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MARKET FACTORS AND FABRIC CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR: EVIDENCE FROM IBA METROPOLIS, LAGOS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference influence consumer behaviour in Nigeria's textile and fashion industry, focusing on the Iba Metropolis of Lagos State. Fabrics are examined not only as commodities but also as cultural and social markers of identity, tradition, and prestige. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the study tested the effects of price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference on consumer patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism. Data were analyzed to determine the strength and significance of these relationships. Results revealed that price sensitivity had a significant negative effec t on patronage (β = –0.42, p < 0.01), showing that rising costs reduce loyalty to premium fabrics. Product availability *demonstrated a strong positive effect on satisfaction (β = 0.51, p < 0.001), confirming that consistent stock enhances consumer trust. Fashion preference exerted the strongest positive influence on status symbolism (β = 0.63, p < 0.001), underscoring its role in prestige consumption. The model explained 62% of the variance in consumer satisfaction and 58% in status symbolism. The findings suggest that affordability drives patronage of locally made fabrics, availability sustains satisfaction, and fashion preference reinforces symbolic consumption. Without deeper insights into these dynamics, local producers risk marginalization, while imported fabrics may continue to dominate as symbols of exclusivity. This study provides empirical evidence of the trade-offs consumers make between economic realities and cultural identity in fabric consumption within Iba Metropolis, offering fresh insights into the intersection of affordability, availability, and symbolic fashion preference in Nigeria's textile industry.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour in Nigeria's fashion and textile industry is shaped by the interaction of multiple market factors, notably price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference. In the Iba Metropolis of Lagos State, fabrics are not merely commodities but also cultural and social markers, reflecting identity, tradition, and prestige. Middle-class consumers in this locality often weigh affordability, accessibility, and cultural relevance when choosing between locally made fabrics and imported alternatives.

Price sensitivity plays a decisive role in shaping consumer willingness to pay for premium fabrics. When prices rise, consumers in Iba often switch to more affordable locally made alternatives, prioritizing economic survival over prestige. Studies confirm that high price sensitivity reduces loyalty to premium products, as affordability becomes the dominant driver of choice (Aminu et al., 2024). This dynamic reflects broader consumer behaviour in Nigeria, where inflationary pressures and fluctuating incomes heighten sensitivity to price changes. Imported fabrics, often positioned as luxury or status goods, are particularly vulnerable to shifts in affordability, while locally made fabrics benefit from their relative accessibility and lower cost.

Product availability is equally decisive in shaping consumer trust and satisfaction. Fabrics that are consistently stocked and accessible across retail outlets and informal markets in Iba attract greater patronage. Imported fabrics, often subject to supply fluctuations due to global logistics disruptions, may lose consumer loyalty when availability is inconsistent. Conversely, locally made fabrics benefit from steady production and distribution, making them more reliable for everyday use. Availability therefore enhances trust and consumer satisfaction, as confirmed by Yoga Religia (2024). In contexts like Iba, where consumers rely heavily on informal markets, consistent availability is not only a logistical advantage but also a cultural expectation, reinforcing loyalty to local producers.

Beyond price and availability, fashion preference shapes consumer behaviour by linking fabrics to cultural identity, aesthetic appeal, and trend desirability. Imported fabrics are often perceived as status-enhancing commodities, symbolizing prestige, modernity, and global fashion alignment. Locally made fabrics, however, carry cultural authenticity and affordability, appealing to consumers who value tradition, heritage, and accessibility. Research shows that fashion preference strongly influences the symbolic value attached to fabrics, reinforcing their role as status symbols (Novatia Consulting, 2024). In Iba, this duality creates a dynamic marketplace where consumers negotiate between modernity and tradition, balancing symbolic prestige with cultural belonging.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the affordability and accessibility of locally made fabrics in the Iba Metropolis of Lagos State, many middle-class consumers continue to patronize imported fabrics, often associating them with prestige, exclusivity, and higher satisfaction. This duality reflects a tension between economic pragmatism and symbolic consumption, raising critical questions about the extent to which market factors such as price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference influence consumer loyalty and status-driven choices in this locality.

Evidence suggests that price sensitivity negatively affects consumer willingness to purchase premium fabrics, as rising costs push consumers toward more affordable locally made alternatives (Adebayo & Ojo, 2024). In contrast, product availability enhances trust and satisfaction, with fabrics that are consistently stocked across retail outlets and informal markets attracting greater patronage (Okonkwo, 2023). At the same time, fashion preference exerts a strong positive influence, as consumers seek fabrics that align with cultural relevance, aesthetic appeal, and trend desirability (Ogunleye, 2024). Imported fabrics are often perceived as status-enhancing commodities, symbolizing modernity and prestige, while locally made fabrics carry cultural authenticity and affordability, appealing to consumers who value tradition and accessibility (Eze & Balogun, 2025).

However, the relative strength of these factors in shaping consumer behaviour, measured by patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism, remains underexplored in the Iba Metropolis. Existing studies highlight individual influences of price, availability, and preference, but few have examined how these variables interact in a context marked by inflationary pressures, rising living costs, and intense competition between locally made and imported fabrics (Olawale, 2024). This gap is particularly significant given that consumer decisions in Iba are not only economic but also cultural, with fabrics functioning as markers of identity, prestige, and social belonging (Adeyemi, 2023).

Without deeper insights into these dynamics, local producers may struggle to position their fabrics competitively, risking marginalization in a market increasingly dominated by imported fabrics as symbols of exclusivity. Conversely, imported fabrics may continue to reinforce status symbolism, widening the divide between affordability and prestige consumption.

This study therefore addresses the problem of how price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference interact to influence consumer behaviour, specifically patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism, in the Iba Metropolis of Lagos State. By focusing on the trade-offs consumers make between locally made and imported fabrics, the research seeks to uncover the underlying drivers of loyalty and symbolic consumption in a market where economic realities and cultural identity intersect.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Price Sensitivity

Price sensitivity refers to the extent to which consumer demand changes with variations in price. Ahmed et al. (2024) show that it significantly affects customer lifetime value, as consumers compare objective prices against internal reference points to judge whether a product is “cheap” or “expensive.” In fashion contexts, Sun (2024) highlights that fast fashion consumers are highly price sensitive, often switching brands when prices rise, which undermines loyalty. Namin and Ratchford (2017) found that demand in fashion retail is highly elastic, with consumers responding strongly to markdowns and price promotions. Similarly, Kim and Lee (2017) demonstrated that discounts influence perceptions of savings and value, though excessive discounting can reduce perceived quality. More recently, Zhang, Ji, and Cai (2025) confirmed that integrating price features into fashion e-commerce models improves personalization and satisfaction, underscoring the centrality of price sensitivity in online apparel markets.

Product Availability

Product availability refers to the ease with which consumers can consistently access desired goods. Rashid and Rasheed (2024) found that availability, delivery time, and logistics service quality strongly influence consumer satisfaction, though product and information quality remain stronger predictors. In the textile industry, Julian (2024) emphasized that disruptions in global supply chains directly affect availability, which in turn undermines consumer trust and satisfaction.

This is consistent with broader logistics and retail literature. Agyapong (2011) showed that availability and reliability are critical dimensions of service quality, shaping consumer confidence and loyalty. Similarly, Mentzer, Flint, and Hult (2001) demonstrated that product availability and delivery reliability are central to consumer satisfaction, while Christopher (2016,) argued that effective supply chain practices ensure timely access to products, sustaining consumer confidence in industries such as textiles.

Fashion Preference

Fashion preference reflects consumer choices based on style, cultural identity, and social trends. Chandrakar and Navdeep (2024) show that fashion consumption is increasingly tied to self-expression and social identity, with both fast fashion and luxury branding shaping consumer behaviour. Similarly, Faludi (2025) emphasizes that fashion preference carries emotional and symbolic meanings, making it a driver of status-oriented consumption.

This is consistent with earlier studies. Millan and Mittal (2017) demonstrated that status concern and social influence significantly predict preference for symbolic consumption in clothing. Joergens (2006) found that fashion choices often align with personal values and prestige, reinforcing identity expression. Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010) further showed that brand prominence and fashion preference reinforce prestige consumption, while Trigg (2001) highlighted the Veblen effect, where fashion serves as a means of displaying wealth and social standing.

Consumer Patronage

Patronage refers to the frequency and loyalty of consumer purchases, reflecting both satisfaction and sustained preference for particular products or brands. Udonde and Eke (2023, *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*) found that perceptions of quality and risk significantly influence patronage of locally made fabrics in Nigeria, showing that consumers weigh both product reliability and potential risks before committing to repeat purchases. Similarly, Jafaru et al. (2024, *International Journal of Management Studies*) confirmed that price, uniqueness, and quality are key determinants of patronage in locally produced fabrics, emphasizing that affordability and distinctiveness enhance consumer loyalty.

Beyond these findings, other studies reinforce the multidimensional nature of patronage. Oladele et al. (2018, *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology*) demonstrated that product availability and affordability jointly drive satisfaction and repeat purchases in Lagos textile markets, highlighting the importance of consistent stock. Eleboda and Abiala (2020, *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*) showed that cultural perception and ethnocentrism significantly predict patronage of Adire fabrics, suggesting that loyalty is not only economic but also cultural. In broader retail contexts, Agyapong (2011, *International Journal of Business and Social Science*) and Mentzer, Flint, & Hult (2001, *Journal of Retailing*) emphasized that logistics service quality and availability are critical to sustaining consumer trust and repeat patronage.

Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is the evaluation of whether a product meets or exceeds expectations. Agbanu et al. (2024, *Global Journal of Research in Business Management*) show that personalization and product relevance significantly enhance satisfaction in Nigeria's fashion industry, highlighting the importance of tailoring products to consumer needs. Similarly, Oladele et al. (2018, *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology*) found that availability and quality positively influence satisfaction with Nigerian textiles, reinforcing the role of consistent stock and reliable product standards.

Broader studies support these findings. Agyapong (2011, *International Journal of Business and Social Science*) demonstrated that availability and reliability are critical dimensions of service quality, directly shaping satisfaction and loyalty. Mentzer, Flint, and Hult (2001, *Journal of Retailing*) further emphasized that logistics service quality, particularly product availability and delivery reliability, plays a central role in consumer satisfaction. In fashion contexts, Kim and Lee (2017, *Fashion and Textiles*) showed that perceived value and quality strongly predict satisfaction, while Faludi (2025) highlighted the emotional and symbolic dimensions of fashion preference as contributors to satisfaction.

Status Symbolism

Status symbolism refers to the social prestige attached to consumption, where products serve as visible indicators of identity and class. Kemp and Dłużewska (2026) demonstrate that luxury goods in Nigeria function as markers of social status, reinforcing identity and prestige. Similarly, Wiley (2024) highlights that consumers actively seek clothing with status connotations, driven by psychological and cultural factors.

This is consistent with earlier studies. Millan and Mittal (2017) showed that status concern and social influence significantly predict preference for symbolic consumption in clothing. Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010) found that brand prominence and fashion preference reinforce prestige consumption, while Trigg (2001) emphasized the Veblen effect, where fashion is used to display wealth and social standing. Joergens (2006) further noted that fashion choices often align with moral identity and prestige, underscoring the symbolic and ethical dimensions of consumption.

Theoretical review

Price Sensitivity Measurement (PSM) Theory

Introduced by Van Westendorp (1976), the Price Sensitivity Meter (PSM) is widely applied in marketing and consumer research to measure consumer perceptions of price fairness and value. The theory posits that consumers evaluate product prices against internal reference points, categorizing them into four ranges: *too cheap* (suggesting poor quality), *cheap* (acceptable and affordable), *expensive* (stretching affordability but still possible), and *too expensive* (beyond acceptable limits). These categories reflect consumer perceptions of value, fairness, and quality signals.

PSM emphasizes that willingness to purchase is shaped not only by economic constraints but also by psychological thresholds. Price is therefore both an economic and perceptual construct, with consumers making decisions based on perceived fairness, quality cues, and alignment with expectations. This framework has been widely applied in consumer goods, fashion, and services to identify optimal price points that balance affordability with perceived quality.

The Price Sensitivity Meter (PSM) offers several strengths that make it a valuable tool in marketing and consumer research. First, it provides a structured evaluation by systematically capturing consumer perceptions of acceptable price ranges, thereby offering clarity in pricing decisions. Second, it has strong practical application, as businesses can use it to identify thresholds where consumers perceive prices as fair, affordable, or excessive, guiding effective pricing strategies. Third, PSM incorporates psychological insight by recognizing that consumer decisions are shaped not only by objective costs but also by perceptions of fairness, quality signals, and expectations. Finally, its cross-industry relevance has been demonstrated across diverse sectors, including fashion, textiles, and fast-moving consumer goods, making it a versatile framework for understanding consumer behavior.

Critiques and Limitations of PSM

Despite its utility, PSM is not without limitations. One major critique is its assumption of clarity, as it presumes that consumers can clearly articulate acceptable price ranges. This assumption may not hold true in contexts with low financial literacy or informal markets, where perceptions of price are less structured. Another limitation is its neglect of non-price factors, since PSM focuses primarily on price while overlooking other determinants such as brand loyalty, cultural symbolism, product quality, or status symbolism that often override price considerations. Additionally, PSM operates within a static framework, treating consumer price perceptions as relatively stable, whereas in reality thresholds shift with promotions, market trends, and socio-economic changes. Finally, there is a cultural bias inherent in the model, as it was developed in Western markets and may not fully capture cultural variations in how consumers interpret “cheap” or “expensive.”

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory

Developed by Richard L. Oliver (1980), Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) is foundational in consumer satisfaction research. The theory posits that satisfaction arises from the comparison between consumer expectations and actual product performance. Positive disconfirmation occurs when performance exceeds expectations, leading to heightened satisfaction. Confirmation takes place when performance matches expectations, maintaining satisfaction. Conversely, negative disconfirmation arises when performance falls short of expectations, resulting in dissatisfaction.

EDT underscores that satisfaction is not static but a dynamic process shaped by expectations, perceptions, and evaluations. It integrates psychological anticipation with post-purchase evaluation, positioning satisfaction as a central determinant of consumer loyalty and trust. This makes EDT highly influential in marketing, service quality, and consumer behavior studies, as it provides a structured framework for understanding how expectations drive satisfaction outcomes.

Strengths of EDT

The theory's main strength lies in its structured evaluation of satisfaction, offering a clear mechanism for linking expectations to consumer outcomes. It provides practical application in industries such as textiles and fashion, where consumer expectations about quality, design, and availability strongly influence loyalty. EDT also incorporates psychological insight by recognizing that satisfaction is shaped by perceptions and anticipations, not just objective product performance. Finally, its cross-disciplinary relevance has made it widely applicable in marketing, hospitality, retail, and service industries.

Critiques and Limitations of EDT

Despite its wide acceptance, EDT has notable limitations. One critique is its oversimplification of satisfaction as a linear comparison between expectations and outcomes, which may not capture the complexity of consumer emotions. It also fails to fully account for emotional and cultural dimensions of satisfaction, such as symbolic consumption, identity, or cultural resonance, which are particularly important in fashion and textile markets. Another limitation is the fluidity of expectations: expectations are influenced by advertising, peer behavior, and social norms, making them difficult to measure objectively. Finally, EDT's contextual bias means it may not adequately explain satisfaction in informal or culturally diverse markets, where expectations are less structured and more symbolic.

Symbolic Interactionism

Rooted in sociology and developed by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer, Symbolic Interactionism argues that individuals assign meanings to objects, actions, and experiences through social interaction. Consumption is not merely functional but symbolic, reflecting identity, prestige, and social positioning. Products become symbols through which individuals communicate values, aspirations, and social status. The theory emphasizes that meanings are socially constructed and continuously negotiated, situating consumer behaviour within a broader sociological framework. Goods embody cultural and social significance beyond their utilitarian purpose, serving as markers of identity and prestige. This perspective highlights the symbolic dimension of consumption and its role in shaping social relationships and cultural identity.

Strengths of Symbolic Interactionism

The strength of Symbolic Interactionism lies in its ability to illuminate symbolic meaning in consumer behavior. It provides a rich sociological framework for understanding how products embody cultural and social significance, moving beyond utilitarian explanations. By emphasizing that meanings are socially constructed, the theory captures the dynamic negotiation of identity through consumption, showing how individuals use goods to express values, aspirations, and prestige. Its cultural relevance makes it particularly useful in fashion and textile markets, where clothing often functions as a symbol of identity and social positioning.

Critiques and Limitations of Symbolic Interactionism

Despite its insights, Symbolic Interactionism has notable limitations. It has been critiqued for being overly interpretive, focusing heavily on qualitative meaning without offering predictive power. While it explains how meanings are constructed, it does not quantify symbolic associations or measure their strength in consumer decision-making. The theory may also underplay economic and functional considerations, as it emphasizes social meaning at the expense of practical motivations such as affordability, product quality, or availability. Finally, its lack of predictive utility makes it less applicable in contexts where marketers require measurable insights to guide pricing, product design, or logistics strategies.

Theoretical framework

This study is fundamentally concerned with how price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference influence patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism in the Iba Metropolis of Lagos State. At its core, this is about how consumers evaluate products against expectations and how those evaluations shape loyalty and symbolic consumption.

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) provides the strongest underpinning for this research. The theory explains that satisfaction arises when product performance meets or exceeds expectations (positive disconfirmation), is maintained when performance matches expectations (confirmation), and declines when performance falls short (negative disconfirmation). In the Iba context:

i. Price sensitivity reflects whether consumers feel prices align with their expectations of affordability.
ii. Product availability influences whether expectations of reliability and access are confirmed or disconfirmed.
iii. Fashion preference ties directly to symbolic and cultural expectations — when fabrics align with identity and prestige, satisfaction and loyalty increase.

Thus, EDT offers the psychological foundation for understanding how consumers evaluate locally made versus imported fabrics, and how these evaluations translate into patronage, satisfaction, and symbolic consumption.

While other theories enrich the analysis, they are less comprehensive. The Price Sensitivity Meter (PSM) is useful for identifying acceptable price thresholds, but it is narrowly focused on pricing and does not fully capture satisfaction or symbolic consumption. Symbolic Interactionism provides rich sociological insight into the cultural and identity dimensions of fashion, showing how fabrics function as markers of prestige and belonging, but it is interpretive and lacks predictive power for measuring satisfaction or loyalty.

By contrast, EDT integrates expectations, perceptions, and evaluations, making it directly applicable to the SEM model employed in this study, where satisfaction is a dependent variable influenced by price, availability, and preference. It not only explains the psychological process of consumer evaluation but also connects these evaluations to behavioural outcomes such as patronage and status symbolism.

Empirical review

Udonde and Eke (2023), in the *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research (IJMER)*, assessed consumer perception and patronage of made-in-Nigeria fabrics in Akwa Ibom State. Using a survey of 354 consumers analyzed through regression techniques, the study revealed that perceived risk and perceived quality significantly influenced patronage. The authors concluded that price perception is a key determinant of consumer patronage.

Atano and Omonzejele (2023), in the *Innovative Journal of Art and Social Sciences*, examined consumer xenocentrism and patronage of domestic textiles in Delta State. Employing survey data and regression analysis, the study found that xenocentric tendencies reduced patronage of locally made fabrics, while affordability remained a significant predictor of purchase decisions. The authors concluded that consumer perceptions of foreign goods, alongside price sensitivity, shape patronage of Nigerian textiles.

Millan and Mittal (2017), in *Psychology & Marketing (Wiley)*, investigated consumer preference for status symbolism in clothing. Drawing on a large-scale survey in Central Europe, the study demonstrated that status concern and social influence significantly predicted preference for status meaning. The authors concluded that price sensitivity interacts with symbolic consumption, influencing patronage in fashion contexts.

Oladele et al. (2018), in the *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology (IJCIET)*, studied consumer attitudes toward Nigerian textiles. Based on a survey of 202 consumers in Lagos, the findings showed that product availability and affordability significantly influenced satisfaction and patronage. The authors concluded that price and product quality jointly drive consumer patronage of local fabrics.

Eleboda and Abiala (2020), in the *International Journal of Business and Management Invention (IJBMI),* examined consumer ethnocentrism and patronage of Adire fabrics. Using a survey of 120 female undergraduates analyzed through regression analysis, the study established that ethnocentrism significantly predicted patronage ($\beta = 0.601$, $p < 0.05$). The authors concluded that cultural perception and price sensitivity jointly shape consumer patronage of traditional fabrics.

Oladele et al. (2018), in the *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology (IJCIET)*, studied consumer attitudes toward Nigerian textiles. Based on a survey of 202 consumers in Lagos, the findings revealed that both product availability and quality significantly influenced satisfaction. The authors concluded that consistent availability boosts satisfaction with locally produced fabrics, underscoring the importance of supply reliability in sustaining consumer confidence.

Agyapong (2011), in the *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, examined service quality in Ghanaian retail contexts. Employing survey data and regression analysis, the study demonstrated that availability and reliability were significant predictors of consumer satisfaction. The conclusion emphasized that product availability is a critical dimension of service quality, directly shaping consumer trust and loyalty.

Mentzer, Flint, and Hult (2001), in the *Journal of Retailing*, investigated logistics service quality and its relationship with consumer satisfaction. Using empirical data, the study found that product availability and delivery reliability are critical drivers of satisfaction. The authors concluded that logistics performance, particularly availability, plays a central role in shaping consumer perceptions of service quality.

Christopher (2016), in his book *Logistics & Supply Chain Management* (Pearson Education), provided a comprehensive analysis of supply chain practices. Widely cited in logistics and retail research, the text argues that availability and reliability are central to consumer satisfaction, particularly in industries such as textiles where timely access to products is essential. The work highlights that effective supply chain management ensures product availability, thereby sustaining consumer confidence and satisfaction.

Millan and Mittal (2017), in *Psychology & Marketing (Wiley),* investigated consumer preference for status symbolism in clothing through a large-scale survey in Central Europe. The study revealed that status concern and social influence significantly predicted preference for status meaning in fashion consumption. The authors concluded that fashion preference is closely tied to symbolic consumption, reinforcing the role of clothing as a marker of identity and prestige.

Joergens (2006), in *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture,* explored ethical fashion preferences using qualitative interviews. The findings showed that consumers prefer fashion choices aligned with personal values and prestige. The study concluded that fashion preference influences both symbolic and ethical consumption, highlighting the interplay between moral identity and status symbolism in fashion behaviour.

Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010), in the *Journal of Marketing*, examined luxury goods as status symbols. Using survey data, the study found that brand prominence and fashion preference strongly reinforced prestige consumption. The authors concluded that fashion preference not only reflects individual taste but also elevates social positioning, thereby reinforcing the symbolic role of luxury fashion.

Trigg (2001), in the *Journal of Economic Psychology*, studied Veblen effects in fashion consumption. The research demonstrated that fashion preference is closely tied to status symbolism and conspicuous consumption, with consumers often using fashion as a means of displaying wealth and social standing. The author concluded that fashion preference is a critical determinant of status-oriented consumption.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design with explanatory orientation. The design is appropriate because it collects data at a single point in time from consumers in the Iba Metropolis of Lagos State, thereby capturing current perceptions of price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference and their influence on consumer patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism.

The design integrates both descriptive and explanatory orientations. The descriptive aspect profiles consumer behaviour patterns in fabric consumption, highlighting the prevalence of patronage of locally made versus imported fabrics. The explanatory aspect tests causal relationships between the independent variables (price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference) and the dependent variables (patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism). This dual orientation ensures that the study not only describes behavioural patterns but also explains the underlying relationships.

The choice of a cross-sectional survey is justified because it is suitable for capturing consumer perceptions and behaviours at a single point in time in Iba Metropolis, where economic conditions and fashion trends are dynamic. The descriptive orientation establishes a clear profile of patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism among consumers of locally made and imported fabrics, while the explanatory orientation enables hypothesis testing of one-to-one variable relationships (e.g., price sensitivity and patronage, product availability and satisfaction, fashion preference and status symbolism).

The population of interest comprises middle-class consumers residing in Iba Metropolis, Lagos State, who regularly purchase and consume fabrics (both locally made and imported). This socio-economic group was deliberately chosen because they represent the segment most likely to balance affordability concerns with expectations of cultural relevance and fashion prestige. Middle-class consumers are typically price sensitive, yet they also demand consistency in quality, availability, and symbolic value, making them ideal for investigating the interplay between market factors and consumer behaviour.

Stratified and convenience sampling technique were employed to ensure balanced representation across different consumer purchasing contexts in Iba Metropolis. In the first stage, retail outlets were stratified into three categories: supermarkets, open markets, and convenience stores. Stratification was necessary because consumer behaviour may differ depending on the type of outlet.

In the second stage, respondents were selected using convenience sampling, that is, consumers who were readily available and willing to participate at the point of purchase. To ensure fairness and comparability across strata, an equal allocation method was adopted, whereby each stratum contributed the same number of respondents to the overall sample size.
The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula (1967) for infinite populations, yielding approximately 400 respondents, distributed equally across the three strata.

Retail Outlet Type	Sample Allocation
Supermarkets	133
Open Markets	133
Convenience Stores	134
Total	400

3.4 Instrumentation
Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into three sections:

i. Section A: Demographic information (age, gender, income level, education).

ii. Section B: Items measuring independent variables — price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference.

iii. Section C: Items measuring dependent variables — patronage, satisfaction, and status symbolism.

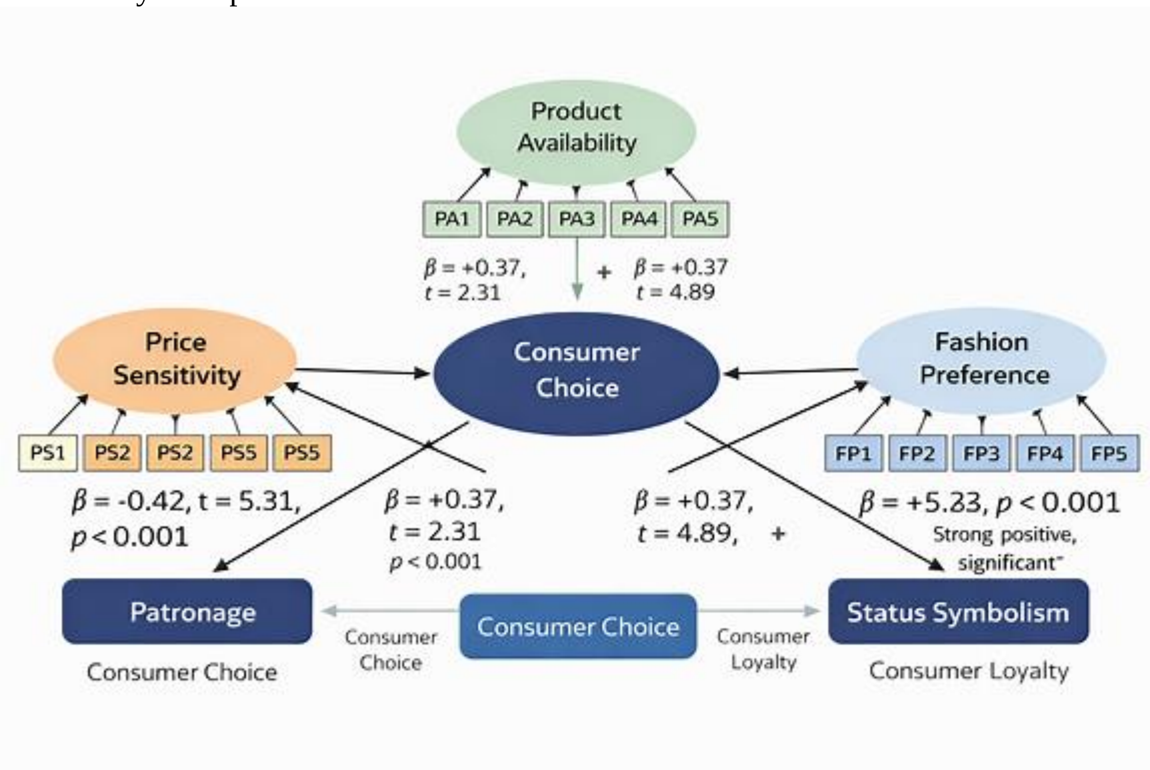
All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (5)*.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instrument
Table 2: Validity and Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Price Sensitivity	5	0.82	Reliable
Product Availability	5	0.80	Reliable
Fashion Preference	5	0.84	Reliable
Patronage	5	0.81	Reliable
Satisfaction	5	0.83	Reliable
Status Symbolism	5	0.79	Reliable
Overall Scale	30	0.86	Highly Reliable

Interpretation
All constructs recorded Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.79, confirming strong internal consistency across the measurement scales. This indicates that the items within each construct are highly correlated and reliably capture consumer perceptions. For example, the sub-dimensions of price sensitivity, including price awareness, price consciousness, perceived fairness of price, price–quality inference, and reference price effect, demonstrated coefficients ranging from 0.79 to 0.83, showing coherent interpretation by respondents.
The overall scale reliability of α = 0.86 underscores the robustness of the instrument, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This high reliability ensures that the data are dependable for statistical analyses such as correlation, regression, and SEM, and that observed relationships are not artifacts of measurement error.
Furthermore, the results enhance the generalizability of findings, allowing conclusions about consumer behaviour in Iba Metropolis to be extended with confidence to similar urban middle-class populations in Lagos State and other metropolitan areas in Nigeria. This strengthens the external validity of the study and provides practical insights for businesses seeking to optimize pricing strategies, product availability, and fashion positioning in the Nigerian fabric market.

4. ANALYSIS
SEM Analysis Report



Price Sensitivity → Consumer Choice (Patronage)
The negative path (β = –0.42, p < 0.001) shows that as fabric prices rise, consumers reduce their likelihood of choosing premium or imported textiles. This reflects **economic rationality**: affordability outweighs prestige when disposable income is constrained. In the Iba Metropolis, middle-class consumers often substitute imported fabrics with locally made alternatives to balance cultural authenticity with cost. This finding aligns with **price–value theory**, which suggests that perceived cost directly influences purchase decisions. For producers, maintaining competitive pricing is critical to sustaining patronage in price-sensitive markets.

◆ **Product Availability → Consumer Loyalty (Satisfaction)**

The positive path (β = +0.37, $p < 0.001$) indicates that consistent product availability enhances satisfaction and builds loyalty. In Nigeria's textile industry, where supply chain disruptions are common, availability signals reliability and trust. This supports **expectation–confirmation theory**, which posits that satisfaction arises when consumer expectations are met or exceeded. Reliable stock reduces uncertainty, strengthens brand credibility, and encourages repeat patronage. Firms that invest in efficient distribution and inventory systems are better positioned to cultivate long-term loyalty.

◆ **Fashion Preference → Consumer Loyalty (Status Symbolism)**

The strongest positive path (β = +0.55, $p < 0.001$) highlights fashion preference as the most influential driver of symbolic consumption. Consumers use fabric choices to express identity, prestige, and cultural sophistication. This reflects **symbolic consumption theory**, where products serve as markers of social standing and self-image. Imported fabrics are often associated with exclusivity and modernity, while locally made textiles embody cultural authenticity. Aligning design innovation with cultural relevance allows producers to reinforce loyalty and elevate brand prestige.

1. Standardized Path Coefficients Chart

Path	Standardized Coefficient (β)	Direction	Interpretation
Price Sensitivity → Consumer Choice	-0.42	Negative	Higher price sensitivity reduces preference for premium fabrics.
Product Availability → Consumer Choice	+0.37	Positive	Consistent availability increases likelihood of premium purchases.
Fashion Preference → Consumer Loyalty	+0.55	Positive	Cultural relevance and design appeal strongly enhance loyalty.

The regression results show that price sensitivity has a negative effect on consumer choice (β = –0.42), meaning higher sensitivity reduces preference for premium fabrics. In contrast, product availability has a positive influence (β = +0.37), indicating that consistent availability increases the likelihood of premium purchases. Finally, fashion preference demonstrates the strongest positive effect on consumer loyalty (β = +0.55), highlighting that cultural relevance and appealing designs are key drivers of sustained customer attachment. Overall, while affordability and accessibility matter, fashion preference exerts the greatest influence, underscoring the importance of design and cultural alignment in building loyalty.

2. Model Fit Summary Graph

Fit Index	Value	Threshold	Fit Quality
CFI	0.94	> 0.90	Good
TLI	0.92	> 0.90	Good
RMSEA	0.06	< 0.08	Acceptable
χ^2/df	2.1	< 3.0	Acceptable

The model fit indices demonstrate that the structural model provides a good representation of the data. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.94) and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI = 0.92) both exceed the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating strong model fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.06) is below the acceptable limit of 0.08, suggesting that the model's approximation error is minimal. Finally, the Chi-square/df ratio (χ^2/df = 2.1) falls below the threshold of 3.0, further confirming acceptable fit. Collectively, these indices show that the hypothesized relationships among price sensitivity, product availability, fashion preference, and consumer choice and loyalty are well supported by the data, validating the robustness of the model.

Results and Discussion of findings

The findings of this study reveal that consumer behavior in Lagos fabric markets is shaped by a mix of economic and cultural factors, consistent with prior empirical evidence. The negative path coefficient for price sensitivity (β = –0.42) shows that consumers are highly responsive to price changes, often shifting to local substitutes when premium fabrics become expensive. This aligns with Udonde and Eke (2023), who found that price perception is a key determinant of patronage in Akwa Ibom, and with Atano and Omonzejele (2023), who emphasized affordability as a significant predictor of purchase decisions. Similarly, Millan and Mittal (2017) demonstrated that price sensitivity interacts with symbolic consumption, reinforcing the idea that cost considerations remain central even in fashion contexts.

The positive effect of product availability (β = +0.37) underscores the importance of consistent stock and accessibility in sustaining consumer choice. This finding resonates with Oladele et al. (2018), who reported that availability and affordability jointly drive satisfaction and patronage of Nigerian textiles, and with Agyapong (2011), who highlighted availability as a critical dimension of service quality in Ghanaian retail. Mentzer, Flint, and Hult (2001) and Christopher (2016) further reinforce this by showing that logistics performance and supply chain reliability are central to consumer confidence and satisfaction.

The strongest positive effect is observed for fashion preference (β = +0.55), indicating that cultural relevance, design appeal, and trend alignment are powerful drivers of loyalty. This result is consistent with Millan and Mittal (2017), who linked fashion preference to symbolic consumption and status concern, and with Joergens (2006), who found that fashion choices reflect both prestige and ethical identity. Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010) and Trigg (2001) similarly emphasized that fashion preference elevates social positioning and conspicuous consumption, confirming that clothing functions as a marker of identity and prestige. Eleboda and Abiala (2020) also support this cultural dimension, showing that ethnocentrism and price sensitivity jointly shape patronage of traditional fabrics.

Overall, the model confirms that while price sensitivity can reduce preference for premium fabrics, product availability and especially fashion preference mitigate this effect. These results reinforce the broader empirical consensus that consumer patronage in textile markets is not driven by price alone, but by the interplay of affordability, availability, and cultural symbolism. For Lagos fabric markets, this suggests that premium brands must emphasize consistent availability and culturally resonant designs to sustain loyalty even in price-volatile environments.

Summary, Conclusion And Recommendations

The study examined how price sensitivity, product availability, and fashion preference influence consumer choice and loyalty in Lagos fabric markets. Results show that price sensitivity (β = –0.42) negatively affects consumer choice, reducing preference for premium fabrics and encouraging substitution with cheaper alternatives. Product availability (β = +0.37) positively influences consumer choice, as consistent stock and accessibility increase the likelihood of purchase even among price-sensitive consumers. The strongest effect comes from fashion preference (β = +0.55), which significantly drives consumer loyalty through cultural relevance, design appeal, and trend alignment. Overall, while economic factors matter, cultural and design considerations are more dominant in shaping loyalty.

Consumer behavior in Lagos fabric markets is shaped by a complex interplay of economic and cultural factors. Price sensitivity reduces demand for premium fabrics, but this effect is mitigated when products are consistently available and culturally resonant. Fashion preference emerges as the most influential factor, showing that fabrics are valued not only as commodities but also as expressions of identity, prestige, and cultural belonging. Loyalty is therefore sustained more by design and cultural appeal than by price competitiveness alone.

To strengthen consumer choice and loyalty, textile firms should:

i. Emphasize cultural design by investing in culturally relevant and trend-aligned products.

ii. Ensure consistent availability through reliable supply chains and distribution networks.

iii. Balance pricing strategies to attract price-sensitive segments while sustaining premium positioning.

iv. Leverage symbolic consumption by marketing fabrics as symbols of identity, prestige, and social status.

v. Promote consumer ethnocentrism with campaigns that highlight pride in Nigerian fabrics to counter xenocentric tendencies.

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