Okrika: Morphology, Marketing and Consumer Attitudinal Evaluation of Second Hand Clothing

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ABSTRACT

The heightened global economic depression remains a major factor forcing many families in the middle and low economies to depend on second-hand clothing. This paper therefore, investigates the history, different forms of its presentation and marketing activities in the second-hand cloth marketplaces. It is aimed at examining the attitude of consumers towards second-hand clothing. It is also aimed at identifying the channels of distribution of fairly-used clothing. The research was largely qualitative; as a result, depth interviews and focus-group-discussion were adopted for gathering of relevant information. These two techniques were regularly used in the early stages of attitude research to pinpoint relevant product-related beliefs or attitudes, and to develop initial picture of consumer attitudes. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were also used to analyse the data. The study revealed that consumers were favourably disposed to second-hand clothing due to economic situations of the country. The study further revealed that selling second-hand clothing contributes positively to the income earnings of many Nigerians in the business. It also mitigates unemployment challenges and provides one of the basic necessities of life to Nigerians – clothing. The paper concluded that second hand cloth is here in Nigeria to stay, and it now represent a veritable source of employment of labour to women and youths. The paper concluded that Nigerian government should recognise the dealers and sellers by formalising them as an organisation that can be regulated.

Keywords: Okrika, Textile, Marketing, Distribution Channel, Consumer Behaviour, Wholesalers

INTRODUCTION

The second-hand clothing trade has expanded hugely in both its economic power and global scope, more than doubling worldwide between 1991 and 2004, in the wake of the liberalization of many third World economies and following the sudden rise in demand from Eastern bloc countries in the early 1990s. The countries of sub-Saharan Africa are the world's largest second-hand clothing destination, receiving close to 26% of total world exports in 2004 (United Nations). The origins of second-hand clothing have been traced to necessity. Lemire (2003) is, however, of the view that from its inception, the second hand clothing trade depended on the existence of a modest surplus of goods in the general population beyond bare necessity, the capacity of labouring and middle ranked people to buy items filtered through other hands, some from other social ranks. In order to move from one social and cultural situation, used clothes must be transformed to become of potential value to a new social group (Palmer et al, 2005)

Passing of clothes between social and economic groups is now a global business. Global Perspectives (2010) affirms that second-hand clothing constitutes a global market of

commerce and consumption that has a long but changing history with complex links to garment production, tailoring and culture.

One of the major functions of clothes is the protection of human body from vagaries of weathers, however, Callaham and Paoleti (1999) were of the opinion that clothing also plays an integral role in the 'look' of people of every era. Hence, among the Yoruba of the South-western Nigeria, the art of dressing the body involves both an aesthetic skill and discerning appropriateness. Many of the Yoruba sayings, such as; *iri ni si ni se ni lojo;* meaning, your dressing competence determines your degree of respectability are pointers to the need for this skill. Another saying; "Bi ati nrin laa ko ni" implies that the way you dress is the way you are addressed, further buttress this fact. The second hand clothing popularly called *okrika* among several other names have been used to sustain this clothing aesthetic and respectability.

Lemire (1997) posits that in Europe and the North America, second hand clothing was an important source of clothing well into the nineteenth century, until mass production and growing prosperity enabled more and more people to purchase brand new rather than previously worn garments. It is instructive to note that when mass produced garments became readily available and at affordable prices, the trade in second hand clothing became export oriented. Consequently, charity shops responded to the clothing needs of the local poor. In essence established charitable organizations became the single largest source of the twenty first century global trade in second hand clothing, supplying both domestic and foreign second hand clothing markets through their collection efforts. These charitable organizations dominated the domestic second hand clothing retail scene in the 1960 and 1970s (Heike, 2005). This period coincided with the long history of Nigeria colonization which came to an end in 1960. This was followed by the Nigerian Civil War of 1966.

The history of the entrance of second hand western clothing and its supplements known as *okrika* among other names into the Nigerian market scene is traceable to the urge of becoming modern with Western education and modernity. It is also a symbol which their colonizers who were the role models in the Euro-centric setting represent. Second hand clothing trade expanded and grew in scope globally with patronage from all segments of the society save in countries that banned these imports. Haggblade (1990) reported that second hand clothing consumption practices in Africa are shaped by the politics that regulate these imports and by distinct regional conventions concerning bodies and dress. He further stated that some African countries such as C'ote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Kenya and Malawi have at one point or another banned the importation of second hand clothing, while some countries like South Africa have restrictive policies by allowing import of second hand clothing only for charitable purposes and not for re-sale. However, because of the porous nature of borders of these countries especially Nigeria and difficulty in enforcing customs regulations, there is extensive illegal importation of this commodity.

African second hand clothing markets undergo changes not only because of the legal rules that guide or prohibit second hand imports but also because of civil strife and war. The internecine civil war of 1966 – 1970 in Nigeria necessitated the importation of charity goods especially cheap second hand clothing to the populace rising from the ashes of war. The second hand clothing business in Nigeria which started as a necessity or means to an end has now become a global phenomenon, succumbing to pressures dictated by fashion, civilization, modernity, necessity, and survival instinct. In second hand clothing, utility, styles and status found common expression (Greyson and Crewe, 2005).

What started originally as charity and a means of solving clothing needs have snowballed into vibrant economic exercise and means of livelihood for many hundreds of household. Anyone

visiting most Nigerian markets is presently bombarded with stalls in which piles of clothing are strewn on sheets of nylon or mats laid out on the floor (plates 1a and 1b).

Plate 1a   Plate 1b

Plates 1a and 1b. Two locations for displays and sale of Second-Hand Cloths

MODE OF SECOND HAND CLOTH DISPLAY

In some cities, particular days of the week are earmarked for the marketing of second hand clothing and clothing supplements such as shoes, hand bags, wigs, hats, belts, draperies and lines. Soft toys such as teddy bears have found their way into the exporting clothing. On such days, a whole street or section of the city is taken over by dealers in second hand commodities, who arrange their wares in piles and piles on the floor along the chosen street (plate 1a) or beside the railway lines (plate 1b). Another method of display is to put the SHC inside wheel barrow. Some sellers add value to their cloths by hanging them on hangers suspended on a rope, hung in any available public place or they move around hawking the SHC on hangers held in their hand (plates 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d). To shield themselves from the scorching sun, some of the sellers sit under giant umbrellas while their sales last. This is the case in Ilorin town, the capital of Kwara State inNigeria, where Sunday is the day designated for display and sales of Second Hand Clothing. Most shops are usually closed on Sundays in Ilorin. Dealers in SHC capitalise on this fact and take over the frontage of all the closed shops from the upper section of the Emir's Road up to the Post office area, which the hub of commercial activity in the town to do their brisk business.

Some of the SHC sellers who have their cloths on the floor periodically will dig their two hands into the whole pile of cloths, lift the cloths up and turn them over in the air before dropping them gradually in other to reveal those that are hidden in the pile and bring them to the buyers' attention (plates 3a and 3b).

However, as visible and ubiquitous as this commodity has become on our socioeconomic landscape, there is still a dearth of scholarly work on it. This study therefore, becomes imperative because the economy of second hand clothing has taken a wider dimension and a form of economic sustenance for hundreds of homes that is beyond this scholarly neglect (Heike, 2005).

Plate 2a

Plate 2b

Plate 2c

Plate 2d

Plates 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d. Different means of displaying SHC for sale

Plate 3a

Plate 3b

Plates 3a and 3b. A seller in act of throwing the SHC in air to show the hidden ones

The economic contribution of used clothing dealers to the Nigerian economy cannot be ignored again because as it were, only few of her citizens are above patronising the stalls of these seller who now perform legally recognized and indispensable economic services of providing affordable clothing for the populace.

The socio-economic role of second hand clothing in the complex life of Nigerians deserves to be studied. This is because new quality clothing are expensive commodity only for the rich, the available ones are of poor quality and not durable. The second hand clothing therefore, fill the gap and fill the essential function of providing the urban dwellers with clothing and accessories at a cost which they could afford. The paper attempted to answer the following research questions:-

1. How do items that begin life as new get recycled and reclaimed?

2. What does second hand clothing buying and selling tell us about the state of contemporary consumption?

This paper also fills a major gap in consumption studies.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The passing of clothing between social and economic groups is now a global business but with roots that are centuries old. In line with the above, for over a century or more, the commerce in second hand cloth, clothing and accessories have provided means of livelihood to many hundreds of households. The occupation of selling second-hand clothing has tremendously assisted middle and especially low-income earners to enjoy one of the basic necessities of life – clothing. The above arose from the economic challenges of Nigeria, ranging from the devaluation of Nigerian currency, inconsistent trade policies, porous borders, importation of low quality textile, unemployment, high cost of living and commodity which ensures that the entire populace from the wealthiest to the poor are beginning to participate in this commerce either as sellers or end-users (consumers/buyers). This important fact has yet not been documented. That many people are employed for wages clearly demonstrates the economic importance of the trade in the second-hand clothing and therefore requires analysis.

It is also of importance to research shift in the consumption pattern of second-hand clothing by the Muslim in some parts of Nigeria who had hitherto little or no interest in the selling and buying of second-hand clothing, but who today, constitute the major dealers, sellers and buyers of second-hand clothing. The above consumption pattern becomes plausible as finished cloth in general remains an expensive commodity produced for the rich and new luxury cloth are certainly out of the reach of most people considered as low income earners.

Scholars have attempted to understand the circulation or channels of distribution of goods and services in the economies of the early modern time which is still in its infancy. Lemire's (1998) work pointed out how important used clothing had been as a means of exchange. Although, Areo (2014) posited that textile was once used as a means of exchange, it was new clothes and not used clothes. **I**n Nigeria, despite the long existence of marketing and wearing of second-hand clothing, there exists dearth of literature on this all-important subject – reused clothing and its accessories.

The extent to which used clothing continues to be a dynamic resource in young people's identity construction in Nigeria's rapidly growing urban areas is yet to be determined, hence this study. Much more are the local views of fashion trends, the rich knowledge youth possess about the specifics of style which would enable them to read clothing and to identify position of others, thereby navigating their way in the city, shaping both themselves and the

urban scene. However, the global scope of the second-hand clothing trade increased concerns about the environment and health issue associated with its wearing.

There are scarce records of its impact on the economic growth and being a major source of employment for Nigerians. It is in this respect that reuse of garments as a contemporary fashion statement was explored. Also, recent interest in second-hand clothes by both fashion consumers and designers was also highlighted in the study. Specifically, the study aims to identify the marketing activities, and attitude of consumers to second-hand clothing. It also aimed at identifying the economic impact and employment generation potential of second-hand clothes to the country.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed largely qualitative method of gathering data. Since the research had roots in psychoanalytic and clinical aspects of psychology, it stressed on open-ended and free response types of questions, which helped to stimulate respondents to reveal their innermost thoughts and beliefs about second-hand clothes. In line with the above, depth interview and focus-group-discussion were used to elicit responses from the respondents. Lagos and four of its large markets and Ilorin second-hand market were purposively selected as the study area because Lagos is a port city, and one of the major points of 'dispersing' second-hand clothes to other parts of the country. Lagos State was observed to have the largest second-hand cloth market called Gatankowa. It is from Gatan kowa that other market outlets such as Oshodi, Yaba, Mushin and Ikotun in Lagos buy from this wholesale outlet to markets or bus stations for transport to sales points. Lagos apart from having a large Sea-port has unprecedented large population. While Ilorin, (Post-Office area) served as an example of one of the outlets on the channel of distribution outside Lagos. One hundred sellers and a proportional 100 consumer respondents were randomly selected in the six market places.

Respondents were encouraged to talk freely about their marketing activities, attitudes and interests, in addition to the second-hand clothes being studied. Transcripts, videotapes, and audiotapes were used in recording the interviews, which were carefully studied together with reports of respondents' moods, gestures or 'body language,' they exhibited during the course of study to convey their attitudes and motives.

The information gathered was based on their socioeconomic characteristics, while the sellers' involvement in the business and buyers' /consumers' attitude, (frills and thrills) demonstrated during purchases or price haggling were also critically examined. The study was conducted between November 2013 and April 2014. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were also used to analyse the data on socioeconomic characteristics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Names Given To Second Hand Clothes in Nigeria

Developed nations such as France, United Kingdom and the United States of America from where second-hand clothes (SHC) are exported to Nigeria were observed to have various names given to it. Callahan and Paoleti (1999) record some of the names as "antique", "vintage," "previously owned", "gently-used" and "cast-off," to mention a few. Some of the above names, for example "cast-off," "previously owned" have connotations of devalued or degraded products. However, in Nigeria, all names given to SHC were observed to be given from derogatory point of view. The names were given based on the perception of the sellers and the consumers of SHC. The perceptions of names given were viewed from the angle of poverty, never-do-well, cheapness and absurdness. It was also observed that the names had origin from the three Nigerian major ethnic groups namely the Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba.

Arising from the above, the following names were observed to be commonly or interchangeably used by the numerous consumers of SHC.

Okrika

About the most popular name in Nigeria, hence used in the title of this study. The name originated among the Ibo-speaking people of South-eastern Nigeria. Until recently, the name was not derogatory; it derived from the fact that *Okrika*, a coastal town of South-eastern Nigeria, was believed to have had the largest consignment of SHC donated by developed countries to meet the needs of victims of the Nigerian civil war. SHC were believed to have been dispersed from *Okrika* in the past to other parts of the country. The name has today received wider acceptance in Nigeria.

Select-select

A term used by the Ibo sellers across the nation. The name is used by the sellers to call the attention of potential buyers. It is a modern day name derived from the fact that buyers had to shuffle the clothes heaped on a spread polyethylene to 'select' their choice (Plates 1a and 1b). While potential buyers are shuffling, the sellers continue to say "come and select your own," "select-select" that is, come and have your best choice ahead of other customers. 'selectselect', according to sellers during focus group discussion, also means that consumers should select cheap, and quality clothes from the heaps on the ground.

Plate 4. Customers making a selection from cloth pile on the floor

Bend-down Boutique

 A derogatory name derived from the method of display of SHC in the open market. The SHC were observed to be heaped on a large tarpaulin or large spread polyethylene. This type of heap display ensures that potential consumers 'bend-down' to shuffle through to make their choices (Plates 5a, 5b, 5c). The name was given by the consumers to describe their physical act or posture while buying. In normal boutiques, consumer stands to inspect the clothes on display usually on hangers, raised platform or showcases.

Bosikoro: A shortened form of Yoruba's *'bosikoro k'oye wo'*, meaning, step aside into obscurity and try them for fitness. This is a Yoruba derogatory name for SHC. Yoruba is one of the three major ethnic groups domiciled in the South-western Nigeria. The Yoruba believe that this cloth type was meant for the poor people of the society, especially in the past. As a consequence of this, would-be buyers who loath the stigma of poverty or being called poor, usually step aside into an obscure place away from the prying eyes of the public or friends

who may recognise them while passing, to try their choice following which they either buy or drop it for another try.

| Plate 5a | Plate 5b | Plate 5c |

Plates 5a, b and c. Customers in acts of bending down to make their choice

Tokunbo: A Yoruba name now widely used by all Nigerians Coined from where the commodity came from- Over Sea. Tokunbo literarily means that which came-from-across-the-Atlantic. It carries derogatory connotation too.

Yamutere: This is another derogatory name from the Yoruba for SHC. Mostly shortened to *yamuu,* the name depicts cheapness of the cloths. It connotes that no matter the poverty level of a consumer, he/she would be able to get something to take home. It is about high affordability of theSHC. The literal translation of *yamutere* is: come and pick yours, while the Yoruba meaning is: *ya* – come; *muu* – pick; *t'ere* – your own. The three syllable words are used for next-to-worthless things in the olden days, and are dialectic distinction of the first set of Yoruba sellers of SHC, the *Ijeshas* and the *Ekitis.*

Gbanjo: This is also a name from the Yoruba depicting goods that are extremely cheap or those on auction; extremely cheaper than new ones. It is a deliberate reduction of prices of commodity, in order to attract large sales is usually the practice. The sellers usually call the attention of potential buyers by jingling a hand bell and calling "*gbanjo, gbanjo, mo lowo lo lai je gbese, gbanjo oti d'opo o, o lule, odi saara.* Meaning come and pick because it is almost free compare to new ones.

Aloku eebo: This is another derogatory name from the Yoruba for SHC. It literarily means remnants from the white people or Europeans. The Yoruba meaning is: *aloku* – remnant/rejects; *ebo* – White people meaning; the white people's cast offs.

Gwanjo: This is the Hausa name for SHC, possibly coined from Yoruba *'gbanjo.'* Hausa are people of the Northern part of Nigeria, where there is no privilege of seaports to import SHC. Focus group discussion, speculated that the Hausa who had to travel to the South-western Nigeria especially, Lagos must have heard the Yoruba calling SHC as *gbanjo*. It is to be noted that the Hausa do not have *'gb'* in the alphabet like the Yoruba, instead they have '*gw'* hence while it is natural for Yoruba to call it *'gbanjo,'* it is more convenient for Hausa to call same as *'gwanjo.'*

Anagwagu: This is one of the derogatory names also from the Hausa people. It depicts a re-used thing, or something of little value, highly inconsequential and therefore meant for the rejects of the society.

Sorting of Bales Content in Wholesale Market

The study observed the existence of the largest SHC market in Nigeria in *Gatan Kowa* some kilometres from *Agege* and *Iyana-paja* area of Lagos State. It was also observed that Tuesdays of every week was the days of arrival and opening of bales discharged from the ships, on arrival to importing country. The wholesalers are merchants who had enough money to import SHC in bales. There were few 20% respondents who had enough money to buy a bale or two. However, the study found out that majority (80%) of respondents usually join forces in 2 to 6 people to purchase and share a bale or two of SHC. It was further observed that the content of some of the SHC bales were already sorted out from source. For example, some bales had only men's shorts, trousers, T-shirts, etc., while some had only women's gown, skirts and under-wears. The above was adduced as part of the reasons why 2 to 6 people combine in buying a bale or two, this allow them to get a mix of varieties shared out from various bales instead of being limited to a particular type of clothes.

Findings also show that there were primary and secondary wholesalers. The primary wholesalers were those who buy bales directly from the ports, while the 20 wholesalers buy from the primary wholesalers and sell to the retailers. The primary wholesaler sells cheaply to secondary wholesalers who add their mark-up prices when selling to retailers.

Findings further observed two levels of retailer-ship; the study termed these as primary and secondary retailers. The shop-owners and itinerant sellers were observed to add form utility to sorted SHC. This form utility was by way of washing to remove peculiar scent of *Tokunbo* clothing, starching and ironing the SHC. However, the itinerant retailers sell them as sorted from the bales of SHC that is, they sell their wares crumpled and wrinkled just the way they came from abroad. The channel of distribution ends up with consumers purchasing SHC (Fig. 1) There are also those who add value by sewing torn parts of the clothing, carrying out adjustments to fit sizes, adding missing buttons, zippers, and other accessories when necessary.

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents' Sellers

Table 1(Part-I). Frequency Distribution of Respondents (sellers) by selected personal and socio-economic characteristics

	Characteristics	*Absolute*	*Relative (%)*
Gender	Male	30	30
	Female	70	70
	Total	100	100
Age	Less than 25	5	5
	25 – 44	45	45
	45 – 54	30	30
	Above 55	20	20
	Total	100	100
Religion	Christian	42	42
	Moslem	58	58
	Total	100	100
Marital Status	Single	48	48
	Married	52	52

Table 1(Part-II). Frequency Distribution of Respondents (sellers) by selected personal and socio-economic characteristics

	Characteristics	Absolute	Relative (%)
Educational Level	No Formal Education	5	5
	Primary	25	25
	Secondary	36	36
	Tertiary	34	34
	Total	100	100
Income	Above =N=7500	11	11
	=N= 7500 – 10000	14	14
	=N=20,000- 29,000	28	28
	Above =N= 30,000	47	47
	Total	100	100

Source = Survey 2013

Results in Table 1 reveals that majority (70%) of the sellers of SHC were women, while 30% were male. Majority (75%) of the respondents (sellers) were between the ages of 25 and 54 years. There were more (58%) Muslims in the trade, while, 42% were Christians. This is probably expected because there are more Muslims sellers in *Gatan Kowa* and Ilorin area than the Christians. Again, 58% of the respondents were married; about 42% of the respondents were still single. From the focus-group-discussion, it was deduced that majority of these single respondents were actually university graduates who opted for this business instead of roaming the streets for white collar jobs.

The above was corroborated from the data in Table 1 considering the educational level of the respondents with 34% of the respondents possessing tertiary institutional qualifications. However, a slightly higher percentage 36% of the respondents had secondary certificates and 25% had primary school education. This shows that majority (95%) of the sellers were fairly educated and only 5% had no formal education.

The results in Table 1 further show that majority (75%) earn far above the Nigerian National Minimum wage, which is N18,000 only, while only 25% earned below the minimum wage. The inference from this was that the business was paying off for majority of second-hand cloth traders.

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents' Buyer

Table 2 (Part-I). Frequency Distribution of Respondents (Buyers) by selected personal and socio-economic characteristics

	Characteristics	Absolute	Relative (%)
Gender	Male	22	22.0
	Female	78	78.0
	Total	100	100
Age	Less than 25	23	23
	25 – 44	32	32
	45 – 54	36	36
	Above 55	9	9
	Total	100	100

Table 2(Part-II). Frequency Distribution of Respondents (Buyers) by selected personal and socio-economic characteristics

	Characteristics	*Absolute*	*Relative (%)*
Religion	Christian	41	41
	Moslem	59	59
	Total	100	100
Marital Status	Single	49	49
	Married	51	51
	Total	100	100
Educational Level	No Formal Education	5	5
	Primary	23	23
	Secondary	42	42
	Tertiary	30	30
	Total	100	100

Source = Survey 2013

Findings, in Table 2 show that among the buyers, majority (78%) were women, while 22% were men. This is expected in the Nigerian society because the women collect money from their husbands to buy for the entire family members, and probably because women are considered more fashionable than men. Majority (68%) of the respondents (buyers) were between the ages of 25 and 54 years, with 23% being less than 25 years and only 9% were above 55 years of age. Further findings show that about 60% of the respondents were Muslims, while about 40% were Christians. Focus-group-discussions explained that it was estimated that Ilorin population is 78% Muslims, hence the high numbers of Muslims recorded. There were also about 50% single respondents who constituted the buyers and 50% married respondents. This indicated that almost equal numbers of male and female patronise second-hand clothes.

It was also probably due to the high population of Muslims around the study area, who would not permit their women out especially to market places. A majority (65%) of the respondent buyers had between primary and secondary education, while 30% were holders of tertiary institution certificates. This shows that the patronage given to SHC is across boards and has broad acceptance within the community of study.

Perception based on Patronage of Second Hand Cloth

Table 3(Part-I). Distribution of Respondents according to Perception based on Patronage of Second Hand Cloth

S/N	*Variable*	*Strongly Agree*	*Agree*	*Undecided*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
		F (%)	*F (%)*	*F (%)*	*F (%)*	*F (%)*
1	Quality attracts me to SHC	44 (44)	26 (26)	5 (5)	20 (20)	5 (5)
2	SHC are quite affordable	27 (27)	45 (45)	12 (12)	10 (10)	8 (8)
3	I sometimes get designer wears	23 (23)	46 (46)	4 (4)	21 (21)	6 (6)
4	Skin diseases are contactable from SHC.	13 (13)	24 (24)	12 (12)	45 (45)	16 (16)
5	Prices of SHC are relatively stable	41 (41)	37 (37)	7 (7)	6 (6)	9 (9)

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents according to Perception based on Patronage of Second Hand Cloth

S/N	Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
6	I at times stumble on new un-used	31 (31)	41 (41)	6 (6)	12 (12)	10 (10)
7	I wear SHC them without washing them.	23 (23)	18 (18)	9 (9)	35 (35)	15 (15)
8	SHC closes gap between the rich and the poor.	43 (43)	33 (33)	14 (14)	5 (5)	5 (5)
9	Sale of SHC contributes economically to the economy.	23 (23)	51 (51)	16 (16)	7 (7)	3 (3)
10	Good quality buy occurs early morning.	45 (45)	27 (27)	3 (3)	6 (6)	19 (19)

Key: SHC = Second Hand Cloth; Source = Survey 2013

Findings in Table 3 reveal that majority (70) of respondents who buy SHC buy them because of their good quality, in terms of the textile materials and the finishing of the sewing, while about 30% disagreed. In focus-group-discussion, respondents were of the view that since new sewn clothes are expensive and meant for the rich, they depended on SHC to close the gap between them and the rich. To buttress this, majority (76%) affirms that buying SHC, washing, starching and ironing it bridges the gap between their family and the rich family. However, about 24% respondents disagreed. In line with the above, majority (72%) were of the opinion that SHC are highly affordable for their family, while 18% disagreed. Majority of the focus-group-discussants felt without SHC, their family would have been worst off economically to drive home the earlier point.

The data in Table 3 further revealed that majority (69%) search for designer wears before any other choice, 27% of the respondents just patronise SHC to get wears for the family. Table 3 also indicated that majority (78%) formed opinion that SHC prices were relatively stable, while 22% disagreed. Among the focus-group-discussants, it was posited that SHC prices is subjected to the vagaries of supply and demand of foreign exchange.

Price changes remain negligible. There were also majority (72%) who often stumble on relatively new unused clothes among SHC. In the same manner, another majority (72%) supported the above claim and further revealed that early morning patronage ensured getting new unused quality SHC. The data in Table III equally revealed that a majority (72%) of the respondent buyers believe that SHC, buying and selling was of economic benefits to the country, Nigeria, with 28% disagreeing.

On the issue of washing SHC before wearing them, 37% believed they could contact skin diseases if the wears were not re-washed, while 61% were of the opinion that no disease was transmittable through the wearing of SHC more so they claimed that the SHC had been thoroughly washed with washing machines and disinfectants before being exported from their origin countries.. In line with the above argument, 41% respondents wash their purchased SHC before wearing them, while about 50% do not wash before wearing SHC. This corroborates the claim that wearing SHC does not transmit skin diseases.

Perception of Sellers Involvement in Selling Second Hand Cloth

Table 4. Distribution of respondents (sellers) according to perception of their involvement in selling Second Hand Cloth

S/N	Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
1.	SHC business is profitable	31 (31)	39 (39)	9 (9)	11 (11)	10 (10)
2.	SHC has consumers across board	43 (43)	28 (28)	5 (5)	15 (15)	9 (9)
3.	Consumers try cloth fitness openly	32 (32)	22 (22)	21 (21)	20 (20)	6 (6)
4.	It is ideal to have a changing room	29 (29)	46 (46)	4 (4)	11 (11)	10 (10)
5.	I sell all types of SHC, male/female	23 (23)	44 (44)	13 (13)	14 (14)	6 (6)
6.	I specialized in a type of SHC	27 (27)	15 (15)	2 (2)	40 (40)	16 (16)
7.	Specialization engenders more profits and loyal consumers.	40 (40)	31 (31)	8 (8)	20 (20)	1 (1)
8.	Place mix is very crucial in selling SHC.	26 (26)	45 (45)	12 (12)	11 (11)	6 (6)
9.	I add value or form utility to SHC.	23 (23)	21 (21)	11 (11)	43 (43)	2 (2)
10.	I train my children in school from profit of selling SHC.	34 (34)	42 (42)	6 (6)	12 (12)	6 (6)

Key: Second Hand Cloth; Source = Survey 2013

The data in Table 4 shows that majority 70% of respondent-sellers opined that selling SHC was profitable for them, while 21% disagreed. It was further noted in focus-group-discussions that majority of those who disagreed were those who were just starting the business and were yet to attain break-even-point (BEP).

To justify the above, majority (76%) of the respondents used their profits to train their children's education, with only 18% who disagreed. On the role of place mix, majority (71%) believed that highly accessible place was important to selling SHC, while 17% do not agree. The data in Table 4 further shows that respondent-sellers were more of generalist in terms of what they sell; hence majority (67%) sells all types of wears, while only 12% sells specialised SHC. To confirm the above, 42% had specialization, while 56% had no specialization. However, on the same issue, majority (71%) of the respondents were of the belief that specialization would engender more profits, loyal consumers and consumer satisfaction.

On the need for a changing room for trying clothes for fitting, 55% of respondent-sellers do not have places to try the purchased clothes, while only 26% had places where the customers try their to-be-purchased SHC, 21% were undecided of the desirability of a changing room.

Focus-group-discussants were quick to explain that potential buyers no longer border whether anybody is watching them; therefore, they try the SHC openly. It was, however, interesting to note that majority (75%) of the respondent-sellers felt that it was highly desirable to have a changing room for their customers, especially for the women, while only 21% had a disagreeing view and 4% undecided.

Typology of Second Hand Cloth (SHC)

Findings have shown that second hand clothing found on sales in Ilorin and other sales outlets are basically of six types namely; male wears, female wears, fashion accessories for male and female, children wears, Toys and soft furnishing materials for homes.

Male Wears

The male wears comprise of trousers in assorted textile materials including denim jeans, corduroy, blazers, shirts, jackets, suits, boxers, mufflers and stockings (plate 6).

Plate 6a   Plate 6b

Plates 6a and 6b. Jeans and T-Shirts on display for sale

Female Cloths

The corpus of Second Hand Cloth for females are skirts, trousers in different materials, blazers, blouses, shirts, Skirt suits, trouser suits, dress suits, evening wears, wedding gowns, swim suits, underwear comprising of brassieres, pants, leggings, panty hose, camisoles and tights (plate 7).

Plate 7

Plate 7. Brassieres on display for sale

Children Cloths

Among the children Second Hand Cloth are found; baby dresses, layettes, shawls, stockings, trousers, dungarees, baby bonnets, christening gowns and party wears.

Fashion Accessories

Fashion accessories such as ladies hand bags, waist belt for male and female, laptop bags, wigs, scarves, caps of different design are some of the items found freely on display (plate 8a, b c, d, e, and f).

| Plate 8a: Bags | Plate 8b: Male Shoes | Plate 8c: Belts |

| Plate 8d: Wigs | Plate 8e: Fez Caps | Plate 8f: Stockings |

Plates 8a-8f. Different Fashion accessories on display for sale

Toys

Also toys in the various foreign characters are some of Second Hand Cloth imported into the country that is sold side by side with other items. Though the characters of these toys have no relation to Yoruba or Nigerian culture, they still find ready buyers. This is as a result of social, electronic and print media which have given the people access to what obtains in the western culture such as children cartoon films. Another reason is the western education which has exposed the buyers to some of the toy characters (plates 9a and 9b).

Plate 9a: Toys   Plate 9b: Toys

Plates 9a and 9b. Assorted toys, some in Western Cartoon Characters

Soft Home Furnishing Materials

The last group of items found among Second Hand Cloth displayed for sale is soft home furnishings comprising of bed sheets, table cloth, duffels, pillow cases, window curtains, blankets, towels and crib covers.

Male	Female	Children	Unisex	General
Fez Cap	Blouses	Sweaters	Jeans	Slip-On
Trousers	Blazers	Gowns	Fez Cap	Sandals
Shirts	Gowns	Trousers	Mufflers	Court Shoes
Jackets	Undies	Stockings	Travelling Bag	Canvass
Ties	Pants	Shawls	Suitcases	Snickers
Boxers	Camisole	Baby Layette		Rubber Sandals
Stockings	Skirts	Baby Carrier		Trekkers
Handkerchiefs	Wigs	Shoes		Jack Boots
Bowler Hats	Brassieres	Head Wears		Bedsheets
T-Shirts	Girdles	Table Cloth		Curtain
Sport Wears	Necklaces			Belts
Knickers	Skirt Suits			Food Warmer
Blazers	Scarves			Laptop Bags
Mufflers	Chemise			Seat Covers
Briefcases	Bangles			School Bags
	Bags			Back Pack

Finally, the ultimate consumers are individuals who buy or use the Second Hand Cloth. The channel of Second Hand Cloth from abroad to Nigeria is represented schematically below:
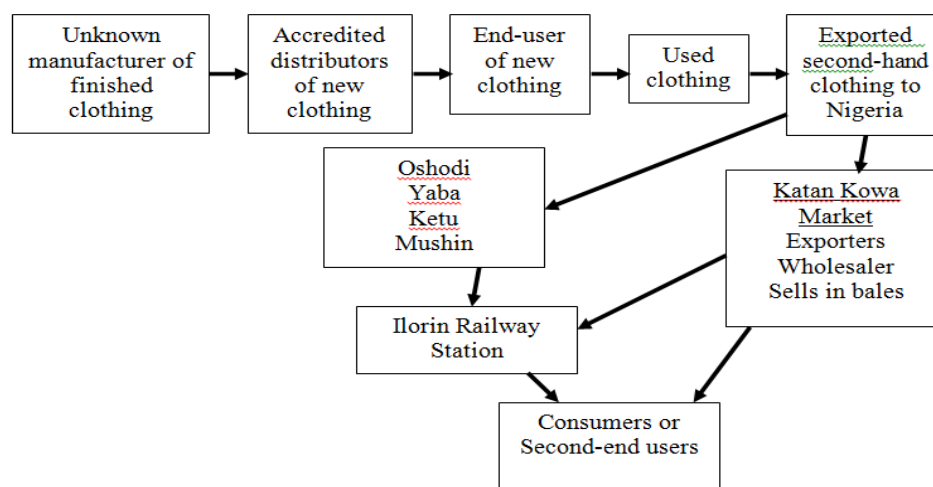

Figure 1. Channel of distribution of second-hand clothing from source countries to the end--user

The above represents one of the simplest channels of distribution. However, the actual path that SHC or title takes may be much more complex than the one illustrated above in Figure 1.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the findings and discussions, it was observed that there was a growing increase not only in the number of women participating in business in open places, but Muslim women. This is seen in the high percentage (58%) of women involved in selling of second-hand clothing. In a country rated by various parameters as one of the poorest countries of the world, oil wealth notwithstanding, the reliance on second-hand clothing seems to be here to stay until further notice. Majority of the women involved in the business see this business not only as lucrative but as a cheaper means of clothing their children and their family where English wears are concerned.

Furthermore, the used clothing sector of Nigerian business is observed to be important to the overall economy of the cities where these businesses are carried out. They do not only make available quality clothing but at highly affordable prices. They also act as brokers for the teeming Nigerian youth seeking employment. To most youth, it serves as a stopgap measure while they seek a so-called better paid or white collar job. The construction of second and third-hand clothing provides a startling twist on local notions of clothes. A cultural economy of judgment and style is at work in local appropriations of the West's unwanted clothing.

Interestingly, these used cloth dealers were able to facilitate the movement of goods by offering previously owned but still re-usable items for sale in a public open marketplace. The lower rungs of the ladder in the society were able to access through second-hand clothing bits and pieces of luxury goods, albeit used, while their upper rung of the ladder of the society were able to recycle their extravagance.

Clothing practices among tertiary institution students in Nigeria were now influenced by the adaptive re-use of hardy textiles, thereby allowing individual re-combination of various garment pieces to emerge.

The study was able to observe that in a global village that is daily shrinking, Nigerians now have access to what is considered modern and trendy in the Western fashion world and the desire to adapt this Western way of dressing have given more credence to the viability of

these clothing. The process of recycling clothing has come to stay, this is because every piece of garment has many potential future lives, and the trade in second-hand clothing and textile recycling is lucrative.

The journey of new clothing purchased by the first ultimate consumer to the third party is a complex matrix. It ranges from garments that sit on the rack unsold for too long in the consignment store retrieved by their owners and donated to charity to unsold garments that are disposed of in bulk to textile recyclers who sort and grade them, some for the industrial cleaning-rag market and more for the second-hand clothing export market. This exported garment on arriving abroad, assumes new life; for example, according to Global Perspectives (2010) in Africa, they not only cover basic clothing needs, but also fulfil desires about bodies in "the latest" as locally defined. In second-hand clothing, consumption, desire constraints emulation. It best exemplifies what goes around in this global process does indeed come around, yet with creatively changed meanings.

Today, unlike before, second-hand clothing is not just any commodity but rather a special one. As a dress, it mediates both individual and collective identities and desires, and as an imported commodity, it opens up a special exposure to interactions between the local and the rest of the world. Dress conventions differ throughout Nigeria, not only in terms of religious norms (for instance, whether people are Muslims or Christians), but also by gender, age, class and religion or ethnicity.

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