GRADUATE SCHOOL
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

12-2022

An Evaluation of Media Messaging by African Fashion Designers and Marketing Message Strategies

Esther Oyindamola Oyanibi
East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.etsu.edu/etd

Part of the Communication Technology and New Media Commons

An Evaluation of Media Messaging by African Fashion Designers and Marketing Message

Strategies

_____

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Media and Communication

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Brand and Media Strategy

_____

by

Esther Oyindamola Oyanibi

December 2022

_____

Dr. Susan E. Waters (Chair)

Dr. Andrew Dunn

Dr. Anthony Chase Mitchell

ABSTRACT

An Evaluation of Media Messaging by African Fashion Designers and Marketing Message

Strategies

by

Esther Oyindamola Oyanibi

In recent times, African brands have been featured heavily in global landscape fashion events,

with brands from Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya leading the way. Although such recognition

could be traced to their expertise, the unique approach of African brands involves putting out

unique designs that easily stand out in the global fashion market. However, their uniqueness goes

beyond the designs they put out, as it is also strongly expressed in their media messaging as a

whole and, consequentially, their marketing strategy as a whole.

This study provides a content analysis of the most important characteristics of eight brands from

different regions of the African continent. It examines 20 photos each from their Instagram

account, analyzing a total of 160 photos. Results point out the distinct market penetration

approach of the different brands from each region and how it reflects in their media brand voice

as a whole.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother, Mrs. Wemimo Mercy Oyanibi who was and will remain a big part of my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1. Introduction

A recent rise in social media marketing (SMM) has made it more prevalent in Africa, and African designers have utilized the same in promoting and selling their clothing lines. SMM has made people aware of world fashion (Alarape et al., 2019). This research evaluates the origin and history of African fashion overtly. The increased curiosity expressed by customers has further boosted the production rate. Africa has several indigenous groups and populations, and their culture largely influences fashion couture. Previously, rich African culture has been represented with the help of clothing and fashion accessories on world fashion platforms (Arthur, 2020). Fashion designers are interested in Africa-based clotheslines (Devkota et al., 2020). They have been experimenting with existing style statements and preparing clothing items that are more in line with the present day. The various advantages, as well as disadvantages provided by SMM, are explored here. For example, it helps in accessing a more significant segment of consumers. Social networking sites, such as Instagram, enhanced knowledge acquisition regarding African fashion (Karikari, 2022). However, as Sobande and Osei (2020) argue, increased competition among brands could affect the purchase rate at various times.

The role of media-based messaging services has also been explored here. As Alarape et al. (2019) mentioned, SMM was seen to improve customer communication. Further, retailers could resolve queries placed by consumers in real time. Therefore, such strategies have been found to boost customer loyalty toward a brand. Computer-mediated communication also helps in keeping consumers updated regarding the latest fashion launches. As stated by DeBerry-Spence and Izberk-Bilgin (2021), fashion has become global. In addition, it is essential to understand changing customer preferences and choices. As supported by Alarape et al. (2019), regular and constant communication with consumers could help modify services accordingly. In

this regard, different theories have been identified and compared with one another to help understand the customer decision-making approach. There has been a significant impact of westernization on fashion products, manufacturing, and style (Sobande & Osei, 2020). A detailed discussion of this aspect has been provided in this study. The research questions are presented in a subsequent section to identify the right approach for data collection and analysis. The importance of the topic has been further mentioned within the rationale—limitations aid in understanding constraints that the researcher may have faced.

Rationale

Westernization has a significant impact on the culture and style of a region. Therefore, the African sub-continent has been taken into consideration. Devkota et al. (2020) mentioned that the mixing of global cultures influences dressing preferences. As Alarape et al. (2019) stated, rich and native culture has so far impacted African fashion. However, as Sobande and Osei (2020) argued, most fashion designers are currently focusing on designing clothing lines that combine western and eastern cultures. Many fashion designer schools have supported westernizing African fashion (DeBerry-Spence & Izberk-Bilgin, 2021). In addition, social media marketing for promoting and selling Africa-based accessories and clothing designs has received positive responses from around the world (Lando, 2020). Therefore, the existing manufacturing styles have been modified to fit an international audience. However, as opposed by Calvain (2019), the indigenous nature in designs is lost as per certain schools of thought.

Faster globalization and a boost in internet penetration have changed fashion globalization drastically (Schlossberg, 2019). Demirdağ and Khalifa (2020) reported that 35% of African customers have mentioned that they want to explore world fashion. Increased westernization has led to consumers feeling that Africa-based clothing and accessories styles are

inferior in comparison to other nations. Gil (2021) mentioned that Africa has a rich history of fighting against colonialism. Therefore, it is also reflected in their arts, literature, music, and fashion. Thus, rapid urbanization threatens their cultural heritage and past (Vilarinho & Christiaans, 2020). So, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of some of these aspects. In addition, the role of the media has also been evaluated here. As mentioned by Pooe (2020), social media marketing has helped generate sufficient awareness of fast fashion. As supported by Ojo et al. (2022), improving communication through SMM has boosted sales significantly. The study helps identify different limitations faced by African designers and retailers. Depending on the findings of the study, strategic measures could be implemented.

Summary

This research explores the role media messaging plays in promoting fashion brands internationally. The study considers African clothes designers in particular. Fashion designers primarily promote their products using social networking sites such as Instagram. Further, different theories also need to be consulted to help comprehend consumer buying patterns. Different academic texts and literature are used to explain the background or context of this research. Rationale helps in understanding the need for future research. There are also several limitations listed in this study that the researcher has encountered.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Mediated Communication – A Concept

Communication is one of the significant factors that have been affecting the daily lives of people across the world. According to Baumel et al. (2021), communication and interactions help shed light on the symbols, signs, shared experiences, strategic relations, and the physical environment maintained by an individual while maintaining interactions with other people. Li and Kent (2021) state that it is necessary to include a medium for human communication to help improve the activities involved in passing the intended messages to the target audience. Meier and Reinecke (2021) emphasize the integration of media with other categories of communication for effective and efficient transmission of messages across the target audience. In the case of the traditional media involved in communication, the message's reach was limited to a specific territorial boundary. As a result, business organizations were limited in reaching out to a broader audience, thereby affecting their expansion and leading to shorter reach for individual messages that restricted the spread of the concerned message beyond a specific area. The rise of online communication media, such as social media, helped individuals and business organizations communicate with a wider audience across transnational borders, leading to an increase in the use of online communication media. Yao and Ling (2020) state that this led to the introduction of various devices like computers, mobile phones, and other such devices that could be useful for spreading a specific message across a wider audience, thereby enhancing the popularity of a given business organization as well as helping in conducting communication across a wider area.

Treem et al. (2020) assert that proper communication channels are crucial to conducting and maintaining interpersonal communication. Moreover, in the modern era, communication

processes are increasingly mediated by computers and smartphones, leading to an increase in the use of computer-mediated communication processes overall.

Computer-mediated communication, or CMC as defined by Tang and Hew (2018), generally refers to all the interactions conducted with the help of technology media alongside face-to-face communication procedures. In simple words, computer-mediated communication generally involves the methods of knowledge expression, transmission, and encoding of the message with the help of a telecommunication network along with the environment of human interactions with the help of specific symbolic text that maintains directions and facilitations through digital means. Computer-mediated communication generally includes simulated communication with the help of media, irrespective of the fact that the message is created by an individual or an organization to promote awareness regarding some issues. The computer-mediated communication, as observed by Nadler (2020), includes multi-user interactions, telephonic texts, instant messaging activities, email messages, and website promotions.

Social Media – A Mode Of Mediated Communication

One of the most popular forms of mediated communication today is social media channels and platforms. Carr (2020) argues that these channels and platforms are beneficial for promoting entertainment and communication activities with the help of shared content. One of the significant advantages of the social media platform is the easy access that is provided to individuals who have been using these platforms regularly. Herring (2019) argues that these platforms are generally web-based or can be accessed with the help of applications that are directly downloadable to various mobile devices like computers, laptops, smartphones, and other similar devices that individuals use to maintain easy access to these platforms. These platforms are Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and YouTube. In addition, social media is generally

helpful for developing unity amongst global users with the help of content sharing. However, Mason and Carr (2022) identify that different social media platforms demonstrate different characteristics that contribute to the uniqueness of the concerned platform. LinkedIn, for example, is highly focused on developing business connections.

On the other hand, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are focused on the development of the opinions of individuals regarding any specific incident or activity. YouTube, another central social media platform, is valid for sharing a particular content type. According to Lenkaitis (2020), one of the significant similarities of using social media platforms is the flocking of users across these platforms to gain access to the news and activities that have been taking place worldwide. The mediated communication over the various social media platforms helps individuals maintain connectivity with the other members active across similar platforms and maintain a proper knowledge and understanding regarding the latest activities occurring across transnational boundaries.

Social Media – A Landscape View. According to Martín-Consuegra et al. (2018), it can be stated that social media has come up be one of the biggest platforms in recent times that can increase the sales of fashion brands all over the country. There are different categories of social media, and some of these are blogs, virtual social worlds, and social media networking. All these platforms are highly effective for organizations, and they can utilize these mediums to the maximum benefit (Ma et al., 2019). Despite their benefits, all these social media platforms have catered to the needs of society and benefitted the users in most cases. As a result, social media is becoming increasingly popular throughout the world. Despite the vital role social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram play in contemporary culture, they are highly dependent on mainstream media. People also share various types of information from these

platforms, even if they do not have their profiles. Users can meet new people through social media and exchange their cultural information (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018).

Users can create profiles through social media and make better relationships. They can make conversations and form different groups, which will be highly effective for them (Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020). Social media can exchange information of all kinds using recent technologies. It has been highlighted by Quelhas-Brito et al. (2020) that social media has become an integral part of advertisements for companies, and this has been quite beneficial for the users as well. Different brands can create relationships with customers and provide them with knowledge of the latest products and services. As a result, brands will also become more valuable. Therefore, the brands can attract many efficient and loyal customers (Scuotto et al., 2017).

As a social networking website, Instagram has become very popular. It is a location-based social networking application that allows users to share photos and videos. The founders of this application were Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, who graduated from Stanford University. The application was officially launched on 6th October 2010, in San Francisco, California. In the beginning, this application was called "Burbn." It combined the social media services of Foursquare. However, after some time, the inclination of the application entirely shifted to sharing photos. It has also been observed that users of Instagram can upload their photos in a square format, somewhat different from the traditional 4:3 format.

Instagram introduced features like 'instant camera' and 'telegram' to bring back the nostalgia of old-fashioned photos taken by polaroid cameras (Park et al., 2020). The wide use of Instamatics could also be seen throughout the usage of Instagram. There are also multiple tools through which the quality of photos can be enhanced. Apart from that, there are options to "follow" different users and "like" the photos of those users as well. They have upgraded their

17

features continuously and become one of the world's most popular social networking sites. Facebook owns this brand now, and it has shifted to Meta as the company uses metaverse technology.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Social Identity Theory

The social identity theory, as discussed by Scheepers and Ellemers (2019), highlights the fact that people tend to consider themselves to be members of larger social groups alongside exhibiting feelings that accompany the concerned association or membership when the social identity of the given individual holds precedence over the identity of the person. Social Identity Theory can trace its origin to the early 1970s (Harwood, 2020), when Henri Tajfel and John Turner conducted a series of studies called minimal-group studies. In the study, the British psychologists postulated that social stereotypes and prejudice are the consequences of the perception process (Harwood, 2020). Steffens et al. (2021) opined that stereotypes are generally perceived in the form of positive distinctiveness. This stereotyping, as highlighted by Perry et al. (2022), could also be restricted to specific groups of social individuals, especially those who belong to minority groups or are marginalized. In this regard, belief systems maintained by groups of individuals or certain individuals generally maintain responses, especially while facing confrontation with marginalization (Harwood, 2020).

In the words of Edwards et al. (2019), an individual's self-concept is generally shaped with the help of the concerned individual's social identity. According to the opinions presented by Liao et al. (2020), the sense of belonging maintained by the concerned individual vis-à-vis a category or group maintains a high significance in the development of the social identity of the individual as well as the other impacts of the same. The social identity theory is based on the

18

idea that individuals tend to maintain a distinctive social identity, which helps foster a different and positive identity that the ingroup members maintain. Furthermore, this enhances the distinctiveness and value of the group. Maintaining social identity is vital in the fashion and clothing industries because it helps develop a community which in turn assists in the overall development of social groups. Bochatay et al. (2019) maintain that clothing can symbolize a person's nationality and social status. Hence, the implementation of the social identity theory plays a significant role in clothing and fashion designs.

Objectification Theory

Another primary theory that has been useful in understanding mediated communication refers to the objectification theory. As stated by Frederick et al. (2022), human bodies have been objectified for a long time, even before the existence of mass media channels. The theory was developed in 1997 by Fredrickson and Roberts, stating that human male bodies face objectification due to their utility, while female bodies are generally sexually objectified. Davids et al. (2019) further mention that the mass media has played a significant role in influencing the opinions maintained by the female members of society regarding their presentability amongst the public.

Comiskey et al. (2020) further explain that the objectification of an individual is generally observed across actual social and interpersonal situations. This theory also highlights that a female member of society is generally observed to have viewed themselves from the viewpoint of their male counterparts rather than embracing themselves in their form. The objectification theory also highlights that female members of society generally maintain a self-evaluation from the perspective of others, especially the male members of society, due to excessive exposure to sexual objectification.

In the fashion industry, it is generally observed that clothing materials designed for female members of society are generally judged based on the perspective and viewpoints of men. As observed by Calogero et al. (2021), this activity has been affecting the buying behavior of female members of society. The buying decision of the females generally depends on the prospective sexual objectification they might face if they wear a particular outfit within a certain social and cultural boundary.

Framing Theory

One of the oldest models used in the facilitation of media studies, the framing theory, was initially introduced in 1972 by Erving Goffman. As discussed by Kuan et al. (2021), **frames** were defined by Bateson as a temporary and spatial message set that develops meta-communication on being analyzed together. In the opinions of Clark and Nyaupane (2020), it could be stated that the choices maintained by the frame or the audience in the scenario are affected by the presentation of the same. Reveals that the choices made by individuals during processing the information presented, especially regarding the news and media they have been observing, are affected by the presentation of the concerned information.

According to Yang et al. (2021), framing is highly dependent on the perceptions maintained by individuals regarding reality rather than actual reality. In order to develop a proper perception of the chosen products, business organizations tend to maintain promotional activities that align with the demands and preferences of the target clients. The buying behavior of the organization's clients is highly dependent on the positive and the negative framing of the promotional messages extended by the concerned individuals and business organizations that are active across any given industry.

In the case of the fashion and clothing industry, the development of frames has highly been affecting customer choice. Marketing messages that are negatively framed affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the promotional activities that the concerned organization maintains. Güran and Özarslan (2022) state that the brands that have been dealing in the clothing and fashion industry generally tend to use artificial intelligence, live streaming, augmented reality as well as social media promotions in order to attract and build awareness amongst the target clients regarding the various products that they have been extending towards the target clients.

Lee and Weder (2021) also state that today's designers generally focus on the personalization of their products in order to increase sales while maintaining relationships with African heritage, which serves as one of the primary marketing tools for both the culture as well as the product lines that are marketed across several international and local markets. Influencers who have been highly active across social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok tend to promote fashion products by donning them while creating videos and reels. As a result, African fashion and culture have been spread across international markets.

Africa – An Overview

Regarding land area, Africa holds the second largest position after Asia. Africa covers roughly one-fifth of the planet's surface (Dickson, n.d.). As per the continent's borders, the Atlantic Ocean is in the west, the Indian Ocean is in the east, and the Mediterranean Sea is in the north. In the south of the continent, the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet. Africa has a vast and beautiful landscape full of natural wonders. Africa is one of the world's largest continents in both area and population. Most climate zones in Africa are temperate in the northern and southern

hemispheres. However, Africa mostly witnesses a hot climate, a prevalent aspect here. The probable reason for this hot climate might be precipitation or glaciation (Dickson, n.d.). Africa is the natural habitat for several animals like giraffes, elephants, lions, and others, which cannot be found anywhere else in the world. European countries colonized this continent, and many new countries were born during the 1960s with arbitrary borders. The eight African regions are Sahara, Sahel, Ethiopian Highlands, Saba, Swahili Coast, Tropical Rainforest, African Great Lakes, and Southern Africa. Regions like the Sahara and Sahel have covered most African lands all over the continent, while others cover some isolated sections. Africa's cultural and historical diversity from the beginning of humankind has been fascinating (Quelhas-Brito et al., 2020).

African Fashion – A Historical Perspective

African ecosystems make up a diverse cultural landscape that forms the cradle of humanity. Considering Africa's complex social history and cultural diversity, fashion in Africa is as colorful as the continent. Consequently, the variation of African fashion history is influenced by many societies and the position of people or groups within that society (Brown, 2017). Moreover, it has also been highlighted that the different groups of people in Africa have worked as the most comprehensive aspect of the fashion industry's growth (Park et al., 2020). It has been highlighted that the warm and hot climate of Africa has been the main reason behind the fewer clothes among Africans for protection. In many areas of Africa, Africans choose to wear very little or almost no clothing for this very reason. Apart from that, women wear wraps around their breasts and waists. These wraps were mainly adorned with ochre and scarification (Iqani, 2019).

The African fashion design industry has been influenced by culture as depicted in the styling and designing of clothes (Iqani, 2019). An example of the same can be given as women in different regions wear skirts when unmarried. Instead, once married, they tend to wear full clothing and robes covering their entire bodies. These clothing apparels often depict their social status, rituals, and cultures since it has been very integral for them (Hsiao et al., 2020). The first ever clothing used by the Africans was bark clothes. Evidently, from their fashion history, Africans have shown immense creativity by mixing bark clothes, beads, and raffia. Apart from that, they used local natural resources like seashells, ostrich eggshells, and bones to cover their bodies.

Figure 1

Bark cloth Fabric Made From Mutaba Trees

(Source: Musella, 2021).

As the Europeans began to settle in most parts of Africa, a profound change occurred across most of the continent after the opening of shipping routes between Europe, Africa, and the East in the 15th century (Chatterjee, 2022a). Due to this, a wide range of dress styles and fabrics are available. Additionally, the development of textiles such as cotton, silk, and wool on the continent led to different weaving techniques used in different areas of African clothing to reflect socioeconomic status, culture, the environment, and the climate of the tribe (Chatterjee, 2022a).

Fashion in North Africa: The geographical description of Africa is complicated in different aspects as well. Though there is not much consensus about the borders of North Africa, it can be imagined that it stretches from Moroccan Atlantic shores to the shores of the Red Sea in Egypt (Abun-Nasr, n.d.). The Mediterranean Sea stretches its northern part, and the Sahara Desert falls south of this region. Different lands or countries of this region are Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Libya, and Morocco. The Ottomans did all the political divisions in this region during the 16th century (Abun-Nasr, n.d.).

The overall climate of North Africa is somewhat mild along the coasts of the Mediterranean and Atlantic Oceans. It has been observed that the fashion industry or fashion sense of local people has been developed by the climate and topography of this region. Like all other parts of Africa, the fashion industry's growth in North Africa has also been influenced by tribal cultures and colonial developments (Helal et al., 2018).

It should also be highlighted that most North African fashion senses have been derived from the Muslim regions (Helal et al., 2018). In this region, hijabs have long been a traditional fashion accessory. Loose trousers and sprawled shawls are some typical clothes worn in the north African region (Meyer, 2022). Interestingly, all geometric and abstract patterns in this region have been merged with symmetry and harmony. Ornamentation is done elaborately, and embroidered Djellaba of the Maghreb region is a ubiquitous and traditional aspect (Meyer, 2022).

Figure 2

A Traditional Embroidered Egyptian Clothing Trends

(Source: Meyer, 2022).

Correspondingly, the region's climate does not allow people to wear clothes that fit their bodies. Hence, the common choice is the loose-fitting ankle-length Galabiya, accompanied by a turban. The Kaftan is a standard coat belted around the waist or over the Galabiya. The Galabiya is an old-style folk dress code for men, worn alone or with trousers. Egyptian farmers often wear the Kamis with wider sleeves. Many times, there are quite a few garments worn over the Kaftan, including the Binish (a wide-sleeved overcoat in dark fabric), Djubbeh (long-sleeved overcoat), and Jubbah (an overcoat with long wide sleeves and buttons halfway down the chest) (Greer, 2020). At the moment, Egypt is adopting more styles of the West as an epithet of the dynamic fashion trends of other African countries.

Fashion in East Africa: East Africa is regarded as the easternmost part of the continent. It has been divided into several sub-regions also. Different groups and sub-regional cultures have been very effective in this section indeed. The eastern part of Africa is a fascinating region due to its diversity. There are around 21 countries in this region. All these sub-regional cultures or groups are the East African Community, the African Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, the Central African Federation, and the British East Africa Confederacy. The six crucial East

African community members are Tanzania, South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, and Uganda (Khalema, 2021).

Countries like Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Djibouti belong to the Horn of Africa region. The geographical elevation of this region is very high. Due to this, most of this region has a tropical climate, but some parts have a reduced temperature. Some countries like Somalia, eastern Ethiopia, and northeastern Kenya have received very little rainfall. Conversely, countries like western Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have recently received adequate rainfall. The clothing or fashion history of Eastern Africa cannot be traced easily since few written records exist (Khalema, 2021).

However, researchers have received much information about the same in the arts. Animal skins have been used in several parts of Eastern Africa. People used cows' skin since cows were abundant in this region (Waddell, 2017). The tanning process of each group was different from the others. Leather makers in eastern Africa had been respected for their elusive artisanship. Cultural exchange between Arabs, Indians, and Europeans was catalyzed by trade, colonization, religious missions, and immigration. Therefore, these factors heavily influenced East Africa's clothing and fabrics (Chatterjee, 2022b). Taking Kitenge as an example, a cotton fabric combining vibrant colors with a variation of the Indonesian batik technique makes up an attractive collection of fabrics. The fabric is also known as African wax print fabric which is commonly used for clothing in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Sudan, some East African countries that use Kitenge regularly (Chatterjee, 2022b).

Figure 3

Colorful Kitenge Wear

(Source: Reny styles, 2022).

Fashion in South Africa: The southern part of Africa is considered the smallest region

in Africa in terms of area. In addition, it has the lowest population density in Africa. The region

lies south of the Congo River basin and Tanzania. It is also located in the western parts of the

Atlantic Ocean (Shvili, 2021). Some important geographical specifications of this region are the

Great Escarpment and the Kalahari and Namib deserts. In addition, this region has several

important lands or countries, including South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Angola, Mauritius,

Mozambique, Malawi, Lesotho, Angola, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, and Zambia (Shvili, 2021).

This region has the best potential to be considered an economic hub in the entire continent.

Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, and Ekurhuleni are some of the wealthy cities in the region.

Textile industry growth has been driven primarily by Ndebele and Himba communities (Shen,

2022). The creativity of these people is immense, and it can be seen from their color selections in

designs, beads, and other elements to the use of fabric. African fabric, commonly known as the

Ankara fabric, is used in many clothes for people (Vänskä & Gurova, 2022). This kind of fabric

has a rich history of over 150 years, and it is also precious outside Africa because of its

lightweight, wax-resistant dyes and hand-drawn motifs (Willard, 2004). The traditional Ankara designs have been greatly influenced by a trickle-down effect where most users are middle-class.

Figure 4

The South African Ankara dress

(Source: Stylemepurple, n.d.).
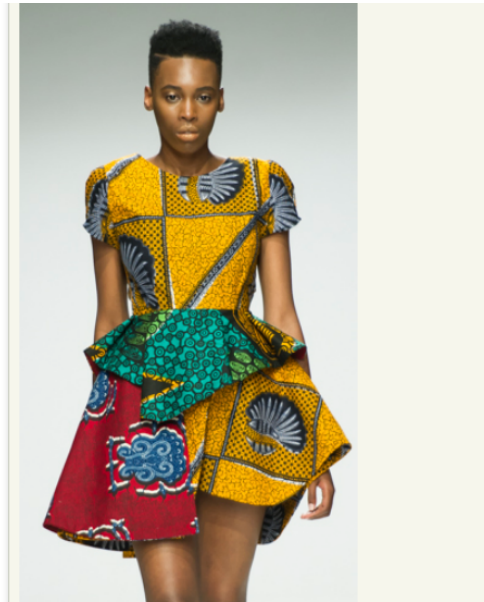
However, local designers are receiving greater acknowledgment as they increase competitiveness in the industry. Analogous to Europe, South Africa is homogenizing its identity as much as possible for fashion to work in the country. Blowing the bubble of colonization, accepting the shared cultural system of the pre-colonial times, then embracing an entirely modern national/ regional identity brews further an exciting outlook for designers in a world dominated by high-end western fashion and cheap Chinese imports. The nation goes beyond the perceptions of 'just prints and beads' to glamor and Afropolitan (pan-Africanism). The aspect of Afropolitanism goes beyond custom and tradition into a form of 'fashion-history decolonization,' cross-culturalism, and globalization. South Africa has seen renaissance fashion take off in the first decade of the 21st century, thanks to David Tlale and Thula Sindi (Mohlatlole et al., 2021).

Fashion in West Africa: Western Africa borders a large portion of the Atlantic Ocean to the west and south. It is the westernmost part of the continent. The northern part of Western Africa is bordered by the great Sahara Desert, marked by the Ranishanu Bend (Ham, 2013). There are multiple countries in this part of the continent. Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Cape Verde, Niger, Mali, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Chad, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Liberia. Nigeria is considered to be the biggest economy on the African continent. Multiple tribes exist in Western Africa (Ham, 2013; Masson & Pattillo, 2001).

Figure 5

Map of Western Africa

(Source: Acquaye, 2018).
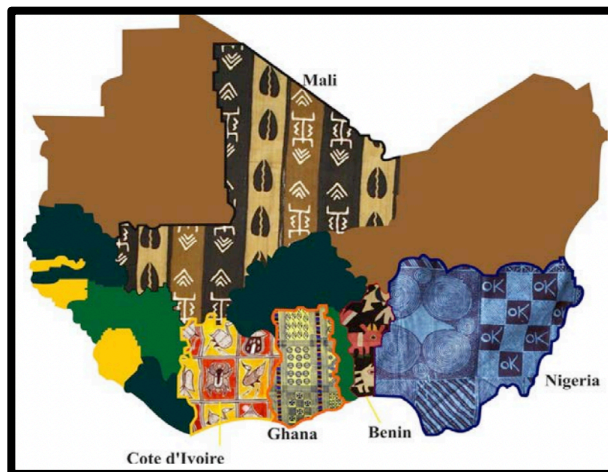
The diversity in lifestyles and cultural factors is highly notable indeed. The fashion industry in this part of Africa is influenced by geography, culture, socio-political history, colonialism, and many other factors. Nevertheless, some typical garments follow the traditions of Western Africa. The Senegalese Kaftan is composed of Agbadas, Babarigas, and Adires (Hansen, 2019). For example, the garments like puffers among Guruns and Riga among Hausa tribes are woven half-sleeve tunics. Traditionally, Kentes are worn along Ghana's coastline and

in Côte d'Ivoire. They resemble ancient Roman robes and are incredibly popular in Ghana (Nordquist & Aradeon, 1975).

Figure 6

Kings and Chiefs in Kente Attire in Ghana

(Source: Okine, 2018).

Like other sub-regions of Africa, West African clothing is deeply influenced by climate, geography, socio-political history, multicultural peoples, colonialism, and cultural exchange, and it tells a story. As elucidate in Health Action Charity Organisation (2019), West African clothing and textiles convey a great deal of information about the cultures they represent regarding religion, history, and culture. The different fabrics serve as symbols of wealth and status that identify members of a specific cultural or social group and are used in initiations, marriages, and funerals. Body modification and enhancing social identity and image have been widespread uses of clothing among individuals and social groups. Furthermore, the dress reinforces social boundaries that distinguish one ethnic group from another. However, the elites always dictate clothing trends due to the socio-political, cultural, and economic environment. Correspondingly, traditional activities such as festivals and celebrating war victories have greatly influenced the region's fabric design (Health Action Charity Organisation, 2019).

Westernization's Influence on African Fashion

The social-cultural evolution in the African continent has impelled both development and predicament. The European intrusion in North Africa in the fifteenth century led to an overall dressing style and fabric style evolution. However, the Western influence on Africa has made the natives absorb the European culture by design or accident, making it almost part of their lives (Sibani, 2018). As a result, African fashion has historically been stereotypically typified by animal hides, tribal art, ornamental decorations, et cetera. Hitherto, prominent brands such as Yves Saint Laurent (YSL) had led the way in reinventing African fashion identities, most notably in 1967 when they first launched the iconic 'African collection,' and have consistently tapped into African heritage for inspiration (Oliver, 2011).

Figure 7

A Yves Saint Laurent African-Themed Summer Collection

(Source: Divalocity, 2013)
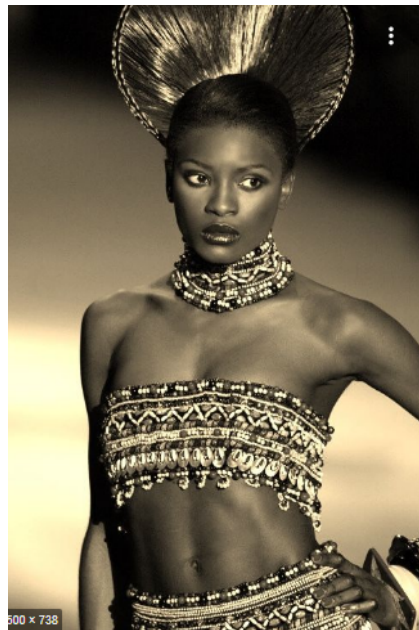
Social media have made it easier to cross cultures, further blending Western and African fashion sensibilities. Due to this, most designers incorporate modernity into the traditional

African outfit by incorporating western style. Furthermore, social media has become an essential marketing tool for the growing e-commerce industry. However, globalization cannot be reduced to mere tools for people who have been indoctrinated into the superiority of the West as a symbol of high quality. Thus, it is much easier to find young people fascinated by Western music or film, trying to learn about how people dress, the type of furniture in their homes, the type of vehicles, as well as other aspects of modern life.

Consequently, the mainstream media concedes the fact that famous western brands embody "nice things," which in turn makes viewers from Africa frown on non-branded items and yearn for the supported brands like Gucci, Dolce Gabbana, New Balance, Louis Vuitton, Prada, Dior, and Balenciaga to name a few. Moreover, influential figures such as Beyonce and Michelle Obama have been spotted gracing the red carpets while wearing African-themed attire, resultantly reinforcing trends (Ochonogor, n.d.).

Most African designers have been inspired by the Western aspect of form and expressions of self-identity. The critical influence has been popular culture, popularized by pop, western Indie, and rock music. Kepha Maina, a Kenyan fashion designer, intimates his style is infused by the minimalist styles of remarkable designers like Alexander McQueen, Commede Garcons, and Azzedine Alaia. Thus far, the designer points to the lack of trust as many well-off Kenyans would instead don a Gucci jacket or fancy carrying a Hermes handbag than buy a high-end fashion product by a Kenyan (BBC, 2022). African brands are still viewed as mediocre, which has led to African designers getting underpaid when working with other notable brands. Designers working with non-African brands are given little to no influence on the creative respect due to their location. These brands are contemptuously trying to hinder and deter emerging African fashion talent and get in the way of their creativity (Adeniji, 2020). Many have

criticized the West for promoting fast fashion and maintaining deleteriously impracticable aspirations. Unlike African culture, Western culture is not concerned with indecent dressing, an aspect that infiltrates fashion in Africa. Thankfully, Generation Z and the Millennials make up a significant percentage of consumers in aspirational embedded fashion culture and consumer reality, hence, a promising future for the industry.

African Fashion In The Current Situations

Thanks to social media, Fashion in the African continent keeps budding, and many people connect with African culture and style worldwide. Of late, African designers are receiving significant recognition in fashion and pop culture due to the steady mainstream takeover of styles from the runway in Lagos, merrymakings in Nairobi, imagery of Marrakech, to the influencers of Dakar and Accra. A new generation of African fashionistas, photographers, and bloggers is redefining the aesthetic realm in Africa. The wave of creative revolution is spreading across the world in the form of cultural appropriation, having been dubbed the novel visual language. Applique silhouettes donned in silk dresses and traditional textile prints have given back power to women. The Xhosa-inspired beaded needlework is becoming a portrayal of modern crocheted wear (Courrèges, 2018)

Figure 8

Xhosa-Inspired Beaded Patterns

(Source: Hays, 2017)

The technologically savvy youth in Africa are increasingly taking advantage of the recognition and pushing the "African narrative" to take the front seat on the current boom (Ochonogor, n.d.). Presently, more African designers are gracing the international fashion scene with their remarkable pieces, with personalities like Panthe O and Douro Olowu, among others, inspiring respect and appreciation. African fashion, spearheaded by African print, is now associated with a sense of taste, globalization, and style. Owing to the abundant varieties of patterns, prints, and fabrics from each distinct region of the African continent, African wear has been more of pan-Africanized. Therefore, it is not easy to distinguish which style is from where. The uniqueness and timelessness of African prints across all generations signify many things. In the 1970s, African-inspired wear was donned as a symbol of black pride during the "black power" movement, denoting the essence of African people and attire (Mohammed, 2022).

The burgeoning African fashion industry has been dramatically impacted by focusing socially responsible products on the African continent by creating jobs for local artisans and supporting the community. For instance, designers and brands offer fair employment opportunities and back sustainable income sources by using locally sourced materials, curtailing the supply chains' environmental effects (England et al., 2021). Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) mainly form the African fashion businesses (England et al., 2021). Fashion designers are progressively accepted as actors and cultural agents. Hence, excluding them from the African fashion value chain undermines their representation and, to an extent, the preservation of the African fashion industry's diverse cultural traditions and themes (England et al., 2021). The African fashion designer is tasked with providing rich intuition into ways artists can interact with tradition. Therefore, designers ought to navigate the associations by textiles, motifs, and garments that interlink history to tradition and local cultures as heritage emblems.

Africa boasts the youngest population in the world, with roughly 70% of its inhabitants under 30, particularly in a world where most of the population is aging (Mohammed, 2022). The younger generations are adopting a new form of self-determination, through which they explore new areas of freedom and utilize new technology to stimulate creativity across the African continent (Mohammed, 2022). The current generation is not unfazed by the inferiority complex cultured by the European colonization decades ago. However, it is ready to rediscover its culture and traditions and act towards remixing and pushing them into modern times.

Research Questions

To gain a deeper understanding of how African designers market their brands internationally, the following research questions have been developed.

I.   How are the mission statements for the 8 brands similar and or different?

II.   How are the vision statements for the 8 brands similar and or different?

III.   How are the values statements for the 8 brands similar and or different?

IV.   How do the four regions differentiate from each other in their clothing designs on Instagram

V.   How are the voices of the 8 brands different and/or similar to each other on Instagram

Chapter 3. Methods

Content Analysis

An analysis of content involves assigning communication content to categories based on definitions and rules and analyzing relationships among those categories. This method is often conducted to draw inferences from antecedent or subsequent conditions or events. Content analysis should be based on content only and free from coding bias and personal opinion. In the social sciences, content analysis converts verbal and nonverbal communication into quantitative information. Experts use content analysis to identify, analyze, and quantify the meaning and relationship between specific texts, themes, or terms. According to the Content Analysis Guidebook (Neuendorf, 2002, p1), the researcher describes it as "the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics."

Methodology Execution

The total number of eight brand were sampled representing 100% for this analysis. For each brand, 20 pictures were sampled for the various variables in the voice analysis and brand differentiation sections.

Selection of Fashion Brands

Fashion brands were selected based on the perspectives of leading African fashion designers. These brands were picked due to their impressive achievements that have put their countries and Africa on the global map regarding fashion. In addition to their high-profile fashion collaborators or collaborators, and the recognition awards they have received, the researcher examined high-profile fashion icons, celebrities, and brands.

A Brief History of Selected Fashion Brands

    West Africa (Nigeria)

    Tiffany Amber. Folake Folarin, a Nigerian fashion designer who studied in Switzerland and the United Kingdom, established the Tiffany Amber brand in Lagos in 1998. In addition to its standalone stores and boutiques in Lagos and Abuja, the company has organized several fashion shows in Africa, Europe, and the United States (Haute Fashion Africa, 2019).

    In 2008, she made history as the first African-based fashion designer to stage a show twice at the New York Fashion Week (Integr8Africa, 2017). Additionally, she was awarded "Designer of the Year" in 2009 at the African fashion Week in Johannesburg and "Fashion Brand of the Year" in 2011 at the ARISE Magazine Fashion Week (Integr8Africa, 2017). In the same year, Naomi Campbell, a supermodel and fashion icon, walks for the brand at Arise Fashion Week 2019, while the brand partners with Lancôme, a French luxury cosmetics house (Okwodu, 2020).

    Jewel by Lisa. Lisa Folawiyo began Jewel by Lisa in 2005 by buying twelve yards of fabric and making her first pieces with her mother in her home. The 46-year-old Nigerian, Lisa Folawiyo, does not just wear traditional West African fabrics but also incorporates modern tailoring techniques and emphasizes beading and sequins (McMullen, 2020).

    She was featured in Vogue Italia in 2012, when Senegalese American actress Issa Rae wore her clothing. The brand has showrooms in Nigeria and New York (Kachitsa, 2021).

North Africa (Egypt)

Temraza (by Farida Temraz). The Temraza brand debuted its first collection at Paris Fashion Week in Autumn/Winter 2014 and won first place in a Fashion Television contest that quickly catapulted the company to success. The brand is founded by Farida Temraz, a 26-year-old Egyptian who is also its creative director (Temraza, 2021). The brand has dressed several celebrities and fashion icons, including country singer Carrie Underwood, Broadway star Laura Bell Bundy, and actress Gina Rodriguez (Johnson, 2022).

Kojak Studio. Founded in 2014 by Mohanad Kojak at 21, the Cairo-based Egyptian brand has become widely popular for its artistically daring pieces, embodying experimental and progressive concepts, merging arts, fashion, and social movements.

Kojak specializes in Pret-a-Porter, Haute Couture, and Bridal, focusing more on womenswear (Kojak, n.d.). The brand's voice is a force for social movement, romanticizing the dark reality through art and creation without neglecting humanitarian issues and other related problems (Kojak, n.d.). The brand has dressed high-profile Egyptian celebrities like Emel Mathlouthi, Huda El Muffti, and a host of others in the past (Kabil, 2021).

South Africa (South Africa)

David Tlale. The South African-based brand was established in 2003 by David Tlale and is widely known for its innovative use of fabrics, color, and texture. David has designed collections for major retailers, including Edgars, and his work has been showcased at Cape Town Fashion Week, New York Fashion Week, and Paris Fashion Week. In addition, he placed third in the Elle New Talent Show Competition during South African fashion Week (Fashion of Southern Africa, 2016).

Black Panther actress, Florence Kasumba, caught the eye at the 26th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards after rocking a David Tlale dress (Venge, 2020). The brand has also dressed Black Panther and Lion King star actress Florence Kasumba (Venge, 2020). In addition, David Tlale has also dressed Flavour, the Nigerian musician, and BBMzansi Star, Themba, among others (BellaNaija Style, 2020).

Maxhosa Africa. Founded in 2012 by Laduma Ngxokolo, the MaXhosa brand is one of the most popular in South Africa, primarily known for its exploration of knitwear design solutions suitable for amakrwala. The 36 years old learned how to use a knitting machine from his mother at an early age and pursued his passion for fashion with an emphasis on highlighting the Xhosa people (Maxhosa, n.d.).

The clothing line has gained a considerable following and endorsement from celebrities like Swiss Beats, Alicia Keys, Beyoncé, and Rafael Saadiq. In addition, celebrity singer, Jidenna has also rocked their past outfits (Boikanyo, 2019).

East Africa (Kenya)

Anyango Mpinga. There is no doubt that Anyango Mpinga is one of the most influential fashion brands in Africa and is now renowned for her reimagined white shirts and bold prints that balance between androgyny and a bohemian aesthetic.

In addition to her innovative eco-stance and acceptance of waste, the Nairobi-born fashion designer is also known for her stance on using emerging technologies to convert waste into future textiles (IA Connect, n.d.). Furthermore, the Beyonce-approved Kenyan fashion brand is currently experimenting with the use of emerging technologies to produce new textiles (Kasuku, 2021).

El Afrique. Made in Kenya and listed on beyonce.com, the fashion brand deals with bespoke and readymade African print bags and clothes for all occasions (Elafrique, 2021). Established by Whitney Nasanga, El Afrique has attracted big names in the local entertainment industry, such as Shaq The Yungin, Le Band, and Wangechi, and partnered with brands like Belaire. The brand is also known for its all-rounded approach, as it does not only stick to African prints (W, n.d.).

Study Variables Considered

The following variables (Ellis, 2019) were considered for the content analysis:

Mission

The brand mission is a short sentence that defines the foundational reason why the brand exists. It can be summed up in the question, "What does it aim to do?" A brand's mission is usually straightforward, concise, and expressed in simple words.

Vision

Brand vision focuses on the brand's activities as it sets a future goal of the impact the brand aims to have on the world. An organization's vision is summed up in the question, "Where is the brand heading?" A clear vision illustrates an organization's direction, assisting in setting its goals.

Values

A brand's values speak to the guideposts that determine how it operates. If the vision is the ultimate destination, then the values are the map that guides a brand's journey into the future.

Brand Differentiator

A brand's differentiators are the specific things that set a brand apart from other competitors. Nevertheless, the brand messaging must convey these to customers as part of a

brand strategy and business model. A brand differentiator enables an organization to establish and express its uniqueness.

Brand Voice

A strong brand messaging campaign goes beyond what it says but also focuses on how it says it. A solid brand voice allows the business to express its personality more clearly. An example of a compelling brand message is being passionate, casual, funny, professional, or whatever else fits the brand's image.

Table 1

Brand Analysis of Nigeria, West Africa

Brand	Mission	Vision	Values	Brand Differentiator
Tiffany Amber	Empowering artisans from all over the continent through distinct African designs.	Creating a fashion and lifestyle brand with global appeal and a distinct African attitude that is as sophisticated as it is indulgent, iconic as it is modern.	Global appeal with an African touch. Sophisticated iconic and modern luxury. Empowering and helping to build powerful, confident women.	Luxurious African touch but is designe global appeal. Expensive, high quality and trendy
Lisa Folawiyo	Transforming the idea of ready-to-wear African fashion.	Elevating traditional African prints above the status quo, making them relevant for a global audience.	Design integrity. Multi-faceted and global. Prioritize African prints for women. Focuses on fashi as a piece of art a African desi history.	Each piece stands out as a distinct Africa piece. Combines clashing colors i a mature way. Fashion pieces stand out as experimental while retaini familiarity.

Table 2

Brand Analysis of Egypt, North Africa

Brand	Mission	Vision	Values	Brand Differentiator
Farida Temraz	Highlighting a woman's silhouette with designs that suite and complement each body type.	Creating unique designs that perfectly sculpt and enhance a woman's silhouette using glamorous details, drawing inspiration from a plethora of cultures.	Unique and elegant designs using embroideries. Luxury women's silhouette. Innovation and perseverance. Women's ready to wear, evening & bridal dresses.	Detailed designs that highlight and enhance a woman's silhouette. First Egyptian customized patterns on fabrics. Fashion designs are inspired by a plethora of cultures.
Kojak Studio	To be the voice to speak for those who do not have a voice.	Catering for everyone who dares to standout and expresses their individuality through pieces that are as unique as those who wear them.	Social movements. Romanticizing the dark reality. Yearning hope for an inclusive world. Highlighting unordinary experiences; seeing beauty in the ugliness. Story telling through costume drama pieces.	Blurs the line between haute couture and ready-to-wear dresses. Story telling designs. Favors unusual fabrics like upholstery to create pieces.

Table 3

Brand Analysis of South Africa, South Africa

Brand	Mission	Vision	Values	Brand Differentiator
David Tlale	To defy convention and impenitently employ unpredictable use and understanding of fabric, color, and texture.	Creating elegant designs that challenge the clichéd and predictable.	Bold and elaborate. Reflects a vibrant personality. Unpredictability. Artistic and individualistic.	Unpredictable style. Innovative and industry-leading (Africa).

Brand				
MaXhosa	To showcase the beauty, culture, language, and aspirations of the Xhosa people.	Developing premium knitwear that celebrates traditional Xhosa aesthetics.	Forward-thinking and visionary. Represents authentic African luxury. Portrays the Xhosa heritage. Prioritizes beadwork and embroidery. Emphasizes Maxhosa's cultural heritage and storytelling.	Strictly creates Xhosa-inspired designs. Leverages beadwork and knitwear in portraying deep-rooted African values.

Table 4

Brand Analysis of Kenya, East Africa

Brand	Mission	Vision	Values	Brand Differentiator
Anyango Mpinga	Creating a brand that stands for fairness and justice, particularly with respect to ensuring a sustainable supply chain.	Reemphasizing the principles of circular fashion to explore radical systems in textile design and promote conscious consumption of fashion through distinct white shirts; bold prints; balanced between androgyny and a bohemian aesthetic.	Story telling through distinct fashion. Inclusivity and circularity. Promoting fair wages for factory workers. Reducing negative environmental impact perpetuated by the fashion industry. Sustainable manufacturing practices	Story telling designs that promote inclusivity and diversity. Eclectic style with an emphasis on organic elements and nature.
El Afrique	Creating bespoke and ready-made African print bags and clothes for all occasions.	Using bold and subtle fabric to match the vast verity of customer tastes.	bespoke and readymade African print Client-oriented Creativity and boldness	High-quality, yet affordable bespoke African print.

The voice of a fashion brand is evident in how it communicates through its designs. In

this analysis, three major factors were considered to accurately depict the voices of the individual

brand from different regions. These are – the number of fabrics/ bright colors, model skin color, and fabric origin/ culture. The number of fabrics/ bright colors represents, to a large extent, how a brand wants to be perceived by its audience. Multiple colors tilt toward an exciting and flashy appearance for vibrancy, while single color portrays monotony and is more reserved, perhaps for a specific kind of people.

The model's skin color also tells much about the brand's voice. For example, West and East African brands favor a darker-skinned model shot, while North Africans go for more fair-skinned models. One of the main reasons for the utilization of the skin colour is partly informed by the need to appeal to different audience. For instance, South African designers have to take into cognizant of the multi-racialism in presenting their models. The other reason in the skin tone differences is mostly attributed to geographical location. North African countries mostly comprise of Arabs and their skin tone naturally is fair as compared to the West and East African (Perrett & Sprengelmeyer, 2021).

Lastly, the fabric type portrays the extent to which a brand tilts towards a specific culture; for the sake of this study, we generalized the African culture as a whole.

Table 5

Brand Voice Analysis Of Brands From Nigeria, West Africa

Brand	Number of fabric colors (Out of 20 pictures)	Model skin color	Fabric origin/ culture	Inference: Brand voice
Tiffany Amber	3 pictures were multi-colors	1 picture was light skinned	6 pictures were with African fabric	After analyzing 20 of Tiffany Amber sample, the brand voice appears to be less colorful but elegant, while appealing more to a global audience than African descent.

Lisa Folawiyo	8 pictures were multi-colors	0 light skinned	8 African fabric	Lisa Folawiyo brand voice is perceived to be less colorful and tilts towards portraying African fabric on the global landscape.

Table 6

Brand Voice Analysis Of Brands From Egypt, North Africa

Brand	Number of fabric bright colors	Model skin color	Fabric origin/ culture	Inference: Brand voice
Temraza	12 bright colors	20 lights skinned	0 African fabric	Considering the data available from analysis, Temraz brand appears to express elegance at its finest, is colorful, and appeals more to the conventional global appearance than its distinct African fashion heritage.
Kojak Studio	8 bright colors	13 lights skinned	0 African fabric	Kojak Studio incorporates colors considerably while prioritizing dark-oriented designs. Hence, it appears to lack that touch of African appeal.

Table 7

Brand Voice Analysis Of Brands From South Africa

Brand	Number of fabric bright colors	Model skin color	Fabric origin/ culture	Inference: Brand voice
David Tlale	11 bright colors	12 lights skinned	4 African fabric	David Tlale combines bright

				colors with bold and elaborate designs that are skin relieving while relishing its African descent.
MaXhos by Laduma	9 multi/ bright colors	3 lights skinned	20 African fabric	A splash of colors portrayed by the confidence of African fabric is the exact sentence that embodies the MaXhosa brand. It portrays the Xhosa people in their entirety.

Table 8

Brand Voice Analysis Of Brands From Kenya, East Africa

Brand	Number of fabric bright colors	Model skin color	Fabric origin/ culture	Inference: Brand voice
Anyango Mpinga	7 multi/ bright colors	8 lights skinned	20 African fabric	Speaks to the uncommon, encouraging diversity and inclusion through design story telling.
El Afrique	9 multi/ bright colors	19 lights skinned	16 African fabric	El Afrique portrays Africa and its fashion through colorful and elegant designs that sits tight on the skin.

The variables in this study were coded twice. To begin with, each picture was coded by one coder initially. Additional coders assessed a random sample of 30% (6 pictures each from the eight brands), resulting in 48 pictures in total. Cohen's Kappa was used to determine intercoder reliability, and reliability levels greater than .7 were obtained (Cohen, 1960, 1968).

Chapter 4. Results

In this study, eight different fashion brands from four different regions of Africa are examined through their digital channels, including their website, social media presence (Instagram) and other publications, listing, event presence, and interviews with founders in the past. Based on the data above, this section addresses the research questions. In total, 160 images were analyzed, 40 for each region and 20 for each fashion brand. The considered fashion brands generally depict fashion in unique ways that are hardly shared by anyone else.

RQ 1: How are the Mission Statements for the Eight Brands Similar and or Different?

The mission statement for the 8 brands differs brand share a common similarity, which is an effort to put African fashion on the map. This includes,

- Tiffany Amber (West Africa, Nigeria)

- Lisa Folawiyo (West Africa, Nigeria)

- Farida Temraz (North Africa, Egypt)

- Kojak Studio (North Africa, Egypt)

- David Tlale (South Africa, South Africa)

- MaXhosa by Laduma (South Africa, South Africa)

- Anyango Mpinga (East Africa, Kenya)

- El Afrique (East Africa, Kenya)

Tiffany Amber (West Africa, Nigeria) is well known for her preference to create elegant designs with global appeal using African fabric; a similarity shared with Lisa Folawiyo (West Africa, Nigeria), MaXhosa (South Africa, South Africa), Ayango Mpinga (East, Africa, Kenya) and El Afrique (East Africa, Kenya). However, David Tlale (South Africa, South Africa),

Temraz (North Africa, Egypt), and Kojak (North Africa, Egypt) seem to be the opposite. They favor designs with the global appeal but without ties to African roots through their fabric.

Kojak (North Africa, Egypt) and Anyango Mpinga (East Africa, Kenya) brands represent more than fashion. Their designs aim at impacting society, promoting fairness, equality, and justice for the less privileged. However, this is not the same for all the other brands that focus squarely on fashion. MaXhosa (South Africa, South Africa) stands out entirely as the only brand that solely exists to propagate the culture and appearance of a specific tribe in Africa, South Africa, the Xhosa tribe. Other brands seem to focus more on representing Africa rather than highlighting a significant tribe.

RQ2: How are the Vision Statements for the Eight Brands Similar and or Different?

100% representing the eight African brands analyzed share the same vision of being unique and standing out from the rest while drawing inspiration from their African descent, as shown in the table above. However, only 75% of brands create styles that tie directly to African culture. The two exceptions are North Africa, Egyptian brands Farida Temraz and Kojak Studio, as their designs favor a more global appeal. East Africa, Kenyan brands Anyango Mpinga and El Afrique embody more activism, bearing on themselves the burdens of inclusivity and diversity to create more recognition and opportunities for African brands.

RQ3: How are the Value Statements for the Eight Brands Similar and or Different?

The value statement of each brand differs based on its mission statement and vision. 37% focus on global appeal (Temraz North Africa, Egypt, Kojak North Africa, Egypt, Tiffany Amber West Africa, Nigeria). The 25% designers Anyango Mpinga and El Afrique, both from Kenya, East Africa, focus on societal causes, justice, and equality. 25% of the brands David Tlale, a South African brand, and Lisa Folawiyo from Nigeria, West Africa, focus on uniqueness and

unpredictable vibrancy. MaXhosa, a South African brand, falls under the 13% category that focuses primarily on African fashion culture.

RQ4: How do the Four Regions Differentiate from each other in their Clothing Designs on Instagram?

Designers from West Africa (Tiffany Amber and Lisa Folawiyo) specialize in modern luxury, which can be defined as high quality, trendy and luxurious. Despite their luxurious designs, African fashion roots and fabrics are incorporated into these designers' designs to appeal to their global audience.

North African Egyptian designers Farida Temraz and Kojak Studio broadly appeal to global audiences while losing their African origins. The pieces they design are carefully crafted with an emphasis on elegance, trends, and storytelling.

The East African designers Anyango Mpinga and EL Afrique emphasized on inclusivity in their designs. This inclusivity is reflected in the affordability of their designs.

The South African designers David Tlale and MaXhosa come out as more innovative with unpredictable designs that are inspired by the multiculturalism of the south region.

RQ5: How are the Voices of the Eight Brands Different and/or Similar to Each Other on Instagram?

The eight brand voices share a single similarity – elegance – deeply appealing to their respective audiences. However, they differ in their color expression and choice of portraying their dress through models. For example, the North African Egyptian brands (Farida Temraz and Kojak Studio) favor light-skinned models over blacks. On the other hand, all other brands favor black-skinned models asides from David Tlale (South Africa, South Africa), who prefers a balanced mix of both.

Chapter 5. Discussion

The content analysis results based on the research questions and data gathered from the Instagram account of each brand are reviewed in this section. Two brands were taken from each region of the African continent – Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, and Kenya from the West, South, North, and Eastern parts of Africa.

From the content analysis, this study infers that a large percentage of the sampled African brands deeply express African values. However, this was done so that it has a global appeal. As a result, dresses from these brands are patronized all over the globe. However, the brands have respective visions beyond expressing deep African roots through their fabric and design colors primarily identified as African. In line with social identity theory, people consider themselves members of larger social groups because they share similar characteristics. Bochatay et al. (2019) demonstrate that clothing can indicate social status and nationality. As presented in the findings, the use of multi-color clothing is one characteristic that identifies the African clothing and design industry, thus defining it as a key identity for Africa. Maintaining this identity is vital in the fashion and clothing industries because it helps develop a community which in turn assists in the overall development of social groups.

In East Africa, the brands promote inclusivity and equality across the global fashion industry. The West African brands prioritize elegance and colorful fashion for global appeal, while the South African brands focus on uniqueness and expressing their peculiar African culture. The North African brands are designed to appeal more to the European audience compared to other brands in this study.

A close examination of Tiffany Amber's (West Africa, Nigeria) designs reveals a global appeal stemming from African roots, with a sense of empowerment and confidence; this could be

why her designs boast high appeal to a global audience. The brand is also very focused on women's empowerment, adding social relevance and business appeal.

Lisa Folawiyo (West Africa, Nigeria) follows a similar path to Tiffany Amber (West Africa, Nigeria), crafting unique designs from African fabric. Her designs portray stylishness and elegance, uniquely redefining African Fabric, giving it more global appeal without losing its origins.

Temraz (North Africa, Egypt) takes a design approach that appears to oppose Tiffany Amber (West Africa, Nigeria) and Lisa Folawiyo (West Africa, Nigeria). The brand's fabric and dresses are generally styled to carry a European appeal without any traces of foundational African origins. Plan fabrics are preferred as opposed to uniquely styled African patterns. Designs also appear to be very European-like, indicating that the brand primarily exists to serve the foreign market and not its origin in Africa.

Kojak (North Africa Egypt) stands out from all the brands discussed, romanticizing the dark reality and promoting inclusion and diversity to reflect the wearer's uniqueness. This brand primarily favors plain dark colors for design fabric instead of the usually colorful patterns seen in African fabric. In line with Kojak's (North Africa Egypt) brand voice, it advocates social justice beyond its business foundations and might be created specifically for foreign markets. Nevertheless, elegance remains a constant trait in all of its designs.

David Tlale (South Africa, South Africa) distinctly approaches designs from the afore-listed brands, taking cues from both South African culture and plain European fabrics. By blending these designs, the brand serves both locals and foreigners.

MaXhosa (South Africa) brand is a stand-out brand due to its unique approach and brand voice. The brand exists for one purpose – to reflect the Xhosa people and their values through

designs. Xhosa designs use mainly Xhosa fabrics to make their dresses, which appeal to the international and local markets.

Anyango Mpinga (East Africa, Kenya) is another brand that celebrates and encourages diversity through its unique designs, like the brands from Nigeria (Jewel by Lisa and Tiffany Amber) and MaXhosa from South Africa. The Anyango Mpinga brand has deep African roots, boldly portrayed in its designs. However, stylish modifications are made to the dresses to give them a global appeal while retaining their foundational African heritage.

El Afrique (East Africa, Kenya) celebrates stylishness and African representation through its designs and fabric. Primarily focused on women, the brand aims to portray a strong representation of the dress wearer and communicate the uniqueness of African wear to a global audience.

Another notable observation in the findings is the manner in which the designers present their models, which tends to line with the objectification theory. The theory has it that females usually internalize the gazes that they are given by men and tend to present themselves in a manner that appeals to men (Szymanski et al., 2010). Sexual objectification occurs when a woman's body part is separated from them and looked at differently as physical objects to satisfy a male sexual desire (Szymanski et al., 2010). In this study, objectification can be observed in how the designers dress their models. Several designers have used clothes that expose part of the model's body. However, these exposures are done at concrete body sections such as the thighs and the breast area. These are often looked at as sexually appealing body parts not only to the men but also to give the impression to women that when they wear the specific dresses, they equally look sexually appealing.

Although most brands claim to be very inclusive in their mission, value, and vision statements, the exact need to be reflected in their branding and messaging. For instance, their framing and presentation of the ideal human body do not consider plus-size people. According to framing theory, frames are a set of temporary and spatial messages that can be analyzed together and produce meta-communication (Kuan et al., 2021). Although the designers have done their photoshoots differently, they communicate one message when they look together. The ideal message is that the ideal human body is medium body size and that the clothes are specifically designed for this category of people. In other words, plus-size individuals may not only have difficulty finding clothes that fit them but may also not look like the models.

Going into the Future

Whereas it is good progress in terms of promoting African designs to the rest of the world, more work is still needed to make their brands global. Although it is universally acceptable to include originality in African brands, the emphasis on Africanism brings about the stereotypes associated with Africans, which may not be a good marketing strategy for the brands. For instance, whereas Gucci is a European brand from Italy, there is less emphasis on the brand's origin as a marketing strength. To gain a global advantage, African designers could pay more attention to the quality of their designs than emphasizing their place of origin.

Secondly, there is a need for African designers to expand their horizons and promote their designs to the rest of the world. An excellent way to do this is by hosting and sponsoring fashion design events in Africa and other parts of the world. Participation in international events could be an excellent boost for African brands and inclusion. Although several African designers have been featured in other world events, very few events have been held in Africa featuring other world brands.

African designers also need to take their online marketing to a higher level with a clear marketing strategy that ensures their online presence and consistent online availability. For example, in the research findings, it was disturbing to find that the Kojak website had broken down, and it was difficult to retrieve some of its content from it. In terms of branding and marketing, this portrays a negative brand image. Moreover, there is a need to use social media platforms as essential marketing tools instead of using them as centers for an aesthetic display of designs without a clear call to action being included as a strategy to stimulate sales. For instance, despite winning the African designer of the year in 2009 and being featured in the Arise Magazine in 2011 as the fashion brand of the year, it is interesting that Nigeria's Tiffany Amber does not have an online shopping link on its website. Also, Egypt's Temraza, featured in the Paris Fashion Week, needs an online shop for their designs. Instead, clients have to contact them to place orders which is a tedious process that may discourage customers.

African brands could take into consideration the needs of their global markets. In order to achieve this, they could research the markets they target and provide designs that meet the global market needs. In addition, considering climate change and local cultures could be part of the segmentation process. For instance, the Nordic region, which is mostly very cold, could require redesigning warmer clothes for those regions.

There is a suggestion to expand the product portfolio that African designers offer to the rest of the world. Instead of focusing on one range of products (clothing), exploring other markets is necessary. For instance, there is a possibility to expand into bedding, bags, boxes, shoes, and children's clothing and products. Increasing their market base will increase their market share, making them more recognizable worldwide. However, such expansion could be done gradually with a clear marketing and expansion plan. A perfect example to learn from could

be America's Ralph Lauren brand, which has diversified its products, giving the consumer an advantage in shopping for all their items in one place.

Limitations and future directions

Although the content analysis and resulting data provide valuable insights into African designers' different media messaging strategies, there are still several limitations that accompany this research. Essentially, this research aims to evaluate the African fashion designers' media messaging and their market messaging strategies; only two brands were selected from each region across the continent. Although this gives a strong indication of what currently exists, it does not account for the full scope of African fashion, as only eight brands were analyzed from the whole continent.

Another limitation is that the research primarily uses Instagram as the social media platform in which each brand's content is collected and analyzed. Not considering other media channels might mean some crucial data were not considered before concluding. Future researchers should study brand content on other social media platforms and, perhaps, analyze data from more brands across Africa. The outcome of these findings will be interesting, primarily because they cover such a broad spectrum.

Future research may also consider brands from more specific geographic regions like Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, Southwest, and Central Africa, which were excluded from this study due to time constraints. Low-profile brands could also be considered for a more locally accurate result. It will be interesting to see what the data says on such elaborate research.

Conclusion

African brands have revolved within the last two decades, penetrating the global space through unique designs with a perfect blend of African roots with global appeal. A significant

contributor to this rise has been the strength and positioning of their media messaging and market messaging strategies used to promote these brands in international spaces. These range from featuring in fashion events to partnering with global brands and, as a result, receiving recommendations from world-class fashion icons in the industry and international celebrities.

Nonetheless, expanding to other global markets still requires more effort. For this to be done, key marketing strategies could be implemented. For instance, social media marketing could be essential for expanding the customer base. In addition, the diversification of products could also play a significant role in growing African fashion brands beyond Africa.

References

Abun-Nasr, J. M. (n.d.). North Africa. Encyclopædia Britannica.

>   https://www.britannica.com/place/North-Africa

Acquaye, R. (2018). Exploring Indigenous West African Fabric Design In The Context Of

>   Contemporary Global Commercial Production (thesis).

>   https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/429749/1/Final_PhD_Thesis_25751093.pdf

Adeniji, A. (2020, January 25). Can African fashion influencers shape the global rise of African

>   fashion? Industrie Africa. https://industrieafrica.com/blogs/imprint/report-african-

>   fashion-influencers-denola-grey-joy-kendi-amoafoa-onyii-bekeh-temi-otedola

Alarape, A. O., Zhou, L., & Barton, M. H. (2019). The use of Elaboration Likelihood Model and

>   Brand Identity Model: The Effects of African Visual Elements on Fashion Branding.

>   Southern Utah University. https://www.suu.edu/hss/comm/masters/capstone/thesis/a-

>   alarape-2019.pdf

Arthur, L. B. (2020). Religion and dress. От Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion.

>   https://fashion-history.lovetoknow.com/fashion-history-eras/religion-dress

Baumel, K., Hamlett, M., Wheeler, B., Hall, D., Randall, A. K., & Mickelson, K. (2021). Living

>   through COVID-19: Social distancing, computer-mediated communication, and well-

>   being in sexual minority and heterosexual adults. Journal of Homosexuality, 68(4), 673-

>   691. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2020.1868190

BBC. (2022, August 30). Kenya fashion: The designers giving Nairobi a fashionable name. BBC

>   https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-62556467

BellaNaija Style. (2020, January 3). Bn collection to closet: Flavour in David Tlale. BellaNaija.

>   https://www.bellanaija.com/2020/01/bn-collection-to-closet-flavour-in-david-tlale/

Bochatay, N., Bajwa, N. M., Blondon, K. S., Junod Perron, N., Cullati, S., & Nendaz, M. R.

    (2019). Exploring group boundaries and conflicts: A social identity theory

    perspective. Medical Education, 53(8), 799-807. https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.13881

Boikanyo, M. (2019, August 19). 5 young designers making their mark in the creative industry.

    Livemag. 5 Young Designers Making their Mark in the Creative Industry Comments.

    https://livemag.co.za/5-young-designers-making-their-mark-in-the-creative-industry/

Brown, L. A. (2017, April 10). The history of African fashion. Medium.

    https://leahbee93.medium.com/the-history-of-african-fashion-19d5d07f956b

Calogero, R. M., Tylka, T. L., Siegel, J. A., Pina, A., & Roberts, T. A. (2021). Smile pretty and

    watch your back: Personal safety anxiety and vigilance in objectification theory. Journal

    of personality and social psychology, 121(6), 1195-1222.

    https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000344

Calvain, E. F. P. (2019). Self-Objectification vs. African Conservative Features in the Selfies of

    Black African Women: A Study of Nigerian Social Media Users. In Gender and

    Diversity: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 798-820). IGI Global.

    https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6912-1.ch040

Carr, C. T. (2020). CMC is dead, long live CMC!: Situating computer-mediated communication

    scholarship beyond the digital age. Journal of Computer-Mediated

    Communication, 25(1), 9-22. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmz018

Chatterjee, S. (2022a, September 17). Anthropology in Fashion: Cultural clothing in Western

    Africa. Yoair Blog. https://www.yoair.com/blog/anthropology-in-fashion-cultural-

    clothing-in-western-africa/

Chatterjee, S. (2022b, September 14). Anthropology in Fashion: Cultural clothing in Eastern

    Africa. Yoair Blog. https://www.yoair.com/blog/anthropology-in-fashion-cultural-

    clothing-in-eastern-africa/

Clark, C., & Nyaupane, G. P. (2020). Overtourism: an analysis of its coverage in the media by

    using framing theory. Tourism Review International, 24(2-3), 75-90.

    https://doi.org/10.3727/154427220X15845838896314

Cohen, J. (1960). A Coefficient of Agreement for Nominal Scales. Educational and

    Psychological Measurement, 20(1), 37–46. doi: 10.1177/001316446002000104

Cohen, J. (1968). Weighted kappa: Nominal scale agreement provision for scaled disagreement

    or partial credit. Psychological Bulletin, 70(4), 213–220. doi: 10.1037/h0026256

Comiskey, A., Parent, M. C., & Tebbe, E. A. (2020). An inhospitable world: Exploring a model

    of objectification theory with trans women. Psychology of women quarterly, 44(1), 105-

    116. https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684319889595

Courrèges, E. (2018, May 15). Africa: The Fashion Continent. Rizzoli New York.

    https://www.rizzoliusa.com/book/9782081513419/

Davids, C. M., Watson, L. B., & Gere, M. P. (2019). Objectification, masculinity, and

    muscularity: A test of objectification theory with heterosexual men. Sex Roles, 80(7),

    443-457. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-018-0940-6

DeBerry-Spence, B., & Izberk-Bilgin, E. (2021). Historicizing and authenticating African dress:

    diaspora double consciousness and narratives of heritage and community. Consumption

    Markets & Culture, 24(2), 147-168. https://doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2019.1661245

Demirdağ, s., & Khalifa, m. K. M. (2020). The Effects of westernization efforts on the Turkish

    education system. International Journal of Educational Research Review, 5(3), 165-177.

    https://doi.org/10.24331/ijere.719244

Devkota, N., Paudel, U. R., & Bhandari, U. (2020). Does westernization influence the business

    culture of a touristic city?. Economics & Sociology, 13(4), 154-172.

    https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2020/13-4/10

Dickson, K. B. (n.d.). Africa. Encyclopædia Britannica.https://www.britannica.com/place/Africa

Divalocity. (2013). A Yves Saint Laurent African themed summer collection [Image]. Pinterest.

    https://www.pinterest.com/pin/142848619403586183/

Edwards, C., Edwards, A., Stoll, B., Lin, X., & Massey, N. (2019). Evaluations of an artificial

    intelligence instructor's voice: Social Identity Theory in human-robot

    interactions. Computers in Human Behavior, 90, 357-362.

    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.08.027

Elafrique. (2021, May 21). About Us. El Afrique. https://www.elafrique.com/about-us/

Ellis, M. (2019). The 9 essential components of Brand Messaging - 99designs. The 9 essential

    components of brand messaging. https://99designs.co.uk/blog/marketing-

    advertising/brand-messaging/

England, L., Ikpe, E., Comunian, R., & Kabir, A. J. (2021). Africa Fashion Futures: Creative

    economies, global networks, and local development. Geography Compass, 14(9).

    https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12589

Fashion of Southern Africa. (2016, August 1). David Tlale.

    https://fashionsofsouthernafrica.com/other-designers/david-tlale/

Frederick, D. A., Pila, E., Malcarne, V. L., Compte, E. J., Nagata, J. M., Best, C. R., Cook-
Cottone, C. P., Brown, T. A., Convertino, L., Crerand, C. E., Parent, M. C., Pennesi, J.-
L., Perez, M., Rodgers, R. F., Schaefer, L. M., Thompson, J. K., Tylka, T. L., & Murray,
S. B. (2022). Demographic predictors of objectification theory and tripartite influence
model constructs: The U.S. Body Project I. Body Image, 40, 182-199.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2021.12.012

Gil, J. P. (2021). BarBarian Jewellery, Social Space, UrBan cUltUre. SlovenSká
archeológia, 69(1), 55-97. https://www.sav.sk/journals/uploads/1108182403_Pinar.pdf

Greer, G. (2020, March 18). Egyptian clothing – what modern day Egyptians wear. Home Page.
https://kaleela.com/en/egyptian-clothing-what-modern-day-egyptians-wear

Güran, M. S., & Özarslan, H. (2022). Framing Theory in the Age of Social Media. Selçuk
Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, (48), 446-457.
https://doi.org/10.52642/susbed.1142562

Ham, A. (2013). Lonely Planet West Africa (Travel Guide). 8th ed. Melbourne

Hansen, K. T. (2019). Global fashion encounters and Africa: Affective materialities in Zambia.
In Dressing Global Bodies (pp. 289-305). Routledge.
https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781351028745-14/global-fashion-
encounters-africa-karen-tranberg-hansen

Harwood, J. (2020). Social identity theory. The International Encyclopedia of Media
Psychology, 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119011071.iemp0153

Haute Fashion Africa. (2019, November 29). Tiffany amber. Haute Fashion Africa (HFA).
https://hautefashionafrica.com/designer/tiffany-amber/

Hays, B. (2017, September 15). Image result for Xhosa Art: Bead work, African Crafts, African

pattern [Image]. Pinterest. https://www.pinterest.com/pin/462181980500843588/

Health Action Charity Organisation. (2019, September 16). The hidden meanings of african

clothing ; influence of African Fabrics on british fashion industry. Health Action Charity

Organisation. https://healthaction.co.uk/the-hidden-meanings-of-african-clothing-2/

Helal, G., Ozuem, W., & Lancaster, G. (2018). Social media brand perceptions of

millennials. International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management.

http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/4954/1/Ozuem_SocialMediaBrand.pdf

Herring, S. C. (2019). The coevolution of computer-mediated communication and computer-

mediated discourse analysis. In Analyzing digital discourse (pp. 25-67). Palgrave

Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92663-6_2

Hsiao, S. H., Wang, Y. Y., Wang, T., & Kao, T. W. (2020). How social media shapes the fashion

industry: The spillover effects between private labels and national brands. Industrial

Marketing Management, 86, 40-51.

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0019850118304425

 IA Connect. (n.d.). Anyango Mpinga - IA Connect | Industrie Africa.

https://connect.industrieafrica.com/designers/anyango-mpinga

Integr8Africa. (2017, June 7). The Woman Behind Tiffany Amber :. Integr8.Africa.

https://integr8-africa.com/2016/05/13/the-woman-behind-tiffany-amber/

Iqani, M. (2019). Picturing luxury, producing value: The cultural labour of social media brand

influencers in South Africa. International Journal of Cultural Studies, 22(2), 229-247.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1367877918821237

Johnson, T. (2022, January 30). Farida Temraz and the Egyptian Fashion Industry. The Gryphon.

> https://www.thegryphon.co.uk/2022/01/30/farida-temraz-and-the-egyptian-fashion-
>
> industry/

Kabil, N. (2021, May 11). 30 celebrity fashion looks designed by Kojak Studio. Rahetbally.

> https://momsmag.rahetbally.com/en/30-stunning-kojak-designs/

Kachitsa, M. (2021, July 16). Upcoming Africa Fashion Designer - Lisa Folawiyo. Leyman

> Publications. https://www.leymanck.com/upcoming-africa-fashion-designer-lisa-
>
> folawiyo/

Karikari, E. (2022). Drawing the Contours of Organizational Culture through Neoliberal and

> Colonial Discourses. Management Communication Quarterly, 36(1), 149-173.
>
> https://doi.org/10.1177/08933189211033986

Kasuku, M. (2021, January 7). Beyoncé-approved Kenyan fashion brands to check out in 2021.

> KenyaBuzz LifeStyle. https://www.kenyabuzz.com/lifestyle/beyonce-approved-kenyan-
>
> fashion-brands-to-check-out-in-2021/

Khalema, H. (2021). (thesis). Chinese investment in Africa through the One Belt One Road

> Initiative (OBOR): The case of Ethiopia, Tanzania and Kenya. KovsieScholar.
>
> https://scholar.ufs.ac.za/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11660/11388/KhalemaH.pdf?isAllowed=
>
> y&sequence=1

Kojak. (n.d.). NOT JUST A LABEL. Kojak. https://www.notjustalabel.com/kojak

Kuan, D., Hasan, N. A. M., Zawawi, J. W. M., & Abdullah, Z. (2021). Framing theory

> application in public relations: The lack of dynamic framing analysis in competitive
>
> context. Media Watch, 12(2), 333-351. 10.15655/mw/2021/v12i2/160155

Lando, A. L. (2020). Africans and Digital Communication at Crossroads: Rethinking Existing

    Decolonial Paradigms. In Digital Communications at Crossroads in Africa (pp. 107-129).

    Palgrave Pivot, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42404-6_6

Lee, E., & Weder, F. (2021). Framing sustainable fashion concepts on social media. An analysis

    of# slowfashionaustralia Instagram posts and post-COVID visions of the

    future. Sustainability, 13(17), 9976. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179976

Lenkaitis, C. A. (2020). Teacher candidate reflection: Benefits of using a synchronous computer-

    mediated communication-based virtual exchange. Teaching and Teacher Education, 92,

    103041. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103041

Li, C., & Kent, M. L. (2021). Explorations on mediated communication and beyond: Toward a

    theory of social media. Public Relations Review, 47(5), 102112.

    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102112

Liao, G. Y., Pham, T. T. L., Cheng, T. C. E., & Teng, C. I. (2020). How online gamers'

    participation fosters their team commitment: Perspective of social identity

    theory. International Journal of Information Management, 52, 102095.

    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102095

Ma, Y., Yang, X., Liao, L., Cao, Y., & Chua, T. S. (2019, October). Who, where, and what to

    wear? extracting fashion knowledge from social media. In Proceedings of the 27th ACM

    International Conference on Multimedia (pp. 257-265).

    https://arxiv.org/pdf/1908.08985.pdf

Martín-Consuegra, D., Faraoni, M., Díaz, E., & Ranfagni, S. (2018). Exploring relationships

    among brand credibility, purchase intention and social media for fashion brands: A

conditional mediation model. Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, 9(3), 237-251.

https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2018.1461020

Mason, A. J., & Carr, C. T. (2022). Toward a theoretical framework of relational maintenance in

computer-mediated communication. Communication Theory, 32(2), 243-264.

https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtaa035

Masson, P., & Pattillo, C. A. (2001). The Monetary Union in West Africa (ECOWAS): Is It

Desirable and How Could It Be Achieved?" (p: Introduction). International Monetary

Fund. Washington, DC - USA: International Monetary Fund.

Maxhosa. (n.d.). The Brand. The brand story | About. https://maxhosa.africa/brand-story

McMullen. (2020, September 29). Designer spotlight: Lisa Folawiyo. McMullen.

https://shopmcmullen.com/blogs/conversations/designer-spotlight-lisa-folawiyo

Meier, A., & Reinecke, L. (2021). Computer-mediated communication, social media, and mental

health: A conceptual and empirical meta-review. Communication Research, 48(8), 1182-

1209. https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650220958224

Meyer, M. (2022, June 28). Egyptian clothing explained from ancient history to modern times.

The VOU. https://thevou.com/fashion/egyptian-clothing/

Mohammed, S. (2022, April 26). Why African fashion is having its moment - gal-dem. gal-dem.

https://gal-dem.com/african-fashion-having-its-moment/

Mohlatlole, K., Club, B., Delport, C., Moloi, N., Mahamba, J. A., Nxumalo, L., Mthembu, L.,

Nyathi, D., Mngxitama, L., & Lemos, M. (2021, October 21). What is South Africa's

lexicon of fashion? - bubblegum club. Bubblegum Club - A cultural organization

working across all platforms and mediums. https://bubblegumclub.co.za/fashion/what-is-

south-africas-lexicon-of-fashion/

Musella, M. (2021, April 4). Bark cloth [Photograph]. Fashion History Timeline.

https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/bark-cloth/

Nadler, R. (2020). Understanding "Zoom fatigue": Theorizing spatial dynamics as third skins in

computer-mediated communication. Computers and Composition, 58, 102613.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2020.102613

Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). The content analysis guidebook. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nordquist, B. K., & Aradeon, S. A. (1975). Traditional African Dress and Textiles: An

Exhibition of the Susan B. Aradeon Collection of West African Dress at the Museum of

African Art. USA: Howard University. School of Human Ecology, Museum of African

Art.

Ochonogor, G. (n.d.). African fashion: History and future. 1.

https://www.umi1.co.uk/blogs/fashion-style/african-fashion-history-and-future

Ojo, E., Mears, H., & Stylianou, N. (2022). Fashioning Africa:: Using a New Collection of Dress

to Decolonize Museum Practice. Creating African fashion Histories, 280-306.

https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv296mt94.14

Okine, E. (2018). Kings and Chief wearing rich Kente cloth in Ghana. shutterstock. Yayi.

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/aburi-ghana-november-10-2018-kings-

1238709928

Okwodu, J. (2020, December 10). How Naomi Campbell and arise are championing talent from

across the Diaspora. Vogue. https://www.vogue.com/article/naomi-campbell-arise-30-

under-30-competition-interview

Oliver, S. S. (2011, December 7). Designers Take a Fresh Look at Africa (Published 2011). The

New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/08/fashion/africas-new-fashion-

influence.html

Park, M., Im, H., & Kim, H. Y. (2020). "You are too friendly!" The negative effects of social

media marketing on value perceptions of luxury fashion brands. Journal of Business

Research, 117, 529-542.

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0148296318303394

Perrett, D. I., & Sprengelmeyer, R. (2021). Clothing Aesthetics: Consistent Colour Choices to

Match Fair and Tanned Skin Tones. i-Perception, 12(6), 20416695211053361.

https://doi.org/10.1177/20416695211053361

Perry, E., Mandy, W., Hull, L., & Cage, E. (2022). Understanding camouflaging as a response to

autism-related stigma: A social identity theory approach. Journal of Autism and

Developmental Disorders, 52(2), 800-810. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-021-04987-w

Pooe, B. (2020). Development of an effective and sustainable supply-chain-management model

for South African fashion designers in the retail clothing industry (Doctoral dissertation,

Cape Peninsula University of Technology). https://jbrmr.com/cdn/issue_file/2021-03-23-

10-35-20-AM.pdf#page=75

Quelhas-Brito, P., Brandão, A., Gadekar, M., & Castelo-Branco, S. (2020). Diffusing fashion

information by social media fashion influencers: understanding antecedents and

consequences. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International

Journal, 24(2), 137-152. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Amelia-

Brandao/publication/339934452_Diffusing_Fashion_Information_by_Social_Media_Fas

hion_Influencers_Understanding_Antecedents_and_Consequences/links/62bf1da5894d6

25717be7c63/Diffusing-Fashion-Information-by-Social-Media-Fashion-Influencers-

Understanding-Antecedents-and-Consequences.pdf

Reny. (2022, August 16). Beautiful kitenge wear for 2022. Reny styles [image].

https://renystyles.com/beautiful-kitenge-wear-for-2018/

Scheepers, D., & Ellemers, N. (2019). Social identity theory. In Social psychology in action (pp.

129-143). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13788-5_9

Schlossberg, G. (2019, September 24). Glenn Schlossberg: The effect of globalization on Fast

Fashion. Medium https://medium.com/@glennschlossberg/glenn-schlossberg-the-effect-

of-globalization-on-fast-fashion-16beebbb5f80

Scuotto, V., Del Giudice, M., Della Peruta, M. R., & Tarba, S. (2017). The performance

implications of leveraging internal innovation through social media networks: An

empirical verification of the smart fashion industry. Technological Forecasting and Social

Change, 120, 184-194.

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0040162517303608

Shen, Z. (2022). How Small Brands Survive the Social Media Firestorm Through Culture

Heritage: A Case Study of Irish Fashion Microblogging. SAGE Open, 12(2),

21582440221095024. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/21582440221095024

Shvili, J. (2021, May 19). Southern African countries. WorldAtlas.

https://www.worldatlas.com/geography/southern-african-countries.html

Sibani, C. (2018). Impact of western culture on traditional African society: problems and

prospects. International Journal of Religion and Human Relations, 10(1).

Sobande, F., & Osei, K. (2020). An African city: Black women's creativity, pleasure, diasporic

(dis) connections and resistance through aesthetic and media practices and

scholarship. Communication, Culture & Critique, 13(2), 204-221.

https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcaa016

Steffens, N. K., Munt, K. A., van Knippenberg, D., Platow, M. J., & Haslam, S. A. (2021).

Advancing the social identity theory of leadership: A meta-analytic review of leader

group prototypicality. Organizational Psychology Review, 11(1), 35-72.

https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386620962569

Stylemepurple. (n.d.). Ankara style inspiration from London, South Africa, Ghana and Lagos

Fashion Week - Fashion - Nigeria. Nairaland, the Nigerian Forum.

Szymanski, D. M., Moffitt, L. B., & Carr, E. R. (2010). Sexual objectification of women:

Advances to theory and research 1Ψ7. The Counseling Psychologist, 39(1), 6–38.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000010378402

Tang, Y., & Hew, K. F. (2018). Emoticon, Emoji, and Sticker Use in Computer-Mediated

Communications: Understanding Its Communicative Function, Impact, User Behavior,

and Motive. New Media for Educational Change, 191-201. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-
981-10-8896-4_16

Temraza. (2021, December 2). temraza-About. https://temraza.com/about/

Treem, J. W., Leonardi, P. M., & van den Hooff, B. (2020). Computer-mediated communication

in the age of communication visibility. Journal of Computer-Mediated

Communication, 25(1), 44-59. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmz024

Vänskä, A., & Gurova, O. (2022). The fashion scandal: Social media, identity and the

globalization of Fashion in the twenty-first century. International Journal of Fashion

Studies, 9(1), 5-27. https://doi.org/10.1386/infs_00045_1

Venge, T. (2020, June 22). David Tlale dresses lion king star. ZAlebs.

> https://zalebs.com/fashion/david-tlale/david-tlale-dresses-lion-king-star

Vilarinho, S., & Christiaans, H. (2020). Identity Building Through Mediation by African

> Tailors. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 44(5), 841-

> 856. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12893

W, E. (n.d.). Kenyan entertainers taking the fashion industry by Storm. Standard Entertainment.

> https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/entertainment/news/article/2001391757/kenyan-

> entertainers-taking-the-fashion-industry-by-storm

Waddell, A. (2021). Emerging Ghanaian and Nigerian fashion entrepreneurs: The Cultural

> Considerations and structural challenges of growing a fashion business in a developing

> economy. https://doi.org/10.32920/ryerson.14665887.v1

Willard, M. (2004). History of research on African factory-printed cloth and current approaches

> in the field. DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

> https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/447/

Yang, X., Tseng, Y., & Lee, B. (2021). Merging the Social Influence Theory and the Goal-

> Framing Theory to Understand Consumers' Green Purchasing Behavior: Does the Level

> of Sensitivity to Climate Change Really Matter?. Frontiers in Psychology, 12, 766754.

> https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.766754

Yao, M. Z., & Ling, R. (2020). "What is computer-mediated communication?"—An introduction

> to the special issue. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 25(1), 4-8.

> https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmz027

APPENDICES

Snap Shots of Designers Brands form Each Region

Appendix A: West Africa (Nigeria)

Tiffany Amber-

Website https://tiffanyamberng.com/

Instagram Handle: @Tiffanyamberng
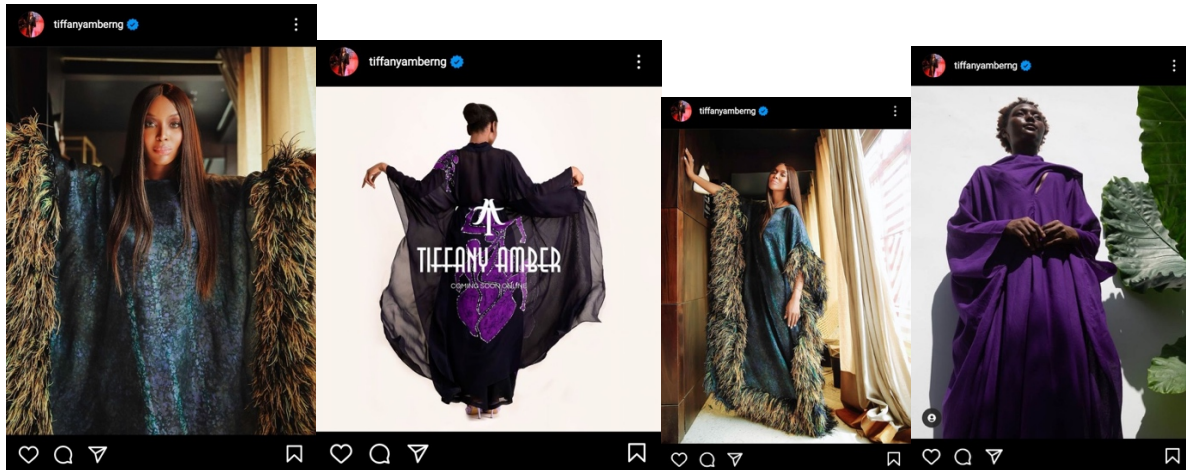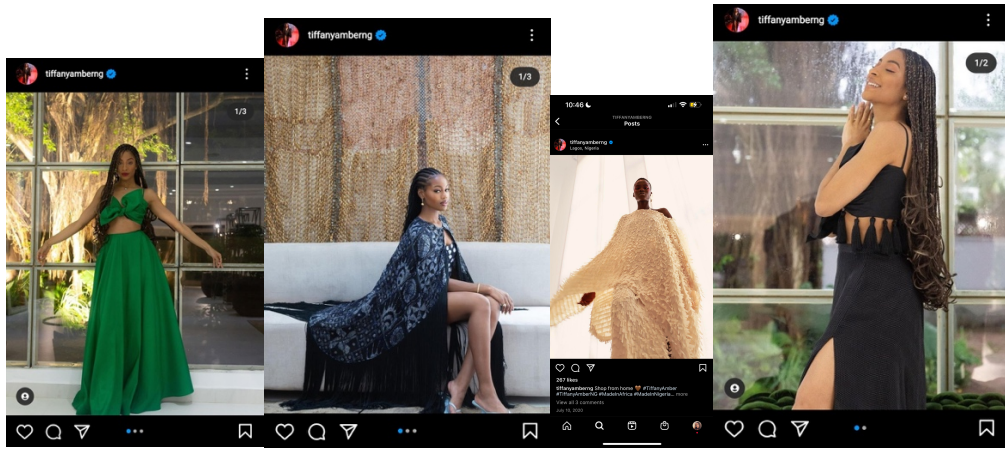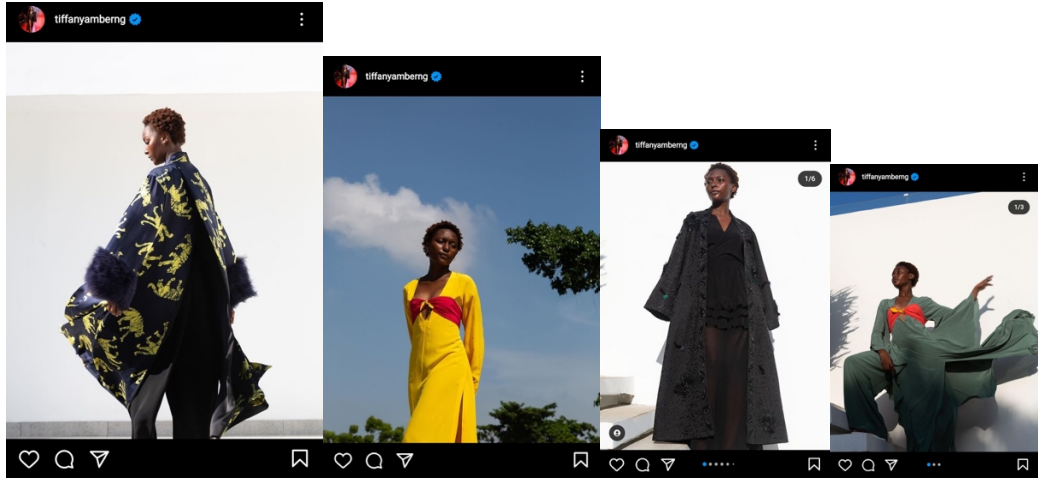
Lisa Folawiyo (Jewel by Lisa)

Website: https://www.lisafolawiyo.com/

Instagram Handle: @Lisafolawiyo_Studio
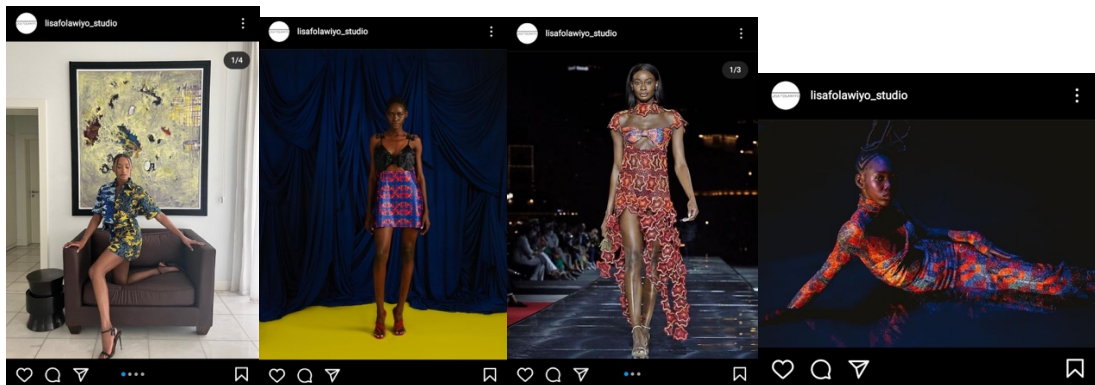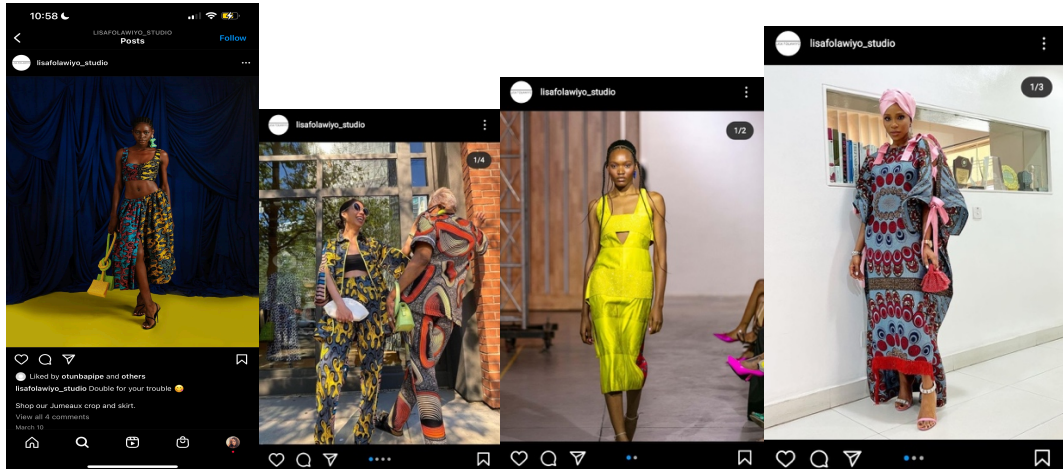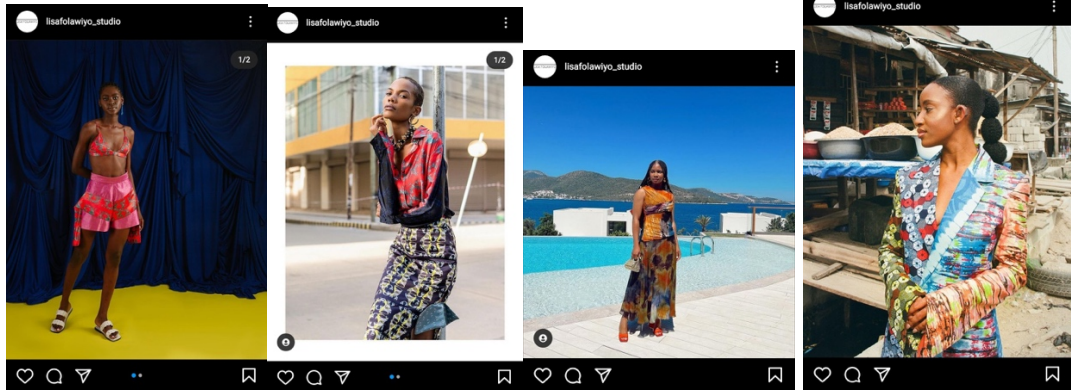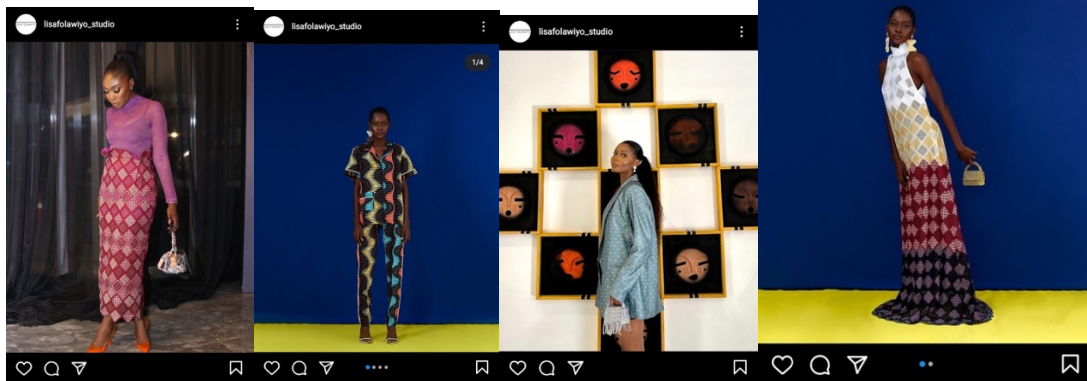
Appendix B: North Africa (Egypt)

Farida Temraz (Temraza)

Website https://temraza.com/

Instagram Handle: @Temraza
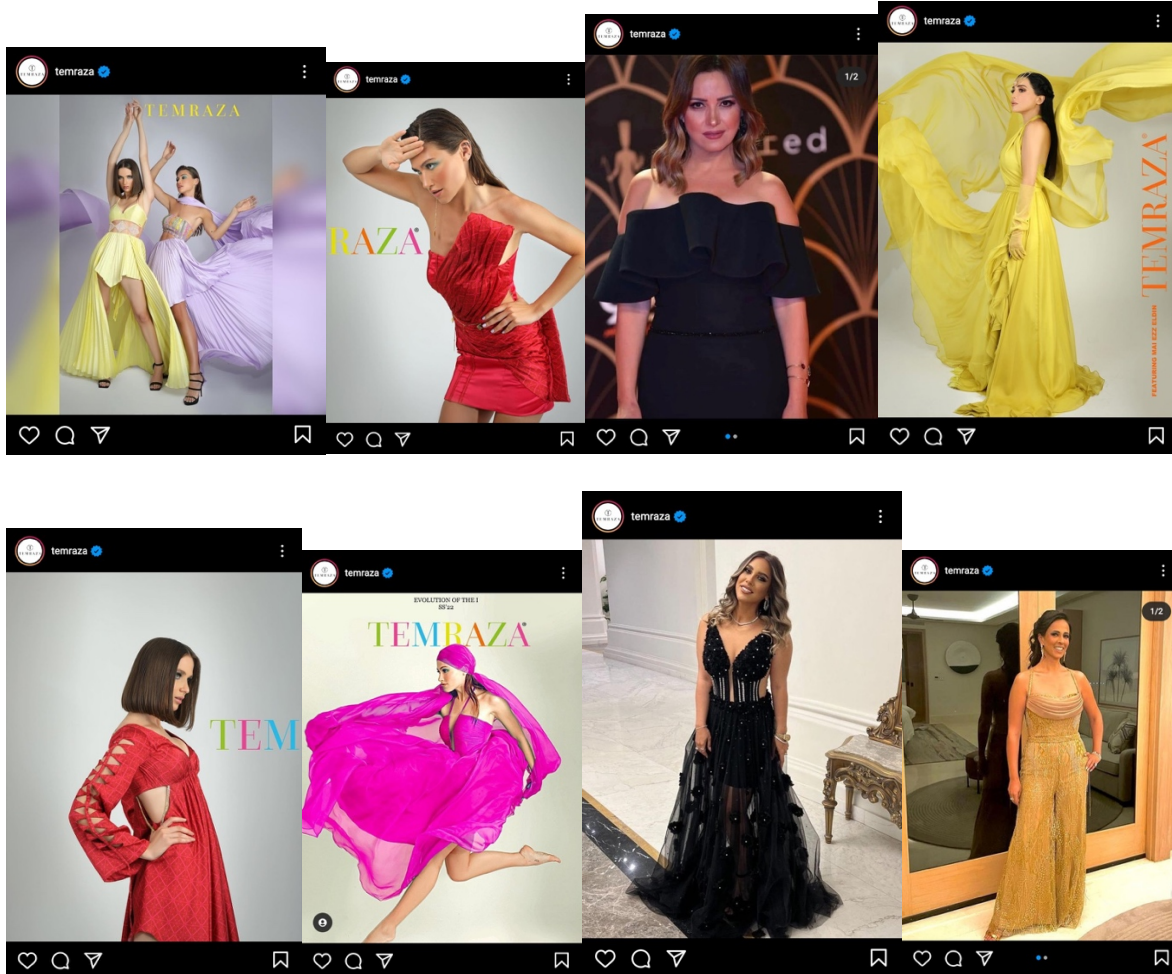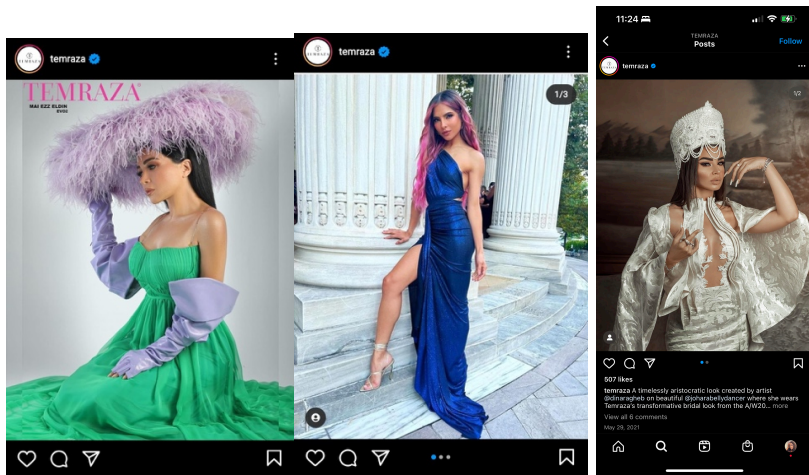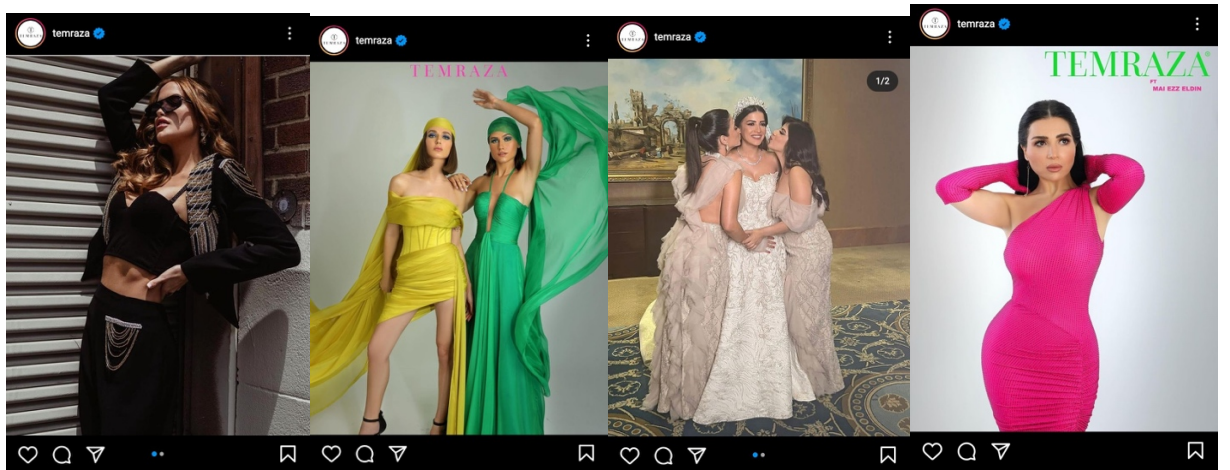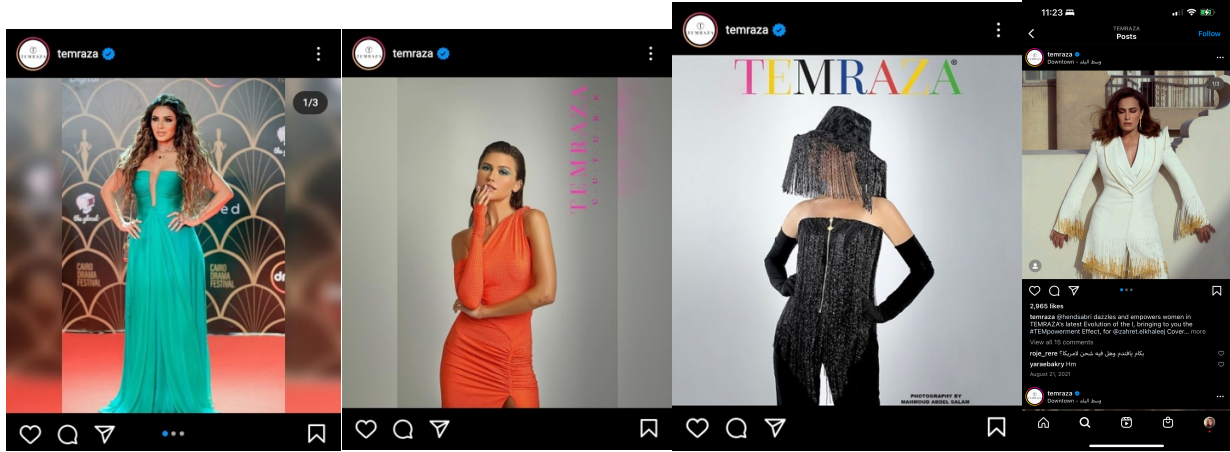
Kojak Studio (Kojak)

Website https://www.kojakstudio.com/

Instagram Handle: @Kojak Studio
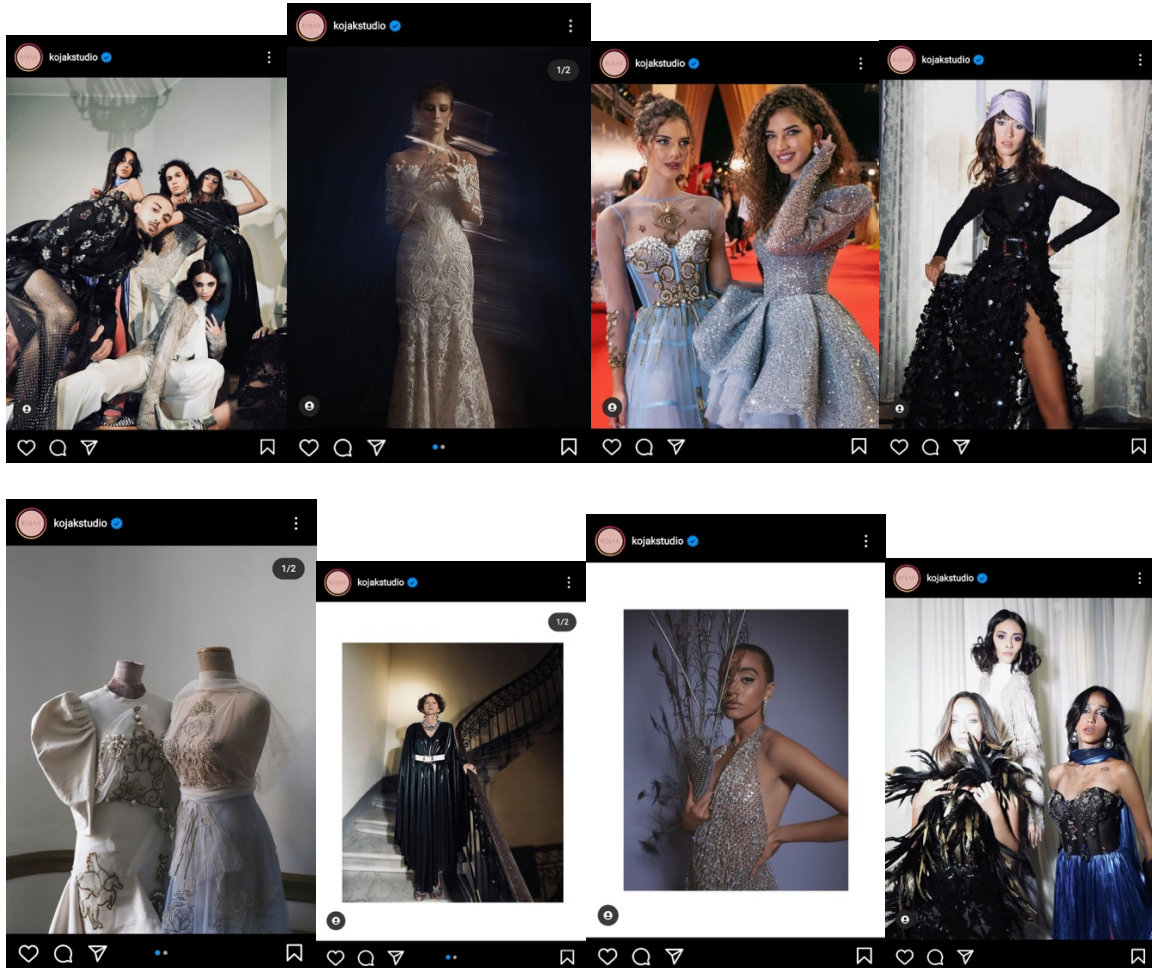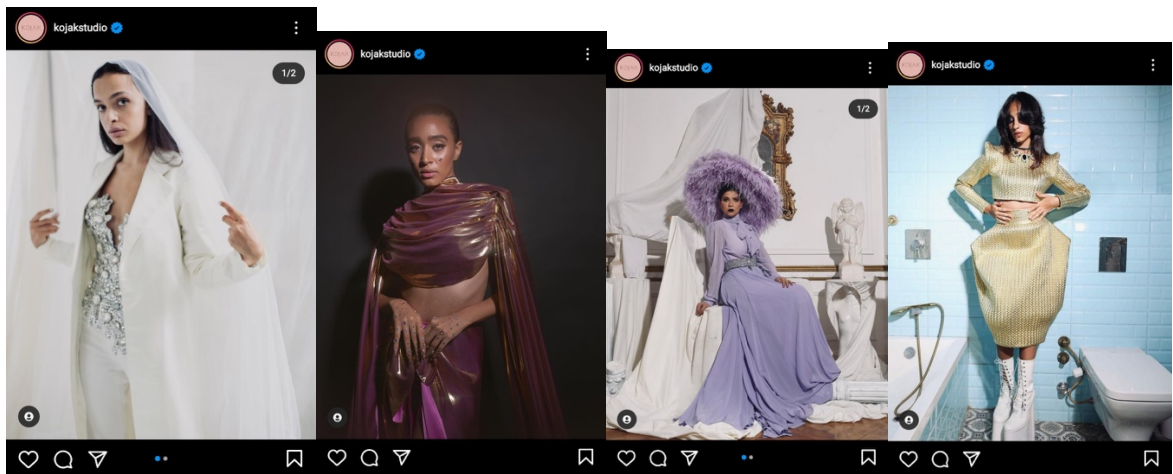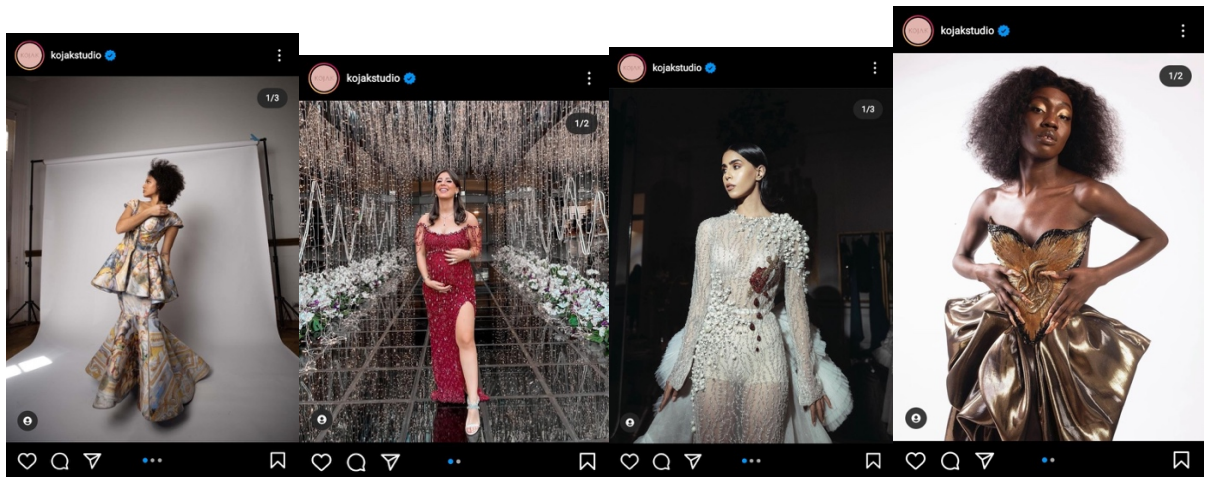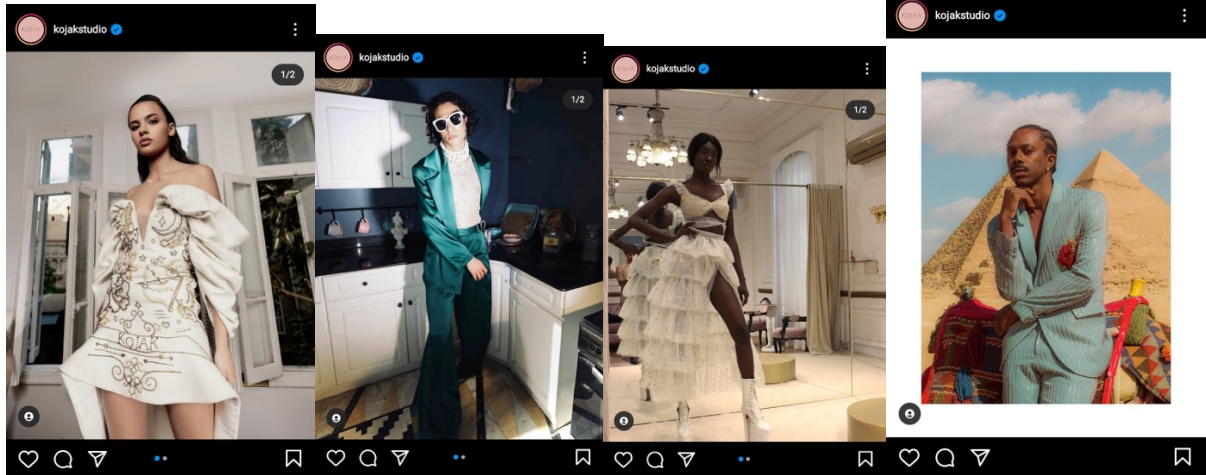
Appendix C: South Africa (South Africa)

David Tlale

Website https://davidtlale.com/

Instagram handle: @DavidTlale
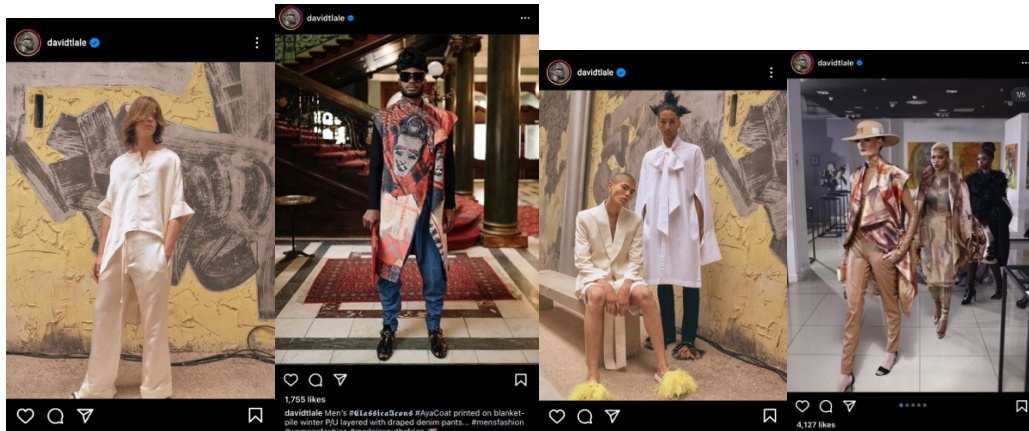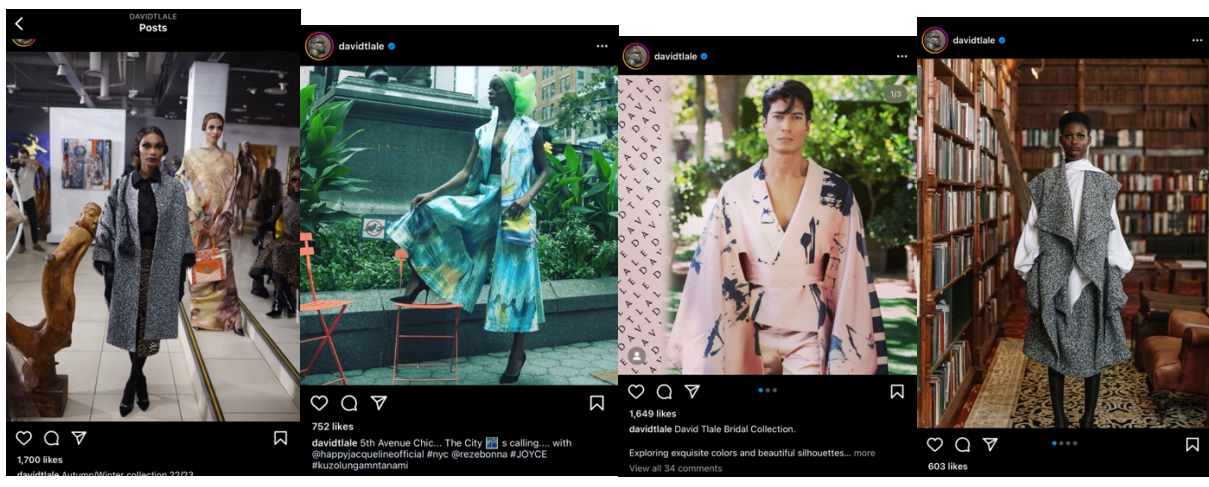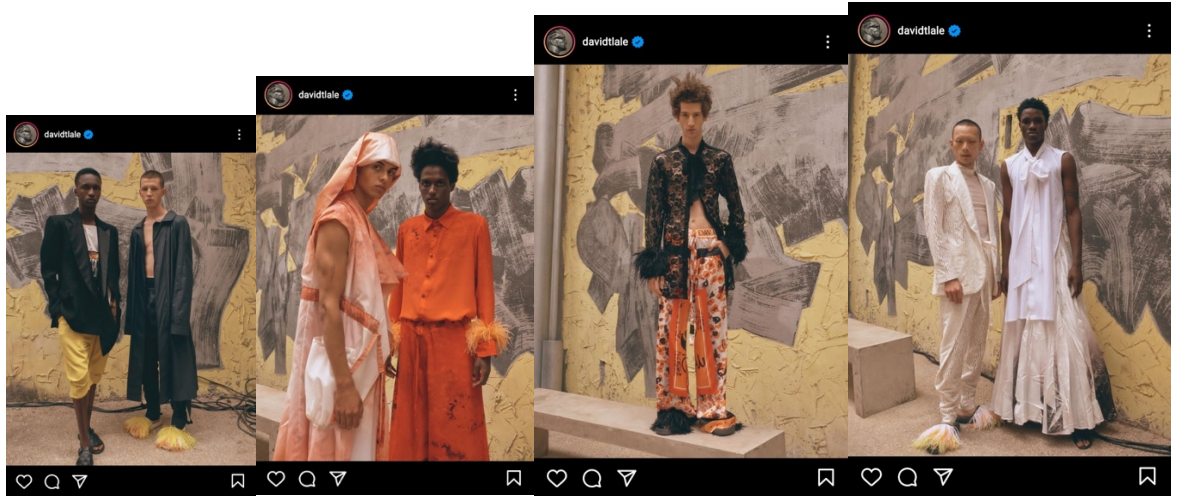
MaXhosa by Laduma (Maxhosa Africa)

Website: https://shop.maxhosa.africa/

Instagram page: @Maxhosa
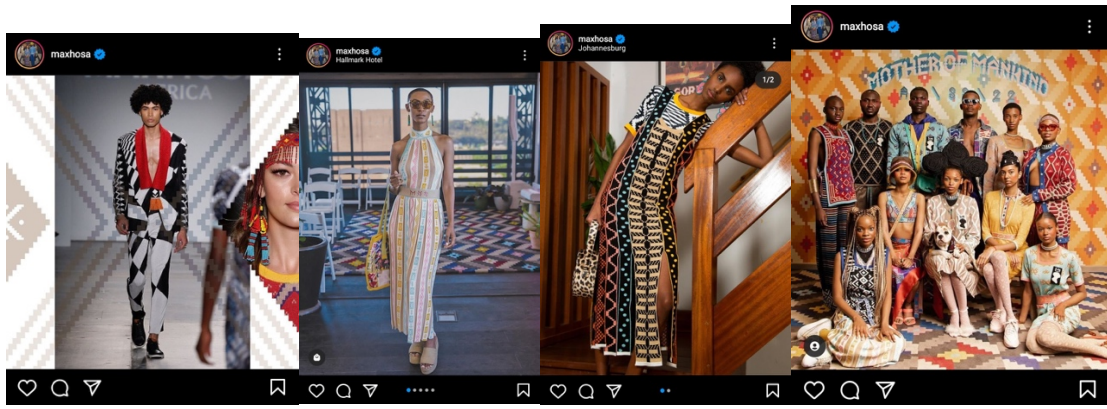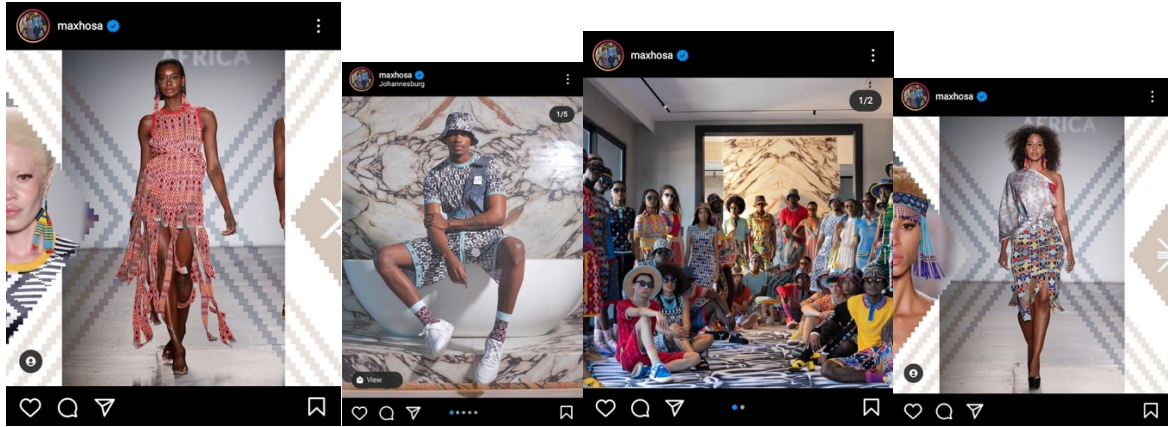
Appendix D: East Africa (Kenya)

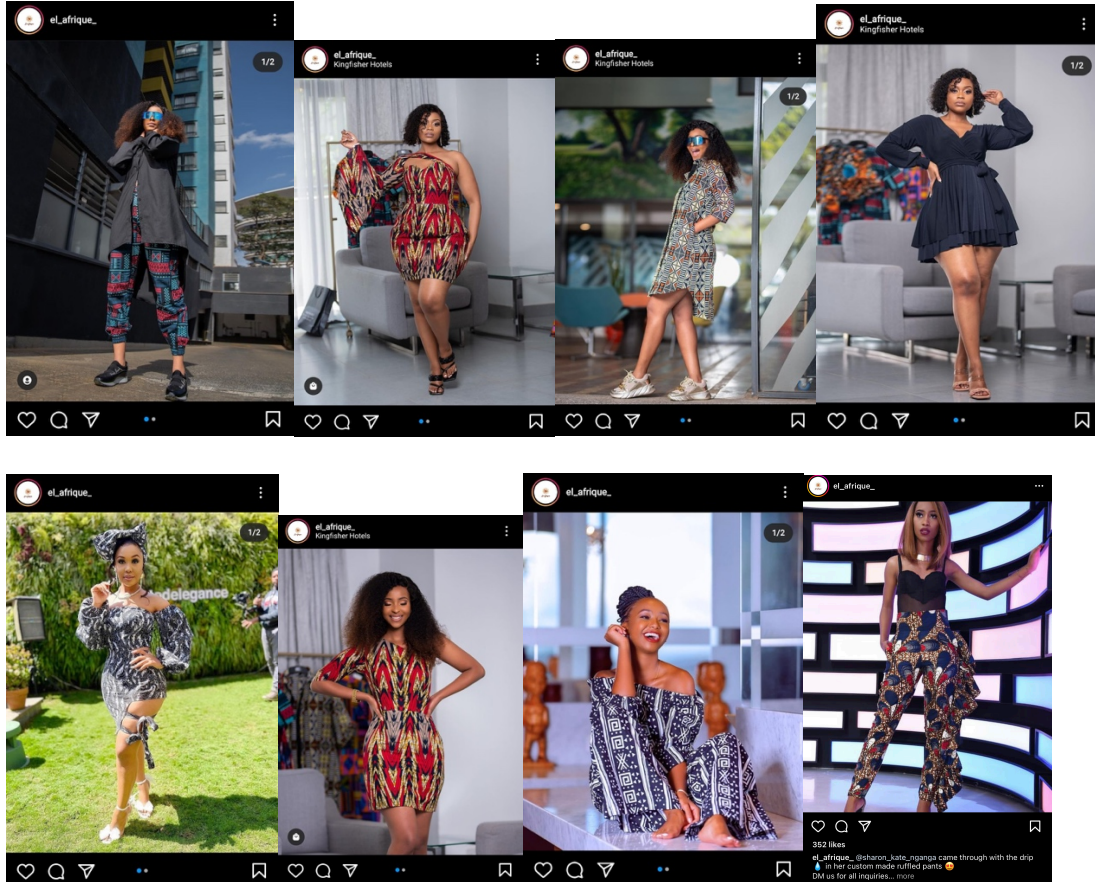Anyango Mpinga

 Website https://anyangompinga.com/

Instagram Handle: @anyangompinga
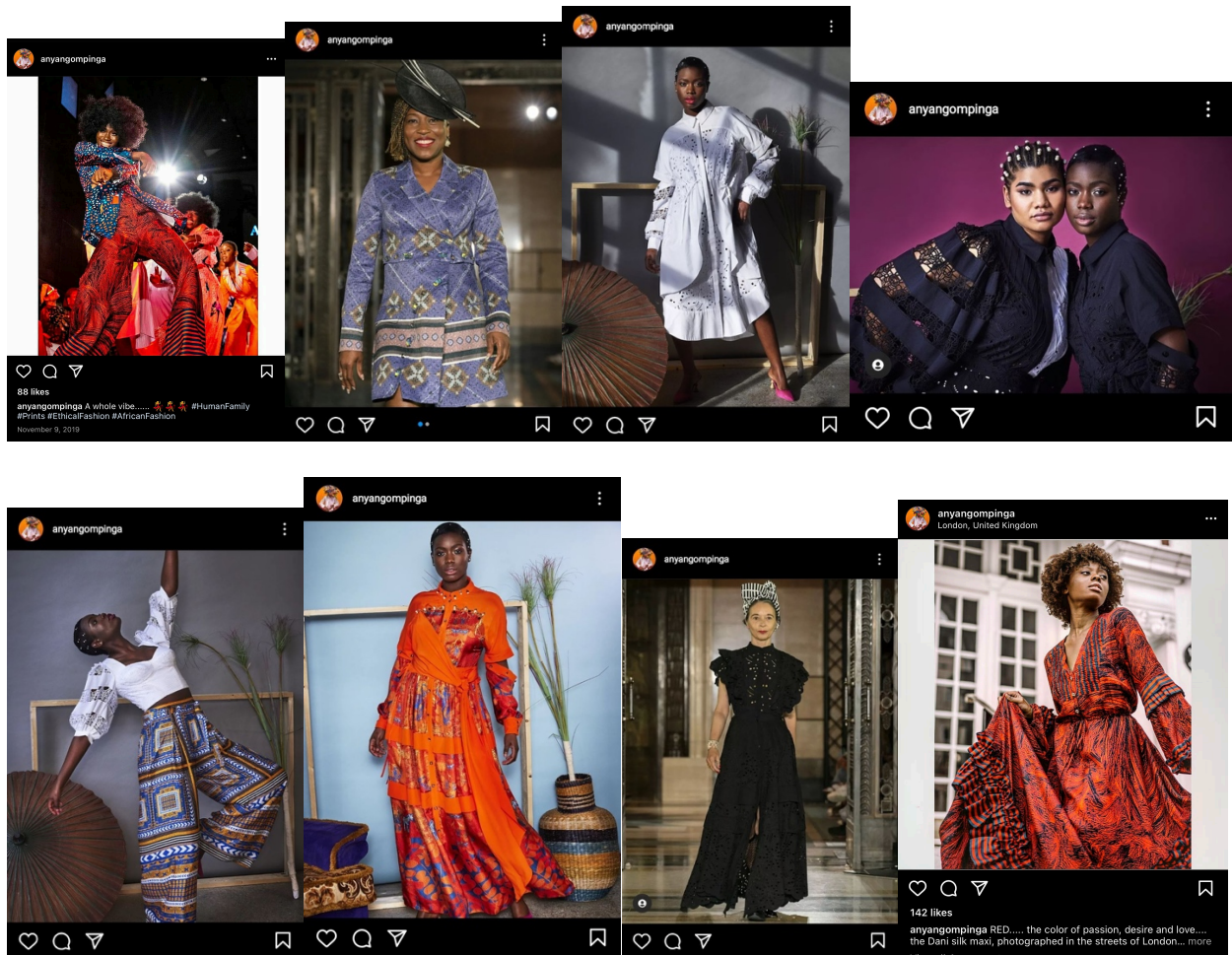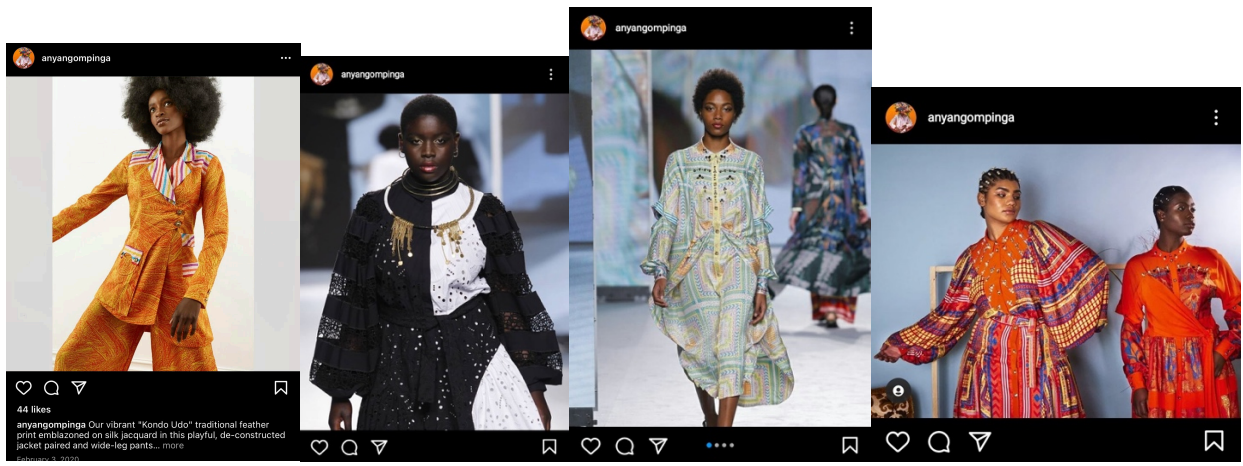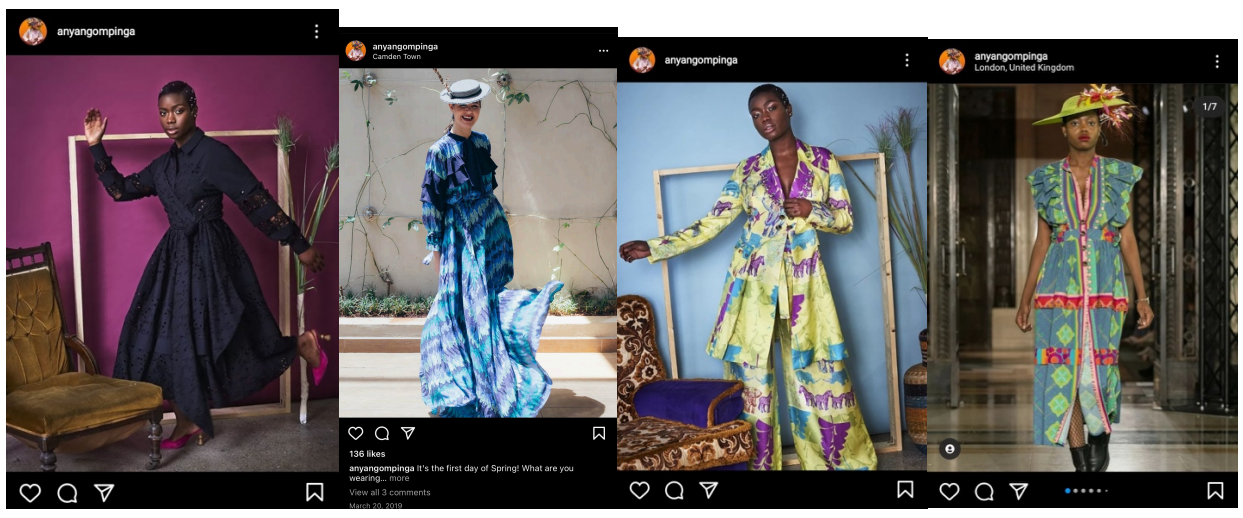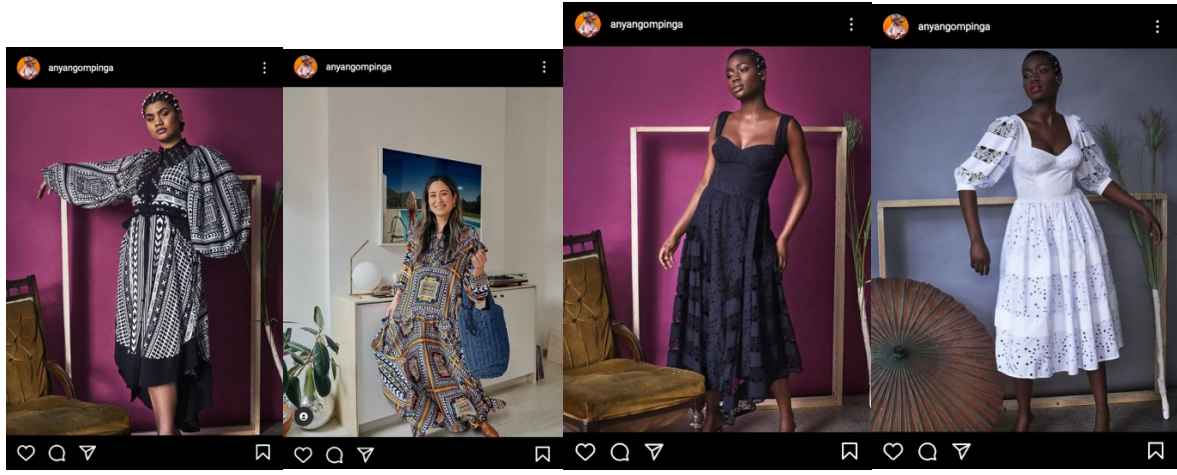
El Afrique

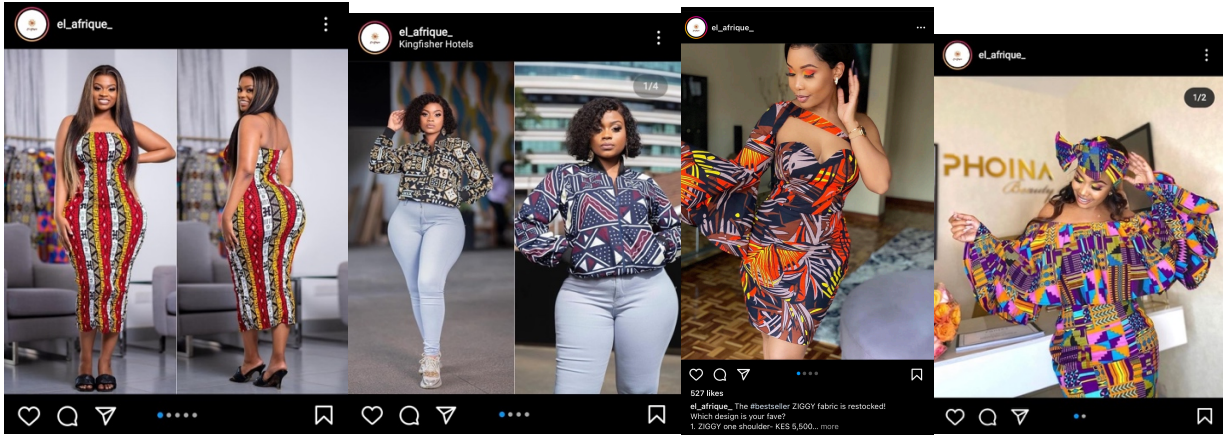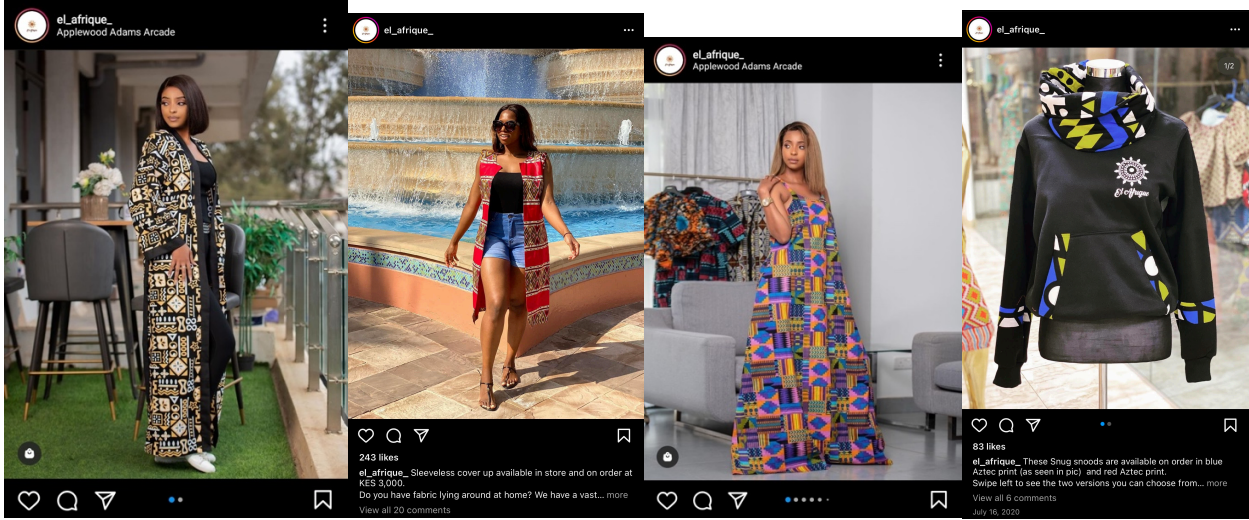Website https://www.elafrique.com/

Instagram Handle @El_Afrique_
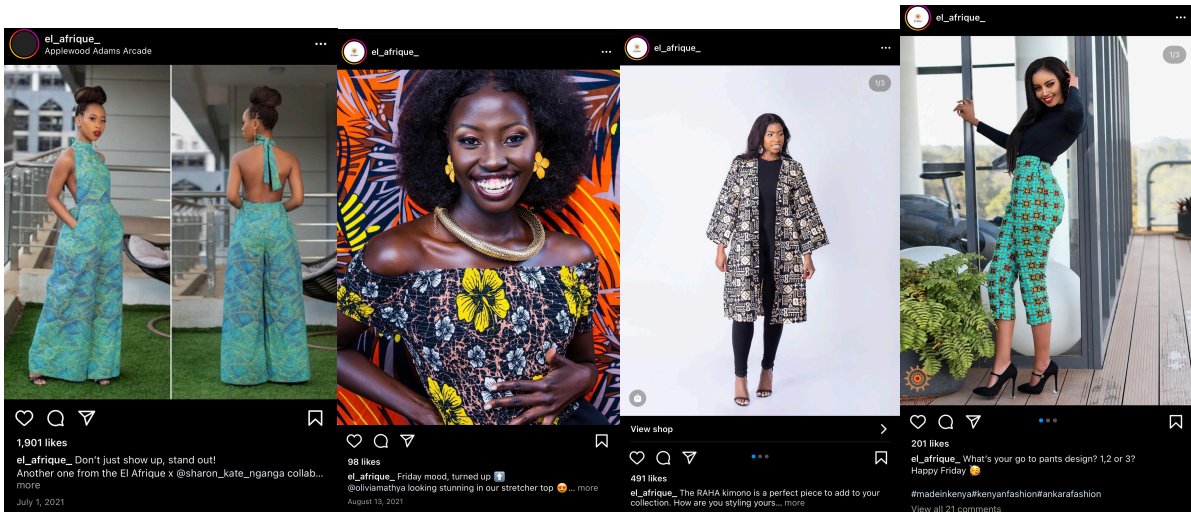
VITA

ESTHER OYINDAMOLA ESTHER

Education:	M.A. Brand and Media Strategy, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, 2022
	Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication, Crescent University, Abeokuta, Nigeria, 2020
	Higher National Diploma in Mass Communication, State Polytechnic, (IREE) Osun State, Nigeria, 2015
Experience	Graduate Assistant, East Tennessee State University, University Career Services, 2021-2022
	Human Resource Generalist, Sakal GB Solutions LTD, Lagos, Nigeria, 2019–2020
	Admin/Project Facility Manager, Sakal GB Solutions LTD, Lagos, Nigeria, 2018–2019