

ASSESSMENT OF FAMILY CLOTHING ACQUISITION AND MAINTENANCE PRACTICES AMONG HOMEMAKERS IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL

Stella N Lemchi, Patience E Ozor*, Eucharia N Okeke, Favour C Ononuju

ABSTRACT

Family clothing acquisition and maintenance, especially among homemakers, has gained attention due to excessive clothing purchases influenced by societal pressures, advertising, and consumer habits (Williams 2021). Factors like family values, culture, and economic status also play a role (Patwary 2023). The sustainability of clothing depends on homemakers' maintenance practices (Magure & Fashy 2023). The study assesses family clothing acquisition and maintenance in Owerri Municipal, focusing on factors influencing purchases, available maintenance tools, acquisition methods, and strategies to improve maintenance practices (Thompson 2020).

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted. A sample size of 225 homemakers was drawn from population of 64,445 homemakers, using the purposive sampling technique. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and simple percentage.

Results

The result showed various factors influencing family clothing acquisition and maintenance practices among homemakers in Owerri Municipal as they agreed that finance, weather, personality, occupation, cost, and prices of clothes determine the acquisition of family clothing and maintenance practices among home makers. Acquisition of clothes by homemakers has pointed towards a

direction that suggests a need to responsibly consume apparel for aims of environmental sustainability. Essential tools and equipment required for effective family clothing maintenance include washing machines, sewing machines, wardrobes, and cupboards for the proper storage of laundered garments (Smith & Johnson 2020). These tools play a vital role in preserving the quality of clothing and ensuring its longevity. Other forms of clothing acquisition among homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council include direct purchase, inherited clothing materials from households, gifts from households among others. Positive ways of enhancing clothing maintenance practices among homemakers include mending, renovation, remodeling of old garments and proper utilization of garment care labels for provision of basic information on clothing maintenance to elongate the life span of the garment.

Conclusion

The study therefore concluded that advertisement strategies on garment products such as providing positive role models for homemakers in relation to clothing acquisition and maintenance skills are adopted as a way of promoting family clothing acquisition, lengthen wear life of clothes and reduce waste among homemakers in Owerri Municipal. Hence, there is need to emphasize more on effective ways of assessing clothing acquisition and maintenance practices of homemakers while teaching students laundry processes and clothing renovation for greater nation impact.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study recommends that homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council be taught adequate skills in various clothing maintenance procedures such as clothing renovation, laundry, ironing, pressing and storage. Strict adherence to Home Economics content on clothing and textiles as it will promote and enhance the assessment of clothing acquisition and maintenance practices among individuals and homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council, Imo State, South-East Nigeria.

KEYWORDS

assessment, family, clothing acquisition, maintenance practices and home makers

— Prof SN Lemchi

ORCID ID: 0000-0003-3878-8641
Department Of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education
Owerri
Imo State 460281
Nigeria
Email: lemchistella@gmail.com

— Dr PE Ozor *

Department Of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education
Owerri
Imo State 460281
Nigeria
Email: patieozor@gmail.com

*Corresponding author

— Dr Eucharía N Okeke

Department Of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education
Owerri
Imo State 460281
Nigeria
Email: okekeeucharia@gmail.com

— Ms FC Ononuju

Department Of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education
Owerri
Imo State 460281
Nigeria
Email: ukadikeoluchi2@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Submitted October 2024
Revision March 2025
Accepted March 2025

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jfec.v53i1.279669>

INTRODUCTION

Clothing refers to fabrics and materials designed to cover and adorn the body, offering comfort, fit, and stylistic expression while enhancing an individual's appearance. It includes a broad range of garments, such as dresses, blouses, shirts, undergarments, shoes, jewelry, handbags, and other accessories, all contributing to both functional and aesthetic needs (Smith & Johnson 2022; Lee & Chang 2021). These objects have practical uses while also conveying individual identity and impacting social relationships. Thus are essential factors that distinguished humans from other animal. They create a micro-climate for the body, cover it, and communicate the wearer's status and

personality to others.

Clothing serves not only to physically protect the body but also as a reflection of a society's culture and a powerful means of communication, conveying interpersonal and social messages. In fact, clothing and the messages they convey are often seen as primary indicators of a culture (Smith & Turner 2023). This supports the argument made by Davis (2020), who describes clothing as any article worn on the body for protection, beautification, or adornment. However, its fundamental purpose remains to increase the comfort of the wearer.. Clothing shields the wearer from rough surfaces, irritants like rash-inducing plants, insect bites, splinters, and other environmental hazards by creating a barrier between the skin and the outside world (White & Zhang 2024).

Similarly, Johnson (2021) emphasized that clothing encompasses a wide range of fibers and materials designed to cover various parts of the human body, including pants, shirts, dresses, coats, and undergarments. It is worn by nearly every group within the human population, although the types of clothing differ significantly across cultures. Consequently, the significance of clothing cannot be overstated in fostering a decent and modest society. It plays a crucial role in protecting the skin from harmful environmental factors and contributes to safety during activities that present physical risks, such as cooking (Nguyen & Patel 2023).

In light of the above, family is often defined as a group of individuals connected by legal or genetic ties, but for many, the notion of family is much broader, with even genetic relationships often being more intricate than they initially appear (Johnson 2020). A family typically comprises two or more people who share common goals, values, and long-term commitments, and who usually live together. Beyond these core elements, families

frequently invest in a variety of clothing to enhance their appearance, as clothing not only serves practical purposes but also plays a key role in expressing personal identity and fulfilling social functions (Taylor 2021). Some of the reasons outlined by Quarcoo and Akomaning (2022) include fulfilling physical needs and providing protection, addressing psychological needs, serving social purposes, boosting self-confidence, and expressing one's personality or identity. As a result, the process of acquiring clothing becomes essential for meeting both practical and emotional needs..

Clothing acquisition refers to the process by which individuals or families obtain their apparel, and it is closely linked to the broader concept of clothing consumption. As observed by Ononuju (2023), clothing acquisition and consumption are inseparable, as the primary purpose of acquiring clothing is for effective use or consumption. According to Thompson (2022), clothing acquisition encompasses the various ways through which individuals or families obtain their apparel. These methods include purchasing ready-to-wear items, acquiring custom-made garments, exchanging or swapping clothes, buying second-hand apparel, inheriting clothing from older siblings, friends, or relatives, recycling, receiving donations, and other means. These varied methods underscore the diverse ways in which people access and consume clothing (Thompson 2022; Brown & Smith 2021).

Clothing acquisition is influenced by a variety of factors, such as weather, geography, health, and physiological conditions. Similarly, recent studies by Patel, Gupta, and Chen (2024) highlight that factors like the growth of low-cost apparel imports, the increasing availability of affordable clothing, the improved durability and reduced cost of synthetic fibers, and family budget constraints all play significant roles in shaping clothing acquisition. Moreover, financial resources

largely determine the quality and quantity of clothing an individual can afford. As noted by Davis (2023), family financial capacity and resources are crucial in deciding the method of clothing acquisition, whether through ready-to-wear items, homemade clothing, or garments made by commercial dressmakers. Proper financial management is key when purchasing clothing.

Furthermore, family clothing acquisition remains a significant area of interest within consumer behavior, clothing and textiles discipline, and the fashion industry (Nguyen Patel & Zhang 2023). This topic has important implications for the academic, moral, and socio-economic well-being of homemakers (Miller & Thompson 2024). While various factors influence homemakers' decisions regarding clothing acquisition, it is crucial to emphasize that the need for effective and proper maintenance of clothing cannot be overlooked. Proper care is essential in ensuring the longevity and continued value of clothing, which is an important consideration in the acquisition process

Clothing maintenance practices involve regular efforts to keep garments in optimal condition through routine inspections and repairs. These practices encompass the care families provide to preserve the fabric's integrity and extend the lifespan of their clothes. According to Davis and Clark (2021), clothing maintenance includes tasks such as washing, altering, proper storage, and making repairs when necessary. These activities not only enhance the appearance of clothing but also ensure its durability. Harris (2020) is of the view that fundamental family clothing maintenance practices include cleaning, mending, and ensuring appropriate storage conditions. The rate of wear and tear on clothing, however, is significantly influenced by the quality and consistency of these maintenance efforts.

Moreover, effective clothing care demands time, energy, a proactive attitude, and the necessary knowledge to prolong the life of garments and ensure they are ready for use when needed (Miller 2023).

Family clothing maintenance practices refer to how homemakers or family members effectively manage and care for the household's clothing using the available resources. However, observations indicate that homemakers with less experience and limited skills often face challenges in assessing and managing clothing acquisition and maintenance. Many homemakers lack the necessary knowledge and expertise to properly acquire, maintain, and extend the lifespan of their clothes. This gap in skills can hinder effective clothing care and result in the inefficient use of resources, especially for parents who bear the primary responsibility for providing clothing. Also, the lack of adequate skills such as proper washing, ironing, and storing often leads to difficulties in managing the household's clothing. Moreover, the increasing dependence on services such as laundry or dry cleaning is viewed by many as an inefficient use of resources.

In another development, the increasing dependence on fast fashion and overconsumption of clothing highlights the urgent need for homemakers to develop essential clothing maintenance skills. By mastering proper garment care, they can cut costs and significantly extend the lifespan of their clothing (Muthu 2020). Furthermore, as the world grapples with environmental crises, such as climate change and overflowing landfills, clothing sustainability has become a key concern (Patwary 2023). In this critical moment, the debate between the Linear Economy and the Circular Economy has gained even more significance. The Circular Economy, which prioritizes reducing waste and extending product life, offers a sustainable path forward, aligning perfectly

with the growing need for responsible clothing acquisition and maintenance practices (Magure & Fashy 2023). The circular approach aims to design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use and regenerate natural systems. The core idea is to create a closed-loop system that minimizes the use of resource inputs, reduces waste and maximizes the sustainable use of product materials.

A linear economy operates on a "take, make, dispose" model, which emphasizes resource extraction and waste generation without considering long-term sustainability or environmental consequences. While it may provide immediate benefits, a circular economy, which focuses on sustainability, waste reduction, and resource reuse, offers long-term advantages and is crucial in addressing global environmental issues. In parallel, the increasing reliance on fast fashion, coupled with inadequate clothing maintenance skills among homemakers, has led to excessive spending and poor consumption practices (Muthu 2020). Therefore, it is vital to improve the clothing acquisition and maintenance skills of homemakers in Owerri Municipal, Imo State, to promote sustainable and responsible practices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to assess issues on family clothing acquisition and maintenance practices among homemakers in Owerri Municipal. Specifically the study sought to find out the:

- 1) determinants affecting clothing acquisition practice among Homemakers
- 2) motivations behind clothing acquisition among Homemakers,
- 3) various forms of clothing acquisition among the Homemakers,

4) available tools and equipment needed for family clothing maintenance among the Homemakers and,

5) possible ways of enhancing clothing maintenance practice among the Homemakers.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

A descriptive survey design was adopted. The design is considered appropriate for this study because it enables the researcher to elicit information from a fraction of a population called sample and findings generalized to the entire population on family clothing acquisition and maintenance practices among Homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State, South-East Nigeria.

Area of the study

The study was conducted in Owerri Municipal Council, Imo State. The area was chosen due to its high clothing consumption pattern among homemakers and other individuals in the study area, as well as being in the heart of the State Capital and the residents are highly enlightened. Owerri Municipal Council is one of 27 LGAs in Imo State. It is located at the Centre of Owerri, the State Capital. The residents are mainly civil servants and business men who carryout business activities and are educated.

Population for the study

The target population for the study comprised of 64,455 Home makers in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State. (National Population Commission 2006) (NPC 2006).

Sample and sampling techniques

A purposive sampling method was employed to select 225 respondents from the five autonomous communities that constitute the Owerri Municipal. Forty-five respondents were chosen from each community to form the sample size for the study.

Instrument for data collection

A structured questionnaire titled Family Clothing Acquisition and Maintenance Practices Among Homemakers in Imo State (FCAMPH) was used to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of two sections (I and II). Respondents were asked to indicate their answers by placing a tick (v) next to the response that best applied to them. The items were designed using a three-point rating scale: Yes, No, and Not Sure.

Validation and reliability of instrument

The questionnaire was validated by three experts one from Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management and two from the Department of Clothing and Textiles both from Alvan Ikoku University of Education, Owerri. A pretest was conducted with 20 copies of the instrument in Orlu LGA of Imo State, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha reliability of $\alpha = 0.80$, indicating high internal consistency

Method of data collection

The questionnaire was administered to the respondents, who were instructed by the researcher on the modalities for distribution and collection of the questionnaire from the respondents on the spot to ensure high rate of return of the questionnaire for the study. Thus, direct contact method was used.

Method of data analysis

Descriptive statistics namely frequency and percentage were used in analyzing the data obtained in this study.

Ethical consideration

Prior to the commencement of the study, ethical clearance was secured from Owerri Municipal Council of Imo state. The study's purpose and procedures were clearly explained to the participants in a manner they could easily understand. Furthermore, formal consent was obtained from the management before any study-related activities involving participants were initiated.

RESULTS

The findings or results of the study based on the research questions are presented in the Tables below.

The results in Table 1 presents the responses on the determinants that affect clothing acquisition practices among homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council. The table reveals that weather (88.9%), cost (88.4%), and family size/needs (77.8%) are the most significant determinants influencing clothing acquisition among homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council. Income level (68.9%) and garment fitness (66.7%) also play key roles, while occupation (57.8%), social status (53.3%), and fashion trends (66.7%) have a moderate impact. Age is the least determinants affecting only 40% of respondents. These are agreed as determinants that affect clothing acquisition practices among homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council.

Table 2 presents the motivations behind clothing acquisition among homemakers. A majority of respondents, 88.9%, stated that occasion-based purchases and family/role

TABLE 1: RESPONSES ON DETERMINANTS AFFECTING CLOTHING ACQUISITION DECISION AMONG HOMEMAKERS IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

S/N	Determinants affecting clothing acquisition among Homemakers	Yes		No		Not sure		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Does Income Level influence the type of garment you acquire?	155	68.9	40	17.8	30	13.3	225	100
2	Does Weather/Climate Condition influence clothing acquisition?	200	88.9	6	2.7	19	8.4	225	100
3	Does Family Size and Needs influence your clothing acquisition practices?	175	77.8	15	6.7	35	15.6	225	100
4	Does Occupation influence clothing acquisition practices?	130	57.8	60	26.7	35	15.6	225	100
5	Does the Cost of Garment influence clothing acquisition practices?	199	88.4	10	4.4	16	7.1	225	100
6	Does Garment Fitness influence clothing acquisition practices?	150	66.7	50	22.2	25	11.1	225	100
7	Does Age influence clothing acquisition practices?	90	40	95	42.2	40	17.8	225	100
8	Does Social Status influence clothing acquisition practices?	120	53.3	73	32.4	32	14.2	225	100
9	Does Garment Texture influence clothing acquisition practices?	200	88.9	11	4.9	14	6.2	225	100
10	Does Fashion Trend influence your clothing acquisition practices?	150	66.7	14	6.2	61	27.1	225	100

Source field survey - 2024

TABLE 2: RESPONSES ON MOTIVATIONS BEHIND CLOTHING ACQUISITION AMONG HOMEMAKERS

S/N	Items on motivations behind clothing acquisition among Homemakers	Yes		No		Not sure		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Does Self-expression and Personal Style make you feel cool?	185	82.2	15	6.7	25	11.1	225	100
2	Does Occasion-Based Purchase improve your clothing acquisition practice?	200	88.9	11	4.9	14	6.2	225	100
3	Does Budget Considerations influence the type of clothes acquired?	180	80	20	8.9	25	11.1	225	100
4	Does Family/Role Identity help clothes acquisition practice?	200	88.9	4	1.9	21	9.3	225	100
5	Does Social Influences affect your clothes acquisition practice?	35	15.6	180	80	10	4.4	225	100

Source field survey - 2024

identity strongly influence their clothing decisions. Self-expression and personal style also play a significant role for 82.2% of respondents. Budget considerations affect 80% of homemakers, highlighting their importance in clothing choices. On the other hand, social influences have a minimal impact, with only 15.6% agreeing that it affects their clothing practices. All these are motivations behind clothing acquisition among homemakers.

The results in Table 3 shows various forms of clothing acquisition among homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council. A majority, 89.3%, inherit clothing materials from household members, while 80% borrow clothing materials. Additionally, 75.6% of homemakers order clothes through e-commerce platforms, and 66.7% purchase clothes from local stores or street markets. Fewer homemakers receive clothes as gifts (28.9%) or acquire them during special sales events (55.6%). The least common practice is receiving clothing as gifts

TABLE 3: RESPONSES ON FORMS OF CLOTHING ACQUISITION AMONG HOMEMAKERS IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF IMO STATE

S/N	Items on forms of clothing acquisition among Homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo state	Yes		No		Not sure		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Do you buy clothes from local stores or street markets?	150	66.7	50	22.2	25	11.1	225	100
2	Do you receive clothes as gifts from relatives or friends?	65	28.9	89	39.6	71	31.6	225	100
3	Do you order clothes via e-commerce platforms?	170	75.6	40	17.8	15	6.7	225	100
4	Do you borrowed clothing materials?	180	80	15	6.7	30	13.3	225	100
5	You inherited your clothing materials from households?	201	89.3	10	4.4	14	6.2	225	100
6	Do you acquire clothes during special sales events or promotions?	125	55.6	75	33.3	25	11.1	225	100

Source field survey - 2024

TABLE 4: RESPONSES ON AVAILABLE TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR FAMILY CLOTHING MAINTENANCE AMONG HOMEMAKERS IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF IMO STATE

S/N	Items on available tools and equipment need for family clothing maintenance	Yes		No		Not sure		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Do you use a washing machine in your home?	185	82.2	15	6.7	25	11.1	225	100
2	Do you make use of Iron and Ironing Board for pressing clothes?	35	15.6	180	80	10	4.4	225	100
3	Do you use dryer or Clothesline for drying clothes after washing?	180	80	20	8.9	25	11.1	225	100
4	Do you make use of fabric softener to keep clothes soft, reduce static, and maintain fabric quality?	200	88.9	4	1.9	21	9.3	225	100
5	Do you make use of stain remover: A cleaning product to treat spots and stains on clothing before washing?	35	15.6	180	80	10	4.4	225	100

Source field survey - 2024

from relatives or friends, with 39.6% reporting they do not engage in this form of acquisition.

The results in Table 4 show the tools and equipment needed for family clothing maintenance. A majority, 82.2%, use washing machines at home, while 6.7% do not, and 11.1% are uncertain. When it comes to ironing clothes, only 15.6% use an iron and ironing board, while 80% do not, and 4.4% are unsure. For drying clothes, 80% rely on dryers or clotheslines, with 8.9% not using them and 11.1% uncertain. Fabric softeners are commonly used by 88.9% of respondents to keep clothes soft and reduce static, with only 1.9% not using them and 9.3% unsure. Regarding stain removal, 15.6% make use of stain removers, while a majority, 80%, do not, and 4.4% are uncertain.

The results in Table 4 shows the possible ways of enhancing clothing maintenance practices among Home Makers in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo state Most (82.2%) use mild stain removers, store clothes at moderate temperatures (88.9%), and mend damaged garments (80%). Reading garment labels before use is common (88.9%), while soaking clothes before washing is less frequent (15.6%). Ironing or steaming clothes before use is done by 66.7%. However, fewer rely on clothing management knowledge (11.1%), dye old clothes (19.1%), or remodel garments (15.6%). Making new clothes from old is practiced by only 8.4%.

TABLE 5: RESPONSES ON POSSIBLE WAYS OF ENHANCING CLOTHING MAINTENANCE PRACTICES AMONG HOME MAKERS IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF IMO STATE

S/N	Items on positive ways of enhancing clothing maintenance practice among Home Makers in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo state	Yes		No		Not sure		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Do you use mild stain remover in enhancing clothing maintenance?	185	82.2	15	6.7	25	11.1	225	100
2	Do you store your clothes at moderate temperature?	200	88.9	11	4.9	14	6.2	225	100
3	Do you mend your damaged garments?	180	80	20	8.9	25	11.1	225	100
4	Do you read labels on the garments before usage?	200	88.9	4	1.9	21	9.3	225	100
5	Do you soak clothes before washing?	35	15.6	180	80	10	4.4	225	100
6	Do you iron or steam press and folding clothes before using?	150	66.7	50	22.2	25	11.1	225	100
7	Does practicing and making effective use of clothing management knowledge help you in maintaining your clothes?	25	11.1	155	68.9	45	20	225	100
8	Does dyeing of old dress to new desired color help you maintain your clothes	43	19.1	98	43.6	84	37.3	225	100
9	Does remodeling and redesigning of garment improve the life span of such clothes?	35	15.6	180	80	10	4.4	225	100
10	Does making new clothes from old one by your family members help you maintain your clothes?	19	8.4	185	82.2	21	9.3	225	100

Source field survey - 2024

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1 reveals that weather/climate conditions (88.9%), cost (88.4%), and family size/needs (77.8%) are the most significant determinants affecting clothing acquisition. This is consistent with Davis (2020) and Ononuju (2023), who argue that practical considerations like weather, affordability, and family requirements play a major role in clothing decisions. Income level (68.9%) and garment fitness (66.7%) also influence clothing choices, supporting findings from Patel, Gupta, and Chen (2024), who highlight the impact of financial capacity and garment quality on acquisition decisions. Occupation (57.8%), social status (53.3%), and fashion trends (66.7%) are of moderate importance, reflecting the balance between functional needs and social influences. Age, however, was the least influential factor (40%), corroborating the findings of Smith & Johnson

(2022), which suggest that practical concerns often take precedence over age-related factors in clothing choices.

Table 2 reveals that the motivations driving clothing acquisition are largely influenced by occasion-based purchases (88.9%) and family/role identity (88.9%), suggesting that clothing choices are often driven by specific purposes such as family events or fulfilling societal roles. This aligns with the arguments made by Taylor (2021) and Quarcoo & Akomaning (2022), who emphasize the role of clothing in meeting both functional and social needs. Self-expression and personal style (82.2%) are also key motivators, reinforcing the idea that clothing plays an important role in conveying individual identity, this is evidence to the findings of Smith & Turner (2023). Budget considerations (80%) further underscore the financial constraints that influence clothing acquisition decisions,

supporting the findings of Nguyen & Patel (2023) regarding the economic factors at play. Social influences, however, have minimal impact (15.6%), which suggests that external pressures, such as peer influence, are less significant in shaping clothing choices in this context.

The findings in Table 3 highlights that the most common forms of clothing acquisition among homemakers are inheritance (89.3%) and borrowing (80%), reflecting traditional resource-sharing practices within families. This finding supports Johnson (2021) and Ononuju (2023), who note that clothing acquisition often involves non-purchase methods such as inheritance or borrowing. E-commerce (75.6%) and local store purchases (66.7%) are also popular, indicating a shift toward modern shopping channels. Fewer homemakers acquire clothing through gifts (28.9%) or special sales events (55.6%), suggesting a preference for more reliable and consistent acquisition methods, as noted by Thompson (2022) and Brown & Smith (2021).

Table 4 shows that washing machines (82.2%) and fabric softeners (88.9%) are the most commonly used tools for clothing maintenance, highlighting the importance of modern technology in ensuring the longevity of garments. These results are in line with Davis & Clark (2021), who emphasize the role of proper washing and fabric care in maintaining clothing quality. However, ironing and stain removal practices are less widespread, with only 15.6% using irons and 15.6% using stain removers. This may point to a gap in knowledge or a preference for simpler maintenance practices, as discussed by Miller (2023). Drying clothes using dryers or clotheslines (80%) is common, yet the use of other maintenance tools like ironing boards and stain removers remains limited, suggesting that there is potential for improvement in the range of tools utilized by homemakers.

The findings in Table 5 shows that possible ways or practices for enhancing clothing maintenance are prevalent, with most homemakers using mild stain removers (82.2%), storing clothes at moderate temperatures (88.9%), and mending damaged garments (80%). These practices are aligned with Harris (2020) and Davis & Clark (2021), who stress the importance of regular care and maintenance in prolonging the life of clothing. Reading garment labels before use (88.9%) is another common practice, which helps to ensure proper handling and care of garments. However, practices like soaking clothes before washing, dyeing old garments, and remodeling clothes are less common, suggesting that homemakers prefer simpler and more direct methods of maintenance. The low frequency of these advanced practices points to a potential area for education and skill development in order to enhance the overall clothing care habits of homemakers in the region.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that determinants affecting clothing acquisition among Homemakers such as income level, weather/ climate conditions, and family size/needs significantly influence clothing acquisition among homemakers in Owerri Municipal Council. Motivations for clothing acquisition include self-expression, personal style, occasion-based purchases, and budget considerations. The study also identifies various forms of clothing acquisition, including purchasing from local stores or street markets, receiving clothes as gifts, ordering via e-commerce platforms, and borrowing clothing materials. Despite challenges in clothing acquisition and maintenance, the study highlights positive strategies for enhancing clothing maintenance practices among homemakers. These insights suggest that with improved practices and knowledge,

homemakers in Owerri can effectively manage their clothing acquisition and maintenance, promoting responsible consumption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sequel to the findings of this study, conclusion reached and expected educational implications, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Homemakers should be provided with more training in proper clothing maintenance techniques, including garment care, mending, and efficient use of tools. This will reduce dependency on external services like dry cleaning and help minimize unnecessary spending.
- 2) Financial literacy programs tailored to homemakers can help improve their ability to budget effectively for clothing acquisition and maintenance, ensuring that families make informed choices about their clothing expenditures.
- 3) Integration of clothing management and maintenance skills should be integrated in to the Curriculum for Home Economics at all levels of education as this has implications for responsible consumption.
- 4) Creating adequate awareness through advertisements of all types to emphasize more on ways of improving on clothing acquisition and maintenance practices of homemakers as it could save family resources and improve responsible consumption.
- 5) Through seminars, Homemakers should be taught how to apply judgment and manipulative skills in various clothing maintenance procedures such as in clothing renovation, laundry, ironing and storage.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to home-makers in Owerri Municipal, focusing solely on clothing acquisition and maintenance practices, and excludes other aspects of family life or household management. The selected sample may restrict the ability to generalize findings beyond this urban area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges the participants for their valuable insights and cooperation. This study aims to enhance understanding of family clothing acquisition and maintenance practices in Owerri Municipal, and the author appreciates the opportunity to share these findings with the academic community.

REFERENCES

- Brown, L. & Smith, J., 2021. Exploring the diverse methods of clothing acquisition: Impact on consumption patterns. *Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(3), pp. 234-245.
- Davis, C., 2020. Clothing as protection and adornment: Exploring cultural and functional roles. *Textile Science and Culture Review*, 11 (2), pp. 103-115.
- Davis, C. & Clark, S., 2021. Sustainable clothing maintenance practices: A family-centered approach. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 72(4), pp. 88-101.
- Harris, T., 2020. The importance of clothing maintenance practices in family life. *Journal of Household Economics*, 24(3), pp. 140-152.
- Johnson, P., 2021. The role of clothing in societal functioning and individual identity. *Journal Clothing and Textiles*, 13(1), pp. 47-59.
- Lee, T. & Chang, W., 2021. Understanding the diverse fabrics and materials in clothing. *International Journal of Fashion Technology*, 9

- (3), pp. 220-233.
- Magure, T. & Fashy, B., 2023. Factors influencing clothing acquisition and sustainability in family households. *Journal of Sustainable Fashion*, 19(2), pp. 118-129.
- Miller, S., 2023. Family clothing maintenance: Bridging the knowledge gap for better longevity. *Journal Home Economics*, 51(2), pp. 89-99.
- Muthu, S., 2020. The impact of poor clothing selection and fast fashion on homemaker expenditures. *Fashion and Society Review*, 12 (1), pp. 35-47.
- Nguyen, K., Patel, R. & Zhang, H., 2023. Socio-economic implications of clothing acquisition in low-income households. *Family Economic Studies*, 8(4), pp. 204-219.
- Osei, A. & Appiah, P., 2021. Skill gap in family clothing maintenance: A case study in Ghana. *International Journal of Family Studies*, 29(1), pp. 52-64.
- Ononuju, C. F. 2023 Assessment of family clothing acquisition and maintenance practices among homemakers in Owerri Municipal. *Unpublished* BSc thesis submitted to the Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education Owerri,
- Patwary, A., 2023. Family clothing acquisition: The role of culture and economic status. *Global Fashion and Consumer Behavior Journal*, 10(3), pp. 142-153.
- Smith, J. & Johnson, L., 2020. Family clothing acquisition and maintenance practices: A socio-economic perspective. *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 23(5), pp. 215-227.
- Smith, J. & Turner, C., 2023. Clothing as a social indicator: The cultural significance of dress. *Fashion and Identity Studies*, 5(2), pp. 76-88.
- Thompson, R., 2020. The impact of family values on clothing acquisition and maintenance practices. *Family Studies Review*, 21(1), pp. 56-68.
- Williams, M., 2021. Consumer behavior and clothing acquisition in the 21st century. *Journal of Consumer Insights*, 30(2), pp. 121-135.
- White, S. & Zhang, L., 2024. *Clothing as a protective barrier: Functional roles in daily life*. Baltimore: Huges press
- Magure, T., & Fashy, B. 2023 Factors influencing clothing acquisition and sustainability in family households. *Journal of Sustainable Fashion*, 19(2), 118-129.
- Muthu, S. 2020. The impact of poor clothing selection and fast fashion on homemaker expenditures. *Fashion and Society Review*, 12 (1), 35-47.
- Patwary, A. 2023. Family clothing acquisition: The role of culture and economic status. *Global Fashion and Consumer Behavior Journal*, 10(3), 142-153.
-