

CHAPTER 7:

EMPLOYING TEXTILE FABRIC WASTE IN MAKING INNOVATIVE FUNCTIONAL MODERN HOME ACCESSORIES

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INTRODUCTION

Cloth is a flexible woven material consisting of a network of natural or artificial fibers often referred to as thread or yarn. Yarn is produced by spinning raw fibres of wool, flax, cotton, or other materials. Textiles are formed by weaving, knitting, crocheting, knitting, or pressing fibres together. (Balter, 2019). The words fabric and cloth are used in the textile assembly trade (such as tailoring and dressmaking) as synonyms for textile. However, there are subtle differences in these terms in specialized usage. Textile refers to any material made by interlacing fibre, (Abamowilz, 1998). Fabric refers to any material made through weaving, knitting, spreading, crocheting, or bonding that may be used in the production of further goods (garments among others). Cloth may be used synonymously with fabric but it is often used for a specific purpose (for example table cloth).

Clothing as a textile product is one of the basic needs of man. This is an indispensable element in human society and has been used as a means of expressing identity, wealth, and power as well as a commodity traded globally over centuries. The versatility of textiles and their importance in the daily lives of people are very numerous to be ignored. In the quest for garment makers to meet

the high demands for clothing, and to cover the nakedness of humanity, several tons of waste are generated which usually are not properly managed, but are indiscriminately disposed of to cause environmental problems (Chua, 2013). The situation is therefore, very disturbing particularly in this era when efforts are been made to save the environment by engaging in reducing, reusing, and recycling waste to curtail climate change and global warming. (Udeani, 2002).

However, it has been observed that the expansion of clothing fashion trends and the construction of fabric into fashionable clothes by garment makers generate several quantities of off-cuts. These remnants or scraps are piled up to occupy space at the workshops with the hope of finding future usage for them. Eventually, these pieces of off-cuts are considered waste when no valuable application is readily found. The danger here is the means of disposal, which is either by burning, burying in the ground, or dumping at the landfills. In whichever way it is doweaste management could be described as inappropriate, because of the negative impact on the environment as well as human existence. In some cases, it is common practice to find the offcuts of textile fabrics thrown into gutters by garment makers, especially on a rainy day. This results in the the blocking of drainage systems causing serious flood, occasionally in most communities, (Asogwa, 2014). This situation of indiscriminate disposal of fabric waste in the community as a result of poor waste management practices and the danger they pose to human lives and the environment, present a favourable ground for the research to invest in how the textile fabric waste can be managed by converting them into accessories for the modern home.

The dynamic occurrence of life does not leave the visual artist uninfluenced. They are increasingly drawn to using waste materials to create unique and beautiful items. This creative pursuit is driven by the ever-changing nature of life, which challenges visual artists to find new, innovative ways to bring beauty into the

environment. By recycling materials, visual artists can bring new life to items that would otherwise be discarded and create works of art that provide an interesting and unique conversation piece in any living space. Modern realities have so far emerged, prompting new media, techniques, modern creativity, and innovational approaches to art production; thus, motivating the possibility of using textile fabric wastes for home accessories. This innovation serves as a creative contribution towards addressing the textile fabric waste menace within the environment. The creative indulgence of the researcher in this regard is to recycle the textile fabric waste from where they were discarded, piled up, up, and skillfully employ innovative procedures in turning them into useful aesthetic or functional artwork for modern home accessories. Femi (2016), asserts that the redemptive and resurgent power of art is a value-recovery measure, that, abandoned things can metamorphose into entirely new products in the hands of a creative and resourceful artist. The process of value-recovery does not just distinguish the artists but uses the process to raise awareness and unsprung signals to other fields of endeavour to key into this environmental conservation practice.

Therefore, this study is focused on curbing the menace of poor textile fabric waste disposal by ensuring a safe and suitable environment by using the textile fabric waste obtained from the garment makers' shops to create innovative artworks.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to use textile fabric wastes to create wealth through the production of innovative functional artworks for modern home accessories.

Literature Review

Textile has been defined as "all materials that can be or have been formed into yarn or fabricated into cloth" (Udeani, 2002). Textile waste refers to any discarded material or product generated through

the textile industry, including clothing, fabrics, yarns, fibers, and other textile materials. It primarily encompasses unwanted or unused textiles that are disposed of rather than being reused, recycled, or repurposed. Textile waste is a significant global challenge due to its sheer volume and environmental impact. The fast fashion phenomenon, which promotes inexpensive and quickly produced clothing, has contributed to a rapid increase in textile waste generation. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2017), approximately 92 million tons of textiles are discarded annually, with only a fraction being reused or recycled.

This report by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation provides valuable insights into the issue of textile waste and offers recommendations for transitioning towards a more sustainable textile economy. It emphasizes the need to reduce waste at all stages of the textile value chain, foster recycling and reusing initiatives, and promote circular economy principles within the industry.

Overall, textile waste is a pressing environmental concern that requires collective efforts from manufacturers, consumers, and policymakers to address the issue and promote more sustainable practices within the textile industry

Theoretical framework

According to Maslow (1943), Clothing fulfils several different roles in satisfying the needs in this hierarchy of needs. Physiologically, clothing is essential for protection from the elements, providing warmth and shelter, and as such fulfils a safety need. In terms of love and belonging, clothing can play a role in helping the individual feel more accepted, and in terms of esteem, clothing can influence the opinion others have of the individual and as such can help to boost the individual's self-esteem. Clothing can also help to promote a person's self-actualization, by allowing the individual to express their creativity and individual style.

According to Maslow's Theory, humans have to meet the needs at each level of the hierarchy before they can move on to the next. For example, a person cannot reach self-actualization until their basic physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, and esteem needs are met. Finally, clothing plays an important role in helping people achieve their needs, considering Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs in the process of creating innovative functional art, from textile fabric waste materials, we can not only address people's basic needs but also contribute to their higher psychological aspirations and overall well-being as outlined in Maslow's Hierarchy of Need.

Production stage: Preliminary drawing for Izu umu nne.

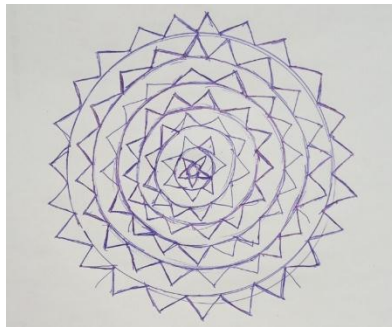


Fig 1: Sketch for *Izu umu nne*. Researchers' preliminary sketch

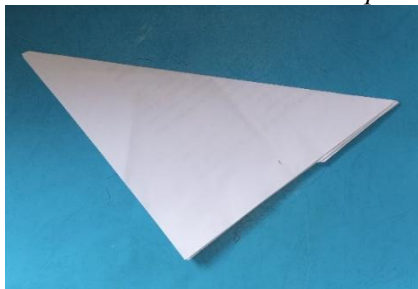


Plate 1. Cut out 5x5 inches and fold the fabric into two to form a triangle. Source: Onyinye Mobi, 2023

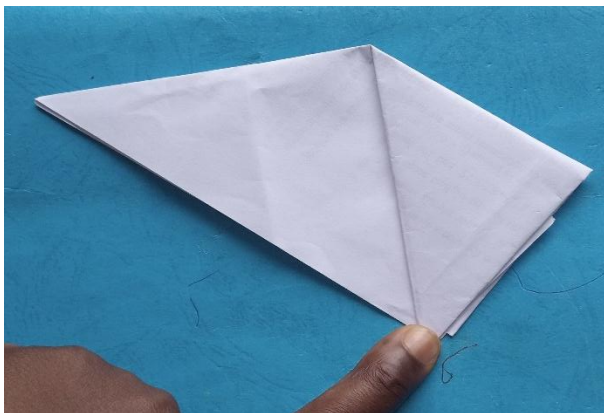


Plate 2. Fold it again like so. Source: Onyinye Mobi, 2023

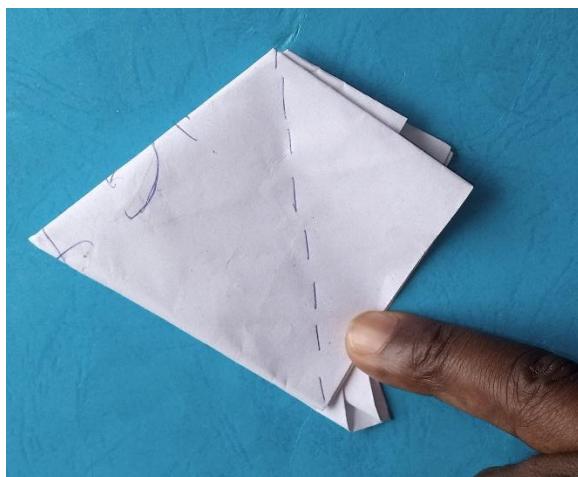


Plate 3. Fold it again like so. Source: Onyinye Mobi, 2023



Plate 4. The folded fabrics. Source: Onyinye Mobi, 2023



Plate 5. Cutting out the background fabric 30 inches by 30inches



Plate 6: Sewing the waste fabric pieces together. Photo researcher



Plate 7. Photo of work as it progresses. Photo credit: researcher



Plate 8. The researcher sewing the folded fabrics to the background fabric. Photo credit: researcher



Plate 9: The final work. Photo credit by the researcher

Discussion of results

This study "textile waste materials, the creation of innovative functional artworks for Modern Home Accessories" contributes significantly to our understanding of sustainable practices and artistic representations of waste. This research sheds light on the possibilities of transforming discarded fabrics into unique, aesthetically pleasing, and functional objects, thereby reducing the environmental impact of textile waste.

The work emphasizes the originality of the research by exploring the potential of textile fabric waste materials in creating functional artworks for modern home accessories. The study's findings have provided valuable insights into this area and have several implications for both researchers and practitioners.

One of the unexpected findings of this research is that textile fabric waste materials can be transformed into unique and aesthetically pleasing artworks that can be used as functional home accessories. This unexpected discovery highlights the untapped potential of textile waste materials and opens up new possibilities for their reuse and repurposing.

The implications of these findings are significant. Firstly, they contribute to our understanding of sustainable design practices by showcasing innovative ways to repurpose textile waste materials. This has important environmental implications as it helps reduce textile waste and promotes a more circular economy.

Secondly, the study's findings have practical implications for designers and artists working in the field of home accessories. By demonstrating the artistic and functional potential of textile waste materials, this research encourages textile Artists to explore new materials and techniques in their creative practice.

Finally, the conceptual framework of this study provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between textile waste materials, art, and design. It offers a framework for future research in this area and can guide further exploration into

the potential applications of textile waste materials in various design disciplines.

Conclusion

Based on the discussions and findings of the study, the researcher concludes that there is potential for repurposing textile fabric waste into functional art pieces for home accessories. This is geared towards utilizing fabric textile waste materials to create innovative functional artworks for modern home accessories which hold immense potential. By repurposing textile fabric waste, we can address the issue of textile waste while simultaneously adding value through creative designs.

Throughout the project, various techniques such as upcycling, patchwork, weaving, and fabric manipulation were employed to transform waste materials into unique and aesthetically pleasing home accessories. These functional art pieces not only serve a practical purpose but also add an artistic touch to interior spaces, contributing to sustainable and stylish homes.

By incorporating textile fabric waste into home accessories, we can reduce the environmental impact of garment makers and promote a circular economy. Additionally, this approach encourages consumers to reconsider their relationship with textiles and adopt more conscious consumption habits.

Furthermore, the project opens up opportunities for collaborations with local artists, designers, and even textile recycling initiatives. Sharing knowledge and skills can foster innovation and create a supportive community on sustainable practices in the world of design. Finally, the study fosters creativity, sustainability, and responsible consumption. It demonstrates the potential for transforming waste into valuable resources, encouraging us to rethink our approach to materials and design in the context of the circular economy.

Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. How can the Textile fabrics waste be identified and possibilities of exploring using them as artwork?
2. What are the ways to recycle and reuse textile fabric remnant from cut pattern into marketable products?
3. What techniques can be used to create utility art forms using Textile fabric waste.
4. How can the innovative functional art work be displayed for public consumption?

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