Care Labels Utilization by Laundry and Dry Cleaning Establishments in Benue State

Gera N.P.; Chukwuone, C.A.; Madu, M.A & Ugwu, E.I
Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education
University of Nigeria Nsukka

Abstract

This study investigated care label utilization practices by launderers and dry cleaners in Benue state. Specifically, the study determined launder's and dry cleaner's perception of the uses of care labels in their clothing care activities; problems that hinder or could hinder uses of care label by launderers in laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue State and ways of enhancing their utilization of care label. Three research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population for the study was 63 launderers/dry cleaners in the laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue State, there was no sampling. Questionnaire and focus group discussion guide were used for data collection. Data analyzed using mean and standard Deviation. Responses from focus group discussion were summarized. Findings of the study include: that launderers/dry cleaners perceived care label as sources of information on type of fibre/fabric, type of care- laundry or dry-cleaning, hand or machine wash, water temperature. Hindrances to the use of care labels include incorrectly presented information by the manufacturers; users inability to read and interpret care labels; some care labels are inconspicuous on clothing ways of enhancing utilization include that care labels should be attached in a conspicuous part of the clothing by the manufacturers; care labels should be legible during useful life of clothing items.

Introduction

Clothing is any article or item placed on the body in order to protect, beautify or adorn it. It includes a variety of items and applications such as clothes (garments, gowns, shirts, trousers, skirts, undergarments, watches, belts, ties, make-up, hair do ,umbrellas, hand bags, walking sticks, among others(Anyakoha,2015).It performs important functions including protection, modesty, decoration, identification, status, creates impression, build self-expression among others. It is one of the basic human needs. In the process of utilization of clothing articles they become dirty and must be cleaned and cared for. The care given to clothes depends on the fabric type (fibre). There

are various ways of caring for different clothes including laundry and dry cleaning.

Laundry is the process of washing, proper drying and finishing of clothing items. Dry clean involves the processes of cleaning clothing and related textiles with special solvents instead of water (Anyakoha, 2016). Clothing manufacturers often attach care labels to clothes. Such care labels are expected to give information on fibre types, care of that fibre, hand/ machine washing symbols, dry cleaning and ironing symbols, and other necessary information. The launder or dry cleaner is expected to study the care labels and follow the instructions given therein.

The scenario in the laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue state on the use of care label is given the researcher a concern. It is observed that many people who patronize launderers and dry cleaners in Benue State often complain and express dis-satisfaction with their laundered/dry cleaned clothing articles. Often the articles get damaged in the process of laundry or dry cleaning. It becomes doubtful as to whether or not the service providers are aware of and utilize the information on the care labels. This situation causing many people's clothing items to get damaged in the process, thereby counting looses to the owners' of the clothing items. This situation most times has led to huge amount of loss both on the launderers and the owners of the clothing items. It is therefore important that care label utilization be ascertained to reduce the number of clothing items damaged during the laundry/dry cleaning process by the service providers. It is upon this background that the study is undertaken to ascertained care label utilization of launders/dry cleaners' in Benue state.

Purpose of the Study
This study focused on care label utilization by launders /dry cleaners in Benue State laundry/dry cleaning establishments. Specifically the study determined;
1. launder's/dry cleaner's perception of the uses of care labels in their clothing care activities.
2. problems that hinder or could hinder the uses of care label by launderers in laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue State.
3. ways of enhancing utilization of care label by launderers in laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue state.

Research Questions
To accomplish this, the study sought answers to the following research questions.
1. What is the launderers'/dry cleaner's perceptions on uses of care labels in their clothing care activities?
2. What are the problems that hindered or could hinder the use of care labels by launderers in laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue state?
3. What are the ways of enhancing care labels utilization by launderers

in laundry/dry cleaning establishments?

Methodology

Area of the Study: The study was carried out in the four major urban towns in Benue State. The registered laundry and dry cleaning establishments in the state are found in these major towns. There are 63 such registered establishments (Benue State Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industries, 2016).

Design of the Study: The study adopted a descriptive survey design.

Population for the Study: The population for the study was made up of all the trained launderers and dry cleaners in the 63 registered in laundry/dry cleaning establishments in the Benue State (Benue State Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industries, 2016). It was expected that each establishment had at least three trained personnel.

Sampling for the Study: A purposive sample of 63 trained launderers/dry cleaners was selected from each of the 63 establishments. One trained staff with the highest qualification and experience was selected from each establishment.

Instrument for data collection: The data was collected with two instruments namely a 4-point scaled questionnaire and focus group discussion guide (FGD). The questionnaire was developed based on the research questions and literature review. It comprised of two sections. Section A demographic information of the respondents. Section B had three parts, to which respondents responded to in line with the three research questions. The questionnaire had four point response options that required the respondents to strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (DA), and strongly disagree (SD) (4, 3, 2 and 1) respectively on the items. The FGD guide was based on the three research questions.

The two instruments were face-validated by three experts in Home Economics from tertiary institution. The reliability coefficient computed using cronbach Alpha method which yielded a coefficient of 0.85. This was considered high enough and the instrument reliable.

Data Collections techniques: A total of 63 copies of questionnaire were administered by hand.

Method of data Analysis: Means were used for data analyses. Any item with the mean of 2.5 and above was regarded as an "agreed" opinion of the respondents. Items with means less than 2.5 were regarded as "not agreed" responses. The FGD information was organised and summarized based on the research questions.

Findings of the Study

Table 1: Mean Responses of Launderers'/Dry cleaner's Perceptions on Information found on Care Labels

S/No	Perceptions on Care labels information	X	SD	Remark
1	Type of fibre/fabric	3.7	0.06	A
2.	Type of care- laundry or dry-cleaning	3.0	0.05	A
3.	Hand or Machine wash	3.6	0.05	A
4.	Water temperature	3.5	0.06	A
5.	Bleaching or otherwise	3.5	0.06	A
6.	Water extraction method (wringing or drip-drying)	3.7	0.06	A
7.	Pressing or Ironing method	3.6	0.05	A
8.	Temperature of the iron	3.2	0.05	A
9.	Dry cleaning solvent	3.5	0,06	A
10.	Storage type	3.7	0.06	A
11.	Method of drying	3.2	0.05	A

X = Mean of launderers', SD = Standard Deviation of the launderers' = Agreed

Table 1 reveals that all the items have their means ranged from 3.0 to 3.7 and are above the cutoff point of 2.5.This indicates that the launderers in the laundry/Dry cleaning establishments agreed with this items as the perceived of the use of care label for laundry/dry cleaning establishments.

Summaries from the focus group moderators guide also shows the perceived uses of care label that, Care label provide guidelines to consumers and apparel care givers about the best cleaning procedures to be used for a particular combination of fabric, thread decoration and construction techniques. And that following the instruction on the care labels will provide assurance that appearance and fit of the garment will be maintained after repeated cleaning treatments.

Table 2: Mean rating of Respondents on Problems Hindering or may Hinder the uses of Care Labels by Launderers in Laundry/Dry Cleaning establishments in Benue State

S/No	Problems hindering or may hinder launderers	X	SD	Remark
1.	Wrong information on Care label	3.5	0.06	A
2.	Users inability to read and interpret care labels information	3.0	0.48	A
3.	Some care labels are inconspicuous on the clothing	3.5	0.06	A
4.	Correct temperature of washing machine setting is not stated	1.9	0.03	D
5.	Care labels do not mention a particular solvent for fabric	3.1	0.05	A
6.	Workers lack of awareness of care label	2.9	0.04	A
7.	Lack of skills to conform	2.5	0.04	A
8.	Incomplete information on care label	3.2	0.04	A

| 9. | Care labels are removed during handling | 3.1 | 0.05 | A |
| 10 | Some care labels are not legible through the life time of the clothing | 3.0 | 0.05 | A |

X = Mean of launderers; SD = Standard Deviation of the launderers' = Agreed

Table 2 reveals that all the items had the average mean from 2.5 to 3.5, which is above the cutoff point of 2.5 except, the item four with average mean less than the cutoff point of 2.5 mean. The result shows that the launderers in the laundry/dry establishments in Benue State agreed with these items that they are the problems hindering or may hinders the use of care label for them (launderers in the laundry/dry cleaning establishments).

The focus group discussions moderators' guild was also summarized and the results were not far from the information obtained from the questionnaire. Some of the issues that attributed from the discussions as the problem hindering or may hinders the use of care labels are; Correct temperature of washing machine setting is some time not stated for, Lack of awareness of the use of care labels, Care labels are removed during handling so the launderer find it difficult during cleaning process, they also attributed that Some care labels are inconspicuous on the clothing.

Table 3: Mean Rating of Respondents on ways of Enhancing Utilization of Care Label by Launderers

S/N	Ways of enhancing the use of care labels	X	SD	Rmark
1.	Sensitization / awareness work shop on the use of care label for the launderer and dry cleaners in the establishments, be organized by clothing and textile lecturers in collaboration with ministry of commerce Benue State.	3.3	0.05	A
2.	Care label must be permanently attached by the manufacturers of the clothing, during the production and be monitor by experts in clothing.	3.1	0.05	A
3.	Care label should be attached in a conspicuous part of the clothing by the manufacturers.	3.1	0.05	A
4.	Care label should be legible during useful life of clothing items	2.9	0.50	A
5.	The care label instruction should be written in a language that is universal by the manufacturers so that it will be understand by launders in laundry /dry cleaning establishments	3.4	0.05	A
6.	The launderer should pay attention to identify care label tag to study them before washing so that they can obey the rules of the care label.	3.3	0.05	A
7.	Correct temperature of washing machine setting should always be stated for hand/machine wash, dry cleaning,	3.0	0.05	A

and other instruction be stated by the manufacturers'

X = Mean of launderers; SD = Standard Deviation of the launderers' = Agreed

Table 3 on the ways of enhancing the utilization of care label by launderer/drycleaners in the laundry/dry cleaning establishments in Benue state shows that the launderers have agreed with all the items presented on the table as the ways of enhancing the utilization of care labels. Since all the items had the mean of above 2.5 and it is above the cutoff point of 2.5. The summary of the focus group discussion moderator guild shows that, Care label should be placed in a conspicuous place on the clothing, by the manufacturer for the launderers to see when cleaning the clothing items. They also stipulated that Care label should be legible during useful life of clothing items. The care label instruction should be written in language that is universal to understand by the laundry and dry-cleaning establishment and that launderer should pay attention to identify care label tag to study it before washing, so as to obey the rules of the care label on the item.

Discussion of the Findings
Findings of research question one on launderers'/dry cleaner's perceptions of care labels information reveals that, care label information should include; method of drying, storage type, dry cleaning solvent, temperature of the iron or ironing method, water extraction method (wringing or drip-drying), bleaching or otherwise, water temperature, hand or Machine wash, type of care- laundry or dry-cleaning and type of fibre/fabric. The findings are consistent with the stipulations of Care Labeling for Clothing and Textile Product Supplier Guide (CLCTPSG 2014). The stipulations of CLCTPSG state care label give special instruction on how to care for clothing items, provide information on how to wash by hand and by using machine or dry cleaning .it also explain the best method to use on clothing items without damaging it. Care label also provide guidelines to consumers and apparel care givers about the best cleaning procedures to be used for that particular combination of fabric, thread decoration and construction techniques this findings also are in line with Davis (2016). He stated that the instruction on the care labels provide assurance that appearance and fit of the garment will be maintained after repeated cleaning treatments, and that care labels are important in establishing responsibility if garment are damage in the care process, knowing the requirements and responsibility of care labels this will help you to take proper care of the clothing items. This finding on the uses of care label are in line with Dolhan (2018),that care label should explain what should be done on the clothing item attach to. The finding are also consistent with the rules of Federal Trade Commission (2018)

The findings also showed that Problem hindering the use of care label by launderers in the laundry /dry

cleaning establishments; are incorrect care instruction provided by the manufacturer of clothing items,. These are in consonance with American society for testing materials guide line (2013) (ASTM).Who identified the constraint to the use of care label as some time the normal care of the article in use is not properly stated ,also when dry cleaning only is not known when the label do not mention a particular solvent to be use.

In consideration of the important of making use of care label in laundry/dry cleaning establishments a good number of ways were revealed by the respondents in order to enhance the utilization of care label by launderers in laundry/dry cleaning establishments. Prominent among the ways adopted for enhancing utilization of care label include .Organizing a sensitization/awareness workshop on the use of care label for the launderers. Care label must be permanently attached. Care label should be placed in a conspicuous place on the clothing item and Care label should be legible during useful life of clothing items. The findings agreed with the stipulations of Federal Trade Commission (2018).

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, this recommendations were made, that launderers in the Laundry/dry cleaning establishments should make use of care label tag attach on the clothing item to follow their instruction, information and method stated on them in their services, Correct temperature of washing machine setting should always be stated for machine wash, and other instruction such as hand/dry cleaning, and other instruction be stated by the manufacturers. The launderer should pay attention to identify care label tag to study it before washing and obeying the rules of the care label in use, to avoid damage of the clothing items during cleaning.

Conclusions
Based on the findings of the study, it can be concludes that care labels help to provide information on how to wash, iron ,dry, bleach and dry clean clothing items. But notice that there are some problems that hindered or could hinder launderers in the laundry/dry cleaning establishment from using the care label information such like when multiple instruction are attach to one clothing item, when the instruction are not well stated, and when they are not see by the launderers. Nevertheless ways to enhance the utilization of this care label were highlighted from the result that, care label should be legible, conspicuous and permanent throughout the life time of that garment. And the launderers should endeavor to use them whenever they are laundering or dry cleaning clothing items.

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