

**AKENTEN APPIAH - MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT, KUMASI**

**REFLECTIONS ON FASHION TRENDS: THE PRODUCTION OF DURBAR
GARMENTS FOR YOUNG LADIES IN THE VOLTA REGION OF GHANA**

PERFECT FOMENYA

JULY, 2023

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**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FASHION DESIGN AND TEXTILES
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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
TECHNOLOGY
(FASHION DESIGN AND TEXTILES)**

JULY, 2023

DECLARATION

I, Perfect Fomenya, hereby affirm that the present submission is an original work authored solely by myself. To the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any previously published or written material by another individual, nor does it include substantial portions that have been accepted for the attainment of any other degree or diploma at Akenten-Appiah Menkah University of Skills Training and Development (AAMUSTED) or any other educational institution. Any sources or references utilized in this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Student Name : FOMENYA PERFECT

Signature

Date.....

SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the Akenten Appiah – Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development

Supervisor’s Name : DR. NINETTE APPIAH

Signature

Date.....

DEDICATION

To my children: Joycelyn, Nathenial, Micheal and Keneddy.

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I would want to convey my heartfelt gratitude to Dr Ninette Appiah for the knowledge she imparted in me and supervising this project. She was there to assist me every step of the way and her guidance is what enabled me to accomplished my task effectively.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the constituents of durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana, focusing on the importance of tradition, culture, and heritage in shaping preferences and expectations. Data was collected from 115 participants and analysed to identify the key factors influencing the production, distribution, and consumption of durbar garments in the Volta Region of Ghana. The findings reveal that respondents highly value garments reflecting the symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes and those that embrace and represent the culture of the people. Moderate agreement was observed for garments made from the local Ewe Kete cloth and those inspired by the culture where they originate. The impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends was assessed, highlighting the strong connection between tradition and fashion trends, and the importance of cultural influences in shaping the fashion world. However, participants did not view all aspects of tradition and fashion trends as equally important in their relationship. Based on these findings, recommendations were provided for the design and production of durbar garments, emphasizing the importance of cultural, traditional, and historical aspects of the community. Further research suggestions include exploring the impact of globalization, technology, sustainable practices, and consumer behaviour on the durbar garment industry in Ghana.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In numerous societies, including Ghana, traditional rulers engage in ceremonial gatherings known as durbars, during which they partake in music and dance to celebrate alongside their subjects. These events serve multiple purposes, such as honoring their ancestors, strengthening their connection with their subjects, fostering unity, purifying the society, and offering prayers for the prosperity of the land and the well-being of all individuals (Arnot et al., 2018; Ponzanesi & Waller, 2012; Reed, 2010). In a grand display, regally adorned monarchs, queens, chiefs, and elders make a public appearance, accompanied by the resounding beats of drums, melodic singing, and lively dancing. At their designated location, monarchs and monarchesses assume a regal position, accompanied by chiefs and elders, while various forms of auditory and physical expressions, such as drum languages, convey expressions of admiration.

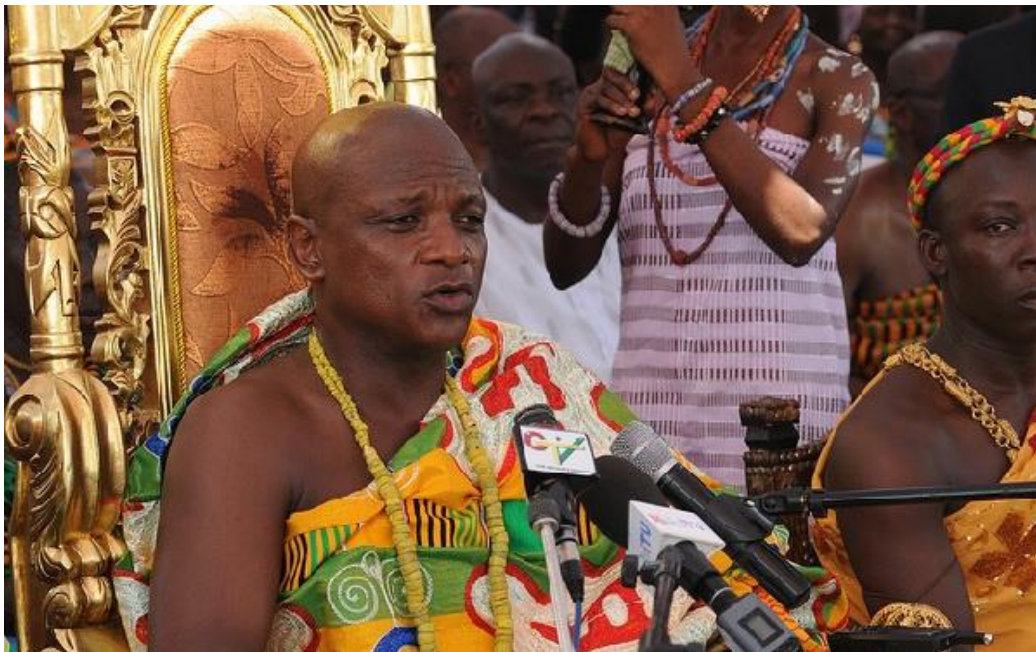


Plate 1: A chief sitting in state



Plate 2: Volta Region chiefs in a durbar



Plate 3: Durbar grounds in Ghana



Plate 4: Durbar grounds in the Volta region

The Ewe community in Ghana has a longstanding tradition of organizing durbars to commemorate various events, such as festivals and the induction of chiefs and elders. This cultural practice has been observed for millennia, as documented by Agawu (2014) and Agawu & Agawu (1995). Traditional rulers typically wear traditional ceremonial garments that are crafted by hand, featuring intricate weaving, stamping, embroidery, and appliqué techniques. These garments are adorned with symbols that signify the ruler's status and authority. Additionally, they are embellished with opulent gold and silver jewelry, as well as precious beads, along with other regalia, all of which are worn during traditional events (Boateng et al., 2016; Adrover, 2014; Steegstra, 2009; Nkansah, 2008).

The vibrant and expansive umbrellas symbolize the protecting function and authoritative stature of these ancient leaders. The gold-plated staffs wielded by the chiefs' representatives, also known as linguists, serve as symbolic representations of political principles. The ceremonial chief stools, which are transported by designated stool bearers and positioned in the presence of the chiefs, serve as representations of both spiritual and political cohesion (Ampene, 2020; Steegstra, 2009).

The carved figures in question allude to specific philosophical, religious, and political ideologies. The Council of Elders typically entrusts royal messengers with the responsibility of carrying gold-plated ceremonial swords, which are employed in the act of swearing vows of allegiance during the installation ceremonies of kings and elders. Traditional durbars typically extend throughout the duration of an entire day, concluding at sunset. The act of partaking in special beverages during these particular events serves as a representation of the values of hospitality and communal camaraderie. Present at the event are both the indigenous people and invited visitors, who are likewise attired in traditional garments to symbolize the prevailing cultural ethos (Boateng et al., 2016; Adrover, 2014; Amlor, 2013).

Traditional attire serves as a symbol and embodiment of a particular culture (Palma, 2021), enabling individuals to commemorate their ancestral roots and cultural history. Traditional attire is derived from the cultural heritage of its birthplace. The prevalence of traditional attire is observed in various societies, including Ghana (Gbadagba & Asiedu, 2020; Danso et al., 2019). On such occasions, Ghanaians adorn themselves in attire that embodies their cultural heritage, serving as a means to commemorate their identity and exhibit their cultural lineage. Traditional dress can be understood as a mode of non-verbal communication encompassing an individual's outward presentation of garments worn on the body, together with any modifications or enhancements made to the body (Roach-Higgin & Ellen, 1995; Eicher & Roach, 1992).

The phenomenon of cultural plurality has a significant impact on various aspects of our everyday existence. One example of advocating for the advancement of good cultural diversity may be observed in the garment industry (Roche, 1996). The shapes of clothing can be observed to embody many cultural influences. Various types of fabrics offer countries valuable insights into their traditional clothing culture, ranging from opulent brocades with intricate textures to delicate and refined materials. Contemporary apparel occupies a prominent position in the ongoing endeavor to promote cultural diversity, serving as a catalyst for fostering admiration and understanding of diverse civilizations (Jie, 2022; Welters & Lillethun, 2022).

In their study, Khan and Lambert (2001) assert that there are multiple elements that contribute to the evolution of fashion trends and the ways in which individuals communicate their identities and beliefs through clothing. The presence of certain elements, such as the enforcement of traditional attire, can contribute to a significant degree of intergenerational discord, ultimately causing individuals to distance themselves from their cultural heritage in public settings and instead maintain a more private relationship with it. In light of the societal shifts brought about by post-modernity and globalization, individuals are increasingly

cognizant of non-conventional clothing options and are able to make clothing choices that effectively convey their personal identity. This may involve showcasing their cultural heritage or deviating from cultural norms (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018; Barnard, 2013).

In any case, the utilization of traditional garments serves to emphasize the distinctiveness between different groups, thus reinforcing the argument put out by Cassidy and Bennett (2012) that fashion serves as a significant tool for individuals to navigate and express their identity within the framework of their daily existence. The notion of fashion is fundamentally intertwined with the idea of transformation (Aspers & Godart, 2013; Godart, 2012). The realm of fashion undergoes a perpetual process of transformation, adaptation, and modernization, driven by the dynamic and evolving preferences of human communities. The shifting cultural landscape and evolving societal standards have resulted in a significant divergence between the fashion trends that were highly regarded in the 1980s and the prevailing sensibilities of the modern day (Westenberger, 2021; Godart, 2014).

The phenomenon of globalization, along with advancements in technology, has significantly accelerated the rate of change that is inherent in the realm of clothes. The commonly held belief that changes occur in the fashion business at a frequency of once every decade is no longer valid. This elucidates the rationale behind the tendency of individuals to characterize fashion as a phenomenon wherein trends that were considered fashionable in the past are deemed unfashionable in the present. According to Davis (1994). Accordingly, Craik (2009) characterizes fashion as an outcome of dynamic cultural transformations in individuals' preferences, inclinations, and selections. Fashion has often been characterized as a kind of communication. Therefore, it may be inferred that fashion serves as a crucial tool through which individuals express their identities.

According to Barnard (2013), there is agreement with this theory, which posits that individuals derive self-expression and self-identity through their choice of attire. According to Blumer

(1969), there is a recognition of fashion's social and psychological aspects, but its creative element is not widely acknowledged within the realms of economics and culture. Fashion, regarded as a prevailing pattern, serves as a fundamental mechanism (Blumer, 1969), and in its capacity as a commodity, it embodies a creative and culturally significant entity. Fashion serves as a technique that facilitates the establishment of order amidst the presence of various competing styles, while also contributing to the formation and sustenance of societal structures. Fashion products are typically assigned a price, serving as a means of expressing one's identity and social status. However, in addition to their economic and social significance, fashion products can also include cultural worth. Garments embody several values, including aesthetic, historical, spiritual, social, symbolic, and authenticity values (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018; Godart, 2014).

Ghanaians are representative of a distinct subculture that exists within the broader African cultural context. The group affiliation of sub-cultures can be determined by factors such as language or geographical proximity. Individuals exhibit a sense of identification with their respective culture or sub-culture. By embracing the concepts and values inherent to their cultural heritage, individuals open themselves up to the potential for these beliefs to permeate and shape other aspects of their existence. One such domain that warrants investigation is the realm of apparel (Klein & Sharma, 2022; McNeil, 2010). According to Fernandes and Panda (2018), there is an inference that an individual's clothing choices tend to mirror those of their reference group. However, it has to be determined whether this phenomenon has any influence on the emergence and evolution of fashion trends. The present study aims to investigate and analyze fashion trends, specifically focusing on the production of durbar clothing for women in the Volta Region of Ghana.

According to Saravanan and Nithyaprakash (2016), fashion trends exhibit a transient nature, with their popularity rising and falling over time. Additionally, the values of a society are

enduring and dynamic aspects that reflect the prevailing ideas and cultural norms. Clothing can be understood as more than a mere representation of traditional values or utilitarian purposes. Instead, it possesses an evocative and exciting quality that merits recognition and respect within society, enhancing its inherent instinctual nature. The transmission of non-verbal communication signals, such as cues related to culture, social status, values, and lifestyle, is facilitated by an individual's physical appearance within society (Mall et al., 2019; Saravanan & Nithyaprakash, 2016).

The societal interpretation and evaluation of a fashion trend play a crucial role in determining its level of success (Hsiao & Grauman, 2021). Therefore, the assessment of impact is determined by the metric of societal approval, which is influenced by a multitude of motivational factors that underlie individuals' beliefs and behavioral characteristics, including cultural influences. Culture and customs, such as the practice of durbars, have played a significant role in the activities of various communities, particularly in ceremonial events aimed at paying homage to their forefathers, strengthening their connection with their constituents, fostering solidarity, purifying the society, and seeking the well-being of the community members. Therefore, it is important to critically analyze fashion trends and create durbar attire specifically tailored for women residing in the Volta Region of Ghana.

1.2 Problem Statement

Clothing serves as a means for individuals to articulate and manifest their social and cultural identities. Numerous scholarly investigations, such as those conducted by Richardson (2017), Twigg (2009), and Bohn (2004), have demonstrated a correlation between clothing choices and

the process of cultural distinction. The authors acknowledge the significance of clothes within culture and its capacity to reveal associations between individuals and their cultural identity. Despite the inherent importance of clothing, there appears to be a dearth of scholarly discussion surrounding traditional attire for customary events like durbars in Ghana. This anomaly is incongruous with the prevailing aspiration to safeguard the nation's cultural identity and historical legacy.

As a result, it's crucial to understand the significance of traditional garment, its connotations, and how it relates to cultural identity. Therefore, in order to effectively preserve cultural artifacts, Ghana must first establish the connection between traditional dress and its underlying values and meanings. The present study is grounded in the belief that investigations into culture, societal values, clothing values, and their interconnections can provide valuable insights for fashion practitioners and researchers. Such insights can facilitate a more comprehensive and profound understanding of how culture and values shape fashion trends, as well as individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards traditional clothing.

The objective of this study was to critically analyze fashion trends and produce durbar clothes specifically designed for women in the Volta Region of Ghana. Additionally, the study sought to investigate the potential influence of culture on traditional clothing value priorities and the expression of clothing. The prevailing social patterns in Ghana indicate the persistent presence of cultural distinctions (Tordzro, 2021; Kraamer, 2020; Fening, 2015), necessitating their recognition and acknowledgment. It is of utmost importance for professionals in the field of clothing to discern the variations in clothing behaviors and develop clothing items that accurately depict and acknowledge the various likes, preferences, interests, and values upheld by individuals belonging to Ewe cultures.

An analysis of fashion trends in the context of durbar garments can provide valuable insights into the various Ghanaian cultures and perspectives on attire. The existing scholarly literature

on traditional clothes frequently emphasizes consumer-oriented aspects such as sales, marketing, merchandising, and advertising (Blakeman, 2013; Blaszczyk, 2011). The perception of individuals is frequently disconnected from their inherent nature (Ryan, 1991), instead evolving into a conceptual representation of an individual as a consumer, characterized by consumer-oriented ideals.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to illustrate the importance of adopting an alternative perspective in research, which centers on an individual's value priorities that stem from internal wants, aspirations, and motivation, irrespective of their consumer behaviors. On the other hand, certain findings derived from traditional academic studies are directly utilized in the fields of consumer sciences and marketing. The study of clothing holds significance in both social science and marketing research. Cultural beliefs exert a significant influence on the formation of values, attitudes, and behavior (Deb & Sinha, 2015). The objective of this study is to examine fashion trends and create durbar clothes specifically designed for women in the Volta Region of Ghana.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This study seeks to explicitly assess the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in Ghana and how cultural experiences affect the order of importance of traditional and clothing values.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To identify what constitutes durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana.
2. To assess the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in the Volta Region of Ghana.
3. To design and produce durbar garments for females in the Volta Region of Ghana.

1.5 Research questions

1. What constitutes traditional garments and fashion trends in Ghana?
2. What is the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in the Volta Region of Ghana?
3. What processes are involved in designing and producing traditional garments for females in the Volta Region of Ghana?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study attempts to critically analyze fashion trends, with a specific focus on designing and manufacturing durbar clothing tailored for females residing in the Volta Region of Ghana. The utilization of this tool holds the capacity to support policymakers, training institutions, small-scale fashion designers, and fashion businesses in Ghana in their critical analysis of fashion trends prior to the design and production of traditional clothing intended for traditional events. These measures would enhance current processes and lend credibility to these garments. The results of this study have the potential to influence the Ghana National Tailors and Dressmakers Association (GNTDA) and the Ghana Association of Fashion Designers in the development of educational initiatives aimed at raising awareness about traditional and durbar attires.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The current study focuses on fashion trends and the production of durbar clothes for females in Ghana's Volta Region, and the research may have limitations, as with most research studies. First, the study's primary data gathering method was quantitative; validity and reliability challenges may occur. As a result, obtaining the same results if the study is reproduced may be difficult. Second, because data will be gathered from a specific Region and Municipality, the conclusions may differ from what is happening in other jurisdictions in terms of fashion trends and durbar clothing. As a result, readers should proceed with caution when it comes to the findings and conclusions.

1.8 Scope of the study

The study's scope was restricted to contextual scope, geographical scope, and time scope. The study's contextual scope was to openly reflect on fashion trends, develop, and produce durbar clothes for young females. Geographically, the study was limited to young females in Ghana's Volta Region. The information was gathered from young women aged 18 to 40. The study, which is required for the award of a Master of Technology degree, is intended to be completed in six months and consists of five major chapters.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter discusses the study's background, the problem's statement, research aims and questions, and the study's organization. The second chapter contains a survey of the related literature. The third chapter describes, among other things, the research design, population, sampling technique and sample size, and data collection and analysis procedure. The results of the data analysis are provided in Chapter 4. The results are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature that defines the backdrop for this inquiry. The review covers the concepts as well as the empirical and theoretical explanations required for a complete examination and knowledge of the research. It offers insight into the thoughts and opinions of other writers on durbar fashion trends, traditional clothes, the relationship between traditional/durbar garments and fashion trends, and the key considerations for designing and creating durbar garments, among other topics.

2.2 The Concept of Durbar and its Significance in Societies

Festivals and ceremonial gatherings hold significant cultural value among several ethnic groups in Ghana. Various activities take place during the celebration, necessitating the usage of different types of clothes for distinct purposes. This serves to enhance the vibrancy of the occasion and showcase the indigenous cultural orientations (Ayesu et al., 2015; Adrover, 2014). A durbar refers to a formal assembly organized by a sovereign or ruler, as stated by Smith (2017). The term "Durbar" originates from Persian and signifies the esteemed court of kings or rulers, as well as a formal assembly where the king conducted debates pertaining to the affairs of the state (Allen et al., 2022; Duindam, J., 2018). Subsequently, in India and Nepal, this term found application to denote the court of a king or the feudal levy, as these regions gradually came under the governance and subsequent administration of foreign powers.

According to Duindam (2018), it may be inferred that a durbar can serve as a feudal state council responsible for the administration of a princely state, or as a ceremonial assembly with no administrative functions. The durbars of utmost prominence were associated with esteemed emperors and kings. Typically, Durbar halls are adorned with opulent embellishments crafted

from the most exquisite materials obtainable at the given period. The Durbar festivals in Ghana are annual cultural celebrations observed in several communities. In many societies, including Ghana, traditional rulers engage in ceremonial gatherings known as durbars, during which they partake in music and dance to celebrate alongside their subjects. These events serve multiple purposes, such as honoring their ancestors, strengthening their connection with their subjects, fostering unity, purifying the society, and offering prayers for the prosperity of the land and the well-being of all individuals (Arnot et al., 2018; Ponzanesi & Waller, 2012; Reed, 2010).

In a public procession, individuals of high status such as kings, queens, chiefs, and elders are magnificently dressed and accompanied by the rhythmic beats of drums, melodic singing, and lively dance. In the ceremonial setting, monarchs and monarchesses are seated in a regal manner, accompanied by chiefs and elders, as various forms of auditory and physical expressions, such as drum languages, are employed to convey words of admiration and adulation. The festivals, ceremonial gatherings, and other rituals serve as mechanisms through which cultures can reassert and reinforce their social ideals and interpersonal connections (Allen et al., 2022; Abbe, 2021; Adrover, 2014). Public events are typically perceived as distinct from ordinary gatherings, as they serve to highlight significant personal or cultural occurrences.

Durbars serve the purpose of establishing connections between the past, present, and future, so attributing significance to the world. Rituals serve as a means by which cultures organize their understanding of reality and the external environment, utilizing the senses as a mechanism. These rituals frequently manifest as actions, artifacts, and attire, embodying a society's fundamental principles. Durbars frequently integrate religious ideologies with societal and political considerations (Watanabe-O'Kelly, 2017; Mulryne et al., 2015). Despite the gradual evolution of durbars, cultural transformations occur throughout time, potentially leading to a

disconnect between the ritual and societal values. Consequently, the ceremony may undergo modifications or possibly be discontinued (Le Roux et al., 2017; Wilkinson, 2008).

The attire donned during these periods often exhibits distinctiveness specific to the event and carries significant symbolism, since it can mirror historical or cultural inclinations that have fallen out of fashion. Various phases or events are emblematic of certain celebrations, necessitating multiple outfit changes. Costumes encompass a comprehensive notion that entails the alteration of the human body through the utilization of textiles, cosmetics, scars, hairstyles, garments, adornments, and objects owned by or on behalf of an individual (Tordzro, 2021; Cremades & Fernández-González, 2016). Costumes, in their various forms, encompass a wide spectrum of practices, ranging from temporary forms of covering and embellishment to more enduring forms of alteration, such as scarification and ceremonial attire. However, it is important to note that the ephemeral nature of costumes is typically the norm.

In contrast to masquerading, the purpose of costumes is not to alter an individual's identity, but rather to augment and amplify their existing identity. Costumes have historically played a significant role in several cultures, being prominently featured in festivals and durbars. These cultural practices have served to emphasize the sense of togetherness within communities, as well as assert the entitlement of individuals or groups to specific positions, roles, or belongings (Thøfner, 2007). The utilization of imported beads for the purpose of delineating shifts in social standing corresponding to various life-cycle phases has been observed among the Zulu community in South Africa since the eighteenth century. Ghana, as an illustrative example, possesses a wealth of customs and cultures in which dress plays a fundamental role.

The phrase "clothing" encompasses all articles utilized for the purpose of covering, adorning, or embellishing the human body, as observed within the realm of body arts, thereby falling under the category of fashion. This statement elucidates the manner in which the culture of both historical and contemporary periods serves as a mirror, providing insights on the nature

and behavior of individuals within their respective societies across several eras (Kraamer, 2020; Ryan, 1991). The significance of costumes in the context of art within human civilization should not be overlooked. Similar to painting and sculpture, this art form holds significant importance. Costumes, in all their manifestations, have a broad impact on individuals, transcending certain demographic groups, since they serve as a means of self-expression within a particular temporal and spatial context (Hsiao & Grauman, 2021; Twigg, 2009; Bohn, 2004; Roche, 1996).

Clothing has been seen as an intrinsic component of any civilisation. Dress serves as a significant aspect of daily existence, while reflecting the social practices ingrained within the cultural norms of a given time period (Roach & Eicher, 2017; Condra, 2013). These aspects are examined via a socio-cultural lens, encompassing the individual's bodily embodiment, the cultural context of their community, and the broader universe. The initial factor that determines one's choice of attire is the individual's physiological differences in relation to gender.

In the Ghanaian cultural framework, traditional activities are employed to partially enhance the physical body of individuals from birth to various stages of life, including puberty, marriage, and even death. These practices have a certain degree of effect on fashion trends (Agoe, 2021). Furthermore, it is important to recognize that humans are inherently social beings. Consequently, individuals are influenced by various elements of social organization, including durbars, family structures, political systems, religious institutions, and social stratification based on class or societal divisions. These aspects of social organization often manifest in the attire and adornments individuals choose to wear (Lee & Lee, 2019). For instance, the physical appearances of individuals are permanently imprinted, often serving as indicators of their social affiliations.

In Ghana, chiefs and monarchs often don elaborate attire for social gatherings such as durbars, so establishing a visual connection between their appearance and their respective roles,

hierarchical standing, social status, and level of experience. Moreover, the manner in which costume is shaped and its various roles within a particular society are impacted by overarching cultural patterns that are prevalent across different societies. The phenomenon of globalization facilitates the convergence of clothing trends on a global scale (Kuupole, 2020; Condra, 2013). The culture of a specific social collective encompasses various aspects, including attire, conduct, and responses. These encompass linguistic expressions, beliefs, taboos, celebrations, attire, as well as aspirations (Quan-Baffour, 2020).

The historical tracing of garments within the sub-region of West Africa, particularly in relation to the early empires from the seventh to the sixteenth century, has been extensively examined in the relevant literature. These garments hold significant cultural significance within this context. Nevertheless, this phenomenon had a significant impact on the attire in the three regions of Gold Coast, presently known as Ghana, over the period spanning from the 19th century to the 21st century in contemporary society. The acquisition of historical data pertaining to clothing patterns is an imperative undertaking in order to mold the contemporary landscape of durbar attire in Ghana (Agoe, 2021; Ayesu et al., 2015).

The examination of garments and their transformations from a cultural standpoint is most effectively explored within the context of traditional Ghanaian institutions, including chieftaincy, religious practices such as magico-religious rites, and social events like rites of passage and festivities. Additionally, it is important to consider the traditional notion of beauty and its influence on the attire of individuals within this cultural framework. The concept of garment uniqueness encompasses not only the clothing items that an individual chooses to wear, but also the specific timing, purpose, occasion, and the message that it conveys about the wearer to the general public (Kwakye-Opong, 2014; Dzamedo et al., 2013). The identification of individuals' cultural identity and moral values through their clothing, often referred to as their "second skin," necessitates the consideration of certain fundamental elements.

The identification of garments pertaining to the culture and traditional practices of the Ewes is primarily based on their distinctive modes of attire and their manifestation of aesthetic principles that encompass various forms of body adornment during durbars (Kirkland, 2021; Schramm, 2004). The choice of a specific clothing code and the accompanying body decoration is impacted by various factors, including technology, values, morals, cleanliness, rituals, aesthetics, and symbolism within cultural contexts (Disele et al., 2011; Salm & Falola, 2002). Furthermore, it has been suggested by Kuuder et al. (2012) that the stability of changes in the dress code within a certain location can be attributed to the customs and rules enforced by a country or social group.

Irrespective of this, the modernization system is exerting a substantial influence on the level of traditional dress. In recent years, there has been a significant shift in fashion preferences in Ghana and other regions of Africa, with a notable inclination towards adopting European styles of attire. The consequence of this phenomenon is the contamination of the indigenous culture, in which the present generation of young individuals is significantly engaged. Culture can be conceptualized as a sociocultural phenomena that serves to delineate and unite collectives of individuals, encompassing many manifestations such as festivals and ceremonial assemblies, for instance, durbars. These cultural practices are rooted in a shared belief system that permeates and shapes all dimensions of their existence. Culture has a significant role in shaping the unique character of societies, such as the Ghanaian society, with a particular emphasis on the Ewe community in this specific context. This cultural identity is expressed via many artistic forms, specifically highlighted by the use of durbar clothing (Fening, 2015; Kwakye-Opong, 2014). The examination of cultural trends and their dynamic nature necessitates a careful delineation between values and principles, decency and indecency, as well as rights and wrongs within the context of the durbar costume of the Ewes. This serves to develop a collective sense of identity among those who share a shared heritage.

2.3 Reflections on Fashion Trends

The production of garments, which was regarded as an artistic practice throughout the prehistoric age, has experienced numerous technological advancements (Nayak & Padhye, 2015). The adoption of technological advancements has facilitated a paradigm change for apparel manufacturers, enabling them to adapt to a new global landscape. In this context, consumer preferences and service have emerged as critical factors that can determine the success or failure of businesses operating in a fiercely competitive market. The relationship between fashion and society is frequently observed, with historical figures exerting influence on fashion trends. Despite the competitive and innovative nature of the fashion industry, it adheres to a concept known as the Fashion Cycle, which lacks a precise and quantifiable duration (Sushko et al., 2019; Naimzada & Pireddu, 2018; Acerbi et al., 2012).

The fashion business undergoes perpetual transformation as novel trends emerge and decline within a recognized phenomenon known as the fashion cycle. Kawamura (2018) posits that fashion trends encompass a wide range of cultural archetypes and offer a multitude of clothing design options that cater to diverse societies. According to Barnard (2020) and Edwards (2010), liberal societies exhibit a greater propensity to embrace radical changes and innovation, while conservative societies tend to prioritize the preservation of old customs. Fashion trends are influenced by various factors within the fashion industry, including fashion capitals, multi-brand corporate entities, designers, trend forecasters in both traditional and emerging fashion media, buyers, and urban subcultures (Zhao et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Holland & Jones, 2017).

A fashion trend is characterized by its complexity and the involvement of multiple factors, making it likely to emerge as a result of the interplay between suppliers' offerings and customers' preferences. Rather than conceptualizing fashion as being driven by a single or limited group of individuals, it is perceived as the culmination of a multifaceted process influenced by several factors (Raxmatovna, 2021; Holland & Jones, 2017). In essence, the realm of fashion encompasses a wide array of items that can be deemed stylish. Within this context, it is possible to discern two distinct categories of consumer demand for fashion products, which can be classified based on the underlying motivation driving their consumption. The need for fashion can be categorized into functional and non-functional aspects. Non-functional demand can be categorized into two distinct groups: external influences on utility and speculative and irrational demand.

Leibenstein (1950) categorizes the external impact on utility into three distinct effects on consumers' demand: the bandwagon effect, the snob effect, and the Veblen effect.

2.3.1 Bandwagon effect

This implies that a fashion item has the potential to gain popularity and high demand when it becomes widely favored by a large number of individuals. It is a common inclination for individuals to seek affiliation with social groups, aspire to get societal recognition, and conform to prevailing norms. Consequently, individuals express a desire to acquire, exhibit, engage in, consume, and adopt behaviors that align with those of their peers. In this particular scenario, it is seen that the consumer's fashionability is enhanced when they choose to wear clothing items that are consistent with those worn by others (Bindra et al., 2022; Maxwell, 2014).

2.3.2 Snob effect

This suggests that the popularity of a product can decline as its consumption increases among a larger number of persons. The awareness of a fashion product's widespread popularity among others can potentially diminish its perceived worth in the eyes of the client. Therefore, the desire of individuals to distinguish themselves from others, whether by being distinctive or exclusive, surpasses their longing to belong to a wider collective (Katagiri, 2021; Juggessur & Cohen, 2009).

2.3.3 Veblen effect

Veblen conducted an analysis of fashion and the phenomenon of 'conspicuous consumption', exploring their interplay with human behavior and the dynamics of social status. In this scenario, the elevated price of a product will result in an augmented demand (Zhao et al., 2022; Andreozzi & Bianchi, 2007). Consumers possess a drive to articulate their position and status through the utilization of a certain product.

A fashion trend is characterized by the emergence of a specific fashion style, silhouette, color, or other novel aesthetic that gains widespread acceptance. Various elements have the potential to exert an influence on the emergence and popularity of trends or fads within the realm of fashion. These factors encompass the prominence of celebrity attire that has achieved iconic status, the activities of fashion merchandising firms, the showcasing of designs by renowned fashion designers, and the contributions of textile producers (Raxmatovna, 2021; Mall et al., 2019; Saravanan & Nithyaprakash, 2016). Fashion trends exhibit cyclical patterns, characterized by a series of distinct stages that commence with the introduction of a trend and culminate in its eventual obsolescence. Once a trend attains its zenith of popularity, it will commence a gradual descent in popularity until it is deemed antiquated and lacking in fashionability, ultimately progressing towards the denouement of the cycle, when both the

fashion industry and consumers repudiate it. Nevertheless, as a consequence of the inherent cyclical patterns observed in the realm of fashion, it is plausible that the trend which was previously dismissed may someday resurface within the cycle subsequent to its state of obsolescence (Kim et al., 2021; Holland & Jones, 2017).

2.4 Fashion Life Cycles

Similar to other consumer goods, fashion also has a life cycle within the industry. Fashion trends are ephemeral and cyclical phenomena that are embraced by customers within a specific time frame and context. The fashion life cycle refers to the duration in which a specific fashion trend is prominent, characterized by its distinct appearance, form, or category of clothing (Ren et al., 2020; Sproles, 1981). The life cycle of every fashion trend consists of five distinct stages: introduction, ascent, peak or saturation, fall, and out-of-fashion. It has been widely asserted that fashion trends exhibit a cyclical pattern, recurring approximately every two decades. In the field, a two-decade period was traditionally considered sufficient for a trend to gain widespread acceptance, subsequently diminish in prominence to the point of being disregarded, and eventually resurface with a contemporary adaptation (Munasinghe et al., 2021; Spragg, 2017).

Gaining knowledge about the cyclical nature of fashion is crucial. Each season, fashion designers introduce a range of new trends that consumers are exposed to. Certain fashion items are promptly dismissed by the media or rejected by retail buyers, while others are embraced temporarily, as seen by their purchase and subsequent use by consumers (Jacometti, 2019; Craik, 2009). Nevertheless, a significant degree of ambiguity exists within scholarly discourse over the precise definition of fashion theory, its interconnectedness with life cycles, and the distinguishing characteristics between fads and fashions. According to Burns et al. (2016), the prevailing consensus suggests that there exists a distinction between fashion and fad cycles.

A fad is characterized by a swift and substantial increase in popularity, followed by a precipitous decrease before reaching a state of full development. In contrast, the field of fashion exhibits a noticeably decelerated phase of growth and a discernible period of maturation. The decline phase of the aforementioned phenomenon, as seen by Niinimäki et al. (2020), has a comparable rate of decline to that of a fad. A fad, in this context, refers to a product that primarily fulfills the singular purpose of providing a novel experience. Fashion is a multifaceted phenomenon that fulfills a range of interconnected desires. Furthermore, it should be noted that trends are not solely the result of designer innovations, but rather they are influenced by consumer preferences and behaviors, often focusing on the non-essential aspects of a product's design (Ren et al., 2020; Hur & Cassidy, 2019).

Hence, one could suggest that fashion trends are not autonomous and detached, but rather sequential and interconnected. The life cycles of these entities can be combined to create a standardized life cycle for the primary product, which is subject to alterations based on fashion trends. The relationship between fashions and style's novelty, rather than functionality, has been discussed by Ren et al. (2020) and Riello (2020). The observed pattern of sales demonstrates a cumulative curve that follows a "S" shape, albeit with a shorter period compared to the typical life cycle, as noted by Richard (1987). Another significant differentiation is that they possess the characteristic of being repeated, unlike the conventional life cycle. The concept of extending the product life cycle can be accomplished through the integration of the notions of novelty, replicability, and longevity. Instead of pursuing product proliferation through attribute development, the fashion industry should prioritize the strategy of replacement (Ren et al., 2020; Sproles, 1981).

The replacement concept aims to optimize the return on investment for original product development endeavors. The accomplishment of this objective can be attained by employing different iterations of a concept in order to leverage the inherent characteristics of fashion (Ding

et al., 2021; Thorisdottir & Johannsdottir, 2019). The implementation of extension activities allows for the distribution of development expenditures, hence offering the possibility of enhanced profitability. The success of this strategy is contingent upon the timely execution, considering the sudden and rapid downturn observed in the fashion industry. The discernible demarcation point between maturity and decline is facilitated by its relative apparentness, as evidenced by studies conducted by Chang et al. (2021), Ren et al. (2020), and Sproles (1981). As previously mentioned, the phenomenon of fashion changes is sometimes referred to as a fashion cycle. Categorizing or theorizing about fashion in a manner that avoids oversimplification poses a significant challenge. However, the fashion cycle is commonly represented as a bell-shaped curve consisting of five distinct stages. The cyclical nature of fashion might manifest in the embrace of a particular aesthetic attributed to a single designer, or in the adoption of a broader trend, such as the miniskirt. The fashion cycle refers to the dynamic process by which fashion undergoes changes throughout time. The five stages identified in the literature are introduction, rise, peak, decline, and rejection (Westenberger, 2021; Ren et al., 2020; Spragg, 2017; Acerbi et al., 2012; Richard, 1987; Sproles, 1981).

2.4.1 The introduction of a style

The culmination of study and experimentation manifests in the form of many styles and accessories, which are subsequently introduced to the global audience. This phase is characterized by the emergence of fashion trends that are labeled as "latest" but do not necessarily ensure universal approval. The novelty and aesthetic of this product are accompanied by a significant financial investment. The cost of manufacture is significantly elevated, rendering these works accessible only to a limited number of individuals. This factor

enhances the feasibility of small-scale production while affording the creator ample autonomy and opportunities for experimentation.

2.4.2 The rise in popularity

During this phase, a significant number of individuals acknowledge and embrace the most recent fashion trends, leading them to make purchases, wear, and exhibit these styles in public settings. Couture designers endeavor to market their products at a comparatively reduced price point, hence facilitating the sale of greater volumes. The surge in popularity is expected to further increase through imitations and adaptations, prompting designers to alter a fashionable style in order to meet the demands and price preferences of their clients. It is possible for other producers to imitate the prevailing trend by utilizing lower-cost materials and less intricate embellishments, so offering these products at a significantly reduced price point.

2.4.3 The peak of popularity

The great demand for a specific fashion item may incentivize producers to replicate and supply the designs at different pricing points. The outcome may elicit either admiration or animosity. This phenomenon gives rise to a subtle distinction between adaptations and knock-offs. For a fashion item to be produced on a large scale, it is imperative that it possesses the potential for widespread appeal among consumers. Hence, the producers conduct a comparative analysis of sales patterns and projections in order to assess client interest.

2.4.4 A decline in popularity

Over time, a significant portion of the fashion industry has shifted towards mass production, leading to a sense of monotony among consumers who seek novelty and eagerly anticipate emerging trends. Consumers continue to have a preference for donning that particular style; nevertheless, their inclination is contingent upon a more favorable pricing structure. Retail establishments strategically place out-of-fashion items on discounted racks in an effort to create space for incoming inventory.

2.4.5 Rejection of a style

This phase represents the culmination of the fashion cycle and marks the onset of a nascent trend. This phenomenon engenders a lack of interest inside the minds of customers, resulting in a tendency to reject or discard a certain style, a concept sometimes referred to as customer obsolescence.

Although the 20-year cycle still holds some validity, the emergence of groundbreaking technology and the prevalence of social media have significantly compressed the lifespan of trends in contemporary times. Styles from many decades sometimes manifest themselves, with a plethora of styles concurrently enjoying popularity. The implementation of design and merchandising technologies has notably diminished the time required to bring products to market, while the pervasive influence of social media has accelerated the emergence and decline of trends within a short span of time. The concept of innovation is commonly described as undergoing a life cycle, characterized by its inception, development, and eventual cessation. According to Rogers (1983), the rate of change encompasses various factors such as product features, the market or audience, the distribution sequence, and the characteristics of individuals and cultures where innovation takes place.

2.4.6 Diffusion of Innovations

Diffusion refers to the process by which innovations are disseminated and adopted within social systems, both at the intra- and inter-system levels. Innovation refers to a design or product that is seen as novel by an individual. Each season, a variety of innovative styles are introduced, and the acceptance of these innovations is contingent upon the presence of five distinct traits. (Zhai et al., 2018; Miller, 2015; Rogers, 1983) have been cited in the text.

a) **Relative advantage** refers to the degree to which an innovation is perceived as superior to earlier alternatives in terms of functionality, cost, social status, or aesthetic appeal.

b) **Compatibility** refers to the degree to which an innovation aligns with the prevailing norms and values of individuals who may potentially accept it. The likelihood of adopting innovation is diminished when it necessitates a shift in values.

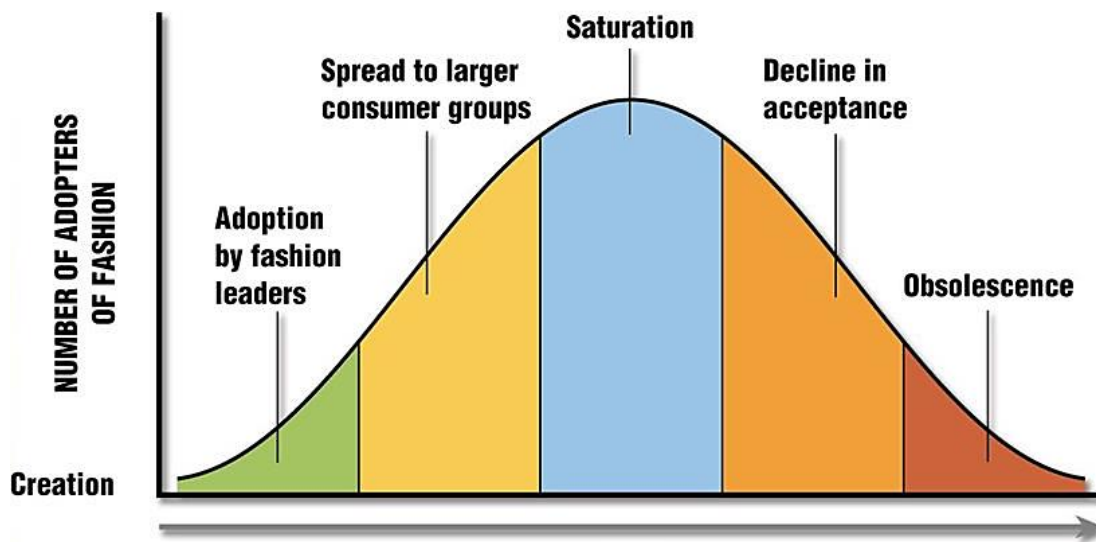
c) **The concept of complexity** pertains to the level of difficulty associated with acquiring knowledge and understanding of the innovation. The likelihood of innovation being accepted is higher when it is easily taught and practiced.

d) **Trialability** refers to the extent to which an innovation may be tested and evaluated with minimal investment, allowing for easy and cost-effective experimentation without significant risks.

e) **Observability** refers to the ease with which an innovation can be effectively communicated to others.

The process of fashion adoption is a consequence of individuals making the decision to acquire and don a novel fashion style. The aforementioned process encompasses five fundamental steps, namely awareness, interest, appraisal, trial, and adoption. The individual develops an awareness of fashion, becomes engaged with it, and evaluates it based on potential advantages, such as innovative fabric technology or alignment with self-concept or peer preferences. Once

the individual evaluates the trend in a positive manner, the subsequent course of action involves the initiation of a trial period followed by the potential adoption of the fashion. The study of the pattern of consumers' acceptance of a fashion is frequently represented as a bell-shaped curve.



Figures 2.1: The Fashion Life Cycle Source: adapted from DeLong (2005)

The life cycle of a particular fashion is shown by graphically delineating its duration, pace of adoption, and level of acceptability. The diagram illustrates the relationship between the rate and duration of the distribution process. The x-axis represents time, while the y-axis shows the quantity of adopters or users. Graphically depicted statistics can be utilized to quantify the degree of acceptance for a certain fashion trend. As an illustration, the trajectory of a fashion trend that experiences both rapid adoption and rapid fall will exhibit initial boom followed by a swift recession. The graphical representation of statistical data yields distinct patterns of fashion adoption, which can be observed in both transient fads and enduring classics (Ren et al., 2020; Sproles, 1981). The utilization of the figure is additionally advantageous in discerning the customer category based on their adoption of a fashion item throughout its life cycle. The individual who embraces a particular fashion trend at its inception can be classified

as a pacesetter or opinion leader. As the trend gains momentum and reaches its zenith, it attracts the attention of the mass-market consumer. However, following the apex, the trend is typically adopted by laggards or isolates.

2.5 Cultural Clothing Identities

The process of identity development poses significant challenges for individuals who belong to cultural clusters, mostly as a result of societal prejudices and discrimination (Sarli & Phillimore, 2022; Padilla, 2006). Phinney (2003) examines the principal theoretical frameworks that contribute to the understanding of ethnic identity development, encompassing social identity, acculturation, and developmental theories. These frameworks are essential in comprehending cultural identity, which encompasses aspects such as cultural self-identification, a sense of belonging, attitudes towards one's ethnic group, social engagement, cultural practices, as well as empirical findings on self-esteem, self-concept, psychological adjustment, ethnic identity in relation to the dominant culture, generational changes associated with immigration, cultural identity, and contextual factors (Maehler et al., 2019).

According to Phinney (2003), it can be deduced that there is a need to develop dependable and accurate instruments for assessing ethnic identification. This is necessary to further investigate the influence of cultural identity on attitudes towards one's own group as well as other groups. Additionally, it is important to examine the function of contextual elements such as family, community, and social institutions in this regard. Phinney highlights the little consideration given to individuals with mixed cultural backgrounds. However, in the subsequent decade following her research, there has been a noticeable increase in scholarly focus on multiethnic and mixed-race backgrounds.

Knight et al. (1993) provide a comprehensive account of socialization methods, which encompass several aspects such as maternal instruction on cultural matters, parental migration history, maternal familiarity and alignment with cultural norms, language usage, and demographic factors including parental educational attainment and level of urbanization in the community. This model exemplifies contemporary multilevel assessments of social identities by integrating social interactions, cognitive beliefs and attitudes, and ecological and structural variables. An important inquiry revolves around the ramifications of cultural identity on psychological adaptation. The study conducted by Phinney (2003) investigated the relationship between cultural identification and self-esteem. While the results are inconclusive, Phinney emphasizes that a robust cultural identity, along with a degree of assimilation into the dominant culture, is associated with elevated levels of self-esteem.

According to Georgianna (2007), cultural identification is emphasized as being both situational and volitional. Georgianna exemplifies the concept of cultural identity as a dynamic interplay between internal self-identification and outward attribution. Georgianna posits that identity is a multi-dimensional construct, wherein several identities are active at different temporal junctures. Uitermark et al. (2005) argue that cultural identification is a complex and dynamic process that goes beyond the simplistic frameworks of assimilationist or pluralist approaches. Population transitions, particularly the phenomenon of immigration, serve as a prominent catalyst for alterations in ethnic identities.

2.6 Relationship Between Durbar Clothing and Fashion Trends

The relationship between Durbar clothes and sociology studies is deeply interconnected on both historical and intellectual levels, as they share common notions and references. The field of cultural studies demonstrates a multifaceted and interconnected fascination in fashion trends,

which can be observed to intersect with the discipline of sociology (Lynch & Strauss, 2007; Craik, 2003). According to Barnard (2014), the cultural studies of fashion encompass various domains, including but not limited to nations and transnationalism, culture, class, gender, sexuality, and the body. The inception of cultural studies in the realm of fashion may be traced back to Hebdige's seminal work in 1979, as referenced by Bérubé in 2006. Hebdige's contribution was crucial in the development of the subculture notion, particularly in relation to youth cultures in the United Kingdom, most notably the Punks. The key tenet of this method is the notion of homology, which serves to categorize the many components of a particular subculture based on their correspondences.

Hebdige explicated that the Punks express themselves through their speech and fashion choices, effectively conveying their opposition to conventional culture in both realms. Hodkinson (2002) expanded upon this methodology by conducting a comprehensive investigation of the Goth subculture within the United Kingdom. Hodkinson's primary contribution involved critically examining the empirical validity of the ideas of subculture and homology within the context of Goth culture. This examination revealed that these concepts did not align with the level of rigor predicted based on Hebdige's conceptual framework. The concept of subculture, originally associated with clothing and fashion trends, has been expanded to encompass non-Western contexts by Kawamura (2013). Through an ethnographic approach, Kawamura explored Japanese youth subcultures and demonstrated how Japanese teenagers have emerged as fashion innovators independent of mainstream fashion institutions.

The presence of vagueness and ambivalence is a prominent issue within the realm of ethnic studies in fashion, particularly when examined from a feminist perspective. This theme is notably explored in the scholarly work of Wilson (2003). According to Wilson, feminist thought should not dismiss fashion, but rather see it as a vehicle for both artistic and political forms of self-expression. Nevertheless, Wilson contends that fashion possesses an inherent

ambiguity, since it may also serve as a mechanism for promoting uniformity and subjugation. The aforementioned ambiguity is also evident in the utilization of tattoos, which can be interpreted from two perspectives: as a resistance against the commodification of bodies, and as a kind of commodification itself (Cremades & Fernández-González, 2016; Fisher, 2002). The topic of globalization and the significance of fashion within this phenomenon is also a focal point in the field of cultural studies (Disele et al., 2011).

2.7 Social and Psychological Factors that Influence Durbar Clothing

Clothing offers satisfaction to individuals by addressing a wide range of human requirements. The human being is inherently a social creature, and as such, cannot disregard the importance of social requirements, which hold equal significance alongside physiological and sociological needs. The significance of clothing only becomes apparent when individuals incorporate them into their daily life (Sapir, 2020; Back, 2017; Lawan & Zanna, 2013). Garments serve as a metaphorical extension of the human body, establishing a profound psychological bond between individuals and their attire. The perception of clothing has evolved from being solely regarded as a fundamental necessity during the early stages of human existence. The act of wearing garments serves a multitude of purposes and is influenced by a range of elements, as discussed by Simmel (2020) and Piamphongsant and Mandhachitara (2008).

Based on the clothing theory proposed by Kawamura (2020), it can be argued that individuals engage in wearing clothing for four fundamental purposes: modesty, immodesty, protection, and ornament. Over time, garments have transcended the confines of clothing theory and evolved into a personal sphere that serves as a protective barrier between one's biological self and the broader physical and social surroundings (Simmel, 2020). Several research studies have reached the consensus that clothing has a significant impact on an individual's behavior. In a

like vein, it may be observed that an individual's personal conduct and character are reflective of their distinct inclinations towards various styles of attire.

Given the psychological attachment that humans have towards their clothing, it is not possible to consider clothing as the sole influencing factor on one's behavior. Conversely, behavior also has an impact on an individual's preferences for clothing (Arora & Aggarwal, 2018). In addition, each of these phenomena are subject to the influence of numerous external and internal causes. Clothing tastes are influenced by a multitude of circumstances. The determination of clothing choices can be categorized into three distinct human needs: physiological, psychological, and environmental. The interconnectedness and multidimensionality of these aspects contribute to the clothing preferences of individuals, as no one dimension can be solely attributed to their choices (Arora & Aggarwal, 2018).

2.8 Theories of Fashion

Fashion theory encompasses a broad range of subjects and is not limited to the history of fashion, trend prediction, celebrity style, haute-couture runways, competition-driven aspects, fabric examination, or fashion publicity. Rather, it serves as a unifying framework for studying all these elements and more, allowing for the interpretation of societal, cultural, national, or group dynamics (Katagiri, 2021; Barnard, 2020; DeLong, 2005). Nevertheless, it is insufficient to rely on a single theory to adequately examine fashion theory or elucidate the mechanisms through which fashion permeates society. Moreover, an alternative populist framework for fashion adoption exists in addition to these theories. This framework pertains to specific

situations where fashion dissemination is shown to occur inside social groupings rather than being determined solely by socioeconomic classes (Reilly, 2014).

Scholars draw upon a range of disciplines such as cultural studies, women and gender studies, anthropology, queer theory, feminist theory, sociology, and social psychology to examine the seemingly mundane practice of daily dressing. Through this interdisciplinary approach, they investigate various aspects, spanning from individual identity and self-perception at the micro level to power dynamics and social hierarchies at the macro level within social systems. Fashion encompasses elements of change, novelty, and the contextual factors of time, place, and individual wearing (Stone & Farnan, 2018; Diamond & Diamond, 2013; Lynch & Strauss, 2007). Fashion can be described as a phenomenon in which a group of individuals collectively respond to the spirit of the times, resulting in the establishment of taste through a process of collective selection.

Fashion is stimulated by the concurrent development and display of multiple new trends, the choices made by forward-thinking consumers, and the concept of expressing the contemporary zeitgeist. At the core of any conceptualization of fashion is the interconnection between the crafted artifact and its modes of dissemination and consumption (Rocamora & Smelik, 2015; Craik, 2003). Various dominant fashion theories are utilized to delineate a wide array of qualities pertaining to fashion. These encompass several areas such as fashion and social communication, fashion and social phenomena, fashion and its emergence, fashion process, and fashion leadership theories, among others. The following are brief summaries of some hypotheses as presented by Reilly (2014) and Diamond and Diamond (2013).

2.8.1 Fashion and social communication

Fashion is widely regarded as a means of communication by several scholars in the field of fashion theory (Katagiri, 2021). The proposition that fashion serves as a means of communicating social values or mirroring societal status was initially articulated within the fields of anthropology and sociology. Flügel (1929) is widely regarded as a prominent figure in the advancement of fashion theory, according to the majority of scholars and researchers in this field. Fashion is commonly characterized as a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing social, economic, and aesthetic dimensions, which frequently intersect and coexist. Fashion has the capacity to serve as a representation of societal transformation and progress, exerting a significant influence on contemporary existence.

Fashion refers to any style, trend, or mode of dress that is embraced by a significant majority of individuals within a specific society. Hence, it is intricately connected to societal circumstances. Thompson et al. (2018) have provided a definition for the term 'society', as an illustration. Thompson et al. propose that society and culture encompass a comprehensive framework consisting of values, beliefs, behavioral norms, assumptions regarding social categorizations, a typology of role models, and a self-referential map. In order to facilitate the dissemination of these concepts among individuals and across generations, it is imperative that they are effectively conveyed through various forms of expression. The manner in which individuals within a specific civilization engage in communication within a specific context holds significant importance. There exist two primary methods individuals might employ to express their ideas. According to Buckley (2017), the expressions discussed can be categorized into verbal and non-verbal forms. The majority of non-verbal communication is expressed through the medium of fashion.

2.8.2 Fashion and social phenomena

Given its pervasive influence on several facets of society, the multifaceted nature of fashion implies its significance as a socio-cultural phenomenon. This is evident in the way individuals from diverse social groups utilize fashion as a means of communication and interaction (Maehler et al., 2019; Kawamura, 2013). Fashion possesses inherent significance, with garments serving as the medium through which it is conveyed. Society has a multitude of dynamic characteristics. Therefore, similar to the multifaceted nature of society and its inherent diversity, the realm of fashion encompasses a multitude of styles that coexist simultaneously. The diverse aspects of society embody specific ideas in which individuals willingly opt to participate. Certain conceptions can be derived from social contact, while others may originate from broader cultural influences (Sapir, 2020; McRobbie & McRobbie, 2013).

The interconnection between society and culture is undeniable, as each serves as a concrete manifestation of the other. Fashion, in this context, involves both the collective and individual aspects of society, namely pertaining to the construction of identities within a community with regards to views, values, ideas, and experiences (Black, 2020; Barnard, 2013). Viewing fashion as a comprehensive social phenomena allows for an understanding of how society expresses its values and confronts its issues. Society encompasses a diverse range of phenomena, including various subcultural manifestations. Hence, it can be observed that a given civilization encompasses diverse subcultural phenomena or subcultural styles, contributing to the overall fabric of its culture. The fashion prevalent within that particular culture serves as a medium for conveying meanings, values, and ideas through social interaction (Crane & Bovone, 2006; Craik, 2003). The societal dimensions of each community exhibit distinct characteristics.

2.8.3 The Fashion Process

The process can be examined within four unique situations. The following are the mechanisms by which individuals satisfy their own needs through fashion, commonly known as fashion adoption. Fashion diffusion refers to the mechanism via which an economic or cultural system undergoes changes in fashion (Baskerville & Myers, 2009). The phenomenon of fashion being transferred from its origin to wider acceptance is commonly referred to as fashion interaction, while the mechanism by which the business sector influences fashion is known as fashion retailing.

2.8.4 Fashion Adoption

This refers to the phenomenon in which consumers embrace a novel style subsequent to its release in the commercial market. Fashion adoption refers to the cognitive process through which individuals make choices to embrace a particular style. The process of fashion adoption can be understood as a negotiation process that occurs at an individual level, within the broader context of the fashion process continuum. This perspective is supported by the works of Mohr et al. (2021) and Forsythe et al. (1991).

2.8.5 Fashion Diffusion

The fashion process encompasses two distinct levels: the individual level, characterized by fashion adoption, and the collective level, known as fashion diffusion. Fashion diffusion refers to the widespread dissemination of styles within a certain social system. In essence, the process of fashion diffusion facilitates the dissemination of innovative ideas and practices both within and across various social systems. The focus of this study pertains to the choices made by a significant proportion of individuals within a given society to embrace a novel concept or practice (Branstad & Solem, 2020).

2.8.6 Fashion Interaction theory

Numerous scholars elucidate the mechanism of fashion dissemination within society. The aforementioned theory endeavors to elucidate the rationales and mechanisms underlying social processes, as well as the manner in which individuals navigate ambiguity by means of their appearance styles (Nakayam & Nakamura, 2004). The theoretical framework was developed by drawing upon the contributions of three prominent theorists, namely Davis (1992), Blumer (1969), and Stone (1962). Blumer's research has introduced the concept of a fashion process at a macro level, perceiving fashion as a communal selection process. Collective action shares certain similarities with crowd behavior. Symbolically, fashion serves as a mechanism for individuals to adapt to and navigate through societal transformations. Nevertheless, there are certain theorists who engage in a disagreement regarding the completeness of Blumer's theory. These theorists argue that the theory falls short due to its failure to establish a distinct correlation between expressive symbolism and unconscious meanings within the domain of visual representation.

2.8.7 Fashion Leadership

The field of ancient fashion theory and its exploratory investigation have contributed to the establishment of fashion leadership principles and the identification of general behavioral features. The notion of fashion leadership has been subsequently categorized into the examination of the fashion innovator and the fashion opinion leader (DeLong, 2005).

2.8.8 Fashion Systems Model

The study of fashion during the 20th century has been conceptualized using a fashion systems model, which posits a distinct epicenter from which new ideas and alterations spread outward (Choi, 2013). Designers adhere to the notion of maintaining a consistent and cohesive visual identity by employing a singular aesthetic throughout many garments. This approach is characterized by specific guidelines pertaining to hem dimensions and the appropriate pairing of different clothing items. According to DeLong (2005), the concept posits that the public who consumes clothes evolves from an innovative central core, with surrounding groups of fashion enthusiasts extending outward from the center. Innovation can be generated by a collective of designers inside this particular framework. Various aspects can exert influence, encompassing individual preferences, contemporary occurrences, as well as marketing strategies and promotional activities. The final criterion of the fashion systems concept pertains to the extent of influence, emphasizing the imperative nature of conforming to a singular aesthetic. The concept of conformity holds significant influence.

2.8.9 Populist Model

The populist model presents an alternative approach to the fashion systems paradigm. The three primary theories of fashion adoption have a broad application across socioeconomic levels. However, the populist model, which was formulated by Polhemus in 1994, focuses on social groups rather than classes as the primary influencers of fashion trends. A social collective may embrace a discernible manner, and this outward manifestation is commonly observed among the members of the group. The purpose of the style is to foster cohesion among the collective and differentiate people inside the cluster; nonetheless, it frequently lacks connection to external trends. It is commonly believed that individuals tend to adopt and maintain a distinct style that is associated with their own social group (DeLong, 2005). As a result, this model exhibits several centers, wherein various groups, distinguished by factors such as age,

socioeconomic status, geographical location, and cultural background, generate their own distinct fashion trends.

2.9 The Flow of Fashion

The process of fashion diffusion has been characterized as a dynamic phenomenon, involving the transfer or dissemination of fashion trends from one societal component to another (DeLong, 2005). The dissemination of effects from a central location to its surrounding areas can be conceptualized in either a hierarchical or horizontal manner, as exemplified by ideas such as trickle-down, trickle-across, or trickle-up.

2.9.1 Trickle Down Theory (Traditional Adaptation)

The concept of the trickle-down theory of fashion acceptance was introduced by Veblen in 1889. This theory posits that the initiation of fashion trends mostly originates among the higher strata of society. The middle and lower socioeconomic strata gradually embrace fashion trends popularized by the affluent, resulting in alterations in their own styles. When the lower classes adopt certain styles, the affluent individuals then modify their own style. This theory posits that those belonging to lower socioeconomic groups exhibit a desire to emulate the fashion choices of those belonging to higher socioeconomic classes. It is worth noting that this theory holds the distinction of being the oldest theory pertaining to the adoption of fashion (Kaiser, 2019; Atik & Firat, 2013). Historically, it was applicable before to the onset of World War II. Therefore, the trickle-down hypothesis presents a direct method for forecasting the diffusion of fashion.

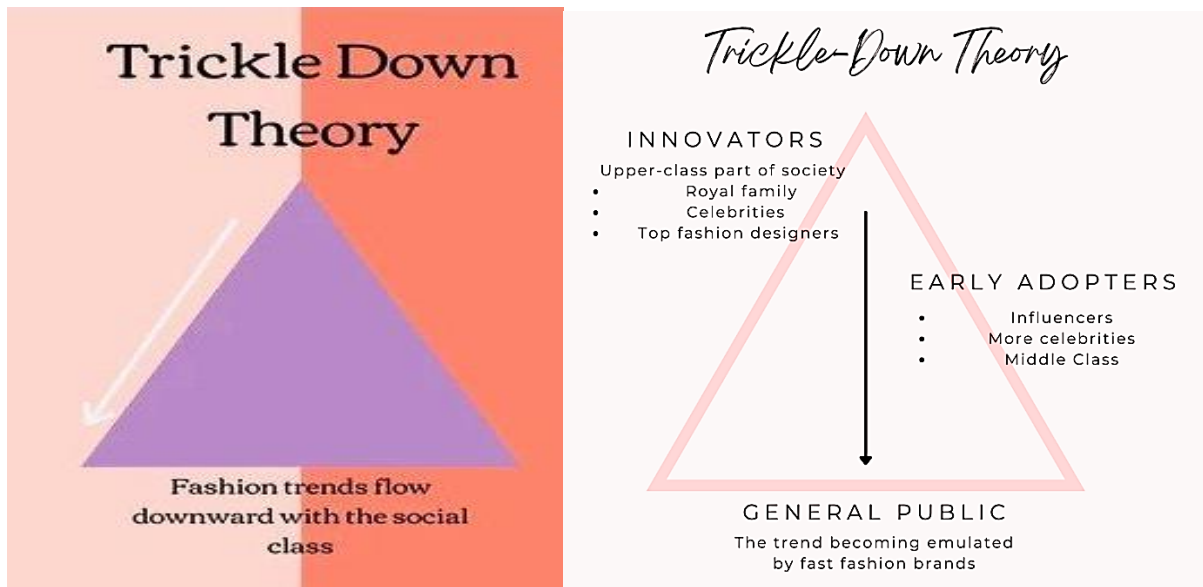


Plate 5: The Trickle-Down Theory

The phenomenon of fashion trends being established by individuals of high social standing, followed by the emulation of these patterns by individuals of lower social status through the adoption of more affordable variations. One of the first theories on distribution is the trickle-down theory, as expounded by Veblen (Katagiri, 2021; Atik & Firat, 2013). The efficacy of the trickle-down phenomenon is contingent upon the presence of a hierarchical societal structure and a collective aspiration for upward social mobility across different strata. According to Atik and Firat (2013), this concept posits that a fashion trend initially emerges and gains acceptance among individuals occupying the highest social stratum, gradually permeating downward to individuals in lesser strata.

The distribution model being discussed here is characterized by the adoption of a social hierarchy, wherein individuals aspire to associate themselves with the affluent members of society. Those positioned at the top of this hierarchy strive for both recognition and, ultimately, separation from those who occupy lower social strata. Fashion is widely regarded as a means of conspicuous consumerism and social mobility for individuals who aspire to emulate clothing trends. According to Zhao et al. (2021) and Atik & Firat (2013), there is a pattern observed

wherein those of lower socioeconomic status tend to accept a certain fashion trend, only for those of higher socioeconomic status to subsequently reject it and seek out a new trend.

2.9.2 Trickle Across Theory (Mass Dissemination)

The trickle-across concept, which originated in the late 1950s, posits that fashion exhibits a swift diffusion across various socioeconomic strata. The emergence of clothing styles occurs nearly concurrently throughout various price ranges, rather than following a hierarchical trickle-down pattern. The idea in question is substantiated by the extensive coverage in mass communications and widespread media, which offer visual representations and comprehensive information on emerging styles. This is further reinforced by the contemporary retail industry, as evidenced by the works of Zhou et al. (2019) and DeLong (2005). Hence, adherents of the trickle-across theory contend that fashion undergoes horizontal diffusion among social groupings that share comparable degrees of social status. The lag time between acceptance from one group to another under the trickle-across concept is minimal. The substantiation for this notion arises when designers showcase a collection that encompasses a spectrum of pricing points, spanning from high-end to lower-end ready-to-wear.

Many social groupings derive their behavior and norms from neighboring groups within the social hierarchy. Numerous designers exhibit comparable stylistic elements over a diverse range of product lines, encompassing both luxury designer garments and more accessible, budget-friendly pieces. After a design is showcased on the runway, other companies engage in the production of comparable items, hence facilitating the general availability of fashion. During the period spanning from the 1960s, characterized by the popularity of the shift dress, to the 1980s, marked by the prominence of shoulder pads, these particular articles of clothing were concurrently accessible for purchase in high-end retail establishments.

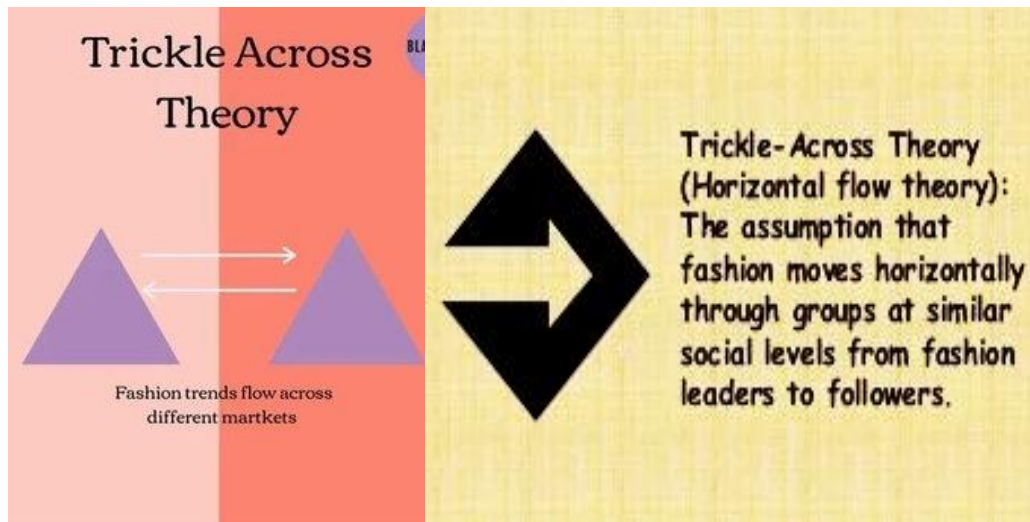


Plate 6: Trickle Across Theory

Source: Zhou et al. (2019).

2.9.3 Trickle Up Theory (Reverse Adaptation)

The phenomenon of fashion adoption, as shown by the trickle-up hypothesis, reflects the dynamic nature of evolving styles and practices within the fashion industry. In accordance with existing theoretical frameworks, fashion styles often originate from youth or street fashion and progressively gain acceptance among older and more affluent consumers (Wo et al., 2019; DeLong, 2005; Evans, 1989). The conventional T-shirt originated as an undergarment within the lower socioeconomic levels and has since evolved into a prominent component of everyday attire. After gaining acceptance among more conventional clients, it is possible for a new style to be embraced by street or young culture.

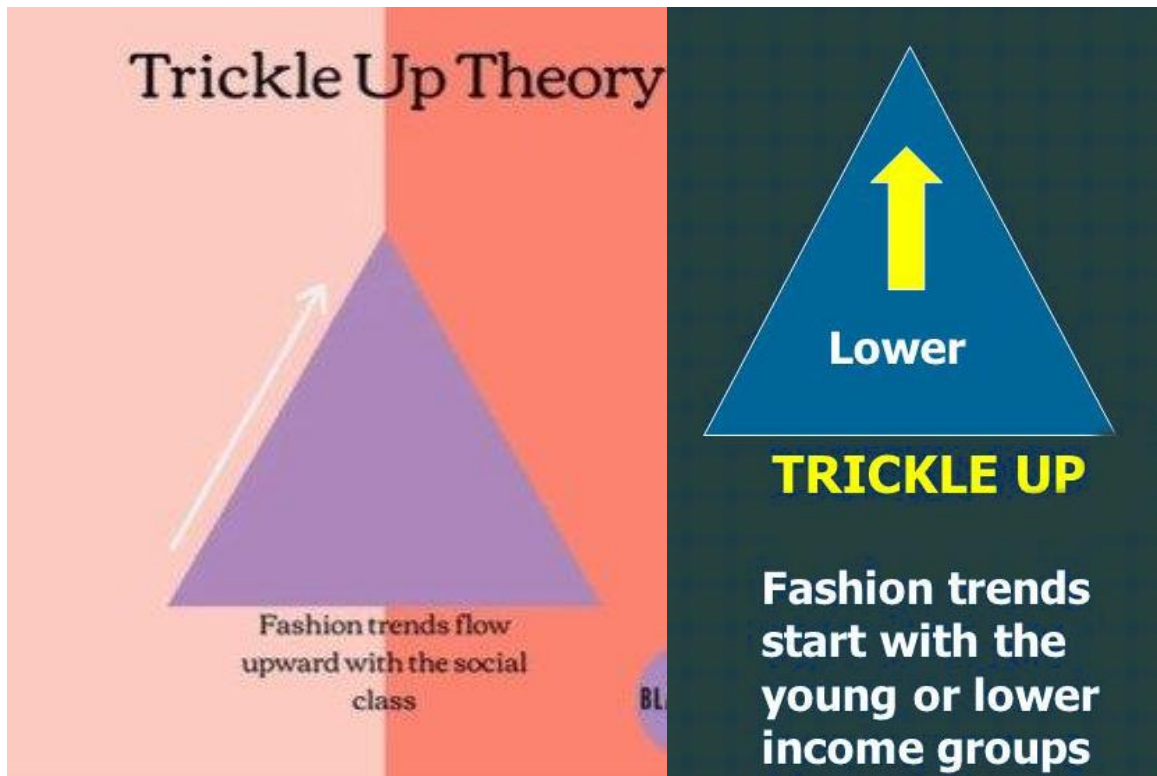


Plate 7: Trickle Up Theory

The trickle-up or bubble-up pattern represents one of the most recent hypotheses within the realm of fashion movement. As previously said, this idea posits that innovation originates at the grassroots level and is then embraced by individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The diffusion of innovation predominantly occurs inside higher-income clusters, indicating a bottom-up trajectory of the movement. Hence, the extent to which a particular society is influenced by a trendy aesthetic is contingent upon its historical roots, visual characteristics, the breadth of its influence, and the motivations of those who embrace it.

The genesis of fashion can be traced back to either the privileged strata of society or the urban environment. However, regardless of its origins, fashion requires a distinctive and original aesthetic (Mohr et al., 2021; DeLong, 2005). According to contemporary fashion theory, it is widely accepted that the fashion adoption process is characterized by a greater prevalence of a "trickle across" flow rather than a "trickle down" flow. In addition, the adoption of fashion occurs concurrently across many temporal dimensions and socioeconomic strata. In the realm

of fashion adoption, innovators and opinion leaders assume crucial roles and constitute significant market segments within a certain social strata.

2.10 Durbar Garments in the Volta Region

In the cultural framework of Ghana, clothing serves as a means of conveying the social and economic standing of individuals. Ghanaian chiefs primarily attire themselves in a manner that serves to symbolize their social standing and economic prowess within their community. According to Adzobu (2016), individuals who belong to this group are typically identified by their opulent attire and distinctive fashion choices that are not commonly observed among the general populace. The transmission of Durbar Garments and their designs within indigenous Ewe society occurs intergenerationally, with established customs developed over extended periods of usage. The durbar costumes of Asorgli State have experienced a decline in quality and craftsmanship throughout festivals, resulting in a loss of their original elegance. According to Adzobu (2016), there has been a significant departure from the traditional attire worn by participants of the Asorgli festival, resulting in a decline in the celebration's cultural importance and reputation.



Plate 8: Samples of durbar garments in the Volta Region

2.11 Culture Theory

Culture, in its most comprehensive definition, encompasses the entirety of a society's distinctive concepts, convictions, principles, and understanding. This phenomenon demonstrates the various methods through which individuals see and make sense of their surroundings. Culture theory is a field of study within the disciplines of anthropology, semiotics, and other social sciences such as political economics, sociology, and communication (Reason, 1998; Durham, 1990). The field of culture theory aims to establish heuristic conceptualizations of culture. Therefore, cultural studies frequently focus on the interconnections between a specific occurrence and several aspects such as ideology, nationality, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, and gender (Steenkamp, 2019; Shweder et al., 1984).

Cultural theory serves as a framework for analyzing the cognitive processes via which individuals develop assessments and evaluations of their surroundings. The purpose of the theory is to demonstrate that these judgments are not autonomously developed, but rather influenced by the social context in which they arise. According to Cremades and Fernández-González (2016), it has become increasingly apparent that various objects and phenomena can acquire cultural significance as they are perceived to possess meaning, regardless of whether this meaning is intentionally crafted or arises by chance. Individuals from many cultural backgrounds engage in the practice of altering their physical appearances, albeit in distinct ways. However, it is important to acknowledge that the symbolic frameworks and conventions employed to decode and comprehend attire are prone to divergence. Within the field of cultural studies, culture is commonly conceptualized as a "structure of feeling" (Błaszczuk, 2011; Reed, 2010), serving as a framework through which individuals perceive and assess their existence.

Evaluation is conducted through the utilization of symbolic meanings and codes. Hence, it is imperative for the field of social psychology to incorporate an analysis of the significance of clothes, taking into account its meaning not alone within social settings, but also within a

broader cultural framework. The semiotic perspective on culture centers on the generation of meaning through the dynamic interaction between a form of collective memory rooted in history and the societal opposition to this memory (Lee & Lee, 2019; Salm & Falola, 2002). Therefore, the cultural approach allows for the examination of the evolving meanings of clothes across different historical contexts.

It is probable that individuals will encounter a system of physical goods when a community collectively embraces a shared culture. The acts of purchasing, selling, and donning garments collectively contribute to the process of signification, wherein cultural items acquire meaning and significance. Therefore, the process of signification is influenced not only by the characteristics of the object itself, but also by the manner in which individuals engage with these items and the actions they undertake in relation to them. The core concept underpinning the cultural perspective originating from semiotics posits that the individual perceiving a cultural message plays a crucial role in the process of signification (Thompson et al., 2018; Durham, 1990). The individual who perceives cultural products has the ability to draw inferences regarding those items by considering their personal views and the manner in which these beliefs intersect with the cultural artifacts.

Cultural forms play a significant role in the production and reproduction of collective values. This assumption posits that specific visual representations or physical objects serve as manifestations of commonly held beliefs and principles within a given society. The aforementioned common values frequently exhibit associations with cultural belief systems (Steenkamp, 2019; Shweder et al., 1984). Cultural forms encompass concrete manifestations of culture that serve as symbolic representations of underlying abstract concepts deeply embedded within a given society. These forms frequently pertain to social relationships, namely how individuals interact with each other based on attributes such as gender, socioeconomic status, age, and ethnicity (Quinn, 2018). The cultural significance of clothes

and appearance symbols is conveyed and shared through many meanings, shaping our interactions within the cultural framework.

The term "cultural form" can encompass an intangible and multifaceted representation or attire that serves to classify individuals within a social context. Cultural forms emerge from a semiotic perspective due to the recognition that meaning is derived from the interplay of oppositions and contrasts within social contexts (Kaiser & Green, 2021). The aforementioned dichotomies and disparities encompass various aspects such as the dichotomy between youth and age, the contrast between masculinity and femininity, the juxtaposition of androgyny and singularity, the dichotomy of inclusiveness and exclusiveness, the opposition between work and play, the contrast between domesticity and worldliness, the dichotomy of revelation and concealment, the contrast between license and restraint, and the opposition between conformity and rebellion (McRobbie & McRobbie, 2013; Reason, 1998).

The dynamics of social interactions are susceptible to transformation or, at the very least, influenced by cultural manifestations of conflicts arising from these interactions (Richardson, 2017; Disele et al., 2011). Social identities can also experience instabilities, and fashion serves as a platform for expressing and highlighting these instabilities or conflicts. Consumers may also exhibit responses to communal tensions when engaging in impression management. The act of juxtaposing various symbols or moving symbols between social identities or contexts is a significant factor in the advancement of cultural forms (Hsiao & Grauman, 2021; Quinn, 2018).

Cultural beliefs and values have a tendency to be perpetuated when they are reflected at a subconscious level. Ideology encompasses the fundamental beliefs and values that define the cultural, collective, or ideological orientation of a society, group, or movement. The manifestation of ideology can be observed in commonplace objects that individuals tend to accept without scrutiny, interpreting them effortlessly due to a shared understanding of their

significance. The production and modification of cultural knowledge are founded upon cultural messages of this nature (Kaiser & Green, 2021). The aforementioned statements can be perceived as conceptual notions, albeit conveyed through concrete manifestations such as articles of clothing. Ideological statements encompass not just semantic content, but also encapsulate values through delineating hierarchies of worthiness.

Cultural messages are generated through the process of presentation, which encompasses the selection, presentation, structuring, and shaping of components of reality. This process can serve to either reinforce the existing societal norms or establish novel interpretations (Quinn, 2018; Kaiser, 2012). Individuals possess the capacity to alter their lived experiences through the manipulation of artifacts inside their respective cultural environments. Culture has a significant role in the provision of various items, including clothing and other tools or things such as adornments, which are utilized for the purpose of managing one's appearance. Additionally, it offers visual representations and conceptual notions. Nevertheless, it is plausible for folks to employ these artifacts, visuals, and concepts in creative manners (Kaiser & Green, 2021).

Even in situations when an individual has a restricted collection of these items, certain restrictions being influenced by cultural factors, they still have the ability to rearrange them, discover novel methods of mixing them, juxtaposition pieces or images that are not commonly encountered, or experiment with different appearances inside a fresh framework. In this manner, cultural conventions might be employed in novel manners or deviated from or altered. Individuals have the ability to express themselves through their own choices, so creating what is usually referred to as a "fashion statement" (Godart, 2012; Davis, 1995). In the context of perception of appearance, individuals possess the capacity to alter their subjective realities by employing various mechanisms to observe and interpret the world around them.

Two distinct perspectives on cultural imagery might be categorized as naive and participant. Individuals that possess a perceiving orientation tend to exhibit a certain level of naivety when they firmly believe that the image they are observing is a mere representation of reality without any active involvement or manipulation. On the other hand, individuals who perceive are actively engaged as participants during the process of signifying. The differentiation holds significant importance in the analysis of ideological cultural forms, as these forms are unlikely to remain concealed. The aforementioned sources (Reason, 1998; Roche, 1996) indicate that these entities are observable in plain sight, although their significance may not be readily apparent. Individuals who actively engage in the process of signification are more inclined to recognize the significance of cultural artifacts compared to those who passively accept the portrayal of reality through a semiotic lens.

Therefore, it is imperative to take into account the various circumstances in which individuals may exhibit varying levels of naivety or engage in their interpretations of cultural manifestations. Culture serves as a means of depicting or symbolizing various aspects of societal existence (Quinn, 2018; Kaiser, 2012). The utilization of clothing imagery has the potential to evoke a range of responses, including those that are unconventional, extraordinary, or thought-provoking. Individuals navigate their existence within a broader cultural context, encompassing various dimensions of human experience, ranging from the pragmatic to the realm of imagination. The utilization of a cultural perspective, informed by semiotics, offers a theoretical structure for the analysis and interpretation of cultural narratives, visual representations, subconscious experiences, and imaginative constructs. This framework enables individuals to either seek solace from reality or to get a deeper understanding of their personal identity and actions (Kaiser, 2012).

Cultural forms that are abstract in nature can be analyzed and juxtaposed with the more tangible and specific clothing trends that are commonly observed in everyday life. While cultural

representations of social life may be commonly shared by the public, these representations are mostly encountered in private circumstances. Consequently, the act of being exposed to cultural representations gets integrated into individuals' everyday lives as they interpret these cultural manifestations. Cultural representations can potentially offer insights into the maintenance of personal appearance. Codes are utilized by individuals to interpret the significance embedded within cultural manifestations of societal existence. The examination of cultural meanings behind messages' surface is a fundamental aspect of adopting a semiotic perspective on cultural representations (Quinn, 2018; Kaiser, 2012).

The interpretation of clothing meanings is not determined solely by their usage, but rather by the tangible objects associated with linguistic codes. These meanings are conveyed through the utilization of language (Richardson, 2017; Disele et al., 2011). Codes might encompass logical connections, correlations, or networks between clothing and appearance components. Codes encompass the standards or culturally embedded cognitive frameworks that facilitate our shared understanding and interpretation of visual cues in a manner consistent with others (Zhao et al., 2022). Codes have a crucial role in determining the organization and arrangement of symbolic elements, hence influencing the formation and transformation of cultural phenomena. Appearance codes are associated with aesthetics and sensory experiences, hence potentially facilitating opportunities for creative interpretation (Abbe, 2021). Articulating cultural norms that inform the understanding of messages can prove challenging, particularly when they involve emotions or sentiments that are not easily defined by explicit guidelines.

Codes can additionally function as guidelines that suggest the appropriate pairing of garments and accessories. The examination of the clothing regalia of chiefs in Anlo State through a semiotic lens within cultural theory encompasses an analysis of their cultural beliefs and behaviors. Therefore, the consideration of culture should involve a comprehensive understanding of how cultural factors influence the utility and production functions across

different contexts (Quinn, 2018; Shweder et al., 1984). Cultural theories commonly analyze cultural practices and their connection to power dynamics. They aim to comprehensively comprehend the multifaceted nature of culture and scrutinize the social and political circumstances in which it becomes evident. Additionally, these theories strive to uncover and reconcile disparities in knowledge, bridging the gap between implicit cultural knowledge and objective forms of knowledge (Quinn, 2018; Kaiser, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study's methods are described in detail in Chapter three. As the title suggests, this chapter explores a variety of aspects of research design and data collection. This study aimed to assess the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in Ghana and how cultural experiences affect the order of importance of traditional clothing values.

3.2 Research Design

According to Yin (2003), empirical research encompasses various categories, each of which is characterized by either an explicit or implicit research design. Research design, in its fundamental terminology, encompasses a coherent framework that establishes a connection between empirical data, the major research inquiries of a study, and ultimately, the conclusions drawn from it. The research design encompasses a comprehensive framework for conducting a specific study, encompassing a minimum of four key considerations: the identification of research questions, the determination of pertinent data, the selection of data to be collected, and the approach for analyzing the obtained results (Yin, 2003). The study design primarily addresses a theoretical concern rather than a practical constraint. Furthermore, the article elucidates the researcher's approach in dealing with the fundamental matters of representation and legitimization (Saunders et al., 2009).

The current study employed an exploratory research design due to its inherent characteristics. Exploratory research is typically conducted in situations when an issue has not been clearly delineated. Additionally, it aids in the identification of optimal research methodologies, data collection techniques, and sample selection. The present study aimed to systematically evaluate

the influence of traditional attire on fashion trends in Ghana, as well as the manner in which cultural experiences shape the hierarchy of significance between traditional and contemporary clothing ideals.

Practice-based design is a novel and dynamic methodology that prioritizes the pragmatic implementation of design ideas and concepts. Brown (2008) asserts that design is not solely a theoretical pursuit, but rather a multifaceted undertaking that encompasses experimentation, iteration, and practical application in real-world scenarios. Through active participation in practical design exercises, professionals can acquire vital knowledge, enhance their concepts, and generate significant and influential outcomes.

Practice-based design presents a multitude of advantages in comparison to conventional design methodologies. First and foremost, it promotes collaboration and the integration of diverse perspectives, fostering the participation of persons from different backgrounds who can contribute their specialized knowledge and unique ideas (Schön, 1983). The use of a varied and inclusive approach frequently results in the development of more comprehensive and holistic solutions. Furthermore, via the active engagement of end-users and stakeholders during the design process, practice-based design guarantees the effective fulfillment of their requirements and expectations (Sanders & Stappers, 2008).

In addition, the implementation of design practices promotes the cultivation of novel ideas and imaginative thinking. Designers have the ability to enhance their concepts and investigate novel opportunities by engaging in a process of iterative prototyping, testing, and refining (Buchanan, 1992). The utilization of an iterative method facilitates the expeditious validation of concepts, detection of possible issues, and swift modification, ultimately resulting in the development of better-designed products, services, or experiences.

3.2 Population of the Study

Yin (2003) defines a population as a collective of individuals, events, or objects that have discernible qualities or characteristics in common. The author provided more explanation, asserting that the set has the potential to be infinite. A population consisting of a limited number of individuals can be enumerated, resulting in a finite outcome. All individuals who took part in this research were clothing producers located in the Volta Region. According to the Dressmakers and Tailors Association of Ghana - Ho branch, there are approximately 900 garment manufacturers now conducting operations inside the municipality (Dressmakers and Tailors Association, 2022).

3.3 Sampling and Sampling Size

Sampling refers to the systematic procedure employed to select a subset of individuals from a larger population for the purpose of participation in a study. This technique, as described by Saunders et al. (2009), involves the careful selection of a specific number of individuals in a manner that ensures their representativeness of the broader group from which they were chosen. The utilization of a multistage sampling technique was employed in order to choose the participants for the study, taking into consideration the composition of the target population. Initially, the researchers employed the convenient sampling strategy to select the town of Ho from the numerous towns situated within the Volta Region. The regional capital of the Volta Region is the place where the researcher resides. Additionally, the researcher employed the purposive sampling method to carefully choose a sample of 120 clothing manufacturers within the town. Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique wherein researchers exercise their judgment

in selecting individuals from the public to participate in their surveys, as stated by Saunders et al. (2009).

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The present study employed a quantitative methodology, utilizing a questionnaire as the major tool for data collection. Questionnaires were employed as a research instrument due to their composition of inquiries and statements that are directly aligned with the objectives or research inquiries of the study, hence facilitating the process of verification (Aguinis et al., 2019). The utilization of the questionnaire once more facilitated the attainment of consistency, homogeneity, and stability in the participants' responses.

3.5 Data Analysis

The methodology literature does not present a singular rational strategy or universally applicable process for analyzing quantitative data. The process of analysis necessitates the exercise of a final decision (Elliott, 2018). As a result, the collected data was subjected to quantitative analysis methods in order to derive meaningful interpretations for the study. Nevertheless, the collected responses were systematically organized, refined, categorized, and quantified. The raw scores were obtained by aggregating the ratings of individual respondents across the items. The study topics were addressed through the utilization of the Statistics Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 26, which facilitated the implementation of descriptive statistics.

3.6 Tools and Materials

The tools and materials used in the garment production include the following;

1. Sewing machine

2. Measuring tape
3. Sewing thread
4. Cutting out shears
5. Brown paper and tracing wheel
6. Scissors



Plate 9: Tools and Materials



Plate 12: Production Processes

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The objective of this study is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the influence of traditional clothing on fashion trends in Ghana, while also examining the role of cultural experiences in shaping the hierarchy of traditional and contemporary clothing ideals. The present chapter provides an exposition of the conclusions derived from the analysis of the collected data.

4.2 Methods

The apparel manufacturing process encompasses various stages, including design, fabric selection and inspections, pattern making, laying and cutting out, sewing, pressing, and finishing and detailing, among others.

4.3 Challenges

The study encountered the following challenge

1. Choosing the best style for the occasion.
2. Preparing of pattern from scratch.
- 3 .Running out of bobbin thread about 4 time in a day is my biggest peeves.
- 4.Figuring out the short to streamline production.
- 5.fixing of zip

4.4 Complete Product



Plate 13: Front view of garment



Plate 14: Back view of garment

4.2 Demographic Profile of respondents

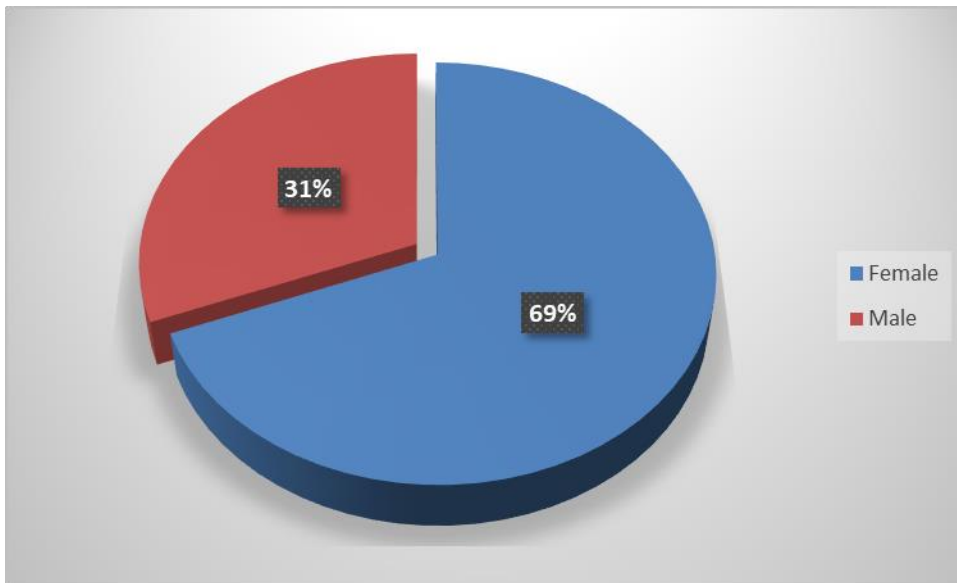


Figure 4.1 Gender distribution of respondents

In the analysis of the gender demographics of the sample, a total of 100 participants were included, with 37 males (32.17%) and 78 females (67.83%). This distribution highlights a higher representation of females in the sample, which is relevant to the research focus on young ladies and durbar garments in the Volta Region of Ghana. The overrepresentation of females in the sample offers valuable insights into the target population's perspectives and preferences regarding durbar garments.

The results imply that the higher proportion of females lead to an increased understanding of the cultural and fashion aspects of durbar garments specific to young ladies. However, this may also limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population in the Volta Region, as the perspectives of males, who may play a role in the production, distribution, or consumption of durbar garments, are less represented.

In conclusion, the gender demographics of the sample demonstrate a greater representation of females, which aligns with the study's focus on young ladies and durbar garments.

Nevertheless, researchers must remain aware of potential biases and limitations in the findings due to the uneven gender distribution.

Table 4.1 Age of Respondents

Age range	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
21 - 30 yrs.	34	29.6
31 - 40 yrs.	33	28.7
41 - 50 yrs.	30	26.1
50 yrs & above	18	15.6
Total	115	100.0

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

Table 4.1 presents the age distribution of the 115 respondents. The largest age group is the 21-30 years range, representing 29.6% of the total sample. This group is closely followed by the 31-40 years range, which accounts for 28.7% of the respondents. The 41-50 years age group makes up 26.1% of the sample, while the smallest age group, 50 years and above, comprises 15.6% of the respondents.

The analysis of the age distribution reveals that a significant proportion of the sample comprises individuals aged 21 to 40 years, constituting 58.3% of the overall population. This observation implies that individuals belonging to younger age cohorts exhibit higher levels of involvement in or susceptibility to durbar garments and fashion trends within the Volta Region of Ghana. The research further indicates that those belonging to the age category of 41-50 years and those aged 50 years and above are underrepresented, constituting a total of 41.7% of the sample population.

The results demonstrate an uneven age distribution among the 115 respondents, with a higher representation of younger age groups, particularly those aged between 21 and 40 years. This distribution suggests that the study better capture the perspectives and preferences of younger individuals who are more likely to be influenced by contemporary fashion trends and social media in relation to durbar garments in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Table 4.2 Educational qualification of Respondents

Educational level	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
No formal education	4	3.5
Basic	59	51.3
SHS/Voc/Tech	41	35.6
Tertiary	11	9.6
Total	115	100

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

From the table, it is evident that the majority of respondents (51.3%) have a basic level of education, followed by 35.6% with a senior high school, vocational, or technical education. Respondents with tertiary education make up 9.6% of the sample, while those with no formal education represent the smallest group at 3.5%.

This distribution of educational qualifications provides insights into the knowledge and understanding of the respondents in relation to durbar garments and fashion trends among young ladies in the Volta Region of Ghana. The diverse educational backgrounds of the participants contribute to varied perspectives on the production, distribution, and consumption of durbar garments within the community.

Table 4.3 Number of years in business

Years in business	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
< 1 year	3	2.6
1 – 5 years	33	28.7
6 – 10 years	24	20.9
11 – 15 years	11	9.6
> 15 years	44	38.3
Total	115	100.0

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

The revised Table 4.3 presents the distribution of the number of years in business among the 115 respondents in the study of durbar garments and fashion trends among young ladies in the Volta Region of Ghana. The results show a diverse range of business experience within the sample.

The majority of the respondents (38.3%) have over 15 years of experience in the business, indicating a significant presence of established businesses and individuals with extensive knowledge and understanding of the local market and its trends. The next largest group, comprising 28.7% of the sample, consists of respondents with 1 to 5 years of experience, suggesting a growing number of new entrants in the field.

Respondents with 6 to 10 years of experience make up 20.9% of the sample, while 9.6% have been in business for 11 to 15 years. The smallest group, accounting for 2.6% of the respondents, have less than one year of experience in the business.

The diverse range of experience within the sample provides insights into the evolving landscape of durbar garment production and fashion trends in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Researchers should consider the potential implications of this distribution when interpreting the findings, as the varied experience levels may influence respondents' perspectives and knowledge of the industry, as well as their ability to adapt to changing market dynamics and consumer preferences.

Table 4.4 Position in the business

Position	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
Owner	1	0.9
Manager	26	22.6
Worker	7	6.1
Apprentice	81	70.4
Total	115	100

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

The corrected Table 4.4 provides an overview of the respondents' positions in the business among the 115 participants in the study of durbar garments and fashion trends among young ladies in the Volta Region of Ghana. The results show a significant presence of apprentices (70.4%), followed by managers (22.6%), workers (6.1%), and owners (0.9%).

This distribution highlights the importance of apprenticeships in the production of durbar garments, suggesting a strong emphasis on training and skill development within the industry. The relatively low representation of owners may indicate that the majority of the respondents are not directly responsible for decision-making in the businesses they work for, which could impact their perspectives on various aspects of the industry, such as production practices and market trends. The diverse roles and responsibilities of the respondents can offer valuable

insights into the inner workings of the durbar garment industry, as well as the challenges and opportunities faced by different stakeholders.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.5 Constituents of durbar garments in Ghana

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	±SD
Since many activities occur during a durbar, all kinds of garments can be used	115	2	5	3.50	.629
A garment that reflects the tradition of the people	115	2	5	4.46	.592
A garment that reflects the cultural significance of the people	115	2	5	3.42	.623
A garment that helps the people to recollect the noble past of their ancestors	115	1	5	3.52	.628
A garment that reflects the rich cultural heritage of the people	115	1	5	3.89	.725
A garment that reflects traditional symbols of the Ewes	115	1	5	3.99	.747
A garment that reflects symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes	115	1	5	4.73	1.46
A garment made from the local Ewe Kete cloth	115	1	5	3.16	1.89
A garment that embraces and represents the culture of the people	115	1	5	4.81	.675
A garment that allows one to celebrate their heritage	115	1	5	4.49	1.186

A garment that allows one to celebrate their origin	115	1	5	3.41	1.520
A garment that is inspired by the culture where it originates.	115	1	5	3.52	1.346

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

Table 4.5 presents the constituents of durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana based on the responses of the 115 participants. The table includes information on the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation (\pm SD) of each statement.

From the respondents it could be observed that the respondents expressed strong agreement with statements about garments reflecting tradition, cultural significance, symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes, and embracing and representing the culture of the people, with mean scores ranging from 4.46 to 4.81. Garments that allow individuals to celebrate their heritage also received a high mean score of 4.49.

On the other hand, statements regarding durbar activities allowing for all kinds of garments, garments reflecting the cultural significance of the people, recollecting the noble past of ancestors, reflecting the rich cultural heritage, and reflecting traditional symbols of the Ewes received moderate mean scores, ranging from 3.41 to 3.99. Garments made from the local Ewe Kete cloth and those inspired by the culture where they originate also received moderate mean scores of 3.16 and 3.52 respectively.

The results indicate that durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana are influenced by factors that emphasize tradition, culture, and heritage. Respondents placed a high value on garments that reflect the symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes and those that embrace and represent the culture of the people. Meanwhile, garments made from the local Ewe Kete cloth and those inspired by the culture where they originate received moderate agreement.

Overall, these findings suggest that the production, distribution, and consumption of durbar garments in the Volta Region of Ghana are heavily influenced by the desire to uphold and celebrate the cultural, traditional, and historical aspects of the community. Fashion designers, producers, and other stakeholders in the durbar garment industry should consider these factors when creating and marketing their products, as they play a significant role in shaping the preferences and expectations of consumers in the region.

Table 4.6 Constituents of durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	±SD
The most popular clothing and accessory trends at any given time are represented by fashion trends.	115	2	5	3.73	1.326
A fashion trend suggests a specific look or expression spread across a population at a particular time and place.	115	2	5	4.08	.859
Fashion trends are expressions that are socio-culturally rooted in lovely areas and mostly use visual cues.	115	2	5	3.94	.925
A fashion trend is an innovative garment with the potential to please the masses.	115	1	5	3.73	1.252
Their movement in fashion defines fashion trends	115	1	5	4.11	1.045

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

According to the table, the respondents generally agreed with the statements about the constituents of fashion trends in Ghana. The highest mean score (4.11) was attributed to the statement "Their movement in fashion defines fashion trends," indicating that respondents believe the evolution of fashion over time is a significant factor in shaping trends. The statement "A fashion trend suggests a specific look or expression spread across a population at

a particular time and place" also received a high mean score of 4.08, suggesting that respondents view fashion trends as a reflection of popular styles within a specific context.

The statements "Fashion trends represent the popular styles of clothing and accessories at a particular moment in time" and "A fashion trend is an innovative garment with the potential to please the masses" both received a moderate mean score of 3.73, while the statement "Fashion trends are expressions which are socio-culturally grounded in beautiful spheres, essentially employing visual characteristics" had a mean score of 3.94.

Overall, these findings suggest that fashion trends in Ghana are perceived as a dynamic process influenced by popular styles, socio-cultural factors, and innovative designs that appeal to the masses. Understanding these constituents is essential for fashion industry stakeholders to create products that resonate with consumers and stay relevant in the ever-evolving fashion landscape.

Table 4.7 The Impact of Traditional Clothing on Fashion Trends

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	±SD
The absence of tradition, a crucial value-oriented component, is evident in the contemporary fashion industry.	115	1	5	4.49	1.022
Traditional clothing reflects diverse cultures	115	1	5	4.02	1.044
Traditional clothes often neglect to prioritize tradition, culture, and sustainability.	115	1	5	3.54	1.387
The fashion world is changing rapidly, and this is affecting traditional clothing	115	1	5	3.47	1.393

Fashion and tradition go hand-in-hand and are two sides of the same trending coin	115	1	5	3.02	1.335
Following the latest fashion means people are wearing what is trending	115	1	5	3.42	1.282
Traditional clothing is a statement that can set anyone apart from the rest, and this affects trends	115	1	5	3.02	1.335
Fashion serves as a means of communication and self-expression, effectively conveying one's origins and so reflecting an individual's cultural identity.	115	1	5	3.42	1.282
Cultural shifts exert an impact on the fashion trends that emerge within a given culture or geographical area.	115	1	5	3.54	1.387
Most people tend to follow the ethnic trends of their locale	115	1	5	3.47	1.393
Culture influences fashion and vice versa.	115	1	5	3.66	1.244
Designers create new designs based on what they know about ethnic groups	115	1	5	3.89	1.352
Fashion trends are influenced by culture and changes, like modernization, art and technology	115	1	5	3.02	1.335

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

Table 4.7 explores the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends based on the responses of 115 participants. It presents the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation (\pm SD) for each statement.

The analysis of the table indicates that participants generally acknowledge the importance of tradition in the fashion world. They strongly agree that tradition is a critical value-based

element missing in today's fashion world (Mean = 4.49) and that traditional clothing reflects diverse cultures (Mean = 4.02).

Participants showed a moderate level of agreement with the statements about the impact of cultural changes on fashion trends (Mean = 3.54), the changing fashion world affecting traditional clothing (Mean = 3.47), and the idea that culture influences fashion and vice versa (Mean = 3.66). These results suggest that participants recognize the dynamic relationship between culture, tradition, and fashion trends.

Statements such as "Fashion and tradition go hand-in-hand and are two sides of the same trending coin," "Traditional clothing is a statement that can set anyone apart from the rest, and this affects trends," and "Fashion trends are influenced by culture and changes, like modernization, art, and technology" received lower mean scores, indicating that participants do not necessarily perceive these aspects to be as crucial to the relationship between traditional clothing and fashion trends.

In summary, the results of Table 4.7 reveal that participants perceive a strong connection between tradition and fashion trends, recognizing the importance of cultural influences in shaping the fashion world. However, the lower mean scores for some statements indicate that participants do not view all aspects of tradition and fashion trends as equally important in their relationship.

Table 4.8 The Relationship between Traditional/Durbar Garments and Fashion Trends

Variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	±SD
Garments are a significant part of every culture, affecting fashion trends.	115	1	5	3.30	1.188

Social and cultural values like modesty and decency are deeply linked with clothing, affecting fashion trends.	115	1	5	3.89	1.130
Garments are an expression, image and personality of culture, affecting fashion trends.	115	1	5	4.41	.859
Garments reflect the norms and cultural values of an ethnic group, affecting fashion trends	115	1	5	2.47	1.214
Garments are inseparable from society's culture because it is influenced by habits and customs that exist in society, affecting fashion trends.	115	1	5	3.34	1.388
Clothing habits differ from place to place, as every culture has unique clothing styles attributed to it, affecting fashion trends.	115	1	5	3.04	1.176
Clothing does not mean one single thing at a time	115	1	5	2.62	1.131
The judgment of people of other traditional groups by one's cultural standards and beliefs affects fashion trends.	115	1	5	3.84	1.123
Garments that are different from one's own can be challenging to accept or appreciate, affecting fashion trends.	115	1	5	3.34	1.388
Valid N (listwise)	115	1	5	2.06	0.84

Source: Fieldwork (2023)

Table 4.8 examines the relationship between traditional/durbar garments and fashion trends based on the responses of 115 participants. It presents the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation (\pm SD) for each statement.

The analysis of the table reveals that participants generally recognize the impact of traditional garments on fashion trends. The statement "Garments are an expression, image, and personality of culture, affecting fashion trends" received the highest mean score (Mean = 4.41), indicating a strong agreement among participants. Additionally, participants agreed that social and cultural values like modesty and decency are deeply linked with clothing, affecting fashion trends (Mean = 3.89) and that the judgment of people of other traditional groups by one's cultural standards and beliefs affects fashion trends (Mean = 3.84).

Statements related to the role of garments in reflecting the norms and cultural values of an ethnic group (Mean = 2.47) and the notion that clothing does not mean one single thing at a time (Mean = 2.62) received lower mean scores, suggesting that participants are less convinced of the significance of these aspects in the relationship between traditional garments and fashion trends.

The analysis also shows that participants are uncertain about some aspects of the relationship between traditional garments and fashion trends, such as the inseparability of garments from society's culture (Mean = 3.34) and the challenges in accepting or appreciating garments that are different from one's own (Mean = 3.34).

In summary, the results of Table 4.8 indicate that participants perceive a connection between traditional/durbar garments and fashion trends, acknowledging the role of cultural and social values in shaping these trends. However, the varied mean scores for different statements suggest that participants do not consider all aspects of this relationship equally significant or straightforward.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study seeks to explicitly assess the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in Ghana and how cultural experiences affect the order of importance of traditional and clothing values. This chapter summarizes the findings, concludes, recommends, and then makes suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of findings

The findings from the study reveal that durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana are significantly influenced by elements such as tradition, culture, and heritage. Participants expressed strong agreement with statements about garments reflecting tradition, cultural significance, and symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes.

It was also found that garments that allow individuals to celebrate their heritage also received a high rating, highlighting the importance of cultural representation in the fashion choices of Ghanaians. In contrast, garments made from the local Ewe Kete cloth and those inspired by the culture where they originate received moderate agreement, indicating that these aspects might be less influential in shaping the preferences of consumers in the region.

The study also established that fashion trends in Ghana are perceived as a dynamic process that evolves with time. Respondents agreed that the movement in fashion defines fashion trends and that trends represent specific looks or expressions spread across a population at a particular time and place. This indicates that popular styles, socio-cultural factors, and innovative designs that appeal to the masses are essential drivers of fashion trends in the country. Understanding

these factors is crucial for stakeholders in the fashion industry to create products that resonate with consumers and stay relevant in the ever-evolving fashion landscape.

In addition, the study explores the impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in Ghana and discovered that participants generally acknowledged the importance of tradition in the fashion world and recognized the dynamic relationship between culture, tradition, and fashion trends.

The study has established that tradition is a critical value-based element missing in today's fashion world and that traditional clothing reflects diverse cultures. However, the lower mean scores for some statements indicate that participants do not view all aspects of tradition and fashion trends as equally important in their relationship.

Lastly, the analysis of the relationship between traditional/durbar garments and fashion trends reveals that participants perceive a connection between these factors. The study found that garments are an expression, image, and personality of culture, affecting fashion trends, and that social and cultural values like modesty and decency are deeply linked with clothing.

However, the varied mean scores for different statements suggest that participants do not consider all aspects of this relationship equally significant or straightforward. Some aspects, such as the inseparability of garments from society's culture and the challenges in accepting or appreciating garments that are different from one's own, received lower mean scores, indicating that they might be less influential in the relationship between traditional garments and fashion trends.

5.3 Conclusions

1. The study identified the constituents of durbar garments and fashion trends in Ghana, highlighting the importance of tradition, culture, and heritage in shaping these trends. There

is high value on garments that reflect the symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes and those that embrace and represent the culture of the people. Moderate agreement was observed for garments made from the local Ewe Kete cloth and those inspired by the culture where they originate.

2. The impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends in the Volta Region of Ghana was assessed, revealing that participants perceive a strong connection between tradition and fashion trends. They acknowledge the importance of cultural influences in shaping the fashion world and recognize the dynamic relationship between culture, tradition, and fashion trends. However, participants do not view all aspects of tradition and fashion trends as equally important in their relationship.
3. The design and production of durbar garments for females in the Volta Region of Ghana should consider the importance of cultural, traditional, and historical aspects of the community.
4. Fashion designers, producers, and other stakeholders in the durbar garment industry incorporate the symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes, embrace and represent the culture of the people, and utilize local materials such as the Ewe Kete cloth when creating and marketing their products.
5. This approach address the preferences and expectations of consumers in the region, ensuring that the durbar garments resonate with the local community and stay relevant in the ever-evolving fashion landscape.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations can be proposed for the design, production, and marketing of durbar garments in the Volta Region of Ghana:

1. The study's findings emphasize the importance of incorporating cultural, traditional, and historical aspects into the design, production, and marketing of durbar garments in the Volta Region of Ghana. To create a deeper connection with consumers and maintain relevance in the evolving fashion landscape, fashion designers, producers, and stakeholders should focus on integrating the rich cultural heritage of the community into their garments. This includes using local materials, such as the Ewe Kete cloth, and embracing the symbolism found in Ewe traditional costumes.
2. Continuous research and innovation are essential for understanding the changing preferences, expectations, and cultural dynamics of the community. Designers and producers should invest in staying up-to-date with evolving fashion trends to cater to the needs of consumers. Collaboration and partnerships with local artisans, cultural institutions, and fashion schools can promote traditional craftsmanship, knowledge sharing, and skill development, contributing to the sustainable growth of the industry and preservation of cultural heritage.
3. Efforts should be made to educate consumers about the significance of traditional durbar garments, their cultural and historical value, and the importance of supporting local artisans and producers. This education will help create a sense of pride in the community's heritage and encourage the adoption of durbar garments as a means of cultural expression. Consumer education and awareness can also contribute to the sustainability of the durbar garment industry in the long term.
4. Lastly, effective marketing and promotional strategies are vital for attracting a broader audience and boosting demand for traditional durbar garments. Designers, producers, and stakeholders should invest in marketing campaigns that highlight the unique features, cultural significance, and craftsmanship of their garments. By addressing these

recommendations, the durbar garment industry in the Volta Region of Ghana can thrive while preserving and celebrating the rich cultural heritage of the community.

5.5 Suggestions for further studies

1. Future studies could focus on conducting a comparative analysis of durbar garment trends and preferences in different regions of Ghana or across various African countries. This would provide a broader understanding of the similarities and differences in cultural influences on fashion and help identify potential opportunities for cross-cultural collaboration and exchange.
2. Examine the role of technology in the durbar garment industry, including the use of digital design tools, e-commerce platforms, and social media for marketing and promotion. This could shed light on the effectiveness of technology in enhancing the industry's growth, innovation, and global reach.
3. Conduct research on consumer behaviour and attitudes towards durbar garments and traditional fashion in general, exploring factors such as age, gender, socio-economic background, and education. This would help identify target demographics, preferences, and potential barriers to adoption, informing marketing and product development strategies.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DRESSMAKE

Questionnaire #: -----

The purpose of this survey is to gather pertinent data regarding individuals' perceptions of fashion trends and designs of durbar garments for women in the Volta Region of Ghana. The objective is to utilize this information to guide the design, development, and production of garments that accurately represent the cultural experiences and traditional clothing values of the region. It is postulated that the provision of any knowledge has the potential to enhance production. To ensure the preservation of anonymity, refrain from inscribing your names on this instrument. The responses provided by the participant in this questionnaire will be treated with strict confidentiality. We kindly request your participation in completing this questionnaire with due diligence and attention to detail. The utilization of a check mark symbol, denoted by a square root symbol (\surd), is a viable method for indicating one's responses when confronted with objects that offer multiple alternative choices. Please provide a concise summary of your answers to the open-ended questions.

Thank you for your time

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

Name of Business _____

Gender: Male [] Female []

Age: Below 20 [] 21-25 [] 26-30 [] 31-35 [] 36-40 [] 41-45 [] 46 & above []

Marital Status: Single [] Married [] Widow []

Educational Qualification: None [] Basic [] Secondary [] Tertiary [] Others
(specify) _____

What is your position/role in the business?

Owner [] Manager [] Worker [] Apprentice []

SECTION B: WHAT CONSTITUTES DURBAR GARMENTS AND FASHION TRENDS IN GHANA

<i>What constitutes durbar garments</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i> <i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i> <i>1</i>
Since many activities occur during a durbar, all kinds of garments can be used					
A garment that reflects the tradition of the people					
A garment that reflects the cultural significance of the people					
A garment that helps the people to recollect the noble past of their ancestors					
A garment that reflects the rich cultural heritage of the people					
A garment that reflects traditional symbols of the Ewes					
A garment that reflects symbolism in Ewe traditional costumes					
A garment made from the local Ewe Kete cloth					
A garment that embraces and represents the culture of the people					
A garment that allows one to celebrate their heritage					
A garment that allows one to celebrate their origin					
A garment that is inspired by the culture where it originates.					

Fashion Trends				
Fashion trends encompass the prevailing styles of garments and accessories that are widely embraced within a specific temporal context.				
A fashion trend can be defined as a prevailing style or aesthetic that becomes popular among a specific population within a given time and location.				
Fashion trends are manifestations that are deeply rooted in socio-cultural contexts, primarily utilizing visual attributes to convey aesthetic appeal.				
A fashion trend is an innovative garment with the potential to please the masses.				
Their movement in fashion defines fashion trends				

Key: 1=Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3=Not sure; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

SECTION C: THE IMPACT OF TRADITIONAL CLOTHING ON FASHION TRENDS

	<i>To a very large extent 5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Not at all 1</i>
<i>The impact of traditional clothing on fashion trends</i>					
The absence of tradition as a fundamental value-based component is a significant deficiency within the contemporary fashion industry.					
Traditional clothing reflects diverse cultures					

Traditional clothes often neglect to prioritize tradition, culture, and sustainability.					
The fashion world is changing rapidly, and this is affecting traditional clothing					
Fashion and tradition go hand-in-hand and are two sides of the same trending coin					
Following the latest fashion means people are wearing what is trending					
Traditional clothing is a statement that can set anyone apart from the rest, and this affects trends					
A fashion statement is a language and self-expression that communicates where we came from, therefore fashion can depict an individual culture in this regard.					
Cultural shifts affect the fashion trend developed by the inhabitants of that particular culture or area.					
Most people tend to follow the ethnic trends of their locale					
Culture influences fashion and vice versa.					
Designers create new designs based on what they know about ethnic groups					
Fashion trends are influenced by culture and changes, like modernization, art and technology					

Key: 5=To a very large extent; 4= to some extent; 3= Not sure; 2= to a small extent; 1=Not at all

SECTION D: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADITIONAL/DURBAR GARMENTS AND FASHION TRENDS

	<i>Always</i>				<i>Never</i>
	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
Garments are a significant part of every culture, affecting fashion trends.					
Fashion trends are influenced by social and cultural norms like modesty and decency, which are closely related to clothes.					
Garments are an expression, image and personality of culture, affecting fashion trends.					
Garments reflect the norms and cultural values of an ethnic group, affecting fashion trends					
Since habits and practices within a society have an impact on fashion trends, clothing cannot be separated from society's culture.					
Every culture has distinctive clothing styles that are attributed to it, which has an impact on fashion trends and causes regional differences in dress habits.					
Clothing does not mean one single thing at a time					
The judgment of people of other traditional groups by one's cultural standards and beliefs affects fashion trends.					
Garments that are different from one's own can be challenging to accept or appreciate, affecting fashion trends.					

Key: 5=To a very large extent; 4= to some extent; 3= Not sure; 2= to a small extent; 1=Not at all