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Man-made fibre textiles preferences and usage among Garment designers for Clothing sustainability in South East, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to survey man-made fibre textiles preference and usage among garment designers. The purpose was to ascertain the physical characteristics of man- made fibre textiles that influence their usage and the preferred tailoring techniques used in making garments. Two research questions guided the study. The data were collected from One hundred (100) professional garment designers in Nigeria. The research design for the study was Ex post facto using descriptive survey method. The sampling technique used was proportionate stratified random sampling. Instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire which was validated. The reliability of the instrument was ensured and the score of data collected were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) and coefficient 0.75 was obtained. The analysis of the research data was done using the mean scores (X) and Standard Deviation (SD). The results of the study revealed that man-made fibre textiles such as acetate has luxurious feel and appearance which influence usage in making dresses, blouses and foundation garments. Polyester is strong with high resistant to shrinkage and stretching, used in making permanent press garments. Acrylic is wool-like, soft and warm for ski wear, socks, sportswear and sweater. Permanent stitches like zig zag and satin stitches are preferred for customized fancy wears, piping and welting used when making garments and suits, darts, pleats, tucks, frills, open seam for sewing dresses, blouses and skirts, appliqués for decorative designs and edge finishing for raw edges. It was concluded that acetate is used in garment making due to its lustrous appearance and feel and thereafter recommendations were made.

Keywords: Man-made fibre, Textile, Preference, Garment designers

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Introduction

Fibres are the fundamental building units used in making fabrics. They contribute to the texture, appearance performance and cost of the fabrics. Fibres are classified according to their origin and sources, which include; natural fibres and man-made fibres (regenerated or non-cellulose and synthetic fibres). Clothing is made from textiles it protects and makes the wearer beautiful. Garment production among designers is basically determined by textiles preferences, selection and styles in fashion. The introduction, innovation and use of regenerated and synthetic fibres to a great extent

revolutionized the textile and fashion industry. The regenerated (non synthetic) fibres are entirely produced by chemical treatment of certain raw materials, such as wood pulp, cotton linters for the non synthetic fibres which are cellulose based, while petroleum extracts, coal and casein are used for synthetic fibres. These fibres derived their names from the chemical substances and methods used in their manufacture, pattern and texture. Thenon synthetic fibres include; Viscose rayon, acetate, triacetate, lyocell (ternel) and cuprammonium, synthetic fibres are Nylon, acrylic (orlon, acrilan and courtelle), Polyester (terylene and crimplene), Aramid, Elastane (lycra) among others. These provide more than enough textiles for clothing designers to select from when making garments based on the consumer's and wearer's preferences.

Preference is a psychological term that refers to an individual's attitude toward an object and is reflected in a decision making process (Kottage et al, 2018). The preference toward a piece of textile by designers is essential in determining the usage. Designer's preference is used primarily to mean an option that has the greatest anticipated value of fabrics among a number of available textile options. It could be interpreted designer's attitude toward the selection of a typical textile through an explicit decision-making process. It means the sense of liking or disliking a particular textile for garment (Azonuche, 2024). Generally, the preference toward apparel is mainly influenced by silhouette, fabric, color, brand, price, comfort, function, and trend of apparel (Boccia & Sarnacchiaro, 2018). The type of man-made textile is one of the most significant factors as it can influence characteristics, price, comfort, function, silhouette, and trend of apparel (Lim & Kim, 2013).

Characteristics of fibreare many, such as composition, structure, finishing, surface contour, color, yarn and texture of a fabric (Chen et al,2013). The chemical composition, structure, and properties of man-made fibres are significantly modified during the manufacturing processes and determine their characteristic performance. Composition, structure, finishing and yarns are more in the aspect of tactile sense, while surface contour and colour are in the aspect of visual sense (Zhao et al, 2019).Man-made fibres yarns are in filaments that are spun and woven into numerous consumer and industrial products, including garments such as shirts, scarves, and hosiery; home furnishings such as upholstery, carpets and draperies; and industrial products such as tie cord, flame-proof linings, and drive belts. Characteristics of the man-made fibre textiles depend on the type of fibres they are made of, texture, appearance, end use and care. Synthetic textiles are extremely strong, durable and affordable, hence clothing industries have preference for usage in making products (Love Sew, 2021).Man-made fibre textiles drape well, soft to handle, lustrous, smooth surface, blend well with other fibres, warm to wear, easy to launder, dry easily,need little or no ironing, can be pleated among others.Drapability of garment of any kind will enhance the fashion trends in an appropriate manner for wears (Balakumar, 2020).Some of the important product decisions in any marketing context are product, variety, product performance, product features, product design, product presentation, sizes and others (Doyle, 2002). Man-made fibres consumer surveys often reveal that quality is one of the most important decision factors for consumers, if not the most important (Keller, 2000). Product quality stands for the ability of a product to perform its functions (Kotler, 2003). Richards (2013) observed that analyzing factors that determine man-made fibre consumer preferences help businesses target their products toward specific consumer groups, develop new products and identify why some products are more sustainable and successful than others.

Sustainability of manmade fabric entails the availability and accessibility of synthetic clothing that are economical, socially and environmentally friendly for consumers. Presently, fashion is greatly rising in our culture to meet the need for identity, impression and aesthetic desire, but often times garment producers do not give attention to environmental, social, moral and ecological challenges of their products (Nwonye et al, 2022). The new generation garment designers assign great value to the aesthetic aspects of clothing, while previously focused was more on practicality and functionality (Kim .2011). Often some man-made fibre textiles are difficult to handle in production therefore, it is crucial that garment designers understand some techniques and tips required that make garment sewing easy handle (Azonuche, et al, 2023). It is important to use strong new needle, synthetic thread, iron out, set correct machine tension, right stitches, seams and sewing machine,

when not available clean the stitching line with wet brush to reduce to reduce fabric colourant/coating and slipperiness or place a strip of paper on stitching line to sew(Azonuche, et al, 2023). The South East of Nigeria consist predominantly business people who engage in the production of goods including clothing products for men and women of all ages in large quantities for sales to consumers, enterprises and export.

In this context, it is necessary to thoroughly investigate the man-made fibre textile preference, with regard to aesthetics and psychological comfort. Some previous studies on the man-made fibre textiles focused on clothing construction in relation to major body shape changes (Kim & Oh, 2013), market segmentation which include clothing purchase behaviours and preferences depending on the designers'age groups and lifestyles (Hong & Choi, 2006). Also in a study, Azonuche (2024) evaluated the aesthetic and expressive qualities of synthetic textile apparel products of fashion designers for sustainability, the importance of functional textiles tailoring have been widely recognized (Park et al, 2010). The study on man-made fibre textile preferences and usage among garment designers is crucial for advancing clothing sustainability in South East Nigeria, where environmental concerns and production practices are increasingly intersecting. Despite growing discourse on sustainability, existing studies have largely focused on organizational efficiency, productivity, and governance rather than material innovation in fashion. For instance, research on capacity building and productivity in Anambra State emphasizes workforce development but neglects sector-specific sustainability practices (Chukwurah et al., 2020). Similarly, studies on academic inclusivity and national development highlight structural growth without addressing creative industries like fashion (Iwuno, 2025). Broader governance and management studies, including those on COVID-19 digital responses (Obikeze et al., 2022) and waste management partnerships (Obi et al., 2026), reveal systemic adaptation gaps but overlook textile consumption patterns.

Moreover, socio-cultural and historical analyses of Nigeria (Okezie, 2021; Molokwu et al., 2023; Chukwu et al., 2025) emphasize identity and development challenges without linking them to sustainable clothing practices. Issues of insecurity and economic instability (Ezeogidi et al., 2020) further complicate sustainable adoption, while innovation-driven performance studies (Muogbo et al., 2025) do not sufficiently explore eco-friendly textile use. These gaps justify the need for focused research on designers' preferences for man-made fibres, which can inform sustainable production, reduce environmental impact, and align fashion practices with broader developmental goals in the region. By contrast, very few studies sought to address man-made fibre textile preferences and usage among designers, there is therefore the need to explore man-made fibre textiles preferences and usage among garment designers in South East, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to survey man-made fibre preference and usage among tailors in Onitsha metropolis. Specifically, it aims to:

1. Determine the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among garment designers in South East, Nigeria
2. Determine the preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fibre textiles among garment designers in South East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among garment designers in South East, Nigeria?
2. What are the preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fibre textiles among garment designers in South East, Nigeria?

Design of the study

Based on the specific objective of the study, the research design for the study is a descriptive type. Survey design was used in order to gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared. A survey research is one in which a group of respondents are studied by collecting and analyzing data from items considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu, 2015).

Area of the Study

This study was carried out in Onitsha and Aba metropolises. Onitsha and Aba citiesare located on the eastern bank of the Niger River, in Nigeria's Anambra and Abia States respectively. These metropolitan cities are known for its river port and as an economic hub for commerce, industry, and education. These metropolises cover large expense of 52 km^2 (20 sq mi) in area (Taylor, 2010). The Onitsha people also share clan lineage and boundaries with its people in delta state is the west, Obosi in the south, Nkwelle in east and Nkpor in the north. Aba people are bounded by the Ikwere in River state and Igbo in Imo State.

Population for the study

The population for the study consists of 266 professional garment designers in South East, Nigeria. These people are chosen because they fall among those that usually utilize man-made fibre textiles in their tailoring business. The estimated population was base on field survey.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

One hundred (100) garment designerswere selected for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two major towns in the South East that solely engage in clothing production and sales, namely; Onitsha and Aba. Furthermore, proportionate stratified random sampling was used to select one hundred (100) garment designers for the study. A stratified sample is a probability sampling technique in which the researcher divides the entire target population into different subgroups/strata and then randomly selects the final subjects proportionately from the different strata (Wilcox, Evenson, Aragaki, Wassertheil-Smoller, Mouton and Loevinger, 2013). This type of sampling is used because the researcher wants to capture densely populated area of Onitsha and Aba that has mixed occupants comprising of indigene and non-indigene tailors.

Instrument for Data Collection

Instrument used for the study was a self-structured questionnaire. The instrument was made up of two sections. Section A contains the demographic data of respondents while section B contains the questionnaire based on research questions with the response. Format adopted was four point scale of strongly agree (SA = 4 points), Agree (A=3 points), Disagree (D=2 points) and strongly disagree (SD=1 point). The overall theme of the questions was on man-made fibre textile preference and usage among tailors in Onitsha metropolis.

Validation of Instrument

The instrument was validated by two experts, one in measurement and evaluation from Educational Psychology and an expert in clothing and textile. The corrections made were effected and the instrument was considered valid for the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was trial tested. In doing this, 10 tailors from Nnewi metropolis who were not participating in the main study were used, copies of the questionnaire were given to them to fill and these were collected immediately. The items of the questionnaire were reshuffled and re-arranged and then administered to the same respondents two weeks later. These were collected and tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) and the score of 0.75 was obtained. This indicates that the instrument is reliable.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher visited the area and then administered the questionnaire face to face to the respondents. This was done to minimize misinterpretation of some questions by the respondents. One hundred (100) copies of the questionnaire were administered personally by the researchers with the help of research assistants to the respondents. Effort was made to enable respondents understand the questionnaire items and give adequate responses to them without assistance or external interference from one another and the questions were correctly filled and collected back. A total of 100 questionnaires were administered, filled and collected back by the researcher.

Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation. Formulae for calculating the mean scores and standard deviation (SD) of the respondents are shown below. Hence, the decision rule follows that the mean of 2.50 and above was regarded as being accepted while items and below 2.50 was regarded as being rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among garment designers in South East, Nigeria**?**

Table 1: Mean rating and standard deviation on the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among garment designers

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Acetate fabric has luxurious feel	3.68	0.71	Accepted
2.	Acetate fabric has shiny appearance, used for wears such as dresses and foundation garments	3.38	0.68	Accepted
3.	Polyester is strong with high resistant to stretching	3.39	0.77	Accepted
4.	Polyester does not shrinking in usage so good for making blouses, shirts and pleated garments	3.43	0,50	Accepted
5.	Rayon fabric has excellent drapes well.	3.43	0.82	Accepted
6.	Rayon softness make it good for usage in making lingerie, linings, rainwear and ties	3.50	07.2	Accepted
7.	Spandex fabric is moth proof	3.42	0.71	Accepted
8.	Spandex is mildew-resistant	3.42	0.80	Accepted
9.	Spandex dry fast hence good for usage in making sports wears	3.42	0.68	Accepted
10.	Resistant to sunlight,	3.38	0.64	Accepted
11.	Acrylic fabric is soft	3.06	0.67	Accepted
12.	Acrylic fabric is wool-like, so warm to wear which makes it suitable in usage for ski wears, socks, sportswears and sweaters	3.06	0.72	Accepted
13.	Aramid fabric is resilient so maintains its shape	3.04	0.85	Accepted
14.	Aramid fabric is resilient high temperatures which makes it suitable in usage for making protective clothing	3.46	0.62	Accepted
15.	Bicomponent fiber textile has thermal bonding that makes it good for usage in making customized sheath materials for hygiene as well as medical products.	3.01	0.69	Accepted
16.	Bicomponent fiber textile has elasticity, soft texture as well as moisture	3.20	0.82	Accepted
17.	Wicking properties, so suitable in usage for sportswear	3.02	0.70	Accepted
18.	Lyocell textiles are usually white and can be dyed, which makes its usage suitable for clothing, work wear as well as medical supplies, feminine hygiene, car seat and upholstery.	3.11	0.75	Accepted
19.	Nylon are exceptionally strong and easy to wash which influence usage in making underwear, raincoats and suits	2.98	0.69	Accepted

Table 1 showed the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among garment designers. On the whole, items 1 to 19 yielded a mean scores ranged between 3.68 and 2.98 which is above the benchmark of 2.50 showing acceptance. Man-made fibre textiles such as; acetate has luxurious feel and appearance which influenced their selection and usage in making dresses, blouses and foundation garments has mean 3.68. The respondents agreed that man-made fiber textile such as polyester are strong with high resistant to stretching, does not shrink and used in making blouses, shirts and permanent press garments (3.43). It is obvious that man-made fibre textile such as rayon has excellent drapability and softness which influenced their selection and usage in making lingerie, linings, rainwear and ties (3.43). Spandex are relatively fast-drying, high moth and mildew-resistant, and used in making athletic apparel, bathing suits and knitted jerseys (3.42). Man-made fibre textile are resistant to sunlight, oil, and chemicals which influenced usage in making infant wears (3.38). Acrylic are wool-like, soft and warm, used in making ski wear, socks, sportswear, sweaters (3.06) among others, which are the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among garment designers. The standard deviations ranged between 0.50-0.85 showing closeness in the tailors' responses to the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles.

Research Question 2: What are the preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fibre textile among designers for clothing sustainability**?**

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fibre textiles among garment designers.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Permanent stitches like zig zag and satin stitches are preferred as suitable sewing fancy wears for customized look	3.86	0.84	Accepted
2.	Piping is a preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fiber textile when making garments.	3.20	0.89	Accepted
3.	Welting is used for suits	3.20	0,73	Accepted
4.	Darts are used for dresses, blouses, skirts, trousers and shirts.	2.82	0.93	Accepted
5.	Pleats are used for dresses.	3.80	0,67	Accepted
6.	Tucks are used for skirts, blouses and dresses	3.34	0,82	Accepted
7.	Frills are used for blouses, skirts and blouses	3.16	0.80	Accepted
8.	Open seam is used for dresses	2.84	0.99	Accepted
9.	Fastenings are used to secure openings and for decorative purposes.	2.99	0.69	Accepted
10.	Linings are used to give bulk and weight to the garment.	2.81	0.92	Accepted
11.	Appliqué to create some pattern or decorative design	3.09	0.84	Accepted
12.	Over laid seam is used for style lines.	2.91	0.88	Accepted
13.	Double stitched seam is used for firmness.	3.24	0.68	Accepted
14.	Slot seam is used as decorative purpose in joining contrasting colours of textiles	2.86	0.73	Accepted
15.	Top stitched seam are used for decorative purposes	3.04	0.72	Accepted
16.	Curve edges are clipped to lie flat and smooth	3.20	0.75	Accepted
17.	Edge finishing are used for raw edges	2.92	0.90	Accepted

The result in table 2 showed mean and standard deviation on the preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fibre textile among garment designers. The mean ranged from 2.81 – 3.86 which is above the benchmark of 2.50 indicating that all items were accepted as preferred tailoring techniques for manmade fibre textiles. These include; permanent stitches like zig zag and satin stitches are preferred for fancy wears with a customized look (3.86). However, piping and welting techniques is a preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fiber textile when making garments and suits (3.20). The respondents agreed that darts, pleats, tucks, frills, open seam, lining and over laid seam, are preferred for sewing dresses, blouses and skirts, appliqués for decorative designs, edge

finishing for raw edges, among others are the preferred tailoring techniques. The standard deviation ranged from 0.67 - 0.99 showing closeness in their responses on the preferred tailoring techniques.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on the physical characteristics of man-made fibre textiles that influence their usage among designers for clothing sustainability, showed that man-made fibre textile such as acetate has luxurious feel and appearance which influenced their selection and usage in making dresses, blouses and foundation garments. However, man-made fibre textile such as polyester are strong with high resistant to stretching and shrinking which influenced their selection and usage in making blouses, shirts and permanent press garments. Also, man-made fibre textile such as rayon has excellent drapability and softness and used in making lingerie, linings, rainwear and ties. Spandex is relatively fast-drying, high moth and mildew-resistant which influenced their usage in making athletic apparel, bathing suits and knitted jerseys (Gilmore, 2016). Man-made fibre textiles are resistant to sunlight, oil, and chemicals hence used in making infant wears. Acrylic is wool-like, soft and warm, good in making ski wear, socks, sportswear and sweater. This finding agrees by Kim & Oh (2013) who upheld that man-made fibre, fibre has modified chemical composition, structure, and properties which contribute to its quality.

Lim and Kim (2013) observed that man-made fibres are spun and woven into a huge number of consumer and industrial products, including garments such as shirts, scarves, and hosiery; home furnishings such as upholstery, carpets, and drapes; and industrial parts such as tire cord, flame-proof linings, and drive belts. It was clear that man-made fibre textile such as Aramid are resilient, maintains its shape and form at high temperatures and suitable in making protective clothing. In this regard, Oladele and Arogundade (2011) collaborated that man-made fiber textile such as bicomponent are thermal bonding and self-bulking which influenced their selection and usage in making customized sheath materials to bond various materials. Meanwhile, man-made fibre textiles such as nylon are exceptionally strong and easy to wash influencing usage in making underwear, raincoats and suits. In consonance with the findings of Kean and Levin (2018) that man-made fibres are to be distinguished from natural fibres such as silk, cotton, and wool. Natural fibres also consist of polymers (in this case, biologically produced compounds such as cellulose and protein), but they emerge from the textile manufacturing process in a relatively unaltered state. Some man-made fibres, too, are derived from naturally occurring polymers.

Findings showed that the preferred tailoring techniques used for man-made fibre textile among garment designers include, permanent stitches like zig zag and satin stitches are preferred for fancy wears with a customized look, piping and welting used when making garments and suits, darts, pleats, tucks, frills, open seam, lining and over laid seam for sewing dresses, blouses and skirts, appliqués for decorative designs, edge finishing for raw edges, among others. This finding in agreement with Montgomery (2016) who pointed out that is Zigzag stitch is useful for stitching stretchable fabrics and reinforcing buttonholes. Industrial zig-zag sewing machines are designed for permanent stitch and installed on an industrial table that are sold separately. However, piping and welting techniques is a preferred tailoring techniques used when making garment. Oladele and Arogundade (2011) found that piping is a trim or edging formed by sewing a thin strip of folded fabric typically bias binding into a narrow tube and attaching it to the edge of a piece of fabric. It can also include cord to give it extra body. Piping is often used to define or reinforce the style lines of a garment. In addition, darts, tucks and pleats are used frequently in all sorts of clothing to tailor the garment to the wearer's fit, figure or to make an innovative shape and fullness (Azonuche, et al, 2025).

Moreover, edge seam pressing and finishing enclosed raw seam edges. This finding is in agreement with Walkenhorst (2015), who revealed that good pressing is also helpful in preserving the shape and fit of the garment, the amounts used will depend on the way the garment is made as well as the fibre content, weave, texture, and finish. Linings are used in man-made fibre textiles to add bulk and weight and finish garments. In line with this finding Azonuche, et al. (2023), Frayer (2005), who noted that the linings provide a neat inside finish and conceal interfacing, padding, the

raw edges of seams, and other construction details. Appliqué technique is used to sew a small piece of man-made fibre textile on another one to create some patterns or decoration designs. Appliqué is ornamental needlework in which pieces or patch of fabric in different shapes and patterns are sewn or stuck onto a larger piece to form a picture or pattern. It is commonly used as decoration, especially on garments and sewn either by hand or machine stitching. Clipping corners and curves are clipped to lie flat and smooth on the garment.

Clothing and Textiles Education Implications

The findings of this study have a number of implications for Clothing and Textiles education. The results of this study provide facts as regards survey man-made fibre preference and usage among garment designers for clothing sustainability. Findings of this study will provide valuable insights to tailors, designers and educators into strategies for improving students' practical skill performance in clothing and textiles and garment production for sustainable clothing for consumers. Thus, Home Economics educators and supervisors need to gain more insights into the strategies for improving students' performance in clothing and textiles so that teacher training programs and curriculum can be designed to effectively prepare learners to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competence for their real professional world of work..

The study has several implications that can be used to improve clothing and textiles practicum program in the future. The findings of the study will broaden clothing designers' knowledge, steer up their interests in clothing and textiles and improve the clothing and textiles practical. It can as well build a proper link between garment designers' performance in clothing and improving the teaching/learning situation. Government can leverage on the findings of this study to inspire others and maintain a climate of effective teaching and learning of clothing and textiles in particular and vocational studies in general.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study has been able is to survey man-made fibre textiles preference and usage among designers for clothing sustainability in Nigeria. The results of this study have shown that man-made fibre textiles such as acetate textiles has luxurious feel and appearance making it suitable for different garments and acrylic are wool-like, soft and warm which influence usage for garments such as ski wear, socks, sportswear and sweaters. The findings also showed that clipping corners and curves are preferable techniques in tailoring with man-made fibre textiles.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. High quality stimulating materials such as computer aided design for skill in garment production should be provided and garment designers should regularly be sponsored to seminars and workshops to update their knowledge.
2. The government should endeavour to provide garment designers with the necessary technical and non-technical materials such as cutting machine, electrical iron, tables, fabrics, computers, industrial sewing machine that can enhance productivity.
3. Man-made fibre textile tailors should be given practical training using different methods of sewing.
4. Man-made fibre textiles garment designers should be trained practically and allowed to use the available facilities. Regular supervision and guidance will increase the quality of output.

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