

REDESIGNING THE SURFACE OF TIE-DYED FABRICS FOR A NEW FASHION TREND IN ABA, ABIA STATE

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Abstract

This study is focused on 'Redesigning the surface of tie-dyed fabrics for a new fashion trend in Aba Abia State'. The study also aimed at using the various known fabric decoration techniques such as tie-dye, batik, patch work, embroidery, and a crystal stone for the production of highly sophisticated fabrics for ladies and males wears into the Nigerian fashion design/textile industry. Again, the research showed how the transformation of tie-dyed fabric surface for the production of females and gents wears could be a viable way to contributing meaningfully to economic life of the people. Finally, the clothes produced from the redesigning of tie-dyed fabrics could be as qualitative and valuable as those produced from textile industrial machines. Data used for this work were gathered from primary sources which include oral interviews and participant observation methods; and secondary sources that include documentary sources such as textbooks, journals, fashion catalogue, internet sources, and previous sources on the areas touched by this study. To achieve the objectives of this study the researcher experimented and explored all the various fabric decoration techniques on the fabric tie-dyed surface in multi-colours resulting to the redesigning of the fabric. As a studio based research, the researcher used desired dimensions and appropriate materials to achieve the following desired themes namely: 'Colour Conference', 'Ochonma', 'Pinklady' and 'Kirikiri Star'. In the course of this work certain limitations were encountered. These include accessibility of materials, limited availability of funds, and time factor. The limitations notwithstanding, the study nevertheless recorded tremendous success, at least for its ability to demonstrate practical possibility of using the various fabric decoration techniques to redesign tie-dyed fabrics as new fashion trends for females and males.

Key words: Redesigning, surface, Tie-Dyed fabrics, Fashion Trend.

Introduction

Since ages, man has always been desirous for changes in any given situation. According to a common dictum, change is the only thing that is constant in the whole universe. The change that is implied here is not political change, economic change, social or natural change; rather, the change referred to in the context is physical change, that is, observable change. In other words, this type of change is man-made, purposely created to achieve a desired goal. Man can influence changes in his environment through surface transformation of the thing within the environment. The erection of architectural structures and sculptures (relief and sculpture in the round) are good examples of surface transformation of the environment. Again, the surface transformation can be done on two dimensional surfaces such as paper, woven fabric, wall and other related materials. The designs on two dimensional surfaces applied here are mainly for human utilization. In a wide spectrum, surface transformation implies altering, changing and transforming the initial face of the object for something better. Man as a gregarious being is conscious of what he wears – clothe and how they are designed to suit his immediate design and demand. What we wear and how they are designed bring to man the concept of textile design and production.

Textile design is a branch of art classified under applied arts; meant to satisfy the clothing needs of people (Ngumah, Ayoola and Samkay, 2013). In a similar vein, Olorukoba (1991) believes that “One of the basic needs of human existence is clothing or textile. As a matter of fact, of all the three basic needs of man shelter, food and clothing (textiles), the third is the most outwardly revealing because it belongs to the group of visual arts”. Simply put, textile means the interfacing of the fibres to make cloth – fabric in a variety of ways. There is no habitable society devoid of textile materials. That is, textile is part and parcel of human creative impulse. There is various fabric – cloth decoration techniques among which include: the tie-dye, batik, patch-work, embroidery, stitching, stenciling, appliqué, beading and painting. Of all these methods, tie-dye appears to be the simplest and most common to achieve in terms of design and production. Tie-dye as a fabric decoration method is a process of using non-absorbent materials (such as rubber band, raffia) to tie some spots and then soak in a preferred dye solution for some minutes to get the desired effect. In support of the above, Obizue (2013) describes tie-dye as a process whereby “Fabrics are folded, tied or bound with rubber or resist materials or ropes to create designs and then immersed in liquefied dye...”

In some cases, various fabric decoration methods may be combined on a given fabric to create multiple and complex designs. More often, the tie-dye decoration method may serve as the background (base) design because of its simple application. The degree of colour application may be determined. In other words, the tie-dye fabric decoration method becomes a surface for the transformation of designs using any other fabric decoration technique.

The surface transformation of a tie-dye fabric base depends on the fashion in vogue; the fashion followers are a known factor on what to do at any time on the design and production process. Whether we realized it or not, our daily decisions as to what we will wear are shaped at least to a degree by fashion. Ultimately, the forces of fashion largely determine what is available to buy - (Awake, 2003). The research which is highly exploratory is focused on redesigning of tie-dye fabrics for new fashion trend in Aba, Abia State.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of the textile industry in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. The fabrics serve man in many capacities ranging from body covering and protection from harmful insects to furnishing of our environment – window blinds, beddings and wall decorations. Man’s desire for aesthetics of what he wears and also be in tune with the fashion in vogue creates room for his instinct to beautify his clothes. This creative impulse helps him to appear in gorgeous and beautiful manner. Thus, man decorates his clothes - fabrics in a variety of ways. The various techniques include: tie-dye, batik, patch-work, embroidery, appliqué, beading, stenciling, and screen-printing among others.

Each of these techniques can be used as a background surface (base) for others if well utilized depending on the situation. However, the utilization of tie-dye technique as surface transformation of fabric for fashion followers is imperative in this exploratory research in Aba, Abia State.

Aim and Objectives

The research is aimed at redesigning the surface of Tie-Dye fabrics for a new fashion trend in Aba Abia State, Nigeria. However, the objectives include to:

1. redesign tie-dye fabric for a new fashion trend.
2. find out the characteristics of tie-dye technique as surface transformation for new fashion trend.
3. demonstrate how tie-dye techniques can be used as surface for fabric decoration
4. to identify a new fashion design trend in Aba Abia State

Literature Review: Concept of Textile Design, Fabric Decoration Technique

The term, Textile is one of the basic requirements of human existence. It is a term that covers all the various aspects of human socio-cultural needs – furnishing, wears, beddings, printing, among others. Olorukoba (1991) simply refers to textiles as “one of the basic needs of human existence as clothing”. That is textile is meant to satisfy the clothing needs of people. Ozor, Ohaka and Lemchi (2013) opine that textile in the form of clothing is among the three basic needs of man after food, and shelter. They further note that the most common uses of textile’s products are apparel and home furnishing. Contributing, Orjinta (2015) asserts that textile ranks with food and shelter in the survival of man in his environment; that it is characteristically skill and activity oriented. Textile, as a discipline or course of study is called textile art or textile design. Whatever is the nomenclature, the discussion here will focus on textile design and not textile technology.

Textile design is an essential form of visual art, classified under applied arts. It is a creative decoration of fabric and allied products for clothing, drapes and furniture (Ojo, 2002). Asogwa and Diogu (2011) describe textile as the component of the Applied Arts which its primary concern is the designing and production of fabrics and other related products such as straw hats, local mats, foot mats, baskets, cords, twines, textiles and fashion materials and others. This means that any woven material or anything that has the capacity of being woven refers to textile. In his reaction, Webster (1981) defines textile as anything woven or capable of being woven; formed by weaving. He concludes that textile is a fabric made by weaving. Similarly, Ogunduyile (1997), describes textile design as the changing of the surface of garment through the application of colour/dye-stuff in order to create an effect. Generally, woven fabrics (cloths) are designed using the various elements of design- line, shape, space, form, texture and colour. These design elements are the units, components or ingredients that make up any design. There are various known techniques of fabric decoration. These include: embroidery, knitting, crocheting, macramé, batik and tie-dye (Ngumah, Ayoola and Samkay, 2013). Ojo (2002) opines that the decoration on fabric may be through dyeing, printing, embroidery, appliqué, crocheting, knitting, among others. In furtherance, Ogu (2013) remarks that dyeing and printing are the art of creating coloured designs and patterns on woven fabrics. The utilization of the fabric decoration techniques is dependent upon the type and function of the fabric (cloths) and also social considerations. The importance of textile (clothing) cannot be overstressed. Clothing refers to a covering for the human body; the wearing of clothing is an exclusive feature of humanity in all ramifications (Balter, 2009). Clothing can serve as protection from harmful natural phenomena such as; sun, dew, rain, snow and ice. It can also protect humans from insect bites. Textiles (clothes) have proffered solutions to environmental hazards such as air-conditioned clothing, armor, diving suits, swimming suits, bee keeper gear, high visibility clothing among others. These clothes are specifically designed to have protective value and not fashion value in the society. Socially, some textile materials – clothes are worn to cover those parts of the body which social norms require to be covered and act as a form of adornment as well as other social purposes (Uzowuihe, 2012). In support of the above, Reed (2007) states that clothing performs a range of social and cultural function; they include occupational and sexual differentiation. Clothing can also be used as a mark of identity and social status. According to Shakespeare, “Apparel often proclaims a man”. No wonder, In Nigeria like any other society, clothing has remained a unique parameter for ethnic identity. The various ethnic groups in Nigeria can easily be identified by their unique traditional wears. Among all the traditional Nigerian ethnic groups, clothing remains very unique as symbolic aspect of culture, religion, occupation, social class (Chukueggu, 1998). Most Nigerian traditional attires are hand woven. For example, Aso-Oke is a traditional cloth for the Yoruba, Akwete, a traditional cloth for the Igbo, while Babariga is associated with Hausa. According to Nwadike (2011), Hausa men are recognized by their elaborate

dress. Many wear large, flowing gowns (gare, babariga) with elaborate embroidery around the neck.

Clothing in Igbo land

Prior to the advent of the Europeans to the soil of Africa, *visa-vis* Nigeria, the Igbo had their form of dressing which is completely in opposition to what they majorly have today. Achebe (1958) in Uzowuihe (2012) described various aspects of dressing and makeup among the Igbo. Traditionally, the Igbo especially Igbo women believed in and valued decorating their bodies (body adornment) for a variety of reasons including aesthetics. Moreover, "One's body is his or her temple" so said an Igbo adage. The Igbo women had their bodies adorned with uri/uli design. Accordingly, men "wore smoked raffia shirts" and painted their bodies with charcoal and Kaolin (Nzu) in some occasions. The essence of clothing among the Igbo traditional society was to cover their private parts. Children were believed to have nothing to hide and were usually naked. A child may wear a string of beads around the waist for medicinal reasons. Igbo women always carried babies at their backs with a stripe of clothing; a tradition that has continued until today. In most cases, women did not have to cover the breast area (Uozie, 2012).

Uzowuihe (2012) quoting Achebe (1958) further remarked that in Igbo traditional society, men wore loin clothes in place of wrappers to cover their private parts. The loin clothes would go under the crotch and were tied together with a rope around the waist. The type of clothing clearly provided the much desired freedom of movement due to the nature of their jobs (farming, hunting and palm trees/palm wine tapping) and social activities like wrestling.

With the coming of the Europeans, the missionaries with education as a strong tool to the Igbo land, and other parts of Nigeria & Africa as a whole, the mode of dressing changed drastically. Clothing was redesigned to cover not just the private parts only. Males began to wear jumpers, shorts, trousers and shirts. Females wore skirts, wrappers and blouses; children were no longer left naked till puberty as originally practiced but were dressed on either native or English wears as decided by their parents (Uozie, 2012). After some times, the urge for foreign clothes started to reduce and the needs for made in Nigeria products was emphasized. Thus, the demand for traditional clothes increased. Nchonwa (1981) notes 'After decades of experimentation and flirtation with foreign clothing, Nigerians have finally come to realize the place of their traditional clothes. We seem to have now recognized the special dignity that our traditional clothes accord us hence on very important occasions like weddings, naming ceremonies and funerals; one notices that almost everybody is attired in the traditional way.

Origin of Tie –Dye

Bridget and Bridget (2016) were able to trace the history of tie-dye thus: The earliest examples of tie-dye are from Sui Dynasty in China in about 5th century AD. Their designs include small circles and lines, with bright colours including red, yellow, blue and green.

In Japan, Asia, they introduced a form of tie-dye known as shibori which has been practiced since 8th century AD. Shibori is a labour intensive resist technique which involves stitching elaborate patterns and gathering the stitches tightly before dyeing and wrapping fabric around a core of rope or wood and binds it with a string or thread to resist dye. They form beautiful intricate designs and are used for kimonos, obi and other accessories and garments.

In Indonesia, tie-dye is known as jumputan, plangi and tritik which are Javanese terms for methods related to tie-dye. In Indonesia, tie-dye is usually combined with other dyeing techniques such as batik-jumputan which combine tie-dye with batik wax-resist dyeing. They also used another method known as ikat which is a tie-dyeing technique of dyeing yarns before it is woven. In India, tie-dye originated from Western India. The

earliest evidence dates back to 4000 B.C. Bandhani (to bind, to tie) is a type of tie-dye decorated by plucking the cloth with fingernails into many tiny bindings to form varieties of patterns in knots. The main colours used in bandhani are in yellow, red, blue, green and black. As with other Indian textiles, bandhani different colours convey different meanings. People believe that red is auspicious colour for brides. Bandhani is one of the oldest known methods of tie-dyeing still widely practiced today in Western India. In Africa, tie-dye techniques have been used for centuries in the Hausa region of West Africa with the renowned indigo dye which was used in pit dyeing in around Kano, Nigeria by mainly male folks. It has been suggested that these African techniques were the inspiration of tie-dyed garments identified with hippie fashion.

In Yoruba, tie-dye is known as adire (a resist-dyed cloth produced and worn primarily by Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria) was first applied to indigo-dyed cloth with resist patterns in the early 20th century. It is a craft mainly practiced by women in Yoruba and was first produced in Jojola's compound in Kemta, Abeokuta by Chief (Mrs.) Miniya Jojojola Soetan, the second iyolode (head of women) in Egba land. She passed on this craft to her children and consequently, to future generations. The first adire fabric was made with Teru (local white attire) and Elu (local dye) obtained from elu leaf which is planted in the Saki area of Oyo State. By 1960s, chemical dyes from Europe caused a revolution in colour and techniques. The introduction of synthetic dyes made the craft easier with availability of dyes in different colours. The local alkaline such as lye was replaced with sodium hydroxide and sodium hydrosulphite. Today, adire has taken a new dimension using simple technology and hot wax or paraffin are used in place of cassava paste. Adire has come along and has continued to face fashion challenges and it is still an alternative to machine prints. Adire appeals so much to the consciousness of Yoruba people in Nigeria and on a global level.

In the Western World, tie-dye was introduced to U.S. in 1909 by Professor Charles P. Pellow of Columbia University when he gave a lecture and live demonstration of his technique using samples of tie-dyed muslin (type of fabric). Shibori and batik were occasionally used before the 1960s. Tie-dyeing became a fad until late 1960s following the example set by the rock star Janis Joplin and John Sebastian who dyed their own clothes. Tie-dye became so popular in U.S. especially after the introduction of affordable Rit dyes (a commercial dye) used as a cheap way to customize inexpensive T-shirts, jeans, and other garments into psychedelic creation.

Textile – Fabric Decoration Methods

As earlier noted, fabric decoration techniques are many and some of them include: tie-dye, batik, stenciling, serigraphy, embroidery, patch-work, appliqué, stitching, knitting and painting. These techniques have been employed in a variety of manners to enhance the visual effects of the designed fabrics.

Essence of Fabric Decoration

Generally, fabrics both for children and adults, male or female are decorated to enhance their aesthetic visual appearance. Decoration implies creating designs on the surface of fabrics for consideration. In this sense, Ozor, Ohaka and Lemchi (2013) observed that “design give people interest on fabric and is responsible for the beauty and variety”. Similarly, Oni (2007) opines that designing textile construction deals with the “arrangement of lines, colours, textures, shapes and details on the surface of garment to give an attractive pleasing look” Again, fabric decoration can lure and spur fashion followers into action. This means that fashion and design work hand in hand.

Fashion Designing and Fashion Followers

Fashion like style is the way and manner of doing things. Often, we talk about fashion in vogue; that is referring to things that are currently done among the males or females. Fashion is more affected or influenced by the female folk in a given society. Generally, fashion has to do with what we wear and its accessories. Designers are determinant factors in fashion and therefore should be very creative. Anyakoha (2002) defined fashion designing as the “sketching, drawing and standardization of designs for garment production using textile fabrics. Persons in fashion designing create new designs and styles for garments produced to specification according to fabric dictate”. Obviously, human beings are subject to change; they by nature would want to belong to things that are in vogue in some degree in spite of their socio-cultural and religious beliefs. Fashion is a popular style especially in clothing, footwear, accessories, makeup, body or furniture. Fashion is distinctive and often habitual trend in the style in which a person dresses. It further defined fashion as the prevailing styles and the newest creation of textile designers’ (Chudi-Duru 2016). According to Awake (2003), “Two basic desires fuel the fashion industry – novelty and conformity”. Nearly everyone likes to wear something new. That is why we sometimes buy clothes, not because an older garment has worn out, but simply because we want a change. At the same time we do not want to look out of place, so we buy clothes that conform to some degree to the style worn by our associates. Fashion like style is as old as man on earth. The making and designing of garment creates room for fashion and its trends in a given society. Fashion occurs and can re-occur after many years. Fashion designers are creative, imaginative and dynamic in the use of the elements of art so that they can attract the attention and sustain the choice of the people on what they wear. According to Awake (2003), to create style, designers use five basic elements: colour, silhouette, shape, texture and line balance (or patterns on the surface of material). Miguel (2015) opines that designers conduct research on fashion trends and interpret them for their audience. They attempt to design clothes which are functional as well as aesthetically pleasing. They consider who is likely to wear a garment and the situations in which it will be worn. When linen fabric was locally produced in ancient Egypt and could not be dyed easily, it had only just one colour-bleached white. Yet Egyptian fashion designers pleated the material so that their clothes had a pleasing shape and silhouette. Thus, one of the most enduring styles was born (Awake 2003). This can logically be said to have marked the beginning of style and fashionable material in the world. With the passage of time, new fabrics and colours were made available and affluent countries such as Romans imported silk from China or India. Another fashionable material was dyed wool from Tyre. All these fashionable materials were relevant and common among the nobility. With the coming of the industrial revolution, however, fashion became much more relevant to the common people (Awake 2003). In other words, the industries arose to clothe both the rich and poor. The need to create design and style to fashion the choices of the people – old, young and babies became imperative in spite of any situation. Social and technological changes played an even greater role in clothing the masses. Since 19th century till present there have been drastic changes in our clothing patterns and fashion parades. The availability of new synthetic fibers such as rayon, nylon and polyester has offered manufacturers a wide array of fabrics. There is no doubt computerized designs made it easy to produce new styles and because of globalization, new fashion trends could appear almost simultaneously on the streets of Tokyo, New York, Paris and Sao Paulo (Awake 2003).

Theoretical Framework: Formalism

This is the physical and visual analysis of a work of art. Formalism is derived from the word form. Form refers to purely visual elements of art architecture which are line, colour, texture, spatial attributes and composition. In formalism, focus is on the visual element in a work of art – what the eyes see about the work and not the artist.

According to Egonwa (2012) affirmed that “formalism emanated from the 19th century concept of arts - for art’s sake, which de-emphasizes the function, context and content of a work of art, but highly values the rules regarding the arrangement of and appearance of objects”. Henry Focillon (1881-1943) developed a widely debated theory of formalism (and) saw artistic forms as living entities that evolved and changed everything according to the nature of their materials and their spatial setting. He argued that political, social and economic conditions were largely irrelevant in determining artistic form...he emphasized the importance of the viewer’s physical confrontation with the work of art (D’Allaya 2005).

In furtherance, formalists believe that the artist is not relevant to appreciating the artwork. They believe that information concerning the artist who created the work is irrelevant to the consumer. Even though, this theory does not support discussions on the artists who created the works and meanings attached to them which is one of its disadvantages, this theory will be relevant in the work because form is one of the important visual elements of art and it cannot be avoided from a work of art. Critical analysis of the forms of the dyed and printed fabrics is imperative in this research for better appreciation.

Functionalism

This theory was propounded by Auguste Comte (1778-1857) and was supported by the following sociologists: Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Emile Durkhiem (1858-1917) and Talcott Parsons (1902-1979). The theory held that society is made of parts that are related and dependent on one another (interdependent) for the survival of each other and for the survival of the entire society...so to say that the survival of a society depends on the functioning of its sectors- family, religion, economic, political, legal and security sector (Ayorinde 2014).

Therefore, this theory will be very relevant to this work in the sense that the various elements of design – line, colour, space, texture, etc will be combined to form or create the textile design and fashion. Again, the textile creative exploration is a combination of the various fabric decoration techniques such as tie-dye, batik, appliqué, embroidery and stitching.

Aesthetic Theory

Akin to the theory of formalism is the theory of aesthetics – philosophy of art. This theory was propounded by a German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten when he was writing his dissertation titled “*Mediationer philosophicae de nomullis ad posuma pertinentilous*” meaning (Philosophica and considerations of some matters pertaining the poem) in 1735. From etymological point of view is derived from a Greek word “*aisthetikos*” meaning (“aesthetic, sensitive, sentient pertaining to sense of perception”) which in turn derived from *aisthanomon* meaning (perceive, feed and sense).

According to Alexander Baugartem, aesthetics is the science of the sense of experiences, a younger sister of logic and beauty and is the most perfect kind of knowledge that sense experience can have. This definition implies that judgment of aesthetic value relies on our ability to discriminate at a sensory level. Aesthetics examines the affective domain response to an object or phenomenon. On a general note, aesthetics has to do with beauty, pleasure to a large extent. Therefore, the assessment of beauty is highly subject and based on individual perception.

In this view, Kant as quoted by Elenwo (2018) describes beauty as being subjective and universal; thus, certain things are beautiful to everyone. The contemporary view of beauty is not based on innate qualities, but rather on cultural specifics and individual interpretations. Aesthetic judgments might be seen to be based on the sense, emotions and intellectual opinions, desires, culture, preferences, values, subconscious decision, training,

instinct, sociological institutions, or some complex combination of these depending on exactly which theory one employs.

This theory therefore becomes a basic tool for this study because it will enable the researcher to see each of the designed fabric as an aesthetic object that will be evaluated on its own merit. Again, since the designed fabrics are meant for fashion followers, they should be able to attract attention and appeal to our sense of sight.

Methodology

Every research must have a design that enables conduct of effective research. Research design is the layout or sequence of analyzing the collected data. Nieuwenhuis (2010) opined that research design is “a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done”. This is a creative and practiced research. The researcher focused design and production as the main part of the study process. The researcher experiments on surface transformation of tie-dye fabrics in combination with other decorations techniques to enhance fashion design and aesthetics of textile industry. The general methodology could be described as experimental, exploratory and driven by issues identified in textile practice/production. As studio based research, the researcher will work qualitatively, based on observation, visualization, through making/selecting motifs, in creating designs and production of fabric decorations for fashion designers that will feature in the study. In the production materials such as fabrics that are affinitive to dye, thread, non-absorbent materials, dye, ink, etc will be employed by several means. Through analysis of the various designed fabrics, the researcher describes, evaluates and documents the textile designs within the study. The products of the creative exploration will be demonstrated for audience and examiner’s viewing and final assessment.

Creative Design/Production Process

This section explains the processes undergone in the design & production of fabric decorations as in this study. The stages and techniques of production are discussed.

Stage 1. Conception of Idea

The idea of the work was born out of various designs on fabrics and how to enhance their visual effect and thus boost their demand in the market. Inspirations emanate from the combinations of design techniques – tie-dye, batik, patchwork, appliqué, among others on the same fabric. Effective application of the colours (pigment) is an indication for redesigning the surface of a fabric to achieve an interesting visual appeal. The general notion that artists have four eyes makes interesting reasoning. That is, they see and look at the same time; they see beyond the ordinary.

Stage 2. Studio Materials and Equipment for Production

The research used series of textile designer’s materials to achieve smooth execution of the project. The materials include fabrics, twine (nonabsorbent materials like rope), wax, tainting tools, stenciling paper, dye-bath, scissors, and various chemicals, among others.

Stage 3. Creative Sketches/Drafts of some of the themes: This process of making sketches will highlight all the design illustrations made for the benefit of this study. Sketches give insight of how the finished works will look like. Creative development of sketches/drafts started with the activity in the field when the researcher saw the need for the redesigning of the surface of fabrics with multiple decoration techniques such as batik, patch work, embroidery, appliqué among others.

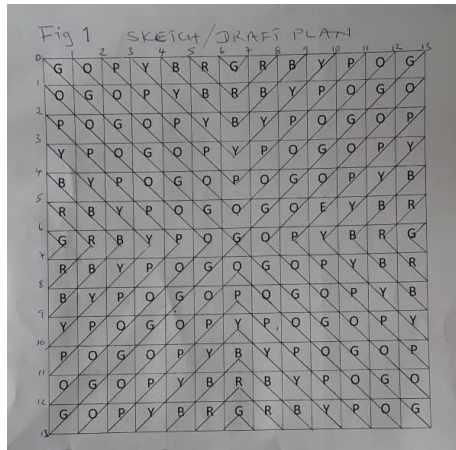


Fig. (1) Sketch for Colour Conference

The above sketch, 'colour conference' will be executed in combination of tie-dye, batik, and patch work decoration techniques.

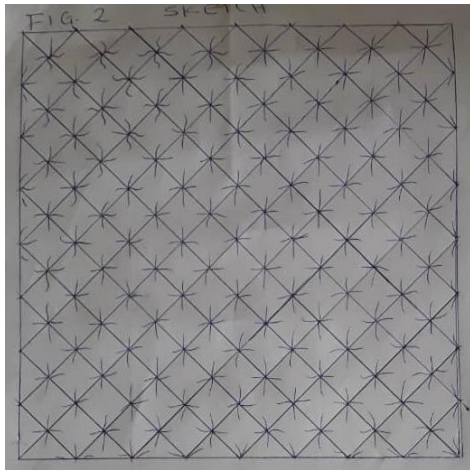


Fig. (2) Sketch for 'Kpakpando'(Star)



Fig. (3) Sketch for 'Ochonma'

The sketch, 'Kpakpando' will be achieved through a combination of tie-dye, embroidery, and crystal stones.. While the sketch, 'Ochonma' will be achieved through the combination of tie-dye, batik, appliqué, crystal stones techniques.



Fig. (4) sketch for Pink-Lady

The sketch, 'Pink-Lady will be achieved through the combination of tie-dye, prints, beads, and crystal stones. Having developed the sketches, the designer commenced the production of the real works, multiple designs on the fabrics with different design techniques.

Processes of tie-dyeing and other techniques



Plate 1: Photo of White fabric before tie-dyeing



Plate 2: Photo of white fabric ready for dyeing



Plate 3: Photo of initially Tie-dyed fabric only



Plate 4:
The Researcher applying dye on tied fabric



Plate 5: Tie-dyed fabric before untying for oxidation



plate 6: Tie-dyed fabric with cloudy effect background



Plate 7: The Researcher applying melted wax on tie-dyed fabric



Plate 8 (A): Tie-dyed fabrics in various colours
Plate 5(B): Various Tie-Dyed fabrics



Plate 9: Researcher using stenciling method for design



Plate 10: Ochonma' before applying other decoration techniques

Project Analysis of Techniques and Processes Involved

This section analyses the various techniques and practical steps used to achieve the desired designs.



Plate 11. 'Colour Conference. Okoli-Akirika, 2021

'Colour Conference' is a fabric designed to serve as furnishing and wears. It measures 183 cm x 183 cm; that is, it is squared in shape. The fabric is designed profusely in very bright colours using patch work technique for furnishing. The background design was achieved using tie-dye technique and batik. The title, 'Colour Conference' is indicative of multi-colour application. Ordinarily, the use of tie-dye as fabric decoration technique may have sufficed, but the application of other decoration techniques such as patch work, truly enhanced the visual appearance of the decorated fabrics. The researcher's inspiration came from the Biblical coat of many colours worn by Joseph, the dreamer and Dolly Parton's coat of many colours. The decoration arrangement of the 'colour conference' is in stripes of vertical and Horizontal Squares. That is, it is in check or draft form of square. Each square measures 5.5cm x 15.5cm. The stripes (vertical and horizontal) were achieved by sewing together pieces of the designed fabrics.

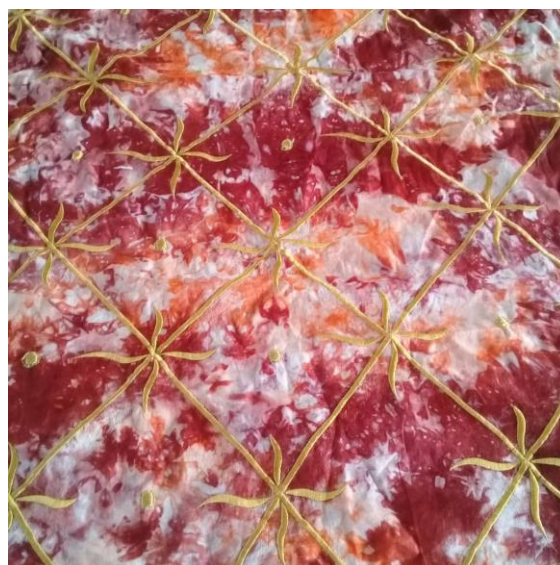


Plate 12. 'Kpakpando'(Star)

'Kpakpando' is a fabric designed to serve as wears. It measures 84cm x 122cm. The designed fabric, 'kpakpando' is designed using multi-decoration techniques such as tie-dye, embroidery, and crystal stones. The background design is achieved through tie-dye

technique, while embroidery and crystal stones are used to create the stars and effects at different spots. This makes it unique and different from similar designed fabrics. The star symbol is a major motif in the decorated fabric. 'Kpakpando' is depicting light that shows the way. Fashion conscious people are attracted by bright colours and meaningful motifs and more importantly intrincating designs. The crystal stones fixed at different spots on the fabric radiate interesting lights enough that can illuminate a musical stage for performance.



Plate 13. 'Ochonma'(Beautifier)

'Ochonma' is a designed fabric meant for all human form of wears. It measures 84cm x 366cm and is the hallmark of the project. It exhibits excellent multi-decorations. The execution of the fabric design is done using three fabric decoration techniques namely: tie-dye, batik, appliqué and crystal stones. The idea of the fabric design emanates from the popular bird called Ostrich. Ostrich which naturally displays profuse decorations in different brilliant colours, shape, and texture (the elements of design). Based on the decorations on the feathers of the Ostrich, the studio researcher explored the different fabric decoration techniques in the following order: tie-dye, batik, appliqué, and crystal stones sewn at special spots. The attached appliqué enhanced the gorgeous effect of the fabric. High class and sophisticated ladies and gents are meant for the designed fabric



Plate 14. 'Pink Lady'

As the name implies, pink is a colour often associated with ladies; meaning it is a feminine colour. The designed fabric in all ramifications is meant for highly sophisticated ladies who have value for aesthetics. The decoration techniques employed include: tie-dye, printing (stenciling), beads, embroidery and crystal stones. The dominant colour element is pink

where it derives its name, pink lady. The designed fabric measures 84cm x 184cm. It has perfect finishing that it becomes difficult to believe that the decorations were handmade. The production processes show that the plane fabric was initially decorated with tie-dye which created a cloudy effect background. This was followed by stenciling prints on the fabric with floral motif. Finally, beads were attached to the centre of the floral motif and other designated areas on the fabric all combined to create a gorgeous female cloth.

Other designed fabrics include: 'Kirikiri Star' (Plate 5) which measures 91.5cm x 122cm. The decoration techniques used include tie-dye to create the background; batik was used to achieve the various stars that formed the motifs on the fabric decoration from where it derived the name, 'Kirikiri Star'. Finally, painting as a decoration technique was employed using coloured marker. All these combined to make interesting visual appearance. The word 'kirikiri' an Igbo word means small. Generally, there is a known wrapper print called 'kirikiri' Star among the Igbo commonly used as uniform. Comparatively, the star is smaller than the one used in present design. The difference is obvious because the star on the wrapper was achieved through mechanical process while the other one was skillfully and manually achieved using tie-dyed background. Plate 6. 'Random Spots (Circle)' measures 84cm x 160cm. As the name implies circular shapes at different spots of the tie-dye fabric formed the motifs. The circular shape was achieved using embroidery technique. At the centre of the circular shape, fibre/yarn was attached (appliqué) to create 3-dimensional effect. All these combined to enhance the visual appearance.



Plate 15. 'Kirikiri Star'



Plate 16. 'Random Spots (Circle)'

Summary of Findings

Gathering data from primary sources was quite a successful one. The researcher was able to gather plain fabrics, cut them to varying sizes, designed with tie-dye as its background and redesigned using other fabric decoration techniques such as batik, patch work, embroidery, appliqué, printing, beads and crystal stones. As we can gather from the pictures of the redesigned surface tie-dye fabrics displayed in the previous chapter, the clothes are all nice reflecting new fashion trend in Aba, Abia State.

Thus, the researcher has successfully produced aesthetically designed clothes for fashion ladies using fabric decoration techniques. This is further supported by responses from oral interview; all affirmed the beauty, or high aesthetic value of fabric redesigned with batik, embroidery, patch work among others.

The grand summary of findings of the study is as follows:

1. The practice of redesigning tie-dye fabrics with other decoration techniques is not common in Aba, Abia State.

2. Fabrics not exotically designed, that is simply, designed with one decoration technique are cheaper than the ones with sophisticated and intrincating design.
3. Fabrics that are redesigned with combination of fabric decoration techniques are nice, of high aesthetic value and of good quality.
4. The market demand of clothes well designed using batik, embroidery, appliqué, etc, is high for high class ladies and gents.
5. The practice of redesigning the tie-dye fabrics will help to boost textile industry and thus help to promote made in Nigeria goods.

Conclusion

This study has made some contributions in its bid to encourage the redesigning of tie-dye fabrics with other decoration techniques in the Nigerian fashion design industry. It has as well demonstrated the economic, environmental, qualitative and aesthetic benefits this practice could offer designers, marketers, consumers, and the country at large. The study is also an eye-opener, and awareness on the need to produce interesting complex designs borne out of combination of the various decoration techniques. However, some problems were encountered by the researcher which is peculiar to every research. The major problem was that some of the fabric materials and chemicals available in the markets are not original and standard (as indicated on the materials). To remedy this problem, the researcher had to import most of the materials and chemicals used in this exploration.

Recommendations

1. That the government should organize workshops, symposia, seminars to all textile designers, textile teachers/technologists to create awareness on the new textile trends since it will contribute towards encouraging entrepreneurship.
2. The government should through the Curriculum planners of the Ministry of Education include the innovation in textile design in the secondary/ college curricular.
3. Nigerians should be encouraged to reduce their over dependence and desire for foreign textile products and look creatively inward for local textile products that could serve as veritable substitutes.
4. Dyeing centres should be created in other parts of Nigeria especially in the South East, South South, and Middle Belt where tie-dye fabrics are not commonly worn or used.
5. The government should subsidize the cost of materials such as fabrics and other related chemicals and dyes to assist the populace to produce consummate entrepreneurs.

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