



## **Socio-Cultural and Economic Importance of Kete Weaving in Agortime Traditional Area, Ghana**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author ILW designed the study, including the instruments for data collection. Author DKD supervised the entire study and conducted the analysis of the data garnered for the study. Author DA managed the literature searches and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. All authors assisted equally in the final writing, read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** The study investigated the socio-cultural and economic importance of Ewe Kete cloth to the people. It aimed at finding out how the Kete weaving developed as a vocation in the Agortime traditional area, the socio-cultural and economic significance of Kete weaving to the people and how the Kete weaving was incorporated into the teaching and learning processes in the various educational institutions in the Agortime traditional area.

**Study Design:** The study employed the quantitative approach using descriptive cross-sectional survey design.

**Place and Duration of Study:** Sample: This study was conducted among the weaving communities in the Agortime-Kpetoe traditional area from February 2019 to November 2019.

**Methodology:** The simple random sampling technique was used to sample the 100 male Kete weavers. Self-designed questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. Reliability analysis of the questionnaire showed high reliability with Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. The quantitative data

were descriptively analyzed and presented in tables as frequency counts and percentages using the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS).

**Results:** The study revealed that Kete weaving industry is a source of employment, income, clothing and socio-cultural identity to the people. The findings of this study revealed that Kete weaving and usage features prominently during lessons involving Basic Design and Technology, Religious and Moral Education as well as Social Studies in schools within Agortime-Kpetoe traditional area.

**Conclusion:** It was recommended, among others, that financial institutions in the North Dayi District should provide credit facilities and financial support services to Kete weavers and sellers to enable them expand their industry and business activities. Also, the North Dayi District Assembly in liaison with the Small Scale and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Commission should provide credit facilities and financial support services to Kete weavers and other rural crafts to pave way for sustainable rural development.

*Keywords: Kete; weaving; socio-economic development; cultural identity.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Weaving is one of the major aspect of textiles. Kente or Kete is a woven fabric that caters for the fundamental human need for clothing, protection and also fulfils the basic demand for decoration. The word Kente is a derivative of Kenten, the Twi word for basket [1] as cited in Badoe & Opoku-Asare, [2]. People use clothing and textiles as an aspect of visual or body art to cover the human body for protection against bad weather and for identification (by helping to distinguish between male and female). Boateng (2004), as cited in Adonteng [3], expressed his view that body art refers to the art on the body in which the most common ones are tattoos and body piercings. According to Tettehio [4], Keetee or Kete weaving is a major vocation for the youth in the Volta Region (p. 225). Ahiagble was in view that, the Ewe people are not only rich in their culture but also produce one of the renowned ancestral handicraft Kente cloth. The ancestral hand woven Kente cloth was known as Agomevor, whose source dates to the 16th century [5]. Among the people of Ewe in the Volta Region, "Keetee" is woven by the people of Agortime traditional area around Kpetoe and Abenyinase in the Tongu area around Mafi-Kumasi; and further south in the Anlo and other areas at Denu, Weta, Klikor and Agbozume [4].

Ahiagble [5] as cited in Kwakye-Oppong [6] opines that, according to their oral tradition, way back in the history of Ashanti, the Ashanti held the ancestors of Agortime captives of war, in which skillful weavers were among them. The Ewe people (weavers) introduced basic key words which gave a room to break the language barrier and being able to teach Ashanti's the craft, the basic Ewe words that were employed

were Kee (i.e to press the thread in order to create the shed) and tee (i.e which means using the reed to press the weft yarn and make it compact). The original Ewe name for Kente, Agbamevo, derived from two words: agba (loom) and avo (cloth) was therefore replaced with kee and tee which were put together as Keetee and perhaps corrupted as kente. According to Ahiagble, the first people to bring the art of Kente weaving from Notsie in Togo were the Ewes or from an earlier site perhaps. From that period downwards till current; within Ewe culture, Kente has actually become a visual presentation of history, moral principles, religious beliefs, oral literature, philosophy and rules of social conduct [5]. However, the documentary on the Ewe Agortime Kente, Nene Neur Keteku III, Konor of Agoteme Traditional Area, noted that before the western world started weaving cloth, Ewes of Agoteme had their own style of weaving. It was not then referred to as Kente weaving but simply as cloth weaving. The Ewe Kete or Kente has softer colours and animal or human designs, whereas Ashanti Kente has geometrical designs, multi-coloured patterns of bright colours, bold designs [7]. In disparity to rayon favoured by Ashanti weavers, the Ewe uses cotton although there is an overlap in techniques.

Ahiagble [5] postulate that, the craft started from ancient Egypt, their former abode, where they were weaving with raw cotton. Primarily, the use hand woven twines which were very thick but currently because of modernization, the thickness has reduced in it thickness; giving the cloth a lighter look and texture. Weavers at the moment use imported threads of various colours which are rather thinner, and ease the production process. Among the people vast Kente cloths are produced in several centres. The exclusivity of

the Ewe Kente is confirmed and established by its warp, weft and the symbolic or abstract motifs that are woven unto the cloth (Ahiagble [5] as cited in Kwakye-Opong, [6]). Usually, Ewe cloth is woven to order for Ghanaians, but the tourists have become customers also and concessions have been made in colour and style in cloth that they buy and seem to prefer. The main cloth market is in Agbozume, which is close to the Togo border. The Ewe Kente or Kete cloth is a form of body art that can be seen and felt. The Ewe Kente or Kete cloth is a strip of cloth woven by the people of Agortime traditional area. The Ewe traditionally calls their strip woven cloth avõ or dõ, and again none of the subtypes suggests a relationship to the word Kete. It is not easy to state exactly when the art of weaving was introduced in the Volta Region of Ghana.

Agortime Kpetoe is chosen as Kete Weaving Centre because of its productive, creative, innovative nature and the ability of its products to reach the global market. Weaving is an indigenous vocation prevalent among the people of Agortim traditional area in the Volta Region of Ghana. Costumes, including the “Ewe Kente or Kete” of the people of “Agortime” traditional area, generally are expressive and forms essential part of civilization, just like other forms of arts. It affects every individual and reflects the great culture of the past, present and future of the people. Kete weaving as an art has a number of socio-cultural and economic significance. The African for that matter the Ghanaian clothes are reflective of the arts and life of the people. These are championed mainly by the symbolism and the insightfulness of the conceptions of those clothes revealed in the dress-life of traditional leaders [8]. The Ewe Kente or Kete as a social means of indicating class and status are held at a very high esteem by the people of Agortime traditional area. Kente or Kete is a royal and sacred cloth worn by kings, and only in times of extreme importance. However, over time, the use of Kente or Kete cloth has become more widespread. Nevertheless, its importance has remained and is held in high esteem by the people of Agortime traditional area and the entire nation. It is on this background that the study will focus on identifying and documenting the socio-economic and cultural benefits of Kete cloth weaving to the people of Agortime traditional area of the Volta region of Ghana. The scope of this study is limited to Volta Region, the people (Ewe) of Agortime traditional area to be specific. The research questions for the study were:

1. How did Kete weaving develop as a vocation in the Agortime traditional area?
2. What are the socio-cultural and economic significance of Kete weaving to the people in the Agortime traditional area?
3. In what ways is the Kete weaving incorporated into the teaching and learning processes in the various educational institutions in the Agortime traditional area?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Kete Weaving in the Agortime Traditional Area

Weaving as an art of fabric or textile construction can be done on a machine or with the hand. To weave is to make fabric by passing threads or strips across, over and under other ones, by hand or on a machine called a loom. Weaving can simply mean to make a fabric. Owusu-Awuah et al. [9] also states weaving involves the process of interlacing the elements such as weavers (weft) and spokes or stakes (warp) that create the fabric form and pattern of woven items. This definition includes both loom weaving and off loom weaving. This means some common examples of woven items in Ghana may include Kente or Kete cloths, smocks, sacks, mats, ropes, leather bags and basket. Textile is the use of fabrics produced by weaving, knitting, felting, embroidering and other methods [10]. History does not state with precision which nation was the first to discover and handle Kete weaving. Ancestral history could trace the Agortime from Konor tribe of the ancient Sudan. Oral history opines that the Leh people, thus, Agortime moved from Egypt through the Kushian Empire to the city state of Ife in present day Nigeria. They moved along with the Ga-Adangme and settled at Kpone. The Leh later moved away from Kpone eastwards through Ketu and Agbome as a result of wars, and resettled at Adangme in today Togo. Years later, the Leh again migrated and resettled at Kpele and further continued to settle at Anloga. Most of the Leh again moved westward and waged war against the people of Agu while moving along the Tordze river which was over grown with palm trees. They settled among these palm trees and have since been known as the Agortime. Literally, Agortime means in the midst of the fan palm. Ago in Ewe dialect refers to “fan palm” and “time” means among or in the midst of, hence Agortime refers to the inhabitants. As at

now, Agortime settlements in Ghana include Kpetoe - the present seat of the Agortime paramountcy, Adedome, Akpokope, Oblema, Wodome, Abenyinase, Ibenyemi among others.

Kente or Kete weaving among the Ewe is an old art practised especially among the Agortime Kpetoe people and the Anlo-Some people. Lartey [11] cited that the art of Kete weaving was brought by the Ewe from Nigeria or Benin. Although the term Kete is popularly used throughout most of the world, its origins are heavily contested in written records. It dates back to at least 1847 when a man's cloth of twenty – seven strips was accessioned into a Danish collection as a “cotton blanket (Kintee) from Popo” an Ewe town in present-day Togo [12]. The Kente or Kete however, is not mentioned once in Rattray's substantial chapter on Asante weaving [13]. Significantly Kete is not the indigenous word for cloth in either of the Asante or Ewe cultures that produce it. Another historical account, indicated that the Asante invaded the Ewe territory and took captive of some Ewe who taught the Asante how to weave. The Ewe (Agortime) weavers did not understand the Asante Language so adapted a sign language and the use of certain simple Ewe words such as Kee which means to create the shed by pressing the treadle and tee which means using the reed to compress the weft yarn tightly to the fell. “Kee” and “tee” were put together to form Keetee which was corrupted to mean Kete in Twi [5].

There is a certain consensus that Ewe Kete with its more richly varied palette and its frequent use of representational motifs – including lettering in French and English is more dramatic than its Asante counterpart and it is, in addition more inventive in terms of overall composition [14]. Weaving among the Ewe includes the making of baskets, cloths, fans, purses, sacks, fences, trays, sieves, hats, nets, and traps. The oral traditions of the Ewe traced the origin of Kete weaving to a hunter named Togbi Se, who after a futile day, sat under a tree to rest and observed a spider weaving its web. Togbi Se wondered why humans could not weave. He went home and tried imitating the spider by inventing a small triangular loom of a type now known as child's loom [14]. It must be noted that the use of a frame structure in experimenting weaving by the early Ewe weavers predates the looms. In this method, materials similar to basket were woven. The technique is still used to teach learners who want to learn how to weave Kete. The apparatus is replica of what Togbi Se used [4].

## 2.2 Significance of Kete Weaving

Indigenous Ghanaian textile industries have immensely contributed to the sustainability of rural development in Ghana. Kete comes mainly in strip forms and are fashioned into traditional clothes and garments used in various jurisdiction for festivities [15]. Products within the Ghanaian indigenous textile industry includes; traditional woven cloth [Kente, Kete-Agbamevo and Fugu] [16,17]. Traditional woven products also helped us to know the ancient people who were weaving. Kete is a traditional cloth of the Asante and Ewe of Ghana and Togo, and has been around since 17 century A.D. [18]. It is a strip of fabric made of cotton, traditionally hand-woven on a loom by men. Kete was once made of silk, however, due to the care requirements of silk, cotton eventually become the preferred yarn for Kete. Kete is typically worn by Asante and Ewe people of Ghana and Togo, rather than other ethnic groups in Ghana.

With prior history as old as the 17th century [18], Kete is a woven cloth that is produced on a narrow loom by male weavers in the Asante and Ewe areas of Ghana and Togo. Ewe Kete is recognized by its muted color palate of browns, greens, blues, reds, oranges, and purples [19]. Some Ewe Kete is made from rayon, rather than cotton yarns, while Asante Kente was once made of silk is now made of cotton. Weaving fosters creativity and personal development. People experiment with processes, tools and designs. Through creativity weaving had developed through various stages to the stage where modern tools or machines are used for weaving. Weavers are confronted with new challenges that make them come out with new designs from time to time. Out of creativity weavers today have Jacquard weave and others. Weaving is an activity that develops the hands, heart and head. When one uses the weaving tools in weaving, he develops manual skills, and it is the education of the hand.

The selection of colours to use in Kete weaving and how people appreciate woven fabrics, for example, Kete is a means of talking intelligently and knowledgeably about them makes them express their feelings about them. This is education of the heart. Again, weaving activities help to reduce tension in people. Skills in thinking where cloth size is calculated and the total ends calculated in addition to calculating the heddles loops and reed dents help to organize yarns into warps then into cloth. This critically brings about

appreciation. It helps to develop sound mental health which is the development of the head. Kete weaving has socio-cultural, political and religious values. Dress is a complex ethnic marker that represents the individual wearing the garment and the cultural group they are associated with [20]. Dress, meaning clothing, can be symbolic, sharing cultural meaning, or aesthetically pleasing to the eye or both [21]. Different styles of dress can belong to a specific culture and vary according to the culture [22]. Through dress, individuals help make culture material, meaning that dress is both a product and a process [23]. Woven Kete clothing serves the purpose of clothing goods, household goods, industrial goods, medical goods, theatrical goods, and mixed goods. Clothing can give important information about one's occupation, origin, personality, opinion, tastes, and current moods. Hence, what we wear speaks volumes of what we think of ourselves and the world around us [24]. The main functions of clothing are for protection, modesty or decency, and adornment. Other functions include, identification, mood expression, sexual attraction, immodesty and impression creation. Clothing provides the body with physical as well as psychological protection [24].

Dress is closely connected to cultural identity [25], including ethnicity. This makes dress an important variable to examine when studying different cultures and their social norms. Culture is the way a group of people lives. In every culture, one of the major things used to portray and transmit the way of life of the people are textiles. Woven fabrics are used as costume to maintain the idea, knowledge, practices and beliefs of a society as handed down from one generation to another. Taylor [26] describes dress as a cultural object, or a nonverbal symbol once it covers the body, preceding its reason for end use. Dress, in terms of fashion, is frequently changing while striving to maintain a form that will continue to be accepted by the people within a culture [27].

Social status is another identity tension that symbolically acquires substance in clothing and fashion [28]. This tension finds an outlet in clothes. Social superiority does not need to be proclaimed, this is why the poor look was made elegant [29], and why ostentation is a mark of those who need to flaunt it. In terms of social status (prestige), the use of Ewe Kete clothing or its elements of clothing is meant to indicate social worth and one's position in society, as in

reflecting the occupational role. Also, clothing could be used to express social interaction. Individuals frames of interpretation are forms of cultural and social norms that reflect the values that they have personally adopted [30]. Regardless of the complications of the language metaphor and the differences between the clothing code and the linguistic code, it is clear that clothing exhibits a great deal of sign conventionalization.

### 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed the quantitative research approach with descriptive cross-sectional survey design as the main research method [31,32]. This was because the researchers aimed at giving an objective account of the socio-cultural and economic benefits of the Kete cloth weaving to the people of Agortime traditional area. The study was carried out from February 2019 to November 2019. The target population for this study encompasses the youth weavers and the elderly weavers who engage in the weaving and use of Ewe Kete cloth in the Agortime traditional area. The sampling for the study was selected using the simple random sampling techniques. The simple random sampling technique was used to sample the 100 Kete weavers using the lottery approach for the study. The choice of random selection ensured that each Kete weaver had an equal or fair chance of being selected which is required for generalisation of the results to the target population [33].

A self-designed questionnaire which was perused by four textile experts who are qualitative researchers was used for collecting the data for the study [34,35]. It consisted of open-ended and close-ended questions with a list of options for respondents to choose from as a means of creating an atmosphere of uniformity. The questionnaire was self-administered by the researchers. The questionnaire consisted of four sections labelled A, B, C, and D. The Section A was to garner data on the demographic characteristics of the participants. These included gender, age, marital status, level of education, and income level. The Section B solicited data on the development of Kete weaving as a vocation in the Agortime traditional area. The Section C on the socio-cultural and economic significance of Kete weaving, while Section D, was on teaching of Kete weaving in educational institutions. Reliability analysis of the questionnaire showed high reliability with Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. The quantitative data

that were generated were analysed using the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS).

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research at this section presents the results and discussion of the data collected from the study. The findings of this research have been presented based on the research objectives for the study. The section begins with the discussion under the demographic information on the participant of the study (Table 1).

##### 4.1 Demographic Information on Respondents

Hundred (100) participants took part in this study. The findings show that the participants were all male. It is shown that the greater percentage of the respondents were aged between 40 to 49 which constituting 38% respectively.

However, the findings suggested that the respondent by their educational qualification revealed that respondents who had other qualifications such as NVTI were more than

those with basic education certificate and WASSCE or SSSCE, constituting 41%, 25% and 20% respectively. This result implies that majority of the Kete weavers had a lot level of education. Furthermore, per the experience 45% has been in the Kete weaving industry for more than 6 years, 15% has 5years experience, 4 years are 13% the rest of the 23% have 0 to 3 years' experience. With regard to the mode of acquisition of Kete weaving vocation, majority (74%) of the respondents had it through apprenticeship, 13% had it through inheritance, 10% learned it on their own, while 3% acquired it through formal education. It could be deduced from the result of this study that all the respondents were males, and majority (88%) of them were youthful. Moreover, little or no room is given to women in this indigenous industry and the reason for excluding women from active participation of these industries can be seen from the taboos associated with the Kete weaving [13]. Apart from the supporting services they render to the industry, women are forbidden to take part in the actual job. According to tradition, if they do so, they will lose their ability to reproduce.

**Table 1. Demographic information on the respondents**

Variable	Variable category	F	%
Gender	Male	100	100
Age (years)	Less than 20	4	4
	20-29	12	12
	30-39	29	29
	40-49	38	38
	50-59	10	10
	60 and above	7	7
Number of years in the Kete weaving job/business	Less than 1 year	3	3
	One year	5	5
	Two years	8	8
	Three years	11	11
	Four years	13	13
	Five years	15	15
	Six years and more	45	45
Highest educational qualification	BECE	25	25
	WASSSCE/SSSCE	20	20
	Diploma	9	9
	Degree	5	5
	Other	41	41
Mode of acquisition of Kete vocation or business or craft	Through my parent or inheritance	13	13
	Through apprenticeship	74	74
	Through formal education	3	3
	Nobody taught me	10	10
Whether there is an association of Kete weavers in the area.	Yes	100	100
	No	0	0

Source: Fieldwork data (2019)

#### 4.2 The Development of Kete Weaving as a Vocation in the Agortime Traditional Area

There are several expressions of opinions of the origin or development of Kete weaves. Respondents of 80% are in a view that Kete weaving can be traced to southern Ghana and Togo. It is produced mainly by Ewe and Asante weavers. It is really a controversy or a debate with regard to the origin of Kete. However, all the respondents remarked that, the word Kete was actually a corruption of the more proper Ewe word Kete for hand-woven cloths. Due to the fact that the Asante do not speak Ewe, they changed the term Keetee or Kete to kente when Ewe weavers taught them how to weave. A couple of the respondents also gave a view that in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, many Ewe people were taken into captivity after the Asante wars. The transfer of technology was pinpointed to the time when many Ewes were taken into captivity by the Asante during the Asante wars between 1869 and 1873 BBC. So, the Ewe people who were taken into captivity taught the Asante people. A mixed opinion from some respondents indicated that, the origin of the word Kete could either come from Ewe or Twi and subsequently borrowed into the other language.

The findings of this study revealed a mixed opinion on the origin and development of Kete weaving as a vocation in Ghana, particularly in the Agortime traditional area. This suggests that the documentation and oral histories on the origin of weaving did not bring much clarity. They only suggest that weaving possibly originated independently in the two areas of Ashanti and Ewe in Ghana. This finding validates the view of Kraamer [36] who indicated that it is neither the Asante nor the Ewe who taught the other group how to weave.

#### 4.3 The Socio-cultural and Economic Significance of Kete Weaving

Table 2 presents data on the socio-cultural and economic significance of Kete weaving to the people of Agortime and the numbers or figures in parentheses are in percentages. Seventy-seven percent (77%) respondents admitted to a high extent, and 23% consented to a moderate extent that the Kete weaving make so much financial contribution to the family economy (shown in Table 2). Though there are no structured economic scale and market statistics for the Kete

products in the study area, it was estimated by the veteran Kete weavers that each of the Kete weavers earn an annual income between 12, 000 Ghana Cedis (1, 986.34 USD) to 18, 000 Ghana Cedis (2, 979.51 USD) in the last three years (2017-2019). Thus, the estimated monthly earning is more than 1000 Ghana Cedis (165.53 USD) which is more than twice the monthly earnings of an average informal sector worker in Ghana which is about 450 Ghana Cedis (74.49 USD).

From Table 2, seventy percent (70%) respondents averred to a large extent, while 30% of them admitted to some extent that Kete weaving is a source of employment and income to them. These 30% respondents alluded to the absence of funding support for their operations. As it was observed in the study areas, the Kete weavers were confronted with the challenge of funding to set up well-furnished and protective shops for their operations. The majority of them resorted to retail purchasing of raw materials which was costly and lead to low revenue after marketing the Kete products.

However, Twenty-one percent (21%) respondents admitted to a high extent, 45% asserted to a moderate extent, while 22% of them stated to a low extent that Kete weaving is a means of personal development. It came to light that 9% of the respondents stated to a high extent, 26% of them mentioned to some extent, while 65% respondents indicated to a low extent that Kete weaving as a vocation is for enhancement of fame. The findings suggested that, 4% respondents held to a high extent, 26% of them mentioned to a moderate extent, while 70% indicated to a low extent that Kete weaving is for history making.

Furthermore, twenty-three percent (23%) respondents admitted to a high extent, 42% affirmed to some extent, while 35% of them stated to a low extent that Kete weaving is an avenue for expressing feelings. Kete weaving as a vocation that fosters creativity was found to be high among 21% respondents, moderate among 34% of them and low among 45% respondents. Kete weaving was found as a source of clothing among the respondents as noted by 50% respondents. Thirty-four percent (34%) respondents held same views to some extent, and 14% of them indicated low extent. Kete weaving is a source of socio-cultural identity as observed by 76% of the respondents to a high extent. Moreover, twenty-four percent (24%)

**Table 2. The Socio-cultural and economic significance of Kete weaving to the people of Agortime**

Statement	Response		
	H	M	L
Financial contribution to the family economy	77(77)	23(23)	0(0)
Employment	70(70)	30(30)	0(0)
For personal development	21(21)	45(45)	22(22)
For enhancement of fame	9(9)	26(26)	65(65)
For making history	4(4)	26(26)	70(70)
For expressing feelings	23(23)	42(42)	35(35)
To foster creativity	21(21)	34(34)	45(45)
As a source of clothing	50(50)	34(34)	14(14)
As a source of socio-cultural identity	76(76)	24(24)	0(0)
As a source of political identity	23(23)	27(27)	50(50)
As a source of religious identity	21(21)	23(23)	56(56)

Source: Field data (2019).

Key: n = sample; 3 = High; 2= Moderate; 1= Low

respondents held congruent views to a slight extent. Twenty-three percent (23%) respondents admitted to a high extent, 27% averred to a moderate extent, while 50% stated to a low extent that Kete weaving is a source of political identity. Twenty-one percent (21%) respondents stated to a large extent, 23% of them admitted to some extent, whereas 56% of them admitted to a low extent that Kete weaving is a source of religious identity.

The findings of this study indicate (Table 2) that, Kete weaving provided a lot of cultural and socio-economic benefits to the weavers and people of Agortime Kpetoe. Evidence gathered from the study reveal that the industry is a source of employment (70%) and income (77%) to the people. It also came to light that the industry is a source of clothing (50%) and socio-cultural identity (76%) of the people. These findings validate the views of Dzramedo et al. [15] as well as Bahl [25] who stated that Kete strip are fashioned into traditional clothes and garments which are worn by both men and women to signify cultural identity. These findings also give credence to the claim that the Kete weaving industry has been an important source of livelihood in Ghana. This brings to fore the importance of Kete weaving as a rural small-scale industry. This industry which is a source of employment will curtail the movement of labour from rural areas to the urban centres. This observation further buttresses the views of Edusei et al. [37] who indicated that Kete weaving invigorates cultural and socio-economic activities of weaving communities.

#### 4.4 Teaching of Kete Weaving in Educational Institutions

The findings of this study states that, all the respondents stipulated that in the Agortime-Kpetoe area, Kete cloth is used during cultural festivals as a way to teach pupils about Ewe cultural identity. Majority of the respondents remarked in a view that, during the study of some subjects such as Basic Design and Technology (BDT) as well as Religious and Moral Education (RME), pupils are given projects on Kete design, prints and weaving. Most of the respondents expressed points that Kete cloth itself being used during lessons in educational settings within the area to teach the history, design, draft and production of the cloth through technology as well as through traditional methods. A couple of the respondents also said, many educational institutions across Agortime Kpetoe hold special ceremonies at which students are given a strip of Kete cloth. Many pupils in educational institutions across Agortime Kpetoe wear Kete cloth during commencement ceremonies. Therefore, it could be concluded from the findings of this study that Kete weaving and usage features prominently in schools within Agortime-Kpetoe traditional area. Evidence gathered from the study indicate that lessons on Kete weaving, its usage and importance feature in subjects such as Basic Design and Technology, Religious and Moral Education as well as Social Studies. These findings give credence to the assertion of Allen [38] who stated that Kete cloth is used in educational settings as a way to teach students about African people and culture and it is been used in educational settings to teach Ghanaian



students how to design, draft and produce it [2]. The findings also substantiate the views of other scholars who observed that many educational institutions across Agortime Kpetoe hold special ceremonies at which students showcase Kete cloth [39,40,15,41,42].

## 5. CONCLUSION

Kete weaving industry does not require any high educational qualification and a long period of apprenticeship training. Learning takes place in the normal processes of socialization and, therefore, does not involve the expenditure of huge sums of money. It unfolds that Kete weaving provides jobs and income for a good number of people irrespective of their educational background. Therefore, it is evident from the findings that the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of Kete weaving are quite numerous. Accordingly, the significance of the Kete weaving industry in the lives of the rural people cannot be over-emphasised.

It emerged from this study that Kete weaving possibly originated independently from two areas in the Ashanti and Volta Region in Ghana. Therefore, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) of the Ministry of Education Service should document the history and development of Kete weaving in the curriculum, syllabus and textbooks for basic and second cycle schools. Similarly, universities, colleges, technical and vocational institutes in Ghana should incorporate it into their curriculum. In addition, teachers should organize fieldtrips for pupils to the towns of Bonwire, Agortime Kpetoe and other Kete weaving towns in Ghana to enable them obtain first-hand information on the history and development of Kete weaving. It also unfolded from the findings that Kete weaving industry is a source of employment, income, clothing and socio-cultural identity to the people. In this regard, financial institutions in the North Dayi District should provide credit facilities and financial support services to Kete weavers and sellers to enable them expand their industry and business activities.

Also, the North Dayi District Assembly in liaison with the Small Scale and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Commission should provide credit facilities and financial support services to Kete weavers to pave way for sustainable rural development. Pragmatically, the credit facilities would enable the Kete weavers to purchase their raw materials such as yarns in large quantities to

reduce the unnecessary costs associated with retail purchasing of the raw materials. Moreover, there are some of the Kete weavers who need to set up enclosed and well-furnished shops or spaces for their operations. These conducive work spaces would offer enough protection for their looms, accessories and Kete woven products. Clear and well documented soft terms for the repayment of the credit facilities by the financial agencies and Kete weavers would help them to enhance their Kete weaving operations to earn more revenue to improve their economic conditions and that of their communities.

Moreover, the North Dayi District Assembly and the Small Scale and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Commission in liaison with the Kete weavers' association in the Agortime Kpetoe traditional area should provide ready-made local and international markets for Kete products in Ghana and abroad. The availability of ready-made markets for Kete products will provide regular income for business expansion and for ensuring sustainable economic livelihood for the Kete weavers.

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## DISCLAIMER

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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