

 ISSN NO. 2320-5407	Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/12867 DOI URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/12867	 INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) ISSN 2320-5407 Journal Homepage: http://www.journalijar.com Journal DOI:10.21474/IJAR01
---	--	---

RESEARCH ARTICLE

HOME ECONOMICS VERSUS OTHER SUBJECTS: A STUDY OF NIGERIAN'S PARENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Nchekwube Justina and Amarachi Igwe

Department of Home Economics, Federal College of Education, Eha Amufu, Enugu State, Nigeria.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 20 March 2021

Final Accepted: 24 April 2021

Published: May 2021

Key words: -

Home Economics, Parents, Attitude, Students

Abstract

Home economics is an essential subject in Nigeria's education system with the potential of providing life skills and teaching basic homecare knowledge to the students. However, there is a growing concern about the decreasing enrollment and interest of students in home economics education in Nigeria. Thus, the primary purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of parents regarding home economics education in comparison to other subjects. Two hundred and thirty-six parents were drawn from different locations in the Enugu State of Nigeria. A simple percentage score indicates that the majority of the parents (74%) indicated a negative attitude towards home economics, while less (26%) showed positive attitudes. The study concludes that there is a prevalence of negative attitudes towards home economics education in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2021, All rights reserved.

Introduction: -

Over the years, home economics as a subject within the Nigerian school system has provided essential training to students in relation to home care. According to the International Federation for Home Economics (2008), home economics as a discipline emerged in response to the global social challenges of poverty, health, social issues, and gender inequalities. The field equips individuals to effectively adapt to the dynamics of the social environment by providing knowledge geared towards efficient usage of human and material resources. Caraher and McCloat (2016) described home economics as a problem-solving-oriented discipline that addresses people's practical, real-world concerns in a socially responsible manner. Accordingly, Okadigwe and Rhoda (2019) refer to home economics as a skill-oriented subject that can offer learners the acquisition of skills for enhancing their capability for self-employment. Home economics education program comprises vocations related to clothing and textiles, foods and nutrition, home management, family relationship, and child development (Uwameiye, 2019). The subject focuses on understanding daily issues and improving aspects of life that impact individuals, families, and communities, such as relationships, shelter, clothing, and nutrition (Simamuna & Kalisto, 2016). It is the area of study that provides the necessary knowledge guiding and assisting human beings in attaining more self-reliance and fulfilled life (Ode, Babayeju, & Obalowu, 2013).

In Nigeria, home economics represents one of the subjects through which core messages of the country's population and family life education program are integrated at the secondary school level (Ukpore, 2005). An average Nigerian life development relating to food and nutrition, child care, home management, family planning, including clothing and textile, is covered under home economics.

Corresponding Author: - Nchekwube Justina

Address: - Department of Home Economics, Federal College of Education, Eha Amufu, Enugu State, Nigeria.

Home economics and other subjects

There is a growing concern that parents and guardians now believe that the full development of the Nigerian child is better valued through his/her training in other disciplines such as mathematics, chemistry, accounts, biology, information technology, and so on. Such notion could negatively impact the teaching and learning of home economics in school, which remains the panacea for the effective and complete development of an individual relating to basic home training and family living. Although, the scientific developments in education recently have been magnificent. People put more interest in the subjects pertaining to technological advancements compared to the essential home training area. However, scientific innovations have sharply outdistanced the achievements in dealing with social problems through home economics programs. Consequently, the trend has changed the direction of parental attitudes to disciplines other than home economics. Parents and guardians currently choose to recommend subjects believed to pose future career opportunities by society, hence, neglecting the importance of home economics. However, home economics remains one of the essential professional disciplines in achieving a healthy social environment.

Challenges of home economics and its implication on parental attitudes

The study of home economics aims to enable students to acquire the relevant potentials necessary to manage material resources and capabilities to develop their personal life (IFHE, 2008) and achieve multi-disciplinary training skills (Ezenwanne, 2015). However, it has also been found that students' performance in practicalizing the outcome of the home economics education is low compared to the goal of teaching home economics. This poor goal realization has made some parents and guardians alike counsel their wards away from offering the subject in school (Rose, 2015). The classroom learning environment (Uwameiye, 2015) and teacher factors (Okeke, 2006) have been found to constitute challenges in home economics and thereby influence parents' attitudes. Gender bias presents a significant problem in the field of home economics. For instance, most people believe that the domain is basically for females. Accordingly, Caraher and McCloat (2016) suggest that the concept of home economics as a subject is aimed at young girls. Perhaps, equip them with the necessary tools to survive as prospective wives, mothers, and domestic workers.

Similarly, Ozioma (2012) implicated several factors such as boy's approach to home economics, parental influence, the overall educational system, role models or lack of role models, and the general society as the causes of the observed gender gap in the learning of home economics. Perhaps, the observed gender bias poses a severe threat to the continuity of home economics in Nigeria's school system.

Attitude is the predisposition to evaluate any aspect of our social world. Attitude could either be favorable or unfavorable contingent on individuals' feelings about persons, objects, or concepts (Adewale et al., 2017). An attitude denotes an underlying inclination to respond to something either favorably or unfavorably (Edward, Moses, & Dinah, 2014). Attitude, once learned, can influence behavior even when the acquired attitude is inconsistent with the expected attitude. Parental support to students learning home economics is greatly affected by the level of attitudes, which means that the parents' positive or negative attitude is a determinant of parents' support of home economics. Parents with a negative attitude toward the subject tend to discourage their children, especially boys, from taking home economics subjects since they consider them as subjects for girls only (Manwa & Motsi, 2010). Parents' attitude towards education influences their involvement in education matters (Edward et al., 2014).

The Present Study

Currently, the education system in Nigeria is progressing towards science education, and the phenomenon is undoubtedly influencing parent's attitude towards home economics education in secondary schools. Despite the gains associated with the study of home economics in the Nigerian school system, enrollment into the field is decreasing (Ode et al., 2013). There is a growing concern about the extinction of home economics programs from the school curriculum. Moreover, food and nutrition education opportunities through home economics courses are being threatened, and teaching curricula are frequently outdated (Slater & Hinds, 2014). Based on the observed collapse of home economics in Nigeria's education, it is pertinent to examine parents' evaluations towards home economics. Although studies looking at parents' perception of home economics education in secondary school are sparse, the available literature suggests that these groups have mixed attitudes towards school home economics education (Lai-Yeung, 2015; Slater, 2013; Slater & Hinds, 2014). Moreover, to the best of our knowledge, no study has been conducted in Nigeria to explore parental attitudes towards secondary school home economics education. Therefore, this study intends to investigate parents' attitudes towards the importance of home economics compared to other subjects offered in Nigeria secondary schools.

Method: -

The study population included male and female adult parents between the age range of 45 to 65 years. Three hundred adults were approached in different locations in Enugu State between November 2020 and January 2021. Those who identified as parents with their wards in secondary school were asked to participate in a study to ascertain their attitudes towards home economics. A survey design was adopted for the study.

Instrument

Parental attitude towards home economics was measured with a self-developed instrument designed to assess parental attitude towards home economics. The 10-item Linkert-type measured in a 5-pointscale ranging from "disagree to strongly agree" the scale contains questions such as "home economics is relevant for my child's growth" "I hope my child will enroll in home economics in higher education. "A score above 25 denotes a positive attitude, while a score below signifies a negative attitude. The reliability and validity of the scale were ascertained following a pilot study, and a Cronbach Alpha revealed a .86 coefficient.

Result: -

In all, 261 adults who passed the inclusion criteria and consented to the study were handed the study's instrument. Perhaps, the questionnaires were filled and collected on the spot. However, only 236 copies were filled correctly and used for the analysis. The result indicated that 64% of the participants showed a negative attitude towards home economics, while 36% expressed a positive attitude towards home economics.

Table 1: - Table showing the percentage score of the parental attitudes towards home economics.

Attitude towards home economics score		
	N	%
Negative Attitude	151	64.0
Positive Attitude	85	36.0
Total	236	100.0

Discussion: -

The present study investigated parents' attitudes towards home economics as a subject in secondary schools in Nigeria. The study established that (64%) of parents had negative attitudes towards the teaching and learning of home economics, mostly influenced by gender role stereotyping (Nnubia, 2013). while (36 %) had positive liberal attitudes. (Manwa & Motsi, 2010). This finding could account for the reduction in student's enrollment in home economics (Ode et al., 2013) and the decline in preference of home economics in secondary schools. Edward et al. (2014) stated that parental attitude regarding academic involvement affects students' performance. Thus, parent's attitudes towards home economics could have a wider implication in the continuity of the discipline in contemporary society. While science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including some non-science fields like government and literature, are core building blocks of education, home economics is an important life skill critical to human existence. Perhaps, it can be deduced from the finding that most parents would prefer their wards to engage more in other subjects than home economics, thus, increasing the decline in homecare study. Positive attitudes toward home economics education are essential for adequate homecare training. However, many parents view home economics with limited knowledge of the enormous possibilities in the field. The current study provides insight into the need to increase home economics awareness in Nigeria.

Conclusion: -

The study explored the attitudes of parents towards home economics in Nigeria. The survey established that the majority of the parents exhibited a negative attitude towards home economics. The finding is explained in that the parents preferred other subjects to home economics. It is important to note that certain factors could limit the generalization of the result. For instance, the study failed to establish a cause-effect relationship, and thereby, it is unclear what factors accounted for the variance in the parent's attitude. Regardless, the result is important to educators in that it provides evidence into the role of parental attitude in the observed reduction in student enrollment in home economics. One of the most significant advantages of home economics class is that it teaches students essential life skills and empowerment. Thus, the study recommends that creating public awareness of home economic classes should be given adequate attention.

Acknowledgment: -

The researchers acknowledge the Tetfund for funding the study.

References: -

1. Adewale, B., Amgbari, E., Erebor, E., Tipili, Z., & Ejiga, J. (2017). Parental attitude towards vocational education in Ado-Odo Ogun State Nigeria. Conference: International Technology, Education and Development Conference (Pp. 5411-5415). Valencia, Spain: INTED2017 Conference.
2. Caraher, M., & McCloat, A. (2016). Home Economics as a food education intervention: lessons learned from Irish secondary school context. *Education and Health*, 104-110.
3. Edward, N. O., Moses, W. P., & Dinah, S. W. (2014). Relationship between Parents' Attitude towards Educational Involvement and Academic Performance of Day Secondary School Students in Samia -Kenya. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 147-157.
- Ezenwanne, D. N. (2015). Academic Stress among Home Economics Students in Higher Education: A Case of Colleges of Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 49-58.
4. Lai-Yeung, T. (2015). Hong Kong Parents' Perceptions of the Transference of Food Preparation Skills. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 117-124.
5. Manwa, L., & Motsi, E. (2010). Role Of Gender in The Teaching and Learning of Home Economics: A Case in Masvingo Peri-Urban. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, 215-225.
6. Nnubia, U. E. (2013). Gender Stereotype in Home Economics programs in Nigeria: Strategies for Correction. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2013.v2n5p9>
7. Ode, M., Babayeju, A., & Obalowu, M. (2013). Low Students' Enrolment in Home Economics Programme: A Case Study of the University of Ilorin. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(4), 46-53.
9. Okadigwe, J. C., & Rhoda, U. I. (2019). Teachers' Perception on Constraints of Effective Teaching and Learning of Home Economics in Secondary Schools in Delta State. *International Journal of Innovative Education Research*, 31-36.
10. Okeke, B. C. (2006). Enhancing Enrolment in Vocational programs in Colleges of Education in the Delta States of Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 72-89.
11. Ozioma, C. A. (2012). Societal and Gender Issues in the Study of Home Economics Education in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 38-47.
12. Rose, E. U. (2015). Influence of Gender and Self Concept on Home Economics Achievement among Junior Secondary School Students in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 85-90.
13. Simamuna, L. M., & Kalisto, K. (2016). Factors affecting teaching and learning of home economics in the integrated primary curriculum: A study of selected primary schools in Lusaka province of Zambia. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 9-16.
14. Slater, J. (2013). Is Cooking Dead: The State of Home Economics-Food and Nutrition Education. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 617-624.
15. Slater, J., & Hinds, A. (2014). University Student Perceptions of Home Economics: Food and Nutrition Education. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 68-80.
16. Ukpore, B. A. (2005). The Role of Home Economics: Population and Family Life Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*.
17. Uwameiye, B. (2015). Students' Perception of Home Economics Classroom Learning Environment in Edo State, Nigeria. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 2155-2160.
18. Uwameiye, B. (2019). Challenges Encountered by Students in the Acquisition of Entrepreneurial Skills in Home Economics Education in Edo and Delta State. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 371-376.