



## Research Article

# Perception on Garment Selection and Acceptability of Multi-Fitted Garment among Women within Child-Bearing Age

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### Abstract

Every woman desires attractive and pretty look throughout different stages of life. Women within childbearing age shows tremendously increase in body weight; size and shape with tender and hypersensitive breast increase and continuous swelling of breast and stomach thereby experience discomfort and substantial pressure during pregnancy in their previous dress. The physiological changes during and after pregnancy require change in garments bringing about tendency to keep altering wardrobe every time; having financial implication on the well-being of the family which the family may not be able to bear. The study therefore investigate Perception on Garment Selection and level of acceptability of multi-fitted garment that will meet fashion needs of women before, during and after pregnancy periods by. The study adopted a descriptive survey conducted in Abeokuta South Local Government area of Ogun State with population of 130,318 women. The study involves practical and theoretical approaches. Two prototype designed of multi-fitted garments were constructed and photograph taken. The photographs with the garments were used to administer a pre-tested questionnaire to 200 women purposively selected from Federal Medical Center, Abeokuta, Ogun State General Hospital, Ijaye maternity units and Local Government Area secretariat. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics while Hypotheses inferential statistics. Result shows that 50% Respondents were married, 31% were pregnant, 49% were expecting their first child with mean age ( $\bar{x} = 27.13$ ); and 52% had Tertiary education. Respondents' perception on physiological changes show that bust increase after birth ( $\bar{x} = 3.14$ ), majority (96%) agreed to general body increase in size during pregnancy ( $\bar{x} = 3.18$ ) and 80% ( $\bar{x} = 3.08$ ) agreed to stomach enlargement after birth compared to not given birth before. Similarly 88% respondent agreed with rapid increase in bust and hip sizes from onset of pregnancy ( $\bar{x} = 2.98$ ) and 92% ( $\bar{x} = 3.34$ ) agreed increase in their body shapes affect pregnant women from wearing their old garment. Result further shows selection criteria of garment by women within childbearing age; it was evident from the result that respondents ( $\bar{x} = 3.35$ ) agreed that multi-fitted garment is comfortable and cost effective in wardrobe planning during childbearing age. Furthermore, the garment made achieved desired fit and simplicity. Affordability was tested with 80% ( $\bar{x} = 3.08$ ); 76% ( $\bar{x} = 3.04$ ) attest garment can be worn for all occasion by women in childbearing age; 92% ( $\bar{x} = 3.28$ ) assert fabric used is fashionable

and 96% ( $\bar{x} = 3.26$ ) accept garment maintain simplicity and comfort. It was therefore evident that the multi-fitted garment was acceptable ( $\bar{x} = 3.21$ ) by the respondents. There was no significant relationship between respondent level of education and perception on garment selection criteria when P-value is  $< 0.05$  (Chi square = .319, df = 3; P-value = .956). Thus, it is inferred that multi-fitted garment had a significant positive effect on women within childbearing age since the need of clothing by these categories of women cannot be over emphasized at various stages within the period; hence the styles conceptualized by the study was acceptable in the event of real production.

**Keywords:** Perception; Garment Selection; Acceptability; Multi-fitted Women; Child-Bearing Age

### Introduction

Every woman irrespective of age desires attractive and pretty look in various fashion styles throughout different stages of life [1]. People wear clothes for protection, modesty, identification, status and adornment; other reasons include physical comfort, self-confidence and to express personality [2]. Women constitute about half of Nigeria population and are known to play vital roles in the productive and reproductive spheres [3].

Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey-NDHS [4] reported that 36% of childbearing Nigeria women are within age 15 - 49 of which only 9% had above secondary education with an average of 3 children per woman to 7 children per woman with no education; 23% of teens (15-19) are already mothers or pregnant with their first child and the highest in North West zone (45%) while lowest in the South East zone (8%). Women without education begin childbearing before age 20 unlike women with secondary (55%) and higher education (3%). Overall, more than half of women age 25-49 were sexually active by age 18.

Women within childbearing age shows tremendously increase in body weight, size and shape such as tender and hypersensitive breast increase one bra cup size especially in the second trimester [5,6] and continuous swelling of the breast tissues and stomach thereby experience discomfort and substantial pressure during the last trimester [7] of pregnancy in their former dress [8]. It is therefore, important to consider the changes and alteration in body shape development in order to make clothing selection that fits comfortably and suitable for its intended purpose [9]. Lange stated that there is absolutely no reason a woman sacrifice her sense of style for pregnancy instead a woman should dress as she would in her normal life. This situation demanded the careful selection of wardrobe to carry on with normal social activities [10,11].

### Problem Statement

The physiological changes in women of child bearing age come during and after pregnancies which require change in garments worn, bringing about tendency for women to keep changing their wardrobe every time there is pregnancy. This has financial implication on the well-being of the family that some of these women may not be able to bear. In order to address these challenges, there is a need to evaluate

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the level of acceptability of multi-fitted garment that can keep the shape of women during these periods with little or no stress on family finance and well-being [12].

### Objective

The objective of the study is to investigate Perception on Garment Selection and level of acceptability of multi-fitted garment that will meet fashion needs of women before, during and after pregnancy periods. Specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine demographic characteristics of respondents
2. Examine perceived physiological changes in women within childbearing age in the study area.
3. Confirm general selection criteria of garment by women within child bearing age
4. Evaluate the level of acceptability of multi-fitted garment among the target age group.

### Hypotheses

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant association between respondent marital status and perception on garment selection criteria.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant association between respondent religion and garment selection criteria.

H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant association between level of education and garment selection criteria.

H<sub>0</sub>4: There is no significant association between respondent's child bearing age status and level of education, and their perception on garment selection criteria.

### Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey carried out in Abeokuta South Local Government area of Ogun State situated in the Yoruba predominant ethnic group in the Southwest of Nigeria with average population of 130,318 women (2006 census) the study involves practical and theoretical approaches [13,14]. In the practical approach, two prototype designed of the multi-fitted garments were constructed for this purpose of the study. The two sets of newly designed multi-fitted garment were tried on with women (not pregnant and pregnant) in child bearing stage, and photograph of the front view, side and back views were taken. These photographs were taken alongside with the garment for more details during the distribution of the questionnaire.

The theoretical approach involves women level of acceptability of the constructed multi- purpose garment based on problems identified and related to comfort, decency, cost, uniqueness, and functionality. Using 4 point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagreed; 2= Disagreed; 3 = Agreed and 4 = Strongly Agreed) self-structured pre-tested questionnaire was administered to 200 women purposively selected majorly from Federal Medical Center, Abeokuta, Ogun State General Hospital, Ijaye maternity units and the Local Government Area secretariat to elicit responses from the respondents. The questionnaire was validated using test-retest method within a period of two weeks with a reliability coefficient=0.746. The data was analysis using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages, and means). Hypotheses were analyzed using inferential statistics (chi-square).

$$\text{Perception /Acceptability Mean} = \frac{\sum \text{Mean of each statement}}{\text{Number of Statements}}$$

The decision rule was based on Mean Acceptability scores using below classification:

- 3.50 - 4.00 =Strongly Agreed/Acceptable
- 2.50 - 3.44 =Agreed/Acceptable
- 1.50 - 2.44 =Disagreed/Unacceptable
- 0.50 - 1.44=Strongly Disagreed/Unacceptable

### Results and Discussion

The Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondent sampled as 50% within the childbearing age were married, 42% were single, and 8% were divorced or separated. Also 35% were in before pregnancy age status, 31% were in during pregnancy age status and 34% were in after child birth age status. Number of children per woman from the table divulges that about half of the respondents (49%) were expecting their first child, 43% had between 1-3 children and 8% had 4-6 children. The table further shows various demographic characteristics like Age range with mean age of 27.13; Religion: reveals (68%) Christianity, (30%) Islam and (2%) were Traditional worshipers. Educational Qualification shows that 2% had no basic education, 9% had Primary education, and 37% had Secondary education while52% had Tertiary education.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{General Perception} &= \frac{\sum \text{Mean of each statement}}{\text{Number of Statements}} \\ &= \frac{15.72}{5} \\ &= 3.144 \text{ (Agreed)} \end{aligned}$$

Table 2 above shows respondent's perception on physiological changes that occurs in women within child bearing age. Most of the respondents agreed that there is bust increment after birth in some women ( $\bar{x} = 3.14$ ) while majority (96%) agreed that there is general body increase in size during pregnancy ( $\bar{x} = 3.18$ ). The table further shows that 20% disagreed and 80% ( $\bar{x} = 3.08$ ) agreed that there is tendency for stomach enlargement of women that have given birth

Table 1: Demographic Characteristic of Respondents.

	Variables	Frequency	Percentages	Mean	Std. D
<b>Age</b>	15-25	90	45.0	27.13	6.424
	26-35	84	42.0		
	35-45	26	13.0		
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	100	50.00		
	Single	84	42.00		
	Divorced	8	4.00		
	Separated	8	4.00		
<b>Religion</b>	Christianity	136	68.00		
	Islam	60	30.00		
	Traditional	4	2.00		
<b>Level of Education</b>	No Basic education	4	2.00		
	Primary	18	9.00		
	Secondary	74	37.00		
	Tertiary	104	52.00		
<b>Number of Children</b>	No child	98	49.00		
	1-3	86	43.00		
	4-6	16	8.00		
<b>Children Bearing Age Status</b>	Before pregnancy	70	35.00		
	During pregnancy	62	31.00		
	After child birth	68	34.00		

**Table 2:** Perception on Body Physiological Changes that Occur within Childbearing Age.

S/No	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
		Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)		
1	There is bust increment after birth in some women.	56 (28.0)	116 (58.0)	28 (14.0)	0 (0.0)	3.14	0.636
2	There is general increase in size during pregnancy	64 (32.0)	108 (54.0)	28 (14.0)	0 (0.0)	3.18	0.657
3	enlargement during child birth age	68 (34.0)	92 (46.0)	28 (14.0)	12 (6.0)	3.08	0.849
4	There is increase in bust and hip size on set of pregnancy	48 (24.0)	108 (54.0)	36 (18.0)	8 (4.0)	2.98	0.765
5	Increase in body shape affect women from wearing their old garment during child bearing age.	92 (46.0)	92 (46.0)	8 (4.0)	8 (4.0)	3.34	0.742

**Table 3:** General selection criteria of garment by women within child bearing age.

S/No	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
		Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)		
1	Fitted garments are perfect outfit for women before their begging of in child bearing	80 (40.0)	100 (50.0)	20 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	3.30	.644
2	Wearing multi-fitted garments by women in child bearing age makes them remain in fashion	32 (16.0)	156 (78.0)	12 (6.0)	0 (0.0)	3.10	.461
3	Multi-fitted garment can be used before, during and after child birth	100 (50.0)	76 (38.0)	24 (12.0)	0 (0.0)	3.39	.698
4	Multi-fitted garment can be used as maternity garments	108 (54.0)	80 (40.0)	12 (6.0)	0 (0.0)	3.48	.611
5	Conformability is achieved in wearing multi-fitted garment by women in child bearing age.	96 (48.0)	104 (52.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.48	.502
6	Multi-fitted garment serve as the cost of changing wardrobe during childbearing age.	92 (46.0)	88 (44.0)	20 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	3.36	.659

compared to women that have not given birth before. Similarly 22% of the respondent disagreed with rapid increase in bust and hip sizes of women since onset of pregnancy and 88% ( $\bar{x} = 2.98$ ) agreed. Likewise 92% ( $\bar{x} = 3.34$ ) agreed that increase in their body shapes affect them from wearing their old garment. This shows that many of the respondents sampled agreed that physiological changes within childbearing age affect women from wearing their old garments during childbearing age.

Table 3 shows the selection criteria of garment by women within childbearing age; 90% ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ) of the respondent agreed that fitted garment are perfect outfit for women before childbearing; 94% ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$ ) agreed that wearing multi-fitted garments by women in childbearing age make them remain in fashion; 88.0% ( $\bar{x} = 3.39$ ) agreed that multi-fitted garment can be used before, during and after child birth; also 94% ( $\bar{x} = 3.48$ ) agreed that multi-fitted garment shown can be used as maternity garments. 90% ( $\bar{x} = 3.36$ ) agreed that wearing multi-fitted garment in child bearing age saves the cost of changing wardrobe during childbearing age. It was evident from the result that respondents ( $\bar{x} = 3.35$ ) agreed that multi-fitted garment is comfortable and cost effective in wardrobe planning during childbearing age.

$$\text{Acceptability Mean} = \frac{\sum \text{Mean of each statement}}{\text{Number of statements}} = \frac{22.44}{7} = 3.21 \text{ (Acceptable)}$$

Table 4 shows acceptability of multi-fitted garment made from African printed fabrics (Ankara and Daviva). The table show that 88% ( $\bar{x} = 3.22$ ) of respondent agreed that multi-fitted garments made of these fabrics are acceptable in their cultures; 96% ( $\bar{x} = 3.34$ ) 3.34 agreed that the garment made of Ankara fabric look perfect. Also from the table, 74% ( $\bar{x} = 3.22$ ) agreed that garment made of Ankara

fabric achieved the desired fit and simplicity. Affordability of the multi-fitted garment produced was also test with 80% 3.08 agreed that it is affordable; 76% ( $\bar{x} = 3.04$ ) agreed that the garment can be worn for all occasion by women in childbearing age; 92% ( $\bar{x} = 3.28$ ) agreed that the garment produced with Ankara fabric is fashionable and 96% ( $\bar{x} = 3.26$ ) of the respondent agreed that the garment made maintain simplicity and comfort as an outfit by women within childbearing age. It was therefore evident that the multi-fitted garment was acceptable ( $\bar{x} = 3.21$ ) by the respondents.

Chi square = .194; df (degree of freedom) = 3; P value = .978

Division criteria rejected Null hypothesis when P>0.05

As shown in the Table 5 above, the null hypothesis was accepted because the P-value obtain is greater than 0.05, therefore the above result showed that there is no significant relationship between respondents marital status and their perception on garment selection criteria. Also the findings in the table above indicates that there are both negative and positive perception on garment selection criteria this implies that whether an individual is single, married, separate or divorced it has no effect on negative and positive perception on garment selection criteria.

Chi square = .960; df (degree of freedom) = 2; P-value = 0.619

Decision criteria reject null hypothesis when p<0.05).

As shown in the Table 6 above the null hypothesis was accepted because the P-value is greater than 0.5. The above showed that there was no significant relationship between respondent's religion and perception on garment selection criteria. This implies that whether an individual is Christian, Islam or traditional worshiper has no effect on negative and positive perception on garment selection criteria.

**Table 4:** Acceptability of Multi-fitted Garment by Women in Childbearing Age.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
		Freq (%)	Freq (%)	Freq (%)	Freq (%)		
1	Multi-fitted garment is acceptable in our culture for women in childbearing.	68 (34.0)	108 (54.0)	24 (12.0)	0(0.0)	3.22	.645
2	Multi-fitted garment made of Ankara fabric look perfect for women in childbearing age	76 (38.0)	116 (58.0)	8 (4.0)	0(0.0)	3.34	.555
3	Multi-fitted garment achieved the desired fit and simplicity.	48 (24.0)	148 (74.0)	4 (2.0)	0(0.0)	3.22	.462
4	Multi-fitted garment produced and affordable.	60 (30.0)	100 (50.0)	36 (18.0)	4 (2.0)	3.08	.748
5	Multi-fitted garment produced can be worn for all occasion by women in childbearing age.	56 (28.0)	96 (48.0)	48 (24.0)	0(0.0)	3.04	.724
6	Multi-fitted garment for worn within childbearing age is fashionable.	76 (38.0)	108 (54.0)	12 (6.0)	4 (2.0)	3.28	.668
7	Multi-fitted garment for women in childbearing age is simple and comfortable outfit.	68 (34.0)	124 (62.0)	8 (4.0)	0(0.0)	3.26	.661

**Table 5:** Test of association between respondent marital status and their perception on garment selection criteria.

Marital Status	Perception on garment selection criteria	
	Negative	Positive
	Freq (%)	Freq (%)
Married	2 (1.0%)	98 (49%)
Single	2 (1.0%)	82(41%)
Divorce	0 (0%)	8(4%)
Separated	0 (0%)	8(4%)

**Table 6:** Test of association between respondent religion and perception on garment selection criteria.

Religion	Perception on garment selection criteria			
	Negative		Positive	
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
Christianity	4	(2.0%)	132	(66%)
Islam	0	(0%)	60	(30%)
Traditional	0	(0%)	4	(2%)

**Table 7:** Test of association between respondent's level of education and their perception on garment selection criteria.

Level of Education	Perception on garment selection criteria			
	Negative		Positive	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Formal Education	0	(0%)	4	(2%)
Primary Education	0	(0%)	18	(9%)
Secondary Education	2	(1%)	72	(36%)
Tertiary Education	2	(1%)	102	(51%)

Chi square = .319 df(degree of freedom)= 3; P-value = .956

Decision criteria reject null hypothesis when P-value is < 0.05

As shown in the Table 7, the null hypothesis was accepted because the P-value is greater than 0.05. The above result showed that there was no significant relationship between respondent level of education and perception on garment selection criteria. This implies that whether an individual has formal or no formal education has any effect on negative and positive perception on garment selection criteria [15].

Chi square = 1.063; df (degree of freedom) = 2; P-value = .588

Decision criteria: reject null hypothesis when P-value is < 0.05

The above result showed that there was no significant relationship between respondents child bearing age status and garment selection criteria because the p-value (0.588) is greater than 0.05. Therefore

**Table 8:** Test of association between respondent's child bearing age status and their perception on garment selection criteria.

Child bearing age status	Perception on garment selection criteria			
	Negative		Positive	
	Freq	%	freq	%
Before pregnancy	2	(1%)	68	(34%)
During pregnancy	2	(1%)	60	(30%)
After child birth	0	(0%)	68	(34%)

the null hypothesis was accepted because the P-value is greater than 0.05. The Table 8 also shows that no matter the status of an individual (before pregnancy status, during pregnancy status and after child birth) has no effect on negative and positive perception on garment selection criteria [16].

## Discussion of Findings

Three research questions were used in the study to confirm the production and acceptability of multi-fitted garments for women within child bearing age in Abeokuta South Local Government. In the statement 'perception on body physiological changes that occur on women within child bearing age' in research question one. Result shows that large percentage of respondents agreed to all questions asked in the table. This result indicates that larger percentage of the respondents has the conscious understanding of all the questions asked.

Results in Table 3 indicate statement perception on general selection criteria of garment by women with child bearing age. In research question 2 also show that large percentage of respondents agreed to all question asked in the table above so this result indicates that larger percentage of the respondents has the right perception of the entire question asked.

Result in Table 4 for research question 3 ' perception on multi-fitted garment acceptability for women in childbearing age in our culture' results indicates that most respondents agree that multi-fitted garment is accepted in our culture for women in child bearing age, it look perfect fit simple comfortable outfit for women in child bearing in Abeokuta south local government.

## Conclusion

The study was to investigate the acceptability of multi-fitted garment by women within childbearing age in Abeokuta, Southwest Nigeria conducted with 200 women within childbearing age (before

pregnancy, During Pregnancy and After Child Birth status). The research adopted a descriptive survey research design and the investment for data collection was the questionnaire carefully structured with demographic characteristics of respondents and the research question which all comprises of four sections. The hypothesis was formulated to further test the level of acceptance and perception on garment selection criteria was analyzed. The null hypothesis which stated there was no significant association between socio-demographic characteristics such as marital status, Religion, level of education, child bearing age status and respondent's perception on garment selection criteria P-value were 0.978, 0.619, 0.956 and 0.588 respectively which are greater than 0.05, it was considered statistically not significant and the hypothesis was accepted.

From the findings, it has been evidenced that women within child bearing age in Abeokuta South Local Government of Ogun State, Nigeria. Cherished the provision of specially made multi-fitted garment made of indigenous textile (Ankara and Daviva fabric) to fit their status. The produced prototypes of the styles of multi-fitted garment designed and constructed were accepted for simplicity and fit, fashionable outfit, affordability, saves cost of changing wardrobe and its dual functional in purpose. Thus, it could be inferred from this study that the multi-fitted garment produced had a significant positive effect on women within childbearing age since the need of clothing by these categories of women cannot be over emphasized at various stages within the period, hence the styles conceptualized by this research have the tendency of being acceptable in the event of real production.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on the objectives of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Local fashion designer and tailors/seamstress should be encouraged to produce multi-fitted garment made of African printed fabrics.
2. The local textile industry should be revamped to produce textile materials that will be of good quality, cheap and affordable.
3. Women within childbearing age should be involved in

the pre-design or pre-production stages of making of multi-fitted garment.

There should be increase patronage of locally made garments to encourage more production of same.

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