



## FACTORS AFFECTING UPPER-CLASS CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF MADE IN NIGERIA FASHION OUTFITS

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of creativity, styles and quality materials, on the upper-class buying behaviour of made in Nigeria fashion outfits. The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this study. A total of 200 upper class consumers within the Calabar metropolis made up the sample for this study. The Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the data obtained from the field. The findings reveal the following: creativity significantly affects the upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis; Styles significantly affect upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis; and that Quality material has a significant effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis. This study recommended that; constant creativity must be embraced in the production of fashion outfits; the styles of Nigerian clothing should be adopted with concern for upper class preference and standard; local fashion companies should seek ways of improving on the quality of clothing made in Nigeria to maintain long term product supremacy in the market; Finally, effective improvement on the creativity, styles as well as quality of clothing within Nigeria should be a must for all fashion outfits within the country.

**Keywords:** Fashion outfit, creativity, style and quality material

**JEL:** D12, M31, O31

### INTRODUCTION

Fashion in Nigeria is embraced by all classes of persons using both locally and internationally made clothing or dresses. But we are living in a heterogeneous society in which people rank themselves and the society also ascribe distinction to its members. These distinctions involve the ranking of individuals in some sort of hierarchy based on one's achievement (Achumba, 2006). As a means of distinction, the wealthy, also referred to as the upper class in Nigeria, are conscious of the way they appear because of the status attained. Therefore, they patronize clothes produced by top designers outside the country leaving the locally produced attires to the middle- or low-class members of the society. Aliyu (2017) posits that, clothes such as garments, textiles, and other fashion materials made in Nigeria receive little or no patronage by Nigerians especially when the foreign ones are available. For these reasons, the Nigerian fashion market lacks patronage from the upper class due to high dominance of the fashion market by foreign textiles produced in countries such as China, USA, India, Korea, Australia, UAE and many others (believed to be of high quality).

This high dominance of the Nigerian fashion market by foreign materials has to a large extent affected the buying behaviour of the upper-class citizens of Nigeria within the south- south region of the country in terms of fashion. This is because every rational consumer will always search for, purchase, use, evaluate and dispose of products and services that they expect will satisfy their need



(Achumba 2006). Also, most upper-class citizens of Nigeria have been built with the orientation that imported clothing or fashion materials are of higher quality and it tends to be accepted irrespective of the price at which it is been offered.

Centres (1952) as cited in Achumba (2006), defined social class as the psycho-social grouping of the population of persons whose socio-economic positions are objectively similar in the main and whose political economic interest coincide. In sociology the term social class is used to designate the distinction between the respected and unrespected. Solomon (2011) in an attempt to explain the social class structure stated that “all societies are divided into the “have” and the “have-not””. Solomon further explained that the United State is a place where all men are created equal. But even so, some people are seen to be more equal than others. The upper class according to Achumba (2006) is the cream of the society, the aristocracy of birth and wealth. According to Achumba, the upper-class style of living is rich but not ostentatious since they are born into wealth and are accustomed to it. In Nigeria, the upper class is believed to be the highest patronisers of clothing or dresses as far as fashion is concern, but most consumers within the south-south region of Nigeria develop little or no interest in outfit made in Nigeria. A study conducted by Lilian (2009) on the marketability of made in Nigeria textile, revealed that consumers still perceive made in Nigeria textile as being relatively lower quality and price than that of foreign textile. Thus, this research seeks to investigate if ‘the upper-class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Nigeria is affected by the styles, creativity and quality materials produced in Nigeria’. Therefore, this study is intended to examine factors affecting upper class buying behaviour of made in Nigeria outfit within Calabar metropolis.

The upper class within Cross River State, Nigeria is known to be the class in the society with high demand for quality fashion materials; hence they are referred to as the fashion driven group in our society. But for the past decades, Nigerians with class within Cross River State have shown very negative attitude towards outfits and fashion materials produced within the country, but develop high demand and taste for foreign outfits leaving locally produced attire especially traditional wears for selected events, such as traditional marriages, burials, cultural display, tourism display, Friday wears, traditional association uniform, etc. reason being that foreign outfit may not be adopted for this purposes.

Moreso, the upper-class citizens have been built with the orientation that imported outfits are of higher quality. This contributes greatly to the reduction in Nigeria’s gross domestic product (GDP), low employment opportunity in the fashion industry, brain drain, and low productivity, all of which stagnate economic growth. But despite all efforts adopted by government to see to the promotion and high patronage of Nigerian fashion outfits, Nigerians still have high level of regard for foreign clothing. These anomalies provide the basis for this research which seeks to examine the effect of style, creativity and quality materials on upper class buying behaviour of made in Nigeria fashion outfits.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Concept of fashion**

The word fashion refers to the styles in human activities or a trend in human activities or products which can either be short term or long term. Fashion products include shoes, hats, jewellery, belt, bags, cosmetics, cars etc. While the activities or services of fashion include: hairdressing, advice



on garment coordination, cosmetic surgery, tattoo image consultancy, hair transplant, cleaning services, etc. For this study the word fashion will be taken to deal with outfits, formal or informal clothing, de-spoke or readymade clothing etc. Fashion according to Lam (2013) generally refers to clothing and clothing trends. The activities of fashion involve series of changes, and in order for the change which is intrinsic to fashion to take place, the industry must continually create and design new products that will enhance consumer patronage. Therefore, creativity and designs remains an essential component of fashion needed by the Nigerian fashion industry to induce the purchase of made in Nigeria clothing in the southern region of Nigeria. Fashion according to Easey (2002) involves the exercise of creative design skills which results in product that range from the basic to the rare and elaborate. Easey (2002) also defined fashion as a continuous change in clothing and related products and services, and the exercise of creative designs and skills.

#### Fashion outfits and upper-class purchase behaviour

Fashion is a popular style or practice, especially in clothing, it is a trend in a person's dressing style. The upper-class citizens of Nigeria within the southern region are seen as people who are led or inspired by creative styling that is favourably promoted. Easey (2002) noted that, only people who can appreciate creative styling in the financial sense, are the wealthier section of the society (the upper class). Aliyu (2017) describe consumer buying behaviour as those acts of individuals directly involved when acquiring and utilizing economic goods and services as well as the decision process that precede those acts. Consumer behaviour according to Solomon (2011) refers to the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires. Consumer items range from food, shelter, music, massages, clothing etc. Made in Nigeria outfits refers to clothing produced within Nigeria by fashion companies based in Nigeria using available materials within the country locally sourced. Right from the colonial era, Nigerians have been involved in the production of clothing which was locally used by the citizens of the country. According to Lilian (2009) "The objective of the made-in-Nigeria exhibition was to "create a sense of awareness for the manufacturing industries in Nigeria so that their products could be patronized like those of advanced countries which are imported into the country". In addition, Aliyu (2017) stated that one of the major national goals in Nigeria is to have a self-reliant nation.

In search for clothing, the upper-class members of the society within the southern region of Nigeria do not go for mass production goods except where they serve as reference group for the lower class members of the society. According to Achumba (2006) they are fond of using snobbery and other upper-class settings to establish product quality and a sense of product dependability. Therefore, these creams of the society develop interest in quality and expensive clothing which is uncommon among other members of the society. To the upper class, buying made in Nigeria clothing is a matter of choice and could also be seen as products for the middle- or lower-class members of the society with the feelings that locally made products never meet their specification. Others feel locally made product is easily access by virtually all class of the society, therefore leaving them with no distinction. These leaves the Nigerian fashion industry and her marketers with a task of producing made in Nigerian product bearing in mind the various classes in the society, price sensitivity of consumers, product quality and specification as it relates to upper class buying decisions etc.

### Creativity and upper-class buying behaviour of fashion outfit

Creativity and innovation are overlapping constructs between two stages of the creative process; both are necessary for successful enterprise (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Creativity can be defined as “the production of novel and useful ideas” (Amabile et al., 1996), while innovation refers to the implementation or “transformation of a new idea into a new product or service, or an improvement in organization or process” (Heye, 2006). The innovation and creativity of Nigerian clothing is found in the designs and styles of clothing made in Nigeria. The continual change that is in fashion involves the exercise of creative design skills which result in product first range from the basic to the rare and elaborate. The creative design personnel provide part of the mechanism by which the industry responds to the need for change (Easey, 2002).

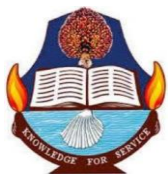
Creativity involves the creation of something new that is central to the entrepreneurial process”. (Barringer & Ireland, 2006). Creativity and innovation are considered to be inseparable from entrepreneurship, which is in turn manifested in the act of starting up and running an enterprise. Pretorius, Millard and Kruger (2005) maintain that “creativity is clearly part and parcel of the entrepreneurial skills required to successfully start a venture”. Entrepreneurs and their start-ups are considered to be “important agents of innovation” (Bosma & Harding, 2007), not simply in terms of the products and services they provide, but also in terms of the technologies and process that they utilise (Bosma & Harding; Watson et al., 1998). Entrepreneurs could be argued to be, by their very nature, the essence of creativity and innovation.

Entrepreneurs implement creative ideas to introduce innovative products or services, or to deliver products or services in a new, more efficient, and hence innovative way. Innovation in New Product Development could include upgrading an existing product or developing a totally new concept to create an original and innovative product (Larsen & Lewis, 2007). There is broad agreement that innovation should be present in all aspects of an organization and that it should be a mindset or a way of life (Abraham & Knight, 2001; Kuczmarski, 1996). Innovation should permeate through the various elements of the organization’s business model to make it harder to be copied by competitors (Loewe & Dominiquini, 2006). Thus, this study hypothesizes that,

H<sub>01</sub>: Creativity has no effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits

### Styles and upper-class buying behaviour of fashion outfits

The continual change in fashion which is intrinsic involve the exercise of creative design skills which result in products that range from the basic to the rare and elaborate, (Easey, 2002). The Upper class according to Wright (2006) “consist of people with great wealth, inherited and accumulated, influenced and power, and account for very small percentage of the population. Their network of influential friends and acquaintances, type of education, leisure pursuit and pastimes, also defines them”. Achumba (2006) defines the upper class as the cream of the society, the aristocracy of birth and wealth whose style of living is rich but not ostentatious since they are born into wealth and are accustomed to it. The central point which describes the upper class is wealth. In Nigeria the upper class citizens may form, or have existing attitude reinforced, before, during and after a purchase. Wright (2006) view attitude as feelings, believes and ways of behaving that people develop about objects, events, people and issues over lifetime through learning and experientially interacting with people and the environment.



Upper class attitude towards the style of Nigerian clothing focuses on the Upper class perceived consequences of the style of Nigerian clothing. Attitude according to black (1977), “is a predisposition towards any person, idea or object that contains cognitive, effective and behavioural component”. Attitude may evolve from many factors within the individual and his environment. These factors include cultural influences, religious leaders and teachers, parents, friends, neighbours, past experiences, our economy and occupational positions and inspirations etc (Mogaba & Akpan 2017)

The style of Nigerian clothing affects the attitude of the upper class of Nigeria in several ways. It is important to note that cloths produced within the country overtime are commonly influenced by our cultural values, religion, experience etc. and so, this has caused the styles of made in Nigeria outfits to have a common relationship. More so, the dynamic nature of man and the society has caused the upper class citizens within Cross River State to portray negative attitude towards the styles of Nigerian clothing. It is also important to note that, this class in the society are always exposed to the western culture and style of living, therefore if admired may affect their attitude towards the styles and design of clothing produced in Nigeria. Thus, this study conjectures that,

H<sub>02</sub>: Styles have no significant effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits.

Quality material and upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits

Among the most important activities required of individuals are choosing among alternatives, making decisions and solving problems Achumba (2006). Arora(2016) views quality as conformance to requirement or specification. Lilian (2009) identifies eight factors that determine quality. These factors include performance, Reliability, durability serviceability, features, Aesthetics, conformance and perceived quality. However, the relative importance of these factors will depend on the item being purchased. In the case of fashion outfits the factors that determine quality could rest on durability of the materials and the design quality. There is a popular belief that the qualities of locally manufactured goods is lower than that of imported ones. An observable fact of much consumption activity in Nigeria is the consumer’s preference for imported goods. Thus, this study hypothesizes that,

H<sub>03</sub>: Quality material has no effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits.

Theoretical framework

The theory underpinning this work is the social exchange theory. The theory was developed in 1958 by George Homands. The theory of Social Exchange people weighed the potential benefits and risk of social relationship, it also views interpersonal interactions or relationship from a cost-benefit perspective. Social exchange in line with this study deals with the exchange of social costs and benefits needed by the upper-class like satisfactory fashion outfit having the required creativity, style and quality materials. Like economic exchange, social exchange assumes that individuals take part in an exchange only when they expect rewards from it to justify the costs of taking part in it (Bailey, 2008). In line with this study, human interaction is a purely rational process that arises and leads to economic success.

## METHODOLOGY

### Materials and method

The study adopted survey research design. A highly structured questionnaire was developed for the study. The study area for this research was Calabar, Cross River State. A sample of 200 was used. The convenience sampling method was adopted in administering questionnaire to respondents the required sample for the study. The data were analysis using a simple regression analysis to ascertain the composite and individual effect of each sub-variable.

The model contained three independent variables (creativity, style, and quality materials) and one dependent variable (upper-class buying behaviour). The model specification for the study is as follows:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + E$$

Substituting the variables in the equation,

$$BB = b_0 + b_1C + b_2S + b_3QM + E$$

Where;

BB = upper-class buying behaviour

b<sub>0</sub> = the model intercept/slope

b<sub>1</sub>, b<sub>2</sub>, b<sub>3</sub>, b<sub>4</sub>, b<sub>5</sub>, b<sub>6</sub> = coefficients of the independent variables (C, S, and QM respectively)

C = Creativity

S = Style

QM = Quality Material

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Creativity has no effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis.

Table 1: Model Summary showing the effect of creativity on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.454 <sup>a</sup>	.206	.202	1.83194

a. Predictors: (Constant), Creativity

Table 2: ANOVA<sup>a</sup> showing the effect of creativity on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	170.432	1	170.432	50.784	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	657.775	196	3.356		
	Total	828.207	197			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creativity

Table 3: Coefficients<sup>a</sup> showing the effect of creativity on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.231	.724		8.603	.000
	Creativity	.484	.068	.454	7.126	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

Tables 1, 2 and 3 above report the results of regression analysis carried out to test Hypothesis 1. The results show that creativity has a significant effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis ( $b = 0.484$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is rejected. Tables 1 and 2 further report a significant  $F$  statistic, indicating the model's strong prediction strength ( $F = 50.784$ ,  $R^2 = 20.6\%$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The  $R^2$  of 20.6 per cent implies that for every unit change in upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis, 20.6 per cent of such variation is attributed to creativity.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Styles have no significant effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Table 4: Model Summary showing the effect of style on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.629 <sup>a</sup>	.396	.393	1.59765

a. Predictors: (Constant), Style

Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup> effect of style on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	327.918	1	327.918	128.469	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	500.290	196	2.552		
	Total	828.207	197			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), Style

Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup> effect of style on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.597	.603		7.625	.000
	Style	.642	.057	.629	11.334	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

Tables 4, 5 and 6 above report the results of regression analysis carried out to test hypothesis 2. The results show that style has a significant effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis ( $b = 0.642, p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is rejected. Tables 4 and 5 further report a significant  $F$  statistic, indicating the model's strong prediction strength ( $F = 128.469, R^2 = 39.3\%, p < 0.05$ ). The  $R^2$  of 39.3 per cent implies that for every unit change in upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis, 39.3 per cent of such variation is attributed to style.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Quality material has no effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Table 7: Model Summary showing the effect of quality materials on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.545 <sup>a</sup>	.297	.294	1.72328

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality Materials

Table 8: ANOVA<sup>a</sup> showing the effect of quality materials on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	246.148	1	246.148	82.887	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	582.059	196	2.970		
	Total	828.207	197			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality Materials

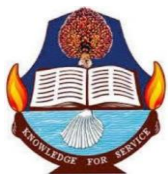
Table 9: Coefficients<sup>a</sup> showing the effect of quality materials on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfits in Calabar metropolis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
		(Constant)	5.643	.634		
1	Quality Materials	.533	.058	.545	9.104	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

Tables 7, 8 and 9 above report the results of regression analysis carried out to test Hypothesis 3. The results show that quality materials have a significant effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis ( $b = 0.533, p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is rejected. Tables 7 and 8 further report a significant  $F$  statistic, indicating the model's strong prediction strength ( $F = 82.887, R^2 = 29.7\%, p < 0.05$ ). The  $R^2$  of 29.7 per cent implies that for every unit change in upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis, 29.7 per cent of such variation is attributed to quality material.





## FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

From the analysis of this study, it is revealed that, creativity, style and quality materials significantly effect on upper class buying behaviour of fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis. Therefore, the upper-class level of patronage on fashion outfit in Calabar metropolis will increase is local fashion outlets and companies within the state give quality attention to creativity, style and quality materials used in the preparation of made in Nigerian fashion outfits.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was therefore recommended that local fashion companies should seeks ways of improving on the quality of clothing made in Nigeria in order to maintain long term product supremacy in the market; Finally, effective improvement on the creativity, styles as well as quality of clothing within Nigeria should be a must for all fashion outfits within the country

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