

Adaptation of some aspect of Yoruba Indigenous Handcrafted Textile for the Production of Modern Interior Decoration

Olujoke Stella AKINRUJOMU (Ph.D)

Department of Fine and Applied Arts, School of Vocational and Technical Education, College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *This Yoruba indigenous textile suffers set back in its use as modern interior decoration due to the high cost of production which made it to be expensive. An apparent increase in textile production at cottage level with a view to acquire skills and for individual government financial benefits in the development of small scale entrepreneurs would prevent consumers from over-dependence on the use of foreign fabric as home decoration. It is essential to protect and effectively utilize indigenous knowledge that represent a major dimension of the containment culture. As a result of this, Yoruba indigenous textile and that of the ethnic groups could fashioned to suit contemporary use which is lacking in the home of many Nigerians recent trends in interior decoration from advanced culture shows Nigerian textile practitioners are equally capable of competitive designs from locally made fabric. The paper focus on the textile cottage industry should grow to meet textile for consumers demand. The paper focuses on the use Yoruba indigenous textile for modern interior decoration by conducting studio experiment to create verities of house items based on textile material using Aso-oke, batik, tie-dye and printed fabrics. Textile materials are transformed into usable home and office products by adopting many textile studio techniques such as appliqué, dying, printing, weavings, sewing and stitching. The paper is expected to promote self-reliance, supporting government's campaign for entrepreneurial education, re-orientation values reducing poverty and generating employment among the teeming Nigerian Youths. Interior decoration, Yoruba indigenous textile, culture, self-reliance, cottage*

Key Words: *Adaptation, Yoruba Indigenous, Handcrafted Textiles, Interior Decoration*

Introduction

Yoruba indigenous textile have been described as one of the most graceful and skillful demonstrated expertise of mankind (Ojo, 2005). Various production processes are involved at the cottage level in notable towns of Oshogbo and Abeokuta. Yoruba textile tradition has been adapted to many uses. This multi-purpose usage of textile is apparent in clothing and interior decoration. These include the construction of garments for occasion and casual wears, the making of utilitarian and decorative objects and materials for home uses. Not only had it provided source of live hood to practitioners, accepted internationally for recognition items of costuming and body adornment.

It is believed that indigenous textile are products generated from innate human desire to decorate and embellish fabric and other fabric materials. Even though textile materials were originally meant to produce fabric for weaving, their application and fabric, lace, nets and cords. This is also extended to household fabric ranging from the simplest white cotton cloths to highly decorated materials that can be used for interior furnishing (Ogunduyile, 2005). The use of fabric for utilitarian purpose had existed in Africa before now. However, the Yoruba traditional indigenous textiles possess complex set of trait and certain characteristics of design qualities, motifs, patterns, colour arrangement and structure. These quantities can be seen on display as woven fabrics, paints, batik, embroidery, quit, appliqué, and tie-dye of all techniques. Ogunduyile (2005) noted that the setback experienced in the patronage of indigenous textiles, and their applicability to other utilitarian materials was due to the emergence of dominating foreign culture over that of the Yoruba. In recent times, indigenous textile had begun to attract consumers and connoisseur as their applicability to furnishing materials are evolving.

In centuries past, indigenous textile are used to serve such as body covering abd expression of fashion interests, by so doing, its practitioners and the entire indigenous community benefited from the economic values of textile engagements. A apart from the benefits stated above, it is possible that these same indigenous fabric can be manipulated to serve contemporary purpose as it can be used for home decoration with greater emphasis on aesthetics that will appeal to Nigerians and foreigners alike. Ojo

(2006) suggested that interior decoration functions as accessories to other furnishing materials. Providing spatial pattern within.

The plausibility of the study hinges on the accessibility and affordability of the materials intended to be used for home furnishing using simple homemade materials such a tie-dye, batik, woven fabrics for interior decoration. The applicability of indigenous textiles in furnishing as an alternative and viable means of decoration among Nigerians motivates this study. As a practicing artist and Art teacher, the study was inspired because, the decoration of homes and offices has generated a lot of concern in the artist's studio experimental life. Since every one intends to own a house or office of high taste, decorated in modern fashion, it was also thought of as a viable means of seize the opportunity of its popularity to the advantage of graduates who may need to be self-employed and consider interior decoration business as option in the profession.

The number of artist graduates seeking white collar jobs also gave the artist a concern. The need to popularize this study and sensitize the public on the need to use indigenous concept in homes is expected to generate more employment and entrepreneurial practices that the researcher had envisaged now and in the future. The seeming over dependence of Nigerians on foreign textile materials for home furnishing and its capability to serve as skill acquisition model in studio Art practices make this effort worthwhile.

The investigator was inspired by the use of indigenous textile for interior decoration. In the homes of the wealthy as it was at the dawn of industrial revolution cheaper home goods and decoration items such a wall papers, paints and fabrics also encouraged middle income families to be more interested in the outlook of their interior. Ohiorherman (2005) and Ojo (2006) noted that varieties of home and office decorations that were of indigenous Nigerian homes. The concept of interior decoration is rooted in the combination of beauty and comfort in the ancient world where fabrics, cushions, tapestries and wall hangings combined of adore to the homes of the Emperors. Morin (2010) noted that the ancient Roman Empire celebrated civic pride through their domed-roof exteriors and interiors with greater emphasis on aesthetics. Ball (2002) also postulated that decorative touches of wall fabrics in simple textiles were noticeable features as art forms and beauty throughout history.

Statement of the Problem

The culture of a particular society could influence its product choice greatly, the new Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), noted that culture is an integral part of development efforts on the continent, Consequently, it is essential to protect and effectively utilize indigenous knowledge that represents a major dimension of the continent's culture. Ogundele (2007) expatiates that good, usable products never happen by chance, rather, they are achieved through design that is based on an understanding of the natural, physical, psychological and emotional characteristic of human beings, their tasks and work environment.

The Yoruba indigenous textile have not been utilized in Nigeria homes and offices as interior decorations the ay it is supposed to be used due to the high cost of production which made it to be expensive. As a result of the reason above, it has been neglected among the *Yorubas* and other consumers. Indigenous textile of *Yorubas* and other ethnic group could be fashioned to suit contemporary textile of *Yorubas* and African renaissance. The study seeks to address the neglect experienced by indigenous textile in home furnishing and provide a studio-based working document for intending practitioners in entrepreneurial activities and for national economic growth

Research Questions

Some questions arising from the research include the following:

1. What are the processing and component of Yoruba indigenous textile suitable for interior decoration?
2. What are the items, materials and technical know-how suitable for interior decoration in textile production?
3. How can the profession of interior decorator multiply entrepreneurial activities and skills acquisition?
4. How can the research create awareness for the popularity of Yoruba indigenous textile in interior decoration?
5. Can the items produced create interior decoration exhibition scenario?

The study seek to explore the usage of indigenous fabric for interior decoration in consonance with the growing trends of the millennium with a view of reviving the consumption attitude of Nigerian towards quest for foreign goods thereby domesticating our craft production economy which cost effective.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Experiment with appropriate traditional and modern methods of sewing appliqué and fabric construction in the making of materials and items for home furnishing
2. Provide a studio-based document for entrepreneurial and skill acquisition activities potentials of the nation
3. Create interior decoration scenario using available technical expertise in textile production

Scope of the Study

The scope of the research is limited to using the varieties of simulated indigenous textile produced by the researcher to create an interior decoration scenario for bedroom/sitting room. Selected traditional and modern and techniques of printed and dyed textile, weaving, knitting sewing fabric appliqué and quilt are employed to create the designs the verities needed for practical exhibition. Sample of indigenous designs from Abeokuta, *Osogbo* and *Ibadan* was used to create varieties interior decoration materials such as window blind (shuttles) bedspread, magazine rack and flowers.

Cottage textile industries in Nigeria

The concept of cottage industries as posited by Hicks (2014) as a small scale industry that can be carried out at home by family members using their own equipment. Textile production at a cottage level are usually characterized by the use of hand tools and indigenous techniques. Cottage textile industry is quite different from the contemporary textile industry because while the later involves the use of mechanized techniques, the former is usually carried out within the cottage setting with labour intensive methods. The product of such as industry area aso-oke, batyik, tritik and adire fabrics. These textile are referred Yoruba indigenous textile. Textile production at cottage level is an activity that has achieved professional level of craftsmanship and has provided a lot of people with means of livelihood. Ogunduyile (2005) notes that cottage textile production in Nigeria is one of the oldest industries that caters for the fundamental needs of individual in the aspect of clothing and protection against weather conditions.

Yoruba Indigenous Dyeing

Dyeing textile with indigenous dyes was popular among Nigerians. The Yoruba was not an exception. Many indigenous plants were used but the indigo became more popular. Every family compound was involved in dyeing activities because of the greater density of indigo plant growth. Today dyeing involves the use of imported dyes, and fabric with many techniques method

Menz (2005) averred that, indigo the most famous of all dye in west Africa particularly in Nigeria, is also the world oldest dye and most important dyestuff. Indigo is still used today where villages have great vats that are set in the ground for dyeing cotton yardage for traditional clothing of the people. Taylor (2005) noted that ancient immigrants might have brought the art of dyeing from decaying empires of the desert such as Mali, where large scale cotton industry existed in the 4th century. Burgess (2011) went further that, there was evidence of textile production in West Africa, long before contact with the Europeans.

Yoruba Indigenous Weaving

The art of weaving is a process of interlacing weft and warp component to form a woven structure. The primitive man had interlaced tings and grasses to create mats and baskets, looms were however found in Egyptian tombs as evidence of perfect craftsmanship. Picton (1988) acknowledged that horizontal loom was also a native of 13th century Europe. He refers to the earliest descriptive studies in textile technologies in Nigeria (which were done by Rothin in 1918; Crowfoot in 1921) and concluded that the simplicity of the weaving apparatus as equipment to manipulate weave structure and other surface design patterns. Poola (2001) notes that archaeological findings revealed the woven design plant fabric in a Turkey Village (Catal-Huyuk) more than 8,000 years ago and that a number of Mexican Textile were dated between 7,000 -5,000 B.C. Based on the records available, it is difficult to determine the exact date when weaving or woven textiles really stated, but the divergent evolutionary evidences presented above are indications that the art of weaving had long existed as part of man's professions and daily activities. The Nigerian weaving industry was boosted by the presence of the loom and the growth of cotton.

Price (1975) states that the English men visiting Nigeria as 1890 reported that the cotton industry which spread from Nubia on the Upper Nile at the beginning of Christian era, also flourished and could favourably have been considered whit those export types in Liverpool and India, while the wild silk anaphe yarn was specially prized for its special effect in woven cloth. Woven textiles pieces, were produced in Nigeria long before contacts with the Europeanst. Seiber (1976) notes that there was evidence that bundled fibres were woven in Igbo-Ukwu over 1,000 years ago and later in the 13th century. There was the benin evidence in the 14th century with fabric dyeing attached to the practice (Barbour and Simmons, 1971). It had

been acknowledge severally that the horizontal loom with treadle-operated harnesses was developed in Europe in the 13th century

The apparent framing for design continuities allows the movement of one type of pattern from one loom to the other. In studio pattern for example, when warps are leashed in a double-heddle loom, the result provides an alternative weave structure, which is different from single-heddle weave. It is noted that the operation by means of pedals leave out hand free the weft backwards

The single-heddle arrangement (vertical loom) involves a shed stick, which is solely manipulated by hand. The fastness at which double heddle-loom operate differs from the less efficient way. The single-heddle loom operate. Lamb (1975) and Picton (1988) however noted that most striking patterns have evolved noted that most striking pattern have evolved fabric produced on single-heddle loom. *Aso oke* according to Okeke (1991) is the traditional clothe of the Yoruba people of south-western Nigeria. The *Iseyin* people of Oyo state are central to the production of *aso oke* from locally procured wild silk (tussah). The use of *aso oke* furnishing materials have not been practicalised and investigated to the fullest. This explains why the research efforts are intended to use *Aso oke* as part of interior coration.

Yoruba Indigenous Textiles as a Small Scale Enterprise

Small Scale Enterprise (SME) is described as low and slow industry with minimum capacity for production. The Yoruba indigenous textiles industry is at the cottage level of development with profound challenges inherent in private sector growth. One of the cardinal goals of the National Economic Empowerment And Development Strategy (NEEDS) is to promote private enterprises by encouraging and empowering Nigerians to make the best use of cultural potentials and natural resources for self-reliance and employment opportunities.

At cottage level, textiles are made through artistic creativity and dexterity and are often unique, beautiful and of high quality. They are commonly used for traditional fashion styles like agbada, buba and sokoto, boubou, buba and iro, and some other modern styles, inseparable in contemporary interior decoration because of the dynamism in fashion accessories and interior home furnishings. Interior furnishing is a term commonly used to describe popular style of furniture, homes and decorations adopted by many people. Michaels (2011) avers that this does not relate only to clothing; there are fashions in all aspects of textile production, including upholstery soft furnishings and accessories.

Concept of Interior Decoration as a Creative Practices

‘Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam, be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home’

The above quote by John Payne clearly describes the sentiments that an individual has towards the home. It is one place on this earth that comfort is sought. Decorating this precious abode should be done with utmost necessity. Though everyone has its taste and preference when it comes to decorating homes, the contemporary use of indigenous textile style is sophisticated and elegant in a homely way with everyone and its lifestyle. One could trace interior decoration back to the times of the caveman drawing on the walls of this cave. During the primitive time the caveman’s drawings, apart from their spiritual inclination or significance, also signified beautification processes. Historically, however, home decoration has been the preserve of the nobility and other privilege members of the society. The primary focus of common dwellings have always been on functions, with aesthetic concerns playing second role to basic necessities.

Many centuries ago, hair from animals was woven to insulate and protect homes. Hair, along with fibres from various plants and trees, were used to create beddings, blankets, clothing, wall-hanging, window and door as textiles became more pronounced. They were also used as currency for trading. Many of the ancient designs and weaving methods are used today and remain important parts of African lifestyles as highlighted by Ojo (2006).

Indigenous textiles for decorating homes are often enhanced through hand-stamping, stenciling, dyeing, painting, or embroidery. Sometimes soil is used to make paint, dyes can originate from herbs, leaves, bark, nuts, fruits, vegetables, and grasses. These are mixed with water or other chemicals such as zinc, sulfur, or iron to obtain the desired thickness and hue. Traditionally, many African textiles were not cut or tailored. Instead, they were draped and tried to suit various occasions. But with the current interest in indigenously made textiles outside Africa, textiles and handmade fabrics are being cut and fashioned into contemporary clothing and home furnishings, including pillows, upholstered furniture, wall hangings, blankets and throw pillows.

Materials and Methods

This study involves the adaption of existing home made fabric furniture items using the researcher’s creative ingenuity and re-arranging home settings in indigenous manner. The peculiarity of this work is that there is no standardized regulation for decorating homes. Sometimes homes decorated lavishly

or minimally depending on the taste or the affluence of the home owners. This is why a lot of freedom of expression is generated in this work with a practice-led studio experiments that resulted into any home made items that are presented in this paper. The development of creative knowledge and the aesthetic taste of man kind and the society demands would create a sense of inquiry in conceptualized creative to realistic objects. The need of use both hand and brain to generate creative items of interior decoration is the basis of the methods and materials in the paper. Unlike computer application and robotic manipulations, the study stands out as an exemplary interjection between creativity and utilitarianism. Manual methods, energy, craftsmanship, artistry and skill are all combined to exert in little in expensive equipments that used.

Fabrics of different colours , sewing machine dye stuff , studio workspace , knives , scissors , cutters , gums threads , chemicals , printing plates of assorted colours are used . potential practitioners are familiar with the systematic demonstration of methods and materials and of course the creative techniques that had been adopted through the studio experience of the researcher.

Components of Textiles in Interior Decoration

‘One love ‘ is a regenerating concept of passion and affection existing between a couple in a united family fold . The subtle colours of *Aso oke* and the contrasting colour of *Adire* are put together to accentuate luster in body flesh and garment adornment . The entire theme is of Yoruba origin procedure .illustration of patterns of ‘one love’ was first made on brown patterning paper . This patterning was done with a view to capture the Magazine Racks are novel ideas for containing pieces of new magazine, light books, papers and sundry objects. It is a necessity in keeping the home clean and tidy when placed in proper position. A contemporary magazine rack is imitated for construction in this study to align with the house hold utilitarian objects. The magazine rack is wrapped with specially designed *Asooke*.

A machine sculpted 4x 4 metre wood of 1.5 metre height was constructed in the carpenter’s shed to serve as long stand for the lamp holder. A spherical cubical of heart shaped was connecting the bulb inside the lamp shade to the adaptor.

Window Shuttle

A long, curtain rack is purchased from the curtain market. The *Aso-Oke* is configured to match the sizes of the rack so as to align suitably with the orderliness and arrangement desired of the shuttle. Ordinarily, the stiffness of *Aso- Oke* representing the shuttle cloth was artificially generated by adding excessive starch to the cloth. This sizing procedure is to allow the stiffness expected from the shuttle cloth, they are then cut into sizes to fit into small plastic rubber that hang unto the rail in slices. The rail naturally has an adjustable rope that controls the closing and the opening of the shuttles.

The use of *Aso-Oke* as shuttle is an innovation that is expected to generate indigenous feeling of nostalgia and the sense of marrying contemporary idea with traditional production. It is to be noted that window blinds, appearing more corporate and compact than drapes and window blinds. The aesthetic nature of the shuttle is articulated by the binding chains pierced throughout the end of the shuttle cloth for fancy.

Throw Pillow

Throw Pillows are products of designing and printed fabrics. Fabrics are designed in abstract motifs, leaves, floral, designs they are stuffed in trap unto to create throw pillows that can be used around resting chairs, beds and sofas. Throw pillows can also serve as headrest or sea support in office or home setting.

The wall hanging made of appliqué is a pattern design generated as a result of Yoruba indigenous culture which attaches importance to the role of drummers in festivals and occasions without drummers and singers in Yoruba indigenous festivals there is no life. This is why the artist has represented the drummer on cloth just as painters and sculptors would do. Appliqués are good for home decorations as a complement to other home furniture. The drummer presented in appliqué is made up of *adire* fabric, yellow on dark background, and consisting of radiating shapes that accentuate the rhythm of drum beat and attached to the background with the skillful use of hand stitches.

Summary and Conclusion

Having drawn existing example from interior decoration created with foreign textile materials from this trend to re-create all items experimented with indigenous textile materials. Existing related literature were also cited serving as theoretical and conceptual framework, and a prelude to the study.

All items of interior decoration experimented on this study are achieved through the use of sewing, baking, dyeing, appliqué, patchwork carpentry and joinery and they are successful. The findings that

indigenous Yoruba textiles can be used for varieties of home made utilitarian materials and objects for interior decorations have been shown in photos and illustrations.

The fact that Yoruba traditions textiles have been cast aside in the area of home furnishing provides major objectives and reasons to drive on this research efforts. Asooke woven fabric, specially structured and customized in the colours of Delta State University and other aspects of indigenous technology are applied in a manner to suit the purpose of providing a practice-led experiment conducted by the student artist in variety of forms. It is shown in the study that colours, materials and technical skills can be combined to create costume-made interior decorated materials.

Contribution to Knowledge

The small scale enterprises [(SMEs) and the cottage industries are expected to use the resourcefulness in the research to re-create job opportunities for the teeming jobless Nigerians. As a poverty reduction strategy, the macro-economic framework for financing the (SMEs) should include proposals for wealth creation, employment generation and value orientation. Aside from empowering craftsmen, the approach will allow governments to sleep with two eyes closed when youth restiveness is removed from the mirage of problems confronting Nigeria as a nation. The seeming emergence of entrepreneurial activities in the curriculum of Nigerian tertiary education in recent times provides succor for the seeming Nigerian youths who can now graduate and be assisted by the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). It is expected that the directorate will help promote and finance proposals brought forward by candidates who need funding for specific study's that can support job engagements. Artists and designers who possess the skills and flats for interior decoration business can benefit from the N.D.E funding and other empowerment programmes. Planning for economics growth and prosperity can be triggered off by creative skills and dedication by Nigerian youths.

It is expected that the activities in this study will assist to stem the tide of unemployment in Nigeria. It has been observed that small business such a interior decoration and crafts technology require little power supply to propel their activities. That explains why sizable loans and credit facilities are needed put interior decoration business into proper shape. Technological know how and skill acquisition knowledge of Nigerians cannot be underestimated even when technology is borrowed. Stolen or manipulated to suit indigenous purposes. As a beginning of the validation test on the study, it is intended as a model for creating interior decoration which can be used in the University Guest Houses, Offices and Staff homes.

The culture of over reliance of white collar jobs by graduates was promoted because there was no strong incentive and encouragement for the enlightened youths to pursue entrepreneurial activities. The important of foreign fabrics and other decorative items to the country legitimately or illegitimately frustrated the efforts of few Nigerians who wanted to engage themselves with skills they acquired in technical colleges and Universities such as in the business of interior decoration.

Recommendations

Observations and results of findings from this study have informed the following recommendations:

- Genuine grassroots empowerment and the participation of non-governmental agencies in skill acquisition sponsorship of youths for self reliance studies are needed.
- Campaign and awareness of the need to patronize homemade textile products especially for interior decoration is necessary in this regard.
- Investment of groups, governments, individuals in skill acquisition centers for the training of the youths become exigent.
- Indigenous policy and other key programmes of NEPAD and NEEDS should adopt local content formula to the fullest.
- Legitimations for the establishment of local craft centres in all the states of the federation should be passed and implemented as done in China and Japan.
- NEOAD and NEEDS proposals designed for the country are not fully implemented. This is because implementation machineries are not put in motion due to policy and change of government with different party policy direction
- The six geopolitical zones of the country should be made to implement NEPAD and NNEDS policies for the benefit of the youth and the nation
- The seeming absence and lack of involvement of educational institution in NEPAD and NEEDS programme of development do not hasten the actualization of many policies that could have benefited the large majority of youth who are institution the anomaly is expected to be corrected

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