



## ONLINE VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF NIGERIAN TEXTILE HERITAGE IN THE NATION AND DAILY SUN NEWSPAPERS

<sup>1</sup>NWAOPARA, Jane Nwamaka

<sup>2</sup>EMEAFOR, Cynthia Ijeoma

<sup>3</sup>EMEAFOR, Obinna F.

<sup>1</sup>Industrial Design Department, School of Arts, Design & Printing Technology Yaba College of Technology, Lagos

<sup>2</sup>Department of Mass Communication, Madonna University, Nigeria, Anambra State

<sup>3</sup>Department of Tourism Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

**Corresponding Author:** Emeafor, Cynthia Ijeoma [cynthiaemeafor@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiaemeafor@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

This study examines the online visual representation of Nigerian textile heritage in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers, highlighting the role of digital media in preserving and promoting Nigeria's rich textile traditions. Utilizing Cultural Representation Theory, the study explores how these newspapers visually and narratively depict Nigerian textiles, such as *Aso Oke*, *Adire*, *Ankara*, and *Akwete*. A content analysis of articles published between November 2023 and April 2024 was conducted, focusing on the frequency of textile-related content, types of visual representation, narrative themes, and the specific textiles mentioned. Frequency and simple percentages of data gathered were examined using SPSS version 21.0. Findings revealed that Nigerian textile heritage received limited media attention, with only 22 reports published within the study period. Coverage predominantly emphasized economic potential (36%) and fashion innovation (32%), while themes related to cultural heritage (22%) and preservation challenges (5%) were underrepresented. Visual representation was largely confined to photographs (97%), with minimal use of infographics or illustrations, limiting the depth of engagement. Additionally, *Adire*, *Aso Oke*, and *Ankara* dominated the coverage, while textiles like *Akwete* and *Batik* were largely overlooked. These findings indicate a partial alignment with Cultural Representation Theory, as the newspapers acknowledge Nigeria textiles but did so with a skewed emphasis on their commercial value rather than their cultural and historical significance. The study underscores the need for more inclusive and frequent media coverage to enhance awareness, appreciation, and continuity of Nigeria's textile traditions in the digital age.

**Keywords:** Nigerian textiles, Cultural Representation Theory, online media, content analysis, digital heritage

### Introduction

The visual representation of Nigerian textile heritage in online news media, such as *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* serves as a powerful tool in preserving and promoting Nigeria's rich cultural heritage. Nigerian textiles, characterized by unique weaving techniques, symbolic patterns, and vibrant colors, are not only aesthetic expressions but also represent cultural identity and history. With the global proliferation of digital media, Nigerian newspapers have increasingly used online platforms to showcase this textile heritage, highlighting designs like *Aso Oke*, *Adire*, and *Ankara*, among others. This coverage has played a pivotal role in educating both local and international audiences, celebrating traditional crafts, and supporting Nigeria's fashion industry.

*The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers have featured numerous articles on Nigerian textiles, reflecting their significance in various spheres, from traditional ceremonies to contemporary fashion. For instance, articles often explore the cultural stories behind textile patterns and the efforts of Nigerian designers who are revitalising these traditions in the global fashion arena. Visual elements—such as high-quality photographs of traditional attires and craftspeople at work—are key in capturing the intricate beauty of these textiles. These digital visual representations help preserve cultural narratives and encourage a sense of pride and continuity in Nigerian textile practices.

This growing online representation is not without challenges, as it requires a balance between tradition and modernity. Scholars argue that these portrayals must accurately reflect cultural heritage without reducing it to mere fashion statements (Olumide, 2022; Akinwale, 2023). Nonetheless, the initiatives by *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers contribute significantly to raising awareness and fostering appreciation for Nigerian textile heritage among new audiences.

### Statement of the problem

The online visual representation of Nigerian textile heritage in media like *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers is crucial for cultural preservation, yet it faces several notable challenges. The central issue lies in the need to accurately and effectively communicate the rich, intricate history of Nigerian textiles to diverse, global audiences in a digital format. Textiles such as *Aso Oke*, *Adire*, and *Ankara* are not only visual but deeply symbolic artifacts, embodying stories, techniques, and cultural identity.

The "Online Visual Representation of Nigerian Textile Heritage" in popular newspapers like *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* highlight a unique intersection of cultural preservation and digital media in Nigeria. However, this approach faces challenges due to a lack of consistent visibility and depth in portraying the full cultural significance of Nigerian textiles, including styles like *Adire* and *Ankara*. The representation of these textiles often leans towards aesthetic appeal for fashion coverage rather than a full exploration of the textile heritage's historical and cultural narratives.

This limited portrayal in popular media can dilute the educational aspect of Nigerian textile heritage and might fail to fully convey the diversity and meaning embedded in the textiles from different ethnic groups. Sources like *The Guardian Nigeria* emphasize that Nigerian fashion, including textiles, is a crucial part of the nation's cultural identity, with a growing role in the global fashion market. However, challenges such as limited digital storytelling and minimal contextual information in these newspapers may undermine a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of Nigeria's rich textile traditions among readers, particularly in a globalized digital landscape where audiences could benefit from deeper cultural insights and historical backgrounds on the subject.

### Objectives of the Study

For this study the objectives are to:

1. Quantify the frequency of textile-related content: This objective aims to determine how frequently Nigerian textiles appear in the digital editions of *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers.
2. Analyze the types of visual representations of Nigerian textiles.
3. Explore the narrative themes surrounding Nigerian textiles in the two newspapers.
4. Identify the type of textile mentioned in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers.

## Literature review

Nigeria's textile heritage is a rich cultural legacy reflecting the diverse ethnic groups, traditions, and historical influences across the country. It encompasses a wide variety of fabrics, weaving techniques, dyeing methods, and patterns that are deeply rooted in Nigeria's history and identity. Nigeria's traditional fabrics symbolize cultural identity, social status, and rituals.

For instance: Aso Oke (Yoruba) a hand-woven fabric by the Yoruba people often used in ceremonies like weddings, festivals and funerals. It exists in various types such as **Alaari** (crimson red), **Etu** (deep blue), and **Sanyan** (beige made from wild silk) (Akinwumi, 1990). *Adire* (Yoruba) is another Yoruba fabric, created through resist-dyeing with indigo. This intricate craft is particularly associated with women in Abeokuta (Picton & Mack, 1979). Akwete (Igbo) a hand-woven fabric produced by Igbo women of Akwete Abia State, known for its vibrant patterns and utility in ceremonial and everyday attire (Eicher, 1976). As stated by Okpoko (2023, p.44) “the allure of Akwete textiles arguably shines brightest during Nigerian wedding celebrations”.

The representation of Nigerian textile heritage in online newspapers like *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* has played a vital role in documenting, preserving, and promoting the country's rich cultural traditions. These publications leverage digital platforms to spotlight the historical, cultural, and economic importance of indigenous textiles such as *Adire* (Yoruba tie-and-dye), *Aso oke* (handwoven cloth), and *Akwete* (Igbo woven fabric). Online newspapers frequently highlight the cultural heritage embodied in Nigerian textiles.

They use their platforms to amplify the voices of local weavers, dyers, and textile artists. The economic potential of Nigerian textiles is a recurring theme in these publications. Articles often explore how the global demand for sustainable, handmade fabrics has spurred growth in the Nigerian textile industry. Online newspapers frequently feature Nigerian textiles within the context of fashion. Stories on Lagos Fashion Week and other international fashion events emphasize how designers are reimagining *Adire* and *Aso oke* for modern markets. These articles often include visuals that celebrate the vibrant colors and intricate designs of the fabrics.

Also, social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest are widely used to highlight the vibrant colors and patterns of Nigerian textiles. Fashion designers, cultural organizations, and individuals post images and videos that emphasize the beauty and versatility of these fabrics in modern and traditional contexts. Websites of Nigerian fashion houses and textile retailers similarly contribute by sharing high-resolution images and interactive features for consumers to explore the heritage of these textiles.

## Empirical Review

Empirical studies on Nigerian textile heritage emphasize the importance of visual and digital representation in preserving and promoting cultural identity, especially in contemporary media such as newspapers and online platforms. Recent studies emphasize the significance of Nigerian textiles, such as **Adire** and **Ankara**, as cultural symbols that reflect heritage, identity, and both individual and collective aesthetics.

Onwuakpa (2023), in the *International Journal of Current Research in the Humanities*, explores the challenges and opportunities faced by Nigerian textile designers in integrating traditional craftsmanship into modern media platforms. The study highlights how these adaptations are often influenced by global aesthetics, sometimes at the expense of traditional African designs. While global media exposure provides Nigerian textile heritage with international recognition, it also presents the risk of diluting cultural authenticity by incorporating foreign design elements.

Muobike (2017) in her study analysed how three national newspapers in Nigeria framed arts and culture and its implications on economic growth. The study revealed that the newspapers framed arts and culture constructively to a very limited extent implying a negative impact on economic growth.

Okpoko (2023) examined the immense potential of promoting Akwete traditional textiles of Abia State on the global stage as a catalyst for sustainable development. Findings demonstrated that with strategic promotion and international exposure, Akwete textiles can carve a significant niche in the global fabric market.

Kayode, Ibiwoye, and Falusi (2022) studied the impact of television advertisement stereotypes on Yoruba culture in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study found that the stereotypes portrayed in television advertisements significantly influenced Yoruba cultural perceptions and identity. According to Bejide *et al.*, (2019), as cited in Kayode *et al.*, (2022), Jacquard, Adire, and Ankara are among the commonly used fabrics in Nigerian fashion, particularly in the Yoruba region. They further noted that traditional Yoruba women's attire includes *buba, kaba, iro, gele, and iborun or ipele*, while Yoruba men's clothing consists of *buba, fila, sokoto, abeti-aja, agbada, and dansiki*.

Furthermore, the findings of Kayode *et al.*, (2022) indicated that women were predominantly depicted in television advertisements as sex objects, physically attractive, and dependent on men. This portrayal, according to the study, has contributed to the growing objectification of women and increased nudity in Lagos State, particularly among the Yoruba people. The researchers emphasized the urgent need to promote Nigerian traditional attire through television advertisements, highlighting its uniqueness, aesthetic appeal, and vital role in preserving indigenous culture, which is increasingly being threatened by modernization.

Chukwu and Ogunboyowa (2022) in their study on function of the press and the social media transmission of cultural heritage observed that the mainstream media of radio, television, film and print in Nigeria going by their growing indigenous contents, are powerful cultural agents that should be increasingly used to project the Nigerian culture and people to the outside world.

Koiki-Owoyele *et al.*, (2020) examined preservation of Africa's cultural heritage through digital preservation. The findings of this study showed that digital preservation of cultural heritage was still a neglected activity. The result further indicated that cultural institutions in Nigeria were yet to make serious effort towards digital preservation of cultural heritage.

Similarly in a study by Ahmed *et al.* (2023) on the utilization of digital channels for the dissemination of cultural heritage resources in Northern Nigeria observed that cultural heritage institutions have digitally documented various resources and a high level of utilization of digital media channels such as blogs, email, online magazines, radio, social media, television displays, and websites for cultural heritage dissemination and preservation.

Adedara and Akinrujomu (2024) in their study observed that fashion exhibition events and social media engagement particularly Instagram and TikTok significantly enhanced the promotion of Nigerian fabric brands and played a vital role in reaching broader audiences.

### Identified Gaps in Existing Studies

Existing research has yet to explicitly analyze the visual representation of Nigerian textile heritage in online newspapers. While studies like Muobike (2017) explore cultural framing in print media, they do not assess how newspapers use imagery to shape public perception. Additionally, no comparative study examines how *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* depict Nigerian textiles through images, infographics, and digital design.

Although research highlights digital platforms' role in cultural promotion (Ahmed *et al.*, 2023; Koiki-Owoyele *et al.*, 2020), there is limited exploration of how traditional newspapers, particularly their online editions, contribute to this representation. Furthermore, the psychological and cultural impact of newspaper visuals on textile appreciation and identity remains underexplored. While Onwuakpa (2023) discusses globalization's effect on textile design, its influence on media representation is yet to be examined.

This study addresses these gaps by analyzing how these newspapers visually portray Nigerian textiles, their effectiveness in promoting textile heritage, and how their digital platforms compare with other cultural representation mediums. By bridging traditional and digital media, this research provides new insights into the role of newspapers in cultural preservation.

## Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Cultural Representation Theory. Stuart Hall's theory of cultural representation, developed in the 1970s and further expanded in 1997, posits that media images and symbols play a fundamental role in creating and disseminating cultural identities.

Hall argues that representation is an active process of meaning-making, where media does not just mirror reality but helps construct it. The theory also argues that media should provide a balanced and accurate portrayal of cultural elements to ensure their continuity and relevance in society. This framework is especially relevant to online visual representation in Nigerian newspapers, as these images do more than simply showcase textiles; they contribute to global perceptions of Nigerian identity.

Online portrayals of textiles like *Adire*, *Aso oke*, *Ankara* and *Akwete* serve as cultural artifacts that can either reinforce or distort traditional meanings, depending on the presentation (Hall, 1997). This is critical in newspapers as their representations reach diverse, often international audiences, shaping understanding of Nigerian culture.

## Methods

Content analysis was used as the research design for this study. This method was chosen because it offers an objective means of understanding how topics, people, or groups are represented in media. It also allows researchers to identify changes in how media address specific issues or themes over a certain period. Content analysis is ideal for this study because it systematically examines how and *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers present Nigerian textile heritage through visuals and text representations. Additionally, it aids in understanding frequency and patterns of how often certain words, images, themes, or narratives of Nigerian textile heritage appear in media content. This provides insights into media focus and priorities.

The population for the study consists of articles and visual contents published in the online editions of *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers, that is, <https://thenationonline.ng> and <https://thesun.ng> between November 2023 and April 2024. The period was chosen because Nigerian cultural festivals and trade fairs, such as the Lagos Fashion Week or textile exhibitions, often occur toward the end of the year (November–December), increasing media coverage of cultural heritage. Also, early months of the year (January–April): often include coverage of economic activities, cultural heritage discussions, and new government policies, which could highlight the Nigerian textile industry.

The sampling method for this study was a purposive sampling of articles published within the study period. Only articles published on the newspapers' official websites and accessible online were included. **Inclusion Criteria** involves articles must contain visual elements (photos, infographics) or references to Nigerian textiles. The textiles can include any traditional Nigerian fabric such as *Adire*, *Aso Oke*, or *Akwete*.

**Exclusion Criteria:** Articles focused purely on foreign textiles, advertisements, or sponsored content without substantive commentary on Nigerian textiles.

The units of analysis are articles published in the online editions of *The Nation and Daily Sun*, which mention or depict Nigerian textiles. Each article analyzed: Frequency of publication, Visual content (images, infographics, etc.), Textual content (themes, tone, focus on artisans or cultural heritage), Type of textile mentioned (e.g., *adire*, *aso oke*, *akwete*)

A coding sheet was developed as the primary instrument for data collection. The coding sheet included categories such as:

- Frequency of publication (number of relevant articles per month).
- Visual content (type of images used, presence of infographics, and depiction of textiles).
- Textual content (i.e. cultural heritage, economic potential, preservation challenges).
- Type of textile mentioned (*adire*, *aso oke*, *akwete*, etc.).

To ensure the reliability of the coding process, two independent coders analyzed a random sample of 20% of the selected articles. Cohen's Kappa coefficient was calculated to measure inter-coder reliability, ensuring consistency in categorization and reducing subjectivity in analysis. A coefficient of 0.80 or higher was considered acceptable.

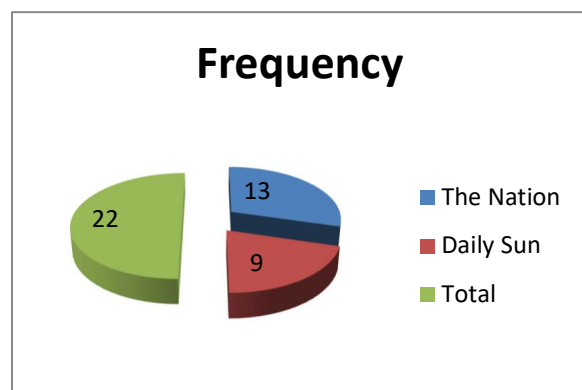
For validity, the coding sheet was reviewed by experts in media studies and cultural representation to confirm its relevance and effectiveness in capturing key elements of Nigerian textile representation in newspapers. A pilot test was conducted on a small sample of articles before the main analysis to refine the coding categories and improve accuracy.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies) were used to identify trends in publication frequency, while thematic analysis was used to interpret cultural narratives in the articles. SPSS software (version 21.0) was used for statistical analysis to detect patterns across the selected months.

## Result

From the data analysed, a total of 22 reports were gathered from the online visual representation of Nigerian textile heritage by *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers. The results generated are shown below.

**Fig 1: Frequency of the Reports in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* Newspapers**



**Source:** Researcher content analysis, 2025

From the Figure 1 above, *The Nation* newspaper presented 13 (59%) reports on Nigerian textile heritage while *Daily Sun* newspaper had 9 with (41%) reports. This shows that *The Nation* newspaper published the highest number of stories on Nigeria textile heritage within the study period.

Also, frequency distribution of news stories across the months shows that in November 2023 a total of 6 news stories featured in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers. The month of April 2024 recorded 4 stories while 5 reports were captured in the December 2023 and February 2024. In the month of January and March 2024, only 1 news story was captured on Nigeria textile heritage.

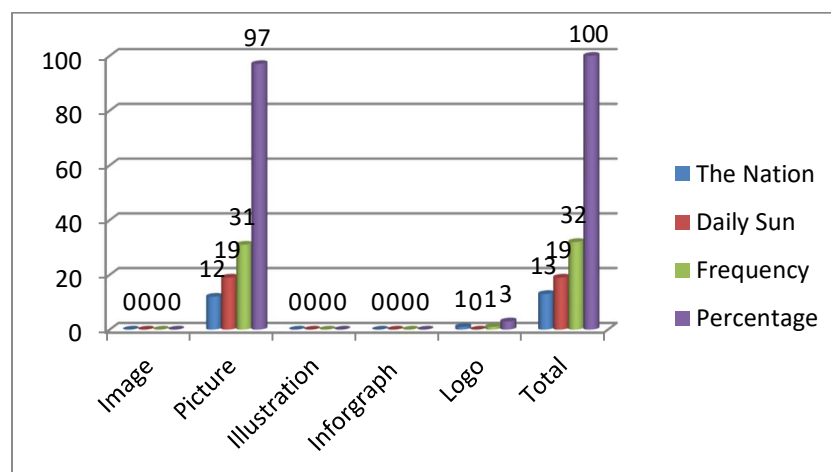
**Table 1: Narrative Themes on Nigeria Textiles Heritage**

Theme	<i>The Nation</i>	<i>Daily Sun</i>	Frequency	Percentage%
Cultural Heritage	2	3	5	22
Economic Potential	7	1	8	36
Fashion Innovation	3	4	7	32
Preservation Challenges	-	1	1	5
Art Exhibition	1	-	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Researcher content analysis, 2025

Table 1 above shows the narrative themes surrounding Nigeria textiles in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers. In the table preservation challenges and art exhibition featured only once with (5%), cultural heritage presented 5 (22%) stories. 3 (11.1%) reports were devoted to oil and gas. Fashion innovation recorded 7 (32%) while economic potentials had more of the reports with 8 (36%). The implication of the above result is that the two newspapers gave more attention to stories on economic potentials and fashion innovation as regards Nigeria textile heritage.

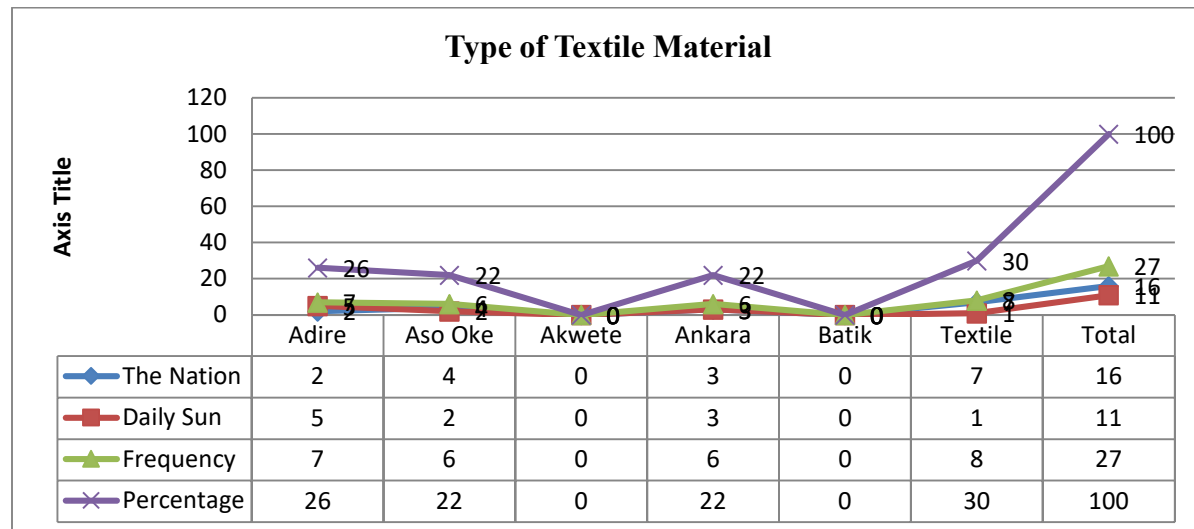
**Fig.3: Data Distribution based on Visual Content**



**Source:** Researcher content analysis, 2025

From the figure above, it is evident that pictures were the predominant visual format, appearing 31 times (97%) in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers, while logo was used only once (3%). This finding suggests that both newspapers primarily relied on photographic representation to depict Nigeria's textile heritage on their online platforms.

**Fig.4: News report on the Type of Textile Material**



**Source:** Researcher content analysis, 2025

To determine the type of textile material reported in the two Nigeria daily newspapers examined, Fig 4 above presents the findings. In the analysis *The Nation* newspaper presented a total of 16 news stories on *Adire*, *Aso oke*, *Ankara* and textile-related news. On the part of *Daily Sun* newspaper, 11 news stories were captured within the study period. The relatively low number of reports suggests that Nigerian textile heritage is not a primary focus in mainstream media, potentially limiting public awareness and appreciation of these traditional fabrics.

## Discussion of Findings

The result obtained from the data analysis in relation to the proportion of news stories on online visual representation of Nigerian textile heritage across six months of study shows that the two selected newspapers: *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* gave little attention to issues that pertains Nigeria textile heritage.

In relation to research objective 1, the result from the analysis of the data in Fig.1 shows distinctively that the selected newspapers did not give adequate representation or in-depth coverage to Nigeria textile heritage during the timeframe of the study. Only 22 news stories on Nigeria textile heritage were obtained within the research duration. This suggests that news stories on textile heritage in Nigeria are not considered as important as other reported topics. This indicates that Nigeria's textile heritage is not given the attention it deserves.

This aligns with Muobike (2017), who found that Nigerian newspapers framed arts and culture constructively to a limited extent, which negatively impacted economic growth. The underrepresentation of textile heritage in news coverage suggests that media organizations do not recognize its economic and cultural significance, limiting its visibility both locally and internationally. Also, the lack of consistent



media representation suggests that cultural heritage, particularly textile heritage, is not considered a priority in mainstream media.

The media, especially online newspaper publications, should prioritize frequent reporting on the country's textile heritage. Consistent coverage would help raise public awareness, foster appreciation, and preserve this important aspect of Nigeria's cultural identity. By highlighting the historical significance, craftsmanship, and economic potential of Nigerian textiles, the media can play a crucial role in ensuring their recognition and continuity for future generations.

Furthermore, the frequency reports in Fig 2 indicate that discussions on Nigeria's textile heritage peaked in November 2023, followed by December 2023 and February 2024. This surge in content could be attributed to the increased festive activities during these months, which often drive heightened interest in traditional textiles for celebrations, cultural events, and fashion exhibitions. Monitoring the monthly frequency count of Nigeria's textile heritage offers valuable insights into the online discourse and emerging trends.

It helps assess aspects such as online presence and visibility, digital documentation, tourism promotion, cultural awareness, and cultural exchange, providing a deeper understanding of how Nigerian textiles are represented and engaged with in digital spaces. The fluctuation in coverage, with peaks in November 2023, December 2023, and February 2024, aligns with festive seasons when traditional attire is in higher demand. This supports Adedara and Akinrujomu (2024), who found that social media engagement and fashion exhibition events play a crucial role in promoting Nigerian textile brands.

The implication of this result is that the two newspapers did not effectively fulfill their role, as outlined by the Cultural Representation Theory, in documenting and promoting stories related to Nigeria's textile heritage. As key agents of information dissemination, the media play a vital role in shaping public perception and preserving cultural identity.

However, the insufficient coverage of Nigeria's textile heritage suggests a gap in cultural representation, which could lead to a decline in public awareness, appreciation, and preservation of this rich tradition. Textiles are not only a part of Nigeria's artistic and historical legacy but also contribute to the nation's economy and global cultural influence. By neglecting to give adequate attention to this sector, these newspapers may have missed an opportunity to educate the public on the significance of traditional fabrics, weaving techniques, and the socio-economic impact of the textile industry.

The analysis of narrative themes in Table 1 reveals that the economic potential of Nigeria's textile heritage received the highest coverage, followed by fashion innovation. However, fewer stories focused on Nigeria's textile heritage as a cultural asset and the preservation challenges faced by artisans. These findings suggest that, despite the significance of Nigerian textiles as part of the country's cultural identity, the two newspapers under study—*The Nation* and *Daily Sun*—primarily highlighted economic opportunities and fashion trends, while largely overlooking aspects related to cultural heritage preservation and the challenges artisans face.

As a result, the news coverage of Nigeria's textile heritage remains incomplete, with limited focus on this cultural legacy. Consequently, the insufficient attention to state government efforts and humanitarian support initiatives may hinder key stakeholders from identifying critical areas that require assistance in preserving and promoting traditional textiles for future generations. This supports Okpoko (2023), who highlighted the global economic potential of traditional Nigerian textiles like *Akwete* but noted the need for strategic promotion.

Relating these findings to **Cultural Representation Theory**, the results indicate that the two newspapers under study did not effectively fulfill their role in representing and promoting Nigeria's textile heritage. According to the theory, media should provide a balanced portrayal of cultural elements, ensuring

that all aspects—cultural heritage, economic potentials, fashion innovation, preservation challenges, and art exhibitions—are adequately covered.

An analysis of the visual content revealed that the two newspapers, *The Nation* and *Daily Sun*, primarily used pictures to report on Nigeria's textile heritage, incorporating real-world scene photographs to accompany news stories. This suggests that their coverage relied on photographic representation to provide more in-depth explanations within their news narratives. However, it was also observed that both newspapers failed to incorporate other visual elements such as illustrations, infographics, and images in their storytelling. The absence of these elements limited the depth of representation and engagement, as diverse visual formats play a crucial role in enhancing audience understanding and appreciation of Nigeria's textile heritage.

This finding is in line with Koiki-Owoyele et al., (2020), who observed that digital preservation of African cultural heritage is still neglected. However, Ahmed et al., (2023) observed a significant utilization of digital channels such as blogs, social media, and websites for cultural dissemination. This suggests that while digital media platforms have begun integrating cultural heritage promotion, traditional media, particularly newspapers, are lagging in using digital tools effectively.

Using images, illustrations, infographics, and logos in online media is essential because visual content captures attention more effectively than text, making reports on Nigeria's textile heritage more engaging and shareable. By relying solely on pictures, the newspapers missed an opportunity to present Nigerian textiles as more than just fashion or economic assets. **Illustrations and infographics** could have provided historical context, weaving techniques, and the symbolic meanings of various textiles.

The analysis of newspaper coverage on Nigeria's cultural heritage, particularly in relation to textile materials, reveals a pattern of selective reporting. As depicted in Figure 4, *Adire*, *Aso Oke*, and *Ankara* emerged as the most frequently reported textile materials in the selected newspapers. While textile-related news generally received notable coverage, there was a clear neglect of *Akwete* and *Batik*, both of which are equally significant components of Nigeria's rich textile heritage.

A notable instance of textile-related reporting was found in *The Nation* newspaper on April 3, 2024, in a report titled *Customs Collect N1.3tr in Q1 2024, Says Adeniyi*. This story primarily focused on the Nigerian Customs Service's efforts to curb smuggling, highlighting the seizure of various goods, including rice, petroleum products, motor vehicles, and textiles—of which textiles accounted for 6% of confiscations. However, the report did not explore the cultural significance of these textiles or the impact of such seizures on Nigeria's indigenous textile industry.

While the frequent reporting of *Adire*, *Aso Oke*, and *Ankara* suggests a recognition of their cultural relevance, the consistent neglect of *Akwete* and *Batik* indicates a skewed representation that marginalizes other equally important textile traditions. This selective focus can influence public perception by reinforcing the dominance of certain textile materials while diminishing the cultural visibility of others.

However, while Okpoko's study demonstrated the market potential of *Akwete* textiles, the present research found that *Akwete* and *Batik* received little to no attention in the sampled newspapers. Instead, *Adire*, *Aso-Oke*, and *Ankara* dominated the discourse, confirming a selective media focus on certain fabrics over others. This finding suggests that media representation of Nigerian textiles is uneven and does not fully capture the country's textile diversity.

Moreover, Cultural Representation Theory highlights the role of media in preserving and promoting cultural identity. By failing to comprehensively showcase Nigeria's diverse textile heritage, the sampled newspapers have not fully executed their role as cultural custodians. A balanced media representation would ensure that all traditional textiles—regardless of their regional origin or popularity—receive adequate coverage, thereby fostering a richer and more inclusive cultural narrative.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight a significant gap in the media's role in representing Nigeria's textile heritage, as examined through the lens of Cultural Representation Theory. The underreporting of Nigeria's textile heritage in *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* newspapers suggests an imbalanced portrayal, where economic potential and fashion innovation were prioritized over cultural preservation and artistic heritage.

According to Cultural Representation Theory, the media plays a crucial role in shaping public perception by constructing and reinforcing narratives. However, the selective focus on certain textiles—such as *Adire*, *Aso Oke*, and *Ankara*—while neglecting others like *Akwete* and *Batik*, reflects a skewed representation that marginalizes key aspects of Nigeria's diverse cultural identity.

Furthermore, the limited use of visual storytelling tools, such as infographics and illustrations, suggests a missed opportunity to enhance public engagement with Nigeria's textile heritage. A more inclusive and frequent representation of traditional textiles would help preserve their historical and cultural significance, promote awareness, and support artisans and local industries.

To fulfill their role as cultural custodians, media platforms must ensure balanced coverage that acknowledges not only the economic and fashion-driven aspects of Nigeria's textile industry but also its artistic, historical, and socio-cultural relevance.

## Recommendations

Based on the data analysed the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be increased frequency of coverage: Newspapers should publish more news stories on Nigeria's textile heritage, ensuring regular reporting to raise public awareness and appreciation.
2. Coverage by the media houses particularly *The Nation* and *Daily Sun* should extend beyond economic potential and fashion trends to include topics such as cultural heritage, preservation challenges, historical significance, and artisan support.
3. Newspapers should integrate illustrations, infographics, and documentary-style reports to provide deeper insights into the craftsmanship and cultural symbolism of Nigerian textiles, making the heritage more engaging and accessible to audiences.
4. Newspapers should actively highlight government policies, private sector initiatives, and investment efforts that support the textile industry. By showcasing these developments, the media can encourage greater institutional backing for heritage preservation and sustainable growth of the sector.

## References

- Adedara, T. M., & Akinrujomu, O.S. (2024). Leveraging Fashion Exhibition Events and Social Media Engagement for the Promotion of Nigerian fabric Brands. *International Journal of Educational Research*7, (6), 1–16.
- Ahmed, M., Buba, A. A., & Dangida, U. F. (2023). Digital Channels for the Dissemination of Cultural Heritage Resources in Northern Nigerian: Preserving Legacy, Fostering Identity. *DUTSE Journal of Education*, 16, (1), 101–119.
- Akinwumi, T. M. (1990). The rise and fall of broadloom weaving among the Yoruba. *Odu: Journal of West African Studies*,38, 45–58.

- Chukwu, O. J., & Ogunboyowa, A. O. (2022). Transmission of Cultural Heritage Function of the Press and the Social Media: An Analytical Introspection. *Sar council Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences*, 14, (1), 34–48.
- Eicher, J. B. (1976). Akwete Cloth: History and Construction. *African Arts*, 9, (2), 36–39, 86–88.
- Hall, S. (1997). Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London: Sage Publications.
- Kayode, F., Ibiwoye, T. S., & Falusi, T. A. (2022). Effect of Television Advertisement Stereotypes on Yoruba Culture in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Visual Communication and Design*, 14, (2), 15–29.
- Koiki-Owoyele, A. E., Alabi, A. O. & Egbunu, A. J. (2020). Safeguarding Africa's Cultural Heritage through Digital Preservation. *Journal of applied Information Science and Technology*, 1, (1), 75–86.
- Muobike, O. I. (2017). Analysis of Newspaper Frame of Arts and Culture in Nigerian Newspapers and Its Implications on Economic Growth *Journal of Tourism and Heritage Studies*, 5, (3), 12–24.
- Okpoko, O. J. (2023). Promoting Akwete Textiles for Sustainable Development. *Journal of Tourism and Heritage Management*, 12, (2), 39–56.
- Onwuakpa, L.E. (2023). Challenges and Prospects of Nigerian Textile Designers in Modern Media. *International Journal of Current Research in the Humanities*, 29, 112–125.
- Picton, J., & Mack, J. (1979). African Textiles: Looms, Weaving and Design. British Museum Publications.

## Appendix



**Akwaete Woven Fabric**