

Home Economics Teachers and Trade Subjects in Secondary Schools in Owerri Municipal

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Abstract

The study focused on equipping Home Economics teachers for teaching trade subjects in Secondary Schools in Owerri Municipal, Imo state. Three research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The Population comprised of 182 Home Economics teachers. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings show that Home Economics teachers encounter problems in teaching trade subjects such as: inadequate and obsolete facilities, teachers' lack of knowledge and skills about the use of available materials, among others. Ways of equipping the Home Economics teachers to surmount the challenges include: organizing workshops for teachers on operation of modern equipment, building of laboratories, organizing of workshops and seminars to upgrade Home Economics teachers competencies on trade subjects, among others. Recommendations were made among which is mounting an in-service training for Home Economics teachers of Secondary Schools on trade subjects during the long vacation.

Key words: Trade, Subjects, Entrepreneurship, Teachers, Secondary, Schools.

Introduction

Home Economics is a skill oriented subject which focuses mainly on training individuals to acquire necessary skills, techniques, knowledge and attitudes in order to become prospective, competent and effective homemakers and professionals in their chosen field. According to Anyakoha (2015), Home Economics as a vocational course is a

unique discipline aimed at equipping individuals for active and competent participation in life within family and work environment. It equips individuals with saleable skills that can make them self reliant. It is a field of study offered at all levels of education in Nigeria: primary, secondary and tertiary level.

At Secondary school level Home Economics is taught in junior

secondary while at the senior secondary, it is taught under the three major areas: Food and Nutrition, Home Management, Clothing and Textile. It was from these three major areas that the trade subjects were carved out which are: as follows: garment making, catering services, tourism, cosmetology, textile trade, dyeing and bleaching. These were slated among other 39 trade subjects as options in which students are to choose one as a requirement in senior secondary school.

These trade subjects otherwise known as entrepreneurial subjects were introduced to meet the broad goals of senior secondary education which is to prepare students for tertiary education and to equip those who may not be privileged to proceed into tertiary level with skills for the world of work, wealth creation and entrepreneurship. (Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN, 2013). According to Adesulu, (2011) and Ementa (2013), the trade subject are for self employment and self reliance, creation or innovation of novel business opportunities, national economic growth and rural urban development. Hence, school leavers with little or no additional skill and knowledge should be able to practice the learnt trade, be gainfully employed and useful to the society.

The Federal Ministry of Education on March 14, 2011 launched this laudable programme. The implementation started from September 2011 and the first Senior Secondary

School Examination on trade subjects was written in 2014 (Okoye and Ogunleye, 2015). For the past four consecutive years of the introduction of these trade subjects, the impact is yet to be felt. School leavers have not fared better in terms of exhibiting the required skills in their different trade areas. Unemployment rate is still escalating at an alarming rate. Orji (2011) noted that the inability of most secondary school graduates of Home Economics to effectively apply occupational skills in other to ensure productive living is as a result of lack of entrepreneurial skills. This could be traced to the problem of teachers' unpreparedness which hinders effective delivery of the requisite skills. Through observation and experience, senior secondary school teachers have not been given in service training to meet up with the ever evolving and dynamic demand of these newly created trade subjects. Thus, these teachers may be encountering difficulties in content and practical delivery of these newly adopted trade subjects. Laudable policies and programmes need to be marched up with tactful implementation strategies to achieve the desired goals. Hence, there is need to equip these teachers with requisite skills for effective implementation of the new curriculum.

Objectives of the Study

The major purpose for this study was to evolve ways of equipping Home Economics teachers for teaching trade subjects in Secondary

Schools. Specifically, the study determined:

1. problems encountered by Home Economics teachers in teaching Home Economics related trade subjects (HERTS) in Secondary Schools.(garment making, catering services, tourism, cosmetology, textile trade, dying and bleaching)
2. ways of equipping schools with adequate instructional resources for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools.
3. ways of equipping Home Economics teachers with adequate instructional skills for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the problems encountered by Home Economics teachers in teaching Home Economics related trade subjects (garment making, catering services, tourism, cosmetology and textile trade, dying and bleaching) in Secondary Schools?
2. What are the ways of equipping schools with adequate resources for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools?
3. What are the ways of equipping Home Economics teachers with adequate instructional skills for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools?

Methodology

Design of the Study: Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study.

Area of the Study: The study was carried out in Owerri Capital Territory, which comprises of three Local Government Areas: Owerri North, Owerri West and Owerri municipal. There are 269 secondary schools in Owerri capital territory with 182 Home Economics teachers.

Population for the Study: The population comprised 182 Secondary School Home Economics Teachers in Owerri Capital Territory. Imo State (Source: Secondary Education Management Board (SEMB), Owerri). They were all females with at least First Degree Certificate from different institutions in Nigeria.

Sample for the study: Purposive sampling was used to select 50 Home Economics teachers who are directly involved in teaching of the trade subject at the Senior Secondary School levels in the schools.

Instrument for Data Collection: A 27-item structured questionnaire was developed based on the research questions and review of related literature. The questionnaire was made of three sections A -C. Section A sought information on the problems encountered by Home Economics teachers in teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools, Section B sought information on ways of equipping schools with adequate infrastructure for teaching Home Economics related trade

subjects in Secondary Schools, while Section C sought information on ways of equipping Home Economics teachers with adequate instructional skills for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts in Home Economics Department of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. Inputs, corrections and comments of the validates were used to reconstruct and update the instrument before the administration.

Method of Data Collection: Fifty copies of the questionnaire were

administered by hand to the respondents in different Secondary Schools in Owerri. 47 copies were correctly completed and returned representing 94% return rate which is appropriate.

Method of Data Analysis: The data collected for the study were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation for answering the research questions. Mean value of 3.00 and above was used as basis for the decision making.

Results

Table 1: Mean Rating of Respondents on Problems encountered by Home Economics teachers in teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools

S/N	Problems encountered by teachers in teaching Home Economics trade subjects	X	SD	RMKS
1	High financial demand of the subjects by students	3.20	0.833	Agreed
2.	Poor attitude of students towards practical lessons	3.10	0.814	Agreed
3.	Inadequate and obsolete facilities and laboratories	3.48	0.762	Agreed
4.	Teachers' lack of knowledge and skills about the use of available materials	2.96	0.8562	Agreed
5.	Confusing the content of the scheme of Home Economics subjects with those of trade subjects	3.18	0.874	Agreed
6.	Insufficient time allocated to the Home Economics trade subjects.	3.14	0.8084	Agreed
7.	Insufficient number of qualified teachers with Certificates on the trade subjects.	3.48	0.9446	Agreed

Key : -Mean response, SD- Standard Deviation

Table 1 shows that the eight items had mean between 2.94 and 3.48 which are all greater than the cutoff point of 2.5. This shows that all the respondents agreed that all the items listed were problems encountered by the Home Economics teachers in teaching the

trade subjects. The Standard Deviation values for all the items ranged between 0.76 and 1.01, which implies that the responses of the respondents are close to each other and to the mean.

Table 2: Mean Rating of Respondents on Ways of equipping schools with adequate resources for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools.

S/N	Provision of resources in Secondary Schools for effective teaching of trade subjects	X	SD	RMKS
1.	Provision of fund for the purchase of equipments	3.52	0.706	Agreed
2.	Building of laboratories for effective teaching of the trade subjects.	3.42	0.493	Agreed
1.	Equipping the existing and the new laboratories with equipment necessary for teaching the trade subjects	3.44	0.577	Agreed
4.	Organizing workshops to educate teachers on the operation of the equipment.	3.54	0.503	Agreed
5.	Employing technologists who can operate of the equipment.	3.50	0.544	Agreed
6.	Servicing and good maintenance of the equipments regularly for durability	3.48	0.677	Agreed
7.	Allocating more time in the school time table for the trade subjects	3.34	0.717	Agreed
8.	Supplying power regularly for the operation of the equipment	3.46	0.706	Agreed
9.	Inviting skilled resource persons from well established companies to teach practical aspects for effective acquisition of skill by the teachers and the students	3.44	0.644	Agreed

Key : X- Mean responses, SD- Standard Deviation

Table 2 shows that the nine (9) items ranged between 3.34 and 3.54 which are all greater than the cutoff point of 2.5. This shows that all the respondents agreed that the items are all ways of equipping schools with adequate resources for teaching Home

Economics related trade subjects. The Standard deviation values for all the items ranged between 0.49 and 0.71, which implies that the responses of the respondents are close to each other and to the mean.

Table 3: Mean Rating of Respondents on Ways of equipping Home Economics teachers with adequate instructional skills for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools.

SN	Ways of equipping Teachers with Skill for teaching the Trade subjects	X	SD	RMKS
1.	Assessment of the teachers to know their level of knowledge in the trade subjects	3.38	0.602	Agreed
2.	Organizing workshops and seminars to upgrade Home Economics teachers' competencies on trade subjects.	3.56	0.501	Agreed
3.	Training Home Economics teachers on peculiarities			

	of the trade subjects	3.48	0.508	Agreed
4.	Inclusion of these trade subjects as courses in related aspects of Home Economics in Tertiary Institutions	3.44	0.611	Agreed
2.	Creation of these trade subjects as courses under Vocational and Technical Education.	3.32	0.652	Agreed
6.	Inclusion of some Home Economics related trade courses at the elementary educational level for better awareness	3.60	0.535	Agreed
7.	Provision of text books by specialists on the trade subjects for better access by the teachers	3.72	0.454	Agreed
8.	Purchase of foreign books for universal knowledge on the trade subjects	3.28	0.809	Agreed
9.	Provision of internet facilities to enhance global knowledge, assessment and sharing among teachers	3.40	0.833	Agreed

Key: X- Mean responses, SD- Standard Deviation

Table 3 shows that the nine items ranged between 3.32 and 3.72 which are all greater than the cutoff point of 2.5. This shows that all the respondents agreed that the nine points were ways through which Home Economics teachers can be equipped with adequate instructional skills for teaching Home Economics related trade subjects in Secondary Schools. The Standard Deviation values for all the items ranged between 0.45 and 0.83 which reveals that the responses of the respondents are close to each other and to the mean.

Discussion of the findings

The findings of the study showed that Home Economics teachers encounter many problems in teaching trade subjects which include the following among others; inadequate and obsolete facilities and laboratories, insufficient time allocated to the trade subjects, insufficient number of qualified teachers with certificates on

these trade subjects. The problem of inadequate laboratory and facilities cannot be overemphasized as Ozor, Okeke and Opara (2016) also identified this major challenge. Kembe (2014), linked the situation to a carpenter working in workshop without tools. Practical lesson cannot be compromised in these entrepreneurial subjects. Furthermore, the problem of insufficient number of qualified teachers affirms the findings of Okoye and Ogunleye (2015), that there was paucity of teachers to handle vocational and technical subjects which were a major reason for the poor implementation of the curriculum. Also, Ementa (2013) stressed that the aims of these trade subjects are bound to fail due to shortage of proficient teachers. The major problem of scarcity of books on the trade subjects corroborates with the findings of Adeyinu and Carim-Sanni (2015) that there is scarcity of good books to teach the trade subjects. Similarly, Okoye and

Ogunleye, (2015) also observed the problem of infrequent supply and high cost of these books.

Furthermore, the findings in Table Two showed that all the teachers agreed that the schools need to be well equipped and provided with enough fund for effective implementation of the trade subjects. This affirms the view of Ofoha (2011), that there is need for provision of fund for effective teaching of trade subjects in Edo State. Similarly, in support of the findings, Arubayi (2014) noted that funding is the life wire of any educational programme and the bed rock for effective acquisition of practical skills, knowing that all these trade subjects are for acquisition of practical skills. Onyemaobi (2009) cried this problem a long time stating that excellent educational plan may not take off or be fully implemented without adequate funds. The findings also showed that there is need for equipping the existing laboratories and building of new ones which should be well equipped with modern facilities. This is in consonance with Mberengwa (2004) who observed that upgrading of Clothing and Textile laboratory (a section of Home Economics) is a priority, especially in technology equipment. In the same vein (Orji 2014) also noted that there is need for provision of infrastructure for effective teaching of trade subjects. Ali, Mohammed, Alum, Muhammed &Yahya (2012) further affirm that there is need for provision of instructional materials, machineries

as well as consumables in the teaching and learning of technical skills.

Finally, Table three showed that there is need for more text books on the trade subjects, this corroborates with the findings of Ementa (2013) who observed that entrepreneurship education (trade subjects) can be effective only when the text books and materials are readily available for use by teachers. He further decried the fact that students will equally not get the best of the lessons without good text books. Also, teachers need to be given chance for in-service courses part of which will equip them with instructional skills so as to effectively teach the trade subjects. This is in line with the findings of Ali, et al (2012) that teachers should be engaged in training and retraining sections to equip them with up to date skills and knowledge towards teaching approaches. Adeyonu and Carim-Sanni (2015) emphasized that for effective implementation of the trade subjects' curriculum, teaching staff, school infrastructures, community interest and support and local resources should be harnessed and made available.

Conclusion

The introduction of trade subjects into the curriculum of Senior Secondary School Education is a good and welcomed innovation. The laudable objective of introducing the trade subjects include: for students to be gainfully employed and useful to the society at the completion of Senior

Secondary School which is mainly towards national development. However, the findings of this study have confirmed that Home Economics teachers in Secondary Schools encounter some problems in teaching the trade subjects. Moreover, the Secondary Schools need to be equipped with infrastructures which will improve the competencies of the teachers. Furthermore, there is need to equip the teachers with relevant instructional skills for the realization of the aim of the introduction of the trade subjects.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study made the following recommendations:

- ❖ Home Economics teachers in secondary schools need to be equipped by giving them in-service training on the trade subjects possibly during the long vacation
- ❖ Some courses related to the five trade subjects should be introduced to the students of Home Economics in Tertiary Institutions at the teacher education stage to prepare teachers to handle Trade Subjects effectively.
- ❖ Professionals should develop more books of good quality on the trade subjects for reference in the process of teaching these subjects.

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