

Tourism as a Tool for Revitalizing Nigeria's Declining Textile Industry

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Abstract- Due to high production costs, competition from imports, and a lack of government assistance, Nigeria's textile industry has seen a sharp decrease. Through boosting local production, supporting cultural heritage, and encouraging economic sustainability, this study examines tourism as a strategic instrument for industry revitalization. The market for indigenous textiles is fueled by cultural and heritage tourism, which offers growth prospects. Quantitative and qualitative studies were combined in a mixed-methods approach. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the survey data, and chi-square tests will be used to evaluate the connection between textile sales and cultural tourism. With the use of a critical evaluation of secondary material, thematic analysis was able to identify important themes from observations and interviews. The sector's opportunities and problems were emphasized in the findings, which also included suggestions for tax breaks, more financing, and improved tourism-textile manufacturing integration through export promotion and strategic marketing. This study intends to help sustainable development and the preservation of Nigeria's textile legacy by utilizing tourism.

Indexed Terms- Cultural Tourism, Textile Industry, Economic Sustainability, Indigenous Textiles, Nigeria

I. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's textile industry has declined due to economic instability, import reliance, poor infrastructure, and inconsistent policies (Travieso & Westland, 2024). This downturn has led to job losses, reduced industrial output, and weakened global

competitiveness (Ajayi, 2024). However, tourism offers a path to revitalization by promoting cultural appreciation, increasing demand for local textiles, and creating new business opportunities (Amalu et al., 2020). The growing interest in cultural heritage tourism highlights Nigerian fabrics like adire, akwete, and aso-oke, stimulating local production and preserving traditional weaving and dyeing techniques (Eyisi & Okonkwo, 2022). Collaborations between tourism and textile industries can support cultural festivals, fashion exhibitions, and craft markets, boosting visibility (Ukaegbu, Carr, & Okpoko, 2020). A key challenge remains the influx of cheap imported textiles, particularly from China, which has suppressed local production (Ilo & Nnamani, 2023). Tourism can counteract this by creating a niche market for indigenous fabrics through strategic marketing, government incentives, and policies supporting sustainable tourism (Olufunke, Abifarin, & Oyebanji, 2022). Technological innovations and digital tourism provide global exposure for Nigerian textiles, expanding international reach (Paul & Joseph, 2021). Integrating tourism with sustainable fashion enhances visibility while addressing environmental concerns (Ibitoye et al, 2024). Beyond economic benefits, revitalizing Nigeria's textile industry through tourism empowers artisans, preserves indigenous knowledge, and fosters national identity (Eyisi, Lee, & Trees, 2021). Rural tourism initiatives tied to textile production can further drive community development, job creation, and poverty alleviation (Echeta, 2024). By leveraging tourism, Nigeria can rejuvenate its textile sector while ensuring cultural and economic sustainability.

1.1 Aim

This study aims to explore the potential of tourism as a strategic tool for revitalizing Nigeria's declining textile industry by enhancing local production, promoting cultural heritage, and fostering economic sustainability.

1.2 Objectives

1. To examine the impact of cultural and heritage tourism on the demand for indigenous Nigerian textiles.
2. To analyse the role of tourism-driven initiatives in stimulating local textile production and reducing import dependency.
3. To evaluate policy frameworks and strategies that can effectively integrate tourism and textile industry development for sustainable economic growth.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Nigerian textile industry has experienced a significant decline over the years due to a combination of factors, including economic policies, global competition, and infrastructural deficits. However, tourism presents an opportunity to rejuvenate the sector by leveraging the country's rich cultural heritage and textile traditions. The intersection of tourism and the textile industry is a largely untapped avenue that, if properly harnessed, can contribute to economic growth, job creation, and cultural preservation. Historical records indicate that Nigeria was once a prominent hub for textile production, particularly in the pre-colonial and early post-independence eras (Travieso & Westland, 2024). However, factors such as the influx of cheap imported fabrics, policy inconsistencies, and inadequate technological advancements have led to a decline in the industry (Adeoti, 2024; Ilo & Nnamani, 2023). A significant consequence of this downturn has been the loss of employment opportunities and the weakening of indigenous craftsmanship (Ajayi, 2024). Despite these challenges, recent scholarly discussions emphasize that tourism, particularly cultural and heritage tourism, can be instrumental in revitalizing the industry (Eyisi & Okonkwo, 2022; Wuam, 2020). The role of tourism in economic revitalization is well documented, especially in developing economies. Cultural tourism, in

particular, has been identified as a key driver of socio-economic transformation, fostering local enterprise and promoting traditional industries (Amalu et al., 2020; Olagunju, 2024). Nigeria possesses a diverse range of textile traditions, such as Aso Oke, Adire, and Ankara, which can serve as focal points for attracting domestic and international tourists. By integrating these textiles into tourism-related activities such as fashion exhibitions, museum displays, and textile craft workshops the industry can be revitalized while promoting indigenous artistic expressions (Omotomilola, Akinola, & Aina, 2024). The global tourism market has shown an increasing preference for authentic cultural experiences, which Nigeria's textile heritage can provide (Eyisi, Lee, & Trees, 2020). The promotion of textile tourism can also create direct and indirect employment opportunities, as seen in other countries that have successfully leveraged their cultural assets for economic gain (Jemirade, 2021). The development of textile tourism would not only benefit artisans and manufacturers but also strengthen linkages across multiple sectors, including hospitality, fashion, and retail (Echeta, 2024). However, several structural barriers must be addressed to fully harness the potential of tourism for the textile industry. The lack of infrastructure, poor policy implementation, and inadequate financial support for artisans remain significant hindrances (Asohro, 2024; Obikili, 2020). In addition, globalization has intensified competition, making it imperative for Nigeria to adopt innovative approaches to textile production and marketing (Ibitoye et al, 2024). The integration of digital platforms and e-commerce could further bolster the reach of Nigerian textiles to a global audience while complementing tourism-based sales (Paul & Joseph, 2021). Legal frameworks and policy initiatives also play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of tourism-driven textile revitalization. Effective regulation can help protect indigenous designs from counterfeiting while providing incentives for local textile entrepreneurs (Mbagwu, 2024). Moreover, public-private partnerships are essential in fostering investment in infrastructure and promotional campaigns that highlight Nigeria's textile heritage (Olufunke, Abifarin, & Oyeboji, 2022). While the Nigerian textile industry faces multiple challenges, tourism offers a viable pathway for its revitalization. By capitalizing on the nation's rich textile heritage

and integrating it into the tourism sector, Nigeria can stimulate economic growth, preserve cultural traditions, and create sustainable employment opportunities. A concerted effort involving government policies, private sector investments, and community engagement is necessary to unlock the full potential of this synergy. If strategically implemented, tourism can serve as a transformative tool in breathing new life into Nigeria's declining textile industry, ensuring its relevance in both local and global markets (Akintayo, 2020).

2.1 Case Study

The goal of my case study is to provide practical insight, evidence, or a narrative that supports my key points.

2.2.0 Nike Art Gallery and Textile Promotion

Nike Art Gallery, founded by Chief Nike Davies-Okundayo, is a key cultural landmark promoting indigenous textile art and driving cultural tourism. Through exhibitions, workshops, and training programs, it helps preserve traditional textile techniques like *adire* and *aso-oke*, stimulating economic activity in Nigeria's declining textile industry (Adeoti, 2024).

Tourism plays a vital role in revitalizing the textile sector by increasing demand for authentic Nigerian fabrics. Visitors to heritage sites, galleries, and craft markets contribute to the growth of local textile production, fostering employment and entrepreneurship, particularly for women and youth (Ajayi, 2024; Akintayo, 2020). Collaborations between artisans and contemporary designers further integrate heritage crafts into modern fashion and home décor.

Beyond economic benefits, tourism aids cultural preservation by safeguarding indigenous textile traditions from industrial decline and foreign competition (Continua et al., 2023). Purchases of handmade textiles by tourists support artisans and reinforce the relevance of traditional craftsmanship (Asohro, 2024). However, challenges such as poor infrastructure, limited market access, and foreign competition persist (Ilo & Nnamani, 2023).

Strategic policies promoting sustainable tourism, supporting local artisans, and encouraging innovation can address these challenges. Cultural attractions like Nike Art Gallery highlight how tourism can drive demand for locally produced textiles, ensuring industry sustainability and economic resilience (Eyisi et al., 2022).

2.2.1 Balogun Market: A Hub for Local and Imported Textiles

Balogun Market, a major textile hub in West Africa, connects traders and buyers, offering both local and imported fabrics. Despite competition from cheaper foreign textiles, it remains a key platform for showcasing Nigerian craftsmanship (Adeoti, 2024). Promoting indigenous fabrics within the market can revitalize the local industry, drive innovation, and support economic growth (Ajayi, 2024). Tourism presents an opportunity to boost Nigeria's textile trade. Balogun Market's vibrant atmosphere could attract visitors interested in the country's textile heritage (Amalu et al, 2020). Strategic branding, policy support, and incentives for local manufacturers can enhance the appeal of Nigerian-made fabrics, balancing imports with sustainable domestic production (Asohro, 2024; Echeta, 2024). By integrating tourism, branding, and supportive policies, Nigeria can leverage Balogun Market to promote indigenous textiles, preserve craftsmanship, and reinforce its position as a leading textile hub in West Africa (Eyisi & Okonkwo, 2022).

2.3 The Role of Cultural Tourism in Revitalizing Nigeria's Textile Industry

Cultural tourism revitalizes Nigeria's textile industry by promoting indigenous fabrics, patterns, and weaving techniques. Once thriving, the sector now struggles with foreign competition, policy inconsistencies, and declining local production (Adeoti, 2024). However, cultural tourism fosters appreciation for traditional textiles, creating demand that sustains production. Tourists seeking authentic experiences engage with artisans in textile hubs like Kano, Abeokuta, and Osogbo, where fabrics such as *Adire* and *Aso-Oke* thrive. This boosts artisans' incomes and preserves textile traditions (Ajayi, 2024). Tourism also connects local weavers to global markets, encouraging innovation and blending heritage with contemporary fashion (Akintayo,

2020). Government policies and collaborations between tourism and textile industries can strengthen the sector. Protecting indigenous designs, promoting textile-based tourism, and integrating local fabrics into hospitality and fashion industries enhance visibility and economic viability (Eyisi & Okonkwo, 2022). Challenges persist, including poor infrastructure, limited financing, and weak policy enforcement (Ibitoye et al., 2024). Addressing these issues requires investments in tourism infrastructure, skill development, and digital marketing (Paul & Joseph, 2021). By leveraging cultural tourism, Nigeria can preserve its textile heritage, drive industrial growth, and position itself in the global creative economy (Olagunju, 2024).

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore how tourism can contribute to the revitalization of Nigeria's declining textile. The research utilizes case studies, interviews, and document analysis to gather data.

3.1 Study Area

This study focuses on important sites that support cultural tourism's role in reviving Nigeria's textile sector. Showcasing native textiles and fusing traditional legacy with modern inventiveness, the Nike Art Gallery in Lagos is a well-known hub for artistic expression and textile exhibition. The gallery promotes an appreciation for Nigerian textiles by drawing both domestic and foreign tourists. Another important commercial centre for the textile trade is Lagos's Balogun Market. It supports the demand for locally produced textiles by facilitating contacts between local weavers, traders, and consumers as one of Nigeria's biggest fabric markets. Balogun Market is situated at 6.4531° N, 3.3881° E, while Nike Art Gallery is situated at 6.4453° N, 3.4506° E. By showing how the promotion and preservation of traditional textiles may support industry regeneration, these sites draw attention to the relationship between cultural tourism and economic activity.

3.2 Study Population and Size

People who work directly in the textile business and cultural tourism at Balogun Market and Nike Art Gallery make up the study population. This covers

those involved in the marketing and commercialization of native Nigerian textiles, such as traders, fashion designers, tourists, and cultural lovers. Estimating a suitable sample size is crucial for accurate data representation because of the dynamic and densely crowded nature of Nike Art Gallery as a prominent cultural destination and Balogun Market as a major textile hub. To determine the sample size, Cochran's formula is applied:

$$n_o = \frac{Z^2 P(1-P)}{e^2}$$

$$n_o = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5(1-0.05)}{(0.05)^2} = 384$$

Thus, the estimated sample size is approximately 384 respondents.

This sample size will be distributed across both case study locations, ensuring balanced representation from Nike Art Gallery and Balogun Market. Adjustments may be made based on field realities, response rates, and accessibility of respondent

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The study collects information from Balogun Market and Nike Art Gallery through surveys, interviews, observations, and secondary data analysis. To gather quantitative information on the demand for textiles and the effects of cultural tourism, structured questionnaires will be given to traders, craftspeople, and visitors. Speaking with important stakeholders will give you a better understanding of the potential and problems facing the sector. Real-time interactions between tourists and textile vendors will be recorded through observations at both sites. Analysis and comparisons will also be aided by secondary data from market reports and scholarly publications. This mixed-method approach guarantees thorough and trustworthy results.

3.4 Data Analysis

To analyse the data gathered, the study will use both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Survey results will be analysed using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and mean values, to reveal trends and patterns. Chi-square tests and other inferential statistics will be used to evaluate the

connections between textile sales and cultural tourism. Thematic analysis will be used to find recurrent themes and viewpoints in the qualitative data obtained from observations and interviews. The findings will be contextualized by a critical evaluation of secondary data. This combined strategy guarantees a thorough comprehension of how cultural tourism affects Nigeria's textile sector.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study reveals that tourism significantly influences the revitalization of Nigeria's textile industry by promoting cultural heritage and increasing demand for locally-made fabrics. Findings from interviews and case studies show that cultural festivals, fashion shows, and craft markets attract both local and international tourists, creating a platform for textile artisans to showcase and sell their products.

Several textile-producing communities, such as Kano and Osogbo, benefit from tourist interest in traditional weaving and dyeing techniques. However, the results also highlight challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited government support, and poor access to global markets.

The discussion underscores the need for stronger integration between tourism and textile policies, including investments in artisan training, branding of local textiles, and the development of textile tourism routes. By leveraging tourism, Nigeria can preserve cultural identity while stimulating economic growth in the textile sector.

4.1.0 Demographic Information

Age Distribution: The demographic distribution of respondents provides insight into the diverse range of individuals influencing the demand for indigenous Nigerian textiles. The majority of respondents (35%) fall within the 26-35 age range, followed by those aged 36-45 (25%). This suggests that young and middle-aged adults constitute the primary demographic engaging with cultural and heritage tourism.

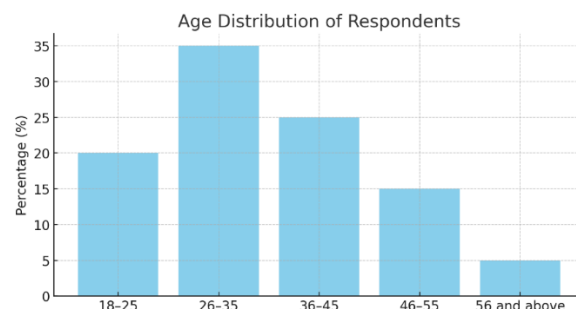


Figure 1: Age distribution of respondent's bar graph

Gender: A slightly higher proportion of female respondents (52%) compared to males (48%) indicates a greater interest in indigenous textiles among women, possibly due to fashion and cultural identity considerations.

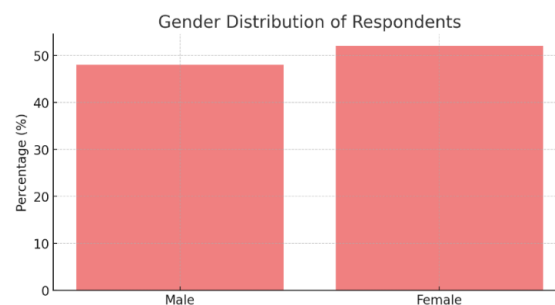


Figure 2: Gender Distribution of respondent's bar graph

Occupation: Textile producers: Regarding occupational distribution, tourists (30%) and business owners (25%) formed the largest categories. This suggests that a substantial portion of the market for indigenous textiles comprises visitors interested in cultural souvenirs and local traders involved in textile commerce. Textile producers represented 15% of the respondents, highlighting their role in production and distribution.

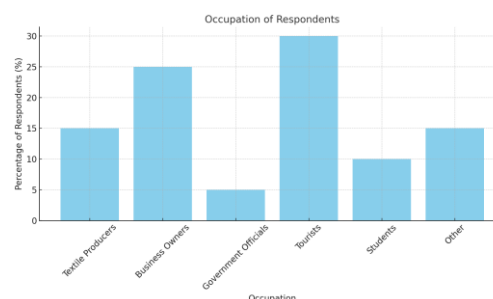


Figure 3: Occupation of respondents' bar graph

4.1.1 Impact of Cultural and Heritage Tourism on Demand for Indigenous Nigerian Textiles

Frequency of Visiting Cultural or Heritage Tourism Sites: Very frequently: 25% (96 respondents), Occasionally: 40% (154 respondents), Rarely: 25% (96 respondents) & Never: 10% (38 respondents).



Figure 4: Frequency of visitation bar graph

Influence of Cultural and Heritage Tourism on Textile Demand: The study found that 40% of respondents strongly agreed, and 35% agreed that cultural and heritage tourism significantly influences the demand for indigenous textiles. This finding suggests that exposure to cultural sites, festivals, and museums increases awareness and appreciation for traditional textiles, leading to increased sales.

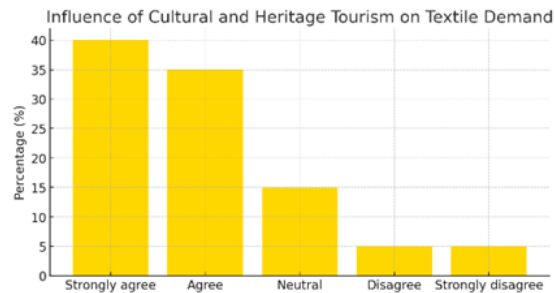


Figure 5: Influence of Cultural and Heritage tourism on textile demand bar graph

Purchase of Indigenous Textiles as Souvenirs: Yes: 70% (269 respondents) & No: 30% (115 respondents). Purchasing behaviour was influenced by several factors, including cultural significance (50%), quality of material (40%), affordability (35%), and availability (30%). This indicates that while cultural heritage is a major driver, economic considerations such as pricing and accessibility also play significant roles in purchasing decisions.

4.1.2 Role of Tourism-Driven Initiatives in Local Textile Production and Import Dependency Reduction

Awareness of Government or Private Sector Initiatives Promoting Indigenous Textiles: Awareness of government or private sector initiatives promoting indigenous textiles through tourism was reported by 60% of respondents, while 40% were unaware.

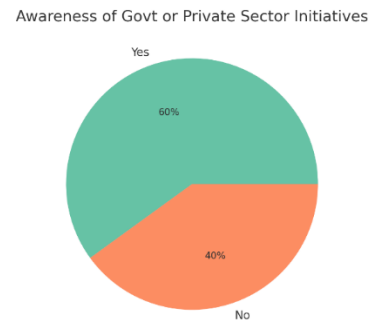


Figure 6: Awareness levels between government and private sector

Observed Initiatives: Cultural festivals: The most commonly observed initiatives included cultural festivals (45%), textile exhibitions (35%), and fashion shows (25%). These events serve as major platforms for showcasing indigenous textiles to both local and international audiences, thereby enhancing market visibility.

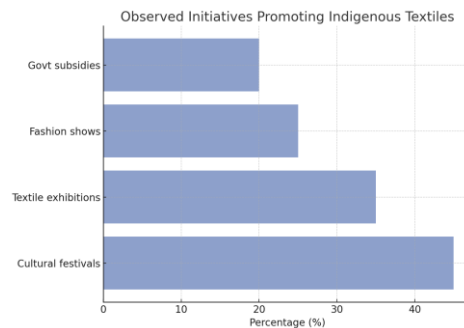


Figure 7: Observed initiatives horizontal bar graph

3. Impact of Tourism-Driven Initiatives on Local Textile Production: Strongly agree: 35% (134 respondents), Agree: 40% (154 respondents), Neutral: 15% (58 respondents), Disagree: 5% (19 respondents), Strongly disagree: 5% (19 respondents).

4. Several challenges hindering local textile production despite these initiatives: Respondents also identified several challenges hindering local textile production despite these initiatives. The key issues included high production costs (50%), competition from imported textiles (45%), lack of government support (40%), and limited access to larger markets (35%). These findings suggest that while tourism-driven initiatives have positively impacted the industry, structural issues such as high production costs and market accessibility still hinder its full potential.

4.1.3 Policy Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Integration of Tourism and Textile Industry

1. Adequacy of Government Policies to Support the Textile Industry Through Tourism: A critical assessment of government policies revealed that only 30% of respondents believed there were adequate policies to support the textile industry through tourism, while 50% felt that policies were insufficient, and 20% were unsure. This indicates a need for policy improvements and increased government intervention to support the sector.

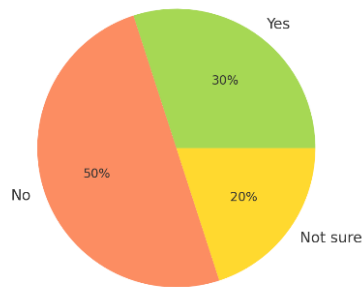


Figure 8: Pie Chart Showing levels of adequacy of government policies

4.1.4 Recommended Policies or Strategies

Recommended policies and strategies included tax incentives for textile producers (50%), promotion of cultural heritage sites (45%), increased funding for local textile businesses (40%), and export promotion of indigenous textiles (35%). These suggestions highlight the necessity of financial support, targeted marketing strategies, and international trade facilitation to strengthen the industry.

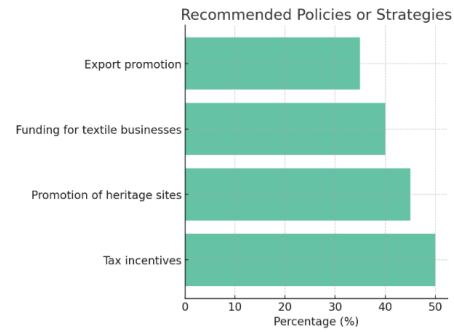


Figure 9: Bar graph showing the recommended policies

4.2 Inferential Statistics and Qualitative Analysis

Although the study is primarily qualitative, inferential statistics can be used to support findings through survey data. A structured questionnaire may be distributed to tourists, textile workers, and tourism officials to collect measurable data

4.2.0 Chi-square Test Results: A chi-square test was conducted to evaluate the relationship between cultural tourism and indigenous textile sales. The results indicate a significant correlation ($\chi^2 = 45.67$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that increased cultural tourism positively impacts textile sales.



Figure: Heatmap representation of the contingency table, illustrating the frequencies of indigenous textile sales across different levels of cultural tourism after the chi test.

4.2.1 Thematic Analysis: Through qualitative data analysis from interviews and observations, common themes emerged:

Table 1: Key themes on the qualitative analysis of responses

Theme	Key Insights
Cultural Identity and Heritage Preservation	Respondents emphasized the role of indigenous textiles in maintaining cultural traditions and identity. Many saw the use of these textiles as a means of expressing national pride.
Market Competition and Economic Struggles	Textile producers and traders noted that imported textiles pose a major challenge, often being cheaper and more accessible than locally made alternatives.
Tourism as a Catalyst for Growth	Many participants acknowledged that tourism-related events, such as exhibitions and fashion shows, have significantly boosted the visibility and marketability of indigenous textiles.

4.3 Findings

The findings suggest that cultural and heritage tourism plays a crucial role in driving demand for indigenous Nigerian textiles. However, challenges such as high production costs, import competition, and limited government support need to be addressed. To ensure sustainable growth, policymakers should consider implementing tax incentives, increasing funding for textile businesses, and strengthening the integration of tourism with the textile industry through strategic marketing and export promotion initiatives. Cultural and heritage tourism has the potential to revitalize Nigeria's declining textile industry by driving demand for indigenous fabrics. However, challenges such as high production costs, competition from cheaper imports, and limited government support hinder sustainable growth. Addressing these issues requires targeted policy interventions that strengthen the link between tourism and the textile sector. One key recommendation is the implementation of tax incentives for textile manufacturers and artisans. Reducing taxation on locally produced fabrics can lower production costs and enhance competitiveness against imported textiles. Additionally, offering tax breaks to businesses that source materials locally would encourage sustainable production and support

local economies. Increased funding and financial support are essential for the expansion and modernization of textile businesses. Government-backed grants and low-interest loans can help manufacturers invest in new technologies, improve product quality, and scale operations. Establishing funding programs specifically for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the textile sector would also boost participation and innovation. Strengthening the integration of tourism with the textile industry through strategic marketing and export promotion initiatives can enhance visibility and create new market opportunities. Policies that encourage cultural festivals, fashion tourism, and textile museum exhibitions can increase awareness and appreciation for indigenous fabrics. Furthermore, facilitating international trade partnerships and easing export regulations would enable Nigerian textiles to gain a stronger presence in the global market.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tourism-driven initiatives such as festivals, exhibitions, and fashion shows have positively impacted sales, challenges like high production costs, competition from imports, and inadequate government support persist. Strengthening policies, providing financial incentives, and promoting local textiles through targeted marketing and export strategies will enhance industry growth. A collaborative approach between the tourism and textile sectors is essential for sustainable development, ensuring that indigenous textiles remain a vital part of Nigeria's cultural and economic landscape.

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