

# ASSESSMENT OF CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE SKILLS OF BADAGRY ASO-OKE WEAVERS IN THE UTILIZATION OF RECYCLED PLASTICS IN POST COVID-19 FOR WEALTH CREATION

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## Abstract

*The study was conducted in Badagry among 250 registered members of the association of Indigenous (Kete) Rivera Aso-Oke weavers who were randomly selected from 450 registered members. The study set out to find whether Aso-oke weavers are creative and innovative, in using recycled plastics for their weaving in post COVID-19. One hypothesis was formulated and a forty five (45) item questionnaire was the main instrument used to collect data for the study. The statistical tools used were frequency count, percentages and chi-square. 175 (70%) answered yes that other threads had been introduced into the weaving of Aso-oke. 203(81%) answered yes that introducing recycled plastic show innovation and creativity. 250 (100%) answered yes that this will help to create job for families, 248 (99%) answered yes that COVID 19 affected many businesses. 245 (98%) answered yes that there is need for weavers to invest in technology. In conclusion, Aso-oke weavers are always ready to introduce something new to attract patronage and remain in business. In view of the foregoing, the following recommendations were made: Badagry weavers should generate more income by becoming plastic collectors and suppliers to recycle companies. They should also invest in technology for their business in order to prevent further pandemic disruptions.*

**Keywords:** Aso-Oke Weavers, Creativity, Innovation, Post COVID-19, Recycled Plastics, Wealth.

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## Introduction

Fabric weaving is one of the topics taught in clothing and textiles which is a major course in Home Economics education. Clothing and textiles is concerned about the design, manufacture and marketing of clothing and other textile products. Textile products play a vital role in meeting man's basic needs from cradle to grave. It has seen technological advances over the years, in all aspects of life. (Cheprasov 2021). Aso-Oke is a hand woven fabric of the Yorubas which has seen creative transformation in yarns, techniques, uses and colours (Olutayo and Akanle, 2013, Olatuya, Olayinka and Olukoyode, 2012, Makinde, Ajiboye and Ajayi, 2009). Aso-Oke is the timeless, wonderful, vibrant, prestigious hand-loomed cotton cloth of the Yorubas. Which is now made with a range of materials including cotton, rayon, silk and metallic threads that gives the fabric a unique shimmery quality. The industry has witnessed and is still witnessing transformation. Its weaves are renowned craftsmen that weave intricate colours and patterns

to meet Nigerians fashion taste and the women are engaged in it production to also meet their domestic needs. The new generation of creative designers are finding ways to marry the rich cultural history of Aso-Oke with modern silhouettes creating wearable foot wear and accessory that is an ode to the Yorubas of the past. (Makinde, Ajiboye, Ajayi 2009). With the transformation Aso-Oke has seen over the years, modern Aso-Oke weavers can also introduce recycled plastics into their weaving. Plastics have been recycled in making items for decoration, in road tarring, in recreational sites, in making t-shirts, insulation for jackets and sleeping bags. Knight (2020) observed that recycled plastic fabrics feels just like regular fabric, unlike creating conventional polyester from oil. (Lewis, 2019, Briggs, 2021). Now many world renowned fashion designers have come up with the idea of using recycled plastic to make stunning clothing making the future of fashion going green and innovative sewing sustainable clothes and helping save the planet as a trend that is going to conquer all runways. Many fashion

designers concerned about making the planet a healthier and unpolluted places they have started using recycled plastic as clothing materials, they are now using collected chipped and melted plastic bottles found in the oceans or other places and turning them into clothes, giving this new waste a new life. Briggs (2021) opined that, scientists have made fabric from polythene, this is a ubiquitous plastic found in everything from plastic bags to food packaging. Polythene being made of one plastic can be recycled into new garments again and again. (Muthukumar, 2021, Knight, 2020, Khatric, 2015). Briggs (2021) Goodship (2007) opined that polythene can be used to make sport wears, such as trainers, vests, leggings and raincoat. In long term is a high-performance space suit engineered to be protected against cosmic radiation. Lewis (2019) noted other uses of recycled plastic to include swimwear, running socks, bras, leggings, solely bags and accessories made out of recycled waste, water proof wash bags, dresses, pants, swimsuits, foot wear made of wool like fabric and made from recycled plastic bottles. Aso-Oke weavers can become creative and innovative by infusing recycled plastics into Aso-Oke weaving in order to produce other textures and blends enabling the fabric to be used for the production of other garments such as leggings, swim wear, vests, trainers and vests, etcetera.

Lobell (2018), Signh (2014) noted that, creativity is the ability to make or otherwise bring into existence something new resulting in innovation. Lobell (2018), Signh (2014) observed that, innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product, service or process to create value for business, government or society by entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are those who marry their creative and innovative ideas with the purposeful action and structure of a business, they succeed by thinking and doing new things or old things in new ways. Peek (2021) noted that creativity and innovation are required for workplace success. Therefore, creativity and innovation results in company inventions and growth. Aso-Oke weavers can use their creativity and move with the trend by innovating and in cooperating recycled plastics yarns into their weaving. This will help in finding solution to cleaner environment, poverty and positioning their business for growth for the future, in this era of never – meet – in – person using technology and other tools at their disposal (Lobell 2018 Signh, 2014, Peek, 2021, Harel 2021, Dau, Mahajan, Oyer and Ramaswamy

2020, Kevin and Sternfels 2020), with creativity and innovation many designers will patronize aso-oke for various articles for their consumers thereby turning waste into wealth. (Muthukumar 2021 Briggs 2021, Lewis 2019).

Lewis (2019) noted that, with the help of advanced technology and environment conscious manufacturers like Aso-Oke weavers; this will be a step closer into making the world a healthy place to live in. Aso-Oke weavers can bring innovation into the business, become plastic collectors, even their children, supply them to big suppliers to textile companies for a fee, buy their finished yarn and use it to infuse into their fabrics in order to produce other wearable articles such as socks, bra, , water proof wash bags etcetera. Aso-Oke weavers need to introduce new ways of going about their daily business considering the lessons learnt during COVID-19 to prevent business disruption.

Fairlie (2020) noted that, COVID-19 disrupted a lot of businesses. Lakuma and Sunday (2020) observed that, business experienced down ward turn. Belitski, Guenther Alexander and Thurik (2021) opined that, the COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented challenge for small businesses that also brings new market opportunities. Dae, Euingrud, Mahajan and Silberg (2020) noted that, those with relatively limited financial resources were most at risk but none were immune to the pandemics effects. Within the retail, three quarters of clothing stores and fabrics reported a large negative impact on their business, within manufacturing, apparel manufactures, and weavers given the pandemics impact on the retailing of clothes and fabrics were among the hardest hit small businesses. Engidaw (2020) opined that, to prevent unemployment, poverty and food insecurity rates from skyrocketing during any time, small and medium enterprises such as Aso-Oke weavers need to learn a lesson from the pandemic on how to protet their businesses because they are facilitators for the transition to industrial society.

Havel (2021) noted that with the impact of COVID-19 there is need for innovation by business owners like Aso-Oke weavers. Menon (2020) observed that companies should have ability to quick change and adapt to a rapidly tumultous changing market. As well as collaboration of multi-stackeholders in the supply chain, be resilient, add delivery, take grants, loans and insure their businesses that will help them to continue to stay in business. Kelvin and Stenfels

(2020) observed to further maintain physical distance, business owners should experiment with new payment methods and apps, use e-commerce website, protective equipment and regular health testing for workers, build customer loyalty and increase promotional activities. This is a “Never-meet-in-person Era”. And Aso-Oke weavers must adapt in order to prevent further pandemic disruptions since the virus does not go away completely but mutates.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Most plastics used end up in landfills, oceans, rivers, gutters or dumped in the wild creating environmental impact, when incinerated, are injurious to health. The study was carried out to make Aso-Oke weavers aware that they can make the environment cleaner, be creative and innovative by collecting, recycling and infusing plastic yarn into their weaving to create jobs for themselves and their families. Thereby reducing unemployment and poverty. Also with the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic, Aso-Oke weavers can introduce modern technology into the way they carry out their day to day businesses to prevent disruption, as the virus does not go away completely but mutates. Moreover, Aso-Oke weavers are not aware that as small business owners they not only play a vital role in providing opportunities but also contribute to the social economic development of the community because they are facilitators for the transition to industrial society. Above all they lack information as the popularity of technology on how to sustain their business in this never-to-meet-in-person era among others.

### **Objectives**

The main objective was to assess creative and innovative skills of Badagry Aso-oke weavers in the utilization of recycled plastics in post COVID-19 for wealth creation. There the following objectives were formulated to:

1. Examine how Aso-oke weavers can introduce creativity and innovation into their weaving in Badagry in the utilization of recycled plastics.
2. Examine if recycled plastics when utilized by Aso-oke weavers can create wealth for families.
3. Examine how Aso-oke weavers can prevent disruption of their business in post pandemic in Badagry.

### **Research Questions**

1. Can Aso-Oke weavers in Badagry be creative and innovative by the utilization of recycled plastics?
2. Can recycled plastics be utilized in the weaving of Aso-Oke fabric for wealth creation?
3. How can Aso-Oke weavers prevent the disruption of their businesses in post pandemic in Badagry?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference between the utilization of recycled plastics by Aso-Oke weavers in Badagry and wealth creation for the families

### **Methodology**

**Design of the study:** The descriptive survey design was adopted, for this study.

**Area of the study:** The area of the study was Badagry Local Government area of Lagos state.

**Population of the study:** The population of the study consisted of 450 registered members from the association of indigenous (Kete) rivera of Nigeria, aso-oke weavers Badagry as confirmed by their chairman.

**Sampling procedure and sample size:** The sample size was 250 respondents randomly selected from 450 registered members of the association of indigenous (Kete) rivera of Nigeria, aso-oke weavers Badagry.

**Instrument for data collection:** A structured questionnaire titled creativity and innovative skills of Badagry Aso-Oke weavers in the utilization of recycled plastics in post COVID-19 for wealth creation was the main instrument used in the collection of data for the research, in which respondents were either to answer yes or no. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, section A and B. section A was on the bio-data of the respondents, while section B had 45 questions, 12 was on creativity and innovation, 16 on utilization on recycled plastics to wealth, 17 was on the prevention of business disruption of Aso-Oke weavers in post COVID-19 in Badagry.

**Validation of the Instrument:**

The questionnaire was given face validity by 2 experts on the topic.

**Reliability of the Instrument:** Trial testing was used to test reliability of the questionnaire by this method, the instrument was administered to 10 respondents from the association personally with the help of their secretary. They were all educated on the

objectives of the study. Sufficient time was given to the respondents to respond to the questionnaire items. All the questionnaires were collected same day.

**Method of data analysis:** Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and chi-square. The results are presented below.

**Research Question 1:** Are Aso-Oke weavers in Badagry creative and innovative?

**Table 1: Creativity and innovation among Aso-Oke weavers in Badagry in the utilization of recycled plastics in their weaving**

S/N	Items (n=250)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Decision
1	The fabric has witnessed transformation over the years	210 (84)	40 (16)	Agreed
2	Patterns are woven to meet modern fashion taste	238 (95)	12 (5)	Agreed
3	The weaving can be customized	218 (87)	32 (13)	Agreed
4	Aso-Oke can now be made into wearables	178 (71)	72 (29)	Agreed
5	This shows creativity among the weavers	195 (78)	55 (22)	Agreed
6	In addition to cotton threads, other threads are introduced into the weaving	175 (70)	75 (30)	Agreed
7	This is an innovation	215 (86)	35 (14)	Agreed
8	Recycled plastic thread can be used in the weaving of Aso-Oke	203 (81)	47 (19)	Agreed
9	To improve the appearance	198 (79)	52 (21)	Agreed
10	The innovation can create opportunity for others	250 (100)	0 (0)	Agreed
11	Creativity and innovation work hand in hand to increase sales for the weaver	243 (97)	7 (3)	Agreed
12	Aso-Oke weavers always strive to improve on the skills	198 (79)	52 (21)	Agreed

Decision: Agree if Yes% ≥ 50, otherwise, Disagree

**Research Question 2:** Can recycled plastics be utilized in the weaving of Aso-Oke fabric for wealth creation.

**Table 2: Utilisation of recycled plastic by Aso-Oke weavers to create wealth in Badagry**

S/N	Items (n=250)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Decision
1	Plastics are not properly disposed	233 (93)	17 (7)	Agreed
2	They degrade the environment	243 (97)	7 (3)	Agreed
3	When burnt, it becomes harmful to the environment	250 (100)	0 (0)	Agreed
4	There is need to put plastics into use in the weaving industry	248 (99)	2 (1)	Agreed
5	Plastic can be recycled into yarns (thread) for weaving Aso-Oke	228 (91)	22 (9)	Agreed
6	This will help to reduce the harmful effect on the environment	208 (83)	42 (17)	Agreed
7	Plastic have been used in the manufacturing of other products	215 (86)	35 (14)	Agreed
8	Synthetic fiber has been used to manufacture Aso-Oke	198 (79)	52 (21)	Agreed
9	Blending plastic thread in the weaving of Aso-Oke will be an innovation	210 (84)	40 (16)	Agreed
10	The innovation will create wealth for family	233 (93)	17 (7)	Agreed
11	Weavers can supply plastic to middlemen who supply companies	200 (80)	50 (20)	Agreed
12	Weavers can become plastic collector supplying to recycling textile companies directly	193 (77)	57 (23)	Agreed
13	Introducing plastic yarn to Aso-Oke will make the fabric more flexible	238 (95)	12 (5)	Agreed
14	Various designers will patronize the new look Aso-Oke fabric	243 (97)	7 (3)	Agreed
15	This new texture, Aso-Oke fabric can be exported to other countries	218 (87)	32 (13)	Agreed
16	As weavers continue to create and innovate, it will be a source of income for years to come for their families	234 (94)	16 (6)	Agreed

Decision: Agree if Yes% ≥ 50, otherwise, Disagree

**Research Question 3:** How can Aso-Oke weavers prevent disruption of their businesses in post pandemic in Badagry.

**Table 3: Preventing distrupction of businesses in post pandemic**

S/N	Items (n=250)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Decision
1	Covid-19 has affected the way business operates	248 (99)	2 (1)	Agreed
2	It disrupted a lot of businesses	233 (93)	17 (7)	Agreed
3	This becomes a challenge to business owners	210 (84)	40 (16)	Agreed
4	Aso-Oke weaving was also affected	218 (87)	32 (13)	Agreed
5	Weavers' finances were affected	248 (99)	2 (1)	Agreed
6	Creating poverty for families	175 (70)	25 (30)	Agreed
7	As a result, the business needs innovation to continue to operate	180 (72)	70 (28)	Agreed
8	This is the never meet in person era	218 (87)	32 (13)	Agreed
9	There is need to invest in technology	245 (98)	5 (2)	Agreed
10	With technology, the wearers can operate anywhere	250 (100)	0 (0)	Agreed
11	the business can also innovate by adding delivery to it	243 (97)	7 (3)	Agreed
12	Loans can be taken to grow the business from cooperative unions	240 (96)	10 (4)	Agreed
13	Government can also support instead of allowing the businesses to die	225 (90)	25 (10)	Agreed
14	Insure the business with a good insurance company	210 (84)	40 (16)	Agreed
15	Aso-Oke wearers should care about their customers	248 (99)	2 (1)	Agreed
16	There is need for wearers to attend workshops to be aware of new trends	250 (100)	0 (0)	Agreed
17	wearers should engage in promotional activities for their product	250 (100)	0 (0)	Agreed

*Decision: Agree if Yes% ≥ 50, otherwise, Disagree*

**Research Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between the utilization of recycled plastics by Aso-Oke weavers in Badagry and wealth creation for the families.

Creativity & Innovation to Wealth	Utilization of Recycled Plastic		df	$\chi^2$ (p-value)
	Yes	No		
Yes	189 (93.1)	45 (95.7)		
No	14 (6.9)	2 (4.3)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>203 (100)</b>	<b>47 (100)</b>		

The chi-square value 7.444 with the degree of freedom 1 implies that the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the utilisation of recycled plastics by Aso-Oke weavers in wealth creation for the families in Badagry is rejected ( $p < 0.05$ ). therefore, there is no significant difference between the utilisation of recycled plastics and wealth creation.

### Discussion of Findings

Table I was on creativity and innovation among Aso-oke weavers, the table reveals that out of 250 respondents 210 (84%) answered yes, that the fabric has witnessed transformations over the years, 40(16%) answered no (Olatayo and Akanle, 2013). 238 (95%) answered yes that patterns are woven to meet modern fashion taste, 12 (5%) answered no (Olatuya, Olayinka and Olukayode, 2012). 218 (87%) answered yes that the weaving can be customized, 32 (13%) answered no. (Olatuya,

Olayinka and Olukayode, 2012). 178 (71%) answered yes that Aso-Oke can now be made into wearables, 72(29%) answered no (Makinde, Ajiboye, Ajayi 2009), 195 (78%) answered yes that there is creativity among the weavers 55 (22%) answered no (Singh, 2014, Peek 2021), 175 (70%) answered yes that other threads are introduced into the weavings, 75(30%) answered no (Olatuya, Olayinka and Olukoyode 2013). 215 (86%) answered yes that this is an innovation, 35(14%) answered no (Lobell 2018, Singh, 2014), 203(81%) answered yes that recycled plastics thread can be used in the weaving of Aso-Oke 47(19%) answered no (Peek 2021), 198 (79%) answered yes that Aso-oke appearance can be improved with the introduction of recycled plastics threads, 52(12%) answered no (Makinde, Ajiboye, Ajayi 2009). 250 (100%) answered yes that the innovations can create opportunity for others. (Muthukumar 2021, Briggs 2021, Lewis, 2019), 243 (97%) answered yes that creativity and innovation work hand in hand to

increase sales for the weavers (Peek 2021) 198 (79%) answered yes the Aso-Oke weavers strive to improve on the skills, 52 (21%) answered no. (Olutuga, Olayinka and Olukoyode, 2013, Olutayo and Akanle, 2013, Makinde, Ajiboye and Ajayi 2009).

Table II. was on utilization of recycled plastics by Aso-oke weavers the study reveals that out of 250 respondents. 233 (93%) answered yes that plastics are not properly disposed, 17(7%) answered no (Lewis , 2019). 243 (97%) answered yes that they degrade the environment,7 (3%) answered no, (Lewis, 2019) 250 (100%)answered yes that when burnt becomes harmful to the environment (Malik 2013). 248 (99%) answered yes that, there is need to put plastics to use in the weaving industry, 2 (1%) answered no (Fairlie, 2020). Plastic can be recycled into yarns for weaving Aso-Oke, 228 (91%) answered yes, 22(9%) answered no (Lewis, 2019, Briggs 2021, Knight 2020). 208 (83%) answered yes that this will help to reduce harmful effect on the environment 42 (17%) answered no (Malik 2013), Goodship, 2007, Khatri 20150. 215 (86%) answered yes that plastics have been used in the manufacturing of other products, 35(14%) answered no (Khari, 2021). 198 (79%) answered yes that synthetic fibers have been used to manufacture Aso-Oke, 52 (21%) answered no. (Olutayo and Akanle 2013, Makinde, Ajiboye, Ajayi 2009), 210 (84%) answered yes that blending plastic thread in weaving of Aso-Oke is an innovation, 40(16%) answered no (Lobell 2018, Singh, 2014, Peek 2021). 233 (93%) answered yes that the innovation will create wealth for the families. 17(7%) answered no (Peek 2021). 200 (80%) answered yes that weavers can supply plastics to middlemen who supply to companies, 50(20%) answered no. (Knight, 2020 Lewis 2019. 193 (77%) answered yes that weavers can become plastic collectors supply to recycling textiles companies directly, 57 (23%) answered no (Knight 2020, Lewis 2019), 238 (95%) answered yes that introducing plastic yarn to Aso-oke will make the fabric more flexible, 12 (5%) answered no (Khan 2021). 243 (97%) answered yes that various designers will patronize the new look Aso-Oke fabric, 7 (3%) answered no (Briggs 2021, Goodship,2007, Knight 2020). 218, (87%) answered yes that the new texture of Aso-oke can be exported to other countries, 32 (13%) answered no (Knight 202, Briggs, 2021), 234 (94%) answered yes that as weavers continue to create and innovate, it will be a source of income for years to come for their families 16(6%) answered no (Lewis 2019).

Table III was on preventing disruption of businesses in post pandemic of Aso-Oke weavers, the table reveal that out of 250 respondents, 248 (99%) answered yes that COVID-19 affected the way businesses operates, 2(1%) answered no (Fairlie, 2020). 233(93%) answered yes that businesses were disrupted, 17(7%) answered no (Lakuma and Sunday, 2020). 210 (84%) answered yes that it became a challenge to business owners, 40(16%) answered no. (Belitski, Guenther, Alexander and Thurik 2021 ), 218 (87%) answered yes that Aso-Oke weaving was also affected, 32(13%) answered no (Belitski, Guenther, Alexander and Thurik 2021) 248 (99%) answered yes that weavers finances were affected, 2(1%) answered no, (Dal, Ellingrud, Mahajan and Silberg, 2020). 175 (70%) answered yes that it created poverty for families, 25(30%) answered no (Engidaw, 2020) 180 (72%) answered yes that businesses need innovation, 70(28%) answered no (Havel 2021, Menon 2020). 218 (87%) answered yes that this is the never meet-in-person era, 32 (13%) answered no (Belitski, Guenther, Alexander and Thurik 2021). 245 (98%) answered yes that there is need to invest in technology, 5(2%) answered no. (Dau, Mahajan, Oyer and Ramaswamy 2020, Kevin and Sternfels 2020), 250 (100%) answered yes that with technology, weavers can operate anywhere, 7 (3%) answered no (Kevin and Sternfels 2020, Dau, Mahajan, Oyer and Ramaswamy, 2020). 243 (97%) answered yes that business can also innovate by delivery to it, 7(3%) answered no (Kevin and Sternfels 2020). 240 (96%) answered yes that loan can be taken to grow the business, 10(4%) answered no (Kevin, and Sternfels 2020) 225 (90%) answered yes that government can also support instead of allowing businesses to die, 25(10%) answered no. (Belikski, Guenther, Alexander and Thurik, 2021). 210 (84%) answered yes that businesses need to be insured, 40(16%) answered no (Belitski, Guenther, Alexander and Thurik 2021). 248 (99%) answered yes that Aso-oke weavers should care for their customers, 2(1%) answered no (Kevin and Sternfels 2020). 250 (100%) answered yes that weavers should engage in promotional activities for their products (Dau, Mohajan, Oyer and Ramaswamy 2020).

### Conclusion

Aso-Oke fabrics has seen transformation in yarns, techniques, use and colour over the years. Introducing recycled plastics into its weaving Aso-Oke texture can be improved if blended with recycled plastics this will continue to show creativity and innovation among weavers, and help to finding solutions to cleaner environment, and poverty

alivation by becoming plastic collectors and suppliers and users themselves. There is need to position their business for growth for the future in this era of never-meet-in person using technology.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the forgoing, the following recommendations were made:

- The indigenous (Kete) Rivera Aso-oke weavers in Badagry should create a plastic collection centre
- Lagos state government to construct a plastic recycling plant for the Indigenous (Kete) Rivera Aso-Oke weavers
- The weavers should attend workshops to keep abreast with time
- Aso-oke weavers should take their business online
- Aso-Oke weavers should always remember that viruses as in COVID-19 does not go away so they should move with time by using technology.

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