
Consumers Knowledge of Symbolic Names and Meanings of Ghanaian Fabrics

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ABSTRACT: *Generally, Ghanaian fabrics are unique and authentic, with each bearing traditional riches that express more pride in their national history, physical, material or symbolic gestures to benefit the indigenous Ghanaians. The fabrics have symbolic names and meanings, based upon which this study investigated consumers' knowledge of symbolic names and meanings of Ghanaian fabrics and their impact on consumer purchase intentions. A quantitative research design was adopted for the study with a targeted population of 3,490,030 that visit the various clothing and textile shops in the Kumasi Central Business District (KCBD). The sample size for the study was 385 participants. Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used in selecting the respondents. A questionnaire was used as an instrument to gather information from the respondents. The returned questionnaires were coded and keyed into SPSS-23.0. The data gathered were analysed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The study revealed that the customers have little knowledge about Ghanaian fabrics' symbolic names and meanings. It was concluded that Ghanaian fabrics had symbolic value, with names and meanings attached and consumers had little knowledge about the Ghanaian fabrics they use. The study recommended that manufacturers could embark on social, cultural and traditional events as part of their promotional programmes to educate and remind consumers to appreciate their rich culture and the symbolic value of the Ghanaian fabrics.*

KEYWORDS: consumers, Ghanaian fabrics, knowledge, names and meanings, symbolic value

INTRODUCTION

Fabrics are inevitable in the lives of human beings. Fabrics have numerous uses including the production of bed linings, curtains and garments. Besides these uses Ghanaians are used to portray the rich culture of Ghana (Amissah & Letcher-Teye, 2018). Fabric designs possess special qualities of aesthetics that blend beautifully the nature of art, beauty and taste within the environment. It is among these qualities that cultural significance is embedded in Ghanaian fabrics (Howard, 2013).

Fabrics in Ghana are not only chosen for their aesthetic outlook but rather have certain cultural and symbolic interpretations which are in line with their names. Most of the fabrics produced in Ghana have local names; '*Yaw Donkor*' (Name of a person), '*Bonsu*' (whale), '*Ama Serwaa*' (Name of a person), '*Efie mmosea*' (gravels in the home/house), '*Sika Wo Ntaban*' (Money has wings), '*Akyekyedee akyi*' (Back of the Tortoise), '*Ansan /Akɔmfɛm*' (Guinea fowl), '*Nsubra*' (deep well of water), among others, and the names depict or explain the beliefs and practices of the Ghanaian culture (Amissah & Letcher-Teye, 2018). According to Amissah and Letcher-Teye (2018), the prints bear philosophical significance and many of the designs found on the Ghanaian fabrics portray events or adages. The fabric names also have a symbolic value which helps the people choose the best product according to their needs and satisfaction. Usually, people do not buy certain fabrics just for design and requirement, but also in an attempt to enhance their self-esteem because of the name attached to the fabric. Some fabric names have a very strong position in the market as they are more consumer-friendly and customers purchase these fabrics because of the name without any hesitation (Robson, 2002).

Ghanaian fabrics are the prized possession of the Ghanaians and have been worn to grace traditional functions and special occasions with symbolic values. A directive from the former president, John Agyekum Kufuor and successive governments encouraged the wearing of Ghanaian fabrics on Fridays as part of efforts to promote made in Ghana products (Ghanaweb.com 2004). President Nana Addo Danquah on his State of the Nation's Address (SONA) on February 21, 2017, wore the '*ahwene pa nkasa*' print. He wore it as a means of sending messages to the opposition party; thus, good and quality beads do not make noise; literally, empty barrels make the most noise but rather good works are seen and not the noise you make. Nowadays, the use of Ghanaian fabrics is now on the rise and consumers are faced with a plethora of fabrics to choose from which sometimes becomes a problem for them. This growing need has attracted consumers' adoption of Ghanaian fabrics without identifying their names and meanings.

The younger generation has lost certain key components of the culture with regards to fabrics and their names. They, therefore, choose designs and wear without knowing their cultural interpretations and the kind of signals and messages they are sending across. Although there are some studies on the significance of Ghanaian printed fabric design, (Dogoe, 2013; Amissah & Letcher-Teye, 2018; Impraim-Swanzy et al., 2019), to the best of knowledge, there is a lack of significant research work investigating the knowledge of consumers on symbolic names and meaning of Ghanaian fabrics. For instance, the study by Amissah and Letcher-Teye (2018) focused on the artistic and cultural significance of

Ghanaian printed fabric design. Impraim-Swanzy et al. (2019), on the other hand, concentrated on the cultural and symbolic interpretation of wax print designs on Ghanaian fabrics. The present study will add to the literature in a significant way by investigating the common Ghanaian fabric names and their meanings and how these fabric names affect consumers' purchase intention.

LITERATURE ON SYMBOLIC VALUES OF GHANAIAN FABRIC

Fabrics come in various forms and have been used by man both functionally and aesthetically in purpose. Normally, a motif is chosen and specially designed to be worn by individuals to important events such as weddings, baptisms and funerals (Bickford, 1994). African printed fabrics, as an example, are adopted as national costumes and have gained importance as a status symbol showing wealth and social prestige (Abraham, 2013). For instance, Ghanaian printed fabrics are made and chosen on purpose to reflect particular activities. According to Sackey (2002), printing on fabrics is the art of making impressions through a printing medium onto a surface as a way of reproducing designs. Oyedele (2013) opines that African textiles are a vital expression of culture.

In Ghana, fabrics represent status and symbolise many things depending on a particular culture. Ghanaian-printed fabrics are worn mainly for funerals, durbars, naming ceremonies and other important celebrations (Amissah & Letcher-Teye, 2018). The distinctive, simple and intricate designs with a variety of colours portray something truly extraordinary with a rich cultural meaning. Ghana has one of the most vibrant cultures in the world. Significant in this is shown in the many and various Ghanaian fabrics used by the people. These fabrics come in a various colour-ways colour way simple and complex designs reflect the socio-cultural and artistic ways of its users. This is very significant in the Ghanaian culture as they are mostly used on specific occasions as well as in everyday wear throughout the year (Dogoe, 2013).

Ghanaian-printed fabrics have taken a global trend. The fabrics are seen in almost all the continents where Ghanaians are present. They are used to portray the rich culture of Ghanaians. These fabric designs possess special qualities of aesthetics that blend beautifully the nature of art, beauty and taste within the environment. It is among these qualities that cultural significance is embedded. Principles of design are adhered to in the designs of these printed fabrics. Tucker (1981) indicated that the principle of design (the unique arrangement of the elements) is based on some aesthetic system. The designer uses elements as tools or raw materials to design, much like paints are the basics to a painter. The elements of design include space, line, form, colour, dot, shape and texture. The principles of design relate to how these elements are utilised. The principles of design are essential to the development and production of clothing used by individuals and families around the world. Each principle has a specific role in creating an aesthetically pleasing fabric or print.

Ghana is one of the leading countries in the production of African print fabric. There are two major companies that produce these fabrics: Ghana Textiles Printers (GTP), and Akosombo Textiles Limited (ATL). The use of printed fabrics in Ghana has a peculiar history that has been handed down to the present generation and generations to come (Impraim-Swanzy et al., 2019). Culture is also manifested in tangible or material form, in terms of types of food procurement and preparation, diverse technology and crafts, clothing, body decoration, visual art and symbols as well as secular and religious architecture. Symbols play a great significance in the fabric design process. They give meanings to the designs created as expressed in the cultural settings of the people. Every symbol stands for and expresses a specific meaning or special value given to it. A common way of showing something as a symbol is a matter of sensory data into meaningful mental images. These fabrics are mostly designed to mirror various African cultures and traditions (Impraim-Swanzy et al., 2019).

Many of the designs found on fabrics portray events or adages. Others also depict highly respected people. According to Asmah, Clement and Mate (2018), most of the fabrics produced in Ghana have local names. These include ‘Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase’, ‘Yaw Donkor’, ‘Bonsu’, ‘Ama Serwaa’, ‘Efie mmosea’, among others are some of the names of the fabrics in Ghana.

Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase (Stool)

The stool symbol is the key feature of this fabric and its name simply implies that “if someone wants to talk about me, the person should take a stool and sit on it”. This indicates that it is better for a person to sit down and take his/her time and say what he/she has to say rather than standing around talking. The stool in Ghanaian culture symbolizes the soul of the society. It is a symbol of authority in traditional politics. In many ways, the stool is synonymous with its owner. The “*Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase*” fabric is designed with stools. The fabric is created with vertical and horizontal pattern lines. The stools were displayed in the rectangular shape created by the vertical and horizontal lines running through the fabric. The motif is a stool repeated in a square shape to create a pattern. The broad thick and thin lines were randomly spread on the background of the design. This fabric comes in different colours signifying the same meaning.



Plate 1: Sɛ wo bɛ ka me hu asɛm a fa akonya tinase (Stool)

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

Ahwerepɔ (Sugarcane) fabric

Ahwerepɔ (Sugarcane) design really has the sugarcane designs displayed on the fabric. The “*ahwerepɔ*” fabric represents love and is likened to sugarcane. It is a means of being appreciative to loved ones. For instance, a wife wears this kind of fabric to show appreciation to the husband for the love showered on her. The “*ahwerepɔ*” fabric is designed with a series of nodes of sugar cane that has been put together either horizontally or vertically depending on the design formation. The node formation has been abstracted and characterised by wavy lines. They form a series of lines that are arranged to form the main motifs of the fabric. The background of the fabric is designed with the same nodes that have been densely arranged together to form the textures. The elements used in the design include dots, lines, shapes and colours. The “*ahwerepɔ*” fabric comes in different patterns and colours.

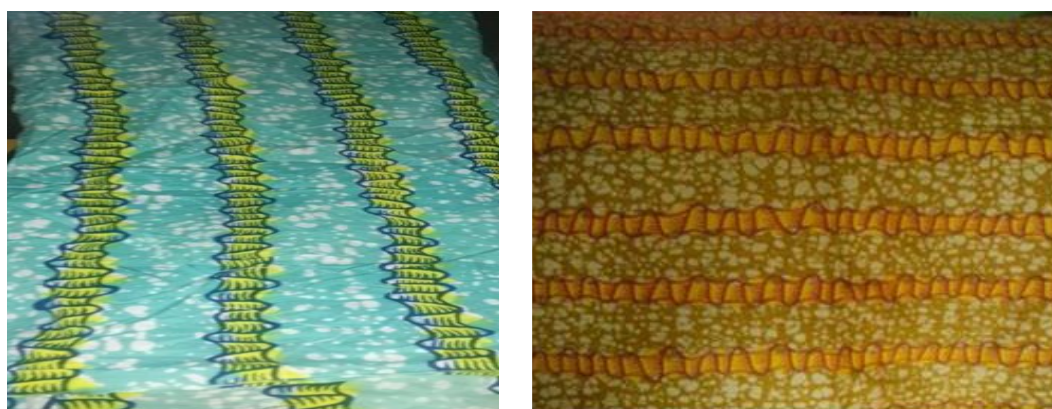


Plate 2: Ahwerepɔ /wo ɔdɔ yɛ dɛw tse dɛ ahwer

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

Sika Wɔ Ntaban

Money has wings is the translation for this fabric. Money indeed flies where it wants to go. If it is not handled well, it will be lost. Bad or wrong investment decisions will cause one to lose money. Birds are a group of feathered theropod dinosaurs and constitute the only living dinosaurs.

Likewise, birds are considered reptiles in the modern cladistic sense of the term, and their closest living relatives are the crocodilians. Birds are descendants of the primitive. The ability to fly is one of the most unique features of birds. The motif is a profile of a bird in an oval shape repeated systematically to give a feeling of movement. It is also made of some horizontal lines repeated throughout the design and serves as fabric textures.

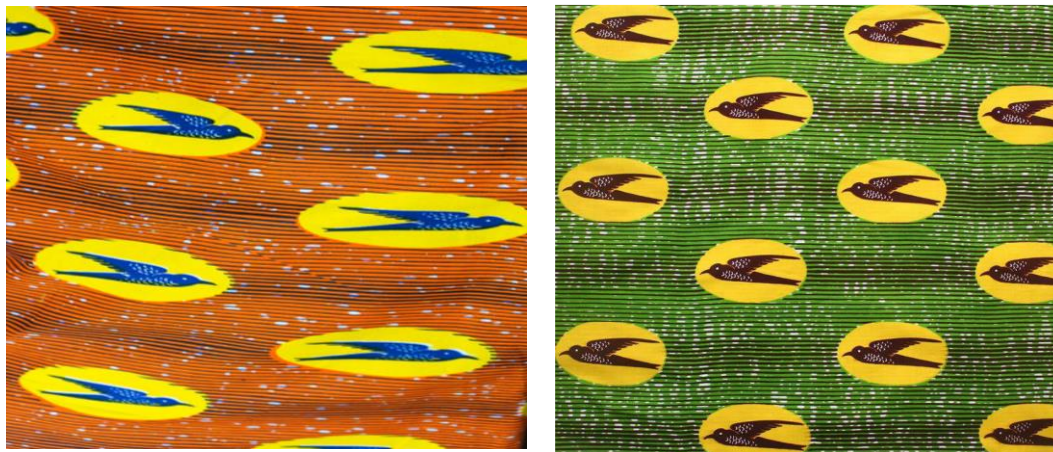


Plate 3: Sika Wo Ntaban

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>.

Akyekyedee akyi (Back of the Tortoise)

This print really does resemble the back of a tortoise's shell with its rough and oval shape taking after the housing of the land-based reptile. The background of the cloth is designed with a shaded colour randomly spread in (an all-round pattern). It signifies that the tsetse fly sits on the back of a tortoise in vain. It cannot suck any blood through the hard shell. The elements used in the design include dots, fence-like design and colour creating an intricate design. The half drop technique was used in the arrangement of the main motif of the fabric. The motif is likened to the shell of the tortoise and comes in different colours.

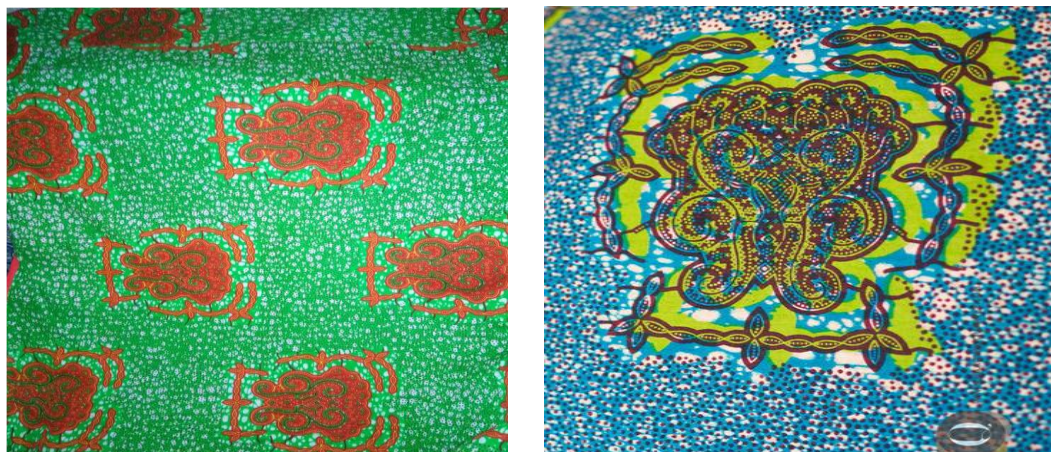


Plate 4: Akyekyedee akyi (Back of the Tortoise)

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

Nsubra

“*Nsubura*” is an Akan word or “*nubu*” (Ga) which literally means deep well of water. Water extracted from deep down the earth or underground is clean or has been purified by nature. Before one gets this clean or purified water, it needs hard work, since the person has to dig deep to get the water. The main motif of the fabric is designed with an oval shape and a moon-like shaded blue to form a complete circle, in a purple circular shape. The purple circular shape is surrounded by multiple oval shapes arranged in a circular form from the smallest to the biggest on a yellowish green background. The motif is arranged using the full-drop pattern repeat on a purple background with shaded blue spots connected with each other with the aid of short lines. The design gives the impression of radial balance. This fabric is the trending fabric in Ghana now and worldwide and can be found sewn into a dress, shirt, and shorts, among others. Its varying colours and bold print renders it versatile and confident.

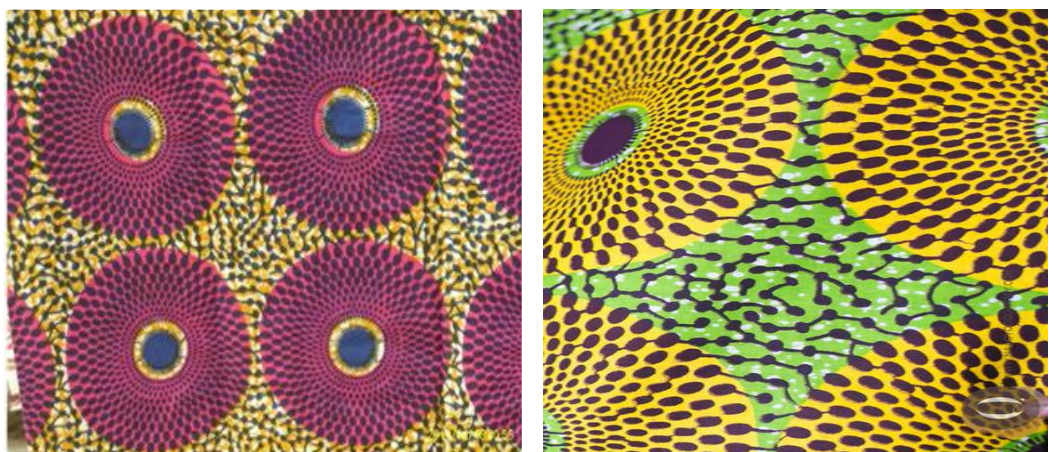


Plate 5: Nsubra

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

Ahwene pa nkasa

Ahwenepa nkasa, can be interpreted to mean “Ahwenepa” (Good waist beads) “nkasa” (makes no noise). Thus, a “good waist beads do not make noise”. This is a common proverb among Ghanaians which implies you should let your deeds or character speak for you, in other words, do not be arrogant; let your achievements speak for themselves. This can be related to mean a good man or a good woman needs no introduction to be known. Someone can notice them through simple interaction. A good man or woman is hard to find but when you meet that special person, you will easily notice. “Ahwene pa nkasa” is designed with a floral pattern arranged using all-round techniques. The elements employed in the design include floral design, lines (curvy, diagonal and spiral lines), dots, shapes and colours. The design has the wax printing method for the background and the block printing technique for the floral pattern. The elements in the design are harmonious as a result of the use of cool colours and the white spots on the background as well as white lines, shapes and dots used in the floral design.



Plate 6: Ahwene pa nkasa

Source: FLO London Shop's collection (2021)

“Akofena” (Sword)

Akofena literally means ‘ako’ - war, ‘afena’ - sword. The symbol found in the fabric shows the power, strength and authority vested in a leader. It symbolises the gallantry and loyalty of warriors who protect a particular chieftain. It is also very significant for swearing the oath of allegiance. The symbol advises people to honour and show loyalty to their leaders. It also encourages statesmanship and gallantry. The items in the design include swords, wavy lines, curvy lines, doodle-like patterns and geometric border design. The designer made good use of the principle of contrast to enable the boarded background with the main motif to stand on it. The sword with three geometric designs on it is caged in a rectangular shape, forming the main motif of the design. The principle of harmony was also employed to create a harmonious effect in the design.

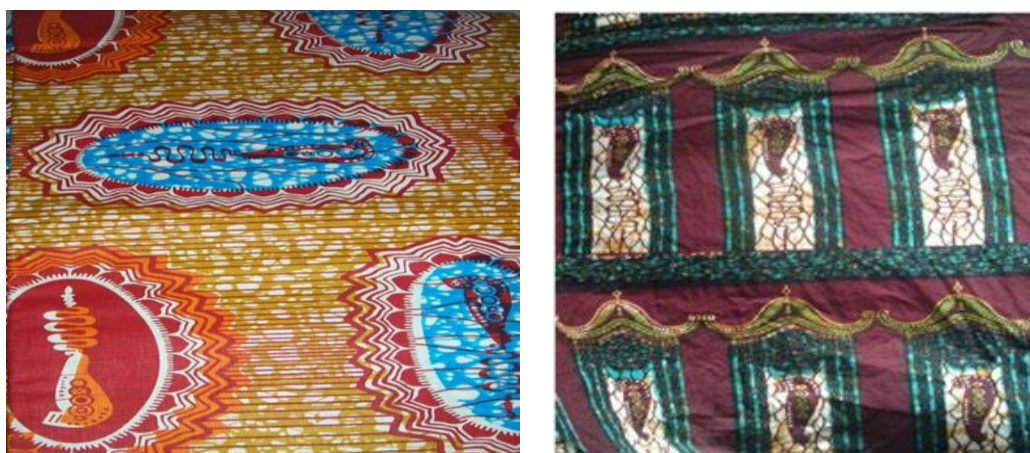


Plate 7: Akofena (Sword)

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

Highlife

Highlife is the backbone of Ghanaian music and having it printed on a fabric makes sense to keep its memory in every generation whether in music form or fashion. Highlife is a blend of traditional Akan rhythms and melodies with European musical elements, such as the use of European instruments and harmony. The elements employed in the design include lines (vertical and horizontal lines), shapes and colours. The interplay of lines creating variety of shapes such as triangles, rectangles, rhombuses, among others is balanced with the dots and vein-like effects created in the background. The principle of harmony is employed in the creation of the background of the cloth with random curvy lines and colours that harmonise with each other. The highlife cloth comes in different colours.

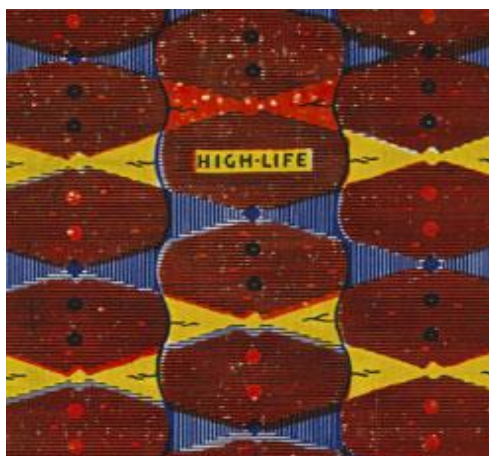
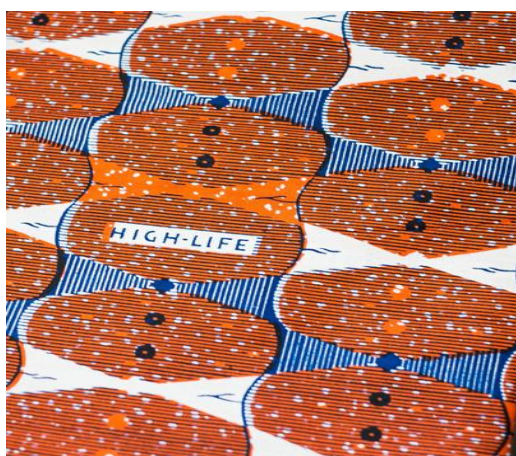


Plate 8: Highlife cloth

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

Efie mmosea

“Efie mmosea” means gravels in the home/house. The design depicts gravels found in the compound of Ghanaian traditional homes. It resembles small stones that are arranged systematically to give a sense of movement. It is believed that a person from one’s family can be wicked or can harm one more than an outsider. This is because a family member knows everything about the person and can easily destroy the person based on the details he/she has. The popular adage is, “*fie mbosabo se ɔtwa wua, ɔye yaw*” literally when a member of your family hurts you, it is very painful. Among the Ewes and Gas ethnic groups, it means the poor man does not chew stones. No one chews stones as food when hungry in the Ghanaian community. We are one another’s keepers, therefore when your neighbour is in trouble, the members of the society deem it a duty to help. Members of society help one another for unity.

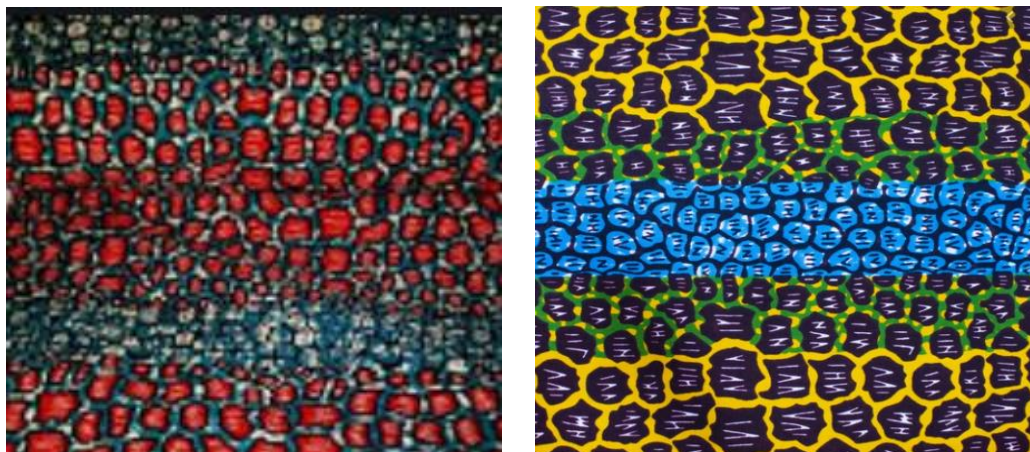


Plate 9: Effie mmosea

Source: <https://enam98.wordpress.com>

METHODOLOGY

The study used quantitative research design. Descriptive survey design was also adopted as useful in describing the characteristics of a large population, makes use of large samples, thus making the results statistically significant even when analysing multiple variables. Many questions can be asked about a given topic giving considerable flexibility to the analysis, and the design allows the use of various methods of data collection like questionnaire and interview methods.

The population for the study comprised all the shop owners and customers above 18 years that visit the various clothing and textiles shops in the Kumasi Central Business District (KCBD) in the Kumasi Metropolis. The Central Business District of Kumasi includes areas such as Bantama, Kejetia, Adum and Asafo Market. The population of the study include the total population of Kumasi metropolis which is 3,490,030 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). This population is made up of all individuals, workers in public and private organisations, businessmen, students and traders.

The sample size for the study was based on the table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Based on this table the sample size determined was three hundred and eighty-four (384). Therefore, 384 customers from each sampled African Prints shops in Bantama, Kejetia, Adum and Asafo Market in Kumasi Metropolis were sampled.

Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were employed. In sampling the various clothing and textiles shops in Bantama, Kejetia, Adum and Asafo Market, a purposive sampling technique was used. Here, any African Print shops within the study area that was approachable to the researchers at a particular point in time were selected. Convenience sampling technique was used for selecting the consumers that visit the various cloth and textiles shops in the Kumasi Metropolis. The researchers established some rapport with the consumers before administering the questionnaires to them. This sampling technique was used because it is affordable, easy and the subjects are readily available.

A questionnaire was used to gather information from the respondents. The quantitative data for this descriptive study was collected via a structured questionnaire distributed by researchers to the customers that visit the various cloth and textiles shops in the KCBD. This method was chosen because questionnaires are the preferred data collection tool for descriptive studies as these are easily distributed to a wide variety of participants in a cost-effective manner. The returned questionnaires were coded and keyed into SPSS-23.0. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Results of the analysis were presented descriptively in a tabular form followed by a narrative description of the results.

RESULTS

In total 292 completed questionnaires were received out of 384 that were distributed. Table 1, explains the details of the demographic data of the consumers. Demographic information of the respondents includes gender, age group, educational level and income level of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Responses	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age group	20-29 years	12	4.1
	30-39 years	63	21.6
	40-49 years	148	50.7
	50-59 years	54	18.5
	60 years and above	15	5.1
	Total	292	100.0
Gender	Male	54	18.5
	Female	238	81.5
	Total	292	100.0
Educational level	No formal education	22	7.5
	Basic education	58	19.9
	Sec/Tech education	76	26.0
	Tertiary education	136	46.6
	Total	292	100.0
Income	Below 300	6	2.1
	300-599	15	5.1
	600-899	21	7.2
	900-1199	51	17.5
	1200-1499	38	13.0
	1500 and above	145	49.6
	Non-salary worker	16	5.5
	Total	292	100.0

As depicted in Table 1, 12 (4.1%) of respondents were between 20-29 years, while 63 (21.6%) were between the ages of 30-39 years. In addition, 148 (50.7%) of the respondents were between the ages of 40-49 years, while the remaining 15 (5.1%) of the respondents

were 60 years and above. The descriptive summary of respondents showed that the majority of them were in the age bracket of 40-49 years while only a few of the respondents were 20-29 years. Focusing on the gender of the respondents, it is observed that 54 (18.5%) of the respondents were males, while 238 (81.5%) of the respondents were females. This showed that shop owners and customers are dominated by females.

The results further indicated that 22 respondents had no formal education representing 7.5%, whereas 58 respondents constituting 19.9% had attained education up to the basic level. However, 76 respondents representing 26.0% had attained education to the Secondary/Technical level. The remaining 136 respondents forming 46.6% had an education to the tertiary level. This suggests that the majority of the respondents included in the study had some form of education so they would be able to read and understand the questionnaire. On the income level, 6 respondents representing 2.1% indicated that their income level is below GHC 300.00 per month. In addition, 15 respondents constituting 5.1% affirmed that their income level is between GHC 300.00 to GHC 599.00 per month. However, 21 respondents representing 7.2% said their income level is between GHC 600.00 to GHC 899.00 per month. Again, 51 respondents representing 17.5% said they received GHC 900.00 to GHC 1199.00 per month; whereas 38 respondents constituting 13.0% revealed that they receive GHC 1200.00 to GHC 1499.00 per month. As depicted in Table 1, 145 respondents constituting 49.6% indicated that their income level is GHC 1500.00 and above, while 16 respondents representing 5.5% indicated that they are not salaried workers. This implies that many of the respondents have the purchasing power to buy and many further enquire about the names and meanings of Ghanaian fabrics.

Knowledge of Symbolic Names and Meanings of Ghanaian Fabric

Knowledge of fabric names and meanings facilitates an intelligent appraisal of symbolic and affective connotations they represent, and also helps in identifying the right quality for the application. Table 2 represents the issues considered when purchasing Ghanaian fabric associated with names.

Table 2: Issues considered when purchasing fabric

Item No.	Questions	Yes		No		Sometimes		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Would you consider purchasing fabric by knowing the name and meaning?	206	70.5	32	11.0	54	18.5	292	100
2.	When you buy a piece of fabric, do you ask for the name and meaning?	39	13.4	81	27.7	172	58.9	292	100
3.	Do you search for attribute information about the fabric you were not previously aware of?	52	17.8	184	63.0	56	19.2	292	100
4.	Do you consider any unknown fabric?	222	76.0	23	7.9	47	16.1	292	100
5.	Do you purchase known fabrics for their symbolic and affective connotations they represent?	202	69.2	13	4.4	77	26.4	292	100

As depicted in Table 2, the respondents were asked whether they would consider purchasing a particular fabric when they know the name and meaning. Statistically, 206 (70.5%) of the respondents answered “Yes”, whereas 32 (11.0%) answered “No” to the question. Meanwhile, 54 (18.5%) answered “sometimes” to the question. The finding revealed that a particular fabric would be purchased when its name and meaning is known. Moreover, when the respondents were enquired whether they asked for the name and meaning when purchasing fabric, 39 (13.4%) said “Yes” to the questions, and 81(27%) of the respondents said “No” to the question. On the other hand, 172 (58.9%) of the respondents answered “Sometimes” to the question. The results showed that the majority of the respondents sometimes ask for names and meanings when purchasing fabric.

On whether the respondents would search for attribute information about the fabric they were not previously aware of, 52 (17.8%) responded “Yes” to the question. However, 184 (63.0%) said “No” to the questions and 56 (19.2%) responded “Sometimes” to the question. This affirmed that the majority of the consumers do not search for attribute information about fabric purchased that they were not previously aware of. On the question “Do you consider any unknown fabric?”, 222 (76.0%) answered “Yes” to the question, whereas 23 (7.9%) said “No” to the question. The remaining 47 (16.1%) of the respondents answered “Sometimes” to the questions. The finding showed that the majority of the customers (youth) consider any unknown fabric.

On the question “Do you purchase known fabric for their symbolic and affective connotations they represent”, 202 (69.2%) of the respondents said “Yes” to the question, whereas 13 (4.4%) of the respondents answered “No” to the question. Seventy-seven (26.4%) of the respondents said “Sometimes” to the question. The finding revealed that consumers do not only recognise fabrics by their visual and physical properties but also by their symbolic and affective connotations they represent. Ghanaian consumers love the patterns, the vibrancy of the colours, and most of all the symbolism and story behind fabrics.

In ascertaining the knowledge of consumers on the names and meanings of Ghanaian fabric, the shop owners and the customers were asked to indicate their knowledge level of each fabric’s names and meanings. Means and standard deviations of 10 fabric names were used to measure the knowledge of consumers.

Table 3: Knowledge of Ghanaian fabric names and meanings

Item no.	Knowledge of Ghanaian fabric names and meanings	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	I know “Akyekyedee akyi” (Back of the Tortoise) fabric signifying that the tsetse fly sits on the back of a tortoise in vain	3.31	1.266	High
2.	I know “Ahwerepo” fabric signifies that love is sweet	3.12	1.278	High
3.	I know “Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase” (Stool) fabric which means is better for a person to sit down to talk rather than standing	2.84	1.308	Low
4.	I know “Akofena” (Sword) fabric which shows the power, strength and authority vested in a leader	2.63	1.367	Low
5.	I know “Owuo Atwedie” fabric which signifies that Death is inevitable	2.55	1.395	Low
6.	I know “efie mmosea” fabric signifies that a person from one’s family can harm one more than an outsider.	2.49	1.371	Low
7.	I know “Ahwene pa nkasa” fabric which means good waist beads do not make noise	2.42	1.379	Low
8.	I know “Nsubra” fabric signifies deep well	2.31	1.345	Low
9.	I know “highlife” fabric which means highlife is the backbone of Ghanaian music	2.07	1.336	Low
10.	I know “Sika Wo Ntaban” fabric which means money flies	2.05	1.190	Low

Mean < 3.0 = low knowledge level; Mean > 3.0 = high knowledge level

As is evident from Table 3, the mean ratings of respondents ranged from 3.31 to 2.05. This indicated that consumers do have knowledge about the names and meanings of some Ghanaian fabrics and others have low knowledge about them. Consumers gave higher ratings for “Akyekyedee akyi” (Back of the Tortoise) fabric signifying that the tsetse fly sits on the back of a tortoise in vain (mean=3.31, SD=1.266). This showed that the respondents understood and had knowledge about “Akyekyedee akyi” (Back of the Tortoise) fabric. On whether the respondents know “Ahwerepo” fabric signifying that love is sweet had a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 1.278 was attained. This signifies that the respondents have high knowledge and understand the meaning of “Ahwerepo” fabric.

Again, the knowledge level of the respondents on “Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase” (Stool) fabric which means is better for a person to sit down to talk rather than standing was low (mean= 2.84, SD= 1.308). Moreover, on the knowledge of the respondents on “Akofena” (Sword) fabric which shows the power, strength and authority vested in leader, they rated it low (mean=2.63, SD=1.367). This signifies that majority of the respondents had low knowledge about “Akofena” (Sword) fabric. Concerning the knowledge of the respondents on “Owuo Atwedie” fabric which signifies that death is inevitable, the mean ratings was low (mean=2.55, SD=1.395). This showed that the knowledge level of most of the respondents on “Owuo Atwedie” fabric was low.

On the knowledge of the respondents on “efie mmosea” fabric signifying that a person from one’s family can harm one more than an outsider, a mean score of 2.49 and a standard deviation of 1.371 was attained. This indicated that the knowledge level of the respondents on “efie mmosea” fabric was low. As to whether the respondents know “Ahwene pa nkasa” fabric which means good waist beads do not make noise, a mean score of 2.42 and a standard deviation of 1.379 were attained. This indicates that the knowledge level of the respondents on “Ahwene pa nkasa” fabric which means good waist beads do not make noise was low.

Concerning the knowledge level of the respondents on “Nsubra” fabric signifying deep well, a mean score of 2.31 and a standard deviation of 1.345 were attained. This mean score implies that the majority of the respondents had low knowledge of “Nsubra” fabric. On the “highlife” fabric which means highlife is the backbone of Ghanaian music, the consumers gave lower mean ratings (mean=2.07, SD=1.33). This showed that consumers’ knowledge about “highlife” fabric is low. With respect to the respondents’ knowledge of “Sika Wo Ntaban” fabric which means money flies, the mean ratings were low (Mean=2.05, SD=1.190). The results showed that consumers had little knowledge about the name and meaning of “Sika Wo Ntaban” fabric.

The overall results indicated that the respondents had little knowledge and understanding about symbolic names and meanings of Ghanaian fabric including; *Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase* (Stool) fabric which means is better for a person to sit down to talk rather than standing), *Akofena* (shows the power, strength and authority vested in a leader), *Owuo Atwedie* (signifies that Death is inevitable), *efie mmosea* (signifying that a person from one’s family can harm one more than an outsider), *Ahwene pa nkasa* (means good waist beads do not make noise), *Nsubra* (signifying deep well), *highlife* (means highlife is the backbone of Ghanaian music), and *Sika Wo Ntaban* (means money flies).

DISCUSSION

Relatively, the findings of this study have been more of a reaffirmation of what was reviewed in the literature. The low knowledge level of the consumers on Ghanaian fabrics associated with names and meanings was in line with Akiniwumi (2008) that consumers sometimes find it difficult to identify Ghanaian fabrics with names and meanings. According to Akiniwumi the symbolic names of these African prints are given by the market women who trade in textiles. The market women do this in order to sell their fabrics to their customers and for this purpose naming of fabric becomes more significant in the society. The view of the respondents on the symbolic nature of Ghanaian fabrics confirms the study by Howard et al., (2012) that Ghanaian fabrics with names have symbolic designs to cast insinuations, yell insults at their rivals, demonstrate their love, and also project their statuses. The finding is also in line with Wendren (2008) that African prints with names tell stories of importance to the wearer such as proverbs, poems and traditional African fables. Aside from its storytelling and proverbial significance other functions of fabric naming are for insinuations. Essel (2017) expressed that; this is because the names given to Ghanaian fabrics could be entertaining, exciting, provocative or cast insinuations, based on naming systems contributed by the retailers who collaborate with the producers. In

people's way of communicating messages indirectly to others, they tend to insinuate them through the usage of some particular fabric names which have symbolic designs or names for such purposes.

On the same issue, Sylvanus (2007) also pinpoints that most importantly, the Western African culture facilitates all credit to the fabrics as a series of local significances, enactment of local logics of usage, interpretation and meanings attributed such that once the fabric leaves the warehouse and enters the market, a name is allotted to it to increase its market potential, and the lifespan of these names are usually unpredictable as some disappear at once whereas others enter the category of bestsellers. In this regard, Quartey (2015) asserted that Ghanaian fabrics have symbolic values. This is because symbols used in the Ghanaian fabrics have powerful meanings that allow natives to make sense of their lives. According to Obeng (2014), symbols printed on the Ghanaian fabrics direct every Ghanaian choice in everyday life. Whether Ghanaians realised it or not, symbols on the fabrics are one of the keys that indicate civilisation or conditioned to behave according to the community's morals.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Ghanaian fabrics are all unique and authentic, each bearing a traditional richness that is befitting of proud Ghanaians. Each of the brightly coloured Ghanaian fabrics has a unique story behind its origin. The purpose of the study was to investigate the symbolic values of Ghanaian fabric names and meanings and their impact on consumer purchase intentions. According to the study, the majority of the customers consider any unknown fabric, but consumers sometimes ask for the name and meaning when purchasing Ghanaian fabric. The finding revealed that consumers do not only recognise fabrics by their visual and physical properties but also by their symbolic and affective connotations they represent.

The study concluded that the customers had little knowledge about symbolic names and meanings of Ghanaian fabric including; *Se wo be ka me hu asem a fa akonya tinase* (Stool) fabric which means is better for a person to sit down to talk rather than standing), *Akofena* (shows the power, strength and authority vested in leadership), *Owuo Atwedie* (signifies that death is inevitable), and many others. It was recommended that influencers like celebrities, government officials, and opinion leaders in the society should always put on Ghanaian fabrics to increase fabric awareness and hopefully drive sales. When influencers have an established audience that knows and trusts them, once they mention the fabric and discuss it in their content, those mentioned may be learned and increase consumers' knowledge and demand of the fabrics.

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