CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1 Background of the Problem

These days, the entire mankind is facing a trouble-free access to global world issues, much gratitude given to the invention of social networking sites. As a matter of fact, it brings the whole world closer together by allowing everyone to update oneself with any information desired only with the help of Internet use. Alongside this effortlessness, the spread of social media consumption including blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are relentlessly unstoppable.

In the process of grasping this phenomenon, this research narrows down the attention to the blogs. Initially came into its existence in 1999 (De Smet 2013, 5), this online diary-like website consists of variety of thoughts on certain topic, depending on the writer. Various blog platforms including Blogger and Wordpress allow anyone to create and maintain their journals in the form of blog, whereby it can be updated whenever desired as long as their gadgets are connected to the Internet.

In terms of writing, the bloggers depend on their knowledge, thoughts, opinions, and values, needless to say from a subjective point of view. With their own unique characteristics, these blog owners both directly and indirectly gather certain amount of population to “follow” them.

When discussing about “followers”, it becomes interesting to bring fashion into the focus of this research. In the industry itself, fashion is constantly
influenced by the evolution of its trends. Fashion blog is one of the tools that open
the way for the trends to take the center stage in the society.

As mentioned in the previous study by De Smet (2013), fashion blogs
fashion blogs are considered as a platform for public opinion, whereby often
recognized as a “street of fashion”.

Nowadays, mainstream media have given quite a lot spotlights to the
fashion bloggers (Hellberg & Tonnesson 2012, 5). For instance, in 2013, Sarah
Sechan talkshow on NET TV had invited two of the most renowned fashion
bloggers in Indonesia, Diana Rikasari and Sonia Eryka. It follows that
Kompas.com has also featured both of them in its daily articles. In the same year,
Nylon Indonesia held a gathering for a number of bloggers at Galeries Lafayette.
This exposure of local fashion bloggers automatically adds up the factor of how
contributive and significant they are in Indonesian fashion scene.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

As an acknowledgement to the phenomena of fashion blogging, it
becomes necessary to observe the blog readers, as they are one of the parties that
take a huge part in defining the success of a fashion blog. Without their fondness
for the blog articles, the blog itself wouldn’t survive regardless of the contents.

When it comes to blog reading, the readers, or in this case, often called as
visitors, they have variety of personal procedures including the motivation, usage,
and situation (Hellberg & Tonnesson 2012, 7). Simultaneously, the fashion
bloggers own the right to update their blogs based on their personal views and
observations on recent fashion issues (Hellberg & Tonnesson 2012, 5). Apropos of the blog content, the visitors hold the chance to write any sought-after comments on the blog posts. With the influential charm owned by the fashion bloggers, they are likely to be considered trustworthy by their visitors, whereby they could affect the visitors’ attitude and decision towards certain recommended brands or products (Hellberg & Tonnesson 2012, 8). In this case, it is likewise that the power of the bloggers drives the visitors’ demands of brands, trends, and particular garments (Hellberg & Tonnesson 2012, 5).

Concerning the facts mentioned in the previous statements, it becomes intriguing to discover the reasons why the blog visitors are engaged in particular fashion blogs. Moreover, they must’ve been relished various gratifications from viewing and following their favorite fashion blogs. There must be a lot of explanation behind the adoration that comes in the form of likes and comments. It is the various needs and motives behind media usage of the audience members that requires certain concept and theory as a guide.

On top of that, this research wants to explore more on the uses of the blog according to the visitors, as well as the gratifications sought from visiting the blog. In the hope of answering the curiosity, this research applies the Uses and Gratifications Theory to the discussion.
I.3 Statement of the Problem

Based on the discussion above, the statement of the problem for this research is:

"Visitors' Uses and Gratifications of 'A Diary of the Riotous Belle' Blog"

The research questions to be answered by the study are:

1. What are the uses of the blog "A Diary of the Riotous Belle" according to the visitors?
2. What gratifications that the visitors get from visiting "A Diary of the Riotous Belle"?

I.4 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out the uses and gratifications of the visitors of a fashion blog: A Diary of the Riotous Belle.

I.5 Significance of the Study

In its relation to the academic field, this research stretches the application of the Uses and Gratifications Theory regarding the consumption of new media. This study also aims to explain comprehensive understanding of the theory and enrich knowledge. Furthermore, this research is hoped to be able to enlighten the readers with new insights in relation to the informants' feedback for media consumption.
1.6 Organization of the Study

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As the opening, this chapter states the background of the problem, identification of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH OBJECT

This following chapter describes the object of the research and the details related to the object.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, this study presents literary reviews about the concepts, theories, and variables related to the research questions.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter analyzes the approach used in the research, the applied research method, the procedures to collect required data, and the method for data analysis.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides thorough raw data drawn out from the research and examines both the correlation and uncorrelation between the concepts, the theories and the research questions.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter concludes the whole research and provides relevant suggestions based on the research findings.