

Influence of mobile marketing in building brand loyalty among clothing retail consumers in Ireland

Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MBA Marketing

Dublin Business School

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Table of Contents

Table of Figures.....	5
Declaration.....	6
Acknowledgments.....	7
Abstract.....	8
1. Introduction:.....	9
1.1. Background and Aim for undertaking this research	9
1.2. Research Questions and Objectives:.....	10
1.3. Organisation of Dissertation:	11
Chapter 2 – Literature Review	11
Chapter 3 – Research Methodology and Methods.....	11
Chapter 4 – Findings	11
Chapter 5 – Discussions	12
Chapter 6 – Conclusion/Recommendations	12
Chapter 7 – Reflection	12
1.4. Scope and Limitations of the Research	12
1.5. Contributions of the Study	12
2. Literature Review	14
2.1. Mobile Marketing and its scope:.....	14
2.1.1. Promotion tools in Mobile Marketing.....	14
2.1.2. Scope of Mobile Marketing:	15
2.2. Mobile Marketing in the Retailing Environment:	16
2.3. Mobile Marketing – Its acceptance and Consumers’ attitude towards it	19
2.4. Relationship Marketing and Customer Loyalty.....	21
2.5. Literature Framing the Context.....	22
2.5.1. Apparel Retail Trends in Europe and Ireland	22
2.5.1.1. Europe.....	22
2.5.1.2. Ireland	23
2.5.1.2.1. Mobile Retailing and trends in Ireland.....	24
2.6. Conclusion:	24
3. Research Methodology.....	26
3.1. Research Objectives:	26
3.2. Research Philosophy and approach	26

3.3.	Hypothesis Development:	28
3.4.	Research Strategy:	29
3.5.	Research Choice:	30
3.6.	Time Horizons:	30
3.7.	Data Collection:	30
3.7.1.	Secondary Data Collection:	31
3.7.2.	Primary Data Collection:	31
3.7.2.1.	Quantitative Data	31
3.7.2.2.	Qualitative Data	32
3.7.3.	Data Analysis and Coding	33
3.7.3.1.	Qualitative Data Analysis:	33
3.7.3.2.	Quantitative Data Analysis:	34
3.7.4.	Ethical issues and Procedures:	34
3.8.	Limitations:	35
4.	Research Findings:	37
4.1.	Findings through Qualitative Data:	37
4.1.1.	The involvement of smartphone in a consumer's clothing shopping experience	37
4.1.2.	Customer Service, Price or Quality? Its influence on shopping from the same brand?	38
4.1.3.	Mobile Advertising and the attitude of consumers towards it	38
4.1.4.	Relevance and Trust, their effect on acceptance of Mobile Marketing	39
4.2.	Quantitative Data	40
4.2.1.	Participants' Profile	40
4.2.2.	Shopping Pattern	42
4.2.3.	Outlets that are usually preferred by participants to shop	43
4.2.4.	Relevant promotion triggering footfall or a purchase	44
4.2.4.1.	The age group 16 – 34 years and their likeliness to visit the store based on relevant mobile promotion	45
4.2.4.2.	The relation of shopping trend with the likeliness of visiting a store based on a relevant promotion on mobile	45
4.2.5.	Personalized offers and Brand Loyalty	47
4.2.5.1.	Building Relationship across young age groups	48
4.2.5.2.	Relationship between frequent shoppers and brand loyalty through mobile marketing	48

4.2.6.	Factors that influences Brand Loyalty	49
4.2.6.1.	What is important to frequent shoppers when it comes to be being loyal to a brand? 50	
4.2.6.2.	Comparison of participants who like receiving personalized offers and factors that influence brand loyalty.....	50
4.2.7.	Exposure to Mobile Marketing by clothing consumers in Ireland	51
4.2.7.1.	Comparison of where participants shop from with exposure to mobile marketing.	51
4.2.8.	Trust factor in receiving Mobile marketing communication.....	53
4.2.8.1.	Comparison with exposure to Mobile Marketing vs Trust factor in receiving future communication.	54
5.	Discussions:.....	55
5.1.	Introduction:	55
5.2.	Exposure to Mobile Marketing by Clothing Retail Customers in Ireland.....	55
5.3.	Acceptance of mobile marketing by retail clothing customers in Ireland and its impact on brand loyalty.	57
5.4.	Relationship through personalized mobile marketing and its impact on brand loyalty.....	58
5.5.	The importance of “Trust” factor in Mobile Marketing to build Brand Loyalty among clothing retail customers in Ireland.	60
6.	Conclusion and Recommendations	62
7.	Reflections	64
7.1.	Introduction and Background:	64
7.2.	MBA-Marketing Learning and Challenges:.....	64
7.3.	Dissertation Learning and Challenges	65
7.4.	Career Plan	66
8.	References	67
9.	Appendices	72
9.3.	Interview of Participant 1, referred to as P1 - 21 years, Female, Student.....	76
9.4.	Interview of Participant 2 , referred to as P2 - 26 years, Male, Student & and Intern	77
9.5.	Interview of Participant 3 , referred to as P3 - 31 years, Female, Working full time	78
9.6.	Interview of Participant 4 , referred to as P4 - 52 years, Male, Entrepreneur	80

Table of Figures

FIGURE 1 KEY FINDINGS FROM QUALITATIVE DATA.....	39
FIGURE 2 GENDER	40
FIGURE 3 AGE GROUP OF PARTICIPANTS	41
FIGURE 4 PARTICIPANT LIKELY TO VISIT A STORE BASED ON A RELEVANT PROMOTION.....	44
FIGURE 5 THE AGE GROUP 16 – 34 YEARS AND THEIR LIKELINESS TO VISIT THE STORE BASED ON RELEVANT MOBILE PROMOTION.....	45
FIGURE 6 THE RELATION OF SHOPPING TREND WITH THE LIKELINESS OF VISITING A STORE BASED ON A RELEVANT PROMOTION ON MOBILE	45
FIGURE 7 PERSONALIZED OFFERS AND BRAND LOYALTY.....	47
FIGURE 8 BUILDING RELATIONSHIP ACROSS YOUNG AGE GROUPS.....	48
FIGURE 9 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FREQUENT SHOPPERS AND BRAND LOYALTY THROUGH MOBILE MARKETING.....	48
FIGURE 10 FACTORS INFLUENCING BRAND LOYALTY.....	49
FIGURE 11 WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO FREQUENT SHOPPERS WHEN IT COMES TO BE BEING LOYAL TO A BRAND?	50
FIGURE 12 COMPARISON OF PARTICIPANTS WHO LIKE RECEIVING PERSONALIZED OFFERS AND FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BRAND LOYALTY	50
FIGURE 13 - DO YOU CURRENTLY RECEIVE ANY FORM OF MOBILE MARKETING COMMUNICATION?	51
FIGURE 14 COMPARISON OF WHERE PARTICIPANTS SHOP FROM WITH EXPOSURE TO MOBILE MARKETING	52
FIGURE 15 FROM WHICH STORE WOULD YOU BE COMFORTABLE TO RECEIVE OFFERS ON MOBILE	53
FIGURE 16 COMPARISON WITH EXPOSURE TO MOBILE MARKETING VS TRUST FACTOR IN RECEIVING FUTURE COMMUNICATION	54

Declaration

I, Preetham Pais, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referenced correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School's academic honesty policy.

Signed: Preetham Pais

Date: 21st August, 2015

Acknowledgments

I would like to first thank my mentor Alan Morgan, for helping me decide and motivating me to proceed with this topic. A word of appreciation for all the professors that have helped me throughout my taught modules and the teams that I've worked with.

A sincere appreciation for my friends who have been there back home to support me through the challenges that took place during the period of my dissertation.

I would like to thank my family and friends who were a constant support before and during my course and helping me pursue and chase my dream to study in Ireland.

Abstract

Mobile Marketing, which involves sending multi-way communications and offers, an activity involving customers and a firm through the medium of mobile devices is seen to be growing in importance in today's market. There have been previous researches involving its importance in the retailing sector and the research aims to highlight the influence it has in building brand loyalty taking into consideration the clothing sector and focussing more on the Irish market. The research also supports the theory of building brand loyalty through relationship marketing and suggests the possibilities of usage of mobile devices for the same. Using mobile marketing to build brand loyalty is fairly a new approach, and the research suggests using the medium to go beyond acquiring new customers. The findings are obtained through qualitative method in the form of interviews and survey strategy was used to obtain the quantitative findings. The secondary data is more focussed on the recent trends in the industry and the trends seen in mobile marketing in the country. This research paves a way for further research in this area that could help the Irish clothing retailers retain their customer base and survive the highly competitive market.

1. Introduction:

This chapter lays out the foundation for this research and gives a brief background to the topic. The research questions and objectives are explained in brief and is further discussed in the methodology chapter. This chapter will also give an overview on the research methods used and provide in brief the scope and limitations of this research. An overview of each chapter will also be explained.

1.1. Background and Aim for undertaking this research

Mobile has been an integral part of consumers these days. Due to the rapid growth in the smartphone sales throughout the world and their usage, mobile marketing has been one of the trending marketing mediums in today's world. Mobile phones have also outnumbered other mediums like televisions and laptops and hence advertising on mobile phone is also a growing phenomenon (Park T, & Salvendy, G, 2012). Mobile marketing gives the freedom of targeting to specific consumers based on location, personalization of content and also provides a scope for interaction. According to a survey conducted by ComReg, 2014, 97% of Irish consumers had a mobile phone in comparison to 69% who had landlines in 2013. Mobile Marketing has been global trend in the marketing communications due to its special characteristics like ultra-portability, location-sensitivity and it being independent of any other channel (Shankar, V. & Yadav, M.S., 2010). Ireland has seen a growth in smartphone users and according to a report published by mintel.com, smartphone ownership reached 64% in the year 2014. Another specific report that was published in December 2014 which marked the trends in clothing retailing in Ireland showed that the customers wanted innovative technology in-store in order to improve their shopping experience. This trend has grown in years as consumers are trying to interact with retailers and brands through GPS technology, QR codes, Mobile websites and Mobile social networking applications. Mobile devices can work as a gateway to develop a relationship between a consumer and a retailer.

Apparel and footwear specialist retailers have declined by 2% to achieve value sales of €2.7 billion in 2014. The recent austerity measures after the economic crisis has affected the consumer spending power (Euromonitor.com, 2015). This has in a way affected the sales of some clothing retailers. Even though the fast fashion retailers who have lower prices are dominating this segment, some retailers can create special offers, scarcity value and communicate it to customers effectively in order to let them visit their stores more often. The

growing number of internet retailing brands is also a constant threat to these retailers and a need to have flexibility shopping and building a relationship with existing customers is important to have their loyalty towards them. There is some research done in finding out the consumers' attitude towards mobile advertising. This research aims to find out if mobile marketing could be influential in building brand loyalty as there is very limited research done, especially for the clothing retail sector in Ireland. The literature also highlights the scope of various mobile marketing techniques that could be used however, this research doesn't cover in depth analysis of those promotional tools. According to (Marketline, 2014), the price sensitivity factor depends and varies regionally, the fact that clothes are in a way linked to lifestyle and social status, there is a high opportunity for retailers to influence consumer behaviour. Mobile marketing can help influencing the shopping pattern and help in building a strong relationship with them.

1.2. Research Questions and Objectives:

“How influential can mobile marketing communication received by customers be to their loyalty towards a retailer in Ireland?”

The main aim of the research is to find out the impact of mobile marketing on the clothing retail customers and their loyalty towards the brand. The objective is to find out the key factors that would trigger loyalty among customers. The main research question is supported by following sub-research questions.

“Is building a relationship with the customer through mobile marketing beneficial to clothing retailers in Ireland?”

The research aims to find out if building a relationship through the mobile medium improves brand loyalty. The focus would be to discover if the customers are connected to a brand through strong relationship marketing over mobile, would it have a positive impact on brand loyalty. It will also help in discovering if such concept would work for the retailers, will it be accepted and have an impact among the consumers.

“Does a previous shopping experience with a retail brand affect the acceptance of mobile marketing among the Irish consumers?”

The main focus of this question is to see if trust plays a major role in the acceptance of mobile marketing. However, there have been previous theories and researches that prove this phenomenon globally, this research would aim to highlight keeping the Irish consumers into consideration.

1.3. Organisation of Dissertation:

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The literature covers various themes, particularly the importance of mobile marketing, its scope and how relationship and brand loyalty could be built through it. It is mainly divided into these five themes

Mobile Marketing and its scope

Mobile Marketing in the Retailing Environment

Mobile Marketing – Its acceptance and Consumers' attitude towards it

Relationship Marketing and Customer Loyalty

Apparel Retail Trends in Europe and Ireland

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology and Methods

This chapter covers the methods used for research. The hypothesis development is also covered in this chapter. In an overview this research has used interpretivism and positivism research philosophy. There is a deductive approach used with the research choice being through mixed methods. The researcher used qualitative and quantitative techniques to gather primary data. Qualitative data gathered is through interviews of four customers representing different demographics and quantitative data obtained is through a survey in which 203 respondents participated.

Chapter 4 – Findings

This chapter will layout the findings from the research carried out. The qualitative data findings are laid out first followed by the quantitative findings. The chapter contains graphs and other data that supports the research.

Chapter 5 – Discussions

This chapter discusses and reviews the findings in detail. A constant analysis is done and compared to the literature in order to answer the research questions. Limitations and drawbacks to the findings are also laid out in brief.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion/Recommendations

A brief conclusion is set out in order to summarize the finding from the research. The scope for further research is also laid out.

Chapter 7 – Reflection

The researcher's experience of this course and various learnings have been put forth. The learning and self-developments that have been encountered are also mentioned.

1.4. Scope and Limitations of the Research

As explained before this study helps in identifying the influence of mobile marketing in the clothing retail sector focussing on the Irish market. The research has helped and discovered that there is a positive relationship that can be built through mobile marketing among the Irish consumers. The research has identified various factors that are important for the consumers in order to stay loyal to the brand and also proved that trust is an important factor. There is a lot of scope for further research under this topic and various aspects of consumer behaviour can be studied. This research doesn't include the attitude of consumers towards various promotional tools of mobile marketing, individual study of retail outlets and doesn't not provide mobile marketing strategies. This research lays a foundation for carrying out even deeper analysis and a research carried out with a longer time frame will be beneficial. The smaller sample size and less time given to this research are major limitations, also since this is an academic research the cost factor also contributed to the limitations. Despite these limitations this research provides significant findings for the Irish clothing retail segment to consider.

1.5. Contributions of the Study

This research gives a consumer perspective to mobile marketing. It also adds to the previous researches and theories done on mobile marketing. Its application on building brand loyalty is a fairly different approach and provides a good base for further research. Moreover this

research is conducted in Ireland and there is no strong previous research done to study mobile marketing and its influence on brand loyalty for a specific sector like Retail clothing. The findings can help various retail outlets in introducing Mobile Marketing in their marketing strategies if it is doesn't play a major role in their current business plan. This research also gives a reason for the fast fashion brands like Penney's, Dunnes stores, etc. to introduce mobile marketing in a larger scale to maintain their strong customer base. The research has tried to merge two different concepts i.e Mobile Marketing and Relationship Marketing and apply it to gain brand loyalty.

2. Literature Review

The literature reviewed for this study focusses majorly on the mobile marketing tools that are relevant for this industry and also the consumer behaviour towards the major mobile marketing channels. In an overview the study focusses on the scope and mobile marketing trends. In addition to this it further captures the apparel retail industry trends and profile in Europe providing an insight on how influential relationship marketing through the mobile medium could be in building brand loyalty.

2.1. Mobile Marketing and its scope:

There are many definitions to Mobile Marketing from different authors and institutions. The American Mobile Marketing Association (MMA) sums it up as using a wireless medium in the process of distributing a certain type of content and influencing a direct response in an integrated marketing programme. Mobile marketing is perceived differently by different people but people can agree that these wireless devices have become the centre of their lives. Different organisations are taking this into notice and introducing various forms of mobile apps and establishing various mobile marketing strategies (Bernier, 2014). Mobile has been an integral part of consumers these days. Due to the rapid growth in the smartphone sales throughout the world and their usage, mobile marketing has been one of the trending marketing mediums in today's world. Mobile phones have also outnumbered other mediums like televisions and laptops and hence advertising on mobile phone is also a growing phenomenon (Park T, & Salvendy, G, 2012). Mobile marketing gives the freedom of targeting to specific consumers based on location, personalization of content and also provides a scope for interaction. The knowledge gained by the statistics around the world through app downloads and the consumer's interaction with mobile apps has become easier for marketers to study consumer behaviour both online and offline giving a deeper reach and targeting customised promotions (C, Dow, 2013). Such promotions are accessed by the consumers instantly (Shankar, et al., 2010).

2.1.1. Promotion tools in Mobile Marketing

Mobile devices are usually not shared and these serve to be some unique modes of targeting. For example it's like knowing how a marketer's audience is and what they like, understanding these important characteristics makes this a strong communication medium (Kirk Hazlett,

(2011). In the world of mobile marketing there are several mobile interaction options, including SMS, MMS, emails, mobile websites, downloaded or preloaded applications, mobile search, mobile display ads, social media networks, in-video products, in-game products, QR codes, and many more (Leppäniemi and Karjaluoto, 2008). This paper would consider secondary data available on SMS, emails, Apps and Social Media browsing through Mobile Phones as it would be relevant to the clothing retail industry. Focussing on SMSs as a major tool of mobile marketing the customers are fairly positive towards text messages that are of interest to them. The study also suggests that the users are more open to the idea of a permission marketing concept. (Maneesoonthorn C, & Fortin, D, 2006). While a research was conducted by (mintel.com, 2014) on clothing retail shoppers it was found out that some of the factors that could improve their shopping experience would be in store technology and access to products on their tablets and phones. In recent years the trend in use of smartphones and technologies like GPS, QR codes and Mobile Social media applications have helped the customers to manage their everyday lives and also help them build interaction with retailers and brands. This shows that how these brands can capitalize on this huge database of mobile consumers and connect to consumers instantly as they have these smart devices with them most of the times during their day. In the USA a brand called Macy's uses NFC technology at bus stops and stores to deliver custom based to customers based on their interests and feed them content constantly through QR codes and SMSs (Mintel.com, 2014). The use of QR codes has been a trend among many retailers in Ireland however its success is far beyond satisfaction. As stated in (Jay Sang, R , 2013) retailers use QR codes due to the low cost involved in making them and also the time that is required for changes to be done to various communication is less unlike communications through traditional marketing channels.

2.1.2. Scope of Mobile Marketing:

According to mintel.com the increasing smartphone and tablet ownership would serve as a strong force to boost mobile retailing with the growth in smartphones by 64% in RoI in 2014, and tablet ownership reaching 41% in RoI. According to (Ismail, M, & Razak, R 2011) there has been a lot of trend in Mobile Marketing however there is very little studies done focussing on the acceptance of mobile marketing. Mobiles are too close to the heart and the head of consumers. Brand managers and Marketing strategists can benefit a lot from a strategically

well designed and implemented mobile marketing. Using a simple communication message the brands can reach consumers or potential consumers through a mobile equipment (Hovančáková, 2011). According to (Ranchod, A , 2007) the attributes inherent to mobile marketing - personalization, ubiquity, interactivity and localization – are important characteristics of an innovative communication. The key findings that make Mobile Marketing important to marketers are these, the length of time between a reception of a brand message on a mobile and being acted upon is relatively shorter as compared to other mediums. The response received through a brand message on a mobile device is polarized as compared to other personal devices (McRae, E, et. al, 2013). There are some serious advantages of mobile marketing firstly being so technologically advanced and being up to date with the trends in the market. Reiterating the fact that the mobile consumption is so important part of people's life and also reflect their own personality in terms of personalization of settings on their phones. The content on mobile can be updated much faster than any other media due to its fast access to the internet (Hovančáková, 2011).

2.2. Mobile Marketing in the Retailing Environment:

There has been some research done in order to analyse the impact of mobile marketing could have on Retailing. The researches done point to the fact that it is indeed a positive approach to included mobile marketing in the marketing strategies of retailers. It is noted that mobile marketing could change the paradigm of retailing due to time sensitive and location sensitive nature of the mobile medium and devices.

Mobile marketing is significantly assumed to be an important tool in retailers' value chain, which indicates to have improved consumer communications, service interactions resulting in improved output value and potentially higher margins (Strom, et.al, 2014). The traditional approach to retailing was to have the consumer visit the store however with mobile the consumer can access the retail store from anywhere, anytime and the retailer also has access to the consumer at the same time. One of the key reasons is that the mobile stays with the consumer most of the time (Shankar, V. & Yadav, M.S., 2010). The role of interactive technologies are also reshaping the competitive retailing landscape and terming the traditional business models of retailing obsolete. In the mobile age the customers can do everything online e.g comparison of prices, from their location. This further helps the customers bargaining power (Vardarajan, et.al, 2010). "By using a combination of channels,

retailers can better satisfy their customers' needs by exploiting the benefits and overcoming the deficiencies of each channel. For example, the store channel provides certain unique benefits, including: the potential to use all five senses when evaluating products, personal service, the option of cash payment, entertainment and social experiences, and immediate acquisition" (Zhang, et.al, 2010).

Study by (Ström, et.al, 2014) suggests that the interaction between the customer and the retailer happens through mobile marketing during the pre- purchase phase. The author's analysis is that there is a path between the consumer's perceived values of mobile marketing that affect adoption, use and loyalty to retailer's mobile marketing thus increasing the relative outcome value of retailer's mobile marketing. The author suggests further research to verify this trend and the scope of building loyalty through mobile marketing. According to (Shankar, V. & Yadav, M.S., 2010) though mobile marketing has a strong future, there are certain challenges that the brand managers and marketers should consider. The authors point out the challenges that could arise due to smaller screens and highlight that the retail customers could also include older aged customers which could have difficulties participating through mobile mediums making it unsuitable for them. Also for these audience the virtual environment of retailing is far more different than the traditional retail channel.

The mobile marketing platform for retailers also has a temporal dimension. In order to induce immediate shopping the retailers could communicate instant offers to customers within the stores environment that could have time expiration deadline. The offer could either be attractive to the consumer or not but it is certain that such offers could be cost effective (Shankar, V. & Yadav, M.S., 2010). The study conducted by (Zhang, et.al, 2010) suggests that there is a scope for retailers going multi-channel. Mobile marketing lets the retailers' access new markets far beyond the local trading areas. The consumers on these different channels find them to be effective in different ways in order to satisfy their shopping needs.

In the mobile application world the shoppers are more interested in content delivery (searching and receiving more information on the retailers), transaction based, location based (offers and information based on the location) , finding the products in-store and usage information and other additional features include saving a shopping list, pictures or profiles of products, loyalty benefits and tracking. Such additional features as compared to a website

attracts different behaviours from the customers. All such features add to a better shopping experience providing a satisfactory service (Ström, et.al, 2014). The study further suggests that it could have a significant improvement in terms of transaction-based results as traffic to stores and sales, and brand relationship results in brand awareness, associations, attitudes, purchase intentions and loyalty. However the study didn't further cover the loyalty effects of mobile marketing. The author's point of researching on the consumers' post purchase interactions with purchased brands are a contact point of increasing importance strengthening the consumer and brand relationship, will term mobile marketing as a stronger tool for consumers supporting such interactions. "If loyalty also spurs consumers' willingness to participate in viral mobile marketing, the viral effects may serve as one out of several indicators of consumer loyalty. The viral effects may also result in increased branding and sales effects, both decreasing contact costs, while the willingness of receivers to access viral content is higher than for firms' mobile push advertising" (Ström, et.al, 2014) .

Mobile seems to be an important marketing medium for the retailers and keeping it at top seems to be a smart move. Mobile remains the top priority for retailers in 2015, with 58 percent of surveyed retailers placing it at the top of their list, up from 53 percent last year (2014) (shop.org and Forrester research, 2015). The report also suggests increase in online sales which grew from 8% to 12% from 2013 to 2014. Executive Director Vicki Cantrell mentions in the article that small but continuous incremental changes in the mobile investments in terms of mobile strategies keeps the retailers happy and also helps in satisfying the tech savvy customers. It was interesting to find out that more than 56% of retailers surveyed feel that the apps are not a key component to their mobile marketing strategy as it involves greater costs, however they are more focussed on making mobile optimized websites. The literature gives a fair knowledge on how mobile marketing is used by the retailers and it is evident that the future holds more research and experiments in this particular field. This could form a strong base to assume and deduce hypothesis from this literature and can be used as a base for research in the clothing retail industry in Ireland. The customers are aware and exposed to this kind of marketing and the brand managers and marketers in this industry see a lot of scope in this medium, this research help in deriving conclusions on how influential mobile marketing could be.

2.3. Mobile Marketing – Its acceptance and Consumers' attitude towards it

Through technology acceptance level and considering how private and highly personal nature of a mobile device is there are three important characteristics at an individual level, they are namely attachment, innovativeness and risk avoidance which serve as antecedents to mobile marketing. In addition to above (Gao, et al, 2011) in their also state that how permission based mobile marketing has a significant influence and participation to mobile marketing activities. The results of the study further shows that permission based marketing strengthens the relationship between attitude and mobile marketing activities. The usefulness perceptions of a promotion and the ease of use also add to the acceptance significantly (Gao, et al, 2011). A report featured in (Marketing Weekly News, 2013) suggests the following theories in terms of acceptance and consumers attitude towards mobile marketing. It states that consumers are more receptive to communication if they find value towards the time they spent on accepting the communication. The brands need to make sure that the advertising is more personalized in order to get accepted by a particular customer of that interest. Jayne Dow, Director of Qualitative Research and Digital Innovation at Firefly, Milward Brown quotes "Mobile advertising experiences that create a more balanced consumer experience -- ones that respect time and provide a useful outcome -- open the door of receptivity and have a positive impact on the brand," (Marketing Weekly News, 2013). (Chowdhury, et al 2010) states the major factors that influence a consumer's attitude towards mobile marketing are content of a particular mobile advertisement, time of transmission, personalization and consumer control, permission and privacy. In a different study (Okoe et al, 2015) confirms that when a customer finds a relevant advert or communication sent to them by a marketer on their mobile devices, the intentions to purchase or recommend that advertisement is higher. The author of this research considers the factors that are stated in the study by (Okoe et al, 2015). The factors influencing consumer's attitude towards Mobile Marketing are as follows.

Entertainment: It is stated as the ability of engaging customers by immediately capturing the attention of the customers. It also states that entertainment is a determinant of consumers' attitude towards mobile advertising.

Credibility: As cited in (McKenzie and Lutz, 1989) it is the customer's perception of an advertisement being true and whether the information gained from it can be trusted. The

credibility of an advertising thus affects the attitude and acceptance of a mobile advertisement.

Irritation: The frequency of getting communication from a marketer could possibly irritate consumers and hence such tactics need to be carefully employed. (El-Garhi, 2014) report suggests that there is a negative correlation between consumers' perceptions of the irritation and their attitude towards mobile advertisements.

Personalization: Personalized services create a strong relation with customers, it is based on what interests the customers and what not which thus encourages transactions.

It is also important to know to what extent are customers willing to get exposed to Mobile Marketing. Research done by (Al-alak and Alnawas, 2010), suggests that customers who were subjected to extensive advertising were more negative towards reception of mobile marketing advertising and were less likely to participate in permission based advertising campaigns. Also, the research reiterates on the point that the usefulness of an advertisement to a customer decides the acceptability of advertisement in the future, hence, the customer would be more willing to receive SMSs in the future. QR codes being one of the mobile marketing tools also has high acceptance from consumers as it is in form of pull marketing and it depends on the consumers' willingness to access information through it. The research by (Ryu, J.S. & Murdock, K, 2013) suggests that the consumers find QR codes easy to use and rated it to be useful. The research also suggests that taking into consideration usefulness the managers also need to consider the innovativeness and relevancy factor while designing their mobile marketing strategy. The author of this research aims to mark the level of influence of such mobile marketing strategies have on brand loyalty which previous studies lack.

The reward based mobile advertising is also trend that some marketers use in order to engage with their customers. "After seeing an in-app ad, 26 percent of users who were rewarded considered purchasing a brand in comparison with 18 percent of mobile users who did not participate in reward-based advertising. Ninety-two percent of mobile users prefer to know what kind of rewards are given to them , and 68 percent of users prefer to know for certain they will get a reward, rather than be surprised" as stated in the report (Marketing Weekly News, 2013).

2.4. Relationship Marketing and Customer Loyalty

Loyalty has been defined as “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future” Oliver, 1999 as cited in (Liu, Guo and Lee, 2011). Relationship marketing is believed to be one of the key points towards customer loyalty, which involves deeply held commitments to re-purchase or reconsider a preferred product or service in the future. Thus a firm investment in building and developing a relationship with customer is important in order to let the customer trust the company’s offering and commitment to service. (Negi, R, & Ketema, E, 2010). (Nakhleh, H.M.A, 2014) suggests there have been a number of ways for marketers to implement relationship marketing tactics, which are expected to have an impact on customer retention and loyalty. As per the paper it is suggested that relationship marketing tactics can be executed through service quality, price perception; value offered, alternative attractiveness, and so on. It is also important to hold to the existing customers rather than spend tremendous time on acquiring new ones, various studies have argued that it is indeed more expensive to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing one (Ennew & Binks, 1996; Hormozi & Giles, 2004). The various costs that are involved in replacement of customers, like advertising, promotion and sales expenses are very high and it takes serious amount of time for those customers to get profitable. Hence it is suggested that it is highly recommended to focus on retaining the existing customers by building a good relationship and continue to persuade them to consume the goods and services of a particular company (Negi, R, & Ketema, E, 2010). Over the years there has been a rapid development and evolution in the field of relationship marketing. There has been a growing de-intermediation process as the marketers have access to customers directly due to the advent of sophisticated computer and telecommunication technology. Various business sectors like air travel, banking, insurance, consumables etc. are experiencing the changes in de-intermediation process and relationship marketing is getting more and more popular (Lee, J, et al , 2013). Brand loyalty is highly dependent on trust and is related to interpersonal relationship thus giving us interesting findings. First, the adaptation of an inherent quality of interpersonal relationships (i.e. trust) in the relationship highlights the fact that a brand possess some features that go beyond being a just a mere product which builds a connection between it and the customer (Delgado-Ballester, E. and Munuera-Aleman, J., 2001). As cited in (Negi, R, & Ketema, E, 2010), Oliver (1999) states that consumer loyalty is

set to occur at four different levels namely, cognitive, affective, conative and behavioural. Loyalty is said to be a mix of attitudinal and behavioural response expressed over period of time towards a brand. There has been some amount of research done to study the relationship between mobile marketing and customer relationship management. With the growth of competition and advancement in technologies the goal of marketing has moved to customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and customer retention (Kanitwaranun, et.al, 2011). A study done by (Hadadi & Almsafir, 2014) within the younger age group suggest that different types of mobile marketing (SMS/MMS, mobile apps, QR Code, location-based and mobile banner ads) has some significant relationship with customer relationship management (CRM). It also suggested that the teenagers are more willing to discover new apps that could satisfy their needs and requirements. The relationship quality as a higher impact on customer loyalty and trust. It comes much before achieving customer loyalty, it is usually used to assess the effectiveness of the relationship marketing tactics used by the marketer/company. Thus a higher level of relationship quality is often termed to be an outcome for higher level of customer satisfaction and trust (Nakhleh, H.M.A, 2014). It is believed that in Mobile marketing for some companies the trends have so far been focussed more on to initial adoption and acceptance however, there has been little attention paid to post-purchase constructs which includes satisfaction and loyalty (Liu, Guo and Lee, 2011). However this has been changing according to recent news reports mentioned in (Shop.org and Forrester research, 2015). From the perspective of a consumer there are two important aspects of a particular service affect the decision to remain or defect, one is the reason that a customer would want to stay or what makes a customer stay, and the tangible and intangible costs of switching to another provider/product. This again relates to the level of relationship quality, if a customer is satisfied and happy the customer normally have no reason to leave. Another factor that is important in terms of customer loyalty is customer privacy and trust (Liu, Guo and Lee, 2011).

2.5. Literature Framing the Context

2.5.1. Apparel Retail Trends in Europe and Ireland

2.5.1.1. Europe

It is noted that the European apparel industry experienced low levels of growth from 2010 to 2014. Even though it is predicted to continue to have low growth over a certain forecasted period it would be much accelerating until 2019. The European apparel retail industry had

total revenues of \$412.5bn in 2014, representing a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 0.5% between 2010 and 2014. The fast fashion retailers are trying to fill the gap for consumer who want to wear fashionable content but cannot afford luxury brands. There was a significant majority seen in the womenswear segment which saw an equivalent to 53% of the total revenue in the fashion sector. The report suggests that since there is a strong competition within the industry the apparel retailers are spending more on advertising in order to create strong brand consciousness and running intensive marketing campaigns. Despite the fact that brand consciousness in this market is substantial, the loyalty of consumers to specific brands is not always the overriding factor in their decision making. It also states a very strong point in terms of brand loyalty, it suggest that the brand loyalty within the top end of the apparel retail industry is more connected to a particular designer, considering the fact that some of these designers have their own retail chains. The retailers also have an opportunity to influence consumer behaviour to an extent as clothes is very closely linked to lifestyle and social status. It also indicates that there is a large market for non-designer apparel retail which can focus on consumers with low disposable incomes. According to the report, Porter's Five Forces Analysis suggest that the risk from new entrants and rivalry is assessed as strong (MarketLine.com, 2015). It also seen that there has been significant rise in mobile purchases however it is still seen that the consumers use mobile more to browse products rather than making a purchase (Academic.mintel.com, 2014).

2.5.1.2. Ireland

It is observed that the total number of apparel retailers declined by 2% in the year 2014 and the total sales were up to €2.7 billion. Primark was the overall leader in terms of value share and Dunnes Stores saw a dip in terms of its value share. There hasn't be a significant increase in consumer spending for the luxury retail brands to experience a higher number of sales. Penney's who has seen a constant growth in the fast fashion sector have products that fit the consumer's budget and the quality provided is also acceptable by the customers. It is also noted that the consumer spending will eventually increase in a period of time as the after effects of economic crisis is fading away. The uptake of mobile internet devices remains strong in Ireland and thus Internet retailing has, to an extent, benefited from the changed economic environment due to reduced outlet numbers (Euromonitor.com, 2015). As highlighted in *Mintel's Loyalty to Retailers –, November 2014* report, almost half (47%) of all adults are less

loyal to retailers than they were before the recession, with shopping habits changing where and how people shop in order to get the best return on their spend, also providing retailers an opportunity with many loyalty schemes and also add this to their marketing strategies.

2.5.1.2.1. Mobile Retailing and trends in Ireland

43% of NI and 28% of ROI consumers have used click-and-collect services in the last 12 months, while 28% of NI and 19% of ROI consumers would be willing to pay more for faster delivery (mintel.com, 2015). Increasing smartphone and tablet ownership is a positive sign for mobile marketing in Ireland, with smartphone ownership reaching 55% in NI and 64% in ROI in 2014, and tablet ownership reaching 45% in NI and 41% in ROI (mintel.com, 2015). Forrester consulting conducted a survey in June 2015 to see how marketers have reacted to the sudden change brought by mobile on consumer behaviour and expectations. It mentions that the marketers are now looking towards delivering in the moment experiences to consumers. Quoting one of the ecommerce manager at a global CPG company "The No.1 thing inhibiting us from doing more with mobile is our own strategy... It's frustrating because we're not taking a whole look at the whole ecosystem, and our strategy is not customer driven" (www.thinkwithgoogle.com, 2015).

2.6. Conclusion:

The above themes have been presented by the author to highlight the presence of mobile marketing in the current scenario. The first theme focuses on the mediums of mobile marketing and the chances of it being considered of utmost importance in the marketing strategies of companies. The highlight of them have been SMS, MMS, In-App ads, E-mail Marketing and Social Media accessed through Mobile devices. The research or study referenced mainly talk about overall usage of these mediums and the retail sector has noticed this change and have made changes to their marketing strategies. However there has been very less or no research done in order to assess the customer retention that can happen or has happened due to mobile marketing. The literature provided does point out that there has been a great influence of mobile in the daily lives of consumers and to an extent the consumers have accepted some form of mobile advertisements. The consumers are open to accept information/communication that is sent to them if it is relevant to them. However, it is important to know if this would lead to a consumer to stick to a brand or there are any other factors that would lead the consumer to switch to a different brand. In the apparel retail

industry, from the reports it is noted that there is a constant threat of new entrants and it is important for the retail brands to hold on to their existing consumer base. There has been very little research done in terms of the brand loyalty that can be established through mobile marketing in the apparel retail industry. The apparel retailers are looking at a steady growth until 2019 as per the reports published on Euromonitor. The fast fashion outlets can definitely gain from this as the consumers with disposable income would also grow.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Objectives:

The above themes layout a foundation for this research and defines the gap and the objectives for carrying out the research. The themes cover mobile marketing and its tools, the attitude of consumers towards it and its acceptance, relationship marketing and its impact on brand loyalty and finally highlighting the trends in the industry that this research is based on.

“How influential can mobile marketing communication received by customers be to their loyalty towards a retailer in Ireland?”

The main aim of the research is to find out the impact of mobile marketing on the clothing retail customers and their loyalty towards the brand. The objective is to find out the key factors that would trigger loyalty among customers. The main research question is supported by following sub-research questions.

“Is building a relationship with the customer through mobile marketing beneficial to clothing retailers in Ireland?”

The research aims to find out if building a relationship through the mobile medium improves brand loyalty. The focus would be to discover if the customers are connected to a brand through strong relationship marketing over mobile, would it have a positive impact on brand loyalty. It will also help in discovering if such concept would work for the retailers, will it be accepted and have an impact among the consumers.

“Does a previous shopping experience with a retail brand affect the acceptance of mobile marketing among the Irish consumers?”

The main focus of this question is to see if trust plays a major role in the acceptance of mobile marketing. However, there have been previous theories and researches that prove this phenomenon globally, this research would aim to highlight keeping the Irish consumers into consideration.

3.2. Research Philosophy and approach

According to (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009) a researcher at every stage of research makes assumptions. This research is also based on certain assumptions towards the research

topic taking into consideration the literature, and the statistics that points towards the theories that are made by the researcher. There are two strong philosophies that the researcher has considered for this research. Positivism and Interpretivism. The first philosophy, which is positivism, is the basis of the scientific research approach and a highly structured methodology in where it is assumed that the research is based on existing theories and have developed certain hypothesis based on it (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). To a certain extent this research is based on the earlier findings however there is a gap in the sector chosen and the theory framing the research question is inadequate to draw out conclusion. The research focuses on studying the behaviour of consumers and their attitude towards a relationship built through mobile marketing by clothing retailers in Ireland. This would involve analysis of human behaviour and studying the buying pattern of these customers. Interpretivism philosophy would be apt for this research. According to (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Interpretivism perspective is highly appropriate for the field of marketing. The consumers act as social actors and thus it is important to understand closely the impact that the marketing strategies would have on them. Also, as a researcher it is important to understand their point of view and have an empathetic stance while carrying out this research.

There are two possible approach for every research, which are deduction and induction. The deductive approach 'involves the development of a theory that is subjected to a rigorous test' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009), this involves the researcher to develop a theory and then a hypothesis which will be then proved through the research strategy. Inductive on the other hand focuses on collecting a data and developing a theory based on it as result of data analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Both these approaches will be used to a certain extent for this theory. The research would involve analysing customer behaviour and interviewing them based on their attitude towards mobile marketing. It involves studying the attitude towards the level of mobile marketing that they are exposed to. The deductive approach will be also used to an extent to analyse the existing theories however, it should be noted that the brand loyalty through mobile marketing is a new field of research for apparel retail and is more focussed topic which is uncovered in the specified literature. Both these approaches will prove beneficial to the research and the findings would definitely lead to a scope for further research for the given topic. Using the quantitative method under the

deductive approach the research will highlight and give logic to the assumptions and the inductive approach will help understand how exactly brand Loyalty can be influenced through mobile marketing. The research aims to highlight the key factors involving relationship marketing and mobile marketing and their influence on brand loyalty which will definitely aim to provide a larger scope for further research.

3.3. Hypothesis Development:

Based on the literature produced in Chapter 2 of this research the following hypothesis is deduced. The following hypothesis is deduced keeping the Irish retail clothing consumers in focus.

Relationship Marketing and Brand Loyalty

As per various authors mentioned in the above theme, relationship marketing has a strong influence over brand loyalty, and the scope of reaching out to consumers through mobile will have a strong impact on it.

H₁ – Building a relationship through mobile marketing influences loyalty among Irish retail clothing consumers

Mobile Marketing Acceptance

Mobile advertising is more commonly accepted among young consumers globally as they are more comfortable exploring new technology and also in some of the reports mentioned in the literature suggests the same for Ireland. Thus the researcher has assumed that it holds true even for Irish consumers and the following hypothesis is deduced.

H₂ – Mobile marketing is more acceptable among young clothing consumers in Ireland

Personalized Mobile Marketing

Theories mentioned under the literature theme Relationship Marketing and Customer loyalty states that promotions that are relevant have the tendency to attract customers to a brand, thus improving the ROI of an advertisement. However, the authors have not conducted a research that would prove the above theory. The results derived for this hypothesis will have a significant contribution for the retail clothing sector in Ireland.

H₃ – Consumers are more likely to visit a store if a promotion is relevant to their needs.

Factors influencing acceptance of Mobile Marketing

The literature states that there are various factors that could influence acceptance of mobile advertisements by consumers, trust is one of them. The author assumes that a previous shopping experience could build this trust.

H₄ – There is a positive acceptance of mobile marketing if a customer has shopped previously from a brand and has a level of trust in it.

Exposure to mobile marketing in Ireland

A lot of companies seem to be undertaking mobile marketing, however it is important to understand if the clothing retail consumers are exposed to it. It is assumed that there is a fair amount of exposure and hence the following hypothesis is derived.

H₅ – Irish consumers are exposed to mobile marketing techniques by clothing retailers in Ireland.

3.4. Research Strategy:

According to (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009) a given research strategy might be associated to a particular mentioned research philosophy also considering the approach undertaken during the research i.e inductive or deductive approach. Before choosing the research strategy, it was first evaluated in terms of the research question and research objectives which provided a link to the approach and purpose. The time constraints and expenditure were also considered before choosing a research strategy. Survey method was used for this research. A survey strategy is usually used for a deductive approach however, this research uses both the approaches including inductive approach. (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009) states that “data collected using a survey strategy can be used to suggest possible reasons for particular relationships between variables and to produce models of these relationships.” It will also provide a better control on the research and considering time and money constraints it is best suited for this type of research. The population that uses mobile phones and who are also shoppers at retail outlets is quite high and hence sampling will also help in such a strategy to save cost and time. The survey method is also popular in business and management type of research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

3.5. Research Choice:

There are namely three research choices, Mono Method, Mixed Methods and Multiple Method. The initial plan of the researcher was to just use Mono method and use qualitative research method. However, interviewing certain candidates would help to give a different approach as the questions will be open ended and the freedom to give more details would likely lead to a new finding or help to discover certain characteristics of a shopper. Therefore the qualitative research helped in forming the base for quantitative method. There is no particular order of dominance, however the data gathered from quantitative analysis will strongly form the basis of this research as the sample will be bigger than that taken for qualitative analysis. This research is based on the mixed method study as both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to research. This approach is supported by (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009) suggestion which states that sometimes a researcher may just choose one particular method however it may lead to the use of multiple methods depending on how the research is leading. The researchers view of mixing strategies is based on the research philosophy used i.e. Interpretivism. The researcher believes that the interviews would provide certain findings that could be further researched on which the deductive approach in terms of surveys would have a possibility to miss. The assumptions are based on the strong conclusions mentioned by various researchers quoted in the chapter of literature review.

3.6. Time Horizons:

There are two types of horizons, longitudinal and cross-sectional (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). The cross-sectional type of time horizon is usually taken for an academic study as it has a short time limit. This particular study is done on a particular phenomenon at a particular time and relating it to a cross-sectional research is apt as it fits appropriately with the study done. The study is based on the influence of mobile marketing on clothing retail customers in the current scenario and suits to be categorized under cross-sectional type of research. Longitudinal research is not suitable as this is highly time-constrained and the research is carried over a short period of time.

3.7. Data Collection:

Validity and Reliability factors have been taken into consideration while designing the research. There are various factors that could lead to falsification or wrong information gathered during the research depending on various reasons. However, while conducting the

research, the researcher has considered such factors and made sure that the data gathered is of relevance.

3.7.1. Secondary Data Collection:

The literature provided a lot of information which was considered to be the secondary data for this research. Each theme that spoke about Mobile Marketing had previous research done by various researchers which helped in forming the assumptions for the survey. Some of the information that was easily available was omitted which made the questionnaire used for collecting primary data small and easy to get information from the audience. The researcher had access to these resources through the college online library and also had access to other university library which helped in gathering all the information around the mentioned themes easy. Most of the recent statistics in terms of Retail, Sales and Mobile Penetration were accessed through websites like Mintel, Euromonitor and Think with Google. Since Mobile Marketing is a dynamic and constantly evolving subject, the current insights were of importance to be included in the literature and were to be considered while drafting the paper.

3.7.2. Primary Data Collection:

3.7.2.1. Quantitative Data

Quantitative data collection is usually a method of collecting data that involves gathering numerical data by commonly two methods that is observation or survey. The survey questionnaire for the purpose of the dissertation was a self-completed, web-based questionnaire. The population of this type of research were people who shop for clothes and have a smartphone. This was derived considering the entire population of Ireland. The initial approach to conduct the survey was to use probability sampling. However, the sample size that would derive out of such a huge population would be big enough. Such huge sample wouldn't be feasible for the researcher in terms of cost and time that would be invested. Since the sample had specific elements that could be considered like, shopping, owning a smartphone etc. a self-selected non-probability sampling was approached. The sample that the researcher considered to be adequate for obtaining response was calculated as follows. The respondents required as per the researcher's needs were a total of 100 respondents.

$$n^{\text{actual}} = (n \times 100) / \text{re}\%$$

$$n^{\text{actual}} = (100 \times 100) / 40$$

$$n^{\text{actual}} = (10000/40)$$

$$n^{\text{actual}} = 250$$

Where n_a is the actual sample size required, n is the minimum sample size and $\text{re}\%$ is the estimated response rate expressed as a percentage (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In order to achieve the above sample the survey was needed to be publicised to specific audience. The medium that was used to publish this survey was Facebook. The survey was created on Survey Monkey and the survey was targeted to people with interests in shopping and people access Facebook through mobile phones across Ireland. The ad was published through a fan page that allows an ad to be targeted using lot of variables like Demographics, Interests, and Devices etc. Even though the sample size was aimed to reach 250 people, such type of advertising usually reaches out to many people far more than the sample size mentioned. This survey was controlled as it used the advanced targeting techniques through Facebook which led the sample size to be highly accurate. The survey consisted of 9 questions that were aimed to achieve information for the research questions. The questions were close ended which gave the participants to choose from multiple options.

3.7.2.2. Qualitative Data

The main reason for choosing to collect data through Qualitative method was to obtain a base for the survey that would be taken. The questionnaire would be altered or formed as per the insights obtained from the interviews. One of the benefits of this type of method for research is that the interview is informal and the interviewee is comfortable sharing more information and share his/her own experience. As mentioned in the research philosophy it is of utmost importance to the researcher to find out the factors that would affect the acceptance of mobile marketing at a personal level. The aim of the research is to find out the key points that would trigger loyalty among the consumers and to find if mobile marketing would be an influence. The researcher has used non-probability sampling and again is self-selected. However the people selected were of different age groups and were not directly known to the researcher in order to avoid biased responses and cherry picking. The initial aim was to interview 10 people with different backgrounds and age groups. However, due to unavoidable

circumstances the researcher could interview only 5 people. However, it was made sure that these people still remained from different backgrounds and age groups. The sample consisted of 2 Females, 3 Males and were categorized in the age group 18-24 years, 24-30 years and 30-50 yrs. This gave a diversified approach to the research, however the research is still dominated with the findings of the quantitative method used. The interviews were conducted in Dublin and the participants were living in Dublin. The interview was a semi-structured interview in order to obtain the necessary information that was derived out of the literature and that would aim to help the research question. The questions were asked in an informal way but in no particular order and were altered if required depending on the respondents' response. The questions were basically formed after creating assumptions and mostly were open-ended allowing the participant to express views on the topic and share more information. The interview was audio-recorded in order to take notes post interview.

3.7.3. Data Analysis and Coding

3.7.3.1. Qualitative Data Analysis:

The data received were answers to mostly open – ended questions and data received was more or less consistent depending on the behaviour of customers who were demographical diverse. The data helped in deducing a theory on which the questionnaires were formed, also considering the assumptions made from literature in the form of hypothesis.

This research used the DDA (Data Display and Analysis Method) in order to draw conclusion and conduct analysis.

The important processes in Data Display and Analysis Method are:

1. **Data Reduction:**

Since the data was collected out of semi-structured and non-standardised interviews there were a lot of additional data that was collected and transcribed. The interviews were first transcribed after they were audio recorded and were then noted, formatted and structured. The cleaning of information took place which derived relevant data from the interviews. Depending on the research objectives the data was categorized to three highlighted parts of the research question which is explained in the introduction. Though this process was bit time consuming the nature of the research helped in conducting the survey depending on the

information that was obtained through open ended questions and body language and interests also helped in formulating information.

2. Data Display:

There are usually two common alternative to data display. The one which was used in this research was Network display in order to map different nodes and establish a relationship. Mostly these nodes were acceptance to Mobile Marketing, Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction, Lifestyle and Attitudes etc. These were sketched out on a paper while analysing information from the transcripts. This was not a one go process and had taken several iterations, however each iteration helped in drawing out conclusions and adding value to the research. The literature was constantly referred to in order to draw out similarities in trends.

3. Drawing and concluding

The data was drawn out to identify various variables omitting certain points until the relevant data to support the theory was extracted. Each theme will be explained and will be compared to the literature in order to support the research. The careful interpretation and study of the data lead to the conclusion of the analysis which is presented in the findings section of the chapter.

3.7.3.2. Quantitative Data Analysis:

The survey was conducted using Survey Monkey and a basic subscription package was purchased. Survey Monkey helps in data analysis and represents the data in graphical format. The tool also helped in comparing the data to various variables in order to produce a theory in order to answer the research questions. The researcher also thought of using the software SPSS to represent the data and code it, however, the basic version of SurveyMonkey prohibited the export of data hence the data was analysed using Survey Monkey tools only. The analysis is done as per the hypothesis and findings are explained in the findings section. The survey gathered responses from 203 respondents in total.

3.7.4. Ethical issues and Procedures:

Ethics was an integral part in the entire process of this research. Steps were taken in order to abide by rules set by the college and also maintain professional attitude towards respondents. The respondents were informed that they could opt out of the interview anytime they wished

and the names would be kept confidential. This research doesn't know the participants personally to challenge the privacy of any respondents hence, the ethical risk undertaken for this project was very low. The interviewees were provided a consent form which they had to sign before taking the interview. The form had names and it was promised to the participants that their information would be kept anonymous, hence the signed consent forms aren't attached. The interviewer recorded the conversation only if it was agreed by the participant. The survey was published ethically and there was no spamming or forced responses gathered from the respondents. The survey did not capture any personal details of the participant like e-mail address or phone number that could be misused. The respondents were made aware that is information was gathered only for academic purposes and the interviewer did not represent any brand or company. The researcher has also made sure that the content used in this report has been properly referenced and due credit is given to the author. The research is assured to be have carried out ethically and responsibly.

3.8. Limitations:

The main limitation for this research was time. The scope of the research had to be kept limited in terms of technique and methods used. The research could have consisted of collecting qualitative data through interviews from corporates and marketing managers in order to provide more depth to the research and have an inside view through actual companies. The time constraint didn't allow such an extensive research and hence the research was limited to questionnaires and interviewing a limited number of people. Though secondary data was adequately available there was very limited research related to specific retail brands and the statistics that were found were more in general than targeted to a specific industry. The sample size that was selected was relatively small, such research would have required a bigger sample size. The cost involved in getting a huge sample was high and the software that was used was a basic version limiting to certain reports unavailable for analysis. The researcher has an experience in mobile marketing and may have a certain bias towards the usage of mobile marketing which could have influenced the approach towards this research, however it was made sure that the research is highly reliable and valid. Since the data included interviews and audio recording there was a lot of time invested in transcriptions which lead to a certain level of research fatigue. The qualitative data collected is not extensive

and was used to support the questionnaire and provide a better path to the survey based on the hypothesis deduced.

4. Research Findings:

4.1. Findings through Qualitative Data:

The participants were of different age categories and had a different background. The participant's names are kept anonymous as per their request. To give a brief background the table provides the details.

Participant	Gender	Age	Background	Shopping Trend
P1	Female	21	Student	Frequent Shopper
P2	Male	26	Internship & Student	Average Shopper
P3	Female	31	Working	Frequent Shopper
P4	Male	52	Entrepreneur	Regular Shopper
P5	Male	29	Working	Regular Shopper

4.1.1. The involvement of smartphone in a consumer's clothing shopping experience

The participants were asked couple of indirect questions in order to find out their dependency on their phone. The participants especially the younger generation used mobile phones to gather information from retailers. P1, P2 and P3 followed brands on social networking sites and were informed of various products from Penney's. Penney's Instagram account showcases products with pricing and also details about their availability. For the above mentioned participants accessing feeds have made them visit the store more than once. P4 and P5 usually shop from individual brands like Jack and Jones, Zara etc. and receive discount or other offers through SMS or their social media page. The age groups 21- 35 years also were more active online and had shopped more than once in the past 6 months from e-commerce clothing websites, namely ASOS and Amazon. The same age group shopped frequently and were inclined to value-shopping and preferred shopping outlets like Penney's. The younger group also liked offers and mentioned that they would frequently look for offers on websites for e-commerce stores and the brands that have online shopping. They occasionally received information on mobile and have seen ads while they have browsed online or heard some ads

on Spotify. They also come to know about latest offers through friends and often see them displayed in front of the shops.

4.1.2. Customer Service, Price or Quality? Its influence on shopping from the same brand?

The older age group prefers shopping from a brand which provides quality products. They are more inclined towards these brands because of the brand image and some of the names included luxury brands. Quality is more preferred than customer service and it is noted that they are not frequent shoppers and usually buy once in three months or more. The younger generation is more price centric and would prefer buying from brands that have reasonable or low pricing when they are shopping on a regular basis i.e more than once in three months. Across all the age groups Quality was more preferred and often compared to the prices that the store offered. P4 preferred shopping from brands like Penney's rarely. Females were more frequent shoppers across age groups, Price, Style and Quality were of utmost importance to them while shopping. They preferred luxury brands for their style and had shopped once in 6 months. There was a higher affinity towards online shopping and the younger group had mobile apps that helped them shop.

4.1.3. Mobile Advertising and the attitude of consumers towards it

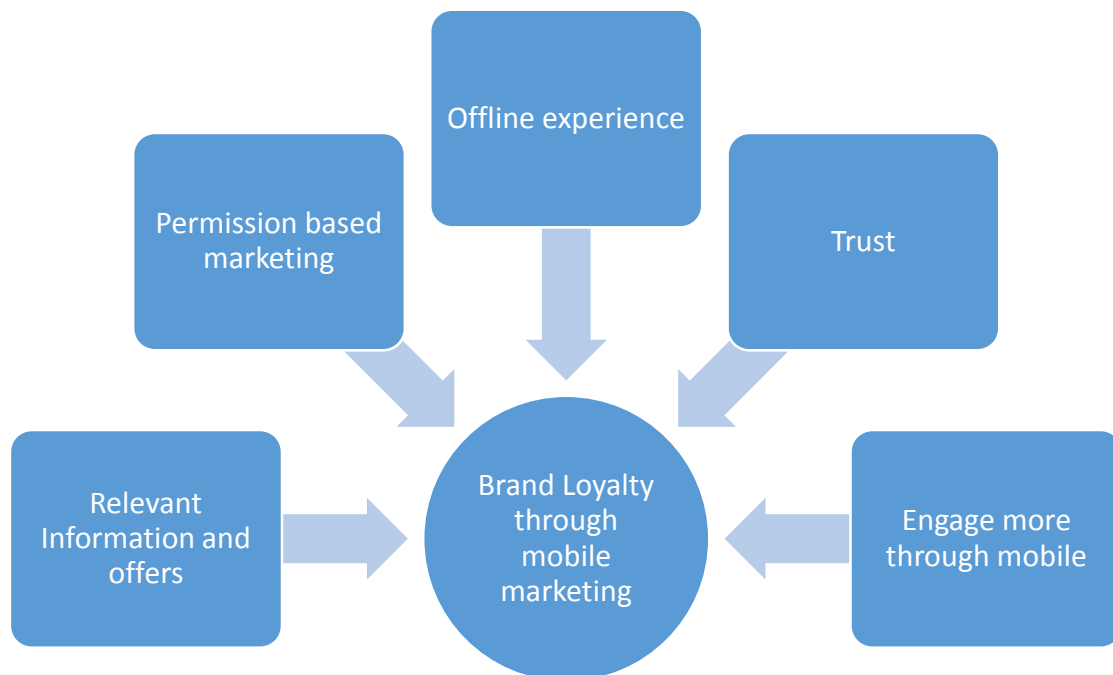
When asked if they would like to receive mobile promotions accustomed to their interests the younger group were open to receiving them. It is noted that it would be of interest to them if the marketing communication received by them would be based on their shopping patterns. They would also like to receive information on website so they could access either through their mobile or their desktops. They were more likely to visit a store if some offer was of interest to them. The age group 25-35 years had a similar opinion but were of the opinion that they would like to receive messages only if they opted to get marketing messages. The reason being that they shop from multiple brands and receiving messages from all of them would be irritating. The older group is not comfortable receiving messages on the phone as they shop rarely and would be not interested in offers. They wouldn't mind offers during season sales etc. but would want it to be very limited. In terms of pull marketing communications it was very few times that the participants had scanned information out of a QR code. The older group had hardly used QR codes and said they would rather have the

information easier. Overall there was a neutral approach to mobile advertising and further research would help in knowing what would be accepted by the customers.

4.1.4. Relevance and Trust, their effect on acceptance of Mobile Marketing

The participants were asked more in detail about their experiences with receiving mobile marketing communication in general and what they felt about it. It was very evident that all the participants were not happy receiving communication from unknown brands and also if they had not opted to receive such messages. When asked if it were a very well-known brand and offered something which would interest them, would they click on it or visit a store, the response was more or less positive. The participants were open to receiving communication from the brands they trust and would not mind opting to mobile communication as long as they are relevant. The participants also suggested that all the brands should have a good mobile website so that they can access information online anytime and anywhere. It was also found out that the offline shopping experience of the participants would also affect their loyalty towards the brand. The participants affirmed that they wouldn't mind any communication sent to them by the brands they really like. Nearly all of them had followed their brands on Facebook and other social media accounts.

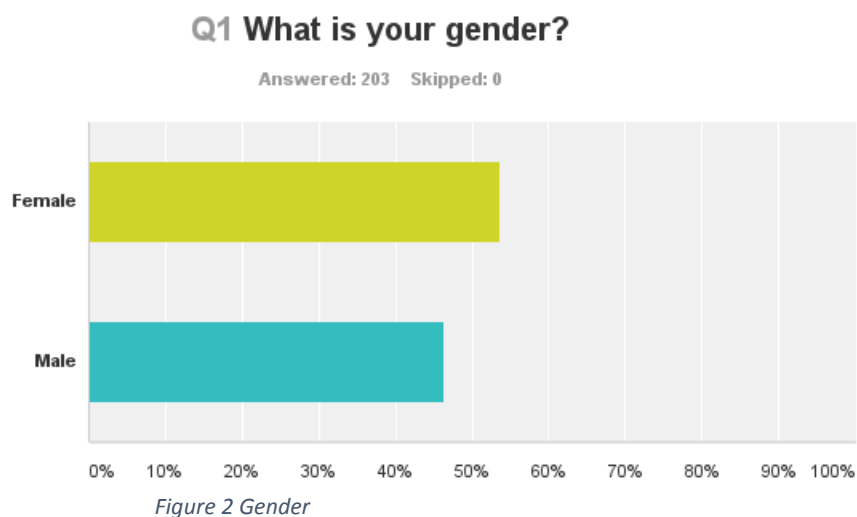
Figure 1 Key Findings from Qualitative data



4.2. Quantitative Data

The quantitative data was obtained through questionnaires that were sent to users in form of a survey. The survey was published on Facebook and promoted through an ad targeting all users in Ireland who had smartphones and had interest in Fashion and Shopping. The ad was not targeted to any specific age group. The total number of respondents were 203.

4.2.1. Participants' Profile



Answer Choices	Responses
Female	53.69% 109
Male	46.31% 94
Total	203

The participants were females in majority, consisting of 53.69% and the rest were males which consisted the other 46.31%. Though it's not much of a difference and hence the respondents were almost equally distributed.

Q2 What is your age?

Answered: 203 Skipped: 0

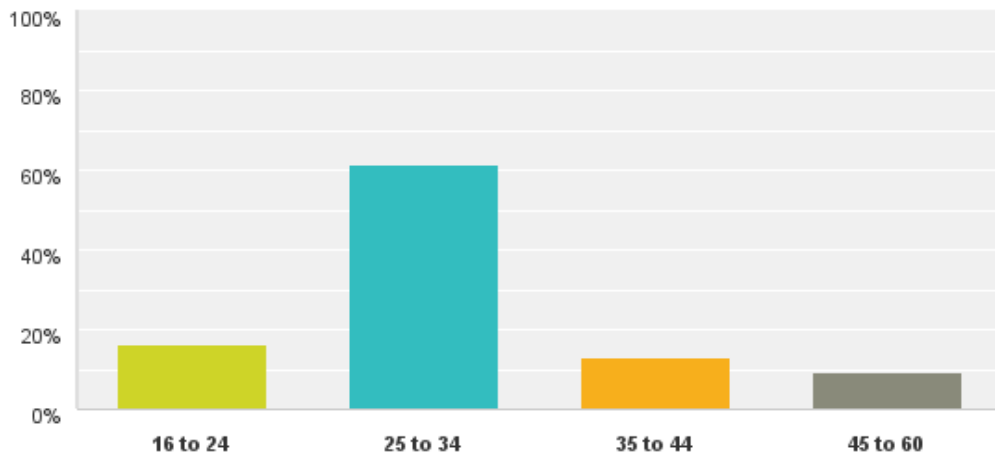


Figure 3 Age group of Participants

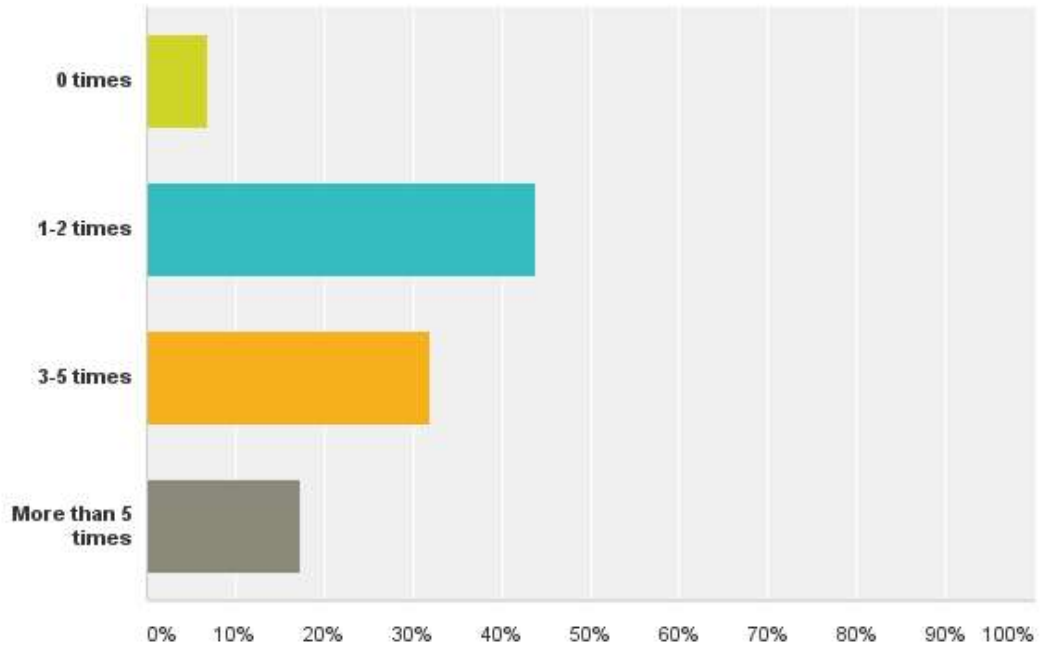
Answer Choices	Responses
16 to 24	16.26% 33
25 to 34	61.58% 125
35 to 44	12.81% 26
45 to 60	9.36% 19
Total	203

The majority of the respondents were from the age group 25 to 34 years which consisted of 61.58% of the total sample, followed by the age group 16 to 24 years at 16.26%, 35 to 44 years at 12.81% and 45 to 60 years at 9.36%. The younger generation forms the majority of this survey and the results would be based on their opinions in excess.

4.2.2. Shopping Pattern

Q3 In the past 3 months, about how often have you shopped for clothes?

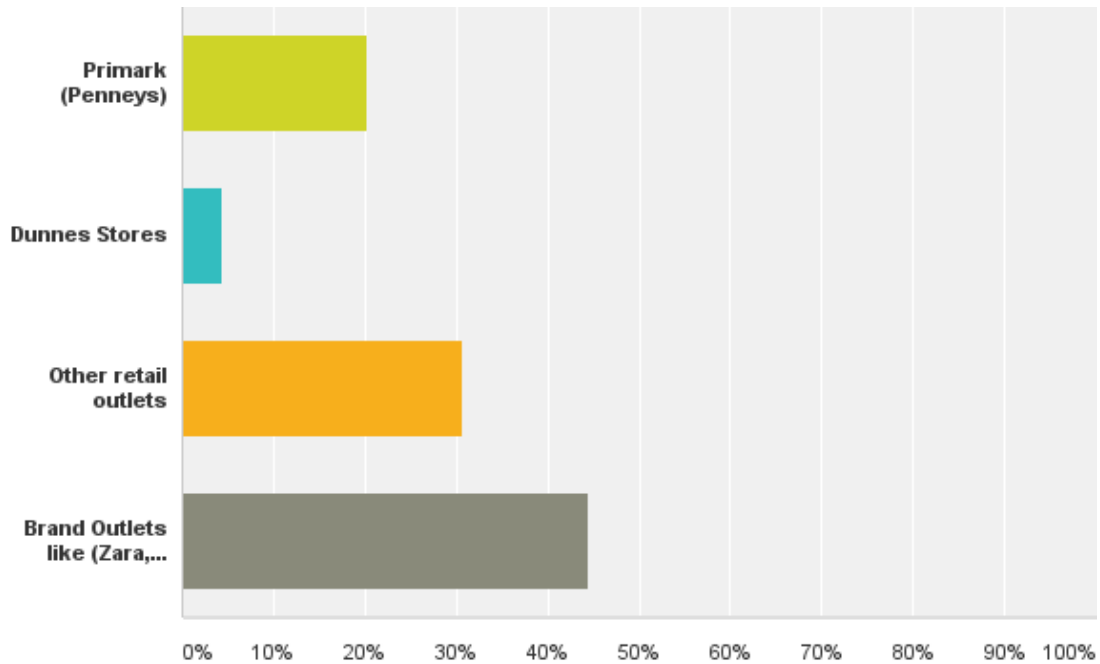
Answered: 203 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
0 times	6.90% 14
1-2 times	43.84% 89
3-5 times	32.02% 65
More than 5 times	17.24% 35
Total	203

The respondents that shopped 1-2 times in the past three months were in majority accounting to 43.84% followed by 3-5 times at 32.02%, more than 5 times at 17.24% and 0 times were at 6.90%. It can be noted that the majority of the respondents have at least shopped once in the past three months.

4.2.3. Outlets that are usually preferred by participants to shop

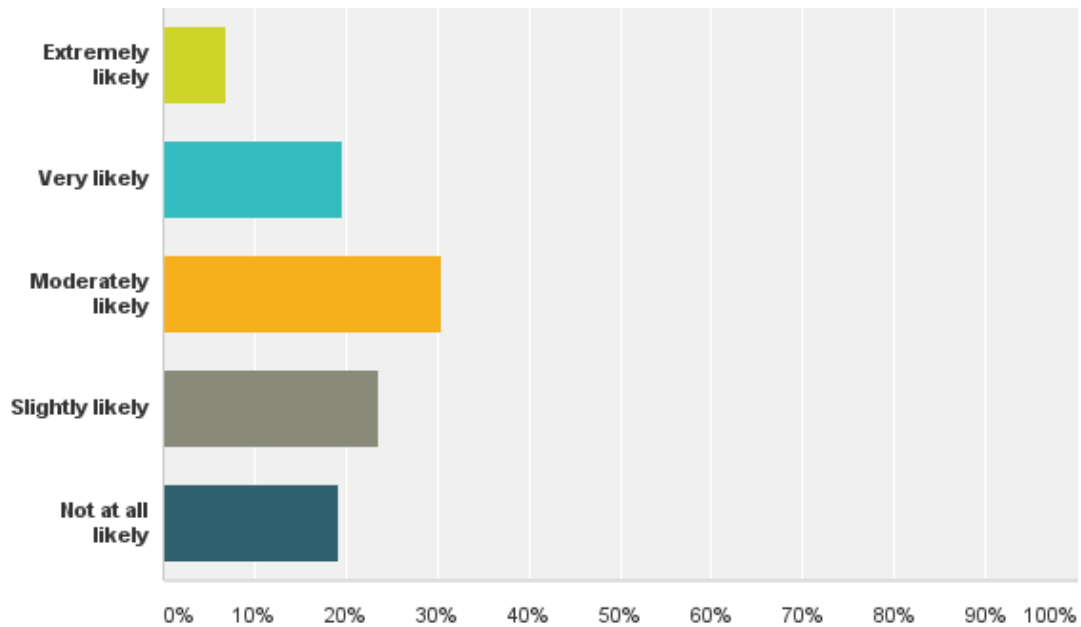


Answer Choices	Responses
Primark (Penneys)	20.30% 41
Dunnes Stores	4.46% 9
Other retail outlets	30.69% 62
Brand Outlets like (Zara, H&M, Jack & Jones etc)	44.55% 90
Total	202

One of the participant skipped the question so the total respondents for this question were 202. It is interesting to see that a good majority of the participants shopped at individual brand retail outlets like Zara, H&M, Jack & Jones which consisted of 44.55%, and participants that shopped at other retail outlets were 30.69%, participants who shopped at Primark were at 20.30% and at Dunnes stores consisted of 4.46%. The customers visiting clothing retail outlets were estimated at 55%.

4.2.4. Relevant promotion triggering footfall or a purchase

Q5: How likely are you to visit a store or make a purchase after receiving a promotional offer on your phone that is relevant to you?



Answer Choices	Responses
Extremely likely (1)	6.90% 14
Very likely (2)	19.70% 40
Moderately likely (3)	30.54% 62
Slightly likely (4)	23.65% 48
Not at all likely (5)	19.21% 39
Total	203

Basic Statistics				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	3.00	3.29	1.18

Figure 4 Participant likely to visit a store based on a relevant promotion

The percentage of participants who were moderately likely to visit a store or make a purchase if a particular promotion was sent to them on mobile was 30.54%. Slightly likely was 23.65%, Very likely were 19.70%, Not at all likely was 19.21% and extremely likely was 6.90%. The percentage of participant’s likely visiting the store based on promotion was more than 70%.

4.2.4.1. The age group 16 – 34 years and their likeliness to visit the store based on relevant mobile promotion.

	Extremely likely (1)	Very likely (2)	Moderately likely (3)	Slightly likely (4)	Not at all likely (5)	Total
Q2: 16 to 24 (A)	9.09% 3	24.24% 8	27.27% 9	15.15% 5	24.24% 8	20.89% 33
Q2: 25 to 34 (B)	6.40% 8	17.60% 22	35.20% 44	23.20% 29	17.60% 22	79.11% 125
Total Respondents	11	30	53	34	30	158

Figure 5 the age group 16 – 34 years and their likeliness to visit the store based on relevant mobile promotion

The age group specified consists of 158 respondents. This particular age group was likely to visit a store based on a relevant promotion. The 16-24 years age group that is not at all likely to shop or visit a store based on a promotion is last than 25% and for 25-34 years is less than 20%.

4.2.4.2. The relation of shopping trend with the likeliness of visiting a store based on a relevant promotion on mobile.

	Extremely likely (1)	Very likely (2)	Moderately likely (3)	Slightly likely (4)	Not at all likely (5)	Total
Q3: 1-2 times (A)	6.74% 6	14.61% 13	28.09% 25	30.34% 27	20.22% 18	57.79% 89
Q3: 3-5 times (B)	6.15% 4	32.31% 21	35.38% 23	12.31% 8	13.85% 9	42.21% 65
Total Respondents	10	34	48	35	27	154

Figure 6 The relation of shopping trend with the likeliness of visiting a store based on a relevant promotion on mobile

Participants who have visited the store more than once are likely to visit the store based on a promotion relevant to them. The participants that fall under this category are in 154 in number. The likeliness of this group visiting the store is more than 80% put together.

4.2.5. Personalized offers and Brand Loyalty

Q6: How likely are you to shop from the same brand if you receive personalized offers?

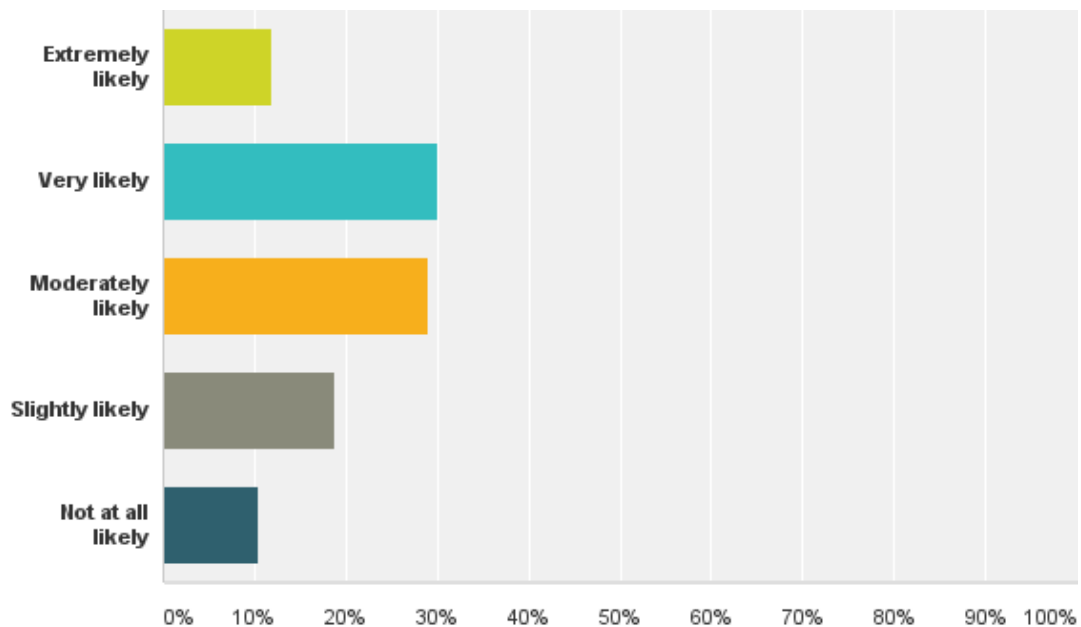


Figure 7 Personalized offers and brand loyalty

Answer Choices	Responses
Extremely likely	11.82% 24
Very likely	30.05% 61
Moderately likely	29.06% 59
Slightly likely	18.72% 38
Not at all likely	10.34% 21
Total	203

The extremely likely respondents consisted of 11.82% of the total sample, Very likely were 30.05%, moderately likely were 29.06%, slightly likely were 18.72% and Not at all likely were 10.34%. The percentage of respondents who were likely to revisit and shop from a brand based on personalized offers were more than 85%.

4.2.5.1. Building Relationship across young age groups

	Extremely likely	Very likely	Moderately likely	Slightly likely	Not at all likely	Total
Q2: 16 to 24 (A)	15.15% 5	30.30% 10	24.24% 8	27.27% 9	3.03% 1	20.89% 33
Q2: 25 to 34 (B)	12.00% 15	30.40% 38	31.20% 39	16.80% 21	9.60% 12	79.11% 125
Total Respondents	20	48	47	30	13	158

Figure 8 Building relationship across young age groups

The age group 16-34 years consists of 158 respondents and it shows that the not at all likely chances of them not visiting a store based on personalized offers is very less, which is less than 10% on an average. These participants are likely to shop from a brand that they received personalized offers from.

4.2.5.2. Relationship between frequent shoppers and brand loyalty through mobile marketing

	Extremely likely	Very likely	Moderately likely	Slightly likely	Not at all likely	Total
Q3: 1-2 times (A)	11.24% 10	25.84% 23	33.71% 30	17.98% 16	11.24% 10	47.09% 89
Q3: 3-5 times (B)	7.69% 5	43.08% 28	30.77% 20	12.31% 8	6.15% 4	34.39% 65
Q3: More than 5 times (C)	22.86% 8	22.86% 8	17.14% 6	28.57% 10	8.57% 3	18.52% 35
Total Respondents	23	59	56	34	17	189

Figure 9 Relationship between frequent shoppers and brand loyalty through mobile marketing

This particular set of correspondents who had shopped more than once in 3 months are likely to shop from the same brand they shopped before if they received personalized offers and information. The chances of them not visiting the store is less than 10%.

4.2.6. Factors that influences Brand Loyalty

Q7: What would make you more loyal to a brand? (Multiple allowed)

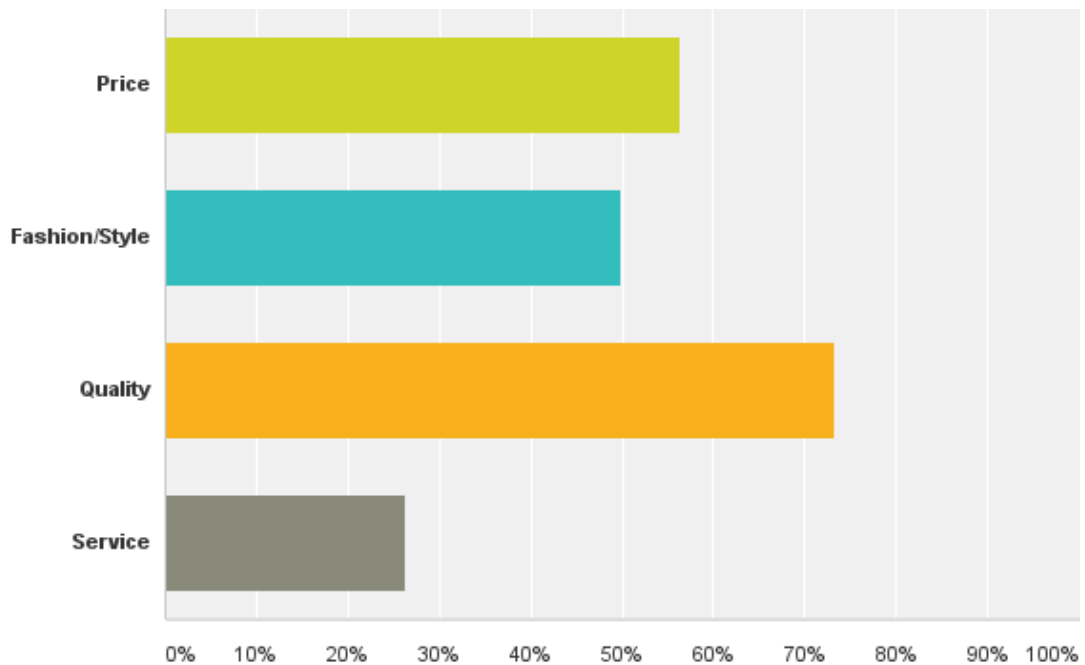


Figure 10 Factors influencing brand loyalty

Answer Choices	Responses
Price	56.44% 114
Fashion/Style	50.00% 101
Quality	73.27% 148
Service	26.24% 53
Total Respondents: 202	

One of the major factors that influences brand loyalty among clothing consumers in this survey is Quality which accounts to 73.27% of the total choices. Price comes second at 56.44%, Fashion/Style is also important to some at 50% and then comes service surprisingly which is at 26.24%. The respondents had the option to select more than one answer and there was one respondent who did not participate in this particular question.

4.2.6.1. What is important to frequent shoppers when it comes to being loyal to a brand?

	Price	Fashion/Style	Quality	Service	Total
Q3: 1-2 times (A)	58.43% 52	44.94% 40	73.03% 65	21.35% 19	93.62% 176
Q3: 3-5 times (B)	54.69% 35	50.00% 32	75.00% 48	28.13% 18	70.74% 133
Q3: More than 5 times (C)	57.14% 20	65.71% 23	77.14% 27	31.43% 11	43.09% 81
Total Respondents	107	95	140	48	188

Figure 11 What is important to frequent shoppers when it comes to being loyal to a brand?

The frequent shoppers among the respondents are loyal to a brand mostly because of the quality of products, Price and Fashion/Style. This accounts to almost 75% of the respondents selected. Very few mentioned that they are loyal to the brand because of their customer service. The total number of respondents that fall under the category of people who shopped more than once in the last three months is 188 which accounts to more than 80% of the total sample.

4.2.6.2. Comparison of participants who like receiving personalized offers and factors that influence brand loyalty.

	Price	Fashion/Style	Quality	Service	Total
Q6: Very likely (A)	45.90% 28	54.10% 33	68.85% 42	18.03% 11	80.85% 114
Q6: Moderately likely (B)	55.93% 33	35.59% 21	77.97% 46	25.42% 15	81.56% 115
Q6: Not at all likely (C)	61.90% 13	57.14% 12	76.19% 16	38.10% 8	34.75% 49
Total Respondents	74	66	104	34	141

Figure 12 Comparison of participants who like receiving personalized offers and factors that influence brand loyalty

This comparison is made to find out the factors of brand loyalty and their relationship with the people who like to receive personalized offers and are likely to visit a store or make a purchase. The majority of them are loyal because of Quality and Price, the rest depend on the fashion/style and Customer service.

4.2.7. Exposure to Mobile Marketing by clothing consumers in Ireland

Q8: Do you currently receive any form of mobile marketing communication (SMS, MMS, In App ads, QR codes) from where you shop?

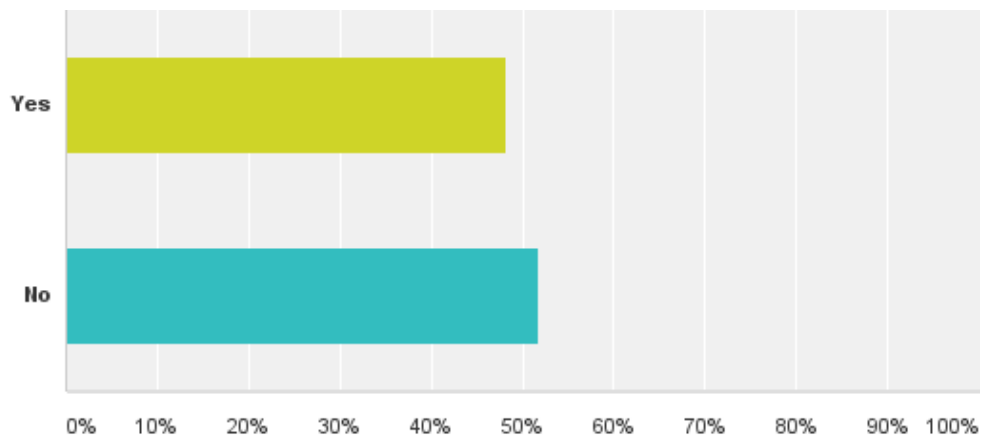


Figure 13 - Do you currently receive any form of mobile marketing communication?

Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Yes	48.28%	98
No	51.72%	105
Total		203

About 51.72% of the total respondents didn't receive any kind of marketing communication from the stores they shopped from. The rest 48.28% said they received some kind of marketing communication from the stores they shopped from.

4.2.7.1. Comparison of where participants shop from with exposure to mobile marketing.

	Yes	No	Total
Q4: Primark (Penneys) (A)	34.15% 14	65.85% 27	20.30% 41
Q4: Dunnes Stores (B)	44.44% 4	55.56% 5	4.46% 9
Q4: Other retail outlets (C)	56.45% 35	43.55% 27	30.69% 62
Q4: Brand Outlets like (Zara, H&M, Jack & Jones etc) (D)	50.00% 45	50.00% 45	44.55% 90
Total Respondents	98	104	202

Figure 14 Comparison of where participants shop from with exposure to mobile marketing

Out of the total respondents who shop from various stores, Primark customers received very less marketing communication which is only 34.15%. There was a 50% chances of receiving and not receiving marketing communication on mobile for customers who shopped from individual brand shopping outlets like Zara, H&M, Jack & Jones etc. Dunnes' customers who also didn't receive marketing which account to 55.56%.

4.2.8. Trust factor in receiving Mobile marketing communication.

Q9: From which store would you be comfortable to receive offers on mobile?

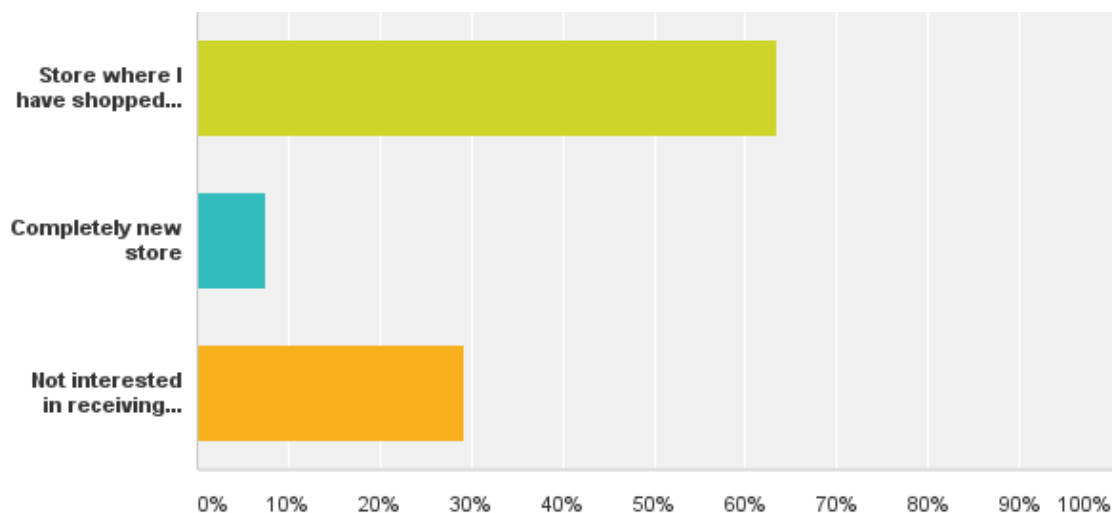


Figure 15 From which store would you be comfortable to receive offers on mobile

Answer Choices	Responses
Store where I have shopped earlier	63.37% 128
Completely new store	7.43% 15
Not interested in receiving offers	29.21% 59
Total	202

It was seen that the majority of the respondents who participated in this question were more comfortable receiving mobile marketing communication from a store that they have shopped before. The percentage of people who would be more comfortable to receiving communication from the store they have shopped from was 63.37%, only few i.e. 7.43% wanted a communication from a new store and 29.21% didn't want to receive any offers at all.

4.2.8.1. Comparison with exposure to Mobile Marketing vs Trust factor in receiving future communication.

	Store where I have shopped earlier	Completely new store	Not interested in receiving offers	Total
Q8: Yes (A)	74.49% 73	10.20% 10	15.31% 15	48.51% 98
Q8: No (B)	52.88% 55	4.81% 5	42.31% 44	51.49% 104
Total Respondents	128	15	59	202

Figure 16 Comparison with exposure to Mobile Marketing vs Trust factor in receiving future communication

People who received marketing information were seen to be comfortable receiving information from where they have shopped earlier which accounted to 74.49%, also out of those 15.31% were not interested in receiving any offers on their mobile. Respondents who didn't receive any mobile marketing communication would prefer receiving communications from stores that they have previously shopped at which accounts to 52.88% of them. 42.31% of the respondent who previously didn't receive messages from their stores were not interested in getting offers. There were few percentage of respondents who were not comfortable receiving communication from a completely new store.

5. Discussions:

5.1. Introduction:

The abundant information gathered from the literature helped this research and though there were many theories around Mobile Marketing there was an evident gap and scope for this topic. The Clothing retailing sector in Ireland has been seeing changes in terms of its revenue due to the economic crisis, however, as mentioned in the Literature chapter the industry is recovering and is seeing some growth over the years. The aim of the research is not to prove that Mobile Marketing is the only way to build brand loyalty among consumers in the retail clothing sector in Ireland, but the possibility of building relationship through it considering the factors that leads to building brand loyalty. This chapter will outlay a structured discussion comprising of findings, it's relation to the literature and analysing the findings in order to prove the hypothesis. Based on various themes derived from the literature, the chapter will be divided into sub headings which will cover Hypothesis, Findings and Literature highlights.

5.2. Exposure to Mobile Marketing by Clothing Retail Customers in Ireland.

Mobile Marketing is a global trend, and brands in Ireland are also embracing the strategy in order to reach their customers. According to labireland.ie, (2015) Irish consumers are exposed to Mobile Marketing due to the excessive use of smartphones and availability of high speed internet and WiFi hotspots. According to their research around 52% of their sample were open to Mobile Advertisements. As mentioned in the literature companies are trying to reach customers through various mobile marketing techniques. The majority is through SMS, inApp advertisements, making mobile friendly websites and some of them are also building Mobile apps. Mintel 2014, report on clothing retailing suggests that advertising spend is increasingly being directed towards digital channels, with mobile advertising experiencing rapid growth as advertisers follow consumers to these channels. It is also noted that the clients of some agencies are also focussing on ad spends online. The findings of this research show that the clothing retail customers are fairly exposed to mobile marketing communication from the stores they shop from. About 51.72% of the total respondents didn't receive any kind of marketing communication from the stores they shopped from. The rest 48.28% said they received some kind of marketing communication from the stores they

shopped from. This shows that there is tremendous scope for these stores to build a relationship with their customers through mobile and focus on some mobile marketing techniques so that they are connected to their customers. It could not only be selling offers or pushing sales. The retailers could focus on selling information and talk about the brand. Bridget Dolan, Sephora's vice president of interactive media quotes "We think one of the biggest opportunities that we have in retail is for our customers to leverage their phones as a shopping assistant when they're standing in the store," in (Mooney and Johnsmeyer, 2015). The company built an app that could help customers pull up reviews on different products in the store, view ratings etc. Having such information definitely helps the customer's shopping experience and could lead to a purchase. This level of customer experience stays and the possibility of the customer shopping again from the same brand is more. From the findings it was also noted that out of the total respondents who shop from various stores, Primark customers received very less marketing communication which is only 34.15%. There was a 50% chance of receiving and not receiving marketing communication on mobile for customers who shopped from individual brand shopping outlets like Zara, H&M, Jack & Jones etc. Dunnes stores' customers also didn't receive marketing which accounts to 55.56%. One of the reasons/assumptions that Primark doesn't capitalize on mobile marketing is because it is one of the top retail outlets doing well in Ireland and has a good base of loyal customers because of the price factor (Euromonitor.com 2015). The customers are more price focused and that accounts to one of the major factors of being loyal. The customers of Primark were active on their social media pages like Instagram which published new products with prices. This is a good way Primark is using mobile marketing and the young consumers are constantly connected to the brand. The Hypothesis "H₅ - Irish consumers are exposed to mobile marketing techniques by clothing retailers in Ireland" is rejected by a very small margin according to the sample taken for this research. One of the limitations could be that the respondent might not have considered the exposure to information through mobile usage on social media and other pull marketing techniques through mobile. This research was an overall understanding of how mobile marketing could influence brand loyalty, however it provides a larger scope for studying various techniques of mobile marketing that could be used to build brand loyalty among clothing retail consumers in Ireland.

5.3. Acceptance of mobile marketing by retail clothing customers in Ireland and its impact on brand loyalty.

Mobile devices are used primarily for personal use and often receiving push marketing communication on the devices could be frustrating and intrusive. Previous study used in the literature highlight the fact the mobile marketing is fairly accepted if the customers have control over them. It also depends if they are relevant to them and come from companies that they trust. However, it was needed to study if such behaviour exists with customers from the clothing retail sector in Ireland. One of the researches conducted by (Intel, 2015) suggested that the Irish consumers are not fans of smartphone/table in-app advertisements and found them to be annoying. Around 63% of RoI consumers agreed to find them annoying.

The findings of this research was not mainly focussed on finding out if mobile marketing communication was accepted but it was put forward to the respondents that if a particular communication were relevant to them would they visit the store or make a purchase. The study relied on the research done for the acceptance of mobile marketing in general and not specific to a particular industry. The percentage of participants who were moderately likely to visit a store or make a purchase if a particular promotion was sent to them on mobile was 30.54%. Slightly likely was 23.65%, Very likely were 19.70%, Not at all likely was 19.21% and extremely likely was 6.90%. The percentage of participant's likely visiting the store based on promotion was more than 70%. The research thus proves that the factors which generally affect the acceptance of mobile marketing also hold true for the clothing retail sector in Ireland. The interviews conducted revealed that the Irish consumers were open to receiving information if they had opted for communications on mobile. They also preferred their stores having mobile optimized websites so that it would help them compare and look for new products which would make their buying decisions much simpler. The young group of respondents were very dependent on mobile to look for information, promotion and were also comfortable shopping online. Such behaviour would help in good mobile marketing strategies and push relevant promotions to customers. The survey also found that the above age group is likely to visit a store based on a relevant promotion. The 16-24 years age group that is not at all likely to shop or visit a store based on a promotion is less than 25% and for the group 25-34 years is less than 20%. The companies can have sophisticated targeting to make sure mobile advertising is more relevant instead of just pushing for sales. This group

also seems to fall under the frequent shopper category and the chances of engaging these customers are more towards a brand. The findings also suggest that irrespective of the age group customers who shopped frequently or at least shopped once in three months were more likely to visit the store based on a relevant promotion received on the mobile device.

There were two hypothesis derived from this theme. First being “**H₂** – Mobile marketing is more acceptable among young clothing consumers in Ireland”. The hypothesis was derived from a general perspective without any research done in the clothing retail sector in Ireland. The survey thus helps in not rejecting the hypothesis as the findings from the qualitative and the quantitative data suggest that the young consumers are more technology savvy and if mobile marketing is done right they would not find it intrusive and irritating. Second Hypothesis, **H₃** – Consumers are more likely to visit a store if a promotion is relevant to their needs. The majority of the respondents from the survey were likely to visit the store when the promotions were relevant to them. The hypothesis is not rejected and hence provides a strong base to companies to make their mobile marketing strategy implement relevant and non-intrusive communication. The following theme could be further explored and also could form a base to investigate what form of mobile marketing is more acceptable. With such research the clothes retailing sector could make adjustments to their marketing campaigns and also help in building strong relationships with customers which would be further highlighted in the next theme.

5.4. Relationship through personalized mobile marketing and its impact on brand loyalty.

“After reading something on a smartphone, nearly one in four shoppers has changed his or her mind about buying something while in the checkout line” (Mooney and Johnsmeyer, 2015). One of the methods that are used to retain customers is through mobile couponing. These are sent to customers who have opted-in for such communication and when the customers are close to the physical store they can attract them to purchase and this would definitely improve loyalty (Shankar, V. & Yadav, M.S., 2010). According to (Mintel.com, 2014) report on clothing retailing in Ireland, a majority of consumers look for value based shopping and look for discounts, such behaviour would lead to further competition in the sector. It is definitely important to build a relationship with a customer so that the customer is not lost due to inadequate information regarding sales, the quality of clothes, fashion trends etc.

Through qualitative data gathered it was noted that the customers would love if the communications received by them were customized. They wouldn't want to receive random sales promotions or discounts which doesn't suit their shopping needs. They also suggested that the e-commerce websites that they shop from usually send them personalized emails depending on their previous shopping patterns. Sometimes these websites also provide discount vouchers as a store loyalty benefit. This can be easily implemented by the physical retail stores with having a presence online and implementing loyalty programs that are personalized and specific to a customer's shopping pattern. The quantitative research also highlights the fact the more personalized a mobile marketing communication is the chances are high that the customer would shop from the same brand. The extremely likely respondents consisted of 11.82% of the total sample, Very likely were 30.05%, moderately likely were 29.06%, slightly likely were 18.72% and Not at all likely were 10.34%. The percentage of respondents who were likely to revisit and shop from a brand based on personalized offers were more than 85%. The relationship can also be built with customers who are young and are more active on mobile, the young users can be targeted with special offers and also give them a reason to stick to the brand. Customers who shopped more often also preferred personalized promotions and were likely to stick to a brand due to personalization. There is an increasing number of online retail stores which provide the convenience of shopping online any time of the day however due to some factors like delivery charges etc. have been inhibiting the success of such websites (euromonitor.com, 2015). (Krueger, 2015) mentions that a deep knowledge of how a shopper behaves could help in forming customized promotions and reap the revenue benefits that could be derived out of those valued customers. The following hypothesis is derived out of this theme, "**H₁** – Building a relationship through mobile marketing influences loyalty among Irish retail clothing consumers" The results from the survey helps in not rejecting the hypothesis and thus the theory derived out of the literature hold true. There could be further research to understand the various relationship marketing techniques that certain retail outlets employ if any. Also, a study on the marketing techniques used by the online stores would also help in implementing those strategies in the offline retail environment.

A set of questions were asked in order to find out what would trigger loyalty towards a brand when it comes to shopping from a retail outlet or clothing store. The factors were derived out

of the literature and findings from the interviews conducted. The findings show that one of the major factors that influences brand loyalty among clothing consumers is Quality which accounts to 73.27% of the total choices. Price comes second at 56.44%, Fashion/Style is also important to some at 50% and then comes service surprisingly which is at 26.24%. Factors such as quality can't be measured through mobile marketing, however, a brand that communicates a right message to their consumers about its quality of clothes and constantly keeps them informed of the standards they maintain could help in maintaining the consumer base that they have. The Mintel report stated in the literature chapter also highlights that the demand for fast fashion stores is more due to the low disposable income. Also the result of austerity measures imposed are hindering the growth of high street clothing retail stores. Such retail stores could capitalize on communicating the right set of discounts to customers and make sure there is no brand shift just due to price factor. Building relationship is highly important and mobile marketing will give direct access to customers to engage them with brand and keep them loyal. It is also important that the strategy should also consider the facts that could lead to negative attitude towards the mobile marketing.

5.5. The importance of "Trust" factor in Mobile Marketing to build Brand Loyalty among clothing retail customers in Ireland.

The research by (Watson, McCarthy and Rowley, 2013) implied that customers are vary about giving their personal information as they are not sure if the data will be shared with other companies. There is a lot of comparison done between permission based marketing and the intrusiveness of SMS marketing. However, for both of these trust plays a major role. It also highlights the willingness of a customer to receive such information. Mobile marketing strategies through pull marketing techniques like QR codes is based on trust and willingness to receive information (Okazaki, Li and Hirose, 2012). A study by Al-alak, B. and Alnawas, I. (2010) proved that there is a negative relationship between extensive advertising and trust. A recent study also suggests that the service quality always plays an important role in building trust (Varshney, S. & Joy, J. 2015).

The interviews with some customers through this research revealed that customers were open to any form of marketing through mobile only if they knew the brand or had any particular shopping experience before. The need for permission based marketing was evident as the interviews showed a sign of displeasure when asked about random marketing

messages that they get which are not relevant to them. It was also noticed that the users were more open to receiving communication from brand that they were associated with and liked to shop at. They would/ were willing to subscribe to any loyalty programmed that would involve getting discounts. Through questionnaire it was found that the majority of the respondents who participated were more comfortable receiving mobile marketing communication from a store that they have shopped before. The percentage of people who would be more comfortable to receiving communication from the store they have shopped from was 63.37%, only few i.e. 7.43% wanted a communication from a new store and 29.21% didn't want to receive any offers at all. Most of the respondents who participated in this survey were young and middle aged customers who seem to fairly open to receiving communication in general. It was also seen that the customers who are exposed to mobile marketing would prefer to receive information from the stores they have shopped before. These were the 74.49% of these total people, also out of those 15.31% were not interested in receiving any offers on their mobile. Respondents who didn't receive any mobile marketing communication would prefer receiving communications from stores that they have previously shopped at which accounts to 52.88% of them. 42.31% of the respondent who previously didn't receive messages from their stores were not interested in getting offers. There were negligible amount of people who were open to receiving communication from completely new store which means that the trust factor plays an important role in building a relationship which would then give rise to brand loyalty. The hypothesis that is derived out of this theme is "**H₄** – There is a positive acceptance of mobile marketing if a customer has shopped previously from a brand and has a level of trust in it." This holds true and the hypothesis is not rejected. As mentioned in an earlier theme it is important to know what form of marketing engages the customer to a brand, also factors like quality, social media presence, price also play an important role in brand loyalty. Mobile marketing could be used to influence brand loyalty and also would be cost-effective in comparison with other medium like TV, Radio and Print. Irish consumers are becoming more and more connected online and mobile marketing could be a very important tool to capitalize on brand loyalty.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The literature forms a strong basis for this research. Divided into various themes it provided the scope of mobile marketing in the global market. The theories involving its application in the retailing environment also formed a strong base to derive hypothesis for the Irish market. The main aim of the study was to determine its influence on brand loyalty within the clothing retail sector. Mobile is an important part of the lives of Irish consumers and the brands can easily reach out and understand consumer behaviour if they have access to them. The need for permission based marketing provides a scope to build relationship through which a long brand loyalty can be attained with a customer. The research gives a path to conduct further studies in this particular sector and looking at the growing trends and competition that the industry is facing it is important that the clothing retailers in Ireland explore this medium to develop a relationship with its customers. Especially the high street outlets who right now in Ireland are not seeing a growth in revenue due to various economic reasons that have affected the consumer spending behaviour, would want not to lose out on their existing customers. The exposure to mobile marketing experienced by the customers is not as much as it was assumed to be. Nearly 50% of the respondents mentioned that they did not receive any communication from the stores they shopped from. This shows a lot of opportunity for the retailers to reach out to their customers. There is a strong demand for personalized mobile marketing, customers would want to receive personalized offers based out on their interests. The retailers could also capitalize on the fact young customers are frequent shoppers and would love to be loyal to a brand if there is constant engagement and personalized offerings. Though the customers look for price and quality to continue shopping with a same brand, there could be ways to find out how this could be achieved through mobile marketing. Some of the customers didn't bother about customer service and the research conducted by mintel that was referred to in the literature suggested that they would need more personnel on the floor to assist them sometimes. This could be easily overcome by technology and implementing applications that could help customer get information on their mobile within the store. There is an adequate number of consumers who have a negative attitude towards mobile marketing particularly in the age group between 35-50 years and would not like to receive any offers on mobile. There could be research conducted to understand what would the factors that would let this behaviour change and win over these

customers. This group shopped at least once in three months and it would be definitely be viable for clothing retailers to invest time and money to understand their shopping behaviour and how mobile marketing could influence it. Trust again is an important factor when it comes to a customer's attitude towards mobile marketing. The research has found out that they would be accepting marketing communication from the brands they have shopped previously from and wouldn't be comfortable receiving any kind of promotions from a completely new store. There are of course limitations to this research and not every aspect has been covered. The main findings of this research proves that relationship marketing done through mobile would be beneficial for the retail outlets and it has a lot of scope in building brand loyalty. Considering the Irish consumers being price sensitive at the moment and the same trend would continue until 2019, the retailers could definitely seek mobile marketing as a medium to communicate and offer strong personalized discounts. The previous shopping experience of a customer also plays a major role in building trust with a brand. The customers who had shopped before were open to receiving communication on their mobile from the brand.

There is a lot of scope for further research on this topic, what type of mobile communication would trigger brand loyalty could be researched on. The research doesn't cover how each mobile marketing tool is accepted by the clothing retail consumers in Ireland. Also, their influence on a purchase and how one could build a relationship through it can also be studied. A larger sample size covering major cities in Ireland can also be considered. A separate study can also be conducted in order to find out how to build brand loyalty for luxury brand among consumers since it's a niche market and would need a different approach than the ones used for common retail outlets. There is a lot of scope for the new technologies like location based targeting and in store push notifications to be implemented in Ireland retail outlets. Building relationship with customers is important and the findings from the research show that mobile marketing can not only acquire new customers but also build a strong bond with the existing ones.

7. Reflections

This chapter will cover the researcher's reflections and the important highlights of taking up the MBA Marketing course. The section is divided into various categories covering previous experience, Course learnings and challenges, Dissertation learning and challenges and finally my future goals and career plans.

7.1. Introduction and Background:

Taking up MBA and travelling far away from home was an important decision of my life. Having worked for 5 years and going back to studies after such a long gap was a challenge in particular. This involved leaving a stable job and having a year gap in my career. However, the experience of studying abroad and doing a masters abroad at that time proved to be a good decision. I completed my Bachelors in Management Studies, Marketing which was a three years undergraduate course. My experience has been in the field of Digital Media and have handled mobile and web products for big brands in India. The experience that I have attained on the job was beneficial in passing through my MBA journey. The learnings obtained from this course and the previous work experience helped me obtain an internship after the taught learning module of the course.

7.2. MBA-Marketing Learning and Challenges:

The teaching style was fairly different from back home and the programme style here was more focussed on practical learning. The involvement of assignments and projects in the module was of great help. There were challenges faced while writing assignments as it is very different from what I had experienced at home. It took me time to get used to the research tools and referencing models. The reflections of the course were recorded on Mahara which was part of the teaching in one of the modules of the course. There was a mix of modules which gave exposure various subjects of business focussing on marketing which was the core module. The subject of Finance was a tough for me as I am very weak at it and the assignments took a lot of time in understanding. Though the scores obtained on the module were fairly average there was lot of learning out of it. The Research Methods 1 module was another one which took a bit of understanding. To be honest the inclination towards the subject was less and thus the scores were affected majorly. If this were taken seriously the process of dissertation would have been much simpler. The three months first semester was a tough

experience. The limited time to complete assignments from all modules and also added exams was a difficult phase to pass through. The experience of changing climate and living far from home made it even more challenging. The second term was fairly easy with interesting modules. The Marketing Innovations module was of great interest to me as it allowed me to come up with business ideas and forming a marketing plan around it. The learning out of it will definitely help in the future. The challenging subject again was Research Methods 2 which took a lot of time in drafting the research proposal. This time the learnings were better and was able to understand major part of the module. However, the scores were not that great and again affected my overall average. Business Strategy was another course that proved to be a lot of interest to me. The forming of groups and working with people from different backgrounds was a great learning experience. The course has almost come to an end and the experience gained over the year has definitely made me mentally stronger and has positively added to my learning experience.

7.3. Dissertation Learning and Challenges

The initial process of the dissertation was bit unfocussed as I was thinking of changing the topic and focussing more on doing a thesis on my internship business plan. However, some advice from my research guide helped me take up this topic as it was also related to my previous work experience. The collection of secondary data was easy and the feedback received on my proposal was put to use. The research questions were worked upon and were rephrased to suit the research topic and initiate the findings. The secondary data was collected from several sources including Journal articles and books. The UCD library was also accessed as it had better collection of journals. The recent trends were collected through reports on Mintel and Passport. The reports also helped in enlightening my own knowledge about the various trends in the digital media field. My own experiences with the retail shops and the shopping experiences helped me approach the research in a better way. The major challenge was to layout the various literature on the topics that were used to frame this research. There were a lot of previous studies that had to be referenced and also had to pick the right ones which were latest and gave important insights. While carrying out the research there was an incident that took place in the family back home which threw me out of course for some time. Managing time off the internship and getting stressed about family issues back home made it very challenging in getting my focus back on track. However with the help

of my boss I was able to devote myself completely to this research and I was back on track soon. I had to calculate and estimate my time all over again and had to put in the extra hours after work on working through my findings and conduct major of my work during weekends. This was an important challenge that I overcame and the learnings out of it will definitely help me put my skills to use again. I was able to conduct a final meeting with my guide before submission and was able to put his suggestions to use. I have been happy with my work and the experiences that I have gained while conducting this research. The tremendous support I got from my colleagues, family and friends was a great add on to my work.

7.4. Career Plan

The post graduate degree that I will earn after completing this course will add to my resume and will be an added advantage to my experience. The focus is to remain in the Digital Media field and explore more into the marketing field in the sector. The experience gained so far will form a right path to my career goals. The aim to obtain a job in Ireland and gain some good international work experience and understand the businesses around here. The goal is to start my own business after few years of learning and experience. The internship experience that I have gained so far will be a great boost and working in a start-up environment has proved to be beneficial. The aim is to get a job in one of the leading companies in the digital field and get a job with major responsibilities. After gaining enough experience either in Ireland or India I would like to take the start on my own.

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9. Appendices

9.1. Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

PROJECT TITLE

Influence of Mobile Marketing in building brand loyalty among clothing retail consumers in Ireland

You are being asked to take part in a research study on...

The research is based on studying the impact of mobile marketing would have on brand loyalty among the consumers in Ireland, it is part of the MBA Course and will be submitted in accordance with the college guidelines

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

In this study, you will be asked to...

The study will involve gathering information of your shopping pattern, the communication that you receive from the clothing stores. Your personal information will be kept anonymous and won't be revealed in the dissertation. However your opinions will be put to the right use.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study typically takes...

The interview won't last more than 20 minutes and the participant will have the right to stop whenever required.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation required from you. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn / destroyed.

You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you.

You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome. A full de-briefing will be given

after the study). If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data I collect does not contain any personal information about you except the age and shopping patterns, your identity would not be revealed in any case.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

I will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact me at 10175665@mydbs.ie

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE:

PROJECT SUMMARY:

By signing below, you are agreeing that: (1) you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, (2) questions about your participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily, (3) you are aware of the potential risks (if any), and (4) you are taking part in this research study voluntarily (without coercion).

Participant's signature

Participant's Name (Printed)

Student Name (Printed)

Student Name signature

Date

9.2. Interview Questions:

- How frequently do you shop for clothes?
- So where do you shop from? Explain about your shopping experience, do you like shopping often?
- Do you have any specific reasons that you shop from these brands?
- Are you someone who would shop anytime or would wait for a brand to give discounts and offers?
- Do you like getting SMS and emails or any kind of notification informing about the discounts and offers on these brands?
- Do you also shop during your birthday or anniversaries? Would you like these brands to give you personalized discounts on your special days?
- How often do you receive information from these brands on your mobile, do you find any kind of discount information on your mobile for these brands?

9.3. Interview of Participant 1, referred to as P1 - 21 years, Female, Student

1. How frequently do you shop for clothes?

Haha! I shop all the time, I don't even remember the number of times I shop. I think I picked up a top last week from Penney's for a fiver. So may be the answer to your question would be at least twice a month or may be more, I don't know!

2. So where do you shop from? Explain about your shopping experience, do you like shopping often?

I usually pick up stuff from Penney's, when I have some more money I go to Zara and H&M, mostly is during sales that I shop from those brands. Like I mentioned I do love shopping, I don't even know if I wear all of that stuff. I like Asos too, they have got good stuff for women!

3. So I understand you shop frequently, would you shop more often than usual if you were given discounts that suit your shopping needs?

Of course! That's usually the case when I am shopping from the big brands. I hear from my girlfriends that there's a sale and I go shopping. Unfortunately you see it in newspapers or hear it from someone. But we women are always on top of these things.

4. Do you like getting SMS and emails or any kind of notification informing about the discounts and offers on these brands?

Mmmm.. I'm not sure may be yes if they are not too many of them. I don't usually get message. I do see a lot of ads when I am online and especially on Facebook. It depends on the brand and how much I like to shop from them.. I usually like stuff from Penney's on Instagram, they make it look so good.

5. Would you like to receive personalised offers depending on your shopping pattern from these brands? Like special discounts on your birthday etc.

I would love that! Asos usually does that, it sends me e-mails on various discounts depending on what I have shopped from before. There are other brands as well that send me e-mails but they are not clothing brands. I would love offers, they somehow make you feel special.

9.4. Interview of Participant 2 , referred to as P2 - 26 years, Male, Student & and Intern

1. Tell me about your shopping pattern, do you shop often? About your shopping experience, where do you shop from etc.?

I don't think I shop regularly. I shop once in two months, I usually buy stuff if I need it. Last time I think shopped was for my new internship.. I don't like spending much on clothes. I buy stuff from Penney's and Zara may be. I sometimes checkout stuff at TK Maxx but I think I have just bought one jacket from there.

2. Do you like getting SMS and emails or any kind of notification informing about the discounts and offers? Do you like information received on mobile through brands that you haven't shopped from before?

I don't prefer too many SMS's on my mobile, I am usually bombarded with ads when I am online. I don't remember if any of these brands have messaged me before. I have seen ads from Dunnes and M&S. I would definitely won't like sms from unknown brands. I agree that I miss discounts because I am usually not aware of them. Wouldn't mind it if they are like once in a month or something. I don't think these usually do those kinda things.

3. Do you also shop during your birthday or anniversaries? Would you like these brands to give you personalized discounts on your special days?

Yes before my birthday. I usually get offers from e-commerce websites for these special occasions. I haven't received such discounts from the offline stores. I wouldn't mind a special discount.

4. Do you have any specific reasons that you shop from these brands?

Well yes the quality from these high end brands are good. Penney's is worth the low price so there is no complaints there. The other reason is that they are closer to the city center and Penney's especially has couple of stores at O'connell which makes it easier to find what you are looking for.

9.5. Interview of Participant 3 , referred to as P3 - 31 years, Female, Working full time

1. How often do you shop?

I think I shop regularly. It's usually once or twice in a month. Sometimes it could be more than that, I usually shop at once when there are sales at various shops I like.

2. So where do you shop from? Is there something you like about these shops that makes you shop from them often?

I like shopping at Zara, H&M, River Island, Debenhams, Penneys most of the time. I like the fashion of Zara and H&M. I usually get different set of brands at Debenhams and usually check stuff on their website. Penney's I prefer when I want to go cheap shopping and pick a lot of stuff for a good price. I also shop online sometimes, you seem to get good discounts when you are shopping online, just that you have to pay for the shipping.. I think Asos gives you shipping free if you shop over 40 Euros, I am not sure but they do have this deal on minimum order.

3. Are you someone who would shop anytime or would wait for a brand to give discounts and offers?

It depends, I usually shop when there are offers. It depends on what kind of shopping mood I am in. Sometimes I just see discounts in front of the stores and end up buying for myself. Usually I shop when I need something, it is not necessary that there is an offer. Sometimes I just like to treat myself with new clothes!

4. Do you like getting SMS and emails or any kind of notification informing about the discounts and offers? Do you like information received on mobile through brands that you haven't shopped from before?

I receive e-mails for sure from the brands that I have shopped online, I think ASOS sends me emails and there are other shopping sites that I had registered with, can't remember them now. I usually buy work clothes online from Oxendales and Littlewoods and get offers a couple of times a month from both. I buy them if I like the colour and style and if they are comfortable for work. I might have shopped once from Brown Thomas because I get e-mails from them, I usually buy bags from them. I don't know if I would like to get messages on Mobile, online if I have opted for those.

5. Do you also shop during your birthday or anniversaries? Would you like these brands to give you personalized discounts on your special days?

Yes I do shop during these days, also when I have to buy gifts for people. It would be great if something like that can happen. E-commerce websites usually do these kind of things. I think boots also does it, not sure they have some credits or something per account.

6. How comfortable would you be to receive communication on your mobile from a brand that you have shopped from and from a completely new store where you have never shopped from?

I don't think I will be happy to get sms or information from a place where I have not purchased before, even if I have not given my information to them, why would they message me? From the shops I shop from and I like, I would definitely like to receive messages but provided they are not too many in numbers. It gets annoying after some point like.

9.6. Interview of Participant 4 , referred to as P4 - 52 years, Male, Entrepreneur

7. How often do you shop?

I shop usually once a month, it's basically with my family. I think personally I shop for myself once in 3 months or may be more.

8. So where do you shop from? Is there something you like about these shops that makes you shop from them often?

I like shopping at Debenhams, Tommy Hilfiger and Brown Thomas most of the time. I usually buy shirts from Ralph Lauren and Blazers from other brands. I think I shop for casual tshirts from other brands in Brown Thomas. I like their style and have a variety of options for my taste.

9. Are you someone who would shop anytime or would wait for a brand to give discounts and offers?

I think I would shop when I would require to shop. My wife usually goes for discounts and we get stuff for kids, she usually manages all of that, I am not good at it. I think the women love discounts and offers, probably just a reason for shopping.

10. Do you like getting SMS and emails or any kind of notification informing about the discounts and offers? Do you like information received on mobile through brands that you haven't shopped from before?

No I wouldn't prefer getting any kind of messages on my phone. I use it for business and my personal work. I think I get some offers on e-mail, but I don't usually check them. As I said I don't shop that frequently and I am not much of an online shopper for clothes.

11. Do you also shop during your birthday or anniversaries? Would you like these brands to give you personalized discounts on your special days?

I shop for birthdays but it's usually for my family. I don't mind if they give me special offers if I am registered with them.

12. How comfortable would you be to receive communication on your mobile from a brand that you have shopped from and from a completely new store where you have never shopped from?

It's definitely a No to shops sending me messages where I haven't shopped from. I am very particular about giving my information to these companies. I hate getting any calls or sms about promotions which are of no use to me.

9.7. Interview of Participant 5, male, 29 years and works fulltime.

1. So often do you shop, where do you usually shop from, when was the last time you shopped?

I usually shop from Primark, H&M , Next, these are the few ranges of clothing stores I usually prefer. I shop online as well from Amazon, but these are the majorly I would shop from, I would also shop from Superdry, Zara e.g. Some of them are exclusive for formal wears. That's like not online, going into the store and shopping. I shop once a month, definitely once a month buying different things, might be casuals, formals or shoes. The last time I shopped was in July actually. I haven't shopped this month yet.

2. Are you someone who would shop anytime, or would wait for brands to give discounts and offers. How personalized would these offers be and would be of interest to you?

As I said, Superdry, Zara, these are the brands would give discounts. These are the brands I would wait for discounts, because the pricing is usually higher and I would like to wait for discounts. So usually wait for discounts that come, that are 50% off or 40% off. Similarly goes for Hollister also. Ah, I actually wait for some amount of time. You usually have a sales time, just before Easter, Christmas, End of Season sale happening. Like for Clarks it's a shoe retailer, they do a sale right before the summer starts and when the summer ends. I know this because I have watched carefully when they offer discounts. I clearly wait for sales to happen. Personalised? Yes I would like personalised offers, e.g I like jackets those are my preferences. Something from Zara if there are any sales from them on jackets I would like to know. Unfortunately I don't think this happens with brands where they actually give you alerts based on your shopping experience. Not all of them have it at the moment, as far as I've seen it. T M Lewin sends me e-mails when they have offers on double cuff shirts because I love them.

3. Do you receive any kind of offers right on your mobile or any kind of information? Do you access the fan pages or follow these brands on social media?

Currently, I receive e-mails from T M Lewin, New Look I know it's a girls brand but they also do Menswear, Zara, H&M hmmm. Yes, Sportsdirect is quite frequent when you add something on your wishlist(online) they immediately send you e-mails. Ya, so that's one.

How far does it get personalize? I don't think it's really personalized, it's more like an e-mail blast and I am just one of their mailing lists. So, it can be way more personalized where it only caters to my requirement. I will give you an example, this is what I have used in 2013 or 2014, there is a company called thread which is a London based company. Once you sign up with Thread, the stylist sends you a list of things based on your preferences, like belts to wear, shirts that go with your preferences, like hoodies and different things. That's one of the personalization experiences that I have ever got. That's why I like that brand.

4. How open are you to receiving any kind of marketing communication on your mobile from a store you have shopped from and how open are you to receiving information from an unknown brand that you have never shopped from?

I'm very sensitive with regards to shops contacting me. I am not very comfortable when I get messages from clothing brands where I have not shopped. It just makes you feel that my information is lying with somebody without my permission. E.g Next and Burton I clearly remember the only reason why I get them is because I have authorised them to send me e-mails. As far as SMS are concerned they are pretty intrusive, I usually allow messages from Papa Johns or Pizza Hut. I prefer e-mails because I get to read them when I want and you organize them as per your wish. I would be sceptical with companies sending me messages without me giving them information. I would go with the tried and tested method rather than exploring new brands, it usually depends. E.g T M Lewin was something that I not used to shop from, after my first purchase I've kind of liked it and have continued buying from them.

10. Survey Monkey Questionnaire

1. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

2. What is your age?

- 16 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 60

3. In the past 3 months, about how often have you shopped for clothes?

- 0 times
- 1-2 times
- 3-5 times
- More than 5 times

4. Where do you usually prefer to shop for clothes?

- Primark (Penneys)
- Dunnes Stores
- Other retail outlets
- Brand Outlets like (Zara, H&M, Jack & Jones etc)

5. How likely are you to visit a store or make a purchase after receiving a promotional offer on your phone that is relevant to you?

- Extremely likely
- Very likely
- Moderately likely
- Slightly likely
- Not at all likely

6. How likely are you to shop from the same brand if you receive personalized offers?

- Extremely likely
- Very likely
- Moderately likely
- Slightly likely
- Not at all likely

7. What would make you more loyal to a brand? (Multiple allowed)

- Price
- Fashion/Style
- Quality
- Service

8. Do you currently receive any form of mobile marketing communication (SMS, MMS, In App ads, QR codes) from where you shop?

- Yes
- No

9. From which store would you be comfortable to receive offers on mobile?

- Store where I have shopped earlier
- Completely new store
- Not interested in receiving offers