

Problems Militating against Provision of Clothing for Pregnant Women in Imo State

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Abstract

The study determined factors affecting provision of clothing for pregnant women and problems pregnant women encounter in clothing selection in Imo State. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using means and t-test. Findings of the study include 16 factors affecting provision of clothing for pregnant women such as: individual figure type, needs and wants, fashion and cost of clothing article, among others. Poor knowledge of textile fabrics, low income, absence of care labels on locally produced fabrics, high cost of clothing article, as well as lack of understanding of figure types and faults are some of the problems encountered by pregnant women in provision of their clothing. The paper recommended that pregnant women should be helped to understand what constitute their functional clothing through workshops, ante-natal classes, seminars as well as clothing and textile education.

Key Words: Clothing, Militating, Pregnant, Women, Provision, Fabric.

Introduction

Clothing is anything placed on the body to beautify, cover and to protect one from harsh environment. Gililan, (2010); Ozipek, Tanyas and Mahmutoglu-Dinc, (2012) noted that clothing is anything placed on the body to adorn, protect or communicate intent. It influences an individual's health, wellness and status (Arubayi, 2003; Jones, 1990; Ukpore, 2006). Clothing constitutes

visual communication which gives varied impressions about the wearer's personality and status (Nwadi and Anyakoha 2011; Ohaka and Igbo 2012). Through clothing the pregnant woman's personality is communicated to beholders which in turn affect the way they are treated by people around them (Akubue, 2014).

A Pregnant woman is one having a baby developing inside the womb. Merenstein and Gardner (2002) noted

that a pregnant woman is one who is carrying a developing fetus in her womb for about 36 weeks. In the same vein Agbo (2013) viewed pregnancy as a condition of being with a child. She noted that the course of pregnancy involves a lot of psychological, emotional and physical changes in woman. These changes affect the normal functioning of the body which eventually results to enlargement of the stomach. Myles (2005) stated that these changes affect the metabolic, chemical and endocrine balance of the body as such; they require ante-natal care. Hence, they register for ante-natal care in hospitals, clinics and maternity homes and visit them on ante-natal days where they are taken care of by the nurses and midwives.

However, as a result of these physical changes, pregnant women need special clothes known as maternity clothes. Maternity clothes are special clothes worn by pregnant women to accommodate the enlarged stomach. Wearing proper clothes during pregnancy is an important element of parental care that a couple has to look into. Myles (2005) pointed out that what one wear during pregnancy has profound effect on individual's health; therefore, pregnant women need appropriate maternity clothing during pregnancy. This can be achieved through careful planning and correct placement of priorities as well as reliable resources (Dead, 2012)

Inappropriate clothing worn by pregnant women disposes them to health risks. Wearing of tight clothing

impedes the vein circulation and increases susceptibility to varicose vein and edema (Myles, 2005; Towler, 2002). In the view of Offor (2002); and Agbo (2013) tight clothing causes discomfort and mal-presentation or even the death of babies in the womb. More so, uncomfortable maternity dresses may cause anxiety problems to pregnant women. Supporting this, Agbo, (2013) reported that prolonged or frequent anxiety; may contribute to pre-mature birth or abortion. Hence, there is need for adequate provision of functional clothing for pregnant women to avoid complication in pregnancy. Ukpore (2006); Brown (2005); Wrigth (2003); Agbo (2013); Mallum and Kembe (2011); Ozor and Ohaka (2013); Anwasha (2011); Paulo, George and Jorge (2003) noted the following as factors that influence the provision of clothing as follows- needs and wants, cost, care, fit, quality, style features, resources available, status, physical changes in the body and the individual's figure type. Supporting this, Gannett (2003); Agbo (2013); and Krieger (2012) stated that garment quality, fit, care, cost, brand name, location, culture and care labels are factors that influence clothing provision.

However, it should be noted that the provision of adequate clothing for pregnant women depend on the activities they do which in turn is reflected on where they live. It is important to note that some of these pregnant women dwell in urban and rural areas of Imo state which has an influence on the way they dress.

Detailed observations of the pregnant women who dress in manners uncomplimentary to the functional clothing pattern show that they are either rural or urban dwellers. These pregnant women face a lot of challenges in clothing themselves. The challenges hinge on a number of factors as well as available resources which are human and non-human. Money is one of the limited resources that are ever inadequate to take care of the needs (Agbo, 2013; and Akubue 2014). Therefore acquiring clothes implies some degree of wealth which some of these women cannot comfortably afford. More so, clothing knowledge is rich resources which pregnant women need to harness in order to cloth themselves adequately. Arubayi (2003) and Osisefo (2004) noted that adequate knowledge of clothing enables one to meet personal and societal clothing needs.

In spite of these factors, there are some problems encountered by pregnant women in provision of their clothing which include poor knowledge of clothing articles, wrong choice of clothing, inability to understand figure faults, low income and high cost of clothing articles among others (Agbo (2013); Mallum and Kember (2011); Kureave and Audu, (2002).

The dressing pattern of these pregnant women is an issue of concern. These pregnant women are either urban or rural and they have access to internet website where they copy different fashions contrary to the culture and tradition that abhor such

dressing patterns. The study seeks ways of improving the dressing pattern of pregnant women through appropriate provision of clothing.

The finding of the study will be beneficial to the nurses and midwives who engage in ante-natal services for they will use the result of the study in educating the pregnant women on measures to improve their provision of clothing. It will expose the pregnant women on ways of solving the problems encountered in the provision of clothing. The study will also be useful to Home Economics Teachers in teaching pregnancy clothing.

Purpose of the study

This study focused on problems militating against provision of clothing for pregnant women in Imo State. Specifically the study determined:

1. factors that influence the provision of clothing for pregnant women.
2. problems encountered by pregnant women in provision of their clothing.
3. measures for improving provision of clothing for pregnant women.

Hypotheses (HOs):

Two HOs were tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on the factors that influence clothing provision.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the urban and rural pregnant women

on problems encountered by the pregnant women in the provision of clothing.

Methodology

Area of the study: The study was carried out in Imo State. Imo State is made up of three senatorial zones namely Okigwe, Orlu and Owerri. There are also twenty seven Local Government Areas (LGAs) with numerous general hospitals located at various parts of the LGAs. In addition the Federal Medical Centre is located at the Owerri senatorial zone while Teaching Hospital is located in Orlu senatorial zone.

Design of the study: The study employed the survey design of descriptive research. This was considered suitable for the study because it will enable information to be gathered from the pregnant women.

Population for the study: The population for the study is 7381 comprising: 105 trained nurses and midwives who are working in government owned hospitals in Imo State and 7120 registered pregnant women who register for ante-natal care in government owned hospitals in the state ((Imo State General Hospitals Register, (2013); Federal Medical Center Register, (2013); Orlu Teaching Hospital Register, (2013). And also, 156 Home Economics Teachers that are teaching in public secondary schools and who reside within the rural and urban LGAs in the state (Imo State Secondary School Education Management Board, (2013).

Sample for the study: Proportionate sampling procedure was used in selecting the sample size. The sample size is made up of 396 pregnant women, 54 nurses/midwives and 80 Home Economics Teachers bringing the sample size to 530.

Instrument for data collection: The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The instrument was developed by the researcher based on the purpose of the study and extensive review of related literature. Five point Likert scale of SA =5, A =4, UD =3, D =2 and SD =1 was used for the study. The instrument was face validated by three professionals. One from the Department of Home Economics, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri, one from the Department of Vocational Teacher Education (VTE) of the University of Nigeria Nsukka and one from Federal Medical Centre Owerri.

Twenty copies of the instrument were administered to 10 pregnant women, 5 nurses/midwives and 5 Home Economics Teachers in the state who were not part of the population to determine the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach Alpha. Reliability coefficient of 0.990, 0.991, and 0.995 were obtained in the three research questions respectively.

Method of data collection and analysis: The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of three research assistants. 530 questionnaires were administered and the recovery rate was 100%. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test.

Mean ratings 3.0 and above were accepted as agreement while below 3.0 were rejected.

Findings of the study

The following findings were made from the study:

1. Sixteen (16) factors were identified as factors influencing the provision of clothing for pregnant women. See Table 1.
2. Fourteen problems were encountered by pregnant women in provision of clothing. See Table 2.

3. Twenty five strategies were identified as measures for improving the provision of clothing for pregnant women. See Table 3.

4. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on factors that influence clothing provision in all the items. See Table 1
5. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on the problems they encounter in provision of clothing in all the items. See Table 2.

Table 1: Mean responses and t -test analysis of urban and rural pregnant women on factors that influence clothing provision of pregnant women.

S/ N	Factors that influence provision of clothing	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_g	SD	t-cal	Rmks
1	Individual's figure type	3.98	3.69	3.86	0.65	-0.17	NS
2	Needs and wants	4.07	3.91	3.64	0.53	-0.07	NS
3	The resources available	3.66	4.13	3.62	0.52	0.18	NS
4	Fashion trend/prevailing fashion	3.69	3.84	3.86	0.65	0.09	NS
5	Durability of the clothes	3.88	3.90	3.79	0.61	0.31	NS
6	Clothing prices in different stores	3.89	3.78	3.84	0.65	-0.06	NS
7	Existing clothes in a person's wardrobe	3.65	3.78	3.83	0.63	0.08	NS
8	Physical changes in the body	3.88	3.77	4.02	0.76	-0.07	NS
9	Work and activities carried out	3.85	4.10	4.12	0.83	0.09	NS
10	Climatic condition	2.58	2.46	2.3	0.30	-0.11	NS
11	Location (urban/rural)	2.73	1.94	2.58	0.28	-0.64	NS
12	Cost	3.93	4.38	3.6	0.51	0.12	NS
13	Style features	3.71	4.05	3.87	0.66	0.15	NS
14	Conformity to contours of pregnancy	4.20	3.90	3.62	0.51	-0.12	NS
15	Clothes that focus attention on the upper parts of the body	4.0	3.97	3.78	0.60	-0.00	NS
16	Basic design elements	4.00	4.07	3.81	0.62	0.02	NS
17	Social status of pregnant woman	4.35	3.77	3.72	0.57	-0.22	NS
18	Social and psychological values of pregnant woman	4.10	3.80	3.99	0.74	-0.15	NS
19	Place of purchase	3.71	1.89	2.64	0.28	-1.29	NS

Key: t-table value=1.9; NS=not significant; SD=standard deviation; df=394 at 0.05 significant level; No. of rural pregnant women =99; No. of urban pregnant women=319;

\bar{X}_g =grand mean; \bar{X}_1 = mean responses of urban pregnant women; \bar{X}_2 = mean responses of rural pregnant women.

Table 1 reveals that factors influencing the provision of clothing for pregnant women include individual's figure type, needs, and wants, finance, fashion, cost, existing clothes in one's wardrobe, style features, social status among others. While place of purchase, location and climatic conditions were rejected as factors influencing the provision of clothing for pregnant women. Table 1 also, showed that t-calculated value is less than t-table value in all the items. This shows that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on factors that influence clothing provision. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted for all the items.

Table 2: mean responses and t- test comparison of mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on problems encountered in the provision of pregnant women's clothing.

S/N	problems	\bar{X}_1	\bar{X}_2	\bar{X}_g	SD	t-cal	Rmks
1	Low income	3.99	3.82	3.81	0.62	0.08	NS
2	Poor knowledge of textile fabrics	4.42	4.05	3.83	0.63	0.11	NS
3	Absence of care labels on locally manufactured fabrics	4.25	3.90	3.77	0.60	0.13	NS
4	Difficulty in reading and understanding information written on care labels	4.41	3.55	3.77	0.60	0.38	NS
5	Difficulty in decision making as regards to selection of fabrics, make-up, occasion and climate	4.05	3.51	3.84	0.64	0.34	NS
6	Difficulty in finding one's size in ready to wear garment	4.18	3.87	3.80	0.62	0.13	NS
7	Inability to know the appropriate dress for the right occasion	4.15	3.62	3.80	0.62	0.28	NS
8	Difficulty in choosing colours in dress	4.04	3.36	3.80	0.62	0.47	NS
9	Difficulty in harmonizing colours with the right accessories	4.37	3.64	3.93	0.70	0.31	NS
10	Inability to understand figure types and faults	4.41	4.27	3.76	0.59	0.03	NS
11	Impulsive buying	4.26	3.97	3.71	0.57	0.10	NS
12	High cost of clothing articles	4.35	3.99	3.90	0.68	0.12	NS
13	Limitless kinds and varieties of clothing in today's market	4.09	3.71	3.73	0.42	0.19	NS
14	Wrong choice of clothing	4.19	3.16	3.64	0.53	0.62	NS

Key: t-table value=1.9; SD= standard deviation; NS=not significant df=394 at 0.05 significant level; No. of rural pregnant women =99; No. of urban pregnant women=319;

\bar{X}_g =grand mean; \bar{X}_1 = mean responses of urban pregnant women; \bar{X}_2 = mean responses of rural pregnant women.

Table 2 shows that all the items were accepted as problems encountered by pregnant women in provision of clothing which include- low income, poor knowledge of textile fabrics, high cost of clothing articles, wrong choice of clothing, difficulty in understanding care labels, choosing and harmonizing colours among others. The mean of the items ranged from 3.74-3.93. The t-test indicated that the t- calculated values ranged from 0.03- 0.62 which is less than t-table value in all the items. The result showed that the two groups of respondents perceived the items to be problems encountered by pregnant women in the provision of clothing.

Table 3: Mean responses and standard deviation of respondents on measures for improving the provision of functional clothing for pregnant women.

S/N	Measures	\bar{X}	S.D	Remarks
1	Buying clothes that consist of mix and match outfits.	3.81	0.62	AG
2	Buying versatile clothing	3.79	0.61	AG
3	Sewing garments for self	3.73	0.57	AG
4	Buying second hand clothing	3.74	0.58	AG
5	Amending old but useful clothing in the wardrobe	3.93	0.70	AG
6	Renovating handed down clothing	3.54	0.39	AG
7	Recycling of one's personal clothing	3.68	0.45	AG
8	Buying clothes on credit or install mental payment	3.52	0.47	AG
9	Buying clothes based on needs	3.59	0.50	AG
10	Buying multi- purpose clothing items	3.64	0.53	AG
11	Evaluating clothes before buying	3.86	0.65	AG
12	Buying clothes that enhance beauty	3.95	0.71	AG
13	Buying clothes based on climatic condition	2.44	0.29	DA
14	Buying durable clothes	3.59	0.50	AG
15	Budgeting for maternity clothing	3.62	0.42	AG
16	Improving the knowledge of textiles and clothing through consumer education	3.53	0.47	AG
17	Improving clothing knowledge of pregnant women during their ante-natal visit in the hospitals	3.90	0.68	AG
18	Buying from the used clothing markets	3.63	0.52	AG
19	Buying from the discount houses and stores that sale factory samples and rejects	3.88	0.67	AG
20	Providing textile education through cooperative extension services	3.90	0.68	AG
21	Organizing workshops for pregnant women	3.64	0.53	AG

22	Buying easy to clean/ minimum care clothes	3.98	0.73	AG
23	Avoiding fabrics that are easily stained	3.40	0.42	AG
24	Avoiding fabrics that have poor cleaning qualities	3.78	0.60	AG
25	Avoiding heavy garments	3.73	0.58	AG
26	Providing clothes for every occasion	3.90	0.68	AG
27	Hiring appropriate seamstress and dress makers	3.82	0.63	AG

Key: AG=Agreed; DA= Disagreed; \bar{X} = Mean; SD= Standard deviation

Table 3 indicates that buying clothes based on climatic condition and avoiding fabrics that are easily stained by perspiration were rejected while every other item were accepted as measures for improving the provision of functional clothing for pregnant women.

Discussion of findings

The study has shown that the factors which influence the provision of clothing for pregnant women include the following: individual's figure type, needs and wants, resources available, fashion trend, cost, durability of clothes, social status, style feature among others. The finding is in line with Paulo, George, and Santos (2003); Gannett (2003); Brown (2005); and Agbo (2013), they noted that needs and wants, style features and resources available are factors influencing clothing provision. However, finance, and high cost of clothing articles are the major factors influencing clothing provision. When these pregnant women cannot afford the cost, they resort to putting whatever that is within the financial strength which may not be appropriate for the clothing needs. This is in line with the findings of Mallum and Kember, (2011), they

stated that high cost of clothing articles is one of the major factors that influence clothing provision.

The study results showed that the problems associated with provision of clothing by pregnant women include low income, poor knowledge of textile fabrics, and absence of care labels on locally produced fabrics, inability to understand figure types and faults, high cost of clothing articles among others. This is in agreement with the findings of Kureave and Audu (2002); Anyakoha and Eluwa (2008). Both authors admitted that the problems encountered by pregnant women in clothing provision include poor knowledge of clothing articles, wrong choice of clothing, and high cost of clothing articles and absence of care labels. Difficulty in choosing and harmonizing colours in dress with the right accessories and difficulty in decision making with reference to selection of fabrics/garments, make-up, occasion and climate were also some of the problems pregnant women encounter in providing clothing. The findings is in agreement with that of Agbo, (2013); and Akubue, (2014), they reported that finance and high cost of clothing articles are some of the problems

encountered in provision of adequate clothing.

The finding of the study also showed that measures for improving provision of functional clothing of pregnant women include sewing garment for self, renovating handed down clothing, buying clothes that consist of mix and match out-fit, buying clothes based on needs and wants, and clothes that enhance beauty. The findings agree with the findings of Agbo, (2013) who stated that the provision of clothing for pregnant women can be enhanced through borrowing of clothes and use of second hand clothing. The finding of the study also revealed that there were no significant differences between the mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on factors that influence clothing provision. This means that location has no influence on factors that influence clothing provision. This finding is in disparity with the finding of Kureave and Audu (2002) who noted that location and social status were significant factors that influence clothing provision of rural families. The difference in the two studies might be as a result of differences in the target population used for the studies. However, the finding is in agreement with the finding of Keriger, (2012) who concluded that culture and fashion trend influences clothing provision. Therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. More so, no significant differences existed between the mean responses of urban and rural pregnant women on problems encountered on

provision of clothing. The t- calculated values were less than the t- table values in all the items 1-14. It can therefore be stated that the responses of urban and rural pregnant women on problem encountered on provision of functional clothing did not differ in all the items. Thus the null hypothesis is upheld.

Conclusion

The finding of the present study showed that a lot of factors influence the provision of clothing of pregnant women. They factors are needs and wants, knowledge of basic design elements, social status and physical changes in the body among others. While problems encountered in the provision of functional clothing by pregnant women include low income, poor knowledge of textile fabrics, inability to understand figure types and faults and high cost of clothing articles. The study concludes the following- sewing garment for self, buying durable and beautiful clothes that enhances beauty and buying clothes based on needs as measures to improve the provision of clothing for pregnant women.

Recommendations

- Pregnant women's knowledge of clothing and textile should be provided through consumer education or during ante-natal visit in the hospitals.
- Workshops and seminars should be organized for pregnant women by churches and village forum on

measures to improve the provision of clothing needs.

- The nurses should expose the pregnant women on ways of solving the problems they encounter on provision of clothing.

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