



The Role of Social Media Engagement in Enhancing Economic Sustainability: A Systematic Review of the Fashion Industry

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Abstract

In recent years, the relationship between social media engagement and economic sustainability has grown into one of the most consequential intersections shaping how the fashion industry operates and evolves. This systematic review draws on peer-reviewed literature published between 2022 and 2026 to investigate the pathways through which social media engagement translates into meaningful economic sustainability outcomes across the global fashion industry, with particular emphasis on evidence from Nigeria and comparably positioned developing economies. Grounded in a corpus of 46 primary sources assembled through structured database searches and refined using the PRISMA screening protocol, the review surfaces five interconnected thematic areas. These concern the role of content quality and posting frequency in cultivating consumer trust and brand loyalty; how platform-specific strategies operate with varying effectiveness across different demographic groups; the function of influencer collaborations as mediators of economic sustainability; the growing contribution of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and blockchain in enabling sustainable fashion practice; and the significance of customer experience management in connecting online engagement to tangible offline economic outcomes. The review also identifies meaningful gaps in the existing scholarship, most notably the limited number of longitudinal studies conducted within the Nigerian context and the sparse direct attention paid to how parasocial relationships shape sustainable purchasing behaviour. Taken together, the findings make a compelling case that thoughtfully and strategically executed social media engagement is far more than a conventional promotional instrument. It operates, rather, as a structural foundation upon which durable economic sustainability across fashion value chains can be genuinely built. The paper closes by proposing concrete directions for researchers, industry practitioners, and policymakers who seek to harness the power of digital engagement in advancing sustainable economic outcomes for the fashion sector.

Keywords: Circular economy, digital marketing, economic sustainability, fashion industry, social media engagement

1. Introduction

Fashion is simultaneously one of the most economically impactful creative industries across the globe while also being one of the most resource-heavy and environmentally debated industries. Fashion brands are currently facing scrutiny from both legislators and consumers to change how

they operate and do business to become more economically viable long-term and sustainable for the planet (Das, Karmakar, Olubiyi, & Behera, 2025; Sowemimo, Diyaolu, Akinmoye, & Adedeji, 2026). Social media presence has been a significant tool during this transition. Not only can social media be used as a platform to display what brands are doing to become more sustainable,

but it completely transforms how consumers shop, where brands source their materials, and how sustainable brands will be in the future.

Social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and Facebook have changed how consumers interact with brands. From 2022 to 2026 there has been a growing body of research analyzing how social media affects the economic sustainability of fashion brands. Articles discuss what fashion brands can do on social media through content creation, working with influencers, and using features provided by the platforms to create long-term financial success. Research studying this topic comes from various backgrounds including marketing, entrepreneurship, consumer science, sustainability, and information systems.

The aim of this comprehensive review is based on the fact that while empirical studies that analyze the relationship between social media and sustainable fashion have been growing in quantity, the literature across the different academic fields, geographic settings, and methods does not seem to be converging. This context would then shape the need for a compilation that integrates data for the world at large with what pertains to Nigeria, illuminates common discourses, highlights distinctions, and at the same time sets the boundaries of the research. The review process is systematic and rigorous to ensure robustness, transparency and replicability and is structured to provide practitioners at the fashion brand level, digital marketers, co-operative administrators, policy makers, and academics, with valuable insights that have practical relevance.

Two further considerations sharpen the rationale for this review. First, preliminary AI-assisted syntheses of the broader literature consistently identify economic sustainability messaging as comparatively underexplored

relative to environmental and social themes, with economic sustainability disclosures remaining scarce among small brands both globally and in Nigeria (Llacer-Falcon, Vilaplana-Aparicio, & Gonzalez-Diaz, 2026; Owa, Abdullah, Ukume, & Gever, 2026). Second, while the mechanisms linking social media engagement to economic outcomes, namely content quality, influencer authenticity, platform-specific strategies, and digital transformation, appear broadly consistent across contexts, their application in Nigeria is shaped by distinct infrastructural, regulatory, and cultural conditions that require dedicated empirical attention rather than direct extrapolation from Western or Asian markets (Anaba, 2025; Palladan, AbdulKadir, Ahmed, & Abubakar, 2023). This review therefore positions itself at the intersection of these two gaps, integrating global and Nigerian-focused evidence to clarify both shared mechanisms and context-specific divergences.

1.1 Research Objectives

The aim of this research is first of all to consider the strategic use of social media interaction as a structural tool that can help in the long-term economic resilience of the fashion sector.

This is to be realised through the following three objectives:

- i. To test the impact of quality content and frequent postings for sustaining consumer trust and brand loyalty for economic growth.
- ii. To recognize the potential of influencer relationships to align with a buying consumer's engagement with sustainability and their actual purchase.
- iii. To explore the benefits of using advanced digital technologies, such as AI and blockchain, to improve transparency and business efficiency of fashion companies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Media Engagement: Conceptual Foundations

Social media engagement can be generally defined as the collection of relational and experiential interactions involving consumers and brands that is driven by participation and affective behaviors within digital platforms (Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2024). It includes both the behavioural and cognitive or emotional aspects, in the form of liking, sharing, commenting and purchasing, as well as the formation of trust and attitudinal commitment. This multi-dimensional conceptualization defines social media engagement over more passive ways of media exposure, highlighting its relational and reciprocal relationships with the audience (Male & Omar, 2026). When it comes to the fashion industry, engagement translates into metrics such as content interactions, community engagement, influencers' reach, and conversions with varying connotations for brand value and profitability.

2.2 Economic Sustainability in the Fashion Industry

Economic sustainability in fashion is defined as the ability of fashion businesses and value chain actors to produce long-term economic value, be it by equipping or enhancing businesses, or community and society, that deliver quality fashion products at better prices and quality concerns to both the target market and themselves (Orisadare, Achukwu, Ogunyemi, & Awoyelu, 2025). While related, this construct is not the same as, but closely related to environmental and social sustainability: economic sustainability is defined as profitability, sustainability of clothing enterprises, quality of jobs created in fashion value chains, the ability of the value chain to withstand risks, and the fairness in the distribution of economic benefits in fashion value chains. Llacer-Falcon,

Vilaplana-Aparicio, and Gonzalez-Diaz (2026), in a systematic literature review of corporate sustainability communication in the fashion industry, observe that economic dimensions of sustainability remain comparatively underexplored relative to environmental and social dimensions, a gap that this review's focus on economic sustainability outcomes is intended to help address. However, for the Nigerian fashion SMEs, cooperatives and artisanal businesses, economic sustainability might be expressed as cooperative member's income, digital marketing proficiency, or access to wider consumer markets (Owa, Abdullah, Ukume, & Gever, 2026; Palladan, AbdulKadir, Ahmed, & Abubakar, 2023).

2.3 The Sustainability-Engagement Nexus in Fashion

The connection between social media engagement and facilitating sustainable fashion has been theoretically explained using the concept of intention-action gap that describes the documented disconnect between consumers' attitudes and their actual purchase action of sustainable clothing (Sowemimo, Diyaolu, Akinmoye, & Adedeji, 2026; Del Olmo Arriaga, Pretel-Jimenez, & Ruiz-Vinals, 2025). Through the theory of social media engagement, the idea of gamechanger is framed as a way how social media can help to normalise sustainable consumption via peer influence and community belonging, affectively bond with credible social media influencers to shift behaviour and provide informational scaffolding to minimise decision uncertainty (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022).

2.4 Social Exchange Theory and Social Media Engagement in Fashion

Social Exchange Theory (SET) proposed by Homans (1958) and later developed by Blau (1964) suggests that relationships between individuals and between people and institutions are regulated by a cost/benefit

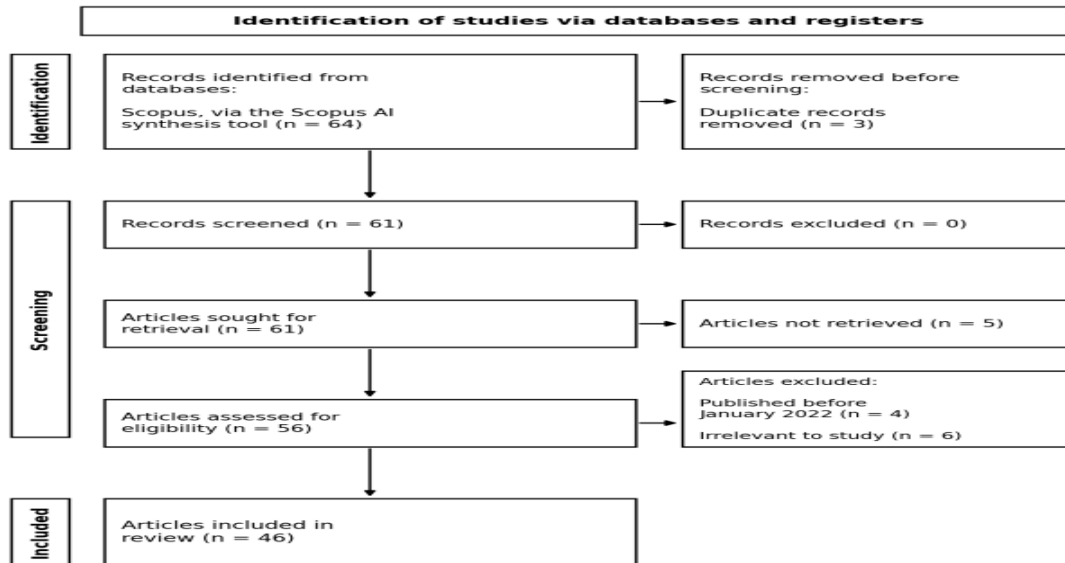
analysis, whereby they agree to join and depend on a relationship with others in which they expect a return commensurate to or greater than the resources they have to bring. For Blau (1964), as in its classic formulation, social interaction is a process of voluntary exchange which indicates that the ongoing nature of a social interaction depends on the ongoing provision of value to it by all the actors involved. A key aspect of the theory is "reciprocity," in which the provision of a valued resource elicits a moral obligation to provide a similar one, initiating an (expected) ongoing chain of engagement and relational commitment. In organisational and marketing applications, SET has, to a great extent, been leveraged to explain customer loyalty, employee commitment and brand-consumer relationship dynamics, and is a fitting framework for digital settings wherein

value exchange is common and multiple (Izogo & Mpinganjira, 2024).

In support of this, SET is used as a theory for the review as it explains the core mechanism of this study namely the engagement on social media and other media as an antecedent to the outcomes of its economic sustainability in a coherent manner and validated with empirical studies. The theory is well applicable to this inquiry since the nature of social media interaction with fashion is a two-way street: Brands invest money in creating and enhancing quality of content, credibility of the influencers and platform-specific strategies, while consumers provide attention, advocacy and actions toward purchase.

3. Methodology

Fig. 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram



3.1 Review Design and Rationale

Systematic review methodology is employed with guidelines of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta Analyses (PRISMA). The systematic approach has been preferred over narrative and scoping

review approaches, due to its rigorous, transparent and reproducible nature, especially in a research area that is marked by its quickly growing body of empirical work and methodological diversity. The content of the review is to summarise, rather than simply collate, the results of the primary studies, highlighting similarities, differences

and emerging themes that would not be evident from study analysis alone.

3.2 Search Strategy and Database Coverage

The following structured electronic search was carried out by scanning Scopus with the Scopus AI synthesis utility, which involves identifying and aggregating peer-reviewed publications. The main search terms that were used were combinations of the following: “social media engagement”, “fashion industry”, “economic

sustainability”, “sustainable fashion”, “digital marketing”, “influencer marketing”, “consumer behaviour”, “Nigeria”, “SMEs”, “circular economy”, “AI”, “AR”, and “blockchain”. Boolean search operators (AND, OR) were used to increase the sensitivity of the search without sacrificing the specificity to the subject area. To get the latest research in this area, the timeframe (the search window) was limited between January 2022 and April 2026.

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication type	Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings	Grey literature, blogs, opinion pieces
Temporal scope	2022-2026	Publications prior to 2022
Thematic focus	Social media, fashion industry, economic/sustainability outcomes	Unrelated industries or topics
Geographic scope	Global, with emphasis on Nigeria and developing economies	No geographic restriction applied for exclusion
Language	English	Non-English publications
Methodological quality	Empirical and theoretical studies with clear methodology	Studies with insufficient methodological reporting

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Systematic Review

3.4 Screening and Data Extraction

After initial database searching, screening was done in two stages: initial screening by title and abstract, then full-text screening. A preliminary search yielded 64 records from Scopus, followed by the removal of 3 duplicate records before screening by title/abstract, which resulted in 61 records being screened. All 61 records were called for

to be retrieved, of which 5 articles received no full text; 56 articles were assessed for eligibility. Of all the above, ten articles were removed for two reason: for four articles they were published prior to January 2022 and the others six chosen articles were not relevant to the present review. Thus corpus with 46 articles has been selected for review. It was screened according to the inclusion/exclusion

criteria followed including the thematic relevance and methodology. Thematic and methodological frameworks, key findings, geographical context, implications for the core research question were narrowed based on a standardised data extraction template that guided the process of data capturing. One hundred twenty-one primary sources were initially generated during the process but of these only 46 primary sources were retained for use in the thematic synthesis.

3.5 Analytical Framework

A thematic synthesis was used as an analytical approach, as described by Thomas & Harden. In this way, new themes and sub-themes emerge across primary studies, descriptive and analytical codes are developed and higher-order interpretive themes emerge, which rise above the findings of individual primary studies. Thematic synthesis was deemed most suitable for this review because the methodological approaches in the primary literature were diverse, and an interpretively rich insight that would inform policy action was desired, rather than a statistical summary. The results of the synthesis are summarized in a thematic framework.

The thematic synthesis was conducted in collaboration with Thomas and Harden (2008), by engaging in a process of line-by-line coding of information in the findings sections of the 46 included studies, the grouping of these codes into descriptive themes, and the construction of an interpretative theme that transcended the findings of the original studies. The codes were manually entered into a structured matrix in a Microsoft (MS) Excel spreadsheet, with each row representing a primary study and columns describing the

coding of the author, year, country/context, methodological approach, theoretical framework, key thematic codes assigned. This matrix allowed for the comparative analysis of studies based upon either their thematic grouping or on either their geographical location or their methodological approach, and it was also useful as a tool for identifying the five general themes set out in Section 4. The coding matrix was reviewed with the original texts of the primary studies and revised, to assure coding consistency.

4. Thematic Findings

The 46 sources were synthesized into 5 overarching themes, as summarised in Table 2, through the thematic synthesis process. Amongst these 46 sources, 43 are first-hand empirical or conceptual studies that were assigned to one of the five thematic categories, as their main focus; three sources (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958; Thomas & Harden, 2008) are foundational theoretical and methodological contributions that guided the review conceptual framework and analytical approach but could not be incorporated in its thematic synthesis, and are not included in Table 2. The number of studies mentioned in the themes listed does not add up to a total of 43 because some of the studies addressed two or more themes; the figures below are based on the primary thematic classification that was assigned during coding. Themes of content quality and themes specific to the platforms were the most abundant themes in the corpus, and customer experience management and digital transformation themes were comparatively less presented, especially in the literature viewed from the Nigerian context.

Table 2. Distribution of Primary Studies (n = 43) Across Thematic Categories

Thematic Category	No. of Studies	% of Corpus	Nigerian-Focused Studies
Content quality, frequency, and consumer trust	15	34.9%	2
Platform-specific engagement strategies	10	23.3%	6
Influencer collaborations and economic sustainability	7	16.3%	0
Digital transformation and Industry 4.0/5.0 technologies	6	14.0%	3
Customer experience management and economic sustainability	5	11.6%	2
Total	43	100%	13

Figure 2: Distribution of Primary Studies Across Thematic Categories (n = 43)

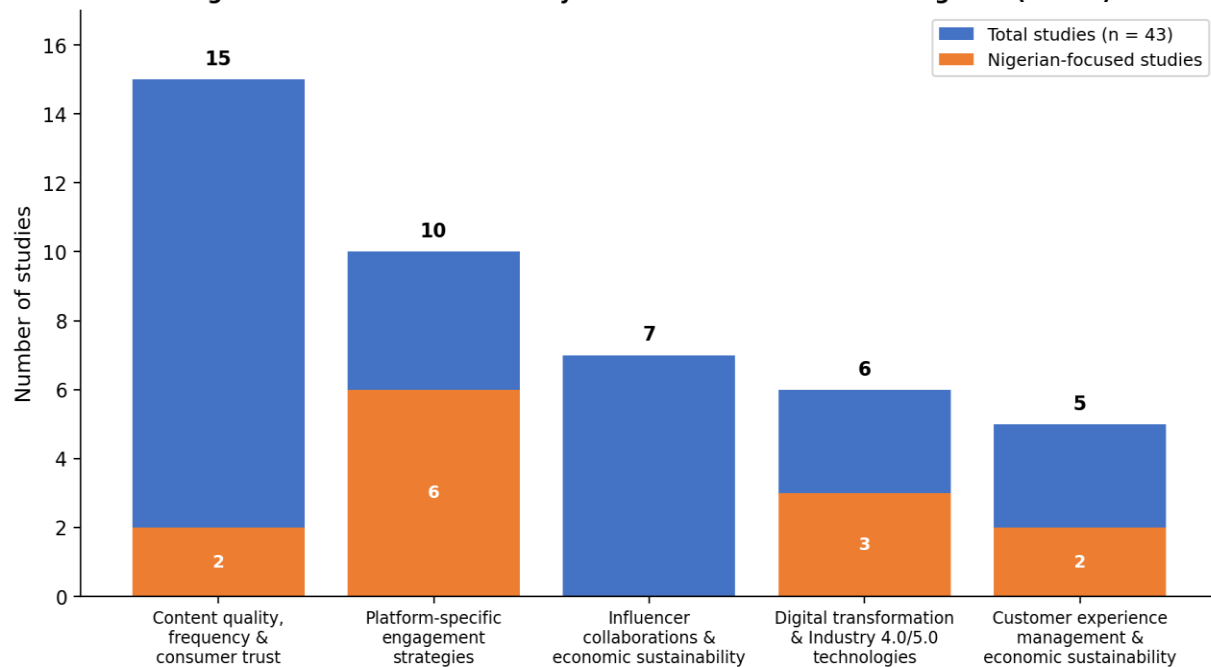


Figure 2: Distribution of Primary Studies Across Thematic Categories (n = 43), with Nigerian-focused study counts shown in orange.

4.1 Content Quality, Frequency, and Consumer Trust

The quality, and frequency of the content appearing in social media sources emerges as the common central theme in the reviewed literature, which confirms that they form the basis of the consumer engagement with a fashion brand, and that, in turn, is one of the key drivers of economic sustainability results. Repeatedly, good content, which are pleasing to look at, informative, authentic, and emotionally challenging, have been shown to attract consumers, earn trust from consumers, and stimulate reordering of products by consumers (Okonkwo, Ezeokafor, Ebomah, & Theresa, 2026; Aremu, Ogunnaiké, Onayemi, & Gberevbíe, 2024; Zhao, Lee, Li, & Sun, 2022). This connection appears to be not only geographically but with any fashion brand that leverages Instagram and TikTok or Nigerian cooperatives that leverage WhatsApp and Facebook as means to communicate with members. In the Nigerian cooperative fashion market, the authors Okonkwo, Ezeokafor, Ebomah, and Theresa (2026) support the notion that the use of innovative social media marketing components (high-quality visual content, routine posting schedules, and individualised messaging) are positively related to cooperative member engagement, and that cooperative member engagement is positively related to better collective economic results. The outcome was the same as the result of researchers that Giantari, Sukawati, Ekawati and Yasa (2025) got in the global study that stated that brand engagement strategies that have been executed by quality in Bali-based fashion SME customers in the purchasing process yielded an increase in performance that is in accordance with one another. In addition to the effects of content, transparency and storytelling help

reinforce those effects: da Silva Cruz, de Freitas, and da Silva (2025) reveal that the transactionality of Instagram is driven in large part by the superficial demonstration of transparency about transparency, and Garcia, Martín-Cardaba, Polaino, and Villar-Cirujano (2025) demonstrate that but for storytelling, then, engagement with the sustainability communication of small brands is no greater than engagement with their product content. Rana (2024) confirms this, noting that green marketing strategies do not simply promote sustainability, but they do instill the message into the mind of consumers. Naim, Alnfai and Abdulla (2025) support this argument and report that fashion brands that make sustainability a key element of their daily social media content are more likely to make a lasting impression than those who treat sustainability as a campaign topic. At the content level of hashtags, Telycenaite (2023) argues that sustainable fashion is used inconsistently on Instagram, by a more diverse group of brands and influencers with mixed substantive credentials of sustainability, which can reduce its ability to signal to users, and more specifically consumers, a trustworthy source for authentic content; Melanthiou and Voutsas (2025) corroborate this for the luxury market, where ‘attaching a green label’ is a technique used to greenwash the content and requires third-party verification for the user interested in sustainability to trust the information and, ultimately, benefit the brand. The alignment of these results across the different contexts would corroborate the general consistency of the interpretation of content quality as a universal stimulus for economic sustainability in the Fashion context, with an intercontextual model including the modulatory effects of platform

preferences and local infrastructure conditions.

4.2 Platform-Specific Engagement Strategies

There is great contradictivity between the brands examined and their effectiveness with the use of social media strategies. Instagram and TikTok are especially popular platforms for fashion brand engagement globally, owing to their visual, user-centric nature and the fact that they are known to surface up the content of app users that makes the right product even more appealing to its user base, particularly the Gen Zs and Millennials (Santos, Silva, & Lopes, 2025; Dourado, Llovet, & Carrasco Polaino, 2026). These are noticing tasks such as visual story telling, and short-form video content started within their community as that being effective engagement tactics that can stimulate community attitudinal engagement and drive purchase intent. These results are consistent with the evidence on SMEs in Nigeria, which underscores the pivotal role of platform selection on economic outcomes. Just like Omotosho (2023) found that small-scale craftsmen in the Southwest region of Nigeria who engage in social media have better business performance than those who do not, Oguh and Agada-Mba (2026) established that adopting different social media platforms by the Kuda Bank strategically aids in its organisational growth. Likewise, Oni (2021) notes that Nigerian SMEs are using social media more and more as a medium of communication for the business, still it is not the same depth depending on the size of the company and how digitally literate they are. Olaleye, Hamdan, and Awwad (2021) build on this by demonstrating that social media competence moderates and mediates between SME adoption and performance, which directly translates to the website readiness level of the fashion businesses

in Nigeria. Munap, Obeto, Salean, and Salleh (2025) agree on how the shopping frenzy influences purchasing behavior among users of TikTok and consequently, the financial viability of fashion brands which is likely to prevail in the Nigerian market as TikTok's penetration grows. According to Santos, Silva and Lopes (2025) the kind of Instagram and TikTok engagement strategies of entrepreneurs who focus on the social responsibility message are more likely to strengthen a sense of belonging and repeat purchases than business-oriented strategies that centre around the aesthetics of the products. In the broader context of adopting social media as an SME, Palladan, AbdulKadir, Ahmed and Abubakar (2023) also point out that the influence of social media adoption on business performance is moderated by the business strategy employed, that is, the strategies for social media usage cannot be evaluated in isolation from the fashion business strategy.

4.3 Influencer Collaborations and Economic Sustainability

Influencer marketing is now the most carefully-studied method for decoding the fashion industry's social media engagement and its relationship to economic viability. The reviewed literature has found that there is a strong positive connection among collaboration of credible influencers and economic outcomes of fashion physical brands through several mechanisms that include consumer loyalty, normalisation of sustainable consumption, boost in brand visibility, and accelerated purchasing decision (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022; Nath & Suresh, 2025). The situation of Caceres Perez, Reynoso Sicha, Barinotto Roncal and Palma Vallejo (2025), who in the Peruvian context point to the significant positive effect that influencer marketing has on young consumers' purchasing decisions in the fashion industry, holds

great relevance for other markets with similar audience characteristics. In an attempt to explore the same, Nath and Suresh (2025) add to the conversations about the importance of social media influencers for changing consumer behaviour in the pro-sustainability fashion consumers. The effectiveness in creating brand videos seems to largely rely on authenticity and following numbers. Zahran and Aljuhmani (2025) found that customer engagement led to the development of brand loyalty among Instagram users as not only did they respond favorably to the brand, but they also believed the brand's messages around sustainable consumption were authentic. Concurrently, Bhalla, Joshi, and Bajpai (2026) examine that the involvement results are more powerful for fashion brands when they team up with nano-influencers (who have smaller, yet more involved followers) than with bigger, or more disconnected followers. Building on this, Kapoor, Tagore, and Dua (2023) demonstrate that the impacts of influencer-advertiser partnerships on engagement with sustainable fashion product content differs between disclosed and undisclosed partnerships, and slightly between the type of benefit association communicated, such that there may be stronger impacts on immediate engagement but stronger impacts on long-term trust. Similarly, Choudhary and Chaudhary (2026) find that when audiences' values are congruent with the brand's sustainability claims, influencer accountability to sustainability is highest, supporting the overall trend that reach is just one of the economic advantages of being an influencer when the promotion is authentic. Prior studies by Shin, Lyu and Jiang (2025) examined the discourse of sustainable fashion on Twitter over 2 years and identified a relatively small subset of opinion leaders who are likely to overlap with the influencers and help set

the thematic direction of sustainable fashion conversation, highlighting the importance of Agenda setting in the broader online conversation beyond endorsement.

4.4 Digital Transformation and Industry 4.0/5.0 Technologies

The literature reviewed also includes significant contributions on the permanent use of advanced digital technologies, including Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain, on the improvement of the results of sustainable fashion practices and the boosts in terms of economic sustainability provided by social media engagement. Orisadare, Achukwu, Ogunyemi, and Awoyelu (2025) systematically review the role of digitalisation and green strategies in textile, apparel, and fashion industries, highlighting the increasing use of these technologies in sustainability-focused social media campaigns. For instance, AI-driven personalisation enables more relevant and engaging social media content and AR applications can give users the power to see clothes before purchasing, reducing the number of returned items and associated logistics costs. The other side of the coin is that blockchain technology offers tools for transparency in the value chain that could assure the information reaches their consumers via social media, an imperative for enhancing consumer confidence in sustainability claims made by the company. Gazzola, Pavione, Hillebrand, and Rosa (2025) provide comparative empirical evidence on circular economy adoption in the fashion industry, finding that digital technologies communicated via social media play a central role in enabling resale, repair, and rental business models, though adoption rates remain uneven across regions. Similarly, Chipambwa and Mutungwe (2025) show that social media plays a

critical role in educating consumers regarding the role of digital retail practices that centre on circular economy concepts in consumer uptake. Notwithstanding, the spread of these technologies is not smooth; the technologies are faced with a number of barriers to their uptake. According to Anaba (2025), these barriers fall under infrastructural, financial and regulatory impediments that impact the level to which such technologies can be used by Nigerian fashion brands to which they belong, even as they make use of social media engagement strategies. Similarly, in their study of construction SMEs in Abuja, Oyewobi, Adedayo, Olorunyomi, and Jimoh (2023) discover that use of social media leads to the measurable gains only under certain conditions, conditions that mirror those suitable to Nigerian fashion SMEs when it comes to being able to employ or leverage AI, AR, or blockchain-based approaches to social media.

4.5 Customer Experience Management and Economic Sustainability

The distinctive contribution of the research carried out in Nigeria for the study of customer experience management is the benefit it hems customer experiences as it relates to social media engagement and economy sustainability. A conceptual difference between humanic clues (personalised service interaction, training of employees, and relational warmth) and mechanic clues (positioning of stores, design of digital interface, and omnichannel seamless service) is presented by Aremu, Ogunnaike, Onayemi, and Gberville (2024). Dual determinants of the results of customer satisfaction and brand sustainability are defined as humanic clues and mechanic clues. As they conducted research and studied local brands from Nigeria, the combination of the two types of clues was quite effective

in creating economic sustainability, and appearances of focussed on either type of clue or focussed on social media strategy produced average results. The situation of the industries related to consumer products in Nigeria is similar. Therefore, using effect moderation analysis the study finds that brand awareness effectively mediates between the relationship of social media technology use and brand loyalty among online shoppers in Anambra State which could be replicated to the Nigerian fashion industry. In an aggregated level, Adeyemi (2023) explains inter-firm knowledge exchange as influencing business sustainability outcomes, suggesting that customer experience management on social media is not limited to a "brand-to-consumer" relationship only but it is also embedded with intra-firm knowledge sharing as evident in the social media marketing community in Nigeria.

In the omnichannel environment, Akude, Agyapong, Atuwo, and Glikpo (2025) take this a step further, studying the impact seamless user experience has on the link between omnichannel marketing and customer retention in emerging markets. Having a "coherent omnichannel strategy" that creates a seamless consumer experience, regardless of whether they are online or offline, is when social media engagement earns the most economic "sustainability impact," according to their findings that are based in the Technology Acceptance Model. From a business perspective, it has far-reaching implications for Nigerian fashion brands aiming to convert their online engagement with audiences into genuine customer connections and sales. To the Nigerian fashion brands, it means a lot for them to understand that they can leverage these social media interactions to establish meaningful customer relationships and generate profits.

Discussion

The analysis of the key thematic and emergent findings presented in Section 4 provides a theoretically and empirically coherent profile of how, and under what conditions, social media engagement promotes the economic sustainability of the fashion industry. This evidence reflects that it is always strategic intentionality that leads to economic sustainability outcomes in all the thematic clusters (content quality, platform strategies, influencer partnerships, digital transformation and customer experience management) – that is, relationships with social media are not just a natural by-product of digital presence, but the result of strategic purposes, clear content recognition and orientation, a partnership with influencers, and digital transformation, among others, that are supported by the platform. This research indicates that adoption of social media is not simply enough to achieve economic sustainability; rather, strategic use and organisational capacities are essential. Secondly, the importance of trust as the main economic currency in endorsing fashion sustainability on social media comes to the fore as a critical integrative perception. Across content quality studies (Okonkwo, Ezeokafor, Ebomah, & Theresa, 2026), influencer marketing research (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022; Diyaolu & Akanmu, 2024), customer experience management investigations (Aremu, Ogunnaike, Onayemi, & Gberevbie, 2024; Akude, Agyapong, Atuwo, & Glikpo, 2025), and circular fashion platform analyses (Slaton, 2025), trust emerges as the critical mediating variable through which engagement translates into economic outcomes. As content objects, the quality of the content is a short-term goal to understand as a means towards building trust, while the credibility of the influencer and the consistency of the customer experience

are fundamental instruments and objectives included within this, which should be at the core of fashion brands' engagement programmes.

5. Conclusion

A critical systematic review that synthesizes 46 peer-reviewed articles published from 2022–2026, was conducted to evaluate the effects of social media engagements on the sustainability of the fashion sector especially from Nigeria's perspective and contributions. As summarised quantitatively in Table 2 and Figure 2, content quality and platform-specific engagement strategies together accounted for over half of the 43 thematically classified primary studies (34.9% and 23.3%, respectively), with platform-specific engagement also being the most heavily represented theme among the Nigerian-focused subset (6 of 13 studies), underscoring the centrality of platform choice and content strategy to economic sustainability outcomes in the Nigerian context specifically. The review has shown how social media interaction works as an interweaving enabling mechanism of economic sustainability along many interactive, findable pathways including building trust, boosting consumer commitment, and stimulating norm changes through influencers, digital transformation, and enriching customer experience. While there are parallels, the platforms, content strategies and institutional contexts pertinent to these mechanisms are also quite different, reflecting distinct local socioeconomic realities, infrastructure limitations, and cultural dynamics, even in the global and Nigerian contexts. Fashion brand managers' primary concern is, from a practical standpoint, that the economic sustainability of social media is viable, though it requires careful planning over improvisation. The content itself, along with the credibility of the

influencers, platform-specific fits and frictions, and customer experience management will be the facts on which a successful social media sustainability approach gets built – and everyone does the same thing first is to create serious trust. Policymakers will find the review to attest that social media can be a cost-effective tool for raising awareness of the circular economy, effecting digital capacity-building in fashion SMEs and

driving generations to change their consumption. It sets the course for future research efforts, providing a roadmap for in-depth analysis and studies into the changing dynamics of communications and technology adoption, over time and across diverse demographics and geographies, which will significantly advance the understanding of one of the most impactful intersections in modern business and sustainability literature.

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