

## Problems of Teaching and Learning Clothing and Textiles in Senior Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT** The aim of this study was to examine the problems of teaching and learning of Clothing and Textile as perceived by senior secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was guided by four research questions. A sample of 941 Clothing and Textile students were randomly selected for the study. Data was collected through a questionnaire and analysed using mean scores and standard deviation. The findings revealed that in the students' perception, the problems of teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles include negative attitudes and lack of confidence among the curriculum and instructional impediments ranging from inadequate topics and tests, inappropriate methods in the curriculum, to lack of pedagogical skills among teachers; and lack of funds and failure of teachers to improvise and utilize instructional materials. To reduce these problems, it is imperative that programmes on attitude change, high quality teachers, sufficient instructional time and materials, as well as effective teaching of the subject. High quality stimulating materials such as computers should be provided and Clothing and Textiles teachers should regularly be sponsored to seminars and workshops.

### INTRODUCTION

Home Economics is one of the vocational subjects taught in Nigerian Education system and it is designed to promote health in the home and society (Obanya 2004). Lemchi (2001) defined Home Economics as the study of the relationship of people and aspects of their environment such as clothing, housing and finance. Okpala (2005) described Home Economics as a skill-oriented, decision-making subject, that equips learners with skills and knowledge which will help them to be self-employed and at the same time, contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the family and society. Home Economics is taught at the junior secondary school level of the Nigerian education system under the Universal Basic Education programme, as an integrated subject, which comprises Food and Nutrition, Clothing and Textile, and Home Management. At the senior secondary level, Food and Nutrition, Clothing and Textile, and Home Management are taught as separate subjects. This, as Olaitan (1996) noted, is to enable students to explore a vast array of occupations in the field before making a career choice. Anyakoha (2002) added that the essence of separating the components of Home Economics is to ensure that students specialize in the fields of their choice.

Clothing is one of the basic needs of man, which influences an individual's health wellness and status (Molokwu 1990; Arubayi 2003; Ukpore 2006). Clothing and Textiles is among the elective Home Economics subjects which students are expected to study at the senior secondary school level of education. Arubayi (2003) implied that the aim of Clothing and Textiles is to help learners acquire knowledge, skills and techniques for meeting personal and societal clothing needs. The aim of Clothing and Textiles curricular at the secondary schools is to teach the learners how to strategically plan and use available resources in his/her environment to improve his/her home, family and societal Clothing needs (Osisefo 2004). Clothing and Textiles in schools curricula also provides students with an apprenticeship Clothing, Textiles and Fashion, which if properly carried out will equip them with strategies for earning income in the future (Mberengwa 2004). Through the subject, students would be trained for homemaking and employment in textile mills and Clothing factories (Redick 1995). In addition, Clothing and Textile skills are needed not just for the home and classroom, but for the job market. Students are supposed to learn practical skills which would be useful to them in higher education or enable them get jobs in industries or other formal sectors of the economy. Hence, self-reli-

ance and income generation activities were stressed in Clothing and Textiles (Nhundu 1997).

In another vein, Waudo (1993) asserted that with the increasing freedom of movement and of labour within the committee of Nations in the world, there is the tendency that the rate of acculturation will be enhanced with the study of Clothing and Textiles. For instance, the massive increase in tourism has led many foreigners to have interest in buying traditional Nigerian Textiles and wears (Molokwu 1990). This is an advantage of the gross domestic earnings of the Nigerian Nation.

Given these justifications for the study of Clothing and Textiles, one begins to appreciate the feasibility and value in teaching the subject in schools. It, however, appears that issues such as students' attitudes, teachers' quality/quantity, instructional materials and curriculum hamper the study of Clothing and Textile in Nigeria. The effectiveness of the Clothing and Textiles as a means for global survival would be compromised if the problems that plague the study of the subject in Nigerian schools are not unveiled and tackled.

### Statement of the Problem

Presently, secondary school students' interest and enrolment in Clothing and Textiles as a subject is low. Lemchi (2001) noted that some students have no interest in the subject. Attitudes associated with Home Economics appear to affect students' enrolment in Clothing and Textiles as a subject and impact performance in the subject. Also, many home economics teachers teach Clothing and Textiles without instructional materials or workshop facilities (Mberengwa 2004). The quality of teachers, facilities and laboratories are grossly inadequate and obsolete. Owolabi et al. (1991) also indicated that a serious disconnection exists between Clothing and Textiles training in secondary schools and the needs of the labour market, as students that do not proceed to higher education have been found to be incompetent in the field of work. Her report showed that, in many cases, employers of labour compensate for insufficient academic preparation by organizing remedial courses for new employees at great expenses. Where students consistently

perform poorly, the implication is that adequate teaching and learning has not taken place in schools. Therefore, the problem of this study is to examine the problems of teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the problems of teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles in Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to:

- (i) Find out the extent to which students' attitudes constitute problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles.
- (ii) Assess the extent to which teacher quality and quantity constitute problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing Textiles.
- (iii) Find out the extent to which instructional materials constitute problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles.
- (iv) Determine the extent to which curriculum issues pose problems to the teaching/learning of Clothing and Textiles.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent do attitudes of Anambra State Secondary Schools Students constitute problems to the teaching of Clothing and Textiles?
2. To what extent to teacher quality and quantity cause problems to the teaching of Clothing and Textiles?
3. To what extent do instructional materials pose problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles?
4. To what extent do curriculum issues pose problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles?

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### Research Design and Sample

The study which is an ex-post-facto design, employed the survey type of the descriptive research. The population consisted of all Cloth-

ing and Textiles students in all the 261 public secondary schools in Anambra State during the 2007/2008 school year. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the subjects for the study. The state had six education zones and each of the zones has more than two local government areas (L.G.As). However, in each zone, two L.G.As were randomly chosen; schools in each L.G.A. were then separated into location (rural and urban) and then according to sex type (boys, girls and mixed schools). In each L.G.A., two boys, two girls and two mixed schools (one rural, one urban) were randomly selected. Thus, twelve schools were selected from each L.G.A. and in effect, a total of 72 schools were involved in the study. Then all the 941 students offering Clothing and Textiles in these schools formed the sample.

#### **Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument used to generate data for the study was a researcher developed questionnaire titled "Inventory of Problems of Clothing and Textiles in Secondary Schools (IPCTSS)". The instrument was structured on a 4-point scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE) for each of the statements.

#### **Validation and Reliability of Instrument**

The instrument was validated by three lecturers (two from Home Economics Education and the third from Measurement and Evaluation Department. The instrument was adjudged to be reliable and consistent in measurement.

#### **Method of Data Collection and Analysis**

The researcher distributed the questionnaire with the help of twelve research assistants. The researcher trained the research assistants by explaining the essence of the study, location of the sample and formats for responding to the items in case of questions from the respondents. In each school, the researcher and her research assistants distributed copies of the questionnaire on the respondents. Repeated visits were made for the collection of copies of the completed questionnaire. Out of the 941 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 21 copies were lost and only 920 copies represent-

ing 97.76% were retrieved. Four of the retrieved copies were not well completed and therefore were not useful. Therefore, only 916 copies (97.34%) were used for data analysis.

#### **Method of Data Analysis**

Means and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. To enhance computation, the options were weighted on the 5-point Likert rating scale thus: Very Great Extent (VGE) - 4 points; Great Extent (GE) - 3 points; Low Extent (LE) - 2 points; Very Low Extent (VLE) - 1 point.

The midpoint for the scale is 2.5. Therefore, only means scores of 2.5 and above were accepted as indications of great extent of problem, while mean scores below 2.5 were regarded as indications of low extent of problems. The obtained mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions 1-4.

### **RESULTS**

**Research Question One:** To what extent do attitudes of Anambra State secondary school students constitute problems to the teaching of Clothing and Textiles?

In Table 1, only item 2 which stated that students do not listen attentively to Clothing and Textiles lessons had a mean rating below 2.50. This means the item is not a problem of teaching/learning of Clothing and Textiles. The remaining seven items scored above 2.50, showing that they are problems. The average mean for the entire items was 2.97. This indicates that to a great extent, students' attitudes constitute problems to the teaching/learning of Clothing and Textiles.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do teacher quality and quantity cause problems to the teaching of Clothing and Textiles?

In Table 2, items 15, and 16 had mean scores below 2.50. This indicates that the items do not constitute problems to the teaching/learning of Clothing and Textile. The rest of the items scored 2.50, showing that they are problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles. The average mean was 2.94. By this analysis, the students indicated that teacher quality and quantity posed problems to the teaching

**Table 1: Means and standard deviation of questionnaire items on students' attitudes as a problem to the teaching/learning of clothing and textiles (N = 916)**

	<i>Items</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Decision</i>
1	Students do not consider the study of Clothing and Textiles important	3.12	1.39	Great extent
2	Students do not listen attentively to Clothing and Textiles lessons.	1.54	0.66	Low extent
3	Students do not regularly attend Clothing and Textiles classes	3.34	1.58	Great extent
4	Students see Clothing and Textiles career as a job for the illiterates	3.04	1.18	Great extent
5	Students' consider money spent on doing Clothing and Textiles projects as a waste	3.68	0.41	Great extent
6	Students do not complete their Clothing and Textiles assignments and projects	2.61	1.61	Great extent
7	Students feel bored in Clothing and Textiles	2.95	1.71	Great extent
8	Students do not feel confident that they will do well in the subject	3.52	1.87	Great extent
	Average Mean	2.97	1.30	Great extent

**Table 2: Means and standard deviations of questionnaire items on teacher quality and quantity (N = 916)**

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Items on Teacher quality and quantity</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Decision</i>
9	There are inadequate Clothing and Textiles teachers in our school.	3.44	1.56	Great extent
10	The Clothing and Textiles teachers do not teach the subject very well.	1.54	1.61	Low extent
11	The Clothing and Textiles teachers are not innovative and resourceful	3.41	1.66	Great extent
12	The teachers spend almost all the class time on the lessons with no time left for practical work.	3.04	1.51	Great extent
13	The teachers mostly do mere dictation of notes	3.31	1.69	Great extent
14	Teachers are not concerned that as many students as possible understand the lessons.	2.88	1.45	Low extent
15	The teachers' scolding makes learning difficult for us in the class.	3.11	1.45	Low extent
16	The teachers avoid questions from students	1.85	1.36	Low extent
	Average Mean	2.94	1.54	Great extent

and learning of Clothing and Textiles to a great extent.

**Research Question Three:** To what extent do instructional materials pose problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles?

The entire items in Table 3 scored above 2.50. Hence, the students indicated that problems in instructional material affect the teaching/learning of Clothing and Textiles to a great extent.

**Research Question Four:** To what extent do

curriculum issues present problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles?

In Table 4, only item 33 had a mean rating below 2.50, while the remaining 7 items had mean ratings below 2.50. This indicates that the students did not see "the teachers attend to only those who know the subject as a problem, but they saw the rest of the issues as problems. The average mean exceeded 2.50. By this analysis, curriculum issues presented great problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles.

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of questionnaire items on instructional materials as a problem (N = 916)**

	<i>To what extent do you encounter these problems?</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
17	Lack of funds for the purchase of materials	3.02	1.26	Great extent
18	Lack of teachers' knowledge and skill to use the available materials	3.36	1.52	Low extent
19	Lack of sufficient time to use instructional materials	3.45	1.57	Great extent
20	Too many recommended texts to read do not allow room for the use of other materials	3.67	1.63	Great extent
21	Inability to school authorities to provide materials needed for learning	3.42	1.03	Great extent
22	Inability of parents to buy needed materials for students	3.54	1.60	Great extent
23	Inability of teachers to use instructional materials to make learning motivating	3.44	1.01	Great extent
24	Lack of well-equipped Home Economics laboratories	3.76	0.71	Great extent
25	Inability of teachers to improvise instructional materials	3.65	1.68	Great extent
26.	Irregular power supply for using electronic materials.	3.56	1.64	Great extent
	Average Mean	3.48	1.36	Great extent

**Table 4: Mean and standard deviation of questionnaire items on curriculum issues as a problem (N = 916)**

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Items on curriculum issues</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Decision</i>
27	The syllabus is too wide	3.88	1.37	Great extent
28	The tests are always so difficult	3.05	1.43	Great extent
29	Clothing and Textiles demand too much of measurement and calculations	3.44	1.56	Great extent
30	Many of the topics are difficult	3.52	1.87	Great extent
31	There are no excursions or fieldtrips	3.61	1.61	Great extent
32	The methods of teaching are not interesting	2.95	1.71	Great extent
33	The teachers attend to only those who know the subject	2.21	1.41	Low extent
34	Students are not exposed to practical until the final certificate examination approaches	1.36	1.13	Low extent
Average mean		3.00	1.53	Great extent

## DISCUSSION

Responses to research question one revealed that students' attitude is a problem to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles. The students had a negative attitude in the sense that they did not consider the study of Clothing and Textiles career as a job for illiterates, and they considered money spent on doing Clothing and Textiles projects as a waste. In addition, students did not complete their Clothing and Textiles assignments and projects, they felt bored in classes and they did not feel confident that they would do well in the subject. This finding agrees with Anene-Okeakwa (2002), who noted that many students hate Home Economics as a subject in the school; some have little interest in the subject that they do not half way and drop it. A reason for the finding might be because of general societal attitudes that see vocational subjects as subjects for the under achievers and girls (Owolabi et al. 1991). It might also be as result of lack of appreciation and awareness of learners on the important role of Clothing and Textiles to socio-economic advancement of the nation. Whatever the reasons, the negative attitudes of the students are likely to hinder effective learning of the subject because studies looking into the attitudinal patterns of school learners have established that in schools' classroom instruction, attitudes determine to a great extent, the degree of success to be achieved (Imarhiagbe 2002; Okeke 2006).

In research question two, it was found that teacher quantity and quality also presented great problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles. The students indicated that there were inadequate Clothing and Textiles teachers in their schools, the available

teachers did not teach the subject very well and were not innovative and resourceful. Besides, the teachers spent almost all the class time on the lessons with no time left for practical work, they mostly did mere dictation of notes, and were not concerned that as many students as possible understand the lessons. This finding corroborates the observation of the Mberengwa (2004) that, the insufficient quantity of teachers have the tendency to influence teaching negatively with its implications on performance. Azih (2001) also found that the quality of teachers in Nigerian secondary schools is so low. The students' responses suggest that many of the Clothing and Textiles teachers are deficient in attainments, unknowledgeable in skill and accepted teaching practice. The students also indicated that the teachers lacked innovation and resourcefulness. This finding may be because teacher education has failed to prepare the Clothing and Textiles teachers adequately for classroom practice, and prepare the Clothing and Textiles teachers adequately for classroom practice, and in-service seminar or workshops are not regularly organized for the teachers. Poor quality teaching is a problem that adversely affects learning because Anyakoha (2002) made it clear that what students learn cannot go beyond what their teachers are able to present them. Several research reports such as Olaitan and Mbah (2001), Osisefo (2004) and Uko-Aviomah (2005) indicated that students' poor performance at the end of a school year is attributable to factors relating to the skill and effectiveness of the teachers. If teachers are weak in content knowledge and pedagogical competence so vital for effective learning, then the limits of achievements of learners will equally be weak.

It was further found that lack of funds,



inadequate instructional materials, lack of improvisation and utilization of teaching aids, as well as inadequate laboratory constituted problems to the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textile. Ogwo and Oranu (2006) also found that inadequate instructional materials and unwillingness of teachers to improvise is a great impediment to Home Economics instruction.

The lack of materials is compounded by teachers' lack of interest to use the limited ones available or even improvise simple materials. Inability of teachers' to improvise might be due to insufficient time. Sammons (1994) observed that teachers who already have too much class work and school responsibilities may find that instructional materials require additional time to improvise and to prepare for using them in the classroom. They may feel that they have no extra time to spare to facilitate their use of such materials. Lack of incentives for the teachers who sacrifice their time to improvise and integrate improvised instructional materials in their classes contributes significantly to teachers' lack of resourcefulness and teacher incompetence in the operation of teaching aids. Many instructional materials do not necessarily have to be bought or factory produced. This researcher believes that teachers can improvise materials, or rather exploit objects and situations in the classroom such as nature corner for teaching different aspects of Clothing and textile because the absence of instructional materials will place serious limitations on what the teacher can achieve.

Finally, some curriculum issues were identified as problems. These include; wide syllabus, difficult tests and topics, lack of excursions and fieldtrips, too much of measurement and calculations, and uninteresting methods of teaching. Similarly, Shulman (1987) observed that few teachers are capable of using effective methods to manage ideas within classroom discourse as few teachers neither know how to sequence materials, formulate questions, teach frameworks explicitly, organize studies nor monitor classrooms well. Similarly, Shulman (1987) observed that few teachers are capable of using effective methods to manage ideas within classroom discourse as many do not know how to sequence materials, formulate questions, teach framework explicitly, organize studies

nor monitor classrooms well. Anyakoha (1991) also observed that Clothing and Textiles curriculum is wide and demanding, but she urged teachers to use appropriate instructional methods in teaching. Given the students' responses in this study, it appears that Clothing and Textiles teachers' combination of subject matter; understanding and pedagogical skills are unimpressive. These curriculum issues are likely to result in a classroom atmosphere of disenchantment, which would make teaching and learning virtually impossible.

### CONCLUSION

Findings of the study have shown that the teaching/learning of Clothing and Textiles is beset with a variety of problems. These problems are summarized as:

- Negative attitudes among the learners as to the feasibility and value of studying Clothing and Textiles and consequently, lack of confidence.
- Curriculum and instructional impediments ranging from inadequate teacher quality and quantity, dearth of stimulating materials, difficult topics and tests, inappropriate methods, to lack of pedagogical skills among teachers, and
- Lack of funds and failure of teachers to improvise and utilize instructional materials.

Under situations mentioned above, the desired goals of the teaching and learning of Clothing and Textiles can hardly be attained. There is no doubt that Clothing and Textiles, just like other vocational subjects is an expensive programme, especially the inevitable aspect of providing for quality resources (teachers, relevant classroom interactions, workshops and facilities. It becomes imperative that programme on attitude change, high quality teachers, sufficient instructional time and materials, as well as appropriate methodology should be designed and implemented for effective teaching of the subject. High quality stimulating materials such as computers should be provided and Clothing and Textiles teachers should regularly be sponsored to seminars and workshops. The programme is practical oriented, where emphasis is on skills acquisition. Therefore, the desired objectives cannot be achieved without making provision for these basic resources in the right proportion.

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