

Utilization of Jute Fabric to Enhance the Entrepreneur Skill of the Youths through the Production of Jute Handbags

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Abstract: This research determined the use of Jute Fabric in the production of ladies bags, enhanced the entrepreneurial skills of youths and determined the utilization of jute fabric handbag production to enhance entrepreneurial skills of youths among selected final year students of Home science Department of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. Three research questions and two null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance, guided the study. The sample size consists of a total of 25 second Year students of the department of Home Economics Michael Okpara University of Agriculture. The 25 registered second year students participated in the cross-sectional study. The instrument for data collection in this study was a Questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage of occurrence. The overall acceptance of the Jute bag was attributed to the quality texture, colour and good size possessed by the Jute bag. Hence this work concludes that the entrepreneurial skills of the youths can be enhanced with the knowledge of Jute bag production which will greatly reduce unemployment of youths. Also the ladies' Jute handbag produced in this study has been shown to be economically viable and acceptable by the consumers.

Key words: Jute Fabric • Entrepreneurial Skills • Youths and Students

INTRODUCTION

Jute is the common name given to the fibre obtained from the bark of the two cultivated species of the genus *Corchorus*, viz, *C. capsularis* (white jute) and *C. Olitorius* (Tossa jute) of the family *Tiliaceae*. Jute is cultivated in the alluvial plains in the tropical and subtropical zones in South Asia region. India alone, accounts for about 50% of the world production of jute and allied fibre [1-3].

The plant is a bast fiber obtained from the stalks of the dicotyledonous plant that belongs to the genus *Corchorus* and the order *Tiliaceae*. Two species of corchorous, *C. capsularis* and *C. olitorius* are commonly utilized for the production of jute. Moreover *Hibiscus cannabinus* and *Hibiscus sabdareffa* allied fibers are also produced in similar climatic condition [4].

Jute plant grows to 2.5 to 3.5 meters in height at maturity. Jute fibre is extracted from the stem of the plant by a microbiological process known as retting. Retting of

jute normally carried out in running water, may also be done chemically. Typical yield of fibre based on the stem from which it is derived is about 6% by weight [5].

The Jute plant is a visco-elastic natural fibre. It is one of the best raw materials for the production of packaging materials. Particularly air & light passing and hydrophilic properties having netting composite structure along with hooking and stake holdingness of jute gunny bag uphold it as best effective and common packaging material for food grains and similar type of commodities. Twine, gunny bag, hessian, carpet backing, cotton bagging, wool pack, various mats, wall cover, floor cover, upholstery, tarpaulin, etc. are the traditional products. On the other hand, new and diversified products have developed with the exploration of its various characteristic properties mentioned in as above [6-8].

Among all the natural fibers, jute fiber appears to be a promising fiber and constitutes large area of investigation due to its good mechanical properties compared with other natural fibers, such as sisal, coir and



Fig. 1: Jute Plants

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org>

ramie [9]. Several authors have studied the continuous jute fiber composites from different aspects, for example, mechanical properties [10, 11], the effect of fiber treatments on mechanical properties [12, 13], dynamic mechanical properties [14], physical properties [15] and processing and microstructures [16].

In traditional textile machinery Jute was used as fibers having cellulose (vegetable fiber content) and lignin (wood fiber content). But, the major breakthrough came when the automobile, pulp and paper and the furniture and bedding industries started to use jute and its allied fibers with their non-woven and composite technology to manufacture nonwovens, technical textiles and composites [17]. Therefore, jute has changed its textile fiber outlook and steadily heading towards its newer identity, i.e., wood fiber. As a textile fiber, jute has reached its peak from where there is no hope of progress, but as a wood fiber jute has many promising features [18].

The Jute fiber is used in the manufacture of a number of fabrics, such as Hessian cloth, sacking, scrim, carpet backing cloth (CBC) and canvas. Hessian, lighter than sacking, is used for bags, wrappers, wall-coverings, upholstery and home furnishings. Sacking, a fabric made of heavy jute fibers, has its use in the name. CBC made of jute comes in two types. Primary CBC provides a tufting surface, while secondary CBC is bonded onto the primary backing for an overlay. Jute packaging is used as an eco-friendly substitute [19].

Diversified jute products are becoming more and more valuable to the consumer today. Among these are espadrilles, soft sweaters and cardigans, floor coverings, home textiles, high performance technical textiles, geotextiles, composites and more.

Many advantages have been attributed to Jute` as a home textile, either replacing cotton or blending with it. It is a strong, durable, color and light-fast fiber. Its UV

protection, sound and heat insulation, low thermal conduction and anti-static properties make it a wise choice in home décor. Also, fabrics made of jute fibers are carbon-dioxide neutral and naturally decomposable. These properties are also why jute can be used in high performance technical textiles [20-22].

With the awareness of environmental pollution and degradation along with health hazardness of modern commodities particularly for their non-destructive and various greenhouse gasses generated during their uses and production time, a world wise opinion of the general mass of the people is increasing against the uses of these harmful products. So, alternative and natural products are gradually getting attraction towards general mass. Against the backdrop of growing global concern for environment, jute being a natural fibre can certainly be considered as a potential candidate for many of the eco-friendly products that will replace majority of today's popular products posing severe threats to our environment. Therefore, this work seeks the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills of youths through the production of ladies handbag using jute fabric.

- The general objective of this study is the utilization of jute fabric for the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills of youths through the production of ladies handbag. To determine if Jute Fabric can be used in production of ladies bags to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of youths, Determine how the utilization of jute fabric handbag production can be used to enhance entrepreneurial skills of youths, also, determine if this products can be commercialized for economic benefits.

The following questions will guide this study;

- Can Jute Fabric be used in production of ladies bags to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of youths?
- How can the utilization of jute fabric handbag production be used to enhance entrepreneurial skills of youths?
- Can this products be commercialized for economic benefits?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional study will be carried out on 2018/2019 session first year students of the department of Home Economics in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike to determine the possibility of using jute bag production on the entrepreneurial skills

enhancement. The subjects of study will be taught how to make jute bags and assessed theoretically and practically.

Study Area: The study area for the study is Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. located between the following coordinates; Latitude 05°29' North and Longitude 07°33' east elevated 122m above the sea level located in the tropical rain forest.

The Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, originally the Federal University of Agriculture, is a federal university in Umudike, Abia State, Nigeria was established as a specialized University by a Federal Government of Nigeria Decree No 48 of November 1992. It began formal activities in May 1993 with the appointment of the first Council and Vice-Chancellor Professor Placid C. Njoku on 27 May 1993, while other key officials of the University were appointed later.

The first set of students were admitted into the institution during the 1993/94 academic year with a student population of 82. This figure is at great variance with the recent statistics that put the students' population at about Twenty-seven Thousand, Seven Hundred and Fifty (27, 750) undergraduates, Four Thousand, Five Hundred and Ninety- eight (4,598) post graduates and Six Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirty (6,730) part-time students at the Continuing Education Centre [23]. This brings the total number of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike students to Thirty-nine Thousand and Seventy-eight (39,078).

The study populations will be 2018/2019 session second year students of the department of Home Economics in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. The population of this study will be 25 registered second year students which are registered for the session.

Sample Size Determination: A total of 25 second Year students of the department of Home Economics Michael Okpara University of Agriculture are registered for the 2018/2019 Academic Session. The 25 registered second year students participated in the cross-sectional study.

A written consent will be given to the students and only students who gave their consent participated in the study.

Sample Collection: The Jute fabric will be purchased from Ariaria main market Aba, Abia state Nigeria.

Materials: The Jute bag will be produced to ensure low cost of production and economic viability. The materials used in the production of the Jute bag include the following;

Table 1: Materials used in the Production

S/n	Materials	Description	Quantity
1.	Jute fabrics (laminated and non-laminated)		
2.	Dye stuff		
3.	Printing gum		
4.	Chemicals and auxiliaries		
5.	PVC buckle and bamboo sticks		
6.	Sewing thread		
7.	Hook and handle		
8.	Runner		
9.	Chain		
10.	Lining		
11.	Cloth		
12.	Eyelet		
13.	Packing materials		
14.	Label		
15.	Scissors		
16.	Measuring Tape		
17.	Cutting Table		
18.	Sawing Machine		

Production Process: The following process will be observed during the production of the bag;

- Creation of proper designs and patterns
- Measuring and cutting out an even square of the created fabric patterns
- The square will be placed on the sewing machine and a straight stitch will be sewn along all of the edges to prevent the fabric from fraying.
- The fabric will be folded in half width-wise so that one side of the square is closed by the fold and there are three remaining open sides. Two of the remaining open sides will be pinned in place with straight pins, leaving one side open for the top of the bag.
- The fabric will be sewn together along the two pinned sides using a straight stitch and a 1/2-inch seam. A sack will be formed with an open top.
- The bag will be turned inside while stitching out so that all of the stitching is hidden.
- The top edges of the bag will be folded down inside the bag approximately 1/2 inch and topstitch will be sewn along the edges.
- A long piece of twine will be Cut for a handle and one end of the twine will be sewn to the inside left side of the bag using a double stitch and one end to the inside right side of the bag using a double stitch.
- Other consumable such as lining, buckles, chains, runner, handles of clothes, bamboo and canes will be fixed to the bag.
- The stitching will be reinforced multiple times by backstitching to ensure the handle is secure.

Training of Research Assistants: Research assistants will be trained to assist the researcher in training the

subjects how to make jute. The research assistants will be trained and guided by the researcher. The training will include elementary knowledge of Jute fabric, purpose of the survey, organization of the study, interviewing techniques and recording techniques.

They Were Also Taught How to Make Jute Bags

Data Collection: 10 self-administered questionnaires will be distributed. The copies of the questionnaire will be checked for completeness and a serial number was given to each for easy identification and recall. A manual coding guide will be developed to facilitate data entry into the computer. Each questionnaire will be coded and entered into a computer which will be facilitated by the developed coding guide. The knowledge questions will be marked and scored by giving ten (10) marks to anyone who answered correctly, thereby making a total of 100 marks for the ten (10) questions. This was also graded into poor knowledge for those who scored 0-39 marks, 40-49 as fair knowledge, 50-69 as good knowledge and 70-100 as Excellent knowledge. Sensory evaluation was be conducted to determine the customer acceptability of the product using the 9-Hedonic scale;

- EXTREMELY LIKE-9
- VERY MUCH LIKE-8
- MODERATELY LIKE - 7
- SLIGHTLY LIKE-6
- NEITHER LIKE NOR DISLIKE-5
- SLIGHTLY DISLIKE-4
- MODERATELY DISLIKE-3
- VERY MUCH DISLIKE - 2
- EXTREMELY LIKE DISLIKE - 1

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage.

Statistical Analysis: Data will be coded, entered and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Data will be presented as percentage and frequency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the result of data collected for the study. The results were presented in accordance with the objectives that guided the study. The major findings of the study were indicated and followed by discussion of the findings.

Table 1: Table Showing test scores of Knowledge of the respondents on Jute Bag making

Grading of scores	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent (70-100%)	8	32
Good (50-69%)	10	40
Fair (40-49%)	4	16
Poor (0-39%)	3	12
Total	25	100.0

Table 2: Table showing responses on the texture of the Jute bag

S/N	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely dislike	1	6.7
2	Very much dislike	1	6.7
3	Moderately dislike	1	6.7
4	Slightly dislike	1	6.7
5	Neither like nor dislike	1	6.7
6	Slightly like	2	13.3
7	Moderately like	1	6.7
8	Very much like	5	33.3
9	Extremely like	2	13.3
Total		15	100.0

Table 4.1 presents the test scores of the respondents on Jute Bag making. The result revealed that 32% of the respondents had excellent knowledge (70-100%) of Jute Bag making, more of the respondents (40%) had good knowledge Good (50-69%) of Jute bag making, few of the respondents (16%) had fair knowledge of Jute bag making while lesser of the respondents (12%) had poor knowledge of Jute bag making [24]. This result further implies that with more of the respondents having a high excellent and good knowledge of Jute bag making, the knowledge of Jute bag production has effectively been passed to the respondents and this has enhanced the entrepreneurial skills of the youths.

Table 2 presents the sensory evaluation for texture of the Jute bag. The result shows that; few of the respondents (6.7%) extremely disliked the texture of the product, 6.7% of the respondents very much disliked the texture of the product, 6.7% of the respondents moderately disliked, 6.7% of the respondents slightly disliked and 6.7% of the respondents neither like nor disliked the texture of the product while 13.3% slightly liked the texture of the product, 6.7% also moderately liked the texture of the product, more of the respondents (33.3%) very much liked the texture of the product and 13.3% of the respondents extremely liked the texture of the product. The high preference (46.6%) of the texture of the product reflects acceptance of the texture of the product by the consumers [25].

Table 3: Table for sensory analysis for Colour of the Jute bag

S/N	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely dislike	1	6.7
2	Very much dislike	1	6.7
3	Moderately dislike	2	13.3
4	Slightly dislike	1	6.7
5	Neither like nor dislike	1	6.7
6	Slightly like	1	6.7
7	Moderately like	1	6.7
8	Very much like	4	26.7
9	Extremely like	3	20.0
Total		15	100.0

Table 4: Table for Sensory Analysis of size of the Jute Bag

S/N	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely dislike	1	6.7
2	Very much dislike	1	6.7
3	Moderately dislike	1	6.7
4	Slightly dislike	1	6.7
5	Neither like nor dislike	1	6.7
6	Slightly like	2	13.3
7	Moderately like	1	6.7
8	Very much like	2	13.3
9	Extremely like	5	33.3
Total		15	100.0

Table 3 presents the sensory evaluation for the colour of the Jute bag. The result shows that 6.7% of the respondents extremely disliked the colour of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents very much disliked the colour of the Jute bag, 13.3% of the respondents moderately disliked the colour of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents slightly disliked the colour of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents neither liked nor disliked the colour of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents of the respondents slightly liked the colour of the Jute bag [26], 6.7% of the respondents moderately liked the colour of the Jute bag, 26.7% of the respondents very much liked the colour of the Jute bag while 20% of the respondents extremely liked the colour of the Jute bag. The high preference for the colour of the Jute bag shows that the bag has quality colour and also reflects acceptance by the consumers.

Table 4 presents the sensory evaluation for the size of the Jute bag. The result indicates that 6.7% of the respondents extremely disliked the size of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents very much disliked the size of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents moderately disliked the size of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents slightly disliked the size of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents neither liked nor disliked the size of the Jute bag, 13.3% of the respondents slightly liked the size of the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents moderately liked the size of the Jute bag, 13.3% of the respondents very much liked the size of the Jute bag and 33.3% of the respondents

Table 5: Table for Overall Acceptability of the Jute Bag

S/N	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely dislike	1	6.7
2	Very much dislike	1	6.7
3	Moderately dislike	1	6.7
4	Slightly dislike	1	6.7
5	Neither like nor dislike	2	13.3
6	Slightly like	1	6.7
7	Moderately like	1	6.7
8	Very much like	2	13.3
9	Extremely like	5	33.3
Total		15	100.0

extremely liked the size of the product. This result implies that with the high preference (46.6%) for the size of the Jute bag, the Jute bag has good size that is acceptable by the consumers [27].

[28] Table 5 presents the overall acceptability of the Jute bag. The result indicates that 6.7% of the respondents extremely disliked the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents very much disliked the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents moderately disliked the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents slightly disliked the Jute bag, 13.3% of the respondents neither liked nor disliked the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents slightly liked the Jute bag, 6.7% of the respondents moderately liked the Jute bag, 13.3% of the respondents liked the Jute bag very much while 33.3% of the respondents extremely liked the Jute bag. This result implies that the Jute bag has a high overall acceptance (46.6%) by the consumers. This can be attributed to the quality texture, colour and good size possessed by the Jute bag [29].

CONCLUSION

This study produced a ladies' Jute handbag and has showed that Knowledge of Jute bag production can effectively enhance the entrepreneurial skills of youths. The result of this study also implied that the Jute bag has quality texture, good colour, good size and was generally accepted by the consumers. The overall acceptance of the Jute bag was attributed to the quality texture, colour and good size possessed by the Jute bag. Hence this work concludes that the entrepreneurial skills of the youths can be enhanced with the knowledge of Jute bag production which will greatly reduce unemployment of youths. Also the ladies' Jute handbag produced in this study has been shown to be economically viable and acceptable by the consumers.

Recommendation: Based on the findings of this study, this study recommends the following;

- Further research should be conducted to further assess the potentials of Jute bag in reducing unemployment through entrepreneurial enhancement with focus on the general public not just the youths.
- Considering the durability of Jute products Jute handbags should be adopted by the ladies
- The produced ladies Jute bag should be improved on to have more competitive advantage than the contemporary bags.

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