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### Evaluation of decorative textile craft produced with hand embroidery technique for households in Etche, rivers state, Nigeria

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#### Abstract

This study evaluated decorative textile crafts produced with hand embroidery technique for households in Etche, Rivers State. Two objectives, two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted the survey research design. The population was 125, 269 individuals (71 registered artisans and 125, 198 heads of households). A total of 431 respondents were selected for the study. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select house heads while census was used for the artisans. Two sets of instruments were used for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The major findings are that the needs for hand embroidery decorative crafts for households add a unique touch to home decoration, and often carry cultural significance and heritage. The findings also indicated that consumers are willing to patronize the hand embroidered decorative textile crafts (Wall Hangings and Table mats) based on aesthetic attributes. The hypothesis was retained at 0.05 level of significance. In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of preserving and promoting hand embroidery technique as a culturally rich and creative practice. It was recommended among others that the teaching and learning of textile craft at formal and informal sector should be encouraged as the need exist for the production of decorative textile craft for households.

**Keywords:** Craft, decoration, decorative crafts, textile craft, hand embroidery

#### Introduction

Decorative crafts encompass a diverse range of artistic practices aimed at enhancing the aesthetic appeal of everyday objects (Adamson, 2020) <sup>[2]</sup>. These crafts often involve techniques such as carving, painting, weaving, or embellishment to transform functional items into visually pleasing artifacts. Examples of decorative crafts include pottery, woodworking, metalwork, glassblowing, mosaic-making and textile art among others (Chong, 2018) <sup>[9]</sup>. Decorative crafts represent a rich tapestry of human creativity that encourages creative innovation and collaboration by providing artisans with a platform to experiment, explore, and push the boundaries of tradition. In today's globalized society, artisans draw inspiration from diverse cultural traditions, historical motifs, and natural elements to create original works that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries in terms of decorations (Chong, 2018) <sup>[9]</sup>.

Decoration is each an art and practice which enhances the aesthetic appeal and functionality of a home's indoors areas. It entails the choice, association, and use of numerous decorative factors to create a visually captivating, harmonious, and personalised surroundings inside a residing space (Adams and Werner, 2021) <sup>[1]</sup>. The idea of household decorations contains a broad spectrum of elements, along with furnishings, choosing paint shades, wallpapers, or wall remedies which establishes the foundational backdrop for a room's ornament. It additionally involves the use of textiles which include curtains, rugs, carpets, throw pillows, cushions, and beddings. All these add texture, warm temperature, and visual interest to room space inside a family. The essence of family decorations lies in harmonization of those family decorations to create a cohesive, inviting, and aesthetically pleasing home environment (Bashiru and Ubah, 2018) <sup>[6]</sup>. It allows individuals to specific their tastes, options, and personalities while developing spaces which might be each useful and visually appealing. Ultimately, family decoration

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transforms a house right into a comfortable and personalised sanctuary. It transcends the mundane, shaping atmospheres, fostering connections, and nurturing the human spirit (Adrian, 2020) [4]. Hence, it turns into of maximum significance to take note of the decorations of the home, bringing innovations from talents including embroidery craft.

Craft commonly is an ability or activity that includes growing items or acting duties by means of hand, regularly the use of conventional techniques. Crafts encompass an extensive range of activities, including but not restrained to: artisanal crafts, fabric crafts, visible arts crafts, ornamental crafts, and functional crafts. Crafts are regularly outstanding from industrially produced items by means of their emphasis on character ability, creativity, and often cultural or historic importance (Dunning, 2022) [12]. On the opposite hand, decorative crafts contain developing objects by and large for classy purposes, regularly to enhance residing spaces or add visual hobby to various environments. These craft work consciously improves the visual appeal of objects and environment. Some of those craft works can be achieved by utilizing knitting, crocheting, macrame and embroidery techniques.

Embroidery technique is one of the first-hand arts which was known by human due to the fact that ancient times, and its one of the fundamental resources to give the unique results and textures to the surface of a fabric by the using decorative stitches and numerous yarns (Anthony and Bachoo, 2021) [5]. Embroidery involves the embellishment of any cloth with sample or design using a needle. The embellishment is made on cloth with threads and on occasion with other substances. Embroidery is a shape of decorative artwork that involves sewing designs, styles, or pictures onto cloth using a needle and thread. It may be executed either with machine or hand.

Hand Embroidery is the art of decorating a cloth with stitches specially performed by hand with the help of needle, frame and yarn to complement its splendor. Most instances, it's an expression of self, rendered with staying power and dedicated difficult work. It is an art rightly described as "painting by way of needle". It adds grace and elegance, existence and style even into articles of ordinary use. It is a versatile and intricate craft that has been practiced for centuries across various cultures, evolving right into an extensive variety of patterns and strategies (Buvinic, 2019) [8]. Hand embroidery encompasses several decorative sewing strategies which include herring bone stitch, satin stitch, chain stitch, stem stitch, among others. Each decorative stitch creates exceptional textures, patterns, and effects. Hand embroidery can be performed on numerous fabric to reinforce the material and to decorate it. Several kinds of hand embroidery stitches can be achieved on household clothing articles which includes table mats, tea coasters, table runners, mattress spread, table cloth, wall hangings among others. Hand embroidery technique is a stunning art that almost everybody can examine. It is an artwork that should be preserved properly and worth gaining knowledge of. However, this art has been disregarded in formal and informal training zone in the study area. Items produced with embroidery techniques are hardly seen in the market which also leads to its absence in home decorations.

### 1.1 Statement of Problem

The absence of hand embroidery decorations in homes can lead to a lack of visual interest, reduced comfort, and portraits negative effects on households' members as a bare or minimally decorated home might lack personal touches. This

can create a feeling of impersonality or detachment for both the household members and guests. This can have various negative implications as it will not impact the sense of comfort and belonging to a home. In Etche local government area in Rivers State, Nigeria, for some reasons such as harsh socio-economic circumstances, lack of interest in home decorations and the lack of utilization of hand embroidery skills by home makers and artisans towards home decorations, has made many homes appear uninviting. This also affects mood and overall satisfaction of household members. Lack of decorations in a home also result in a lack of warmth, character, or specific themes that otherwise contribute positively to the atmosphere. The lack of visual stimulation or aesthetic appeal in homes can also contribute to increased stress, lower creativity, and even feelings of depression or anxiety in some individuals. The lack of decoration and personalization might hinder productivity and creativity among home makers, artisans and entrepreneurs. In the same vein, the loss of this traditional skills can diminish cultural diversity and deprive local artisans of their livelihood and communities of their cultural identity. Hand embroidery technique provides opportunities for income making and innovative designs for home decorations, little attention has been paid to the reactions of consumers to textile crafts made from hand embroidery. Hence the study on the evaluation of decorative textile craft produced with hand embroidery technique for households in Etche, Rivers State, Nigeria.

### 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to evaluate decorative household crafts produced with hand embroidery. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the need for hand embroidery decorative textile crafts in households among the people of Etche in Rivers State;
2. Determine the acceptability of household decorative textile crafts produced using hand embroidery technique by consumers.

### 1.3 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the needs for hand embroidery decorative textile crafts in households among the people of Etche, Rivers State?
2. How willing are consumers to accept decorative textile crafts produced using hand embroidery technique?

### 1.4 Hypothesis

The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- **H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of household heads and artisans on their willingness to accept the hand embroidery decorative textile crafts produced.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1 Design for the Study

The study adopted the Survey research design. Survey research design is an essential aspect of research methodology, particularly in fields that rely on data collection from individuals or groups. It is used for studies which aim at and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics features or facts about a given population. A well-designed survey can yield accurate, representative, and actionable data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018) [10].

### 2.1.1 Ethics Statement

The study turned into finished with knowledgeable oral consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of the respondents. The statistics changed into collected with strict compliance regarding ethical demand of respondent's statistics protection control as required involving human subject.

**2.2 Area of the Study:**  
The study was carried out in Etche local government area in Rivers State. Etche is one of the 23 Local Government Areas in Rivers State. There are 40 communities in Etche local government (Chuku, 2005) [11]. The people of Etche are mostly engaged in agriculture, earning the nickname 'the food basket' of the State. However, the influx of outsiders is gradually turning many parts of the area into a mini-urban area. The implication of this is that there is a desire for higher tastes and demands of textile craft innovations in the area, especially hand embroidery decorative designs that are not usually common.

### 2.3 Population and Sample

The total population size for this study was 125, 269. This population is in two categories: Seventy-one (71) registered artisans and one hundred and twenty-five thousand, one hundred and ninety-eight (125, 198) heads of households (Etche local government council, 2024 update). The sample size for phase I of the study was 431 respondents (71 registered artisans and 360 household heads) selected from the two categories of population. The Krejcie and Morgan Table for sample determination was used to determine the sample size for the household heads category. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample size for household heads. In the first stage, 15 communities were randomly selected from the 40 communities in Etche. In the second stage 2 wards were randomly selected from the 15 communities, given a total of 30 wards. In the third stage, 12 households were randomly selected from the 30 wards given a total of 360 households. In the last stage, one head of households was randomly selected from each of the households given a total of 360 household heads. No sampling was done for artisans as the number was manageable.

### 2.4 Instrument for Data Collection and Study Procedure

Two devices of devices were used for facts collection in levels, the ones are: Needs Assessment Questionnaire (NAQ) developed on a 4-factor score scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with rankings 4, three, 2 and 1 respectively. This device have become used to answer studies question one the authors

acknowledge the contributions of the research assistants a in segment one of the study. The second instrument titled 'Embroidered Decorative Crafts Assessment Instrument (EDCAI) turned into used to elicit facts from family heads and artisans on the acceptability of gadgets produced using embroidery method.

This EDCAI instrument was designed on a 5-point likert scale of Like Extremely (LE); Like Very Much (LVM); Neither Like nor Dislike (NLD), Dislike Very Much (DVM); Dislike Extremely (DE), with scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. This instrument was used to answer research question two.

### 2.4.1 Validation of the Instruments

The instruments were face validated by three experts. Two Home Economics lecturers and one registered artisan in Rivers State.

### 2.4.2 Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instruments was determined by test retest using 20 respondents. This consisted of 15 household heads and 5 artisans in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The 20 respondents were purposively selected to establish the reliability of the instrument for data collection. From the data collected in test retest, the reliability coefficients of 0.89 and 0.86 were obtained from the two instruments using Cronbach alpha reliability technique.

### 2.5 Data Collection Technique

The data for this study were collected in two phases. At the end of administration of the instruments, 68 (95.8%) and 325 (84.6%) of the questionnaires were retrieved in good condition, and subsequently used for the analysis in phase one and two of the study.

### 2.6 Data Analysis Technique

Data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation as well as t-test. The research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviations. Mean of 2.50 was used as cut-off point for decision making for the 4-point rating scale while mean of 3.00 was used for the 5-point likert scale. Any item with mean rating of 2.50 and 3.00 and above were considered as 'disagreed' (D) and 'liked' respectively for research question one and two. The null hypotheses generated were tested using t-test with P value of 0.05 level of significance considered significant.

## 3. Results and Discussion

**3.1 Research question one:** What are the needs for hand embroidery decorative crafts for households in Etche, Rivers State?

**Table 1:** Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of the needs for hand embroidery decorative crafts for households in Etche, Rivers State.

S/N	Statement	Households (n = 325)		Artisans (n = 68)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Adds a unique touch to home decoration	2.87	0.90	2.64	0.74
2	Reflects the homeowner's artistic taste and creativity	3.72	0.81	3.70	0.81
3	Makes the home space more visually appealing	3.35	0.66	3.11	0.86
4	Often carry cultural significance and heritage	2.63	1.03	2.59	0.99
5	Are usually of high quality due to detailed and careful work	3.15	1.02	3.19	0.96
6	Tend to last longer compared to mass-produced items	2.50	0.93	2.54	0.92
7	Can be applied to various household items (cushions, curtains, tablecloths, wall hangings)	3.00	0.81	2.99	0.89
8	Fits into different decor styles (traditional, modern, eclectic)	3.28	0.73	3.35	0.67
9	Items add a personal touch to celebrations and special occasions	3.33	0.88	3.32	0.83
10	Make thoughtful and meaningful gifts	2.80	0.79	2.82	0.80
11	Process can reduce stress and anxiety	3.76	0.67	3.33	0.71
12	Provides opportunity to learn and appreciate different cultural	3.18	0.77	3.20	0.76



	embroidery techniques and traditions				
13	Preserve heritage	3.17	0.74	2.99	0.73
14	Fosters creativity	3.19	0.77	3.22	0.88
15	Serves as a form of commercial endeavor	3.17	0.76	2.99	0.78
16	Learning and practicing hand embroidery develops fine motor skills and enhances creativity	3.04	0.73	2.89	0.88

$\bar{X}$  =Mean; SD=Standard Deviation; A=Agree; D=Disagree; Agree =  $\geq 2.50$  while Disagree =  $< 2.50$ .

The data in Table 1 revealed that the mean values of the needs for hand embroidery decorative crafts for households in Rivers State ranged from 2.50 and 2.54 for house heads and artisans (item 6) 3.70 and 3.76 (item 2 and 11) respectively for house heads and artisans and were above the cut-off point of 2.50 ( $X > 2.50$ ). This indicated that all the respondents agreed with all the stated needs for hand embroidery

decorative crafts for households. The Standard deviation ranged from 0.66 to 1.03 and 0.67 - 0.99 respectively for house heads and artisans respectively. This indicates that the strength of the respondent's agreement on needs for hand embroidery decorative craft for households in Rivers State were close.



**Fig 1:** Finished Hand embroidery wall hangings



**Fig 2:** Finished Hand embroidery table mats

**Research Question 2:** How willing are consumers to accept the hand embroidery decorative crafts (Wall Hanging and

Table mat) in Etche, Rivers State?

Answers to this research question are presented in Tables 2-7

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard deviation on willingness of consumers to accept the hand embroidery decorative textile crafts (Wall Hangings and Table mats) by households in Etche, Rivers State

S/N	Attributes	Acceptability Based on Aesthetic Attributes				
		Household Heads=10		Artisans =10		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	Colour harmony	3.70	1.00	3.20	0.72	Liked
2.	Patterns and designs	3.68	0.94	4.81	0.95	Liked
3.	Craftsmanship quality	3.90	0.90	3.20	0.60	Liked
4.	Rhythm	3.90	0.67	3.86	0.97	Liked
5.	Dimensions	3.89	0.97	3.80	0.95	Liked
6.	Stitches	3.01	0.90	3.86	0.67	Liked
7.	Texture	4.69	0.95	3.14	0.68	Liked
8.	Uniqueness/originality	3.00	0.72	4.00	0.52	Liked
9.	Cultural motifs	3.70	0.90	3.18	0.50	Liked
10.	Size/shape	3.53	0.68	3.42	0.86	Liked
11.	Lines	3.46	0.67	3.55	0.89	Liked
12.	Gives the home a beautiful look	3.76	0.94	3.56	0.99	Liked
13.	Ethical alternatives to mass produced goods	3.72	0.63	4.38	0.64	Liked
14.	Beautiful for commendation	3.88	0.97	4.52	0.98	Liked
15.	General acceptability	4.59	0.90	3.39	0.75	Liked

Key:  $\bar{X}$  = Mean scores; SD = Standard deviation; Decision Rule:  $\geq 3.00$  =Liked

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation on willingness of consumers to accept the hand embroidery decorative craft (Wall Hangings and Table mats) by households in Rivers State based on aesthetic attributes. The table shows that respondents liked the hand embroidered wall hangings and Table mats because the mean scores were above  $\geq 3.00$  which was the cut-off point. The table shows that the mean scores ranged from  $\bar{X}$  3.01 (stitches item 6) to  $\bar{X}$  4.69 (texture, item 7) for house heads and 3.14 (texture, item 6) to 4.81 (patterns and design, item 2) for artisans. The standard deviation ranged from 0.63 to 1.00 for house heads and 0.50 - 0.99 indicating that the responses were close.

**Table 3:** independent t-test analysis on the mean responses of household heads and artisan on willingness of consumers to accept the hand embroidery decorative textile crafts

Group	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	p-value	Decision
HH	10	3.93	0.96	0.01	8	0.98	NS
FD	10	3.64	0.95	—	—	—	—

**Decision rule:** if  $p < .05$  reject  $H_0$ , else retain  $H_0$ . NS= Significant,  $p < .05$ , \* Not significant,  $p > 0.05$

**Key:** HH= Household Heads; FD= Fashion Designers; SD= Standard Deviation

Table 3 shows the summary of independent t-test analysis on the mean responses of household heads and artisans on their willingness to accept the hand embroidery decorative textile crafts ( $t_{(391)}=0.01$ ,  $p=0.98$ ). The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of household heads and artisans on their willingness to accept the hand embroidery decorative textile crafts produced was thereby retained. The implication is that both household heads and artisans did not differ in their opinions on how willing they are to accept the hand embroidery decorative textile crafts. The findings from the research question one which dwelt on the needs for hand embroidery decorative textile crafts for households in Etche, Rivers State revealed that the respondents agreed with all the needs stated. These include that hand embroidery decorative crafts adds a unique touch to home decoration; reflects the homeowner's artistic taste and creativity; makes the home space more visually appealing; items often carry cultural significance and heritage; items are usually of high quality due to the detailed and careful work involved; tend to last longer compared to mass-produced

items; can be applied to various household items such as cushions, curtains, tablecloths, and wall hangings. Other results are that the hand embroidery decorative craft items fit into different decoration styles, whether traditional, modern, or eclectic; make thoughtful and meaningful gifts; Its process can reduce stress and anxiety and provides an opportunity to learn about and appreciate different cultural embroidery techniques and traditions. This finding is in line with Adams and Werner (2021) <sup>[1]</sup> who noted the several significant roles these items play in home decorations such as being valued for adding a unique, personalized touch to home spaces, which differentiates it from mass-produced alternatives. The author also noted that the craft allows homeowners to showcase their artistic taste and creativity, as each piece can be custom-designed, reflecting individual preferences and styles. Furthermore, hand embroidery textile craft enhances the visual appeal of homes, as the intricate and detailed designs bring a sense of sophistication and warmth to various spaces, such as living rooms and bedrooms (Bashiru and Ubah, 2018) <sup>[6]</sup>. Beyond aesthetics, these items often carry cultural significance and heritage, as many embroidery techniques and motifs are passed down through generations, preserving cultural identity and history (Anthony and Bachoo, 2021) <sup>[5]</sup>. This not only enriches the home environment but also fosters a connection to tradition and roots, making hand embroidery craft a meaningful addition to households. Additionally, hand embroidery fosters creativity and serves as a powerful outlet for self-expression. For artisans, it provides a canvas to explore various designs, color schemes, and stitch patterns, resulting in highly individualized works. For homeowners, it offers a chance to personalize their decorations and reflect their own tastes and values. The craft also offers commercial opportunities, as artisans can sell their handmade creations of textile craft with embroidery technique, transforming it into a sustainable income source (Adiji, 2018) <sup>[3]</sup>. In the same vein, the process of learning and practicing hand embroidery has personal developmental benefits. It enhances fine motor skills, patience, and concentration while stimulating creativity (Adrian, 2020) <sup>[4]</sup>. Through these various avenues, hand embroidery continues to be a vibrant and meaningful craft that contributes to both individual expression and cultural continuity.

The findings of research question two revealed that consumers are willing to patronize the hand embroidered

decorative textile crafts (Wall Hangings and table mats) based on aesthetic attributes. The findings reveal a significant preference driven by aesthetic attributes. These attributes play a crucial role in influencing consumers' purchasing decisions, emphasizing the unique appeal of handcrafted items in comparison to mass-produced alternatives. The Aesthetic attributes included colour harmony, patterns and designs, craftsmanship quality, rhythm, dimensions, stitches, texture, uniqueness/originality, cultural motifs, size/shape, lines, gives the home a beautiful look, ethical alternatives to mass produced goods, and beautiful for commendation. This finding is in line with Crawford, (2019) who stated that the aesthetic appeal is one of the primary reasons consumers are drawn to textile crafts. The intricate and detailed nature of hand embroidery adds a unique and personal touch to home décor items, which cannot be easily replicated by machines. In the same vein, Bell and Hollows (2016) <sup>[7]</sup> noted that consumers appreciate the craftsmanship involved in creating decorative items, as the meticulous stitching and artistic designs elevate the visual appeal of everyday household items. This artistry enhances the overall ambiance of a home, adding warmth, elegance, and personality to interior spaces. Each hand-embroidered decorative craft item is a one-of-a-kind piece that reflects the artisan's creativity and attention to detail. Consumers are drawn to this uniqueness, as it allows them to personalize their living spaces with distinctive pieces that stand out. The aesthetic appeal of hand-embroidered items often reflects specific themes, patterns, and motifs that are tied to cultural heritage, nature, or artistic trends. Consumers value the beauty and creativity embedded in these designs, especially when they align with their personal tastes or décor styles (Jones, 2019) <sup>[13]</sup>. The use of vibrant colors, intricate patterns, and luxurious fabrics such as cotton, linen, or silk adds to the visual richness of these items which contribute to a home's overall aesthetic harmony.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that this research provides comprehensive insights into the use and promotion of hand-embroidered decorative textile crafts among households, particularly in Etche, Rivers State. The findings reveal a consistent appreciation for the unique, artistic, and culturally significant qualities of hand-embroidered items. Overall, the research underscores the importance of preserving and promoting hand embroidery as a culturally rich and creative practice that should be taught and learned. Artisans, consumers, marketers, policymakers, and cultural advocates all have roles to play in ensuring the longevity, sustainability, and continued relevance of this craft in the contemporary world. Based on the findings from this study, it was recommended that the teaching and learning of textile craft at formal and informal sector should be encouraged as the need exist for the production for households. Further, the government and community-based groups should organize regular workshops to train artisans, especially younger generations, in traditional hand-embroidery textile craft techniques. This will ensure the craft's sustainability and help transfer knowledge to new artisans and younger generation.

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#### Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

#### Authors Contributions

CUS designed the study, wrote the first draft of the manuscripts and managed literature searches.

DIA carried out the practical aspect of the work and literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscripts.

#### Data Availability Statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article. Further enquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

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