

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

A famous designer named Miuccia Prada ever told that fashion is an instant language, the other one said that style is a way to say who you are without having to speak, here the intention of the writer adding those quotes are because that is what fashion do and what is happening in our society. Fashion as a language means that fashion can communicate, otherwise we can communicate through fashion itself. Indeed, fashion in general not only about clothing. According to the writer, the term of fashion is often used in something that being popular, fashion is always related to dress, clothing, garments, style, as a synonym for glamour, beauty and style or a style that continues to change from one period to the next, on the other hand it also serves as a reflection of the social and economic status. However, the term of fashion is relative and each of it has differences in meaning and usage.

Malcolm Barnard in his book called *Fashion as Communication: Social Identity, Sex, Class, and Gender* revealed that the clothing is used to demonstrate the social value or status, and people often make an assessment of the social value, based on what is used by the other person, Fashion is not just about clothes, but also as a mechanism or ideology that applies to almost every area of the modern world, from the late middle ages and the period thereafter (Bannard,1996,p.09).

As time goes by, fashion industry grows rapidly in decades. There are not just clothing corporations but other parties which involved in this industry, such as designer, mass media, models, and of course society as the wearer of fashion products. Therefore, those parties have its role for distributing the trend of fashion around the world. Fashion cannot survive without the media, thus, media have played an important role for fashion industry and vice versa.

One of the media which spread the trend of fashion is fashion magazine, as stated by Vinken that fashion magazine which is a magazine whose contents are generally geared towards fashion and or beauty (Vinken,2005,p.47). The appearance of the first fashion magazine in 1770s within the journalism and image making are still continuing until today with some involvement. Fashion industry by media coverage transformed into article, fashion spread, or any other fashion publicities. Here, media especially fashion magazine becomes really crucial. Through the articles, fashion is being communicated to the society. Fashion becomes lifestyle which represented in the magazines. Fashion magazine not just become the media that present information efficiently but also as the lifestyle guidance for its readers.

Alongside with the phenomenon of fashion in our society there is a magazine named Go Girl! competing with others magazine in Indonesia to serve fashion news especially for Indonesian teenagers. However, this magazine in three years lately got the achievements such as Indonesian Print Media Award from Serikat Perusahaan Pers powered by Dahlan Iskan in 2013 (spsindonesia, 2013).

It is not to be forgotten that this magazine gaining TOP BRANDS AWARDS for teens category in 2012 until 2014 and as the writer found the data from AC Nielsen as stated in SWA Magazine that Go Girl! magazine becomes top five best-selling magazine competing former Indonesian popular teen magazine, Gadis ( 33.000\* ) and Go Girl ( 36.000\* ) in average number of readership (topbrand-award, 2014).

There are some reasons why the writer then decided to analyze Go Girl! magazine, it is because as stated in their official website this magazine is not a franchise, it's local and published by PT. Aprilis Maju Media. Go Girl! has tagline that is ' magazine for real ' and in their own definition magazine for real means giving the real features and tips that more realistic to be applied in daily live, fashion pages which more wearable, informal language, and practical size. (Go Girl Magz, 2015)



Figure 1 Go Girl! magazine

Comparing to other local magazines, then we will know that the other local magazines brought the culture of Indonesian more than Go Girl!. Go Girl!

itself tend to be more *international taste* in their contents, also by using English words and international figures in many parts of their articles. Go Girl! uses international celebrities as their cover except if there are any special editions then local celebrities might be used as the cover.

However, the writer tends to choose Go Girl special 100<sup>th</sup> edition because there is such an interesting part of it. The editor of the magazine collected 100 of their subscribers or selected readers and named it Go Girl 100 Stylish Readers. The selected readers come from the submission of their styles then the editor picked some of them to be the stylish readers in that special edition.



Figure 2 First section of 100 Stylish readers' page

Since this study connecting with the teenage female magazine thus firstly we should understand about the definition of teenager. The writer found in several dictionaries that many of them define the term teenager as an adolescent and vice versa. The writer assumes that these two terms are basically interchangeable. From general overview, a teenager is defined as an adolescent between the onset of puberty and maturity, while an adolescent is a person in his or her teen years.

World Health Organization (WHO) states that adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19 (WHO, 2015).

Adolescence is the first time, however, when individuals have the cognitive capacity to consciously sort through who they are and what makes them unique. Erikson states that Establishing a sense of identity has traditionally been thought of as the central task of adolescence (Erikson,1994,p.27). However, teenagers especially female, who are growing up and in process of finding their identity, start to pay attention to their appearance. In this phase female teenagers start to face changes in their life. During adolescence, some teens feel uncomfortable asking for advice or talking about certain issues with adults, consequently, they go to friends or the mass media for advice as idea of Winship in McRobbie (1994,p.39). At this point the issue between the teenagers and the role of the magazine as the information provider is really connected. People use the stories they see both in the news and in entertainment media as reference points about what's important and to compare what they already know, or think they know, about what's good and bad and what should be done about problems (Brown,2002,p.4).

McRobbie argues that female teenagers are lack of self-discipline, they cannot control their own life, give an excessive award to themselves, controlled by power of desires, they tend to think and feel in a short way, having too much pride as woman, and refrain themselves too far away. Those weaknesses of female teenagers are usually used by the industry to persuade and impress female



teenagers with their products. It creates the opportunities to the company to spot them as the potential market (McRobbie,1994,p.56).

Related to the issue of female teenagers as the potential market and the significance of the fashion industry in Indonesia here the writer found the interesting phenomenon which is here Go Girl magazine as the fashion magazine for the teenagers provide the source of fashion and also as the place for the industry to spot their potential market, in this case the readers of Go Girl magazine which is the teenagers itself.

Since the magazine consists of some rubrics such as the health and beauty, feature, monthly routine, celebrity, then specifically this study took fashion rubrics of the magazine as the object. In the field of fashion rubrics there is a definition about it, that is an article, with accompanying pictures, that highlights the latest fashion trends (Scwaab,2011,p.17). Accompanied by Walton explanation of the term fashion rubrics then included in the section of editorial content which is the content in a periodical that is featured or written by the staff of the publication. In fashion magazines, it can include fashion spreads, trend reports, articles, etc (Walton,2008,p.12).



Figure 3 Fashion Rubrics of Go Girl

The writer then found that as the fashion rubrics consists of the advertisement which can be as the references to the readers in purchasing such as clothes, accessories, or even shoes that set on the trend. This is due to Raymond William in Tomlinson who states that advertising is something *magical* because it transforms commodities into glamorous signifiers and these signifiers present an imaginary, in the sense of unreal, world (Williams,2000,p.10).

According to this phenomenon, there has been a movement from just a simple desire becoming inevitable primary need. Moreover, it can be said that consumers are being trapped on the flow of consumerism. Their consumption are not based on the real need, but to make their desire into reality. Additionally, industries keep looking for an inspiration to unconsciously ideology the need to consumers. Advertisements is used by the companies in this case is the fashion rubrics in the magazine to promote their products, creating the desires to follow the trends.

According to McGregor in Southerton in the *Encyclopedia of Consumerism* explains that consumerism is the misplaced belief or the myth that people will be gratified by an acceptance of consumption as a way to self-development, self-realization, and self-fulfillment (Southerton,2011,pg.27). While according to Harvey in Underhill, consumerism is an idea that the meaning of our lives is to be found in what we consume, rather than in what we produce (Underhill,2008,p.100).

Towards the phenomenon of consumerism and the role of advertisement in promoting products, the writer interested in observing a study that correlates consumerism among female teenagers and the advertisement, especially in Go Girls' fashion rubrics. Moreover, the writer sees consumerism especially among female teenagers is the phenomenon which covers many parts such as environment and their psychology aspect in purchasing the products of fashion. In other side, advertisement as a tool of promotion is used to make people buy product, to persuade people, for instances it can be said that advertisement also increase consumption.

This research is mainly conducted using the theory of consumerism to analyze the consumption among female teenager. The aim of this research is to figure-out whether consumerism in buying fashion products happens in female teenager, and what factors support the consumerism. Female teenagers means Go Girls' readers and their fashion rubrics are chosen as the objects because female teenagers are the target market for fashion products companies.



It would be interesting to find out whether consumerism happens among female teenagers. As stated above, they are in process of growing up, finding their identity. They must suit their outlook and they need devices to help them and the fashion magazine as their guidance. It is also interesting to know whether fashion rubrics influencing them or not, in case that fashion rubrics which unconsciously as the part of advertisement also affects consumption towards the readers.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problems**

From this context, the writer has intended questions for this study;

1. How does consumerism circulate among female teenagers, at this case is Go Girl's readers?
2. Do the fashion rubrics of Go Girl! influence the female teenagers in choosing and purchasing the fashion products?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the statement of the problems above, this study is intended:

1. To find out how consumerism occurs among female teenagers in order it indicates the fact about fashion products which are being purchased by female teenagers. Whether they really need them or those products has another meanings for its wearer.
2. To find out whether their choices of those products is influenced by the advertisement or not.

#### 1.4 Significances of The Study

This study is arranged to give a contribution to the development of recent fashion. This study is also helpful in understanding the works of fashion as the unity of meaning, in which fashion does not merely appear as what it is but it contains several meanings which circulating in our daily lives and spheres. In fact, consumerism which becomes the main topic of this study belongs to the part of recent fashion which is recorded in the magazine

This study elaborates the works of image as a formation of meaning in which the image does not come up as an intentional sign but it contains a meaningful sign. This is related to the images which are presented in magazine as part of mass media. Therefore, this study will also be beneficial for students in Airlangga University who take cultural studies or communication as their major. In general, this study tries to encourage readers to be critical readers or viewers when they realize there is something interesting phenomena in our society. They are expected to be brave to share their idea about the society not only being as follower and imitating what's on the trend.

## 1.5 Definition of the Key Terms

**Advertisement** :Something that is shown or presented to the public to help sell a product or to make an announcement (Turrow,2009,p.34)

**Consumerism** : The belief that personal wellbeing and happiness depends to a very large extent on the level of personal consumption, particularly on the purchase of material goods (Botterill,2010,p.18)

**Fashion** : Vibrant form of visual and material culture that plays an important role in social and cultural life. It shapes our bodies and the way we look at other people's bodies. It can enable creative freedom to express alternative identities. It connects to fine art and popular culture (Arnold,2001,p.07)

**Identity** :The distinctive characteristic belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group (Burke,2009,p.17)

**Teenager** : The period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19 (Savage,2007,p.05).