

Recommendations

1. Management of universities should improve more on the level of academic staff development in terms of opportunities such as sponsorship, attendance in conferences seminars and workshop at local and international level.
2. University management should be committed to providing academic staff with development opportunities to ensure that individuals and departments are able to contribute fully to the achievement of the department and university objectives.
3. University leadership should place high premium on openness to change, integrity, conscientiousness and sound ethical in dealing with their subordinates in order to enhance trust and cooperation among staff members and improve organizational effectiveness.

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STUDY OF THE COVERAGE OF HOME ECONOMICS SYLLABUS IN SELECTED JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IBADAN RURAL COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

The development of rural communities is closely hinged on implementation of basic laid down policies on teaching and learning. This is why this study was conducted to investigate the extent of coverage of Home Economics syllabus in rural communities. Multistage sampling procedure was adopted to select 240 respondents for the study using structured questionnaire to elicit information. Results shows that most of the respondents (65.0%) are between the ages of 15-17 and were females (75.0%). Majority (57.5%) of the respondent learn Home Economics for just 2 periods in a week. Above 70% of them responded to majority of the topics. Study of home art and craft (40.8%), textiles (42.5%) and Basic sewing process (48.7%) are topics that witnessed a below average response from the respondents. Most (50.8%) of the respondent reported that they have only one Home Economics teacher. It was concluded that specific areas of Home Economics especially home art and craft need more emphasis to actualize sustainable rural development. It is therefore recommended that the Government should employ more Home Economics specialist teachers in Secondary Schools especially in rural areas. Also, government policies on lesson time table for Home economics should be increased for effective teaching and learning.

Key words: Coverage, Syllabus, Home Economics, Sustainable Rural Development

Introduction

Home Economics is today a subject concerning human development, personal and family finance, housing and interior design, food science and preparation, nutrition and wellness, textiles and apparel, and consumer issues (AAFCS, 2015). Home Economics is one of the specialized subjects in our school system that establish a synergy between the home as an abode, vocational work as skill and the environment as an entity. This may be the reason why scholars have viewed Home Economics as a field of study that brings out the survival instincts in man with relation to vocational aspects of home management.

The National Policy on Education (2007) describes a two tier of secondary education lasting for a period of

six years. A child is required to spend the first three years of secondary education in junior secondary school (JSS) and another three years in senior secondary school (SSS) if a student performs well in both continuous assessment (C.A) and terminal examinations (Badmus, 2007). According to NPE (2007), the junior secondary school shall be both pre-vocational and academic. Emphasized among the prevocational subjects proposed for junior secondary school is Home Economics. Mugenda (1995) cited in Grace (2005) that in 1959, the American Home Economics Association defined home economics as the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life through educating individuals for family living, improving the services and goods used for families, conducting research to determine the changing needs of individuals and families, and the means of satisfying those needs, furthering community, national and world conditions favourable to family living. Also, Mugenda (1995) as quoted by Grace (2005) that in the late 1970's at the International Federation of Home Economics Council's meeting, the definition of Home Economics was examined again. The council defined home economics as a discipline that is concerned with using, developing and managing human and material resources for the benefit of individuals and families, institutions, and the community. This involves the study and research in sciences and the arts concerned with different aspects of family life and its interaction with the physical economic and social environment.

Moreover, the work of Joe Project store (2018) citing Uko-Aviomoh stated that Home Economics is a skill-oriented field of study that is expected to equip learners with survival skills that make for self-reliance, employment and paid employment. Home-economics is a broad field of knowledge and services concerned with all phases of family life. It is a subject designed to promote a healthy home and society. Home Economics is the only curriculum area that focuses on practical living skills related to family. Junior secondary school (JSS) Home Economics curriculum is designed to provide learners with basic intellectual and practical education knowledge relevant to Nigeria society. According to Badmus (2007) it is also part of the aim of the curriculum to

prepare youths formally for jobs as well. The attitude towards Home Economics has been that it is a female domain, a subject for the less gifted children and an easy subject. Also, Joe Project store (2018) asserts that the term Home Economics may call up stereotypical images of girls busy sewing and cooking, images that have led many people to view this field as fundamentally narrow, dull and socially conservative. So often, Home Economics has been cast as a conspiracy to keep women in the kitchen, an interpretation that over looked its impressive and diverse contributions. As one of the compulsory pre-vocational subjects taught at junior secondary education level in Nigerian education system, Home Economics plays enormous roles in human existence and nation development.

Rural areas of Nigeria being an environment deprived of certain social amenities and white-collar job opportunities requires that its habitant obtain several fundamental survival skills such as handicraft making, culinary and management skills needed to create jobs and be entrepreneurial, which is basic to the teachings of Home Economics. This is also in tandem with the report of Radhika (2019) who reported that the rural individuals should focus upon the development of their skills and abilities in terms of various aspects; these include production of handicrafts and artworks, pottery making, silk weaving etc.

However, the academic performance of students in Home Economics in rural areas is nothing to write home about due to several factors including poor attitude towards the subject and negative public interest in the subject, non-availability of teachers to cover the syllabus, among others. This corroborates with the assertion of Tshabalala and Ncube (2013) which asserted that lack of materials, bad teacher behavior, poor grounding in the subject area at lower levels, poor teaching methods as well as fear of the subject are factors affecting academic performance of students. Nkum (2015) also identified causes of poor academic performance as inadequate teaching and learning materials, method of instruction, teachers and students' self-motivation. It must be pointed out that a syllabus conveys information about expectations. A syllabus functions as a contract between a teacher and students. The syllabus lays out expectations for the quality of work expected from students and shows students how they should prepare for class (SPS, 2016). The Home Economics syllabus has been designed to instill in students, certain skills and knowledge needed for their optimum survival. The Home is an important factor in the life of every individual as it determines the consequential outcome

and fundamental knowledge that will be possessed by such individual particularly for academic achievement. The teaching of Home Economics in Junior Secondary Schools is inevitably sacrosanct in ensuring a good synergy between the home and knowledge acquired in school which eventually ensures that every individual understands their fundamental duties and obligations as a micro member of the society; and moreover, to realize the importance of skills such as cooking, cleaning, home management, budgeting and financing.

However, it is widely observed that most schools do not give the required importance that the study of Home Economics requires at Junior Secondary Schools. Normally, attachment of importance to subjects should be directly proportional to the degree of impact on student's daily life. Home Economics being a subject that impacts to a greater extent the inculcation of fundamental survival skills in students, needs to be given much importance. The relevance of Home Economics in the life of every individual is highlighted in an article published on the website of *Nigerian Infopedia on January 21, 2020*; it stated that Home Economics equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable him or her cope with the problems of health, environmental sanitation and overcrowding.

This lack of importance attachment is evident in particular indexes that determines the learning outcomes of students such as number of teachers, periods available for learning, facilities and equipment necessary for teaching and learning. It is reported by Owolabi (2012) that poor or low performance in science in schools in Nigeria is attributed to inadequate instructional materials, equipment, facilities; lack of qualified teachers and laboratories. This situation is more pathetic in rural communities as teachers prefer to teach in urban communities to rural ones. It is also evident that rural communities Junior Secondary Schools lack in greater extent the facilities, equipment, and instructional materials needed for effective teaching and learning when compared to urban communities. This is in tandem with the recommendation of Nnamdi and Michael (2012) that social amenities such as electricity, pipe-borne water, roads, good school environment etcetera, should be provided for rural areas so as to check the reluctance of teachers to accept postings to rural schools.

The effect of not having the required number of Home Economics teachers, periods available for learning, and necessary facilities and equipment in Junior Secondary Schools is that the syllabus designed to

ensure students in rural communities require the adequate knowledge and skills associated with the subject is not covered. The direct implication of this is that Home Economics students in rural communities will lack the necessary skills and knowledge needed to navigate the home and society life; such students are expected to contribute less or next to nothing in terms of community development, family life management. Those students may not understand fully their roles in ensuring the continuous existence of the society, their self-survival and that of their family.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to carry out a study on the coverage of Home Economics Syllabus in selected Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan rural communities.

The specific objectives of this research are to:

- 1. determine the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents
- 2. investigate the extent to which Home Economics Syllabus is being covered
- 3. determine the number of teachers available to the students to teach Home Economics

Research Questions

- 1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents?

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency %
Age	
12 - 14	50 (20.8)
15 - 17	156 (65.0)
>18	34 (14.2)
Sex	
Male	60 (25.0)
Female	180 (75.0)
Religion	
Christianity	132 (55.0)
Islam	60 (25.0)
Others	48 (20.0)
Father's occupation	
Farming	84 (35.0)
Trading	58 (24.2)
Civil servant	68 (28.3)
Artisans	24 (10.0)
Others	06 (2.5)
Mother's occupation	
Farming	86 (35.8)
Trading	78 (32.5)
Civil servant	51 (21.7)
Artisans	19 (7.9)
Others	05 (2.1)

Source: Field survey, 2020

the respondents?

- 2. To what extent is the Home Economics Syllabus covered?
- 3. What are the number of Home Economics teachers available to the students?

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in rural communities of Ibadan. Two (2) Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ibadan were considered appropriate as rural communities. The population of the study includes all the schools and their students in the considered LGAs. 12 schools were purposively selected based on certain demographic factors. Random sampling technique was adopted to select 20 students each from the 12 schools to have a total sample of 240 respondents. A structured questionnaire was developed to elicit the required information from the respondents. Validity of the instrument was carried by seeking the inclusion of professionals in Home Economics and Curriculum development. Reliability test was carried out using Cronbach Alpha test to arrive at reliability co-efficient of 0.75. Data collected were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis and results presented in frequency and percentages table as well as charts.

The personal characteristics of the respondents shown in Table 1 shows that 65.0% of the respondents fall within the ages of 15-17, this is followed with a wide margin by 20.8% which fall in the age between 12-14. This shows that at the point of enrollment, majority of the students are usually between the ages of 12-14. This is in negation with a report by statista.com published on the 8th October, 2021 which states that “the official junior secondary age in Nigeria goes from 12-14 years old. Majority of the students (75.0%) are

females, while 25.0 % are males. This indicates that female children get enrolled more in secondary schools than their male counterparts. This finding is in variance with the report published by Statista on the 11th October, 2021 that 49.3% of students enrolled in junior secondary schools of Nigeria are females. About 45.0% and 57.5% of the students have fathers and mothers who take up trading as an occupation, while 35.0% and 35.8% of their fathers and mothers are farmers in the rural community.

Research Question 3: What are the number of Home Economics teachers available to the students?

Number of Home Economics Teachers Available in the Schools
Table 3: Number of Home Economics Teachers Available in the Schools

Number	Frequency
1	132(55.0)
2	80(33.3)
3	28(11.7)

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 3 shows the number of Home Economics teachers available in the schools to teach the subject to the students. Majority (50.8%) of the students reported that they have only one Home Economics teacher available to them. This reflects the negative state of the student teacher ratio in Junior Secondary Schools of Ibadan rural communities. The National Policy on Education stipulates that the teacher-pupil ratio should be 1:40. It is also stated by UBEC (2010) that the mandatory student-teacher ratio is 39:1. Moreover, it is a common knowledge that the availability of adequate human resources that is, teachers; determines the extent at which the syllabus will be covered in Junior Secondary Schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Indeed, modern Home Economics has gone beyond the confinement of just cooking, sewing and cleaning. It has metamorphosed into a key subject that impacts fundamental survival skills in individuals. It instills complex and key principles such as logical reasoning, problem solving, time and money management in students, all these highlights the importance of Home Economics as a subject in Junior Secondary Schools in rural communities. In lieu of this, this research study therefore carried out an investigative study on the coverage of Home Economics syllabus in selected Junior secondary schools in Ibadan rural communities, and concludes that there is shortage of Home Economics teachers in the study area which directly impacts on the extent to which the syllabus can be covered. It is also observed that the student teacher ratio is well inadequate as it is not in tandem

with the recommended 1:40. In addition, most of the students responded well to the major topics in the syllabus, specific areas of the Home Economics such as Study of Textiles and Basic Sewing Processes witnessed a below average response from the students, which is an indication of non or low coverage of that aspect of the syllabus. Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that:

1. The Oyo state Government should employ more Home Economics specialist teachers in Junior Secondary Schools especially in rural communities.
2. Adequate facilities and equipment be provided to create an enabling environment for the Home Economics teachers in order to facilitate effective transmission of knowledge to the students
3. Relevant institutions and Government parastatals should partner with and incorporate relevant private organizations into the sensitization of students and schools about the importance of Home Economics as a subject.
4. Government agencies in charge of designing the lesson Time Table for Junior Secondary Schools should consider increasing the number of lesson periods allocated for teaching and learning of Home Economics considering its importance to the lives of the students.

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