EXPLORATION OF AKWETE WEAVES MOTIFS FOR ADAPTATION ON PRINTED TEXTILES FOR APPAREL PRODUCTION

BY

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BY

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JANUARY, 2017

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled, "Exploration of Akwete weaves motifs for adaptation on printed textiles for apparel production," has been carried out by me in the Department of Industrial Design (Textiles), Faculty of Environmental Design of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The field work, studio work and write up were supervised by Prof. B.A. Kparevzua, Dr. M.F. Ahuwan and Dr. S.A. Dutsenwai. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this thesis was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Chika Chinyeogwa Chudi-duru _____ _____

Name Signature Date

CERTIFICATION

This thesis, "Exploration of Akwete weaves motifs for adaptation on printed textiles for apparel production," by Chika Chinyeogwa Chudi-Duru, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Industrial Design (Textiles) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the Almighty God, whose grace and mercies were sufficient for me throughout the course of this research. And also to my lovely mum, Lady Nkechinyere Martha Nwigwe (1939-2014), my precious jewel, whose demise fell in between the time this research was being carried out.

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ABSTRACT

This study is on the exploration of Akwete weaves motifs for adaptation on printed textiles for apparel production. It investigatedthe traditional hand woven fabrics of the *Akwete Igbo*and identified a lot of symbolic motifs. This study aimed at adapting and printing these Igbo traditional motifs on cotton fabrics by adopting the screen printing, stenciling, batik (wax resist) and free hand drawing techniques. Some of the printed fabrics, were sewn into fashionable wears with the view that they will suit current fashion trends in Nigerian society. The research designs adopted were the descriptive survey and the studio exploratory strategies. The population of the study comprised of Akwete woven motifs (38), *Akwete* weavers (30), users of *Akwete* hand woven fabrics andpotential users of the new *Akwete* printed fabrics (48,324). The sample size for this study is three hundred and eighty- one (381) which was arrived at using the Krejcie and Morgan (2001) formula for calculating sample size. Structured questionnaires, observation and photographs were the three instruments used for data collection. A focus group discussion was conducted with the thirty weavers mentioned earlier. They were six (6) in a group that is a total of 5 groups were formed during the group discussion. Interviews, were also conducted with the oldest weaver found in the field and a male community leader from*Akwete* Town. The data collected, were subjected to qualitative analysis while the data collected from the questionnaires were subjected to analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The descriptive statistics of percentages, mean and standard deviation were employed to analyze the data collected. The findings of this study indicated that *Akwete* weaving tradition is on the decline and there is low patronage.The results based on the research questions are as follows: *Akwete* weaving has a history which has not been sufficiently documented, the weavers make use of a lot of symbolic motifs with which Akwete hand woven fabrics are recognized, the symbolic meanings attached to the *Akwete* woven designs depicts the Igbo world view and the weavers perception of life, the aesthetic appearances of *Akwete* woven fabrics, which showcase Igbo culture are what determine the attraction of the consumers, *Akwete* woven fabrics have many traditional uses which are beneficial to the weavers and the potential users but not constantly used, they have not been in constant use in contemporary Nigerian fashion, the respondents also agreed that, *Akwete* printed fabrics should be produced using the symbolic design motifs so that the Igbo cultural heritage showcased in the weaving tradition will not be lost,*Akwete* woven designs are suitable and appropriate for prints on cotton fabrics and the constructed apparels of the *Akwete* printed fabrics suit the contemporary fashion trends in Nigeria.This

research concludes that, the *Akwete* woven motifs can be utilized on printed textiles and the printed textiles are suitable for constructing fashionable wears whether combined with other plain fabrics or not.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Adinkra- a set of indigenous motifs from Ghana that are hand printed on fabrics using pieces of calabashes as a transfer medium.

Akwammiri- (water cloth) the earliest Akwete woven fabric, usually small in size.

Acham-open woven cloth brought through trade by the Portuguese

Udo-ala- a festival in Akwete town

Ngaragara- part of the Akwete loom

Ozo- a title in Igbo land

Nkwe-Akwete loom

Itagbe-single panel of cloth

Etireti-Akwete loom accessory

Iro and buba- a traditional attire for Yoruba females

Ahia– Akwete loom accessory (heddle)

Akuraku- another name given to the woven fabrics made in *Akwete*

Oshugbo- judiciary society in Obas' court

Potoki- Portuguese

Eregbornamgbudu/ntukwasi- two pieces of wrappers tied on top of one another

Knife pleat- a type of pleat that faces one side

Crop top- a very short top usually worn with a gown, skirt and trouser

Construction- involves creating a 3 dimensional form from a 2 dimensional design pattern and fabric.

Stabilizer-a kind of material usually placed under a fabric as a kind of reinforcement to bring out the actual shape of the style

Princess cut- a line that usually runs from the armhole to the dart position used for shaping

Peplum-an attachment in form of a piece of cloth that is in a flayed, gathered or pleated form to a blouse

Muslin- A dressmakers' pattern made from inexpensive cloth for fitting

Ease- ease in a pattern means acceptable margin

Alteration- a change of form, shape or size

Commercial pattern- any pattern made by a pattern company and sold over the counter

Seam Allowance- added fabric or allowance in the pattern or body measurements to ensure ease and comfort and mobility in the garment.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. Focus group discussion (FGD)
2. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS)
3. Computer aided design (CAD)

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the textile world, most fabrics are decorated with designs. Designs cannot be separated from textiles; they could either be woven, appliqued, embroidered, hand painted, printed, dyed or drawn on pieces of fabrics to decorate, identify, differentiate, add more value and also serve other purposes to the wearer, the designer and the admirer. Such designs on the fabrics comprise of motifs which are often arranged in repetitive forms by the designer, showcasing different patterns. The designs convey lots of meanings. Herald (2010) supported this, and pointed out that design patterns are non-verbal means of communication used to differentiate, disguise, warm and allure. He further mentioned that they are universal phenomena that are characterised by elements and principles of design. Designs on textiles are found in many cultures.According to Kriger (2006), textiles are one of human kind's most important commodities and have a lot to express on the peoples history and societies worldwide. There are Asian, Oriental, African, Chinese, Japanese, Arabian, European, Native American, North American, South American, Ancient Greek textile designs and others. All the designs produced in these areas can be distinguished from one another based on their various motifs and peculiar characteristics attributed to each of them.

Kambon (2013), posited that Africans produce lots of designs in textiles which depict their own culture and world views. Dereje, Liujie and Zhou (2013) pointed out that the concept of utilising motifs for a design in Africa is not only to please the eyes and the viewers but it is used as a medium of communication in a society that conveys spiritual values and beliefs from their ancestors. In Contemporary African art, African textiles had and still have an exceptional significance as a means of communication, information and mutual association within particular communities. They are produced on woven, dyed and printed fabrics either manually or with the aid of machines. Wayne (2009) observed that, the colours and designs

of African wax print fabrics express significant values and symbolism as they can represent social status, age, tribalistic orientation, worldview and marital status.They all have their history to tell, basing their stories in their own culture presented in form of motifs and patterns printed on the fabrics. Cobb (1998)observed that wax prints are used as forms of identity with each tribe possessing their own unique motifs and patterns which make it simpler in spotting outsiders. The wax print fabrics use pictures or symbols that promote religious themes, renowned individuals, historic occasions, popular songs and religious hymns that truly reflect African origin and that such wax print fabrics have been transported to other continents for clothing and fashion purposes. Kooji in Herald (2010) supported by observing that patterns are like microrganism that extensively grow wherever they find a welcoming environment, they move easily across environmental borders, not regarding the culture or geography. They travel, adjust and metamophose to fit the new environment and ensure their survival. Africans own different types of traditional designs which are momentous and highly symbolic. Their cloth designs which consists of various symbolic motifs, are part of their tradition which is cherished and has been in existence long ago.

In Africa, there are different techniques utilised in producing African textiles which are peculiar to West, South, North, East and Central Africa. Nwachukwu and Ibeabuchi (2012) reported that cloth weaving is universally practised in most urban areas and cities in West Africa, particularly Nigeria, and a lot of designs were used to decorate the fabrics.These designs, added more value to the pieces of woven cloth and caused them to be appreciated by the Nigerian people that own them and many others.The locally made fabrics in Nigeria which are woven, tie-dyed, batiked, and starch resisted fabrics which are produced by the Yoruba, the Igbo, the Tiv, the Igbira, the Hausa and the Fulani are all decorated with designs. Some of these designs are in form of linear patterns with particular colours while some are in abstracted forms. The Igbo from the Eastern part of Nigeria wove fabrics known as

*Akwete,*which are decorated with designs, produced by the *Akwete*women in *Ndoki and Asa* areas in Ukwa East Local Government Area of Abia State. According to Lamb and Holmes (1980), *Akwete*is widely known for its hand woven fabrics which made use of the women's vertical loom. This tradition of cloth weaving is old and respected for its highly supposed excellence that the name of the town "*Akwete*" was given to all textiles produced in that area. The *Akwete* woven fabrics depict prestige because of the symbolic designs woven into them. They are in three main categories namely: George cloth, *Popo* cloth and *Akwete*which were usually tied by the women as two wrappers known as *Eregbor* and *ntukwasi* with a lace blouse and the men tied one wrapper with a jumper shirt. These categories are all known as *Akwete* woven fabrics, and are all distinguished from each other by their woven designs which comprise of various motifs.

Over the years, a lot of woven designs have been produced by the women weavers. Davis (1974) stated that some *Akwete*weavers claim to know over one hundred motifs which have been combined and woven into the cloth to produce various designs for prestige, beautification, identification, protection, special occasions and special families. Most of these designs are complicated, and each motif used in the design is symbolic and has a story to tell. They are patiently hand woven into the cloth by the weavers. These designs and the sizes of the woven cloths, differentiated them from the other woven fabrics in different parts of Nigeria because of their widths; which are very wide. Each *Akwete* design is distinct and has its own special meaning.

Although, this heavily ornamented hand wovencloth is anoldtradition; itis stillone of their cultural heritage as regards to textiles and it has not been utilised the way it should. Aronson (1980), for instance, observed that it is still valuable and useful to the Igbo community but

mostly patronised by few Igbo people and some people of Rivers state of Nigeria for various ceremonies.

Previously *Akwete* weaves were used as prestigious cloth by the royalty and wealthy people in Igbo land, but presently they are scantily used during chieftaincy title taking, marriage ceremonies, costumes for Igbo movies, exhibitions abroad, as well as artifacts in museums and in private collections abroad. Lamb and Holmes (1980) mentioned that through the use of the most elaborate and expensive *Akwete* cloths, prestige can be established. They further noticed, that *Akwete* hand woven cloth can be tailored into European style clothing, though, they still argued that to do this is uncommon and unpopular. They also observed, that the prestige rendered to the woven fabrics depended on the designs woven into the fabrics. Most of the*Akwete* woven fabrics cannot be plainly woven; this indicates, that without the designs woven onto the fabrics the distinguishable qualities will be lacking.

Therefore, since the design motifs and decorations on *Akwete* weaves depict prestige, anddistinguish *Akwete* cloths from other woven cloths in the world, they are also seen to be a cultural heritage; it is assumed that if the motifs are adaptedand used in other aspects of Nigerian costumes like printed fabrics, forconstructing everyday apparels for both adults and children, they will be appreciated. If *Akwete* woven art would meet the challenges of modern fabrics in the markets and the demands of the international market, something new has to be produced using *Akwete* woven design motifs on printed fabrics for clothing construction. This study is of the view that this new ground that will be broken will go a long way to meet the aspirations and yearnings of the users in this century.

An additional impetus to this study is that in recent times, African prints have inspired the fashion industry globally.Wayne (1995) is of the same opinion and pointed out that these wax prints have remained highly sought after and have become a fundamental part of the rich

culture of West Africa, of recent many fashion designers across the world, are seen utilising the fabrics in their designs. This trend has been significantly present in the runways at fashion shows all over the world. Western and other non-African designers have incorporated African prints and wax in their designs. Several international celebrities have been spotted dressed in African printed outfits sewn by Nigerian designers, which accentuates rising influence of Nigerian fashion across the globe. According to Aisha (2013) (an internet blog) and Okayafrica (2014), a lot of people have been spotted wearing apparels designed by Nigerian designers with African design prints. The creativity of these designers has made African prints and wax preferred choices of the rich and famous in the world. Of recent, prints made from other locally produced textiles in Africa, such as Kente woven fabric by the Ewe and Asanti of Ghana, Kuba woven raffia by Bakuba ethnic group in Democratic Republic of Congo, batik by the Yoruba of Nigeria, Korhogo cloth by the Senufo of Ivory Coast and mud cloth by the Bogolanfini of Mali have been in the fashion scene. A lot of printed versions on fabrics have been produced from these locally manufactured handmade fabrics utilising their motifs. They are all African indigenous fabrics, which *Akwete* is also one of them, unfortunately, *Akwete* woven fabric is yet to have a printed fabric version comprising of its hand woven designs. Therefore, if *Akwete* prints are produced using *Akwete* woven design motifs perhaps it may be able to regain its lost popularity and be utilised in the contemporary fashion world just like others.

1.1 Background to the Study

Akwete, the heavily ornamented woven cloth is a distinct woven cloth which is highly prized in Igbo society. However, it is becoming more unpopular among the women, men and the youths because it cannot compete favourably with other wax print and woven fabrics found in the market. Okeke (2006) strongly suggested that modern students of textile design should explore methods of making the Igbo traditional fabric and its decorative designs more

acceptable to modern consumers so that the useage of foreign textiles can be reduced. Raji et al (2007) in Musa et al (2011), lent support to Okeke (2006) and emphasised that Nigerian people generally prefer foreign (textiles) goods over the homemade materials. This is the belief that the performance properties of the foreign-made textiles are better than those produced locally. They further mentioned that the quality of a textile material is often determined by the texture, usefullness, aesthetic properties, comfortability during use, and probably past experience.

According to Ekwueme (2009), 1963 was a remarkable year for the *Akwete* cloth manufacturing industry. It was showcased in an exhibition in the United States of America. This particular act, boosted its value as a cultural representation of the Nigerian people. This contact, internationally, intensified international awareness of the aesthetics of *Akwete* cloth. It has continued to attract international attention, as the largest in size and most elaborate of all the woven cloths in Igbo region but yet, to the best of this studys' knowledge they have not been sufficiently utilized in the fashion industry in Nigeria.

According to Tenuci (2013), history has it, that in African communities, the designs on printed fabrics are highly cherished by their owners and could be handed down from one generation to the other. Nigerians, for example, have a passion for naturally dyed fabrics and woven fabrics which have different patterns and designs on them. These designs are mainly based on the traditions of the people. The acclaimed pioneer of the highly ornamented intricate weft patterns (designs) on *Akwete* studied the weave structures of the Portuguese heavily ornamented cloth, sometimes between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, copied them and secretly began to weave a new style of *Akwete* designs according to Afigbo(1982) and these new designs of *Akwete* were what brought them into limelight contemporarily.

In the contemporary fashion of Nigeria, the fashion industry has grown. According to Osae-Brown and Emelike (2012), Nigeria has come out of its shell and presented her fashion to the world because the world needs to know that there is more to Nigeria in fashion. The local fabrics used to make these new fashion statements are the adinkra and kente from Ghana, aso-oke of theYoruba, veritable wax, laces, george materials from Asian countries with *Akwete* cloth not in the list. All these are in the fashion scene in Nigeria, always undergoing one modification or the other and effortlessly finding their way in to the wardrobes of the fashion conscious because the contemporary fashion allows for both the traditionally hand made and factory made fabrics (contemporary) to be combined in colourful designs to make appropriate styles in fashion.

However, *Akwete* hand woven fabrics of the Igbo have not been utilised in the contemporary fashion of Nigeria, while some of its counterparts are still in constant use in African fashion. Since it is heavy, and regarded as a traditional cloth should it be allowed to be found only in international museums and private collections? Or should it be regarded as the most celebrated of all the woven cloth by the Igbowomen without any modifications to thrill and draw the attention ofthe Igbo and Nigerians at large to it for body adornment? Since it has beautiful motifs that tell the story of Igbo worldview, the woven cloth was sought for, and the motifs extracted and utilised as design motifs on printed textiles for constructing clothes for Nigerians, so that the *Akwete*weaving tradition and its designs will always be kept alive. The Kente woven cloth of Ghana has Kente print which is worn by even Nigerians. Also, the Mud cloth from Mali also has Mud cloth print which many designers in Europe and America have utilized in producing cloth wears which have been showcased on runways.In Nigeria, Ojo (2004), has adapted contemporary motifs on light-weight hand woven fabrics (aso-oke) using screen printing as a technique and the results obtained, during this exercise, were positive.

Futhermore, this study has observed that the designs and decoration on *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are symbolic and depict Igbo culture andDavis (1974), reported that Akwete hand woven fabrics have been used in producing household items.It is assumed that if they are also used in other aspects of Nigerian costumes like prints, for both adults and children, they will be appreciated by everyone.According to fibre to fashion (2013), Nigerian designers are making a space for themselves globally in the fashion scene and also bringing international fashion home. It has observed that the Nigerian fashion industry is no longer recognised as an amateur industry, confined to local limits and it is paving its way into global fashion destinations like; Paris, London, New York and Milan by a rise in appearances as African prints were used to construct some clothing but the absence of *Akwete* hand woven cloths and its printed versions were noticed by this study.

It further mentioned that Nigerian designers are not just following or imitating the global trends or styles rather some of the Nigerian fashion brands are utilising the Nigerian culture and promoting the local fabrics like *Ankara.* Which has gained good popularity worldwide since it appeared on the fashion runway during New York fashion weekand other fashion events worldwide in the twenty first century. This study, therefore, deems it fit that suitable and appropriate designs be obtained from traditional designs or local environment and adapted on printed textiles for producing dress styles or garments for Nigerian men, women as well as children that will reflect Nigerian culture. Therefore, it is against this background that this study on the *Akwete* weaves motifs, utilised them as design motifs on printed textiles for garment construction.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although, the unique weavings of *Akwete* women have been recorded and recognised in the world of textile history throughout West Africa, yet the *Akwete* hand woven fabrics have almost been neglected by the Igbo that own them. Basden (1983), observed that since the introduction of English clothing which seems to be cheaper, simpler, lighter and more comfortable to wear; the Igbo have almost abandoned their traditional clothing. Okeke (1992) asserted that although the Igbo still adorn themselves in their traditional attires during occasions but they still imitate modern European fabrics and designs and have always struggled to retain their traditional style of dressing and designs that go with them. Lamb and Holmes (1980), observed that younger *Akwete* women have found other jobs apart from weaving in some other nearby towns, away from their home town, and only return home for a bit of weaving during weekdays and holidays. This shows less concentration on the weaving vocation, poor output on the part of the weavers and reduction in production. Also, Holmes in the foreword of Lamb and Holmes (1980) observed, that weaving is a craft which is at risk presently in Nigeria because the factory cloth and the attraction of the city are fast reducing the number of hand weavers. Castonguay (2009) lent support to him and mentioned that many forms of African art are fast disappearing.

At present, the *Akwete* woven cloth is in danger of remaining in the foreign museums and private collections for archival purposes. Other fabrics that are imported into the country have almost taken the place of *Akwete* hand woven cloth because it cannot compete favourably with them.The few that are woven are very expensive and there is nothing exciting coming out of it, the quality has declined substantially. Talbot in Lamb and Holmes (1980) is in line with this and reported that, unfortunately European cotton and dyes which run in the wash are used now, whereas pieces woven thirty years ago from native cotton are as fresh today as when they came from the loom. According to Aronson (1980), one *Akwete* weaverclearly

mentioned, that it is because *Akwete* women produce the handwoven cloth that is the reason why they do not make use of it. Aronson further observed that the Ndoki people like so many other Igbo groups are quite contented with imported Indian madras. She argued that, if the use of *Akwete* woven fabrics were left to Ndoki people alone, it could die out. Amidst all these observations by some authorities, *Akwete*woven motifs still symbolize Igbo cultural worldview.

Although efforts have been made in various areas by various groups to bring this woven fabric back to the fashion scene, for instance Kucha (1989), has attempted the use of *Akwete* woven fabric to construct hooded clothing which could be used during cold season. Some of the *Akwete* designs have been combined with other factory-made fabrics to produce some apparels which have been showcased in some exhibitions. These efforts have not given *Akwete* woven fabrics the popularity it is seeking. Furthermore, Onyenke (1985), produced printed cotton furnishing fabrics based on *Akwete* woven designs and Igbo art forms. Okeke (1982), Eicher (1976), Davis (1974), Ottenberg (1992), Aronson (1980) Sheehy (1988) and Mozer (2012) also believe that the *Akwete* woven fabrics were valued and appreciated by the Igbo. Yetto the best of my knowledge, the area of utilising the woven motifs and printing them on cotton textiles as prints for utilisation in clothing construction is yet to be covered. Since *Akwete woven* fabrics are decorated with symbolic design motifs, which when worn depicts prestige and Igbo culture; the need to adapt the *Akwete* motifs on printed textiles has become pertinent and and has recently begun to be emphasized by this study so that some aspects, if not all of *Akwete* woven fabrics can be preserved, reawakened, propagated and sustained.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to produce printed fabrics using *Akwete*woven motifs as designs and thereafter use the printed fabrics for clothing production that will suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Survey the details of designs on *Akwete* weaving tradition specifically.
2. Study and document the *Akwete* symbolic design motifs and the values attached to them.
3. Identify the importance of *Akwete* woven fabrics in the traditional Igbo society and fashion industry in Nigeria.
4. Explore the suitability of *Akwete* woven motifs for printed textiles.
5. Construct fashionable apparels using the new *Akwete* prints.
6. Evaluate the perception of *Akwete* weavers and potential users on the new *Akwete* prints.

1.5 Research Questions of the study

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What are the ways canthe designs details of the*Akwete* weaving tradition be satisfactorily surveyed?
2. What are the *Akwete* woven design symbolic motifs?
3. How can the significance of *Akwete* woven fabrics in the traditional Igbo society and Nigerian fashion industry be ascertained?
4. What will be the results of the exploration of *Akwete* woven design motifs on printed textiles in the studio?

5. How can the new *Akwete* prints be constructed into fashionable apparels to suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria?
6. In what ways can the perception of the potential users of the new *Akwete* prints be evaluated?

1.6 Basic Assumption

The basic assumption that guided this study is:

That this innovation will create opportunities for *Akwete* woven design motifs to be more popular, appreciated by people and add to the varieties of *Akwete* fabric designs in textiles so that if the *Akwete* woven fabrics cannot be used in constructing cloth wears because of its weight, the printed version can be utilized.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Several studies have been carried out on the cultural values of other traditional woven fabrics in Nigeria and their usage like this study has done. Examples of such studies are Kparevzua (1983), Maiwada (2001), Ada (2006), Adepeko (2014) and others. A lot of studies have also been carried out on *Akwete* woven fabrics by Aronson (1980, 1979), Davis (1974) Afigbo and Okeke (1982), in recent times yet the hand woven fabrics still remain unpopular to many. The study gathered that there is a decline in the usage of these woven fabrics amongst the Igbo and beyond and it has not been used in contemporary fashion.

This study, has observed that the investigation of *Akwete* traditional woven designs to determine their suitability as design motifs on printed textiles for utilization in the construction of Nigerian fashion will retain and bring into limelight the traditional woven motifs of the Igbo people and Nigerian nation as a whole. It will promote the Igbo weaving tradition and made in Nigeria goods.

It will document both the old and new designs of the traditional woven cloth for a clearer understanding. In the Nigerian apparel history, students of designs and art will have introspection into their woven culture. This study, will broaden their knowledge on the various hand woven textiles of the *Akwete* and also enable them to know that these textiles could be investigated and utilized as designs in various resist methods of dyeing, printing in textiles, Graphics, glass, ceramics, painting and sculpture.

It will also be useful for research; that is serving as reference materials for art historians in African textiles and costume history, fashion designers, anthropologists, artists, ethnographers and educationists.

This study observed that, a pair of *Akwete* fabric is expensive depending on the name and intricacies of the woven designs. This shows that not many can afford it. This study produced some samples of new*Akwete* printed fabric manually, which in further studies if produced industrially will be more affordable to many and also convey the same messages the woven one has. The printed, fabrics if mass produced, will be cheaper than the woven pieces; the cheaper they are, the more affordable they will be and the turnover in sales.

Considering the technological advancements, the textile industries in Nigeria will employ this opportunity to produce different African prints in huge capacity utilizing *Akwete* cloth design motifs, which will be sold to many people in the country and other places. By so doing, a lot of income will be generated and awareness of this weaving tradition will be created, because the printed fabrics will be used to construct a lot of apparels which will be worn by people.

This study will present to the fashion designers, fashion journalists, fashion merchandizers, fashion design students and fashion houses different designs of *Akwete* cloth prints for constructing casual and corporate apparels to meet the needs of contemporary fashion in Nigeria and beyond.

1.8 Justification for the Study

Having gone through the review of related literature, this study observed that some researches have been carried out on *Akwete* fabrics, it's weaving techniques, uses, products, marketing, patronage and the decrease in the usage of the woven fabrics. To the best of its' knowledge,there has not really been a new trend of *Akwete* cloth, as regards to the Nigerian fashion scene and no attempt was made to utilize the *Akwete* woven design motifs to produce some African prints that will be more affordable to many people who will utilize them in contemporary fashion for apparel production. This study is therefore considered worthwhile.

1.9 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited to Abia state and the traditional hand woven textiles produced in *Akwete* town. This study was focused on the utilization of Akwete motifs as designs on printed textiles. It was primarily concerned with the manual production of some experimented printed samples and their end uses as clothings for men, women and children only. It did not cover industrial printing.The methods of design transfer were photographic, stencilling, batik and free hand decorations only. The explorations were carried out, in the textile design studio of the Department of Industrial Design in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Imo State University, Owerri.

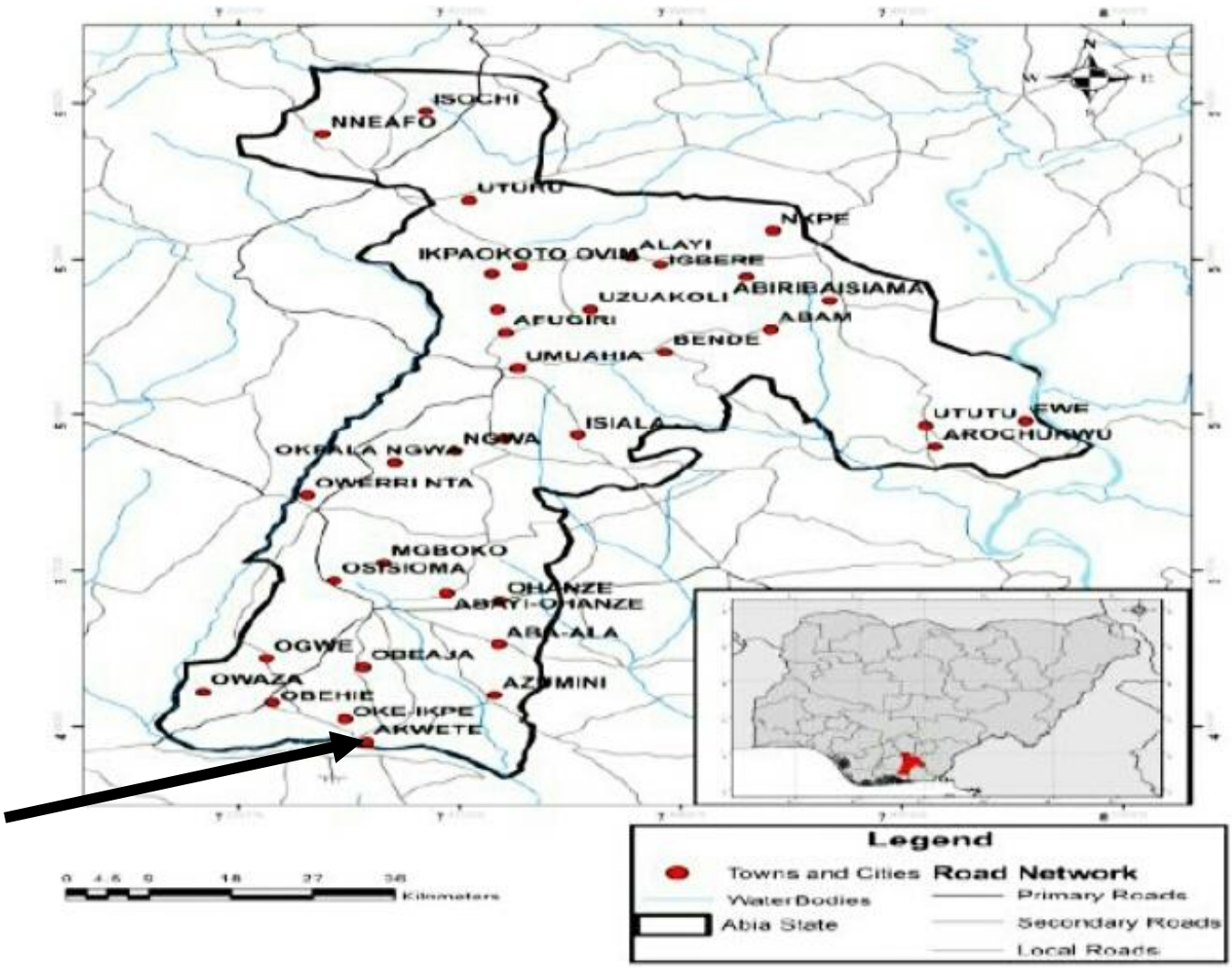


Figure: I Map of Abia State.**Source:** www.abiastate.gov.ng....state-profile....(2016)

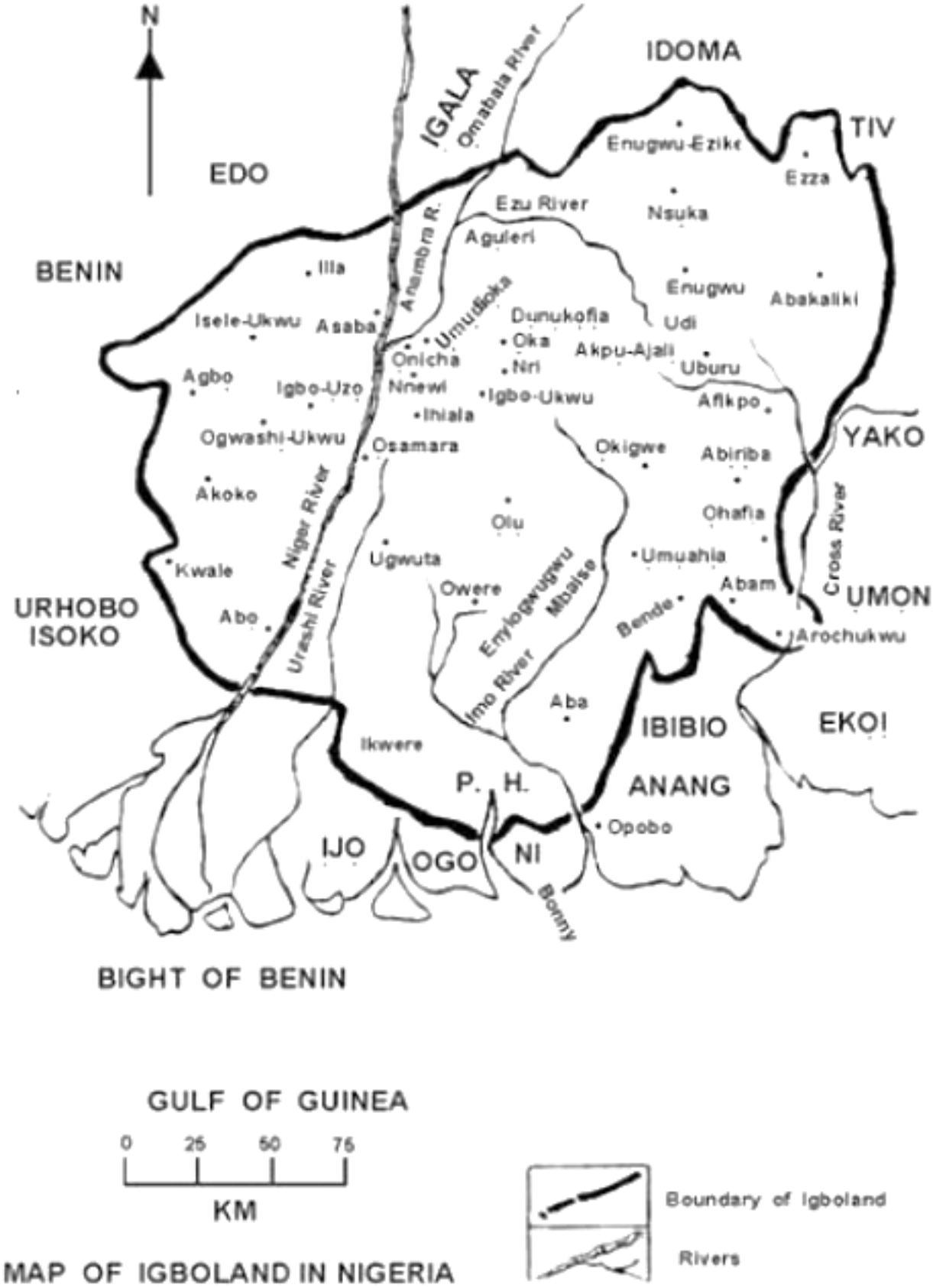


Figure: 2 Map of Igboland in Nigeria. **Source:** www.abiastate.gov.ng....state-profile.... (2016)

1.10 Theoretical framework

This study was theoretically guided by the creative ideas of some Nigerian fashion designers such as Deola Sagoe, Amaka Osakwe, Lisa Folawiyo and Ituen Basi who have been experimenting and reinventing indigenous Nigerian fabrics to turn them into contemporary fashionable wears(Jennings 2011) so that they will not go into extinction. It agrees with their ideas of experimenting with the indigenous fabrics to come up with appropriate cloth wears to suit the current trends in Nigeria. For instance, Lisa Folawiyo (Jewel by Lisa is her cloth line) in Arise fashion shows at New York fashion week for spring /summer 2010 and Paris fashion week for Autumn / winter 2010/11 showcased the results from an exploration carried out on the embellishment of the African print cloth with sequins, beads and crystals to give it a new look to suit the contemporary fashion globally. She further introduced her own custom –made Ankara inspired prints on cotton, georgette and royal or shantung silk fabrics which she introduced into the contemporary fashion. She also showcased some apparels she produced with batik and mud cloth inspired prints on velvet, linen, silk, satin and chiffon to typify African style. It has been observed by this study that most African contemporary designers working towards international fashion seasons have always combined culture in their designed apparels.

Jennings (2011), refers to Deola Sagoe as the grand dame of contemporary Nigerian fashion because she established her fashion brand on the principle of utilizing African hand-woven fabrics and making them into contemporary pieces of clothing also Osakwe made Nigerians to be cognizant of their own hand made fabrics by experimenting with adire fabrics which had proverbial meanings behind each motif which have been transferred from one generation to the other. She contemporizes Adire fabrics made by the Yoruba for a modern audience. Through these methods, it has been observed by this study that indigenous fabrics are

surviving and adapting to the introduction of cheaper industrially made products and imports of luxury fabrics including lace, silk, velvet and damask.

This study also agreed with Ituen Basi who changed the local fabrics to adorable apparels through her patchwork on the fabrics, plaiting with the pieces of fabrics to form part of the clothes and colour blocking techniques to suit the recent trends in fashion. She further redesigned adire and aso-oke by combining them to form styles which are being worn in contemporary fashion in Nigeria. All these concepts that centered on re-invention and transformation helped this study to practically explore the design motifs found on *Akwete* woven fabrics; transform them into prints and construct them into garments which can be utilized in recent fashion. This study was also guided by the view of a Sudanese designer – Omer Asim in Jennings (2011), which stated that:

> African designers have begun to be recognized for using their heritage in a way that contributes to the evolution of their culture by creating contemporary versions of their traditional crafts. It is very interesting because it is relevant to young urban Africans who want to wear things that express their identity and give the diaspora a means of connecting with their homeland in a more authentic way.

1.11 Conceptual framework

Alteration, modification, enhancement, adaptation, reformation and conversion have been the concepts utilized by some designers to transform some of the African indigenous fabrics to be more relevant and sustainable in the contemporary fashion scene. Jennings (2011), indicated that the products from all these have succeeded in making people conversant with their local fabrics because something new has been produced out of them.These modified products are used more frequently in recent fashion to showcase indigenous cultural identity even in their adaptive states.To the best of this studys' knowledge,*Akwete* woven fabrics have not undergone any form of alterations as regards to adapting the woven motifs on printed textiles.In view of this, printed fabrics were produced by this study, by adapting the woven

symbolic motifs of *Akwete* fabrics so as to aid its constant usage in the current fashion in Nigeria and beyond.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the literature and the vital information on the *Akwete* weaving tradition with the intent to obtain broad-based knowledge from renowned authorities on the subjects related to the exploration of *Akwete* weaves motifs for adaptation on printed textiles for apparel production. Subsumed below are the breakdowns of this chapter:

1. The historical background of *Akwete* weaving tradition.
2. *Akwete* symbolic motifs and designs; their importance in weaving.
3. The recent trends of the *Akwete* weaving tradition and their values to the Igbo.
4. Printed textiles in Nigeria.
5. History of contemporary fashion in Nigeria.
6. Printed textiles in contemporary fashion in Nigeria.
7. Various methods of printing on fabrics.
8. The printed version of some African textiles.
9. Garment construction
10. Review of related theories

2.2 The Historical Background

2.2.1 Origin

In the southeastern part of Nigeria, *Akwete* town to be specific, in Ndoki and Asa areas of Abia State, women and girls practiced the art of cloth weaving known as *Akwete*. Nwachukwu and Oziogu (2012), Goodlife (2010), Powerhouse Museum (2008), proclaimed that the Igbo are widely known for *Akwete*-cloth weaving which is basically done by females. They further reported, that an Igbo legend mentioned that weavers from that village wove in the late nineteenth century. Okeke (1982), attested that *Akwete*was located in then Imo

state.Earlier, in the colonial records *Akwete* was spelt as *Aqettah*.They formed an essential part of a clan called *Ndoki*.He futher asserted thatthis name was given to them as a nickname by the Ijaw of Bonny after a period of unpleasant misunderstanding.Afigbo(1974) in Okeke (1982:3), narrated the story as this:

> Our leader had a son during the quarrel and called him *Igbo….. "Anyi na-Adokwani ke:* for what are contending?"The quarrel ended and whenever We went to *Bonny*, we were mocked by the name that the *Anyi na-adokwani Ke* people have come.It was from that, that we received our name *Ndoki*.

He further narrated, that there are twenty family compounds in *Akwete* town that make up the Ndoki clan.They live in compounds, known by their compound names and are synonymous with cloth weaving. They are Umu-Akpara, Umu-Ogbulu Opiah, Umu-EkeleAgbara, Umu-Manya, Umu Odike, Isiama Bibilama, Isiama Akparanta, Isiama Akanwaobu, Isiama Kamalu, Umu-Nwachukwu, Umu-mgbokwo, Umu-Odoeme, Umu-Ajieren, Umu-Onyenucheya, Umu-Nwaibari, Umu-Eruba, Umu-Onyeuku, Umu-onuzo 1&11, Okpuhu and Umu-ibe.

Lyndersay (2011), affirmed that a middle 20th century Igbo material, was the hand woven *Akwete* cloth from *Akwete* (a town between Aba and Port Harcourt). It is specifically woven in Ndoki town of *Akwete* in Ukwa East Local Government Area of Abia state. From the mid to late nineteenth century, weaving grew from a part-time activity that occupied some women, to full-time occupation in which all *Akwete* women participated. At this period, *Akwete* weavers responded to the patronage of neighbouring Ijaw of the Niger-Delta, devising innovative techniques to create desired patterns in new textile materials. Oyelola (2004), found out that*Akwete* women have been involved in major roles of inventing hand weaved textiles which have for over a very long time enriched the beauty and dignity of those who wear them. She further mentionedthat women limited their weaving to using the vertical loom to produce cloth for everyday wear and also more sophisticated designs for special

occasions. She alsomentioned that the *Akwete* weavers were well known for their woven cloths which are elaborately decorated with rayon silk warp threads.

According to Nwachukwu et al (2012) andIkegwuonu (1979), the *Akwete* cloth is originally referred to as "*Akwa Mmiri"* (cloth of the water) meaning towel. They believed that *Akwete* cloth is as old as the Igbo nation but because of the skillfulness of the weavers who demonstrated great mastery of technique and beauty of design, the art of *Akwete* cloth weaving was erroneously believed to have been introduced from Okene in Kogi State where a similar but highly developed style had earlier existed. Ekwueme (2009) narrated that the *Akwete* clans' ancestors came from Bonny in Rivers state; maybe that could explain why Umuagbai-Ndoki(a part of Ndoki clan) found in Ijaw and Ogoni areas in Rivers state also weave a cloth called Akuraku (Ikegwu andUzuegbu 2015).They further mentioned that this weaving vocation was projected into limelight globally by the colonial masters. But Ekwueme (2009) maintained that *Akwete* woven fabrics gained popularity during the oil boom era. This trade was what brought the beauty and creative nature of the woven cloths and the weavers into limelight at that time.

However, the *Akwete* woven motifs have always remained popular in the history of Nigerian textiles. Adetoro (1984) also affirmed Akwete weaving as one of Nigerians' traditional textiles which can be used to communicate evocative messages that represent parts of their life or those around them and have unique looks and meanings.He further declared that some of them represent popular inspirational proverbs and maxims, record historical events, express particular human attitudes or behaviour related to depicted figures or concepts uniquely related to abstract shapes. He also claimed that the woven designs have always been personal expressions of the weavers. According to Ikegwuonu (1979) in Chukwueggu and Ogu (2013), *Akwete* fabric designs are derived from legend stylised human, animal forms,

creatures, everyday life, conceptual symbols and inspirations. They further affirmed that*Akwete*woven symbols are associated with rich Igbo tradition dating back to 9th century and they are still woven and scantily used till date to convey specific massages through the woven fabrics.Although the woven symbols are not reserved for a particular group of people, that is; is not only the Igbo that utilise the woven fabrics, they still have significant meanings for the people that use them and their owners.

Ekwueme (2009) believed that the ancestors of this Igbo traditional costume of the highly gifted community came from the island of Bonny in Rivers state as stated earlier, and narrated that their ancestors settled in the mainland while the men's occupation was fishing, the women designed and wove the intricate patterns now known as *Akwete*. She further observed that these intricate designs created by these weavers have arguably been adjudged as one of the most famous of the women vertical loom clothes in Nigeria. She asserted that though the origin of this unique traditional industry is still shrouded in mystery, history however reveals that the production of the cloth, is the traditional profession of the women folk who started weaving from the time their hands were strong enough to handle a narrow wall loom. Ogu and Ndebilie (2011) is also of the same view with Ekwueme (2009), that every woman in *Akwete* knows how to weave and the younger ones are taught to weave as soon as they can operate the narrow wall loom. But Afigbo (1981), Goodlife (2010) and Sinha (2012) also disagreed with this view of Ekwueme (2009) concerning the origin of its weaving vocation, and said that the legendary weaver,*Dada Nwakwata* who was acclaimed to be the founder of *Akwete* weaving began weaving with designs of her invention. She is said to be the founder of weaving in *Akwete* and has remained a role model for *Akwete* weavers who like her claimed they can weave any cloth design set before them. Dada Nwakwata unravelled threads from an open woven cotton cloth locally known as *acham* brought to the area through trade with the *Potoki* (Portuguese) between the fourteenth and sixteenth

centuries when the latter operated in the Bight of Biafra.They further narrated after studying the weave structures of the heavily ornamented cloth, *Dada Nwakwata*copied them and secretly began to weave a new style of *Akwete* designs. This style of her weave structures was revealed after her death by a deaf and dumb friend who was the only person she permitted in her company when she wove her cloth.Oyelola (2010), also agreed with Afigbo (1981), Goodlife (2010) and Sinha (2012) and mentioned that the first *Akwete* weaver is believed to be Dada Nwakata, she is always remembered every year during the festival of Udo-ala.



Plate1: Akwete weaving.
A sculptural piece of a woman weaving, mounted at the entrance of *Akwete* town, depictingitas a town where weaving is a major occupation of the women. Photograph by Chudi- Duru,C.C (2016)

Sinha (2012) strongly believed that *Akwete* is the traditional hand woven cloth of the Igbo, made by highly talented women in the town of the same name. The method uses a uniquely wide version of the single heddle loom and the skills have been transferred from mother to

daughter since ancient times. Remnants of Igbo weaving have been dated back to the 9Th century A.D with the Igbo Ukwu finds of woven raffia fibre cloth (Cole and Aniakor, 1986).

She, further observed that it has been highly prized by Igbo women for ceremonial dresses, which is wrapped around the waist and another under the arms; *Akwete*hand woven fabrics were overtaken by cheap imported materials. Now, with the introduction of the lighter polyester silk threads and beautiful new patterns, in her own view which this study disagrees with, *Akwete* competes remarkably well with the best materials in the world. The artistry and craftsmanship that goes into the making of this material stand it head and shoulders above most woven fabrics in West Africa.

Sinha (2012) postulated that although there are some uniquely traditional *Akwete* patterns passed down over centuries, each weaver still tries out new designs in keeping with modern trends in fashion thus creating an interactive and vibrant industry. All affairs from administration to marketing are carried out by the women of *Akwete* some of whom have set up a cooperative to coordinate their marketing; this was observed during the numerous field works in *Akwete* town. Their works remain uniquely individual in their designs while retaining their traditional character. Oyelola (2010), is of the same view with Sinha (2012) and mentioned that the ingenuity of *Akwete* weavers is not used up in that they are always producing new designs to meet up with current trends. This study observed that if *Akwete*weaving industry is vibrant as Sinha(2012) and Oyelola(2010) had claimed, some modifications should have been made and it would have been very popular in contemporary fashion like some of its counterparts; for example the kente fabric of Ghana. This study, therefore, sought to popularise *Akwete* hand woven designs by utilising its motifs on printed fabrics which will be worn by people to see if the traditional fabric can regain its lost popularity.

Clarke (2013) noticed that *Akwete* village is on the southern fringes of the Igbo speaking area of Nigeria and its women wove clothes that were traded throughout the Niger delta, both as formal dress and for use on various ceremonial occasions. An internet blog *Akwete* (2012) asserted that *Akwete* is the traditional hand woven cloth of the Igbo, which was made by highly talented women in the town of *Akwete* and being transferred from mother to daughter. According to Cooper Hewitt (an internet blog), the unique weavings of *Akwete* women are known throughout western Africa but this study disagrees with this statement because *Akwete* woven cloth cannot claim the same popularity as Kente woven cloth of Ghana. Today, the location of *Akwete* town is somewhat remote, but in the 19th century, it was an important stop on the slave and palm oil trading routes from the interior to the port cities of Opobo and Port Harcourt, and textiles were a valued trade item. Shaw (1970) in Oyedele (2014) said that archaeological excavation revealed the presence of woven textiles made of fabrics other than cotton at Igbo-ukwu, how and by whom they were made was not known.

However, *Akwete*woven fabrics are still being woven in *Akwete* village and to the best of this studys' knowledge they still remain unknown to some of the Igbo especially the youths. Therefore, a new ground has to be broken so as to take this weaving tradition to a higher ground. This study sought to find that new ground.

2.2.2 Methods, Materials and Types

Basden (1983), recorded that the Igbo earlier wove fabrics on hand looms which were in stripes of cloth from twelve to fifteen inches in width. The finished article was used for caps and loin cloths and the colours were fast and were not fading easily. According to Nwachukwu et al (2012)and Afigbo and Okeke(1982) equipment and materials used in weaving *Akwete* cloth include looms, heddles, beaters, swords, yarns, twines, brass spatula, ropes, shuttles and wax.An *Akwete* woman uses a wide vertical loom which produces one hundred and fifteen centimetres wide x one thousand six hundred and nine centimetres long;

thelength that is realized after the weaving of the cloth is normally twice the length of the vertical loom. They further affirmed that the modern *Akwete* broad vertical loom which is locally called *nkwe* is used by women in *Akwete* town to weave using a continuous warp in which the warp consists of merely cotton, which is the most material used in *Akwete* weaving. They also observed that *Akwete* clothes are characterised by the use of supplementary weft patterning and tasselled ends and the decorative effect is achieved by grouping together the ends of the warp threads and using threads of heavier texture or contrasting colours for patterning. They further described the *Akwete* loom as a simple rectangular wooden frame with two horizontal posts serving as the warp and cloth beams and also mentioned that the frame is of considerable size and leans towards the weaver with the pointed ends of the upright posts fastened to the rafters of the roof. And also claimed that a traditional flywheel called 'ngarangara' is still used to wind the warp (vertical) threads of the loom in two, three or four folds into manageable balls and the warped threads are then looped and stretched between the horizontal posts of the frame that sets the standard size of the cloth. Futhermore, they noted that the flywheel is also used to wind the weft (horizontal) threads onto a long hat blade or shuttle that during weaving, it is passed through the open shed of the warp threads from one hand to the other in a slow- careful motion. They also reported that, a primary heddle rod known as ahia and other supplementary heddle rods depending on the intricacy of the patterns, is used by theweaver to commence work.

Afigboet al (1982) noticed that a standard length of cloth takes at least seven days to produce, and more if the designs are complex and elaborate and this decorative effect is achieved by leaving the four-inch length of unwoven warp threads at the end and grouping them together to create the tassel effect. They further noted that *Akwete* clothes are distinguished from other textiles produced on the vertical loom by their sizes and bigger or smaller sizes may be produced at the request of a client. They further discussed the processes the raw cotton fibres

undergo before use namely: first, ginning process: the cotton seeds are removed from the fibres by rolling a cylindrical iron rod over the cotton ball. Second, bowing process: involves making cotton fibres fluffy by flicking the string of a small bow against them until they look like cotton wool. Third is the spinning process: it involves the pulling of fibres into threads.But this study observed during the field work that the weavers are nolonger using local yarns but factory made yarns which are less stressful in terms of accesibilty and useage.A sample of the *Akwete* loom is presented on plate II below.



PlateII:Akwete weaving.
Mrs. Nneoma Okere, an Igbo of *Akwete*, working on an *Akwete* cloth in *Akwete* town, utilizing the *ikaki* (tortoise), *igbe akwukwo* (box of books) and *ute* (mat) motifs to weave a design. Photograph by Chudi-Duru, C.C (2015).

Nwachukwu et al (2012), observed that *Akwete* cloth comes in different colours and designs. Some are in the patterns of red and black designs, interwoven in geometric patterns on the white ground which are favoured by Igbo men and mainly used as a towel for bathing. They further observed that the*Akwete* cloth, woven from sisal-hemp fibres are of a coarse type, used by masquerades, and by warriors as headgears, while those made from raffia fibres are

used in religious occasions like the Ozo title ship and for mourning by women in the earlier days.They also mentioned that the most popular *Akwete*hand woven cloth is the type of cotton fabric woven from cotton fibres in colourful patterns and the weavers have much preference for a bright and strong colour like red and yellow. They noted, that *Akwete* cloth is usually made of cotton thread and the decorative motifs are produced with cotton threads of a heavier texture or rayon silk. Oyelola (2010) is of the same view with Nwachukwu et al (2012) and spotted that stunning effects were also produced by the weavers of *Akwete*. Who utilised abstract and figurative patterns for the plain ground weave by using additional weft threads usually rayon or Lurex.



Plate III: **An *Akwete* weaver.**
She wasfound in the weavers'cooperative building during the field work.Photograph by Chudi-Duru, C.C (2016).

According to Eicher (1976), *Akwete* is noted for the vertical loom weaving of its women and girls. It differs from the other types of weaving especially the Okene weaving in that it is usually the width of a woman's wrapper, although sold in pairs, the pairs are not sewn together but worn together; they are called up and down*(eregbor na mgbudu/ntukwasi).*They are full wrappersquite unlike the aso-oke woven cloths of the Yoruba that are woven in small

stripes and later joined to make a large piece which could be tied on the head and also used as a wrapper. Davis (1974)also mentioned another difference between *Akwete* cloths and other vertical loom cloths, that *Akwete* cloth is often identified by one end of the cloth being three to five inches wider than the other. The reason for this may be, that the tension on the warp threads is loose keeping the warp yarns spread apart but as the weaving progresses the tension becomes tighter and the weaver makes the cloth narrower. Because of the shape created, women use the cloth as wrappers. She affirms that the uneven shape created makes it possible for the wrapper to be held firmly to the body when it is tied.

2.3 *Akwete* symbolic Motifs and their Importance in Weaving

According to Davis (1974), a history of *Akwete* could be written using the innovation of symbolic motifs applied to their cloth in that many motifs, showcase traditional legends, practices, tools, household items and beliefs while others, such as bow tie, confirm either new labels for old, familiar objects or the ability to translate newly introduced, everyday objects into stylised designs in weaving.The Vanguard media (2012), reported that the decorative motifs on *Akwete*hand woven fabrics appear mostly on one side of the cloth, though they can appear on both sides. It also observed that they are given names which are suggestive of their appearances. Eicher (1976) further analysed some motifs used on *Akwete* cloth, and proclaimed that the tortoise motif (also seen on Ijebu-ode cloth) was formerly used by the royalty; the ebe or cross was formerly produced on fabric specified for use on religious occasions, times of stress or on the battlefield. Another explanation for the use of the tortoise as a motif was that the tortoise is the hero of many Ibo fables.

However, according to Nwackwu et al (2012) is not of the same view with Vangaurd media (2012) and sressed that some weavers can give different names to motifs that are not suggestive of their appearance. They are in line with Eicher (1976) and mentioned that in the olden days, the tortoise motif (*ikaki)* is only worn by members of royal families and if

anybody from non-royal family dares to wear it, he or she could be punished or be sold into slavery. And also the *ebe* design, is especially reserved for use as a protective talisman for pregnant women or warriors. Nwachukwu et al (2012) observed that most of these designs or motifs are by inspiration because the weavers claim that certain motifs are revealed to them by the gods and as a result, no weaver is allowed to copy the design and it, therefore, perishes with its owner.This study has observed that a number of five or more different motifs, can be woven onto a piece of cloth to form a design pattern and given a name.

Davis (1974), reported that many motifs are variations of one another like the *ikaki* has many variations and any special circumstances surrounding the development of a new motif usually involve either the weaver or the wearer, and traditionally the creator of a new motif receives an unwritten copywright.She affirmed that some motifs may be peculiar to certain families, though the same motif may be given different names by different weavers in some cases. According to some contemporary weavers, certain motifs were gifts of creative inspiration from a divinity to favoured weavers, and it was forbidden for any other weaver to use such a motif and when the weaver died, the motif could no longer be made, and existing cloth containing it increased in value and prestige.This study observed that this practice is no longer taking place now because during the field work the study observed that every design motif of *Akwete* can be woven by any weaver and can be worn by anyone.Therefore, motif ideas are no longer considered divine in origin.

She further observed that the privilege of wearing some particular motifs depended on the wearer's role, and some patterns were reserved for first class families or special occasions because of the circumstances surrounding the motif origin. She gave an example with the *Nnadede* cloth and mentioned that it is among the few woven wrappers, presently known to be two-faced, or reversible and it is a design of *Akwete* cloth in which the woven pattern

appears identically on both sides of the cloth. The picture is placed in plate VI. This pattern is also called *Dada Nwakata* as the weavers confirmed this during the field work because of its intricacies and the double face it has.She mentioned that it is usually a balanced design composed of rectangles formed by overlapping vertical and horizontal thin stripes and interchangeably, a dot, or star, iswoven at the centre of the rectangles. She further mentioned that in this design, wider stripes of different colours of yarn divide the cloth into two sections. The story behind the cloth named *Nnadede* goes like this as narrated by Davis (1974) and confirmed by Chudi-Duru (2015) in *Akwete* town.*Nnadede,* wasa warrior in the *Akwete* area in the 1860s and very famous for his victories in war. During one of his ceremonial returns, this woven piece was presented by his father to him, it was a beautiful cloth designed and woven especially for the occasion. She concluded by mentioning that for many years in Igbo land, that pattern was reserved as a status symbol and for ceremonial purposes, but as time went on, it gradually took its place among the commonly used traditional *Akwete* designs. Nevertheless, it is still highly regarded in *Akwete* traditional weaving, because of the story behind the woven piece and because of the skill required to weave the reversible cloth. She also mentioned that it is sometimes referred to as "star" cloth, after some similarly patterned imported "George" cloths with embroidered motifs enclosed in rectangles.The samples of different designs of *Akwete* woven pieces still in the process of weaving are placed in the plates below.

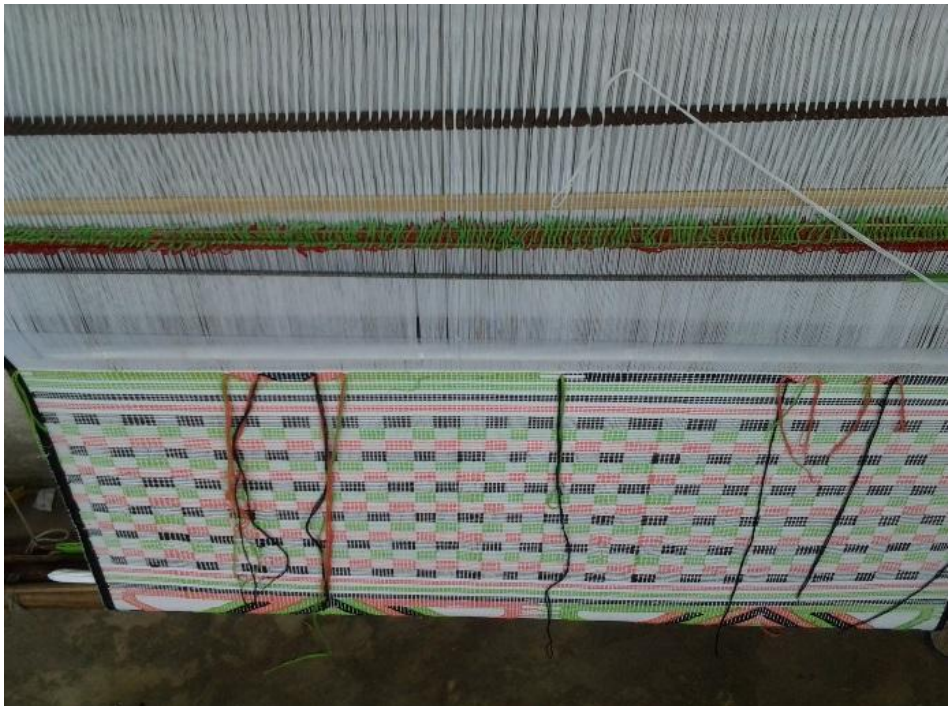


Plate IV(a):***Akwete* woven fabric.**
This comprises of *mkpuru* sugar motifs, still in the process of weaving in a loom. Weaver Mrs Nneoma Okere.Photograph by Chudi-Duru, C.C (2015).



Plate V(b): ***Akwete* woven fabric.**
It comprises of *ikaki,comb, ruler and okwa na epele* motifs in a design.Weaver:Mrs Helen Brown mother to Mrs Nneoma Okere. Photograph by Chudi-Duru, C.C (2015).



Plate VI:*Nnadede* (a prestigious woven design).
This design is still in the process of weaving in a loom, it is made up of small rectangles and stripes as boarder designs. Photograph by Chudi-Duru, C.C (2015).



Plate VII:A group of females in*Akwete*hand woven cloths.
These*Akwete* woven motifs are madeup of *ikaki, ikperendiomma, ukwu bench and popo* designs.The first female from the left is tying a popo designed wrapper, the second is also tying a popo design wrapper,the third female is tying an ikaki, ukwu bench and ikperendioma design wrapper,the fourth is also tying a popo design wrapper,the fifth is tying the same thing with the third femalewhilethesixthfemaleistyingapopodesignedwrapper.Source:www.nairaland.com/806789/traditional-Eastern-Ijaw-attire-pictures/2 (2011)

According to Davis (1974), the colours that were used often were the earth colours. The colours that were used are red, rust, brown and orange. Yellow, blue, green, purple, black and white colours were introduced of recent. She mentioned that they reflected the availability of imported chemical dyes and yarns and the mixed tastes of a wider market. And with the use of the traditional colour combination, a few numbers of colours were used but with the recent introduction of new colours; weavers have conformed to weaving customers' requests ranging from monochrome, blends and multi-colour cloths.

Davis (1974) further mentioned, that *Akwete* cloth has many uses because of its size, shape and the versatility. She said they have been used for dresses, wall hangings, covers, drapes, bedspreads and other decorative uses. But this study is of the view that, the designs have not been printed on cotton fabric; that is why an attempt was made by this study to achieve that. Some women adorned in *Akwete* fabric are showcased in plateVIII below.



Plate VIII: Ijaw Bride from Bonny with *Akwete* cloth.**Source** :printerest**(2015)**

2.3.1 Origin of these motifs.

All the motifs incorporated in *Akwete* weaving originated from somewhere. Some of the weavers claim that they get some of their designs in dreams, some of them were created by the weavers themselves according to Madam Akpara (interviewee),(2016,July 20) while some of them are copied from other cultures.She also said that some of the weavers are motivated by getting some inspiration from the surroundings, Igbo beliefs, traditions, folklores and Igbo worldview and fellow weavers.

Aronson (1979), narrated the story behind the origin of the popular *ikaki* symbolic motif and proclaimed that *Akwete I*gbo weavers use suitable wide range of foreign introduced patterns, including those from *Ijebu Yoruba* area. She further narrated that *Ijebu Yoruba* who are located in southeastern *Yoruba* land were ruled by a divine King based in *Ijebu ode.*She repoted that there is a separate but not related system of *Ijebu* rule called *Oshugbo* (*Ogboni* by other *Yoruba* subgroup) and this system is the judiciary society in the *Oba*s'court. This society, consists of male and female elders who make decisions on criminal court cases and oversee all affairs pertaining to the king and it is the duty of the *Ijebu* women weavers to manufacture the ritual attire that all *Oshugbo* members must wear. She mentioned that such a cloth is referred to as *asoolona* meaning "cloth that has patterns". This piece of cloth she reported is a large wrapper, made up of four full wide panels sewn together along the selvedge and worn like toga style on the body and there is also the single panel of cloth called an *itagbe* which is worn over the left shoulder or as a turban on the head. She mentioned that they wear this ensemble of clothes for the purposes of public display and it combines the *Ooni* (crocodile) motif with a *shaki* feature (the woven texture is shaggy), which symbolises power, prestige and things that are good. Aronson (1980), asserted that in another part of *Yoruba* land, the members of *ogboni* tend not to use *Ijebu* woven cloth as standard attire. She found out that clothes bearing indistinguishable patterns to *Ijebu* cloth are found in cloth

collections among the *Ijaw*group living at the east end of the Niger Delta which is more than a hundred miles from *Ijebu* land. She strongly believed that trade seems to have been the impetus for the spread, because the *Ijebu Yoruba* have been known to be vibrant cloth traders and it may have been among the clothes transported to Niger delta. She claimed that for two centuries, the kings of Eastern *Ijaw* have worn cloths bearing *Ijebu* like patterns as their official attire. The patterns showcase a striking resemblance to the *Ijebu* counterparts but have another name (*Ikaki)*, the meaning in *Ijaw*language is the tortoise. This motif symbolises tortoise as a highly revered personality, possessing wise, cunning and tricky which*Ijaw* kings and chiefs have always imitated andithas been made the official attire for the royalty since the late 18th century which this suggests that *Ijebu* cloth were being traded to the *Ijaw* by this early date.

This study observed, that the Igbo that weave this cloth do not call the tortoise motif its' Igbo name but the *Ijaw* name, which means that this particular design originated through the*Ijaw.*The Ijaw name has displaced the Igbo name which is *Mbe or Mbekwu*. Aronson (1979) noted that of recent, that the *Akwete* Igbo women weavers now weave the regalia of the *Ijaw kings* (Amanyanabo) which shows that they have taken on the role of replicating imported cloth types. She observed that they no longer buy from ijebu weavers, butorders were placed for the woven cloths in *Akwete* town.

She declared that there was an attachment and liking for imported clothes by the eastern *Ijo* to a height that local weaving production became affected. And very close to the Eastern *Ijaw in* the north are the *Ndoki* people in the village of *Akwete,* with whom the Eastern *Ijaw* were trading heavily for slaves and palm oil in the 18th and 19th centuries. She further noted that, through such commercial contact, weavers of *Akwete* became experts in weaving imported cloth patterns that are familiar to their eastern *Ijaw* patrons.And also at the end of 19th

century in the centre of competitive trading amongst the coastal and inland groups, weaving in *Ndoki* village of *Akwete* was transformed. Aronson (1979).

Aronson (1980) and Davis (1974) asserted that oral tradition tells a story of an innovative and pioneer weaver named Dada Nwakata who exhibited highly outstanding professional skill, invented and wove hundreds of new patterns executed with imported cotton threads.This made her fabrics the toast of clients. According to Afigbo and Okeke (1982), she unravelled the mystery behind the Indian woven materials sold by the Portuguese and produced the designs using the *Akwete* loom. Dada Nwakata wove reversible patterns that appear on the front and back of the woven wrapper. Aronson (1979) argued that it would have been to please her wealthy to patrons. Crow (1830),in textiles, trade and globalization (an internet blog), observed that during a visit to the town of Bonny in the eastern Delta region of Nigeria in 1801,the chief's wives were seen tying more than six pieces of different types of cloths around their bodies while going to any festivals, and this made the body look like a roll or truss of yarn, tied at both ends.It further narrated that the weavers from *Akwete* village were among those to do so in the late nineteenth century using vibrant colours of imported threads drawing inspiration from clothes imported from England,India and other Asian countries.

This research has revealed that many new motifs that form patterns that symbolise a lot of things have been incorporated in the recently woven *Akwete* cloth. They have a particular tendency for innovation. Aronson (1980), Davis (1974) and Lamb and Holmes (1980), mentioned that the weavers wove numerous motifs which were used in forming patterns of designs. These patterns have complex combinations. For example, no two cloths bearing the Ikaki motif are alike forming a contact to the traditional Ijebu version. Sometimes other symbolic motifs from other parts of West Africa bearing the names of what they feel it looks like will be given to it making it purely *Akwete* woven cloth.

According to Lamb and Holmes (1980) *Akwete*, woven cloth can be divided into three main categories namely george cloth, popo cloth and *Akwete*. Oyelola (2010) also puts it that, some *Akwete* designs are Popo and George which show their inter-cultural influences from Ghanian kente and Indian madras. This study, observed that this categorization is based on the different designs woven on the *Akwete* cloth which symbolise and connote a lot of meanings. All the *Akwete* woven fabrics fall under the three categories. The three main categories are:

i. George cloth
ii. Popo cloth
iii. *Akwete*

2.3.1.1 George Cloth

According to Lamb & Holmes (1980), this type of woven cloth has designs of stripes and checks. Aronson (1980), is of the same view with Lamb & Holmes (1980) and explained that in the compound where she was residing during a research in *Akwete* town, she came accross a woman using a piece of Indian madras known locally as George cloth as the prototype for the design she was weaving. These Indian madras cloths are characterised by colourful plaid designs. An example of this George cloth is *Nnadede.* It also has an Indian source. They further mentioned that all the numerous *Akwete* plaid and check designs are derived from Indian imports and could have resulted from a request by the Ijaw patrons to duplicate designs that were particularly admired and favoured. Therefore, every cloth designs that have been copied from Indian madras come under this heading.

2.3.1.2 *Akwete*

Aronson (1980) mentioned that this type refers to the type of woven cloths, produced by the weavers using their own designs motifs. She mentioned that the *Akwete*weavers used to make some simple cloth of traditional patterns of black and white warp stripes which has an overall effect of small checks and some with the embellishment of the water stripes with arrays of

holes which belong to the wider tradition of the Nigerian woman's vertical loom. This study revealed that these type of *Akwete* cloth are called*Akuraku.*

2.3.1.3 Popo Cloth

According to Lamb and Holmes (1980) and Talbot in Aronson (1982), it is a fact that the male Ewe parallels of weaving can be found easily on the Popo cloth of *Akwete* but its origin is from Ghana and Togo. Lamb and Holmes (1980) further explained that it is a type of cloth woven for sale in opobo market and also in Bonny in deliberate competition with the Ewe cloths from Keta and Togo. It is still held in high esteem among the women of Ijaw because of its importance.

2.4 Symbolic Motifs of *Akwete* woven cloth

These are the motif symbols woven into the *Akwete*fabrics, which represent another thing other than the object that was woven in Igbo culture. Negri (1976) in Aniakor (2002) in Ofomata (2002) viewed, the prestigious Igbo cloth as that which utilises rayon or other synthetic threads to make the floated patterns found on the woven cloth. And these patterns consist of symbolic motifs which attach status and prestige to the woven cloth.

These motifs have a lot of symbolic meanings to the weaver, wearer and admirers.For example, the woven symbol observed on an*Akwete* cloth called *akajiaku*during a field work (2015) which means a wealthy person does not comprise of a human being but an intricately complicated design. This shows, that for one to afford it, that person has to be wealthy.

The motifs woven on the cloths, become objects which are meant to represent another (usually abstract) even if there is no meaningful relationship. This study believed that even the names used to represent those designs are symbolic. Lamb and Holmes (1980) and Aronson (1980) reported that the *Akwete* women have produced a lot of designs (over a 100) using different motifs. This wasconfirmed by this study in *Akwete* town during the numerous field works.During one of the fieldworks in 2015 in *Akwete* town, a weaver named Mrs

Nneoma Okere rated Dada Nwakata and Madam Goerge Mmeribokwu as first class weavers. She wove designs that had symbolic motifs woven on one side but can be seen on both sides while Madam George wove George materials.

This study hasobserved that some names of these motifs are in Ijaw language while the rest have Igbo and English names. Why some of them have Ijaw names stems from the fact that they are the neighbouring villages near *Akwete* town, they normally patronise the weavers a lot and these woven clothes have a lot of cultural significance in Ijaw areas.The English names, as this study observed developed from the expatriates that come from other countries to work in oil companies in River state; who gave English names to some of these motifs for clearer understanding. These motifs attached a lot of importance to the woven cloth and attract buyers.This is because any new design motif that are woven were sought for by someone that has never purchased it .Some of the design motifs which were seen during the field work in *Akwete*town and utilised by the weavers are as follows:-

1. *Akajiaku* (onethat is wealthy)
2 Volvo
3. Air conditioner
4. Oil boom
5. *Nnadede*(literally stands for the father of an elder,symbolically stands for a respected person in the community)
6. *Ikaki*(tortoise(in Ijaw language), symbolizes wisdom and cunningness)
7. *Aziza*(broom)
8. *Igbe Akwukwo*(box of books)
9. *Ebe*(talisman used for protection)
10. Nigerian Coat of Arms (stands for patriotism)
11. Two birds
12. *Mkpuru* Sugar (cubes of sugar)

13. Fancy Blocks
14. Butterfly
15. First lady
16. Baby lace
17. Ruler
18. *Mkpekele efere*(pieces of broken plates)
19. *Kpakpando* (star)
20. *Ahia* (utilization of many heddles (rods) to produce complicated designs that do not have specific names.)
21. Hour glass
22. *Ikpere ndioma(*The knees of the beautiful people)
23. *Ute* (mat)
24. *Fig (popo* pattern and its variations*)*
25. *Mboisi*(Comb)
26. *Mkpuru ludo(ludo seeds)*
27. Snake
28. Flower (geometric in nature)
29. *Mkpuru oka* (corn)
30. *Dakuru* (the name of the weaver that started weaving this design- an Ijaw woman married into Akwete)
31. *Popo* patterns
32. Checker board
33. Crown
34. Necklace
37. Saw
38. Key/children fingers

39 Chain

40 Scissors

41. Snake back

42. Stool or bow tie

43. Wine glass

44. Cross

45. Fruit of the oil bean tree

46. "V boot"

47. Christmas tree and parcels

48. Heart/love

49. Azu (fish)

50. Pivot

51. Stool

52. Ritual objects

53. Nigerian flag

54. Logo of festac (the 2nd All black festival of the Arts held in Nigeria 1977)

55. Eating utensil (spoon)

56. Single bell

57. Anu Kpo Anu (animal eating animal)

58. Okwa na epele(saucer and holder)

59. Mirror in the sun

60. Nnunnu (bird)

61. *Ishi ajuala* (head of a monitor lizard)

62. *Okwa*(saucer)

63. Double 8

64. *Aka abuo* (two hands)

65. *Ugo* (eagle)

66. *Ijikoaka onu* (unity)

67. Ocean in the river

68. *Akisi igbebiri (Ijo* name*)*

69. Eye witness

70. *Ajari* (George)

71. Rainbow

72. *Anya* pussy-cat(pussycat eyes)

73. Flower

74. *Afo ikaki*(belly of a tortoise)

75. *Ukwu bench* (the bench legs)

76. *Okpuru afo eke* (pythons belly)

77. *Isafela(Ijaw name)*

78. *Inyingi(Ijaw name)*

79. Madam pass madam

80. *Mgbawa tomato* (broken tomato)

81. Ceiling fan

82. Standing fan

83. Achicha (Biscuits)

84. *Kufere mmiri*(across the river)

85. *Ijeagwo*(snakes' movement)

86. Brocade

87. *Dada nwakata*(the name of the woman that started weaving in Akwete town.The name stands for any woven cloth that has reversible sides)

88. block

89. Hand fan
90. Five stars
91. Anthropomorphic motifs
92. *Mkposu*(openings)
93. *Onwa* (moon)
94. Block
95. *Oche eze(*kings'stool)
96. *Ebe afo mkpo(*protruded version of ebe)
97. *Ebe olu ngalasi*(slim neckedversion of ebe)
98. *Ebe uhie*(variety of ebe)
99. *Ebe agharigha(*smaller version of ebe*)*
100. *Agbani*(*Ijaw* name)
101. Ovation
102. *Rekereke*(sweet thing)
103. Stainless(for classy women)
104. Toll gate
105. Ocean fish
106. *Ifuru Osisi*(inflorescence of a flower)
107. Afro
108. Lace
109. *Babwaya*(babwire)
110. *Egbe otuzo*(key)
111. *Otuzo Umunwaibari*(represents chain)
112. *Ikpere aturu*(sheeps'knees)
113. *Ishianu*(head of a lion, tiger etc)

114. *Obuenyi(*elephant carrier)

2.5 Cultural significance

Akwete cloths serve important functions in the context of royalty as have been observed by Aronson (1980). Previously, in Igboland, *they were* mostly used during chieftaincy titling ceremonies and coronations. All the kings' cabinet members with the Ndinze, Ndiozo and Ndilolo usually adorn themselves in *Akwete* woven fabrics.

Aronson (1980) further stated that elsewhere in the eastern delta in Nigeria, this cloth has assumed a supreme importance and it's often associated with elite segments of the society-kings, chiefs and the priestly class. *Ikaki* cloth bears the symbol of the tortoise called *Mbe* or *Mbekwu* in Igboland. Which to the Rivers people (the Ijaw in particular), a tortoise is a wise and cunning creature; the same goes to the Igbo that weave the cloth.She further affirmed that it is understandable that a cloth with this name would be associated with chieftaincy.She also mentioned that in Ijaw areas, when a king dies, ikaki woven design is normally used to decorate his rooms, where he is lying in state and his surroundings. Also during the installation of chiefs in office, *Akwete*woven fabrics are also used as the ceremonial attire, beautifying their homes and surroundings and as an expression of family wealth, social status and an emblem of power.

According to Aronson (1980), the *Akwete* woven cloth is utilised by women in some ceremonies among the Kalabari known in cloth-tying ceremonies (egenebite and bibite).She documented that these ceremonies are for women who are ready for marriage and childbirth. She observed that, they are bestowed with recognition as matured women during these festivals which involve a formal public appearance with the young woman wearing selected types of cloth changed at different stages of the ritual. She also affirmed that the*Ikaki*designis worn first before other types of cloth because it is the initial type of cloth brought to the

Bonny area through trade. She further noticed, that among the Kalabari, the ceremony is extended over several months, allowing the woman to wrap one category of cloth for a three week period before changing to another. The *Akwete* cloth is often one of the first to be tied in the Kalabari event.

Lamb and Holmes (1980) reported that of recent, *Akwete*cloth is scantily worn or tied during ceremonial occasions including church services and celebrations of Christian festivals. They mentioned an important role *Akwete* woven cloths play in marriage arrangements in *Akwete* in the past.They observed that the dowry of an *Akwete* girl contains many pairs of *Akwete* cloth category, as well as a box or trunk, filled George clothes, the possession of a large number of clothes is still being compared with the possession of wealth in terms of money.

This study observed that they are used as uniforms for group identification and some Church organizations, also make use of them as uniforms. Just like in Yoruba land, societies and associations in *Akwete* may have a special cloth known as *aso ebi*. Talbot in Lamb and Holmes (1980) mentioned that in Kalabari, some societies were actually named after the group cloths, some were woven in *Akwete* town. Also, different dance groups and cultural organisations identify themselves with a particular *Akwete* woven designs as uniforms. This study also observed that they are also used for acting as Igbo cultural attire in Nollywood home movies.

2.5.1 Status symbol attached to *Akwete* weaving tradition

The beater (etiti) used in weaving is a status symbol, in the weaving tradition of *Akwete* town.According to Aronson (1980), this is normally transferred to a daughter of the deceased weaver after her demise.This signifies continuity in the weaving vocation. Mr Justice (interviewee, July 20,2016), revealed that this sword is used in affirming a curse placed on anyone who disobeys the laws governing the traditional weaving by heating it on the

groundby the men, after the curse has been pronounced by the women.This sword is highly respected.

2.6 Modern Transformation

During the course of this study, it was observed that the weavers do not only replicate foreign designs but have mastered the art of elaborating on old designs and also inventing new ones. These have formed part of their weaving tradition from the nineteenth century.It also observed that there are lots of variations of the the ikaki woven cloth recently, it is no longer the ikaki design alone but other design motifs have been combined alongside the ikaki so as to meet up with the recent trends in fashion. A lot of intricate designs have been produced by the weavers using numerous ahia (heddles).

This study also observed that these designs are more expensive than the ordinary ones. Some of these designs woven by using many heddles do not have names they are simply called *ahia*according toLady P. Ordor(discussant). Chukueggu and Ogu (2013) further mentioned that the designing of the fabric depended on the tastes and trends in the society, market demands and the skillfulness of the craftswomen. Adetoro (1984) mentioned that modern *Akwete* fabrics are designed using cotton, rayon and metallized yarns usually in brilliant warm and glittering colours with intricate geometric patterns achieved by the inlay technique. Chukueggu (1998) in Chukueggu and Ogu (2013) observed that the weavers make use of culturally oriented motifs which they combine with modern motifs to create modern forms and concepts. He further noted, that there are light weave *Akwete* fabrics which was achieved by reducing the cloth count. He also claimed that the insertion of the motif symbols is done using matching colours which are different from the background colours and of recent most of the weavers copy some designs from each other especially when the design is in high demand after production. And this is quite unlike in the past when the designs can only be

woven by the inventor of that particular design that bears the name of that weaver or designer. Below, on plate IX are the samples of old *ikaki*designs.





Plate IX: Samples of old Ikaki motif design.
Private collection of Chief and Lolo E.C. Uchegbuproduced in the late 70s.**Source:** Chudi-Duru(2015)

Lambs and Holmes (1980), is of the view that normally *Akwete* weavers adopt motifs from all sorts of external sources and most of these motifs have been transformed as they have remarkable changes in appearance, woven structures and usage. They reported that the weavers make use of modern shiny yarns of synthetic materials in contrast to the older dyed cotton and also make use of imported cotton yarns but industrially dyed. This study observed that some researches have been carried out on the origin of *Akwete* weaving, its loom, the cloth itself, usage, motifs, patronage and its various designs but yet some aspects of documenting the design motifs is still lacking. Chudi-Duru (2016) has also enhanced the *Akwete* fabric by decorating the woven fabrics with stones, beads, trims, sequins and some fanciful metals cut in form of flowers, objects and shapes.

2.7 The Recent Trends of *Akwete* Weaving Tradition and their values to the Igbo

One of the recent trends in *Akwete* weaving, as reported by Nwachukwu et al (2012), is the formation of guilds and cooperative association to procure yarns (foreign yarns- polyester, cotton, silk, rayon, acrylic and others.) and to market their goods but this study observed that this has not really helped in bringing*Akwete* into limelight in Nigerian fashion because marketing of their goods still remains a major problem to the weavers. Sinha (2012) is of the same view with Nwachukwu et al (2012) and said that although there are some uniquely traditional *Akwete* patterns passed down over the centuries, each weaver still tries out new designs in keeping with modern trends in fashion thus creating an interactive and vibrant industry. In spite of all these setup, this study is of the view that*Akwete* woven fabrics, are still struggling to be vibrant in the contemporary fashion scene in Nigeria.

Sheehy (1988) reported that the women of *Akwete* have adapted to change in recent times, machine spun and coloured threads are used and they are responsive to new trends. Goodlife (2012) noted that men used the fabrics to sew traditional shirts popularly known as jumper, wokor or Etibo, usually worn over trousers for special occasions; the study noticed that the *Akwete*woven fabrics are scantily used for the occasions mentioned by Goodlife (2012) in Nigerian contemporary fashion. Contrary to this, prints are commonly used as have been observed by this study in places of woven fabrics, because many people prefer light clothing that could be used for everyday wear and also beaffordable. This study is of the view that the production of*Akwete* printed fabrics, will create create versatile usage.

Okali,Okpara and Olawoye (2001) noticed that there is reduced patronage of *Akwete* cloth and this has contributed to increasing migration of young females to Aba one of the commercial towns in Abia state and its environs. They further mentioned that traditional non-farm activities, such as women's cloth weaving are declining in rural settlements as they are

negatively affected by competition from imported goods, lack of investments in technological innovation, lack of yarn production and inadequate infrastructure such as electricity supply. This study has observed that the imported goods which consist of prints, wax, georges to mention but a few, have overtaken the traditional hand woven fabrics. *Akwete* design motifs were printed on fabrics by this studyas African printed fabrics, so that the woven motifs can will not go into extinction.

Sheehy (1988) reported that the *Akwete* weavers are responding to new trends, this study disagreed with this view and is of the opinion that the woven cloths have not been utilised by the fashion designers in contemporary fashion because they are finding it difficult to compete with other fabrics both traditionally woven and imported ones, there are notmuch modifications as regards to surface embellishments.This study believed, that for *Akwete* woven fabric to meet up with its counterparts something has to be done. The Igbo, want to see something invented from*Akwete*hand woven cloth. The old designs are not really meeting up with their counterparts in terms of its utilisation in contemporary fashion. And this is why Okeke (1985) strongly insisted that modern students of textile design should explore methods of making the Igbo traditional fabrics more acceptable to consumers by making it comfortable in handling and wearing. As nothing new has come out of *Akwete* woven art to the best of this studys' knowlegde, it utilised the *Akwete* woven motifs on printed textiles for constructing garments for both adults and children in Igboland and beyond.

2.8 African wax prints

2.8.1 Printed fabrics in Africa

According to Eccentric Yoruba (2011), an internet blog, the development of the African printed fabric is as a result of a long historical process of imitation and simulation and how exactly Dutch wax prints became popular in West Africa is still being argued. It said that Dutch wax prints started out as cheap mass-produced imitations of Indonesian batik locally

produced in Java. It also mentioned that the Dutch and the English, were the key players in industrialising the batik production techniques and popularising the resulting textiles in foreign markets.

Futhermore, itmentioned that Javanese batik is a product of hand-drawing motifs on a cotton cloth and involved the use of wax and resist-dye and was introduced to Holland,after being colonised by the Dutch, and subsequently to other parts of Europe, but did not gain popularity. In the 19th century, it reported that the Dutch merchants found out that fabrics were mass produced in Europe using engraved roller print machines and dye-resistant resin to design motifs to produce a batik effect on cloth. It was an effort by the Dutch to develop foreign textiles markets for machine-produced batik imitations.The mass production of batik dyed textiles were broughtto Europe bythe van Vlissinger's who were a textile merchant family and established their company in 1846 and set up Vlisco brand of cloth.

Eccentric Yoruba (2011) narrated the various views as regarding to how Dutch wax prints entered the West African market. One view is that in the late 1800s, Dutch transporters that were on their way to Indonesia from Europe had with them, their simulated batik textiles. They often stopped at various African ports, to sell their goods and consequently got lots of African customers.

It further narrated another view,which is that these fabricscould not be marketed in the Indonesian market dueto, it did not retain the well defined qualities as the original batik and economic restrictions imposed on the sale of foreign textiles at the beginning of the 20th century to protect locally made batik textiles.Therefore,in order to avoid a deficit in their business, the target market was diverted to West Africa.

Furthermore,it reported that the impression that the introduction of Dutch wax prints into the West African market took place from nowhere is not quite true because in West Africa, there

had always been a vibrant textile market since fabrics have been significant in African social life, for a very long time. It also mentioned that early in the 16th century, the English, Dutch and French were selling batiks and other types of textiles manufactured in Asia, such as the guinea cloth and cotton produced by the Indian to West African markets. As a result of this, consumers were already acquinted to internationally produced fabrics. Once the Dutch batik-inspired wax prints were introduced in West African markets, it gave rise to the height of foreign-manufactured fabrics in the 19th century.

However,Eccentric Yoruba (2011), concluded by mentioning that no matter how Dutch wax prints found themselves in West Africa, it can be concluded that they were initially meant for the Indonesian market but found a more eager market in the Gold Coast (Ghana) where they became symbols of high quality fashion. From the Gold Coast, these fabrics proliferated to other West and Central African markets including Nigeria. Doku (2014) also supported the view and said that the unique fashion home of sub-Saharan Africa began in Ghana.

Doku (2014) further narrated that West Africans accepted these Dutch wax prints in the 19th century, using and integrating them as part of their culture and self-expression. The English produced and sold wax printed textiles, but the Dutch brands were much more accepted because most of the West African countries were under English and French colonial rule; their preference was for the Dutch brands till date.He further mentioned thatup until the 1960s, most wax prints sold in West Africa were produced in Europe using motifs designed precisely for African markets and later after most West African countries gained their independence things were transformed.

Asho(2013), is of the same view with Doku(2014), and mentioned that although the fabrics were manufactured outside Africa, as African countries gained independence in the 50's and 60's they built indigenous textile mills and started creating designs that represented

traditional cultural motifs, patterns and colours of various ethnic groups in Africa. Currently, Ghana is home to several fine and high-quality wax print manufacturers including Woodin, a subsidiary of Holland's Vlisco and ATL which is a subsidiary of Manchester-based ABC textiles. Doku (2014) further mentioned that in the early year 2000, Ghana's fashion industry began to take shape. He also mentioned that the large scale production of African prints and the marketing of new products through fashion shows contributed to the increased sophistication of the industry and public awareness. Eccentric Yoruba (2011) noticed that, although these textiles are now manufactured in Africa, the companies that manufacture them are largely not owned by Africans. Yet West Africa became the exclusive markets for Dutch prints which have dominated the West African market since the end of the 19th century.He is of the opinion that, wax prints carrying European brand names are the most expensive in the West African fabric market today.

Also Felsenthal (2012), recorded that, in Indonesia, the inhabitants have used the technique of wax-resist dying to produce batik fabrics for a long time. These elaborately patterned handmade textiles have some similarities to the prints that have been displayed on the fashion runways. They are made of bold, repeated and intricate motifs set against the backgrounds of varying hues. She further narrated her own view on how the prints originated in West Africa. There was a conscription by the Dutch in the mid-19th century, which enlisted a lot of West African men both slaves and soldiers to augment their army in Indonesia.These men took a liking to the local handicrafts on reaching there and came back with batik their home countries, from then a taste emerged in West Africa for these batik textiles.Similarly Eccentric Yoruba (2011), supported this view by accepting the theorised role played by West African contracted soldiers for the Dutch in Indonesia, also known as the Black Dutchmen by bringing the wax prints to West Africa. It recorded that they served between 1810 and 1862 and had taken Indonesian batik with them on their return to their homes as gifts for their

families. Thereafter, local interest in the fabrics grew, and the Dutch wax prints were the closest imitation available.

During that time, Felsenthal (2012) reported that Europeans were trying to work out how to manufacture their own versions of batik, so as to flood the market in Indonesia with cheaper, machine-made versions of the clothes because the handmade versions were hard to produce and costly. Then, a Belgian printer came up with a method for applying resin to both sides of a cotton clothat the end of the 19th century, and the machine-made wax-print fabric was produced.

She further reported that aproblem was faced by them, in that the machine-made version of these cloths were not perfect as the original ones and they had somecrackling effects which did not appeal to Indonesian batik conformists. In order not to encure a loss and also find a new market for those imperfect textiles, the Dutch turned to West Africa. As the case was, the West Africans appreciated theimperfections and saw them as possessing unique qualities in that, no two bolts of cloth were identical. They have the liking for fabrics that are not the same, meaning that a particular design is not common.She also observed that the west Afican keenness for these imperfections were so pronounced that Dutch wax manufacturers still produce those imperfections into the printing process today, long after they have resolved the technical fault.

Felsenthal (2012) found out that as Europeans began to sell this cloth, in West Africa to majority which are women, both rich and poor, who saw its'useage as being prestigious; their tastes changed the manner in which those designs were producedas new patterns were designed to reflect significant events and local proverbs. Brighter colours, tighter patterns, and geometric shapes were preferred by the native female merchants.This study has observed that the African wax fabrics are stillproduced in bright colours and geometric shapes till

date.She also revealed that the West African traders often placed catchy names on them, and those names became widely known but the European manufacturers still identify the fabrics by number.Eccentric Yoruba an internet blog (2011) is in line with this and said that designs and motifs that became extremely popular and successful were given catchy names, and had proverbs and slogans attached to them by some Families.It further mentioned that they often give their own names to fabrics representing memories or meanings of special things.This study also agrees with this, in that it observed that most African wax printed textiles in the markets are named.The names are used in communication, said Helbach (interviewee in Felsenthal (2012)). She further explained that in naming the fabrics, certain ideas are showcased, and is a condition for West Africans to proclaim that the foreign-made cloth is based on their cultural values, therefore it is their own. Therefore, she sressed that these simulations of Indonesian patterned fabrics became permanentlyassociated with Africa ethnicity. In line with this, Dutch wax prints, are said to be authentically African even though they were produced and designed by Europeans with little or no African input in terms of designs and motifs at the production stages.

Sylvanus (interviewee inFelsenthal (2012)) asserted that how they are viewed by wearers in places like Togo, Ivory Coast, and Ghana as universal and multicultural is what is thought provokingabout these fabrics and not how African they are.This study observed that Nigeria was not mentioned, which means that Nigerians as a whole have not really utilised the wax printed fabrics extensively like the other countries mentioned above.

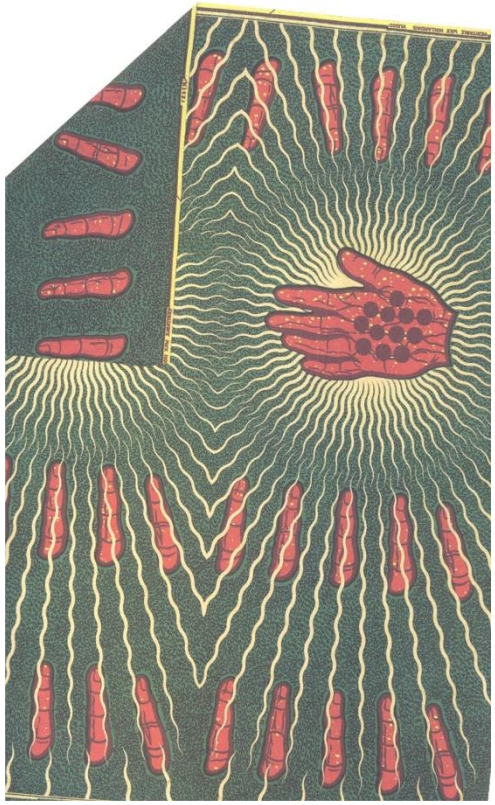
Despite their origins, Sylvanus (interviewee in Felsenthal (2012)) noted that wax prints have become a fundamental part of West African life that showcases latest designs, symbolicpatterns that converse social status.They could be used as courting gifts, included in a woman's dowry, and as clothings at funerals in Africa.Hommage a L'art (2013), recorded

that while this hollandaise is designed and produced in the Netherlands, they have been embraced by African women and have become rooted in African fashion and culture.In the 1920s prints began to feature portraits of African heads of states and in the 50s prominent politicians, local community leaders and chiefs in their designs(commemorative textiles) so that people could buy them to celebrate their leaders.

Sylvanus(interviewee in Felsenthal (2012)) argued that in 1846, Vlisco was not producing wax fabrics for the African market, rather they were designing them for Indonesians.She also mentioned that they were not the first to improve on the wax-printing technique.And it was not until the early 1920s that Vlisco became expert wax printers when it obtained the rollers of another Dutch manufacturer who had mastered the process. But Homage a L'art (2013) insisted that Vlisco has been creating unique textiles in Holland since 1846, and this has influenced the fashion in West and Central Africa.

However, Sylvanus (interview transcript in Felsenthal (2012) observed that the Chinese copycats, have been using digital photographs since the 90's to produce counterfeits of European designs to sell in West Africa.These imitation wax are often considered as inferior to the European standard because it is printed on one side. She further stated that in response to the occrences of these Chinese imitations, Vlisco had to recently change its marketing plan by releasing 20 to 30 designs every few months, so as to stay ahead of them with new patterns.Some names that have been given to these wax prints are star, opener, ruler, horse, alphabets, broken plates, bow-tie, bible and snail, bible and star, pink lady, eyes, happy family, ten o'clock mass, rope, hand, record, fan, shell and others. Some samples of these Dutch wax wrappers are placed on the plates below.

2.8.1.1 Some samples of Dutch wax printed cloth designs and their symbolic meanings



PlateX(a)-African waxprint. This isknown as Hand; symbolizes that more can be achieved through teamwork. **Source:**Vlisco since 1846.

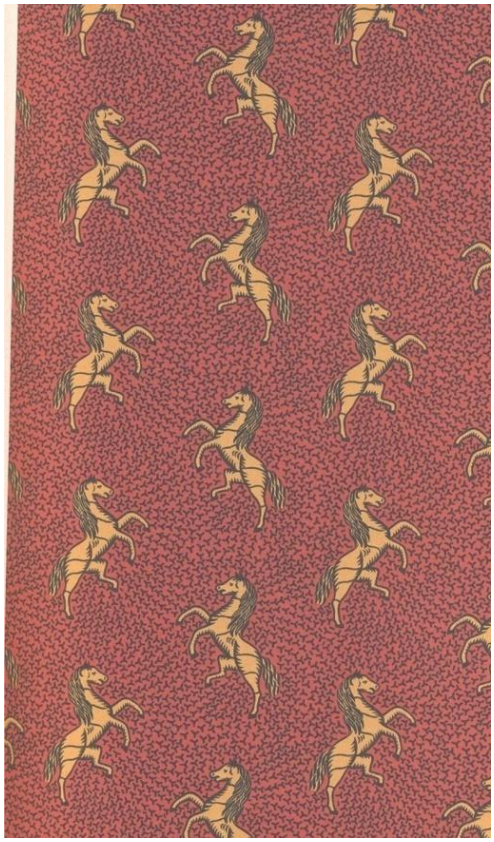


Plate X(b)- African waxprint According to Vlisco (2013) this design portrays a horse.It is generally known as a jumping horse because of the way the horse is drawn.In Nigeria it is traditionally worn by Igbo women as uniforms for some of their meetings.In Ivory Coast it represents rivalry between wives beacause the horse is presented as if it were to be engaged in a race. (**Source:**Hommage A L'art.Vlisco (2013)



Plate X(c)- **African waxprint.**Itis called "I am sitting at my gate" this is the literal image of this design.In togo, the name later changed to *Gendermerie* or force as it is a reminder to some people of the togolese police station entrance.**Source:**Hommage A L'art.Vlisco (2013)

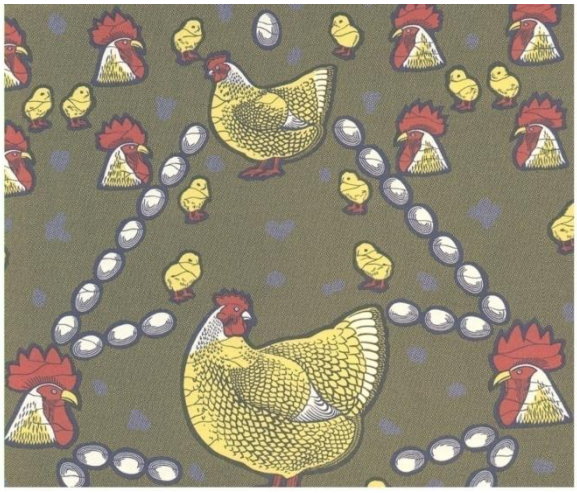


Plate X(d) - **African waxprint.**This design is called a happy family.It showcases a farmyard family with a cock,hen,chicks and eggs.This connotes family values and instills the essential position of its wearer in the family.It shows the hen as a mother sorrounded by her chicks and her eggs.Only the head of the cock is seen that is why the story is told that it is always full of trouble.**Source:**Hommage A L'art.Vlisco (2013)

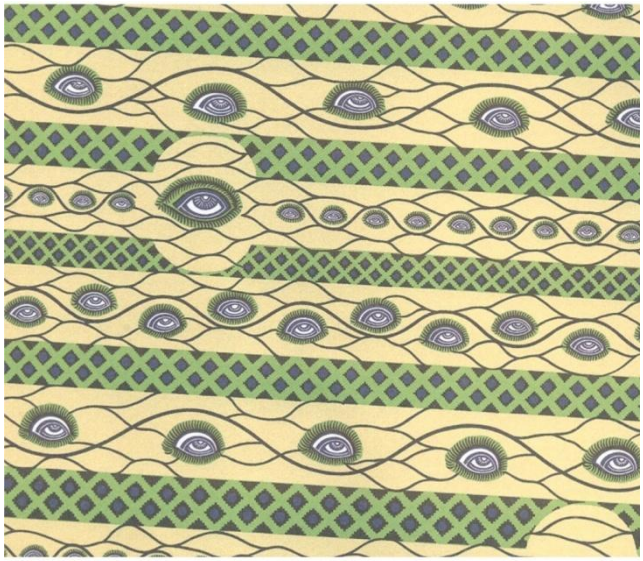


Plate X(e)- **African waxprint.** This design is known as "eyes" in Nigeria inspired by the drawing of eye, in Ivory Coast it is known as "lustful eyes",worn by a woman to show a man that she desires him. **Source:**Hommage A L'art.Vlisco (2013)

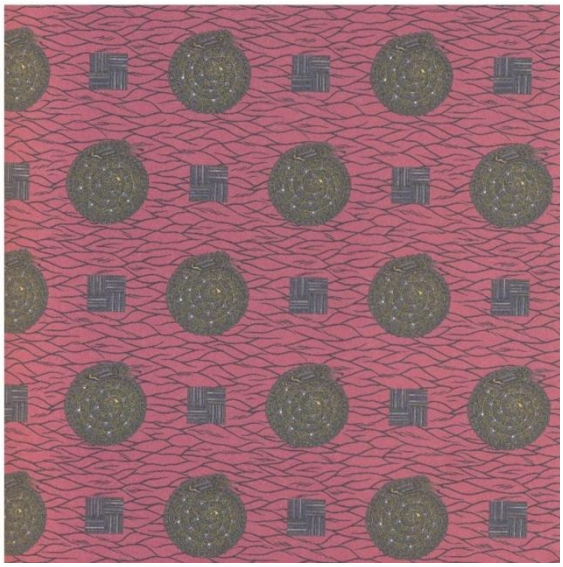


Plate X(f)- **African waxprint.**In Nigeria,this design is known as the"Big Bible and snail"(literal image of the motif). Usually worn by the Igbo women as uniforms during their community meetings in August. **Source**:Hommage A L'art.Vlisco (2013)

Akwete woven designs are one of the designs made by some indigenous African women just like in other parts of Africa, if printed on cotton fabrics, it will go a long way to showcase its specific meanings of its symbols to many people in Nigeria and beyond.

2.8.1.2 Printed Textiles in Nigeria

Oyedele (2013)mentioned that African prints (Ankara)'s origin is not African, but was embraced by Africans due to its affordability and texture which is suitable for African climate. Oyedele (2013), further mentioned that good quality fabrics flooded African markets after independence including Nigerian markets. Most of these wax prints sold in these markets were produced by Europeans without African input. The fabrics produced were in grades of the Dutch wax with Hollandaise as the most expensive, and unaffordable by the poor. He said that the name *Ankara*originated from a girl named *Ankara* and was given to the cheaper version of the Dutch wax made by the Turks which was at the reach of the poor. This Ankara he reported, was considered local due to its vibrant colours and motifs. After the independence in 1960, and over the years; with the building of textile mills in Africa and in Nigeria; there was the continuous production of pattern that reflected African culture and each culture have its own preference for colour and design. Gradually, African print (Ankara) replaced Dutch wax and became popularized. In line with this, this study produced some samples of *Akwete* printed fabrics, another grade of African print which is indigenous to the Igbo people in order to bring their woven cultural motifs to limelight; utilising the colours and designs that are peculiar to the Igbo. Abimbola (2010) believed, that there is a demand and the production of textiles for local and international consumption could be a profitable venture economically, socially and otherwise. Oke (2013) also observed, that African prints have always been fabrics of elegance and close to the heart of Africans. Shonibare (2009) has utilised them in producing sculptural art works. They can also be used to make some other fashion accessories like bags, earrings, bangles, shoes, necklaces, hair accessories, and

purses, pairs of canvas, rings, wrist watches,hair bands, sandals, picture frames, caps, belts, and slippers. Some of these, are placed in the plates XIa-f below:

2.8.1.3Samples of African wax print accessories



Plate XI(a): Fashion Accessories. Source:pinterest.com/ankaraluv/ankara-purses-accessories(2016)



Plate XI(b): Ankara Handbags.
Source:pinterest.com/ankaraluv/ankara-purses-accessories(2016)



PlateXI (c): Ankara Belts.
Source:pinterest.com/ankaraluv/ankara-purses-accessories(2016)



PlateXI (d): Ankara head bands.
Source:kemimobuse.com(2016)



Plate XI (e): Ankara Slippers.
Source:pinterest.com/ankaraluv/ankara-purses-accessories(2016)



Plate XI(f): Ankara Necklace.
Source:pinterest.com/ankaraluv/ankara-purses-accessories(2016)

This study is of the view that,*Akwete* printed fabrics can also be utilised to produce fashion accessories that could be worn by Nigerians and beyond.The fashion network (2013), a fashion and style internet blog, is of the same view with Oyedele (2013), that there was a time when Ankara fabrics were regarded as the fabrics of the poor but today the fabrics have undergone a magic transformation to become the choice of the rich and famous. Fabrics which were once considered as out of fashion has changed to become the fabrics in vogue. It further said, that Ankara fabrics have become inevitable in any social function. They are also used for dress uniforms in both traditional and religious functions, church weddings, burial ceremonies, naming ceremonies, chieftaincy titles, political functions by different political parties, pilgrims uniforms and other traditional functions. Some of the clothings made with African printed fabrics are placed in plates X11 a-e.

2.8.1.4 Samples of bridal gowns and other apparels made from African wax printed fabrics



Plate XII(a): Ankara Bridal Party Dresses. Source: www.allthingsankara.com(2014)



Plate XII (b): a couple in African print.**Source:** Bellanaija.com(2016)



Plate XII (c): a lady on African print(skirt and blouse).**Source:** Bellanaija.com(2016)



Plate XII (d): Ankara WeddingDress.Source: lifestyle.ng/ankara-bridal-dresses-and-wedding(2016)



Plate XII (e): Ankara Wedding Dress.Source: lifestyle.ng/ankara-bridal-dresses-and-wedding(2016)

This study believes that if *Akwete* prints are produced they will be used as dress uniforms(aso-ebi) in various ceremonies, used in producing fashion accessories as mentioned and viewed above and also provide gainful economical activities to many people and the nation Nigeria at large.

The printed textile called *ankara* is usually printed on 100 percent cotton fabric, although recently some of the printed textiles are mixtures of cotton and stretch fibres. Oyedele (2013) is in line with this view, and said that *ankara* is a 100 percent fine cotton fabric that is tightly woven in plain weave, with different motifs and patterns printed on it through various dyeing and printing techniques. It absorbs moisture quickly and dries faster. It also gives the cooling effect and makes it ideal for African climate. He further mentioned, the different grades of *ankara*: real Dutch wax, veritable wax, veritable Dutch wax and Hollandaise. There are some other grades of *ankara t*hat this study noticed that were not mentioned by Oyedele (2013); they are Ghana wax print, Cote d'Ivoire wax print, Nigerian wax print, Togo wax print, and the others from African countries.

Some of the motifs used in African prints according to Oyedele (2013) are African symbolic motifs, geometric shapes, lines, Arabic scripts, Roman letters and numerals, animals forms, flowers, leaves, seed, musical objects, line drawing of contemporary objects such as bicycle, cars, Television and so on. He further mentioned that the designs can be grouped into four:

- Women's life (family, love , housework)
- Town life and what it brings (alphabets, television, money, power)
- Nature (animals, flower, seed, leaves)
- Rhythms (music, drum)

Designs and colours in African prints can portray the wearer's tribal origin, material status, age as well as societal standing.

2.9 Nigerian Contemporary Fashion

2.9.1 Fashion

The fashion news (2012) andNellis (2012) defined fashion as a popular or latest style especially in clothing, footwear, accessories makeup or furniture. They further mentioned that it is aunique and a constant trend in the style in which a person dresses. They also affirmed that it is the prevailing styles in behaviour and the newest creations of textile designers. They are of the view that a clothing style may be introduced as a fashion, but its use becomes a custom after being handed down from one generation to the other. But for most people according to Nellis (2012), it is a method of utilising clothing, accessories and hair to show or hide something about oneself. Fashion statement can be made with clothes, accessories, shoes, hair and makeup.She further observed that fashion reflects on what people think, what they valued and how they lived and it is used in different ways such as clothing, culture; religion and many others. Maxey (2012) argued that Clothes are not just for keeping warm; rather fashion is a way to express one's self.

Nellis (2012) observed that fashion helps people to make their first opinion of themselves and influence the opinions and ideas of other people. She explained that it has changed over the years, long dresses, miniskirts and bell bottoms are examples of clothing items that were once in style. Khaki trousers, polo shirts and simple dresses keep coming back in style.

Lars &Svendsen (2005) in Bada (2013) defined fashion as one of the most influential phenomena in western civilisation. He viewed the understanding of fashionas that whichcontributes to the understanding of oneself and personal style based on cultural background, beliefs and environment; personal styles are their identity. In the early fifteenth century, Bada (2013) reported that,fashion was considered so important in France that Charles the IIV was told to create a separate organization for fashion, even though not many

people supported such organizations back then, since then the fashion industry has been growing.Andin the eighteenth century, people became more aware of the importance of fashion and style as newsagents, fashion magazines printed fashionable clothings in bright coloured glossy paper and newspapers.

He further reported, that the major fashion shows in London, Paris, Milan and New York were broadcasted on national and international television as fashion was clearly seen to be important enough to get such lavished attention.He also mentioned that the fashion event today has become a cultural factor of primary importance to people of different class, culture and background as there is something for everybody. According to Olaode (2012), in the first Africa fashion week that has ever taken place in London, 54 designers were showcased to 4,700 people for two days. These designers came from all over Africa and few Europeans who used African fabrics in designing. He also mentioned that there is a change in the world of fashion and African fabrics are not left behind as more and more globally renowned designers are embracing African fabrics. He furtherobserved that the fashion designers created a synthesis between contemporary and African designs and networks which would inspire the growth of African and textile industry in Africa as fashion is an industry that flourishes before any other industry in developing countries. Oyedele (2013), supported this and pointed out that Africans create and design fabrics which possess unique traits to express their culture. And African wax prints have taken over the fashion scene in Africa in the last decade; being used in various creative styles and applications.

This study believed that fashion is something that is dealt with every day. Even people who say they do not care about what they wear, they choose clothes every morning that say a lot about them and how they feel that day. It is a substitute for glamour, beauty and style and also applies to a prevailing mode of expression that may or may not apply to all. Since

fashion is something that is dealt with every day,*Akwete* printed fabrics were produced and casual clothes which can be worn everyday were constructed from them.

2.10 Contemporary fashion

Contemporary in this context means modern, things of the present age. Contemporary in fashion means any fashion item that is conformed to modern or current ideas in style and design. In the world today, the cloth fashion is always presented in a contemporary way. If not, people will find it difficult to be adorned in the clothes of their forebears without any modifications to suit the current trends. According to Jennings (2011), Africa is fashion's new boundary and did not receive a recognition in the worlds' fashion for over half a century. She further mentioned that this days' generation of talented designers have attracted international customers by combining contemporary and African fashion to produce some designs. These designs are found in most cities of Africa. Jennings (2011) also mentioned that Africa's indigenous fabrics have survived and adapted to the introduction of cheaper industrially made products and imports of luxury fabrics which include lace, silk, velvet, damask and so on and so forth.

Miguel (2015) further mentioned that contemporary designersconduct researches on fashion trends and interpret them for their audience. And attempts were made by them to design clothes which are functional as well as aesthetically pleasing and considered who is likely to wear a garment and the situations in which it will be worn. This study, is of the opinion that these processes mentioned by Miguel (2015) should be applied to *Akwete* printed fabrics.The designers should produce clothes which can be utilized quite often in todays'fashion byconsideing who is likely to wear the garments and the situations in which they will be worn.

She further mentioned that, what a person chooses to wear can reflect his or her personality or interests and when people who have high cultural status start to wear new or different clothes, a fashion trend may start. She also observed that people who like or respect these people become influenced by their personal style and start wearing similarly styled clothes.

Jennings (2011), observed that the first generation of recognised fashion designers utilised the local fabrics and styles as a means of showing pride in their African identities. This action she said has attracted international consumers who adopted African attire and hairstyles. She also mentioned that in 1960, a Nigerian designer and model, Shade Thomas Fahn, who trained at Central Saint Martins in London launched a boutique chain which offered modern versions of traditional garments. According to Jennings (2011), she was the first designer to turn the *iro and buba* into a zip-up wrapper skirt and adapted a man's *agbada* into a woman's embroidered *boubou*. At this time according to her, Nigerian women wore imported dresses and felt that the traditional clothing was meant for the elderly and aged alone. Fahn at that time was patronised by Nigerian royalty and professional women alike and sold her modified iro and buba worldwide.She also mentioned other fashion designers in Nigeria that also towed Fahns' footsteps, for instance: Abah Folawiyo, Betti O. and Folorunsho Alakija.

Jennings (2011) further mentioned other African fashion designers that modernised their indigenous fabrics to promote it in the fashion world. One of them is Pathe Ouedraogo who has his studio in Cote d'Ivoire in 1977. She mentioned that, he focused on modernised boubous and pagnes which became presidential wears for leaders including Nelson Mandela. She also mentioned Chris Seydeu (1949-1994), who made use of bogolanfini (the mud cloth made by Bamana women of Mali distinguished by its brown and white geometric patterns). According to Jennings (2011),he was the first to turn it into a fashion fabric in the 1970s. While he respected its ritual significance, he carefully adjusted it to make it into Western

Styles. Till date, a collection of artists known as *Bogolan Kasobane* headed by Kandiaura Coulibaly keeps the fabric alive.

Another designer mentioned by Jennings (2011), is Tetteh Adzedu, a Ghanaian who began the menswear label *Adzedu* of shapes in Accra in the 1980s, his Art Dress line incorporates *Kente,* the famous woven fabric invented for the Ashanti royalty and *adinkra*, a printed cloth associated with *Akan* funerals into his designs. Jennings (2011) also mentioned Niger designer Seidnally Sidhamed, known as Al phadi. She observed that in 1998 he launched the festival international de la mode africanie (FIMA) in the Niger desert, a landmark African fashion exposition bringing African and international designers together. Oumou Sy, a Senegalese fashion designer who founded the carnival of Dakar in the 1990s was also mentioned byJennings (2011). She also made use of indigenous fabrics which were often exclusively decorated with embroidery and turn their weaves into contemporary apparels. She also mentioned Errol Arendz and Maricanne Fasster from South Africa who entered the fashion scene in the 1980s and remained key players in African fashion. These designers mentioned above by Jennings (2011) have butressed their reputation as founders of contemporary fashion in Africa.

Jennings (2011) is of the view that Africa has a lot of influence on global fashion as has been showcased on some designer pieces which have been displayed in the world's fashion scene using African indigenous fabrics. In line with the above statement, this study is of the view that there is a lot of growth in Nigerian contemporary fashion and new fashion trends keep on evolving every now and then. Williams (2015) reported that Nike Ogulana, a fashion designer in Nigeria mentioned that African brand of contemporary fashion in Nigeria encompass rich fabrics, vibrant colours, prints and original woven designs which showcase the culture and heritage of her people. He further observed that Nigerians are interested in the

current fashion because they want to fit in with their friends, relatives and colleagues at work and so on.All these mentioned above are the reasons why the textile and fashion designers of Igboland must look for various ways of enhancing the *Akwete* woven motifs and fabrics so that they will be utilised in the contemporary fashion just like other designers from other parts of Africa have done. Chudi-Duru (2016).

In contemporary fashion, Jennings (2014), described Africa as diverse and dynamic as the continent and the people who live there. She stressed that contemporary African fashion put Africa at the intersection of world cultures and globalised identities, displaying the powerful creative force and impact of newly emerging styles. According to Muguette (2005), African designers are showcasing bold, vibrant colour combination and dazzling patterns in their designs. She further mentioned some African countries that have an outstanding pieces of designed clothes as Morocco, Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Uganda, Benin, Ghana, Zambia, South Africa, Tanzania, Guinea to mention but a few.

In Nigeria, Uduma (2012), is of the view that African designers should always design with their indigenous fabrics to showcase their culture. He reported that Mrs Folorunsho Alakija (an exponent of contemporary fashion in Nigeria) tried to meet up with her western counterparts in Black Expo Exhibition in New York, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Georgia, Mississippi and Maryland in 1993 and 1999 but failed. He noted, that at both exhibitions Folorunsho tried as much as she could to meet up with her western counterparts but failed. This failure later made her realise that she could not compete with the westerners in their own line and with their own fabrics because they know it better than her. She thought of a substitute. According to him, Folorunsho started working with ethnic fabrics that celebrate Africa, capturing and representing the styles, symbol, sign, dreams and aspirations of the people. He further nsrrated that in designing, she noted that it is necessary to understand that

fashion is relevant, relative and dynamic. She observed that it must be relevant to the culture and environment where it is being sold.

Uduma (2012) further noted, that the result of her research was the production of designs that were originally African but embraced contemporary realities and as such, new designs were made without their being wholly African but a blend of western and African designs. According toUduma (2012), Folorunsho said the designs must be a fusion of African heritage and western designs. He further stated that Folorunsho's research is the idea controlling contemporary fashion in Nigeria and through this way, Nigerian designs have been able to make the impact in the world's fashion scene. Since then Admin (2012) observed, that the Nigerian fashion industry has taken a whole new turn, which the Ankara fabrics that were used as wrappers by most women have become so popular because fashion designers have brought out the best of them by constructing more fashionable items from them.

For instance, Admin (2012) listed some designers like Dakova and Frank Oshodi who have showcased the beauty of Ankara in their designs, the likes of Ituen Bassey, Folake Folarin-Coker (Tiffany Amber), Lanre Da Silva, V-Gold, Lisa Folawiyo (Jewel by Lisa),Data Okorodudu who have also made use of Ankara in their designs, competing among themselves, to drive Nigerian fashion market where it is today, and also show the world that Nigerian designers can make some differences with their indeginous fabrics.Admin (2012) affiemed that this has led to the emergence of new designers who are even better than their mentors but are still upcoming. Admin(2012) further mentioned, that these designers have succeeded in popularising the veritable wax which is used to make English and different traditional attires. The designs have been featuring in both Nigeria and international fashion shows.Therefore,this study is of the view that the production of *Akwete*printed fabrics will

project *Akwete* fabrics to Nigerian fashion designers who will utilise them in garment construction.

According to Ezeala (2015), Deola Sagoe was among the very few Nigerian fashion designers that braved the use of Aso-oke fabric in their clothing. Deola followed the footsteps of Matriach Sade Thomas Fahn, fashion revolutionary of the 1960s and developed a unique system where the fabric actually looks like it has been embroidered but it's all done on hand looms. She said it has been a personal mission for Sagoe to make the fabric more lustrous and softer as she innovated new production techniques and skills. She further stated that in 2011, Arise Magazine celebrated her success by giving Sagoe an award for her lifetime achievement and this was mainly because of her pursuance of the ideology and research and development into the use of Aso-oke fabrics.

Akwete fabrics unlike *kente* fabrics of Ghana has not been utilised in daily fashionable wears because of its shortcomings. If *Kente* woven fabrics can have their simulated versions of prints and constructed into contemporary fashionable wears so that it could cut across Ghana, the same shouldbe applied to *Akwete* woven fabrics. This is one of the reasons why thisstudy explored the *Akwete* weaves motifs and determined their suitability as designs on printed textiles so that they could be utilised in contemporary in Nigeria.

2.11 African Printed Textiles in Contemporary Fashion

2.11.1 Fashion in Nigeria

Afuwape (2008) in Bada (2013) observed that fashion in Nigeria is an aspect of the culture of a vibrant, passionate and flamboyant people. He has observed that the Nigerian Fashion scene is an outlet or another face of a people that brings out the creative nature and passion of the people who are colourful, expressive, curious, rich and daring.He further pointed out that the fullness of this rich culture has been recognized all over the world today, due to the vision

and innovation of Nigerian designers. He is of the view that, those of them who work and live in the fashion capitals of the world never forgot nor shielded away from their Nigerian roots.Bada (2013) mentioned that the designers who are making big impacts in the fashion capitals abroad, but are based in Nigeria are Deola sagoe, tiffany amber, Maki oh, Jewel by lisa, Frank oshodi among others.

Elsworth (2009) in Bada (2013) says that in the fashion industry today, and all over the world, the Nigerian culture is being borrowed and incorporated into styles, signatures and works of partakers of the industry. He also said that the simple wearability of such materials like Ankara has made the fabric not only a runway creation but an every day and even red carpets and movie premier wear of choice for the Hollywood big names.

Djirackor (2013) proclaimed that just as Africa is not one big country, African print comes in many distinct types of styles applied to diverse fabrics, with their own printing techniques and purposes. Super Wax, Dutch, Java , super print, Ghana wax,Cote d'Ivoire wax,Togo wax, Nigerian wax,veritable wax, Bogolan, Batik, Bazin, Kente print and mud wax prints. These are some of the various prints that are used for both traditional and contemporary African styles, which non-Africans most commonly and indistinctly refer to as African print. He further stated that bold colours, stark combinations, a wide range of patterns from geometric, animal and floral to even political messages and portraits of public figures—all are used to create garments for both men and women.

Djirackor (2013) further stated that the fabric commonly called wax is one of the most popular textiles sold on the continent. He further observed that paying close attention to the development of African fashion generally and African print specifically, it wouldn't be difficult to see how both influence the fashion industry as a whole. These exotic and exuberant designs coming up every now and then on runways and in fashion papers; fashion

brands like Givenchy, Tory Burch, Stella McCartney, Burberry Possum, Anna Sui and Junya Watanabe have produced fashion collections to Africa, and made it their business to consistently integrate wax and other prints rooted in motherland culture within their collection. He further mentioned the number of celebrities who have since adopted Ankara and wax-style prints. This study believes that if *Akwete* print is produced, a lot of Nigerian and international designers might like to construct a lot of designers wears from them since they have developed interests in African prints.

Djirackor (2013) has also observed that African printed fabrics, is permeating western fashion at a deeper level than ever. From accessories to women's wear and menswear, there's a collective call to pay homage to the traditional movement in the most contemporary way. According to Alhassan (2011), African inspired fashion is the new rave in the fashion industry globally and it infiltrated the fashion industry in 2010. Young (2012) is of the same view with Djirackor (2013) and Alhassan (2011), and mentioned that the vibrant, colourful fabrics of African traditional clothes are gaining new life and growing popularity on the global fashion scene. And at a recent fashion show in Lagos, Nigeria, African fashion designers from across the continent showcased their innovative, bold designs and declared their ability to transcend the traditional and raise the profile for unique fashion.

Young (2012) further stated, that in the contemporary fashion scene there is a break from the long wrap around skirts with matching tops and head wraps; instead, models that participated wore form-fitting jumpsuits,six-piece and pencil skirts all created from the traditional Ankara or Dutch Wax cloth. Young (2012), mentioned that Designer Tsemaye Binitie, a Britain-based Nigerian designer acknowledged African fashion's move to a global direction.He mentioned that Binitie launched his own label by the same name two years ago and said that his business is one of those producing more contemporary styles. He also

mentioned that Nigerian designer Maureen Ikem Okogwu-Ikokwu, based in Thailand, mention that it is Africa's time in Bangkok, people love African fashion because it is something different, new and vibrant. He observed thatnot all fashion designers focused on westernising African styles and designer Loza Maleombho from Ivory Coast stood out from most of the designers with her collection completely made from traditional African textiles, including fabric from her own country as well as Ghana's bright cotton kente cloth. He futher pointed out that her models proudly wore brown turbans traditionally worn by Tuareg nomads. He also mentioned that Nigerian designer Maki Oh's styles showcased baggy trousers reminiscent of the men's agbada suit, made from the traditional aso-oke loom woven fabric. Young (2012) quoted South African designer Malcolm Kluck in times live who said Africa is quite a new emerging fashion centre, Europe and America are quite saturated in terms of fashion and if one is thinking of Prada and Gucci (famous western designers) there is almost one in every street corner now but if one is looking for new fashion frontiers, maybe Africa will be that. This study is of the view that since Africa is the new emerging fashion Centre in the world, African prints including Nigerian prints will be in continuous usage in fashion and designing. In line with this,*Akwete* weaves motifs were investigated to determine their suitability as designs on printed textiles for clothing construction in Nigerian fashion so that they will be amongst the printed fabrics that will be mass produced and utilised in the fashion world.

According to Kalu (2007), African prints have infiltrated the fashion world, it has gone beyond its use for wrappers and loose blouse (*iro*and *buba*) now it is enjoying the styles of contemporary fashion, with the skills of creative designers. He said, that it is blended in styles and designs for both office and formal occasions. He further noticed, that Nigerian designers are now enticed by the light nature, an array of colours and pattern of prints which when understood and properly mixed and matched with contemporary fabrics,produce creative

designs. These days, Nigerian designers are parading African prints in their collections. Xuly, Tiffany Amber, Momo, Lunar, jewel by Lisa and Gloss are all Nigerian cotemporary fashion designers that engage African prints in their productions. Kalu (2007) is of the opinion thatalthough African prints are not of African origin they are embraced by Africans and non-Africans, it has its own virtue, whether they are expensive or not and when tailored in the right way as an entity or mixed with other contemporary fabrics, they look gorgeous and graceful. He also mentioned that Nigeria is the fashion conscious part of Africa, through the creative skill of the designers.He pointed out that, they havetaken African wax fabrics, explored it, improved it and showcased it to the world through beautiful creative applications.

2.12 The printed versions of some African woven fabrics

A lot of African printed fabrics (simulations) have been produced using the adaptation of motifs and designs of the various African hand woven and resist decorated fabrics. The reasons are that these hand woven fabrics are very expensive, ceremonious, heavy and not accessible to the public, in addition to providing opportunity for variety in the world of African textiles. Through the production of these prints, many will be able to purchase and utilise them frequently.

The locally produced African fabrics that have their printed versions are the mud cloth (Bambara/Bamana: *Bogolanfini)* of Mali, this is a hand made Malian cotton fabric, traditionally dyed with fermented mud and plants. It dates back to 12^{th} century, it has an important place in traditional Malian culture and has of recent become a symbol of Malian cultural identity (Azzarito 2014and Donne (1973)this cloth has been exported world wide for fashion, fine art and decoration purposes.The pictures of the mud cloth(bogolanfini) and its imitation wax print is placed in the plates XIIIa and b below.



Plate XIII (a): Mali mud cloth (Bogolanfini).**Source**:www.sagatours.com(2016)

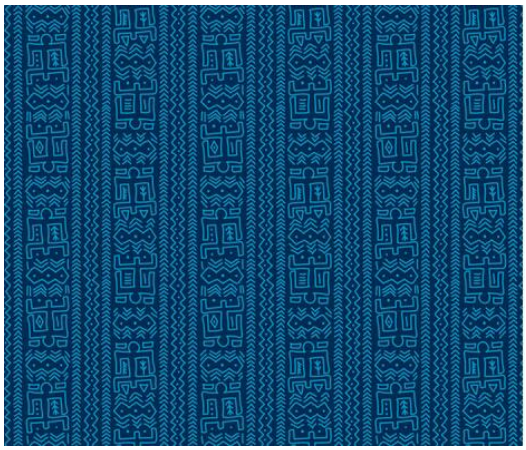


Plate XIII (b): Mud cloth print (simulation). **Source:**www.spoonflower.com(2016)

Kente is made by the Asante and the Ewe of Ghana.The ultimate history project(an internet blog)and Y (2013) pointed out that ,this is a type of silk and cotton fabric made of interwoven cloth srips using the mens'horizontal loom.This woven fabric is an icon of African cultural heritage around the world, identified by its dazzling, multi-coloured patterns of bright colours, geometrical shapes and bold designs having their own special meanings and stripes.This art of weaving is passed down to only males from generation to generation quite unlike the *Akwete* woven fabrics which are only passed down to genetrations of women only.The kente woven cloth and its simulated wax print are placed in plates XIII c and d below.



Plate XIII (c): Plate Kente woven cloth of Ghana.**Source:**www.pinterest.com(2016)



Plate XIII (d): Kente printed fabric(simulation).**Source:**www.ebay.com(2016)

Kuba cloth of Congo –According to Brinkely &Darish (2009) and Darish (1989 &1990), in Kuba culture,the men are responsible for the cultivation and weaving of raffia cloth, which are used for different purposes, the most of common of them is to weave a plain raffia that will be used as the foundation for decorated textile production.Men produce the cloth on inclined single –heddle looms after which the women decorate the woven fabrics.They are unique in the Democratic republic of Congo formerly, Zaire, for their elaboration and complexity of design and surface decoration.Most of their textiles are variations on rectangular or square pieces of woven palm leaf fibre enhanced by geometric designs and executed in linear embroidery and other stitches, which are cut to form pile surfaces with a look of velvet.Apart from the decoration, Women are also responsible for transforming the raffia cloth into various forms of textiles like ceremonial skirts,headdresses and basketry.The kuba cloth and its simulation in form of print are placed in plates XIII e and f below.



Plate XIII (e): Kuba woven cloth. **Source:**splenddidwillow.com(2016)



Plate XIII (f): Kuba printed fabric(Simulation).**Source:**www.welcometoharlemhiddentreasures.com(2016)

Korhogo cloth of the Ivory Coast –Wayne (2010), observed that this cloth is very similar to the mud cloth but this is produced in Ivory coast in West Africa and named after a village called Korhogo by the Senufo in the Northern part of Ivory coast.It is produced by painting a design on hand spun, hand woven cotton fabric usually done with a stencil.Each picture

orsymbol used in Korhogo cloth has special meaning to the people of Ivory Coast.The painting is done with a specially fermented solution that turns black after a reasonable amount of time has passed on.The samples of Korhogo fabric ans its simulation are placed in plates XIII g and h below.



Plate XIII (g): Senufo Korhogo cloth. **Source:**blog.africaimports.com(2016)



Plate XIII (h): African Korhogo print (Simulation). **Source:**www.etsy.com(2016)

This study has observed that these fabrics are making fashion statements in the fashion world and showcasing the individual weaving culture of those that own them by utilising their motifs and designs on printed textiles. Therefore, this study haslaid emphasis and explored *Akwete* weaves, extracted the designs and printed them on cotton fabrics for fashionable wears. So that *Akwete* printed fabrics can be produced like its counterparts.Samples of the apparels made with mud cloth print kente prints are placed on the plates below.



Plate XIV (a): Mud Cloth (bogolanfini) Print. **Source:** Bella Naija.com(2015)



Plate XIV(b): Kente print gown.Source: Bella Naija.com (2015)

2.13 Printing Techniques

Sleigh-Johnson (2009) defined printing, as the process of impressing an image onto a surface using paint or ink. Fernandez (2010) also defines printing, as the process by which the colouration of a fabric according to the preconceived profiles or drawings is finally carried out. He further reported, that in the final process of bringing the designs to the fabric there are often several techniques that come together to ensure that the result is true to what the

designer intended. He further gave an example, that one may find the same garment on which various printing techniques have been applied with different effects. He also mentioned that the use of multiple techniques is achievable by manual and technological advances that constantly generate new possibilities for printing as well as offer a wide range of methods by which to manipulate the fabric. Info please (2015) defined textile printing as the process of applying colour to fabrics in definite patterns or designs. It further stated that there are many techniques in printing, namely, block printing, burnout printing, blotch printing, digital printing, duplex printing, engraved roller printing, electrostatic printing, flock printing, ink-jet printing, jet spray printing, rotary screen printing, screen printing (flat screen), stencil printing, spray printing, transfer printing, warp printing and some other special methods like tie dying and batik printing. All these techniques are grouped under traditional and digital techniques according to Fernandez (2009).

It was gathered during the course of this study that, manual printing is still being utilised in some parts of the world to produce some appropriately designed prints which are fashioned into some clothing namely in Pakistan, India, Ghana and some other places. Those prints are usually more expensive than the machine printed fabrics because they are handmade. Info please (2015) mentioned that the early forms of textile printing are stencil work and block printing and more recent printing processes include screen printing. Fernandez (2009) also observed that one printing technique that is frequently used is serigraphy or printing with a screen. He recorded that it consists of separating the drawing or design to be transferred to the fabric into different layers that correspond to each of the colours that the design contains. He mentioned that there is a stencil with the design that will appear on the screen, then the design is placed on the rectangular or square frame of wood or metal which holds the screen (special taunt fabric to which the emulsion has already been applied). He further mentioned that the light fixes the emulsion and leaves free the mesh areas on which the drawing is found

which are the areas that will need to be inked, after removing the screen, it is washed to remove the emulsion in areas where the picture appears. And the emulsion will cover the areas where there will be no image, leaving free the area in which you want to print the colour. This process is repeated using a screen for each colour to be printed. He further mentioned, that the design is transferred to the fabric by pressing the ink through each screen and onto the fabric with the aid of a squeegee. Bhatt (2014) is of the same view with Fernandez (2009), and defined printing as a technique that makes use of a woven fabric called a mesh to hold up an ink blocking stencil or chemical to receive a desired image.He further mentioned that a squeegee is moved across the screen forcing the ink into the mesh openings to transfer the designs to the cloth.He also observed that one colour was printed at a time and several screens were used to produce multi-coloured designs.

Fernandez (2009) observed, that only on rare occasions can a designer who designs can express himself or herself with only one technique. The more tools a designer masters, the more chance he or she has of obtaining a result that approaches their original idea. He further mentioned that the success in the communication of the concept that resides in every collection will depend on understanding the advantages and limitations that the different working methods have.

Fernandez (2009) defined digital techniques as those techniques that are based on the use of the computer which processes the images and allows their manipulation through specific computer programs. He mentioned that the design representation can be sketched, drawn manually or done digitally. The drawing can be carried out through the traditional technique and is scanned afterwards to convert it into a digital file that can be transformed with programs that enable finishing touches of images such as Coreldraw. This provided manipulation variations in colours and sizes in this study.

He further pointed out that almost all the designers combine the traditional techniques and the digital techniques; where the preliminary point of their work is usually a scanned image or photographs that they manipulate digitally until the final result is obtained. Therefore, this study is of the view that both the traditional and digital techniques for screen printing, stencil printing and batik dyeing techniques for producing the printed samples are appropriate for studio exploration. Fernandez (2009) reported that either through hand methods or through the use of digital technologies, designers have a great variety of techniques that can be used to transfer their designs to the fabric. He further mentioned that any image, either an illustration or a photograph can be printed on material through some specific procedure but the results obtained will be different from the visual point of view. Fernandez (2009) also stressed the importance of screen preparationbefore printing he further mentioned the procedures which are as follows:

1. Laying of the wooden frame onto the mesh (a lightweight synthetic fabric).
2. Staple the fabric very tightly to frame. Staple one of the corners first, stretch it, and then staple the opposite corner. Go back to the first corner, stretch the fabric and staple about one inch clockwise from the first staple that was made. Go back to the opposite corner, stretch the fabric and staple one inch clockwise next to the other staple. It should be continuously stretched while stapling until the whole screen has been stapled. The first places that were stapled should be stapled again because they are not as tight as the rest.
3. After the stapling, the exposure of the designs onto the screen commences.

2.13.2 Stencilling

Gaines(1975) in Kparevzua(1983) and Johnston and Kaufman (1977), defined stencilling as a process of printing whereby a design is cut out of a thick paper and paint or ink is applied through cut out areas depositing a colour reproduction of the design on the cloth.They further

added that the sheets of cardboard, plastic, thin metal and wood are used in addition to specially prepared paper.

2.14 Garment Construction

Fischer (2009) defined clothing construction, as the foundation of clothing and fashion design. According to Garment construction and Cole and Czachor (2008), clothing construction refers to the stitching of garments and all the sewing techniques involved in the process. They further mentioned that construction techniques involve stitching darts, pockets, seams, tucks, and pleats, zippers, waistbands, ruffles and flounces, collars, facings, cuffs, sleeves, hems, linings and closures all of these are included in clothing construction. Rajitha (2005) defined garment making as an introduction to the basic skill of sewing which is essential to convert the design on paper into a garment. She further stated that garment making is one of the basic content of fashion designing. She mentioned that proficiency in the art of sewing is an essential pre-requisite in garment making; therefore, it is necessary to know the techniques of sewing for producing attractive garments with a good fit. She further mentioned that garment construction is thus a technical accomplishment that requires knowledge of fabrics, principles of clothing construction and skills involved in it, which will greatly depend on the ability to select the correct fabric, colour, design and accessories to suit an individual occasion. She is of the view that a well-made garment will be attractive if it fits well and proper attention is paid to its finer details and creation of clothes is an art that requires much skill. Fischer (2009) affirms that it is vital that fashion designers know and understand the techniques involved in creating a three-dimensional garment from a two – dimensional design or pattern in order to create a beautiful shape and fit on a moving body. She is of the same opinion with Cole and Czachor (2008),and further mentioned that garment construction involves both technical and design issues ;the designer chooses where to

construct lines, pockets, collars, darts, how to finish edges and how to produce volume and structure in order to create a unique look.

She further mentioned that fashion designing leads through the essential stages of garment construction and offers a starting point. It introduces pattern cutting, draping on the mannequin and shows some techniques that will be utilised to turn a two- dimensional flat design in order to achieve a three-dimensional garment. According to garment construction, a costume is constructed by cutting the fabric into parts according to a pattern which fits the human form; then the different parts are joined together by sewing. To achieve this, the following procedures are followed: taking of measurement, drafting of the blocks and pattern, cutting of the garment according to the pattern, joining of the different parts, fitting and necessary alterations, finishing of the garment, application of trims and pressing. They further stated that pattern making is also a part of the design process. If the patterns are not made correctly the seams cannot be stitched correctly. This study produced appropriate constructed samples basing it on the procedures of garment construction.

The steps to be analysed and considered in garment construction according to Rajitha (2005) include:

1. The required measurements
2. The different parts of which it is composed, a suitable material with regard to (a) wearing qualities (b) advantage of cutting (c) expenditure (d) ease of laundering (e) ease of preparing or making over.
3. The preparation for drafting and cutting.
4. The drafting of the pattern
5. They layering of the pattern on the material
6. The cutting out
7. The construction of the garment

8. The trimming
9. The pressing

Rajitha (2005) stressed that the knowledge of sewing gives a confident feeling when it is applied to the construction of garments. She argued that the earlier method of sewing which was done by hand is not applicable for all stages of garment making today; that is why the considerable emphasis is laid on machine sewing in garment construction. There are lots of machines in today's market each has its own function to perform. They range from the simple lock stitch to the electronic machines that use advanced computer technology having various functions for example piping, binding, ruffling, pleating, darting, hemming, and making of buttonholes and attachment of fasteners. She insisted that a good sewing machine is required to obtain quality products in garment construction. She advised that one has to be familiar with the characteristic of different types of machines for selecting appropriate machine which will give good result depending on the ability and the requirement of the person that will use it. There are different types of sewing machines in different models according to Rajitha (2005), they may be operated by hand, treadle or electric motor.

2.14.1.1 Hand – operated sewing machines

This is the simplest form of sewing machines and it is operated by hand. It has a detachable handle provided to the flywheel that is used to operate the machine. This machine is suitable for domestic purpose because it does not help in speeding up the work. This type of machine is not meant for bulk sewing.

2.14.1.2 Treadle sewing machine

This machine has the same feature like the hand sewing machine but it is operated by the foot using an additional stand. The balance wheel in this machine is operated by a belt with the help of lower stand which is driven by feet. This machine operates faster than the hand-

operated machine. It is suitable where there is no power supply. Both hands are free to handle the fabric while sewing, thereby speeding up the work.

2.14.1.3 Electric Sewing Machine

This is the fastest sewing machine. In an electric sewing machine, the balance wheel is operated by a belt which is attached to an electric motor. These types of sewing machines are frequently used by designers and tailors to enable them to meet up with their customers' demands.

2.15 Preparation for Stitching.

Rajitha (2005) suggested that before starting the actual sewing, the needle of the machine should be checked if it's the correct size, the sharpness and the setting. The bobbin should also be evenly set. The various steps of preparation before sewing are:-

1. Upper threading
2. Drawing the bobbin thread
3. Tension adjustments
4. Pressure and feed adjustments
5. Selection of thread and needle.

2.16 Pattern drafting

In the section of pattern drafting, there are some basic rules in pattern cutting, which are based on sound principles which this study will strictly adhere to. These rules must be obeyed to achieve a good result. Tuit (1974) lent support to this and said that pattern drafting is a method of obtaining patterns by working from measurements of the figure according to a set of instructions and drawing a shape on paper or cord. Aldrich (1994) defined pattern drafting as a means of achieving a shape around the body so that the body and the blocks remain constant; anyone studying old magazines or costumes books quickly becomes aware that the outline of clothes often changes dramatically in different periods of fashion. These basic

blocks can be adapted to different styles in different periods of fashion. Hollen (1965) and Rajitha (2005) further mentioned that flat-pattern is one of the three methods of making patterns. The other two are drafting on paper from a set of body measurements and draping fabric on a dress form. In drafting, success depends on the pattern maker's ability to take accurate measurements.They have observed that it is a precision work which is very exciting and complicated. And it increases the ability to plan new procedures, organise work efficiently, analyse intelligently the cause of mistakes, make proper corrections, and practice economy in the laying off out of date clothing and old patterns of great importance. They further mentioned that the feeling of confidence which comes with an understanding of pattern making principle and the feeling of pleasure derived from creative activities are also achieved.

Rajitha (2005) observed that although patterns are made and sold for our convenience, available in a range of convenient sizes, it is known that this still does not guarantee a well-fitting garment. Firstly, the human being is not mass-produced, everyone is unique and has a unique figure. Everyone is different and require sized clothes. Secondly, commercial pattern sizes often cannot be relied upon for accuracy. Hay (2007) strongly advised that the best skill a designer can have, is to learn to draft his or her own patterns for proper fitting.

Hollen (2004) lent support to this and said that commercial basic patterns or blocks made by different companies are not identical. The measurements, patterns should be taken and constructed by the designer before sewing. This study is also in support of personal drafted patterns so as to achieve accurate results.

There are two stages in pattern drafting according to Armstrong (2009) and Tuit (1974) the making of a set of five basic patterns known as block patterns or blocks and the adaptation of the blocks. The five blocks are front and back bodice, sleeve, front and back skirt.

There are some advantages of pattern drafting according to them namely:

1. They provide a permanent record of the correct fit while dart movements, additional seams, fullness and others are planned on them.etc
2. It is quicker than any other system; that is the same block can be adapted to many styles no matter how different they may appear because they are related since they all developed from the same basic shape and will thus fit the same figure.

They affirmed that, unless the fit of the blocks is perfect, no pattern cut from them will fit well. So much time should be spent on making the sets of blocks in calico fabric to check the fit; so that if there are some adjustments to be made it could be done on the calico and thereafter transferred to the blocks. By doing this, a lot of confidence is built on an adaptation of the blocks to many styles because the pattern developed from the corrected blocks will have the same adequate fit. To make the block last longer, Tuit (1974) advised, to make them in cardboard papers so as not to be worn out easily. In pattern drafting the first step is to take the measurement required.

2.17 Taking measurements

Tuit (1974) and Hollen (2004) stressed that it is essential that measurement is taken precisely; in the direct position and with an equal amount of tension on the tape as inaccurate measurement will cause an unnecessary amount of fitting and re-cutting after the garment is tacked together. Measurement must be taken so as to ascertain the size of the figure and to determine the proportions of the various parts of the figure.Stringer (2015) and Tuit (1974) further suggested that a general observation of the shape of the figure should be made before taking the measurements to note any variations from normal, sloping or square shoulders. Also the posture of the figure, whether normal, erect or stopping, the side view, the front and back views should be noted, as these give better indication of the posture and proportion. They advised that a piece of tape tied around the waist of the figure to define the exact

location of the waist, is very important before taking the measurement as this will help greatly because it is normally difficult to assess the position of the waist accurately especially at the back.

They further suggested that measurements could be taken over a dress if it is close fitting or over underclothes. Taking of measurement has an order which according to Tuit (1974), insisted that measurement must be taken in the same order each time to avoid omitting any and do not allow ease when measuring as this is allowed later when drafting the pattern. The basic blocks were drafted in this study and thereafter adapted into the different pattern and personal measurement was used.

Rajitha (2005) supported Tuit (1974) and mentioned that accurate body measurements are important for obtaining the best result in clothing construction. Besides good fitting, correct measurements can also contribute towards saving time in constructing a garment. Taking body measurement is a responsible task, which should be undertaken with great care. It could be taken directly from a person for whom the garment is made for or on a standard dress form of intended sizes. For the purpose of clothing construction, it is important for a dress maker to have adequate knowledge about the correct method of taking and recording body measurements, equipment required for it and other important points to be considered before taking the measurement.This study is of the same view with Rajitha (2005), that without accurate body measurements, the apparel will not have a proper fit on the body.

2.18. Points to be considered while taking measurements.

According to Rajitha (2005), the points to consider while taking body measurements are:

1. A good quality measuring tape should be used for taking body measurements. The long metal end of the tape is used for taking vertical measurements and the rounded metal end, for taking horizontal measurements.

2. The person taking the measurements should stand straight, but in a natural pose and preferably in front of a mirror. A well-fitted foundation garment should be worn while taking measurements.
3. Another person is needed to take anothers' measurements not oneself. Basic lines of the body are to be taken into consideration while measuring body parts.
4. Before body measurements are taken, a cord or tape is fastened around the waist and left until all measurements have been completed. The tape should be kept parallel to the ground while taking girth measurements like the bust, waist, hip, etc.
5. The accuracy of several measurements depends on this exact waistline location. Add to these measurements the suggested amount of ease.
6. The amount of ease needed varies with the type of fabric used. More ease is needed for woven fabrics than knits, only the normal amount of ease were utilized in this studio exploration since the printed fabrics are 100% cotton.
7. A proper order and certain sequence should be followed in taking the measurements to make it more systematic.

According to Aldrich (1994), the designer makes use of a foundation (block) as a basis for drafting the pattern for a design. Style lines, tucks, gathers, pleats or drapes may be introduced but still the basic fit of the pattern will conform to the block used. According to McCall catalogue (1999) sizing in ready-to-wear clothing varies with each manufacturer therefore, this study did not depend on a ready-to-wear size when selecting a pattern.Thisstudy insisted on using personal measurements in support of Hollen (1965). According to Aldrich (1994) agreements have been reached by clothing manufacturers on the general average measurements of women by providing the British standard and American standard publishedsizing tables. This study has revealed that many African women fall in between sizes that is why when already made clothes are purchased, they run into the trouble

of adjustments. Sometimes after the adjustments, the clothes do not fit the body as they were supposed to. That is one of the reasons why personal measurements were preferred in this study for clothing construction.

According to Aldrich (1994), blocksconstructed are used as the basis for all adaptations. These are traced or wheeled on to pattern paper with the aid of a tracing wheel to produce the working pattern. She futher explained that the working pattern is used for marking out the basic style lines and design features (for example: pockets, collars, button hole placing). A lot of experiments are done with complicated styles at this stage. The final pattern is the pattern from which the pattern will be cut. It must be clearly marked with all the information required for making the garment. Before any adaptation is carried out Aldrich (1994) advised that the correct blocks should be drafted and the length should be decided on if any easy fitting armhole is required.

Tuit (1974) mentionedthat there are two stages in pattern drafting, the first is the making of the set of five basic patterns known as block patterns or block while the second is the adaptation of the block to the style required. She further relayedthe advantages of cutting from blocks and they are as follows:-

i. They provide a permanent record of the correct fit while dart movements, additional seams, fullness and others are planned on them.
ii. It is quicker than any other system.
iii. The adaptation of using the same set of blocks shows that all styles no matter how different they may appear must be related since they came from the same basic shape and will fit the same figure.

2.19 Garment making

Rajtha (2005) suggested that understanding garment making and regular knowledge of basic sewing techniques such as simple stitches, seams, dart, gathers and pleats etc. will enable appropriate application in garment construction. Before learning to stitch seam on the machine one must learn the basic hand stitches which are used in garment making. Basic hand sewing techniques are divided into construction and decorative stitches. Constructive stitches are further divided into temporary and permanent stitches.

She further advised that a method of joining two layers of fabric together either by hand or machine is essential in garment construction. She defined a seam as a method of joining two or more pieces of materials together by a row of stitching. The purpose of most of these seams is functional and can be known as constructional seams. The seams should be as flat as possible and unseen except those that are used for the decorative purposes. Seams may be divided into conspicuous and inconspicuous seams. Inconspicuous seams will not have stitches seen on the right side of the garment when finished, example are plain, corded and French. Conspicuous seams are those that have stitches seen on the right side of the garment like run and fell seam, lapped seam and so on.This study is of the view that the knowledge of garment construction is adequately needed in this study.

2.19.1 Seam finishes

Rajitha (2005) affirmed that in clothing construction, seam finishes are made to prevent fraying of raw edges thereby making the seam clothes more durable and long lasting. They provide the neat appearance to the inside of the garment. There are three things to consider in determining the seam finish decision, they are:

i. The type and weight of fabric

ii. The amount and kind of wear and care the garment will receive

iii. Whether or not seams will be seen.

There are different types of seam finishes in use. They are pinked finish; edge stitched finish, double stitch finish, overcast finish, herringbone finish and bound seam edge finish.

2.19.1.2 Fullness

Fullness is seen by Rajitha (2005) as an important feature of style and a necessity for ease of movement in a well-fitted garment. She further said that fashion changes the basic methods of controlling fullness that frequently recur. Although they are adapted to enhance the current style.Darts, tucks, pleats, garther and so on, are some examples of controlling fullness.

2.19.1.3 Tucks

A tuck has been defined by Rajitha (2005), as a fold of fabric stitched in place by running stitch or machine stitch on the right side of the garment; as a means of shaping the garment to the body, for holding in fullness or add decorative effect at shoulders, waistlines, yokes, pocket and cuff of sleeves etc. She mentioned that they can be used in groups or clusters and in regular width. She suggested that when calculating the amount of fabric needed; each tuck is equal to an allowance equal to twice its finished width. There are pin tucks, piped or corded tucks, shell or scalloped tucks, crossed tucks.

2.19.1.4 Pleats

She mentioned that pleats are folds of fabric that provide fullness in some parts of a garment. She further pointed out that they can be placed singly or in a series and be pressed flat or left unpressed, according to the style of the garment when the pleats are pressed they give a smooth slimming effect to a garment , whereas the unpressed pleats are softer and give a fuller shape. They are manually introduced into the waistline of skirt, dresses, sleeves to provide fullness evenly all around.

2.19.1.5 Openings

Rajitha (2005) has noticed that all garments need openings at some point or the other so that they can be put on and taken off easily. These openings can be closed in a variety of ways. She suggested that the type of closures selected will depend on the position, the amount of strain it will receive and whether it is to remain concealed or form a decorative feature on the garment. In general, fasteners should be fixed on to double material for strength. They should be fixed in such a way that the right side of the garment laps over the left side for women and the left laps over the right for men. Fasteners should be selected to suit the colour, design and texture of the fabric, the style, use of the garment and the position of the placket.She also advised that age and sex of the wearer should be considered. Hooks and eyes, buttons, button holes and so forth are the different types of fasteners that may be used for fastening an opening.

2.19.1.6 Necklines

Rajitha (2005) defined the Neckline as an outline of bodice around the neck. She noted that it can be shaped in different ways and styles to get a decorative effect, particularly for ladies garments. She futher explained that a neckline may be finished with a facing, binding or a collar and a straight piece of material attached to a curve will look bulky and untidy. She also mentioned that the elasticity of bias permits it to stretch or contract and take the shape of any curved edge giving it a flat smooth finish. She also noted that bias strips can be applied as facings and bindings and further mentioned that there are two main types of applied facings, namely: bias facing and shaped facing. Bias binding is used to finish and strengthen raw edges and to add a decorative trim to a garment while shaped facing are fabrics cut in the same shape and grain as the garment area and edge to be finished (Rajitha 2005).

2.19.1.7 Plackets

Rajitha (2005) defined plackets as finished openings constructed in order to make it easy to put on or take off a garment. Plackets are kept closed with the aid of fasteners such as zips, buttons and buttonholes, press buttons, hooks and eyes and so on. Plackets can be differentiated into two types inconspicuous and conspicuous. The continuous bound plackets, faced plackets and zipper plackets are examples of inconspicuous plackets. Tailored plackets are the conspicuous types commonly seen on men's shirt sleeves, shirt sleeve openings and on neck openings on caftans and children's dresses.

2.20 Review of related theories

Tyson (2006), pointed out that theories should be thought as new pairs of glasses through which certain elements of our world are brought into focus while others fade into the background. He further mentioned that in order to understand somethings clearly, the focus must be restricted in a manner that showcases certain elements and ignores others, just like a camera forms whatever it frames and portrays the rest as having a hazy background. That is why he assumed that this is the reason why science and religion are at loggerheads because they concern their foresight on different aspects of their own experience. Therefore, Tyson (2006) emphasized that it is pertinent to study and understand a number of theories in order to bear in mind that various viewpoints are compulsory in a qualitative research analysis so as to clench the very process of understanding that emphasis on human experience in a work of art, design and a picture and also to boost or multiply the ability to see the value and the limitations of every method in viewing the world. He noted that since there are different ways of seeing the world, critical theories contest with each other for supremacy in educational and cultural communities. Each of them offering themselves a perfect means of appreciating human experience. *Akwete* woven art is a human experience and there are many theories that have been propounded by some authorities that in one way or the other concerns and relates

to some aspects of the *Akwete* weaved art tradition and its products.They are the feminism, iconography, social Darwinism,functionalism,looking- glass self, trickle-down and trickle across theories of fashion distribution. Which will be looked at closely as they relate to this study.

The feminist theory which is based on the ideology of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), in her book 'A vindication of the rights of women' (1792) which challenges the idea that women as a group were in anywhere inferior to men.If they were not as efficient as men, it was only because they were not properly educated and had few opportunities, not because of any fundamental difference in ability. According to Crossman (2016), the feminist theory is most concerned with giving a voice to women and highlighting the various ways women have contributed to the society.It is also based on the equal rights of women with men. Women should be treated equally with their male counterpart socially, politically economically and so forth. It gives a leading voice to the women and criticises the patriarchal hierarchy, alienation and marginalisation of women's role in the society. Therefore, *Akwete* weaving has been a medium for women to lend their voices to the society and the world at large through the following ways.

Self-expression – through the *Akwete* weaving practices, the weavers have been able to express their intent and desires. They have also been able to portray the sensibilities of Igbo people and their cultural heritage on the woven cloth, which is illuminating and showcasing the Igbo cultural values for the world to see. Through their art of weaving, *Akwete* town has become renowned in the world history of textile weaving.

During the course of this study, it has been realised that *Akwete* women's target market or consumer market is the women. The women normally fill their boxes with *Akwete* woven fabrics before marriage ceremonies. Everyone wants to have the latest woven designs. They

also utilise the woven fabrics in a lot of cultural festivals especially by the Ijaw because the fabrics that must be utilised are the *Akwete* woven fabrics. The designs woven on the fabric makes the female consumer unique and become the centre of attraction, thereby enabling the weaver to express herself by portraying the Igbo cultural fabrics and heritage. The *Akwete* cloth enhances the looks and appearances of the female, thereby helping to improve her self-confidence and self-identification in the midst of her male counterparts. The weavers have been able to project the image of *Akwete* town by internationalising the name *Akwete*in the world history of woven fabrics. In spite of the male dominance of developmental process, the weavers have been able to tenaciously hold on to the development of *Akwete* cloth and projection of the woven art to the society.

One of the central themes of feminist theory by the proponents or theorists is that women should be economically empowered as men. *Akwete* weaving occupation has given the indigenous *Akwete* weavers a platform for economic improvement and empowerment. Therefore, through the sale of the *Akwete* cloth, they are able to contribute to the nation's economy, finance their children's education, feed and clothe their families, thereby not making themselves vulnerable or be in a disadvantaged situation. This theory only dealt with the concerns of *Akwete* weaving and its products as it concerns only the women.

According to encyclopaedia Britannica, the social Darwinist, Herbert Spencer (late 19th-century theory) propounded a theory which says that persons, groups and races are subject to the same laws of natural selection as Charles Darwin had perceived in plants and animals in nature. According to the theory "the weak were diminished and their cultures delimited, while the strong grew in power and in cultural influence over the weak." He held that the life in the society was a struggle for existence ruled by "survival of the fittest" in other words, only the strongest survive and trample on the weak. It is a competition or dies situation.

Although the *Akwete* weaving is on the decline, but the tenacity of the weavers to hold on to their cultural heritage, without going into extinction or becoming a historical artefacts in the midst of alternatives like Dutch wax wrappers, george wrappers, kente woven fabrics, Aso-oke woven fabrics and laces. This has made the competitive spirit to still be witnessed in the weavers who did not completely abandon their cultural heritage and be trampled on. This study has illuminated and highlighted their efforts and the doggedness of some of the weavers to make sure that *Akwete* lives on even if it is not being utilised the way it should in the contemporary fashion scene. This theory only showcases the indefatigable efforts made by some of the weavers to see that the art of weaving which they learnt from their foremothers do not go into extinction amidst glaringly seen threats.

The ideas of Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), the theory of iconography could be used in relation to *Akwete* weaving and its design motifs. This theory states that "in a work of art, the form cannot be divorced from content; the distribution of colour, lines, light, shade, volumes and planes no matter how delightful as a visual spectacle, must also be understood as conveying a more than visual meaning. Iconography is a method that enables scholars to retrieve the contents embedded in works of art (D'Alleva 2005). In *Akwete* weaving, iconography helped in identifying the woven pieces as indigenous to Africa. It also enabled this study to identify the woven fabrics through their peculiar motifs and sizes as the type of fabrics woven by the Igbo women of *Akwete* town in Abia state of Nigeria. The ways in which the *Akwete* woven fabrics communicate certain ideas on the Igbo worldview, culture, heroic acts, Igbo folklores, royalty, wealth, women's role in the society and beliefs are the contents that were woven onto the various pieces of *Akwete* woven fabrics. This theory only took care of the origin, identification of these motifs and their meanings to those that own them which are the contents which the form of the woven fabrics cannot be separated from.

The theory of functionalism by Bronislaw Malinowski (developed between 1910 and 1930) states that the specific cultural institutions function to support the structure of society or serve the needs of individual in the society. According to Crossman (2016), in the functionalist theory the different parts of the society are primarily composed of social institutions, each of which is designed to fill different needs, and each has particular consequences for the form and shape of the society.From the functionalist point of view, each part of the society has a function to perform so that the society be run well. For example *Akwete* woven fabrics have been the indigenous clothes that the Igbo have used to meet the needs of clothing. By doing this it has been able to solve a basic need which is clothing, through this, they are being protected from cold, insect bites, heat, dust and nakedness. The fabric has also given the Igbo a cultural identity as regards to textiles. Through the weaving of this cloth, it has given the Igbo a worldwide recognition as regards to the history of textiles in Africa. The weaving occupation has a lot of economic importance; by providing jobs for the women and girls so that they can help in one way or the other by taking care of their families through the proceeds gotten from the sales of the woven fabrics.

The aesthetics importance is not left out; the motifs which have been woven into the fabric are used to beautify the woven cloth and gives it an identity. Without the aesthetic appearance it might not be attractive to the buyers and users, therefore the motifs have roles to play. Each motif has a cultural significance, in other words, each motif has a symbolic meaning which depicts Igbo culture and worldview. Formerly some of these motifs were reserved for the royalty and the first class citizens of the community. It was meant for them only. It served as a prestigious clothing which depicts affluence. Above all these theories reviewed, the function still supersedes all because anything like a design that has been produced like *Akwete* woven cloth must have some functions it performs so as to be more relevant in the society.

Charles Horton Cooley's looking- glass self theory (1864 - 1929), according to Mclntyre (2006), he believed that the influence of groups within a society had a strong impact on human behaviour.This theory of self is one in which people learn who they are through their interactions with others.This means that their self image comes from their own self reflection and from what others think about them.He believed that it is through these interactions that one begins to get an idea of who they are, therefore the self is a product of peoples' social interactions.According to the looking glass self theory,there are three main concepts first of all, people imagine how they appear or present themselves to others.Secondly, people imagine the jugdements others make of them based on their apperances, and imagine how the people feel about them, based on the jugdements made on them.Applying this theory to the *Akwete* weaving tradition and its products, the woven fabrics are seen as prestigious and expensive in Igboland.In the Igbo society, when a woman dresses up well, it showcases the wealth of her husband and beauty.It also shows that she is being looked after very well in her husbands' house.People tend to respect, copy and admire her everywhere she goes because of her dressing manners.There is a song in Igbo language that goes like this:

Ezigbo nwanyi malu di ya
Ezigbo nwanyi malu di ya
Ezigbo nwanyi malu di ya
Olutalu malu mara mee ya
Na nma nwanyi bu ekike
Ezigbo nwanyi malu di ya

This song means that a good woman should treat her husband well and the beauty of the woman lies in her dressing.Anyone that is married should know how to do it.

Previously, anyone that ties *Akwete* woven wrappers,is seen as being wealthy and comes from a rich home.Therefore, when they wear those woven fabrics, they look great, people stare at them and they are recognized easily.They assume that they look great in their prestigious outfits.On the other hand,there were so many others who could not afford these

woven fabrics.They were seen as people who do not have money because in those days people normally boast with the number of *Akwete* woven fabrics and other fabrics they have acquired.Those that do not have saw themselves as being poor and could not go to some special functions.In line with this,so many wives who do not want to be left behind, tried to please their husbands before August meetings so as to avoid being poorly dressed.

This study observed that Thorstein Veblen's' trickle-down theory of fashion distribution which was first coined in 1899 could be one of the hitches that *Akwete* fabrics underwent. Since the finished product of *Akwete* has to undergo a distributive process so that it can reach most people in order to be utilised. Veblen theorised that new technologies and consumer goods come into the market at a price point that only the rich can afford. After a while, when other companies manufacture their own and make more affordable versions of such products and the lower classes begin to afford them. It relied on the ranked group in the society and the aspiration to move up the social ladder to function effectively. It has been utilised in a number of disciplines among them are political science, sociology, psychology and economics but its first application was to fashion.

In this case, fashion trickles down through the classes as the lower classes find ways to copy or imitate the styles in more affordable ways. This enables the upper class to keep changing their fashions beyond the reach of the lower classes. According to the Encyclopaedia of Clothing and Fashion (2005), when this fashion reaches the lower class and becomes common the higher class rejects it and goes for another fashion so as to distinguish themselves from the lower class. One of the problems the weavers said they are facing today, is that of patronage. Those that are buying *Akwete* woven fabrics are few, but this research observed that there was a time when only the rich could afford them. *Akwete* woven fabrics were formally woven for the wealthy ones, the royalty, aristocrats and heroes in Igbo society because the fabrics are seen as prestigious and expensive. Then, in Igbo society, there were

some expensive design motifs that were meant for some particular group of people. In other words, those that are not among the group that owns those particular designs dares not to wear them because they were meant only for the elites, but today anyone can save some money to buy and wear any of such designs.This has contributed to what has made the utilization of *Akwete* woven fabrics in the contemporary fashion to be uncommon. Relating this low patronage to the trickle-down theory of distribution in fashion, it could be that the higher class abandoned the costume for other expensive Indian fabrics which can be customised for them on demand. There is not much to distinguish the high class from the low class and middle class in terms of Igbo cultural costume.

To ensure that *Akwete* motifs live on in the contemporary fashion, prints have been produced utilising them by this study. These prints are the printed versions of the woven cloth so as to create variety, light weight and affordable to many. It can be utilised in the contemporary fashion for the production of different apparels. As almost everyone is utilising different kinds of prints in the current fashion of today including the less privileged, many people will be able to purchase the prints and utilise them. Basing this on the trickle up or bubble up fashion distribution theory by channel Gabrielle (Coco) (1883-1971) a French designer in Benbow (2002), believed that fashion ideas originated from the streets and were adopted by couture designers.Futhermore, that when innovation in fashion starts on the streets and worn by lower income groups, it is picked up by designers and the upper class whom will then move to adopt the designs and popularise it. In this context, when the prints are produced, considering the fact that *Akwete* prints will begin their lives on the streets because of their affordable prices. In this way, the prints produced will be utilised by many, made popular and retained in many spheres of life.When those that can afford them put them on, the rich will also be attracted to them because they are new.Printed fabrics normally have different grades

and prices. Other higher grades of these prints will be produced to accommodate the rich in the society.Thereby bringing *Akwete* woven motifs back to the fashion scene.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is the general framework guiding a research project. Nadia (2014) stated, that a "research methodology is the section of a research in which the methods to be used are properly discussed for a proper understanding". The research methodology that were discussed in this study includes research design,population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, pilot study,field work, data collection procedures and analysis as well as preliminary preparation.

3.2 Preliminary Preparation

The printing of kente woven fabric designs on cotton fabrics by some textile industries was part of what sparked off the idea of this study. Since then this study has been curious to find out the possibilities of adapting *Akwete* woven designs on printed cotton textiles for constructing contemporary fashionable wears which can be used for constructing some garments for everyday wear.

3.3 Research Design

According to Olaofe (2010), a research design is a plan, mode or the conceptual structure of the research and type of approach adopted in the study. It also enabled the researcher to manage the integral components of the variables connected with the problem of the study. The research designs that were used for this study are the descriptive survey and studio exploratory methods. This study was in two phases. The first phase was the theoretical aspect, while the second phase focused on the studio practicals, which is the exploratory aspect.

3.3.1 Descriptive Survey

Osuala (2005) defines a survey research as versatile, practical, identifies present conditions and points to present needs. He further mentioned that it interprets, synthesises, and integrates these data and points to implications and interrelationship. Denga and Ali (1983) in Adepeko (2014) also pointed to the fact that the descriptive survey involves the selection of an unbiased sample from a large population in order to make generalizations since the sample is expected to be a representative sample of the population and the whole population cannot always be reached due to various constraints ranging from time to time Therefore, this method was found to be suitable for this study because of its effectiveness.

3.3.2 Studio Exploratory Research

The exploratory aspects of this study were the adaptation of *Akwete* woven designs on printed cotton fabrics and the clothing construction. This section was in two segments. The first was the production of some *Akwete* printed fabricsamples in the textile studio and the second was the construction of these printed samples into fashionable wears.Computer aided designs were utilized in this study to arrange the extracted motifs into a desired pattern. Four different techniques were used in the transfer of designs in this study, namely: photographic method of transfer, stencilling and dabbing, batik dyeing and hand drawing with 3-D fabric ink. Digital separation of colours was utilised to separate the colours after which each colour had its own frame covered with a mesh or cut stencils.

3.4 Pilot Study

A mini-trial test of the research instruments to determine the adequacy of such instruments according to Olaofe (2010) was carried out in this study. An open-ended pilot study questionnaire was utilised during the pilot study. The reasons for this were to determine the effectiveness of the research instruments, determine if some problems may be faced while

conducting the main study and proffer possible solutions, ascertain the validity, reliability of the research instruments and prove the feasibility of the research procedures.

3.5 Population of the Study

According to Awotunde and Ugodulinwa (2004), the population in research is a group of things or body which the study intends to obtain information and draw a conclusion from. The total population of this study include the Akwete woven motifs, weavers in the cooperative society,users of *Akwete* woven fabrics and potential users of the *Akwete* printed fabrics.

3.5.1 The Akwete Woven Fabricscollected from the Field.

A total number of fifty (50) Akwete woven pieces were collected from the field.They are placed in the plates below.



Plate XV : Double 8design**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate XVI:*Kpakpando* design. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XVII: A modern *Akwete* design.(Ahia) **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XVIII: Double bell design lay-out.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XIX*: Ikaki, ute, ikperendioma and igbe akwukwo* motifs were combined together in a design. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XX: Butterfly motif. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXI: An *Akwetepopo* design cloth. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXII: Baby lace. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXIII: one love. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXIV:*Ije agwo*.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXV:*afo Ikaki*. Source:Lolo L**.**Uchegbu



Plate XXVI:*Ikaki* (tortoise) and okwa na epele. A variation of ikaki design. Source:Lolo L**.** Uchegbu



Plate XXVII:*Kpakpando*.private collection Source: Lady M.N.Nwigwe.



PlateXXVIII:blocks.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXIX: Ahia. A modern *Akwete* cloth design. Woven samples of Lady P. Odor an *Akwete* weaver. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate XXX: Ahia.*Akwete*cloth design. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXI:*Akwete* cloth design. **Source:**weaver: Lady P. odor(2015)

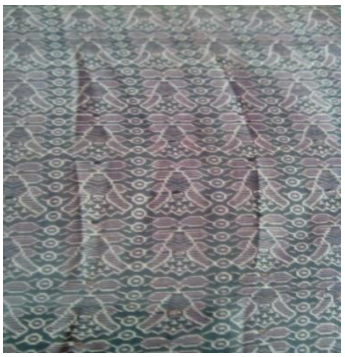


Plate XXXII: *Akwete* cloth design. **Source:**weaver: Lady P odor(2015)



Plate XXXIII: first lady. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXIV: George.The earring motif was used. Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXV: George. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXVI:*Akwete* cloth design called Big fish. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXVII:*Akwete* cloth design called Ebe. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXVIII:*Ute*. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XXXIX: variation of scissors and ruler motifs design. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XL: ije agwo and kuferemmiri. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XLI:Variation of Ebe motif design. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).

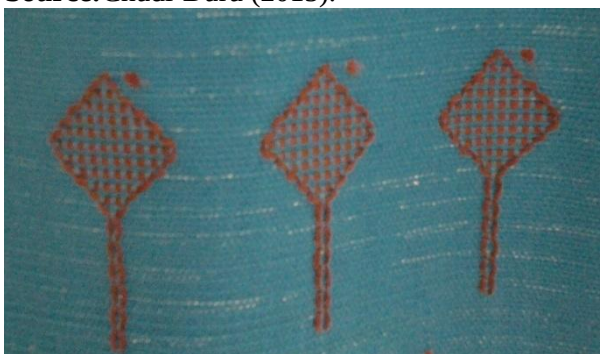


Plate XLII: Akupe. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XLIII: Mkposu. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).

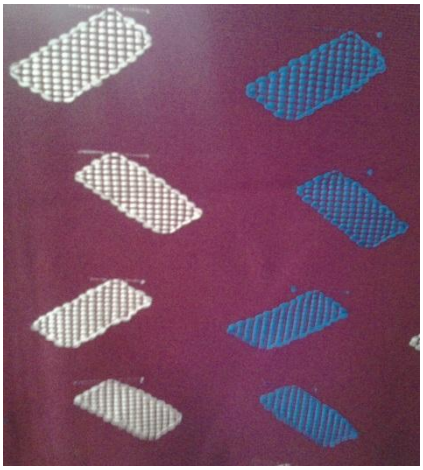


Plate XLIV:*Achicha(*Biscuit). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).

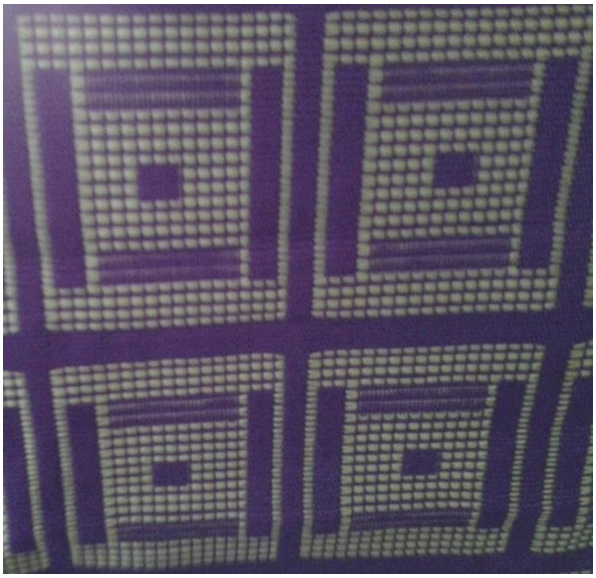


Plate XLV: fancy block. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XLVI*:* *Mgbawatomatoes*. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XLVII: table fan. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XLVIII: Madam pass Madam. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate XLIX: Ahia. **Source:**Lady P. Ordor (2015).



Plate L: Okpueze. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate LI:*Akwete* motif called Ikaki. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).

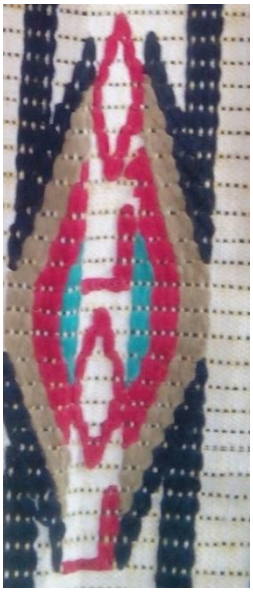


Plate LII:*Akwete* motif called Ikaki. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate LIII:*Akwete* cloth design called Christmas tree. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate LIV:*Akwete* motif called Ebe. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).



Plate LV: Double bell motif. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2015).

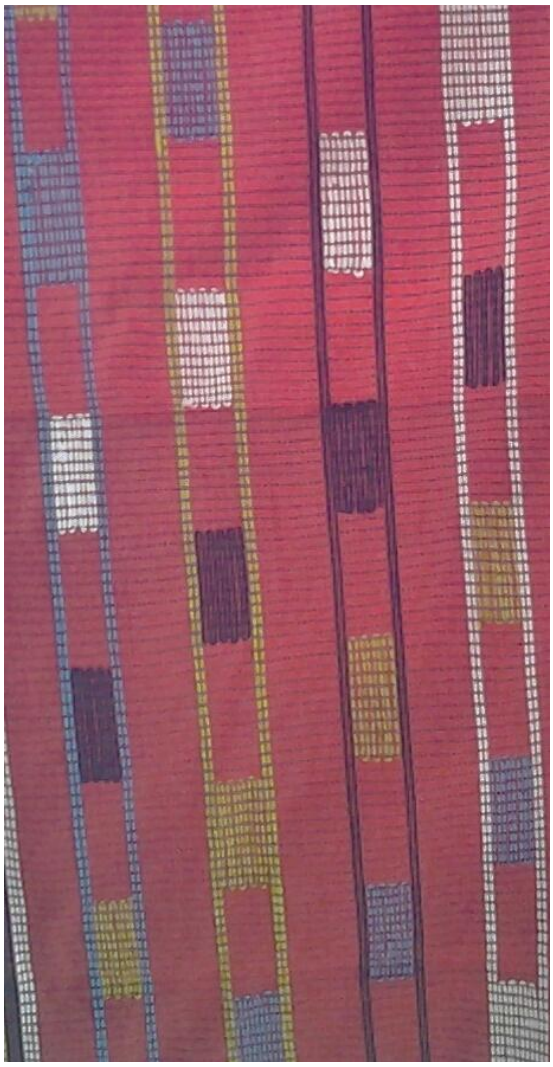


Plate LVI:*Okwa na epele*. **Source:**weaver Mrs Nneoma Okere (2015).

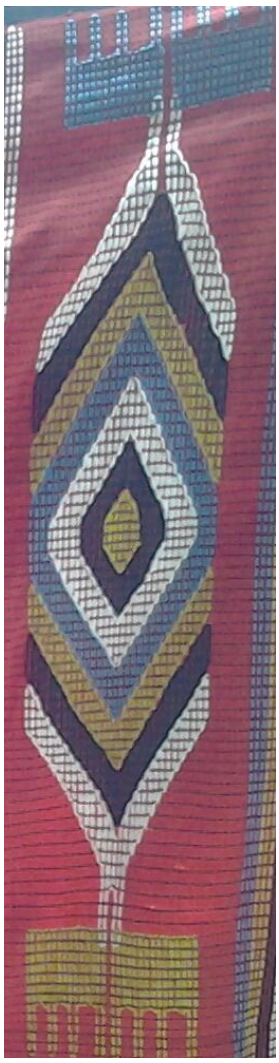


Plate LVII: variation of*Ikaki* motif. **Source:** weaver Mrs Nneoma Okere (2015).



Plate LVIII:*Akwete* motif called Ikaki. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

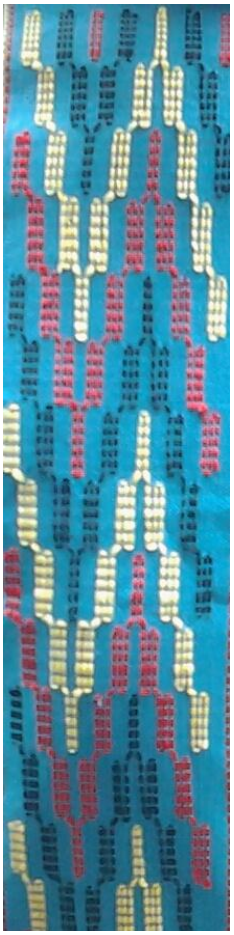


Plate LIX:*Akwete* motif called Ikperendioma. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

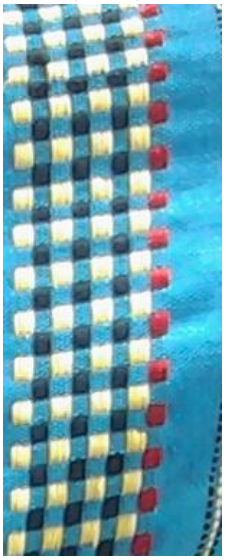


Plate LX:*Ute*. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXI:*Igbe akwukwo*. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXII:*Akwete* motif called Ruler. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXIII:*Akwete* motif called Ikaki. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXIV:*mkpuru* sugar. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXV: Ocean in the river. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXVI:*Ebe*.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXVII: bigfish. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



Plate LXVIII: Nnunnu. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

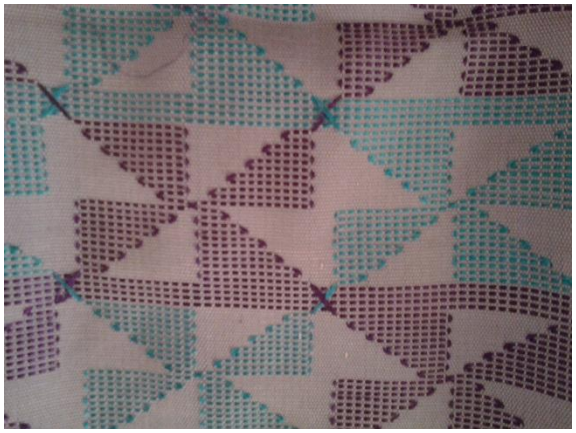


Plate LXIX: Ceiling fan. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)



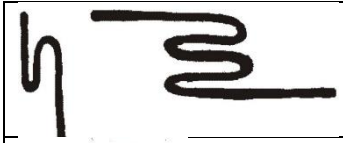
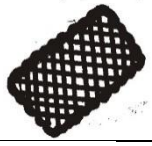
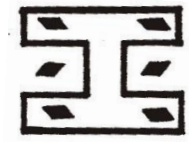
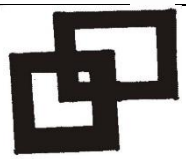
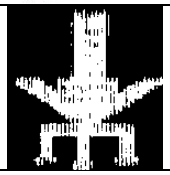
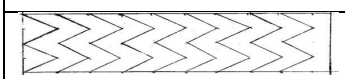
Plate LXX: Diamond. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2015).

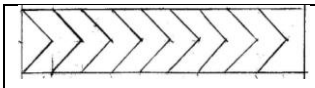
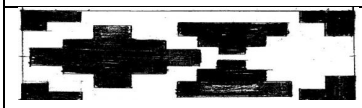
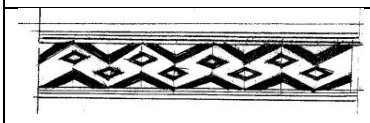
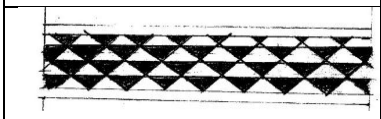
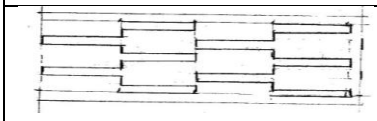
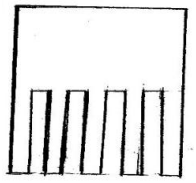
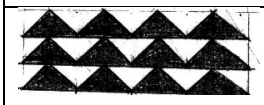
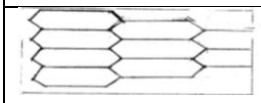
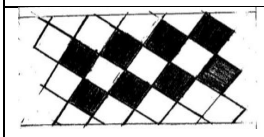
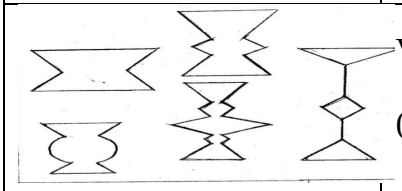
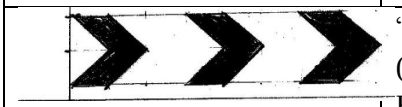
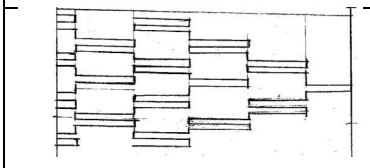
3.5.2. Extracted Motifs (population of the motifs).

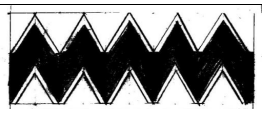
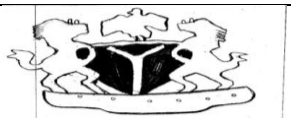
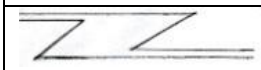
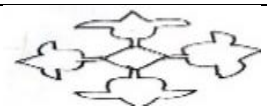
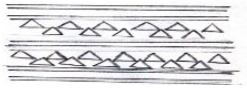
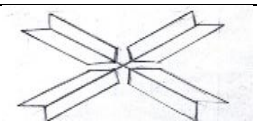
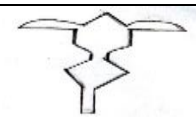
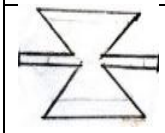
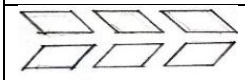
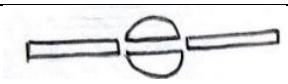
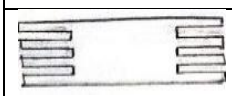
Out of the woven pieces placed in the plates above and some others drawn by the weavers themselves in the field, some motifs were extracted and sketched by this study, for a clearer understanding.Sketches of *Akwete*woven motifs extracted fromthe woven designs that were collected from the field are inserted in the figure below. They are sixty (60) in number.

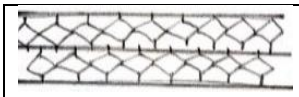
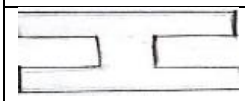
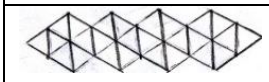
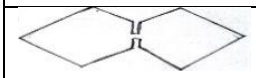
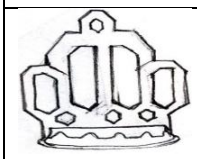
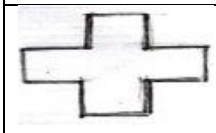
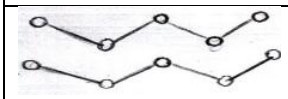
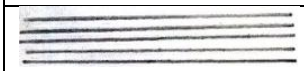
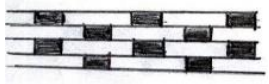
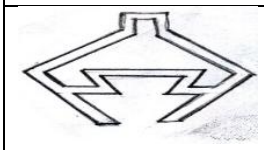
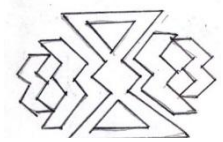
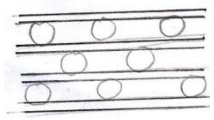
3.5.2.1 Sketches of Akwete symbolic motifs

Woven symbolic motifs	Names and meanings
	Ocean in the river (from plate LXV)
	Heart or one love (from plate XXIII)

	Kuferemmiri (across the river) (from plate XXX)
	Biscuit (from plate XLIV)
	Hand fan (from plate XLII)
	Mgbawa tomatoes(broken tomatoes) (from plate XLVI)
	Ceiling fan (from plate LXIX)
	Fancy block (from plate XLV)
	Nnunnu(bird) (from plate LXVIII)
	Igbe akwukwo(box of books) (from plate LXI)
	Variation of fancy blocks (from plate XLV)
	Anthropomorphic motif (Placed in Chapter Five under findings)
	Checkerboard / mat (from Appendix IV)
	*Ijeagwo* (from plate XXIV)
	Tortoise (from Appendix IV)

	The leg of a bench (Placed in Chapter Five under findings)
	Corn (from plate XXXVIII)
	Necklaceor Diamond (from plate LXX)
	Saw (from Appendix VI)
	Key or Children's Fingers (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Mboisi(comb) (from plate XXIII)
	Scissors(was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Snake back (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Stool or bow tie (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Variations of Ebe Motif (from plate LIV)
	"V" (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Ikperendioma(Knees of the Beautiful people) (from plate LIX)

	Zigzag or (Dakuru) the name of the designer (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.))
	Nigerian Coat of Arms (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Z (was drawn by the weaver -Madam Helen Brown.)
	Double bell(from plate LV)
	Diamond (from plate LXX)
	Popo(from plate XXI)
	Variation of scissors (from plate XXXVIX)
	Double eight (from plate XVI)
	Kpakpando(star) (from plate XXVII)
	Single bell(from plate XXIII)
	Variation of ebe motif (from plate LIV)
	Broken V(was drawn by the weaver - Madam Helen Brown.)
	Ngaji(spoon) Placed in Chapter Five under findings)
	Mboisi- isi abuo(comb of two heads) Was drawn by a weaver-(Mrs Ngozi George)

	Mkpuru ludo(ludo seeds) Was drawn by a weaver-(Mrs Ngozi George)
	Okwaepelewas drawn by a weaver-(Mrs Ngozi George)
	Mkpekele eferewas drawn by a weaver-(Mrs Ngozi George)
	Butterfly (from plate XX)
	Okpueze(crown) (from plate L)
	Crosswas drawn by a weaver, Mrs Ngozi George.
	A borrowed Asante motif from Ghana, was drawn by a weaver-(Mrs Ngozi George).
	Ruler (from plate LXII)
	Epele (from plate XXVI)
	Iyerinti/olanti(earring) (from plate XXXIV)
	Anthropomorphic motif (placed in Appendix IV)
	Ikaki motif (placed in Appendix IV)
	A borrowed motif from Asante in Ghana. (placed in Appendix IV)

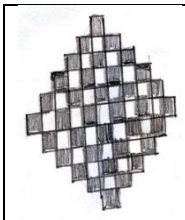
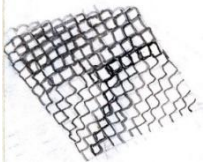
	Found on the woven cloth called Akajiaku (the one that is wealthy).It is usually combined with ikaki motif on the woven cloth. (from plate XXXVII)
	Basket motif was drawn by a weaver-(Mrs Ngozi George.

Figure 3: Sketches of the Akwete motifs found in the field. Source Chudi-Duru (2015).

3.5.3 Population of the respondents

Table 3.1Population of the respondents from the three tertiary institutions surveyed

Institution	**Staff**	**Students**	**Total**
College of Education, Arochukwu	300	600	900
Abia State University, Uturu	3,845	20,389	24,234
Abia State Polytechnic, Aba	1,300	21,890	23,190
Total	**5,445**	**42,879**	**48,324**

Source: College Of Education (Tehnical) Arochukwu; Abia State University, Uturu; and Abia Polytechnic, Aba Information Office, 2016.The total population of these institutions in Abia state is forty eight thousand,three hundred and twenty-four (48,324)

3.5.3.1 Target Population

The target population of this study is all the *Akwete* woven cloths in existence during the time this study was conducted.

3.5.3.2 Accessible Population

The accessible population of this study are the *Akwete* woven cloth this study had access to during the research period.

3.6 Sampling

Mbahi (2001) and Olaofe (2010) indicated that a sample is the selected elements (people or objects) chosen for participation in a study; people are referred to as subjects or participants. The main function of the sample is to allow the researcher to conduct the study to individuals from the population so that the results of their study can be used to derive conclusions that will apply to the entire population.

The study area is Abia state, there are three senatorial districts namely Abia North, Abia Central and Abia South. In these senatorial districts, higher institutions were chosen using purposive random sampling because this study is of the view that since *Akwete* woven fabrics are not just woven and worn by only *Akwete* people but the whole Igbo land and beyond and it is necessary that one samples the higher institutions.Those are the places where one can find many people from different parts of the country to respond favourably to the questionnaire. The institutions chosen were Abia State University, Uturu in Abia South, Abia PolytechnicAba in Abia Central, and Abia State College of Education (Technical), Arochukwu in Abia North made up of the institutions' staffand students. Issuing of questionnaires were to:

1. Some registered weavers in *Akwete* town.
2. Users of *Akwete* woven fabrics.
3. Potential users of *Akwete* printed fabrics.

According to the observations made by this study during one of the fieldworks in 2016,there was an estimate of 1,200 weavers in *Akwete* town, made up of of girls and women that weave in their various houses but only a total number of 70 were duly registered with the *Akwete* cooperative weaving society. But only thirty of them were present on the day of their meeting, (fourteenth day of July 2016), and were involved in the focus group discussion. The women present were thirty in number, they were divided into five groups and some

issuesbased on the research problems and objectives were discussed. A total number of ten questions and some woven cloths were adequately discussed and studied respectively (see appendix II page 286). The oldest registered weaver and a community leader were also interviewed.The interview transcripts are placed in Appendix III, page288.

3.6.1 Sampling Size

In reducing the population to a sample size that was used to investigate the phenomenon, this formula as propounded by Krejcie and Morgan (2001) was used to determine the sample size of the known estimated population of forty-eight thousand, three hundred and twenty four thousand (48,324) from the three tertiary institutions surveyed.

$S = x^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + x^2P(1-P)$.

S = required sample size.

x^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

= 3.841 x 48,324 x .50 (1- 0.50) / 0.05 x 0.05 (41879 – 1) + 3.841 x .50 (1 – 0.50)

= 92,806.242 (0.50) / 0.0025 (48,324) + 1.9205 x 0.5

= 46,403.121 / 120.81 + 0.96025

= 46,403.121 / 121.77025

= 381.07

= 381

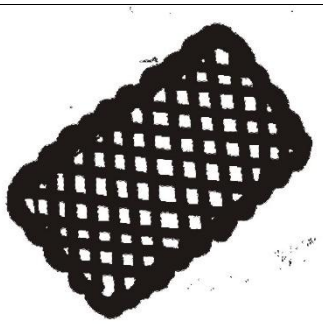
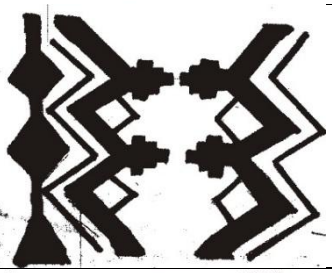
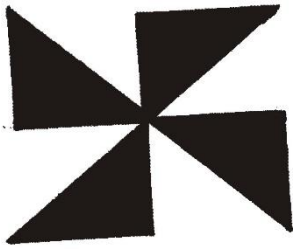
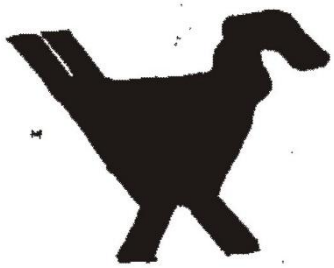
The calculated sample size for the study is therefore 381.

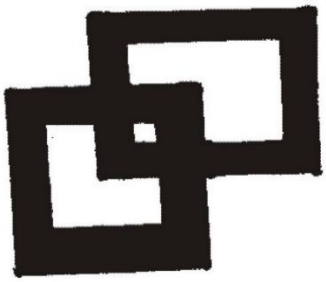
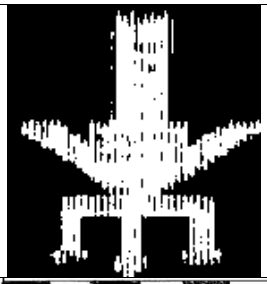
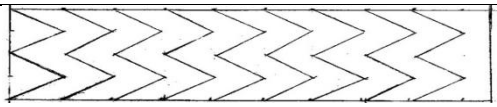
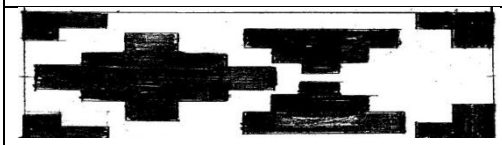
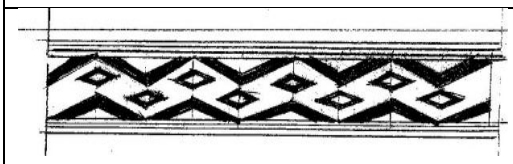
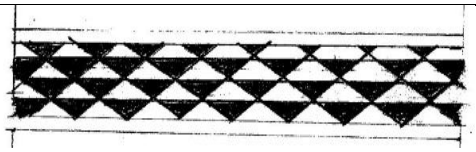
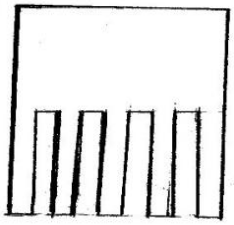
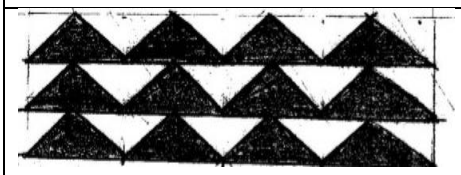
A total number of 381 people comprising of users and potential users of *Akwete* woven fabrics were randomly selected and issued a 5 point Likert scale questionnaire.The distribution of the questionnaires to the institutions chosen were as follows: Abia State University, Uturu in Abia South (161 questionnaires), Abia PolytechnicAba in Abia Central (120 questionnaires), and Abia State College of Education (Technical), Arochukwu in Abia North (101 questionnaires) made up of the institutions' staff and students.

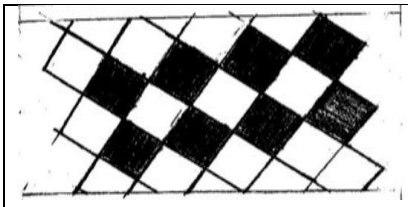
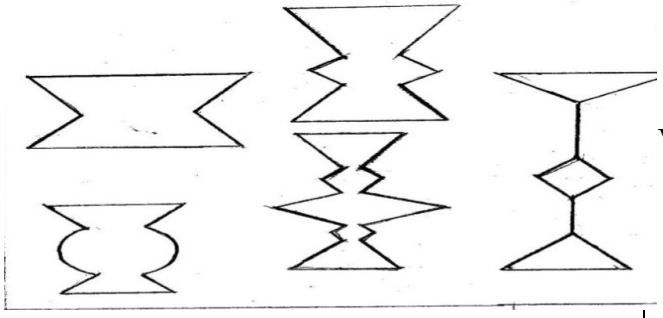
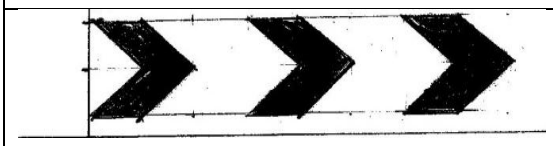
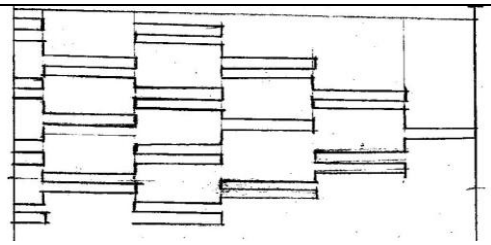
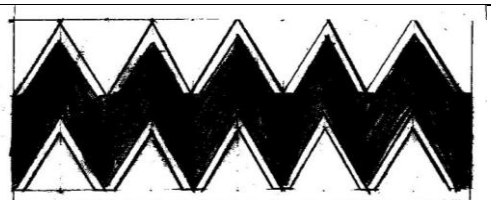
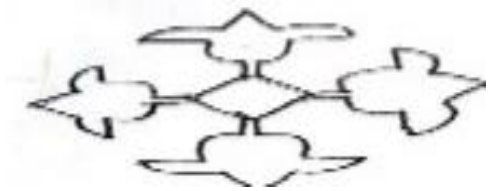
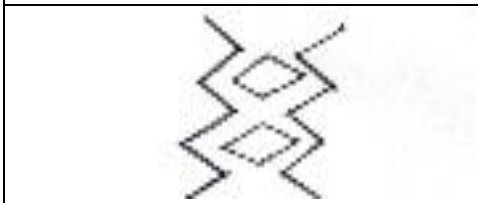
3.6.1.1 Sampling size for the motifs

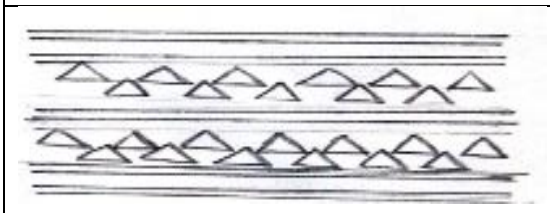
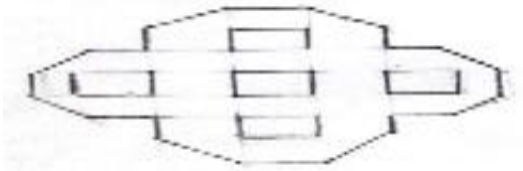
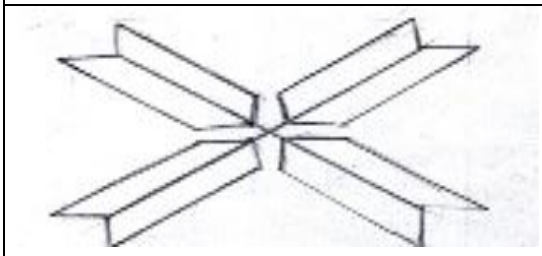
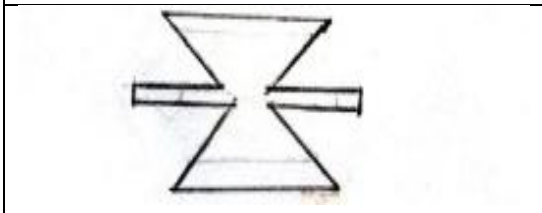
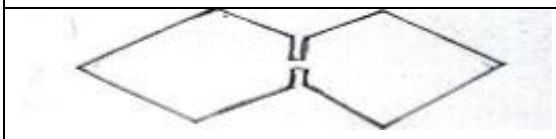
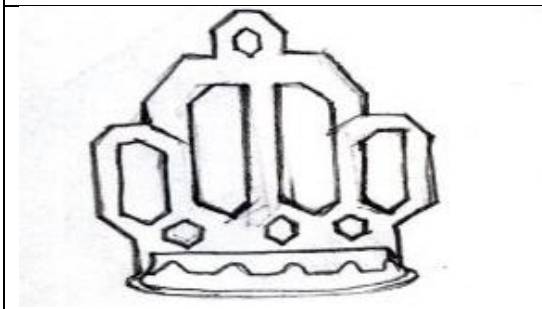
A total number of a hundred and fourteen (114) woven motifs were revealed during the course of this study. Fifty (50) *Akwete* woven fabrics were visibly seen and sixty (60) woven design motifs were extracted from them because a particular fabric may contain more than three motifs. From these woven designs extracted, thirty-eight (38) motifs were chosen using convenient sampling and used as the sample size because they can easily be identified as *Akwete* woven design motifs when printed on fabrics.The were used during the studio exploration to produce twenty-five (25) printed fabrics which were used to construct ten (10) contemporary fashionable wears, including dresses, blouse and skirt, shirts for men and teenager's dress. This studio exploration was executed in the textile design studio of the Department of Industrial Design in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and the textile design studio of Imo state university, Owerri.The motifs that were chosen by this study are placed in the figures below.This number was chosen so as to enable this study to combine up to three to four motifs to form an appropriate design pattern or lay-out.

3.6.1.2 Sketches of woven motifs chosen and utilised in this study(sample size).

Woven motifs	Names and meanings
	Biscuit
	Mgbawa tomatoes(broken tomatoes)
	Ceiling fan
	Fancy block
	Nnunnu(bird)

	Variation of block
	Anthropomorphic motif
	Checkerboard
	Snake
	Corn
	Necklace
	Saw
	Mboisi(comb)
	Scissors

	Stool or bow tie
	Variations of Ebe Motif
	"V"
	Ikperendioma(Knees of the Beautiful people)
	Zigzag or (Dakuru) the name of the designer
	Double bell
	Variation of necklace

	Isi ajuala
	Variation of scissors
	Ahia(achived using many heddles)
	Kpakpando(star)
	Variation of ebe motif
	Butterfly
	Okpueze(crown)
	Ruler

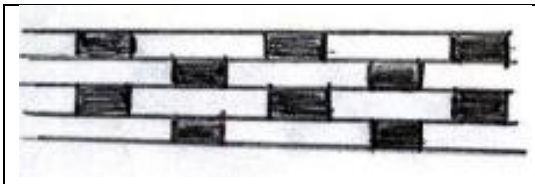
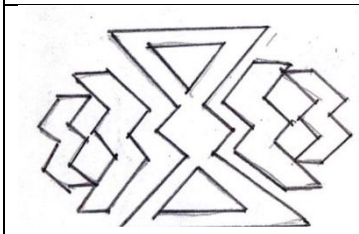
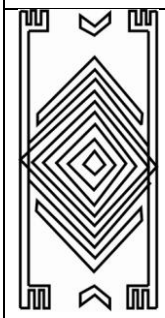
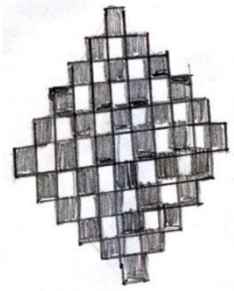
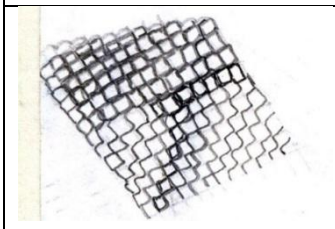
	Epele
	Anthropomorphic motif
	Variation of ikaki motif.
	Found on the woven cloth called Akajiaku (the one that is wealthy).It is usually combined with ikaki motif on the woven cloth.
	Basket motif

Figure 4: woven motifs chosen for the studio exploration.

3.7 Data collection

During the course of this study, field works were embarked on in Akwete town where the *Akwete* fabrics are woven. Some private weavers that were not participating in the Akwete cooperative weavers' society were visited in their homes so as to collect more information from them. National Museums in Owerriand Enugu were visited to see if some *Akwete*woven

fabrics could be found there.This study also used the internet to retrieve some data on Akwete woven fabrics found in some foreign museums. Some Nigerian Igbo home movies were studied, since the study observed that *Akwete* woven fabrics are used for acting. The Akwete womens'cooperative society was paid several visits so as to collect as many samples as possible and private collectors were also visited.

3.7.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this survey is in Likert scales comprising response ratings of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and Undecided.(See Appendix I,page 280)

3.7.2 Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussion (FGD) is a rapid assessment, semi-structured data gathering method in which a purposively selected set of participants gather to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the study (Kumer 1987,Puchta & Potter, 2004). And the purpose is to collect information about people's opinions, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, not to come to an agreement but used to clarify information gained from individual interviews or written surveys.The study takes notes, main points and useful notes.

In addition to providing impetus for the study, it was deployed throughout the process. This availed this study to select at least five (5) groups of about six (6) members using the *Akwete* weavers. The membership of the FGD comprised of weaversof the woven fabrics only. The age range of the discussants were between the ages of 18 to 50 and above. This age range was considered worthwhile because mostof the individuals in this range were knowledgeable enough to discuss the issues raised inline with research objectives and problems of the study.

3.7.3 The In-depth Interview

The In-depth interviews were conducted with the interviewees which include a male community leader(Mr Justice) and a woman (Madam Edith Akpara, the oldest weaver in the community) on 14th day of August 2016 in *Akwete* town. An interview guide was designed by this study and scrutinized. The choice of these informants is premised upon the case study.

3.7.4 Secondary Sources

The secondary sources employed in this study were documentary photography and observation.

3.8 Data Collection for the studio exploration

This study followed these specific procedures in data collection of*Akwete* woven motifs.

1. Identifying the target population and target sample.
2. Selecting the required samples of *Akwete* woven cloth from the population.
3. Study it to extract the symbolic motifs which were utilised to produce *Akwete* print.
4. Producing some paper designs of *Akwete* woven designs in full colour with the help of a computer.
5. Printing of *Akwete* designs on cotton fabric that are known as *Akwete* printed samples in the studio.
6. Producing some fashion illustrations; to show the styles that were be sewn with the *Akwete* print. These served as a guide during the drafting of the blocks and patterns.
7. Drafting of the patterns of the designs that were used in clothing construction.
8. Constructing of garments with *Akwete* printed fabrics for Nigerian contemporary fashion.
9. Analysis of results.

3.9 Validation of Research Instruments

The pilot study questionnaire, the survey questionnaire, the Focus Group Discussion questions and interview guidelines were designed and validated. Olaofe (2010) suggested that for any study to be acceptable as scientific or empirical, the research instruments must exhibit an appreciable measure of validity and reliability. This means the ability of the research instruments to measure as adequately as possible the variables they are supposed to measure. The questionnaire was face validated. This means validity on its face value which means to determine that each research question is related to the objectives and the topic under investigation. Olaofe (2010) stated that in face validity, the instrument can be adjudged to be valid in terms of clarity and unambiguity. These questionnaires were evaluated by this study's Supervisors so as to assess the content and construct validities. Olaofe (2010) and Osuala (2005) stressed the relevance of validity of research instruments.

3.10 Computer aided textile design

According to Gwarri (2008), computer aided design can improve the quality of textile designs.He also revealed that computer can be a very useful designers' tool because it is quite easy to copy a design pattern by scanning in the computers' memory.The computer was used to resize or alter the designs on the screen and the various versions of designs printed in this study.The colours, tones and content werealso adjusted.The parts that are not needed were removed and the design saved.This trend enhanced the presentation, promotion and preservation of African cultural heritage of the *akwete* motif designs.

3.10.1 Paper Design sketches

A total number of twenty-five paper design sketchesand swatces were produced during the studio exploration. The paper designs showcased the designs that were printed on the cotton fabrics, the lay-out of the designs, patterns, separation of colours and arrangement of these designs.They were generated through the computer. The design motifs of the *Akwete* woven

fabric were transferred on paper so that the colours and designs would be studied very carefully.

3.10.2 Fashion Illustration

It is better to sketch the idea for a clearer understanding when planning, cutting and sewing of any style of garment. In the fashion design, designs are mostly presented in the form of hand drawn sketches before they are actually cut and sewn. This process was utilised in this study to portray what the design would look like before it was made.The toolsused were pencil, eraser, ruler (for precision), sketch pad, sharpener, colour medium (coloured pencils, markers, gouache, paint etc.), tracing paper.These tools were used in producing the fashion illustrations needed for this study. A total of nine illustrations were drawn in this study.The illustrations are placed in Appendix VIII (Pp 298-300).

3.11 Pattern Drafting

Commercial patterns were not used in this study. The patterns were drafted from the fashion illustrations made in the study. The measurements of the people that will wear them were taken correctly and accordingly so as to avoid mistakes while drafting the patterns. After drafting the basic blocks, the blocks underwent a lot of alterations (flat pattern designing) to suit the modern day fashion.

3.11.1 Steps followed for taking measurements in this study

The measurement chart according toArmstrong (2009) and Tuit (1974), listed the steps that were followed for taking body measurements for blouses, gowns, shirts, jackets and skirts in this study.Bust measurement is usually the first to be taken, as it gives an indication of the other measurements to expect if the figure is in proportion or not.

The parts of the body that were measured in this study are:

1 –Bust

2 – Highbust

3 – Waist

4 – Hip

5 – Upper hip

6 – Hip depth

7 – Back waist length

8 – Frontwaist length

9 – Bust point length

10 – Back width

11 – Front width

12 – Shoulder

13 – Top arm girth

14 – Depth of sleeve head

15 – Sleeve length

16 – Elbow point length

3.11.1.1 Skirt Measurement

Waist, hip and hip depth measurements were taken as for a dress.

3.11.2 Body measurement

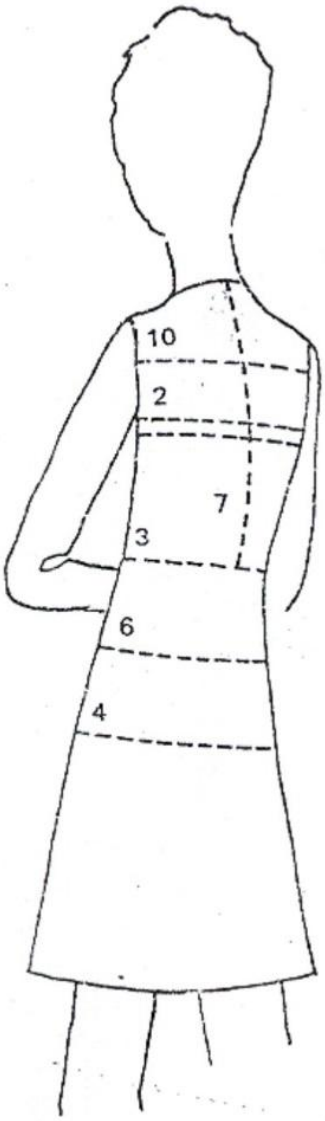


Figure 5 (i): Back body measurement. Source: Tuit (1974)

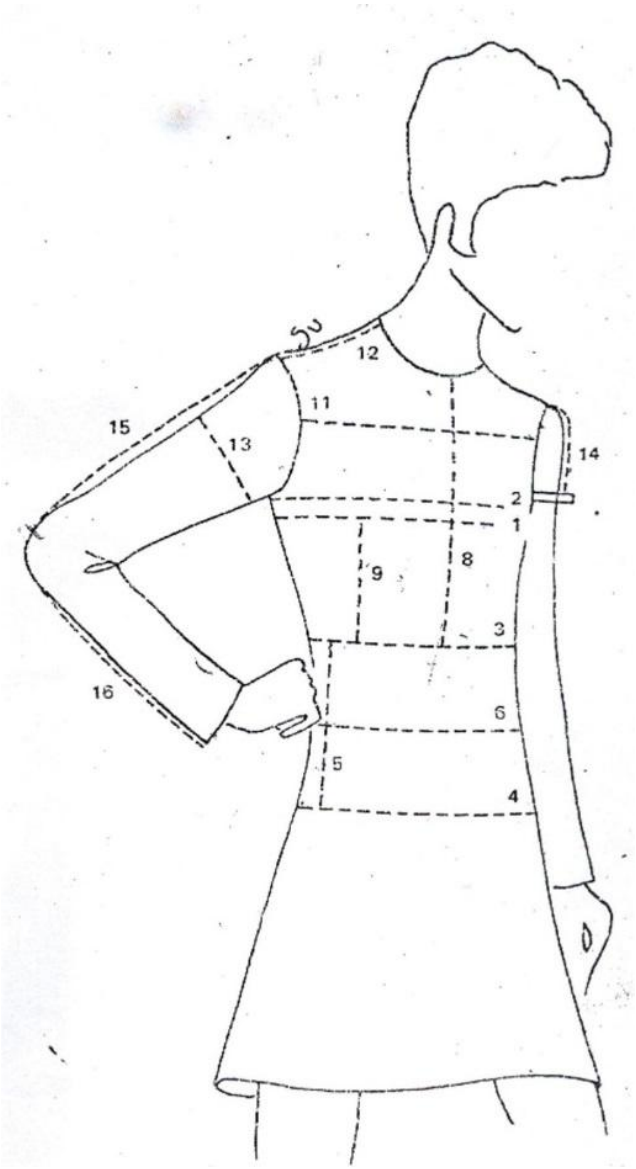


Figure 5(ii): Front body measurement. Source: Tuit (1974)

Table 3.2 Body measurement chart

	Dress Measurement	Body Measure	Ease	Total	Half Total
1.	Bust		2”/5.0cm		
2.	High Bust		2”/5.0cm		
3.	Waist		1”/2.5cm (Skirt)		
4.	Hip		2”/5.0cm		
5.	Upper Hip		2”/5.0cm		
6.	Hip Depth				
7.	Back Waist Length				
8.	Front Waist Length				
9.	Bust Point				
10.	Back Width		½”13mm		
11.	Front Width				
12.	Shoulder				
	Sleeve Measurement				
13.	Top Arm		2”/5.0cm		
14.	Depth of Sleeve head		½”/13mm		
15.	Sleeve Length		½”/13mm		
16.	Elbow Point Length				
	Skirt Measurement				
17.	Front Length				
18.	Back Length				
19.	Side Length				

Source: Tuit (1974)

3.11.2.1Ease

Tuit (1974) suggested that, the amounts of ease shown on the measurement chart, are the average amounts used at the moment for a dress in a material of average thickness. A coat or jacket would need approximately twice these amounts (All circumference measurements must have ease added as a garment made exactly to the measurements of the figure would be very uncomfortable to wear.) The only length measurements which always, have ease added are depth of sleeve head; to allow room for the arm to move, sleeve length; to allow for the elbow to bend. In line with this, this study is of the view that any sewn clothing without amounts of ease added, will be torn while trying to wear and also uncomfortable to the wearer.Therefore, some amounts of ease were added to the sewn apparels in this study during construction.

3.12 The Construction of Bodice Blocks

The construction of the blocks utilized in this study was according to Tuit (1974).

The constructed bodice is placed in the figure below:

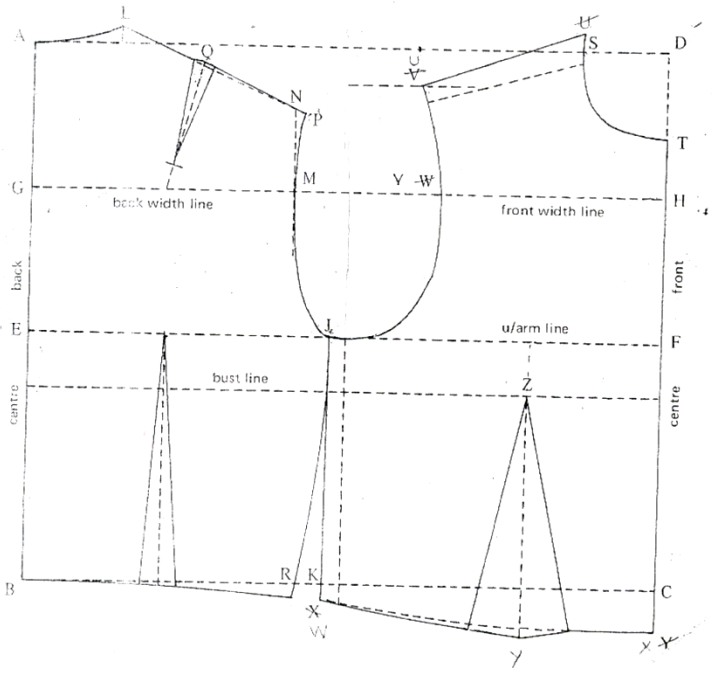


Figure 6: Front and back bodice block Source: Tuit (1974)

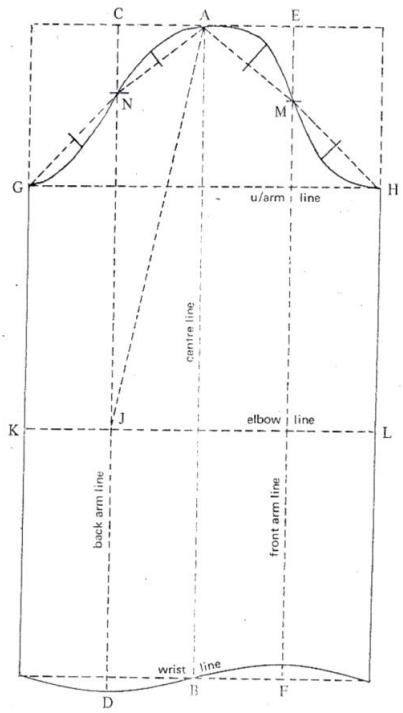


Figure 7: sleeve basic block. Source: Tuit (1974)

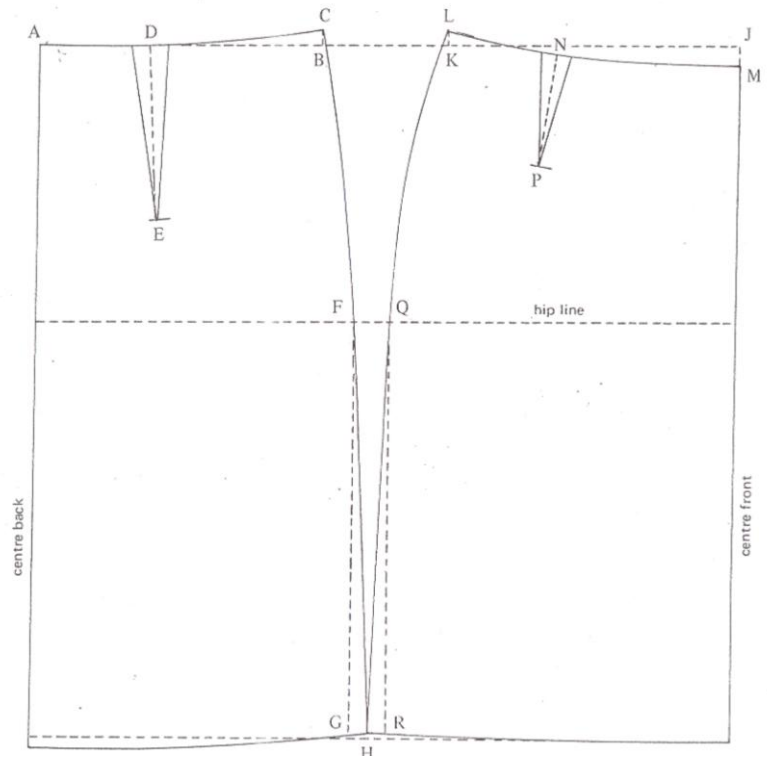


Figure 8: Skirt basic blocks. Source: Tuit (1974)

3.12.1 Children's Blocks

The children's blocks were constructed in a very similar way to the adults' blocks in this study. There are no skirt blocks as children seldomly wear close fitting skirts. The children's sleeve block, like the adult's, is long and loose fitting for ease of adaptation.

3.12.2 Bodice Blocks

The children’s bodice is placedin the figure below.

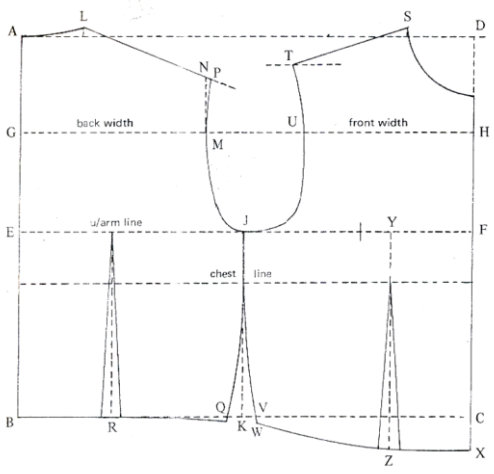


Figure 9(a): girls’basic blocks.Source:Tuit (1974):

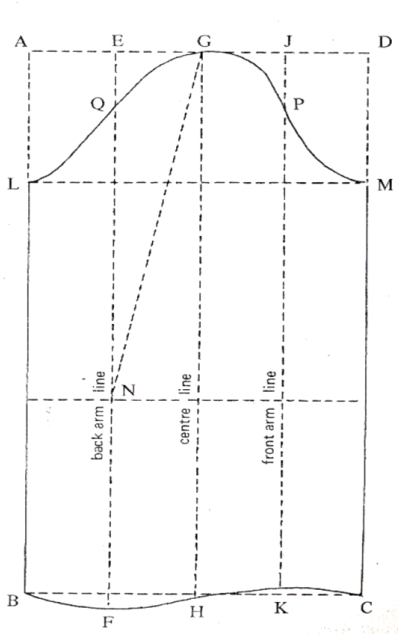


Figure 9 (b):bodice and Sleeve block for girls.**Source:** Tuit (1974)

3.12.3 Clothing Construction

After the patterns have been drafted in this study, they were properly laid on the printed *Akwete* fabric. The *Akwete*printedcloth was spread on a long table; there were no folds during the laying. This might alter the placements of the patterns on the folded fabric. The laying was done in a way that no fabric was a waste. During the laying of patterns on fabrics, some pins were used to attach the paper patterns onto the fabric and the grain lines of the printed fabrics were handled properly so that the designs on the printed fabrics were not be misplaced.

After that, the pinned patterns were outlined using a pencil on the *Akwete*printed fabrics and the patterns were removed and kept in an envelope for safety. Then the outlined patterns were cut. After cutting, the next process was sewing. The patterns were joined according to the rules and techniques guiding that particular apparel (either skirts, blouses, jackets, gowns, trousers or children's wear etc.). When the sewing was completed, the finishing commenced.

3.13 Tools Used In Garment Construction

A variety of tools and equipment were used for performing various functions in garment construction in this study. Rajitha (2005) found out that knowledge of these tools will help to choose the right tool to complete a particular task in the process of garment construction. Some garment construction tools that were utilised in this study as follows:

1. A pair of scissors for cutting fabrics.
2. Cutting Board or Table.This is a flat board placed on a table where the fabric is laid out and cut. The fabric is pinned securely to the cutting board or table to prevent it from slipping.
3. Tape Measure.This is a 60 inch long measuring device used in taking body measurements, drafting patterns, and measuring fabrics. It has a metal tip and reversible markings in centimeters and inches.
4. Yardstick or Meter stick.It is used to measure fabric and to check grain line.
5. Hip curve.This is used in connecting or shaping slightly curve points.
6. L-square. It is useful in constructing perpendicular lines with divisional parts located in longer and shorter arms.
7. Ruler aids in connecting shorter lines, marked off in inches and centimeters
8. Beeswax or Candle makes the thread stronger and serves as lubricant, which makes the thread easier to use in sewing buttons and other hand sewing jobs.
9. Pin cushion.This is a cotton-stuffed cloth cut and sewn in many different shapes to keep the pins in place. Pins are used when cutting and sewing material and helps save time during basting.
10. Needles. They come in three sizes: small, medium and large. Needles are used for basting, sewing buttons on and when mending torn clothes.
11. Sewing Machine.It is a machine used to stitch.

12. Tailor's Chalk is a thin piece of hard chalk used in tailoring for making temporary alteration marks on clothing.
13. Tracing wheel. It is an instrument with multiple teeth on a wheel attached to a handle. The teeth can be either serrated or smooth. It is used to transfer markings from patterns onto fabric with tracing paper.
14. Dressmaker's carbon paper - the functions is like a carbon paper. It is used in transferring the markings on the patterns to the fabric
15. Flat Iron.This is an electrical appliance used to remove creases from fabrics.
16. Ironing board. This is a small, portable, foldable table with a heat resistant surface.

3.14 Printing

Thirty-eight woven design motifswere transferred onto cotton fabrics in the textile design studio using the Screen Printing, stencilling and batik dyeing techniques.

3.14.1 Batik

Batik is another fabric decoration technique that was utilized by this study in studio exploration 1. This is a resist method of pattern making, where some certain portions of the fabric were coated with wax to resist the dye.The wax was heated, until it liquefied and was applied to the fabric using a piece of foam. The materials used for the batik dyeing during studio exploration of this study are bees wax and paraffin wax, a piece of foam, sauce pan, newspaper to cover the surface worked on and also for de waxing, cotton fabric, stick, a pair of gloves, dyes, caustic soda, sodium hydrosulphite, buckets of water, stove, pot and electric kettle, stove, basins, spoon, electric iron.

3.14.2 The batik process utilised in this study

First of all the fabric was desized to remove any dirt,grease and dust that might prevent the fabric from absorbing the dyestuffs; and areas to be dyed were mapped out using a

pencil.Thecombination of bees wax and paraffin wax were heated in a sauce pan to melt. While the wax is still on the fire the foam was utilizd in applying the hot wax to the fabric.To achieve the cracking effects which was part of the designs used by this study, some portions of the fabric was waxed and rumpled to create that effect.After waxing, the dye,caustic soda and sodiumhydrosulphite were mixed in a bath or bucket according to theirappropriate qauntities with hot water using a stick.These chemicals must accompany the dye because they serve as reducing agents to make it soluble in water.The hot water solution of dye and chemicals was diluted with cold water so as not to melt the wax that has been applied to the fabric while dyeing. The fabric was dipped into the dye bath for thirty minuites to enable it to absorb much dye to this studys' satisfaction.It was removed from the dye bath and spread under a shade for oxidation reaction to occur.After this, the fabric was dewaxed with hot water by dipping into a bucket of hot water several times using a long stick and dried under a shade.All the wax applied to the fabric might notbe completely removed at this juncture,therefore the iron and newspapers were utilized.The two surfaces of the fabric both front and back were covered with some layers of newspapers, and the dyed fabric was placed in between the two layers of the newspapers. Then the fabric was ironed. During this process, the remaining wax was transferred onto the newspapersand was no longer on the fabrics. This made the fabric to be wax free and ready for printing.

3.14.3Steps followed to cut the stencils used in this study during the studio exploration

1. Sketching and scanning of the motifs into the computer.
2. Designing,colouring with coreldraw, and adjusting with the correct measurements.
3. Printing it out on a laser printer film paper so that each colour had its own film.
4. Using a sharp cutter, the stencil was cut out making sure that the hand is kept straight, so as to produce some sharp edges.

5. Each stencil was cut two times so that when one gets blocked, instead of wasting time and washing, the other was used. Or instead of waiting for it to get dried after washing, the other was used. This helped in speeding up the printing process.

3.15 Pilot Study Printing Exercise

During the course of this study, some visits were made to *Akwete* town where the weaving takes place. Some woven designs were collected by this study and documented for this study. The simulations and outlines of the motifs extracted from the woven fabrics were utilized in printing while some other abstract designs were also employed. It was observed in the pilot study conducted that the utilization of a single motif without the addition of two or more *Akwete* woven motifs and some abstract designs presented the printed cloth as scanty and innappropriate. It did not produce appropriate prints which will suit the current trends in Nigerian fashion.Therefore during the printing exploration, this was avoided.

3.15.1 Printing Tools and Materials used for producing the Printed Samples

The printing tools and materials used for producing the printed samples are:

Organdy silkscreen fabric or polyester, laser printer film paper, smooth wooden frame, staple gun, squeegee, set of silkscreen photosensitizer and emulsion, printed designs in black and white for photographic transfer, plain 100% cotton fabrics, buckets of water, a piece of foam, a sheet of clear non-coloured glass, masking tape, fabric inks and acrylic paints, sticker inks, 3D fabric paint, a spoon, small containers for mixing the pigments,ruler, paper and notebooks, scanner, a computer or laptop, tape and acrylic yarn.



PlateLXXI: Some of the printing tools used for the studio exploration.
Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.15.2 Pilot study studio practical

Akwete woven motifs that were utilised in the pilot study printing were the one with comb, ruler and basket motifs. These were woven on one piece of cloth to form a design called *Akwete*. Below are the procedures followed during the studio pilot test (studio exploration).



Plate LXXII: Capturing the motifs on*Akwete* woven fabric.Photographed by Chudi-Duru C.C. (2015).

The *Akwete* woven fabric was scanned directly in a high definition scanner (Epson 600) so as to capture their woven motifs accurately (see plate LXXII). Since the scanner is smaller than the fabric, and cannot pick all the woven details at once, the scanning was done portion by portion. And this produced, multiple images in the computer which needed to be arranged to give the desired patterns.

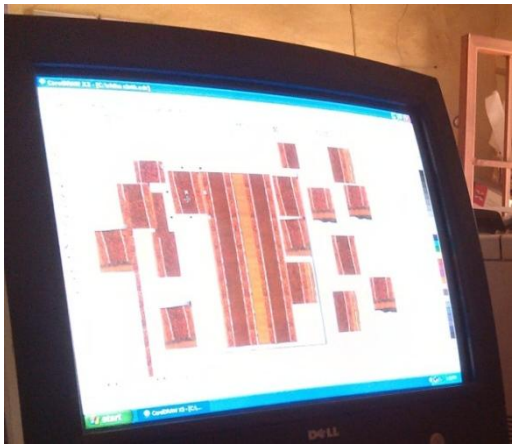


Plate LXXIII: Reconfirmation of the designs scanned. Photographed by Chudi-Duru C.C(2015)

The woven fabric was spread out so as to see the actual design on the cloth and control the arrangement of the woven motifs scanned in to the computer.

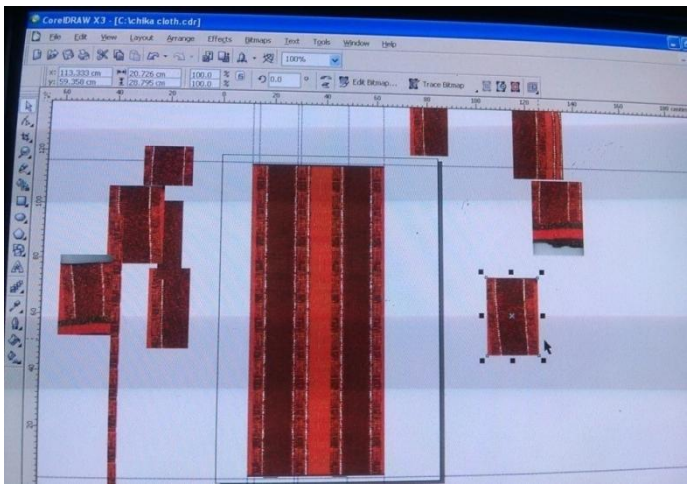


Plate LXXIV: Determining the size. Photographed by Chudi-Duru C.C(2015)

After the arrangement of the designs on the system, a particular size was chosen which is 40" by 25" (a very big size; but was not the same as in the other designs).This was because it is the size of the cotton fabric that was utilised for printing. The printing size determined the size that was achieved on the system (see plate LXXIV). Working with the correct size was highly important in this stage so as to achieve a balance which is one of the principles of design. The arrangement was also reconfirmed again at this stage to make sure it coincides with the one on the fabric to ensure that it is an appropriate design but varies in size.

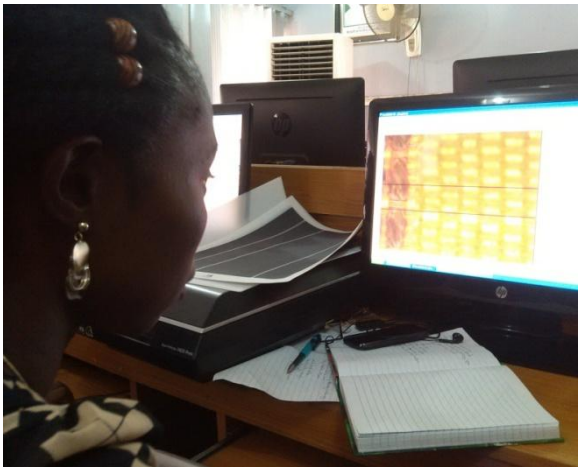


Plate LXXV: Digital colour separation. Photographed by Chudi-Duru C.C(2015)

In this section, the colours used during the weaving of the fabric were carefully studied (see plate LXXV). This particular woven fabric used for the pilot study has four colours: red, yellow, brown and white. The number of colours on the fabric determined the number of colour films to be produced during the separation. The woven fabric had four basic colours when scanned which gave four films. They are cyan, magenta, yellow and black (bitmap file).This study needed only two films for this particular sample. The cyan film was converted to the deep orange spaces while the magenta film was converted to the brown spaces. The small portion of yellow that was found in the deep orange and brown during the colour separation has low density so the yellow film was discarded. Also, the portion of black found was in low density so the yellow and black films were discarded. They were found not necessary. The white did not have any film produced because the fabric to be printed on is white. The forty-five inches by twenty inches was found to be too much so the colours were separated in bits. The image was printed in full and divided into 6 parts. Each part was separated differently to be joined after the separation.

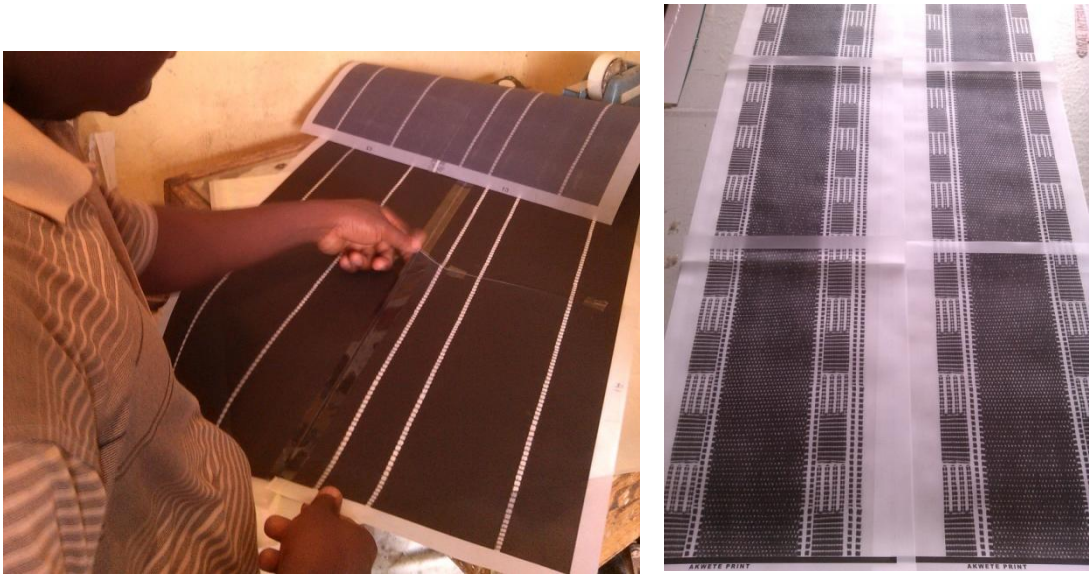


Plate LXXVI: Joining of the films. Photographed by Chudi-Duru C.C. (2015)

In order to get one whole film, the different parts were joined together according to the original woven designs of the fabric (see plate LXXVI). They were six films for the cyan and six films for the magenta. The films were ready to be exposed to the silk mesh known as the screen. But the silk mesh must be fixed to the wooden frame using a staple gun.

Sericol and sensitizer were the chemicals used in the coating of the screen. Sericol is a photosensitive chemical while the sensitizer is a chemical based liquid. The sensitizer is watery and the sericol is a bit thick, resembles pap but bluish in colour. The two solutions were mixed to produce a photosensitive solution. This mixture was applied to the screen in a thin coat to enable it dry easily. After the coating, the screen was kept away from the sun to dry in a cool dry place. The moment it dried it became photosensitive in that whatever that was exposed to it, immediately transfers to the screen.

The film was taken and laid on the screen, after which it was covered with a sheet of transparent glass which was taken out and placed under the sun. At this moment, the sun is the empowering agent that makes the image from the film to be transferred to the coated screen. The glass kept the film in place and helped the film to be in close contact with the screen. The pressure was exerted on both sides, under it was a sheet of foam while on top

wasthe transparent glass. Once the heat from the sun penetrated through the glass to the film, the designs on the film were immediately transferred to the screen. The exposure time was determined by the heat of the sun available. It was exposed in the afternoon when there was much heat so it took 3 to 4 minutes to expose. After the exposure, the glass, the film and the foam were removed. The screen was taken out to a shade and out of the sun.

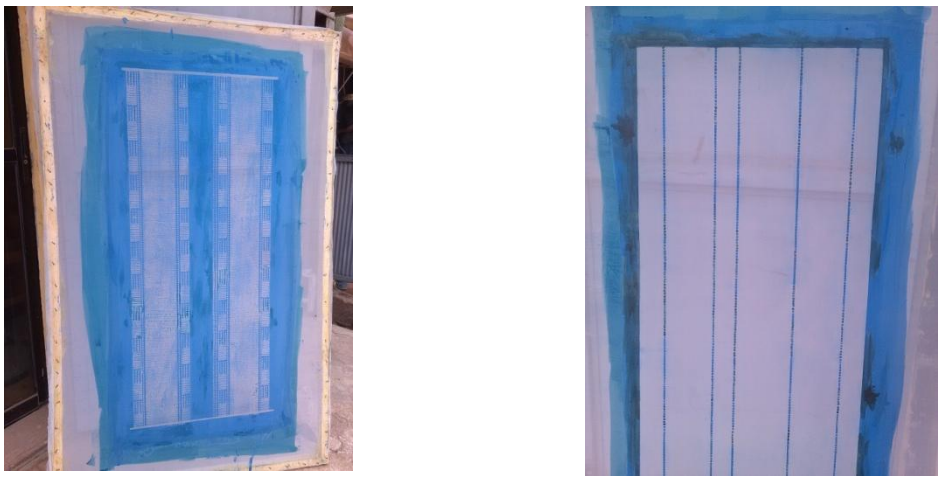


Plate LXXVII: Coating,exposing and washing of the screensPhotographed by Chudi-Duru C.C. (2015)

When the screen was taken out of the sun to a shade, water was sprinkled on its surface. As the water was sprinkled, the negative spaces were fixed on the screen while the positive spaces which were unwanted were washed away (see plate LXXVII). The images started appearing on the surface of the screen from this moment. After washing, the screen was allowed to dry and the four sides were corvered with masking tape in preparation for printing. The printing exploration was carried out in the textile studio of the department of industrial design, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.Pilot study exploration II (garment construction) experiment is placed on page 226.



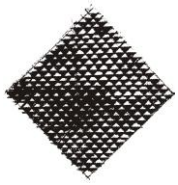
Plate LXXVIII: sample of *Akwete* print and part of the studio practical during the pilot study. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

3.16 Studio exploration I (Simulation and Printing)

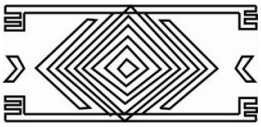
During the studio exploration, a total of thirty- eight design(38)motifs were utilised in printing.They are ruler, afo-ikaki, ikperendioma,ukwu bench, ute, ebe, popo, okpueze, double bell, ebe ukwu, ebe nta, kpakpando,fancy block, ruler, basket, mboisi, mkpa,ikaki,fan, nnunnu, achicha, mgbawa tomatoes, butterfly,okwa, epele,necklace,ukwu ikaki, single bell,anthropomorphic motif,mkpuruoka,iyerinti, double eight, ebe afomkpo, ebe olu ngalasi, okwa epele, ije agwo and stylized ebe.

Computer aided design (CAD) was utilized in designing after scanning and capturing of the design motifs. Some sketches of the design outlines were capturedin some cases while in some their simulations were used.After this process of designing, some of the designs were transferred to the screen using photographic transfer,stencilling, batik dyeing and free hand drawing. Most of the motifs mentioned were combined to form a design in most cases.During the studio practices twenty-five pieces of *Akwete* printed fabrics were produced and each had its own processes that are different from one another except three.Hence, each was discussed separately for a clearer understandingwhile the results are placed in chapter four.

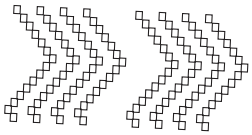
3.16.1 Studio exploration I(1)



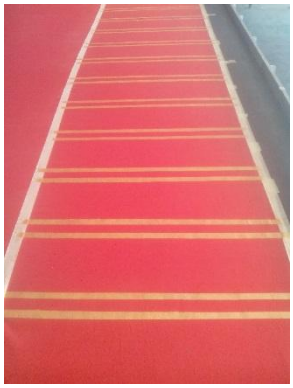
Ute motif sketch



Ikaki and ukwu bench motifs sketch



Ikperendiomma motif sketch



First stage



Second stage



Third stage



Fourth stage

Plate LXXIX:*Ikaki* and *ikperendioma, ukwu* bench and*ute* motif design stages in printing.

This is a seven coloured printed fabric, involving four motifs. The techniques that were employed in this studio printing are the stencilling technique and the hand decoration with 3D fabric ink.*Ikaki*,*ukwu*bench, *ute*and*ikperendioma* motifs were utilised to create a design in this studio printing. These motifs were scanned into the computer after a preliminary study on the sketch pad and arranged to form an appropriate design pattern using the Corel draw. After designing with the computer (see computer aided design in figure 10 below), it was printed out on a laser film paper and cut into stencils. This paper was used because the study observed that, it is water and oil proof. It will not get soaked and weak easily. All the stencils cut had their duplicates.A total number of seven different stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio. Their particular colours were indicated on top of each stencil, to avoid making some mistakes during the studio practical.The printing process is as follows:

1. The fabric was desized in order to remove any dirt, grease, starch and dust that is blocking the surface so as to allow the penetration of the printing ink.The pretreated fabric was dried and ironed to remove any creases. The printing was carried out in stages.
2. The fabric was securely fixed to the printing table by fastening it with a masking tape. (see stage1)
3. The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done according to the measurement of the design printed so to achieve accurate registration of designs (see stage 2).
4. This study started the printing with the light colours first, before the darker colours, making use of a piece of foam (see stage 3). After the printing, the fabric was decorated with the 3D fabric ink while still fastened to the printing table (see stage 4) and removed after it must have dried.The computer aided design formatis placed in the figure below.

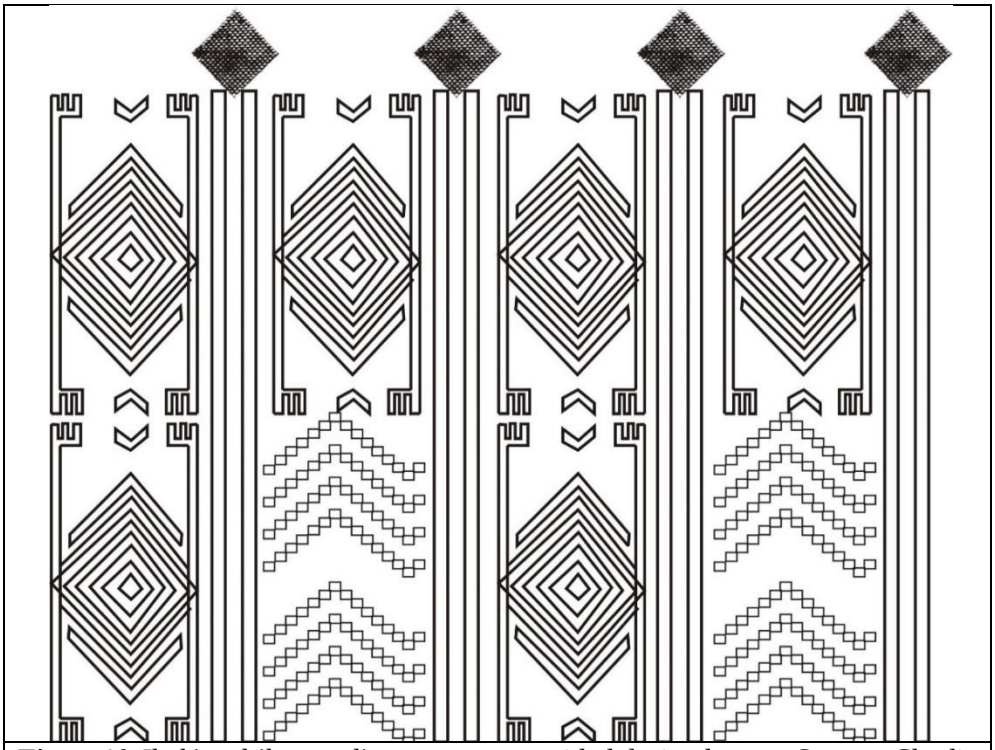
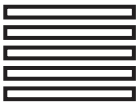


Figure10:*Ikaki* and *ikperendioma* computer aided design lay-out.Source :Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.2 Studio exploration I(2)



Ukwu bench motif sketch



Popo



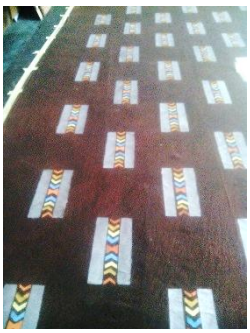
Ebe motif sketch



First stage



Second stage



Third stage



Final stage

Plate LXXX:*Ebe*, *Popo* and*Ukwu* bench motif printing stages. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques that were employed in this studio practical are the stenciling technique, plain dyeing and freehand drawing with 3D fabric ink.Three motifs were utilised in forming a design pattern in this case namely: ebe, popo and ukwu bench. This is a six coloured printed fabric.A preliminary study was carried out on the motifs before printing them on fabrics.The design was scanned into the computer and arranged to the desired pattern using a computer application known as Corel draw. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design was created out of these motifs which was utilised in this studio practical (the computer aided design is placed in figure 11 below).The design was printed out on the laser film papers and the stencils were cut. A total number of six stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.The stencils were separated into their different patterns according to their colours. The ebe motif itself was number one, the little dots were number two, popo lines were number three and ukwu bench motif was numberfour.The processes followed during the studio practical is listed as follows:

1. The hundred percent white cotton fabric was desized, in order to be more absorbent to dyes. The fabric was block dyed with brown dye before printing on it.

2. After the dyeing, it was washed and ironed to remove the creases incurred from the dyeing processes.
3. The fabric was fixed to the printing table with a masking tape to hold it firmly to the printing table in the first stage.
4. The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done according to the measurement of the design to be printed, so as to achieve accurate registration in second stage(see stage 1).
5. The printing was carried out by utilising the designs that have light colours before the darker ones in the third and fourth stages. The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are acrylic paints and 3D fabric inks(see stages 2 to 3). The computer aided design is placed in the plate below.

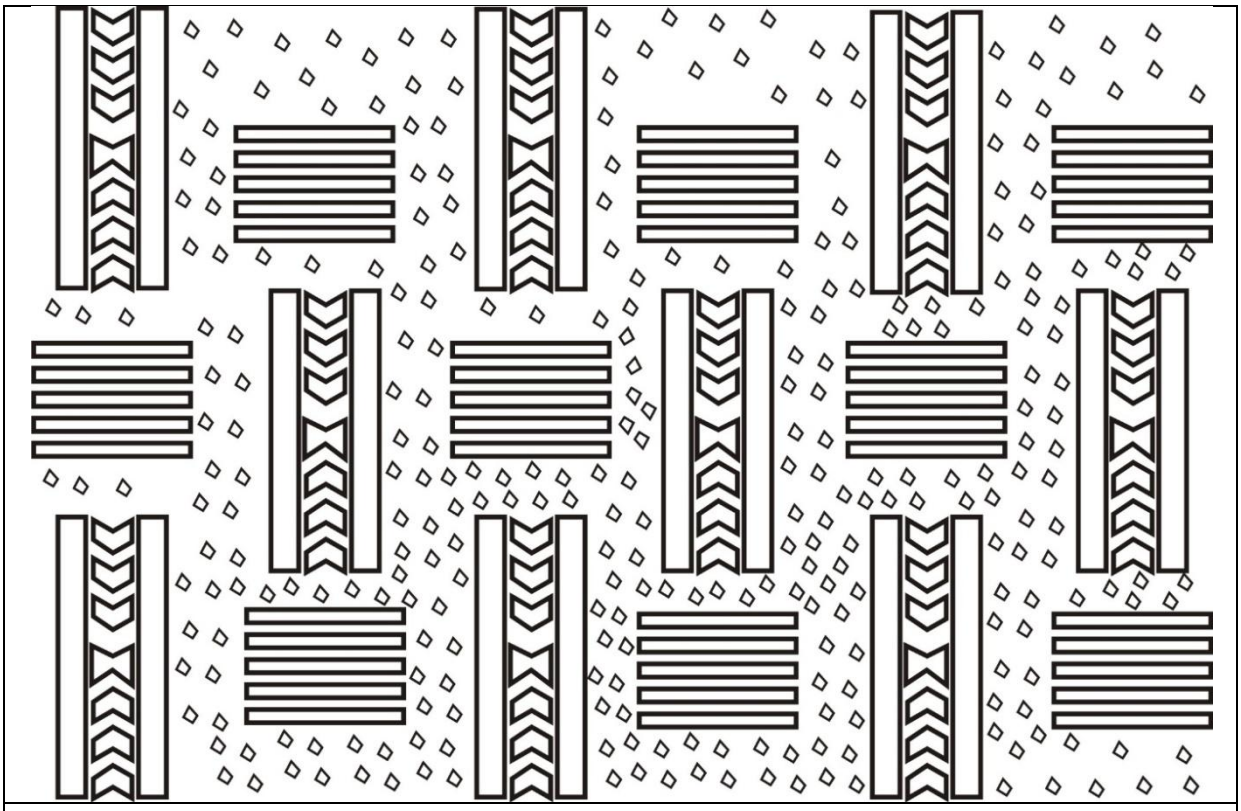
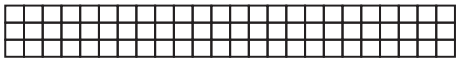
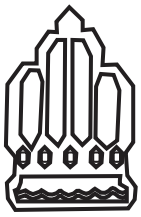


Figure 11: computer aided design utilising*Ebe, Popo* and *Ukwu* bench motif.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

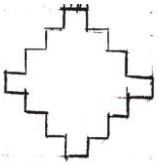
3.16.3 Studio exploration I(3)



Ute motif



Okpueze motif



Ute motif



First stage **Second stage** **Third stage** **Final stage**

Plate LXXXI:*Okpueze*and *Ute* design motifs stages of printing in the studio. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques applied in this studio practical are photographic transfer and stencilling. It is a four coloured printed fabric.Three motifs were utilised in producing a design pattern and they are placed above.Before the capturing of the design motif, a preliminary study was carried out to experiment on what the design will look like. The woven motif on the woven fabrics was captured in a scanner to be able to pick the woven details after which the design was developed and arranged in a computer using CorelDraw application.The colours were separated and printed out in form of films.The screens to be used were coated with emulsion (photosensitive chemicals). The film was exposed to the coated screen so as to transfer the designs unto it. The screen was washed with water after the exposure and the transferred designs appeared.The steps followed during the studio exploration is as follows:

1. Before the printing exercise, desizing of the 100% cotton fabric that was to be printed on so as to remove any dirt, grease and dust which might prevent the printing ink from penetrating into the fabric was carried out.
2. The pretreated fabric was ironed to remove some rumples and to achieve the smoothness of the cloth surface.
3. The fabric was fixed to the printing table in the studio with a masking tape. Making sure that all the four sides are properly taped to the printing table in stage one.
4. The dimension of the design transferred to the screen was being taken and marked out with a tape measure on the fabric placed on the printing table.An acrylic yarn was used as the demarcation of the point of designs to achieve a proper registration in stage two.The printing commenced starting with the screen in stage three.
5. After the screen printing, four stencils were also utilised in stage four.This study utilised the screen before the stencils. The *okpueze* was screen printed while the *ute* and the other minor motifs were printed utilising the stencilling method.Below in this figure, the computer aided design format is placed.

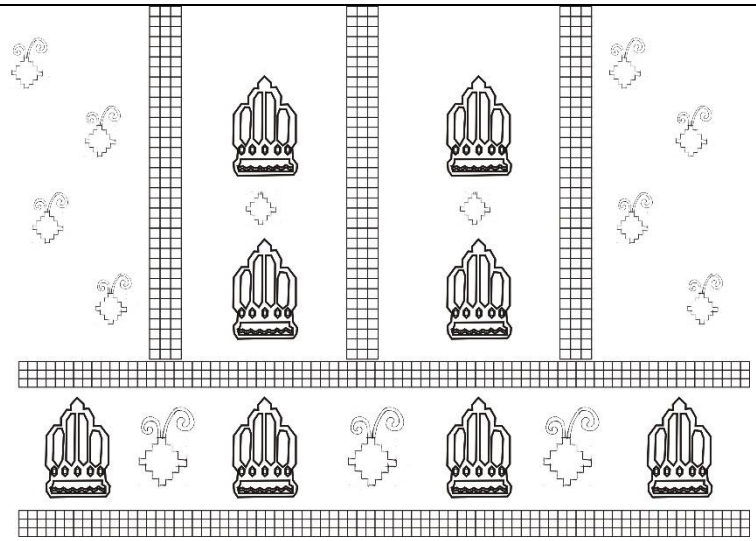
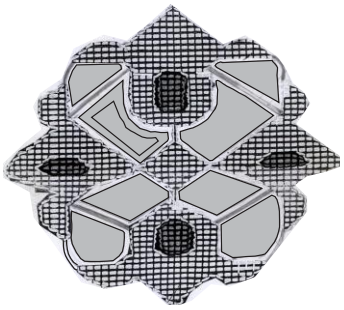


Figure 12 :*Okpueze* Motif computer aided design. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.4 Studio explorationI(4)



Double bell motif sketch



First stage



Second stage



Third stage



Final stage

Plate LXXXII: Double bell design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The printing techniques applied in this studio practical are photographic transfer and stencilling. It is a four coloured printed fabric. A preliminary study was carried out to see what the design will look like and to choose the appropriate design network that was used. The motif on the woven fabrics was scanned in a scanner to be able to capture the woven details after which the design was developed and arranged in a desired pattern and colour using a computer application known as CorelDraw.The study utilised the simulation of the motif instead of the outline. After this process, the study separated the colours using digital colour separation so as to produce the design in different films representing the various colours that were printed.The screen to be used for the photographic transfer was coated with photosynthetic chemicals so that when the design films were exposed to it in the dark room the design appeared on the screen.The screen was washed with water to make way for the

visibility of the designs exposed.The steps followed during the studio exploration is as follows:

1. Desizing of the 100% cotton fabric to remove any dirt, grease and dust.The pretreatedfabric was ironed to remove the rumples.The fabric was fixed to the printing table in the studio with a masking tape.
2. The dimension of the design transferred to the screen was taken and marked out with a tape measure on the fabric placed on the printing table.An acrylic yarn was used as the demarcation of the different units of designs to achieve a proper registration during the printing exercise in stage one.
3. During the printing, the design on the screen which is the double bellwas screen printed first, before the designs that were cut in stencils in stages two, three and four.

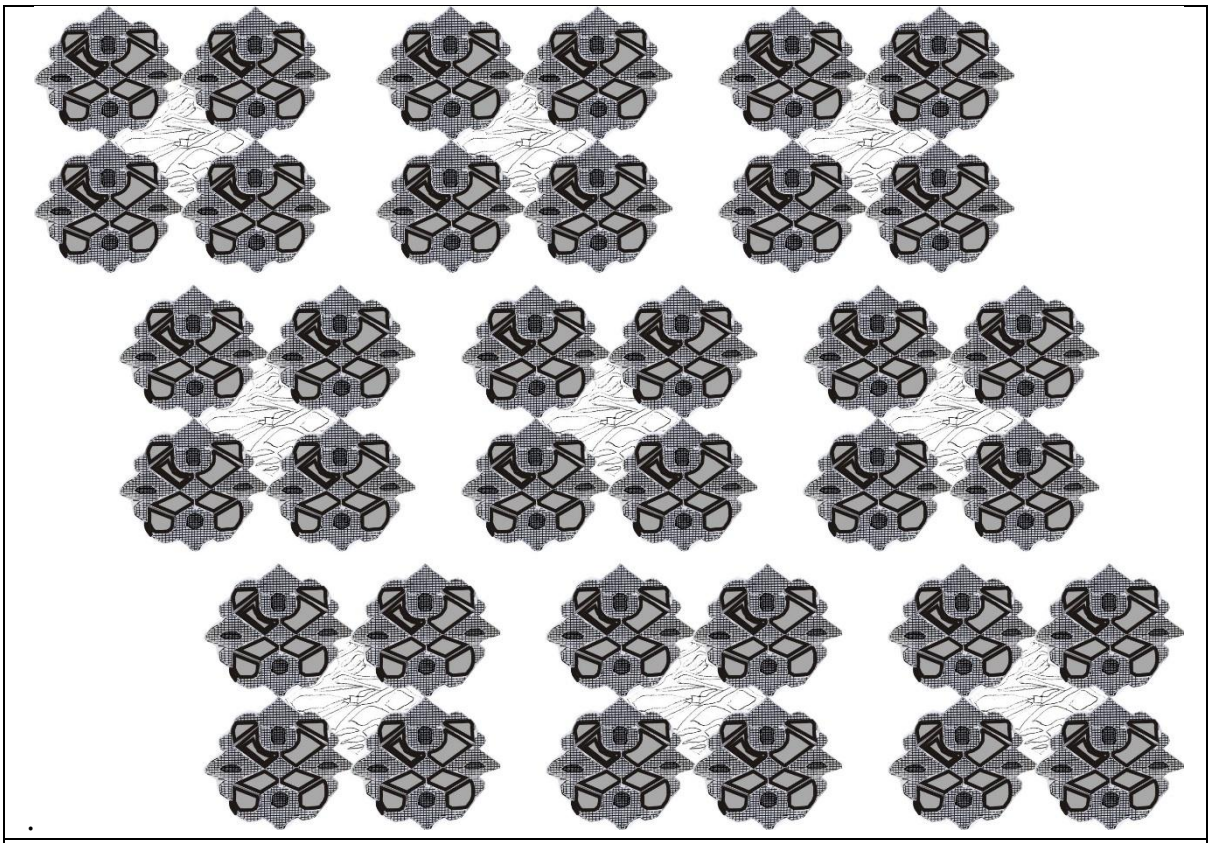
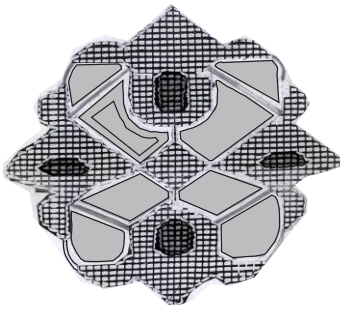


Figure 13: Double bell motif design layout. Source :Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.5 Studio explorationI(5)



Double bell motif sketch



First stage **Second stage** **Third stage** **Final stage**

Plate LXXXIII: Double bell design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

The techniques applied in this studio practical are photographic transfer and stencilling. It is a four coloured printed fabric. It is another colour scheme of double bell design. A preliminary study was carried out by sketching out the designs on the sketch pad to see and choose different design networks that have been experimented with.This gave an insight to what the design would look like. The motif on the woven fabrics was captured in a scanner to get its simulation after which the motif was developed and arranged in a desired pattern and colour using a computer application known as CorelDraw. After this process, the study separated the colours using Digital colour separation so as to produce the design in different films representing the various colours to be printed.The screen to be used for the photographic transfer was coated with photosynthetic chemicals so that when the films were exposed to it in the dark room, the design appeared on the screen.The steps followed during the studio exploration are as follows:

1. The cotton fabric was desized, to make it more receptive to the printing inks.The pretreated fabric was ironed to remove some rumples.
2. The fabric was fixed to the printing table in the studio with a masking tape. The dimension of the design transferred to the screen was taken and marked out with a tape measure on the fabric placed on the printing table.An acrylic yarn was used as the demarcation of the different units of designs to achieve a proper registration during the printing exercisein stage two. During the printing, the design on the screen which is double bellwas printed first, before the designs that were cut in stencils in stage three.In thefigure below, the computer aided design format has been inserted.

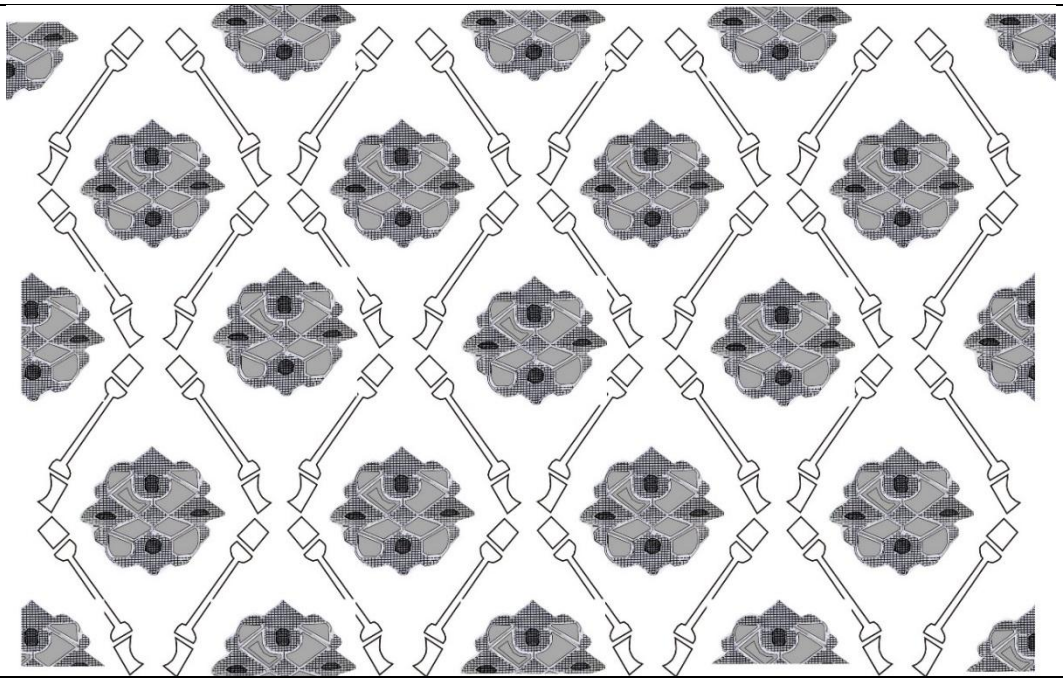


Figure 14: Double Bell design layout 2. Source :Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.6 Studio exploration I(6)



Ebeafomkpo motif sketch



First stage



Second stage



Third stage



Final stage

Plate LXXXIV: Ebe afomkpo design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Before the printing, a preliminary study was carried out and the motif was sketched. The motif was scanned into the computer and arranged the way the study felt it will be appropriate for printed fabrics. The ebe afomkpo motif was stylised a bit to make it more attractive but still retained its outline.This study chose to do this to see if it will be appropriate for printed fabrics. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design was created out of the *ebe* motif(it is placed in figure 15 below).The design was printed out on laser film papers and the stencils were cut. A total number of four stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.The stencils were separated into four parts. The *ebe afo mkpo* motif itself with the dots is number one, the little *ebe* inside the *ebe* motif which is red in colour is number two, the stem-like lines to the right is number three, while the other stem to the left is number four.This is atwo coloured printed fabric and the technique utilised in this studio practical is stencilling only.The printing processes involved are as follows:

1. The fabric was desized in order to remove any dirt, grease and dust so as to be more absorbent to the printing inks.After its pretreatment, it was ironed to remove any form of crease.
2. The fabric was placed on the printing table with a masking tape so as to be firm while printing.The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread in stage one. This was done according to the measurement of the design to be printed.
3. During the printing, the designs on the stencils were dabbed on the fabrics using a piece of tied foam, that was shown in stages two, three and final (plate LXXXIV). The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are the acrylic paints.The computer aided design format is placed in the figure below.

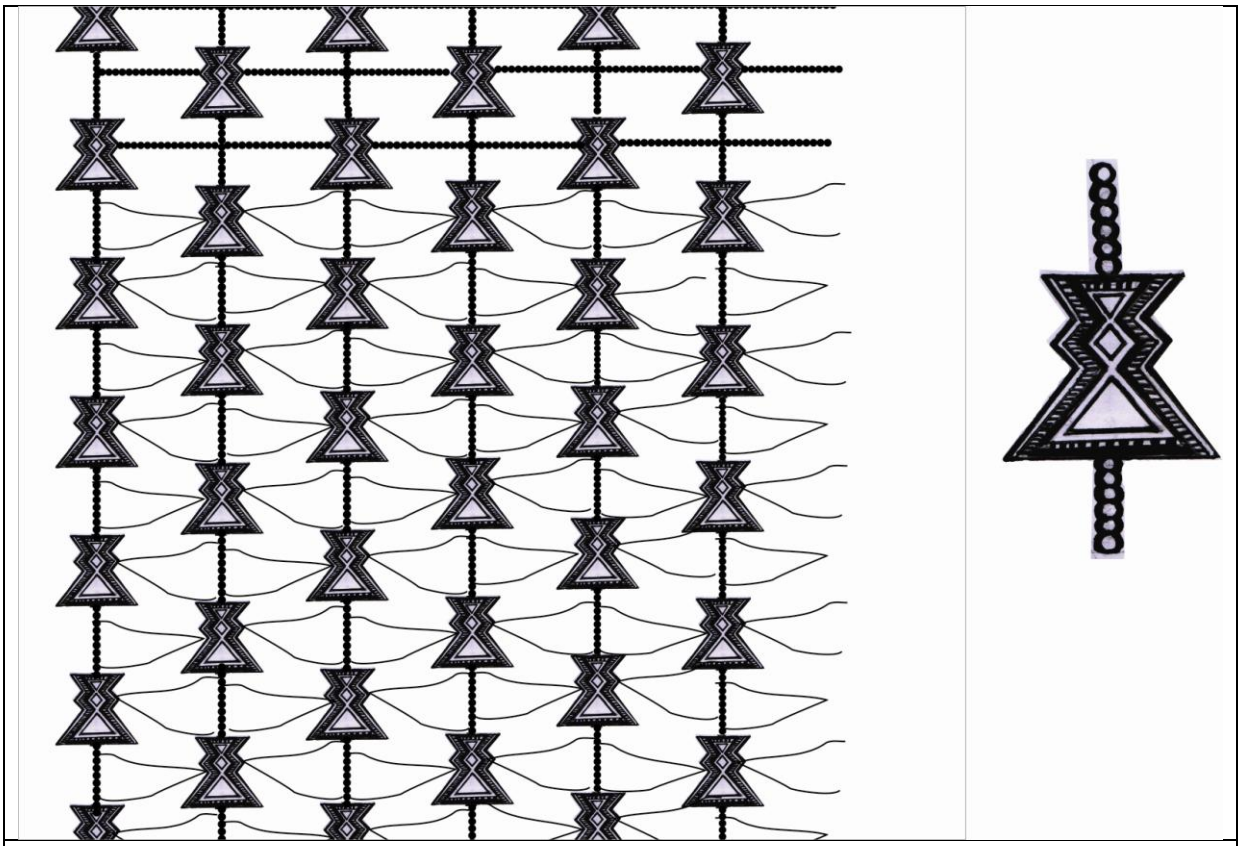
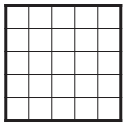
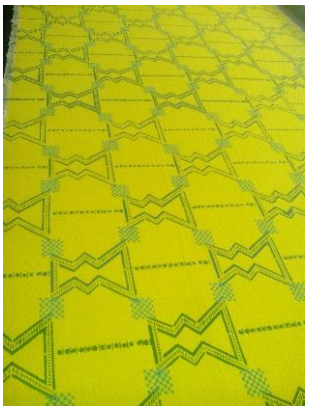


Figure15:*Ebeafomkpo* motif (sketch)**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

3.16.7 Studioexploration 7


Ebe motif


Ute motif







First stage **Second stage** **Third stage**

Plate LXXXV: *Ebe ukwu afomkpo*design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The technique that was utilised in this studio exploration is the stencilling only. This is a four coloured printed fabric. The same motif has been previously utilised earlier (plate LXXXIV) but this is a different colour scheme. The processes utilised in the studio exploration was the same as its counterpart described above so it will not be explained again. The design was printed out on laser film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated into four pieces. Ebe motif withdots is number one, the little ebe inside ebe motif which is red in colour is number two, while ute motif is number four. The printing started by utilising the stencils in dabbing. The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are acrylic paints.The computer aided design format is placed in the figure below.

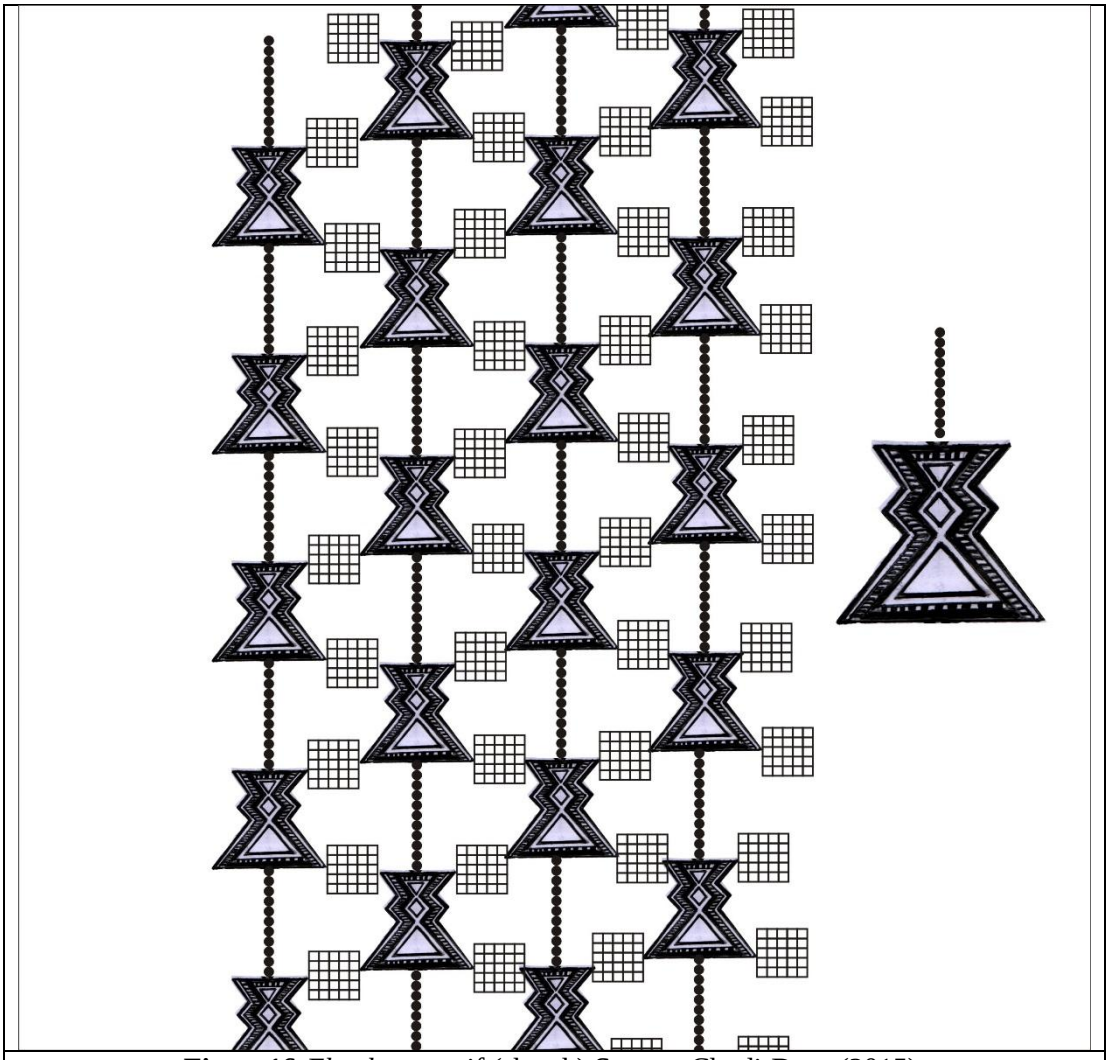
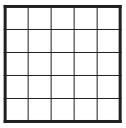
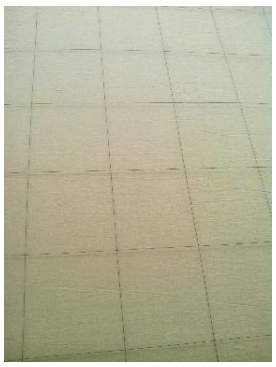


Figure16:*Ebeukwu* motif (sketch) **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015).

3.16.8 Studio explorationI(8)


Ebe motif


Ute motif







First stage **Second stage** **Third stage**

Plate LXXXVI:*Ute* and ebe design motifs printing stages. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The technique that has been utilised in this studio exploration is the stencilling. This is a two coloured printed fabric.Before the printing commenced, there was a preliminary study conducted by this study after which the motif was scanned into the computer and arranged the way this study felt it would be appropriate, using the Corel draw application. The design developed in the computer with these motifs were printed out in a laser film paper. Two different stencils were cut out from the design produced for this studio practical. Other spares were also kept standby in case there's a cut. The processes utilised in the studio exploration are documented below.

1. The hundred percent white cotton fabric was desized in order to have more affinity for dyes and printing inks.After desizing, the fabric was block dyed to colour yellow before printing on it. The materials that were utilised for the dyeing exercise are a yellow dye, caustic soda, sodium hydrosulphite, buckets of cold and hot water, white cotton fabric. It was dried, ironed and fixed to the table with a masking tape.

2. The dimension of the design was taken and marked on the fabric laid on the printing table in first stage.
3. The printing commenced. This particular design was carried out by dabbing with a piece of foam that was tied with a string to provide a handle that was held while printing in stage two.The foam has a smooth base which served as a carrier of the colour to be used.Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

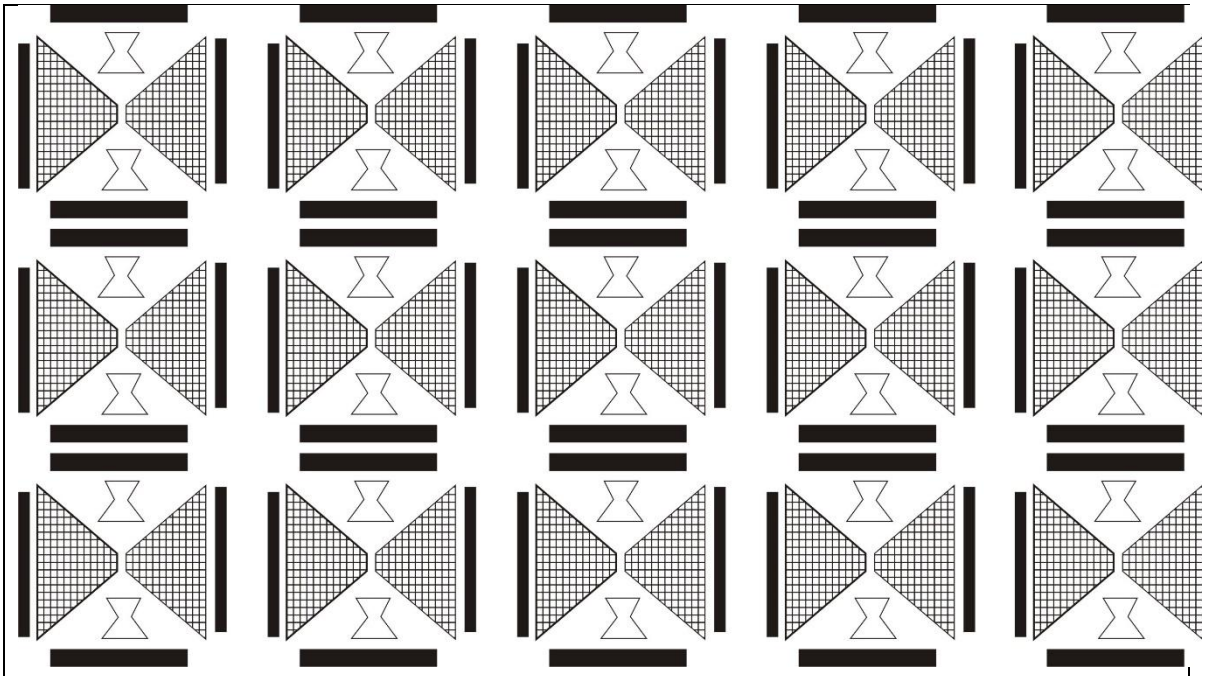
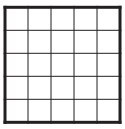


Figure 17: *Ute* and *ebe* motifs computer aided design.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.9 Studio explorationI(9)



Ebe motif sketch



Ute motif sketch



Kpakpando motif sketch



First stage Second stage Third stage Final stage

Plate LXXXVII: *Ute*, *ebe* and *kpakpando* design motifs printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

This is a 5 coloured stencilled printed fabric. The orange background of the fabric was block dyed. The fabric was initially white in colour. The motifs were extracted from the woven fabrics by drawing them on the sketch pad during the preliminary study. This was done because this study wanted to make use of the outline, not the simulation.The following processes were followed during the studio practical:

1. The extracted motifs sketched were scanned into the computer, after which coreldraw application was employed to neaten and arrange them to form a design which was printed on the cloth.Three motifs were combined to form a design pattern.
2. The dyed cloth was dried, ironed and fixed to the table with a masking tape in stage one.The dimension of the design was taken from the paper print out and marked on the fabric laid on the printing table.

3. The design made were printed out in a film paper. Stencils were cut out of the printed designs. Four different stencils were cut for this studio practical. Other spares were also kept standby.
4. The printing commenced. This particular design was carried out by dabbing with a smallpiece of foam that was tied at one end to form a flat soft surface in stages two and three.The computer aided design format is placed in this figure is below.

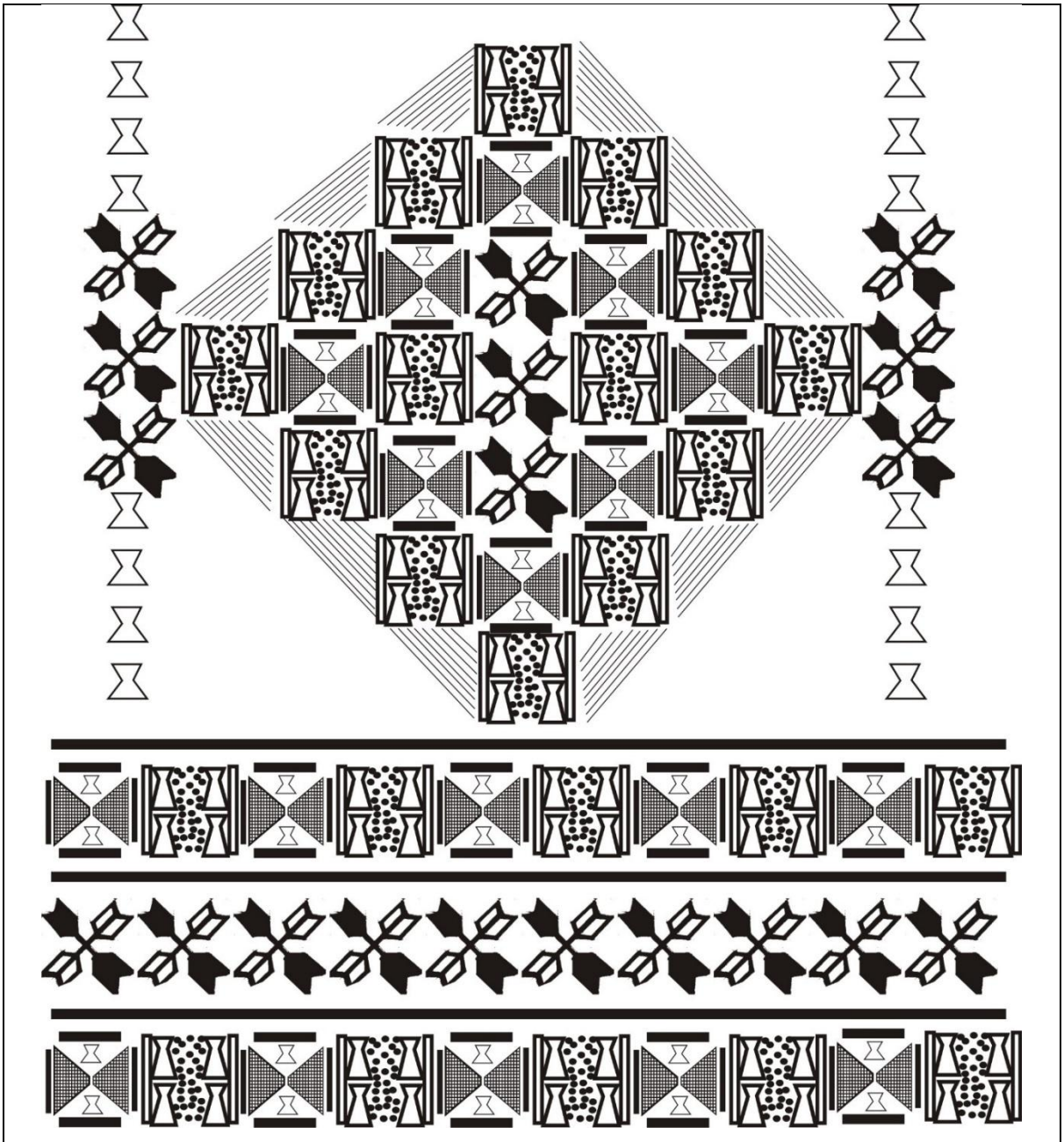
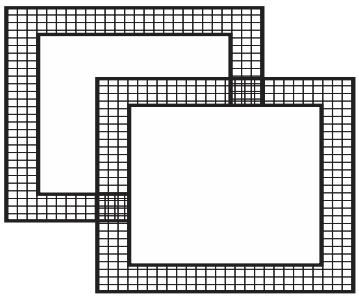


Figure 18: *Ute*, *ebe* and *kpakpando* design motifs computer aided design.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

3.16.10 Studio explorationI(10)



Fancy block motif sketch



First stage



Second stage



Third stage



Final stage

PlateLXXXVIII:Fancy block design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The technique utilised in this studio exploration is the stencilling. It is a four coloured printed fabric utilising the fancy block motif.A total number of three stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.The motif was scanned into the computer after a preliminary study and arranged to form a design that could be printed. This study utilised the simulation of this motif to see if it would be appropriate for printed fabrics. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design was created with the motif.The design was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated into three according to their different colours. The processes involved in this studio practical are:

1. The fabric was pretreated in order to have more affinity for the printing ink, dried and ironed.
2. The fabric was secured tightly on the printing table with a masking tape and the portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing

thread in stage one and two. This was done according to the measurement of the design printed.

3. The printing commenced in stages three and four. The inks that were used to carry out this first stage studio practical are the stickerinks, while the acrylic paints were used to for the stencilled areas.The computer aided design format is inserted in the figure below.

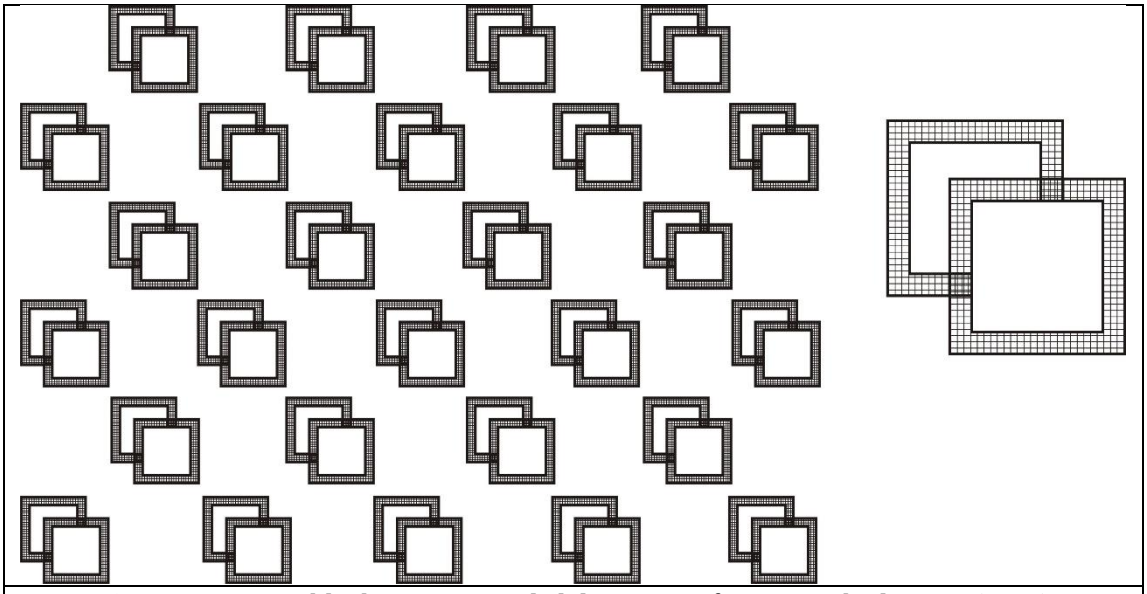


Figure 19: Fancy block computer aided design motif.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.11 Studio explorationI(11)



First Stage Second Stage Third Stage Final Stage

Plate LXXXIX: Multiple*Akwete* design printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

This is a one colour printed fabric. The techniques utilised in this studio exploration are the photographic transfer and stencilling .Three printed fabrics were produced with the same

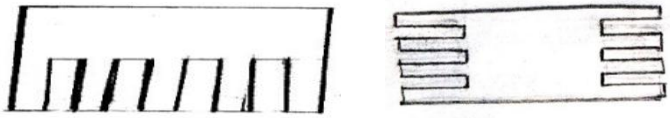
screen.One was on a piece of black fabric, the other was on a white fabric and another was on a batiked background in plate CXXIX. A paper design was produced utilising a total number of forty *Akwete*woven design motifs sketches during the preliminary studies. After it was completed, the photographic transfer was utilised to transfer the designs onto the screen; this was done in a dark room. The transferred design tothe screen was first of all printed before utilizing the cut stencils.The steps followed during the studio practice are as follows:

1. The cotton fabric was desized.The pretreated fabric was ironed to remove some rumples.
2. The fabric was fixed to the printing table in the studio with a masking tape. Making sure that all the four sides are properly taped to the printing table.The dimension of the design transferred to the screen was taken and marked out with a tape measure on the fabric placed on the printing table.An acrylic yarn was used as the demarcation of the point of a unit of design to achieve a proper registration in stage two.
3. After the screen printing in stage three, some stencils that were cut previously, for other designs were also utilised in this particular printing (stage four).



Figure 20: Multiple *Akwete* design motifs (paper design).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.13 Studio explorationI(13)



Mboisi motif sketches



First stage Second stage Third stage Final stage

Plate XC: *Mboisi* design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The technique utilised in this studio exploration is stencilling. This fabric is a five coloured printed fabric.The design was sketched and scanned into the computer.The *Akwete* design motif utilised in this study is *mboisi* (comb).Other designs were added to compliment the motif.Coreldraw application was used to shapen and arrange the scanned designs to form a desired pattern, after which colours were apportioned to the design. The design was printed out on film papers and each colour had its own stencils cut. The stencils were separated into eight parts according to their designs and colour. The mboisi motif is number one, the big square is number two, the diagonal is number three, the medium square is number four, the smallest square is number five, the solid coloured block is number six ,the texture is the eight in number while the branchlike lines are number nine.A total number of nine different stencils were cut before embarking on the printing practical in the studio.The studio exploration processes are explained in details below.

1. The cotton fabric was desized.This made it have more affinity for the printing inks that were used during the studio practical.The fabric was ironed after the pretreatment and drying.
2. It was was tightly fixed on the printing table with a masking tape. The masking tape was also used in achieving straight and sharp lines in this design in stage one.The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done according to the measurement of the unit of design to be printed.
3. The printingprocesses started with the light colours first, beginning with the yellow, lilac, deep green and black in the second and third stages. The golden colour came as the last because it was printed on top of the colours that were printed before. The paints that were used to carry out this of studio practical are acrylic paints because they appear brighter and are fast on the cloth when washed.Below on this figure is the computer aided design format.

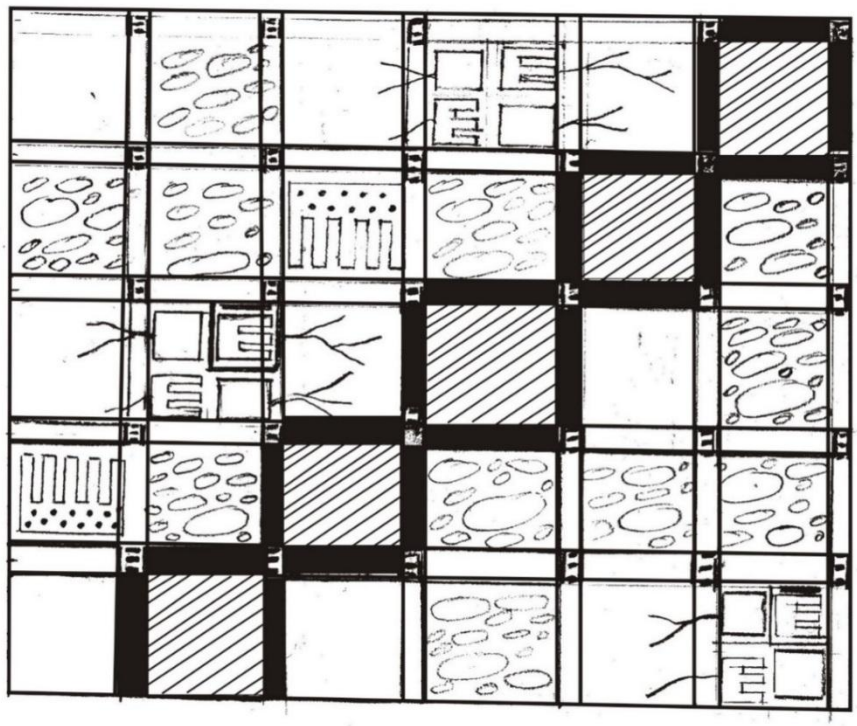
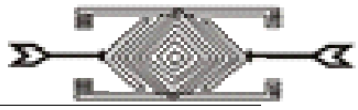
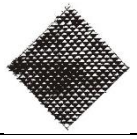


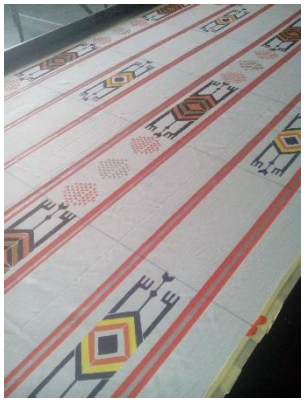
Figure 21: *Mboisi* motif computer aided design.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.14 Studio exploration I(14)

	
Ikaki motif sketch	Scissors motif


First stage


Second stage


Third stage


Final stage

Plate XCI:*Ikaki* and scissors design motif printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques used in this studio exploration are the stencilling and free hand drawing. This is a six coloured printed fabric.A total number of four stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.The design motifs extracted from the woven fabric were scanned into the computer after the preliminary studies have been conducted and arranged to achieve an appropriate pattern which was employed in printing.The Ikaki and scissors motifs were made use of to see if they could be appropriate for printed fabrics. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design was created out of these motifs.The design was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated into the various colours involved.The studio exploration processes are recorded below.

1. The plain white fabric was desizedso as to make it more absorbent to printing inks.The fabric was ironed after pretreatment and drying.It was secured tightly to the printing table with a masking tape to avoid shifting or pulling up.The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This

was done according to the measurement of the design to be printed as guidelines for accurate registration in stage one.

2. The printing started with the printing of light colours then the dark colours in stages two and three. The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are thetextile printing inks which were mixed with the acrylic and used in dabbing.While the3D fabric ink was used for free hand decoration after the stencilling in the final stage.Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

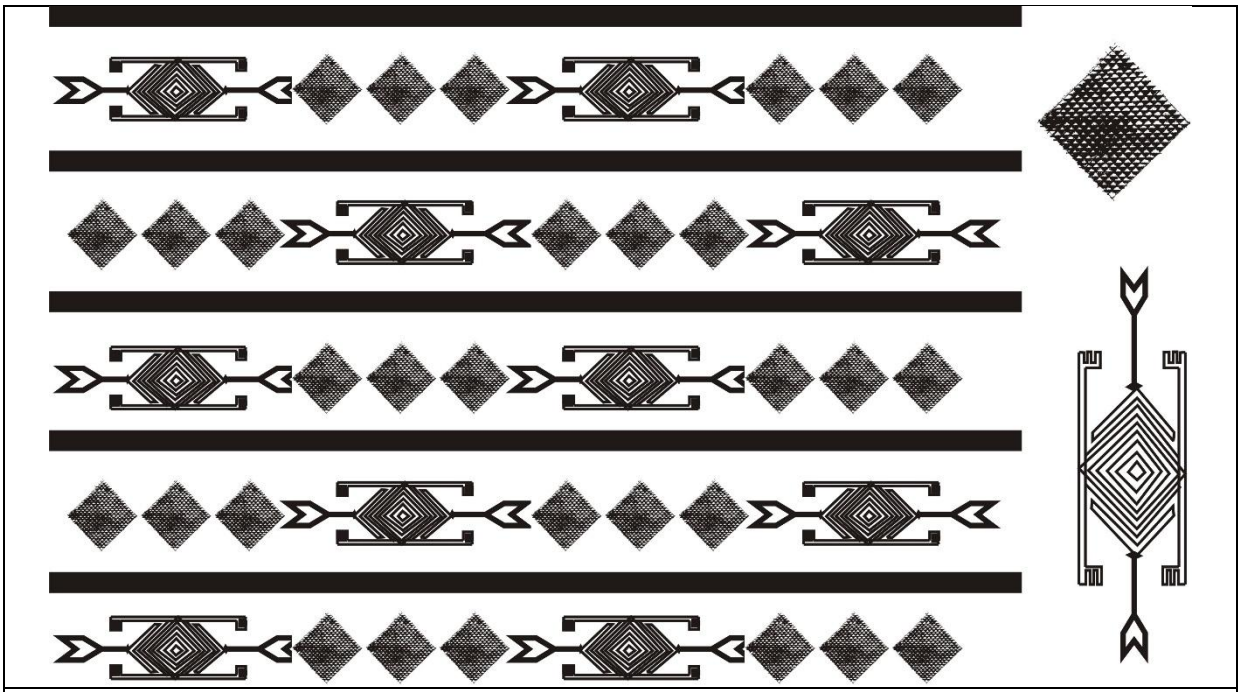
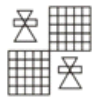
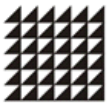
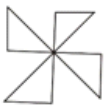


Figure 22:*Ikaki* with hands and legs and scissors computer aided design.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016).

3.16.15 Studio exploration I(15)

				
Ute and ebe motif sketch	Scissors motif sketch	anthropomorphic design motif	Ceilingfan motif sketch	Fancyblock and rulermotif sketch



First stage



Second stage

Plate XCII: Fan, *ebe*, scissors, *ute*, and anthropomorphic design motifs printing stages. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

This is a five coloured printed fabric.The technique that was utilised in this studio exploration is the stencilling only.After the preliminary study was conducted, the design motifs were scanned into the computer, so as to shapen, arrange and apply colours to them inorder to produce an appropriate design. The *Akwete* motifs utilised in this studio practical are ebe, scissors, ceiling fan, *ute* and an anthropomorphic design. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a paper design was created out of these motifs.

The design was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated and labelled so as to avoid mistakes according to their various colours.The processes of the studio practical are explained below.

1. The fabric was desized, so as to be permeable when the printing inks are applied on it, and ironed after pretreatment and drying.

2. It was laid and held tightly on the printing table with a masking tape to avoid shifting.The portions in which the designs were printed on, were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread in the first stage. This was done according to the measurement of the design printed.A total number of six stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.
3. The printing took place by printing the light colours first and then the dark colours in stage two.A piece of foam that is tied to produce a flat surface was used in the dabbing. The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are the mixture of textile printing inks and acrylic paints.Below on this figure, the computer aided design format has been placed.

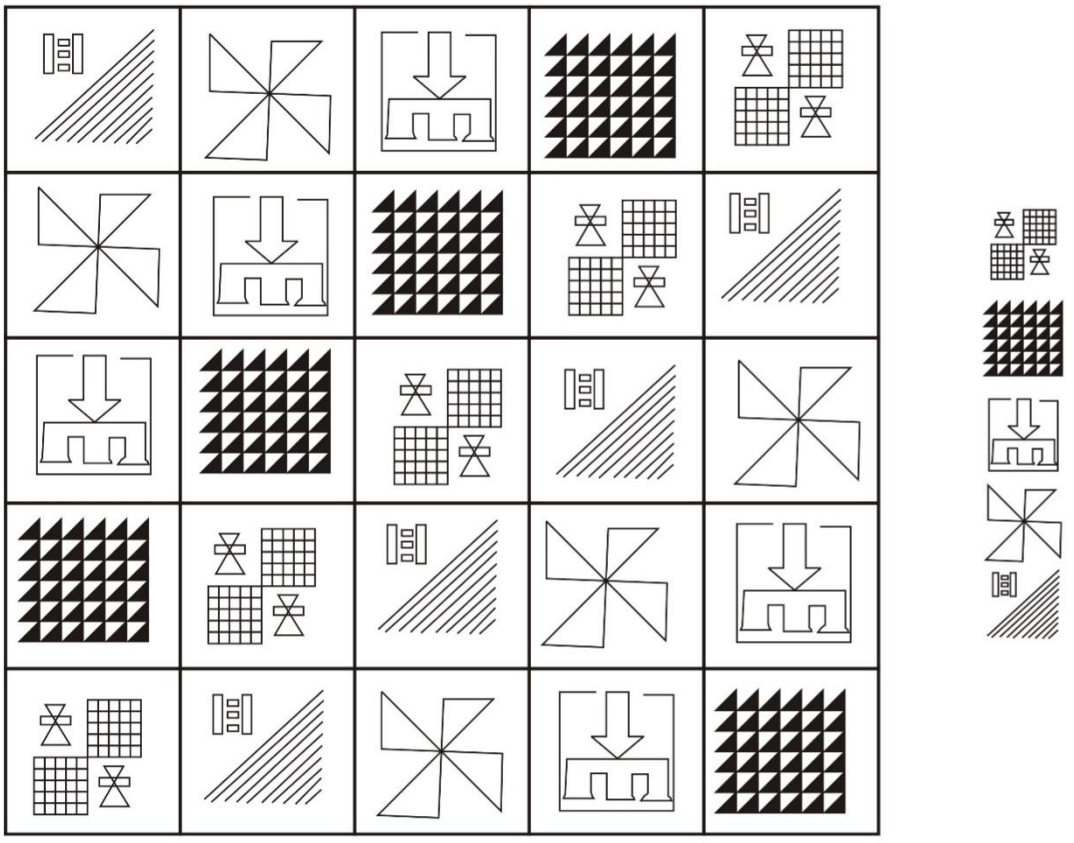
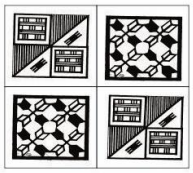
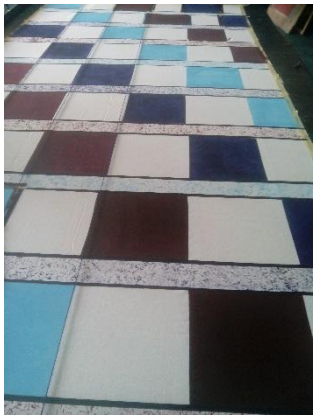


Figure 24: Fan, *ebe*, scissors, *ute*, and anthropomorphic computer aided design motifs (sketch).

Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.16 Studio explorationI(16)

	
Abstract motif sketch.	Popo, mboisi and kpakpando motif sketch



First stage **Second stage** **Third stage** **Final stage**

Plate XCIII: *Kpakpando*, *mboisi* and *popo* design motifs printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The printing techniques that were utilised in this study are the photographic transfer and the stencilling. This is a four coloured printed fabric.The sketching of the design was done in a sketch pad during the preliminary studies. After which the motifs sketched were scanned into the computer.They were worked on by shaping andarrangingthem appropriately, using the coreldraw application. This resulted to a pattern of design.After this, the design was printed out in a paper and transferred to the screen using the photographic transfer.The part of the designs that required stencils were printed out on film papers and cut. A total number of two stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio while the rest of the designs were achieved through screen printing.The stencils were separated into different parts according to the colours and designs.The studio exploration processes are described below.

1. The cotton fabric was desized in order to make it more absorbent to printing inks.The fabric was ironed after pretreatment and drying.It was laid and held tightly on the printing table with a masking tape, to avoid shifting and lifting up while printing.The portions in which the designs were printed on, were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done according to the measurement of the unit of design printed in stage one.
2. A texture was created by making use of two ply yarns which weresqueezed to form a rough ball.These squeezed yarns were dipped in the inks that and applied lightly on the surface of the fabric to create a texture before printing in stage two.
3. The printing was carried out starting with the screen printing, after whichthe cut stencils were utilised starting from the light colours and ending with the dark ones. The paints that were used to achieve this studio practical are the textile inks and acrylic paints.Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

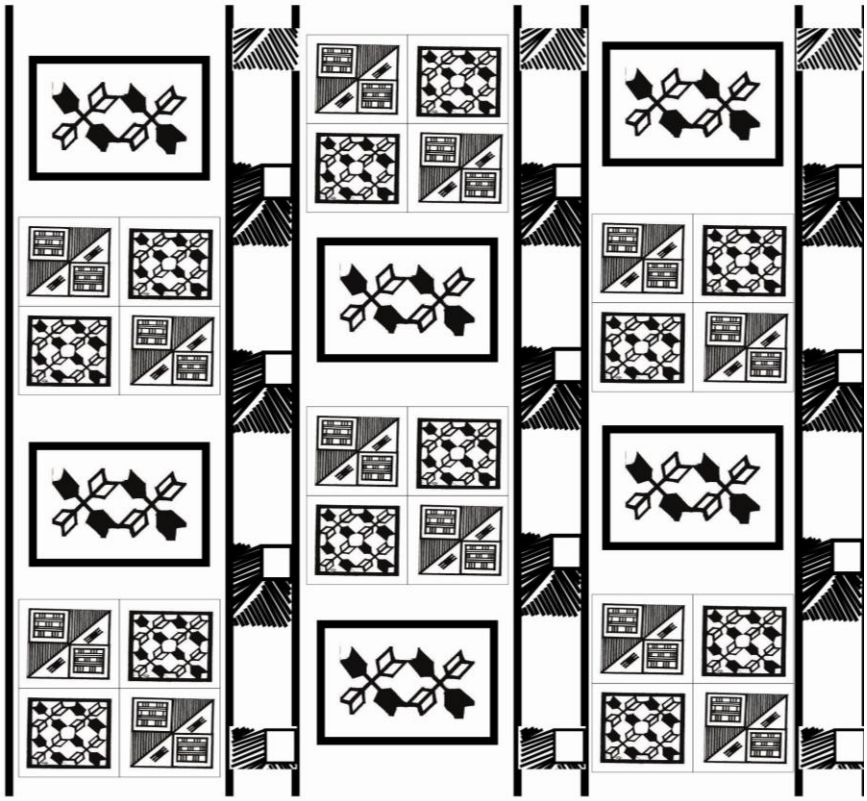
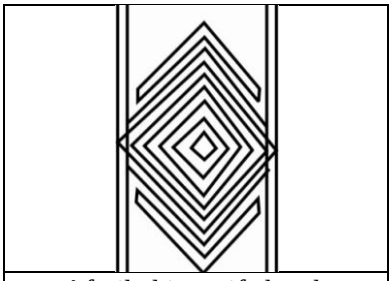


Figure 25: *Kpakpando*, *mboisi* and *popo*motifs computer aided designs**. Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16. 17 Studio explorationI (17)



Afo ikaki motif sketch



First stage



Second stage



Third stage



Final stage

Plate XCIV: Afo*ikaki* printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques employed in this studio practical are stencillingand batik method of dyeing. The *afo ikaki* motif sketchwas scanned into the computer.It was neatened and arranged in an appropriate mannerusing CorelDraw application. At the end of utilizing the application, a design was created out of the ikaki motif. A total number of seven stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.The design was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated into different parts and colours.Seven stencils were cut and utilised in this study.The following processes were involved in the studio practical.

1. The white fabric was desized and after the pretreatment, four-fifths of the fabric was measured andblock dyed lemon green while the remaining one-fifth was resisted with

wax and queezed to achieve some crackles.After the dyeing, the fabric was dewaxed and ironed to remove excess wax and wrinkles.

2. The fabric was laid and held taut on the printing table with a masking tape to avoid shifting. The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done according to the measurement of the design that was printed(first stage).
3. The printing was embarked on, and a collection of tiny squares cut on laser film paper were used; to add some textures to the plain dyed surfaces in the fourth stage. The printing started with the lightest colour and ended with the darkest one in the second and third stages. The paints that were used to carry out this studio practice are the acrylic and textile inks.Below on this figure is the computer aided design format.

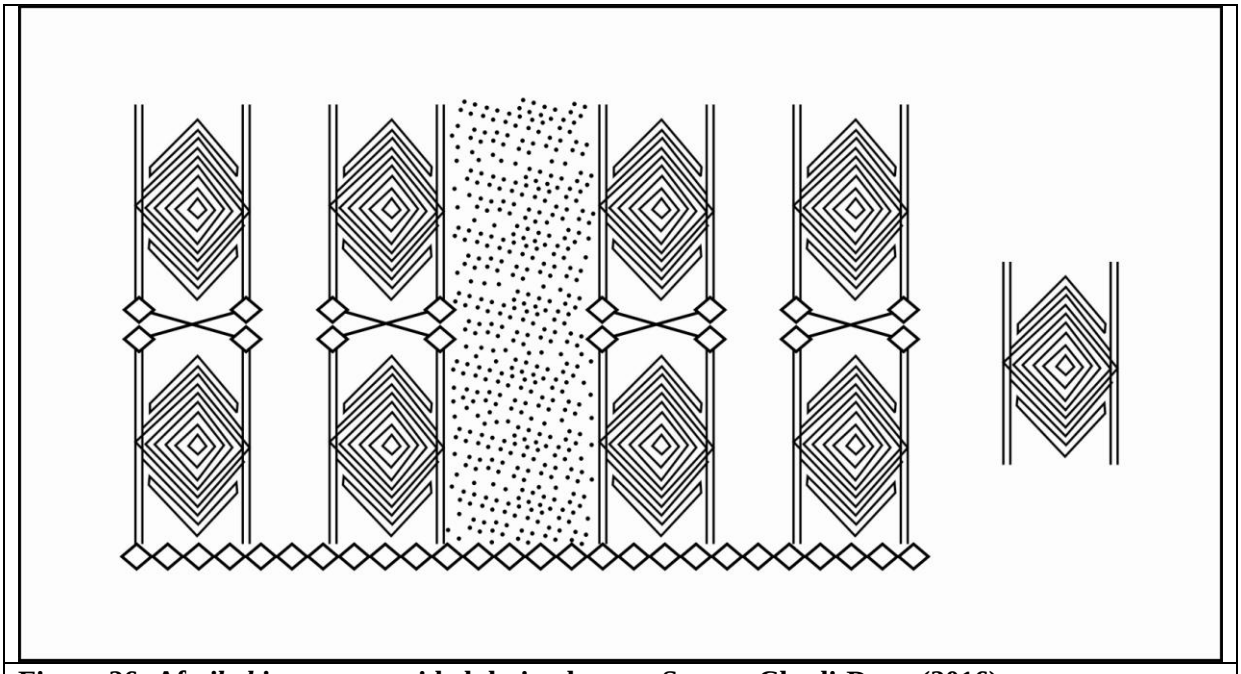
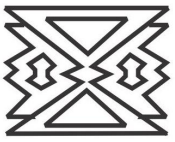


Figure 26: Afo *ikaki* computer aided design lay-out.Source:Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.18 Studio exploration I(18)

	
Stylized ebe motif sketch.	Nnunnu motif sketch.



First stage **Second stage** **Third stage** **Final stage**

PlateXCV:*Nnunnu* and stylized*ebe* design motifs printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The technique that was utilised in this studio practice is stencilling.It is a four coloured printed fabric.The motif sketches utilised were scanned into the computer after the preliminary studies have been conducted.Coreldraw was employed in designing with the motifs.It helped in getting the actual shape of these motifs, design network and application of colours. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design was created out of the *ebe* and *nnunnu* motifs.It was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut.A total number of three stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio. The stencils were separated into their various parts according to their colours.The printing process is presented as follows:

1. The fabric was desized in orderto be more absorbent to the printing inks and ironed.The fabric was laid and fastened to the printing table with a masking tape to avoid shifting and lifting up.

2. The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread and masking tape in stage one. This was done according to the measurement of the unit of design printed.
3. The printing was carried out by utilising the cut stencils and dabbing the designs onto the fabric (in two, three and final stages). The paints that were used to execute this studio practical are a mixture of textile inks and acrylic paint.Below on this figure is the computer aided design format.

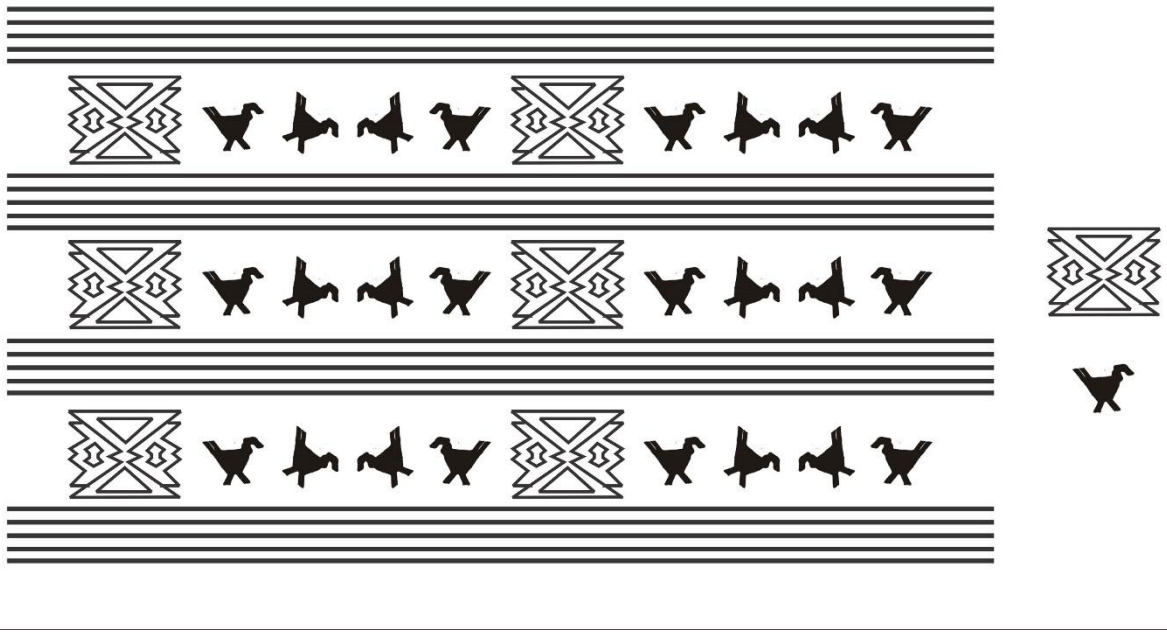
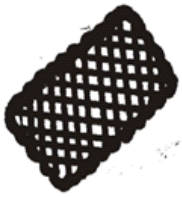
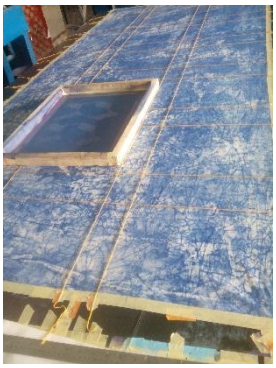
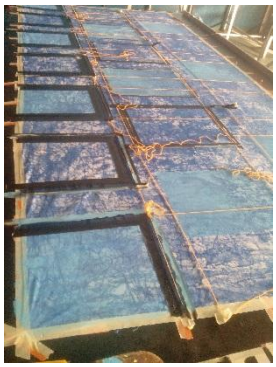


Figure27:*Nnunnu* and stylized ebe computer aided design lay-out. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.19 Studio explorationI (19)

	
Achicha (biscuit) motif sketch	Achicha motif sketches



First stage **Second stage** **Third stage** **Final stage**

Plate XCVI: *Achicha* (biscuit) design motifs printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques that were utilised in this studio practical are photographictransfer, batik dyeing and stencilling. It is a five coloured printed fabric.The preliminary study on the design was conducted by producing a rough sketch of the motif and its design network; the picture of *achicha* motif was scanned into the computer and arranged appropriately. Corel draw application was employed while designing. The portion of design for stencilling was printed out on film papers and cut while the other portion was printed on a plain white sheet of paper in black and white (negative and positive) and transferred to the screen using photographic transfer technique. A total number of three stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio while the main motif (achicha) was transferred to the screen.The stencils were separated into their different parts according to their colours.These processes below were strictly followed during the studio practical.

1. The white fabric was desized so as to have more affinity for dyes and printing ink.After the pretreatment, it was dried and covered all overwith wax. It was also squeezed in order to have some crackles and form some designs, which could serve as a texture. After the batik dyeing process, the fabric was washed and ironed as it has been shown in the first stageabove.
2. Before the printing, the fabric was held taut on the printing table with the aid of a masking tape.This is shown on the second stage.The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done according to the measurement of the unit of design printed to aid proper registration.This is shown in the second stage. The printing started with the screen printing method and finished up with the stencilling method.
3. The sky blue colour shown in the third stage was achieved by applying it over the dyed fabric in form of a wash (applying a thin layer diluted with much water), so as to achieve a transparent effect.The areas that the wash was applied to, were barricaded with some masking tape at its boarders so as to prevent the wash from permeating through. The paints used to carry out this studio practical are the sticker inks and acrylic.This is seen in the third and fourth stages.Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

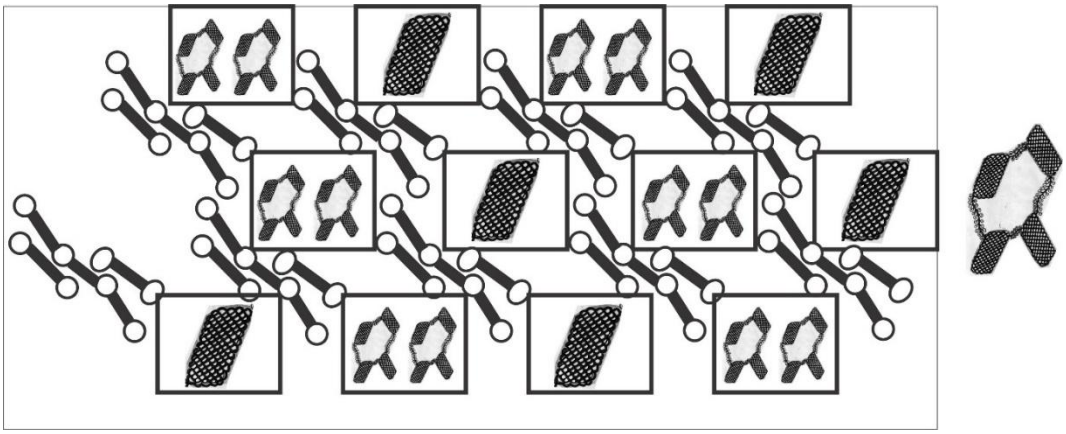
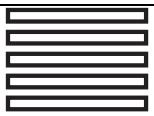


Figure28:*Achicha* (biscuit) design motif (computer aided design lay-out). **Source**:Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.20 Studio exploration I (20)

	
Ebe motif sketch	Popo design motif sketch



First stage **Second stage** **Third stage** **Final stage**

Plate XCVII: *Popo, ebe* and*ute* motifs printing stages.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

This is a six coloured printed fabric and three motifs were involved. The techniques that were utilised in this studio exploration are stencilling and block dyeing. Before the exploration began, preliminary studies were conducted with these motifs.The motif was scanned into the computer and arranged using the preliminary study as a guide. At the end of designing with CorelDraw, an appropriate design was created out of these motifs.

The design was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated into different parts according to their various colours to be printed.A total number of two stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.After this, the fabric was prepared for printing. The processes are recorded below.

1. The white fabric was desized and block dyed into a purple colour. It was dried and ironed after the dyeing processes.The fabric was laid and fastened to the printing table with a masking tape to enable it to be fixed on the table.The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread. This was done

according to the measurement of the design printed.This can be viewed on the first stage above.

2. The printing was carried out by making use of cut stencils and a piece of tied foam, which was used to dab the designs that were cut out on the stencils onto the fabric. The paint that was used to accomplish this studio practical is acrylic paint. Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

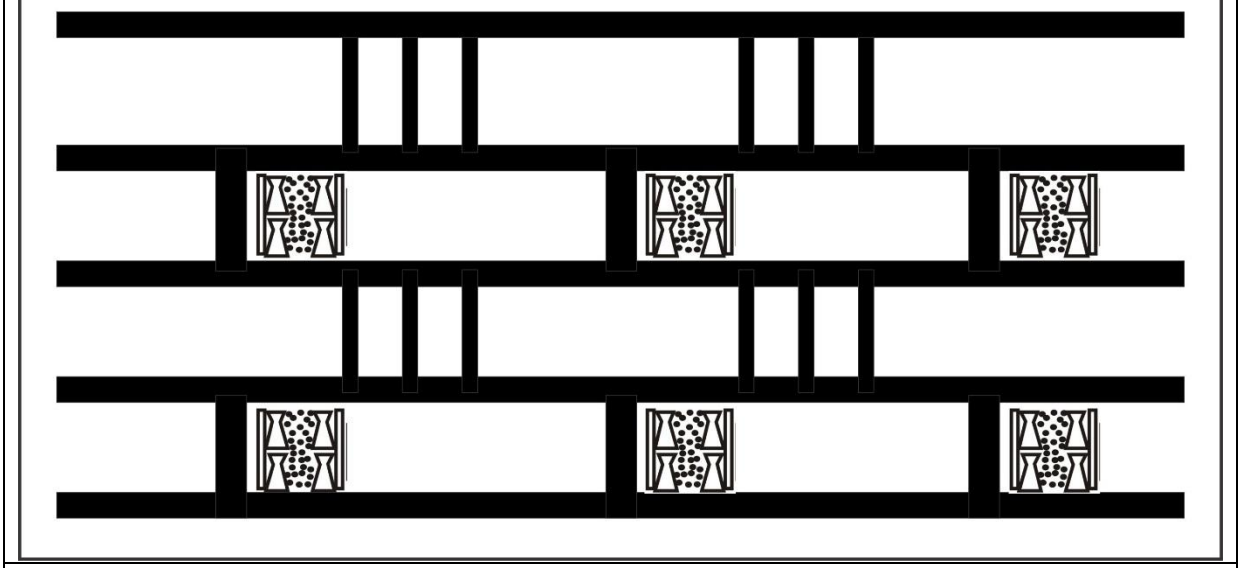
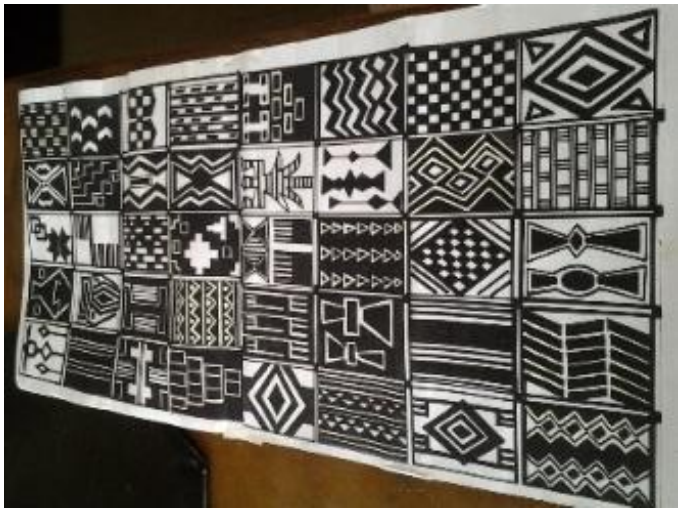


Figure 29:*Popo, ebe* and *ute* motif design computer aided design lay-out.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.21 Studio exploration I(21)





Stage one Stage two Stage three Final stage

Plate XCVIII: Multiple*Akwete* woven design motifs printing stages. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

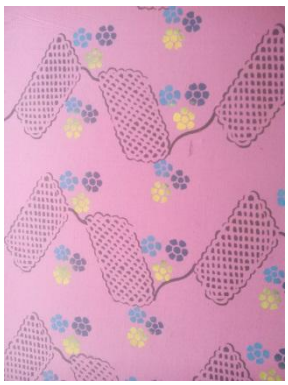
The techniques that were utilized in this studio exploration are photographic transfer, batik and the stenciling. This is a four coloured printed fabric with multiple motifs. Before the exploration began, preliminary studies were conducted with these motifs, then the fabric was prepared for printing.The designswere sketched and arranged on a cardboard sheet before it was scanned into the computer and arranged in a manner that this study felt it would be appropriate. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw a design was created out of these motifs.The design was printed out on film papers and transferred to the screen using photographic transfer.A total number of four stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio. The few stencils were cut and separated into their different parts. The printing processes are documented below.

1. The fabric was first of all waxed allover and squeezed with hands to produce some crackles on the waxed fabric. These crackles allowed some dye to penetrate and form some designs as texture on the fabric.
2. The printing was done by screen printing the multiple motifs and subsequently using the stencils to finish up the colours that are enclosed in those motifs. The paints that were used to implementthis stageof studio practical are the textile inks and acrylic paint.The design lay-out is the same as the one placed on Figure 20 (page 186).

3.16.22 Studio explorationI(22)

		
Floral design motif sketch	Achicha motif sketch	Ebe motif sketch






Stage one Stage two Stage three Final stage

PlateXCIX: *Achicha* (biscuit), *ebe* design motifs with a floral touch (Stages in printing).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The technique involved in this studio exploration is stencilling. This is a five coloured printed fabric. Before the exploration began, preliminary studies were conducted with these motifs. The motifs were scanned into the computer and arranged in a way that this study felt they would be appropriate. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design emerged out of these motifs. A total number of three stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.The design which was the result from the preliminary studies was scanned into the computer and arranged to create a pattern of design that was printed on the fabric. The biscuit and ebe motifs were combined with some floral motifs to create a design.It was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. Here are the processes of the printing exploration:

1. The fabric was desized and ironed so as to achieve a smooth surface.Thereafter it was fastened to the printing table with a masking tape so as to be firmly attached to the

it.The portions in which the designs were printed on, were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread(stage one). This was done according to the measurement of the design printed. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw, a design was created out of these motifs.

2. The design was printed out on film papers and the stencils were cut. The stencils were separated into different parts according to their various colours which were printed.
3. The printing was carried out by making use of a piece of tied foam to dab the stencils that were cut onto the fabric. In stage two,the first colour was printed and in stage three, the third colour was printed.
4. In the final stage, the last colour was printed.The paint that was used to execute this studio practical, was the acrylic paint.Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

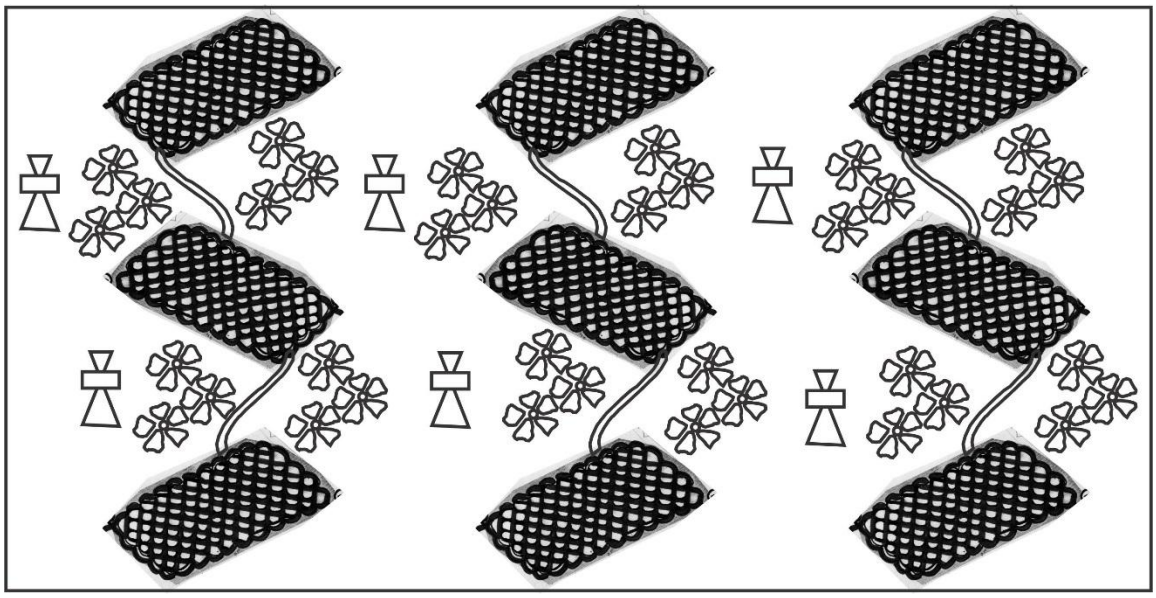
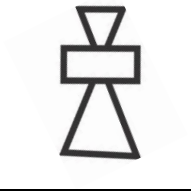


Figure 30: *Achicha* (biscuit), *ebe* design motifs with a floral touch. (Computer aided design lay-out).
Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.23Studio exploration I (23)

	
Ebe motif sketch	Mgbawa tomatoes motif sketch.


Stage one


Stage two


Stage three


Final stage

Plate C: *Mgbawa* tomatoesmotif (printing stages).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques utilised in this studio exploration are photographictransfer, drawing with 3D fabric ink and the stencilling. This is a five coloured printed fabric and the design network is a counter change. The simulation of this motif was used with some abstract motifs. The design was scanned into the computer and arranged in a way that this study felt it would be appropriate for a fabric design. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw application in the, a design was created out of these motifs and printed out in black and white. The particular motif meant for photographic transfer which is *mgbawa tomatoes* was exposed in the dark room and transferred to the mesh while the abstract motif was printed out on a laser film paper and had the stencil cut.The printing processes are recorded below.

1. The fabric was desized andironedto achieve a level of smoothness. It was fixed to the printing table with a masking tape so as to be stable while printing.T

2. The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with a tiny sewing thread in stage one. This was done according to the measurement of the unit of design printed for proper registration of designs.
3. The design transferred to the screen was used first in printing (second stage), thereafter the stencilling was employed in the third stage and the 3D fabric ink was the last to be used in the final stage.It was used to achieve free hand drawing of intricate designs on the fabric. The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are the textile ink, 3D fabric ink and acrylic paints.Below in this figure is the computer aided design format.

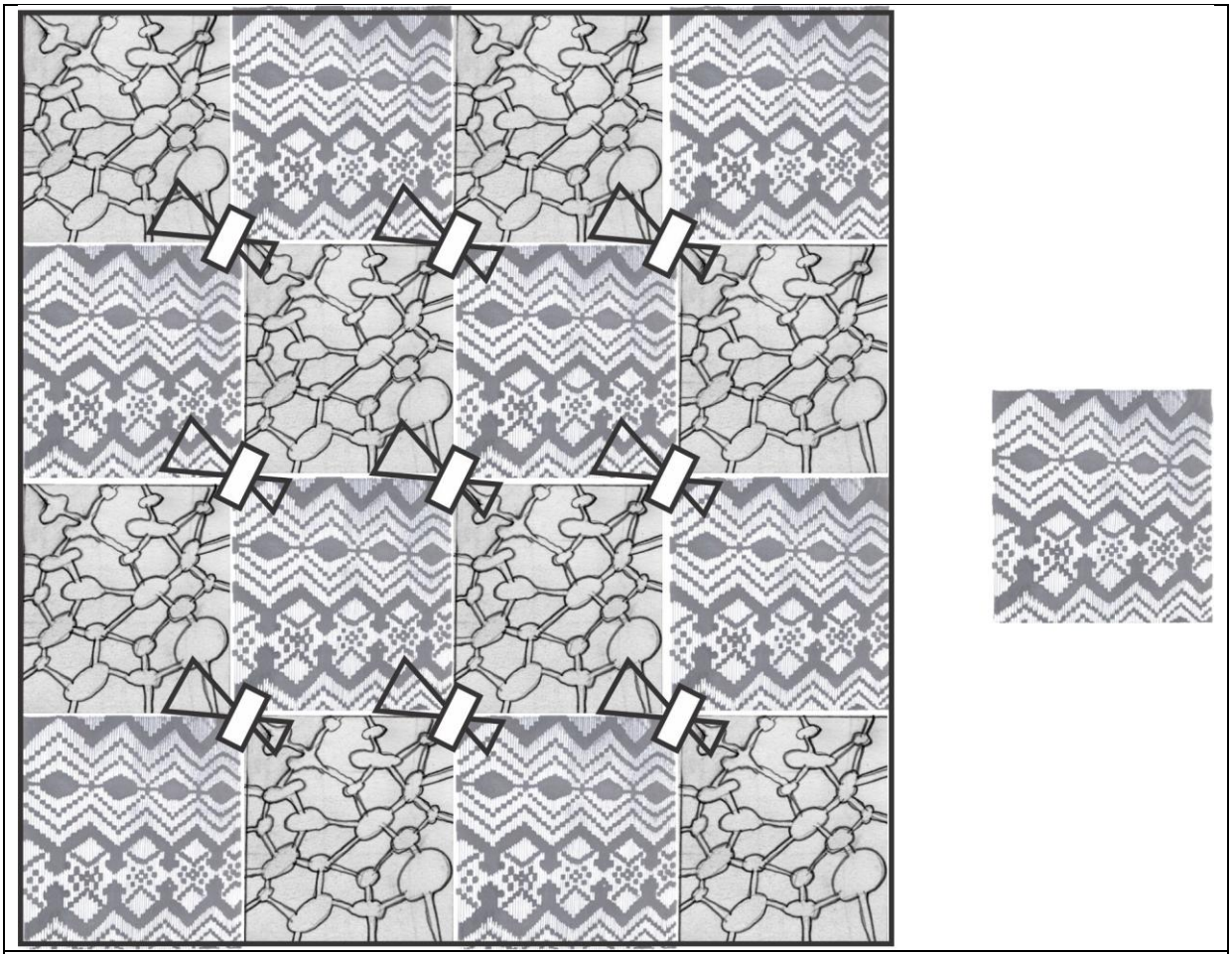


Figure 31:*Mgbawa* tomatoes design motif (Computer aided).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.24Studio explorationI (24)



Butterfly motif sketch







Stage one Stage two Final stage

PlateCI: Butterfly design motif (printing stages).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques that were utilised in this studio exploration are the photographic transfer, drawing with 3D fabric ink and the stencilling. This is a four coloured printed fabric with some abstract motifs in an allover repeat pattern network. Before the exploration began, preliminary studies were conducted with these motifs. After which the fabric was prepared for printing. The picture of the motif was scanned into the computer so as to capture the simulation details. It was later arranged in a way that the study felt it would be appropriate for a fabric design. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw application in the computer, a design was created out of these motifs and printed out in black and white. The particular motif (butterfly)meant for photographic transferwas exposed, and transferred to the mesh, while the abstract motif was printed out on a laser film paper and the stencils were cut.A total number of two stencils were cut before embarking on the printing exploration in the studio.

The processes involved in the printing process are recorded below.

1. The fabric was desized and ironed after pretreatment to remove any creases. It wasfixed securely to the printing table with a masking tape to avoid shifting. The portions in which the designs were printed on, were demarcated with an acrylic yarn. This was done according to the measurement of the design printed (stage one).
2. During the printing proper, the design that was transferred to the screen was printed on the fabric in the studio before the design cut on the stencil was utilised (stage two).
3. After the dabbing of the stencils cut, the 3D fabric ink was employed for free hand drawing of intricate designs on the fabric while still placed on the printing table (stage three). The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are the textile ink, 3D fabric ink and acrylic paints.The computer aided design format is inserted in this figure.

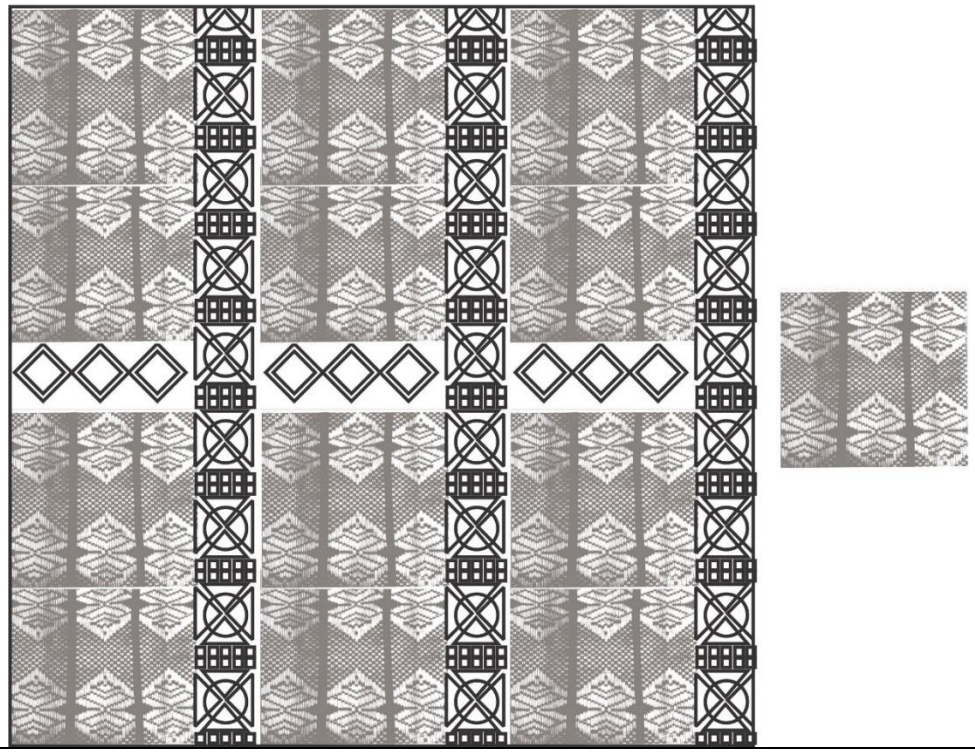
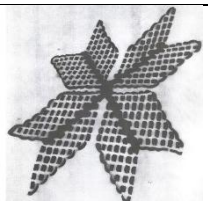
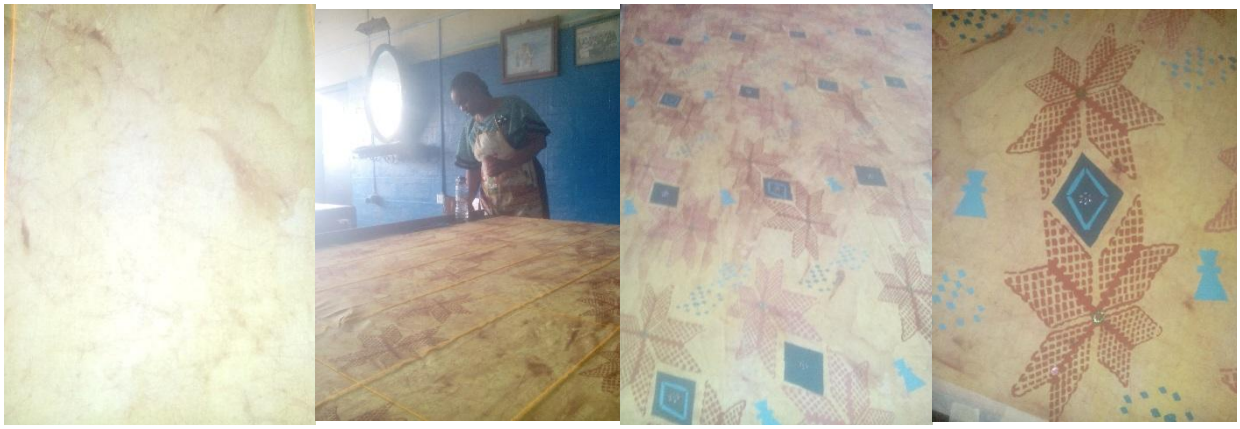


Figure 32: Butterfly design motif, computer aided design lay-out.**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.16.25Studio explorationI(25)

	
Kpakpando motif sketch	Ebe motif sketch



Stage one Stage two Stage three Final stage

PlateCII: *Kpakpando* and ebe design motifs (printing stages).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

The techniques utilised in this studio exploration are batikdyeing, photographic transfer, drawing with 3D fabric ink and the stencilling. This is a five coloured printed fabric with some abstract motifs. It has an allover repeat pattern network. Before the exploration began, preliminary studies were conducted with these motifs. The photograph of the simulated motif was scanned into the computer and arranged in a way that this study felt it would produce an appropriate design for a fabric design. At the end of designing with the CorelDraw application in the computer, a design emerged out of these motifs and printed out in black and white. The particular motif meant for photographic transfer which is *kpakpando* was exposed in the dark room and transferred to the screen while the other onesmeant for the stencilling which are ebe and some abstract motifs were printed out on a laser film paper and the stencils were cut. A total number of four stencils were cut before embarking on the printing process in the studio.

The processes involved in the printing processes are recorded below.

1. The white fabric was desized and was dyed with two colours. Firstly, it was block dyed plain yellow. Secondly, the yellow fabric was waxed all over and squeezed to produce some crackles before the second dyeing which was with brown colour (first stage). The batik dyeing produced a textural effect on the fabric. It was dewaxed with hot water and later ironed to remove the excess wax and creases incurred during the dyeing processes.
2. It was secured firmly to the printing table with a masking tape.The portions in which the designs were printed on were demarcated with an acrylic yarn. This was done according to the measurement of the design that was printed (second stage).
3. During the printing proper, the design that was transferred to the screen was utilised first before the stencilled designs.
4. After dabbing with the stencils, the 3D fabric ink was employed for free hand drawing of intricate designs on the fabric while still placed on the printing table (third and final stages). The paints that were used to carry out this studio practical are the textile ink, sticker ink 3D fabric ink and acrylic paints. The computer aided design format is inserted in the figure below.

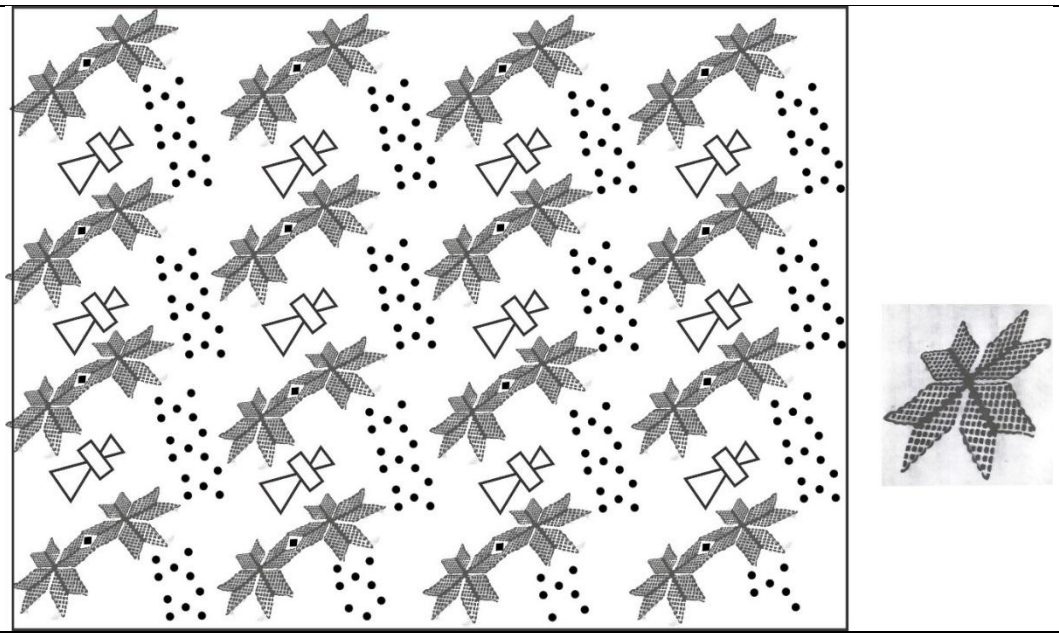


Figure33:*Kpakpando* and *ebe* design motif (Sketch).**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

3.17 Studio Exploration II

3.17.1 The utilisation of the *Akwete* printed textiles in constructing different apparels

A total number of ten apparels were constructed in this study which comprises of gowns, two wrappers to be tied with a blouse, skirts and blouses for female; on the other hand, shirts were also sewn for the men. All the clothes made in this study were sewn with the aid of a sewing machine and some sewing equipments. Measurements were taken according to Tuit (2007) Patterns were drafted with the required measurements on paper, cut, laid and pinned to the fabric before cutting.In some cases the basic blocks were adapted to the desired pattern of the styles drawn in the figures below:

3.17.2 Studio exploration II(1)

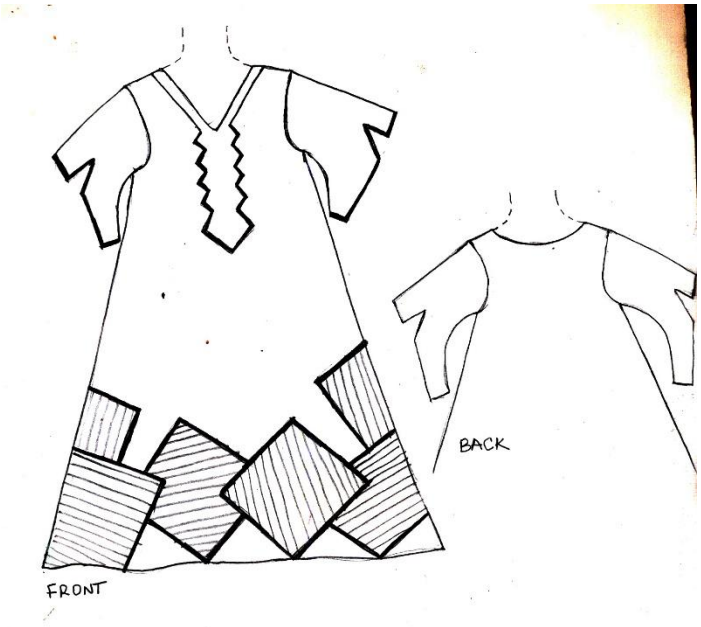


Figure 34: Sketch of A-line patch gown

This A –shaped gown with a V-neckline on plate (CXXXIV) showed the usage of some pieces of *Akwete* printed fabric to produce a patchwork on a plain yellow daviva cotton fabric. Machine embroidery was utilised on the front of the gown to decorate it while some bias trimmings were used at the edges of the sleeves to neaten and decorate the edges.The sleeves have a slit by the sides. Some beads and stones were used to accentuate the embroidery on the gown to create a fashion statement.

3.17.3 Studio exploration II (2)

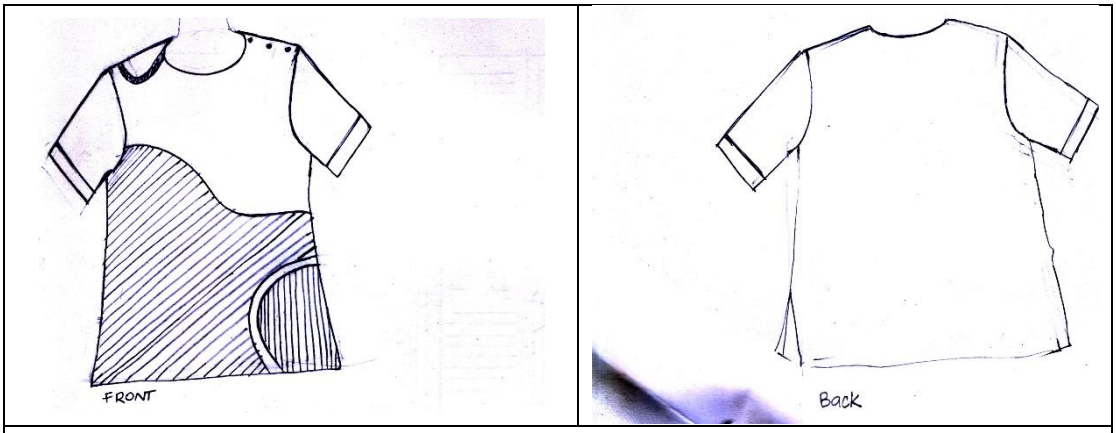


Figure 35: Sketch of the style of a mans'shirt.



Plate CIII(a):Stage 1



Plate CIII(b):Stage 2



Plate CIII(c):Stage 3



Plate CIII(d):Stage 4

This is a shirt for a male.A combination of the *Akwete* print and a plain white cotton fabric was used to produce the shirt on figure 35.It has a high neck and the fastener is on the left shoulder.It is a fitted male shirt.

3.17.4 Studio exploration II (3)

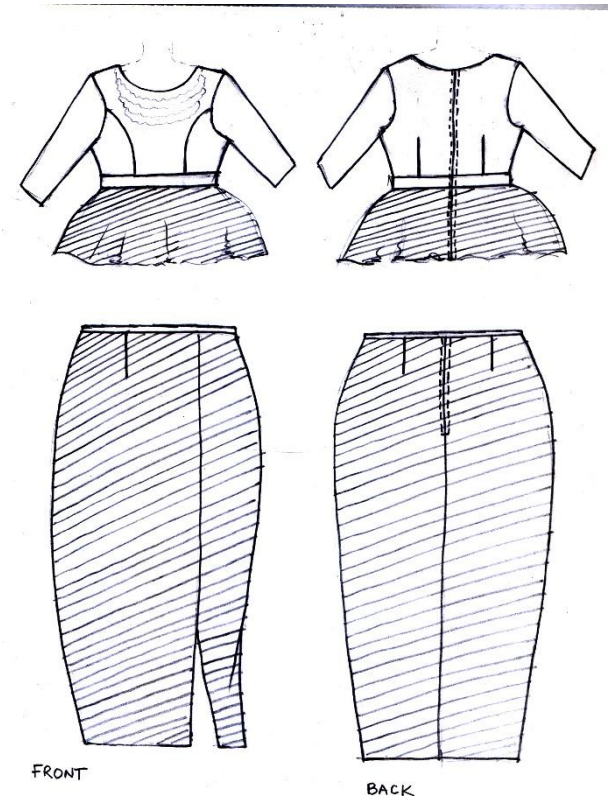


Figure 36: Sketches of the style of a long skirt and a peplum blouse

On Figure 36, is the sketch of a three-quarter sleeve, princess cut, and peplum blouse with an ankle length straight cut skirt.The bodice was accentuated with some layers of crocheted trimmings and a gold coloured net to decorate the bodice.There is a band at the waist of the blouse to give it a fitting. This band was attached to the flayed *Akwete* printed fabric.The sleeves were made from a lace-like fabric that is a little bit elastic.The skirt is a straight cut fitted long skirt made with *Akwete* printed fabric.

3.17.5 Studio exploration II (4)

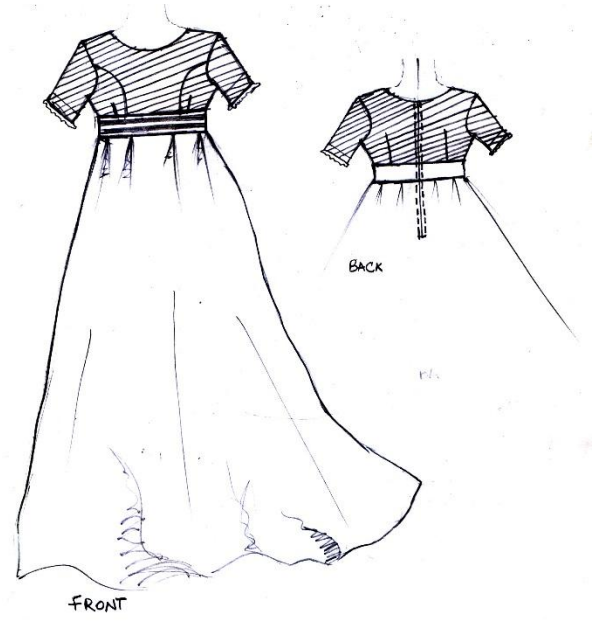


Figure 37: Sketch of the style of a flowing gown .



PlateCIV(a): Drafted patterns



Plate CIV(b): Constructed bodice of the gown on figure 38.

On Figure 37, is the sketchof a long flowing gown.The bodice is constructed with *Akwete* printed fabric while a plain yellow coloured fabric is used for the combination.The bodice has a princess line cut and an empire waist.On the band, a trim was attached to it to enhance it further. This garment sewn has functional, structural and decorative design because if these areas of design are ignored it will reduce the value.

Functional design refers to how the garment works physically on the body, that is, for the purpose of which they are made. In this study, the gown is a free flowing gown for an adult. The garment was made to be comfortable, provide adequate room for movement yet hold its shape to the form with the help of a stabilizer. It is also made in a suitable fabric style (a combination of *Akwete* printed fabric and plain cotton fabric), weight to suit the style, provide protection and warmth or coolness.

Structural design is all the seam lines that are stitched to hold the garment together in this garment construction. It also refers to the thread used in stitching. Zips need to be stitched for closures using the quality thread with enough stitches to hold the fasteners permanently to the garments so they don't fall off. For this study, a quality thread was used to stitch all the seams neatly together and a zipper was attached at the back for convenience.

The decorative design refers to the decorative additions to the fabric surface. This is an important aspect of design because ultimately it may be what attracts a customer to purchase the garment; it is the special detail that distinguishes one garment from another. In this studio practice, the decorative design items were the *Akwete* woven designs print, the vibrant colours, and trimmings used. Stabilisers were also used to add structure, shape and reinforcement to the garment. The first impression of a garment is the silhouette, which is the outside shape of the garment. The use of stabilisers helped to bring out the actual shape of the flowing gown, add quality and extend the life of the garment. Using unsuitable stabiliser for the fabric or leaving it out completely when needed, will affect how the finished garment will look like. Different types of stabilisers are underlining, interfacing, stabilising tape, bonding or by stay stitching.

In the construction of this gown, a fusible interfacing was ironed on to the bodice to hold its shape, add more strength to the cotton fabric and improve its appearance. Another stabiliser used in this study is an underlining (backing), a piece of cotton fabric was used to line the

skirt of the gown and the bodice, this was done to add more weight to the cotton fabric, so as to withstand the weight of the interfaced cotton bodice and also to improve its appearance.

3.17.6 Studio exploration II (5)

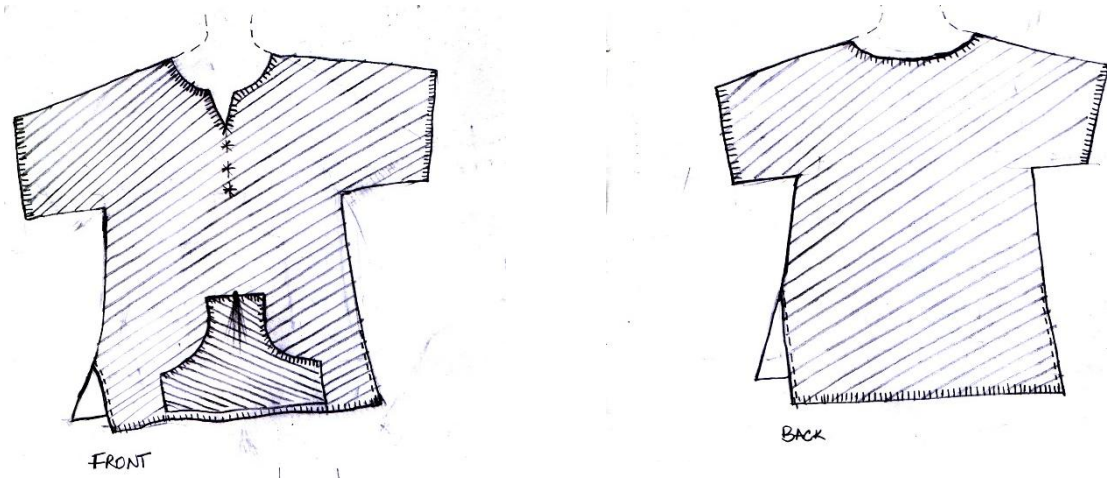


Figure 38: style of a mans' shirt(sketch)



PlateCV: Laying of pattern.



PlateCVI: shirts'pocket.

Figure 39 shows the sketch of a free top, it can be worn by a man or a woman.It has two pockets attached to the front of the top. It has a kimono sleeve.This study utilised hand embroidery to decorate the top made from the *Akwete* printed fabric.

3.17.7 Studio exploration II(6)

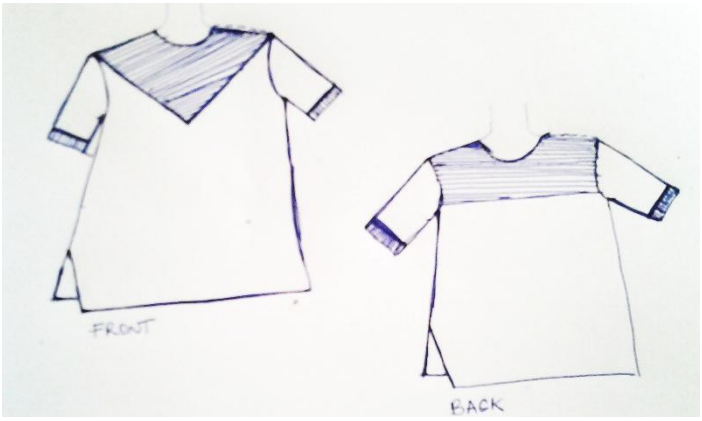


Figure 39: The sketch of the style of a man's shirt sewn.(sketch)



Plate CVII(a): Stages in the clothing construction.



Plate CVII (b): Stage i



Plate CVII(c): Stage ii



Plate CVII(d): Stage iii

On platesCVII(a-d), are the stages during the clothing construction of a shirt made with *Akwete* printed fabric and a combination of a piece of plain fabric.

The *Akwete* woven fabric was used to form a vee design in front of the shirt and also on the sleeves.It is a high round necked shirt with its fastener on the left shoulder.It was worn with a pair of jean trousers.

3.17.8 Studio exploration II(7)

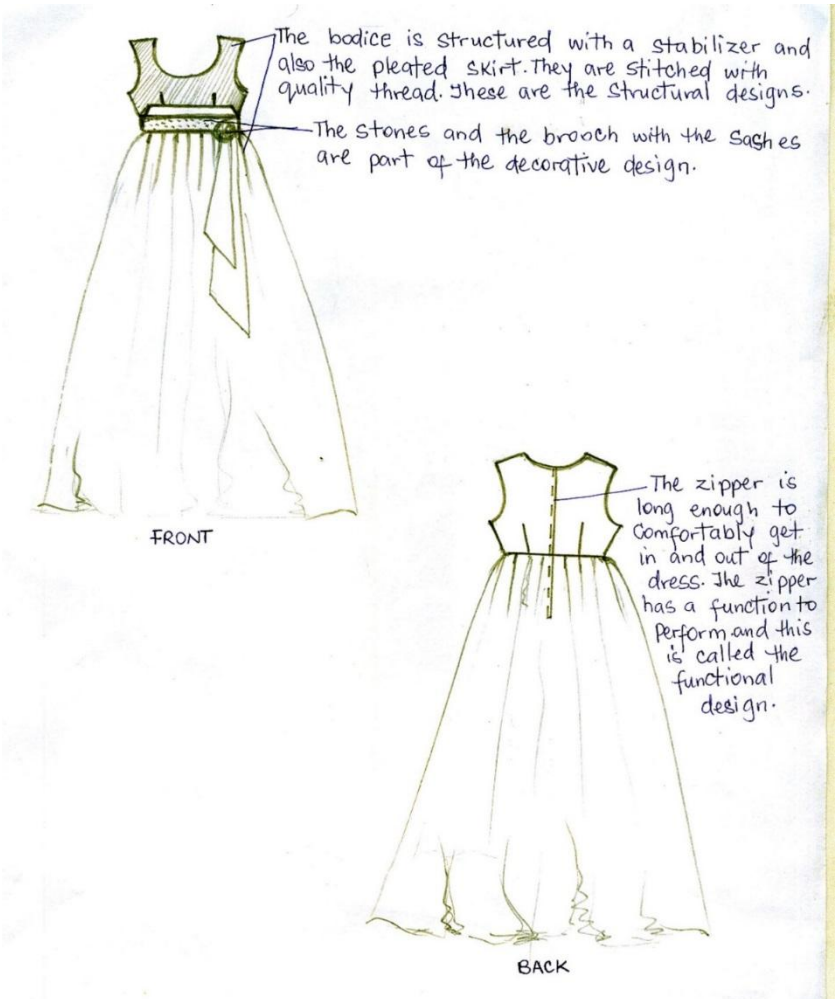


Figure 40: The sketch of the style of a girl's flowing gown.

This garment sewn on figure 40, has the functional, structural and decorative design which if these areas of design are ignored will reduce its value.Functional design refers to how the garment works physically on the body, that is, for the purpose of which they are made. In this study, the gown is a prom dress for a girl.



Plate CVIII (a): laying of patterns on the fabric.



Plate CVIII (b): The fusible stabilizer was ironed onto cloth.



Plate CVIII (c): The bodice is ready to be joined to the skirt which will be pleated (knife pleats).



Plate CVIII (d): The bodice which is the piece of *Akwete* print has been joined to the skirt which is a factory made fabric,chiffon.

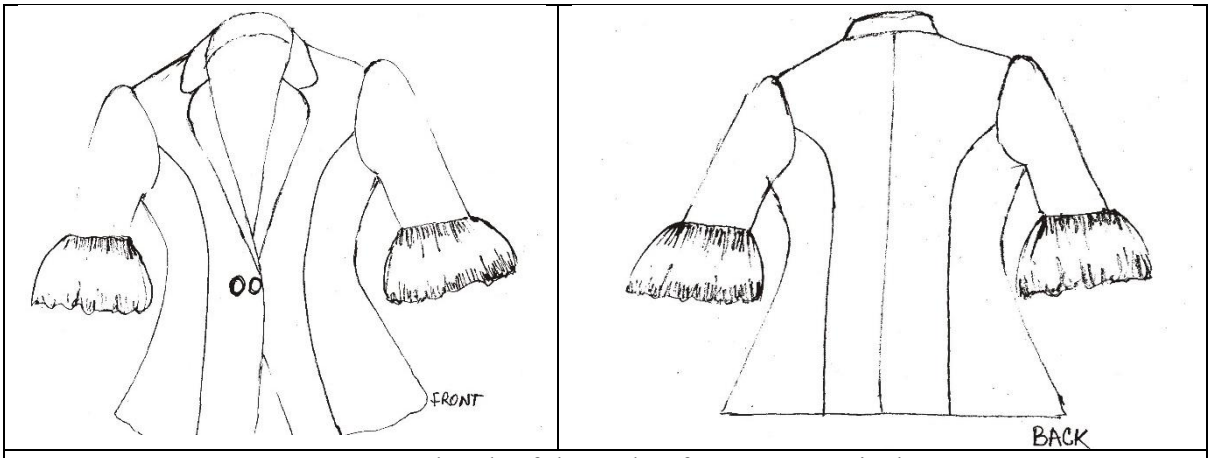


Figure 41: Sketch of the style of a teenagers' jacket.

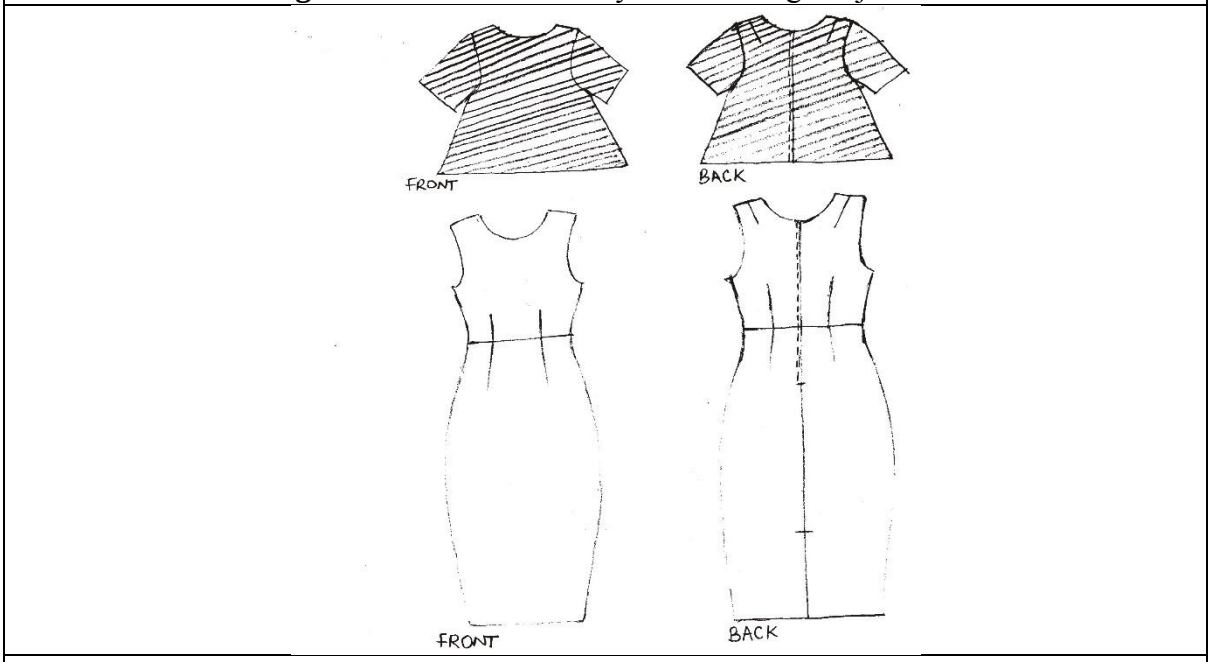


Figure 42: Sketch of a teenagers'crop top and gown.

In figure 41, is the sketch of a jacket made from Akwete woven fabrics by this study .It has a convertible collar, princess line cut and a sleeve with garthered section.The fastener that was used by this study is buttons.

In figure 42, is the sketch of a teenagers' crop top and a gown made with akwete printed fabric. The crop top has a high neck and a short sleeve. While the gown is made from a plain fabric.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings and analysis of this study. The results that were obtained are presented in tables, analysed and discussed in line with the objectives of the study with emphasis on the suitability of *Akwete* woven motifs as designs for printed textiles. The objectives were presented on nine tables, each had questions that helped to answer a research question, in some casesand two or three tables were used to answer a research question. For this study, the researcher administered three hundred and eighty one (381) questionnairesto the population which invariably are the respondents. After the coding and processing of data, three hundred and thirty seven (337) of the questionnaire were considered valid at 88.5% return rate and were used in the analysis and interpretation of the data collected(the survey questionnaire is placed in Appendix I, page 280).

The data was collected from respondents – the traditional weavers, users of *Akwete* woven fabrics and potential users of the new *Akwete* printed fabrics. A focus group discussion was conducted with thirty weavers (the discussion questions are placed in Appendix II, page 287) and also interviews were granted to the oldest weaver in *Akwete* weaving cooperative, the men of *Akwete* were not left out in that an interview was granted to a community leader (the interview transcripts are placed in Appendix III, page 289). The data were analysed by coding the results with the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) after which the descriptive statistics of percentages, mean and standard deviation were employed to analyse the data.While the data from the focus group discussion was analysed using qualitative analysis.

4.2 The findings of this study

Demographic information of respondents (users and potential users)
Table 4.1: Qualifications of respondents

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Primary certificate	13	3.9
Post Primary certificate	15	4.5
Diploma	69	20.5
NCE	69	20.5
BA/BSc	75	22.3
MA/MFA/MSc	24	7.1
PhD	19	5.6
None	53	15.6
Total	337	100.0

Table 4.1 shows that 3.9% of the users of *Akwete* woven fabrics and the potential users of the newly *Akwete* printed fabrics have a qualification of primary school certificate. 4.5% of the respondents have only post primary certificate, while 20.5% have diploma, those with a qualification of NCE have 20.5%, those with BA/BSc have 22.3%, and those that have MA/MFA/MSC have 7.1%, those that have PhD have 5.6% and those without any qualification have 15.6%.The highest number are therefore BA/BSc holders.

Table 4.2: WorkingExperience of Respondents (users and potential users)

Number of years	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 yrs	103	30.6
6-10 yrs	26	7.7
11-15 yrs	34	10.1
16-20yrs	40	11.9
21-25yrs	26	7.7
31yrs and above	11	3.3
Not working	97	28.8
Total	337	100.0

From table 4.2, those of the potential users and users with the working experience of 1-5years have 30.6%, those with 7.7% are with 6-10 years of experience, 11-15 years of

workingexperience had 10.1%, 16-20 years of working experience had 11.9%, 21-25 years of experience had 7.7%, 31 years and above had 3.3%, while those that are not working had 28.8%.1-5 yrs of working experience are the majority.

Table 4.3: Marital status of Respondents

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	258	76.6
Married	79	23.4
Total	337	100.0

From Table 4.3, showing the marital status of the respondents, those that are single have 76.6% while those that are married have 23.4%. Those that are single are more.

Table 4.4: Tribe of Respondents (Potential users and Users)

Tribe	Frequency	Percentage
Igbo	259	76.9
Non igbo	78	23.1
Total	337	100.0

From the Table 4.4, 76.9% of the users and potential users are of Igbo origin, while 23.1% of the users and potential users are non-Igbo.Therefore the Igbo are the majority.

Table 4.5: Igbo from *Akwete*(potential users and users)

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	40	11.9
No	223	66.2
No response	74	22.0
Total	337	100.0

From Table4.5, showcasing the *Akwete* indigenes, only11.9% of the users and potential users are from *Akwete* while 66.2% of the Igbo users and potential users are Igbo but not from *Akwete*.There was no response from 22.0% of the users and potential users. This shows that the majority are not from Akwete.

4.3: Answers to the research questions.

4.3.1 Research question 1: How can the *Akwete* weaving tradition and the details of designs be satisfactorily surveyed?

Table 4.6: Surveying the *Akwete*Weaving Tradition

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remark
1	*Akwete* weaving has a history attached to it which has not been satisfactorily documentated.	4.29	.96	Accepted
2	*Akwete* weaving is mainly for the Igbo people in the south eastern Nigeria, and the weaving done by women only.	3.55	1.27	Accepted
3	The weaving activities are being influenced by some other woven fabrics	3.77	1.24	Accepted
4	*Akwete* woven fabrics are part of Igbo cultural heritage	4.24	1.14	Accepted
5	*Akwete* weaving has many techniques and tools which are used in weaving	4.13	1.15	Accepted
6	*Akwete* woven cloth is found in many peoples possession	2.38	1.35	Rejected
7	*Akwete* weaving is on the decline	3.66	1.46	Accepted
8	*Akwete* weaving is flourishing	2.12	1.37	Rejected
9	Some weavers have abandoned their vocation	3.56	1.26	Accepted
10	There is prestige accorded to those that wear them	3.75	1.32	Accepted
	Grand mean	3.75		Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

From the computations presented in Table 4.6, the *Akwete* weaving tradition was surveyed. From the table, eight items from the questionnaire were accepted while two other items were rejected. From the mean rating scores recorded, on the items that were accepted, they show that: *Akwete* weaving has a history attached to it which has not been satisfactorily documented with a mean score of 4.29, *Akwete* weaving is mainly for the Igbo people in the South East Nigeria with a mean score of 3.55, the weaving activities are being influenced by some other woven fabrics with a mean score of 3.77, *Akwete* woven fabrics are part of Igbo cultural heritage with a mean score of 4.24, *Akwete* weaving has many techniques and tools which are used in weaving with a mean score of 4.13, *Akwete* weaving is on the decline with

a mean score of 3.66, Some weavers have abandoned their vocation with a mean score of 3.56 and there is prestige accorded to those that wear *Akwete* woven fabrics with a mean score of 3.75. Here also on the table, the respondents, however, disagreed to two items on the table as follows: *Akwete* woven cloth is found in many people's possession with a mean score of 3.38 and *Akwete* weaving is flourishing with a mean score of 3.12.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.75 (that is the overall mean response of the respondents divided by the number of questionnaire items), it can be deduced that *Akwete* weaving tradition is part of Igbo cultural heritage as regards to textiles which has a history attached to it that has not been sufficiently documented.

From the Focus Group Discussion conducted withthe weavers in *Akwete,* they revealed that *Akwete* woven art is only practised by women and has a lot of history attached to it that needs constant documentation because it is hereditary. According to them, *Akwete* weaving was started by a woman called Dada Nwakata who unravelled the threads of some imported woven cloths from the Portuguese to enable her derive some inspiration from them. *Akwete* woven art is part of the Igbo cultural heritage which makes use of many techniques and tools for weaving. According to Mrs Edith Akpara (85yrs) weaver who spoke throughout the discussion in Igbo language and who was taught how to weave by her sister-in-law at the age of eight stated that:

> *Akwete* weaving tradition is a part of Igbo cultural heritage which has a strong history attached to it and this history has brought the woven art into the limelight in the textile history of the world but it is on the decline because of lack of patronage, bad roads, financial constraints and lack of weaving materials.

4.3.2 Research question 2: What are the symbolic design motifs woven?

Table 4.7: *Akwete*Woven Design Motifs

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	All *Akwete* motifs can be woven in any colour	4.19	1.06	Accepted
2	*Akwete* woven wrappers are not plainly woven	2.40	1.31	Rejected
3	They must always be decorated with design motifs recently.	3.78	1.31	Accepted
4	The motifs and size are what makes them to be *Akwete* woven designs	3.71	1.9	Accepted
5	Motifs can be used to express ones ideology	3.97	1.27	Accepted
6	The motifs on *Akwete* woven fabrics are many	3.79	1.22	Accepted
7	Many significant names are given to the motifs	3.75	1.33	Accepted
8	It is impossible to achieve successful weaving of indigenous *Akwete* woven fabrics without the introduction of design motifs on them	2.43	1.47	Rejected
9	They have specific values to the Igbo people	4.23	.95	Accepted
10	Some of them are borrowed motifs	3.56	1.24	Accepted
11	Some motifs are preferable to others	3.84	1.21	Accepted
12	Some of the designs motifs are meant for a particular set of people	3.57	1.21	Accepted
13	All the *Akwete* design motifs have names attached to them	3.85	1.33	Accepted
14	Newly woven designs spring up every day	3.67	1.37	Accepted
15	The oldest designs are still being woven till date	3.72	1.32	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.76		Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.7, presents the respondents ideology or portrayal of *Akwete* woven design motifs. From the table, thirteen items from the questionnaire were accepted while two other items were rejected. From the mean rating scores recorded on the items that were accepted,they show that: All *Akwete* motifs can be woven in any colour with a mean score of 4.19, the recently woven clothes must always be decorated with designs motifs with a mean score of

3.78, the motifs and size are what makes them to be *Akwete* woven designs with a mean score of 3.71, motifs can be used to express one's ideology with a mean score of 3.97, the motifs on *Akwete* woven fabrics are many with a mean score of 3.79, many significant names are given to the motifs with a mean score of 3.75, they have specific values to the Igbo people with a mean score of 4.23, some of the motifs are preferable to others with a mean score of 3.80, newly woven designs spring up every day with a mean score of 3.63 and the oldest designs are still being woven till date with a mean score of 3.66, some of them are borrowed motifs with a mean score of 3.56, some of the designs motifs are meant for a particular set of people with a mean score of 3.57 and all the *Akwete* design motifs have names attached to them with a mean score of 3.85. Also from the table, the following items were rejected: *Akwete* woven wrappers are not plainly woven with a mean score of 3.40, it is impossible to achieve successful weaving of indigenous *Akwete* woven fabrics recently without the introduction of motifs on them with a mean score of 2.43.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.76 recorded from the table, it can be inferred that *Akwete* weaving tradition has a lot of symbolic design motifs that are old and new, which are also valued and utilized in weaving till date.These symbolic design motifs are what gives the *Akwete* woven fabrics their identity.Previously some of them were reserved for a particular group of people.

From the focus group discussion conducted with *Akwete* weavers at the *Akwete* weaving corporative secretariat, the discussants revealed that *Akwete* has a lot of symbolic motifs that could number above a hundred and fifty which are valued and used to decorate the woven wrappers. These motifs express the Igbo worldview and the weavers' creativity. Lady P. Ordor (a discussant), also disclosed that, most of her motifs are revealed to her in dreams. Her designs are not common, they are very complicated and cannot be easily copied by any

weaver because she makes use of many heddles to produce numerous patterns on her woven cloths.They copy some design pattern and motifs from some people and the weavers also copy some from themselves.They all have numerous names one by one. The weavers revealed that some of the motifs woven are borrowed from some other cultures and those cultures, in turn, borrow from them too. For example, the design called popo is copied from Ghana. They also revealed that newly woven designs spring up every day but has not eradicated the use of the old designs because they are still woven till date.

This table 4.8, also helped to answer Research Question 2.

Table 4.8: Symbolic Meanings and Values Attached to the *Akwete*Woven Design Motifs

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	All the *Akwete* woven design motifs are symbolic and valued by the Igbo and Ijaw areas	3.81	1.28	Accepted
2	The symbolic meanings are related to the cultural values of the Igbo people	3.88	1.17	Accepted
3	Due to the meanings and values attached to the woven cloth people are attracted to them	3.75	1.35	Accepted
4	Some users of *Akwete* woven cloth do not value the meanings	2.16	1.43	Rejected
5	The users buy the woven cloth based on their meaning and values attached to the motifs	3.56	1.26	Accepted
6	Some of the woven cloth are named after the designers	3.64	1.18	Accepted
7	The symbolic meaning attached to the woven cloth affects the cost	3.60	1.42	Accepted
8	All the *Akwete* design motifs are symbolic	3.59	1.35	Accepted
9	Some symbolic motifs are for particular ceremonies	3.64	1.42	Accepted
10	The old symbolic motifs are valued	3.59	1.23	Accepted
11	The new symbolic motifs are preferred by the buyers	3.55	1.32	Accepted
12	Some colours are not attributed to certain symbolic motifs	3.77	1.24	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.63		Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.8, presents the responses on the aesthetic values and acceptability of *Akwete* woven fabrics. The respondents strongly agreed to the following items: all the *Akwete* woven design motifs are symbolic and valued by the Igbo and Ijaw areas with a mean score of 3.81, the symbolic meanings are related to the cultural values of the Igbo people with a mean score of 3.88, due to the meanings and values attached to the woven cloth people are attracted to them with a mean score of 3.75, the users buy the woven cloths based on their meaning and values attached to the motifs with a mean score of 3.56, some of the woven cloths are named after the designers with a mean score of 3.64, the symbolic meaning attached to the woven cloth affects the cost with a mean score of 3.60, all the *Akwete* design motifs are symbolic with a mean score of 3.59, some symbolic motifs are for particular ceremonies with a mean score of 3.6, the new symbolic motifs are preferred by the buyers with a mean score of 3.59 and some colours are not attributed to certain symbolic motifs with a mean score of 3.76. Also from the table, the respondents disagreed on the following items: users of *Akwete* woven cloth do not value the meanings with a mean score of 2.16.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.63 recorded from the table, it can be inferred that the symbolic meanings attached to the *Akwete* woven designs depict the Igbo worldview and the weaver's perception of life.People are attracted to woven fabrics based on their meanings.The old and new motifs are appreciated by the people.

From the Focus Group Discussion conducted, the weavers revealed that the *Akwete* woven design motifs are symbolic and valued by the Igbo. The symbolic meanings are based on the cultural values of the Igbo and based on this, they are rendered and attracted to people. Some of the woven designs are named after the designers. Madam Helen (a teacher), the women's cooperative president – 2015, who disclosed that,some of the motifs are made for specific occasions and for specific people especially those woven for chieftaincy titles and occasions

like the new yam festivals and marriages. There are many designs named after their initiators namely: dada nwakata, dakuru etc.Most of these motifs like Ikaki and popo are mostly used by the Ijaw, during their various ceremonies of womanhood, for example, the egenebite and bibite.

The discussants stated that recently, some of the motifs that are reserved for the specially placed people in the society are being woven for everyone who wishes to be adorned in that particular design.Also from the focus group discussion conducted with *Akwete* fabrics weavers, the weavers revealed that the Igbo and Ijaw who reside in the eastern part of the country appreciate *Akwete* woven fabrics and accept it as their own as they are basically the major consumers of the fabrics.

4.3.3 Research Question 3:How can the significance of *Akwete* woven fabrics in the traditionalIgbo society and Nigerian fashion industry be ascertained?

Table 4.9: The AestheticValues and Acceptability of *Akwete*Woven Fabrics

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	The artistic appearance of *Akwete* woven fabrics attract a lot of buyers	3.91	1.27	Accepted
2	The artistic appearance of *Akwete* woven fabrics make them still valuable till date	4.04	1.05	Accepted
3	The woven symbolic motifs add to the aesthetic of the *Akwete* woven fabrics	3.89	1.09	Accepted
4	The colours are very significant and add a lot of beauty to the *Akwete* woven fabrics	4.08	1.12	Accepted
5	The *Akwete* woven fabrics are appreciated because of the aesthetic values	3.89	1.18	Accepted
6	The woven symbolic motifs cause the *Akwete* woven fabrics to be accepted by many	3.61	1.39	Accepted
7	The symbolic motifs on *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are carefully woven with precision	3.79	1.32	Accepted
8	The yarns used on the woven fabrics also promote the aesthetics	3.79	1.28	Accepted
9	The *Akwete* woven fabrics are accepted by the Igbo people as their own but do not utilize them.	3.78	1.36	Accepted
10	The *Akwete* woven fabrics are showcased in every	2.07	1.37	

	traditional occasions in Igbo land			Rejected
11	Many Igbo men, women and youths are not found in occasions being adorned with *Akwete* woven fabrics	3.79	1.25	Accepted
12	Many Igbo people know what *Akwete* woven fabrics are	2.41	1.33	Rejected
13	Other tribes like the Ijaw have accepted *Akwete* woven fabrics as one of their traditional costumes and utilize them	3.53	1.37	Accepted
14	The Igbo people prefer georges, hollandaise wax print to *Akwete* hand woven fabrics	3.74	1.49	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.74		Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.9, potrays the responses on the aesthetic values and acceptability of *Akwete* woven fabrics. The respondents strongly agreed to the following items: the artistic appearance of *Akwete* woven fabrics attract a lot of buyers with a mean score of 3.91, the artistic appearance of *Akwete* woven fabrics make them still valuable till date with a mean score of 4.04, the woven symbolic motifs add to the aesthetics of the *Akwete* woven fabrics with a mean score of 3.89, the colours are very significant and add a lot of beauty to the *Akwete* woven fabrics with a mean score of 4.09, the *Akwete* woven fabrics are appreciated because of the aesthetic values with a mean score of 3.89, the woven symbolic motifs cause the *Akwete* woven fabrics to be accepted by many with a mean score of 3.61, the symbolic motifs on *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are carefully woven with precision with a mean score of 3.79, the yarns used on the woven fabrics also promote the aesthetics with a mean score of 3.79, the *Akwete* woven fabrics are accepted by the Igbo people as their own with a mean score of 3.78, many Igbo men, women and youths are not found in occasions, adorned with *Akwete* woven fabrics with a mean score of 3.79, other tribes have accepted *Akwete* woven fabrics as one of their traditional costumes and utilize them with a mean score of 3.53 and the Igbo people prefer georges, hollandaise wax print to *Akwete* hand woven fabrics with a mean score of 3.74. From the table also, the respondents disagreed on the following items: the *Akwete*woven

fabrics are showcased in every traditional occasion in Igbo land with a mean score of 2.07 and many Igbo people know what *Akwete* woven fabrics are with a mean score of 2.41.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.74 recorded from the table, it can be deduced that the aesthetic appearance of *Akwete* woven fabrics which showcases Igbo culture are what determines the attractions of the consumers to the woven fabrics.

Mrs. Nneoma Okere (discussant) who claimed that her mother taught her how to weave using the legs of a stool at the age of 8, specifically stated that, irrespective of the fact that very few Igbo appreciate and patronise *Akwete* woven fabrics, there are still many others who do not know what *Akwete* woven fabrics are.They are that group of people that do not appreciate and wear them. As she stated, these categories are the young ones and some of those who reside in other parts (regions) of the country.

From the focus discussion group, it was revealed that the aesthetic values which include the colour, techniques, motifs and yarns used in weaving add a lot of beauty to the woven fabrics. These have made them be acceptable to the few who patronize the weavers thereby, promoting the Igbo culture. Another discussant Mrs Ngozi George (a descendant of Madam George, one of the pioneer weavers in *Akwete*) said that, the beautification pattern lies in the manner in which the colours used are combined, the type of motifs used, the quality of the yarns used and the mastering of the techniques utilised in weaving the numerous designs. They go a long way to create acceptability of the woven pieces.

This table 4.10, also helped to answer Research Question 3.

Table 4.10: Traditional Significance Attached to *Akwete* hand Woven Fabrics

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	The *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are often used by people in commemoration of traditional events.	4.19	1.01	Accepted
2	Traditional woven fabrics are used for all occasions by the royalty and wealthy	3.70	1.26	Accepted
3	Traditional woven fabrics are worn for all occasions be it social, religious and traditional or ritual worship	2.44	1.37	Rejected
4	*Akwete* traditional hand woven fabrics are also used by the ordinary people	3.81	1.19	Accepted
5	Other tribes from the riverine areas like the Ijaw use them for some ceremonies	3.85	1.24	Accepted
6	The traditional textiles are valued when used by the Igbo.	3.94	1.25	Accepted
7	The traditional textiles can be made into other fashion accessories like bags, shoes, sandals etc	4.08	1.17	Accepted
8	*Akwete* woven fabrics can be sold for economic purposes	4.12	.99	Accepted
9	The traditional *Akwete* fabrics are used for interior decoration during the burial of a prominent person	3.74	1.19	Accepted
10	The traditional textiles can be used for interior decorations in homes	3.72	1.35	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.86		Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.10 expresses the responses of potential users of *Akwete* fabrics on the aesthetic values and acceptability of *Akwete* woven fabrics. The respondents strongly agreed to the following items: the *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are often used by people in commemoration of traditional events with a mean score of 4.19, traditional woven fabrics are used for all occasions by the royalty and wealthy with a mean score of 3.70, *Akwete* traditional hand woven fabrics are also used by the ordinary people with a mean score of 3.81, other tribes from the riverine areas like the Ijaw people use them for some ceremonies with a mean score of 3.85, the traditional textiles are valued when used by the Igbo with a mean score of 3.94,

the traditional textiles can be made into other fashion accessories like bags, shoes, sandals etc with a mean score of 4.08, *Akwete* woven fabrics can be sold for economic purposes with a mean score of 4.12, the traditional *Akwete* fabrics are used for interior decoration during the burial of a prominent person with a mean score of 3.74 and the traditional textiles can be used for interior decorations in homes with a mean score of 3.72. Also from the table, the respondents disagreed that traditional woven fabrics are worn for all occasions with a mean score of 2.44.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.86recorded from the table, it can conclusively be infered that *Akwete* woven fabrics have many traditional uses which are beneficial to the weavers and the users.

The Focus Group Discussion revealed that *Akwete* woven fabrics are not being utilised for many occasions in Igbo land. Although they are found in some private collections, they are scantly utilised in traditional occasions recently. The weavers revealed that it is quite unfortunate that the Igbo that own these motifs do not patronize them as much as the Ijaw (in Rivers state) whom they claim patronize every new design produced by the weavers and store them in big boxes for keeps to show signs of wealth and utilize them quite often for different purposes.

This table 4.11, also helped to answer research Question 3.

Table 4.11: Utilization of *Akwete* Woven Fabrics in the Contemporary Fashion.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	*Akwete* hand woven fabrics have been utilized in contemporary fashion in Nigeria	3.32	1.31	Rejected
2	*Akwete* hand woven fabrics have been showcased in fashion shows in Nigeria	3.48	1.37	Rejected
3	Contemporary fashion designers have designed a lot of clothes using *Akwete* hand woven fabrics in which I have some	2.12	1.36	Rejected
4	A lot of users are discouraged by the weight of some *Akwete* woven fabrics	3.61	1.33	Accepted
5	*Akwete* weavers should incorporate a lot of new ideas to make *Akwete* more acceptable	4.09	1.21	Accepted
6	*Akwete* woven fabrics should always undergo a lot of innovations in methods of weaving, types of yarns, colours, and embellishments so as to withstand any form of competition from its counterparts	4.17	1.06	Accepted
7	These innovations will make the *Akwete* woven fabrics to be in constant use in the contemporary fashion	3.71	1.42	Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.Weighted mean score is 3.84
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.11indicates the responses of respondents on the utilisation of *Akwete* fabrics in the contemporary fashion. The table shows that users and potential users of *Akwete* woven fabrics strongly agreed to some of the items on the questionnaire as follows: A lot of users are discouraged by the weight of some *Akwete* woven fabrics with a mean score of 3.61, *Akwete* weavers should incorporate a lot of new ideas to make *Akwete* more acceptable with a mean score of 4.09, The *Akwete* woven fabric should be made to be more appealing to the buyers with a mean score of 4.09, *Akwete* woven fabrics should always undergo a lot of innovations in methods of weaving, types of yarns, colours, and embellishments so as to withstand any form of competition from its counterparts with a mean score of 4.17, the *Akwete* design motifs should be printed on cotton fabrics so as to be a constant use in the

contemporary fashion with a mean score of 3.71, these innovations will make the *Akwete* woven fabrics to be in constant use in the contemporary fashion with a mean score of 3.93, the *Akwete* printed fabrics will convey the same message the woven one has with a mean score of 3.60 and the *Akwete* printed fabrics will also be more affordable to people in Igbo land and beyond local boundaries with a mean score of 3.84. Here also in the table, the respondents disagreed with the assertions that*Akwete* hand woven fabrics have been utilized in contemporary fashion in Nigeria with a mean score of 3.32, *Akwete* hand woven fabrics have been showcased in fashion shows in Nigeria with a mean score of 3.48, contemporary fashion designers have designed a lot of clothes using *Akwete* hand woven fabrics in which I have some with a mean score of 2.12.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.84 recorded from the table, it can be inferred that *Akwete* woven fabrics have not been in constant use in contemporary Nigeria. A lot of ideas including the printing of these motifs on fabrics should be incorporated to make it more accepted to the fashion designers who will now use them to produce apparels that will suit the current fashion in Nigeria.

From the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), the women claimed that *Akwete* weaving fabrics are being utilised in the contemporary fashion of Nigeria, but the potential users strongly disagreed with this. Some of the weavers mentioned that *Akwete* woven fabrics should not be transferred into prints as they prefer weaving with their hands though there is very low patronage.While some of them want to see the printed versions. Mrs Brown (discussant) revealed that, if the cherished *Akwete* woven cloths are transferred into prints, they will not be able to compete with the other woven fabrics. They still prefer weaving with their hands, which is strenuous but their great grandmothers passed this vocation down to them.They gave

birth to them and the weavers saw them weaving.They do not allow other people to encroach into their weaving activities that is why they guard it jealously.

They also pointed out that government needs to come to their aid and promote the weaving industry. This will, in turn, enable the weavers to be more accessible to some quality yarns which will be much cheaper and used to produce more woven wrappers.

4.3.4Research Question 4: What will be the results of the exploration of *Akwete* woven designmotifs on printed textiles?

Table 4.12: The Exploration of *Akwete*Woven Designs as Design Motifs for Printed Textiles

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remark
1	*Akwete* design motifs are appropriate for prints on cotton fabrics	3.66	1.50	Accepted
2	The design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be printed on cotton fabrics to create room for variety	3.81	1.26	Accepted
3	The design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be printed directly on the cotton fabrics without alterations.	3.52	1.49	Accepted
4	The design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be altered a bit to create other designs and printed on cotton fabrics	3.75	1.5	Accepted
5	The production of *Akwete* printed fabrics will create a room for more recognition of *Akwete* weaving tradition	3.85	1.39	Accepted
6	The production will also create awareness and put the printed fabric in constant use in the fashion industry	3.99	1.29	Accepted
7	The printed fabrics will be demanded by many more than the woven one because of its price and weight	3.88	1.39	Accepted
8	The printed *Akwete* fabrics should be produced so that people can use them in the contemporary fashion always	4.11	1.31	Accepted
9	The printed *Akwete* fabrics will not change the symbolic motifs which depict the Igbo world view	3.61	1.53	Accepted
10	The *Akwete* printed samples can be likened to the adinkra print which consists of adinkra symbols from Ghana, which has gotten a lot of recognition worldwide	3.75	1.45	Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.Weighted mean score is 3.79**Source:**Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.12points out, the responses of respondents on the exploration of *Akwete* woven designs as design motifs for printed textiles. The respondents strongly agreed to the following items: *Akwete* design motifs are appropriate for prints on cotton fabrics with a mean score of 3.66, the design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be printed on cotton fabrics to create room for variety with a mean score of 3.81, the design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be printed directly on the cotton fabrics without alterations with a mean score of 3.52, the design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be altered a bit to create other designs and printed on cotton fabrics with a mean score of 3.75, the production of *Akwete* printed fabrics will create a room for more recognition of *Akwete* weaving tradition with a mean score of 3.85, the production will also create awareness and put the printed fabric in constant use in the fashion industry with a mean score of 3.99, the printed fabrics will be demanded by many more than the woven one because of its price and weight with a mean score of 3.79, the printed *Akwete* fabrics should be produced so that people can use them in the contemporary fashion always with a mean score of 4.10 the printed *Akwete* fabrics will not change the symbolic motifs which depict the Igbo worldview with a means score of 3.61, the *Akwete* printed samples can be likened to the adinkra print which consists of adinka symbols from Ghana, which has gotten a lot of recognition worldwide with a mean score of 3.75.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.79 recorded from the table, it can be deduced that *Akwete* woven designs are suitable for the exploration as prints on cotton fabrics as this has created a room for variety.The designs that are altered and the ones that are not altered should be utilised for printing on fabrics. The unique qualities of the prints which are its' light weight, easily conveyable and more accessible to the potential users and fashion designers will enable it to be in constant use in the contemporary fashion in Nigeria.

In the plates below, the studio exploration 1 results (*akwete* printed fabrics) for research question 5 are placed.

4.3.4.1 Studio Exploration 1 Results

Studio Exploration 1.1 Result



Plate CIX:*Akwete*printed fabric utilizing*ikaki*, *ikperendioma*, *ukwu* bench and ute motifs. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.2: Result



Plate CX:*Ebe*, *Popo* and *Ukwu* bench motif printed fabric. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.3: Result



Plate CXI:*Akwete* printed fabric called *Okpueze*.**Source:Chudi-Duru** (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.4 Result



Plate CXII: *Akwete* design motif print called double bell. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.5: Result



Plate CXIII: *Akwete* printed fabric called double bell. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.6 Result

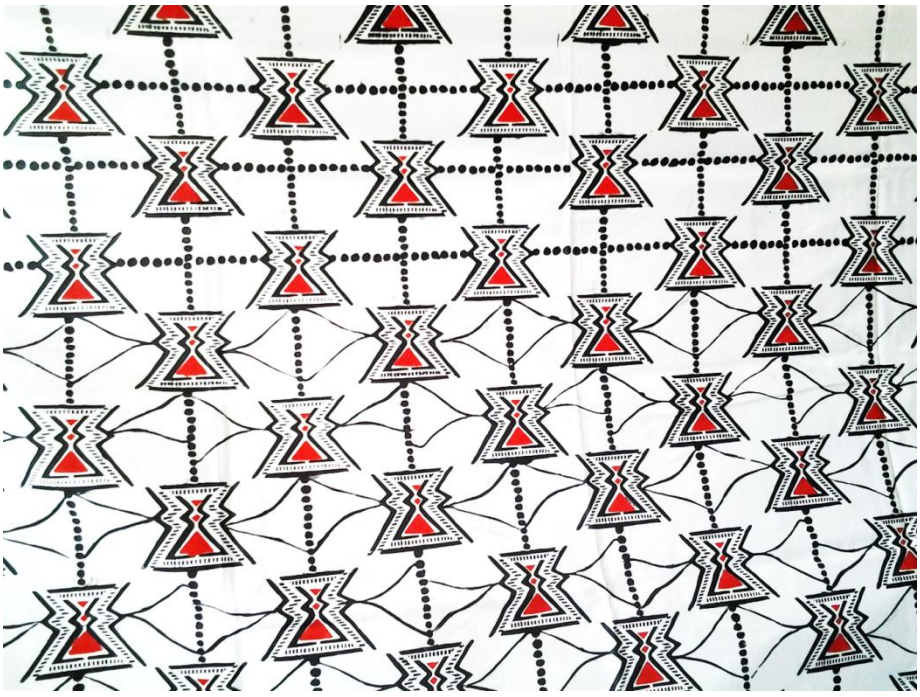


Plate CXIV:*Akwete* printed fabric (*Ebe afomkpo* motif) **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.7Result

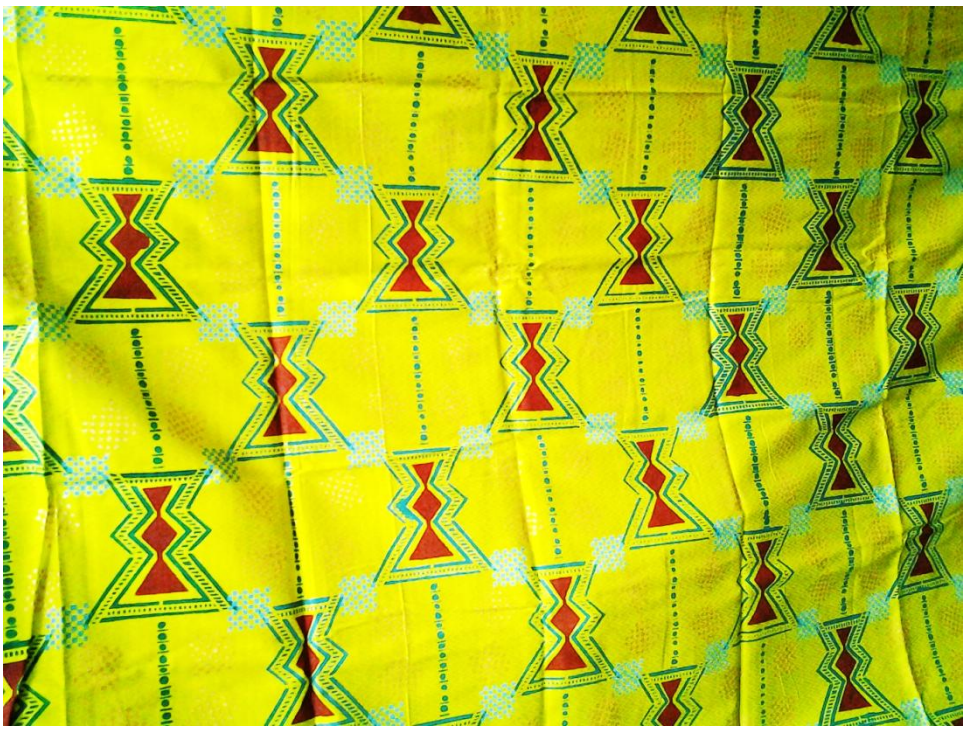


Plate CXV:*Akwete* printed fabric (*Ebeukwu afomkpo* motif) **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.8Result



Plate CXVI:*Akwete* woven fabric utilizing*Ute* and *Ebe* motifs**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016).

Studio Exploration 1.9: Result



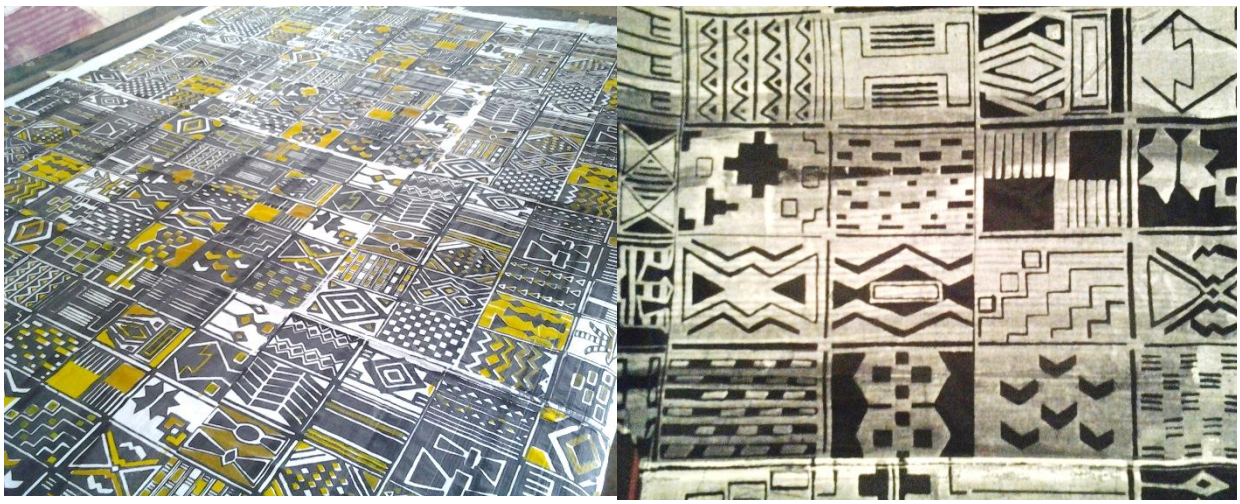
Plate CXVII:*Akwete* printed fabric utilizing *Ute*, *ebe* and *kpakpando* design motifs) **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2015)

Studio Exploration 1.10: Result



Plate CXVIII:*Akwete* printed fabric(Fancy block design motif) **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.11:Result



Plates CXIX(a & b): Fabrics produced from the multiple *Akwete* design motifs
Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.12:Result



Plate CXX:*Akwete* printed fabric. ruler and basket design motifs were utilized. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.13:Result

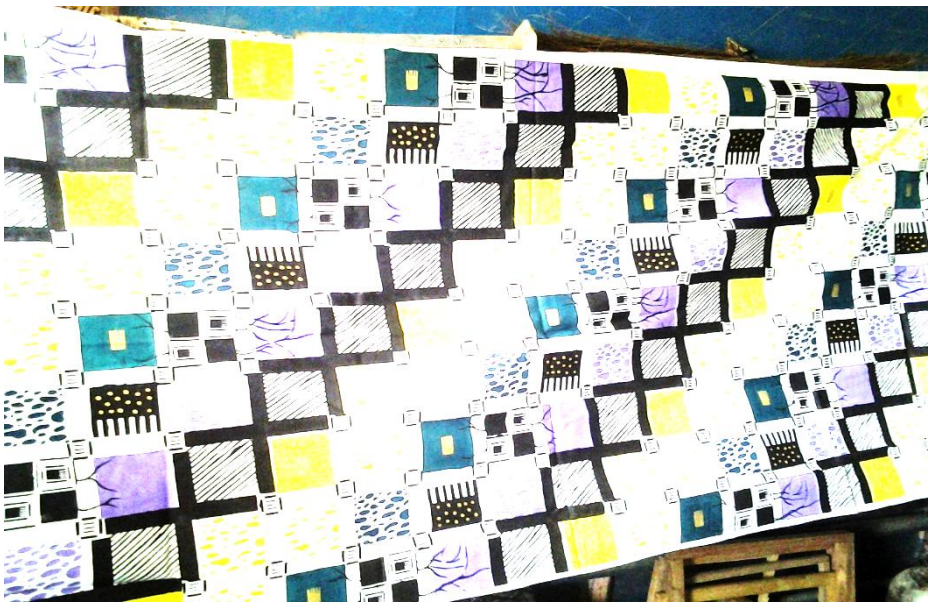


Plate CXXI:*Akwete* printed fabric. (*Mboisi* design motif.) **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.14: Result



Plate CXXII:*Akwete* printed fabric (*Ikaki* and scissors design motifs). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016).

Studio Exploration 1.15: Result



Plate CXXIII:*Akwete* printed fabric.(Fan, *ebe*, scissors, *ute*, and anthropomorphic design motifs printed fabric). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.16: Result



Plate CXXIV:*Akwete* woven fabric (*Kpakpando*, *mboisi* and *popo* design motif printed fabric). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.17:Result



Plate CXXV:*Akwete* woven fabric *(Afo Ikaki).* **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.18:Result



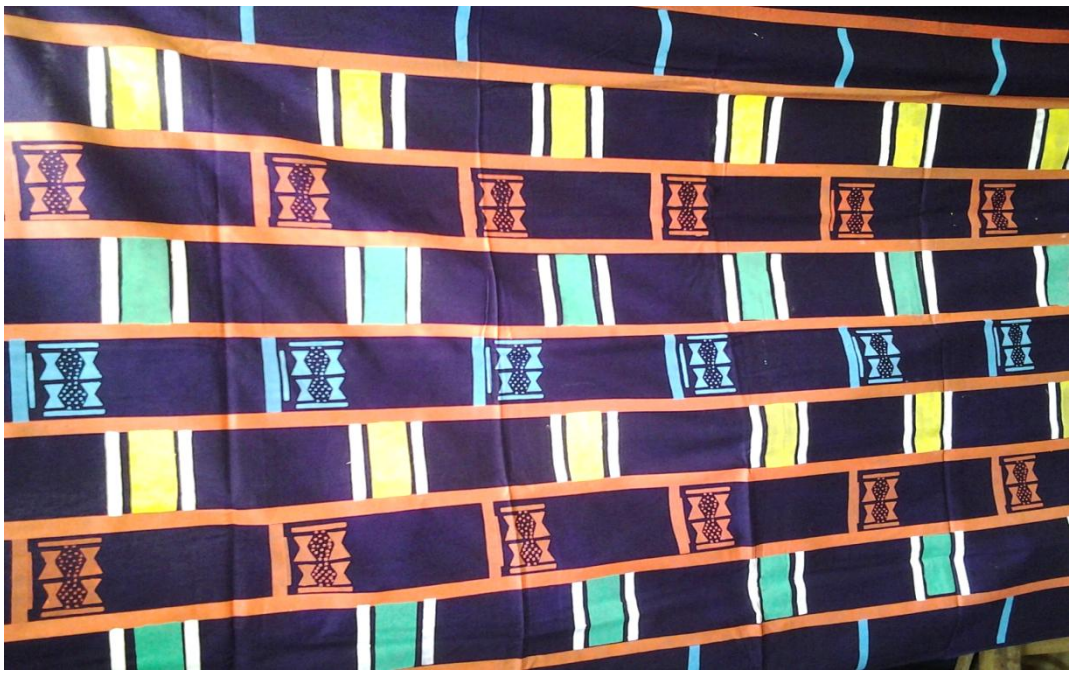
Plate CXXVI:*Nnunnu* and stylized *ebe* design motif (printed fabric). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Explorarion 1.19:Result



PlateCXXVII:*Achicha* (biscuit) design motif (printed fabric)**. Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.20:Result



PlateCXXVIII:*Popo*, *ebe* and *ute*motif design (printed fabric). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.21:Result

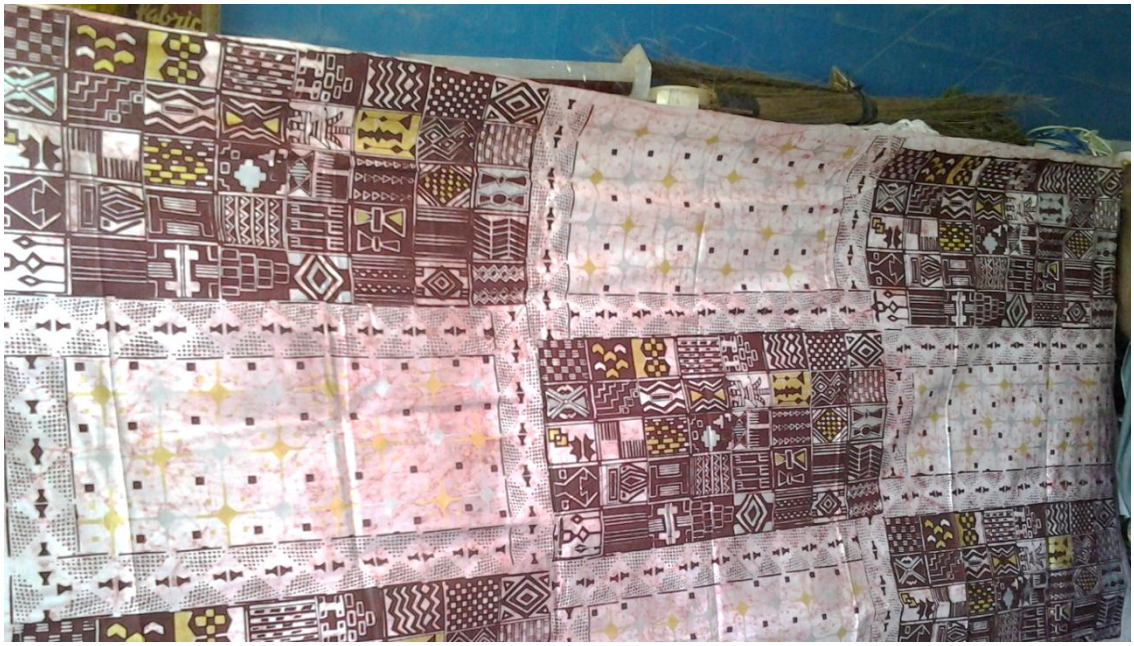


Plate CXXIX: Multiple *Akwete* woven design motifs utilized as one unit of design(Printed fabric) **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.22:Result



Plate CXXX: *Achicha* (biscuit), *ebe* design motifs with a floral touch printed on a fabric. **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.23: Result



PlateCXXXI: *Mgbawa* tomatoes (broken tomatoes) design motif (Printed fabric). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.24: Result



Plate CXXXII: Butterfly design motif (Printed fabric). **Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

Studio Exploration 1.25:Result



Plate CXXXIII: *Kpakpando* and *ebe* design motif (Printed fabrics)**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

4.3.5 Research Question 5: How can the *Akwete* prints be constrcted into fashionable apparels to suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria?

Table 4.13: Construction of Selected Fashionable Apparel with the newly *Akwete*Printed Fabrics to Suit the Contemporary Fashion in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be sewn into shirts, skirts, blouses, trousers, gowns, caftans, etc. to suit the current fashion needs	3.55	1.66	Accepted
2	Styles like the two wrappers and blouse can also be sewn with the *Akwete* printed fabrics to suit the contemporary fashion	4.01	1.11	Accepted
3	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be made into foot wears to suit the contemporary fashion	3.79	1.37	Accepted
4	Factory made materials like linen, cotton, chiffon, satin, suede and velvet can be combined with the *Akwete* prints	3.80	1.37	Accepted
5	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can also be sewn into styles like jackets and blazers to suit the contemporary fashion	3.99	1.24	Accepted
6	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can also be utilized for home furnishing items	3.66	1.41	Accepted

7	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be sewn utilizing the styles in vogue	3.56	1.48	Accepted
8	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be used as background designs for commemorative textile prints	3.74	1.41	Accepted
9	The sewn samples will suit the tropical weather of Nigeria	3.73	1.42	Accepted
10	The sewn samples will depict the Igbo woven design motifs	3.82	1.45	Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.13 expresses, the respondents' responses on the construction of selected fashionable apparel with the newly *Akwete* printed fabrics to suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria. The table shows that the potential users of the *Akwete* printed fabrics strongly agreed to all the item on the table as follows: The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be sewn into shirts, skirts, blouses, trousers, gowns, caftans, etc. to suit the current fashion needs with a mean score of 3.55, styles like the two wrappers and blouse can also be sewn with the *Akwete* printed fabrics to suit the contemporary fashion with a mean score of 4.01, the *Akwete* printed fabrics can be made into foot wears to suit the contemporary fashion with a mean score of 3.79, factory made materials like linen, cotton, chiffon, satin, suede and velvet can be combined with the *Akwete* prints with a mean score of 3.80, the *Akwete* printed fabrics can also be sewn into styles like jackets, skirt and trouser suits and blazers to suit the contemporary fashion with a mean score of .99, the *Akwete* printed fabrics can also be utilized for home furnishing items with a mean score of 3.66, the *Akwete* printed fabrics can be sewn utilizing the styles in vogue with a mean score of 3.56, the *Akwete* printed fabrics can be used as background designs for commemorative textile prints with a mean score of 3.74, the sewn samples will suit the tropical weather of Nigeria with a mean score of 3.73 and the sewn samples will depict the Igbo woven design motifs with a mean score of 3.82.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.77 recorded from the table (that is, the overall mean response of the respondents divided by the number of questionnaire items), it can be inferred that the constructed apparels with the *Akwete* printed fabrics suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria. The results of the research question 6 is placed in the plates below.

4.3.6.1 Studion Exploration 2: Results **(Garments Construction) for research question 6.**



Plate CXXXIV: a woman wearing a gown using the Akwete printed fabric as patch designs on a plain fabric. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



PlateCXXXV: A girl wearing a gown made from a combination of *Akwete* woven fabric and another fabric (chiffon). **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



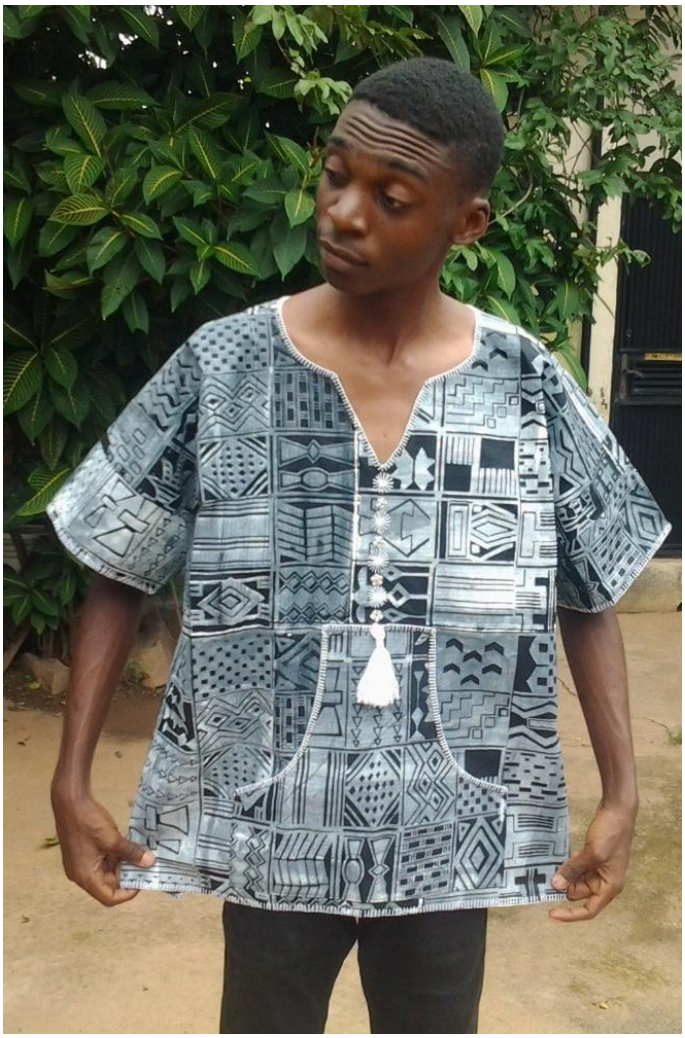
Plate CXXXVI: A man wearing a combination of *Akwete* printed fabric and a factory made plain fabric. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



Plate CXXXVII: A lady wearing the long skirt and a peplum blouse. In this case, *akwete* print was combined with a factory made fabric **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



PlateCXXXVIII: The researcher is wearing a flowing gown made with a combination of *Akwete* printed fabric and a plain yellow fabric. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



PlateCXXXIX: A man wearing a shirt made from *Akwete* printed fabric. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



Plate CXL: A man wearing a shirt made from *akwete* printed fabric. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



Plate CXLI: The researcher tying *akwete* printed fabrics.It was worn as two wrappers with a matching blouse. **Source:** Chudi-Duru (2016)



PlateCXLII: A girl wearing a jacket made from *akwete* printed fabric. Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)



Plate CXLIII: A lady wearing a crop top made from *akwete* printed fabric. Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)

4.3.6 Research Question 6:**In what ways can the perception of the potential users of the new *Akwete* prints be evaluated?**

Table 4.14: Perception of Potential users of the new *Akwete* Printed Fabrics.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. D.	Remarks
1	*Akwete* printed fabrics should be produced and used in Nigeria and beyond.	4.31	1.15	Accepted
2	The *Akwete* printed fabrics should maintain the same design motifs, symbols, name and colour as in the woven ones	3.85	1.26	Accepted
3	The *Akwete* printed fabrics should retain the names of the woven ones	3.69	1.32	Accepted
4	Apparels made with *Akwete* printed fabrics are suitable for all occasions	3.55	1.49	Accepted
5	The *Akwete* printed fabrics is light in weight and it is an advantage to the users	3.62	1.42	Accepted
6	The *Akwete* printed fabrics should also be regarded as prestigious like the hand woven ones because they bear the same motif symbols	4.08	1.26	Accepted
7	They are good and acceptable as formal and casual clothing	3.66	1.29	Accepted
8	The unique qualities of the *Akwete* printed fabrics will make it to be acceptable by all classes of people	3.74	1.39	Accepted
9	The design motifs of the *Akwete* woven fabrics are appropriate on the printed textiles	3.58	1.46	Accepted
10	The *Akwete* printed fabrics like the *Akwete* woven fabrics should be mass produced and sold for economic purposes	3.94	1.31	Accepted
11	The *Akwete* printed fabrics like the Kente print will showcase the Igbo cultural/world view to the Igbos that neglected it and beyond local boundaries	3.86	1.43	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.81		Accepted

Key: 1 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 3 = strongly disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Source: Chudi-Duru, 2016

Table 4.14displays, the responses of the perception of potential users of the new *Akwete* printed fabrics. The respondents strongly agreed to the following items: *Akwete* printed fabrics should be produced and used in Nigeria and beyond with a mean score of 4.31, the *Akwete* printed fabrics should maintain the same design motifs, symbols, name and colour as in the woven ones with a mean score of 3.85, the *Akwete* printed fabrics should retain the names of the woven ones with a mean score of 3.68, Apparel made with *Akwete* printed

fabrics are suitable for all occasions with a mean score of 3.55, the *Akwete* printed fabrics are light in weight and it is an advantage to the users with a mean score of 3.62, the *Akwete* printed fabrics should also be regarded as prestigious like the hand woven ones because they bear the same symbolic motifs with a mean score of 4.08, they are good and acceptable as formal and casual clothing with a mean score of 3.66, the unique qualities of the *Akwete* printed fabrics will make it be acceptable by all classes of people with a mean score of 3.74, the design motifs of the *Akwete* woven fabrics are perfect on the printed textiles with a mean score of 3.58, the *Akwete* printed fabrics like the *Akwete* woven fabrics should be mass produced and sold for economic purposes with a mean score of 3.94 and the *Akwete* printed fabrics like the Kente print will showcase the Igbo cultural and worldview to the Igbo that neglected it and beyond local boundaries with a mean score of 3.86.

Based on the value of the weighted mean average of 3.81 recorded from the table (that is, the overall mean response of the respondents divided by the number of questionnaire items), it can be inferred that the *Akwete* printed fabrics should be produced using the symbolic motifs woven onto the fabrics so that the Igbo cultural heritage showcased on the woven cloth will not be lost.It can also be inferred that the names given to the woven symbolic motifs should not be changed when they are printed on fabrics in order to depict prestige.The fabrics that are produced will be suitable for different kinds of apparels for various occasions.

4.4 Discussion

In Table 4.1, which shows the qualifications of the users and the potential users, those with BA/BSc qualifications outnumbered the other respondents, followed by those with NCE and Diploma qualifications, showing that those within these groups are the highest number of users and potential users of the printed fabrics.It has been observed by this study, that these groups make up the students and the working class which are always fashion conscious and will always like to experiment with lots of fabrics during any occasion, for everyday wears

and office wears. These groups, are those that make up the workforce in the study area which is Abia state. Most of them in one way or the other have seen, read or heard of *Akwete* woven fabrics but have not been able to possess one. Few of them that have seen and utilised the hand woven cloth. There are complaints laid about the weight of the woven cloth, absence of innovation, exorbitant prices and non-availability of the cloth.Therefore, *Akwete* woven cloth as heavy as it is can not be worn to the offices as office wears.During the field work, it was observed that most of the clothes the respondents wore to their places of work were mostly cotton; they appreciated the *Akwete*printed fabrics because they prefer light clothings which willsuit the weather and also be very comfortable when worn to the offices.This study observed that the imported textiles have almost taken the place of *Akwete* woven fabrics.The imported textiles have become a daily wear while *Akwete*hand woven textiles have become exceedingly occasional and almost forgotten by the Igbo(Basden 1983). Chukueggu and Ogu (2013) affirmed that although there has been a lot of recorded progressions in the areas of designs woven on the cloth,weavers' skills and their materials utilised in weaving;*Akwete* woven fabrics are yet to gain recognition in contemporary fashion in Nigeria.

During the focus group discussion with the weavers, the number of the educated weavers were more than those that were not educated.The weaver that had the best and most intricate designs is a degree holder by name Lady patience Order, which signifies that the more educated the weavers are the more they are able to do a lot of explorations to produce masterpieces as samples of woven cloths. Most of the weavers are engaged in weaving and teaching or weaving and farming at the same time. They utilised the proceeds from their weaving in training themselves educationally. Another discussant, Mrs Nneoma Okere attested to that. As a mother of two, she survives on the sales she makes from her woven cloth and trains herself in school.

The users and potential users with the working experience of 1-5years outnumbered the other respondents showing that these are the younger ones which are most eager to see the new innovation based on the *Akwete* woven designs.The respondents with 31 years and above experience were very few showing that they are not easily found.Thus the study is of the view that this particular group were the ones that know the woven fabrics too well yet they are the minimum end users.

In the focus group discussion, most of the weavers have more than 25 years of weaving experience.They attested to it by mentioning the time they started weaving.This means that the longer the weaving experience the much better and experienced the weaver becomes because it is practiced daily.

The number of the users and potential users that are single, outnumbered those that are married showing that the single ones are those that will utilise the printed fabrics.They were found in the higher institutions during the field work.Most of the singles – which are mosly the youths, do not have the knowledge of what *Akwete* woven fabrics are like, and as a result of this, they did not utilised them to sew some apparels. That is why they do not have any in their possessions. During the field work in Abia state, this study had to show the respondents the sample of *Akwete* woven fabric, before they could respond to the questionnaire. Since the youths are the leaders of tomorrow and they outnumber the adults, if it is only the adults that have the knowledge of what *Akwete* woven fabrics are, then there is a problem that needs to be solved.That is why this study is of the view that this research will bring back the minds of those that do not have the knowledge of what *Akwete* woven fabrics are, and those that have entirely forgotten the Igbo woven fabrics. The majority of the respondents, are from Abia state but do not know much concerning *Akwete*weaving tradition and its products. Those that are single are some of the students and some workers that were found in the field. Although

the singles are still patronising and interested in foreign wears but they expressed likeness for the new *Akwete* printed fabrics because of the lightness in weight and what they symbolise.They mentioned that they can be able to manipulate the prints for some current styles in the fashion quite unlike the woven fabrics.These prints can be sewn into different wears which will be useful to them.

All the discussants are married, this was confirmed by this study during the focus group discussion. During the numerous field works in *Akwete*town, only a few single girls were seen weaving, most of them have travelled outside *Akwete* to search for other jobsthey feel will suit them better since there's lack of patronage in weaving vocation (Lamb and Holmes 1980).Therefore, when this hereditary chain from mother to daughter is truncated by this act, it shows that this weaving process will be dying slowly because there will be no one to inherit the weaving practice. Ndebilie (2002) also upheld this fact by saying that *Akwete* weaving practices and the woven cloths are dying slowly.

There were many tribes from different parts of the country, which responded to the questionnaire because the higher institutions were sampled. In line with this, many people from different parts of Nigeria were administered with the questionnaire; but the number of the Igbo that are users and potential users that returned their responses outnumbered the others.This shows that the Igbo are very eager to see something new produced from the traditionally hand woven Igbo fabrics.

The number of users and potential users from *Akwete* town is less than the users and potential users that are Igbo but not from *Akwete*.This shows that in as much as *Akwete* town is where this fabric is produced, it is simply a small place compared to the whole of Igbo land, the study revealed that they are not the major consumers of their woven fabrics; rather the consumers are those that surround them being the other Igbo that are not from *Akwete* and the

Ijaw from Rivers state of Nigeria. Aronson (1980) confirmed and noted that the indigenes of *Akwete* are not the major consumers of the woven fabrics, rather the major consumers are other people from the neighbouring Igbo and Ijaw towns.

In the surveying of *Akwete* weaving tradition and the details of designs, a lot of designs and motifs are being created by the weavers on constant basis.Most of them have not been documented. Davis (1974), attempted to document a few of the motifs, but the majority of them are yet to be documented.There are also lots of recent happenings in the weaving tradition and practices which have not been sufficiently documented.Till date the women and the girls are the ones still involved in the weaving vocation. They are the ones that initiated the weaving, they make the rules and decide on certain issues including how the weaving cooperative society should be managed.

Inspite of all the efforts by the weavers to keep *Akwete* flourishing, the discussants in the focus group discussion, revealed that *Akwete* weaving vocation, which is part of Igbo cultural heritage, is on the decline.Many weavers have abandoned their weaving practices to other towns in search of greener pastures while those in *Akwete* town have engaged themselves in farming and also weaving, due to low patronage. It is no longer a full-time practice as it used to be.The bulk of money is not realised in the business. Mrs Nneoma Okere(a discussant) also buttressed the fact that the men do not participate in the weaving rather they can help to wind the thread which is used for the weft (filling) onto the bobbins after several pleadings.She further explained that the reason why men were not allowed to weave in *Akwete* town is because first and foremost, the women are the ones that invented weaving in *Akwete* town,it is their occupation, they are more patient and very careful because this weaving is not so easy,it involves a lot of processes which the men might not be patient enough to handle, and passionate over their weaving inheritance, the men are normally filled with energy,they do

not get involved in house hold chores like the women and tend to the children.Therefore,they will be faster in weaving, and as a result, this will pose a threat to the women's weaving vocation because thewomen will not be as fast as the men in producing more woven fabrics.

Futhermore, she narrated a story about a woman in *Akwete* town who was extraordinarily very fast in weaving, whenever she got a contract of weaving some cloths, she finished in few days instead of a week or more. She produced a lot of woven fabrics to the envy of the other weavers. So the other women got suspicious and later found out that the woman's husband used to weave for her inside their house and nobody knew. This resulted to their ostracisation from *Akwete* town till their death.

Mr Justice Obinna, a community leader, who was interviewed attested that it is an abomination for a man to weave in *Akwete* although some might just try to do a little weaving on their own in a playful mood. The men's occupation were farming and fishing in those times. He further explained that everything concerning the weaving is purely the women's concern except for the endorsement of some decisions made by the women as regards to anyone who will teach someone that is not from *Akwete*on how to weave the cloth. The men were needed to hit the needle (otiti) on the ground after each pronouncement of curses; and if everyone dares teach a non-indigene, those pronouncements surely follow till date. He mentioned thsat indigeneship is either by birth or by marriage only. He further revealed that Dada Nwakata, and Madam George were among the premier women that pronounced the courses on the defaulters. The women guided their vocation jealously and never allowed people to understand their techniques of weaving so that the name *Akwete* town, the weavers and the woven fabrics can be recognised as only their own and brought into limelight globally.The leader of the cooperative weavers society, Madam Helen disclosed that their forebears forbade the teaching of Akwete weaving techniques to any female that is not an

indigene during the focus group discussion. This study is of the opinion that this could be one of the strongest reasons why this weaving practice is on the decline.This study is of the view that if this woven art is practiced in other areas of Igbo land successfully, a lot of ideas would have been developed as regards to the constant modification of Akwete woven fabrics.It would have been made available in different parts of Igboland not only in Akwete town.This study observed that this hand woven fabrics are not found anywhere in the Igbo markets and beyond.To the extent that if one needs to purchase any,is either one travels to Akwete town or places a call across to any weaver to make one availalable.In view of this, this study is of the opinion that it will be very difficult for this weaving practice to develop from this particular state.

The women used this unique weaving vocation to give themselves a leading voice in their patriarchal community and project*Akwete*woven cloth to the world.Through this weaving they are able to make enough money to fend for their families and train their children.They have also been able to showcase their design ingenuity by producing some master pieces which have made*Akwete* woven products to be recorded among the first woven cloths in West Africa in the textile history of the world (Cole and Aniakor,1986),Aronson 1980).They have also been able to clothe and beautify the people of Igbo nation and beyond with their intricately woven fabrics.The women have always taken the responsibility of the weavers welfare, and also used this vocation to empower more women through the proceeds from the women's weaving cooperative society levies.Basing all these attributes of the weavers on the ideology of feminist theory which believes that women are not less capable than men and that they are not inferior to men, so they should be treated equally.If they were inferior, they would not have been capable of bringing *Akwete* town into prominence through their weaving vocation. It is through their handiwork and hard work that they able to do this. The women have also been able to distinguish themselves in the aspect of African traditional weaving.

Anywhere, *Akwete* weaving is mentioned, ones' mind goes to the women.They have succeeded in bringing worldwide recognition to the Igbo and Nigeria at large.

The weavers refused to impart the knowledge to others(Aronson 1989) except their own daughters who ironically, are not interested. Mrs Nneoma Okere, one of the weavers in this group complained bitterly that the little daughter of a primary school age has refused to be taught how to weave using a stool as a smaller loom, which could be managed by a child. She insisted that it is only going to school that she desires. She mentioned that those that tried teaching some other people passed through a lot of difficulties. Therefore, their absolute refusal to impart their knowledge of weaving to non *Akwete*indigenes and the negative response of their children towards mentoring them by their mothers is gradually leading to the deterioration of this woven art and practice.

The symbolic design motifs used by the weavers are in form of decorative images usually repeated on the hand woven cloths to form some designs. These motifs were woven into the cloth.The women made use of a lot of motifs numbering over a hundred and eighty.These symbolic motifs are means of expression by the women in defining the Igbo culture, recording the events of the past, telling through stories through the fabrics and narrating historical proverbs (Davis 1974).Basing this on Erwin Panafskys' ideology on iconography which says that in a work of art (design), the form cannot be divorced from the content.The symbolic motifs are the traditional images associated with a subject.These images are used to represent the Igbo cultural beliefs and worldview.

The *Akwete* motifs are one of the characteristics of *Akwete* woven cloth.The size of the woven cloth(measuring two yards and a quarter) with its motifs distinguishes it from other woven cloths in Nigeria and beyond.This study observed that there are no joinings on the woven fabrics and the woven fabrics have names attached to them for proper

identification(Davis 1974).The women are endeared to their woven pieces.Some of the motifs utilised by the women as mentioned by Lady Patience Ordor(a discussant) during the focus group discussion are created by the women, some are very intricate while others are quite simple.There are various ways in which designs can be gotten, for example from dreams like Ordor claimed, by the weaver herself, by copying from another weaver in *Akwete* and by copying from other weavers in other cultures that weave.If any weaver creates a design, she is free to name it what it symbolises to her; or can even give it her name.A lot of things can inspire the women to create new design motifs while weaving, like recent happenings in Igbo land and Nigeria in general, stages of life, happenings in a woman's life, childhood experiences, occurrences in married life and household items. New design motifs are being created by the women and this has not stopped the usage of the old ones as they are still used in weaving till date.The more intricate the designs are the more expensive the woven fabrics will be.The number of heddles used to weave determines the amount the fabric will be sold.Usually many heedles are used to create intricate designs.The meanings embedded in most of the woven motifs which are not copied are based on the cultural values of the Igbo.

Some of the woven design motifs are used for special occasions. Most of the woven fabrics are woven in bright colours.The artistic appearance of the *Akwete* woven fabrics attract a lot of buyers; this statement was supported by Lady Patience Odor who pointed out during the focus group discussion that the design motifs used to decorate the woven pieces attract a lot of expatriates that are workers in some oil companies in Rivers state of Nigeria.They buy them so as to use them for wall hangings.Without these design motifs on the woven cloth, there are nothing to see and identify them with.

The weavers do not make use of tape measure, but the designs are woven with precision and their colour combinations are also appropriate yet they never had a formal education in art and design.The yarns used in weaving also add to the aesthetics of the woven cloth.

Although the woven cloth is beautified with a lot of motifs, they are not being showcased in every traditional occasion in Igboland. Many men, women and youths are not found being adorned in the woven fabrics as most of the youths are a bit ignorant of what*Akwete* looks like except those from *Akwete* town and Ijaw area of Rivers state .The dress code for current occasions in Igboland is mostly George wrappers, laces and wax prints.

This study observed that the hand woven fabrics are used in acting Igbo home movies to depict Igbo cultural costume but ordinarily they are scarcely worn during occasions.Few of the traditional rulers among the Igbo, wear the woven fabrics during their coronation ceremonies especially the woven wrappers with the crown and ikaki designs, and this is not very common as this is done once in a while.The weavers sell their products to earn some money. Formally, their customers come to *Akwete* to buy from them but recently they carry their finished products to their customers on request because there have inaccessible roads leading to *Akwete*town where the fabrics are woven.

Some of the weavers have attended a lot of exhibitions both at state ,national and international levels.These have not really created enough awareness that *Akwete* fabrics are looking for so as to come back to the fashion scene in Igboland and beyond.

This traditional hand woven textiles could be used for other fashion accessories like bags, shoes and sandals among others (Okeke 1982).They could also be used for interior decorations ordinarily. During the burial of a prominent person, the woven fabrics are used for interior decoration (Aronson 1980). *Akwete* woven fabrics have lots of function to perform in the Igbo society. Basing this ideology on the theory of functionalism by Bronislaw

Malinowski which states that “specific cultural institutions function to support the structure of society or serve the needs of individuals in the society.”Therefore, each part of the society has a function to perform so that the society can be run well.The *Akwete* weavers are part of the society, their vocation and products have contributed to the economic, cultural, educational segments of the Igbo society and beyond; in addition to providing some *Akwete* clothes for body adornment.

There are lots of difficulties the weavers alwaysface which include: non-availability of funds.They do not have access to loans to enable them purchase some materials needed in production. If there is no fund to produce woven products, there will not be anything to earn their living from. Most of them struggle to produce small orders to high standards because of no funding.Upon these struggles, there is the lack of patronage, due to non-accessibility of good roads and loss of interest in the woven cloth by some of the younger females. They also have insufficient good looms in the cooperative society building, as a result they are the ones making their looms locally with the help of the carpenters for those who can afford to do so.The cooperative building which is in a bad shape is undergoing a lot of repairs. This has resulted in people staying in their homes to weave instead of the cooperative society building.This makes it so difficult to see most of the weavers and interact with them.

There is also the influx of foreign materials into the markets which are cheaper and easier to handle in wearing.Therefore, this has drawn people's attention from handwoven textiles to machine made textiles which are cheaper and lighter in weight.The weavers also need to be retrained so as to know and be enlightened on what people expect from them. Amidst all these problems the weavers are facing,they have not stopped weaving.They are still keeping the *Akwete* weaving alive.Basing this on the social Darwinist theory of natural selection by Herbert Spencer(Encyclopedia Britainnica) which says that only the strongest survive and

trample on the weak.The weavers are not discouraged rather there is still a competitive spirit still being witnessed in the weavers.Other weaving communities around *Akwete* town are not as strong and prominent in weaving as *Akwete*.Amidst all odds they still rely on *Akwete* town for inspiration.They are still working hard and trying to survive.

The *Akwete* hand woven textiles, have not been constantly utilised in the contemporary fashion in Nigeria and have not also been showcased in fashion shows in Nigeria recently. This is because a lot of users are discouraged by the weight of the fabrics, lack of new ideas and innovations which should have improved the aesthetics and other qualities of the fabric.Another reason is that the fashion designers have not considered it suitable for sewing cloth wears.The innovations in techniques, yarns ,colours and embellishments are very necessary so as to withstand any form of competition from its counterparts (other traditionally hand woven textiles and foreign textiles). A pair of *Akwete* woven fabrics weighs 3.5, while the printed fabric of six yards weighs 1 kg, a pair of George wrappers have different weights depending on the accessories utilised in embellishments.The potential users prefer light weighted fabrics that is why they accepted the *Akwete* printed fabrics.Considering the qualities of the new *Akwete* printed fabrics, which are: lightness in weight, have similar design motifs with the original *Akwete*hand woven fabrics, and similar colours; they should be mass produced and used in Nigeria and beyond to create variety.The apparels constructed with *Akwete* printed fabrics, are seen as prestigious because they have the same woven motifs printed on them.The only difference is that the former one is printed while the later is woven.

The printed fabrics were accepted by the potential users because they found the design motifs appropriate for printed textiles.They also recommended that the prints should be mass produced so that many people can buy and utilise them in contemporary fashion in Nigeria.Since the potential users are mostly the youths and they are mostly found on the

streets, they are the young and restless and will want to experiment with new fashion items so as to always be in vogue. Bringing in the Ted Polhemus trickle up or bubble up theory of fashion distribution,which states that fashion originated from the streets through the low-income people and then eventually flows to upper-income groups.This study believes that if the new *Akwete* printed fabrics are mass produced, the prices will differ from the woven textiles,it will be cheaper.When the prices are cheaper the low-income earners can be able to afford them and experiment with them by sewing them into different styles of clothing. This new innovation will eventually flow up gradually, to upper-income groups who might even demand for more superior prints from the cheaper ones that have been previously produced for the low-income earners, for example; most of the Dutch wax fabrics in the markets have different grades with different prices so as to carry everyone in the society along.

The new *Akwete* printed fabrics, have brought into the Nigerian fashion scene, the Igbo traditional symbolic woven motifs which were not sufficiently utilised previously.All the design motifs utilised in printing on the cotton fabrics in the studio were printed as they are.The woven details(simulation) of some of the design motifs were utilised in printing while the motif outlines were used to produce some designs.The*Akwete*printedfabricshave also created room for variety in Igbo textiles.

During the focus group discussion, majority of the discussants did not welcome the idea of producing *Akwete* prints because they felt that after taking lots of measures to seclude their cherished vocation,their woven symbols will now be showcased on printed fabrics.They mentioned that though the weaving processes are tedious, there is the lack of patronage, they are not earning enough money from the weaving as compared to before, they will still like to continue weaving because they stated that it is a divine gift.They also felt that the printed fabrics might take the place of the woven fabrics but some of them still argued that the

printed fabrics are welcome and they know that they can never take the place of the original*Akwete*hand woven fabrics rather they will project the weaving practice and create variety and perhaps rekindle a lost interest.

Having examined the other theories, it is not as if they are not important, but the most suited for this study is the functionalist theory.But the most suited for this study is theBronislaw Malinowskis'(1884-1942) functionalist theory which focused on the physical and psychological needs of human.The functionalists believe that each part of the society has a function to perform to make sure that the society moves on effectively.For example,Akwete weaving tradition is a part of the society.It has a lot of functions to perform to ensure the smooth running of the society.Akwete woven fabrics have lots of functions to the society apart from being used as clothings.This woven art falls under art for life sake not art for art sake because its' primary aim as an African art, is the symbolic functions that it performs asregards to the Igbo tradition though it has aesthetic functions.These woven fabrics convey lots of messages to the weaver,wearer,the community that owns them, the community where they find themselves and the admirers or onlookers.The weavers' jobs are to weave and provide the people with woven fabrics to cover their bodies.The motifs woven into the fabrics have aesthetic values that attract and serve as identification to the people that own them.With the help of these printed fabrics that have been produced,people will buy and wear them.This in turn will boost the economy and also serve as a restoration of Igbo cultural heritage as regards to textiles so that it will not go into extinction.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study was carried out to examine the *Akwete* weaves to determine their suitability as design motifs on printed textiles for constructing Nigerian fashion. Descriptive survey and studio exploratory research designs were employed. In order to achieve the aim of the study, six specific objectives were set.A total number of a hundred and twenty motifs were found during the fieldwork, out of these,thirty-two motifs were utilised in studio exploration and printed on cotton fabrics.The techniques utilised are the screen printing, stencilling, batik dyeing and free hand drawing utilizing the 3D fabric ink. Two studio explorations were carried out in this study comprising of the printing of *Akwete* motifs on fabrics and the construction of some of the prints into clothing.

A total number of 381 users of *Akwete* woven fabric and potential users of *Akwete* print were administered with a well-structured 5 point Likert scale questionnaire, while focus group discussions were conducted with the weavers in the *Akwete* weaving Cooperative Society. The focus groups were five in number. Made up of six women in a group. They were 30 weavers in all that availed themselves for the focus group discussion. Some issues as regards to *Akwete* weaving tradition based on the research objectives were adequately discussed and recorded by the researcher. Interviews were also granted. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and percentages which were presented in tables.Qualitative analysis was used to analyse the focus group discussion and interview.

5.2 Summary of major findings

Having carried out this study, on the exploration of *akwete* weaves motifs and their adaptation to printed textiles for garment productions; the following findings were made:

- Most of the Igbo do not make use of *Akwete* hand woven fabrics during commemoration of events.Most of the Igbo prefer imported clothings to the hand woven fabrics and weaving in *Akwete* town has gone back to part-time activity because of their inability to adequately provide for their daily living from the proceeds of the woven cloth. It also found out that some of the weavers go to farm very early in the morning and return in the afternoon to continue with their weaving. To buttress the finding by this study, Chudi –Duru (2016) mentioned that, on various visits to *Akwete* town, she had to wait for the weavers to return from the farm around 12noon to commence their weaving which they started previously.
- Most of the older designs are still woven till date for example; the ikaki, nnadede, ebe and others. All the motifs can be woven in any colour and a lot of new designs that are not named have been incorporated by some expert weavers.These motifs have not been adequately documented and there are not much enticing ideas on how to make the woven pieces more acceptable to people.
- *Akwete* weaving tradition is on the decline, and most of the younger weavers prefer to further their studies and go to the cities for white collar jobs instead of their weaving vocation.
- Less weavingactivities are being carried out there because there is no conducive environment for the weavers as the co-operative weaving society building is undergoing a lot of repairs.
- Most of the weavers only weave on demand because of lack of patronage and those that patronise them more are the white expatriates from some oil companies in the country, some people from Rivers and Western states of Nigeria.
- The weavers are extremely reluctant to impart their knowledge in weaving to non-indigenes of *Akwete*for fear of uncertainties and this has caused this weaving tradition

to remain under their control so that *Akwete* woven cloths will not be common and found everywhere, and many weavers also believe that the gods of their land will render any person that taught an outsider how to weave useless.Aronson(1989) also buttressed this fact while noting that*Akwete* women of Nigeria used myth as a strategy to protect their economic interests in a tradition that underwent significant change during the past century.They saw their leader Dada Nwakata as highly secretive,they copied her behaviour which Aronson (1989) and this study encountered during their researches in *Akwete* town. As a result of this, they cannot reveal the secrets involved in their weaving practices. They also adhere to a set of strict rigid rules so as to prevent the spread of their woven art to other areas.No woman that is not from *Akwete* is taught how to weave.This assures them that *Akwete* weaving remains under their economic control and also confined in *Akwete* town.They were faced with the risk of competition with their neighbours, therefore, they had to operate on a set of rules.These rules were not flexible but made lawful by fiction.

- Some of the Akwete woven fabrics found in the British Museum are placed on plates CXLIV (a –d) under while the rest are placed in Appendix VI.The motifs are still utilised in weaving till date.



Plate CXLIV (a):*Akwete* woven design. Decorated with ebe,popo and ukwubench motifs with boarder designs.Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Date:before 1913.Source: Clarke (2013)



Plate CXLIV (b):*Akwete*woven design.Decorated with ebe and anthropomorphic motifs.Bevings' collection donated to British Museum. Date:before 1913.Source: Clarke (2013)

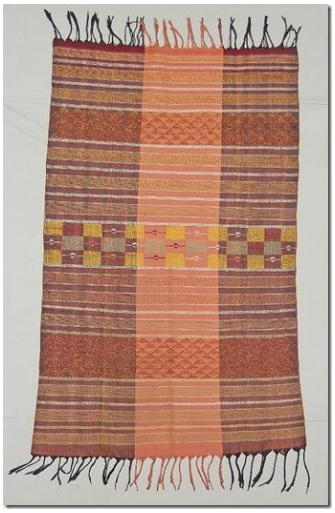


Plate CXLIV (c):*Akwete* woven design. Decorated with checkerboard, ruler ngaji and saw motifs.Bevings' collection donated to British Museum. Date:before 1913.Source: Clarke (2013)



Plate CXLIV (d):*Akwete* woven design. Decorated with afo ikaki, ebe, scissors and ruler motifs.Bevings' collection donated to British Museum. Date:before 1913.Source: Clarke (2013)

- Mixing of Acrylic colours and textile inks for printing were found to be appropriate.This mixture produced brighter effects than the pure textile printing inks.
- Many motifs were incorporated to form one design on a piece of printed cloth, as this was found to produce rich and full designs.Making use of only one motif produced scanty designs on printed fabrics.
- The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be used to sew apparels, which fit into the contemporary fashion in Nigeria; which bear the Igbo woven symbolic motifs on them and showcase the Igbo culture.They are also regarded as prestigious just like the woven pieces.
- Combinations of various printing techniques in textile are very effective in achieving better results in printing than using only one technique.

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

Having conducted a survey on the *Akwete* weaves to determine their suitability as design motifs on printed textiles for constructing Nigerian fashion, this study established that:

- The *Akwete* woven motifs have the capability to produce appropriate designs for printed fabrics when utilised and a variety of *Akwete* woven cloth in the form of prints have been produced to convey important cultural information through its design motifs.
- Through this study, the literature on popularising and sustaining the uses of traditional African motifs has been enriched as this, will open new grounds for further researches on the subject matter that is, the utilisation of other woven motifs on printed textiles and constructing them into wears to suit the current fashion in Nigeria.
- This study has created a cultural awareness on the importance of these motifs in terms of printing them on fabrics and sewing them into wears that will be worn to suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria.
- Through this method a mixture of contemporary and traditional methods of printing were found to be very effective in studio exploration.

5.4 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that Akwete woven motifs can be utilized for printed textiles. The results achieved in this study have revealed that there are lots of *Akwete* woven motifs that can be utilised and printed on fabrics.The printed textiles were found to be suitable materials for fashion and garment production. They can also be combined with other plain factory-made fabrics like plain woodin, daviva, linen and laces to produce contemporary wears which showcase Igbo culture. Based on the findings, this study concludes that the production of *Akwete* printed fabrics and their utilisation in clothing construction have added to the variety of African designs in the world of African printed textiles and to the world of fashion. Itsproduction brought into limelight the Igbo woven

symbols which have not always been recognised and showcased in the fashion industry in Nigeria.Also, the rare quality of the printed fabrics which is its' lightness compared to the weight of the woven fabric, will enable the printed fabrics to be accepted by different groups of people in Nigeria and beyond thereby, helping the *Akwete* symbolic motifs to be retained, revived, popularised and kept alive.

5.5 Recommendations

This study recommends that:

- Designers and Artists should be encouraged on the subject matter of utilising *Akwete* design motifs in other areas of art and design to aid their sustainability since it has a lot of motifs which showcases African culture.
- Other traditional motifs in other cultures of Nigeria could also be surveyed with a view of printing them on fabrics to be utilised in fashion and designing to create variety and suit the current trends in fashion.
- Research should also be carried out on the adaptation of those *Akwete* design motifs on dyed fabrics to tell the story of Igbo world view.
- The *Akwete* prints should be mass produced in the industries and marketed as this study produced handmade samples. In this way, *Akwete* weaving tradition will be promoted and their designs brought to the limelight. The woven fabrics which are not patronised by people due to its weight, exorbitant price, and lack of adequate materials and accessibility of good road, the prints will now be bought at a cheaper rate.
- Seminars and Exhibitions should be organized annually showcasing Igbo weaving traditional products. Many weavers should be encouraged by inviting them to display their products. Competitions should be staged by Ohaneze Ndigbo for the best weaver, the best woven clothes, the fastest weaver, and the most complicated

designs and so on because the design motifs are needed for decorating the printed fabrics. Igbo Stake holders, Governors and their wives should be invited and the general Igbo public should be invited.

- *Akwete* cloth weaving centres should be established in all the state council for arts and culture in Igbo land. In that way they can teach other people and also sell their products, thereby enabling sustainability. The women weavers should be sensitized by the five Igbo States council for arts and culture on the need to sell their products in the galleries set apart for them in those councils for arts and culture. In this way many will come to remember the *Akwete* woven fabrics and not only this, those fabrics will be showcased. This will cause many to buy and own some pieces of those woven fabrics especially those who cannot go to *Akwete* town because of the distance and bad roads. These woven fabrics should be in various towns because many people do not know or remember what *Akwete* woven fabric is like. Some do not even know that*Akwete* woven fabrics are the indigenous Igbo fabrics as found out during the field work. Therefore, the weavers should be talked into coming out of their shells to showcase the weaving tradition to their fellow Igbo so that this weaving practice will not die.
- Igbo cultural attire museums should be established in all Igbo speaking states to conserve, preserve and showcase the Akwete woven fabrics for the future generation.
- This study alsosuggests that, the wives of the Eastern State governors should begin to be adorned always in *Akwete* woven fabrics to see if the woven fabrics will be popular and admired by the Igbo and beyond. In this manner, the woven fabrics will be admired and remembered.And once the printed *Akwete* woven fabrics are seen,

the admirers will relate them to the woven pieces and know that they are the same except for the various techniques used in production.

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APPENDICESI:QUESTIONNAIRE

(For users of *Akwete* woven fabrics and potential users of *Akwete* printed fabrics).

Dear Respondent,

I am a doctoral candidate of Textile Design, Department of Industrial Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria carrying out a study on the Investigation of *Akwete* weaves to determine their suitability as design motifs on printed textiles for constructing Nigerian fashion. You have been selected as one of those that can give some required answers to these questions related to the study. The approximate time for answering these questions should be 20 minutes. All information given will be held confidentially. Kindly answer the questions as instructed.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

Instruction: Please tick (√) in the boxes as the information applies to you.

1. **Qualification**
   Primary Certificate
   Post Primary Certificate
   Diploma
   N. C. E. ( )
   B.A./B.Sc ( )
   M.A./M.F.A./M.Sc ( )
   PhD ( )
   None ( )
2. **Working Experience if any.**
   1-5 yrs ( )
   6-10 yrs ( )
   11-15 yrs ( )
   16-20 yrs ( )
   26-30 yrs ( )
   31 yrs and above ( )

3. **Status**
   Single ( )
   Married ( )

4 A native of *Akwete* Town? Yes ( ) No ( )
Igbo not from *Akwete* town Yes ( ) No ( )
Other tribes in Nigeria Yes ( ) No ( )
Non Nigerian- African Yes ( ) No ( )
Non-African Yes ( ) No ( )

SECTION B

	Surveying the *Akwete* weaving tradition.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	*Akwete* weaving has a history attached to it.					
2.	*Akwete* weaving is mainly for the Igbo people in the South Eastern Nigeria.					
3.	The weaving activities are being influenced by some other woven fabrics.					
4.	*Akwete* woven fabrics are part of Igbo cultural heritage.					
5.	*Akwete* weaving has many techniques and tools which are used in weaving.					
6.	*Akwete* woven cloth is found in many peoples' possession.					
7.	*Akwete* weaving is on the decline.					
8	*Akwete* weaving is flourishing.					
9.	Many weavers have abandoned their vocation.					
10.	There is prestige accorded to those that wear them.					

SECTION C

	Akwete woven design motifs	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	All *Akwete* motifs can be woven in any colour.					
2.	*Akwete* woven wrappers are not plainly woven.					
3.	They must always be decorated with design motifs.					
4.	The motifs and size are what makes them to be *Akwete* woven designs.					
5.	Motifs can be used to express one's ideology.					
6.	The motifs on *Akwete* woven fabrics are many.					
7.	Many significant names are given to the motifs.					
8.	It is impossible to achieve successful weaving of indigenous *Akwete* woven fabrics without the introduction of motifs on them.					
9.	They have special values to the Igbo people.					
10.	Some of them are borrowed motifs.					
11.	Some motifs are preferable to others.					

12.	Some of the designs motifs are meant for a particular set of people.					
13.	All the *Akwete* design motifs have names attached to them.					
14.	Newly woven designs spring up every day.					
15.	The oldest designs are still being woven till date.					

SECTION D:

The aesthetic values and acceptability of *Akwete* woven fabrics.		**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Undecided**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	The artistic appearances of *Akwete* woven fabrics attract a lot of buyers.					
2.	The artistic appearances of *Akwete* woven fabrics make them still valuable till date.					
3.	The woven symbolic motifs add to the aesthetics of the *Akwete* woven fabrics.					
4.	The colours are very significant and add a lot of beauty to the *Akwete* woven fabric.					
5.	The *Akwete* woven fabrics are appreciated because of the aesthetic values.					
6.	The woven symbolic motifs cause the *Akwete* woven fabrics to be accepted by many.					
7.	The symbolic motifs on *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are carefully woven with precision.					
8.	The yarns used on the woven fabrics also promote the aesthetics.					
9.	The *Akwete* woven fabrics are accepted by the Igbo people as their own.					
10.	The *Akwete* woven fabrics are showcased in every traditional occasion in Igbo land.					
11.	Many Igbo men, women and youths are found in occasions being adorned with *Akwete* woven fabrics.					
12.	Many Igbo people know what *Akwete* woven fabrics are.					
13.	Other tribes have accepted *Akwete* woven fabrics as one of their traditional costumes and utilize them.					
14.	The Igbo people prefer Georges, hollandaise wax print to *Akwete* hand woven fabrics.					

SECTION E:

Symbolic meanings and values attached to the *Akwete* woven design motifs		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	All the *Akwete* woven design motifs are symbolic and valued by the Igbo and Ijaw areas.					
2.	The symbolic meanings are related to the cultural values of the Igbo people.					
3.	Due to the meanings and values attached to the woven cloth people are attracted to them.					
4.	Users of *Akwete* woven cloth do not value the meanings.					
5.	The users buy the woven cloth based on their meanings and values attached to the motifs.					
6.	Some of the woven cloth are named after the designers.					
7.	The symbolic meaning attached to the woven cloth affects the cost.					
8.	All the *Akwete* design motifs are symbolic.					
9.	Some symbolic motifs are for particular ceremonies.					
10.	The old symbolic motifs are not valued.					
11.	The new symbolic motifs are preferred by the buyers					
12.	Some colours are attributed to certain symbolic motifs.					

SECTION F:

Traditional uses attached to *Akwete* hand woven fabrics.		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	The *Akwete* hand woven fabrics are often used by people in commemoration of traditional events.					
2.	Traditional woven fabrics are used for all occasions by the royalty and wealthy.					
3.	Traditional woven fabrics are worn for all occasions be it social, religious and traditional or ritual worship.					
4.	*Akwete* traditional hand woven fabrics are also used by the ordinary people.					
5.	They are appreciated and valued by the Igbo people.					
6.	Other tribes from the riverine areas like the Ijaw people use them for some ceremonies.					

7.	The traditional textiles are valued when used by the Igbo people.					
8	The traditional textiles can be made into other fashion accessories like bags, shoes, sandals etc.					
9.	*Akwete* woven fabrics can be sold for economic purposes.					
10.	The traditional *Akwete* fabrics are used for interior decoration during the burial of a prominent person.					
11.	The traditional textiles can be used for interior decorations in homes.					

SECTION G:

Utilization of *Akwete* woven fabrics in the contemporary fashion.		**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Undecided**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	*Akwete* hand woven fabrics have been utilized in contemporary fashion in Nigeria.					
2.	*Akwete* hand woven fabrics have been showcased in fashion shows in Nigeria.					
3.	Contemporary fashion designers have designed a lot of clothes using *Akwete* hand woven fabrics in which I have some.					
4.	A lot of users are discouraged by the weight of some *Akwete* woven fabrics.					
5.	*Akwete* weavers should incorporate a lot of new ideas to make *Akwete* more acceptable.					
6.	The *Akwete* woven fabrics should be made to be more appealing to the buyers.					
7.	*Akwete* woven fabrics should always undergo a lot of innovations in methods of weaving, types of yarns, colours, and embellishments so as to withstand any form of competition from its counterparts.					
8.	The *Akwete* design motifs should be printed on cotton fabrics so as to be in constant use in the contemporary fashion.					
9.	These innovations will make the *Akwete* woven fabrics to be in constant use in the contemporary fashion.					
10.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics will convey the same messages the woven one has.					
11.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics will also be more affordable to people in Igboland and beyond local boundaries.					

SECTION H:

	Perception of potential users of the new *Akwete* printed fabrics.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	*Akwete* printed fabrics should be produced and used in Nigeria and beyond.					
2.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics should maintain the same design motifs, symbols, name and colour as in the woven ones.					
3.	They *Akwete* printed fabrics should retain the names of the woven ones.					
4.	Apparel made with *Akwete* printed fabrics are suitable for all occasions.					
5	The *Akwete* printed fabrics is light in weight and it is an advantage to the users.					
6	The *Akwete* printed fabrics should also be regarded as prestigious like the hand woven ones because they bear the same motif symbols.					
7.	They are good and acceptable as formal and casual clothings.					
8.	The unique qualities of the *Akwete* printed fabrics will make it to be acceptable by all classes of people.					
9.	The design motifs of the *Akwete* woven fabrics are perfect on the printed textiles.					
10.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics like the *Akwete* woven fabrics should be mass produced and sold for economic purposes.					
11.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics like the Kente print will showcase the Igbo cultural/world view to the Igbo that neglected it and beyond local boundaries.					

SECTION I:

	The exploration of *Akwete* woven designs as design motifs for printed textiles.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	*Akwete* design motifs are appropriate for prints on cotton fabrics.					
2.	The design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be printed on cotton fabrics to create room for variety.					

3.	The design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be printed directly on the cotton fabrics.					
4.	The design motifs of *Akwete* woven fabrics should be altered a bit to create other designs and printed on cotton fabrics.					
5	The production of *Akwete* printed fabrics will create a room for more recognition of *Akwete* weaving tradition.					
6.	The production will also create awareness and put the printed fabric in constant use in the fashion industry.					
7.	The printed fabrics will be demanded by many more than the woven one because of its price and weight.					
8	The printed *Akwete* fabrics should be produced so that people can use them in the contemporary fashion always.					
9.	The printed *Akwete* fabrics will not change the symbolic motifs which depict the Igbo world view.					
10.	The *Akwete* printed samples can be likened to the adinkra print which consists of adinkra symbols from Ghana, which has gotten a lot of recognition worldwide.					

SECTION J:

Construction of selected fashionable apparel with the newly *Akwete* printed fabrics to suit the contemporary fashion in Nigeria.		**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Undecided**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
		SA	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be sewn into shirts, skirts, blouses, trousers, gowns, caftans, etc., to suit the current fashion needs.					
2.	Styles like the two wrappers and blouse can also be sewn with the *Akwete* printed fabrics to suit the contemporary fashion.					
3.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be made into foot wears to suit the contemporary fashion.					
4.	Factory made materials like linen, cotton, chiffon, satin, suede and velvet can be combined with the *Akwete* prints.					
5.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can also be sewn into styles like jackets and blazers to suit the contemporary fashion.					
6.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can also be utilized for home furnishing items.					
7.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be sewn utilizing the styles in vogue.					
8.	The *Akwete* printed fabrics can be used as background designs for commemorative textile prints.					
9	The sewn samples will suit the tropical weather of Nigeria.					
10.	The sewn samples will depict the Igbo woven design motifs.					

APPENDIX II

The focus group discussion questions:

1. In your own opinion, has *Akwete* weaving tradition a history and has it been sufficiently investigated and recorded?
2. What happens when someone that is not from *Akwete* is taught how to weave?
3. Who are the people that weave in *Akwete* town?
4. Tell us how many symbolic motifs do you utilize in weaving in *Akwete*? Can you mention some?
5. How does each of you get the motifs you utilize in weaving and what are the meanings of these motifs in the Igbo culture?
6. What do you consider as the relevance of these hand woven traditional fabrics to the Igbo and Nigeria as a whole?
7. Tell us, how do you see *Akwete* weaving; is it flourishing or declining? If any give us some reasons.
8. What are the numerous problems faced by the weavers and have the government and NGOS been of help?
9. In your own opinion has *Akwete* hand woven fabrics been utilized in recent fashion in Igboland and beyond?
10. How does each of you perceive the printed version of *Akwete* woven fabrics utilizing its design motifs on printed fabrics?

The *Akwete* weavers that were involved in the focus group discussion on Thursday, 14th day of July 2016:

1. Mrs. Mgbechikwere Onyekwere
2. ” Chinedu Elekanachi
3. ” Nneoma Glory Okere
4. ” Nwunne Kamalu
5. Madam Helen Brown
6. Mrs. Uchechi Okorie
7. Mrs. Julie Nwogbo
8. Mrs. Nwunne Nnandi
9. Mrs. Gogo Kamalu
10. Mrs. Ugochi Kamalu
11. Lady patience Odor
12. Mrs. Uche Elekanachi
13. Mrs. Mgbokwo Brown
14. Mrs. Eunice Kamalu
15. Mrs. Chinyere Nwagbara
16. Mrs. Chinyere Osondu Jaz
17. Mrs. Ngozi George
18. Mrs. Uchechi Jaz
19. Mrs. Beaty Kamalu
20. Mrs. Agusta Brown
21. Mrs. Rose Okere
22. Mrs. Ozuronye Akparanta
23. Mrs. Gladys Chijindu
24. Mrs. Love Onyewuchi

25. Mrs. Sopuruchi Emeka
26. Mrs. Victoria Omeire
27. Mrs. Nkemakolam Chidiebere
28. Mrs. Enyioma Theophilus
29. Mrs. Mgbeodichinma Onyekachi Jaz
30. Mrs. Mary Brown

APPENDIX III

The interviewees are Madam Edith Akpara (an *Akwete* weaver with over 50 years of weaving experience) and Mr. Justice Obinna (a community leader).

The transcriptforMadam Edith Akpara (MAE)

Q: What is your occupation?

MAE: farming and weaving

Q: Mama pls for how long have you been weaving?

MAE: I have woven for over 50 years although I stopped for some time because of childbearing but later continued with weaving and selling of the woven wrappers in far away Lagos.

Q: Does *Akwete* weaving tradition have a history behind it? And has it been adequately recorded?

MAE:Ofcourse ,it has.Some people normally come for us to narrate the history of *Akwete* weaving to them but I feel that it has not been sufficiently documented because there are lots of recent happenings concerning the techniques,types of yarns used,motifs,patterns of designs and colours used in weaving which keep on improving day by day.

Q: When did you start weaving?

MAE:I started weaving at the age of eight.My sister taught me how to weave.This art of weaving is hereditary it is passed from one generation to the other but solely for women.The women are not good in farming, all we know is to weave.This weaving practice is passed from mother to daughter in most cases.We do not teach anyone that is not from *Akwete* town or married into *Akwete* town.I started with weaving plain George wrappers, then progressed to the ebe and okwepele designs.She also showed me how to warp.If I didn't learn it fast ,I was beaten,but if I learn it well and fast, credit is given to me and I will be given the liberty to continue weaving.The next design I was taught was the ahia -E,in this type many heedless are used to weave in the design motif ;this pattern is highly complicated.But I learnt ute,ikaki,okpuruafoeke,ijenwatita(looks like dada nwakatas' design).The local yarns are no longer utilized in weaving but the new yarns.This is because the demand then were difficult to meet due to the processes involved in the harvesting and manufacturing of the natural fibres to yarns.

Q: In your own opinion, do you feel that there is patronage in *Akwete* weaving?

MAE: There is less patronage as it is supposed to be.People suddenly stopped coming to buy but before they were coming.Our woven wrappers were sold abroad but it is no longer done now. It is only Rivers state people thatcome to buy.Some of them that come to buy are the Ijaw,Okirika and Bonny people.The Igbo prefer georges and wax prints because they are light and can be washed often quite unlike the *Akwete* hand woven fabrics.There is also a lot of hardship and the cost of producing one woven wrapper is high so it will also affect the cost price.

Q: What are the importance of *Akwete* hand woven fabrics?

MAE: They are used for marriages especially in those River state areas mentioned before, they are also used as uniforms in some churches, used for chieftaincy installation ceremonies and bought by some foreign expatriates as gifts and wall hangings.They are normally checked by the family members to see if the required pieces are complete before any other thing will follow.They also value their grand mothers boxes of *Akwete* wrappers especially if they are no more. That is how they amount of wealth accrued by a woman.Once a sample is given to a weaver and you weave it well, you will become their friend and customer for a life time.

Q: what do you suggest towards the progress of this woven art?

MAE: If only the government and some NGOs can come to our aid and help us financially.
Q: Have you attended any exhibition before?
MAE: Yes, I have attended severally, but the one I can vividly remember is the one I attended in Enugu.I noticed that the Igbo were not buying the *Akwete* woven fabrics but they were busy buying the Aso-oke woven fabrics of the Yoruba.Most of them could not afford the *Akwete* hand woven fabrics, they saw them as being too expensive.
Q: Are there some other people that weave around *Akwete* town?
MAE:Yes, there is another place called Ndoki in Rivers state, we were together with them before the states were created but they fell into Rivers state;they pretend to be weavers but cannot weave like us.They come and buy our hand woven wrappers to display in their shops and claim that they are the ones that wove them.
Q:Do you have some motifs you utilize in weaving?
MAE: Yes, we do.There are so many of them. They help to beautify the woven pieces and also convey lots of meaning. They depict the Igbo cultural values.Most of them are created by us while some are borrowed from other cultures.
Q: Are *Akwete* woven fabrics utilized in current fashion in Nigeria?
MAE: They are not being utilized the way they were used to.The imported clothes are preferred by many people because most of them are cheap and easily accessible.Our cloths are not found everywhere, that is why they cannot be bought from the markets and utilized except we take them ourselves to the markets and individuals to sell .The yarns that are used in weaving are quite expensive and many weavers are finding it difficult to purchase; many younger ones have abandoned the vocation for the city. I will like to see it being utilized often in the current fashion, both in Igboland and Nigeria.You people should come to our aid and see what can be done so as to enable this art of weaving to be vibrant again.That is what we use to train our children and help our families.
Q: Should*Akwete* woven fabrics have their versions of printed fabrics just like African prints?
MAE: In as much as we do not want any type of fabrics to overtake our *Akwete* hand woven fabrics, whatever that will be done to bring *Akwete* woven fabrics will be welcomed so that it will not go into extinction.

The interview transcript for Mr Justice Obinna (community leader).

Q:What is *Akwete* town known for?
MJO: *Akwete* town is known for her weaving practices.
Q: Do men weave in *Akwete* town?
MJO: Men do not use the womens'vertical loom to weave in *Akwete* town.I am yet to see that happen.Infact it is a taboo for any male born in *Akwete* to do this.They could play with the loom, when the owner is not around but not to engage in weaving a cloth seriously.One can also use a different loom entirely to weave but not the indigenous *Akwete* loom.
Q: Do men interfer in the affairs of the women weavers?
MJO: No.The women are the ones that are in charge of their weaving practice and its affairs.They make their laws by themselves and also enforce them.The only thing the men are involved in is to endorse the curses pronounced by the women on defaulters by hitting the beater (sword) on the ground and also to bear witness to what happened.
Q: Are *Akwete* woven fabrics still beign utilized in current fashion in Nigeria?
MJO: I will say that they are not used the way they were used earlier.Through technology, a lot of clothes which are cheaper and more affordable have been

produced.And there is a lot of competition posed by other traditional hand woven fabrics.Those fabrics can be found in the markets allover the country, but *Akwete* woven fabrics cannot be seen in the market.It is unique on its own.

Q:Should *Akwete* woven fabrics have their versions of printed fabrics just like African prints?

MJO: *Akwete* weaving is our cultural heritage and we will not like to see it lost.If there are things to be done, to withstand the stiff competition amongst the other indigenous woven fabrics; they will be appreciated.

APPENDIX IV:*AKWETE* WOVEN FABRICS



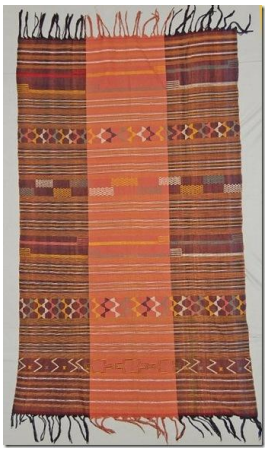
Akwete woven design (checkerboard motif with boarder designs).Bevings' collection donated to the British Museum.
Source:Clarke (2013)



Akwete woven design(ebe motif with boarder designs).Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Source: Clarke (2013)



Akwete woven design(achicha motif with boarder designs).Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Source: Clarke (2013)



Akwete woven design(ukwu ikaki,ruler and ute motifs with boarder designs).Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Source: Clarke (2013)



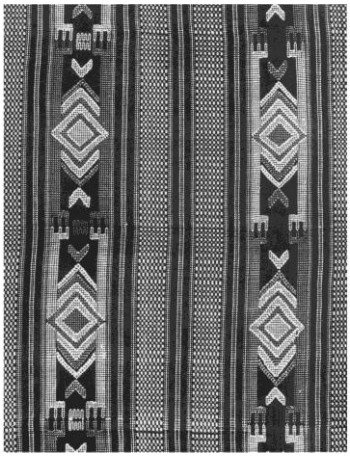
Akwete woven design(ebe,ruler and comb motifs).Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Source: Clarke (2013)



Akwete woven design(ikaki,ebe, ruler and ute motifs).Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Source: Clarke (2013)



Akwete woven design(Ikaki,ruler and scissors motifs).Bevings' collection donated to British Museum.Source: Clarke (2013)



Akwete woven design(ikaki,ukwu bench and ruler motifs).Source:Davis (1974)



Akwete woven design (ebe, popo and anthropomorphic motifs). Source: Davis (1974)

APPENDIX V: PILOT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRES

Department of Industrial Design,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
Dear Madam,

You have been carefully selected for this pilot academic exercise. The information provided by you will be carefully protected. It will also be used academically. Please your objective response to this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

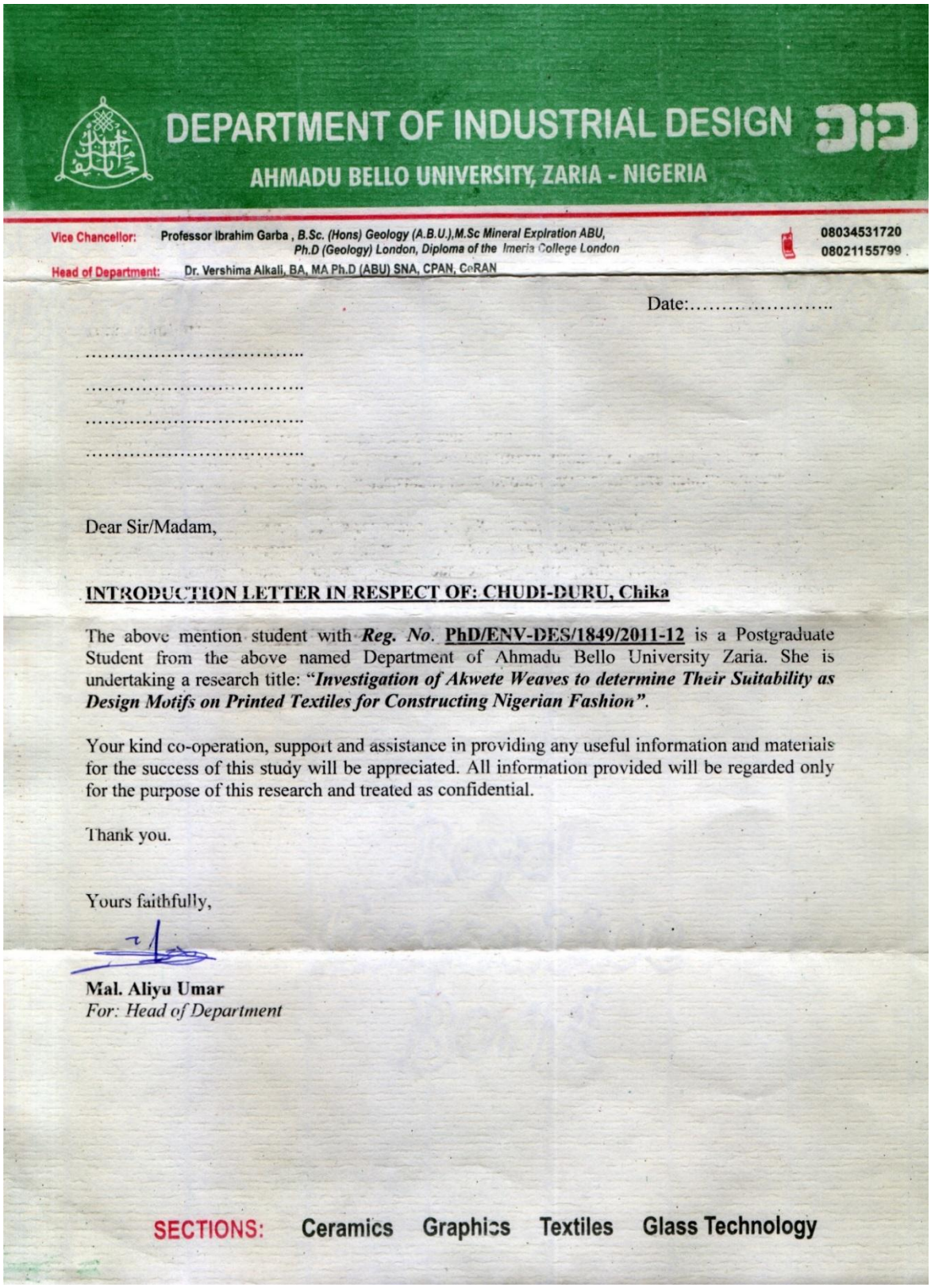
FILL IN OR TICK AS APPROPRIATE

Qualification: …….
Occupation: ……

1. What types of *Akwete* Cloths do you always produce? …….
2. What types of yarns were originally used for weaving here?.....
3. Where do you get yarns from? ……
4. Where do you normally sell your products? ……...
5. What is the cost of your product(s) …….
6. Why don't you use locally spun yarns? ……...
7. Do you still dye your yarns? ……...
8. What are the names of the dyes used locally? …….
9. What are the difficulties in this weaving practice in *Akwete* Town? …….
10. Do you intend to continue it for long? ……
11. What is your view on the traditional cloth weaving in *Akwete* in this era of modern textiles goods? …….
12. Do you see a good relationship between your trade and the modern textile industry? …….
13. What influenced your choice to become a cloth weaver? ……..
14. What are the main sources of your weaving raw materials like yarns, loom, etc.? ……
15. What exhibitions have you taken part in? ……
16. The suggestions for the promotion and encouragement are of hand crafted cloth weaving a …….
17. What is the usefulness of the *Akwete* weaving Cooperative Society? ……..

18. What is your view on providing the weavers with contemporary motorized looms with more harnesses in the production of traditional hand woven *Akwete* cloth? ……..
19. What is the assessment on the role of *Akwete* traditional cloth weaving enterprises in social, cultural and economic life of the Igbo till today? ……
20. Can *Akwete* traditional cloth be developed to withstand competition amongst the imported Indian Georges and madras? ……
21. How can you assess the fabric weaving of the *Akwete* as regards to job creation and self-reliance? ……..
22. Who are the major consumers of the *Akwete* woven fabrics? ……..
23. Do you think *Akwete* design motifs depict Igbo culture and world view? …….
24. What are the problems faced by the weavers in *Akwete*? …….
25. How many do you sell in a week and how much do you realize? ……..
26. Is it wholesale or retail? …….
27. How do you sell your woven wrappers? …….
28. Who started weaving in *Akwete*? ……
29. Why are many people not weaving now? ……...
30. List the tools required for your weaving …….
31. Describe the techniques involved ……
32. What are the raw materials needed and how are they acquired? ……..
33. What are the names of the symbolic motifs woven onto the cloth? Since when have these motifs existed? …….
34. Draw some of them ……
35. Do you think *Akwete* weaving is flourishing? ……
36. If not, state why……
37. What are the reasons? ……..
38. What are the common designs woven in *Akwete* weaving? ……...
39. Is there any difference in the weaving of *Akwete* and other Nigerian ethnic groups? …….
40. If so, state the differences……
41. Do you think that these design motifs can be suitable on printed fabrics.....
42. If yes, which motifs do you suggest and why? …….

APPENDIX VI: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA - NIGERIA

Vice Chancellor: Professor Ibrahim Garba , B.Sc. (Hons) Geology (A.B.U.),M.Sc Mineral Expiration ABU, Ph.D (Geology) London, Diploma of the Imeria College London

Head of Department: Dr. Vershima Alkali, BA, MA Ph.D (ABU) SNA, CPAN, CeRAN

08034531720
08021155799

Date:.....

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Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTION LETTER IN RESPECT OF: CHUDI-DURU, Chika

The above mention student with ***Reg. No.*** **PhD/ENV-DES/1849/2011-12** is a Postgraduate Student from the above named Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. She is undertaking a research title: "***Investigation of Akwete Weaves to determine Their Suitability as Design Motifs on Printed Textiles for Constructing Nigerian Fashion***".

Your kind co-operation, support and assistance in providing any useful information and materials for the success of this study will be appreciated. All information provided will be regarded only for the purpose of this research and treated as confidential.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Mal. Aliyu Umar
For: Head of Department

SECTIONS: Ceramics Graphics Textiles Glass Technology

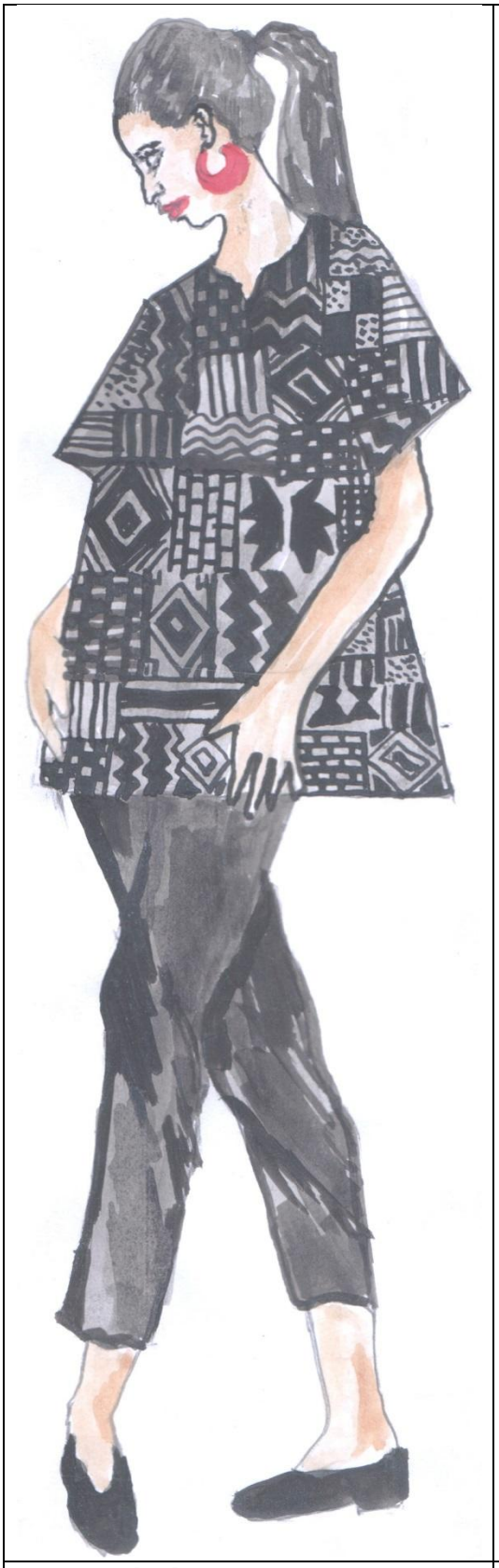
APPENDIX: VII

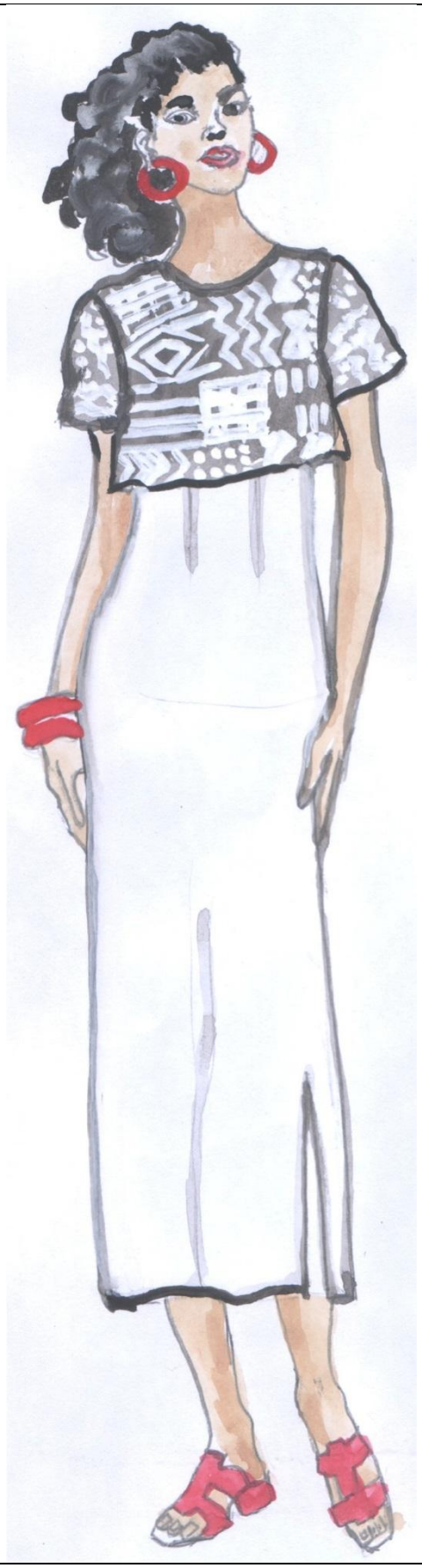
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PICTURES

	
The interview granted by the oldest weaver in Akwete Weavers' Cooperative Building in Akwete Town on 14th of August, 2016. Photographed by Chudi-Duru (2016)	Part of the focus group discussion in Akwete Weaevers' Cooperative Building in Akwete Town on 14th of August, 2016. Photographed by Chudi-Duru (2016)
	
Part of the focus group discussion in Akwete Weaevers' Cooperative Building in Akwete Town on 14th of August, 2016. Photographed by Chudi-Duru (2016)	Part of the focus group discussion in Akwete Weaevers' Cooperative Building in Akwete Town on 14th of August, 2016. Photographed by Chudi-Duru (2016)

APPENDIX VIII

FASHION ILLUSTRATIONS FOR THE STUDY

		
Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)		**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)

		
Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)		**Source:**Chudi-Duru (2016)



Source: Chudi-Duru (2016)