THE POWER OF THE INFLUENCER - THE POSSIBILITIES OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO DEVELOP THE NAMIBIAN FASHION INDUSTRY

Ibilola Odunlami and Hugh Ellis

Abstract:

This article explores how social media can be used as a tool to develop the nascent Namibian fashion industry and encourage consumer interest. This research started from the hypothesis that a localised social media platform could be used as a tool to boost industry competitiveness as well as consumer support. The research took on a mixed methods approach where a survey was undertaken, followed by a series of interviews of local fashion industry stakeholders to gain insight into how social media could best serve Namibian fashion. Analysis of results indicates that a localised social media platform could be beneficial for the industry but it is important that such a platform not exclude opportunities of international exposure and networking. Furthermore, for such a platform to work, stakeholders in the Namibian fashion industry will have to embrace the power of influencers on social media, and the idea of 'co-creation' with the social media audience.

Keywords:

Innovation, social media, influencer, engagement, public, consumer, fashion

Introduction: Namibia's fashion industry landscape

The Namibian fashion sector currently faces developmental gaps compared to leading African counterparts such as Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa. In a 2017 interview with The Namibian Newspaper, Namibian fashion pioneer Cynthia Schimming emphasised the crucial role of fashion in both Namibia's culture and economy. Despite this, she noted a lack of local support for the industry (Kaakunga, 2017).

While Africa may be emerging as a significant player in the fashion industry, Wadell (2016) argues that local markets are in a constant competition with Western markets. The presence of a large number of imported goods and the preference for second-hand items, combined with perceptions that foreign products are of higher quality, create obstacles for African fashion producers to thrive and remain competitive in the market (Brooks & Simon, 2012, cited in England, Ikpe, Comunian & Kabir, 2021).

It is reported that almost all mainstream shopping firms in Namibia are South African and European chain stores (Bauereis, 2016), with Namibians typically favouring these outlets for their clothing needs, a trend that poses direct competition to individual designers and seamstresses in Windhoek. Bauereis (2016) adds that urban Namibians often view locally made and handcrafted products negatively because they associate them with backwardness and a time before industrialization. Additionally, there is a widespread lack of trust in the quality of Namibian products among urban consumers. This competition between African fashion markets and imported clothing is said to have an effect on the establishment of design traditions, as well as the commercial resources from which players within the local fashion industry can benefit (Rovine, 2019; Wadell, 2016). Furthermore, the media considerably promotes Western fashion trends through outlets like fashion shows, magazines, and social media (Lopes, 2020, as cited in Adade, 2023).

Namibia's relationship with colonialism has made a dramatic impact on local dress practices in complex ways. Sarantou (2014) illustrates the ongoing challenges that Namibian creatives face owing to the lingering effects of colonialism, outlining how some local designers use their design styles as a means of navigating and adapting to different cultural influences. Others use their design styles as a way to anchor themselves in more stable, consistent identities. However, despite these creative strategies, local designers face ongoing tensions and frustrations stemming from the postcolonial realities they grapple with on a daily basis. These tensions are manifested in the struggle to assert cultural authenticity and compete with imported fashion trends, perpetuating a cycle of dependency and marginalisation within the local fashion industry.

To enhance its recognition and credibility among local consumers as well as the international market, the Namibian fashion industry would benefit from increased local support. This research aims to investigate the potential of media in fostering local engagement and support for Namibia's burgeoning fashion industry. By garnering backing from local fashion consumers, stakeholders stand to gain significantly within the industry, aiding in the establishment of a stronger identity and cultural brand, ultimately raising industry standards and positioning Namibia as a key player in Africa's fashion landscape.

However, there seems to be a lack of literature on the preferences and behaviours of Namibian fashion consumers, as well as the various factors that influence their decisions to adopt or reject local fashion products, particularly in relation to the efficacy of localised social media platforms tailored specifically for the Namibian fashion industry.

Applying the Diffusion of Innovations theory will allow for the analysis of factors influencing the diffusion of local fashion innovations in Namibia, identify barriers to adoption, and propose strategies to promote the acceptance and support of local fashion within the Namibian market. This theoretical framework can provide insights into how to address the challenges faced by the Namibian fashion industry and promote its growth and sustainability, positioning Namibia as a significant contributor to Africa's fashion industry.

The media and fashion consciousness

The media highly impacts a consumer's brand consciousness (Shephard, Pookulangara, Kinley and Josiam, 2016). Oberhofer (2012) states that when aiming to elevate the exchange within the local fashion scene, as well as to establish new local, transcontinental and global connections, the digitalisation and mediatisation of fashion are valuable aspects to consider.

Fashion consciousness is defined as a person's awareness and interest in fashion, which also includes how much he or she is involved with the styles of clothing (Nam, Hamlin, Gam, Kang, Kim, Kumphai, Starr, and Richards, 2006, cited in Shephard et al., 2016). Shephard et al. (2016), link fashion consciousness to fashion leadership. The presence of fashion leaders facilitates other consumers' awareness in fashion (Beaudoin, 1998; Goldsmith et al., 1993, as cited by Shephard et al., 2016). As a supporting agent to consumer fashion awareness and engagement Gul and Shahzad (2014), and Khan, Fatima and Matloob, (2019) identify the media as one of the key influencers in consumer fashion consciousness.

Social media as a fashion marketing tool

Once considered a hierarchical, experts-only industry, the fashion industry has now become more inclusive, where everyday people can get an inside look and offer feedback (Durmaz, 2014; Park, Ciampaglia, & Ferrara, 2016). Social media can be defined as a digitalised platform dedicated to sharing ideas and information through virtual networks and communities (Dollarhide, 2024). Socialization and media are considered an imperative form of communication that the fashion industry relies on to study consumer trends and anticipate fashion behaviours (Ahmad, Salman &

Ashiq, 2015; Apeagyei 2011, cited by Shephard, Pookulangara, Kinley & Josiam 2016).

Based on data collected from customers in France, the United Kingdom and the United States, research by Huang et al. (2016) has found that social media has emerged as the dominant platform for users to share information on, learn about, and interact with brands, as well as make and evaluate purchases. Because it is an integrated medium, it provides unique value to both marketers and consumers (Ahmad et al., 2015). Through social media, marketers have a faster way to engage with existing and potential customers and receive authentic information to gain insight on consumers (Huang et al. 2016).

Peer-to-peer communication through media is increasingly becoming recognized as a useful and cost-effective means of marketing (Alrwashdeh, Emeagwali, & Aljuhmani, 2019). Brand involvement and public conversation influence fashion leaders making purchase decisions (Lee & Workman 2013, as cited by Shephard et al. 2016). It is therefore important for brands to understand electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) engagement in order to optimize their social media marketing strategies and online presence (Alrwashdeh et al., 2019).

Purpose of the study

In the case of the Namibian fashion industry, it can be argued that the Western colonial influence on Namibia has resulted in local consumption patterns that rely heavily on imported clothing, thus diminishing the role of local fashion industry stakeholders. This paper explores how media can be used to develop the Namibian fashion industry by encouraging local engagement and support of Namibia's growing fashion industry. The study explores ways to determine what local fashion consumers are attracted to.

Additionally, there is a lack of information regarding localised social media platforms in Namibia created and customized to generate consumer engagement and investment, particularly within the emerging Namibian fashion industry; research that, for example, explores social media platforms or applications created specifically for designers to network with consumers or other designers, manufacturers, and suppliers in order to improve the competency of the industry. It is on this basis that this research sought to examine how social media can be used to elevate industry standards and increase the engagement and support of the Namibian fashion industry.

Research design

This was a mixed methods study, where quantitative data was collected to analyse consumer interests. Thereafter, interviews were held with industry stakeholders to gather qualitative information. The population consisted of Namibian fashion consumers as well as industry stakeholders. The sample of the population consisted of two groups: a number of local fashion conscious consumers, and industry stakeholders.

Quantitative data was collected to understand which social media platforms were the most successful in marketing Namibian fashion to the local fashion consumer. This survey sought mainly to find out how social media can be used to encourage local fashion consciousness and consumer engagement. Survey Monkey was used as the main data collection tool. Because social media operates online, the ideal respondents of the survey were those who have access to compatible technological devices and internet connection. Respondents were recruited via social networks through being invited to click on a link that would lead respondents to the survey. The Survey Monkey platform was considered a fitting tool because a questionnaire on this platform can easily be shared via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The qualitative section of the study intended to examine how social media can cultivate competitiveness as well as a distinctly local creative identity. Industry stakeholders were interviewed

to determine whether a localised platform would be more beneficial in the development of their local fashion innovations. Industry stakeholders are more involved in the fashion industry than consumers and they have a more comprehensive understanding of how the local industry works. In addition, through the interview process, the stakeholders were able to take the surveyed responses of the public into consideration when answering some of the questions. Participants were asked a number of questions, namely: whether a localised platform could be more beneficial in the development of local fashion innovations; what characteristics a localised social media platform would need to generate unique and relevant innovations, products or designs; how much consumer participation should be taken into consideration in the development of this platform; and how Namibian culture could best be integrated into social media to cultivate a distinctive creative identity within the local fashion industry.

Findings

Quantitative findings

For the quantitative survey a total of 42 responses were gathered. The average age, as well as the median age of the respondents was 25. The following table shows the 42 respondents categorised by nationality and country of residence. The quantitative findings focused on consumer interests, where members of the Namibian public answered on their thoughts of social media in relation to Namibian fashion.

Table 1: Summary of respondents

Number of respondents	Nationality	Country of residence
34	Namibian	Namibia
1	Zambian	Namibia
1	Unknown	Unknown
2	South African, Zambian	South Africa, Zambia
4	Namibian	Russia, South Africa, United States, China

Figure 1: Respondents asked to select one of the following
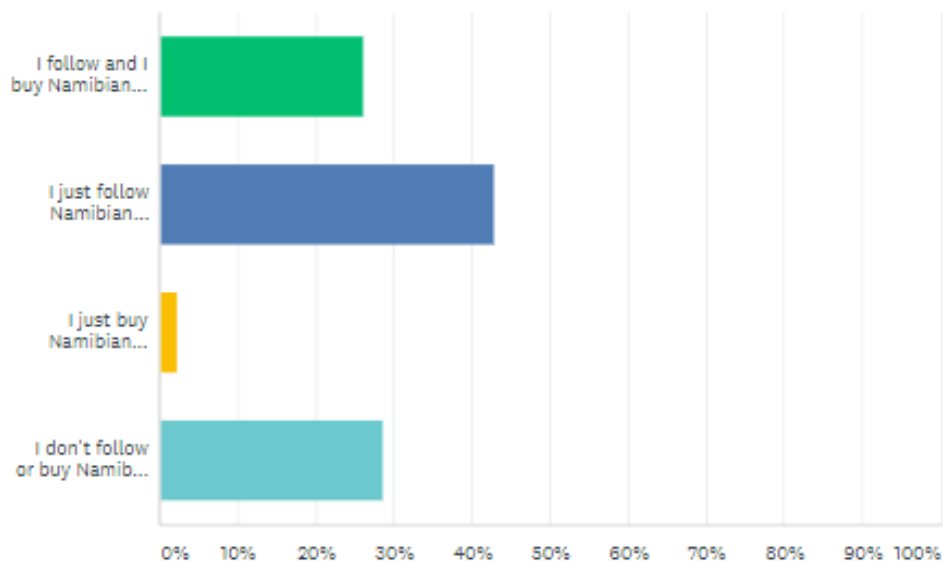

Figure 2: How much would a local influencer/social media platform [e.g. magazines] persuade you to care more about a Namibian fashion brand?
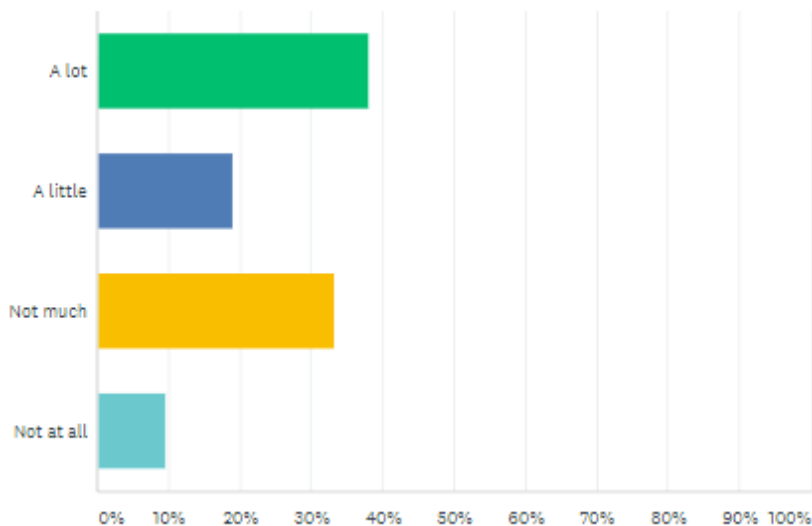
Table 2: How much would a local influencer/social media platform [e.g. magazines] persuade you to care more about a Namibian fashion brand?

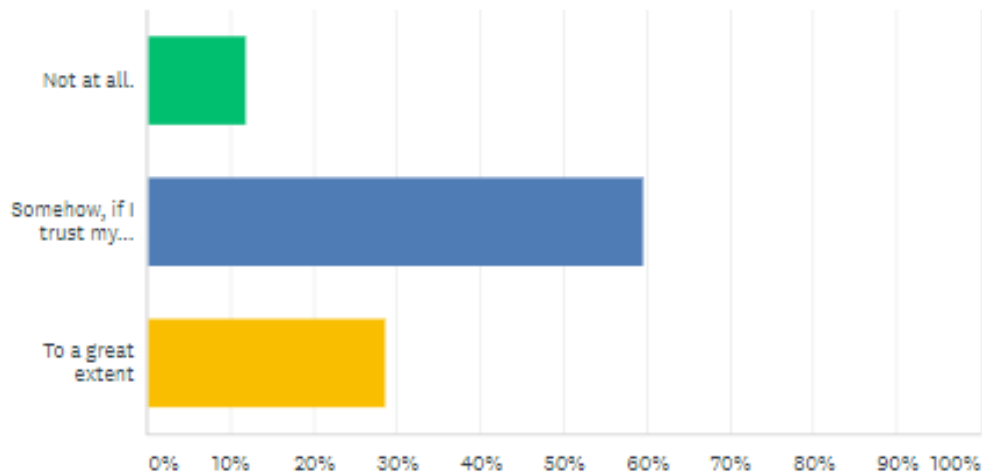| ANSWER CHOICES ▼	RESPONSES ▼	
▼ A lot	38.10%	16
▼ A little	19.05%	8
▼ Not much	33.33%	14
▼ Not at all	9.52%	4
TOTAL		42

Figure 3: On a scale from 1 (extremely relevant) to 4 (least important), what should Namibian fashion focus more on?
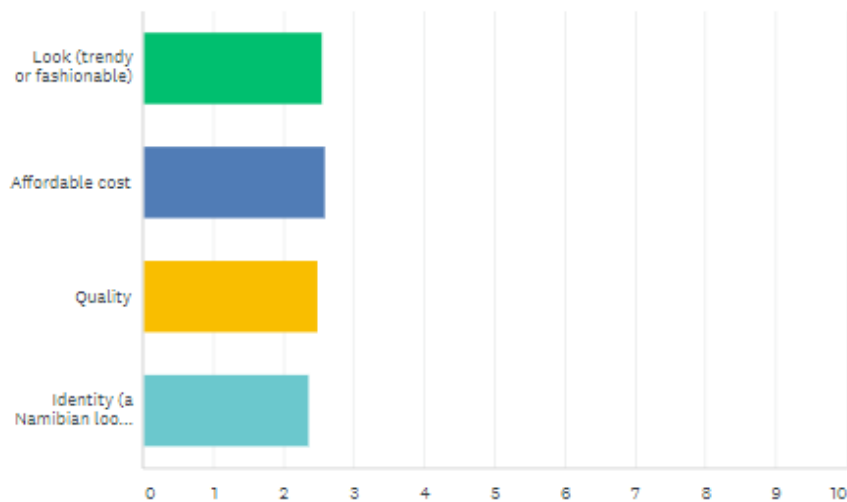
Table 3: On a scale from 1 (extremely relevant) to 4 (least important), what should Namibian fashion focus more on?

|	1 ▼	2 ▼	3 ▼	4 ▼	TOTAL ▼	SCORE ▼
▼ Look (trendy or fashionable)	35.71% 15	16.67% 7	14.29% 6	33.33% 14	42	2.55
▼ Affordable cost	14.29% 6	42.86% 18	30.95% 13	11.90% 5	42	2.60
▼ Quality	28.57% 12	14.29% 6	35.71% 15	21.43% 9	42	2.50
▼ Identity (a Namibian look and feel)	21.43% 9	26.19% 11	19.05% 8	33.33% 14	42	2.36

Figure 4: To what extent would a friend's social media post or referral influence your interest on a Namibian fashion brand?

Table 4: To what extent would a friend's social media post or referral influence your interest on a Namibian fashion brand?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not at all.	11.90%	5
Somehow, if I trust my friend's taste	59.52%	25
To a great extent	28.57%	12
TOTAL		42

Figure 5: If you were involved in the Namibian fashion industry, you would like to:
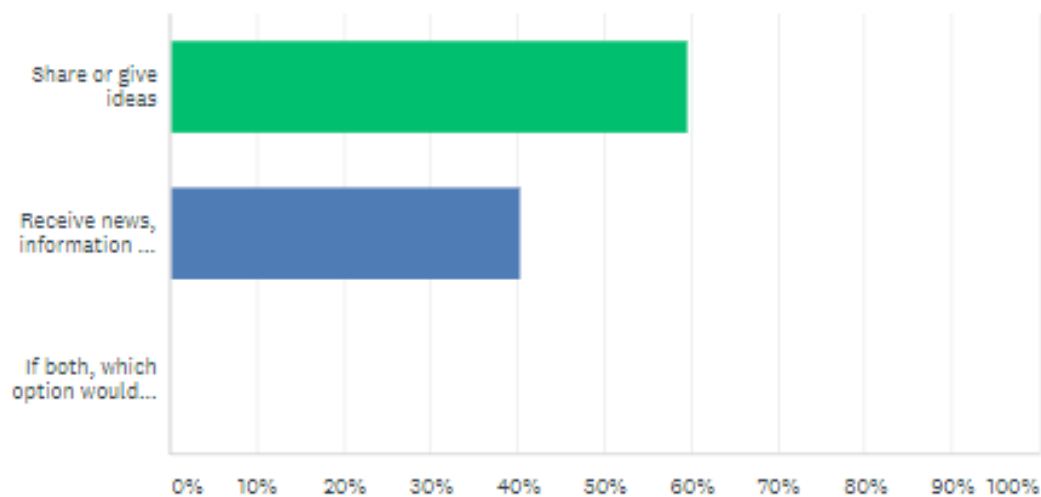
Table 5: If you were involved in the Namibian fashion industry, you would like to:

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
▼ Share or give ideas		59.52%	25
▼ Receive news, information or inspiration		40.48%	17
▼ If both, which option would you consider the most important?	Responses	0.00%	0
TOTAL			42

The findings show that Namibian fashion has captured the interest of consumers primarily because of their willingness to support local fashion. However, this has not often translated into actual purchasing of merchandise. 18 out of 42 respondents (42.86%) follow Namibian accounts, but do not buy local. Most responses showed that this was because Namibian fashion is too expensive. A few other respondents stated that it did not appeal to their style while others stated that it was due to lack of exposure.

Consumers have lost interest in local fashion brands mainly because of lack of information about the brand. A lack of trust and perceived costliness of Namibian clothing also surfaced as a main concern. Affordability, quality and trendiness was therefore prioritised over local identity.

Electronic sharing of Namibian fashion through posts shared by friends proved to be the most common means of exposure to Namibian fashion (45.24%) and most respondents showed that they highly trust their friends' posts or referrals.

The majority of the respondents (59.52%) also showed that they would like share or give ideas, and not only receive news and inspiration on the platforms. Lastly, Instagram, primarily a visual platform, was selected by 29 of the 42 respondents (69.05%) as the platform best suited for receiving fashion information.

Qualitative Findings

Semi-structured interviews were held with a number of stakeholders operating in different fields of the local fashion industry to give a wider representation of the industry. The following three stakeholders were selected because they contribute towards the image/branding and the service providing aspect of the local industry. The contact details of the stakeholders were attained through event networking, and through contact details provided on stakeholder social media platforms.

Interview 1: Editor and co-owner of local digital fashion and lifestyle magazine

The participant spoke about how Namibia is limited in resources that encourage creative thinking and innovation when it comes to the local fashion industry. The interviewee added that despite efforts by participating individuals or stakeholders in the local fashion industry, many are barely getting by with what they have. The participant, however, added that Namibia is currently a small market and that it will take time to get to the point of hosting a platform that looks into establishing local fashion brands in the country as well as selling or making the brands marketable outside of the country.

The interviewee iterated that for unique and relevant innovations, products and designs to be generated on a localised platform (whether products, innovations or designs are sourced locally or internationally); the platform would need to have an authentic Namibian feel to it.

Secondly, the platform would need to have a voice. In other words, it would need to become a household name, locally and internationally. The localised platform would also need to make efforts to constantly and consistently stay relevant.

The participant stated that consumer participation should feature on the platform from the very beginning. Consumer involvement on the platform, which she referred to as "co-creation", would mean that the consumer would have a sense of ownership. According to the interviewee, participation in itself is an important manifestation of democracy because allows people to be able to influence how they would want any service to be managed, developed and maintained. According to the interviewee, the platform would need to engage the society. That would mean getting members of the public involved by starting conversations with people, being informative and being relevant. The interviewee added, however, that consumer involvement would need to be controlled or managed the right way.

Interview 2: Fashion designer and fashion design lecturer at a local arts training institution

The interviewee talked about how social media has made marketing for designers more cost effective, and how it also allows people to see what designers are doing, not only in the capital city, but outside Windhoek as well. She talked about how platforms such as Instagram can also act as a portfolio for designers, where the public can see the progress, look and feel, speed of the production, fabrics, and so forth.

The interviewee stated that a localised social media platform would be a viable innovation because physically, it is sometimes costly or a challenge for designers to keep stock. Social media allows designers to constantly make posts and changes to garments, collections, designs, and so forth.

The interviewee also added that a database for Namibian fashion would also need to feature on the platform, where users would be able to look up a specific item and a list of relevant designers (or service providers) would appear.

The participant stated that a localised social media platform should allow the public or customers the opportunity to go back and see what the designer has created, how long the fashion designer has existed, how many garments he or she can make, and so forth. In addition, a standardised price would also need to be taken into consideration., a standard minimum wage for designers would help to regulate the flow of production in terms of quality and would prevent undercutting. The interviewee stated that the problem faced by many fashion designers in the country is that customers tend to want to cut on cost, but expect high quality products. Oftentimes, designers also feel pressured by customers to cut prices so as not to lose the customer to competition. She iterated that of course, once the price is cut, the quality is also cut and added that consumers need to understand that.

According to the participant, in addition to the designers' portfolio, showing the speed of work, the price, and the brand or designer's blog, a localised platform should include some room for the designer to explain him/herself to the client, and respond to negative or positive comments, reviews or ratings.

She noted that there is always room for the public to give comments; however, this would depend on the level where the platform is. She commented that typically, a small business would want as much input as they can get can because they want it to grow. However, as the company grows, the business might then want absolute control (although this is not the case for all larger businesses).

She stated that the public also sometimes acts as quality control for the designer (or non-designers) as well. Even if designers or service providers did not like the comments, they would need to motivate their reasons for not liking it.

The interviewee added that because Namibian fashion operates in a small sector, it will be better to allow public input. It would be helpful if the platform could also include a conversation forum and a space for frequently asked questions.

In addition, the interviewee stated that contact with international fashion industries would be an

important feature for the platform. This is because it would allow our growing industry to be exposed to what larger industries are doing.

The designer talked about how international chain shops in the country have introduced a "uniform look" that has influenced consumer tastes and preferences. This confirms This has therefore also had an effect on what the designers produce. She stated, however, that it is harder for designers to stand out if they are simply picking up what others are doing. Her fashion design curriculum therefore includes Namibian, African and Western fashion history. This gives learners/prospective designers an understanding of what is going on locally, in our neighbouring countries and around the world. The interviewee stated that culture is important in design because if a designer travels outside of the country, they would want to showcase something different. She stated that you cannot copy French designers if you want to go to Paris, for example. Your designs should signify your culture. Through incorporating aspects of your culture, it will help you to develop your brand and your signature style, she stated.

The interviewee stated that for the platform to nurture or encourage creativity and originality, producers would need to be informed that they can only showcase their original content, copying is not allowed. According to the interviewee, many designers in Namibia, upon request, will copy red carpet looks from 'A-list' celebrities to please clients.

She also noted that while mood boards/story boards could play a role on the platform, they might limit people's creativity. She mentioned Pinterest as one example, where people sometimes copy creative ideas without changing anything. The interviewee stated that research for inspiration is important. Like in fashion history, many designers can merge various elements to create a look or collection. However, from many of the students she has worked with, the interviewee stated that many tend to go with the examples she has provided instead of developing their own ideas.

To encourage creativity on the platform, the interviewee suggested that the most successful Namibian designs be displayed for inspiration. Competitions could also be held where users as well as designers are able to view the design process.

Interview 3: Fashion Council of Namibia board member and public relations specialist

The participant stated that a localised social media platform would be beneficial on the on hand because it would be Namibian focused; it would be driven for Namibian culture and Namibian ideas. On the other hand, the participant stressed that such a platform should not remove the possibility of international exposure, because collaboration networks are very important in this industry. Therefore, the platform would need to be localised, but it would also need to have a touch of international exposure for it to be viable. He iterated that the platform would be beneficial to Namibian fashion because it would allow users to see what is happening in the Namibian sphere/industry; users would be able to see who is who and who is doing what.

In defining which characteristics a localised platform would need to generate innovations, the interviewee stated that pinpointing such would be tricky. This is because, according to the interviewee, Namibia's fashion industry is still in its infant stage. What could benefit such a platform from the beginning would simply be the birth of it. He stated that because our industry is at an infant stage, we would have space to fail; to see what is working and what is not working, to use what is currently being used and also to see what type of designs or products would work on this platform. Because current social media is broad and has served multiple purposes, stakeholders now know which products, services, innovations, designs are currently working. They can then take current analytics and tailor them for a Namibian platform, which the interviewee stated would allow the industry to "fail forward" rather than failing and giving up completely.

He added that the platform should be more interactive to give industry professionals and possible consumers/customers a platform to engage. According to the interviewee, both consumers and service providers would need to be active in the platform because ultimately, the platform would need to include features and solutions that both parties can benefit from. Both parties would need to be taken into account because of the sender-receiver relationship between the seller and the buyer. The buyer would likely want flexibility and to have a way into the system. He added that people are more likely to feel good about a product, service or platform when they are involved in it.

The interviewee noted how some stakeholder social media platforms or accounts that he has come across are quite westernised, while others have maintained a Namibian focus. He held the opinion that a localised platform could bring the Namibian fashion industry to similar heights as some of the larger fashion industries, such as those in South Africa, West and East Africa. In other words, the platform would need to push Namibian culture and identity, which according to him has not quite manifested yet. He noted how on East and West African platforms, users are able to see the rich culture that those fashion industries are celebrating.

Therefore, if Namibian culture could be integrated, people will be able to see what Namibian identity is, as well as our creativity in terms of advancing our industry, creating, and being part of the global movement. The interviewee noted how Namibian fashion's current state of not having an identity online, while other African countries do have one, is sad. With our industry being in its infant state, the interviewee believed that it could definitely start moving forward to creating that identity. He stated that through this, local culture will be celebrated more and people would more boldly begin say, "I'm proudly Namibian". People would be prouder to put through Namibian culture than trying to westernise their culture. A localised social media platform would therefore be relevant and distinctly beneficial for Namibia's growing fashion industry.

Data analysis

According to the diffusion of innovations theory, media and interpersonal contacts play an important role in creating knowledge, providing information and influencing opinion and judgment (Kaminski, 2011; Rogers, 2010; Universiteit Twente, 2017). Attitudes about an innovation are changed or influenced through interpersonal channels, whereas mass media channels contribute more effectively towards the creation of knowledge about the new idea. In these interpersonal channels or peer networks, attitudes towards an innovation are influenced by early adopters, who serve as opinion leaders for their peers (Rogers, 2010; Kaminski, 2011). According to Rogers (2010), the innovation adoption of these opinion leaders tends to be imitated by others in their system. Social media networking is cited by Kaminski (2011) as a prime example of where the adoption of an innovation is influenced through opinion leader approaches.

For this reason, this research started from the hypothesis that a localised social media platform could be used as a communication channel that would boost industry competitiveness as well as consumer support. A local Namibian social media fashion platform could assist this diffusion of innovations from the innovators in the fashion industry, where they often currently 'become stuck', through the broader Namibian society, which could generate the critical mass necessary to sustain a more vibrant local fashion sector.

The diffusion of innovations theory can help industry stakeholders explore what they should pay attention to when creating and marketing their products or services. Two of the three ways people may decide to adopt an innovation (Communication Theory, 2010) proved relevant in the findings:

Collective adoption – where the decision is made by all individuals in the social system. This can sometimes be through formal means such as democratic parliaments and town halls, but it also and

increasingly takes place through more informal means such as dissemination through word-of-mouth and discussion on social media or among acquaintances in small group settings. In this vein, social media can help increase engagement and interest in the Namibian fashion industry by encouraging participation and involvement by the public or people not normally considered key stakeholders in the industry - people who read fashion blogs, for example, and not designers or textile industry managers. This would give members of the public or consumers a sense of ownership through social media.

Authority-based adoption – where the decision for the entire social system is made by few individuals. These need not necessarily be political leaders, but also opinion formers such as 'influencers' and 'thought leaders'. This research suggests that consumers could respond well to influencers, who could popularize designers' work, form opinions as to 'what works' for their 'constituencies', and from a channel of communication between fashion consumers and the professional fashion industry. Several stakeholders' interviews implied that a Namibian social media fashion platform would need to regulate public input/participation, therefore limiting the extent to which the public can engage. Influencers, as informal 'authorities' would then be needed to still provide a communication channel and serve as a promotion vehicle, between the industry and consumers.

Conclusions and recommendations

With the help of the internet and social media, fashion has migrated from a hierarchical, experts-only industry, and has now become more democratic, where everyday people not only get an inside look, but can offer feedback (Durmaz, 2014; Rocamoa, 2012). Peer-to-peer engagement of a brand, product or service is impactful in how a consumer responds to the brand, product, service or innovation (Huang et al. 2016). To encourage local fashion consciousness and consumer engagement, there would need to be more exposure of Namibian fashion on current social media platforms. Interactions with stakeholders in this survey showed that this was especially important in the Namibian context, where a small market makes electronic word of mouth communication extremely powerful.

Social media drives customer equity by maintaining the relationship between the brand and the consumer, which is believed to be more valuable than a purchase made by the customer (Kumar & George 2007, as cited by Kim & Ko, 2012). Social media can influence public attitudes and opinions, and therefore affect a brand's reputation dramatically (Kim and Ko, 2012). Thus, boosting consumer involvement can encourage positive attitudes towards local industry innovation.

Whether through a localised platform or current popular social media platforms, participants within the Namibian fashion industry will need to hone in on influencer power of persuasion (not only influencers as people but the platform as an "influencer" as well). A localised social media platform could be beneficial for the industry but it is important that such a platform not exclude opportunities of international exposure and networking.

The localised social media platform should serve as a "voice". The media highly impacts the consciousness that a consumer has about a brand (Shephard et al. 2016). Therefore, Namibian fashion on social media would not only need to showcase fashion innovations but be informative, consistent and relevant in order to increase public engagement. Through social media, it would also be beneficial to allow controlled consumer participation in the design/production process.

It could be suggested that the Namibian fashion industry also look into showcasing affordability and style, or at least communicate the production process (including cost of production) to the consumers. This would help them understand why products tend to be costly.

While research has proven the influential role of consumer involvement in their attitudes towards an

innovation, not much has been said on the extent of public participation with Namibian fashion industry efforts. How much of the production process should consumers be a part of? Further research could look into how social media could best manage consumer involvement in a way that would ease the flow of production for the stakeholder as well as satisfy the consumer.

References

Bauereis, L. (2016). *The creative city in Namibia: Development potential for Windhoek?*
https://publikationen.uni-tuebingen.de/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10900/71829/GSWP_Creative%20Windhoek_Bauereis%2C%20Lukas.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Communicationtheoryorg. (2010). *Communication Theory.*
https://www.communicationtheory.org/diffusion-of-innovation-theory/

Drury, G. (2008). Opinion piece: Social media: Should marketers engage and how can it be done effectively? *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice, 9*(3), 274-277.
https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/palgrave.dddmp.4350096

Durmaz, L. (2014). *The role of social media in the fashion industry: How fashion blogging encourages two-way symmetrical communication.*
http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1081&context=joursp

Frazer, G. (2008). Used-clothing donations and apparel production in Africa. *The Economic Journal, 118*(532), 1764-1784.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/20108883.pdf?casa_token=Y4yIjvUrdcIAAAAA:ABD-0hnl9vaGEVFVC1DbJ5uyeBKA0QTYlLuV1zlULyy33hpmCNO_jkfWj_e6wnQfNuKWJuxoS6iqUCREFiYjNAhcPAQAekAxk30de7Ksh2R9UdEN7RJD

Frimpong, S. K. (2011). A comparison of effect between domestic versus foreign brands on consumer purchasing decisions in Ghana. In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Innovation & Management.*
http://www4.pucsp.br/icim/ingles/downloads/papers_2011/part_3/part_3_proc_16.pdf

Gul, M. S., & Shahzad, H. (2014). The relationship of social media with fashion consciousness and consumer buying behavior. *Journal of Management Info, 2*(1).
http://jmi.readersinsight.net/index.php/jmi/article/download/4/xml_1

Hansen, K. T. (2004). The world in dress: Anthropological perspectives on clothing, fashion, and culture. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 33*, 369-392.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25064858.pdf?casa_token=pUZzSLx0Tg8AAAAA:1CtETPJTe3a8foOTc3E1JvMVFRzSW8db0IqbPlf1TX9NwY3BA4yv-e6k-hhygVvIUUXy4ykGZXZOKNJ2Jw4CLgsvuEK_3bu8zM42gUjQap9AIonjlpdt

Huang, L., Hudson, S., Roth, M. S., & Madden, T. J. (2016). The influence of social media interactions on consumer–brand relationships: A three-country study of brand perceptions and marketing behaviors. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 33*(1), 27-41.
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/28a4/22c954c5b81d1c1b358b4cbe26f10811c949.pdf

Ibrahim, A., Ghazali, Z., & Zakaria, Z. (2011). The influence of socialization agents on fashion consciousness. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 2*(14). http://www.ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol._2_No._14%3B_July_2011/15.pdf

Jennings, H., & Ude, I. (2011). *New African Fashion*. Prestel. https://prestelpublishing.randomhouse.de/leseprobe/New-African-Fashion-US-Version-/leseprobe_9783791345796.pdf

Kaminski, J. (2011). Diffusion of innovation theory. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Informatics, 6*(2), 1-6. http://cjni.net/journal/?p=1444

Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research, 65*(10), 1480-1486. http://hamkarfile.ir/up/1650.pdf

Oberhofer, M. A. (2012). Fashioning African cities: The case of Johannesburg, Lagos and Douala. *Streetnotes, 20*(01). https://cloudfront.escholarship.org/dist/prd/content/qt4dv2g2n9/qt4dv2g2n9.pdf

Rantisi, N. M. (2011). The prospects and perils of creating a viable fashion identity. *Fashion Theory, 15*(2), 259-266.

Rocamora, A. (2012). Hypertextuality and remediation in the fashion media: The case of fashion blogs. *Journalism Practice, 6*(1), 92-106. http://kenanaonline.com/files/0081/81971/HYPERTEXTUALITY%20AND%20REMEDIATION%20IN.pdf

Rogers, E. M. (2010). *Diffusion of innovations*. Simon and Schuster.

Rovine, V. L. (2006, August 2). African fashion design: global networks and local styles. *Africultures*. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anja_Christinck/publication/225616414_Farmers_and_researchers_How_can_collaborative_advantages_be_created_in_participatory_research_and_technology_development/links/00b4953a92931a6fae000000/Farmers-and-researchers-How-can-collaborative-advantages-be-created-in-participatory-research-and-technology-development.pdf#page=37

Shephard, A., Pookulangara, S., Kinley, T. R., & Josiam, B. M. (2016). Media influence, fashion, and shopping: A gender perspective. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, 20*(1), 4-18. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Bharath_Josiam/publication/301826030_Media_influence_fashion_and_shopping_a_gender_perspective/links/5a1c89d2a6fdcc0af32659f3/Media-influence-fashion-and-shopping-a-gender-perspective.pdf

Utwentenl. (2018). Universiteit Twente. https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/communication-theories/sorted-by-cluster/Communication and Information Technology/Diffusion_of_Innovations_Theory/

Wadell, A. (2016). Redefining fashion capital(s) contemporary Ghanaian and Nigerian Fashion [Master's thesis, Ryerson University]. https://mlc.ryerson.ca/assets/MRP%20Proposal%20(Waddell)_web.pdf

Wolny, J., & Mueller, C. (2013). Analysis of fashion consumers' motives to engage in electronic word-of-mouth communication through social media platforms. *Journal of Marketing Management, 29*(5-6), 562-583.
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0267257X.2013.77832

About the authors

Hugh Ellis is a Senior Lecturer: Journalism and Media Technology at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST). His main research interests are in photojournalism, documentary photography, journalism in feminist movements, arts journalism, and performance poetry as a public sphere. He has a PhD in media studies from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and has previously worked as a journalist and United Nations official in Namibia.