DISSERTATION

TAILORED FOR THE GRAM: A TECHNOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF NIGERIAN IGBO WOMEN FASHION DESIGNERS' SELF-PRESENTATION ON INSTAGRAM

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ABSTRACT

TAILORED FOR THE GRAM: A TECHNOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF NIGERIAN IGBO WOMEN FASHION DESIGNERS' SELF-PRESENTATION ON INSTAGRAM

Using African Technocultural Feminist Theory, this study uncovered the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances to perform digital identities online as well as examined their negotiation of patriarchal ideologies within Igbo culture. The Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) of Instagram posts and interview data revealed Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers employed self-promotion and cultural digitization of Igbo-centric fashion in their self-presentation online. Instagram's affordance of photos allowed them post visually appealing pictures which showcased the intricacies of their designs as well as facilitated the designers' cultural digitalization of Igbo-centric fashion while creating space to challenge patriarchal structures within Igbo culture. The analysis also showed Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers value building and maintaining professional relationships with their clients as they embodied visual aesthetics, relatability, and authenticity in their self-presentation online. Implications, recommendations, and limitations were discussed.

Key words: African Technocultural Feminist Theory, CTDA, Igbo-Centric Fashion, Self-Presentation, Qualitative, Affordances, Persona, African Feminism.

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DEDICATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

On the 15th of February 2021, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a Nigerian American national made history by becoming the first Black person and first woman to head the World Trade Organization. Prior to this, Dr. Okonjo-Iweala served twice as Nigeria's finance minister, spent 25 years at the World Bank as a development economist and is now the chairwoman of the Center for Global Development. Beyond her leadership skills and expertise, what makes Dr. Okonjo-Iweala stand out from the drab suits typically associated with international finance is her colorful and vibrant traditional African attire. She is well known for her coordinated headwrap that matches her custom-made outfits made from African fabric. Ngozi is one example of an African in diaspora that has embraced African fashion and is using it as a form of cultural identity. Other examples include Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie who has also been seen proudly adorning herself in African colorful prints on her TED talks and her social media accounts. Scholars allude there is always a high probability of running into someone wearing African print on the streets of New York, Paris and London (Fasinu, 2020). More so, among African Americans in the United States, wearing authentic African prints transcends being a fashion statement to showcasing their African identity. As a result, Nigerian designers are gaining international recognition with their cultural fashion attire as the industry grows in size, sophistication and creativity thereby attracting global attention (Moreno-Gavara, & Jiménez-Zarco, 2019).

The Nigerian fashion industry plays a huge role in its contribution to Nigerian culture and economy as it showcases the rich diversity of different religions and ethnic groups in the country while simultaneously creating career opportunities for its citizens. The industry is worth over

three billion dollars, accounts for 0.46% of Nigeria's GDP and has experienced an average growth of about 17% since 2010 (Akinsola, 2019; Agu & Onuoba, 2016). Nigerians of all walks of life, from politicians to clergy, teachers, bankers, celebrities, have an increasing awareness of fashion. As such, there is a constant demand on fashion designers to create outfits to meet the growing market (Agu & Onuoba, 2016). Nigerian designers, including Igbo women designers, are showcasing on world runways and winning acclaim as national and international figures including Michelle Obama, Lupita Nyong'o, Beyonce, and Nollywood star Genevieve Nnaji have been known to wear Nigerian designs (Olarenwaju, 2018). Some examples of Nigerian Igbo women designers include Amaka Osakwe (Maki Oh), Nkwo Onwuka (Nkwo Sustainable Fashion) and Zizi Cardow. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are adopting marketing strategies such as producing high-quality clothing, using local labor as well as constructing symbolic values through branding and identity as a way of communicating significance for their products ((Moreno-Gavara, & Jiménez-Zarco, 2019; Brydges & Hracs, 2018). Designers also rely on fashion shows as well as a variety of educational and apprentice schemes to create publicity about the industry. More recently, Nigerian Igbo women designers are using new media technology, specifically social media as channels to visibility and exposure.

Social media are digital platforms that enable information sharing, collaboration between diverse groups, and, when used for business, facilitate conversations between customers and organizations (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015; Castillo, Benitez, Llorens, & Luo, 2021). Social media has also revolutionized the word-of-mouth ecosystem as it potentially expands audience reach from one or few people to the entire world (Castillo et al, 2021). As such, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers have the responsibility to identify the best digital branding strategy to persuade consumers. Scholarship on media identity in entrepreneurship has identified

entrepreneurs' online identities/branding as crucial to the survival/successes of their businesses (Ekinci et al., 2020; Powell & Baker, 2014). Digital identity is created based on what a person chooses to publish about themselves as well as what others say about them online (Elwell, 2014). Using graphics and/or text, individuals can create an online identity that presents the specific impression they want their audience to have of them (Cover, 2016). To understand Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's media identity on Instagram, this study relied on African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) a new theory which presents a framework for understanding the ways African people use technological platforms as a conduit for cultural expression, business branding, self-presentation, and advocacy, while centering historically underrepresented and marginalized African identities. The theory relies on three tenets to explain how African people may apply new media technology for culturally relevant narrative construction: self-presentation, technology affordance, and African feminism.

The ubiquity of the Internet presents a fluidity of self-identity that can neither be turned off nor guarantee anonymity (Cover, 2016). For example, years ago, multiuser domains and chatrooms created an opportunity for Internet users to imagine online identity as a mask that can easily be worn and taken off as the Internet guaranteed ambiguity. In today's culture of constant connectivity, the Internet has become part of the human ecosystem especially as it intertwines with the user's daily life. This implies several Internet users have multiple digital identities (across different social media platforms) which are interconnected with each other and create a 'networked biosphere of digital selves' (Elwell, 2014). As such, individuals are more likely to present an idealized rather than authentic version of themselves in their online platforms. Additionally, studies show social networking sites have different features that affect how users approach these platforms as they perform their multiple identities (Nagy & Neff, 2015). These

features are described as technology affordances. Technology affordance is the material qualities of media technologies and the affective processes of people who use them (Taina & Helmond, 2017). Technology affordance also explains the ways technological changes affect social relations and structures which ultimately requires users to be adaptive and open to learning (Taina & Helmond, 2017; Nagy & Neff, 2015). To put it contextually, social media has experienced some significant changes to its communication platforms including static platforms, ephemeral platforms and static platforms incorporating ephemeral attributes (Kircova, Pinarbaşi & Köse, 2020). Affordances can be conceptualized as high-level or low-level dimensions (Taina & Helmond, 2017). High-level affordances are features enabled by technical devices, platforms, and media technologies. In social media specifically, high-level dimensions are shaped by eight affordances that guide communication processes and user engagement: persistence, replicability, scalability, searchability, visibility, editability, persistence and association (Taina & Helmond, 2017). Low-level affordances on the other hand are located in the materiality of the medium in specific features, buttons, screens and platforms (Taina & Helmond, 2017). For example, Amazon Kindle cannot be used like Apple's iPad because its affordance is reading books. As Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on social networking sites for marketing, it is imperative that they recognize each platform's distinct affordances in order to produce suitable content that drives visibility and exposure. While previous studies have explored technology platforms and their affordances, there are insufficient studies that explain how non-western technology users (particularly African women) approach and engage with technology platforms. ATFT therefore presents a detailing of new media technology use within African culture to explicate how African people operationalize new media technology. Specifically, ATFT calls for

a thorough description of the technology platform being studied including its interface analysis, practices, and an explanation of icons and how they facilitate African women's content creation.

The proliferation of the Internet and social media have made digital platforms become essential tools for entertainment, marketing, and social connectivity for most Nigerians. With a population of 209 million and a national GDP of 448 million dollars, Nigeria has the largest population and the fastest growing economy in Africa (The World Bank, 2021; Kemp, 2021; Naidoo, 2020; Terwas, Abdul-Talib & Zengeni, 2014). Nigeria is considered the financial hub of the continent due to its abundance of human and natural endowment (See Appendix A). Nigeria is also leading the African new media trend with about half its population (104 million) registered as Internet users and about 33 million people active on social media (Kemp, 2021). On a global level, about 59% of the world's population are active Internet users and about 2.95 billion people were active on social media (Dwivedi, et al, 2020). As Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers adopt social media, specifically Instagram for visibility, they however, face significant challenges as they develop their brands on social media. First, the pressure to create an online identity presents a burden for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers as they navigate self-presentation on technological platforms that continues to evolve and expand the scope of their affordances (Scolere, Pruchniewska, & Duffy, 2018). Second, the need to maintain online visibility is crucial to Nigerian Igbo woman fashion designers as they constantly compete with local entertainment celebrities including Nollywood actors and musicians for visibility. Third, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers compete with international fashion industries for visibility on digital platforms especially as western clothing industries target African local markets with cheap pre-owned clothing which ultimately presents a pricing issue as Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are tasked with persuading their clients to purchase their more

expensive custom-made pieces. By interviewing Nigerian Igbo women fashions designers and examining their media texts on Instagram, I provide a broad analysis of designers' digital self-representation as well as a present an analysis of their lived experiences, including gender negotiations within culture.

The use of social media platforms like Instagram helps in selective presentation of the self to the outside world (Longo & Saxena, 2020). Instagram is a photo and video-based service which has over a billion monthly active users worldwide (Geurin-Eagleman & Burch, 2016). In January 2021, about 8.6 million Nigerians were active users of the platform which was a 19% increase from 2019 (NapoleonCat, 2021). As more Nigerian fashion designers adopt Instagram platform for advertising, they are able to achieve their marketing objectives at significantly lower cost while connecting with their customers and increasing product sales (Dwivedi, et al, 2020). Additionally, Nigerian designers are using Instagram to share balanced stories of Africa and African culture. This is especially important because Africa has been misrepresented in western media with predominant disparaging narratives of poverty and insecurity (Ndiayea & Ndiayea, 2014). Specifically, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are using Instagram as a tool to express their cultural identities, preserve history, and share their creative apparels. As they navigate persuading their clients to purchase their more expensive custom-made designs over cheaper second-hand western clothing, they rely on Instagram to communicate the intrinsic value of choosing their apparels. An example of a Nigerian Igbo woman fashion designer who uses Instagram as a platform to showcase her creativity and share her cultural identity is Nkwo (Onwuka, 2021). She posts pictures of clothing and shoes made from up-cycled fabrics to promote the core values of her brand which is conservation of natural and environmental

resources (figure 1). Another example is Zizi Cardow, a renowned contemporary designer who showcases her traditional African print inspired attires on Instagram (figure 2).

Figure 1: Photograph of Nkwo's first intentionally waste controlled collection called Modernity during Lagos Fashion Week. Screenshot from her Instagram account [nkwo_official].

Figure 2: Photograph Zizi's ethereal collection, screenshot from her Instagram account [zizicardow].

Zizi uses her the platform to promote her collections as well as emphasize the ethical processes in the sourcing and crafting of her fabric and designs (Cardow, 2020). Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are therefore, skillfully combining modernity and exclusivity with tradition and sustainability as they give artistic expression to Igbo culture. They are also offering improvement and development opportunities for countless Igbo women who work in small local businesses while creating opportunities for international recognition of Nigerian Igbo culture. (Moreno-Gavara & Jiménez-Zarco, 2019).

Igbo people constitute the third largest ethnic group in Nigeria and are found in the southeastern part of the country (Amadi & Agena, 2015). They make up about 19% of Nigeria's population (40 million people) and are one of the most dispersed and influential tribes in the country. Igbo people are known for their entrepreneurial endeavors and have pioneered the Igbo apprentice system which Harvard Business School is currently reviewing for mainstream implementation (Ukwu, 2021). The Igbo apprentice system (also known as Imu-Ahia which translates to 'to learn market/trade') advocates for shared prosperity where entrepreneurs form livable clusters through the provision of startup funds to apprentices following the completion of their internship (Appendix A). The Igbo apprentice system has been identified as one of the major factors that helped pull many Igbo families out of poverty within 3- months of the Biafran civil war (Adegbite, 2021; Okoro, 2018). However, scholars call for a reimagining of this model as the current system has been criticized for being heavily skewed towards men (Nnonyelu, 2020). This implies women have been historically excluded from this financial model which has benefitted Igbo men. This is rooted in the patriarchal structure within the traditional Igbo society that is reflected in men considered as subjects and women perceived as the man's object without whom she has no identity.

Despite Nigerian women's financial input to the economy, their contribution remains underreported and undervalued. For example, the Nigerian fashion industry is a woman-dominated informal sector and continues to make significant contribution to the national economy (GEM, 2019; Ogundana et al, 2018; Chukwu, 2005). Nigerian women contribute more than 30% of Nigeria's GDP and account for more than 40% of the employment generated by small and medium sized enterprises (Ogundana, Galanakis, & Oxborrow, 2018). Their contribution to start-ups, small, and medium businesses foster development and poverty reduction. However, their multiple responsibilities (at home, in business and in the society) are mostly hidden, unpaid and/or underpaid. This has existed throughout African colonial history and continues to be an issue especially in the ways Nigerian women view themselves within the society. Scholars have traced Nigerian women's subordination (particularly Igbo women) to colonization and religious missionary activities (Amadiume, 2015). Before colonization, Igbo culture practiced a dual gendered symmetrical system where members of the community were valued for their social responsibilities. Women were active community stakeholders exercising power in religious, political and economic sectors. With colonization came the infiltration of Victorian gender role ideologies that dictated leadership, authority and responsibility were men attributes, and nurture, compliance, passivity, and dependance were woman attributes. As such, most traditional societies in Nigeria adopted this patriarchal ideology by stipulating a woman's place is in the home space where she is confined to domestic chores as well as bearing and raising children, while the man is considered the breadwinner and provider.

Subjugation of women still persists within the Nigerian political sector as women are underrepresented in political offices. For example, Nigerian women's political participation is currently around 6.7% in both elective and appointive positions, which is far below the Global

Average of 22.5% and Africa Regional Average of 23.4% (Oloyede, 2015). As consequence, the nation's law-making agencies continue to resist gender equality initiatives even though 49.4% of the population are women (Ogharanduku, Jackson, & Paterson, 2020). Specifically, in 2016, the National Assembly rejected a gender equality bill citing civil and religious organizations claimed gender equality was an attack their beliefs (Ogharanduku, Jackson, & Paterson, 2020). Gender disparity also persists in national mobile technology and media use. Currently, about 13% of Nigerian social media users within the ages of 25 and 34 were women and about 20% of the same age range were men (Varella, 2021). Studies show Nigerian women face technology barriers due to cost challenges, illiteracy, cultural norms, safety concerns and lack of understanding the importance of technology platforms (Schwartz, 2013). Gender issues are also prevalent within the Nigerian fashion industry. While the fashion industry is considered women's domain, Nigerian women fashion designers are in competition with their men counterparts for reputation and respect. Women fashion designers are considered less reputable and as such, their apparels are typically undervalued and underpriced. However, as Nigerian women fashion designers, especially Igbo women designers like Nkwo and Zizi, adopt Instagram as a tool for visibility, they ultimately subvert their subjugated roles, while building reputation for their brands.

The ubiquity of digital technology in our daily lives has changed the way we interact, communicate, and conduct our businesses. Nowadays, our identity is always online regardless of our proximity to digital communication mediums. Social networking sites like Instagram contribute to the elements of our identity leaving our footprints all over the Internet (Longo & Saxena, 2020). Quantitative research has been widely used to examine social media use by extracting numerical data and prioritizing standardized measures, statistical objectivity,

replicability, and generalizability (MacKenzie, Scott, Reid, & Gardani, 2022). Qualitative research, on the other hand, has been shown to be more effective in extracting the implicit and explicit meanings from social media users among, particularly among African social media users (Acha-Anyi, Acha-Anyi, Asongu, & Tchamyou, 2020; Breines, Madge, & Dalu, 2020). This study therefore relies on a post positivist approach to understand Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation on Instagram as they promote their businesses online. Additionally, qualitative research has been shown to aid theory building which is important for a developing field like social media use from non-western contexts (Willig, 2019). Thus, to understand Nigerian Igbo women's negotiation of gender dynamics within Igbo culture, this study relied on ATFT, a new theoretical framework which offers an analytical procedure for exploring and interrogating structures within culture, particularly through an African feminist lens. By unpacking Nigerian Igbo cultural practices, ATFT contextualized Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's gender experiences within culture.

1.1 Need for Research

Media theorists have provided evidence that technology is culturally produced and ideologically aligned to white supremacy (Sweeney & Whaley, 2019; Brock, 2020). This has historically presented white people as ideal and universal users of technology and as a result, erased non-western cultural practices. For example, Buolamwini (2017) found that facial recognition technology is more likely to make 37% - 83% misclassification errors for darker women and 0.4% - 3% misclassification errors for lighter men. African social networking site users are thus developing strategies to challenge the monolithic picture of western cultural imperialism that come from social media platforms. Specifically, they are reterritorializing western-centric technologies and using it for indigenous cultural and political expression (Arthur,

2022; Arthur 2019; Clark, 2004). Currently, there is a lack of concrete theories that explores this. While basic media theories are helpful in situating technology use, there is a need to Africanize technocultural analysis to account for Africa's diverse cultural systems. Thus, this study presented African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) as a new theoretical framework for detailing how African people operationalize new media technology in our current global media and technoscapes.

This study also contributes to the limited scholarship on Africa and African women. Negative portrayals of Africa still persist in Western media. Scholarship on media portrayals of Africa argues it is fraught with gross generalizations of Africa and African people (Zeph-Ojiako, & Anakwuba, 2019; Adegbola, Skarda-Mitchell, & Gearhart, 2018; Schraeder & Endless, 1998). Many news depictions paint a dark jungle-like portrait of the continent, ravaged with starvation, poverty, disease, and corruption (Gabore, 2020; Poncian, 2015). A study on the framing analysis of U.S. textbook' discussion of Nigeria found unfair deficit perspectives leading to disparaging narratives that are the result of imperialist scholarship and media (Odebiyi & Sunal, 2020). African studies scholars suggest the disproportionate coverage of negative over positive news presents an imbalance in reporting about the continent that is not a complete representation of African people. Limited beliefs about Africa and African people can in part be attributed to early European travelogues depicting Africa as a savage jungle of wild animals and barbarian bush people incapable of contributing to technology (Harth, 2021). Yet, the relentless spread of streaming and social networks, sensors, artificial intelligence, and automation driving Africa's digital revolution suggests otherwise. According to WHO Africa (2020), 13% of all new and modified technology developed in response to COVID-19 is African, with 57.8% of the technologies being ICT-driven, 25% were based on 3D printing and 10.9% were robotics. These

advances systematically refute false notions of a digital or technological divide between the African continent and the rest of the world. This study therefore presents a new understanding of the ways African people interact and use new media technology for cultural expressions through history, language, fashion, interdependent relationship/connections, advocacy etc.

Scholarship on media identity in entrepreneurship has identified entrepreneurs' online identities as crucial to the survival of their businesses as they shape and determine their business persona (Ekinci et al., 2020; Powell & Baker, 2014). Scholars argue most entrepreneurs will construct their business identities around their self-identities (Mmbaga, Mathias, Williams, & Cardon, 2020). There is a need to study how entrepreneurs perform online identities as this determines the survival/successes of their businesses (Ekinci et al., 2020; Powell & Baker, 2014). Therefore, African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) and self-presentation theory presented a framework that explicated Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's media identity by examining who they are and what they do (Mmbga, et al., 2020). In addition, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers who use Instagram to promote their businesses online are expected to successfully navigate the specificities of each technological platform as they situate communicative strategies within Nigerian Igbo cultural ecology. Instagram requires the designers to be adaptive to its affordances in order to maximize its marketing potentials. ATFT and technology affordance theory guided our understanding of the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram's affordances for visibility and exposure.

Finally, this study investigated the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' model African feminism in their negotiation of patriarchal ideologies within Igbo culture. Studies have shown that Nigerian women designers face several challenges as entrepreneurs including the pressure to perform an online identity for technological platforms that continues to evolve; the

need to maintain online visibility as they compete with local and international celebrities and fashion brands; pricing issues with men fashion designers and preowned clothing from the west. They also navigate gender, family-based issues (e.g., family responsibilities and gender discrimination); and market-based issues (e.g., lack of access to finance, government regulation and economic conditions) which are mostly rooted in patriarchal ideology that suggest women prioritize their roles as wives and mothers over their desire for upward mobility in the business world. Religious philosophies further reinforce these patriarchal systems which makes it more challenging for women to rise above subjugation (Mordi et al., 2010). Studying the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's negotiate gender through an African technocultural feminist lens answers the call for future studies to examine the relationship between gender relations and online identity performance while considering overlapping power structures that impact women's self-representational choices in digital spaces (Butkowski's et al., 2020). Thus, this triadic model for theorizing self-presentation using Instagram's affordances mapped the ontologies and typologies of social media within visual, intercultural, and non-western context.

1.2 Research Questions

This study sought to understand Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation on Instagram as they promote their businesses online while examining their negotiation of patriarchal structures within Igbo culture. As more designers rely on technological platforms to showcase their designs, their self-presentation becomes an ever-evolving cycle through which their identities are constantly negotiated against a combination of social, cultural, economic, and political realities. As such, digital platforms such as Instagram and its affordances exacerbate individual performance tendencies as it creates a space for content creators to surround themselves with an increasing network of audiences.

In addition, Nigerian women's economic contribution to the Nigerian economy has been historically neglected and underestimated. This neglect is as a result of patriarchal ideologies that permeated the country during colonial era (Pittin, 1984). This study seeks to understand the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers negotiate gender dynamics within Nigerian Igbo culture.

RQ1*: How are Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers using Instagram and its affordances to present themselves on Instagram as they promote their businesses online?*

RQ2: *In what ways are Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers navigating patriarchal structures within Igbo culture that could impact their businesses?*

1.3 Methods Overview

To answer the research questions about Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation and their negotiation of patriarchal structures, a multimethod qualitative approach was employed: Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) of the designer's Instagram account and content as well as a semi-structured interview of each of the designers (co-researchers). Combining semi-structured interviews with CTDA is important for triangulation which increases the validity and credibility of this study (Creswell, 2014; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011; McMurray, 2004). African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) worked together with Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) and semi-structure interviews to generate a robust informative picture of Nigerian women fashion designers' online identities as well as highlighted key gender issues within their entrepreneurial, cultural, and technological ecology.

This study was conducted in three phases: **Phase 1** (critical technocultural discourse analysis of 10 Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram accounts and content), **Phase 2** (semi-structured interviews of the same 10 Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers), and **Phase 3** (a reanalysis of the overall data that incorporates themes from the interview transcripts

and Instagram posts using CTDA and ATFT framework). Designers were recruited from a purposive sampling via Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms. The criteria to participate in the study include fashion designers identified as women, had Instagram accounts, and identified as Igbo. For **Phase 1,** a purposive sample of 10 Instagram posts per all 10 designers (n = 100 posts) was collected based on types of media posted (photographs, videos, memes, GIFs, captions, and hashtags); user engagement through likes, comments, and sharing posts with other users; and cultural ideology through gender dynamics and Igbo cultural traditions. Additionally, I noted my observation of how fashion designers create, perform, and manage their identity. **Phase 2** (semi-structured interviews of each 10 designers) was done virtually and recorded on Zoom. Recruitment began after the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved and granted exempt status to this study because I maintained the same participants for **Phase 1** and **Phase 2**. Designers were sent a consent form and a pre-interview questionnaire one week before the semi-structured interview. Each interview recording was transcribed verbatim, and participants were asked to review the notes, transcripts as well as the interpretation of the data. Information from the semi-structured interviews was analyzed through a CTDA lens considering the themes that emerged related to Instagram's affordances, user engagement and cultural ideology. **Phase 3** (reanalysis of the overall data - Instagram posts and interview transcripts). African Technocultural Feminist Theory through CTDA lens allowed for the analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram posts and interview transcripts to understand their self-presentation using Instagram's affordances as well as their gender negotiations within Igbo culture. I thematically coded and analyzed the data using MAXQDA while considering the themes that emerged related to Instagram's affordances, user engagement and cultural ideology.

1.4 Researcher Positionality

The researcher's positionality is crucial in research study as it impacts the researcher's relationship to the respondents, the researcher's approach to data collection, quality of information gathered as well as the interpretation of evidence (Chukwu, 2005). I consider myself a post positivist researcher because I agree that social realities can be understood from the perspective of the participants. I also understand I need to examine my own epistemologies as they shape what I bring to the research by way of assumptions and knowledge. I understand that my methods require empathy and respect for the designers as well as a reflexivity in the processes by which constructs are generated and deployed in the unpacking of social media use.

I also identify as a new media feminist scholar because my research interest revolves around social identity, new media theory and African feminist theory. I understand media influences the attitude and perceptions of audience members. I recognize media can be used for different purposes including information, persuasion, entertainment as well as a conduit for transmitting culture. I have also gravitated towards African feminist scholarship for four reasons. First, African feminism leads to the production of research that is "for women" by utilizing research practices aimed at answering questions that arise from women's lives which had not been previously considered in man-dominated epistemologies. Second, African feminism, like intersectional feminism, does not seek to annihilate men but anticipate a more holistic vision that upholds every member of the society. Third, African feminism has an overarching liberatory objective that evokes engagement in political conversations and critiquing power dynamics that oppress women and other underrepresented groups. Finally, African feminist scholarship assumes a collective position in knowledge production as it recognizes cultures situated all around the globe pursue different knowledge agenda which is local and unique in its creation and

application. I have taken classes in feminist methodological frameworks as well as African feminist discourse which has given me some necessary tools to conduct this study.

I also agree that an important ethical construct to a researcher is their recognition of their "insider" or "outsider" status in relation to the research ecology. The insider and outsider distinctiveness between the researcher and the participants (co-researchers) masks the power differentials and experiential differences. Therefore, an awareness that insider and outsider status is socially constructed and therefore more of a fluid position than a static one is crucial (Naples, 1996). My identity as a researcher is grounded in the fluidity of my insider and outsider status for the purpose of this study. I am a Nigerian Igbo cisgender woman who was born and raised in Nigeria. I am fluent in Igbo language and received college education from Abia State University, which is situated in the eastern part of the country. I also received fashion design training and began making plans to grow my fashion business before I accepted the opportunity to earn a graduate degree in the United States. I have used technology to promote my business in online spaces specifically relying on social media (Facebook and Instagram). In the view of the importance of understanding a language and the culture of the research participants, the researcher bearing an insider status presents an advantage of situated knowledge which requires the researcher to have sufficient understanding of the culture, historical and social location of the participants. I recognize that I also identify as an outsider in some ways. I am currently a graduate student working towards earning an advanced degree in the United States. I recognize this could create a power dynamic between the researcher and co-researchers. I also recognize my intersectional identities could influence the way I interpret the data. Thus, in compliance with post positivist frame, I endeavored to allow my co-researchers voice to guide my overall analysis. This study completely relied on the valid narratives and experiences as well as the

disclosed identities the co-researchers were willing to share with me and/or on their Instagram accounts.

1.5 Research Summary

The goal of this study was to uncover the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on Instagram and its affordances for self-presentation online as well as examine their negotiation of gender dynamics within Igbo culture. Thus, this dissertation covers five key study components in the next chapters: Literature Review, African Technocultural Feminist Theory, Methods, Results/Discussion, and Conclusion/Limitation. Chapter 2: Literature Review presents a historical background of Nigerian Igbo culture pre- and post-colonization as well as current trends in the Nigerian fashion industry. Next, an explication of online identities and persona, self-presentation theory and a description of technological platform affordances is presented. I then prefaced African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT), the theoretical framework which guided this entire study. Chapter 3: African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) African Technocultural Feminist Theory is a new theory that considers the intersection between technology and cultural practices in its explication of the ways African people utilize technological platforms as a conduit for multiple uses, while prioritizing historically underrepresented and marginalized African identities. The first section of this chapter presented new media technologies and African gender negotiations. Next, a description of stereotypical media representations and gender dynamics negotiations from an African feminist perspective is presented. Then, I apply ATFT to Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers by explicating each tenet of the theory. Chapter 4: Methods describes the qualitative multimethod approach which relied on a Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) lens. CTDA is a multimodal technique which considers the intersection of technology with cultural ideologies. Specifically, I

unpacked self-presentation on Instagram, examined Instagram's affordances and technology practices, and explored Igbo socio-cultural ideologies identified in the posts. The data for this study was generated from semi-structure interviews of 10 Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers and 10 Instagram posts of the same designers recruited for the interviews (n=100). The methodological approach was broken up into three phases; **Phase 1** (CTDA of the designer's Instagram accounts and content), **Phase 2** (CTDA of semi-structured interview of each of the designers), and **Phase 3** (a reanalysis of the overall data that incorporates themes from the interview transcripts and Instagram posts using CTDA and ATFT framework). All the data were uploaded to MAXQDA data analysis software and coded based on Leavy's (2017) three step model: immersion, reduction, and codebook creation.

In Chapter 5: Results and Analysis, data generated from the Instagram posts and semi-structured interviews were analyzed using CTDA and ATFT as analytical frameworks, considering themes that answered the research questions - self-presentation, Instagram's affordances, and cultural ideology. The results from the study were also presented in three phases. For **Phase 1**, the outcome of analyzing of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram profiles and content showed they employed self-promotion and cultural digitization of Igbo-centric fashion in their self-presentation online. Instagram's affordance allowed them post quality pictures which showcased the intricacies of their Igbo-centric designs while creating space for them to challenge patriarchal structures within Igbo culture. For **Phase 2**, the results of the semi-structured interviews showed that Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers valued building and maintaining professional relationships with their clients. They embodied relatability and authenticity in their self-presentation online. Instagram's hashtags, reels and direct messaging affordances facilitated Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation in a

mediated environment. Also, Igbo culture played a significant role in Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation and fashion design experience as their designs were influenced by Igbo-centric fabrics. **Phase 3** identified overlapping and unique findings across all the datasets. The reanalysis of the data provided more context on the linguistic significance of *Nsibidi* resurfacing within the Nigerian fashion industry. With the increasing popularity of *Nsibid*i fabric, Nigerian Igbo fashion designers are ultimately publicizing the long-lost secret language to every one within Igbo culture, thereby resisting patriarchal structures that initially excluded women from the language. The result of the reanalysis also uncovered Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's hesitancy to address gender inequity. Thus, despite the fact Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers indirectly challenge patriarchal structures within their Instagram content, the results showed they were afraid to specifically call out oppressive systems that impact women and other underrepresented identities within Igbo culture. The designers cited concerns about cyber bullying as the primary reason for their hesitancy to confront gender inequity on Instagram. This impacts negatively on their entrepreneurial experiences which ultimately affects their businesses. However, Instagram's affordance of direct messaging could be used as a tool for digital activism to push back against women oppressive structures. Specifically, Instagram's direct messaging affordance provide privacy/safety from cyber bullying which could form a starting point for gender equity congregation/advocacy on Instagram. The groups could adopt a quiet subversion approach which would be part of an empowering process. Participants would be granted confidentiality as they share their experiences. The group could also be a space to share tips on navigating gender issues including strategies/solutions focused on women renting workspaces and successful business registration, childcare support/resources, and other educational tools for individual and collective upliftment.

Finally, Chapter 6: Conclusion summarizes the findings and explores implications and recommendations. I also delineate the limitations of the study and provide suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with a historical background of Nigerian Igbo culture pre- and post-colonization as well as current trends in the Nigerian fashion industry. Next, an explication of online identities and persona using Goffman's theory of self-presentation as a theoretical framework is presented. I then describe digital identities online and the intersection of self-banding and labor within the fashion industry. Finally, I provide a description of technological platform affordances and then preface a need for new theoretical framework that that considers the intersection of technology platform affordances and African cultural practices to define how African people manipulate digital technologies for sociocultural representations of self.

2.1 Background of Nigerian Igbo Culture: Pre and Post Colonization

Nigerian Igbo people are from the southeastern part of the country specifically Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo, as well as minor parts of Delta, Rivers and Benue states. According to Igbo folklore, they are descended from Eri, a divine figure who was sent from heaven to begin civilization. As a result of the transatlantic trading of Black people for forced labor, Igbos have migrated to other countries including Jamaica, Cuba, Barbados, Belize, the United States etc. Traditionally, their major occupation span across agriculture, crafts work and trading. Igbos are well known for growing yam[1], which is the reason for the New Yam Festival celebrating the harvest of new yams. They are also known for their variety of soups made form locally grown vegetables and herbs. The Igbo community is culturally homogenous as Igbo

[1] Yams are root crops that are similar to yucca in texture and flavor. They have bumpy, tough brown skin (that looks almost tree trunk-like) with starchy, not sweet flesh. Yams are also frequently compared to the texture and flavor sweet potatoes (but are not as sweet) and are best boiled and served alongside tomatoes stews, palm oil or made into yam pottage dishes. They are sometimes difficult to find in the U.S., but you can pick them up at specialty grocery stores like African stores.

language is the unifying factor of the Igbo ecosystem. However, the impact of neighboring non-Igbo communities as well as the wide variations of Igbo regions led to some differences within Igbo communities. These differences are evident in social, cultural, political, architectural traditions as well as multiple dialects (about 30 different dialects). Igbo land is divided into five sub-cultural zones which include Northern or Onitsha Igbo, Southern or Owerri Igbo, Western Igbo, Eastern or Cross River Igbo and Northeastern Igbo (Chukwu, 2005).

2.1.1 Igbo Women and Gender Roles Pre-Colonial Era

Before Britain colonized Nigeria, gender in Igbo culture was fluid and dynamic as roles are not rigidly feminine or masculine. As such, Igbo culture practiced a dual-sex symmetrical system where members of the community were valued for their social responsibilities (Chukwu, 2005). To explicate the dual-gender cultural system within Igbo culture, I will describe three ways Igbo women negotiated gender roles before colonization. First, it is important to note that the flexibility in the negotiation of gender roles advocated for the success of both men and women within the society. Consequently, women were allowed to play men roles and vice versa. For example, in homes where there are no men heirs, the first daughter becomes the lineage daughter. Lineage daughters (*umuada)* are different from *okpala* (lineage sons) and *inyemedi* (lineage wives). While the *umuada* by privilege of lineage is seen as a husband, *inyemedi* is viewed as a wife. As daughters of a lineage, the *umuada* is expected to perform duties relating to that of a husband in her relationship with the *Inyemedi* who are equally expected to play the role of wives. This social relationship did not involve sexual intercourse as the *umuada* typically hired a man to perform sexual duties while she played the social role of protector and provider. The *umuada* is thus construed socially as both wife and husband owing to her shifting identities. Beyond her family responsibility, the *umuada* also played key political roles within the community.

Second, Igbo women wielded political power in the midst of a men dominated political system. Authority in Igboland was given to the king *(Obi/Eze)* and his council of elders *(Ndichie).* However, the fluidity of gender roles (dual-sex system) allowed women to take up political positions. Women served in political offices while exercising authority as rulers, councilors, diplomats etc. For example, in Arochukwu, the *Ezenwanyi* (Woman king) exercised political authority as a ruler. By virtue of her leadership qualities, she assumed political positions as woman king and ruled *Aro* political leadership just as the men monarchs. She was the only known woman monarch in Arochukwu history who reigned between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Another example of Igbo matriarchy was in Oguta where the oldest woman in some villages *(Nwanye/Nwanyi)* sat at the helm of village affairs where she made crucial decisions that impacted the lives of every member of the community. A third example is the *Omu* and *Ada* (senior daughters of lineage) in Onitsha. They exerted great influence and power over other women and men. They were the only women who held the *Ofo* (the staff of ritual authority) in Onitsha. This group was however exclusive to the foremost daughters of Onitsha who were senior women within Onitsha village group and were past childbearing age. They typically possessed a lot of wealth from trade businesses and have been referred to a woman monarch whose power and authority was comparable to the king *(Obi).* They were also the custodians of religious morality as they performed religious rites while protecting sociopolitical spaces as they acted as part of the checks and balances of the society (Chukwu, 2005).

Third, dual gendered system allowed women take up spiritual roles within the community. Igbo people believed supernatural forces operated within the human and spirit realms and controlled Igbo social and political life in different degrees. The supernatural deities

were grouped into two categories; those that occupy and control the heavens and are led by the Supreme being, God the creator, the Almighty God *(Chineke, Chukwu* or *Obasi di elu*); and those that occupy and control the earth under the supervision of the Earth Goddess *(Ala* or *Obasi di n'ala).* Comparatively, Igbo people saw God as the most powerful and ubiquitous but also saw the Goddess as more involved in human affairs which made her more feared and respected. Igbo people believed abominable offenses like homicide, incest, killing of sacred animals etc. could pollute the land and could unleash the wrath of the goddess on the offenders. Punishments range from sudden death to denial of ground burial for offender, property loss, pestilence, defeat in war, barrenness of humans and land etc. *Ezeala* (a man priestess) attended to the Earth Goddess and, was responsible for ritual cleansing of the land whenever an abomination was committed. As a man priestess, *Ezeala* had to dress like a woman and was respected by members of the community as well as individuals that travelled from far to consult the goddess. Igbo culture also has other religious functionaries that feature women such as medicine men/women, rain makers, fortune tellers etc. Goddess focused religions provided a basis for women to exert control over religious, political and judicial functions throughout the lands that were dedicated to the goddesses.

The dual gendered system was also practiced in several parts of Africa including Gikuyu of Kenya (Njambi et al, 2005), Bamileke of Cameroon as well as Nuer of Sudan (Chukwu, 2005) etc. The Ashanti tribe in Ghana still practice matriarchy as line of descent is traced through the woman. The dual gendered system was in place in Africa until Western interference of European culture permeated through colonialism.

2.1.2 Impact of British Influence on Igbo Women

The earliest presence of European visitors in Igbo land can be traced back to late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The visitors were mostly explorers, traders, missionaries, and colonial administrators. Most of the European visitors were socialized with Victorian gender roles and ideology which dictated a woman's place was at home and her success was based on her ability to be "a good wife", "a good mother" and an "excellent home maker". This ideology influenced their policies and programs and as such the missionary education they presented was intended to prepare Igbo girls and women for these "ideal roles". The collaboration of Igbo community with Europeans (who were oblivious of the power Igbo women wielded in the community) presented an interference in Igbo women's religious, political, social, and economic spaces. Eurocentric Christianity was introduced in Igboland by European missionaries began as early as the 1850s with the establishment of the first mission at Onitsha in 1857 by Reverend John C. Taylor of the Church Missionary Society (Chukwu, 2005). This was followed by Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches in Onitsha and Uwana between 1885 and 1888. The adoption of Eurocentric Christianity led to an adoption of new cultural values, decline in traditional religious activities as well as a disrespect of indigenous authorities (Chukwu, 1995). Unlike Yoruba land where Eurocentric Christianity was mostly embraced by men, Igbo women where the highest adopters of Eurocentric Christianity because it campaigned against *Osu* caste (cult dedicatees system), human sacrifices and murder of twin babies. Therefore, most early converts were women accused of witchcraft, mothers of twin babies and women who suffered from diseases (including swollen stomach, leprosy etc.). After Britain conquered Igboland, more Igbo people converted to Christianity as it presented an opportunity for Western education which in turn promised job opportunities. However, missionary education was gender-biased against

women. While boys were trained in science and new technologies, women were trained in childcare, modern housekeeping, sewing, needlework, cooking etc. It is imperative to note that most of training presented to the women was of little to no relevance to the Igbo woman's daily activities. While women and girls were trained for domestic activities thereby subjecting them to societal invisibility, the men and boys were trained with skills that prepared them to take up leadership roles in the society. Women were taught to focus on being sexually appealing to their husbands submissive, meek, self-sacrificing and gentle. Interestingly, the men were not taught these same virtues and were only expected to meet their professional goals. Thus, most Igbo men adopted similar arrogance typically associated with men-dominated western society. Investing in women's education was seen as a waste of resources because it was assumed she will be married off. Therefore, most academic scholarships were given to men. I remember my mother telling me villagers in my community made fun of my grandfather for choosing to educate his daughters. The villagers argued women will be off to their husband's homes thereby rendering the education useless. Furthermore, Christian missions prohibited women from taking social titles as it was believed the rituals associated with the titles were rooted in paganism.

The introduction of British colonial rule in Igboland was brought into effect by force. Igbo people resisted colonialism and as a result, suffered over twenty decades of military efforts to subdue them. The impact of colonization on Igboland was both negative and positive. While Christian missionaries introduced western education, improved transportation system, urbanization, new technologies, freed women who engaged in forced labor, advocated against the killing of twins and protested the stigmatization of their mothers as well as presented certain skillsets to Igbo women, colonization also unleashed several changes that had dire consequences on Igbo people, particularly Igbo women. Due to men-dominated western ideologies imposed on

Igbo people by British colonizers, Igbo women were stripped of their sociopolitical and economic power. The British indirect rule was the most explicit in legitimizing men institutions while ignoring women institutions. However, since these institutions did not exist in Igboland (due to the dual-gendered system), British colonial government created these men institutions and empowered them. An example of such institutions is the warrant chiefs. The office of warrant chiefs (which excluded women) created a new political structure that rendered the dual-sex political system redundant as women lost their power and visibility. Women's organizations and institutions stopped being politically active. The traditional political structure was altered as the man office of the *Obi* (king) became a salaried position while they also completely ignored its woman counterpart *(Omu).* Age grade societies and women's organizations also lost their customary power and influence. Igbo women traders also lost their economic power as they lacked access to British money which favored men. Women were also denied opportunity to salaried employment because they could not compete with men who had British education advantage over them.

2.1.3 History of the Nigerian Igbo Textile Industry

Woven textiles play a huge role in defining Igbo history and culture. Archaeological remains of woven bark fragments from the 9th century A.D. found at Igbo-Ukwu provides evidence of the earliest known weaving in Nigeria (Chukwu, 2005). Some reputable cloth weaving areas in Igbo land include Nsukka, Abakiliki, Asa Ndoki (Akwete) as well as Asaba and Ubulu-Uku in Anioma (Chukwu, 2005). Weaving in these areas required skill which in turn boosted industrial development. Weaving initially started with raffia and bark of trees before cotton began to be used from locally spun yarn. The fabric produced were used for multiple functions such as fashion, ritual occasion, burials, and masquerading. Conceptually, woven

clothes could be distinguished into two categories: as a metaphor for wealth, status and power and as a powerful in itself. They are used as a symbol of wealth when they are worn by kings and queens as well as for rites of passage such as funerals. They are considered powerful in themselves when they are used for sacred ancestral and spirit masks (Chukwu, 2005).

The most popular and prestigious fabric woven in Igbo land is called the Akwete which is produced in the town of Akwete. Akwete cloth was and remains the largest, most elaborate and most celebrated woven cloth in Igbo land. As such, they are typically worn on important occasions. Oral tradition suggests the earliest cloths made in Akwete were plain, woven, head spun narrow clothes (Chukwu, 2005). Machine-made yarn of different colors was eventually introduced by the 19th century with the introduction of Europeans yarns and designs (figure 3). Currently, Akwete is characterized by an unlimited variety of vibrant colors and designs (Chukwu, 2005). The cloth measures about 100 centimeters lengthwise and 150 centimeters width (Clark, 2013). What makes Akwete outstanding was the designs, most of which were inspired by traditional motifs that reflected the designer's daily lives. The designs often reflected the designer's politics, religion, and values. They were also influenced by national events, important dignitaries as well as objects. With the influence of European and Indian cloth designs permeating Igbo markets, Akwete weavers skillfully adapted and translated foreign designs into their motifs. Akwete weaving was typically dominated by women because cloth weaving was part of raising woman children in Akwete town. Girls were taught to weave as early as 6-7 years old and typically learned from her mothers, grandmothers, or any woman members of her household (Osifuye, 2017). Most Akwete weavers continue weaving until they are about 80-90 years old. Thus, making it a lifelong business/tradition that was passed on from generation to

generation (figure 4). Akwete women considered weaving as a fulltime job because that was a key source of their livelihood.

Figure 3. Photograph of two women wearing Akwete fabric

2.1.4 British Influence on Igbo Textile Industry

With the introduction of European clothes in Igboland by mid-nineteenth century, Igbo people began wearing European cloth with their traditional outfits. Chukwu (2005) identifies four factors that led to the adoption of European clothes by Igbo people. First, the influence of Christian missionaries who demanded their converts (specifically women) “covered their nakedness”.

Figure 4. Photograph of a woman and girl weaving Akwete.

The traditional apparel at that time was loincloth and beads. Men wore a strip of indigenous cloth around their waists while women wore knee-length cloth and complimented with traditional beads *(mbaji* or *jigida)* and body art *(Uli)*. When the missionaries established schools, they made it compulsory for boys to wear shirts and khaki shorts and girls to wear gowns. Secondly, because most people who wore European clothing were educated and working for the European government, European clothing began to garner admiration and respect for people who were seen in them. It eventually became a status symbol for wealthy people. Third, locally made clothes was struggling to compete with European clothing which at this time was imported in large quantities. With European clothing adopting comfortable styles, they outperformed locally made clothes especially because they were fanciful and relatively cheaper than locally made clothes. Finally, Western education adversely impacted Igbo textile industry. The emerging educated Igbo men and women had contempt for locally made clothes. Girls who assisted their mothers in weaving were now going to training schools five days a week and spending the weekend

performing church activities. However, it is important to note that the Akwete industry also benefitted from European influence. The women who produce Akwete were quick to adopt colorful yarns of in place of local cotton threads in their weaving. Akwete women were able to navigate the frequent changes that resulted from imperialism. Their ability to adapt to these changes boosted the Akwete industry thereby making it even more popular in Igboland. However, because Akwete fabric was expensive and suited for important ceremonial occasions, fashion designers gravitated towards African fabric (popularly known as Ankara) to create fashion pieces due to its affordability and versatility.

2.1.5 Current Trends in the Nigerian Fashion Industry

The light nature, array of color, and pattern of Ankara fabric are some of the reasons many Nigerian fashion designers (including Igbo women fashion designers) are incorporating Ankara fabric into their designs. The fabric is one hundred percent fine cotton and is suitable for Nigeria's humid weather. Fashion designers are also able to blend the fabric with other matching fabric to create unlimited contemporary designs that can be used for both formal and informal events (figure 6). The Ankara fabric originated from Holland and started as a mass-produced imitation of Indonesian batik by Dutch textile manufacturers (Oyedele & Obisesan, 2013). In the 19th century, the fabric was mass produced in Europe using engraving roller print machine. During the course of production, the manufacturers experienced some issues which resulted in cracking effect, series of small lines and dots throughout the fabric that led it its rejection by the intending Indonesian market. This "mishap" was then brought to the Gold Coast by Dutch merchants from where it spread to other African markets following its acceptance (Oyedele & Obisesan, 2013). Dutch manufacturers then made some changes to the designs to specifically suit

the African market. They used motifs that included pictures of African local leaders, chiefs, community leaders and heads of states.

African fabric has undergone significant transformation since it infiltrated Nigerian markets. Upon its arrival, Ankara was considered cheap and too colorful for formal occasions. However, the 2003 fabric importation ban by the former president of Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo, turned it to a fashion fad and an inevitable part of all occasions. Ankara is currently worn by all classes of people to various events including weddings, chieftaincy coronation, religious activities, burials ceremonies, and other special events. Ankara can also be worn to formal work environment and leisure activities due to its versatilities. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are also using African prints to create and design to express their culture and identity. The fabric allows them to express their creativity as they mix and match with other fabrics and colors. They also use the Ankara fabric to make different fashion accessories such as headwraps, bags, bracelets, earrings, hair ties etc. The colors of the fabric as well as the different pieces made are culturally significant. For example, head wraps are used to convey modesty, spirituality, and prosperity. Head wrapping was a nonverbal way of communicating people's status within the community. In Igbo culture, headwraps are called 'ichafu' and are used to identify different categories of women within the society (HACO, 2019). For example, an Igbo woman's headwrap would tell if she were a widow, grandmother or married or unmarried young woman.

Figure 5. Photograph of women wearing African Fabric (also known as Ankara).

Another important element of African fabric are the colors. Most African fabric are a combination of bright, beautiful colors that are symbolic and have distinct meanings (HACO, 2019). Some examples of prominent colors in African fabrics and their meanings include gold which represents wealth and fertility; red represents tension; blue represents love and peace; green represents prosperity and life; and white which represents spirituality and purity. Several Nigerian designers are showcasing their designs in their collections and on runways. Additionally, some are defying societal norms by creating pieces that represents their authentic selves/identities. For example, Chioma Inyang, a Nigerian Igbo fashion designer went against the norm of wearing a white dress on her wedding day by wearing an Ankara wedding gown (Mgbeahuru & Ucheagbo 2021). By combining two matching Ankara fabric (figure 7), she created a beautiful wedding dress that represented her appreciation of African culture.

Figure 6. Photograph of Chioma Inyang (A Nigerian Igbo fashion designer) wearing an Ankara wedding dress. Screenshot from her Instagram account [theonlychioma].

2.2 Online Identities and Persona

Online identities are crucial for business branding as every information shared online contributes, one way or another to business persona (Chen, 2013). Persona research identifies four dimensions of personas; (1) *the public-facing self* which is typical with celebrities and public figures and involves an individual being concerned with the construction and maintenance of their public persona because of their huge media following/watching audience (2) *the generic persona* which is when an individual performs an ideal or model of abilities/ attitudes which is typically motivated by the pursuit of a specific social activity with a corresponding social role. This could also present as identity play, which Humphrey (2017) defines as 'a negotiation

between our concept of self and the present or perceived audience, both sides playing critical roles in forming that present-moment identity', (3) *the fictitious persona* which is persona that is fabricated out of nothing for a particular purpose (as art or entertainment) or as a target consumer/user to inform the design of a product or marketing strategy, (4) *the attributed persona* which is where a persona is not attached to an individual, class of individual, or fictional character, but inanimate object or concept like the ways video games can acquire their own personas specifically when they are represented by a specific fictitious character (Giles, 2020).

Regardless of the dimension/type of persona and how it is created/performed, two key determinants are maintained: personas are typically mediatized which means they are determined by (but not limited to) the specific technological platform affordances where they are created or performed; and personas are used to connect with a collective/public. This study relies on the *generic persona* in its explication of the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances to perform their digital identities online. Additionally, this study Africanizes online persona through African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) by showing how African cultural systems influences persona in digital spaces.

2.2.1 Self-Presentation in Digital Spaces

Self-presentation dates back to Erving Goffman's (1959) piece, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* He argues people performed their identities through verbal and non-verbal messages with a goal to express the most credible image to their audiences. For example, when a person meets another person or group of people, they typically will seek out information about the individual. Acquiring this information is crucial as it guides the observers in determining what the person expects of them and what they should expect of him/her. More so, they rely on the perceived psychological traits in attempting to predict the person's present and future

behavior (Goffman, 1959). They typically rely on what they already know about them or what they can glean from several parameters such as their socio-economic status, attitudes and/or beliefs. They could also rely on past experiences they have had with the individual or certain stereotypes that fits the person's physical characteristics. In this present technological era, they may choose to rely on what the person says about themselves on their digital platforms as this presents concrete evidence of who they are. As such, individuals are more likely to present an idealized rather than authentic version of themselves in their online platforms. Thus, self-presentation is a constant negotiation of individual goals and the "self" a person perceives their audience desires (Goffman, 1959).

Hogan (2010) compares this performance to a stage play as it is bounded in space and time and represents the exemplification of specific roles. A performance is described as the practice of doing something. Specifically, it can be referred to as the practice of pointing, underscoring as well as displaying the act of doing. For example, social roles associated with gender, race and class as well as those involved in professional, family, religious and social circles are performed through repeated behaviors (Papacharissi, 2012). Contemporary performance theory argues people live by means of performance (Dolan, 2001). Social media platforms like Instagram further exacerbate individual performance tendencies as it creates a platform for content creators to surround themselves with an ever-increasing network of audiences. As they upload content to their accounts, they are ultimately performing their identity while introducing 'the self'. Their self-presentation becomes an ever-evolving cycle through which their identities are constantly negotiated against a combination of social, cultural, economic, and political realities. Goffman (1959) describes the process of 'face-work' as the constantly negotiated image we present of ourselves. Face is not only defined by the person's

actions, but how those actions are perceived and judged by other participants in the flow of the encounter. Face-work is a complex collaborative dance in which all participants and their every word, wink, gesture, posture, stance, glance, and grunt take part. In short, how they choose to present themselves (and by extension, who they "are") really contextualizes where they are, whom they are with, and what they are doing etc. For Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers, while Instagram may be a platform that facilitates performance, self-presentation however, revolves around public displays of social connections/clients, communicating the core values of their brands, advocacy against social injustices and showcasing cultural heritage. For example, Nkwo uses Instagram to promote positive images of Africa and the unique interpretation of the rich history of the continent while advocating for more sustainable fashion that strives to reduce environmental waste. However, studies show that race in relation to social media self-presentation is severely understudied (Kapidzic & Herring, 2015). By studying Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation on Instagram through ATFT lens, this study presents a unique Africanized perspective to self-presentation scholarship as it highlights the ways non-western women users of technological platforms perform their identities while considering the intersection of indigenous Igbo cultural practices and technological platforms to influence self-presentation in digital spaces.

2.2.2 Digital Identities and Online Interactions

Elwell (2014) defines digital identity as a set of characteristics asserted by one subject about itself or by another digital subject (human or otherwise) in a digital realm. This implies a person's identity is what a person chooses to publish about themselves as well as what others say about them. With the ubiquities of the Internet, it has become imperative to manage/control the kinds of information we upload to our online platforms as this is crucial to our digital identities.

Through the use of text, graphics, images etc., individuals create an online identity that presents the specific impression they want their audience to have of them. The evolution of the Internet presents a fluidity of self-identity that does not guarantee anonymity. Specifically, years ago with multiuser domains and chatrooms, it was common to imagine online identity as a mask which can easily be worn and taken off while the Internet guaranteed ambiguity. In today's culture of constant connectivity, the Internet is intertwined with the user's daily lives evidenced by a blurred connection of online and offline identities. This, however, does not mean a person's online and offline identities are functionally the same. Rather, it implies a collaborative experience of identity between the digital and the analog. It also implies many people have multiple digital identities, from Facebook profiles, LinkedIn personae's, Instagram handles, Twitter handles, TikTok accounts, Snapchat accounts, YouTube channels, blogs (Elwell, 2014).

The interconnected networked system of technological platforms like Instagram presents important tools that help contextualize performance of online identities. Instagram is a photo and video-based service which was launched in 2010 and currently has over a billion monthly active users (Geurin-Eagleman & Burch, 2016). The primary focus of the app was to feature photographs, specifically those taken on mobile phones. Instagram has both visual and textual affordances. Its visual affordance includes stylistic features of photographs such as photo quality and camera angle (Rietveld, van Dolen, Mazloom, & Worring, 2020). Its textual affordance allows users incorporate narratives/storytelling in their posts. The app also has an audience engagement component that allows people to like and follow other users. As Instagram further expanded its connectivity architecture, friending no longer referred to people you know but people you *may* know or *should* know based on the network's algorithm. Liking someone's post lost the luster of real and authentic gestures and reduced it to a provoked automated gesture.

Gradually, Instagram eventually transitioned to a platform for social capital acquisition. People realized they could stage performances of themselves and reap the reward of increased social capital. Celebrities took advantage of this and began self-promotion on their Instagram pages.

Instagram's interface therefore creates an opportunity for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to promote their business to a global audience while simultaneously expressing their cultural identities, preserving history, and communicating the intrinsic value of their apparels. It is crucial to note that the designers don't use Instagram to create their self-identities and business identities (especially since these identities existed before social media). They, however, develop these identities as they promote their businesses and use Instagram to perform and share these identities.

2.2.3 The Intersection of Self-Branding and Labor within the Fashion Industry

The pressure to perform one's online identity presents a burden for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers. As new technological platforms are created and old ones continue to expand the scope of their affordances, designers are expected to adapt to these changes as they perform online identities (Scolere, Pruchniewska, & Duffy, 2018). Self-branding is defined as 'a form of affective, immaterial labor that is purposefully undertaken by individuals to garner attention, reputation, and potentially, profit management' (Scolere et al, 2018). It is an investment in social relationships that expects reputation as revenue. It also explores the concept of performance in digital space as it relates to self-presentation. Despite the fashion designer's [self-branding] labor in curating their online personas across a plethora of platforms, their reward to investment of time, energy and attention is often unsure (Gandini, 2016). A designer looking to make money typically perform their identity around authenticity and entrepreneurial ideal. Authenticity is an impression of realness the designer creates that makes them relatable and likeable. The

entrepreneurial ideal is based on a self-enterprise model where the designer engages in continuous self-labor, promoting themselves to succeed and be profitable (Arriagada & Ibáñez, 2020). The expected reciprocity of social relation on these platforms further increases the burden of labor (Duffy, 2017). This implies the Nigerian designer is expected to not only share content but also respond to their audiences as a form of social exchange. Studies have also shown that online platform users intentionally share a different version of themselves online, depending on the specific platform (Gandini, 2016; Scolere et al, 2017).

The construction of an online persona is not only an unequivocal form of labor but a convoluted set of performative practices that demands constant production and display of the fashion designers' social identities across online platforms (Gandini, 2016). Numerous fashion designers get into the fashion industry because they need to earn income from their passion projects while negotiating a labor market that is filled with uncertainty (Duffy, 2017). A large number of designers often engage in unpaid labor with the promise of future visibility. The concept of aspirational labor is defined as the individual uncompensated work that is the foundation of the idealized process of *getting paid to do what you love*. Aspirational labor shifts content creators focus from the present to the future presenting the perfect harmony of labor and leisure. Most fashion designers who engage in aspirational labor believe they will be paid for their work either through material rewards or social capital in the future (Duffy, 2017). Studies show combining passion and work specifically in the fashion design industry often led to exploitation as it justifies unfair working conditions (Scolere, 2019). As Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers aspire for visibility and exposure on Instagram, they also engage in aspirational labor as they perform their identities online. In addition, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers also experience disrespectful labor practices that include poor wages, lack of benefits and

violations of their rights, poor technological infrastructure such as lack of power, high cost and poor quality of Internet, lack of good road networks/access, low penetration of online payments and lack of logistics networks (Aziz & Alexandre-Leclair, 2019). All these issues present additional labor burden for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers as they navigate self-presentation in online spaces.

2.3 Technological Affordances and Vernacular

Technological platforms have become essential commodities as millions of people around the world depend on them for various activities such as entertainment, education, business, and socialization (Nieborg, Duffy & Poell, 2020). As the fashion industry continues to maintain its exclusive attributes, many fashion designers are relying more on technology as a tool to help them earn positions of influence within the industry as well as successfully circumvent legacy companies with bureaucratic structures. (Duffy, 2017). Nieborg et al (2020) defines platform practices as the 'strategies, routines, experiences and expressions of creativity, labor and citizenship that shape cultural production through platforms.' Some platform practices particular to the fashion industry include fashion and lifestyle blogging, beauty vlogging, DIY designs, How-to-videos as well as content sharing on social media. Fashion designers using Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, etc., are therefore focused on social media for the dissemination of content rather than content production which ultimately gives them the opportunity to scale up and dominate markets. Much of their content – from written blog posts to design images and patterns to recorded how-to videos – are created independent of the social media platforms; thus, social media is utilized to share content once it is already created. This places the burden of labor on fashion designers as they are under pressure to keep sharing content that suits the identities they wish to perform to stay visible and relevant in a competitive

marketplace (Nieborg et al, 2020). To understand Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' adaption to Instagram's affordances, this study relies on technology affordance theory to explicate the need for fashion designers to remain flexible and adaptable to technology changes.

Technological affordance considers the material qualities of technologies and media as well as the affective processes of the people who use them. Scholarship on technology describe affordances as how technology users use technology, while imagined affordance is considered to be dependent on users' actions, awareness and perceptions (Nagy & Neff, 2015). As such, the theory of imagined affordance specifically draws on technological adaptation in practice and interaction and expatiates upon the constantly evolving characteristic of technology that requires its users to be flexible, responsive as well as open to learning (Nagy & Neff, 2015). To put it contextually, social media has experienced some significant changes to its communication platforms. From static platforms like Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, to ephemeral platforms like Snapchat and Wickr, to static platforms incorporating ephemeral attributes like Instagram stories, Facebook stories and LinkedIn stories (Kircova, Pinarbaşi & Köse, 2020). Recognizing each platform's distinct affordances and structures requires creators to produce content that specifically suits each platform. For example, images play a significant role across all prominent social media platforms, however, each platform exhibits specific effects that influence the appearance and responses of particular images (Pearce, Özkula, Greene, Teeling, Bansard, Omena, & Rabello, 2020). Another key component of technological platforms fashion designers grapple with is *platform vernacular*, which is described as each platform's unique combination of styles, grammars, and logic. Every platform has a vernacular specific to it that has evolved over time through design, appropriation, and use (Gibbs, Meese, Arnold, Nansen & Carter, 2015). Platform vernacular scholarship requires the examination of the specificities of social

media platforms, account for the particular forms of participation that occurs on them, as well as situate these communicative strategies within cultural ecology (Gibbs et al, 2015). A common platform vernacular peculiar to Instagram would be its affordance of photographic images, captions, short description/bio, as well as the use of hashtags that makes the poster become a part of a large body of conversation. Hashtags are often used as a means of researching events or issues on a single platform. For example, a Nigerian Igbo woman fashion designer who specializes in children's clothing would need to include that specific detail so they can easily be discovered by potential clientele.

Most technological platforms require fashion designers invest in social relationships using reputation as a currency which may or may not translate to actual value. This has designers exploring different technological platforms and navigating their affordances to best suit their goal of visibility and social capital. In studying portfolio building on social media, Scolere (2019) presents evidence that suggest a significant number of designers are transitioning to digital portfolios even as print portfolios gradually becomes obsolete. Technology platforms like Instagram require significant effort from designers as they strive to make social connections with their audiences. While some designers maintain a website and personal blogs, they emphasized the importance of using social media as a tool to maintain visibility. As such, some platforms require more effort than others. Instagram require frequent and dynamic updates of work in order to stay relevant. The fashion designer could post pictures/videos that narrates their creative journey, their personal lives or cutting-edge fashion trends.

Within the African fashion industry, designers are using social media platforms to express their cultural identities, preserve history, and share their crafts and creative apparel. African women designers use social media to communicate the significance of African fabric

and colors. They are also offering improvement and development opportunities for countless African women who work in small local businesses while creating opportunities for international recognition of African cultural practices (Moreno-Gavara & Ana Isabel Jiménez-Zarco, 2019). For example, Chioma Inyang, a Nigerian Igbo woman fashion designer uses Instagram to share DIY fashion tips/tricks as well as showcase her various Igbo centric fashion pieces. African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) therefore works with technology affordance theories to present a framework that calls for a reimagining of technological affordances particularly in the ways African women use technological platforms. Specifically, this study shows the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers negotiate their technology experiences as they promote their businesses online.

2.4 Summary

The Nigerian fashion industry is an informal woman-dominated sector which plays a significant role in its contribution to Nigerian culture and economy. With the proliferation of media technologies, more Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are adopting Instagram as a tool for visibility and exposure. Specifically, Nigeria Igbo women fashion designers compete with local and international public figures entertainment for visibility, while trying to persuade their consumers to choose their custom-made designs over cheaper preowned clothing. Therefore, Instagram's affordances allow designers express their cultural identity while simultaneously marketing their businesses in online spaces. While the fashion industry is considered women's domain, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers still experience gender disparities as they experience gender-based discrimination within culture which ultimately impacts their businesses. There are currently insufficient theories that considers the intersection of technology platform affordances and African cultural practices to define how African people,

especially those who identify as women, manipulate digital technologies for sociocultural representations of the self online. The next chapter presents African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) as a framework for understanding the complexities of African women's digital experiences, particularly in the ways they manipulate new media technologies. The theory ensures African traditions are preserved, valued, and respected, while focalizing African women's negotiation of gender and power relations in technological discourse.

CHAPTER 3. AFRICAN TECHNOCULTURAL FEMINIST THEORY (ATFT)

African Technocultural Feminist Theory is a new theory that considers the intersection between technology and cultural practices in its explication of the ways African people utilize technological platforms as a conduit for multiple uses, (including cultural expression, business branding, self-presentation, advocacy etc.,) while prioritizing historically underrepresented and marginalized African identities. ATFT therefore decenters western-centric perspectives of African technology users by presenting a theoretical framework for understanding how African technology users engage with new media technology through their diverse cultural identities. The proliferation of new media technology presents multiple opportunities for Africans to share authentic and balanced stories of their respective nations and cultures. However, there are insufficient theories that examines the ways African technology users approach and engage with different technological platforms. Highlighting African cultural practices within technology use is a decolonial approach that centers African culture and creates space for Afrocentric research in scholarship (Martinez, Cespedes, Bubar, and Souza, 2018). Thus, ATFT considers three fundamental tenets in its elucidation of how African technology users apply new media technology for culturally relevant narrative construction: new media technology analysis, African cultural practices, and African feminism.

First, a proper description of technology platform/interface is required where the researcher provides a detailed description and analysis of the new media technology platform and an explication of the ways it facilitates content creation and user engagement. Next, a thorough description of the specific African cultural practice under review including the area's cultural matrix, and a review of the geopolitical location, history, and sociocultural practices.

Third, is an interrogation of oppressive structures within culture that keeps minoritized identities subjugated. ATFT can be used to study phenomena on various new media technology platforms including social networking platforms (like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok etc.), Over-the-top television platforms such as Netflix., Hulu, etc., audio/podcast platforms, game streaming platforms etc.

Before colonization and the Internet, African communication reflected the interdependent systems of African cultural practices. The Internet and social media introduced virtuality symbolic of western cultural practices. African technoculture is therefore an aspect of cultural discourse that examines the experiences, consciousness, and meaning derived from the intersection of African culture and technology praxis. Some scholars argue some technology principles are focused on deskilling, information gathering, surveillance, and large populations management (Brock, 2020; Penley & Ross, 1991). As a result, non-western social media users like Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers, are developing strategies to challenge the monolithic picture of western cultural transmission that comes from new media technology use. Thus, ATFT offers a framework for understanding the digital performance's mass mediated possibilities from an African context.

3.1 New Media Technologies and African Gender Negotiations

Social media platforms – each with different affordances – have been used as a tool for a plethora of uses by African people on the continent and in diaspora. For example, social networking sites have been used to call out geopolitical injustices and inequities on the continent. Activists in nations like Namibia, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Democratic Republic of Congo used #BlackLivesMatter inspired hashtags and action to force their governments and people around the world to pay attention to their issues. The #EndSARS and #ZimbabweanLivesMatter

movements brought attention to police intimidation and brutality in Nigeria and Zimbabwe; the #CongoIsBleeding campaign created worldwide awareness to the deadly Congolese mine exploitation, and #EndAnglophoneCrisis focalized Cameroon's barbaric child murders. Young adults demanding revolutionary change in their countries have led these campaigns. Likewise, social media platforms have been used to create awareness of gender issues as well as challenge gender roles on the continent. African feminists in particular rely on social media platforms to advocate for gender equity (Pereira, 2017). For example, the 2015 #BringBackOurGirls (BBOG) crusade globally illuminated Boko Haram's kidnapping of 276 Nigerian girls. Namibia's #ShutItAllDownNamibia campaign was used to share pictures of women who were victims of gender-based violence.

While gender dynamics may not be the only focus of African feminism, it remains one of the key issues on the continent. Several African scholars have highlighted the role of colonization in widening the gender gap between African women and men. In Igboland, for example, the introduction of colonial rule legitimized patriarchal institutions and ignored existing women's institutions, thereby causing women to lose their sociopolitical and economic power (Chuku, 2005). Among the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria, women lost most of their lands due to colonizers instituting men as the sole owners of land (Olofintuade, 2017). Gender disparity is also evident within the technology sector as studies report a widening online gender gap in technology use (Afrobarometer, 2019). The results of 45,800 face-to-face interviews in 34 African countries between late 2016 and late 2018 found women were less likely than men to own mobile phones, to own computers, or to access the Internet regularly. Gaps range from 11% in mobile phone ownership and daily use to 4% in phone access to the Internet among those who own mobile phones. African countries also vary widely on the level of women's regular Internet

use. The results showed 58% of women in Cabo Verde and 57% in Mauritius use the Internet regularly while fewer than 10% do in Mali, Niger, Benin, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, and Malawi (Afrobarometer, 2019). As women continue to trail behind men in technology use, gender inequity will persist. Additionally, because digital connection grants access to a wide range of economic opportunities and is a prerequisite for the success of many efforts to empower African women, there is an urgent need to bridge this digital gap.

Yet, despite these gender disparities on the continent, African women who use digital technology rely on social media platforms as tools for gender equality advocacy. New media technology enables African women's activism to reach larger numbers while simultaneously supporting community and network building. For instance, in June 2015, participants of a Nigerian book-club started the viral hashtag #BeingFemaleinNigeria on Twitter, sparking a global call for awareness of Nigerian women's struggles (Dosekun, 2022). The hashtag produced a plethora of powerful stories describing everyday sexism and identifying how cultural norms and government policies contribute to Nigerian women's oppression (Olofintuade, 2017). Following this, Lola Omolola created a Facebook group, Female in Nigeria (FIN), a 'women only' space that allowed them to freely express themselves without fear or judgement. With 1.8 million women as members as of 2021, FIN's extraordinary growth hinges on members' cultural, socioeconomic, religious, sexuality, and geopolitical diversity and sharing a common goal of defying persistent societal norms, restriction, and oppression. Additionally, women who were in abusive marriages/relationships considered FIN a safe space to share their experiences as well as receive support and validation from other women. The bond each member shared was successfully translated to real life as women met (in-person) for hangouts and community outreach (Dosekun, 2022).

The advent of social networking sites has boosted African women's digital engagement. Feminists and gender equality activists are actively blogging, tweeting, and sharing content that call for gender equity on different social media platforms. In 2017, the United Nations initiated a worldwide campaign to end female genital mutilation. Twitter was used to champion the #EndFGM campaign which included tweets from African feminists, anti-FGM activists, non-governmental organizations as well as autobiographical accounts from FGM survivors opposed to the practice. There were an estimated 500 million tweets FGM related tweets sent on twitter platform every day (Julios, 2018). Africans are also raising their voices on social media in support of the #EndChildMarriageNow campaign. The two-year campaign organized in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA encouraged African governments to raise awareness of child marriage's harmful impact on girls, including increased health problems, violence, and denial of access to social network and support systems perpetuating a cycle of poverty and gender inequality. Namibia's #ShutItAllDown campaign shared harrowing stories of women like Gwashiti Ndahambelela Tomas, whose boyfriend allegedly slit her throat when she tried to break up with him, and Ndinelelo Haidula, who was shot and killed in front of her children during an argument with her husband (Oduah, Peñarredonda, Idris, and Christopher, 2020). African feminists are using social media to change the way Africans engage with gender issues on the continent such as sexism, rape, child marriage, female genital mutilation, etc.

Additionally, African people are using social media to share more balanced and accurate stories of Africa and African cultural practices. This pushes back against the disparaging narratives of poverty and insecurity that is prevalent in western media. (Ndiayea and Ndiayea, 2014). For example, scholars have chronicled travel bloggers' use of social media platforms to show interesting and exciting places to visit on the continent (Arthur, 2021). Research is

beginning to emerge on how African beauty bloggers use their platforms to share African indigenous herbal and eco-friendly techniques for making oils and butter for skin and hair care, as well as how multiple lifestyle vloggers share authentic representation of African homes, cooking recipes and family dynamics. African fashion designers, like Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are also using social media platforms to express their cultural identities, preserve history, and share their crafts and creative apparel. They use social media to communicate the significance of African fabric and colors while offering improvement and development opportunities for countless Nigerian women who work in small local businesses (Moreno-Gavara & Jiménez-Zarco, 2019).

3.1.1 Gender Dynamics from an African Feminist Perspective

Feminism has been defined as a worldwide movement advocating for the political, social, and economic equality of all genders (Humm, 2014). Different feminist frameworks identify and contextualize women's oppression while proffering feasible solutions for protecting women's rights (Bayu, 2019). Specifically, the history of western feminism is divided into four primary waves. The first wave points to a period of feminist activity in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States which focused on equal contract and property rights for women. It also contested forced marriages and patriarchal male ownership of married women and children. The second wave began in the early 1960s and lasted through the 1980s. Activists demanded an end to discrimination in different spheres of life, ushering in an era of women contesting cultural and political inequalities rooted in sexist power structures. The third wave began in the 1990s and was a response to the essentialist issues of the second wave which over emphasized upper middle-class white women's experiences. Advocates demanded women of color, women from low socio-economic classes, and women from 'global

south'[2] nations are brought to the forefront of contemporary, progressive feminist politics. The fourth wave began in 2012 and focused on empowering all women, while using media technology and intersectionality to critique interlocking systems of power and gendered norms that continues to marginalize all women with minoritized identities in society including women of color, trans women, queer women, etc. (Oyekan, 2014).

African feminist theorists, however, argue for theories to address the growing gaps between African women and western women (Oyěwùmí, 2016). Despite the pervasiveness of hegemonic western feminist theory in academic discourse, there is a call to re-imagine African women's negotiation of gender in various cultural contexts (Mikell, 1997; Opoku-Mensah, 2001; Guy-Sheftall, 2003; Dutoya, & Saiget, 2022). African feminism, therefore, demands expanding explanations of the continent's gender issues, in addition to explications of enslavement, colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, poverty, illiteracy, and disease. Western dominance in interpreting African realities continues to generalize African women while ignoring the particularities of the issues they face on and off the continent. As a result, solutions to gender inequality rooted in hegemonic western feminism (Friedan, 1974; Fricker, 2006) are typically not applicable to African women because these problematic solutions assume the universal experiences and expect harmful cliches (Mary Maxfield, 2016).

There are various African cultural practices that birth the need for new African feminist theories. First, Africa has a unique historical gender framework particularly on the scientific construction of both human and social origins. Oyěwùmí (2016) argues social roles in western

[2] This term is used with trepidation as it often reinforces global hierarchies in much the same way as the terms 'developing country/nation' and 'Third World country/nation.' In no way, do we believe African nations are culturally, historically, intellectually, and socially inferior; yet there is acknowledgement of how colonial economic vestiges continue to abase numerous countries.

society were based on biology and were inadvertently transferred to other cultures, including those that understood gender differently. For example, scholarship on the histories of kinship and gender identified Europe as the nomadic patriarchal North, western Asia and the Mediterranean basin were considered the zone of confluence, while Africa was considered the agricultural matriarchal South (Amadiume, 2005). As a result, pre-colonial religious, cultural, and political leadership historically assigned women powerful leadership roles within African communities. Yet, Africa was presumed to be in the dark ages as it contradicted the dominant hegemonic theories of the west (which privileges patriarchy), particularly with regards to gender and kinship[3].

Second, it is important to acknowledge ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic diversity within the continent. Chandra Mohanty (1988) argues denying Africa's class and ethnic diversity leads to a presumption of identical interests and desires which is then reflected in African women's homogenization. She contests African women's objectification as victims of socioeconomic systems. In addressing hegemonic western feminist scholar's victim narrative, Oyěwùmí (2016) argues African women are assumed to lack agency while African cultural practices are looked down on and under studied. She challenged the western gaze particularly in the ways it privileges the visual. She explains western societies' cultural logic is rendered through biologically assumed gender, race, and/or class differences and relies on faulty worldwide visual premises. The visual gaze is an invitation to differentiate; as such, anyone who does not appear to conform to hegemonic categories is ultimately othered. She encouraged a

[3] Eurocentric Christianity spread post colonization led to an adoption of new cultural values, decline in traditional religious activities as well as a disrespect of indigenous authorities (Chuku, 1995). Eurocentric Christianity also introduced the binary gender system to African contexts and has since maintained its hold on African gender and sexual relations.

world-sense approach which privileges senses other than the visual, arguing this is a more inclusive way of describing cultural worlds and acknowledging different cultural groups.

Third, African feminism does not consider gender dynamics as the primary focus in their fight for equity and justice because African collectivist culture emphasizes every person's goals and needs; the interconnectedness between individuals plays key roles in social identity. Sembené (1962) argues African women experience more freedom than western women because women and men in Africa have separate powers in strictly defined areas. Using an epistemological approach, Hay (1988) argues women in the west bemoan their inability to make economic contributions while African women are known to demonstrate social and economic autonomy within their households and hold nearly equal political and economic roles in broader society. Consequently, African feminism seeks to anticipate a more holistic vision of society that upholds every member. While gender discrimination is one of the issues African feminism tackles, it also fights against other oppressions that affect all people like racism, neocolonialism, cultural imperialism, religious fundamentalism, and corrupt political systems (Bayu, 2019).

Finally, African feminists bemoan the portrayal of African women's sexuality in western media (Tamale, 2011; Chuku, 2005; Oyěwùmí, 2016). Information about African sexualities can be found in folklore, traditional songs, dance, folk art body markings, clothing, jewelry, names, and naming systems (Tamale, 2011). However, African sexuality continues to be misrepresented in western media as barbaric and backward, which are tropes aimed at colonizing and exploiting Black people. Reports from nineteenth century explorers situate Africans as sexually insatiable and amoral (mainly because of their clothing), all of which are rooted in racist constructions aimed at denigrating African women (Tamale, 2011). Clothing for Africans was not for warmth or protection; many African tribes did not wear much clothing. Men wore a loin cloth or apron,

and women wore wraps around their chest or waist, often adorning the rest of their bodies with traditional body art. This presented a sharp contrast to the conservative sexual norms of the west, which was repressed, and their clothing expected to erase of any hint of sexuality (Tamale, 2011). In present day, public health researchers' central ideologies have continuously revolved around AIDS and media-controlled images of enforced and violent sexuality including polygamy, female genital mutilation, and child rape have prospered (Tamale, 2011; Luyt, 2011; Brijnath, 2007). This ultimately impacts western feminists' theoretical approach to African women's issues. African women's sexuality has been perpetually deemed aberrant; population control, forced marriage and motherhood, forced prostitution, genital cutting, veiling, beating, and an attempt to save African women without understanding indigenous cultural practices have pervaded western feminist ideals (Mama, 2017).

African Technocultural Feminist Theory therefore answers the call for African and gender feminist scholarship to center African women's issues from a uniquely African standpoint to correctly represent their realities. Additionally, because ATFT also calls for an examination of gender relations within culture, this theory presents a model for understanding technology use from a feminist, visual and non-western context. Specifically, it allows media theorists effectively to interrogate and critique interlocking systems of power and gendered norms that continues to marginalize minoritized identities in African societies. ATFT is therefore a fitting theoretical framework as it highlights the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use social networking sites like Instagram for marketing while navigating gender issues within Igbo culture. Particularly, ATFT presents a new lens for exploring the intersection of gender dynamics, culture, and technology.

3.1.2 Applying ATFT to Nigerian Igbo Women Fashion Designers

The goal of this study was to understand the ways Instagram facilitates Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation in digital spaces while they negotiate gender dynamics within Igbo culture. To contextualize ATFT to Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers, this study adapted ATFT and explicated the following tenets: 1) Self-presentation, 2) Instagram interface analysis; and 3) African cultural practices.

Self-Presentation. To understand Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation on Instagram, it is imperative to unpack impression management through photography in digital spaces. Studies on African digital revolution and identity performance online describes the ways new media technology enables African people express themselves in digital spaces (Vokes & Newbury, 2018). Thus, people will most likely present different aspects of their personality depending on the particular online platform, and the people on the platform (Papacharissi, 2010; Connolly-Ahern & Broadway, 2007; Schniederjans & Schniederjans, 2013). Instagram's affordance of visibility (easy content location and retrieval) and persistence (durability of message over time), allows for a more controlled self-presentation which enables Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers portray ideal images online (Hollenbaugh, 2021). The proliferation of social networking sites and their affordances allows African people, particularly Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to not only be subjects of photography creation, but also agents in their creation of social media content (Vokes & Newbury, 2018). Literature on African photography has focused on the compelling performance of self-confident and modern African identities (Lamuniere, 2001) which contrasted against European colonial and stereotyped imagery of African people.

New Media Technology Analysis. For this study, this involves unpacking Instagram's affordances and practices as well as an explanation of icons and how they influence Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's content creation. Some examples of Instagram's features include the ability to upload images/videos to the user's main feed; stories (a feature which enables posts that disappear after 24 hours); video reels (designed to mimic TikTok posts); captions, short bios, and comments; as well as hashtags and geotags that situate Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's post in theme and location specific Instagram archives.

African Feminism. ATFT is rooted in African feminist frameworks which calls for addressing the complexities of African women's lived experiences within culture. This requires that I identify and interrogate structures within Nigerian Igbo culture and explain how Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers generally manipulate social media affordances for self-presentation and resistance of patriarchal structures. This also calls for a detailed analysis of African cultural practices present in the social media post. ATFT argues for the need to be hyper specific to the culture represented to ensure African cultural systems are valued, upheld, and respected. This includes detailing the African cultural matrix, its geopolitical location, history, and sociocultural practices.

3.2 Summary

The proliferation of new media technology presents multiple opportunities for Africans to share authentic and balanced stories of their respective nations and cultures. However, there are currently insufficient theories examining the ways African technology users comprehend and operate technological platforms for sustained sociocultural narrative making. African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT) presents a framework for understanding how African technology users engage with new media technology. ATFT articulates three tenets to unpack

technocultural praxes amongst African technology users: self-presentation, new media technology, and African feminism.

ATFT framework calls for addressing the complexities of African women's experiences, particularly in the ways they manipulate new media technologies for gender equity advocacy while simultaneously creating community, building networks, and showcasing Africa's diverse cultural systems. Thus, relying on this theory to study Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' interaction with new media technology ensures African cultural systems are preserved, valued, and respected, and African women's negotiation of gender power relations is brought to the fore front of technological discourse. This study therefore employed a multimethod qualitative approach – Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) and Semi Structured Interviews - to understand the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances to brand themselves in digital spaces, while navigating patriarchal ideologies within Igbo culture (more information in chapter 4).

CHAPTER 4. METHODS

Researchers have relied on qualitative interviews to provide context to a phenomenon as well as elucidate detailed information about a person's thoughts and actions (Wolfgang, McConnell, & Blackburn, 2020). CTDA have been used to provide a holistic analysis of technology users' interactions with technology platforms, technology practice and cultural ideology (Avdeeff 2021; Arthur, 2021; Brock, 2020; Maragh, 2017; Brock, 2016). Additionally, qualitative methods have been shown to be a preferred feminist methodological framework because it effectively centers historically underrepresented groups (Sprague, 2016). In this chapter, I explain how the data collection process addresses the research questions grounded in African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT).

4.1 Multimethod Research

Multimethod research can be defined as the process of using two or more different methods within the same study rather than restricting the study to one method (Anguera, Blanco-Villaseñor, Losada, Sánchez-Algarra, & Onwuegbuzie, 2018). Unlike mixed method research, multimethod research is not limited to a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods alone, rather it is open to a full variety of methodological synthesis. Thus, multimethod research can use a mixture of qualitative methods (e.g., interviews and focus groups), quantitative methods (e.g., surveys and experiments), or a fusion of both qualitative and qualitative methods to answer research questions (Creswell, 2014; Anguera et al., 2018). A qualitative multimethod approach is important for triangulation which increased the validity and credibility of this study (Creswell, 2014; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011; McMurray, 2004). The two different qualitative methods therefore generated a more robust informative picture of Nigerian women fashion

designers' online identities as well as highlighted key issues within their entrepreneurial, cultural, and technological ecology.

Creswell (2009) identifies six types of multimethod strategies; ***sequential explanatory*** (characterized by an initial phase of quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by a phase of qualitative data collection and analysis); ***sequential exploratory*** (most useful when testing a new instrument and is characterized by an initial phase of qualitative data collection and analysis followed by a phase of quantitative data collection and analysis); ***sequential transformative*** (typically theory driven and characterized by collection and analysis of either quantitative or qualitative data first, after which results are integrated in the interpretation); ***concurrent triangulation*** (where two or more methods are used to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a study and data collection is concurrently); ***concurrent nested*** (a nested approach that gives priority to one of the methods and guides the project, while the other method is embedded); and, ***concurrent transformative*** (use of a theoretical perspective reflected in the purpose or research questions of the study to guide all methodological choices).

This study is closely aligned with the **sequential transformative strategy** because it is guided by African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT). The sequential transformative strategy is typically done in two phases, where the second phase builds upon the first phase (Creswell, 2009). Thus, this study was conducted in two phases where **Phase 1** (Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram accounts) informed **Phase 2** (semi-structured interview of each designer). These phases were then followed by **Phase 3** (a reanalysis of the overall data that incorporated themes from the interview transcripts and Instagram posts using CTDA and ATFT framework). Creswell (2009) argues sequential transformative research is more likely to give voice to diverse perspectives and

better advocate for the co-researchers (Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers). The methodological approach is therefore broken up into the following phases:

In **Phase 1**, a critical technocultural discourse analysis of the visual and textual content of the designers Instagram account and content was done. The data included still images (photos), moving images (videos), post engagement (how many likes and comments), and linguistic analysis of captions and hashtags. In **Phase 2,** a virtual semi-structured interview of each designer was conducted. The interview questions are designed to target four main areas of inquiry that were driven from this study's theoretical foundations and research questions: (1) Fashion design experience, (2) Instagram experience, (3) Instagram affordances, (4) Cultural ideology. Data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed through a CTDA lens considering the themes that emerge related to Instagram's affordances, user engagement and cultural ideology. This study followed feminist qualitative research praxis by ensuring data collection and analysis were collaborative, participative, reflexive, and iterative (Sprague, 2016).

Phase 3, a reanalysis of the Instagram posts and Interview transcripts. Here, the researcher combined CTDA lens and ATFT theoretical framework to reexamine the interview transcripts and Instagram posts. The research questions guided the entire process and were maintained including Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation on Instagram, Instagram's interface analysis to understand the ways the platform allows for content creating and audience engagement, and gender negotiations within Igbo culture.

4.2 Phase 1: Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA)

The multi-modal qualitative Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA) is a relatively new tool in academia used to critically examine the ways technology intersects with cultural ideologies. Developed by Andre Brock (2018), CTDA is a corrective analytical method

that decenters western hegemonic notions of technology users with minoritized identities thereby 'prioritizing the epistemological standpoints of underrepresented groups' (Brock, 2020). Thus, CTDA is a fitting analytical method to understand the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers filter their technology use through their cultural identity. I relied on CTDA to understand the ways Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram's technological affordances for self-presentation and entrepreneurial endeavors while navigating gender dynamics within Igbo culture. This method is also suitable for this study because it introduces a 'tecno-cultural' component to critical discourse analysis that maintains culture and technology are interrelated. This means a person's culture will shape their understanding and technology use. It also implies recognizing that technology has the potential to create and influence culture through the multiple ways it consciously and unconsciously alters our individual and collective behaviors daily (Gilkey, 2020). The need for people to connect with each other gave rise to the proliferation of social media platforms. Each social media platform has its distinct interface, design and functions which makes it stand out from each other.

Social media platforms like Instagram have technological features that are uniquely distinct from other social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, TikTok etc. These unique features require a separate analysis of the technological platform as well as the visual design, which is lacking in critical discourse analysis. CTDA therefore, provides a wholistic analysis of the interactions of technology platform, technology practice and cultural ideology (Brock, 2016). In addition to understanding Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation on Instagram, deciphering Instagram's social and cultural meaning is important to know what specific feature of the platform allows the designers perform their online identities while navigating patriarchal ideologies.

Although CTDA is a new method of data analysis, several scholars have adopted this approach in multiple social media platform studies. One of the first applications of CTDA was an analysis of African American's Twitter use as a Black cultural outlet as well as and the ways Twitter platform facilitated cultural performances of its users (Brock, 2012). It was also used to explore the ways Black travel influencers use Instagram and its affordances to challenge white travel imaginary, facilitate the survival of Black representation in travel-sphere and dismantle racist erasure of Black travelers online (Arthur, 2021). Maragh (2017) also used this method to explicate African American's self-presentation and online identity on Twitter. Moreover, Pemberton & Takhar (2021) used CTDA to analyze French *hijabi* wearing influencers' visibility in the blog-sphere with through the tropes of Islam, the body and female sexuality. Avdeeff (2021) also used the method to analyze public response to Taylor Swift's LGBTQ+ allyship in the track 'You Need to Calm' track on TikTok and Twitter. These different applications of CTDA show this was the most appropriate method to study how Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances for self-presentation and negotiation of patriarchal ideologies.

4.2.1 Explanation of the Method

CTDA's main analytical areas focuses on how technological features are used to create content followed by an examination of technology practices for message sharing and an evaluation of how ideologies are communicated in those messages. Social networking sites like Instagram allow for a more controlled self-presentation which lets Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers portray ideal images online. Three common impression management techniques documented by previous research on social media sites include ingratiation, competence, and supplication (Connolly-Ahern & Broadway, 2007; Schniederjans & Schniederjans, 2013). This is

also applicable to people who use Instagram for marketing in digital spaces. By carefully curating their posts, they adopt self-promotion techniques while proving their business competence. Social media users also take advantage of technology affordances such a photographs and filters for online self-presentation (Papacharissi, 2010). Users report they intentionally post pictures that are attractive, flattering and even photoshopped to increase ingratiation (Schniederjans & Schniederjans, 2013). Self-presentation on Instagram can also be evident through post captions, number of followers, number of following, bios and profile pictures. These are carefully planned and maintained to match the specific impression the social media user wants their audiences to have of them. Relying on ATFT and CTDA, I highlighted the specific ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers presented themselves on Instagram.

The second step was an explication of Instagram's platform affordances. This includes the platform's symbols, algorithms, screen compatibility, device compatibility, app, multimedia, and graphic capabilities that define the physical design of the technology (Brock, 2020). Symbols include logo, fonts and icons that represent different functions on the platform. Instagram's affordances of filters for image manipulation, location annotation of photos, instant sharing, and the platform's ability to present all these features within a single mobile application boosts its cultural relevance. Instagram uses algorithms which are a set of mathematical rules that shows users content they are likely to engage with. The platform's multimedia capabilities enable users to display data in various formats including texts, images, audio, video, and animation, while its graphic capabilities provide the affordance to create pictures, diagrams, designs, and patterns. Instagram users rely on these affordances to interact with information communication technologies. Combining ATFT and CTDA method of analysis therefore

deconstructs Instagram's interface while considering the platform's social and cultural components, both of which are missing in academic research.

Instagram's design presents several affordances that allows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers express themselves on social media. The platform's icon features a camera lens that reminds its users of its primary function, which is taking and sharing photos. When a user opens Instagram app, the word Instagram is they seen at the top left bar of the screen and three icons (a plus sign icon, a heart icon, and a messaging icon) are at the top right bar. The plus sign lets the designers create a post, story, reel or go live. This affords designers to post pictures/videos of their designs to showcase their creativity. The heart icon shows the designer's activities such as post engagements (likes, comments) and friend requests. The messaging icon allows designers send and receive direct messages from other Instagram users. Below the top bar, designers see Instagram posts made by other Instagram users. While designers are only able to see one poster's content at a time, designers can swipe left to see up to 10 photos/videos per poster. Below the picture/video content is the text component of Instagram that allows designers create captions for their post and view other Instagram user's engagement. For example, Instagram allows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers post photographs of their designs on their accounts. Designers can also use text, emojis and hashtags to caption their photos. Some popular hashtags Nigerian Igbo Women fashion designers use in their Instagram post include #naijafashion, #madeinnigeria and #africandesigners. They also use several wedding hashtags because weddings present marketing opportunities where they style entire bridal parties. Some popular wedding hashtags include #naijaweddings, #bellanaijaweddings and #asoebibella. At the bottom bar of the Instagram screen is the home icon, a search icon, reels icon, and a shop icon. The home icon takes you to the home page, while the search icon matches designer's searches with relevant

usernames, bios, captions, hashtags, and places; reels icon which lets designers post 30 second videos (similar to TikTok) and allows them view other Instagram user's reels; and the shop icon which lets designers browse through a brand's products while giving them shortcuts that links to an online store. The shop icon presents a unique opportunity for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to sell their apparels both nationally and internationally. Finally, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers can add geotags to their content by adding their location to their post. This helps increase their following and post interactions, which ultimately helps drives visibility and exposure.

The third step in CTDA is the examination of technology practices (user interactions) to understand the ways technological behaviors create meaning within the social media platform. This explicates how Instagram's distinct technological ecology and user elements facilitates understandings of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation in online spaces by exploring the ways members of their online community engage with their media content. This includes examination of how their followers respond to their posts, praise, or criticize their designs, or communicate/reflect on social issues raised by the designer. Additionally, the ease of using hashtags allows designers to be easily reached by a wide variety of audiences looking for outfit inspiration and trends which ultimately expands the designer's virtual reach. Followers can also respond to designer's post using hashtags which creates archived interactions that improves community engagement. Furthermore, audiences can also share the designer's post to their account as well as join the designer's livestream when they choose to go live on Instagram.

The final step in CTDA is an examination of cultural ideologies established within the media content. These cultural considerations explored social and historical contexts identified within the posts examined. The main purpose of examining cultural ideologies was to

understand the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers negotiate patriarchal ideologies within Igbo culture. Additionally, cultural traditions related to fashion were analyzed. This includes (but is not limited to) connotations of fabric color and patterns identified within the media content. By considering the intersection of African cultural practices and new media technology use, ATFT combined with CTDA Africanizes technocultural analysis in its detailing of how Indigenous Igbo women fashion designers rely on Instagram's affordances for entrepreneurial and cultural expression. This ensured indigenous African traditions are preserved, valued, and respected, while centering African women's negotiation of gender and power relations within technological discourse.

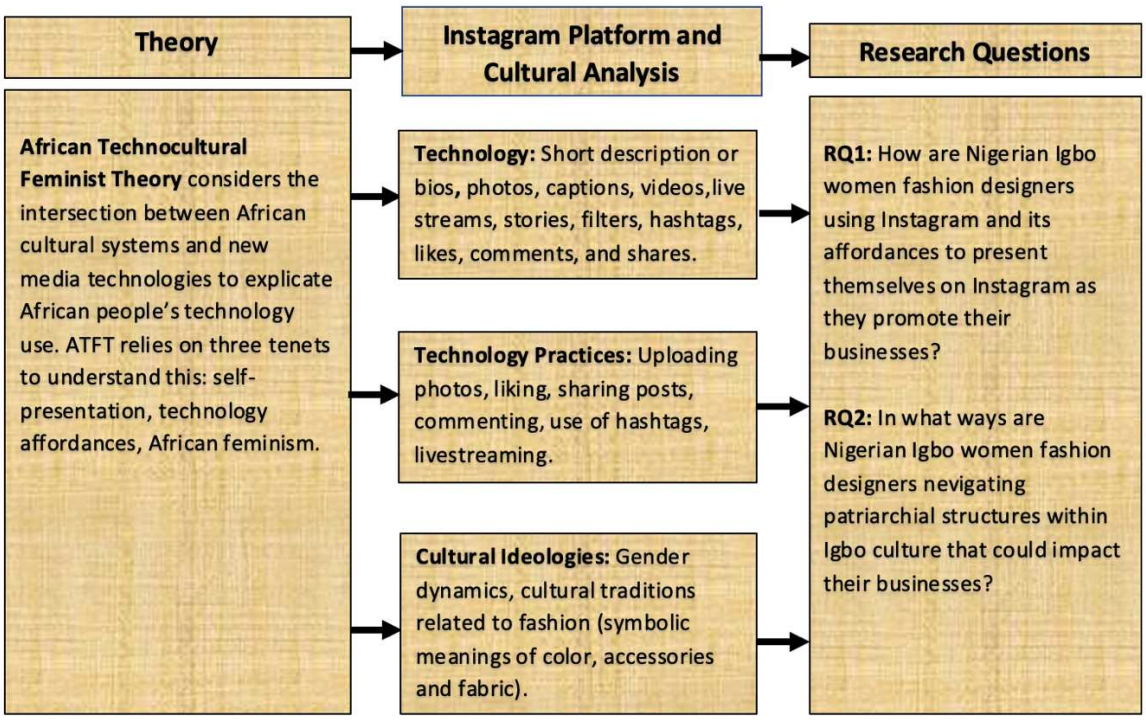

Figure 7. CTDA explanation showing how the interconnections of technology, technology practices and cultural ideology relate to ATFT and lead to the research questions

4.2.2 Data Collection and Sample

Data collection began after IRB approval was granted by Colorado State University's Institutional Review Board. After IRB approval was granted, I conducted a Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram accounts to guide my understanding of how Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances to perform their digital identities. While I did not require IRB approval to collect Instagram data (franzke, 2020), I needed IRB approval for the semi-structured interviews part of this study. It was imperative that I received IRB approval before advancing to data collection because I maintained the same co-researchers for both **Phase 1** (CTDA analysis) and **Phase 2** (semi-structured interviews). The data was generated from a purposive sample of 10 Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram accounts. I then collected and analyzed a purposive sample of 10 Instagram posts per designer (n = 100 posts).

During the sampling and data collection process, I adhered to recommendations from the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) ethical guidelines which advocates for protecting participants information during data collection by deleting participant's personally identifiable information (PID) or seeking informed consent to include PID in this study (franzke, 2020). So, I made sure to request permission from the designers to include screenshots of their Instagram posts/content in the analysis.

The decision to recruit 10 participants and analyze 10 posts was guided by Creswell's (2009) recommendation that qualitative sample sizes are large enough (no more than 20) to allow a deep and meaningful understanding of the phenomenon, but small enough (no less than 5) so the rich case-oriented analysis is not precluded. Thus, before I purposively selected the 10 posts, I carefully looked through all designers' contents and posts and chose photos that represented a

summary of the designers overall Instagram profile. To participate in the study, co-researchers identified as women, owned Instagram accounts, and identified as Igbo. I sampled designers who had a wide range of social media following. This was beneficial as it highlighted the different stages the designers were in their careers (see table 1). Specifically, the data showed women who were at the beginning stages of their business (indicative of small social media followers) and designers who were at influencer status (over 20,000 followers). An excel sheet was first used to make a list of all 10 fashion designers. I used excel software to aid data visibility as well as keep track of themes that came up within the data. Then I examined the types of media posted (photographs, videos, memes, GIFs, captions, and hashtags); user engagement through likes, comments, and sharing posts with other users; and cultural considerations through gender dynamics and Igbo cultural traditions. These three spheres of analysis explicated CTDA's primary modes of understanding technocultural routines and practice which include interface – media posted; technology practice – post engagement; and cultural ideology – gender dynamics and cultural traditions related to fashion (Arthur, 2021; McFarlane & Samsioe, 2020). Finally, each post was coded on excel sheet for the following eight items:

- Description (image, physical appearance, and context)
- Subject matter (people, object, places, events)
- Captions (words, emojis, hashtags)
- Format (video, photo, meme, gifs, story)
- Post engagement (likes and comments)
- Style description (fabric color and design type)
- Gender dynamics (body display, self-assertiveness, and non-conformity to patriarchal structures)
- Self-presentation (self-promotion, brand promotion, event promotion, supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns).

Table 1. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram profile detail

Co-Researcher	Number of Followers	Following Number[4]	Number of Posts
1	20,000	1397	338
2	1527	1161	273
3	84	106	16
4	911	387	245
5	12,400	465	672
6	2291	701	401
7	4167	1530	561
8	1477	1077	334
9	992	950	277
10	86	47	78

This enabled me to provide a rich and thorough analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's posts as well as guided my understanding of the ways Instagram and its affordances allows them to perform their digital identities online. I used these eight variables (Table 2) as main headlines and put the components of each variable (i.e., main heading description and subheadings image, physical appearance, and context) as subheadings. In a separate excel document, I made detailed field notes from my observation of the Instagram post, images, follower comments, emojis and hashtags related to the fashion designer or the fashion piece. Additionally, I noted my observation of how the fashion designers created, performed, and managed a 'self' or 'personality', specifically motivated by fashion and the environment in which in which the image was promoted (McFarlane & Samsioe 2020). I took screenshots of the posts and saved them in my computer as I understood posts could be deleted at any time. l also

[4] The number of followers, following numbers and number of posts were collected March 15, 2022.

created a folder for these screenshots and had duplicates saved in a hard drive, flash drive and google drive in the event of technology failure.

Table 2. Screenshot of a portion of the preliminary codebook showing description coding of each photograph.

		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
Designer's name	*Date post was made*	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo culurral inluence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted]										
1	5/17/19	Picture of a woman in colorful outfit with green tree behind her	African women outdoors	Photo	120 likes and 20 comments	The word "Ankara" with two pink big and little heart emojis. #weddingguest #EBAY19, green dress emoji, zanastells	Colorful dress, combination of light and dark colors. Peach, browns, greys and black. Fabric is a combination of ankara and chiffon. No refrence to Igbo culture but Afrocentric design	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
2	4/21/19	Picture if a woman in a blue lace gown	African woman indoors, at an event	photo	95 likes, 10 comments	Show-stopper🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥 @divastella always does justice to her zanastells outfit👌 👗@zanastells #slaymummy #mummyanddaughterslay #wearzanastells	Rich blue dress paired with nude lace. No reference to Igbo culture	Labor practices was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	1/17/20	Picture of a woman in ankara 2-piece jacke and matching	Picture taken outoors	Photo	39 likes, 2 comments	F.R.I.D.A.Y!!! @favboma spotted in our 2 piece set...thanks for	Puple and yellow jacet and matching short	Labor practices not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	10/1/20	Picture of a mannequinne in a drress	Pictue taken indoors	photo	56 likes, 8 comments	God bless Nigeria 🍀🍀🍀 #zanastells ✂️	Green and white dress with big puffy white satin sleeves. Post was celebating Nigeia's independence. No specific connection to Igbo culture but celebrate's Nigeria as a country	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne in the designer's fashion piece
5	11/7/19	Picture of a woman in Igbo traditional outfit	Picture taken outdoor, specificially in a wedding	photo	79 likes, 4 comments	Our beautiful Igbo bride from the other day.. @ chinonyeremndukwe 🍷🍷 👗@zanastells	Blue wrapper and matching blouse for traditional Igbo wedding. Woman also accessoriezed with tradtional beads on her neck, head and wrists.	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece at her wedding
6	2/20/20	Picture of a woman in a long sleeve dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	79 likes, 10 comments	Pretty in blue 🍷🍷 Outfit @zanastells	Deep blue long sleeved dess (one am cross crossed, o e am lace). Woman has igbo taditional Igbo beads on her wrist	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	3/1/20	Picture of a women in wapper and blouse	Photo taken outdoor	photo	70 likes, 0 comments	Jay said *Naza just make me beautiful, you know it's my day* and we indeed made her as a queen on her big day...Thanks for always trusting us darl @meetjaytina 2nd outing❤️❤️❤️ #igbankwunigeria #igbobrides #tradwedding #jake2020 #zanastellsbride	Black and gold Igbo traditional bridal outfit, blouse and matching wapper, paird with black gele and white and gold taditional beaded jewely on he neck an wists. Also has a gold featheed fan.	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	8/31/20	Picture of woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoor	Photo	74 likes, 0 comments	All shades of 💙💙💙 @____amaka____ Outfit: @zanastells	Blue dress. Top of the dress is exergerated deep blue silk fabic and the body is light blue with lace materia	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	7/2/20	Picture of woman in maching shirt and skirt	Picture taken indoors	Photo	63 likes, 1 comment	Happy birthday @esemakeover We love and celebrate you!!! Dress: @zanastells	Bluish green outfit, matching top and skirt.	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	2/3/19	Picture of woman in a dress	Picture taken indoors	Photo	82 likes, 2 comments	Yummy mummy🔥🔥🔥@divastell a dressed in zanastells 👗@zanastells 💄@esemakeover 📷@joseph.orji . #ZNwoman #wearzanastells #abujafashiondesigner #aseobibella	Oange and deep blue dess with long slit. Two types of sleeves, full sleeves and tendill sleeves. Outfit is paired with maching head accessoy	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece

Data from the Instagram posts were analyzed using CTDA as an analytical framework which considered the themes that emerged related to Instagram's affordances, user engagement and cultural ideology. All data was collected in the spring of 2022. The next step was preparing the data for analysis. First, I carefully examined the Instagram photos and content (n=100). I employed Saldaña's (2021) 'description coding' of each photograph which is best used when

addressing the question “what is going on here?” (Table 2). Then, I uploaded the data to MAXQDA for coding and analysis. Some may argue the coding process is reductionist and employs quantitative approaches in the ways the researcher counts frequency of codes that emerge. However, I relied on Saldaña’s (2021) definition of coding which describes the analytical process as one that assigns rich symbolic meanings through essence-capturing and/or evocative attributes to data. I made sure to ponder, scrutinize, interrogate, and reflect on each code that emerged, which ensured I was not treating each occurrence as mere statistical numbers.

4.2.3 Instagram Data Analysis

After uploading the preliminary excel data to MAXQDA, I then identified themes across the dataset and converted them to codes. Leavy (2017) recommends the following three-step model: immersion, reduction, and creating the codebook. First, I inductively created codes that described aspects of the data. This process is also known as open coding or immersion which provides deep insight into the social worlds of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers (Saldaña, 2021). During this process, I created memos to initiate data analysis, which contained emerging categories/themes across the preliminary codebook. The next step was axial coding which involved intensive code reduction. Here, I coded distinct themes around one category and demonstrated how they belonged to a particular group. As I did this, I ensured the themes in the data addressed the research questions. Finally, I developed a code book which organized the data for analysis. The coding process allowed me to further reduce and classify the data generated. The codebook (Appendix B) contained the name of the element, a description of the code with a clear definition, and examples that illustrates the code’s use (Forman & Damschroder, 2008). Primary codes were based on the manifest content observed in each dataset. The memos I made during the iterative process of open coding aided in reorganizing the

codes into more concise, broader categories during the reduction phase of coding. I ensured ATFT was reflected throughout the process of analyzing the Instagram dataset. Specifically, the three tenets of ATFT formed the foundation for coding and data analysis; self-presentation – which Africanizes self-presentation in digital spaces, new media technology analysis – which considered the ways Instagram facilitates content creation and audience interaction; and African feminism – which identifies and interrogates structures within Nigerian Igbo culture and explains how Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers generally manipulate social media affordances for self-presentation and resistance of patriarchal structures.

4.3 Phase 2: Semi-structured Interview of Nigerian Igbo Women Fashion Designers

To understand Nigerian Igbo women's self-presentation on Instagram and their negotiation of patriarchy within Igbo culture, a semi-structured interview of each designer was conducted. The semi-structured interview method is the most used interview technique in qualitative research for several reasons; 1) interviewers can prepare questions before hand to help guide the conversation and keep co-researchers on topic 2) offers more flexibility for the researcher and the co-researchers to digress on to other areas 3) encourages two-way communication 4) provides opportunity for interviewers to learn answers to questions and the reasons behind the answers 5) allows co-researchers time to open up about sensitive issues (Kallio, Johnson & Kangasniemi, 2016). The semi-structured interview guide typically consists of two levels of questions: the main themes and follow-up questions (Kallio, Johnson & Kangasniemi, 2016). The main theme covers the main content while the follow-up questions probe the co-researchers to further explain a particular response. Seidman (2006) presents three phases to a typical interview: 1) ***focused life history*** where the researcher puts the designer's experiences in context. I did this by asking the designers to provide as much information as

possible about themselves in relation to the research topic; 2) ***the details of experience*** where the emphasis is on the concrete details of their experience; 3) ***reflection on the meaning*** where the co-researchers are asked to reflect on the meaning of their experiences. I asked questions that allowed the designers contextualize and make sense of their experiences, especially in the ways it relates to other aspects of their lives and themselves (Seidman, 2006). This created a collaborative relationship between the researcher and designers. While the flexibility of the semi-structured interview is its greatest advantage, it also presents its most crucial concerns. Qualitative scholars question the ethics of a researcher collecting data that is completely unnecessary for the research. Before conducting this study, I practiced ethical research guidelines by providing the co-researchers with participant information sheets and consent forms in an invitation email (Sugiura & Pope, 2017).

4.3.1 Participants

To ensure triangulation and validity, participants for **Phase 1** were the same for the semi-structured interviews. I began by identifying fashion designers within my network (about three designers). I introduced myself and asked them if they would be interested in participating in the study. I then asked the designers within my network to share the recruitment flier to their own networks and WhatsApp groups. I then requested for their email addresses and sent the recruitment message to a total of 20 designers hoping at least 10 would agree to be interviewed. Interested participants were also emailed a consent form and asked to complete a pre-interview questionnaire. Because the interviews would be conducted online, I included participant compensation of five-thousand-naira ($12.50) internet data reimbursement for all interested participants. This is important because the way internet/mobile technology works in Nigeria is unique and different from the west. Internet users are expected to subscribe for data to be able to

go online, which could be expensive. Thus, compensating the designers with data showed honor and care for the co-researchers (franzke, 2020). Finally, I understood the designer's postings were public and it was ethical to publish their data verbatim (franzke, 2020; Townsend & Wallace, 2016). However, I followed ethical guidelines for Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) ethical guidelines by asking permission from participants before using any identifiable information, and ensuring the data used did not pose any harm to the participants (franzke, 2020).

4.3.2 Data Collection

Prior to scheduling the interview, I received approval from Colorado State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), after which I sent out an electronic Participant Informed Consent Form (Appendix 2) along with some Pre-Interview Questionnaire one week before the interview session. The questionnaire contained information which was discussed during the interview and was used to obtain basic initial information about the participants' demographics (age, state of origin etc.), familiarity with Instagram's affordances and usage, as well as gender related experiences. The pre-interview questions were sent out one week prior to the interview to allow the researcher some time to review the responses. The interviews were done virtually over Zoom and was recorded, with participant's permission. I adhered to feminist research ethics guidelines umbrellaed under the Association of Internet Researchers ethical guidelines which encourages caring for our bodies, our communities, and our co-researchers (franzke, 2020). I showed care for the co-researchers by being mindful of international time difference and scheduling the Zoom meetings during working hours in the day, even though this was midnight/early morning my time. Because I interviewed participants from three different countries, Nigeria (8), UK (1) and the US (1), I scheduled the interviews for the Nigerian and

UK participants around 2-4AM MST which was around 10-12 noon GMT (Nigeria and UK both had the same time), and the participant in the US (specifically LA) was scheduled for 10AM MST which was 9AM PDT. I took care of myself by taking naps during the day to make sure I was alert throughout the interviews. Each interview session lasted for about 30 – 40 minutes. Participants had their videos on the entire time, and we did not encounter any serious technological difficulties. I only had one participant whose screen was frozen for about one minute towards the end of the interview. We resorted to conducting her interview without video and only relied on audio.

Participants were asked questions about their background and/expertise, fashion design experience, Instagram experience (including a description of their Instagram profile, identity and user engagement), Instagram affordances (that explored a description of the ways Instagram affordances impacts their marketing strategy) and cultural considerations that includes questions about gender dynamics and cultural traditions related to fashion and Igbo culture. Each interview recording was transcribed verbatim. I listened carefully to all the recordings in order to verify the 'accuracy' of the transcripts. I documented verbatim accounts of both verbal and non-verbal utterances (e.g., coughs, laughter, and emphasis) to ensure the content and tone of the interviews, as well as participants' affective states were captured (Braun and Clarke 2006). The recordings of the interview were stored safely and securely in in my password protected laptop with duplicates stored in a hard drive and password protected google drive folder.

In feminist methodology, the researcher is required to reconstruct the purposes of inquiry to engage with the struggle of equity and justice while concurrently deconstructing individual power relations between the researcher and the subject (Sprague, 2016). This requires that scholars take up moral/ethical lenses that decolonize, honor, and respect cultural praxis while

engaging with research that promotes collective action centered on equity and equality for all humanity (Sprague, 2016; franzke, 2020). As such, I recognized my actions must resist the perpetuation of researcher power. Instead, power was given to the co-researchers through member checking (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Member checking required I returned to the designers from whom data was generated to ensure my interpretation of the data was recognized as accurate representations of their experiences. I therefore asked all the participants to review the notes, transcripts as well as the interpretation of the data. I sent the transcripts and data interpretation to the participants three months after data collection (in June 2022). All the participants acknowledged the notes and transcripts accurately reflected their perspectives and experiences. This established validity and encouraged a collaborative research methodology. Moreover, as I coded, analyzed, and reanalyzed the data, I made sure I reflected the co-researcher's voice, processes, emotions, motivations, values, attitudes, microculture and identities throughout the coding process. Because I shared similar culture with the co-researchers, I was also able to understand some innuendos, body language and sounds they made in response to the questions. These outcomes gave me a multi-dimensional facet about Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers. In addition, while I counted the number of codes to access the frequency of items, this was not a measure of significance (Saldaña, 2021).

4.3.3 Interview Data Analysis

The semi structure interview data analysis was similar to the Instagram post data analysis where I employed the three-step model: immersion, reduction, and codebook continuation (in this case as I added to the Instagram post data analysis codebook). First, I uploaded the interview transcripts to MAXQDA, then I created memos to initiate data analysis which contained emerging categories/themes across the interview transcripts. Then, I employed axial coding

which involved intensive code reduction. Here, I coded distinct themes around one category and demonstrated how they belonged to a particular group. As I did this, I ensured the themes in the data addressed the research questions. The coding process allowed me to further reduce and classify the data generated. The new codes added to the codebook also contained the name of the element, a description of the code with a clear definition, and examples that illustrates the code's use (Forman & Damschroder, 2008). After the categories were organized, they were then examined and interpreted for more focused and nuanced patterns particularly as it relates to the research questions - self-presentation, Instagram affordances, and cultural ideology. Specifically, I collapsed/consolidated common themes into one category. For example, themes like "challenges with gender", "gender negotiation within fashion industry", and "men are superior" were consolidated into the "gender inequities within Igbo culture" theme. I continued to examine the data until I reached saturation which was when new themes were no longer emerging from the dataset and further coding was no longer feasible. Since categories should be empirically grounded, it was during this final process of examination that I linked the analyses to CTDA, ATFT theoretical framework, existing findings, and the research questions.

4.4 Phase 3: Reanalysis of Instagram Posts and Interview Transcripts

The final phase of analysis was a reexamination of the interview transcripts and the Instagram data. Here, I also applied the immersion and reduction model by identifying overlapping codes as well as unique findings across both datasets. After the categories were organized, they were then reexamined and interpreted for more focused and nuanced patterns. African Technocultural Feminist Theory thorough a CTDA lens allowed for the analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation using Instagram's affordances as well as explicated their negotiation of gender dynamics within Igbo culture. Data from the semi-

structured interview and the Instagram posts were analyzed using CTDA as an analytical framework which considered the themes that emerged related to self-presentation, Instagram's experiences and affordances, and cultural ideology. More broadly, the interview questions were designed to target three main areas of inquiry that were driven from this study's theoretical foundations (African Technocultural Feminist Theory) and research questions: (1) Self-presentation, (2) Instagram experience and affordances, (3) Cultural ideology.

4.5 Limitations

This study presents three limitations specific to the research methods employed. Below, I discuss limitations around CTDA methodological framework and the semi-structure interview method.

Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA): Brock (2016) argues CTDA requires researcher reflexivity to situate technological platforms in historical, material, and cultural ideological contexts. As such CTDA analysis are typically in narrative form which quantitative scholars may argue is not replicable and as such not generalizable. Brock (2016) however contends CTDA is specifically formulated to contend the false constructs of positivism because it allows each researcher to bring their diverse disciplinary, cultural, and social perspectives to the research which is reflective of their positionality. Additionally, a crucial component of CTDA is paying attention to the medium in order to make sense of user experience. Thus, CTDA analysis considers graphic user interface, narrative, and context of use as it articulates user discourse - none of which can be effectively measured using quantitative approach (Brock, 2020).

Semi-structured Interview: First, the flexibility of a semi-structured interview can easily derail from the research questions. However, I was open to ideas that I did not expect to emerge

during the interview. Second, analyzing the data generated from a semi-structured interview can be time consuming, tedious to analyze and expensive to transcribe (McDougal, 2014). Additionally, there is the possibility participants expressed what they perceived to be the socially desirable response to sensitive issues resulting in desirability bias.

4.6 Summary

To answer the research questions, a qualitative multi-method approach was employed. The methodological approach was broken up into three phases: **Phase 1** (Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram accounts and content) and **Phase 2** (semi-structured interview of each of the designers), and **Phase 3** (a reanalysis of the overall data that incorporates themes from the interview transcripts and Instagram posts using CTDA and ATFT framework). Participants for both **Phases 1 and 2** were the same and were recruited from a purposive sampling via Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media platforms. The criteria to participate in the study include co-researchers identified as women, have Instagram accounts, and identify as Igbo. **Phase 3** reanalyzed data (both interview data and Instagram posts) from a total of 10 Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to understand their media identity and negotiation of patriarchy within Igbo culture. All the data were uploaded to MAXQDA data analysis software and coded based on Leavy's (2017) three step model: immersion, reduction, and codebook creation.

Before sampling, I first sought approval from Colorado State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) because participants for both **Phase 1** and **Phase 2** were the same. For **Phase 1** (CTDA), a purposive sample of 10 Instagram posts per designer (n= 100 posts) were collected and analyzed. I used an excel sheet to make a list of all 10 fashion designers while taking note of the number of posts, number of followers, following number and profile bio of

each fashion designer. I analyzed the posts based on types of media posted (photographs, videos, memes, GIFs, captions and hashtags); user engagement through likes, comments, and sharing posts with other users; and cultural ideology through gender dynamics and Igbo cultural traditions. Additionally, I noted my observation of how fashion designers performed and managed their digital identities.

For Phase 2 (semi-structured interview), I sent out a message to the designers requesting for them to participate in this study. Then, an electronic participant informed consent form along with some pre-interview questionnaire was sent out to designers who choose to participate in the study. The interview was done virtually over Zoom and was recorded, each lasting for about 30 – 40 minutes. Participants were asked questions about their background and/expertise, fashion design experience, Instagram experience (including a description of their Instagram profile, identity, and user engagement), Instagram affordances (that explores a description of the ways Instagram affordances impacts their marketing strategy) and cultural considerations that includes questions about gender dynamics and Igbo cultural traditions. Each interview recording was transcribed verbatim, and participants were asked to review the notes, transcripts as well as the researcher interpretation of the data. Information from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed through a CTDA lens considering the themes that emerged related to self-presentation, Instagram's affordances, user engagement and cultural ideology.

Phase 3 (reanalysis of the overall data) began after all 100 Instagram posts had been collected and analyzed in an excel spreadsheet, and all 10 interview transcriptions were completed. Then, the data from the pre-interview questionnaire, Instagram analysis and interview transcripts were then reexamined. I applied the immersion and reduction coding procedure by identifying overlapping codes as well as unique findings across both datasets. After the

categories were organized, they were then reexamined and interpreted for more focused and nuanced patterns, and were linked to ATFT theoretical framework, and the research questions.

CHAPTER 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to understand the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on Instagram and its affordances to perform their identities as well as negotiate gender dynamics within Igbo culture. This chapter presents the results and analysis of the findings which were done in three phases. **Phase 1** was an analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram posts where I presented descriptive values and CTDA analysis of their Instagram profiles and content, related to African Technocultural Feminist Theory and the research questions. **Phase 2** was an analysis of the designer's semi-structure interview posts where the socio-demographic details of the co-researchers were presented, followed by an analysis of the interview transcriptions using CTDA and ATFT lens. Finally, **Phase 3** was a reanalysis of the Instagram posts and the semi-structure interview data. Here, I also relied on CTDA and ATFT as I identified overlapping themes and unique findings across all the data sets.

5.1 Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis of Instagram Profiles and Posts

The Instagram post analysis begins with a CTDA analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram profile and bios which was then followed by a CTDA analysis of their Instagram posts. For this analysis, I identified themes within the preliminary codebook related to African Technocultural Feminist Theory and the research questions. Specifically, the analysis was based on Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation, the ways they use Instagram and its affordances to perform their digital identities in a mediated environment, and the influence of Igbo cultural ideologies on their designs. Relying on ATFT, I highlighted the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances to challenge men-dominated structures while asserting themselves in digital spaces.

To analyze the Instagram data, I employed thematic analysis based on Brock's (2012) CDTA framework. I did this by identifying themes within the preliminary codebook which reflected the research questions and relates to African Technocultural Feminist Theory. The three overarching inquiries driving this study were Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation on Instagram, the ways Instagram affordances allows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers perform their digital identities, and how Nigerian Igbo cultural ideology influence their fashion design businesses/experiences. The result of the Instagram content analysis identified two themes that describe Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation on Instagram: self-promotion, and cultural digitalization of Igbo-centric fashion.

5.1.1 Self-Promotion

Self-promotion is an important component of professional success that predicts perceptions of competence. Moss-Racusin & Rudman, (2010) describes self-promotion as a primary form of impression management where a person points with pride to their accomplishments and speak directly about their skills. The ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers set up their Instagram profile and the content they share on their pages highlight their competence in fashion. Instagram profile pictures are thumbnails located at the top left corner of a profile. This is typically the first image a user sees when viewing an Instagram profile. The profile picture is accessible to the public regardless of the user's privacy settings. This means Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's user profile can be seen by people who follow them and those who are not following them. A profile picture is therefore an important component in Nigerian Igbo designer's self-presentation online. The result of the profile analysis revealed seven designers had their business logo as their profile picture, while a small number (three) had their own photo set as their profile picture (table 2). This finding provides evidence that business

owners typically use branded logos on their social media handles as a form of self-presentation to influence audience interaction (Papacharissi, 2013; Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). The designers who used their personal pictures as their profile picture were likely taking a humanizing approach to make themselves more personable to their audiences. A key tenet of African Technocultural Feminist theory is an explication of the ways new media technology platforms allow African technology users create content online. Instagram's affordance of profile photos allows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers situate themselves as professional fashion designers within digital spaces. This lets them embody a form of identity construction which can ultimately influence audiences' willingness to purchase their designs.

Next to the profile picture on Instagram technological platform is the bio. Instagram bios are a description of an Instagram user's account which can be up to a hundred and fifty characters long and sits at the very top of the profile page. Instagram bios typically contain the user's name, contact information and other relevant details about the account owner. Instagram bios provides insight to who Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are and what they do. A review of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's bios showed six co-researchers prefaced their bios with their names and contact information while four designers went right into describing their brand and the services they provide. This result shows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers used words that articulate their expertise in fashion design business. For example, 'bespoke' informs potential clients of their ability to make uniquely fitted clothing from scratch, while 'fashion design' creates an impression of artistic ability and creativity. The designers also used words that specifically target the Nigerian wedding industry. For example, the word 'bridal' targets anyone looking to hire the services of a fashion designer skilled in making wedding clothing. Most Nigerians typically have three types of weddings; court wedding (where are

married legally and receive their marriage license), religious wedding (which includes Christian and Islamic weddings, typically preceded by a wedding ceremony at the church or mosque where they are joined by an officiant and, is followed by a wedding party where they celebrate with friends and family); and traditional wedding (where cultural marriage rites are performed). The Nigerian wedding industry is a lucrative business prospect for designers as they are presented with an opportunity to make clothes for an entire wedding party.

The words Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers used in their bios to describe their brand revealed an intentionality towards competence that is not typically associated with African portrayals in western media. Scholarship on media portrayals of Africa argue it is fraught with gross generalizations of Africa and African people (Zeph-Ojiako, & Anakwuba, 2019; Adegbola, Skarda-Mitchell, & Gearhart, 2018; Schraeder & Endless, 1998). Many news depictions paint a dark jungle-like portrait of the continent, ravaged with starvation, poverty, disease, and corruption (Gabore, 2020; Poncian, 2015). African studies scholars suggest the disproportionate coverage of negative over positive news presents an imbalance in reporting about the continent that is not a complete representation of African people. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are therefore using assertive words of competence to reclaim the negative portrayals of Africa and African cultural systems within western media. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are also seen to have agency in the ways they control their self-presentation on the profiles and bios. This finding agrees with ATFT as it ultimately challenges the victim narrative/assumption hegemonic western feminists have of African women (Oyěwùmí 2016; Lamuniere, 2001). Instagram's affordances of profiles and bios allows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers choose how they want to be perceived by online audiences. This finding situates ATFT particularly because Nigeria is a patriarchal society where women are expected to seek

permission from men for every aspect of their lives including leisure activities and work decisions (Adisa, Abdulraheem, & Isiaka, 2019). However, Instagram facilitates their self-presentation on their own terms, thereby subverting patriarchal structures within culture.

Finally, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers also embodied self-promotion in the pictures they chose to share on their Instagram pages as well as how they chose to caption them. The images were mostly quality photographs which communicated expertise and showcased the intricacies of their designs. Their designs included formal wears, at leisure outfits, wedding outfits etc. For example, on the 16th of October 2020, one of the designers created a post which contained a picture of a women in an orange formal flowing dress (figure 8). The photograph was professionally taken in an outdoor setting. The designer included a geotag of her location (Abia, Umuahia). The photo was captioned:

> Serving you Looks for Days! What are you waiting for? Let's make design for you today! #Fashion #Fashiondesigner #Fashiondesigners #FashiondesignersinUmuahia #Womenfashion #MadeinNigeria #AbiaTailor #UmuahiaTailor #DesignerinAbia #Designerinumuahia #UmuahiaDesigner #AbiaDesigner

In the photo, we observe the designer rely on Instagram's affordances of captions, geotags and hashtags to promote her brand online. She uses captions to specifically invite clients to hire her to design their clothes. She situates the post with a photo that highlights her fashion design skills while relying on geotags to communicate her specific location. She also used hashtags which included words like "fashion design", "womenfashion" etc., and geotagged her location "Abia Umuahia" for visibility.

Figure 8. Photograph of a Nigerian Igbo designer's Instagram post showing her use of geotags, hashtags and captions to promote her brand. Screenshot[5] from the designer's page.

This provides evidence that the designer along with other Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers employ self-promotion in their self-presentation on Instagram. Their embodiment of self-promotion goes against patriarchal prescriptions for Nigerian women which expects them to be submissive and subordinate while men are positioned as dominant (Adisa, Abdulraheem, & Isiaka, 2019). This result therefore reveals Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on Instagram and its affordances to express counterstereotypic behavior for women since self-promoting women are often perceived as violating gender prescriptions (Moss-Racusin & Rudman, 2010). This finding supports ATFT and therefore contributes to feminist and media scholarship as it provides evidence of the ways African women utilize new media technology to

[5] I was careful to protect the designer's identity and anonymity by blocking out identifying information of the designer within the post.

resist patriarchal structures within culture. Furthermore, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are reframing the ways people think about fashion by showcasing African designs on a platform that allows visibility and exposure to both local and international audiences.

5.1.2 Cultural Digitalization of Igbo-centric Fashion

Digitalization of culture is defined as the process of digitalizing movable and immovable cultural heritage using contemporary virtual technologies to achieve digital archiving (Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin, 2008). Studies show that culture influences self-presentation and self-expression in digital spaces (DeAndrea, Shaw & Levine, 2010). The result of the analysis showed majority of the designer's posts contained several elements that reflected Igbo culture including fabric and color. The meanings attributed to Igbo-centric fashion depends on historical context and the socio-cultural realities of community members within the society (Okadiwe, 2016). New media technology therefore offers an opportunity for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to create digital archives of Igbo fashion which ultimately preserves Igbo culture.

Color. The result of the analysis found majority of the designers posted content with black, white, and red colors (table 4). Before the proliferation of media communication, colors were used as a medium of communication in most African societies (Ibrahim, 2016). This mode of communication was effective and relatable to indigenous Igbo people because colors were seen among natural elements. For example, two dominant colors within Igbo culture are found within the soil and in plants. White color is found in clay (*Nzu*), while red (*Uhie*) is found in cam wood trees. These colors serve various traditional uses including ritual purposes, initiations, marriages, ornaments etc. Historically, white color symbolized peace, purity, and wholesomeness. White was also associated with traditional rituals, the supernatural and mourning. For example, when a widow wears tiny white beads, it becomes a symbol of

mourning (Okadiwe, 2016). For this analysis, I focused on red color as this provided evidence of how Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers used color to challenge patriarchal structures.

In traditional Igbo culture, red symbolizes blood and danger. For instance, women who just experienced childbirth used red markings to indicate they were in the process of healing. Other women and men in the process of healing from adult physical and ritual circumcision also used red markings to indicate this. Igbo men [6] chiefs wore red woolen caps to represent the pain and suffering Igbo people experienced in the course of history, particularly around the Nigerian civil war from 1967-1970 when the Nigerian government carried out a genocide on Igbo people for wanting to secede. Red caps also symbolized authority and tradition. Igbo men chiefs wore these caps to represent the Igbo chieftaincy institution, its power and authority. Women were typically not allowed to wear these caps as they were exclusive to men. Igbo men chiefs also paired the red caps with red beads to signify their royalty status. The result of the analysis shows a Nigerian Igbo woman fashion designer, in red beads and red headwrap (figure 9). While she may not have specifically worn the woolen red cap, her decision to adorn her head with red headwrap and accessorize with traditional Igbo beads suggests a resistance to these misogynistic structures. The designer is therefore challenging these systems within Igbo culture that only allowed men attain chieftaincy/royalty status. By choosing to adorn herself in these accessories, she is pushing back against cultural institutions that excluded women from attaining prestigious positions. In addition, men were granted rights to put on red caps based on their significant socio-economic contributions to Igboland. However, this tradition does not consider women's contributions as befitting to earn equal status within society. Nigerian Igbo fashion designers are

[6] Igbo men chiefs were titles given to men who were considered upstanding within Igbo community.

relying on Instagram's affordance of photos to challenge patriarchal structures within Igbo culture while simultaneously using the platform as a digital archive to save and document fashion pieces that communicate Igbo cultural meanings. Thus, this finding aligns with ATFT in the ways it spotlights African women technology users and centers their technology use for gender equity advocacy.

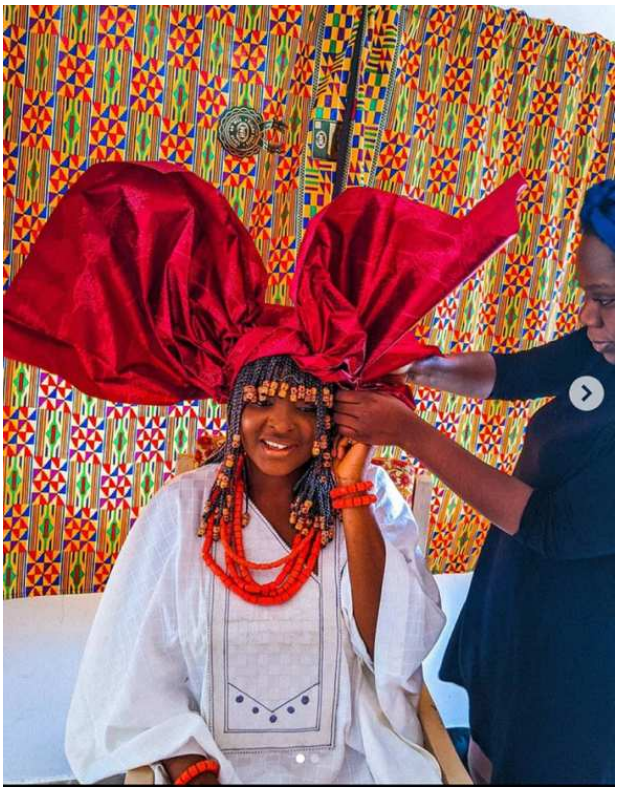

Figure 9. Photograph of a woman in white embroidered dress clothing with red headwrap and beads. Screenshot from one of the designers' pages

Fabric. The result showed that some common fabrics displayed on Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's pages were African print fabric (Ankara), lace fabric, *Isi-Agu* and *Nsibidi* fabrics (figure 10). Two fabrics unique to Igbo culture are *Isi-Agu* and *Nsibidi.* Historically, *Nsibidi* fabric are clothes that contain *Nsibidi* ideograms which are worn by members of the

Ekpe[7] secret society. They typically wore *Nsibidi* printed fabric which conveyed the sanctities and notability of the *Ekpe* secret society (Ajiginni, Okogwu & Oparaocha, 2020). Some common *Nsibidi* markings include animal symbols such as the leopard, crocodile, and python, all of which indicate social status symbols of wealth and patriarchal power. Historically, women were not allowed to wear *Nsibidi* fabric because the language was exclusive to men. However, Figure 10 shows a picture of a woman in a red dress with *Nsibidi* markings on the fabric screenshot from one of the designer's Instagram accounts.

Figure 10. Photo showing a woman in *Nsibidi* fabric. Screen shot from the designer's accounts.

[7] Ekpe is a men only secret society in Nigeria which exists mainly among Efik and Igbo people. Members of the Ekpe society are said to act as messengers of the ancestors. The society pays tribute to the village ancestors and members are bound by oath of secrecy. The secret society is currently still active but now plays traditional ceremonial roles.

The woman places one hand on her waist, while smiling confidently toward the camera. Behind her was a backdrop of green leaves and a few flowers which is also symbolic in Igbo culture. The designer's choice of red color (which symbolizes royalty and status), paired with *Nsibidi* fabric reveals a resistance to patriarchal structures that has excluded them from attaining positions of power within Igbo culture The green background is also representative of life or life-giving (green color in Igbo language is *ndu* which means life). The designer therefore asserts her right to participate men dominated traditions while choosing to embody a visual persona that is life-giving and uplifting to every member of the society.

Similar to *Nsibidi* fabric is *Isi-Agu* fabric which translates to leopard head. *Isi-Agu* are zoomorphic motifs on a soft velvet textured fabric with printed leopard/lion/tiger heads on them (Ajiginni, Okogwu & Oparaocha, 2020). In Igbo culture, a leopard is known for strength, courage, and boldness. This why *Isi-Agu* was typically gifted to warriors who had successfully combated and killed *Agu* (leopard/lion/tiger). Thus, *Isi-Agu* implies a hierarchy of privilege within Igbo culture and was typically worn by the elites. Pop culture and the media has however influenced the exclusivity of *Isi-Agu* and has opened access to regular folks who love the fabric. The extension of consumption of *Isi-Agu* fabric to the public has offered an emerging market for trendy fashion in the mainstream of Igbo lifestyle (Ajiginni, Okogwu & Oparaocha, 2020). Today, *Nsibidi* and *Isi-Agu* fabrics are reemerging within Igbo culture and is accessible to every member of the society including women. For example, on September 23, 2021, one of the designers shared a picture of a woman wearing a black blouse with *Isi-Agu* wrapper (figure 11). Typically, Igbo men wore *Isi-Agu* fabric as shirts and paired them with plain cotton trousers. In the picture, a woman is seen tying the *Isi-Agu* fabric around her waist. Igbo women (as well as

Nigerian women) are now wearing this fabric in diverse ways to not only symbolize resistance to these patriarchal structures but also assert their individual cultural expression.

Figure 11. Photo showing post from one of the designer's Instagram accounts showing a woman in *Isi-Agu* fabric. Screen shot from the designer's accounts.

The woman in the picture chose to tie the fabric around her waist, while some other women may choose to make it into a dress or combine the fabric with other fabrics to depict their diverse tastes and preferences. While there are still contestations on whether women are recognized as eligible to wear this fabric, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are using Instagram to assert their right to adorn themselves in fabrics that typically excluded them because of their gender. Just like the red woolen caps, they are therefore challenging these patriarchal structures and advocating to be included in prestigious positions that have historically been men dominated.

However, this resistance brings up safety concerns for the designers and the clients (who they showcased on Instagram) particularly for those who live and work in rural Igbo

communities. Rural communities typically enforce misogynistic structures and sanction people who default. I remember when I recently got married, I visited my rural community to meet other members of my husband's family. One morning, I decided to go out for a walk wearing jean trousers and my mother in-law (who is a community resident) told me I could get in trouble because women were not allowed to wear trousers in the village. She said there were financial sanctions that would be applied to family members who resided within the rural community. These sanctions differ from place to place and could span across financial sanctions to inflicting physical harm on women. While I recognize none of the designers who participated in this study resided in rural communities and may be exempt from these community sanctions, I know that sometimes, Igbo people who lived in the city typically traveled to their local communities at the end of the year to enjoy cultural festivities where these sanctions are typically enforced. The question becomes how these sanctions affects them when they are in their local communities and how they impact on their clients as well. Sometimes they may or may not be aware of the severity of the sanctions particularly if they don't travel to their local communities often. As Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on Instagram to challenge men-dominated structures by sharing pictures of themselves and their clients in these previously exclusive fabrics, they are bravely advocating for gender equity while influencing people's attitude towards Igbo cultural practices.

5.2 Critical Technocultural Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interview Data

To analyze the interview data, I relied on CTDA (Brock, 2012) to thematically analyze the interview transcripts. I did this by identifying themes within the text segments that reflects the research questions and relates to African technocultural feminist theory (Gibbs, 2007). The analysis of the data begins with a description of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' socio-

demographic information. Next, I present a CTDA analysis of the semi-structured interviews where I identified themes within the interview data that relates to the research questions and African Technocultural Feminist Theory. Specifically, I explain the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers present themselves on Instagram, how the platform facilitates the performance of their digital identities, and the role of cultural ideologies in self-expression and gender negotiation within Igbo culture. I also discuss how Instagram affordances facilitates the performance of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' digital identities, as well as identify the role of Igbo cultural ideologies in self-expression and gender negotiations.

5.2.1 Socio-Demographic Information of the Co-Researchers

The table below describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the semi-structured interview participants for this study. A total of 10 interviews were conducted and participant's age range from 25 to 33 years with the median age of 29 years (table 3). Regarding marital status, 6 designers were married, while 4 were single. A majority of the designers (4) were from Abia state while others were from Delta (2), Anambra (2), and Imo (1) states. All the designers were college graduates, with degrees in Environmental Science, Petroleum Engineering, Microbiology, English Language, Public Health, Economics, Political Science, and Medical Lab Science. It was interesting to observe none of the designers had a college degree in fashion design. Further exploration of the data to understand why and how they choose to become fashion designers, revealed three reasons. First, designers mentioned they had always been interested in fashion and pursued the interest part time while in school. Second, they decided pursue fashion design after they had experienced disappointment with other fashion designers they had hired in the past. Third, two fashion designers mentioned they had struggled with

securing employment in their field of study post-graduation and decided to pivot to fashion designing.

Table 3. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' demographic detail

Co-Researcher	Age	Marital Status	University Degree	Average Number of Clients	Average Monthly Income[8]	State of Origin
1	27	Single	Environmental Science	30	$80.00	Delta
2	29	Single	Petroleum Engineering	112	$500.00	Abia
3	30	Single	Microbiology	35	$100.00	Abia
4	27	Married	English Language	80	$200.00	Anambra
5	32	Married	Public Health	25	$200.00	Abia
6	29	Single	Economics	200	$400.00	Imo
7	33	Married	Political Science	30	$2,000.00	Anambra
8	33	Married	Medical laboratory Science	40	$150.00	Delta
9	25	Married	Microbiology	70	$300.00	Ebonyi
10	30	Married	Microbiology	70	$800.00	Abia

Thus, while none of them specifically attended business school or fashion design school, their college education afforded them the necessary skillset to launch and grow their businesses. Additionally, the designers reported an average monthly income (from their fashion design business) of $80.00 to $2,000.00 and had an average client base of 25 to 200 people (table 3). The two designers who earned the highest monthly income from their fashion design business ($2000 and $800) lived and worked in the US and UK respectively. The other eight designers earned in Nigerian naira, so I converted their monthly income to USD based on an exchange rate of $1 to N423.42. It is important to note that cost of living in Nigeria is, on average 56.60%

[8]Note: Average monthly income is an estimate of the fashion designer's monthly income from their fashion design business. It does not represent their overall household income.

lower than in the United States (Numbeo, 2022), so the money designers made monthly was sufficient to live on in Nigeria.

5.2.2 Presentation of the Self on Instagram

People engage in selective self-presentation by highlighting certain aspects of themselves and downplaying others. Central to self-presentation is the notion of imagined audiences. Social media users heavily weigh the perceptions of their audiences when creating content online (Hollenbaugh, 2021). This was also true for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers as the results showed that their self-presentation on Instagram was regulated by the impression they wanted their audiences to have about their brands. The analysis revealed three themes typical with Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation on Instagram: visual aesthetics, authenticity, and relatability.

Visual Aesthetics: Visual aesthetics refers to the pictorial attractiveness that communicates a clear and unique image or pleasing appearance of an image or object (Lavie & Tractinsky, 2004). Previous research has highlighted the importance of visual aesthetics in Instagram marketing as it boosts audience engagement and interaction with content (Kusumasondjaja, 2019). All the designers mentioned they used their mobile phones to capture almost all the photos they uploaded to their profile and emphasized the importance of posting high-quality photos on their pages. A few indicated they hired professional photographers on occasion but most of the photos they shared were shot on their mobile phones. Some photographic qualities they highlighted include clarity, good background, proper lighting, and

appealing color coordination. For example, Nneka[9] and Ann describe what makes a photo Instagram worthy.

> *"First of all, the quality of the picture… it has to be really clear… good background. The client has to use a good phone camera…. When the background is good, it speaks well of the design. You know, good background, good lighting, good picture quality, and I think we're good to go."*

> *"…The picture quality matters a lot in terms of the background, the lighting…they have to actually work together because the background if fine and equally lighted then you have a good quality of the picture that you want, so the background and the lighting are what basically has to be good…"*

Several designers also highlighted the importance of the photo taken with the right angle. Cynthia who has taken several photography lessons mentions she educates her clients on the best angles with which to take cellphone photos when she asks them to send her a photo of themselves in her designs.

> *"There's a way you could turn your phone to take pictures…Make sure that the leg room is actually a closer range than the upper part, then it gives you a bold perspective of the picture. It's always better to show the upper part of the picture than the lower part so it gives you that angle…"*

The designers also mentioned they used photo editing software to enhance pictures they took on their phones. Photo editing software was also used to enhance the poor-quality photos which their clients shared with them. The goal was to make sure the photos met the designer's standard for quality photos, and by posting the edited pictures on their page, their clients felt like they were part of the fashion brand. Some frequently used photo enhancing tools highlighted from the interviews include Instagram photo editor, light room, beauty plus apps, filters, and presets. It is important to note that designers were mindful about getting consent from their clients before posting their pictures on Instagram.

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[9] Nneka and other participant's names are pseudonyms.

> *"I…work on the pictures to make it Instagram worthy. I use lightroom App for my personal page. I use preset then I work on the color, the light, the upticks, the effects, whatever it might be. I took up a course on photography a little so I will be able to create better content and better pictures for my Instagram…"*

> *"…There are lighting features on Instagram …sometimes if I take a picture and its dark…I need to make it brighter. I will then use the edit features on Instagram to edit it - add some brightness to it, add some contrast to it, sometimes if the color does not come out well, I will add a bit of saturation…"*

> *"…I have clients that send me pictures…the quality of the picture might not be great … they might not understand these things…it means I have rework it. Sometimes even when I rework it, it's not as great as I want it to be, but I will post them anyways because I want to showcase the design … I will find a way to fine tune it even though it's not as perfect in my eyes and then I will still post. Then posting them and tagging them gives them the feelings that they belong to the fashion family…"*

This finding therefore reveals Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are hyper conscious of their self-presentation on Instagram. Their intentional sharing of quality photos reveal visual aesthetics are a crucial part of their self-promotional technique on Instagram. They are hyper-aware of how they present themselves online as well as how their clients display their work. This finding therefore contributes to ATFT as it contextualizes African women's self-promotional strategies on Instagram. Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are active agents in their creation of social media content (Vokes & Newbury, 2018). By posting visually appealing photos on their pages, they embody a compelling performance of self-confident and modern African identities (Lamuniere, 2001) which contrasts against European colonial and stereotyped imagery of African people.

Authenticity. Authenticity is a concept used to evaluate the realness and originality of objects and individuals. Authenticity does not exist objectively but focuses on the relational aspect of social negotiations. With increasing commercialization, "authenticity has become the core narrative to overcome the mere perception of profit-orientation across all fields of cultural production" (Maares, Banjac, & Hanusch, 2021). On social media platforms like Instagram,

authenticity is a constant negotiation of a person's sense of sincerity, and a display of their hidden inner self (Maares, Banjac, & Hanusch, 2021). Management of an authentic persona does not only involve impressing positivity on audiences but exposing imperfections and vulnerability (Berryman, R., & Kavka, M. (2018). The result of the semi structured interview revealed Nigerian Igbo women fashion embodied authenticity in their self-presentation Instagram. When asked how they would describe their accounts, Chima replied:

> *"…I think in one word its real… it's not fake… it's what you see is what you get… it's not all over the place and is easy to interpret what am doing or what am selling…"*

Her use of words like "real" and "what you see is what you get" reveals she embodied perceived authenticity in her interaction with Instagram audiences. Her response suggests she typically post pictures of her work showcasing her talents and skillsets thereby performing expertise. Another designer (Nancy, 24) mentioned she had made mistakes starting out and decided to share content journaling her experiences while showcasing what it means to be a fashion designer in Nigeria.

> *"…I realize that starting up I made a lot of mistakes and I… saw people making the same mistake that I made… I just wanted to share my work, share my experience, and share what I know basically. … I show my life through my work…I just want when people see my work, they should know what it's like living in Nigeria like doing the kind of work that I do while living in Nigeria …"*

This suggests Nancy shares posts that tells a story of her experiences, including her mistakes and successes. In doing so, she presents a persona of transparency while aiming to drive-up authenticity. Another designer mentioned her connection to Igbo culture helps build credibility and authenticity especially when her clients request Igbo-centric designs.

> *"…I have so many Igbo customers, matured women…. right now, I have 4 orders for Igbo blouses, you know Igbo women when it comes to blouses, they want an Igbo person to make it for them, they just have that trust [in an Igbo designer] ..."*

Here, the designer describes how her connection to Igbo culture allows her clients perceive her as authentic particularly because she is assumed to be well versed and experienced in making

Igbo-centric designs. This finding contributes to ATFT theoretical framework as it provides evidence Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers embody authenticity as they present themselves in digital spaces. By providing personal and sometimes uncomfortable information, Instagram therefore allows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers exemplify transparency in their self-presentation online. Additionally, their authenticity persona is connected to their Igbo cultural roots which also aligns with ATFT as it shows the ways Igbo culture influences African technology users' self-presentation online.

Relatability. The designers emphasized the importance of creating content that their followers could easily connect with. To do this, they would share photos of themselves on their accounts to let their audience know they were human beings who most likely shared similar experiences as they did. Judith mentioned she recognized she didn't have a perfect body so one of the ways she promotes body positivity and inclusion is by sharing pictures of herself in her designs.

> *"I post my pictures once in a while actually because… when people don't see your face, it's actually hard to relate with whatever content you're putting up which is why we see that people that make videos create content a lot and show themselves…"*
>
> *"I post some personal [pictures]because I like to interact with an Instagram page that have some personal content … I want to believe I'm dealing with a human and not a robot… I try to post…myself because I don't believe I have the perfect body, so I want you to see that no matter how imperfect your body is, there's a style for you..."*

With increasing commercialization, studies show authenticity and relatability have become the core narrative to overcome the perception of a mere profit-orientation across all fields of businesses. Thus, navigating the fine lines of commodifying oneself as object while staying true one's true self becomes a challenging task for most business owners (Maares, Banjac, & Hanusch, 2021). Nigerian designers navigate these fine lines by embodying cultural relatability.

Specifically, by posting pictures of themselves in their customized Igbo-centric designs, the designers demonstrate an intentionality towards connecting with their Nigerian clientele particularly as they recognize they are in competition with international brands and other popular clothing from outside Nigeria. This finding contributes to ATFT scholarship as it shows Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on cultural relatability as a marketing strategy to show how their clients can stand out from generic designs that are mass marketed. The findings also suggest Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers recognize the importance of building and maintaining professional relationships with their clients. This result presents a contextualization of the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers rely on Instagram and its affordances to communicate authenticity, visual aesthetics, and relatability in order to drive up audience attention and engagement. They aim to build trust and confidence in their fashion design expertise by posting quality photographs while striving to maintain their online connections by creating an authentic and relatable persona on Instagram.

5.2.3 Platform Affordances and the Mediated Environment

Different technological platforms possess diverse features which informs the ways their users approach and utilize them for multiple purposes. Extensive research has been done to show the moderating effects of social media platforms and self-presentation (Arthur, 2022; Hollenbaugh, 2021; Scolere, 2019; Humphrey, 2017; Papacharissi, 2002). Instagram therefore presents a mediated environment for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to perform their digital identities. The results from the semi structured interview identified three Instagram tools that facilitated Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation on Instagram: hashtags, reels, and direct messaging.

Hashtags. A hashtag is a label used on Instagram that makes it easier to find information with a theme or specific content. A hashtag is created when a user adds any text after the # symbol without inserting space. All the designers mentioned they included hashtags in their posts for a wider reach, and to boost visibility. Some designers mentioned hashtags helped them keep up with fashion trends and sometimes, they would google viral hashtags within in the Nigerian fashion industry. Others mentioned they typically create their own hashtags organically, based on the fabric, design style and their location.

> *"I use hashtags based on what I have made. For example, if I have made a jumpsuit then definitely there will be jumpsuit in my hashtag. Then, I also use hashtags based on my location. So, I put my location there because sometimes I found out that most people that look for me, the hashtag they use has to do with location because somebody can probably say ok I live in Johnson and someone will probably say tailors in Johnson or fashion designer in Johnson and people who hashtag will pop up in those…I use hashtags based on the reach am targeting. I use hashtags based on what I have designed so if it's a concept I have made, I will put a concept hashtag. If it's a dress I have made, a ready to wear outfit or if its custom-made outfit I will put custom made there, something like that..."*

> *"First of all, I use hashtag in relation to the industry that's fashion then in relation to the fabrics then in relation to the style like if its fashion I start with fashion then if it's an Ankara [African print] based, I use Ankara then if is a short gown I start with Ankara short gown like that… if there is a bead, I just build up with it too."*

Reels. Instagram reels are immersive 60 second videos that allows Nigerian Igbo women designers creatively express their brand designs and helps them get discovered by people who are interested in fashion. Majority of the designers (7) mentioned they frequently used Instagram reels because it gives them visibility as well as an opportunity to gauge reach. Specifically with Instagram posts, a person cannot effectively evaluate reach except through likes and comments. Stories would let you know how many people see your content, but its ephemeral affordance ensures the content disappears after 24 hours. Reels on the other hand tracks views and does not disappear unless the owner of the account intentionally deletes it.

> *"…Reels are a very good way to reach a vast number of people. Most times when I post videos… I use reels because… it might not do a number at the time you're posting it or even the next day after you posted but just give it like two week or three weeks then you will be amazed by the number of views and the number of followers you will get from that particular video…"*

> *"Recently I found reels to be a very good resource. I discovered that people… tend to see my work more on reels than they see it on the post … especially when you add all the extra features like the music and all that and then people tend to view my post more when I put it on reels than even when I post."*

Direct messaging. Instagram's direct messaging affordance allows the designers send and receive messages to one or more people. These messages could be in the form of text, photos, or videos. Also, Instagram's direct messaging tool allows people send posts they see on their Instagram field to the designers which makes it easy for the designer to know the specific design their clients are referencing. All the designers emphasized the importance of the direct messaging tool on the Instagram particularly in the ways it facilitates conversations with clients from around the world.

> *"…Some people will just generally come to your DM from all over to ask questions or to see if they can get something like what I have posted. I feel like on Instagram, most people just come straight to your DM. They might not like or comment or anything they will just come to your DM to ask questions."*

This result therefore provides evidence that African people use Instagram and its affordances for marketing and self-branding. This finding aligns with ATFT as it also presents evidence of the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers push back against existing negative stereotypes of African people, particularly about technological use and advancements. For example, scholarship on media portrayals of Africa argues it is fraught with gross generalizations and negative stereotypical representations of Africa and African people (Zeph-Ojiako, & Anakwuba, 2019; Adegbola, Skarda-Mitchell, & Gearhart, 2018; Schraeder, & Endless, 1998). Many news depictions paint a dark jungle-like portrait of the continent, ravaged with starvation, poverty, disease, and corruption (Gabore, 2020; Poncian, 2015). Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers

are therefore joining other decolonial media users who use Instagram's affordances, to share balanced representations about African people (Arthur, 2022).

5.2.4 The Role of Cultural Ideologies in Self-Expression and Gender Negotiations

Two key aspects of Igbo cultural practices are reflected in Igbo-centric fashion and gender dynamics within culture. Igbo fabrics play a huge role in defining Igbo history and culture and are used for multiple functions including weddings, ritual occasions, burial, masquerading etc. Also, the ways men and women interact within Igbo culture has experienced some significant changes pre and post colonization. Before British colonization, Igbo people practiced a dual-sex symmetrical system where community members were valued for their social responsibilities. The flexibility in the negotiation of gender roles advocated for success of both men and women within Igbo culture. Due to men-dominated western ideologies imposed on Igbo people by British colonizers, Igbo women were stripped of their sociopolitical and economic power (Chuku, 2015). Today, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers experience gender inequities within Igbo culture with continues to impact on their upward mobility in the business world. The results of the analysis identified two themes related to cultural ideology: gender inequity within Igbo culture and Igbo-centric fabrics.

Gender inequity within Igbo Culture. The result revealed none of the designers experienced gender inequalities within the Nigerian fashion industry. All the designers maintained the fashion industry didn't discriminate against gender and a designer's creativity was what set them apart from others. When asked about her experience of gender inequity within the fashion industry, Susan a 33-year-old designer mentions.

> *"The fashion world is all about creativity. So, your strength is your creativity. We don't talk about gender here to a great extent…. Nobody cares what gender you really are. I think the deal is, are you creative? That's the selling point, that's the strength…."*

While the designers mentioned they didn't experience gender inequality within the fashion industry, they however described their experiences of gender inequity within Igbo culture. They highlighted how they were socialized from childhood into believing women were inferior to men.

> *"While growing up as kids, they make you know that this is a man, he has more power than you… they will even make it obvious that the man is more superior to the woman."*

> *"Things like okay like ATM queue, you know, when you have been on the line, you know, and then, maybe a man walks in and wants to come in your place, when you have been on the line, and then, maybe you now shout back and like, why would you come to displace me, next thing you'll will hear one insensitive person on the queue trying to tell you why will you talk to a man like that. Don't you have a husband at home? Is that how you talk to your husband. And I'm like really."*

Some designers described specific experiences of gender inequities within professional spaces where they were passed up for opportunities because they were women.

> *"… We went for a competition, and I came second place joyfully but one the judges just came up and said they were 3 of them so two of them said they weren't going to allow a woman to win a man. It was just a business speech competition, but I was speaking for fashion though, he said he wanted to let me know…"*

> *"… I remember there was a job I bided for with some other people. I didn't get that job and the reason was they felt I'm a woman. Part of the question they were asking was [before they gave out that particular contract] was… are you married? how many children do you have? Maybe they felt you always have interruption that you won't deliver on time so they, so they gave the job out to a male…"*

Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers also described their experiences of real estate discrimination when they wanted to rent or purchase a place for their residence or business. Specifically, they mentioned most landlords held underlying notions about their financial inability to maintain annual rental payment, particularly when they were unmarried.

> "*If you want to get a house or you want to rent a house over here and you're a woman they will look at you like you can't afford to pay for it or even if you pay for it now, they will assume you won't afford the next year's rent…"*

> *"…I have a sister that is not yet married but she had to go with somebody to fake being her husband so that she can get a place…"*

Additionally, some married designers highlighted how they had trouble navigating registering their businesses themselves and only received approval after their husbands intervened.

> *"When I wanted to rent a shop and I went by myself…the man was saucy and rude until I asked my husband to handle it. He handled it at the end of the day… I think another business I started during 2020, I needed NAFDAC registration for it. They really made it hard for me until my husband got involved…. I think in business it's also they rather deal directly with the men than we the women."*

Finally, most married Igbo women fashion designers are overburdened with the labor of running a business and being the sole caretakers of their children. This result supports Orebiyi's (2002) argument that unequal gender relations still persist between spouses in Nigerian societies. Due to gender socializations in many Nigerian societies including Igbo culture, women are taught to accept housework and childcare as feminine duties regardless of whether she is engaged in full-time employment in the formal sector. Thus, men directly benefited from the unpaid domestic services of women, leaving women overburdened and exhausted.

> *"When it comes to roles, I think mostly women seem to be overburdened. … If you want to be a businesswoman you must figure out how to manage with taking care of the home and running your business, but you have to make sure that your family doesn't suffer like they are your priority that's what I feel. But for the male I think their job is mostly is just to make sure they provide for the family that's how society made it is just recently that few people like they are coming to realize that okay the male is supposed to help out but the way I was raised my brothers they were like their job was just sit and be served and the girls were supposed to clean up and do all that but that's changing."*

Igbo-centric Fabrics. Almost all the fashion designers (80%) mentioned their designs were influenced by Igbo culture. This was specifically reflected in the type of fabric used for their designs. Some popular Igbo-centric fabric that was came up during the interviews were Igbo Georges, and *Nsibidi* fabric. Igbo fashion designs are typically displayed at Igbo traditional weddings where the couple and their wedding party dress up in Igbo cultural designs.

> *"… there are fabrics that just look like, Igbo, we call them Igbo wrapper. So, some of these are Georges they used for weddings…"*

> *"… I make dresses for brides and most brides use the dress for their traditional wedding, most of them are Igbo. this is how I …bring in my own Igbo culture into it. It works when designing traditional dresses for the bride."*

Nigerian Igbo women designers would typically get hired to make all the outfits and some designers mentioned being Igbo gives them the credibility of cultural familiarity. This makes it possible for their clients to trust them with their wedding outfits.

> *"…I have so many Igbo customers, matured… Igbo women too. When it comes to blouses, they want an Igbo person to do it for them, they just have that trust…"*

Igbo Georges are embroidered fabric renowned for being soft and comfortable to wear. They have a regal and celebratory appearance and have historically been used among Igbo noble and royal families. Today, Igbo Georges are one of the most popular fabrics for weddings. *Nsibidi* fabric on the other hand, are textiles which have *Nsibidi* iconographic writings on them and is gaining popularity among Igbo people. These writings are a unique ideography created in the Southeastern part of Nigeria and have existed since the 5th century. One of the designers shares how she came across this fabric designed with historical inscriptions.

Figure 12. Photograph of a bride in George fabric. Screen shot from one of the designer's Instagram pages.

> *"…I think two years ago or last year this tribal thing started trending and then I'm very inquisitive…so I take a picture of the fabrics. I use a goggle picture it has this thing of when you take a picture, they ask you if you want to take the picture to search or something on goggle … I just searched for the image and started seeing the Nsibidi writing Igbo language that's what our ancestors used in communicating so I checked it and I saw that some of the fabrics is saying something like hello, how are you..."*

One tenet of ATFT is African feminism which calls for hyper specificity and in-depth explication of the African cultural practice being studied. African feminism also advocates for centering the complexities African women's experiences within culture. This finding presents evidence that Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers experience gender inequities within their homes and businesses. These disparities typically begin from childhood and continues to adult professional spheres. Most of the disparities identified are rooted in patriarchal ideologies which keep Nigerian women subjugated.

5.3 Reanalysis of Instagram Posts and Semi-Structure Interviews

Relying on ATFT and CTDA frameworks, the result of reanalysis the Instagram posts and interview data identified three overlapping themes and unique findings across all the datasets: reclaiming *Nsibidi* ideography, hesitancy to address gender equity on Instagram, and salient impact of gender inequality on Nigerian Igbo women entrepreneurs.

5.3.1 Reclaiming Nsibidi Ideography

As I mentioned earlier, *Nsibidi* is a photo-writing script which was developed in what is now the Southeastern part of Nigeria, specifically among the Ejagham people in Northern Cross River State (Macgregor, 1909). *Nsibid*i spread throughout the region and was adopted by other cultures such as Igbo people. *Nsibidi* was first described when terracotta vessels, headrests, and anthropomorphic figurines from Calabar region dated to around the 4th century revealed ideography comparable to *Nsibidi.* There are several hundred *Nsibidi* symbols that were once taught in schools prior to colonization. Many of the signs are about love affairs while those that deal with warfare and the sacred were kept secret. In fact, a vast majority of the writings were only known by the Ekpe and *Nsibidi* secret society, into which men were regularly initiated into after a period of preparation (Macgregor, 1909). Aspects of colonial rule such as western education and Christianity reduced the number of *Nsibidi*-literate people, leaving the secret society members as some of the last literate in the symbols.

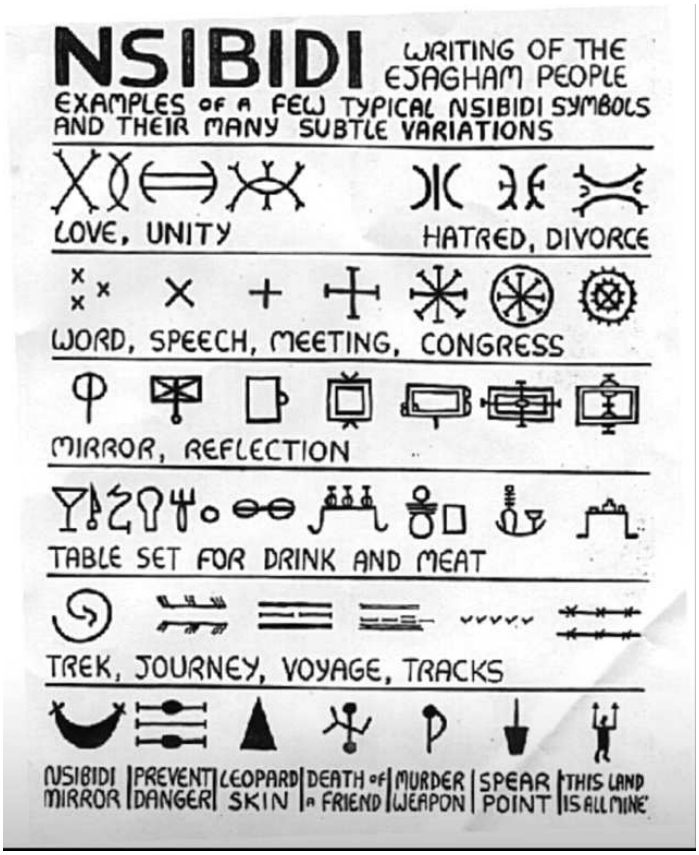

Figure 13. Photograph showing Nsibidi markings and interpretations. Retrieved from https://guardian.ng/life/a-look-at-nsibidi-the-long-lost-african-writing/

Currently, *Nsibidi* is reemerging on the world stage, specifically within pop culture and the Nigerian fashion industry. *Nsibidi* was one of the two written languages used across the Black Panther movie (figure 17) as a way to reclaim the lost language (Desowitz, 2018). *Nsibidi* also plays a central role in the *Nsibidi* series of fantasy novels by Nigerian Afrofuturistic fictional author (Okorafor, 2020). Within the Nigerian fashion industry, *Nsibid*i is also gaining popularity and momentum as more people are beginning to show interest in the long-lost ideography.

Figure 14. Marvel Studios' Black Panther Nakia played by Lupita Nyong'o photographed with Nsibidi inscriptions on the wall. Shot by Matt Kennedy for Marvel Studios 2018.

The reanalysis of the data provided more context on how *Nsibidi* is resurfacing within the Nigerian fashion industry. For example, the designer who wore the fabric on her Instagram post mentioned how people would prefer to purchase *Nsibidi* fabric over other regular African prints despite the face *Nsibidi* cost almost twice as much as regular African print fabric.

> *"…I mean these fabrics are wildly accepted. If you go to the market, the regular Ankara is about four thousand naira [$6.55] or five thousand [$8.10] these ones are like nine thousand naira [$14.75], and they are selling like everybody is just buying it…"*

The fashion industry is ultimately creating space for the reimagining of *Nsibidi* ideography while publicizing this secret language (that was once exclusive to men) to everyone within Igbo culture. This finding therefore aligns with ATFT as it provides evidence that Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are resisting patriarchal structures within Igbo culture as they showcase women in fabrics that historically excluded them. Moreover, reclaiming *Nsibidi* pays homage to indigenous Igbo cultures and dismantles western perception of Africa as a savage nation in need of European intervention.

5.3.2 Hesitancy to Challenge Gender Inequity on Instagram

While the results of designers Instagram posts and contents revealed they pushed back against patriarchy within Igbo culture, the result of the interviews showed they did this indirectly through fabric, color and prints, but were hesitant to name and address oppressive structures online. For example, although the designers shared pictures of women in fabrics which had historically excluded women in Igbo culture, Nigerian Igbo wo men fashion designers were reluctant to share their experiences of gender discrimination on their Instagram platforms. Their concerns are valid because designers who choose to push back against patriarchal structures within their fashion events have typically received unwelcome responses. For example, on the 17th of February 2021, @nkwo_offical, a Nigerian Igbo woman fashion designer had her women models wear the red woolen caps for the Arise fashion week (figure 13).

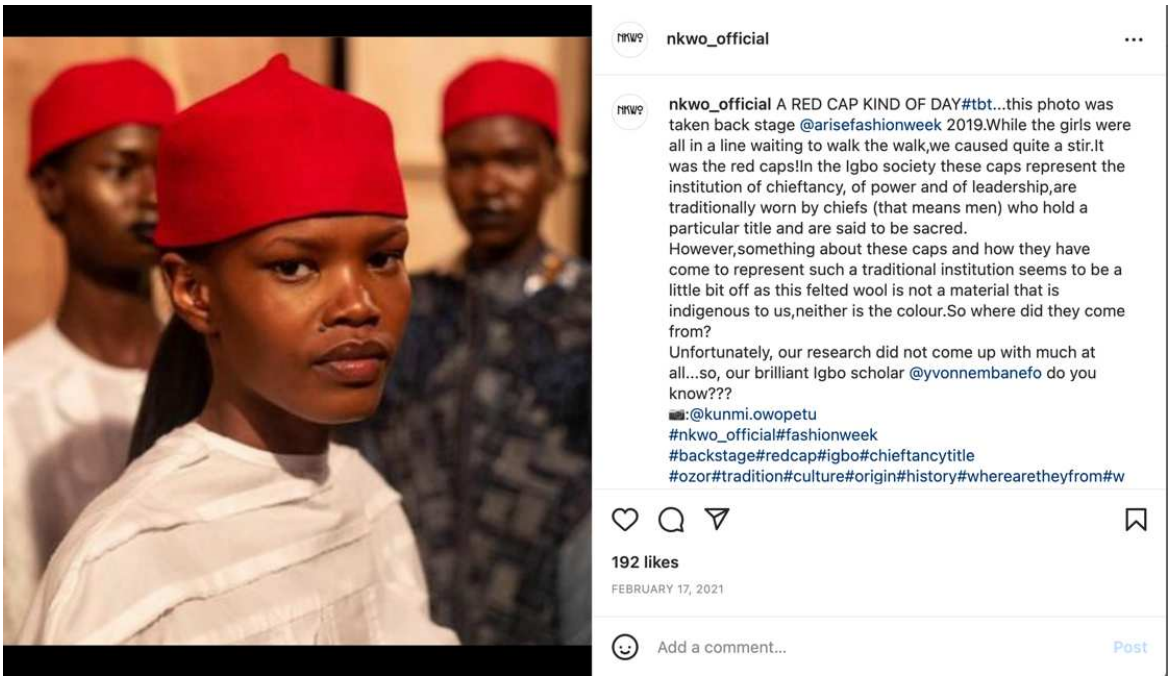

Figure 15. Photograph of women in woolen red cap. Screen shot from Nkwo Onwuka's Instagram page

In the post, Nkwo mentioned they had gotten 'quite a stir' as a result. The 'stir' Nkwo mentions indicates people were uncomfortable and possibly challenged her decision to have the women

models wear the red woolen caps that were considered sacred and exclusive to men. The history of the red cap is rooted in misogyny and the designer chose to challenge the Igbo cultural institution through fashion. However, Nkwo is a popular designer and can afford to challenge the patriarchal institutions in those kinds of ways. Some up and coming designers (like the co-researchers in this study) may be hesitant to take on this approach, particularly on Instagram as they are concerned about receiving backlash online, and worse, their business being impacted by their online advocacy. A reexamination of all 10 designers Instagram content and the interview transcripts revealed the designers were concerned about cyber-attacks when they advocated for women's rights on her Instagram pages. Though they felt safe to discuss these issues among their family members, they expressed concerns over discussing them online because Instagram was not considered a safe space to do this.

> *"… you know one thing with addressing inequality we all know what's going on but sometimes we just want to pass those post when we see them. There are some posts I will see, and I will type and after typing I will just delete it. That's because you just have to be prepared because when you post people will come for you, they will come and insult you or bully you …"*

> *"… a person was vindicated, a man, for sexually assaulting a lady. And they were like, it's because of her dress. Why would you put all the blame on the woman? … It should be the man for not being able to control themselves. Yes, we have had cases where people are covered up very well and you still see them sexually harassed. So, those are the kind of things that maybe I get to talk about with people at home, my brothers, and sisters at home. But, you know, coming out to social media to address it, sometimes I feel, I might not have, enough backings, you know, there's a lot of attack on social media, you know, negativity and, all of that. So, I don't think it's something I'm ready to experience yet, because it might knock me off my feet..."*

While Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers indirectly challenge patriarchal structures within their Instagram content, they however, are reluctant to specifically call out oppressive systems that impact women and other underrepresented identities within Igbo culture. Although none of the designers have personally experienced cyber-attacks from online activism, their concerns are however valid.

Sobieraj (2018) describes three strategies aggressors employ to silence women or limit their impact in digital publics – intimidating, shaming, and discrediting. With intimidation, attackers often draw upon women's fear of rape and physical violence. Public shaming attempts regularly exploit double standards about women's sexual behavior and physical appearance to taint targets. Discrediting tactics are rooted in sexist stereotypes that aim to devalue the ideas and contributions of women online. Moreover, Gardner (1995) mentions that fear of online harassment prevents women use of online platforms for activism. Even when no harassment transpires, "the fear it might occur diminishes their comfort and freedom, acting as a form of oppression even in absentia." Thus, Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers fear that when they use their Instagram pages to advocate against gender inequities within Igbo culture, they would become vulnerable to cyber-attacks which would aim towards discrediting their experiences and ultimately negatively impact on their business. This finding also aligns with ATFT's tenet - African feminism – as it highlights the risk Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers are exposed to when they intentionally create Instagram posts that tries to push back against patriarchal structures. This risk could begin with cyber bullying and culminate in negatively impacting their source of livelihood. However, I'm curious about the ways Instagram's affordance of direct messaging could be used as a tool for digital activism. I wonder if the designers could create chat groups where only people they trusted would be invited to engage in conversation about gender inequities within Igbo culture. While this creates a safe space for digital activism and community building, such information may never be accessible to key instigators of oppressive systems against women since the information would be limited to folks who have been invited to join the group chat. Nevertheless, Instagram's affordance of direct messaging provides privacy/safety from cyber bullying which could form a starting point for gender equity

congregation/advocacy on Instagram. The groups could adopt a quiet subversion approach which could be part of an empowering process. Participants would be granted confidentiality as they share their experiences. The group could also be a space to share tips on navigating gender issues including strategies/solutions focused on women renting work spaces and successful business registration, childcare support/resources, and other educational tools for individual and collective upliftment.

5.3.3 Salient Impact of Gender Inequity on Nigerian Businesswomen

While the interview data showed Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers didn't experience gender inequity within the fashion industry, a reanalysis of the overall data showed their experiences of gender inequity within Igbo culture impacted their entrepreneurial experiences which ultimately affects their businesses. Some designers mentioned they experienced barriers while navigating certain business-related processes such as licensing and registration and property rental etc. because they were women. Some who were married alluded the process seemed easier the moment their men partners intervened. Women's difficulties in navigating business-related activities independently, particularly when they are unmarried, affects their productivity which in turn negatively impacts on their economic empowerment. Concerning barriers to renting business spaces, some reasons highlighted for refusal are steeped in patriarchal cultural and religious beliefs that encourage men to control women's activities. For example, the designers mentioned most landlords refuse to rent spaces to unmarried women based on the underlying presumption of promiscuity and inability to maintain rental payment. This of course is a double standard as promiscuous men renters are not typically held to the same moral standard. This notation is steeped in patriarchal culture which Walby (1989) describes as "diverse institution-rooted patriarchal practices that distinguish masculinity from femininity".

These "different aspects of culture particularly promote, entrench and reinforce separation of acceptable conducts for men and women" (Ntoimo & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2014). Thus, women's experiences of discrimination when renting spaces causes a segregation and exclusion of women within the fashion design industry which ultimately negatively impacts their financial wellbeing.

5.4 Summary

The goal of the study was to understand Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation on Instagram. This study also sought to uncover the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers negotiate gender dynamics within Igbo culture. The results were presented in three phases; **Phase 1** (CTDA of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram accounts and content) and **Phase 2** (CTDA of semi-structured interview of each of the designers), and **Phase 3** (a reanalysis of the overall data that incorporates themes from the interview transcripts and Instagram posts using CTDA and ATFT framework).

For **Phase 1**, the analysis of Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram profiles and content showed they employed self-promotion and cultural digitization of Igbo-centric fashion in their self-presentation on Instagram. The words they used to describe their brands on their bios communicate expertise and proficiency in the fashion design business. Instagram's affordance of photos allowed them post quality pictures which showcased the intricacies of their designs as well as facilitated the designers' cultural digitalization of Igbo-centric fashion while creating space for them to challenge patriarchal structures within Igbo culture. Specifically, as Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer employ self-promotional tactics and share pictures of women in *Nsibidi* and *Isi-Agu* fabrics, they are ultimately challenging men-dominated structures and advocating for gender equity while influencing people's attitude towards Igbo cultural practices.

For **Phase 2**, the result of the CTDA of the semi-structured interviews showed that Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers value the importance of building and maintaining professional relationships with their clients. Thus, they employ visual aesthetics in their self-presentation, while embodying relatability and authenticity online. Instagram's hashtags, reels and direct messaging affordances presented a mediated environment for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to perform their digital identities. Also, Igbo culture played a significant role in Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation and fashion design experience as majority mentioned their designs are influenced by Igbo-centric fabrics and that they experienced gender inequity both at home and within professional spaces.

Phase 3 identified overlapping and unique findings across all the datasets. First, the reanalysis of the data provided more context on the linguistic significance of *Nsibidi* resurfacing within the Nigerian fashion industry. With the increasing popularity of *Nsibidi* fabric, Nigerian Igbo fashion designers are ultimately publicizing the long-lost secret language to every one within Igbo culture, thereby resisting patriarchal structures that initially excluded women from the language. Second, the result uncovered Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's hesitancy to challenge gender inequity. Despite the fact Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers indirectly challenge patriarchal structures within their Instagram content, they however are afraid to specifically call out oppressive systems that impact women and other underrepresented identities within Igbo culture. The designers cite concerns for cyber bullying as the primary reason driving their hesitancy to confront gender inequity on Instagram. This however has a salient indirect impact on their businesses, which is the third unique finding from the reanalysis. While the interview data showed that Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers didn't experience gender inequity within the fashion industry, a reanalysis of the overall data showed their experiences of

gender inequity within Igbo culture impacted their entrepreneurial experiences which ultimately affects their businesses. The next chapter presents a summary of the study, identifies limitations, and presents potential areas for future studies.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

This study was inspired by post positivist inquiry about how Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use new media technology platforms and their affordances to perform their identities online. Through the lens of African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT), this research uncovered the ways Instagram facilitates Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers' self-presentation in digital spaces while they negotiate gender dynamics within Igbo culture. I presented African Technocultural Feminist Theory, a new theoretical framework which considers the intersection between technology and African cultural practices in its explication of the ways African technology users utilize technological platforms as a conduit for multiple uses, while prioritizing historically underrepresented and marginalized identities. ATFT calls for addressing the complexities of African women's experiences, particularly in the ways they manipulate new media technologies for gender equity advocacy while simultaneously creating community, building networks, and showcasing Africa's diverse cultural systems. I also drew from several foundational frameworks to set up this study, online persona studies, Goffman's demagogical self-presentation scholarship, and technology affordance literature. However, this study Africanizes these foundational frameworks by showing how African cultural systems influences persona in digital spaces.

The results from the study revealed Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's Instagram profiles and content showed they employed self-promotion and cultural digitization of Igbo-centric fashion in their self-presentation online. Instagram's affordance of photos allowed them post quality pictures which showcased the intricacies of their designs as well as facilitated the designers' cultural digitalization of Igbo-centric fashion while creating space for them to

challenge patriarchal structures within Igbo culture. Specifically, as Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers share pictures of women in *Nsibidi* and *Isi-Agu* fabrics, they are ultimately challenging men-dominated structures while influencing people's attitude towards Igbo cultural practices. However, this resistance brings up salient safety concerns for the designers and the women showcased on Instagram. Because fabrics like *Nsibidi* were once exclusive to a men secret cult, there may be sanctions and safety concerns for women who showcase them on Instagram. These sanctions may be higher for women who reside in rural communities where misogynic structures are enforced. The result of the CTDA of the semi-structured interviews further revealed Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers value the importance of building and maintaining professional relationships with their clients. They embodied visual aesthetics, relatability and authenticity in their self-presentation online. Instagram's hashtags, reels and direct messaging affordances presented a mediated environment for Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers to perform their digital identities. Also, Igbo culture played a significant role in Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's self-presentation and fashion design experience as majority mentioned their designs are influenced by Igbo-centric fabrics and that they experienced gender inequity both at home and within professional spaces. Finally, the results provided more context on the linguistic significance of *Nsibidi* resurfacing within the Nigerian fashion industry. With the increasing popularity of *Nsibid*i fabric, Nigerian Igbo fashion designers are ultimately publicizing the long-lost secret language to every one within Igbo culture, thereby resisting patriarchal structures that initially excluded women from the language. Additionally, the result uncovered Nigerian Igbo women fashion designer's hesitancy to address gender inequity. Despite the fact Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers indirectly challenge patriarchal structures within their Instagram content, they are reluctant to specifically call out oppressive

systems that impact women and other underrepresented identities within Igbo culture. The designers cite concerns about cyber bullying as the primary reason driving their hesitancy to confront gender inequity on Instagram. This however has a salient indirect impact on their businesses as gender inequity within Igbo culture negatively impacts on their entrepreneurial experiences which ultimately affects their businesses.

This study is relevant for two reasons. First, African cultural systems were accounted for, and African women's negotiation of gender power relations was brought to the fore front of technological discourse. While there is a plethora of literature on self-presentation on social media, there is insufficient literature on African women's self-presentation, specifically using a feminist lens. Studying Nigerian women's identities on Instagram answered the call to study African women's digital identities through a feminist perspective as it examined the relationship between gender display and self-presentation while considering overlapping power structures that impact women's self-representational choices on social media (Butkowski et al, 2020). Second, this study pushed back against existing negative stereotypes of African people, particularly about gender negotiation, technology use and advancements. Scholarship on media portrayals of Africa argues it is fraught with gross generalizations and negative stereotypical representations of Africa and African people (Favour Zeph-Ojiako, & Blessing Anakwuba, 2019; Oluseyi Adegbola, Jacqueline Skarda-Mitchell, & Gearhart, 2018; Peter Schraeder & Brian Endless, 1998). Many news depictions paint a dark jungle-like portrait of the continent, ravaged with starvation, poverty, disease, and corruption (Samuel Gabore, 2020; Japhace Poncian, 2015). This study presents a well-rounded narrative of African women as it centers their technocultural experiences while highlighting their gender negotiation within Igbo culture. Thus, this study supports ATFT as it situates Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers as decolonial media users

who use Instagram's affordances, to share balanced representations about African people while resisting men-dominated structures within Igbo culture.

6.1 Implications and Recommendations

This study has both practical and theoretical implications. This research contributes to new media technology scholarship as it presents African Technocultural Feminist Theory (ATFT), a new framework that contextualizes the ways African technology users approach and engage with new media technology. ATFT calls for hyper specificity of the culture represented which pushes back against western stereotypic representation of African people. Future scholars who wish to contribute to African new media technology research would benefit from using this framework as it ensures technology platforms are properly examined and African diverse cultural systems are accounted for. Additionally, because ATFT also calls for uplifting minoritized African identities within culture, this theory presents a model for understanding technology use from a feminist, visual and non-western context. Specifically, it allows media theorists to effectively interrogate and critique interlocking systems of power and oppressive norms that continue to marginalize minoritized African identities in society.

The findings from this study also contributes to social media marketing research as it suggests practical implications for effective social media marketing. The results showed Nigeria Igbo women employed self-promotion, visual aesthetics, relatability, and authenticity in their self-presentation on Instagram. Social media marketers are encouraged to post visually appealing photos as this boosts audience engagement and interaction with Instagram content. They are also encouraged to use captions that reinforce competence and self-promotion. Combining these with authenticity and relatability, social media managers would be able to forge deeper connections with their perceived audiences while boosting the persuasiveness of the post. Another practical

implication from this study is that it identifies effective tools for Instagram marketing. The findings showed that Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers relied on Instagram affordances of hashtags, reels, and direct messaging as effective tools for audience engagement on Instagram. The designers used hashtags in their post for a wider reach and to boost visibility. They also used reels to properly evaluate content reach which is valuable for assessing potential impact of posts and content. Moreover, they relied on Instagram's direct messaging affordance to facilitate communication with their virtual clients which ensured the designers properly captured their client's specific tastes and preferences. Marketing professionals are therefore encouraged to use these tools for effective social media marketing.

Finally, this study revealed Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers continue to experience gender inequities within Igbo culture which impacted on their entrepreneurial experiences. Almost all the designers interviewed experienced difficulties navigating business-related activities which negatively impacts on their economic empowerment. Nigeria is a nation endowed with abundant resources and offers an opportunity for businesses looking for growth and new markets. However, persistent gender parity is limiting this potential. Failure to fully embrace gender equity does not only negatively impact women but also has societal, community-wide, and individual (all gender included) implications. Approaching this issue may require systematic collective action from the government, business organizations, communities, and individual people. Programs that address deep rooted attitudes about behaviors towards women are encouraged. These programs would clearly name misogynic structures within culture and strive io address them. Programs should be run from government level, all the way to individual levels, and should work with community members to raise change agents who would ensure women are treated equally and fairly across all sectors. There should also be monitoring and

evaluation to track progress and provide information that drives accountability and commitment to goals. Another strategy is to increase plans that ensures women's safety on technological platforms. The result of the finding suggest Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers were hesitant to advocate against gender inequity because they were concerned about cyber bullying which they perceived would negatively impact their businesses. They however challenged patriarchy in other ways which did not include naming and calling out these structures. Thus, technology platforms like Instagram are encouraged to create more features that facilitate reporting cyber bullying, particularly within the comment section. More anti-bullying features like Restrict which allows Instagram users moderate comments should be created across all social media platforms to allow African technology users regulate abusive comments they receive on their posts. These features may encourage more online activism which would lead the way to improve gender parity in Nigeria. Additionally, Instagram's affordance of direct messaging could be used as a tool for digital activism to push back against women oppressive structures. Specifically, Instagram's direct messaging affordance provide privacy/safety from cyber bullying which could form a starting point for gender equity congregation/advocacy on Instagram. The groups could adopt a quiet subversion approach which would be part of an empowering process. Participants would be granted confidentiality as they share their experiences. The group could also be a space to share tips on navigating gender issues including strategies/solutions focused on women renting workspaces and successful business registration, childcare support/resources, and other educational tools for individual and collective upliftment.

6.2 Limitations and Future Studies

This dissertation considered the ways Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers use Instagram and its affordances to perform digital identities online. The research questions and method are limited to Instagram and its affordances. Future studies should explore African women's self-presentation on other social media platforms and compare how each platform influences their digital identities. Future research could also expand on the scope of Instagram's ephemeral affordances such as stories to understand the ways African women use Instagram to perform their digital identities. Additionally, due to the hyper-specificity of this study to Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers (informed by feminist epistemology which argues women's experiences differ from one place to another), future studies should study women from different ethnic groups within Nigeria or different parts of Africa to understand their self-presentation online and their negotiation of patriarchal structures. Also, this study did not include any designers from rural areas and from low socioeconomic class. All the designers were college educated graduates and were within the ages of 25-33 years old. Future studies are encouraged to include women from lower socioeconomic background as well as older women for more diverse perspectives. Finally, **Phase 1** (CTDA of designers Instagram posts and content) analyzed a purposive sample of $n=100$ Instagram posts. The results therefore are not generalizable. Future studies are encouraged to analyze more posts using big data methodology to compare both results.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

Definitions and Context

Nigeria's Entertainment Industry

Nigeria's media and entertainment industry currently leads other African countries in productivity and international reach. The nation's 7-billion-dollar movie industry (Nollywood) is the second largest in the world in terms of output, producing about 2,500 films annually that is accessible on YouTube, Netflix, and Pay-Tv services like DStv and GOtv (Maio, 2019). Nigeria's music industry has also been described as the 'musical heartbeat of Africa' as Nigerian artists are gaining global recognition by winning prestigious awards for producing music that blends diverse music genres (ranging from hip-hop, rap, R&B, reggae, gospel) with indigenous forms of music (International Trade Administration, 2021).

Igbo Apprentice System

Apprentices typically join an established entrepreneur and are expected to leave their family to live under the care and supervision of the 'oga' (business owner). The apprentice is often closely related to the business owner and helps out with other domestic chores in the home as their appraisal is based on their business and non-business ethics. At the end of the apprenticeship (which typically lasts for 5-8 years), they are compensated with a take-off fund which they can use to start their own businesses. This does not prevent collaboration with the business owner despite being a competitor. On the contrary, the business owner can assist the former apprentice with credit line for goods and services if the need arises.

Historical Background of Feminism

The history of Western feminism is divided into three waves. The first wave points to a period of feminist activity in the 19th century and early twentieth century in the United Kingdom and the United States. Its core message was on gender equality for women especially in the area of equal contract and property rights. It also contested forced marriages and ownership of married women and children by their husbands. The second wave began in the early 1960s and lasted through the 1980s. It pushed the agenda of the first wave further by demanding an end to women's discrimination in different spheres of life. This wave ushered the era of women contending cultural and political inequalities which was rooted in sexist power structures. The third wave of feminism began in the 1990s and was a response to the essentialist issues of the second wave which over emphasized the experiences of upper middle-class white women. The fourth wave began in 2012 and is characterized by a focus on the empowerment of women and uses an intersectionality lens to critique interlocking systems of power that continues to marginalize minorities such as women of color and trans women, etc. (Oyekan, 2014).

Appendix B

Code Book from Semi-Structured Interviews and Instagram Posts

Code	Description	Examples
Visual aesthetics	Refers to the pictorial attractiveness that communicates a clear and unique image or pleasing appearance of an image or object	*"First of all, the quality of the picture… it has to be really clear… good background. The client has to use a good phone camera…. When the background is good, it speaks well of the design. You know, good background, good lighting, good picture quality, and I think we're good to go."*
Relatability	Emphasize the importance of creating content that their followers could easily connect with	*"I post some personal [pictures]because I like to interact with an Instagram page that have some personal content …I want to believe I'm dealing with a human and not a robot…I try to post…myself because I don't believe I have the perfect body, so I want you to see that no matter how imperfect your body is, there's a style for you..."*
Authenticity	This is a concept used to evaluate the realness and originality of objects and individuals	*"…I realize that starting up I made a lot of mistakes and I… saw people making the same mistake that I made... I just wanted to share my work, share my experience, and share what I know basically. …I show my life through my work…I just want when people see my work, they should know what it's like living in Nigeria like doing the kind of work that I do while living in Nigeria …"*
Hashtags	Identifies designer's use of # on Instagram that makes it easier to find information with a theme or specific content	*"First of all, I use hashtag in relation to the industry that's fashion then in relation to the fabrics then in relation to the style like if its fashion I start with fashion then if it's an Ankara [African print] based, I use Ankara then if is a short gown I start with Ankara short gown like that… if there is a bead, I just build up with it too."*

Reels	Identifies designers use of Instagram reels which are immersive 60 second videos that allows them creatively express their brand designs and helps them get discovered by people who are interested in fashion.	*"Recently I found reels to be a very good resource. I discovered that people… tend to see my work more on reels than they see it on the post … especially when you add all the extra features like the music and all that and then people tend to view my post more when I put it on reels than even when I post."*
Direct messaging	Identifies the designers use of Instagram's direct messaging affordance which allows them send and receive messages to one or more people.	*"… Some people will just generally come to your DM from all over to ask questions or to see if they can get something like what I have posted. I feel like on Instagram, most people just come straight to your DM. They might not like or comment or anything they will just come to your DM to ask questions."*
Self-promotion	Identifies images and comments that showcases the designer handwork. Captions includes words and hashtags that articulate designer's expertise	Includes photo of a person in designer's outfit, photos of the designer showcasing their own designs, use of words in caption like bespoke, fashion designer, made in Nigeria etc
Gender inequity within Igbo culture	Identifies Nigerian Igbo women fashion designers experience of gender inequities within Igbo culture	*"While growing up as kids, they make you know that this is a man, he has more power than you… they will even make it obvious that the man is more superior to the woman."*
African print fabric	Identifies images containing African print fabric	Includes pictures that have the designers or their clients in African wax/print fabric aka ankara
Black color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing black color	This includes photo of an out in all black color and outfits with other color including black.
White color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing white color	This includes photo of an outfit in all white color and outfits with other color including white.
Red color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing red color	This includes photo of an outfit in all red color and outfits with other color including red.
Lace fabric	Identifies images containing lace fabric	Includes pictures that have the designers or their clients in lace fabric

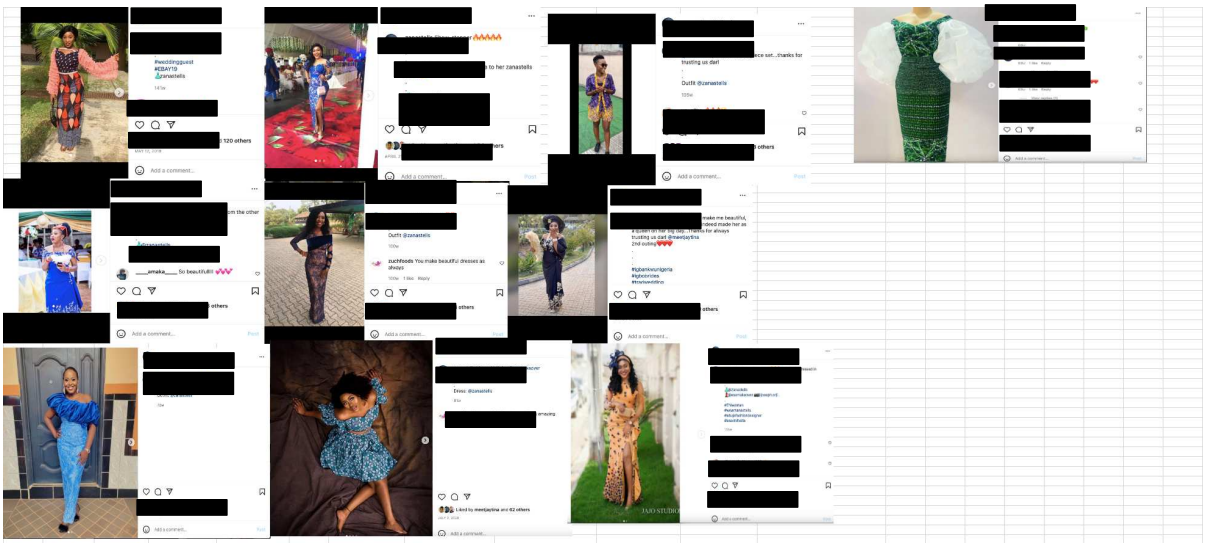
Green color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing green color	This includes photo of an outfit in all green color and outfits with other colors including green.
Headwrap	Identifies images that contain people with a headwrap	Including gele, turbans, fascinators etc
Gold color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing gold color	This includes photo of an outfit in all golf color and outfits with other color including gold.
Yellow color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing yellow color	This includes photo of an outfit in all yellow color and outfits with other color including yellow.
Brown color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing brown color	This includes photo of an outfit in all brown color and outfits with other color including brown.
Orange color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing orange color	This includes photo of an outfit in all orange color and outfits with other color including orange.
Pink color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing pink color	This includes photo of an outfit in all pink color and outfits with other color including pink.
Purple color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing purple color	This includes photo of an outfit in all purple color and outfits with other color including purple.
Silver color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing silver color	This includes photo of an outfit in all silver color and outfits with other color including silver.
Traditional Beads	Identifies images containing beaded jewelry	Includes images of the designer's or their clients with beads, both white and coral
Isi Agu fabric	Identifies images containing *Isi-Agu* fabric	Includes pictures that have the designers or their clients in *Isi-Agu* fabric
Nsibidi fabric	Identifies images containing fabric with *Nsibidi* markings	Includes pictures that have the designers or their clients in fabrics containing *Nsibidi* markings
Feather	Identifies images with feather	Includes images of the designer's or their clients with a feather, both black and white
Blue color	Identifies an image containing a person wearing blue color	This includes photo of an outfit in all blue color and outfits with other color including blue.
George fabric	Identifies images containing George fabric	Includes pictures that have the designers or their clients in George fabric

Frequency of primary codes present in Instagram Photographs (*n*=100). The total frequencies were more than a hundred as some photos had more than one code.

Code	**Total f (*n*=100)**
Self-promotion	100
African print fabric	65
Black color	22
White color	19
Red color	18
Lace fabric	15
Green color	15
Headwrap	15
Gold color	12
Yellow color	10
Brown color	9
Orange color	9
Pink color	9
Purple color	7
Silver color	6
Traditional Beads	5
Isi Agwu fabric	3
Nsibidi fabric	2
Feather	2
George fabric	1

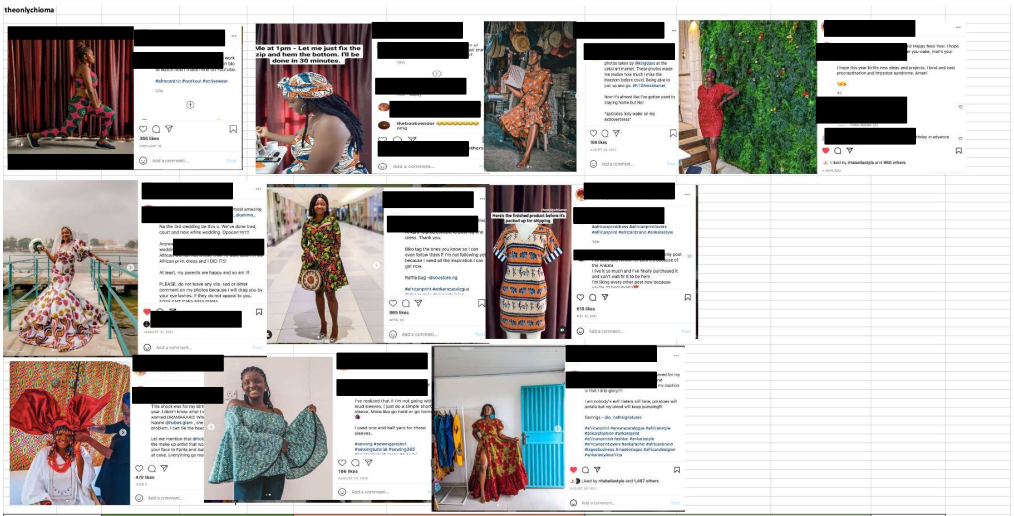
Appendix C

Preliminary Codebook of Instagram Content

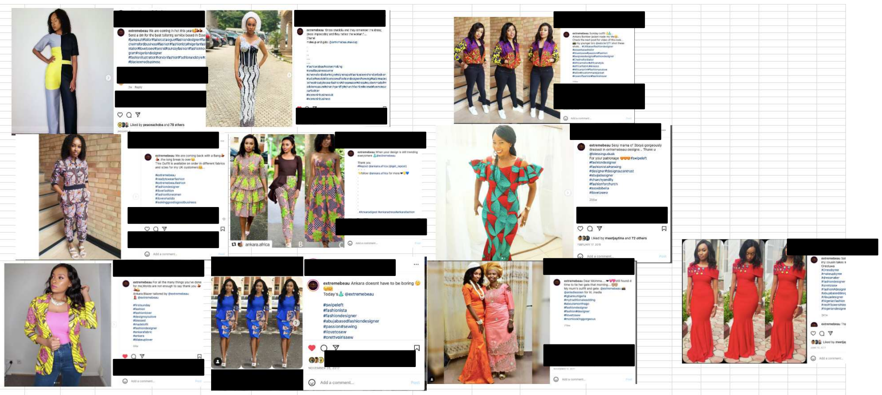


		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
Designer's name	*Date post was made*	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of igbo cultural influence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted]										
1	5/17/19	Picture of a woman in colorful outfit with green tree behind her	African women outdoors	Photo	120 likes and 20 comments	The word "Ankara" with two pink big and little heart emojis. #weddingguest #EBAY19, green dress emoji, zanastells	Colorful dress, combination of light and dark colors. Peach, browns, greys and black. Fabric is a combination of ankara and chiffon. No refrence to Igbo culture but Afrocentric design	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
2	4/21/19	Picture if a woman in a blue lace gown	African woman indoors, at an event	photo	95 likes, 10 comments	Show-stopper🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥 @divastella always does justice to her zanastells outfit 👌 🙏 @zanastells #slaymummy #mummyanddaughterslay #wearzanastells	Rich blue dress paired with nude lace. No reference to Igbo culture	Labor practices was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	1/17/20	Picture of a woman in ankara 2-piece jacke and matching	Picture taken outoors	Photo	39 likes, 2 comments	F.R.I.D.A.Y!!! @favdooma spotted in our 2 piece set...thanks for	Puple and yellow jacet and matching short	Labor practices not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	10/1/20	Picture of a mannequinne in a dress	Pictue taken indoors	photo	56 likes, 8 comments	God bless Nigeria 🍀🍀🍀 #zanastells ✂️	Green and white dress with big puffy white satin sleeves. Post was celebating Nigeia's independence. No specific connection to Igbo culture but celebrate's Nigeria as a country	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne in the designer's fashion piece
5	11/7/19	Picture of a woman in Igbo traditional outfit	Picture taken outdoor, specifically in a wedding	photo	79 likes, 4 comments	Our beautiful Igbo bride from the other day.. @ chinonyerenmdukwe 🍒🍒 🙏 @zanastells	Blue wrapper and matching blouse for traditional Igbo wedding. Woman also accessoriered with tradtional beads on her neck, head and wrists.	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece at her wedding
6	2/20/20	Picture of a woman in a long sleeve dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	79 likes, 10 comments	Pretty in blue🍒🍒 Outfit @zanastells	Deep blue long sleeved dess (one am cross crossed, o e am lace). Woman has igbo tadtional Igbo beads on her wrist	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	3/1/20	Picture of a women in wapper and blouse	Photo taken outdoor	photo	70 likes, 0 comments	Jay said "Naza just make me beautiful, you know it's my day" and we indeed made her as a queen on her big day...Thanks for always trusting us darl @meetjaytina 2nd outing❤️❤️❤️ #igbankwunigeria #igbobrides #tradwedding #jake2020 #zanastellsbride	Black and gold Igbo traditional bridal outfit, blouse and matching wapper, paird with black gele and white and gold tadtional beaded jewely on he neck an wists. Also has a gold featheed fan.	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	8/31/20	Picture of woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoor	Photo	74 likes, 0 comments	All shades of 💙💙💙 @_____amaka_____ Outfit: @zanastells	Blue dress. Top of the dress is exergerated deep blue silk fabic and the body is light blue with lace materia	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	7/2/20	Picture of woman in maching shirt and skirt	Picture taken indoors	Photo	63 likes, 1 comment	Happy birthday @esemakeover We love and celebrate you!!! Dress: @zanastells	Blutsh green outfit, matching top and skirt.	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	2/3/19	Picture of woman in a dress	Picture taken indoors	Photo	82 likes, 2 comments	Yummy mummy🔥🔥🔥 @divastell a dressed in zanastells 🙏 @zanastells 💄 @esemakeover 📹@joseph.orji . #ZNwoman #wearzanastells #abujafashiondesigner #aseobibella	Oange and deep blue dess with long slit. Two types of sleeves, full sleeves and tendill sleeves. Outfit is paired with maching head accessoy	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece

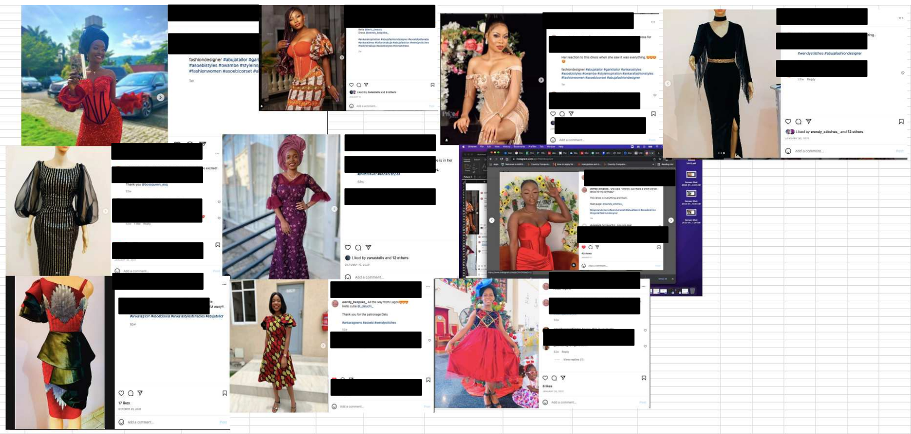
theonlychioma



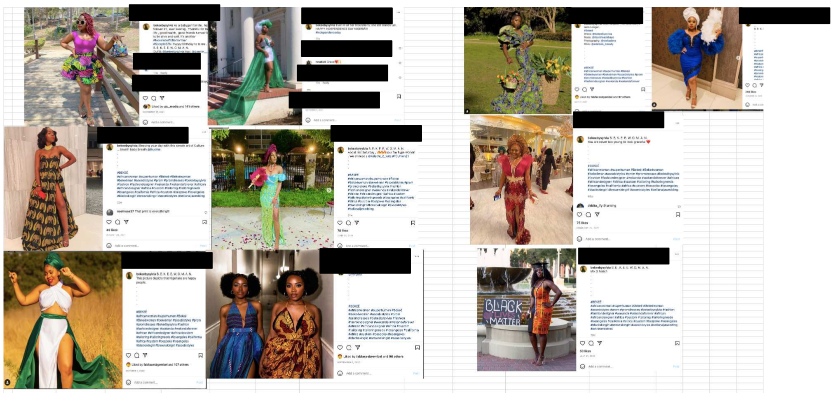
		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
	Date post was	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbocentric influence in outfit*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
1	3/20/21	woman in ankara workout wear	photo taken indoor	photo	378 likes, 16 comments	Let's make some work out wear, shall we? Click the link in bio to watch how I made mine on YouTube. #afrocentric #workout #activewear	green and pink workout wear made with ankara fabric	reference to labor was made but on designer's youtube channel	arms and midsection are displayed	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece
2	3/19/21	woman in ankara outfit	video shot indoors	video	8616 likes, 436 comments	This is one part of sewing I can't understand. Small thing will take hours. Who can relate?	designer made a video and was in different african print fabric throughout video. The screen shot shows designer in bright colored ankara fabric, spaghetti strap and matching head wrap	reference to how long it takes to fix small sewing issues	arms and cleavage are on display	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer promoting her fashion piece
3	8/24/20	woman in ankara outfit	designer in photoshoot	photo	179 likes, 11 comments	nothingtodoinlagos had me checking all my gorgeous photos taken by @kingobas at the Lekki art market. These photos made me realize how much I miss the freedom before covid. Being able to just up and go. #NTDIlekkimarket Now it's almost like I've gotten used to staying home but No! *sprinkles holy water on my extrovertness*	designer in orange dress	Labor practices not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation. No bodily display	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece. Image quality is professional
4	1/24/22	Woman in red	designer in photoshoot outdoors	photo	1001 likes, 32 comments	I realised I haven't said Happy New Year. I hope it's not late. Our elders say "whenever you wake, that's your morning". So Happy New Year. I hope this year births new ideas and projects. I bind and cast procrastination and impostor syndrome. Amen!	red short dress, short sleeves, with nsibidi cultural markings	Labor practices not highlighted	dress is above the knee so legs are on display	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece. Image quality is professional and designer is looking away from the camera
5	1/31/21	women in wedding dress made with African fabric	photo is taken outdoors, by the river	photo	2660 LIKES, 336 comments	You guys, I had the most amazing time yesterday getting married to @_ukanimo_ Na the 3rd wedding be this o. We've done trad, court and now white wedding. Opooorrrrr!! Anyway, I told myself that if I'll be doing a white wedding, (I didn't want to initially because I'm an African woman not white) then I'll walk down in an African print dress and I DID IT!!! At least, my parents are happy and so am !!! PLEASE, do not leave any vile, sad or bitter comment on my photos because I will drag you by your eye lashes. If they do not appeal to you, scroll past maka adaa mama. Now let's talk about the team. I walked down the aisle to the sonorous voice of @viveeyan HIRE HER if you want your day to be truly special and intimate. Dress was made by @Elan_clothiers. I can't get over this dress. They have a lingerie and even a bridal class coming up in February so if it's something you're interested in, GO FOR IT!	wedding dress is made with a combination of two fabrics. Colors are white, red and green	Labor practices not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece. Image quality is professional
6	4/29/21	woman in ankara outfit	photo is taken in a mall	photo	1055 likes, 38 comments	Actually, the aim of this post is to get the pages that curate Ankara related content to post my fine dress. Thank you. Biko tag the ones you know so I can even follow them if I'm not following yet because I need all the inspiration I can get now. Raffia bag -@voostore.ng #africanprint #ankaracatalogue #africanstyle #ankarafashion #ankaraprint #africanprintsinfashion #ankarastyle #africanprintlovers #ankarachic #africanbrand #lagosbusiness #madeinlagos #africandesigner #ankarastylesafrica	green flowery ankara fabric with some brown/orange patterns. Accessorized with a brown rafia purse	Labor practices not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece. Image quality is professional and designer is looking at the camera
7	5/31/21	video showing production process	video done indoors	video	621 likes, 41 comments	Production. #africanprintdress #africanprintlovers #africanprint #africanbrand #ankarastyle	the video showed the process to make a short dress made with african fabric. Colors on the fabric are black, white and brf musicians and elephants	designer showed the labor process	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer promoting her fashion piece
8	6/3/21	photo of a woman in white outfit and red headwrap	photo taken indoor	photo	535 likes, 19 comments	This is an appreciation post. This shoot was for my birthday last year. I didn't know what I wanted but I wanted DRAMAAAA!!! When I told Naomi @hobas.glam , she said "no problem, I can tie the headgear". Let me mention that @hobas.glam is the make up artist that won't change your face to Fanta and leave your neck at coke. Everything go match. She gets to locations early and even tells you what she's putting on your face if you want to know. So If your wedding, owambe, birthday, shoot etc is coming up, @hobas.glam is your girl. Thank me later.	photo showed a women in white embroided outfit with red hearwarp dramatic and red beads on her wrists and neck	Labor practices not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece. Image quality is professional
9	8/23/20	photo of a woman in ankara fabric and jeans	photo taken indoor	photo	193 likes 12 comments	Who else likes loud sleeves? I've realized that if I'm not going with loud sleeves, I just do a simple short sleeve. More like go hard or go home. 🤷‍♀️ I used one and half yard for these sleeves. #sewing #sewingproject #sewingtutorial #sewing365 #sewingismytherapy #tutorial #patternmaking #clothingmanufacturer #livinginlagos	ankara top is green and light yellow with loud sleeves	Labor practices not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece
10	8/30/21	photo of a woman in ankara fabric and jeans	photo taken indoor	photo	1468 likes 60 comments	The caption I had prepared for my photo this morning was about giving and receiving but for this particular photo, my caption is that I drip glory!!!! I am nobody's evil! Haters will hate, potatoes will potate but my blood will keep pumping!!! Earrings - @o_nathsignatures #africanprint #ankaracatalogue #africanstyle #ankarafashion #ankaraprint #africanprintsinfashion #ankarastyle #africanprintlovers #ankarachic #africanbrand #lagosbusiness #madeinlagos #africandesigner #ankarastylesafrica	Fabric is red and yellpw, long and flowing. Accessorized with ankara earrings	Labor practices not highlighted	thighs and legs are on display	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece. Image quality is professional



		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
Designer's [redacted]	*Date post*	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo cultural inluence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted]		in a jumpsuit	photo taken indoor	photo	78 likes, 8 comments	We are coming in hot this year🥰 ... Send a dm for the best tailoring service based in Essex... #jumpsuit#tailor#tailorcatalogue#fashiondesigner#fashionlover#chelmsfordbusiness#fashion#fashionista#nigerianfashion#londontailor#ilovetosew#sewist#sundayfashion#fashionnova#fashiongram#nigeriandesigner #fashionillustration#londonfashion#fashionandstyle#outfitdetails#blackownedbusiness	Color block jumpsuit, grey, yellow and black	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
2	9/21/21	Woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoors	photo	146 likes, 8 comments	extremebeau "Dress shabbily and they remember the dress; dress impeccably and they notice the woman.".... Chanel makeup and gele: @extremebeaumakeup #fashionideas#corsetmaking #smallbusinessowner #chelmsfordtailor#style#styleinspo#fashionlover#londonfashion#tailor#sewist#ilovetosew#fashiondesigner#sewing#tailormadeclothes#readytowearfashion#dressmaker#dress#custommade#madetomeasure#churchyandfly#churchfashion#corset#womenswearfashion #womeninbusinessuk #womeninbusiness #blackownedbusinesses	Black and white dress, bejewelled upper part, sleeves are nude. Outfit is paired with white gele	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
3	3/24/19	Woman in Ankara bomber jacket	Photo taken outdoors	photo	187 likes, 27 comments	Sunday outfit👌👗.... Ankara Bomber jacket made my Me😊... Check the next post for video of this look... 📸: my younger bro @edozie1271 shot these shots... #UKbasedfashiondesigner #essexbasedtailor #ilovetosew#passion#fashion #bespokedesigns#fashiondesigner #Chelmsfordtailor #Africantailor#africanstyle #africanfabric#Ankara #Africanprint#fashionyoulove #tailor#custommadejacket #loveroffashion#fashionlover	Yellow, purple, and red bomber jacket made with ankara fabric	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
4	8/16/20	Woman in ankaa jumpsuit	Photo taken outdoors	photo	125 likes, 13 comments	We are coming back with a Bang ...the long break is over😉.. This Outfit is available on order in different fabrics and sizes for my UK customers😊.... #extremebeau #readytowearfashion #extremebeaufashion #fashiondesigner #ilovefashion #fashionforwomen #ilovewhatido #lookinggoodisgoodbusiness	Ankara flowery fabric used to make jumpsuit. Casual style, pockets and waist band. Brown , white and grey colors	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
5	3/13/19	Three pictures of the same woman in two diffeent dress styles and a jumpsuit	photos taken outdoors	photo	107 likes, 1 comment	When your design is still trending everywhere 👗 @extremebeau Thank you #Repost @ankara.africa (@get_repost) ・・・ follow @ankara.africa for more ❤💛💙 . #Ankaradigest #ankaradress#ankarafashion #ankarafashion#ankaralifestyle #ankara_and_asoebi_styles #ankarastyles #9ja #ankaratop #ankaraskirt #ankarafashion #ankaralover #africanprint #asoebi #ankarafabric #ankaracatalogue #ankaradress #ankarastyle #ankaraprint #ankaradesigns #africanstyle #africaninspired #africanfabric #africanfabrics #africanstyles #waxprints #vlisco #africanfashiontrends	Brown, green and peach colored ankara fabric. First dress is a three layered dress, middle picture is a longsleeved jumpsuit and third dress is a sleeveless dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
6	2/17/18	Picture of a woman in an ankara dress	Photo taken outdoors	photo	73 likes, 2 comments	Sexy mama of 3boys gorgeously dressed in extremebeau designs .. Thank u @blessinguduak For your patronage 😍😍😍 #swipeleft #fashiondesigner #fashionista#sewing #designer#designsucantrust #abujadesigner #churchyandfly #fashionforchurch #asoebibella #ilovetosew	Red and teal ankara dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	10/4/20	Woman in an ankaa jacket with camisole and jeans	photo taken indoor	photo	115 likes, 14 comments	For all the many things you've done for me,Words are not enough to say thank you ♀ Ankara Blazer tailored by @extremebeau 💄: @extremebeau #firstsunday #fashion #fashionlover #designsyoulove #blessed #madetofit #fashiondesigner #ankarafabric #ankara #Makeuplover	Pink and yellow jacket paied with pink camisole and blue jean	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
8	11/26/17	Woman in a blue dress	Photo taken outdoors	photo	358 likes, 15 comments	Ankara doesnt have to be boring 🤔😉🤗 Today's👗: @extremebeau #swipeleft #fashionista #fashiondesigner #abujabasedfashiondesigner #passion#sewing #ilovetosew #prettygirlssew #fashionforchurch #churchyandfly #asoebibella	Blue and. Bown dess. Dress has ruffle in front	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
9	11/17/17	Photo of two women weaing Igbo wrapper and blouse	photo taken indoor	photo	124 likes, 0 comments	Dear Momma.....❤💗💖 still found d time to tie her gele that morning....🙈🙈 My mum's outfit and gele: @extremebeau 📸 @aniediessien for XL media #Igbankunigeria #mytraditionalwedding #aboutamonthago #fashiondesigner #fashion#designer #ilovetosew #momlookinggorgeous	woman 1 is in oange dess with white taditionl accssoies-cap, neck beads and bracelets; woman 2 is in peach wrapper and blouse with gold gele	Designer metions she found time to tie her mom's gele. She is the bide and she made he mom's outfit.	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business
10	6/17/17	Photo of a woman in ed dess	Photo taken outdoors	photo	120 likes, 10 comments	Saturdays are for weddings ...when my cousin takes me all the way to lagos...Chike & Oreoluwa #Dressbyme #makeupbyme #dressmaker #fashiondesigner #iovetosew #fashion#designing #abujabaseddesigner #Abujadesigner #Nigerianfashion #red#flowers#design #Nigeriandesigner	woman in red dress decorated with colorful bottons around the right sleeves	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	Self and brand promotion. This post was the designer wearing her design and promoting her business



		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
Designer's name	*Date post was made*	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo culurral inluence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted] 1	/22	woman in a red dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	11 likes, 0 comments	Asoebi delight. 👗 @wendy_stitches_ fashiondesigner #abujatailor #garkitailor #ankarastyles #asoebistyles #owambe #styleinspiration #ankarafashionstyles #fashionwomen #asoebicorset #abujafashiondesigner	Red dress with Black gele	Labor practice was not highlighted	Post does not describe any gender negotiation	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
2	1/10/22	woman in a oange ankara dress	photo taken by the balcony	photo	10 likes, 0 comments	Have you seen the state of her body?😍😍😍😍 Bella @lavic_beauty Dress @wendy_bespoke_ #ankarainspiration #abujafashiondesigner #asoebibellanaija #ankaradress #tailorsinabuja #abujafashion #wendystitches #tailorsinabuja #asoebistyles #corsetdress	Orange fabic combined withcoloful ankara fabic, single puffy sleeve	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	1/22/22	woman in a champagign coloded dress	photo taken indoors	photo	11 likes, 3 comments	Throwback to when we made this dress for our lovely birthday celebrant. Thank you for patronizing us @iam_missjoy Her reaction to this dress when she saw it was everything.😍😍😍😍 fashiondesigner #abujatailor #garkitailor #ankarastyles #asoebistyles #owambe #styleinspiration #ankarafashionstyles #fashionwomen #asoebicorset #abujafashiondesigner	champaign colorded dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	1/30/22	Mannequinne in a black dress	photo taken indoors	photo	14 likes, 1 comment	legant, dashing and daring.. Make that statement!! 🤗😁 #wendystitches #abujafashiondesigner	Black suede dress with fringe sleeves	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne promoting the designer's fashion piece
5	1/30/22	mannequinne in a black and gold stripped dress with chiffon sleeves	photo taken indoors	photo	17 likes, 2 comments	My beloved customers always leave excited! 😍😍 Slide to see fittings🤗🤗 Thank you @bossqueen_esq	Black and gold dress stripes with chiffon sleeves	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne promoting the designer's fashion piece
6	10/20/20	woman in purple dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	13 likes, 1 comment	She's original and that sparkle is in her @_daluchi_ @wendy_bespoke_ got you covered for all styles. #initforever #asoebistyles	Purple and maroon dress accessorized with matching gele. Fabric is lace with gold stars	Labor practice was not highlighted	post does not describe any gender negotiation	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne promoting the designer's fashion piece
7	1/9/22	woman in a red corset dress	photo taken indoors	video	49 views, 13 likes and 4 comments	She said, "Wendy, just make a short corset dress for my birthday" This dress is everything and more. Main page: @wendy_stitches_ #nigeriandresses #wendymadeit #abujatailors #asoebistyles #nigerianfashiondesigne r	Red corset dress, Mini length, sleeveless	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress revealed model's cleavege, arms and thighs. Model was confident	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	10/29/20	Mannnequine in a dress	photo taken indoors	photo	17 likes, 0 comments	Forget the rules, if you like it, wear it. Beautiful Dress is by Wendy stitches... we are just a DM away!! #ankaragown #asoebibella #ankarastylesforladies #abujatailor	Multicolored ankara farbric, one arm sleeve	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress will reveal one arm because of sleeveless style	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne promoting the designer's fashion piece
9	1/31/21	Woman in a red and yellow leaf design dressr	photo taken outdoors	photo	12 likes, 1 like	All the way from Lagos😍😍😍 Hello cutie @_daluchi_ Thank you for the patronage Dalu #ankaragowns #asoebi #wendystitches	Red and yellow dress, ankaa fabric with leafy patterns	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress is not revealing	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	1/30/21	child in a multicoloed dress	photo taken indoors	photo	8 likes 3 comments	Everybody wants a nice dress..... even the kids 🤗 #wendystitches	Sleeveless dress, red bottom and multicoloed sequinned top part	Labor practice was not highlighted	Sleeveless dress	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece



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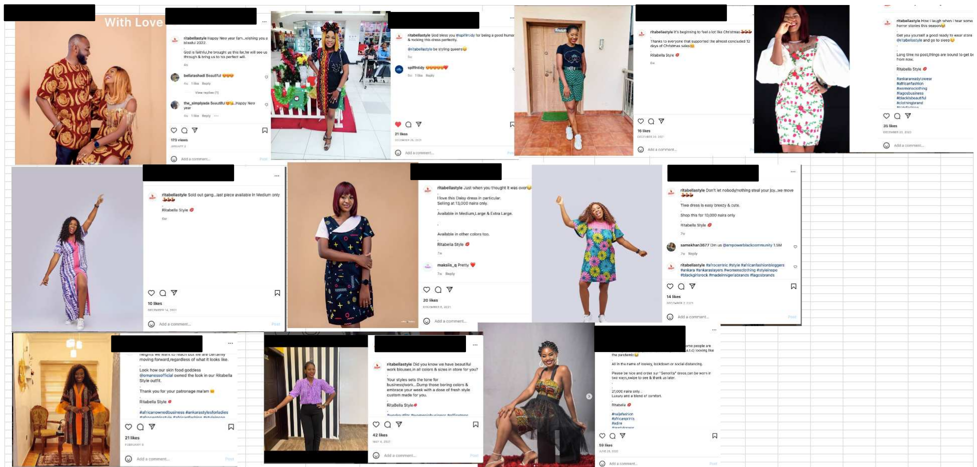
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
[redacted]	[redacted]	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo culurral inluence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted]	[redacted]21	Woman in multicolored dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	146 likes, 42 comments	As a Babygurl for life , happy sweet 16, forever 21 , ever soaring . Thankful for Grace , long life , good health , good friends turned family , happy to be alive and well, it's another #NovemberToRemember #ScorpioSZN. Happy birthday to to me . B. E. K. E. E. W. O. M. A. N. Outfit: @bekeebysylvia Hair: @connie___u	Dress is a fushia pink top and a multicoloed thee layeed botto,, length of dess is above knee	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece
2	10/1/21	Woman in green and white dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	179 likes, 28 comments	Even in all her tribulations, she still stands tall . HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY NIGERIA!!! #independenceday	Green and white sleeveless dess accessoriezed with matching color headwarp	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress revealed model's cleavege, arms and thighs. Model was confident	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece
3	5/17/21	woman in a green dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	98 likes, 10 comments	Seek Respect , not Attention, it lasts Longer . #Bekeé Dress: @bekeebysylvia Muse: @itsaishaadebayo Photography: @stellaslenz MUA: @adaizais_beauty	Green long flowing dress with three layered sleeves	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress is not revealing	Brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	10/21/19	Woman in a blue dress	Photo taken indoor	photo	245 likes, 74 comments	If I Don't Give Them, How Will They Take It ... B. E. K. E. É. W. O. M. A. N. .. .. #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #bespoke #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #bespoke #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #blackskingirl #beyonce #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding #extra	woman in blue dress with white feather fan and white head wrap. Sleeves have layers	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece
5	8/29/21	woman in black and bown dress	Photo taken indoor	photo	50 likes, 4 comments	Blessing your day with this simple art of Culture ... breath baby breath @ihuoma . . . . #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #bekeéman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #africa #custom #bespoke #losangeles #blackskingirl #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding	woman in black and brrrown isiagwu dress. Sleeveless with high high slits	Labor practice was not highlighted	Cleavage, thighs and arms are revealed. Model looked confident	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
6	6/23/21	Woman in a blue and green dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	78 likes, 3 comments	B. E. K. E. E. W. O. M. A. N. About last Saturday , 🔥🔥🔥 your fav hype woman . We all need a @kelechi_2_kute #FCUnion21 . . . #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #bekeéman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #africa #custom #bespoke #losangeles #blackskingirl #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding	Woman in a green an blue derss. Sleeveless and thigh high slit	Labor practice was not highlighted	Cleavage, thighs and arms are revealed. Model looked confident	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	2/26/21	woman in ed and gold dress	Photo taken indoor	photo	75 likes, 3 comments	B. E. K. E. E. W. O. M. A. N. You are never too young to look graceful ❤️ . . . . #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #bekeéman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #africa #custom #bespoke #losangeles #blackskingirl #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding	woman in a red and gold dress accessoirzed with gold head wrap	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	10/1/20	woman in green and white outfit	Photo taken outdoor	photo	107 likes 7 comments	B. E. K. E. E. W. O. M. A. N. This picture depicts that Nigerians are happy people. . . . . . #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #bekeéman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #africa #custom #bespoke #losangeles #blackskingirl #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding #civilizacionesextraterrestres	Grreen and white outfit, top and skirt. Outfit is criscross top with two thigh high slits. Mid section is also exposed.	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is top with two thigh high slits. Mid section is also exposed. Model looks confident	Self promotion. This post was a photograph of the designer promoting her fashion piece
9	9/6/20	two women weaing african print	Photo taken indoor	photo	96 likes, 0 comments	B. E. K. E. É. W. O. M. E. N. @vanjess . . . . . . #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #africa #custom #bespoke #losangeles #blackskingirl #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding #civilizacionesextraterrestres	two women, one in a blue dress and the otherr in maroon and brown dress.	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfits reveal some cleavage and arms	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	7/21/20	woman in s black and kente dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	52 likes, 0 comments	B. E . K. E. E. W. O. M. A. N. Mix X Match . . . . . . #BEKEÉ #africanwoman #superhuman #Bekeé #Bekeéwoman #asoebistyles #prom #promdresses #bekeébysylvia #fashion #fashiondesigner #wakanda #wakandaforever #african #africandesigner #africa #custom #tailoring #tailoringneeds #losangeles #california #africa #custom #bespoke #losangeles #blackskingirl #brownskingirl #asoebistyles #bellanaijawedding #extraterrestres	woman in gaduation cap weaing a black and kente dress. Dress is sleeveless and sis right above the knee	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit reveal arms	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece



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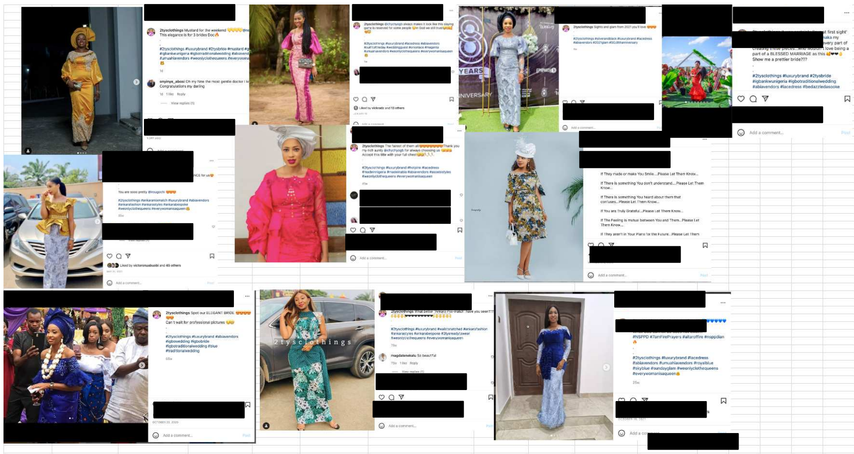
	Date	**Description**	**Subject Matter**	**Format**	**Post Engagement**	**Caption**	**Style Description**	**Labor Practices**	**Gender dynamics**	**Self-Presentation**
[redacted]	*Date post was*	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo culurral inluence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
1	1/2/22	Video of a man and woman and two girls	photo taken indoor	video	187 views, 40 likes, 27 comments	Happy New year fam...wishing you a blissful 2022. . God is faithful,he brought us this far,he will see us through & bring us to his perfect will.	Adults are wearing Isiagwu fabic, gils are in red and black dresses	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
2	12/26/21	Woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	21 likes, 1 comment	God bless you @spiffntidy for being a good human & rocking this dress perfectly. . @ritabellastyle be styling queens😊	Woman weaing a dress, half of it with nisibidi fabic and othe half is black. She accessorized with a head band made wih matching fabric	Labor practice was not highlighted	dress is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	12/20/21	woman in a tshit and ankara shorts	Photo taken on a balcony	photo	17 likes, 0 comments	It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas💃💃💃 . Thanks to everyone that supported the almost concluded 12 days of Christmas sales😊 . Ritabella Style 💋	Black tee shirt tucked in green ankara shorrtsr	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
4	3/22/22	woman in white green and red dress	photo taken indoor	photo	17 likes, 7 comments	No Light...Laugh No fuel...Laugh No Money...Laugh It's hard I know but you can do it. Heads I increase! Tails I multiply!! All things are working together for my good!!! . Laughter is an act of faith,exercise it today. . Ritabella Style💋 .	Dress is mostly white with poffy sleeves, midi lengh	Labor practice was not highlighted	dress revreals thighs	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
5	12/14/21	woman in a high slited dress	photo taken indoor	photo	10 likes and 0 comments	Sold out gang...last piece available in Medium only💃💃💃 . Ritabella Style 💋	Loose fitting long high slitted dress. Purple, pink and white	Labor practice was not highlighted	Dress reveals thighs	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
6	12/8/21	woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	20 likes, 4 comments	Just when you thought it was over😂 . I love this Daisy dress in particular. Selling at 13,000 naira only. . Available in Medium,Large & Extra Large. . . Available in other colors too. . Ritabella Style 💋	Black dress with white neck and sleeve. Dress has colored designs scattered all over	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a picture of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
7	12/7/21	woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	14 likes, 2 comments	Don't let nobody/nothing steal your joy...we move💃💃💃 . Tiwa dress is easy breezy & cute. . Shop this for 10,000 naira only . Ritabella Style 💋	yellow, blue and pink floral dress, about the knee length	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a photo of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
8	2/6/21	woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	21 likes, 4 comments	We may not yet have attained heights we want to reach but we are certainly moving forward,regardless of what it looks like. . Look how our skin food goddess @omanessofficial owned the look in our Ritabella Style outfit. . Thank you for your patronage ma'am 😊 . Ritabella Style 💋 . #africanownedbusiness #ankarastylesforladies #afrocentricstyle #africanfashion #styleinspo #lagosfashion #fashionista	Orange and brown dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	5/4/21	woman in a dress shrit and pants	photo taken indoor	photo	42 likes, 7 comments	Did you know we have beautiful work blouses,in all colors & sizes in store for you? . Your styles sets the tone for business/work...Dump those boring colors & embrace your week with a dose of fresh style custom made for you. . RitaBella Style💋 . #workoutfits #womeninbusiness #officetops #blackandwhitephotography #blackownedbusiness #lagosentrepreneurs #fashionblogger #style	woman in lilac dress shirt and black pants	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
10	*6/25/20*	woman In a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	59 likes and 21 comments	It has come to our notice that some people are turning up to engagements(wedding,birthday,e.t.c) looking like the pandemic😂 . All in the name of lowkey, lockdown or social distancing. . Please be nice and order our "Senorita" dress,can be worn in two ways,swipe to see & thank us later. 21,000 naira only. . Luxury and a blend of comfort. . Ritabella 💋 . #naijafashion #africanprints #adire #readytowear #lagosfashion #bellanaija #styletofit #africanstyle #ankarafashion	blck , orange and brown dress. SLEEVELESS	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a picture of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece



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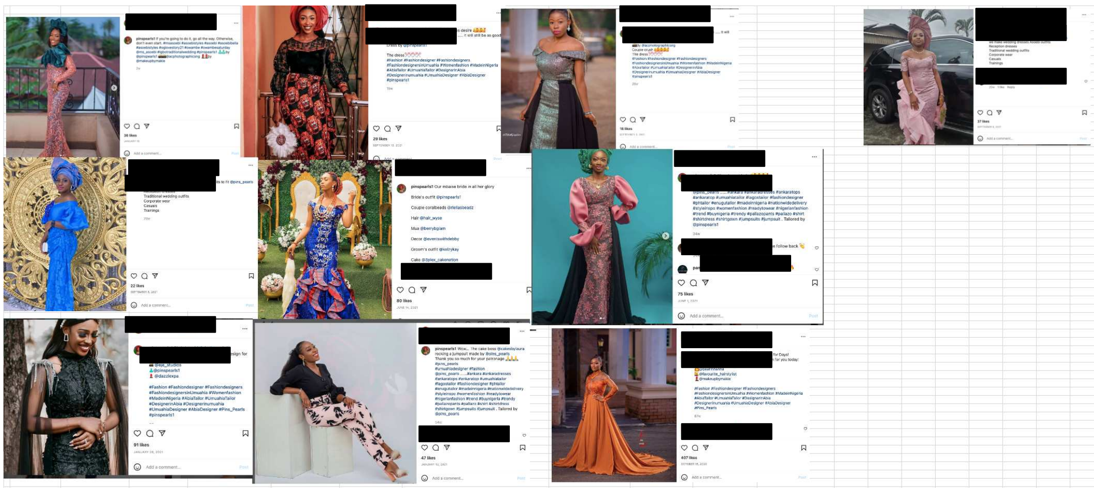
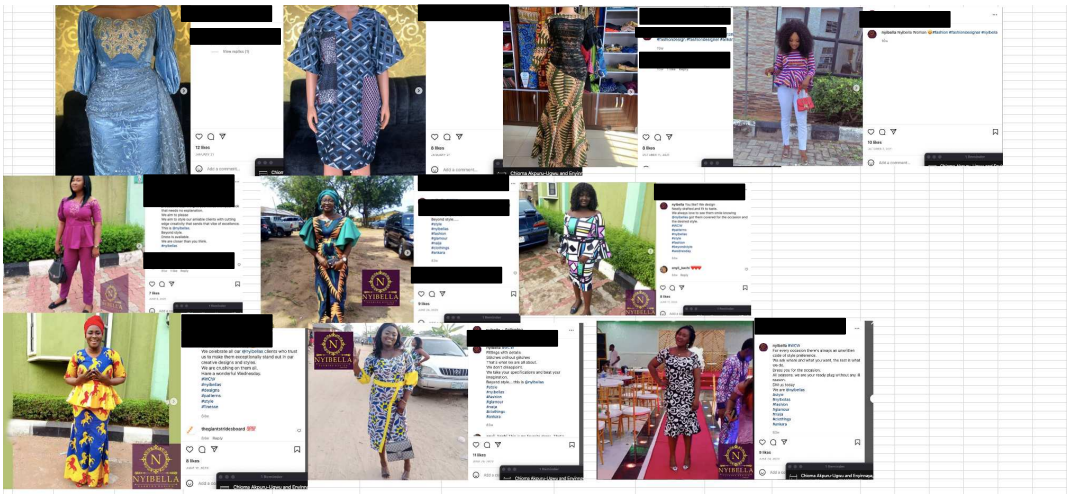
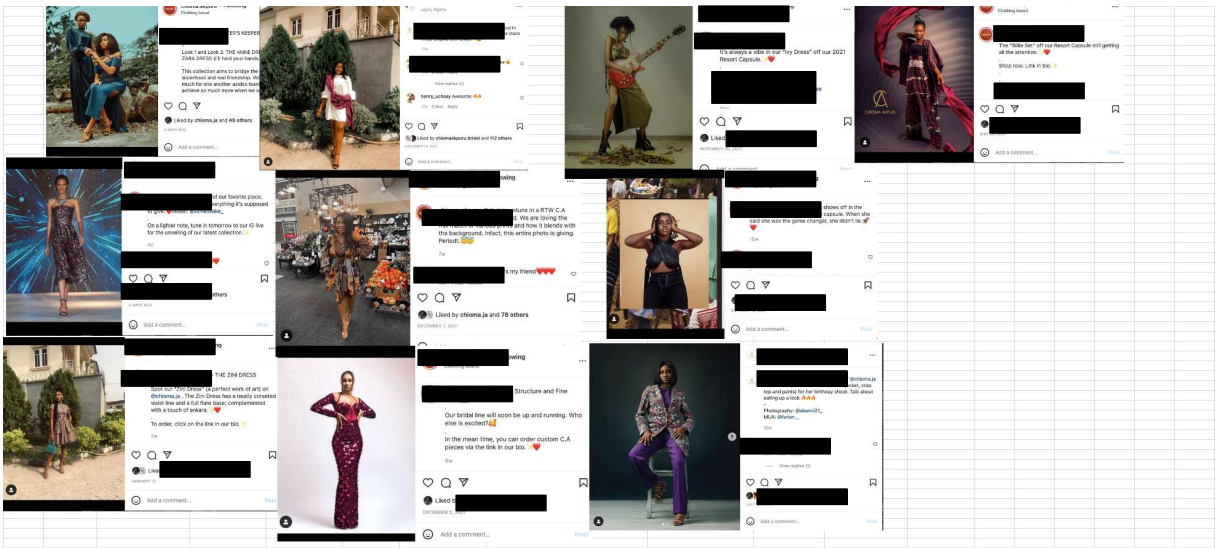
[redacted]		[redacted]an in mustard outfit	photo taken outdoors	photo	11 likes, 2 comments	Mustard for the weekend 💛💛💛💛 @neena_prime This elegance is for 3 brides Doc🔥 . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #2tysbride #mustard #georgedress #igbankwunigeria #igbotraditionalwedding #abiavendors #umuahiavendors #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen 👸	Woman in mustard drress, lace and silk fabric, with matching headwrap	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
2	1/19/22	woman in dark pink outfit	photo taken outdoors	photo	14 likes, 1 comment	always makes it look like this slaying game is reserved for some people 😏 In God we still trust😂😬🥰😍😇 . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #lacedress #abiavendors #outfitoftheday #weddingguest #onionlace #magenta #umuahiavendors #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen 👸	pink dress with full sleeves	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	12/27/21	woman in silver dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	10 likes, 0 comments	Sights and glam from 2021 you'll love 😍😍😍 . . #2tysclothings #silverandblack #luxurybrand #lacedress #abiavendors	silver dress in lace fabric, sleeves are a combination of silk and lace. Black headwrap	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	10/9/21	woman in a red dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	35 likes, 3 comments	It was certainly 'love at first sight' for me and this pretty bride @xty_amaka my babyto😍🥰😘. We loooooooveeed every part of creating these pieces...who wouldn't love being a part of a BLESSED MARRIAGE as this 🥰❤️❤️👌 Show me a prettier bride??? . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #2tysbride #igbankwunigeria #igbotraditionalwedding #abiavendors #lacedress #bedazzledasooke #asooke #umuahiavendor #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen 👸	Traditional wedding setting. Woman seems to be the bride. She is wearing a red dress with horse hair accessory and red beads	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
5	5/31/21	woman in gold and silver outfit	photo taken outdoors	photo	46 likes, 2 comments	It's the effortless CLASS and ELEGANCE for us😍❤️😍👌😍😘😘😘😘 . . You are sooo pretty @irougochi 😍😍😍 #2tysclothings #ankaramixmatch #luxurybrand #abiavendors #ankarafashion #ankarastyles #ankarabespoke #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen 👸	Gold top and silver skirt, both in lace material	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
6	4/17/21	woman in dark pink outfit	photo taken outdoors	photo	29 likes, 7 comments	The fairest of them all😍😍😍😍😍😍😍 Thank you my rich aunty @chychyogb for always choosing us 😘😘😘. Accept this title with your full chest😉😉🙇‍♀️🙇‍♀️🙇‍♀️ . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #hotpink #lacedress #madeinnigeria #madeinabia #abiavendors #asoebistyles #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen	Fushia pink dress with lace fabric. One arm is flowing and the other is a simple straight sleeve. Headwrap is silver	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	11/6/20	woman in floral print outfit	photo taken indoors	photo	32 likes, 0 comments	BEFORE YOU SLEEP LET THEM KNOW : If They made or make You Smile....Please Let Them Know... If There is something You don't understand....Please Let Them Know... If There is something You heard about them that confuses...Please Let Them Know... If You are Truly Grateful...Please Let Them Know... If The Feeling is mutual between You and Them...Please Let Them Know... If They aren't in Your Plans for the Future...Please Let Them Know... If You've forgiven them....Please Let Them Know....	blue, gold and white dress pared with white hat. Outfit is formal	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	10/29/20	woman in blue outfit	photo taken outdoors	photo	39 likes, 0 comments	Spot our ELEGANT BRIDE 😍😍😍😍😍😍 Can't wait for professional pictures 😏😁 . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #abiavendors #igbowedding #igbobride #igbotraditionalwedding #blue #traditionalwedding	Dark rich blue lace fabric, blouse wrapper and matching head wrap. Accesorized with white beads	Labor practice was not highlighted	Outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	8/19/20	woman in green and white outfit	photo taken outdoors	photo	36 likes 7 comments	What better 'Ankara mix-match' have you seen???🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️🖤🖤🖤🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌 . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #waistsnatched #ankarafashion #ankarastyles #ankarabespoke #2tysreadytowear #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen	combination of two different fabrics, green and white ankara fabrics	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	10/18/21	woman in blue outfit	photo taken indoors	photo	48 likes, 3 comments	God has completed it 💙💙💙💙💙💙😸😸😸 What God cannot do does not exist!!! #NSPPD #7amFirePrayers #altaroffire #nsppdian🔥 . . #2tysclothings #luxurybrand #lacedress #abiavendors #umuahiavendors #royalblue #skyblue #sundayglam #weonlyclothequeens #everywomanisaqueen 👸	Combination of suede and lace, sude is dark blue, lace is light blue.	Labor practice was	Outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a picture of the designer promoting her fashion piece



		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
[redacted]	[redacted]s made	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo culurral inluence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
1	1/15/22	Woman in bluish green and peach dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	38 likes, 0 comments	If you're going to do it, go all the way. Otherwise, don't even start. #msasoebi #asoebistyles #asoebi #asoebibella #asoebistyles #oglovestory21 #owambe #owambesaturday @ms_asoebi #igbotraditionalwedding #pinspearls1 👗👗 by @pinspearls1 📸📸 @acphotographicsng 💄💄 by @makeupbymakie	Peach dress paired with blue green neck line and hairband	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	Self promotion. This post was a video of the designer and her family promoting her fashion piece
2	9/13/21	woman in Igbo traditional outfit	photo taken indoors	photo	29 likes, 0 comments	Faux wrap dress for Jubilees desire 🥰🥰🥰 We make it so you can rock and re rock ..... It will still be as good as new 😁😁 @pinspearls1 Dress by @pinspearls1 The dress ✂️✂️✂️✂️ #Fashion #Fashiondesigner #Fashiondesigners #FashiondesignersinUmuahia #Womenfashion #MadeinNigeria #AbiaTailor #UmuahiaTailor #DesignerinAbia #Designerinumuahia #UmuahiaDesigner #AbiaDesigner #pinspearls1	Black lace top with isi agwu wrapper, accessoried with red head wrap and a white feather fan	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	9/9/21	woman in black and silver dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	18 likes, 0 comments	We make it so you can rock and re rock ..... It will still be as good as new 😁😁 @pinspearls1 Dress by @pinspearls1 📸 By @acphotographicsng Couple crush 🥰🥰🥰🥰 The dress ✂️✂️✂️✂️ #Fashion #Fashiondesigner #Fashiondesigners #FashiondesignersinUmuahia #Womenfashion #MadeinNigeria #AbiaTailor #UmuahiaTailor #DesignerinAbia #Designerinumuahia #UmuahiaDesigner #AbiaDesigner #pinspearls1	Formal looking dress, black bottom and silver top	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	9/6/21	woman in pink dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	37 likes, 1 comment	Belle @xue_chisom Thank you for your patronage ma'am We tailor and design your outfits to fit @pins_pearls we make wedding dresses Asoebi outfits Reception dresses Traditional wedding outfits Corporate wear Casuals Trainings	Light pink lace fabric, accessorized with matching headwrap and pink and gold feather fan	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
5	9/6/21	woman in blue outfit	photo taken indoors	photo	22 likes 0 comments	We tailor and design your outfits to fit @pins_pearls we make wedding dresses Asoebi outfits Reception dresses Traditional wedding outfits Corporate wear Casuals Trainings	Blue dress, lace fabric, puffy sleeves with blue matching headwrap	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
6	6/14/21	woman in blue outfit	photos taken outdoors	photo	80 likes, 5 comments	Our mbaise bride in all her glory Bride's outfit @pinspearls1 Couple coralbeads @riellasbeadz Hair @hair_wyse Mua @berrybglam Decor @eventswithdebby Groom's outfit @kelzykay	Blue dress with gorge fabric, accessorized with different gorge fabric at the bottom of the dress. Accesorized with red beads in her hair, neck and wrists and a white feather	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	6/1/21	woman in pink and green outfit	photo taken indoors	photo	75 likes, 2 comments	The elegant lady 🥰🥰🥰🥰 #pins_pearls #pinspearls1 #umuahiadesigner #fashion @pins_pearls ......#ankara #ankaradresses #ankaratops #ankaratop #umuahiatailor #lagostailor #fashiondesigner #phtailor #enugutailor #madeinnigeria #nationwidedelivery #styleinspo #womenfashion #readytowear #nigerianfashion #trend #buynigeria #trendy #pallazopants #pallazo #shirt #shirtdress #shirtgown #jumpsuits #jumpsuit . Tailored by @pinspearls1	Pink and dark green outfit. Pink fabric Is mixed with lace and silk. Green is in silk fabric. Accessorized with lighter green head wrap	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	1/28/21	woman in black dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	91 likes, 2 comments	Birthday girl @desire__chris What are you waiting for? Let's make a design for you today! 📸 @eje_studios 👗 @pinspearls1 💄 @dazzlexpa #Fashion #Fashiondesigner #Fashiondesigners #FashiondesignersinUmuahia #Womenfashion #MadeinNigeria #AbiaTailor #UmuahiaTailor #DesignerinAbia #Designerinumuahia #UmuahiaDesigner #AbiaDesigner #Pins_Pearls #pinspearls1	Black lace dress accessoriezed with silver decorative pieces	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	1/13/21	woman in black shirt and pink pants	photo taken indoors	photo	47 likes, 3 comments	Wcw... The cake boss @cakesbylaura rocking a jumpsuit made by @pins_pearls Thank you so much for your patronage 🙏🙏🙏 #pins_pearls #umuahiadesigner #fashion @pins_pearls ......#ankara #ankaradresses #ankaratops #ankaratop #umuahiatailor #lagostailor #fashiondesigner #phtailor #enugutailor #madeinnigeria #nationwidedelivery #styleinspo #womenfashion #readytowear #nigerianfashion #trend #buynigeria #trendy #pallazopants #pallazo #shirt #shirtdress #shirtgown #jumpsuits #jumpsuit . Tailored by @pins_pearls	formal outfit, black shirt and pink and black floral pants	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	10/16/20	woman in orange long flowing dress	photo taken outdoors	photo	406 likes 18 comments	Pins_Pearls Serving you Looks for Days! What are you waiting for? Let's make a design for you today! 📸 @acphotographicsng 🙆 @pearlnnanna 💇‍♀ @favourite_hairstylist 💄 @makeupbymakie #Fashion #Fashiondesigner #Fashiondesigners #FashiondesignersinUmuahia #Womenfashion #MadeinNigeria #AbiaTailor #UmuahiaTailor #DesignerinAbia #Designerinumuahia #UmuahiaDesigner #AbiaDesigner #Pins_Pearls	orange dress, formal long and flowing, dinner gown	Labor practice was not highlighted	showing shoulders	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece



		Technology Interface			Technology Practices		Cultural Ideology			
	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
Designer's [redacted]		*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Skirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo cultural influence, if any*	*OFFs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
1	1/7/21	Light blue dress on a mannequinne	Photo taken indoor	photo	13 likes, 2 comments	So pretty 🔥🔥🔥	Light blue dress, lace fabric combine with lace, assessorized with gold in the chest area	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
2	1/21/22	Manequine in an ankara print dress	Photo taken indoor	photo	8 likes, 0 comments		two different ankara fabric combined, short sleeve, above knee length	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne promoting designer's fashion piece
3	10/11/21	manequinne in a dress	Photo taken indoor	photo	8 likes, 1 comment	95% ready though 😈😈 #custommadewear #fashiondesign #fashiondesigner #ankara #ankarastyles	Green and light brown anakara fabric combined with black lace in the top part.	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a mannequinne promoting designer's fashion piece
4	10/7/21	woman in multicolored shirt and pants	photo taken indoor	photo	10 likes, 0 comment	Nybella Woman 👑 #fashion #fashiondesigner #nybell	Tshirt is blue, red and white stripes with splashes of gold, paried with white pants	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
5	6/9/20	womn in dark pink outfit	Photo taken outdoor	photo	7 likes, 3 comments	Work fit??? No worries, @nybellas got you ready for a productive day. We give you words with your look that needs no explanation. We aim to please We aim to style our amiable clients with cutting edge creativity that sends that vibe of excellence. This is @nybellas. Beyond style. Dress is available. We are closer than you think. #nybellas	Peplum shirt and matching pants. Formal looking outfit	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
6	6/24/20	woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	9 likes, 3 comments	#WCW We style to please every fashion rule and gaze that prepares for assessment. We are @nybellas Beyond style.... #style #nybellas #fashion #glamour #naija #clothings #ankara	multicolored ankara fabric with flay sleeves	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	6/17/20	woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	8 likes, 2 comments	You like? We design Neatly drafted and fit to taste. We always love to see them smile knowing @nybellas got them covered for the occasion and the desired style. #WCW #patterns #nybellas #style #fashion #beyondstyle #Wednesday	multicolored formal dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	6/17/20	woman in a shirt and skirt	Photo taken outdoor	photo	8 likes, 1 comment	Hey there it's Wednesday. Call it the mid-week day 😉. We celebrate all our @nybellas clients who trust us to make them exceptionally stand out in our creative designs and styles. We are crushing on them all. Have a wonderful Wednesday. #WCW #nybellas #designs #patterns #style #finesse	Blue yellow and red ankara fabric, has horses all over. Skirt and blouse. Red headwrap	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	6/24/20	woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	11 likes, 3 comments	#WCW Fittings with details Stitches without glitches That's what we are all about. We don't disappoint. We take your specifications and beat your imagination. Beyond style....this is @nybellas #style #nybellas #fashion #glamour #naija #clothings #ankara	yellow, blue and white dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	6/24/20	woman in a dress	Photo taken outdoor	photo	10 likes, 2 comments	#WCW For every occasion there's always an unwritten code of style preference. We ask where and what you want, the rest is what we do. Dress you for the occasion. All seasons, we are your ready plug without any ill reason. OM us today We are @nybellas #style #nybellas #fashion #glamour #naija #clothings #ankara	Black and white formal dress	Labor practice was not highlighted	outfit is not revealing	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece



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	Date	Description	Subject Matter	Format	Post Engagement	Caption	Style Description	Labor Practices	Gender dynamics	Self-Presentation
Designer's name	*Date post was made*	*Image, Physical Appearance and Context*	*People, Object, Places, Events*	*Video, Photo, Meme, GIFs, Story*	*Number of Likes and Comments*	*Including Emojis and Hashtags*	*Dress, Shirt, Shirt and Skirt combination, Skirt, Jumpsuit, description of Igbo cultural influence, if any*	*DIYs, Sewing Process/Activity*	*Body display, self-assertiveness and non-conformity to patriarchal structures*	*Self promotion, Brand Promotion, Event Promotion, Supporting other designers, fan appreciation, personal campaigns*
[redacted]										
	1/29/22	photo of women wearing dresses	photo taken outdoor	photo	62 likes, 13 comments	SISTER'S KEEPER SS22 COLLECTION • Look 1 and Look 2: THE ANNE DRESS and THE ZARA DRESS (I'll hold your hands through it all) This collection aims to bridge the gap between sisterhood and real friendship. Women can be so much for one another asides tearing down. We achieve so much more when we work together. We should genuinely love to see the other woman win, celebrate her successes, support her dreams and goals, cheer her on, be a shoulder to lean on, lend a helping hand, be our SISTER'S KEEPER. Photography: @moivphotography Model: @jojo_horself_ & @mimirald Creative Direction/ Styling: @chioma.ja	Two women in the photo. One of the women is sitting and has a criss cross neck and thigh slits. There are also specks of silver on the top part of the dress. The second woman is wearingn a long flowing dress also with specs of silver and one sleeve. Color is blue green	labor practices was not mentioned	thighs, arms and neck are on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
2	12/14/21	photo of a woman in a dress shirt	photo taken outdoor	photo	113 likes, 15 comments	C.A Women always step out in style. @_realandrea is no exception as she stuns in our draped shirt dress. ✨🥰 A Women always step out in style. @_realandrea is no exception as she stuns in our draped shirt dress.✨🥰	white shirt dress, above the kneww, draped burgudy fabric across the dress shirt	labor practices was not mentioned	thighs are on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
3	11/30/21	photo of a woman in a dress with a guitar	photo taken indoor	photo	133 likes, 14 comments	MAGIC • It's always a vibe in our "Ivy Dress" off our 2021 Resort Capsule. ❤️ Fit: @chioma.akpuru Model: @adedola_po Art direction/Photography: @akanniiee MUA: @house.of.zaynee	Green halter neck dress with thigh high slit	labor practices was not mentioned	thighs are on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
4	5/28/21	photo of a woman in shirt and pants	photo taken indoor	photo	42 likes, 6 comments	THE BILLIE SET • The "Billie Set" off our Resort Capsule still getting all the attention. ❤️ Shop now. Link in bio.✨ . Outfit: @chioma.akpuru Photography: @gyasi_media Model: @oyinsthugur80 Agency: @gccmodelsng	red and dark purple, high waist pants and lose jacket with matching fabric. Ankara fabric	labor practices was not mentioned	no body part is on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
5	1/27/22	photo of a woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	49 likes, 6 comments	Easily one of our favorite piece. This C.A culotte is giving everything it's supposed to give.❤️ Model: @ucheokeke_ On a lighter note, tune in tomorrow to our IG live for the unveiling of our latest collection.	bronze and black dress	labor practices was not mentioned	arms and neck area on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
6	12/7/21	photo of a woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	79 likes, 8 comments	dr_izzy_ stuns in a RTW C.A piece. Ankara never gets old. We are loving the mix match of various prints and how it blends with the background. Infact, this entire photo is giving. Period.😇😇	two fabric combination dress, slightly above the knee, one arm exporsing shoulder	labor practices was not mentioned	legs and soulderr on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
7	10/12/21	photo of a woman in a dress	photo taken indoor	photo	55 likes, 3 comments	art_neyorla shows off in the "Didi Set" off our 2021 Resort capsule. When she said she was the game changer, she didn't lie.🚀❤️	black top and pants, top is black fabric cris crossed across model's chest. Mid section on display	labor practices was not mentioned	midisection and shoulders on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
8	1/12/22	photo of a woman in a dress	photo taken outdoor	photo	82 likes, 7 comments	NEW IN- THE ZINI DRESS • Spot our "Zini Dress" (a perfect work of art) on @chioma.ja . The Zini Dress has a neatly corseted waist line and a full flare base; complemented with a touch of ankara.✨❤️ . To order, click on the link in our bio.✨	formal looking dress, slightly above the knee	labor practices was not mentioned	legs on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
9	12/5/21	photo of a woman in dress	photo taken indoor	photo	162 likes, 14 comments	Design, Structure and Fine lines.✅ Our bridal line will soon be up and running. Who else is excited?🥰 In the mean time, you can order custom C.A pieces via the link in our bio. ❤️	formal dress, sequence, formfitting and classy	labor practices was not mentioned	no body part is on display	brand promotion. This post was a photograph of a client promoting designer's fashion piece
10	9/12/21	photo of woman in a 3 piece suit	photo taken indoor	photo	112 likes, 10 comments	Our Creative Director @chioma.ja stuns in a 3 piece ensemble (blazer jacket, crop top and pants) for her birthday shoot. Talk about eating up a look.🔥🔥🔥 • Photography: @akanni21_ MUA: @farian._	formal three piece suit. Purple pants and multicolored jacket. Matching purple crop top	labor practices was not mentioned	no body part is on display	Self promotion. This post was a picture of the designer promoting her fashion piece