



# International Journal of Economics and Financial Research

ISSN(e): 2411-9407, ISSN(p): 2413-8533

Vol. 1, No. 8, pp: 106-112, 2015

URL: <http://arpgweb.com/?ic=journal&journal=5&info=aims>

## Strategies for Enhancing Student Enrolment in Home Economics Education in Tertiary Institutions in Edo State

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**Abstract:** This study examined strategies for enhancing student's enrollment into Home Economics Education in tertiary institutions in Edo state. The study was a descriptive survey. A total of 21 lecturers participated in the study. No sampling technique was adopted as all the 21 lecturers in the 4 tertiary institutions who lectures Home Economics Education in Edo State were used for the study. Three research questions were raised and answered in the study. A validated questionnaire was used for data collection while the weighted average mean was adopted for data analysis. Findings from the study revealed that there has been dwindling enrollment into Home Economics Education in tertiary institutions in Edo State. Some of the factors responsible for the state of enrolment are negative attitude of parents, poor institutional funding and low awareness of the relevance of Home Economics Education to the students. Strategies if adopted is capable of enhancing the enrolment were; increased funding of tertiary institutions by the government, provision of well equipped laboratories and libraries, creating awareness among parents and students, giving of loans to graduates of Home Economics to aid their business and students should spent longer period in industrial attachment. One of the recommendations proffered was that the existing tertiary institutions offering Home Economics Education should be properly funded by the government.

**Keywords:** Enrolment, Home Economics, Enhancing, Tertiary institutions, Perception.

### 1. Background of the Study

There are many misconceptions about Home Economics as a programme of study; many people have been led to believe that Home Economics is a programme of study for women only or for drop outs. Home Economics being a vocational subject is aimed at developing not only practical skills, but activities and habits that make the recipient creative, innovative and resourceful. Against this background, Home Economics as a programme of study, has made a slow progress in Nigeria.

For the purpose of clarity, Home Economics is a field of knowledge which is skill-based and is primarily concerned with strengthening families, conducting researches to discover changing needs of individuals and families and the means of satisfying these needs (Fleck, 1974) and (Olaito and Agusiobo, 1981). Home Economics was specifically designed to be taught as a vocational subject at the primary, secondary and tertiary level of education in Nigeria. It is also taught in vocational training schools and centres. That of vocational training centre was designed for proficiency of skills for participants as part of preparing individuals for life and survival. It becomes Home Economics Education when it resides in the faculty of Education in tertiary institutions.

Home Economics Education emphasizes training for jobs. It gives individuals knowledge, skills and attitude to enable them take a related vocation upon completion of their studies. It also prepares youth and adult for employment in a specific occupation or a family of occupations by providing experiences which will enable them to develop competencies needed for such jobs. Home Economics Education is taught at higher institutions to train teachers, make graduates to be self employed and employ others such that they would be able to transform the nation into a fully developed and industrialized nation. Home Economics Education in Nigeria as stated in National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) is to be implemented in tertiary institutions such as Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities, by equipping individuals with home related vocations necessary for self reliant and entrepreneurial skills for managing an enterprise.

Equipping the populace with skills became important because of the rate of unemployment in Nigeria. It is alarming that young ones with bright future are roaming the streets in search of jobs, unable to earn a living, for they are unskilled as such are unproductive and not useful to the society. As a result of this, vocational programmes became necessary, hence the introduction of the 6334 system of education. According to Olayinka (2004), large population of youth that graduate from post primary school (secondary schools) find it difficult to be gainfully or

self-employed. This stems from the type of education they received while in the school. This has motivated the government in several ways to introduce different types of education at different times yet with very little result.

Another group of youth facing unemployment problem in Nigeria are the graduates from tertiary institutions. According to statistics from the Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria has youth population of 50 million, representing 60% of the entire population of the country, and yet 60% youth aged 20-24 are unemployed. The increase in the number of youths in tertiary education is a positive development. However, labour market in Nigeria is presently unable to accommodate the graduates. Olayinka (2004) stated that many youths as a result of joblessness have resorted to getting involved in vices such as kidnapping, armed robbery, prostitution, internet fraud and so on which have in no small measure militated against growth and development of the nation.

According to UNESCO less than 1% of the secondary school students are aware of vocational courses which Home Economics education belongs. As a result of this, most of the tertiary institutions offering vocational courses are underfunded and ill equipped and some of the laboratories lack equipment for practice. Trained and qualified teachers are insufficient, the buildings and the enabling environment required for service delivery are not provided in these schools. These and others factors may have affected the enrolment negatively. Against this background, this research study was designed to investigate strategies that should be put in place to enhance the enrolment of students into Home Economics education as one of the vocational programmes in tertiary institutions in Edo State, Nigeria.

## **1.1. Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

- 1) What is the perception of lecturers on the students' enrollment into Home Economics Education in tertiary Institutions in Edo State?
- 2) What is the perception of lecturers on the factors responsible for the enrollment pattern of students in Home Economics Education in tertiary institutions in Edo State?
- 3) What is the perception of lecturers on strategies for enhancing enrollment into Home Economics Education in Edo State?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Design of the Study**

This study employed the descriptive survey research design on the perceived strategies by lecturers for enhancing student's enrollment into Home Economics Education in Edo State tertiary institutions.

### **2.2. Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised of all 21 Home Economics Education lecturers in the four tertiary institutions offering Home Economics Education in Edo State.

### **2.3. Sample and Sampling Technique**

Since the total population is 21, and they appear few, the entire population of lecturers was used for this study. Therefore there was no sampling.

### **2.4. Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument for data collection was a 29-item questionnaire made up of three sections. Section 'A' was based on state of enrolment. Section 'B' was based on the factors responsible for the pattern of enrolment, while 'C' was based on the strategies for enhancing enrolment into Home Economics Education. A four point scale was used and the weightings were strongly agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

The decision was such that any mean 2.5 and above is 'Agree', while a mean below 2.5 is taken for 'Disagree'.

### **2.5. Validity of the Instrument**

The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. The final draft was based on their corrections.

### **2.6. Reliability of the Instrument**

Researcher adopted test-retest reliability to obtain the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was administered on a group of 10 Home Economics lecturers from neighboring tertiary institutions in Delta State to determine the reliability of the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using Spearman Brown formula. A reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained.

### **2.7. Method of Data Collection**

The researcher personally visited the institutions, meet with the lecturers to apply the questionnaire. The questionnaire was collected on the spot, all the 21 questionnaire were returned representing 100%.

## 2.8. Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics (mean  $\bar{x}$ ) was used in analyzing the data collected. A mean of 2.5 and above indicates agreement with the item stated while a mean of 2.49 and below indicates disagreement.

## 3. Findings

Research Question 1: What is the perception of lecturers on state of the students' enrollment into Home Economics Education in Tertiary Institutions in Edo State?

**Table-1.** State of Enrolment into Home Economics Education in Tertiary Education

	Items	X	F	Fx	Compu tations	Decision
1.	There has been low enrollment of students into Home Economics Education over the years	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	15 06 - - 21	60 18 - - 78	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.7	Accepted
2.	Even those that are there right now were forced as a result of lack of admission.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	13 6 2 - 21	52 18 4 - 64	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.0	Accepted
3.	Many students reject admission if offered Home Economics Education as a course of study.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	12 7 2 - 21	48 21 4 - 73	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.4	Accepted
4.	Student population in Home Economics is the least among other vocational and technical education courses.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	11 6 3 1 21	44 18 6 1 69	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.2	Accepted
5	The name of the scare away students from the course and so they reject admission if offered Home economics	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	18 3 - - 21	72 09 - - 81	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.8	Accepted
6	Male students perceive Home Economics as a preparatory course for female becoming good housewives,	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	12 8 - 1 21	48 24 - 1 72	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.4	Accepted
7	Students perceive Home Economics as a course for servants and not masters so they reject when admitted into the course.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	2 4 14 1 21	8 12 28 1 49	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 2.3	Rejected
8	It is a course meant for the children of the poor so children from rich homes reject admission into Home Economics.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	8 10 2 1 21	32 30 4 1 67	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$ = 3.1	Accepted

Table 1 above shows that enrollment of students into Home Economics Education is actually not encouraging. This is evidenced in the respondents responses where majority strongly agreed that there has been dwindling enrollment of students into Home Economics Education, That students even reject admissions when offered Home Economics for reasons such as the name of the course (3.8), perceive the course as a course for preparing house wives (3.4), children of the rich reject admissions into Home Economics for it for children of the poor (3.1). But do not perceive the course as a course meant for servants (2.3).

Research Question 2: What are the perceived factors responsible for the enrollment pattern of students in Home Economics Education in tertiary institutions in Edo State?

**Table-2.** Perceived Factors Responsible for the Enrolment Pattern of Students into Home Economics

	Items	X	F	Fx	Comput-ation	Decision
1.	Parents are more interested in choosing courses they termed prestigious for their children.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	17 4 - - 21	68 12 - - 70	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.3	Accepted
2.	Students for various reasons lack interest in the study of Home Economics Education.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	13 8 - - 21	52 24 - - 76	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted
3.	Parents and students are not well informed on the usefulness of Home Economics	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	13 5 3 - 21	52 15 6 - 73	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.4	Accepted
4.	Not supporting students practical is responsible for the low enrollment of students into Home Economics Education	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	5 5 8 3 21	20 15 16 3 54	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 2.5	Accepted
5	Low recognition of skilled craftsmanship in Nigeria	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	8 8 5 - 21	32 32 10 - 74	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.5	Accepted
6	Elites do not allow their children to study Home Economics since it is not one of the classed honorable profession	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	15 5 1 - 21	60 15 2 - 77	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted
7	Instructional materials for studying Home Economics are all female gendered oriented	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	6 3 8 4 21	24 9 16 4 53	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 2.5	Accepted
8	Male student are ashamed to read Home Economics due to peer disapproval	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	8 9 4 - 21	32 27 8 - 67	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.1	Accepted
9	Most students lack vocational guidance and career education	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	14 7 - - 21	14 7 - - 21	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted
10	Students do not understand the prevailing circumstances in the world of work and the worthiness of legitimate occupations	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	13 7 1 - 21	52 21 2 - 75	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.5	Accepted
11	Students and parents believe that vocational programme are for the never do well	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	14 7 - - 21	14 7 - - 21	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted

Table 2 shows that factors such as lack of awareness on the relevance of Home Economics Education, negative attitudes of parents towards the course and poor funding of the programme are some of the factors responsible for low the dwindling enrolment.

Research Question 3: What are the strategies for enhancing enrollment into Home Economics Education.

**Table-3.** Strategies for Enhancing Enrolment into Home Economics Education

	Items	X	F	Fx	Compu-tation	Decision
1	Home economics education should be adequately funded to attract students.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	14 7 - - 21	56 21 - - 77	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted
2.	The society should be properly enlightened on the usefulness of Home Economics as a course.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	14 6 -1 - 21	56 18 - - 74	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.5	Accepted
3.	The existing Home Economics laboratories should be upgraded with modern facilities.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	16 5 - - 21	64 15 - - 67	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.1	Accepted
4.	Career workshop should be organized for senior secondary school students where Home Economics can be introduced to students.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	14 7 - - 21	56 21 - - 77	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted
5.	Well equipped libraries with home economics books should be given to all secondary schools for effective teaching and learning of Home Economics	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	13 8 - - 21	52 24 - - 76	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted
6.	Students should be taken for excursion to some Home Economics establishments such as fashion homes, hotels and hospitals.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	12 9 - - 21	48 27 - - 75	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.5	Accepted
7.	The public should be sensitized on the relevance of Home Economics skills to nation building	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	11 8 2 - 21	44 24 4 - 72	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.4	Accepted
8.	Qualified teachers should be employed to teach Home Economics in the secondary schools.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	10 11 - - 21	40 33 - - 73	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.4	Accepted
9.	Loans and advances should be given to graduates in Home Economics by government and financial institution to enable them to start business of their own	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	16 5 - - 21	64 15 - - 79	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.7	Accepted
10.	Students of Home Economics Education should spend longer period in industrial attachment for more practical experience.	SA-4 A-3 D-2 SD-1 Total	14 7 - - 21	56 21 - - 77	$\frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$    = 3.6	Accepted

Table 3 above shows that there are various strategies that can be put in place to enhance student's enrollment in Home Economics. The respondent's opinion to the questions raised in the table 3 above is an indication that they are all strategies that can enhance the enrollment of students into Home Economics

### 3.1. Summary of Findings

The major findings from the analysis are summarized below:

- i) There has been dwindling enrollment of students into Home Economics education over the years

- ii) Factors responsible for the enrollment pattern of students into Home Economics education in tertiary institutions in Edo State include: negative attitude of parents , poor institutional funding and low awareness on the relevance of Home Economics Education to the students
- iii) While the following are the ways of enhancing enrolment into Home Economics Education; increased funding, provision of well equipped laboratories and libraries, creating awareness among parents and students, giving of loans to graduates of home economics to aid their business and students should spent longer period in industrial attachment.

### 3.2. Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows that there has been low enrollment into Home Economics Education, which is in line with the findings of Akuezilo (1992) and Olaito and Agusiobo (1981) that Home Economics Education is one of the courses which has low enrolment of students at the university and other tertiary institutions and has a wide disparity between male and female in favour of the female. This they attributed this to poor recognition of vocational programmes by government and stake holders in education sector. Also Ode and Babayeju (2013) asserted that factors responsible for low enrolment of students into Home Economics programmes are among others poor funding, shortage of teachers, ways of socializing boys and girls, lack of interest from students and poor method of teaching. Another reason for low enrolment is the disparity between male and female in favour of the female as supported by Imonikebe (2002) who believed that male students lack understanding of Home Economics and what it entails that is why they disregard the subject and if the subject is left for only female there is bound to be low enrolment. Also noted that students lack the awareness of the job opportunities that Home Economics has to offer and for this many male students refuse their admission even when offered Home Economics as a course of study. Ode (2011) sees that students feel that Home Economics as a course cannot take someone beyond cooking and sewing and so lack interest in the subject. All these factors have made it impossible for institutions to meet up with their quota in the various institutions offering them. The viability of a programme is recognized in the rate of enrolment. Hence, an increase in students' enrolment in Home Economics is highly important.

Lastly, the result of the analysis shows that the following are the ways of enhancing enrolment into Home Economics Education; increased funding, provision of well equipped laboratories and libraries, creating awareness among parents and students and giving of loans to graduates of Home Economics to aid them for starting their own businesses. This is supported by Amah (2013) who suggested that government and stake holders in education should create adequate awareness and provide facilities for teaching and learning the subject. Seminars should be organized to create awareness; laboratories should be well equipped to facilitate the acquisition of skills. Okebukola (2005) found similar result in his study. Okebukola (2005) asserted that the infrastructural decay and shortage of qualified personnel in tertiary institutions in Nigeria today is enough to discourage prospective students from enrolling in skilled areas. Therefore the provision of adequate facilities is highly significant if enrolment into Home Economics Education is to improve.

## 4. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

### 4.1. Summary

Based on the information gathered from this study, the following were established: that there have been dwindling enrollment of students into Home Economics Education which is actually due to the negative attitude of parents and lack of interest of students and government towards the course. To enhance enrolment into the programme, adequate awareness has to be created and reappraisal of the programme is needed because if Home Economics Education is considered crucial for national development, then a reappraisal of the programme is required. This is made possible by linking it with business and industrial organization. Therefore practical training of students in the form of industrial training for a longer period will be necessary. Through this, industries and business corporations will be able to expose the students with practical experiences that will help them to become entrepreneurs.

### 4.2. Conclusion

Enhancing the enrolment of students in Home Economics Education is of most importance especially at this period that the nation is experiencing unemployment problem. The fact remains that vocational programmes which Home Economics belongs, has to be given attention by the government through adequate funding. Finally, several strategies have been put in place to enhance the enrollment of students into the programme. If these strategies are adequately put in place, students' dwindling enrolment will be a thing of the past.

### 4.3. Recommendations

In view of the research findings, the following recommendations were proffered

- 1) That the existing tertiary institutions offering Home Economics Education should be properly funded by the government
- 2) Adequate teaching aids and instructional materials should be procured for effective teaching and learning of Home Economics Education.



- 3) Awareness and sensitization programmes should be organized for people on the relevance of Home Economics Education to nation building.
- 4) Loans and financial assistance should be given to graduates of Home Economics Education by government and financial institutions to enable them become self-reliant.

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