

**E-COMMERCE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA: AN INSTAGRAM PAGE ATTRIBUTE-  
CONVERSION MODEL IN CONTEXT OF FASHION APPAREL INDUSTRY****Acee-Eke, Beatrice Chinyere****Department of Marketing, Faculty of Management Sciences****Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State,  
Nigeria***Email: Bettyacee1@gmail.com***ABSTRACT**

This study theoretically examined e-commerce through social media: an Instagram page attribute-conversion model in context of fashion apparel industry. The aim of this paper was to theoretically examine how different Instagram pages attributes influence conversion model within the fashion apparel industry context. This work is anchored on Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory. To achieve the objectives, the study employed survey of literatures and content analysis. Content analyses revealed that the relationship between Instagram page attributes and the conversion model in the fashion apparel industry is both strategic and influential in driving consumer behavior from awareness to actual purchase. Based on extant literature reviewed, the study concluded that as fashion consumers migrate toward visually driven, mobile-first shopping experiences, Instagram has emerged as a key digital storefront where brand identity, product visibility, and user engagement converge. Consequently, it was recommended that fashion brands should prioritize the production of high-resolution, aesthetically appealing images and videos that align with their brand identity.

***Keywords: Instagram Page, Conversion Model, E-Commerce and Fashion Apparel Industry***

**INTRODUCTION**

The rapid proliferation of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the global commerce landscape, giving rise to e-commerce as a dominant mode of buying and selling goods and services. Among the most profound shifts within this paradigm is the integration of social media platforms particularly Instagram as strategic tools for engaging consumers, building brand identity, and driving conversions. Social commerce, defined as the intersection of e-commerce and social networking platforms, has emerged as a powerful business model that leverages user-generated content, peer influence, and interactive experiences to facilitate online purchases (Liang & Xue, 2023). In the fashion apparel industry, where visual appeal, trend sensitivity, and brand storytelling are critical, Instagram stands out as a highly influential medium. As a photo- and video-centric platform with over 2 billion monthly active users globally (Statista, 2024), Instagram enables fashion brands to showcase their products in creative, aspirational, and lifestyle-oriented ways. Through tools such as Instagram Shops, Stories, Reels, influencer collaborations, and shoppable posts, brands are now able to blur the lines between content and commerce turning everyday scrolling into sales opportunities (Chen & Dhanesh, 2022). This has led to a growing interest in understanding the conversion mechanisms that transform casual viewers into paying customers within the Instagram ecosystem.

While previous research has examined the role of social media in consumer behavior (Alalwan, 2022; Ahmad *et al.*, 2023), there is a growing need to focus specifically on Instagram page attributes and their influence on conversion behaviors in the fashion apparel context. Instagram page attributes such as visual aesthetics, content consistency, brand credibility, interactivity, and influencer endorsement serve as key cues that shape consumer perceptions and decision-making (Kim & Kim, 2022). These cues not only influence trust and engagement but also contribute to the psychological processes that result in actual purchases. Moreover, the fashion apparel sector is uniquely poised for Instagram-driven commerce due to its reliance on visual inspiration, frequent product updates,

and emotional branding. Studies have shown that visual appeal, product-display strategies, and brand personality expression on Instagram significantly enhance the shopping experience and increase purchase intentions (Kang *et al.*, 2021). However, despite the platform's commercial potential, conversion rates remain relatively low compared to traffic and engagement levels, indicating a critical gap between attention and action (Choi & Lee, 2022). This underscores the importance of identifying and modeling the specific Instagram page attributes that contribute most effectively to conversion outcomes.

In response to this gap, this study introduces an Instagram Page Attribute–Conversion Model to explore how different page-level characteristics influence consumer behavior in the fashion apparel industry. By drawing on theories from digital marketing, consumer psychology, and media richness, the study aims to provide a structured framework for understanding and optimizing social media-driven e-commerce performance. Particular attention will be paid to the interaction between visual content quality, user engagement cues (likes, comments, shares), informational value, and social proof (e.g., influencer collaboration and customer testimonials). Furthermore, the study adopts a consumer-centric lens, recognizing that the conversion process is not merely transactional but also cognitive and affective. Consumers are influenced not only by the product itself but also by how it is framed within the brand's narrative, the interactivity of the page, and the credibility of social actors endorsing it. In the fashion industry, where identity expression and social validation are critical, these factors may have even more pronounced effects on conversion behaviors. The above discussion necessitated the study.

### Conceptual Framework

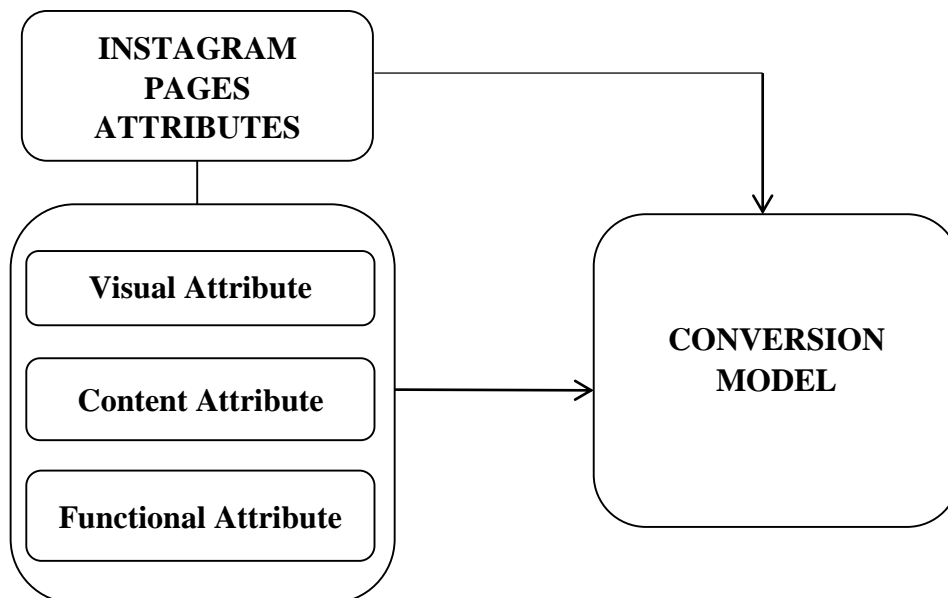


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: (Kim & Kim, 2022; Kang *et al.*, 2021).

### Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this paper was to theoretically examine how different Instagram pages attributes influence conversion model within the fashion apparel industry context. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine how visual attribute influence conversion model within the fashion apparel industry.
2. examine how content attribute influence conversion model within the fashion apparel industry.
3. examine how functional attribute influence conversion model within the fashion apparel industry.

## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

### Concept of Instagram Pages Attributes

In the evolving landscape of social commerce, Instagram page attributes have emerged as critical elements influencing brand perception, consumer engagement, and purchasing behavior, particularly in visually-driven industries like fashion apparel. Instagram, as a platform rooted in image and lifestyle storytelling, enables brands to curate digital storefronts that are aesthetically appealing and interactively immersive. The term Instagram page attributes refers to the composite characteristics, elements, and features presented on a brand's Instagram profile that shape how users perceive and interact with the brand (Kim & Kim, 2022).

According to Kang, Johnson, and Kim (2021), Instagram page attributes are "the strategically curated visual and textual elements of a brand's profile that contribute to user engagement and brand image formation." These include tangible elements such as image quality, color schemes, and feed layout, as well as functional aspects like post frequency, use of hashtags, and interactive features (e.g., polls, swipe-up links, and shoppable tags). Similarly, Kim and Kim (2022) define them as "the brand's stylistic and communicative cues on Instagram that signal professionalism, authenticity, and trustworthiness, influencing how consumers evaluate the brand. These attributes are not random design choices; they are strategic signals that represent brand identity, positioning, and customer orientation in the digital space. Choi and Lee (2022) further assert that Instagram page attributes serve as psychological triggers that inform consumer decision-making, including trust formation, emotional connection, and purchase intention.

The fashion apparel industry is highly competitive, fast-paced, and largely emotion-driven, making Instagram a fertile ground for brand building and consumer engagement. Instagram page attributes allow fashion brands to create immersive brand experiences that go beyond showcasing products to communicating lifestyles and aspirations (Chen & Dhanesh, 2022). Unlike traditional e-commerce websites, Instagram facilitates real-time interaction, peer influence, and visual storytelling—all of which are vital to appealing to the modern fashion consumer. Aesthetic presentation and visual branding are especially important in fashion because consumers often associate visual quality with product quality. According to Kim and Kim (2022), users exposed to high-aesthetic Instagram pages are more likely to form favorable brand attitudes and exhibit higher purchase intentions. This is reinforced by the platform's design, which privileges visual content and facilitates impulse buying through seamless shopping integrations. Thus, visual attribute, content attribute and functional attribute are considered as dimensions of Instagram pages attributes.

### Dimensions of Instagram Pages Attributes

#### Visual Attributes

Visual attributes in fashion are defined by Kang *et al.* (2021) as "the collection of stylistic, compositional, and aesthetic elements that influence how consumers perceive fashion products, including color, texture, silhouette, harmony, and presentation style." These attributes are the first point of contact between a brand and its audience, serving as semiotic cues that reflect quality, relevance, and brand personality. In the fashion apparel industry, visual attributes play a central role in influencing consumer perceptions, emotional engagement, and purchase behavior. Due to the inherently aesthetic nature of fashion, visual presentation functions not merely as a medium of communication but as a strategic tool for brand differentiation, storytelling, and conversion. Visual attributes refer to the set of visual design elements and stylistic features used by fashion brands to

convey identity, enhance appeal, and inspire action across both digital and physical retail environments (Kim & Kim, 2022). These attributes are especially important in digital contexts such as e-commerce websites and social media platforms like Instagram where consumers rely almost entirely on visual cues in the absence of tactile experiences.

### **Content Attributes**

In the digital age, particularly within the context of social commerce and e-commerce, content attributes have become central to how fashion apparel brands attract, inform, and convert consumers. While visual attributes focus on aesthetics, content attributes encompass the informational, contextual, and persuasive components that accompany fashion-related media. These attributes are vital to digital storytelling, brand identity reinforcement, and consumer decision-making in an environment where physical product interaction is absent. In essence, content attributes refer to the textual and narrative elements embedded within fashion brand communications—captions, hashtags, product descriptions, tone of voice, brand messaging, and storytelling techniques—that influence how consumers perceive value and engage with the brand (Kim & Kim, 2022).

According to Kang, Johnson, and Kim (2021), content attributes are “the verbal, textual, and semantic features of brand communications that provide information, stimulate engagement, and facilitate brand-consumer interactions in digital platforms.” These may include product descriptions, fashion tips, brand stories, call-to-action (CTA) statements, and hashtags, all of which serve to enhance meaning, communicate utility, and persuade customers. Similarly, Liang and Xue (2023) define content attributes as “the informational and emotional messaging embedded in fashion content that guides consumer evaluation and supports purchase intent.” In a competitive digital marketplace, it is not only what brands show visually but what they say and how they say it that drives customer action.

### **Functional Attributes**

Functional attributes in fashion are defined as the utilitarian aspects of a garment that relate to its performance, comfort, and suitability for intended use (Choi & Lee, 2022). These include material quality, ease of care, breathability, fit accuracy, stitching, and even how garments respond to environmental conditions like temperature or moisture. According to Liang and Xue (2023), functional attributes are the product-related characteristics that address consumers’ basic needs of wearability, safety, and practical use, in contrast to hedonic or aesthetic dimensions. Thus, while design and appearance may attract consumers initially, functionality sustains long-term satisfaction and loyalty. The fashion apparel industry, while often characterized by aesthetics and style, also rests fundamentally on functionality—the extent to which clothing meets consumer expectations in terms of practicality, performance, and utility. In the context of both physical and online retailing, functional attributes refer to the tangible, performance-based features of a garment that address fit, comfort, durability, versatility, and usability.

### **Concept of Conversion Model**

In the contemporary fashion apparel industry, particularly within the context of digital commerce, the conversion model refers to the structured journey through which a potential customer transitions from mere awareness of a brand or product to ultimately making a purchase decision. This process encompasses various stages—often visualized as a funnel—and is shaped by psychological, behavioral, technological, and marketing variables. The model is increasingly relevant due to the dominance of social commerce, mobile shopping, and visual-centric platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which influence fashion discovery and purchase behavior (Alalwan, 2022; Kim & Kim, 2022). A conversion model is defined as the systematic representation of the stages a customer goes through before converting from a passive viewer to an active purchaser. In the fashion apparel industry, it includes exposure to fashion content, engagement with product visuals and descriptions,

evaluation of alternatives, decision-making, and finally, purchase (Liang & Xue, 2023). Unlike traditional sales funnels, modern conversion models also incorporate post-purchase behaviors such as advocacy and repurchase. Kim and Ko (2021) further define the fashion conversion model as “a multidimensional path-to-purchase process, driven by brand content, social proof, product attributes, and seamless omnichannel experiences.

### **E-commerce and Social Media in Nigeria**

E-commerce in Nigeria has experienced significant growth due to increased mobile phone usage and digital literacy. Platforms like Instagram provide SMEs and fashion entrepreneurs with low-cost access to large audiences. Studies have shown that social media lowers barriers to market entry and enables personalized marketing. E-commerce is traditionally associated with web-based communities. For instance, Zetlin and Pflieger (2022) describe consumer-driven online markets in which most consumers’ needs are arranged through a community Web site. This gathering of needs in one place facilitates vendors to have higher sales and more community members to obtain discounts. Therefore, web-based communication is said to substantially affect almost every company that provides services or produces consumer goods. It could change the nature of community sponsorship strategies and corporate advertising, as well as the manner through which business is done (Blanchard & Markus, 2024).

One particularly powerful online communication platform nowadays is social media. Social media is defined as ‘a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content’ (Nielsen, 2020). It uses Internet-based and web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (i.e., one-to-many) into social media dialogues (i.e., many-to-many). Some examples of Web 2.0 social media sites include blogs, web forums, virtual communities, and social networks. According to Nielsen (2020), the world spends over 110 billion minutes daily on social media sites. A positive consumer engagement leads to positive purchase behavior. Consumer engagement encourages customers to think about brands on a personal level, which improves their buying intentions. Consumer engagement behavior positively correlates with a movie’s box-office revenue. Additionally, consumer engagement positively influences brand loyalty (Nielsen, 2020) because interactions between customers and brands improve consumer understanding of the brand by enabling direct and instantaneous communication. Such interactions mean customers experience the brand’s personality and feel appreciated; later, they reciprocate by purchasing the brand’s products and leaving positive reviews.

### **Relationship between Instagram Pages Attributes and Conversion Model**

The relationship between Instagram page attributes and the conversion model in the fashion apparel industry is both strategic and influential in driving consumer behavior from awareness to actual purchase. Instagram page attributes such as visual aesthetics, content quality, functional presentation, brand storytelling, and interactivity serve as the first points of engagement for potential customers. High-quality images, cohesive branding, influencer collaborations, user-generated content (UGC), and detailed product information build consumer trust and shape perceptions about a brand’s credibility and style identity (Kim & Kim, 2022). These attributes play a critical role in attracting attention and nurturing interest—essential steps in the early stages of the conversion model. For fashion brands, especially those operating via social commerce, visually appealing and functionally informative Instagram profiles directly influence engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and saves, which are precursors to deeper product exploration and eventual purchase intent (Choi & Lee, 2022).

Moreover, Instagram page attributes are critical in facilitating seamless transitions between the consideration, intent, and conversion stages of the consumer journey. When fashion brands effectively integrate clickable shopping tags, clear calls-to-action, and consistency in tone and branding, they not only enhance usability but also reduce friction in the path to purchase (Liang &

Xue, 2023). Features like Instagram Checkout and in-app browsing options turn the platform into a direct selling channel, where visual and content-based attributes stimulate impulse buying and reinforce trust. Additionally, functional content—such as size guides, fabric descriptions, and styling tips—supports informed decision-making, bridging the gap between engagement and conversion (Ahmad et al., 2023). Therefore, the synergy between well-curated Instagram page attributes and the conversion model forms the basis of successful social commerce strategies in the fashion apparel industry.

## THEORETICAL REVIEW

This work is anchored on Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory. Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory was propounded by Mehrabian and Russell 1974. The theory assumes that:

- i. Instagram page attributes such as visual quality, content richness, and interactivity act as stimuli that affect consumer perception, emotions, and engagement in the digital environment (Kim & Kim, 2022).
- ii. Consumers do not merely observe Instagram content passively; instead, they experience internal states (organism), such as aesthetic pleasure, desire, curiosity, or trust, which mediate their eventual behavior.
- iii. Virtual environments like Instagram can mimic or replace traditional retail sensory experiences, and users' decision-making processes are similarly responsive to cues in this mediated space.

The implication of this theory is that the model is highly applicable to social media-based fashion retail, where visual stimuli and emotionally engaging content heavily influence shopping behaviors. Instagram serves as both a promotional and a transactional platform, making S-O-R a practical model for explaining how page design and content lead to conversions. Since fashion is both a visual and emotional category, the S-O-R theory effectively captures the holistic nature of consumer experience from attraction to emotional connection to action offering deeper insights than rational-choice or utilitarian models alone.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above and extant literature reviewed, the study concluded that as fashion consumers migrate toward visually driven, mobile-first shopping experiences, Instagram has emerged as a key digital storefront where brand identity, product visibility, and user engagement converge. High-quality imagery, consistent branding, interactive product displays, and seamless navigation serve to reduce psychological distance and increase buyer confidence.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on discussion above, the following recommendations were made:

1. Fashion brands should prioritize the production of high-resolution, aesthetically appealing images and videos that align with their brand identity.
2. Instagram shopping functionalities such as product tagging, clickable links, Instagram Checkout, and highlights should be fully utilized and frequently updated by fashionists.
3. Brands should continuously analyze key performance indicators (KPIs) such as engagement rate, conversion rate, bounce rate, and customer retention.

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