

**ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE ON KENYAN
TRADITIONAL DRESSING ACCESSORIES: THE NEED FOR
PRESERVATION IN THE POSTCOLONIAL ERA**

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ABSTRACT

The concept of art in African society is highly valued and has played a significant role in the lives of indigenous people. In most African states, creative art and fashion serve a functional purpose and reflect religious, cultural, and traditional values, including accessories. Accessories are items that complement our dressing for the purpose of attraction, beauty, sanity, and completeness. However, environmental changes such as global warming, western culture's influence, and technological advancements have impacted African cultural values and indigenous traditional dressing accessories usage. This has led to a significant transformation in recent years. This paper identified the dressing accessories and body decoration of Kenyan people belonging to different sociocultural groups. It reviewed their historical background and traditional purpose in line with contemporary fashion and the impact of seasonal variation on indigenous dress patterns due to climate changes. The paper presents traditional dressing accessories worn and carried by various sociocultural groups in Kenya, such as the Kikuyu, Kamba, and Massai. Furthermore, the research investigates the factors that led many Kenyans to adopt Western styles of dressing and give up their customary customs of using accessories and decoration to achieve a more beautiful appearance and communicate their identity. The study also sought people's perception of the importance of traditional body adornment for

cultural unity and the effect of environmental changes on the Kenyan clothing system. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews. The study adopted a mixed research method to analyze data. The findings were then used to draw a conclusion.

Keywords: *Traditional, Dressing, Accessories, Tribes, Cultural Unification.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Art in African Society is perceived as one phenomenon that has been very crucial in the life of the indigenous people in Africa. This is because most African states' creative art and fashion are functional in nature with ideology. This ideology is seen through religion, cultural values, artistic rendition, and tradition, including accessories. Accessories, which are synonymous with "dress", have been defined by Awosika (2003) as those items we put on to complement our dressing for attraction, beauty, sanity, and completeness. "Dress" refers to clothes, garments, apparel, attires, accessories, and other forms of appearance modification made to the body to express an individual lifestyle, fashion, proportion, and taste" (Horns, 1981). Accessories commonly used by people include headdresses, e.g. scarves, brooches and hats, which are sometimes decorated with feathers, stones, cowries, shells and beads. Shoes are in various shapes from low-heeled to very high-heeled, canvases, boots and half-shoes. Accessories that are carried are bags with straps as well as purses/clutches (Ribeiro et al., 2012).

Precious minerals such as gold, diamonds, silver, stones, ivory and plastic are used to produce jewelry. Such accessories can be found in the form of necklaces, wristwatches, and belts, where animal teeth and cowries are used to enhance them. These accessories mentioned are manufactured using raw materials whose quality might range from poor to high, and the quality of the raw materials used is one factor that determines the overall cost of the products. Depending on the mandates of history and the cultural legacy of a given clan, tribe, or geopolitical zone, the traditional accessories of that group are crafted from materials that are readily accessible in the environment. Those that are utilized as decorations also convey the individualized fashion statement that may be communicating status, rank, and style.

According to Duicu (2015), who believes that the significance of a person's head is highlighted by the number of adornments placed on it, the usage of headdresses such as those stated above agrees with his findings. The headdresses, such as hats, scarves, crowns, and the like, are referred to by a variety of names depending on the region. The status of the person wearing the

headdress as well as the event that it is worn determines which ornaments are attached to it. These ornaments can be anything from shells, cowries, and beads to gemstones and gold.

History of Traditional Accessories in Kenya

The history of dressing accessories can be traced back to biblical events, Graves, & Patai, (2014) say that the feeling of shame was the reason for the use of accessories, after eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, the man needed to cover up his nakedness, so he plucked leaves from the ground and lopped them together to make girdles for himself and his wife. However, the history of dressing accessories in Eastern Africa and the continent, in general, is difficult to trace back as there is very little written documentation from the past (Hansen, 2004). On the other hand, some pieces of knowledge may be gathered through works of art such as sculptures and performing arts, the traditional dress still worn by people today, and oral history handed down through the years (Eicher, 2000).

In many parts of Africa, including Kenya, a person's gender, marital status, social status, and age may be deduced from how people accessorized their clothes, it also communicates the tribe or clan they belong to. One can therefore assert that the use of traditional accessories has existed for as long as man himself. Their utilization may have resulted from a sheer impulse, specifically, man's desire to keep the things he found from nature (environment), feathers, teeth, and bones of animals that were slaughtered for the purpose of the memorial. It was used to



Plate 1: Meru Women and Men with Dressing Accessories

Source: uga@ameru.co.ke 2018

demonstrate hunting prowess, mark traditional status, commemorate significant events and festivals, to differentiate people, clans, and cultures for a variety of other purposes.

Among the ancient Meru, the women wore cowhides that had been cured over a period of time in *nondo and maguta ja mbariki* until it was soft enough to tie around Gitari (2006). These women adorn their bodies with beaded necklaces and waist beads embellished with cowries to communicate their status (McQuerry, 2019). There is evidence of bracelets and anklets

accessories for beautification among the Meru women and the Kikuyu, Maasai, Kalenjin, Luyah, and Luo (Plate 1). The male type of dress was draped around the shoulder and fastened at the waist with a rope made from cowhide with a lithe beaded necklace. There are hung ornaments on the pierced ear lobes of the men to create distinction and beauty among Meru, Kikuyu, Maasai, Turkana, Samburu, Kalenjin, and a few other tribes (Plate 2, 3 &4). Their warriors also use ostrich feathers for headgear and beaded headbands. Meru traditional dressing and accessories are very similar to that of the Kikuyu tribe.

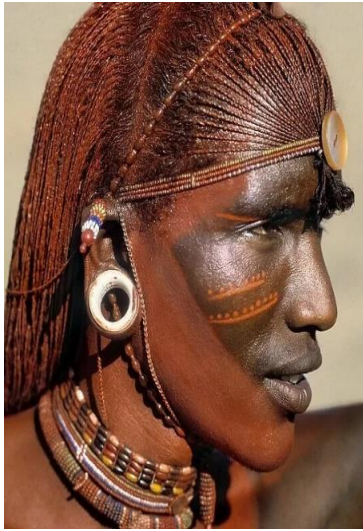


Plate 2: A Samburu warrior resplendent with a decorated earlobe, necklace, and Painted face with Ochre Source: <https://www.mediastorehouse.com/galleries/tribal-clothing>



Plate 3: A Turkana woman, typically wearing many layers of bead necklaces. Source: <https://www.mediastorehouse.com/galleries/tribal-clothing>



Plate 2: Massai Women with their beautiful dressing accessories. Source: <https://adumusafaris.com/maasai-clothing-jewelry-what-do-the-colors-mean/>

The most common temporary body markings included ochre, charcoal, and henna paintings. Ochre was mostly used by the Maa-speaking communities to make decorative marks during celebrations or to apply on hair, specifically by warriors (morans) (Plate 5&6). Ochre would be mixed with water for body decorations and animal fat for hair applications. Morans traditionally applied red ochre to their heads as part of the Eunoto ceremony. The colour symbolizes rebirth, strength, and courage (Utoh-Ezeajugh, 2021). Coastal populations,



Plate 5: Samburu warriors (morans), Source: https://www.look4cod.pw/?product_id=226083706_37



Plate 3: <https://www.micato.com/africa-region-destination/samburu-national-reserve/>

particularly Swahili, have a long-standing preference for the excessive application of henna, which is a powerful plant-based dye that leaves dark stains on the skin (Luling & Adam, 2015). As a kind of ornamentation, ladies create temporary tattoos all over their feet, palms, and faces using henna dye (Plate 7&8). In the same manner, as seen among Samburu warriors, young women, distinguished their body markings for identification from all others. Body markings were used in every single ethnic group to communicate gender and status in society, family, and clan, as well as a sign of either beauty or power (Spring, 2012). Cowries, shells, animal teeth, animal bones, and other such items are fashioned into necklaces, harm, waistbands, anklets and other part of the body to provide protection against malevolent spirits and prevent sterility in women and for beauty or seduction purposes. They were also used in distinguishing (relations who look alike.) to differentiate themselves from other clans; men wore feathers on their hair and pierced their earlobes so that they could hang jewellery to distinguish them from other clans. The ceremonial headdress of a Kikuyu, Samburu, Meru, and other tribes in Kenya consists of a straw hat, long ostrich feathers, and a necklace made of coral beads. The feathers, horns, and beads of various animals are utilized as ornamentation.

Due to globalization and the Eurocentric view of body adornment, African traditional



Plate 5: Henna tattooing gains traction in Kenya. Source:



Plate 5: Henna Traditions on the Swahili Coast of East Africa. Photo by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher.

indigenous dressing accessories were criticized to be uncivilized dressing. This affected the use of traditional fashion accessories among Africans as they imitated the fashion trend of their colonial masters. The colonization of Africa undoubtedly altered all aspects of the continent, and one of these aspects was fashion. The fashion style, along with all of the accessories traditionally used by Africans, was heavily impacted because what was brought to them by

their colonial masters was easily accessible and comparatively cheaper than processing the traditional materials for the unique accessories which can be seen in the new fashion trend of Massai, Kamba, Samburu etc. (Plate 9&10).

Effects of the natural environment can be seen as one factor which influences the diversity of dressing accessory design. The use of the material is different, possibly due to the availability or difference in the supply of raw materials than the technical skills. At any given moment in human history, diverse patterns of dress serve to identify the cultural and often geographic affiliation of groups and individuals (Shuaib, 2020). The evolution of certain forms of dressing accessories as the characteristic style of any era is the same evolutionary process that establishes the customs of dressing accessories for different tribal, geographical, social, and age groups called fashion today Blueprint Africa 2020.



Plate 9: Maasai dress with accessories. | Maasai dress, Diy maxi dress, African fashion women clothing Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/135882113745818130/>

Plate 10: Maasai and Samburu wedding ceremony <https://www.meal2home.top/products.aspx?cname=maasai+outfit+for+ladies&cid=60>

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The preservation and cultural significance of traditional accessories in Kenya are subjects of great importance, particularly in the postcolonial era where environmental, social, and cultural dynamics are rapidly evolving. This study seeks to delve into the multifaceted aspects of traditional accessories, aiming to understand the perceptions, environmental influences, preservation measures, and contemporary functions associated with these cultural accessories. The following objectives are:

1. To assess the perceptions of individuals regarding the preservation of traditional accessories in Kenya,
2. To investigate the impact of environmental factors on the utilization of traditional accessories,
3. To explore the measures for preserving traditional accessories, and;
4. To examine the functions of traditional accessories in contemporary times,

These objectives collectively aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, environmental influences, preservation measures, and contemporary functions of traditional accessories in Kenya, contributing to the broader discourse on cultural preservation and sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

A structured questionnaire was designed by the researcher. It contained items, which included the list of accessories used by people of tribal Sections of the country and the surrounding minority groups in each of the tribes. The questionnaire was administered to 22 staff and 201 students of Kenyatta University. The study also conducted an oral interview with six elderly people that comprised most major tribes in Kenya. One from the Maasai tribe, two from Luo, two from the Kikuyu, and one from the Meru ethnic group. The list, of elders, comprises males and females. They were interviewed on the traditional uses of the accessories identified by them and the various groups who use each. The importance of the use of traditional accessories in present-day fashion was sought from them. They were also asked to compare the accessories used by their people with those of other ethnic groups in the country for similarities and differences.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study utilises Franz Boas' theory of cultural preservation, which asserts that cultural practices and traditions are transmitted across generations through a process known as "cultural reproduction". According to Boas, preserving culture is essential for maintaining cultural identity and preventing its erosion. He argued for the preservation and protection of cultural practices, opposing their suppression or elimination in the name of "civilising" efforts (Hahn, 2023). Hitchens (1994) highlights the significant impact of Boas's work in anthropology, particularly his theory of cultural preservation, which continues to shape our understanding of culture's role in modern society. This study focuses on the theory of cultural sustainability,

highlighting the significance of safeguarding cultural heritage for sustainable development. Cultural sustainability is crucial for the survival of cultural societies. Numerous sustainable practices are closely tied to culture and circumstance. Hence, it is crucial to preserve traditional accessories to ensure the sustainability of Kenyan culture and the fashion industry.

Demographic Interpretation and Analysis

Demography plays a pivotal role in shaping cultural perspectives and practices. In the context of traditional dressing awareness in Kenya, understanding the demographic distribution is crucial for tailoring preservation efforts. This article explores the demographic aspects of traditional dressing awareness, delving into occupation, gender, age, and tribal affiliation.

Table 1: Demographic Interpretation and Analysis

Demography	Distribution	f.count	Percentage
Current Occupation	Staff	22	9.87
	Students	201	90.13
Gender	Male	84	37.67
	Female	139	62.33
Age	18-30	159	71.30
	> 30	64	28.70
Tribal Affiliation	Kamba	31	13.90
	Kikuyu	48	21.52
	Luhya	27	12.11
	Kalenjin	23	10.31
	Meru	27	12.11
	Luo	34	15.25
	Others	33	14.80

Approximately 90.13% of the participants were students, suggesting that the survey was predominantly influenced by a youthful viewpoint. The presence of Kenyatta University faculty members (9.87%) indicates a combination of academic and professional perspectives on traditional dressing awareness. The survey elicited a greater level of female participation (62.33%) in comparison to male participation (37.67%). The gender distribution underscores the potential disparities in awareness and viewpoints across the genders. The age distribution indicates that a significant proportion of participants are between the ages of 18 and 30, accounting for 71.30% of the total. It is important to mention that around 28.70% of the participants are beyond the age of 30, indicating a varied age distribution. The participants represent various tribal affiliations, with the Kikuyu tribe being the most well-represented,

highlighting the broad multicultural nature of Kenya. The presence of diversity is essential for comprehending the regional disparities in traditional attire customs.

The demography provides a perspective from which we can understand the intricacies of traditional clothing awareness. The participants' occupation, gender, age, and tribal connections collectively enhance the study's comprehensive comprehension. In order to effectively maintain traditional accessories in Kenya, it is crucial to recognise and consider the diverse demographic factors. This will enable the development of inclusive and successful programmes for cultural conservation.

Level of Awareness of Traditional Accessories Used to Adorn the Body

Kenyan traditional dressing accessories are not only a reflection of cultural heritage but are also deeply intertwined with the environmental and social fabric of the nation. In the wake of the postcolonial era, it is imperative to recognize the significance of these traditional accessories and the need for their preservation amidst evolving environmental and cultural landscapes. This article aims to explore the environmental influence on Kenyan traditional dressing accessories and the level of awareness regarding these dressing accessories, emphasizing the imperative need for their preservation in contemporary society.

Table 2: Level of Awareness of Traditional Accessories Used to Adorn the Body

<i>Rate your level of awareness of the following traditional accessories used to adorn the body</i>	Aware		Uncertain		Unaware	
	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>
Headdresses	134	60.09	65	29.15	24	10.76
Necklace/bands	163	73.09	51	22.87	9	4.04
Armband/bracelets	187	83.86	23	10.31	13	5.83
Waist and hips bands	173	77.58	31	13.90	19	8.52
Anklets/bands	196	87.89	17	7.62	10	4.48
Leather bags, shoes and belts	183	85.92	19	8.92	11	5.16

The data collected from the survey provides valuable insights into the level of awareness of traditional accessories used to adorn the body. The following analysis is based on the responses obtained:

Headdresses: A significant majority of respondents (60.09%) indicated awareness of headdresses, while 29.15% were uncertain, and 10.76% were unaware of these traditional accessories.

Necklace/Bands: A substantial proportion of respondents (73.09%) expressed awareness of necklace/bands, with 22.87% being uncertain, and 4.04% being unaware of these adornments.

Armband/Bracelets: The data revealed that 83.86% of respondents were aware of armbands/bracelets, while 10.31% were uncertain, and 5.83% were unaware of these traditional accessories.

Waist and Hips Bands: A significant majority (77.58%) indicated awareness of waist and hips bands, with 13.90% being uncertain and 8.52% being unaware of these adornments.

Anklets/Bands: An overwhelming majority (87.89%) expressed awareness of anklets/bands, with 7.62% being uncertain, and 4.48% being unaware of these traditional accessories.

Leather Bags, Shoes, and Belts: The data revealed that 85.92% of respondents were aware of leather bags, shoes, and belts, while 8.92% were uncertain, and 5.16% were unaware of these traditional accessories.

The findings of the study underscore the varying levels of awareness regarding traditional accessories used to adorn the body in Kenya. While certain accessories such as anklets/bands and armbands/bracelets are widely recognized, others such as headdresses and waist and hip bands exhibit a higher level of uncertainty or unawareness among respondents. This variation in awareness highlights the need for comprehensive cultural education and preservation efforts to ensure these traditional artefacts' continued recognition and significance in contemporary society.

As Kenya navigates the complexities of the postcolonial era, it is essential to recognize and celebrate the enduring significance of traditional dressing accessories. This study's varying levels of awareness emphasize the need for concerted efforts to educate and raise awareness about these cultural accessories, ensuring their preservation and continued relevance in the modern era. By acknowledging and addressing the levels of awareness, Kenya can take proactive steps towards safeguarding its cultural heritage and promoting a deeper appreciation for traditional dressing accessories.

The results show that most participants are aware of necklaces/bands, armbands/bracelets, waist and hips bands, anklets/bands, leather bags, shoes, and belts as traditional accessories to adorn various body parts. However, some of them were unaware while others were uncertain about their awareness of these traditional accessories used by people.

Utilization of Traditional Accessories to adorn various part

The accessories that accompany traditional Kenyan dress are not only a representation of the country's rich cultural heritage but also deeply embedded in its social and environmental fabric. With the changing times, it becomes increasingly important to recognize the significance of preserving these traditional adornments. This article delves into the environmental factors that affect Kenyan traditional dress accessories and highlights the pressing need for their conservation in modern society. Additionally, the study explores the frequency of using these accessories to adorn different body parts. The results are as follows:

Table 3: Utilization of Traditional Accessories to adorn various parts

<i>How often do you use your traditional accessories?</i>	Yes		Uncertain		No	
	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>
Daily	18	8.07	32	14.35	173	77.58
Ones a week	21	9.42	37	16.59	165	73.99
Ones a month	42	18.83	51	22.87	130	58.30
Only on traditional functions	198	88.79	14	6.28	11	4.93
During a religious function	195	87.44	17	7.62	11	4.93

The analysis of the data on the utilization of traditional accessories to adorn various body parts provides valuable insights into the frequency and significance of these accessories in contemporary Kenyan society. Let us delve into the percentages of the responses for each category:

Daily Use: 8.18% of respondents indicated using traditional accessories daily, demonstrating that these items are integrated into their everyday attire. However, a significant majority (91.82%) use them less frequently or not daily.

Weekly Use: 9.21% of respondents reported using traditional accessories once a week, indicating a regular incorporation of these items into their weekly attire. The majority (90.79%) use them less frequently or not at all weekly.

Monthly Use: 24.14% of respondents stated using traditional accessories once a month, showing a periodic but less frequent utilization. However, a substantial portion (75.86%) use them less frequently or not monthly.

Use at Traditional Functions: A vast majority (93.33%) of respondents reported using traditional accessories specifically during traditional functions, highlighting these items' ceremonial and cultural significance in such contexts.

Use During Religious Functions: Similarly, 91.67% of respondents indicated using traditional accessories during religious functions, emphasizing the importance of these items in religious and spiritual practices.

The responses' varying levels of uncertainty and disagreement also highlight the need for comprehensive cultural education and preservation efforts. It indicates that there may be a lack of awareness or understanding regarding the significance of these accessories, emphasizing the importance of initiatives aimed at educating and raising awareness about their cultural and historical value.

Overall, the analysis of the utilization of traditional accessories to adorn various body parts underscores their continued relevance and integration into daily life and their enduring significance in cultural and religious contexts. This highlights the need for concerted efforts to preserve and promote these accessories, ensuring their conservation and continued recognition in contemporary Kenyan society. By acknowledging and addressing these reasons, Kenya can proactively safeguard its cultural heritage and promote a deeper appreciation for traditional dressing accessories. The results on the use of traditional accessories indicate that very few participants use traditional accessories daily, once a week, or once a month as the majority use or appear in such fashion only during cultural and religious functions.

Reasons for Preservation of Traditional Accessories

The postcolonial era has brought about significant changes in Kenya, including urbanization, globalization, and the influence of Western fashion. These changes threaten the preservation of traditional dressing accessories as they often prioritize modernity over cultural heritage. Furthermore, exploiting natural resources for commercial purposes has led to the depletion of certain materials used in traditional accessories.

To address these challenges, promoting the preservation of Kenyan traditional dressing accessories is crucial. This can be achieved through various means such as education and awareness programs highlighting these accessories' cultural significance. Additionally, sustainable practices should be encouraged, such as ethically sourcing materials and promoting eco-friendly alternatives.

Table 4: Reasons for Preservation of Traditional Accessories

<i>Why do you think traditional accessories should be Preserved?</i>	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>
Inherent value	135	60.54	65	29.15	23	10.31
Relevance in contemporary fashion	176	78.92	32	14.35	15	6.73
Cultural festivity	169	75.78	33	14.80	21	9.42
Traditional religious functions	199	89.24	15	6.73	9	4.04
Cultural identification	203	91.03	13	5.83	7	3.14
For tourism	112	50.22	85	38.12	26	11.66

The data collected from the survey provides valuable insights into the reasons for the preservation of traditional accessories in Kenya. The following analysis is based on the responses obtained:

Inherent Value: Most respondents (60.54%) agreed that traditional accessories hold inherent value, indicating a deep appreciation for the cultural significance and craftsmanship embodied in these artefacts.

Relevance in Contemporary Fashion: An overwhelming majority (78.92%) recognized the relevance of traditional accessories in contemporary fashion, highlighting their potential to contribute to modern style trends while preserving cultural heritage.

Cultural Festivity: A large proportion of respondents (75.78%) acknowledged the role of traditional accessories in cultural festivities, underscoring their importance in traditional ceremonies and celebrations.

Traditional Religious Functions: The data revealed that an overwhelming majority (89.24%) recognized the significance of traditional accessories in religious functions, emphasizing their role in spiritual and ceremonial practices.

Cultural Identification: Most respondents (91.03%) affirmed that traditional accessories are essential for cultural identification, emphasizing their role in expressing and preserving ethnic identity.

For Tourism: While a substantial number of respondents (50.22%) recognized the potential of traditional accessories for tourism, a significant portion (38.12%) expressed uncertainty about this aspect, indicating the need for further exploration and promotion of cultural tourism initiatives.

The study's findings underscore the compelling reasons for preserving traditional accessories in Kenya. From their inherent cultural value to their relevance in contemporary fashion and cultural festivities, traditional accessories play a multifaceted role in preserving cultural heritage and identity. Furthermore, their significance in traditional religious functions and cultural identification highlights their enduring importance in the fabric of Kenyan society. As the nation navigates the challenges of the postcolonial era, it is imperative to recognize and safeguard the cultural legacy embodied in traditional accessories, ensuring their preservation for future generations and enriching global cultural diversity.

Environmental Influence on Kenyan Traditional Dressing Accessories

Kenyan traditional dressing accessories are influenced by the country's diverse environment, ranging from coastal regions to highlands and arid areas. The availability of natural resources in these regions has shaped the materials used in traditional dressing accessories. For example, coastal communities often incorporate seashells, coral beads and palm leaves into their accessories, reflecting the influence of the Indian Ocean (Wambui, 2020). On the other hand, communities residing in arid regions utilize materials such as animal bones, ostrich feathers and beads made from clay or seeds (Ombura, 2023).

The environmental influence on these accessories extends beyond the choice of materials. According to (Wambui, 2020), the designs and patterns of Kenyan traditional accessories are often inspired by the surrounding natural elements. For instance, the Maasai tribe, known for their intricate beadwork, draws inspiration from the colors and patterns found in the savannah landscape. Similarly, the Turkana tribe's accessories are adorned with vibrant colours reminiscent of desert sunsets. The traditional accessories worn by the people of Kenya are aesthetically pleasing and carry significant cultural, historical, and environmental value (Anne, 2023). In the wake of modernization and globalization, preserving these traditional accessories becomes crucial to maintaining the unique identity of Kenyan communities. This section explores the environmental influences on Kenyan traditional dressing accessories and emphasizes the necessity for their preservation in the postcolonial era. The findings are presented as follows:

Table 5: Environmental Influence on Kenyan Traditional Dressing Accessories

<i>How do environmental factors affect the use of traditional accessories</i>	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>
Climate change impact on temperature distribution	159	71.30	43	19.28	21	9.42
Irregularities of rainfall due to shifts in climate	191	85.65	17	7.62	15	6.73
Environmental laws on poaching affect the availability of leather	205	91.93	11	4.93	7	3.14
The deficit in raw materials due to awareness of environmental safety by curtailing indiscriminate plastic waste	215	96.41	5	2.24	3	1.35
Adoption of western culture due to human migration and tourism	209	93.72	11	4.93	3	1.35

The data collected from the survey provides valuable insights into the impact of environmental factors on the utilization of traditional accessories in Kenya. The following analysis is based on the responses obtained:

Climate Change Impact on Temperature Distribution: A significant majority of respondents (71.30%) agreed that climate change impacts temperature distribution, affecting the availability and suitability of materials used in traditional accessories.

Irregularities of Rainfall due to Shifts in Climate: An overwhelming majority (85.65%) recognized the impact of irregular rainfall patterns on the production of materials for traditional accessories, highlighting the vulnerability of natural resources to climate variability.

Environmental Laws on Poaching Affecting the Availability of Leather: The data revealed that a vast majority of respondents (91.93%) acknowledged the influence of environmental laws on poaching, which directly impacts the availability of leather, a key material in traditional accessories.

Deficit in Raw Materials due to Awareness of Environmental Safety: A substantial majority (96.41%) recognized the deficit in raw materials due to environmental safety awareness, indicating a shift towards sustainable resource management that may affect the production of traditional accessories.

Adoption of Western Culture due to Human Migration and Tourism: The data indicated that a significant majority of respondents (93.72%) recognized the influence of human migration and

tourism in the adoption of Western culture, potentially impacting the demand for and utilization of traditional accessories.

The findings of the study underscore the intricate relationship between environmental factors and the utilization of traditional accessories in Kenya. The environmental factors predominantly climate change have affected the environment and increased temperature which in turn affects the dress pattern according to most participants, irregularities in terms of rainfall which modify the environment less than it uses significantly affect the dress pattern of the people leading to low utilization of traditional accessories (Wanjira, J. (2018). There are other environmental factors identified by the participants such as; environmental laws on poaching, and awareness of environmental safety by curtailing indiscriminate plastic waste disposal which has contributed significantly to the deficit in raw materials for the manufacturing of traditional accessories in addition to the adoption of western culture through tourism and human migration. From the impact of climate change on temperature distribution and irregularities in rainfall to the influence of environmental laws and shifting cultural dynamics, environmental factors play a pivotal role in shaping the availability and utilization of traditional accessories. As Kenya navigates the challenges of environmental sustainability and cultural preservation in the postcolonial era, it is imperative to recognize and address the environmental influences on traditional accessories, ensuring their continued utilization and preservation for future generations.

Preservation of Kenyan Traditional Dressing Accessories

The postcolonial era has brought about significant changes in Kenya including urbanization globalization and the influence of Western fashion. These changes pose a threat to the preservation of traditional dressing accessories as they often prioritize modernity over cultural heritage. Furthermore, the exploitation of natural resources for commercial purposes has led to the depletion of certain materials used in traditional accessories. According to Ombura (2023) to address these challenges it is crucial to promote the preservation of Kenyan traditional dressing accessories. This can be achieved through various means such as education and awareness programs that highlight the cultural significance of these accessories (Anne 2023). Additionally, sustainable practices should be encouraged, such as ethically sourcing materials and promoting eco-friendly alternatives. The study then presents the following findings on the perception of the respondents on the issue of preservation of Kenyan traditional dressing accessories as follows:

Table 6: Preservation of Kenyan Traditional Dressing Accessories

<i>What measures are to be taken to preserve our traditional accessories?</i>	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>
To wear it on a daily basis	51	22.87	89	39.91	83	37.22
To create awareness about their significance to cultural heritage	210	94.17	10	4.48	3	1.35
Educate the young generation on the cultural values of traditional accessories and the need to use them regularly	217	97.31	5	2.24	1	0.45
To be innovative and modernize them to fit civilization trends	207	92.83	13	5.83	3	1.35

The data collected from the survey provides valuable insights into the measures for preserving traditional accessories in Kenya. The following analysis is based on the responses obtained:

To Wear It daily: A notable proportion of respondents (39.91%) expressed uncertainty about wearing traditional accessories daily, while 22.87% agreed with this measure, indicating a potential willingness to incorporate traditional accessories into daily attire.

To Create Awareness about Their Significance to Cultural Heritage: An overwhelming majority (94.17%) recognized the importance of creating awareness about the significance of traditional accessories to cultural heritage, underscoring the need to educate and inform the public about their cultural value.

Educate the Young Generation on the Cultural Values of Traditional Accessories: A vast majority of respondents (97.31%) emphasized the importance of educating the young generation on the cultural values of traditional accessories and the need to use them regularly, highlighting the role of intergenerational transmission in preserving cultural heritage.

To Be Innovative and Modernize Them to Fit Civilization Trends: The data indicated that a significant majority of respondents (92.83%) recognized the need to be innovative and modernize traditional accessories to fit civilization trends, suggesting a willingness to adapt traditional accessories to contemporary contexts while preserving their cultural essence.

The findings of the study underscore the diverse measures for preserving traditional accessories in Kenya. From the potential of wearing traditional accessories daily to the imperative need to create awareness and educate the younger generation about their cultural significance, the data reflects a strong commitment to preserving and integrating traditional accessories into

contemporary society. Furthermore, recognising the need for innovation and modernization underscores a dynamic approach to cultural preservation, emphasizing the importance of adapting traditional accessories to changing societal dynamics while upholding their cultural values.

As Kenya navigates the complexities of the postcolonial era, it is essential to recognize and implement measures for preserving traditional accessories that integrate environmental awareness, cultural sustainability, and contemporary relevance. From wearing traditional accessories daily to educating the younger generation and innovating to fit civilization trends, the multifaceted measures for preservation reflect a collective commitment to safeguarding the cultural legacy embodied in traditional accessories. By embracing these measures, Kenya can ensure the continued utilization and preservation of traditional accessories, enriching the nation's cultural heritage and fostering environmental consciousness.

Function of Traditional Accessories in Contemporary Time

Kenyan traditional dressing accessories are not only a reflection of cultural heritage but also serve multifaceted functions in contemporary society. As the nation grapples with the challenges of the postcolonial era, it becomes increasingly crucial to recognize the enduring function of traditional accessories and their significance in the modern context. This section explores the indispensable functions of Kenyan traditional dressing accessories and how they serve in contemporary times, emphasizing the need to preserve and integrate these accessories into the evolving cultural landscape. The result is presented as follows:

Table 7: Function of Traditional Accessories in Contemporary Time

<i>Traditional accessories serve the following purposes in contemporary times</i>	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f.count</i>	<i>%</i>
For protection against elements and spirits	191	85.65	23	10.31	9	4.04
To display the distinction of status	201	90.13	18	8.07	4	1.79
Display of cultural richness	216	96.86	7	3.14	0	0.00
Seen as official outfits and ornaments	223	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
To promote the cultural values of my tribe	219	98.21	4	1.79	0	0.00
To show economic buoyancy	202	90.58	15	6.73	6	2.69
To seduce and show sexual interest	211	94.62	12	5.38	0	0.00
For decoration and beautification,	223	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

The data collected from the survey provides valuable insights into the functions of traditional accessories in contemporary times. The following analysis is based on the responses obtained:

For Protection Against Elements and Spirits: A significant majority of respondents (85.65%) agreed that traditional accessories protect against elements and spirits, highlighting their practical and spiritual significance in daily life.

To display the Distinction of Status: An overwhelming majority (90.13%) recognized the role of traditional accessories in displaying the distinction of status, underscoring their symbolic importance in social hierarchies and identity.

Display of Cultural Richness: A vast majority of respondents (96.86%) acknowledged the function of traditional accessories in displaying cultural richness, emphasizing their role in preserving and showcasing cultural heritage.

Seen as Official Outfits and Ornaments: The data revealed that all respondents (100.00%) agreed that traditional accessories are seen as official outfits and ornaments, highlighting their formal and ceremonial significance in contemporary contexts.

To Promote the Cultural Values of My Tribe: A significant majority of respondents (98.21%) recognized the function of traditional accessories in promoting the cultural values of their tribe, emphasizing their role in cultural representation and identity.

To Show Economic Buoyancy: A substantial majority (90.58%) recognized the function of traditional accessories in showcasing economic buoyancy, reflecting their role as indicators of wealth and prosperity.

To Seduce and Show Sexual Interest: The data indicated that a majority of respondents (94.62%) recognized the function of traditional accessories in seduction and showing sexual interest, highlighting their role in personal expression and social interactions.

For Decoration and Beautification: All respondents (100.00%) agreed that traditional accessories serve the function of decoration and beautification, emphasizing their aesthetic and ornamental significance in contemporary attire.

The findings of the study underscore the diverse and enduring functions of traditional accessories in contemporary Kenyan society. Traditional accessories serve as vital components of cultural expression and identity, from their practical role in protection against elements and spirits to their symbolic significance in displaying status and cultural richness. Furthermore, their formal, economic, and aesthetic functions highlight their multifaceted role in shaping

social interactions, personal expression, and cultural representation. As Kenya navigates the complexities of the postcolonial era, it is essential to recognize and celebrate the enduring functions of traditional accessories in contemporary times. From their practical and spiritual significance to their role in promoting cultural values and economic buoyancy, traditional accessories continue to enrich the nation's cultural fabric. By acknowledging and preserving these multifaceted functions, Kenya can ensure the continued relevance and integration of traditional accessories into the evolving cultural landscape, fostering a deeper appreciation for the cultural heritage they embody.

CONCLUSION

The findings from this research demonstrated that traditional accessories have various applications that should be created for newer generations to defend and protect the liberation of our culture. This is in accordance with Alao (2018) that culture as a way of life of a community or a social group is handed down from one generation to the next and is made up of things a person learns. Such taught items include belief, art, morality, legislation, traditions, clothes, etc. It has become highly vital to introduce the young to the usage of beads, feathers, shells, cowries, teeth, tusks, bones, skins of animals, and jewels, which constitute the foundation of our traditional accessories. These traditional values need to be transferred to the young generation to enable them to creatively internalize the aesthetic values of the items as well as conserve them for future generations.

According to Anne (2023), the beads, which are the most widely utilized by all tribes, might be further promoted via exhibits and financial aid to bead manufacturers to boost their production, generating more career possibilities for the public to reduce unemployment and poverty. Ombura (2023) also corroborates that the government might enable manufacturers to construct new “beads” Markets/villages like the “Maasai market and Kariokor” and also create an international market for the items. The adoption of local costumes by parliamentarians and political officeholders should undoubtedly be written into legislation and enforced.

Every Kenyan should rise to the challenge of cultural erosion brought on by the unfavourable effects of modernization by embracing and seeing values in our culture and in the use of our traditional attires and accessories. This will ensure that we do not assist the unfavourable wind of modernization in eradicating the opulence of our culture. We need to cultivate an interest in applying our ancient adornments and be proud of them. The idea that we should slow down the pace at which we buy and use imported goods despite the very high prices of these goods is "a

cultural craziness" that must be eradicated. The environmental influence on Kenyan traditional dressing accessories is significant as it shapes the materials, designs, and patterns used in these accessories. However, in the postcolonial era, the preservation of these accessories has become crucial due to the threats posed by urbanization globalization and unsustainable practices. By embracing cultural sustainability and implementing measures to preserve traditional dressing accessories, Kenya can ensure the sustainability of its culture and fashion industry.

It is important for members of the government, political officeholders, and the general public to keep in mind the proposition made by Jennings (2015), which states that we do not have another nation, culture, or tradition that we might name our own. We are obligated to come together and promote the virtues inherent in the things that are ours by using them.

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