The Textile Industry in Ghana:
A Look into Tertiary Textile Education and its Relevance to the Industry

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This thesis titled

The Textile Industry in Ghana:
A Look into Tertiary Textile Education and its Relevance to the Industry

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Abstract

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The Textile Industry in Ghana: A Look into Tertiary Textile Education and its Relevance to the Industry

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Ghana is an African country rich in culture; a key component of the culture being its tradition of textiles with colorful and bold motifs. The textile manufacturing companies in Ghana have faced economic challenges since the inception of trade liberalization (Quartey, 2006). Specifically, Chinese imports have introduced competition into the market which has resulted in marginalized value of authentic Ghanaian textiles (Egu, 2009, Quartey 2006). Pelelo (2009) suggested that economic benefits could result for African nations from educational reform.

The purpose of this study was to explore the tertiary education system in Ghana and to understand its current relevance to the Ghanaian textile industry. The research questions developed for this study were:

- What is the current state of the textiles industry in Ghana?
- What are the views of key stakeholders about the relevance of the current textile curriculum to the industry?
- What are opportunities for future industry growth and career advancement within the textile field in Ghana?

This research addressed this issue through exploratory interviews with stakeholders including government officials, industry representatives and faculty
members of a textile program in a public tertiary institution. Additionally, students from the same program as the faculty member participants were surveyed. This primarily qualitative approach enabled data collection to answer the relevant research questions.

There was strong agreement that the industry is in a state of collapse; the Ghanaian textile industry is not competitive enough to withstand the competition presented by textile imports. As a result of this research, the following recommendations were generated:

- Ghanaian textile companies need to be creative and innovative to withstand the challenges presented to the industry, particularly in terms of textile design and its application to product design.
- The industry needs to invest in modern technologies for production and hence reduce production and labor costs.
- Educational institutions should include internship, management, retail and global trade courses in their curricula to make graduates more marketable for the industry.
- Industries and tertiary institutions need to partner to educate consumers about recognizing authentic Ghanaian textiles and about the economic effects of smuggled and imported textiles.
- Tertiary institutions should cultivate strong alumni networks to enhance industry/education relationships.
- Better and documented collaborations between tertiary institutions and industry are needed.
Government should consider ways to be responsive to domestic textile challenges through policies that provide economic support.

Keywords: culture, curriculum, education, Ghana, textile industry
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Ghana is a Sub-Saharan country that lies on the western side of the African continent. According to the official website of the Government of Ghana (http://www.ghan.gov.gh), Ghana was called the Gold Coast, a reflection of its natural resources. The Europeans who settled on the Gold Coast were the Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, and British. The country became a British colony in 1874 and gained independence in 1957 under the leadership of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (http://www.ghan.gov.gh). Before independence, Europeans settled purposely to trade with the country because it is blessed with natural resources like gold, diamonds, and cocoa. The country is rich in cultural practices which are expressed through its culinary dishes, art, religion and clothing. In Sykas’s (2005) book titled *The Secret Life of Textiles, Six Pattern Book Archives in North West England*, a North West correspondent offered his view about Africans and their culture as:

The people of the Gold Coast, Nigeria and other West African territories have a highly developed sense of design, color and quality. The cotton goods they buy and use are an immensely important part of their inherent culture. They know what they want in color and design and will always buy as high a quality as they can afford (p. 30).

Ghanaian Textiles

Ghanaian textiles are known as kente, adinkra, the smock, batik, tie-dye, and the wax prints. (These are all traditionally made from cotton, silk and rayon). The historically authentic Ghanaian fabrics are the kente, adinkra, and the smock. Below are
descriptions of these cloths. Ampofo-Anti (1999) gives the best fitting definition for kente as:

A "royal cloth" of the Asante, [kente] is probably the most well-known textile of Africa. It is hand woven textiles made from colorful fine cotton, silk, or rayon threads. The thread is intricately woven into long strips (strip weaving) that are arranged to be sewn together to create one large piece. These masterly woven patterns are assigned names. The named patterns tell stories, impart proverbs and reflect the rich and artistic heritage of Ghana (p. 3).

According to Ampofo-Anti (1999), “Adinkra cloths are created by hand stamping symbols on the surface of dyed cloth or designs are drawn on the cloth with a comb-like tool. The symbols have moral or philosophical meanings” (p. 2). The smock is described on the “Welcome to the Navrongo and Lawra Homepage” n.d) as:

The smock is the most distinctive dress for Northern Ghanaian men. It is the traditional dress and is found in Northern Ghana. The material is hand-woven in strips and sewn together. Often symbolic patterns and designs are oversticked on the front and back. (Clothing, para. 5)

According to Sykas (2005) the production of wax prints has its origin in Holland and he describes it as:

[The] European textiles printing process first practiced in Holland for the West African market [is wax print]. Wax prints aim at giving the effect of traditional batik, but [its] exaggerated the flaws of the hand production, especially the
veining produced by dye seeping through the cracks in the wax resist. Wax prints need not employ wax; resin and pipe clay were also used as resist media (p.153). The above definition implies that wax print was inspired by batik making which originated in West Africa (where Ghana is located). The batik is characterized with the networking of lines produced through the use of wax in resisting dye to some areas on the fabric. The mechanized process developed in Holland to produce a batik-like design proved to be popular imports with the people of West Africa. Wax prints and their designs are so closely identified with the people of Ghana that they became a textile associated with the region even though the fabrics arrived in West Africa via trading activities with Europe (Sykas, 2005).

The textile industry in Ghana mainly produces textiles for the purpose of garment construction. The Ghanaian textiles industry, as part of the country’s history, has been a key source or means of providing employment opportunity to many of its citizens (Quartey, 2006).

Asare (2012) cited the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER, Legon, Ghana) in a report that the Ghanaian Textiles industry employed 25,000 workers in 1977 and has since declined to 7,000 in 1995, 5,000 in the year 2000 and fewer than 3,000 in the earlier part of 2005. Ghana is now joining other countries in the sub-region who also have collapsing textile industries like Kenya, (Mangieri, 2006) and Zambia (Koyi, 2006). Although there has been the establishment of a number of small to medium size enterprises, these small to medium size companies are mainly in the garment manufacturing sector (Vandyck & Fianu, 2012). Asare (2012) reported that
Ghana has only four large textiles firms, and they are Ghana Textile Print (GTP), Akosombo Textile Limited (ATL), Ghana Textiles Manufacturing Company (GTMC), and Printex. These four companies are unstable in terms of their production because production capacity has been reduced drastically over the years (Quartey & Abor, 2011). Although multiple factors have contributed to the decline in production by the textile companies, the influx of textile imports has been a major factor. Additionally, the higher import duties on raw materials for production, and the lack of investment in newer equipment for production by the local textile industry are recognized as deterrents to the textile industry (Egu, 2009).

According to Abdullah (2010), the Ghana’s Revenue Agencies Governing Board (RAGB) stated that the country is losing about $15,843,727 (0.14% of GDP) in what was projected as annual revenue through the smuggling of textiles materials. In an article published on Ghanaweb in November, 2004, titled “We are what We Wear,” Ohene-Frimpong praised the Ministry of Trade and Industry under the President’s Special Initiative for launching the “National Friday Wear Programme.” This was to encourage Ghanaians to celebrate their culture and wear clothing made with the local fabrics on Fridays (www.ghanaweb.com). Similarly, the Kranchi-East District Chief Executive also launched the “Everyday Wear” in an attempt to keep the textiles industry from virtual collapse. He announced that this initiative was not only to help the industry but also to preserve the Ghanaian identity through a common dress code (Agbewode, n.d).
Ghanaian Academic Curriculum in Textiles

Textiles as a program is offered in several universities and polytechnics in Ghana. Most of the universities (Cape Coast University, University of Ghana, and University of Education, Wenniba), place textiles courses under the Home Economics discipline, with only one public university, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), offering it under the Industrial Art program (see http://www.knust.edu.gh/pages/sections.php?siteid=industry&mid=652&sid=1941). Some of the common courses taught in the textile programs in the universities are Introduction to Clothing and Textiles, Textiles Fibers and Fabrics, Dynamics of the Fashion Industry, History of Fashion, Pattern Drafting, Garment Production, Textile Design and Weaving Mechanism (see http://ucc.edu.gh/academics/view/2/department/28/programme/774).

On November 29, 2011, it was reported in a Ghanaian local newspaper, Graphic Business, that Mr. Abraham Koomson (The General Secretary of the Textiles, Garment and Leather Employees Union, TEGLEU) noted that because of the unfair competition faced by local textile companies, they are being forced to downsize as a measure for sustaining their operations. Mr. Abraham Koomson expressed his fear that this would result in an increase in graduate unemployment (Graphic Business, 2011). It is of concern that university programs are not well positioned to produce graduates who transition to industry careers that contribute positively to the Ghanaian economy (Amoako, 2010). Rather, it is desirable to cultivate academic programs that prepare graduates to enter viable career opportunities. Thus, it is time to consider ways to match educational
opportunity to appropriate and viable industry and to revise educational programs to reflect future development opportunities.

In relation to the above mentioned concerns, this thesis examines the curricula of a textile program in a Ghanaian public university specifically that of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). This thesis seeks to provide information responding to:

- What is the current state of the textiles industry in Ghana?
- What are the views of key stakeholders about the relevance of the current textile curriculum to the industry?
- What are opportunities for future industry growth and career advancement within the textile field in Ghana?

**Definition of Terms**

Adinkra – Adinkra cloths [fabrics] are created by hand stamping symbols on the surface of dyed cloth or designs are drawn on the cloth with a comb-like tool. The symbols have moral or philosophical meanings (Ampofo-Anti, 1999, p. 2).

Akan – A large tribe in Ghana

ATL – Akosombo Textiles Limited

CEPS – Customs Exercise and Preventive Service

GTP – Ghana Textile Print

GTMC – Ghana Textile Manufacturing Company

GLSS – Ghana Living Standards survey
Kente – A "royal cloth" of the Asante, is probably the most well-known textile of Africa. It is hand woven textiles made from colorful fine cotton, silk, or rayon threads. The thread is intricately woven into long strips (strip weaving) that are arranged to be sewn together to create one large piece. These masterly woven patterns are assigned names. The named patterns tell stories, impart proverbs and reflect the rich and artistic heritage of Ghana (Ampofo-Anti, 1999, p. 3).

MOTI – Ministry of Trade and Industry

PSI – Export Action Programme on Textiles and Garment, an initiative put in place by the then President Kufuor to enhance growth through export within the textile and garment sector.

RAGB – Revenue Agencies Governing Board

SHC – Second Hand clothing

TEGLEU – Textiles, Garment and Leather Employees Union

Textile/Garment Cluster Network – A cluster formed through the collaboration between the Ghana government and UNIDO to bring together micro, small and medium textiles companies

Textile/Garment Training Centre – A training center established through the collaborative effect of the Ghana government and UNIDO
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter presents the works of other scholars in relation to the Ghanaian textile industry and curriculum review. First, information on the cultural and economic aspects of textiles used for dress is provided. Subsequently, literature on the Ghanaian textile industry, the industry effects of imports and second hand clothing is presented and finally, the role of tertiary education in Ghana, and the need to update curriculum content to better meet the needs of employers within the textiles field are reviewed.

Cultural Aspects of Dress

Eicher (2000) defined culture as “the way human beings are taught to behave from the time they are born (p. 34). Damhorst (2005) noted that culture is “an elusive and complex concept” (p. 3) that shapes people’s personalities, thoughts, and behaviors. Through an exploration of the connection between clothing and culture, Breward (1995) determined that analysis of a person’s dress is perceived as a personal critique rather than an assessment of an object that is separate from the wearer.

Dress is defined as alterations made to the body (Eicher, 2000, Storm 1987); dress is often a deliberate attempt to communicate to observers (Storm. 1987). Dress includes attachments added onto the body in order to manage and maintain the body. It encompasses not only clothing but tattoos, piercing, hairstyles, accessories and other types of adornment (Eicher, 2000, Workman & Freeburg 2009). Eicher (2000) concludes that “dress is behavior” (p. 1). Storm (1987), in Functions of Dress, stated that “all dress is functional with one or many purposes” (p. ix). She identified functions of dress to
include such things as adornment, utility, convenience, protection, modesty, role
communication, status identification, religion, and group dynamics. According to Storm
(1987) the main function or purpose of dress is for adornment and this is a universally
accepted function.

Storm (1987) identified the role of dress in society, “Dress is a powerful social
force, especially in unstable societies where the existing order is frequently challenged”
(p. ix). Frings (2008) added that the textiles and clothing industry during the industrial
revolution brought about social, economic, and fashion changes to the western world.
France and Britain benefited socially and economically through the textiles and clothing
industry (Storm, 1987). In Horn’s (1968) book *The Second Skin*, she effectively coined
the phrase and the concept that clothing becomes an extension of its wearer and, in fact,
defines the wearer.

**Traditional Ghanaian Dress**

In Ghanaian culture, textiles have played a vital role in the everyday life of the
Ghanaian people based on their wide use of symbolic imagery from the Ghanaian culture
(Salm & Falola, 2002). The wax print, adinkra and kente fabrics are usually stitched into
‘kaba and slit’ (long skirt and top) which is the traditional garment worn by Ghanaian
women (Asare, 2012). Today, the fabrics are used in the making of other modern garment
designs reflective of the western styles (Kichura, n.d, Asare, 2012). The fabrics are either
combined with plain matching colors in the fabrics or made only from the kente, adinkra,
the smock, and the wax print. The kente and wax prints are of beautiful bright colors
worn to church services, parties, graduation ceremonies and other joyous festivities. The
adinkra cloth, on the other hand, is worn solely to funerals. The smock can be worn for both joyous and sorrowful occasions.

**The Role of Textiles in Economic Development**

Industrialization has been identified as a way of developing a nation. The US and Great Britain depended on industrialization to develop their strong economic foundations (Hillstrom & Hillstrom, 2006). The industrial revolution literally changed both the economic and social lifestyle of people from the western cultures (Frings, 2008). Robert E. Lucas Jr., who was awarded the Nobel Prize, reflected on the importance of industrialization to a country’s economic development by describing how industrialization improves the standard of living for citizens. He stated:

> For the first time in history, the living standards of the masses of ordinary people have begun to undergo sustained growth. The novelty of the discovery that a human society has this potential for generating sustained improvement in the material aspects of the lives of all of its members, not just of a ruling elite, cannot be overstressed. We have entered an entirely new phase of our economic history (Lucas, 2002, p. 109).

Hillstrom & Hillstrom (2006) reported that New England, in the early 1800s, was the first place the industrial revolution started in the United States. Linton (1966) mentioned that the US textile industry was the second in terms of size and fourth in terms of manufacturing capacity among all twenty-seven major industries in the United States. It employed 1.6 million men and women. Horn, Rosenband, and Smith (2010) identified
that the industrial revolution was the foundation for modern economic growth not only for Britain, but Europe as well.

China is presently industrializing. As reported by Bi Mingxin (2007) on the official web portal for the Chinese government, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in China reported that the economy of China has developed rapidly since early 2000 through industrialization. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) website listing The World Factbook (n.d), China’s 2012 economic growth rate was 7.8 percent, with a GDP of $12.38 trillion.

The Ghanaian Textile Industry

Both internal and external factors contribute to the current state of Ghana’s textile industry. Klutse (2008) reported in a Ghanaian local newspaper, The Daily Guide, that the Chief Executive of the Public Procurement Authority (PPA), A.B. Adjei, blamed the use of old machinery by the textile industry as one reason which contributed to its possible collapse. The external threats include imported textiles from China, India, and some African countries that are smuggled into Ghana through unauthorized routes (Asare, 2012).

The issue of imported second hand clothing (SHC) coming from Europe and some western countries, introduces an additional threat to the domestic industry. In an article published on the weblog by the International Institute for Journalism of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Abdallah (June, 2010) affirmed that Ghana’s once prospering textile market is now flooded with Chinese lower quality textile products and SHC. As a consequence, he reported, Ghana’s unemployment index
has increased. The Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research reported that in 1977, over 25,000 people were employed in the textile industry in Ghana; this was 27 percent of total employment in the manufacturing sector in Ghana (Quartey, 2006).

Countries like South Africa, Zambia, and Kenya can relate to these similar experiences within their textiles industries. Koyi (2005) presented the state of the textiles industry in Zambia, mentioning that, through an incentive program offered by the Zambian government in the 1960’s through to the 1980’s, the industry contributed significantly to the manufacturing value of the country as a whole. The industry was one of the main players in the country’s development through the 1980’s. It began to experience a down turn when copper earnings fell and hence there was not enough foreign exchange for the imports of spare parts and raw materials for production. Trade liberalization was to be a saving grace for the industry but, paradoxically, trade liberalization introduced a competition to be faced by the local textiles industry from Asian textiles and SHC from western and European countries (Koyi, 2005).

Quartey (2006) conducted qualitative research to investigate and present the state of the textiles industry in Ghana and also to examine the fate of the industry based on its challenges. He stated that “Industrial development has been recognized as one of the surest means of ensuring higher and sustained growth rates; hence, African countries including Ghana pursued import substitution industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s” (p. 135). Industrialization, he identified, was a means of promoting economic growth. To answer his research question, interviews were conducted with stakeholders in the industry. Quartey (2006) reported that data gathered from the Ministry of Trade and
Industry (MOTI) in 2004 showed that the textile industry, historically, was a means of earning foreign exchange for the country. The Ghanaian textile industry employed 25,000 people in the 1970s which represented 27 percent of national employment. The industry used 60 percent of installed capacity and produced 129 million yards of textiles in 1977. The workforce in the industry has since declined to 5,000 in the year 2000. The decrease was attributed to a shortage in foreign exchange for the importation of raw material (such as dye stuffs and cotton fabrics) for production. Additionally, the introduction of trade liberation encouraged textile imports from Asian countries and other African countries. Domestic textiles faced competition from these cheaper imports including SHC (Quartey, 2006).

According to Quartey (2006), in the mid 1970’s there were 16 large and medium sized firms producing textile products and 138 large and medium-scaled firms producing clothing. Most of these companies have since shut down. Ghana Textile Print (GTP), Akosombo Textile Limited (ATL), Ghana Manufacturing Company (GTMC), and Printex were the four companies still producing textiles in Ghana as of 2002. Fabrics produced were the wax, java and fancy prints, household fabrics, tie die, batik, kente, and printed adinkra cloths. Information (Quartey, 2006) retrieved from MOTI showed that fabric and garment importation into the country was $35 million by the year 1992 and $57 million by 1998. By July of 1999, textiles and garment importation stood at $42 million, which showed an increase by December of 1999. Despite the increase in textile imports, the revenue generated from the export market for the industry increased during the 1990’s, from $27.2 million in 1992 to $179.7 million in 1994 (Quartey, 2006). In the
late 1990s however, the trend reversed and export revenue declined to $3.173 million in 1998 (Quartey, 2006). The decline was a result of the trade barriers existing among the Economic Community of West African Countries (ECOWAS). Other attributes where high tariffs as well as poor quality of domestic textiles and apparel (Quartey, 2006).

Quartey (2006) reported that, with the inception of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) enacted by the United States, Ghana qualified to export into the US market in 2000. By 2004, revenue generated from the export of textiles and apparel was $7.4 million as compared to $11.48 million made by the US from their imports into the Ghanaian market. As part of Ghanaian government’s measures to help save the industry, economic policies were established. These policies, including the textiles/garment cluster network, textile/garment training center, President’s Special Initiative (PSI) Export Action program on textiles and garments, and a tariff review. These various policies were established to train textiles employees on mass production strategies, to up-grade marketing, technical, and managerial skills in the industry, and to provide financial assistance to help the industry take full participation in AGOA. Some stakeholders proposed that tariff revisions include an increase in import duties on all clothing and a zero rate on all raw materials needed for Ghanaian textile production. Quartey (2006) suggested that the government of Ghana develop strategic policies that address the issues of cheap importation and undeclared textiles (including those smuggled into the country that are counterfeits).

Quartey and Abor (2011) investigated the perception of Ghanaians on their preferences about local and imported textiles. They conducted qualitative research,
gathering data from textiles manufacturers in Accra, consumers, and traders in textiles. There were 40 participants in each of the three groups. In their study, most of the traders were women over age 50; the age range of the consumer participants was under 20 through over age 51. Quartey and Abor (2011) interviewed the participants using a structured questionnaire. The survey of the manufacturers showed that about 75 percent of them had reduced production by 20 to 50 percent. Reasons stated for this reduction were the low demand for local textiles, high production costs, high wages, high cost of raw materials, and the influx of imitated textiles that were sold cheaply. The other 25 percent were not sure by how much they had reduced production (Quartey & Abor, 2011).

Quartey and Abor (2011) reported that more than half of the traders stated that they purchased textiles weekly; fewer than a quarter stated that they purchased textiles monthly. Similarly, fewer than a quarter of the traders mentioned that they bought textiles fortnightly (14 days). For the consumers, more than half mentioned that they purchased textiles occasionally while about a quarter stated that they bought annually; the rest (about 25%) bought bi-annually, monthly, weekly, and fortnightly. In response to their preference of textiles type, more than half of the participants stated a preference for the local textiles - with reasons being the good quality, attractiveness and affordability of the local textiles. Those who stated that they preferred imported textiles mentioned that they were cheap and very affordable. The traders who preferred the imported textiles mentioned that they were profitable. When questioned on whether there should be a ban placed on imported textiles, 35 percent supported a ban, giving reasons such as a ban
would (1) enable more employment opportunities in the sector, (2) promote the local textile industry, and (3) become a saving grace for the industry. Sixty-five percent of traders disagreed with a ban on imported textiles, stating that imported textiles were cheap, affordable and of a better quality than the local textiles (Quartey & Abor, 2011).

Quartey and Abor (2011) found that Ghanaian consumers preferred local textiles to imported ones because of the quality and affordability of the local textiles. Fewer than half of the participants indicated a preference for imported textiles. Quartey and Abor (2011) suggested that, for the local textiles to compete on a level field with imported textiles there should be a strong adhesion to policies on duties, quotas, and tariffs.

**Second Hand Clothing (SHC) in Africa**

Baden and Barber (2005) conducted an analytical study on the impact of SHC on developing countries. They found that, although SHC contributes only 0.5 percent of total trade globally, it forms one of the main components in textiles and clothing imports into most Sub-Saharan countries. The trade in SHC offers jobs to many citizens of these countries some of which include transportation, cleaning, repairing, restyling, and trading. Employment generated from trading in SHC is reported to be more than employment in the formal sector of the textile industry in these African countries. Baden and Barber (2005) revealed that trading and purchasing SHC provides benefits to both traders and consumers alike. Revenue generated from the trade of SHC is around one billion dollars annually. Consumers, especially low income earners or the poorer populate, purchase SHC because the clothes are very cheap and affordable. Baden and Barber (2005) reported that SHC appeals to all persons of the socioeconomic ladder and,
while SHC is noted to be relatively cheap and affordable, most people are purchasing them because of the popularity of western clothing styles.

Baden and Barber (2005) cited Hansen (2000) who noted that SHC imports into West African countries are a key contributing factor to the decline in production of local textiles industries in these countries. If SHC is totally banned from these countries, there is no sure way the local textiles industry would begin to increase production capacity because SHC has been taken over by textiles and clothing imports from Asian countries have introduced an additional element of competition to the Ghanaian textile market.

Baden and Barber (2005) concluded that while trade in SHC has been a major means of employment which supports the living conditions for many people and providing a consumer benefit not only to the poor but to all socioeconomic levels. Although SHC is a factor to the deteriorating condition of the local textiles industries, its economic benefits must be noted. Baden and Barber (2005) recommended that some revenues generated by SHC trade be distributed to support the textiles industries in countries with low purchasing power and declining textile economies. Another recommendation was for improvement in the customs enforcement so that SHC-related frauds can be reduced.

**Tertiary Education**

Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) in collaboration with the World Bank, the National Council for Tertiary Education, and the National Accreditation Board of Ghana, evaluated the tertiary educational policy in Ghana from an economic standpoint. As a result of their research, suggestions were provided to tertiary institutions on the quality
and relevance of curriculum, teaching, and its contribution to the economy of the country. Their study revealed that there was an over-supply of graduates in the art and humanities programs and an under-supply of graduates in science and technology programs which affects Ghana’s opportunity to contribute economically on a global stage.

Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) determined that the quality of graduates is declining in Ghana’s tertiary education. Data from the enrollment of students during the period of 1990-2000, positions or jobs requiring degrees and diplomas from tertiary institutions, job vacancies, and communication patterns existing between employers and tertiary institutions, were analyzed to inform Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong’s (2002) research. They considered that the quality of college graduates are affected by methods of teaching and also by the lack of reviews or reforms of academic curricula. One major contributing factor they noted was the lack of sufficient funds from the government in the running of these tertiary institutions, especially the polytechnics. Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) recommended for tertiary institutions to review the curricula of each college and department to enable graduates to be competitive on the job market in the global world, thus making them more efficient and productive professionals. Tertiary institutions were advised to update their library resources by including books on current trends and access to journals and other research sites to better inform faculty and students. They suggested that provision be made for the involvement of members of the private sector and individuals alike to contribute financially towards the betterment of tertiary education in Ghana. It was suggested that an interaction between the private
sector and tertiary institutions could formulate policy framework for national student job
attachment that would help both students and the private sector.

Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) reviewed the administrative files of the
national Council for Tertiary Education and the Ghana living Standards Surveys (GLSS)
to investigate economic viewpoints related to issues of tertiary education. They
summarized the following suggestions resulting from their inquiry:

1. Developing the human resource capacity to meet both local and international
economic challenges.
2. Designing effective financing schemes, and
3. Re-aligning institutional aspirations and mechanisms in the education sector
with those of the national economy (p. 2).

Polelo (2009), a faculty member from the University of Botswana, examined the
importance of higher education from an economic perspective and suggested a need to
reform its policies so as to meet the demands of the world market. The main aim of
reforming tertiary education policies is to produce efficient, competitive and productive
graduates. Pelelo emphasized the importance of higher education when he stated,
“Education is assigned the task of producing a competitive workforce in the global
market. In these reforms, education is commodified. It is no longer a service but is a cost”
(p. 407). In his article, Polelo (2009) revealed Botswana’s tertiary education reform and
how its policymaking reflects that of the global and local nexus. He analyzed data from
organizations in charge of policymaking for tertiary institutions and interviewed
stakeholders. Polelo (2009) examined documents from the Working Group on the
Tertiary Education for Botswana (WG) regarding policy development. It was revealed that the stakeholders and policy makers considered both local issues that were seen related to the betterment of tertiary education, and also events occurring across the world. Views from The World Bank, an organization that seeks the economic welfare of all nations, were also considered (Polelo 2009).

**Curriculum Review**

Howell and Nolet (2000) defined curriculum as “a structured set of learning outcomes, or tasks that educators usually call goals or objectives” (p. 35). Alade (2011) identified that changes occur regularly within societies and, in response, suggested that curricula should be reviewed so as to meet the dynamics of society. Naude and Cloete (2003) mentioned that curriculum change is a complex issue which often provokes conflict, resistance, and anxiety even when there is a much greater reason to review or change a curriculum. Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) added that, for a nation to have efficient and skilled graduates to improve its economy, there is a need for the reorganization of tertiary institutions which includes curriculum review.

Garner and Buckley (1988) conducted a quantitative study on the relevance of courses within the clothing and textiles programs in universities in Illinois, USA. This study was done based on a recommendation made by Rudd (1981) on the trends of the clothing and textiles curriculum. She mentioned that an in-depth assessment could determine which of the courses are deemed important and more relevant to the industry (Garner & Buckley, 1988). The participants used for the study included clothing and textiles graduates from the University of Illinois, apparel retailers from the state of
Illinois, and members of the Association of College Professors of Textile and Clothing (ACPTC). In selecting the courses, Garner and Buckley (1988) used program catalogs of 32 institutions. A questionnaire was developed to measure the participant assessment of the eight course content blocks within the clothing and textiles curriculum, developed for this research. Their data set included responses from 134 retailers, 97 graduates, and 185 educators. Garner and Buckley (1988) found that there was a significant difference between the ratings of the graduates, the employers, and the educators about the curriculum. Although there were significant differences, Garner and Buckley (1988) concluded that nine of the courses were seen to be very important and should be prioritized as educators consider reviewing the curriculum. Participants were mostly in retail; hence, they centered on nine courses in fashion marketing. These nine courses were: *Inventory Management and Stocking Procedures, Merchandise Buying Methods, Price-Quality Relationship in Apparel, Salesmanship, Consumer Behavior, Self-Presentation in Business, (i.e resumes, interviewing), Management, Marketing, and Speech Communications*. Garner and Buckley (1988) concluded that, for success in the various fashion marketing careers, the above mentioned elements should help educators as they plan courses of study for students.
Chapter 3: Methodology

The main purpose of this research was to present the current state of the textiles industry from the perspective of the stakeholders, including educators and students, within the industry in an effort to draw conclusions and recommendations for future economic opportunities in Ghana. The role of textiles educators was of primary interest. To answer the research questions for this thesis, a primarily qualitative research design was adopted. Surveys enabled some quantitative insight to complement the qualitative data with descriptive statistics.

As a new researcher with great passion for the textile and fashion industry and also a fanatic of my cultural heritage, I am determined to contribute to the sustainability of the Ghanaian textile industry. Unfortunately after graduating from college in 2009 and my inability to work within the textile industry, I was curious to find out why the industry could not employ graduates with a textile background. This was the driving force that propelled me to pursue academic excellence, and through that, to find solutions to the problems faced by the Ghanaian textile industry. There is also limited research on the relevance of education systems on the textile industry in Ghana; hence, the need to add to the limited scholarly literature on the topic.

Sample Population

Participants were carefully selected based on certain criteria. First and foremost, they had to be directly involved with the textile industry through employment or policy making that affects the industry, education, and the production of the textiles. Participants selected for this study are comprised of:
• ministers or representatives from the Ministries of Trade and Industry, Education, and Employment

• faculty members from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST)

• students studying in the Department of Textiles from KNUST and

• employees from the industry

Although there are several tertiary institutions that teach textiles, KNUST was identified as the only University that teaches textiles as a four-year program. The others teach it under the home economics program which includes both textiles and catering (culinary) courses. It was therefore prudent to target faculty members and students from KNUST.

Although there are four textile producing companies in Ghana, the two most prominent companies were used for this research. The Ministry of Education was identified as one of the governmental offices that would provide insight into some administrative input on education. The Ministry of Trade and Industry was selected because it oversees all industries in the country and formulates policies that affect them. The Ministry of Employment was identified as being capable of providing information regarding employment situations in the country.

**Development of Interview and Survey Questions**

Questions for the interviews were carefully created and mapped against the various research questions. This was to ensure the relevance of the questions to answering the research questions. Each group of participants had its own questions that capitalized on the specific area of knowledge in relation to the industry although some
questions cut across all participant groups. The questions were further refined to be more
direct and specific in order to obtain more precise answers. The general questions for all
participants were:

- How would you describe the state of the textiles industry?
- What are your thoughts about the imports of textiles from China?
- What do you think of government’s role in solving this issue of cheap imports and
counterfeit textiles from China and neighboring countries?
- Can you describe your thoughts about the way Ghanaians currently use textiles to
  communicate and celebrate their culture?
- Has this phenomenon change over the years? And how do you expect Ghanaians
to use textiles in the promotion of culture?

See Appendix A for the specific questions presented to each participant. The student
participants completed a survey, presented in Appendix B.

A questionnaire for the survey was created to include both open-ended and Likert-
scale questions. In the survey, the quantitative questions were rated on a scale of 1-5,
with one being “strongly disagree” and five being “strongly agree.” The questions were:

- Jobs are easily accessible in the textile industry.
- The objectives set out for the courses are met upon completion.
- The courses studied are relevant to the industry.
- Some of the courses are not relevant to the industry.
- The program should have specific areas (like majoring in fashion, textiles or
  retail).
The facilities in the university are up-to-date with technology (tools and equipment to aid in your studies).

The library resources are very helpful in aiding studies.

**Recruitment**

Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Ohio University (Appendix C) was first obtained and then the recruitment process began. With the exception of students, the other participants were recruited first through a phone call to obtain their verbal consent to participate in this research. An email (Appendix D) was then sent to formally seek their consent and schedule dates and times for the interviews. A trip was made to Ghana, West Africa to conduct the interviews and distribute the surveys for this research.

The first interviews were with the faculty members at KNUST in Kumasi, Ghana. Four faculty members were interviewed. Each of them participated in a separate interview session in their offices. Individual interviews took an average of 35 minutes. At the time of travel, the school was in the examination period. In an attempt to find students to participate in the research, a faculty member during one of the examination sections announced to the students that a researcher was outside the exams center, giving out surveys for students to complete. Sixty-seven students picked up the surveys and more than half of the students (34; 51%) returned their surveys.

A return trip was made to Accra to conduct the other interviews. Based on the appointment dates and times that were set up, the interviews with the representatives from the ministries and one of the textile companies in Accra were conducted. Another
trip to Akosombo where the second textile company is located was made and the interview with the representative was conducted. Before each interview, interviewees were given the consent forms (Appendix E) to read and sign. One participant refused to be recorded; the other interviews were recorded. Non-recorded information was taken via notes during the interview.

**Data Analysis**

The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS to determine the frequencies and percentage responses of the students and for descriptive purposes. The interviews were transcribed. Copies of the transcribed interviews were emailed to the participants to verify whether the correct information was reported. After their confirmation, the qualitative data was coded using content analysis. Emerging themes and trends were identified. Thematic descriptions were used in reporting participant views of the related questions.
Chapter 4: Results

Participants in this research included four faculty members, 34 students from the public university, three employees from the textile companies in Ghana, and three government representatives. The government representatives were from each of three ministries: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Employment, and Ministry of Trade and Industry. The faculty members were one associate professor and three assistant professors, who have taught for over 5 years and are in their early and late 40’s. A total of 67 surveys were distributed to students from one of the public universities in Ghana; 34 (51%) were returned. The age range of the student was between 20 and 26 years. The responses to the research questions posed to the participants are reported here.

Faculty Members

State of the local textile industry.

All four faculty members shared the same view that the textile industry in Ghana is in a deplorable state. Each one referenced the great impact of Chinese imports through the practice of the open market system under the trade liberalization policy as the key contributor to the phenomenon. A faculty member stated that the textile industry is producing at five percent capacity presently because of cheap imports into the country; as most Ghanaians preferred cheap textiles. He indicated that he had been on a tour to the textile companies and shared that ATL is the only vertically integrated company - meaning it processes cotton from spinning to printing the final fabric that is sold on the market. GTP, he added, imports the gray cloth and prints on it. Juapong (presently called Volta Star) has reduced its production capacity and stopped running the morning and
evening shifts and are now producing only three times in a week. The present state of the industry, as the faculty mentioned, has caused problems both economically and socially. One faculty member summed up the state of the industry as:

I would say that it’s not one that one will be so proud of for a number of reasons because it is not only peculiar to Ghana; all over the world we know that the textile industries are raving under the influence or impact of China. Ghana has suffered its due or share of this influence. And as a result, some of our local industries have folded up. The ones that are still in production are not doing well. These come up with a lot of problems, or a chain reaction. The textiles industry used to be the employer of the large number of people. And so when there are challenges with their production, it does affect the local economy of wherever they are situated. Incomes suffer; there are creeping into societies all kinds of vices because people are unemployed. In a nutshell that is the state of the textiles industry and by this I am really looking at the factory produced textiles.

**Views on imports.**

There were varying perceptions about the Chinese products imported into the market. Some faculty members were quick to mention that Chinese imports were not altogether bad. In actual sense, importation into the country, as they said, is to help the industry compete well and improve their designs so as to be competitive. Three of the four faculty members had the view that the import of textiles from China was the bane of the local industry. They stated that the Chinese are producing textiles at a very cheap price with which the local Ghanaian industry cannot compete. They noted that textile
production demands high levels of energy and labor which affects the final price consumers must pay. The Chinese have relatively cheaper production costs because they have cheaper labor, free gas supplies from the government, and rebates from their government when they export. Thus, Chinese textile companies who export are rewarded for doing so. Unfortunately, because of the differences in production costs when comparing the two countries, the low purchasing power of Ghanaians supports both their preference and demand for Chinese textiles over locally manufactured textiles.

The quality of prints of the imported Chinese textiles was viewed in different lights. Two faculty members mentioned that the quality of the Chinese imports have improved so that it is no longer easy to tell the difference between authentic Ghanaian fabric and the imports based on the lightness (feeling by hand) of the fabric and the color fastness. One faculty member shared this about the quality of the Chinese textiles:

[From] China, now I can get a whole range of qualities that you would want to have in any product. I think they meet various kinds of taste and purchasing power. And so it used to be in the past that when you buy an item made in China you automatically know it was an inferior product. Initially, people thought that the textile products from China were like that. No, they’re very good quality. Recently it’s come to light that they produce quite some good quality textiles and most of it depends on whoever is ordering. And we have entrepreneurs who get designs made for them here in Ghana; they take them over to China and they have it printed. And so if they ask for low quality prints, that is what they get. But if they go for top quality - and here when I talk about quality, quality in terms of
fastness of the colors that are used, fabric density, because that has been some of
the problems from that country - [top quality imports are available].

Faculty members were of the view that the counterfeit textiles imported from China are
those smuggled into the country through unauthorized routes. These smugglers bring
fabrics deliberately to represent them (counterfeits) as authentic. Because these
counterfeits seem to be authentic textiles, they tend not to be seized (removed from the
market).

**Government interventions.**

All four faculty members opined that government was doing its part in curbing
the influx of smuggled and counterfeit goods. They mentioned that government entities,
together with representatives from the textile companies, have set up a task force that
goes into the market and confiscates counterfeit products and products that are smuggled
into the country without paying the appropriate tariffs and duties. The task force burns
the seized products as a way of deterring smugglers from continuing this act. They also
mentioned that in 2004 under President Kufuor’s administration, the government passed a
directive to make the Takoradi port the only entry for imported textiles. This act was to
ensure that all imported textiles go through the correct channel before getting onto the
market. But, the faculty members noted, this is not really helping because potentially
legitimate importers find it difficult to transport their good all the way to the Takoradi
port just to import legally. Judging from the cost of transporting the goods to the
Takoradi port and the duties and tariffs required for importing, they choose to smuggle
the goods to reduce time and monetary barriers.
One faculty member shared that some people think the government is not doing enough. He reflected that people, mostly those from the industry, want the government to ban imports altogether. He elaborated that government cannot ban imports because it is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which Ghana joined on January 1, 1995 (WTO, n.d.). China is also a member. Ghana has appended its signature to certain trade policy agreements; therefore opting out would bring consequences upon the country. On the other hand, a faculty member suggested that government could help in retooling the local industry so that Ghanaian textile companies would be better prepared to compete with importation.

**Curriculum.**

The faculty members revealed that the curriculum for the textile program at their institution is a blend of technology, design, and fashion courses. The emphasis of the curriculum is on textile production because the local industry historically has been involved in textile production. Some faculty members mentioned that the program is an amalgamation of textile courses and fashion courses; hence, it cannot be termed as a fully-fledged textile program nor a fully-fledged fashion program. They revealed that the program includes some entrepreneurial and marketing courses because, looking at the state of the industry and considering the low employability of graduates, those courses are meant to help graduates set up their own companies. Some faculty members added that the program has courses in *knitting technology, textile fibers, and nonwovens*. This was viewed as controversial in terms of relevance and necessity because the local industry is more focused on weaving cotton fibers. These courses are in place to help
students potentially find employment outside the country or continue education programs outside Ghana, where broad knowledge of textile production processes is needed. In terms of preparing the students for the industry, all faculty members were of the view that the program is adequately preparing the students, especially in the area of textile design. It was mentioned that most of the graduates who are employed in the industry are finding success in the use of computer software for developing designs for textile production.

The faculty members interviewed stated that the curriculum is reviewed every five years to reflect the current trends in the industry. It was mentioned that a proposal was sent to the administrative body of the school proposing two separate programs: a textile program and a fashion design program. This was done because faculty members felt that students were overburdened with too many courses from the two fields and a separation of the programs would ease the course load.

When asked about the collaboration between the industry and their university, faculty members identified challenging relationships. They reported that some companies refuse to have students tour the factories, which would support students learning. Alumni networks proved to be the best avenue for collaboration. Some of the former graduates who are working in textile companies have managerial positions and are willing to arrange student tours and partnerships. These collaborations have developed into opportunities for students to go on attachment (internships and work experiences) with these companies. The academic department also sponsors seminars and invites some of the employees from the industry, mostly those who are graduates from the school, to educate students about what actually happens in the industry.
Culture as communicated through textiles.

One faculty member shared this:

You can write a whole book on that you know [he laughs]. The Ghanaian culture is very rich in symbolism and so everything that we use and how they are used must have some kind of symbolism attached to it and this you will see in our textiles. I think more in our textiles. Even though I feel that is waning a little bit, because in the past people attach so much to the naming of textiles. Now it isn’t the naming that matters but color. Even the colors have changed. In the past you will see some types of colors; basically, the maroons, the greens, some browns, some typical dark blue, and colors that you call earth colors. But now these colors were used in a full way, if I say in a full way, [I mean] with higher value of the shade.

Another faculty member said this about the use of textiles in the circle of life in the Ghanaian community:

Ghanaians have a very strong cultural background, which in relation to textiles is very positive. Ehmm, looking at the cycle of life, from birth to puberty to marriage and then to death, at every stage of these rites, there are some cultural ceremonies that are performed and therefore, textiles cannot be left out in these ceremonies.
Employees from the Industry

State of the local textile industry.

Three employers from the textile industry were interviewed; the views they shared about the textile industry are presented here.

All three textile industry representatives asserted to the fact that the industry is not doing well because of the heavy competition from imported textiles, mainly from China. They affirmed that this has caused reduction in the workforce as a great number of companies closed down. This is what one employer said about the state of the industry, which was a view the others shared as well:

[The] textiles industry in Ghana, I think, is on a downward trend currently; down because you have several textile industries [companies] dying. Currently we are the only one surviving and recently our local competitor ATL was forced to close by the tax authority because they couldn’t pay and this boils down to cheap imports coming in at very low prices whereby we cannot even break even. So, you find out a lot of textiles industries are really struggling to survive mainly because of the unfair competition from the East. For us surviving in here, we are kind of doing a lot of innovation, retooling and it’s been challenging; we are reducing staff and kind of changing technology just to stay our grounds. So that is what is happening so far. But it hasn’t being easy for us at all.

Imports from China.

The employers shared common views about imports. One mentioned:
We have imports that come from China and, although there are high tariffs, they find a way of bringing them in without paying the tariffs. What they do is that they dump the products in neighboring Togo and then they are smuggled in most of the time. They don’t bring it [products] through the approved routes. So what they incur by way of tariffs are what the custom offices might be bribed to take when they get them on the way, or how expensive it took them to transport the goods in without paying taxes. Apparently the tax alone on imported textiles is about 45 percent. So when you avoid paying that, you are making a lot of money. A container might be about, average container might cost you about GHC 2million [approximately, US$ 1million]. So if you are saving 45 percent of that, you can tell how much money they are making.

Another industry representative had this to say:

They are only cheap because the duties are not paid and we come in formally and you can’t avoid all the duties on raw materials, the income tax and everything so it makes ours very expensive. If you take our prices and divide by half, you are as good as calculating what the duties, tariffs and taxes that we are paying for printing in Ghana. So that, when their price, for instance we will sell this, for New Style, for six yards it goes for GHC 45.00 from us. Depending on which retailer you get it from it might be from GHC 45.00 to GHC 55.00. And they will sell the same quantity for about half our price so they are about half of ours. The difference is simply huge. So if they were paying duties, they would have been of the same price as ours and that would be fair competition.
In conclusion one employee said; “After all, trade must take place among nations. We say, give us a plain field [level playing field], why are they smuggling it? Let the people compare [them] with the locally produced ones and let’s see which one has the quality.”

**Government interventions.**

The employees within the industry acknowledged government contributions to helping the industry, but unfortunately these measures did not live up to their full expectations. One textile employee had this to say about governmental interventions:

The present government started one by introducing the Ghana Standards Board policy whereby anybody who wanted to import something has to present the designs before a committee which comprise[s] of the local textile companies. That is one way of checking. Two, they set up a tax force, also this tax force [is] comprise[d of] people from the local textile companies and they go to the market and seize these and then; three, they also increased duties on imports. So these are the three things government has in place just to check on these things. There is a 25 percent extra duty just to make it unattractive and make the local ones attractive. But you find people under invoicing, you find people smuggling and a lot of people don’t go to the Standard Board to have it cleared.

He continued that;

The previous government, the Kufuor administration introduced the single port whereby all textiles will come through Takoradi and that also created its own problems. So this current government changed it and said you have to go to [the] tax force for them to crosscheck your goods and then you can use whatever port
that you want, pay the duty- and people are not doing it. The genuine importers, we also import textiles from our parent company and we are suffering because we bring it in, we pay the right duties and our things are expensive. We import Vlisco wax from our parent company from Holland and it makes it extra expensive. We also import 60 to 80 percent of our raw materials, gray cloth and the dye stuff and chemicals.

Another employee added that,

It’s tough; it’s tough for government because, one, government sees China as [a] trading partner. In the past four years, they [China] gave about three billion dollars as a loan to government and when you start attacking their products, you know what will happen. So the political will is not there because we have a trading partner who is so important to you and you can’t be seen as putting trade barriers between yourselves and your donor country, so that is why it is tough on government. Two, when you start fighting the channel of customers and traders and all on the market, they perceive you as against what they do to earn a living. Especially during election years, they just don’t want to create that perception. So that is also one weakness of [our] government.

**Demand of the local prints.**

When asked about the demand for the local textiles, the employees from the industry shared that there is a great demand for the prints. This is due to the heavy patronage of the Friday wear policy. Organizations, institutions, and schools even come with their own customized designs to be printed for them which they wear on Fridays.
The expansion of Friday wear to Everyday Wear further enhances support for Ghanaian textiles. Industry representatives were quick to add that, although there is an increase in patronage, it rather favors the Chinese imports. One employee noted that:

Demand for local textiles is on the increase; you find lots of Ghanaians now appreciating it because it gives you an African look anywhere in the world. So there is a lot more usage of African prints than it used to be. But the usage is not benefiting local industry. The government introduced Friday wear, but you find out that, although people are doing this Friday wear, they are using more imports. And then these days, the new crazy is the patch work. Most of the patch works are Chinese fabric. Because they can’t buy GTP at this high price and cut into pieces and use for this work and so it’s rather benefiting the importers.

**Job opportunities and efficiency.**

Employees were asked whether there was collaboration with the universities where students could come for internships and field trips. There were varying levels of collaboration reported. Overall, they did agree that there was no formal or documented collaboration between the companies and universities teaching textiles. An employee from one of the companies reflected:

Even though it might not be too official, almost all the institutions are open to us here for attachment. But I think with Tech, there is a special thing; in fact we have agreed, even though it ought to have being documented, there has being a sort of relationship that has been established so that every year we expect that students come for attachments. They come in June, July, and August. So we have the June
group, July group, and August group. Apart from Tech we have other schools come in, almost all the universities.

Another employee from a different company noted trust as a barrier to welcoming students into the workplace. He shared his views on why the collaboration is not strong:

Again because of competition and because of the copies, it becomes very difficult to work with an institution that you can’t tell that you have their loyalty so that if you are depending on them to create your designs it won’t be copied and the way you think will not be transferred. You see every company has its own philosophy. We have our ideas and [our] thinking into our designs; if you take that outside in the face of all this copies and imitations then you are selling your intellectual property more or less. So we are a bit weary now [of] going into collaboration with Tech and other institutions. It’s unfortunate, that is what we need to hold on to.

When it comes to employment within the industry, industry representatives confirmed dire expectations for new graduates. They cited production levels currently about 60 percent capacity as a major reason for downsizing instead of employing new graduates. They did however attest to the fact that the few graduates who are employed (approximately 10 graduates in the past 15 years), are very efficient. New employees in the production department of this particular company were mostly from KNUST, while those who were employed in the design studio where from a variety of schools including KNUST, some polytechnics, and a private design school called Ghanata. The employee gave reasons for Ghanata graduates mostly being taken on into the design studio as:
When it comes to design, we also take polytechnics and also there is a private design school. Sometimes the products from Ghanata are good because they admit artists. When you have an artist who has also done graphic design, it’s beneficial. Sometimes when you have an artist it’s good (sic) than somebody who is not an artist and has learned to do graphic design.

Employees, in general, advised that students studying textiles in this difficult time for the industry should add value to their background by taking other managerial and marketing courses. Thus, when they compete for only few industry vacancies, students who have broader knowledge show added advantage that will be beneficial to the company.

**Culture as communicated through textiles.**

When asked whether textiles communicate Ghanaian culture to people, one employee reflected about the names given to the prints and what these mean to people:

I think most of our culture is portrayed in our textiles designs. People give names to the various cloths. [For example] “Ɛnopa d’ayie” [which means] giving credit to a good mother, to women. Or Agya pa n’anti yie” [wishing a father farewell], Onyame ye kese” [God is great], it shows every aspect of our culture, religion, even in politics. When Atta Mills died, ‘sasa,’ this cloth was made with his picture; and it talks a lot in our political history years to come. At funerals, what are some of the funeral cloth portraying apart from giving good impression about people? It also enables us to remember the behavior or nature of the person who died. “Sika ye deɛ” it portrays wealth “Akosombo kania,” it portrays electricity.
So it portrays into all aspect of our lives. It also portrays our proverbial nature by these names.

Another employee added that for their company they have focused on contemporary market trends as a growth opportunity, specifically, they have introduced another brand called the *New Style* and their target market is the youth. The brand has a slogan which is “explore your creativity.” This new product and its marketing efforts are designed to encourage the youth to use more African prints, in small yardages, and create a very stylish, and modern look. They had realized that the youth are straying away from wearing the traditional kaba and slit and, instead, wearing more of the western, contemporary designs which they obtain from second hand clothing. As a measure for attracting the youth to patronize their brand, they sponsor some production houses, media houses, and even schools by giving them free fabrics to construct garments with modern designs. This sponsorship, he added, has helped in creating the awareness of their prints and encouraging the youth to buy their brand.

**Representative from the Ministry of Education**

**Unemployment among graduates.**

The coordinator for tertiary education from the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) explained that, in looking at the issue of unemployment among graduates from tertiary education, those who mostly study professional programs most often than not gain employment because of their demand. Professionals like nurses, doctors, teachers, engineers, and lab technicians are always more successful with employment, while graduates who study non-professional or generalized programs are
less likely to gain employment after graduating from school. The generalized programs, as he stated, are mostly geared toward administrative works and those jobs are already virtually filled. Therefore, new employees are dependent on vacancies which do not frequently occur. He also revealed that graduates from polytechnics find jobs more readily than graduates from the universities and he gave reasons:

Recent studies have also shown that polytechnic students don’t really fall in the unemployment parts because the industry prefers polytechnic students who have been trained in the same program as university students. [This is] because the polytechnic programs are designed for hands-on, while the university ones are more of a theoretical based. And industry does have a slight hand in determining the courses and course directions for those from the polytechnics since – there is a project we called TALLY, teaching and learning innovation forum, which technically force[s] all the polytechnics to engage [in] competency based training for almost all their programs. And this requires that they go on attachment; and, most of the polytechnics by the time they are done with school have gone on attachment at the same industry or place for two or three consecutive years and get ruled in. Because, while they are there doing that time, they go for training and the industries think when they have invested in them, they need to take them on.
Role of the National Council for Tertiary Education.

The coordinator expanded on the role of the institution, which is the National Council for Tertiary Education and another board they work hand in hand with, the National Accreditation Board (NAB). He summarized their role as:

Well the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) is the apex supervisory or regulative body in Ghana when it comes to tertiary education. It formulates policies and determines the direction for how tertiary education should go. It advises government on financial resources and policy directions for tertiary education. And then it has quality assurance in implementing which serves as quality assurance audit which is the National Accreditation Board. And there is NATEC that regulates professional examinations and polytechnic examinations. So NCTE is basically responsible for ensuring that, one, funding to tertiary education is properly managed, dispersed and not wasted.

The NAB also oversees the certification of both schools and programs within a tertiary institution. The education ministry representative continued,

What we do is that, when it comes to accreditation, there are two forms of accreditation. Well it’s not forms but technically levels; institutional accreditation and program accreditation. Institutional accreditation is when accreditation is given to an institution; it’s like a license for you to start a tertiary institution. And then the program accreditation is one that gives you credits for every program you run. So, you may have institutional accreditation for University of Ghana, but anytime you want to introduce a new program in the University of Ghana, you
need to come for the program accreditation. Now the program accreditation, what you have to do is you have to present a proposal to the National Council for Tertiary Education. That proposal should take into consideration the policy and developmental goals of the country especially when you intend to use government funding for it. Stuff requirement, funding requirement, employability of your graduate, target market for students rolling in, and all that. So you present the proposal to NCTE. NCTE has an academic board that looks at it, the academic board is made up of experts from the field, and council members. They look at it and then, most of the time we ask institutions to send program originators or deans of schools to come and defend why government should allow you to run a specific program and if possible fund it, and we do that. So that is what we do when it comes to program accreditation. So once you go through that process and we approve it, that first phase is called program approval. Once we’ve approved you, then we write a letter copying you to National Accreditation Board, to now take up the challenge of coming to the school to access your infrastructure, personnel, and resources to see if you can actually implement and rule out and then once they look at it and are satisfied, they give you the license and then you can advertise the program for people to apply for intake. We may approve or not. We approve if it conforms to national development and policies. If for instance, Ghana is now looking at science development. When you bring a program, we have oil, we have gold, and we have that. And you want to start a program in gold or natural resources. You have to justify why we should give [the program to]
you. So if you just tell me, ‘I’m going to train engineers for surveying only,’ what is the industry capacity to take in per year? How many students do you intend to train every year? What is the national shortfall for this particular sector? So if we have a short fall, then you must show that there is a short fall and say in about three years, I will be able to pass out graduates who will start filling out these places within this period of time.

The coordinator mentioned that, every ten years institutional re-accreditation is required by all institutions in the country, while the program accreditation validation has to be done every five years. He added that:

Because every five to ten years the national interest changes and that is the direction we go along with, the requirements and the needs assessment. Some programs have been abandoned, not because the students are not interested, but because government is no longer willing to fund them.

The coordinator revealed that there is very little collaboration between the universities and industry. He pointed out that the Winneba textile curriculum is more geared toward training students to graduate and teach in either secondary level education (Senior High School), vocational institutions, or sometimes tertiary level (equivalent to higher education in the United States). He reflected that he is unaware of any KNUST collaboration with industry. He mentioned the lack of attachment program inclusion (internships) in the KNUST curriculum as being a major reason why textile graduates from polytechnics are preferred to those from KNUST.
State of the industry and culture as communicated through textiles.

The coordinator shared that because his field was not textiles, he was not in the position to give very concrete answers about the state of the industry and that the only thing he had heard were snippets on the news about the government clamping down on Chinese fake products. With respect to identifying textile authenticities, he mentioned that he could not tell the difference between and ATL print and a GTP print. However, he could differentiate between a wooden print, most especially when he feels the thickness of the print. His reflection about clothing being of cultural significance was insightful. He noted that Ghanaian clothes have meanings and tell stories about what the wearer might be experiencing. He noted that if someone is sad and mourning the death of a loved one, the emotion is reflected in the type of design and colors in the clothes. Likewise if the wearer is happy, the designs and the colors show that as well. He added that gone were the days when the local textile was an everyday attire. The usage of authentic textiles has been reduced because more people have turned to the western way of dressing. However, with the introduction of the Friday wear initiative, more people are selecting clothing that display the African prints, mostly on Fridays and Sundays. He gave a unique perspective because he mentioned that he grew up in a palace; so he is a traditionalist who is mostly dressed in the African prints every day.

Representative from the Ministry of Trade and Industry

State of the local textile industry.

The director shared interesting points about the textile industry in Ghana and he believed that the industry is growing. This was as a result of people’s acceptance and use
of the local textiles prints for both official and casual wear. He also cited growth in use and application of textiles for accessories and home décor. He added that, growth within the industry can be attributed to the Friday wear policy. In his words:

I guess about seven or eight years ago, when the minister for trade, the then minister for trade, launched what we call the Friday wear, which became official and accepted, the use of the African print shirt for work [began to emerge]. …, even most of the institutions, including the banks and everything have had to accept that and even design their own prints of use by their staff on those days. And I would be glad to say that some of them have ventured to use these designs for their everyday wear. So if you go to some the banks you will realize that, I think Ecobank will be one, they have their own prints that they wear almost every day and that to a large extent is moving, has moved, the textile industry from the traditional use by the women only for traditional occasions and all that into [mainstream men’s and women’s apparel] I mean official clothing, office clothing, and then now it’s becoming accepted for both social outing as well as everyday wear, even now some of it are (sic) being used for accessories in handbags, shoes and everything.

**Imports from China.**

The director offered both his views and perceptions of others’ views towards imported textiles mainly from China.

What I will say is that ehmm, there is a mixed reaction about the textile import from China. Ghana now belongs to WTO and to that extent, it is very difficult as a
country to come out and say that we are going to exclude other competing
product[s] from other countries. The best you can do is to put in some measures to
kind of enhance opportunities in your countries that your products have. And that
has been an area that had been a very contentious area in the past few years. There
has being a lot of imports of local textiles from other African countries and other
countries. But I want to quickly point out that this had not been something new. If
you look at some of the key companies that we have, the GTP and co, they do
distribute things like Vlisco, which is [from] Holland, which is made in the Dutch
[Netherlands]. So it’s not like we have always used textiles exclusively made in
Ghana. There have always been textiles that have been made in other countries.
But I guess the issue was the mode in which these Chinese ones do come in. And
sometimes some of us have a feeling that some of the issues are kind of
aggravated beyond the actual position. If you look at the nature of the production
of textiles in this country in the past few years, I mean ten years or above, you’ll
realize that most of the textile companies had moved from producing for the basic
cotton, through grey baft to yarn to fabric to the textile to sometimes just printing
on the gray baft. They mostly import a bulk of this treated material from outside,
mostly China. They bring it to this country and do the local print on it. So to some
extent we had relied on … almost 80 percent or more, on China for components
of their output. So I think after a while some of the Chinese companies have been
smart and some of the local Ghanaian importers have also thought that if these
guys just bring everything and print everything here, why don’t we just bring the
full print. So our activities have kind of lured or drawn their attention to this industry. And their point is that you realized that the Chinese companies, most of them do very efficient production. And that will mean that they enjoy economics of scale as well, so their cost of production is much lower and hence their prices are relatively lower. And it becomes competitive for most of our companies that had in the last 40 years maintained their own the same type of methods and methodologies to be able to compete with them.

**Government interventions.**

The director also reflected on measures government put in place in support of the Ghanaian textile industry. He offered these comments:

I think government has put enough measures to protect the local textile companies. In terms of giving this designated port where good[s] ought to come in, there is an element of smuggling in there which I guess now there is a tax force in the ministry of trade that is to go into the market and even try and find these goods and burn them and seize them. Even at the market end. Even though there is or the force at the port, [at the] border trying to stop them, the ministry goes further to even go into the market to identify some of these textiles that did not go through the right channel and seize them and then burn them or something. So I guess that is one or two measures. A key thing I want to add is that, I think we should encourage our textiles companies to be much [more] efficient, I mean, after a while it comes difficult to stop some of these imports because of the WTO that we have assigned ourselves to and all those trade agreements that we have
with some of these countries. So I believe the China bit is there but our companies too, ought to really increase their efficiency and also the effectiveness of their production methods.

[He continued, acknowledging] the fact that government as an institution [and] to that extent, is supposed to make policies that will enable their local companies to be competitive and efficient. It’s pretty much difficult for government to go into macro management of any company. We can only make policies and then ensure that companies are better placed to be competitive.

**Import and exports.**

When asked about imports and exports of textiles into the Ghanaian market, the director made certain revelations. He revealed these:

I know that the GCNet captures all products that come into the country and all products that go out of the country. The GCNet is Ghana Community Network that is what we use. Every product that is imported into the country goes through this system. This system captures item by item every product that comes into the country and every product that goes outside the country. As long as the finishing of the product is consistent with what we have in the system. [it is approved]. It’s easy to get an update of how much and how many textiles that are coming in legally and those that are going out legally. In terms of import, I guess the Ghana Revenue Authority kind of should be feeding the ministry; I think they do but sometimes the information doesn’t get to me. The volume of goods that come into the country and the components of these goods, what is going out and what is
coming in[does not always get reported], but I think it should be accessible. I
don’t have it, I have to make a few calls to see if they can pull some [data]. But in
terms of export, we have at some point been able to pull out some data on that and
it was quite impressive.

He referenced a recent review of textile export data to the US through AGOA.

It was quite impressive. Figures reflecting exports to the US were ranging from as
low as 200,000 in 2001 to as high as about nine million dollars in 2007 and then it
dropped down in 2008.

He added that the figures are higher in actuality because some individuals also export, but
not through AGOA, which he referred to as the suitcase export. In addition to
conventional exports, individuals buy the local prints and send them outside of Ghana to
sell or send textiles as gifts to family and friends outside Ghana. Some local designers
also design garments with the local prints and take them outside to sell without declaring
them at the ports.

**Culture as communicated through textiles.**

The director mentioned that Ghanaian cloth identifies the people of Ghana as
Ghanaians. From the local prints to the Kente, he confirmed that these textiles are unique
to the Ghanaian people. He noted that the chiefs from the north to the south of Ghana are
those who very much propel the use of the local cloth, either through the wearing of the
smock (which is a northern attire) to draping the cloth (which is a southern attire). He
emphasized the importance for selling the Ghanaian culture through festivals. Festivals
like the ‘adea kesea, ‘hobgetsosto’ and the others are celebrated year round in the various
regions, and they could serve as tourist attractions through which textiles could be showcased. He suggested that traders could make souvenirs using native prints and other textile products unique to Ghana for festivals and export.

**Representative from the Ministry of Employment**

In accordance with the Labor Act, Act 651, there should be offices in all 64 districts throughout the country where citizens could report their unemployment status. These offices serve as the intermediary body between unemployed citizens and companies. The representative from the labor office mentioned that it is stated in the law that persons should apply through the office while companies should also inform the office of vacancies so individuals would be linked to the companies for employment opportunities. He stated that there are forms in all districts where officers assist individuals unemployed to fill out with details of their address, age, and skill so the office could better connect people with the right companies for employment. He quickly added that what had been noticed is that graduates from the universities do not make use of this platform to find employment. Mostly people who are skilled in the hand, that is people who work with their hands, are those who often apply. Unfortunately, graduates from the universities are those who make up big numbers of those unemployed and these are not the population which is skilled in the hand. He added that they have 201 employment agencies or organizations; out of them, there are 113 licensed agencies that effectively link people to companies for employment.

The director indicated that the Labor office, in collaboration with GBSS plans to conduct a survey throughout the country on the number of persons who are unemployed
and take more information or details so the government could have access to accurate statistics.

**Students**

A total of 34 students were surveyed about the textile industry and their program of study (see Appendix B). Table 1 presents the frequencies of the academic ranks and sex of student participants. Their responses to the questions in the survey are presented in this section.

Table 1

*Sex and academic rank of student participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>Male n (%)</th>
<th>Female n (%)</th>
<th>Total n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third year</td>
<td>15 (43)</td>
<td>7 (21)</td>
<td>22 (64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth year</td>
<td>9 (27)</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>11 (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25 (73)</td>
<td>9 (27)</td>
<td>34 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student views on the state of the textiles industry in Ghana.**

As shown in Figure 1, 29 (85%) of the students thought that the industry was collapsing. They referenced high imports, the lack of modern equipment, low production
capacity, poor maintenance due to lack of finance and external aid, high price of local textiles and the high redundancy of employees as reasons. Three students (9%) however, felt that amidst the above challenges, the industry was growing. The high demand for the local textiles for fashion and the increase in creativity in terms of design over the past two years were cited as supporting reasons. Two (6%) students did not respond.

*Figure 1:* Student responses to the state of the local textile industry

***Student views of issues or problems faced by the Ghanaian textiles industry.***

A variety of issues were identified as problems facing the Ghanaian textiles industry. In general, student participants felt that the low patronage of the local textiles, lack of incentives, cheap Chinese textile imports, imitated prints, high price of the local textiles, lack of infrastructure, low employment rate, huge taxes, lack of modern machinery, and unfair competition are problems faced by the local textile industry.
Do you think that the Government is doing anything in support of the industry?

As shown in Figure 2, 25 (73%) of the students answered “no” to the question “Do you think that the Government is doing anything in support of the industry?” These students indicated that government was not doing anything for the industry. Five students (15%) responded that government acted effectively with the introduction of the Friday wear policy and subsidization of duties on raw materials. Through survey responses, they noted expectations for government to act faster on helping the industry. Four (12%) of the students had no idea of any governmental interventions for the industry.

![Is the Government Supporting the Textile Industry](image)

*Figure 2: Student assessment of government support*

**Student expectation for job opportunities/careers in the textiles industry.**

Textiles designer, textiles stylist, weaving technician, kente weaver, textiles engineer, textiles consultant, textiles chemist, fashion designer, quality control officer, textiles researcher, textiles manufacturer, merchandiser, trend forecaster, fashion
illustrator, spinner, teacher and lecturer were the job opportunities mentioned by the students as careers within the textile industry.

Most of the students stated that their love for fashion and clothing construction was the reason why they wanted to educate themselves in the field of textiles. Others mentioned that they love to make textile designs. Some students also added that they want to contribute to the growth of the industry and also promote the culture of Ghana through textiles.

Figure 3 shows that most of the students (16; 47%) are hoping to work within the textile manufacturing companies either in the printing department, design studio or spinning department. Eight (23%) of the student participants want to work in fashion as fashion designers or models. Seven students (21%) want to venture into other fields, while three (9%) of them want to be self-employed.

![Figure 3: Student hopes for area of work upon graduation](image)
Figure 4 presents the student’s response to the specific area within the industry they hope to be working after 10 years. The greatest percent of students (9; 26%), indicated a desire to work in the textile industry, with the next popular career aspiration being the fashion industry (8; 23%). Three (9%) students want to be self-employed while two (6%) students want to be in management. Interestingly, five (15%) students expect to work outside the textile industry in fields such as telecommunication, engineering, military, and marine in 10 years time. Seven (21%) students had no idea where they hoped to work after ten years from graduating.

![Pie Chart: Student responses to area of work after 10 years]

*Figure 4: Student responses to area of work after 10 years*

**Student internships within the textiles industry.**

Figure 5 shows that only six (18%) students had been on internship while 28 (82%) had either no plans to or not yet been on internship. Some of the companies that student mentioned being on internship with were GTP (TexStyle Limited), ATL, Calding
Fashion Limited and Volta Star Limited. Two of the students who said “no” mentioned that the companies to which they had applied did not accept their request for internship.

![Pie chart showing responses to being on Internship]

**Figure 5: Responses to being on Internship**

Those who had experienced internships said it was very beneficial. They noted that as a result of the internship they understood the various printing systems and how the machines functioned. They also learned the processes of production from the fiber stage to the fabric stage. Some students realized that industry practices and environment were quite different from what they had studied in school.

Table 2 contains the frequencies to the responses provided to the Likert-scale questions. Of the responses, one represented “strongly disagree” and five represented “strongly agree.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree(%)</th>
<th>Neutral(%)</th>
<th>Agree(%)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs are easily accessible in the textile industry</td>
<td>14(41)</td>
<td>17(50)</td>
<td>3(9)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The objectives set out for the courses are met upon completion</td>
<td>1(3)</td>
<td>13(38)</td>
<td>12(35)</td>
<td>8(24)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course studied are relevant to the industry</td>
<td>2(6)</td>
<td>6(18)</td>
<td>9(26)</td>
<td>15(44)</td>
<td>2(6)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of the courses are not relevant to the industry</td>
<td>4(12)</td>
<td>2(6)</td>
<td>5(15)</td>
<td>9(26)</td>
<td>14(41)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program should have specific areas</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>6(18)</td>
<td>28(82)</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The facilities in the university are up-to-date with technology.</td>
<td>16(47)</td>
<td>14(41)</td>
<td>2(6)</td>
<td>1(3)</td>
<td>1(3)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library resources are very helpful in aiding studies</td>
<td>10(30)</td>
<td>12(35)</td>
<td>11(32)</td>
<td>1(3)</td>
<td>0(0)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This study reveals some new insights that were made possible through interviews with faculty members, government representatives, employees from the Ghanaian textile industry, and students from a public university in Ghana who address the relevance of tertiary education to the Ghanaian textile industry. A summary of the key emergent themes generated through this research, with application to the relationship between tertiary education, textile industry production, and economic performance, are presented in this chapter. This research, overall, supports Quartey’s (2006) assessment of the state of the textile industry in Ghana. Thus, it can be concluded that the Ghanaian textile industry is in poor economic condition and little improvement has occurred in the past seven years. As a result of this analysis, recommendations for government, educators, and industries, related to textiles, are presented.

The State of the Textiles Industry in Ghana

From the gathered data, it was evident that a majority of the participants were in agreement – the Ghanaian textile industry is collapsing. The poor state of the industry requires drastic measures to save it from total collapse. While some constituents in the project sample said that the Ghanaian textiles industry is growing, the complexities of imported textiles into the economy, effectively disadvantaging local producers, must be recognized. The low purchasing power of the Ghanaian people is the main driving force leading to an increase in demand for the importers of textiles and a decline for the local textile companies due to their relatively high prices.
Challenges facing the Ghanaian textiles industry.

Chinese imports are a major contributing factor to the deplorable state of the industry. All four faculty members, three employees from the textile industry, and the director from the Ministry of Trade and Industry agreed that importation has the potential of strengthening the local textile industry; however, for the industry to be competitive enough to withstand the pressures from the importers, government support is needed. A fair playing field is requested by domestic producers so that Ghanaian consumers have choices between imported and local textiles at comparable prices. The employees are seeking all importers to import legally and pay the proper tariffs and duties before selling on the market. Unluckily, the local industry does not enjoy the economies of scale that Chinese manufactures who are the major importers of textiles into the country do. From the high utility bills and even constant power outages, to the 45 percent tariffs on the 60 to 80 percent imported raw materials domestic Ghanaian textile companies face serious challenges. Electricity issues, Value Added Tax (VAT), and tariffs contribute to high prices of the local textiles produced by the Ghanaian textile industry.

Clearly, government from the previous administration had acted to implement measures to improve the state of the local textile industry. Regrettably, the corrupt nature of some CEPS officials and the lack of proper borders along the country have resulted in the periodic act of smuggling. It has been reported that some CEPS officials at the borders or ports of entry receive bribes from importers and do not take the actual tariffs and duties on the imported textiles, hence contributing to the unfair competition and stolen government revenue. Sand filled trucks have being reported to be carrying hidden
imported and imitated textiles and are unknowingly allowed into the country. CEPS officers cannot ask all sand filled trucks to empty their trucks for inspection before letting them through. It will only take highly spirited and patriotic people, who honestly believe in doing the right thing, to reduce these acts.

Counteractively, for the industry to be competitive they need to be very creative in the designs they produce, identify their target market(s), and produce market tastes and demands. This will increase the patronage of the local prints. Employees from GTP who were interviewed mentioned that they have recognized being innovative and creative are successful ways of sustaining their company.

It is also imperative that the local companies realize that, in order to be better placed to compete well, they need to invest in modern technology and update their obsolete equipment and machinery with modern ones. Government cannot go any further than it has because the companies are privately owned. It is for the companies to look for investment opportunities or seek government’s help in soliciting for financial intervention. This will also serve as a measure for reducing their production cost which will in turn affect the end price for the consumers, making it a bit more affordable and increase demand.

**Opportunities for the Ghanaian textiles industry.**

It was affirmed that the culture of the Ghanaian people is reflected through textiles. Festivals, as some of the participants mentioned, are major cultural celebrations of the people and, in particular, the culture can be seen during these festivals. Textiles form a key part of these cultural celebrations, but the nature of the festivals does not
sufficiently support textile industry production. Thus, the Friday Wear policy and the anticipated Everyday Wear policy are initiatives created by government and embraced by the people, which support native textiles to some extent. Complexities related to the role of textile imports to Ghanaian culture and its use emerged. Textiles are inseparable from the culture of Ghanaians, although the origins of textiles that reflect Ghanaian culture are not necessarily native.

Some participants mentioned that the patronage of the local Ghanaian textiles for use, especially on Fridays, do not support local textile companies to a large extent. A collaboration between local companies and tertiary institutions to educate the general public on the risk posed by consumers who patronize imitated products is suggested as a result of this research. The ripple effects (i.e. loss of jobs, loss of revenue for both country and companies, just to mention a few) created as consumers promote smuggling and counterfeiting of the local textiles must be mitigated. Support by both government and consumers for textiles made in Ghana are necessary to preserve textiles jobs for the citizenry.

Another way of ensuring the sustainability of the Ghanaian textile industry is for the tertiary textiles education to review the curriculum to include areas such as retail and global trade to reflect that of the global trend in the fashion and textile industries.

The Role of Tertiary Textiles Education in Economic Development

Tertiary education should be made more attractive and current as well as reflective of global trends. As some faculty members mentioned, some courses are to enable graduates’ success when seeking employment opportunities in other countries. To
achieve this, it is imperative that courses in retail, global trade, and textile engineering be included to the fashion and textile programs. The department needs to convince the administration of the university into separating textile and fashion as individual programs to enable students to have better and broader knowledge of the textiles and apparel merchandising disciplines.

The main purpose of universities in any country is to aid in national development through research. It was mentioned by the representative from the Ministry of Education that the collaboration between the universities and textile companies is not strong enough. This collaboration can be nurtured through the strengthening of the alumni network which will enhance industry-educator relationship. Thereafter, a documented policy can be created to solidify the collaboration between industry and academia. If there is a documented policy for collaboration between the universities and industry, it will go a long way toward solving some of these problems facing the textile industry. Research conducted by both faculty and students in partnership with the textile companies will result in better production systems and lower cost of production; hence, increasing patronage and demand for the local textiles. This will then contribute to national development through the generation of revenue.

Career expectations and opportunities for textiles graduates.

The majority of students in the sample indicated that they desired employment opportunities within the textile (47%) and fashion (23%) industries right after graduation. Ten years from graduating from school, 64 percent still want to remain in these two industries working in the printing, spinning, textile design departments of the textile
industry and working as fashion designers or models in the fashion industry. Although these career paths exist, vacancies are not available to enable their entry into industry careers. This gives rationale for the need to further develop and sustain the Ghanaian textile industry because future graduates are hoping to work within the industry. The creation of jobs can be enhanced if industry implements the above suggestions for creating an increase demand for the local textiles.

**Suggestions for implementation of curricular changes.**

The textile curriculum from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology appears to be tailored to meet factory requirement but needs more review and restructuring to better fit fully within the present and future requirements of the textile industry. Courses such as *Marketing, Management* and *Internship* were the top courses suggested by some participants for inclusion within the curriculum. These courses were viewed as advantageous in enabling graduates secure employment opportunities within the textile companies and prepare them for managerial positions offered in the companies. The internship course, if included within the program, will offer all students an opportunity to better understand what really goes on in the textiles industry and to offer creative ideas toward solving a variety of challenges facing the industry.

A small number of students (6; 18%) mentioned that they had been on an internship. Thus, implementing required internships will reflect substantial enhancements for both educational institutions (curricula) and the Ghanaian textile industry. The current situation presents concerns that many graduates have no realistic view of the industry.
This confirms the NCTE coordinator’s view that, “It’s not that they are not getting the required training, but there is very little linkage between program, institution, and industry at the university level. So that may be the main reason accounting for the lack of employment of students from the universities for most of these programs.”

Implications

The revelations and views presented in this study lend information for government officials, faculty members, employers, students and companies as well as individuals interested in the textile industry in Ghana to find other possible solutions to the bottle necks within the industry. These can be tackled from various areas within the industry. Companies within the industry can take the views of faculty members as well as representatives from government on improving the collaboration between industry, tertiary institutions, and government in finding better solutions to the challenges faced by the industry. Government needs to offer more support based on the statistical evidence of how the industry contributed to the economic growth of the country in the 1970s and 1980s. Government could assist industry partners by seeking investors to help in developmental projects to build up the industry through a retooling project, or supporting industries to set up a strong retail sector where small garment manufacturing companies can be contracted to make apparel for the retail sector.

Limitations

Although the purpose of this study was to explore the broad topic of the Ghanaian textile industry and its interface with government and tertiary education, limitations should be noted. Views obtained for this research were from a select group of participants
who are stakeholders within the industry. In order not to offer biased views from only one company, it was necessary to obtain views from employees of at least two textile manufacturing companies although views from representatives from all companies within the industry would have being more elevating. Although we cannot make generalized conclusions on the curriculum of tertiary textile education and its relevance to the industry, insight into the one public university that offers a textile program over the four-year period can be drawn. This research method has in-depth transferability to applicable industries or countries with a similar situation to that of the Ghanaian textile industry. This study can be expanded to obtain views from faculty members and students from other universities and polytechnics who studied some textile courses in their curriculum.

**Recommendations**

In summary, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Ghanaian textile companies need to be creative and innovative to withstand the challenges presented to the industry, particularly in terms of textile design and its application to product design.
- The industry needs to invest in modern technologies for production and hence reduce production and labor costs.
- Educational institutions should include internship, management, retail and global trade courses in their curricula to make graduates more marketable for the industry.
Industries and tertiary institutions need to partner to educate consumers about recognizing authentic Ghanaian textiles and about the economic effects of smuggled and imported textiles.

Tertiary institutions should cultivate strong alumni networks to enhance industry/education relationships.

Better and documented collaborations between tertiary institutions and industry are needed.

Government should consider ways to be responsive to domestic textile challenges through policies that provide economic support.

**Areas for Future Study**

There is limited literature about the textile industry in Ghana as well as its potential to contribute to economic growth of the country. In order to offer more views and literature on the industry, future studies are suggested. Areas for further study include research into:

- The various production management strategies adopted by the Ghanaian textiles companies.
- Economic benefits of investing in the Ghanaian textile industry.
- How retail success stories of bigger economies such as the United States can serve as models for economic development strategies Ghana.
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## APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

### FACULTY MEMBERS

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<tr>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>The state of the textiles industry</td>
<td>How would you describe the state of the textiles industry?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What are your thoughts about the imports of textiles from China?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What do you think of government role in solving this issue of cheap imports and counterfeit textiles from China and neighboring countries?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance of the curriculum</td>
<td>Please describe the current textiles curriculum.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Describe your suggestions for restructuring. (are there ways you will suggest for the change in curriculum)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How is the current curriculum preparing students for today’s textiles industry and also for the future?</td>
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<td>(follow up probing question) Do you think that the curriculum needs</td>
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<td>restructuring?</td>
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<td>What courses do you think are a necessity to the textile manufacturing firms, why?</td>
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<td>Are the courses targeting specific areas within the industry?</td>
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<th>Job opportunities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Do you think that students easily get jobs in the companies? Explain</td>
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<td>Is there a partnership between the companies and the department that allows students to easily go on internship with the textile companies?</td>
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<td>What is the percentage absorption of the students into these companies upon graduation?</td>
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<th>Role of culture</th>
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<tr>
<td>Can you describe your thoughts about the way Ghanaian’s currently use textiles to communicate and celebrate their culture?</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Possible probing question) Has this phenomenon changed over the years?</td>
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<td>How do you expect Ghanaians to use textiles in the promotion of culture?</td>
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### MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

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<td>How would you describe the state of the textiles industry?</td>
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<td>industry</td>
<td>What are your thoughts about the imports of textiles from China?</td>
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<td>What is government doing to solve the issues of cheap imports and counterfeit</td>
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<td>textiles from China and neighboring countries?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How would you describe the present import and export pattern?</td>
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<td>Is there any form of measure to determine the demand pattern of Ghanaians</td>
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<td>towards our local textiles and that of the imported ones?</td>
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<td>Role of culture</td>
<td>What polices are in place to check smuggled and counterfeit textiles?</td>
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<td>Can you describe your thoughts about the way Ghanaians currently use textiles to</td>
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<td>communicate and celebrate their culture?</td>
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<td>you expect Ghanaians to use textiles in the promotion of culture?</td>
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|   | 1. How does culture play a part in the sustainability of the local textiles industry?  
<p>|   | 2. What aspects of culture do you think will help the industry? |</p>
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<td>How will you describe government’s effort to solve the issues of cheap imports and counterfeit textiles from China and neighboring countries?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job opportunities</td>
<td>Does your ministry check with companies to know how many graduates they employ?</td>
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<td>How does the ministry seek to alleviate unemployment, although this is a global problem, how does government hope to reduce the unemployment rate?</td>
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<td>Does your ministry check on the rate of unemployment yearly and do you check against the number of student who graduates each year to those who get employed?</td>
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<td>What has been the employment rate for students who graduated from the textiles program?</td>
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<td>Can you describe your thoughts about the way Ghanaian’s currently use textiles to communicate and celebrate their culture?</td>
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<td>(Possible probing question) Has this phenomenon change over the years? How do you expect Ghanaians to use textiles in the promotion of culture?</td>
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<td>What is the number or percentage of graduates who get employed in the textiles industry specifically in the textile companies yearly?</td>
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<td>How does the ministry under the National Youth Employment program address issues of unemployment among the youth, especially graduates from tertiary institutions?</td>
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<td>Have you thought about the textiles industry as a potential area for increased employment opportunities?</td>
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<td>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What are your thoughts about unemployment among graduates from tertiary institutions?</td>
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<td>How significant is the role of the ministry in the tertiary level?</td>
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<td>Are there times when unemployment was a rationale for policy reviews for tertiary institutions?</td>
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<td>What are your views on tertiary education and its purpose to the country?</td>
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<td>What are your thoughts on having graduates work in our textiles industry, especially the textile manufacturing companies?</td>
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<td>Do you think government is doing well solving this issue of cheap imports and counterfeit textiles from China and neighboring countries?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How would you describe the demand for local textiles?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Comparatively how would you describe the demand locally to the export market (Are your productions mainly for the local market or for the export market?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job opportunities</td>
<td>How many workers are graduates from the tertiary institutions that read textiles as a major?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Approximately how many do you hire each year?</td>
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<td>What are the specifics skills new employees who are graduates of textiles programs need to have to work productively in your company? Which of these</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of culture</td>
<td>Can you describe your thoughts about the way Ghanaian’s currently use textiles to communicate and celebrate their culture?</td>
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- skills do your new employees typically have?
- What are the skills who you require that they improve upon?
- How would you describe their efficiency and skills?
- What is the relationship between the company and the University?
- Are you into any partnership to allow students to come on internships?
- What are your views on a potential increase in employment for graduates especially those who studied textiles?
- Do you think there are courses that are important for success in the industry especially in your company?
| What aspects of culture do you think will help the industry? |
Appendix B: Student Survey

The Textiles Industry in Ghana

I am by name Ruth Adikorley, a graduate student in Ohio University in the department of Human and Consumer Sciences. I am writing a thesis about the textile industry in Ghana. My aspiration is to know more about the industry and your views of the current state of the industry since you are studying in related areas that are necessary in terms of career opportunities in the textiles industry. I will also like to know your thoughts about the courses you are pursuing in completion of the program and how well you view them as reflective of what the industry requires of you as graduates.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you can decide not to answer these survey questions and you will not be affected in any way. The information you provide is confidential and will be used as data towards a master’s thesis for Ruth Adikorley, graduate student in the Apparel, Textiles and Merchandising program at Ohio University, USA.

If you have any question, please contact:

Researcher: Ruth Adikorley,
ra872911@ohio.edu

Advisor: V. Ann Paulins Ph.D.
paulins@ohio.edu

Thank you in advance for your participation!!!
Please answer the following questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Please do NOT put your name on this questionnaire so your confidentiality can be ensured. The information you provide will not be tied to your name or any identifying information. If you have any questions about the survey items, please ask the researcher who gave you this questionnaire. Thank you for your participation.

1. Please share your views on the state of the textiles industry in Ghana?

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2. Are there any issues or problems faced by the Ghanaian textiles industry? If Yes please explain them

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3. Do you think that the Government is doing anything in support of the industry? Please mention them.

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4. What are the job opportunities/careers in the textiles industry?

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5. Why do you have an interest in obtaining education in textiles?

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6. What area of the industry do you hope to work in after completion of your program?

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7. What area of the industry do you hope to work in after ten years of completion of your degree program?

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8. Have you taken an internship with any of the companies within the industry? If yes, please mention them.

........................................................................................................
9. How was your experience in the field? Was it beneficial?

Please circle one of the scales that best fit your answer to the following questions

10. Jobs are easily accessible in the textile industry

1  2  3  4  5
strongly disagree  disagree  neutral  agree  strongly agree

11. The objectives set out for the courses are met upon completion

1  2  3  4  5
strongly disagree  disagree  neutral  agree  strongly agree

12. The course studied are relevant to the industry

1  2  3  4  5
strongly disagree  disagree  neutral  agree  strongly agree

13. Some of the courses are not relevant to the industry

1  2  3  4  5
strongly disagree  disagree  neutral  agree  strongly agree
14. The program should have specific areas (like majoring in fashion, textiles or retail).

1 2 3 4 5
strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree

15. The facilities in the university are up-to-date with technology (tools and equipment to aid in your studies).

1 2 3 4 5
strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree

16. The library resources are very helpful in aiding studies.

1 2 3 4 5
strongly disagree disagree neutral agree strongly agree

17. What is your Gender? (please circle the one that applies to you).

Male Female

18. What year are you in? (please circle the one that applies to you)

First year Second year Third year fourth year
Appendix C: IRB Approval Form

A determination has been made that the following research study is exempt from IRB review because it involves:

Category 2. research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior

Project Title: The Textiles Industry in Ghana

Primary Investigator: Ruth Dede Adikorley

Co-Investigator(s):

Advisor: V. Ann Pauline

Department: Human & Consumer Sciences

Robin Stack, CIP, Human Subjects Research Coordinator
Date: 11/06/12
Office of Research Compliance

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as mandated in your application for review. Any additions or modifications to the project must be approved (as an amendment) prior to implementation.
27th November 2012

The Human Resources Manager  
Akosombo Textiles Limited (A'TL)  
Accra - Ghana  

Dear Sir/Madam,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

My name is Ruth Adikorley, a graduate student from Ohio University in my second year writing my thesis on the topic of the textiles industry in Ghana.

I am seeking permission to visit your company and interview you about the state of the textile industry and your views on it as it stands presently. I plan to arrive in Ghana in early December 2012.

The insight that you provide as an employer in this industry, will add value to my research especially insight you provide on the efficiency of the graduates from tertiary institutions that are working with you and also possible suggestions or recommendations for educators.

If you agree to participate in my research, I will like to set up an appointment.

You may contact me by email, on ruth2911@gmail.com

Yours faithfully,

Ruth Edw Adikorley  
Graduate student  
MSc. Apparel, Textiles & Merchandising  
Department of Human and Consumer Sciences  
Ohio University - USA
Appendix E: Ohio University Consent Form

Title of Research: *Educational preparation and the textile industry in Ghana.*

Researcher: *Ruth Adikorley*

You are being asked to participate in this research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

**Explanation of Study**

This study is being done to explore the current state of the industry by looking at the relevance of the textile curriculum studied in the tertiary level especially in the universities in relation to the current conditions. Specifically, this thesis will look into the curriculum of the textile program at KNUST and explore views from students, faculty members, employers and ministers about the curriculum and the Ghanaian textiles industry.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to provide your views on the topic through an interview where you will be recorded. Information gathered from you will be transcribed together with others for the purpose of aggregate data analysis.

Your participation in the study will last for approximately 2 hour.
Risk and Discomforts

No risks or discomfort are anticipated

Benefits

The study is important to society; insight about the textiles curriculum has the potential to enhance the industry which may have both local and global impact.

Confidentiality and Records

Interview data that you provide will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. Your interview will be transcribed and the audio file will be deleted. Your data will be used aggregately with data from other interviewees. While every effort will be made to keep your specific comments confidential, there may be circumstances, when your institution or job title will be connected with comments that you make in the interview.

You name will not be used in reports about this study.

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Ruth Adikorley/ Dr. V. Ann Paulins on ra872911@ohio.edu / paulins@ohio.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participate, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance Ohio University, 001-740-593-0664.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- You have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
• You have been informed of potential risks and they have been explained to your satisfaction

• You understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this study

• You are 18 years of age or older

• Your participation in this research is completely voluntary

• You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature ------------------------------------------ Date -----------------------------------------

Printed Name -----------------------------------