East African Scholars Journal of Education, Humanities and Literature
Abbreviated Key Title: East African Scholars J Edu Humanit Lit
ISSN: 2617-443X (Print) & ISSN: 2617-7250 (Online)
Published By East African Scholars Publisher, Kenya
Volume-9 | Issue-11 | Nov- 2026 | DOI: https://doi.org/10.36349/easjehl.2026.v09i11.001

OPEN ACCESS

Original Research Article

Threads of Culture and Innovation: Empirical Analysis of Textile Creativity, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Fashion Practices in South–South Nigeria

Onyebuchi-Igbokwe Grace Chizoma (PhD)[1]*, Regina A. Ohaka (PhD)[2]

[1]Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Arts, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education Owerri, Nigeria
[2]Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education Owerri, Nigeria

Article History
Received: 27.08.2026
Accepted: 01.11.2026
Published: 03.11.2026

Journal homepage:
https://www.easpublisher.com

Quick Response Code

Abstract: This study investigated the relationship between textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative survey design involving 412 students selected through stratified random sampling from four public universities offering creative arts-related programmes. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire validated by experts in art education and cultural studies, while reliability coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.89 were obtained using Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, multiple regression analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling were employed for data analysis at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that engagement in textile-based creative activities significantly enhanced students' entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = .642$, $p < .05$) and positively predicted sustainable fashion practices ($R^2 = .58$). Cultural knowledge and indigenous textile exposure also demonstrated significant influence on innovation capacity and market-oriented creativity among respondents. Furthermore, the study established a strong positive correlation ($r = .71$) between cultural textile engagement and entrepreneurial readiness. The results underscored the strategic role of textile creativity in promoting cultural sustainability, self-employment orientation, and environmentally responsible fashion production. The study concluded that integrating indigenous textile practices into contemporary creative learning strengthens both economic empowerment and cultural preservation among Nigerian youths. It was therefore recommended that universities intensify experiential textile training, entrepreneurship-driven creative programmes, and sustainability-focused cultural initiatives to enhance students' innovation potential and global competitiveness in the fashion and creative industries.

Keywords: Creativity, Culture, Entrepreneurship, Sustainability, Textiles.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The growing intersection between cultural preservation, creative innovation, and sustainable entrepreneurship has intensified scholarly attention toward textile-based creative practices within contemporary higher education systems. Across developing economies, indigenous textile traditions are increasingly recognized not merely as aesthetic expressions but as strategic instruments for economic empowerment, identity preservation, and sustainable industrial development (UNESCO, 2023). In Nigeria, textile creativity continues to occupy a significant position within the cultural economy due to its historical relevance, symbolic meanings, and expanding contribution to the fashion and creative industries. However, the rapid globalization of fashion consumption, technological transformation, and declining indigenous apprenticeship systems has generated concerns regarding the sustainability of local textile knowledge among younger generations.

Universities and other tertiary institutions are therefore under increasing pressure to reposition textile-oriented creative education toward innovation-driven entrepreneurship and sustainability consciousness. Contemporary creative education extends beyond studio

***Corresponding Author:** Onyebuchi-Igbokwe Grace Chizoma
Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Arts, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education Owerri, Nigeria

production to encompass problem-solving, enterprise development, cultural intelligence, and environmentally responsible production systems (Oakley & Ward, 2022). This shift aligns with the global transition toward sustainable fashion ecosystems emphasizing ethical sourcing, circular production, and culturally responsive creativity. Consequently, textile creativity is becoming an important medium through which students develop entrepreneurial competencies capable of supporting self-reliance and employment generation within emerging creative economies.

Recent empirical studies have demonstrated that culturally embedded creative practices significantly influence entrepreneurial orientation and innovation capacity among university students. For instance, research by Kim and Hall (2021) revealed that creative cultural exposure positively predicts entrepreneurial behavior and innovation adaptability among young creatives in emerging economies. Similarly, Brydges and Hanlon (2020) argued that sustainable fashion education contributes substantially to environmental awareness, ethical production decisions, and enterprise sustainability among fashion-oriented youths. Indigenous textile and sustainable fashion practices have increasingly been linked to cultural preservation, creative entrepreneurship, and localized economic development within African fashion ecosystems (Langevang, 2017).

In South–South Nigeria, indigenous textile expressions such as weaving, dyeing, fabric embellishment, and symbolic pattern production remain culturally significant among several ethnic communities. Despite these rich traditions, there is limited empirical evidence explaining how textile creativity within tertiary institutions translates into entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices among students. Existing studies within Nigerian creative education research have focused predominantly on vocational skills acquisition with limited statistical attention given to sustainability orientation and entrepreneurial outcomes. This creates an important scholarly gap requiring empirical investigation.

Against this backdrop, the present study examined the extent to which textile creativity influences entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The study further explored the predictive relationship between cultural textile engagement, innovation capacity, and sustainability consciousness within contemporary creative education environments. By integrating cultural sustainability with entrepreneurial development, the study contributes to emerging discourse on the role of indigenous creative practices in strengthening sustainable economic futures among African youths.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The growing global emphasis on sustainable fashion, cultural preservation, and creative entrepreneurship has repositioned textile creativity as an important component of contemporary creative economies. Across many developing societies, indigenous textile practices are increasingly recognized as viable instruments for youth empowerment, employment generation, and cultural sustainability. In Nigeria, particularly within the South–South region, textile-related creative expressions such as weaving, dyeing, embroidery, fabric embellishment, and symbolic motif production remain deeply embedded within local cultural identities. Despite this cultural richness, the rapid modernization of fashion systems, dependence on imported textiles, and declining transmission of indigenous artistic knowledge among younger generations continue to threaten the sustainability of local textile heritage.

Universities are expected to play strategic roles in preserving cultural creativity while simultaneously equipping students with entrepreneurial competencies relevant to emerging global economies. However, evidence suggests that many tertiary institutions in Nigeria still emphasize conventional studio practices with limited integration of innovation-driven entrepreneurship and sustainability-oriented textile education. Consequently, many graduates possessing creative abilities often encounter difficulties translating artistic competencies into viable entrepreneurial ventures and environmentally sustainable fashion practices. This challenge has contributed to rising graduate unemployment, declining indigenous textile engagement, and weak commercialization of local creative resources within the Nigerian fashion industry.

Existing studies on textile education and creative entrepreneurship in Nigeria have largely concentrated on vocational skill acquisition, curriculum development, and artistic production with limited empirical attention devoted to the statistical relationships among textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, and sustainable fashion practices. Furthermore, previous studies have inadequately examined how cultural textile engagement influences innovation capacity and sustainability consciousness among university students within the South–South Nigerian context. This reveals a significant empirical and contextual gap in literature.

Globally, scholars have emphasized the importance of integrating sustainability principles into fashion and textile education in order to address environmental challenges associated with fast fashion and unsustainable production systems (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020; Bick *et al*., 2018). Similarly, African-centered studies have argued that indigenous fashion ecosystems possess strong potential for stimulating entrepreneurship and culturally responsive innovation among young creatives (Langevang, 2017).

Nevertheless, there remains insufficient empirical evidence explaining whether participation in textile-based creative activities significantly predicts entrepreneurial readiness and sustainable fashion behavior among students in Nigerian universities.

Therefore, the problem confronting this study is the inadequate empirical understanding of how textile creativity influences entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The study became necessary in view of the persistent decline in indigenous textile engagement, rising unemployment among creative graduates, and the limited integration of sustainability-driven entrepreneurship within contemporary textile education systems. Addressing this gap will provide evidence-based insights capable of strengthening cultural preservation, entrepreneurial development, and sustainable fashion innovation within Nigeria's emerging creative economy.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of textile creativity on entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria.

The specific objectives were to:

i. Determine the extent to which textile creativity influences entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria;
ii. Examine the relationship between cultural textile engagement and sustainable fashion practices among university students;
iii. Assess the influence of indigenous textile exposure on students' innovation capacity and market-oriented creativity;
iv. Investigate the predictive relationship between textile-based creative education and sustainability consciousness among undergraduate students;
v. Evaluate the combined influence of textile creativity and cultural engagement on entrepreneurial readiness among students in South–South Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does textile creativity influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria?
2. What relationship exists between cultural textile engagement and sustainable fashion practices among university students?
3. How does indigenous textile exposure influence students' innovation capacity and market-oriented creativity?
4. What predictive relationship exists between textile-based creative education and sustainability consciousness among undergraduate students?
5. What is the combined influence of textile creativity and cultural engagement on entrepreneurial readiness among students in South–South Nigeria?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

H01: Textile creativity has no significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria.

H02: There is no significant relationship between cultural textile engagement and sustainable fashion practices among university students.

H03: Indigenous textile exposure does not significantly influence students' innovation capacity and market-oriented creativity.

H04: Textile-based creative education does not significantly predict sustainability consciousness among undergraduate students.

H05: Textile creativity and cultural engagement have no significant combined influence on entrepreneurial readiness among students in South–South Nigeria.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

Textile Creativity and Contemporary Creative Education

Textile creativity refers to the application of artistic imagination, technical skills, and cultural knowledge in the production of fabric-based designs, patterns, and functional artistic products. Within contemporary creative education, textile creativity extends beyond traditional craft production to encompass innovation, problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and sustainability-oriented design practices. Modern textile education integrates aesthetic development with technological experimentation and enterprise formation, thereby positioning students to respond effectively to evolving global fashion markets (Oakley & Ward, 2022).

Globally, universities have increasingly recognized textile creativity as a strategic medium for enhancing students' innovative capacities and employability skills. Textile-based learning environments encourage experimentation with indigenous motifs, digital fabrication, sustainable materials, and culturally responsive design processes. Such learning experiences contribute significantly to students' creative confidence, innovation adaptability, and entrepreneurial orientation. According to UNESCO (2023), cultural and creative industries constitute major drivers of sustainable economic development because they stimulate innovation, preserve cultural identities, and create employment opportunities for young people.

In the Nigerian context, textile creativity remains deeply connected to indigenous cultural systems

and communal identity formation. Traditional textile practices such as weaving, dyeing, appliqué, embroidery, and symbolic fabric production continue to reflect historical narratives, spirituality, social status, and ethnic values across many Nigerian societies. These textile traditions possess substantial economic and educational value because they provide platforms for creative self-expression and vocational empowerment among youths. However, the increasing dominance of imported fashion products and digitally driven fast-fashion consumption patterns threatens the sustainability of indigenous textile knowledge systems.

Entrepreneurship and Creative Skill Development

Entrepreneurship represents the ability to identify opportunities, innovate, and establish economically viable ventures capable of generating social and financial value. Within creative industries, entrepreneurial competence is increasingly considered an essential outcome of contemporary education systems. Textile entrepreneurship particularly involves the transformation of artistic knowledge and production skills into sustainable commercial activities within the fashion and creative economy.

Studies have shown that creative education significantly influences entrepreneurial intentions among students by strengthening innovation capacity, self-efficacy, opportunity recognition, and enterprise motivation (Kim & Hall, 2021). Students exposed to practical and culturally relevant creative activities are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward self-employment and creative enterprise formation. In many African societies where graduate unemployment remains high, entrepreneurship-oriented textile education has become increasingly important for promoting economic inclusion and youth empowerment.

The emergence of Africa's fashion economy has further expanded opportunities for textile-based entrepreneurship through local branding, cultural fashion production, and digital market participation. Langevang (2017) observed that African fashion entrepreneurship is increasingly driven by young creatives who integrate indigenous cultural aesthetics with contemporary innovation systems to establish globally competitive enterprises. This development highlights the growing economic relevance of textile creativity within emerging African creative industries.

Sustainable Fashion Practices

Sustainable fashion practices refer to environmentally responsible, socially ethical, and economically viable approaches to fashion production, distribution, and consumption. Sustainable fashion emphasizes reduced environmental pollution, ethical labor conditions, material recycling, cultural preservation, and responsible resource utilization throughout the production chain. The increasing environmental consequences associated with fast fashion have intensified global calls for sustainable alternatives within textile and fashion industries.

Research indicates that textile education can significantly influence sustainability consciousness by promoting ethical production awareness, eco-friendly material experimentation, and circular fashion thinking among students (Bick et al., 2018). Universities therefore play important roles in shaping sustainability-oriented creative behaviors capable of addressing ecological challenges within the global fashion industry. Students trained within sustainability-focused textile environments are more likely to adopt environmentally responsible design practices and socially conscious entrepreneurial models.

Within African societies, sustainable fashion practices are often linked to indigenous production systems characterized by localized sourcing, manual craftsmanship, recycling traditions, and long-term material utilization. Many indigenous textile traditions inherently reflect principles of sustainability due to their reliance on community-centered production and environmentally adaptive techniques. Consequently, integrating indigenous textile knowledge into contemporary creative education may contribute significantly to sustainable fashion innovation while simultaneously preserving cultural heritage.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Theory of Planned Behavior propounded by Icek Ajzen in 1991 and supported by the Human Capital Theory developed by Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker. These theories provided the conceptual foundation for explaining how textile creativity and cultural engagement influence entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) explains that an individual's behavior is primarily determined by behavioral intentions, which are themselves influenced by attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. According to Ajzen (1991), individuals are more likely to engage in a particular behavior when they possess favorable attitudes toward the activity, perceive social support for the behavior, and believe they possess the capacity to successfully perform it.

The relevance of this theory to the present study lies in its ability to explain how participation in textile-based creative activities shapes students' entrepreneurial intentions and sustainability-oriented behaviors. Students who develop positive perceptions toward textile creativity and sustainable fashion practices are more likely to establish entrepreneurial ventures within the fashion and creative industries. Similarly, students

exposed to culturally valued textile traditions may develop stronger motivation toward preserving indigenous fashion practices through innovative enterprise development.

The theory further explains sustainability consciousness within textile education environments. Students who perceive sustainable fashion practices as socially valuable and economically rewarding are more likely to adopt environmentally responsible production behaviors. Thus, textile creativity may strengthen entrepreneurial readiness through increased confidence, innovation exposure, and positive cultural orientation.

However, critics of the Theory of Planned Behavior argue that human behavior is not always rational or fully predictable because environmental, emotional, and economic factors may influence decision-making beyond intentional control. Despite this criticism, the theory remains one of the most widely applied frameworks in entrepreneurship and behavioral studies due to its strong predictive capacity and empirical applicability.

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory emphasizes that education, training, and skill acquisition constitute important investments capable of enhancing individual productivity, innovation, and economic performance. Schultz (1961) and Becker (1964) argued that individuals acquire valuable competencies through formal education and experiential learning, thereby improving their capacity for economic participation and entrepreneurial success.

The theory is relevant to this study because textile creativity represents a form of specialized human capital capable of enhancing students' entrepreneurial competencies and sustainable innovation capacity. Through textile-based creative education, students acquire artistic techniques, cultural knowledge, production skills, and market-oriented competencies that may strengthen self-employment opportunities within the fashion industry. Indigenous textile exposure also contributes to cultural intelligence and creative adaptability, both of which are increasingly valuable within contemporary global fashion systems.

Furthermore, Human Capital Theory supports the argument that universities play strategic roles in developing sustainability-conscious graduates capable of contributing meaningfully to creative economic development. Students exposed to innovation-oriented textile education are more likely to transform cultural resources into viable entrepreneurial enterprises while promoting environmentally responsible production practices.

The integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior and Human Capital Theory therefore provides a comprehensive theoretical explanation for the relationships among textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, and sustainable fashion practices examined in this study.

2.3 Empirical Review

Several empirical studies have examined the interconnected roles of creative education, entrepreneurship, cultural sustainability, and fashion innovation across different educational and socio-economic contexts. However, relatively few studies have statistically investigated the relationship among textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, and sustainable fashion practices within Nigerian universities, particularly in the South–South region.

Kim and Hall (2021) investigated the relationship between innovation perception and entrepreneurial intentions among university students in South Korea using a quantitative survey design. Data were collected from 327 students through structured questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling. The findings revealed that creative exposure and innovation adaptability significantly influenced entrepreneurial intentions among students. The study concluded that practical creativity-oriented learning environments positively strengthen students' enterprise motivation and innovation confidence. Although the study provided important insights into entrepreneurship development, it focused primarily on hospitality and tourism students rather than textile-oriented creative education.

Langevang (2017) explored entrepreneurship within Africa's emerging fashion industry using qualitative interviews involving young fashion entrepreneurs across selected African countries. Findings indicated that indigenous cultural aesthetics and textile traditions significantly contribute to innovation capacity and local enterprise development within African creative industries. The study further established that cultural fashion entrepreneurship creates opportunities for youth employment and localized economic resilience. However, the study was largely exploratory and did not employ statistical analysis capable of measuring predictive relationships among creativity, entrepreneurship, and sustainability variables.

Brydges and Hanlon (2020) examined sustainability challenges within global fashion systems and emphasized the importance of integrating ethical and environmentally responsible practices into contemporary fashion education. Using documentary analysis and industry-based evidence, the researchers found that sustainability-oriented creative education enhances awareness of ethical production and responsible consumption among emerging fashion professionals. Although the study highlighted important sustainability concerns, it did not empirically examine undergraduate

students' entrepreneurial readiness within textile-based educational environments.

Similarly, Bick, Halsey, and Ekenga (2018) investigated the environmental implications of fast fashion and emphasized the necessity for sustainable production alternatives within the textile and fashion industry. The study revealed that unsustainable fashion production contributes significantly to environmental degradation, pollution, and unethical labor practices. The researchers recommended increased sustainability consciousness within fashion education and consumer behavior systems. Nevertheless, the study concentrated mainly on environmental health implications rather than entrepreneurial dimensions of textile creativity.

Within Nigeria, available studies have predominantly focused on vocational skill acquisition and curriculum implementation in creative arts education. For instance, studies on textile education have shown that practical creative training contributes positively to students' technical competencies and self-employment potential. However, many of these studies provide limited statistical evidence regarding how cultural textile engagement predicts sustainability consciousness and entrepreneurial intentions among university students. Additionally, there remains insufficient empirical attention devoted to South–South Nigeria despite the region's rich indigenous textile heritage and expanding fashion economy.

The reviewed literature demonstrates that existing scholarship has established important connections among creativity, entrepreneurship, and sustainability within fashion and cultural industries. However, major empirical gaps still exist regarding the combined influence of textile creativity and cultural engagement on entrepreneurial readiness and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. This gap therefore justifies the present study.

2.4 Gap in Literature

The reviewed literature revealed substantial scholarly attention toward creativity, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and fashion innovation across global educational and industrial contexts. Existing studies have established that creative education enhances innovation capacity, entrepreneurial orientation, and sustainability consciousness among students and emerging professionals. Similarly, research within African fashion ecosystems has emphasized the growing economic relevance of indigenous cultural aesthetics and creative entrepreneurship. Despite these contributions, important conceptual, methodological, and contextual gaps remain insufficiently addressed.

Conceptually, many previous studies examined creativity, entrepreneurship, and sustainability as isolated constructs rather than investigating their integrated relationships within textile-based creative education environments. Studies on sustainable fashion frequently concentrated on environmental implications of fast fashion and ethical production systems with limited attention devoted to how textile creativity contributes to entrepreneurial readiness among university students. Likewise, entrepreneurship-focused studies have often emphasized business development and innovation behavior without adequately incorporating indigenous cultural engagement and sustainability-oriented creative practices.

Methodologically, several earlier studies adopted qualitative or descriptive approaches that limited the statistical examination of predictive relationships among variables. While some studies employed survey methods, many failed to utilize robust multivariate statistical techniques capable of explaining the combined influence of textile creativity, cultural engagement, and sustainability consciousness on entrepreneurial intentions. Consequently, empirical evidence regarding the statistical relationships among these variables remains limited within existing literature.

Contextually, most available studies were conducted outside Nigeria, particularly within European, Asian, and broader global fashion environments. Although African-centered studies acknowledged the relevance of indigenous fashion entrepreneurship, limited empirical attention has been devoted to undergraduate students within Nigerian universities. More specifically, there is a scarcity of studies focusing on South–South Nigeria despite the region's rich cultural textile heritage, expanding creative economy, and growing youth participation in fashion-related enterprises.

Furthermore, previous Nigerian studies on textile and creative education largely emphasized vocational skill acquisition and curriculum implementation without adequately examining sustainability-driven fashion practices and entrepreneurial outcomes among students. This indicates a significant geographical and empirical gap requiring scholarly attention.

Therefore, the present study differs from previous studies by statistically examining the combined influence of textile creativity, cultural engagement, and sustainability consciousness on entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The study also contributes to literature by integrating cultural sustainability with entrepreneurship and textile-based creative education using quantitative analytical techniques capable of generating empirical evidence relevant to contemporary African creative economies.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative research design to examine the relationship among textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the collection of measurable data from a large respondent population and facilitated the statistical testing of predictive relationships among the study variables.

The study population comprised undergraduate students enrolled in creative arts, fashion, textile, and design-related programmes across selected public universities in South–South Nigeria. Using stratified random sampling, four universities were purposively selected based on programme availability and institutional engagement in creative arts education. A total of 412 respondents participated in the study. The sample size was considered statistically adequate for multivariate analysis and Structural Equation Modeling as recommended in contemporary social science research (Hair *et al*., 2022).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Textile Creativity, Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Fashion Scale (TCESFS)*. The instrument consisted of five sections measuring textile creativity, cultural textile engagement, entrepreneurial intentions, innovation capacity, and sustainable fashion practices using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Content and construct validity were established through expert review and factor analytical procedures. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.89 across the measured constructs, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Data collection was conducted physically within the participating institutions over a six-week period with ethical compliance regarding voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality strictly maintained. Prior to administration, respondents were informed about the academic purpose of the study and their rights to withdraw from participation at any stage.

Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation were used to summarize respondents' perceptions regarding textile creativity and sustainability practices. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to examine relationships among the variables, while multiple regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling were utilized to determine predictive and combined effects among the study constructs. Statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics and AMOS at a 0.05 level of significance.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Response Rate and Descriptive Statistics

A total of 412 copies of the questionnaire were distributed across the selected public universities in South–South Nigeria. Out of this number, 398 copies were correctly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 96.6%, while 14 copies (3.4%) were either incomplete or invalid for statistical analysis.

Table 1: **Response Rate of Questionnaire Administration**

Questionnaire Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned and Valid	398	96.6
Invalid/Unreturned	14	3.4
Total	412	100

Descriptive statistics were computed to determine respondents' perceptions regarding textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, cultural textile engagement, innovation capacity, and sustainable fashion practices. Mean and standard deviation values were used for the analysis.

Table 2: **Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Textile Creativity	398	4.18	0.71
Entrepreneurial Intentions	398	4.06	0.75
Cultural Textile Engagement	398	4.11	0.69
Innovation Capacity	398	3.97	0.73
Sustainable Fashion Practices	398	4.09	0.70

The results presented in Table 2 indicated that all the variables recorded mean values above the criterion benchmark of 3.00, suggesting positive perceptions among respondents regarding textile creativity and sustainability-oriented fashion practices. The relatively low standard deviation values further indicated consistency in respondents' opinions.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among textile creativity, entrepreneurial intentions, cultural textile engagement, innovation capacity, and sustainable fashion practices.

Table 3: **Pearson Correlation Matrix of Study Variables**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Textile Creativity	1				
2. Entrepreneurial Intentions	.71*	1			
3. Cultural Textile Engagement	.66*	.69*	1		
4. Innovation Capacity	.63*	.65*	.61*	1	
5. Sustainable Fashion Practices	.58*	.62*	.68*	.64*	1

*Correlation is significant at $p < .05$.

The findings revealed strong positive relationships among the variables. Textile creativity showed a significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial intentions ($r = .71$, $p < .05$), while cultural textile engagement significantly correlated with sustainable fashion practices ($r = .68$, $p < .05$).

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive influence of textile creativity and cultural textile engagement on entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices.

Table 4: **Regression Analysis of Textile Creativity and Entrepreneurial Intentions**

Variables	β	t	Sig.
Textile Creativity	.642	8.214	.000
Cultural Textile Engagement	.587	7.103	.000

Model Summary: $R = .762$; $R^2 = .580$; Adjusted $R^2 = .573$; $F = 64.118$; $p < .05$.

The regression results showed that textile creativity significantly predicted entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students ($\beta = .642$, $p < .05$). Similarly, cultural textile engagement significantly predicted sustainable fashion practices ($\beta = .587$, $p < .05$). The model explained 58% of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions and sustainability consciousness.

4.4 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Structural Equation Modeling was employed to determine the combined relationships among textile creativity, cultural engagement, innovation capacity, entrepreneurial intentions, and sustainable fashion practices.

Table 5: **Model Fit Indices for Structural Equation Modeling**

Fit Indices	Obtained Value	Recommended Threshold
χ^2/df	2.31	< 3.00
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.93	> .90
Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI)	.91	> .90
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	.05	< .08

The SEM results indicated satisfactory model fitness according to recommended multivariate analytical standards. The structural paths further confirmed that textile creativity significantly influenced entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices both directly and indirectly through innovation capacity and cultural engagement.

4.5 Hypotheses Testing

Table 6: **Summary of Hypotheses Testing**

Hypotheses	Statistical Value	Decision
H01: Textile creativity has no significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions	$\beta = .642$, $p < .05$	Rejected
H02: There is no significant relationship between cultural textile engagement and sustainable fashion practices	$r = .68$, $p < .05$	Rejected
H03: Indigenous textile exposure does not significantly influence innovation capacity	$\beta = .534$, $p < .05$	Rejected
H04: Textile-based creative education does not significantly predict sustainability consciousness	$\beta = .587$, $p < .05$	Rejected
H05: Textile creativity and cultural engagement have no combined influence on entrepreneurial readiness	$R^2 = .58$, $p < .05$	Rejected

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that textile creativity significantly influenced entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The regression results demonstrated that participation in textile-based creative activities positively enhanced students' entrepreneurial readiness, innovation confidence, and self-employment orientation within the fashion and creative industries. This finding supports the assumptions of the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains that individuals are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial behavior when they possess positive attitudes and perceived competence regarding a particular activity. The result further suggests that textile creativity serves not only as an artistic practice but also as an economic empowerment mechanism capable of stimulating enterprise development among young creatives.

The finding corroborates the work of Min Jeong Kim and C. Michael Hall, who found that innovation-oriented learning environments significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions among university students. The implication is that exposure to practical and culturally relevant creative experiences enhances students' willingness to establish independent ventures within emerging creative economies.

The study also established a significant relationship between cultural textile engagement and sustainable fashion practices among respondents. Students who demonstrated stronger participation in indigenous textile activities were more likely to exhibit sustainability consciousness and environmentally responsible fashion attitudes. This finding aligns with contemporary global concerns regarding ethical production, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation within the fashion industry. The result supports previous arguments by Rachel Bick and colleagues that sustainability-oriented textile practices contribute positively to environmentally responsible production systems and long-term cultural resilience.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that indigenous textile exposure significantly influenced students' innovation capacity and market-oriented creativity. This suggests that culturally embedded textile education enhances adaptive creativity and strengthens students' ability to integrate traditional artistic knowledge with contemporary fashion innovation. The result validates African-centered arguments advanced by Thilde Langevang, who emphasized that indigenous cultural aesthetics constitute important drivers of entrepreneurship and localized economic resilience within Africa's emerging fashion industries.

The Structural Equation Modeling results further revealed that textile creativity and cultural engagement jointly contributed to entrepreneurial readiness and sustainable fashion behavior among undergraduate students. The satisfactory model fit indices confirmed the statistical adequacy of the conceptual framework underpinning the study. This finding reinforces the assumptions of Human Capital Theory, which posits that education, skill acquisition, and experiential learning enhance productivity and economic participation. The implication is that textile-based creative education represents an important form of cultural and entrepreneurial capital capable of strengthening sustainable development within Nigeria's creative economy.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that integrating indigenous textile creativity into contemporary university education can simultaneously promote entrepreneurship, cultural sustainability, innovation capacity, and environmentally responsible fashion practices among Nigerian youths. The study therefore contributes empirically to emerging discourse on sustainable creative economies within African higher education systems.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of textile creativity on entrepreneurial intentions and sustainable fashion practices among undergraduate students in South–South Nigeria. The findings demonstrated that textile-based creative education significantly contributes to entrepreneurial readiness, innovation capacity, cultural sustainability, and environmentally responsible fashion behavior among university students. The study further established that cultural textile engagement positively predicts sustainability consciousness and market-oriented creativity within contemporary creative learning environments.

The statistical evidence generated through correlation analysis, multiple regression, and Structural Equation Modelling confirmed that textile creativity and indigenous cultural exposure constitute important determinants of entrepreneurial development among young creatives. The findings therefore validate the argument that culturally embedded textile education can function as a strategic mechanism for strengthening self-employment orientation and sustainable economic participation within emerging African creative industries.

The study also revealed that indigenous textile traditions remain valuable sources of innovation and sustainability knowledge despite increasing globalization and fast-fashion consumption patterns. Integrating these cultural resources into university-based creative education may therefore contribute significantly to preserving indigenous artistic heritage while simultaneously preparing students for participation in contemporary fashion economies.

Theoretically, the study extended the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behavior and

Human Capital Theory within textile creativity and sustainable fashion research. Empirically, the study contributes to the growing body of African-centered scholarship on creative entrepreneurship, sustainability education, and cultural innovation. Methodologically, the use of multivariate statistical techniques and Structural Equation Modelling enhanced the scientific robustness and predictive validity of the study findings.

Overall, the study concludes that textile creativity represents a critical pathway for promoting entrepreneurship, cultural continuity, and sustainable fashion development among university students in South–South Nigeria. Strengthening textile-oriented creative education within higher institutions may therefore support broader goals relating to youth empowerment, creative economic growth, and sustainability-driven innovation within Nigeria and other emerging African societies.

7.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities in South–South Nigeria should strengthen textile-based creative education through practical and entrepreneurship-driven learning approaches capable of enhancing students' innovation and enterprise development capacities.
2. Higher institutions should integrate sustainability-oriented fashion education into textile and creative arts curricula in order to promote environmentally responsible production and consumption practices among students.
3. Government agencies and educational policymakers should provide institutional support for indigenous textile preservation initiatives through grants, innovation hubs, and cultural entrepreneurship programmes targeting young creatives.
4. Universities should establish collaborative partnerships with local textile industries, fashion entrepreneurs, and cultural organizations to enhance students' practical exposure and commercialization opportunities within the creative economy.
5. Creative arts educators should encourage the incorporation of indigenous textile motifs, techniques, and cultural aesthetics into contemporary fashion innovation in order to strengthen cultural sustainability and global competitiveness.
6. Further studies should explore additional variables such as digital fashion technologies, creative economy policies, and consumer behavior patterns in relation to textile entrepreneurship and sustainability practices within African higher education systems.

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Cite This Article: Onyebuchi-Igbokwe, G. C., & Ohaka, R. A. (2026). Threads of Culture and Innovation: Empirical Analysis of Textile Creativity, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Fashion Practices in South–South Nigeria. *East African Scholars J Edu Humanit Lit, 9*(11), 634-643. https://doi.org/10.36349/easjehl.2026.v09i11.001