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Tesettur Fashion in Turkey: The Contribution of Facebook as a Social Media Marketing Tool

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Author's contributions

The sole author designed, analyzed and interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: The aim of this paper is determining the contribution of Facebook as a social media tool in promoting and marketing of tesettur fashion, and exposing what companies should do to get ahead in competitive markets.

Study Design: Research study.

Place and Duration of Study: Analyzing the Facebook accounts of different tesettur clothing companies.

Methodology: 10 different tesettur clothing companies in Facebook have been selected and the changes in the firms' accounts have been analyzed under a variety of parameters for 6 months. A formula has been developed with the help of survey results and Facebook performances of the companies have been computed in terms of 5 parameters.

Results: Alvina is the winner with a score of 26,32. In addition, the point of the subsequent Aker is 22,46. SefaMerve is seen at the third place with 17,15. Modanisa is the fourth with 14,17, Tuğba & Venn is the fifth with 13,57, Armine is the sixth with 13,31, Zühre is the seventh with 11,94, Setrms is the eighth with 10,39, Kayra is the ninth with 7,96 and Nihan is the last one with 6,66 points. Alvina is the company that has the highest Facebook score. The reason is the highest total number of entry by the company in six months. Companies' performances increase when they advertise and share information about their products, campaigns etc. much on Facebook. Number of member and

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entries shared by companies are the most important parameters in terms of Facebook performance. **Conclusion:** It seems to be a significant contribution of Facebook in marketing of tesettur fashion. It is seen the most important thing is increasing number of entries shared by the companies. If the companies advertise much, consumers will be informed about the products better. The increase in the number of members directs the company to share more. Thus, increasing of the shares will attract more members to company's Facebook account.

Keywords: Tesettur fashion; Social media; Islamic marketing; Facebook performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The case of veiling is an important sacred duty both for men and women from the time of being an obligation in Islam [1]. Throughout the history of Islam, although clothes used in fulfilling these requirements have a wide variation, the main underlying reason remains the same. However compared with men, women are more attractive due to the creation [2]. This makes the veiling case obligatory especially for women in Islam.

As the years passed the case of veiling has begun to change with the positive improvements in families' income, level of culture and the world economy. Formerly, a black chador or a plain piece of cloth providing the necessity of veiling is not enough anymore. The veiling case has started to evolve into a consumption culture, as well as an internal need. This culture aimed at women mostly, has pioneered to the process of variety of clothes with the increasing of the supply. Thereby, a tesettur fashion has started to spread among the Islamist women who belong to well-educated, middle and upper income groups. In addition, the effects of the tesettur fashion have reverberated into the sub-groups over the years [3].

Transformation of tesettur into the fashion has begun to get manufacturers into this field with the help of consumption culture. Today's consumer's request of reflecting themselves to the outside world led to product diversification in the context of tesettur. Considering that consumers are more conscious in the era of marketing; so manufacturers must show further efforts. This situation shifts manufacturers to seek alternative supply channels to reach consumers. One of these channels is defined as social media. With this research it's aimed to determine whether social media contributes to the marketing of tesettur fashion and which company uses the Facebook more effectively.

2. TESETTUR

The veiling case in Islam is intended for purposes such as protection of individual's mental health, honor and general ethics of society, and providing the balance in interpersonal relationships, and setting up a family life in a dignified way. Men and women are subject to different provisions in terms of veiling. Because these two genres have been created differently [4].

Men and women should cover themselves as needed in terms of veiling. Men are obliged to veil their awrah during prayer, towards other men and women except wife [4]. Awrah is defined as the part from navel to the knee for men. In addition, awrah covers almost the whole body except the face and hands in terms of women [5]. Covering targets mostly women although the veiling case in Islam concerns both genders. This is because a large majority of men wrap themselves already as needed in their daily lives. In other words, men generally cover themselves by wearing regular daily clothes without the need for special ones such as headscarves, chadors etc [6].

Tesettur is a concept which arises from the necessity of veiling in Islam. The tesettur concept can be stated as being covered for women [7]. Another definition of tesettur is keeping the body away from other men and covering ornaments with a veiling cloth [8]. In another study, it has been defined as a head and body covering that provides to avoid contact with unrelated men [9]. This can be understood from the descriptions, tesettur is the term that covering of women in order to shield themselves against men and hide their ornaments.

Tesettur is a distinctive form of veiling that developed in the 1980s with an oversize headscarf with tailored coat or suit. Tesettur is a key symbol of the Islamist movement, but despite its centrality, tesettur is rent by the same multiple, contradictory meanings as Islamist lifestyle

choices [10]. It can also be said that the concept of tesettur reflects the modern version of veiling clothes. This may resemble in principle, the traditional dress of Muslim women who live in rural areas in agricultural communities and are uneducated, but it is now Islamist women in the city, who want to be appear educated and political, who adopt the tesettur style [11].

Tesettur also represents the social order among genders in Islam. The tesettur cloth has a moralistic function and provides a protection of women's honor. The woman controls her behaviors and limits the attractiveness by covering with the aid of tesettur. So that she can also limit the potential abusive behaviors of the opposite gender [12]. Tesettur must cover the nakedness even when the individual is alone. The veiling cloth should be loosely woven and show no skin [13]. As seen, women should wear the tesettur in order to hide their attractiveness.

3. TESETTUR AND FASHION RELATIONSHIP IN TURKEY

Tesettur and fashion relationship has emerged over the past thirty years within a particular economic group and political development in Turkey. It's important to remember Turkey has been a constitutionally secular state with a majority Muslim population in 1923 while evaluating the current occasion [14]. There has been a big pressure on headscarves before 1980s due to veiling and Islam is a barrier towards modernism [15].

After 1980s, Islamist movements have emerged in the areas of politics, education, finance etc. Thus, Muslims have started to involve these fields and they have discovered three important concepts that associated with consumption and capitalism: fashion, brand and profit [16]. The fashion concept can be stated as a social norm accepted and advocated by a particular social class. It affects all areas of society, especially in clothing [17]. It can be understood fashion doesn't occur in classless societies [18]. Firstly a trend must occur in order to create a fashion in terms of clothing. Secondly, this trend must be followed by individuals and the society.

Briefly it can be said Islamic identity has evolved in Turkey especially after 1980s by getting rid of the feeling of exclusion and oppression [19]. A couple of reasons can be shown as a source of this evolution in Islamic culture. First one is the increasing level of individuals' income and

affluence. Islamist women belonging to middle and upper class have begun to prosper and made the veiling different after the 1980s with the rising of economy in Turkey. Tesettur products have started to vary with the developments in the economy. Thus, a consumption culture and a fashion concept have started to occur among this group of Islamist women [15]. Uniform clothing preferred in earlier periods such as large scarves and coats in a limited series of color has transformed into modern and designed clothes.

The second reason can be expressed as the increasing level of women's education and request of being modern. Veiling and modernity have been placed in opposite sides in earlier periods in Turkey. It has been argued the modern individual must move away from the conservatism of the religion [12]. However, Islamist girls have increased their level of education and moved away from the veiling clothes like black chadors and veils that can be described as reactionary. This situation has given them the identity of a modern tesettur. Thereby, the idea of combination of modernism and religion has played an extremely important role in the development of tesettur fashion.

The last reason can be described as reaching to the consumption level of "contemporary" republicans and reducing the gap between Islamist and Republican individuals [19]. Islamist women can dress up like moderns and represent their culture in the best way.

Variety of clothes has started to increase with the transformation of tesettur into the fashion. The resulting colors, shapes and designs have increased a lot, so that this rising provides to dress differently. Nowadays, Islamist women merge in a wide range of tesettur models while there is a limited possibility to choose in earlier periods. In addition, designers considering the needs of women pave the way for further diversification of tesettur fashion [20].

4. TESETTUR FASHION AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Individuals wear clothes as a tool for reflection of their inner worlds, as well as the basic needs of dressing. In this context, individuals intend to send various signals to the outside world by following the fashion when a fashion occurs. This condition is also similar to the tesettur case. The reason why women transform the tesettur into the

fashion is request to express themselves, as well as the needs of veiling.

It can be also shown women want to express themselves as a result of postmodernism. The important thing in postmodernism is not the product itself or its function, but the meaning and image. Consumers don't purchase the product for its functional benefits but in the case of perceived image. The product should link to the consumer emotionally [21]. The tesettur fashion has turned into a consumption culture with the requests of women to reflect themselves to the outside world. It can be said that the need of veiling undergoes a change. Thus, the opportunity of choice and the range of products have increased as a result of tesettur fashion.

The transformation of tesettur into a fashion has attracted also the manufacturers to this area. In fact, it can be said manufacturers and the fashion have triggered each other in a way. In other words, fashion has occurred with the increase of production and diversity, and manufacturers in the market have increased with the fashion. This amount of excess supply in the market has brought an opportunity of choice to the consumers and various difficulties to the manufacturers in terms of reaching the consumers.

Consumers are more powerful than manufacturers in the age of marketing. Therefore, manufacturers have needed to search alternative marketing channels to link with the customers. Because the market competitiveness is quite high and the postmodern consumer who has a structure of instant satisfaction may seek other manufacturers [22]. It is extremely important to respond quickly and instantly to the consumers for retention. Otherwise, both the consumers and potential ones may be lost to competitors.

Social media can be shown as one of these alternative marketing channels. Social media is an internet based application that allows exchange of content developed by users [23]. It helps individuals to connect each other in a restricted system [24]. Social media is open to feedbacks and contributions of the users and this virtual environment enables voting, commenting and sharing of information [25]. Briefly, we can define the social media as an interactive virtual environment which allows internet users to share about a subject or idea and so on. Websites such

as Facebook, Twitter, FriendFeed, Flickr etc. can be shown as an example of social media tools.

In this study Facebook has been used from these social media websites. According to a study [26] Facebook is mostly used among university students for socializing and maintaining friendships; in addition sharing information with contacts, participating discussions and uploading videos, music etc. [27]. However, it can be said Facebook is also mostly used for commercial purposes and marketing operations in recent years which is called "social media marketing". Social media marketing can be explained as the usage of social media websites for the marketing aims. Social media is seen as a direct marketing tool due to its nature of communicating directly with users [28]. In the context of promotion, social media is used in so many fields such as searching for solutions of consumer complaints, demonstration of products, campaign announcements, special applications and product usage knowledge [29].

Facebook can be shown as the best way for companies for marketing operations. Because it has special applications for marketing such as like buttons, brand or company pages, advertisements, social games and contests, and analytics [30]. Companies attract individuals with these tools and promote them. Briefly, Facebook attracts individuals in terms of socializing and gives companies an opportunity to link with them. Consumers generally don't make shopping via Facebook, but they purchase from companies' websites or stores by following their products on Facebook. According to Packer [31] it's a tool for consumers to have access to the company.

Facebook assumes the role of a supporting tool for the marketing of tesettur fashion. Turkey has approximately 32 million Facebook members [32] and the penetration rate is around 42%. This means there is a considerable market for the online marketing activities. In this context, tesettur clothing companies use Facebook in order to reach the Islamist women consumers. Companies advertise and demonstrate their products reflecting tesettur fashion, give information about new creations, prices and even organize competitions via Facebook. Firms can establish warm and long-term relationships with consumers and also reach to consumers around the world with the help of the interactive nature of Facebook.

In addition to all these, company's involvement in social network sites can also result in strategic and operational benefits. By inviting feedback, or simply by observing conversations, a company can learn about customers' needs and inform about its new product development policy [28].

One more important thing should be noticed in Facebook marketing. As said before social media is a promotion tool for companies but there are some rules that need to be considered in terms of product promotion in Islamic marketing ethics. These can be listed as below [33]:

- Avoidance of false and misleading advertising
- Rejection of high pressure manipulations, or misleading sales tactics
- Avoidance of sales promotions that use deception or manipulation

Companies shouldn't deceive individuals just in order to enhance sales and profits. Giving a false impression of any kind to promote or sell a product is strictly prohibited within the Islamic ethical framework of international marketing practices. Companies should be honest and fair in marketing activities to feel accountable to God [34].

5. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the contribution of Facebook as a social media marketing tool has been investigated in terms of *tesettur* fashion. For this purpose, 10 different companies over 100.000 members were selected from Facebook. These 10 companies also represent mostly known *tesettur* brands in Turkey. Furthermore, these 10 companies have about 11 million members in Turkey where approximately over 18 million covered women live [35]. It means the penetration rate is about 61% which is extremely considerable. It's also important to remember one person may get into 10 companies at the same time on Facebook but the penetration rate still has the same importance.

Number of member, entry, comment, like and sharing of the entry by users have been determined as parameters from these companies' accounts in order to decide which company's Facebook performance is greater in marketing of *tesettur* fashion. These parameters have been selected because of the necessity of dynamic data for the study. After an investigation

it's seen that companies mostly interact with their consumers in terms of these 5 parameters.

"Number of member" is the term used for companies' Facebook membership number. "Number of entry" measures the numbers of posts made by the page's owner independently of its content. "Number of comment" represents the reviews made by page's followers. The meaning of "number of like" is approving the entry. The last term "sharing of the entry by users" is associated with sharing of the entry again by users on their Facebook walls.

Facebook accounts of the companies have been analyzed between the dates 24.06.2013-24.12.2013 for six-month period. It is difficult to observe the accounts and save the rapidly changing data for years. In addition, this process takes time and much effort. Thereby, it is planned to compute the six-month Facebook performance of the companies in marketing of *tesettur* fashion.

Given the level of importance of these 5 parameters is thought to be different from each other. For this purpose, individuals have been asked to rank these 5 parameters according to their level of importance during this one-week period. The questionnaire has been sent to participants via Facebook and e-mail with an attached survey link. Participants have not been informed about the sector during the survey process. In other words, the questionnaire has been designed for any product ranking on Facebook. The survey consists 248 participants of 150 men and 98 women. It's seen that there are 42 participants in the age group of 15-20, 53 of 21-25, 68 of 26-30, 58 of 31-35 and 27 participants in the age group of 41+ when age distributions of the participants have been examined. As a result of the survey, ranking have occurred from the most important to the less as the number of member, entry, sharing of the entry by users, like and comment.

The ranking points have been converted to the coefficients of parameters as a result of the survey. Thus, one-week data obtained in the context of the numbers of member, entry, comment, like and sharing of the entry by users are weighted 5, 4, 1, 2 and 3 respectively. These weighted points have divided by total number of member in order to compute the Facebook performances of the companies. After that final performance scores were obtained by multiplying these points with 10.

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Six-month Facebook performances of the companies have been calculated with the formula developed by the survey. In this context, it's seen Alvina is the winner with a score of 26,32. In addition, the point of the subsequent Aker is 22,46. SefaMerve is seen at the third place with 17,15. Modanisa is the fourth with 14,17, Tuğba & Venn is the fifth with 13,57, Armine is the sixth with 13,31, Zühre is the seventh with 11,94, Setrms is the eighth with 10,39, Kayra is the ninth with 7,96 and Nihan is the last one with 6,66 points.

When Table 1 analyzed Alvina is the company that has the highest Facebook score. The reason is the highest total number of entry by the company in six months. It can be also explained like this, although SefaMerve has almost four times member of Alvina, it has lagged behind Alvina. So it shows us the importance of entries shared by the company. It can be understood that companies' performances increase when they advertise and share information about their products, campaigns etc. much on Facebook. Nihan also shows the importance of the entry. It has the lowest quantity and as a result the lowest FS.

When the numbers of comment and like analyzed, it can be seen that they show parallelism with the entries. In addition total number of member is also important while evaluating them. More numbers of entries shared by the company mean more numbers of

comments and likes. Because companies communicate with their members in accordance with the entries and shares. Members communicate with the companies by telling complaints or opinions about the products etc. that shared by the company. When compared the number of comment and like, it can be easier to decide according to the numbers of like. Because there may be useless expressions in the comments and other members may get bored to read the long comments. In this context, it can be said that the number of like can be a guide to make a decision.

It is also very important of sharing of the entry by members. In this way companies can advertise themselves for free via their followers. Facebook friends of the followers can see the posts. Thereby, advertising of the products spread exponentially by this way called "viral marketing". When Table 1 analyzed, it can be expressed Alvina, SefaMerve and Aker use the viral marketing highly effectively via Facebook among other companies.

These results can also be supported with the correlations. As can be seen from Table 2, there is a strong relationship between number of entry and Facebook score (0,818). It shows that the most important factor is number of posts by the company. An increase or decrease in the numbers of posts also increases or decreases the Facebook scores. The second relationship occurs between number of sharing the entry by users and Facebook score (0,817).

Table 1. Data of Companies' Facebook Accounts

NCo	NM ₁ (24.06.2013)	NM ₂ (24.12.2013)	MD	NE	NC	NL	NS	FS
Aker	268.476	354.812	86.336	480	8.320	150.106	18.251	22,46
Alvina	461.588	760.893	299.305	580	6.624	216.689	21.318	26,32
Armine	636.612	808.569	171.957	273	3.976	84.109	14.262	13,31
Kayra	1.399.805	1.602.389	202.584	150	4.704	113.036	10.231	7,96
Modanisa	1.026.419	1.317.323	290.904	562	5.056	182.560	13.219	14,17
Nihan	137.418	148.323	10.905	88	1.685	18.965	1.431	6,66
SefaMerve	2.115.414	2.993.261	877.847	478	13.852	329.867	22.854	17,15
Setrms	595.329	720.996	125.667	212	2.763	40.852	11.757	10,39
Tuğba&Venn	828.347	1.076.891	248.544	128	4.014	91.575	10.232	13,57
Zühre	819.427	1.002.163	182.736	189	6.335	116.499	14.372	11,94

Source: [36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45]

NCo: Name of the company
 NM: Number of member
 MD: 6 Monthly difference at number of member
 NE: Number of entry
 NC: Number of comment

$$FS = \frac{5MD + 4NE + 1NC + 2NL + 3NS}{NM_2} * 10$$

NL: Number of like
 NS: Number of sharing the entry by users
 FS: Facebook score

It shows the importance of viral marketing. When table analyzed no significant relationship can be found between Facebook score and numbers of comment directly. In addition there is no relationship between Facebook score and numbers of like. Furthermore, there is a strong linear relationship between NC, NL and number of sharing the entry by users (0,826 and 0,840 respectively). It can be said that numbers of comment and like correlate with Facebook score via viral marketing and number of entry.

It seems to be a significant contribution of Facebook in marketing of tesettur fashion. As mentioned before Facebook is mostly used for the purpose of promotion in marketing operations. Companies promote their products and listen to customers' complaints and opinions with the help of Facebook's direct communication ability. In this context, it can be said that tesettur companies use Facebook in order to advertise and give information about the prices or campaigns etc.

When Facebook performances of the companies analyzed, it's seen the most important thing is the quantity of entries shared by the companies. If the companies advertise much, consumers will be informed about the products better. The increase in the number of members directs the company to share more. Thus, increasing of the shares will attract more followers to company's Facebook account. Another important parameter for improving of the companies' Facebook performances is sharing entries by the users. In this way, the promotion company makes can reach hundreds of people with one "click" like a virus.

The number of comments and likes are the other factors that affect the Facebook performances of

the companies. Consumers have an idea about the product or the company by reading comments. Because user comments are an important guide during the purchase process especially consumers don't know much as Yıldırım mentioned [46]. The number of likes can be used as a decision tool in the presence of long user comments and they also give an evaluation at the first glance.

As a result companies have started to use this alternative marketing channel effectively and this advantage of social media is known for the past few years. However in addition to this, it can be said this study focuses on what companies should do to beat their competitors in tesettur markets. According to Facebook performances and the survey, it's seen that the most important things are number of member and entries shared by companies. Companies should increase their level of member and share much about products, prices etc. for customers in order to enhance the Facebook performance. It's expected the increasing level of Facebook performance also raises sales and profits.

However, it should be noted that the excess of the number of members is not sufficient to increase the performance alone. Companies will obtain positive returns when they communicate with consumers constantly in this online environment.

Briefly, this study reveals the relationship between marketing of tesettur fashion and Facebook as a social media tool. The formula in this study, have been developed by the author after the survey. It's expected further studies will support the results of this study with the help of the formula.

Table 2. Correlations

	NM ₁	NM ₂	MD	NE	NC	NL	NS	FS
NM ₁	1	0,988**	0,861**	0,165	0,654*	0,674*	0,409	-0,080
NM ₂	0,988**	1	0,928**	0,257	0,729*	0,755*	0,494	0,030
MD	0,861**	0,928	1	0,454	0,837**	0,878**	0,652*	0,295
NE	0,165	0,257	0,454	1	0,599	0,767**	0,780**	0,818**
NC	0,654*	0,729*	0,837**	0,599	1	0,917**	0,826**	0,555
NL	0,674*	0,755*	0,878*	0,767**	0,917**	1	0,840**	0,630
NS	0,409	0,494	0,652*	0,780**	0,826**	0,840**	1	0,817**
FS	-0,080	0,030	0,295	0,818**	0,555	0,630	0,817**	1

*sig < 0,05; **sig < 0,01

7. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The first limitation of this study is the selection of specific 10 tesettur clothing companies. The second limitation is determining only Facebook as a social media tool. In addition, the last limitation is the unknown effects of the Facebook operations to the sales.

Considering these limitations, researchers can also examine the other tesettur companies on Facebook. Furthermore, companies' accounts can be analyzed with social media tools such as Twitter, FriendFeed, Flickr etc. In addition, data collection period can be expanded to one year. Finally, interviews can be made with managers in order to determine the effects of marketing operations of Facebook to the sales and profits.

It is also important to notice that having a strong correlation value does not imply on causal effects. For further researches, these kind of effects can be demonstrated with a model and measured with regression analysis etc.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors has declared that no competing interests exist.

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