



## Advancement of Sustainable Natural Resource Management via Textile Consumption Habits in Nigeria

Ngozi Kesiah OKEKE<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 0009-0006-4019-5406, Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

### Article Info

Received: 03/06/2025  
Accepted: 22/12/2025

### Keywords

Sustainable,  
Resource,  
Conservation,  
Textile Consumption,  
Habits

### Abstract

Since ancient times, people have worn clothing to protect their bodies from the weather and to enhance their appearance. The demand for textiles increased as a result of the population boom. The industrial revolution brought about by the necessity to meet the growing demand for textiles resulted in the creation of fast fashion items, which in turn contributed to the depletion of natural resources. People can now more easily purchase more clothing than they truly need thanks to the availability of inexpensive fast fashion materials; some of these items are often worn just once before being unused in closets and finally thrown away. Additionally, this has resulted in unsustainable excess consumption of natural resources. The goal of this qualitative study is to advance sustainable natural resource management in Nigeria through textile consumption habits. By analyzing Nigerian textile consumption patterns, analyzing the effects of these patterns on the environment, showcasing sustainable textile options in Nigeria, and ultimately proposing ways that natural resources could be managed sustainably through the discussion of textile consumption patterns, the goal was achieved. A review of relevant journal articles and fieldwork were conducted to determine the degree of public awareness regarding sustainable textile consumption practices. Based on the findings of the conducted fieldwork, it was found that certain organizations are already embracing the idea of sustainable resource management through the reuse of textiles encouraged by individual contributions of worn clothing. The study's conclusion suggested that more campaigns be launched to encourage Nigerians to conserve natural resources by adopting sustainable textile consumption practices.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the primary requirements of man has been met by textiles: clothing to protect our bodies from harsh weather and to keep us from being nude. Throughout history, clothing has been utilized to enhance one's appearance. The population boom and other applications for clothing increased demand for textiles. The industrial revolution, which was prompted by the need to supply the growing demand for textiles, resulted in the depletion of natural resources. Currently, the rate of natural resource consumption outweighs what the ecosystems can provide. Thus, reducing the use of natural resources has become a subject of interest to many scholars, especially with regards to textile production and consumption. This is due to the fact that the textile industry is one of the sectors that primarily relies on the utilization of natural resources, and the amount of clothing produced and discarded has increased as a result of fast fashion. According to the European Parliament (2024), the rise in fast fashion has accelerated the expansion of the textile industry's consumption and this has also resulted in the over use of natural resources. For example, the production of textiles requires a lot of water, and the cultivation of cotton and other natural fibers need land.

Radhakrishnan (2022) supported this claim by pointing out that the fashion and textile industries have a history of using a lot of natural resources and producing waste goods that contaminate the environment and endanger the planet's living things. The European Parliament estimates that 2,700 liters of fresh water are needed to produce one cotton t-shirt in 2024, which is sufficient to supply one person's drinking needs for two and a half years. For a t-shirt alone, that is a significant amount of water. According to estimates,

\* Corresponding author: kezng05@gmail.com

the textile industry was the third-largest contributor to land use and water degradation in 2020. European parliament (2024) asserts that it took on average nine cubic meters of water, 400 square meters of land and 391 kilogrammes (kg) of raw materials to provide clothes and shoes for each EU citizen.

According to an earlier study by Okafor, Madu, Ajero, Ibekwe, and Nzekwe (2021), the textile and apparel sector uses over 93 billion cubic meters of water a year. Approximately 4% of the yearly freshwater withdrawal is accounted for by its water use. Additionally, it takes 200 liters of water to make one kilogram of fabric. The fiber, dye, bleach, and final product are all cleaned with water. Subsurface water is contaminated because waste waters are frequently not reprocessed before being released into the environment. Additionally, the study found that textile dyestuffs include a significant amount of organic chemicals that are resistant to aerobic degradation and do not readily decompose. 500,000 tons of plastic microfibers, or 50 billion plastic bottles, are released into the ocean each year as a result of clothing washing. Around the world, cotton production consumes roughly 16% of pesticides and requires 2.5% of agricultural land (Okafor, Madu, Ajero, Ibekwe, and Nzekwe, 2021). It also accounts for 4% of the use of NPK fertilizer. The runoff pollutes the water.

One of a man's essential wants is clothing, and as the population grows, so will the demand for clothing. Nigeria now relies heavily on imports for her apparel needs, but previously it was not so as the many textiles mills across the country provided substantial number of the textiles used in Nigeria. However, certain textile consumption patterns contributed to the grounding of these textile mills, resource depletion and environmental pollution. Nigerian consumers should be made aware of the negative effects that unsustainable textile consumption practices have on the environment and encouraged to adopt sustainable practices that would slow the depletion of natural resources. Clothing materials will last longer if consumers adopt sustainable textile consumption practices. Preserving the raw materials and funds that would have been used to purchase new clothing, as well as lowering the pollution that results from their manufacture and use. Data for this qualitative study came from fieldwork, firsthand observation, and a review of relevant literature. The types of textiles consumed, purchase patterns, and disposal methods will all be examined in this paper's analysis of Nigeria's present textile consumption patterns. Analyze the effects of Nigerian textile production and consumption on the environment. Draw attention to Nigeria's sustainable textile possibilities and promote their use to help achieve the 12th SGD target.

### **Statement of problem**

Consumption patterns are a key component of sustainable natural resource management, but it has not been given adequate attention in Nigeria when it comes to textile resource management. The *aso-ebi* culture is one of the fashion trends that has led to a rise in textile consumption in Nigeria. This technique involves dressing in the same style or pattern for ceremonies. Originally, the *aso-ebi* culture was mainly practiced by the Yoruba people. This method of purchasing, selling, sharing, and wearing clothing was first limited to family members. But in recent years, this system has been made available to and feasible for well-wishers, because it also acts as a way to identify with family and friends during a variety of celebrations (Olabiyi and Kolawole, 2022).

Beyond South-Western Nigeria, these behaviors have spread to other parts of the nation. The accessibility of inexpensive fast fashion Ankara materials mostly imported has facilitated the *aso-ebi* culture. A lot of the time, people purchase more clothing than they truly need, some of which gets worn out after first or second wear, because of its low quality and eventually discarded. Kamble and Behera (2021) support this by claiming that fast fashion has increased textile consumption, which has led to an increase in textile waste and the depletion of natural resources. Nigerian consumers of fashion, who are fixated on trends and novelty, frequently disregard sustainability. Sustainable natural resource management should be promoted through consumption of durable textiles that are made through environmental friendly processes in order to lessen the depletion of natural resources utilized in textile production, given the strain that excessive textile consumption is placing on the environment and natural resources.

## Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to promote sustainable textile consumption habits in Nigeria, in order reduce environmental impact of over consumption of textiles and production processes of new textiles as a means of advancing sustainable resource management. The aim was accomplished by achieving the following objectives:

1. Evaluating textile consumption pattern in Nigeria, by looking at the types of textiles consumed in Nigeria, purchasing habits, and disposal practices.
2. Examining the environmental impacts of textile production and consumption pattern in Nigeria, this will include water pollution, energy consumption, waste generation
3. Highlighting sustainable textile options, such as Funtua cotton, locally dyed and woven fabrics made from locally sourced materials.
4. Suggest ways natural resource could be sustainably managed through textile consumption habits in Nigeria.

## Research Questions

1. What type of textiles are majorly purchased and consumed in Nigeria?
2. What impacts does textile production and consumption pattern in Nigeria have on the environment such as water, energy and waste generation?
3. What sustainable textile options are available in Nigeria?
4. In what ways can natural resource be sustainably managed through textile consumption habits in Nigeria.

## Significance of the Study

The results of this study have environmental, economic and cultural implications. Promoting environmentally friendly textile consumption practices could reduce the amount of textile waste produced, which significantly adds to pollution and landfill garbage. Sustainable textile consumption practices could aid in lowering greenhouse gas emissions from the textile industry, which would help to mitigate climate change. Natural resources like water, land and energy utilized in textile manufacture would be preserved by promoting sustainable textile consumption patterns in Nigeria. Promoting of sustainable textile consumption, could draw the attention of Nigerian consumers to their role as agent of change in the management of natural resource. It could also motivate more Nigerians to patronize locally made textiles such as, hand woven fabrics and fabrics dyed from locally sourced organic dyes and materials. This way our indigenous method of fabric production which is sustainable, can be preserved from going into extinction. Finally, it will help in the achievement of sustainable Development Goal 12; Responsible Consumption and Production.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Sustainable Use of Natural Resource

Olariu, (2024) in a study on the importance of sustainable use of natural resources states that in the face of rapid economic growth and increasing global population, it is important that attention is paid to sustainable use of natural resources. This is because natural resources such as land, water, minerals, forests, air, fisheries and wild life are essential for the survival of man. However, over time and with progressive industrialization, resource utilization has increased significantly and in some cases, exploitation levels have surpassed the natural regeneration rates of these natural resources. According to Olariu, (2024) sustainability involves using these resources in a way that meets our current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It requires a delicate balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity. The study asserted that sustainable use of resource is important because it contributes to economic growth, helps in environmental protection, promotes social equity by distributing resources fairly among members of the society. It further recommends successful sustainable practices as transitioning to renewable energy

source like solar, recycling, ethical sourcing of products, sustainable supply chain management among others.

Xiaogang, Lifang, Ying and Yuxia (2024). In a study assessed the impact of sustainable consumption behavior on natural resource conservation in China. Data for the study were collected via random from Chinese population between 2020 and 2021. Findings revealed a substantial positive influence of sustainable consumption behaviour on natural conservation, with government environmental policy, environmental consciousness and alignment with SDGs acting as moderators. The outcome of the study highlight how sustainable consumption behaviour aids the conservation of natural resource in China emphasizing the important role of consumer actions to this effect.

Wessels A. (2022) in a study on sustainable utilization of environmental natural resources asserts that sustainable use of natural resources entails effectively managing of natural resources for the benefit of the entire human community. This means that all people must behave responsibly in order to reduce the use of natural resources especially the non-renewable natural resources that are limited in quantity and their availability may end up in the future.

### **Textile consumption pattern in Nigeria; types of textiles consumed in Nigeria, purchasing habits, and disposal practices.**

The consumption patterns of textiles in Nigeria differ slightly between regions and socioeconomic groups. Consumption habits, on the other hand, encompass a wide variety of actions from the problem awareness stage to post-purchase behavior, concept development, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires. They are not limited to the actual purchase of things. It involves researching consumer demands, motives, and decision-making processes, as well as trends in the acquisition of various goods and services. It basically focuses on how people and organizations choose, purchase, utilize, and discard products (Orji, Sabo, Abubakar, and Usman, 2017).

Therefore, it is evident that Nigerians' consumption patterns of textiles may have a big impact on how our natural resources are managed. When it comes to textiles and apparel, Nigerian consumers are still not very conscious of sustainability. According to the findings of Ajila, K. (2019), 78% of respondents had a low degree of awareness of the effects of post-consumer solid textile waste on the environment in Oyo State. Similarly, the findings of the survey conducted by Okeke (2023) to determine the degree of awareness of eco-friendly textile materials in Anambra state revealed that, out of the 116 respondents surveyed, 67% of men and 87% of women were unfamiliar with sustainability in clothes. Therefore, it can be deduced from this data, that a larger proportion of Nigerians are not aware that their textiles consumption pattern may affect the environment or our natural resources. According to Austgulen (2016), the textile and apparel business is largely controlled by the purchasing habits and financial resources of the average customer.

In a study, Austgulen (2016) examined the traits of customers who intentionally consume textiles and apparel in an environmentally friendly manner. Political consumption served as the prism through which the study was conducted, based on a cross-national study that was carried out in five nations in western Europe. The textile and garment industries were used to evaluate factors that have been established in prior research to predict general political consumption. The results demonstrated that, with notable country variations, there are both parallels and differences with earlier research on political consumption. Adejuwon, Aodu, and Onwudiegwu (2024). examined how socioeconomic factors affected the use and disposal of apparel among employees of tertiary institutions in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. According to the survey's mean assessment (on a five-point frequency scale), respondents occasionally burn (2.86) and dispose of unwanted garments with solid garbage (3.32). However, they hardly ever disposed of textile apparel in water bodies (1.82), landfills (2.30), or recycling platforms for reuse (2.14). Furthermore, respondents frequently (4.04) purchase apparel made of natural fibers, but they also occasionally (3.10) purchase apparel made of synthetic fibers and *aso ebi* (special occasion attire) (3.32). Those with higher incomes are more likely to use formal trash disposal systems ( $r=.31$ ,  $P<.05$ ), while those with lower incomes are more likely to prefer recycling ( $r = -.37$ ;  $p<.05$ ) and buying used clothes ( $r=-.34$ ;  $p<.50$ ), according to data

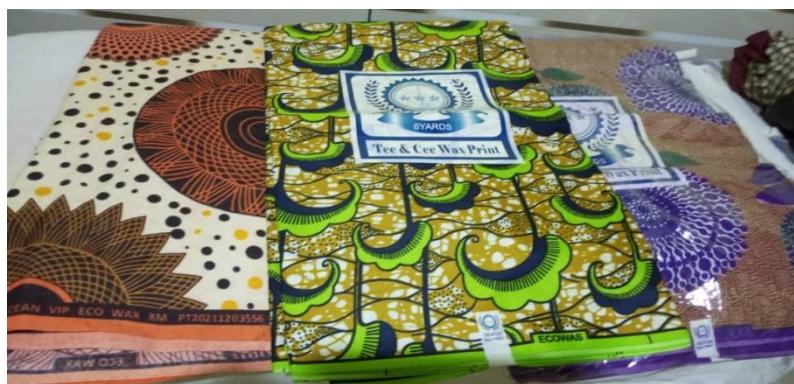
from the respondents. Those with more education have a lower propensity to purchase aso-ebi ( $r = -.32$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In order to encourage ecologically appropriate disposal methods, the study emphasizes the necessity of infrastructure development and targeted marketing for various socioeconomic categories. The main goals of policy proposals are to promote recycling and lessen the negative environmental effects of textile waste.

### Types of Textiles Consumed in Nigeria, Ankara Fabrics

Beyond just garments, Nigerian fashion now symbolizes identity, history, and cultural inspiration that reflects the richness of our inherited traditions. Clarke (2024) asserts that traditional textiles like Adire and Ankara contain vivid colors that convey tales of societies, historical occurrences, and values that have been passed down through the ages. Writing on the structure of Ankara fabrics, Oyedele and Obisesan (2013) states that Ankara is a 100% fine cotton fabric tightly woven in plain weave before different motifs and patterns were printed on it through various dyeing techniques. The study noted that Ankara has good strength; it is firm and smooth to touch and allows the body heat to pass through. It also absorbs moisture quickly and dries faster and ability that gives it a cooling effect and makes it ideal for African climate.



**Figure 1a.** Photo of 100% cotton Hitarget brand of Ankara fabric sampled from Abada Niche part of Eke Awka Market, Anambra state on the 2nd of August 2025  
Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)



**Figure 1b.** Photo of Tee & Cee brand of Ankara fabric, made of cotton blend with synthetic fibre sampled from Abada Niche part of Eke Awka Market, Anambra state on the 1st september of 2025  
Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)

Because of its vivid patterns and striking themes, Ankara fabric has come to be used as a general term for all 100% cotton fabrics, including Dutch wax, African print, and Holland wax, in Nigeria, see figure 1a.

Nigeria is at the forefront of its cultural acceptance, and it has also come to represent African fashion. Probably because of its breathability which makes it suitable to African climate. In Nigeria, Ankara is essentially an African wax print that is frequently bought for apparel. It is renowned for its vivid hues and striking designs that can be incorporated into dressy outfits for special occasions or worn on a daily basis. Its traditional African designs are easily incorporated into modern fashions, which is why ready-to-wear clothing also uses them.

Originally constructed of 100% cotton, Ankara fabric is renowned for its breathability, eco-friendliness, absorbency, comfort, and color fastness even after numerous washings. However, contemporary Ankara fabrics made of synthetic materials, such as polyester, have lost some of their outstanding quality and durability compared to classic cotton Ankara fabrics. Because it is less expensive, compared with the 100% cotton Ankara fabric, Ankara made of a polyester blend might be categorized as fast fashion see figure 1b. Ankara fabrics made of non-cotton sometimes lose their textures and colors after washing. Clarke (2024).

### Adire / Ukara Fabric

In southwestern Nigeria, the Yoruba people are known for using handcrafted fabrics called adire. Sustainable cotton materials dyed with natural (organic) indigo dye are used to make Adire fabrics. Adire is one traditional Nigerian fabric that has endured in local and global fashion to this day. It can be made into clothing for special occasions or daily use, just as Ankara, especially among the Yoruba tribes. Ukara is another traditional handmade fabric popular in Southeast Nigeria, that is highly prized by members of the Ekpe community. Similar to Adire, it is produced sustainably with 100% cotton material and stained with indigo, a natural dye created from plant leaves. See figure 2a



**Figure 2a.** Photo of Nigeria handmade Adire/ukara fabric

Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work on 1st September 2025 (Okeke, 2025)



**Figure 2b.** Photo of Intorica George fabric

Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work on 2nd August 2025 (Okeke, 2025)

### George Fabric

Although George fabric originated in India, it has since assimilated into the cultural identities of the Igbo tribes in southeast Nigeria, as well as other tribes in southern Nigeria. African George, like the original

Ankara fabric, was originally made entirely of cotton, but more recently, some George fabrics have been manufactured with a blend of polyester. High-quality cotton fabric George is renowned for its rich embroidery designs and vibrant colors. There are various brands of George, including Plain George, Intorica Brocade George, and Intorica George. See figure 2b. In southern Nigeria, the Indian Raw Silk George has also gained popularity as a dress for special events see figure 3a.

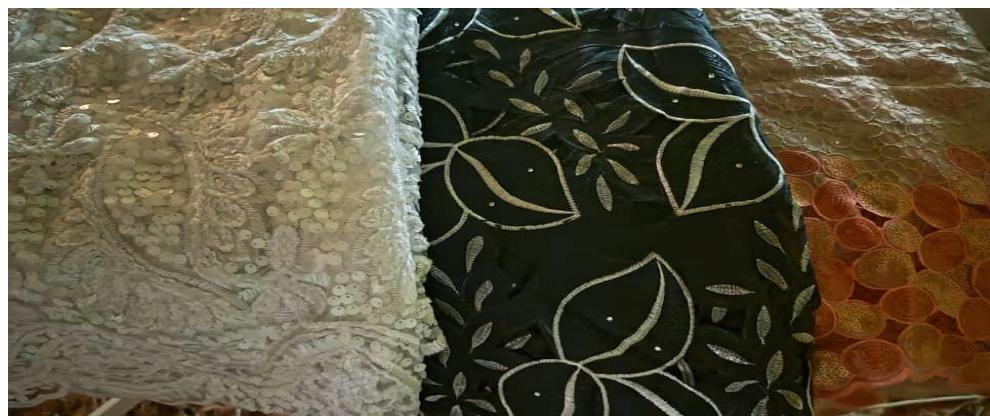


**Figure 3a.** Photo of Indian Silk George fabric

Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work on 1st september 2025 (Okeke, 2025)

### Lace Fabrics

Rofiquazzam is cited by Okeke (2023) as saying that lace is an open fabric made of a web of strands weaved into intricate designs. The fabric known as lace has become popular among individuals from all around the nation. Nigeria offers a variety of lace styles, including French, Swiss, paper, and cord lace, see figure 3b. Lace fabric's timeless style makes it appropriate for a wide range of outfits, including blouses and skirts, special occasion dresses, and even business attire.



**Figure 3b.** Photo of lace fabrics

Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work on 1st september 2025 (Okeke, 2025)

### Brocade Fabric

Brocade, a beautifully textured and patterned fabric, is another popular fabric that is frequently used in Nigeria. It is particularly popular among the Hausa and Fulani people of northern Nigeria for traditional clothing. It has elaborate patterns and decorations created with metallic threads. There are various types of brocade; some are composed entirely of cotton, which is perfect for hot weather because to its breathability and comfort. Others are composed of blends polyester or silk.

## Textile purchasing habits and disposal practices

Since the majority of Nigeria's textile industry have closed, the country is primarily dependent on imported textiles for its apparel needs. There are a lot of elements that affect Nigerian customers' buying patterns, including socioeconomic status and cultural and religious background. Orji (2017) asserts that consumer buying behavior encompasses the purchasing behavior of the final consumer as well as numerous other elements and traits that impact the individual's identity, decision-making process, shopping habits, and brand preference. Social character, which is based on social class, is one of the elements that the study said is important in Igbo consumers' decision-making when it comes to the purchasing of textile materials. According to Orji (2017), persons in a particular social class always seem to have the same purchasing habits. High earners are more likely to shop for new clothes more regularly, thereby producing more textile waste. There are textiles that are specifically associated with a certain ethnic group when one looks at the kinds of textiles that are consumed in Nigeria.

Adejuwon, Onwudiegwu, and Aodu (2024) found that individuals with greater incomes prefer to buy more clothing items corroborating Orji's assertion. The study further stated that individuals with greater incomes have little interest in recycling or buying used clothing, supporting the idea that socioeconomic factors also play a significant influence in textile shopping behaviors. The study noted however, that they relied on a formal trash disposal system and were less likely to dispose of clothing in water bodies. The study also observed that there were no appreciable differences between the ways that natural and synthetic fiber textile materials were disposed of, as both were frequently dumped in landfills or dump sites, burned, or dumped in waterways where they could cause major environmental risks. According to Adejuwon, Onwudiegwu and Aodu (2024), disposal through formal waste management infrastructure and burning were preferred by their respondents.

Due to Nigeria's weak economy, middle-class and lower-class individuals are increasingly acquiring used clothes, which is primarily made of fast fashion materials. In an effort to safeguard the environment and domestic textile manufacturers, the government has attempted to control the importation of used fast textile materials, but to little avail. This is because new clothing's pricing and availability are constantly hampered by a lack of resources. However, some of these old clothes are inexpensive and already worn out, so they are thrown away readily, and their trash pollutes the environment.

## 3. METHOD

The study is a qualitative research. Specifically, descriptive research methods were used. Data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary data was sourced from personal experience on practical batik works (3 samples made up of 2 adire fabric and 1 ukara fabric) and observations from fieldwork on reuse and upcycling, as well as interviews with field actors such as Fashion designers, fabric sellers and Church welfare groups. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in choosing the target population. Which is made up of 10 traders that deal on fabrics at Eke Awka Market, four fashion designers that rents wedding gowns and six major churches that promotes reuse through donating of used clothes to willing church members. Data collection started from the 2nd of August 2025 to 5th of September 2025. While the secondary data was sourced from textbooks, journals and articles relevant to the topic.

## 4. SUSTAINABLE TEXTILE OPTIONS IN NIGERIA

### Funtua Cotton

It is made entirely of locally grown cotton that is spun, woven, and grown in Funtua, Katsina state, Nigeria. Its conventional weave and loose weave improve its breathability. Northern Nigeria is renowned for its cotton spinning heritage, which is still practiced today through Funtua cotton spinning and textile weaving. Cotton crops were typically cultivated in June and July and harvested in November and January, according to Ismail (2024). In the past, Katsina, Sokoto, and Zaria farmers produced the majority of it. Furthermore, according to Ismail (2024), cotton

accounted for up to 25% of Nigeria's GDP in 1980. The collapse of more than 150 Nigerian textile enterprises left Funtua Textile Limited as one of the few survivors. The company's capabilities for spinning, weaving, finishing, and ginning draw clients from both inside and outside of Nigeria. This company can only remain afloat if Nigerians patronize its high quality cotton fabric.

### **Adire / Ukara Fabric dyed with Indigo Dye**

Nigerian traditional handcrafted fabrics known as "Adire fabric" are constructed entirely of cotton and naturally dyed indigo. These are made utilizing methods that cause the least amount of environmental harm possible by combining caustic soda with plant extract dyes. Used dyes are frequently recycled repeatedly, which contributes to the preservation of natural resources. Nonetheless, certain Adire textiles are dyed synthetically. Another handcrafted fabric that is native to South East Nigeria is Ukara, which is manufactured using a natural indigo dying technique. Ukara is manufactured from indigo dye derived from at least 800 species of the leguminous *Indigofera* plant, of which roughly 600 are present in Africa, according to This Is Us, which was sourced from Lagos Fashion Week (2024). The leaves are crushed to produce the colors, which are then utilized to create exquisite, detailed designs on cotton textiles. Because no hazardous chemicals are used in the production processes, Ukara fabrics are environmentally friendly, see figure 2a.

### **Hand Woven Fabrics**

A variety of hand-woven fabrics have managed to withstand the effects of Nigeria's importation of foreign textiles, although some are struggling to survive. Some of these textiles are made from cotton or synthetic yarn blends made by businesses outside of Nigeria. On the other hand, hand-woven fabrics are considered sustainable because of the low environmental impact of their production procedures. Akwete cloth, Akwa-ocha, and Orii are examples of sustainable handwoven fabrics made and used by the Igbo people of South Eastern Nigeria. The Yorubas of South Western Nigeria are known for weaving and wearing *aso-oke*. Anger-woven fabrics from the Tiv and Atu-woven fabrics from the Idoma and Okene peoples are found in the middle belt region of Nigeria.

### **4.1. Ways Natural Resource could be Sustainably managed via Textile Consumption Habits in Nigeria**

#### **Increasing Reuse**

The term "textile reuse" describes a variety of techniques for extending the useful life of textile items by giving them to new owners, either with or without previous alteration (such as patching). Renting, trading, swapping, borrowing, and inheriting are ways to accomplish this Peters and Sandin (2018). However, reuse of textile is better appreciated with high quality and durable fabrics. Even if the second-hand market has made it easier to reuse textiles, the majority of Nigerians who buy used clothing do so because of the country's difficult economic situation rather than because they are environmentally conscious. The environmental impact of our textile consumption patterns is largely unknown to many individuals. Increased reuse of leftover textile material as well as made in Nigeria apparels are strategies for the sustainable management of Nigeria's natural resources used in textile production. Because it eliminates the need to produce new products, textile reuse has a higher positive impact on the environment than recycling, claim Sandin and Peters (2018).

#### **Trading**

Okirika, the second-hand market, has been a booming industry that has given many Nigerians a source of income and allowed middle-class and lower-class people to get alternative clothing at a lower cost. However, these used clothes are imported from other nations, like the USA, China, Germany, and the UK. Currently, most people that patronize second-hand clothes, prefer imported ones to Nigeria used clothes. It is crucial to implement tactics that would increase the thrift of Nigerian-made used clothing,

because it may not be feasible to sell them abroad for reuse, unlike other nations who export theirs to third-world nations. In this manner, traditional Nigerian clothing that is sustainably produced can be reused and marketed at a lower cost, protecting the environment from pollution and resource depletion.

### Renting

Another method of reusing clothing that reduces the resources required to produce new garments is renting them. Church wedding bridal gowns are unique pieces of clothing that are frequently worn only once in a lifetime, and they can be costly to make or buy already made ones. Thus, in order to conserve resources, the majority of individuals turn to renting it. Some tailors and seamstresses in Nigeria hire out bridal gowns for church weddings; this practice may even be extended to clothing for traditional weddings and other occasions. See plate 4a and plate 4b. According to the proprietress of the classic fashion Amaku road Awka, during an interview conducted on the 23rd of August 2025, the price for renting bridal gown varies according to the quality of material used in making the gown as well as the style. For instance some wedding gowns in her show room rents for forty thousand naira while there are some that rents from sixty thousand naira and above.



**Figure 4a**



**Figure 4b**

*Photo of church wedding gowns and traditional wedding cloths for renting displayed at classic fashion Amaku road Awka, Anambra state.*

*Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)*

### Inheriting

This is the method of reusing textile which is achieved by families passing down clothes, or other textiles materials to future generations, thus prolonging their use and reducing waste. For instance used clothes can be inherited from siblings or relations that have out grown them, preserving both funds and depletion of natural resource.

### Donating

Donating used clothing that is still in good condition to churches, extended family members, or nonprofit organizations like the Motherless Baby's Home or the Old People's Home is another way that textile consumption patterns can manage resources sustainably. During the fieldwork conducted on March 2, 2025, at the Regional Head Quarters of Redeemed Christian Church of God, Seed of David Parish Awka, it was noted that the Welfare Department, under the direction of Mrs. Nnonyelu, gathers and displays used clothing on the first Sunday of each month for individuals to freely select as needed, see figure: 5a and 5b. This tactic has given people a way to donate their unwanted clothing rather than burning it or throwing it in a landfill, which would harm the environment.



**Figure 5a.** Display of Used cloth by Welfare Department of RCCG Seed of David Church Awka  
 Field work at RCCG Regional H/Qtrs. Awka  
 Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)



**Figure 5b.** Selection of Used cloth by people at Welfare Department stand of RCCG Seed of David Church Field work at RCCG Regional H/Qtrs. Awka  
 Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)

## Upcycling

The practice of turning unwanted, discarded fabrics into new, more valuable items is known as upcycling. Various upcycling processes can be used to enhance or transform old, worn cloth into standout items. For example, an old clothing can be given new life by using dying techniques like tie-dye or marbling, which give it a brilliant color and flare. To create modern fashion with a hint of tradition, pieces of Ankara cloth can be appliqued onto ordinary old fabrics, like Jean material. Creating embroidery patterns on simple colored cloth or adding embellishments with beads are two other ways to upcycle fabrics. In order to give the woven fabric a new lease on life, old *Aso-oke* wrappers or headgear can be repurposed into gowns, skirts, tops, and bags, cushion covers among other items. See Figure:6,7a and 7b.

Another way to upcycle old clothing into more fashionable looks is by re-styling. Using crochet stitches, for example, a sleeve can be added to a top or sleeveless dress. A combination of traditional and contemporary motifs can be achieved by upcycling an old Ankara cloth skirt or gown by adding scallops using crochet stitches. You may also upcycle old skirts into tote bags. According to Mohammed (2024), upcycling techniques give clothing a new lease on life and a physical transformation, enabling you to experience a new piece of apparel that expresses your creativity and tells a narrative.



**Figure 6.** Used Aso- oke wrapper transformed into gown  
 Field work at RCCG Regional H/Qtrs. Awka  
 Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)



**Figure 7a.** Used shirts transformed into seat cover  
 into seat cover  
 Photo courtesy: (Anuprema)



**Figure 7b.** Used Damask head tie transformed  
 hand bag  
 Photo source: Taken from researcher's field work (Okeke, 2025)

## 5. CONCLUSION

The results of the fieldwork show that some people already engage in some kind of reuse, including upcycling, donating, renting, and inheriting. For example, wedding gowns are rented by a few fashion businesses in Awka, including Kirus Fashion and Tailoring Centre, No. 28 Emma Nnaemeka Street, Awka; Merit Fashion Clothing Brand, St. John of God School Road, Awka; and classic fashion Amaku Road, Awka. According to some of the owners of the fashion houses visited, renting wedding gowns is more cost-effective, because they are not worn every day, but some people prefer personalized wedding dresses due to their religious convictions. Asoke head ties to bubu gowns and damask head ties to bags are examples of sustainably manufactured traditional woven fabric that has been upcycled, according to observations made from churches visited (see plates 6 and 7b). Additionally, as noted in plate 5b, there was evidence of people giving away their used clothing for reuse through church donations. However, it has been noted that low-income earners are mostly drawn to these types of fabric consumption patterns as a way to deal with the economic downturn. It is crucial that all societal strata adopt sustainable natural resource consumption habits as a logical reaction to limited supplies rather than just a passive survival tactic. Reuse, renting, donating, inheriting, and upcycling are examples of consumption habits that can be adopted to ensure a healthy environment by lowering textile waste in addition to aiding in the conservation of finite natural resources.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Adejuwon, O.O., Onwudiegwu, C. A., Aodu, B. A. (2024). Impact of Socio- Economic Factors on Clothing Consumption and Disposal Behaviours amongst Tertiary Institution Staff- Members at Ile- Ife, Nigeria Retrieved from <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jasem> on 27/02/2025
- [2] Austgulen, M.H. (2016). Environmentally sustainable textile Consumption-What Characterizes the Political Textile Consumers? Journal of Consumer Policy 39 (4) Retrieved from [researchgate.net/publication/286764620-environmentally-sustainable-textile-consumption-what-characterizes-the-political-textile-consumers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286764620-environmentally-sustainable-textile-consumption-what-characterizes-the-political-textile-consumers)
- [3] Clarke, R. (2024) The Power of Nigerian Traditional Fabrics Retrieved from <https://rexclarkeadventures.com> on 25/02/2025
- [4] European Parliament (2024). The impact of Textile Production and waste on the environment (infographics) Retrieved from <https://www.europarl.europa.eu> on 25/02/2025
- [5] Ismail, I. (2024). The Resilient Thread: Funtua's Last Standing Cotton Factory retrieved from [dailytrust.com/the-resilient-thread-funtua's-last-standing-cotton-factory](https://dailytrust.com/the-resilient-thread-funtua's-last-standing-cotton-factory) on 1/03/2025
- [6] Jarvis, K. (2023). Is textile recycling greenwashing or an actual waste solution? Here 's everything you need to know. Retrieved from <https://adropintheoceanshop.com> on 25/02/2025
- [7] Kamble, Z., and Behera, B.K. (2021). Upcycling textile wastes: challenges and innovations Textile Progress 53 (2) 65-122 Retrieved <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357729154-Upcycling-textile-waste-challenges-and-innovations> on 22/10/2024
- [8] Mohammed A. (2024). Trash to treasure: The trend of upcycling vintage clothing in Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://lifestyle.thecable.ng/trash-to-treasure-the-growing-trend-of-upcycling-vintage-clothing-in-nigeria> on 2/03/2025
- [9] Olariu, A. (2024). Importance of Sustainable Use of Natural Resources retrieved from <https://www.anovo.com> on 09/05/2025
- [10] Orji, G. M., Sabo, B., Abubakar, M.Y. and Usman, A.D. (2017). Impact of Personality factors on Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Textile Materials in South Eastern Nigeria International Journal of Business and Economic Research. retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net> on 09/05/2025
- [11] Okafor, C.C., Madu, C.N., Ajaero C. C., Ibekwe J. C., and Nzekwe, C. A. (2021). Sustainable Management of Textile and Clothing retrieved from <https://www.aimspress.com/journal/ctr> on 25/02/2025
- [12] Okeke, N.K. (2023). The Prospects of Plantain Fibre Utilization for Fashion and Interior Decorations in Anambra State PhD dissertation submitted to the department of Fine and Applied Arts Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State.
- [13] Okeke, N.K. (2023). Fabric Fashion Trends in Awka and Amawbia, Anambra State: Analysis of The Most Preferred Fabric Between Ankara and Lace Awka *Journal of Fine and Applied Arts, Vol. 9 No 2, 2023*
- [14] Olabiyi, O.B. and Kolawole, A.J. (2022) A Historical Assessment of the Economics of *Aso-Ebi* System among the Yoruba People of South- Western Nigeria Lapai Journal of Humanities Vol.13 No.2, December 2022. Pg 18- 26.

- [15] Oyedele, A.M. and Obisesan B. (2013). The Resurgence of Ankara Materials in Nigeria journal of Education and Practice Vol. 4, No.17, 2013 retrieved from core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234634704 on 28/05/2025
- [16] Radhakrishnan, S, (2022) Sustainable Development Goal: Sustainable Management and Use of Natural Resource in Textile and Apparel Industry. In book: Sustainable Approaches in Textiles and Fashion (pp.165-205)
- [17] Sandin, G. and Peters, G.M. (2018). Environmental Impact of textile Reuse and Recycling- A review. Journal of Cleaner Production Vol.18, may 2018, pages 353-365
- [18] Wessels A. (2022). Sustainable utilization of environmental natural resources Department of Environmental Science, Nipissing University, North Bay Ontario, Canada International Scholars Journals Vol.(13) No.1, 2022 Retrieved from <https://www.internationalscholarsjournals.com> on 28/05/2025
- [19] Xiaogang G., Lifang W. Ying G., and Yuxia Liu (2024). The impact of sustainable consumption behavior on natural resource conservation in China: a cross- sectional analysis Resource Policy Volume 89, February 2024, 104610 retrieved from [www.scencedirect.com](http://www.scencedirect.com) on 28/05/2025