

## THE STATUS OF VOCATIONAL HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

**OKUNOLA, Olusola O.**

Department of Home Economics  
Michael Otedola College of Primary Education,  
Noforija, Epe, Lagos State  
E-mail: okunolao@yahoo.com

### ABSTRACT

*The implementation of vocational curriculum at the university level has been of great concern over the years in the vocational field. Despite various efforts made in literature to improve the curriculum delivery of the subject like Creative Arts and Home economics, criticisms still abound on implementation. The research therefore examined the status of vocational Home Economics curriculum as one of the vocational courses available in a few universities in Nigeria. The study is a descriptive survey of the ex-post-facto type. Six research questions and two null hypotheses were raised in the study. The sample for the study comprised 82 vocational education undergraduates, 20 vocational staff making a total sample of 102 respondents selected from a university of education in southwestern Nigeria. Two questionnaires used for data collection are Home Economics Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (HECIQ) with a reliability coefficient of 0.60 and Students Attitude to Home Economics Questionnaire (SHEQ) with reliability coefficient of 0.80. The results revealed among others that: there is inadequacy in the methodology of the curriculum implementation; the resources available are not adequate enough; female students have better attitude to home economics than male; there is no significant difference in the vocational staff rating of the adequacy of Home Economics objectives. Female students have a higher mean score of 18.2407 on their attitude to Home economics curriculum when compared with a mean score of 18.1395 for the male. It was recommended that the methods of teaching Home economics should be improved upon by vocational staff with adequate supply and utilization of relevant human and non-human resources for Home economics teaching at the university level.*

### BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Education is regarded as a important tool for positive change in both developing and developed countries of the world. Through education, people are able to develop their knowledge and skills, adopt new behaviour and can as well survive in the society (Alade, 2006). One of such vocational areas which can be used to achieve the purpose of education is vocational home economics. It is an aspect of skill based education which has helped man to see the value of home institution and appreciate home-making activities as well as educating youth for the role of future homemakers, thereby living functionally in the home, community and nation.

Vocational home economics is thus concerned with the improvement of the family and its environment (Osuala, 1995). It is the study of all the elements of family living, individual human development and interpersonal relations. This vocational area provides the necessary knowledge for guiding and assisting human being towards a more self-rewarding and fulfilled life within the context of home management and family life. The curriculum of home economics by design places so much emphasis on doing, that is, it can be rightly regarded as vocational rather than prevocational subject.

Among the themes in the home economics curriculum are:

- a. Clothing and Textiles
- b. Food and Nutrition
- c. Good grooming
- d. Home and Family living
- e. Family and Human relationships

Instruction as to the implementation of the Home Economics curriculum lays emphasis' on teacher's resourcefulness, the availability and adequate utilization of material resources. Also the content of the curriculum, the learning activities and the evaluation techniques along with the stated Home Economics objectives are expected to be appropriately brought into play during its implementation. Home economics logically began in the primary school, but obviously, information appears meager in literature concerning the status of its implementations at various levels of education in Nigeria. Notwithstanding, Akanbi (2001), Ndelekwute (2000), Osuji (2004) and Alade (2006) respectively have variously commented on the state of affairs of vocationally based curriculum in Nigeria at various levels. Some of the survey researches examined the curriculum design, the 'state of infrastructure facilities, vision and mission of vocational curricula, self reliance, skill development and people's attitudes to vocational areas, all in the teaching and learning of vocational based programmes like home economics, technical education, business education and vocational agricultural education. In addition, Olaitan (1996) in his appraisal of some home economics curriculum observed that the content of home economics syllabus leaves one in doubt as to where to draw the line of distinction between pre-vocational home-economics and vocational home economics. Also, no suggestion is clearly made to trainer-trainee activities that would create occupational awareness, and home economics syllabus are titled in favour of practical- exercise to a mere - neglect of explanatory activities.

On attitude to technical and vocational education in Nigeria, Olaitan (1996) observed that the poor societal attitude to vocational and technical education is still a major problem today. Also, the society believes that vocational technical education which home economics is a part of is for the un-intelligent youth. This misconception has largely affected the prospects of those who pursue vocational courses compared with those who pursue academic or liberal education. This assertion is supported by Osuala (1995) and Oni (1999) who lamented the misconception of taken vocational subjects/courses to be meant for the ungifted youth. This attitude has reflected in the population of students opting for home economics and related vocational courses in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The fact remains that education has a duty to prepare both the young and adults for a happy and efficient home and family life. Vocational home economics is one of the avenues which prepare learners for future productive living, home and family life.

Home economics is one of the pre-vocational and vocational subjects in secondary school in Nigeria, but the topics or content of the home economics syllabus leaves one in doubt as to where to draw the line of distinction between pre-vocational home economics and vocational home economics (Olaitan, 1996). Even at the outset in the document released by the Federal Ministry of Education in 1985, the general objectives of the home economics curriculum were not made clear. This made it difficult to tell what objectives the curriculum should achieve, the instructional strategies to be adopted and the basic facilities to be provided. Meanwhile, in recent times, Vocational Home Economics is being given more attention because it borders on the improvement of the quality of life of the individual and family specifically, and the society at large. At the university level, the philosophy of Home Economics focuses on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competence which family members require to satisfactorily improve family living. However, the criticisms remain that the extent to which the family and educational values inherent in Vocational Home Economics curriculum are being attained over the years has not been satisfactorily dealt with as expected by the researchers in vocational and home-making field. Hence, the evaluation of home-economics curriculum implementation at the university level becomes very essential.

Evaluation is often defined as a process of finding out the strength and weakness of a programme. It gives direction and impetus to educational effort. In life, we often come across a variety of situations which makes it quite imperative that we should take decision on the circumstances. Thus, in respect of home economics curriculum implementation in the university, it becomes important to critically examine the implementation of the existing programme in relation to the desired inputs, processes and outputs with a view to making suggestions or alternatives to policy and decision makers for the improvement of the teaching and learning of the vocational course option in Nigerian universities. The nature of the evaluation of a curriculum implementation depends on what objectives are sought, the coverage of the evaluation and evaluation model used. Many evaluation models exist in literature from which researchers can select. A model presents a mental picture of a phenomenon and how the parts of a whole framework affects each other (Alade, 2006). Some of the models which have been employed in vocational education evaluation wherein Home Economics belong as identified by Olaitan (1996) are: the Illumination

model; The goal free model; the Content, Input, Process and Product model (CIPP Model) and the Transaction model. These models from the former to the later as mentioned focus on shedding light on a programme, evaluating without prior knowledge of the programme goals, emphasis on the Context (C), Input (I), Process (P) and Product of the programme or curriculum, and a concentration on the educational process (transaction model) respectively. More importantly, in this study, since the emphasis is on the implementation status of home economics, Antecedents (A), Transaction (T) and Output (O) (ATO) model of Tyler developed in 1949 appears more appropriate. Antecedents are the inputs that go into the programme implementation; transaction is the implementation stage, while the output is the outcomes (product) of the implementation (See methodology).

The fact remains that implementation of Vocational Home Economics curriculum has not been vividly explored from the available literature. In addition, the nature of the available inputs in term of the human and material resources, the strength and weakness of its implementation and the product status which is the offshoot of the effectiveness of the teaching methods in use, and the materials put into use all to improve the status of the course option and quality of instruction in its implementation at the university level remain the wide gap to be filled by this study. This obvious gap which has not been conclusively filled by the available literature makes the study to be very significant.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.**

Home economics education seeks to enrich the children and adults in the art of home-making and related activities. However, at the university level of education in Nigeria, the extent to which undergraduates are being prepared for home making and family life through Home Economics curriculum has not been conclusively and comprehensively surveyed empirically. Likewise, numerous criticisms abound on whether home economics curriculum is being implemented as intended in Nigeria universities. It is on this thrust that this study examined the status of Vocational Home Economics curriculum implementation in a university in southwestern Nigeria.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to evaluate:

1. The state of human and non human resources used in the implementation of Vocational Home Economics curriculum in the university.
2. The teaching methods employed in the teaching of Vocational Home Economics in the university.
3. The extent to which vocational home economics curriculum objectives are being achieved in the university.
4. How vocational home economics students rate their attitude towards home economics curriculum and its implementation.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the state of human and non-human resources used in the implementation of vocational home-economics curriculum in the university?
2. What are the teaching methods employed in the teaching of Vocational Home Economics in the university?
3. How do Vocational Home Economics students rate their attitude towards vocational home economics curriculum and its implementation?

### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between male and female vocational home economics staff ratings of the adequacy of home economics curriculum objectives.
- H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in male and female students' attitude to home economics curriculum.

### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study is limited to only Tai Solarin University of Education in Southwestern Nigeria where vocational home economics is offered at that level. Staff and students were involved in the study.

**POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population of the study covered the entire regular and full-time Vocational Home Economics staff and students of Tai Solarin University of Education due to poor implementation of Home Economics Curriculum in the University. The entire population of the study covered twenty two (22) home 'economic staff and three hundred (300) home economics students in the university.

**SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The sample for the study covered twenty (20) home economics staff purposively selected for the study. They are both full time and part-time lecturers because of the low population of staff and students in the area. Eighty-two (82) vocational home economics students who were in the final class were also purposively sampled from both full-time and part-time degree programmes of Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria. In all, One hundred and two (102) participants were on ground at the time when this research was in progress and were sampled for the study.

**INSTRUMENT**

Questionnaire is the main used for data collection in this study. There are two man types of questionnaires in all. The first questionnaire named Home Economics Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (HECIQ) is divided into two sections; A and B. Section A is on the demographic information (age, gender, qualification etc) of the sampled vocational home economics staff in the University of Education. Section B is divided into four parts, that is Part 1 - 4 as indicated below

Part 1:-Rating of adequacy of home economic objectives by vocational home economics staff.

Part 2:-State of human and non-human resources in the implementation of home economics in the university.

Part 3:- Teaching methods of home economics in the university

Part 4:-Rating of students learning of home economic curriculum implementation. That is. Students performance as it relates to the achievement of objectives' (Good, Fair, Poor). The second questionnaire is Students' Attitude to Home Economics (SAHE). This is an attitudinal rating scale which has three sections of A, B, and C. Section A is about the students bio-data (Name, gender, age and class), while section B focused on students ratings of their attitude in terms of interest and likeness to the teaching and learning of home economics. The students were to respond either Yes or No to each of the twelve items.

**VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT**

The items of the questionnaire were developed by the researcher over a period of time. This was to ensure that the items were relevant and adequately cover the scope of the research. The items on the two questionnaires were scrutinized and vetted with the assistance of four experts with background in vocational and technologically - based areas of specialization as well as curriculum evaluators to ensure both content and face validity. The content validity covered the relevance of the items of the questionnaires, phrasing of the items, wording and depth of coverage, while the face validity gave attention to the arrangement of the items in the questionnaires for adequate presentability and readability of the content therein. The reliability of the questionnaire (HECIQ) was determined using the Contabach Alpha Coefficient of reliability and a reliability value of 0.60 was considered adequate for the study. Kuder Richardson 20 (KR-20) was used to determine Students' Attitude to Home Economics (SAHE) Questionnaire reliability because it has only Yes and No options. A reliability value of 0.81 was considered to be high enough to collect the relevant data to this study.

The research instrument named Home Economics Curriculum Implementation Questionnaire (HECIQ) was administered by the researcher and some research assistants to the one and hundred and two (102) respondents were administered. The entire questionnaire distributed were properly monitored and all the Questionnaires were collected back from the respondents two weeks later.

**METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were used. Quantitatively, the researcher used percentages, simple frequency counts and bar graphs as appropriate to the research questions raised in

the study. While inferential statistics of t-test was used to test the null hypotheses in respect of gender responses to the statements in the questionnaires at 0.05 alpha level. Qualitatively, the findings of the study were presented in a logical order in which the research questions and research hypotheses were generated in the study.

## RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** What is the state of human and non-human resources used in the implementation of vocational home economics curriculum in the university?

**Table 1: State of Human and Non-Human Resources for Vocational Home Economics Curriculum Implementation**

S/N	Items	A available and Adequate	A available and not adequat	Not Adequate
I	Specialists in Home Economics	07 (36.0%)	08 (42.0%)	05 (22.0%)
II	Home Economics text books	02 (8.0%)	12 (62.0%)	06 (30.0%)
III	Home Economics laboratory	06 (30.0%)	05 (25.0%)	09 (45.0%)
IV	Fund	03 (16.0%)	11 (54.0%)	06 (30.0%)

The result in table 1 makes it evident that only 36.0% specialists in Home Economics are available and adequate in the university 42.0% are available and not adequate while 22.0% are not adequate at all. This perhaps may be as a result of low production of vocational home economics specialist teachers in the very few existing tertiary institutions where the course is offered in Nigeria. Similarly, only 8.0% of home economics textbooks available are adequate, 62.0% of the available ones are not adequate while 30.0% are not adequate at all. The reason which may be responsible for this is the non-popularity of the course option in universities. Thus, relevant home economics textbooks are scarce in Nigeria markets. In the respondents' reactions to home economics laboratory, 30.0% is recorded for its availability and 25.0% for its adequacy while 45.0% of the non-adequacy of home economics laboratory shows that the available ones are poorly equipped. The attitude of the government and the society to such' a vocational curriculum might be responsible for this. The same thing applies to only 16.0% recorded for the availability and adequacy of fund for its curriculum. As also presented in table 1, 54.0% of the available fund are not adequate while 30.0% are not adequate at all.

**Research Question 2:** What are the teaching methods employed in the teaching of vocational home economics in the university?

**Table 2: Teaching Methods used in Home Economics Curriculum Implementation**

Sin	Items	Frequently used (FU)	Occasionally Used (OU)	Not Used (UN)
I	Practical method	06 (30.0%)	12 (62.0%)	02 (8.0%)
II	Team Teaching	12 (62.0%)	17 (30.0%)	2 (8.0%)
III	Discussion method	04 (20.0%)	10 (50.0%)	06 (30.0%)
IV	Talk and chalk method	14 (70.0%)	04 (20.0%)	02 (10.0%)
V	Combination of methods	08 (40.0%)	10 (50.0%)	02 (10.0%)

Figure 1 presents a clear picture of the extent to which Home Economics curriculum objectives are being achieved in the university. The record of students' performance shows that a percentage of 48.5% recorded for poor performance of students is an indication that the objectives of the vocational course are not being achieved as expected.

The extent of the achievement of the Home Economics objectives is only 35.0% good. On the methods of teaching home economics in the university, low percentage of 30.0 and 20.0 were recorded for the frequent use of practical method and discussion method of teaching home economics, but high percentage of 62.0 and 50.0 were recorded respectively for their occasional usage. In another case, 62.0% of the home economics staff claimed their frequent use of team teaching, while a less than average percentage (40.0%) responded their frequent use of combination of methods to teach home economics

curriculum. A percentage of 70.0 and even the highest percentage in the items listed in table 3 was recorded for the home economics staff frequent usage of talk and chalk method to teach home economics. This might be as a result of inadequate supply and provision of material resources and instructional resources to teach this vocational based subject in the university

**Research Question 4:** How do vocational home economics students rate their attitude towards vocational Home Economics Curriculum and the implementation?

**Table 3: Students' Attitude Towards Good Fair Poor Vocational Home Economics Curriculum and the Implementation Fig.I: Bar Chart on the Achievement of Home Economics Curriculum Objectives.**

S/N	Items	Yes	No
I	I like Home Economics	9 (84.0%)	13 (15.5%)
II	Home economics is a course I hate	27(33.0%)	55 (67.0%)
III	Home Economics is interesting to me	50 (61.3%)	32 (38.7%)
IV	I like doing home economics assignments	36 (44.3%)	46 (55.7%)
V	I will not like to take up home economics job on graduation	50 (61.3%)	32 (38.7%)
VI	I do enjoy home economics in class	29 (35.6%)	53 (64.4%)
VII	I do not like to listen to my lecturer teaching health and hygiene in class	27 (33.0%)	55 (67.0%)
VIII	I like doing the home economics skills taught in class	49 (59.3%)	33 (4.07%)
IX	I have interest in home economics and family relationship taught in class	50 (61.3%)	32 (38.7%)
X	I do not like food and nutrition topics	35 (42.7%)	47 (57.3%)
XI	I am happy for decency and personal habit often teach in home economics as a course	54 (66.0%)	28 (34.0%)
XII	I do not have interest in clothing and textile aspect of home economics teaching	30 (36.6%)	52 (63.4%)

On vocational students rating of their attitude towards home econonucs curriculum implementation, 84.0% expressed their likeness for the subject, 33.0% shows their hatred to the subject, 61.3% applauded their interest to it, a below average percentage of 44.3 responded that they like doing the home economics assignment, while a high percentage of 61.3 show their non readiness to take up home economics job on graduation from the university. These findings may be as a result of poor societal attitude towards it recognition and status in the labour market. This might also be the reason for a low percentage of 35.6 recorded for the students who enjoy home economic in class (item iv). Only,33.0% of the students refuted the statement of not listening to their lectures teaching health and hygiene in class, 59.3% express their positive attitude towards doing the home economics skills taught in class, 61.3% have interest in home economics and family relationship, while 42.7% refuted the state (item ix) of their likeness for food and nutrition topics. his is evident that some home economics topics taught during its curriculum implementation are liked by the students while some are disliked. Perhaps vocational staff methodology, interest and societal perception of the vocational course are part of the reasons for this. However, 66.0% of the students responded that they are happy for decency and personal habit often teach in home economics as a course. The mode of its implementation at the classroom level through lecturers' presentation of the. subject matter might be responsible for this. For item xii in table 4, a percentage of 36.6 was recorded for the extent of pupils interest in clothing and textile aspect of home economics teaching. The mode of presentation of this aspect whether in practical or theoretical form might be the reason for this.

**H01:** There is no significance different between male and female vocational home economics staff ratings of the adequacy of home economics curriculum objectives

**Table 4: t-test of vocational Home Economics Staff Rating of Home Economics Curriculum Objectives**

Gender	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Df	t-value	Significance 2-tailed	Remark
Male	04	9.8696	1.0998	18	-.917	.364	Not Significant (N.S)
Female	16	10.1852	1.3020				

The result in table 4 shows that although the mean score of the female home economics staff on the adequacy of home economics curriculum objectives ( $x = 10.1852$ ) is greater than their male counterpart ( $x = 9.896$ ), the mean difference is not significant ( $t\text{-value} = -.917, df = 18, p > 0.5$ ). Therefore the null hypothesis 1 was not rejected.

$H_{02}$ : There is no significance different between male and female students' attitude to home economics curriculum

**Table 5: t-test of students; attitude to Home Economics Curriculum**

Gender	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Df	t-value	Significance 2-tailed	Remark
Male	86	18.1395	0.8699	80	-.719	.473	Not Significant (N.S)
Female	108	18.2407	1.0490				

In table 5, since  $t\text{-value} = -.719, df = 80, p > 0.5$ , there is no significant difference in male and female students attitude to home economics as a course. However, the mean score shows that female students have better attitude to home economics with a mean score of 18.2407 compared with the mean score of their male counterpart

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of the study have revealed that the states of human and material resources for home economics curriculum implementation in the university are still grossly inadequate. This finding supports the assertion of Olaitan (1996) that inadequate provision of resources is till a major threat in the curriculum implementation of vocational courses in Nigeria institutions.

Moreover, this study discovered that tail and chalk method is often used in the implementation of home economics curriculum with no due attention given to practicals (table 2). It thus means that the teaching and learning of home economics in the university is till too theoretical. This finding agrees with the findings of Alade (2006), and Oni (1999) who in their studies lamented that most vocational and technical education subjects are still desk-bound in the approach to their teaching in educational institutions.

On the attainment of home economics curriculum objectives, the students' performance as discovered from the available records made it clear that the purpose of installing home economics curriculum in educational institutions have not been effectively achieved. Only 35.0% of the students performance was rated good while majority (48.5%) belong to the poor category. This finding is a challenge to the school system and all stakeholders of education at least in respect of home economics in the only university in southwestern Nigeria where it is being offered for the past few years.

The students' attitude towards home economics teaching and learning in the university is not bad. In the twelve items to which the students responded, it is evident that if home economics can be adequately presented with appropriate human and non-human resources, the attitude of students would still be enhanced, With a positive attitude response of 84.0% in table 3 for the students' likeness to home economics, it means that there is hope for continuous survival of the course in the nearest future.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following are the summary of findings emanating from this study:

1. The objectives of home economics curriculum at the university level are fairly adequate.
2. There is the need for some modifications in the economics curriculum being implemented in the university especially in the area of the objectives and the subject matter.

3. Inadequate supply of human and non-human resources are still one of the major problems confronting the effective implementation of vocational home economics curriculum in Nigeria.
4. The approaches to the implementation of home economics curriculum in university are mostly theoretical.
5. The students' attitude to home economics curriculum implementation is not bad although their attitude could still be enhanced.
6. Female students have a better attitude towards home economics curriculum implementation than their male counterpart.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Home economics is still one of the vocational areas in Nigeria curricula. The study has been able to evaluate its curriculum implementation with reference to the attainment of its objectives in term of students' performance in the course. It is made evident that while the objectives of the course are still found to be fairly adequate, though with the need for some modifications, the problems of the course border more on implementation with emphasis on the inadequacy of the resources and methods of teaching.

On the basis of the focus and findings of the study, it is believed that the challenge before vocational home economics can be addressed within a short period of time by the education stakeholders. It is on the light of the outcome of this study that the following recommendations are put forward.

1. There is urgent need to improve on the approaches of teaching vocational home economics by vocational staff.
2. Vocational staff needs to up-date their knowledge from time to time in order to improve their curriculum delivery.
3. There is need for more vocational staff preparation (home economics staff inclusive) by the existing tertiary institutions in the country.

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