

# Home Sewing For Family Survival And Economic Stability: Strategy For Improving Home Making In Ondo Town

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*Abstract: This study was designed to investigate skill acquisition in home sewing among homemakers and its influence on family survival and economic stability in Ondo town of Ondo state, Nigeria. Ten prominent streets were selected for the study, a total number of sixty (60) respondents were conveniently selected for the study. Survey research design was used to solicit information from the selected samples and five point Likert scale questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using mean scores. Findings revealed that the level of skill acquisition among homemakers was low, challenges confronting acquisition of skill in home sewing include lack of working tools, poor motivation, poor manipulation of tools and equipment among others. Based on the findings of the study recommendations were made towards improving the level of skill acquisition in home sewing among homemakers in the aspects of registration of homemakers with skilled persons and constant practice among others.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The home is regarded as a place where one lives and it is the reflection of the quality of the occupant. The family consists of a group of people united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption and characterized by common residence and economic cooperation (Ayakoha and Eluwa, 1999). It is therefore important that every home be made comfortable aesthetically to the occupants and visitors/guests using the family resources.

Resources are available compatible wealth (property and products), a homemaker is a resource person to the family, when she is conversant with the production and provision of simple family needs. This can be achieved based on the homemakers' ability to accomplish preparation, construction and mending of simple household articles using home sewing processes.

Home sewing is the ability of a housewife/homemaker to engage in acquiring simple sewing skills based on acquisition of the fundamentals stitches (basic stitches). Basic stitches are sub-divided into three major groups: (a) temporary stitches used in hold fabric pieces in place and are removed from work after completion (even tacking, long and shot tacking and tailors tack) and (b) permanent stitches that remain on fabrics after sewing is completed. There are three groups of

permanent stitches (a) joining stitches (running, backstitches, oversewing), (b) neatening stitches (fine hemming, slip hemming etc) and (c) decorative stitches (blanket stitch or loop stitch, satin, herringbone, French knots among others).

Homemakers all over the world are potential artists and can create beauty using fabrics in the interior of a home through sewing techniques. Home sewing should be the hobby of every homemaker, the pleasure of decorating the home can be rewarding and exciting particularly when the homemaker is involved in the production of useful items for household use.

Sewing can be fun, relaxing creative. and form of career opportunity for generating fund. Creativity, is the ability to generate and manifest appropriate knowledge and skill that will enable an individual to maximize resources around him, it is seen as creator of jobs for the economy and individual development (European Community, 2005). Braide (2003) holds that experience is a fundamental basis in developing and shaping creativity.

Sewing skills can be acquired through formal education at school. Olodi (2000) holds that creativity and entrepreneurial skills among students is the concern of Home Economics education and that absence of creativity skills among school leavers is an impediment to sustainable development. Likewise, Anyakoha (2002) averred that the aim of Home

Economics education is to teach learners how to use available resources in their environment to improve their homes.

However, sewing skills can also be acquired through informal education program (apprenticeship). Apprenticeship is a system of learning skills of a craft or trade from experts in the field by working with them for a set period of time (Microsoft Corporation, 2007). In both methods quality skill is achieved through training and practice. Web-Lupo and Lester, (1987) Ochingha (1995) submits that skills of a craft or trade can be acquired through imitation, repetition and active participation. Home sewing requires good imagination and practice before perfection could be achieved, it also demands patience as watchword for a homemaker to sew successfully.

The craft of making things that are useful to the family is an experience and plays crucial role in the social, physical and economic stability of the family. Production of household articles such as valences, table cover, arm-rest, bed-linen and covers, draperies curtain, place mat for use in the different apartments of the home and mending of simple tear on garments among others is the responsibility of the homemaker towards protecting and promoting survival and stability of the economy for improved home-making.

A homemaker should be knowledgeable in the selecting quality textured fabrics, balancing of shapes and lines to provide effective pleasing arrangements. Furthermore, it is essential that the homemaker should be able to manipulate the sewing machine and simple tools (hand sewing needle, tape measure, cutting scissors, pinking shears) and many more. Adequate sewing skills could be achieved only when essential sewing tools and equipment are readily available to the homemaker. Arkhurst (2004) holds that instructional facilities enhance leaning of practical programs including sewing techniques.

Bull (1994) averred that making things are sources of enjoyment that never fails and it is that which increases with experience, while the expertise of a homemaker brings about satisfaction. Cesac (1980) opined that satisfaction is achieved when an individual makes things for himself, immediate relations, the home and friends.

This study therefore, intends to create awareness on acquisition of skill in home sewing the importance of home sewing as means of sustaining the survival and economic stability family.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of the study is that it has been noticed that many homemakers in Ondo town are fond of purchasing simple household items that ought to be made at home to save cost. This condition results from the challenges emanating from their inability to accomplish preparation and sewing of simple household articles for the family use which is responsible for inadequacy in supporting the survival and economic stability of the family in many homes.

#### PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to investigate home sewing for family survival and economic stability: strategy for improving home making in Ondo town.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- ✓ Document the degree of skill acquisition in home sewing among homemakers;
- ✓ Identify challenges confronting homemakers in carrying out simple sewing processes at home;
- ✓ Document the different sewing tools available to home makers;
- ✓ Document the benefits of home sewing processes to the family;
- ✓ Suggest strategies that could improve home sewing practices among homemakers;

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ✓ What is the degree acquisition of skill in home sewing among homemakers?
- ✓ What are the challenges confronting homemakers in acquiring skills in home sewing processes?
- ✓ What are the benefits of home sewing to the family?
- ✓ What are the sewing tools/equipment available to the homemakers?
- ✓ What are the strategies to be adopted in improving home sewing processes among homemakers?

## II. METHODOLOGY

#### RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employed survey research design to elicit information from the selected samples on home sewing among homemakers in Ondo town.

#### RESEARCH POPULATION

The population of the study consisted of two sets of homemakers (working class and non-working class homemakers) selected from ten identified streets in Ondo town. The ten streets are Yaba, Oke-Odunwo, Enu-Owa, Oke-lisa, Odo-sida, Oke-Dibo, Sabo, Oka, Odojomu and Rainbow area respectively.

#### SAMPLE SIZE/SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Samples were conveniently drawn from two different sets of home makers (working class and non-working class home makers) from the selected streets in Ondo town. A total number of sixty (60) respondents were selected (thirty (30) working class and thirty (30) non-working class homemakers).

#### RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Four point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data from the selected samples. The test instrument consisted of thirty-eight (39) items based on the objectives and the research questions. Items of the test instrument were validated by two experts in the area of clothing and textiles to ascertain proper construction of the questions for easy understanding of the selected samples. Reliability was tested using test-retest method.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The test instrument was administered to the selected samples and their responses collated and analyzed using mean of the two sets of respondents (working class and non-working class homemakers). Mean rating of 3.50 was accepted as agreed and any mean rating below 3.50 was rejected as disagreed.

S/No	Responses category	Point	Limits
	<b>Bonding</b>		
1.	Strongly agreed	4	3.50 – 4.0
2.	Agreed	3	2.50 – 3.49
3.	Disagreed	2	1.30 – 2.49
4.	Strongly disagreed	1	0.50 – 1.49

Key:

$X_1$  Mean of strongly agreed and agreed

$X_2$  Mean of Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed,

$X_g$  Grand mean of  $X_1$  and  $X_2$

R Remark

S/No		$X_2$	$X_2$	$X_g$	R
1.	Ability to manipulate simple basic stitches	4.46	4.47	4.47	Agreed
2.	Thread the sewing machine correctly	3.20	2.40	2.8	Disagreed
3.	Manipulate sewing machine	2.89	2.74	2.82	Disagreed
4.	Sew with only hand sewing needles	4.16	4.75	4.46	Agreed
5.	Sew curved edges neatly with sewing machine	2.29	2.48	2.39	Disagreed
6.	Machine straight edges neatly	1.86	2.52	2.55	Disagreed
7.	Turn raw edges/hem neatly	1.78	1.90	1.84	Disagreed
8.	Cut straight edges correctly	3.56	4.00	3.78	Agreed
9.	Use other sewing tools correctly	2.36	1.74	2.05	Disagreed

Table 1: Degree of Skill acquisition in Home Sewing Among Homemakers

Table 1 above showed that degree of skill acquisition in home sewing among home-makers in respect of items 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9 obtained mean below 3.50 denoting low degree of skill acquisition among home-makers. While items 1,4 and 8 obtained mean above 2.50 noting that home-makers degree of skill acquisition in the use of simple sewing tools is high.

S/No		$X_2$	$X_2$	$X_g$	R
1.	Lack of working tools/equipments	3.30	3.77	3.54	Agreed
2.	Poor knowledge of basic home sewing processes	4.63	4.66	4.65	Agreed
3.	Sewing processes consumes time (wastes time)	4.56	3.60	4.08	Agreed

4.	Workload of domestic activities (cooking, child and home care)	4.30	4.15	4.23	agreed
5.	Long working hours at work	4.45	3.96	4.21	agreed
6.	Poor manipulation of tools/equipments	4.20	4.00	4.1	agreed
7.	Availability of readymade household articles in the market	4.45	4.24	4.35	Agreed
8.	Homemade household articles are more expensive than readymade ones	2.26	2.40	2.33	Disagreed
9.	Lack of interest	3.64	4.22	3.93	Agreed
10.	Lack of encouragement from spouse	4.36	4.28	4.32	Agreed

Table 2: Challenges Confronting Home-makers in acquiring skills in home sewing processes

In table 2, it was observed that lack of working tools, basic processes in home sewing, consumption of time, domestic activities, inability to manipulate tools, availability of ready-made household articles on Nigerian markets, expensive home-made household articles are, lack of personal interest and poor motivation from spouse are identified as problems facing the home-makers in carrying out home sewing processes.

S/No		$X_2$	$X_2$	$X_g$	R
1.	Effective use of leisure hours to manage family resources economically	4.35	3.15	3.75	Agreed
2.	Conserves family resources/income	4.27	3.85	4.06	Agreed
3.	Transfer of skills in home sewing to the younger ones in the family	3.62	4.50	4.06	Agreed
4.	Improves expertise in home sewing processes of homemakers	4.25	4.50	4.38	Agreed
5.	Creates aesthetic value to the appearance of the home	4.68	3.49	4.89	Agreed
6.	Production of uncommon homemade articles for family use	3.82	3.54	3.68	Agreed

Table 3: Benefits of Home Sewing in Sustaining the Family Economy

In table 3, it was noted that home sewing skills promotes meaningful use of leisure hours to manage family resources

economically, conserves family income, transfers home sewing skills to the younger ones, improves the expertise of home-makers in home sewing processes, creates aesthetic value of the appearance of the home and produces unique and uncommon articles for family use.

S/No		X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>e</sub>	R
1.	Cutting equipments (scissors in their varieties)	3.45	3.80	3.62	Agreed
2.	The sewing machine	2.50	3.20	2.85	Disagreed
3.	Tools (hand sewing needles, office/safety pins) cutting shears making	3.58	3.45	3.51	Agreed
4.	Measuring equipments (tape measure)	4.0	3.50	3.75	Agreed
5.	Working room/work surface	2.50	1.75	2.13	Disagreed
6.	Pressing equipment (pressing iron/ironing table)	3.80	3.45	3.63	Agreed

Table 4: Sewing Tools/Equipment Available to the Homemakers

Table 4 showed that responses of home-makers to items 1,3,4 and 6 agreed working tools such as cutting /pinking shears, hand sewing needles and pressing iron are available for use, while respondents disagreed with items 2 and 5 denoting that homemakers do not have access to the use of sewing machine and working room/work surface.

S/No		X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>e</sub>	R
1.	Learn it at school	2.89	2.25	2.57	Disagreed
2.	Learn it under apprenticeship programmed/skill acquisition centre	4.29	4.75	4.52	Agreed
3.	Learn it from friends	4.35	4.55	4.45	Agreed
4.	Constant practice	3.84	3.20	3.52	Agreed
5.	Development of personal interest towards home sewing processes	3.82	3.64	3.73	Agreed
6.	Availability of sewing tools/equipment	3.45	3.25	3.35	Agreed
7.	Preparation of basic stitches scrap book	4.50	3.85	4.18	Agreed

Table 5: Strategies for Improving Skill Acquisition in Home Sewing Among Home Makers

Table 5 above disclosed that home-makers' responses to items 1 disagreed to learn it from school while they agreed with item 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 to acquire the skills through skill acquisition centre and from friends, maintain constant

practice, increase their interest, prepare basic stitches specimen book and availability of sewing machine.

### III. DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

Findings on degree of skill acquisition in home sewing particularly in the aspects of threading of the machine and manipulation of straight and curved edges and the use of simple tools is low. Challenges confronting home-makers in acquiring skills in home sewing focused on lack of working tools. This finding is contrary to the submission of Arkhust (2004) that instructional materials contribute to acquisition of skills. Furthermore, poor knowledge of basic sews processes and inability to manipulate the available tools correctly. Heavy workload of domestic activities, (cooking, child care and house-keeping among others), Long working hours at work, easy access to already made household articles on Nigerian markets, lack of interest and poor motivation.

Benefits of home sewing processes to the family include effective use of leisure hours to manage family resources and conserves revenue. This finding is in line with the statement of European Community, (2005) that appropriate knowledge and skills will enable an individual to maximize the resources around him. Likewise, it promotes transfer of skills in home sewing to the younger family members for continuity purpose, creates aesthetic value to the appearance of the home and production of unique and uncommon home-made articles.

Responses to availability of sewing tool/equipment, in this study very few working tools such as hand sewing needles, measuring tape and pressing iron are at the disposal of the home-makers. However, equipment such as the sewing machine that increases the rate of sewing processes is not provided this may likely be responsible for home-makers inability to achieve better accomplishments on perfect home sewing, working with them for a set period of time.

Strategies for improving home makers home sewing ability lies within the ability to learn from friends and skill acquisition centre on part time basis. This finding is in line with the submission of Microsoft Corporation, (2005) that apprenticeship is the system of learning skills of craft or trade from experts in the field. Respondents also agreed that adhere to constant practice. This is also in line with the submission of Braide (2003) that experience is the fundamental basis in developing and shaping creativity Web-Lupo and Lester (1987), Ochingha (1995) and Bull (1994) attest that constant practice increases learners' expertise in skill acquisition. Respondents also agreed to development of personal interest, availability of sewing tools and equipment, and preparation of basic specimen books for reference purposes.

### IV. CONCLUSION

The importance of skills acquisition in home sewing processes among home-makers for survival, economic stability and improved home making in the family were highlighted. The degree of skill acquisition, challenges facing the home makers and benefits derived from home sewing process were discussed. Strategies for improving the degree of

skill acquisition in home sewing were suggested and recommendations provided.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were provided.

- ✓ Home-makers should buttress their sewing capability by registering with skill acquisition centre on part time basis or learn from friends.
- ✓ Home-makers are charged with the responsibility of constant practice in manipulating simple sewing techniques.

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