

## **Diversity Of Jewellery: The Account Of The Northern, Middle And Southern Ghana**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

The value of Jewellery and its outlook in Ghana transcends three different historical sectors; the Northern, Middle and Southern enclaves. In Ghana jewellery is admired and well cherished by many. It plays a vital role for Ghanaians in various meaningful ways that cannot be underestimated in value and concept. With this immense value of jewellery in Ghana, little or no account has been given to the scope of jewellery identifiable to each enclave and whether or not there are peculiarities with jewellery used per each of the enclaves. This has become a concern, which the jewellery industry needs to pay attention to. This paper discusses the dispensational Jewellery across the enclaves in Ghana and its distinctions from the past during the Gold Coast era to the present-day Ghana. This research seeks to bring to the limelight the philosophical underpinnings of various elements that distinguish and influence jewellery production from the various enclaves traceable from the past to the present in Ghana. A qualitative method of research was used to gather and synthesize the data. Theories of culture, structural functionalism, traditional art aesthetic, adaptation, and enculturation were applied using the interdisciplinary theoretical approach. A total of 162 respondents were used for the study. Results obtained indicated that whereas the jewellery differs significantly from one enclave to the other in Ghana, their underpinning patterns are derived from the cultures of these different enclaves. The appreciation of the Ghanaian jewellery is dependent on the kind of design it bears. The enclave that produced it influences each design. The study indicated the enormous improvement that the current trend of jewellery is enjoying due to computer techniques applied, enormous use of machines coupled with intricate tools used in production, which was not the case centuries ago. The study concluded that more variety of jewellery in terms of its design, integration of materials and concept of its use are eminent of being produced in the next five years. The major challenge will be not to miss the identity of the Ghanaian culture with regard to the enclaves in Ghana.

**Keywords:** Aesthetic, Concept, Culture, Design, Jewellery, Symbol, Tradition, Value

### **1.0 Introduction**

Adornment of the body with jewellery by the Ghanaian started centuries ago. Even before colonial rule took over Gold Coast, the use of jewellery was prominent (Labi & Ansah, 2008). Interestingly, Erik (2004) contends that while the country was shaping itself from Northern Territories, Ashanti, Gold Coast Colony and Trans-Volta Togoland as seen in Figure 1 to the present-day sixteen regions of Ghana, jewellery was serving symbolic and ceremonial purposes among the people occupying these territories. A recent discussion by

Odotei (2002), significantly reminds us that history of Jewellery in Ghana started as a commodity for status and cultural purposes arguably in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. This then metamorphosed as an additional purpose to the belief that jewellery can serve as a means of protection and body development (Apenteng, 2015). This philosophy influenced the design and techniques of jewellery production across the Northern, Middle and Southern sectors of the country. What is missing and has not been clearly defined is the outstanding design that defines each of the sectors or enclaves, the philosophies behind the designs and the techniques that led to their production with the addition of who introduced who to what and who is predominantly known for what. The intention of this paper is to find answers to these questions.



**Figure 1:** Map of Gold Coast

**Source:** Pre-independence regions of Ghana.svg – Wikipedia 2021.

Kotoku (2008) ascertains however that, because of the value of jewellery for the Ghanaian, bits and pieces of it were found around the country centuries ago before documentation. In the fifteenth century through the Numu blacksmiths and jewellers from the Mande clan, iron and aluminium metals were used in producing jewellery for the ears, arms, and legs in the northern part of Ghana particularly among the Dagombas, Kassenas, Nankanes and Sisalas. Surfaces of these jewellery are naturally rough. Shape and design were simple geometry mostly round and oval. Though sand casting was applied as the manufacturing process, the focus was more on forging and coiling (Larbi & Ansah, 2008). Another important feature to note was the account that Jewellery were made using a combination of leather and cowry to adorn the head and across the shoulders. The focus was less on designs but more on the fulfilment of religious and cultural significance (Kemevor & Duku, 2013). The account of Garrard (1980), professed beads, regalia and rings were jewellery identified with the middle sector of Ghana. He stated that a town called Nsoko or Begho in the Brong Ahafo region established the evidence of jewellery in the middle sector. Suffice to say the Bonos and the Asantes made a case for jewellery by employing brass metal to cast decorated anklets, straps, rings, bracelets and chains for royals. The Asantes used gold

metal to produce jewellery with traditional symbols as the main design for chiefs and superiors to celebrate traditional occasions. Among the middle sector, historically, jewellery and decorative pieces were set aside unambiguously for royalty as such those jewellery were crafted to look like the original pieces associated with chieftaincy in Bono and Asante state (Wilson, 2002). The northerners and other foreigners who the Asantes overpowered in war and used to advance jewellery production in the middle sector, expressed and used the filigree and casting techniques. Their designs were true natural-object- made with most of them being animal symbols believed to have a cultural link.

Leaves, gold-plaited regalia, beads were geared towards festivals (Adom, 2016) and ritual celebrations as a means of jewellery used along the south. The south made leaves from specific trees as a form of necklace, wrist and headband. The spirit behind these leaves is for protection and spiritual connotation though it serves as jewellery. This jewellery is common among the Ga-Adangmes, part of Fantes and the Nzemas. In fact, this type of jewellery has its design in the way it is arranged and/or formed around the body. It is clear that leather and fabric-integrated jewellery is also common amongst, the Ga-Adangme and Ewes who have occupied the coastal west part of Ghana (Kwakye-Opong, 2012). Arguably among the sectors, it is the south that is known for the use of beads centuries ago till now. The traditional settings of jewellery among the Ga Adangmes are grounded on sand and glass beads with the most expensive ones being the stone beads. They used beads for their festivals and puberty rites. Ayensu (1997) pointed out that status and rites of some of the cultures in the south are associated with the use of beads. He again argued that the Fantes, Nzemas and other tribes along the southern sector make crowns, headgears, finger rings, shoulder straps, amulets and anklets out of gold material or gold-plaited metals for use by their chiefs and traditional authorities. The Fante confederation influenced their jewellery products with traditional symbols and beliefs (Gyan, Abbey, & Baffoe, 2020). The techniques for production by the south enclave were mainly acquired from the foreigners who came to trade along the coast. The genesis of jewellery from Gold Coast to Ghana as accounted for above has shown diversity in aesthetic, function and cultural values placed on jewellery. Going forward in this paper one can figure out the types of jewellery and its design and how it has metamorphosed in this contemporary times.

## **2.0 Methodology**

This study was carried out in Ghana among 10 out of the 16 regions. Ghana is located at the West of Africa. It shares boundary with Cote d' Ivoire at the West, Burkina Faso at the North, Togo at the East and The Gulf of Guinea at the south. Its land size is 238,540 sq km (92,101sq mi) and a total coastline of 539km (334.9mi). Figure 2 indicates the map of Ghana and the regions that were selected for the study. These regions were selected for their origination and spread of jewellery and its use across Ghana (Garrard, 1980; Labi & Ansah, 2008).



A: Ghana map showing all the regions

B: Arrows showing regions of study

**Figure 2:** Map of Ghana (A and B)

**Source:** *ghanamissionun.org/map-regions-in-ghana 2021.*

This study was qualitative approach driven. Qualitative method of research was used to gather and synthesize the data from 18 communities among the 10 regions in this study. This approach was used because of its cultural and social context and its element of describing and understanding occurrences in their natural settings from the perspectives of respondents (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) observed that qualitative research method evolves around understanding concepts, opinions and experiences through in-depth insights analysis of non-numerical data to generate new ideas. In this process interdisciplinary theoretical approach was used. It made room for the application of theories of culture, structural functionalism, traditional art aesthetic, adaptation, and enculturation using the interdisciplinary theoretical approach.

### 2.1 Sampling Technique

The study covered 10 out of the 16 regions of Ghana where purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from 1) Upper West region; among the Walas, Dagaabas and Sissalas, 2) Upper East region; among the Gurunes (Frafras) and Kassena-Nankanis and 3) Northern region; among the Dagombas and Mamprusis of the northern sector, 4) Bono Ahafo; Dormaas, 5) Bono East; Techimans and 6) Ashanti regions; Asantes and Akwamus constituted the middle sector and the 7) Central regions; among the Fantes and Oguuas, 8) Greater Accra region; among the Gas and Adangbes, part of the 9) Eastern region; Krobos and Akuapims and part of 10) Volta region; Anlos formed the southern sector for the study. The way of life with regards to the use of jewellery by the Walas, Dagaabas, Sissalas, Gurunes (Frafras), Kassena-Nankanis, Dagombas, Mamprusis, Dormaas, Techimans, Asantes, Akwamus, Fantes, Oguuas, Gas, Adangbes, Krobos, Akuapims and Anlos was the setting for this study. The cultural frame work of these people were sought juxtaposing it to their view on jewellery on a normal day. Data was gathered on historical background, production concept and the functionality of jewellery. In line with information needed, 3 each of 1) elders in the traditional councils, 2) goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers and 3) jewellery users were sampled. A total of 162 respondents were sampled and focus group interview was applied. Pictures and videos were used in analysing the data for the study.

No.	Category of Interviewee	Total No Selected	Details
1.	Elders of traditional council (60 year and above)	54 (NE 21+ME 12+SE 21)	Three (3) elders from the 18 communities of study were interviewed through focus group discussion.
2.	Goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers (40 year and above)	54 (NE 21+ME 12+SE 21)	36 18 Goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers from the 18 communities of study were interviewed through focus group discussion.
3.	Jewellery users (40 year and above)	54 (NE 21+ME 12+SE 21)	Three (3) jewellery users each from the 18 communities were interviewed through focus group discussion.

NE=Northern Enclave, ME=Middle Enclave, SE= South Enclave

**Table 2.1.** Breakdown of interviewees who responded in the study.

*Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2022.*

## 2.2 Data collection

The study was both primary and secondary data oriented. The primary data in this study were the focus group interviews, observation of festivals, rites and ceremonies. Related books, pictures and videos on the study were treated as secondary data. The data collection exercise was from September, 2019 to December, 2022. Enumerators used were 10 in number who were trained on the objective of the study. A total of 162 respondents were engaged for four times during the data collection process. An interview guide was responded to through face-to-face engagement amidst demonstration of concept for interviewees. Observation was done on the field of occasions where elders of traditional council, jewellery users and admirers were engaged in. Jewellery producers availed themselves for their works to be observed in line with the information given out. The data gathered through interview were prudently transcribed, coded and reconciled with what was observed, pictures and videos.

Data were then gathered, synthesised, analysed and findings presented. Analysis of data was qualitatively done using photographic, descriptive and thematic analytical tools within the cultural settings of the respondents. Consent of respondents were sought to ensure full compliance of ethical consideration of the study. To safeguard the anonymity of respondents during the analysis and discussion of the findings of the study faces of persons in the pictures taken were edited.

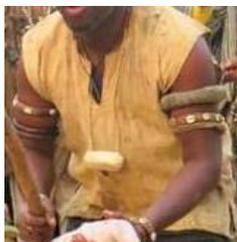
## 3.0 Results and Discussion

This section of the study presents and discusses findings from the data collected on the field of the study.

### 3.1 The Northern enclave of Ghana

The Northern part of Ghana has a lot to do with jewellery making as accounted for by Ansah & Larbi, 2008. All the 63 respondents were Ghanaians who hail from Upper West, Upper East and Northern regions of Ghana. They are the Walas, Dagaabas, Sissalas, Gurunes (Frafra), Kassena-Nankanis, Dagombas and Mamprusis. Out of the 63 respondents 21 were elders of traditional council, other 21 of the respondents were goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers and the remaining 21 were jewellery users. According to the study, one fundamental philosophy of the jewellery associated with the northerners is the influence of

the design by their way of living. The study discovered that hunting, farming, fighting to protect territories, festival celebration well defined the design and kind of jewellery for the northern enclave. Aside this, the material composition of jewellery of these people is quite unique. The study indicated that cowries, leather, leaves, ferrous metals, jute fabric and thread are the basic materials used for the jewellery produced in the north. The leather used for jewellery is made from skins of lion, tiger, leopard, cat, dog, cow, and antelope. The skin of these animals is preferred because they are believed to possess powers that are meant for powerful people (Ademin, 2016). The northern jewellery design is the simplest but more purposeful in terms of decoration and spiritual protection. Respondents particularly those who produce jewellery insist designing is not much the focus but what the jewellery is used for is what is needed. The study considered festivals such as Dumba, Paari-gbiele and Damba. Jewellery in this sector was found to be based on the natural environment and were made with a traditional or local touch as seen in Figures 3 to 8. These jewellery are made and used occasionally.



**Figure 3:** Wearing amulet made of leather and cowry



**Figure 4:** Wearing choker made of jute thread



**Figure 5:** Wearing of shoulder strap and necklace made of leather and cowry



**Figure 6:** Wearing of twisted metal bangle and leather wrist band



**Figure 7:** Wearing of beaded chains



**Figure 8:** Wearing of necklace made of thread and leather

**Source:** *Researcher's Field Survey 2022.*

The study unearthed the belief that most jewellery in this enclave contains powers and protection against evil. Even if the jewellery does not contain any power, so far as it has a form similar to the ones known, the user is seen to be wearing powerful jewellery. In recent times the burgeoning crave and taste for jewellery by the people of the north has changed. For about two decades now, the concept and the philosophy of jewellery usage has seen a blend of the indigenous and the foreign types. This new trend was introduced by Mande from Niger through Burkina Faso (Larbi & Ansah, 2008). The Mande clan introduced the people in the North to the casting and blacksmith metal technology as such jewellery made out of metal can be seen in Figures 9 to 12. These types of jewellery according to (Lyck, Long, & Grige, 2012) were the foremost jewellery and cultural items used six decades ago for cultural and body adornment purposes across the northern enclave. It is worth noting that the design of this jewellery is simple and the technique of production are casting and forging. Interestingly, this jewellery has special traditional oriented blacksmiths who are solely fortified for its production.



**Figure 9:** A man wearing metal chain with cast pendant on the neck



**Figure 10:** An elder in chain with cast pendant



**Figure 11:** A metal cast ring on display



**Figure 12:** An elder in chain with cast pendant

**Source:** *Researcher's Field Survey 2022.*

According to M. A. Fuseni (Personal Communication, August 18, 2021) it was not until the late 1990's that new material-forms of jewellery with complicated design were introduced to the traditional scheme of things in the northern enclave (Larbi & Ansah, 2008). This new form of jewellery in the northern enclave is those seen in Figures 13 to 21. These are plastic beads and sequins string with either raffia, nylon or cotton thread. The bead comes with different colour variation. The bigger beads are associated more with masculinity and the smaller sized beads are linked more with the feminine in society (Introduction to Jewellery Making and Beading, n.d). This means chiefs and males and the smaller ones are for the queen mothers and the females use the bigger ones. It also includes cowry and metal jewellery.

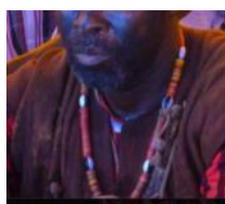


A



B

**Figure 13:** Cowry beads used as hair band (A and B)



**Figure 14:** Plastic beads used as necklace



**Figure 15:** Glass beads used as necklace



**Figure 16:** Plastic beads used as necklace and shoulder strap



**Figure 17:** Plastic beads used as necklace, amulet and shoulder strap



**Figure 18:** Glass beads used as necklace and wrist beads



**Figure 19:** A combination of glass and plastic beads used as necklace, wrist beads and choker



**Figure 20:** Metal plaited necklace used on the neck



**Figure 21:** Sonorous metal used as anklet

**Source:** *Researcher's Field Survey 2022.*

The study deduced that new form of jewellery choice has emerged from the north which includes necklace made of bead, precious, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, head band made of cowry and bead, shoulder strap made of cowry and bead, wrist jewellery made of bead, finger ring made of precious, ferrous and non-ferrous metal, and anklet made of bead, cowry, ferrous and non-ferrous metal but for the females they use earrings as well which are precious and non-ferrous metal made with some of them having gemstones. The study unfolded that 90.47% representing 19 out of the 21 of the respondents of Jewellery users in the north made a case for fresh sense of jewellery after observing the happenings across the country. Apart from that there is no particular taboo or spiritual implication attached to indigenes using a variety of jewellery except to say, there is repercussion for some royals if they do not use the traditional kind of jewellery. Response from 95.23% of goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers representing 20 out of 21 affirmed that the current trend of jewellery in north are mainly string bead-jewellery made from plastic, glass, and cowry as shown in Figures 13 to 19. This was not the case some three decades ago. The material used was cowry stringed for purpose (F.S. Alidu, Personal Communication, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022).

### **3.1.1 Factors that influenced the new trend of Jewellery in Northern enclave**

The geographical location of the northern part of the country is opened up to other cultures from Cote D' Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo and even the southern part of the country. In fact, some of the festivals and occasions celebrated in the north receive entourage from

neighbouring countries to participate. For instance, Kakube, Kobine, Dumba, Paari-gbiele, Damba, just to mention a few receive entourage from Burkina Faso, Togo, Nigerian, USA among others who when coming for these functions display their culture and artworks. This has influenced the choice and design of jewellery for occasions and traditions in northern Ghana. This phenomenon has elevated a new taste of jewellery and its trend. It was noted that migration of workers from different cultures to different locations particularly indigenes from the south to the north and vice versa aided the influence of change of choice in the use of traditionally known jewellery in the north to the new trend. Based on the study, 80.95% of the Jewellery users representing 17 out of the 21 grounded their choice of jewellery on media exposure. It is certain that social media, television, use of the Internet has also contributed to the new choice of jewellery. There are different designs and choice of materials used in jewellery making which is widely available in the media. This has played a significant role in the taste of jewellery for the northern enclave.

### ***3.1.2 Design concept of the new trend of Jewellery in Northern enclave***

It must be noted that the designs of these jewellery according to the study are derived from animals and items that assist them in their day-to-day activities. Lion, pot, crocodile, antelope, cow, spider, dog, cowry, cola nut, tree, cutlass, hoe among others were the concepts of idea the goldsmiths/blacksmiths and the jewellers used in designing the jewellery during the 19<sup>th</sup> century through to the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But this design narrative changed at the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which has improved, to the present days in 21<sup>st</sup> century with more intricate designs from other cultures.

The use of jewellery in this enclave is very minimal. It is worth noting that occasions such as festivals, marriage rite, and enskinment of chiefs are the activities that bring to fore variety of jewellery used in the north. The northerner is noted for the use of jewellery basically on the neck, ear and finger. But for cultural troupes and traditionalists they go beyond the neck, ear and finger to the head, arm, shoulder, waist and ankle. The north although had and is still being influenced, has not deviated from their simple choice of design in production by the goldsmiths/blacksmiths. The Jewellery users have however changed their taste and choice to a more complex design due to influence from the trend of jewellery brought from elsewhere.

### ***3.2 The Middle enclave of Ghana***

The study of the middle enclave covered the people of Dormaa, Techiman, Asante and Akwamu. The journey of jewellery in this enclave can be traced from the chieftaincy bond of the bono and Asante state coupled with the introduction of blacksmith technology introduced by the northerners (Labi & Ansah, 2008). A total of 36 indigenes in the middle enclave responded to the study. Out of the 36 respondents 12 were elders of traditional council, 12 of the respondents were goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers and the remaining 12 were jewellery users. The elders of the traditional council in the Middle enclave had 11 out of the total 12 of the respondents representing 91.66% believing that the middle enclave has the most complicated but largely one-purposed jewellery design and usage.

Jewellery among the middle enclave got recognition as far back as the reign of the first King of the Asante kingdom and Bono state. Initially bead, leather and gold dust were used as the ornaments for the king and the chiefs. The beads were sand and stone made. Sand beads for the people and stone beads for the royals. The goldsmiths who were earmarked only for jewellery production for the Kings and chiefs used forging technique. Although these jewellery produced were of forms and shapes, the designs were very simple. The study recognised that 83.33% of the goldsmiths/blacksmiths representing 10 out of the 12 of the

respondents in the middle enclave agreed that it took the introduction of Adinkra symbols by the Bonos and Asantes to advance the design of jewellery produced. Then came the introduction of casting technique acquired from the northerners which added to the production skill. Later the goldsmiths were trained by the foreigners to acquire filigree technique which made the jewellery from this enclave one of the most multifaceted and aesthetically valuable jewellery in Ghana (Ayensu, 1997). This type can be seen in Figures 22 and 23. As asserted by 83.33% representing 10 out of 12 respondents of the goldsmiths/blacksmiths in the middle enclave, Jewellery design in this enclave is mostly influenced by traditional symbols of the indigenes. The festivals considered in the study of the middle enclave were Kwafie, Apoo, Adaekese and Adae. The study reveals that jewellery in this enclave is mainly used for body adornment, award, and as a treasure to be handed down to the next generation. Goldsmiths who are specialised in making jewellery make the jewellery in this enclave. The jewellery is basically gold, silver and brass made. The study unfolded bead jewellery as other form of items used to adorn one's body in the middle enclave. In fact, the people of this enclave used beads hand-in-hand with the gold, silver and bronze jewellery. Interestingly the enclave is known for metal beads. These metal beads are produced mostly from brass metal. The jewellery user of this enclave 91.67% of them use beads as seen in Figures 24, 26 and 28 to 36 with only 8.33% using metal jewellery more than bead jewellery. Lost wax method of casting is used in producing this metal bead as seen in Figures 24 and 26. Its designs are traditional-symbol made. These beads are mostly used on the neck and wrist. Designs are simple but interesting.



**Figure 22:** Chief in his full regalia



**Figure 23:** Gold chain with pendant and shoulder strap using filigree method



**Figure 24:** Wearing gold beads and gold chain with pendant



**Figure 25:** Silver bangle, bracelet and finger ring in use by a chief



**Figure 26:** Wearing of wrist gold beads bracelet and cast gold finger rings



**Figure 27:** Fabric, leather and gold traditional symbol head gear



**Figure 28:** Beads and cowry amulet and necklace in use along side metal shoulder strap



**Figure 29:** Combination of glass and metal beads for bracelet with cast gold finger rings



**Figure 30:** Combination of beads and pierced traditional symbols as knee and ankle



**Figure 31:** Bead bracelet and cast finger ring



**Figure 32:** Combination of beads and pierced traditional symbols as anklet



**Figure 33:** Leather, leaves and Beads combination necklace in use



**Figure 34:** Combination of beads and pierced traditional symbols as head gear



**Figure 35:** All round beads regalia on display



**Figure 36:** Bead necklace amulet and bracelet on display

**Source:** *Researcher's Field Survey 2022.*

The new trend of Jewellery in this enclave is the influx of foreign jewellery that is computer aided manufactured. Although welcomed by the indigenes, it has also challenged the goldsmiths/blacksmiths to learn and apply tools and equipment that aid in producing similar designs. Jewellery is electroplated in this enclave on a large scale. The technique of electroplating has assisted bronze jewellery in the middle enclave (Cera, 1997). The Asantes among the middle enclave are those recognised to identify their kingdom chieftaincy with gold, silver and bronze (L. B. Duah, Personal Communication, July 23rd, 2021). This statement was corroborated by all the goldsmiths from the Asanteman who responded in the study.

### **3.2.1 Factors that influenced the new trend of Jewellery in Middle enclave**

The study observed new trend of jewellery in the middle enclave. This has to do with different types of jewellery and its foreign conceptual design produced basically using computer aided manufacturing process. This jewellery has a lot of gemstones and enamel materials (Underhill, 2015). Some of this foreign jewellery is tiara, hairpin, chain, necklace, earring, nose ring, tongue, charm and toe ring among others. This jewellery are less in price

because most of them are costume jewellery, making it affordable by the indigenes as compared to the jewellery produced by the goldsmiths (Cera, 1997). The study shows that 83.33% prefer precious jewellery than the costume-made ones but for affordability concerns they use the costume-made ones. The goldsmiths use gold and silver mostly which makes it too expensive for many to afford. With regards to bead jewellery, the new trend is the combination of string beads with pierced adinkra symbol or traditional symbols that are fitted at an interval joint of the beaded jewellery whether it is meant for the head, wrist, neck or all part of the body as seen in Figures 30, 32 and 34.

### ***3.2.2 Design Concept of the new trend of Jewellery in Middle enclave***

In this enclave jewellery produced by goldsmiths were designed mostly with traditional symbols, totem, proverbs and wise sayings of various clans as shown in Figures 22 to 32 and 34. Attention is given to the front view of the jewellery items. In other instance, the symbols are repeated and joined to form the jewellery. In the design, clarity and distinction is given to symbols, elements of design and principles of art (Pradel, Zhu, Bibb, & Moultrie, 2018). In fact, designs are traditional-symbols centred with a minute attention given to elements that enable joining of the symbols together. This revelation and disclosure in the study is not the same for the influx of foreign jewellery in the enclave.

Materials used significantly are gold, and brass but some are silver made. Gold because this enclave has it in abundance as such their cultures give premium to their king to sit on golden stools. In the Ashanti Kingdom the silver is meant for the second in command after the King for that reason the Mamponghe seats on silver stool (Agyekum, 2011) while Offinsohene, third in command seats on bronze stool (Tetteh & Adu-Agyem, 2014). This is replica in many of the cultures at this enclave making gold, silver, copper, and brass major materials in jewellery production in the middle belt. The techniques used were mostly casting, piercing and soldering. This gave room for aesthetic value jewellery with complicated design but intriguing to admire. The middle enclave got exposed to European production techniques as well as the production techniques applied by the northerners as far back in the 1800's. The influence of these techniques advanced the use of materials and designs implied in jewellery production of the middle enclave ahead of the northern enclave. Usage of jewellery is very loud in this enclave. The part of the body that can be possibly exposed to or earmarked for jewellery usage includes head, neck, ear, arm, wrist, finger, knee, ankle, waist, toe just to mention a few. But in recent times nose, tongue, shoulder, nipple, navel among others serve as parts of the body that jewellery are used.

### ***3.3 The Southern enclave of Ghana***

A total of 63 indigenes in the south enclave responded to the study. Out of the 63 respondents 21 were elders of traditional council, 21 of the respondents were goldsmiths/blacksmiths and jewellery sellers and the remaining 21 were jewellery users. The southern enclave has been the place of diverse types of jewellery. The southern enclave since time immemorial has built a jewellery brand which is European-influenced in design and style. As many times as the colonial masters invaded the south so it was for the influence of the choice of jewellery design for the southern enclave. It took the cultures of the Fantes, Nzemas, Ahantas, Oguaas, Gas, Adangbes, Krobos, Akuapems and Anlos to arrest the total influence of the foreigners who came to Ghana as colonial masters. The indigenes used their cultural symbols and choice of materials embedded in their traditions to create identity for their jewellery (Kotoku, 2008). This was the response from the 95.23% of the elders of traditional council in the southern enclaves who were considered for the study. Materials such as sand, glass, leaves, gold, stone, and leather brought some level of distinction to the

jewellery of the enclave as exhibited in Figures 37 to 51. The designs of jewellery for this enclave are very intricate and ingenious.



**Figure 37:** Colourful beaded head gear worn around the head



**Figure 38:** A chief in a gold chain, amulet and bracelet made from traditional symbols



**Figure 39:** A chief in a leave woven into necklace



**Figure 40:** A combination of beads and leave necklace and bracelet



**Figure 41:** Plastic bead necklace and shoulder strap with leather amulet used by queen mother



**Figure 42:** A lady in a leave-woven necklace



**Figure 43:** Plastic beads bracelet And leave necklace In use at a festival



**Figure 44:** Leather as well as plastic beads necklace on display



**Figure 45:** A woven leave necklace and plastic beads on display



**Figure 46:** Glass bead bracelet and necklace in use at a festival



**Figure 47:** Glass bead necklace, amulet and bracelet on display



**Figure 48:** Glass bead necklace, amulet and waist jewellery on display



**Figure 49:** Gold bracelet and finger ring on display by two elders at a durbar



**Figure 50:** A chief in a regalia made of beads necklace and bracelet combined with leather amulet and bracelet



**Figure 51:** A chief wearing leave head gear and beaded choker and shoulder straps with jute necklace

**Source:** *Researcher's Field Survey 2022.*

Beads, and precious metal jewellery are the most dominated jewellery in the South according to the responses from 86.23% of the goldsmiths/blacksmiths. As seen in Figures 39, 40, 42, 43, 45, 51, leaves and leather jewellery are also used but more particularly during festivals. Beads used in this enclave are mostly multi-coloured like what is seen in Figures 37, 47 and 48. The bead materials are either sand or glass-made although some are plastic-made like those in Figures 40, 41, 43, 44, 45. Jewellery are for adornment and for traditional occasions. It was observed that in the south they use jewellery on the head, neck, ear, arm, wrist, finger, knee, ankle, waist and toe. But in recent times nose, tongue, shoulder, nipple, navel among others serve as parts of the body that jewellery is used.

### ***3.3.1 Factors that influenced the new trend of Jewellery in the southern enclave***

The major factor of influence in the southern enclave as far as jewellery is concerned, has to do with the availability of the foreign jewellery that are imported from abroad. These jewellery are conceptually made with ideas of foreigners. They are very complicated and of different types and purpose as compared to the indigenes' production. Most of these jewellery are costume jewellery and are very affordable. The design for these jewellery lack traditional symbols, proverbial and wise saying concepts of the indigenes of the southern enclave. Designs are precise because of the use of computer aided manufacturing method. Designs are alphabet, letters and figures oriented.

Unlike the indigenous beads produced out of glass, stone or sand, there are plastic ones available similar to the natural ones with multiple colours or mono chrome which is now used in place of the natural beads. The jewellery are of different variety ranging from head, neck, hands, nipple, naval, waist, thigh, knee, ankle, toe among others. These are what the southern enclave is having for use per the responses of the 90.47% jewellery users among the respondents.

### ***3.3.2 Design concept of the new trend of Jewellery in the southern enclave***

Jewellery designs of the indigenes are complex and colourful in nature. Designs are traditional symbols, proverbial and wise saying concept-oriented (Gyan, Abbey, & Baffoe, 2020). They play with colours in bead production. The colours used for the beads are identifiable with the clan it is made for. Leaves used are woven to suit one's choice. Leather used for jewellery are dyed or burnished and in some cases, thronged at the edges. Those for festivals and ritual purposes are dyed red or wrapped in red liner. The western part of the southern enclave uses traditional symbols and clan symbols in their regalia for the chiefs and royals. The symbols are cast in sections and arranged by soldering to form the required jewellery. The use of jewellery in the southern enclave is on a high side. The study recognised that 95.23% jewellery users expressed their love for the use of jewellery any time

and any day. The indigenes use jewellery on their head, neck, ear, finger, arm, shoulder, waist, knee and ankle.

### 3.4 Current trend of jewellery in Ghana

Unlike the north, middle and southern enclaves whose jewellery are widely defined by occasion, territorial protection, festival celebration, traditional symbols, totem of various clan, choice of materials embedded in their traditions (Adom, 2017), the current dispensation of jewellery in Ghana is broaden over ethic culture and tradition, local materials and territorial indigenous concept.

Arguably, since the year 2000, Jewellery in Ghana has seen different styles and designs which has no limitation with regards to location, culture, material and concept. Wilson (2002) has this to say “A more accurate assessment would describe the ever-increasing assimilation of European designs and western iconography that have become so fashionable in today’s Ghanaian society”. The influence of other continents concepts of designs and way of producing jewellery has brought about the contemporary jewellery we now see as new trend of jewellery seen in Figures 52 to 72. This has though brought variety. However, care must be taken not to throw away identity and concept.



**Figure 52:** Foxtail chain Symbol bangle



**Figure 53:** Traditional adinkra



**Figure 54:** Tinsel chain



**Figure 55:** Bracelet with gemstone And adinkra symbol pendant



**Figure 56:** Combination of plastic beads and metal necklace with adinkra symbol pendant



**Figure 57:** Metal necklace with pendant, choker and earring



**Figure 58:** Adinkra symbol



**Figure 59:** Earring



**Figure 60:** Beaded bracelet with

pendant and bangle



**Figure 61:** Necklace made with gemstone and metal



**Figure 62:** Earring made with gemstone and silver wire

silver adinkra symbol



**Figure 63:** Necklace made with button-wrap-fabric and thread



**Figure 64:** Earring made with copper metal, bead and enamel



**Figure 65:** Silver enamelled bangle



**Figure 66:** Silver enamelled earring



**Figure 67:** Etched gold, silver and copper pendants



**Figure 68:** Etched copper earring



**Figure 69:** Etched gold finger ring



**Figure 70:** Gemstone bracelet



**Figure 71:** Silver enamelled finger ring



**Figure 72:** Bead made earring, necklace and bracelet

**Source:** Wikipedia 2022.

### 3.4.1 Design of current trend of jewellery in Ghana

This paper noted that concept of design of most of the current trend of jewellery is fully subjected to computer design which brings to bear the elements of design and principles of art in equal measure. Jewellery designers in most recognised shops in Ghana produce their jewellery using computer aided design and computer-aided manufacturing methods. With reference to Figures 52 to 72, jewellery in Ghana has assumed national and international

choice and purpose. Jewellery making has now been digitised; software such as rhino, matrix, 3D Design, JewelCAD, WizeGem among others are mostly used in this production in Ghana (Dutta, 2019).

These jewellery show combination of traditional symbols and foreign designs to suit many occasions which can be used by both male and female. Choice of colours are well organised, texture, line and shape are inspired by in-depth knowledge of jewellers who are now well schooled (K. Asomaning, personal communication, August 19, 2022). The present-day Jewellery designers have taken into consideration proportion, variety, emphasis, unity, balance, movement, contrast, repetition, space, rhythm amongst others in the jewellery they produce. Owing to these factors, the designs are intriguing, intricate and very attractive with a lot of aesthetic values for the consumer as exhibited in Figures 52 to 72. This touch given to current jewellery products have made it a delight to use across Ghana irrespective of enclaves, locations and cultural or traditional underpinning philosophy. In fact, the aesthetic value, which the current jewellery in Ghana is portraying, is underpinned by designs, which are within and outside traditions, computer technology, well-embellished technique and good finishing methods (Koulidou, & Mitchell, 2021).

It is worth noting that material addition has also contributed to the arguably dynamic space jewellery has seen itself, in terms of usage across all festivals, customs, celebrations, ceremonies just to mention a few in Ghana. Aside the use of cowries, leather, leaves, ferrous metal, jute fabric, thread, beads, brass and precious metal such as gold, and silver for jewellery as the study has accounted for from the various enclaves, one cannot be oblivious of the unique beauty and aesthetic value gemstones, enamel, dyes, and mordant as new materials used are adding to the taste and choice of jewellery in Ghana. Gemstones are sometimes the main materials in some of the jewellery works (Introduction to Jewelry Making and Beading, n.d). Mostly earring, pendant, finger ring, bracelet and necklace are gemstones oriented in the current dispensation of jewellery as seen in Figures 61 and 62. Enamel on the other hand has also contributed to the new trend of jewellery used in Ghana. As seen in Figures 64 to 66 and 71, enamel has also added aesthetic value to jewellery used in Ghana. Dyes and mordant are used to decorate and finish jewellery. Figures 67 to 69 are examples of etched jewellery which have become part of the current trend of jewellery used in Ghana. It is obvious from the study that the jewellery in the 1900's has seen a dynamic transition in various ways in the 2000's in Ghana as such, many now have to use jewellery that suits them.

## **4.0 Conclusions**

The focus of the study was to unearth the outstanding distinguish concepts of design and factors that influence the then and now jewellery produced and /or used in the north, middle and south of Ghana. It aimed at creating the philosophical picture of jewellery and how it can be identified per enclaves in Ghana. The conclusions that have been drawn from the study indicates that account of history of jewellery in Ghana arguably dated back 14<sup>th</sup> century with evidence of jewellery work spotted in the Northern territories, Ashanti and Gold Coast Colony of the then Gold Coast now Ghana (Labi & Ansah, 2008). The identity of jewellery in Ghana has its own distinctions. Occupation and territorial protection coupled with festival celebration are notable elements that defined the design and kind of jewellery for the northern enclave. The study concluded that the new trend of jewellery at the northern enclave is due to acquisition of characteristics of values, norms and beliefs of others cultures from their immediate neighbours. The scope of jewellery used in the north has widened due to enculturation. Their designs are uniquely made, simple and purposeful. The influence of

fabrication techniques advanced the use of materials and designs implied in jewellery production in the middle enclave ahead of the northern enclave but not limited to its usage. The middle enclave derived their concept of design from traditional symbols, totem, proverbs and wise sayings of their clans (Gyan, Abbey, & Baffoe, 2020). Jewellery in the south is influenced with European design and style. Its brand focuses on cultural symbols and choice of materials entrenched in the traditions of the people. This enclave presents to us a very intricate and ingenious Jewellery which can be used at almost all parts of the body.

Jewellery decades ago were more of natural material with less artificial material composition. It was justifiable and majority of the process in producing it were hand-made with less machine or tool involvement. But then designs were less complex and their uses were limited to few parts of the body. The current jewellery has more touch of computer design, computer manufacturing technology and improved hand tools that enables jewellers to produce them for use. The trend of jewellery has seen significant complicated designs, integration of materials, advance production technology and variety of jewellery that can be used at almost all parts of the body (Kotoku, 2008). With this development more variety of jewellery in terms of its design, integration of materials and concept of its use are eminent of being produced in the next half decade to come. The major challenge will be not to miss the identity of the Ghanaian culture with regards to the enclaves in Ghana. Interestingly the current jewellery is striving on both natural and artificial materials. Also, precious and costume jewellery are very much patronised due to the fashionable touch of this computer age making it aesthetically pleasant to use for almost all occasions; although the costume jewellery outweigh the precious jewellery. These underpins the reasons why jewellery used across the country seem same but used for different occasions and cultural activities as compared to the past decades. With this new development no one should misconstrue the fact that jewellery in Ghana have a thin line of difference among the enclaves which is still based on the traditional symbol, occupation, material and technology.

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