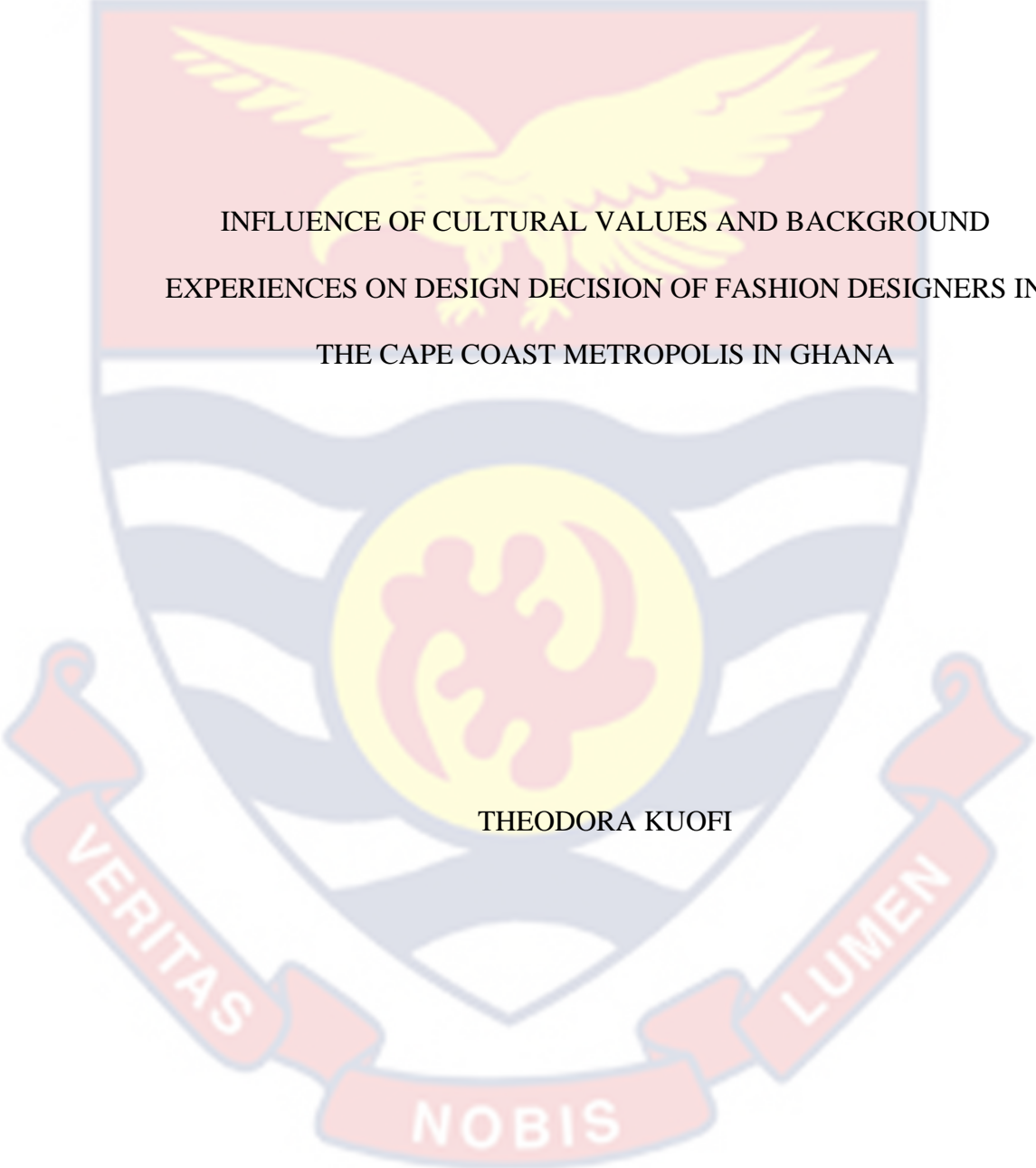


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL VALUES AND BACKGROUND
EXPERIENCES ON DESIGN DECISION OF FASHION DESIGNERS IN
THE CAPE COAST METROPOLIS IN GHANA

THEODORA KUOFI

2021



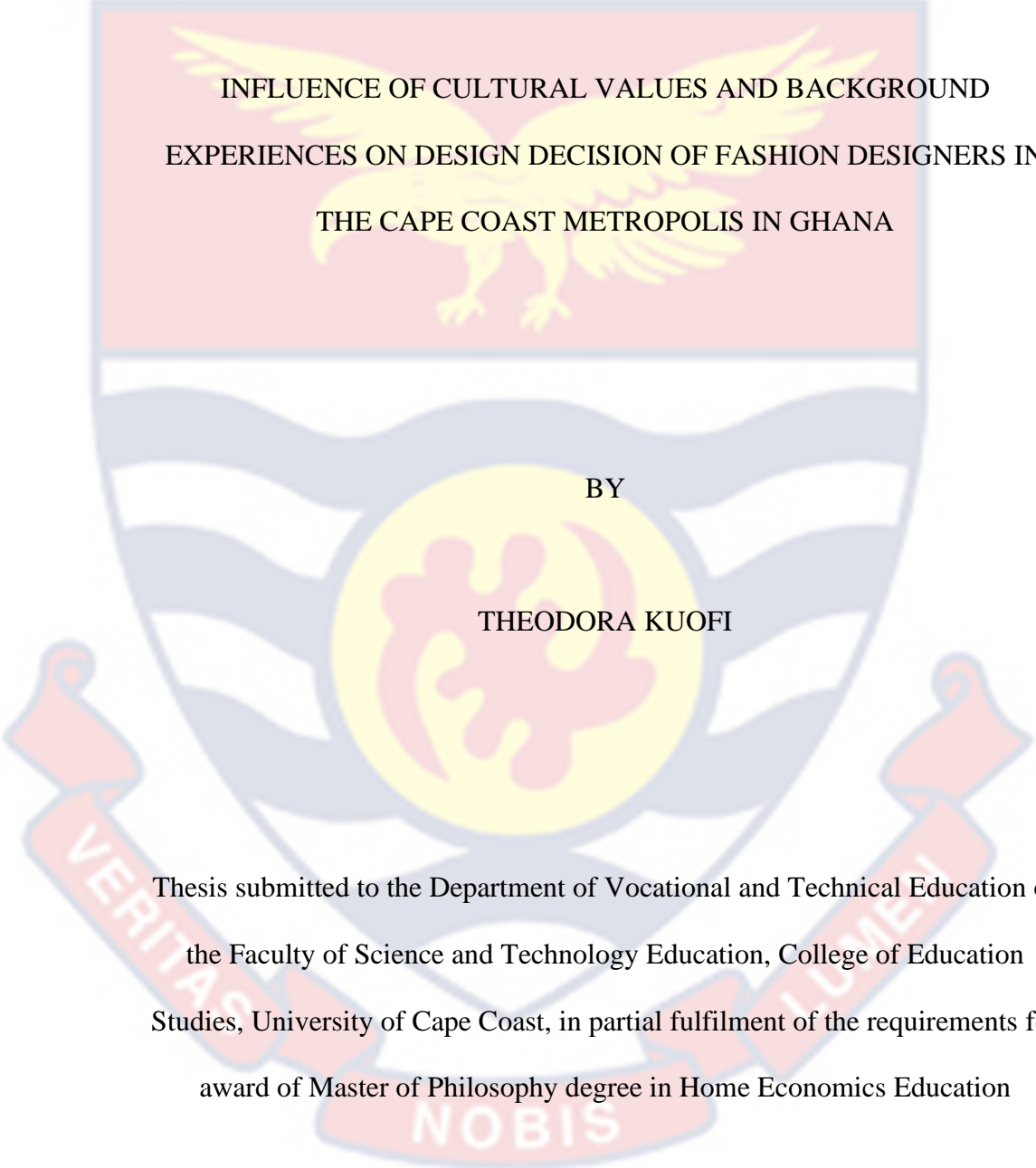


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THE CAPE COAST METROPOLIS IN GHANA

BY

THEODORA KUOFI

Thesis submitted to the Department of Vocational and Technical Education of
the Faculty of Science and Technology Education, College of Education
Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
award of Master of Philosophy degree in Home Economics Education

JUNE 2021



DECLARATION

Candidates' Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: Date:

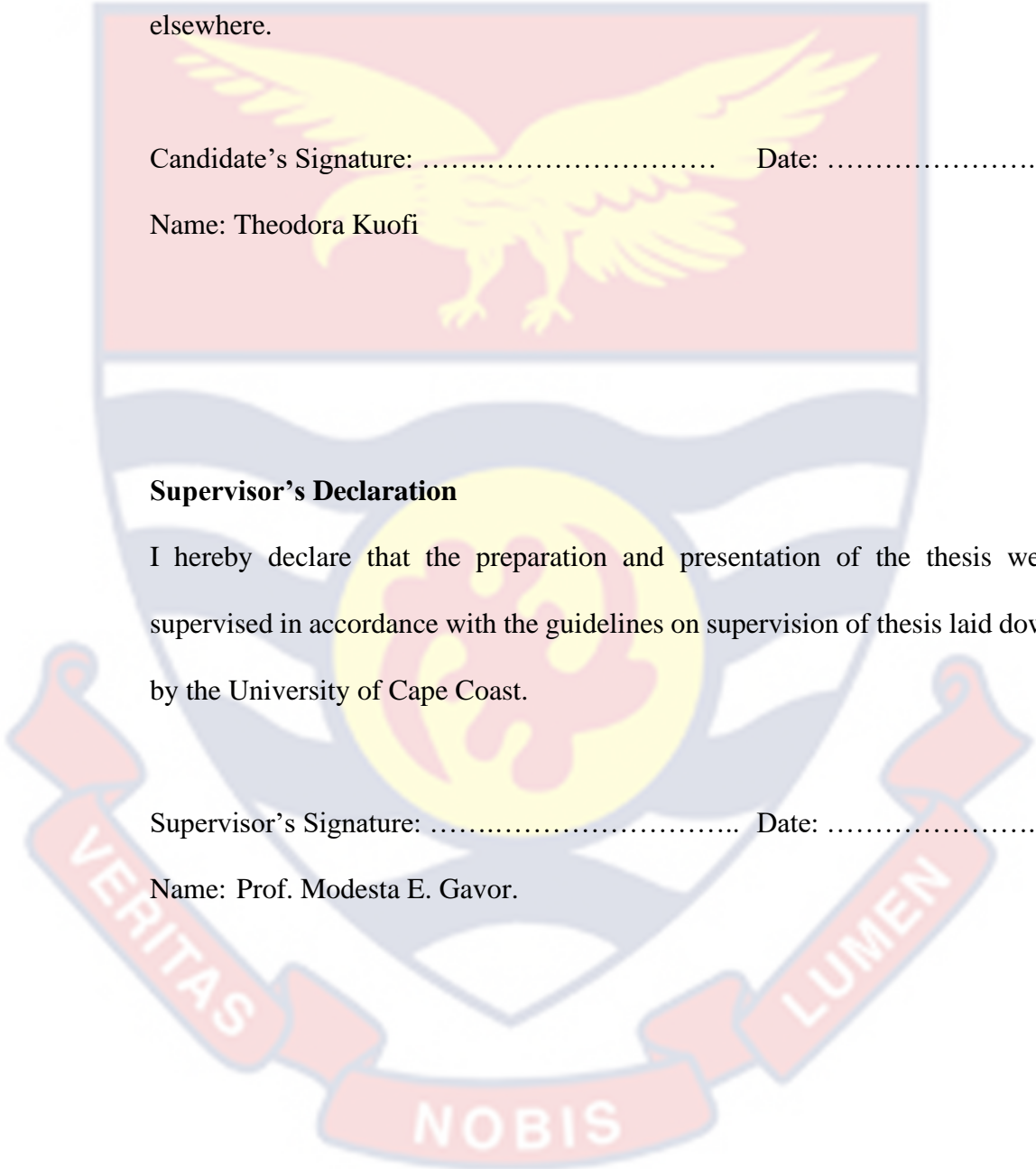
Name: Theodora Kuofi

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: Date:

Name: Prof. Modesta E. Gavor.



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how fashion designers in Cape Coast Metropolis are influenced by cultural values and background experiences when making garments for clients. Based on this aim, four research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study employed the qualitative approach with emphasis on the phenomenological design. The research population was the fashion designers in Cape Coast Metropolis. In all, twenty (20) participants who were fashion designers who were willing and ready to give information to answer the research questions, could design and sew were purposively and snow balling selected. Interview guide was the instrument used to collect data. From the analysis, it was found that all the participants had been to school and trained to achieve master craftsmen. Through the research questions, one found out that, the designers were able to improve the designs skills through visiting of online applications. Also, in times of trouble, some designers go to the more experienced designers to obtain relevant advice as to how to go about the problem. It was also found out that the use of cultural elements in designing local fabrics is now being cherished by Ghanaians over foreign fashion. Another finding was the difficulty to meet all deadlines for the collection of sewn fabrics by designers. It was concluded that designers in the north of Cape Coast Metropolis in Ghana have numerous on-the-job experiences that prepare them to face any kind of customer behaviour. It is recommended to all fashion designers, especially the novice fashion designers to take keen interest in workshops organised by the association of fashion designers to improve upon their skills.

KEY WORDS

Colours

Creativity

Cultural values

Design

Traditional fabrics



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My profound gratitude goes to Professor Modesta Efua Gavor of the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, my supervisor, whose patience, suggestions and constructive criticisms helped to put this work into shape.

To all friends who contributed to the completion of this piece I say thank you.



DEDICATION

To my children: Alice and Emmanuel.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
KEY WORDS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Objectives	7
Research Questions	8
Significance of the Study	8
Delimitation	9
Limitation	9
Definition of Terms	9
Organisation	9
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Introduction	11
Conceptual Framework of the Study	11
Culture, Values and Society	13

Cultural System	19
Cultural Norms	21
Beliefs in Fashion Design	22
Artifacts in Ghana	23
African Traditional Dress	24
Apprenticeship	26
Apprenticeship in Ghana	26
Vocational and Technical Education in Ghana	27
Experience: Flow in the Job	27
The Nature of the Fashion Design Process	28
Design Process	29
Creativity in the Fashion Design Process	32
Market and Consumer	37
Technology	37
Fashion Illustration and Fashion Design	38
Fabrics in Fashion Design	40
Insight of Ghanaian Textiles	41
Theory of Optimal Experience	54
Summary	57
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	
Introduction	59
Research Design	59
Study Area	60
Population	61
Sampling Procedure	62

Data Collection Instrument	63
Procedure for Data Collection	66
Data Processing and Analysis	67
Summary	67
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	
Introduction	69
Background Information	69
Presentation of Themes	71
Research Question One	73
Research Question Two	91
Research Question Three	98
Research Question Four	101
Discussion	103
Summary	112
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Introduction	113
Summary	113
Key Findings	114
Conclusions	116
Recommendations	117
Suggestions for Further Research	118
REFERENCES	119
APPENDICES	132

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Background Information on Respondents	70
2	Generated Themes and Sub-Themes	72



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1 Conceptual Framework of fashion designers in north metropolis in Cape Coast influence of design process.	12
2 Sample of "Wo nsa ekyir"	42
3 Sample of "Ahwerpow" (sugarcane nodes)	43
4 "Ennyi sika entow" block (if you do not have money, do not lay block)	44
5 "Enyiwa ber a onso gya" (fire is not sparked in eye red with anger)	45
6 "Ahondze pa nkasa" (precious and quality beads do not talk)	46
7 "Afafranta" (butterfly)	47
8 Senkye Bridge	48
9 "Owu atwer baako nfo" (staircase of death is not climbed by one person)	49
10 Akofena-(sword)	50
11 Efie Mmosea	51
12 Study Area: Pedu, Abura and Eyifua	61



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study is about the influence of cultural values and background experience of the fashion designers on design decision. The differences in cultural background and geographical settings in the world will not be out of place to know whether the designing processes of fashion designers are influenced by their cultural values and background experiences. The study on fashion designers to see whether their design decisions in terms of style, design, fabric and colour are influenced by their cultural values which include customs, beliefs, norms and arts in relation to background experience. A research performed by Zhang and Wakkary (2014) indicates that designers' personal experiences can contribute to technology designs. They also revealed that the designers were confident enough to incorporate their personal experiences into their designs which is an indication that the design decisions of the designers involved were influenced by their experiences.

Background to the Study

Fashion can be designated as an innate part of the human social relations and it cannot be measured without dejecting its definitive drive, which is the communication of the individual self. If self – identity were never in doubt and social comparison never took place, there would be no demand for fashion and no need or opportunity for change of style. Fashion is not only concerned with the outer cover of the human being in dress, jewelry and ornaments but also a general social body that impacts and shapes individuals and the society as a whole. As civilization continues to exist, there will be the request for fashion and workers for the fashion industry (Kawamura, 2005).

The collection of a particular dressing and its body embellishment over another is comparatively influenced by technology, values, morals, hygiene, rituals as well as aesthetic and symbolism in cultural forms. Dzrmedo (2009) agrees that customs and laws enacted by a country or a social group may also effect the stability or changes in dress code of the area. Sue-Jenkyn (2005), as cited in Dzrmedo (2009), sees a key relation between culture and fashion. He notes that a designer must read the cultural trends along with planning, good research and experimentation before designing within the time frame. A fashion designer needs to appraise fashion in line with the culture of the society to promote cultural values of the society. Au, Taylor & Newton (2004) report that fashion in Hong Kong is defined through the factors of social attitude, psychological satisfaction, aesthetic presence and historical revival. It is also identified as a way of assessing the people's modern lifestyle and represent social standard in a period of time that brings out personality and characters of the wearer while enhancing the aesthetic beauty (Gopura, Payne & Buys, 2016).

Designers are significant figures in the manufacture of fashion and perform important role in the preservation, reproduction and distribution of fashion. They are the fore front in that field since their participation in the fashion system determines their status and reputation. Without designers, according to Kawamura (2005), clothes do not become fashion since they personify fashion and their designs objectify fashion. The fashion designers and clothing are not separated from the concept of fashion. Fashion designers research fashion trends, forecast what will be popular with consumers, and take inspiration from the world around to create fresh and original designs. They also decide on fabrics and patterns to produce sample designs and adjust them until

the final collections produced to influence the rest of the fashion industry and appeal to the potential buyers. Fashion designing changes with time as it is influenced by cultural, historical and social factors.

Jin (2004) avers that the most essential competitive advantage in today's apparel industry is skilled human resources, such as creative designers who serve as cultural interpreters when designing as cited in Hwang (2013). Moreover, creativity and originality in design are the most important factors in becoming a successful fashion designer rather than just an ordinary dressmaker. Skilled designers place more importance on design principles that update their behaviour and designing strategies in performing duty. Fashion designers need special knowledge and skills to be creative, solve problems, and develop concepts (Khoza & Workman, 2009; Hwang 2013). Aesthetic knowledge and technical expertise through design education are important to the development of the fashion industry (Gopura, Payne & Buys, 2016). Nevertheless, a fashion designer's imagination and choice on a particular design may be influenced by factors which including culture and background experiences.

A research conducted by Hwang (2013) involving ten Korean fashion designers indicated that the background and personal experiences served as sources of inspirations and had an indirect influence on their creative design ideas and creativity. According to Hwang (2020), personal experiences that serve as sources of inspiration perform a significant part in designing which could directly result in an increase in creative design ideas that add to originality. The designers involved in the study also experience optimal flow during the creative design process when they have positive experiences (Hwang, 2020). Hwang (2020) goes further to say that the designer's ability to draw

ideas together helps in developing new creative ideas. Mete (2006) asserts that sources of inspiration play a powerful role throughout the creative stages of design as they can help promote originality. He also explains that fashion designers develop their inspirations and ideas from everywhere and their project choices are subjective by all arts and lifestyle throughout the world. Fashion designers are therefore influenced by several factors which include culture and background experiences.

Culture is the result of practices. Culture does not generate the act or the product of the act; it is rather the evolution of the act and the result of an individual's action that takes on meaning in culture (Kawamura, 2005). The society helps to shape the action of the individual. Designers accomplish an understanding of the patterns of communication and the meanings of these patterns through the reflection of culture. Cultural impressions come in to show that the product development process in designers are shaped by their own cultural and societal standards. The features of culture, such as arts, beliefs, music, customs, values and dress code propose a significant cultural trait that effect the designers. Therefore, the cultural values and living patterns of a designer can play an important role in his or her work; cultural differences affect the way designers work (Hwang, 2013). Fashion designing is now more than an expression of culture that reflects the taste of the times, but has expanded to include value as culture that packages the industry as a whole, considering social environment, corporate environment and design environment as cited by Kim & Ha (2010) in Hwang, (2013).

Cultures differ from place to place and different people have different ways of seeing things in the world because of difference in ethnicity and geographical location. People in different cultures have different ways of seeing things in the world. The notable relevance of culture varies from society to society. What is acceptable in one society may likely not be acceptable in another. Designs, styles and looks which may be accepted in some societies may be disapproved of in others due to differences in cultural values. In the Ghanaian community, especially among the Akans, black dress is worn for funeral ceremonies while in some parts of Asia, they wear white for funeral ceremonies and for widowhood rites, white in the Ghanaian community is a sign of victory and also worn for outdoorings and naming ceremonies. The punk look which was recognised in Great Britain as a socio-political movement (Hwang, 2013) was seen in the Ghanaian community as waywardness from anecdotal evidence.

The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID), seeing culture as an important part of designing, has promoted the idea that designers should embody the cultural traditions of their national societies in their designs while integrating the best characteristics of international design principles and standards (ICSID, 2001). Culture can play an important role by representing an outline through which meaning is related to the user.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) says that best practice is what makes one experience actual satisfaction during work, a state of mindfulness called flow. Zhang and Wakkary (2014) explain individual experiences as involving personal life situation at home or personal day-to-day working activities. A research conducted by Ghuangpeng (2011), to probe into the issues that affect the career decision – making process of tourism and hospitality students from

different cultural background (Thailand and Australia), was found out that their decisions were mostly affected by their background and working experiences. These experiences also gave them the confidence that influenced their efficacy. Another study by Wu, Wu, Tsai & Li (2017) on top management team members' decision-making process of one thousand (1000) top enterprises in China. The top management team were those who were involved in the direction, schemes, successive leadership and philosophy of a company. The study reveals that practical characteristic is one of the major factors that affect the decision making process of the management team. The executives involved were able to make tactical decisions drawing from their previous experiences and that the executives with similar experiences cooperated better.

One is tempted to group those in the fashion industry into two. The first group, where designers have mostly gone through formal education to a level where they have a good appreciation of what designing is. The second group are those who generally acquired their skills mainly through apprenticeship and have very little appreciation of designing garments. The second group usually sew for people mainly based on copying of styles.

Statement of the Problem

The fashion industry in Ghana is not as vibrant as in the developed countries (Amankwah, Howard & Sarpong 2012). A number of researches have been carried out on the fashion industry in Ghana, but none has been done with regards to the influence of cultural values and background experience on fashion designers' design process. It is noted that Ghana has its own culture together with cultural values. However, when it comes to clothing, there has been so much external influence and one can say that when it comes to wedding gowns

and work clothing; for example, what is mainly used by Ghanaians, is foreign both in design and fabric. Ghanaian culture has been influenced by the cultures of the world. Importers who bring fashion related goods to Ghana have an influence over Ghanaian fashion and culture which has direct increase on their economic gains (Dzramedo, 2009; Sarpong, 2005; Abor & Quartey, 2010). It will not be out of place to investigate how garment designing processes are influenced by the cultural values and background experiences of Ghanaian fashion designers. The fashion designers were trained through formal apprenticeship who could design and sew. The researcher would therefore like to carry out this study on fashion designers in Pedu, Abura and Eyifua in Cape Coast metropolis as a case study to see whether their designing decisions in terms of style, design, fabric and colour are inclined by their cultural values which include customs, beliefs, norms and arts in relation to background experience.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how fashion designers in Pedu, Abura and Eyifua in Cape Coast metropolis are influenced by cultural values and background experiences when making garments for clients.

Research Objectives

- i.** To determine whether fashion designers' background experiences influence their creative decisions
- ii.** To determine whether fashion designers' cultural values influence their design decisions
- iii.** To find out whether fashion designers incorporate cultural meaning into their designs

Research Questions

- i. How do fashion designers' background experiences influence their creative decisions?
- ii. In what ways do fashion designers cultural values influence their design decisions?
- iii. How do fashion designers incorporate cultural meaning into their designs?

Significance of the Study

According to Kawamura (2005), individual schedules and choices are affected by the individual's cultural values. Hwang (2013) also agrees that the design choices of fashion designers are affected by their cultural values; the differences in the individual cultural values need the use of cultural meanings. Fashion designers, according to Skov (2002), are the mediators of culture and value providers implying that fashion is one of the ways through which culture is shared among the nations as the world moves into economic and cultural internationally. Therefore, this study will help fashion designers to understand the influence of cultural values on product development that may facilitate their uniqueness on products and make possible adjustment when designing for the global market. Fashion designers will appreciate the need for knowledge and skills to be creative, to solve problems and to develop concept. This study will also extend knowledge on how cultural values and the background experiences of Pedu, Abura and Eyifua in Cape Coast metropolis designers' influence their design decisions.

Delimitation

The focus of the study was the origin of creativity and sources of design inspiration for selected fashion designers within the Pedu, Abura and Eyifua and how cultural values might be incorporated into their designs.

Limitation

The researcher had to arrange different times of meeting with the various respondents as they worked at different locations.

Definition of Terms

Fashion designer: master craftsman in fashion design with at least three years' work experience.

Background experiences: they experiences gained on the job, training and customer preferences as knowledge in a field.

Lost in the job: forgetting about break time because of the job

Silhouette: this refers to the shape or the outline of dress

Organisation

The study is made up of five chapters. The first chapter comprises the following headings: background to the study, statement of the study, purpose of the study, research questions and significance of the study, delimitation and limitations.

Chapter two of the research is made up of the review of related literature. Topics reviewed under this chapter included: conceptual framework, education, culture and values, nature of design activity and optimal experience and colour symbolism.

The third chapter describes the methodology which was used in collecting data for the study. This involves the research design, study area, population, sample technique, instruments for data collection, trustworthiness, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis.

Chapter four consists of the results and discussions of the data collected, while the fifth chapter is made up of summary of the study, the key findings, conclusions and recommendation.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The study looked into the influence of cultural values and background experiences on design decision of some selected fashion designers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This chapter reviewed other studies that were closely related to the study. The review of literature was organised in three sections. The first section discussed meaning of culture and cultural values: beliefs, customs, norms and arts. The second section looked at the design activities which includes nature of design activities, design processes and creativity. The last section was devoted to optimal experience in flow of work. The chapter also looked at the conceptual framework of the study.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 shows the relationship among the cultural values, background experience and the decisions of the fashion designers and how they influence each other when taking the decision during designing.

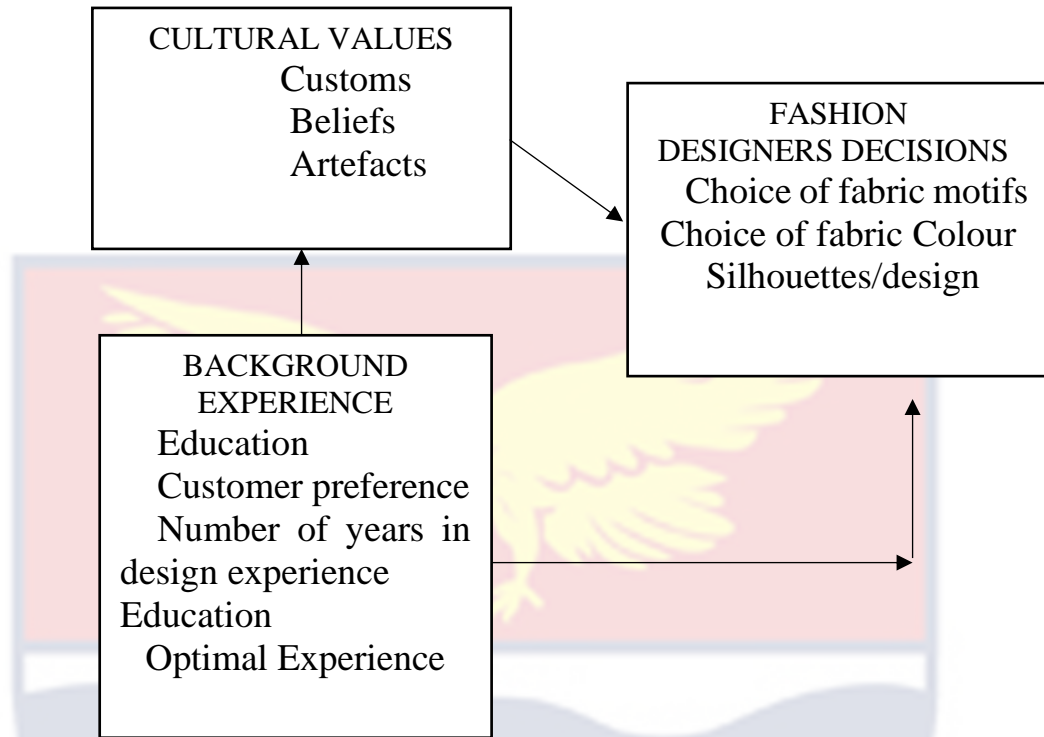


Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework of fashion designers in north metropolis in Cape Coast influence of design process.*

Source: Adapted and modified from Hwang (2013)

Conceptual framework on the influence of the cultural values and background experience on the design decision of the fashion designers in Cape Coast. This was adapted and modified from Hwang (2013) on the product development process and relationship of how cultural values and personal experiences influence fashion design process in South Korea.

Cultural values are standards that help shape the individual and influence their lives within the society. Cultural values such as norms in the form of wearing a traditional dress, beliefs and artefacts are learned and handed over to the next generation (Podrug, 2011). These will inform the kind of designs to be used in the choice of fabric motifs, choice of fabric colours and the silhouettes/design.

Background experience comprises the number of years of experience a fashion designer may have in the job, the customers' preference and education will affect the decision of the fashion designer. After school, some people go for further training in fashion designing and others start work right away, but both are not classified as experienced unless they have worked for a number of years. Anecdotally, that number of years is three to five years of continuous designing as an independent fashion designer.

Background experience can have effect on cultural values and vice versa to influence the design decision. There is an interrelationship among the designer's design, the decision making and creativity as indicated by Hwang (2013).

Culture, Values and Society

In certain circumstances, culture is used as an input for textile design. Cultural essence is used by designers to present innovative moods and designs. Moods and styles are collected activities in a culture and artistically presented in textiles. For a certain period of time, culture may be learned by exposing it to a particular society. Later on, designers use this awareness to evoke their personal emotions (Shin, Cassidy & Moore, 2014). One should remember that these values are special because they combine items like colours, motifs, dressing styles and other associated practices by referring to them as culture. The cultural routes provide an adequate strategy for the design process and also provide insights into contemporary and professional creativity to lead designers on the road of innovation.

The definition of a specific design is often associated with a given source; for example, religious, traditional and historical leaders. Recently, it has been shown that this definition of culture as an alternative source for textile design has the requisite knowledge for designers (Mohammad, 2008). It may be generally accepted by most African cultures that a brand originating in various African ethnic fabrics becomes part of a community culture. It means accepting fashion with diverse cultural values, patterns and originalities. The key inputs of this series are well-known traditional patterns and textiles such as Kente, Adire, Adinkra and Congo Raphae. The new suit, Sun Yat sin suit, and a lot of dress-based cheong brands also play a major role in Chinese culture. Via these historically rich textile sources modern Chinese designers have reflected aspects of the past as well as new hopes for the future Tiraz, the Islamic brother, is the basis of today's Muslim brands, concepts and styles of culture including jilbabs, hijab and galabiyyas (Yao, 2011). Simply put culture has the ability to adopt from other cultures and internalise it. However, the core features of any community are upheld in the new fashions, textiles or behaviours that are being copied.

These modern designs have introduced social arts, expressions, and political shifts in their culture to wearable fashion pieces. Culture is the means which fashion designers can gain full insight into the interaction patterns and interpretations of these models. These factors are generated by the fashion designers' own cultural and social ideals in the process of product creation. The final product produced by designers is influenced by their cultural context, beginning at the design process. Fashion designers have different cultural influences influencing them, including visual arts, tradition, music and

performing arts. Mode design is now more than a cultural phenomenon reflecting the taste of time or the presence of people or the public, it has evolved so as to incorporate meaning as a community that combines the entire industry with the social, business and design world.

Culture enables fashion designers to understand the world around them by offering a benchmark or viewpoint. People with a shared culture would probably share the sense of symbols, positions and values in one way or the other. The approach to culture can be taken from a multifaceted method, examining both objective and subjective aspects of elements of fashion design. Material culture is linked to objective aspects. Social structures and ideologies, such as social incentives, alliances, convictions, behaviours, stereotypical ideals and norms and roles of the person, are subjective elements made by man. Aesthetics or fine arts such as dance, music, or drama are the names of culture.

Contemporary culture is complex, incorporating multiple states of everyday life across collection of diverse individuals (Kellner & Durham, 2006). This present-day culture is reflected in and shaped by media and communication technology, which are an essential part of contemporary society. Technology advances increase the transferability of media and culture. Forms of media, including television, newspapers, movies, advertising, popular music, magazines and the Internet, present and influence gender role, norms, ideals of body image, lifestyle, fashion trends and entertainment, as well as individual identity. Media culture presents ideologies and lures viewers to believe that what they see through the media is truthful and of value. For instance, media transmitted sexual content has some impact on the sexual attitudes, convictions and behaviour of young people (Gruber & Gruber, 2000).

Culture could be described as a learning behaviour system that is shared and communicated by community members. Culture is individually acquired and transferred history from generation to generation. Mode designers receive culture as part of the social heritage, and can reshape their culture and change that will be part of the successive generations' heritage. The models of learned behaviour and consequences of behaviour are typically largely not possessed by one or a few people (Laughlin & Throof, 2006). Culture is a structure derived from explicit and implied livelihoods, common to all or specially designed members of a society. Explicit culture refers to word and behaviour parallels that can be seen explicitly. For example, cultural behaviour could be generalised from dress, mannerism and conversation regularities whereas implicit culture is in abstract forms that are not very evident (Podrug, 2011).

The importance of peace, emotional dependency, solidarity and cooperation is emphasised in most African countries. African collectivism values the protection of the family, social order and reverence for tradition. Cultural variations influence the way designers work because a designer has an important role to play in his work as cultural values and living patterns. Values can be deduced from human behaviours because many are rooted in the characteristics of people. Effective managers must understand the principles behind employees' behaviour, and they can only understand why people often do something unconscious and different (Engel-Enright, 2007). Attitudes and behaviour are influenced by values. If its principles align with the policies of the organisation, fashion designers will gain more job satisfaction. If the policy of the organisation differs from its principles and opinions, it will be dissatisfied and deception will contribute to job dissatisfaction. Mode designers should have

the principles that are able to stand the test of fact. Fashion designers must not have static principles, but versatile systems that can adapt to the changes in their own lives, socio-economic climate and their person (Engel- Enright, 2007). Words affect the attitudes, cognitions and actions of a person (Erez & Earley, 1993). The orientation of value in a given society is supposed to have a special rank order.

Values help to describe who we are and reinforce the sense of self. They form the guiding principles of the individual. Rokeach (1973) as cited in Erez & Earley (1993) defines values as:

“standards that lead individuals to take positions on issues, predispose them to favour particular ideologies, guide self-presentation, influence how individuals evaluate and judge themselves and others, act as a basis for morality and competence comparisons with others, and direct individuals to challenge certain ideas and to rationalise beliefs and actions that would otherwise be unacceptable, thus preserving self-image” (Erez & Earley 1993, p. 49).

Many societies have been transformed by industrialisation and modernisation to make them worldlier, materialistic, rational and adaptive, leaving many countries open to new cultures (Granato, Inglehart & Leblang, 1996). Eastern Asian countries, including China, Korea and Japan; for example, emphasise the importance of unity, emotional dependency, solidarity and collaboration instead of highlighting individual needs, emotional independentness and freedom which characterise Western cultures (Sung & Tinkham, 2005).

Collectivism of East Asia values the protection of families, the social structure and the high regard for traditional customs, parents, elders and teachers. In comparison, the ideals of westerners tend to concentrate more on individualistic characteristics such as intellectual skill and independence (Sung & Tinkham, 2005).

It could be said that many African countries have their unique culture which can be seen in the way they talk, the food they eat, the clothes they wear among others. Ghana, cannot be left out from in the development of fashion to represent its culture. According to Rovine, Gott and Loughran (2010), Hansen and Madison (2013), and Rovine (2015), African culture that is shown through fashion has gained substantial recognition in academia, especially in the area of art history. Concurrently, Kabas and Couture (2015) report indicated that Ghanaian fashion broke the Africans borders to be the first African fashion to be exhibited America with a keen interest in African culture and fashion. It is imperative to say that African fashion is noticed by other worlds, especially in the way Africans dress.

Just as many African cultures and fashion, Ghanaians also have unique fashion that distinguish them from other cultures. Many ethnic groups in Ghana have peculiar fashion of dress that distinguish them from others. For instance, noted fashions among the Ghanaian people is made from fabrics such as the Adinkra, Kente, Fugu (smock) and others (Danso, Adom, Eshun, & Adamtey, 2019). Danso et al. (2019) and Adom (2016) buttressed that Adinkra is a common fashion among the Akans which is used during special occasions. Fugu, according to Essel and Amissah (2015) is a loose garment that the people from Northern Ghana use to sew cloth made from strips woven on looms. These

fashions of dresses are mostly used during special occasions such as festivals, funerals, naming ceremonies among others.

Similarly, other ethnic groups in Ghana are identified by special types of fashion. There are particular types of outfits that gives prestige and recognition to men and women alike in Ghana. Most men in the southern part of Ghana makes use of about 10 or six yards of fabric that is draped around their bodies and hang on their left shoulders (Danso et al., 2019). On the part of women, the popular Kaba which is a three piece of sewn blouse, and slit (abosoo) is most used as a sign of womanhood (Gott, 2009). According to Gott, this three-piece fashion of Kaba and slit has its source from the European blouse and the already prevailing fashion that characterise most Ghanaian women dressing. From few of the fashion that is used to identify the dressing of Ghanaians in these few extracts, it could be seen that even though there has been some adoption or influence from foreign cultures, the core culture of Ghanaians still remains the underlying determinants of fashion. Ghanaians still attach much significant to the root traditional fashion.

Cultural System

There are three levels or stages of culture that can be identified as technical, social and ideological (Hamilton, 1987). Technology refers to the cultural system where tangible materials used in the versions of communal and geographical environment, and the methods by which these features are organised to identify the culture of the people (Hamilton, 1987). The sub-cultural system of dress consists of fabrics and techniques used to make it. In a layer-cake model of culture, technology is at the top of the list, indicating that it is the result of the ideology and the social structure of culture. The layers of

ideology and social structure are incorporated within and symbiotic with technology. In simple terms, culture defines the materials, behaviour and way of living of people including their fashion.

Ideology, the third level of the layer-cake model that Hamilton (1987) proposed, is the most fundamental concept of all. Without ideology, technological and social structures would not even exist. Ideology is the in-depth, essential core of culture (Hamilton, 1987). If compared to the parts of a tree, ideology may represent the roots while the wood and technology represent the fruit that the tree bears. Ideology as part of culture includes

“values, norms, knowledge, themes, philosophies and religious beliefs, sentiments, ethical principles, world views, ethos, and the like” (Kaplan & Manners, 1972, p. 112).

While ideology is the “values and public agenda of nations” and organisation groups, for the most part it describes the connection between arranged thought and social power in large number of political-economic frameworks (Lull, 2000). It is the basis of judging whether something is good or bad, right or wrong, explicit or implicit, appropriate or inappropriate (Hamilton, 1987). In fashion design, ideology may refer to “a set of design principles; perception of quality; precedents or formula regarding price determinations or inventory size; attitudes about modesty versus immodesty; fashionable versus unfashionable judgments; age and gender appropriateness in dress” (Hamilton, 1987:3). These three elements, namely technology, social structure and ideology interact with each other to shape one’s culture.

There is no doubt that Africans had their own culture of living, dressing, farming among others before the inception of colonialism. Africans have their unique way of dressing which one can say was influenced by the introduction of new fashion via colonialism. Research revealed African tradition in the aspect of fashion to be in a constant changing practice to be in sync with other fashions around the world (Hansen & Madison, 2013). Even though the fashion system in Ghana may be seen to be sufficient in producing textiles for its populace, the massive production of textiles has taken over various markets across the world which has affected the consumption rate of most African prints (Hansen & Madison, 2013). Despite the globalisation of fashion, it appears that most African cultures maintain their ideologies in the styles they produce (Rovine, 2009). There is the need to see African culture to be one that was able to stand the test of time despite the many changes that fashion was integrated into the African market.

Cultural Norms

Cultural standards may be referred to as the accepted expectations and rules governed by a community or a society. Failure to comply with cultural living and functioning standards may impose punishment. It is important to take into account cultural norms in the fields of fashion design. The National Association of Social Workers (2015), builds on previous standards that have been established to introduce new concepts and expands on new ones which goes beyond race, ethnicity and religious identity among others. The idea that culturally shared, sanctioned and incorporated structures of beliefs and practices are transferred from one generation to the next must be that of a cultural community. Cultural norms provide meaning and consistency to life and

provide the means of attaining a sense of dignity, protection and belonging as requirements for good moral conduct. In addition to related principles and rituals, moral beliefs convey a sense of order and control over life facets that may seem chaotic or unpredictable otherwise.

In complex, interactivities at all levels of control from standard of live-of-life to culture, cultural standards are woven into interpretative expressions of the way of life, patterns and discourse. The links between ethnicity and fashion are also mediated by cultural norms and even gene expression through activities like marriage, lifestyle preferences and exposure to the environment (Kagawa-Singer & Chung, 2014). It could be said that most elements of culture are expressed in the form of fashion. Many literary works made reference to fashion even as they are discussing other elements of culture. Therefore, fashion could be said to be one of the core elements of culture that cannot be ignored.

Beliefs in Fashion Design

Every culture is based on faith because it distinguishes individuals from all human cultures. Fashion design beliefs lend themselves to multiple meanings as it is said to be one of the most difficult to define divisive concepts. It is utilised in several various disciplines, each of which defines its parameters differently. Danso et al. (2019) define their classical study to be an attitude of the whole self, including both will and intellect, aimed at an individual, an idea and a divine being, as in religious faith. The history of ethnic, religious or social groups are beliefs and traditions. In the widest context, values include how individuals think, do, and use things for their lives. Beliefs have conservative elements which connect the past to the present generation and to the unborn.

There are cultures that respect the way people clothe themselves in their society. Clothing nuances our everyday businesses and announces the sentiments and the convictions of a community. The most picturesque insight into the life of a specific social environment is clothing (Danso et al., 2019). It also shows the universal constants that typically demonstrate faith and fitness in a given period, along with a number of cultural processes, bonds and individual features. Clothing is viewed as a collective and personal visual medium and a certain community can be effectively decoded using it in contemporary culture. This is one of the best ways for a person to convey his or her identity. Clothing, depending on a person's values, contributes to social relations. Akinbileje (2010) suggests that the recognition of a people's cultural environment involves clothes. Clothing is a viable way to preserve the traditions of a community in traditional institutions. In the case of the individual's perspective- the person's clothing style as per culture; the person's thoughts and perspectives on the life of that person and others are influenced. People wear clothes that often advertise sex, age and class. It can show your job, your roots, your personality and your taste (Akinbileje, 2010).

Artifacts in Ghana

Ghanaian objects reflect the rich cultural heritage of Ghanaian culture. Objects from fashion come and go; although the ideals of society have been developed and evolved, their faith and culture have evolved. Fashion objects are not only an ambitious projected picture of a fine, old-world reinterpreted value to fulfil a purpose or schedule but also an evocative and refreshing idea that makes us all the more instinctive to show our appreciation of society. A person begins to look for a way to minimise his or her dissonance or aspires to improve.

The young people of today want to view mode objects and to adopt the clothes that fit their value and characteristics as an expression of their feelings. In daily fashion and cognitive interaction, the attraction of aesthetic experiences is tricky in theory (Mcleod, 2018). In addition to the conventional social agenda of fashion artefacts and patterns, the pattern of anonymous style and self-expression has been described by the generation attitude. The present behaviour is characterised by self-image and self-expression, which has transcended from the feudal system of the pre-capitalist to the post-modern social structure. This is common among today's young people who are looking to find fashionable artefact choices during the identity formation of Erikson's psychosocial development (Mcleod, 2018).

African Traditional Dress

Wearing traditional dress may be an expression of national, regional, tribal or religion identity and distinguish oneself from outsiders who are not members of the cultural group. A traditional style may reflect cultural integration rather than cultural resistance such that old and new culture and structures co-exist through mutual adaptation (Diop & Merunka, 2013).

Wearing techniques in different areas have developed. The absence of written word and real historical documentation make traditional dress in Africa hard to track.

Mostly, traditional garments may reflect the tribal status, their socio-economic status, history, landscape and climate. The nucleus of tribal clothing is traditional and contemporary textile and printed fabric. Generically, African clothing follow specially crafted designs to produce inspiring aesthetic fabrics that depict moral and functional values based on fundamental symbolisms

(Gyekye, 2003; Adom, 2013). Different colours, designs, strips of woven and beaded fabric or beaded attire, are made in printed and dyed cloth. African clothes, bright and audacious are usually trendy in modern products. African clothing, which has taken root in western clothing, is worn by millions of users for daily and formal occasions. This makes the scene dynamic and colourful.

Mode of production

In factories African fashion is not manufactured on a large scale in the same way as in western industrialized nations, and is not uniform in terms of mark patterns (Luttmann, 2010). Although the global fashion and ready-to-wear clothing (including embroidered African clothing) have been eclectically adopted by consumers, it has not extended to the mass manufacturing of kaba and slit with normal global clothing manufacturing procedures (Dogde as cited in Luttmann, 2010). In addition, Quartey (2006) revealed that there are a number of small local production of print fabrics such as the Adinkra cloth, batik or tie and dye cloth and production of kente among others. Thus, the production of traditional fashion adopts some features from the world of fashion globally but maintains the core features of its core values. This implies that Ghanaian fashion is dynamic but maintains its core values during production.

Circulation of African fashion

Sales from African fashion in Africa of their merchandise and services are based on social policies. The workplace is the central social meeting place where the customers meet and invite others to exchange ideas of fashion. The location is well arranged to the comfortability of the customers. The advertising signs outside the shops comply with modern graphics standards. This contributes to the professionalism and social stature of the owner, guaranteeing

the customer's psychological satisfaction. Inspired by the local surroundings, images, values and content

Apprenticeship

Many designers may undergo training either in the classroom or through apprenticeship. Apprenticeship includes a number of associated skill groups which enable the apprentice to practise a particular business and may take place over a period of time. Training is mainly suited for jobs requiring production skills (Monk, Sandefur & Teal, 2008). Learning gives one an opportunity to work for a real employer, earn a real wage, earn a true certification and learn useful working skills. Training may also provide more efficient ways of gaining skills for the job market. The standard of apprenticeships is paramount.

Apprenticeship in Ghana

Ghana has a highly-developed framework for training young men and women in skills which are commonly used in the informal sector. The non-formal training accounts for 80–90% of all training programmes in Ghana, compared to 5–10% by public educational institutes and 10–15% by the NGOs (Palmer, 2009). Contracts for apprenticeship are at least threefold different from regular contracts of employment: first, it contains a long and fixed time period during which only mutual consent can terminate; second, it contains promises of teaching and learning, of at least a kind; finally, contracts for apprenticeship have a high risk of involving children (Smits & Stromback, 2001). Trainees develop professional skills in the operation of machinery and repair equipment as well as in general business management competences such as procurement, pricing and contracting in relation to formal training. Apart from the classroom training, apprenticeships are much more versatile, as they possess more specific

skills (Monk, Sandefur & Teal, 2008). This brings to the notion that, more of those who undergo apprenticeship may get the chance to have more hands on activities than classroom training.

Vocational and Technical Education in Ghana

The three main stages of professional and technical education are: primary, secondary and tertiary education. At the elementary level of education, vocational education begins at secondary school, vocational or technical training is offered in secondary schools, technical institutes, vocational schools, education centers and other post-secondary education institutions as well as in some schools. In technical universities, traditional universities and similar institutions professional and technical training is provided at tertiary level (Boateng, 2012). The aim of non-graduate vocational and technical education is to provide, in addition to general education, skills training to young men and women to meet national technical manpower requirements, including self-improvement at the middle levels in industrial, business and farming (Baiden, 1996).

Experience: Flow in the Job

Anecdotally, it could be assumed that people become better at what they practice or rehearse often. In relation to fashion, it could be said that people become more creative as they continue to design. Creating sense involves bringing order to the contents of the minds by assimilating one's actions into a unified flow experience. People who find their lives meaningful usually have a goal that is stimulating enough to take up all their drives a goal that can give meaning to their lives. Purpose, resolution and harmony unify life and give it meaning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). If an important objective is pursued with

determination and all the various activities fit into a unified experience of flow, the outcome is harmony.

The Nature of the Fashion Design Process

Although designers share many features of scientists and artists, they appear to be distinct from individuals in these two professions (Owen, 1998). Some people think that designers are more likely to gain design skills through experience than through theory (Yee, 2007). Some designers may prefer to see their practice in their day-to-day design activities as creatively constraining (Yee, 2007). Although a designer should look for new information to innovate, the query mechanism is always concealed and only the answer can be generated to demonstrate the results. The creative process needs to be transparent and obvious in design analysis so that everyone can regenerate the processes which can remain hidden in design practice (Yee, 2007). Theory, methods and processes can improve the quality of design according to Owen (1998).

Fashion designers who are more inventive, unpredictable and unprompted (Lawson, 1997) than architects are able to work closely with customers, the designers still need to meet the customers' needs and design issues and solutions that rely on such needs which are interconnected (Sinha, 2002). Fashion design relies on the personal experience and demands of the designers and the clothing they create (Stecker, 1996). A fashion designer should also consider social, cultural, economic and political aspects to produce a good design.

Although in each new season, different fashion houses can individually and privately present their designs, they also create a collection that shares a common theme with collections produced by other designers collaborating with

others (Sinha, 2002). A fashion designer results overlap and are synchronized because designers need to take into account social changes and patterns in popular culture in their work. They watch many of the same films and TV shows, keep track of street and art trends and sewing and work.

Advanced designers, political and economic scenes, trend observers and forecasters read information and attend several of the same trade shows. Designers often use the piracy to develop mechanism to clone one another. Designers must be consistent and astute "readers" of the society's trends; thus, fashion designers must know how to assess and collect information on design issues (Potter, 1998), and how to perceive the market and integrate meanings into the process of decision making in an acceptable manner. Designers typically use a walkway, a fashion stage or the media to tell the stories and show creativity by presenting a set.

Fashion designers around the world increasingly follow a more conceptual approach in order to share their artistic ideas (Bugg, 2009). More important designers' step from the commercial side of fashion and adopt a more radical approach to fashion, communicate their personal philosophy and techniques and integrate them (Bugg, 2009). It was tested, examined and defined in a number of contexts as three major case studies focusing on body interactions, movement and behaviour. From her work on fashion design and communication, Bugg has sought to define new forms and alternatives, rather than commercial, market and trend, through concepts and contexts.

Design Process

Development is a creative process. Design is innovative, magical, innate, and elusive process (Regan, Kincade & Sheldon, 1997). It is a

mechanism in which a particular problem is solved. In reality, design is a way to solve a problem, or look at a problem whose main objective is to solve a complicated problem and to develop or explore innovative possibilities. The design method turns concepts into practice based on the philosophical ideas of designers about realistic solutions. Project ideas can be created based on the talents of designers, existing expertise, imaginations, perspectives, motivation and ability to resolve problems. Design successes can finally be defined as the ability of designers to identify a proper solution to a specific design problem (Regan, Kincade & Sheldon, 1997).

Designers include responses to the parameters of the problem, based upon their previous expertise, experience, motivation, competence and problem solving techniques. Jones (1992) says that designers go through three basic process stages: study, synthesis and assessment — to arrive at a relevant conclusion about the design issue (Jones, 1992; Yee, 2007). Some designers learn design through project-based practice and "learning through doing" rather than learning from theoretical discourse (Yee, 2007).

Fiore, Kimle & Moreno (1996) stated that most individuals who seem to create have similar imaginary style, showing repeated patterns in the way they approach problems and the way they go about facts. The design process consists of an image, presentation, testing and reproduction spiral structure (Gray & Malines, 2004; Zeisel, 1994). The design method is seen by Press and Cooper (2003) in terms of four processes namely formulation, assessment, transition and reaction. Per their view, one needs to think carefully about what to design, assess the design to be done, the changes that needs to take place and

finally, how people will react to it. Simply put, the design process may have several stages that designers need to take into consideration when designing.

Different designers used slightly different approaches to arrive at the final design (Rissanen, 2007) and clothing and fashion designers prefer to use a variety of mental processes to design and create creative works. Numerous fashion designers worldwide have to a greater extent, taken a philosophical approach to tell their tale worldwide (Bugg, 2009). Hussien Chalayan is a fashion designer who makes clothing to show his ideas, system and results, rather than clothing with practical and aesthetic qualities (Bugg, 2009). Yohji Yamamoto, who feels like "the time's passing," also provides an example of an artist who embeds his/her idea in design. He considers perfection so that he incorporates "the traces of wear and tear on something to wear again, the manner in which plugs are embedded in a garment from the stance and the form of their owner, and the transformations in the character of a textile over time all embody the achievements of Yamamoto in creating: perfect imperfection or the individuality of an attire (Salazar, 2011).

A few design scientists have created a paradigm for the processes of fashion design. Lamb & Kallal (1992) developed a design framework for clothing design which divides functional design in six steps: identifying problems, preliminary ideas, refining design and creation, assessment and implementation of prototypes. Parsons & Campbell (2004) define the process of innovative design in four main stages: recognition of the problems, concepts, the prototype and solutions. In short, the design process starts with the description of problems, followed by knowledge collection and the issue to be resolved. The next step is to synthesise the knowledge collected and create

hypotheses and ideas. Finally, the output is formulated and evaluated. Most importantly, the design process is not linear, but requires a number of iterative steps (Parsons & Campbell, 2004). In researching the design procedure and the performance of fashion designers, the effect of culture was not greatly influenced.

Creativity in the Fashion Design Process

Creativity can be said to remain one of the most unanswered concepts of human thought behaviour (Liu, 2000). A number of studies related to creativity have been carried out by researchers in various academic disciplines, such as psychology, socio-cultural studies in philosophy, genetics, education, and cognitive science, including research into cognitive, mental, social and cultural perspectives of human creativity. Creative minders are using previous experience for problem solving, drawing conclusions and making choices.

The discussions on the concept of creativity continue (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Creativity definitions are formulated in four terms – product, method, type of individual and conditions (Torrance, 1965). Creativity in the field of fashion is a form of problem-solving methodology involving a spiral method, including the identification of problems, preliminary concepts, prototyping, assessment and implementation (Lamb & Kallal, 1992). The ability to create original and useful work is the creativity (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). It is a fully evolved ability that engages cognitive processes that are fundamentally natural to generate new and important factors (Fiore, Kimle & Moreno, 1996) such as; (A) Individuals who appear to possess exceptional intelligence; (B) individuals who live in especial and primary ways of the universe, and; (C) People who have turned our society around with some

reverence impressions like Leonardo, Edison, Picasso or Einstein, as they have done. Sternberg and Lubart (1999) portrayed a creative person as a vessel empty that is inspired by a divine being.

A creative human is highly imaginative and can be seen in the creation of items like clothing (Kidd & Workman, 1999). Creative people typically prefer asymmetric figures and shapes, but not all creative design strategies inherently have these characteristics. Amabile's (1983) concept of creativity was stated by Sternberg and Lubart (1999) as an inspirational convergence of experiences and skills in a given field of artistic innovation. The latter competencies include a cognitive style which requires complexity management and breaking the mental system during the resolution of problems (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999).

Creators appear to have identical types of cognition. For example, they may see repeated trends, address issues in similar ways and think metaphorically and flexibly (Fiore, Kimle, & Moreno, 1996; Lewis, 2005). Resolution experience is dependent on the cognitive styles of the person (Plucker & Renzulli, 1999). The two major phases of creative critical thought are a generative and exploratory phase (Finke, Ward, & Smith, 1992). The generational process has the ability to promote innovative findings (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). An exploratory stage afterwards typically helps to describe innovative ideas (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Lewis (2005) defined analog and metaphorical conceptual mixture, constructive thinking and differing thinking of the means of generative development of cognitive thought.

In the different methods used to research innovation, differing thought played an important role (Sinha, 2002). Divergent thinking is a technique used to create new ideas by looking for different solutions to a series of problems that apply to the design of mode. The key tool for testing innovation has been divergent thought and is considered one of the attributes of creative minds (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999; Lewis, 2005). The Creative Thinking Test was developed by Torrance (1965), which was based on the work of J.P. Guilford. The concept of creativity by Torrance states that “the process of becoming sensitive to problems, deficiencies, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, disharmonies, and so on, includes; identifying the difficulty in searching for solutions, making guesses, or formulating hypotheses about the deficiencies, testing and retesting these hypotheses and possibly modifying and retesting them and finally communicating the results.

In developing and forming the latest product in fashion design, creativity plays a critical role; throughout the design and product creation phases, the translation, incorporation and communication of new concepts are continuously employed. Creativity research comes from a variety of fields, including psychology, business, engineering, architecture, education, mathematics and philosophy. Scholars in many areas accept that innovation takes various forms (Ruppert-Stroescu & Hawley, 2014). Fashion concept creativity has different characteristics. In addition to creative innovation in a new consumer product design, there is an additional criterion for creative value. Based on the design attributes of Trueman's (1998), as cited in Rahman, Zhu and Liu (2007), there are some ideas that adapt and expand design roles. Design may be used to transmit messages and ideas to the public as a communication tool. It is also

used as a way to create, grow and communicate the consumers' identity (Rahman, Zhu & Liu, 2007). A brand product can be distinguished from other products by design. In fashion design, the latest designs and innovations can be integrated into new items. Good design will build a company with more business and interactions.

While fashion designers frequently believe they have clear understanding and knowledge of creativity, few investigators have studied the relationship between creativity and the source of inspiration for individual designers. In order to improve the design creativity of fashion students in education and creativity as part of the strategic response by the industry, previous literary research has been carried out (Sinha, 2009).

Many of the fashion design approaches researchers are based primarily on a production-oriented approach to design, Eckert (2017) has examined the relationships between design inspiration and design success in the clothing industry and stresses that the importance of inspiring sources will be of benefit to designers. One of the researchers thought that market-oriented design restricted one's ability to communicate an artistic meaning. In this study professionals in the design of fashion viewed innovation as a small creative change in daily processes or product creation.

Although fashion artists frequently believe they have strong creative skills and knowledge, some researchers have investigated the connection between creativity and the source of inspiration for individual fashion designers. Previous literature searches were conducted for improving fashion design students' innovation in educational environments as part of an industry strategic response (Karpova, Marketti, & Barker, 2011; Kidd & Workman, 1999; Sinha,

2009). Furthermore, the majority of fashion design approaches by researchers concentrate primarily on a production-oriented approach to the design process (Fiore, Kimle, & Moreno, 1996; Wickett, Gaskill, & Damhorst, 1999; LeBat & Sokolowski, 1999; Regan, Kincade, & Sheldon, 1997). In a study by Eckert (1997) on the connections between inspirations for design success in clothing, she highlighted the importance of inspiring sources for knit designers and predicted that they will benefit design companies. One of the researchers thought that market-oriented design restricted one's ability to convey an artistic meaning. In a recent research by 28 apparel specialists, Karpova et al. (2011) studied the importance of innovation within the apparel industry and examining their perspective on innovative thought. In this report, clothing professionals viewed innovation as tiny creative improvements in daily processes and product creation (Karpova et al. 2011). In addition, creative imagination was less highlighted as the fashion designer is not involved in a pure artistic production strictly (Karpova et al. 2011). This may be due to the essence of the US and Ghana fashion industry, which concentrates on manufacturing goods that are ready to be sold for pragmatic use by consumers. Furthermore, it is also encouraged to copy or adapt the ideas of other designers to speed up the design process and echo real world trends.

The focus was less on creative innovation since fashion designers are not exclusively interested in "pure artistic" production (Karpova et al. 2011). Radical innovation or fashion design is simply a development of a new product and an improvement of an existing product is progressive innovation or basic fashion style. Mode types have typically shorter lifetimes, while mode fundamentals have a longer lifespan due to their classical form. It is important

for fashion designers in this customer-driven society to consider what is within the minds of customers.

Market and Consumer

In product design, market and customer analysis may play a major role. Findings from researches and data may enable designers to build a good customer relationship and to produce more attractive product. Concurrently, research suggest that understanding the needs and desires of consumers is key to the success of new products (Rahman, Zhu & Liu, 2007). Therefore, for a fashion designer to attract and maintain more customers, there is the need to understand what customers need and how to produce quality products for customers and at the same time maintain good relations with them.

Technology

Due to technological progress, fierce competition and shifting customer preferences and market demand fluctuations, fashion designers must respond to the emerging global market much quicker and produce fresh and unique products that distinguish them from their rivals. The design process is important to understand what determines the success and failure of a product. The presence of a product can stimulate a sensory aesthetic response.

In most fashion designers, the information sources are encoded, the product is considered a conveyor of ideas and pictures and the buyer is considered a recipient. Designers use various design elements as well as principles, including line, space, shape, light, colour, texture, pattern, reproduction, parallelism, sequence, alternation, gradation, transition, lighting, rhythm, concentration, contrast, emphasis and to create an aesthetic product

attracting the attention of their consumers, designers (Rahman, Zhu & Liu, 2007) shape the look and quality of their work in their style.

Fashion Illustration and Fashion Design

In the beginning, an illustration is an image that is presented to illustrate or dictate sensual information (such as a story, poem or article in the newspaper), as drawing, painting, photography or other works of art, by giving graphic visual representation. Fashion illustration is the communication of fashion that comes from pictures, drawings and paintings. It is normally ordered as a part of an editorial or to promote fashion designers, fashion boutiques and departmental stores in fashion magazines (Blackman, 2007). Laird (2000) exposes fashion illustrations almost 500 years of existence. There has been a need for fashion illustrations ever since the life of clothes and the need to transpose a concept or image into clothing. The fashion illustrations not only depict or design a clothing, but are also a type of art. In the late 1930s, Vogues and others started to re-situate their famous illustrated cover with photographic images, thereby declining fashion illustration over the years. He says:

“A waterfall into the history of fashion illustrations and a watershed of their decline was Vogue's first photographic cover. Photographs will always have a connection with reality and truth by association, no matter how altered or modified. I would like to think of them as prose poems and more fictional narratives. They are fashion illustrations. They can be filtered more clearly than images from a single vision. Illustration lives on, albeit in a bad fashion place" (Laird, 2000).

When a picture was invented and could represent the reality of clothing with different figures, the above statement received attention and dominated the

mode scene. With technology advances that make the experiment with various fabrics and colours very simple, versatile and convenient, many fashion designers use pictures as the best alternative.

Fashion design has been used as a working definition for this project interchangeably. In general, fashion designers work very closely with each other to create visual images that are artistic, unique and creative with the help of both conventional and digital media. Actually, fashion illustrators are basically tasked to develop eye-catching drawings aimed to boost the interest of the buying public to a particular clothing trend. The images produced by fashion illustration professionals are usually included in print advertisements, TV advertisements and online advertisements. Although fashion illustrators are mainly tasked to make sketches, layouts or images, they are still expected to fulfil other duties which may include creation of designs for garments, shoes, fashion accessories and other apparels with the use of imaging software programmes like photo shop, illustrator and others (International Academy of Design and Technology, 2011).

In relation to the above concept, the following newsletter can address some basic functions of fashion illustration:

- a. Create clothing patterns, shoes, accessories for fashion and other clothing;
- b. Bringing to life the vision of mode design by illustrating the actual design plan;
- c. Draft sketches using different means, including paintings, carbons, coloured pencils and software programmes for computers;

- d. Produces sketches, layouts and other media publications for catalogues, magazines, brochures, flyers;
- e. Communicate ideas of fashion through drawings, designs, drawings, drawings;
- f. Choose the appropriate colour, sound, and animation to suit the definition of fashion;
- g. Develop patterns and designs for the production of garments;
- h. Keep open contact with fashion designers, art directors and customers.

Drudi (2008) believes that new designs of clothes are used in fashion illustrations and technical drawings. The clear, easy-to-understand and accurate representation of such illustrations is of paramount importance. Therefore, it is expedient to visualise texture, colour and feel in both fashion illustration and professional drawing. In connection with this statement, she undertook a project in a published book where she used already made fabrics like denim, corduroy and others to illustrate different garment designs with both manual and digital techniques. She also suggests that a different cloth design may be inserted to modify the same piece, enabling the designer to test the cloth swatches easily and to visualise the finished product. It also proposes the insertion of a different template to change the same item so that the designer can easily test the fabric swatches and display the finished product.

Fabrics in Fashion Design

Without fabrics, fashion design is impassable. It definitely governs the fashion design as the most important factor. Structures are essential as the construction of ensembles begins with a piece of fabric in the fashion design process. Tone is set for the entire tool by correct choice of fabric. The choice

for the type of fabric is different from a designer to a designer as each one has its own unique insights into the application of textiles in its designs and how they need them to form the design. In the textile industry, with so many technological advances, different types of fabrics are available on the market that designers can mix and match. Choosing a suitable fabric is one of the vital aspects of fashion designing. Oftentimes, fabrics inspire garment design. The choice of the right style for the chosen fabric and the best fabric for the refined design make the design a success. A designer must choose the fabric based on quality, price, suitability and current fashion trends, bearing in mind what works best. A mode designer can build with constant observation and experience the ability to imagine a concept in mind, with the chosen fabrication, to obtain a visual picture of the final product. Besides architecture, a good designer needs to consider the needs of the consumer and the trends. In addition, the ideal fabric must have adequate quality. A good quality fabric may be costly, but it is vital for designers to choose a textile for their clothing. The reason is that the use of high-quality fabric makes the outfit easier to wear.

Insight of Ghanaian Textiles

While of foreign origin, the textile industry in Ghana fulfils Ghana's demand. The traditional ceremonies of Ghanaians' contemporary textile culture serve as marriage, birth and funeral rituals. Industrial wax prints come with ethnic and symbolic names. The designs were original and outstanding. Some of the wax prints had names added to their rituals, including open-air ceremonies, funeral events, naming, and the rites of puberty, marriage and so many more. The indigenous fabrics in Ghana use the metaphysical symbols and

culture in relation to our culture and tradition (Impraim-Swazy, Oduro & Owusu, 2018).

The following are some of the common names, icons and cultural interpretations: “se wo nsa ekyir beye wo dew a, ontse de wo nsa mu”, literally meaning if the back of your palm will be tasty, it will never be more tastier than the right side of your palm. Literal significance: the sensation behind the palm is not like the inner palm or the back of the palm of the hand. The motif in this fabric has two palms placed on the opposite sides with circles in between them. The palm is in the silhouette with tiny dots displayed on it. Cultural and symbolic interpretations: carrying out a duty by yourself is not the same as someone doing it for you. It is better to do things yourself than to rely on other people. A sample is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: *Sample of "Wo nsa ekyir"*

Source: International Open Journal of Humanities and Social Science (1)1,
2018.

Ahwerpow (Sugarcane Nodes)

Ahwerpow/ wo odo ye dew tse de ahwer (sugarcane) Literally meaning: your love is like sugarcane, you love sweetly. The motif in the fabric looks like the sugar cane stem and a line show therein. Cultural and symbolic: love is similar to sugarcane. It means to be grateful to those who are dear and shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3: *Sample of "Ahwerpow" (sugarcane nodes)*

Source: Current trends in fashion technology and textile engineering 2(4) 2018

Ennyi sika entow 'block' (if you do not have money, do not lay 'block').

Literally meaning: If you do not have money, do not lay block. The design consists of uniformly squared blocks and four circles that look like a hole and a shadow around. The arrangements are made for the construction of a cement block. The symbolic and cultural meaning of the textile depicts the essence of money in the laying of blocks. Blocks cannot be purchased without money. A sample is shown in Figure 4.

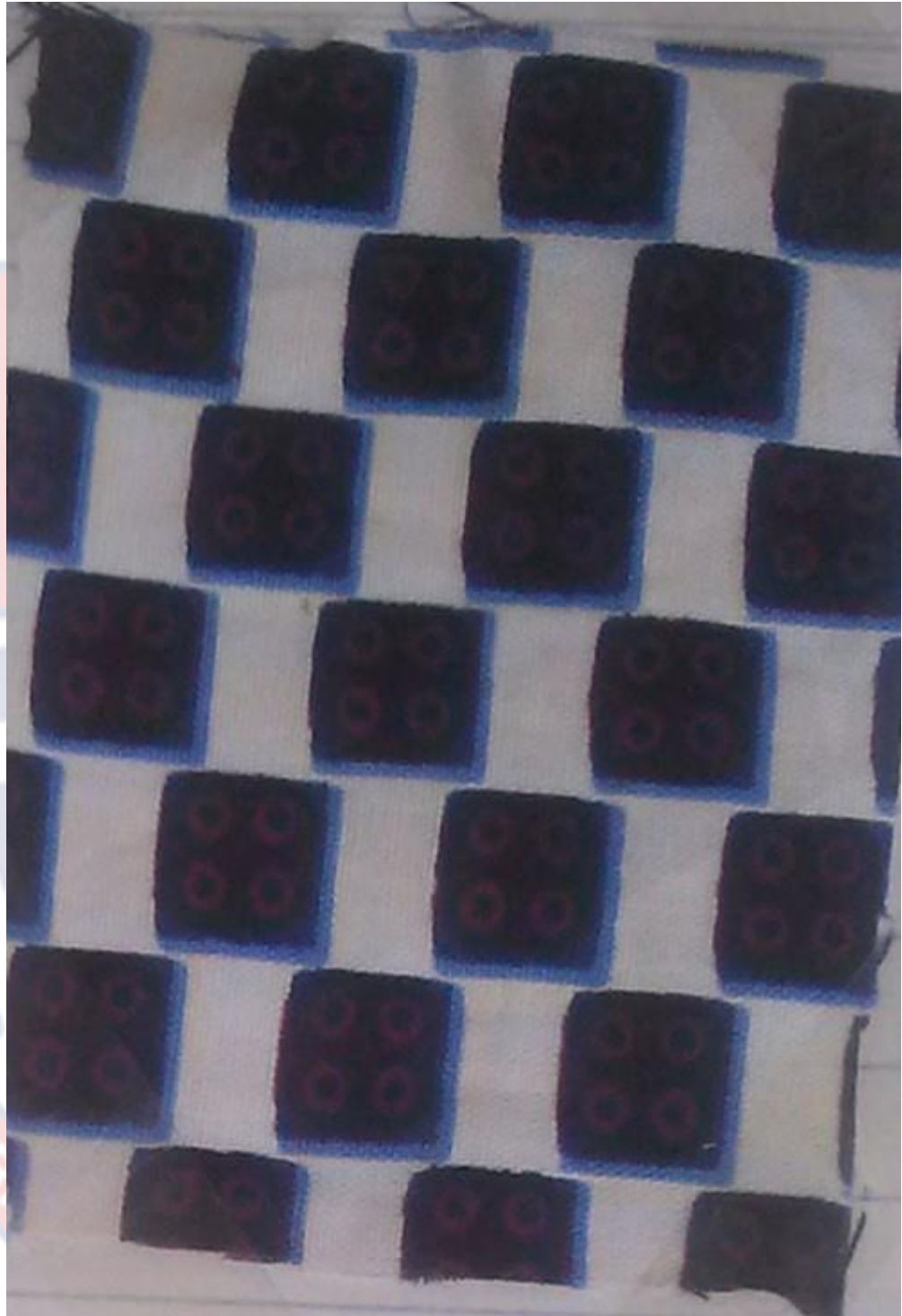


Figure 4: *"Ennyi sika entow" block (if you do not have money, do not lay block)*

Source: International Open Journal of Humanities and Social Science (1)1.

Enyiwa ber a onnso gya (fire is not sparked in eye red with anger)

Literally meaning: whoever you maybe, when aggressive your eyes would not spark fire. The architecture consists of five parallel diagonal lines crossing the intersection with a number of points. The lines do not cross and do not have any markings. The designs reflect autonomy, power over oneself, patience and containment. Cultural and symbolic meanings. This means that not every frustrated face is furious. Figure 5 show a sample of this textile.



Figure 5: "*Enyiwa ber a onnso gya*" (*fire is not sparked in eye red with anger*)

Source: International Open Journal of Humanities and Social Science (1)1.

Ahondze pa nkasa (precious and quality beads do not talk)

Literally meaning: Quality beads do not talk. The designs consist of several floral patterns that are chained into a streamer. Certain circles look like beads chains. Cultural and symbolic interpretations: architecture symbolically appears to be good works and society's actions. It also demonstrates that empty

barrels make the most noise and that good people don't have to blow their horns.

This is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6: "Ahondze pa nkasa" (*precious and quality beads do not talk*)

Source: Current trends in fashion technology and textile engineering 2(4) 2018.

Afafranta (butterfly)

From the old saying- abofra bo nwa ombo akyekyere. Literally meaning a child breaks snail shell not that of tortoise. The design features a circle, flower pattern, and entangled lines of zigzag with two butterflies with the wing.

Symbolic and cultural interpretations: a child's function and behaviour are not supposed to be achieved by adults. A butterfly symbolizes a transition, an equilibrium, a grace and a change-taking capacity. This fabric is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 7: "Afafranta" (butterfly)

Source: Current trends in fashion technology and textile engineering 2(4) 2018.

Senkye Bridge

Senkye pattern is designed by dense, wavy lines filled with colours and chains of fine horizontal lines in texturiser arrangements, denotes the Volta Lake located at the Volta and eastern borders of Ghana. The alleged bridge is aligned with the dense wave lines. Interpretation of culture and symbolic: The attractive suspension bridge on the Volta River is the Senkye Bridge. It shows Ghana's beauty and famous landmark. Figure 8 showed the sample of this fabric.



Figure 8: *Senkye Bridge*

Source: International Open Journal of Humanities and Social Science (1)1.

Owu atwer baako nfo (staircase of death is not climbed by one person)

The design is a ladder with different types of lines arranged in vertical and horizontal patterns. Zig zag lines arrangement from the main patterns with haphazardly spread of thick and thin lines form the background of the patterns. The ladders create chains of arrows facing each other. Vertical lines produce symmetrical balance in the motif. Different colours on the staircase forge harmonious effect. Difference in colours was used to bring out standard for the staircase on the background of the pattern.

Owu atwer literally means- death ladder is a proverb ‘owu atwer baako nfo’ ‘– death is in evitable, indicating the strict nature of death. The symbol reminds people to be humble and live lives worthy of emulation. It also fulfils the promise of life after death. This is a symbol of mortality.



Figure 9: "Owu atwer baako nfo" (staircase of death is not climbed by one person)

Source: Current trends in fashion technology and textile engineering 2(4) 2018.

Akofena-(Sword)

Akofena (sword) with tree geometric design on it is cooped up in rectangular frame. Literally meaning: 'ako'-war and 'afena'-sword. This symbol indicates power, strength and authority clothed with leadership roles. It symbolises the gallant and loyalty of warriors who protect a particular chieftaincy and statesman. The ceremonial sword also signifies the social standing of clan, group or state in terms of strength, wealth and attitudes. A sample of this fabric is shown in Figure 10.



Figure 10: *Akofena-(sword)*

Source: Current trends in fashion technology and textile engineering 2(4) 2018.

Efie Mmosea

The fabric is designed with different shapes and stone-like figures organised in a haphazard way to create strips with space in between them and the difference in colours establish the background from the foreground.

Literally meaning – efie mmosea means house-hold pebble. It indicates that only close affiliation would hurt you severely or without your close relations participation no one can afflict you. We are each other's guardian when your acquaintance is in trouble the members in the society deem it a duty to help. Fellows of the society help one another for unity. Figure 11 shows a sample of this fabric.

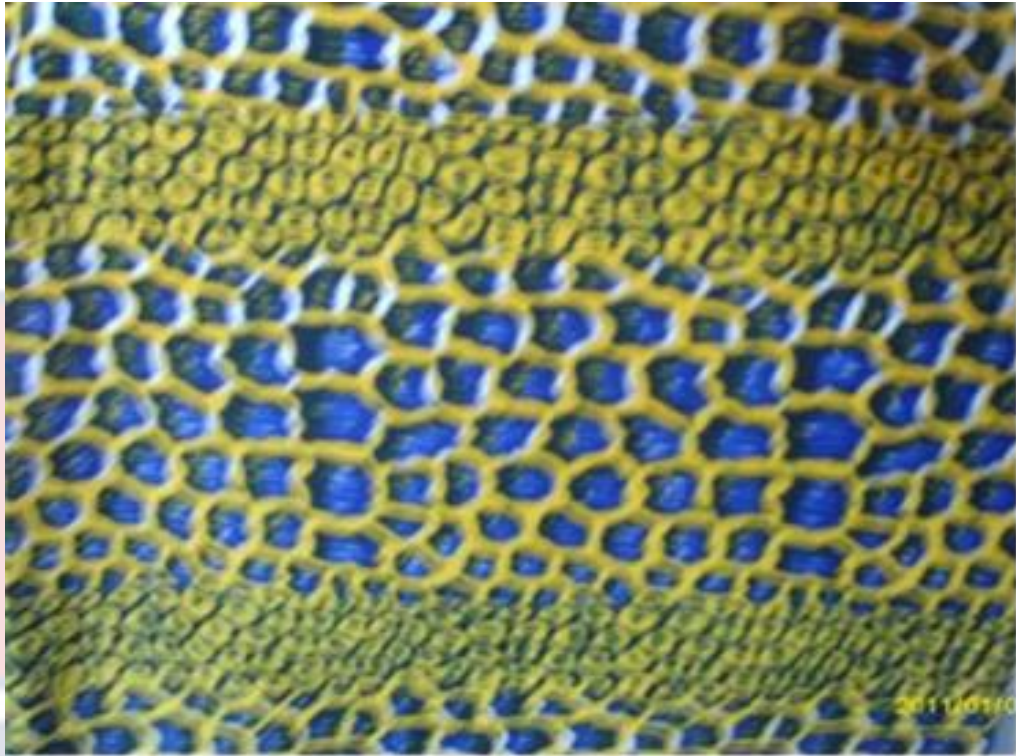


Figure 11: *Efié Mmosea*

Source: Current trends in fashion technology and textile engineering 2(4) 2018.

Colour symbolism

In a society, colour is among the joy of life. In various cultures, the definition is different. For instance, red stands for political force and strength in many African countries and red stands for luck, happiness and festivities in China, while the same colour stands for danger or anger in Japan. In African textile, colours are pronounced to be bold. It can either be done by checking the luminosity or by using deep colours. Pattern arts have a sense of their own. It also varies in context and portrayal when we go from culture to culture.

Colours serve as an important visual symbolic form in the establishment of a ceremonial or ritual involvement, the identity foundation for individuals and participants, the definition of relationships and the contextualisation of ceremonial regalia (Acquaye, Sawyer & Kusi, 2018). The weaver uses the symbolism of the print, as a means of visual communication, according to the

merchant. The template to represent or document events and experiences in life is given symbolic names (Amankwah, Howard, & Sarpong 2012). In printouts to express people's thoughts, philosophy, principles, opinions, and behaviours, totemic animals and proverbs are used. African prints provide excellent implementation of design elements and principles. Colour combination is essence in African prints because of multiplicity, colours in bright contrast are used besides with suitable texture and motif to create rich looking and high aesthetic value in classical prints designs (Amankwah et al., 2012).

Choice of colours may show how tradition individual aesthetic may be seen. Symbolism of colour determines the gender difference, tradition, individual aesthetic appeal and the occasion. Edusei (2006) claims that each colour has its own symbolic significance:

- i. The symbolic name is derived from the white egg and the white clay. It is used for spiritual cleansing, sanctification rituals and indicates a bond with the ancestral spirits, gods and other spiritual forces. White symbolises joy, goodness, pureness, sanctity and vitality. It can be used by people who die at youthful age at funerals.
- ii. The yolk of egg, ripped edible fruits and vegetable and mineral gold are derived in all shades of yellow. It refers to pureness, worth, holiness, pride, elegance, riches, royalty, spiritual life and fertility. It is beautiful, pageant, cheerful, pompous and happy.
- iii. c. Green comes from vegetation. It shows growth, strength, production, wealth, vitality, fertility, good health, spiritual health and rejuvenation. The green colour shows new, fresh and pubertal appearance.

- iv. d. The sky, the supreme creator's dwelling and the sea represent the blue. It means good, holy, joyful, virtuous or pure, peaceful, spiritual holy and harmonious, calm, peaceful and serene, faithfulness, feminine tenderness and water. It is used as a fertility symbol.
- v. Silver denotes a part of women's lives. Silver ornaments are usually worn by women. Silver decoration, marriage ceremonies and cultural celebrations are used for spiritual purification. It represents pureness, joy and peace.
- vi. Gold dust and gold nuggets are used as a medium of exchange and for making valuable royal ornaments. It derives its significance from the commercial value and social prestige connected with the precious mineral. It means royal riches, beauty, high standing, supreme excellence, spiritual pureness and glory.
- vii. The blood, sacrificial rituals and bloodshed are all related to red. The term "red" include fear, hate, alarm, rage, brutality, calamity, assault and mourning. Red refers to gravity, increased moral and political spirit, sacrifice and struggle.
- viii. Brown is the earth colour and soil that says of fresh starts. It refers to oxidation, decay and degradation. It marks a life's end and is used to grieve the dead.
- ix. The name of the gray colour is ash. It is used to cure and purify spiritual practices to recreate spiritual equilibrium when spiritual faults occur. It is also used in malevolent spirit defense rituals. It symbolises mismanagement, aging, spiritual defects and spiritual purification.

- x. Black represents old age, spiritual maturity, increased spiritual energy and spiritual strength, death and dullness. Black is used as colour of funeral.
- xi. Maroon is part of the earth's colours and looks like red-brunt. The healing and strength that repels evil spirits is obtained from the clay.
- xii. Purple is among the colours of Mother Earth. It is considered to be earth and has the rite of power to cure and is part of the feminine life.
- xiii. Pink colour is considered to be the feminine aspect of life and refers to pleasure, calm, tenderness and sweetness (Edusei, 2006).

Theory of Optimal Experience

Csikszentmihalyi (2008) outlines the principle of optimal experience, or flow and provides a basis for understanding Korean fashion designers' creative process and their personal experience. The theory of flow also provides a framework for understanding the relationship between creativity research and designers' creative processes.

The theory was based on the principle of flow, i.e., a state of a person's mind or psychological experience of what he likes and which he is interested in. Csikszentmihalyi (2008) described flow as the way people describe their state of mind when they harmoniously order their consciousness and want to do something they do for themselves. The flow theory describes an excellent experience leading a creative individual to an innovation (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). If challenges go beyond the ability of an individual because of the limited qualifications, anguish may occur. On the other hand, the individual will experience boredom if there is no problem (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). The task must therefore match the degree of competence.

In Csikszentmihalyi (2008) experts, including artists, athletes, musicians, chess masters and surgeons who were individuals who would prefer to spend their time on what they enjoyed mentioned experiences with flow conditions. He has suggested a system of explaining, based on several years of experience, how creative flow includes pleasure and satisfaction in participating in a creative process. The conditions of flow were considered immaterial in relation to sex, age, ethnic background and cultural differentiation.

Nine major elements will characterize the flow experience:

1. Every step of the way clear objectives;
2. Among the actions immediate feedback;
3. Challenges and abilities balance;
4. Misunderstanding and action;
5. Consciousness excludes distractions;
6. No fault concern;
7. The sense of time can be skewed;
8. Self-consciousness disappears and
9. The activity becomes self-employed (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

Over the course of flow, people know what to do without thinking consciously about the next step; behaviour and consciousness converge throughout the experience. Creative people often lose track in a creative phase with aspects, such as time and the environment. An individual needs to balance their field challenges and skills (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

In the creative process, the essential conception of flow is a creative end. The development of innovation requires creativity. The creative procedure starts with the objective of resolving problems which are presented to the person by

someone else, or suggested to the state of the art in the region. He further shows that the less likely the artists are to discover their objective, the more innovative the work is (Csikszentmihalyi 2008). Independent designers were also artists, who produced works of art with their clothing design (Engel-Enright, 2007).

One reason clothing designers choose their particular field is because they like to create clothing. While the ultimate goal of their practice may be to achieve fame or financial success, they also value their roles as designers and design them for work they love. The motivation of Yohji Yamamoto, an influential Japanese fashion designer whose work has been also identified as Japanese is as follows: Each time I work the next collection during fitting and cutting each time, I find some innovation. That's the time I'm happy, the only time I'm happy." In this light, the delight that he describes when he finds something new, such as a different way of clothing, folding or cutting, shows not just an enthusiasm for his job but also an urge to refresh, to renovate and to step up the bounds (Salazar, 2011).

In numerous studies on happiness, life satisfaction and motivation research, for example, psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists have utilized the principle of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). There has, however, been very little research on designers, particularly fashion designers from different cultural backgrounds. Since fashion design includes cognitive capacity which includes imagination, analytical thinking and the combination of innovative ideas from various sources, flow theory can be used for design and the creative process in general.

Engel-Enright (2007) studied the principle of optimum experience in a Master's thesis by United States clothing designers in Colorado. The study looked at individual apparel designers' needs, interests, behaviours and skills. The principle of best experience was evaluated by a group of independent female designers who each owned a small company. She looked at how the perspectives of independent designers “flow” through the custom design process. The answers to the "flow" experience of the designers included their design processes. Given the individuality, creativity and change of the characteristics of design, designers undergo “flow” processes during their design activities. The results of the study showed that the designer encountered a 'flow' in the event of a balance between difficulty and technological and aesthetic abilities. The inner revenge of constructing and designing the garment manifested this "flow." The primary aim of independent clothing designers was not to achieve fame or financial compensation (Engel-Enright, 2007).

Summary

This chapter looked at the following topics: cultural values, design activities, creativity, traditional fabrics and experience in flow of work. Cultural values and background experience have effects on the design decision of the fashion designer. Cultural values are explicit and implicit which are transferred to the next generation so the fashion design is passed on from generation to generation with modification in aesthetics. The design processes and creativity showed the ways in which the designers go through for their designs to be accepted as best or excellent designs. Some symbolic traditional fabrics and colours were also discussed. Formal training of a fashion designer and

experience in flow of work were again discussed, which will help the designer to give off his or her best.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The study investigated the influence of cultural values and background experiences on design decision of some selected fashion designers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This chapter discusses the methods and procedures that were employed to conduct the research. It includes the description of the research design, study area, population, sampling procedure and instruments used for data collection, data collection procedure and data processing and analysis and chapter summary.

Research Design

The design for the study was a phenomenological research design. Phenomenological research design is good in perceiving personal experience, being aware of individual inspirational deeds and describing them. Phenomenological research brings to the forefront the insights in the individuals from their own perspectives enabling it to be used as the practical theory that permits it to educate, to care, protest policy and action (Lester 1999). It involves the study of experience from the individual perception. Research has shown that phenomenological studies provide scientific approaches to the study of a phenomenon and personal experiences of people (Elley-Brown, 2015). Phenomenological research gathers an in-depth information through qualitative approach.

Qualitative research approach is interested in providing a deeper understanding of a characteristics of the totality of a single situation (Abdullah & Raman, 2001). According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), the qualitative

research approach helps researchers to use the right methodologies in collecting detail and in-depth data that can be analysed and discussed to provide answers to questions guiding the study. In light of this assertion, researchers may use qualitative research approach to studies as it will give them in-depth results. A qualitative research describes procedures to make meanings from the data collected. The qualitative method is where the researcher wishes to gather a general idea from the subjects, the goal being to explore, interpret and describe a situation qualitative research is useful. It gives detailed perspective of a few people; participants' voices can be heard and views are on the participants responses. The qualitative research had the weaknesses as: the data cannot be generalised to the whole population because the sample size is few and the individual sample is studied and the data is not numerical. Qualitative research is highly interpretive and reliance on the participants which reduces the researcher's expertise (Techo, 2016). This type of research offers rich descriptive and textual information use to generate important question to ask research participants.

Being conscious of these, the phenomenological design was adapted for the study in other to explore, interpret and describe the cultural values and background experience influence on the fashion designers' decisions. The design helped gave rich descriptive information which generated important questions.

Study Area

Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly has been divided into two sub-metropolitan assemblies, that is, Cape Coast North Sub- Metropolitan Assembly and Cape Coast South Sub Metropolitan Assembly. The Accra-Takoradi

Highway serves as the division line. Cape Coast north is on the right hand side when coming from Accra to Takoradi and Cape Coast south is on the left hand side. Pedu, Abura and Eyifua are communities in Cape Coast Metropolis in Central Region which are situated in the northern part of the metropolis established by legislative instrument. The occupation of the people in these communities are hair dressing, sewing, petty trading, government and private sectors and a number of catering and hotel services. The fashion designers have their workshops in these communities.

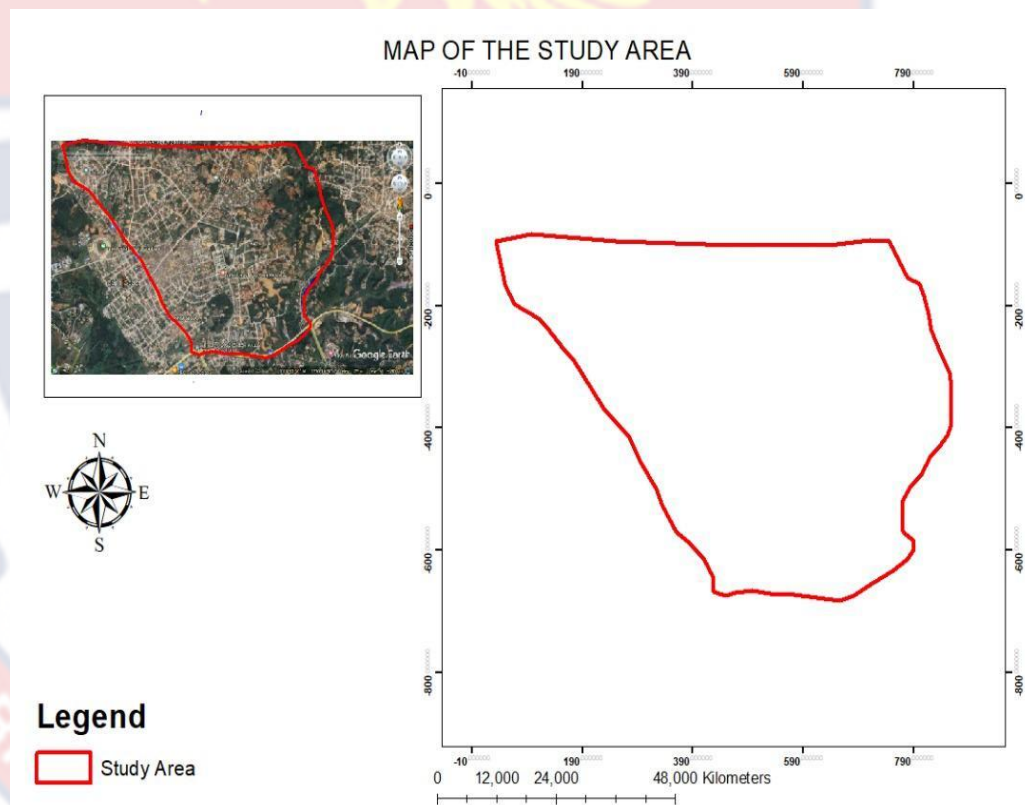


Figure 12: Study Area: Pedu, Abura and Eyifua

Source: Google Earth

Population

A population is any group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The population may be all the individuals of a particular type or more restricted part of that

group (Best, 2007). Target population is the collection of elements or objects that possess the information sought by the researcher and about which inference would be made. The target population can also be expressed in terms of elements, sampling unit, extent and time. The targeted population for this study were the fashion designers (master craftsmen) with three or more years' experience who were able to design and sew in Cape Coast Metropolis. A delimiting time frame of at least three years' work experience as a designer was chosen to ensure sufficient experience in design; it typically takes a number of years to become a professional and be capable of producing an extraordinary product. The target population was 95. This population was chosen because they had the characteristics of the population needed to provide information to help answer the research questions.

Sampling Procedure

A group chosen from a population with the aim of yielding information about the population as a whole is termed as a sample. It is a smaller representation of a larger whole. A good sample not only needs to be representative; it needs to be adequate or of sufficient size to allow confidence in the stability of its characteristics (Salaria, 2012). Purposive sampling, according to Sidhu (2003), is used for cases with small population and allows the researcher to pick up samples from different places at different times. Singh and Masuku (2014) state that purposive sampling gives biased estimate, therefore, it cannot be statistically recognised. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the first sample of the study. Once the first person was sampled, the snowballing sampling technique was then adopted to get the rest of the sample members. In all 20 sample size selected. One respondent was

chosen through the purposive sampling technique and 19 of remaining respondents were selected through the snowballing sampling technique. In snowballing, the researcher will have to identify individual who then becomes the information to identify other members of the population who may provide further data Ofori and Dampson (2011). The sample chosen were the master craftsmen who had been on their own for more than three years who could design and sew. This sampling methods allowed the researcher to access participants with the characteristics needed for the study. These techniques allowed me to select the sample needed to provide the necessary data that I had access to and who were willing and ready to give the relevant information to answer the research questions. I identified participants who were willing and ready to assist me in the study. The participants selected were all located in the north of Cape Coast Metropolis and were easily accessible.

Data Collection Instrument

Interview guide was designed to engage the selected panel for interview to collect qualitative data for the study. The schedule for the interview that were devised comprised semi structured items. This approach allowed challenging responses to follow up as the researcher was able to ask probing questions for clarity. According to Lynas (2001), in a semi – structured interview only broad areas are identified and questions asked on them. Lynas (2001) further states that the researcher has the opportunity to ask further questions and the act of probing ensures that areas that are misunderstood are cleared up and a good relationship is achieved and cooperation encouraged.

Interviews tend to be informal and friendly in a qualitative study. The use of semi-structured and in-depth interview provided insight and understanding of how cultural values and background experiences influence the design decision of the designers. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher may follow the standard questions with one or more individually tailored questions to get clarification or probe a person's reasoning. The use of interview helped the researcher to collect data which were trustworthy.

Here are some sections which helped in bringing out research questions:

Sections under professional development experience which asked the respondents about the factors which influenced your choice of becoming fashion designer almost all said love for the job, under the personal experience which is flow of work the respondents were asked whether they have gotten lost in the work during design process they said they get lost especially when they are enjoying the work, when there is new design and when it is quite difficult. Respondents were also asked if they were able to meet deadlines and were satisfied with their works, the answers were in affirmative. These were some questions and answers provided by respondents under the research question one which sought the influence of background experience of fashion designers decision on design process. The desire for the job, getting lost in during work and trying to meet deadlines will help the respondents to pursue their designs to whatever length it takes them. These background experience will help them to influence their creativity in designing. The next section was cultural values influence under research question two, some of the questions include: how relevant is the traditional textiles in fashion. They answered that the traditional textiles maintain culture and we wear them to traditional marriage ceremonies.

Again, they were asked how different is the fashion system in Ghana from other parts of the world which they answered no because the way we produce our works by the customised method. The responses to the questions show that the respondents would want to maintain their culture and adapt and adopt the cultures of others to make designing and sewing easier. By this cultural values would influence creative design.

Research question three sought to find out how fashion designers incorporate cultural meaning into their designs among the questions that were asked does the use of colour in Ghanaian fashion has any meaning and significance. Yes, they have meaning and significance they have effects on our cultural setting was the answer. Colours have meanings and significance attach to them when people are in particular colour.

The last section which asked about their challenges they faced in the job, they have a lots of problems ranging from bringing fabrics of different colours, cost of production and rejection of piece of advice. Fashion designers face different kinds of challenges on the job.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation and methods used to ensure the quality of study (Connelly, 2016). It is the establishment of protocols and procedures necessary for the study and are considered worthy by readers. The researcher and an expert discussed and edited the coding to give meaning to the categories. They, that is, the researcher and the expert discussed and finalised all the disagreements in the coding process. The researcher and a senior colleague carefully checked the data to see

if the examples were clearly illustrated and established themes and theoretical findings.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher sought for ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Cape Coast and an introductory letter was also taken from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education of University of Cape Coast before visiting the workshops of the respondents to introduce myself to the respondents and ask for their participation in the study.

The researcher visited the workshop of the participants to seek their permission and willingness to participate and work with the researcher to set up a time for the interview. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents and they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Interview schedule was distributed to the respondents (master crafts) at their workshops by the researcher. Contact number of the researcher was given to the respondents for further deliberations. The participants were given the interview schedule two days before the actual day of the collection of data. This was done to help the participants fill the demographic aspect of the interview and to prepare them for the actual interview.

The interview was done on one-on-one basis at the workshops of the individual fashion designers. The interview schedule consisted of semi-structured items and was recorded using voice recorder. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes and one hour depending on the speaking rate of the respondents. The interview was conducted in both English and Fanti languages. The researcher had the opportunity to ask leading questions when the need arose; this made the researcher gain rapport that helped her to obtain the

information that was relevant for the study. In all, a time frame of two weeks was used to collect data from the participants. However, the researcher had the time and dates changed for appointment making schedule difficult.

In general, the instrument (interview schedule) which was used was considered most appropriate for the study because the participants were contacted for the data at their workshops during their work hours and convincing them to stop work and fill a questionnaire (personal data), an alternative to interview schedule would have been very difficult.

Data Processing and Analysis

The qualitative data set was recorded and analysed using thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data and has an advantage of being a method rather than a methodology (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and Clarke & Braun (2013) cited in Maguire & Delahunt (2017). This means that it is not tied to a particular theoretical perspective, a very flexible method with a considerable advantage (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The recorded data was then transcribed into Microsoft Word Document. The researcher then read through the transcripts, made notes on the relevant data which were later developed into themes for coding according to the research questions with a senior colleague.

Summary

This chapter looked at the methods employed in conducting the research. The methods included the research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, instruments for data collection, data collection procedure, and data processing and analysis.

The phenomenological research design was the design for this research work as it allows the use of qualitative approach. Phenomenological design gave me a lot of flexibility and could adapt to changes as the researcher progressed with the fashion designers in Cape Coast Metropolis. The sample was selected through purposive and snowball techniques. In all twenty respondents were selected for the study.

Trustworthiness of the research questions on the interview guide was done by an expert in Clothing and Textiles Education and her assertion of its appropriateness guided me in the review of the items. The interview was longitudinal and was done at the workshops of the respondents with each lasting between 45 and one hour. I was able to do this after introductory letter has been given to the respondents and it took a time frame of two weeks to collect data for the study. Through this, I suffered some limitations. Among them is changing and resetting of time for the interviews which affected the time schedule at the workplace. Data collected were analysed using phenomenological analysis based on the questions raised

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study. The research sought to investigate how fashion designers in Cape Coast Metropolis are influenced by cultural values and background experiences when making garment for clients. The study employed a phenomenological with a qualitative approach to describe, analyse and interpret the practices of cultural influence and background experiences of the fashion designers in Eyifua, Abura and Pedu in Cape Coast Metropolis in Ghana. For the study, 20 respondents were sampled through purposive and snowball techniques and data was collected using the one-on-one semi-structured interview guide. Data from the interview was analysed according to research questions. The first part of this chapter presented information on the background characteristics of fashion designers within the northern part of Cape Coast Metropolis. The second part is organised into seven themes which enabled the researcher to answer the research questions that guided the study.

Background Information

For the study, it was necessary to obtain the background information of respondents in order to put the study into context. The background information obtained from the respondents included sex, age, level of educational qualification, years of experience in the fashion industry, the hours spent per week as a fashion designer, previous experience, current area in clothing design and the order of importance of skill which applies to clothing or fashion design. Table 1 presents information on respondents' background information.

Table 1: Background Information on Respondents

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	7	35
Female	13	65
Age (years)		
25-29	1	5
30-34	9	45
35-39	6	30
40-44	4	20
Educational background		
Master's degree	1	5
Bachelor's degree	6	30
HND	7	35
SHS	3	15
Vocational school	3	15
Years of experience		
10 and below	11	55
11-20	4	20
21-30	5	25
Hours per week		
21-30	2	10
31-40	9	45
41-50	7	35
More than 50	2	10

Source: Field data, (2020)

At a glance at Table 1, it can be seen that the respondents were experienced fashion designers with 13 of them being females forming the majority for the study. The age grouping shows that all the respondents are adults that could make sound judgment as the least age group fall within 25-29 years and the oldest group is made up of those within 40-44 years. However, 13

of the respondents were in the age groups of 30-34 years and 35-39 years respectively. The good thing is that, all the respondents could express themselves in the English language as the lowest educational qualification is the Vocational school certificate. Also, 1 of the respondents obtained master's degree whereas 9 of the respondents obtained Higher National Diploma (HND), and bachelor's degree which constituted 7 and 6 respectively. Further, Table 1 revealed that 11 of the respondents have either 10 years or below of experience in the fashion design industry. In addition to this, 4 and 5 of the respondents had between 11 to 20 years, and 21 to 30 years of experience respectively. In relation to the number of hours spent at their workplaces, it was shown that all the respondents use a considerable number of hours each week designing clothing for their clients.

From the background information obtained in Table 1, it was shown that the people used in the study were qualified enough to provide relevant information for answering the research questions of the study. It could also be said that the experiences of the respondents before taking part in this study helped them to bring on board technical insight. Therefore, there is greater confidence in the data that was collected and used for analysis in this study.

Presentation of Themes

The study had four research questions with seven themes were which produced to help explain how fashion designers in the Cape Coast metropolis are influenced by cultural values and background experiences when making garments for clients. From the seven themes generated, twenty-two sub-themes were also developed to answer the study questions. Research question one had four themes with 13 sub-themes; research question two had one theme and five

sub- themes; research question three had one theme with two sub-themes and research question four had one theme with one sub-theme. The themes and sub-themes developed are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Generated Themes and Sub-Themes

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Professional Development Experience	1.1. Categories of clients Demographics of clients 1.2. Reason for becoming a fashion designer 1.3. Rate of patronage Daily Occasionally / during festivities 1.4. Design criticisms Fees Choice of style and material 1.5. Workshops for self-improvement
2. Source of Inspiration	2.1. Sources of design ideas
3. Creativity and Design Processes	3.1. Creative Design process 3.2. Design research 3.3. Problem-solving process
4. Cultural Value Influence	4.1. Difference in Ghanaian and foreign fashion system 4.2. Relevance of traditional textiles in fashion 4.3. Considerations in designing for clients 4.4. Influence of foreign fashion on Ghanaian fashion and culture 4.5. Cultural elements in designs
5. Meaning of Ghanaian colours	5.1. Meaning of colours 5.2. Influence of colour on style
6. Challenges	6.1. Challenges faced in the job

Based on the themes and sub-themes presented in Table 2, the research questions were answered one after the other.

Research Question One: How do fashion designers' background experiences influence their creative decisions?

Research question one interviewed fashion designers about their background experiences and how these experiences influenced their creative decisions. Four themes were used to obtain the background experiences of designers and their creative decisions. These themes are professional development experience, source of inspiration, background experiences, and creativity and design processes.

Theme One: Professional Development Experience

Responses obtained from the respondents based on theme one is mostly focused on the age of respondents, reason for becoming a fashion designer, rate of patronage, design criticisms, and workshops attended

Categories of clients

In general, fashion designers did not show any age limit for clients that they sew for. It was a common practice among most of the designers to design for any age group of people that they are requested to sew for. It appears that most designers receive design orders from the working class who are able to afford the fees involved. Few of the statements made by designers were as follows:

“I design for all categories of people but the females are more than the males. I do design for men but not much. I design for all ages, from day one to any age but the people that come here more are between the ages of 24 to 50 years” (Ama)

“I sew for the youth. Majority of them will be around 22 to 28 years of age.” (Abena)

“I mostly design for children and adults for both males and females. Actually, majority of them should be around 35 years of age.” (John)

“Most of my clientele are young people; active youth. They are between 25 to 35 years. However, I can sew for any category of people.” (Ewurabena)

“Normally, I sew for pastors, church leaders, and those who work in high offices. The average age of my customers ranges from 26 to 45 years.” (Peter)

In the same way, most of the respondents indicated that their customer list is full of young and the working class who find it necessary to sew new dresses. Some of the general statement made by the designers include those stated in the following:

“I can say that I don’t have any specific group of people that I sew for. I sew for everybody that comes to my shop. I cannot turn away any client. Once it is sewing, I will do it for the customer unless my deadline does not favour him or her. Mostly, I sew for young people who may be around the ages of 22 to 35 years.” (Collins)

“I think everyone that comes to my shop is a client, whether he or she is old or not; I will attend to them as they request. Most of them are young people who are between 24 to 40 years.” (Owusuwaa)

Reason for becoming a Fashion Designer

On one hand, about two thirds of the respondents indicated that they became fashion designers out of the love they have for fashion and designing. Most of them indicated that designing is part and parcel of their lives and have joined the field of fashion and design as their passion. Few of the responses given by most of the respondents are indicated in the following statements:

“I chose to become a fashion designer because designing is my passion. The thing is, I love putting things together. It is the love for it.” (Esther)

“I am a designer now and working as a designer because I was born a designer. Is in my blood before I was born. I started sewing from my childhood.” (Yaa)

“When I see people wearing new clothes, I become delighted. My mother used to sell second-hand clothing and I used the leftover pieces to design. I will cut new designs for myself not knowing the measurement of armhole, sleeve and the others... I do these things and through that, I fell in love with fashion.”
(Nana)

“In fact, I was born into it a family of fashion designers something, I cannot ignore. I love to design and that’s why I am now a fashion designer, just like most people in my family.” (Owusu)

On the other hand, some of the designers, about one third of the respondents, indicated that they started designing as a mean of survival. According to them, designing was not an initial field that they wanted to work

in, but due to circumstances surrounding them, they had to turn to fashion and designing to make a living. Few of the comments to buttress this point are as follows:

“..... I was first working as a mobile banker for some years after completion of school but due to relocation of the firm I decided to start my own work as a fashion designer, because I had it as a gift too I... I decided to make good use of it, I love to design and make clothes with accessories ...” (Addo)

“After my mother died, I had to choose which trade to learn to support me for life. I had to make the right choice since it was for life, from the age of about seventeen I had to learn until the time I was able to purchase some few machines that was to take me into the phase of trade.” (Diana)

Rate of Patronage

80% of the respondents stated that the rate at which clients bring clothing to sew is not at any regular interval but depend mostly on occasions. From the responses, it was revealed that customers sew dresses occasionally; that is, when they are attending meetings, festivals, any special programme among others. Few of the comments are stated to authenticate this point.

“For here, hmmm, I can't say that when it is occasion time. They come here when they want to sew new dresses. Every day, anytime is possible.” (Efua)

“Customers bring their clothing occasionally. During Christmas, Easter and at times when they have wedding to attend. And when they come too, they come with a lot of

materials; one person can bring about 10 to 15 cloths.”

(Dzifa)

“Mostly, it depends on the occasions available. I can’t say this specific day or maybe every two weeks they bring clothing, but mostly when there is an occasion. But, frankly speaking, I get customers frequently; I can even say almost every day.”

(Vivian)

“Hmmm, I can say may be twice in a month. Also, people normally come when it is time for festivities such as Easter, Christmas, parties; when they are going for a programme. Some may come twice in a month but others may wait about three to four months before they will bring cloths to be sewn for them,” (Mawuli)

In addition to these, some of the respondents posited that there is no defined rate at which customers bring their dresses or clothing to be sewn for them. According to them, customers may bring their fabrics to be sewn for them any day that is convenient for them. This is illustrated in the statements that follow:

“Hmmm, twice in a month. Also, people normally come when it is time for festivities such as Easter, Christmas, parties; when they are going for a programme. Some may come twice in a month but others may wait about three to four months before they will bring cloths to be sewn for them.” (Peter)

“Hmmm, I get new clients almost quarterly and every other day regular customers come in with alterations and many others.” (Esther)

Design Criticisms

Almost all the respondents of the study noted that, in one way or another, they are faced with criticisms from their clients. Per their view, everyone may face criticism at one point in time; whether you are a designer or not. They further revealed that, no matter how good you are, some customers will always find fault and critique you; especially if they assume that the fees charged is too much for them. The statements from some of the respondents are presented as follows:

“Some will be saying, is too expensive, is too expensive, they won't come back but later call me that they took some things to another seamstress and the thing is not fitting them so their coming back and they eventually come back. When they go, they don't get the perfection that they want so they eventually come back and they keep on bringing new clients. They even make advert for me.” (Juanita)

“Since I have worked for a long period of time, I've realised that some, if they don't want to pay, then, they will start criticizing or if they see that the work you've done for them, the money is too much for them, they start criticizing until they wear it for a function, then they will feel shy that a friend of theirs want the same style. Some of them will apologise and

some of them will not. Some will also wait for a longer period before apologising. Some will not even pay at all.” (Emefa)

Another area of criticism, as pointed out by the respondents is that, some clients do not want designers to make any change in the designs they have selected, even if it will not fit the client. They based on the slight mistake by their designers and critique them for not designing what they requested for.

Samples of their responses are shown in the ensuing statements:

“I have a client who came and want to sew. She said we should give her our own design and when I was done, she said this is not the type of dress that I want. So as for criticisms, yes but not regularly.” (Abena)

Communication in design was not successful so some of styles don't go well. The lady who just left insulted me well... She said I should have closed my shop but after some days she came back and reconciled with me. She also brought new fabrics to design. I took it in good faith and never became angry. She became my friend and I have been designing for her.” (Adobea)

“A client asked me for fabric about six yards to sew a design, apparently, he brought his fabric and I designed for him and I added another piece of fabric as my own to add beauty. He became angry for adding that piece of fabric (kente), I have to buy new fabric and sold the old one. The nature of our work calls for that: do not be angry the customer is always right.”

(John)

Workshops Attended

16 members of the respondents revealed that they do not attend workshops to improve upon themselves. According to 12 of them, what they know is enough for them to serve their customers. Most of the fashion designers believe in themselves to deliver the needed output for customers but look out for new designs that are trending from social media, the community, and other occasions. Vivid ones are:

“I don’t normally attend workshops. Normally, what I do is to attend fashion show or when someone is graduating, I go there to look at the styles but going for a workshop, I don’t.” (Ama)

“No, why do I have to attend workshop. Every time, I’m learning new things. The one organising the workshop, I know more than that person, why do I have to attend workshop. Workshops, you have to be careful the type of workshop you attend. If you don’t take care, they will rather put dust into your eyes.” (Owusuwaa)

“No, I have not attended any workshop because I have not seen any programme like that. There has not been any programme like that. I haven’t joined any association too.”

(Nana)

“Okay, I’ve not had the formal training but I have some classes online that I have joined to check out the cutting.”

(Dzifa)

Only 20% of the respondents indicated that they have attended a workshop organised for fashion designers. Even among the few who stated that they have attended workshops before, there was an indication that the workshop is not an event that is planned regularly. Let us have a look at these comments from the respondents:

Yes, I had the opportunity to attend two workshops.” (Juanita)

“At our association meeting, they organise such training for some of us. Recently such a meeting was held to help those who did not know.” (Efua)

Theme Two: Source of Inspiration

This theme has only one sub-theme which is, sources of design ideas.

Sources of Design Ideas

In relation to their sources of inspiration, different sources were cited by the respondents. It was made known that fashion designers make use of magazines, online searching of new designs, from nature, previous works among others. In simple terms, all fashion designers have some intrinsic motivation in how they come about their designs. When fashion designers were asked, what inspire them to design creative dresses, this is what they had to say:

“I go online to see the new designs that are coming out. Sometimes, I use pencil and paper just to create something..” (Adobea)

“The designs I have seen online. I can see a design, then I will create a design similar to the one I’ve seen but I’ll try to add up and take out some things.” (Vivian)

“I sometimes take some from news, some from magazines, some too from the people I see around, church and the market. When I am on the street, I watch out critically for the types of dresses people wear.” (Diana)

Apart from obtaining designs from design hubs; designs that have been done by other fashion designers and modified or reproduced, some designers also indicated that they prefer to create their own design.

“I’ll still say that the love and passion. Also, the joy that comes when people put on their dress.” (John)

“To be more creative, I look at nature first. For me to be creative, I look at nature more, especially things related to the sea. For example, a dressing like the mermaid dress has its source from the sea.” (Collins)

“Mostly, it depends on the previous works that I have done. That is the feedback I get from clients encourage me to design more.” (Abena)

“When I am free, I create my own design. I don’t normally like using the catalog. Because I believe those who sat down and do the catalog are doing it for their business. So, I can also create my own style. Also, most of those I design for don’t like trending styles. They mostly want me to design a special design for them which is different from the trending one.” (Yaa)

Theme Three: Personal Experiences

Personal experiences of fashion designers appear to be similar from the responses given. The experiences of the respondents are grouped into sub-themes including working mood, getting lost in work, meeting deadlines,

clients' satisfaction, favourite design, creative design process, design research, and problem-solving process.

Working Mood

The mood of designers showed that they enjoy designing for people. All the fashion designers interviewed express that they do enjoy their design process. Few of their comments include:

“Yes, I do.” (Ama, Adobea, Peter, Ewurabena, Collins, Juanita)

Other respondents added that they do enjoy designing for clients especially if it is in line with their area of expertise. Few comments that will help to authenticate this point is include:

“Yes, I enjoy designing for my clients, especially, when that design is in my line.” (Emefa, John, Efua)

“Yes, I enjoy, especially, those with perfect shapes like the hour glass shape.” (Abena, Vivian)

Getting Lost in Work

From the interview conducted, there is no single person who denied the fact that he or she get lost in the work he/she is doing. Getting lost, which is used figuratively in the study, means that designers forget to even go for break, eat, or even drink water. Some of the comments on this sub-theme is presented in the following:

“Definitely, I do get lost in my work. I remember I was working on a guy's garment and I was working to the extent that I even forgot is time for break. By the time I realised, it was already five and I normally close around 5 to 6. Normally, I should

have left the dress in the shop but I took it home to continue working on it. So, I do get lost.” (Diana)

“Yes, I sometimes get lost in the work to the extent that I forget to eat. Sometimes my wife even complains about it.” (Peter)

“That is my weakness, I carry food to the workshop all time but I forget to even break and eat. I ’m the type that, if I start to work, I do not break to attend to anything else unless I have to finished. I don’t have time for myself, yesterday, for instance, I got myself deep into the job when I realise time was gone.” (Dzifa)

“Yes. Sometimes, I drink only water or eat biscuit for the whole day. For instance, today, I didn’t eat anything till I finished with what I was doing for the day. But the outcome is always very good.” (Esther)

Also, some designers indicate that they get lost when they do not know how to design some particular dress. Others also indicated that, sometimes, when the type of dress is not easy to design, they do get lost.

“Sometimes I do get lost. Especially, when I am designing something for the first time, it may get to a point, I may have to leave it, and go and walk around and be thinking about how to continue before coming back to it.” (Nana)

“Sometimes, when I am enjoying the work I am doing, it becomes difficult to let it go. Also, when you are designing a style that is demanding, you will not like to leave it halfway but complete it before you attend to something else. At the end

you become proud of your work. It all boils down to timing.”

(Mawuli)

Meeting Deadlines

Almost all the respondents of the study indicated that they meet deadlines. Only few of respondents indicated that they sometimes miss the deadline that they give to their clients but, inform clients about it first. Samples of the common responses are shown in the statements that follow:

“Mostly, I am able to meet deadlines. For example, 80% of the works I do, I meet the deadlines.” (Efua)

“I do meet deadlines but not all. I can say about three out of five when it is a wedding gown; that one, I always meet the deadline.” (Diana)

“Mostly, I meet deadlines, but in case I am sick and I promised someone to come for his/her dress tomorrow at 12, I call the person and inform him/her that I am sick; so, for tomorrow 12 o'clock deadline, I can't meet it.” (John)

“For deadlines, I always meet them.” (Collins)

Clients' satisfaction

In relation to clients' satisfaction, the respondents indicated that their clients are usually satisfied in the eventually. However, they noted that in everything, whether you are the most perfectionist in the world, some people will still not be satisfied with what you are doing for them. In general, majority of the respondents revealed that their clients are content with their works. The common ones are:

“Yes, they are. Yes, they are satisfied.” (Addo, Owusu, Adobea)

“Yes, very. The moment they put it on, my name is being mentioned everywhere.” (Yaa)

“So far, I’ve not had any negative response from the people that I sew for. So, I take it to be positive because if they don’t like their outfits, they will tell me. Since such complains are not coming, I take it to be that, they are satisfied. Sometimes I do call them to find out if everything is alright.” (Owusuwaa)

“Yes, mostly. Maybe, it is 10% that may not be satisfied, the 90% are satisfied.” (Vivian)

In addition to these comments, one of the respondents stated that, even if they are not content from the beginning, they end-up liking the design. This is stated as:

“In the long round, most of my clients are satisfied with my designs. Sometimes, they even use them as photographs on their whatsapp page and their whatapp status and even bring more customers to me.” (Ama)

Favourite Design

Every fashion designer is passionate about designing some particular type of dress. The most popular, or favourite design for the respondents of this study includes dinner wears, wedding gowns, wedding suits among others. Few of the statements from the interview are displayed in the following:

“I love designing for dinner wears. They are simple and straight forward dresses.” (Juanita)

“My favourite designs are wedding gowns, traditional gowns; that is engagement ‘kente’, and Sunday wears, that is a day after the wedding.” (Esther)

“I may say, designing like wedding suit is my favourite design. Anytime I get it, I get more excited than any other work.”

(Owusu)

In addition, one of the respondents indicated that she likes fitted dresses.

This is made known in the statement as follows:

“My favourite dress designs are the fitted dresses. I like fitted dresses because they bring out femininity. Also, I am able to manipulate various silhouettes to fit or suit fitted dresses.”

(Emefa)

Theme Four: Creativity and Design Processes

Every fashion designer has his/her own way of designing dresses for clients. This theme is focused on exploring the creativity and the processes designers use when designing. The theme is sub-divided into themes such as creative design process, design research, and problem-solving process.

Creative Design Process

There is more than one way to design new dresses and many fashion designers use different approaches. It was revealed that designers use various design techniques in designing and sewing dresses. As some design dresses without sketching first, some have to sketch before starting the design process. Similar comments made during the interview by respondents are shown in the following:

“No, I don’t have any routine. Before I will come, I know that this is what I have to do. So, when I come, I just take my tape measure and I start working. It is not always that I sketch.”

(John)

“Sometimes, I buy the fabric myself. I buy the fabric that is going to suit the design. I get everything together before I set to do it.” (Abena)

“If you have a design, then I get all the accessories and all the things needed for the work before I start to work. I don’t sketch before, but if you don’t follow the routine, you might not get the design right.” (Owusuwaa)

“I do draft before I get to the main material to start working on it. I use freehand but certain styles you need to prepare patterns before you can cut especially those you have not sewn before. I have to plan before coming, I take the person’s measurement to do the cutting and sew.” (Adobea)

Notwithstanding, some designers do further plan in relation to the material and how to give clients the best outfit. The following statement show the design strategies:

“I first look at the design, then I cut according to measurement. Where the design is difficult, I use brown paper to cut out and see whether it is good before I do actual work.”

(Vivian)

“Sometimes, I arrange things for myself during the week. For instance, if I am sewing for three or four people, I make sure

that I apportion time for each one's work. I may decide to sew trousers for all the three people before starting with the top dresses. Normally, if I am sewing white clothing, I normally work with that one first. Thus, if I take any white clothing, I have to make sure it is completed because if I don't work on it, it may become dirty. So, most of my clients say that anytime I work with their white clothing, they don't see any stain.”

(Collins)

Design Research

In line with the creative design process, many fashion designers have their research procedures for effective design. Majority of the respondents use the design procedures while others make use of online resources coupled with the design procedures to get new designs. Comments from the interview include:

“I normally use the material, linings, and sometimes beads. Also, I use the brown paper, pencils for my design research. As for brown paper, I use it every day or even every work. Sometimes, if the design is just simple, I will not use brown paper but for difficult ones, I use brown paper.” (Mawuli)

“When there is a design, the first thing I do is to look out for it. I ask myself some few questions such as where the person will take the dress to. I also consider the person that is going to wear that particular dress, then I look at the texture of the fabric. The complexion of the person to see if it will match. For

instance, there are some fabrics, when a male wear it, it doesn't fit.” (Addo)

“My clients normally come with their designs. Those who don't come with designs, I look at their shape and I design to hide the bad postures. I sometimes sketch for them to see but they say unless they see the final product they cannot really comment.” (Ewurabena)

“I mostly go online to look at latest designs. I go to YouTube and Instagram to look at the latest designs and it helps me a lot in my designs.” (Diana)

Problem-solving process

According to data from the interview, it could be seen that, fashion designers have various ways of solving problems. As much as possible, designers try to solve the problem at hand or do anything to make their clients happy and to address their concerns.

“When I see the problem, I will think about it well. If I am supposed to cut the place or make some touches to make a new design, I will do it. So, I sometimes use the problem to create a new design but if it cannot be solved, I put the one that is spoilt aside and start another one. This one does not happen often.” (Efua)

“When I have problems related to customers, I consult people that I think have more experience in the job than I do. Then I correct my mistake or I solve that problem.” (Owusu)

“Before I cut, I look at the design critically. But in case I miss some design, I have to unpick everything and introduce that a new design before sewing it back again.” (Collins)

“There are a lot of problems. Some are occupational hazards and you can’t do away with them but rather adjust. Even last week, I was working and the iron burn the material. I had to search and buy a piece of the same material to complete the dress for the client.” (Peter)

Few of the designers also indicated that they will do anything to please their clients. Even if it has to do with kneeling down to beg them.

“To be a fashion designer, one has to be patient and know how to speak to people in order to solve problems. I believe that it is difficult to gain or win one person than to let tens of customers down let go. I have not met any client that I have grievance with yet; I would have knelt down to plead with her if need be.” (Abena)

Research Question Two: How do fashion designers’ cultural values influence their design decisions?

This research question sought to find out about the cultural values of fashion designers and how these values influence the type of decision they take when designing for clients. The theme that focused on answering research question two is cultural value influence.

Theme Five: Cultural Value Influence

This theme has five sub-themes which sought to bring out the influence of culture on their design pattern. The five sub-themes are difference in

Ghanaian and foreign fashion system, relevance of traditional textiles in fashion, considerations in designing for clients, Influence of foreign fashion on Ghanaian fashion and culture, and Cultural elements in designs.

Difference in Ghanaian and Foreign Fashion System

In bringing out the differences between the Ghanaian and foreign fashion system, many of the respondents had interesting comments. Some indicated that they do not have the material and resources to produce the same designs as foreign ones. Others noted that foreign designs are not all that different from that of Ghanaians. Some of the statements made are as follows:

“Here, I realise that there are some designs that you may see online that you want to design but the fabric they use for it is not readily available on the Ghanaian market. Also, the machines they use to produce the design is also not available. Sometimes, the design that you are sewing disturb a lot due to the machines that we are using.” (Addo)

“In Ghana, our fashion system has problem with creativity as compared to other world because designers outside the country are more creative. When you compare their designs to that of ours here, you can see vast difference. They are more advanced in sewing than us in Ghana. They are more advanced because in doing our works, we may require some specific tools. Most of these tools are not available here in Ghana. Sometimes, even if you try to achieve a particular effect, you may not get it perfectly as you want because we don't have the machines.” (Juanita)

Meanwhile, some respondents stated that Ghanaian fashion is different from foreign cultures. Evidence from their statement is presented in the comments that follow:

” Ghanaian fashion moves very fast, when it comes and you don’t join them, it will get to a time, you will wear it and they will laugh at you that is old. But outside, they wear the thing for a long period; for summer and can still wear it later. In Ghana, as for our fashion, it doesn’t last long. So, when it comes and say you want to wait till everything is going down before you wear it. Before you realise, you are out. Once the fashion is invoked, the one that will fit you. Make sure you wear it.” (Mawuli)

“Yes. There is a difference there. For me, I like straight stitches as compared to those imported, you can see that they have such features; they are just designed some way with perfection. But when you come to our dress making, we don’t take time to make them straight. If we can push a little to their standard I will be happy” (Esther)

Further, another client also stated that there may be differences between Ghanaian fashion and that of foreign ones.

“I will say yes and no. No because the fashion system in Ghana is not all that different from that of other worlds. And I will say yes because, some of the things done in Ghana is unique. How Ghanaians work is somehow different from how Nigerians work and how our neighboring countries work. Mostly,

Ghanaians adopt the individual tailoring. Individuals have their styles and they will bring it to you but when you are doing mass production, you will just produce it in much quantity.”

(Yaa)

Relevance of Traditional Textiles in Fashion

From the data received from the respondents, it was evident that most of the respondents attach some level of importance to traditional textiles in fashion design. On the contrary, others do not feel that there is much effect of traditional textiles on fashion. The most visible ones were the introduction of African wear by former president J. A. Kuffour introduced traditional Friday wear and the replacement of the use of laces with the use of kente by couples during traditional weddings. These could be found in the following statements:

“I would say about 10 or 12 years back when former president Kuffour declared the Friday wear that was when people started patronising the traditional fabric. Even now, anytime our current president, president Nana Addo attends any function, you will see him in Ghanaian traditional wear. Unless he is attending continental or meetings outside the country, he doesn't wear foreign official dresses. These has pave way to the wearing of traditional wear.” (Dzifa)

“Very relevant. First, people want to use laces for marriage ceremonies but nowadays, people prefer to use Ghanaian textile; mostly kente for their traditional marriage ceremonies.” (Adobea)

“I may say traditional textiles helps us to maintain our culture. It also makes us unique for easy identification. When we are designing, we easily incorporate the Ghanaian colours such as the red, gold, green and this easily identify us as Ghanaian, and also our Ghanaian symbols are incorporated.” (John)

“Tradition does really have much effect on the fashion people choose. For instance, those who bring “kente” for me to sew mostly request for the “kaba and slit”. About 60% of them and the other 40% goes for long dresses. As for the GTP and Woodin materials, there are different styles that people choose from. The dress forms follow tradition.” (Ama)

One of the participants revealed that, traditional textile helps us to feel comfortable in the type of climate we have in Ghana. He stated that:

“Traditional textile is relevant because of our climate. Now that we are in hot season, when you wear it, you feel a cool sensation. So, I think is more ok for our climate.” (Nana)

Considerations in Designing for Clients

Designers consider some factors before designing for clients. Some of the factors they consider include the stature of the person, the skin colour of the person, the occasion the dress will be used for among others. Majority of the responses were presented in the statements that follow:

“At times, I go online to find similar model and I decide on how the design will look like. I also look at the figure type of the person, that is the client and see if the design will suit her.”

(Owusuwaa)

“I first look at the posture, their skin complexion, and where the dress will be taken to. Sometimes the function the dress will be taken to is also considered before designing.” (Nana)

“First, I look out for the comfortability of the dress. The person must be comfortable to wear the dress and wear it anywhere he or she wants to go to. Secondly, I also look at the work that they do. Most of my clients are average workers and some work in offices. So, I look at their place of work when designing for them.” (Vivian)

“I consider the size of the material the client brings to determine whether it will fit the design. If not, I will ask her to buy additional material or change the style to a simple one that the material will be enough for.” (Yaa)

Influence of Foreign Fashion on Ghanaian Fashion and Culture

Most of the respondents specified that foreign influence is causing some changes in the Ghanaian fashion and culture. The concerns raised by respondents include complains from clients on the cost of designing African wears, and also the high cost of fabrics.

“When foreigners or traders bring the used clothes to Ghana, it is cheaper. If I want to buy used clothes, it may be GH C 60.00 but if I want to sew and I go to the market, I will have to buy the material for may be GH C 70.00 and the sewing cost of GH C 50.00 or more is also there. So, it is cheaper to buy those clothing on the part of my clients.” (Mawuli)

“Ghanaian fabrics are sometimes too expensive as compared to the foreign fabrics. So, a person will say look at the amount you are charging, and look at the fabric price. Why don't I go to a boutique or a bend-down boutique to get one? Even that one will save me some money.” (Efua)

“Right now, if they are sewing for engagement, is becoming expensive nowadays. At first, you will sew kente for engagement and you will not be adding any expensive laces or beads or other elements. But right now, if you don't add lace or bead, it means you are still in the olden days. So, if you have money or not, you have to make sure you add small beads. Also, the foreign production of cheap materials has affected the economy of textile manufacturing industries in Ghana.” (Juanita)

“Sometimes, people bring designs from foreign cultures which are not generally accepted by the Ghanaian culture. And because we are more conservative, some of the designs do not fit into our values. When it comes to this point, I will not design that kind of design for the client in order not to spoil my brand name and personal values.” (Collins)

Cultural Elements in Designs

According to the fashion designers interviewed, the inclusion of cultural elements in designs has started making roots in some design patterns. Some respondents indicated that cultural elements such as beads is being used to design kente for weddings and engagements. Further, the use of cultural

symbols in Ghanaian fabrics has also included culture in fashion designs. Few of the points made by respondents include:

“Yes, you see the cultural embodiment in it. Sometimes, the dress that the person will wear will tell you that this person is from Central Region or Greater Accra or Ashanti. This is because, you see the kind of dressing that they wear then you can easily tell where they are from.” (Emefa)

“The symbols will also determine the names and places that they are meant for. Symbols are associated with cultural names such as ‘gye nyame’ and ‘enyiber onso gya.’ The names of the traditional textiles were given by the elderly women in the family who could not speak their minds in marriages and families.” (Abena)

“I think, traditionally, Ghanaian women prefer to wear kaba and slit for functions. It shows maturity in women” (Yaa)

“It depends mostly on what the person wants to use the dress for. The Muslims, for instance, like every part of the body to be covered but for the Ga people, they can sew anything and wear. Where I am currently, there is no specific Ghanaian element that distinguish the designs I do.” (Peter)

Research Question Three: How do fashion designers incorporate cultural meaning into their designs?

This research question sought to find out how fashion designers use cultural and/or traditional meanings in their work. That is, how culture is portrayed in the dresses people wear, colours used for occasions, and how the

various elements of culture determine fashion. One theme and two sub-themes were used to answer this question.

Theme Six: Meaning of Ghanaian Colours

In most facets of life, people use symbols to represent particular values.

Likewise, Ghanaian colours have meanings according to responses from the fashion designers interviewed. The meaning of Ghanaian colours, as a theme, has two sub-themes namely meaning of colours, and influence of colour on style.

Meaning of Colours

Responses from designers showed that some colours are meant to depict a particular intent. Designers indicated that white is a colour of victory while black or red is used to depict mourning or danger respectively. The focus of all the responses is depicted in the statements that follow:

“Yes. Colour talks a lot in fashion. It is attributed that when a person wears white, you can say that the person is victorious; and if the person is in red and black, even if he doesn't tell you anything, you will sense that the person is in trouble or there is something going on.” (Owusu)

“Colours have meaning and as a designer, you need to know where the customer will take the fabric to in order to advise accordingly; you need to know whether the fabric is meant for party, funeral or engagement.” (Juanita)

“Yes, they have names that have meaning and significance. Some fabrics are for outdoorings, others are for funerals and some are for weddings. I bought a piece of fabric and asked

for the name, then I realised that I can't use the fabric. I have to keep the fabric in-doors, since then I ask of the names of most fabrics before buying them.” (Esther)

“Yes, colours do have meaning in Ghanaian culture. For instance, for funeral, if someone wears black, it means the person is bereaved.” (Ama)

Influence of Colour on Style

Just as colours have meaning, they also influence the style to some extent. Most of the respondents indicated that the style of the dress may depend greatly on the colour and the occasion one is attending. Samples of the statements that seems to be general for most fashion designers include:

“Yes. For example, when someone gives you red or black material, you can ask the person, are you going for funeral? This will affect the design too; but some people may get offended if you ask them about funeral.” (Ewurabena)

“For instance, when we look at colours, colour black represent sorrow or sadness. Colour white also signifies victory or happiness. Red may signify danger or difficulties. Therefore, when you are going to sew for customers that bring this type of colour, you have to be careful what design to choose.” (Owusuwaa)

“Yes, the colour of the fabric depends on the particular occasion the person will be attending. Some client's skin colour may not go with the colour he has chosen to sew. So, you need to advise him either to combine it with something so

that the colour will diminish or so that the person will change the colour.” (Addo)

“Colour and occasion are very important to the style of dress. You cannot use a black coloured fabric to design extremely stylish design as black colour represents sadness. Other colours also have their meanings.” (Diana)

Research Question Four: What challenges do the fashion designers face when designing?

This research question sought to find out some of the challenges fashion designers encounter in the process of designing for clients. To answer this question, one theme and one sub-theme were used.

Theme Seven: Challenges

The challenges’ theme has one sub-theme which is challenges faced in the job. This helped to reveal some of the challenges that fashion designers face.

Challenges Faced in the Job

In every job, one may face challenges in one way or another. In the world of fashion design, there is no exception to challenges. According to the records obtained, fashion designers face different kinds of challenges. Some indicated that a simple advice to the client on the choice of colour and style can be difficult as clients see themselves as those who know more about the colour and style combination. Some of the statements include:

“A client may prefer using a design and colour which do not match. When we try to advise, the person will insist that, that is what he wants to sew. After that, when the person goes and comes back, he or she will then be asking you, can we do

something about it? I should have listened to you when you were advising me. It means the person has gotten another work for you to do and since the person is your client, you need to find ways and means to attend to him.” (Vivian)

“Yes, some clients, especially, those with bad postures want to expose some parts of their bodies and if I try to tell them, it becomes a problem.” (Dzifa)

“Oh yes, I do. I think for now, I am the only one here. If I am not around, is going to reduce production. But if I have someone around, even if I am not around, the person can be working while I attend to other duties. This is my major challenge now.” (Collins)

“Some customers complain about the high cost of sewing in Ghana. They say that foreign goods are even cheaper than what we are producing locally.” (Mawuli)

“Yes, me for instance, I am not all that good at sketching. So, sometimes I find it difficult. But I do try my best.” (Abena)

Also, some fashion designers have challenge in managing their shops, apprentices and work together. The statement that follows shows one of the responses:

“Yes, when you are designing and you need to handle your workers at the same time, it has its own challenges. If you give someone a time to come for her things and you are not able to finish because your apprentices fail to come to work due to one or two reasons, you will not be able to complete the work

for the person which means that you have disappointed the person.” (Efua)

Discussion

This study sought to find out about how fashion designers in the Cape Coast metropolis are influenced by their cultural values and background experience in designing and making dresses for people. To achieve this aim, four research questions were developed. Based on the analysis from the data collected, seven themes and twenty-two sub-themes were used to attend to the four research questions. The discussions are organised based on the research questions that guided the study.

Research Question One: How do fashion designers’ background experiences influence their creative decisions?

Professional Development Experience

From the analysis presented, it was found each fashion designer has some experiences with their clients from different angles. It was found that there is no much dependence on the age category of clients as almost all fashion designers indicated that they can design for any age group of people. However, those who constitute the majority of their (designers’) customers are those within the active working age; that is, between the ages of 24 and 50 years. It could be said that, most of the people within the active working age group would want to look more presentable and also, have the means to acquire fabrics and foot the bills of the charges fashion designers might charge.

Also, it suffices to say that more of the young or working class may serve as agents of advertisement for designers when they wear their dresses. Research revealed that casual dresses may influence the behaviour of workers

negatively (Badola, 2010) while others suggest that how individuals dress talks about their social status and their personality, and helps to achieve institutions goals (Peterson, 2007). Notwithstanding, Rafaeli and Pratt (1993) posited that the dressing of workers has great influence on the dynamics of institutions.

Therefore, obtaining active working people as the average age of clients in this study could be based on the fact that, they want to look presentable and also promote their self-image and personality as well as maintain or improve the status of their organisations. These might be some of the reasons for obtaining more of the working class of people.

One of the greatest experiences one may have could be the reasons that led to the choice of profession to pursue in life. Anecdotally, people may pursue the profession that they love and are comfortable with. Similar revelations were made in this study when majority, about two-thirds (85%), of the respondents indicated that they became fashion designers due to the love they have for fashion and designing. There is no doubt in their statement as some even buttressed that, designing is part and parcel of their lives and passion. Meanwhile, some of the respondents started with fashion and designing as a mean of survival. Greater portions (85%) of the findings of this study are in concomitant with other studies that fashion designers are those whose heart is directed towards creative ideas in designing clothes by calling on their imagination, taste, sense and style (Kawamura, 2004). One could conclude that experiences leading to fashion designing are great inspirations since most of the designers love designing; even the few that started designers based on struggles as they have to survive, fall in love with the designing as the gift was always there.

In relation to the rate of patronage, the findings showed that there is no definite time when clients bring fabrics for sewing. According to the respondents, clients could bring fabrics every two weeks, every three to four months, or during occasions (especially during Easter and Christmas periods). Meanwhile, some of the respondents indicated that almost every day, they have something doing. From these assertions, it is imperative to note that clients bring their fabrics to fashion designers when they are ready to sew new dresses or when there is an impending pressure on them to acquire one; it could be pressure from the workplace, or to attend an occasion (weddings, naming ceremonies, funerals, meetings) among others. Once again, this finding is concurrent with that of Sarpong et al. (2011) who revealed that the returns of a fashion designer depend on the number of fabrics clients bring to be sewn for them and it is not predictable. Sarpong and colleagues also indicated that more customers bring their fabrics to be sewn during festive periods and occasions. Therefore, the rate at which clients sew new dresses depend on when they need it, and when they can afford it to look presentable. There is no guarantee that clients will bring their fabrics to be sewn every day.

Further, respondents presented some of the criticisms they encounter in course of serving customers. In almost all kinds of works, people may face criticisms whether they are performing well or not. In this study, almost all the respondents indicated that they faced some levels of criticisms from their clients. They name cost of sewing as too expensive, and wrong design as some of the critics labelled against them by their clients. Luttiman (2010) concurs that there is low remuneration for fashion designers since customers do not pay as it is expected to cover the cost of sewing accessories. The implication of the low

remuneration is that, designers may not be able to purchase quality accessories but use inferior goods to sew for clients. In effect, this will reduce the quality of the outfit since designers also need to pay themselves from the meagre cost of production.

An additional experience that fashion designers can talk about is the opportunity to attend workshops to learn new designs. 85% of the designers interviewed however stated categorically that they do not attend workshops. Some of them even put it that, it will rather put dust into your eyes. However, only a minute number of the designers revealed that they had the opportunity to attend one or two workshops. They even noted that, workshops are not regular, or they do not know when and where it is being organised since most of them are not members of any sewing association. The lack of workshops was reported by Sarpong et al (2011). According to Sarpong et al. (2011), 85% of designers recommended periodic organisations of workshops to boost the skills and competency of designers. Similarly, the same recommendation is experienced in other parts of the world such as Portugal (Fernandes, 2019). Inferring, one may posit that workshops are rare events organised among fashion designers. The common recommendations for leaders in this area to organise workshops presupposes that those that are organised, if any, are not heard by the majority of fashion designers.

Source of Inspiration

Every individual may be motivated by different intrinsic and/or extrinsic events or factor. The most important thing is that, one needs to be motivated in order to create beautiful designs. Online resources, magazines, observation of dresses within the community, nature, previous works, self-creativity are some

of the sources of inspiration fashion designers use in designing. Again, similar studies revealed that fashion designers obtain their inspiration from their previous experiences as well as their surroundings (Hwang, 2013). Concurrently, in their job profile, Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) (2021) acknowledge that fashion designer is someone who researches on the new fashion trends, and predicts what will be desirable to customers by taking inspiration from their environment. Simply put, fashion designers have the ability to use their creativity to design new fashions, and also base on experiences among others.

Personal Experiences

Personal experiences of the fashion designers may depend on several factors. From their own statements, there is no single person that does not enjoy designing for clients even though get lost in their work sometimes. That is, they enjoy designing to the extent that they forget to eat, go for break, or even drink water. According to the findings, this normally happens if they are designing for the first time or there is an impending deadline to meet. Per Hwang's (2013) assertion, deadline is a matter of a must, not a matter of choice. This viewpoint of a respondent in Hwang's work is also shown in this study where respondents posited that they also meet deadlines; especially, when it comes to designing wedding dresses. However, research has shown that workers in clothing industry work overtime to earn wages (Smyth, Qian, Nielsen, & Kaempfer, 2013). Even though the designers used in this study own their shops, the designers still work overtime in order to meet deadlines. One may say fashion designers always want to satisfy their customers even though the charges are not up to expectation.

The toils of fashion designs are seen in their quest to meet all deadlines ahead of them. Meanwhile, fashion designers have their preferred dress type that they like to work on. While some like to design dinner wears, others like to design engagement kente dresses and suits. No matter how difficult the design may be, designers strive to meet deadlines to satisfy clients.

Creativity and Design Processes

Creative ideas may help fashion designers to excel in their field of work. The more creative a designer is, the more possible it is for him or her to design new outstanding dresses. Within fashion designers in this study, some design without following the design process while some sketch, cut brown paper and sew to see how the outcome will be before starting work on the fabric. The mental experience of some designers helps them to work on dresses without any sketches or pattern drawing. Khoza and Workman (2009) in Hwang (2013) buttressed this point when they posited that creativity combines efforts of the mind to transform ideas and synthesize them into new designs. The procedures for designing have become a mental picture of some of the designers. Therefore, producing new dresses turns to be simple for designers that have past experiences and picture dresses in their minds.

Though, designers may design without trying out a sample first, this can cause problems when the fabric is cut at the wrong places or the design is wrong. To solve or avoid problems, the study indicated that respondents use the problem to create new design. Lawson (1997) noted that the power of recognising spoilt areas and converting them into nice design output is one of the most important skills of a designer. Lawson's statement supports the

findings of this study. In conclusion, creative design tasks fashion designers to implore varying solutions to varying problems.

Research Question Two: How do fashion designers' cultural values influence their design decisions?

Cultural Value Influence

The way people live in an area or country may have huge impact on how they process information as well as how they work. Fashion designers in Ghana may have certain traits based on values of culture such as beliefs on dress forms, technology and symbols or motifs in traditional fabrics. Some fashion designers pointed out that they preferred Ghanaian women wearing kaba and slit to functions. It shows maturity in women and others also said that, it depends mostly on what the person wants to use the dress for. Muslims for instance would like every part of their body to be covered. Diop & Merunka (2013) agree that traditional styles may reflect cultural integration and Bakare & Akinbileje (2010) also admit that the recognition of a people's cultural environment involve clothes. These suggest that the clothing forms part of culture that cannot be ignored and tells of the origin of the people. Some fashion designers in Ghana expressed that symbols used as motifs in the traditional fabrics will determine the names and places that they are meant for. Symbols are associated with cultural names such as 'gye nyame' and 'enyiber a onso gya'. Impraim-Swazy, Asoh & Owusu, 2018 and Ammisah & Letcher-Teye (2018) mention some of the tradition names of the Ghanaian textiles which has been handed over to us and can be worn to places and on occasions. In the same regard, some fashion designers in Ghana indicated that their fashion is a little different than what other foreign designers do due to the lack of sewing machines and other tools.

In addition, lack of creativity was cited as one of the differences between Ghanaian fashion and foreign fashion. Westwood & Low (2003) named people's similar background, the way of doing things, religion among others as culture. More specifically, Luttmann (2010) revealed that Ghanaian designers practice the all-in-one type of fashion design; that is from taking measurement to finished garment with no labels in most cases. This implies that, Ghanaians find better means that will help them achieve their type of fashion despite any challenge that they may be facing.

From another perspective, it was revealed that foreign fashion designs influence the Ghanaians designs. For instance, the introduction of beads and other cultural elements in the design of kente and any other traditional clothing has caused the price of the design to go higher. However, foreign goods turn to be less considered in terms of colour, occasion where the clothing is to be used among others are considered by designers before designing and sewing clothing for clients. Studies have shown that culture and foreign fashion may influence the creativity of fashion designers (Westwood & Low, 2003; Kawamura, 2004). One may posit that Ghanaian designs are mostly affected by cultural elements, names of the traditional fabrics and foreign fashion. Ghanaians take into consideration more factors when designing such as the design of the fabric, colour of the fabric, and occasion where the clothing will be used among others.

Research Question Three: How do fashion designers incorporate cultural meaning into their designs?

Meaning and Significance of Colours to Ghanaians

Anecdotally speaking, most cultures around the world have special meanings for their colours. Ghana is not left out of the use of colours in their

design process. In this study, respondents indicated that colours mean a lot in Ghanaian fashion. For instance, they name white as a colour that is used to depict victory, black as a colour of sadness or being bereave and red as a colour of danger. In the same regard, Amenuke, Dogbe, Asare, Ayiku and Baffoe (1991) posited that the traditional meanings of colours are not new but represent ancestral wisdom, mental and spiritual meanings in life. In addition, Amissah and Letcher-Teye (2018) specified that colours are used among Ghanaian to express feelings about events. Therefore, it suffices to say that the role of colour in our daily lives cannot be underestimated. Even though colour may not tell exactly a person's mood or situation, it has meanings and once people are in a particular colour, meanings are read into it.

Research Question Four: What challenges do the fashion designers face when designing?

Challenges

Challenges may occur in every situation we find ourselves. However, it is not compulsory that everyone will fall into difficulties during fashion designing. Respondents in this study showed that there are challenges in their type of work and that they try to resolve them as they occur. For instance, clients bringing fabrics of different colours that do not match, cost of production, not being able to meet deadlines among others. According to Sarpong (2005) and Abor & Quartey (2010) foreign goods have hindered the growth of local fashion as most of them are cheap and imitated. Imperatively, fashion designers continue to face different kinds of difficulties on the job.

Summary

This chapter sought to present and discuss the analysis from the data collected. Also, the chapter sought at presenting solutions to the questions posed in chapter one of the study. From the analysis, it was found that fashion designers had lots of experiences that they can base on for future decision making. It was found out that fashion designers can design for any age group of people even though majority of their clients were between the ages of 24 and 50 years. Also, the respondents indicated that they love to design for the clients.

The second research question found out that culture has a great influence on how fashion moves in Ghana. Foreign fashion was noted as one of the factors that influences Ghanaian fashion as most of their goods end up in Ghana and this hinders traditional fashion. Research question three found that colour speaks a lot in fashion design including Ghanaian fashion. White was noted as a colour of victory, while black was noted as a colour of sadness. Finally, research question four found that designers face many challenges including complains of cost of production, not being able to meet some deadlines among others.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the whole study. It also draws conclusion from the findings and offers the necessary recommendations as well as suggestions for areas for further studies.

Summary

The study sought to examine how designs decision of fashion designers in Cape Coast metropolis are influenced by their cultural values and background experience when making garments for clients. The research questions were:

1. How do fashion designers' background experiences influence their creative decisions?
2. In what ways do fashion designers' cultural values influence their design decisions?
3. How do fashion designers incorporate cultural meaning into their designs?

The study adopted the phenomenological design with the qualitative approach. The research population was the fashion designers in Abura, Pedu and Eyifua in Cape Coast. In all, twenty (20) fashion designers who were on their own who could design, sew and willing and ready to give relevant information to answer the research questions were selected using purposive and snow balling sample techniques. The interview guide was given to participants two days before the interview. The interview guide had four research questions with seven themes and 22 sub-themes. The information obtained from the

interview was transcribed and emerging themes were analysed according to the research questions.

Key Findings

The demographic information on the interviewees showed that they were both males and females with the females in the majority. Participants had their ages within the 25-44 years denoting a very youthful age ready to adapt in new changes. All the participants had been to school and trained to achieve master craftsmen who are on their own. The current areas of clothing of the participants included men's, women's and children's wears.

Based on the research question one which sought to examine how the fashion designers background experience influence their creative decisions, the findings revealed that, the participants were able to improve the designs skills through visiting of online applications (apps) that display different fashions and designs to learn new things. Also, in times of trouble, some designers go to more experienced designers to obtain relevant advice as to how to go about the problem. Online platforms, dresses of people in the community, nature are among the sources of inspiration and helped fashion designers to be creative. Mostly, designers met deadlines, this makes most of the customers satisfied about the services rendered. Further, the feeling of anxiety or frustration was to make you work to meet your deadline. Based on the zeal to satisfy customers, designers do lose track of breaks and time to eat or drink. Notwithstanding, participants followed routine procedures to help them work better even though some indicated that they do not sketch before sewing for clients. Participants prepared ahead of time, prepare when needed and follow the process of design and sew the final products. Again, majority of respondents said that they design

out of love they have for designing; few of the designers that started designing as a mean of survival end up saying that the love of design was always with them as an innate skill. The elements and principles of design are used to design, notions and other embellishments were also used to decorate fabrics and designs.

The research question two sought to find how fashion designers cultural values influence their design decisions. This research question found out that fashion design in Ghana is a little different to what other foreign fashion designers do due to the lack of sewing machines and other tools. That is, the tools needed to produce the expected designs for clients are not available. According to the findings of this study, fashion designers' creative ideas have been affected based on the influences from foreign cultural designs on Ghanaian fashion. However, the study found out that the use of cultural elements in designing local fabrics is now being cherished by Ghanaians over foreign fashion. Further, it was found that the use of colour in Ghanaian fashion is very important to society in the sense that, some major colours have meanings associated with them and cannot be worn for all occasions. The colours will tell you where to take them to. Customs, they say, showed black colour as a colour of sadness, white as victory or joyful, red as danger or sign of death among others. Therefore, designers take caution when designing for people. In addition, lack of creativity in Ghanaian fashion was mentioned as one of the differences between Ghanaian fashion and foreign fashion.

The third research question was to find out how fashion designers incorporate cultural meanings and significance into their designs. The traditional textiles have meanings and significance. The colours will tell you

where to take them to. The greens, purples and pinks were for happy occasions and browns, reds and blacks were used for sad or mourning occasions. The choice of colour and the figure or person depend on the occasion. Colours can create the illusion of brightness and dullness.

Fourth research question was to examine the challenges faced by fashion designers when designing the challenges include designing for abnormal figure, that is, when the upper torso is bigger than the lower torso making it difficult to design especially when designing fitting dresses. Sometimes the problem is choosing the right fabric and right design to fit the occasion and customers should pay heed to the pieces of advice given them. Also, the study found out that giving pieces of advice to customers sometimes becomes an issue as the customers take it the wrong way. Another difficulty that was discovered in this study is the inability to meet all deadlines for the collection of garments.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is imperative that fashion designers in Ghana have numerous on-the-job experiences that prepare them to face any kind of customer behaviour. Fashion designers are faced with different conditions of work ranging from their love of the work to getting lost in their own work. Based on their anxiety to meet deadlines and satisfy clients, designers end-up working for long hours without breaks. Designers use nature, designs of people from the community among others as source of their creative inspiration.

Further, it could be said that designers mostly take note of the meaning of symbols present in fabrics before deciding on the type of dress to make for a particular customer.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the influence of cultural values and background experience of fashion designers' decisions, researcher recommends the following:

First, all fashion designers, especially the novice fashion designers to take keen interest in workshops organised by the association of fashion designers to improve upon their skills. However, the doyens in fashion designing should take the association more seriously and organise frequent skill building workshops for all fashion designers within the Cape Coast metropolis and beyond.

Second, the fashion designers who do not have in-depth knowledge of Ghanaian cultural values should seek help from other fashion designers in order to advice clients adequately about the meaning of the textiles they bring to be sewn for them. These fashion designers should get acquainted with the symbolism in Ghanaian fabrics to be in a better position to advice customers.

Third, all fashion designers should learn about colour combination and the meaning of each colour in the Ghanaian culture as well as in the design world. This is imperative as it will help each designer to know what design or style to give customers based on the colour of the fabric. Based on the occasion the customer wants to use the fabric for, the designer should be in a position to offer pieces of advice on the colour to fabric.

Fourth, the leaders of the association of fashion designers in the Cape Coast Metropolis should organise customer relation workshops for their members on how to handle challenges that come with designing; especially,

those that have to do with cost of production, colour matching, meeting deadlines among others.

Suggestions for Further Research

Even though this study delved into background experience of designers, it is imperative to conduct a study to investigate avenues for producing creative designs. It was interesting to find out that some turn to nature as a source of inspiration for being creative. A study should be conducted to explore avenues that will help designers that find it difficult to create their own designs.

Again, another study should be conducted on effective management of customers by fashion designers. A study into effective ways of managing the relationship that exist between fashion designers and customers may help to curtail the challenges that come with fashion designing and make the design work less stressful.

An area for further study is to compare the cultural values and background experience of two different ethnic groupings to see the similarities and differences of the groupings. With the differences in geographical boundaries in locations, it would be interesting to see how cultural values and background experience of fashion designers' decision on their designs will hold the same views and opinions or not.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST****COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES****FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION****DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

Qualitative study was chosen to gather personnel opinion from fashion designers.

This interview schedule is designed to investigate into the influence of cultural values and background experience of fashion designers' decision on their designs which forms part of a thesis being conducted by a student from the above mentioned university. It is being administered strictly for academic purposes only. Please you kindly requested to answer the questions with sincerity. Every information you provide will be treated confidential and your anonymity is guaranteed.

There are four research questions with seven themes and 22 sub-themes to help answer the questions.

Personal Information Form

Male

Female

Age

Highest educational level

Your number of years of experience as a fashion designer

How many hours per week do you spend as fashion designer on average?

Your previous experience before you started your own business

Current area in clothing design

SECTION A

Professional Development Experience

1. What categories of clients do you design and sew?
2. What is the average age of your customers?
3. What factors influenced you most in your choice of becoming a fashion designer?
4. How often do your clientele bring their works to your shop?
5. Have you had any criticism concerning your designs?
6. Share your experience
7. Workshops attend/how do you improve yourself

SECTION B

Inspiration

1. Where do you get energy for your design ideas?
2. Where do you get your inspiration from?
3. Do you have one or more sources or inspiration that you always revisit?
4. What kind of help inspire you to be creative?

SECTION C

Personal Experience: flow

1. Do you enjoy designing for your clients?
2. Have you ever gotten lost in your work, that is, experienced flow or optimal experience during the design process?
3. Do you feel anxious or frustrated with your work? If yes, when?

4. Are you able to meet deadlines?
5. Does deadline for collection help or hinders your creative process?
6. Are your clients satisfied with your designs?
7. Can you tell me more about your favourite design?

SECTION D

Creative and design process: related to work pattern

1. Is there a routine to your design process?
2. What does your design research entail?
3. How does your design move from sketches to samples and final product?
4. What process do you use to solve problems?
5. What creative skills do you use when you design clothing?

SECTION E

Cultural Value Influences

1. How is the fashion system in Ghana different from other fashion systems in the world?
2. Could you please describe the characteristics of Ghanaian style or fashion?
3. What are advantages of being a Ghanaian designer?
4. What are the difficulties of being a Ghanaian designer?
5. Have you attempted to market your collections outside of Ghana? If so, as a Ghanaian designer, have you ever had any difficulties entering different markets?

6. How relevant is the traditional textiles in fashion?
7. Do Ghanaians have a fashion that affect the cultural norms and practices of its people negatively or positively?
8. What factors do you consider when designing for clients?
9. In what ways do foreign fashion affect the fashion and culture of Ghanaians?
10. Do you notice any Ghanaian cultural element embedded in your designs/outfit/garment?

SECTION F

Meanings and Significance

1. Does the use of colour in Ghanaian fashion has any meaning and significance?
2. Do your choice of fabric colour and its style depend on a particular occasion, meaning and significance attached to them?
3. How do colour and style affect your designing process?

SECTION G

Challenges in the Job

1. Do you face any challenge when designing
2. Share your challenges.
3. What are the difficulties of being a designer?

Grand summary

What is the most important aspect for designing clothes for you?

Do you have a philosophy when it comes to design? If so was it guided by your cultural values?



APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT CODE	PSEUDONYM
1. Resp.1	Ama
2. Resp.2	Adobea
3. Resp. 3	Abena
4. Resp. 4	John
5. Resp. 5	Ewurabena
6. Resp. 6	Peter
7. Resp. 7	Collins
8. Resp. 8	Owusuwaa
9. Resp. 9	Yaa
10. Resp. 10	Efua
11. Resp. 11	Juanita
12. Resp. 12	Owusu
13. Resp. 13	Diana
14. Resp. 14	Dzifa
15. Resp. 15	Emefa
16. Resp. 16	Mawuli
17. Resp. 17	Addo
18. Resp. 18	Vivian
19. Resp. 19	Esther
20. Resp. 20	Nana