

AKENTEN APPIAH MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND  
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DEPARTMENT OF FASHION DESIGN AND TEXTILES EDUCATION

REDEFINING OCCASIONAL GARMENT SILHOUETTES WITH ADINKRA  
TRADITIONAL SYMBOLS

PAMELA FRIMPONG

(8201210004)

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# **DECLARATION**

## **STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I, PAMELA FRIMPONG, declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree to the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED) or elsewhere.

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## **SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidance for supervision of thesis as laid down by the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED)

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. ABOAGYEWAA-NTIRI, JOSEPHINE

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my dear late father Mr. Robert Opuni Frimpong. He was there for me in times of need. Even when I did not know who to turn to, or when I did not know who to trust, he was always there. If not for him, I would not be where I am today.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore the potential for designing garments using Akan traditional symbols (Adinkra) in the garment production process in Ghana. The selected symbols were *Akoko Nan*, *Dwennimmen*, *Akoban*, *Hye won Hye*, and *Wo Nsa Da Mu A*. The study employed a qualitative methodology. The total population of the study is 80 which consisted of the 20 executives of the Dressmakers Association (designers), 30 textile shop owners, and 30 female radio presenters (consumers) in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area of the Western Region of Ghana. Furthermore, the study employed purposive and convenience sampling to select a sample to participate in the study. The sample size of the study was 30 stakeholders selected from the three groups consisting of 10 executives of the Dressmakers Association (designers), 10 textile shop owners, and 10 female radio presenters (consumers). A semi-structured interview (pre-production) and a focus group discussion (post-production) were used to obtain data for the qualitative component of the study. The resulting qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis. The study found that most of the participants were conversant with the Adinkra symbols and expressed their interest in the Adinkra silhouette-based garments. Following the interviews with the stakeholders, the researcher designed and produced the Adinkra silhouette-based garments in the studio. A post-production interview was finally conducted with the stakeholders to evaluate the final productions. The interview revealed stakeholders appreciated the Adinkra silhouette-based garments.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Ghanaian culture involves a lot of ideas and enthusiasm which influence the way of life of the people. Even though Ghanaian culture is changing drastically in the name of fashion, modernisation, and globalisation, some cultural elements are still accepted and maintained including traditional symbols (Dzokoto, Schug, Adonu, & Nguyen, 2018). Throughout the ages, traditional symbols play and will continue to play an indispensable role in the garment industry (Mawuli, 2019).

Wearing fashionable garments has become not only a social asset but accrues personal benefits to the individual wearing them as well (Joy & Peña, 2017). True charm comes from inner sources of strength. Intelligence, the serenity of spirit, and the beauty of character are goals most often achieved by those who have a basic sense of security and self-respect. Understanding the fundamentals of good clothing or dress selection is a good start towards securing the feeling of adequacy often described as a sense of security (Guo, 2018). Ghanaian garment has a variety of choices for a variety of numerous occasions. This study examines the potential for applying Ghanaian symbols to design garments based on selected Adinkra symbols.

Culture has been associated with a group of people with common characteristics. It may, however, happen that these people are confined to a specific geographical area or otherwise (Mohajan, 2018). Such features make them distinct or unique from others. The culture of

such people portrays their very existence. Globally, all continents are rich in their culture. It identifies who they are. Similarly, Ghana has a rich culture. One's way of life, specifically, "clothing" tells who one is. The cloth a person wears either identifies him/her with a family, clan, community or ethnic group (Dzokoto et al., 2018). Certain symbols and inscriptions in the cloth/dress make it easy for a person to be identified.

However, with time there has been a gradual shift in the garment trends of the people of Ghana. Bosman (1967) asserts that a gradual influence on the clothing styles of the coastal people was occasioned by the arrival of the Portuguese and other foreign travellers through the trading of European clothes and other goods for gold. The European influence became so rampant and invasive across every activity; education, religion, politics, social change, and the garment which also robbed the nation, particularly the youth, of their sense of self-identity (Amankwah, Howard, & Sarpong, 2012).

Another factor for the loss of Ghanaian garment identity is the increased taste for foreign fabrics. A study by Amankwah et al. (2012) highlights the fact that most Ghanaians are influenced by foreign cultures; as a result, they patronize foreign fabrics or dresses. Such a situation instils in the minds of the buyer and other Ghanaians that our culture is outmoded. Tungate (2005) asserted, clothes are not bought; a persona is purchase. Deductively, foreign clothes are rather exchanged with our identities.

The way forward is to redefine such a trend as this will solidify Ghanaian identity. The Ghanaian community can boast of its highly endowed traditional Adinkra symbols. It is

unlikely to have a situation in the Ghanaian community where there was no symbol to describe. Such symbols portray our “Ghanaianess”. Gyan, Abbey, and Baffoe, (2020) asserted that unique representations have a strong influence on Ghanaian culture. They seem more specific to the Ghanaian people; therefore, it leaves a mark of “identification” whenever they are used. Regardless of the current trends in the garment industry, producers/marketers/garment designers can promote the use of these traditional symbols in garment production or dressmaking, especially in wedding gowns. Redefining Ghanaian garments ensures a new vision for the sustainable use of traditional symbols; consumer pleasure is built from awareness and responsibility, not constant consumption (Boadu, 2018).

Previous works focusing on the application of traditional symbols in contemporary clothing and garment are rife in the literature. For instance, Aboagyewaa-Ntiri (2013) described how traditional symbols have been applied in the Ghanaian garment industry. Again, Aboagyewaa-Ntiri and Vijayan (2016) related the Adinkra symbol to the empowerment of African women in the Akan context. Tamakloe (2016) also viewed clothing accessories as a symbol and a vehicle for promoting the Ewe culture in Ghana. Despite their relevance to the discourse on traditional clothing, these studies do not address practical ways of applying Akan traditional Adinkra symbols in garment design. Consequently, some experts call for further research in this direction. Dzramedo (2009) investigated the changing trends and significance of traditional systems regarding clothing and adornment in the Akan society, and recommended, among others, that there was a need for more research into the garment sense and taste of the Akans, especially in respect of the application of local fabrics.

Designing an outfit from Adinkra symbols can be considered an innovation in the field of garment development in Ghana. The garment industry should seize every opportunity to use these proverbs and symbols in the production and design of their products, especially on occasions such as the “month of love” or Valentine’s Day in February and Weddings.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Even though Akan Adinkra symbols have been used over the years in the design of garments, the potential to produce a complete garment or outfit with Adinkra symbols as silhouette appears to be under-explored in the garment industry in Ghana. Many countries that have advanced in their local garment industry have leveraged their cultural practices to develop their garment industry and ensure the uptake of their garment industry among their citizens (Moodley, 2003). Ghana is confounded with a strong culture with proverbs and symbols playing an integral role in the communities. Current garment trends are not only intrinsic but also influenced by the dynamism of globalization (Ogar et al., 2019). Thus, most garment consumers shop around for the best deal on price, quality, convenience, peer group influence, and aesthetic qualities (Hines & Bruce, 2001). Abstract symbols and proverbs are represented verbally. Corresponding symbols are found on spokesmen staff, umbrella tops, sculpture works, and, fabrics such as batik tie and dye, tie and dye, screen printing, etc. Proverbs have philosophical values. This study, therefore, investigates the potential for designing and producing garments for females out of five Akan traditional symbols, namely *Akoko Nan* (A hen’s leg), *Dwennimmen* (Ram’s horn), *Akobon* (War Horn), *Hye won Hye* (That does not burn), *Wo Nsa Da Mu A* (If your hands are in the dish).



### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to explore the potential for designing garments using Akan traditional Adinkra symbols in the garment as silhouette production industries in Ghana.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Select five original Adinkra symbols for designing garments based on documentation by Rattray (1927).
- ii. Design garments based on five selected traditional Adinkra symbols.
- iii. Produce five garments based on the five selected traditional Adinkra symbols.
- iv. To evaluate the designs of the garments with stakeholders.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed for the study:

- i. What are the names and meanings of the five selected original Adinkra symbols?
- ii. What is the procedure used in selecting five original Adinkra symbols for designing garments?
- iii. How can the five selected Adinkra traditional symbols be used for designing the garments?
- iv. To what extent can new garments be produced from the five selected Adinkra traditional symbols?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study draws awareness to the potential for using symbols in garment design and production. It is also expected that the use of Adinkra-based garments will result in a positive attitude to Akan culture and traditional symbols and proverbs among garment-loving Ghanaians.

The following are some of the significance of the study:

- The findings will lead to the patronage of garments made out of traditional symbols, thus helping to ensure the appreciation of traditional symbols and their significance.
- It would help promote the symbols and preserve the culture of Ghana.
- The project intends to add new ideas to garment design production in Ghana.
- It will also broaden the scope of the garment industry in Ghana by adding a new trend to the garment industry and garment production.
- The project will create a new commercial venture for stakeholders in the garment industry.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Limitations are likely weaknesses in the study that is out of control for the researcher the design and the results (Irving, 2019). The researcher did not include other traditional symbols from other ethnic groups in Ghana due to the limited time within which the study was conducted.

## 1.8 Delimitations of the Study

Delimitations are characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of a study and are often within the researcher's control. Delimiting factors include the research questions, variables of interest, the choice of objectives, the research paradigm, and the population chosen to be studied (Simon, 2010).

The study was delimited to only Akan symbols (Adinkra) as they are widely recognized and used among a large spectrum of Ghanaians. Furthermore, the study was delimited to only five different kinds of Akan Adinkra symbols to determine their feasibility for the production of garments. These are *Akoko Nan*, *Dwennimmen*, *Akoban*, *Hye won Hye*, *Wo Nsa Da Mu A*.

## 1.9 Definition of Key Concepts and Terms

**Garment:** a piece of clothing being an outer covering or outward appearance. It is a language that tells a story about the person who wears it.

**Proverbs:** Proverbs are short sayings that give advice or express truth and use an imaginative or metaphorical way to make a statement about life.

**Traditional symbols:** It is a visible presentation that signifies the beliefs of a particular culture and has meaning within that culture.

**Adinkra symbols:** They are full of meanings and show the richness of the Akan culture. They also serve as shorthand that is used to communicate heartfelt truths in a clear visual form.

**Silhouette:** The outline of garments.

**Sequins:** A small shiny, disc-shaped bead used for decorative purposes.

**Hem:** The lower edge of a part of the garment.

**Pattern:** It is a type of fashion template that is often fashioned out of paper and used to cut out individual pieces of clothing from fabrics or materials. It can be a basic or commercial pattern and comes in various sizes.

**Occasional wear:** It is an outfit used for important occasions. These clothes are unique. They are distinct from everyday clothing.

### **1.10 Organization of the Research Study**

This research is carefully organized and put into six (6) main chapters. Chapter One covers the justify the research work. The general concept, research question, the purpose and objectives of the investigation, and the outline of the thesis chapters are all included in this section. Chapter Two reviews the relevant related literature on the research topic. The review should be aimed toward the research's declared objectives for the study. It also points out any gaps in the literature that the study aims to fill. Chapter Three is the Research Methodology. This section would contain details about the participants, such as sampling methodology, processes, and equipment. It also covers research design, equipment description, and distribution. Chapter Four is the findings of the study and discussion. The research findings will be presented and described in this chapter. The findings are written in prose with citations. To make reference easier, more illustrative material is placed in the appropriate sections of the chapter. The discussion focused on the research's major findings and the implications drawn from them based on findings from similar earlier studies. Chapter Five is the production of the occasional garment based on the five selected Adinkra symbols. Chapter Six is the Summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations. The main research findings will be discussed, as well as how the research activity has added to

knowledge. The sub-section could include study recommendations and limits, as well as suggestions for future research.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter involved the introduction of the study which further consisted of the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose, objectives and research questions of the study, the significance of the study, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations, definition of key concepts and terms, and the organization of the research report. Chapter two consists of the theoretical framework and literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and discusses previous empirical literature in respect of the relevance of studio-based research, idea development in arts, Akan symbols, mechanisms and processes for producing garments, and models for designing garments. But first, it discusses the theoretical framework for the study.

#### **2.2 Akan Adinkra Symbols**

The Akans constitute the single largest ethnic community in Ghana making up about 49.1% of the entire population of the country (Appiah-Adjei, 2014). They comprise 11 sub-groups namely Akuapim, Akyim, Ahanta, Asante, Bono, Akwamu, Fante, Guan, Kwahu, Sefwi, and Nzima (Quan-Baffour, 2011). Migrating from the area of the ancient Ghana Empire, most Akans settled in present-day Ghana, where they successively took permanent settlements between the 11th and 18th centuries; others inhabit the eastern part of Côte d'Ivoire and parts of Togo (Kyiileyang, Debrah, & Williams, 2017).

Every society has a group of symbols that it associates with and this permeates every culture and continent in the world (Eriksen & Nielsen, 2013). It is said that before the emergence of the language as known today, symbols were the basic mode of communication (Umeogu, 2013). In Africa, symbols play a major role in communication and interaction in the community. Similarly, among the Akans of Ghana, symbols have and continued to play a longstanding role in the lives of its people. Since symbols are the embodiment of the

knowledge and communication of any society or group of people, the Akan people leveraged symbols in enhancing communication among themselves (Lang, 2014).

The Akans practice a dynamic culture involving symbols, proverbs, and wise sayings (Quan-Baffour, 2011), often depicted visually and philosophically (Amate, 2011; Kquofi, Amate, & Tabi-Agyei, 2013; Kquofi, Sarbah, & Arthur, 2015; Umeogu, 2013). The Akan symbols of the Twi-speaking folks of Ghana include a wealth of symbolic and socio-cultural qualities that may be used to enhance socio-cultural development and information literacy of highly valuable traditional Ghanaian customs collectively referred to as Adinkra (Dumouchelle, 2017).

The term “Adinkra” is derived from the Twi expression “to say goodbye”. According to oral tradition, Adinkra was the name of a king of Gyaman in Cote d'Ivoire who was decapitated at the turn of the 19th century during the reign of Nana Bonsu Panyin of Asante for asserting to possess a replica of the renowned Asante Golden Stool, which turned out to be a farce after it was captured by the Asantes (Kissi, Fening, & Asante, 2019). Following his death, the craftsmen he employed were taken as captives to the Asante kingdom. They are said to have introduced the art of making Adinkra cloth from the styles or emblems identified on King Adinkra's garments and the sections of his stool in Asante (Rattray, 1927 as cited in Kissi, Fening, & Asante, 2019).

Other cultures and symbols are increasingly replacing and collapsing the traditional symbols that were previously revered in Ghanaian communities, thanks to the entrance of foreign cultures and symbols into Ghanaian customs (Linklater, 2019). The Akan Adinkra symbols, on the other hand, have stood the test of time as they tend to decode, understand, construct,

question, and assess communication using visual pictures creatively and suitably to transmit significant meanings (Amate, 2011).

### **2.2.1 The Role of the Adinkra Symbols in the Akan Society**

Symbols are tools of communication and expression of human thought and emotions. According to Umeogu (2013), human beings have always communicated with symbols since time immemorial as they enhance the communicative and interactive role of society. Symbols predate human language and as a result, they can reveal what words cannot. Indeed, it is said that “words stop, where symbols begin”. There are three types of symbols namely direct, indirect and non-material symbols. Dukor (2010: p. 201 as cited in Umeogu, 2013) described direct symbols as those whose material image expresses what they mean ideologically. Examples of direct symbols include the Adinkra symbols of the Akans. Indirect symbols, on the other hand, represent symbols whose material objects represent a different image that is not immediately discerned in the material. Lastly, non-material symbols are manifested in gesticulations and linguistics which are types of manifestations where the actual understanding of the symbols is unearthed through comprehensive reflection.

Closely related to symbols are proverbs which represent the rich cultural ideas of a society expressed in short and wise sayings. Proverbs represent an indispensable, rich source of imagery as well as highlight community among Africans including the Akans of Ghana (Dickson & Mbosowo, 2014; Kyiileyang et al., 2017). Proverbs transmit the socio-cultural values and heritage of a cultural group. According to Quan-Baffour (2011), proverbs express



the rich cultural heritage of society as they are metaphors and figures of speech employed for imparting wisdom and knowledge to the younger members of society. Proverbs play several roles in African society. Among others, they communicate the values of the community as much as they are communicative tools in themselves. Proverbs have also been viewed from different perspectives including the practical, philosophical, and aesthetic points of view (Kquofi et al., 2015; Marfo, Opoku-Agyeman, & Nsiah, 2011; Yankah, 1989).

The point of convergence of symbols and proverbs, from the foregoing, is not far-fetched. Symbols form the basis of human communication whereas proverbs are one of the forms of communication; this is to suggest that symbols may indirectly manifest as proverbs (Umeogu, 2013). To some, symbols might be construed differently by different people and this may form the basis of a community (Eriksen & Nielsen, 2013). Thus, it is noted that symbols and proverbs are essentially expressions of the beliefs, practices, and values of a group of people (Marfo et al., 2011).

Using what people are already acquainted with might sometimes be the most effective approach to catch their attention (Ahrens & Schneider, 2021). People are more likely to pay attention to stimuli that they can relate to (Sullivan & Li, 2021). People, most especially Africans, prefer to internalize judgments and make decisions based on prior information or experiences (Sullivan & Li, 2021). Consumers are said to have pre-existing thinking patterns, procedural knowledge, or perceptual systems that impact their tastes and decisions (Schubert, 2012).

The character of oral cultures is reflected in proverbs, which are empirical stepping stones. This elucidates the essence of proverbs and defines our forefathers in terms of the important role ideology, philosophy, and style play in daily life (Sahu et al., 2018). It is crucial to remember that proverbs, as elucidated by Moon, have been around for a long time and that they have been experimentally verified and proven to be wise sayings that warn and lead our people daily (Brophy, 2016).

Proverbs has once again created an atmosphere of greater knowledge and morality among its people and the rest of the globe. The application of the head is based on an awareness of local proverbs. Proverb-oriented oral traditions are widespread in Third World societies. In decoding, proverbs and myths are quite useful. Proverbs can teach us about our society (Mkandawire, 2011). People's ideas about the cosmos and how to live in it are frequently seen in folktales and proverbs. As a result, it is essential to consider our forebears' cultural background, ideology, and philosophy as it relates to life. As a result, morality, dignity, confidence, and self-reliance are infused into these ideas (proverbs). As a result, appreciating these life flavours as the "backbone" of African civilization will not be out of place (Adugna, 2014).

Mbiti (1997) indicated that proverbs are firmly ingrained in our African culture and that nearly everyone who grows up in a community will become a walking carrier of proverbs. Mbiti assessed the identity and basis of proverbs as the principles that support Africa and the rest of the globe. Indeed, Africa's whole social environment, including culture, attests to this

reality by displaying proverbs as one of the weapons utilized in creating society (Biney, 2011).

### **2.2.2 Empowerment of African Women through Adinkra Symbols**

Shettar (2020) describes women's empowerment as processes and strategies for improving the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender, and economic progress of women and women's communities. Women's social and economic development is critical to the overall economic development of any society or country. The gender divide in terms of equal privileges and education opportunities has been and continues to be significant in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The cultural concerns, religion, tradition, and, more often than not, economics, combined with fear and suspicion, particularly women face even more seemingly insurmountable barriers as a result of Western education. Girls' socialization reinforces recognition of the dominant sex roles with family life as the ultimate goal, rather than labour force participation for women. Girls growing up in such circumstances will only be educated if schooling is provided.

Purnamawathi (2019) noted empowerment as "the extent to which society has many choices from various opportunities," such as by developing the notion of "human freedom" in five respects: economic empowerment, political freedom, social opportunities, security, and transparency as the principles and ultimate goals of development, while economic measures are the way to achieve them. According to Suharto (2010 as cited in Purnamawathi, 2019), empowerment emphasizes not just the autonomy of individual community members, but also the strengthening of institutions. The main components of empowerment are instilling

modern cultural values such as hard work, self-reliance, efficiency, openness, and a responsible attitude. Furthermore, the goal of empowerment is to increase the power of the community, particularly weak groups that are powerless due to internal conditions (such as their own perceptions) or external conditions (such as being oppressed by unfair social structures). These values are pervasive in African societies and more so treasured among the Akans. The Adinkra symbols of the Akans have been found as a source of empowerment for women (Aboagyewaa-Ntiri & Vijayan, 2016) as they always epitomize these values. In their study, Aboagyewaa-Ntiri and Vijayan (2016) enumerated a number of Adinkra symbols with meanings symptomatic of the well-being and empowerment of women in Akan communities including the following:

- Aya ‘Fern’: Symbol of endurance and resourcefulness
- Sesa wo suban: ‘Change your behaviour’ Symbol of life transformation
- Fawohodie: ‘Independence’ Symbol of freedom, emancipation and liberty
- Mmerɛdane: ‘Time changes’ Symbol of dynamics in life
- Nyansapɔ: ‘Wisdom knot’ Symbol of wisdom, ingenuity and patience
- Neaɔpeseɔbedihene: ‘He who wants to be king’ Symbol of leadership

According to the authors, centuries of a negative self-image among African women were the result of a male-dominated society with stereotypes that placed men on a pedestal for being wiser, more intelligent, and strong (Gyan, Abbey, & Baffoe, 2020). Similarly, in Akan thought, the woman was always seen as subservient to the man in many ways. Some of these ways are very pervasive: women depend on men for their basic survival, women are of inferior intellect, women are incapable of leadership, and in a worse form women are only good for sex (objectification of women) (Gyan et al., 2020). These negative perceptions and

stereotypes of women have contributed greatly in reducing the social, emotional, political, and economic independence of women in the Akan society. Furthermore, these perceptions have reinforced a negative self-image among women. As negative self-images are mental pictures of the “nothingness” of Akan women, Aboagyewaa-Ntiri and Vijayan (2016) motivate that adopting positive mental images in the form of empowering Adinkra symbols in the dress and accessories of women can serve as a strategy for ensuring an affirmative behaviour among Akan women. Aboagyewaa-Ntiri and Vijayan (2016) pointed out that Adinkra symbols can be incorporated into a variety of female garments in a bid to raise the power consciousness of Akan women.

In as much as the Adinkra symbols are numerous and of a different variety, many other Adinkra symbols can be found as sources of empowerment for women. In this study, the selected symbols are equally empowering symbols to the cause of women. For instance, the “Akoben” symbol has been found by researchers to possess an empowering value for environmental protection and sustainability. Without the environment, the community does not exist. Without the community, the role of women which involves nurturing and protection cannot be fulfilled. Among some of the symbols, Adom, Opoku, Newton, and Yeboah (2018) referenced the Akoben symbol as one that is applicable to environmental sustainability education.

### **2.2.3 The Use of Symbols and Artifacts in Garment Production**

Artefacts are the products and processes that incorporate symbols in garment businesses' and the industry's work at the same time in the garment industry. The apparent physical goods of the companies engaged are artefacts in the form of unique dress ware as well as accessories. Such products, on the other hand, are the primary method by which these companies portray themselves, particularly their corporate and brand images, beyond their stakeholders, allowing those stakeholders to make sense of the company in the ways that the company's executives wish. Such image forecasts, as well as the reactions of their stakeholders, have an impact on the image projecting businesses' identities and subsequent artefacts (Cappetta & Gioia, 2013). To look at it in another way, cultural artefacts serve as both the tool and the objective of actions aimed at improving the image and reputation of image-driven businesses. The exquisite garment is characterized by its artefacts, such as clothes, accessories, stores, and so forth. It is an industry that thrives or perishes based on the images and interpretations that its artefacts transmit. Both domestic and foreign audiences value fine garment artefacts because they are ubiquitous, visible, and important. Nevertheless, their *raison d'être* is perplexing: to create special items that customers primarily utilize to express their particular identities, social standing, and aspirations. However, it is the artefacts' merely symbolic function that provides scholarly insight into the larger significance of artefacts through organizations (Grömer, 2016).

Perhaps most intriguingly, businesses in this industry establish, maintain, and modify their organizational identities largely through their artefacts, and transmit those identities to various constituents using image-based "sense giving" procedures.

The garment business is the most obvious industry to investigate to learn more about the link between artefact, image, identity, sense-making and sense-giving mechanisms. In this chapter, we will look at how products and other firm artefacts are used to project corporate as well as brand image, to learn more about the connections between sense-making and sense-giving activities, as well as the creation, maintenance, and transformation of organizational identity.

In both corporate sense-making as well as sense-giving, artefacts as symbols play significant descriptive and operational roles. The interpretations provided to organizational artefacts influence the sense-making as well as sense-giving factors that enable organizational identity and the preservation or subsequent change of the artefacts that reflect that identity, affecting both internal and external representations of the group (clan). Schein's typology is valuable, but it obscures the relevance of artefacts and symbols (Robinson & Baum, 2020). We contend that objects and symbols are significant. They have an impact not just on the surface but are also important conduits for addressing the underlying processes that determine image and identity.

Garment arbiters, who may pronounce which individuals are in and which are out within this specific segment, may play a crucial role in setting symbol borders. Garment magazines and their editors are the most well-known of these arbiters. The importance of attractive photography and the emphasis on the notion of a symbol as art has continued to elevate the prominence of these publications. The apparel industry has worked to elevate the symbolic worth of premium garment items while downplaying their materiality. One publication, in

particular, has aided in the transition of a high garment from a purely industrial business to a cultural one (Geczy, 2019).

Fine garment businesses and arbiters also increasingly emphasized the aesthetic and symbolic characteristics of the items over their utilitarian use as a cultural enterprise. A symbolic need cannot be met for \$50, but an instrumental need can. Garment items generate a symbolic language that may be utilized to set oneself apart from others: less instrumentality equals more individuality (King, 2018).

The garment business has been nearly exclusively driven by symbols in the past. Surprisingly, making a profit was not a priority in its early years. The business is based on "cults of personality," with nearly all of these companies intimately linked to their brilliant founders. However, the situation has changed. Economic reasons have surpassed symbolic elements in importance, resulting in the integration of expressive symbolic and economically instrumental aspects in the design and delivery of artifactual products. The ability to meet both expressive and instrumental criteria is determined by "style," an artistic decision made by a garment house on the various items in its collection, their major characteristics, and how they are integrated (Behuria, 2021).

Considering the widespread perception of the garment as a superficial industry, it has long been a topic of sociological research. Garment, on the other hand, has recently been a topic of interest in the literature on organization and management. The products of the industry have always been seen as vehicles for the expression of societal and organizational identity.



“We are a business (we are an industry) that is special and exclusive,” the apparent message delivered at the organizational level. Our items provide the impression that they are unique and special to those who purchase them.” It's vital to remember that this is a business where appearances are (nearly) everything. Almost all actions are governed by image (Garcia, 2021).

Artefacts are typically thought to exist at the surface level of a company's culture (i.e., "visible organizational structure and procedure"). Artefacts are “material items produced by individuals to enable culturally expressive activities,” according to Trice and Beyer (Siciliano, 2016). Artefacts, according to Gagliardi, are "pathways of activity" that "contain a tangible element in the social system (Oppl & Stary, 2014)." The 'physicality' factor has gotten the most emphasis when it comes to artefacts, which is understandable. The customary emphasis on materiality, on the other hand, might obscure the larger significance of artefacts in transmitting deep meanings and serving as strong symbols (Iliopoulos, 2016).

#### **2.2.4 Idea Development in Garment Design**

Colour, texture, space, lines, pattern silhouette, form, proportion, balance, emphasis or focal point, rhythm, and harmony are all aspects that go into garment design. Each one of these features adds to the garment's aesthetic appeal as well as psychological comfort. Illusion principles can be used in clothing design to compliment the wearer's physique.

Designers simply answer that ideas come with their motivations, lifestyles, and perhaps personal sentiments when asked to discuss how they create and how they produce design ideas. Thorough observation and study of a clothing designer's method may capture how they

design (Lee & Jirousek, 2015). The conceptual research approach in the design stage has been researched so far in the domains of product, architectural, as well as engineering design. However, most of the studies on the subject of clothing design have focused on examining end products, such as how culture influences designs, how historical garments affected their respective times, garment trends, size concerns, and the social significance of apparel (Bhamra & Lofthouse, 2016).

### **2.3 Theoretical framework**

The framework adopted for this study emphasises the studio as a comprehensive view of the trilateral connection of the human surroundings, design, and social activities. Ankiewicz and De Swardt (2006) argue that specific forms of knowledge are connected with specific stages of the design process. According to Ankiewicz and De Swardt (2006), they can vary based on the field and its ancient development. “Because design functions in a world of uncertain finance preferences, time constraints, competing prejudices, personal and organizational politics, and so forth and designers must be able to react or account for these factors”(Ankiewicz & De Swardt 2006, p. 137). Within the design studio, activities, attitudes, and assertions establish logical links to the design problem and human interactions (Carvalho & Dong 2009). With studio-based learning, tacit norms and practices in the studio govern how interpretation is developed and design is performed.

The practice of studio-based research and learning must consider the wider disciplinary society and aim to establish a studio connection for students to acquire the procedures, norms, and tools used by the higher specialized society of practice. The studio practice must

respect and consider the academic society in which students, as well as professors, participate. This studio connection, as well as the methods in which instructors serve, must not just act as guides, but also mediators for students' transition to proficient training, which is a key component of the theoretical outline.

It is necessary to separate the activities distinctive to the studio as a practice society from disciplinary appropriate gears, practices, and standards as we explore studio-based instruction to draw values that may be useful in different disciplines. The development of this awareness is a prerequisite for critical reflection (Fischer, 2005), particularly in multidisciplinary academic design studios, where students from various backgrounds collaborate.

As a first start, the current framework gives a method of understanding the studio that embraces the professional society's norms, practices, and tools while also taking into consideration the disciplinary standards of the academic community. This difference ought to be useful to scholars willing to learn more about the nature of studio-based training and experts who want to use the studio approach in their teaching. During the early 1900s, the Bauhaus School of Design in Germany established the design studio as the first foundation of industrial design education and this was eventually adopted by colleges and universities with workshop-based design curricula (Bergdoll & Dickerman, 2009).

The studio, as employed in design-related curricula such as landscape design, interior design, architecture, and industrial design, is an instructional environment in which undergraduates are allotted separate desks that are, in most circumstances, accessible to students at regular

times during the semester. Students are motivated to work from the studio instead of at home during off-hour times as they often meet several times a week for 3–4 hours sessions. Undergraduates' work often focuses on design challenges anchored in the reality of professional practice as a variety of problem-based and project-based learning. Students are given a project brief by the instructor that identifies an ill-defined challenge that they have to solve through the design work.

“A design is a significant category of human activity connecting theory and practice, combining systematic and artistic efforts to address ill-structured and open-ended issues” (Hoadley & Cox 2009, p. 20). Working with unclear parameters in specific circumstances necessitates knowledge or concepts on how to acquire and understand the problem at hand, and handle the complication of ill-structured and open-ended challenges, which is crucial to design work. Students present their projects, representations, or prototypes to the faculty or specialized designers for assessment at various points throughout the semester. The goal of these sessions is to encourage students to reflect and explore their knowledge development during project assessments and inquiries. This provides an opportunity for students to learn about the design process from one another, instructors, and industry professionals. In an ongoing iterative cycle, Brocato (2009) splits the design process into three parts. The first phase involves students evaluating an ill-defined topic and developing several proposals. The second phase comprises peer and instructor critique, which can come in the form of pin-ups, formal juries, and desk or table critiques (known as “crits” in design disciplines). In the third phase, students enhance their work after the proposal and criticism phases by going through

many practices of their design and incorporating responses from classmates and teachers as they construct a fresh succession of proposals.

In the design process at an architecture studio, there are more technically accurate evolved aims for sequential and aesthetically superior polished ideas of earlier iterations. Iterations are preceded by new modified and polished concepts, which are informed by previous work's assessment and response. As the number of iterations grows, students will need to access a wider variety of materials and content. The location of work in a critique area is central to studio-based learning, as it makes the work never complete, constantly on a path toward greater iterations." (Brocato, 2009, p.142).

Hoadley and Cox (2009) argued that a good design is iterative, with variations in the design explaining the design process's stages. Iterations are just useful if they help you get responses from your colleagues and mentor during the design assessment. One feature of a design problem is that the very understanding of human activities is limited, and also designs will inevitably result in unforeseen outcomes. Students depict their concepts in the studio using a variety of expressive techniques, such as drafting on paper or sketching using digital tools, producing low-fidelity prototypes, or building small-scale and even true-to-scale models. Modelling, as well as other theoretical framework representations of design, serve two goals related tasks in the tutorial room. Students employ representations to give physical form to the concepts they propose and to evaluate them. Instructors, on the other side, use these models as indicators to evaluate students' understanding of design. In modelling, the students are in charge of creating an audit trail, which is a log of the modelling process for people

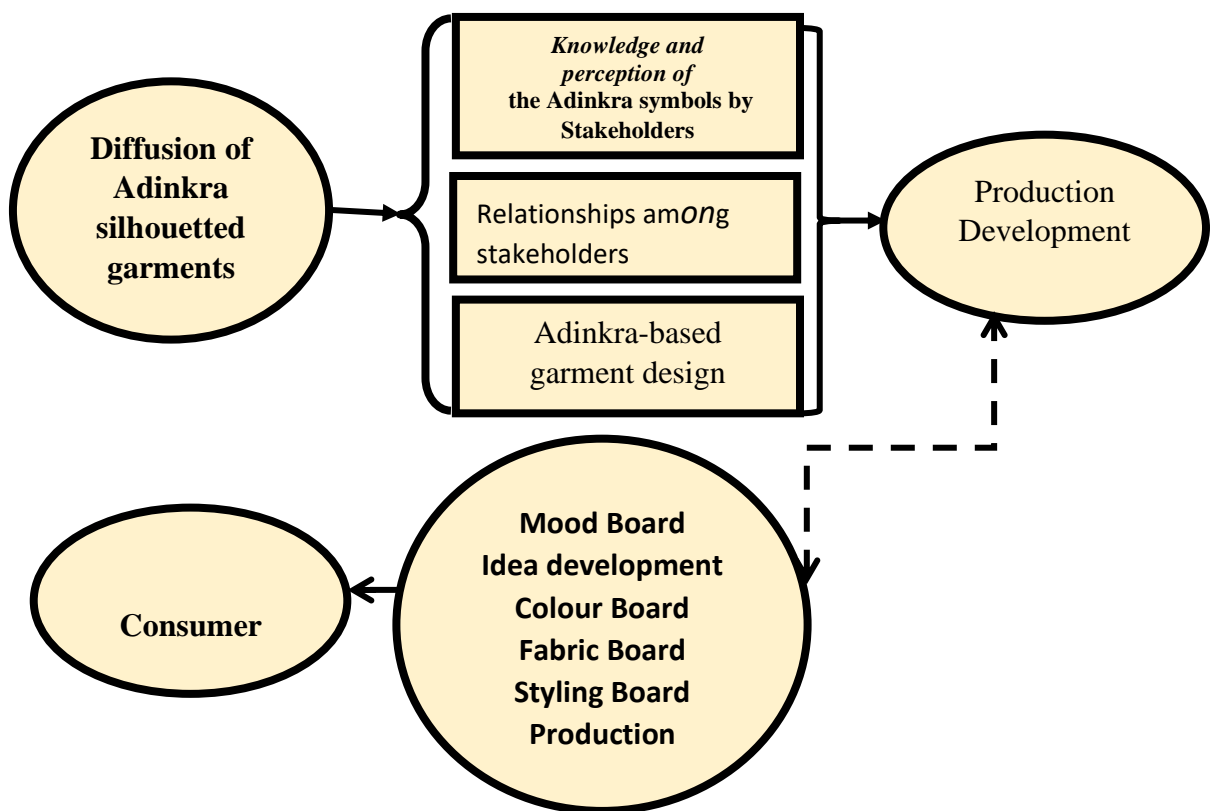
responsible to review the design process and the product. What was formerly a private procedure for the student is presently made openly for an electorate to judge the work of the student. Modelling, in a way, is an "externalization" of the internal design of the student's thought processes. It also serves as a tool for students to develop a better understanding of themselves as designers by achieving insight from their learning process.

## **2.4 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework was adapted from Aboagyewaa-Ntiri (2019) to fit the current study. The model (Fig. 2.1) begins with a diffusion of Adinkra silhouetted garments and ends with the same diffusion of Adinkra silhouetted garments, resulting in a closed-loop arrangement system. As a result, a flow model suggests relationships between the components in order to achieve the proposed diffusion of Adinkra silhouetted garments. Following the diffusion of Adinkra silhouetted garments are the three facilitating factors used in Burgess et al. (2006)'s research, which has been modified to meet the needs of the study. These factors include knowledge of the Adinkra symbols, relationships among clothing industry stakeholders, and the textiles and clothing industry, as well as the production of Adinkra-based garments. This conceptual framework model's focal point is the consumer. The current market is driven by consumers rather than manufacturers (De Mooij, 2011; Kotler, 2012; Schultz, Block, & BIG research, 2012).

Once the production development stakeholders can demonstrate the presence of these facilitating factors in the industry, the new Adinkra sub-sector can adopt some of the symbols, taking their meanings into account for the design of new symbolic clothing. As a result, there is a need to establish continuous interactions between production development. Manufacturers, suppliers, trade associations, and others are examples (see Fig. 2.3).

Technology, such as Mood Board, Idea development, Colour Board, Fabric Board, Styling Board and Production, can be used to develop and produce Adinkra-based symbolic clothing. After developing the Adinkra silhouetted garment, it is critical to ensure that these products reach the intended consumers. Because the Adinkra silhouetted garment is culturally based, it is expected that consumers will adopt these products as it has the potential to empower them. Cultural symbols are used as product designs, and the meanings of the culture are communicated to consumers through the use of the products (McCracken, 1986). The didactic meanings of Adinkra symbols may aid in realigning most people's attitudes towards women to actively pursue careers, professions, and vocations that will improve their lives.



**Fig. 2.1: Conceptual Framework (adapted from Aboagyewaa-Ntiri, 2019)**

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter involved the related literature, the theoretical framework and the Conceptual Framework used for the study. The theoretical framework and the Conceptual Framework also clarified how well the studio is based on a comprehensive understanding of the trilateral connection of the human surroundings, design, and social activities. It was made clear again, how the framework assists students in their academic, practical, and project work in the art discipline, especially studio-based research.

Focusing on the Akan tradition, symbols and proverbs were also explored in the literature. It was established that symbols form the basis of human communication whereas proverbs are one of the forms of communication. And finally, it was made known that symbols and proverbs are essentially expressions of beliefs, practices, and values of a group of people.

Also, the literature review explored the role of Adinkra symbols in women empowerment; and the use of symbols and artefacts in garment design. This exploration resulted in the establishment of the fact that customary emphasis on materiality might obscure the larger significance of artefacts in transmitting deep meanings and serving as strong symbols.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers the research paradigm, the methodology, the research design, and the research tools used for the study. The main focus of this study was the exploration and description of the use of Akan Adinkra symbols in the production of garments for occasional dressing in Ghana.

#### **3.2 Studio Investigation Methodology**

The methodology provides a framework for the research, which is a logical and intelligible system based on the researcher's viewpoints, beliefs, and values that guides her decisions. The methodology, according to Moncayo et al. (2017), can be seen as a distribution of a mostly qualitative approach. According to Queirós et al. (2017), a methodology does not aim to provide solutions but rather provides a hypothetical viewpoint for determining which approach, collection of methodologies, or best practices can be applied to the research question(s) at hand.

This study employed the studio investigation methodology (Puadi et al., 2021). This methodology consists of phases 1 and 2 which are the data collection methods and the artwork approach respectively. Phase 1 consists of the various design possibilities vis; qualitative, neonarrative, object (subject of study), and visual research methods; while phase 2 involves the artwork approach which further consists of the art-making process and studio experience.

Furthermore, this study uses the qualitative approach to generate preliminary relevant data from fashion stakeholders including designers, textile shop owners, and consumers on their preferences for garment design and production based on the selected Adinkra symbols. The researcher also conducted focus group interviews with the fashion stakeholders on their views and perceptions of the resulting garment designs based on the selected Adinkra symbols.

Furthermore, the art-making process consists of artwork conception, idea development, making the artwork, and finalizing the artwork and resolution, respectively. Studio experience involves problem finding, problem-solving, media exploration, creative mind/process, site of inquiry, and giving form to ideas of personal and social relevance. This study, therefore, made use of both the art-making process and studio experience under the artwork approach.

### **3.3 Research Design**

Creswell (2009, p.3) describes the research design “as the plan and procedure for research and this involves the decisions on assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis”. It is a conceptual sequence that connects the study’s results to the proposed goals of the study. According to Babbie (2013, p.115), “the best study designs use more than one research method, taking advantage of their varied strengths”. The type of research problem, objectives, and questions of the study (Creswell, 2009, p.18) inform the choice of this approach. Babbie (2013, p.114) suggests that each research method has its strengths and

weaknesses and that some concepts are more suitably investigated with the use of some methods than others.

This study employed a studio-based research design. This design involves a practice component in the technique or research product (Skains, 2018). Studio-based research takes a more detailed look at the processes that take place in visual art studios and how they relate to theory and practice. As a result, the theories and methodologies are combined to form a creative process or methodological model that is distinct from traditional research (Barret & Bold, 2007, 2014).

Studio-based research, also known as studio practice, is described as the systematic use of the artistic process, or the actual production of artistic expressions in all forms of the arts, as a key approach for researchers to explore and examine experience (Mcniff, 2016). These investigations are distinct from research projects in which the arts may play a key part but are primarily employed as data. Practice-based research is a unique investigation that uses practice and the outcomes of that practice to generate new knowledge. Claims of originality and contribution to knowledge can be proved by creative products like photographs, drawings, and models, as well as other outcomes like performances and exhibitions, while the relevance and context of the claims are articulated in words (Candy, 2006). The researcher will build a comprehensive or dense description of experiences surrounding the usage of various types of African materials in the construction of garments; therefore, the art studio-based design will be applied (Streubert, Speziale & Carpenter, 2003). The various materials will be tested for garment production capability, as well as garment design

development from a mood board and garment manufacture employing the African material in a studio setting.

### **3.4 Population for the Study**

The total population of the study is 80 which consisted of the 20 executives of the Dressmakers Association (designers), 30 textile shop owners, and 30 female radio presenters (consumers) in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area of the Western Region of Ghana. These stakeholders are involved in the design, production, and consumption of garment products and were considered knowledgeable on the role and use of Adinkra symbols in garment design and production. The inclusion criteria were that the participants had to be involved in the garment industry, and had knowledge of and or had actually traded in or dealt with the Adinkra symbols in the course of their work. This was because the purpose of the study was to explore the use of Adinkra symbols for garment design and production. The last criterion was that consumers of garments knew and had used garments with Adinkra symbols embossed on them.

### **3.5 Sampling Technique**

A non-probability sampling approach was used for this study. Furthermore, the study employed the use of purposive and convenience sampling to select a sample to participate in the study. These approaches ensure that participants were selected based on the judgement of the researcher to fulfil the inclusion criteria and the availability of the potential participants to participate in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2007, p.166; Henn *et al.*, 2009, p.157).

### **3.6 Sample Size**

The sample size of the study was 30 stakeholders selected from the three groups consisting of 10 Executives of the Dressmakers Association (designers), 10 textile shop owners, and 10 female radio presenters (consumers). As demonstrated in previous studies, a sample size of 30 is ideal for a qualitative study as the resulting data is rich in thick description (Aboagyewaa-Ntiri & Mintah, 2016).

### **3.7 Instrumentation**

A semi-structured interview and a focus group discussion were used to obtain data for the qualitative component of the study. This was actualised with the aid of a semi-structured interview schedule to obtain information on the preferences, views and perceptions of the participants in the study regarding research questions 1, 3, and 4. The first instrument consisted of semi-structured interviews with Executives of the Dressmakers Association (designers), textile shop owners, and female radio presenters (consumers) in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area. It must be noted that there were three different schedules for the semi-structured interviews for the three groups of stakeholders.

The questions in instrument 1 consist of Section A: demographic background B. experiences C. preferences D. uses of the symbols E. benefits of the symbols and F. meanings of the symbols. The second instrument, which was for textile shop owners, consisted of 4 questions on the fabric quality of the selected fabric such as colour and texture, brightness, handling, washability, and environmental friendliness of Adinkra Symbol silhouette-based garments. The third instrument, which was for the female radio presenters (consumers), consisted of 5

questions under the themes: Section A. Demographic background B. Perception C. Preferences of Adinkra Symbol-based garments.

The last instrument was a Focus Group Interview with the three groups of participants referred to as the “stakeholders”. The questions in the instrument consisted of Section A. demographic background B. Perceptions, and C. Preferences of Adinkra Symbol silhouette-based garments.

### **3.8 Reliability and Validity of the Instrument**

To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted with an expert at the Accra Technical Training Centre (ATTC), one designer, a garment shop assistant, and one consumer from Takoradi to answer an initial draft of the questions in the instruments. This was to ensure clarity, and accuracy of the questions, and to also enhance the validity of the questions (Henn et al., 2009, p.157). The feedback received were used to improve the instruments.

### **3.9 Data Collection**

The qualitative data for this study was obtained through semi-structured interviews with selected stakeholders in the garment industry: 10 Executives of the Dressmakers Association (designers), 10 garment shop owners, and 10 female radio presenters (consumers). The interviews were conducted with the individual stakeholders in their natural setting in their workplaces.

### **3.10 Data Analysis**

Following the completion of the interviews with all stakeholders, the data collected were analysed using the thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis is a technique for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes in data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study follows Robson's (Robson & McCartan, 2016) thematic analysis approach, which includes five phase guidelines: i) familiarizing oneself with the data; ii) producing the initial codes; iii) finding themes; iv) constructing thematic networks; and v) integration and interpretation. This analysis approach is suited for this study since it emphasizes participants' viewpoints, knowledge, and experience as the primary object of investigation. The integration of data from multiple participants aided in understanding the big and complex concerns surrounding the use of Adinkra symbols in the garment sector.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

The study was conducted in line with the research ethical guidelines of the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED). Care was taken to assure the participants of the qualitative interview that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without prior notice to the researcher. They were also assured of the confidentiality of their data and other general principles of research ethics in conformity with Gajjar (2013).

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the qualitative interviews, which included individual interviews prior to the design and production of the garments based on the selected symbols. Again, the interviews included focus group interviews conducted after the design and production of the garments.

The study was to explore the potential for designing garments using Akan traditional Adinkra symbols in the garment as silhouette production industries in Ghana.

This chapter discusses the findings of the interviews and results from the studio-based investigation and concludes with the findings of a focus-group interview. The discussion under the qualitative interviews is thematically organized under the objective.

#### **4.2 Qualitative Findings**

Prior to the studio work, interviews were conducted with stakeholders to understand their perceptions and preferences before the actual design and production of the garments. As a demand-driven product, it is necessary to factor in the inputs of potential dealers and customers before designing and producing a new garment based on a novel concept. The stakeholders who participated in the interviews were garment designers, textile shop owners, and consumers. Finally, the interview findings of the focus group interview (conducted after the design and production phase) involving garment designers, textile shop owners, and consumers are presented to conclude this section.



#### **4.2.1 Interviews with Executives of Dressmakers Association (Designers)**

##### **A: Demographic background**

Garment designers are responsible for sketching and producing the designs. They ensure the integration of all the elements of the design, such as colour, texture, space, lines, pattern silhouette, shape, proportion, balance, emphasis or focal point, rhythm and harmony. Each of these contributes towards the visual perception and psychological comfort of the garment. As a result, 10 garment designers were selected purposively to participate in the study. The participants were represented with the codes PD 1-10 where PD is Participant Designers.

The designers were made up of three (3) males and seven (7) females. This was due to the fact that many garment designers happen to be females. Their ages ranged from 25 to 55. They had worked between 5 years and 25 years. The participants were interviewed at their workplaces during working hours.

##### **B. Experience with Adinkra Symbols**

The study sought to find out from the designers their experiences with Adinkra symbols. All the participants responded to this question. Their responses suggested that they had significant knowledge and experience of Adinkra Symbols. Some designers revealed in relation to when they became aware of the symbols and what they mean to them:

*“Primary school. The symbols mean love, unity, war, honesty, sorrow and power”  
(PD 3)*

*“Junior secondary School. The symbols serve as a source of information to the viewer or user. They mean a lot. Some of them mean pain, joy, and how to mind your own business” (PD 7)*

Some of them associated the symbols with the Akan community. This is no surprise as the Adinkra symbols are believed to have originated among the Akan ethnic group. As the site of the interviews was an Akan community (Sekondi-Takoradi), the participants were likely to be Akan and as a result may be familiar with Adinkra symbols.

The findings also revealed that the process of experiencing awareness of the symbols may be through traditional and cultural events. Some of these include funerals, festivals, marriage, and naming ceremonies. One participant remarked:

*“Adinkra symbols were introduced to me formally and informally, consciously and unconsciously. Informally and unconsciously, Adinkra symbols were introduced to me through kente clothes and funeral attire. On buildings as symbols as a young person” (PD 5)*

A further look at the interview results shows that most of the participants were introduced to the symbols at a younger age.

### **C. Preferences for Adinkra Symbols**

The study also explored the preferences of the participants in relation to the Adinkra symbols. The interview revealed that the participants had a wide variety of preferences that also showed that they were aware and conversant with the symbols. The most common symbols were mentioned as:

*“Hye won hye”  
“Akoko nan”  
“Sankofa”  
“Dwennimmen”  
“Adinkrahene”  
“Gyenyame”  
(PD 4, 6. 9)*

These symbols are undoubtedly popular with the Akan community. For instance, “Adinkrahene”, means 'Adinkra King', as it is a source of inspiration for people. The symbol consists of three concentric circles, one within the other. The symbol represents charisma, leadership and greatness. Adinkrahene is used in the garment of many powerful people in the Akan society as it depicts the power and formidability of the people wearing it.

On the other hand, a number of the participants also showed their knowledge of some of the symbols that may not be deemed popular but also have their place and role in the philosophical life of the people. Some of these include “abedua”, “nkyim”, “denkyen”, and “adwo”, and “denkyemfunefu”. (PD 1, 4, 10)

#### **D. Uses of the Adinkra Symbols**

The participants were requested to indicate “which of the symbols are patronized for occasions of empowerment?” In response, a number of participants indicated that the most patronized Adinkra symbols for empowerment are:

*“Akoma”*  
*“Odonnyew fie kwan”*  
*“Adinkrahene”*  
(PD 2, 6, 8)

Furthermore, others indicated that symbols of empowerment are pervasive as most of the symbols inspired greatness and indefatigability of the people. These were represented by among others, the following symbols as indicated by some participants:

*“Denkyemfunefu”.*  
*“Gye Nyame”*  
*“Dwennimmen”*  
(PD 2,5, 7)

Symbols of empowerment, for instance Akoben, are also sources of inspiration and a rallying cry for the warriors. As a result, these symbols of empowerment remain a source of strength and encouragement in times of crises or fear.

On the popular occasions for which symbols are patronized, *PD 6* revealed that:

*“During naming ceremonies, people place requests for the “Gye Nyame” designs while marriage and funeral periods also cocoa seasons for us”*

### **E. Benefits of the Adinkra symbols**

To the designers, the symbols had an enriching effect within the Ghanaian garment community. All the participants responded to the question of the effect of the symbols in the Ghanaian community. A few responses of the participants are quoted as follows:

*“I think Adinkra sells the Ghanaian culture and also make it unique to foreigners”*  
*(PD 1)*

*“Because the symbols represent the Ghanaian ways of communication especially the Asante Community or Kingdom” (PD 4)*

The responses indicate that the symbols play a significant role not just in the Asante or Akan way of life, and also in the Ghanaian community as a whole. Specifically, they market the cultural potential of Ghana to the rest of the world. Finally, the Adinkra symbols promote effective communication as they convey a rich and mature message when adorned.

Furthermore, the symbols promote cultural integration of the youth into the society. This is evidenced by participant *PD 5* who responded that:

*“The symbols will ensure that the youth do not forget their culture of their elders and forefathers”*

Another participant *PD 3* also intimated that the symbols promote the philosophical development of the people.

*“It indicates the philosophy, educational, Historical, communicative values and the Anthropology of the Ghanaian youth. For example, the symbol: Bi-nnka-Bi literally meaning “bite not one another, symbolizes – let’s not offend each other”*

## **F. Meanings of the Adinkra symbols**

The Adinkra symbols represent the Akan thought and belief. The study also sought to find out from the participants their perspectives on the meanings of the Adinkra symbols they were familiar with. According to a participant *PD 3*, the Akan symbols were becoming popular even among the youth because they are gradually getting to understand their meanings:

*“It is catching up gradually. The elite understand and appreciate the use of the Adinkra symbols, the traditional and the Cultural group also use it. The youth currently love using it in the form of beads and dongles around their wrist. Slowly and gradually it is catching up and many Ghanaian youth love using it”.*

### **4.2.2 Interviews with Textile Shop owners**

#### **A: Demographic background**

Textile shop owners are merchants and traders of fabrics. They deal in all kinds of fabrics such as cotton, satin, silk and linen. In addition, they keep stock of traditional fabrics. As a result, they are experienced in the role of symbols in the design and production of all kinds of fabrics. The researcher purposively selected 10 of such merchants to participate in the study.

The purpose of their inclusion was to solicit their perceptions and preferences for Akan symbols for the design and production of garment. The participants were represented with the codes PS 1-10 where PS is an acronym for Participant Shop Owners.

They were made up of four (4) males and six (6) females. This was due to the fact that many females operate textile shops. Their ages ranged from 30 to 60. They had been in business between 10 years and 30 years. The participants were interviewed at their workplaces during working hours.

### **B: Fabric Quality**

This section found from the participants their views and perceptions on a number of issues related to the design and production of the garment. These were the colour and texture of the fabric; the brightness of the fabric; handling; washability of the fabric; and the environmental and eco-friendliness of the fabric to be used for the design and production of the garments.

#### **The colour and texture of the fabric**

The participants were tasked to indicate their views and perceptions of the colours and texture of the fabric selected by the researcher for the production of the garments. In response, many of them appeared to be pleased with the selection made by the researcher. Some of their comments are captured as follows:

*“The colours and textures are very suitable for the production of the garment because when you look at the colours, they are very bright and catchy and with the texture too it is very smooth.” (PS 4)*

*“The colours are cool and good for celebratory programmes. The texture of the fabric is very soft and it has two different textures. One part is smooth and shiny and the other part is a little bit rough but it is very comfortable on the skin. It also looks like both sides can be used to sew an outfit.” (PS 5)*

Some of the participants suggested that their reasoning for supporting the colour choices were that they were based on their target market, their age range, and whether it would suit their needs, wants and skin tones better than others. Some had this to say:

*“I was trying to achieve timelessness- this doesn't mean basic and boring designs. This means staying in time season after season and yet creative.”*

*“The colour is simple but rich and relevant for the occasion the garment was meant for” (PS 6)*

It is interesting to note that some of the participants pointed to the place of feedback in determining colour and texture choice of customers.

*“The colour and texture are suitable based on the feedback of our customers”*

### **Brightness of the fabric to be used**

On the brightness of the fabric to be used, the participants were also tasked to indicate their views and perceptions. Again, with this question, the interviews revealed that most of the participants supported the choice of fabrics in respect of their brightness. Some of their views are captured as follows:

*To make the symbols in the fabric to stand out, I think the brightness of the fabrics is quite okay. That will make the wearer look gorgeous. (PS 2)*

*Dark colours of fabrics are used to sew garments for fair people but wild colour fabrics are used to sew garments for dark skin people to know the beautifulness of the fabric when sewn. (PS 10)*

*The brightness of the fabric will help you see a person afar; also it will help bring the design of the dress very well. (PS 8)*

The findings show that the participants were pleased with the brightness of the fabric as they indicated that bright colours ensure that the wearer appears gorgeous, outstanding, and unique. Also, they indicated that bright colours are useful for dark-skinned people, thus appropriate for the African and Ghanaian markets.

### **Handling of the fabrics**

The researcher also found from the participants the extent to which they believed the fabrics were easy to handle during sewing. The results of the interview indicated that the participants were split on whether the fabrics were easy to handle during sewing. This was not particularly surprising as the researcher presented a variety of fabrics for them to select those they thought were suitable for the garments. Some responses are reproduced:

*“No, a bit complicated depending on the style.” (PS 3)*

*“No, it’s a bit complicated because you have to make sure the symbols are correctly arranged.” (PS 1)*

On the other hand, others indicated their preference for some of the fabric.

*Yes some are very okay and easy to handle because the fabrics are not too smooth neither are they too hard to sew. (PS 9)*

*“I think some are easy to handle as they are compatible with the symbols.” (PS 7)*



### **Washability of the fabrics**

On the question of whether the selected fabrics could be washable, most of the participants indicated that the selected fabrics were washable and will not pose a problem to wearers.

Some of their comments are as follows:

*“Yes, but some are advisable to be machine was.” (PS 5)*

*“It is washable by using either a washing machine or giving it a hand wash” (PS 8)*

It is important to note that even though they were mostly in agreement with the washable quality of the selected garments, many of them advised a need to apply a washing machine for washing them.

### **Environmental and eco-friendliness of the fabrics**

In relation to this question, all the participants responded that they believed the selected fabrics were environmentally and eco-friendly as those fabrics do not pose any health hazard to consumers and the environment. One of such response is as follows:

*“I don’t think they pose any such risks. People have been using these fabrics for a long time and there no reports of any such risks.” (PS 6)*

### **4.2.3 Interviews with Female Radio Presenters (Consumers)**

#### **A: Demographic background**

Consumers patronize garments and other textile products. Consumers patronize fabrics or garments made with cotton, satin, silk and linen. In addition, they wear garments for a number of social, religious, and traditional functions such as church services, funerals, weddings, naming ceremonies, and festivals, among others. As a result, consumers are the

targets of the various designs of garments on the market. They drive demand and supply and their perceptions drive the development of new fabrics and garment designs. Some consumers have strong preferences for and perceptions of Adinkra symbols in the design and production of all kinds of fabrics and garments. The researcher purposively selected 10 consumers to participate in the study. The purpose of their inclusion was to solicit their perceptions and preferences for Adinkra symbols in the design and production of garments. The participants were represented with the codes PC 1-10 where PC is an acronym for Participant Consumers.

They were made up of three (3) males and seven (7) females. Their ages ranged from 25 to 45. The inclusion criteria for the consumers were that they were relatively young, knew some Adinkra symbols, and had never worn a traditional garment.

### **B: Knowledge and Awareness of the Adinkra Symbols**

The study found out from the consumers whether they knew any Adinkra Symbol to which a few responses were noted:

*“I know of Akofena, Akoko Nan, Akoma, Won sadamu a, Bi kabi, Sankofa” (PC 5)*

Another responded while emphasising those related to empowerment:

*“I know a number of them but I prefer those empowerments such as Hye won hye, Akoma, Gye Nyame, Adinkrahene and AnanseNtentan”. (PC 6)*

The consumers showed adequate knowledge and awareness of the Adinkra symbols as they were mainly Akans and residents of an Akan community (Sekondi-Takoradi).

The researcher was also interested in finding the consumers' understanding of the meanings of the symbols, at least, in regards to those they mentioned:

*"I think Akofena means: courage, valour, and heroism".*

*"Akoko Nan means: represents the nurturing, but also disciplining of children".*

*"Wo nsa da mu a means: people do not eat everything and leave you nothing".*

(PC 3. 4. 8)

### **C: Use of garments with Adinkra symbols**

The study found out when the participants last wore an African garment. The purpose of this question was to know the extent to which local garments are patronised. The responses suggested that they were frequently worn and was fast becoming the norm rather than the exception:

*"Two weeks ago, on Friday as my Friday wear for work"*

*"I wore one to engagement ceremony with symbol of Akoma in it"*

The study also found out from the participants their favourite Adinkra symbols, to which they responded by mentioning the following:

*Akoko nan*

*Akofena*

*Aya*

*Nyame be wo ansanamawu*

*Akoben*

Regarding occasions on which these garments were mostly patronised, the participants responded by mentioning Naming ceremonies, Funeral, Engagements, Festivals, and Church services.

#### **D: Fabric quality**

In respect of fabric preference, the participants revealed that they preferred Wooden and Paradise fabrics. Wooden is among the most patronised fabric and textile brands in Ghana. It is, therefore, no surprising that the consumers chose these two brands for a fabric.

#### **E: Perception of the concept of Adinkra-based garments**

##### **Recommending the designs**

To a question of whether the consumers would recommend the designs to their friends if they found them in a shop, most of them answered in the affirmative:

*“I will buy it no matter the cost because if something is your favourite you will never let it go no matter what. I recommend it to people and even encourage them to buy so that we can sell our tradition and let others know how enrich our traditions are”.*

*“I will buy it and also recommend it to others. Most Ghanaian hardly know about the Adinkra symbols because it mostly use for fabric printing and also for traditional purposes, which does not attract the youth to patronise them but I think if it is know in a very unique dress which will look the Adinkra symbols, a lot of people will buy”.*

The responses here were hardly surprising. Existing fabrics and garments, where they have the Adinkra symbols, emboss the symbols. The resulting designs from the Adinkra-based garments are promised to be unique and innovative.

#### **4.2.4 Focus Group Interview**

A focus group interview was undertaken by the researcher following the production of the garments with the garment stakeholders. This was done to appreciate their perceptions of the resulting Adinkra-based garments produced by the researcher.

##### **A: Background of the participants**

The study also investigated the perceptions and preferences of the garments produced from the Adinkra symbols through a Focus Group Interview. These were 10 participants made up of members of each of the fabric industry stakeholders interviewed prior to the design and production of the garments based on the Adinkra symbols. Thus, there were three (3) fabric designers, three (3) textile shop owners, and four (4) consumers. In terms of sex, they were made up of three (3) males and 7 females. Their ages ranged from 25 to 55.

##### **B: Perception of Adinkra symbol**

###### **Uniqueness of the Garments designed out of the Symbols**

The group was asked to indicate their perception of the resulting design of the garments that were made out of the symbols. Seven members of the group indicated that:

*“Yes, it is unique because looking at the Adinkra symbol you can actually see the design that was made in the Adinkra symbol which makes it very unique”*

*“I think it is because it is one of a kind. Most of the design from Adinkra symbols is used for applique and print of fabrics. Designing from the symbol is not common. I think Ghanaian designers should think of designing garments out of the Adinkra symbols for both male and female and for all occasions to sell our traditional symbols to the world”.*

The participants expressed their perceptions on the design, highlighting the novelty of the idea. For some of the group members, it is a departure from the usual applique and embossment style. Others also emphasized how the resulting design brings out the potential of the Adinkra symbols in terms of the messages they convey, the indigenous nature of the designs, and the ingenuity of the process.

### **Empowerment potential of garments designed from Adinkra symbols**

The group was also asked to indicate their view on whether or not they believed the resulting garment could bolster the potential of Adinkra symbols as a source of empowerment. Six of the members of the group supported the notion:

*Most definitely it will. Looking at an Adinkra symbol like Akoben (war horn) it is an empowerment tool for women who strive hard in a day to make ends meet so if a woman is wearing a garment like that, she is going to be empowered to do more.*

Others highlighted the cultural perspective of how the Adinkra-based garments could contribute to the empowerment of women in the society:

*“Adinkra symbol is part of our culture and the cloth queen mothers put on show the power they have over their community. Making garments with symbols which have the meaning of power and strength for women can be associated to empowerment of women.”*

It is instructive to note that Adinkra symbols were associated with traditional authority in the community. As a legacy of the Akans, it is not surprising that Adinkra will be seen by the group members to be a source of empowerment for Queen mothers who play critical traditional roles in the Akan society as kingmakers. Furthermore, in the Akan society, women

play a role as the source of inheritance. Thus, Adinkra symbols is seen by the group as a source of empowerment.

### **Durability of Garments designed out of Adinkra symbols**

This question was intended to find out from the group their perception on the durability of the garment designs on the Ghanaian market. Members of the group were unanimous that the designs will stand the test of time:

*“Yes, the design is very attractive. Attractiveness and aesthetics involve the perfect blend of the rules of construction - elements and principles of design. You employed these rules and principles- unity, balance, repetition, emphasis, proportion and scale. All these came together to make it fit well and aesthetically pleasing”.*

*Yes. The product will last and thrive longer with the right advertising strategies. Marketing is all about advertising, influencers, photoshop for Ad companies and user generated centers, for this reason I took a picture with a film star to advertise the product. I realized that sustainability is key hence my target group which is sustainable- conscious 20- 30 years old, there what is most important is getting the garment made.*

These responses suggest that the group members were of the view that the designer, in this case the researcher, was diligent in the application of the rules of designing. A respondent also suggested that there was a need to apply sound marketing principles to ensure the reception and marketability of the new product.

## **C: Preferences of the Adinkra symbol-based garments**

### **Garment design preferences**

The study sought to find out from the group members their preferences for the various completed garment designs from the Adinkra symbols. In response, the group members highlighted a number of issues regarding their choice of the designs. One detailed comment is as follows:

*“Even though i love all the garments, I would choose the one with Black with the white strips. This is simple and aesthetically pleasing. In colour psychology, black colour symbolises mystery, power, elegance and sophistication. This dress can be a marketable branded for lifestyle banner image or icon to create a certain tone of consistency. This is consistent in most designs especially on websites.*

*Black is a colour retailers like Chanel and Nike use. Chanel uses black for their logo and has several black and white images to maintain consistent look. Looking at the black dress and the white strips in relation to the fair complexion, it contrasts well against fair complexion and the white strips. It also draws visual emphasis. This makes it cut across international barriers. The whole concept is to empower women to be powerful, independent, elegant, sophisticated, to mention a few”.*

Most of the members appeared to select the design based on Akoko nan. Incidentally, this design is black with white strips to match. They explained that they made this choice as a result of its black colour which was aesthetically pleasing and in line with colour psychology. Furthermore, black dress designs align with international best practices.

### **Suggestions for improvement of the designs**



The focus group participants were made to suggest ways to improve the resulting designs. Several comments were made on this question, among them:

*“I would suggest improving on the symbols of love, care, unity and peace and reducing the sorrow, war, and sadness so we live a happy life among ourselves.”*

*“Garment should be designed out of understandable symbols such as symbols which define that is Dignity being thankful and the others and not symbols such Akoko nan which is not so easy to understand when it is worn to audience.”*

*“I would improve on the use of love, effective communication symbols sure as (teeth and the tongue) and Akoko nan (hen’s leg)”*

The group participants indicated that there was a need to improve the designs with symbols that represent peace, love and community. These qualities are empowering and represent a sense of strength among people. It was also mentioned by some group members that some of the symbols were difficult to understand and that easy-to-understand symbols were preferable; the symbol in question being Akoko nan. It is instructive to note, however, that this symbol is a symbol of discipline and nurturing. Thus, it is a symbol worth understanding as it holds deep philosophical meanings and significance.

### **4.3 Selected Adinkra Symbols, their Names, and Meanings for Designing Garments**

The first objective of the study was to identify appropriate symbols for the purpose of designing garments. The study achieved this goal partly through interviews with stakeholders in the garment industry and these were garment designers, textile shop owners, and garment consumers. They were interviewed on a number of thematic areas including their experiences with the Adinkra symbols, preferences for Adinkra symbols, uses of the Adinkra symbols,

benefits of the Adinkra symbols, and meanings of the Adinkra symbols. Among the three groups of stakeholders, most of them were female and they were relatively young albeit considerable experience in their trades. The fact that most of the stakeholders were female is not surprising. In countries with strong garment industries such as Bangladesh, women play a predominant part in the garment industry (Quayyum, 2019).

#### **4.3.1 Stakeholders' Experiences with Adinkra Symbols**

The findings of the interview in relation to the experiences and perceptions of the stakeholders, particularly garment designers and consumers, revealed that many of them were conversant with many symbols and understood their significance. Most of them associated the symbols with the Akan community. This is no surprise as the Adinkra symbols are believed to have originated from among the Akan ethnic group (Kuwornu-Adjaottor, Appiah, and Nartey, 2016). Regarding their experiences of the symbols, the study revealed that many of the respondents had known these symbols as long as they could remember. Many of them experienced them by assigning meanings to them. The study revealed that among many consumers, many understood Adinkra symbols as representing the positive values of society. This general positive appreciation of the symbols may be attributed to the longevity of the Adinkra symbols in the lives of the participants. This was echoed by Chunfa, Donkor, and Yao (2021) that symbols were better appreciated when it was experienced locally among indigenous people. This also supports the reasoning of Ahrens and Schneider (2021) that, during communication, using what people are already acquainted with might sometimes be the most effective approach to catch their attention. Consequently, in this study, most stakeholders exhibited a good level of awareness of the Adinkra symbols.

### **4.3.2 Preferences for the Adinkra Symbols**

The participants also expressed a wide variety of preferences for the Adinkra symbols. The symbols represented various sentiments and situations in the community and they range from humility, power, valuing the past, death and the invincibility of God, among others. Kuwornu-Adjaottor, Appiah, and Nartey (2016) suggest that awareness of different Adinkra symbols among the people of a community is a sign of communicative competence. According to the authors, the awareness and use of symbols for communication helps to reduce conflict in society. It is, therefore, noteworthy that the preferences of the participants for various Adinkra symbols are deep and encompassing. From the interviews, it was revealed that most of the respondents had strong preferences for symbols that express empowerment, love, providence, and love for community, among others. These included “Hye won hye”, “Akoko nan”, “Sankofa”, “Dwennimmen”, “Adinkrahene”, “Gye Nyame”, among others. Dzokoto, Hill, Twum-Asante, and Hayfron (2018) found evidence of the empowering nature of some of the Adinkra symbols as some of them promoted peaceful co-existence, steadfastness and tenacity, and fundamental human rights. They concluded that the Adinkra symbols also promoted affective values in the Akan society.

### **4.3.3 The Meanings of the Adinkra Symbols**

The study also found that the participants appreciated the various potential uses of the Adinkra symbols in their communities. Among many of the uses of the symbols, the study revealed that empowerment, trust, love and patience, wisdom, and comfort are believed to be some of the values ascribed by the participants to the Adinkra symbols. Kuwornu-Adjaottor et al. (2016) asserted that the Adinkra symbols embody Akan qualities across the

philosophical, educational, historical, and moral spheres. Dzokoto et al. (2018) also reiterated that the symbols conveyed the emotional experiences and expression in the Akan community. These were often manifested in the use of the symbols during solemn periods like funerals where they are used in printing garments and other portrayals of the departed and the families left behind.

Furthermore, to explore the meanings of the selected symbols, primary and secondary sources were explored on the meanings of the symbols. From the literature and the interviews, the selected Adinkra symbols used in this study have been found appropriate for the values of empowerment, particularly for women: “Akoko Nan”, “Dwennimmen”, “Akoben”, “Hye won Hye”, and “Wo Nsa Da Mu A”.

The “Akoben” symbol, for instance, has been found by researchers to possess an empowering value for environmental protection and sustainability. Without the environment, the community does not exist. Without the community, the role of women which involves nurturing and protection, cannot be fulfilled. Among some of the symbols, Adom, Opoku, Newton, and Yeboah (2018) referenced the Akoben symbol as one that is applicable for environmental sustainability education. Being a symbol representing a horn sounded during a war, it represented a rallying cry for the community members to support the initiatives of leaders to protect the environment especially in the age of global warming and climate change. It is appropriate that the Akoben symbol is also seen as a symbol of empowerment for women. By protecting the environment, women who continue to be the key homemakers

will have access to potable water, foodstuff, and a community free from man-made hazards such as flooding and environmental pollution.

#### **4.4 Developing Ideas for Designing Garments Based on Adinkra Symbols**

The second objective of the study was to develop ideas for designing garments based on the Adinkra symbols. The goal of idea development is to derive inspiration from the Adinkra symbols to aid in the creation of garment designs.

The idea development phase consisted of a preliminary phase involving the creation and investigation of Adinkra symbols to generate new ways of examining the ideas and constructing new solutions for designing the garments. Idea development is a concept that provides solutions for the design problem; it also ensures effective communication on multiple levels. Idea development takes a longer process. It involves editing, revising, introducing and then evaluating results. In order to develop a good design, there is a need to assess every concept for effectiveness.

In this study, the idea development process involved generating a concept, concentrating on the ideas through visual exploration, preparing layouts detailing design directions, setting preliminary specifications for such as illustrations, or symbols, and introducing the design brief and rough layouts. The preliminary feedback provided by the conceptual sketches of the symbols was the rough representations of the basic abstract design or idea.

Among the five symbols selected, each symbol was introduced as a design problem and as the central idea for the idea development. A paper was divided into sections and the initial

concepts were placed at the first section. The initial concept or symbol was manipulated into five relevant stages while the manipulation of the symbol continued until the designer runs out of ideas. At this stage, every possible concept is valuable. After the ideas in the concept have been placed, one of these relevant stages in the idea development was picked and an additional layer was introduced and explored to create a design for a unique garment. The same procedure was repeated for the remaining four other symbols.

#### **4.5 Designing Garments Based on the five Selected Adinkra Symbols**

The process for designing the Adinkra-based garment started from the idea development stage to production. The process was broken down into steps to transition smoothly from one stage to another by small gradual steps or techniques to establish a good design for the apparel.

A collection of inspiration from Adinkra symbols was selected based on the interview conducted and it was used for a mood board that represents the aesthetic motif behind the design. In order to create a matching design element throughout to reflect the image of the Adinkra symbols, five stages of idea development were created for each symbol to get inspiration from the mood board which resulted in a harmonious and successful outcome. The ideas developed were inspired by sketching different types of motifs which came in handy to illustrate the idea in a sketch of a silhouette that represents the design for the garment. The layout of the mood board, idea development and inspiration should reflect the aesthetic of the design. Inspiration is not all about fashion images, but other elements that represent the feeling behind the design which will give room for creativity.

The researcher begun sketching out the idea for a garment based on the finished idea developed from the mood board. This stage was all about getting an idea from the mind onto paper. It is important that the sketch reflects the correct construction of the garment, to get a unique design of a garment that will spark a transformative idea that consumers will love.

The design of the garment was used to create a Specification Sheet for the garment. The researcher used the silhouette and designs to determine the construction details and specs. The researcher also sources to come up with fabric and trim options. The next step was the production of the garment.

#### **4.6 Producing Garments Based on the Selected Adinkra Symbols**

Garment production consists of multiple steps. For smaller brands, producing garments takes a little bit longer. Once the Specification Sheet had been created, the researcher sourced different elements that will help in the production. Pre-production of the garment consisted of fabrics and trims sourcing, fabrics development, pattern making and sampling. After the designs were finalized, the researcher sourced the fabric needed to bring them to life.

The designs were then broken down into pattern pieces. The use of advanced software called Plotter was used to break down the components of the garment. The researcher was assisted by technical experts for pattern-making. Samples were then created. Samples are the prototype or toile of the creation of the original design. They were sewn individually and used to test the garment in case any of the patterns needed adjustments.

The patterns were laid economically on the fashion fabric or foundation fabric. Larger pieces were laid first before the smaller pieces to ensure that there is minimum wastage when cutting out. Pattern markings are then transferred to the fabric to guide the sewing.

The amount of time needed to produce the garment depended on the complexity of the designs; the more complicated the design, the longer it took to assemble the garment. Each garment was completed in a different amount of time because of its unique design. After assembling the garments, the researcher also checked the quality of the garment during and after production. This quality assurance stage helped to fix the mixed fault in time.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the findings and results of the study. The discussion was based on the qualitative interviews with stakeholders in the garment industry and the results of the studio-based investigation.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DESIGN AND PRODUCTION OF AKAN TRADITIONAL ADINKRA**

#### **SILHOUETTE GARMENT**

##### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the studio-based investigation and subsequent design and production of the garment based on the five selected symbols. Again, it presents the results of the studio-based component of the research where the actual ideas, designs, and production of the Adinkra-based symbols took place.

##### **5.2 The Design Process**

The costume design process began with the creation of a mood board to inspire my ideas. From there, I moved the inspiration to preliminary sketches, where I had to sketch various clothing designs before arriving at my final sketch work.

###### **5.2.1 Design Brief**

For young ladies in their mid-twenties and above, five unique and distinctive outfits were created around a similar topic. For an infrequent ceremony, African designs in combination with exotic textiles were chosen.

###### **5.2.2 Inspiration/Mood Board**

This board is a graphical representation of the designer's mood for a project or design, and it aids in the discovery of a subject. A collage is what a garment mood board is. A visual

representation of inspirational photos, items, material samples, trimmings, or product examples that illustrate the brand, collection, or customer's concept and feeling. It is a scribble of whatever it is been inspired by. The inspiration can be a theme, a location, a colour scheme, a material story, or something wholly utilitarian depending on the customer's behaviour, which helps the clothing line stay focused and consistent as it grows. When it comes to conveying your vision to others, garment mood boards are an excellent tool. A group of product creators, vendors, producers, or retailers, for example, could be involved. It is possible to accomplish it on a computer or a huge hardboard or foam board. A designer's inspiring board is essentially a collage of photos, words, and things such as fabric, trims, paint chips, packaging, and so on that they have collected and wish to arrange and keep on hand as a reference for a project they are working on. It can take the shape of a paper poster, a bulletin board, a digital graphic, or a movie, and it will aid the references and research in establishing a framework for the design or suggesting new outfits.

- Mood boards for clothing can be used for a lot more than just collection and product design.
- Mood boards can be used to give a branding designer instructions on how to create your brand's designs.
- A garment mood board can be used to give instructions to a web designer on how to build your website.
- A mood board for apparel can be utilized for almost any other type of design job.

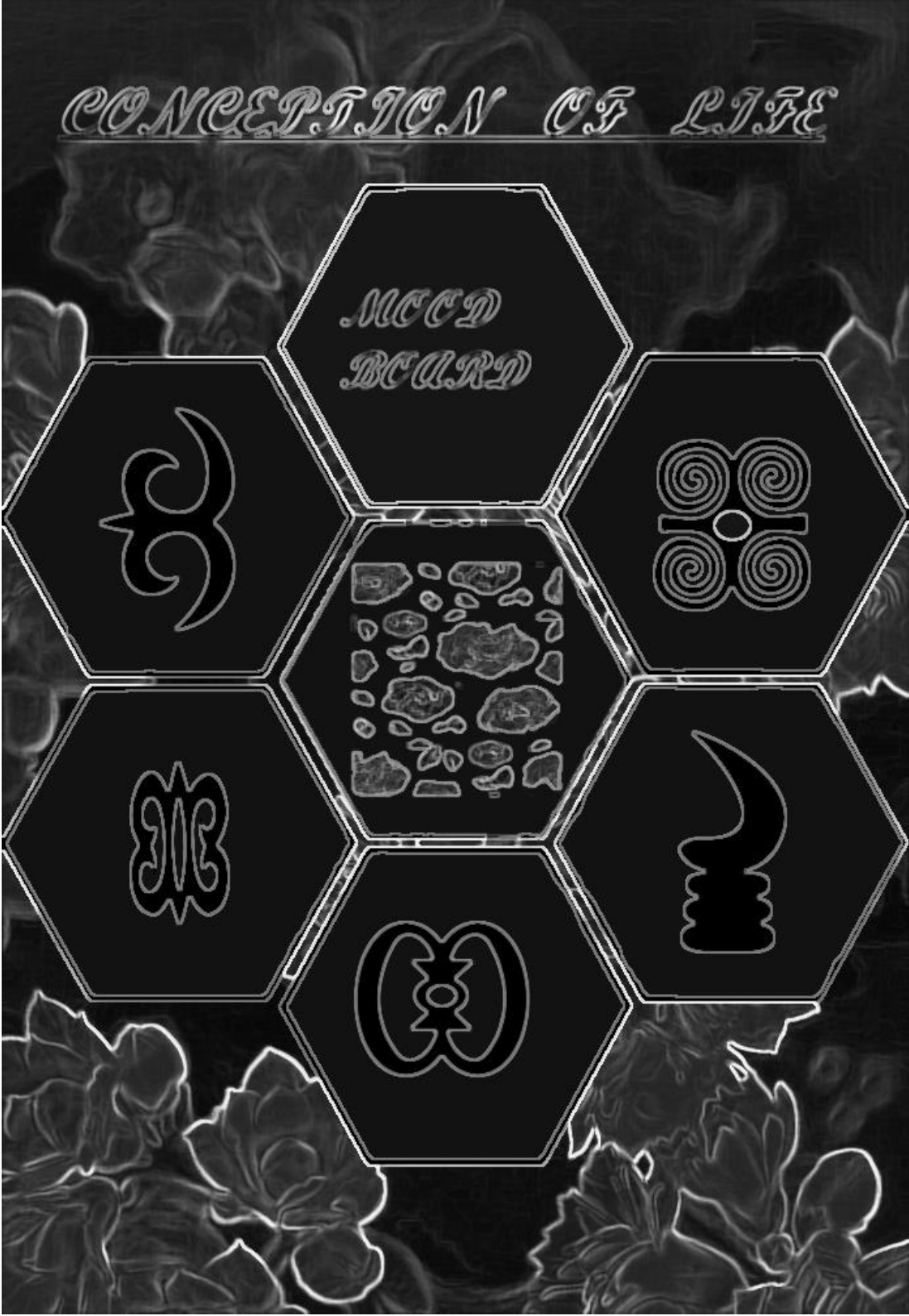


Plate 5.1: Mood Board

### 5.3 Exploration of the Meanings of the Five Selected Adinkra Symbols

#### a. Akoko Nan

**Literal meaning:** “A hen’s leg or feet”.

**Symbolic meaning:** parental care

**Background:** A symbol of nurturing coupled with discipline. This is one of the Adinkra Akan symbols of discipline and compassion. A hen tramps on its chick, as the term implies, but is unable to kill them. The symbol represents a parent's protective and caring personality.

**Philosophical lesson:** The sign emphasizes that providing services that engage, involve, strengthen, and support children is the most effective method to assure their safety, permanence, and well-being. It also teaches parents and children how to build a relationship based on mutual trust, respect, honesty, and open communication. Between them, the symbol urges them to provide personalised, culturally responsive, flexible, and relevant services.

**Application to contemporary living:** In our Ghanaian cultures, the symbols of Proverbs have a variety of roles. The first, and maybe the most typical, function of a proverb symbol is to teach. The innate function is to educate people on what might happen if they do something, which is most typically tossed around as expert advice in conversation.



**Figure 5.1 Akoko Nan (A hen’s leg) (Rattray, 1927, p. 268)**

## **b. Dwennimmen**

**Literal meaning:** “Ram’s horns”

**Symbolic meaning:** concealment, humility, and strength

**Background:** There is strength and protection in concealment, in humility.

**Philosophical lesson:** This sign shows that accepting one's flaws and submitting to them is a form of self-control that can have moral and ethical implications. It allows you to be completely free of the urge to impress, be correct, or move ahead. This way of life results in contentment, patience, forgiveness, and compassion since it is committed from the heart. It provides significant influence over one's attitude, viewpoint, actions, and strength quality.

**Application to contemporary living:** The principles of power and humility are combined in this emblem. It shows how a ram will fight valiantly against any foe but will quietly resign to being killed. This means that even powerful people should maintain a humble attitude.



**Figure 5.2 Dwennimmen (Ram’s horns) (Rattray, 1927, p. 266)**

### c. Akoben

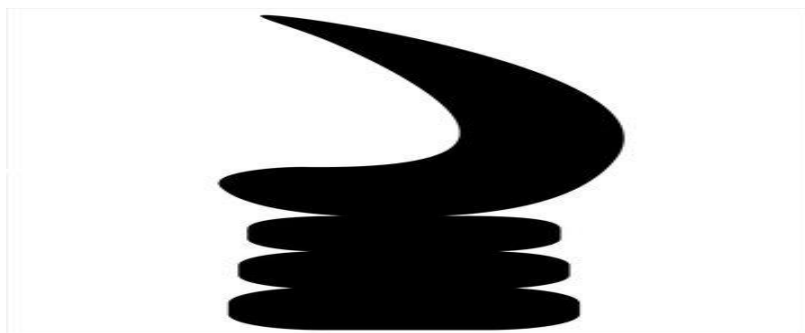
**Literal meaning:** Warhorn

**Symbolic meaning:** Readiness and preparedness

**Background:** A mark of alertness and attention. Its cry alerted others to oncoming danger, allowing them to prepare for an impending attack and defend their territory against their adversary. It was also used to call troops to the battlefield. Being prepared is making all of the necessary arrangements to be ready for anything at any moment. The background knowledge will enable them to do tough tasks with attentiveness and awareness.

**Philosophical lesson:** The Akoben provided a constant reminder to stay awake, observant, and cautious. It is a symbol of patriotism and readiness to serve a noble cause. The Akans were inspired by the sign, which gave them hope and urged them to always be ready to serve their country. The emblem is closely associated with loyalty as a result of this.

**Application to contemporary living:** It represents a call to action, as well as the readiness to be called to action, readiness, and voluntarism. The war horn was sounded to call the nation to arms. Everyone has to be on their toes to decipher the message being sent and take the appropriate action.



**Figure 5.3 Akoben (war horn)** (Rattray, 1927, p. 266)

#### **d. Hye won Hye**

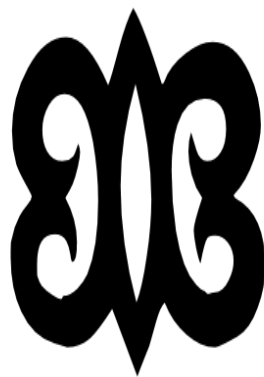
**Literal meaning:** That which does not burn

**Symbolic meaning:** Imperishability and endlessness

**Background:** Hye won Hye, which means "that which does not burn," is the name of the symbol. The symbol represents forgiveness, endurance, and resilience, as well as a person who has persevered in the face of adversity through forgiveness.

**Philosophical lesson:** This emblem derives its meaning from traditional priests who could walk on fire without burning their feet, serving as an example to others to persevere and overcome adversity. The act of walking over hot coals without harming oneself defies human logic, and it demonstrates the priests' holiness and physical and mental fortitude, which enabled this seemingly impossible feat to be accomplished. Hye Won Hye is an encouragement to others to be tough in difficult times and to persevere through adversity.

**Application to contemporary living:** The emblem represents invincibility and perseverance. Its origins can be traced back to traditional priests who were able to walk barefooted on fire without being harmed. Its purpose is to motivate others to persevere in the face of adversity.



**Figure 5.4 Hye won Hye (That which does not burn) (Rattray, 1927, p. 266)**

**e. Wo Nsa Da Mu A**

**Literal meaning:** If your hands are in the dish

**Symbolic meaning:** symbol of participatory government, democracy, and pluralism

**Background:** People do not consume everything and leave you nothing if your hands are in the dish.

**Philosophical lesson:** This emblem stands for inclusion and democratic governance. In essence, this promotes teamwork and participatory government. If you believe in a cause, you owe it to yourself to see it through to the conclusion.

**Application to contemporary living:** This symbol represents democracy, pluralism, and participatory government. People will not devour everything and leave nothing for you if you have already placed your hands on the plate.



**Figure 5.5 Wo Nsa Da Mu A (If your hands are in the dish) (Rattray, 1927, p. 265)**



#### **5.4 Idea Development for each of the Five Symbols**

Although the process of turning an idea into reality varies by industry and business, it is all based on the same principles. For designers, coming up with new ideas is an important aspect of the creative process. Effective decisions on the final piece of design solution can be made by refining ideas.

Refinement does not entail big modifications, but rather minor tweaks that improve the concept. Keeping the design brief in mind when refining an idea is important. Make refinements to ensure that the design reflects the intended style and effectively interprets the source of inspiration, that it functions effectively for the intended purpose, that it can be produced or constructed using available materials and techniques, and that it is appealing to the target market or audience.

The sources of Adinkra symbols inspire the concept of growth. The more foresight that goes into designing or creating an idea, the better it will suit its requirements. When developing a concept, gradual care is used since it is worked from the known to the unknown without leaping to a conclusion.

The goal of the idea development is to derive inspiration from the Adinkra symbols to aid in the creation of the garment design. The preliminary phase entails the creation and investigation of adinkra symbols to generate new ways of examining an idea and constructing a new solution that will most effectively solve a problem. The preliminary feedback provided by the conceptual sketches of the idea development is rough representations of the basic abstract design or idea.

Below are diagrams representing the way each of the five symbols was developed:

Akoko Nan (A hen's leg)		Dwennimmen (Ram's horns)		Akoben (war horn)	

**Figure 5.6: Idea Development of Akoko Nan**

**Figure 5.7: Idea Development of Dwennimmen**

**Figure 5.8: Idea Development of Akoben**

**Source: Constructed by the research**

Hye Won Hye (That does not burn)		Wo Nsa Da Mu A (If your hands are in the dish)	

**Figure 5.9: Idea development of Hye won hye**

**Figure 5.10: Idea development of Wo Nsa Da Mu A**

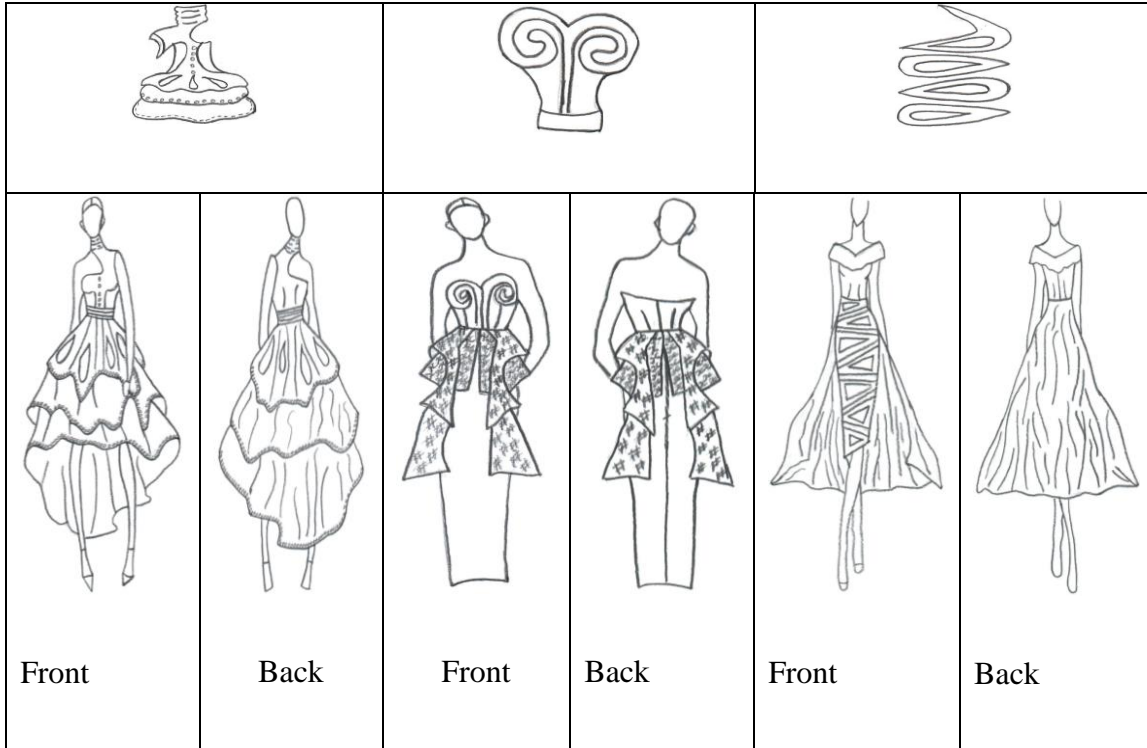
**Source: Constructed by the research**

## **5.5 Style Board**

The purpose of this board is to generate figurative visuals that fit into the abstract mood board atmosphere. This is done by leveraging a collection of visual properties, such as colour, texture, shape, material, shadow grooves, and so on, that may be translated directly from the style boards photos to the concepts. In addition, the objects on the style board are meant to be as close to what the user or consumer would use as possible. The goal of the style board is to translate the mood board's abstract setting into actual products. Established solutions are used to help tame the abstract.

The visual communication and presentation of the produced concepts are the focus of this board. It is to use visuals to develop and explain the concept. A concept's development is an iterative design process that necessitates focus and tenacity. Creating or styling a person's appearance in terms of dress, accessories, and beauty by his or her personality.

Design is concerned with how requirements or issues are discovered, related, and stimulated in some circumstances. It has an impact on how we use our materials, energy, skills, and other resources to fully satisfy them; it requires initiative and zeal, inventiveness and ingenuity, scientific discovery and technical knowledge, and visualization power combined with knowledge of human capabilities, and aesthetic sensibility. The outlined drawing of the garment derived and stylized from the idea development appears on this board.

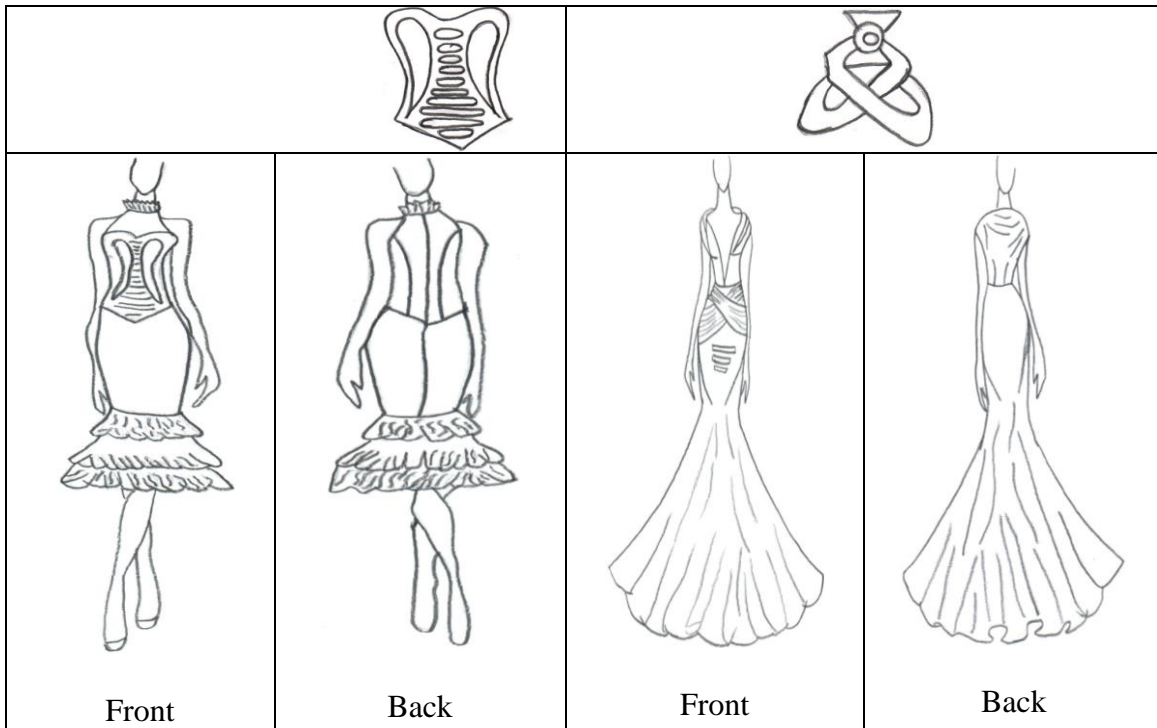


**Figure 5.11: Silhouette design derived from the Akoko Nan symbol**

**Figure 5.12: Silhouette design derived from the Dwennimmen symbol**

**Figure 5.13: Silhouette design derived from Akoben symbol**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



**Figure 5.14: Silhouette design derived from Hye won Hye**

**Figure 5.15: Silhouette design derived from Wo Nsa Da Mu A**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

## **5.6 Choice of Colour**

Colour has been investigated and used for more than 2000 years. Throughout history, different civilizations have experimented and learned more about colour. We are still learning today about how colour affects us and its importance in our lives.

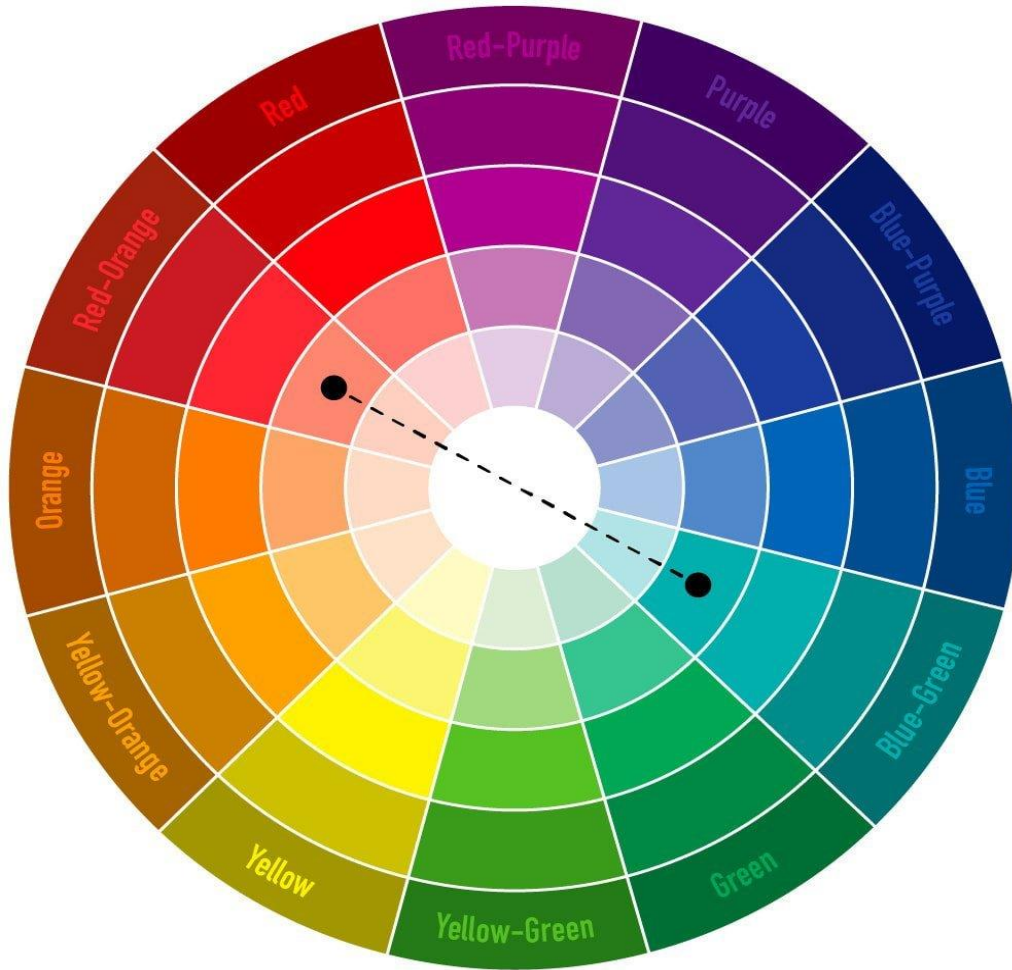
Colour is simply light of different wavelengths and frequencies and light is just one form of energy made up of photons. Colour is a visual language. It is personal and universal sending a message of endless variation. It evokes our feeling and affects our life. The apparel colour is used beautifully. It is one of the basic components of a garment, the other being, texture, details, and silhouettes.

Developing and personalizing a design requires careful use of colour. Colour represents purpose and evokes emotion. A pleasing blend of colour, fabric, and design can produce a flattering garment to present the positive characteristics of the body. Just as there are certain colours which are usually pleasing and becoming, there are others which nearly all people find rather trying and hard to wear. As a general thing, we must all avoid pure hues having the full intensity. All of the bright shades of purple are trying to most complexions. Bright reds and blues can be worn by very few people, whereas the duller shades of these colours are found to be quite pleasing to many types. The colours chosen for this project are White, Black, Red, Gold, and Green and these were chosen based on the colour board for the project.

The study of colours as a predictor of human behaviour is known as colour psychology. Carl Jung is regarded as a pioneer in this discipline for his investigations into the qualities and

significance of colours in our daily life. Colours have properties that can elicit different emotions in humans. Colours can improve the effectiveness of placebos as well. Colour's impact on people varies based on their age, gender, and culture. Although colour connotations vary depending on context and culture, colour choice is rather consistent across gender and ethnicity.

In marketing and branding, colour psychology is also commonly used. Colour is essential to marketers because it can impact consumers' emotions and perceptions of goods and services. Logos are significant for businesses because they might attract more clients. When buyers believe the corporate logo reflects the personality of the goods and services, this occurs.



**Plate 5.2: Psychological Colour Wheel (colour board)**

**White-** White is an unadulterated colour. It can be found in nature and accounts for the majority of the colours we see today. We see a specific colour when the dye present in an object is reflected in our eyes by white light. Purity, transparency, cleanliness, sanctity, and tranquillity are all symbols of white. It is commonly used in hospitals and banks to demonstrate the organizations' trust and openness, as well as their cleanliness and purity. It's also employed in modern décor to emphasize the design's minimalism while reflecting light to make the space appear larger and brighter.



**Black**-When there is no light present, the colour black appears. It represents mystery, darkness, negativity, power, elegance, and refinement at times. Many fashion businesses utilize black in their logos due to its simplicity and slimming properties. When used correctly, both on its own and in combination with other colours, it is a sophisticated hue.

**Red**-Passion, energy, love, strength, fire, fury, blood, and death are all represented by the colour red. Many firms use this bright colour to liven up their logos and demonstrate that they mean business. It may be found in nature in flowers and fruits. Playfulness and youthful disposition are represented by a lighter tint of red. When paired with other colours, it evokes a variety of feelings. Red and orange typically mean fire and wrath, red and black mean death, and red and white means safety and purity, while green and red signify nature. Red and orange usually mean fire and rage, red and black mean death, and red and white means safety and purity.

**Gold**-In nature, gold is a rare colour that can only be found in amber and a few types of tree sap. It is a symbol of prosperity, victory, achievement, and success. It's a dark hue that's only used sparingly. It's a show-stopper colour that evokes luxury, refinement, and wealth.

**Pink** – Pink is a naturally occurring colour that is derived from a pale red hue. Compassion, love, romance, passion, and tranquillity are all symbols associated with it. Many firms that appeal to parents with children utilize it because it demonstrates caring affection.

**Green**-Green is a dominating colour in nature that evokes strong feelings. It is a symbol of life, security, calmness, rejuvenation, and optimism. It is commonly used in hospitals and offices in little doses to create tranquillity and relaxation. Envy, possessiveness, and consumerism are also symbols. The colours it tends toward give a combination of feelings because it is a mixture of blue and yellow. More colours of blue in green give it a tranquil

serene vibe, whilst lighter shades of yellow in green give it a joyful and lively vibe while yet preserving the calmness.

When people understand how colours function and how they affect the world and the people around them, they may use them to their full potential to improve their lives. Colours, in all of their tones and hues, are employed in various combinations to entice, warn, and generate specific feelings.

The colour is affected by the material and type of fabric used. Silk gives the colour a high-end opulent sheen, whereas satin gives it a glossy appearance and chiffon gives it a shimmering appearance. Wool gives the colour a rustic, dreary appearance, whereas cotton gives it a plain appearance.

### **5.7 Choice of Fabric and Trimmings**

An important step in having a successful sewing project is selecting the appropriate fabric for the design. Fabric selection is personal and provides a great opportunity to create an individual look.

To make a wise clothing decision, you need to know something about textiles (fabrics). The fabric used to make a garment will affect the way the garment looks, feels and wears.

There are various factors to consider when picking which cloth to utilize for a project. Some of these are: how often will the garment be worn, can the fabric be cleaned, what colour is required, what sewing abilities are required, how much money can be spent, and fabric features. Because it stands out from the crowd, the exotic paradise satin fabric was chosen. It has a rich satin weave with wonderful dual tones of two colour yarns. When one looks attentively, one notices that it has two-tone colours on the front and another colour on the

back, which makes it distinctive in terms of generating looks and how it drapes. Beads, sequins, and other ornaments were employed as accents.

### **5.7.1 Justification of Choice of Fabric**

The choice of fabric for this project is a cotton blend with polyester and then chevron with a taffeta lining; this was due to the use the garment will be put to. Furthermore, it consists of cotton and cotton blend with polyester as the fabric was chosen because of their properties.

#### **Cotton**

The word cotton is derived from the Arabic word qoton or qutun, which means a plant found in a conquered land. Cotton is a fibre that grows from the surrounding surface of seeds in the pods, or balls of a bushy mallow plant. It is composed basically of a substance called cellulose.

#### **Taffeta**

Taffeta is a crisp, plain-woven fabric that is usually made of silk, but can also be made of polyester, nylon, acetate, or other synthetic fibers. The appearance of taffeta fabric is often bright and shiny. Taffeta comes in a variety of weights and sheerness levels, depending on the type of fiber used and the tightness of the weave.

The name "taffeta" comes from the Persian word "taffeta," which means "crisp, weaved." Taffeta was first made in the Middle East in the eleventh century.

Taffeta is considered a high-end fabric, with a beautiful, smooth surface and unique characteristics.

- Crisp. Taffeta fabric is crisp and holds its shape well as a result of the tightly twisted yarns woven together in a plain weave fashion.

- Sheen. Taffeta has a lustrous shine that is unique to the fabric and comes from the innate qualities of silk or polyester.
- Smooth. Taffeta fabric also has a smooth surface, and piece-dyed taffeta in particular is especially soft.
- Sound. Taffeta, especially yarn-dyed taffeta, makes a rustling sound called “scroop” (combination of scrape and woop) when it rubs together.

## **5.8 Making up the Process:**

### **Tools, Equipment, and Materials**

Garment designing is not just about producing an incredible design. It is also about using the right tools in achieving the perfect outcome. To understand the life of a garment designer, it is also essential to know the tools they use for their career. For example, the draping of pieces of cloth in a mannequin, twirling and cutting the fabrics, and making the creative ideas come out.

A tool is any instrument or a simple piece of equipment that you hold in your hands and use to do a particular kind of work. The key difference between equipment and materials is that materials form the actual product and are the parts, components, ingredients, and raw materials that become a part of the product whereas equipment refers to the tools, machinery, and devices that help create the product.

#### **5.8.1 Material Board**

This board contains all materials, like fabrics, trimmings, and notions, that was used in the garment collection's production process. Fabric swatches and trims that will be used in the collection are displayed on the fabric board.

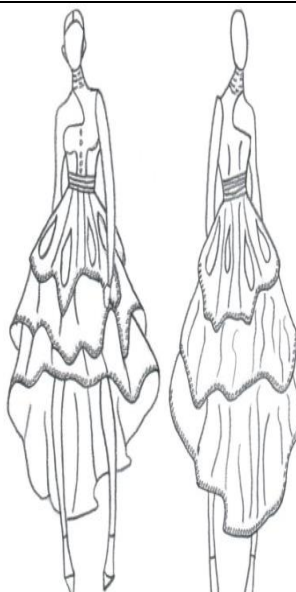
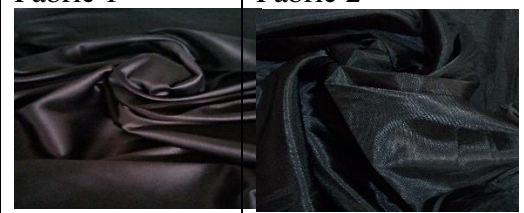


**Plate 5.3: Material Board**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**




### **5.8.2 Description/Specification Sheet**

A garment specification sheet is a technical document that contains the construction details of the product, a technical diagram/ sketch of the garment, and measurements of the product. Here, fashion is referred to as apparel and clothing products. The fashion designer communicates the design concept through the specification sheet. The stitch class and seam type are mentioned in the sketch. The specification is a technical document that contains the construction details of the design and outlined sketch of the design and measurements used in the production process.

Garment specification sheet			
Style No.: Melag 01		Date: 23-10-2021	
Category: Womenswear		Size: medium	
Season: Spring-Summer		Designers Name: Melag	
Description of garment: Women occasional summer wear			
S.NO.	Measurements (inches)		 <p style="text-align: center;">Front                  Back</p>
1	Neck size	14"	
2	Across chest	12.5	
3	Bust	33"	
4	Waist	27"	
5	Shoulder length	5"	
6	Across back	13.5"	
7	Hip	42"	
8	Hip depth	9"	
9	Length of dress	60"	
10	Sleeve length	22"	
11	Shoulder to waist	15.5"	
12	Shoulder to nipple	9"	
13	Bust separation	7"	
14	Rib cage	29"	
15	Chest circumference	31"	
16	Wrist	6"	
Wash Care Instructions		Machine wash, line dry, iron medium, don't bleach	
Fabrics/lining		Fabric 1	Fabric 2
Paradise fabric			
Taffeta (lining)			
Description of fabric: (Fabric composition, construction, width)		Delicate to handle fabric, with 60"	
Trims and Accessories		Sequins and flat peals detailing at both front and back and the round neck. Zipper at the side seam.	
Remarks		All patterns need to be neatened before stitching, sequin detailing has to be handled carefully, and the lining should be neatened.	

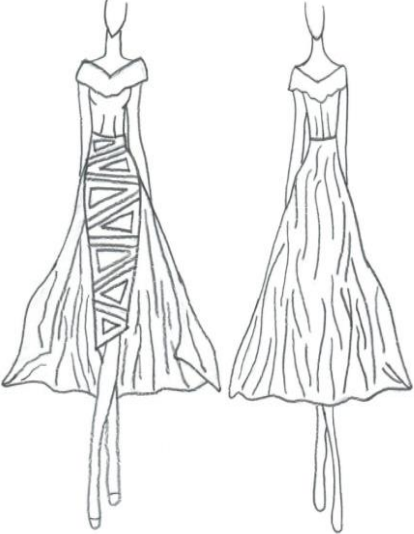




**Figure 5.16: Garment specification sheet**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

Garment specification sheet			
Style No.: Melag 02		Date: 23-10-2021	
Category: Womenswear		Size: medium	
Season: Spring-Summer		Designers Name: Melag	
Description of garment: Women occasional summer wear			
S.NO.	Measurements (inches)		 <p style="text-align: center;">Front                      Back</p>
1	Neck size	14"	
2	Across chest	12.5	
3	Bust	33"	
4	Waist	27"	
5	Shoulder	5"	
6	Across back	13.5"	
7	Hip	42"	
8	Hip depth	9"	
9	Length	60"	
10	Sleeve length	22"	
11	Shoulder to waist	15.5"	
12	Shoulder to nipple	9"	
13	Bust separation	7"	
14	Rib cage	29"	
15	Chest circumference	31"	
16	Wrist	6"	
Wash Care Instructions		Machine wash, line dry, iron medium, don't bleach	
Fabrics/lining		Fabric 1	Fabric 2
Paradise fabric			
Taffeta (lining)			
Description of fabric: (Fabric composition, construction, width)		Delicate to handle fabric, with 60"	
Trims and Accessories		Decorative zipper at the centre back seam	
Remarks		All patterns need to be neatened before stitching, the lining should be neatened	

**Figure 5.17: Garment specification sheet**

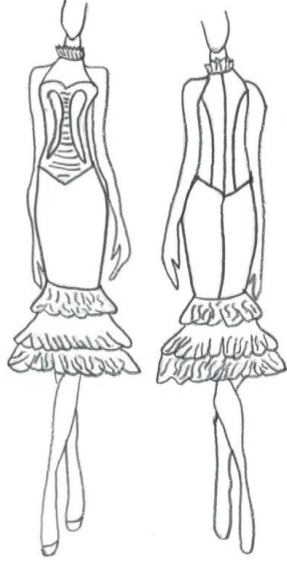


**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

Garment specification sheet			
Style No.: Melag 03		Date: 23-10-2021	
Category: Womenswear		Size: medium	
Season: Spring-Summer		Designers Name: Melag	
Description of garment: Women occasional summer wear			
S.NO.	Measurements (inches)		 <p style="text-align: center;">Front                      Back</p>
1	Neck size	14"	
2	Across chest	12.5	
3	Bust	33"	
4	Waist	27"	
5	Shoulder	5"	
6	Across back	13.5"	
7	Hip	42"	
8	Hip depth	9"	
9	Length	60"	
10	Sleeve length	22"	
11	Shoulder to waist	15.5"	
12	Shoulder to nipple	9"	
13	Bust separation	7"	
14	Rib cage	29"	
15	Chest circumference	31"	
16	Wrist	6"	
Wash Care Instructions		Machine wash, line dry, iron medium, don't bleach	
Fabrics/lining		Fabric 1	Fabric 2
Paradise fabric			
Taffeta (lining)			
Description of fabric: (Fabric composition, construction, width)		Delicate to handle fabric, with 60"	
Trims and Accessories		Sequins and beads detailing at both front and back and decorative zipper at the centre back seam.	
Remarks		All patterns need to be neatened before stitching, sequins and bead detailing has to be handled carefully, the lining should be neatened.	

**Figure 5.18: Garment specification sheet**

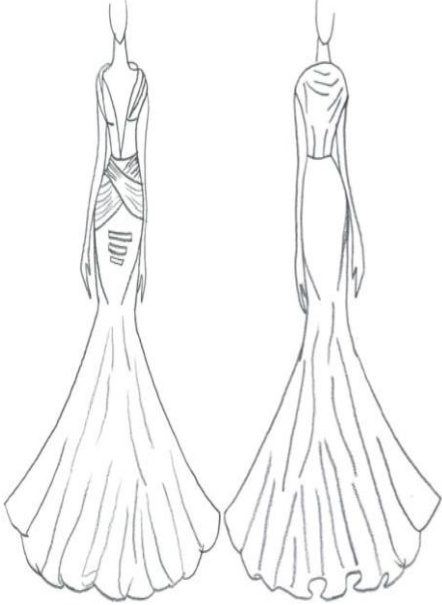


**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



Garment specification sheet			
Style No.: Melag 04		Date: 23-10-2021	
Category: Womenswear		Size: medium	
Season: Spring-Summer		Designers Name: Melag	
Description of garment: Women occasional summer wear			
S.NO.	Measurements (inches)		 <p style="text-align: center;">Front                      Back</p>
1	Neck size	14"	
2	Across chest	12.5	
3	Bust	33"	
4	Waist	27"	
5	Shoulder	5"	
6	Across back	13.5"	
7	Hip	42"	
8	Hip depth	9"	
9	Length	60"	
10	Sleeve length	22"	
11	Shoulder to waist	15.5"	
12	Shoulder to nipple	9"	
13	Bust separation	7"	
14	Rib cage	29"	
15	Chest circumference	31"	
16	Wrist	6"	
Wash Care Instructions		Machine wash, line dry, iron medium, don't bleach	
Fabrics/lining		Fabric 1	Fabric 2
Paradise fabric			
Taffeta (lining)			Fabric 3
Description of fabric: (Fabric composition, construction, width)		Delicate to handle fabric, with 60"	
Trims and Accessories		Sequins and beads detailing at the front and trim around the neck. Invisible Zipper at the centre back seam.	
Remarks		All patterns need to be neatened before stitching, sequins and bead detailing has to be handled carefully, the lining should be neatened.	

**Figure 5.19: Garment specification sheet**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

Garment specification sheet			
Style No.: Melag 05		Date: 23-10-2021	
Category: Womenswear		Size: medium	
Season: Spring-Summer		Designers Name: Melag	
Description of garment: Women occasional summer wear			
S.NO.	Measurements (inches)		 <p style="text-align: center;">Front                      Back</p>
1	Neck size	14"	
2	Across chest	12.5	
3	Bust	33"	
4	Waist	27"	
5	Shoulder	5"	
6	Across back	13.5"	
7	Hip	42"	
8	Hip depth	9"	
9	Length	60"	
10	Sleeve length	22"	
11	Shoulder to waist	15.5"	
12	Shoulder to nipple	9"	
13	Bust separation	7"	
14	Rib cage	29"	
15	Chest circumference	31"	
16	Wrist	6"	
Wash Care Instructions		Machine wash, line dry, iron medium, don't bleach	
Fabrics/lining		Fabric 1	Fabric 2
Paradise fabric			
Taffeta (lining)			
Fabric 3			
Description of fabric: (Fabric composition, construction, width)		Delicate to handle fabric, with 60"	
Trims and Accessories		Trim at the front No zipper	
Remarks		All patterns need to be neatened before stitching, trim detailing has to be handled carefully, and lining should be neatened.	

**Figure 5.20: Garment specification sheet**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

## **5.9 Production Plan**

### **5.9.1 Stitch and Seam Technology**

Dressmaking is the technique of attaching various materials with various stitches. If colour, harmony, and style aren't enough, the dressmaking stitches are important, and they must be understood before the dress can be constructed. Stitches are fundamental; the success of garment-making is primarily based on them. The stitch used in the production was a normal strength stitch, the seam was an open plain seam throughout the production, and the garment was constructed circularly with all raw edges included. Hem tape was applied on parts of the garment where stitching was not possible.

### **5.9.2 Pattern Making**

It is a flat-surface technical design of a garment in which dress forms are measured and turned into two-dimensional patterns before being cut and made. The flat pattern technique was proposed as a base pattern in the production process, which was then changed and manipulated into the desired garment style. The researcher had the opportunity to visit the Ghana Apparel Training and Service Centre at Accra Technical Training Centre (ATTC). A computer with pattern making software was used to prepare the patterns based on the specification of the design of the garment before it was printed out from a machine called the Pattern Making Plotter Machine (Garment Pattern Making Machine). Staff of the Centre assisted the researcher in the preparation of the patterns. The complete pattern was created with the right instruments and measurements.

## Adaptation of style and final pattern pieces of the garments with computer software

Patterns are the building blocks for all other designs. Any ambitious fashion designer who wants to create their patterns must comprehend the ideas of adding different fullness, introducing style variations, and putting it all together in the construction process. At first sight, pattern adaptation may appear complicated, yet it is simple and provides a platform for ideas to flow much more quickly. Basics of adaptation:

- i. Draw the described style or have a picture of the style.
- ii. Outline the blocks that needed to be developed.
- iii. Slash and spread, if fullness is required or a change of darts' position is needed.
- iv. Add extra allowance if desired.
- v. Include any desired style/feature.
- vi. Reduce or lengthen the patterns at the adaptation stage before cutting.

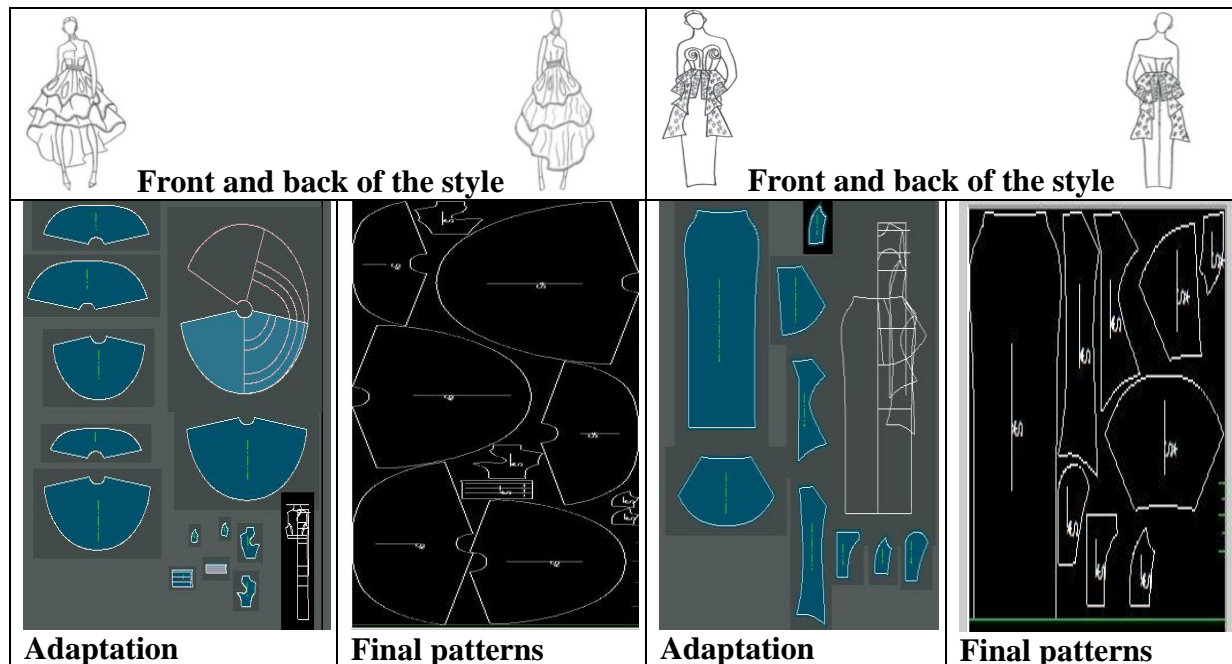


Figure 5.21: Adaptation and final pattern of the Akoko Nan dress design

Figure 5.22: Adaptation and final pattern of the Dwennimmen dress design

Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)

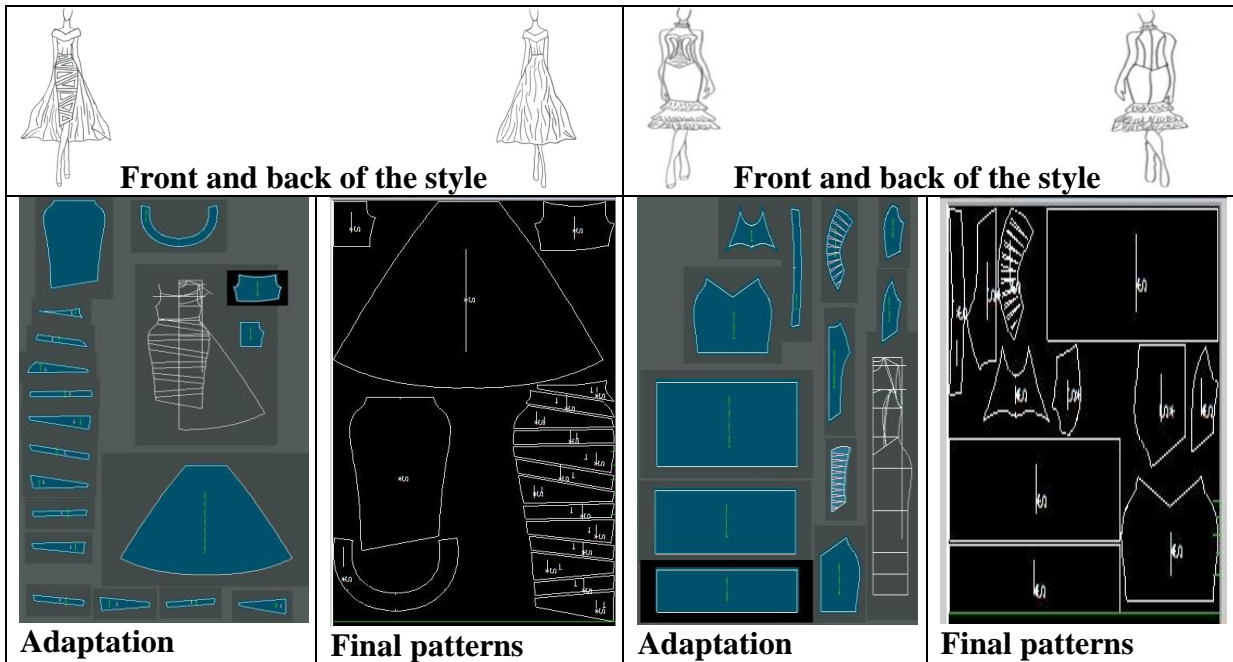


Figure 5.23: Adaptation and final pattern of the Akoben dress design

Figure 5.24: Adaptation and final pattern of the Hye won Hye dress design

Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)

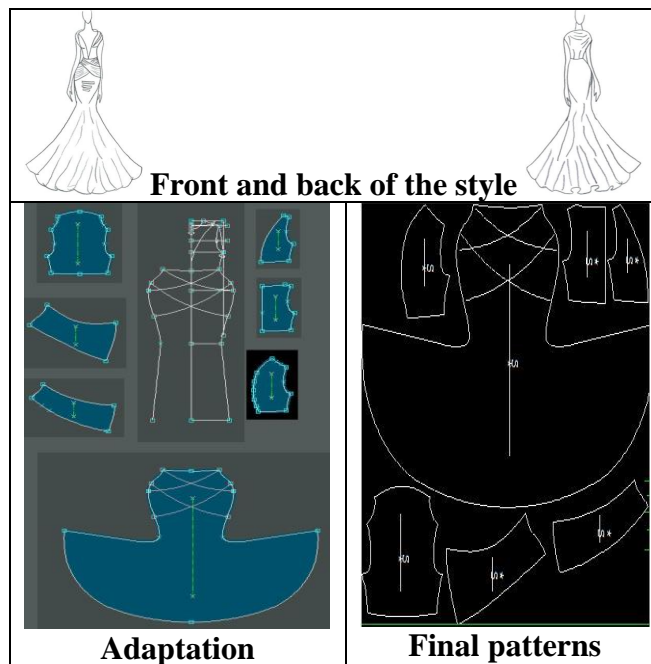


Figure 5.25: Adaptation and final pattern of the Akoko Nan dress design

Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)

## **Digital Plotter Machine**

A digital plotter is a computer graphics output device that draws curves and other data. A plotter is a computer hardware device that prints vector graphics in the same way as a printer does. Rather than a series of dots like a standard printer, plotters employ a pen, pencil, marker, or other writings implemented to create several, continuous lines onto paper. Wide-format printers have mostly replaced these devices, which were once commonly employed for computer-aided design. Plotters print schematics and other comparable applications on paper. Plotters can work on very large sheets of paper while keeping a high level of resolution. They can print on plywood, aluminum, sheet steel, cardboard, and plastic, among other flat materials. Plotters enable the same pattern to be drawn thousands of times without damaging the image.



**Plate 5.4: A plotter prints out the patterns**

### 5.9.3 Laying Out

Laying Pattern Pieces over the fabric in an economical way is called a pattern layout. This prevents the wastage of fabric. During layout, there are some principles to follow and these are;

- Press the fabric as well as the pattern pieces flat before laying the pattern on the fabric.
- Use a large table or any hard flat surface for accommodating the work.
- If an open layout is used, place the fabric right side up on the table. For all other layouts fold the fabric right sides facing and wrong sides out.
- Decide on the best way to fold your cloth; this will depend on the width of the cloth, the width of your pattern pieces, the type of cloth, and the design of the garment (whether left and right halves are identical. Whether many pieces have to be cut on the fold, etc.)



**Figure 5.26 & 27: Laying out patterns on the toile fabric**



#### 5.9.4 Cutting Out

Before assembling the garment, the final pattern was cut on the required fabric using the right tools and equipment, taking into account pattern markings and instructions. The trim out's theme is a geometrical pattern based on a line. The cut-out pattern is generally seen as a whole. The fabric is put out on the cutting table and thoroughly examined for flaws. The pattern elements are placed in such a way that the fabric is used efficiently. A tailor's chalk is used to mark the pattern, which is subsequently adjusted for any alterations in the figure. After that, extra fabric is added to the inlays above the seam allowance to allow for future changes.



**Figure 5.28: Cutting out of the toile**



### **5.9.5 Assembling of Garment**

This process entailed gathering and stitching garment components together to form a whole garment. Using appropriate sewing materials, techniques, and equipment, the cut components of the garment were sewed together into a wearable item of clothing throughout this operation. Garments assembly is a fundamental necessity of clothing and fashion design, and it entails the transformation of raw materials into stitched and wearable garments. Different elements of a garment must be assembled to produce a complete garment.

#### **Sewing of the toile**

While toile de Jouy refers to the prototype of a garment made of muslin or a similarly simple, light fabric, toile can also refer to the prototype for a garment made of muslin or a similar plain, light fabric. Before finalizing a design, most designers need to make numerous toiles. The purpose of toile is to use shape, drape, and fabric selection to reflect the spirit of the finished garment. This is the first time a designer will be able to see their work in three dimensions. Toiles are normally made of unbleached woven cotton or single-knit jersey, or muslin, which is a loosely-woven cotton fabric. "Muslins" is a term used to describe this pattern testing.

A sample, miniature, or model was created to evaluate a concept or procedure. These samples were created to see if they could be used in the construction of the main garments. Polyester was used to sew the samples of the five (5) designed garments to see how the final product would look and to test appropriate garment production procedures. The garments were then made.

**Pictures of the Toile**



**Figure 5.29: Toile of the Akoko Nan dress design**

**Figure 5.30: Toile of the Dwennimmen dress design**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



**Figure 5.31: Toile of the Akoben dress design**

**Figure 5.32: Toile of the Hye won Hye Nan dress design**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



**Figure 5.33: Toile of the Won Nsa Da Mu A dress design**

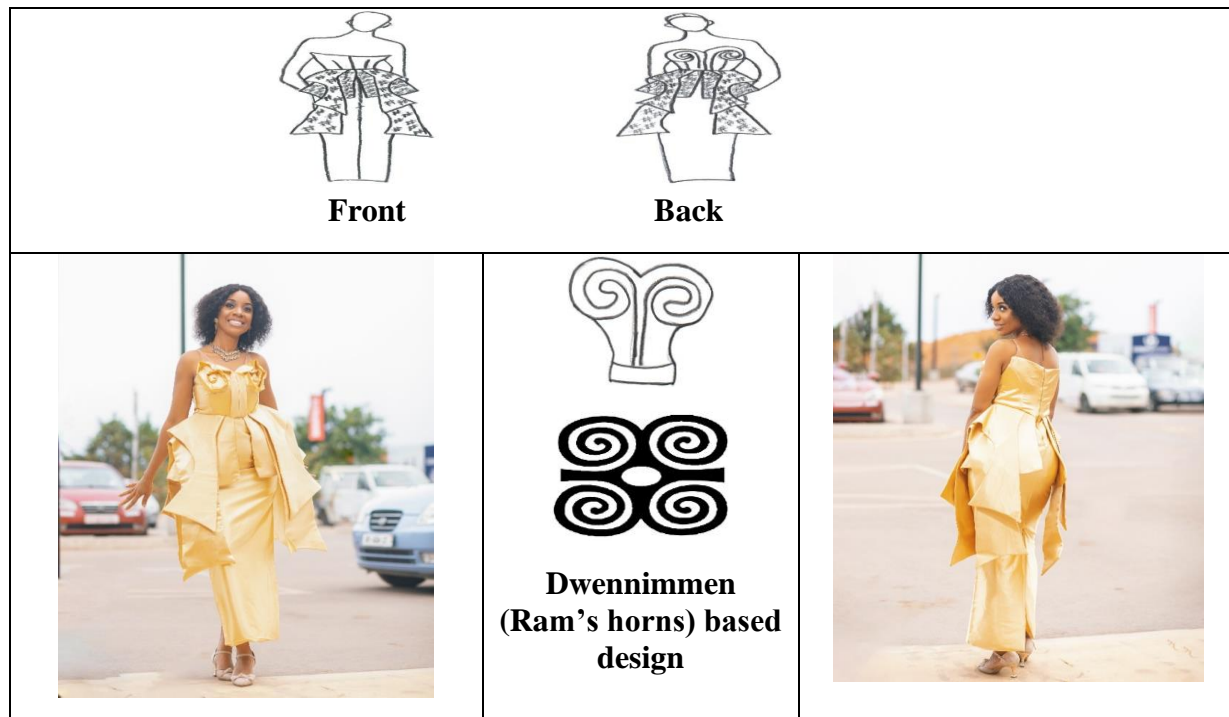
**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

**Final Garments**

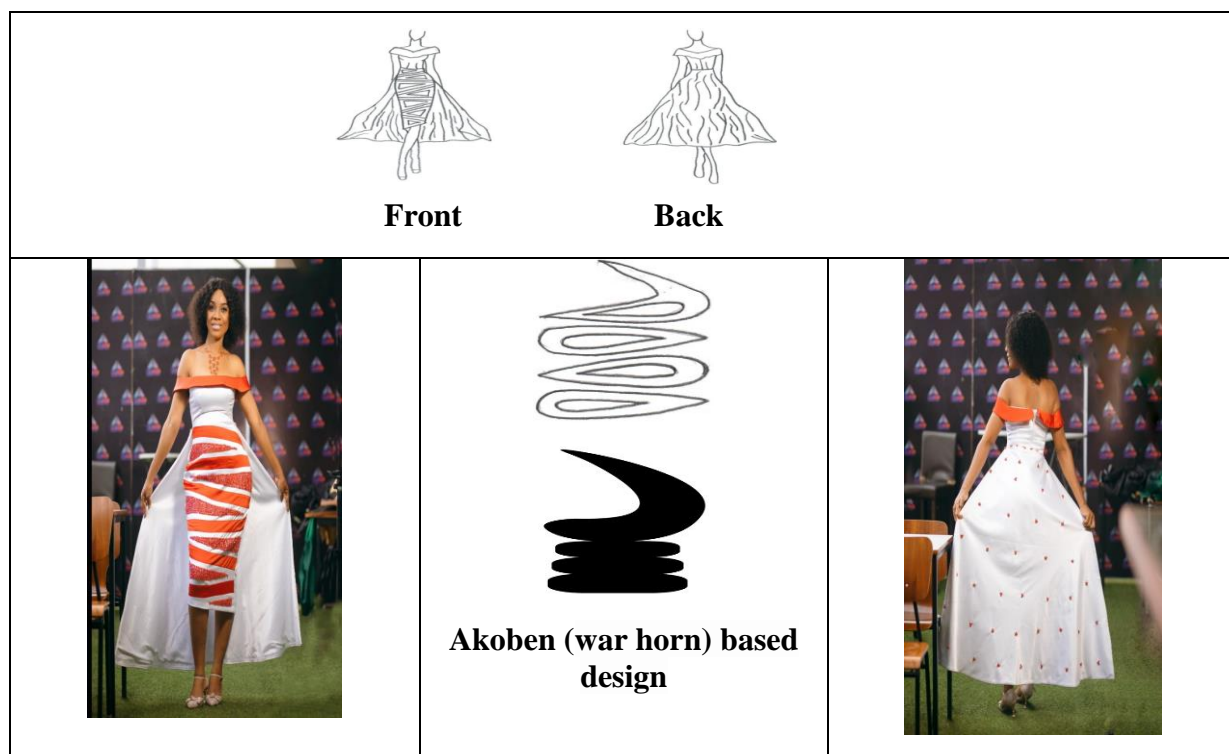


**Plate 5.5: Akoko Nan based design outfit wore by the researcher**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



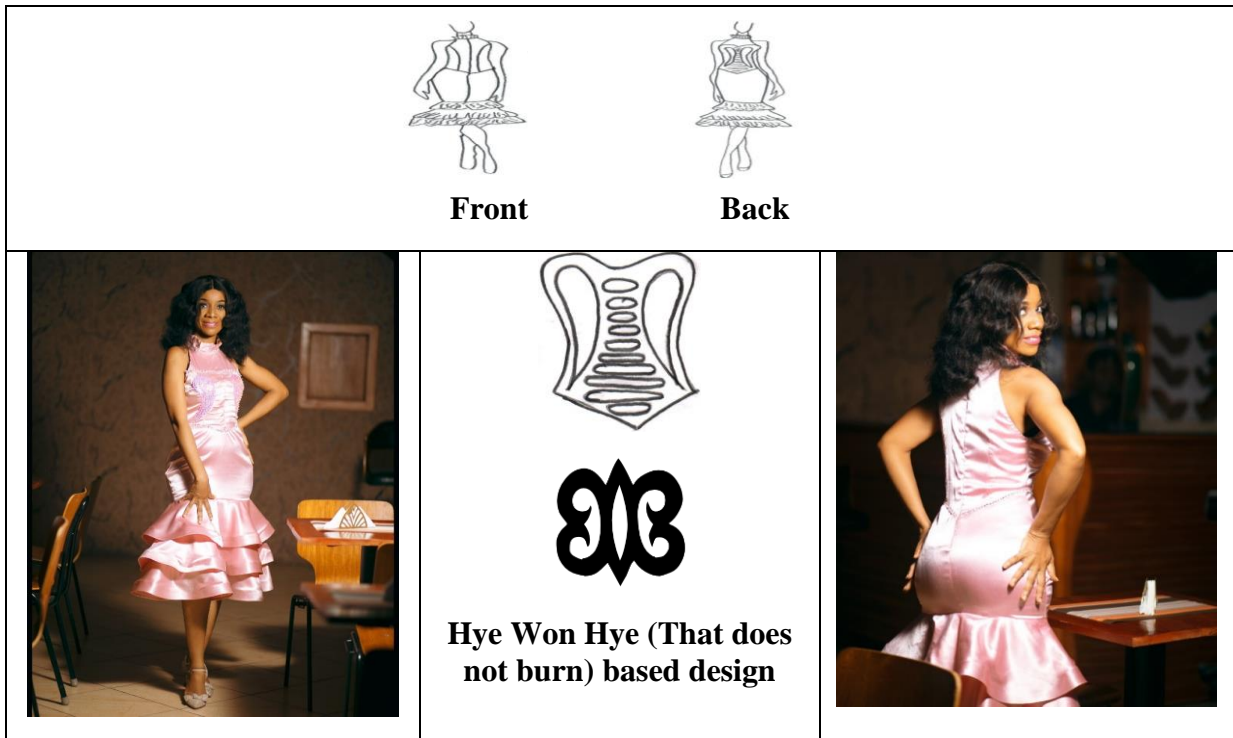
**Plate 5.6: Dwennimmen based design outfit wore by the researcher  
Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



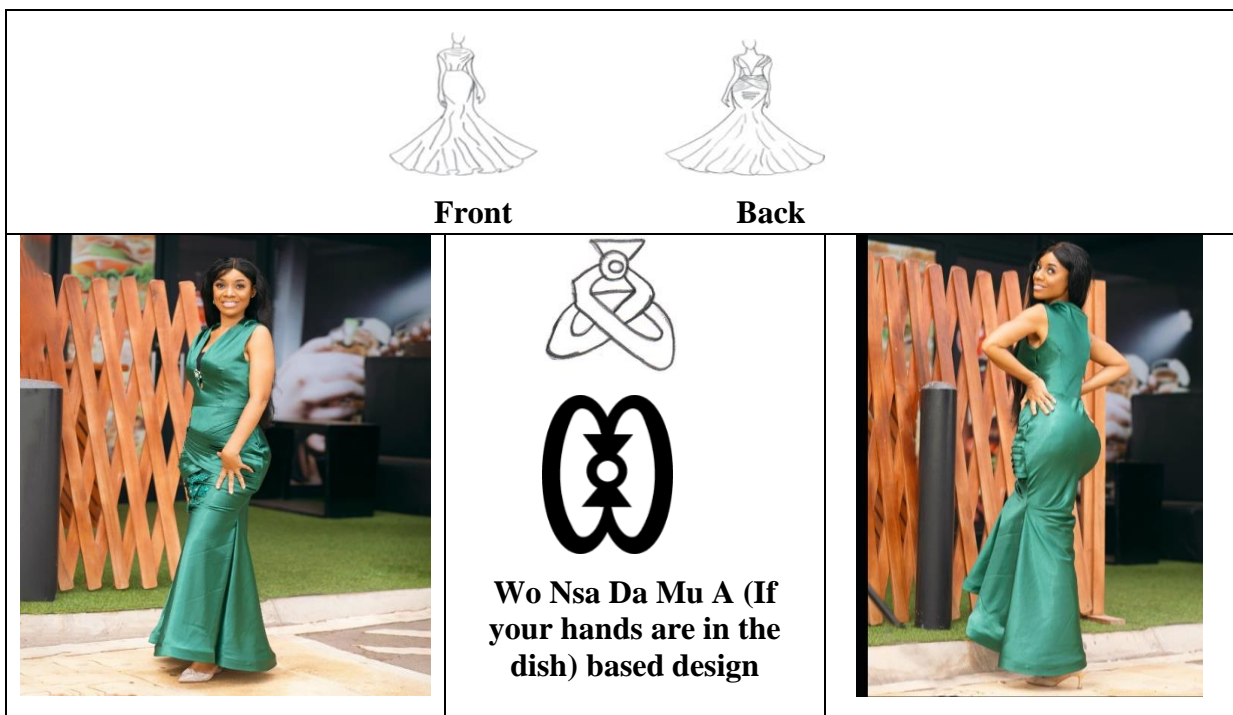
**Plate 5.7: Akoben based design outfit wore by the researcher**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**





**Plate 5.8: Hye won Hye based design outfit wore by the researcher  
Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



**Plate 5.9: Won Nsa Da Mu A based design outfit worn by the researcher  
Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

## **Cost sheet**

This section estimated and summarized the cost of materials and other resources used in the collection's design and manufacturing plan. A cost sheet gives a straightforward picture of each product's marketability and profitability. Whether the item is priced correctly for the market can be assessed and altered throughout the planning phase. Using a calculator and a cost sheet to design is a necessary aspect of the job.

<b>COST SHEET</b>		Company Name:	
		Melag designs	
Date: 23 <sup>rd</sup> February		Style: melag 01	
Description: women occasional wear 2022		Season: spring/summer	
		Selling price: 744.20	
Size range: medium		Colours: black	
Markers: self-paradise 60"			
Marker's yardage:		Allowance:	

1. Material	Yards	Price	Amount
Paradise Fabric	8	25.00	200.00
Lining	8	2.00	16.00
Interlining	1/2	6.00	6.00
<b>TOTAL MATERIAL COST</b>			<b>222.00</b>

2. Trimmings	Quant.	Price	Amount
Sequins	20	3.00	60.00
Flat pearl	10	2.00	20.00
Zippers	1	2.00	2.00
Tear drop beads	20	3.00	60.00
Hook and Eye	2	0.10	0.20
Labels, Poly Bags			
Hangtags			
Hangers			
Size Tickets			
Crinoline	30yds	2.00	60.00
Outside Services			
<b>TOTAL TRIMMING COST</b>			<b>202.20</b>

3. Labour			
Cutting			20.00
Sewing			90.00
Contract mark-up			200.00
Grading			
Marking			10.00
<b>TOTAL LABOUR COST</b>			<b>320.00</b>
<b>4. Total cost</b>			<b>744.20</b>


  

Suggested retail	%		Gh.
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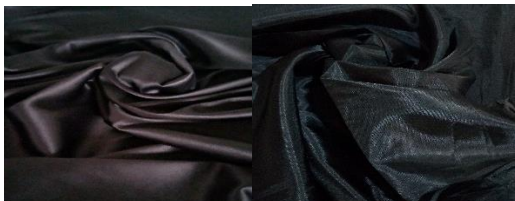
  

SKETCH

Front                      Back



MATERIAL SWATCH



**Figure 5.34: Cost Sheet for Akoko Nan outfit**  
**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

<b>COST SHEET</b>		Company Name:	
		Melag designs	
Date: 23 <sup>rd</sup> February		Style: melag 0.2	
Description: women occasional wear spring/summer 2022		Season:	
		Selling price: 504.10	
Size range: medium		Colours: gold	
Markers: self-paradise 60"			
Marker's yardage:		Allowance:	

1. Material	Yards	Price	Amount
Paradise Fabric	5	25.00	125.00
Lining	4	2.00	8.00
Interlining	1/2	6.00	6.00
<b>TOTAL MATERIAL COST</b>			<b>114.00</b>

2. Trimmings	Quant.	Price	Amount
Buttons			
Hook and eye	1	0.10	0.10
Zippers	1	3.00	3.00
Bone	4	3.00	12.00
Collar Stiffener	2	15.00	30.00
Labels, Poly Bags			
Hangtags			
Hangers			
Size Tickets			
Outside Services			
<b>TOTAL TRIMMING COST</b>			<b>45.10</b>

3. Labour			
Cutting			20.00
Sewing			90.00
Contract mark-up			200.00
Grading			
Marking			10.00
<b>TOTAL LABOUR COST</b>			<b>320.00</b>

4. Total cost			504.10
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Suggested retail	%		Gh.
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**SKETCH**

Front                      Back





**MATERIAL SWATCH**



**Figure 5.35: Cost Sheet for dwennimmen outfit**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**



<b>COST SHEET</b>				Company Name: Melag designs	
Date: 23 <sup>rd</sup> February			Style: melag 0.3		
Description: women occasional wear 2022			Season: spring/summer		
			Selling price: 594.30		
Size range: medium		Colours: red and white			
Markers: self-paradise 60"					
Marker's yardage:			Allowance:		
<b>SKETCH</b>					
			Front	Back	
					
<b>MATERIAL SWATCH</b>					
					
1. Material	Yards	Price	Amount		
Paradise Fabric	5	25.00	125.00		
Lining	5	2.00	10.00		
Interlining	2	12.00	24.00		
<b>TOTAL MATERIAL COST</b>			<b>159.00</b>		
2. Trimmings	Quant	Price	Amount		
sequins	10	5.00	50.00		
Crystal Beads	20	3.00	60.00		
Zippers	1	5.00	5.00		
Appliques					
Hook and eye	3	0.10	0.30		
Labels, Poly Bags					
Hangtags					
Hangers					
Size Tickets					
Outside Services					
<b>TOTAL TRIMMING COST</b>			<b>115.3</b>		
3. Labour					
Cutting			20.00		
Sewing			90.00		
Contract mark-up			200.00		
Grading					
Marking			10.00		
<b>TOTAL LABOUR COST</b>			<b>320.00</b>		
4. Total cost			594.30		
Suggested retail	%		Gh.		

**Figure 5.36: Cost Sheet for Akoben outfit**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

<b>COST SHEET</b>		Company Name:	
		Melag designs	
Date: 23 <sup>rd</sup> February		Style: melag 0.4	
Description: women occasional wear spring/summer 2022		Season:	
		Selling price: 639.10	
Size range: medium		Colours: pink	
Markers: self-paradise 60"			
Marker's yardage:		Allowance:	

1. Material	Yards	Price	Amount
Paradise Fabric	4	25.00	100.00
Lining	4	2.00	8.00
Interlining	1/2	6.00	6.00
<b>TOTAL MATERIAL COST</b>			<b>114.00</b>

2. Trimmings	Quant.	Price	Amount
Sequins	20	3.00	60.00
Beads	20	5.00	100.00
Invisible Zippers	1	2.00	2.00
Appliques			
Trim	3	1.00	3.00
Labels, Poly Bags			
Hook and eye	1	0.10	0.10
Hangers			
Size Tickets			
Crinoline	20yds	2.00	40.00
Outside Services			
<b>TOTAL TRIMMING COST</b>			<b>205.10</b>

3. Labour			
Cutting			20.00
Sewing			90.00
Contract mark-up			200.00
Grading			
Marking			10.00
<b>TOTAL LABOUR COST</b>			<b>320.00</b>
<b>4. Total cost</b>			<b>639.10</b>

Suggested retail	%		Gh.
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SKETCH

Front                      Back



MATERIAL SWATCH



**Figure 5.37: Cost Sheet for Hye won Hye outfit**

**Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)**

<b>COST SHEET</b>		Company Name:	
		Melag designs	
Date: 23 <sup>rd</sup> February		Style: melag 0.5	
Description: women occasional wear 2022		Season: spring/summer	
		Selling price: 463.00	
Size range: medium		Colours: green	
Markers: self-paradise 60"			
Marker's yardage:		Allowance:	

1. Material	Yards	Price	Amount
Paradise Fabric	4	25.00	100.00
Lining	4	2.00	8.00
Interlining			
<b>TOTAL MATERIAL COST</b>			<b>108.00</b>

2. Trimmings	Quant.	Price	Amount
Buttons			
Crinoline	10yds	2.00	20.00
Zippers			
Appliques	1	15.00	15.00
Snaps			
Labels, Poly Bags			
Hangtags			
Hangers			
Size Tickets			
Outside Services			
<b>TOTAL TRIMMING COST</b>			<b>35.00</b>

3. Labour			
Cutting			20.00
Sewing			90.00
Contract mark-up			200.00
Grading			
Marking			10.00
<b>TOTAL LABOUR COST</b>			<b>320.00</b>
<b>4. Total cost</b>			<b>463.00</b>


  

Suggested retail	%		Gh.
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**SKETCH**

Front                      Back



**MATERIAL SWATCH**



**Figure 5.38: Cost Sheet for Won Nsa Da Mu A outfit**

Source: Constructed by the researcher (2022)

## Care Label

These are information commonly found on labels on designers' products. Care labelling usually may include the following;

**Fibre content:** listed in order of the highest fibre content first.

**Country of origin:** tells you where the product was made.

**Product details:** type, size, and style of garment.

**Safety advice:** Used especially on children's toys or clothing. 'Keep away from fire' 'For children 36 months and over. The CE mark and Lion mark show that a product meets safety standards.

**Retailers' logo:** Retailer's store and product number used for tracing products if they have a fault.

**Barcodes:** Used to track the movement of the garment from the factory to the shop.

**Care labels:** how to look after your product to keep it looking good Wash care labels

**Environmentally friendly, cruel free, or Fair-trade:** The label will often say if the garment was ethically produced.

Legally textiles products must have care labels, safety instructions, size, and fibre content. Substances such as dyes and paints are labelled to make people aware of how dangerous they can be.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The aim of the study was to explore the potential for designing and producing Adinkra-based occasional garments.

#### **6.2 Summary of Findings**

The use of Adinkra graphic symbolism is pervasive among the Akans of Ghana, in particular with respect to their choice of fabric and garment design, as it is an ancient practice. The use of Adinkra symbols in the garments of Akans has been well received in recent times. However, the adoption of the Adinkra symbols for the complete production of garments is a new innovation in the socio-cultural lives of the Akan people and to some extent Ghanaians. This new garment production practice has a big potential to transform the garment industry in Ghana. This new practice will also boost the patronage of locally-made garments among young people in Ghana. It will also influence young people's appreciation of the cultural practices embedded in their cultural symbols. For Akans, the use of Adinkra symbols for producing garments will result in the enrichment of the Akan culture particularly the growth and transmittal of culture from the older generation to the younger generation.

The study achieved its aims through the use of the studio-based research method involving both qualitative and studio-based practices. To understand the potential consumer perceptions of the Adinkra-based symbols, preliminary interviews involving garment

industry stakeholders including consumers, textile designers, and garment shop keepers were conducted. The finding revealed among others that, in terms of experience with the Adinkra symbols, a cross-section of the participants had significant knowledge and experience of Adinkra Symbols. The interviews also revealed that the participants had a variety of preferences with respect to the Adinkra symbols.

In respect of the uses and benefits of the Adinkra symbols, most of the participants felt that the symbols represented myriads of values including love, loyalty, courage and most importantly empowerment. The symbols also hold a lot of potential for marketing the culture of the country as well as deepening cultural awareness among the youth. They use them for a variety of occasions such as naming ceremonies, and weddings, among others. The participants also indicated their knowledge of the meanings of the Adinkra symbols as representing Akan thought and culture.

In regards to their perceptions of the researcher's choice of features of the fabric for the actual design and production of the garments, the participants demonstrated that they viewed the choices in terms of the colour and texture, brightness, handling, washability, and eco-friendliness of the fabric as appropriate. In respect of idea development, the study also found that there is a need for proper planning before ideas can be developed out of the symbols.

### **6.3 Conclusions**

The study concludes that the use of Adinkra symbols in the design and production of occasional garments is a very viable alternative for the development of the garment industry in Ghana. Furthermore, this would lead to the enrichment of the Akan culture with a trickling

effect in every aspect of life among the people in areas such as empowerment, particularly among women, and social cohesion in society. The study also concludes that the participants valued a variety of Adinkra symbols including “*Hye won hye*”, “*Akoko nan*”, “*Sankofa*”, “*Dwennimmen*”, “*Adinkrahene*”, “*Gye Nyame*”

The study also concludes that the goal of idea development is to derive inspiration from the Adinkra symbols to aid in the creation of garment designs. Also, idea development consisted of a preliminary phase involving the creation and investigation of Adinkra symbols to generate new ways of examining the ideas and constructing new solutions for designing the garments.

The study also concludes that the process of designing the Adinkra-based garments starts from the idea development stage. The design process also consists of discrete steps which transition smoothly from one stage to another through small gradual steps or techniques to establish a good design for the apparel.

Finally, the study concludes that garment production consists of multiple steps. These steps consist of the creation of the Specification Sheet, the pre-production stage of the garment which also involved acquiring fabrics and trimming, fabrics development, and pattern-making and sampling. These steps were followed with pattern-making with the use of plotter software. It must be noted that seeking expert assistance in the pattern-making and the application of software to the whole process was a critical step in achieving the goals of the study.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

Following the literature exploration, findings and results, and the subsequent discussion and conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations to improve the potential design and production of occasional garments with selected Adinkra symbols:

1. It is recommended that designers should integrate the perspectives of their user community when selecting Adinkra symbols for the design and production of Adinkra-based garments.
2. When deciding to design and produce garments based on symbols, designers should focus on symbols of empowerment to enhance the societal status of marginalised people including women.
3. It is recommended that designers should consider the design and production of Adinkra-based garments using project management principles. This will ensure that the project moves through a seamless process while leveraging the expertise of technicians and the state-of-the-art fashion technology in the garment industry.
4. The study also recommends that designers should explore the production of men's wear with other appropriate Adinkra-based symbols.
5. It is also recommended that other researchers should try other ethnic symbols to produce garments out of them.

## **6.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

1. Future researchers can explore the potential of applying traditional symbols of other ethnic groups in Ghana and how this can contribute to the development of the garment sub-sector in Ghana.



2. Further research may also focus on applying similar principles proposed in this study to design garments for men.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EXECUTIVES OF THE DRESSMAKER'S ASSOCIATION (DESIGNERS)**

#### **AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT (AAMUSTED)**

#### **KUMASI**

#### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EXECUTIVES OF THE DRESSMAKERS' ASSOCIATION (DESIGNERS)**

The researcher is a student of the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development studying towards Master of Philosophy in Fashion Design and Textiles degree. She is researching into the topic: “Redefining Occasional Garments Silhouette with Traditional Symbols”. You are requested to participate in this study which is for academic purposes only. As a result, you are assured of the confidentiality of your personal information. You are also at liberty to withdraw from the interview at any stage. However, with your participation in the study, the findings of the study will help improve the adoption and use of Akan symbols in the designing of garments. By participating in this study, you grant your informed consent. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this study.

**Pamela Frimpong**

**Section A: Background information**

Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

Working experience:

Date:

**Section B: Experience with Adinkra symbols**

1. When were you first introduced to Adinkra symbols and what do they mean to you?

.....

**Season C: Benefits of Adinkra symbols**

2. Why do Adinkra symbols have such an enriching effect within the Ghanaian garment community?

.....

3. What benefits do the Adinkra symbols have on the development of the Ghanaian youth?

.....

**Season D: Preference for Adinkra symbols**

4. Which Adinkra symbols are popular among your customers?

.....

**Season E: Uses of Adinkra symbols**

5. Which of the symbols are patronized for occasions of empowerment?

.....

6. Which occasions are these symbolic garments patronized for?

.....

**Season F: Meaning of Adinkra symbols**

7. Do you feel that the meanings of the Adinkra symbols in garments have become a part of the identity of your customers?

.....

8. Do you think that the Adinkra symbols in garments can be a source of empowerment for women in particular?

.....

9. Do you think garments designed from Adinkra symbols will be novel?

.....

Thank you.



## **APPENDIX B**

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEXTILE SHOP OWNERS**

#### **AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND**

#### **ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT (AAMUSTED)**

#### **KUMASI**

#### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEXTILES SHOP OWNERS**

The researcher is a student of the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development studying towards Master of Philosophy in Fashion Design and Textiles degree. She is researching into the topic: “Redefining Occasional Garments Silhouette with Traditional Symbols”. You are requested to participate in this study which is for academic purposes only. As a result, you are assured of the confidentiality of your personal information. You are also at liberty to withdraw from the interview at any stage. However, with your participation in the study, the findings of the study will help improve the adoption and use of Akan symbols in the designing of garments. By participating in this study, you grant your informed consent. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this study.

**Pamela Frimpong**

#### **Section A: Background information**

Sex: Male [ ]      Female [ ]

Working experience:

Date:

**Section B: Fabric Quality**

1. Are the colours and texture of the fabric selected suitable for the production of the garments?

.....

2. What do you think about the brightness of the fabric to be used?

.....

3. Are the fabrics easy to handle when sewn?

.....

4. Are the fabrics washable?

.....

5. Are the fabrics environmentally friendly and Eco-friendly?

.....

Thank you.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FEMALE RADIO**

#### **PRESENTERS (CONSUMERS)**

#### **AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND**

#### **ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT (AAMUSTED)**

#### **KUMASI**

#### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FEMALE RADIO PRESENTERS (CONSUMERS)**

The researcher is a student of the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development studying towards Master of Philosophy in Fashion Design and Textiles degree. She is researching into the topic: “Redefining Occasional Garments Silhouette with Traditional Symbols”. You are requested to participate in this study which is for academic purposes only. As a result, you are assured of the confidentiality of your personal information. You are also at liberty to withdraw from the interview at any stage. However, with your participation in the study, the findings of the study will help improve the adoption and use of Akan symbols in the designing of garments. By participating in this study, you grant your informed consent. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this study.

**Pamela Frimpong**

#### **Section A: Background information**

Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

Working experience:

Date:

**Section B: Perception of Adinkra Symbols**

1) Are the designs of the product attractive to last long in terms of marketing?

.....

2) Are the garments durable to last long when used?

.....

3) Will you recommend the product to a friend?

.....

**Season C: Preference of Adinkra Symbols-Based garment**

4) Which of the garment will you prefer and why?

.....

5) Regardless of the price are you willing to buy the product?

Thank you.

## **APPENIDX D**

### **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EXECUTIVES OF THE DRESSMAKER'S ASSOCIATION (DESIGNERS), TEXTILE SHOP OWNERS AND FEMALE RADIO PRESENTERS (CONSUMERS) AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT (AAMUSTED)**

#### **KUMASI**

#### **FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW**

The researcher is a student of the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development studying towards Master of Philosophy in Fashion Design and Textiles degree. She is researching into the topic: “Redefining Occasional Garments Silhouette with Traditional Symbols”. You are requested to participate in this study which is for academic purposes only. As a result, you are assured of the confidentiality of your personal information. You are also at liberty to withdraw from the interview at any stage. However, with your participation in the study, the findings of the study will help improve the adoption and use of Akan symbols in the designing of garments. By participating in this study, you grant your informed consent. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this study.

**Pamela Frimpong**

#### **Section A: Background Information**

No. of participants: Male [    ]    Female [    ]

Date:

**Section B: Perception of Adinkra symbol**

- 1) Do you think that the resulting garment designed from an Adinkra symbol is unique?  
.....
- 2) Based on your experiences, do you think that garments designed from an Adinkra symbol for women will be associated with empowerment of women?  
.....
- 3) What do Adinkra symbols in garments signify in your various cultures?  
.....
- 4) What is your general perception of the value of garments designed from an Adinkra symbol?  
.....
- 5) If you could make any suggestion to improve garments designed from an Adinkra symbol, what would it be?  
.....
- 6) Are the designs of the product attractive to last long in terms of marketing?  
.....
- 7) Are the garments durable to last long when used?  
.....
- 8) Will you recommend the product to a friend?  
.....

**Section C: Preference of Adinkra Symbol-Based garments**

9) Which of the garment will you prefer and why?

.....

10) Regardless of the price are you willing to buy the product?

.....

Thank you.