

## UTILISATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SKILL ACQUISITION AMONG FASHION DESIGNERS IN LAGOS AND OYO STATE

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### ABSTRACT

The study examined the utilisation of social media for skill acquisition among fashion designers in Lagos and Oyo States. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select a total of 230 fashion designers from the Nigerian Union of Tailors. Data were obtained using a questionnaire and interview schedule. Percentage, Mean and PPMC ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) were used to analyse the data. Most (60.4%) of the respondents were females with a mean age of  $34.5 \pm 8.44$  years. WhatsApp (93.9%) and Facebook (73.5%) were the most used platforms. Respondents' engagement of social media included connection with other fashion designers (1.957), collection and save of style (1.865), interact with customers (1.830). Business size (1.261), finance (1.226) and data (0.939) were the factors influencing utilisation of social media for skill acquisition. Benefits derived included gain knowledge/information on fashion designing (1.439), more customers (1.409) and increasing income (1.374). Improper time management ( $=0.883$ ), time consumption ( $=0.848$ ) and insufficient data ( $=0.765$ ) were constraints to social media utilisation. There was low level of utilisation of social media for skill acquisition among 58.3% of respondents. Respondents' age (-0.165) and household size (-0.134) significantly correlated with utilisation of social media. Significant relationship existed between level of engagement (0.159), factors influencing the use of social media (0.656), benefit derived (0.446), challenges faced (0.265) and utilisation of social media for skill acquisition. Respondents exhibited low utilisation of social media for skill acquisition despite high engagement on social media. Need for sensitisation through campaigns and provision of network hubs to access internet services.

**Keywords:** Fashion designers, skill acquisition, social media utilisation, WhatsApp, Facebook

### INTRODUCTION

The world has become a global village, with the advent of information technology; this has completely revolutionised livelihoods and communication strategies among people (Onodi, 2023). The advent of the internet and advancements in communication technology in the late 20th century brought dramatic changes in the way the world interacted, traded, communicated, and exchanged ideas (Lubinga, 2023). An integral part of the global transformation in information and communication technology is the gradual rise of social media platforms as primary channels for social interaction, commerce, entertainment, and idea sharing through the building of virtual networks and communities (Akintayo, 2021). Vocational skills such as hair styling, event planning, fashion designing, makeup artistry, and cooking skills can today be acquired on social media. Social media is increasingly being used by fashion designers for different purposes such as marketing, communication, advertisement and sales, among others (Oluwafemi, 2024).

Consequently, skill acquisition, such as fashion designing, entails the progressive development of competencies and proficiency through engagement in diverse experiential and educational contexts (Nwachukwu & Okoli, 2021). Hence, fashion design is one of the acquired entrepreneurial skills that lives with the individual for ages and can generate income when applied to commercial use, especially with the use of social media. (Unimna, Essien, Opo & Unimke, 2021). The power of social media lies in its ability to connect and share information with

anyone or many people simultaneously. According to the Data Reportal (2020), more than 4.5 billion people were using the internet at the start of 2020, while social media users had passed the 3.8 billion. The use of social media by fashion designers has been centred more on marketing aspects, interaction with customers, exploration of styles, and sales. Many social networking platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Google+, microblogging platforms like Twitter, photo sharing platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest, and video sharing platforms like YouTube, Facebook Live and Periscope have been explored by fashion designers (Ranavaade, 2024).

Fashion designing though comes with a lot of benefits, such as economics empowerment, creativity, cultural promotion, and so on, but its physical learning has been marred with some challenges such as tough experiences during master-apprentice training, long years of training, withholding of technical information by masters, seniority among apprentice, running errands for masters and seniors, to mention a few thus, many potential youth learners patronize online training media. In addition, many fashion designers lack relevant and recent knowledge and skills about the current trends, techniques, and concepts in fashion designing. In addition, despite the increasing popularity of social media platforms among fashion designers, studies on their use have been centred more on marketing aspects, interaction with customers, exploration of styles, and sales. There is the need to explore the state of the literature on why and how social media stands out for skill acquisition.

There is insufficient research on utilisation of social media platforms for skill acquisition in the fashion industry and how different social media platforms can be leveraged for different skill acquisition in the study area. It then becomes a necessity to research on extent of utilisation of social media to acquire skills such as fabric cutting, joining, lining of fabrics, drafting patterns, taking accurate measurements, machine maintenance, fabric and textile selection, colour combination, and so on in fashion designing. Social media stands out in skill acquisition due to its ability to provide low-cost, visually driven, interactive, and globally accessible learning opportunities that promote practical, self-paced, and market-relevant skill development. The general objective of the study is to examine the use of social media for skill acquisition among fashion designers and specific objectives are:

1. describe socio-economic characteristics of the fashion designers,
2. identify the social media platforms used by fashion designers,
3. determine the factors influencing the choice of utilisation of social media platforms for skill acquisition in fashion designing,
4. ascertain the benefits derived from utilisation of social media in fashion designing,
5. identify challenges faced in the utilisation of social media platforms by fashion designers.

## METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in Lagos and Oyo States, Nigeria. The states are located in the southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Lagos is the most economically important state of the country and the nation's largest urban area with a population of 15 million. Lagos lies approximately between latitudes 6° 22' N and 6° 52' N, and longitudes 2° 42' E and 3° 42' E. Its capital is Ikeja, and it has 20 local government areas. It is the hub of technology and businesses in Nigeria. While Oyo State is the Zonal headquarter of the southwestern states in Nigeria. Its capital is Ibadan, and Ibadan is the third most populous city of Oyo with a total population of 7, 840 864 residents (National Bureau of Statistics 2016). The state lies between latitudes 7° 31' and 21° north and longitudes 2° 47' and 4° 23' east of the meridian. Oyo state has 33 Local Government Areas with eleven Local Governments in the Ibadan Metropolitan area that consist of five urban local governments in the city and six semi-urban local

governments in the less city. It is also one of the city's housing a wide population of fashion designers.

The population of the study comprised registered members of the Nigeria Union of Tailors (NUT) in Lagos and Oyo States. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. In Lagos State, 50% of the metropolitan Local Government Areas (7 out of 14) were selected through simple random sampling. Thereafter, 10% of the towns in each selected LGA and 10% of the registered fashion designers in each town were randomly selected, yielding 140 respondents.

In Oyo State, Ibadan metropolis was purposively selected due to the concentration of fashion designers. Subsequently, 50% of the urban LGAs (3 out of 5) and 50% of the semi-urban LGAs (3 out of 6) were randomly selected. From each selected LGA, 10% of the towns and 10% of the registered designers per town were randomly selected, resulting in 90 respondents. The total sample size was 230 fashion designers

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Socioeconomic characteristics

The result in Table 1 shows that nearly half (49.1 %) of the fashion designers held secondary-school credentials, 36.5% had tertiary education, while 3.0% had no formal education. Thus, most respondents have an appreciable level of education, which may enhance the social-media utilisation. The age distribution indicated the  $\bar{x}$  age was 34.5, pointing to a relatively young and productive cohort. Gender-wise, females dominated at 60.4 %, implying that Women were more actively involved than men in the trade. This female predominance aligns with recent research highlighting the growing entrepreneurial presence of women in Nigeria's fashion industry (Abdulraheem, 2024).

### Utilised social media platforms by respondents

Results in Table 2 revealed that fashion designers mostly utilised WhatsApp (93.9%), Facebook (73.5%), Instagram (52.6%), TikTok (57.8%) and television (56.5%) platforms. However, some respondents used Telegram (30.0%), Pinterest (8.3%) and YouTube (45.7%). It implies that social media platforms are a useful tool for fashion designers. Findings of this study are in consonance with the findings of Adegbola and Adegbola (2021), who opined that social media sites, especially Instagram, have played a significant role in promoting Nigerian fashion and linking designers with potential clients.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by socioeconomic characteristics**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
<b>Age Group</b>			
20years below	6	2.6	34.5±8.44
21-30years	82	35.7	
31-40years	88	38.3	
Above 40years	54	23.5	
<b>Sex of respondent</b>			
Male	91	39.6	
Female	139	60.4	
<b>Religion</b>			
Christianity	110	47.8	
Islam	119	51.7	
None	1	0.4	
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	61	26.5	
Married	163	70.9	
Divorced	1	0.4	
Widowed	1	0.4	
Separated	4	1.7	
<b>Educational Background</b>			
No formal Education	7	3.0	
Adult Education	5	2.2	
Primary Education	21	9.1	
Secondary Education	113	49.1	
Tertiary Education	84	36.5	
<b>Years of Experience</b>			
0-5years	57	24.8	
6-10years	79	34.3	
11years and above	94	40.9	
<b>Estimated Monthly Income</b>			
0-10,000	21	9.1	21, 783
10,001-20,000	32	13.9	
20,001 and above	177	77	
<b>Household Size Group</b>			
1-3 household size	113	49.1	3.8±1.9
4-6 Household size	98	42.6	
7-9 Household size	17	7.4	
Above 9 household size	2	0.9	

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents by social media platforms used**

Available social media platform	Yes (%)	No (%)
WhatsApp	93.9	6.1
Facebook	73.5	26.5
Tik Tok	57.8	42.2
Television	56.5	43.5
Telegram	30	70
Pinterest	8.3	91.7

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Factors influencing the choice of utilisation of social media for skill acquisition**

The result in Table 3 shows that business size ( $\bar{x}$ =1.261), finance ( $\bar{x}$ =1.226), insufficient data ( $\bar{x}$ =0.939), internet service ( $\bar{x}$ =0.891), education ( $\bar{x}$ =0.826), time ( $\bar{x}$ =0.648), and social media addiction ( $\bar{x}$ =0.570) influenced social media utilisation among fashion designers. Designers with

reliable internet access used social media more effectively for skill acquisition. Platforms requiring high data and time commitments (e.g., YouTube) were less used than those demanding lower data and education levels (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp). Larger businesses and better-educated designers showed higher adoption due to greater resources and digital literacy. Conversely, limited finance, poor

internet and low education restricted use. These findings align with Adeyemi, Akinola, and Oluyemi (2021) and Olaleye et al. (2021), who emphasised

that access to digital technology significantly enhances fashion designers' ability to learn using social media.

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents by factors influencing utilisation of social media for skill acquisition**

Factors influencing the choice of media utilization	Great Factor (%)	Lesser factor (%)	Not a factor (%)	Mean	SD	Rank
Business size	51.7	22.6	25.6	1.261	0.842	1 <sup>st</sup>
Finance	49.1	24.3	26.5	1.226	0.842	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Data availability	33	27.8	39.1	0.939	0.849	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Internet service	25.2	38.7	36.1	0.891	0.777	4 <sup>th</sup>
Level of Education	23.9	34.8	41.3	0.826	0.790	5 <sup>th</sup>
Time	20	24.8	55.2	0.648	0.794	6 <sup>th</sup>
Addiction to social media	10.9	35.2	53.9	0.570	0.682	7 <sup>th</sup>
Age	13.9	15.7	70.4	0.435	0.725	8 <sup>th</sup>
Flair for social media	10.4	22.2	67.4	0.430	0.675	9 <sup>th</sup>
Fear of social media	12.2	18.3	69.6	0.426	0.700	10 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Benefits derived from the utilisation of social media for skill acquisition in fashion designing**

Results from Table 4 revealed a high benefit (70.9%) derived from using social media by fashion designers for their business. This implies that the utilisation of social media by fashion designers comes with lots of benefits, such as improving networks, getting feedback, easy access to information, brand building, acquiring skills, exposure to new trends, and so much more. A study by Ogunrinde, & Omotoso (2021) revealed that fashion designers have access to tutorials, how-to videos, and online training programs. The results show that fashion designers derived numerous benefits from the utilisation of social media platforms, with varying levels of intensity.

The most highly ranked benefit is gaining knowledge and information on fashion designing, with a  $\bar{x}$  score of 1.439, indicating that a large

proportion of respondents perceived social media as a major source of learning and professional development. This implies that social media plays a critical role in improving technical and creative competencies among fashion designers.

The benefits of establishing good customer service and expansion of business through attracting more customers were jointly ranked 2nd with a  $\bar{x}$  score of 1.409 each. This suggests that social media significantly enhances customer relations and business growth by creating direct interaction between designers and clients, as well as widening their market reach.

The least ranked benefit was improved visibility, which ranked 10th with a  $\bar{x}$  score of 1.126. Although these benefits were perceived to a lesser extent, they still indicate that social media contributes to branding, market awareness, and personal recognition.

**Table 4: Distribution of the benefits derived from utilisation of social media for skill acquisition in Fashion designing**

Benefits derived	Large %	Small %	Not a benefit %	Mean	Rank
Gain knowledge/information on fashion designing	68.7	6.52	24.8	1.439	1 <sup>st</sup>
Establish good customer service	64.3	11.3	23.5	1.409	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Expansion of business/more customers	61.7	10.4	24.3	1.409	2 <sup>nd</sup>
improve sales				1.404	4 <sup>th</sup>
Establish good communication with other fashion designers/sharing knowledge and information	63.9	11.3	24.8		
Increase income	61.7	13.9	24.3	1.374	5 <sup>th</sup>
Knowledge of trendy styles	54.8	22.2	23	1.317	6 <sup>th</sup>
Learn to take accurate Measurement of clients	50.9	24.8	24.3	1.265	7 <sup>th</sup>
Adequate access to market information	40	33.9	26.1	1.139	8 <sup>th</sup>
Improve social status	38.7	36.1	25.2	1.135	9 <sup>th</sup>
Marketing of products	40.9	31.7	27.4	1.135	9 <sup>th</sup>
Improve visibility	38.7	35.2	26.1	1.126	10 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey (2023)

Table 4b shows that a large majority of the respondents (70.9%) derived high benefits from using social media, while only 29.1% experienced low benefits. This indicates that social media is generally perceived as highly beneficial by most respondents. The mean benefit score of 15.5 with a standard deviation of 9.1 suggests a moderate spread

in the level of benefits derived, implying that although most respondents benefit greatly, the degree of benefit varies among individuals. Overall, the table highlights that social media plays a significant and positive role in benefiting the respondents.

**Table 4b: Categorisation based on benefit derived from using social media**

Benefits categories	Percentage	Mean	SD
Low benefit	29.1	15.5	9.1
High benefit	70.9		
Total	100.0		

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Challenges of social media for skill acquisition**

Results in Table 5 indicate that the most severe challenges faced by fashion designers in the study area include *time constraints* ( $\bar{x}=0.883$ ), implying that a significant proportion of respondents are too busy with daily responsibilities to actively engage in social media-based learning. Although 43% indicated that it is not a challenge, the combined proportion of those who experience it as severe or mild (58%) shows that time remains a major limiting factor. The second is *time consuming* ( $\bar{x}=0.848$ ), suggesting that many respondents perceive the process of learning skills via social media as requiring excessive time. This perception may discourage sustained participation and reduce the effectiveness of social media as a tool for continuous skill development. This was followed by *network issues* ( $\bar{x}=0.822$ ). Next is *inadequate power supply* ( $\bar{x}=0.783$ ), *insufficient data* ( $\bar{x}=0.765$ ), *limited digital literacy* ( $\bar{x}=0.691$ ), and lastly, *cyberbullying* ( $\bar{x}=0.657$ ).

There is a difference between lack of power supply and battery issues in the table lies in their severity level, prevalence, and overall impact on social media use for skill acquisition:

Lack of power supply is a more serious and widespread challenge. It has 20.4% of respondents reporting it as severe, A higher mean score of 0.783, and it is ranked 4th among all challenges. This shows that poor electricity supply is a major infrastructural barrier affecting many respondents.

Battery issues, on the other hand, are a less severe and less common challenge. It records only 9.1% as severe, A much lower mean score of 0.383, and it is ranked 15th (last) among the challenges. This suggests that battery problems have a relatively minor effect on respondents compared to power supply problems in Nigeria as a major barrier to fashion designers’ use of social media for career advancement.

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents based on challenges faced in the utilisation of social media for skill acquisition**

Challenges faced	Severe	Mild	Not a challenge	Mean	SD	Rank
	%	%	%			
Do not have the time	31.3	26.7	43	0.883	0.856	1 <sup>st</sup>
Time consuming	21.3	42.1	36.5	0.848	0.747	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Network issues	20	42.1	37.8	0.822	0.741	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Lack of power supply	20.4	37.4	42.2	0.783	0.763	4 <sup>th</sup>
Insufficient data	15.7	45.2	39.1	0.765	0.704	5 <sup>th</sup>
Low knowledge of use	14.3	40.4	45.2	0.691	0.709	6 <sup>th</sup>
Cyberbullying	12.6	40.4	47	0.657	0.693	7 <sup>th</sup>
Blurry illustrations	15.7	33	51.3	0.644	0.738	8 <sup>th</sup>
High cost of subscription	18.3	21.7	60	0.583	0.782	9 <sup>th</sup>
Expensive to use	16.5	20.4	63	0.535	0.763	10 <sup>th</sup>
Short attention span	15.7	22.1	62.2	0.535	0.751	10 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of trust of customers	15.7	18.7	65.7	0.500	0.752	12 <sup>th</sup>
Do not have internet-based phones	13	17.0	70	0.430	0.713	13 <sup>th</sup>
Exposure to fraudsters	9.1	21.7	69.1	0.400	0.652	14 <sup>th</sup>
Battery issues	9.1	20	70.9	0.383	0.649	15 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey (2023)

**Relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and utilisation of social media by respondents**

The result in Table 6 shows a significant relationship between estimated monthly income ( $\chi^2= 6.812, p< 0.05$ ) and utilisation of social media.

However, fashion designers' estimated income influences the use of social media for their business, as the urge to make more profit and the number of responsibilities they face can prompt them to look for ways to expand their business and increase profits.

**Table 6: Relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of respondents and the utilisation of social media.**

Variable	$\chi^2$ value	p-value	df
Sex	1.856	0.173	1
Religion	2.352	0.309	2
Marital Status	3.920	0.417	4
Education Background	9.224	0.056	4
Years of Experience	1.785	0.410	2
Estimated monthly income	6.812	0.033	2

Source: Field survey (2023)

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The study concluded that fashion designers used social media platforms. Although, the overall level of utilisation of social media for skill acquisition was low, fashion designers specifically utilised YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Pinterest, and TikTok to acquire technical and creative skills such as sewing trendy styles, pattern drafting, and textile knowledge. The benefits of social media such as increased sales, income, visibility, and social recognition motivate continued engagement. Despite these benefits, they experienced challenges like limited time and high data costs in the course of social media usage. The study recommends that designers of all ages should engage multiple platforms for diverse learning, there should be financial and infrastructural support from network providers to promote affordable access, continuous learning, and greater participation in online fashion communities.

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