model Coefficients between Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable Purchase Intention.

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	Constant	0.324	0.216		1.500	0.135
	RR	0.070	0.060	0.050	1.152	0.250
1	SN	0.226	0.050	0.237	4.479	0.000
	SV	0.271	0.055	0.255	4.941	0.000
	DC	0.342	0.048	0.363	7.146	0.000

General Linear Model Analysis of Co-Variance between Variable Gender and the Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention
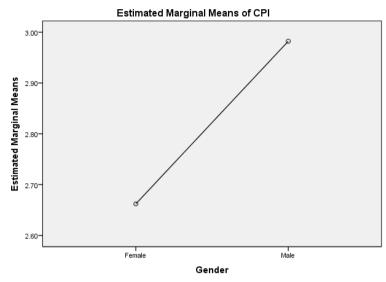
To predict the effect combination between the demographic variable gender and the dependent variable conformity purchase intention on the model, the general linear model analysis is done. Table 6 shows the tests of between-subjects effects results for the demographic independent variable gender with respect to the variable purchase intention. Since variable RR is not supported, it is not included in the model analysis. From the table, the significance value obtained for gender is less than 0.05 which means that gender has a significant impact on purchase intention. This indicates that the hypothesis H5 "Gender has an influence on conformity purchase intention" is supported. The results also further confirm that SN, DC and SV, having significance values less than 0.05, have a significant impact on purchase intention therefore, confirms their influence on conformity purchase intention and hypotheses H1, H3 and H4 are confirmed. Table 7 summarises the hypothesis results obtained.

Table 6. Tests Between Subject Effects Analysis of Co-Variance for Variable Gender with Respect to Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention.

Dependent Variable: CPI

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	169.744[a]	4	42.436	102.147	0.000
Intercept	4.981	1	4.981	11.991	0.001
Gender	7.134	1	7.134	17.172	0.000
SN	11.428	1	11.428	27.508	0.000
DC	21.026	1	21.026	50.613	0.000
SV	15.025	1	15.025	36.168	0.000
Error	122.554	295	0.415		
Total	2633.111	300			
Corrected Total	292.298	299			

Figure 2 shows the mean variances of purchase intention between the genders. It is observed that gender has a linear relationship with conformity purchase intention; with males having the highest CPI value, meaning the highest impact on conformity purchase intention, and females having the lowest CPI value,

meaning the lowest impact on conformity purchase intention. This suggest that male consumers are more likely to make conformity purchases than female consumers.

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: SN = 2.6689, SV = 2.9383, DC = 2.3408

Figure 2. Mean Variation Between Males and Females with Respect to Dependent Variable Conformity Purchase Intention.

Table 7. Hypothesis Results on Conformity Purchase Intention.

	Hypothesis	Significance	Results
H1	Environment integration has an impact on conformity purchase intention	Yes	Confirmed
H2	Word of mouth between social ties has an influence on conformity purchase intention	No	Rejected
H3	Social comparison has an influence on conformity purchase intention	Yes	Confirmed
H4	Praise and punishment from society has an influence on conformity purchase intention	Yes	Confirmed
H5	Gender has an influence on conformity purchase intention	Yes	Confirmed

Regression Analysis of Model

The unstandardised coefficients Beta values from Table 8 predicts the correlation between the variables and therefore, the final model. DC is seen to have the highest impact on CPI with a B value of 0.352, followed by SV, SN and lastly gender having a value of 0.159. The genders, male and female are assigned values 1 and 0 respectively. As a result of that, two final models are described for gender on conformity purchase intention;

Males: CPI = 0.289 + 0.332DC + 0.314SV + 0.253SN + 0.320
Females: CPI = 0.289 + 0.332DC + 0.314SV + 0.253SN

Table 8. Regression Model Coefficients.

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	Constant	0.289	0.140		2.061	0.40
	DC	0.332	0.047	0.352	7.114	0.000
	SV	0.314	0.052	0.295	6.015	0.000
	SN	0.253	0.048	0.265	5.245	0.000
	Gender	0.320	0.077	0.159	4.144	0.000

V. CONCLUSION

Reliability analysis of data showed Cronbach's Alpha values for both the independent variables and the dependent variable conformity purchase intention above 0.6 indicating that the measurement items defined for each variable are reliable. The validity analysis showed all measurement items complying to the validity requirements having KMO values greater than 0.6 and a Bartlett's test of sphericity significance value of less than 0.005. Factor analysis for validity test also showed the measurement items defined for each variable to fall under one single component, further indicating that the variables defined are valid and good for fit. The correlation analysis of data showed the variables defined correlated well with the model with the exception of variable RR which is seen to have a weak but positive relationship with conformity purchase intention having a Pearson correlation value of 0.333 and a significance value less than 0.05. Independent variables SN, DC and SV however, showed a highly significant relationship with variable CPI. The individual assessment of the independent variables through regression analysis showed a low p-value of significance of 0.250 for RR indicating that the hypothesis H2, defined for variable RR, is not supported. Variables SN, SV and DC, however showed a high significance with the regression model, supporting the hypotheses H3, H4 and H1 respectively. To test the gender influence on conformity purchase intention, the general linear model analysis of co-variance performed showed a significance value less than 0.05 indicating that gender indeed have an impact on conformity purchase intention and therefore, hypothesis H5 is supported. From the mean variation between male and female respondents, it was found that males have a higher conformity purchase intention than females. The final model obtained for gender on conformity purchase intention therefore is defined as CPI = 0.289 + 0.332DC + 0.314SV + 0.253SN + 0.320 for males and CPI = 0.289 + 0.332DC + 0.314SV + 0.253SN for females. To conclude, the environment integration of an individual, social comparison, praise and punishment from the society and the gender of the individual in a defined group influences conformity purchase intention, and males are more likely to conform compared to females.

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