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Enhancement Of Garments Production In Ghana: A Case Study Of Tamale Metropolis

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Abstract: ***Garment production is an integral part of fashion and the industry. People wear clothes every single day to cover their nakedness, express their moods or reveal their social ranking. The garment industry is one that has a large market share and yet still has the potential for even more market internationally. The international garment market is flooded with names that carry waves of quality and class. Several brands exist that have carved niches for themselves in the global garment production market. With this, the study aimed at enhancing garments production in Ghana. In conducting this research, descriptive design was employed. A non-probability sampling technique was used to select 60 producers of garment in Tamale Metropolis. The study revealed that garments produced in the Tamale metropolis is below average. This phenomenon could be associated to the low level of education and knowledge base of the garment producers. It was recommended that periodic workshops should be organized for the garment producers among other things to sharpen their skills and broaden their knowledge base to help them produce garment that have an international appeal. Also, more presidential special initiatives should be designed and implemented with the aim of seeing Ghanaian garments patronized both locally and internationally.***

Keywords: Garments, Production Processes, Pattern Making and Fabric Preparation

I. INTRODUCTION

Clothing in general is a relevant factor that differentiates humans from animals. It only does not serve as protection from the elements but also as housing for the wearer. In the process, various kinds of clothing are used in satisfying ones needs. Clothing are used in all stages of life, from the cradle, primary, secondary, university, upon getting a job, marriage and old age, thus the fashion industry plays very prominent role in the socio-economic development of every nation by helping generate income for living and as a means through which people acquire their clothing needs.

In meeting the demand of clothing, apparel production has been a profession in existence long before the industrial revolution and has under gone various transformations. Man had long since time immemorial been devising ways of meeting his clothing needs by making apparel for such purpose. It is asserted that clothes were made by hand both by individuals who wear them and by hired dressmakers and tailors (Frings, 2007). Democratization of fashion became a possibility with the invention of the sewing machine which turned the handicraft into an industry hence mass production of apparels.

Although the fashion industry first developed in Europe and America, today it is highly globalized with clothing being often designed in one country, manufactured in another and sold in a third. In so doing, the industry has come to consist of many separate sectors, all of which are devoted to the goal of satisfying consumer demand for apparel under conditions that enable players in the industry to operate at a profit. It employs a large number of people therefore ensuring competiveness and specialization (Frings, 2007).

Today, the global phenomenon has caused manufacturers and retailers to greatly increase imports of textiles, apparels

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accessories, which in effect cause similar apparels to be worn around the globe. The consumer plays a crucial role in the fashion industry as they have the purchasing power to either accept or reject fashion. In acceptance, the consumer must buy and wear a style to make it a fashion. In view of this, a manufacturer ignores a consumer at his own peril. Consumer demand has caused the fashion industry to convert from a manufacturing to a marketing focus before manufacturing products (Easey, 2009). It is therefore important for the fashion professional to avail reliable information regarding the quality of products to the consumer in order to obtain maximum value for the amount of money spent (Marshall, Jackson, Stanley, Kefgen, Touchie-Specht, 2004).

The introduction of electronic industry, in the 1990's (i.e. computer aided design, high tech manufacturing, computer shopping), and advances in information Technology have also permitted an increased flow of ideas and information across borders, enabling consumers to educate themselves about foreign goods. The garment industry has indeed become an important economic factor worldwide (Dickson, 1991; Wolfe, 1989). The progressive reduction of barriers to investment and trade by most governments are hastening the opening of new market, and the unification and socialization of the global community have presented firms with significant market opportunities (Ball & Mcculloch, 1996).

Garments are articles used basically to cover ones nakedness. They are now used for purposes beyond covering nakedness to expressing oneself. Barclay (1992) spoke of clothing/ garments being used by individuals of high social status and in limelight notoriety to express themselves in the society. Through time, especially during the renaissance, a person's clothing was a reflection of his/her culture and its customs (Ulzen-Appiah, 2003). Garments have evolved in the process of time to become elements of fashion, no longer just worn for covering but worn based on what is in vogue (Ulzen-Appiah, 2003). Garment production has therefore become an industry in every country with increased market share. Producing garments from high quality fabrics translates into comfort for the consumer and also easy working of the fabric during the production process leading to an almost detect-free apparel of a high quality and standard (Choudhary & Goel, 2013).

Quality of the produced apparel is a priority of apparel buyer's that needs to be met, especially by garment producers of developing countries. Every garment when produced possesses a quality of its kind and level. The different quality of different apparel is due to differences in the processes of production (McNamara, 2008). Seam characteristic also has a strong influence on the final quality and conformity of the apparel to quality standards (Choudhary & Goel, 2013).

Garment manufacturing process consists of series of different steps (Bisen & Srivastava, 2009). These steps are broadly divided into two categories pre-production and production process. Bheda, Narag and Singla (2003) opined that the preproduction process consists of designing the garment, pattern design, sample making, production pattern making, grading and marker making. Once the sample is approved for commercial production, final marker is made for cutting. According to Bisen, and Srivastava (2009), the production process consists of cutting, stitching (preparatory and assembly) and finishing

The government of Ghana established the Ghana Export Promotion Council, (GEPC), in 1969, to promote export trade in the country. In an attempt to diversify the export base of the Ghanaian economy, the government or Ghana empowered the GEPC to identify products with export potential with the aim or promoting the export of non-traditional commodities to boost the economy. Textiles and garments were noted to have great potential in earning foreign exchange for the country. There have therefore been many moves to improve products or this sub-sector to increase their value on the market.

His Excellency John Agyekum Kuffour, President of the 4thRepublic of Ghana, instituted a Presidential Special Initiative on Textiles and Garment (PSIoTG) to coordinate and harmonize activities of the Textile and apparel industry and to provide international garment quality standards to textile and apparel products. The establishment of the P.S.I. was to develop production capacity and manpower skills of the country to meet the huge market opportunity offered by the AGOA. In conjunction with United Nations International Development Organization (UNIDO), the government of Ghana has set up a well-equipped skill-training Centre in Accra, Ghana to train personnel in the sub-sector to help Ghanaian garment makers produce export-quality garment as well as access the market in significant way.

Ghanaian fashion has in recent years undergone a complete overhaul due to globalization and technology. The introduction of the Friday – wear which involves wearing of local Ghana made textiles has to some extent popularized the use of the local textile fabric and increased its use as most are sewn into fashionable dresses. However imported ready-to-wear garments are very popular among the Ghanaian populace irrespective of cost. The standard of living for many Ghanaians enables them to acquire more apparels with quality finishing thus the flooding of the Ghanaian market with Chinese and European rejected fashion goods popularly referred to as "store reject". Irrespective of such situations, producers of fashion products in Ghana are largely dominated by ever-present road-side dressmakers whose market is very low and production is based on custom-made items.

The study sought to identify the production processes for selected garments used in the Tamale Metropolis, the quality of the processes used in the production of the garments and ways of enhancing the production of quality apparel in the Tamale Metropolis.

The study is therefore a pointer to the Ghanaian dressmaker to know the necessary steps in producing a garment in relation to international quality standard. it will serve as a source of information particularly on the processes involved in making garments thus bridging the gap such that manufacturers are able to identify practices that contribute to poor production of products so as to be able to produce clothing that appeal to consumers in a wider market both locally and internationally.

II. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design was employed for the study. The population of the study involved makers of female garments within the Tamale metropolis. This population is part of a total of 140 garment makers within the metropolis. Respondents for the study were selected purposively. To qualify to be a participant, a garment maker had to fulfil the following requirements: be a garment maker, be situated within the Tamale metropolis, makes female garments and make the two garment styles under study; sheath and pouf dress. Without preference to area of residence or operation the 60 makers of the female garments were selected for the study.

The study made use of both questionnaire and observation as instruments for collecting data. The questionnaire was designed for the selected dressmakers in Tamale Metropolis. Creswell (2005) described questionnaire as a form used in survey design that participants in a study complete and return. Series of questions were raised under key themes such as the production processes for selected garments used in the Tamale Metropolis, the quality of the processes used in the production of the garments in Tamale Metropolis and ways of enhancing the production of quality apparel in the Tamale Metropolis.

Participant observation was undertaken to find out the various processes in garment production within the Tamale Metropolis. The researcher chose direct observations over unobtrusive observations to avoid any issue with invasion of privacy. The dressmakers who volunteered in the direct observation study were aware they were being watched by the researcher. Direct observation was used during every data collection observation session.

Data gathered from the study was collated, sorted manually and analyzed using SPSS and the Ghana Standards Authority Product Certification document of the Product Certification Department. Research question one was analyzed by presenting data on the production process in frequencies and percentages based on various practices of the. Research questions two and three were analyzed based on the certification standards provided for in the Ghana Standards Authority Product Certification document. The production processes and products of the makers were examined per the quality standards specified in the Product Certification document.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

A little over eighty nine percent (89.3%) of the respondents interviewed were females with the remaining 10.7% being male (Table 4.1). This phenomenon as seen is not surprising as the study focused only on female garments.

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	6	10.7
Female	50	89.3
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.1: Gender distribution of respondents

Majority (64.3%) of the respondents had a highest educational level of junior high school. The next were those who had primary level education (14.3%) followed by senior high school education (12.5%), and 3.6% of respondents who have no educational level at all (Table 4.2).

Educational Level	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Primary	8	14.3
Junior High School	36	64.3
Senior High school	7	12.5
Tertiary	3	5.4
No education	2	3.6
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.2: Educational level of respondents

In considering how long the respondents have been in the business of garment production, the majority (42.9%) have been producing garments for between 5 and 7 years, 25% for 2 to 4 years, 19.6% for 8 to 10 years, 8.9% for over 10 years and 3.6% have been in the business of garment production for less than 2 years. Figure 4.1 gives a representation of the number of years respondents have been producing garments.

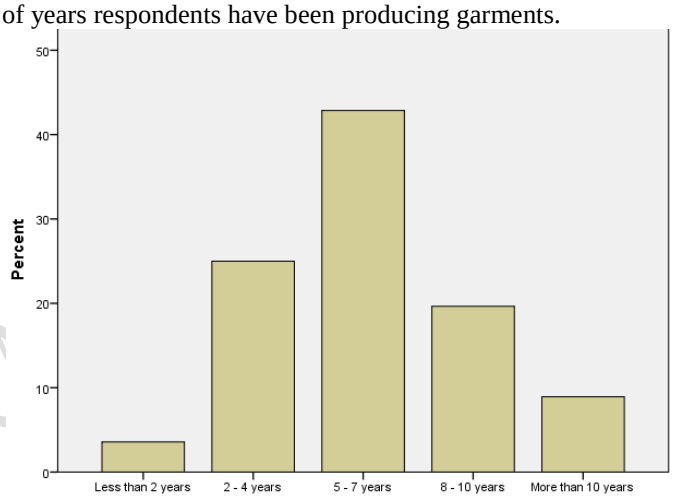

Figure 4.1: Number of years respondents have been producing garments

B. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON PRODUCTION PROCESSES

In garment production, production processes range widely from fabric selection, pretreatment of fabric, designing styles, pattern making, to selection of thread (Carr and Pomeroy, 1992). In this study, production processes covered included fabric selection, styles design, pretreatment of fabric and pattern making.

Statistically, 12 (21.4%) of the respondents claimed to sketch designs of garment before making patterns or sewing, whereas, the majority (n=44) of the respondents representing 78.6% did not sketch design whatsoever for various reasons. The main reason was that sketching the design/style before making patterns or sewing was not necessary. Some section also felt sketching designs was too much work, and another claimed to have the styles in memory and therefore need not sketch designs on paper. All the respondents, who claimed to sketch designs, did so on paper.

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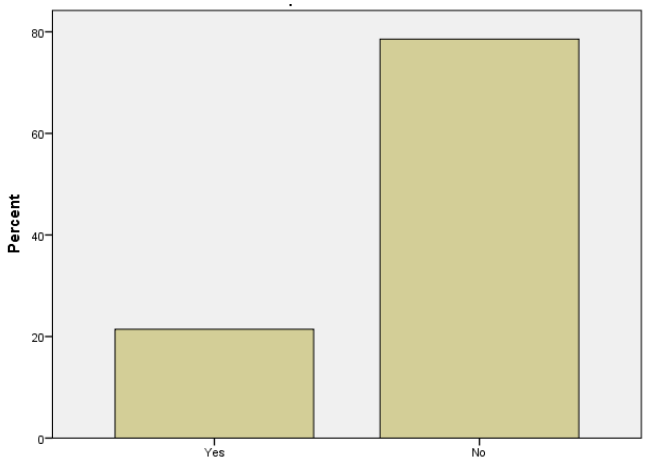

Figure 4.2: Respondents sketch patterns before cutting or sewing

A significantly large majority of the respondents practiced freehand cutting instead of pattern making. 73.2% of respondents practiced freehand cutting whiles 26.8% practiced pattern making as part of the pre-production practices (Figure 4.3). Various reasons were given by the respondents for their choice of either freehand cutting or pattern making. Some claimed to practice freehand cutting because it was cheaper, others claimed it saved time and resources. Some respondents also practiced pattern making because they believed it is the right way to produce garments. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 give a presentation of the various reasons given by respondents backing their choice of either freehand cutting or patternmaking respectively. Forster (2009) in her work on freehand cutting stated that freehand cutting contrary to pattern making is the most practiced in Ghana. According to her, it is the main method of cutting out garments in homes and small-scale sewing industries.

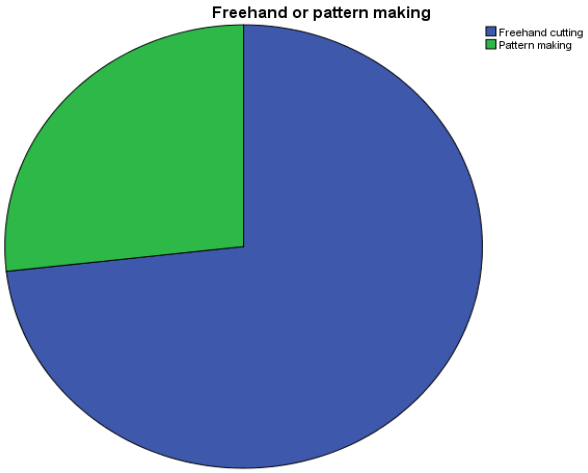

Figure 4.3: Pie chart on respondents who practice freehand cutting or pattern making

Reasons	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Less expensive	4	7.1
Consumes less time	3	5.3
Does not require a lot of materials	3	5.3
I have experience in cutting	5	10.7
Involves less effort	4	7.1
It is not necessary to make patterns	2	3.6
Less stressful	5	8.9
That is how I learnt it	8	14.3
Requires less materials	2	3.6
Makes you more careful	1	1.8
It is not necessary to make pattern	4	7.1
Total	41	73.2

Table 4.3: Reasons for practicing freehand cutting

Reasons	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gives a better product	2	3.6
It helps me to produce quality garments	1	1.8
It is right way to sew	1	1.8
It reduces mistakes	1	1.8
Reduces errors when sewing	6	10.7
Reduces mistakes	3	5.4
That is the best thing to do	1	1.8
Total	15	26.8

Table 4.4: Reasons for practicing pattern making

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON QUALITY MEASURES OF GARMENTS PRODUCTION PROCESSES IN TAMALE METROPOLIS

According to Carr and Pomeroy (1992), sketching designs is important as it enables the designer to include all the necessary information in producing the garment viz, darts, seams, trims, fabric samples and detailed features of the style. Ultimately, designing/ sketching a design has an influence on the overall outcome of a garment as it allows the garment producer to visualize all the necessary parts of the garment and possibly make adaptations before the actual garment is produced (Carr and Pomeroy, 1992). With Computer Aided-Designs (CAD) gaining increased use in international garment production, it would not be wrong for garment in Ghana likewise to adapt such systems for designing garments. The CAD takes into account fabric details through fabric simulations and various other details whiles producing a 3-dimensional design. This ultimately creates a high quality product that consists of a design that fits the fabric type and occasion.

Very few of the respondents 4 (7.1%) always selected what fabric they used in making the garments they produced. In addition, 45 (80.4%) of the respondents stated they rarely selected the fabric they used, and 7 (12.5%) claimed that they sometimes had the opportunity to select the fabric used in making the garments (Figure 4.4). This may be reasonable as the main stay of the Ghanaian garment production industry is the production of custom-made garments which involve the customer usually providing his/her own fabric.

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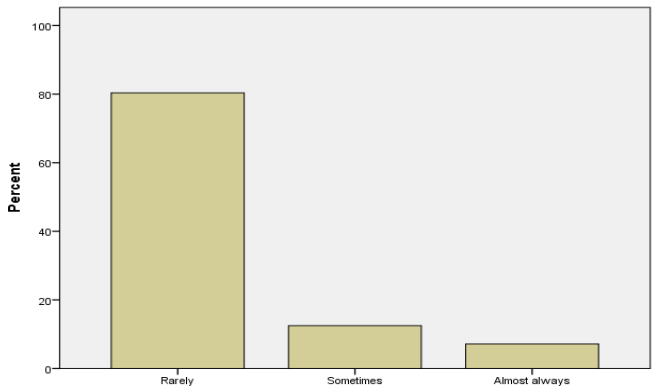

Figure 4.4: Frequency of respondents' selection of fabrics for sewing

Concerning pre-treating of fabric, 41 (73.2%) of the respondents rarely pre-treated fabrics before cutting it out, 10 (17.9%) sometimes pre-treated fabrics, 3 (5.4%) pre-treated fabric almost always, and 2 (3.6%) always pre-treated fabric before cutting them out (Figure 4.5). The results indicate that dressmakers in Tamale Metropolis infrequently pre-treat fabric before cutting.

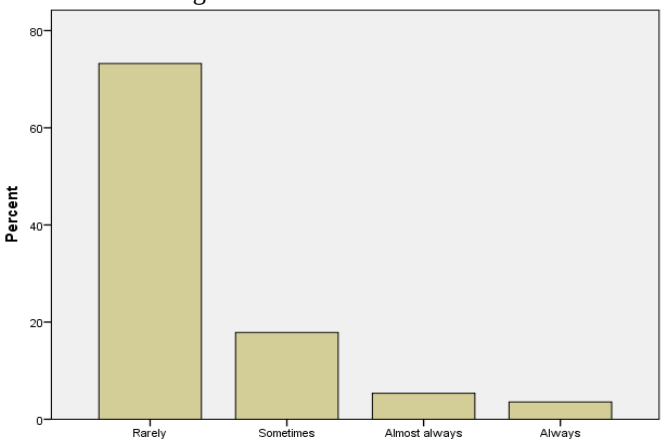

Figure 4.5: Frequency of pre-treatment of fabric by respondents

In the study, only 3.6% of respondents claimed to press their garments during construction. Five point four (5.4%) rarely pressed the garments, 71.4% pressed the garments but not always; only sometimes. Nineteen point six (19.6%) pressed the garments almost always. Figure 4.6 gives a graphical representation of how often respondents pressed the garment the produced during construction. According to a fashion technology course material (http://www.b-u.ac.in/sde_book/fashion_sew.pdf), pressing is necessary to enhance the neat appearance of a garment and its attractiveness at the intended point of sale. It also eliminates creases from the garment.

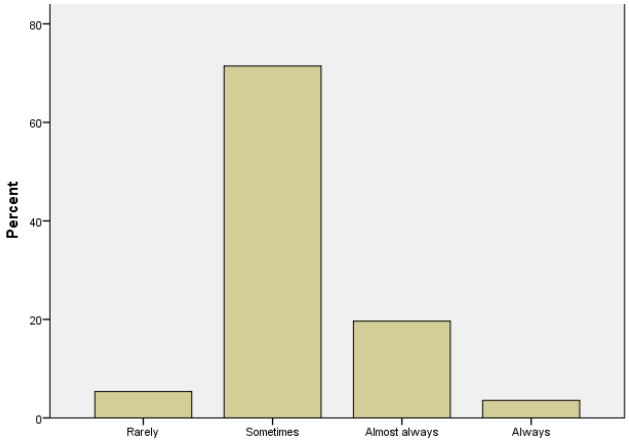

Figure 4.6: Frequency of pressing fabrics in garments' construction by respondents

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents claimed to not always apply interfacing, facing or stay-stitching during sewing. Only 1.8% always did, 5.4% rarely did, and 42.9% did so almost always (Figure 4.7). Concerning whether dressmakers match stripes or directional print fabric designs, as little as only 1.8% of respondents made sure those plaids, stripes and directional patterns on fabrics matched during garment construction. Thirty nine point three (39.3%) did so almost always, and the largest majority was respondents who did match plaids, stripes and directional patterns but not always – sometimes. They occupied a margin of 58.9% (Figure 4.8).

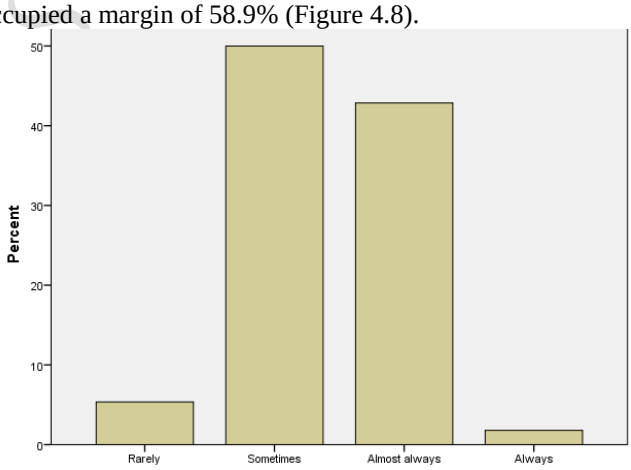

Figure 4.7: Frequency stay-stitching, application of interfacing and facing during in sewing

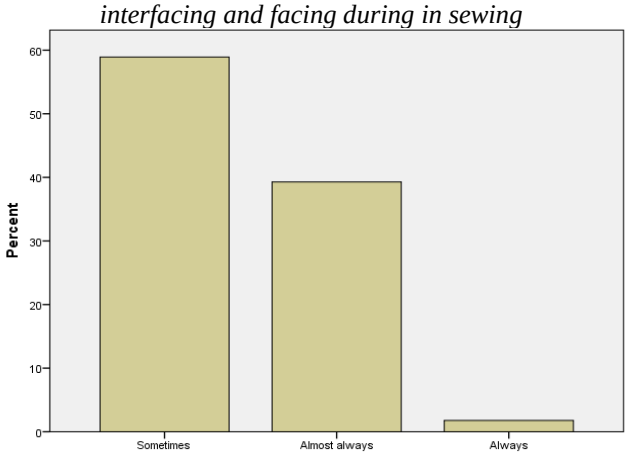

Figure 4.8: Frequency at which respondents match stripes or directional print fabric designs

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When asked about distribution of eases within a garment without having puckers, pleats or dimples, 23.2% claimed to always do so, 71.4% said they were able to do so almost always, whiles yet 5.4% claimed they were able to achieve that sometimes – not always (Figure 4.9).

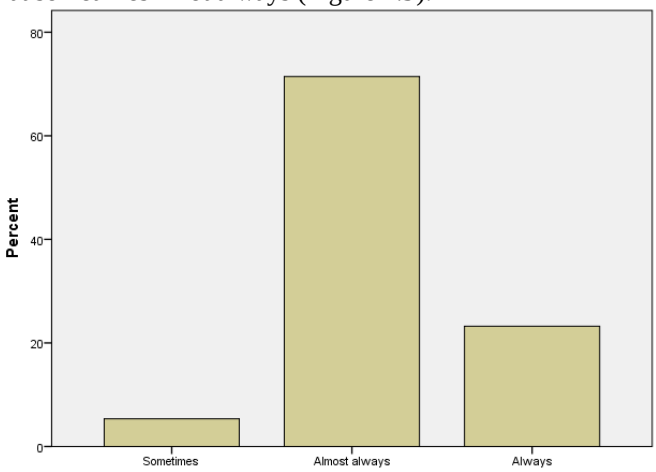

Figure 4.9: Frequency of distributing eases evenly without puckers, pleats

Figure 4.10 shows the frequency of respondents and how often they neaten raw edges of garments they produce. Seventy five percent (75.0%) of the respondents claimed they sometimes neat all raw edges of garments they produce, 10 of them forming 17.9% mentioned that they almost always neat raw edges of garments they produce. Meanwhile, 4 respondents constituting 7.1% affirmed that they always neat edges of garments they produce. This reveals that dressmakers neat raw edges of garment but not always.

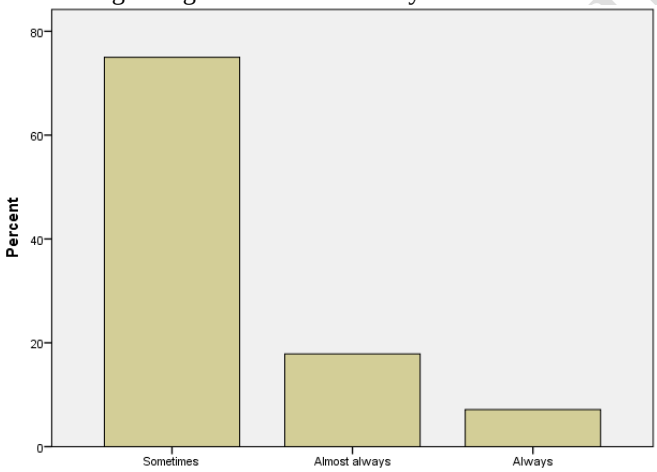

Figure 4.10: Neatening of raw edges of garment by respondents

Concerning the trimming of seams to reduce bulk, 21.4% of the respondents sometimes trimmed enclosed seams of garments, 51.8% did so most of the times, and whiles 26.8% always trimmed enclosed seams to reduce bulk (Figure 4.11). Five point four percent (5.4%) of respondents always fully checked and corrected garments of any defects before finally handing over to the customer. The majority (n=43) representing 76.8% did so sometimes, and 10 (17.9%) of respondents most of the times fully checked and corrected any defects with the garments before giving them out to the customers (Figure 4.12). Only 12.5% of respondents always cut out loose threads and did general thread cleaning and final pressing. Thirty-five point seven percent (35.7%) did so almost always, and 51.8% did so sometimes (Figure 4.13).

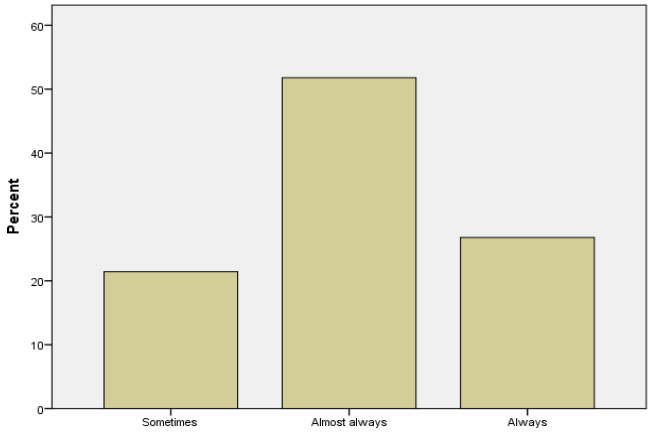

Figure 4.11: How often respondents trimmed enclosed seam to reduce bulk

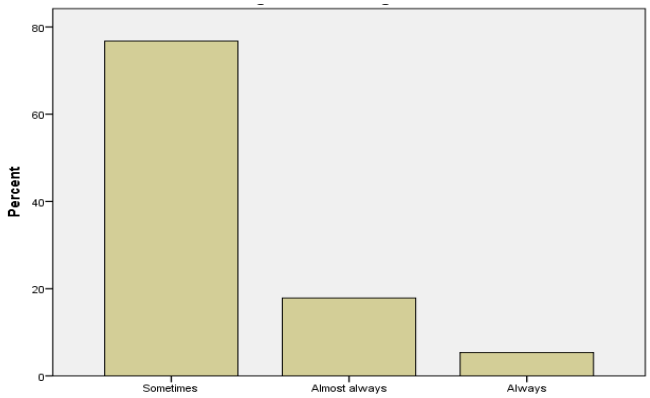

Figure 4.12: Checking and correcting defects on garment before giving out to customers

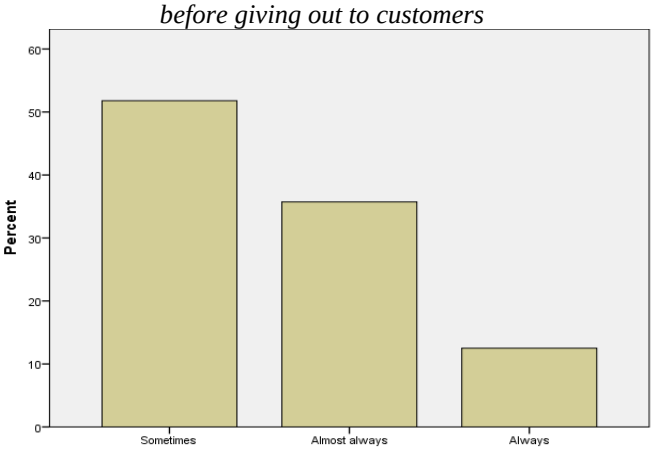

Figure 4.13: Cutting loose of threads before presenting garments to customers

D. ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF SALIENT GARMENT FEATURES BY RESPONDENTS

In judging the overall quality of garments produced during this study, eight (8) main parts of a garment were assessed. These are the seams and stitches, pockets, sleeves, collar, openings/ fastenings, interfacings, hems and finish of the garment. In assessing seams and stitches of the garments, below 80% were of a good quality (48.2%), and only 17.9% of the garments assessed had excellent seams and stitching. The

rest were poor, fair or average. Table 4.5 gives a distribution of the assessment of the garments' seam and stitches.

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Poor	3	5.4
Fair	27	48.2
Average	14	25.0
Good	2	3.6
Excellent	10	17.9
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.5: Quality assessment of seams and stitches

Only 19(33.9%) of the garments assessed had pockets that were excellently constructed. Moreover, 21 respondents representing 5.4% were of good quality, 13(23.3%) were average and 37.5% were fair (Table 4.6). Concerning sleeves also, 57.1% were of average quality, 21.4% good and 21.4% excellent (Table 4.7).

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Fair	21	37.5
Average	13	23.2
Good	3	5.4
Excellent	19	33.9
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.6: Quality assessment of pockets

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Average	32	57.1
Good	12	21.4
Excellent	12	21.4
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.7: Quality assessment of sleeves

Twenty five percent (64.3%) of the garments had collars of average quality, 14% of good quality and 10.7% were excellent (Table 4.8). Moreover, 5.4% of garments assessed had openings/ fastenings that were excellent, 1.8% were good, 30.4% were average and 62.5% was of fair quality (Table 4.9).

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Average	36	64.3
Good	14	25.0
Excellent	6	10.7
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.8: Quality assessment of collar

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Fair	35	62.5
Average	17	30.4
Good	1	1.8
Excellent	3	5.4
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.9: Quality assessment of opening/ fastening

A little over 12.5% of the garments had excellent interfacings. 3.6% had good interfacing, 17.9% were average and 66.1% were fair (Table 4.10). There was none that had a poorly constructed interfacing. Moreover, 14.3% had excellent hem, 6.1% had good hem and 69.6% had hem that qualified to be average (Table 4.11). In addition, 21.4% of the garments assessed had excellent finishing, 1.8% had good finishing, 23.2% had finishing that was average and 53.6% had fair finishing (Table 4.12). Sleeves, pockets, collars, interfacings, facings, hem, seams and stitches and finishing of a garment all play a part in the overall appearance, use, feel and quality of the garment. According to Myers-McDevitt (2011), sleeves for instance add to the functionality, design, style and silhouette of a garment. Openings and fastenings also are more likely to wear out faster before other parts of the garment due to them being handled more frequently. They therefore need to be strong and of good quality (Ministry of Education, 1992).

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Fair	37	66.1
Average	10	17.9
Good	2	3.6
Excellent	7	12.5
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.10: Quality assessment of interfacing

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Average	39	69.6
Good	9	16.1
Excellent	8	14.3
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.11: Quality assessment of hem

Assessment	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Fair	30	53.6
Average	13	23.2
Good	1	1.8
Excellent	12	21.4
Total	56	100.0

Table 4.12: Quality assessment of finish

E. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FROM OBSERVATION

The researcher undertook field observation of the dressmakers on enhancement of garment production in Tamale Metropolis. The researcher herself was present to observe the selection of fabric and style, fabric preparation, cutting of fabric, sewing product and packaging of product for analyses.

a. FABRIC AND STYLE SELECTION

Dressmaking in the Tamale Metropolis is customer - base. It was observed at the various shops that fabric selection for sewing was received from customers. A style was selected from either a calendar or magazine. Again, it was observed that dressmakers cut a piece of fabric and pin to the selected style for identification when ready for cutting and sewing.

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Plate 4.1: Dressmaker receiving a client fabric and style selection

This indicates that unlike buying clothes from the racks from departmental stores for which fabric are selected for production by the manufacturer with all dress accessories provided for by the designer, the same is not said of dressmaking in the Tamale Metropolis.

b. FABRIC PREPARATION AND CUTTING

On the issue of fabric preparation, it was noted that some dressmakers do not grain the fabrics and avoid pressing as the fabrics were hanged or folded and stored in showcase. In so doing there is less crease which is smooth off by hand before direct measurement is done on fabric.

The researcher further observed that the dressmakers uses the basic measurement of clients thus; bust, waist, hip and across shoulders to outline the silhouette of the clients which is sketch on the fabric as style adaptation. It was noted that the dressmakers cut out with seam allowance of two to three inches inclusive and pattern was mostly cut without the use of any marking tools.

Plate 4.2: Fabric preparation and cutting observed

c. SEWING PROCESS

There was no orderly manner of sewing in relation to the use of flat and round method by the dressmakers at Tamale Metropolis as observed by the researcher. It was noted at the various shops that there was no hard and fast rule as to how any particular garment should be made. Meanwhile, it is convenient to ensure quality i.e. it is plausible to use the round method for circular garment and method, that for garments that have joint at either sections of the garment (front and back).

In preparation for sewing, Vilene which usually referred to as stiff, the dressmakers cut it to the shape of the neckline and fused to fashion fabric. The dressmakers fused by ironing or stitching the neckline and pressing off as observed by the researcher. It was further noted that the neckline was not under stitch. Again, the researcher observed that dressmakers mark dart lines and stitch for both front and back. They matched the front shoulder seam with the back and stitch off.

It was noted that the dressmakers outline the garment for actual shaping using the required measurement. This is done on one side and folded to transfer the markings to the other side and then stitched. It was realized that seam allowance was snipped at the waist and sometimes two or three rows of stitching lines were sewn on the seam allowance for future alterations. The sleeve is set in after joining the shoulder seam and shaped from the sleeve edge through to the hem of garment as observed by the researcher. It was noted that garment was finally pressed to bring out the shape.

Plate 4.7: Final pressing of garment

d. PACKAGING OF PRODUCT

The finish garment was folded into two and hanged on a storage space, awaiting collection.

Plate 4.8: Storage of final product

IV. CONCLUSION

The study focused on gathering information on the pre-production and production processes involved in garment production as practiced by garment producers in the Tamale metropolis. Majority of the garment producers in the Tamale metropolis are females and have low levels of education. Majority have also been garment producers for close to seven years with just a few (8.9%) being in the industry for over ten years. Most of the garment producers (76.8%) make sketches of designs before cutting out fabric or sewing it, and this is done on sheets of papers. The commonest form of cutting out a garment practiced by producers in the Tamale metropolis is the freehand cutting. Majority of the garment producers are not committed to always neatening raw edges, matching plaids and stripes, pressing garment during construction, checking and correcting defects in garment, cutting out loose threads, straightening fabric grain before cutting, doing general thread cleaning and final pressing, etc.

Generally speaking, the quality of garments produced in the Tamale metropolis is a little below average as was seen by the assessment of the quality of the main parts of the garments produced; seams and stitches were 3.6% good, pockets 5.4%, sleeve 21.4% good, collar 25.0% good, openings/fastenings 1.8% good, interfacing 3.6% good, hem 16.1% good, finish 1.8% good.

This low level of quality realized could be the result of myriad factors including, low educational level of the garment producers, lack of workshops to enable them better their knowledge and skills, and a sheer lack of commitment to quality on the part of the garment producers. The garments produced in the metropolis have in no way the ability to compete with other international brands to make an appearance in the international market. For garments produced in the metropolis to receive international appearance and recognition, a lot of work needs to been done.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since majority of the garment producers have not had a high level of education, especially in fashion and garment production, periodic workshops need to be organized by the head of the dressmakers association in collaboration with the Ghana Standards Authority. This will help the garment producers to learn new practices and trends that translate into producing high quality garments. Regular on site visits should be organized by the GSA to assess randomly the quality of garments being produced within the metropolis.

Ghana Education Service (GES) should incorporate basic fashion and garment design into educational syllabi in Junior High Schools. Most of the garment producers went into garment production after their junior high school education. This will therefore create a strong foundation upon which those going into garment production after Junior High can build their carrier as garment producers.

The government should design and implement more presidential special initiatives with the aim of seeing Ghanaian garments patronized. A high patronage of what the garment producers make will create the awareness of the need to improve quality.

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