



Vocational Training for Enhancing Individual Fulfillment and Quality of Family Life in Nigeria

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Abstract

The essence of vocational training is to equip individuals and families with skill acquisition, integration of knowledge, and attitudes drawn from wide varieties of relevant disciplines that would help individuals and families to proffer solutions to daily practical problems of living emanating from home, family and society. The study examined the contributions of vocational training in promoting individual fulfillment and instituting more stable economy to improve quality of family life in Nigeria. Two research questions were raised for the study and a descriptive survey design was employed in the methodology. The instrument for data collection was a structured interview. The sample size was 200 (100 individuals and 100 households) selected using multi-stage sampling techniques from a Nigerian University, out of the population of 1582 of both academic and non-academic staff. Mean responses revealed that most of the items on the individual fulfillment had a mean of 2.5 and above and the items on quality of family life had mean of 3.45, 2.50 and 4.00 respectively which indicates that Home Economics is a discipline with potential attributes for skill acquisition capable of positive influence in promoting individual fulfillment and improving quality of life. The study recommended that adequate and regular advocacy from practitioners of vocational education (Home Economics) as a discipline to individuals and families so as to educate general populace on the benefits of Home Economics philosophy and objectives as contributions towards promoting individual fulfillment and quality of family life for more stable economy is very important. The study therefore suggested inclusion of a viable extension services/advocacy as a core aspect of vocational education (home economics curriculum) in schools, colleges and universities.

Keywords: Individual, Fulfillment, Quality, Family, Life.

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INTRODUCTION

The family and home is the focal point of development. It (the family) is the only known institution that concern itself with the needs, development, welfare and economic stability of the individual, family and society at a very intimate level. Education had been making good efforts to meet the changing roles, standards and responsibilities of the individual, family and the society in order to make a fulfilled, quality of family life towards a more stable economy especially among Nigerian families (Mbah, 2007). This concurred with Opara (2011) and Opara (2012) that stated relevance of vocational and technical education to nation building.

The idea that Home economics should promote individual fulfillment, quality of family life geared towards a more stable economy is amongst the philosophy and objectives of Home Economics as a discipline. Home Economics is a professional field of study which attempts to serve the society through its effort to solve family problems (International Federation of Home Economics, 2014). From the conceptual position statement of IFHE, it is believed that Home Economics principle is purported to enhance the entire characteristic needs of the family and society. The subject content promotes and guarantee food security of the nation from its ability to solve societal problems by making food available through production, preparation, and service of foods to the family.

Home Economics is a double major subject which has led individuals to the fields of Education, nutrition, social services, and Hospitality Management which is difficult to find in a single subject. Home Economics has not remained static; the changing nature has been so rapid recently, especially on how to improve family living. Its inter-disciplinary nature in composition and practice embracing Physical, Biological and Social Sciences in the application of these areas of knowledge will help in promoting and improving the lives of individuals, families and the society (Mbah, 2007).

INTERDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF HOME ECONOMICS

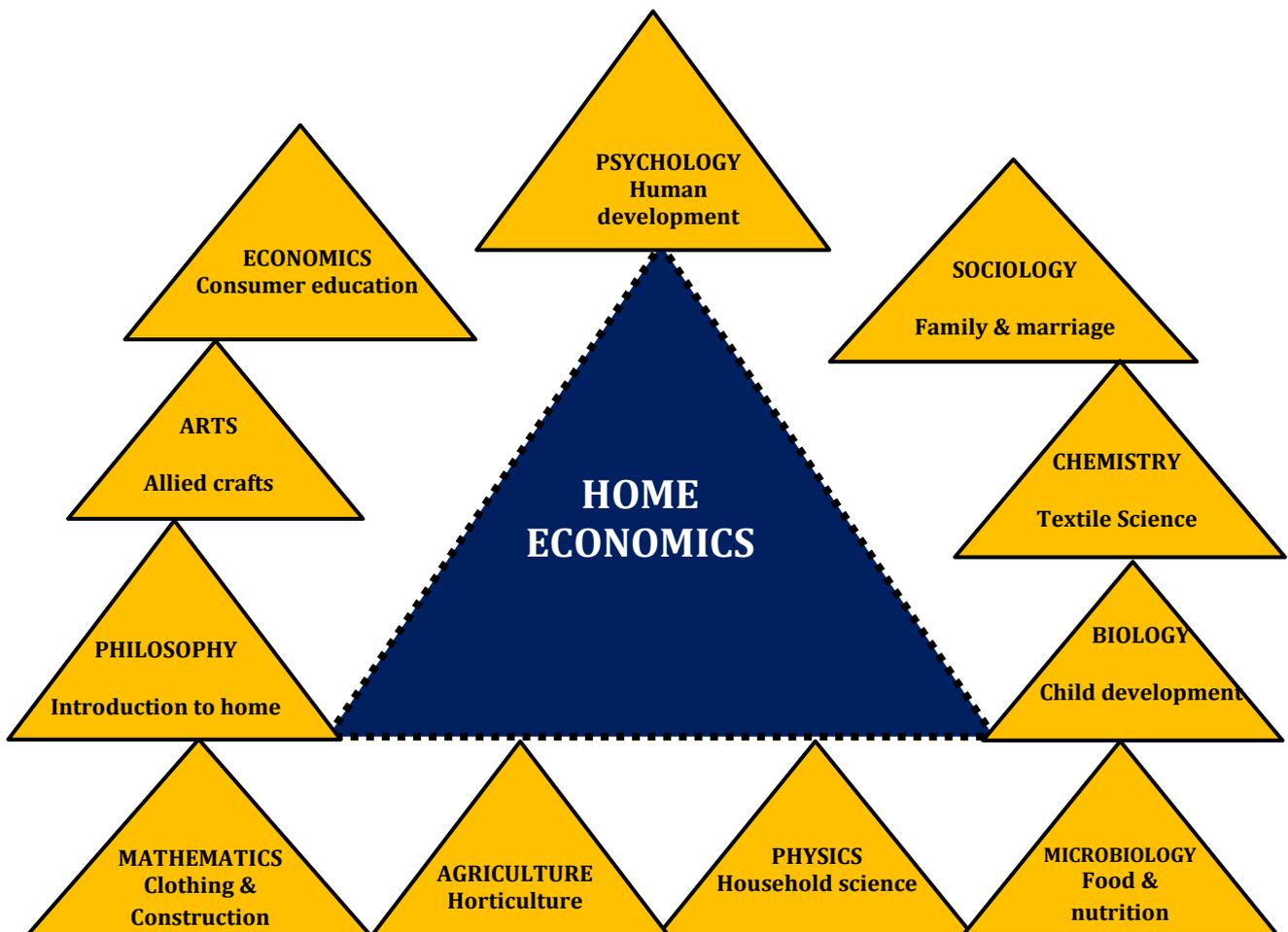


Figure: Integrating nature of Home Economics (Mbah, 2001)

Mbah et al. (2001) emphasized that Home Economics generates knowledge as well as uses concepts from other fields and applies the information to help individuals and families improve lives for present and in the future. Since Home Economics is mostly concerned with the quality of life within the family, it is expected to encourage all personalities involved in it to develop such traits that can make individual to be complete civilized beings. Through these, all individual and family members will realize all values and standards as well as satisfy all wants for the purpose of goal attainment, thus, living a fulfilled and improved quality life.

Promoting Quality of Life

Home Economics possess the training facilities and principles of enhancing quality of life for individuals and families in terms of better standard of living, hope and self-reliance. Home Economics can employ the application of knowledge acquired through skills and practice towards development, family resources management, housing, foods, nutrition and research. The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of no poverty; zero hunger; good health; quality education; gender equality; clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation and infrastructure; reduced inequality; sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land; peace, justice and strong institution; partnership for the goals. These goals are the views of Home Economics which is in line with IFHE mission statement summarized in two statements as:

- To promote human rights and the universal values of household and families as environment within which individuals are assisted to reach full potentials and to acknowledge global interdependence, which is one of the issues Home Economics tries to tackle.
- To promote awareness that families and households are the prime nutrition environments for every being, mental, physical, psychological and emotional family well-being as the basic infrastructure for all other forms of social and economic development. This is another concern that Home Economics tries to address to ensure that individuals and families live a fulfilled quality life (IFHE, 2014).

These objectives could be achieved via the under listed factors:

Skills

The utilization of skills generated from Home economics professional practice will help individuals and families to be useful and achieve goals. These skills include – clothing skills of sewing, knitting, garment making, crocheting craft works, cooking skills – such as baking confectioneries, food center/garment stores, interior decoration laundry work etc. could help individuals to generate income to help the family and societal economy which could lead to wealth creation. Skill training and acquisition is needed in life. A skilled person can survive in every environment because the products will help to generate income for the individual and family (Anyaegbu, 2015).

Resource Management

Home Economics activities enable individuals to identify the resources that are available to them both human and material resources. This will encourage proper and adequate

management of family/individual resources towards achieving long and short term goals. In order to attain satisfaction and quality of life with given resources, individuals and families must apply the knowledge and skills of management (McGregor, 2010).

Nutrition

This is basic to the well-being of people and determines wellness level that any individual in society is expected to achieve. Through Home Economics, one could be equipped to be dieticians and nutritionist, which could enable them to counsel, advise and instruct individuals and families towards healthier dietary habits (Glolabi, Otigonsuren & Cable, 2016).

Sanitation

Poor sanitation is another example of inadequate infrastructure in the developing countries. This creates critical health problems. Home Economics should guarantee the family sanitation through teaching and training of people on the usefulness of good sanitation and simple hygiene processes.

Stable Economy

For a more sustainable economy, skills and adequate management of family resources are taught/ inculcated into the individuals and families this will enable them to be self-reliant and generate money for individual and family up keep. Instead of looking for a paid Job, the individuals and family members will be self-employed (SDA, 2016). Again, through what the individuals could create for production and sales and efficient utilizations of what is available to them. When there are new inventions in the society, the goods and services invented are sold for money. When individuals are able to create and produce articles that are important in the economy of a country, it would help to improve the lives of individuals, families and society at large. These chains of production could go a long way to achieve the goals of sustainable development goals (SDG) that aims at:

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Ensure healthy lives promote well-being for all at all ages, etc.

Through Home Economics, all these promotion of individual fulfillment and family quality life is purposeful and achievable. Most individuals and families become frustrated because some family and societal problems are difficult to solve. It is helpful to consider basic human needs as sets. Some needs may be met while others are being sought (Jiah, Zack & Thompzon, 2016). Those that can adjust and manage the home and the family effectively are only the sharp ones. Actually, the most pressing family problems used to be wealth related and through the application of scientific principles could be resolved. Recently, social problems predominate, some marriages end in divorce, there is child abuse, drugs/alcoholism, unwanted pregnancies, diseases and alienation is acute examples of the social issues among youths. Others are school dropout, youth unemployment inflation, hunger, poverty, etc.

Home Economics can help people to cope with these problems rather than trying to change the situations. The knowledge of Home Economics to the Nigerian Women is very necessary to enable tackling issues, organize her life/family life. Therefore, Home Economics

had gone beyond cooking and serving of food on the table to involving more of resources management, the ability to cope with individual and family issues promoting and improving the individual and quality family, life for a more stable economy. This is the gap the researchers want to fill by this study. The general purpose of the study was to examine the contributions of Home Economics in promoting individual fulfillment and quality family life for more stable economy. Specifically to:

- Find out the contributions of Home Economics in promoting individual and family fulfillment.
- Determine how Home Economics could promote more stable economy to improve quality of family life in Nigeria.

Research Questions:

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- What are the contributions of Home Economics in promoting individual and family fulfillment?
- How could Home Economics promote more stable economy to improve quality of family life in Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

The result of this study will be beneficial to individuals, family members, mothers, and the society at large. The study will enable individuals and families to acquire knowledge on resource management that could help in adequate management of finances as to achieve the individual/families stated goals. It will help the individuals and families to know how best to cope with and tackle the family issues than trying to change the situations.

METHODS

Design of the Study

The study employed a descriptive survey design.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprised all the individuals and families in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike (MOUUAU) Nigeria. The number was one thousand five hundred and eighty two workers (1, 582) of both academic and non-academic staff in twelve Colleges (MOUUAU Registry 2016). Multi stage sampling technique was used in selecting one hundred (100) individuals and one hundred (100) families. Two Colleges were merged and College of general studies was not included because it is new College, therefore, ten (10) Colleges were involved in the study. Thus, the sample size was two hundred respondents. This was to be able to get actual information from individuals.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was structured interview. The interview was divided into sections; section A and section B. section A was for individuals and section B for

families. Responses were elicited using a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly Disagree (SD).

Method of Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using frequency counts and mean scores in respect of the research questions. Decision was taken based on any mean score of 2.5 and above and responded was regarded as Agree while those below 2.5 were regarded as disagreed.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the contributions of Home Economics in promoting individual fulfilled and family quality of life?

Table 1: Mean response of contributions of Home Economics in promoting individual and family quality of life

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Educating them on family resource management	61	58	40	41	200	2.70	Agree
2	Through entrepreneurial skills	244	174	80	41	539		
		52	61	41	46	200	2.60	Agree
3	Good nutrition	208	183	82	46	519		
		66	33	52	49	200	2.58	Agree
4	Educating them on the importance of good health and sanitation	264	99	104	49	516		
		66	55	48	31	200	2.78	Agree
5	Encouraging to cope with problems	264	165	96	31	556		
		57	68	40	35	200	2.74	Agree
6	Do not state goals and priorities	228	204	80	35	547		
		79	76	40	55	200	3.15	Agree
		316	228	80		629		

Research Question 2: How could Home Economics promote more stable economy to improve quality of family life in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean response of how Home Economics could promote stable economy and improve quality of family life

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Wealth creation through skill acquisition	96	74	16	14	200	3.26	Agree
		384	222	32	14	652		
2	Proper identify of resources available to them.	88	70	30	12	200	3.17	Agree
		352	210	60	12	634		
3	Knowledge about foods and nutrition education.	79	76	40	55	200	3.15	Agree
		316	228	80		629		
4	Poverty alleviation through self-reliance	66	55	48	31	200	2.78	Agree
		264	165	96	31	556		
5	Knowledge about family norms, values and standards	57	68	40	35	200	2.74	Agree
		228	204	80	35	547		

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