

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**INDIGENOUS EWE KETE DESIGNS IN CONTEMPORARY GHANAIAN  
FASHION**

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**8161750009**

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst design with a blue and white pattern. The text "UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA" is written around the perimeter of the circle.

**A dissertation project in the Department of Music  
Education, School of Creative Arts, submitted to  
the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment**

**of the Requirements for the Award of a Degree of  
Master of Philosophy (Arts and Culture)  
In the University of Education, Winneba**

**JULY, 2019**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I, Ernest Ametefe Doh, hereby, declare that this submission is my own work towards the Master of Philosophy Degree in Arts and Culture and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person or material which has been accepted for any other degree in this University or elsewhere, except where due acknowledgement has dully been made in the text.

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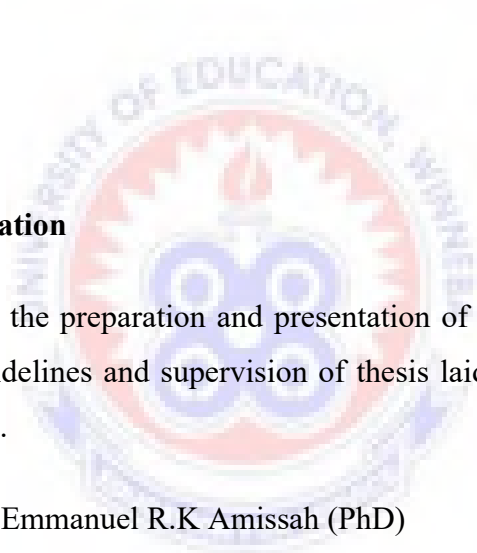
### Supervisors Declaration

I hereby certify that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with guidelines and supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Emmanuel R.K Amissah (PhD)

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....



## DEDICATION

I sincerely dedicate this project to Almighty God for making this dream a reality. I further dedicate this project to my late Father; Fredson Kofi Doh and Dr. E.R.K Amissah. Their attention, support and encouragement have brought me this far. I am highly indebted to them.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor Dr. E.R.K Amissah his patience and thoughtful support and to Dr. Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel, for their guidance and unflinching assistance throughout the research period. I further extend my appreciation to my mother, and siblings, the Doh family, I say a very big thank you for your unwavering support throughout my life. To you my wife, your encouragement and support have brought me this far. Thank you, Dzifa.

JULY, 2019

E.A.D



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## ABSTRACT

Indigenous weavers have long existed in the Ewe-land of Ghana and noted for creating cultural and aesthetically functional fabrics. Unlike Asante Kente cloth designs, there is little documentation on the Ewe Kete cloth designs particularly that of the Klikor people. However, this study investigates and documents indigenous Kete cloth designs of the Ewe land and its spot in contemporary Ghanaian fashion. The study is a Qualitative research which used ethnographic case study design to obtain data through observations and interviews from a purposeful sample of sixteen (16) respondents (weavers, elders, dressmakers) from the Klikor-Agbozume community. With a thematic analysis, findings reached that the indigenous Klikor Kete cloths possess some adorable characteristics which can easily be blended into contemporary cloth designs to meet the demands and taste of modern fashion lovers. A detailed documentation such as this study will educate the current and future generation of weavers, fashion designers and dressmakers to appreciate indigenous Klikor Kete designs thereby adopting it for contemporary fashion culture. I recommended to Ghanaian fashion experts to put on top priority, documenting frequently Klikor Kete to promote its symbolic and figurative designs to help promote the Ewe couture and fashion as well as improve tourism in the Klikor-Agbozume community.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The life of a group of people becomes relevant if their culture is well defined and very clear as to what they do. Textiles play a very quintessential role in the life of man. Its vibrant aspect, clothing, makes life bearable and without it life would be very uncomfortable (Breward, 2000). More importantly, the textile of a particular ethnic society aids in their identification and distinction from other ethnic societies. Thus, the culture of a people is partially portrayed through the clothing they put on and or the textiles they produce for sale (Adikorley, 2013). Aside textiles giving identity to an ethnic society or nation, it helps in understanding the beliefs, ideologies and accepted norms governing the lives of a group of people (Edensor et al, 2002). Ghanaian hand-woven cloth popularly known as Kente by the Asante people and Kete by the Ewe people is a very important cloth which has promoted the culture of the people of Ghana in various ways.

The cloth has thus received recognition both locally and abroad (Ross, 1998). Both the Asante and the Ewe people have claimed ownership of this ingenious craftsmanship, stating where, when and how weaving started in these areas. The original Ewe name for Kente is “Agbamevo”, derived from two words: „Agba“ (loom) and „Avo“ (cloth) was therefore replaced with “kee” (open) and “tee” (close) which were put together as “keetee” and perhaps corrupted as kente (Kraamer, 2006).

In spite of the bone of contention regarding the authenticity of the true origin and rightful owners of this artistry, both ethnic groups have demonstrated a high level of unique skill and creativity in woven cloth designs (Temesgen, 2018). The triumphant

tales of the Asante Kente as against the Kete cloth of the Ewe people evoke questions such as; what factors inhibited popularity and commercialization of the Kete cloth? Through what means can the Klikor Kete cloth designs be projected to meet the functional and aesthetic taste of contemporary fashion? These questions call for investigation thereby forming the framework for the study. Practical answers to these questions will go a long way to exhort the indigenous Kete cloth of the Klikor people, thereby finding its commercial and functional space in contemporary fashion. This is because it has been established in earlier studies that indigenous Ghanaian textiles and fashion occupies significant positions in the lives of the people by way of giving unique ethnic identification and depiction of political status (Essel, 2019).

The study therefore examined selected indigenous Kete cloth designs of local weavers at the Klikor-Agbozume community – their characteristics, symbolism and functions situating it in the essence of contemporary Ghanaian dressmaking and fashion.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It is perceived that tradition is shifting and continuously defining new concepts based on what is inherited (Galbin, 2014). This ideation has led to documentations of indigenous culture and artistry of many ethnic societies around the world. In Ghana, art historians including indigenous dress aesthetics and fashion scholars have documented the forms, functions and symbolisms of indigenous and contemporary Ghanaian fashion and the essential roles they play among various ethnic societies of the people of Ghana (Essel, 2019; Acquaaah et al, 2017). Another study by Essel (2019) recounts that there are various challenges hampering the growth of dress and fashion design in Ghana.

The existing literature on indigenous Ghanaian dress and fashion therein establishes sound arguments on the socio-cultural, political and aesthetic significance of indigenous fashion and as well reveals the craftsmanship of some ethnic groups in Ghana such as the Asante and the Northern communities. Granted, like other ethnic groups, the Ewe people are lovers of beautiful fabrics, which they use in various aspects of their lives such as festivals, naming ceremonies and funeral rites (wikipedia contributors, 2020). However, there is little documentation on the Ewe Kete cloth designs particularly that of the Klikor people. Even as research shows that some communities among the Ewe ethnic group in Ghana are skilled at weaving unique intricate designs functional to the local people (Timothy, 2019) there is literature deficit on the „Nameology“ of the Klikor Kete cloth designs and why it is not glorified to a higher peak of commercial popularity both in Ghana and abroad as in the case of the Asante Kente cloth designs. The narratives about Klikor have since been tagged with “spirituality” due to their “Trokosi and Trokovi” practices and most dreadful famous “Nogokpo Shrine” (Pattisson, 2006). Again, there exists an unscientific assertion that the Klikor Kete cloth designs are surrounded by some sacred mystery which makes its patronage unpopular among other ethnic cultures in Ghana.

The study therefore, aimed at investigating the factors contributing to the unpopular demands of the Klikor Kete cloth in Ghanaian fashion industry. It also examined characteristics and names of the indigenous Klikor Kete cloth designs and its essence in contemporary dressmaking and fashion in Ghana. It as well investigates the stigmatized assertions associated with the production process of Kete cloth at the Klikor area to establish an empirical basis of its authenticity or otherwise.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives for the study are to:

1. Investigate the beliefs and practices surrounding the making of Klikor Kete weaves
2. Examine and document the symbolisms and philosophies of selected Klikor Kete designs
3. To find out strategies to commercialise and promote Klikor Kete weaves

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions guide the study:

1. What processes are involved in making the Klikor Kete weaves?
2. How unique are the features of Klikor Kete design weaves?
3. What strategies are there to commercialise and promote Klikor Kete weaves in modern fashion?

### **1.5 Purpose of the Study**

The cardinal purpose of the study is to project indigenous Klikor Kete weaves, highlighting its functionality and cultural aesthetic qualities for patronage in both contemporary Ghanaian fashion industry and abroad.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The research adds to knowledge of existing literature as it documents the nameology of Klikor Kete cloth designs and provides detailed socio-cultural meanings of the design patterns and its functionality. To the fashion industry, this study serves as a springboard to educate the masses especially people with diverging ethnicity and not from the Ewe-land to appreciate the rich, aesthetically pleasing Klikor Kete cloth designs and its contemporary functionality for commercial patronage and use. Increase in patronage of the Kete cloth will help save the jobs of

the weavers, dressmakers and as well boost the other local businesses in the fashion industry and tourism value chain. Again, the study provides rich information which serves as reference material for other researchers, cultural and art historians who seek to embark on similar scholastic study relating indigenous textiles and fashion.

### **1.7 Delimitation**

The scope of this research concentrates on indigenous Ewe Kete weaves from the Klikor community in the Ketu Municipality of Ghana. Klikor locality is one of the Ewe communities with an old history of weaving hence the respondents were selected from there in order to obtain rich data for fair conclusions.

### **1.8 Definition of Terms**

The following terms used have been explained to enhance the understanding of the thesis.

Indigenous: Originating in and naturally living, growing, or occurring in a region or country reserved or perceived to have emanated from or is native to the land.

Kente: Ashante, woven cloth using the traditional loom. Two sets of yarn mainly warp and wefts are interlaced to produce the fabric. Usually, cotton yarns are used.

Kete: Is a traditionally woven fabric by the Ewe people of Ghana which is woven on a traditional loom. Two sets of yarn mainly warp and wefts are interlaced to produce the fabric. Usually, cotton yarns are used.

Avɔ: Ewe name for cloth.

Contemporary: Existing or occurring at or dating from the same period of time.

Aesthetics: Deals with questions pertaining to perception and understanding of works of art. It is an attempt to explain explicitly the human behaviour and reactions towards what is perceived in kente pieces or works of art.



### **1.10 Arrangement of the Rest of the Text**

Chapter two, deals with the review of related literature. The third chapter covers the methodology employed by the researcher to accomplish the study. Chapter Four presents and discusses the results of the study. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes and concludes the study, and makes recommendations based on the findings.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

The chapter supports the validity and essence of the research conducted. It does that by outlining the findings and views of other authors and specialists on the field of study. The review is therefore worked into the following sub-headings which are:

- Concept of Culture
- Indigenous /Traditional textiles
- Ethnographic Accounts of Ewes of Ghana
- History and forms of Kete Designs
- Kete weaving
- The design elements of weaves
- Symbolism
- Colour Symbolism
- Generation of ideas in Design Concept
- Fashion

#### 2.1 Concept of Culture

Culture has been described by many anthropologists as the characteristics such as language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts of a particular group of people. For example, Eicher (2000) defined culture as “the way human beings are taught to behave from the time they are born”. His view therefore implies that the way of life of a particular group immersed with them right from birth. However, other schools of thought have described culture as a dynamic elusive and complex concept that shapes people’s personalities, thoughts, and behaviour (Damhorst, 2005, p.3).

Many ethnic cultures turn to evolve in their ways of life from time to time with their guided cannons or societal norms. One keen aspect of culture is its unique identity which makes different ethnicities distinct from each other. Commenting on cultural identity, Breward (1995) purported that there exist a strong connection between clothing and culture. This is because dressing or clothing is tied to cultural identity and the wearer of a cloth can be easily associated with a particular ethnicity.

To expand it further, culture can be expressed as the sum total of the beliefs, rules, techniques, institutions, and artifacts that characterize human populations or the collective programming of the mind (Krokosz-Krynke, 1998). This assertion makes culture a collective phenomenon. Highlighting on the essence of Ghanaian culture, the Cultural Policy of Ghana (2004, p.3, 4) document explained Ghanaian culture as the totality of the way of life evolved by our people through experience and reflection in our attempts to fashion a harmonious co-existence with our environment. Culture is dynamic and gives order and meaning to the social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious practices of our people. Our culture also gives us our distinct identity as a people. The second aspect stated that our culture manifests in our ideals and ideas, beliefs and values; folklore, environment, science and technology, and in the forms of our political, social, legal and economic institutions. It also manifests in the aesthetic quality and humanistic dimension of our literature, music, drama, architecture, carvings, paintings and other artistic forms.

In agreement with the cultural policy, Ghana's culture is purely born out of the diverse ethnic backgrounds people find themselves in, and all these translate into the society, academia, working community, social life and a lot more spheres of life.

Culture, in this current dispensation can be related to a concept known as “sankofa” linking the positive aspect of the past with the present as well as focusing into the brighter future (Appiah-Adjei, 2016). This therefore does not rule out the possibility or realities of modern fashion’s impact on the indigenous clothing. However, there is the need to consciously link only the positive aspects of Western dress styles into all cultural values including the Ewe cultural values, ethics and dress styles, so that we will not be fully swallowed by westernization (Gocking et al 2002). That will be tantamount to throwing our moral values and aesthetics of concepts of clothing out of the window in the name of modernity in fashion, in spite of the fact that hybrids of cultures are unavoidable aspects of the modern system of life (Salm et al 2002). Then the concept of distinct identity will then have been erased from our mind as a nation. There is therefore the need to have a collective approach towards solving the problem of only wearing Western clothes which denounce the identity as a group of people that is by way of saying everything should not be allowed to engulf our society. A clear distinction has to be made between what to take-in or absorb as well as what to ignore in our societies. There is the need to understand the importance of our cultural ways of fashioning the body then we can look for possible ways of blending our clothing system with the modern trends but still portraying our unique identity as Ghanaians who are proud of their inheritance. Modesty and decency are terms that can be measured in-line with Ewe cultural values, which includes considering in totality what constitutes private parts of the body that need to be covered alongside with what can be exposed (Malesevic, 2006). In line with this, Sue-Jenkyn, (2005, p.56,58) sees a major relation between culture and fashion which he expresses that, for a designer to know what to design and how to present it within the time frame; he must together with other things like planning, good research,

experimentation, be able to read the cultural trends. As a fashion designer, there is the need to seriously assess the fashion in-line of the culture of the society that you design for, in order to aid in the promotion of the culture of the said community. Various writers have thus dealt with the history of dress, including fabrics and their socio-cultural importance (Clarke, 2002; Tortora & Eubank, 1994; Payne, 1965; Barton, 1969). And this makes us ascribe some sense of prominence to dress codes and fashion trends especially in our local communities.

Generally, Ghanaian culture is diversified among the various ethnic groups. These cultures are characterized by customs and norms according to the values and acceptable practices of the people. Like any other ethnic groups in Africa, the Ewe people are known for the deep respect they have for their cultural values of which dressing forms a vital integral part of their rich culture (Gocking et al, 2002). Hence, digging out the aesthetic qualities of the Klikor Kete designs will go a magnitude of projecting their culture image and intensify patronage of these intriguing master crafts.

Also, it has been said that culture lays the living foundation for its people (Johnson, 2013) who make a community. Culture gives an identity to the community and there are various elements or forms that make up culture. These include language, food, beliefs, clothing, dance, festivals and norms that identify the people and which culture they belong to. For instance, in Ghana, when “Akple” is mentioned, everyone knows it is from ethnic groups in the Volta Region, when “Adinkra” or “kente” is mentioned, the Asante people come to mind. Similarly, the mention of “Fugu” brings to mind the people of Northern regions of Ghana. But mere mention of the name “Klikor” evokes dread even among the Ewe-land since the village is noted for many

powerful shrines including the famous “Nogokpo Shrine” and other grand African traditional belief practices (Pattisson, 2006).

The Ewes used dress codes and forms of grooming to show social status religious distinction among the people (Dzramedo, 2009). Dress is therefore useful in all aspects of livelihood of the Ewe people including religious activities and perhaps justifies their adventure into cloth weaving. However, not all the people of the Ewe land have the customary history of weaving cloth. Historical records and research has however proved that a larger portion of the Ewe people are skillfully creative at weaving various artifacts including mats, baskets and hats for domestic functions (Timothy, 2019).

It is therefore empirical to delve deeper into the historical records of the Kente cloth, discussing the narratives of its origin and influences they exert on modern culture and fashion trends in Ghana. The next sub-themes present an overview of how the Kete cloth originated and with which groups of the Ewe people they are mainly associated with.

## **2.2 Indigenous /Traditional Textiles**

The word indigenous means native or belonging naturally to a place while the Encyclopedia Britannica (2008) explains the concept as relating to things having originated in and being produced, growing, living, or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment. Tradition reflects concepts or items belonging, relating or referring to a place, based on or derived from tradition, but the Encyclopedia Britannica (2008) refers to anything traditional as an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom) and or a belief or story or a body of beliefs or stories

relating to the past that are commonly accepted as historical though not verifiable. Throughout this thesis however, the two concepts were used simultaneously to infer customs, religious beliefs, as well as practices handed down from one generation to another within the selected regions, relative to the kind of textiles being done.

According to Asante (2005), “traditionally, textiles are made from yarns, which are developed by processing fibre, although many textiles can be made by the direct conversion of fibre”. In the indigenous setups however, textiles are one of the aspects of art by which people’s culture is expressed through the use of traditional fabrics. This is very paramount in the Ashanti culture of Ghana. The Ashanti king and sub-chiefs as well as some dignitaries are usually spotted in their colourful Kente cloth.

Asante (2005) further noted that spinning implements such as the whorls or weights were found on Neolithic sites, indicating that thread was being spun and therefore cloth production was carried out at an early age and that as far back as 5600BC, there were evidence of textiles after man’s settlement and subsequent development. These were seen in Neolithic and Bronze Age sites around Switzerland, Scandinavia and Egypt. Traces of scrap materials made from cotton and silk dating about 3000BC have also been found in India and many others in Peru about 2000BC.

Appiah (1993) is of the view that, in all traditional African communities, textile production or cloth decoration is an important craft since it provides clothing to the society as a whole. Similarly, Akrofi (2004) also believes that the cultural significance of clothing varies from culture to culture. It is therefore of primary importance that people in an era be identified by their costume. This he cited in the case of the ancient Egyptian civilization as portrayed in the dresses of their kings, priests, slaves and the ordinary citizen as seen on their walls and tombs. Other forms

of textiles include the traditional Japanese, the Australian aboriginals, Zulus, Masai and Ghanaian dresses stressing on cloths and their designs being peculiar to the designer's tribe and custom influence. As a result, it is notably prominent to find almost every society in Africa to be associated with a peculiar art of textiles. The Yoruba of Nigeria for instance are noted for their "Adire" and "Aso Oke", Raffia cloths of Zaire, Bogolan", Mud-dyed cloths of Mali and "Pakhamani of Zulu-South Africa whilst the Asante of Ghana are noted for their woven Kente cloth. (Clarke, 1997) In the case of industrial development of indigenous practices, Akrofi (2004) cited the spring process of ancient Stone Age which later developed from the spindle to the spindle whorls and presently to more complicated automated frames like the rotor, ring and vertex spring frames. Which can be adapted for the indigenous processes of textile production in Ghana today, thereby help in improving upon the quality of products within the industry.

### **2.3 Ethnographic Account of the Ewes of Ghana**

Different opinions come to play when it comes to the origin of the Ewes. Some trace their origin as far back as biblical times in a settlement called Adzatome (Sumeria, present day Iraq) which is a suburb founded by Ham, the son of Noah (Dotse, 2015).

According to the narratives of both Vigbedor (2011) and Dotse (2015), the Ewes were believed to have migrated to Egypt due to the confusion of the languages after the destruction of the tower of Babel. From Egypt, they moved to Sudan and then to Ethiopia, which was then called "Abyssinia". They then settled between the bend of the River Niger and the middle spreads of the River Senegal and kept on migrating till they settled where they are found presently. However, oral tradition has it that the "Eveawó" (Ewe people) or "Eveduko" (Ewe nation) migrated from Nigeria



before the mid-fifteenth century, then to Benin (Dahomey) and then from Dahomey, they settled at Notsie, present day Togo and were ruled by the tyrant King Agorkorli during the 17th century. An escape from the hands of the wicked king resulted in splitting into three groups; one group remained at Notsie, another settled at Tando, and the third group settled in Ghana (Vigbedor, 2011).

Dotse (2015) had explained that the Ewes are made up of different groups of people, during their migration they were subdivided in groups of which one group settled in the Northern parts of the present-day Ewe homeland. This group includes settlements such as Peki, Hohoe, and Alavanyo. The second group settled in the central parts of Ewe land which includes places such as Ho, Sokode, Abutia, Adaklu. The third group moved southwards and includes Anlo and present day Togo. However, the third group settled in present day Sokakofe, Keta, Denu, and all towns along the coastal belt in the Volta Region (Garry & Rubino, 2001; Dotse, 2015). The whole settlement of the Ewe people is about 190 kilometres from east to west, from Kpong in Ghana to Grand Popo in Benin and 160 kilometres from North to South (Garry & Rubino, 2001).

From Atakpame in Togo to Denu in Ghana, are found a number of ethnic sub-groups such as the Avatime, Nyagbo and Tafi groups in Ghana and the Adja and Mina groups in the republic of Togo in Benin (Ahiagble 2004). One third of the people live in Ghana whilst the rest, two third are in Togo. The people are not only rich in their culture but also produce the famous ancestral handicraft kete cloth originally called in Ewe “Agbamevor”. Kente weaving among the Ewe is some of the people's sustenance and therefore small weaving industries are found in their towns with most of the Ewe weavers can currently be found in towns such as Kpetoe and Agbozume (Clarke 2002).

### 2.3.1 Selected study areas in retrospect

Ghana is made up of 16 regions and among these regions is Volta Region which is made up of metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies. A particular reference to the town under study is Klikor. The culture of the town in relation to their weaving skills were reviewed to reflect the various designs of kete woven in the towns and establish how different or similar they may be in relation to contemporary times.

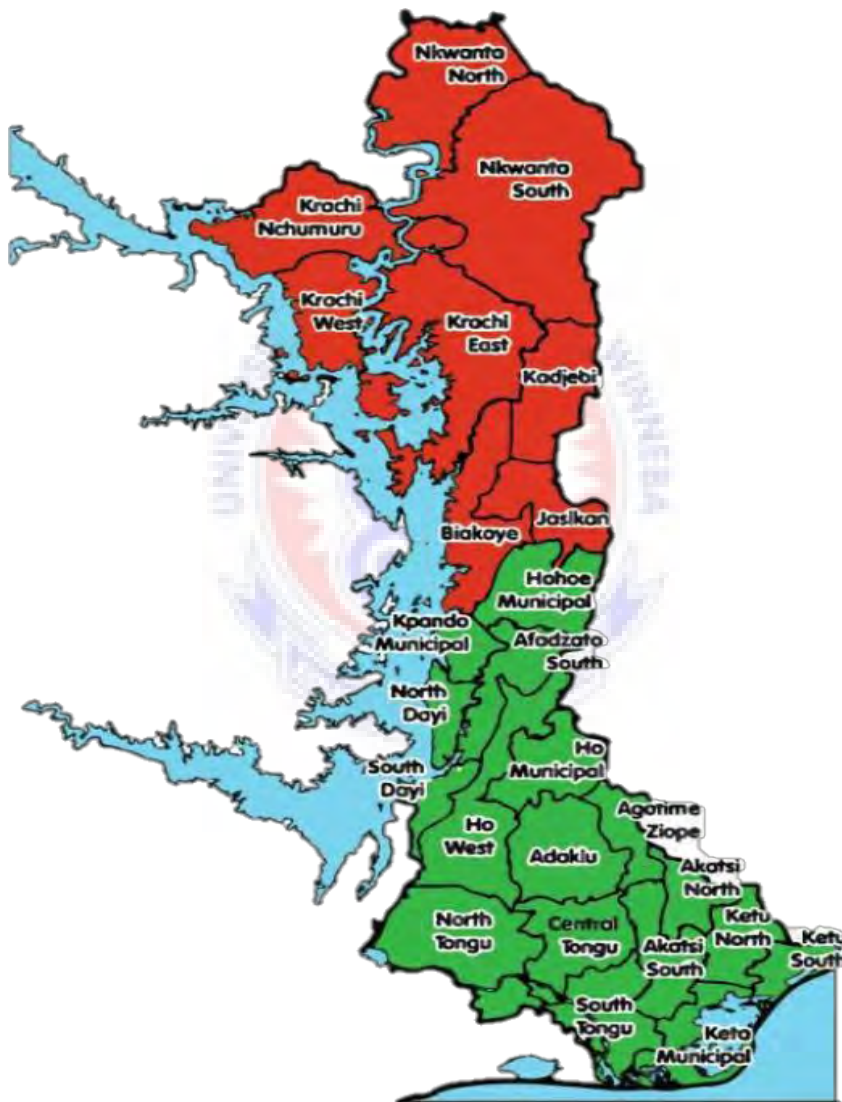


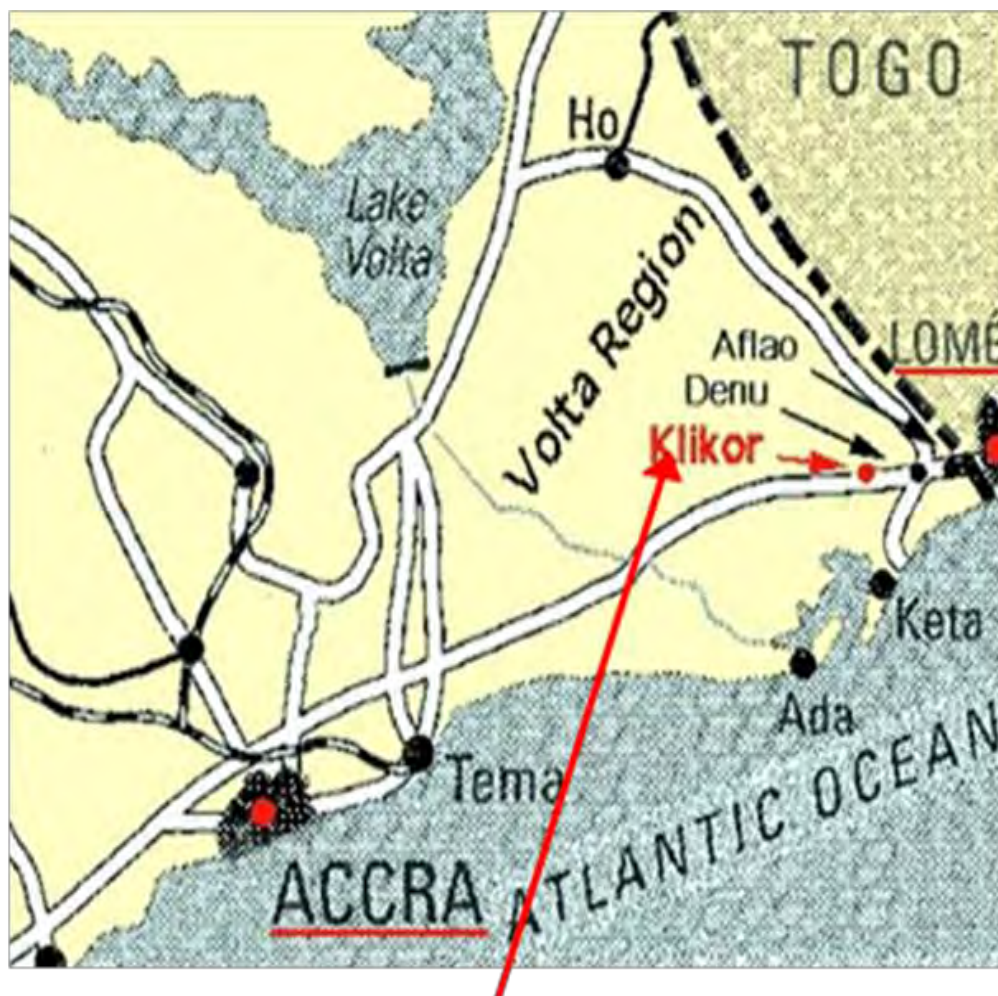
Figure 1: A part of Ghana Map indicating the Region under Study

### **2.3.2 Study Region**

Klikor-Agbozume is a settlement of some people, whose subordinate position to the Anlo was confirmed in 1912 when Francis Crowther, secretary for Native affairs in Gold Coast included Agbozume in the Anlo state under his friend Togbi Sri II (Dotse, 2015). Agbozume lies on the main road between Accra and the border with Togo. It is under the Ketu District. The village is adjacent to Klikor, which is separated by only one path. The two settlements are often referred to as klikor-Agbozume. The village has a big Market which takes place every four days. The market is popularly known for the sale of kente cloth where traders from Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin and Nigeria come to buy for export (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org>).

Interestingly, the people of Klikor are known among the Ewe land from Benin through Togo and the rest of Ghana for their spiritual nature of and traditional customs (Dotse, 2015). It is the home of the famous “Nogokpo Shrine” where many divine seekers around the world visit for spiritual protection and fortification. Kliklor is also known for famous traditional „Trokosi“ and „Trokovi“ practice and Zendo Glimetso Za (Festival) which attracts many indigenes and tourists both within and outside the Ewe-land. According to one video documentary produced by TV3 Network Limited Ghana (2016), about over 500 men from all walks of the Ewe land converge at Klikor annually, to undergo spiritual fortifications and purification in a mystical forest. The convention is an annual festival where the men who usually wrap cloth around their waist and led by priests, offer prayers amidst sharing of wine and powdered millet and interchange of spiritual greetings and sacrifices. Festival is said to establish link between the divine seekers and the spiritual realm for protection, prosperity and life (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLw9nzEhGZ8>). The documentary revealed that, the spiritual leaders wore kete cloths. It is therefore not

surprising that some people especially from the other ethnic groups in Ghana have stigmatizing mysterious perceptions about the Klikor kete weaves. Also, records of past festivals indicate that the traditional leaders of the Klikor locality adorn themselves in Kete cloth during annual durbar (See Figure 2.3). This indicates that the people of Klikor have high value for their indigenous weaves as functional artistry in all aspects of their livelihood.



**Figure 2: The Study Area, Klikor-Agbozume**



Figure 3: The (Fiaga) Paramount Chief of Klikor Traditional area (right) dressed in Kete cloth with his sub-chiefs and priest at the Zendo Glimetso Za

Source: <https://www.gbcghana.com/1.11479316>

#### 2.4 History and Forms of Kete Designs

Currently, literature does not provide empirical sources regarding the exact origin of Kete cloth weaving among the Ewe people. The debate about who the originators of the 'Kete' cloth as known to the Ewes and 'Kente' by the Asantes remains open and unending controversy between the two ethnic groups (Kraamer, 2006). However the narratives presented by Kraamer in his quest to find the true origin of these hand woven cloths term by both the Ewe and the Asante as Kete and Kente respectively gives room for readers of his work to make individual judgments on the matter. For example, Kraamer stated that even though there was a heated debate on whoever the right originators were, there is constant confirmation among the Ewe speaking region that *Kente* is corrupted word from the Ewe language which literary means "ke" (open) and "te" (press) – an act which describes the weaving process of this ingenious hand woven cloth. He added that it was purported by the

indigenes that the Ewe weavers taught the Asante weavers how to weave after the Asante wars in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Kraamer, 2006). To make this issue much clearer, Ross (1998, as cited in Kraamer, 2006) has said the creation of “Agotime Agbamevorza”, cloth festival in 1996 and the “Bonwire Kente Festival” in 1998 by both ethnic groups demonstrates the urge to promote their own weaving industry. Both Agotime and Bonwire are exponent weaving communities in the Ewe and Asante land respectively. However, with the Ewe land again taking lead in establishing the cloth festival is not a strong justification for eluding origination of the craft to them. Interestingly though, archival records as revealed by Kraamer (2006) in his extensive study of this subject indicates that the raw material, “cotton” and “rayon” used by both the Ewe and Asante weavers were imported during the 16<sup>th</sup> century from Quidah in Benin and Ivory Coast (Daaku, 1979 as cited in Kraamer, 2006). Again, the study of Kraamer indicated that there are many major weaving centers in the Ewe land as against the few listed villages in the Asante land. However, the study does not emphatically identify a specific village or town among the two ethnic groups where weaving originated. This therefore makes it difficult to tag the origin of the Kete cloth designs to a particular village or town among the Ewe people. Commenting on the historical relations between the Asante and the Anlo-Ewes, renowned columnist Anthony Kobla Dotse (PhD) on Ghanaweb explained that both ethnic groups has reputable alliance dating back in to the mid-1750s with the Asantes depending heavily on the Anlos for salt. And that the only time in history where the Anlos had a thing to do with the Asente wars was when they invaded Agotime-kpetoe, captured some „Agbatsimevor“ (Kete) weavers to Asante land to show them the art of Kete weaving (Dotse, 2015). The historical excavations of Kraamer and the narratives of Dotse both indicate that there is no connection between the Akan

language and the word “Kente”. Although Dotse and the other authors did not claim the art of weaving originated from the Ewe land, their sound arguments supported by historical and archival facts leaves no doubts in the minds of their readers that the Ewe people have upper credits as far as the origin of Kente or Kete cloth is concern. And above all, the oldest known Kete by the Ewe people is from Agotime dating back into the 1500s as confirmed by the Smithsonian museum (Dotse, 2015).

It is interesting to note that even as Agotime has been mentioned countless times on the issues of origin of the Kete cloth, the Agotime community is not the only area where the hand woven master pieces are produced. Kraamer (2006) and Dotse (2015) acknowledged that Kete weaving had been prevalent among the Anlo and the mid-Ewe villages including Agbozume. It is evident that the Ewe Kete weavers across the chest of the Ewe land mastered their craft so well by blending intriguing motifs in their weaves. This undisputedly resulted in the victory of the Ewe Kete, winning the first National Ghana Independence Kente Competition organized by the department of Social Welfare at the Accra Community Center on March 4, 1957 (Dotse, 2015). Dotse added that the Ewe weaves have numerous aesthetical and artistically figurative motifs which are technically much more complex to weave than the geometric patterns of the Asante Kent thereby leading to the crowning of the contestant number nine (9), from the Trans Volta Togoland. According to Dotse (2015) this was the origin of the famous derogatory name (#9) for the Ewes, explaining that name denotes pride rather than negativity.

The total number of kente designs of the Asante, not including Ewe designs, exceeds 500 each for warp and weft patterns (Ross, 1998). Instead of recording designs in a written form, kente weavers used oral traditions and pattern books, bags, or books containing woven pattern samples to preserve this knowledge (Appiah et al

2015). Today these patterns are not only reproduced in kente cloths but inspire many contemporary weavers to create new designs.

Ewe kete designs appear to have evolved through a logical progression of steps, from simple warp striped patterns to increasingly complex weft designs. The development of these designs was made possible through the experimentation of skilled master weavers while creating textiles in an established weaving industry (Cromson, 2011).

In the initial stages, kente were not the intricately designed coloured textiles as produced today but were predominately solid blue and white warp striped or checked cotton cloths. These cloths were woven in plain weave with a single pair of shafts and Rattray (1927), a 20th century anthropologist, noted that the blue and white cloths were highly valued prestigious items worn by leaders in communities. The blue colour in these early clothes was obtained by using cotton dyed with indigo; eventually a limited palette of colours evolved from other plant derived dyes, brown from Indian tamarind, red from dried cam wood, and green from spinach leaves.

As the colour range expanded, so did the complexity of weft-faced designs, eventually evolving into the mix of solid color bands of weft stripes known today as „babadua“ – a term that refers to a segmented cane similar to bamboo (Ross, 1998, p.78). With the development of intricate designs, a second pair of shafts was introduced to the double heddle loom and facilitated the evolution of supplementary weft designs.

The Ewe people use a style similar to the “susudua” but often insert figurative motifs between the weft-faced bands. During early stages, narrow one-color bands woven with a weft-faced structure were introduced. These designs, referred to as “bankuo” by the Asante, often consisted of very simple geometric patterns woven in



between two solid stripes. The next major development was made possible by the availability of fine quality coloured threads obtained through the unraveling of imported cotton and silk yarns.

What characterizes kete cloth to most people, however, is its design. Kente cloths are produced with flat, bright colours arranged in geometric shapes. The effect can be dramatic and visually stunning, but there are very important variations that define the meaning of each cloth to the wearer. It is in this context that Sabotey (2009) affirms that Ghanaian cultural values are embedded in their weaves. Thus, their philosophical values in the fabrics they produce are in the form of events, proverbs, stories, historical records and other aesthetic values projected from the cultural context. Kente cloth comes in various colours, sizes and designs, and is worn during very important social and religious occasions.

Kente designs are symbols, elements woven to be part of the whole Kete cloth outlook. Some traditional design symbols can be found in Kente patterns (example: Nyemfre, Nkyinkyia and Akoma designs are in Aburoo Ahaban pattern), and some designs are named as patterns (example: Agyene-gyene-nsu, Akyempem kwatia, Daakwansire and Nankatre). Whereas the Kete possess a blend of the Asante Kente characteristics together with figurative images such as human, animals and household objects. It can therefore be established that both the traditional designs and the contemporary concepts blend well irrespective of the medium used in Ghanaian artistry.

## 2.5 Kete Weaving

Weaving involves the interlacing of two sets of linear elements such as yarns, grasses, wires, or other thread-like materials. One set of threads is called the weft and passes perpendicularly through the other set, the warp. The warp and weft when connected form a weave structure. Plain weave or tabby, the simplest weave structure is produced by the weft crossing the warp in an over-under pattern (Crosman, 2011).

The history of the Ewe, and of their weaving in particular, is almost nonexistent (Adler & Barnard, 1992). The Ewe peoples settled in the Volta delta area of southeastern Ghana beginning in the 16th century (Adler & Barnard, 1992). During this period the Ewe established weaving areas (which are still in existence today at Agbozume (a major textile market) and around the Keta lagoon, Kpetoe and Kpandu area (Gillow, 2003). Unlike the Asantes, the Ewes did not form an autocratic government but developed a chieftain-dominated social structure. The Ewe weavers, unrestricted by weaving regulations of a royal court, were allowed to experiment with designs and could accept commissions from individual patrons. The uniqueness of the traditional weaving crafts can be seen through the characteristic shapes derived from the values of traditional knowledge in Kete weaving (Labi, 2009). Though new trends are introduced, the distinctive traditional style of weaving remains apparent (Svašek, 1997). Interestingly, the traditional Kete interacts with the custom-made ones in stimulating in an unpredictable way. Inspired by the Pan-Africanist ideology of the 1960s, the new Diaspora has caused a blossoming of interest in Kete types that have developed out of ancestral traditions which embrace the fashions of the contemporary world.

## **2.6 The Design Elements of Weaves**

Kete are ceremonial hand-woven cloths, woven on a horizontal treadle loom. The weaves are in strips measuring about eight to ten centimeters wide (8cm-10cm) and are sewn together into larger pieces of cloth, which comes in a variety of colours, sizes and designs and are worn during special, social, and religious occasions. Most design elements are combined to make the design of kete. The most important part of the fabric is the creative part of it. People have their own preferences concerning shape, colour, texture and pattern. The elements of design used in Kete are basic lines or (continues dot), shape, form and space, texture, colour, and value (Dickson, 2009).

### ***2.6.1 Lines or continuous dot***

Jirousek (2000) explains line as a mark made by a moving point and having a psychological impact, according to its direction, weight, and the variations in its direction. In nature line represents a lot of things thus as a structural feature and when brought together suggests forms that can be recognized and seen as conveyers of information through the emotion and state of mind by its character and direction (Sackey, 2002). They are also used to create textures and patterns in fabric design. Every design created is made up of different lines coming together. Asmah (2004) explains line as a fundamental mark or stroke used in drawing which the length is longer than the width. A line can be thought of as points so close together that they lose their individual identity and form a new entity. Since lines can be straight, curved, or irregularly shaped, one can think of it as the track of a motion in point. Horizontal line denotes a feeling of rest or repose, vertical lines communicate feelings of loftiness and spirituality, and diagonal lines suggest a feeling of movement or direction. Curved lines vary in meaning. Soft, shallow curves suggest comfort, safety,

familiarity, relaxation and it recalls the curves of the human body, which have a pleasing sensual quality (Sackey, 2002).

It is an enormously useful and versatile graphic device that is made to function in both visual and verbal ways. The quality of lines in kete is a fundamental visual language that cannot be claimed for any other single element. It is possible to recognize the soft, irregular lines of the hand-woven fabric in Ghana which can act as a symbolic language or communicate emotion through its character and direction. The quality of line in itself contributes to the mood under which the fabric is woven, and for the weaver, the quality of the line is a fundamental expression of their style. Line acts as borders between ideas, concepts or steps in the design and creates shapes and edges of the form (Jirousek, 2000).

### ***2.6.2 Texture***

This is an element of design which describes the surface appearance of an object, some surfaces of objects appear real and some appear as illusions. Texture is the degree of roughness or smoothness of surface quality of objects. Lovett (2000) explains texture as the surface quality of a shape, rough, smooth, hard, soft, glossy, etc. and can be physical (tactile) or visual. This indicates that it is the surface characteristics of a material that can be experienced through the sense of touch or the sight. The eye appreciates the interplay of light on smooth or rough surfaces, the hand feels the fabric surface, and the ear hears the sound of the texture such as the tussle of taffeta. Okamoto et al, (2013) explained the texture of a fabric as being soft or smooth, hard or rough, silky, and or leathery with each having its own effect and these effects of each fabric have to be considered when preparing a design. A designer should be aware of these factors before planning, preparing and designing a fabric. At a glance, the Kete cloth reflects dynamic textures which appeals to the sense of sight

aesthetically-indicating that they have been carefully woven. Experts have likened textures of fabrics to their water/ moisture absorbing potency and ability to produce warmth therefore not surprising that the Ewe people use aging Kete cloths as rags and mat spread for babies to sleep on (Dotse, 2015).

## **2.7 Symbolism**

Symbolism is a sign that is intricately woven in such a way that expresses people's perception of reality (Edson, 2012) and communicates an idea, emotion and meanings to a phenomenon which is deeper than the sign itself. It could be in the form of a sign, totems, symbols, colour, tattoo or patterns. The researcher infers that designs are also communicated as symbols per the assertion by Edson. The concept of designing can be used as symbols to represent an idea. Therefore, a series of all ideas brought together can be referred to as a design. Symbolism is very effective in terms of communicating; it communicates philosophies and ideologies better than words can. It is said that societies are becoming more and more visually arbitrated (Lester, 1996). Most people seem to understand societies better not by reading words, but by perceiving images. Research shows that pictures are directly linked to long term memory. Any image an individual beholds stores information of itself in the memory of that individual (U.S Department of Labour, 1996). Most literature and study made on Ghanaian fallen heroes show the current generation what they have done most often through the pictures of these fallen heroes. Examples of such individuals have their statues dotted about in the country; some with gestures which meant something significant and others carrying symbolic items which also represent something unique. Statues and pictures of such people are Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president, Okomfo Anokye and the Golden stool.

The Adinkra symbols are a representation of a proverb which is used to communicate an idea or a message to a group of people and this is a form of message to everyone who sees it somewhere. Lester (1996) cited a study made by Jerome Bruner, a psychologist at New York University, which indicates that people remember 10% of what they hear, 20% of what they read and 80% of what they see and do. This means that symbolism which makes use of images, is a very good tool for communication. The history of fashion records instances where symbols were used as a form of communication. In the eighties, some fashion designers in the United States made use of symbols from some of their enemies, to communicate what they called “rebel” values (Hibbert & Hibbert, 2005). An example of this symbol is a crossed hammer and a sickle with a red five-pointed star.

The designs help in teaching oral traditions. The use of designs in our clothing and fashion plays an important and integral aspect in transmitting culture from one generation to the next. It helps individuals, especially the younger ones, to understand and appreciate culture better. It serves as a vehicle through which ideas and concepts are conveyed. Moreover, it represents how a society perceive life and helps in indoctrinating these concepts from one generation to the next thus enhancing and keeping the philosophies and beliefs of that society. When the designs are made in the kete cloths or woven cloths they help teach the younger generation and foreigners who visit us. Furthermore, designs are used as a means of maintaining cultural concepts.

One way of differentiating culture within societies is the designs associated with the cloth and what they represent or communicate. Ewe kete is used to even differentiate different cultures or ethnic groups in the Ghana. It is easier to use the eye of designs to determine where an individual is from. With designing, one is able to

identify things even when words are not used. For instance, the national flags help in identifying a particular country without anyone talking about it (Atiase, 2012). There are people who use designs just for the fun or beauty of it. People use it in their clothing, in their homes, offices and anywhere possible just for its aesthetic quality.

### ***2.7.1 Colour symbolism***

According to oxford advanced dictionary, colour is the most influential and existing thing in our lives. Studies have shown that colour affects our moods and feelings, as well as looks. Colour can also be described as a sensation which causes stimulation of the eye. Colours which are seen in every object are defined by the Longman dictionary as the appearance of something with a lot of different colours. Colour is an important aspect of fabric design as they considerably influence the aesthetic appeal of a fabric.

Asmah (2004) explains two theories of colour and these are light and pigment theories. These theories depend on the twin reflection and absorption of colour. Colours derived from the light theory can be divided into primary and secondary colours. The primary colours are red, blue and green while the secondary colours are obtained by combining the primary colours such as Red and Green to get Yellow, Red and Blue to get Purple and Blue and Green to get Blue Green. The light theory can be represented in the chromatic circle which is divided into twelve equal parts representing the primary and secondary colours. This means that the equal combination or mixing of two primary colours results into a secondary colour. Colours can therefore be used in its natural state or mixed state (artificial state).

“Kete” has the philosophical meaning of the colours used. Based on these, the above theories helped the researcher to know how the weaver chooses the colours to harmonize and blend well. The use of colour is one of the main aspects of the research

as every fabric has its own colour and a reason for its use. The colours when used bring out the designs well for example, when a very dark colour like brown is used to design on another dark surface it won't bring out the work well. Asmah (2004), states that indigenous woven cloth represents the history, philosophy, aesthetic principles that weavers use to weave the cloths. This also represents design and colours found in the cloth. The above definition and explanation shows that colours are used according to the mind-set of the people doing the weaving. Colours differentiate the categories of individuals and their choice of what colour they should wear and for what occasion. During rituals and ceremonies people from different tribes of Ghana display colours which play significant roles in portraying and exhibiting their culture. In the drama of ceremonial or ritual performances, colours point to a different stage in a ritual sequence and make it possible to apprehend movement and direction (Asmah, 2004). Colours thus hold significance for people and influence their emotion.

Colour conveys meanings in two primary ways: natural associations and psychological symbolism. Colour can also derive its meaning arising from any of the following; cultural, political, historical, religious, mythical and linguistic. Korankye (2010) explains how the colour of an object is seen by the eye. This means that the eyes play an important role when talking about colour. A colour must be well seen before it can be appreciated. Indeed the physical properties of colour attract the sense of emotions and aesthetical senses of people. This fundamental principle perhaps guided the making of the Ewe Kete cloth as a distinctive and adorable masterpiece (Dotse, 2015).



### **2.7.2 Colour**

Colours form a part of symbolism. Among the Ewes, colour is a representation of beauty. That is to say that, to the Ewe, every colour is seen as beautiful whether it is black or white. The widely used colours among the Ewes are mostly red, white and black. The use of colour is not just for their aesthetic purposes but for the symbolic usage. Korankye (2010) explains how coloured objects reflect and absorb colour waves. This means that the eye reflects and absorbs colours in a woven fabric. The beauty of an analogous colour arrangement will be appreciated by some; others will prefer complimentary arrangements, whilst some will only choose the colour scheme for an occasion. A well-arranged colour and design brings out beauty and make fabrics stand out well. Colours are critical ingredients that need to work to produce successful fabric. Colour has such a powerful effect on people that it can be used therapeutically (Dillon, 2001).

Colour sensation is a characteristic of human experience which is used when designing fabric, clothing, painting at home, garnishing food, furnishing, lighting, paper design identification and security. The most common colours used during the aforementioned activities are;

#### **1. White**

It is a sign of joy, virtue, or purity. It is mostly worn by the priestesses, diviners, and those who assist them for rites such as purification rites, sanctification rites and is associated with egg white and white clay. The white cloth is normally known among the Ewes as “klala”. When it is combined with either; green, yellow or black, it is used to signify spiritual strength. White can be used during funerals for people who died at an old age (Tamakloe, 2016).

It is used for spiritual purification, healing, sanctification rites and festive occasions. In some situations, it symbolizes contact with ancestral spirits, deities and other unknown spiritual entities such as ghosts (Morton, 1997). White colour is associated with innocence, cleanliness and purity, which create a peaceful and relaxing interior. It mixes well with all other colours and tints them down, enlarges small spaces and brightens dark rooms. It is believed that a child is born “pure”, without sin and when he/she grows and dies, he/she returns to a “pure” state again and this means that “purity”, which the colour white signifies, marks the beginning and end of life. It is therefore not surprising that in almost all parts of Ghana when a child is born, both the child and his/her parents, especially mothers, adorn white clothes.

## **2. Black**

It represents extreme vitality, old age and maturity since it is believed that as things grow old, they get darkened. It is popularly used as a funeral colour to signify sorrow, grief or sadness. Black deems other colours, thus prevents them from being prominent and effective. It is used to tell people that whatever is done in secret would one day be revealed (Tamakloe, 2016). The black colour helps to reveal hidden colours and thus it is mostly used as outlines for most of the designs in the kete woven fabrics.

## **3. Red**

Red represents blood, which signifies life. It is used to symbolize seriousness, heightened spiritual or political mood and danger. Red symbolizes passion, anger, warmth and energy. Therapeutically, it increases heart rate and circulation. Red appears as a brilliant and cheerful colour which gives the impression of warmth and appears to advance towards the observer (Ajibade & Obongha, 2012).

#### **4. Blue**

This is associated with the sky, aquamarines, water and sapphires. This symbolises relaxation, coolness, tranquility, good fortune, peacefulness, harmony and love related ideas. Blue is a cold colour and appears to recede from the eyes. A blue room is more restful than red whilst the sky calms and relaxes the human body. Morton (1997) indicates that different shades of blue used together can look a little cold and uninviting, rather, blue blends well with other colours.

#### **5. Green**

This is associated with vegetation, freshness, jealousy, innocence, harmony, reassurance, peace, planting and harvesting. Tender green leaves are usually used to sprinkle water during purification rituals. It symbolizes growth, vitality, fertility, prosperity, fruitfulness, abundant health and spiritual rejuvenation (Asmah, 2004). Green is perfect for creating a natural, restful and secure environment. A touch of green in fabric design will have much the same cheering effect as seeing new leaves and shoots after a long rain. It blends and combines successfully with most other colours. Turquoise, emerald, apple green, acid lime, soft olive, sage, pistachio and forest green are all types of greens.

#### **6. Yellow**

This is associated with the sun, sunflower, gold, butter yellow and egg yolk. It relates to hot climates and lifts spirits. Yellow is a very luminous and vivid colour which conveys the idea of purity and symbolizes sanctity, preciousness, royalty, wealth, spirituality, vitality, heat, happiness and fertility. Chiefs are adorned with gold during outings and festive occasions to show the richness of the land. Kete is not patronised solely for its beauty, but also for its symbolic meaning. Each cloth has a name and a meaning. The designs, patterns and motifs have names and meanings which were derived from historical events, individual achievements, proverbs,

philosophical concepts, oral literature, moral values, social code of conduct, human behaviour and certain attributes of plant and animal life. Patterns and motifs are rendered in geometric abstractions of objects associated with the intended meaning. These are generally created by weavers who also assign names and meanings to these patterns. Sometimes, kings and elders may ascribe names to cloths that they specially commission to be made for them. There are over three hundred (300) different types of cloths and/or designs, each with its own name some of which this research sets out to identify and/or explore (Tettehfiio, 2009).

### **7. Pink**

It is associated with the female essence of life. It is viewed as red rendered mild and gentle, and therefore associated with tenderness, calmness, pleasantness, and sweetness. According to Asante social thought, these attributes are generally considered as essential aspects of the female essence.

### **8. Purple**

This colour is viewed in the same way as maroon. It is considered as earth associated with colour used in rituals and healing purposes. It is also associated with color used in rituals and healing purposes. It is also associated with feminine aspects of life. Purple cloths are mostly worn by females.

### **9. Maroon**

It has a close resemblance to red-brown which is associated with the color of Mother Earth. Red-brown is usually obtained from clay and is therefore associated with healing and the power to repel malevolent spirits. It derives its symbolism from the white part of the egg and from white clay used in spiritual purification, healing, sanctification rites and festive occasions. In some situations, it symbolizes contact with ancestral spirits, deities and other unknown spiritual entities such as ghosts. It is

used in combination with black, green or yellow to express notion, spirituality, vitality and balance.

#### **10. Grey**

It has a close resemblance to red-brown which is associated with the color of Mother Earth. Red-brown is usually obtained from clay and is therefore associated with healing and the power to repel malevolent spirits. It derives its symbolism from the white part of the egg and from white clay used in spiritual purification, healing, sanctification rites and festive occasions. In some situations, it symbolizes contact with ancestral spirits, deities and other unknown spiritual entities such as ghosts. It is used in combination with black, green or yellow to express notion, spirituality, vitality and balance.

#### **11. Silver**

It is associated with the moon which represents the female essence of life. Silver ornaments are usually worn by women and are used in the context of spiritual purification, naming ceremonies, marriage ceremonies and other community festivals. It symbolizes serenity, purity and joy.

#### **12. Gold**

This derives its significance from the commercial value and social prestige associated with the precious mineral. Gold dust and gold nuggets were used as medium of exchange and for making valuable royal ornaments. It symbolizes royalty, wealth, elegance, high status, supreme quality, glory and spiritual purity.

#### ***2.7.3 Colour symbolism in fashion***

The vocabulary of colour can be described as the visual reaction to the wavelength of sunlight interpreted as red, blue, green and so on; possessing physical properties of hue, intensity and value as well as portraying the psychological and

emotional stance of a person (Cayton, 2002; Schneider, 2002; Greider, 1996; Jackson, 1980; Appiah, 1979). Colour is one of the most universally appreciated elements that help to give form and meaning to a piece of art such that pleasant colour rhythms and harmonies fulfill our aesthetic desires and can arranged or employed to interpret a person's emotions, symbolize ideas and create mood. According to Cayton (2002):

“blue can import a state of dignity, sadness or serenity, reliability, fidelity, loyalty and honesty”. Red may suggest bravery, sin, passion, danger or violence. Globalization or shared experience among nations or countries has also helped to associate abstract qualities such as virtue, loyalty and evil with colour. Consequently, phrases such as: “true blue”, “dirty yellow coward”, “red with rage”, “seeing red”, “virgin white”, “pea-green with envy”, “gray gloom” seem to be universally adopted.

However, colour meanings and symbolisms throughout the world depend on the culture and ethnicity of the people. For instance, during the early Roman civilization, purple colour signifies royalty. This was so because purple dye was so expensive that it was only the Roman emperor who could afford it (Barton, 1969). Apparently even when the dye became affordable the tradition and its representation were still observed. To the Chinese, red symbolizes good luck, purity, power, protection and wealth; hence red is mostly used in their marriage ceremonies. Colours are also believed to have some psychological and varying associations in Indifferent cultures. Yellow or gold for example is a sacred colour to the ancient Chinese, a symbol of power to the Egyptians and Greeks, however, the early Christians looked down on it because of its connection with wealth (Kwakyee-Opong, 2001).

To reinforce the power of colour and a person's psychological disposition Cayton (2002) has this to say:

Light, bright colours make us feel joyful and uplifted; warm colours are generally stimulating; cool colours are generally depressing. Medical facilities, trauma centers, and state correctional facilities are often painted in light blues or “institutional greens” because of the calming effect.

Inferably, these various symbolisms make colour a living reality that also define nature's gifts such as leaves, plants, flowers, blood, insects and animals (Jones 2005). Colour application and appreciations have invariably been informed by such means and has resulted in impressive masterpieces (Dzamedo, 2009, p.76-79). According to Antubam (1963) traditionally, colour symbolism among Ghanaians (including Ewe people) does not depend on scientific analysis but rather on philosophies embedded in their abstract and spiritual values. Commenting further in his book Ghana's Heritage of Culture, Antubam (1963) discusses the notions of colour within the Ghanaian culture. He mentions that black, grey, blue, vermilion, crimson, tomato and terracotta red, silver, gold, white and brown are colours traditionally known and used by Ghanaians. Gold for instance represents royalty, continuous life, warmth, maturity and glory. As a result, the Akans and Ewe chiefs use gold ornaments to denote their royal position in the community. Hence at a certain time in the history of the Bono of Ghana queen mothers were forbidden to use gold; they used white, blue and silver and during state functions the Korontenhene or Tufohene of the Akan who is "ranked next after the paramount chief" was also restricted to silver ornaments to separate him from the chief. Similarly, Antuban stated that when a chief of La selects his future wife, certain portions of the body of family members are designed with yellow preparation. And to ensure continuous life, all Tano fetish priests add a piece of gold (pokowa) to their "fetish preparations" (Antuban, 1963). Antubam (1963) mentions further that white symbolizes purity, virtue, virginity, joy and victory while black reflects the idea of vice, deepened sadness and malicious spirits such as the devil and death. Appiah (1974) holds a similar view and mentions that symbolism has an eminent role in African art as well as metaphysical qualities that express the

ideologies of the people, therefore the colours used by a chief on an occasion is associated with meaning than elegance.

It is deduced from all the various writers that colour concept and symbolisms are culture based; since they reflect the ideas and values of the people in focus. In reference to the evidences mentioned in the related literature, it can be concluded that clothing and adornment are a part of a people's culture; indicating class distinction, social status, group identification, age, and sex. Costume and adornment also help to isolate the geographical, historical and ethnic background of a community as well as acting as protective devices against both physical and spiritual elements. As a result, the majority of the writers underscore the relevance of the social and cultural significance of dressing as a means of national as well as ethnic identity.

Cultural Aspects (2008) are some of the works that have enhanced the researchers' understanding of the social organization of Ewe people, including the structure, mythology, history and concepts of some costumes, and the gaps that need to be filled. Further, other archaeological and anthropological interpretations gathered, provided information that helped readers and researchers understand and acknowledge investigations on clothing and adornment as an integral part of historical record keeping. Ghanaian Symbolism is embedded in culture. For instance, in Ghana, symbolism has a predominant impact on the culture of the people (Amate, 2011). In my life experience, throughout the life cycle of the Ghanaian, there is an aspect of symbolism that is evident at every stage that is from the day an individual is born to the day he dies, symbols play a pivotal role. It is said that the ability for a culture of a people to grow in strength and greatness is dependent on their ability to uphold their valued truths and ideals about life through the gloomy confidentiality of symbolism (Asmah, 2009). Meaning cultural symbolism helps in impacting strength and



greatness to culture when it is sustained. This adage is particularly evident among the Asante in Ghana who have done so well with their use of Adinkra symbols. Adinkra symbols are visual representations of strong beliefs held on to by the Asantis for many generations. These symbols have, to some extent, become the widely accepted type of Ghanaian symbol to the neglect of the symbols of the other ethnic groups. This is most likely as a result of the silence the other ethnic groups have over their symbols. Most designers and artists make use of the Adinkra symbols, thereby helping in its promotion.

The Ghanaian fashion legend, the late Owusu Ansah virtually used Adinkra symbols in almost all his designs thereby promoting it. One renowned artist in Ghana, Professor Ablade Glover, probably helped in the promotion of these Adinkra symbols as well when he used it in three of his literary works which he published within 1969 to 1971. In these publications, --he identified the proverbs from which these symbols were derived as well as their meanings. Other ethnic groups in Ghana like the Fantes make use of cultural symbols which are represented on their canoes and in their Asafo flags. There are symbols used by ethnic groups in the northern sector of Ghana as well, which are normally represented in their architecture and fugu – a traditionally woven attire mostly worn by the northerners in Ghana (Amissah, 2015). In recent times, much has been written about the Adinkra symbols as a result of increased research being carried out on it. Unlike the Asantes, the Ewes among many other ethnic groups in Ghana, have less recognition regarding their cultural symbols and as such have virtually little literature written about them. This perhaps is due to the fact that Asantes capitalized on the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology to document many academic materials on their culture including the controversial origin of the Kente cloth to their advantage (Dotse, 2015). Ewe cultural

symbols are said to originate from myths; however these myths which became fables, developed into poems and songs then later evolved to proverbs out of which the symbols were generated (Dzobo, 1997). The symbols and their meanings which are scarcely known are embedded in the minds of the older generations who are gradually dying with the knowledge.

This leaves the younger generation, who seem to be less concerned, ignorant of these symbols and their meanings. The symbols used by Ewes are derived from their proverbs. These symbols are used by royals, traditionalists, traditional rulers, elders and the people within the community. There are symbols reserved for religious purposes as well as those reserved for the traditional rulers.

#### ***2.7.4 Shape, form, and space***

There are ways to categorize shape and form. Jirousek (2000) explains:

organic shapes and forms as irregular in outline and often asymmetrical and most often thought of as naturally occurring and he identifies geometric forms as those which correspond to named regular shapes, such as squares, rectangles, circles, cubes, spheres, cones, and other regular forms.

In this study, creating a sequence of similar shapes in Kete is a good way of bringing a sense of cohesion to a scheme that does not seem to blend together properly. Kete has the shape and form of animals, geometric, human and nature. Shape and form are areas or masses which define objects in space (Lovett, 2000). Also, Dennis (2004) gives examples of shapes that can be found in Kete as chairs, tables, combs, letters, simple phrases, names of objects and people and geometric shapes. These shapes are unique features of the Kete. These unique forms of the hand-woven fabric in Ghana include other elements like texture.

## 2.8 Generation of Ideas in Design Concepts

Atiase (2012) explains further that the designs as a plan within the framework of their composite art included layout, pattern, motif, sketch, draft, form and arrangement of line(s) which are all synonymous to each other. These foundations serve a functional purpose of providing aesthetic pleasure to the user of these weaves. Each of the weave designs has traditional concepts associated with them. Designs for the weaves are conceived and planned by the traditional weavers from memory and originally developed concepts from natural sources (Atiase, 2012). With constant practices and experience on the loom over a period of time, the ideas and design concepts were mostly naturally generated from the memory without following any formal or laid down procedures (Lartey, 2014). The theories of both Atiase and Lartey provide a sound basis to argue that the traditional weavers of the Ewe land are indeed genius master craftsmen with highly imaginative and creative abilities.

## 2.9 Fashion

Fashion as the most admired style in clothes and bodily adornments. By implication it is the cultural construction of the embodied identity (Steele, 2004). As cited in Wiktionary (2010) Hannerman address that:

Fashion is a general term for a currently popular style or practice, especially in clothing, foot wear or accessories. Fashion refers to anything that is the current trend in look and dress up of a person. The more technical term, costume, has become so linked in the public eye with the term "fashion" that the more general term "costume" which is in popular use mostly has been relegated to special senses like fancy dress or masquerade wear.

Again, Fashion is referred to as a style that is popular at a particular time, especially in clothes, hair, make-up and many more (Venkatasamy, 2015). In other thoughts fashion however goes beyond ordinary material for the body as it adopts, implicit, and explicit elements to create a dressing form: influence of thought on wear. Fashion

refers to anything that is the current trend in look and dress up of a person. It reflects the society of which it is part (James, 1979).

Also, fashion has reportedly been influenced by wears, conquests, laws, religion, tradition and the arts. Individual personalities have also had an impact on fashion like royals and heads of state often set fashion (Essel, 2019). In the Ewe communities the „Agbamevor“ are known to be typical ceremonial and sacred clothes for very special ceremonies and this status is influenced by tradition (Dotse, 2015). The Ewes as any other ethnic societies are fashion lovers, having their own unique costumes and dress styles for specific occasions. It is perhaps for which reason they have specific names for their woven kete fabrics (Kraamer, 2006; Dotse, 2015).

Fashion also has its critics who have at times denounced fashion as irrational, tyrannical and immoral (Negrin, 1999). Critiques on diplo examples in some assembled form in questioning that Why should pink be in fashion one season and gray the next season? Why do people follow fashion like fashion slaves, when they have enough clothing already? A common accusation is that fashion designers accelerate fashion change to create new business yet no new fashion succeeds until people are ready to accept and patronize the products said by observers. Just as clothing signals about gender, it carries messages about situations and occasion; special formal and casual attire of some sort will continue to be part of fashion till the next generation (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). The changes and followers of fashion turns out to be eye openers for new ideas, and it is a choice one has to make, as to whether to follow a particular trend or not. Just as to know, different ideologies however tends to be critique of the other when that are in separated reality in dress, style or concept.

Notwithstanding, the term fashion also lacks the precision of the word dress for it refers to many different kinds of material and nonmaterial cultural products such as houses, music, automobiles, scientific theories, philosophy and recreation (Eicher, 1992). Furthermore, fashion forces positive and negative value judgments on body modifications and supplements and their properties on the basis of their relative positions within a fashion cycle of introduction, mass acceptance, and obsolescence (Aspers et al 2013). It is also interesting to note that not all types of dress qualify as fashion. For example, religious dress in many societies resists fashion change and is therefore, automatically excluded from a study of fashion. Many experts have posited that the characteristics of dress that communicates identities of an individual depend on materials available as well as on social structuring of a more abstract sort than that which organizes human activities related to kinship, economy, polity, and religion (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). This structuring as posited by Roach-Higgins and Eicher, (1992), tends to extend society wide, includes belief systems that shape moral and aesthetic standards for dress and technologies used to produce body modifications and to convert materials from the physical and biological environment into body supplements. The authors continued to explain further that humans in every society develop ways for designing and fabricating supplements for the body out of materials from their environment, as well as products and tools for modifying their bodies in ways that identify them with or distinguish them from others.

### ***2.9.1 Ghanaian fashion***

Ghana is one country which is really into fashion and becoming part of the world's most notable. Global Language Monitor, a U.S.A based company that tracks trends through language worldwide ranked Accra as the 62nd most fashionable city in the (world. <https://www.primenewsghana.com>). Most Ghanaian dressmakers are made

to measure tailors and seamstresses who follow printed fashion design patterns or styles usually displayed on the walls of their studios for clients to select. Acquah-Harrison (1997) observed that:

Ghanaian fashion and dressmaking is a field of vocation where skills such as pattern-cutting and sewing are transferred through apprenticeship. It is perhaps through the establishment of this apprenticeship that the current made to measure dressmakers have evolved – this is because the apprenticeship system still exists in the clothing and textiles industry in Ghana.

Dressmakers therefore depend heavily on photos showing a variety of styles and dress patterns designed by experts or with models for their work which probably accounted for the spread of fashion styles across the country easily (See Figure 4).



Figure.4: Design Templates (Photo Calendar on the wall) used by most tailors and seamstresses in Ghana. (Source: <https://futurechallenges.org>)

However, Dogoe (2013) has observed that:

Ghanaian fashion and dressmaking styles are a blend of local and Western designs. With the widespread use of technology and common use of social media, the Ghanaian youth are exposed to a wider taste of fashion through the music and entertainment industry and celebrity lifestyle.

This compelled fashion experts to express the opinion that, Ghanaian youth are fashion lovers who easily jump to modern fashion trends (Ghana and Beyond, 2019). The youth are therefore ready to patronize any fashionable product in terms of apparels, footwear, cosmetics or jewelry however it appears that the local fabric designers and producers have been stuck duplicating particular motifs, colour, texture and common African print designs which creates monotony in the Ghanaian fashion industry. And one practical way of breaking away from this monotony is to promote products like the kete cloth designs.

### **2.9.2 African Clothing and Fashion**

The understanding to clothing and fashion is understood differently depending on different beliefs and values of a particular group of people in a particular locality. This largely depends on the cultural settings of the people involved and how clothing and fashion is useful in their daily activities. For Shoko (2013, p. 451) clothing in different cultures also “shapes the traditional beliefs of people and the roles they play as well as giving them identity”. “People, who share the same or similar beliefs and values as others can understand the same meaning of what clothing and fashion can convey” (Alexandersson & Matlak, 2017, p. 6). Generally, Kodzoman (2019, p. 9) believes that:

Clothing serves many purposes: it protects the wearer by enhancing safety; it protects by providing a barrier between the skin and the environment; it can insulate against cold or hot conditions; it can provide a hygienic barrier also wearing clothes is a social norm. It may also function as a form of adornment and an expression of personal taste or style.

Clothing in Africa has traditional and western influences. This makes clothing and textile products ready for market. Buyers can tell better the value, because of their high class of taste for quality and the consistent use of the products. Likewise, the product’s aesthetic qualities, functionality, ritual history or status as souvenir attracts

the buyer (Akinbileje, 2014). Africans have their colour schemes and the way it is understood, as much as the aesthetic qualities are present, there is much concentration on the meaning of the colour and what it represents. People are careful, for instant, what to wear to funerals and christening ceremonies.

Hansen (2014, p. 2) emphasizes that “in several countries in West Africa, distinct regional dress styles that are the products of long-standing textile crafts in weaving, dyeing, printing etc. today coexist with dress styles introduced during the colonial period and after”.

Langevang, (2016, p. 20) spoke about some popular styles considered in West Africa:

the boubou (a loose robe made from a single piece of fabric and with a neck opening, worn both by men and women), the kaftan (a straight tunic adopted from Arab culture) and the kaba (a two- or three-piece women’s dress that consists of a Western inspired sewn blouse, sewn or wrapped skirt, and an unsown cloth used as a second wrapper or head gear).. The smock, worn by Ghanaian men, is a loose fitted shirt made from hand-loomed strips of fabric. It originated in northern Ghana and is, together with the kente cloth (associated with the Akan kingdom), considered Ghana’s national dress.

Contemporary fashion Designer’s idea about trends in African clothing and textiles are often seen through the collection of clothing materials from different sources to be used for dresses which are later seen to be a creative attractive piece worn at major events at fashion shows where both local and international people appreciate. The taste for fashionable clothing and textiles has gone beyond mere understanding and interpretation, and an example is the high demand in Second-hand clothing and textiles. However, the desire for second-hand clothing has changed from being a need to a “new look” dress aesthetic that plays itself out in everyday life (Hansen, 2014, p. 5). The transitions and trends in African clothing and fashion show the intent of using clothes to express culture. Therefore the various influences and transformations restructure African clothing and fashion to perpetuate from generations to



generations, sometimes showing instances of unity and disunity by the various external influences. The metaphors and ensigns of cloth and clothing, expressed in their form and colour, are not limited to the traditional milieu, but are expressed in contemporary institutions (Adesanya, 2005 as cited by Akinbileje, 2014, p. 632). Also, the contemporary imported second-hand clothing in Africa plays an active role in this process by providing stylistic components that are incorporated into new tailor-made designs (Grabski 2010) as cited Hansen (2014, p. 3).

### ***2.9.3 Oblivious Nature of African Clothing and Fashion***

Knowing the characteristics of textiles products which are used for clothing and generally fashion is very necessary and important. The nature of African clothing and fashion has been largely oblivious. Despite the oblivious nature of the African cloth and fashion, new trends seen amongst African clothing and fashion, have modern creativity and distinctiveness. Most traditional African cloths have varying degrees of socio-economic status and an asset commodity in the societies that predates to colonial times (Clark 1994, Dogbe 2003 as cited by Bowles, 2016, p. 55).

Rovine (2011, p. 58) reveals that “kente, kaba and embroidery is firmly rooted in precedent, a style that reaches far back into the past yet whose meanings and forms reflect changing influence”. The indication however is that African clothing and fashion has been in existence since the colonial times, in terms of the originality the African wax prints, dyed fabrics, woven fabrics, knitted fabrics with decorative African details and dresses have been tested and tried.

The royal kente, like any other originated cloth from Africa has ceased not to change because of how they are hyped (Barfuo, 1993 as cited by Dzramedo, 2009, p. 35).

During Ghana’s colonial and independence times:

an incorporated kente-kaba were revolutionary as a popular stylish and nationalistic forms of attire for women, particularly for special events. The emergence of traditional cloth and contemporary fashion style ascribe how changing trends sustain African clothing and fashion (Richards, 2016, p. 19).

African fashion cycles have been driven historically by ongoing innovation and change, as well as a constant reinterpretation and negotiation of various external influences” (Sylvanus, 2015, p. 246). Kente has seen various faces of recognition from past to current historian accounts. African and European leaders have been beautifully adorned in kente fabrics to honour them in various ways. Many efforts have been made In sustaining African clothing and fashion, it becomes a battle of influences between old and new trends. Sometimes traditional concepts are lost or altered in order to reinstate the new mode in clothing and fashion. Kente, which is distinctly a Ghanaian clothe is now a new symbolic affirmation of African identity and Pan-African unity especially among the African Americans (Clarke, 2002 as cited by Dzramedo, 2009, p.35).

Sylvanus (2015, p. 245) that kente-kaba and Malian embroidered tunics which exemplified as:

new approach in Modern day African textiles was spear-headed by fashion designers on the continent who are constantly reinventing local materials and forms with specific reference to classical African designs but with references from global fashion systems.

According to (Rovine, 2011) the assured methods that provides insights into the continued importance of traditional practices as well as the primacy of innovation in Malian embroidery fashion and other African fashion trends. It is very important to state that modern and current innovations which includes the showcase of fashion products on runways add new perspective to African clothing and fashion. It must be observed that quality African designs and motifs that express traditional values are exhibited in some modern trends that demeans the message traditional fabrics are

communicating. These conceptual designs are sometimes found on African wax print fabrics that are printed to instil cultural symbols and meanings to Africans in sustaining African values. The introduction of Friday wear in Ghana brought the idea to celebrate African traditional clothes, have more local content in terms of fabric and accessories with international appeal which puts a stamp on the fashion map globally” (Amankwah, Howard & Sarpong, 2012, p. 573). This trend has therefore made African clothing and fashion popular and in demand. Celebrating and using our traditional African clothing and textiles is well deserving, with several advertisement on our products both internationally and local people.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0. Overview

The chapter presents the methodology that was used to collect data for the study. The design is based on the qualitative research paradigm with the emphasis on Indigenous Klikor Kete Designs. The Chapter also provides information on the target population and also the research instruments used in gathering the data needed to answer the research questions, sampling methods, the population size and the data processing methods.

#### 3.1. Research Design

A qualitative research paradigm was used in this study to examine the indigenous Klikor Kete design weaves. The rationale for using a qualitative approach in this research was to explore and describe the behaviour, perspectives, experiences and feelings of people and emphasize the understanding of these elements. According to Jacob (1988 as cited in James, 1997) qualitative is a generic term for investigative methodologies described as ethnographic, naturalistic, anthropological, field or participant observer research. Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of looking at variables in their natural setting and how they interact. Razavieh (2002) also indicates that qualitative inquiry seeks to interpret human actions, institutions, events, customs and the like, and in so doing construct a “reading” or portrayal of what is being studied. This design was used because it involves an empirical investigation of a particular indigenous and contemporary phenomenon within its context using multiple sources of evidence to elaborate much on what is being studied so that it can bring out a better understanding of the idea.

Sitsofe, (2009) opines that qualitative research emphasizes the holistic description of whatever is being observed rather than comparing the effects of a particular treatment. This study employed the qualitative research design due to the nature of the study. The researcher observed how the various kete designs from the town chosen for the study were rendered. Malterud (2001) explains the qualitative research method as a systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from a talk or observation.

The study describes in detail the processes involved in weaving Klikor kete designs and qualitative research method is the most appropriate design for the in-depth investigation of this phenomenon. Adoption of the qualitative research method also made it possible for the researcher to assume an interactive social role in which observations and interactions with weavers yielded great results.

### **3.2 Population for the Study**

Population in research means the aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding inferences that are to be made in a study. It comprises all those people who are proposed to be covered under the scheme of study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) describes population as any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The main target and accessible population for this thesis constitutes Ewe kete weaving town called Klikor. The population therefore consisted of indigenous Klikor Kete weavers, traditional leaders and indigenes that purchase kete cloths for their domestic uses. The population under study or consideration is the type with varied characteristics and is thus heterogeneous.

### 3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

Mugo (2002) describes a sample as an act, process, or technique used in selecting a suitable sample which helps in ascertaining the characteristics of the whole population. In this study, the sampling technique used was the stratified random sampling. This technique allowed the researcher to divide the population into subgroups known as strata and randomly select samples from each of the subgroups (Latham, 2007). It aids in identifying the right sample of people to observe, as well as those that need to be interviewed. The sample size when accessed for the study numbered up to sixteen (16) respondents. This was divided into strata of three (3) respondents consisting of four (4) traditional leaders, six (6) artisans (weavers), six (6) dressmakers from the general public. All the respondents were indigenes of Klikor and its surrounding villages. Table 3.1 shows the stratification of the accessible population.

**Table 3.1: Stratification of Accessible Population Strata**

<b>Population for the Study</b>	<b>Accessible Population</b>	
ST. 1	Traditional leaders	4
ST. 2	Traditional weavers	6
ST. 3	Dressmakers	6
<b>Total Population</b>		<b>16</b>

Source: Field work data (2018)

Table 3.2 is a schematic overview of the stratified accessible population using the stratified sampling method. The formula used in determining the percentage for each stratum is:

$$\text{Percentage of stratum} = \frac{\text{Frequency}}{\text{Total accessible population}} \times 100\%$$

**Table 3.2: Schematic Overview of Disproportionate Allocation Stratified Sampling**

Strata	Disproportionate stratified Sample	
	Frequency	Percentage
ST. 1	4	25%
ST. 2	6	37.5%
ST. 3	6	37.5%
Total Population	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field work data (2018)**

### 3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Instrumentation is the process of data gathering which involves selecting or designing of the instrument and the collection under which the research tools would be administered (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Studying the indigenous Ewe Kete designs in Contemporary Ghanaian Fashion required multi-facets instruments including, observation of cultural activities, in depth interview of key informants to obtain firsthand information, and documentation by delving into the archives (photo album, video recording and old kete clothes) of the people to get rich and authentic information to consolidate and compare the observation and the interview data in order to ensure trustworthiness in the study. Ary, et al., (2013) refers to instrumentation as a process used to solicit information in research. Interviews and observation were the instruments used to collect data for the study, which is known as triangulation.

#### 3.4.1 Interview

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways we use to try and understand our fellow human beings. Orodho (2003) added that the interview is face to face contact a researcher may have with a cross-section of the target group for information. In other words, it is a way of

verbally interacting with participants or respondents in conducting research. Semi-structured interview was used to gather rich and in-depth data from the weavers because it allowed the researcher to interact with the weavers in their local dialect which they were very conversant with and can express themselves in. Such flexibility in qualitative interviewing provided the respondent with the opportunity to converse with the researcher rather than to get into the mode of answering queries (Mason 2002) and the customers as well as the fashion designers. Interview is also the process where the researcher goes directly to a particular setting in which he/she is interested to interact with the people under study and collect data (Fraenkel & Horman, 2003) Interviews were conducted on the agreed and appropriate date scheduled by participants for the researcher at their place of convenience. An interview guide was used to serve as a guide for the researcher. The interview guide was focused on the factors related to design patterns and the perceptions about the Klikor kete designs.

### **3.4.2 Observation**

Observation is recognized as the most direct means of studying people when one is interested in their overt behavior and it is a more natural way of gathering data. Data collected through observation may yield more real and true data than by any other method. As a scientific tool, observation may range from the most casual to the most scientific and precise, involving modern mechanical and electronic means (Sidhu, 1984 p.158). The degree of observer participation can however, vary considerably. Direct observation of behaviour is an important means of appraising the work of weavers. The Non-participant Observation is a research instrument that allows the researcher to be physically present, but only as a spectator who does not directly take part in the activities of the people who are being studied, (Kothari 2004). With the Participatory form of observation, the researcher takes part in the activities



of the subjects under investigation, and thus becomes a member of the group, giving the researcher a high level of understanding of the activity under study, (Lartey 2014).

Based on this, the researcher employed non-participatory observation which involves retrieving information in the field of research with the use of all senses, such as listening, touching and seeing in order to observe the weaving techniques and designs created during weaving. Critically observing how weavers went about their work enabled the researcher to identify the differences that exist among the various tools, particularly their shapes and materials they use. Observation thus gave the researcher's insights into the ways in which the population of the region under study went about their work.

Throughout the research process one of the instruments used was the observation method where the weavers, customers' attitude and body language relating to the answering of questions were observed and important details written down to help with the study, the designs on the kete fabrics were also observed critically to note the unique characteristics of Klikor kete designs and their symbolism.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedure**

Two main types of data were needed. These were the primary and secondary data. Primary data were the direct information gathered from the field through the use of the research tools. Primary data gathered also comprise the various kete designs; and this was gathered through an interview with the weavers. Other issues addressed were the nature and status of Klikor kete designs and Ghanaian fashion as well as issues pertaining to how the industry could be resourced.

During the researcher's visit to the study areas, indigenes were not left out of the interview. Through the interview characteristics of Klikor kete weaves were discovered; these were based on beliefs of the kete designs, names associated to the kete designs, materials, colours associated to them among others. Opinions of how the Klikor Kete was important to the Ghanaian society at large were sought from individuals. Suggestions about how to sustain the Ghanaian culture were also sought from individuals through interviews. Relevant varied still pictures were taken from the field to support arguments, observation, comments, concepts and descriptions in the thesis.

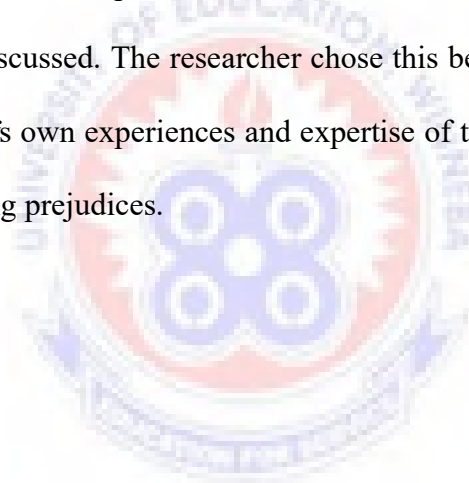
Secondary data gathered include information from libraries and other literature sources. These sources included textbooks, journals, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, annual reports, internet among others. The other secondary data source was from unpublished theses and dissertations. Relevant literature from the internet was also consulted.

### **3.6 Data Analysis Plan**

The presentation and analysis of the data gathered were done thematically and interpreted eclectically due to the differences in the approach in handling each of the research questions. Thematic analysis involves making inferences by systematically identifying characteristics of messages and is related to a process of ascertaining meanings about a written phenomenon being studied (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002). The approach to thematic analysis in this study involved grouping and transforming the large amount of data into manageable coded themes or categories by identifying similar patterns of the themes and issues (Neuendorf, 2002). This was necessary because the current study resulted in a large amount of data emerging from in-depth interviews as well as studio observation and document reviewing. The research

focused on coding and organising data into categories based on key themes and issues as well as developing new establishments and conceptual elements (Jennings, 2001). The data collected from Interviews were analysed side by side with what the researcher observed and gathered during various studio observation and document review, this is to make informed decisions out of the findings.

The researcher discussed and interpreted data using tables, and words. All data were analyzed, interpreted and synthesized in order for the inferences to be accurately drawn and reported. Conclusions and recommendations were made at the end of the study. This brought very accurate information by generating tables, bar charts and percentages of ideas from respondents. A lot of essential data were collected, assessed and analysed and discussed. The researcher chose this because; it helped in analysing data, the researcher's own experiences and expertise of this programme among others as well as eliminating prejudices.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the results of the data collected from respondents through interviews and observations made during field work based on the objectives set. Photographs and tables have been used to synthesize the necessary data to facilitate the understanding of data retrieved from the field. This chapter presents and analyses data collected data from the study along with detail discussions.

#### 4.1 Beliefs and Practices Involved in making Klikor Kete weaves

Kete weaves occupy a special place in the hearts and minds of the Ewe people. This is basically because of how traditionally, the features of kete is uniquely different from other weaves and these weaves have a link with the beliefs and practices that associates its production. Even though there has been lots of changes in the appearance of the weaves the evidence of continues existence of some preparatory processes prior to the weaving process cannot be underestimated. This gives reason to believe that traditional fashion is dynamic and keeps changing over the years. (Dzramedo, 2009).

All rites performed by individuals who prefer to be dressed in Ewe kete do that with meaning. They choose the type of Kete that will suit the occasion they intend to wear them for. It is during these occasions that the meanings associated to the kete becomes very relevant. The beliefs and practices involved in the production of kete is seen by the people of Klikor spins from basic conceptual beliefs which are preparatory processes which are involved in the life of the weaver as they weave. However, Togbe (personal communication, March 19, 2018) emphasised that the kete

weaves when produced are not ordinary they possess designs that were not preconceived because of the pre-preparatory processes involved.

#### 4.1.1 Beliefs

Traditionally, the act of praying and pouring libation has been presently the custom practiced by the weavers in Klikor. Any of these form of prayer is done before they weaving process. When interviewed on whether there were some spiritual practices or ritual performances involved in the preparation of the yarns before using them to weave the kete fabrics, the respondents including residents and chief expressed their candid views maintaining that they have not experienced or heard of anything of the sort. The weavers however explained that daily spiritual routines (figure 5) are part of their occupation as weavers hence they commit their work into the hands of *Mawu Sogbolisa* (The Supreme God) before commencing work each day. This finding also confirms the narratives of Dotse (2015) that the Ewe people are spiritual people who have deep respect for their ancestors, feared and venerate the creator of the universe through various traditional mediums. Interestingly, one of the weavers reported that they are not the only weavers or artisans who commit their work into the hands of the „Supreme Being“. According to him, farmers and fishermen do same therefore there shouldn't be any reason for which the kete making would be associated with any form of spirituality even though it plays vital functions during festivals, rituals and initiations. The position of the weavers is justifiably and undeniably sound. In that, even school sessions begin with prayer in Ghana because the people of Ghana are prayerful and generally spiritually conscious as a people. Spirituality is integral part of our culture. Therefore Klikor been known for numerous shrines including the famous Nogokpo shrine shouldn't bare any negative stigma on the artistry of the weavers of that jurisdiction.



Figure 5: Klikor kete weaver performing morning prayers before the start of his work  
(Source: Field Work Data 2018)

#### **4.1.2 Practices**

##### *Yarn preparation*

During a detailed field observation to investigate the preparation processes involved on weaving the kete cloth by the Ewe weavers at the Klikor traditional area, some interesting revelations unfolded which conforms with the earlier study conducted by Lartey (2014) regarding the production processes of Kente, kete and Fugu cloths at various parts Ghana including some Ewe communities in Ho area.

Interview reports revealed that the local weavers at Klikor have double sources of the yarns used for their weaving. While some were obtained and processed locally, other weavers mainly depended on imported yarns from Togo and Benin for their weaving. This statement thereby confirms the earlier position of Daaku (1979 as cited in Kraamer, 2006) that the raw materials for weaving were imported from Togo, Benin and Ivory Coast into Ghana. The weavers at Klikor used both cotton and rayon fibres to produce their weaves.

It was observed that the fibres go through seasoned process including preparation of yarns, organic dyes and dyeing of fibres to obtain bright colours as narrated by Lartey (2014) in her ethnographic study. However, for some reasons including the tiring process involved in the yarn preparation and readily availability of yarns on the market, the weavers indicated that they have resulted in purchasing manufactured yarns than making them locally. According to them, the variety of coloured cotton cone yarns are cheaper and usually obtained from the local market or ordered from Togo (figure 6 and 7). They explained that working with the already coloured yarns is less stressful since it saves them from the trouble of going through dyeing process as they used to do in the past. Details of the dyeing processes used by the Klikor weavers in the past are the same as that of the Ho and Agotime weavers which has already been documented by Lartey (2014) in her work. For example the locally manufactured yarns, the process begins with spinning of yarns which were pre-soaked in starch solution made from cassava juice. The yarns were then taken through warping process to prevent them from entangling during dyeing after which the starch was removed by boiling the yarns in water for about twenty five to thirty minutes. This allows the dyes to penetrate easily into the yarns during dyeing.



Figure 6: Imported yarn cones used by Klikor kete weavers  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)





Figure 7: Naturally dyed yarns in organic dye and some artificial yarns  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)

The entire preparation process is crowned with dyeing the yarns in natural dye extracts which is then allowed to dry. After drying, the yarns are then washed to remove excess dyes and make the yarns clean before the actual weaving of the kete cloth is done. The cleaning of the yarns is an indication of how the Klikor weavers are hygienic and conscious of adequate aesthetic finishing of their weaves. One respondent recounts that, the purity and neatness of weaves attracts good market value and respect to the weaver therefore hygiene is held in high esteem with regarding to kete weaving. It was also observed that some weavers complement the organic dyes with artificial dyes (figure 7). According to them the artificial dyes save them time and the trouble of going through the stressful lengthy process of vegetable dye preparation as vividly outlined by Lartey (2014) in her phenomenological study

of woven organic dyed yarns. Through the study, the weavers indicated that the reasons they don't manufacture the yarns again, is because they are now many in the market and are far cheaper and easier to get compared to previous processes. They are also already in various colours and will need no dye process.

The old way of getting their yarns dyed, has died down since the introduction of already dyed yarns on the market. The dyeing of the yarns were done because they wanted their preferred colour and because they didn't have any fixative to make the dyed yarns permanent, the kete fabric easily fades when it is washed. The yarn is called "Detsi" in Ewe so if they want it in any colour example black, it is called "Detsi yibor" and that is how they named their yarns when dyed. Findings indicate that the Klikor weavers used both local and foreign names for yarns they purchase on the market some these foreign names currently used are M4/T4, Miran, Silk and Cotton.

#### *Klikor Kete design and weaving process*

According to Kwakye-Opong (2014) Ewes had their own style of weaving and this assertion was evident during the field observation at Klikor. Samples of the older Klikor weaves looked thick and highly textured as compared to the current weaves. In an interview to find out reasons why the weight and texture of the cloth has changed, the weavers pointed to modernity as the main factor. According to them, people do not feel comfortable wearing thick fabrics these days therefore called for modification in the craft. They also added that, the yarns are now finer and the weaving techniques have been improved over the years due to making it easier to produce well refined and smooth textured woven fabrics than before. However, field observation reports indicates that the Klikor weaver still use the traditional simple looms – preferably called „Agba“ by the indigenes for their cloth weaving which makes the entire

weaving process somewhat cumbersome. The weavers admitted that the looms seem to be traditional but have under gone some modifications in recent times which make it convenient for weaving. It was also observed that the weavers crafted their own looms in customised manner to suit personal preferences of the artists however, there were general features of the looms characterized by simplicity and constructed in local wood fixed firmly on the ground (see figure 8).



Figure 8: Traditional loom used by Klikor kete weavers

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

The weavers were also interviewed on how they come out with the various unique kete design patterns and the motifs incorporated in the weaves. Interestingly, the respondents gave honour to the supreme God in their opening statements referring to their craft as „*Adanu*“ (Art or Design) which is talent or gift from God. It was observed that the weavers do not create initial sketches or drawings to serve as a guide

before beginning their weaves. According to them, the guidance of *Mawu Sogbolisa* and the experience on the loom developed over the years leads to creating perfect designs and patterns. However, it was also observed the weavers at Klikor have a gallery of previous designs which they use as exhibits to show clients who wish to have similar designs. This finding also confirms the earlier studies of Kraamer (2006), Lartey, (2014) & Dotse (2015) that Ewe Kete weavers are geniuses who create design patterns from imagination and as well have collection of woven pieces in bags for records. Indeed, creating designs on the loom was not a difficult task for the Klikor kete weavers even as the design patterns and motives looked complex and very colourful.

After obtaining suitable textured and coloured yarn, the weaving process is set to commence. The warp ends are laid on the loom with long yarn stretched and separated from a distance, wrapped on a pedal and supported with heavy weight (dragstone) to prevent them from entangling (see figure 9). According to the weavers, improper stretching of the yarns can lead to lose weaving thereby producing unattractive cloth. Having set up the loom with warp ends firmly laid through the heddles, the main weaving which is the interlacing of the weft ends carried on a customised shuttle is used for the interlacing.



Figure 9: Stretched warp ends attached to dragstone  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)

The number of shuttles for a strip of kete depends on the numbers of coloured yarns the weaver chooses to create the patterns with. The shuttles carry the weft yarns which are then threaded through the warp ends and then pressed with a beater in a repeated process which the weavers describe as “ke”(open), “te” (close). After repeating this creative process of opening the warp ends, threading through with the shuttles and closing it up with a beater to make it firm, along strip of colourful cloth is produced.



Figure 10: Sample Shuttles for threading  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)

It was observed that the weavers accompany the art with music. A probe into why they sing along while weaving revealed interesting responses. According to the weavers, the weaving process requires sound peaceful state of mind and a medium of connection to the grand creator – *Mawu Sogbolisa* (The Supreme God) for artistic knowledge (*Adanu*) in order to create these beautiful pieces (figure 11 shows samples of some colourful and complex woven designs). Therefore, music is used as a medium of relaxation to which they do not realize been seated for long hours through the weaving process. They explained that it sometimes takes them about 4 hours to complete complex long single strip and the process is tiring but music makes it enjoyable together with the finish product bringing self-fulfillment. This joy can be seen on the facial expression of one of the weavers in figure 15. Sample of the loom used by the genius Klikor weavers is presented in figure 13.



Figure 11: Complex colourful imaginative designs made by Klikor weaver who believe their ideas comes from God  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 12: Klikor weaver demonstrating one of the kete weaving process (warping)

Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 13: Structure of Klikor kete loom

Source: Field Work Data (2018)



#### 4.2 Symbolism and Philosophies of kete designs

Klikor kete weaves are characterized by unique designs which are based on nature such as animal, human motifs as well as things found in the natural environment (see figure 14).



Figure 14: Klikor kete weaves with animal motifs

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

Further investigation to establish symbolic meanings of the motives in a single and focus groups interview at different sessions with the respondents comprising of chiefs, elders and weavers resulted in a converging response. According to them:

the motifs and the design patterns are the reflections of their beliefs in nature as the source of life and internal peace therefore connecting with the natural elements is an integral part of their lives.

The interpretations of the motifs and design patterns of the Klikor kete cloth as explained by the respondents provide sound justification for people who are attracted to nature and are inclined towards spirituality to be highly interested in the Klikor kete weaves for its symbolism and functionality.



Figure 15: Traditional loom used by Klikor kete weavers

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

In an interview with two traditional leaders, it was disclosed that the Klikor weaves are characterized by warp and weft patterns consisting of household objects, natural shapes, animal forms and human beings. The cloth were made in single long strips and later stitched together with needle or machine to obtain a full cloth length. The weavers explained that their weaves follow the Plain, Twill and Tapestry sequences of weaving where the plain weaves has no particular design but the twill weaves possesses varied patterns running through the cloth whilst the tapestry comes with

deliberate construction of images in the cloth to represent an idea. According to the weavers, they do not have to adhere to any rigid rules or royal principles when weaving and that the woven kete cloth is also characterized by elaborate end borders and simple strips on side (figure 16)



Figure 16: Elaborate end borders of Klikor kete weave

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

Again, another interesting thing which was remarkable about the Klilor kete weaves was the unique coding and naming of the design patterns. It was observed that the kete designs were coded with unique names and a further probe into what constituted the nameology from the respondents revealed that the kete patterns were symbolically coded according to their motifs and functionality. This finding also affirms the earlier claim of Dotse (2015) that Ewe Kete cloth in general has unique characteristics customised to serve specific function. From the field observations and interviews, some names and meanings of klikor kete cloth designs are presented based

on their characteristics and functionality as follows; figurative images, symbolic patterns and simple patterns.

#### **4.2.1 Figurative Klikor weaves**

Klikor weavers incorporated animal motifs along with coloured patterns in their weaves to connote figurative expressions. In some cases, they used household objects such as comb, stool, cutlass, broom, spoon, etc. as motifs for such figurative cloths. According to the weavers, these objects and the natural figures are part of the livelihood of the people connecting them to nature and symbolise life. The objects are therefore used symbolically to make figurative expressions in some weaves which are used for specific functions such as rites of passage, initiations and celebrations. Some of these figurative weaves were collected and presented pictorially with brief descriptions.



Figure 17: Tapestry, Twill weave combined geometrical pattern woven with animal motifs (Elephant, lizard, chameleon, eagle, crocodile and seagull)



Figure 18. Plain weave, tapestry. Household object (comb) woven in varied colours in full drop pattern arrangement  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 19. Plain weave, tapestry, Multi-colour patterned weave with variety of motifs including; stool, cock, geometrical shapes and drum:  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)

*Symbolic and Geometric patterns*

In some instances, the Klikor kete weavers skillfully integrate multi-coloured geometrical shapes into their weaves. The geometrical shapes are usually arranged in a full drop pattern arrangement with strips of beautiful multi-coloured yarns creatively woven around the motifs. Such cloths are usually used for joyful occasions like marriage ceremonies and festivals. The weavers admitted that the nature of this kind of kete requires patience and it is time consuming taking several hours even a day sometimes to complete a full piece of cloth. One of the respondents explained that process requires use and inter-change of several shuttles due to the many variety of colours used for the weave. Figure 19 shows an example of this type of kete from the Klikor locality.



Figure 20: Twill weave Complex multi-colour weaves with geometrical shapes as motifs.

Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 21: *Ehia nage* (Poverty should fall) Plain weave Simple mat weave with long coloured strips of lines and organic shapes as motifs.

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

#### **4.2.2 Simple and Complex patterns**

Common among the Klikor weaves are cloth made with simple or complex patterns without motifs in them. This type of weaves includes mono and multi-colours usually woven using the plain or twill weave techniques. According to the weavers, this type of kete is less stressful to produce since it does not involve complex motifs. They added that this category of kete are the less expensive and are usually for daily usage.

The Features and characteristics of Ewe kete are very unique no matter how complex or simple it may appear after weaving. These kete designs have names that associate to the daily life activities of life. Some of these weaves were also named after the weavers or after an event on occurrence. These names more importantly aids both the young and old remember past events and further makes it easy to buy from a person. In the Ghanaian markets African traditional clothing are easily identified by names rather than through description.

The Ewe weaves and their names with what they mean. As captured by the respondents. “Ehiānaga” (Are you in need of Money?), “Atōtō” (Pineapple), “Fiawoyome” (behind the chief), “Kpekui Vɔ (small stones, pebbles), “Matomato” (no way), “Lɔlɔli” (love is present), “Haliwoe” (Ani seed), “Kɔsɔkɔsɔ” (chains), “Lɔlɔzuavi” (Love turns to bitterness), “Nyazɔzɔ” (check your steps), All these are life circumstances used by the indigenous and contemporary weavers and traditional leader in the identification of the Ewe kete cloths. A cloth such as “Hali woe” talks about the spice called “Nkitinkitin” in the Akan language and Anise seed in English this seed has a lot of health benefits that is used by people. Other weaves were Mother’s Day, Easter Sunday and these designs are used for the occasions or presented as a gift to a loved one.

According to Bohannan (1964), in order to appreciate the art fully, something of the cultural background must be known to make the message clear. Also, an aesthetically good work may be rejected as poor or ugly when it fails to serve what extra aesthetic functions it may be.

The cultural background of these woven fabrics are very relevant to its people and to the stakeholders involved even if it is not aesthetically appealing but the wearer, or buyer may have reasons for buying. And that reason can be because of its cultural significance or its beautiful appearance. Owing to the above point mentioned, the researcher highlighted on the meaning and symbolism of some Ewe kete weaves from the respondents who were interviewed.



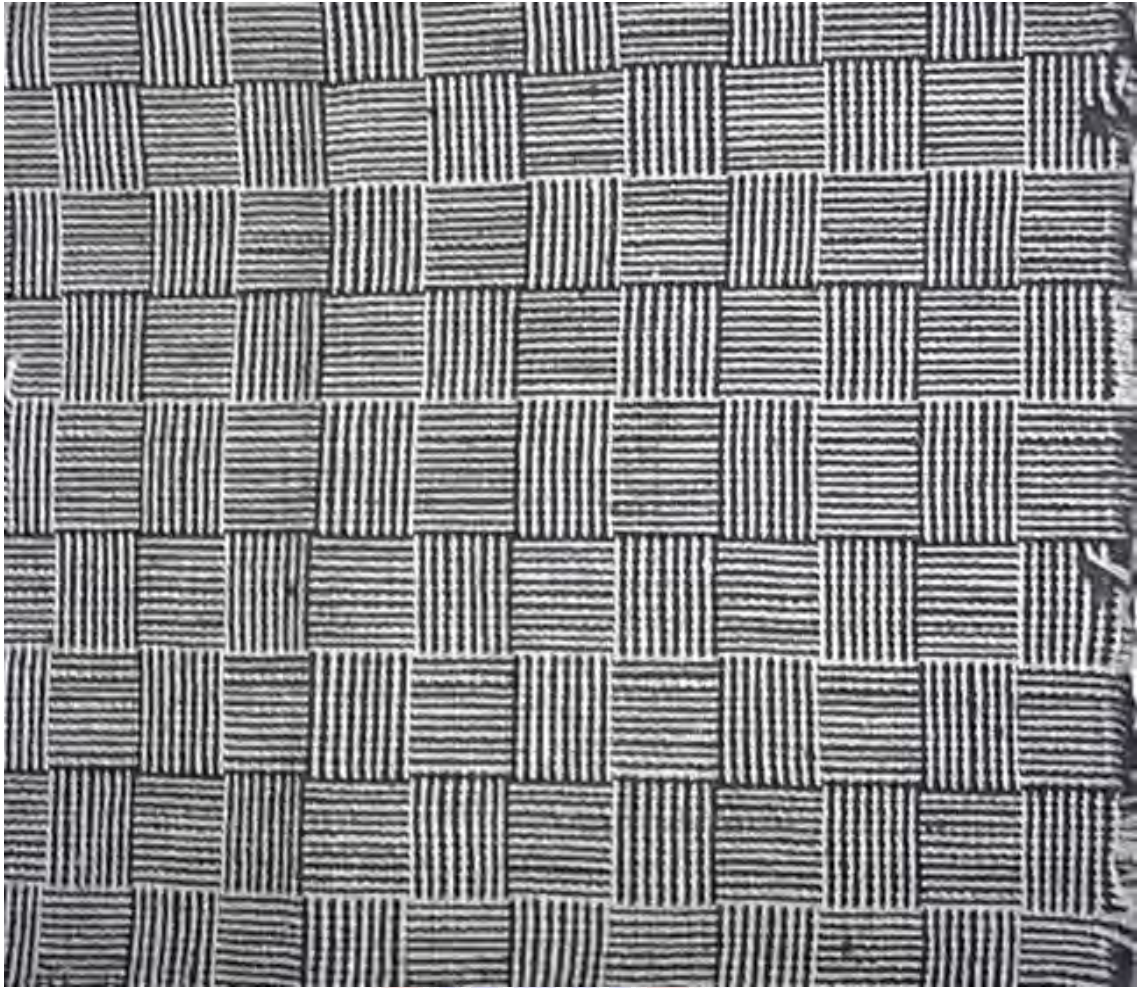


Figure 22: *Kpe kui vɔ*, Twill weave Mono-colour textured pattern single weave

Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 23. *Ehianega/Afiadekemefa* (you need money), plain weave

Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 24: Fiawoyome (Behind the chief), Plain weave

Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 25: Atɔtɔ (Pineapple), twill weave  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 26: Haliwoe (A processed corn to prepare Aliha drink, enduring challenges),  
Plain weave

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

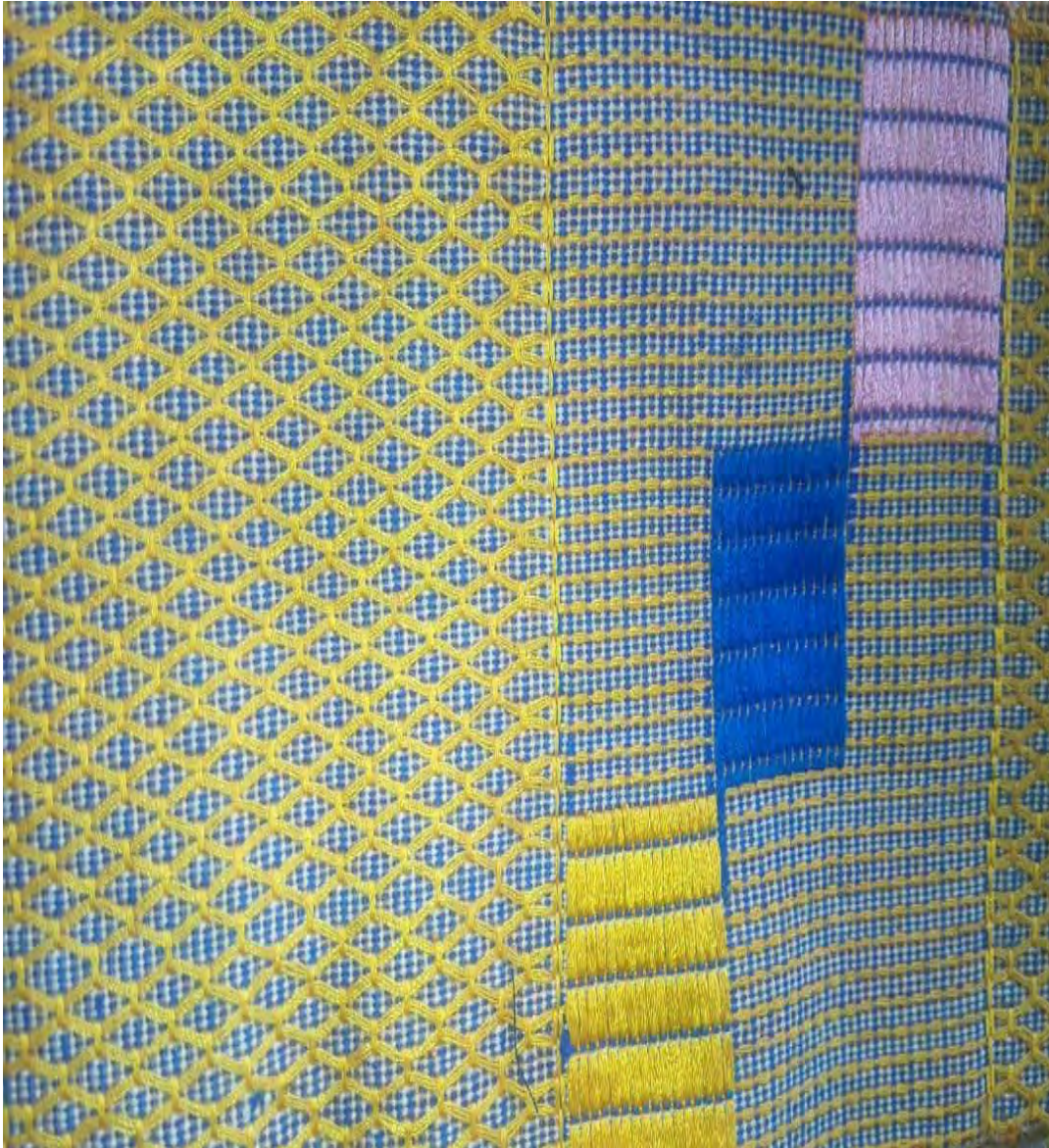


Figure 27: *Soge (thunder money)*, Twill weave  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 28: Achimota (prescribed kete fabric for students in Achimota school), Plain Weave variation  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 29: kɔsɔkɔsɔ (chains), Twill weave  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)





Figure 30: klogame (the plastron of a tortoise), plain weave  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 31: Nyazozo (know how to walk), Plain weave

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

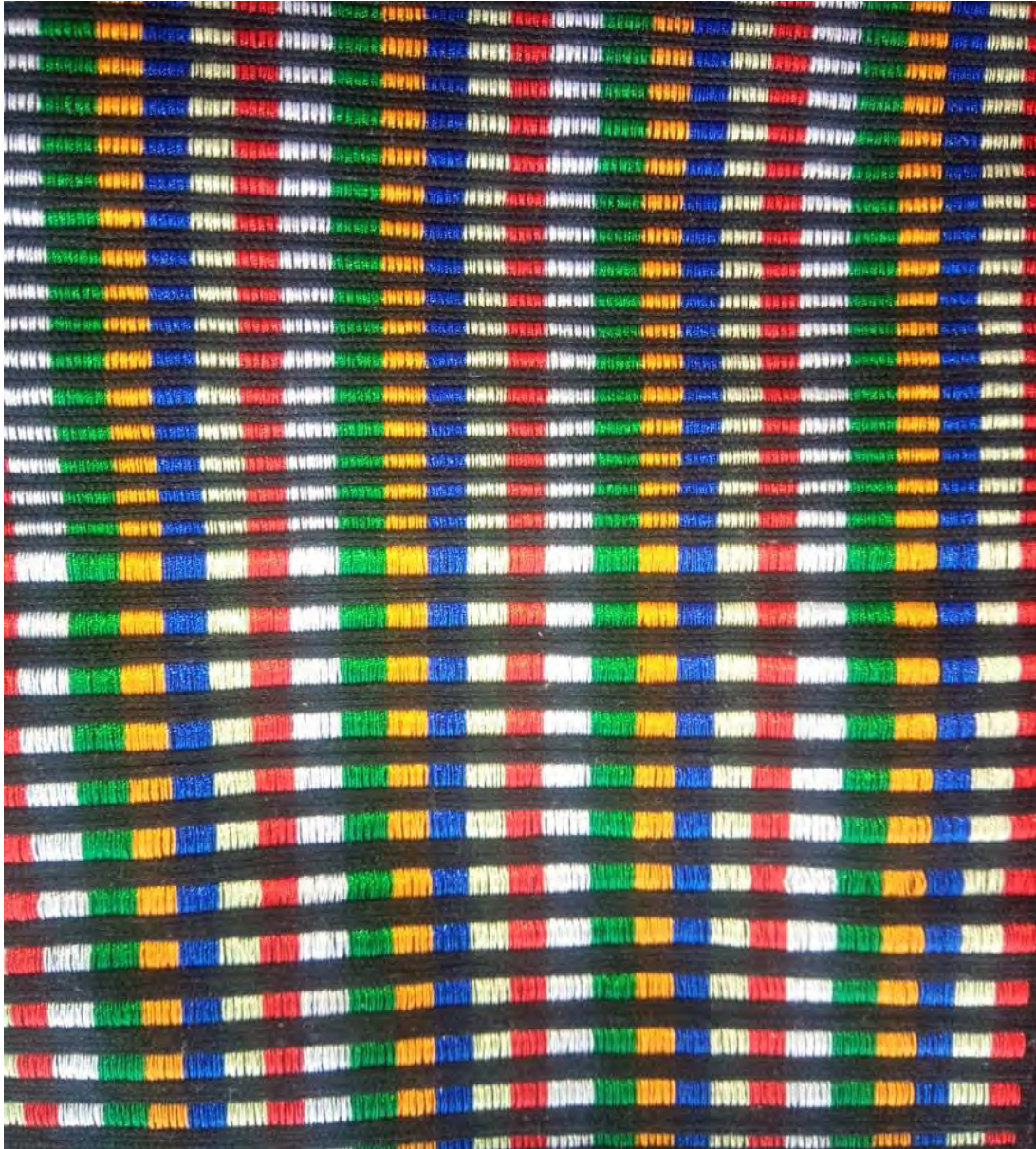


Figure 32: Masawor (name of originator) weft faced  
Source: Field Work Data (2018)



Figure 33: Ðəŋku (Fishing Net), plain and weft faced diamond pattern

Source: Field Work Data (2018)

### **4.3 Strategies to commercialize and promote Klikor Kete weaves**

One of the main objectives of the study was to investigate how the Ewe kete cloth can be commercialized in the mainstream Ghanaian fashion industry as it were in the case of Asante Kente cloth which is even well known globally. This objective therefore formed the basis on which some specific questions along with observation guides were designed to gather in-depth information from the respondents.

It was observed that the Klikor weavers were not enthused to commercialise their craft. Majority of the weavers were seen working solo and not bothered about producing in larger quantities. When interviewed, some explained simply that they are content with what they make from their weaves. Yet, some disclosed that they mostly find it difficult to raise capital for the work which makes it very challenging to produce in large quantities or even employ extra hands to assist them with the production process. Hence what they produce now is just “hand to mouth” said a respondent. When probed on how they can expand their business, the weavers purported that they will gladly appreciate any form of external support both financially and high level of marketing. To them if they get access to enough raw materials and ready market, they will produce in large quantities like their Asante counterparts. One of the weavers lamented that “we don’t even have association to channel our problems through to authorities”. This indicates that most of the weavers at Klikor wish to engage in full time commercial weaving better than they are currently doing.

The study also investigated whether or not the name “Klikor” – which is rather popular for their strong adherent to traditional belief systems and practices such as “Trokovi” and Trokosi” and also home of the famous “Nogokpo shrine” have any adversity on the patronage of the kete weaves. Generally, the respondents exhibited

little knowledge on the matter and seem not to have any knowledge about how their location at Klikor could affect the patronage of their craft. However, they admitted that Klikor is well known for the great Nogokpo shrine and not for the Kete weaves. Also, in an interview with the chief and elders, they admitted the name “Klikor” exert spiritual power and awe to many people outside the jurisdiction because of the famous Nogokpo shrine. However, the irony rather is that, the shrine is a personification of peace and serves justice for all and not a symbol of destruction as the name has been associated with negativity out there.

When drawn their attention to the possibility that the negative stigma of Klikor could be the reason why the klikor weaves are not making waves, the weavers purported that the perception about their town can be changed through education and by their chiefs advertising the Klikor cloth when they travel outside the Ewe land. They therefore call on the support of all benevolent people and government to come to their aid to expand the weaving which has gone beyond cultural artifact and now a lucrative business which can create much employment for many people especially those in the fashion value chain.

#### **4.4 Demographics of Respondents**

The sum of respondents was sixteen (16), the researcher had access to all sixteen (16) respondents comprising four (4) traditional weavers, six (6) costumers, and six (6) dressmakers. For ethical reasons, the following alphabets were used for the respondents.

**Table 4.4: Demographics of Respondents**

Town	Traditional Leaders	Weavers	Dressmakers
A	TL-A	W-A	D-A

From the Table 4.4 the town was represented with A, TL-A represent Traditional Leaders from Town A, W-A represent weavers from the town A, D-A represent Dressmakers from the Town A, in that order.

#### 4.5 Demographics Characteristics of Traditional Leaders (TL)

This part openly discusses the demographic characteristics of the Traditional Leaders involved in the study. The limiting factors discussed include: Age range, gender and length of experiences.

**Table 4.5: Traditional leaders**

Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	1	16.67
6-10 years	2	33.33
11-15 years	1	16.67
16-20 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work (2018)

Table 4.5 shows the experience of the leaders in their weaving experiences, it showed that, one (1) Traditional leader representing 16.67 % has been weaving from a period of 1 to 5 years. 2 (33.33%) of leaders have been in the weaving profession from 6 to 10 years. Two (1) traditional leaders representing 16.67 % have had 11-15 years weaving experience. The research findings have also established that the Traditional leaders were actively involved in weaving even though it is not as they used to, their experiences relates also to their leadership roles in the town. Work experience refers

to events which are experienced by an individual which relate to the performance of some job. However, a number of measures can be used to represent an individual's level of work experience (Hofmann, Jacobs & Gerras, 1992; Rowe, 1988).

**Table 4.6: Weavers**

Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	4	66.67
6-10 years	2	33.33
11-15 years	0	0
16-20 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work (2018)

Table 4.6 shows the experience of the weavers in their weaving, it showed that, four (4) weavers representing 66.67 % have been weaving from a period of 1 to 5years. 2 (33.33%) of weavers have been in the weaving profession from 6 to 10 years. Zero (0) for 11-15 years weaving experience and 16-20 respectively. The research findings have also established that the weavers were mostly young adults actively involved in weaving.

**Table 4.7: Dressmakers**

Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	4	66.67
6-10 years	1	16.67
11-15 years	1	16.67
16-20 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work (2018)



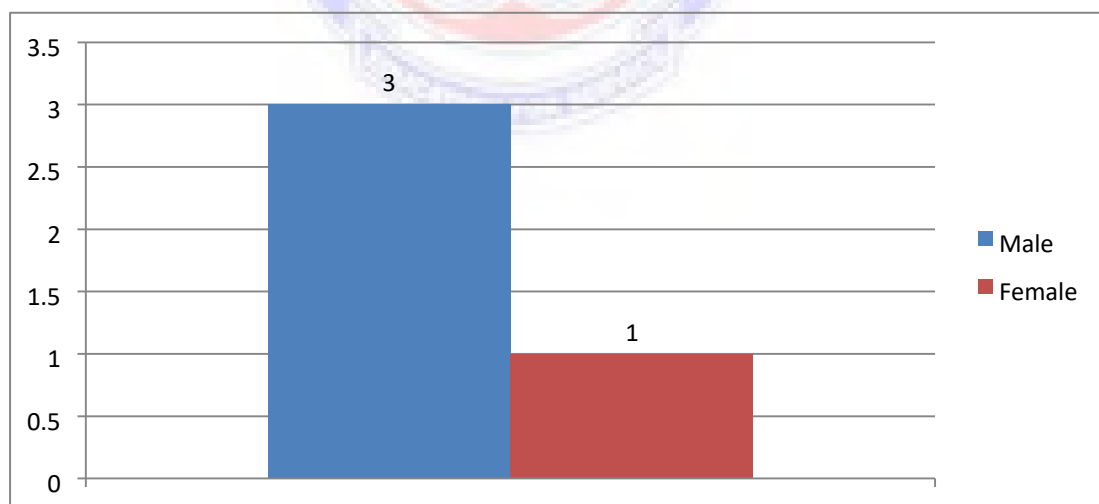
Table 4.7 shows the number of years the dressmakers have been practicing sewing of dresses, it also showed that four (4) dressmakers representing 66.67 % have been sewing from a period of 1 to 5years. One (1) representing 16.67% of dressmakers have been in the sewing profession from 6 to 10 years. The research findings have also established that the dressmakers were mostly young women.

**Table 4.8: Demographic data of weavers in relation to gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	6	100
Female	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work (2018)

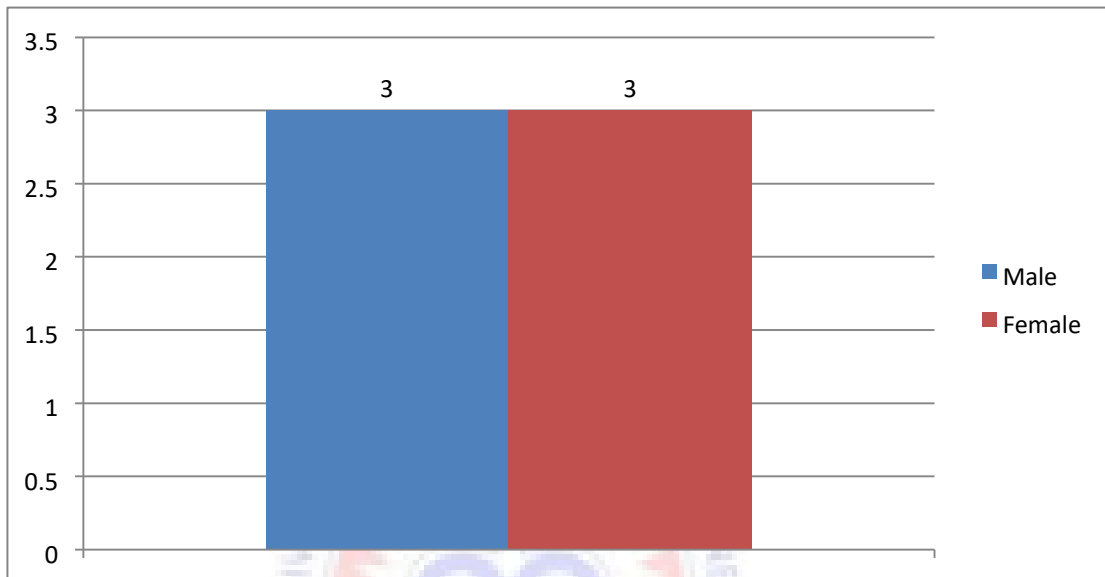
Table 4.8 showed the demographic data for gender of the respondents (weavers) for the study. From the data, six (6) weavers representing 100% were male, zero (0) representing 0% were females. This indicates that males dominate in weaving than the females in the study.



**Figure 4.5: Demographic Characteristics of Traditional Leaders (TL) in relation to their gender**

Source: Field work data (2018)

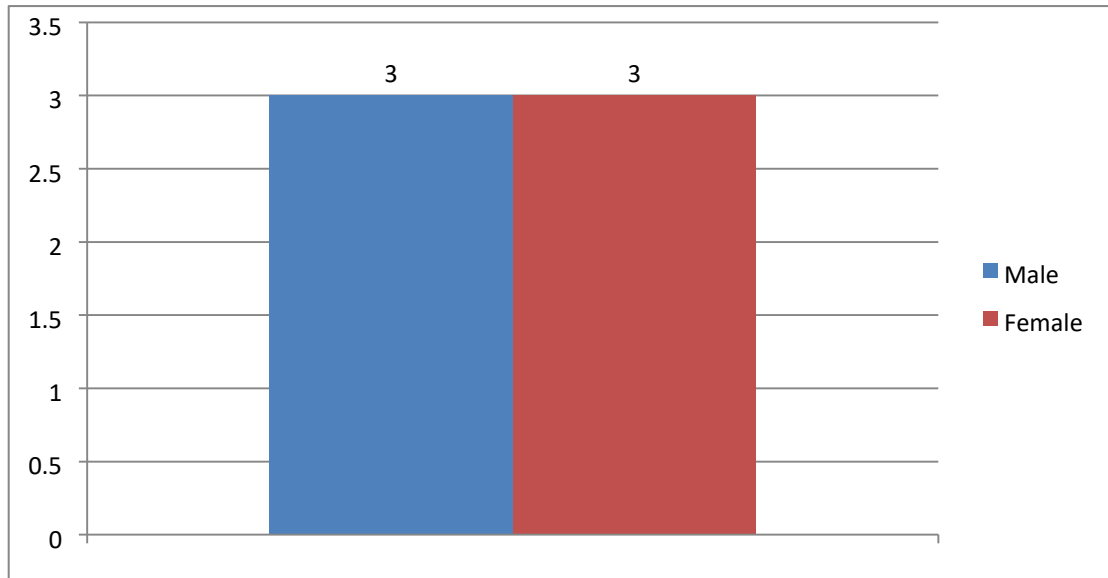
The Figure 4.5 shows the demographic data for the gender of the Traditional Leaders for the study. From what the data shows, (3) representing 90 % are males while (1) representing 10 % was female. The data suggest that males were more than the females in this category of the study.



**Figure 4.6: Demographic Characteristics of dressmakers in relation to gender**

Source: Field work data (2018)

Figure 4.6 above showed the demographic data for gender of the dressmakers for the study. From the data, three (3) representing 50 % are females while three (3) representing 50% are males. The data suggest that there is a fair distribution of both male and female in the study.



**Figure 4.7: Demographic Characteristics of weavers in relation to gender**

Source: Field work data (2018)

Figure 4.7 above showed the demographic data for gender of the weavers for the study.

From the data, six (6) representing 100 % are males, while none (0) representing 50 % are females. The data suggest that the male figure is mostly involved more weaving when the study was conducted.

#### 4.6 Age Range of Respondents (Traditional Leaders)

Table 4.8 below shows the ages of the respondents interviewed during the fieldwork.

**Table 4.8: Age Range of Respondents (Traditional Leaders)**

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
25-40 years	1	25
40-65 years	2	50
65-80 years	1	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work data (2018)

Table 4.8 above shows the age range of respondents (Traditional leaders) for the study. One (1) representing 25% each for both the ages of 25 to 40 and 65 to 80. Two (2) representing 50% in the age range of 65-80. It could be realized in the study that the middle age class of people were mostly represented in the study. The interview dialogue also revealed that the traditional leaders knew about weaving.

**Table 4.9: Age Range of Respondents (Dressmakers)**

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
25-40 years	4	66.67
40-65 years	2	33.33
65-80 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work data (2018)

Table 4.9 shows the age range of respondents (dressmakers) for the study. Four (4) respondents from the age range of 25 to 40 representing 66.67%, two (2) representing 33.33% of the ages 40 to 65 and the age range from 65-80 years had no representation.

**Table 4.10: Age Range of Respondents (weavers)**

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
25-40 years	4	66.67
40-65 years	2	33.33
65-80 years	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work data (2018)

Table 4.10 shows the age range of respondents (weavers) for the study. Four (4) respondents from the age range of 25 to 40 representing 66.67%, two (2) representing 33.33% of the ages 40 to 65 and the age range from 65-80 years had no representation.

#### **4.7 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The study revealed that all the participants have been in Klikor for not less than 6 years. This qualifies a respondent for this study.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Overview

In this Chapter, the researcher focuses on the summary of the main findings of the study, conclusion and general recommendations. The aim of this thesis has been an attempt to examine and document forms, functions of Klikor kete designs, highlighting its aesthetic values which can be incorporated in contemporary Ghanaian fashion.

#### 5.2 Summary of Findings

Below are the key findings of the study and they are mostly based on objectives.

The following were the objectives:

- Investigate the beliefs and practices surrounding the making of Klikor Kete weaves
- Examine and document the symbolisms and philosophies of selected Klikor Kete designs
- To find out strategies to commercialise and promote Klikor Kete weaves

The study revealed that there are spiritual connotations or practices involved in the preparations and weaving process of Klikor kete designs. The weavers use practical scientific and artistic process coupled with aesthetic, imaginative and creative abilities which they believe are talents given to them by the supreme God.

Finding revealed that the Klikor kete designs have unique features which distinctively identify them from other woven fabrics. Klikor kete designs are originally filled with figurative images. It is usually produced in strips and joined together with images like star, moon, hand, comb and more running through the woven fabric.

Findings revealed that the indigenous Klikor kete weaves have predominantly dull coloured yarns used in the execution of the works. Whereas the contemporary woven kete fabrics have been identified to mostly have very bright colours and few or no figurative images.

Findings revealed that the indigenous Klikor weaves possess some philosophical ideas in the form of proverbs, unfortunately which have been neglected; mostly a lot of people look down upon these art forms that project the rich values of the Ghanaian culture. The indigenous Ewe kete design (often figurative and mostly weft faced) it is different from that of other woven works.

It was established through the study that the Klikor kete weaves have been modified and possesses aesthetically pleasing features, suitable textures and colourful patterns which can be used to produce any form of dress by contemporary fashion designers to satisfy the taste of modern day and fashion lover both locally and internationally.

The study revealed that indigenous Ewe kete woven designs follow the Plain, Twill and Tapestry weaving sequence, plain weave which has no particular design, twill weave will have varied pattern running through the kete cloth whiles the tapestry comes with deliberate construction of images in the kete cloth to represent an idea.

### 5.3 Conclusions

A number of conclusions could be drawn based on the findings of the study. One of which is that the unpopularity of the Klikor kete weaves is due to the negative stigma they have been associated with. The fact the weaves are made in a locality where the “fearsome Nogokpo shrine” is located puts a lot of people off from its patronage. Perhaps, with the embracement of foreign culture and Ghana predominantly being a Christian country, many people do not want to purchase items especially the kete cloth which is produced at a town popularly known for extreme traditional beliefs and practices.

Whereas the Klikor weaves were found to be unique in nature and possess aesthetic values which can be incorporated into modern Ghanaian fashion, the finding revealed that the weavers lack what it takes namely, financial strength, enough raw materials and adequate labour force to produce in commercial quantities.

Again, it was evident that the kind of publicity given to other weavers in Ghana especially those in Asante land was completely missing at Klikor. The weavers at Klikor do not have any form of publicity or promotion from media houses and the fashion industry hence the weavers are confined to “hand to mouth” kind of business which would be difficult for them to engage in commercial production.

Again, it is fair to conclude based on the findings that the Klikor weaves are aesthetically pleasing with comfortable textures suitable for use in modern fashion. The designs are beautiful with variety of textures both light and heavy weight suitable for all occasions and therefore should be promoted and commercialised to the general public.



Finally, it is justifiable to conclude that if measures are not taken to embark on intensified public reeducation to change the negative narratives about Klikor weaves, the long surviving artistry which was handed over down to the current generation would eventually die off in the near future due to poor patronage of the Klikor kete cloths.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are therefore made based on the data, discussions, analyses and conclusions drawn throughout the study.

It would be ethically prudent to retell the negative narratives of associated with the people of Klikor. By so doing, their craft will be highly accepted and patronized by the general public both in Ghana and abroad. The study therefore recommends that the National House of Chiefs in collaboration with the paramount chief of the Klikor Traditional Area together with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) should embark on grand public education coupled with positive documentary relating the arts and crafts of the Klikor people. Media houses should be tasked by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Arts to promote Klikor kete weaves nationwide.

Again, the local Klikor kete weavers should form an association and establish Klikor Kete Festival to help promote sales of the kete cloth. “The Klikor Kete Weavers” Association”, when formed, can collaborate with the Ketu South Municipal Assembly should establish weaving training centers to help the youth to learn the art of weaving and commercialising it. This would help generate funds for developmental projects in the Klikor township.

Also, Klikor weavers should embrace modern technology to help increase their production. Textiles engineers and mechanical technicians should study the current loom used by local weavers and modify or design automated devices for local weavers to help them produce their hand woven fabrics in a more simplified and less stressful process. This would also help the Klikor weavers to expand their business of kete weaving.

It is recommended detail documentary should be done by Ghanaian fashion experts on the symbolism and figurative designs of the Klikor kete weaves to help educate buyers on the philosophies and proverbs that are associated with the kete fabric. Explaining them in details will help in advertising the cloth better to consumers nationwide and abroad.

Finally, Weavers should be supported financially by the Municipal Assembly with low interest loans and raw materials to catapult the weaving business.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### Interview Guide for Weavers

Dear leaders, these questions seek to find out from you, your perception concerning the Indigenous designs in the Ewe kete and the role contemporary fashion has/can play in this present dispensation where fashion is very paramount. Please you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions. All information provided will be treated as strictly as Confidential. There are no wrong or correct answers, however, I would be grateful for your honest contribution.

1. Name
2. Educational background
3. Age
4. Do you have any background knowledge in weaving?
5. How did you learn weaving?
6. How long have you been weaving?
7. How often do you weave?
8. Did you meet or inherit any existing design?
9. How often do you create new designs?
10. Are there differences between indigenous and contemporary kete designs?  
Explain, if Yes or No.
11. How are the Ewe kete designs achieved?
12. What design traits are associated to Ewe Kete?
13. Do the designs in the kete cloth make them Fashionable?
14. What role does kete designs play in the fashion Industry in Ghana?

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Guide for Traditional Leaders

Dear sir, these questions seek to find out from you, your perception concerning the Indigenous designs in the Ewe kete and the role contemporary fashion has/can play in this present dispensation where fashion is very paramount. Please you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions. All information provided will be treated as strictly as Confidential. There are no wrong or correct answers, however, I would be grateful for your honest contribution.

1. Name
2. Educational background
3. Age
4. Do you have any background knowledge in weaving?
5. How did you learn weaving?
6. How long have you been weaving?
7. What are the socio-cultural meanings of Ewe kete weaves.
8. How often do you create new designs?
9. How important is the Ewe kete in current Fashion?
10. Are there differences between Ewe kete design weaves and others?  
Explain, if Yes or No
11. What design traits are associated to Ewe Kete?
12. Do the designs in the kete cloth make them Fashionable?
13. What role does kete designs play in the fashion Industry in Ghana?

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Guide for Fashion Designers

Dear madam/sir, these questions seek to find out from you, your perception concerning the Indigenous designs in the Ewe kete and the role contemporary fashion has/can play in this present dispensation where fashion is very paramount. Please you are kindly requested to respond to the following questions. All information provided will be treated as strictly as Confidential. There are no wrong or correct answers, however, I would be grateful for your honest contribution.

1. Name
2. Educational background
3. Age
4. Do you have any background knowledge in weaving?
5. Where did you learn your profession?
6. How long have you been sewing?
7. How often do you sew?
8. Do you sew kete fabrics?
9. How often do you sew them?
10. How important is the Ewe Kete in current fashion?  
Explain, if Yes or No.
11. How best can you explain the ease in designing a style with normal fabrics and that of kete?
12. Is it possible to sew kete fabric into any style that is current?
13. Do the designs in the kete cloth make them Fashionable?
14. What role does kete designs play in the fashion Industry in Ghana?

**Thank You**