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CREATIVE USE AND ACCEPTABILITY OF YORUBA HAND-WOVEN CLOTH (*ASO-OKE*) FOR FASHION AC- CESSORIES AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The traditional hand-woven cloth of the Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria, *Aso-Oke*, is predominantly used for cultural ceremonies, which has limited its everyday relevance and contributed to declining patronage. This study examined the creative use and acceptability of *Aso-Oke* for fashion accessories among female students of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. A total of 279 respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Although more than half (59.9%) of the respondents were aware of *Aso-Oke* accessories, majority (69.5%) did not own any. However, a high proportion expressed willingness to use (66.3%) and purchase (68.5%) such products. The overall acceptability mean score of 4.03, which is above the benchmark, indicates a positive perception of *Aso-Oke* accessories in terms of aesthetics, durability, and cultural value. The study further showed that products such as footwear, handbags, jewelry packs, and wristbands significantly influenced acceptability. The study concluded that creative transformation of *Aso-Oke* into fashion accessories enhances its relevance among young consumers and has strong potential for cultural preservation and economic development. It is therefore recommended that production and marketing of *Aso-Oke*-based accessories be encouraged at both local and international levels to improve income generation and sustain indigenous textile heritage.

Keywords: Fashion Accessories; Cultural Ceremonies; *Aso-Oke*; Innovative Use

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INTRODUCTION

Aso-Oke is a traditional hand-woven cloth of the Yoruba people of south-western states of Nigeria, which include: Oyo,

Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti and Lagos States. Few of them are found in parts of Kwara and Kogi States. Olutayo, *et al.* (2011) stated that *Aso-Oke* means *Aso-Ilu Oke*, meaning

cloth from the up-country or hinter land. *Aso-Oke*, being a rare name to the youths, means clothes from the loom. It is a fabric woven from traditional materials in Yoruba land. The weaving of *Aso-Oke* started centuries ago amongst the Yoruba's, but predominantly amongst the people of Iseyin in Oyo State. The cloth is made of pure cotton yarn, with additional threads of heavy texture with contrasting colours to achieve decorative effects (Ojo, 2007). Makinde, *et al* (2009) defined "*Aso-Oke* as the Yoruba traditional hand woven fabric, which is a strip of cloth. Yoruba women use *Aso-Oke* as girdle (*Oja*) to strap babies, wrapper (*Iro*), head-tie (*Gele*), blouse (*Buba*) and shawl (*Ipele* or *Iborun*), while the men use it for Jumper (*Dansiki*) and Big Gown (*Gbariye*).

Creativity is a phenomenon whereby something new and somehow new and somehow valuable is formed. The created item may be intangible (such as an idea, a scientific theory, a musical composition, or a joke) or a physical object (such as an invention, a printed literary work, or a painting). Creativity is the ability to transcend traditional ways of thinking or acting, and to develop new and original ideas.

An accessory can be defined as any item worn or carried in addition to clothing, which enhances the overall appearance and completeness of an outfit. Accessories are essential components of dress that contribute to the aesthetic appeal of garments by adding detail, identity, and stylistic expression (Huseynova, 2024). They include items such as handbags, shoes, belts, necklaces, bracelets, scarves, rings, eyeglasses, wristwatches, and earrings. Beyond their functional role, accessories significantly influence personal presentation and first impressions by contributing to a polished, confi-

dent, and distinctive appearance. As noted by Craik (2021) and Kawamura (2020), accessories function as important elements of fashion expression that communicate identity and social meaning.

The significance of this research rests on the current fact that *Aso-Oke* is not in the limelight of everyday use. The research promotes the idea of using *Aso-Oke* for other purposes besides the usual *Iro*, *Buba*, *Gele*, *Agbada* and *fila*. Makinde (2009) opined that to sustain *Aso-Oke* production and use among the Yoruba people of South Western Nigeria today requires a total change of attitude from its uses as occasional dress for traditional ceremonies and local festivals to, creating windows of opportunity for indigenous technological growth, entrepreneurial development and cultural creativity, through the creative use of *Aso-Oke*. This statement was buttressed by Market Reports World (2026) that predicts significant growth in women's accessories such as handbags, jewelry, sunglasses.

In the olden days, the weaving profession was hereditary in Yoruba land; it was a closed-door profession whereby children learn from their parents. Weaving is the technique of producing fabric through the use of a loom in which two sets of threads known as warp and weft, respectively are interlaced at right angle to each other. No one can specifically say when and where traditional woven textile was introduced to Yoruba land in particular. The literal meaning of Market Reports World (2026) is "Top Cloth". *Aso-Oke* is an important item of clothing worn by the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria. Indigenous *Aso-Oke* textile is one of the most vibrant and successful textiles on the African continent (Ogunnaike & Akinwale, 2022).

By the end of the 20th century, *Aso-Oke* was worn by the Yoruba only at major life-circle events such as birth of a new baby, weddings, festivals, burial ceremonies and such events. At present, the fabric is more popular among the Yoruba than other ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria, especially in major towns such as Qyo, Iseyin, Saki, Okeho, Ibadan, Lagos, Oshogbo, Ijebu Ode, Abeokuta, Owo and Ado Ekiti are known for their *Aso-Oke* weaving.

Production of *Aso-Oke* textiles is from natural fibres, such as cotton, silk, bark of wood made into threads for weaving. These fibres were locally sourced until they started importing them from Tunisia, Italy, France and Japan. *Aso-Oke* stripes are usually 14-15 mm wide and they are joined together to form one piece of desired clothes. Most often the weavers use two types of loom for *Aso-Oke* creation, the single heddle loom, which is always upright and the broad loom mainly used by women while men use the horizontal double heddle loom. There are three major types of *Aso-Oke* namely *Etu*, *Alaari* and *Sanyan*.

Etu with blue and white stripes in the warp direction with a light blue checkerboard having pattern weave structure, the strips were woven using local wild silk fiber, and thus, *Etu* is dyed repeatedly in traditional indigo blue dye, which is brought out at intervals for drying and stretching. In the ancient time, *Etu* was used as important social dress by chiefs and elders among the Yorubas. Okpu and Abimbola (2020) buttressed the above statement that *Aso-Oke* was worn by the Yorubas only at the major life cycle events such as birth of a new baby, weddings, festivals, burial ceremonies, to men-

tion a few.

Second, is *Alaari* which is red-crimson in colour, it is traditionally woven with locally spurned silk yarns dyed in red cam wood solution severally to achieve permanence. *Sanyan* is regarded as *Oba Aso* and it is the most expensive then in the market place, it is always in grey or carton brown colour with white stripes. The design in *Aso-Oke*, has reached the peak of the fashion when it has been woven in different colours with designs and variety of modern blended yarns, also combined with silver or golden metallic threads usually called (shine shine) to create designs. *Aso-Oke* has met a fusion with modern materials as designers now combine it with contemporary textile to create versatile fusion pieces that are appealing to wider and younger audience (Victoria, 2025). She further opined that traditional garment designers are now incorporating *Aso-Oke* into other modern styles and even accessories, making it an everyday fashion.

Statement of the Problem

Traditional woven fabric *Aso-Oke* is mainly used as occasional dress for ceremonies and local festivals, so this has made it experience a decline within the Yoruba community for everyday use. In order to sustain and arouse people's interest in patronizing *Aso-Oke*, its uses need to be enhanced. To achieve this, there is need to develop creativity in its use to make it more convenient for everyday use. Thereby upgrading it from the normal *Iro*, *Gele*, *Buba*, *Aghada* and *Fila* and bringing in the fact that textile production is not mainly for garment but has a lot to do in other aspect like interior decoration, fashion creativity and lots more.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to de-

termine the acceptability on creative use of *Aso-Oke* as fashion accessories among female students of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB).

Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the socio-demographic characteristic of FUNAAB female student
2. Produce some fashion accessories from *Aso-Oke*
3. Determine the users view about the creative use of *Aso-Oke* for fashion accessories
4. Appraise the cost effectiveness of the items produced in relation to current price of similar products in the market
5. Determine the acceptability of FUNAAB female students on the item produced.

Scope of Study

The study was limited to the production and acceptability of creative use of *Aso-Oke* as fashion accessories among female students of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research was an action/survey research of which products were developed, and acceptability determined. Research and development were considered appropriate for the study because of the practical aspect involved, introduction and improvement of products was also involved. A survey research design was used to determine the acceptability of respondent on creative use of *Aso-Oke*, examining their awareness, and determines the market price competitiveness of the product produced.

Study Area

The study was carried out at the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. There are ten Colleges in FUNAAB, including College of Food Science and Human Ecology (COLFHEC).

There are four Departments in the College:

Department of Food Science and Technology, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Department of Home Science and Management, and Department of Hospitality and Tourism.

The population for the study was drawn from all female students in the four Departments in the College, totaling 928 female students. Due to the difficulty of reaching all COLFHEC female students in the study area, a simple random sampling technique was used and Yamane formula for calculating sample size was used to calculate the sample size. The total sample size worked with in this study was 279 ($n = 279$).

Method of Data Collection \ Analysis

A well-structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The different accessories made from *Aso-Oke* were exhibited for respondents to aid them in completing the questionnaire.

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, percentage, mean and standard deviation were employed to analyze the data collected.

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=279)

All the respondents were females. Majority of the respondents (87.8%) were 20-29 years of age; 91.8% were single, 87.8% were Yorubas and 70.3% Christians. Also, about a quarter (25.4%) of the respondents were in 200 level (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=279)

Items	(%)	Remark
Gender		All respondents were Females
Female	100.0	
Age		The majority respondents observed in the age group of 20-29
Below 20	12.2	
20-29	87.8	
Marital status		The maximum participants were single
Single	91.8	
Married	8.2	
Ethnicity		The maximum participants were Yoruba
Yoruba	87.8	
Igbo	8.2	
Hausa	3.9	
Religion		Majority of the respondents were Christians.
Christianity	70.3	
Islam	29.7	
Education (Level)		Study had most of its respondents in 2001
100 Level	18.6	
200 Level	25.4	
300 Level	22.4	
400 Level	18.3	
500 Level	15.4	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Creative Use of Aso-Oke as Fashion Accessories (n = 279)

Majority of the respondents (59.9%) were aware of using *Aso-Oke* as accessories and 52.7% have seen accessories made with *Aso-Oke* before. However, with their awareness, majority of the respondents (69.5%) did not have accessories made with *Aso-Oke* (Table 2).

66.3% of the respondents can make use of accessories made with *Aso-Oke* while 68.5%

can buy accessories made with *Aso-Oke*. Majority (69.2%) can use a set of *Aso-Oke* jewelry and 74.6% can use footwear and bag made with *Aso-Oke*

Above average of the respondents (58.8%) agreed that the products can compete favourably with the ones in the market; 60.6% guaranteed the durability of accessories made with *Aso-Oke* and 53.8% agreed that the accessories made with *Aso-Oke* is in vogue (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents View on Creative Use of *Aso-Oke* as Fashion Accessories (n = 279)

Items	YES (%)	NO (%)
Are you aware of using Aso-Oke as fashion accessories?	59.9	4.1
Have you seen accessories made with Aso-Oke?	52.7	47.3
Do you have any accessories made with aso-oke?	30.5	69.5
Can you use accessories made with Aso-Oke?	66.3	33.7
Can you buy accessories made with Aso-Oke?	68.5	31.5
Can you use a set of Aso-Oke jewelry?	69.2	30.8
Can you use the combination of Footwear and Bag made with Aso-Oke?	74.6	25.4
Does the product compete favourably with the one in the market?	58.8	41.2
Can you guarantee the durability of accessories made with Aso-Oke?	60.6	39.4
Does the accessories make with Aso-Oke in vogue?	53.8	46.2

Source: Field Survey 2021

Cost Effectiveness of the Footwear, Handbag, Jewelry Pack and Wristwatch Strap Produced

Over half of the respondents (64.5%) were willing to pay a sum of ₦2,500 for shoe (Table 3). Less than quarter of the respondents (7.5%) were willing to pay ₦3,500 for the footwear; (12.2%) were willing to pay a sum of ₦5000 for the Shoe produced. It can be concluded that the shoe will best be sold at ₦2,500 since it ranked first (Table 3).

21.9% of the respondents were willing to pay ₦3,500 for the handbag; 28.7% were willing to pay ₦2, 500 and 27.2% were willing to pay ₦5000 for the handbag. The general acceptable price for the handbag was ₦2,500.

15.8% of the respondents were willing to pay ₦3,500 for the jewelry pack; 30.5%

were willing to pay ₦4,500 and 29.4% were willing to pay ₦6,000 for the handbag produced. The preferred buying price was ₦4,500 only.

15.8% were willing to pay ₦1,000 for the wristwatch strap; 29.4% were willing to pay ₦1,500 and 32.3% were willing to pay ₦2,000 (Table 3). About 22.6% of the respondents were willing to pay other sum different from the ones listed above. The best asking price was ₦2000 (Table 3).

A list of 13 items had mean value of 3 and above which was the bench mark intended to judge the respondents as accepted while 2 of the items had a mean value of less than 3 and as such it was considered rejected. However, total items mean was 4.03 which was higher than the bench mark mean. This suggested that the respondents accepted the use of *Aso-Oke* as fashion accessories.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents' View on Cost Effectiveness of the Footwear, Handbag, Jewelry Pack and Wristwatch Strap Produced (n = 279)

ITEMS	PRICE (₦)	FREQUENCY (%)	RANK
Footwear	2500	180 (64.5%)	1 ST
	3500	21 (7.5%)	4 TH
	5000	34 (12.2%)	3 RD
	Others	44 (15.8%)	2 ND
Handbag	2500	80 (28.7%)	1 ST
	3500	61 (21.9%)	3 RD
	5000	76 (27.2%)	2 ND
	Others	62 (21.2%)	4 TH
Jewelry pack	3500	44 (15.8%)	4 TH
	4500	85 (30.5%)	1 ST
	6000	82 (29.4%)	2 ND
	Others	68(24.4%)	3 RD
Wristwatch strap	1000	44 (15.8%)	4 TH
	1500	82 (29.4%)	2 ND
	2000	90 (32.3%)	1 ST
	Others	63 (22.6%)	3 RD

Source: Field Survey 2021

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide strong evidence for the need to reposition *Aso-Oke* from its traditional ceremonial use to more contemporary and functional applications. The study revealed that although a moderate proportion of respondents were aware of the use of *Aso-Oke* for fashion accessories, a larger proportion did not own such products, indicating a gap between awareness and actual utilization. This finding reflects the broader challenge identified in recent literature that traditional textile industries in Nigeria are experiencing declining everyday usage due to modernization and changing consumer preferences (Abdulmalik & Daraojimba, 2024).

The persistence of *Aso-Oke* as a ceremonial fabric rather than a daily-use material reinforces the argument that, without innova-

tion, indigenous textiles risk reduced relevance in contemporary society. However, the high willingness of respondents to use and purchase *Aso-Oke* accessories suggests that the challenge is not outright rejection but rather the limited transformation of the fabric into modern, user-friendly forms. This aligns with recent studies indicating that *Aso-Oke* is increasingly being reimaged into everyday fashion items such as bags, footwear, and casual wear, thereby enhancing its appeal among younger consumers (Afolabi, 2021).

The findings revealed a high level of acceptability of the developed accessories, with an overall mean score of 4.03, indicating that respondents positively perceived the products in terms of aesthetics, durability, and cultural value. This supports the position that indigenous textiles possess inherent

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents View on Acceptability of Footwear, Handbag, Jewelry Pack and Wrist Band Produced in the Study

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
I prefer accessories made with Aso-Oke to the imported one	279	3.3513	1.2857	Accepted
Accessories made with Aso-Oke is the best for occasion	279	4.0143	1.0248	Accepted
The accessories produced is well design and would be appreciated in an event	279	4.2760	0.7241	Accepted
The accessories made with Aso-Oke are of unique quality	279	4.4014	0.6205	Accepted
Aesthetically accessories made with Aso-Oke are beautiful than other accessories	279	4.3548	0.7194	Accepted
Accessories made with Aso-Oke improve our cultural heritage	279	4.3441	0.7888	Accepted
Accessories made with Aso-Oke can last for a very long time	279	4.5484	0.6654	Accepted
I will gladly buy the accessories made from Aso-Oke at the usual price of the accessories	279	4.4910	0.6167	Accepted
I cannot be ashamed of using the accessories made with Aso-Oke in the midst of people	279	4.3871	0.6791	Accepted
The accessories produced made me to love the traditional woven fabric more	279	4.4839	0.7239	Accepted
The accessories produced is a source of innovation for unemployment youth	279	4.5305	0.7333	Accepted
The accessories produced are not attractive	277	3.8087	1.2696	Accepted
The accessories produced is not neatly made	277	2.8592	1.3693	Rejected
The management of Aso-Oke accessories is difficult but I will still go for it	278	2.8741	1.3227	Rejected
The accessories produced will be lovely on me	279	3.7993	1.2390	Accepted
Valid N (listwise)	274	4.03		

Source: Field Survey 2021

qualities that can compete favourably with modern alternatives when appropriately re-designed and adapted to contemporary fashion demands.

Contemporary studies have also emphasized that *Aso-Oke* remains a strong cultural symbol and identity marker, with the potential to drive both cultural preservation and economic development if integrated into mod-

ern fashion systems (Diyaolu & Omotosho, 2020). The cost-effectiveness analysis also revealed that respondents were willing to pay reasonable and competitive prices for the accessories, suggesting strong market viability. This is consistent with recent reports highlighting the growing global demand for *Aso-Oke* as a luxury and exportable textile, contributing significantly to employment and income generation within Nigeria's creative economy (Onyekwelu, 2024).

The study also revealed that respondents perceived *Aso-Oke* accessories as capable of promoting cultural heritage while serving as a viable source of employment for youths, thereby highlighting its socio-economic relevance. This finding is consistent with emerging trends in the Nigerian fashion industry, where designers are increasingly transforming indigenous textiles into globally competitive products, creating employment opportunities and sustaining indigenous knowledge systems (Adeola & Adebayo, 2020).

Overall, the findings of this study directly address the problem of low patronage and limited everyday use of *Aso-Oke* by demonstrating that innovation in design and application significantly enhances its acceptability and economic potential. The study therefore establishes that creative diversification of *Aso-Oke* into fashion accessories represents a viable strategy for bridging the gap between tradition and modernity, ensuring the sustainability of the textile, and contributing to both cultural preservation and economic development in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study has demonstrated that although

Aso-Oke is traditionally confined to ceremonial use, its creative transformation into fashion accessories significantly enhances its acceptability among young consumers. Despite the gap between awareness and actual ownership, the high willingness to use and purchase *Aso-Oke* accessories, alongside a strong overall acceptability rating (mean = 4.03), confirms that the fabric possesses strong potential for contemporary adaptation. The findings therefore establish that innovative application of *Aso-Oke* can bridge the gap between traditional relevance and modern fashion demands, while also contributing to cultural preservation and economic development.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. Greater awareness should be created on the versatility of *Aso-Oke* beyond ceremonial use, particularly among youths, through media campaigns, exhibitions, and fashion shows.
2. Designers and researchers should focus on continuous innovation by developing modern, functional, and aesthetically appealing accessories that align with current fashion trends.
3. There is a need for stronger collaboration among research institutions, technical colleges, and private organizations to enhance skill development and facilitate the adoption of improved technologies for large-scale production.
4. Government and relevant stakeholders should provide support in the form of funding, training, and enabling policies to strengthen local textile enterprises.
5. Consumers should be encouraged to patronize locally made *Aso-Oke* products, as this will not only boost demand but also promote cultural heritage and economic sustainability.

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