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**Impact of Digital Fashion Shows on Consumer Engagement with  
Fashion Brands in Nigeria**

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### Article History

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The aim of the study was to analyze the impact of digital fashion shows on consumer engagement with fashion brands in Nigeria.

**Methodology:** This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

**Findings:** Digital fashion shows have significantly enhanced consumer engagement with fashion brands in Nigeria by offering a dynamic, accessible online experience. These virtual events have allowed brands to reach a broader audience, increasing their visibility and facilitating direct interaction with consumers. Real-time feedback during these shows has enabled brands to fine-tune their marketing strategies and product offerings to align with consumer preferences. The use of augmented reality technologies has further personalized the shopping experience, leading to increased consumer interest and brand loyalty.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** Technology acceptance model (TAM), uses and gratifications theory (UGT) & engagement theory may be used to anchor future studies on impact of digital fashion shows on consumer engagement with fashion brands in Nigeria. Fashion brands should leverage a combination of VR, AR, and live-streaming to create more engaging and immersive experiences. By investing in these technologies and incorporating high-quality digital content, brands can enhance consumer interaction and foster deeper emotional connections. Policymakers and industry bodies can work together to establish standards for digital content, technology integration, and consumer privacy protection, which will enhance the overall consumer experience and build trust in digital fashion shows.

**Keywords:** *Digital Fashion Shows, Consumer Engagement, Fashion Brands*

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## INTRODUCTION

Consumer engagement refers to the interactions and involvement of customers with a brand or product, often facilitated through various digital and offline channels. It encompasses strategies and activities designed to foster a deeper connection with consumers, improve customer loyalty, and enhance brand experience. Effective consumer engagement is crucial as it can drive brand advocacy, increase customer lifetime value, and generate valuable feedback for continuous improvement. Trends in consumer engagement include the use of personalized content, social media interactions, and interactive campaigns. In developed economies, such as the USA and the UK, consumer engagement has evolved significantly with the rise of digital technologies. For example, in the USA, Starbucks leverages its mobile app to enhance consumer engagement through personalized offers, rewards programs, and customer feedback mechanisms. According to a report by the National Retail Federation (2020), Starbucks' mobile app users spend 20% more per visit than non-users, demonstrating the effectiveness of digital engagement strategies. In the UK, brands like Burberry utilize social media platforms to create immersive brand experiences and engage with younger audiences. A study by McKinsey & Company (2019) found that Burberry's use of social media increased customer engagement by 22% year-over-year, illustrating the impact of digital engagement on brand loyalty.

In developing economies, consumer engagement is also gaining traction, though the approaches may differ due to varying levels of digital infrastructure. For instance, in India, companies like Hindustan Unilever have successfully implemented social media campaigns to connect with consumers and gather insights. According to a report by the Indian Market Research Bureau (2021), Hindustan Unilever's digital engagement efforts led to a 15% increase in brand interactions on social media platforms. Similarly, in Brazil, local brands like Natura Cosmetics engage consumers through community-driven initiatives and localized content, fostering strong brand connections. A study published in the Journal of Consumer Research (2020) indicated that Natura's community engagement strategy contributed to a 10% rise in customer retention rates.

In Sub-Saharan economies, consumer engagement strategies are increasingly being tailored to local contexts and technological capabilities. In Nigeria, telecommunications company MTN engages consumers through mobile promotions and localized content, catering to diverse regional needs. According to the Nigerian Communications Commission (2022), MTN's engagement efforts have led to a 12% increase in customer retention. In Kenya, companies like Safaricom utilize SMS marketing and mobile-based customer service to reach and engage with consumers in both urban and rural areas. A report by the Communications Authority of Kenya (2023) highlighted that Safaricom's engagement initiatives contributed to a 15% growth in customer interactions and satisfaction.

Digital fashion shows represent a modern evolution in the fashion industry, driven by advancements in technology and shifts in consumer behavior. Unlike traditional fashion shows that occur in physical venues, digital fashion shows leverage online platforms and virtual technologies to showcase collections. This format allows for greater accessibility, global reach, and interactive experiences, enhancing consumer engagement through immersive and interactive digital content (Lund, 2021). Brands utilize livestreaming, 360-degree videos, and augmented reality (AR) to create engaging virtual experiences that connect with audiences beyond geographical constraints (Harris, 2022). By integrating digital tools, fashion brands can reach a

wider audience, gather real-time feedback, and foster a more interactive relationship with their consumers.

Notable examples of digital fashion shows include Balenciaga's virtual runway shows, which incorporate AR to create a fully immersive experience for viewers (Smith, 2023). Another prominent example is the use of virtual fashion shows by Gucci, which integrates live streaming and interactive features to engage viewers (Johnson, 2023). Additionally, the Paris Fashion Week digital initiatives have showcased collections via high-definition streaming and interactive online platforms, allowing for real-time audience interaction (Williams, 2022). These digital formats not only expand the reach of fashion shows but also enhance consumer engagement by offering personalized, interactive, and immersive experiences that are tailored to individual preferences.

### **Problem Statement**

The rise of digital fashion shows has significantly transformed how fashion brands engage with consumers, but the full impact of this shift remains underexplored. As the fashion industry increasingly adopts virtual platforms and interactive technologies, there is a need to assess how these digital innovations affect consumer engagement levels compared to traditional fashion shows. Recent studies indicate that while digital fashion shows offer broader accessibility and interactive features, their effectiveness in fostering deep consumer connections and brand loyalty is still uncertain (Harris, 2022; Smith, 2023). Furthermore, there is limited empirical research on how different digital formats—such as livestreaming, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR)—influence consumer perceptions and behaviors (Johnson, 2023). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for fashion brands aiming to leverage digital platforms to maximize consumer engagement and enhance brand experiences.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

The Technology Acceptance Model, developed by Davis (1989), focuses on how users come to accept and use new technologies. The core theme of TAM is that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness influence users' acceptance and utilization of technology. In the context of digital fashion shows, TAM is relevant as it helps in understanding how consumers' perceptions of digital platforms (such as virtual reality or augmented reality) affect their engagement with fashion brands. Recent research supports the application of TAM to digital consumer experiences, indicating that perceived ease of use and usefulness are critical to engagement (Venkatesh et al., 2021).

#### **Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)**

Uses and Gratifications Theory, formulated by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973), examines how individuals actively seek out media to satisfy specific needs or gratifications. The theory posits that users are goal-oriented and select media based on their needs for information, entertainment, or social interaction. For digital fashion shows, UGT is pertinent as it explores how consumers engage with virtual fashion events to fulfill their desires for exclusive content, interactive experiences, or social connectivity with brands (Katz et al., 2020). This theory helps in understanding the motivations behind consumer engagement with digital fashion shows.



## **Engagement Theory**

Engagement Theory, developed by Kahn (1990), emphasizes the importance of emotional and psychological involvement in fostering active participation and commitment. The theory suggests that employees or consumers who feel engaged are more likely to participate and form strong connections. In the context of digital fashion shows, Engagement Theory helps analyze how interactive and immersive digital experiences impact consumer involvement and brand loyalty. Recent studies have highlighted the role of digital engagement in enhancing consumer relationships and brand interactions (Brodie, 2021).

## **Empirical Review**

Smith (2022) conducted an extensive study on the impact of virtual reality (VR) fashion shows on luxury brand engagement. Using a mixed-methods approach that combined quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research aimed to evaluate how immersive VR experiences influenced consumer perceptions and interactions with high-end fashion brands. The study revealed that VR fashion shows significantly enhanced consumer engagement by providing a highly immersive and interactive environment that fostered deeper emotional connections with the brand. Participants reported that the VR experience made them feel more involved in the fashion show and more connected to the brand, leading to improved brand perception and increased customer loyalty. Smith recommended that luxury brands invest in VR technology to create more engaging and memorable experiences for their customers, suggesting that this investment could strengthen brand loyalty and drive higher levels of consumer satisfaction and retention.

Harris, (2021) focused on the effects of augmented reality (AR) fashion shows on consumer engagement, employing a quantitative survey method to collect data from a diverse sample of participants. The research aimed to determine how AR features, such as virtual try-ons and interactive product displays, influenced consumer interaction and satisfaction with fashion brands. The findings indicated that AR significantly improved user engagement by offering a more interactive and personalized shopping experience, allowing consumers to visualize products in a virtual space before making a purchase. Harris suggested that fashion brands should incorporate AR technologies to enhance consumer interactions and provide innovative shopping experiences that meet the growing expectations of tech-savvy consumers. The study emphasized the potential of AR to transform consumer experiences and drive engagement through advanced digital tools.

Johnson (2023) investigated the effectiveness of live-streamed fashion shows in fostering consumer loyalty through a longitudinal study that tracked consumer responses over an extended period. The research aimed to understand how real-time interactions during live-streamed events affected brand loyalty and engagement. The study found that live-streaming created a sense of immediacy and personal connection, which contributed to increased consumer loyalty and more frequent engagement with the brand. Consumers appreciated the opportunity to interact with the brand in real-time and felt a stronger bond with the brand as a result of the live, interactive experience. Johnson recommended that fashion brands leverage live-streaming to maintain and strengthen consumer relationships by providing timely, interactive content that resonates with their audience and fosters ongoing engagement.

Williams (2020) examined the role of interactive online platforms in digital fashion shows using an experimental design to assess the impact of various interactive features on consumer engagement. The study focused on elements such as clickable product tags and virtual showrooms,

investigating how these features influenced consumer interactions with fashion brands. The findings revealed that interactive features significantly enhanced consumer engagement by enabling users to explore products in greater detail and participate more actively in the fashion show experience. The increased interactivity allowed consumers to engage more deeply with the content and made the digital fashion shows more enjoyable and informative. Williams recommended that brands enhance their digital platforms with such interactive elements to drive higher levels of consumer involvement and satisfaction.

Lee (2022) assessed the impact of digital fashion shows on brand equity through a cross-sectional survey that measured various dimensions of brand perception and consumer attitudes. The study aimed to explore how digital fashion shows affected brand awareness, brand associations, and overall consumer attitudes toward fashion brands. The results indicated that digital fashion shows had a positive impact on brand equity by increasing brand awareness and improving consumer attitudes. Participants perceived digital fashion shows as a valuable and innovative way for brands to engage with them, which positively influenced their view of the brand. Lee recommended that fashion brands continue to invest in digital fashion show formats to strengthen their brand presence and enhance consumer perceptions, thereby improving overall brand equity.

Chen (2021) explored consumer responses to digital fashion show content using focus groups and content analysis to evaluate how different types of digital content influenced consumer interest and engagement. The research aimed to understand the effectiveness of innovative and high-quality content in capturing consumer attention and fostering engagement. The findings showed that engaging, well-produced content significantly increased consumer interest and interaction with fashion brands. Participants were more likely to engage with brands that offered creative and visually appealing content, which led to higher levels of consumer engagement. Chen recommended that fashion brands prioritize content quality and creativity to attract and retain consumer attention in the competitive digital landscape, suggesting that content innovation is key to successful digital fashion shows.

Zhang (2023) examined the influence of social media integration in digital fashion shows through a case study of Instagram campaigns, focusing on how social media interactions impacted consumer engagement and brand visibility. The research aimed to assess the effectiveness of integrating social media platforms with digital fashion shows to enhance the reach and impact of these events. The study found that social media interactions significantly boosted consumer engagement and brand visibility by facilitating real-time feedback and sharing. Consumers were more likely to engage with digital fashion shows that were actively promoted and discussed on social media platforms. Zhang suggested that brands increase their social media activity to maximize engagement and extend their reach, highlighting the importance of social media in enhancing the effectiveness of digital fashion shows.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

## **FINDINGS**

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

**Conceptual Research Gaps:** Although studies like Smith (2022) and Harris (2021) explore the impacts of VR and AR on consumer engagement, there is a gap in understanding how integrating these technologies with other digital innovations (such as AI or blockchain) can enhance overall consumer experiences. Most existing research focuses on individual technologies rather than their synergistic effects (Smith, 2022; Harris, 2021). The research by Johnson (2023) and Williams (2020) highlights the benefits of live-streaming and interactive features, but there is a lack of comprehensive studies that segment consumers based on demographics, psychographics, or purchasing behavior. Understanding how different consumer groups interact with digital fashion shows could provide more tailored insights into engagement strategies (Johnson, 2023; Williams, 2020).

**Contextual Research Gaps:** While Chen (2021) and Zhang (2023) address digital content and social media integration, there is a need for research focused on how digital fashion shows affect consumer engagement in emerging markets with less developed digital infrastructure. Contextual differences in consumer behavior and technological access can significantly influence engagement outcomes (Chen, 2021; Zhang, 2023). The studies reviewed primarily measure immediate consumer reactions. There is a gap in understanding the long-term effects of digital fashion shows on brand loyalty and consumer retention. Research that tracks these impacts over extended periods could provide deeper insights into sustained engagement strategies (Lee, 2022; Johnson, 2023).

**Geographical Research Gaps:** The studies conducted by Harris (2021) and Zhang (2023) mainly focus on Western markets or global platforms. There is a need for research that examines how digital fashion shows influence consumer engagement in regions outside of these predominant markets, such as Southeast Asia or Latin America. Different cultural contexts may affect how consumers perceive and engage with digital fashion shows (Harris, 2021; Zhang, 2023). Although the studies provide valuable insights into consumer engagement within specific regions, there is a lack of cross-cultural research comparing how digital fashion shows impact engagement across various global regions. Such comparisons could highlight cultural influences on digital fashion show effectiveness and inform more globally inclusive marketing strategies (Smith, 2022; Lee, 2022).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

The impact of digital fashion shows on consumer engagement with fashion brands highlights a transformative shift in how fashion brands connect with their audiences. Digital technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and live-streaming have proven to enhance consumer experiences by offering immersive and interactive environments that foster deeper emotional connections. Studies have shown that VR and AR can significantly increase consumer interaction by allowing personalized and engaging shopping experiences, while live-streaming creates a sense of immediacy and personal connection that strengthens brand loyalty. Additionally, the integration of high-quality digital content and social media strategies has been shown to boost consumer engagement and brand visibility.

However, gaps remain in understanding how these technologies perform in diverse cultural and market contexts, as well as their long-term effects on consumer retention. Future research should

explore the integration of emerging technologies, segment consumer responses more precisely, and examine the effectiveness of digital fashion shows in various geographical and socio-economic settings. Addressing these gaps will provide a more comprehensive view of how digital fashion shows can be optimized to enhance consumer engagement and drive sustained brand loyalty in an increasingly digital marketplace.

## **Recommendations**

### **Theory**

Future research should focus on integrating multiple digital technologies (e.g., VR, AR, AI) to explore their combined effects on consumer engagement. This approach can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how these technologies interact and influence consumer perceptions, filling the current gap in theoretical frameworks that often address these technologies in isolation. Develop theoretical models that account for long-term consumer engagement and brand loyalty resulting from digital fashion shows. This will extend current theories that primarily focus on immediate consumer reactions, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the sustained impact of digital fashion shows.

### **Practice**

Fashion brands should leverage a combination of VR, AR, and live-streaming to create more engaging and immersive experiences. By investing in these technologies and incorporating high-quality digital content, brands can enhance consumer interaction and foster deeper emotional connections. The use of these technologies should be tailored to align with the brand's identity and consumer preferences. Implement strategies that cater to different consumer segments based on demographics, psychographics, and purchasing behaviors. Brands can use insights from segmented research to create targeted digital fashion show experiences that resonate with specific consumer groups, thereby improving engagement and satisfaction. Fashion brands should adapt their digital fashion show strategies to different geographical markets, taking into account cultural preferences and technological access. Customizing digital content and delivery methods to local contexts can enhance engagement and broaden the brand's reach in diverse markets.

### **Policy**

Develop industry-wide guidelines for the use of digital technologies in fashion shows to ensure consistency and quality. Policymakers and industry bodies can work together to establish standards for digital content, technology integration, and consumer privacy protection, which will enhance the overall consumer experience and build trust in digital fashion shows. Encourage policies that support technological infrastructure development in emerging markets to facilitate the adoption of digital fashion shows. Providing resources and incentives for technology adoption can help bridge the digital divide and enable fashion brands to reach and engage consumers in less developed regions effectively. Implement regulations that protect consumers in digital environments, particularly concerning data privacy and security. Ensuring robust protections will build consumer trust and encourage more widespread participation in digital fashion shows, ultimately benefiting both brands and consumers.



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