



# 6

## Towards Understanding How Nigerian Fashion Brands Influence Customer Purchasing Behaviour. A Case Study of Nigerian Fashion Brands

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### Introduction

In Western countries, the fashion industry has witnessed changes in the buying behaviour of consumers based on trends and fads seeing as fashion consumption has been based on fashion seasons (Tyler, Heeley, and Bhamra, 2006), and fast fashion (Christopher et al., 2004). However, in heterogeneous and ethnically fragmented societies like Nigeria, consumer buying behaviour is influenced by a myriad of factors because of cultural and ethnic diversity and religious differences (Farrag & Hassan, 2015; Briliana & Mursito, 2017; Islam & Chandrasekaran, 2019), and the dynamic macro-environmental factors like changes in the political and economic environment. As such, it is imperative to study the Nigerian fashion industry and how fashion brands influence consumer buying behaviour within a highly fragmented society.

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In recent years the Nigerian fashion industry has grown rapidly over the years in size and sophistication, attracting global attention. Euromonitor International suggests that the sub-Saharan fashion market is worth \$31 billion, with Nigeria alone accounting for 15% of that (\$4.7 billion) (Akinsola, 2019; Chege, 2019). Also, Nigerian designs have received increased global presence and exposure over the years, having been featured in fashion shows and designs across the world (Akutu, 2019). For instance, the GT Bank Fashion Week focuses on showcasing African fashion to a more global audience and succeeded accordingly in that regard. The textile, apparel, and footwear sub-sectors remain the second largest contributor to Nigeria's manufacturing sector (after food, beverages, and tobacco). It posted the total output of N799 bn (US\$2.6 bn) in Q3 2018 or 22% of the country's manufacturing GDP. Although Nigeria has a huge appetite for fashion, textile manufacturers struggle with limited capacity in clothing production, poor patronage, and meagre purchasing power (FBNQuest, 2019).

Although some research on the purchasing behaviour of fashion consumers exists, important gaps still remain. While studies have examined the impact of the physical environment on consumer purchasing behaviour (Chang & Chen, 2008; Sherman et al., 1997), the impact of emotional components on purchasing behaviour is yet to be fully explored (Martin et al., 2008; Shaw & Ivens, 2002; Smith & Wheeler, 2002; Yalch & Spangenberg, 2000). Research on consumer purchasing mostly outlines purchasing behaviour from the consumer perspective, the customer cognitive psychology, and the decision-making process (Dias, 2003; Foxall, 2004; Loken, 2006; Perry & Kyriakaki, 2014; Schmitt, 2012; Zhong & Mitra, 2020). Very few studies have examined fashion brands and their role in influencing consumers' buying decisions. Studies have highlighted the limitation of the customer psychology perspective because of its focus on the overall consumption and acquisition processes (Nguyen & Mogaji, 2022b; Parker et al., 2016; Pham, 2013). This chapter intends to contribute to research by examining how fashion brands influence consumers' purchasing behaviour (Brooksworth et al., 2022a, 2022b).

Specifically, this study provides new insights into consumer buying decisions in the fashion industry in Nigeria. In doing so, it explores how fashion brands develop their marketing mix and how it affects their

marketing strategies in the sub-Saharan African country. We address how Nigerian fashion brands influence consumer buying behaviour, an important area that needs to be explored. This study contributes to the literature by investigating how Nigerian fashion brands influence the consumer buying behaviour of female consumers. The novelty of this study lies in the Nigerian context that is utilized. Attention is drawn to the contextual influences (Elsner & Schwardt, 2015; Ojong & Simba, 2020; Smallbone et al., 2014; Welter, 2012) in the country and its impact on the influence Nigerian fashion brands have on consumer buying behaviour. This study contributes to the literature on consumer buying behaviour by exploring a non-mainstream context and acknowledging a fragmented and heterogeneous context (Ojong & Simba, 2020; Welter, 2012, p. 193).

In the following sections, we will consider the factors that can influence consumer purchasing decisions as well as previous studies conducted in the literature. We will then discuss the methods and specifics of the case that was evaluated. We will conclude by assessing the findings of the study concerning the literature.

## Literature Review

### Nature of the Nigerian Fashion Industry

The Nigerian fashion industry has been influenced by political, economic, and socio-cultural factors. In the 1960s, the Nigerian fashion industry was heavily swayed by the European style of fashion; women's fashion particularly consisted of fitted and oversized silhouettes and miniskirts. Nigeria was under colonial rule at the time and striving for cultural and economic independence from the British Rule (Langevang, 2016). The use of local fabrics and dress practices to express African pride and cultural identity was common (Rovine, 2010). For instance, the Yoruba women wore *iro* and *buba*, tied *gele* on their heads with *ipele* over their shoulders (Adeleke, 2018). A prominent designer during that time who was credited with the introduction of ready-to-wear clothes in Nigeria was Shade Thomas Fahn (Jennings, 2015). She was a

‘Western-trained African designer’; who trained at Central Saint Martins, London (Langevang, 2017; Jennings, 2015; Rovine, 2010). She launched the *Shade’s Boutique* chain where she modernized traditional African garments. Her designs consist of pre-tied *gele*, turning *iro* and *buba* into a zip-up wrapper skirt and turning men’s *agbada* into women’s embroidered *boubou*” (Jennings, 2011, p. 7), in which she catered to the Nigerian elites, royalty, and professional women (Jennings, 2011).

In the 1970s, Nigeria had transitioned from colonial rule to military rule. Under the administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo, protectionist policies were introduced and implemented, like the ban on the importation of ready-made clothes, to give room for local production and consumption (Oyejide, Ogunkole, and Bankole, 2005). This led to the rise of designers like Lanre Ogunlesi of *Sofisticat* (Kreglex, 2016). This ban also drove the demand for indigenous wears like *oleku*, oversized sleeves with high-waist wrappers that stopped at knee length (Kreglex, 2016).

The 1980s also witnessed the influence of European style on West African fashion; people began to sew English-styled dresses from *aso-oke*: skirt suits for ladies, trousers with a short-sleeved jacket for men, and a host of other atypical styles (Agbadudu & Ogunrin, 2006; Kreglex, 2016). The popular designers around these times were Folorunsho Alakija of *Supreme Stitches* and Princess Abah Folawiyo of *Labenella Creations*. Alakija’s fashion brand catered for up-scale and elites of Nigeria, like wives of politicians, royals, and wives of the military officers (Siun, Akinyoade & Quaye, 2017; Kreglex, 2016). Princess Abah Folawiyo created designs that clothed top celebrities in Nigeria; she was famous for designing President Olusegun Obasanjo’s *agbada* (Daigbare, 2016). Labella’s creations targeted clothing for plus-sized African women, and these designs include kaftans, culottes, and many others (Kreglex, 2016).

In the 1990s, Nigeria witnessed a crisis in its political and military landscapes. There was a power shift from the 21-year military rule to a democratically elected government (Sesay and Ukeje, 1997; Onishi, 2001). This period was a tumultuous time for Nigerians as there was the annulment of the 1993 election, the death of the winner Moshood Abiola, and the hanging of activists like Ken Saro Wiwa and nine others under the administration of General Abacha (Sesay and Ukeje, 1997).

The civil unrest during this period led to a high rate of emigration of Nigerians including many fashion designers such as Ade Bakare Coutour and Deola Sagoe who were then in their prime. Ade Bakare's designs displayed his use of historic Yoruba textiles and design techniques to complement gowns and dresses, making them more African in style than Western (Jean, 2015), while Adeola Sagoe's haute couture designs cater to the needs of Nigerian elites. The former operated from abroad and the latter worked in Nigeria. In the 2000s, the Nigerian political system had successfully transformed from military rule to democratic rule.

In 2015, the Nigerian economy, like many others, was greatly affected by the fall in global oil prices, being an oil producer and exporter of crude oil. In turn, the stock market lost \$10.5 billion as investors were wary of the "heightened risk environment" and dumped their stocks (Kazeem, 2016). According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the constant basic price of the Nigerian GDP reduced in the second quarter of 2016 by 2.06% after shrinking by 0.36% in the first quarter of 2016. Annual inflation reached 17.1% in July 2016 from 16.5% in June, while food inflation witnessed an increase from 15.3% to 15.8% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016; Gabriel et al., 2016). In addition to this economic downturn, the Naira fell drastically to an abysmal rate of 423 Naira to 1 dollar. This only further fuelled the rapid devaluation of the Nigerian currency (Omoh et al., 2016).

The crippling oil prices caused by reduced demand together with the diminishing foreign exchange earnings prompted President Buhari to respond by introducing 'unorthodox' fiscal policies such as restricting the use of Nigerian debit cards abroad to prevent the depletion of Dollar reserves (Kazeem, 2016). Due to the limited success of these policies, Nigerian lawmakers and government officials led a social media campaign with the Twitter hashtag *#BuyNaijaToGrowTheNaira*, aimed at encouraging Nigerians to patronize local products to save the Naira and the Nigerian economy and in turn, stir patriotism amongst the Nigerian populace (Kazeem, 2016). As a consequence, the campaign encouraged people to wear Nigerian brands as a means of promoting the local fashion industry. For example, Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, posted on her Facebook page that she intended to wear Nigerian designs to most of her public appearances to actively promote made-in-Nigeria

products in support of the ‘Buy Nigeria to grow Nigeria’ campaign. This campaign resulted in increased collaborations and partnerships between Nigerian fashion designers, artists, actors, and fashion influencers to promote the Nigerian Economy and encourage a sense of national pride.

## Consumer Purchase Behaviour

Scholars have conceptualized various definitions of consumer behaviour. Some definitions have examined consumer behaviour as a process (Cai & Xu, 2006; Foxall, 1993; Harrison et al., 2006; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007) while others examine its outcome (Armstrong et al., 2020). Consumer buying behaviour refers to the “buying behaviour of final consumers—individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption” (Armstrong et al., 2019). From a European perspective, “consumer behaviour is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires” (Bamossy et al. 2006, p. 6).

There are multidisciplinary perspectives of consumer purchasing behaviour in psychology, sociology, and economics. According to neo-classical economic theory, consumers are rational and, as such, maximize their utility based on a cost–benefit analysis of price and product scarcity (or availability) (Tversky & Kahneman, 1980; Baines et al., 2016). In line with this school of thought, consumers make purchases when the functional benefit of an offering outweighs the costs (Baines et al., 2016). However, this perspective has been criticized by other scholars who argue that consumers’ actions are inconsistent with economic theory (Foxall, 2009; Thaler, 1980). Other scholars have alluded to the individualistic approach of the rational perspective of consumer behaviour as it is based on a consumer’s mental state and the impacts it has on their actions (Satz & Ferejohn, 1994). In contrast, the socio-psychological school of thought is based on the assumption that buying behaviour is influenced by the emotions and feelings of the consumers (Baines et al., 2016). Several empirical studies have alluded to the role of emotions in consumer

behaviour (Bagozzi et al., 1999; Cohen et al., 2006; Erevelles, 1998; Escalas & Stern, 2003; Laros & Steenkamp, 2005; Peck & Wiggins, 2006; Watson & Spence, 2007).

Several factors influence consumer purchasing behaviour. These factors consist of cultural, social, personal, and psychological characteristics (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020). Culture can be defined as a set of beliefs, values, and behaviours that are learned from and conditioned by family and society to guide the way of life of a group of people (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020). Hofstede defined culture as the collective programming of a group of people. The concept of culture is a broad and encompassing concept that requires demystification for further understanding. Within a culture, there exist sub-cultures and ethnic groups, which consist of a group of people who share a similar language, religion, and an ontological perspective in how they view the world. Empirical studies (Cakanlar & Nguyen, 2019; He & Wang, 2015; Kacen & Lee, 2002; Kim et al., 2002; McCort & Malhotra, 1993; Miao et al., 2019; Sethi & Chawla, 2014) have alluded to the role of culture on consumer behaviour.

Another factor that influences consumer purchasing behaviour is social class. Social class is defined as “society’s relatively permanent and ordered divisions whose members share similar values, interests and behaviour” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2020, p. 164). Social factors have been argued to influence consumer purchasing behaviour such as consumer groups and social networks, family and social roles, and status. Reference groups “consist of direct or indirect points of comparison or reference in forming a person’s attitude or group” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2020, p. 165). Organizations employ the use of influencers, opinion leaders, and word-of-mouth influence on consumer purchase behaviour.

## **Review of Previous Research on the Nigerian Fashion Industry**

Over the last decade, there has been a dearth of research examining the Nigerian fashion industry and consumer behaviour. However, in recent years, a few scholars have begun to examine the design and development

of Nigerian brands (Adelaja et al., 2016; Agbadudu & Ogunrin, 2006); fashion consumption behaviour of Southeast Nigeria (Agu & Onuoba, 2016); Entrepreneurship (Fasinu, 2020) and distribution channels and internalization (Ogunrin & Inegbenebor, 2015). Due to the significance of the Nigerian fashion industry to the country's economy and to the global market, it is important to examine the Nigerian fashion industry and contribute to research on fashion in the developing economy.

A few studies have begun to examine the purchase decision of Nigerian customers in the fashion industry. For example, Uzo et al.'s (2018) study examined the characteristics of African buyers purchasing behaviour in Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa. Findings from their research revealed that African buyers purchase mainly consumables for household consumption, price bargaining, and local culture. Similarly, Agu and Onuoba's (2016) study measures the extent of the relationship between psychological influences and fashion consumption behaviour of consumers in Southeast Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed fashion consumers value product fitting in a fashion purchase decision.

Previous studies examining purchasing decisions of fashion customers have also employed diverse research designs in an attempt to answer their research questions. For instance, Anu and Onuoha (2016) employed the use of quantitative research and multiple regression analysis as a data analysis technique to investigate the purchase decisions of fashion customers. Other studies also employed the use of qualitative research to investigate purchasing behaviour (Uzo et al., 2018). This study has contributed to the literature on customer purchasing behaviour in Nigeria. However, the use of the case study approach of Nigerian fashion brands like *Lisa Folawiyoye*, *Lanre Da Silva*, and *Grey Velvet* will reveal new knowledge and provide a new perspective towards understanding how fashion brands in Nigeria influence the purchasing decisions of Nigeria female consumers between the ages of 18 and 35. A case study analysis provides in-depth analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the research problem and provides recommendations for improving existing problems.

To answer the research question, a plethora of studies have applied various methodological approaches. Studies have adopted quantitative research methods (Ünal et al., 2019; Valaei & Nikhashemi, 2017; Choi



et al., 2012; O'cass, 2020); mixed methods (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009); and qualitative research methods (Grant & Stephen, 2005; Nash, 2019). Although these studies have laid a foundation towards understanding consumer purchasing behaviour, a case study analysis will reveal a new way of approaching the research problem and offer a perspective that points to the need for additional research.

Within the literature, gaps can be observed. Firstly, studies analysing consumer purchasing behaviour have examined the perspective of the customers methodologically towards answering the research question. Understanding how fashion brands influence the purchasing behaviour of women will offer a new dimension to the literature from a developing country's perspective. The literature on fashion marketing and purchasing behaviour has focused on more developed economies like the UK and the US—countries that have a high purchasing power due to customers with disposable income. Understanding how fashion brands influence the purchasing behaviour of millennials within the 21–35 age group in emerging economies will contribute towards an understanding of the research problem from a different macroeconomic context.

## Methodology

The nature of the social reality of this study is relativist ontology. Relativist Ontology is based on the assumption that there exist multiple socially constructed realities unguided by natural laws (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kaur et al., 2022). Relativist ontology excludes the possibility of a 'true' construction. There is no objective world or truth; everything is relative and created by social beings (Eisenhardt, 1989; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The epistemological position of this research is an interpretive paradigm. This paradigm emphasizes the need for social context, human complexity, and how people understand their social phenomenon (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). The interpretive view suggests that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). This study adopts the interpretivist stance because this research does not aim to test hypotheses and is not involved in law-like generalization.

This study adopts the qualitative research method to answer the research questions. Case studies tend to focus on qualitative data using methods such as interviews, observations, and analysis of primary and secondary sources (e.g., newspaper articles, photographs, and official records). In this study, qualitative data sources consist of multiple case study analyses of interviews, websites, and social media of Nigerian fashion brands like *Jewel by Lisa*, *Orange Culture*, and *Nkwo Onwuka*.

The sampling strategy adopted in this study is the Theoretical/Purposive sampling strategy. This study is not interested in randomly selecting case studies or samples that do not allow us to answer the research question. Thus, “the goal of theoretical sampling is to choose cases which are likely to replicate or extend the emergent theory. In contrast, traditional, within-experiment hypothesis-testing studies rely on statistical sampling, in which researchers randomly select the sample from the population” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 537). The data analysis technique that is employed in this research is the thematic analysis technique by Braun and Clarke (2006).

## Findings

### Product

A consistent theme that has emerged from the analysis of the case studies was that Nigerian fashion brands when designing clothes incorporate the African design and their own cultural identity and philosophy into the product development process. In the development of their clothes, a lot of these products are sourced, inspired, and designed from the culture, ethnicity, and hometown of the fashion brand owners. The culture and history of the designer are also deeply embedded in the creation and development of the fashion brand.

*When I'm designing a collection, it's usually what I know, who I am. I have lived in Nigeria, grown up in Nigeria even though my father is from Ogbomoshó and my mother is from West Indian, this is who I am. Everything I put into what I make, is all of me, it's my culture, it's my history and everything that I am. (Lisa Folawiyo).*

There has been an increased interest and trend for Africans, both within the continent and in the diaspora, to connect with their roots and use fashion to express their identity, support local entrepreneurs, and increase export and production. In Nigeria, consumer fashion choices have been heavily influenced by European fashion and style, and this has, in effect, influenced consumers' purchasing behaviour over the years. However, changes in the political, economic, and socio-economic environment have led to an increase in demand for fashion with bold African prints and designs. For example, the release of the movie *Black Panther* in 2019 led Africans across the globe to express a deep sense of pride in their identities and roots rather than the eurocentric outlook that has long been embedded in the psyche of Africans and people of African descent. This renaissance led to an increased interest in clothes with African designs, prints, and jewellery as a form of self- and political expression. As a result, the consumption of African fashion has gone beyond fashion consumption as a fad or trend but one that connects to the ideology, philosophy, and sense of self and how they construct their reality, which will influence how they think, feel, and perceive, thus influencing their purchasing behaviour.

Culture can be defined as the total way of life of a group of people. Culture has a role in how individuals construct their reality and how they view themselves (Geertz, 1996). Ethnic identity, on the other hand, is defined "as the shared identity of people based on a common historical background, ancestry, and knowledge of identifying symbolic elements such as nationality, religious affiliation, and language" (Chattaraman & Lennon, p. 520). Several studies on consumer research have investigated the relationship between ethnicity and consumer consumption (Deshpande et al., 1986; Stayman & Deshpande, 1989; Koslow et al., 1994; Donthu & Cherian, 1994; Kim & Kang, 2001; Ogden et al., 2004; Chung & Fischer, 1999; Burton 2010; Huang et al., 2013).

The identity theory involves the reflexivity of self, a situation whereby an individual sees themselves as an object that can be categorized or classified about a social group (Stets & Burke, 2000). Social identity perspective occurs when individuals categorize themselves as part of a group and form their perspectives in alignment with the norms of the group (Hogg, 2016). These cognitive processes individuals go through are segmented

into depersonalization and self-verification (Hogg, 2016; Stets & Burke, 2000). Depersonalization is the cognitive process whereby individuals do not see themselves as people, but rather as part of a group and follow the norms and act following those norms. Self-verification is a situation whereby individuals try to ensure consistency in maintaining the standards of the group via role-playing and acting to portray their identity (Hogg, 2016; Stets & Burke, 2000).

Consumers have moved from consuming fashion as part of a trend to developing deep ideological meaning and relationships with fashion that is a part of their self-identity and self-philosophy. This identity and philosophy could be based on psychological factors like ethnicity, religion, and sustainability, which give an individual a sense of purpose, self-actualization, and acceptance within a particular society (Nguyen & Mogaji, 2021a). Identity can be defined as “any category label to which a consumer self-associates either by choice or endowment” (Reed II et al., 2012, p. 312). Identities can be categorized based on “objective membership groups”, “culturally determined membership groups and abstracted role ideas” (Reed II et al., 2012).

Empirical studies have examined the influence of identity on fashion purchase and consumption. For instance, Grine and Saeed’s (2017) study analysed the motivation influencing women to wear a hijab. Findings from the study revealed that women wore the hijab for religious obligations rather than for fashion purposes (Lindridge, 2005; Saeed et al., 2020). This is in alignment with the literature on ethical and sustainable fashion where purchasing behaviour is made based on ethical commitment and ethical values (Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Joy et al., 2012; Khare, 2015; Niinimäki, 2010). Other studies have examined the role of cultural identity on fashion purchasing behaviour (Miller-Spillman et al., 2016; Noble & Ang, 2018). For example, Chattaraman and Lennon’s (2008) study in the US investigated whether ethnic consumers’ consumption of cultural apparel and attributional responses related to their consumption is predicted by their strength of ethnic identification. Findings from their analysis revealed that ethnic identification was a significant predictor of cultural apparel consumption. Similarly, a qualitative study by Gbadamosi (2015) in the UK showed the role of cultural and psychological factors in the consumption decision of ethnic minority

consumers and highlighted the role of symbolic consumption for acceptance. This is in line with previous research on the impact of ethnic identification on the consumption of ethnic-inspired apparel (Forney & Rabolt, 1985–1986; Kim & Arthur, 2003).

## Price

One of the critical challenges that Nigerian fashion brands face is pricing which, in effect, influences the purchasing behaviour of customers in Nigeria. Several internal and external factors influence pricing amongst fashion brands. The first internal factor is the cost of production. Secondly, the sector is also plagued by institutional constraints and a lack of government in the form of grants, funds, and loans. Despite the impact of the Nigerian fashion industry on the GDP and the high level of demand for luxury fashion in Nigeria, a lack of support and institutional factors also influence the increase in price and the lack of accessibility to luxury fashion brands by Nigerian women.

The lack of institutional support implies that Nigerian fashion brands embrace the use of cost-based pricing, ‘which involves setting prices based on the costs of producing, distributing, and selling the product plus a fair rate of return for the company’s effort and risk’. This however affects customers’ decision-making because of a lack of disposable income and low purchase behaviour, which could affect customer acquisition and retention (Shin et al., 2012).

## Promotion

Nigerian fashion brands effectively advertise their products through fashion shows like the *Lagos Fashion and Design Week* and the *GTBank Fashion Weekend* where they engage in competitive advertising and showcase their brand’s features, originality, and functionality to their target audience. Though this is effective in ensuring market penetration and showcasing the features and distinctiveness of the brand, the market penetration might not be effective for the Nigerian middle and lower class.

Secondly, Nigerian fashion brands employ the use of social media influencers to promote their fashion designs. For instance, fashion designer Lanre Da Silva utilized popular Big Brother Nigeria contestant, Erica, as her fashion brand ambassador. Also, Nigerian fashion brands employ the use of existing fashion influencers based in Nigeria as part of their social media marketing. For instance, Nigerian ready-to-wear brand *Myt5s*, a contemporary female apparel brand *Adey Soile*, a custom-made womenswear brand *Fablanebyderin*, and a women's wear fashion designer *Toju Foye* collaborate with millennial fashion influencer/actress Ini-Dima Okojie to promote their brand to young millennial and gen Z women.

Nigerian designers also promote their designs across the domestic shores using Hollywood actors, writers, and politicians to pay tribute to the African heritage, promote Nigerian brands across the domestic shores, and influence the buying decisions of consumers across Nigeria. For instance, Rihanna was the first celebrity to wear an Ankara-printed shirt in 2014 during President Obama's second term (Toure, 2019). Similarly, we have Nigerian writer, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie collaborating with Nigerian designers like *Fia Factory*, *Grey*, and *Ladunni Lambo* to wear Nigerian-made clothes for identity and political reasons. She states, "this project is an act of benign nationalism, a paean to peaceful self-sufficiency, a gesture towards what is still possible; it is my uncomplicated act for complicated times" (Financial Times, 2017). These collaborations and partnerships could influence consumer buying behaviours of female consumers who aspire to be like Chimamanda and Ngozi Okonjo Iweala in Nigeria and across the domestic shores.

The use of influencers and opinion leaders have been employed by various organizations because of their exposure to relevant media, being peer groups of the target market, they aim to influence (Baines, 2019). Chan and Misra's (1990) discriminant analysis revealed the varied characteristics of an opinion leader, as public individuation, product familiarity, and personal involvement. They are also referred to as influencers; Enke and Borchers (2019, p. 261) define a social media influencer as "third-party actors who have established a significant number of relevant relationships with a specific quality to influence organizational stakeholders through content production, content distribution, interaction, and personal appearance on the social web".

People who are publicly individuated differ from others based on their actions and behaviour, which results in public attention (Chan & Misra, 1990; Cho et al., 2012). This public differentiation gives the positive impression that the individual is unique in their identity and individuality (Chan & Misra, 1990). Opinion leaders who can stand out and differentiate themselves from others would be able to successfully disseminate information about the brand to others, thus, increase market penetration (Baines, 2019; Chan & Misra, 1990). Secondly, an opinion leader must be very knowledgeable and familiar with the product they are selling, because the level of knowledge and information possessed will impact the quality of information that is disseminated to the target audience (Chan & Misra, 1990). Empirical studies show opinion leadership affects consumers' intention to follow the influencer's advice (Casalo, Flavian & Ibanez-Sanchez, 2020; Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019).

Studies have found that social media influence led to positive consumer behavioural outcomes (Ki & Kim, 2019; Lim et al., 2017; Silva et al., 2020) like trust and brand engagement (Delbaere et al., 2020), and influence perception of information credibility and decision-making (Cooley & Parks-Yancy, 2019). Despite the positive implications of social media marketing through the use of influencers, there exists a dark side of social media influencing that could affect the consumption of fashion brands in Nigeria (Baccarella et al., 2018; Scheinbaum, 2017). According to the theory of persuasion knowledge, the use of social media influencers has also been posed to have "inference of manipulative intent", which has negative effects on the perception of trustworthiness and corporate reputation (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Guo & Main, 2012; Walsh et al., 2009; Xie & Peng, 2009). Empirical studies show that customers may be deceptively exposed to purchasing from a fashion brand because of the influencer and observing a discrepancy between what was promoted via social media influencers and what was bought (Mavlanova et al., 2008; Mukonza et al., 2021). Social media influencers may also be perceived as not acting in the best interest of their consumers since they have been paid endorsement fees (Liljander et al., 2015; Gökerik et al. (2018)), and thus, we experience a lack of authenticity (Audrezet et al., 2018).

## Conclusion

This chapter contributes to research on ethnicity and consumer purchasing behaviour by examining how Nigerian fashion brands influence the psychological choices of their target audience. A limitation of this study is its lack of scientific rigour which makes it impossible to generalize this study to a wider population. Issues of generalizability occur because of the focus on a single unit. However, this focus on a single unit enables a rich description and knowledge of the phenomena and advances the knowledge base of the area (Nguyen & Mogaji, 2022a; Reis, 2009; Stake, 2005).

Another limitation of the case study research includes issues of validity and reliability. Due to the subjectivity and role of the researcher's interpretations of the case, the problem of bias could occur. Hamil (1993, p. 23) states that case study research "lacks rigor in the collection, construction, and analysis of empirical materials that give rise to the study". This argument has been countered by other scholars who argue based on the strength of case study research and the difference in the "ideology, epistemology and methodology" it presents (Reis, 2009).

Another limitation of this research is its reliance on qualitative data sources from verbal reports like personal interviews with fashion designers. The use of other data sources like quantitative data would have enabled the means of 'perceptual triangulation' and provided a much fuller picture of the case at study.

The implication of the issues raised in this study is manifold. Firstly, government institutions in Nigeria have to make a significant investment in the fashion industry to reduce the cost of production for fashion designers in Nigeria. As much as this chapter has examined the role of fashion brands and their influence on consumer purchasing behaviour by influencing the self-identity of consumers through the use of African designs, more has to be done to ensure that the consumer can purchase Nigerian fashion brands by investing financially into the sector. Secondly, macroeconomic factors like an increase in the exchange rate, price inflation, level of disposable income, and government policies have affected consumer purchase behaviour.



To further advance research on fashion marketing in developing countries like Nigeria, we recommend studies that measure the extent to which African designs influence the self-identity of Nigerian women (Nguyen & Mogaji, 2021b). Also, future research should be undertaken on consumer behaviour across different ethnic groups in Nigeria. Due to the heterogeneity and highly fragmented market, understanding the diverse behaviours across multi-ethnic groups will help advance understanding of consumer behaviour in a highly fragmented society. In addition, future studies should examine the dark side of influencer or digital marketing in developing countries with a lack of respect for rule of law and a low deficit of trust.

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