

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**DESIGNING GA TRADITIONAL DRESS-FASHION-INSPIRED
CONTEMPORARY OCCASIONAL FEMININE WEAR: *TEMAMEI ASHIN*
YEI IN FOCUS**



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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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**A thesis in the Centre for Research, Culture and Creative Arts (CeRCCA),
School of Creative Arts, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Arts and Culture, Dress Fashion Design Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

DECEMBER, 2024

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Sussie Aku Damalie, hereby declare that this thesis with the except of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been dully acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

We declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Prof. Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel (PhD) (**Principal Supervisor**)

Signature:

Date:

A. K. Kemevor (PhD) (**Co-Supervisor**)

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the people of Tema *Manhean*, and all fashion enthusiasts who look for original, creative and exquisite dress fashion influenced by ancestral knowledge and skills, all of which have been attained in the present project.



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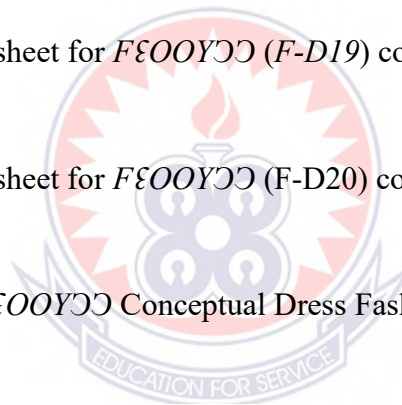


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ABSTRACT

This thesis was motivated by the appreciation and application of ancestral knowledge, competencies and values of dress. It engendered inclusivity by the use of findings from an understudied ethnic women's dress cultural practices of the *Ga* speaking people of Tema *Manhean* in the Greater Accra region of Ghana as an inspiration to influence a collection of contemporary feminine occasional wear. The project adopted a qualitative approach, using descriptive and studio-based research designs respectively. The population for the study was made up of human and non-human subjects, which sample size consisted of sixteen (16) *Ashin Yoo* artefacts, twenty (20) designs in the collection produced, and fifty-four (54) non-indigenes and fifty (23) indigenes interviewees respectively. Thematic, visual content, and trend analysis were used in analysing the data. The studio-work was premised on the *synthesis* model developed as a result of the project. *Haute couture* approach was adopted for production using distinct, conventional and non-conventional materials. The twenty (20) softly-tailored dressy, made-to-measure wardrobe made befit elegant yet relaxed semi-formal and formal occasions which call for a blend of exquisite tradition with style for the culturally-inclined fashion innovator as the customer profiled. Expert purposive technique was used in sampling the accessible population due to the nature of the multi-phased study. Observation, and interview were among instruments used for data collection. The major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo* remained four consistent with literature. Symbolically, the nobility rite maidens used the themed artefacts to express their feminine identity, communicate the various stages and levels of purification, status and allegiance to their society. In addition, the staples adopted as dress cultural practices were of symbolic spiritual and physical protection. However, there was evidence of value addition to their repertoire of fabrics adoption during *Kpojemɔ* and *Kpojei* (post purification outing stages) respectively. There were indications of the use of *Kusum* as curriculum which impacted the grooming of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens from socio-cultural relevance point of view. The twenty suits and separates *FɛOOYɔɔ* (*gorgeous-you-are*) collection created and exhibited was highly rated; seventy-six of the seventy-seven interviewees representing 98.7% acknowledged that the sensational collection created had helped in achieving the main goal of the project. Even in the face of many constants, there was ample empirical evidence of new findings in fabrics adopted by the maidens updating existing literature. The *FɛOOYɔɔ* (*gorgeous-you-are*) collection was catalogued and recommended to be used for teaching and learning of conceptual dress fashion trends in fashion institutions of higher learning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter placed the study into perspective by defining the nature of the research problem as well as providing the justification for it. It touched on the background, problem statement, purpose and objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, amongst others.

1.1 Background to the Study

Tema, in the Greater Accra region of Ghana is one of the six indigenous *Ga* towns of Ghana which form the *Ga* State (Amartey, 1991; Damalie, 2018a; Kwakye-Opong, 2014). The Tema traditional area is sited within the Tema township along the Greenwich Meridian longitudes 0°15W and 0°00' and latitudes 5° 30' and 5° 45' north (Kwakye-Opong, 2014; 2011), and is seen as a potential tourist site due to its prime location. *Temamei* (the people of Tema), the original owners of the land occupied by the Tema Township are presently located in Tema *Manhean* along the coast (Amartey, 1991; Damalie, 2018a).

As a metropolitan area, the city of Tema witnesses many interesting ethnic Ghanaian cultural practices and dress including that of the local people of Tema. However, research into the various dress culture practices displayed within Tema, including that of the local *Ga*-speaking women of Tema during the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (initiation rite of passage), particularly one in relation to creating conceptual dress fashion collection is recent and rather too scanty, given the ethnic group's prominence in Tema (Damalie, 2019; 2018a) for decades before independence. The study focused mainly on exploring the creative culture of the people of Tema; traditional/ethnic

stylists' works (dress culture practices of initiation maidens) to be used as a source of inspiration for the purpose of dress fashion experimentation. It involved creating a conceptual wearable dress fashion collection inspired by the rich indigenous classics worn by participating maidens during their initiation or rites, and other environmental influences consistent with conceptual fashion design (AU & AU, 2018). The choice was mainly motivated by the need to celebrate African culture; by drawing inspiration from African cultural heritage, and by so doing privileging women's voices and sartorial stories, and using these as sources of knowledge about their creative practices.

From fashion design perspective, it is very important to absorb the world's cultures, particularly that of Africa as Africans construct our particular way of communicating, and provide a way to go beyond our own *mental home*' (Romeo Gigli, as cited in Mbonu, 2014, p. 11). Besides, as it is often argued, and held in that, sub-culturally-led styles which stem from the traditional artefacts of group crafts, or religious items can influence new stylistic creations' (Muir, Moultrie & Eckert, 2008, p. 1236), communicating values (Vrencoska, 2009). What is more, such studies are reportedly of interest to particularly non-African researchers and novices alike outside the continent (Dogoe, 2013; Ryan, 2016). More than just underscoring the foregoing profound assertions, such studies are a repository of knowledge, identity and self-expression (Pinther, 2022) that have implications for socio-economic signification, and thus, fuelled the goal to put the *Ga* women culture (Ghanaian and African) and its cultural aesthetics in the spotlight of world fashion.

The study was set up within the context of rising research on concentrated fashion and, in particular, its relationship to Ghanaian arts, culture and dress cultural studies

(Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018a; Dedume, Ametorgbey & Asimah, 2016; Dogoe, 2013; Gott & Loughran, 2010; Impraim-Swanzy, Oduro & Owusu, 2018; Richards, 2015; Rovine, 2016; Ryan, 2016; Steegstra, 2004). The study empirically explored the interrelationships between conceptual fashion and arts, culture and dress cultural practices. It was thus embedded in fashion, design inspiration, and dress fashion design studies vis-à-vis ethnic/traditional dress cultural practices of rite of passage or initiation ceremony for maidens. It focused on *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (the girls' rite of passage) of Tema *Manhean* located in Ghana.

A number of studies as have been carried out in relation to women/female initiation rites (also referred to in some instances as puberty rites) elsewhere and in Ghana, where references to their accompanying indigenous classics used have been described (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Dedume et al., 2016; Dzramedo, 2009; Hobson, 2016). The readings suggested that most of these scholarly engagements, specifically those conducted in Ghana have been centred more on *Dipo* (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Crentsil, 2015; Dzramedo, 2009; Steegstra, 2004), and to some extent *Bragoro* because in the opinion of Asare-Danso, it appears to be among Krobo', and in the opinion of the current study the Asante people that puberty rites are still performed in the country' (Asare-Danso, 2018, p.175).

While relatively few studies on female initiation rites have been carried out among the Asante, Ewe and the people of Avatime in the Volta region (Asare-Danso, 2018; Dedume et al., 2016; Dzramedo, 2009), virtually little has been done on similar rite of *Ga* (people of Tema *Manhean*) initiation rite (Damalieu, 2019; 2018a). Like Asare-Danso (2018) in the case of *Bragoro*, this gap, which was a limitation identified, was

the impetus for the study enquiring into the initiation rite dresses of the people of Tema *Manhean* of Ghana. In addition, the inadequate research into fashion and sartorial styles as a core subject of African studies had been identified by Pinther (2022) as one of the key stimuli to venture into conceptual fashion experimentation related to the maidens' dress culture practices during the ceremony.

History, with regard to the *Ga* people, has been studied by various people in the recent past. For instance, ethnographic studies by Field (1965) and Quacopoome (2001) as cited in Kwakye-Opong (2014) focused on the social life of the *Ga* people. Culturally, issues on other rites of passage, traditional governance, and worship of spirits among others of the *Ga* people may have extensively received attention according to Kwakye-Opong (2014) but not that of *Temamei* (people of Tema *Manhean*). Kwakye-Opong (2014) for instance, concentrated on the historical accounts of the costume of *Ga* people from 15th-18th century in her study. Even though she strongly argued that an important way of looking at the strength and dynamics of a creative art was by examining its earliest periods, her research on the subject matter excluded that of *Ashin* (initiation or rite) maidens' decades-old practice which existed before Ghana's independence. In her study, she highlighted the historical and socio-cultural evidence of *Ga* costumes and adornments, headdress/hairstyles, in terms of sex and status, among others, but there was no mention of the unique dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (initiation or rite) maidens of Tema.

Designing a destination-inspired conceptual fashion collection is not an entirely new concept as the practice appears to have a long history in and outside Africa (Arthur, 2021; Delhaye & Woets, 2015; Essel, 2017; Gott & Loughran, 2010; Nkrumah, 2022; Ojo, 2016; Pinther, 2022; Rovine, 2016; Vrencoska, 2009). Historically, Chez Julie

was reported to have reinterpreted *Ga* men's toga classics into the *Akwadzan* design for the adult female consumer. She also changed the narrative on the revered well-known indigenous Ghanaian hand-woven kente used by both genders in drapery dress forms, by creating the 'Kente kaba' (Essel, 2021; Richards, 2015; Ryan, 2016) for the adult female consumer, paving the way for other designers to actually cut out and piece the Kente cloth together.

Arthur (2021) driven by the need to offer unique clothing options for auspicious marriage occasions, created distinctive traditional marriage dress collection for a Ghanaian tourist to make him look culturally appropriate. That destination-inspired *Voyage* collection was inspired by the historic Larabanga mosque located in the Northern Savannah region of Ghana. Nkrumah (2022) also created the *Exploit* collection; a fusion of the *Ga* coastal side and occupational inferences of James Town, Accra, and the 1980's youth fashion style as inspiration in the construction of a dress art collection. Alexander McQueen and Hussein Chalayan were well-known to be prominent designers who used their work to convey political and social messages. Even though Vrencoska (2009) described the strategy as a risky and courageous artistic approach for fashion business, the author admitted that their collections (and other fashion projects) remain commercially successful (Vrencoska, 2009) and relevant. In the face of the present *Nakba* (catastrophe) reportedly happening in the Palestinian Gaza Strip and West Bank, some designers, including Zara, used the ethnic *Kafiyya* or *Keffiyeh* or *Kufiya* (Palestinian scarf), and other national symbols including their flag, colours and the current size on the map of the Palestinian people in making conceptual fashionable dress designs as seen all over social media sources.

Here in Ghana, in the Greater Accra region, seasoned designer Ophelia Crossland also blended the Ghanaian hand woven kente (also highly patronised by such rites participants including Ashin (initiation rite) maidens of Tema during the ceremony), and other cultural elements to create unique brands. Ayesha Ayensu of the *Christie Brown* label, and other young designers also drew inspiration from the use of the industrialised made-in-Ghana/African wax prints (arguably referred to as African prints) as cultural heritage to create exclusive wearable brands (Damalie, 2018a; Richards, 2015; Ryan, 2016) for the international market. However, there is very few scholarly research into conceptual fashion design experimentation of the *Ashin* (initiation) maidens' dress culture practices.

The basis for the creation of any such fashion design products, be they custom-made, mass customised wear, conceptual clothing, or high-fashion projects comprise of the quest to solve a design problem and/or further create a new need for consumers using various strategies (Rech, 2016). Hence, no effort is usually spared in deriving the best of inspirations in making such conceptual dress fashion collections or items. The *KCascades Impressions* brand, though limited in scope, was highly motivated and influenced by, not only the dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo*, (initiation of the maidens of Tema *Manhean*), but in addition cross cultural sensibilities in material selection as points of attraction (Damalie, 2019).

The destination-inspired fashion concept in this context refers to creating a group of high-end fashion wearable clothes made to reflect a place to which someone is going, or a place where something is being sent or expected; denoting a place such as Tema, Tema *Manhean* and its environs, that people may make a special trip to visit. Destination-inspired fashion is distinguished by *haute couture* notations such as

experimentation in smaller quantities of luxury products, with considerable hand or like manner sewing techniques, and sized to fit individual models or wearer's body size and shape. Such customised conceptual fashion is normally themed and so reflects composite ideas from the source(s) of inspiration.

Although the *KCascades Impressions* fashion brand used as a foundation for the current project exuded ethnocentric and cross cultural sensibilities, its characteristic limitations in design and scope created a problematic research gap which ought to be filled. Of certainty, admirers of that brand have suggested the top lace of the dress for instance, could be varied— be made into other girlish colours like peach, pink, and gold among others, as was reflected in the kente skirt wrap component to be used for weddings and other exceptional ceremonies respectively. Those suggestions are food for thought worth considering in a related future conceptual project.

The key design strategy of interest central to the current project was dependent on emergent concepts from key dress used by the *Ashin* (initiation) maidens in public during the ceremony which hitherto had neither been adequately explored nor amply used in the earlier brand cited in Damalie (2019). To further broaden the scope of the existing brand, emergent aesthetics from the main outing dress identified were to be further manipulated in innovative and creative ways to create new items.

The benefits of such a practical design and goal-oriented case study cannot be over-emphasised as it focused on making three significant cases. The first one was a case of telling exclusive ethnic women sartorial stories of what appears to be adult-sponsored celebration at initiation (Markstrom, 2008 as cited in Hobson, 2016) of less scholarly engaged existing practices in Ghanaian *Ga* women dress cultural practices.

Secondly, it was a case of seizing the opportunity of interest in exotic concentrated African fashion (Richard, 2015; Rovine, 2016; Ryan, 2016), by creating experiential conceptual fashion from Africa, and in line with national and continental aspirations. Its uniqueness added to earlier efforts of very few Ghanaian scholarly studies with similar interests as alluded to earlier. Additionally, it aided in the promotion of African cultural aesthetics, adhering to the African adage which admonishes Africans not to forget to celebrate their own culture. The opportunity was used to explore the study's potential impact on conceptual dress fashion from Africa (from ideation to delivery) in current areas of research in the field of conceptual fashion and textile studies.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Accessible literature on African fashion (specifically on ethnic dress cultural practices) from Ghana (Africa) showed that the subject had not yet received much academic attention despite the exciting and important current developments in the field of African indigenous classics in relation to initiation dress practices, and dress fashion among others (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2019, 2018; Delhaye & Woets, 2015; Dzramedo, 2009; Gott & Loughran, 2010; Kwakye-Opong, 2014). Attempts made in that regard mainly by non-indigenous African researchers and a few indigenous African scholars focused on the work of high designer names of repute (first to fourth generation designers) in the Ghanaian design environment (Essel, 2017; Richards, 2015; Ryan, 2016). For instance, Essel (2017) identified twelve (12) iconic creative hands in the fashion creation industry from 1920 to present. While his study assessed the contributions of the Ghanaian designers to the globalisation of fashion design, Richards' (2015, 2014) focused on the works of Parisian-trained Ghanaian fashion designer Juliana Nortey (*Chez Julie*) and other

fourth generation Ghanaian designers such as Aisha Ayensu of the *Christie Brown* label, the duo Kabutey Dzieror and Sumaya Mohammed of *Pristis* label to mention but a few. Efforts of trailblazers in the field including Essel (2017) and Richards (2015) focused on the contributions of contemporary iconic Ghanaian designers. The study upheld Essel's (2017) suggestion to add to the list of iconic designers, given the emerging market of consumers (including academia) in quest of original ethnically-inspired African dress fashion and designers, despite the many misconceptions about Africa, Africans and African styles (Ojo, 2016; Rovine, 2016).

What have been ignored in all these creative efforts of Ghanaian designers, however, is the works of indigenous African stylists, which are used during female initiation ceremonies. Of specific interest to the current study was the *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (the nobility rite of the people of Tema) in Ghana (Africa). For instance, searchlight on such works by extension gave room to examine decades old ethnic dress cultural practices in Ghana. Even though that could be a 'treasure trove' for conceptual fashion designers, it did appear that African designers (in and outside academia) were not seizing the moment of current interests in Africa and African fashion to help change existing misconceptions about the continent, by using ethnic dress cultural practices to create unique conceptual fashion brands and wealth. Typical examples of decades old ethnic dress cultural practices in Ghana witnessed in the Tema Metropolis included that of *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ of Temamei* (nobility rite of the people of Tema), *Kpelejo, Hɔmɔwɔ* and other festive dress codes (also of the people of Tema), and the *Krobo Dipo Yoo Sikplem* (Damalie, 2018a) all from the Greater Accra and Eastern regions of Ghana respectively.

Asare-Danso (2018) and Boakye (2010) affirmed that the latter (Krobo *Dipo Yoo Sikplem*) practised among the Krobo people had been explored extensively by a number of anthropologists (Abbey, 2016; Adjaye, 1999; Huber, 1963; Nanegbe, 2016; Schneider & Danquah, 2000; Teyegaga, 1985 as cited in Asare-Danso, 2018). That situation, Asare-Danso (2018) asserted, was the case because it appeared to be only among the Krobo people that initiation rite is still performed in Ghana. But the women of Tema *Manhean* had also observed the cleansing ceremony referred to as *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (nobility rite) for decades. The lack of adequate literature on their practice suggested that unlike the *Dipo*, very scanty scholarly studies had been conducted (Damalie, 2019, 2018a) in that regard. The study yearned for more scholarly engagements with the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* ceremonial dress cultural practices; as efforts to preserve Ghanaian heritage through documentation, and as influencers in creating authentic exquisite ethno-centric conceptual fashion brands of African origin. There was the need to identify for analysis major dress cultural practices of *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens. By so doing, it helped appreciate their concepts, and beautiful visual contents. Such reviews ought to examine trends in key dress styles as practised, as these might essentially provide stimulus for influencing dress fashion design practice in creating innovative conceptual fashion brands of unique African nuances (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Damalie & Yeboah, 2023; Mbonu, 2014; Muir et al., 2008; Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009) to project African fashion.

Damalie (2018) studied the indigenous classics of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (nobility rite) and their symbolic meanings. Damalie's focus was to fill the knowledge gap on the subject matter as there was little or no evidence of such documented literature to guide the reading public, and particularly for the purposes of research.

However, in order to get more in-depth insight into the phenomena, the present study called for a further examination of the symbolic, and by extension the socio-cultural relevance of the major dress cultural practices of the maidens used for the *Ashin Kpeemo* (ceremony). It was envisaged that the result might lead to an even deeper meaning, appreciation, and understanding of the dress concepts of the rite maidens. That might further give more impetus and direction to designers/researchers interested in practically creating clothing using the symbolic and values vis-à-vis the beauty of the women's sartorial culture practices to fill the yawning design related gap identified in literature.

Deola Ade Ojo is a top Nigerian fashion designer with 25 years of experience. As a designer, she is keen on making fashion statements with her designs in which her African cultural identity is paramount (Ojo, 2016). Her memorable works include the fringing of the popular *Aso Oke* cloth (M-Net/Anglo-gold Africa Designs in 2000 (Ojo, 2016) to showcase the indigenous fabric's versatility. Like Deola and the Ghanaian designers (Chez Julie, Christie Brown and Ophelia Crossland among others) mentioned in the introductory part of the study, inspiration from local cloths and industrialised wax prints— wax prints with African/Ghanaian motifs and concepts made in or outside Africa (Akinwumi, 2008) have proven useful in the promotion of African fashion far beyond their immediate economies (Richards, 2015; Ryan, 2016). As an Afrocentric collection, any existing foundation brand worth its sort ought to be of similar posturing, that is, pushing the boundaries of Ghanaian fashion.

Damalie's (2019) *KCascades Impressions (KCI)* brand in like manner sought to contribute to bridging the gap of flow of design inspiration from Africa in the face of

constant re-imagination of African styles by the West (Damalie, 2019; Rovine, 2016). The brand has been displayed in two major culturally-inclined exhibitions in 2019 and 2022 since its creation. It has influenced other investigations of the designer (Damalie, 2021) and other mini projects of students at the tertiary level, underscoring the assertion that sub-culturally led styles which stem from the traditional artefacts of group (crafts, religious items) can influence new stylistic creations (Muir et al., 2008; Saleem, Akhtar, Ali & Khan, 2014).

However, the *KCI* brand inspired by *Ga* nobility dress cultural practices (the *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Hesaamɔ*) remained restrictive. This was because it was technically limited to dress aesthetics related to only one of four identified themes of the maidens' dress cultural practices. The current project therefore argued that the scope of the *KCI* brand (Damalie, 2021, 2019) needed to be expanded in order to attain a more extensive brand, to further project the brand and what it stands for. The argument was that, the deeper the investigation, the more design opportunities it might provide (Mbonu, 2014). There was thus the need to explore unique dress and/or style details or features including silhouettes, materials, colours, accessories and techniques of aesthetic value used by indigenous stylists that defined the *Ashin Yoo* (nobility maiden) as a 'treasure trove' consistent with fashion design practice (Ojo, 2016; Rovine, 2016). Such efforts, the study held, might further help unearth the full potentials of the maidens' dress cultural practices, to be applied in the area of conceptual dress fashion design and production. The study argued further that the maidens' dress culture might further risk remaining in oblivion, which might in turn encourage the continuous authentication as African, re-imagined African sensibilities from Western designers, and the perpetuation of flow of design inspiration for African designers influenced by the West (Rovine, 2016), hence the study.

Like the noted iconic designers cited earlier, the present study saw the need to create solid group of outfits with African cultural identity at the heart of it all. It was however, not without the ideology of the new norm of ‘shift and interaction’ or ‘borrowing’ (Rovine, 2016, p.35) between cultures to create a new African fashion aesthetic which included universal hints (Damalie, 2021; Delhaye & Woets, 2015; Essel, 2017; Muir et al., 2008).

Quite apart from the need to arouse the endorsement of the value of the study from the indigenes whose sartorial stories (artefacts) positively influenced such conceptual fashion, such opportunities did allow the indigenes much more access to research outcomes. It was assumed that it might further help the researcher receive valuable feedback (constructive criticism and/or appreciation) from indigenes on artefacts created; this is critical for future studies. Thus, the present study was duty bound to engage local members of the Tema Traditional Area to ascertain their views on the collection produced and other relevant information if need be.

Additionally, it appeared that for the average African designer, ‘the dress practices of New York, Paris, or Milan were much more accessible than those of South Africa, Kenya, or Nigeria’ (Rovine, 2016, p.34) and perhaps Ghana. Substantially more effort was required to seek out images and information from elsewhere in Africa, meanwhile European and North American culture is reportedly prominent, because such information was circulated in every form of mass media. Ryan (2016) commended Richards’ 2015 Gainesville (Florida) exhibition of Ghanaian designers who use inspiration from wax prints with African/Ghanaian motifs and concepts (made in or outside Africa) to promote African fashion far beyond their immediate economies. Richard’s exhibition was hailed by Ryan (2016) as among the first to

focus specifically on one African scene in a country, moving away from continent-wide concept. Ryan (2016) admitted that the concentrated approach in fashion presentation appealed to experts and novices alike (Gott & Loughran, 2010 as cited in Ryan, 2016).

Riding on the back of that expert opinion and the suggestion of Rovine (2016) and Ryan (2016), it was deemed necessary for projects such as the present one to include neutral audience apart from the local opinions so as to allow for diversity of feedback on artefacts produced. There was thus the need for the present study to ascertain views from a non-*Ga* speaking audience outside the indigenous *Temamei* community on the collection created.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main goal of the study was to inspire inclusiveness of culture in the production of knowledge by creatively reinterpreting folklore (Pozzo, 2020). Inspiration was drawn from the ethnic sartorial stories of initiation rite maidens for the purposes of product design, development and production, and to promote the new need of a cohesive *Ga* destination-inspired collection, while placing the *Ga* subculture [Ghanaian and African], its cultural aesthetics and impact on fashion design in the spotlight of world fashion consistent with best practices (Mbonu, 2014; Picard, 2019). It was equally meant to fill the literature gap on the need to explore aesthetic attributes of dress cultural artefacts of *Temamei Ashin yei* (nobility rite maidens of Tema *Manhean*), and their potential influence on culturally-inclined conceptual dress fashion design practices.

Thus, the project took a look at the African continent and its rich cultural resources vis-à-vis fashion design inspirations by analysing ethnic *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress

practices crafted by traditional stylists in Ghana (Africa). Inspiration for the practical component (the collection) was from aesthetic aspects of major dress cultural practices themed *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Kpojeei-Hesaamɔi* (traditional dress and/or styling of Tema *Manhean* maidens), in the quest to throw light on a less known Ghanaian ethnic dress practice. It also aimed at promoting African aesthetic fashion as a design practitioner from academia (Candy, 2006). As a profile-raising philosophy, the study's target market included, but was not exclusive to, potential consumers of lifestyle products; adventure-loving fashion forward mature female Millennials (tourists). The practice, as suggested in literature, enables designers to create goods desirably suitable to meet the perceived needs of their prospective clients (Burns et al., 2016; Vrencoska, 2009).

The current study further sought to expand the boundaries of an existing *KCI* brand (Damalie, 2019) which was also inspired by the ethnic *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress practices but was limited in scope. As a result, the focus was on using all three (3) key formal outing dress practices of the maidens, their cultural setting, the initial brand and other influencing components as the key stimulating force to create a distinctive dress fashion collection for contemporary women.

1.4 Research Objectives

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify and analyse the major dress cultural practices of the participating maidens during *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (rite).
2. Examine the symbolism and socio-cultural relevance of the major dress cultural practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*).

3. Create a collection of feminine occasional wear inspired by the aesthetics aspects of the major dress culture practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*), and catalogue it as a tool for teaching and learning.
4. Ascertain views of audience from the Tema Traditional Area on the collection created.
5. Ascertain views of audience from a non-*Ga* setting on the collection created as part of awareness creation process and act upon feedback for improvement, if necessary in subsequent relatable projects.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the major dress cultural practices of the participating maidens during *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (rite)?
2. What are the symbolism and socio-cultural relevance/importance of the major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (rite)?
3. What factors were considered in creating the collection catalogued, and to what extent did it reflect creative re-interpretation of the aesthetics aspects of the major dress cultural practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*)?
4. What were the views of audiences from the Tema Traditional Area on the collection created?
5. What were the views of audiences from the non-*Ga* setting on the collection created?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The quest of the current project was to solve a design problem of creating a new need for consumers using various product design strategies consistent with contemporary

conceptual, *haute couture* (high fashion) practice where distinct designs are made using high quality materials and techniques premised on national and continental aspirations (Axelsson, 2021; Burns et al., 2016; Rech, 2016). The rationale was to seize the moment of current interests of consumers (including academia) in the quest of original African ethnically-inspired dress fashion (Damalie, 2019; Rovine, 2016; Ryan, 2016) targeting fashion forward female tourists in particular as prospective customers, while informing academia of existing practices in Ghanaian dress culture and their likely impact on dress fashion design. Additionally, the study essentially placed the potential tourist site (traditional area) and their dress culture in the spotlight of the world.

The study focused on experiential conceptual fashion from Africa in line with national and continental aspirations, and further added to earlier efforts of few Ghanaian scholarly engagements with similar topical interests. Thus, it contribute to knowledge on indigenous African women's sartorial stories from Tema *Manhean* and its possible influence on ethno-fashion design.

Further, the study attempted to contribute to ongoing scholarly conversation on the impact of Africa on fashion which refocused on African influence for made-in-Africa dress fashion. Indeed, it used innovative and creative product design tactic mainly initiated and influenced from women's subculture in Africa as a strategy, thus creating original, distinctive collection to satisfy the growing interest in African fashion inspired by Africa (Richards, 2015; Rovine, 2016; Ryan, 2016) by way of promoting African aesthetics (African resources, and themes) where the key animating force is Ghanaian (African). The documented album of sartorial findings in the report and dress fashion catalogue might be very useful in articulating this point of

view, and for teaching and learning about culture, ethnic dress, and conceptual fashion design practices.

1.7 Delimitation / Scope

Study Site / Source of inspiration

The study site was limited to Tema *Manhean* in the Greater Accra, and Takoradi in the Western regions of Ghana respectively. Tema *Manhean* in the Greater Accra region was the focal point of this production-based research project. The site was associated with the sources of inspiration (dress cultural practices and the environment) which stimulated the project. The aesthetic features of three samples of the major dress cultural practices used by the traditional *Ga* speaking women during the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (nobility rite) strongly drove the project.

Target customer/ Product

The term ‘lifestyle merchandising’ was used in branding the new need created. It was coined to recognise the importance of appealing to the target customer’s lifestyle choices e. g. love for culture and adventure (Burns et al., 2011, p.184). It was thus used in the context of appealing to target customer or patron with the following characteristics: a fashion innovator, who loves cultural tourism, has adventure-loving lifestyle and loves to travel to Africa (Ghana), a culturally-inclined large to plus size hourglass female millennial, aged between 26 to 56 years willing to visit Tema, Tema *Manhean* and environs.

Project Model

The project was modelled on a unique *Synthesis* model; a fourth trajectory developed from a cluster of contemporary design philosophies of practice among designers/ researchers in the British community (Broadbent, 1980 as cited in Evbuomwan,

Sivaloganathan & Jebb, 1996). Other underpinnings included consumer fashion adoption theories (Sproles, 1979 as cited in Saleem et al., 2014).

The project made innovative use of striking features observed from the rich ethnic nobility rite maidens such as the illusionary hourglass-like silhouette they assume, the female matured form and look they underscored, dress styles crafted, and dress materials (use of conventional and non-conventional textile fabrics, trims and notions), colour story, motifs (both highlighted and implied), techniques and values applied, among others.; a careful observation, analysis and manipulation of concepts consistent with fashion practice and the constructivist research philosophy adopted for the study (Polit & Beck, 2018; Mbonu, 2014). The creativity design strategy used allowed the researcher to artistically apply concepts from elements of the dress cultural practices; such as rule breaking, innovative juxtaposition, and individual creativity which cannot be ruled out in such creative projects (Hwang, 2013).

1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms

Abaya: The name of a local plant used as spice.

Abonua: Ga term for the lime fruit.

Adiagba: Type of valuable beads used by *Ashin* maidens. The term also means a treasure.

Adjeikojo: One of the villages under Tema now turned into a township.

Aesthetics: The term means beautiful or in Ga *Fεonɔ*, meaning *‘a thing of beauty.’*

It is attributed to the maidens artefacts in one of their cheer songs, and was the basis for paying attention to the demonstrable aesthetic or

beautiful aspects implied in the creativity of the maidens dress cultural practices which were used during the fashioning of the collection.

Akwadzan: Toga styled design for the adult female consumer.

Aggrey beads: Types of glass beads found locally in Ghana.

Akotsɛle: Parrot feathers.

Akpaako: The present location of the Tema people also referred as *Wo Kpele Ga* sub-group.

Anehɔ: A place in Togo where the four sub-groupings of the *Ga* people reportedly settled for a while after they left Nigeria before moving to their present locations in Ghana.

Anyɛ ashin: Application of the *Ashinmu* (Batana oil).

Asafo anyɛ: A female clan representative – female leader among the town warriors.

Ashaiman: One of the nearby Tema villages which has also developed into a township.

Ashinfɔɔ: This refers to the camping stage, a key activity observed during the nobility rite.

Ashinmu: Processed palm fruit oil with which the maidens are ‘cleansed’ (also known as Batana oil).

Ashino: Beads.

Ashino-yei: Small white rocaile strung beads

Ashin tɛ: **Ashin** stone imbedded in the maidens’ hair during the second level of the purification process.

- Ashin Yoo*: An indigenous Tema *Manhean* female native undergoing the initiation rite.
- Ashin Yei*: Plural form for *Ashin Yoo* rite maidens.
- Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ*: Decades old initiation practice observed by the maidens of Tema *Manhean* (Tema New Town).
- Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Hesaamɔi*: The *Ashin* maidens' ceremonial dress design / styling.
- Atufo*: The local bustle padded scarf worn at the small of the back to narrow the skirt cloth in front and to shift the volume of the wrapped cloth to the back.
- Awoo tokota*: Walking barefooted.
- Ayilo*: Baked white clay used for body décor during *Telekɔmɔ*.
- Basa We*: The clan name of the custodian of the *Basa* spirit hence their name *Basa We*. Their other name is *Nii Ansah We*.
- Blema kpãanɔ atsa*: Continuity of ancient established norms and or lived experiences.
- Bragoro*: Women/female initiation rites (also referred in some instances as puberty rites). It is practised among the Ashanti people of Ghana.
- Bue*: The bright red loincloth used by the maidens as panties throughout the ceremony.
- Clala*: The white calico used as skirt wrapped clothing on the body during the *Ashinfɔɔ* phase of the ritual.

- Chemu* A lagoon found on the eastern part of Tema. It is home to one of the spirits culturally adopted by the Tema Traditional Area.
- Costume:* The term was used interchangeably with dress adopted for a specific purpose (not for everyday use).
- Dangbe:* The *Dangbe* or *Dangme* are a group of Ghanaians located in the Greater Accra region of Ghana.
- Dipo:* Initiation rites (also referred to in some instances as puberty rites) among the Krobo people of Ghana.
- Dipo Yoo Sikplem:* The popular rite practised among the Krobo people of Ghana.
- Design:* Design was used in the context of a creative process as well as a product resulting from the process.
- Duku tsuru:* This referred to red scarves used by the maidens during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping).
- Eyɛ feo tsɔ:* ‘It is so beautiful’ in the *Ga* language.
- Fɛonɔ:* ‘A thing of beauty’ in the *Ga* language.
- FɛOOYɔɔ:* The *Ga* term implies ‘you look gorgeous’. It is the theme/title of the collection created, and was inspired by one of the cheer songs sung by the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens.
- FɛOOYɔɔ* collection: The group of clothing designed as a brand based on the *Ashin Yei* (maidens’) dress culture practices.
- Fers:* Yellow coloured paste used for floral marks on the face and arms of the maidens.
- Fliwa* beads: Necklace used by the maidens described as queen of all their strung neck beads.

- Ga*: A tribe in Ghana and also refers to the language spoken by the *Ga* people who are located in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. They are the landlords of the Ghanaian capital Accra.
- Gamei*: The *Ga* people.
- Gbotoshi wowo*: A feminine rite practised by *Ewe* people from the Volta region of Ghana.
- Guan*: A language spoken among some tribes in Ghana.
- Ga Dangbe*: A collective term referring to the *Ga* and *Dangbe* people of Ghana.
- Hanfu*: An authentic form of Chinese historical clothing.
- Hao*: A strap used by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens in securing wrapped cloth on their waist or bust.
- Hesaamɔ*: Dressing or styling.
- Hesaamɔi*: Dress, dressing or styling in plural terms.
- Hlorkpãa*: A twine used in stringing the various components of the *Ntah* anklets together. It is believed to give protection especially to pregnant *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens.
- Hɔmɔwɔ*: A festival observed by the *Ga* people in Ghana.
- Kafiyya*: A name of the Palestinian scarf also referred to as *Keffiyeh* or *Kufiya*.
- Kakaban We*: The *Kakaban* clan is one of the twenty-three (23) clans within the Tema Traditional Area.

- KCascades Impressions*: The dress fashion brand inspired by *Ga* dress culture practices (DCPs) of *Temamei Ashin Yoo* (nobility rite maiden) during the outdoor stage.
- Kebisanana*: A female initiation rite practised among the Fantes in the Central and Western regions of Ghana.
- Kete*: Loom woven traditional luxury cloth of the Ewes of Ghana.
- Klagon*: The name of yet another nearby village under Tema *Manhean* which has similarly developed into a township.
- Kpeemo Hesaamɔ*: The initiation rite dress culture practices or styling.
- Kpelejo*: A festive occasion of *Temamei* celebrated prior to *Hɔmɔwɔ*.
- Kpojiemɔ*: The outdoor ceremony of the *Temamei Ashin Kpeemo* (nobility rite) where the maidens dress up in rich luxurious cloths (kente, kete, silk or velvet) and gather at their paternal clan house for aspects of the rituals.
- Krojei*: The post-rite phase of the *Temamei Ashin Kpeemo* (nobility rite).
- Kpokpoi shwamɔ*: Sprinkling of *Ga* festive food made with milled maize) during *Hɔmɔwɔ* festival of *Temamei*.
- Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ*: The outdoor dress culture practices of the nobility maidens.
- Krɔbɔ*: A non-edible fruit of a plant, green in colour, with a pleasant fragrance.
- Kusakɔkɔ*: A practice among the *Guan* speaking people from Avatime also in the Volta region of Ghana.

<i>Kusum:</i>	The tradition or custom in the <i>Ga</i> language. Its use is linked with belief.
<i>Kusum gboo:</i>	A maxim impling <u>tradition goes on.</u>
<i>Kweni:</i>	Strung neck beads used by the maiden as jewellery.
<i>Kyiribra</i> rituals:	An Akan (a Ghanaian language) which literally means <u>hater of menstruation</u> .
<i>Larabanga:</i>	The <i>Musjid</i> (mosque) is located in the Northern Savannah region of Ghana.
<i>Lon:</i>	Raffia fibre patronised by the <i>Ga</i> people as dressing accessory is a long green grass which is collected and dried to obtain a brownish colour.
<i>Maimour:</i>	Mali's Maimouna Diallo's distinctive style inspired from Zulu beadwork
<i>Mama Bumɔ:</i>	The way cloth is wrapped by the <i>Ashin</i> maidens during the <i>Ashin</i> ceremony.
<i>Mama Tsuru:</i>	The red cloth wraps used by the maidens during <i>Telekɔmɔ</i> (pre-camping).
<i>Manmomoeimli:</i>	The old abode of <i>Temamei</i> where the people settled in the Gold Coast era.
<i>Model:</i>	Sample size of figure to fit the garment. The term was also used in the context of the flowchart carefully developed to guide the creative design, product development, production and promotion stages and procedures.
<i>Nakba:</i>	An Arabic term meaning catastrophe.

<i>Niɲmãa:</i>	Body marks made on the <i>Ashin</i> (nobility rite) maidens during the rite.
<i>Nyanya:</i>	Green <i>nyanya</i> wreath is worn around the neck in an almost dried form to reportedly protect the <i>Ashin</i> (nobility) maidens from the evil speech of others. Its use as garland is common among the <i>Ga</i> and <i>Ewe</i> people of Ghana.
<i>Nkitinkiti:</i>	A local term for aniseed (spice).
<i>Ntah:</i>	The queen of the <i>Ashin Yoo</i> 's(nobility maiden's) anklets.
<i>Ɖmɔkɔfu:</i>	Woven raffia
<i>Odasobɔ:</i>	Printed silk scarves used by the <i>Ashin</i> (nobility) maidens during the post-rites phase.
<i>Oduku</i> headdress:	A unique local hairstyle for <i>Ashin yei</i> (nobility maidens).
<i>Otofo:</i>	A feminine rite practised by <i>Ga</i> speaking people from Kpone. It used to be practised by three clan houses of Tema <i>Manhean</i> .
<i>Pepre:</i>	Cloves (spice).
<i>Saasabi:</i>	A nearby village under Tema <i>Manhean</i> which has developed into township.
<i>Sakumɔ:</i>	A lagoon found on the western part of Tema. It also refers to the sea spirit to which the Traditional area holds allegiance.
<i>Tebibianɔ:</i>	The next location the <i>Wɔ Kpele Ga</i> sub-group moved to. It is close to the <i>Sakumɔnɔ</i> lagoon.
<i>Silhouette:</i>	A term used to describe human shape(s) and also dress forms.

- Telekɔmɔ:* The pre-camping stage of the nobility rites.
- Temamei:* The traditional people of Tema *Manhean*. They are referred to in the *Ga* language as *Temamei*; that is to say the people of Tema.
- Tema Manhean:* It means Tema Newtown. It is the name of the original owners of the land occupied by the Tema Township developed by the State.
- Tema Kpeemɔ yɛ fɛo tsɔ mɛi pii naaa:* That is to say, –The Tema *Ashin* rite is so beautiful, yet many people (except the indigenous Tema maidens) cannot experience it.
- Tigare:* Traditional priest and priestess of the Tigare deity.
- Torman:* A *Ga* word meaning ‘gourd town.’ It is the nickname of *Temamei* based on their erstwhile gourd farming activities.
- Tunn:* A feminine rite practised by three clan houses of Tema *Manhean*.
- We:* Means clan; Nii Ansah *we* means the Nii Ansah clan.
- Wɔ Sagba:* A *Ga* sub-grouping of *Ga Mashi* who left Ife in search of their own land.
- Wɔ Doku:* Refers to a *Ga* sub-grouping of La Bone who left Ife in search of their own land.
- Wɔ Krowɔ:* The *Ga* sub-grouping of Nungua who left Ife in search of their own land.
- Wɔ Kpele:* The *Ga* sub-grouping of Tema who left Ife in search of their

own land.

<i>Wulomei</i> :	Traditional priests in the society of the <i>Ga</i> people.
<i>Wuobibiafe</i> :	Short hair plaited in dotted portions like chicken droppings.
<i>Yaa</i> :	Net
<i>Yihoo</i> :	Plaited hairstyle.
<i>Yihoo kpãa</i> :	Black hair plaiting thread.
<i>Zenu</i> :	A suburb near Ashaiman. It is one of the nearby villages under Tema Traditional area.

1.9 Abbreviations

<i>AYKK-H</i> :	<i>Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Krojei-Hesaamɔ</i>
CFDA:	Council of Fashion Designers of America
DIY:	Do it Yourself
Fig.:	The term was for image as well as for the shape of the human form.
<i>KCI</i> :	<i>KCascades Impressions</i> ; the foundation brand used as a trend influencer.
<i>TAYK-H</i> :	<i>Temamei Ashin Yoo Krojei-Hesaamɔi</i> .
<i>TAYKK-H</i> :	<i>Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Krojei-Hesaamɔi</i> .

1.10 Organisation of the Study Chapters

Chapter one described the focus of the research and discussed the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, specific objectives and research

questions. The delimitation, significance of the study, operational definition of terms, abbreviations and organisation of the study chapters provided outline for the report.

Conceptual framework and literature related to the key themes specific to the project were reviewed in chapter two. Chapter three focused on materials and method of the research project. The results of the study were presented in chapter four. The content of outcome of the study were thematically analysed, and consequently discussed in relation to the literature reviewed in chapter two and other relevant inferences. The summary of the entire research, the conclusions reached and recommendations premised on the findings were presented in the fifth chapter. Suggestions were also made for further study in the fifth chapter.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

With the existing research gaps identified and justification for the present project mentioned, the study underpinnings conceptualised in the framework used in the study was analysed and firmly placed within the context of research design, and the related literature based on work done in the area of dress cultural practices of initiation rites in relation to the current study's objectives. It included thematic visual content analysis of the major dress cultural practices of the participating maidens during the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (initiation rite) with others such as *Bragoro*, *Dipo*, and *Kusakoko* initiation rites in perspective.

2.1 Study Philosophical Underpinning

The study adopted a blend of design philosophies from other fields of design consistent with those embedded in the statement dress of the initiation maidens. These were fused with consumer fashion adoption theories, fashion design and production related theories, design as well as production-led models all hinged on the standpoint feminism and symbiotic theories respectively (Sproles, 1979 as cited in Saleem, Akhtar, Ali & Khan, 2014; Burns, Mullet & Bryant, 2016; Evbuonwam, Sivaloganathan & Jebb, 1996). These were based on the motivation of the study which cannot be overemphasized; that is, the need to celebrate African women (subculture), the product type, category and presumed use; culturally influenced, mature, dressy occasional user-friendly custom-made feminine lifestyle fashion product desired, in line with a group of marginalised ethnic women's dress cultural practices. The concept model adopted, as well as the design strategy intended in the design-led model were influenced by the study underpinnings selected upon the

review of literature in relation to the topic vis-à-vis the desired outcome. While all the conceptual underpinnings were of equal merits regarding their usefulness for the multi-angled study, and the impact of each individual underpinning's worldviews in the practical project/collection, the study was rooted in the standpoint feminist theory for obvious reasons.

The reason being the paucity of literature about the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' dress used, coupled with the creativity of the marginalised stylists' expertise; that is, the works of traditional stylists who meticulously dress the initiation maidens. There was also the need to properly harness the socio-economical signification of the rites in its aesthetic values including most importantly, creatively re-interpreting their dress cultural practices influences. These collectively birthed the whole notion of the project. Thus, the study underpinnings rooted in the standpoint feminism theory formed the basis of the study. They were relied upon as highly influential strategies in deciding the research methodology adapted as well as materials and methods employed in the implementation of the project both on the field and in the studio.

First, the product design theories adopted were based on the combination of three design philosophies on: how design is, might be or should be' (Broadbent, [1980] as cited in Evbuomwan et al., 1996). The Semantics, Syntax, and Past experience' philosophies appear complementary in this regard (Evbuomwan et al., 1996). They underlined the socio-cultural relevance of the object of study to *Temamei*, the society being studied, hence their adoption for the current project.

2.1.1 Design schools of thought

There have been various schools of thought expressed by designers and researchers as regards how design is, might be or should be done', and this according to

Evbuomwan et al. (1996), has undoubtedly resulted in controversy. The three schools of thought currently within the British design community were expressed in Broadbent's (1980 as cited in Evbuomwan et al. (1996) book on *Design: science: method*. Evbuomwan et al. upheld in a summary that:

The first group believed that the **design process should be chaotic and creative**, the second group believed that **design should be organised and disciplined**, but the third group argued that **no design process should be imposed on a designer**. Support for the first viewpoint is usually based on the argument that the design function is an art, hence cannot be taught, which seems to imply that designers are born not made. . . Support for the second view comments that: systematic methods come into their own under one or more conditions. . . (p. 304).

Meanwhile, support for the third viewpoint made a case comparing the ways in which designers and scientists tend to use a strategy of systematically exploring the problem in order to look for underlying rules which would enable them to generate the correct or optimum solution. In contrast, designers tended to suggest a variety of possible solutions until they found one that was good or satisfactory. In their opinion, Evbuomwan et al. (1996) further noted that: the evidence from the expert comments suggested that scientists problem-solve by analysis, whereas designers problem-solve by synthesis' (p.304). They again noted that:

Arguments put forward by those belonging to this school of thought are usually that universality, which is the target of most design methodologists, is contradictory to practical usefulness and that the creativity of designers can be hampered . . . if design methodologies are adopted. In this group, emphasis is placed on the importance of case histories of design, including all necessary knowledge to be learnt for improving design ability. This school of thought is closely associated with the view that the design ability cannot be acquired efficiently in a theoretical manner, but by experience (p. 305).

Each of the philosophies by the three schools of thought, although useful in their own right (Evbuomwan et al., 1996), falls short of showing a clear, well-thought out and focused plan, which leaves nothing to chance when used exclusively for a research

such as the current study. It was therefore anticipated that, each school of thought on its own may not exclusively address the issue of design creation and influencing factors being pursued satisfactorily. Each may ignore issues related to concepts such as showing design (product) conception, development, and production on one hand, and the engagement with audiences to communicate findings which would be in essence to promote the outcome of the project, and further seek feedback on the designs created relative to the motivation of the study. The various schools of thought either concentrated solely on product or process. But when used together as a synthesis, they appeared better; each complementary to the other to pay attention to the purposeful design objective itself as well as the procedural aspects of the creative design activity and possible replication of the process (Evbuomwan et al., 1996).

The current study which attempted to solve the design problem of creating a new need drew rich insights from all three schools of thought to arrive at a blend of design philosophies rather than focusing on one (Evbuomwan et al., 1996, p. 304). Relevant concepts from all three schools were merged to achieve a coherent intellectual position on how design is, might be or should be done. It was deemed consistent with the project; a blend which actually addressed the issue of design as a well thought out execution of what product and how process; that is, keeping focus on the designing of the product without sacrificing transparency in the structure of activities in the process to attain the desired outcomes as required in such research undertakings. Besides, the synthesis of design philosophies appeared to reflect the philosophical dress design position of the dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens, thus consistent with their practice and for the present project.

2.1.2 Semiotic theory

The theory of semiotics, often regarded as the study of signs and symbols and their use in communication, is foundational to understanding how meaning is constructed and interpreted in human culture. It has had significant contributions from various scholars, particularly Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, and Roland Barthes (Chandler, 2007).

Saussure's work, especially in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), laid the groundwork for semiotics by emphasizing the relationship between the “signifier” (the form of the sign) and the “signified” (the concept it represents). Saussure proposed that meaning arises from the differences between signs in a system of language, where the value of a sign is determined by its relationship to other signs in the system, rather than by any intrinsic link to an external reality (Saussure, 1916/1959).

Peirce, another pivotal figure in the development of semiotics, introduced a triadic model of the sign, which involves the sign, the object, and the interpreter. According to Peirce, signs could be categorized into icons (which resemble their object), indices (which have a direct link to their object), and symbols (which have an arbitrary relationship to their object). His semiotics is broader than Saussure's, incorporating logic and philosophy into the study of signs (Peirce, 1931–1958).

Barthes extended semiotic theory into cultural studies and literary theory. He introduced the concept of the “myth,” where a sign can carry a second-order meaning. For Barthes, myths are ideological signs that reinforce cultural norms. He applied semiotic analysis to a wide range of cultural artifacts, such as advertisements, fashion,

and literature, exploring how these signs contribute to the creation of social meaning (Barthes, 1972).

The theory of semiotics has been used to analyze various forms of communication, including language, art, media, and even the structure of social interactions. The study of semiotics involves both the formal properties of signs and the cultural, historical, and social contexts in which these signs function. It plays an essential role in understanding the construction of meaning in visual culture, literature, and advertising, among others (Chandler, 2007).

Chandler (2007) argues that as a study of signs, symbols, and their meanings in communication and culture, the term semiotics originates from the work of linguists and philosophers such as Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. It has reportedly evolved into a broad field influencing disciplines like linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, and media studies. Semiotics, at its core focuses on how meaning is constructed and communicated through signs (Chandler, 2007). A “sign” is anything that conveys meaning, and it can be visual, verbal, auditory, or even conceptual, Chandler argues. Semiotics examines how signs represent ideas, objects, or concepts in different contexts.

As discussed earlier, key concepts in semiotics include sign, signifier, signified, signification, codes, and semiosis. A sign is the basic unit of semiotics. It is anything that stands for something else. A sign consists of two components; the signifier, that is, the physical form of the sign (e.g., a word, image, or sound), and the signified, that is, the concept or meaning associated with the signifier (e.g., the idea or object that the signifier refers to).

Signification is the process through which signs produce meaning. This includes both denotation (the literal or primary meaning) and connotation (the secondary, cultural or emotional meanings). Meanwhile, codes are systems of signs that are governed by rules, which help create meaning. These can be linguistic (like grammar) or visual (like the conventions used in film or advertising). Semiosis however, is the process by which a sign comes to represent something. It is the interaction between the signifier and the signified, and how they create meaning in context.

Notable theorists include Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce and Roland Barthes (Chandler, 2007). Saussure, a foundational figure in structuralism, defined semiotics as the study of the relationship between the signifier (the form) and the signified (the concept). He argued that meaning arises not from a direct relationship with reality but through differences between signs in a system. Peirce's semiotic theory was more focused on the logic of signs and their categorization. He classified signs into three types. Icon is a sign that resembles its object (e.g., a photograph), while index is a sign that has a direct, causal connection with its object (e.g., smoke as a sign of fire). However, symbol is a sign whose relationship with its object is arbitrary and based on convention (e.g., the word "eat" as a symbol for the animal).

Meanwhile, Barthes expanded semiotic theory into cultural and media studies. He distinguished between myths and signs, arguing that in modern society, many cultural practices are loaded with ideological meanings (e.g., advertisements or films).

Linguistically, semiotics is crucial for understanding how language operates as a system of signs and how meanings are constructed in communication. Semiotic theory is used to analyse visual signs, texts, advertisements, and media content, uncovering underlying ideologies and cultural meanings. In cultural studies however, semiotics

helps decode cultural symbols and artifacts, explaining how meaning is created in everyday life. In art and literature, semiotics provides a framework for interpreting how visual art, literature, and other forms of expression create symbolic meaning. In essence, semiotic theory explores how humans create and interpret meaning through signs and symbols. Its influence has spread across many academic fields and has become an essential tool for understanding communication, culture, and society.

The semiotics theory adopted focused on how meaning is constructed and communicated through signs within the subculture. First, it guided the researcher in the identification and analysis of the visual, auditory and conceptual signs and symbols used by the *Temamei Ashin* (rite) maidens in their dress culture practices during the ceremony. Beyond that, the theory guided the study in examining how signs represent ideas, objects, or concepts in different contexts. Additionally, the theory guided the researcher in appreciating the deep meanings constructed, and communicated through the signs (material and non material culture) used by the nobility maidens during the cleansing ceremony. Its application further guided the study in unearthing and appreciating the symbolic as well as socio-cultural relevance of the signs to them (and their society).

2.1.3 Fashion design and consumer fashion adoption theories

Regarding fashion design and consumer fashion adoption, three of Sproule's (1979) theories on design and consumer fashion adoption were adopted for the study. The first was the subcultural innovation; second the innovation-collective, and third the trickle across or mass-market theories as cited in (Saleem et al., 2014).

Sproule's (1979 as cited in Saleem et al., 2014) asserted that the subcultural innovation theory explains culture's ability to spread new fashion among the people.

The second theory, innovation-collective, explains that individuals who are creative and innovative are treated as the leaders in fashion because of their choices and styles. The third theory adopted was the trickle across or mass-market proposal which suggests that every class has its leader who has a great influence on them when it comes to fashion compared to any other person (Sproles, 1979 as cited in Saleem et al., 2014). Even though the trickle across or mass-market was concerned with mass production, its adoption for the current study was particularly because of the combination of mass communication about fashion information for diffusion to the social classes in the societies targeted for feedback on the collection to be created (Saleem et al., 2014).

The subcultural innovation theory guided the choice of a subculture/ethnic dress practice; in this case it guided that of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (nobility rite of the Tema people) as a key source of inspiration. Literature suggested that the cultural and societal activities which exist in the consumer's environment had a great influence on styles and tastes (Sproles & Burns, 1994 as cited in Muir et al., 2008). The dress practice chosen appeared well crafted from design perspective, and had been practised for a long time in the tourism-potential traditional area of Tema *Manhean* by the locals, but had received very little scholarly attention to show its potential influence on fashion inspiration on the African continent and beyond (Damalie, 2019, 2018). Sproles and Burns in Muir et al., (2008) described fashions and fads emerging from national celebrations, sporting events, scientific discoveries, widely exposed events in other countries, leisure activities, as well as arts and movies as significant in design. Such events, they contended, contribute to the current *zeitgeist* (Woudhuysen, 2006 as cited in Muir et al., 2008).

The innovation-collective theory directed the choice of the fashion forward customer during market research, and the merchandising (promotion) philosophy adopted in the study to work on lifestyle product; the new need to be created to meet the needs of the potential consumer of such concentrated conceptualised dress fashion. Such fashion forward consumers are individuals who are creative and innovative; as such they are treated as the leaders in fashion because of their choices and styles. The theory guided the selection of female consumers interested in travel, adventure and ethnic dress culture as fashion forward leaders, and models to direct the attention to the source of inspiration, and its potentials of influence, signification for the local and larger economy when adopted commercially, and to entice others to adopt the concept to make a strong case for the community being studied.

Regarding the trickle across or mass-market theory, the study desired to use the fashion forward customer (leader/model) within her social class in diffusing information about the brand to be created. These 'creative or innovative individuals' (Sproules & Burns, 1994, p.127, as cited in Muir et al., 2008), who are not necessarily elites have the influence to shape the taste consensus across society. Indeed, it had been argued that not all prestigious persons were innovators – but innovators were not necessarily persons with the highest prestige (Muir et al., 2008). They are just the people at different income levels, in different social classes who actively select and adopt innovations early and lead the direction of opinion among their peers. In doing so, the study further identified fit model(s) with physical features close to that observed in the craft of the traditional stylists to guide customer profiling during the creative design process. For instance, the customer could be a mature female model of large to plus size endowed at the bust, and hip lines with curvy hourglass shape, or

one who could be styled with illusionary details to reflect same as demonstrated in the maidens' adopted dress style.

The trickle across theory further aided in the selection of a combination of communication strategies as used not only by designers in the West (Rovine, 2016), but also in the culture of influence as the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens were used to creating awareness publicly in the community about the ritual at various stages (Damalie, 2018a). By doing so, the study hoped to disseminate information about the destination-inspired fashion collection produced to both fashion conscious and otherwise in the society. Trickle across theory further helped explain how to promote the brand (Muir et al., 2008; Saleem et al., 2014) across the various audiences targeted for awareness creation, and to gain feedback on the collection created.

2.1.4 Feminist theory

The feminist approach in sociology has always tried to fix the flaw that women have been ignored in the construction of the epistemology (knowledge) and methodology of sociology. Proponents of the theory include, according to Gurung (2021), Mauthner (2006), Harding and Norberg (2005), Moloney (1996) and Naples (2007). Gurung (2021) asserted further that, even though Harding and Norberg (2005) had reportedly pointed out at a point in time that the daily life activities of the dominant group did not provide them sufficient sources to develop such values and interest in their work, feminist epistemologies demonstrate that the gender aspects in the research process is relevant (Gurung, 2021; Ying, 2013). Feminists further analyse women's past to understand how patriarchal society has devalued them by formulating new understandings that transform the existing practices based on the contribution, values, and experiences of women in society. Feminist researchers have claimed, accordingly,

that their research projects have practical implications for improving women's lives (Harding & Norberg, 2005 as cited in Gurung, 2021) — a point worthy of note in the products to be developed in the present collection.

Among the feminist epistemologies, the feminist standpoint epistemologies formed a major strand. They have challenged the differential power that groups have to define knowledge by arguing that the marginalised groups hold a particular claim to knowing (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006). Feminist standpoint theory has reportedly been the most controversial and debated in more than thirty years of history of second-wave feminist thinking (Harding, 2004). It is highly advocated as equal to its critics even today and has invited ongoing debate and reflection. It has continued to inflame discussion among feminist theorists. It looked into the inequalities between men and women in knowledge production from the epistemological perspective.

In general, standpoint is simply taken as an understanding or perspective of the world regarding its social position. However, Pilcher and Whelelan (2004) according to Gurung (2021) claimed that the standpoint theorists have developed it into complex arguments about the production, status and purpose of research-generated knowledge and has formed an important critique of traditional scientific epistemologies. The term standpoint in the feminist standpoint theory, in the opinion of Rolin (2009), is meant to designate a moral and political commitment and not merely a perspective on social reality.

From the foregoing assertion therefore, standpoint is not just a perspective occupied as a matter of fact of being a woman. Perspective may give a starting point of one's socio-historical position, but standpoint is earned through the experience of collective political struggle demanding both politics and science (Kokushkin, 2014). Thus, it

has now become a technical term that stresses the politics and science for achieving group consciousness through distinctive understandings of social relations in referring to dominant perspectives as well as to those of oppressed or marginalised groups. In the context of the present project, feminist standpoint theory was engaged in complex conversation of knowledge production through the identification, analysis and use of the dress cultural practices among initiation rite maidens. In furtherance, understanding of the socio-cultural relevance of the sartorial stories of an otherwise –adult-sponsored‘ rite, for supposedly –oppressed” maidens (Lincoln, 1981 cited in Hobson, 2016, p. 8), engaged in dress cultural practices where the tables have been turned over was discovered. For standpoint theorists, standpoint refers not to perspective or experience but to an understanding of perspective and experience as part of a larger social setting reflecting political consciousness, so it is not escapable from the epistemological issues, the linking of epistemological concerns with political action lies at the heart of feminist standpoints, as argued by Hartsock (1997) in Gurung (2021).

Ying (2013) adopted the standpoint theory of feminist theorists for her study. The important notion of standpoint theory in her view, upheld in the context of this study was to start research with the experiences of those who have traditionally been left out of the production of knowledge; like the traditional female stylists of Tema *Manhean*. The perspectives of marginalised/oppressed individuals, for example women, can help to create more objective accounts of the world (Harding, 1991 in Ying, 2013). By adopting the present approach for this study, there was an acknowledgement that it was important to let the key actors (the traditional female stylists who create the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens‘ dress, or at least their works, and their models/clients, the *Ashin* maidens who adorn the works, and who have normally been omitted from

the production of knowledge in a way), tell their stories. Thus, the project concept was advocacy, acting as a voice for the voiceless.

Like Gurung (2021) and Ying (2013), this study aimed at giving a clear picture of the need to document and share the wardrobe accounts of the indigenous *Ga* speaking women of the Tema *Manhean* during the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (initiation ceremony) which scholarly society had ignored, and by so doing promote Ghanaian/African cultural aesthetics, while applying major ideas and strategies of feminist standpoint theory for knowledge production. The study was a design-led studio-based approach in fashion studies (Flynn & Foster, 2009). It dealt with the scope and challenges of adopting feminist standpoint theory in proposing a conceptual framework amidst the fusion of other relevant theories as discussed earlier, and methodological inquiry as adaptable, resourceful and applicable in the field of **concentrated** (ethnic or country focused) (Ryan, 2016) conceptual fashion design.

The present study adopted the semiotic and standpoint feminist theory as the balancing measure to the constructivist philosophy or paradigm adopted, and further as a strong intellectual basis, and key to the design philosophies and consumer fashion adoption theories employed in the study to influence the research methodology. The collection was all about women's dress culture and fashion studies; worthwhile scholarly attention to feminine traditional stylists' works — a subculture showing female dress cultural practices as inspiration. This was to help conceptualise and produce cohesive, elegant dressy lifestyle designer label fashion product; culturally-inclined *_new need_* that sought to blend tradition with exquisite style for high end female consumption. The theory guided the fieldwork activities in the purposive selection of the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rite maidens') subculture during which ethnic

stylists' works were identified as women's nobility rite dress practices. The study subsequently identified the key informants (mothers) from whom secondary data were collected in the form of photographs, the female consumer (target market) whose lifestyle and spending power influenced the dressy elegant product type and design outlook (specified in the design brief, implied in product development including materials selected, and style details produced) (Burns et al., 2016; Mbonu, 2014).

The other key design philosophies and consumer fashion adoption theories underpinning the study informed the methodology adopted for creative design, and production procedures in and outside of the studio. Together the underpinnings impacted the novel *Synthesis* model developed for the practical component of the study and its impact on guiding items to be tested. In addition, they influenced the design strategy (fashion innovation and creativity) adopted, and applied throughout the project including modes of engagements used as means to reaching out, and in communicating the outcome to selected audiences so as to get useful feedback to either endorse the brand produced or perhaps propose means of improving on it in the next experimentation/project.

2.1.5 Fashion creation models

i. Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) fashion design-led model

Sellitz (1962) in Flynn and Foster (2009) defined concept as an abstraction from observed events, and a construct as a higher level abstraction. Flynn and Foster (2009, p. 13) interestingly equate a concept to an instance of looking at a 'hat' which may vary according to the individual opinions of what a hat could look like to the seller and the buyer. In the case of a construct, the duo contended that, it is an idea or notion that is not easily observed. For instance, issues such as attitude, learning, or motivation

could be described as abstracts. Attitudes for instance, are not physical objects that one can pick up and touch. The duo described a model on the other hand as a visual representation of concepts and constructs (Flynn & Foster, 2009). They asserted that a model could be equated to a schematic diagram which provided a picture to follow. By creating a visual picture, the researcher then has a format to pull items together that need to be tested, they argued.

Design involves a prescription or model, the intention of embodiment as hardware, and the presence of a creative step (Archer, 1984 as cited in Evbuomwan et al., 1996). Pasricha and Kadolph (2009) proposed a model which looked at cultural trend analysis, as a key influencer considered for design-led approach to creating artefacts. Pasricha and Kadolph further proposed fashion innovation as a strategy, followed by production. The simplified chart concepts might be further narrowed as ‘analysis-synthesis-evaluation’, argued AU and AU (2018). Even though the proposed approach could singularly guide the design of artefact(s), it was silent on a critical additive, creativity. That critical component was not in keeping with Archer’s (1984) position on the necessary presence of a creative step in a design model (Evbuomwan et al., 1996). Again, for a project of this nature, with attention on the creative process in product development, creativity and innovation remained key design strategies needed to achieve a ‘high fashion’ product that spoke to the desired outcome; for a momentous user-friendly cultural artefact that was not only expressive and functional, but also pleasing to the eye (AU & AU, 2018; Vrencoska, 2009).

Thus, the study appreciated the need to combine innovation of ideas with creativity in crafting any ‘new need.’ Besides, because lifestyle artefacts need to be exquisite, the nature of cultural artefacts of interest needed a design strategy which made them user-

friendly regardless of the origins and beliefs of the final consumer (or patron). The objective was to make the designs reach far beyond the domestic cultural milieu. Thus, the study considered introducing creativity as a game changing strategy in the proposed construct of Pasricha and Kadolph (2009 as cited in Damalie, 2019) to allow the infusion of other relevant detailing as variables or designing features. AU and AU (2018) argued as postulated in Belliver's (1956) early writings on creativity, that:

The concept of inspiration of creative incubation fore-fronted the important role of the subconscious in the stages of creative thinking, particularly when solving problems which are mathematical or scientific in nature. Bono (1977) also reportedly encouraged techniques of lateral thinking, while Koestler et al. (1975) posited creativity as a universal faculty, not restricted to special individuals. Theorist physicist David Bohm (1998) also positioned creativity within the quantum sphere, therefore attempting to reconcile the fundamental basis of both artistic and scientific creativity.

Arguably though, creative people such as conceptual designers, are more open to stimuli from the environment, and as a result are described as more receptive to new possibilities (AU & AU, 2018). AU and AU contended that the various concepts of creativity such as rule-breaking, innovative juxtaposition and individual creativity form a useful background when creating a model to guide creative processes of conceptual fashion design (AU & AU, 2018). This is especially the case for conceptual fashion designers who often involve several collaborators from different disciplines (AU & AU, 2018) as intended with the present project.

That being said, Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) proposed construct did not adequately prescribe the creative design process as to what stages to be used procedurally as required of such evidence-based research project. Hence, the study adopted and modified the mass-production flow chart of Burns et al. (2016) influenced by Burke's (2011) model. That way the stages of implementation for a customised conceptual high end collection were clearly illustrated. The focus of research was thus on the

sources of inspiration (emerging materials from the maidens' dress, preferred dress forms and body shapes, materials, colours, accessories and techniques used in putting together the maidens' dress) vis-à-vis observable fashion trends (evolving materials – textile fabric designs and fashion findings on the market; dress silhouettes, colours, trims and notions) observed through fashion research. Yet others included collection, planning, production and promotion.

ii. Burns et al. (2016) fashion production using conventional manufacture-led model

Evidently, the design process for any design model usually exhibits certain properties and features which represent various associated viewpoints and activities that occur during the process (Evbuomwan et al., 1996). The conventional business-oriented or production-led model of Burns et al. (2016) focused on mass fashion production of ready-to-wear brands. That flowchart was commercially useful. It basically considered design, marketing, fabrication and promotion, distribution and sales, all of which were critical for fashion business viability.

Although generic in nature, the model was amenable to experimentation of customised conceptual dress fashion, hence its partial adoption for the present project. A designer has to decide which of the concepts in the model is fit for purpose, besides such structure brings clarity to the whole design process, while ensuring discipline to the process. The Burns et al. (2016) outline was further simplified in arrangement to reflect a blend of the Semantics and Syntax design philosophy undertones to be in tune with Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) viewpoint upheld earlier in the current study. The reform set the study's priorities right when it came to the source(s) of inspiration on one hand; it directly influenced the market and fashion research, and

the promotional philosophy to be used in the diffusion of the results/outcome of the project.

On the other hand, it further added to the originality of concepts vis-à-vis trends in textile fabrics, colours, trims, notions, and cut details for the practical element of the project. The blend of Broadbent's three design philosophies (1980 as cited in Evbuomwan et al., 1996) guided the value addition to Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) model. Its use as the overall lens over the re-organised commercial-led structure was to demonstrate how the creative design, development, and production processes were to be organised for the practical component of the current study, and thereafter the promotional strategies to be adapted.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework formed a key part of the research. It was a visual product, one that explained graphically the main things to be studied, the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationships among them. Adom, Hussein and Agem (2018) argued that in scholarly research, it is imperative that research study is hinged on either a theoretical or conceptual framework that explicitly explains the basic beliefs, theories or concepts that informs the study. They were however quick to note that the two were not the same. They described theoretical framework as a 'blueprint' or guide for a research citing Grant and Osanloo (2014). They maintained that a conceptual framework is a structure which the researcher believed can best explain the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied. Others explained theoretical framework as the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs a research. Theoretical and conceptual framework explains

the path of a research and grounds it firmly in theoretical constructs, argued Adom et al. (2018).

The current study made use of conceptual framework. It further made use of a model. For the present study, the structure in Figure 2.01 explained on one hand the system of concepts, i.e. philosophies, models, and theories and the assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that support and inform the conceptual dress fashion design project. The conceptual framework best explained the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied and their relativity. It further explained the path of the research and grounded it firmly in the theoretical constructs (Adom et al., 2018) adopted.

As such, the present study examined and subsequently adapted a fusion of design philosophies, consumer fashion adoption theories, conventional dress fashion design manufacture related theories and models respectively as illustrated in Figure 2.01. It was viewed with the feminist standpoint as the central theory given that the model drew from the sartorial story of the otherwise marginalised women folk from Tema *Manhean*. The conceptual framework was used to illustrate how the project turned a purely cultural ultimatum also viewed as an ‘oppression’ tool (Lincoln, 1981 cited in Hobson, 2016, p. 17) into a concept of status signifier, and value of positive powerful self-image, using dress.

The conceptual framework in Figure 2.01 graphically showed the main things studied: key design factors, concepts, and/or features and the recognised relationships among them. The framework further contributed to the development of an original amalgamated model to guide the experimentation and promotion of the destination-

inspired lifestyle dress fashion collection for potential female target market of tourists to Tema *Manhean*.

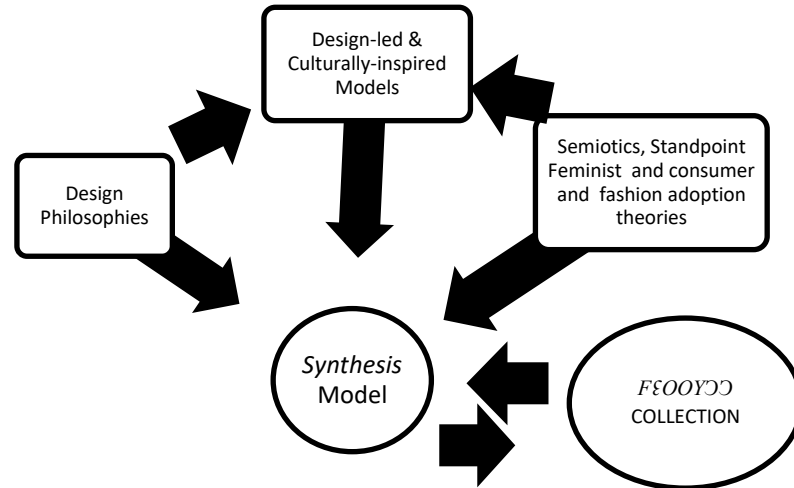


Figure 2.01: Conceptual framework

Source: Author's construct

Consequently, Figure 2.01 showed the framework of a blend of the design philosophies, standpoint feminist, semiotics and consumer fashion adoption theories adopted to influence the models (conventional design-led and culturally-inspired) as indicated on the top centre and the wings (on the right and left) of the diagram respectively. The connecting arrows from both wings illustrated their link to the two intersected models (conventional design-led and cultural-inspired) in the apex centre of the construct. Regarding the design philosophies adopted, the arrow connection to the top models demonstrates how fusion of the semantics, syntax and 'past experience' philosophies impacted on the central models based on the practised look of the maidens attained over time required of the dependent model to be created. That way the three schools of thought played complementary roles in the *Synthesis* model constructed and the collection created, consistent with the complementary nature of the three schools of thought (Evbuomwan et al., (1996, p. 304). The expectation was

that the processes as well as the products (collection), to a high extent reflect these underpinnings

The semiotics theory adopted kept the study's focus on meanings constructed and communicated through dress culture practices of the *Ashin* (rite) maidens during the ceremony. For the design composition, the connecting arrow kept the attention on the aesthetic value of the signs and symbols represented as objects and what concepts they each and collectively contributed in different contexts within the model, and their impact on the *Synthesis* model developed to guide the development of the collection.

Similarly, the fashion adoption theories adapted for the study were of immense significance. The arrow connecting the underpinning theories - culture/subculture theory to the central models indicated the need to identify and analyse the feminine *Ashin Yei* (nobility maidens') subculture trends, their symbolic value to drive the creative design processes as well as guide production of the collection. Existing literature emphatically suggest sub-culturally led styles can stem from the traditional artefacts of an existing group (crafts, religious items) or new stylistic creations (Muir et al., 2008). The arrow connecting the innovative collective theory to the central models pointed to the contribution of this theory to the need to identify a fashion leader with a target market, in this case a Millennial for whom the 'new need' was to be created. Finally, the arrow connecting the trickle down theory to the central models pointed to its contribution to the trend setting agenda and diffusion strategies required in the needed model to promote the fashion artefact created.

The adopted design-led model threw light on the product outlook while the adjusted production-led model outlined the processes of realising and promoting the product.

To understand design, it is necessary to address both the artefact and the process. Design theories and models tend to cover both, but with a clear difference in focus. The core can be strongly product-focused, strongly process-focused, or intentionally focused on both in equal measure. It has to be noted, however, that as theories and models evolve, the core may change (Chakrabarti & Blessing, 2014).

The so-named *Synthesis* model was developed as a framework; a novel representation of how high fashion (*haute couture*) conceptual fashion design is, might be and could be' (AU & AU, 2018; Evbuomwan et al., 1996), with attention to both product outlook and the processes of production and promotion for awareness creation and feedback. Conceptually speaking, it was influenced by the fusion of all the theories, philosophies and constructs as project underpinnings and their expected impact as illustrated in Figure 2.02 as indicated, hence the name. The *Synthesis* model structure was described later in the report.

The word *FɛOOYɔɔ* is Ga language implying the accolade –gorgeous-look or gorgeous you look,” and the term collection refers to the group of themed clothing to be developed (Burns et al., 2016; Damalie, 2018a). The title *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection espoused the intended look of the ultimate user(s) of the collection. It was teased from the maidens' cheer song: Tema *Kpeemo* ye *fɛo tsɔ mei pii naaa*,” that is to say, –the Tema *Ashin* rites is **too beautiful**, yet many people (other than the indigenous Tema maidens) were not privileged to experience it. That song is one of the cheerful songs sung as the maidens and their groups of followers go from house to house in the traditional area of Tema *Manhean* in the early evening prior to the camping stage that began the initiation ceremony, to announce the commencement of the ritual to the town folks and patrons. The decision to use the term *FɛOOYɔɔ* was influenced by its actual usefulness to the project outlook: its link to the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' major

dress cultural practices, the quest of the current project to draw inspiration from sampled aesthetic concepts of the maidens' major dress cultures, and finally to fashion stunning impactful ethno-centric dress-inspired fashion collection with the maidens' dress at the centre stage. Thus, the *Synthesis* design model was to impact the final collection to be created as illustrated, and the expectation that the final *F&OOYOO* collection reflects concepts in the model as shown by the feedback arrow in the conceptual framework in Figure 2.01. These underpinnings collectively impacted on the *Synthesis* model developed to describe the steps taken and predict the expected outcome - dressy fashion collection (Chakrabati & Blessing, 2014). The construct further indicates the expected relationship between the *F&OOYOO* collection and its guide, the *Synthesis* model.

2.3 Thematic Visual Content Analysis of Major Dress Cultural Practices of Participating Maidens during Girls' Initiation

This section among others, reviewed the term culture; specifically, the initiation rites dress of *Dipo*, *Brogoro*, *Kusakoko* and *Ashin* maidens of Krobo, Ashanti Akyem Agogo, Avatime and Tema *Manhean* respectively. Emphasis was on their individual identification and visual content analysis of the artefacts as major dress cultural practices of the participating maidens during the various rituals. This was looked at vis-à-vis initiation or 'so called' puberty rites, and dress used by other ethnic or indigenous communities elsewhere in Ghana and beyond.

2.3.1 Culture defined

The term culture has several meanings. From an anthropological point of view, culture can refer to 'what people think, what people do, and what people produce' (Cho, 2009 as cited in Hwang, 2013, p.1). Jantzen (2004) in Hwang (2013) explained

implicit cultural theory as structured and repeating patterns of daily life that represent a system of ideas including values and other mental processes. Jantzen (2004) according to Hwang (2013) further attributed culture to a system of ideas and behaviour including habits and customs that are shared by groups and that which further determines the actions of an individual. In support, Westwood and Low (2003) in Hwang (2013) also argued that people with similar backgrounds share comparable attitudes, values, goals and experiences based on such factors as ethnicity, race, gender, and religion.

While it is important to realise that group behaviour does not necessarily suggest a shared culture, existing literature suggests that there might be numerous factors contributing to a common behaviour within a group, and this similar behaviour may lead to different consequences. Jantzen (2004) however upheld that in defining culture, what was important was whether and to what extent culture was shared and, defining what elements were shared, what the sharing consisted of, and how it emerged throughout the culture (Hwang, 2013).

From the foregoing, the study viewed culture as the total way of life of *Temamei* including the dress culture practices of the *Ashin* maidens. Consistent with Jantzen's (2004 as cited in Hwang, 2013) description of culture, this review examined the concept of puberty rites as it related *Ashin* rites, and dress as used by the *Ashin* (nobility) maidens of Tema as a shared culture, defining what elements of dress were shared by the maidens, and the extent to which they shared them, and what the sharing consisted of, and how it emerged throughout the ceremony.

2.3.2 The concept of puberty rites

Puberty or initiation rites for girls in Ghana are usually associated with and found among the Akan, Ewe, Guan and the *Ga-Dangbe* group (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Damalie, 2018a; Dedume et al., 2016; Dzramedo, 2009). Among the Akan, the rite is known as *Bragoro*; among the *Ga* speaking people from Kpone, it is referred to as *Otofo*; some Ewe groups referred to it as *Gbotoshi wowo* and the *Guan* speaking people from Avatime also in the Volta region referred to as *Kusakokɔ* (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Damalie, 2018a; Dedume et al., 2016). The *Dipo Yoo Sikplem* popularly referred to by many as *Dipo* is observed by the Krobo people (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018), while the *Ga* speaking people of Tema *Manhean* refer to the ritual as the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (Damalie, 2019, 2018a).

Notably the terms used in the local parlance as illustrated in the foregoing are contextual, each specific to the ceremony among the people who practise it, and in their individual dialect (language). When it comes to the use of the commonly used English term ‘puberty’ rite or ‘puberty-rite’ as suggested in literature (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2019, 2018; Hobson, 2016; Kwakye-Opong, 2014, 2011), it appeared problematic, particularly when it is related to the context of the cultural practice.

In the case of the Navajo and Apache local communities in the United States of America for instance, the cultural practice was linked with the developmental stage of the participants; they were young girls of ‘menstruating age’ Hobson (2016, p. 8) reported. Also, among the people of Ashanti in the Agogo traditional area here in Ghana the girls were reportedly initiated once they started menstruation. The term ‘puberty’ was thus linked in those instances with the developmental stage of

menstruation. Damalie (2018, 2019) also referred to *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* as ‘puberty’ rite even though she reckoned that the dictates of that passage rite in contemporary times did not support the use of the term, the reason being that, the term ‘puberty’ is not applicable to all the maidens in the true sense of the word. Not when girls as young as two to three years of age were initiated as *Temamei Ashin* (nobility) maidens. The same can be argued in the case of *Dipo* rite because of the inclusion of young pre-menstrual girls as initiates. Thus, the term ‘puberty’ rite may not be an appropriate term to use in describing the ritual in the two societies cited given the present phenomenon where the age status of participants have changed (Adinku, 2016; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018a).

In societies where the passage rite had been described as ‘coming-of-age’ rituals, and/or girls’ adolescence ceremony (Reichard, 1950 as cited in Hobson, 2016) for instance, both terms were also linked to the developmental stage of the participating maidens in Navajo and Apache communities. Interestingly, in the case of *Kusakɔkɔ* rite among the people of Avatime the term ‘puberty’ was not used, rather the phrase ‘initiation rites’ was used to describe the ceremony in that study. The current study upheld therefore that the phrase precisely described the process of introducing the young girl child from childhood or adolescence to adulthood, during which young girls are prepared for adulthood and adult responsibilities, Dedume et al. (2016) argued.

The other terms which have been used in describing the ritual are worth analysing. For instance, Dedume et al. (2016) introduced the phrase ‘initiation rites’ in relation to the *Kusakɔkɔ* rite. The developmental stage of the maidens was not mentioned at all, hence there was very little to scrutinize regarding the phrase used, and whether or

not the participating maidens were supposed to be at the menstruating age. Asare-Danso (2018) also used the term nobility in his discourse of the *Bragoro* among the people of Ashanti in the Agogo traditional area even though he also used the term puberty rite in reference to the ritual. Suffice it to say that in the case of *Bragoro*, both terms were applicable, because the maidens were initiated into womanhood at their menstruation age. With the phenomenon of girls as young as two to three years being initiated in both *Dipo* and *Ashin* rites, the maidens can all not be described as coming of age nor menstruating young adults.

Asare-Danso's (2018) use of the term nobility in his discourse of the *Bragoro* among the people of Ashanti Agogo seemed to describe the honorary or symbolic pursuit of the ceremony. He reported:

According to the informant, in the olden days, when a girl menstruates for the first time (or experiences the menarche), her mother will rush to inform the Queen mother to go and examine the girl. This was done to ensure that the child would not be hiding pregnancy, in order to avoid the kyiribra rituals. Kyiribra (literally meaning hater of menstruation) rituals are performed on girls who become pregnant without undergoing the nobility rites (bragoro).

The foregoing suggests that for the people of Ashanti in the Agogo traditional area, bragoro is different from kyiribra rituals. While the former is for initiating girls menstruating for the first time, the latter rituals are performed for girls who become pregnant without undergoing the nobility bragoro rites. Thus, there is a clear distinction between the two rituals and the targets they are meant for obviously.

Both suggestions of initiation rites and nobility seemed more applicable in the English language to all the cited cases of the rituals by intent since they appear to underscore to a large extent the whole essence of the ceremony; to introduce the girl child to her societal norms based on which she was honoured and thus accepted as a

culturally integrated member. Besides, both terms did not draw unnecessary attention to age, and other varying inclusion criteria of the various girls' rites cited to warrant any difficulty.

Thus, an adoption of the term *'initiation'* and/or *'nobility'* best described the transitional nature of the girls' rites for all the cases cited, particularly for *Ashin* and *Dipo* (rite) since it appeared more applicable to all participants regardless of their ages and any other inclusion criterion. Quite apart from that, all participating *Ashin* (rite) maidens were enjoined as indigenes to take part in the initiation because it was symbolic, it was the custom or *Kusum* of the individual cultures they belong to, which essentially seek to inculcate symbolic cultural values as it were, to them (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Damalie, 2018a; Dedume et al., 2016; Dzramedo, 2009).

Among the groups cited, the *Dipo Yoo Sikplem* of the Krobo people continues to attract more attention of researchers than any other according to existing literature (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018a; Dzramedo, 2009). In his opinion, Asare-Danso (2018) decried the fact that only few works have been done among the Ashanti citing (Sarpong, 1974; 1977), and the Ewe people (Hevi-Yiboe, 2003; Nukunya, 2003) as cases in point. But this was also the case regarding *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (the nobility rite of the people of Tema) (Damalie, 2018a). Like Asare-Danso (2018), this limitation and its resultant gap in literature has been one of the main motivations for researching into the current study, and demonstration of its impact in creating *Ga* destination-inspired group of fashionable conceptualised clothing.

Like the *Bragoro* of the Akan people and *Dipo* of the Krobo people, the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (initiation rite) has been practised for several decades by the people of Tema

Manhean. It is a transitional ceremony to initiate the girl-child into her society albeit very little is known about it in scholarly engagements until quite recently (Damalie, 2021, 2019, 2018a). The ritual among the people of Tema (*Temamei*) is a *Kusum* (custom) observed to symbolically ‘cleanse’ the participating maidens of ‘dirt’ (Damalie, 2018a). It is described by its practitioners as symbolic traditional healing. Even though current literature (and oral information) suggest such practice exists for boys elsewhere in the Zambia and some local communities in Krobo, Prampram, *Ga*, Ashanti and some Northern parts of Ghana respectively, the known ones seem to suggest that such ceremonies were typically associated with local girls from the local communities as demonstrated in the literature.

Asare-Danso (2018), Boakye, (2010), Dedume et al. (2016) and Dzramedo (2009) have all argued that such ritual was in recognition of the value of women in those societies where the practices was observed. A position the present researcher upheld even though compelling evidence in the literature suggested that the participating maidens in most cases (Agogo traditional area among the Akan people, Tema *Manhean* and their neighbouring Krobo people) had very little to say in the matter; that is, whether to participate or not to participate. The decision, it appeared was solely an adult and society one made on their behalf (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018a; Hobson, 2016). Compliance apparently made adherents and their families to live and feel a sense of pride and belongingness to the society as a whole, and to avoid inevitable consequences such as pacification of deities and ancestors as observed by researchers on indigenous societies where taboos were observed (Ackah, 1988; Asare-Danso, 2018; Damalie, 2018a).

Existing accounts as described by many specialists on the subject as discussed earlier agreed that when young girls of such indigenous communities attained the stage of adulthood, rituals were performed to introduce them into the society as young adults (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Dzramedo, 2009). Perhaps it was the reason Hobson (2016) described the ceremony as ‘adult-sponsored’ celebrations of adolescents at ‘puberty.’ It is however worth noting that from the discourse so far, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were not the same for all, the reason for which the present study argued that the participants, and for that matter the initiation rites, could not all be painted with the same brush; in other words, all of them should not be referred to as ‘puberty rites.’ Those female rites are best described as initiation or nobility rite.

On the issue of the values of such initiation rites, Asare-Danso (2018) for instance, made a strong case for nobility rites when it came to the inculcation of values education. His assertion was based on the case among the people of Ashanti where puberty rites were performed to usher girls of menstruating age from childhood into womanhood or adulthood, and to prepare them for marriage. Same can be said about the *Ashin yei* (rite maidens) since some of the maidens at the time of initiation were of menstruating age; they were not menstruating for the first time. Besides, some *Ashin* (nobility) maidens were allowed to go through the process even when they were obviously pregnant maidens (quite unlike *Dipo* and *Bragoro*). This stand was supported by Dedume et al. (2016). In their opinion, the ritual was in recognition of the value of women in the society. Beyond ‘coming of age,’ Asare-Danso (2018), Adinku (2016), Boakye (2010) and Dzramedo (2009) among others, acknowledged the occasion was equally used to teach the young maidens the realities of adulthood. In support of that assertion, Boakye (2010), for instance revealed that in the case of

the *Dipo*, the practice as she had personally experienced, was a form of vocational training for young women in which they were taught generally how to assume their roles as responsible women in the society. This, she contended, filled a gap in the absence of formal education.

Boakye (2010) further related that it was established in a bid to increase the status of the girl-child in the Krobo society thus agreeing with Dedume et al. (2016) and Asare-Danso (2018). In addition, Adinku (2016) noted that the Ghanaian *Dipo* initiation rite acknowledged the part women play in the welfare of the society, hence the performance of elaborate ceremonies for the girl child's transition from childhood to adulthood. This acknowledgement was consistent with the view of Asare-Danso (2018). While not disputing the various concepts adduced in the literature, the present study advanced in addition the notion of female empowerment inclinations; status enhancement practices such as good grooming, high dress sense and creativity in fashion and positive self-awareness, ideals that are still relevant today. For many contemporary young women, empowerment means a variety of things such as: having a well-groomed body, having self-awareness, having a fashion sense, having positive interpersonal experiences, being socially and environmentally responsible, having life skills and experiences among others. These were shared by some participants of the coveted Miss Universe contestants viewed as a global platform (Nguyen, 2021) during the 2021 edition – participant interviews prior to the National Costume competition segment (YouTube, 2021).

From another perspective, the girl-child initiation ceremony which is a celebration of the girl-child can be seen as one of nobility; an honourable thing to do, and high appreciation of womanhood from the various societal perspectives (Adinku, 2016;

Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018; Dedume et al., 2016; Dzramedo, 2009). Although Asare-Danso (2018, p.175) was of the view that traditionally, the girls' nobility rite performed by the Ashanti Akyem Agogo of Ghana for instance was meant to provide values education to the people, he stressed on a powerful note that: ... the gods and ancestors saw to the enforcement of morality. Same could be attributed to *Dipo* and *Ashin Kpeemo* rite. In both cases opinion leaders within the community such as traditional priests, priestesses, clan heads, elderly women and to some extent parents who adhered to such belief, were very much involved in the rites observation at various stages on that basis.

In the case of *Ashin* (rite) maidens, for example, they were made to visit three shrines in the course of the rites observation where the traditional priests in each case reportedly sprinkled some concoctions on them. Besides, the clan in charge of the ceremony, Nii Ansah *We*, reportedly own the *Basa* spirit hence their name *Basa We* (Damalie, 2018a). The ritual might therefore appear more of an initiation into the society based on traditional belief, enforcement of moral values and perhaps by implication empowerment for the participants, a situation which in the view of this study the participants have turned around given the worth of value addition to their lives. But at what cost? Knowledge gained on status enhancement practices skills such as personal hygiene and good grooming practices, high dress fashion sense, positive self-awareness and interpersonal experiences, and high appreciation of themselves as noble, and respected women in their respective societies (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2019; Dedume et al., 2016; Dzramedo, 2009). Notwithstanding all those values taught, it appeared that the maidens in all cases were compelled by societal norms and taboos fashioned by adult customs to participate in the rituals, hence it was not a wholly voluntary act on the

part of many indigenous adolescents based on the accounts of Asare-Danso (2018), Boakye (2010) and Damalie (2018a).

As it is with *Dipo*, the nobility or initiation ceremony participants of Tema *Manhean* can be young or adult females who have never given birth, and must have patrilineal lineage to qualify. However, unlike the *Bragoro* rite, *Ashin yei* (nobility rite maidens) can still observe the rituals even if they are heavily pregnant (as illustrated in Plates 3b later). Meanwhile, in the case of *Bragoro* and *Dipo*, it was a taboo for girls to get pregnant before observing the rites. It was believed that there were threats associated with non-compliance. It further implied that taboos were used for controlling the maidens of communities where such rites were observed as it was also the case of *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*). Thus, the people refrain from committing sins or offences believed to be taboo for fear of being in a state of ritual disability (Ackah, 1988); a situation which may lead to offenders being isolated from other members of the society. In his view, the threat associated with taboo makes traditional societies live morally acceptable behaviour for fear of inevitable consequences because punishments for them are automatic. For instance, Asare-Danso (2018, p. 181) reported that:

. . . in the olden days, when a girl menstruates for the first time (or experiences the menarche), her mother will rush to inform the Queen mother to go and examine the girl. This was done to ensure that the child would not be hiding pregnancy, in order to avoid the kyiribra rituals. Kyiribra (literally meaning hater of menstruation) rituals are performed on girls who become pregnant without undergoing the nobility rites (bragoro).

The literature on the various girls' initiation rites reviewed highlighted that the participants were trained in disciplines relevant to the new stages such as domestic science and personal hygiene to prepare them physically, emotionally and

psychologically about the changes that were to occur in their lives after passing out. The other point worthy of note was that among *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*), preparation by the parents apparently began very early. This was because the ceremony meant for the girl child's transition was not necessarily observed at the onset of menarche (menstruation) like the indigenous Navajo and Apache communities in the United States (Hobson, 2016), or *Bragro* as practised among the people of Ashanti Agogo (Asare-Danso, 2018).

The maidens of Tema *Manhean* go through the transition as soon as the parents were ready, particularly if a sibling(s) or distant cousins became pregnant. Girls as young as two years were also initiated during the ceremony, not only to make it the usual family affair. This intervention was also meant as reduction of the cost involved for parents (Damalie, 2018a) and to avoid situations where the girls totally reject going through the rituals. Therefore, it was common to find girls as young as two years of age participating in the *Dipo* rite as well (Boakye, 2010). It did appear that the ceremony according to the tradition of *Temamei* (people of Tema *Manhean*) was deemed important beyond the more obvious function of providing some sense of guidance and stability for adolescent girls. Unlike other ethnic groups like the Ashanti Akyem Agogo *Bragoro* and the Krobo *Dipo*, Tema *Ashin* (rite) allows even pregnant young adults to participate in the ceremony. The application of body marks (symbols) which signified acknowledgement of their idols, the untold private or secret aspects of the cleansing process and the taboos associated with them which further served to preserve the social status quo, all played a role in their cultural and social construction.

Among the various *Ga* groups, the people of Tema *Manhean* (*Temamei*) are the only group who observe the Tema *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rite). The rite of their compatriots, Gbugblah-Teshie *Ashin*, the Krobo people (also a *Ga-Dangbe* group) are quite different from the practice of the people of Tema *Manhean* (*Temamei*). The phenomenon in the case of the *Temamei* has been openly practised since the people settled in their old abode (*manmomoeimli*) in the Gold Coast era (Damalie, 2019; 2018a). The group is one of the four *Ga* groups who migrated from Ancient Egypt at the same time as the Hebrews or Israelites with the permission of the then Pharaoh, ‘King Amenhotep II’, to govern themselves anywhere but in ancient Egypt (Amartey, 1991, p. 13) when the opportunity to leave was granted. As a people, they travelled westwards through the Congo (Zaire) along the Ubanji river, then by sea to Nigeria and settled in Bone. It was further related that:

In Nigeria, the *Ga* group divided into two; one group settled in Benin and the other in Ife to be precise. The *Ga* group set off again in search of their own land but now in four groups;..... *Wo Kpele* first settled at *Akpaako* (their present location), then to *Tebibiano* (closer to the *Sakumono* lagoon) but moved and founded Tema (*Manmomoeimi*) by the year 1200 (Amartey, 1991), all in search for a fertile land of their own for their farming activities (Akwashong Tse, 2016 as stated in Damalie, 2018a).

History has it that Tema used to be nestled among palm grooves and was wedged between two lagoons, *Chemu* on the east and *Sakumo* on the west. They were nicknamed *Torman* (*Ga* word meaning ‘gourd town’) by their customers who bought gourds from them (Akwashong Tse, 2016 as cited in Damalie, 2018a). Even though oral history had it that the villagers, mostly fishermen had lived within the ‘protective’ arms of the two lagoons as far back as the 15th century, Amartey (1991) was of the opinion that *Wo Kpele* founded Tema earlier in the 13th century. TEDECO (a newsletter of the Tema development cooperation, 1976) does not only acknowledge

their presence within the location in support of Amartey (1991), the paper also acknowledged their deep-seated faith in the might of the two lagoons, so much so that scarcely any traditional ceremony came to an end without fervent entreaties to them for their continued mercy and protection. They were moved to their new location amidst protest in January 1959 (TEDECO, 1976) when the Kwame Nkrumah- led government decided to develop Tema as the harbour city of Ghana. Tema is situated on the Greenwich Meridian, and is envisaged to become a recognised tourist site soon.

The people of Tema *Manhean* are still regarded as the traditional landlords of the whole of Tema. They share boundaries with Nungua (founded by *Wɔ Krowɔ*), on the west, Katamanso, on the north, Kpone, on the east and the Atlantic Ocean, on the south. They share socio-economic links with other members of the *Ga* State namely Nungua (*Wɔ Krowɔ*), La Bone (*Wɔ Doku*), and *Ga Mashie* (*Wɔ Sagba*) and the newly created Osu and Teshie (off- shoots of La Bone and other *Ga* groups) all in the present day Greater Accra Region of Ghana. They all claim the same ancestry; the Hebrews (Israelites) of Ancient Egypt. Amartey (1991) contended that available records showed that:

they lived alongside the Israelites on the Goshen plains in Ancient Egypt and might have inter-married and experienced situations such as the Passover, shared customs such as male circumcision, the position of *Wulomei* (as traditional priests) in the society among others but they may not be Hebrews through and through.

It is obvious that as a people the *Wɔ Kpele* group (and the other three *Ga* groups) had encountered many peoples and cultures including Egyptians, Israelites and Africans during their sojourns to their present abode (Amartey, 1991; Damalie, 2018a), and one cannot help but wonder if the nobility rite is one of such experiences.

2.3.3 Major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo*

Clothing indicates what people wear. In Ghanaian culture, clothing is just as important as any other facet of society. Each ethnic group, from the northern to the southern belt and the central belt, with their distinct culture across the length and breadth of the country, represents themselves uniquely in the way they dress and are believed to influence the trend of fashion in Ghana (Amankwah, Howard & Sarpong, 2012; Damalie, 2019; 2018a). Indeed, the many ethnic groups including *Temamei* have different cultures, beliefs and societal norms particularly when it comes to clothing and dressing.

Researchers of Ghanaian dress have distinguished between various indigenous Ghanaian groups (like Akan, Ewe, Dagomba, Gonja and Frafra) and their unique traditional dress by their ensemble of details and ‘look’ with little or no difficulty (Damalie, 2018a; Gott & Loughran, 2010; Osae, 2019; Smith & Eicher, 1982; The Anlo State *Hogbetsotso Za*, 2019; Watson-Quartey, 2011). Indigenous dress or classics refer to the dress cultures which have been practised over centuries and have cultural antecedents and historic nostalgia. We convey our history and culture as well as present dispositions and mindsets in the patterns, designs, fabrics and colours of the clothes we wear, as well as the ways we wear them.

Fashion and/or clothing are a subtle yet critical form of self-expression to many Ghanaians including the *Ga* people. The reality however is that the communal and cultural ethics of people throughout the world as well as Ghana change with time and so do the fashion, dress and other aesthetics of their arts, and uses also change throughout the ages. These notwithstanding, fashion and dress are two different

spheres, and many studies are careful to distinguish between the terms dress, or clothing, and fashion.

Along with related words like apparel, attire, accessories, garments, garb, outfits, and ensembles, clothing, costume, and dress show what people wear. Gott and Loughran (2010) pointed out that fashion implied constant changes as it was volatile, hybrid, and crossed many boundaries. *Dress*, on the other hand, was considered stable, distinctive, and related to the social practices of individuals. *Dress*, they reckoned, also symbolised the more private aspects of personhood throughout an individual's life cycle, while fashion allowed both conformity and distinction, that is, showing allegiance to others by dressing like them as well as showing individuality by dressing differently (Simmel, 1904, as cited in Gott and Loughran, 2010).

2.3.3.1 Concept of dress

Calasibetta and Tortora (2003) described dress as a collective word for all clothing. For instance, they cited the dress of Spain, and the dress of an ethnic group. Beyond that, they also recognised that the term is used interchangeably with apparel, clothes and costume. In the field of textiles and apparel, it is asserted that a widely accepted definition of dress is . . . the total arrangement of all detectable modification of the body itself and all material objects added to it (Roach & Musa, 1980, p.11, as cited in Calasibetta & Tortora, 2003). Thus, the concept of dress from the earlier descriptions can be viewed as tangibles such as garments or apparels, body marks and pigmentations, accessories, and cosmetics. It also includes intangibles such as fragrances used on the body.

Calasibetta and Tortora (2003) further noted that the word is used invariably for a one-piece outer garment that varies in length but extends at least to below the hips and

ends in a skirt. They further suggested that in Western costume history, dress is traditionally worn by women. Additionally, the term is used for various dress styles that have been developed over the years and are generally formed by placing an adjective describing the apparel in front of the word *dress*. Examples include coat dress, drop waist dress, shirt dress, and swing dress among others. They asserted that *dress* also means to put on a garment, arrange hair, and tan and finish hides for leather uses. Calasibetta and Tortora (2003) further described the term *dress* as an item of apparel intended to be worn for more formal occasions, for example, dress shoes, dress shirt and dress waist coat.

From the foregoing, it appears the term *dress* can be used variously and interchangeably; though it has a collective connotation, it can also be used to describe an item. The concept of *dress* from the earlier descriptions can be viewed as tangibles such as garments or apparels, body marks and pigmentations, accessories, and cosmetics, and intangibles such as fragrances used on the body. As a collective, it can be used in describing all visible alterations of the body itself and all material objects added to it. As an item, it can be used in describing a one-piece outer garment or apparel worn by women that varies in length but extends at least to below the hips and ends in a skirt.

Many researchers in this field of study, including Smith and Eicher (1982) further argued that apparel as a dress is not necessarily the most frequently used one. However, they agreed that apparel is no doubt the most obvious category of artefact used. Apparel therefore remained that item of clothing which is most striking of what is viewed when one dresses even though cosmetics were perhaps more often employed around the world as adornment than is clothing. In addition, the word dress

can be used in describing costume intended to be worn by women for more formal occasions.

Consistent with the concept of dress suggested by current literature discussed above, the focus of this session of the review was to scrutinise the concept of dress as it was used by the participating maidens during the *Ashin* ceremonies as documented in the book: *Indigenous Costumes of Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* and their symbolic meanings' (Damalie, 2018a). Consequently, dress in the context of this review and in the subsequent sessions went beyond the cloth apparel worn as it included the total look created as a result of all that was constantly applied on the maidens' bodies to alter it from its natural look. Attention was further paid to the most striving of the dress cultural practices of the maidens during various stages of the ritual. Consequently, the concept was looked at collectively and also used in describing all visible alterations of the body itself and all material objects added to it. Head coverings as well as pigments applied to various parts of the body, especially the face, and scents were all discussed as part of dress (Damalie, 2018a; Kwakye-Opong, 2014, 2011) and were considered essential based on their use(s) by the maidens.

2.3.4 Statement dress of the participating maidens during the *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* ceremony

The key activities during the nobility rites are organised around four themes namely: the pre-camping (*Telekɔmɔ*) activities; camping (*Ashinfɔɔ*) activities; outdoorings (*Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ*) and post-rites (*Hesaamɔ*) activities as described in Damalie (2018a). Thus, the statement dress of the participating maidens are the patterns of dress or dress code that have become associated with this indigenous nobility ceremony, as shown in the following Figures (2.02 – 2.05):



Figure 2.02a (left): *Telekomo* maidens are seen in *Mama Tsuru* and *Duku Tsuru*.

Figure 2.02b (right): A pregnant *Ashin Yoo* (rite maiden) being decorated by a stylist

Source: Damalie, 2018a

The maidens in Figure 2.02a are observing the *Telekomo* stage of the *Ashin* rites. As shown, the maidens wear *Mama Tsuru* and *Duku Tsuru* (red cloth wraps and matching red scarves). The maiden in Figure 2.02b is a pregnant *Ashin Yoo* (rite maiden) being decorated by a stylist using white dotted body marks. She is wearing another variant of *Mama Tsuru* and *Duku Tsuru* compared to the two variants in Figure 2.02a (Damaliev, 2018a).

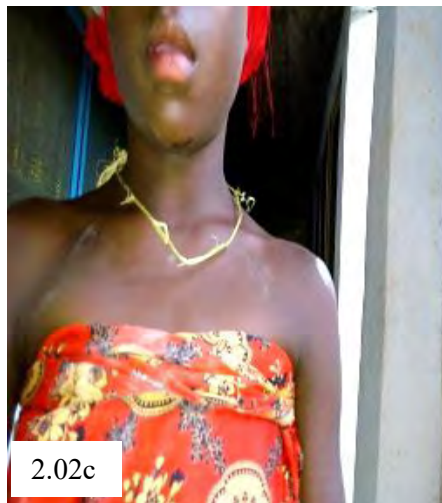


Figure 2.02c (left): *Ashin* maiden in *Mama Tsuru*; *Nyanya* necklace; *Duku Tsuru*.

Figure 2.02d (right): An *Ashin* maiden in two draped layered *Mama Tsuru*; *Atufo*.

Source: Damalie, 2018a

Figure 2.02c: On one hand, the *Ashin* rite maiden in Figure 2.02c (first left) is seen in *Mama Tsuru*; *Nyanya* necklace; *Duku Tsuru*. On the other hand, Figure 2.02d showed the maiden (second right) in two draped layers of *Mama Tsuru*; *Nyanya* Necklace; *Atufo* (bustle) that shapes the layered cloths Damalie (2018a).

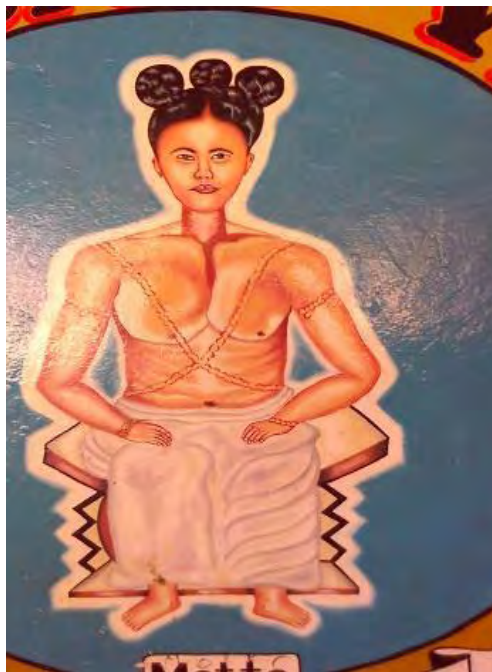
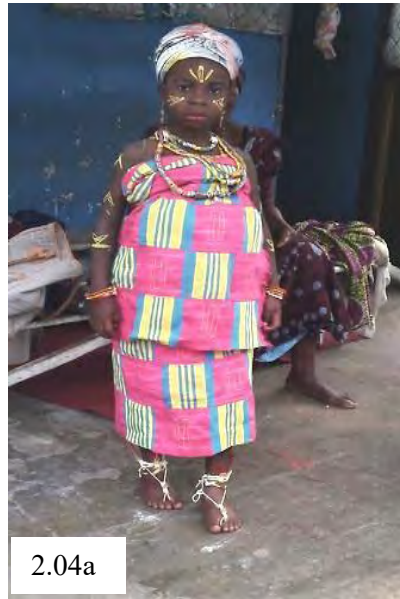


Figure 2.03: *Ashinfɔɔ*; an artist's impression of the *Ashin Yoo* (maiden).

Source: Damalie, 2018a

Figure 2.03 shows an artist impression of the *Ashin Yoo* (maiden) in knee length *Clala* (white calico) waist cloth; *Dmɔkɔfu* (raffia) accessory; underneath the waist cloth, the maidens wear waist beads and *Bue* (loincloth) during *Ashinfɔɔ*. The feet are bare as practised during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping) (Damalieu, 2018a).



2.04a



2.04b

Figure 2.04a: *Ashin Yoo Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ* (rite styles) in double layered kente cloth.

Figure 2.04b: Two *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens) in one piece exotic patterned silk cloths.

Source: Damalie, 2018a

Figure 2.04a shows one option of the *Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ* (styling). The *Ashin Yoo* (maiden) is seen in two layered colourful kente cloths and *Odasobɔ* scarf covering the moulded *Oduku* headdress, beaded necklaces, and gold jewellery and the *Ntah* anklets to accessorise the outdoor ceremony. The toe nails are polished with white talcum powder. The body marks feature prominently; *Fers* (yellow coloured) floral marks on the face and arms and scented *Krɔbɔ* artistically smeared on the arms (Damaliev, 2018a).

Figure 2.04b on the hand shows adapted *Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ* (outing dress styles). Two *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens) are seen in exotic patterned silk cloths (one piece) showing off their embellished *Oduku* headdress for the outdoor ceremony. The fabric has been pulled to cover the breast of the maidens (Damaliev, 2018a). Their necks are adorned with beaded necklaces, as well as several pieces of gold jewellery, their wrists are adorned with several *Adiagba* strung beads; their feet are adorned with

the *Ntah* anklets to accessorise the outdoor garment, and nail polished with white talcum powder. The body marks feature prominently showing *Fers* coloured floral marks on the face and arms and scented *Krɔbo* artistically smeared on the arms (Damalie, 2018a).



Figure 2.04c: Black and white portrait of *Ashin* (rite) maidens during *Kpojiemɔ Hesaamɔ* (outing dress styles) in the 1960s.

Source: Damalie, 2018a.

Figure 2.04c shows a black and white portrait of *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens in *Kpojiemɔ Hesaamɔ* (outdoor garment) in the 1960s; Maidens are in hand woven kente and exotic printed cloths respectively for the outdoor ceremony (Damalie, 2018a). Here again they wear bold facial decorations. The maidens' upper torso is barely covered with body marks and beads and gold jewellery. They all feature the *Oduku* (headdress) with jewels as hair embellishments (Damalie, 2018a).



Figure 2.05a: An array of young *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens) in beads look statement.

Figure 2.05b: A fairly younger *Ashin Yoo* (rite maiden) in rich splendid wax prints, and beads-cum-*bue* look statement.

Source: Damalie, 2018a

Figure 2.05a (top left) shows an array of young *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens) having passed through *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rite of the people of Tema) dressed in rich impressive wax prints, *Odasobo Duku*, gold earrings and beaded accessories (including the *Ntah* anklets) during the post rite (Damalíe, 2018a).

Figure 2.05b (top right) shows a fairly young *Ashin Yoo* (rite maiden) dressed in rich splendid wax prints and accessories. Her unique style difference lies in the use of the *Bue* (red loincloth) in place of the *Ntah* (anklets). The maidens' cloths are wrapped beyond their calves; high enough to show the *Ntah* (anklets) (Damalíe, 2018a). The body marks feature prominently in yellow *Fers* floral marks on the face and arms and scented green *Krɔbo* (dried green fruit paste) smeared creatively on the arms. Beaded statements of emphasis are used in the form of several neck and wrist beads. The

maidens are barefooted except for the banded *Bue* (or loincloth) in place of the *Ntah* (anklets) (Damalie, 2018a).



Figure 2.05c: Young *Ashin Yei* (nobility rite maidens) in rich colourful splendid wax prints and *Bue Ntah* (anklets).

Source: Damalie, 2018a

Figure 2.05c shows young *Ashin yei* (rite maidens) having passed through *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (nobility rite of the Tema people) dressed in rich colourful splendid wax prints and accessories (Damalie, 2018a). Use of loincloth in place of the *Ntah* anklets is repeated here to accessorise their bare feet. Here again, the body marks feature prominently; the yellow *Fers* floral marks on the face and arms and scented green *Krɔbɔ* (dried green fruit paste) smeared creatively on the arms. Gold statement— emphasis is on the neck and wrists using several gold necklaces, and several wrist beads (Damalie, 2018a).

The main dress of the participating maidens were worn on the head, neck, body, arms, wrists, knees, ankles, and waist often worn by the maidens for both less dressy and

more dressy occasions (Smith & Eicher, 1982) during the ceremony. The *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping stage) and *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) periods appeared less dressy while the *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* (outdooring and post rite) periods looked dressier.

The materials used for dress as shown in the portraits above included textile prints, beads, gold, plants, colours, parrot feathers and twine trimmings, complementary accessories, body marks often worn as adornments, and cosmetics and fragrances often employed for image enhancement (Damalie, 2018a).

***Telekɔmɔ Hesaamɔi* (Pre-camping dress or styling)**

Literature on the main dress cultural practices of the maidens during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping stage) suggested the use of the following from head to toe as demonstrated in Figure 2.02a - c:

1. Headdress

Yihoo (plaited hairstyle): Damalie (2018a) described the two main hair plaiting styles were used during the camping stage short hair wear plaits in dotted portions like chicken droppings (referred to as *Wuobibiafe*). Meanwhile, those with long hair wore their hair in long plaits. Both plait styles were done using *Yihoo kpãa* (black plaiting thread). The head was then tied in *Duku Tsuru* (red scarves) (Damalie, 2018a).

2. Neck dress

Nyanya (wreath of creeping plant): The rites participants were made to wear this plant around their necks as shown in Figure 2.02c as protective dressing accessory (Damalie, 2018a).

3. *Body dress*

Mama Tsuru: The rites participants dress up in two pieces of red cloth wrapped around the upper (hip length) and lower torsos (calf length), hair covered in red scarves, leaving the shoulders and the arms bare and covered with body marks as shown in Figures 2.02a; 2.02b and 2.02c. According to Damalie (2018a), each two yards long piece measures 183 cm by 115 cm. In the case of younger girls, one piece was manipulated and draped to fit (not cut to fit). The maidens wore this dress while going round the main suburbs of the town in the company of chaperons, patrons and relations amidst cheering and singing, highlighting some details of the rituals (Damalieu, 2018a).

Ayiloo (white baked clay): The participating maidens were decorated with body markings made in white baked clay dotted as shown on clove-smearred black background. They wore a variety of body marks as observed in Figure 2.02b.

Atufo: The local bustle **Atufo**, basically a padded scarf made up of old clothes (Damalieu, 2018a). The stuff was carefully and firmly rolled to hide in the scarf. The two narrowed ends were tied into knots and worn (tied) in the small of the back as illustrated in Figure 2.02c.

Bue: This type of bright red and white cotton textile print piece measures about 40 cm by 100 cm or less (Damalieu, 2018a). The cotton loincloth was used by the maidens as panties. The padded piece of cotton cloth is worn tucked in the maidens' waist beads in front and at the back (Damalieu, 2018a).

4. *Arm dress*

Fragrant herbs: The maidens' arms and legs were decorated and deodorised with a blend of fragrant herbs and spices. The main ingredient used, the **Krɔbo**, is a non-edible fruit of a plant, green in colour with a pleasant fragrance (Damalieu, 2018a). Its

smell was further enhanced with *pepre* (cloves), *Nkitinkiti* (aniseed) and *Abaya* (also a local plant). The ground or powdered spices were mixed together with natural lime juice.

In cosmetology, clove is known for its effective relief of itching and promotion of healing when applied to the skin (Hussain, Rahman & Mushtaq, 2017). Besides, its addition to the *Krɔbɔ* (green fruit) paste is a way of adding spicy scent to the body to enhance the maidens' body odour when applied.

Aniseed or anise is an equally powerful plant rich in many nutrients and boasts a wide array of health benefits. It has a distinct licorice-like taste and is often used to add flavour to deserts and drinks. Its culinary benefits notwithstanding, a test-tube study demonstrated that aniseed essential oils were especially effective against certain strains of fungi, including yeasts and dermatophytes, a type of fungus that can cause skin diseases (Hussain et al., 2017). Anise added in oil, powder, or extract forms (in small amounts) is said to enhance the aroma of soaps and skin creams. Therefore its inclusion in the *Krɔbɔ* (green fruit) paste may likely decrease the growth of certain strains of fungus and bacteria, and further enhance the aroma of the paste applied on the maidens' skin. Natural lime juice used in the mixture acts as a skin toner.

Application: The *Krɔbɔ* (green fruit) paste was applied on the bare chest, back, arms and feet in creative patterns. Preferred body sprays or perfume were added to the mixture to further enhance the scent (Damalie, 2018a). The wearing of fragrance is very significant as the practice shows that the wearing of perfume gives pleasure, not only because it smells nice, but because it further creates an aura around the wearer that expresses something she wishes to convey about her personality (Sonntag, 2003).

5. *Wrist dress*

Ashino-yeei (small white strung beads): These small white round beads called ***Ashino-yeei*** are worn by the maidens on both wrists. Any maiden seen wearing these wrist beads at this point, is acknowledged as an initiate observing the rites process (Damalie, 2018a).

6. Waist beads: Damalie (2018a) described the maidens wear waist beads not only as adornment, but also a functional item worn during the ceremony to aid shaping the hips and in wearing the loincloth.

7. *Foot dress*

Awoo tokota (barefoot): The maidens ceremonially walk barefoot throughout the process as demonstrated in Figures 2.02 to 2.05. They however wear anklet beads as part of the ***Ntah*** ensemble to accessorise the wrapped cloths (Damalie, 2018a).

Ashinfɔɔ Hesaamɔ (Camping Dress or Styling)

1. *Headdress*

Yihoo: Figure 3 shows the plaited hairstyle of the young maidens. The hair carries the ***Ashin tɛ*** (stone), a major item for the rituals during the camping stage. Maidens with long hair wear the ***Ashin tɛ*** embedded in the long plaits. The hair is parted and implanted with the ***Ashin tɛ*** before the ends are plaited with ***Yihoo kpa*** (black thread). Those with ***Wuobibiafe*** hair style carry the ***Ashin*** (rite) stone wearing ***Yaa*** (net) on their hair. The plaited hair is described as ***Anye Ashin*** (the application of the ***Ashinmu***) because the ***Ashin tɛ*** (rite stone) is implanted in the hair (Damalie, 2018a).

2. *Neck dress*

Dmɔkɔfu: (woven raffia) was worn by the maidens during the ***Ashinfɔɔ*** (camping) stage. They were made of three strands of woven raffia dyed with the ***Fers*** colour

(yellow) (Damalie, 2018a). Two sets of the woven yarns were worn from the right shoulder across to the left underarm, and vice versa as shown in Figure 2.03.

3. *Body dress*

Ashinmu: *Ashinmu* is processed palm fruit oil (Batana oil) with which the maidens are cleansed.⁴ For four continuous days, the maidens were made to sit in the open under a shade in front of their paternal clan houses (from Monday to Thursday) drenched with *Ashinmu* (the Batana rite oil). Significantly, the rite oil was first applied by a priestess and other elderly women in charge, signifying it was a ritual. Subsequently, the maidens were made to apply the *Ashinmu* (Batana rite oil) by themselves as and when it dried up (Damalie, 2018a). Instead of bleaching, high-born men and women, according to Sonntag (2003) anointed their bodies with spiced and scented oils. The *Ashin Yei* (nobility maidens) literally cleanse their bodies with palm fruit oil and sit under open air tents to allow the oil seep into their skin. It is a demonstration of the assertion that natural oils are lovely to use in grooming the skin/body. This act actually had a beneficial effect on not only the skin/body, but also the mind according to Sonntag (2003). The use of these elements further demonstrated the use of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) as a status signifier (well-treated skin).

Clala (piece of white calico): The rite participants at this stage were each wrapped in one piece of calico around their lower torsos only; from their waist up were left bare except for the *Dmɔkɔfu* (woven raffia) worn on the shoulders and their oiled skin. This particular dressing was only associated with the *AshinƆɔ* (camping) stage which was deemed quite private (Damalie, 2018a). As indicated earlier, the ceremony at this stage involved body exposure as initiates were not allowed to cover their breasts as

illustrated in Figure 2.03. Instead they are expected to leave the upper torso bare the entire time with the *Ashinmu* (Batana rite oil) constantly being re-applied on the body. Interestingly, the baring of the upper torso (the breasts) was also observed during the outdoor stage. The question the act raised was if the consistent practice with the maidens' ritual to bare the upper torso, was to show their confidence in their own radiant glowy skin?

Bue: The bright red and white loincloth was used by the maidens as panties during the *Ashinfɔ* (camping) stage. It was worn on waist beads with the **Bue** (loincloth) tucked in, in front and at the back much the same way as diapers to soak in excess body oil which dripped below (Damalie, 2018a). Indeed, the **Bue** (loincloth) was used throughout the rite ceremony.

Abonua (lime): The lime juice together with local sponge was used in completely scrubbing off the *Ashinmu* (Batana rite oil) from the bodies of the maidens on the Thursday evening (Damalie, 2018a). The lime further served as a skin toner.

***Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ* (Post-rites Dress)**

1. Headdress

Oduku (hairstyle): The **Oduku** (headdress) is a unique local hairstyle for *Ashin Yei* (nobility maidens). Moulded like a wig cap using upholstery or horse hair materials, the exquisite headdress was also textured using black hair plaiting thread. It was worn on the head like a 'dancing crown' by leaving the hairline by an inch or so. The remaining hair on the hairline was then attached to the **Oduku** (headdress) by plaiting them together. Gold ornaments such as hair pins and forehead jewellery were used in enhancing the hairstyle, very much like their compatriots of old, the Egyptians who

were known to wear elaborately ornamented wigs (Damalie, 2018a; Kindersley, 2012; Sonntag, 2003).

2. Neck dress

Kweni (Strung neck beads jewellery): The exposed upper torsos of the maidens were partially covered using multiple necklaces as accessories. Their necks were adorned with several strung **Aggrey**, glass and also metal beads specifically made from gold (Damalie, 2018a).

Fliwa beads necklace used by the maidens was described as the queen of all the strung beads. Made up of valuable authentic **Adiagba** beads, **Fliwa** is the shortest styled neck beads. The beads were sandwiched between two maize-cob designed gold beads. It is a prestigious dress item of adornment and the maiden's wardrobe is incomplete without the queen of beads, **Fliwa** (Damalie, 2018a).

The lengthy strung beads worn by the maidens were adorned with gold emblem pendants. In some cases they are worn together with same length beads necklaces or shorter length gold necklaces. The maidens wore same fashioned armlets, and bracelets in some cases. They wore gold pendants and other set pieces such as gold earrings, bracelets, rings and forehead jewellery as well as hair pins, described Damalie (2018a).

3. Body dress

Kente/ **Kete**: Loom woven kente (one large piece of rich Ghanaian kente cloth (particularly the Ashanti and Ewe designs) were highly patronised by **Ashin Yei** (rite maidens). The Ashanti kente and Ewe **kete** are precious hand-woven textiles associated with Ghanaian culture and royalty (Dzramedo, 2009; Dedume et al., 2016).

The maidens dressed up in one piece of such rich Ghanaian kente or *kete* cloth wrapped around the lower torso from waist down. As seen in Figure 2.04b, a participant may also choose to dress up in two different wrap around styles of the rich Ghanaian hand woven cloths; one wrapped around the lower torso from waist down in skirt style, and the second style the pull up the skirt cloth to cover the upper torso, thereby covering the breasts.

But for the necklaces used as accessories that partly cover them up, the waist cloth style of dressing leaves the breasts of the maidens bare. The exposure of the breasts, according to patrons, told the level of sexual maturity of the maidens (Figure 2.04c). Damalie (2018a) revealed that, in recent times the bashful maidens pulled up the waist cloth to cover the breast when they are away from probing eyes of elders in their clan house as seen in Figure 2.04b. As indicated in Figure 2.04a, others also use two pieces of the hand-woven variants of the indigenous Ghanaian cloth instead of one, that way the baring of breast did not arise.

4. *Foot dress*

Ntah (anklets): *Ntah* is the queen of the anklets used by the maidens (Damalie, 2018a). The pair used by a maiden was each made up of the protective *Hlorkpãa* (twine), *Akotsɛle* (orange coloured feathers of parrot) and other separately strung rocaille and bugle beads making up a set.

Other beads

Several other rocaille and bugle strung beads of different sizes like the *too pipee* (red), *Corley* (blue) and *Ashino Yeei* (white) were worn as armllets, wrists, knees and ankle beads.

***Kpojei-Hesaamɔ* (Post rites Dress or Styling)**

The *Kpojei-Hesaamɔ* (post rite) stage lasts longer than all the other stages. The maidens can observe the dress code for several months; as long as it was convenient for them. The dress types included:

1. Headdress

Odasobɔ scarves (Headdress styles): The maidens wore variety of *Odasobɔ* printed silk scarves during the post outdoor stage as shown in Figure 2.05 post rite outings. The *Oduku* (headdress) at that point served as the mould for this head dress styling. The headdress was worn when the maidens dressed in textile prints. Gold ornaments such as hair pins were used in enhancing the maidens' headdress style.

2. Neck dress

Kweni (Strung Neck Beads/Jewels): Unlike the *Kpojei Hesaamɔ*, the maidens' multiple necklace accessories were worn over covered busts and scented *Krɔbɔ* embellished upper torso. Their necks were adorned with several strung beads of *Aggrey*, glass and also gold. The *Fliwa* beads as well as the lengthy strung beads were worn by the maidens at this stage too (Damalie, 2018a).

The author noted that here again, the neck dress were worn together with same length beaded necklaces or shorter length gold necklaces. The maidens also wore same created armlets and bracelets in some cases. They wore gold pendants and other set pieces such as gold earrings, bracelets, rings and hair pins.

3. Arm dress

Beaded armlets were used for dressing up the maidens at this stage also.

4. *Body dress*

Textile prints (industrialised wax prints): *Hesaamɔ* means styling or dressing up. Several pieces of colourful and impressive made-in-Ghana GTP textile prints formed the cloths used by the maidens for several months. Damalie (2018a) mentioned the preference for high quality cloths at this stage. The wax prints of choice were of very celebrated names/ patterns of the Tema-based GTP company wax prints or its Holland alternatives. As shown in the Figure 6 variants, the colours as well as patterns of fabrics associated with *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens were wide-ranging. Cloths used during *Hesaamɔ* (dressing) were not repeated. The maidens' two-layered cloths were wrapped to a length beyond their calves; but high enough to show off the *Ntah* or alternate banded *Bue* (anklets). The prints were worn with matching *Odasobɔ* scarves as headdress styles with the *Oduku* (headdress) serving as the mould for further head wear styling.

5. *Foot dress*

Anklet: The maidens used the *Ntah* or its *Bue* alternative interchangeably as anklets during this last stage of the ceremony. One unique style difference at this stage laid in the alternation of the *Bue* in place of the *Ntah* anklet in making alternated beaded or gold dress statements (Damalie, 2018a).

6. *Niyɔmãa* (Body marks)

The maidens' body marks featured prominently in yellow *Fers* floral marks on the face and arms and scented green *Krɔbɔ* (dried fruit) applied creatively on the arms as illustrated in Figure 2.05 (Damalie, 2018a).

7. Beads

Emphasis was on the use of several neck and wrist beads, or alternative gold jewellery and anklet-decorated bare feet (Damalie, 2018a).

The *Ashin* (rite) ceremony were held in four main stages, that is, *Telekɔmɔ*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ*, and *Kpojei* (pre-camping, camping, outdoor and post rite), during which

six key elements stood out beautifully in the four timeless statement dress used by the maidens as major dress culture practices and in harmony with nature. These included body and dress silhouettes, materials including fashion fabrics and those used in making relevant staples; dress accessories used to complete the maidens' dress. Colour codes were used as impactful cues to announce the maidens at each stage. The colours to a large extent were used by the subculture to determine dress themes developed for each staged statement dress. For example, red, white, and gold colours featured prominently along side other hues such as green, blue, orange and black.

Regarding dressing accessories, the maidens used specific pieces and accompanying jewellery for embellishment during each stage of the ceremony. Techniques were consistent, and played a vital role in the dress outlook of the maidens during the ceremony. The nobility maidens' dress culture practices appeared deliberately imbued with strong values which hinted of their society's worldview of dress.

2.4 Symbolism and Socio-cultural Relevance of the Major Dress Culture associated with the Maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*)

2.4.1 Symbolism of major dress cultural practices associated with the *Ashin* maidens during the *Ashin* ceremony

‘Symbols-in-action, with or without accompanying verbal symbols’ bring out a major characteristic of rituals which is symbolism (Shorter, 1998 as cited in Boakye, 2010). Similarly, Boakye (2010) argued that rituals are endowed with symbolism all leading to their main purpose. Like *Dipo*, a lot of meanings can be derived from the symbolic actions observed on the *Ashin Yoo* during the rite with regard to their dress practices. As earlier illustrated, there were different types of dress patterns associated with each of the four stages of the ceremony, i. e. *Telekɔmɔ*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ*, and *Kpojei* (pre-camping, camping, outdoor and post rite) dressing which signify the ritual cleansing or symbolic traditional healing is underway.

This review looked at the patterns of dress associated with the *Ashin* (rite) ceremony, highlighting the symbolism of the major dress and details during each stage. Further, the section analysed the worldview or underlying beliefs or philosophy (in design inspiration; production and use) of the major dress of the maidens (*Ashin yei*), and the value of the dress to the maidens. Available data suggested that the main dress cultural practices of the maidens during *Telekɔmɔ* (camping) included the use of headdress, neck dress, body dress, arm dress, ankle dress, wrist dress, and foot dress among others.

1. Headdress

Yihoo (plaited hairstyle): Hair is an essential part of a person’s identity, self-perception, and can be a way they communicate with those around them (Asbeck,

Riley-Prescott, Glaser & Tosti, 2022). That being said, it also remained symbolic when it comes to the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' headdress. The plaited hair of the *Ashin* (nobility) maiden is not only functional at this point, but also decorative adding to the beauty of the maidens. The hair style was kept and covered with the red scarves throughout to the *Telekɔmɔ* (camping) period. The plaited hair denoted the glory of the maidens. It further buttressed Dzramedo's (2009) earlier assertion on hairstyles. In his opinion, hairstyles in the art and culture of Africans had very important significance and incredible meanings attached to them. The choice of red coloured scarf and matching fabrics used also signified the seriousness and passion attached to the rite even at this initial stage. 'Colour preferences vary among . . . cultures. These preferences might be related to . . . cultural heritage' (Burns et al., 2016, p.132) as observed when *Ga* traditional opinion leaders including the chiefs (*Mantsemɛi*), and traditional priests (*Wulomɔ*) adorn the colour during serious religious ceremonies such as sprinkling of *Kpokpoi* during *Hɔmɔwɔ* (hoot at hunger) festival of the *Ga* people, and funerals among others.

2. Neck dress

The green *Nyanya* (wreath) was worn around the neck in an almost dried form to reportedly protect the participants from the evil speech of others. The use of the garland was common among *Ga* people, particularly traditional priests, priestesses and other figure heads for spiritual protection (Damalie, 2018a; Kwakye-Opong, 2014). The *Nyanya* leaf is a creeping plant collected and designed in its green state to suit a religious purpose. It was believed to have the ability to cleanse, protect and empower users and thus reserved among the people of Tema *Manhean* (*Temamei*) for their (*Ga*) traditional leaders such as chief priests, chiefs, priests/priestess and used during ceremonial occasions such as durbars, coronations, festivals, and

sometimes for healing (Nortey, 2008 cited in Kwakye-Oppong, 2011). With such people of rank, the fibre was created into a necklace and worn, but in very few instances *Nyanya* wreath can be worn around the waist.

3. *Body dress*

Mama Tsuru: The rites participants dressed up in two pieces of red cloth to signal the beginning of the initiation rites. These particular red wax prints (designs) used during the *Telekɔmɔ* (camping) were rarely worn by the indigenes except for ritual purposes such as the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (rite). However, other variations (similar motif in other shades of red coloured fabrics) were used during funerals and specific stages during *Hɔmɔwɔ* festival. The maidens, by this post-camping rite dress announced the start of the initiation to the townsfolk and all patrons. They went from house to house with a group singing cheerful songs like: *‘Tema Kpeemɔ yɛ fɛɔ tsɔ, mei pii naaa,’* meaning: the Tema *Ashin* (rites) is so beautiful, many people (other than ethnic maidens) cannot experience it (Damalie, 2018a).

4. *Ayiloo* (White baked clay)

The participants were decorated with different body markings over the period. Some of these reflect recognition of the spirits of the people of Tema *Manhean* (*Temamei*). The body markings included those made in white baked clay (*Ayiloo*) which indicated visitation to specific shrines during the ceremony. The body marks observed in the photograph in Figure 2.02b were made in almost round or oval geometric shapes on black background from the clove paste seen on the grinding stone. It was reported that other body marks were made on the body as a result of sprinkled matter on the body during visits to specific shrines within the traditional area (Awo Diin, Personal conversation, 24 February, 2024).

These demonstrated the basis of this ceremony as a holistic approach in inculcating values for life; i.e. blending faith (spiritual) and the practical (physical) dress needs of the maidens. For *Temamei*, this ceremony was *Kusum* or custom not fetish, yet it had religious meanings inherent in there, because it was linked with traditional belief that requires sanctifying, cleansing and then projecting the female child as a result as a noble member of the community. This further portrayed her as marriage material and a mother of the society of *Temamei*. In some cases, prospective would-be husbands contributed financially to reduce the cost involved in acquiring the needed materials for the ceremony (Damalie, 2018a). Healthy lifestyle and self-beautification could not be ruled out of the ritual because the dress practices the maidens were taken through led to attaining such goals; being groomed for adulthood, and its attendant roles and responsibilities ahead in life.

5. *Atufo*:

The padded scarf *Atufo* (bustle) worn at the small of the back to narrow the skirt cloth in front and to shift the volume of the wrapped cloth to the back to form a bustle. Like the popular bustle of the fashionable silhouette of the 18th century polonaise (Kindersley, 2012), the padded scarf bustle helped in exhibiting a correct roundness and firmness of the buttocks. It was critical in shaping the body of the maidens into the desirable hourglass-like figure. It also allowed a good hang of the draped dress form, besides the elegant pace to the participants when walking. The *Atufo* (bustle) dress item usually made from used clothing was worn by the participants throughout the ceremony except for the *Ashinfɔ* (camping) stage. It appeared the dress item is the secret to the graceful drapery of the outer cloths of the *Ashin Yoo* (rite maidens) (Damalie, 2018a) as demonstrated in Figures 2.02c, 2.04 and 2.05.

6. *Bue*:

Bue is the special bright red and white cotton loincloth used as panties. Its use prevents air from entering the female genitals. It was preferred because it was made from natural cotton, and performs relatively better in terms of receiving residual virginal fluids when worn by the maidens. Its colour was fit for purpose, and its use conformed to tradition, as it was the preferred panties used by many culturally-oriented mature women in Ghana. Until recently, it used to be the main outer cloth used by the *Dipo* maidens tucked in their numerous waist beads to cover not only their private parts, but hang on and long enough dramatically. *Bue* symbolically underscores the intergrity of the feminity of the individual female who wears it (Wellington, 2006). The maidens also overtly used the *Bue* (loincloth) in carefully folded ankle bands, worn in place of the *Ntah* (anklets) as feet accessories (Damalie, 2018a) as shown in Figure 2.05.

7. *Arm dress*:

Fragrant herbs were applied on the arms and legs of the maidens for this ritual in particular. The green pigment of the scented *Krɔbo* (dried fruit) smear served as a foundation for further make over; floral and other motifs or shapes are marked as decorations using the yellow *Fers* paste. The *Krɔbo*'s (dried fruit) elevated smell when used on the maidens does not only help in the cleansing process, it further improved on their body scents unleashing certain bizarre but pleasant presence enforcing their femininity, presence, and unique appeal (Damalie, 2018a).

The use of such plants in the beauty industry is viable even today. For instance, the laurel leaf is the hero ingredient of the ‘Possess Man’ range of perfumes for men. The leaf which was a symbol of victory in ancient Rome, is remembered even today in

terms of baccalaureate and poet laureate, conveying greatness in a chosen field. It is used as an unguent or balm to inspire victory and to heal wounds. The aromatic fragrance of the laurel leaf is believed to signify a winning spirit to this day (Orilame Catalogue, 2022).

In much the same way, the use of these four organic plant-based products in the aromatic *Krɔbɔ* (dried fruit) paste inspired tradition, purity, good grooming and some mystery. Each maiden carried that unique scent that expresses her identity as an attractive aura, and her pride as a cleansed noble, ethnic woman of Tema. The fragrance created further expressed the cultural artistry of Tema people (*Temamei*) (Damalie, 2018a). The scented *krɔbɔ's* (dried fruit) pleasant-smelling perfume worn by the maidens signified the pure state of the well-groomed maidens.

8. Wrist dress:

Ashino yei (white strung beads) are small white round beads worn by the maidens on both wrists. The wearing of the peculiar white beads also signified observance of the rite. The maidens also wore similar beads of different colours such as waist beads at this point to aid in wearing the *Bue* (loincloth) in keeping with tradition. Besides serving as embellishment on the naked body, the waist beads helped in shaping the waist and also served as part of the grooming of the maidens during the period (Damalie, 2018a).

9. Foot dress:

Walking bare feet is the *Kusum* of the people as shown in the Figures 2.04 to 2.05. It signified the observation of the rite in line with their custom. As earlier indicated, this tradition was also observed among traditional authorities such as the paramount chief during the performance of *Kpokpoi shwamɔ* (sprinkling of *Kpokpoi* during *Hɔmɔwɔ*

festival) of the people of Tema, traditional heads, their priests and priestesses within the community. Damalie (2018a) revealed that this had always been the ceremonial practice; it had been the *Kusum* (custom) of the maidens during the *Ashin* (ceremony) and had not changed.

In the olden times, it was related that among the only costumes used by a *Ga* chief priest, a chief and the queen mother walked barefoot (Kwakye-Opong, 2011). This was significant in constituting their dressing during confinement, and when in public at all functions.

*Ashin*Ɔ HesaamƆ (Camping Dress or Styling)

1. Headdress

The maidens were made to carry the sacred *Ashin tɛ* (stone) in their plaited hair during the camping ceremony to indicate that they were being cleansed. To corroborate this process, Dzramedo (2009) asserted that in most societies in Africa, there is a strong bond between the human hair and other activities; including expressing it as a symbol of womanhood and beauty. Besides, the hair style adding to the beauty of the maidens, it contributed to the mysterious *Ashin tɛ* (rite stone) which was mined in secrecy and kept on throughout to the camping period (Damalie, 2018a).

2. Neck dress

It is related that the woven *Dmɔkɔfu* (dyed and worn raffia accessories) worn in crisscross style by the maidens during this stage further suggested the ongoing healing process. Kwakye-Opong (2011) described the *Lon* (raffia fibre) patronised by *Ga* people as a long green grass which is collected and dried to obtain a brownish colour. It can be either used in its brownish state or dyed according to its ritual purpose, and

mostly worn by priests and priestesses, especially the *Tigare* priest and priestess who use it as a skirt. It was reported that chiefs, *Otufo* initiates and some other *Ga* people may be required by tradition to wear a string or two of the *Lon* as necklace, bracelet or anklet (Damalie, 2018a).

3. *Body dress*

The *Ashinmu* (Batana oil) is the oil used in ridding the body of physical/spiritual *__dit* on the participating maidens. It signifies the cleansing of the maidens. Observation showed that with the help of the external heat from the sun, the Batana oil (*Ashinmu*) seeps into the skin, and cleanses the pores of the skin. This activity forms part of the skin/body grooming process of the maidens as the oil applied is purified and contributes to the glowing of the skin. Literature suggested the diverse length at which women go to have succulent skin (Sonntag, 2003). For example, Cleopatra reportedly bathed in asses' milk which softened and conditioned her skin. Today some beauty brands have adopted natural almond milk and that from coconut, cocoa, palm fruit, honey, and other potent natural organic products to soften and condition the skin (Oriflame Sweden, 2022, pp. 34-35, 65, 69). The *Ashinmu* (Batana oil for purification) significantly contributed to the glow of the maidens' skin and showed the value the young women, and for that matter, the people of Tema place on good grooming, particularly healthy skin.

6. *The Clala*

The *Clala* (calico) dress code during *Ashinforo* (camping) indicated that the maidens were being purified. It is related that in the olden times, the white calico was among the few dresses used by a *Ga* chief priest, a chief and the queen mother (Kwakye-Opong, 2011). The maidens could only be seen by observers from afar during this

private cleansing session. No cameras were allowed; even though it was believed that if a picture was snapped the image could not be captured, it was still abhorred for one to attempt to do so, thus the use of the artist's impression in Figure 2.04 as illustrated on the clan house of *Basa We* (Nii Ansah *We*) in Tema *Manhean*.

7. **Bue (Loincloth):**

During the camping period when the young maidens were constantly drenched in *Ashinmu* (processed palm - Batana oil), the use of the **Bue** (loincloth) becomes even more beneficial as it soaked the dripping oil and thus prevented the maidens from developing rashes in-between the upper-most parts of their inner-thighs due to the excessive amount of oil that flowed down during the *Ashinmu* (application of the processed palm oil) process. At this point the wisdom in the use of the absorbent cotton-based cloth was clearly established as it served as an effective under garment (Damalie, 2018a) for the maidens.

8. **Abonua (Lime)**

The maidens use lime to rid the skin of the Batana oil (*Ashinmu*). Oral traditions and available literature suggested that its use helped in exfoliation, toning and mattifying their skin apart from ridding it of the oil applied on the maidens. Naturally, the beauty industry places a high premium on organic lime because it is rich in purifying, toning and mattifying properties. Organic lime is used in the beauty industry with other plant-based ingredients like African tea tree organic essential oil to help target skin blemishes, help purify and soothe skin while working to tone and tighten pores (Oriflame Sweden, 2022, catalogue).

Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔi (Post-rites Dress)

1. Headdress

Oduku (Hairstyle): The ***Oduku*** hairstyle is unique to this passage ceremony of the people of Tema (***Temamei***). It is a dress item prominently associated with the dress worn by the participants during the outdoor phase. According to Damalie (2018a), the hairstyle suggested the value ***Temamei*** (the people of Tema) place on dress, dressing and appreciation of beauty culture as a whole, including hair and adornment. The maidens wore the ornamented ***Oduku*** (symbolic hairstyle) to show exquisite ethnic elegance. During the post rite stage, the headdress served as the foundation for wearing the head scarf.

2. Neck dress

The use of a medley of strung beads and gold jewellery showed opulence and elegance. The elegant beads showing colourful tones and decorations were reminiscent of a joyous occasion. The use of such pieces as ***Fliwa*** (beads necklace) which is the queen of all the maidens' strung beads, was significant. The neck bead is made up of genuine expensive ***Adiagba*** (treasured) beads. It is considered a prestigious dress item of adornment and its use suggested the high status and worth of the maiden's family. A maiden's sartorial story was considered incomplete without the ***Fliwa*** (neck beads).

The other high-status dress items of adornment— variety of lengthy, short strung beads, insignia gold pendants, gold and bead armlets, gold earrings, bracelets, rings and forehead jewellery as well as gold hair pins for hair enhancements, all but suggested the status of the maiden's family. The expensive and treasured gold beads used were made in symbolic forms and also pointed to the wealth of the family.

Damalie (2018a) asserted that their use further suggested the preparation and investment of cost, time and effort made by the parents, particularly mothers, towards these auspicious moments in the life of the girl child.

3. *Body dress*

The use of rich hand woven kente or *kete* for dress indicated the status of the maidens and their families in the Tema traditional area. Both the Ashanti and Ewe hand-woven designs remain an important contributor to African dress today (Dzramedo, 2009, p. 42), particularly the *Ashin Yoo* (nobility maiden). The other option was to use luxurious printed silk or *Ago* (velvet) for the *Kpojemɔ* (outdooing) ceremony.

The exposed breast was seen as custom (*Kusum*). However, in recent times some maidens pull part of the excess on the waist part of the waist cloth in covering the breasts when they were away from their clan house (Figure 2.04b). Others wore two pieces instead of one (Figure 2.04a). This style also allowed the breasts to be covered. Those notwithstanding, the custom of the maidens (*Temamei*) is to leave the breast bare on that occasion (Damalie, 2018a) and the modification was considered by some older women in the community as not following the *Kusum* of *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (custom of the maiden' rite).

4. *Niyɔmãa* (Body mark/decorations)

Elaborate floral motifs marked on the face, bare chest and back, arms and feet of each maiden identified her as a rite participant. The yellow floral and geometric marks are for cosmetic purposes and add shared colour to the dress practices of the maidens (Damalie, 2018a). Feathers and match boxes were used in the application of the bright yellow pigment *Fers* paste as shown in Figures 2.04 and 2.05.

5. *Abonua* (Lime): The lime juice, apart from being used in completely scrubbing off the *Ashinmu* (Batana oil for purification) from the bodies of the maidens during *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) is used as a skin toner. The lime juice as indicated earlier, helped to cleanse the pores on the skin of the maidens. It was further used as a deodoriser during the ceremony (Damalie, 2018a).

6. *Foot dress*

Like the *Fliwa* (strung neck bead), the *Ntah* (anklets) also signified the *Ashin Yoo* (maiden) as it actually defined her and her family's status (Damalie, 2018a). Accordingly, the dressing of participants as cleansed maidens was considered incomplete without the *Ntah*. The *Hlorkpãa* (twine) used in stringing the various components together was believed to give protection especially for the pregnant maidens. The parrot feathers were used for their spiritual significance. Kindersley (2012, p.28) stresses the 'inherently powerful' nature of parrot feathers even though they appear 'light, flexible yet tough.' The *Ntah* (dress item) is thus a very significant ceremonial piece in the dress of the *Ashin Yoo* (maiden). Together with the other distinct beads, these protective accessories were used for dressing the maidens up for several months.

***Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (Post-rite Dress or Styling)**

1. *Headdress*

The *Oduku* (headdress) is a unique symbol of the *Ashin Yoo* during the outing stage of dressing too. It served as a foundation for further styling using the *Odasobɔ* (silk scarves). Damalie (2018a) argued that the maidens used this unique headdress to express their individual fashion taste and unique scarf tying styles as beautiful (young) women.

2. *Body dress*

The key body dress used by the maidens signified the wealth of their families, as they used high quality colourful local textile prints (wax prints) particularly GTP textile prints— with celebrated names/patterns. A conscious effort was made to make the maidens live up to the theme of ‘_dressing up’ by being well-dressed for several weeks or months after they had been outdoored. Fabrics once used were not repeated during outings (Damalie, 2018a).

The occasion was used to further signify the expression of traditional elegance and high fashion sense of *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*). The technique of wrapping the cloth around the body by making a stride of the feet helped in creating the farthingale technique (Kindersley, 2012). Meanwhile the use of the *Atufo* (bustle) gave a fair idea of design influences of the expertise and style preferences of the women. The *Atufo* (bustle) was worn on a cloth skirt as part of the undergarment ensemble showing an understanding of the dress item, its benefits, and its relevance as dress enhancements. The procedures the maidens used helped in fashioning the alluring and desirable curvy feminine hourglass-like silhouette. Although the maidens did not wear shoes, the way the *Atufo* was worn created such an impression; it created an illusion of raised buttocks. The dress shape created did not only influence the hang appeal of the draped cloths, but its shape further allowed free movement, air of comfort within the design and wearing ease of the textiles worn. This essentially contributed to the elegant pace when the maidens walked. The colour story made the dress concept classy; a critical attention to the displayed Figures (2.04 to 2.05) show the dress’ (or styling) potential to influence contemporary fashion trends as intended in this project.

The dress culture practices of the *Ashin* maidens served as a powerful means of expressing their identity as indigenes, status, and allegiance (Tajuddin, 2018). Beyond the provision of physical protection, it was believed to provide spiritual protection beyond the ceremony. The *Bue* symbolically underscores the integrity of the femininity of the individual female who wears it (Wellington, 2006).

2.4.2 Design philosophy of the major dress cultural practices of the rites of passage maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*)

Fashion philosophy is not in essence but a network of intellectual relations and mental appeals, which calls on each researcher to work his mind in the study of the issues presented to him without waiting for what others have said, but not limited to the general public (Elsayed, 2018). In an attempt to answer to what the dress philosophy for *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (the nobility rite of the people of Tema *Manhean*) was, this section of the study examined the dress used by *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*) during the *Ashin* rite in a likely outlook, given the relativity of fashion to dress or vice versa. The primary concern was to comprehend the network of intellectual relations i.e. reasoning, and mental appeals that informed the viewpoint of the people on the dress used by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens for specific activities during the ceremony through observation (Flynn & Foster, 2009). These included what the indigenes had said in relation to the traditional dress culture as reported in literature (Damalie, 2018a), and the perceived purpose or function; thought process in relation to the dress design form and visual appeal.

2.4.2.1 Viewpoint on the major dress cultural practices associated with the rite as observed by the Ashin (rite) maidens

Temamei are the only *Ga* group that observes the Tema *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ*. They have a different worldview on dress, particularly as portrayed in the way they have developed their dress that was worn during the *Ashin* nobility rite. From the earlier analysis of the major dress cultural practices of the participating maidens during the ceremony, it was inferred from the set pieces they wore that they considered the combination of natural materials including textiles, jewellery, plants and plant pigmentations to be an important part of how, and with what, they dressed in many instances.

As discussed earlier, the materials they wore were inspired by their cultural beliefs, and suggested their appreciation of not only physical but also spiritual protection. The dress materials further communicated the cultural identity, and the social status of their women (Rouse, 1989). The dress details illustrated their view on the essence of dress; inculcating ‘modesty’ in the level of coverage, and other times immodesty exposing the bust area of participants during *Ashinɔɔ* and *Kpojiemɔ Hesaamɔi* (camping and outdoor styling of the ritual), and appreciating their beauty regardless, in relation to their use of colours, trimmings and techniques on the most desirable of feminine shape—the hourglass body shape.

The *Ashin* (rite) maidens’ unique dress cultural practices used during the ceremony were distinctively created. It also portrayed their North African ancestry of drapery of cloth as found among ancient Egyptians, and their use of accessories, values, and cultural artistry handed down from pre-Gold Coast era (Amartey, 1991; Damalie, 2018a; Kindersley, 2012). Obviously for socio-cultural reasons, their design is driven

by age old past clothing of stitch-less draped dress fashion experiences built on time-honoured standards of their *Kusum* and unique style.

The style of dress commonly associated with the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (ritual) as alluded to in Figures 2.02-2.05 were generally three-quarter-length bustier (single and double layered) or skirt styled wrapped around cloths. The upper part of the bodies, including the arms and feet, were partly covered with arm and multiple *Adiagba* (treasured) wrist beads. The bodies were further painted in colourful decorations, with smears of green scented *Krɔbɔ* (green dried fruit), radiant *Fers* (yellow pigment) used for bold geometric and/or floral motifs. The partly exposed top part of the body allowed air to cool the body, which obviously added freshness to the body. It further created harmony with their habitats including their present location. The people of Tema have usually lived by water— from the Nile River in ancient Sudan, to their present abode near the *Chemu* and *Sakumɔ* lagoons and the sea respectively — and in naturally warm climates (Damalie, 2018a). Could their dress style have been informed by these elements?

The maidens' wraps have always been form fitting. They mostly cover adequately, but when required to expose some areas such as the bust area, they appear less revealing than that of the *Dipo* maidens who mostly use beads as dress until recently (Boakye, 2010). The *Ashin* (rite) maidens' wrapped cloths have a foundation of under layers mainly the *Atufo* (bustle), *Bue* (loincloth), and cloth skirts secured in place with *Hao* (strap).

While the accessories used during the post camping and camping periods were constants for all participants, those used during outdoor and post-rites outing periods particularly, were not. Their varied nature gave room to show some

individualistic preferences for themselves in an incredible reflection for women empowerment consistent with recent expressions of feminist standpoint. Young optimistic participants of the 70th Miss Universe contestants (2021) in an interview demonstrated what it meant for ‘young audience always looking for ideas that helped them form their identities and personalities.’ ‘They could associate themselves with a fashion statement that helped define them powerfully’ (Marc Gobè, n.d. cited in Flynn & Foster, 2009, p.110).

The wrapped garment designs constantly featured the hourglass silhouette as a preferred body shape and basic style note. The garment and accessories details, materials used, and colours appeared as original creative concepts not the same as the other Ghanaian tribes (Krobo, Avatime and Ashanti Akyem Agogo people respectively) who also observe female nobility rites as evident in the literature discussed.

The dress trends as illustrated earlier indicated themed dress and common style notes. The differences in the looks of the maidens’ dress which had to do with textile fabric choice, jewellery and style variants used during outdoor and post-rites periods further gave room for individual creativity. The study upheld Damalie’s (2018a) position that the *Ashin* (rite) maidens’ four main dress cultural practices used during the ceremony was thus distinctive, custom-made wrapped to fit, and had inherent sustainable cultural sensibilities given that some of the materials used were recovered items, while others were re-usable. Yet others like the *Oduku* were up-cycled.

The sartorial viewpoint of *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*) on *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo Hesaamɔi* (rite Dress cultural practices) can be summarised as significantly unique representation of feminist insignia of empowerment. It is a societal imposed

ritual yet somewhat liberal, regal and yet encouraged some modicum of innovation and creativity. The ancient dress design practice was seemingly in line with three *Ga* truisms: *Ƒɛɛɔɔ*, *Kusum gboo*, and *Blema Kpãa nɔ atsa* (“a thing of beauty, ‘the tradition goes on’ and ‘continuity of ancient established norms or protocols’). The highly conceptualised women’s crafted wardrobe was deemed beautiful (*eyɛ Ƒɛɔ*) as implied in one of their rite cheer songs discussed earlier, and appeared to be stimulated not only by elements of tradition and modernity, history, form and beauty (Moroso, 2010) but also creativity.

The use of key dress items such as assorted natural and glass beads (*Fliwa*), *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (headdress), *Ntah* (anklets), and wrap around cloths using draping technique reflect decades of inspired sustainable ethnic and historic dress experiences across the globe (Kindersley, 2012). The dress forms and style notes made bold and unique ethnic statements; a fusion of belief, tradition and style. There was evidence of exceptional artistry, using highly predictable drapery methods and materials (in some cases unpredictable fabrics) in the style used at each stage in striking themes of colours, materials including fabrics, accessories, details and related concepts.

The dress represented the maidens’ identity in the society as submissive to traditional authority, yet empowered native women with self-worth. Apart from their use of the dress to signal the observance of the *Ashin* (nobility) ceremony, they used each distinct dress style including the colours, to announce specific stages of the ceremony and their accompanying mood expressed—solemnity, happiness or even relief. Beyond that, the practice also impacted the lifestyles of participating maidens by inculcating in them dress essence and courtesies, positive self-image and desirable social values. Their dress styles were unique to them, and did set them apart from

other female nobility/initiation rites dress practices found within current literature reviewed (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Dedume et al., 2016; Hobson, 2016). Their dress sense underscored the position of Manyeyo (2018) as cited in Damalie (2018a), that as *Ga* people, what we wear, when we wear them and how we wear them uniquely tell who we are.

2.4.3 Socio-cultural relevance of dress cultural practices on the rites of passage maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*)

Values, according to Jarett (1991 as cited in Asare-Danso, 2018), are cherished in society and as a result they have to be taught. Values may be classified according to their religious or spiritual, moral, political, economic, social, intellectual, professional, aesthetic, sentimental and material or physical benefits (Ganguli, Methrotra & Mehlinger, 1981 as cited in Asare-Danso, 2018). Asare-Danso used these benefits to help determine the type of values that could be developed from the performance of various rites of passage. He further examined five approaches to value education as postulated by Huitt (2004) as follows— Inculcation, Moral Development, Analysis of Issues, Action Learning and Values Clarification. Among them he noted that the Inculcation Approach is applicable to experiential (symbolic) studies because it requires teaching people to develop acceptable values of society.

Gatherer (1991 cited in Asare-Danso, 2018) hinted of three key ways by which educators could provide values education as: (i) the use of the formal and informal curriculum; (ii) the use of the hidden curriculum; and (iii) the use of personal interaction between the teachers and their pupils. The latter was of the view that the hidden curriculum appeared to be applicable to such case studies, where people may acquire values education unconsciously by going through the transition rituals or rites

of passage. Similar arguments had been advanced by researchers in support of aspects of the female ‘puberty’ rites in Ghanaian societies including Dedume et al. (2016) and Boakye (2010) in recent times.

Thus, the present study agreed with Asare-Danso (2018) that from the value inculcation and hidden curriculum principle of Huitt (2004) and Gatherer (1991) respectively (cited in Asare-Danso, 2018), it can be argued that *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*) who are known for upholding the potency of their deities (TEDECO 1976 as cited in Damalie, 2018a) and ancestors in traditional issues, informally but consciously teach to their young maidens the values of their society through the use of the rite and its associated dress styling (*Ashin Yoo Kpeemo Hesaamɔi*). To further illustrate the above point, the coded dress at each stage taught adherence to cultural dictates of wearing specific clothing as basis for going through the *Ashin* ceremony to become accepted members of the society. Esteemed values of the people such as obedience to cultural norms relative to belief in the power of the spirits and purity of nature, fused together with good grooming, dress and dressing ethics, resourcefulness and their essence were all inherently taught to the participants of such rites as also portrayed in the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rites) dress cultural practices (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018b; Dedume et al., 2016). For instance, the maidens were made to use naturally inspired materials such as cotton and silk cloths and dressing accessories, plant-based extracts in their skin care products, and healthy habits such as walking barefooted regardless of background or age. By so doing, they were also taught not to shy away from their *Kusum* by viewing dress beyond the realms of physical protection. As such, the maidens’ dress cultural practices were used as a means of teaching them to see dress beyond physical protection from elements such as the weather, wind and others. They were taught to

appreciate the use of dress for spiritual and physical protection as well as conforming to *Ga* social norms. These further resulted in social control and served as agents of religious and social integration which helped in uniting the people in common behaviour, and perhaps shared values.

Most of the products used for their body marks were made with strikingly beautiful colours of natural products which contained plants causing no harm to the environment. To make it even better for them and for their cultural milieu, the dress styles had hardly evolved over time, making the constant features more prominent than those likely to be influenced by fashion impulses such as cloth types and the use of cosmetics. For instance, a comparison of 20th and 21st century photographs of participants in Figure 2.04c *Kpojiemɔ-Hesaamɔ* (outdooing dress styles) attested to the stability of their dress design concept. That was a pointer to the dress culture practices of *Ashin yei* (rites maidens) as a social heritage that could be useful in originating realistic conceptual fashionable brands for the African creative and tourism industry as demonstrated with *Dipo* and *Kusakɔkɔ* festive influence (Boakye, 2010; Dedume et al., 2016).

It was further reasoned that the various Ghanaian societies in which these ceremonies were observed used the female initiation or nobility rites as it was applied in empowering their women, contrary to Lincoln's, standpoint of oppression; a view Hobson vehemently described as flawed (Lincoln, 1981 as cited in Hobson, 2016). According to Hobson (2016), although the methods may differ from other religious practices, the point that ought to be made was that it appeared different religious or spiritual, moral, political, economic, social, intellectual, professional, aesthetic, sentimental and material or physical benefits were impacted in those societies through

these rites. In the case of the *Ashin* (rite) participants, the maidens were enlightened on the female body and its uses, as well as its appropriate clothing needs and uses. They were taught to use dress to express modesty by extending their wrapped cloths to cover essential body parts such as their calves, and their quest to cover their breasts accommodated in this modern age of minimalist dress concepts. These communicated the maidens' identity and status, and were seen as noble of virtuous women, to wit, marriage materials in waiting. The maidens were further taught to use dress for purposes of beautification and attraction or subtle seduction as it were (Rouse, 1989). Through the use of dress, they acquired ways of projecting positive self-image by developing skills to present a liberated and attractive self.

For instance, the maidens were inculcated with dress skills. They learnt good grooming processes using natural products from plants (like spices, fruits and oils) to take care of their skins. They also acquired taste for not only popular but high quality, colourful, elegant traditional dress styles and materials. Then again, they learnt to appreciate and use colourful and impressive high quality made-in Ghana loom woven kente, *kete*, as well as silk prints, GTP textile prints and exotic cloths like Holland-made wax prints and *Odasobo* (silk scarves) as illustrated in the outing portraits (Damalie, 2018a). The maidens were inculcated with skills of paying attention to detail and styling. The *Kpojei* (outing) portraits showed how they blended classic cloths with specific hair style options such as wearing the *Oduku* or tying *Odasobo* scarves as useful dressing values. Additionally, they made inspiring alternative fashion statements with their dress components such as gold cum wax prints or beads cum wax prints. They were also inspired to use nature — plants as antiseptics and earthen products (*Nyanya* – wreath; *Krɔbo* – dried green fruit; *Fers* – yellow pigment paste); cloves, lime, aniseed, palm fruit, and baked white clay – *Ayilo*) not only as

therapeutic beauty products, but also for embellishment of their bodies (Damalie, 2018a).

Damalie (2018a) argued that the rite maidens were exposed to the concept of patriotism through the patronage of Ghanaian products such as kente, *kete*, Tema GTP wax prints, local *Adiagba* (treasured) beads and gold. They also acted as citizens of the world by patronising fabrics like silk and Holland-made prints from outside Ghana. Through the dress related ritual, the maidens learnt about sustainability characteristics such as wardrobe development, care and preservation of cloths, appreciation and reuse of old cloths to prepare the *Atufo* (bustle), and the use of recyclable materials such as horsehair for the *Oduku* (headdress), and orange parrot feathers for making the exquisite *Ntah* (anklets).

They were thus not only introduced to high fashion taste which consequently pointed to appreciation of the value for hard work since quality was not cheap but rather expensive. They were also made to appreciate modesty in consumption through the reuse of old stuff ‘ (Awo Dinn, 24 February, 2024, Personal Conversation). One might argue that they unconsciously learn sensuality without necessarily exposing their nakedness in public to the extent that their dress exudes modesty by the level of coverage (except in cases where they were directed to do otherwise) as tradition demanded. Covered body, extended cloth lengths covering their calves all presented in a look that elusively showed off their beauty, and their key to attracting courteous attention.

Besides these, the study upheld that the maidens further learnt to appreciate a high sense of fashion and style, and appropriate adornments. They were introduced to how to bring colours, fabrics, accessories together, and customise styling to create desired

looks. They further acquired high appreciation for custom-made body signature: skin care, beauty, and fragrance. Above all, they were taught humility and harmony with the earth, and adherence to socio-cultural dictates as basis for being accepted as members of the society through initiation as *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens).

2.4.3.1 Implications of maidens' dress value beyond the local community

Beyond the impact the dress may psychologically have on the womenfolk in the community, others who grow up in such environments, are likely to appreciate and develop the ability to draw inspiration and learn from their dress sense. The case of Ayesha Ayensu of the *Christie Brown* fashion label, Chez Julie, and Ophelia Crossland could be cited in support of this stance (Richards, 2014; 2015; Ryan, 2016). Indeed, the *KCascades Impressions* 2019 brand was a direct result of the *Ashin Yei Kpojiemɔ* (rite) dress cultural practices (Damalie, 2019, 2018a). All four designers were influenced by their *Ga* antecedents, and their cultural environment obviously played a role in their designs (Richards, 2015; Ying, 2013).

Beyond that, the stylists' craftsmanship, if recognised by the nation and brought to the attention of the world of arts and culture as expected (by the world body UNESCO), and suggested by the Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay on the occasion of International Arts Education Week (2022), might benefit the local community and the country. This is because their spectacular craftsmanship when adapted and used in creating fashion products as intended in the current project might bring economic significance to all stakeholders. Such research opportunities to create awareness for the nation to co-opt ethnic dress practices, and their impact to open new markets and regimes of consumption could benefit the country's economy and that of Africa as a whole in line with national and continental trade aspirations. This was true to the

extent that, culture, like love, is the only thing that grows when it is shared (Javier Pérez de Cuéllar cited by Azoulay, 2022). The people of Tema can therefore liaise with UNESCO to share their culture so as to benefit from such auspicious international activities in order to draw the right attention, and recognition from all stakeholders for economic advantage.

2.5 Factors to Consider in Creating Collection Inspired by Ethno-Centric Dress Cultural Practices

The practice of conceptual fashion design requires both creating a strong signature look and offering constant novelty. At this stage the study analysed factors considered vital in creating a collection inspired by ethno-centric, identity, and/or political tendencies. Literature suggested these can be achieved not only with strong motivation driving the collection as a project or brand. Additionally, the desired product type, model guiding the said product (group of clothing) development, as well as design strategy employed (AU & AU, 2018; Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Mbonu, 2014; Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009; Ying, 2013) can go a long way to help achieve desired results.

Motivation could be stimulated by varied design quests like cultural or environmental influencers. It could also be instigated by creative urges like experimentations to help push design boundaries, for awareness creation on issues such as sustainable dress culture or purely for profit (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Damalie, 2021; 2019; Richards, 2015; Rovine, 2016; Ryan, 2016). For instance, review of motivation underlying works of some designers Deola, Maimouna Diallo among others (Damalieu, 2021; Rovine, 2016, Ryan, 201, Richards, 2015, 2014).

Designing at the level of couture or small designer collections is very different from designing for the mass market. Mass production is limited by cost, has a rigid production process, and sees the need to necessarily achieve hanger appeal (look) in order to sell (Aldrich, 2012). This is very opposite to the couture designer, albeit, fashion research is observed as a creative investigation that can yield ideas, which then inspire and contribute to the design process (Mbonu, 2014).

Generally, designing is seen as a creative process, while design can be seen to be a creative, magical, intuitive, and elusive process. Elsayed (2018) asserted that design is a process for creating solutions with respect to a given problem. In his opinion, design is in fact, a form of problem-solving, or a way of looking at a problem whose primary goal is to solve a complicated problem, and to create or explore innovative options. Accordingly, he posited that philosophy of the design process transforms ideas into reality, based on designers' conceptual ideas with respect to practical solutions. But the question is which factors or influences do designers consider in creating inspired fashion brands such as intended in the present project?

Kadolph and Pasricha (2009) asserted that textiles and clothing education has conventionally followed two models in designing brands; either a business model or a design model. These can be observed within industrial practice when it comes to design (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Cooklin, 2006). The conventional business model reportedly emphasises on innovation, target market, and profit, whereas the design-led focuses on trend analysis, fashion innovation and production as mentioned earlier. However, with environmental literacy on the rise, and the demand for the incorporation of global citizenship in consumables today, many millennial designers agree with the suggestion of many campaigners including Lehow and Meyer (2005

cited in Kadolph & Pasricha, 2009), that it is indeed time to change the models. It is time to include global citizenship competencies to counter the problems around the globe, hence the emergence of a third force, the sustainable fashion model with focus on reducing consumption by reuse or zero waste, creativity and production. But before these noble calls in favour of saving the climate, the shared culture of the people of Tema *Manhean (Temamei)* had factored such noble ideas into their dress sense with the use of what could be considered waste into star items such as *Oduku* (headdress), *Atufo* (bustle) and *Ntah* (anklets). The age-old use of tying in securing dress instead of stitching could equally be cited as recognition of the importance of sustainability tendencies in the use of dress.

Three distinct models sampled from current literature including that used in Nkrumah (2022), Damalie (2019), Burke (2011), Burns et al. (2016), and Pasricha and Kadolph (2009) as representation of fashion design related models cited on case by case basis were examined. The intention was to observe the basis or reasoning for their adoption in each case, and to help determine their usefulness by exploring issues raised in creating inspired brands such as advanced by design practitioners in both academia and industry. The effort was to offer an effective model to use for the present project. Further to help identify effective strategies within each model used for product/design conceptualisation, development, production and promotion. The resolve was to guide in the development of an effective model.

2.5.1 Burke's (2011) model

First to be considered was Burke's (2011) conventional business model. The model for creating a fashion brand was presented in circular eight interrelated activities. Burke's flow chart began with the design brief, followed by research sourcing,

prototypes, samples and construction, the final collection, promotion-marketing, branding and sales, production and business-sales and results as illustrated in Figure 2.06. Burke's model is prescriptive and orderly. Even though it is business oriented and supports economic production, it can be adapted partially for experimental design-led productions.

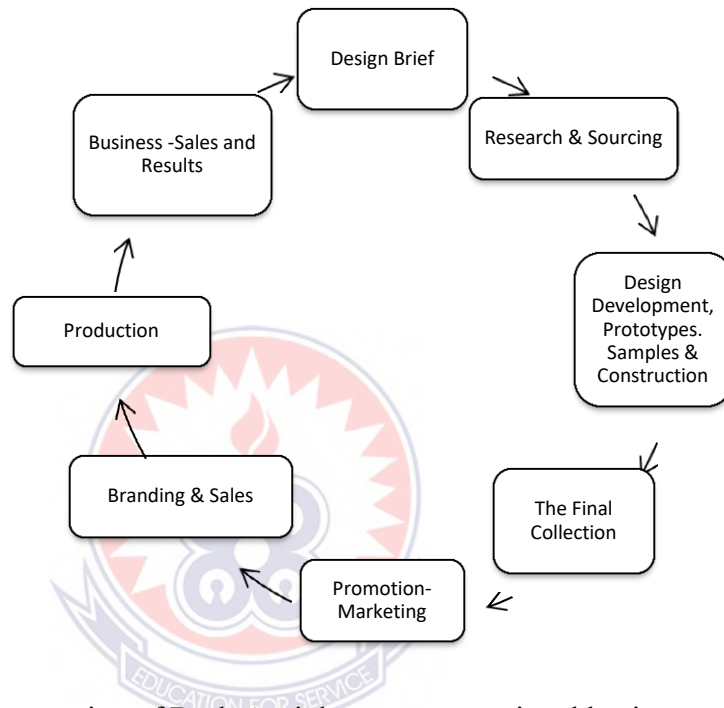


Figure 2.06: A representation of Burke's eight-step conventional business model.

Source: Burke, 2011

2.5.2 Burns et al.'s (2016) model

Conversely, Burns et al.'s (2016) conventional business model suggested a linear style of eight sequential steps as practised in industry. It begins with research and merchandising, followed by the design brief, design development and style selection, marketing the fashion brand, preproduction and sourcing. The production process; material management and quality assurance and distribution and retailing make up the eight steps as illustrated in Figure 2.07.

Like Burke's model, Burns et al.'s (2016) model is equally prescriptive and orderly. It is however adaptable for experimental design-led productions even though it is modelled to suit business-oriented production.



Figure 2.07: Eight-step generic commercial model for product manufacture.

Source: Burns et al., 2016

Research and merchandising

The topmost step is research and merchandising. Merchandising refers to the process of buying and selling goods and services; or area of a fashion brand company that developed strategies to have the right merchandise, at the right price, at the right time, at the right place or location to meet the needs and wants of the target market. This is because consumer demand is the driving force in the fashion industry (Burns et al., 2016 p.131). The industry expression, ‘You can make it only if it sells,’ accordingly underscored the concept of the consumer-driven market (Burns et al., 2016, p.131). Thus, the success of any fashion company was said to be dependent on determining the needs and wants of the consumer, hence its position in the typical business model driven by consumer satisfaction and profit.

Activities at that stage helped a fashion manufacturer to know its target market and to provide the merchandise assortment desired by its customers – when they want it and where they will purchase it. Several types of research are therefore conducted to determine what consumers will need and want, and when and where they will want it. This process is referred to as market research.

Defined as ‘the systematic and objective approach to the development and provision of information for the marketing management decision-making process’ (Kinnear & Taylor, 1983, p.16 as cited in Burns et al., 2016, p. 131), market research can be applied as basic research that deals with extending knowledge about the marketing system or applied research that helps managers make better decision. Company executives, merchandisers and designers in the fashion industry conduct applied market research as part of the planning process to understand consumer market trends. Applied market research included three types of research namely, consumer research, product research, and market analysis (Burns et al., 2016, p. 131).

Consumer research provided information about consumer characteristics and consumer behaviour. Some forms of consumer research study broad trends in the marketplace, including demographics and psychographics. Research on demographics focused on understanding the following characteristics of consumer groups: age, gender, marital status, income, occupation, ethnicity, geographic location. Consumer research may also focus on psychographic characteristics which concern the buying habits, attitudes, values, motives, preferences, personality and leisure activities of consumer groups. Thus, demographic information helped describe who the customer is, while psychographic information helped explain why customers make the choices they made. Numerous companies reportedly conducted and interpreted their own

market research to determine their customers' needs and wants. Those in fields other than fashion have a fashion division to serve companies who need such services. Fashion companies expanding their markets also did the same to better understand the preferences of these new consumer groups. Albeit, it was related that conducting consumer research in relation to fashion items can be a challenge as purchase decisions were based on a number of factors (including psychological, social, and financial considerations) that consumers were often not conscious of (Burns et al., 2016). They made the case that results of market research indicated that consumers frequently did not purchase what they had indicated they would purchase when queried in advance.

Product research on the other hand provides information about preferred product design and product characteristics. When new products are developed, or existing products are modified, it is helpful, according to literature, to assess how well a new or revised product will fare in the market place (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016). The authors argue that information on customer preferences is carried out through oral surveys of potential consumers and use of questionnaires or posting of inquiries online, style testing techniques predicting what customers would want to buy, and the use of outlet store sales to gather information on how customers react to various styles and prices among a host of others.

Market analysis provided information about general market trends. This included planning ahead to meet consumers' future needs which was a critical part of continued success in the apparel industry. This was followed by design brief, design development, and style selection, marketing the apparel, preproduction, sourcing,

apparel production processes, material management and quality assurance, and finally distribution and retailing (Burns et al., 2016).

The main difference in the two conventional commercial models analysed were not only in the style of presentation but also in the activity beginning each of the flow diagrams. While Burke (2011) contended that the business model was opened by the design brief, Burns et al. (2016) began with research and merchandising. However, the common reasoning underlying both cases is economic production of merchandise for making sales and profit as reflected in the other related steps enlisted. That being said, both researchers acknowledged that some apparel companies in the industry deviate from the sequence shown in both ideals for a variety of reasons, and this made both constructs adaptable.

2.5.3 Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) design-led model

Damalie's (2019) *KCascades Impressions* which served as a foundation for the current study adapted Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) conventional design-led model. It was stimulated by the need to take advantage of the seeming interest of researchers in the concentrated approach to fashion inspiration in creating brands in Africa, particularly from Ghana. *KCascades Impressions* was thus inspired by the less known subculture being explored (*Ga* maiden's ethnic dress culture practices) so as to point to its potential influence on fashion (Muir et al., 2008) by actually using the opportunity to create innovative fashion brand stimulated by same and reaching across cultural divides to attract the potential target market.

The model in Figure 2.08 influenced by Pasricha and Kadolph (2009) showed the three-step block used; research and merchandising, inspiration for the design brief, and results of the production process. The interconnected diagram was simple, and

less elaborated graphically compared to the other models sampled, it showed consistent progression. The three phases were relatively compressed, thus needing more tests for explanation. Besides, the model was not thorough as it focused more on product outlook with less attention to showing a detailed process. That limitation notwithstanding, the non-commercial model focused on trend analysis of the maidens' dress cultural practices, fashion innovation and production characteristic of descriptive design-led model and in line with that project objective.

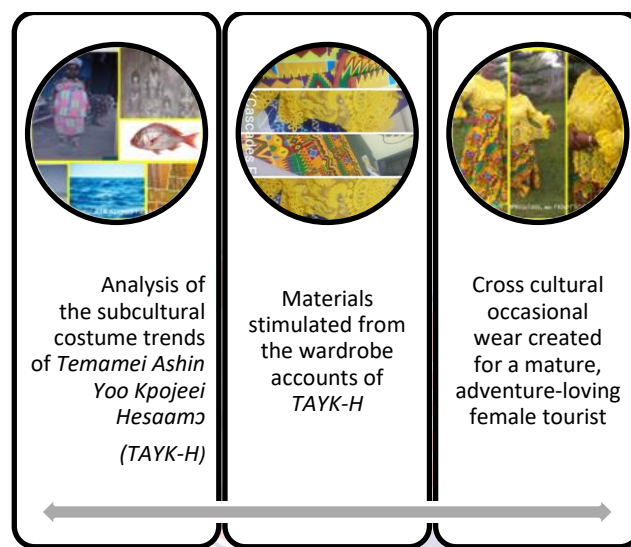


Figure 2.08: Three-step conceptually-driven design-led model from Pasricha and Kadolph (2009).

Source: Damalie, 2019

2.5.4 Nkrumah's (2022) model

Nkrumah (2022) work was hinged on a conceptually-driven five-step flow chart adapted from Burns et al. (2016) and Burke (2011). The collection was a fusion of design and sustainable fashion representations (Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009 cited in Damalie, 2019). That study blended the coastal side and occupational inferences of Jamestown, Accra and the 1980's youth fashion style as inspiration in creating an original sustainable fashion concept.

The diagram in Figure 2.09 shows sequential steps in the design, development, production and promotion processes adapted for the *Exploit* collection. It was to promote sustainable cultural concepts among the youth of Jamestown in Accra. These steps in line with the study objectives further impacted the processes in the studio (Nkrumah, 2022). The model was descriptive and orderly. It was self explanatory as the stages were further broken down for clarity. Additionally, it was tailored to suit the conceptual, experimental and eco-friendly/design-led goal of that study. Nkrumah's model was more relatable to the current study on that score than the earlier ones discussed.

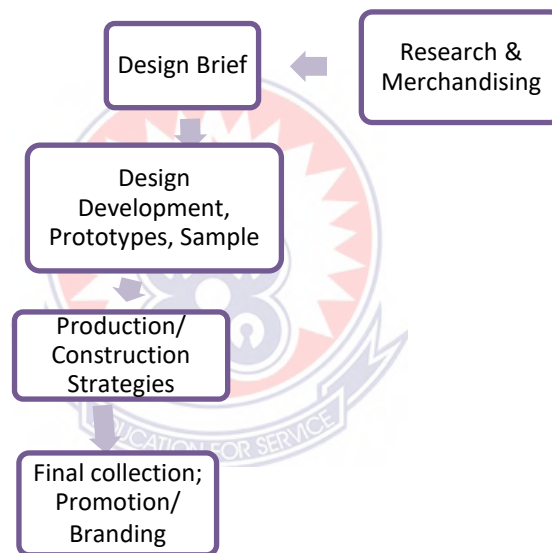


Figure 2.09: Nkrumah's five-step conceptually-driven sustainable fashion and design-led model.

Source: Nkrumah, 2022

Research and merchandising

The first step under this model was research and merchandising. Being an experimental project, merchandising focused on identifying marketing strategies in relation to design details of interest to the target group. This included conducting necessary market and fashion research and development strategies to get the right

merchandise, at the right time, in the right amount, to the right location to meet the wants and needs of the target consumer.

It is a priority in fashion designing to take into consideration the target market which constitutes the gender, age and background of the clientele as this is helpful to the designer in determining consumer preferences in meeting demands by providing the right product or merchandise (Burns et al., 2016). The model consisted of design brief, design development, prototypes and samples, production/construction strategies, final collection and promotion/branding. The five-step strategy of Nkrumah (2022) was an abridged adaptation of Burns et al. (2016) and Burke (2011) premised on the motivation for the study. However, compared with that of Damalie (2019), it appeared more expanded, hence slightly varied in the steps and activities during each stage. That notwithstanding, the central focus of the models used in both studies were non-commercial, and purely creative experimental research work to make factual statements respectively, and to contribute to knowledge and conceptual design practice.

Fundamentally, both studies showed how culture can be used to spread fashion through sub-cultural innovation (Sproles, 1979 as cited in Saleem et al., 2014). The sustainable culturally inclined design-led models both targeted a given situation within a cultural setting (incidentally both *Ga* people) and sought to bring to the fore the people's subculture (albeit one well-known and the other less-known respectively) to originate a group of clothing designs to solve a socio-cultural problem using design, and at the end of the day to *sell* Ghanaian arts and culture.

In the case of Burns et al. (2016) and Burke (2011), it was obvious from their accounts that industry's target was commercial fashion with the manufacturing

process resulting in the ‘actual sale of merchandise’ produced. However, both authorities agreed that the scenarios presented are adjustable for non-commercial production of designs for the sake of promotion or exhibitions and branding as demonstrated with the design-led models used by Damalie (2019) and Nkrumah (2022). The international fashion arena of *haute couture* (which is mostly affordable by only the most affluent in the society), pushes the boundaries of design. As such, for those fashion houses into *haute couture* in particular, designing was seen more about campaign and profile-raising for their brands (rationale) (Burke, 2011; Mbonu, 2014). This was to be expected when for many a designer, the very essence of the trade was to be distinctive, and different from the competition, and researchers in the field attested to this fact (Burns et al., 2016; Burke, 2011). According to Mbonu (2014, p.58), *haute couture* is an extravagant and costly business to be in— no expense is spared. The clothes are specific to an individual customer, just like the principle of a tailor-made suit. The fabrics are the finest and the garments employ the handcrafting skills of the most able seamstresses.’

Like Burns et al. (2016), both Nkrumah (2022) and Damalie (2019) initiated their flow charts with research and merchandising because in such educational projects, research was the essential basis because it was of significant value in validating the projects (Flynn & Foster, 2009), contrary to Burke’s (2011) approach. Besides, both studies were not inspired by profit but by contributing to knowledge and skills thus, the models like the designs, remained experimental, allowing creativity. They were innovative in nature given the results of the processes.

Both designers used *haute couture* strategy to push the boundaries of design and for publicity albeit within academia to promote the resultant brand. When using the

made-to-measure *haute couture* approach, clothing is usually made in small quantities, not en masse. Hand-sewing and/or other similar techniques are used or implied in assembling and finishing, adding a handmade touch necessary for such crafted brands, and the clothing are sized or sculptured to fit individual body/form measurements (Burns et al., 2016; Mbonu, 2014). Thus, it does not require some of the business activities of mass production. Furthermore, *haute couture* clothing is considered ‘high sewing’ hence more expensive fabrics are used with relatively less concern to cost in that regard, unlike mass production (Mbonu, 2014). The same cannot be said about sustainable fashion because more often than not, the concept when applied seeks to explore and manipulate materials other than the usual in a bid to address in many cases environmental concerns, and to an extent display creativity. Many such designers in many instances had innovatively fused the design and sustainable fashion led models (Boateng, 2021; Nkrumah, 2022; Osei, 2021).

As illustrated earlier, Damalie (2019) selected the design-led model because of the thought underlying the project, which was to create, and promote a new need using *haute couture* strategy (Burke, 2011; Mbonu, 2014); typically, fashioning an ‘ethnocentrally meaningful brand that had cross cultural attraction.’ It was an descriptive-experimental case study inspired from the subculture of the rich traditional creativity of the ‘*Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Kpojɛi-Hesaamɔ*’ (AYKK-H) (rite maidens’ outdoor dress) (Damalɛ, 2019, 2018a). A close scrutiny showed that the rationale for the collection created resonated with Pasricha and Kadolph’s (2009) design-led model. The activities of which were compressed and skewed towards the key research objectives gave direction and focus within the scope of that study. Apart from the inherent dress philosophy of the maidens, creativity and the subsequent promotion introduced in the brand also contributed to the direction of the project (i. e. target

market and figure statistics, design features or style, including materials, production methods, and techniques influenced from maidens' concepts, then results).

In sum, the abovementioned literature reviewed suggested issues considered for creating fashion brands are basically a combination of four. First was the reasoning underlying the need to create a brand, and second the product type desired. The justification became the basis for the project, whereas the product type spoke to whether the project was profit based, for a purely academic experimentation or for a mixed; that is a simulated business/design-led idea, one that can be carried out in entrepreneurial settings like students' incubator brands which require innovation and adherence to some business considerations and principles. That motivation and the project type then influenced the third big issue which was the model to use, with its inherent design strategy adopted or adapted in line with the motivation. The project objectives ought to conform to the elements in the selected model. These further influenced the steps or activities to be undertaken, and how they could be organised.

2.5.5 *Synthesis Dress Design Model*

Design models, according to Evbuomwan et al. (1996), are the representations of philosophies or strategies proposed to show how design is and may be done.' They are often drawn as flow diagrams, showing the iterative nature of the design process by a feedback link. Reportedly, design models that arose from various philosophical viewpoints in the past have tended to belong to two main classes, namely prescriptive and descriptive models (Evbuomwan et al., 1996).

According to Puadi, Zahuri bin Khairani and Nizam bin Othman (2021, pp. 846 - 847):

Studio-based research uses a more focused approach to the processes performed in visual art studios that align with their theory and practice. Therefore, the theories and methods are used in conjunction to create a model of creative process or methodology that is different from conventional research (Barret & Bold, 2014, 2007).

Prescriptive models are seemingly associated with the syntactic school of thought and tend to look at the design process from a global perspective, covering the procedural steps, that is, suggesting the best way something should be done. On the other hand, descriptive models are concerned with designers' actions and activities during the design process, i.e. suggesting what is involved in designing and/or how it is done. While the prescriptive models in general tend to prescribe how the design process ought to proceed and in some cases appear to suggest how best to carry out design, research has shown that descriptive models emanating from both experience of individual designers and from studies carried out show how designs were created, that is, what processes, strategies and problem-solving methods designers used (Burke, 2011; Burns et al, 2016; Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Nkrumah, 2022). Literature again suggests, the prescriptive models attempt to encourage designers to adopt improved ways of working, usually offering a more algorithmic and systematic procedure to follow, and are often regarded as providing a particular methodology' (Evbuomwan et al., 1996, p. 305).

Meanwhile, Finger and Dixon (1989 as cited in Evbuomwan et al., 1996) also discussed descriptive models from a different perspective identifying the research work in this area along two main lines. The first was research based on techniques from artificial intelligence such as protocol or practice analysis, involving systematic gathering of data on how designers design. The second was research based on

modelling the cognitive process. Visser's cognitive perspective (2009 as cited in Namkyu, 2021), postulated that various subfields of design have both similar and different characteristics depending on the situation, the designers, and the artefact.

On the one hand, common characteristics—problem-solving, ill-defined problems, and pluralistic approaches —exist regardless of different design situations. On the other hand, different forms also occur in diverse situations. While comparing studies in several subfields of design, including architecture, mechanical and software design, she noted three-dimensions of the design process, the designers, and the artefact that influence design form differently (Visser, 2009 as cited in Namkyu, 2021).

The practice component of the present case study was arguably influenced by the quest to conduct an empirical study that explores the practice of fashion design . . . in order to 'demonstrate . . . the ways in which fashion design is situated differently or similarly to design practice, which is often described as *design thinking*' (Kimbell, 2011 as cited in Namkyu, 2021). It was modelled on a hybrid of two fashion manufacturing concepts, that is design-led and production-led models as illustrated in Figure 3.01. The literature reviewed suggested four factors could be considered in creating an ethnic destination-inspired fashion brand. These include strong motivation and purpose for the project, the product type intended vis-à-vis the relevance to the prospective customer, the model and the nature of design (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Damalie, 2021; Evbuomwan et al, 1996; Kim et al., 2011; Mbonu, 2014; Muir et al., 2008; Namkyu, 2021). Thus, in the present project, the factors considered were fashioning a ground-breaking novelty *haute couture* theorised collection with a strong signature look motivated by feminine *Ga* culture, using a synthesised model developed by the researcher/designer. It was influenced by the conceptual framework discussed earlier, with non-routine design strategy as its core conceptual outlook.

As illustrated in the conceptual framework, the present study sought to adapt a hybrid model for creating the group of clothing (collection) so as to pay attention to design as a product as well as a process as required in such pragmatic art-based studio-based research projects. Thus, the new model in Figure 3.01 observed the fashion design process from global perspectives as described in the literature reviewed (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009). It covered the procedural steps suggesting the best way the collection was to be done as implied in the literature reviewed. Similarly, the new model further described the designer's actions and activities during the design process showing what was involved in designing and/or how it was to be done.

With that, the study achieved one of the specific tasks required under the third design objective which sought to develop a more responsive novel practice model; a flow diagram that reflected an expressive as well as procedural system of design in the absence of one (AU & AU, 2018). The model was thus a blend of all three schools of thought on design (Evbuomwan et al., 1996) consistent with those embedded in the maidens' dress design underpinnings. It was done to find a way of clarifying both the conceptual and procedural processes through to delivery as required in research rigour, and in line with the main objective of the study. It sought to identify and describe the rationale, processes and related skills used by the designer while creating a purely experimental (non-profit) ethno-centric collection. The *Synthesis* model as it had been named, was developed for the present case study as shown to underscore the importance of generating one solution concept early in the practical process, thus reflecting the 'solution focused' nature of design thinking proffered by Cross (1991, as cited in Evbuomwan et al., 1996).

The independent novel *Synthesis* model was thus a representation of ‘how ethnically-inspired conceptual *haute couture* design is, might be and could be’ with attention to both product outlook and the production processes and promotion as suggested. It was influenced by the fusion of all the theories, philosophies and models in the conceptual framework, and formed part of the project underpinnings (Elsayed, 2018; Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Gurung, 2021; Parischa & Kadolph, 2009; Saleem et al., 2014). The model expressed the design outlook and processes in eight organised, related, progressive and iterative stages as illustrated in Figure 2.10.

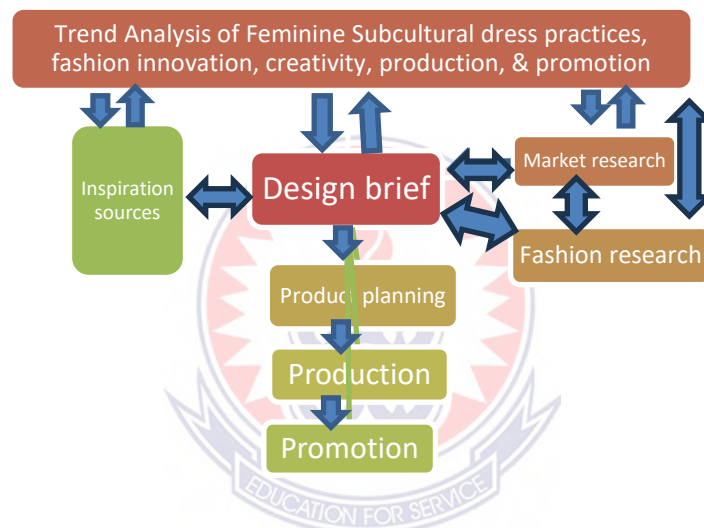


Figure 2.10: Synthesis Model (2024)

Figure 2.10 proposed eight-step design-led model. It showed sequential steps in design, production and promotion of the intended collection.

In fashion practice, ‘research is what defines each . . . collection. It starts with the very first decision or motivation—to make a new collection, and from that point on, everything that enters the arena plays a part as research’ (Mbonu, 2014, p. 20). This was also emphasised in Burns et al.’s (2016) business model. Consistent with literature therefore, the apex phase dictated all subsequent research which defined the collection. That included the inspiration, target market and fashion research on one

hand, and creative design, development, production and promotion processes on the other hand, as well as activities within each of the phases.

As illustrated in the diagram, the apex phase suggested the central design-led phase adopted; that which focused on the conceptual *haute couture* outlook of the collection. The key indicators focused on the need for subcultural trend analysis of dress as proposed in Pasricha and Kadolph (2009 as cited in Damalie, 2019). Thus, the highlight was on *Ga/Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Kpojei Hesaamɔi*, (female initiation rite outing dress of Ga-speaking people of Tema *Manhean*). The *KCascades Impressions* brand which served as the foundation to the present project also served as the fashion trend. Dress fashion innovation, and creativity were then introduced into the existing designs by manipulating motifs and ideas. By so doing, the prevailing trends in the dress culture practices were re-interpreted according to the design strategy so as to create the ‘newness’ required in the new need (Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Mbonu, 2014, p. 11; Muir et al., 2008). Production (including toiling or prototyping of samples) of the designs were carried out (as shown in the Appendix A), and the final collection produced were promoted to selected audience (those related to source of inspiration and neutral ones) as a means of communication, engagement, and awareness creation on the project outcome. It was also meant to generate responses as feedback on the brand concept created. These key activities impacted the product outlook as indicated earlier.

Once the apex or lens had been adapted, that first phase was further split into two other phases of research; to identify source(s) of design inspiration in relation to the focus feminine group and artefacts targeted, market research and fashion research, lifestyle market for profiling a specific consumer, and fashion research on prevailing

materials and dress fashion trends. These then impacted on the design brief indicated directly below the apex phase. The product planning, followed by production, then promotion followed in that orderly manner as illustrated with the connecting arrows. The arrows shown connecting the apex phase to the design inspiration, market and fashion research phases and vice versa illustrated the iterative flow relationship between the three stages mentioned. These then together impacted on the design brief directly below the apex stage as illustrated with the connecting arrows.

Originally, the design-led model suggested by the proponents was summarised to three key activities; trend analysis, fashion innovation, and production (Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009, p. 121). Even though that could be viewed as a seeming limitation of the non-commercial model in this context, it offered the opportunity to stretch the boundaries of the rather simplified model as demonstrated in the present project. Its effectiveness was thus demonstrated in its ability to embrace inclusion of new concepts such as creativity as a design strategy and promotion of artefacts which were also implied in the subculture under study to the novel model developed and used for the current study. That became necessary so as to allow the need to introduce additional ideas relative to the aim of the project. For instance, manipulating existing concepts and introducing new ones to create the desired niche (lifestyle product type) and impact could only have been done by influencing the nature of design. By doing so, the model developed was aligned with the overarching goal of the project. These inclusions are practices consistent with (fashion) design where ‘newness’ is sought while maintaining aspects of the ‘old’ as carryovers (Burns et al., 2016; Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Mbonu, 2014, p.11).

Again, the addition of promotional activities was in keeping with the desire to create awareness for the resultant brand, and its implications by reaching out to related audiences. It further created the opportunity to seek the responses as demonstrated by the maidens, and other designers on the continent and beyond (Ojo, 2016; Richards, 2015; Rovine, 2016). The additional concepts were key to the need to find a strategy for sharing knowledge on the subsequent brand, as it were, to raise the profile for the non-commercial experimental brand as alluded to by Burke (2011), and to create the needed impact for the collection produced. This strategy is also consistent with current practice where many couture inspired fashion design projects were promoted through exhibitions, digital platforms and catwalks during fashion shows, using live models to share knowledge and skills, to campaign to raise the profile for their brands (Barry, 2017; Burke, 2011; Gaimster, n.d.; Murray, 2020; Odabasi, 2019), and create awareness among patrons. Thus, the two concepts served as value addition to the existing design-led model.

The development of the design brief was informed by research findings conducted during the previous four phases described. The theorized design brief (Hocking, 2014) actually guided the beginning of the actual ideation creative design process in the studio. It entailed the real creation of the articles (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016). Existing practices cited in the literature underscored the use of the brief as a document, developed by designers, often under the approval of a creative director. In typical fashion business, this document is a guide for designers, and includes business aspects of a company (or an entity) to help develop a unified brand identity and strategy. The brief often includes information related to target theme or inspiration, deliverables, timeline, and budget. Fundamentally, development of a design brief

creates an outline for development of all the designs within a collection (Burns et al., 2016).

In the present project, the design brief document was a guide for the designer, as it summed up the collection requirements and included unique details to help develop a unified brand identity and strategy. Thus, the *FƐOOYƆƆ* design brief in Tables 1 and 2 included information related to target theme or inspiration, deliverables, timeline, and budget. In the context of the current project, research centred on the design goal determined what was included in the brief. At this point it was worth underscoring that the researcher/designer's area of interest was motivated by the need to celebrate culture that is Ghanaian [African] and feminine. The product type desired was ethnic-inspired high end conceptual *haute couture* female dressy fashion. Broadly, the influencing theme— *Ga Temamei Ashin Yoo KpeemƆ Kpojei-HesaamƆi* (TAYKK-H that is the rite maiden's outing dress cultural practices) destination-inspired *haute couture* collection, formed the basis for developing the fashion brand (Burns et al., 2016), and for that matter, the brief. The brief also focused on consistency in the designer's lifestyle product type the same as the foundation brand *KCascades Impressions* (Damalie, 2021), thus creating the needed nexus. Burns et al. (2016) opined that such consistent effort helps develop brand recognition, build product loyalty, and encourage repeat patrons (customers and researchers alike), a niche desired for the present brand being developed going forward.

2.6 Existing Paradigms of Communication Used by Designers of Dress Fashion as Means of Seeking Feedback from Audiences

This section of chapter two in reviewing existing literature on the need for feedback on education projects, paid attention to public as well as private events such as

fashion shows, museum and/or gallery fashion exhibitions and other emerging platforms cited in the literature as methods of dissemination in Arts-informed research (Barry, 2017). In addition, literature was reviewed on the usefulness of such suggested approaches in receiving feedback. The objective was to appreciate the various platforms used, and find which medium was more applicable for ascertaining feedback from specific audiences on fashion research/project outcomes. Further the review was to guide the organisation of such events.

After a research is conducted, it is important to communicate what was found (Fynn & Foster, 2009) for feedback. Feedback literacy, according to Carless and Boud (2018) as cited in O'Connor and McCurtin (2021, p. 21) is, the ability to appreciate and understand the feedback provided, self-evaluate one's own work, attend to the feelings that feedback invokes and be able to act upon feedback provided. Thus, feedback literacy is critical to learning as it provides objective information regarding the adequacy of one's performance (Damalie, 2018c). Just as in many academic endeavours, feedback usually spells out the success or otherwise of the designer's ability to satisfy set targets or goals. It is said that feedback, if effectively collected from target audience and utilised by the artists/designers, enables practitioners to improve subsequent performance on academic endeavours such as experimental projects. The literature reviewed various means of engagement in practice by artists including fashion designers to guide the quest to engage with selected audience for communicating practical project outcomes and for critical learning for future works. Feedback, in this regard, was to be based on assessment of opinions expressed by select audiences on exhibits displayed.

Communication is the process of exchanging information via a common system of symbols. It is the process of sending, receiving and interpreting messages through which we relate to each other and to our larger world as well. Fashion as a social expression, reflects the times. It shows the taste and values of an era, just as paintings and art forms do. Fashion reflects the way people think and live – social psychology. Fashion and communication are interlinked and blend into each other owing to their basic essence. Fashion is an aesthetic driven field with fashion portfolios, fashion photography, fashion shows and theme based shows, boutiques, colours and their influence on lifestyle being fewer and major aspects that depict the influence, importance and impact of fashion communication (Bowstead, 2011; Mbonu, 2014).

Current literature suggested that dress fashion designers/researchers keep finding new paradigms of communication with audiences on artefacts created (Green, Du Puis, Hesselbein, Greder, Pietsch, Getman & Estrada, 2019, p.1; Titton, 2019, p. 747). The likes of fashion shows, fashion exhibitions at museums, galleries and digital experiences apparently serve as platforms used as means of communicating findings to selected audiences. The researchers asserted that these platforms further served as a means of engaging, and interacting with beneficiary communities using research outcomes as a basis to create awareness.

2.6.1 Fashion show

Regarding fashion shows, the readings suggested that researchers/ designers share fashion collections as a means of informing consumers of what is new through traditional and modern platforms. Fashion show, as it is known today, was described by Brucculieri (2021) as a communicative tool used by fashion designers to engage the audience's attention to their designs. Historically, Charles Frederick Worth was

credited as the pioneer who shared his designs on live models for his clientele to choose from (Bruculieri, 2021). Before then it was reported that haute couturiers had traditionally visited clients at home for fittings' (Zak, 2020 as cited in Murray, 2020).

While the method of showing the clothing on live models became standard, it was not yet what is commonly thought of today as a runway show. At present the focus has shifted to fashion weeks with dramatic spectacles and well-considered locations. Fashion weeks for instance are deemed significant since in addition to new designs to present, within those weeks a fashion show's effect sometimes moved ahead of the designs (Odabasi, 2019). When collections are completed, fashion designers introduce them through the fashion show', a field used to present their collection ideas in an impressive and striking manner. Through this form, according to Odabasi (2019), the designer employs performative presentation to help put across the intellectual message, the allure of a fashionable creation, or to mediate diverse creations in a visual way as a collection.' Fashion shows have a strong impact due to the atmosphere created which is surrounded by music, video art, performance and stage design. These 20-25 minute shows represented the whole collection through the background idea in its most relevant form, argued Odabasi (2019). The researcher upon reviewing contemporary examples between 2013 and 2018 found that the audience has gained a new role as becoming participants in the fashion shows themselves with the opportunities offered by technological developments which create new meanings for the fashion shows. It was therefore understood that the function of fashion shows was now changing from a means of promotional to audience communication.

Trunk shows on the other hand are early shows, or what Blanchard (2018) called fashion parades, and Zak (2020) called salon shows, where an intimate audience gathered in a home and an entrepreneur displayed goods to be sold (Murray, 2020). Mention was made of Coco Chanel who would watch her audience from, the reflection of the curved mirror staircase that led to her apartment and British Lady Duff-Gordon who would watch . . . at her Hanover Street salon respectively in 1937 (Murray, 2020). In Murray's opinion, the shows were highly focused on the clothing and less on the critical reception or marketing. The location, she asserted, was usually wherever the designer had access, such as Chanel's apartment or Duff-Gordon's salon. In these private homes, she argued, photographers were not allowed. The emphasis was thus still on the client rather than publicity (Blair, 2019 as cited in Murray, 2020). By her account therefore, the fashion industry had grown, and middlemen like department stores and clothing magazines separated the consumer from the designer, while the show has witnessed many changes. The purpose as well grew from displaying an item to a potential buyer to establishing the tone for the fashion industry as a whole; setting trends and coordinating magazines with departmental stores. It has become less about winning over an individual buyer and more about herding a mass of buyers towards certain trends, Bruculieri argued (2021). Designer Christian Dior was reported as the first designer to allow photographers to photograph his collection in 1947.

2.6.2 Feminist fashion and fashionable feminism

Conversely, fashion designers were said to be making use of the runway as a site of resistance, and design clothes that communicate defiance against a global political climate characterised by the rising of far right, authoritarian and populist political movements' (Titton, 2019). Titton cited many cases to point out instances where

conflicts and contradictions arose out of the convergence of feminism, fashion and radical protest.

Our Minds Our Bodies Our Power, The Future Is Female, Nevertheless She Persisted, We Should All Be Feminists, Nasty Woman, Pussy Grabs Back - these were only a few of the feminist rallying cries seen on t-shirts, pins and signs at the Women's marches organized in cities across the world after to the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States in January 2017.

The researcher (2019) recounted how a selection of the slogans printed, embroidered or emblazoned on t-shirts, jackets, dresses and accessories that were presented at the fashion shows of Dior, Ashish and Prabal Gurung in Paris, London and New York from September 2016 through January 2017. She further narrated how Political fashion was declared as a major trend of 2017 and since then, more and more fashion designers had been expressing their solidarity with feminism, and other perceived rights such as anti-racism, human rights and environmental causes by drawing on the unequivocal form of political sloganeering and by appropriating symbols of protests.

The loudest feminist dissent in Titton's (2019) view was heard at New York Fashion Week in January 2017, where the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) handed out pink buttons and flyers in support of Planned Parenthood, the nonprofit organisation that provides reproductive health care in the U.S.A. and that was one of the main targets of Trump's presidential campaign. The initiative against the defunding of Planned Parenthood was led by CFDA member Tracy Reese and was reportedly supported by more than forty designers and brands, among them Proenza Schouler, Diane von Furstenberg, Tory Burch, Narciso Rodriguez, Zac Posen and Prabal Gurung, and many designers chose to take a stand against the sexism and xenophobia of their newly-elected President on the runway.

It was further reported that models at the Public School Autumn-Winter 2017 show wore red baseball caps which read ‘Make America New York.’ The net proceeds from their sale were donated to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Prabal Gurung was also reported to have sent a series of feminist, pro-immigration and pro-civil liberties t-shirts down the runway, a portion of the proceeds from the t-shirts was donated to the ACLU, Planned Parenthood and the Shikshya Foundation Nepal. The ‘Pussy Hat,’ the ubiquitous pink hand-knit or crocheted DIY— emblem of feminist resistance against the misogyny of Donald Trump, was another symbol of dissent that made it from the streets to the catwalk (Titton, 2019): models wore it at the finale of the Autumn/Winter 2017–18 fashion show of Italian brand Missoni in February 2017. Here again, part of the proceeds from the sale of the collection was donated to the ACLU and the UN Refugee Agency (Bartlett 2019a, p.25). While the protest against Trump by fashion designers reached its peak in 2017, feminist slogans and symbols were reported to have remained persistently trendy, not least as a reaction to the dismantling of legislation concerning gender equality and reproductive rights in the U.S.A. and in several countries across Europe and Latin America.

2.6.3 Fashion exhibitions at museum

Exhibition of clothing at museums is another paradigm used by curators/artists as means by which fashion was communicated. ‘Curated exhibitions are places where research practice, creative design, storytelling, and aesthetics converge’ (Green et al., 2019). In the case of museums however, the tendency was for curators to focus on fashion as art, i.e. attention on the more glamorous and extravagant aspects of fashion. Anneke (2017, p.2) argued that the underrepresentation of ordinary clothes in museum collections had influenced the way in which fashion research could be done,

and upheld the advice that curators address the nuanced realities of fashion as constituting a vital part of everyday lives.’

2.6.4 Fashion exhibitions in public space

Ryan (2016) commended Richards’ 2015 Gainesville (Florida) exhibition of Ghanaian designers who use inspiration from wax prints with African/Ghanaian motifs and concepts (made in or outside Africa) to promote African fashion far beyond their immediate economies. Richard’s exhibition was hailed by Ryan (2016) as among the first to focus specifically on one African scene in a country, moving away from continent-wide concepts. Such concentrated a approach in fashion presentation, she reckoned, appeals to experts and novices alike (Gott & Loughran, 2010, as cited in Ryan, 2016). It was deemed necessary for the dress collection to be exhibited among both local neutral audiences so as to allow for diversity of feedback on artefacts produced. By doing so, the products became much more accessible, thus deepening the discourse on the results and any action needed to be taken. Such opportunities presented the needed awareness for all stakeholders including the State to open up ‘new’ markets and regimes of consumption (Delhaye & Woets, 2015) for potential tourists, and other likely economic benefits for the country and the continent as a whole.

2.6.5 Museum fashion exhibitions from the designer’s perspective

Vrencoska (2015) described fashion exhibitions as ‘a hot trend in art and cultural heritage museums worldwide.’ The researcher was of the opinion that ‘specialized costume and fashion museums were increasing in a number of countries.’ Accordingly, ‘most of the scholarly research and papers dedicated to museum fashion exhibitions and Fashion Museology were tackling the subject from a museological

perspective: collecting, archiving, conserving and displaying fashion design on one end, and fashion design as a newly discovered attraction for the museum audiences on the other.’ The researcher focused on museum fashion exhibitions from the designer’s perspective: the opportunities and the benefits for the authors themselves. The researcher after reviewing several fashion exhibitions—five visited and one curated, held from 2009 to 2014 in different museums around the world concluded thus:

Museum fashion exhibitions, apart from the gains to museums and their audiences, provide the designers with opportunities to present their artistic explorations and experimentation, their creative processes, interdisciplinary collaborations, complexity and storytelling. It is according to the researcher, a new platform for a multi-layered communication with the audience. By being exhibited in a museum, the fashion designer’s work becomes part of a specific cultural experience for the visitors. The designer’s benefit, on the other hand, is a deeper relationship with the audience and a critical acclaim for their work, with recognized artistic values. (Vrencoska, 2015, p.1).

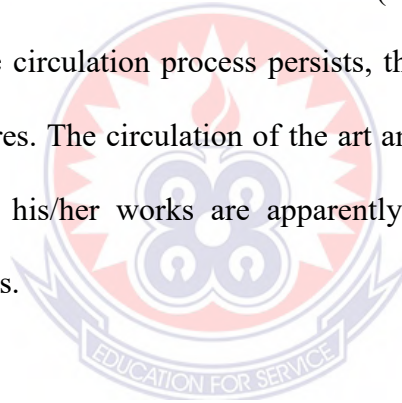
2.6.6 Fashion galleries

Art galleries have traditionally played a pivotal role in the contemporary art system, divided between cultural and commercial goals, which are not necessarily compatible (Lazzaro & Picchi, 2023). Their existence as commercial and parallel channels of art distribution (Annamma, 1996), both play a central role in the framing process. Annamma argued that while commercial art galleries promote and sell the artist and her/his works, parallel galleries are more concerned with exhibiting art works particularly those of a more experimental nature.

The mandate of most galleries, she further contended, is to diffuse and expose the artist. In that respect, parallel galleries are similar to museums. However, they cannot hope to parallel the seal of approval and value that museums bestow on the artist and their work. Parallel galleries, nonetheless, perform an important service according to

Annamma (1996). They provide space for unknown or up-and-coming artists to show their work. The first step towards the recognition of the artist in the art world according to Annamma is seeing or being seen. She however asserted that that was not enough as the artefacts need to be seen and exchanged severally before the artist's career is decisively launched.

As such every time the artist's work is sold, its importance is reinforced and its value rises. Meanwhile each resale further contributes credibility to the artist's career and artistic complexity to the object via the currency art critics and dealers offer for a given piece. Again, verbal and written discourses and exchanges circulating with the object further entrench its value and bestow status (and wealth) on its owner(s), she argued. The longer the circulation process persists, the greater the depth/history and status the object acquires. The circulation of the art and the long term promotion and sale of the artist and his/her works are apparently central to the functioning of commercial art galleries.



2.6.7 Digital exposers

In their review of digital fashion research, before and beyond communication and marketing, Nobile, Noris, Kalbaska, & Cantoni (2021) make an interesting analysis of the situation. The researchers opined that technological advancements have shaped the nature of fashion throughout history. They recounted that the first industrial revolution contributed to the mechanisation of fashion manufacture by exploiting water and steam power; the second revolution accelerated fashion production through the invention of electricity; the third one impacted the use of electronics and information technology within the fashion environment. The fourth, the so-called Industry 4.0, contributes to shape the fashion industry through an advancement of

digital technologies, such as cyber-physical spaces, Internet of things, computing tools, personalisation, localisation, and digitalisation of fashion heritage (Kalbaska, Sadaba, & Cantoni, 2018; Nobile & Kalbaska, 2020; Noris, SanMiguel, & Cantoni, 2020; Permatasari & Cantoni, 2019; Wang & Ha-Brookshire, 2018) as cited in Nobile et al. (2021).

Nobile et al. make the case that the digital transformation has impacted all the facets of fashion. They noted that firstly, fashion communication and marketing, through the adoption of digital tools creates a fertile ground for the improvement of business and customer relationships (Noris, Nobile, Kalbaska, & Cantoni, Toni, 2021, as cited in Nobile et al., 2021). The researchers further said technology also had had an impact on fashion design and production, for proposing advancements in areas related to sustainable manufacturing and to the improvement of decision-making processes and HRM systems (James, Roberts, & Kuznia, 2016; Ma, 2010; McQuillan, 2020; Yu, Choi, Hui, & Ho, 2011). More so, it also influenced culture and society, impacting education and human being's everyday life (Chun, 2011; Ebling, 2016; Harris, 2008; Ryan, 2020 as cited in Nobile et al., 2021). While they also noted that the areas of fashion communication and of its digital transformation are emerging ones, as it appears clear also from the brief outline above, research on them still requires to be recognised and framed in a consistent way, to yield to a better understanding of the field and to open up to new and better linked research avenues (Cantoni et al., 2020; Lascity, 2021).

2.6.8 Summary of related literature reviewed

The present study reviewed a couple of theoretical concepts, constructs and models. Key among them were the three complementary design philosophies from

Broadbent's (1980) schools of thought (Evbuomwan et al., 1996); Sproles (1979) design and consumer fashion adoption theories were reviewed. Pasricha and Kadolph's (2009) fashion design-led model as well as Burke (2011) and Burns et al. (2016) business-led models were also reviewed among others. After lengthy deliberations, the suggested model consisted of a blend of complementary underpinnings drawn from design philosophies, theories and models in line with that of the subculture under study, to guide the studio-based project with recourse to the artefacts under study during the fieldwork. The reviewed literature suggested a conceptual framework and the *Synthesis* model as intellectual premises for the project.

The literature reviewed in the present study described as unsuitable the use of the term 'puberty' in reference to *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rite) in Damalie (2018a). The reason for this being that the term 'puberty' was not applicable to all the maidens in the true sense of the word. Not when girls as young as two to three years of age were initiated as *Temamei Ashin Yei* (the rite maidens of Tema *Manhean*). The argument was hinged on the developmental stage of the participating maidens, vis-à-vis their mixed ages with some of them nowhere near the puberty line.

Hobson (2016) reported that in the case of the Navajo and Apache local communities in the United States of America for instance, the cultural practice was linked with the developmental stage of the participants. The young girls were of 'menstruating age.' Compared to a rite such as 'bragoro' practised in Ashanti Akyem Agogo here in Ghana where girls were reportedly initiated once they started menstruation (Asare-Danso, 2018), the researcher upheld, and suggested the acceptance of the term in both cases cited.

However, in the case of both *Temamei Ashin* (rite of the people of Tema *Manhean*) and *Dipo* rite practised by their neighbours in Krobo, the argument did not hold because, relatively girls as young as two to three years of age who were not of menstruating age yet were initiated as shown in the literature. Whereas the term ‘puberty’ rightly related to the menstruating girls who observe ‘bragoro’, the same could not be said about participating maidens who observed initiation rituals in the two societies cited given the present phenomenon where the age status of participants have changed (Adinku, 2016; Damalie, 2018a; Boakye, 2010).

Dedume et al. (2016) introduced the phrase ‘initiation rites’ in relation to the *Kusakoko* rite. The developmental stage of the maidens was not mentioned at all, hence there is very little to scrutinise regarding the phrase used and the whether or not maidens are supposed to be at the menstruating age. Asare-Danso (2018) also used the term ‘nobility’ in his discourse of *Bragoro* among the people of Ashanti Akyem Agogo, which seemed to describe the honorary or symbolic pursuit of the ceremony. Suffice it to say that in the case of *Bragoro*, both terms were applicable, because the maidens were initiated into womanhood at menstruation age. Thus, the present study adopted the term ‘initiation’ and/or ‘nobility’ because it best described the transitional nature of the girls’ rites for all the cases cited, particularly for *Ashin* and *Dipo* rites since it appeared more applicable to all participants regardless of their ages and any other inclusion criterion.

The study reviewed the dress cultural practices of Tema *Ashin yei* (maidens) used during *Telekomo*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (pre-camping, camping, outdoor and post-rites dress or styling) respectively. The review suggested four main themed dress cultural practices used by the maidens. *Temamei Ashin Yoo*

Kpeemo (rite of the people of Tema *Manhean*) dress cultural practices used by the maidens was based on custom and thus was a mandatory tradition. The review findings suggested that three of the dress cultural practices were used by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens for three different outings during the rituals, whereas one other was used in private during camping.

The dress silhouettes as suggested in the review were four namely: (i) double layered bustle bustier cum waist wrap, (ii) single layered bustle bustier wrap, (iii) single layered waist skirt wrap and the (iv) decorated upper torso barely covered by gold and treasured beaded necklaces. Each silhouette was carefully layered on functional foundation garments including the *Atufo* (bustle), and secured around the bust or on the waist line or both using *Hao* (strap). The dress fit was routinely planned and comfortable. The literature reviewed pointed to the use of the layered pieces arranged to achieve the hourglass-like body shape. The looks created were symbolic and reflected the maidens' shared culture indicative of the ritual being observed at the various stages.

The review suggested that the *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens) used the dress cultural practices as status signifier. The red industrialised wax print used during *Telekomo* (the pre-camping stage) was routine. The white *Clala* (cloth) associated with *Ashinfwo* (application of processed oil) was also routine, and marked the continuation of the purification procedure in private. Unlike the two earlier stages of the ritual, the *Kpojiem* and *Kpojei Hesaamci* (outdooing and post rites dress) respectively were marked in public using materials which featured a medley of bright celebratory colours.

Unlike the two initial stages when *Ashin* (rites) maidens wore prescribed, constant and specific cloth types and colours, they used variants of rich Ghanaian kente, *kete*, velvet, and industrialised wax prints of choice during *Kpojemɔ* and *Kpojei* (outdooing and post rite stages) respectively. That was indicative of personalised elements to the maidens' shared looks. The review yet again pointed to key shared culture of styling features namely: *Mama Bumɔ* (cloth wrapping), *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (moulded headdress), *Odasobɔ* (silk scarves), *Ntah* (anklets), *Bue* (loincloth), *Fers* (yellow pigment), *Krɔbɔ* (green dried fruit), *Hao* (strap) and *Fliwa* (treasured short beaded necklace) whose use created a statement dress look that set the maidens apart from other nobility rite maidens in Ghana and elsewhere. Thus, the nobility maidens' dress culture practices served as a powerful tool for articulating their identity, status, and adherence to their society. Beyond providing physical protection during the rite, their dress culturae practices provided spiritual protection.

The reviewed literature suggested that the maidens' dress cultural practices were extremely relevant to the *Ashin* (rite) maidens and *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*) in general. It appeared that the *Kusum*, a hidden curriculum had been schemed to impart specific clothing psychology to the maidens. Their dress design philosophy was creative and yet the strategy was routine particularly during the first two stages of the rituals. It was evident despite the creative antecedents that their design strategy left some room for innovation. The literature reviewed further suggested there was demonstrable evidence of cultural maxims *Fɛonɔ* (‘a thing of beauty’), *Kusum gboo* (‘tradition goes on’), and *Blema Kpãa nɔ atsa* (‘continuity of ancient established norms or protocols’) in the maidens' dress. Their dress ideas projected feminineness, conceptual look (themed silhouettes, material culture, colours, accessories, techniques, and value) and based on their cultural belief system

and social values. Values imparted evidently included loyalty, team spirit, hard work, high sense of sustainable dress appreciation and etiquette, and self worth - grooming of the self. The literature reviewed further suggested demonstrable use of *Fɛɔɔ*, *Kusum gboo*, and *Blema Kpãa nɔ atsa* as their dress design philosophy.

The practice of conceptual fashion design required both creating a strong signature look and offering constant novelty. The secondary data reviewed suggested factors such as strong motivation to drive a conceptual dress fashion collection. Additionally, the desired product type, an adoption or adaptation of a model guide the said product development, as well as design strategy employed all based on supportive philosophies (AU & AU, 2018; Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016; Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Mbonu, 2014; Pasricha & Kadolph, 2009; Ying, 2013) were key. The review suggested the use of a theoretical framework which impacted on the conceptual framework as well as the *Synthesis* model developed as the intellectual premise and a guide for the project.

A thematic content analysis was used to purposely select for review ten mandatory unique dress details that define and set the *Ashin Yoo* (rite maiden) apart from other nobility rite maidens in Ghana and elsewhere as intimated earlier. The review suggested the key shared culture of styling features namely: *Mama Bumɔ* (cloth wrapping), *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (moulded headdress), *Odasobɔ* (silk scarves), *Ntah* (anklets), *Bue* (loincloth), *Fers* (yellow pigment), *Krɔbɔ* (green dried fruit), *Hao* (strap) and *Fliwa* (treasured short bead necklace) as unique to the *Ashin* maidens. These were thus analysed for exquisite authentic culturally-inclined concepts to drive the creative process. The details worth embracing, based on the nature of design strategy adopted, might include:

1. The female hourglass body shape which was underscored throughout the outing dress practices. It was thus recommended as the key body shape to look out for in the target market including fit models.
2. Meanwhile, the dress category suggested included well composed female dressy soft, comfortable, smart casual, occasional clothing in suits, separates, and as items.
3. The dress lengths suggested ranged from various dignifying lengths and fit. The length could range from long, ankle length, calf length, thigh length and cropped tops.
4. Soft, comfortable wrapped style lines, skirts, bustier dress/seamed waistline, tiered bustier dress, yoked web-like top yokes, full slim fit sleeves, off-the-shoulder sleeves, drum stick sleeves, asymmetric front opening, wide hem with light weighted finishing details were suggested. Again, neck details might consider draped neckline/collars, fluted reverse, vee, square, and round tunic necks with beaded collar details or variations.
5. Materials suggested might include popular wax prints (large prints, small prints, all over patterns, one directional patterns, leafy and animal motifs, lines etc. fabrics), hand woven kente, *kete*, printed silk, velvet, upholstered material (horsehair), body marks inspired fabrics; lace, polka dot prints, floral prints, and wax prints with gold/coloured dust smears or splashes.
6. A beautiful colourful palette suggested included a medley of red, black, off white, yellow, peach, purple, royal blue, cream, green, white, pink, blue black, gold and mixed.
7. Techniques suggested in the review included economy in cut, fabric manipulations to reflect the maidens' dress details: wrap, drape, ease, volume,

tie/ knot, plait, smear; the use of straight lines, circles, undulating lines, bulges in cuts and the use of illusions in creating illusionary fits.

8. Dress accessories such as bands (detachables as in self-belts, attached waist band and belts, waistband with extended ends etc.), garment openings secured with gold, bead buttons/zippers, fabric trims with dangly ornaments, tassels, frills, fringes, light dress hem, or fabric trims such as bow-ties/floral petal ends, and lightly weighted dress hems were also options worthy of consideration.
9. Head styles suggested in the review consisted of hats, hair covers/scarves different from or similar to fashion fabric. Upholstered dome moulds as hair enhancement (poignant) attachment or fascinators, hair styled fully pulled back (and held together), or pony tail. Accessories suggested included hair jewellery, necklace, arms, wrists, anklets, cosmetics/make up, purse, and pin brooch/ornament among others.
10. It was suggested that footwear might be medium height wedge or steady block heels, flats heeled, strapped or netted cover tops, detailed beaded ankle straps with ties or buckles to push up the hips and accentuate the looks created.

The literature reviewed suggested that dress fashion designers/researchers keep finding new paradigms of communication with audiences on artefacts created (Anneke, 2017; Green et al., 2019, p.1; Titton, 2019, p. 747). The likes of fashion shows, fashion exhibitions at museums, galleries and digital experiences apparently served as platforms used as means of communicating findings to selected audiences. The researchers asserted that these platforms further served as a means of engaging, and interacting with beneficiary communities using research outcomes as a basis to create awareness.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter three of the study provided information on philosophical assumption, research approach and research design. It further included information on the population studied, sample, sampling frame and techniques, as well as the instruments used for data collection. The chapter further covered the data analysis plan, ethical considerations, trustworthiness and authenticity.

3.1 Philosophical Assumptions

‘Research’ as Scott and Usher, (1996 p.17, as cited in Tombs & Pugsley, 2020) noted, is a social practice carried out by research communities. What constitutes ‘knowledge’, ‘truth’, ‘objectivity’ and ‘correct method’ is defined by the community and through the paradigms which shape its work.’ They defined paradigm as ‘the entire constellation of beliefs, values and techniques shared by members of a given scientific community’ (Kuhn cited in Scott & Usher, 1991, p.15). Two principal paradigms that have dominated social sciences research since the 19th century are those based around positivism, and either interpretivism or constructivism. These inform and shape the views held regarding the research and in turn impact on the ontological, epistemological and methodological choices made.

Tombs and Pugsley (2020) argued that research is divided into different types, with each one emanating from different ways of knowing (ontology) and how researchers explain how they know and share their understandings (epistemology). Ontology comprises what the subject matter to be investigated is (Flynn & Foster, 2009). What exists and what is the nature of the world?

Epistemology on the other hand is described as where people's knowledge comes from and whether it is possible to know. What kind of statements people try to make, and whether researchers want to develop universal laws or provide meaningful descriptions of how social life is enacted (Flynn & Foster, 2009; Tombs & Pugsley, 2020).

Another term which needs defining is methodology. Methodology according to Tombs and Pugsley (2020), inquires how researchers are to discover and validate what they think exists. What methods will they select to collect data? It is important to be aware of these definitions and to consider where exactly researchers' own belief systems lie, the duo argued. They asserted further that this will enable researchers to develop a research question and to set about addressing it using appropriate research tools to give them the best possible fit between the question and the type of solution they offer.

Consistent with the forgoing, the study adopted a constructivist paradigm. The approach guided the researcher to develop the research problem (question) and to set about addressing it using appropriate research methods and tools to arrive at the best possible fit between the question and the type of solution the study offered.

3.1.1 Constructivism paradigm

Tombs and Pugsley (2020) opine that constructivism is a different tradition to research. It adopts a qualitative focus. Constructivists like interpretivists, believe that there are numerous realities, not a single reality. The constructivist paradigm however, holds that people construct their own understanding of the world through experiencing and reflecting on those experiences. Thus, constructivist research seeks to understand the meaning that people attach to those experiences.

Particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action (Schwandt, 1994). The literature further expatiates that, the constructivist believes that to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it. The enquirer must elucidate the process of the meaning construction and clarify what and how meanings are embodied in the language and actions of social actors. To prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings; it is to offer the enquirer's construction of the constructions of the actors one studies (Schwandt, 1994).

The study was premised on the constructivist's ontological assumptions that knowledge is subjective and there are multiple realities which are socially constructed. Meaning that, the researcher believes that knowledge is dependent on the person behind it. That is to say, two people can have multiple realities by interpreting the same data differently.

Epistemologically, the study upheld the constructivists' believe that knowledge is developed through a social construction process through interaction. So as a researcher, one is part of the process of socially constructing the knowledge. Thus, the knowledge a researcher has will not be only dependent on his or her interpretation of the data collected from the participant, but also be shaped by how one interacts with the participant. The researcher premised the study on this paradigm because it resonated with the task at hand. The intention was to engage indigenes of the Tema *Manhean* on the *Ashin Yei* dress culture practices. After analysing and making meaning of the data collected from the study site, the researcher identified aesthetic attributes and reinterpreted them to create the new need (designs) for selected

demographics visiting the potential tourist site, using the *haute couture* design-led approach; in essence, ‘construction of the constructions of the actors studied’ (Schwandt, 1994)

3.2 Qualitative Research Approach

The study was based on the qualitative approach. Qualitative research takes a holistic approach to understand and theorise, whereas quantitative research takes an objective approach to explain and predict events (Davies & Logan, 2012). Qualitative research tries to gain an in-depth understanding of life as it unfolds in a natural setting without manipulating it. The goal (as in this project) is to study people’s perceptions and experiences, to build a complex holistic picture of the issue. Accordingly, qualitative designs arise from research questions about the meanings of a social or human issue within a particular context. These designs use inductive analysis (that is, working from specific data to broader, more abstract conclusions). They can also use flexible emergent design strategies. For example, altering the sampling strategy to explore a concept identified in the data analysis (Davies & Logan, 2012).

Qualitative research is inquiry in the natural setting, an exploratory study of experience-as-lived and everyday life in the world. Magilvy and Thomas (2009) opined that the goal of a qualitative study is to produce a rich description and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of interest, the cultural or lived experience of people in natural settings. In a qualitative study, the researcher is the instrument of research, meaning data is generated by asking questions in personal interviews or focus groups, making observations and recording notes, possibly participating in an event and reflecting on this participation, or taking photographs. Questions are usually open-ended, and the ideas about the answers to the question. Qualitative research data

are usually text data, narratives, and stories told by people about their experiences. recorded digitally, on tape, on film, or in photographs, or in notes taken by the researcher. These data are then examined descriptively to notice similarities and differences in the data, categories, patterns, and themes that are then described and sometimes interpreted to provide a rich description of the experience as-lived.

The qualitative research activity was thus represented in three major strategic steps. The qualitative descriptive case was of the plan to collect data (photographs) of major dress culture practices of *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens, and subsequently conduct detailed review of the objects in line with the first objective of the study. An emic audience was engaged to help in the validation and documentation of the data (photographs) collected as authentic.

3.3 Research Design

The present case was constructivist in nature (Tombs & Pugsley, 2020), and adopted qualitative descriptive case and studio-based research designs due to the nature of the study which essentially looked at conceptual dress fashion design as an opportunistic research activity. Research design, as described by Flynn and Foster (2009), is that plan or strategy used to conduct research having established one's research question, purpose, and conducted literature review. Flynn and Foster, in reference to Stange, Crabtree, and Miller (2006) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) noted that the design may be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of the two referred to as mixed methods, combined, or multi-method (2009, p. 121).

3.3.1 Qualitative descriptive case study design

According to LoBiondo-Wood, Haber, Cameron and Singh (2018), many researchers use qualitative descriptive method, related to phenomenological, grounded theory, and

ethnology, when they want to provide a comprehensive summary of the experiences of their participants. ‘Researchers conducting qualitative descriptive studies stay close to their data and to the surface of the words and events ...’ (Sandelowski 2000 as cited in LoBiondo-Wood et al., 2018). ‘Qualitative descriptive study’, according to Sandelowski (p.34) in LoBiondo-Wood et al. (2018, p. 174), ‘is the method of choice when straight descriptions of phenomena are desired.’ Qualitative descriptive researchers do not highly abstract the data; the data are presented as they are. However, descriptive research requires validity, with multiple observers accurately documenting the same event.

The authors note that when using qualitative descriptive method, researchers use a variety of methods when sampling, collecting data, doing analysis, and displaying data. Data in qualitative descriptive research are said to be similar to data in other types of qualitative research where the researchers use interviewing (both individual and group), observation, and examination of documents (Lambert & Lambert, 2012 as cited in LoBiondo-Wood et al., 2018). The data analysis is not as prescriptive as in other types of qualitative research; it focuses on content analysis derived from the data themselves and is constantly analysed as data are collected. The authors note that the data present a straightforward summary. Lambert and Lambert, according to LaBiondo-Wood et al. (2018) asserted that qualitative descriptive research is used when researchers desire a straightforward description of a phenomenon.

Hence, its choice for the present study which aimed at describing the major artefacts identified as patronised by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens in line with the first, second, fourth and fifth objectives of the study. The practical aspect however required that data found were highly abstracted and reinterpreted in some instances to

conceptualise the collection desired to attain the third objective of the study. The approach further informed the strategy to engage varied audiences for feedback on or validation of the collection to be created. This aspect was an in-depth study of a situation or event. Lambert and Lambert (2012), in LaBiondo-Wood et al. (2018) argued that a case may involve a single person or a group. It could also involve an institution, such as a medical facility or a community. The case, according to the researchers, is usually an incident that is bounded, or limited, rather than something that lacks specificity. The case may be complex or simple, but it is an integrated system. The case is examined in depth by detailing its context and ordinary activities, and the study tries to understand issues related to the history, development, or circumstances of the case. The present study used purely qualitative research design so as to have rich experiential details on the object of study and its usefulness in the studio work.

3.3.2 Studio-based design

Studio-based research is a new and emerging form of research, commonly practiced by persons involved in creative and aesthetic work (Sullivan, 2006 & 2010; Marshall, 2010 as cited in Puadi et al., 2021). Creative studio research, according to researchers, is a research that has methodologies and strategies appropriate to its disciplinary context (Puadi et al., 2021). The qualitative studio-based design involved the abstraction of concepts and experimentation of the dress fashion design ideas composed in the studio. The activities were influenced by inspiration, market and fashion research, ideation or creative design, design development and style selection, pre-production and production processes. Thereafter, community engagements were held so as to communicate the outcome of the studio work as part of awareness

creation process. It was further meant to act on the feedback for improvement in subsequent relatable projects, .

The ultimate prospective users to wear the collection were high end fashion users who enjoy travel and love indigenous fashion inspired by Africa. Motivated by the urge to celebrate African culture, the study focused on the African continent and its rich cultural resources for fashion design inspirations so as to bridge the gap in design practices and missed opportunities as long as the issue of dress culture of *Temamei* (the people of Tema *Manhean*) was concerned.

The stimulating case of conceptual dress design is a technically integrated system of abstraction of ideas, product development, experimentation and trend diffusion. The audiences' responses were analysed as part of the project under objectives four and five and included in the report. Thus, the case was examined in depth by detailing its context and extraordinary creative design opportunities and activities. The study tried to demonstrate understanding and appreciation of aspects of the culture of the people of Tema *Manhean*, and brought on board some noteworthy issues related to the people's culture— history, development, and economic circumstances which could inform the way forward to the powers that be for appropriate action to benefit the community, the country and the African continent at large.

3.4 Population of the Study

A population is the entire set of individuals of interest to a researcher. The term refers to a large group (human or objects) of interest which according to Gravetter and Forzano (2009) are typically huge containing far too many individuals or objects to measure and study. Although the entire population usually does not participate in a research study, the results from the study are generalised to the entire population.

Most qualitative studies typically aim to discover meaning and to cover multiple realities, not to generalise to a population, Woo asserts (Woo, 2019).

The populations of interest to the study were in four groups: First was an ethnic *Ga* (local) audience of Tema *Manhean*. Second was a non-*Ga* audience outside the Tema *Manhean* Traditional area. The third population of interest was inanimate, made up of all artefacts (dress or clothing) used by *Ashin* (rite) maidens by way of their unique dress cultural practices used during the initiation ceremony of the maidens of Tema *Manhean*. The fourth group was also inanimate; all artefacts (dress fashion designs or products) composed in the studio as cases in point in relation to the study. These groups of participants were properly placed either as insiders or technically informed persons and dress items of interest to engender the right responses to the questions raised in the study.

3.4.1 Accessible population

The accessible populations of interest to the study were in four groups. First, the ethnic *Ga* audience of Tema *Manhean*, preferably women (either previously initiated or involved in on-going *Ashin* [nobility rite]), who attend the publicised exhibition of the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection within the traditional area, and were willing to participate in the study. Subsequently both male and female attendees who participated during the exhibition and were willing to comment on the exhibits and the exhibition were allowed to participate in the study.

The second accessible population was the non-*Ga* audience (both males and females) within academia who attended the publicised exhibition of the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection within the community, and were willing to partake in the study. Other participants

who attended later during the period of the exhibition, and were willing to comment on the exhibits and the exhibition were given the opportunity to do so.

The third accessible population of interest to the study was made up of all themed dress cultural practices or artefacts used by *Ashin* (rite) maidens in both public and private space during the initiation ceremony (artefacts actually gathered from the field and also from scanty literature (Damalie, 2018a). The fourth accessible population was all the twenty-three (23) conceptualised artefacts composed and produced within the collection (including prototypes which were tested).

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

Qualitative studies typically use small non-probability samples (Woo, 2019). Consistent with Woo's assertion that the goal of most qualitative studies is to discover meaning and to cover multiple realities, a sample size of sixty-four (n=64) audience who responded to the open invitation to the exhibition held within the Takoradi Technical University community constituted the first group of non-indigenous audience sample, while thirty (n=33) participants (indigenous) who attended the exhibition held in Tema *Manhean* constituted the second sample (of the local audience). The human sample for the study equaled ninety-seven (97) participants.

All four (4) themed dress cultural practices of the maidens, specifically those they were seen in within the public and private space (as suggested in the literature) were identified and purposively sampled for validation from the audiences consistent with qualitative descriptive research design. Sixteen (n=16) photographs of the maidens dressed in *Telekɔmɔ*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojienɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (pre-camping, outdoor and post rite) artefacts were also purposively sampled. Meanwhile, all the twenty (n=20) artefacts (designs) in the collection created were sampled for

evaluation in line with the study objectives (four and five). The inanimate sample totaled thirty-six (36) in all. Both indigenous and non-indigenous audiences who came early, and were willing to make general comments, formed the third human sample of the study because these were information rich samples (Flynn & Foster, 2009; Woo, 2019) needed for the project.

Purposive sampling technique was used because the study focused on sampling techniques where the units investigated were based on the judgment of the researcher using acceptable inclusion criteria. The technique represented a group of different non-probability and probability sampling techniques, and relied on the judgment of the researcher when it came to selecting the units (e. g. people, cases, organisations, pieces of data) that were studied. Usually, in such instances (as in the present case), the sample being investigated was quite small, especially when compared with probability sampling techniques (Terrell, 2016).

The main reason for using the purposive sampling technique was to focus on particular characteristics (i. photographs of artefacts used by the rite maidens; ii. collection created as a result of inspiration derived; iii. exhibition participants from the indigenous community and iv. Participants from a non-Ga settings) of the population that were of interest to the project, which best enabled the researcher to answer the research questions. Both the animate and inanimate samples were representative of the population albeit not in terms of size in the case of the current study. In the case of the dress cultural practices selected, they formed one category of the maidens' two sartorial stories, even though the sample size was more; three out of four specific clothing categories were sampled because of the varied creative outcome desired in the collection. Local and non-local audiences were engaged based on their

timely availability and willingness to be part of the study, but for researchers pursuing case study research designs, it was a choice, the purpose of which varied depending on the type of purposive sampling technique that was used. The sample selected worked best for the present case study (Terrell, 2016).

Maximum variation sampling is a purposeful technique used to capture a wide range of perspectives relating to the thing that a researcher is interested in studying. It is a search for a variation in perspectives, ranging from those conditions that were viewed to be typical through to those that were extreme in nature (Terrell, 2016). Conditions here referred to the units (that is people, cases/organisations, events, pieces of data) that were of interest to the researcher and the project. These units may exhibit a wide range of attributes, behaviours, experiences, incidents, qualities, situations, and so forth. The technique was chosen for the present study because of the basic principle behind maximum variation sampling, which was to gain greater insights into the phenomenon under study by looking at it from all angles (LoBiondo-Wood et al, 2018). This helped the researcher to identify common themes that were evident across the sample (*Ashin Yoo Kpojei Hesaamɔi* or outing dress styling), vis-à-vis which factors were to be considered in designing the collection in relation to the subculture being studied, the prospective demographics to appeal to, given the concept of the study, and strata of audiences engaged for feedback.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Tools used on the field for data collection included observation and interview guides (Puadi et al., 2021, p. 848). The document review raised questions which helped in analysing the data (photographs) collected noting worthwhile information during the first phase of field work. The structured interview guide/opinionnaire (See

Appendices C & D respectively) was used for collecting data from non-local participants interviewed at the exhibition in Takoradi whereas the semi-structured interview guide was used in collecting data from the local participants in Tema *Manhean* (Flynn & Foster, 2009). The tools were useful in giving an insight into how the audiences thought and felt about a wide variety of issues related to the artefacts used by the maidens and the collection it influenced.

The mentioned instruments were used in conjunction with the catalogue of findings on objects of study and catalogued photo shoots of designs produced showing fit (See Appendix B). Dress mannequins and dummies were used as display tools. Large photo frames (2 by 3 feet) were also used to illustrate visual support of the artefacts during the exhibitions. These allowed effective engagement of the audience during the second wave of data collection but this time on the new artefacts created. Studio research tools included tools and equipment used for the design, pattern and garment construction activities (as shown in Appendix E).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The population studied was not a vulnerable population or people who could not give informed consent. That notwithstanding, permission was sought from the researcher's department (Head of Music department) of the University of Education, Winneba to embark on the current academic exercise (See Introduction letter in Appendix F). Ethical clearance was further sought from the ethics committee of the Takoradi Technical University to engage staff and students of the university community. The consent of other participants who fell within the population studied was sought to put the data collected from them to academic use (Appendix G – Ethical clearance). The rationale for the study was clearly captured on the instruments used for data collection

(See samples of Interview and Opinionaire used shown in the Appendices C & D respectively). It was also clearly explained to the participants (Terrell, 2016) (See Instruments used in Appendices C & D). A document review raised questions which guided the identification, analysis and documentation of the photographs (data) collected from family albums during the initial field activity. Parents' permission was sought orally to use the information collected (including the portraits of their daughters) for academic purposes only. Efforts were made to minimise the extent of the maidens' exposed breasts from the data (photographs) in the report – results under objective one, even though per the maidens' practice it is acceptable and is of public knowledge in the Tema *Manhean* community to see them as portrayed in the photographs (See Results under objective one).

3.8 Trustworthiness and Authenticity

Trustworthiness criteria: One of the most popular criteria for judging the quality of a study located within the qualitative framework is the 'trustworthiness criteria' propounded by Guba (1992, as cited in Kusi, 2012). The elements of the criteria include credibility or authenticity, transferability or fittingness, confirmability and dependability/consistency.

3.8.1 Credibility (confidence, in the 'truth' of findings) of a qualitative study can be ensured through triangulation (Davies & Logan, 2012; Kusi, 2012). This involves the use of two or more methods of data collection in a study of some aspect of human behaviour. Some techniques used are prolonged field engagement, peer debriefing (with experts), and checking with participants, argued Davies and Logan. Employing this strategy helps the researcher to offset the limitations associated with using one method to collect data and to determine the veracity of information gathered.

3.8.2 Transferability of findings as a feature of qualitative research, is equivalent to generalisability of findings in quantitative study. The critics of qualitative studies, especially case studies argue that the findings of such studies are difficult to generalise (Kusi, 2012). This is because such studies according to Kusi (2012) often focus on one instance or a few instances. Typically, qualitative researchers do not aim to generalise the research findings; rather they attempt to enhance understanding of the phenomenon in the place where the study is conducted (Flynn & Foster, 2009). However, it is acceptable for the readers of such study to transfer or apply the findings to individual contexts should they find sufficient similarities between their contexts and the context of the research.

Transferability, according to Davies and Logan (2012) can be assessed by reviewing examples of the data gathered, often in the form of quotations by participants or detailed thick descriptions as observed in the reviews carried out in the present study.

3.8.3 Dependability or consistency of qualitative research findings corresponds to reliability of findings in quantitative research into brackets (Mariam and Associates, 2002 as cited in Kusi, 2012). Dependability of conclusions of qualitative research study is ensured by asking clear questions, reducing bias and subjectivity during data collection; and ensuring triangulating the data. Researchers further suggest peer examination; explanation of researcher's positionality into (whether one is an insider or an outsider researcher); audit trail and report the research process and findings transparently always so as to enhance the dependent ability of one's research findings. It is argued that unlike quantitative studies, it is difficult to generate objective results in qualitative study. This is because, as a qualitative researcher, one is said to be embedded in prejudices and have their own knowledge, values, biases and

conventions which could impact to some extent, on the findings of their study. Therefore, one must endeavor to ensure that the meanings of the data one collects are not changed by one's knowledge and experiences. One must ensure that the results, accepted as the subjective knowledge of the researcher, and as can be traced back to the raw data of their research, that they are not merely a product of the observer's worldview, disciplinary assumptions, theoretical proclivities and research interests' (Charmaz, 1995, p.32 as cited in Kusi, 2012, p. 103). Merriam and Associates (2002) and Schwandt and Halpen (1988) in Kusi note that one can achieve this by using an audit trail, which provides a means of ensuring that constructions could be seen to have emerged directly from the data, thereby confirming their research findings and grounding them in evidence or raw data. In quantitative research, the strategy is referred to as confirmability, and that Kusi argued is equivalent to objectivity in quantitative research.

3.8.4 Triangulation

Triangulation has received much attention in social research in recent times. Kusi (2012) refers to it as the practice of employing several tools (instruments) within the same research design, and serves several purposes in qualitative research. First, it is a useful strategy for validating procedures and results of such studies. Flick (2005) in Kusi (2012) indicates that the strategy enables researchers to address all possible dimensions of a phenomenon, collect sufficient data for advancing knowledge; and address the limitation associated with using a single technique for data collection. However, applying the concept of triangulation does not mean one's study becomes error-free. According to Marvasti (2004, p. 144), 'a more theoretically enlightened approach to triangulation is to see it as a way of adding complexity and depth to the

data and analysis' (as cited in Kusi, 2012, p. 104). Triangulation is a useful technique when a phenomenon is studied through a case study approach, in particular.

The elements of the criteria were all adhered to in the study. To ensure trustworthiness and authenticity the study used qualitative methods such as data collection, analytical plan, dress creation processes, and reporting of results guided by the research designs and specific objectives (Sandelowski 2000 as cited in LoBiondo-Wood et al., 2018). The study contributed to the evidence of the existence of the *Ashin* rite and the use of distinct key dress cultural practices among the *Ga* speaking people of Tema *Manhean* to which little scholarly attention had been given. It further authenticated the outcome of the study, establishing the usefulness of the aesthetic values of the maidens' dress cultural practices in contemporary dress fashion design and practice. Additionally, it offered a creative and credible approach to help underpin contemporary fashion practice, and provided a framework for relatable fashion projects which seek a similar outlook. Triangulation was ensured through the engagement of population with varied demographics (Terrel, 2016) for feedback to increase quality or rigour of the study (Davies & Logan, 2012).

3.9 Data Analysis Plan

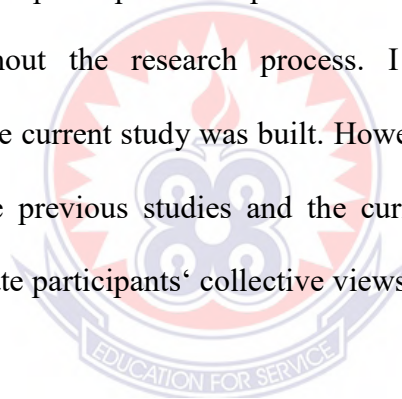
3.9.1 Content/Thematic/Trend Analysis

Thematic and visual content analysis were used to analyse and interpret the data (photographs of maidens) collected and the *KCascades Impressions* brand (Damalie, 2019). Human centred design thinking approach (Miro Team, 2025) and abstract reasoning was widely used in some decision making. For instance, dress design composition was based on manipulation of the motifs derived from the story boards consistent with design practice (Burns et al., 2016; Burke, 2011; Mbonu, 2014).

Visual content and thematic analyses were also carried out in the study. Trend analysis was conducted to identify persistent concepts in the maidens' dress themes consistent with design practice (Nkrumah, 2022; Osae, 2019; Osei, 2021). The method was further applied in identifying and appropriating related materials including fashion fabrics and colours in vogue. Thematic and visual content analysis were similarly used in analysing the outcome of the artefacts produced in the studio.

3.10 Researcher's Reflexivity and Coding of Participants

As a onetime resident of Tema *Manhean*, I recognise that my perspectives about the subculture (*Ashin Yoo Kpeemo*) of *Temamei* could have in a way influenced my interpretations of the participants' experiences. I remained aware of these positionalities throughout the research process. I also carried out foundation researches on which the current study was built. However, there were methodological variations between the previous studies and the current dissertation. Voice quotes were used to substantiate participants' collective views.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Overview

Chapter four of the study consisted of detailed results encompassing all five specific objectives, in an attempt to answer the research questions raised in the first chapter. The chapter covered in-depth (thematic, visual content and trend) exploration of the outcome and further discussions of findings in relation to emerging ideas argued with inferences to relevant literature suggestions.

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Research Objective 1: Major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo* (nobility rite maiden of the people of Tema)

Research question one of the study questioned what the major dress cultural practices (dress cultural practices) were. In all, sixteen (16) photographs of maidens undergoing the initiation rites were gathered from three informants (mothers of *Ashin* rite maidens) in the Tema *Manhean* traditional area of the Greater Accra region of Ghana. In this session, the data (photographs) of *Ashin* (rite) maidens collected were regrouped into four themes to reflect the four stages of use by the maidens namely: *Telekɔmɔ*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (pre-camping, camping, outdoor and post-rites) dress styling respectively. The clothing collected from family albums during the fieldwork constituted the major dress cultural practices used by the maidens as per the dictates of the initiation rite in the stages identified in Figures 4.01 to 4.21.

Stage One: Major dress used for pre-camping (*Telekɔmɔ Hesaamɔi*) are illustrated in Figure 4.01 and Figure 4.02



Figure 4.01 and 4.02: Key dress of Tema *Ashin* (rite) maidens during pre-camping stage.

Source: Damalie, 2018a

Figure 4.01 and Figure 4.02 show images confirmed as maidens of *Ashin Yoo Kpeem* (rite) wearing *Telekɔm* or pre-camping dress. The first of the two images show a pregnant *Ashin Yoo* (rite maiden) seated, and is seen being decorated with body marks (*Nɔɣmã a*) which constitute aspects of *Telekɔm* (pre-camping) dress. The other dress components in Figure 4.02 include red cloths (wae print) and red scarves (*Mama Tsuru* and *Duku Tsuru*) respectively.

The second portrait also in Figure 4.02 shows a group of *Ashin* (rite) maidens in four other variants of red cloths (wae prints), scarves and *Nyanyra* (leaves or wreath) as neck accessories during the pre-camping stage. The preferred colours at this stage as seen in the portraits are red, green, black and white.

Stage Two: *Ashinfɔɔ Hesaamɔi* (camping dress)

An artist's impression of *Ashin Yoo* (maiden) during *Ashinfɔɔ* indicate the prescribed camping dress (as shown in Figure 2.04). The maiden in that portrait is seen in a knee length wrapped skirt of white calico and crossed raffia neck accessories (*Dhorkorfu* - woven raffia leaves). She wears a plaited hair during this stage of the ceremony, and her whole body is drenched with *Ashinmu* (processed oil). Underneath the waist cloth, the maiden wears waist beads and *Bue* (loincloth) during *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping); and the *Ashin tɛ* (rite stone) in the hair molds.

Stage Three: *Kpojiemɔ Stage Hesaamɔi* (outdooring dress)

Major dress cultural practices of *Ga*-speaking women of Tema *Manhean* outdooring stage known as *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooring) are indicated in Figure 4.03 to 4.09. *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooring) is the third stage of the ceremony and the maidens appear in public after days of camping to observe other rituals in privacy.





4.05



4.06

Figures 4.03 - 4.06: A bevy of *Ashin* (rite) maidens during their outdoor ceremony. **Source:** Field Data Ananu Family Album, 2023

Figures 4.03 and 4.04 show a bevy of *Ashin* (rite) maidens during their outdoor ceremony. Maidens are dressed in variants of luxurious hand woven kente and *kete*; busts are either bared or covered; bodies are decorated with spiced green *Krobo*, yellow *Fers* facial marks; necks and limbs are accessorised with strung beads including *Adiagba* (treasured) beads and gold neck jewellery, *Oduku* (headdress) and *Ntah* (anklets).

Figure 4.05 and 4.06 show a bevy of *Ashin* (rite) maidens of different ages (at various stages of development) during their outdoor ceremony on Friday. Maidens are seen dressed in five variants of luxurious loom woven Ghanaian kente and/or *kete*; busts are either bared or covered; maidens' bodies are decorated with spiced green *Krobo*; faces are decorated in petal-like marks in yellow *Fers*; necks and limbs are accessorised with multiple strung beads including *Adiagba* (beads) and gold neck

jewellery; *Oduku* (headdress) are seen embellished with gold hairpins, and feet clad in *Ntah* (anklets).



Figures 4.07 and 4.08: A bevy of *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens in a second appearance.

Source: Field Data Ananu Family Album, 2023

Figures 4.07 and 4.08 show a bevy of *Ashin* (rites) maidens on Friday making a second public appearance in luxurious clothes after their outdoor ceremony earlier in the day. Maidens (siblings) are dressed in two variants of colourful luxurious loom woven Ghanaian Kente and the other relative in exotic sequined velvet; bared and covered bust styles. Their bodies are decorated with spiced *Krɔbɔ* (green smears of the dried fruit), *Fers* (yellow floral) facial marks. They all use neck and limb accessories including multiple strung beads— *Adiagba* (treasured beads) and gold neck jewellery, *Ntah* (anklets) and gold embellished *Oduku* (headdress).



Figure 4.09: *Kpojemɔ* shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens.

Source: Field Data from Ananu Family, 2023

Figure 4.09 shows the shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens (siblings) on display during the *Kpojemɔ* (outdooing) phase. Two variants of colourful luxurious expensive cloths— loom woven Ghanaian kente and exotic sequined velvet; bared and covered bust styles; spiced *Krɔbɔ* (green smeared) decorated bodies, *Fers* (yellow) facial marks, use of neck and limbs beads including *Adiagba* (treasured) strung beads and gold neck jewellery, gold embellished *Oduku* (headdress) and the *Ntah* (anklet) accessories to accentuate the shared look created.

Stage Four: *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (post rite outing) dress

Major dress cultural practices of *Ga* speaking women of Tema *Manhean* post-rite stage is referred to as *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (outing dress). *Kpojei* (post rite outing) dresses are as illustrated from Figure 4.10 to 4.21. It is the last stage of the ceremony and the maidens are free to dress for as long as they desire depending on individual

schedules and wardrobe capabilities. Cloths (wax prints) used by the maidens are not usually repeated during the period.



Figure 4.10: *Ashin* rite maidens (siblings) during their post rite stage of the ceremony.

Source: Field Data from Ananu Family Album, 2023

Figure 4.10 shows *Ashin* (rite) maidens (siblings) during their post rite stage of the ceremony. Maidens are dressed in variants of colourful layered wax print and head scarves have changed to the luxurious *Odasobɔ* (scarves). Covertly, maidens dress on *Atufo* (bustle) and *Bue* (loincloth) and other dress pieces. Covered busts; bodies decorated with green *Krɔbɔ* (smears); yellow *Fers* facial marks; accessorised with strung neck and limbs *Adiagba* beads and gold neck jewellery; *Oduku* (headdress) and the *Ntah* (anklets) are maintained. On display is a wardrobe of wax prints in the basin for their use during the period.



Figures 4.11 and 4.12: *Ashin* maidens (siblings) post rite dress.

Source: Field Data from Ananu Family Album, 2023

Figures 4.11 and 4.12 show the shared *Ashin* (rite) maidens (siblings) during their post rite stage of the ceremony. Maidens are dressed in common colour schemes of variants of colourful layered wax prints on *Atufo* (bustle) and *Bue* (loincloth) foundation garments; covered busts; bodies decorated with spiced *Krobo* (green dried fruit), *Fers* (yellow) facial marks, accessorised with strung neck and limb beads including *Adiagba* (treasured beads) and gold neck jewellery, *Odasobo* (scarf) on molded *Oduku* (headdress) and the *Ntah* (anklets). There is evidence of use of contemporary cosmetics in makeup and fashionable pose.



Figure 4.13 and 4.14: Shared culture of post rites *Ashin* (rite) maidens.

Source: Field Data from Family Albums, 2023

Figures 4.13 and 4.14 show shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens (siblings respectively) on display during the post rite stage of the ceremony. Maidens are dressed in common colour schemes of variants and/or similar colourful layered wax prints on *Atufo* and *Bue* foundation garments; same style of covered busts; bodies decorated with scented *Krɔbɔ*, yellow *Fers* facial marks, accessorised with strung neck and limbs *Adiagba* beads and gold neck jewellery, *Odasobɔ* (scarf) on *Oduku* (headdress) and the *Ntah* (anklets). The curvy hourglass-like shape is on display in a fashionable pose.



Figures 4.15 and 4.16: Evidence of shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens (non-siblings).

Source: Field Data from Ananu Family, 2023

Figures 4.15 and 4.16 adduce evidence of shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens (non-siblings) during the post rite stage of the ceremony. Maidens are seen dressed in common colour schemes of variant colourful layered wax prints. Similarly they feature covered busts; bodies decorated with fragranced *Krɔbo*, *Fers* (yellow) facial marks; maiden's wrap cloths accessorised with strung *Adiagba* (treasured); neck and limbs beads jewellery; *Oduku* (headdress) covered with *Odasobo* (scarves) and *Ntah* (anklets). There is evidence of the blend of modernity in the use of makeup cosmetics and traditionally spiced *Krɔbo* body decoration and facial *Fers* makeup. The maidens are seen in groomed fashionable poses featuring the likeable curvy hourglass-like shape.



Figures 4.17 and 4.18: Evidence of shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens.

Source: Field Data from Ananu Family, 2023

Figures 4.17 and 4.18 show evidence of shared culture of *Ashin* (rite) maidens (siblings) on display during the post rite stage of the ceremony. Maidens are dressed in relatable colour schemes of variant colourful layered wax prints. They feature bodies decorated with spiced *Krɔbo*, yellow *Fers* facial marks, accessorised with multiple strung neck *Adiagba* (treasured) beads jewellery; covered busts; *Oduku* (headdress) covered with *Odasobo* scarves. There is evidence of the use of contemporary cosmetics blended with indigenous spiced *Krɔbo* body decoration and facial *Fers* makeup. The maidens demonstrate confidence in fashionable bust poses.



Figure 4.19: *Ashin* (rite) maiden in colourful layered wax print lifestyle print.

Source: Field Data from Ananu Family, 2023

Figure 4.19 shows an *Ashin* (rite) maiden in colourful layered wax print, another variable of cloth (‘life’) used during the post-rite. Top wrapper is well-secured at the back. Similar covered busts; evidence of the extent of coverage of bodies decorated with spiced *Krɔbo* (green dried fruit), yellow *Fers* facial marks and make up. The maidens use multiple strung *Adiagba* (treasured) beads on neck and blue tubular strung beads on limbs, and gold earrings as jewellery. The *Oduku* (headdress) shapes the *Odasobo* (scarves) worn. The *Ntah* (anklets) and curvy hourglass-like shape remain constant, displayed in fashionable pose.



4.20



4.21

Figure 4.20 and 4.21: Portraits of *Ashin* (rite) constants.

Source: Field Data, 2023

Figure 4.20 and 4.21 are evidence of *Ashin* (rite) maidens' use of colourful material (cloths, headdress, beads and gold jewellery) during outdoor and post-rites stages respectively, regardless of age, and the involvement of mothers. The maidens look all dressed up in similar colourful schemes of yet another variant of layered 'life' wax print and rich Ghanaian kente respectively. The cloths appear well secured around the bust and/or waist of the bodies of the maidens. Maidens show similar style of covered or bared busts; bodies decorated with traditional spiced green *Krɔbo*, yellow *Fers* facial marks; and *Oduku* headdress covered with *Odasobo* scarves.

The use of a lot of colourful *Adiagba* (treasured) beads and gold accessories links the two dressy stages together with common themes; use of the same high quality materials; use of same colour schemes, layering and securing techniques; and the covert use of the *bue* and bustle as foundation garments. There is a covert use of

Atufo (bustle) to achieve the hourglass-like silhouette. Two wrap styles are portrayed – bustier and skirt wrapped, and bodies decorated with spiced green *Krɔbɔ*, yellow *Fers* facial marks; and same *Oduku* (headdress) style. The wax print wrap in Figure 4.21 is double layered while the kente wrap is not. The maiden in wax print has covered the *Oduku* (headdress) with *Odasobɔ* (scarf).

Mothers are heavily involved in the ceremony. A mother of *Ashin* (rite) maidens is seen wearing colourful variant of rich kente cloths during the outdooring of maidens (Figure 4.21). Additionally, the constant silhouettes, materials, colours, accessories, techniques and values are demonstrated in Figures 4.20 and 4.21 respectively. The varied ages of the participating maidens are also demonstrated with both portraits as constants.

Trend Analysis of Findings on Major Dress Practices of Temamei Ashin Yoo

As hinted earlier, the body shape adopted in most (three out of the four) key garments used by *Ashin* (rite) maidens is the hourglass-like body shape. The trend depicts mostly draped bustle styled garments at all the four staged dresses observed. The garments used are mainly of thigh-length bustier top and skirt suit, calf-length bustle skirt, plain skirt, and Capri-length bustier.

The trend further indicates the use of industrialised wax prints, traditional Ghanaian loom woven cloths (*Kente* and *Kete*), calico, acetate, silk and velvet as preferred textile materials. The use of non-conventional materials including reusable old cloths, coir from upholstered waste and old fishing net are also observed. The use of materials from nature such as leaves, edible and inedible fruits, spices, baked clay, processed oil, parrot feathers, twine, and yarn strands in dress also appears to be of relevance in the assemblage of the dress culture practices during the initiation rite.

Key colour trend show colour specifications for each stage; red is used for commencement for initiation, white is used for the purification process, and medley of bright hues are used for post-camping outing dress (*Kpojiemɔ and Kpojei Hesaamɔ*).

The maidens' garment accessories depicted in the trend reveal staples used as *Hao* (strap), the *Atufo* (bustle), underskirt, *Bue* (loincloth), anklets and *Krɔbɔ* (body smears). Key dressing accessories trend observed in the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' dress culture practices is head dress which include plaited hair style, head coverings such as net, scarves and locally-molded wig used alongside hair implants, attachments and enhancement such as stone, and *Oduku*. Forehead and hair jewellery are made with gold. The maidens also use plants and beads as jewellery. Additionally, they use body painting or *Nijmãa* as body décor to complete the *Ashin* (rite) crafted look.

The data suggest both single and double layered wrap techniques as the most frequently used method of construction of the maidens' garments. The trend shows that garments designed have volume, and are structured. The outfits also have enough wearing ease to ensure comfortable fit. As suggested by the data, tying techniques are the most frequently used for the construction of the maidens' garments and beaded jewellery. Multiple accessories are used for emphasis and to render specific effects at desired parts of dress.

Discussion of major dress culture practices of Ashin (rite) maidens

The four uniquely crafted cultural statement artefacts used by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens appear conceptualised with influencers cutting across cultural belief, nature and technology as noted earlier. The integrated design philosophies applied include belief expressed in the custom or *Kusum* of the people of Tema *Manhean*, appreciation of beauty and creative inclinations, and reliance on ancestral skills in dress design as

practiced over decades by *Temamei* for the subcultural dress practices (Damalie, 2018a). Consistent with literature (Evbuomwan et al, 1996), the design strategies applied reflect a complementary blend of original routine design, redesign, and creativity and innovation approaches. The original design of the rite maidens crafted is the *Telekomo* red statement dress; it featured double layered bustle bustier top and skirt wrap. The second design, the white statement dress featured a single layered plain skirt wrap. The third designs created are two; the original silhouette featured the colourful single layered bustle skirt wrap, while the second design featured the subtly introduced single layered Capri-length bustle bustier wrap. The fourth staged design repeated the initial silhouette crafted, featuring the double layered bustle top and skirt wrap.

The first two cases serve as originals using routine design strategy. The third and fourth statement designs emerge as variants of the first originals through creative and innovative manipulation. Although the dress silhouettes appear repeated in two instances such as the double layered bustle bustier top and skirt wrap, and the single layered plain skirt, the materials, colours and accessories used together in each case differ (Damalie, 2018a). These instances make each of the four designs stand out as unique and original. In-depth scrutiny revealed that all three strategies had been engaged in crafting the maidens' five statement artefacts.

Consistent with the literature reviewed on the major dress culture practices of the *Ashin* rite maidens (Figures 2.02 to 2.05), the product development paradigms observed reflect both simple, exaggerated, and fashionable dress design practices. Production methods adopted include economy in cut, free sizing and techniques used (drape, wrap, layer, and tie) which encourage manipulation of materials and

application of sustainable practices. The procedure creates opportunity for individual creativity and customization practices alongside modified looks as observed in Figure 4.09.

Evidently, the looks of the maidens in all the three silhouettes from *Telekɔmɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (maidens' outing dresses) in the literature as well as the current data show that the techniques of crafting the hourglass body shape remain a constant preference. Mode of construction involved structures of wrapping, layering, securing the wrapped cloths with *Hao* (strap) as illustrated in the photographs reviewed. The blend of colourful beads and gold ornaments used as preferred jewellery is also evident. The countenance of groups of maidens' photographs collected further display not only a dress culture of opulence but also of poise by its patrons. Their facial expressions as seen from the data shown in both the literature reviewed and the new findings were indicative of the acceptance of the ancient phenomena (the *Ashin* rite) and the accompanying dress cultural practices as *Kusum* (tradition) which has been creatively impacted by modernity.

4.1.2 Research Objective 2: Symbolism and socio-cultural relevance of the major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (rite).

Critical observation of the data suggested the symbolic relevance of the maidens' dress cultural practices as means of expressing identity, status, and alligiance to their culture. They also use the dress culture practices for attraction, to provide physical and spiritual protection beyond the period of the cleansing rite. Additionally, the data suggested the use of specific statement dress during each of the four stages of their initiation into womanhood (*Ashin Kpeemɔ*). The use of specific staples such as the the *Bue* (loincloth) symbolically underscore the integrity of the maidens during the

rite (*Ashin Kpeemo*). The data further showed the preference for specific details such as types of silhouettes, materials, colours, accessories, fragrance, looks, and dress types thematically associated with specific stage(s) of the ceremony, connoting various messages to both participants about themselves and to other observers.

Use of themed statement dress: The *Ashin* (rite) maidens dress in variants of symbolic red statement dress purposefully used during commencement of the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (nobility rite) as shown in Figure 4.01 and Figure 4.02. The nobility maidens' use of the red colour cloth is customary (*Kusum*). It is a way of identifying them as initiates. The choice of the bold red artefacts further communicate readiness to start the initiation rites (*Ashin Telekomo*) to patrons in the community.

The case is however different for the *Ashinforo* dressing, during which the *Ashin* (rite) maidens depict symbolic customary white statement dress to signal the long purification stage. The distinct knee length skirt wrap is made from unstitched plain white calico without the use of the bustle at this point as shown in Figure 2.03.

Furthermore, the emblematic colourful cultural or exotic nobility rite statement dress as shown in Figures 4.03 to 4.09 signal the celebratory completion of the *Ashin* ritual during *Kpojiemo* (outdooing ceremony). The data in Figures 4.06, 4.07 and 4.08 show two distinct dress forms associated with *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens at this point as bustle skirt wrap and bustle bustier wrap using luxurious traditional woven Ghanaian Kente or an equally luxurious velvet alternative, also signifying family worth (status). The use of the bustle skirt wrap in particular is *Kusum* and therefore mandatory at this stage.

The *Kpojei* (post rite) stage equally witness the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' final statement dress using colourful classic double layered bustle bustier wrap on ankle length skirt wrap dress to signal their newly earned privileged status as cleansed women during the unrestricted post rite stage.

Visual Content Analysis of Major Dress Culture Practices of Ashin (rite) maidens

The data collected suggested that the *Ashin* (rite) maidens featured different body types and they are at varied developmental stages. However, *Ashin* (rite) tradition demands that they adopt the hourglass-like shape which body type required prominent bust and hips with a narrowed waistline. To achieve that desired shape, each maiden's upper torso is left unpadded, while the lower part is padded with locally-made bustle (*Atufo*) and underskirt to attain the preferred sensual feminine hourglass-like effect. Thus, regardless of their age, each maiden posed the symbolic body silhouette of a woman; sensual and attractive feminine identity of the *Ashin* ritual.

In all, three out of four of the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' symbolic statement dress were of bustle dress wrap styles. The locally-made hip pad *Atufo* (bustle) is effectively used to achieve the bustle dress shape as it is worn specifically at the small of the back towards the side of the hips, with narrowing ends at the front to create the exaggerated hips desirable of the *Ashin Yoo* (nobility rite maiden).

The garments formed consist of combination of layered bustle bustier top and skirt wraps, using wax print designs as shown typically adopted by participants at the *Telekomo* (pre rites) stage. The red cloths used at that stage indicate characteristically bright red hue backgrounds. While the motifs or patterns in the surface designs appear relatively insignificant in this case, they do introduce other colours to the palette. Albeit, those colours introduced give more prominence to the preferred symbolic red

background colour as it stands out to draw the attention of observers and announce the maidens.

The unstitched selvages and cut edges of the bustle wrapped-around garments are particularly notable in Figures 4.10 to 4.21. The volume of the garment and wearing ease allowed from the use of the bustle (*Atufo*) are obvious in Figures 4.07 and 4.08 which partially reveal the back view of the rite maidens. The wrapped clothes are traditionally secured with straps known as *Hao*. The covert cloth straps play an even more significant role of snatching in and defining the waistline, thereby emphasising curved lines in the body shape of the maidens that tend to convey a sense of femininity symbolic of the initiation dress code. Its use as a key dress accessory is significant in the assembly of the draped cloth pieces. Meanwhile, underneath the maidens' wrapped cloths, cloth underskirts are used in shaping and influencing the overall hang of the outer bustle garment.

The maidens wear matching red head scarves at this stage as shown in Figures 4.01 and 4.02. Underneath the scarf, the *Ashin Yeï* (nobility rite maidens) wear their hair in plaits which further influence the mold of the scarf. The wearing of arm and wrist beads, small black and white rocaille beads around the ankles, as well as green *Nyanya* (leaves/ garland) around the neck goes a long way to complement and contextualize the bustle garment. While the dress accessories form the core part of the garment, the dressing accessories complement their style of dressing.

The maidens depict distinct look and fragrance as a shared culture during *Telekomo* (pre-rite) as shown in Figures 4.01 and 4.02. This include apart from the red clothed bustle styled garment, naturally scented green *Krɔbo* (paste made from dried inedible fruit) body decoration which they also used as skin enhancer. The colour adds a green

hue to the maidens' shared colour story. The upper torso of the maidens also feature white dots made from baked white clay (*Ayilo*). The white dots are evenly made on dark clove-stained contrasting backgrounds. The maidens show obeisance of the rule not to wear footwear, as tradition (*Kusum*) demands.

***Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) dress**

Two strands of *Ɖmorkofu* (olive green woven raffia), oiled body (*Ashinmu*) and hair styled in molds as seen in Figure 2.03 are used to complement the white wrapped skirt during *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping). The *Ashin tɛ* (ritual stone) carried within the hair creates interesting molds on the head. A maiden wearing short hair style had her head covered using fishing net (*Yaa*) in order to carry the mandatory *Ashin tɛ* (purification stone) on the head. The knee-length skirt wrap made from unstitched white calico is secured with *Hao* (strap) as a key dress accessory.

The pure white skirt wrap signals the quest to purify the maidens. Albeit, it could be observed as a symbol of the victory envisaged for participating maidens (A. Tetteh, personal conversation, May, 2024). The unstitched nature of the cloth used allows for future use. The maidens' bodies are exfoliated using the body oil (*Ashinmu*), made from the processed palm fruit oil, which is unrelentingly applied for four days to cleanse the maidens of dirt (spiritual and physical).

***Kpojiemɔ* (outdooring ceremony) dress of *Ashin* (rite) maidens**

Additionally, the maidens repeat the single layered bustle bustier wrap using gorgeous bright coloured exotic embellished velvet bustle bustier wraps. Eight variants of traditional loom woven cloths are revealed in the data. Apart from the varied traditional woven Asante Kente, striped Ewe *Kete* is also used by some maidens (Figures 4.06, 4.07 & 4.08) to signal appreciation for rich Ghanaian traditions. The

use of sequined velvet further shows the importance attached to distinct selection of materials (that is textiles) with exotic sensibilities.

Thus, unlike the bold red background or plain white colours symbolically associated with the pre-camping and camping stages respectively, a medley of bright colours are apparently preferred during the *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooing ceremony) of the maidens to reflect the theme and significance of the ceremony at each stage.

The bustle garment wrap styles used at this stage are of two different options. The data suggested that the maidens' use equally expensive and elaborate cloth variants with even more interesting surface detailing during the outdooing ceremony in particular. The motifs or patterns in the surface designs in the Kente and *Kete* cloths are illusionary and relatively small creating alluring looks.

Like the previous fabrics used in the three stages analysed, the cut edges of the cloths used at this stage are unstitched. The *Atufo* (bustle) and the strap (*Hao*) work together as key dress accessories used in shaping and securing the wrapped-around cloth respectively; they help portray the exaggerated hip which in effect form the curvy hourglass-like shape as shown in the *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooing ceremony) portraits.

The maidens' style of head dress during the outdooing ceremony differs completely from the other two stages described earlier. As shown in the literature and present findings (Figures 4.03 to 4.09), the *Ashin Yei* (nobility rite maidens) wear the *Oduku* headdress. It is a local black molded 'wig' made up from up cycled upholstered coir strands sparsely covered in black hair plaiting yarns to add texture. The head dress worn in a 'dancing crown' style is decorated with gold ornaments as seen in the portraits (Figures 4.03 to 4.09).

Notwithstanding the use of hair ornaments, the rite maidens wear a blend of colourful strung local *Adiagba* (treasured) beads and gold ornaments on their necks, arms and wrists. The maidens' dangling gold earrings, matched with the gold necklaces and unique pendants. Variety of strung *Adiagba* (treasured beads) also adorn their necks including the typical short strung neck beads called *Fliwa*; a must-wear strung neck beads for the maidens as seen in the portraits. They also wear blue tubular arm beads with corn cobs details, and about eight rows of assorted wrist beads arranged in an orderly manner (starting with thinner or smaller sizes from the wrist bone upwards). Additionally, the maidens wear the queen of anklets, *Ntah*; a symbolic pair of dressing accessories without which they fall short of expectation. The *Ntah* (anklets) feature a protective twine (*Hlorkp̄ā*), assortment of specific beads and orange parrot feathers, one on each anklet.

The seemingly bare body parts of the maidens such as the upper torso, arms and feet decorated with the green scented *Kr̄b̄* (inedible dried green fruit) are also used to enhance the maidens' skin and added aura to their presence as done during the pre-rites stage. Additional emphasis is placed on the face using facial décor using the floral motifs made with radiant yellow *Fers* (pigment) worn on contemporary foundation is introduced at this stage. Additionally, the maidens shaped their eyebrows and wore facial contouring. Together, these create a fabled look. The *Fers* floral motifs, as shown, repeated on the chest and back of the maidens add texture and create illusionary coverage depicting lacy fabric. The glowing skin creates a solid foundation for the body and facial décor as a result of exfoliation carried out during camping. As illustrated earlier, these distinct dressing accessories form part of the total cultural statement look crafted for the maidens. They top that up with their well-

known traditional signature body fragrance customised for them during the ceremony. The maidens walk bare footed as custom demands, even at that celebratory stage.

Figures 4.10 to 4.21 show one distinct dress type adopted by the *Ashin yei* (nobility rite) maidens during the *Kpojei* (post-rites outings). As seen in the portraits cited, the *Ashin yei* (rite maidens) wear double layered bustle-shaped bustier top and skirt wraps. Their typical shared look during the final stage of the ritual show the use of exceptionally impressive classic statement dress; the star of the dress are the classic materials used including industrialised wax prints and the unique colours adopted.

The dressing accessories used at each stage create a unique cultural outlook. This unique statement dress is a status signifier; that is, the distinct style of expensive *Adiagba* (treasured bead necklaces) and *Ntah* (queen of anklets of the maidens embellished with parrot feathers) combination as seen in Figures 4.10 to 4.21. Figures 4.03 to 4.06 on the other hand show an even more exciting combination of themed gold hair pins, forehead jewellery and gold necklace with pendants used as dressing accessories.

Figures 4.10 to 4.21 show *Ashin* (rite) maidens during the post rite stage (*Kpojei*). The garment wraps used at this stage consist of only one design option. The maidens are seen in double layered bustle dress; the thigh-length bustle bustier top is draped to fall over bustle skirt wrap using classic industrialised wax prints. Here again, the cloths worn over the exaggerated hips project the feminine hourglass silhouette. Besides, unlike the outdoor styling which required the use of Ghanaian hand woven cloth and exotic alternatives, only colourful African wax prints are used during the post rites. However, lifestyle prints (that is innovative colourful wax prints without names) are patronised alongside the popular or classic ones as seen in Figures

4.19 and 4.20. Both small and relatively large patterned cloths are patronised to make emphatic illusionary statements using dress as demonstrated in the portraits in Figures 4.10 to 4.21.

The cut edges of the cloths are unstitched as usual, and the cloths are consistently secured using straps (*Hao*) as key dress accessories as illustrated in the previous portraits illustrated. Beyond that, the cloth strap is also used purposefully to shape the wrapped-around cloth to achieve the feminine hourglass-like shape.

The maidens' head gear adds yet another twist to their head styles during the post-rite dressing. The symbolic culturally-chic statement head wear consists of the legendary eco-friendly *Oduku* (local black molded 'wig') which at this point serves as a foundation item for tying the *Odasobɔ* (silk scarf). The tied headdress style notably falls further from the hairline framing the face of the maiden. The maidens' use of the cultural bead outlook blended with glamorous gold details is remarkable like the other set pieces of statement dress associated with the *Kpojiemɔ* (outing) stage described. The dress styles combine expensive *Adiagba* (treasured bead) necklaces, with incredible *Ntah* (queen of anklets of the maidens embellished with parrot feathers), and a blend of gold to complement the look. The outlooks respectively crafted, creatively add on to the varied paradigms of dress where in each case tradition and exotic culture are either seen intricately interwoven and/or projected side by side to tell unique cultured stories.

The maidens' bare upper torso, arms and feet are creatively smeared with the aromatic green *Krɔbɔ* (inedible dried fruit) used to enhance their skin tone and add to the aura they bring to bear on viewers as done during the pre-rites stage. There is equally emphasis on their glowing skin, and facial décor which feature floral motifs made

from radiant yellow pigment (*Fers*) worn on contemporary foundation. The maidens also wear modern shaped eye brows and facial contours. The *Fers* floral motifs are repeated on the chest and back of the maidens. These distinct dressing accessories form patterns and serve as part of the total cultural statement look crafted for the maidens for the post-rite outing in particular. The rite maidens wear their traditional signature fragrance customised for them during the ceremony. As shown in the portraits, the maidens adhere to the restriction of not wearing footwear; thus walking bare footed, and in touch with nature.

Discussion of Findings

Symbolically speaking, the major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (nobility rite) observed are four statement dress. Critical observation of the data suggested the use of themed statement dress specific for each of the four stages in their initiation into womanhood (*Ashin Kpeemo*) (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie & Essel, 2024). The maidens' dress culture practices served as a authoritative means of expressing their identity, status, and allegiance in addition to providing physical protection (Tajuddin, 2018) as well as spiritual protection. The findings revealed striking visual differences regarding dress details (materials, colour and dressing accessories) that set each themed dress of the maidens apart from the other, albeit there are similarities in form and techniques (drape, wrap, layering, tying and structuring) used in the assemblage of the details. There is preference for specific details regarding types of silhouettes, use of conventional and non-conventional materials, rich colour story, interesting dress and dressing accessories, body fragrance, customised and shared looks, and dress types thematically associated with specific stage(s) of the ceremony, which conveyed bold statements; implicit and explicit messages on the world view of dress of *Temamei* to both initiation participants and

observers alike. This is consistent with literature. According to Damalie (2018a), the hourglass-like body shape remains constant in the look of the maidens' outing dress styles. The readings further indicate that the fabled look crafted for the *Ashin* (rite) maidens with each staged dress set them apart from the other female initiation dress cultural practices observed in Ghana (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie & Essel, 2024).

It is instructive to note that the *Ashin Yei* (nobility maidens') showy cultural statement dress are symbolic status signifiers which underscore family wealth and worth depicted by the maidens during the post-rites activities (Damalie, 2018a; G. Ananu, personal communication, May 11, 2024). Whilst it is seen as a bragging right by mothers especially, the use of the distinct dresses makes them attractive, and also adds to the delightful colour palettes preferred by individual maidens on that occasion.

It is also important to note the usefulness of the *Atufo* (bustle) as not only a staple item during public outings; it is purposefully used to secure as well as shape the wrapped-around cloth to achieve the "ideal" feminine hourglass-like shape (Eryazici & Çoruh, 2015; Kindersley, 2012, p. 432). Indeed, its use together with underskirt further performs the job of a "farthingale" (Kindersley, 2012, p. 433). This is observable in the process of wrapping the cloth around the body of the maidens over the *Atufo* (bustle) where adequate room of wearing ease (volume) is created using movements (Awo Diin, Personal communication, February 24, 2024). This additionally ensures a good hang of the outer garment in use. *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens continue to use the bright red and white loincloth (*Bue*) mentioned earlier as

panties even as it gets introduced as an overt dressing accessory (Damalie & Essel, 2024, p.10).

4.1.3 Research Objective 3: Create a collection of feminine occasional wear inspired by the aesthetics aspects of the major dress culture practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*), and catalogue it as a tool for teaching and learning.

Six key activities culminated into realising the research objective of creating the collection of occasional feminine wear. The human centred design approach with iterative design model framework has become the way to design based on design thinking (Miro Team, 2025). The *Synthesis* model (Figure 2.10, p. 145) influenced by the study underpinnings was developed to empathise – understand the user’s needs; define – identify the design problem; ideate - explore various solutions; prototype – create a low-scale representations of solutions; test -test each solution and refine and implement – implementation of solution in real-life (Miro Team, 2015).

The processes began with market and fashion research which guided the study in first identifying the user(s) - female tourist(s) who visit Tema and environs) and her need. It also guided the trend analysis of aesthetic aspects -silhouettes, key materials, colours, accessories, techniques and values - within the three major outing dress culture practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*) suggested in the data collected. These were clustered together as a theme/mood board to drive inspiration in relation to the understanding of the user’s need (Mbonu, 2014). A brief was developed to capture the understanding derived, and the deliverables thereof based on planning, production and promotional needs of the collection as indicated on the *Synthesis* model developed for the study (Figure 2.10, p.145). The product

development and style selection, and production of the designs conceptualized followed the creative design activities.

4.1.3i Creative design process

The creative design process involved a summary of the proposed design in a brief. This was followed by the profiling of the customer representing the target market for whom the designs were to be created (Mbonu, 2014). Story or concept boards for the ideation, including mood /theme board, trends, colour, and motif boards were organised to reflect the abstraction of ideas for the composition of designs.

A. Design brief

Table 1: FƐOOYƆƆ design brief

Theme	<i>GATEMAMEI NOBILITY RITE OUTING DRESS / ASHIN YOO KPEEMƆ KPOJEI HESAAMƆI (TAYKK-H)</i>
Influencing Brand	<i>KCASCADDES IMPRESSIONS, 2019</i>
Title	<i>FƐOOYƆƆ – Blending tradition with style</i>
Design Purpose	Design, develop, produce, and promote a cohesive conceptualised <i>Ga</i> destination-inspired dress collection influenced by aesthetic aspects of a less known existing practice in Ghanaian dress culture among <i>Temamei</i> , and catalogue the outcome for the purpose of teaching and learning. The rationale was to place the said culture in the spotlight of world fashion.
Promotional Philosophy	# Millennial fashion forward female consumers (fashion innovators) dressy occasional lifestyle dress category; age range 26 – 56 years.
Target Market	High end Female Millennial, Tourist, Large to Plus size figure.
Customer Demographics and Psychographics	Culturally-inclined Millennial, fashion forward female consumer yearning for dress fashion of hourglass silhouette; fashion innovator, adventurous and love to travel to Africa [Ghana]; precisely to the port city of Tema and its environs in Ghana.
Value Proposition of the brand/ Design Problem	Elegant Designer labelled Lifestyle <i>Haute Couture</i> Brand; Softly tailored, user-friendly ‘New Dressy Culturally-inclined Need’ that blends tradition with exquisite style that makes the client look

	gorgeous.
Design Thinking	Human centred with iterative design approach (Miro Team, 2025) embedded in the <i>Synthesis</i> model.
Price Point	Designer label.
Designer Responsibility	Researcher - creative director, developer, producer and promoter.
Preferred Silhouette	The adorable hourglass shape
Concepts	Ten (10)

Table 2: F&OYD design brief continued

Deliverables/ Design Requirements	Dress suits, Separates, Items – head scarves, self-belts, with matching accessories such as jewellery, and footwear.
Colours	Medley of colours – Red/ Black /White /Green; Gold/ Yellow/ Orange/ Black Green/ Royal Blue/ Purple / Peach /White.
Fashion Fabrics	Cotton Industrialised/African imitated wax prints, indigenous loom woven Kente & imitated print brands, <i>Lisa</i> Satin, Synthetics (laces, net), Eco-friendly findings – use of unconventional gift wrappers & nets as useful dress materials.
Motifs/ Patterns	Dots, lines, drapery lines, circles, waves, foams, vegetation, animals, and birds.
Themes	All three outing dress style details: Fashion fabrics, Colours, Trims, Accessories, Body marks, Looks, Designs, and Styles.
Trimmings	Findings (feather, twine, nettings), ornamental buttons, zips, fashion fabric bow tie, organza trims, <i>bue</i> trims; bow ties, net trims, and bow tie, sequins, stones, pearls, beads and strip bindings.
Volume (Scope of collection)	From a little over a dozen to saturation point of 20 due to exciting emerging concepts (10).
Photo shoots	In studio May/June, 2023.
Presentations	Two Exhibitions of collection, Catalogue, Photo frames, mannequin display and Digital slide show.
Exhibition Timelines	January, 2024 – May, 2024
Locations	Takoradi, Tema <i>Manhean</i> , Winneba

B. Customer profile




Figure 4.23: The customer profile

Figure 4.23 is the customer profile showing one of six selected models, Grace Oghenevo, representing the fashion forward customer accessed, and her brand associates. Grace is inspired by nature. She is a fashion forward personality who loves beauty in totality. She is equally passionate about Africa, particularly Ghana and Ghanaian hospitality which resonates with our culture. Grace is an Oriflame brand ambassador. In her line of business, she meets a lot of various people across the age and lifestyle spectrum, plus she is culturally inclined hence the decision to sample her as the customer for this ethno-centric brand. Her lifestyle preferences description as captured in the collage in Figure 4.23 suggested that she is focused on mixing business with pleasure, besides she is comfortable with innovation, creativity and technology.

Grace is a tourist from Nigeria in need of an elegant designer labelled lifestyle *haute couture* brand which is user-friendly and culturally-inclined that blends tradition with exquisite style; that which makes her look gorgeous. Nigerians were reported among the top three nationalities who visited Ghana in 2023 (GTA, 2023; Statista Tourist arrivals by Origin, 2023).

C. Ideation stages

Table 3: Ideation boards for FƐOOYƆƆ conceptual dress fashion collection

1.1 MOOD/THEME BOARD FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: SOFTLY DRAPED CUSTOMISED DRESS SYMBOLIC OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN DURING ASHIN YOO KPEEMƆ (RITE).</i>	
MAIDENS/ MODELS: CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 26 – 56 AND ABOVE YEARS	STATUS SIGNIFIER/ SYMBOLIC/ RELEVANT
DRESS CATEGORY: LEISURE /DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
MOOD/THEME BOARD	
	<p>Maidens' outing dress used during <i>Telekɔmɔ</i> pre-camping; <i>Kpojiemɔ</i> - outdoor and <i>Kpojei</i> - post-rites of the ceremony.</p> <p>These phases were seen as themes during the design phase. Tema Manhean is sited along the coast on the Greenwich Meridian. The sea and its attributes also contributed to design features abstracted for the collection during the ideation stage.</p>

Theme board is described as a way to dump out a designer's most raw bits of inspirations (Kuupole, 2020). The collection was inspired by aesthetic aspects of three dress culture practices including looks created for *Temamei Ashin* (rite) maidens

during the outing stages of the *Ashin Kpeemo* or initiation as illustrated in Table 3. Materials (including fabrics), body décor, silhouettes, accessories, colours and techniques used in creating design details of the maidens and looks were all considered at this stage. The board further served as the mood board as the countenances of the maidens were also considered in categorising the designs in the collection for specific occasions.

The Atlantic Ocean is a key resource of *Temamei*. It is the most reliable source of occupation from their past to present, as they rely on it for fishing. The fishing season is also linked to the *Ashin* rites. It is the time of economic boost for *Temamei*, besides fish serves as a big component in cooking for the maidens. That link is thus upheld but also for its aesthetic contribution to the ideation/ creative design process. This key resource and its attributes and worth were considered a valuable aspect of the theme board and for that matter the collection to be created.


The images in Table 4 show the trends, colour palette and motif boards respectively for the collection to be created. The trends board illustrates the *KCI 2019* cross cultural brand. Design features of *KCI 2019* were considered as influencers of the new need fashioned. They were modified in line with the overarching project objective, theme, the clients' and their environment needs.

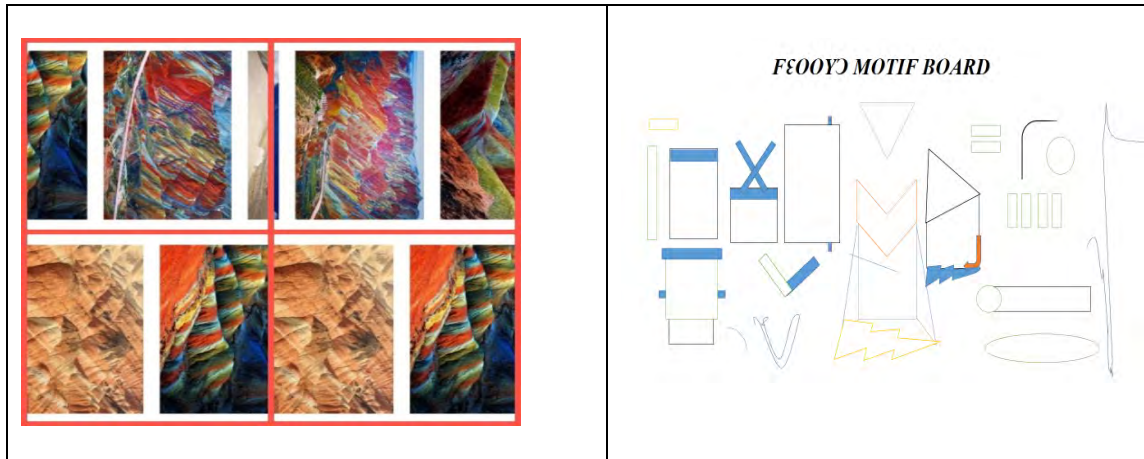
A colour board is truly about the mood one hoped to create (Kuupole, 2020). A colour board is all about colours, as such it illustrates the colour story: colours extracted from the theme and fashion trends boards for the collection; colour palette: the actual colours selected within these colours to produce the brand, and colour ways: optional colours which could have been used to produce the brand. The colour story in Table 4 inspired the collection. The motif board is also shown in Table 4. It shows the outlines, and shapes extracted from the theme and trends boards. These

were further manipulated to develop style details such as dress silhouettes, necklines, sleeves, hems and other cut details the designs in the collection created as illustrated in the design boards in Tables 5 to 8.

D. Trends/ Colour/ Motifs board

Table 4: Trends board

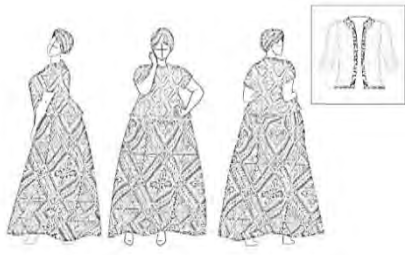
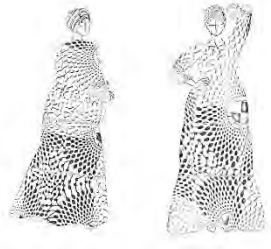


1.2 TRENDS BOARD— FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WITH CROSS-CULTURAL SENSIBILTIES MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMERS/MODELS: LARGE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 26 – 30 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
TRENDS BOARD	
	
<i>KCI 2019</i> Design features of KCI were considered as influencers of the new need fashioned.	
COLOUR PALETTE	MOTIF BOARD



E. Design boards

Table 5: Design board

1.3i DESIGN BOARD FOR FEOOYO CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL 'NEW NEED' WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMERS /MODELS: LARGE TO PLUS SIZE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 26 – 56 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: LEISURE /DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN BOARD - No.: F-D1 MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL No.:F-D2 YOO KPAKPA	
No.: F-D3 AKUSHIKA	No.: F-D4 SHIKA NUBU

 <p>Three fashion sketches of long, patterned dresses with a geometric or floral motif. A small inset sketch shows a top-down view of a garment.</p>	 <p>Two fashion sketches of long, patterned dresses with a dense, intricate pattern. One is shown from the back, and the other from the front.</p>
<p>No.: F-D5 NIÐMAA</p>	<p>No.: F-D6 MLISTA-NIÐMAA</p>
 <p>Three fashion sketches of long, patterned dresses with a dense, intricate pattern, shown from different angles.</p>	 <p>Three fashion sketches of long, patterned dresses with a dense, intricate pattern, shown from different angles.</p>

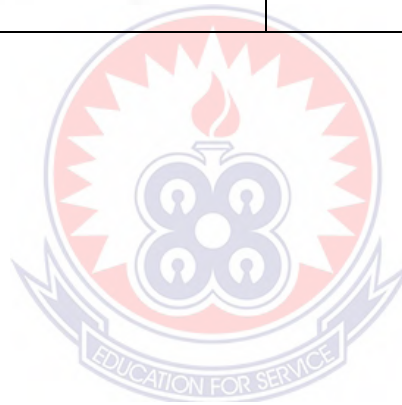


Table 6: Design board continued


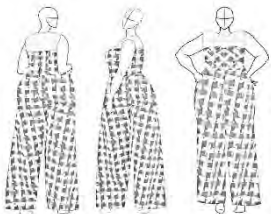




1.3ii DESIGN BOARD FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMERS /MODELS: LARGE TO PLUS SIZE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 26 – 56 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: LEISURE /DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN BOARD - No.: F-D7 NIƆMAA-CHIC	No.: F-D8 TSILE LOOWU
	
No.: F-D9 AAYOO	No.: F-D10 ODEHE
	
No.: F-D11 ANUƆYAM	No.: F-D12 OWULA
	

Table 7: Design board continued



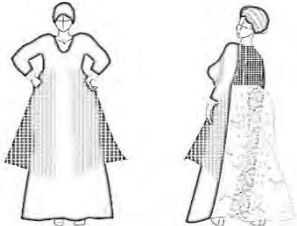







1.3iii DESIGN BOARD FOR FƐOOYOO CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMERS /MODELS: LARGE TO PLUS SIZE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 26 – 56 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: LEISURE /DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN BOARD - No.: F-D13 OBLA KPAAD	No.: F-D14 BLEMA KE AKPAAKO
	
No.: F-D15 OBLA YOO	No.: F-D16 WALA YOO
	
No.: F-D17 ADIAGBA	No.: F-D18 MANYE YOO
	

Table 8: Design board continued

1.3iv DESIGN BOARD FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMERS /MODELS: LARGE TO PLUS SIZE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 26 – 56 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: LEISURE /DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN BOARD - No.: F-D19 MANYE YOO	No.: F-D20 AHUƆ KE YAA WULAMƆ
	
No.: F-D21 AHUƆ KE YAA WULAMƆ	No.: F-D22 KPLEMƆ
	

Source: Studio - Data Digital sketches from Work Book, 2023


The design boards in Tables 5 to 8 played a dual role— illustration of all the twenty designs that make the *FƐOOYƆƆ* collection and style board depicting tangible accessories to be used. The boards contains two and three dimensional sketches of all the twenty designs that make the *FƐOOYƆƆ* collection. The sketches show all details

including silhouettes, style lines and cuts intended to be seen in the collection. The sketches shown illustrate silhouettes, textures, motifs, and lines derived from the theme and trends boards that serve as sources of inspiration. The *Ga* names ascribed to each design as depicted reflect the various concepts and components of the sources so identified as influencers.

4.1.3ii Design/Product development and style selection

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* conceptual dress fashion collection is a destination-inspired conceptual dress fashion motivated by dress cultural practices of marginalised *Ga* women of Tema *Manhean*. Table 9 illustrates the specification (spec) sheets for the *FɛOOYɔɔ* conceptual dress fashion collection. Prior to that, three out of seven concepts tested as prototypes were illustrated on spec sheets (See appendices). Each document consisted of two dimensional views of the design sketch, the fit-model's measurement, patterns required, the fashion fabric and other related materials used in the production of the costume, with quantities and prices. Adobe illustrator (AI, 2023) was used in sketching the *FɛOOYɔɔ* designs. These served as a guide for production; including pattern engineering as they showed the constructional details required in the making of the designs (Adrich, 2012; Joseph-Armstrong, 2014).



Table 9: Spec sheet for *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* (F-D1) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D1 SPEC SHEET FOR <i>Fɛ00Yɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION																			
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL „NEW NEED“ WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>																			
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE																		
AGE RANGE: 40 – 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST																		
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED																		
DESIGN TITLE: MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL	DESIGN No.: F-D1																		
LARGE SIZE / BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH																		
Neck	15 ¾”																		
Shoulder to Shoulder	16”																		
Nape to Waist	15 ¾”																		
Dress Length	50”																		
Across Back	16”																		
Bust	43”																		
Waist	38”																		
Hip/ Seat	43”																		
Sleeve Length/ Cuff	23” /10”																		
Side Seam	38”																		
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)																		
 <p>Material(s) / Fashion fabric: Golden yellow <u>‘City hotel‘</u> wax print (Cloth seller 1, 2023), polyester lining, fish string, and horse hair.</p> <p>Fabric swatch</p>	<table> <tbody> <tr> <td><u>‘City hotel‘</u> wax print</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polyester lining</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reel of Fish string</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A yard of Horse hair</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>550</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>750</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>‘City hotel‘</u> wax print	250	Polyester lining	60	Reel of Fish string	20	A yard of Horse hair	20	Sewing Notions	100	Components, Trims & Findings	100	Production Cost	550	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	750
<u>‘City hotel‘</u> wax print	250																		
Polyester lining	60																		
Reel of Fish string	20																		
A yard of Horse hair	20																		
Sewing Notions	100																		
Components, Trims & Findings	100																		
Production Cost	550																		
Cost of Labour	200																		
Cost of Dress	750																		

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
<p>Dress Front Bodice</p> <p>Back Bodice</p> <p>Front & Back of Skirt</p> <p>Main sleeve & attachments</p> <p>Belt</p>	<p>Operation/ Machine Style Recommended./ Stitch & Seam Type</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining & topstitching</p> <p>Plain Seams inside</p> <p>Horse hair application on hem for desired hang</p> <p>Full Lining of front wraps</p> <p>Key hole on left side seam of front bodice as outlet for attached belt from right side</p> <p>Dramatic left placed over front wrap.</p>



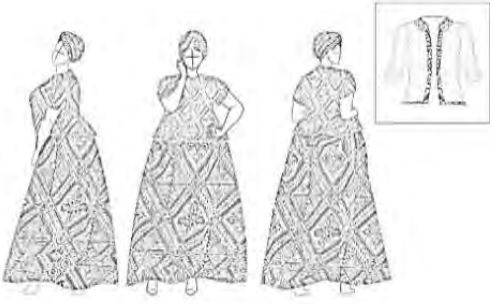
Table 10: Spec sheet for *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* (F-D2) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D2 SPEC SHEET FOR <i>Fɛ00Yɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 – 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURISTS
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>YOO KPAKPA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D2
LARGE SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 15 ¾'	
Nape to Waist 15 ¾'	
Shoulder to Shoulder 16'	
Dress Length 50'	
Across Back 8'	
Bust 43'	
Waist 38'	
Hip/ Seat 43'	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 23' /10'	
Side Seam 38'	
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)
Materials/ Fashion fabric: Organza, <i>Lisa</i> , and <i>Yoo Kpakpa</i> (<i>Obaapa</i>) (Awo Diin, Personal conversation, 2023) wax print.	Organza 100
	<i>Lisa</i> 60
	<i>Yoo Kpakpa</i> (<i>Obaapa</i>) wax print 250
	Notions 20
	Components, Trims & Findings 20
	Production Cost 450
	Cost of Labour 200
	Cost of Dress 650
Fabric Swatches	

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
<p>Front & Back Blouse</p> <p>Sleeve</p> <p>Front & Back Inner blouse</p> <p>Wrap skirt</p> <p>Waist band</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Fix pearls on round neckline</p> <p>Fix pearls on elasticated lace on cuff of sleeves</p> <p>5' zipper back opening</p> <p>Fix back button and hole on waistband</p> <p>Turn a lay to add weight to skirt hem.</p>



Table 11: Spec sheet for *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* (F-D3) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D3 SPEC SHEET FOR <i>Fɛ00Yɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION															
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>															
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE														
AGE RANGE: 50 – 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST														
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT														
DESIGN TITLE: <i>AKUSHIKA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D3														
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH														
Neck 15 ½”															
Shoulder to Shoulder 16”															
Nape to Waist 15 ¾”															
Dress Length 53”															
Across Back 15 ¾”															
Bust 42”															
Waist 38”															
Hip/ Seat 46”															
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 23”/10”															
Side Seam 38”															
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)														
Materials/ Fashion fabrics: <i>Ntenfre</i> wax print <i>Krɔbɔ</i> green, royal blue, and orange coloured <i>Ntenfre</i> wax print (Awo Diin, Personal conversation, 2023). Yellow and brown tie-dye corded lace, pearls, gold-trimmed buttons and bustle.	<table> <tbody> <tr> <td>Indus. wax print</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tie-Dye corded lace</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>480</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>680</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Indus. wax print	250	Tie-Dye corded lace	200	Sewing Notions	20	Components, Trims & Findings	50	Production Cost	480	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	680
Indus. wax print	250														
Tie-Dye corded lace	200														
Sewing Notions	20														
Components, Trims & Findings	50														
Production Cost	480														
Cost of Labour	200														
Cost of Dress	680														

  <p style="text-align: center;">Fabric swatches</p>	
<p>SLOPERS</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTION SPECS</p>
<p>Front & Back Inner shirt Sleeve Front & Back Jacket Sleeve Front & Back Flare skirt</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types Use lock stitches for joining and top stitching Use chain stitches for neatening Use plain seams through out Use pearls to define jacket collar edge one centimetre apart.</p>

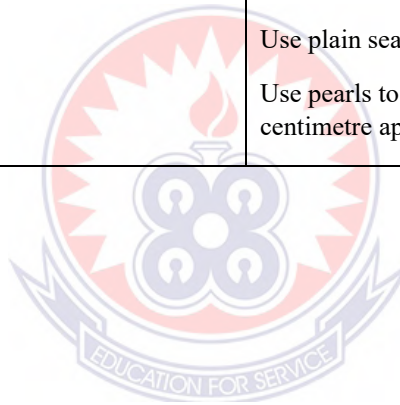




Table 12: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D4) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D4 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION															
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>															
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SALOME	GENDER: FEMALE														
AGE RANGE: 27 - 30 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST														
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY OCCASIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORFABLE FIT														
DESIGN TITLE: SHIKA NUBU	DESIGN No.: F-D4														
SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS -INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH														
Neck 16															
Nape To Waist 16'															
Dress Length 58'															
Across Back 17'															
Bust 43'															
Waist 34'															
Hip/ Seat 45'															
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 22' / 10'															
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)														
Materials / Fashion fabric: <i>Nsubura</i> (Impraim-Swanyz et al., 2018) industrialised wax print, sequins, and tubular beads.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><i>Nubu</i> indus. wax print</td> <td>210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black cotton</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>325</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>525</td> </tr> </table>	<i>Nubu</i> indus. wax print	210	Black cotton	35	Sewing Notions	20	Components, Trims & Findings	60	Production Cost	325	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	525
<i>Nubu</i> indus. wax print	210														
Black cotton	35														
Sewing Notions	20														
Components, Trims & Findings	60														
Production Cost	325														
Cost of Labour	200														
Cost of Dress	525														
 <p>Fabric Swatches</p>															

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET
<p>Front & Back Upper Dress</p> <p>Sleeve</p> <p>Skirts - Top Tier</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Lower Tier (10 inches wider than top layer)</p> <p>Mandarin variation Collar</p> <p>Inside Pocket Bag</p> <p>Self -Belt</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Join front and back bodice pieces</p> <p>Prepare two tier skirt pieces</p> <p>Finish top parts with cover edge stitches</p> <p>Prepare one piece mandarin-inspired collar</p> <p>Fix back zipper opening</p> <p>Prepare and insert two-tiered puffed sleeves using round method</p> <p>Prepare and attach inseam pockets</p> <p>Prepare self-belt</p> <p>Dress is not lined.</p>

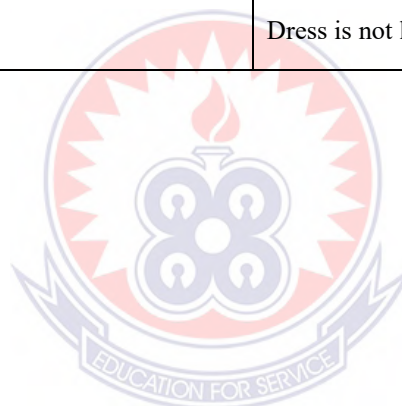
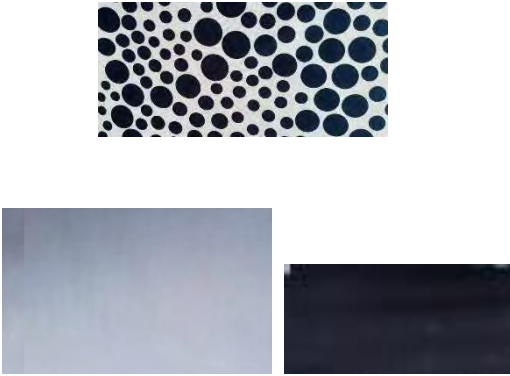


Table 13: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D5) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D5 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION		
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>		
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SALOME	GENDER: FEMALE	
AGE RANGE: 30 – 33 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST	
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED	
DESIGN TITLE: NIDMAA	DESIGN No.: F-D5	
EXXP SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH	
Neck	16 ½ —	
Nape to Waist	16	
Dress Length	26" / 57"	
Across Back	18"	
Bust	52"	
Waist	50"	
Hip/ Seat	53"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff	17" / 12"	
Side Seam	40"	
Inside Leg Seam	25"	
Bodyrise	15"	
Knee	22"	
Bottom	15"	
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)	
Material(s)/ Fashion fabrics: Black multi-sized Polka dot-print on white Twill, white Organza and Spandex fabrics.	Black and white Polka dot-print twill	150
	White Organza	100
	Spandex fabric	50
	Sewing Notions	20

 <p style="text-align: center;">Fabric swatches</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td style="text-align: right;">340</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td style="text-align: right;">250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td style="text-align: right;">590</td> </tr> </table>	Components, Trims & Findings	20	Production Cost	340	Cost of Labour	250	Cost of Dress	590
Components, Trims & Findings	20								
Production Cost	340								
Cost of Labour	250								
Cost of Dress	590								
<p>SLOPERS</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTION SPECS</p>								
<p>Top Blouse Front & Back Back Top Layer Trousers Topside Trousers Underside</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching Chain stitches for neatening Plain seams through out Pearls on sleeves sparsely fixed</p>								

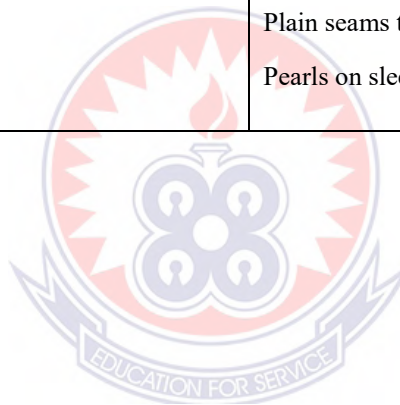


Table 14: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D6) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D6 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>MLISTA-NIIMAA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D6
LARGE SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck	15¾"
Shoulder to Shoulder	16"
Nape To Waist	15 ¾"
Dress Length	50"
Across Back	16"
Bust	43"
Waist	38"
Hip/ Seat	43"
Sleeve Length/ Cuff	23" /10"
Side Seam	38"
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)
Material(s)/ Fashion fabrics: Golden yellow multi-sized Polka dot-print on white twill and <i>Krɔbo</i> green and brown <u>Mlitsa</u> or <i>Fobitɛ</i> wax print.	Polka dot-print on white Twill 150 <i>Krɔbo</i> green & brown <u>Mlitsa</u> wax print 150 Notions 100 Components, Trims & Findings 100 Production Cost 500



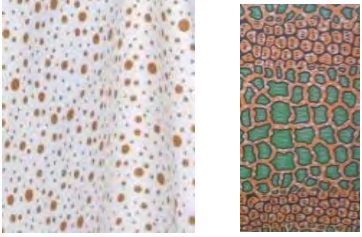

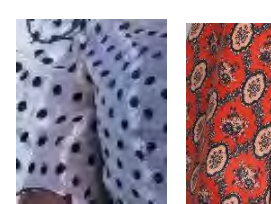
 <p>Fabric swatches</p>	<p>Cost of Labour 200</p> <p>Cost of Dress 700</p>
<p>SLOPERS</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTION SPECS</p>
<p>Front & Back Bodice</p> <p>Collar</p> <p>Sleeve & Band</p> <p>Front & Back Skirt</p> <p>Trouser Topside & Underside</p> <p>Waist band</p> <p>Pocket Bag</p> <p>Belt</p>	<p>Operation/ Machine Style Recommended./ Stitch & Seam Type</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and chain stitches for neatening.</p> <p>Wax print used for both under and top roll cum shawl cut collar</p> <p>Princess front and back bodice</p> <p>Eight functional gold buttons on wrapped front opening with button holes; two others decorative</p> <p>Only centre front pieces are lined</p> <p>Bound dress hem using one cm wax print bias piece</p> <p>Detachable self-belt with gold buckle is stiffened with hard vilene</p> <p>Gold eyelet holes</p> <p>Two inseam side pockets</p> <p>Bias banded straps for sleeve finish</p> <p>Trousers side slanted pockets, 8' back zipper opening, inserted waistband, plain hem finish for trousers.</p>

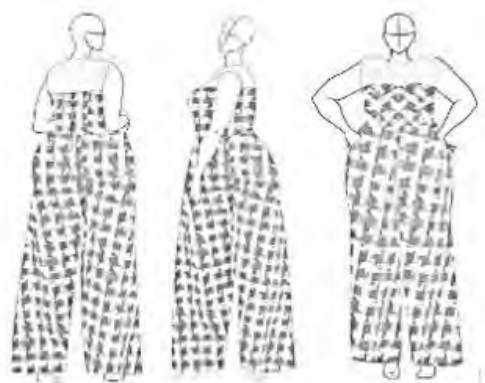
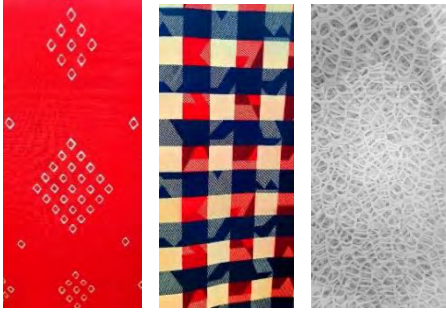
Table 15: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D7) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D7 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 – 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY OCCASIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>NIDMAA-CHIC</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D7
LARGE SIZE BODY MEASUREMENTS	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 15 ¾"	
Shoulder to Shoulder 16"	
Nape to Waist 15 ¾"	
Dress Length 50"	
Across Back 16"	
Bust 43"	
Waist 38"	
Hip/ Seat 43"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 23" /10"	
Side Seam 38"	
Inside Leg Seam 25"	
Body rise 13"	
Knee 18"	
Bottom 16"	
MATERIALS	
Materials / Fashion fabrics: Black velvety Polka dot-print on white organza and industrialised _red, beige and black _Crackers' <i>NUSTYLE</i> wax print.	Black/white velvety Polka dot-print organza 100
	Industrialised <i>Crackers</i> wax print 250
	Sewing Notions 50
	Components, Trims & Findings 50
	Production Cost 450
	Cost of Labour 200
	Cost of Dress 650
Fabric swatches	

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
<p>Front & Back Blouse</p> <p>Trouser Topside & Underside</p> <p>Asymmetric Front Skirt wrap</p> <p>Top Waist Band</p> <p>Trouser Waist band</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Bias binding on neck of blouse</p> <p>Flat seam for front and back princess style line</p> <p>Chain stitch and fish string to form lettuce edge</p> <p>Open end back zipper opening for blouse</p> <p>Asymmetric regular right to left front wrap</p> <p>Palazzo trousers has 8' back zipper opening</p> <p>Inserted waistband</p>



Table 16: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D8) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D8 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT WEAR	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: <i>TSILE LOOWU</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D8
XXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 16"	
Nape To Waist 16"	
Dress Length 33" / 64"	
Across Back 18"	
Bust 47"	
Waist 40 ½"	
Hip/ Seat 49"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 10"	
Side Seam 44"	
Inside Leg Seam 31 ½ —	
Bodyrise 12 ½"	
Knee 26"	
Bottom 16"	
MATERIALS	
Materials / Fashion fabric: Stretchy Plaid twill, tulle net-backed corded lace and <i>bue</i> wax print.	Stretchy Plaid Twill 90
	<i>Bue</i> print 150
	White Tulle net-backed corded lace 100
	Taffeta 60
	Sewing Notions 20
	Components, Trims & Findings 20
	Production Cost 440
	Cost of Labour 350
	Cost of Dress 790

Fabric Swatches

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET
<p>Top Front Yoke</p> <p>Top Back Yoke</p> <p>Front Bustier Pieces</p> <p>Back Bustier Pieces</p> <p>Trousers Topside</p> <p>Trousers Underside</p> <p>Pocket bag</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches for skirt edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Insert <i>bue</i> bias strips while joining cut bustier sessions</p> <p>Work inseam side pockets on each front section of trousers</p> <p>Use round method in joining crutch</p> <p>Fix back zipper opening after joining top torso to trousers on waist line</p> <p>Jumpsuit not lined.</p>

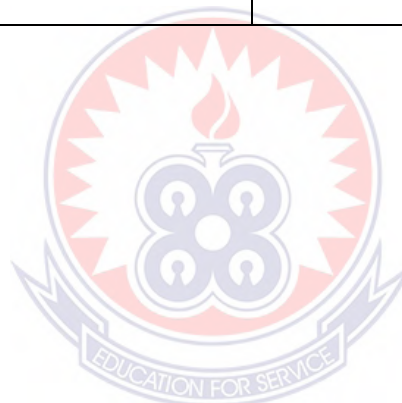





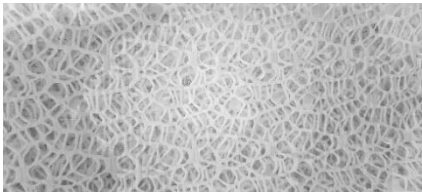
Table 17: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D9) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D9 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: AAYOO	DESIGN No.: F-D9
XXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS -INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 16"	
Nape To Waist 16"	
Dress Length 33"	
Across Back 18"	
Bust 47"	
Waist 40 ½"	
Hip/ Seat 49"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 18"/ 20"	
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)
Materials / Fashion fabric: Bue industrialised wax print.	Bue Indus. print 150
Fabric Swatch	Taffeta 60
	Sewing Notions 10
	Components, Trims & Findings 10
	Production Cost 230
	Cost of Labour 100
	Cost of Dress 330
SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET
Front Jacket Pieces	Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/
Back Jacket Pieces	Stitch & Seam Types

Sleeve Tier 1	Lock stitches for joining
Sleeve Tier 2	Use of plain seams through out
Notch Collar	Join Princess sections for front and back
Patched Pocket Bag	Join centre back seams
	Prepare rever and facing
	Favour front opening
	Attach notch collar
	Prepare and attach patched bosom pockets
	Prepare and insert two tiered inserted sleeves
	Jacket is fully lined.



Table 18: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D10) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D10 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION													
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>													
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE												
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST												
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT	FIT DESIRED: COMFORFABLE FIT												
DESIGN TITLE: ODEHE	DESIGN No.: F-D10												
XXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS -INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH												
Neck 16"													
Nape To Waist 16"													
Dress Length 33"													
Across Back 18"													
Bust 47"													
Waist 40 ½"													
Hip/ Seat 49"													
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 16"/ 20"													
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)												
Materials / Fashion fabric: Tulle net-backed corded lace.  Fabric Swatch	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Tulle net-backed corded lace</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>120</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>220</td> </tr> </table>	Tulle net-backed corded lace	100	Sewing Notions	10	Components, Trims & Findings	10	Production Cost	120	Cost of Labour	100	Cost of Dress	220
Tulle net-backed corded lace	100												
Sewing Notions	10												
Components, Trims & Findings	10												
Production Cost	120												
Cost of Labour	100												
Cost of Dress	220												
SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET												
Front Jacket Pieces Back Jacket pieces Sleeve Tier 1 Mandarin Collar	Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types Lock stitches for joining Use of plain seams through out												

Patched Pocket Bag	Join Princess sections for front and back Join centre back seams Prepare facing Favour front opening Attach mandarin collar Prepare and attach patched bosom pockets Prepare and insert single tiered inserted sleeves Jacket is not lined.
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Table 19: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D11) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D11 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: ANUDYAM	DESIGN No.: F-D11
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 15 ½"	
Shoulder to Shoulder 16"	
Nape to Waist 15 ¾"	
Dress Length 53"	
Across Back 15 ½"	
Bust 42"	
Waist 38"	
Hip/ Seat 46"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 26" / 8"	
Side Seam 38"	
MATERIALS	
Materials / Fashion fabrics: Lemon green cotton-metallic loom woven kente, black cotton-metallic loom woven kente, floral organza, pre-pressed white <i>Lisa</i> , bra cups, and 1 ¼" elastic band, taffeta, and braided trim.	Green woven Kente with metallic strips 150
	Black woven Kente with metallic strips 150
	Organza 150
Fabric Swatches	Pre-pressed <i>Lisa</i> 100
	Taffeta 50
	Sewing Notions 20
	Components, Trims & Findings 50
	Production Cost 690
	Cost of Labour 200
	Cost of Dress 890

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
Bustier Top Front Pieces Bustier Top Back Pieces Bolero Jacket Front Pieces Bolero Jacket Back Pieces Sleeve Waist Peplums Chevron Skirt Front Piece Chevron Skirt Back Piece Waist Band Under Skirt	Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types Lock stitches for joining and top stitching Chain stitches for neatening Cover edge stitches for edge finishing Use of plain seams through out Assemble front bustier pieces Assemble skirt cut pieces Assemble Bolero pieces Use braided trim to define Bolero jacket neckline and front to back edge Bolero and Bustier fully lined.



Table 20: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D12) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D12 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION		
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>		
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE	
AGE RANGE: 50 – 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST	
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED	
DESIGN TITLE: OWULA	DESIGN No.: F-D12	
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH	
Neck 15 ½"		
Shoulder to Shoulder 16"		
Nape to Waist 15 ¾"		
Dress Length 53"		
Across Back 15½ —		
Bust 42"		
Waist 38"		
Hip/ Seat 46"		
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 17/10"		
Side Seam 38"		
Inside Leg Seam 24"		
Bodyrise 14"		
Knee 18"		
Bottom 16"		
MATERIALS		COST SHEET (GHS)
Materials/ Fashion fabric: Colourful (Turquoise blue, orange, violet, metallic gold) motif, violet-metallic gold imitated kente wax prints, and white dry lace.		Colourful imitated kente wax prints 160 Plain imitated kente wax prints 90 Dry white lace 50



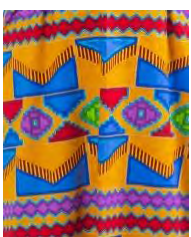

 <p style="text-align: center;">Fabric swatches</p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Polyester</td> <td style="text-align: right;">60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components and Trims</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td style="text-align: right;">460</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td style="text-align: right;">200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td style="text-align: right;">660</td> </tr> </table>	Polyester	60	Sewing Notions	50	Components and Trims	50	Production Cost	460	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	660
Polyester	60												
Sewing Notions	50												
Components and Trims	50												
Production Cost	460												
Cost of Labour	200												
Cost of Dress	660												
SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS												
<p>Top Bodice Front Shoulder Piece</p> <p>Top Bodice Front Bustier Pieces</p> <p>Top Back Piece</p> <p>Skirt Wrap</p> <p>Belt</p> <p>Main Sleeve</p> <p>Puff Cuff</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitch for joining</p> <p>Chain stitch for neatening</p> <p>Plain seam for piecing front chevron sectional cuts</p> <p>Plain seam for piecing princess front bodice,</p> <p>Attach soft self-belt on each end of wrap</p> <p>Bar tack stitched key hole on side of bodice for passage of belt for side bowtie</p> <p>Work button hole on each stitched latch on long sleeves for gold button</p> <p>Flared-puffed hem attachments fixed to off-white dry lace. Dress is not fully lined.</p>												

Table 21: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D13) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D13 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION															
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>															
CUSTOMER/MODEL: JZAKPA	GENDER: FEMALE														
AGE RANGE: 55 - 62 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST														
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY OCCASIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORFABLE FIT														
DESIGN TITLE: OBLA KPAA	DESIGN No.: F-D13														
SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS -INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH														
Neck 15"															
Shoulder to Shoulder 16"															
Nape to Waist 15 5/8"															
Dress Length 56"															
Across Back 15 1/2"															
Bust 42 1/2"															
Waist 34"															
Hip/ Seat 44"															
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 5"/10"															
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)														
Materials / Fashion fabrics: Sequined lace, and embellished imitated kente industrialised wax print, vilene and grommet eyelets.	<table> <tr> <td>Luxurious sequined lace</td> <td>300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Embellished imitated kente wax print dress</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>410</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>660</td> </tr> </table>	Luxurious sequined lace	300	Embellished imitated kente wax print dress	60	Sewing Notions	20	Components, Trims & Findings	30	Production Cost	410	Cost of Labour	250	Cost of Dress	660
Luxurious sequined lace	300														
Embellished imitated kente wax print dress	60														
Sewing Notions	20														
Components, Trims & Findings	30														
Production Cost	410														
Cost of Labour	250														
Cost of Dress	660														
  <p>Fabric swatches</p>															

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET
<p>Top Bodice Front Yoke</p> <p>Top Bodice Back Yoke</p> <p>Bustier Front Pieces</p> <p>Bustier Back Pieces</p> <p>Sleeve</p> <p>Front Skirt</p> <p>Back Skirt</p> <p>Belt</p>	<p>Operations/Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Prepare front and back lace yokes to waist</p> <p>Prepare Sweetheart Princess styled front and back,</p> <p>Join front and back sections</p> <p>Fix front grommet eyelets</p> <p>Superimpose wax bodice on lace bodice</p> <p>Prepare inseam pockets on skirt</p> <p>Join bodice to A-line skirt on waistline</p> <p>Fix back zipper</p> <p>Prepare and insert short flare sleeves</p> <p>Prepare detachable self-belt; Dress is not fully lined.</p>

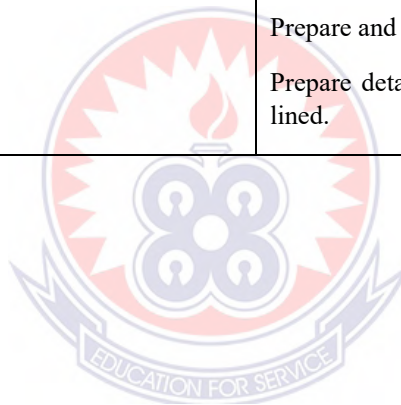

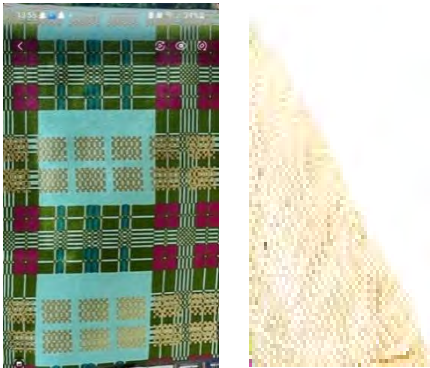


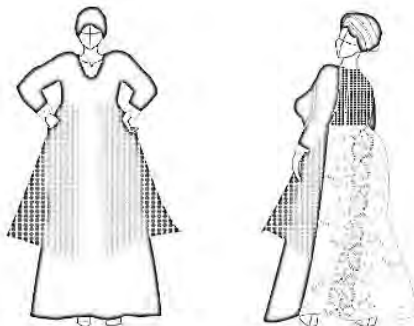
Table 22: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D14) conceptual dress fashion collection

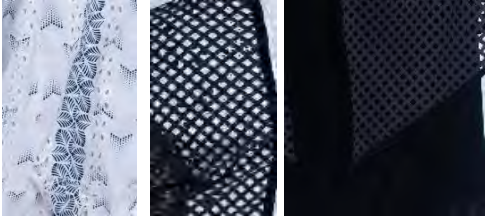
F-D14 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORFABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: BLEMA KE AKPAAKO	DESIGN No.: F-D14
SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS -INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 15 ¾"	
Nape to Waist 15 ¾"	
Shoulder to Shoulder 16"	
Dress Length 50"	
Across Back 8"	
Bust 43"	
Waist 38"	
Hip/ Seat 43"	
Sleeve Length/Cuff 23"/ 10"	
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)
Materials / Fashion fabric: Imitated Plaid Kente industrialised wax print from _Woodin', Sparkly gift net and yellow organza.	Embellished imitated kente wax print dress 300
	Sewing Notions 20
	Fabric Swatches
	Production Cost 400
	Cost of Labour 200
	Cost of Dress 600

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET
<p>Blouse Front Pieces</p> <p>Blouse Back Piece</p> <p>Sleeve</p> <p>Waist Peplums</p> <p>Skirt Wrap</p> <p>Back Godet Pieces</p> <p>Waist Band</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Use cover edge stitches to finish designated edges</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Prepare asymmetric neckline</p> <p>Join Princess cut sessions for front and back</p> <p>Prepare double layered waist peplums</p> <p>Prepare back zipper opening</p> <p>Prepare inserted sleeves with sparkly net godet and attach pleated hem details</p> <p>Prepare and insert triple godet pieces to slashed back knee to hem.</p>



Table 23: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D15) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D15 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ DRESS FASHION COLLECTION											
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>											
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE										
AGE RANGE: 50 – 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST										
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED										
DESIGN TITLE: OBLA YOO	DESIGN No.: F-D15										
EXL SIZE / BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH										
Neck 15 ½"											
Shoulder To Shoulder 16"											
Nape To Waist 15 ¾"											
Dress Length 53'											
Across Back 15 ½'											
Bust 42'											
Waist 38'											
Hip/ Seat 46'											
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 10'9'											
MATERIALS		COST SHEET (GHS)									
Materials / Fashion fabrics: Black velvet, embroidered black and white wax print and perforated Black scuba, and taffeta.	<table> <tr> <td>Black velvet</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Embroidered black and white wax print</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Perforated Black Scuba</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taffeta lining</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </table>	Black velvet	100	Embroidered black and white wax print	200	Perforated Black Scuba	100	Taffeta lining	60	Sewing Notions	20
Black velvet	100										
Embroidered black and white wax print	200										
Perforated Black Scuba	100										
Taffeta lining	60										
Sewing Notions	20										

 <p>Fabric swatches</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>750</td> </tr> </table>	Components, Trims & Findings	20	Production Cost	500	Cost of Labour	250	Cost of Dress	750
Components, Trims & Findings	20								
Production Cost	500								
Cost of Labour	250								
Cost of Dress	750								
<p>SLOPERS</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTION SPECS</p>								
<p>Front Dress Panel Pieces</p> <p>Back Dress Panel Pieces</p> <p>Front Waist Wrap</p> <p>Back Layered Piece</p> <p>Sleeve</p> <p>Cuff</p> <p>Neck Straps</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Insert wax print sewn straps into V neckline</p> <p>Finish scuba front attachment edges with velvet bias</p> <p>Finish scuba centre back attachment edges with velvet bias</p> <p>Insert scuba front layers in side seams</p> <p>Use round method in inserting sleeves</p> <p>Finish sleeve hem with straight-banded wax print.</p>								

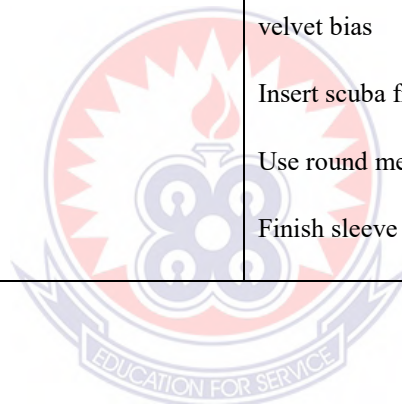
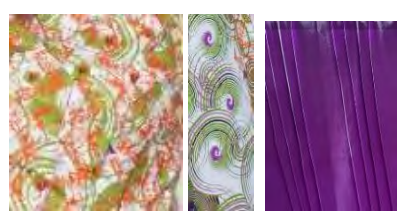



Table 24: Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D16) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D16 SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 – 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>WALA YOO</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D16
LARGE SIZE / BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 15¾"	
Shoulder to Shoulder 16"	
Nape to Waist 15 ¾"	
Dress Length 50"	
Across Back 16"	
Bust 43"	
Waist 38"	
Hip/ Seat 43"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 23"/10"	
Side Seam 38"	
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)
Materials / Fashion fabrics: Lifestyle industrialised <u>Woodin</u> branded cotton print, and pre-pressed light violet chiffon.	Lifestyle <u>Woodin</u> branded cotton print 300
	Pre-pressed light violet chiffon 50
	Sewing Notions 50
	Components, Trims & Findings 50
Fabric Swatches	Production Cost 450
	Cost of Labour 200
	Cost of Dress 750

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
Front Bodice Back Bodice Skirt Pieces Sleeve Puff Cuff Under Skirt	Operation/ Machine Style Recommended / Stitch & Seam Type Lock stitch for joining Chain stitch for neatening Overedge stich for finishing edge Plain seam through out Mock wrap front fully lined Top skirt of dress edge chain stitched Elastic band on waistline of chiffon slim inner skirt.



Table 25: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D17) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D17 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 – 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: ADIAGBA	DESIGN No.: F-D17
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	FLAT DRAWING
Neck	15 ½”
Shoulder To Shoulder	16”
Nape To Waist	15 ¾”
Dress Length	53”
Across Back	15 ½”
Bust	42”
Waist	38”
Hip/ Seat	46”
Sleeve Length/ Around arm	10”/ 12”
Side Seam	38”
Inside Leg Seam	24”
Body rise	14”
Knee	18”
Bottom	16”
	

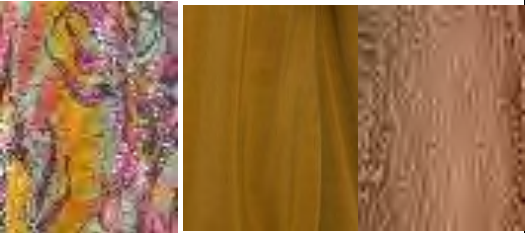


MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)																		
<p>Materials / Fashion fabric: Industrialised wax print with rhinestones as embellishment, soft curry-gold crepe, and fishing and Tulle net.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Fabric swatches</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Indus. wax print with rhinestones</td> <td style="text-align: right;">400</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Soft curry-gold crepe</td> <td style="text-align: right;">150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fishing Net</td> <td style="text-align: right;">30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tulle Net</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td style="text-align: right;">100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td style="text-align: right;">750</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td style="text-align: right;">300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,050</td> </tr> </table>	Indus. wax print with rhinestones	400	Soft curry-gold crepe	150	Fishing Net	30	Tulle Net	20	Sewing Notions	50	Components, Trims & Findings	100	Production Cost	750	Cost of Labour	300	Cost of Dress	1,050
Indus. wax print with rhinestones	400																		
Soft curry-gold crepe	150																		
Fishing Net	30																		
Tulle Net	20																		
Sewing Notions	50																		
Components, Trims & Findings	100																		
Production Cost	750																		
Cost of Labour	300																		
Cost of Dress	1,050																		
SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS																		
<p>Front Jacket Pieces</p> <p>Back jacket Pieces</p> <p>Sleeve & Puff Cuff</p> <p>Sleeveless Top Front Pieces</p> <p>Sleeveless top Back Pieces</p> <p>Waist Peplum Pieces</p> <p>Palazzo Trousers Topside</p> <p>Palazzo Trousers Underside</p> <p>Waist Band</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening; Overedge stitches for seam edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Superimposed waist peplum blouse plain hem finish</p> <p>Elasticated puff sleeve attachments</p> <p>Gold button</p> <p>2' Elasticated trousers back waist</p> <p>Layered inserted flared peplum skirt pieces; lettuce edge finish.</p>																		



Table 26: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D18) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D18 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 -54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: MANYE YOO	DESIGN No.: F-D18
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 15 ½”	
Shoulder to Shoulder 16”	
Nape to Waist 15 ¾”	
Dress Length 53	
Across Back 15 ½”	
Bust 42”	
Waist 38”	
Hip/ Seat 46”	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 10”/10”	
MATERIALS	
Materials / Fashion fabric: Industrialised wax print with metallic gold as embellishment, 1 centimetre width elastic and assorted pearls.	Indus. wax print with metallic gold 300
	Sewing Notions 50
	Components, Trims & Findings 100
Fabric swatches	Production Cost 450
	Cost of Labour 250
	Cost of Dress 700

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
<p>Hip length Blouse Front Pieces</p> <p>Hip length Blouse Back Pieces</p> <p>Hip Peplum Top Layer</p> <p>Hip Peplum Under Layer</p> <p>Off-the-shoulder Puff Sleeve</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Overedge stitches for seam edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Superimposed hip peplums</p> <p>Braided shoulder straps</p> <p>Machine pearled two piece Peter Pan on Stand collar</p> <p>Elasticated Off-the shoulder Puff sleeves</p> <p>24" zipper back opening</p>





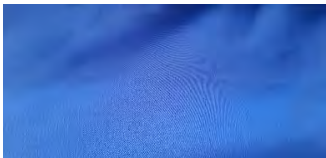
Table 27: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D19) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D19 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION																					
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>																					
CUSTOMER/MODEL: ANGIE	GENDER:FEMALE																				
AGE RANGE: 30 – 33 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST																				
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE																				
DESIGN TITLE: KPLEMO	DESIGN No.: F-D19																				
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH																				
Neck 16"																					
Nape to Waist 16"																					
Dress Length 52"																					
Across Back 14"																					
Bust 43"																					
Waist 36"																					
Hip/ Seat 52"																					
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 12"																					
Side Seam 42"																					
MATERIALS		COST SHEET (GHS)																			
Materials / Fashion fabrics: Industrialised glittery wax print with metallic gold as surface embellishment, yellow Organza, sparkly gift net, grommet, zipper, taffeta and fish string.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Indus. glittery wax print</td> <td>300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yellow Organza</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sparkly gift net</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grommet</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taffeta</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>560</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>760</td> </tr> </table>	Indus. glittery wax print	300	Yellow Organza	20	Sparkly gift net	20	Grommet	50	Taffeta	50	Sewing Notions	20	Components, Trims & Findings	100	Production Cost	560	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	760
Indus. glittery wax print	300																				
Yellow Organza	20																				
Sparkly gift net	20																				
Grommet	50																				
Taffeta	50																				
Sewing Notions	20																				
Components, Trims & Findings	100																				
Production Cost	560																				
Cost of Labour	200																				
Cost of Dress	760																				
 <p>Fabric Swatches</p>																					

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
<p>Bustier Front Yoke</p> <p>Bustier Back Yoke</p> <p>Bustier Waist Peplum Pieces</p> <p>Mullet Hem Wrap Skirt</p> <p>Waist Band</p>	<p>Operations/Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches for peplum edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Use sparkly net trim to finish wrap skirt edge</p> <p>Insert bones into Princess style lines in front and back, Use wax print bias trim to finish keyhole on the back, neckline and armhole</p> <p>Fix grommet and corded lacing; Fix zipper back</p> <p>Shape end ties end ties of waistband for bowtie effects; Use round method in lining Bustier.</p>



Table 28: Spec sheet for FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D20) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D20 SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY OCCASIONAL	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: AHUDƆƆ KƐ YAA WULAMƆ	DESIGN No.: F-D20
EXL SIZE/ BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck 16"	
Nape To Waist 16"	
Dress Length 33"/64"	
Across Back 18"	
Bust 47"	
Waist 40 ½"	
Hip/ Seat 49"	
Sleeve Length/ Cuff 10"	
Side Seam 44"	
Inside Leg Seam 31 ½"	
Body rise 12 ½"	
Knee 26"	
Bottom 16"	
MATERIALS	
Materials / Fashion fabric: Nouveau 'lifestyle' sequined embroidered wax print, lace mesh, Burgundy Tulle net, and Lisa.	'Lifestyle' sequined embroidered wax print &
	Lace mesh 400
	Burgundy Tulle net 20
	Lisa 90
	Sewing Notions 20
	Components, Trims & Findings 50
	Production Cost 580
	Cost of Labour 300
Fabric Swatches	Cost of Dress 880

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SHEET
Top Yoke Front Piece Top Yoke Back Piece Bustier Front Pieces Bustier Back Pieces Bolero Jacket Front Pieces Bolero Jacket Back Pieces; Sleeve Skirt Front Top Layer & Godet Pieces Skirt Back Top Layer & Godet Pieces Skirt Front Lower Layer & Godet Pieces Skirt Back Lower Layer & Godet Pieces	Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types Lock stitches for joining Chain stitches for neatening Cover edge stitches for skirt edge finishing Use of plain seams through out Roll collar is lined Body of jacket is not lined Two piece jacket sleeve is not lined Side strapped belt is lined. Bustier top of dress fully lined.

4.1.3iii Production process Spec sheets

Tables 29 to 48 illustrates the production process spec sheets for the *F&OOYOO* conceptual dress fashion collection. Each document consisted of information on the design description, fit model, layout, construction and assembly activities.

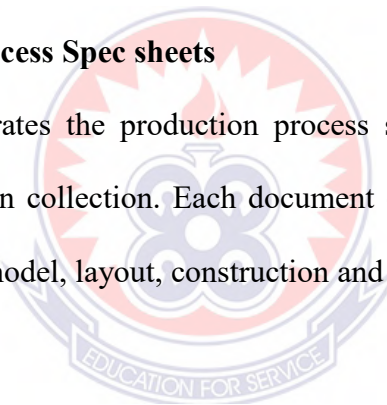


Table 29: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D1)* conceptual dress fashion collection

<i>F-D1</i> PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 44 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL	DESIGN No.: F-D1
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dress details include layered front bodice wrap, vee front neck, soft belt, mermaid back panel cut, and undulating hem projected on a large size hourglass shape. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the flare sleeve hem attachments. These were laid on the bias fold due to the fluid nature of hang required. 	 <p>Layout</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Construction of dress segments</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches and fish string for lettuce attachments to sleeve edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams throughout construction</p> <p>Use of soft vilene to add weight to wax print.</p> <p>Lined top bodice</p> <p>Fix zipper back</p> <p>Shaped end ties of waistband for bowtie effects</p> <p>Use round method in lining top bodice</p>

Table 30: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D2) conceptual dress fashion collection





F-D2 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 44 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>YOO KPAKPA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D2
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dress features pearl embellished high neck crisp plain organza blouse which has bishop sleeves with lace cuffs, <i>Lisa</i> inner sleeveless blouse, worn on a versatile flare cut wrap skirt projected on an ideal large size hourglass silhouette. All finals patterns for cutting both the outer and inner blouses were laid along the straight grain except for the flare wrap skirt. The skirt was laid on the bias fold due to the fluid nature of hang required. 	 <p>Organzie top blouse lay out</p>  <p><i>Yoo Kpakpa</i> wrapped skirt lay out</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Fixing of pearls on neckline of blouse</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Use of pearls to define neckline and short zipper for blouse back closure</p> <p>Fix elasticated lace band at the hem of bishop sleeves</p> <p>Shape end ties of waistband for bowtie effects</p> <p>Use <i>Lisa</i> fabric for blouse inner.</p>

Table 31: Production Spec sheet for *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* (F-D3) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D3 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>Fɛ00Yɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>SYNOPSIS: DESTINATION-INSPIRED CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES (Dress cultural practices) OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: <i>AKUSHIKA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D3
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The top shirt features a round neck, short sleeves, gold buttoned front opening, and pleated flare attachment to the hem. The pleated full 360 degrees flare skirt has waist band, and back zipper closure. The beaded cord lace throw on jacket has pearled wax print collar, seamless shoulders, gold buttoned front opening, and unstitched asymmetric shaped sleeve hem projected on a plus size hourglass silhouette. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the flare wrap shirt hem attachment and flare skirt. The skirt was laid on the bias fold due to the fluid nature of hang required. ▪ All finals patterns for cutting throw-on jacket also were laid along the straight grain except for the asymmetric sleeves which were cut directly on the spread cord lace fabric due to the undefined edge incorporated. 	 <p>Layout of top blouse pieces</p>  <p>Layout of flared hem attachment</p>  <p>Layout of flared skirt</p>  <p>Layout of throw on jacket</p>

ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Front opening</p>  <p>Fusing collar fall with interfacing</p>  <p>Construction of dress segments</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Use plain seams through out</p> <p>1 cm distance for pearls used in defining jacket collar edge</p> <p>No shoulder seam for jacket; gold buttons on shirt</p> <p>Fi zipper ; Fix waistband for skirt</p>  <p>Hang of throw-on jacket on top blouse</p>

Table 32: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D4)* conceptual dress fashion collection

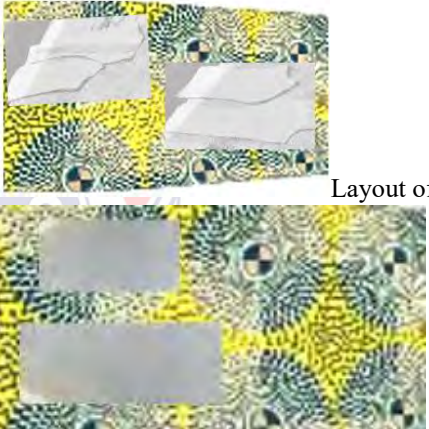

F-D4 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SALOME	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 27 - 30 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY OCCASIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: <i>SHIKA NUBU</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D4</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The design features one-piece Mandarin and placket collar style, princess style lines in front and back, hip seam, two side pockets, two-tiered skirt, cover-edge stitch-embellished edges, back zipper closure, and inserted sleeves with two-tiered puffed details. The occasional wear can be worn with or without the black self-belt designed. The preferred silhouette is large to plus size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain due to the stable nature of hang required. 	 <p style="text-align: right;">Layout of dress</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Cover-edge tiers; back zipper; Puffed up sleeve.</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Join front and back bodice pieces</p> <p>Prepare two tier skirt pieces</p> <p>Finish top parts with cover edge stitches</p> <p>Prepare one piece mandarin-inspired collar</p> <p>Fix back zipper opening</p> <p>Prepare and insert two-tiered puffed sleeves using round method</p> <p>Prepare and attach inseam pockets</p> <p>Prepare self-belt; Dress is not lined.</p>

Table 33: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D5) conceptual dress fashion collection


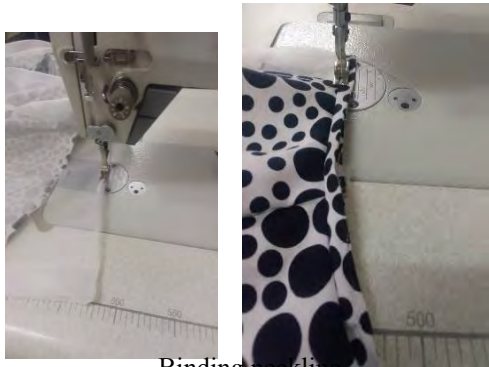
F-D5 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SALOME	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 30 - 43 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>NIɔMAA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D5
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The A-line cut outfit features ruched sleeves top blouse worn over narrow legs trousers which reflects <i>Niɔmãa</i> colours black and white, layered back, and full back gold buttoned closure on a large size hourglass silhouette. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the flare top blouse which was laid on the bias fold due to the nature of hang required. 	 <p>Layout of dress parts</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Binding neckline</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Plain seams through out</p> <p>Pearls on sleeves sparsely fixed</p> <p>Bound neckline</p> <p>Gold and white back buttons</p>

Table 34: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D6) conceptual dress fashion collection*




F-D6 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 44 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>MLITSA-NIƆMAA</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D6</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The fascinating design shows narrow fitted trousers, worn under double breasted front coat dress emphasized with gold buttons as fashion statement, and shawl collar cut seamed in on the bias as emphasis to create a conceptual look. The dress has stiffened belt with gold buckle. The preferred silhouette is a large size hourglass figure. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the collar of the top blouse which was laid on the bias fold due to the give required to lay smoothly. 	 <p>Layout of dress segments</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Checking button placements of top blouse on dress form</p>  <p>Fixing of ornated buttons</p>	<p>Operation/ LMachine Style Recommended./ Stitch & Seam Type</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining; chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Wax print used for both under and top roll cum shawl cut collar</p> <p>Use 1cm seam for Princess front and back bodice</p> <p>Use eight functional gold buttons on wrapped front opening with button holes; two others decorative</p> <p>Only centre front pieces are lined to reduce weight</p> <p>Dress hem is bund using one cm of wax print piece cut on true bias</p> <p>Detachable self-belt with gold buckle is stiffened with hard vilene</p> <p>Two inseam side pockets</p> <p>Bias banded straps for sleeve hem finish</p> <p>Trousers side slanted pockets, 8° back zipper opening, inserted waistband, plain hem finish for trousers.</p>

Table 35: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D7) conceptual dress fashion collection


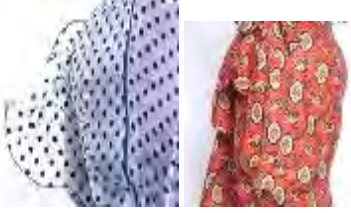

F-D7 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 44 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>NIɔMAA-CHIC</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D7
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dressy <i>Niɔmāa-Chic</i> features high neck velvety organza blouse with princess style line, lettuce edge cold shoulder sleeves, wax print waistband with side tying ends, and back zipper closure. ‘Crackers’ print palazzo pants has wrapped cloth front, and back zipper closure. The preferred silhouette is a large size hourglass shape. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the asymmetric top wrap which was laid on the bias fold due to the style. 	 <p>Layout of dress segments</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Lucttuce-edge cold shoulder sleeve; back open-ended zipper ; asymmetric faux front wrap</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>1cm bias binding on neck of blouse</p> <p>Flat seam for front and back princess style line</p> <p>Chain stitch and fish string to form lettuce edged clod should sleeves</p> <p>Open end back zipper opening for blouse</p> <p>Asymmetric regular right to left trouser front wrap</p> <p>Palazzo trousers has 8’ back zipper opening</p> <p>Inserted trouser waistband.</p>

Table 36: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D8) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D8 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: <i>TSILE LOOWU</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D8
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The luxury resort dress is a sleeveless jumpsuit which has luxury cord lace yoked bustier top seamed on A-line Palazzo pants. It has <i>bue</i> trimmed piped chevron front seams, side pockets, and back zipper closure. The preferred figure is an extra-large hourglass silhouette. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain as required for the good hang required. 	 <p>Top blouse layout and cutting</p>

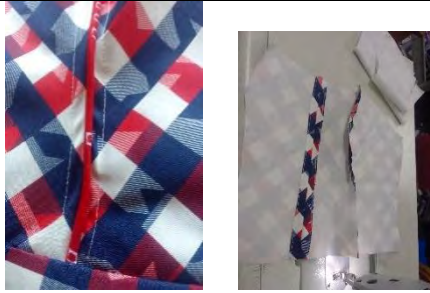
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p><i>Bue</i> cloth used as piped seam trim</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches for skirt edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Insert <i>bue</i> true bias strips while joining cut bustier sessions</p> <p>Work inseam side pockets on each front section of trousers</p> <p>Use round method in joining crutch</p> <p>Fix back zipper opening after joining top torso to trousers on waist line</p> <p>Jumpsuit is partially lined (top blouse)</p>



Table 37: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D9) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D9 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>AAYOO</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D9
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The audacious fully lined throw on jacket is worn on chevron cut front jumpsuit to complement the alluring resort wear. The design features front and back princess style lines, notch collar with rever, full front button-less opening, shaped centre back, two-tiered inserted jacket sleeves, and two front bosom patched pockets. The preferred silhouette is a plus size hourglass shape. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the notch collar which was laid on the cross grain to match the stretchy neckline. 	 <p style="text-align: center;">Layout of <i>Aayoo</i> throw on jacket</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Checking scye depth and fit of uncompleted dress on dress form.</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining Use of plain seams throughout garment including Princess front and back sections Join centre back seams Prepare rever and facing using fashion fabric Favour front opening for a fine edge Attach notch collar Prepare and attach patched bosom pockets before lining Prepare and insert two tiered part with sleeves Tiers not lined Jacket is fully lined.</p>

Table 38: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D10)* conceptual dress fashion collection


<i>F-D10</i> PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY RESORT	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: <i>ODEHE</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D10</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The design details of the light and airy white cord lace jacket are front and back princess style lines, Mandarin collar, full front button-less opening, shaped centre back, single-tiered inserted jacket sleeves, and two front bosom patched pockets. The preferred silhouette is a plus size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the notch collar which was laid on the cross grain to match the stretchy neckline. 	 <p>Layout of throw on jacket parts</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining Use of plain seams through out Join Princess sections for front and back Snip centre back seams on waist to relax seam line for smooth hang Prepare facing favouring front opening Attach prepared Mandarin collar Prepare and attach patched bosom pockets Prepare and insert single tiered inserted sleeves Jacket is not lined.</p>

Table 39: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D11) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D11 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: <i>ANUDYAM</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D11</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fully lined Bolero jacket features braid-trimmed round shaped front, princess style line and one piece jacket sleeve. Bustier features sweetheart neckline, double-layered flare waist peplums, with lettuce edge finishing, full back open-ended zipper closure. The chevron cut floor length skirt has undulating hem finish, and is worn over silky <i>Lisa</i> skirt. The preferred silhouette is a plus size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except the waist peplums and the main organza skirt. The waist peplums were laid on the bias grain for a full 360 degrees fluidity. The skirt was laid on 90 degrees bias to attain a chevron cut. 	 <p>Layout of dress segments</p>


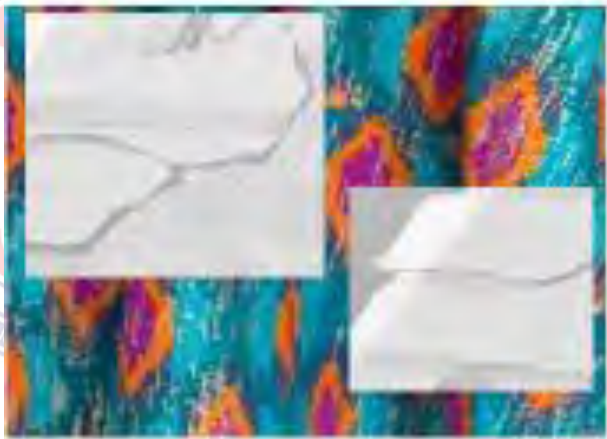
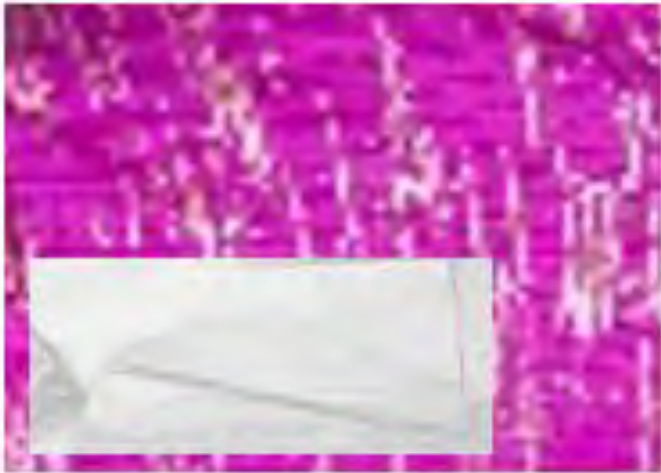




ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>g</p> <p>Application of interlining to bustier cuts</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Use of plain seams throughout</p> <p>Cover edge stitches and fish string for peplum edge finishing</p> <p>Add weight to bustier pieces using vilene</p> <p>Insert bra caps into bust area of Princess style lines in front</p> <p>Fix open ended zipper back</p> <p>Use round method in lining bustier</p> <p>Seam four gore pieces of organza skirt together</p> <p>Fix back zipper</p> <p>Attach waistband on organza skirt</p> <p>Prepare multi-pleated skirt underlining separates.</p>



Table 40: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D12) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D12 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: <i>OWULA</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D12
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The bustier cut features square neckline on front, front chevron cut, back deep wrap, vee back neckline, <i>hao</i> (waist straps), and drumstick sleeves with dry lace insertions. The preferred silhouette is the plus size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the bias grain except the belt and the sleeves. The wrap skirt was laid on the bias grain for a full 360 degrees fluidity. The centre front bustier cut bodice was laid on 90 degrees bias to attain a chevron cut. 	 
	Layout of dress segments

ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
  <p>Unusual right over left back wrap Lace insert</p>  <p>Chevron joints</p>  <p>Thinly turned undulating skirt hem.</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Use of plain seams throughout</p> <p>Use lace as underlining in sleeves</p> <p>Fix zipper back</p> <p>Shape end ties of back wrap for bowtie effects</p> <p>Use round method in lining top blouse</p> <p>Dress is fully lined.</p>

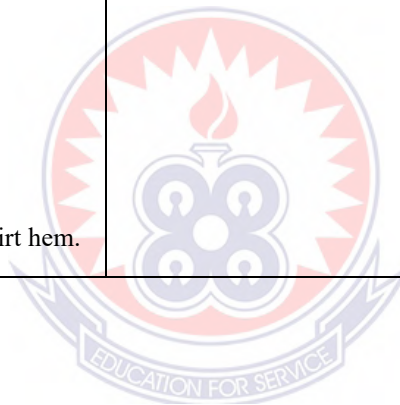






Table 41: Production Spec sheet for *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* (F-D13) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D13 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>Fɛ00Yɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: JZAKPA	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 55 - 62 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: <i>OBLA KPAAD</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D13
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The dressy occasional wear is an A-line mullet hem outfit. It features lace yoke, flare cap sleeves, grommet and lace faux front opening, back zipper closure, side pockets, and self-stiffened belt with gold buckle. The preferred silhouette is large size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the cross grain except the skirt and the sleeves. The mullet hem skirt was laid on the bias grain for fluid drape. The sleeves were laid on 360 degrees bias grain to attain full flare cut. 	  <p style="text-align: center;">Skirt layout</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Bustier layout</p>

ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Deep sweetheart neck cut Mullet hem</p> <p>Front laced grommet opening; princess style lines</p> <p>Soft Detachable belt with gold eyelet and buckle.</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches for skirt edge finishing</p> <p>Weight fashion fabric (imitated wax print)</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Use lacy tape to finish flare cut lace sleeves</p> <p>Insert grommet and lace into faux front opening</p> <p>Topstitch Princess style lines in front and back</p> <p>Fix zipper back</p> <p>Prepare belt</p> <p>Use round method in lining Bustier front and back</p>

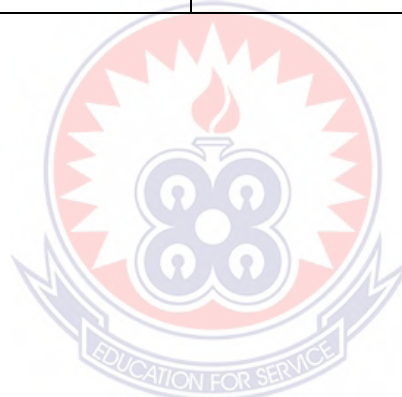




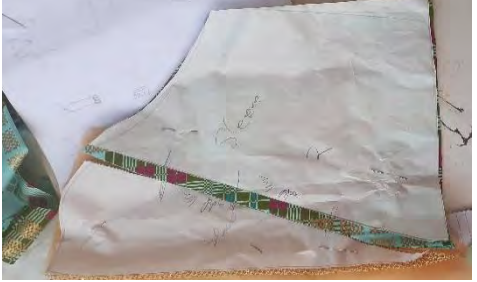


Table 42: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D14)* conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D14 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 44 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: BLEMA KE AKPAAKO	DESIGN No.: F-D14
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dressy occasional wear is an A-line mullet hem outfit. It features lace yoke, flare cap sleeves, grommet and lace faux front opening, back zipper closure, side pockets, and self-stiffened belt with gold buckle. The preferred silhouette is large size hourglass. All finals patterns were laid along the cross grain of fabric to maintain the plaid/checkered effect in the fashion fabric with the exception of the waist peplums and godet. The peplums and godet were laid on the bias grain for the flare effect desired in the pleated peplums and godet insertions. 	
 <p>Peplums layout</p>	 <p>Blouse layout</p>
 <p>Sleeve godet insert layout</p>	 <p>Sleeve layout</p>

ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Flat seam for front and back princess style line</p> <p>Chain stitch and fish string to form lettuce edge</p> <p>Use open end back zipper opening for blouse</p> <p>Asymmetric regular right to left front wrap</p> <p>Inserted waistband</p>



Table 43: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D15) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D15 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: SENAM	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 44 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: WALA YOO	DESIGN No.: F-D15
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ceremonial dress features wrapped front and the play of lines, drum stick sleeves influenced by visual formation of the multiple wrist beads worn by the maidens, volume of skirt, and meandering edge finishing on a large size hourglass silhouette. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain to maintain stability in the fashion fabric with the exception of the skirt. The skirt was laid on the bias grain for the flare effect desired in the skirt. 	 <p>Layout of dress segments</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Lining and facing preparation</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches for front edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Prepare Princess style lines in front and back neckline</p> <p>Prepare and fix sleeves</p> <p>Fix back zipper</p>


 <p>Drumstick sleeve preparation</p>	<p>Prepare underskirt of garment</p> <p>Use round method in lining upper part of garment</p> <p>Fix pearls on dotted spots at the frontal part of garment.</p>
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Table 44: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D16) conceptual dress fashion collection




F-D16 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: <i>ADIAGBA</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D16</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The waistcoat is single breasted and features short drumstick inserted sleeves using fishing net and wax print. The sleeveless inner crepe blouse worn on wide legged palazzo trousers has princess style line and gathered hem attachment. The palazzo trousers has elasticated waistband and back zipper closure. The preferred silhouette is the plus size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the waist peplums of the jacket which was laid on the bias fold due to the nature of hang required. 	 <p>Layout of dress segments</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Layered lettuce-edged hem finish</p>  <p>Key-hole centre front finishing</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching Chain stitches for neatening Cover edge stitches for peplum edge finishing Use of plain seams through out Favour key hole jacket front edge Insert prepared sleeves Fix gold button and work button hole Prepare sleeveless tank top and fix back buttons Prepare Palazzo pants and fix elasticated waistband Use round method in lining top part of jacket.</p>

Table 45: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D17) conceptual dress fashion collection*

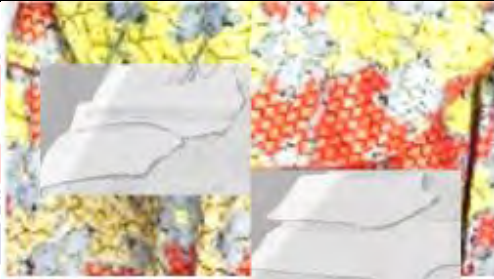



F-D17 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: <i>MANYE YOO</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D17</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The cold shoulder styled dress features a novel beaded Peter pan collar with stand, gold shoulder straps, woven fabric shoulder braids, puff sleeves, and double layered skirt attachment on lower hip with cover-edge stitched undulating hem finish. The preferred silhouette is a plus size hourglass. ▪ All finals patterns were laid along the straight grain except for the hip peplums which were laid on the bias fold due to the nature of hang required. 	 <p>Bodice front and back layout</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
   <p>Beaded Peter-pan collar Off shoulder puff sleeve Double layered peplum Chain-stitched cum fish lined edge finish</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches for peplum edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Insert shoulder trims</p> <p>Fix grommet and corded lacing</p> <p>Fix zipper back</p> <p>Insert exaggerated puffed up sleeves</p> <p>Use round method in lining Bustier</p>

Table 46: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D18)* conceptual dress fashion collection

<i>F-D18</i> PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: ANGIE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 30 - 33 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: <i>KPLƐMO</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>F-D18</i>
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The skirt suit is made up of sleeveless yoked body hugging bustier, wax print bound neckline and scye, eyelets laced front, double layered waist peplums, back button and hole, and laced back closure. The deep wrap skirt has mullet hem, waist straps for tying and net trim bound hem. The preferred silhouette is a large size hourglass figure. ▪ All finals patterns were laid on the straight grain but on specific motifs in the fashion fabric. The flare wrap skirt was plotted directly on the fashion fabric. The skirt was laid on the bias grain due to the fluid nature of hang required. 	 <p style="text-align: center;">Laying and cutting out of skirt suits</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Grommet back Lettuce-edge finishing applied</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining and top stitching</p> <p>Chain stitches for neatening</p> <p>Cover edge stitches and fish string for peplum edge finishing</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Use sparkly net as trim to finish wrap skirt edge</p> <p>Insert bones into Princess style lines in front and back,</p>





		<p>Use wax print bias trim to finish keyhole on the back, neckline and armhole</p> <p>Fix grommet and corded lacing</p> <p>Fix zipper back</p> <p>Shape end ties end ties of waistband for bowtie effects</p> <p>Use round method in lining Bustier.</p>
<p>1cm bias bound hem</p>	<p>Boned bustier</p>	





Table 47: Production Spec sheet for *FɛOOYɔɔ* (F-D19) conceptual dress fashion collection

F-D19 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: GRACE	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 40 - 48 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY CEREMONIAL	FIT DESIRED: FIT & FLARE
DESIGN TITLE: <i>AHUD Kɛ YAA WULAMɔ</i>	DESIGN No.: F-D19
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The burgundy tulle net yoked floor length evening dress is a double-layered sleeveless bustier which comes with a throw on asymmetric one sleeve jacket. The bustier dress has godet inserts in the upper and lower panels. The throw on jacket has asymmetric front and back rolled over collar, and silk waist side straps for tying. The preferred silhouette is plus size hourglass form. ▪ All finals patterns were laid on the cross and straight grains with emphasis on the on specific motifs in the fashion fabrics. The godet was not interlined as the main garment. The main dress was cut with the right side showing up due to the nature of the fabric. 	 <p>Layout of dress segments – fashion fabric</p>  <p>Layout of satin lining</p>

 <p>Laying out of asymmetric throw-on jacket</p>	 <p>Laying out of godet</p>
<p>ASSEMBLY</p>	<p>CONSTRUCTION DETAILS</p>
 <p>Bustier cap</p>  <p>Double layered waist to knee and floor length skirt</p>  <p>Fit of asymmetric roll collar and short- two pieces jacket sleeve</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lock stitches for joining and top stitching Serger (chain stitches) for neatening Use ready-made lace edge finishing Use of plain seams through out Use sea blue <i>lisa</i> as backing and for contrast Insert bones into Princess style lines in front and back Insert godet Fix back zipper Use round method in lining Bustier part of dress

Table 48: Production Spec sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ (F-D20) conceptual dress fashion collection*

<i>F-D20 PRODUCTION SPEC SHEET FOR FƐOOYƆƆ DRESS FASHION COLLECTION</i>	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL "NEW NEED" WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: RUQAYAT	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 50 - 54 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY OCCASIONAL	FIT DESIRED: COMFORTABLE FIT
DESIGN TITLE: OBLA YOO	DESIGN No.: F-D20
DESIGN DETAILS:	LAY OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evening dress has front velvet, and back embroidered black and white wax print. Styles worthy of note include freely layered front attachments, stitched back layers, wax print straps in vee neck for emphasis, and inserted cuff banded sleeves. The preferred silhouette is plus size hourglass. All finals patterns were laid on the straight grains with emphasis on the pile direction of the velvet, and on specific motifs in the lace wax print. The main front, back and sleeves were cut with the right side up due to the nature of the fabric. 	 <p>Layout of upper back</p>
ASSEMBLY	CONSTRUCTION DETAILS
 <p>Two layering techniques – net scuba on black and white embroidered wax print & net scuba on luxurious black velvet</p> <p>Fitting of vee neckline strips</p>	<p>Operations/ Machine Style Recommended/ Stitch & Seam Types</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining</p> <p>Use of plain seams through out</p> <p>Join Princess sections for front and back</p> <p>Join centre back seams</p> <p>Prepare facing</p> <p>Favour front and back neckline</p> <p>Insert straps into neckline</p> <p>Prepare and attach front and back layers</p> <p>Prepare and insert banded sleeves.</p>

4.1.3iv The *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection

In creating the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection, the factors considered included the scholarly motivation vis-à-vis the research gap hinted in the literature search (Damalie, 2018a), and resultant design problem identified; the purpose of the project based on analysis of emerging trends, contents, themes and implications of the relevance of aesthetically pleasing aspects of the feminine subculture dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens reviewed vis-à-vis the study underpinnings, methods and adoptable concepts to enable one to achieve the overarching goal of the study.

Shared cultural values such as traditional dress design philosophies, appreciation of quality, aesthetic, and beauty; and findings from the Tema *Ashin Yoo* (rite maidens') dress cultural practices including materials used by maidens; preferred dress and body forms, colours, techniques and accessories were all considered. The foregoing issues largely informed the *Synthesis* model adapted from the study underpinnings for the project.

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* conceptual dress fashion collection of twenty (20) designs was spurred by ten cohesively linked yet individual concepts. The creatively-innovative 'new need' had a blend of tradition (destination-inspired dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* nobility rite maidens) with exquisite style achieved through creative manipulation of secondary data collected. The use of creative and/or innovative individuals who have influence to shape the taste consensus across their society was used as a merchandising strategy. The value proposition was projecting 'a gorgeous' tourist with a meaningful 'new need'; a gift with cultural sensibilities from the *Ashin Yoo* (nobility rite maidens') outing dress, softly tailored customised conceptual dress which blend tradition and style. The target client was the culturally-inclined large to

plus size female millennial fashion innovator (usually ignored when creating mass customised dress fashion), aged between 26 to 56 years, adventure-loving lifestyle and willing to visit Tema, Tema *Manhean* and environs. The figure type was sampled out of many types because she is well endowed but her body proportions needed to be understood and one needs to use more than style guidelines to highlight her best features. There is plenty of guidance out there for how to dress for different body types, but plus size. Styling for this body type can be a bit more nuanced (Kit & Kaboodal, 2025), meanwhile they have the money to spend' (KB, Personal communication, May 4, 2023) besides they love to look good.

A catalogue of twenty (20) large to plus size feminine, dressy occasional collection of conceptual dress suits and separates was fashioned using studio-based research design. The collection was premised on ten thematic emerging concepts derived through critical aesthetic analysis of ten components teased from out the three major outing dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (nobility rite maidens), natural resources from the maidens' environment and the *KCascades Impressions (KCI)* brand (Damalie, 2019) as a key influencer. Apart from the dress variables observed from the *KCI* brand, the aesthetic aspects of the maidens' dress cultural practices such as *Mama Bumɔ* (wrap around cloth style), *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (headdress), *Odasobo* (silk scarf), *Ntah* (anklets), *Bue* (loincloth), *Fers* (yellow pigment), *Krɔbo* (green dried fruit used as decorative body smears), *Hao* (strap) and *Fliwa* (queen of rite maidens' beaded necklace), the sea and its many attributes (undulating sea waves, white foam at the shoreline, features of fish and fishing occupation related essentials such as fishing net, fish line/string and pearls) as illustrated on the collage or abstractly implied were targeted variables for inspiration.

These resources collectively stimulated the ten concepts as subgroups which in turn influenced the materials selected namely: (i) classic wax prints-inspired fabrics, (ii) innovative classic wax print-inspired fabrics (iii) body décor-inspired (iv) empowerment-inspired (v) indigenous loom woven kente-inspired (vi) innovative kente-inspired prints, (vii) exotic traditional luxury-inspired (viii) ‘lifestyle’ innovative wax print-cum-jewellery-inspired (ix) fusion of multiple dress-inspired (x) *Asasa* sustainability-inspired.

Style details using techniques deduced from the maidens’ dress range and design names were further adapted so as to stay ahead of the trends observed in the concept boards. The impact derived was highly effective and unique as the inspirational sources and their socio-cultural relevance to the maidens and by extension to the ethnic group also influenced the selection of silhouettes, materials used and their colours, accessories and techniques in the dress variables as well as design names. Titled *FɛOOYɔɔ*: ‘*Gorgeous-You-Are*’, the collection is presented as follows:

Research Question 3: What factors were considered for the collection created and catalogued, and to what extent did the collection created reflect creative re-interpretation of the aesthetics aspects of the major dress cultural practices of the nobility rite maidens?

In creating the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection, the factors considered included the scholarly motivation vis-à-vis the research gap hinted in the literature search, and resultant design problem identified; the purpose of the project based on analysis of emerging trends, contents, themes and implications of the relevance of aesthetically pleasing aspects of the feminine subculture dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (nobility rite)

maidens vis-à-vis the study underpinnings, methods and adoptable concepts to enable one to achieve the overarching goal of the study.

Shared cultural values such as traditional dress design philosophies, appreciation of quality, aesthetic, and beauty; and findings from the Tema *Ashin Yoo* (rite maidens') dress cultural practices including materials used by maidens; preferred dress and body forms, colours, techniques and accessories were all considered. The foregoing issues largely informed the *Synthesis* model (Figure 2.10, p.145) adapted from the study underpinnings for the project.

The *FƐOOYOO* conceptual dress fashion collection of twenty (20) designs was spurred by ten cohesively linked yet individual concepts. The creatively-innovative new need had a blend of tradition (destination-inspired dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* nobility rite maidens) with exquisite style achieved through creative manipulation of secondary data collected. The use of creative and/or innovative individuals who have influence to shape the taste consensus across their society was used as a merchandising strategy (Burns et al., 2016). The value proposition was projecting a gorgeous tourist with a meaningful new need; a gift with cultural sensibilities from the *Ashin Yoo* (nobility rite maidens') outing dress, softly tailored customised conceptual dress which blend tradition and style. The target client was the culturally-inclined large to plus size female millennial fashion innovator (usually ignored when creating mass customised dress fashion), aged ranged between 26 to 56 years, adventure-loving lifestyle and willing to visit Tema, Tema *Manhean* and environs.

A catalogue of twenty (20) large to plus size feminine, dressy occasional collection of conceptual dress suits and separates was fashioned using studio-based research design

(Puadi et al., 2021). The collection was premised on ten thematic emerging concepts derived through critical aesthetic analysis of ten components teased from out the three major outing dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (nobility rite maidens), natural resources from the maidens' environment and the 2019 *KCascades Impressions (KCI)* brand as a key influencer. Apart from the dress variables observed from the 2019 *KCI* brand, the aesthetic aspects of the maidens' dress cultural practices such as *Mama Bumɔ* (wrap around cloth style), *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (headdress), *Odasobɔ* (silk scarf), *Ntah* (anklets), *Bue* (loincloth), *Fers* (yellow pigment), *Krɔbɔ* (green dried fruit used as decorative body smears), *Hao* (strap) and *Fliwa* (queen of rite maidens' beaded necklace), the sea and its many attributes (undulating sea waves, white foam at the shoreline, features of fish and fishing occupation related essentials such as fishing net, fish line/string and pearls) as illustrated on the collage or abstractly implied were targeted variables for inspiration. These resources collectively stimulated the ten concepts as subgroups which in turn influenced the materials selected.

Style details using techniques deduced from the maidens' dress range and design names were further adapted so as to stay ahead of the trends' (Muir et al., 2008). The impact derived was highly effective and unique as the inspirational sources and their socio-cultural relevance to the maidens and by extension to the ethnic group also influenced the selection of silhouettes, materials used and their colours, accessories and techniques in the dress variables as well as design names. Titled *Fɛ00Yɔɔ*: '*Gorgeous-You-Are*', the collection is presented as follows:

I. CLASSIC WAX PRINTS-INSPIRED FABRICS

MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL

The name ‘Meridian City Hotel’ was inspired by two ideas. The first was Kwame Nkrumah’s Meridian Hotel built for the State, as part of national development for which the people of Tema were forcefully relocated from their old settlement in old Tema along the Greenwich Meridian. The relocation paved the way for the development of the Tema port and township. The main fashion fabric used for the design is popularly known as ‘City Hotel’. The wax print is still popular, and its interesting name resonates with the brand objective. Thus, the two names were combined in coining the design reminiscent of historic memories. The dress details were inspired by style preferences of the maidens during the outing stages (*Telekɔmɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔ*). Key amongst them were concepts such as the use of colourful classic popular wax prints in layered wrap design, the *Hao* (waist strap), extent of coverage, beaded and gold accessories, undulating sea waves, and fish details.



4.24a



4.24b

Figures 4.24a & b: Model in two dimensional views elegant ‘MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL’ design.



4.25a



4.25b



4.25c



4.25d

Figures 4.25a -d: Model in four portraits showing dress details.

As illustrated in Figures 4.24 (a and b) and Figures 4.25 (a – d), the elegant mock wrap floor length mermaid dress uniquely features princess front and back bodice with anti-clockwise wrap front bodice and an undetachable soft self-belt. It also has back bowtie, high-waist, back zipper opening, mermaid back skirt, asymmetric hem, inserted sleeves with triple-layered lettuce-edged hems, and lined front bodice. The dress is partially lined. Key materials used are ‘City hotel’ industrialised wax print, polyester lining, fish line and horse hair. The dressy traditional outfit is colourful; coffee brown, golden yellow, orange, yellow, and white. The dress is in hourglass body shape. Techniques applied include wrap, drapery, layering, sea waves, fish tail, fish string, volume, coverage, and the use of high heels in raising the hips. The dress is accessorised using multi-pleated tied head scarf, a set of orange-cum-gold twisted

mixed beaded necklace and matching dangling earrings, and black strapped slip on leather heels with flat tips.

YOO KPAKPA

The name ***YOO KPAKPA*** means virtuous woman. Besides the expectation that each indigenous maiden who goes through the rite attain such socio-cultural values, the wax print selected is popularly referred to in *Ga* as ***YOO KPAKPA***. The regal three piece asymmetric toga wrap dress reflects the wrapped cloth, the volume of layered clothes used in all three outing dress, sea corals and the undulating sea waves, the ***Hao*** strap, coverage in terms of the dress length and beaded embellishments. The materials selected include black organza and black silky *Lisa*.



Figures 4.26a-c: The Model in the regal ***YOO KPAKPA*** asymmetric Toga wrap dress.



Figures 4.27a & b: Model in two poses showing garment details.

The regal three piece asymmetric toga wrap dress shown in Figures 4.26 (a to c) and Figures 4.27 (a and b) respectively is made up of organza beaded neck blouse with inserted full bishop sleeves, sleeveless *Lisa* inner wear, and asymmetric toga wrap skirt. The details include pearled beaded round neckline, princess front bodice, short back zipper opening, left over right flare wrap skirt with soft self-belt for back side bowtie, and undulating asymmetric hem. The versatile outfit has a sleeveless *Lisa* inner wear. Materials used are Organza, *Lisa*, and **YOO KPAKPA** (also known in Akan as ***Obaapa***) industrialised wax print. The colour palette is pink, sea blue, white and black, moulded on an hourglass body shape. Techniques used include wrap, volume, bands, coverage, and the use of high heels in raising of hips. The dress is accessorised with pleated cloth as head scarf, a pair of dangling custom earrings, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

AKUSHIKA

The ***AKUSHIKA*** design in Figures 4.28 (a and b) and Figures 4.29 (a to d) is named after the soul day of birth of the client, and the dress concept of bold and beautiful gold jewellery cum wax print fashion statement of the maidens during the ***Kpojei*** (post rite) stage of the ceremony. The design is inspired by the sustainable tendencies

of the nobility Dress cultural practices. The cultured look created is influenced by all the outing dress. Additionally, they informed the materials and colours selected; popular wax print called *Sɛbɛbo* and code lace net (imaginary connection of body marks on the upper torso). The colour red is influenced by the *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping dress), and the techniques applied in the outing dress such as layering of wrapped cloths, the use of the *Hao* (strap) and *Atufo* (bustle), the volume, bead accessories, sea waves and corals, fishing accoutrements, dress coverage and length.



Figures 4.28 a & b: Model in the refined three-piece skirt suit separates.





4.29c



4.29d

Figures 4.29 a - d: Model in four front and side portraits showing dress details.

The three-piece fused concept in Figures 4.28 (a and b) and Figures 4.29 (a to d) features skirt suit separates made up of a beaded tie-dye throw-on cord lace jacket with beaded collar detailing, classic wax print inner shirt worn over 360 degrees floor length flare skirt. Details include beaded innovative Peter Pan collar, princess style line front bodice, and inserted pair of one piece sleeves with asymmetric hem. The inner shirt has collarless neckline, short shirt sleeves, five-button shirt full front opening, and pleated flare attachment. A 360-degree cut flare skirt, waist knife pleats, back zipper opening, waistband, and bustle to influence hang. Materials used are colourful classic *Sebebo* also called *Ntsenfre* wax print, and tie-dye cord lace, pearls, and gold-trimmed buttons. The colour palette includes yellow, brown, *Krɔbo* green, orange, royal blue, off-white, and gold. The hourglass is given further emphasis with the use of the bustle as foundation garment. Its use further ensures the illusionary asymmetric hem (long front length and relatively shorter back length) effect. Other techniques include wrap, volume, bead accessories, fishing net, coverage and the use of high heels to further raise the hips. The dress is accessorised with multi-pleated cloth head scarf, a pair of dangling custom earrings, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

II. INNOVATED CLASSIC WAX PRINT -INSPIRED

SHIKA NUBU

SHIKA is gold, while *NUBU* in *Ga* means a well. *SHIKA NUBU* means a gold well. The two-tiered design shown in Figure 4.30 () to Figure 4.31() is named after the innovative timeless well-known wax print called *Kporkplorka* among the demographics under study. The fabric motifs resonate with ripples of a well, representing the maidens' expected resourcefulness and contribution to society given the grooming they receive. The design is inspired by all three outing dresses of the *Ashin* (rite) maidens and influenced the colours of the fashion fabric used. The dress concepts of layering, volume, coverage, and farthingale effect of the *Atufo* (bustle) are of value in the detailing of the *SHIKA NUBU* design.





4.30a



4.30b

Figures 4.30a & b: Salome in three dimensional full front and back views of innovative timeless *SHIKA NUBU*.



4.31a



4.31b

Figure 4.31a & b: Salome in two views of the two-tiered *SHIKA NUBU* frock showing details.



4.32a



4.32b

Figures 4.32a & b: Model in two dimensional poses of *SHIKA NUBU* showing comfort in wear and other details.



4.33a



4.33b

Figures 4.33a & b: Naa models the two-tiered innovative timeless *SHIKA NUBU* frock with emphasis to free size concept, alternate headdress style, and other details.

Figures 4.30 (a and b) to Figures 4.33 (a and b) shows the two-tiered innovative timeless *SHIKA NUBU* frock featuring one piece Mandarin-inspired collar embellished with beads and sequins, princess style lines in front and back, hip seam, two-tiered skirt with cover edge stitch-embellished edges, back zipper opening, stiffened self-belt, and inserted sleeves with two-tiered puffed details. Materials used include innovative *Kporkplorka* (also referred to as *Nsubura* in Akan or ripples in

English), industrialised wax print, sequins, and tubular beads. The design's colour palette includes turquoise green, yellow, black and gold. The body shape is hourglass. Other techniques used include layering, volume, and coverage. The dress is accessorised with rosette, pleated or multi-pleated cloth scarf, pair of dangling gold earrings and/or beaded *Adiagba* necklace, and wrist watch, and gold clasp bangle. A pair of strapped top high heels with flat tips is used to raise the hips to accentuate the look created.

III. BODY DÉCOR-INSPIRED PRINTS

NIDMAA

Generally, the term *Niyṁãa* means writing in *Ga*. However, in relation to the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens, it refers to their body décor using elements of design (such as dots, lines, colour, and space). In this instance, the stylish monochrome two-piece trousers dress suit shown in Figures 4.33 (a and b) to Figure 4.35 (a and b) is named after the *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping) body décor of white dots on black smears, and the use of gold jewellery during *Kpojiemɔ* (maidens' outdoorings) and *Kpojei* (post rite). The A-line organza ruched sleeved top blouse worn over narrow leg trousers reflects *NIDMAA* colours, and other concepts such as wrap, layering, volume, *Hao*, and coverage of the outing dress. The twist in fabric choice is the innovative reverse of black on white polka dot twill print used, with hints of spandex properties, and crisp white organza for a 'revealing' effect.



Figures 4.33a & b: The Model Salome in the three dimensional stylish *NIDMAA* two-piece trouser dress suit.



Figures 4.34a, b & c: Model in three poses of the stylish *NIDMAA* two-piece trouser dress suit featuring details.



4.35a



4.35b

Figure 4.35a & b: Model in two bust postures in stylish *NIDMAA* two-piece trouser dress suit featuring details.

Other details include collarless topstitched neckline, ruched sleeves, double layered back bodice, full back gold button opening, shaped hem; waist casing and tie strings, inseam side pockets, narrow legs, and plain hem finish. Materials are black multi-sized polka dot-print on white twill, white organza and black stretchy spandex fabric. The colour palette includes white, black and gold. The body shape desired is hourglass. Other techniques are wrap, layering, volume, coverage and high heels to raise the hips. Twisted beaded necklace made from white and gold small rocaille round beads and colourful *Adiagba* beads, and slim dangling crystal and gold earrings are used as accessories, while a pair of twisted braided glittery silver heels with flat tips are used to raise the hips.

MLITSA-NIDMAA

The coat dress *MLITSA-NIDMAA* in Figures 4.36 (a and b) to Figures 4.37 () is inspired by two key dress concepts of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens: the *Telekomo* and *Kpojei Hesaamci* (pre-camping and post rite dress). There is also the use of classic prints and body décor; ‘white-on-black-dots’, and green *Krobo* used on the maidens as body décor during the pre-camping stage. The fashion statements made by

the maidens during the post rites stages are intriguingly combined in this design. The two main fashion fabrics used for the design are the popular polka dots and *Krɔbo* green *Mlitsa* wax print. The newer version of polka dots twill print is trending in golden yellow. The *Mlitsa* wax print is also popular among the demographics under study, and its interesting name resonates with the brand objective. Thus, the two names were combined in naming this particular design. The dress details are influenced by the shared culture of body décor colouring (white, black and green) nuanced in gold jewellery fashion statements observed in the maidens' dress cultural practices during the post rites stage.



Figures 4.36a & b: Model Senam in two dimensional views of the stylish double breasted floor length belted coat dress suit separates.

The use of new polka print as the outer garment worn over the *Mlitsa* wax print pair of trousers is fascinating as shown in Figure 4.35. The wrapped front influenced by cloth wrap style is emphasised with gold buttons as fashion statement, and the shawl collar cut is seamed in chevron (fish bone details) as emphasis to create a conceptual look.



Figures 4.37a -d: Model Senam in four bust poses of the stylish double breasted floor length coat dress suit separates, with focus on details.

The coat dress suit in Figures 4.36 (a and b) and Figures 4.37 (a to d) is made with golden yellow multi-sized polka dot-print on white twill, and *Krɔbo* green and brown *Mlitsa* industrialised wax print. It is worn over narrow leg trousers made with *Krɔbo* green *Mlitsa* industrialised wax print. The coat dress suit features wide roll and shawl cut collar, Princess front and back bodice, wrapped front, detachable self-belt with gold buckle, joined waist, ten gold buttoned front opening, flare skirt, two inseam side pockets, slightly shortened bound front (asymmetric) hem, below-elbow inserted sleeves with banded hems. The trousers has side slanted pockets, back zipper opening, inserted waistband, narrow legs and plain hems. The body shape projected is the hourglass. Techniques used include wrap, volume, bands, binds, coverage, and the use of high heels to raise the hips.

NIDMAA-CHIC

NIDMAA-CHIC in Figures 4.38 (a and b) to Figures 4.40 (a and b) is named by a combination of influencers of the fabrics adopted, and appreciation of the style. Constant components of all three outing dress culture practices influenced the design. The *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-rite) body décor of white on black dots and the use of velvet as wrapped cloth during the *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooring) influenced the top blouse fabric choice. The *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping) red wax print called ‘*crackers*’ or *Owulakuku* influenced the Palazzo pants fabric choice. Design details are inspired by general enigmatic aesthetic details such as glowing arms of the maidens, wrapped cloth front, dress length, the *Hao* (waist strap), and sea waves among others.



Figures 4.38a & b: The model in a two dimensional views of ***NIDMAA-CHIC***.



Figures 4.39a & b: The model shows detailing of the *NIDMAA- CHIC* separates in two dimensional poses.



Figures 4.40a & b: Model shows off detailing of the *NIDMAA- CHIC* separates in two poses.

The off-the-shoulder organza top with black velvety polka dot-print is worn over mock wrap floor length industrialised wax print palazzo trousers. The blouse has high round neckline, front and back princess style line, almost elbow-length off-the-shoulder sleeves with lettuce edge, back open-ended zipper opening, banded hem with end straps for side bow tying. The pair of palazzo trousers has asymmetric front wrap, back zipper opening and inserted waistband.

The design blends black velvety polka dot-print on white organza fabric, and industrialised red, beige and black *Owulakuku* or crackers' *NUSTYLE* branded wax print influenced from *Telekomo* (pre-rite) dress code. The hourglass is reflected in the look created. Techniques applied include wrap (*Mama Bum*), volume, coverage, body décor, and the use of high heels in raising the hips. The dress is accessorised with pleated tied cloth scarf, red dangling earrings with fluffy balled detailing, and black and red strapped 3" wedge heels with flat tips.

TSILE LOOWU

The chevron front cut design is named after the *Tsile* (fish) in which season the *Ashin* (nobility) was observed in the past (Damalie, 2018a). The luxury dress ***TSILE LOOWU*** in Figures 4.41(a and b) to Figure 4.43 is a sleeveless jumpsuit, with a luxury yoked bustier on A-line palazzo. The main fashion fabrics used reflect the appreciation and appropriation of geometric shapes used during all the outing stages of the ceremony. Materials inspired are the plaid twill, white corded lace (an imaginary connection of body marks on the upper torso), and the bright red and white *Bue* (loincloth), using concepts such as sea waves, volume, fish herringbone, fishing net, and coverage to influence the cut details.



4.41a



4.42b

Figures 4.41a & b: Model Grace rocks *TSILE LOOWU* Chevron front sleeveless jumpsuit.



4.42a



4.42b

Figures 4.42a & b: Shows illusory height achieved in the *TSILE LOOWU* Chevron jumpsuit in two poses.



Figure 4.43: Shows the side bust view of the model in *TSILE LOOWU* Chevron jumpsuit details.

The chevron front jumpsuit above in Figures 4.41(a and b) features sleeveless figure defining luxury yoked bustier on A-line palazzo. Other details include front and back corded lace net front and back yokes, Princess style lines in front and back, fashion waist seam, piped style lines, back zipper opening, inseam side pockets, and wide legs. Materials used are stretchy plaid twill, tulle net-backed corded lace and *Bue* (loincloth) wax print findings. The colour palette is white, blue, and red. The body shape is hourglass. Other techniques include sea waves, volume, fish herringbone, fishing net, coverage and the use of high heels to raise the hips. The garment is accessorised with side hair bun style, pair of soft red tassel earrings, wrist watch, and 3' matching striped top wedge heels with flat tips to raise the hips.

IV. EMPOWERMENT

AAYOO

AAYOO in *Ga* is in respectful reference to the ‘woman’. The audacious design in Figures 4.44 (a and b) to Figures 4.45 is a bold use of the *Bue* (loincloth) as a throw-on jacket for the career woman. It is worn on a chevron cut front jumpsuit. It is inspired by all three outing dress of the nobility maidens. Ordinarily, the bright red and white loincloth is used covertly as an undergarment (Damalie & Essel, 2024; Wellington, 2006). However, the fabric is used in an interesting twist as an alternative in place of the *Ntah* (anklets) by the nobility maidens to make a fashionable cultural statement. All three outing dress inspired the design with techniques such as layering, volume, coverage and the effect of the *Atufo* (bustle) as key influencers. It projects the empowered woman.



Figures 4.44a & b: Grace models *AAYOO Bue* print throw-on jacket on chevron front detailed jumpsuit.



4.45a



4.45b

Figures 4.45a &b: Model poses in *AAYOO Bue* print throw-on jacket showing details.



4.46a



4.46b

Figures 4.46a &b: Model in two poses of *AAYOO Bue* print throw-on jacket showing details.

The *AAYOO Bue* (loincloth) throw-on jacket in Figures 4.44 (a and b) to Figures 4.46 (a and b) feature princess style lines in front and back, notch collar and rever, full front opening, shaped centre back, two tiered inserted jacket sleeves, and two front bosom patched pockets. The material used is the *Bue* (bright red and white) industrialised wax print, taffeta and soft interfacing. The colour palette is made up of

red, blue, and white. The silhouette of choice is the hourglass. Techniques used include layering, coverage and the use of high heels to raise the hips. The dress is accessorised with side hair bun style, pair of soft red tassel earrings, and wrist watch, and 3" matching striped top wedge heels with flat tips to raise the hips of the wearer.

ODEHE

ODEHE implies royalty. It is styled as part of the chevron jumpsuit for the career woman. The design in Figures 4.47 (a and b) to Figures 4.49 (a and b) is an alternative to the audacious ***AAYOO*** throw-on jacket. The use of light and airy white corded lace is inspired by the imaginary connection of the maidens' body marks on the upper torso during outing, the beautiful white sea foam from the waves observed at the shoreline, and fishing net. The other design details are influenced by key ***Telekomo***, ***Kpojemɔ*** and ***Kpojei*** (themed outing dress). Aesthetic dress concepts such as layering, volume, nature of coverage, and the effect of the ***Atufo*** (bustle) on the hipline influenced the design.



Figure 4.47a & b: Grace models ***ODEHE*** tulle-backed cord lace throw-on jacket on jumpsuit.



Figures 4.48a & b: Grace models *ODEHE* tulle-backed cord lace throw-on jacket showing details.



Figure 4.49: Grace models *ODEHE* tulle-backed cord lace throw-on jacket with focus on details.

The classy tulle net-backed corded lace throw on jacket features princess style lines in front and back, Mandarin collar, full front button-free opening, shaped centre back, single tiered inserted sleeves, and two front bosom patched pockets. The material is tulle net-backed cord lace, and the colour palette is white for an hourglass body shape. The techniques used include layering, coverage, and the use of high heels to raise the hips. The dress is accessorised with side bun hair style, pair of red tassel earrings, and

wrist watch, and 3” matching stripped top wedge heels with flat tips to accentuate the look.

V. INDIGENOUS LOOM WOVEN KENTE-INSPIRED

ANUDNYAM

The luxurious cultured four-piece nouveau loom woven kente, organza and *Lisa* dress in Figures 4.50 (a and b) to Figures 4.52 (a and b) is named *ANUDNYAM* meaning honour. This is in reflection of who the cleansed maidens are to their families and community as a whole. Inspiration is from *Telekɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* (themed) outing dress. Key influencers of fabric colour story are *Krɔbɔ* (green fruit smears), cloves, and red *Telekɔɔ* (pre-rite) materials. Useful techniques are facial floral décor, layering, undulating sea waves and fish herringbone, *Hao*, coverage, *Atufo* (bustle) effect on hips, and *Ntah* (anklets).



Figures 4.50a & b: Model in three dimensional views of the cultured four piece loom woven kente cum printed organza and *Lisa* dress.



Figures 4.51a & b: Model Ruqayat in two dimensional views of the cultured four piece loom woven metallic blended Kente, printed organza and *Lisa* dress showing complements.



Figures 4.52a & b: The model in two dimensional views of the *ANUDNYAM* dress showing the combined effects of the braid on shaped bolero front edges on the bustier top, chevron cut skirt with flute-like waves and undulating hem.

The dress features a braid-trimmed rounded front bolero with inserted jacket sleeves. The bustier features a sweetheart neckline, double-layered flare waist peplums with lettuce edging, and full back zipper. The chevron cut floor length skirt features flute-like waves and undulating hem. The bolero is fully lined. The materials used include

lemon green metallic blended silky loom woven kente, black metallic blended silky loom woven kente, beautiful floral organza, pre-pressed white *Lisa*, bra cups, and 1 ¼” elastic band. The body shape desired is the hourglass, while techniques such as layering, sea waves, fish bone, bands, coverage help create the look. The high heels worn helped to raise the hips. Dress accessories include black knitted turban with gold stitched-on button, a pair of dangling gold custom earrings, bracelet, and wrist watch, twisted necklace made from twisted strands, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

VI. INNOVATIVE KENTE-INSPIRED PRINTS

OWULA

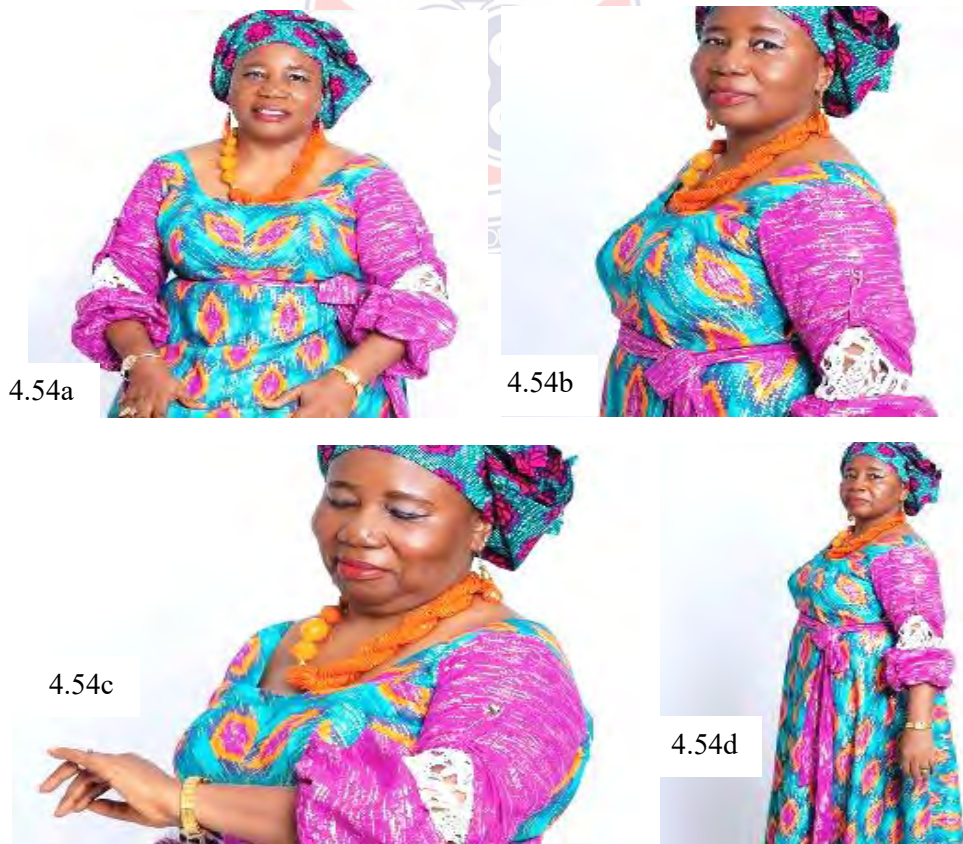
OWULA, a *Ga* term is an acknowledgement used in appreciation that one is ‘well dressed’ for an occasion. The stylish and audacious back wrap kente print dress is influenced by the *Kpojemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (outdooing and post rites) dress. The *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens during this stage continue to wear wrapped luxurious kente, and wax prints respectively secured with *Hao* (waist strap) and body and hair texturing. These as well as their key accessories which include headdress, multiple neck and wrist beads, gold jewellery and the enigmatic *Ntah* (anklets) are reflected in the design. These concepts influenced not only the design details but also the colours of the *OWULA* design in Figures 4.53 (a to c) and Figures 4.54 (a to d).

The floor length timeless elegant chevron wrap dress features flare back wrap cut, made with colourful turquoise blue, orange, violet, metallic gold imitated kente wax print and plain. The details include Princess front bodice, versatile back wrap, soft self-belt, side bowtie, high-waist, flared skirt, undulating hem, inserted long sleeves

with latch and gold buttons, a touch of off-white dry lace and flared-puffed hem attachments. The dress is fully lined.



Figures 4.53a - c: Shows model Ruqayat in three dimensional views of *OWULA*.



Figures 4.54a - d: Shows model Ruqayat in four poses of the *OWULA* design showing detailing.

The dress silhouette mirrors the hourglass body shape of the model. Other techniques used include *Mama Bumo* (wrap), volume, *Ntah* (anklet) colour and design details, coverage, and the use of high heels in raising the hips. The dress is accentuated with a pleated cloth (*Yoo Kpakpa*) head scarf, a set of orange cum gold twisted mixed beaded necklace and matching dangling earrings, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

OBLA KPAA

The term ***OBLA KPAA*** is appreciation of high fashion in the *Ga* language. The dressy occasional wear is an A-line mullet hem outfit as shown in Figure 4.55 and Figure 4.56. It is inspired by a mix of all three outing dresses of the maidens' materials, colours, motifs and techniques. The fashion fabrics are luxurious sequined lace, and embellished imitated kente wax print. Key influencers of the design are wrap, layering, sea waves, volume, coverage, *Hao* (waist strap), and the farthingale effect of the *Atufo* (bustle).



Figures 4.55a & b: Model in three beautiful poses of the ***OBLA KPAA*** dressy occasional wear.



4.56a



4.56b

Figures 4.56a & b: The portrait shows decorative grommet and lace closure, detachable self-belt, and mullet hem details of the *OBLA KPAA* dressy occasional wear.



4.57a



4.57b

Figures 4.57a & b: Model in two dazzling poses of the stylish *OBLA KPAA* dressy occasional wear showing detailing.

Figures 4.55 (a and b) to Figures 4.57 (a and b) shows the A-line mullet hem luxurious sequined lace and embellished imitated kente wax print dress. The dress details include front and back lace yokes, sweetheart cut, Princess style lines in front and back, front grommet embellishment with laced holes, waist seam, A-line skirt, back zipper opening, inseam side pockets, inserted short flare sleeves, and detachable

self-belt with fastener. Materials used include sequined lace, and embellished imitated kente industrialised wax print, vilene and grommet eyelets and lace.

The colour palette is yellow, gold, red, blue, lemon green, sea blue, violet, and black. The hourglass body shape is featured. Techniques employed include sea waves, volume, coverage, and the use of high heels to raise the hips. Accessories used include centre parted long hair sweeps, pair of dangling gold earrings, green pearled and gold necklace, wrist watch, gold bracelet and stone embellished gold leather heels (3”) with pointed tips to accentuate the look created.

BLEMA KE AKPAAKO

BLEMA KE AKPAAKO in Figures 4.58 to Figures 4.60 is a stylish fusion of memories from the past and contemporary trends as the name implies. The kaba and wrap skirt is named by the nature of sustainable cultural tendencies in the design reflecting the two eras, and the fusion of material with a twist. Concepts from ***Kpojiemɔ*** and ***Kpojei*** dress and the two eras are key using wrap, undulating sea waves, fishing net, layering, ***Atufo*** (bustle), ***Hao*** (waist strap), volume, colour medley, head covering, dress coverage, and bead and gold accessories as techniques manipulated. The fashion fabrics used are colourful lifestyle ***Woodin*** branded imitated kente print, and classic ***YOO KPAKPAA*** wax print, gold organza, and sparkly gift net.



4.58a



4.58b

Figures 4.58a & b: Model Senam in three dimensional views of stylish ***BLEMA KE AKPAAKO***.



4.59a



4.59b

Figures 4.59a & b: Model Senam in stylish ***BLEMA KE AKPAAKO*** showing detailing.



Figures 4.60a & b: Model Senam in stylish **BLEMA KE AKPAAKO** showing further details.

The dress details in Figures 4.58 (a and b) include a top kaba and wrap skirt (cloth). The blouse has asymmetric neckline, Princess style lines in front and back, double layered flare waist peplums with cover edge stitched embellished edges, back zipper opening, inserted sleeves with sparkly net godet and pleated hem details. Cloth has triple godet inserts from back knees. Materials used include imitated plaid kente industrialised wax print from *Woodin*, sparkly gift net, and yellow organza. Deep and light green, pink, gold and blue are the colour palettes. The body shape emphasised is the hourglass body shape (Figures 4. 60a and b). Other techniques include **Mama Bumɔ** (wrap), **Hao** (waist strap) sea waves, volume, fish net, extensive coverage, and the use of high heels to raise hips. The dress is accessorised with pleated **YOO KPAKPA** cloth scarf, gold custom jewellery of twisted necklace, pair of dangling gold earrings, and gold wrist watch, and the use of strapped top high heels with flat tips to raise the hips (Figure 4.59a).

VII. EXOTIC-CUM-TRADITIONAL LUXURY-INSPIRED

OBLA YOO

The little black dress (LBD) in Figures 4.61(a to c) and Figures 4.62 (a to d) is a timeless ‘must-have’ luxury wardrobe item for every elegant lady. The name ***OBLA YOO*** in *Ga* means lady. The design is inspired by an old *Ga* song by *Wulomei* about the Tema Meridian hotel, and a possible dress requirement of an elegant lady on an evening date. The design is influenced by the use of luxurious materials used during the *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* stages. The dress details are influenced by techniques from all outing dress such as the front wrap of cloth used, volume and ease of wear, the *Hao* (strap) used in securing the layers, the length and coverage of dress, and the *Ntah* (anklets) considered as a ‘must-have’ status signifier for the maidens.



Figures 4.61a - c: Shows model in three dimensional views of Timeless luxury of an A-line little black dress (LBD) ***OBLA YOO*** design.



Figures 4.62a -d: Model in four poses of the Timeless luxury A-line little black dress (LBD) *OBLA YOO* design.

As shown in Figures 4.62 (a to d), the LBD has black and white print strapped-V neckline, black velvety front, and black and white scuba-cotton back, Princess style lines in front and back, inserted three-quarter sleeves with banded wax print hem attachments, superimposed flare front scuba net, and stitched back scuba net attachments, back zipper closure, joined waist, mullet back hem. A-line front and hourglass back shape. The outfit is fully lined.

Materials used include black velvet, embroidered black and white wax print, and perforated scuba net. Taffeta lining was used in lining the dress. The use of techniques such as the hourglass, wrap, volume, binds, length, coverage, anklet details of foot

wear, coverage, and the use of high heels to raise the hips gave the desired silhouette. The dress was accessorised with black knitted turban with gold stitched-on button, a pair of dangling gold custom earrings, thin gold necklace with pendant, gold bracelet, and wrist watch, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

VIII. 'LIFESTYLE' INNOVATIVE WAX PRINTS-CUM-JEWELLERY-INSPIRED

WALA YOO

WALA YOO literally means 'life woman' in *Ga* language. The name is inspired by two key dress concepts, that is, trendy lifestyle *Woodin* branded cotton fashion fabric, and flattery look of an *Ashin* (rite) maiden. Thus, the *Telekɔmɔ*, *Kpojemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (Pre-rite and post-rite dress) stages of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens influenced the fabric as well as colour choices. Imagery of concepts such as white dotted marks on dark clove smears applied on the nobility maidens as body décor, gold cum beads on print fashion statements, undulating sea waves motifs and also colour splash (gold on white, orange, green, violet and red) fused together influenced the fabric choice. The design details reflect the shared culture styles of wrapped front and the play of lines, visual formation of the multiple wrist beads worn by the maidens, and the manipulation of lines to reflect the effect of meandering sea waves.



Figures 4.63a & b: The model in two dimensional views of floor length stylish mock wrap dress suit separates.



Figures 4.64a -d: The model Senam in five busts of the floor length stylish mock wrap dress suit separates with focus on light handed make up, gold and bead combination jewellery (*Fliwa*), deep vee neck, pearled bust and multi-pleated scarf with petals.

Mock wrap dress in Figures 4.63 (a and b) and Figures 4.64 (a to e) has been made with metallic gold designed ‘lifestyle’ industrialised *Woodin* branded cotton print. The top skirt of the dress is mirrored from the wrap front bodice. The wide opening at the hem shows a slim inner pre-pressed light violet chiffon skirt. The dress has V neckline, front and back princess style line, wrap front, joined waist, back zipper opening, A-line skirt, slightly shortened (asymmetric) front hem with fine cover edge stitch detailing, mullet hem, a 7/8 inserted drum stick sleeve variant; puff sleeves with puffed elasticated hem attachments. The pre-pressed chiffon skirt features a 1¼ inch elasticated waistband. The front bodice is further embellished with red pearls to highlight polka dot prints. The front bodice is fully lined with polyester. The colours used are gold on white, orange, green, violet and red. The hourglass is given prominence to reflect the source of inspiration. The techniques used include wrap, volume, coverage, and the use of high heels in raising the hips. The dress is accessorised with tied pleated cloth scarf, gold dangling earrings, and a medley of *Adiagba* (treasured bead) strung *Fliwa* styled neck bead, and matching white and gold strapped one and half inches (1 ½‘) heeled footwear.

ADIAGBA

ADIAGBA implies a treasured possession. It is named after the expensive neck and wrist beads used by the maidens during the *Kpojemɔ* and *Kpojei* outing stages respectively. The strung *Fliwa* neck beads necklace and the ones worn on the maidens’ wrist are must-wear status signifiers. The name is inspired by the value *Temamei* put on daughters of the land, such that they spare no financial effort and inputs made on what they expend on the nobility rituals. The three piece single breasted waistcoat suit separates in Figures 4.65 (a to c) to Figures 4.67 (a and b) reflects the outdoor and post rites dress; particularly the front wrap technique,

layering of cloths and draped neck beads, the use of the *Atufo* (bustle) to create exaggerated hips, the colourful nature of adornment during these two stages, embellishment using beads and gold jewellery to complement wrapped cloths, the use of luxurious quality fabrics, the sea waves, and fishing net. These concepts together influenced the nature of fabrics used, their colours and the style notes of the *ADIAGBA* design.



Figures 4.65a - c: Model in three dimensional views of three pieces' single breasted waistcoat suit separates made with novel rhinestone-embellished wax print on curry-gold crepe trouser suit.



Figures 4.66a & b: Two dimensional views of triple-layered lettuce-edge skirt part of the three-piece *ADIAGBA* throw-on single-breasted waistcoat dress.



Figures 4.67a & b: Model in two dimensional views of the top throw-on waistcoat of three-piece *ADIAGBA* suit separates with focus on the built-up collar deep cut gorge, puffed drum stick sleeves and accessories.

The *ADIAGBA* three-piece single-breasted waistcoat suit separates top features triple-layered lettuce-edged waist peplum, a built-up neckline, a deep front gorge revealing curry-gold cropped top and gold button closure. The dress is made of novel rhinestone-embellished industrialised wax print, curry-gold crepe trouser suit consisting of sleeveless cropped top and flared legged trousers. The top single-breasted features princess style lines in front and back, net inserted short sleeves with puff hem attachments around arms, gold button and hole closure, joined waist,

inserted triple layered flared lettuce hem peplum skirt, open front. The cropped top features princess front and back bodice with gathered hem attachment; flared trousers feature elasticated back waistband, front casing and plain stitched hems.

Colours include gold, orange, pinkish-purple, and black. The skirt has tulle net interlining for a bouncy bustle effect. Other techniques include layering, volume, sea (waves, fishing net, and fish string), coverage, and the use of high heels in raising the hips. The outfit is accessorised with black ruched-back scuba turban with sparkly diamond stitched-on, a pair of custom jewellery, and wrist watch, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

MANYE YOO

The design name implies a victorious woman, a wish of every mother of Tema *Manhean* for her daughter undergoing the *Ashin* ceremony. The cold shoulder dress variant is inspired by the value proposition the mothers put on their daughters. This is observed during the celebration of the *Adowa* dance to commemorate the end of the rites. The design reflects all the outing dress, particularly the colourful aesthetic story of the nobility rite dress; *Telekɔmɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* (outing) dress. Of particular interest are the colours, techniques of layering wrapped cloths, the use of the *Atufo* (bustle) to put emphasis on the hips of the maidens, the sea and its resources including fishes, corals and the undulating sea waves, the use of *Hao* (strap) in securing wrapped cloths, and the use of beaded accessories among others. These also influenced the selection of the wax print with metallic gold surface design used, and the cut details of ***MANYE YOO***.



Figures 4.68a & b: The Model in a two dimensional view in fashionable off-the shoulder, double-layered lettuce-edged full flare hipster peplum long wax print dress.



Figures 4.69a & b: The Model in two dimensional views cold shoulder puff sleeves and strap; and black knitted turban headdress.



Figures 4.70a & b: The Model in two poses of the fashionable beaded Peter Pan collar, off-the shoulder sleeves, and double-layered lettuce-edged hipster peplum, mullet hem details and custom jewellery.

The dress in Figures 4.68 (a and b) to 4.70 (a and b) is a fashionable off-the shoulder, double-layered lettuce-edged hipster peplum, long dress, made of metallic gold designed ‘lifestyle’ industrialised wax print. It features Princess style lines in front and back, pearled two piece novel collar (Peter Pan on stand), strapped shoulders, elasticated puff sleeves, zipper back opening, double-layered flared lettuce mullet hem peplum skirt. Materials used include ‘life’ industrialised wax print with metallic gold as embellishment, assorted coloured pearls and synthetic gold fabric. The colour palette is gold, yellow, red, and grey. The dress emphasises the hourglass silhouette. Techniques used are layering, volume, sea (waves, fish string), bands, binds, coverage, and the use of high heels in raising the hips. The dress is accessorised with black knitted turban with gold stitched-on button, a pair of custom earrings, and gold wrist watch, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips.

IX. FUSION OF MULTIPLE DRESS-INSPIRED CONCEPTS

KPLEMO

The sleeveless body hugging bustier and mullet hem deep wrap skirt suit in Figures 4.71(a and b) to Figures 4.73 (a and b) is named *KPLEMO* meaning glittery. The name is influenced by the glittery ‘lifestyle’ wax print, and the sparkly gift net used. The design reechoes the maxim ‘All that glitters ...’ which in this case can be observed ‘is gold’ if the value placed on the girl child is anything to go by. The design is inspired by the all three outing dress. Concepts like *Mama Bumo* (wrap), volume, fishing net, *Hao*, coverage, fusion of colours, the farthingale effect of the *Atufo*, and accessories used during all three outing stages are influencers.



Figures 4.71a & b: Model in two dimensional views of the *KPLEMO* (Glittery) ‘lifestyle’ wax print body hugging bustier, deep wrap skirt suit with mullet hem.



Figures 4.72a & b: Model Salome poses in two dimensional side and front views of the *KPLEMO* (Glittery) with focus on side details and multi-pleated headdress.



Figures 4.73a & b: Model reveals the yoked bustier, and *Fliwa* and custom jewellery blend, back key hole and corset back grommet and lace closure, and triple-layered flare waist peplums.

The glittery ‘lifestyle’ wax print sleeveless body hugging bustier and mullet hem deep wrap skirt suit features front and back yokes, Princess style lines in front and back, double layered flared lettuce peplum skirt, keyhole back, wax print bound neckline and armhole, grommet and corded lacing, and zipper back opening, gold net bound

mullet hem wrap skirt with waistband, and end ties for bowtie effects. Bustier is lined. Materials used include industrialised glittery wax print with metallic gold as surface embellishment, organza, sparkly gift net, grommet, zipper and fish string. The colour palette consists of gold, red, lemon green, white and black.

The body shape featured is hourglass. Other techniques used include *Mama Bumɔ* (wrap), volume, fishing net, lacing, coverage, and the use of high heels to raise the hips. Accessories are black knitted turban with gold stitched-on button, a pair of custom earrings, and wrist watch, and jewel chain anklet-strapped glittery black leather heels with pointed tips used in raising the hips.

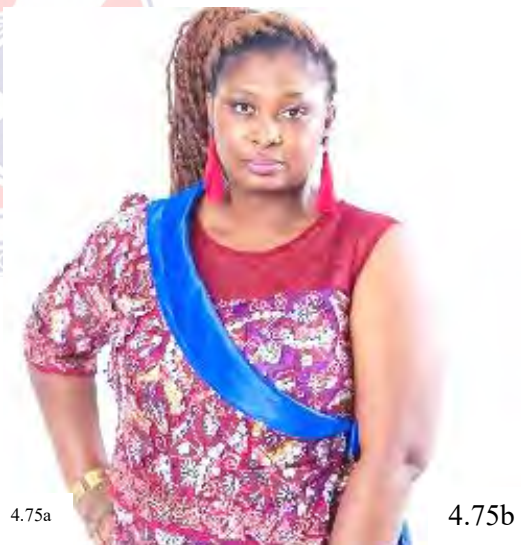
X. ASASA SUSAINABILITY-INSPIRED

AHUD KƐ YAA WULAMɔ

Ahuɲ KƐ Yaa Wulamɔ is a timeless luxury evening wear named after sea waves and fishing net implied in the design. The exceptional nouveau ‘lifestyle’ sequined embroidered pieced wax print cum net lace, floor length double-layered sleeveless bustier dress which comes with asymmetric jacket reflects the sources of inspiration implied in the name of the design. The other complementing fabric is luxurious royal blue *Lisa* silk. The choice of a patchwork design known in *Ga* as *Asasa* fabric tells a story of the practice of cultural sustenance, in the face of related challenges regarding the health of the sea, and needed efforts in advocacy to ensure responsible fishing practices. It is inspired by the *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* (outing dress) with concepts such as *Mama Bumɔ*, (wrap), sea waves, volume, layering, coverage, and the farthingale effect of *Atufo* (bustle).



Figures 4.74a & b: Model Grace poses in four dimensional (front and back) views of the asymmetric *AHUD KƐ YAA WULAMO* triple-layered dressy evening wear.



Figures 4.75a & b: Model Grace poses in two dimensional views of the asymmetric *AHUD KƐ YAA WULAMO* dressy evening jacket with asymmetric roll collar and jacket sleeve details; jewel neck bustier, braided hair style, and simple tassel red earrings to complement the look.



Figures 4.76a & b: Grace poses the right side with jacket on, and without jacket to show off alluring *AHUI KƐ YAA WULAMO* dressy asymmetric evening dress.

The two piece evening dress in Figures 4.74 (a and b) to Figures 4.76 (a and b) is rendered in timeless luxury nouveau ‘lifestyle’ sequined embroidered wax print cum net lace. The outfit is a floor length sleeveless bustier dress, with an asymmetric jacket. The jacket features Princess style lines in front and back, roll collar, inserted two piece jacket sleeve, and side strapped bow tie. An asymmetric jacket complements the sleeveless frock. The jacket is unlined. Materials used include nouveau ‘lifestyle’ sequined embroidered wax print, lace mesh, tulle net, and blue *Lisa* fabric. The colour palette is burgundy, orange, blue, and golden yellow.

The bustier evening dress rendered in timeless luxury nouveau ‘lifestyle’ sequined embroidered wax print cum net lace. It is a sleeveless floor length and has double-layered panel skirts with godet inserted bustier dress. The bustier dress is fully lined with royal blue *Lisa* fabric. Other details include round neck front and back net yokes, sweetheart yoke cuts, princess style lines in front and back, waist seam, twelve paneled pieces with godet insertions, back zipper opening.

Materials used include nouveau ‘lifestyle’ sequined embroidered wax print, lace mesh, tulle net, and *Lisa*. The colour palette is burgundy, orange, blue, and golden yellow. The body shape is hourglass. Other techniques used are wrap, sea waves,

volume, layering, creating slimy illusion with coverage, and the use of high heels to raise the hips. The dress is accessorised with side ponytail hair style, pair of red tassel earrings, and wrist watch, gold clasp bangle and striped top 3” wedge heels with flat tips to raise the hips and accentuate the look created.

The *Ga* destination-inspired collection created highly reflects the creative reinterpretation of the aesthetically pleasing aspects of the major dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (rite) maidens (Elsayed, 2018; Evbuomwan, 1996; Muir et al, 2008). The designs fashioned, the materials appropriated and used, the colours and techniques used, the accessories used in styling the looks created, as well as the naming of each design in the collection, have been impacted by the influencing themes applied consistent with fashion practice (Mbonu, 2014; Ojo, 2016; Pinther, 2022; Saleem et al., 2014; Vrencoska, 2009).

Analysis of FɛOOYɔɔ collection: creative design, product development and style selection, technical package and production processes and presentation

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection consisted of the creative process, design/product development and style selection process, technical package, product construction process and the presentation of the final outcome. As relayed in the data, the creative process consisted of the summary of collection intended at the earlier stage of the project termed as the design brief as shown in Tables 1 and 2 (pp. 215 & 216). The brief served as the blueprint as it were to the project the collection (as specified in objective three).

Figure 4.23 entailed customer profiling which zoomed in on a model representing the nature of persons who were identified as likely to be interested in wearing such conceptualised clothing. The ideation stages as illustrated in the Table 3 show the

compilation of the story boards: mood/theme, trend, colour, and motif boards. These provided all the required information together with the customer profile to decipher the shape and form to adapt to in terms of dress details. The occasion for which the design was to be used further informed the materials and colours selected. Manipulation of motifs derived from the mood/theme/trend boards guided the composition of several sketches out of which the collection was sampled consistent with fashion design practices (Mbonu, 2014). Before then the other three sampled as prototypes (See Appendices). The actual conceptualisation of the designed collection was clearly hatched at each stage of those activities as illustrated in Table 4. Those activities further culminated into the actual composition of the *FƐOOYƆƆ* design boards presented in two dimensional views in Tables 5 to 8. In all, twenty designs were selected based on ten concepts derived from the mood/theme board. The concepts derived further influenced the names given to each design as shown on each respective specification (Spec) sheet. The designs were grouped based on concepts and numbered progressively accordingly as shown on each respective specification sheet.

Tables 9 to 28 show the design/product development and style selection process. Each Spec sheet consists of the required fit model's body measurements, a sketch of the design, selection of fashion fabrics and notions for the design, cost sheet for materials, production, labour and the final dress. The Spec sheet further captured the pattern pieces required based on each design and a summary of key instructions followed to construct each dress in the collection.

Tables 29 to 48 show the production process. As illustrated on each Spec sheet, the design details or description were outlined to inform steps required for each design

construction. The layout, construction details during assembly of each respective design were captured on each respective Spec sheet. The Tables (3 - 48) contained both text and images to tell as much as possible happenings during the studio work.

The final outcome was also presented with both text and vivid images to show the extent to which the processes followed have impacted the designs created in the collection.

Discussion of F&OOYOO collection: creative design, product development and style selection, technical package and production processes

The production process followed three levels consistent with fashion practice (Burns et al., 2016; Burke, 2011; Mbonu, 2014). Each stage concentrated on a specific aspect of creating the design. The development of the design brief was informed by research findings conducted during the previous four phases described. The theorized design brief (Hocking, 2014) actually guided the beginning of the actual ideation creative design process in the studio. It entailed the real creation of the articles (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016). Fundamentally, development of a design brief creates an outline for development of all the designs within a collection (Burns et al., 2016). Existing practices cited in the literature underscored the use of the brief as a document, developed by designers, often under the approval of a creative director. In typical fashion business, this document is a guide for designers, and includes business aspects of a company (or an entity) to help develop a unified brand identity and strategy. The brief often includes information related to target theme or inspiration, deliverables, timeline, and budget as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 (Burke, 2011). The use of concept boards (customer profile, mood/theme, trends, motif boards and colour story) had direct bearing on the collection created.

Product development, style selection, technical package and production processes

The pattern production processes entailed the interpretation of the sketched designs into paper templates. The body measurements of the fit models were used as the main data in plotting on paper (Aldrich, 2012). The designer chose this method of pattern drafting because, it was easier to correct mistakes made during drafting. The custom-made sized patterns were made to fit the model's figure with a few inches tolerance. That way, attention was on wearing comfort and style suitability to flatter the models' body shape. Where necessary, the body measurements of the fit models were plotted directly on the fashion fabric (freehand cutting) (Aldrich, 2012). Stylised patterns were also graded in some cases for use in cutting similar stylised parts of other designs, particularly when the same fit model's measurement was used. The production patterns used had style lines with all the necessary pattern markings to direct laying out, cutting out, stitching and seaming information and instructions consistent with pattern adaptation for cutting (Joseph-Armstrong, 2014).

The blue print sized-to-fit custom-made (pattern size to fit a model) was desirable because it incorporated in the construction, major built-in techniques to ensure wearing comfort of each garment, style suitability and to flatter models' body shapes (contours and bumps) (Eryazici & Çoruh, 2015; Kindersley, 2012). Specification sheets, that is, technical package show the sketches, the fit models' body measurements, and production processes. The spec sheets further indicated the materials used in the construction of the designs. They further showed quantities procured and prices which aided in costing of each design. The information on the specification sheets served as a guide for pattern engineering (Burns et al., 2016; Joseph-Armstrong, 2014) as they showed some constructional details and attachments

of the designs. The front and back views of the sketches were also projected on plus size silhouettes on the specs sheets to show the dress details (Joseph-Amstrong, 2014). The outcome of the field and studio experimentation was examined using thematic, trend, and content analyses.

Visual content and trend Analysis of FĔOOYĔĔ collection

The hourglass-like shape remained a constant in the dress culture practices of the *Ashin* rite maidens as shown literature and implied in the selected figure types (Damalie, 2018a; Damalie & Essel, 2024). The fit models selected were of the hourglass shape to reflect the source of influence. The age range of the fit models selected also reflected the varied age group reflected in the findings (Damalie, 2018a), suffice it to say the group was limited to young adults and mature adults age ranged between 26 and 56 years old targeting lifestyle tourists of plus size figure reflecting the forms adopted by the rite maidens (Figures 4.02; 4.03; 4.09).

The softly tailored dressy elegant wardrobes suitable for relaxed semi-formal and formal occasions, satisfied the call for a blend of exquisite tradition with style, consistent with the motivation for the project. Thus the *FĔOOYĔĔ* brand unveiled: One (1) jumpsuit; six (6) throw-on jackets; eight (8) long dresses; six (6) skirt suits and separates; three (3) trouser suits and separates ahead of the trends of influence. Consistent with fashion practice (Burns et al., 2016; Mbonu, 2014; Ojo, 2016), the collection featured all the dress forms depicted by the nobility maidens as reviewed in the literature and the data collected as findings. The jumpsuit, trousers and throw jackets were derived from further manipulation of the maidens' dress forms. The collection revealed various levels of comfortable fit; body hugging bustiers, snugly fitted bodices, and alluring floor length frocks featuring audacious cuts, dramatic

detailing and finishing for the bold large to plus size hourglass as preferred silhouette (Kit & Kaboodal, 2025). The collection largely emulated the ‘_dœncy’ portrayed in the *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress culture practices as illustrated in the literature reviewed.

The ten key concepts featured strongly in the collection from the maidens’ dress culture practices. The idea of female empowerment featured prominently during the initiation ceremony (Damalie, 2018a) was theorized. The use of classic wax and lifestyle prints; trends of innovative classic wax print; body décor; the use of local loom woven kente and innovative versions in prints and the show of opulence in the use of pure cultural artefacts were mimicked to make ‘... culture alive in modern clothing ...’ (Picard, 2019). The likely outcome of blend of ‘_lifestyle’ innovative wax print-cum-jewellery; sustainability concepts referred to as *Asasa* and fusion of multiple dress-inspired concepts were highlighted in the sub-themes fashioned to show the influence of the materials, colours and accessories used by the rite maidens and thus selected for designs in the collection.

The wrap or *Mama Bum* technique was the most used in the collection. It featured prominently on necklines, waistlines (front, back, upwards and downwards). Another technique which strongly featured invariably was layering. It was applied on sleeves, waistlines, hiplines, and main body separate items that ought to be worn together. The use of volume was employed in making the designs less skimpy. The *Hao* (strap) was implied in straps, belts, bands and bindings on necklines, waistlines, sleeve ends and garment hems. It was used hand in hand with the tying (technique) of belts and the nuance of button-less openings. Attributes of the sea and fishing accoutrements were also strongly implied in the collection. The multi-colour story of the ten sub-themes added to the high end ambiance sought-after in the brand. It subsequently created the

needed nexus and shared culture within the ten concepts in the collection and also between the collection and the maidens' dress culture practices referenced (Damalie, 2019, 2018a; Damalie & Essel, 2024). The design strategy adopted (innovation and creativity) was meant not to only show resemblance to the maidens' wardrobe accounts selected, but to further demonstrate creativity, that is departure from the norm (Pozzo, 2020) in the 'new need' so crafted.

The dress suit and separates show 'decent' coverage. The cut details incorporated could be linked with motifs manipulation from the ideation board in Table 3. The farthingale effect of the *Atufo* (bustle) influenced flare cuts with dramatic edges (asymmetric mullet and proportionately balanced hem) emanating from fishing accoutrements on the ideation board in Table 3. The use of eco-friendly staples, materials and motifs by the maidens as observed on the ideation board influenced the selection of fishing regalia as fashion fabrics and trimmings. To prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings; it is to offer the enquirer's construction of the constructions of the actors one studies (Pinther, 2022; Rouse, 2009; Schwandt, 1994; Vrencoska, 2009).

The *Ntah* (anklets) concept mainly influenced the colour scheme of the collection and particularly the footwear selected as dressing accessories for the fit models. The *Fliwa* (treasured beaded necklace) was implied in necklace impressions of accessories used by the fit models. The use of high heels helped to raise the hips of the models for emphasis on the hips to depict the maidens' appreciation for the hourglass silhouette. The techniques employed to a large extent impacted positively on the collection fashioned.

Discussion of FEOOYOO collection

The *FEOOYOO* collection inspired inclusiveness of the knowledge and competences (works) of otherwise ignored *Ga* women (traditional stylists) of Tema *Manhean* located in Tema located on the Greenwich Meridian in Ghana. Rather than shy away from the adult-sponsored sub-culture which appeared forced on its participants; as a supposedly oppressive societal tool in the words of Lincoln (1981 as cited in Hobson, 2016), the excitement with which the ethnic maidens had embraced the sub-culture as illustrated in *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* portraits, for instance was infectious. Their engagement in dress cultural practices appeared to have turned the tables over; making the imposed rituals (Asare-Danso, 2018; Boakye, 2010; Damalie, 2018a; Dedume et al., 2016) a status signifier, and conceptual fashion influencer by all standards, given the aesthetics crafted and historical dress accounts of the traditional area (Kwakye-Opong, 2014).

The title *FEOOYOO* emerged from one of the many cheer songs the maidens sing while going round in the community to announce the beginning of the female initiation rite (Damalie, 2018a) substantiated by Awo Diin (Personal communication, February 24, 2024). Ten key concepts influencing the collection from the maidens' dress cultural practices consistent with conceptual fashion design practice (Ojo, 2016; Pinther, 2022). These concepts were generally inferred from the maidens' choice of fabrics, body décor and jewellery among others used during the ceremony. These influenced the options selected within prevailing fashion trends for the collection underscoring the ontological and epistemological assumption of the contrustivist research philosophy adopted (Schwandt, 1994), and consistent with conceptual fashion design practice (Pozzo, 2020; Vrencoska, 2009). These concepts keep the maidens' dress cultural practices ... alive in... modernity (Picard, 2019).

The *Fɛ00Y00* collection, made up of twenty (20) softly tailored dressy elegant wardrobes suitable for relaxed semi-formal and formal occasions, satisfied the call for a blend of exquisite tradition with style, consistent with the motivation for the project. The brand unveiled dress suits and separates to stay ahead of the trends (Muir et al., 2008). The collection revealed various levels of comfortable fit; body hugging bustiers, snugly fitted bodices, and alluring floor length frocks featuring audacious cuts, dramatic detailing and finishing for the bold large to plus size hourglass as preferred silhouette. The collection further emulated the ‘_dæncy’ portrayed in the *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress culture practices (Damalie, 2018a).

Each of the high end *haute couture* design (customized to fit specific sizes, using distinct materials, unique techniques and finishing) (Burke, 2011; Burns et al., 2016 Mbonu; 2014) was named with either historical antecedents of *Temamei*, socio-cultural relevance of *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress cultural practices, and/ or shared values (dress essence, dressing and grooming) imparted to the participating *Ashin* (rite) maidens in mind. The exquisite designs in the alluring collection were inspired by all three outing dress; reflecting a fusion of the maidens’ shared dress culture sensibilities during *Telekɔmɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* (pre-camping, outdoorings and post rite outings) (Damalie, 2019, 2018a).

Consistent with its source of inspiration however, the whole collection was influenced by three *Ga* maxims/philosophies namely: *Fɛonɔ*, *Kusum gboo* and *Blema kpãa nɔ atsa*, referring to the people’s ‘_appreciation for expression of creativity or beauty’, ‘_uphdding of tradition and procedures’, and ‘_continuation of past experience’ in relation to competencies required in dressing, all of which were demonstrated in the maidens’ sartorial story. The collection, like the maidens’ dress cultural practices, was

hinged on feminist standpoint to keep focus and effectively tell the story of the traditional women stylists and the nobility maidens of Tema *Manhean*, and by extension their effort and its impact on female empowerment.

The constructivist pragmatic case study used non-routine design strategy. Arguably, this was in keeping with the norm. Even though the strategy used in the maidens' dress design was more routinely prescribed, the innovation and creativity strategy adopted had been applied in the actual constructs of the madens' dress. Thus, the *FƐOOYƆƆ* collection was modelled with value addition yet demonstrable *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens' dress cultural practices outlook, consistent with the general objective of the study. The practice was consistent with dress fashion design (Pozzo, 2020).

Fashion is considered ... a dynamic phenomenon in which different styles, designs and models converged, acting both as a source of attraction for designers as well as a source of inspiration to draw and depart from in an attempt at innovation' (Pozzo, p.1).

Notably, Pozzo asserted that the constant desire to innovate with original and effective solutions led Western designers to incorporate other cultures' distinctive looks, reinterpreted by the designer's creativity and sensitivity to other cultures' (Pozzo, 2020, p.3). Elsewhere in the West, supposed African concepts were being reimagined as African (Rovine, 2016).

The use of creative or innovative individuals who have influence to shape the taste consensus across society was also inspired by the subculture, and was used as a merchandising strategy. The value proposition was a meaningful lifestyle merchandise, a new need/product (gift) with cultural sensibilities from the *Ashin Yoo's* (rite maidens') outing dress and/or dress styles; softly tailored customised conceptual dress which blend tradition and style. The target client in mind was the

culturally-inclined large to plus size female millennial fashion innovator, aged between 26 to 56 years, adventure-loving lifestyle willing to visit Tema, Tema *Manhean* and environs.

The materials used for the collection included conventional bold and colourful industrialised classic wax prints and innovative versions with local names; the luxurious traditional loom woven kente mentioned earlier, and colourful imitated industrialised print versions; embellished ‘lifestyle’ prints; popular cotton twills, plain pre-pressed chiffon, silk, variants of plain and colourful crispy cotton organza, and luxury velvet variants.

The fashion fabrics used were very particular and had a very clear visual language, so that united the sub-themes within the collection. Because of the overarching objective of the study and the very many concepts within the maidens’ sartorial stories, the collection became an array of clothing that represented these perspectives within the agreed frame as practiced in fashion design (Ojo, 2016).

Conventional and non-conventional sustainability-inspired materials such as variegated print-on-lace, sparkly gift net, fishing net and fish line/string were used as key fashion fabrics and also for detailing. Cover-edge stitches were prominently applied as finishing. Horse hair, braids, pearls, gold buttons, zippers, grommet eyelets and laces, and other unique notions were used as functional and decorative findings. These details were informed by the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens’ dress concept.

Among the dress accessories used in styling were attached and detachable soft and stiffened self-belts with gold ornamentations in some cases, and under trousers and skirts meant to be part of the look created. Headdresses included multi-pleated

onetime use cloth scarves, and sewn turbans, or long tied braids, bun-styled braids, wigs, locks, and short haircuts. Jewellery used included custom, gold, and exquisite necklace and beads, and accompanying earrings. Footwear used were flattering designer-made breathable 1½” to 3” high heels and wedges to accentuate the look created. Makeup used was light handed using organic luxury beauty branded products.

Techniques employed included manipulation of design silhouettes and ease, layering, *Mama Bumɔ* (wrap), volume, *Hao* (strap), implied attributes of the sea and fishing accoutrements, coverage, colour story, and motifs, the farthingale effect of the *Atufo* (bustle), *Ntah* (anklets) and *Fliwa* (treasured beaded necklace) impressions of accessories used by the maidens during outings. The use of high heels helped to raise the hips of the models for emphasis on the hips to depict the maidens’ appreciation for the hourglass silhouette. The techniques employed to a large extent impacted positively on the collection.

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection was influenced by three *Ga* viewpoints on dress namely: *Fɛeɔɔ*, *Kusum gboo* and *Blema kpãa nɔ atsa* (in line with semantics, syntax, and ‘past experience’ design philosophies), all hinged on feminist standpoint, and consumer fashion adoption theories (Broadbent, 1980 cited in Evbuomwan et al., 1996; Saleem et al., 2014). Evidently, the case study used innovation and creativity design as a key design strategy which influenced the dichotomy observed between the collection and its source of influenced (Evbuomwan et al., 1996). Arguably, the collection to a high extent pushed the boundaries of conceptual fashion design in relation to the *Ga* traditional dress fashion as shown with the resultant concepts and detailing employed. Ordinarily, silhouettes, materials, colours, accessories, techniques

and values that communicate dignity, elegance, boldness, confidence, luxury, richness, prestige, sophistication, a bit of drama defying logic and hints of eco-friendliness, and highlight premium quality known for branding high fashion are not found in one collection; which the *FΞOOYƆƆ* collection clearly illustrated and acknowledged by exhibition audience from academia and *Temamei* (illustrated under objectives four and five) directly during the exhibition.

Research Question 4: Local audiences' views on the collection created:

In all, twenty-three (23) local women were purposefully sampled for feedback on the exhibits displayed in Tema *Manhean*.

Views on the statement dress of Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo (ritual)

Prior to responding on the collection created, the local audience (who were all past initiates) were interviewed on the statement dress of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (ritual) used during the various rite stages. Majority of the interviewees confirmed that the draped cloths (dress) in the photographs displayed Tema *Ashin* dress culture practices. All the participants said they deem the dress culture practices as unique to their culture.

Views on colour symbolism

Based on the evidence displayed, all interviewees associated prescribed colours of the rite as red for observing *Telekɔmɔ*, (pre-camping) and white for *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) stages respectively. They also agreed that medley of bright kente colours was associated with the *Kpojiemɔ* (post rites), and similarly colourful wax prints were associated with the *Kpojei* (post-rites) stages respectively.

A further probe was made to know from the interviewees' point of view the symbolism of the preferred colours used during each stage. In response, some hinted they had no idea at all, while others responded to the question. Some interviewees said the red wax prints used during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping) signified readiness to commence the passage rite; others said the red colour signified the maidens were in the process of being cleansed; yet others hinted that the red colour signified the unknown danger ahead or the war-like situation the maidens were getting into as they were unaware of what spiritual hurdles lay ahead of each of them. For instance, one did not know what was in those three successive shrines to be visited, hinted one interviewee (G. Ananu, Personal communication, May 11, 2024).

On symbolism of the colours adopted in the dress cultural practices used, the indigenous women interviewed answered:

One said, we were not told. An opinion leader, a priestess Aamanyeyoo, insisted upon further probe on the matter that the red cloth colour used during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-rites) was *Kusum* (tradition). Besides, she continued:

I see the use of the red colour as strategic because of its vibrant nature which attracts attention. It makes the maidens easily noticeable when they go round during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping) to announce the commencement of the rite of passage from house to house to patrons who further enquire about where the *Kpeemɔ* (rite) was being held, wanting to know [in] which suburb, *Awudum* or *Ashamang* the ceremony was based, she argued.

The white colour used for *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping purification) according to some interviewees signified one was being cleansed or purified. Another one said the use of the colour signified the maidens were going through *Kusum* (that is the tradition of cleansing). Yet others said it signalled victory.

Regarding the use of the medley of colours associated with the *Kpojiemɔ* (post rite), a few of the interviewees hinted the colourful kente used by the maidens signalled happiness and excitement; others also said it signalled a commemorative show of appreciation upon the successful completion to the rite. Two others said the use of the colourful kente also signalled a show of wealth. Giving further explanation, G. Ananu, an interviewee hinted:

My children wore two variants of kente a day for the two days they were to converge at their fathers' clan house (on Friday and Saturday), making the number of kente used by my daughters four in all. What it implied was that, we were well prepared for the *Kpeemɔ*. Besides, the pictures taken were all for reference, just in case one dared to insinuate in future whether my children had been cleansed? What they wore? And in which clan house were they hosted?' (G. Ananu, Personal communication, May 11, 2014).

Views on the socio-cultural relevance of the dress cultural practices to maidens

Regarding the socio-cultural relevance of the dress cultural practices to the *Ashin* (rite) maidens and *Temamei*, many of the interviewees were of the opinion that the rite teaches the maidens life skills such as value for hard work, fashion essence and grooming lessons; many others said observance of the rite signified obeisance which paved way for successful marriage, child delivery and life in general. Many also said that the dress cultural practices observed promoted social cohesiveness among the group of participating maidens during the ceremony and beyond. According to other interviewees the obeisance the maidens observed through the rite, by extension, earned them a pride of place as worthy members of the community even as they observed shared dress culture amongst themselves and promoted socialisation among *Temamei*.' Two others added that through the rite their pride of place as *Temamei* was sustained among the league of *Ga* ethnic tribes (*Ga Adangme*) as they were able to display their unique sense of belonging through their dress essence. Another said that the dress cultural practices taught through the adoption of the *Ashin Kpeemɔ*

Hesaamɔi (rite dress cultural practices) helped the maidens' transition to adulthood and its dress responsibilities and prohibitions.

The local interviewees confirmed that the dress cultural practices were used primarily as physical and spiritual protective clothing, to communicate the maidens' identity as indigenes observing the rite or their status as *deansed* indigenes and proud members of the society. "The dress forms they adopted, particularly those they wore in public with bared upper torso communicated each maiden's developmental stage as rightness or not for interested suitors," argued one interviewee (G. Ananu, Personal conversation, May 11th, 2024). Another engaging conversation with A. Tetteh one of the local interviewees revealed that the look of the maidens during the *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) was the exact image of the *Ashin* spirit, the female partner to the *Basa* male spirit both of whom were in control of the rite of passage (A. Tetteh, Personal conversation, May 13th, 2024).

All the local interviewees hinted that the dress cultural practices dress forms adopted during *Ashinfɔɔ* and *Kpojiemɔ* (pre-camping and outdoor phases) which apparently led to the baring of the breasts was because of reasons such as its allowance for unhindered application of the *Ashinmu* (Batana oil) for purification, while the exposed breasts during *Kpojiemɔ* (out dooring) communicated at that point the maidens' developmental stage as rightness for interested suitors or not respectively.

Regarding the importance of the rite vis-à-vis the dress cultural practices associated with it, the local interviewees opined that the rite helped preserve and transmit *Temamei* heritage; dress culture practices, values and tradition; portrayed and communicated dress culture and identity as *Temamei*; and acted as a status signifier

that helped bring glory and honour to the self and family. In addition, the rite promoted peace and unity; helped promote social cohesion among *Temamei*; served as inspiration and education for other youth of Tema *Manhean* to emulate and also as source of socio-economic signification for service providers . One local interviewee concluded that the rite helped transmit knowledge from one generation to next. Some participants said observance of the rite promoted peace of mind.

Analysis of findings regarding dress culture symbolism and socio-cultural relevance

The data suggested that the participants' affirmed the exhibits as that of *Temamei* initiation (rite) dress culture practices (*Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ Hesaamɔi*). The participants, having gone through the rituals previously, said they deem the dress culture practices as distinctive to their culture.

On colour symbolism, the participants validated the colours associated with each themed statement dress as consistent with the *Ashin* (rite) themes practiced. The data additionally suggested that, while some of participants as previous *Ashin* (rite) maidens lacked information about the rationale behind what they are made to wear, many others also assumed by reading their own meanings based on their understanding and experiences of what the colours *Ashin* (rite) maidens are made to wear implied. Their opinions on the use of colour(s) as tool for spiritual and physical engagements, communication of identity, signals for stages of activity of engagement and status (worth) were however interesting and noteworthy. For instance, the association of the colour red to a 'war-like' venture into an unknown spiritual realm, mystery, power to attract attention and announce presence (take charge of the moment as it were) were particularly instructive.

Opinions on the use of the white colour during *Ashinfɔ* (camping purification) also varied with majority affirming that the colour signified one was being cleansed or purified underscoring the acceptance of the colour of clothing used at that stage as *Kusum* - that is the tradition of cleansing the maidens were taken through. Indeed, it was at that point (in private) that the maidens were made to carry the sacred *Ashin tɛ*, (rite stone), secured as implants in hair molds or secured on short hair with net. They were persistently cleansed saturated in *Ashinmu* (batana oil) which sipped into the skin and physically exfoliated the skin. It was significant that two of the local interviewees attributed the white colour to victory, given the narratives recounted of life challenges some of those who refuse to observe the rite had reportedly gone through.

Actually, to many *Ashin Yei* (rite maidens), the use of the medley of colours associated with the *Kpojiemɔ* (post rite) dress, called for luxurious clothing that matched the occasion; happiness and excitement expressed for the commemorative show of appreciation upon the successful completion of the ritual. G. Tetteh's account seemed to suggest an interplay between the colourful loom woven cultural cloth or exotic equivalents used during the ceremony and the maidens' status, with future inferences as consequences.

The data suggested that beyond the general use of clothing, the participants viewed the *Ashin* (rite) dress cultural practices as valuable to the extent that the maidens were guided to appreciate hard work (since all the wardrobe accounts imply economic muscle for acquisition of resources). Besides, they were made to experience first hand good grooming lessons and high fashion sense; knowing what to wear to suit occasions without necessarily explaining the reasons to them.

The data further suggested that the dress cultural practices were used primarily as physical and spiritual protective clothing. They were further used to communicate the maidens' identity and status (worth and wealth). Their acceptance to go through the rite using the prescribed dress code was hinged basically on belief, particularly those instances of baring their breasts whether in private or public (Tajuddin, 2018). To a large extent, these suggestions were consistent with clothing theories espoused in literature (Rouse, 1989) and during other known female initiation rites like *Dipo*, *Bragoro* and *Kusakɔkɔ* observed in Ghana (Adinku, 2016; Asare-Danso, 2018; Dedume et al., 2016).

Discussion of findings on symbolism from local audience

The *Kusum* (custom) of *Temamei* in relation to the *Ashin* (rite) of initiation persist in prescribing the use of the red, white and colourful dress codes respectively for adherents (Damalie, 2018a). The dress codes appear more of articles of belief and thus, mandatory. Consistent with an earlier findings in Damalie (2018a), colour is used to publicly signal the start of the ritual, the private stage of purification, and public declaration of the end of the initiation rite. Red signaled the start of the ritual, white motioned the private stage of cleansing, while the use of flamboyant colours indicated the climax end of the ceremony respectively. –Based on cultural representations, the colour of attire can portray the mood of a person: whether he/she is happy or sad” (Kwakyee-Opong, 2011, p.5). Consistent with kwakyee-Opong’s opinion, –these bits of message are not verbal; however, they automatically relay information about the wearer” (Kwakyee-Opong, 2011, p.5); confidence, passionate, purity, enigmatic, powerful, daring, victorious, celebratory.

‘*Kente* and *kete* are precious hand-woven textiles associated with Ghanaian culture and royalty’ (Dzramedo, 2009, as cited in Damalie, 2018a, p. 63). Indeed, the prestigious cloth was used as ‘status signifier of the maiden’s family’ (Damalie, 2018a, p.62; Kwakye-Opong, 2014, p. 150) as confirmed by the interviewee (Gbooya). Gbooya’s stance underscored Dzramedo’s and Kwakye-Opong’s description of ‘both the Ashanti and Ewe hand-woven designs as important contributors to African dress today.’

Views of local audience on the socio-cultural relevance of the dress cultural practices to maidens

The findings confirmed the dress styles the maidens use as *Kusum* (tradition); it further underscored the demand for the maidens to bare their breasts (A. Tetteh, personal communication, May 11, 2024) even though some of them attempt to cover up the breasts when they get away from prying eyes of those in authority. That point made on their use of clothing further underscored how clothing theories were applied in the *Ga* culture, where modesty and immodesty co-exist. The maidens’ clothing were effectively used as tools for communication of identity and status, protection, attraction in different public and private situations (Rouse, 1989, p. 2).

It appeared that the dress forms and types adopted by the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens were part of a ‘hidden’ curriculum for imparting their social-cultural belief system in tandem with their accepted social psychology of clothing; it communicated their world view on dress and dress design philosophies, and the inculcation of laudable social values (team spirit, hard work and shared culture of grooming and nurturing in the appreciation of high dress sense).

The dress forms adopted were used to render spiritual protection to the maidens (Damalie, 2018a) consistent with their social psychology of clothing (Rouse, 1989). Beyond that, they further served as physical covering for the maidens' nakedness and ensured modesty in two instances- *Telekɔmɔ* and *Kpojei* (pre-camping and post camping). In addition, it could be argued that those instances were further used in portraying the maidens' sense of style, and that their preference for the ideal hourglass body shape really came to the fore for emulation.

Feedback from local interviewees on collection created

All twenty-three women interviewees agreed with the statement that the theme of the collection *Ƒɛ00Y00* resonated with the *Ashin* rite. They further asserted that the dress items in the collection were beautiful, and that the materials used were unique to the collection created. They were all of the opinion that the detailing introduced in the garment was unique to the collection, that the colour palettes used were beautiful to behold, and reflected the chosen theme *Ƒɛ00Y00*. Additionally, the interviewees acknowledged that the clothes in the collection created fitted well, and that there was evidence of innovation and creativity in the collection created.

A seamstress said, —. I am glad that you have brought out our tradition in the open. Serves as a source of inspiration for the youth" (Participant 9, May 2, 2024). Another participant, a hairdresser said the collection is —... creative and innovative .." (Participant 10, May 2, 2014). Another seamstress said, —... It is an inspiration for the youth; exceptional designs. Shows the loincloth and other cloths can be used in creating beautiful outfit for occasions ..." (Participant 10, May 2, 2024). Gugu, the oldest ethnic stylist in Tema *Manhean* had this to say, —. Well done. We really have not considered this at all. It is really nice ..." (Participant 18. May 2, 2024). Yet another seamstress further said, —...All the designs are innovative. I have never seen loincloth that has been used for design. I'm impressed (Participant 1, May 2, 2024). An art student said, —... I love the fact that you have used tradition in style. Creativity was top notch ... (Participant 6, May 1, 2024). Another participant, a hairdresser asserted, —... It is thoughtful..." (Participant 3, May 2, 2024).

With that, all twenty-three women interviewees affirmed that the main purpose for the project, that is, to conceptualise a cohesive high fashion *Ga* destination-inspired group of women clothing, while placing *Ga* culture in the spotlight of global fashion had been achieved with the exhibits in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection.

Based on the exhibits presented, the local interviewees were of the opinion that the *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress cultural practices of *Temamei* could benefit the local community, the generality of the Ghanaian society and the country as a whole in six thematic ways namely: (i) employment creation; (ii) tourism attraction and promotion; (iii) promotion of culture of *Temamei* on the global stage; (iv) become source of inspiration for designers and bridal styling; (v) strengthen social bonds; and (vi) could encourage interest in youth training in vocational skills.

General comments from other exhibition participants including the women interviewed on FɛOOYɔɔ collection:

General comments from other exhibition participants including the women interviewees were positive and showed a high appreciation of the brand created. While many participants were appreciative of the educative presentation, others appreciated the uniqueness of materials used for the collection and yet others commended the project undertaken. Additionally, some participants were very appreciative of the beautiful collection and even mentioned favourite designs. Many also liked the story lines of the collection and the display of *Ga* culture. Others acknowledged the inspirational nature of the collection, and identified with the concept of women empowerment effort. Yet others were intrigued with the innovative and creative techniques used, and the conceptual nature of the collection created.

Analysis of feedback from local interviewees on collection created

The data suggested that the local interviewees did not only accept the collection exhibited; they were also in agreement with the chosen theme for the collection which they avowed echoed the nature of initiation rite dress culture practices. The data further suggested their appreciation of the group of clothing produced as unique in terms of the materials and colours used as well as the cut details featured. The interviewees further described the collection as attractive and reflective of the chosen theme.

The local women interviewed further appreciated the level of fit exhibited by the fit models. They also acknowledged the level of creativity and innovation inherent in the *FƐOOYƆƆ* collection, and were all of the opinion that the goal for the project to place the subculture's dress practices in the spotlight of global fashion had been achieved.

In appreciation of the project, the interviewees further attributed benefits of the project (exhibits and for that matter the *Ashin* dress culture practices) as capable of job creation, promotion of the culture of *Temamei* on the world stage and subsequently attraction of tourists to the tourism potentials of the community.

Discussion of findings on feedback from local interviewees on collection created

The global environment is said to have increased interest in products from the far reaches of the world (Burns et al., 2016). They argued that consumers who purchase and wear fashion inspired by other cultures may derive a sense of adventure and vivacious enjoyment of that culture, hence designers seek inspiration from exotic cultures with clothing styles, fabrics and accessories that are unique. The colourful collection meant to truly reflect the *Ashin* maidens' dress culture practices from ideation to production so as to promote the subculture dress practices as an influential source of inspiration (as illustrated in Table 3) underscored the ability of culture to

spread fashion (Sproles, 1979 as cited in Saleem et al., 2014). It was refreshing that the local audiences who were familiar with, and had experienced the sartorial story of the rite maidens at first hand highly identified with, and validated the exhibits in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection. Clothing styles, fabrics and accessories uniquely inspired by the subculture (*Temamei Ashin Yoo* outdoor dressing) as illustrated in the collage in Table 3 were responsible for all the body and dress silhouettes, fashion fabrics and notions, colour story, dress and dressing accessories, and indeed, techniques appropriated and used in all style details in the collection (Mbonu, 2014). The objective, as appreciated by the local audience, was to create a collection with *Ga* [Ghanaian] culture at the heart of it all, so as to promote the marginalised subculture which had proven through the present project that it possessed many useful inspirational potentials, and to encourage other designers in the long run.

Analysis of general comments from other exhibition participants including the women interviewed on FɛOOYɔɔ collection:

Data on the general comments from other exhibition participants including the women interviewees were indicative of the positive impact of the exhibition among the local audience. Many of the participants said they appreciated the educational presentation, while others said they loved the uniqueness of the materials used for the collection. Yet others commended the project undertaken.

It was obvious that while many of the participants were actually very appreciative of the beautiful collection and even mentioned favourite designs, others paid attention to the story lines of the collection and the display of *Ga* culture. That notwithstanding, participants acknowledged the inspirational nature of the collection, and identified with the concept of women empowerment effort. Essentially, the innovative and

creative techniques used, and the conceptual nature of the collection created did not go unnoticed as some participants were fascinated by the exhibits presented.

Discussion of findings from general comments from other exhibition participants including the women interviewed on FεOOYƆƆ collection:

The Akans say ‘*adepa na εton ne ho*’, to wit, ‘a good design attracts consumers to a product, communicates to them, and adds value to the product by increasing the quality of the usage experiences associated with it’ (Bloch, 1995). The findings show the positive impact of the exhibition among the local audience, and their appreciation of what they described as educative presentation.‘ They loved the uniqueness of the materials used for the collection and were full of commendation of the project undertaken.

Thus, the significance of the collection design could be seen through the eyes, expression, and behaviour of the participants (Ojo, 2016) as they were full of appreciation of the beautiful collection, citing favourite designs. The interesting story lines of the collection and the display of *Ga* culture did not go unnoticed. They acknowledged the inspirational nature of the collection, particularly the concept of women empowerment effort and appreciated the innovative and creative techniques used. Above all, the participants were fascinated by the conceptual nature of the collection created, underscoring the significance of sharing the project outcome with them in the first place as recommended in Kwakye-Opong (2011). After all, is it not said that a good design attracts consumers to a product, communicates to them, and adds value to the product by increasing the quality of the usage experiences associated with it (Bloch, 1995)? Suffice it to say that the means of engagement used was impactful on the audience’s interaction with the artefacts (Green et al., 2019).

Objective 5: Non-local audiences' views on the collection created:

Views on Ashin maidens' dress cultural practices during the rite:

Based on the evidence adduced at the exhibition within the academic community in Takoradi, majority (n=53) of respondents interviewed representing 99.2% approved of the statement that the dress in the photographs showed Tema *Ashin* (rite) dress culture practices. Fifty-one of the respondents representing 94.5% further agreed that the dress form used by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens was unique to their culture.

All fifty-four of them agreed with the statement that having gone through the initiation rite as observed, the maidens are by implication taught valuable life skills such as fashion sense and dressing as well as hard work. They all, based on the evidence adduced agreed with the statement that the rite is a status signifier in the Tema *Manhean* community.

Opinions on collection created:

On the substantive matter about the collection created, all fifty-four non-local audience agreed with the statement that the theme of the collection *FɛOOYɔɔ* resonated with the *Ashin* rite. Almost all of them (98.1%) agreed with the statement that the dress items in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection were beautiful. Almost all of them agreed with the statement that the materials used were unique to the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection created. They were all additionally of the opinion that the detailing introduced in the garment were varied and unique to the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection created, and further agreed with the statement that the colour palettes used were beautiful to behold, and that they reflected the theme *FɛOOYɔɔ*. Significantly, all participants representing 100% agreed with the statement that the clothes in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection fitted well.

When asked to indicate whether the exhibits created reflected innovation and creativity, they all answered in the affirmative, implying they observed innovation and creativity are evident in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection exhibited. The respondents were further asked to indicate whether or not the objective to create a cohesive destination-inspired conceptualised dress fashion collection while placing attention on *Ga* culture had been achieved with the exhibits presented. Fifty-three out of the fifty-four of the participants representing 98.1% answered in the affirmative, validating the artefacts created as conceptualized, and a cohesive high fashion *Ga* destination-inspired group of women clothing which places *Ga* culture in the spotlight of global fashion.

General comments from the non-local audiences on the exhibits and exhibition

Comments from the non-local audiences on the exhibits and the whole exhibition were similarly favourable and showed high acceptability of the brand. Many of the non-local audiences (respondents inclusive) could not help but admire and affirm their likeness for the conceptual nature of the collection, while many more said they liked the story lines of the artefacts presented, and mentioned personal preferences among the exhibits in no particular order as: *Aayoo, Akushika, Adiaqba, Yoo Kpakpa, Anuɔnyam, Kplɛmɔ, Ahuɔ kɛ Yaa, Mlitsa-Niɔma, Niɔma-chic, Niɔma, Odehe, Obla Yoo, Owula, Manyyoo, Tsile Loowu, Shika Nubu, Asasa, Shika Nubu, Blema Kɛ Akpaako and Meridian City Hotel.*

While some commended the project undertaken and acknowledged the high display of *Ga* culture through modern fashion, others acknowledged the beauty of the collection, and the educative mode of presentation. Additionally, some participants found the works presented inspirational, and recognised the uniqueness of the materials used.

Many were appreciative of the techniques used in the project, and applauded the use of fashion to encourage women empowerment.

A respondent said, “...creativity and artistry is on display ...the exhibition is inspiring. It was great to see how tradition has transformed into modern fashion. ..” (Respondent 7, March 21, 2024). Another expressed, “...the colour scheme used in the collection can also tell a vivid story of the designer’s good eye in seeing and interpreting colour symbolism in terms of *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo*, which is a joyful celebration ...” (Respondent 30, March 24, 2024). Yet another respondent put it in this way, “... I see creativity in the designs and the garments depict the Ga culture...” (Respondent 55, March 24, 2024). “... The researcher has really brought the culture of the *Gas* into innovative and creative dresses. The colour scheme blends well and so harmonious...” , expressed one other respondent (Respondent 54, March 24, 2025).

Analysis on Non-local audiences’ views on the collection created:

Views on Ashin maidens’ dress cultural practices during the rite:

In all fifty-four participants from academia were engaged as Non-Ga audiences on the collection created but prior to that their views were taken on *Ashin* maidens’ dress cultural practices during the rite. Based on the evidence adduced at the exhibition within the academic community in Takoradi, majority of them approved of the statement that the dress in the photographs showed Tema *Ashin* (rite) dress culture practices. Many further agreed that the dress form used by the *Ashin* (rite) maidens was unique to their culture. On that score, their position was consistent with that of interviewees from Tema *Manhean*.

Actually, all the respondents were in agreement with the statement that having gone through the initiation rite as observed, the maidens are by implication taught valuable life skills such as fashion sense and dressing as well as appreciation for hard work consistent with literature (Damalie, 2018a). They further agreed with the statement that the rite is a status signifier in the Tema *Manhean* community based on the

evidence adduced. Here again, their position was consistent with that of interviewees from Tema *Manhean*.

Analysis of opinions on collection created:

Regarding the collection created, all fifty-four non-*Ga* audience agreed with the statement that the theme of the collection FɛOOYɔɔ “resonated with the *Ashin* rite. Virtually all of them agreed that the dress items in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection were beautiful. Concerning the materials used, almost all the respondents were of the opinion that they were unique to the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection created. They invariably agreed that the detailing introduced in the garment were varied and unique to the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection created, and further agreed with the statement that the colour palettes used were beautiful to behold, and that they reflected the theme *FɛOOYɔɔ*. It was noteworthy that all participants were of the opinion that the clothes in the FɛOOYɔɔ collection fitted well. On that score, their position was consistent with that of interviewees from Tema *Manhean*.

Majority of the student respondents described the collection as very unique, inspiring and beautiful. They expressed these in the following, —... The designs have unique features which are inspiring and the waves and net helped in the sustainable fashion...” (Respondent 50, March 21, 2024). Another had this to say, —. all the works are beautiful and attractive as well...” (Respondent 48, March 21, 2014). Yet another said, —... I think that every work has its conceptual meaning which has influenced the work so much. Every work is unique and beautifully done, its detailing and aesthetics is on point” (Respondent 52, March 21, 2014). Respondent 49 said, —... I was really touched about the way you used sea waves as your inspiration to design a dress ...” (Respondent 49, March 21, 2014).

It was refreshing to note that the respondents overwhelmingly agreed, as the local interviewees did, that the brand created reflected innovation and creativity. Like the local participants, the non-*Ga* audience also affirmed that the objective to create a

cohesive destination-inspired conceptualised dress fashion collection while placing attention on *Ga* culture had been achieved with the exhibits presented. Almost all the respondents validated the artefacts created as conceptualised, and a cohesive high fashion *Ga* destination-inspired group of women clothing which places *Ga* culture in the spotlight of global fashion. Thus, findings relating to opinions of the local participants interviewed on the collection created were largely upheld by the non-local respondents.

Analysis on general comments from the non-local audiences on the exhibits and exhibition

The data on comments from the non-*Ga* audiences on the exhibits and the whole exhibition were likewise favourable indicating high acceptability of the brand. Again, many of the non-*Ga* audiences (including the respondents) approved of the conceptual nature of the collection. Many more further said they liked the story lines of the artefacts presented. Notably, all the designs in the collection were cited as favorites by respondents.

Both the project undertaken and the mode of presentation were commended as educative. Some respondents were enthused by the high display of *Ga* culture through the lens of modern fashion. Like the local interviewees, some of the non-local participants found the works presented inspirational, and recognised the uniqueness of the materials used. The techniques used in the project were appreciated. Many also applauded the use of fashion to encourage women empowerment.

Discussion of findings on Non-local audiences' views on the collection created:

Views on Ashin maidens' dress cultural practices during the rite:

Consistent with existing literature (Damalie, 2018a), majority of the non-local audience interviewed approved of the statement that the dress in the photographs based on the evidence adduced, showed Tema *Ashin* (rite) dress culture practices. Further, many agreed that the dress form used by the rite maidens was exclusive to their culture. On that score, their position was consistent with that of local interviewees from Tema *Manhean*. The clothing used form an integral part of their life as initiates because it reflected the historical past and present of the maidens and their community, –sending signals with regards to sex, status, ethnicity, belief and geographical location” (Kwakye-Opong, 2011, p.4).

As recognised by the respondents, the maidens were by implication taught valuable life skills such as fashion sense and dressing as well as appreciation for hard work (Damalie, 2018a). Consistent with the view of Kwakye-Opong (2011, p.4), they viewed the rite and by implication the statement dress used as a status signifier in the Tema *Manhean* community based on the evidence adduced and authenticated by the interviewees from Tema *Manhean*.

Feedback from the exhibition participants was highly positive on all fronts (exhibits and the exhibition organised). There were suggestions from both local and academic participants for more extensive exhibitions of the outcome of the study.

“...This is an outstanding collection which really truly is of Ghanaian (*Temamei*) culture by all standards, which needs to be opened to the whole nation through any means of communication...” (Respondent 17, March 21, 2024).

“... Beautiful concept displayed. . . I suggest that the candidate consider exhibiting this at the TTU 70th Anniversary celebration

event, precisely Technology fair... ‘ (Respondent 10, March 21, 2024).

... We suggest you exhibit during the installation of the next Tema *Mantse*‘ who incidentally will be from Nii Ansah *We* also called *Basa We* the custodian clan of the *Ashin* nobility rite...‘ (Exhibition participants from Abbey Kwei *We*, Personal communication, Day 1 of Exhibition: 30th April, 2024).

There was agreement among all interviewees on all facets of the *FεOOYƆƆ* collection presented, be it on the theme, the beauty of the dress items, uniqueness of materials used, the detailing introduced in the garments, colour palettes, and reflection of the theme in the collection. Other premise of agreement was on evidence of well fitted garments, innovation and creativity of the collection. On top of all, both groups - local and non-local interviewees were unanimous on the issue of goal attainment of the project.

‘Clothing is communication, and generally you speak from your knowledge base’ (Ojo, 2016, p.45). It can be argued that the participants spoke from a cultural knowledge base. Even though it could be argued that each of the ten concepts in the *FεOOYƆƆ* collection stood out (which was not rare in practice), the collection appeared as a unit. That was because each design was linked to the theme which further resonated with the source of influence which the indigenes identified with. Again, the aesthetic aspects of the rite maidens‘ dress details had been carefully woven together in the silhouettes, materials and colours selected to reflect the source of influence. Further, the interaction between the individual concepts could also be credited for the beautiful collective look created. Besides, there was obvious linkage in the style details introduced, and the collection embraced the ‘basket ingredients‘ in a storytelling manner, thus further ensuring consistency and unity of purpose.

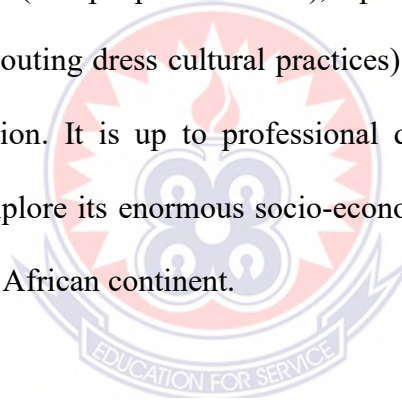
It was thus not surprising that most of the interviewees engaged, particularly those who came with some cultural, art, fashion and dress background shared similar opinions about the exhibits. In modern society, aesthetic sensibilities are relevant to all products, regardless of their function (Bloch, 1995). Besides, the participants were all mature enough to appreciate beauty and exquisite fashion taste. Such participants provide valuable information about exhibits (Odabasi, 2019). In sum, *FΞOOYƆƆ – Gorgeous-You-Are* collection, a feminine, user-friendly, cohesive conceptual timeless fashionable, exquisite, ethnic/destination-inspired new need has been highly validated.

The project was indeed a way for the scholarly community to experience, understand, and explain the social world from the vantage standpoint of ethnic women's lives, and its impact on the wider society as demonstrated in Nkrumah (2022). For standpoint theorists, standpoint refers not to perspective or experience but an understanding of perspective and experience as part of a larger social setting reflecting political consciousness, so it was not escapable from the epistemological issues, hence the focus on this feminine subculture was apt. The concept of using culture to spread fashion has thus been confirmed and endorsed by the citizenry. While the project's ability to inspire culturally-inclined consumables have been acknowledged by the study participants, the responsibility lies on all creative minds particularly fashion and dress designers within and outside academia to project our Ghanaian cultural heritage by exploring Ghanaian dress cultural practices particularly as they relate to marginalised groups.

The outcome of the project underscores long held standpoint that sub-culturally led styles which stem from the customary artefacts of group crafts or religious items such as *TAYKH* can influence new stylistic creations (Burns et al., 2016; Damalie, 2019;

Muir et al., 2008; Saleem et al, 2014; Vrencoska, 2009), like *FɛOOYɔɔ*, and could subsequently contribute in placing the African culture as source of inspiration in the spotlight of world fashion, with its enormous socio-economic signification for the locals, the State, as well as the African continent as attested to by the study participants.

With this project, I argued in agreement with other accomplished researchers of culture on the ability of Ghanaian [African] culture in spreading fashion (as *TAYKH* can influence new stylistic creations (Burns et al., 2016; Muir et al., 2008; Pinther, 2022, Rovine, 2016; Saleem et al, 2014; Vrencoska, 2009). The dress cultural practices of *Temamei* (the people of Tema), specifically *Ashin Yoo Hesaamoi* (nobility rite maidens' outing dress cultural practices) styled by traditional women of Tema can spread fashion. It is up to professional design practitioners within and outside academia to explore its enormous socio-economic significance for the locals, the state, as well as the African continent.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

The chapter consisted of the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The main findings that contribute to knowledge and conclusions reached as well as the recommendations made based on the conclusions of the study were outlined in this chapter. Suggestions for further study were also indicated.

5.1 Summary of Main Findings

Specifically, the study objectives were to: identify and analyse the major dress cultural practices of the participating maidens during *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ*; examine the symbolism and socio-cultural relevance of the major dress cultural practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*); create a collection of feminine occasional wear inspired by the aesthetics aspects of the major dress culture practices of the nobility rite maidens (*Temamei Ashin Yei*), and catalogue it as a tool for teaching and learning. The study further ascertained views of the audience from the Tema Traditional Area and a non-*Ga* setting on the collection created to impact future relatable projects.

The study revealed under objective one that:

The major dress cultural practices of participating maidens during *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (female nobility rite of the people of Tema *Manhean*) were four. They were used during *Telekɔmɔ*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (pre-camping, camping, outdoor and post-rites dress or styling), and their use have withstood the test of time.

Regarding the symbolism and socio-cultural relevance of the major dress cultural practices of *Temamei Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (nobility rite of maidens from Tema *Manhean*), the finding revealed that:

1. Symbolically, *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens used four distinct statement designs at the four stages; three bustle wraps were used as outing dress and one other plain wrapped skirt as private dress. The mandatory themed dress forms, materials, colour story, dressing accessories, look and fragrance associated with the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens at each stage signified the various levels of the ‘cleansing’ ritual.
2. Three key silhouettes (dress forms) associated with the dress cultural practices of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens during first, second and fourth stages of the ritual remained constant and were signifiers of the ritual being observed at those specific stages.
3. The hourglass attributed mostly as desirable to the feminine figure is the preferred body shape for dressing the maidens. Also contributing to the feminine look are the double layered bustier cum waist bustle wrap, single layered waist skirt wrap and the subtly introduced single layered bustle bustier wrap dress forms. The comfortable dress fit was creatively planned but routinely prescribed for use at various levels of the tradition (*Kusum*).
4. Materials used by *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens during pre camping and camping stages were constant and specific in nature regarding colour(s), dressing accessories, manipulation techniques and utility. The bold red colour was symbolically associated with dress for *Telekomo* (camping), while pure white calico was observed as characteristically associated with dress for *Ashinfɔ* (camping).

5. Medley of bright colours were seen as symbolically associated with dress for *Kpojemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (outdooring and post camping stages) respectively. The maidens use more colourful and intricately patterned kente designs, sequined embellished velvet fabrics and ‘lifestyle’ industrialised prints during the outdooring and post rites stages respectively. The colourful luxurious and rich hand woven Ghanaian Asante kente, Ghanaian Ewe *kete*, exotic silk prints and embellished velvets were used during *Kpojemɔ* (the outdooring stage) upon the completion stage, while colourful classic and ‘lifestyle’ industrialised prints (Ghanaian and foreign) were used during *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (post rite styling) to communicate or signify the final stage of the rite.
6. Interviewees’ submission on colour suggested that the colour red used for *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping stage) was seen as tradition associated with the readiness of the maidens for the commencement cleansing rite. Others said it portrayed the seriousness as well as the mystery associated with their cleansing activities ahead, the outcome of which was not clear albeit the maidens expected to come out as victorious cleansed women. The use of the vibrant red colour was additionally described as strategic tradition used in announcing the maidens to patrons, and also an indication of the commencement of the purification ceremony.
7. Interviewees described the white colour used for *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping stage) as a signifier that the maidens were going through that specific stage of the purification *Kusum* (custom). Others said the white associated with *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping stage) was seen as symbolic of victory anticipated after the purification rite.

Thus, the colour red used during *Telekɔmɔ* (pre-camping stage) signified the commencement of the cleansing tradition; white colour used during *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) signified anticipated victory after the purification while the use of bright colours during *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei Hesaamɔi* (outdooing and post rites dressing) respectively were for commemorative purposes, for making cultural statements and implying status of the maidens (self and family). The use of medley of colours associated with the outdooing ceremony - *Kpojiemɔ* (colourful kente used by the maidens) signaled moments of happiness and excitement. Others also said it signaled a commemorative show of appreciation of the successful completion to the rite. The use of the colourful kente cloth was described as the show of wealth.

8. Distinct dressing accessories and body décor (colours and motifs) were used by the maidens. For instance, prescribed dressing accessories— a lot of beads and gold jewels remained a must-use for maidens observing *Ashin Kpeemɔ* (nobility rite). *Oduku* (headdress), *Fliwa* (*Adiagba* strung neck beads), *Adiagba* (treasured beads), *Too Pipe* (blue tubular beads), and *Ntah* (anklets) were among key mandatory overt dressing items. *Atufo*, *Bue* (loincloth) and waist beads were mandatory key covert dressing items.
9. Distinct body décor (colours and motifs) artistically applied for each themed look made included: *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (headdress), *Bue* (loincloth) and *Ntah* (anklets) were all from sustainable sources (either recovered, reused, or up-cycled) dressing accessories used in making strong cultural statements. The maidens use the *Bue* (bright red and white cloth) ankle band instead as anklets (as there was the need to cover the thinly strung ankle beads -- an aspect of the

Ntah (anklet) ensemble) while outside the traditional area as part of the outlook.

10. The *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens' dress cultural practices demonstrated that it was driven by a distinct blend of dress psychology, dress design philosophy, design strategy and concepts— themes, silhouettes, material culture, colours, accessories, techniques, and utility. Both theories of modesty and immodesty in dress were used interchangeably. That was demonstrated amidst the use of dress for both spiritual and physical attraction, and protection. The theory of sensual attraction was also implied with two of their dress concepts.
11. The cultural maxims *Fɛɔɔ*, *Kusum gboo*, and *Blema Kpãa nɔ atsa* (appreciation of creativity, upholding tradition and appreciation of ancestral knowledge and competences as accepted expertise, respectively) were demonstrable as their dress design philosophy. The dress design strategy used by the people of Tema *Manhean* was non-routine (creative and innovative).
12. There was general consensus among the interviewees that styling details such as *Mama Bumɔ* (wrapping cloth on the body), *Atufo* (bustle), *Oduku* (moulded headdress), *Odasobɔ* (silk scarf), *Ntah* (anklets), *Bue* (loincloth), *Fers* (yellow paste), *Krɔbɔ* (green dried fruit powder), *Hao* (strap) and *Fliwa* (strung *Adiagba* neck beads) were distinctly used in harmony by the *Ashin* (nobility) maidens of Tema *Manhean*. The indigenous women interviewed agreed that those set pieces and their exceptional use together created a look that set the maidens apart from their compatriots among the *Ga Adangme* group and other Ghanaian girl initiates in general.
13. Production of dress items was done by draping, tying and layering. Gold hair pins, corn cobs and orange parrot feathers (*Ako Tsɛɛ*) were unique details

used as trims. The *Hlorkpãa* (twisted yarn) is deemed as a protective component used in stringing the maidens' beads together.

14. The *Ashin Yoo* (nobility maidens') traditional healing process used natural cosmetics sources: earth items including (*Nyanya* plants, palm fruit, spices, *Krɔbɔ* (dried green fruit powder) and the soil – the feel of the earth under the maidens' feet) and baked clay (*Ayilo*); wind items including (bird totem/parrot feather); air (dress barely covered the whole body to add to the feel of comfort of the maidens) and water (liquids from lime and perfume aided the mixing of matter smeared and splashed on the body).
15. *Nyanya* (creeping) and *Dhorkofu* (woven raffia) plants were used as protective neck accessories for the maidens during *Telekɔmɔ* and *Ashinfɔɔ* (pre-camping and camping stages) respectively. The *Ashinmu* (Batana oil) used for skin exfoliation during *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) was made from processed palm oil. Spiced (aniseed, cloves/pepre, *abaya*, and lime) *Krɔbɔ* (dried green fruit powder) was used together with perfume of choice to render that mysterious and enhanced body scents of maidens. The *Fers* (yellow paste) was used for facial and body décor. The *Krɔbɔ* (dried green fruit powder) was used for body décor (excluding the face).
16. Many interviewees upheld that when it comes to the socio-cultural relevance of the dress cultural practices to the *Ashin* (nobility) maidens and *Temamei* (the people of Tema), the rite taught the maidens life skills such as value for hard work, fashion essence and grooming lessons. Others said observance of the rite paved way for successful marriage, child delivery and life in general. Others also added that the dress cultural practices observed promoted social

cohesiveness among the group of maidens observing the rite during the ceremony and beyond.

17. Interviewees acknowledged _the obeisance the maidens observed through the rite by extension earned them a pride of place as worthy members of the community even as they practiced their shared dress culture amongst themselves and promoted socialization among *Temamei* (the people of Tema).‘ Two interviewees agreed that through the rite, the pride of place as *Temamei* (the people of Tema) was sustained among the league of *Ga* ethnic tribes (*Ga Adangme*) as they are known to be skilful in displaying their distinctive sense of belonging through their dress style. Another said that the dress cultural practices taught through the adoption of the *Ashin Kpeemo Hesaamɔi* (nobility rite maidens‘ dressing) helped the maidens‘ transition to adulthood and its dress responsibilities and prohibitions.

18. Many interviewees confirmed that the dress cultural practices were used primarily as physical and spiritual protective clothing, to communicate the maidens‘ identity as indigenes observing the rite and after that a status signifier as _cleansed‘ indigenes and proud members of the society. The dress forms particularly those they are seen in public with bared upper torso also communicated each maiden’s developmental stage as rightness or not for interested suitors.

Under objective three in relation to the collection and how it was created, the findings revealed that:

1. The *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection was influenced by the three *Ga* maxims (design philosophies) demonstrated in the maidens' dress namely: *Fɛonɔ*, *Kusum gboo* and *Blema kpãa nɔ atsa* (appreciation of creativity, tradition and reliance on ancestral expertise) which were in line with semantics, syntax, and 'past experience' design philosophies adopted. These were fused with consumer fashion adoption theories and premised on feminist standpoint.
2. The *Ashin* (nobility) maidens' dress psychology, design philosophy, design strategy and concepts— themes, silhouettes, material culture, colours, accessories, techniques, and utility demonstrating their shared cultural values was also considered for inspiration.
3. Three concepts: *Mamamejin* (classic prints); Lifestyle prints; and innovative classics were initially tested at the pre-production stage. The hourglass body shape of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens was retained in the sampled fit-models. Dress forms developed at that stage included skirt and trouser suits, and asymmetric after-dress, featuring varied inserted sleeve styles. Materials sampled for the prototypes included colourful classic and lifestyle industrialised prints, and matching plain crepe and tulle fabrics. Different techniques manipulations resulted in varied drape-effected cuts, dress accessories and finishing details. The prototype dress coverage borrowed from concepts from the maidens' dress cultural practices. Flat pattern making and the sewing were adopted as methods for pre-production.
4. The prototype dress design concepts, and construction procedures tested proved successful. Consequently, they contributed in the selection of

silhouettes, materials, colours, accessories, techniques and values adapted in the main collection created. The *Synthesis* model developed proved effective; its dependability and replicability was proven by the outcome of the prototypes produced. It was consequently adopted for the main project.

5. As a concept, the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection created was driven by ten ideas influenced by resources from *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens' sartorial practices, their socio-cultural relevance, and environment as sources of inspiration. Those in turn influenced the title of the brand which all the interviewees agreed reflected the maidens' wardrobe accounts. Body and dress silhouettes, materials, colours, techniques and resultant style features selected for the designs, and to a large extent the names ascribed to each of the twenty exclusive designs in the collection were equally influenced by the maidens' dress cultural practices and their environment.
6. That influence further impacted on the use of creative or innovative individuals/fit models who had influence to shape the taste consensus across society. That was used as a merchandising strategy. The target client in mind was the culturally-inclined large to plus size female millennial fashion innovator, aged between 26 to 56 years, with adventure-loving lifestyle and willing to visit Tema, Tema *Manhean* and the environs. The value proposition was a meaningful new need, a gift with cultural sensibilities from the *Ashin Yoo's* outing dress that made the wearer *look gorgeous (FɛOOYɔɔ)*. Similarly, the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens acted as models worthy of emulation in their community. Therefore their shared culture and choices acted as benchmarks for subsequent groups. The cultural maxims or dress philosophy demonstrable in their dress showed their appreciation for

things of beauty (*Fɛɔnɔ*). They held on to tradition (*Kusum gboo*) and relied on ancestral knowledge and skills exhibited by traditional stylists all styled the maidens during the ceremony (*Blema kpãa nɔ atsa*).

7. The creative nature of the maidens' dress cultural practices was replicated in the new need created. Thus, the collection fashioned used creativity and innovation concepts as such rule breaking, innovative juxtaposition, and individual creativity which cannot be ruled out in such creative projects for conceptual and fashionable dress. That idea informed the use of the collection pieces as separates.
8. *Fɛ00Y00* collection was made up of softly tailored dressy elegant customised wardrobe suitable for relaxed semi-formal and formal occasions which call for a blend of exquisite tradition with style using the high end *haute couture* approach. Like the maidens' dress cultural practices, the nature of materials used were unique. They included exceptional conventional colourful industrialised classic prints with local names and in some cases their trending innovative versions; luxurious traditional loom woven kente and colourful imitated industrialised print variants; embellished 'lifestyle' prints; exotic popular cotton twills, plain pre-pressed chiffon, silk, crepe, tulle, variants of plain and colourful crispy organza, and luxury velvet variants. Other conventional and non-conventional sustainability-inspired materials such as variegated print-on-lace, sparkly gift net, fishing net and fish line/string were used as main fashion fabrics and trims for detailing.
9. Regarding finishing, cover-edge stitches and lockstitches were prominently applied as expressive detailing. Horse hair, braids, pearls, gold buttons,

zippers, grommet eyelets and laces, and other unique notions were conceptualised for use as functional and decorative dress trims (findings).

10. The *haute couture* approach used in production reflected the maidens' preference for classy high-end look and feel, their use of exquisite materials and the zero-waste method of dress production, and the non-repetitive (one-time) use of cloths. The items in the collection mimicked the look created and materials used, albeit the collection was user friendly and more convenient for use.

11. On designs, fit, detailing and finishing, the brand unveiled one (1) jumpsuit; six (6) throw-on jackets; eight (8) long dresses; six (6) skirt suits and separates; three (3) trouser suits and separates; a group of timeless clothes that will last long. With these, the maidens' preferred dress silhouettes was increased from four to five in the collection. The brand introduced various levels of comfortable fit; some body hugging bustiers, others snugly fitted bodices, and yet others loosely fitted skirts and alluring floor length frocks featuring audacious cuts, with dramatic detailing and finishing for the bold large to plus size hourglass as preferred silhouette.

12. Dress accessories used in styling included attached and detachable soft, as well as stiffened self-belts with gold ornamentations in some cases. Under trousers and skirts added were meant to be part of the look created. Headdress included multi-pleated onetime-use cloth scarves, sewn turbans, long tied braids, bun-styled braids, wig, locks, and short haircut. Jewels used included exquisite custom, gold, and beads necklace and earrings. Footwear used were flattering designer-made breathable 1½' to 3' high heels and

wedges to accentuate the look created. Make up used was light handed using organic beauty products.

13. Techniques employed included manipulation of design silhouettes and ease, layering, wrap or *Mama Bumɔ*, volume, *Hao* (strap), coverage, colour story, motifs and implied attributes of the sea and fishing accoutrements. Others were the farthingale effect of the maidens' *Atufo* (bustle), and impressions of the *Ntah* and *Fliwa* (special ankle and neck) accessories used by the maidens during outings. The use of high heels helped to push or raise the hips of the models for emphasis on the hips to depict the maidens' appreciation for the hourglass silhouette.

Under objective four, views from all twenty three indigenous women engaged representing 100% on collection created showed their acceptance that:

1. The theme of the collection *FɛOOYɔɔ* "resonated with the *Ashin* rite. The dress items in the collection were beautiful, and that the materials used were unique to the collection created. The detailing introduced in the garment was equally unique to the collection, that the colour palettes used were beautiful to behold, and reflected the chosen theme *FɛOOYɔɔ*. Additionally, the clothes in the collection created fitted well, and that there was evidence of innovation and creativity in the collection created.
2. Significantly, all the interviewees affirmed that the main purpose for the project had been achieved with the exhibits in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection. They were all of the opinion that based on the exhibits presented, the *Ashin* rite dress cultural practices of *Temamei* (the people of Tema) could benefit the local community, generality of the Ghanaian society and the country as a

whole in six thematic ways: The dress cultural practices relevance was aligned to employment creation, tourism attraction and promotion, its projection to the promotion of culture of *Temamei* (people of Tema) on the global stage and that it could become source of inspiration for designers and also for bridal styling. Mention was also made of its ability to strengthen social bonds and encourage interest in youth training in vocational skills respectively.

Under objective five, views from non-*Ga* audiences (Respondents) on collection created showed that:

1. The theme of the collection *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* resonated with the *Ashin* rite. Majority upheld that the dress items in the *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* collection were beautiful to behold and the materials used were unique to the collection created. They agreed that the detailing introduced in the garment were varied and unique to the collection created. Additionally, they affirmed that the colour palettes used were beautiful to behold, and reflected the theme *Fɛ00Yɔɔ*. The respondents agreed that the clothes in the *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* collection fitted well, and that there was evidence of innovation and creativity in the collection created.
2. The artefacts created had helped in achieving the main goal of the project which was meant to conceptualise a cohesive high fashion *Ga* destination-inspired group of women clothing, while placing *Ga* culture in the spotlight of global fashion. Generally the exhibition participants including the women interviewed were highly impressed with the brand fashioned. Their remarks were highly positive. For instance, participants were

appreciative of the educative presentation; others acknowledged the uniqueness of materials used for the collection and commended the project done. They were also very appreciative of the beautiful collection, and identified many favourites. Many also liked the story lines of the collection and the display of *Ga* culture. Many additionally acknowledged the inspirational nature of the collection, identified with the concept of women empowerment effort, the innovative and creative techniques used and the conceptual nature of collection created.

3. Comments from the non-local audience on the exhibits and the whole exhibition were similarly favourable and showed acceptability of the brand. Many of the non-local audience (respondents inclusive) could not help but admire and affirm the conceptual nature of the collection, while many said they liked the story lines of the artefacts presented, others mentioned personal favorites among the exhibits presented. Participants' best favourite designs included, in no particular order: *Aayoo, Akushika, Adigba, Yoo Kpakpa, Anuñnyam, Kplɛmɔ, Ahuñ kɛ Yaa Wulamɔ, Mlitsa-Niñma, Niñma-chic, Niñma, Odehe, Blema Kɛ Akpakoo, Obla Yoo, Manyeyoo, Tsile Loowu, Shika Nubu, Obla Kpaan and Meridian City Hotel, Wala Yoo and Owula.*

4. Many others commended the project undertaken and acknowledged the high display of *Ga* culture through modern fashion. Yet others acknowledged the beauty of the collection, and the educative mode of presentation. Additionally, other participants found the works presented inspirational, and recognised the uniqueness of the materials used. Many applauded the use of

fashion to encourage women empowerment and were appreciative of the techniques used in the project.

5.2 Conclusions

The major dress culture practices associated with the *Ashin yei* (nobility rite maidens) during *Telekɔmɔ*, *Ashinfɔɔ*, *Kpojiemɔ* and *Kpojei* (pre rite, camping, outdooring and post rite respectively) were four resilient classics. The staged statement dress which largely served as a form of preservation of their dress culture for centuries have withstood the test of time.

Symbolically, the dress culture practices of the nobility maidens were themed as they reflect their feminine identity. The dress culture practices of the rite maidens is used a status signifier in the Tema *Manhean* community, as each artefact used signaled the stage and level of purification attained, and communicated their status during and after the ritual. The *Ashinfɔɔ* (camping) dress to is said to be the exact nature/appearance of the *Ashin* rite spirit, underscoring their allegiance. The conventional and unconventional materials and techniques used, colour story, aura and fabled look created is *Kusum* (custom) thus mandatory. Its use is in obeisance of their belief system with spiritual connotations, and it did embolden the maidens and influenced their countenance.

That notwithstanding, the maidens' over the years have contributed to the development of their outing dress form during *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooring stage) by subtly introducing the innovative single layered bustier bustle wrap dress as a style which cover the breasts during the outdooring stage away for prying eyes of the stakeholders. There was also the introduction of luxury sequined velvet as bustier wrap during *Kpojiemɔ* (outdooring stage).

From the socio-cultural relevance perspective, the findings from the dress cultural practices of *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens suggested the use of *Kusum* as a hidden curriculum with long held values of cultural beliefs as an ennobler - a tool for imparting the noble women of the traditional area. The dress cultural practices were highly conceptualized based on *Kusum* (belief or custom), nature, technology (modernity) and bold aesthetic values.

The maidens' themed statement dress so designed played both functional - spiritual and physical (protective and sensual) - as well as decorative (beautification) roles in their sartorial stories. At each stage the dress used emphasised their status as noble indigenes (maidens) undergoing the *Ashin* ritual. At the climax of the ritual, their dress projected them as having been cleansed of spiritual and physical dirt. The maidens' look during the *Ashinforo* (camping stage) described as the exact replica of the spirit associated *Ashin Kpeemo* (nobility rite) was *Kusum* (custom), therefore mandatory and contributed in preserving the maidens' heritage as shared dress cultural values .

In all, the dress forms, types, materials, and colours adopted by the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens imparted their socio-cultural belief system in sync with the people's acceptance of their shared dress culture (their social psychology of clothing, design philosophies, and inculcated laudable social values such as team spirit, hard work, grooming and nurturing in appreciating high dress sense). The maidens' use of dress during the ceremony further portrayed clothing theories of modesty and immodesty adopted; clothing use for physical and spiritual protection, beautification and attraction, and to communicate their unique identity. Thus, the exclusive theorized dress cultural practices of the maidens signified their dress essence, and shared dress

cultural values as *Temamei*. Beyond that, aesthetic values demonstrated in the *Ashin* nobility rite maidens' exhibited rich creativity viable in influencing contemporary dress fashion.

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection made up of twenty sensational softly tailored dressy elegant contemporary feminine wear had been meticulously conceptualised and customised to suit relaxed semi-formal and formal occasional needs which call for a blend of exquisite destination-inspired traditions (*Ashin* nobility rite dress-inspired) with style using the *haute couture* approach for quality products and ambiance.

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* brand adopted all three dress silhouettes of the nobility maidens' outing dress and added to them. The brand further extended the features of the *Ashin* (nobility) maidens' dress details and that of the *KCascades Impressions*. The designs created in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection were innovative and creative fashionable versions to the maidens' outing dress culture practices. The highly impacted designs were comfortable and well planned to tell the maidens' stories on the fit models.

The successful production of the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection composed was influenced by the study underpinnings; it was highly impacted by aesthetic values of the *Ashin* rite maidens and a blend of related design-led strategies precisely pursued in the execution of the project. The collection emulated the aesthetically pleasing statement dress strategy and 'dæncy' portrayed in the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens' dress cultural practices. Thus, the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection highly resonated with the nobility maidens' exceptional aesthetic wardrobe details and underscored the significance of their ethnic creativity.

The *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* collection was used as a medium for advocacy for paying scholarly attention to highly credible knowledge production emanating from works of otherwise ignored *Ga* women (ethnic stylists) of Tema *Manhean* located on the Greenwich Meridian in Ghana. Thus, the concept inspired scholarly inclusiveness of *Temamei* sartorial stories. The *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* catalogue attached and the report both provide useful knowledge and practice in designing culturally-inclined fashion clothing.

Feedback on the collection was favourable as the items were highly rated by the audiences engaged (both indigenous and non-indigenous). Participants interviewed validated the collection. They upheld the theme of the collection which resonated with the *Ashin* (nobility rite) dress cultural practices. It was instructive that many of the interviewees agreed that the fashionable dress items in the collection were beautiful; and that the materials used were unique to the collection created. Additionally, almost all of them affirmed that the detailing introduced in the garment was equally exclusive to the collection, while the colour palettes used were beautiful to behold, and reflected the chosen theme *Fɛ00Yɔɔ*. Besides, all of the participants engaged affirmed that the clothes in the *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* collection fitted well, were creative and innovative.

Thus, the outcome of the study according to the court of public opinion (n=76 representing 98.7 %), was that the goal set to create a user-friendly, cohesive conceptual timeless fashionable new need was achieved. The implication was that *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* indeed lived the dream of inspiring inclusiveness of a marginalised feminine subculture in the production of new knowledge, while placing *Ga* culture in the spotlight of global fashion.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion reached, it is recommended that:

1. During the rite opinion leaders of *Basa We* through the Tema Traditional Council should create a space to educate community members and observers on the dress classics used so as to further preserve their dress culture.

A permanent photo gallery or museum could be built at a vantage point (Palace or Nii Ansah *We*) in the community to further contribute to the effort of educating a larger population – including particularly designers and tourists, which could aid in job creation in the community.

2. Other maidens (participants) within and outside the locality should adopt the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens' worldview of dress for purposes of grooming and sustainable dress practices.

Within academia, its inclusion could be considered in enriching the fashion beauty culture curriculum at the tertiary level (Bachelors). It could also be useful for grooming contestants during the very many culturally-inclined feminine beauty pageants held on academic campuses in Ghana, on the African continent and beyond.

3. The *FɛOOYɔɔ* catalogue and the report on the project be used in the teaching and learning of fashioning aesthetically pleasing ethno-centric conceptual fashion trends (silhouettes, materials, colours, accessories, techniques and values) in fashion institutions of higher learning.

4. In order to influence fashion design research endeavours in Africa and beyond among both professionals and budding designers from tertiary fashion institutions in particular as professed in the current study, more extensive exhibitions of the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection should be organised for a wider

audience using various means of communications to help create more awareness about the usefulness of nobility rite dress cultural practices, particularly the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens' dress cultural practices in designing contemporary dress fashion to promote heritage tourism in the traditional area. This goes to support the Government of Ghana's recent call (made by the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts Dzifa Abla Gomashie) to integrate cultural education into national policies in order to preserve heritage, foster national identity, and support economic growth through creative industries (MyJoyOnline, 2025).

Additionally, opinion leaders of *Basa We* through the Tema Traditional Council should liaise with the Tema Metropolitan Assembly and the Regional Education Secretariat to get the recognition of the stylists' craftsmanship by the nation, and be brought to the attention of the world of arts and culture (through UNESCO) to benefit the local community and the country at large.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

1. A study to examine the evolution of the *Ashin Kpeemo* (rite) dress cultural practices from when *Temamei* first settled in *Manmomoemli* to present practice in Tema *Manhean* is suggested.
2. A study to explore the use of the private dress culture of the *Ashin* (nobility rite) maidens of *Temamei* (people of Tema) or a blend with the other three cohorts could be useful in revealing even more exciting new concepts for dress fashion ideation.
3. The need for the creation of a photo gallery (using action research) to serve the community's and visitors educational need could be inure to the tourism potentials of the traditional area.

4. Current stylists and designers could tap into the *FɛOOYɔɔ* trends for even more engaging concepts. Contemporary stylists could also tap into the *Ashin Yoo Kpeemɔ* (nobility rite) maidens' dress design flow chart to create relatable dress concepts for brides (as suggested by one of the local interviewees; the oldest traditional stylist of the nobility rite maidens (Tema *Ashin Yei*)).
5. Feedback from tourists (as potential consumers) on the collection created could offer fresh perspectives going forward.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SPEC SHEET FOR *FɛOOYɔɔ* CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION PROTOTYPES

The *FɛOOYɔɔ* conceptual dress fashion collection is a destination-inspired conceptual dress fashion motivated by dress cultural practices of marginalised *Ga* women of Tema *Manhean*. Tables 49, 50 and 51 illustrate the Spec (specification) sheets for the *FɛOOYɔɔ* conceptual dress fashion collection prototypes (three out of seven concepts) tested. Each document consisted of two-dimensional views of the design sketch, the fit-model's measurement, patterns required, the fashion fabric and other related materials used in the production of the dress, with quantities and prices. These served as a guide for production; including pattern engineering as they showed the constructional details required in the making of the designs.

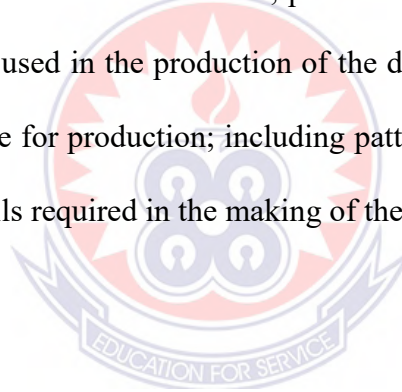

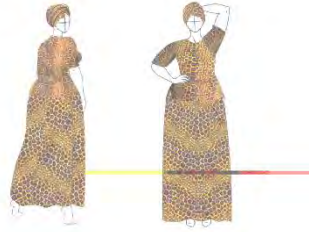


Table 49: Spec Sheet for *FƐOOYƆƆ* Conceptual Dress Fashion Collection—**Prototypes**

<i>FP-D1</i> SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FƐOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION - PROTOTYPES															
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL NEW NEED WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>															
CUSTOMER/MODEL: FIT MODEL	GENDER: FEMALE														
AGE RANGE: 45 – 50 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST														
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY / TRADITION	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED														
DESIGN TITLE: <i>MLITSA-CHEVERONESS</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>FP-D1</i>														
LARGE SIZE / BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH														
Neck	15 ¾”														
Shoulder to Shoulder	16”														
Nape to Waist	15 ¾”														
Dress Length	50”														
Across Back	16”														
Bust	42”														
Waist	36”														
Hip/ Seat	46”														
Sleeve Length/ Cuff	23” /10”														
Side Seam	38”														
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)														
Material(s)/Fashion fabric: Golden yellow and dark brown <i>MLITSA</i> (Awo Diin, Personal communication, 2023) wax print, polyester lining, ornamental buttons and skirt zipper.	<table> <tr> <td><i>MLISTA</i> wax print</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polyester lining</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>510</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>710</td> </tr> </table>	<i>MLISTA</i> wax print	250	Polyester lining	60	Sewing Notions	100	Components, Trims & Findings	100	Production Cost	510	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	710
<i>MLISTA</i> wax print	250														
Polyester lining	60														
Sewing Notions	100														
Components, Trims & Findings	100														
Production Cost	510														
Cost of Labour	200														
Cost of Dress	710														
 Fabric swatch	 Illusionary Belted Short Sleeved Top on Chevron Cut Skirt														

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
Dress Front and Back Bodice Front & Back of Skirt Main inserted sleeves Slim Belt	Operation/ Machine Style Recommended./ Stitch & Seam Type Illusionary straight and chevron cut details Lock stitches for joining & topstitching Plain Seams inside Vilene for re-enforced edges Full Lining of top and skirt Full back opening Eyelet holes on attached belt Full length Skirt





Table 50: Spec Sheet for *FεOOYƆƆ* Conceptual Dress Fashion Collection—**Prototypes**

FP-D2 SPEC SHEET FOR <i>FεOOYƆƆ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION – PROTOTYPES	
<i>VALUE PROPOSITION: MEANINGFUL NEW NEED WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: FIT MODEL	GENDER: FEMALE
AGE RANGE: 45 – 50 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY / TRADITION	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED
DESIGN TITLE: <i>MLITSA-CHEVERONNESS</i>	DESIGN No.: FP-D2
LARGE SIZE / BODY MEASUREMENTS – INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH
Neck	15 ¾”
Shoulder to Shoulder	16”
Nape to Waist	15 ¾”
Dress Length	50”
Across Back	16”
Bust	42”
Waist	36”
Hip/ Seat	46”
Sleeve Length/ Cuff	23” /10”
Side Seam	38”
	 <p>Faux front wrap flare dress with belt attached; three-quarter bow-tie embellished sleeves and side seam pockets.</p>
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)
Material(s) / Fashion fabric: Colourful lifestyle wax print, taffeta lining, long invisible zipper.	<i>MLITSA</i> wax print 250
	Taffeta lining 60
	Sewing Notions 100
	Components, Trims & Findings 100
	Production Cost 510
	Cost of Labour 200
	Cost of Dress 710
 <p>Fabric swatch</p>	

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
<p>Top Dress Front and Back Bodice</p> <p>Front & Back of Skirt</p> <p>Main inserted sleeves</p> <p>Attachable belts</p>	<p>Operation/ Machine Style Recommended./ Stitch & Seam Type</p> <p>Illusionary straight and chevron cut details</p> <p>Lock stitches for joining & topstitching</p> <p>Plain Seams inside</p> <p>Vilene for re-enforced edges</p> <p>Full Lining of top and skirt</p> <p>Full back opening</p> <p>Eyelet holes on attached belt</p> <p>Full length Skirt</p>



Table 51: Spec Sheet for *Fɛ00Yɔɔ* Conceptual Dress Fashion Collection—**Prototypes**

FP-D3 SPEC SHEET FOR <i>Fɛ00Yɔɔ</i> CONCEPTUAL DRESS FASHION COLLECTION— PROTOTYPES																	
<i>VALUE PROPOSTION: MEANINGFUL „NEW NEED“ WITH CULTURAL SENSIBILITIES; SOFTLY TAILORED CUSTOMISED CONCEPTUAL DRESS WHICH BLENDS TRADITION AND STYLE MOTIVATED BY DRESS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF MARGINALISED GA WOMEN OF TEMA MANHEAN.</i>																	
CUSTOMER/MODEL: FIT MODEL	GENDER: FEMALE																
AGE RANGE: 45 – 50 YEARS	STATUS: TOURIST																
DRESS CATEGORY: DRESSY / TRADITIONAL	FIT DESIRED: SNUGLY FITTED																
DESIGN TITLE: <i>MLITSA-CHEVERONESS</i>	DESIGN No.: <i>FP-D3</i>																
LARGE SIZE / BODY MEASUREMENTS — INCHES	DESIGN SKETCH																
Neck	15 ¾”																
Shoulder to Shoulder	16”																
Nape to Waist	15 ¾”																
Dress Length	50”																
Across Back	16”																
Bust	42”																
Waist	36”																
Hip/ Seat	46”																
Sleeve Length/ Cuff	23” /10”																
Side Seam	38”																
MATERIALS	COST SHEET (GHS)																
Material(s) / Fashion fabric: Innovative <i>City Hotel</i> ’ (Awo Diin, Personal communication, 2023) classic wax print, wine crepe and tulle; long zipper and short trousers zipper; elastic band horse hair and vilene.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><i>City Hotel</i> wax print</td> <td>250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tulle</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wine Crepe</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sewing Notions</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Components, Trims & Findings</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Production Cost</td> <td>710</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Labour</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Dress</td> <td>910</td> </tr> </table>	<i>City Hotel</i> wax print	250	Tulle	60	Wine Crepe	200	Sewing Notions	100	Components, Trims & Findings	100	Production Cost	710	Cost of Labour	200	Cost of Dress	910
<i>City Hotel</i> wax print	250																
Tulle	60																
Wine Crepe	200																
Sewing Notions	100																
Components, Trims & Findings	100																
Production Cost	710																
Cost of Labour	200																
Cost of Dress	910																
 <p>Fabric swatches</p>	 <p>Asymmetric floor length Wax Print top on Crepe and tulle inner top and trousers.</p>																

SLOPERS	CONSTRUCTION SPECS
Asymmetric Top Front and Back Bodice Asymmetric Front & Back Flare Skirt Top Front and Back Bodice Main inserted sleeves Attached soft belts	Operation/ Machine Style Recommended./ Stitch & Seam Type Floor length Asymmetric Dress on Crepe and Tulle Trousers and Top Lock stitches for joining & topstitching Plain Seams inside Vilene for re-enforced edges Lined top; Back opening Soft attached belt Full length Skirt



APPENDIX B

FĔOOYĔĔ EXHIBITION GALLERY



Figure 5.01: *AAYOO* design on display.

Figure 5.02: Accessorised *MLITSA-NIDMAA* design on display.



Figure 5.03: *NIDMAA* design on display.

Figure 5.04: *OWULA* design on display.



Figure 5.05: *YOO KPAKPA* and Meridian City **Figure 5.06:** *AKUSHIKA*, *ADIAGBA*, *MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL* designs. *SHIKA NUBU* on display.



Figure 5.07: *ANUDNYAM* design on display. **Figure 5.08:** *NIDMAA*; *NIDMAA-CHIC* and *MLITSA-NIDMAA*.



Figure 5.09: Framed exhibits; *OBLA KPAA*, *Meridian City Hotel* and *NIDMAA*.





Figure 5.10: *ADIAGBA Fliwa* neck and wrist beads; gold earrings; custom jewellery; asymmetric rocaille beads, used as accessories for the *FΞOOYƆƆ* collection on display.



Figure 5.11: Multi-pleated half bow and full face headdress designs used as accessories for the *FΞOOYƆƆ* collection on display.



Figure 5.12: Interactions with cross sections of the exhibition audiences.

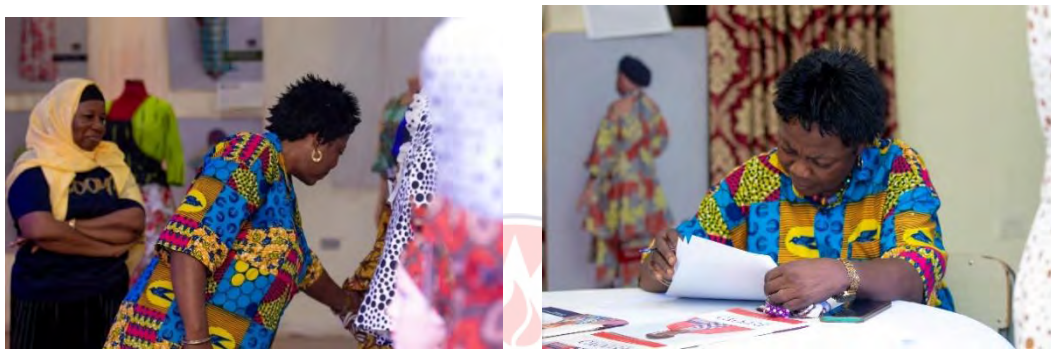


Figure 5.13: A participant admiring the *MERIDIAN CITY HOTEL* design; the participant responding to the opinionnaire during the exhibition.

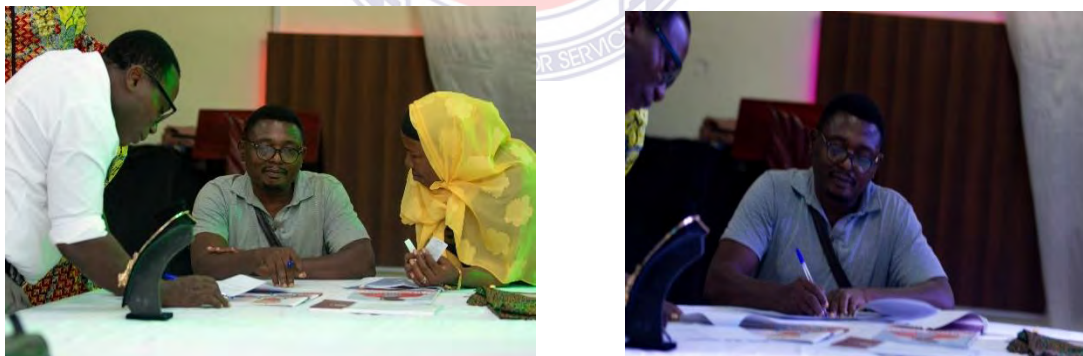


Figure 5.14: Participants responding to the opinionnaire during the exhibition.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

SUSSIE AKU DAMALIE

PhD IN ARTS AND CULTURE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

Project Topic: Designing Ga Traditional Dress-Fashion-inspired Contemporary Occasional Feminine Wear: *Temamei Ashin Yei* in Focus

Citizens of Tema *Manhean* are considered as the most important stakeholders of this project which intends to be a voice for their women folks' subculture, *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rite of passage). The interview that follows is a useful instrument for this purpose. The form contains a list of statements, each of which the local audience observing this exhibition are asked to endorse or reject, the purpose being to gather information for the survey and for performance improvement.

May I therefore have your consent to use your feedback on the project for academic purpose? Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your opinion expressed will be held in confidence. If in the course of filling this form you lose interest in answering the items on the form, you can refuse to continue. Though participation in the study does not imply a direct benefit to the respondent, the information obtained in the course of this study may be available in its results. If you need any clarification on any point related to this form, you can do so through sussiedamalie@gmail.com or WhatsApp:(0244 989776).

The case study is of constructivist paradigm and grounded in standpoint feminism and consumer fashion adoption theories. The motivation for the project was to 'celebrate African culture' and inspire inclusion. Thus, the main objective (object three) was to conceptualise a cohesive 'high fashion' Ga destination-inspired group of women clothing, while placing the Ga culture [Ghanaian and African], its cultural aesthetics and impact thereof in fashion design in the spotlight of world fashion. It was also

meant to fill the literature gap on dress cultural artefacts of *Temamei Ashin* (rite of passage), and practices in creating conceptual dress design fashion.

The focus is on traditional women folk from Tema *Manhean* who appear to have been marginalised and left out of the production of knowledge (Damalie, 2018a; Gurung, 2021). Of particular interest is the creativity of the traditional stylists who meticulously dress the *Ashin* maidens. This study when completed might contribute knowledge to addressing the paucity of literature about the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' initiation rites dress used, and the need to properly harness the socio-economical signification of the rites including most importantly drawing inspiration to creatively re-interpret their dress culture practices (Dress cultural practices) for consumers and patrons of conceptual dress fashion alike. These influences birthed the whole notion of the project - conceptual fashion collection.

LOCALS OF TEMA *MANHEAN* INTERVIEW GUIDE

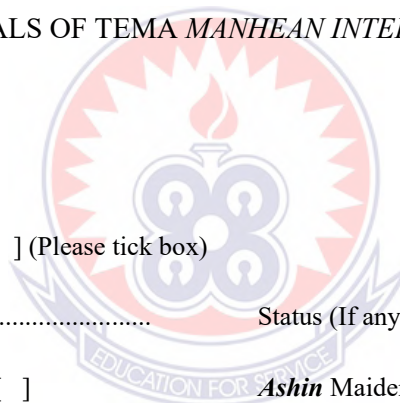
A. Demographics

Form No.:

Gender Female: [] Male [] (Please tick box)

Age range: Status (If any):

Indigene [] Non-Indigene [] *Ashin* Maiden:



The opinions of participants of this study are an important indicator of how well the researcher is engaging the locals in the project. Please answer the following statements about the exhibits and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of them. The items are in relation to objectives 1 and 2 of the study which sought to identify for analysis the major dress cultural practices of the *Ashin Yoo* (rite maidens), and to find out the symbolism and socio-cultural relevance of the dress cultural practices of the maidens respectively.

B: Please tick [] one box under a number for each statement (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6)

		Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	The dress culture in the photographs displayed show Tema <i>Ashin</i> dress culture practices.						
2.	I deem the dress forms we use as unique to our culture.						
3.	Through the rite, I was taught valuable life skills such as fashion sense and dressing as well as hard work.						
4.	My mother was the main financier of the rite.						
5.	My father was the main financier of the rite.						
6.	My spouse was the main financier of the rite.						
7.	Both of my parents financed the rite.						
8.	The rite is expensive to observe.						
9.	The rite to cleanse maidens is a status signifier in our community.						

10. What are the colours used at each stage?

.....

11. What do the colours used at each stage mean or signifier?

.....

12. How is the rite beneficial to the maidens and the people of the Tema *Manhean* community?

.....

13. What is the importance of the rite to *Temamei*?

.....

C. Please express your impressions about the collection created in relation to the third objective of the study which sought to create a cohesive destination-inspired dress fashion collection while placing attention on *Ga* culture.

		Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
14	The theme of the collection ‘ <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> ’ resonates with the <i>Ashin</i> rite.						
15	The dress items in the collection are beautiful.						
16	The materials used are unique to the collection created.						
17	The detailing introduced in the garments are unique to the collection.						
18	The colour palettes used are beautiful to behold.						
19	The clothes fit well.						

D. Please express your opinion on the innovation and creativity of the items in the collection in relation to the goal of the project.

20. Do you see innovation in the collection created?

.....
.....
.....

21. Do you see creativity in the collection created?

.....
.....
.....

22. In your opinion, has the main goal to conceptualise a cohesive ‘high fashion’ *Ga* destination-inspired group of women clothing, while placing the *Ga* culture on the spotlight of global fashion been achieved with the exhibits in the *FɛOOYɔɔ* collection?

.....
.....
.....

23. Based on the exhibits presented, how can the *Ashin* rite dress culture practices of Tema *Manhean* benefit the local community, generality of the Ghanaian society, and the country as a whole?

.....
.....
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.....
.....
.....

24. Comments /impressions about the whole idea of the project or exhibition?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

THANK YOU

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APPENDIX D

OPINIONNAIRE

SUSSIE AKU DAMALIE

PHD IN ARTS AND CULTURE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, GHANA

Project Topic: Designing Ga Traditional Dress-Fashion-inspired Contemporary Occasional Feminine Wear: *Temamei Ashin Yei* in Focus

Members of academia besides indigenes of Tema *Manhean* are considered as the very important stakeholders of this project which intends to be a voice for their women folks' subculture, *Ashin Yoo Kpeemo* (rite of passage). The opinionnaire that follows is a useful instrument for this purpose. The form contains a list of statements, each of which non-local audience observing this exhibition are asked to endorse or reject, the purpose being to gather information for the survey and for performance improvement.

May I therefore have your consent to use your feedback on the project for academic purpose? Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your opinion expressed will be held in confidence. If in the course of filling this form you lose interest in answering the items on the form, you can refuse to continue. Though participation in the study does not imply a direct benefit to the respondent, the information obtained in the course of this study may be available in its results. If you need any clarification on any point related to this form, you can do so through sussiedamalie@gmail.com or WhatsApp.(0244 989776).

The pragmatic case study is of constructivist paradigm and grounded in standpoint feminism and consumer fashion adoption theories. The motivation for the project was to 'celebrate our culture' and inspire inclusion. Thus, the main objective was to conceptualise a cohesive 'high fashion' Ga destination-inspired group of women clothing, while placing the Ga culture [Ghanaian and African], its cultural aesthetics and impact thereof in fashion design in the spotlight of world fashion. It was also meant to fill the literature gap on dress cultural artefacts of *Temamei Ashin* (rite of passage), and practices in creating conceptual dress design fashion.

The focus is on traditional women folk from Tema *Manhean* who appear to have been marginalised and left out of the production of knowledge (Damalie, 2018a; Gurung, 2021). Of particular interest is the creativity of the traditional stylists who meticulously dress the *Ashin* (rite) maidens. This study when completed might contribute knowledge to addressing the paucity of literature about the *Ashin* (rite) maidens' initiation rites dress used, and the need to properly harness the socio-economical signification of the rites including most importantly drawing inspiration to creatively re-interpret their dress culture practices (Dress cultural practices) for consumers and patrons of conceptual dress fashion alike. These influences birthed the whole notion of the project - conceptual fashion collection.

NON-LOCAL OPINION SURVEY

A. Demographics	
Form No.:	
Gender Female: [] Male [] (Please tick box)	
Age range:	Status (If any):
Non-local []

The opinions of participants of this study are an important indicator of how well the researcher engaged non-locals in the project. Please read the following statements about the exhibits and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of them. The section is in relation to objectives 1 and 2 of the study. Objective 1 sought to identify for analysis the major dress cultural practices of the *Ashin Yoo* (rite maidens). Objective 2 sought the symbolism and socio-cultural relevance of the dress cultural practices of the maidens.

A: Please tick one number for each statement (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6).

		Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	The dress culture in the photographs displayed show Tema <i>Ashin</i> dress culture practices.						
2	I deem the dress forms they use unique to their culture.						
3	Through the rite, the maidens are taught valuable life skills such as fashion sense and dressing as well as and hard work.						
4	The rite is a status signifier in the Tema <i>Manhean</i> community.						

B. Please express your impressions about the collection created in relation to the main objective 3 of the study which sought to create a cohesive destination-inspired conceptualised dress fashion collection while placing attention on *Ga* culture. Please tick [√] as appropriate from option 1 to 6.

		Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	The theme of the collection ‘ <i>FɛOOYɔɔ</i> ’ resonates with the <i>Ashin</i> rite.						
2.	The dress items in the collection are beautiful.						
3.	The materials used are unique to the collection created.						
4.	The detailing introduced in the garments are varied and unique to the collection.						
5.	The colour palettes used are beautiful to behold and reflect the theme.						
6.	The clothes fit well.						

C. Please answer ‘_Yes’ or ‘_No’ in the section below in relation to objective 3 of the study as stated above (B).

	Items on creativity and innovation in relation to goal	No	Yes
		1	2
7.	Do you see innovation in the collection created?		
8.	Do you see creativity in the collection created?		
9.	Has the main goal to conceptualise a cohesive ‘_high fashion’ <i>Ga</i> destination-inspired group of women clothing, while placing attention on the <i>Ga</i> culture been achieved with the exhibits in the collection?		

10. Comments:

.....

THANK YOU

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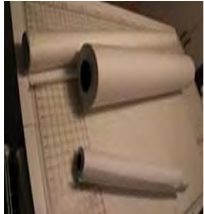



APPENDIX E





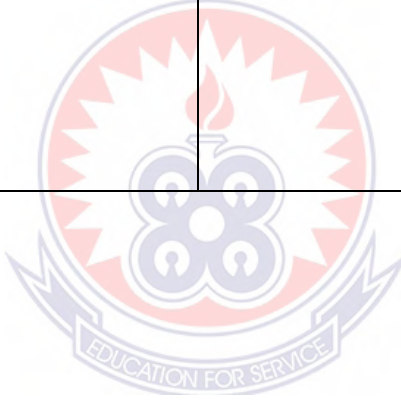
STUDIO TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

In every art environment, there are key tools, equipment and materials which aid in effective work. Consistent with fashion design practice, the researcher brought together the needed tools and equipment to work with, as a means of aiding in the design, development and core construction of the collection. Table 3 shows the tools, equipment and materials other than fashion fabrics used in production of the collection.

Tools, Equipment and Materials

Table 3: Tools and Equipment used for the Pattern and Garment Construction Activities in the studio.

 <p>Tape measure used for collecting data (body statistics).</p>	 <p>Brown papers used for the flat patternmaking strategy adopted as key garment development strategy.</p>	 <p>French curves used for shaping patterns constructed.</p>	 <p>Pin cushion used for keeping pins, during pattern and the construction of artefacts.</p>
 <p>Steam Pressing Iron for pressing during garment construction</p>	 <p>Cutting out shears used for cutting out. Smaller sizes were used for paper cutting and trimming activities during the</p>	 <p>All-purpose cotton polyester sewing threads were used for the sewing method adopted as key</p>	 <p>Industrial straight stitch sewing machine used during dress construction.</p>

process.	garment development and construction.	production strategy.	
<p>Industrial chain stitch/Serger sewing machine used for construction of artefacts.</p> 	 <p>Grommet machine used for functional and decorative detailing on garments.</p>	 <p>Eye-letter used for making eyelet holes on belts.</p>	 <p>Pearl fixing machine used for fixing pearls as finishing on garment parts.</p>
 <p>Garment steamer used for final pressing of dress, and also before displaying exhibits.</p> 			

APPENDIX F

INTRODUCTION LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION

P.O. Box 21, Winneba, Ghana
Tel: +233 (03323) 22035 / (020) 2041084

www.uew.edu.gh

OUR REF.: SCA/DME/L1/VOL.2/161

YOUR REF.:

13th February, 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/ Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION SUSSIE AKU DAMALIE

I write to introduce, **Sussie Aku Damalie**, a Ph.D student of the Department of Music Education, University of Education, Winneba, who is conducting a research on the topic: *"Fashioning Tamamei Ashin Yei Dress Cultural Archetypes into Contemporary Occasional Feminine Wear"*. Please, this research and information is for academic purposes only.

I would be very grateful if you could give her the assistance required.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Francis Annan'.

DR. JOHN FRANCIS ANNAN
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX G

ETHICAL CLEARANCE



**TAKORADI
TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY**

**CENTRE FOR RESEARCH,
INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

P. O. BOX 256, TAKORADI - GHANA

Website: www.ttu.edu.gh Email: crd@ttu.edu.gh

Ref. No. TTU/ERC/24/026

March 1, 2024

Department of Fashion Design
Takoradi Technical University
Takoradi

Dear Ms. Sussie Aku Damalie

LETTER OF APPROVAL

The Ethics Review Committee of the University has considered the ethical merit of your proposed research project titled **"Fashioning *Temamei Ashin Yei* Dress Cultural Archetypes into Contemporary Occasional Feminine Wear"** and has approved it.

Prior permission should be sought from the committee if there is the need to vary the research project.

The committee respectfully request you to abide by all the relevant ethical principles required by your research.

Kindly furnish the committee a summary of the key research findings upon completion of the research.

Thank you, Madam, for your application.

Yours faithfully

Prof. Maame Afua Nkrumah

Chairperson

Ethics Review Committee

Takoradi Technical University

