

# Clothing and Textile at Senior High Schools: An Evaluation of Affective Entry Characteristics of Teachers and Students

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## Abstract

*This study evaluated the affective entry behaviors of students and teachers in Clothing and Textile at the Senior High School level of education in Ghana. The mixed method approach of research design was adopted and a multi-staged sampling technique was used to sample 478 students and 23 teachers respectively. The results shown that, majority of the students had the minimum entry aggregates, some Clothing and Textiles teachers had other specializations other than Clothing and Textiles, Students and teachers were not interested in Clothing and Textiles. Students were forced by parents and teachers to take Clothing and Textiles. Recommendations such as Ghana Education Service (GES) should employ teachers with Clothing and Textiles background, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and Ghana Education Service should make the Basic Design and Technology component 'sewing' very attractive at the Junior High School level to help students develop interest in Clothing and Textiles.*

*Keywords: Affective entry characteristics, Clothing and Textiles, Students, Teachers, Evaluation*

## 1. Introduction

Clothing and Textiles (sewing) was the first subject to be taught in the history of Home Economics in Ghana, however, many people do not have much interest in studying it at all levels of education. Even those who opt for Home Economics programme prefer choosing Food and Nutrition to Clothing and Textiles (C&T). At the Senior High School (SHS) level of education, Clothing and Textiles (C&T) has been downtrodden in the same vein as the other levels of education. Students opting for Clothing and Textiles in some Senior High Schools offering Home Economics across the regions is shown in Table 1. *The enrolment of students into C&T is not encouraging, indicating that, the subject may not be appealing enough to students compared to other options available to them.*

*According to [1], young people account for 60 percent of the unemployed in sub-Saharan Africa and youth unemployment is an acute problem.*

*Clothing and Textiles (C&T) is one of the subjects in Ghana education curriculum which would help the government attain its goals on education which states "to provide relevant education to all Ghanaians at all levels to enable them acquire job relevant skills in order to be productive, facilitate poverty reduction, and promote socio-economic growth and national development"[2] and curb the unemployment situation in the country.*

In view of this, the major rationale for C&T curriculum for SHS is to train students to acquire knowledge and skills in clothing production and management [2]. Consequently, one of the aims of C&T curriculum is to help students develop clothing production skills. Unfortunately, most SHS C&T graduates who wish to set up their sewing businesses after school have to be retrained to sew through apprenticeship before practicing and this does not reflect the outcome of the profile dimension of the Clothing and Textile curriculum at the Senior High School level of education (Knowledge and Understanding-15%, Application of Knowledge-25%, Practical Skills-60%) stated in the syllabus [2]. Again, anecdotal evidence shows that majority of students who enter into the tertiary institution with C&T background from SHS still find the course difficult and seem to have no interest just like their colleagues who have no foundation in C&T at the SHS. Similarly, [3] noted that, Clothing and Textiles students from the second cycle institution who gain admission into the Polytechnics to pursue fashion lack certain basic skills in sewing and time is needed to teach basic sewing skills all over again at the Polytechnic in order to prepare them for the Fashion programme.

The outcome of Clothing and Textiles curriculum is not encouraging. Bloom's model of learning outcomes is determined by four dimensions: Students' cognitive entry behaviors, affective entry characteristics, the learning task(s), and the quality of instruction. The cognitive entry behaviors are a form of pre-learning that is required in order to learn a specific learning unit [4] while the affective entry behaviors are a combination of a student's interest in, attitude towards and academic self-concept regarding a course or the learning units of that course [4].

Table 1. Five-year WASSCE enrolment data

Sch	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
	C	F	C	F	C	F	C	F	C	F
A	0	38	0	77	12	35	12	37	9	33
B	4	19	6	53	0	24	2	26	1	47
C	1	98	8	106	3	54	10	70	12	77
D	15	77	54	188	0	40	72	181	45	129
E	3	49	4	76	2	19	5	35	0	23
F	1	47	4	107	0	71	0	47	1	78
G	19	37	77	105	23	32	28	53	14	75
H	5	24	9	67	6	35	9	35	9	59
I	1	23	12	51	4	26	6	24	5	31
J	8	48	6	61	4	96	58	60	43	54
K	19	31	49	62	48	87	57	76	51	51
L	9	72	28	180	0	89	0	85	29	111

Source: WAEC 2017

Students who had positive affective entry characteristics are said to be more attentive, more insistent and more successful [5]. Student interest is therefore seen as a major factor in affecting learning outcome for that matter the educational process and this is revealed in a study by [6] that, student interest and motivation is the primary influence on perceived learning. Academic self-concept/ efficacy is another constituent of the affective entry characteristics which states an individuals' efficacy perceptions regarding their academic achievements and individuals' solid and sincere beliefs about whether they will be able to fulfill a given academic task successfully at a predetermined level or not [7]. These imply that, the affective entry characteristics of students affects the outcome of learning for that matter the educational process, therefore this study evaluated both the student and teachers' affective entry characteristics of the main human resources (Teacher and Student) in Clothing and Textiles Education at the Senior High School level of Education in Ghana. Specifically, the study looked at the entry qualification of both the teacher and learner and their willingness or interest to offer and teach the subject respectively using the input factor in Stuffle beam's Context Input Process Product (CIPP) evaluation model.

## 2. Methodology

The study employed a mixed method research design. A multi-staged sampling procedure of stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used in the sampling of respondents in their respective institutions of study. The ten administrative Regions of Ghana at the time of the study were stratified into two strata (Southern and Northern zones). Two out of 5 regions were then purposively selected in each stratum i.e., the region

with the highest number of schools offering C&T and the lowest number of schools offering C&T in each stratum. The sample of schools offering C&T in each region were chosen randomly (lottery method) under options 1-3 using Ghana Education Service categorization of schools to obtain eighteen schools. All twenty-three (23) teachers and four hundred and seventy-eight students in the sampled schools were purposively sampled to participate in the study because the numbers were not large and they have similar characteristics in terms of the syllabus used for teaching and learning C&T. Questionnaires and interview guides were used as data collection instruments and data was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative approaches. The abbreviations used for the Likert-scale item are as follows: SA = Strongly Agreed, A= Agreed, D = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed and the responses were categorized into Low (with mean score of 1.00-2.50) and High (with mean score of 2.51-4.00).

## 3. Ethical consideration

An official introductory letter was taken from the Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Education of the University of Cape Coast to the various schools and institutions to facilitate data collection. In addition, personal permission letters were taken to all the SHS and WAEC to help collect data and all information needed for the study.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Entry characteristics of students and teachers in Clothing and Textiles

The average aggregate score of students is 16-20 and out of 478 students, 60 students were admitted with an aggregate score above 25 to the Senior High School to offer Clothing and Textiles

Fifteen teachers possess first degree, 5 teachers possess masters' degree and 3 teachers possess diploma certificates. The results show that teachers who handle Clothing and Textiles subject in Senior High Schools in Ghana have good academic qualification. The area of specialization of these teachers was also investigated. Majority of the teachers were trained in Clothing Textiles but 5 teachers studied Home Economics and Fashion and Design respectively, 3 teachers studied Food and Nutrition and 2 teachers studied Educational Leadership.

#### **4.2. Extent to which students and teachers are willing to take and teach Clothing and Textiles**

Students' willingness to take Clothing and Textiles was also investigated. The result shows that on the average, majority of the students do not love Clothing and Textiles as a course ( $M=1.31$ ,  $SD=.55$ ). Many of these students were forced by their parents to take the course ( $M=3.50$ ,  $SD=.85$ ) and a significant number was forced by their teachers to take the course ( $M=3.50$ ,  $SD=.87$ ). The results further suggest that many students do not have interest in the course ( $M=1.53$ ,  $SD=.88$ ). Also, friends to some extent, discouraged students who wish to take the course ( $M=2.65$ ,  $SD=1.12$ ). The attitude of teachers to teaching the course do not equally serve as a motivation to many students who offer the course ( $M=2.28$ ,  $SD=1.07$ ). Majority of the students do not enjoy the course in class ( $M=1.49$ ,  $SD=.72$ ) and perceived the course as relatively not important for every student to take ( $M=1.69$ ,  $SD=.84$ ). Finally, given the chance to choose a course, majority of the students will not opt for Clothing and Textiles as a course again ( $M=1.56$ ,  $SD=.81$ ).

The willingness (or interest) of teachers teaching Clothing and Textiles as a course was also investigated. The responses were categorized into Low (with mean score of 1.00-2.50) and High (with mean score of 2.51-4.00). The data revealed that teachers' preference for teaching Clothing and Textiles ( $M=1.52$ ,  $SD=.51$ ), interest in the subject ( $M=1.39$ ,  $SD=.50$ ), enjoy teaching the course ( $M=1.39$ ,  $SD=.50$ ), chose the course to teach ( $M=1.57$ ,  $SD=.66$ ), consider the course as important ( $M=1.74$ ,  $SD=.62$ ) and love the course ( $M=1.30$ ,  $SD=.47$ ) to be relatively low (Below 2.50).

### **5. Discussion**

#### **5.1. Student's entry characteristics**

The study revealed that majority of the students who offer Clothing and Textiles at Senior High

Schools in Ghana have average aggregates score 16-20 in their BECE but 60 students had aggregate scores above 25. Students' prior academic performance is one of the major factors that can aid or impede on a student's educational endeavour and this may aid the implementation of a curriculum or delay its implementation as stated by [8] that, a student's progress in a higher academic programme is mostly determined by the various entry qualifications obtained by the students for admission. [9] also identified and reported that students' academic performance depends among other things on students previous or prior educational performance. This implies that students with weak aggregates will find it difficult to learn Clothing and Textiles to the highest level in their academic endeavours. They may drop out because they cannot meet the demands of the curriculum. A follow up on the impact the calibre of students admitted into Clothing and Textiles have on teaching and learning in an interview with Clothing and Textiles teachers revealed that, most teachers find it difficult imparting knowledge to such students and it delays the amount of content they are able to cover within a particular period because they have to take their time explaining and re-explaining concepts to such students.

#### **5.2. Teachers' qualification and area of specialization**

It has been established from the results that some of the teachers have specializations different from Clothing and Textiles. The question is how would teachers who do not have specializations in a particular area of study handle and motivate students to study that subject? Teachers can have a positive or negative impact on students' performance based on their content knowledge as noted by [10] that, teacher subject knowledge as captured by teacher test scores, has been consistently found to have a positive and significant impact on student performance.

The specialization of the teacher is very vital in students' development. A teacher who is an expert in an area will be glad seeing his/her students doing well in his subject as noted by [11] that, teachers want to enjoy teaching and watching their students develop interests and skills in their interest area. The [12] noted that, when a teacher has his or specialization in an area, or teachers who have strong knowledge of subject matter give details in their lesson, link the topic to other topics, ask students many questions. These suggests that teachers who have specialization in Clothing and Textiles, have higher potential to teach and interpret concepts better to students than those with different specialities like Educational Leadership and Food and Nutrition. A related study shows that, one of the factors that is responsible for the low performance of students in

Clothing and Textiles is lack of enough qualified and competent lecturers [13]. In an interview with the students, some of them stated that, some teachers do not have time for them when they are doing their practical work and they sometimes find it difficult understanding the concepts taught by the teachers. These may be one of the reasons why the performance of students in Clothing and Textiles is not encouraging and student enrolment data keeps declining over the years since some of the teachers who are supposed to make the subject attractive are ignorant of what he or she is teaching.

### 5.3. Students Interest and willingness

The students' response indicated that, they did not willingly choose Clothing and Textiles (M=1.56) and they do not have much interest in Clothing and Textiles but they were under compulsion.

Interest or willingness is said to be one of the forces that directs an individual's behavior as opined by [14] thence they involve themselves in an activity without coercion. This implies that, a Clothing and Textiles student who has interest in the course will be ready to learn always and vice versa. Since students are not interested in Clothing and Textiles, students learning will not be effective as it is a widely accepted belief that student' attitudes towards school and courses affect their success at school and in courses [15]. This may be a predominant factor for the inability of Senior High School Clothing and Textiles graduates to possess the necessary skill needed for clothing production and management and the low enrolment recorded into Clothing and Textiles.

Similarly, students reported that, the Clothing and Textile teacher's attitude did not motivate them to take Clothing and Textiles. Research have shown that, the teacher has a lot of influence on the classroom experience [16]. If a teacher is unmotivated or negative there will be a direct impact on the students within the classroom and vice versa. It is important for a teacher to understand this cause and effect in order to understand how to organize their classroom to create a better learning environment.

### 5.4. Teachers' Interest and willingness

Results of the study indicated that, most teachers who teach Clothing and Textiles are not interested in the subject. This explains why students are also not interested in Clothing and Textiles. This implies that, without personal interest, Clothing and Textiles teachers will not willfully give their best in teaching because their interest level in the subject is low. Teachers are the main catalyst of learning and their interest in a subject area is a major factor that can enhance their performance in the classroom as an

engaged instructor invests more in his or her students and this in turn affects learning as mentioned by [17] that, students are attentive and know when instructors are investing in them, and they will recognize these efforts.

In an interview, some teachers indicated that, "we the teachers can make people get interested in the course by first of all becoming interested and making others see how important our course is. One teacher specifically said, *"for me, my dressing and my attitude to teaching alone makes a lot of students yearn to take Clothing and Textiles so I had to fight for a second class for my students in form one because, they are over seventy (70) students now."*

The above testifies how a teachers' attitude to his subject area alone can boost the interest of their students. Studies have shown that, teacher's good attitude, in particular, plays an integral part in the effort to improve learning outcomes or teaching efficacy when students are unwilling to participate in class [18]. Similarly, [19] in a similar study found that, students' interest in learning and a teacher's instructional attitude both have a significant interactive influence on the learning outcomes in Taiwanese colleges.

Interest directs behavior and this affect teacher's attitude to teaching and the importance attached to this area of study. If the teachers were intrinsically motivated, their attitude to the courses they teach alone would make other teachers and school authorities respect Clothing and Textiles as outlined by [20] in the self-determination theory that, the quality of interest-based motivation largely corresponds to intrinsic motivation.

## 6. Findings

Majority of the students offering Clothing and Textiles had good aggregates (aggregate 6-25) at the BECE level but about 60 students had above aggregate 25 and were offering Clothing and Textiles Parents (Mean=3.50) and Teachers (Mean=3.50) forced students to take Clothing and Textiles.

Five (5) teachers out of 23 did not have their specializations in Clothing and Textiles Students and teachers do not have interest if offering and teaching Clothing and Textiles respectively (Mean below 2.5).

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the outcomes of the study, it is recommended that, Ghana Education Service should ensure that, students with better aggregates (6-15) from Basic Education Certificate Examination should be enrolled into Clothing and Textiles. Ghana Education Service (GES) should employ teachers with Clothing and Textiles background who can teach skill-oriented lessons to the students.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and Ghana Education Service should make the Basic Design and Technology component 'sewing' very attractive at the Junior High School level in order to help students develop interest in Clothing and Textiles at the basic level of education. Senior High School C&T teachers should motivate their students to whip up their interest for smooth learning. Lecturers in University of Education, University of Cape Coast and University of Development Studies responsible for training Clothing and Textiles teachers for the Senior High Schools should teach or package the course well to students to enable them appreciate Clothing and Textiles as a course of study for a better practice in the Senior High Schools.

## 8. Conclusion

Majority of Senior High School students in Clothing and Textiles had the minimum requirement to offer Clothing and Textiles. Parents and teachers forced students offering Clothing and Textiles to take the subject. Thus, there is an external force rather than students will to take Clothing and Textiles. Students are not interested in offering Clothing and Textiles and this is affecting the teaching and learning process and thereby affecting the outcome of the teaching process. Teachers have low interest in teaching Clothing and Textiles thereby reducing motivation of students to develop interest in the subject to influence their younger ones to take Clothing and Textiles thereby affecting student enrolment, the teaching and learning process and the outcome. A teacher without intrinsic motivation or willingness/interest for Clothing and Textiles cannot have any good teaching attitude to promote teacher-student interaction, course organization, responsiveness, classroom management, adequate preparation etc. and this is leading to a low achievement of the aims of the Clothing and Textiles and the educational goals of Ghana.

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