

PRODUCTION OF LOCAL WOVEN TEXTILES AS A MEANS OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN MAKURDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Abstract

This study investigated the production of local woven textiles as a means of alleviating poverty in Makurdi Local Government Area, Benue State. A survey research design was used for the study. The population for this study comprised of 550 local weavers and dyers. Five research questions guided the study. A sample size of 352 was used through purposive sampling. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage, mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that narrow loom was majorly use for the production of local fabrics, the white and black colour of Tiv traditional woven textile, fabrics were produced in large quantities representing 45% compared to Idoma and Igede tribes in the state. Majority of local weaver said they have difficulty in getting initial capital to start production was the main problem. Most of the local weavers adopted a strategy of constant supply of woven fabrics in the market in order to alleviate poverty. In conclusion the Tivs have high regard for locally woven fabric which forms the bed rock for their cultural celebrations. More than half of the local weavers earn between ₦50,000 to ₦55,000 Per annum representing 86% of the local weavers. Recommendations are that narrow loom should be used to teach the youths skills in weaving to reduce their poverty level among others.

Keywords: Local Woven, textile, poverty alleviation.

Introduction

Textile refers to fabrics used in making clothes. Fibers used in making fabrics are made into yarns and subsequently knit or woven into fabrics. (Nordas, 2004). Yarn is produced by spinning raw fibers of wool, flax, cotton, or other material to produce long strands. Textiles are formed by weaving, knitting, crocheting, knotting, or felting. Local textile production refers to the hand technical practices of making fabrics through interlacing of fibres. Fabric refers to any material made through weaving, knitting, spreading, crocheting, or bonding used for making garments. The making of these fabrics are as a result of twisting fibers together to form yarns. Twist holds fibers together to form yarns. The appearance of a yarn can easily be observed through, colour and size. Traditional yarns are those yarns produced by methods used in the early historical fiber development. Weaving is a process of producing fabrics by interlacing at least two sets of yarns at right angles. The three basic types of weaves include, plain weave, will weave and satin weave. The plain weave is the simplest and was used by the local weavers in Benue State to reduce poverty (Spindel, 2012).

Poverty is a phenomenon which is as old as the society. It could be said to mean a state of perpetual want, absence of essential means of survival. To be economically poor

implies not having and not being able to get the basic needs of life. Poverty is also defined by British Institute for International and comparative law, (BIICL 2003) as the scarcity of human basic needs for human survival, like adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, healthy education and recreation.

Poverty alleviation aim at improving the quality of life for those people currently living in poverty. It is one of the most difficult challenges facing any country in the developing world where, on the average, majority of the population is considered poor. Evidence in Nigeria shows that the number of those in poverty has continued to increase. For example the number of those living in poverty increased from 27% in 1990 to 46% in 2000 and 67% in 2010. By 2020 it increased to more than 70% (Olugbamigbe, 2021). Poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria are means through which the government aims to revamp and reconstruct the economy.

Local textile production industries form a major part of manufacturing production, employment and trade in many developing countries. Textile and clothing industry offers a range of opportunities including entry-level jobs for unskilled labour in Benue state thereby has

the ability to reduce reducing the level of poverty of people that are involved in it especially people in Makurdi who have the skills of producing these local textiles. In doing this, they have experienced a very high output growth rate in the sector, (Boyo and Dada 2013)

Weaving is a method of textile production in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads are interlaced at right angle to form a fabric or cloth. Similar methods of fabric production are knitting, felting and braiding or plaiting. Weaving and dyeing are part of primary methods of textile production and it involves interlacing a set of vertical threads called warps with horizontal threads called weft while dyeing is the colouring of fabric with soluble solution or substance. (Balter, 2009).

Weaving can be done by hand or by machines, though hand weaving is still in practice mostly by some local textile weaver and dyers in Benue. It involves finger weaving, lacing and knotting together with thread by hand, is still used today by many traditional weavers in Makurdi. It is based on the conversion of fibres into yarn, yarn into fabric. These are then dyed or printed, fabricated into clothes. Different types of fibre are used to produced yarn. Cotton is the world's most important natural fibres. In the year 2007, the global yield was 25 million tons from 35 million hectares cultivated in more than 50 countries (Kathleen, 2005).

The traditional and locally decorated fabrics, namely ange, Iri-achi and Ogodogodo used by the Tiv, Idoma and Igede are underutilized in the country. The traditional wears for Tiv, Idoma and Igede cultures are made from locally cotton and mostly used during family meetings and festive periods. There was ready market for the sale of the products, (Sokoya, 2000).

In recent years, Benue textile designers are also gaining influence based on their innovative ideas. This can become a source of income and poverty alleviation for individual in the state. The styles of weaving and dyeing craft vary depending upon the cultural tradition of the place, climate conditions, cultural influences and business contacts. Weaving and dyeing is mostly done by middle age people and few men in Makurdi local government and other parts of the states with the help of different materials, and each tribe in Benue has its own styles with their love for culture treasure traditional wears. Thus, if the production of these local Benue fabrics namely anger, Iri-achi and ogodogodo are encouraged, it could lead to poverty alleviation among the populace who are presently living in poverty because of hard economics times.

Statement of the Problem

The motivation for this study came as a result of increasing numbers of local weavers selling

traditional cloths after crossing river Benue Bridge from wurukum area. Different sizes of beads with assorted designed with traditional colours of ethnic groups are sold at these locations. The researcher is thus motivated to investigate into the entrepreneurial activities of the local weavers in order to find out whether the production of these local fabrics can be said to be a source of poverty alleviation among the local weavers.

Objective of the Study: The main objective of the study is to find out if the production of the locally woven fabrics can serve as a means of poverty alleviation in Makurdi local government. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the types of loom used in the production of local traditional fabrics in Benue State.
2. Identify the prevalent colour and level of production of the local traditional fabrics in Benue State.
3. Ascertain the decoration techniques used for the production of local fabrics based on types.
4. Determine the income generated per annum from the production of local woven fabrics.
5. Determine production challenges faced by local weavers.
6. Find out the improvement strategies employed by weavers and dyers for increased production.

Research Questions

1. What are the types of loom used in the production of local traditional fabrics in Benue State?
2. What are the prevalent colour and level of production of the local traditional fabrics in Benue State?
3. What are the decoration techniques used for the production of the local fabrics based on the types?
4. What is the income generated per annum from the production of local woven fabrics?
5. What are the production challenges faced by local weavers?
6. What are the improvement strategies employed by weavers and dyers for increased production?

Scope of the Study

This study focused on the various local textile weavers and dyers in Makurdi. Both males and females who are involved in the production of locally woven and dyed fabrics serve as respondents in this study.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study used survey research design, because it aimed at collecting and analyzing data from few people considered being a representative of the entire population or group. The design was adopted because, it found out the opinion of local textile producers (weavers and dyers) in Makurdi Local Government Area.

Area of Study

This research work essentially covers local weavers and dyers in Makurdi Local Government Area. These include North Bank, Wadata, High level, modern market and wurukum, where production and marketing of the traditional wears were sold within the local government.

Population of the Study

The population for the study is made up of a total number of five hundred and fifty (550) local weavers/dyers shops located within the coverage of the study area.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size was 352. This was determined using purposive random sampling since the population is small.

Members of this sample have special characteristic skills needed for weaving.

Instrument for Data Collection

Instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire which was used to elicit information

Research question 1: What are the types of loom used in the production of the local traditional woven fabrics?

Table 1: percentage response of local weavers on production types utilized when making fabrics response and percentage.

S/N	Types of loom	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Narrow Loom	302	86%
2.	Wide Loom	50	14%
Total		352	100%

Table 1 shows that majority of local weavers used narrow loom for the production of traditional fabrics, while wide loom was the least.

from the local weavers and dyers of textile fabrics.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Home Science and Management in the University of Agriculture Makurdi Benue State.

Data Collection

A total number of three hundred and fifty-two (352) copies of structured questionnaire were administered to local textiles producers (weavers and dyers). This was done with the help of two research assistants who administered and collected the questionnaire. Direct contact approach was used to collect data from the respondents.

Data Analysis

The research questions 1, 3 and 4 were analyzed using frequency and percentage while question 2 were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation (SD). The bench mark for these items was 2.50. Any item with a mean value of 2.50 and above was regarded as agree while the value with less than 2.50 is not accepted.

Result and Discussion

The result and the discussion of findings were presented according to objectives and research questions that guided the study.

Research question 2: What are the prevalent colours and level of production of locally woven and dyed fabrics?

Table 2: Types and level of production of local woven and dyed fabrics

S/n	Types and level of	Colour	Level of	Frequency	Percentage
1	The Tiv Fabrics (Anger)	White & Black	Large quantity	160	45
2	The Idoma Fabricss (Iri-Achi)	Red & Black	Medium quantity	120	34
6	The Igede Fabrics (Ogodogodo)	Green, Black and White	Medium quantity	72	21
Total				352	100

Table 2, shows that the Tiv traditional fabric is produced in large quantity (45%). Tivs were the largest populated people in Benue State. This justifies the production of the traditional fabrics in large quantity. Idoma traditional fabrics were produced in medium quantity as shown in Table 1, representing 34%. This was followed by the Igede Traditional fabric, 21 %. The production levels followed the pattern of level of population of each tribe.

Table 3a: Techniques used for decoration based on types of fabric type in Benue State

S/N	Anger (Tiv fabrics)	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Black only	5	3.5%
2.	White only	4	2.5%
3.	Black & White	151	94%
Total		160	100%

Table 3b:

S/N	Iri-achi (Idoma fabrics)	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Red only	8	6.6%
2.	Black only	6	5%
3.	Red & black	106	88.4%
Total		120	100%

Table 3c:

S/N	Ogodogodo (Igede fabrics)	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Blue only	5	6.9%
2.	Black only	2	2.7%
3.	White only	3	4.1%
4.	Blue, black and white	62	86.3%
Total		72	100%

Table 3a show that Anger fabrics had white and black colour which represent the Tiv traditional colour. Table 3b shows the Idoma fabrics had Red and black colour while Table 3c shows that Igede traditional fabrics colour is Blue, black and white.

Research Question 4: What are the income generated per annum from local woven textiles and dyed fabrics.

Table 4: Mean and Standard deviation on the level of income per annum.

S/n	Income Per Annum(₦)	SA	A	DA	\bar{X}	ds	SD	Remark
1	50,000 - 55,000	83	86	84	99	3.23	1.12	Accepted
2	60,000 - 65,000	98	87	85	82	3.76	1.72	Accepted
3	70,000 - 75,000	86	98	86	83	3.97	1.98	Accepted
4	80,000 - 85,000	81 86	88		97	1.22	1.02	Not accepted
5	90,000 - 95,000	72	80	93	10	1.22	1.02	Not accepted

Table 2 shows that majority of respondent agreed that they earn 70,000 to 75,000 per annum from woven and dyed fabrics. Item 4 and 5 were not accepted. The respondents said that money in these categories were not earned by them per annum. The main reasons given by weavers was that economy in the state is slow as most customers were civil servants.

Research question 5: What are the problems faced by weavers and dyers of local woven textiles fabrics?

Table 5: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on the problems faced by weavers and dyers of local textile fabrics.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	High level of taxation	2.06	1.54	Not accepted
2.	Raw materials purchased at high cost	2.50	1.46	Accepted
3.	Lack of quality fast dyes to fabrics	2.74	1.23	Accepted
4.	Lack of initial capital caused delayed production	3.86	1.34	Accepted
5.	Climate change affects the production in raining season.	2.51	1.47	Accepted

Table 3, shows that lack of initial capital was the highest (23%) on the problems faced by local weavers and dyers to start production ,followed by raw materials bought at high cost, representing 21 %. Lack of quality fast dye substance was the least problem representing 17%.

Research question 6: What are the strategies employed by weavers and dyers.

Table 6: The strategies employed by weavers and dyers.

S/n	Strategies employed by weavers	Frequency	Percentage
1	Living close to business point reduce the cost of transportation	61	17.3
2	Purchasing raw materials directly from dealers reduce high cost of fibre and dye materials	70	19.9
3	Constant availability of local fabrics in the market enhance more income	81	23
4	Self-dying of fibers reduce cost of labour	77	21.9
5	Utilizing other locally made dyes to reduce cost of import.	63	17.9
	Total	352	100

Table 4 shows that majority of the weavers indicated that they adopted a strategy of woven fabrics available to their customers in the market or point of sale, representing 23%. Other used strategy of self-dying of fabrics by themselves (21 %) to reduce cost of labour. The least strategy adopted by the weavers is living close to business area which had 17.3%.

Discussion of the Findings

The result shows from research question one that Tiv traditional woven and dyed fabrics (Anger), was produced in large quantities representing 45% among the three ethnic groups in Benue State. Tiv tribes are the largest populated ethnic groups in the state, hence produced the highest quantity of traditional woven fabrics. The people have high regards for their culture, especially during festive periods by wearing traditional attires. This statement was in agreement with Aloysius (2015) which stated that there is relationship between values and clothing behaviour. The Idoma ethnic groups produced woven and dyed textile fabrics (Iri-Achi) in medium quantity representing 34%. This is because they are less populated than the Tiv. The Igede tribes also produced Local fabrics (Ogodogodo), in medium quantity (21 %). The more populated people, the more production of traditional woven and dyed textile fabrics.

Majority of local weavers agreed that their income per annum were between N70,000 - N75,000. Some of the weavers stated that they do not earn N90,000 - N95,000 per annum. Few weavers noted that the amount is not achievable as most of their customers were civil servants in the state.

This supports Sokoya, S. K (2000) that a country cannot fully diversify with mono-economy. There should be diversification of economy.

The third research question which sought information on the problems faced by weavers and dyers, 23% of the respondents accepted that lack of initial capital was the major problem to start production. This finding was in agreement with By field (2002) that individual in a poor state of economy face difficulty in starting a viable business enterprise. The economy in the state is very tight as there were no viable industry or companies to support the income of civil servants.

Most of the weavers, 20.2% said that climate change affects the traditional weaving during raining season in most cases. The rain hinders the production as the weaving is carried out in the open. Other problems encountered by the weavers was high taxation, representing 17.9%, lack of good quality fast dyes with response of 17%. Some weavers and dyers complained that there were a lot of sub-standard dyes in the market which costs almost the same price as original dyes. This statement is line with Ghani, E. K (2009) that observed that sharp practices are common among some business individuals.

It was found out from the fourth research question that living close to production area was not the overriding factor among others in the strategies employed to reduce poverty. Majority of the weavers and dyers, (17.3%) noted that rented houses in the business areas more costly to them.

Most of the strategies adopted by weavers and dyers include purchasing of raw materials directly from dealers to reduce cost of fibres and dyes which represent 23 %, making of fabrics constantly available in the markets for customers was 19.9% and dyeing of fabrics by themselves to reduce cost of labour representing 17.9%. This statement is in support of Freymuth (2011), which noted that appraisal and job satisfaction is key to any business enterprise.

Conclusion

The result of the findings revealed that locally made woven and textile fabrics are of different types with the level of production. Each type is made for a specific purpose according to cultural identity of the three ethnic groups in Benue State. The colours of fabrics differ for the Tiv, Idoma, Igede and Benue united mixed colours. The local woven fabrics are used as traditional attires, have Chieftaincy values to a particular culture and are worn as uniforms for celebrating festive periods.

The findings showed that climate change affects the production and patronage by customers during raining

season. The weavers stated that patronage was high during dry season as there were a lot of occasions and increase in demand of locally woven fabrics.

Recommendations

1. The result revealed that majority of local weavers used narrow loom for fabrics production. This is the simplest of all weavers. There is need for our jobless Youths to learn basic skills of local woven fabrics in order to earn a living for themselves.

2. Local weavers should engage more labourers to help them in the process of dyeing techniques for fabrics decoration as there was increase in demand for traditional woven fabrics in the society.

3. The different ethnic group in Benue State which has different colour of their cultural attire should showcase their identity whereas they live outside Benue State.

4. The prospective weavers that lack initial capital to start the business should engage in age-group little contribution in order to get a loan to start commercial fabrics weaving business.

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