

# Women and Modernization of Tailoring Production in Northern Nigeria 1990-2015

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**Abstract:** *The nature of tailoring production shows that many women tailors who produce clothing to the direct order of personal consumers are artisans. They engage directly in production, either working alone or with the assistance of family members or unrelated apprentices<sup>1</sup>. As a result of the development of new tailoring machines, the business of tailoring began to take new dimension, because the tailored women began to expand the business by establishing modern and new fashion centers such as Farees Couture by Farida Said at Zoo road, Fashion Empire by Zainab Lawal at Yahaya Gusau road established in 2012 and KMM Couture by Khadija Munnir Rabi'u at Goron Dutse established in 2014 all within the metropolis. The role of women in textile craftwork within the metropolitan area of Kano cannot be over-emphasized. Kano is endowed with several traditional crafts existing for centuries; those of which we are familiar with include cloth-making, embroidery of stitched men's cap, tailoring, dyeing, weaving, and spinning to name the most important ones. This paper concentrates on the role of women in modernization and reorganization of textile production mainly tailoring in Kano metropolis by examining how modernization and globalization of tailoring as a trade affected the socio-economic re-orientation of Kano metropolis.*

**Keywords:** women, modernization, tailoring production, Northern Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning, the tailoring women started operating in workshops that were small in size and the amount of capital invested in such workshops consists of little more than a sewing machine,

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Malama Sadiya Abdulrazak Salisu, Kofar Mata, Kano Municipal Local Government Area, Aged 52, on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

sewing thread, scissors, tape measure and work bench. The single most important item of capital investment is the sewing machine. This research identified that the majority of women tailors possess one machine, while some have two or three depending on their capital which they purchased through savings or through cash provided by their husbands or families in order to develop their business more efficiently<sup>2</sup>.

The women in tailoring require no major items of capital equipment, their major investment being the time involved in acquiring the skills necessary to sew a range of tailored garments. Therefore, market-oriented workshops continued to be found within the metropolitan areas of Kano and the bulk of production is on women garments and the women market-oriented tailors do produce a wide range of women garments. It is important to note that the young girls employed in workshops by women know how to make different types of women garments. In the parts of Kano metropolis with large workshops there were two to three women tailors including the owner. In small workshops however, there were only one or two tailors and the head owns the sewing machine and is also active in production. In the larger ones, employees work with the sewing machines provided by the head who is not herself a tailor, but organizes production, cuts cloth, buys raw-materials, and sells the finished products. The advantages large workshop owners have over smaller operators include their ability to produce large quantities of women's garment. Owners of large workshop also have greater knowledge of market conditions, and have credit relations with cloth dealers and have the ability to diversity production strategies to meet changing conditions of demand. However, even in the largest workshops there are periods of little activity when employees can get fresh orders. It is important to note that both workshops and fashion centers employ and pay workers on a piece rate basis.

In describing the occupation of tailoring, the Hausa continue to use the term *Sana'a* which is derived from the Arabic word *San'a* meaning a craft. The tailor is considered to be *mai Sana'a* (literally one with a craft). However, the use of the term craft or trade is misleading when applied to the contemporary Kano context in so far as it implies the existence of a homogeneous body of autonomous or self-employed producers. They possess a high degree of skills based upon years of specialized training under some formally organized and highly structured system of apprenticeship. They are able to produce a wide range of women garments within a system of production which allows every woman producer to exert major control over what, how and for whom garments are produced<sup>3</sup>. In fact, women tailors of metropolitan areas of Kano are highly differentiated category of producers. They differ in the kinds and levels of skills attained, the types of women's products they make, the markets they serve, the scale and types of production units within which they work, and the degree of control they have over the means of production utilized in the tailoring process. They also participate in a relatively complex division of labour based on whether they sew by hand or machine, or type of machine used, skill and set.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Hasiya Datti Ahmed at Rijiyar Zaki Qtrs, a renowned Tailor for 28yrs and owner ladies fashion center, 2/8.2019

<sup>3</sup>D, Heathcoat, "Insight into a Creative Process: A Rare Collection of Embroidery Designs from Kano", Savanna, Vol. 1. No 2, 1972, P. 21

The majority of women in tailoring within Kano metropolis cuts across all ethnic groups within the country (Yoruba, Nupe, Igbo, and Mumuye etc) but with a handful number of the indigenous who are culturally and spatially distinguished from their non-Hausa counter parts within the metropolitan areas. This distinctiveness is reinforced by an economic division of labour. In the city tailors produce clothing for a predominantly Hausa market consumers in both urban and rural areas, whereas tailors from southern Nigeria produce to non-Hausa peoples most of whom living within the metropolitan areas of Kano. However, by the year 2000 this tradition has changed as even the indigenous women have opted for modernization of their trade and thereby producing clothes cutting across all ethnic groups or nationalities in the metropolis<sup>4</sup>. Cooperation between indigenous women tailors and non-Hausa women tailors is minimal as the vast majority of city tailors are working with, and were trained by other Hausa people. There are other men tailors living and working outside the city and some tailors who commute to work outside the city still contribute greatly in sewing clothes for women<sup>5</sup>.

It is important at this juncture to make it clear that most of the cities and major towns have their own hand-tailoring craft workers concentrated in special places. In Kano metropolis, some of the specialized tailoring workers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were settled at the wards of Soron Dinki, Dala, Fagge, Gingau, Alfindiki, Fagge and Yan'tandu<sup>6</sup>. Tailoring was one of the businesses practiced in all parts of Hausaland. In Kano metropolis, tailoring has for many years been an important occupation and it started at a time when one of the Hausa people called 'Guwa' made his hand cloth<sup>7</sup>. Since from that time both men and women started their local and hand tailoring which made it possible for many people in Hausaland to practice tailoring as an important occupation. Tailoring today is a flourishing form of art among the inhabitants of the polity with well-established hand and machine-sewn patterns in wide spread demand. Hausa tailoring is of different designs according to whether they are hand or machine-sewn on women's dress and depending on the decorative character of the patterns. Below is an examination of the developmental stages tailoring has undergone through in Kano metropolis.

## THE HOME BASED TAILORING

It is the oldest tailoring activity within the three types identified in Kano metropolis. It is an activity that needed apprenticeship through family members or relatives usually residing within the same environment. The home based tailoring does not require any specialization or division of labour as these tailors operate at all level of production in terms of cutting, designing, sewing,

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<sup>4</sup> Most women engaged in tailoring have now accustomed to producing garments for all types for customers owing to the fact that a competitive tradition has grown in the area therefore women in tailoring gear-up to meeting the demands of their customers. Interview with Rahila Muhammad Mai-Ishiriniya 48yrs at Adakawa 2/02/2020

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Malama Khadija Abdullahi, Gwammaja Quarters, Dala Local Government Area, 54, 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1921

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Malama Hafsatu Garba, Kuka Bulukiya, Dala Local Government Area, Aged 64, on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2019

<sup>7</sup>M.H. Madabo, Ciniki da Sana'o'I a Kasar Hausa, Annur Printing and Publishing Company, Kano, P.38

mending, lining, finishing and buying accessories for the clothing. What this meant is that a single tailor who is home based is responsible for interacting with the customer, taking their measurement, buying the accessories and finally sewing or marketing their products<sup>8</sup>. It is a socio-economic activity that has identified high interest of women at home because of its affordability, homogeneity and accessibility. The home based tailoring is usually done for sustenance hence the profit and prices of the products are usually low or affordable. They market their product through relatives and friends especially those who wear the fabrics sewn by the tailors. At this level, tailors do not use the identified pattern work required to create a perfect shape, size and design for a fabric but they rather use the B-Spoke measure in which the tailors talk to their customers directly on their sizes, shapes, and designs they need for the garment. What this meant is that the tailor does not need to create a formal pattern before a final dress is designed a skill which women use traditionally in making garments.<sup>9</sup>

It is significant to mention here that women both married and no husband in Kano had been advised not expect their husbands to provide everything they require for survival. The Kano state government (1979-1983) gave the advice while declaring open a two- day workshop on self-reliance and economic skills among which was tailoring business for women organized by the state Agency for Mass Education (AME) at Kofar Mata Centre in the Kano Municipality<sup>10</sup>. According to the then government the present economic situation in the country demanded that women should brace up and contribute their own quota to the up keep of their families. In addition, it was also maintained that women have a role to play in the socio-economic development of Kano and therefore they should be encouraged and made aware of the assistance they could receive from both government and non-governmental agency to improve their small scale business such as tailoring, weaving and so on. It was equally maintained that women have significant role to play in enhancing the socio-economic development of the nation especially if they are supported financially to continue running their small scale businesses<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, their role could further help to boost the socio-economic activities in the state and it is necessary to enlighten women both of those in the urban and rural areas on their responsibility in order to ensure a self-reliant society. Furthermore, one of the characteristics of tailoring enterprise is that it has no contact with government regulatory bodies or measure for the simple reason that the home based is usually done at homes. The apprenticeship of the home based tailoring began to take changes especially with regards to our scope of study. This came in the form of taking students who are not necessarily relatives or even residents of the same area. These are usually done in an informal way with no separate classes, forms, examinations or categorized months for the apprenticeship. Women tailors like Khadija Muhammad in Mandawari, Zillaziya Abdullahi of Kurnar Asabe, Rabi'atu Abdullahi of Fagge, Ummasalama Abubakar of Shago Tara at Dala, Khadija Muhammad of Rijiyar Zaki,

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Hadiza Umar Baba 48yrs Rijiyar Zaki quarters, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Sakina Nasir Ahmed on 01/04/2020 60yrs at BUK quarters she has been a tailor for more that forty years as well the head technician Home Economics department FCE Kano.

<sup>10</sup>The Standard May 27, 1989, P.141

<sup>11</sup>Interview with Malama Safiyya Suleiman, at Hotoron Arewa in Nasarawa Local Government Area, Aged 62 Years, on 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2021

Sakina Nasir of BUK Quarters and Rahila Muhammad Mai Ishiriniya of Adakawa quarters in Kano metropolis are clear examples of household tailors that have marked their names in the history of tailoring activities in Kano. Secondly the designs or styles used had to do with the application of accessories on the garments which were purchased in the market. The gradual but high rise of demand for these accessories, the rising rate of apprentices as many young women within the metropolis desired to venture into tailoring as an enterprise led to the eventual opening of tailoring centers and shops within localities in the metropolis. Therefore, tailors need not go to the main markets for the purchase of these accessories in making their desired products.

## COMMERCIAL TAILORING

From the mid-1990s, the tailoring enterprise began to witness some transformation in the form of commercial stalls and roadside shops within Kano metropolis, with the activities of people like Hajiya Yan'biu Dantata who ventured into tailoring in the late 1980s. Yan'biu Dantata became a household name in tailoring business when she established her tailoring school and centre at Goron Dutse in the year 1998.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly unlike the home based tailoring which was hitherto a hereditary business; the introduction of commercial tailors came with training and apprenticeship. Hence a tradition was transformed and a new one was coming up. However, it is important to mention at this point that two to three factors were responsible for this development. The continuous rise in population within the metropolitan areas of Kano gave birth to an assimilated form of culture in which a merger of the traditional culture of ancient Kano society married along with other tribes within the country impacted highly not only on the population growth but on all the fabrics of the society i.e. society, economy, culture and politics.

Furthermore, the introduction of advanced technology in the form of appliances, designs, accessories, shaped and of course sewing implements further necessitated the changes, though this very reason cannot be divorced with modernization and globalization of the economy at large.<sup>13</sup> With all these developments, a new tradition was introduced whereby women started to engage in two or more enterprises owing to the economic hardship of the period. Therefore, the commercial tailors came in the form of ex-civil servants, civil servants or even entrepreneurs specializing not only on adult dresses but also on children garments as the need may arise.

The first development started with advanced designs which attracted customers from far and beyond. Machines were imported for special designs such as stone work and embroidery. These industrial machines imported gave perfect designs and were faster than the old ones used. The tailors at this point began to widen their specialization through trainings at different tailoring schools, or through workshops offered by government by the National Directorate of Employment (NDE). Tailoring came in various forms and services in the forms of veils, bags, dresses, and baby sets which were a development compared to the home-based tailors as examined above.

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with Haj. Yaya Abdullahi Dantata 80yrs Koki quarters Kano city 1/09/2019

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Hajiya Aisha Muhammad owner of Salfat interior and Tailoring designs. 5/5/2018



The next development had to do with division of labour within the enterprise. As more specialization was incurred within the business, more people began to operate on the basis of that specialization. A clear example is that cutting, finishing, mending; paintwork, putting accessories etc were all specialization that needed attention and perfection. Hence, tailors had to employ services based on the above specialization to meet up the demands of customers<sup>14</sup>.



**Picture showing one of the commercial shops located at Zoo road in Kano metropolis**

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Hajiya Hafsat Datti Ahmed 50yrs she the owner of flora stitches a commercial tailoring enterprise at BUK Road Rijiyar Zaki on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Record keeping, issuing of receipt, the use of social media for publicity and jingles in the radio stations are all developments associated with commercial tailoring which was hitherto not applied to the home-based method of tailoring. The post 1990s period witnessed a high rise of commercial tailoring shops all over the metropolis unlike the pre 1990s era when the tailors were concentrated within some known localities in the city like Fagge, Yakasai, Soron Dinki, and Hausawa to mention but a few. But the subsequent development in the tailoring enterprise brought with it two major changes. First and foremost the specialization changed from being hereditary in the sense that women had to undergo training to enable them become professional tailors and secondly, the concentration of tailors and tailoring center became a metropolitan pattern rather than a specialization pattern attached to some wards and localities within the city of Kano.

**Table 1: Commercial Tailoring shops in Kano Metropolis run by Women 1991-2015**

SN	NAME OF SHOP AND LOCATION	OWNER
1	Floral Stitches Gwarzo road Rijiyar Zaki Kano	Hafsat Datti Ahmad
2	KMR Couture, Goron Dutse Isyaka Rabi house	Khadija Munnir Rabi
3	Heroine Sapna, Suleiman Crescent opposite Ni'ima Guest palace	Safina Aliyu Maru
4	Ebonique, Sardauna Crescent	Amina Adam
5	M & M Apparels shop 24 Lamido Crescent	Mrs Stella
6	EF DEE Stitches, Tafawa Balewa road Kano	Fatima Danlami Al'asan
7	The Divas, office 1 central plaza Kabuga	Rabi Galadima
8	Bi'at Exclusive, Darmanawa Tudun Fulani	Bilkisu Ibrahim
9	Farees Couture, no 31 Sabo Bakin Zuwo road opposite Sufi Mart	Farida Said
10	Half Moon, Hotoro GRA opposite Kwanar Maggi Maiduguri road	Hafsat Munnir Umar

Source: field survey 2022

## THE FASHION CENTERS/BOUQUETS

Based on the above examination on tailoring, the fashion design bouquets emerged and originated out of the growing influence and rise of event centers within Kano metropolis and the impact of western and Asian culture by the womenfolk within the country and Northern Nigeria in particular. The activities of event centers and the growing influence of Arab and western culture necessitated a new cultural flow of marriage events which occasioned the bride to look exclusively beautiful and totally different from all visitors. The need for the makeover led to the inter relation of two or more enterprises i.e. the saloon, the fashion bouquets and the event centers. The need for a

flamboyant presentation of the bride led to the marriage of two or more cultural designs by the fashion houses within the metropolis<sup>15</sup>.

The fashion bouquets centers operate on special occasions especially with regards to marriages, parties, reunion, awards or any special functions within the metropolis. In this study I explored the question of how women in the metropolitan areas of Kano have found cloth to be a source of economic and political power in the twenty first century. I showed that by attending to the wide range of cultural associations which link cotton and cloth with women we can begin to understand the changing women's roles in the cloth production-distribution system of the metropolitan Kano in specific. While noting how shifts in the economy have affected women's position within the local cultural economy in the twentieth century, women's roles in cloth production in the late twentieth century enabled them to create social ties by bestowing cloth as gifts. With shifts in the means of access to cloth as the economy has become increasingly commoditized and internationalized, the range of associations surrounding cotton cloth acquisition has changed. A gift of cloth no longer resonates with organic reproduction, but rather signifies links to a market economy dominated by women.



**Picture showing one of the fashion bouquet shops along Sultan Road Nasarawa Local Government in Kano Metropolis.**

<sup>15</sup>Interview with Malama Khadija Muhammad, Rijiyar Zaki, Aged 56, on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2020



Since cloth was not strictly limited to the subsistence sphere, women's control of the economic potential resident in that cloth created subdued tensions between men and women. Where among the cloth production served as a sign of conjugal ties, reason being that cloth could be used by a woman to create and reinforce ties with her own friends and kin as a buffer against the very fragility of Hausa conjugal relations, and to build capital which could be used for purposes other than subsistence or gift exchange. As we shall see, in Kano it was not the direct production of cotton for the market that led to women control of the productive and marketing processes, rather, cotton production was gradually destroyed by the growth of the trade economy in which imported cotton cloth was promoted and local cotton production was driven out by the competition<sup>16</sup>. It was the availability of imported clothes in the context of increasing circulation of cash made available through the importation that led to the demise of local textile production. Both government and its policies contributed to the decline of local textile production, taking advantage of other opportunities in the economy and replacing locally produced cloth with more prestigious imported cloth. Because the locally produced cloth was implicated in local understandings of masculinity and femininity, its replacement with imported cloth altered how gifts of cloth were understood. A good example is the dye cloth business which has been a substantial part of Kano traditions and history in cloth production for centuries.

It has become clear to say that if our successive governments had actively supported our traditional crafts and progressively sought to improve their techniques instead of trying to adopt those of the industrial west wholesale, the nation's economy would not only have performed better but it would have helped in absorbing some of the shocks of present economic conditions. This is because among other things, those sophisticated technologies which we are trying to import wholesale from the west have evolved out of centuries of those nations' political, social and economic experience which are entirely different from our own. It is therefore significant at this juncture to make it clear that Kano is blessed with abundant supply of labour, raw-materials for manufacture of several goods and internal and external market potentialities. In a nutshell, Kano is also endowed with numerous traditional crafts whose indigenous technologies indicated that they only need encouragement and support of even the women traditional craft occupations so as to contribute their quota to the economic development of Kano in order to utilize those potentialities to produce many of which are now imported not only for the home markets but also for export.

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<sup>16</sup>Interview with Malama Halima Ahmad, at Tarauni Local Government Area, Aged 66 Years, on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

**Table 2: Examples of Fashion Houses in Kano owned by both Male and Female**

NAME OF SHOP AND LOCATION	OWNER
Fashion Empire, Zara Plaza yahaya Gusau road sharada, Kano	Zainab Lawal Dare
Classy Kids by Beehad, Janbulo Kabuga Housing estate	Hafsat Garba Sabo
Beauty Tailoring, Zoo road beside BIMCO petroleum	Safiya Harisu Bisalla
Peacock Fashion House Zoological Garden Zoo road	Abba Rabiw Adam
Ay and Royal Fashion House, Tudun Fulani along Karkasara	Basira Auwal
Gwanee Fashion, Aminu Kano Plaza opposite Pediatric Hospital Zoo road	Usman Shehu
Senegalese Fashion House, no5 Zoo road opposite Union Bank	Isa Muhammad
Dis and Dat, Sulaiman Cecscent opposite Ni'ima Guest Palace	Mansura Isah
Reras fittings and dress services, Suite 13 Al-Hamsad Tower opposite Shoprite	Musa Idris
Ef Dee Stitches, Tafawa Balewa road Kano	Fatima Danlami Al'asan
KMR Couture, Goron Dutse Isyaka Rabiw house	Khadija Munnir Rabiw
Heroine Sapna, Suleiman Crescent opposite Ni'ima Guest palace	Safina Aliyu Maru
Ebonique, Sardauna Crescent	Amina Adam
M &M Apparels shop 24 Lamido Crescent	Mrs. Stella
Nonny Statelier, flat 2 Gidan Malam Dahiru behind Jifatu Shopping Mall Zaria road	Saratu Saminu Abubakar

Source: field survey 2023

**Impact of the Roles of Women in Textile Production to the Development of Kano**

The disparity between the women and their male counterpart in accessing to basic Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) may have been identified as a huge constraint in Nigeria's quest to become a major economic bloc in the African sub-region. Traditionally, due to the role of women in many cultures in Nigeria, they have faced several challenges when it comes to starting a business or taking a leading role in corporate organizations. As found in many other African countries, Nigeria holds conservative values and traditional customs in undertaking business activities. Entrepreneurial roles, including those in corporate institutions have long been recognized to be an occupation for men, stemming from the fact that men play the role of heads of the home. Prevailing traditional beliefs create barriers for women who aspire to become entrepreneurs. Coupled with this, the responsibilities required of a woman as a mother as well as lack of access to funds also constitutes challenges to women being on equal ground with men in the entrepreneurial landscape<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup>S. Enid, *Hajiya Husaina: Notes on the Life History of a Hausa Woman*, Patricia W.R., (ed) *Life Histories of African Women*, London/ New Jersey, 1988

Indeed, a study by a women entrepreneurship advocate, Phillips Koellinger showed that women have lower propensity for entrepreneurship compared to men. This may be attributable to the inherent constraint women face in their entrepreneurial ability, which continued to be a stumbling block for their entrepreneurial growth and success. Despite increasing impact of Western commercial techniques, certain traditional savings strategies, credit relations, and socio-economic networks continue to play a significant role in the day-to-day activities of women as their behaviour is still very much influenced by socio-cultural relationships which stimulate them to an ever-increasing desire for economic gain and accumulation of wealth. Basically accessing or having job is one of the essential spheres for a better life considering the way of life in a metropolitan polity<sup>18</sup>. The defining entrepreneur activities undertaken by women in Kano has impacted and promoted the urbanization process of the polity. This can be seen in the form of changes brought about by prolonged and continuous entrepreneur activities by women especially in the small, medium and large scale enterprise within Kano<sup>19</sup>. However, the above activities could also be seen to have widened and further having multiple impacts on the society and economy of Kano.

Of importance is the growing number of businesses, the evolvments of capital, the promotion of commercial transactions furthering the augmentation of the development process of not only the women folk but the whole metropolis. The transportation business within Kano has helped greatly not only in transporting goods and services but also in easing commercial undertakings within the metropolis and beyond. Another great impact has to do with attracting more skills and specialization especially with different commercial endeavors within Kano. For example, the accelerated development involving women tailoring has helped greatly in the diversification, specialization and application of more skills especially those not indigenous but which is in concurrent with the dynamics of the modernization process of the world in terms of equipment, designs, accessibility and productivity within the metropolitan area.

With the above, more opportunities became more available for women due to the fact that skill and entrepreneurship that used to be hereditary have been challenged following the rise and development of new skills, specialization and entrepreneurship activities within the metro. Basically, one can distinguish two main spheres: the 'social' and the 'economic'. The 'social' or 'domestic' is essentially a 'localized' exchange domain in which familiarity and reciprocity play the main role in maintaining relationships between the parties concerned; calculations for maximizing values are less pronounced here; goods and services of varying values are exchanged between persons who are primarily related by kinship, religious, political, neighborhood, or other social affiliation. Quite a number of women in the metropolis are members of at least one 'rotating

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<sup>18</sup>B. Hannah, Performance of Women in Small Scale Enterprises: Mental Status and Family Characteristics in *European Journal of Business and Management*, Vo. 14 NO: 7, 2012

<sup>19</sup>[https://www.gyanvihar.org/journals\\_index\\_php/2019/2/12](https://www.gyanvihar.org/journals_index_php/2019/2/12). Impact of Medium Scale Enterprises on Employment Generation in kano state Nigeria.

credit association' (*adashi*) or the other. Most of these groups operate on daily, weekly, monthly or fourth night basis with one member drawing the pool (*kwasa*) each week.

## CONCLUSION

Kano metropolis has been blessed with an abundant supply of labour, raw-materials for the manufacture of several goods and internal and external markets potentialities. It is also endowed with numerous traditional craft workers particularly in tailoring whose technologies demonstrate that they need encouragement and support in order to utilize these potentialities to produce goods many of which are now being imported not only for the home market but also for export. It was therefore in the metropolis that tailoring production emerged to become one of the significant craft producing clothes mostly by women not only for the home market but also for export to many areas of Northern Nigeria and beyond. The introduction of advanced technology in the form of appliances, designs, accessories, sewing implements further necessitated the changes, though this very reason cannot be divorced with modernization and globalization of the economy at large. With all these developments, a new tradition was introduced whereby women started to engage in two or more enterprises owing to the economic hardship of the period. Therefore, the commercial tailors came in the form of ex-civil servants, civil servants or even entrepreneurs specializing not only on adult dresses but also on children garments. Women have played a significant role in transforming the home-based business of tailoring up to a contemporary modernized fashion. In contemporary era, the whole system of tailoring activities by women became entirely different from those of the earlier time because new tailoring materials were introduced and imported directly from abroad and this has necessitated the contemporary tailors to establish new fashion centers which greatly helped in extending the business structure of the modern time.

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