Influence of Low Socio-Economic Status on Clothing Problems of Families in Ogwashi-Ukwu, Delta State

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ABSTRACT
The study was designed to examine clothing problems of families with low socio-economic status in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study was seven hundred and twenty two family heads (720) who had their children in the government secondary schools in area of study. Stratified random sampling was used to obtain 100 families as sample for the study. Data was collected from respondents using structured questionnaire and the hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results of the analysis revealed that socio-economic status influences the style of life a family lives especially in clothing. Educational qualification, occupation and income are key determinants of individual social strata in a society. It was found out that families of low income level (low socio-economic status) had difficulty to satisfy basic needs since they lived below an income level of N20000. Inferiority complex, media influence, pressing basic needs, inadequate income, poor maintenance culture of clothes among others were identified problems confronting families of low socio-economic status. The stated hypothesis was rejected. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the government should sponsor television jingles, drama and talk shows to sensitize the low socio-economic group on appropriate clothing value of local clothing items; people, irrespective of socio-economic group should learn to develop self-confidence and not to depend on their clothing for self-esteem
Key words: Clothing problem, Socio-economic status, Family.

INTRODUCTION
Socioeconomic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position relative to others, based on income and education, and occupation. Marmot and Michael (2004) indicated that when analyzing a family's social economic status, the household income, earners' education and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed.

Lareau (2003) observed that socioeconomic status is typically broken into three categories, high, middle, and low to describe the three areas a family or an individual may fall into when placing a family or individual into one of these categories any or all of the three variables income, education, and occupation can be assessed. Additionally, low income and little education have shown to be strong predictors of a range of physical and mental health problems due to environmental conditions may be the entire cause of that person's social predicament to begin with.

Simiyu (2001) argues that the family income refers to wages salaries, profit, rents and any flow of earnings received. Income can also come in the form of unemployment or workers compensation, social security, pensions, interests or dividends, royalties, trusts, alimony, or other governmental, public, or family financial assistance. Income can be looked at in two terms, relative and absolute. Absolute income, as theorized by economist Keyenes, is the relationship in which as income increases, so will consumption, but not at the same rate.

Relative income dictates a person or family's savings and consumption based on the family's income in relation to others. Income is commonly used measure of social economic status because it is relatively easy to figure for most individuals. Income inequality is most commonly measured around the world by the Gini Coefficient, where 0 corresponds to perfect equality and 1 means perfect inequality (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2004). Low income focuses on meeting immediate needs and do not accumulate wealth that could be passed on to future generations, thus increasing inequality. Families with higher and expendable income can accumulate wealth and focus on meeting immediate needs while being able to consume and enjoy luxuries and weather crises (GOK, 2003)

Ominde (2004) observes that education plays a major role in skill sets for acquiring jobs, as well as specific qualities that stratify people with higher from lower social economic status. Annette Lareau speaks on the idea of concerted cultivation, where middle class parents take an active role in their children's education and development by using controlled organized activities and fostering a sense of entitlement through encouraged discussion. Laureau argues that families with lower income do not participate in this movement, causing their children to have a sense of constraint. A division in education attainment is thus born out of these two differences in child rear

Gachathi (2006) indicates that occupational prestige as one component of socio-economic status which indicates both income and educational attainment. Occupational status reflects the educational attainment required to obtain the job and income levels that vary with different jobs and within ranks of occupations. Additionally, it shows achievement in skills required for the job. Occupational status measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision making ability and control, and psychological demands on the job (Erick et al, 2012). Generally, it can be deduced that socio-economic status influences families' lifestyle such housing, schooling, feeding and clothing

Clothing is one of the basic needs of man. It includes any garment, accessory, ornament and apparel place on the body to adorn, protect, project or communicate intent (Xu, 2000). Jones (1990) stated that clothes are worn among people for six common reasons: protection, modesty, occupational identity, attraction, social status and traditional identity. The way people dress can tell us a lot of things about them. Ukpore (2006) pointed out that different socio-economic class typically dress differently as a matter of class identification to impact the information to other members of the class, family or community. People, especially women are so concerned with the type, style and cost of dressing they put on irrespective of their income and the welfare of their families. The researcher observed that in Ogwashi-ukwu some women from low socio-economic families do not want to beaten when it comes to clothing. They want be exquisitely dressed in every occasion they attend. When they feel that somebody else is better dressed than them, they begin to feel inferior and uncomfortable. This also happens when they are not noticed at or not honoured at occasions. It is against this background study seeks to examine clothing problem of families with low socio-economic status in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of the study is to identify clothing problem of families with low socio-economic status in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State. Specifically, the study seeks to:
1. determine the socio-economic characteristics of families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State; and
2. identify clothing problems of low socio-economic families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State

Research Questions
The following research questions were stated for the study:
1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State?
2. What are the clothing problems of low socio-economic families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State?

Hypothesis
Ho_1: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of high, middle and low socio-economic families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State on clothing problems of low socio-economic families.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study was parents of students in the five government secondary schools in Ogwashi-ukwu town. Seven hundred and twenty two families (720) made the entire population (School Principal registers, 2015). Stratified random sampling was used to obtain 100 families as sample for the study where 20 families were randomly selected from each of the five schools.

The instrument had a face and content validity and reliability coefficient of 0.74 using the test-retest method which was high enough to support the use of the instrument in the research (Inomiesa, 1993). Each family had a copy. The questionnaires were given to a student representing a family to give to their parents. Family heads were requested to respond to the instrument. Income level was used to differentiate responses of high, middle and low socio-economic status. Eight three (83%) copies of the questionnaires distributed were duly completed and returned.

Items with mean weight of 3.0 and above were accepted while items with less mean weight were rejected. The questionnaire was coded with nominal values designed for each response that was expected from the respondents. Each of the items was scored on the basis of the following code. The items are on 5 point scale of strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). The data were analysed using means, standard deviation while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyse the hypotheses

RESULTS
Table 1: Socio-economic characteristic of families in Ogwashi-ukwu, Delta state (N=83)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Highest educational level		
No formal education	12	14.45
Primary education	20	24.09
Secondary education	41	49.39
Tertiary education	10	12.04
Occupation		
Civil Servant	23	27.71
Business	18	21.68
Farmer	40	48.19
None	02	2.40
Income level monthly(N)		
Less than 20000	29	34.93
20000 – 40000	31	37.34
41000 – 60000	15	18.07
Above 60000	08	09.63

Source: Field Work, 2015

Table 1 indicated that majority (61.43%) of the family heads had secondary school education and above as their highest educational qualification, 14.45% of the respondents had no form of education while 24.09% had primary school certificate. Response on occupation showed that 27.71% of respondents were civil servants, 21.68% of them were into different form of business, 48.19% were farmers, while 2.40% had no form of occupation. Response on income level indicated that monthly, 34.93% have income level below N20000 (Low socio-economic status), 55.41% have income level between N20000 - N60000 (Middle socio-economic status), while 09.63% have income level above N60000

Table 2: Clothing problems of low socio-economic families (N=83)

S/N	Statement items	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Inferiority complex due type of cloth worn	3.31	0.63	Agreed
2	Media influence of the style of cloth invoke	3.81	0.71	Agreed
3	Pressing basic needs of the family	4.56	0.61	Agreed
4	Inadequate income to cater for clothing	3.01	0.53	Agreed
5	Poor maintenance culture of clothes	3.51	0.71	Agreed
6	Negative price perceptions and Prestige sensitivity	3.50	0.81	Agreed
7	Saving for rainy days	2.81	0.65	Disagreed

Source: Field Work, 2015

The data presented in Table 2 showed that six out of the seven items were agreed by the respondents to be clothing problems facing low socio-economic families. Six of the items had mean value higher than the cut-off point of 3.00 while the mean value for item 7 was below. The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.53 to 0.81. This indicated that respondents were unanimous in their responses as they were not far from each other.

Table 3: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for significant test between the mean scores of high, middle and low socio-economic families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State on clothing problems of low socio-economic families.

Socio-economic status	D.F	S.S	M.S	F- cal	F-table	Decision
Between Group	2	36.83	18.41	3.64	3.11	
Within Group	80	404.12	5.05			Rejected
Total	**82**	**440.95**				

P<0.05 level of significance

The result in Table 3 showed that F-cal value (3.64) is greater than the F-table value (3.11) which indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. It implied that there is significant difference between the mean scores of high, middle and low socio-economic families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State on clothing problems of low socio-economic families

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
The finding in Table 1 indicated that majority (61.43%) of the family heads had secondary school education and above as their highest educational qualification while others had primary education and no form of education. Education is very necessary for man in order to articulate himself and achieve fullness. Level of education can be used to determine how equipped one is acquiring that can provide income for sustenance and provide basic needs of the family such as food, cloth and housing. If a family head is properly educated it can influence the socio-economic strata the family will fall into. Ominde (2004) observes that education plays a major role in skill sets for acquiring jobs, as well as specific qualities that stratify people with higher from lower social economic status. Response on occupation indicated that most of the respondents were into farming and different of business as means to get income while lesser percentage of them were civil servants. Occupation reflects the educational attainment required to obtain the job and income levels that vary with different jobs and within ranks of occupations. Additionally, it shows achievement in skills required for the job of the family heads. Occupations that are less valued are paid significantly less and are more laborious, very hazardous, and provide less autonomy. Economic reserves or assets, presents a source of security providing a measure of a household's ability to meet emergencies, absorb economic shocks, or provide the means to live comfortably (Mamott & Micheal, 2004). Response on occupation indicated that 34.93% of the respondents have income level below

N20000 (low socio-economic status) while 65.04% were regard as families of the middle and high socio-economic status. This implied that some of the head of families will not be able to provide basic needs of their family such food, shelter and clothing. Socio-economic strata are determined from income disparities and differences in achievement of family heads (Amutabi, 2003).

The findings in Table 2 indicated that inferiority complex, media influence, pressing basic needs, inadequate income, poor maintenance culture of clothes among others were identified problems of families of low socio-economic status. Consumers have been influenced by several media such as television, the internet, and traditional catalog based shopping. Furthermore, affluent persons are more apt to have become accustomed to media that depict affluent and opulent lifestyles (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2003). Media influence makes this group of persons to desire more textiles, jewelries, styles, designs, colour and couture in order to belong. However, due to their income level it becomes a problem to satisfy clothing needs with other basic needs of the family. Basic needs refer to housing, food, clothing, health care, education amongst others. Family head try as much as possible to sustain basic needs with their little income, in the process of doing that little or nothing is left for proper clothing after meeting needs such as food, housing, health care and school fees. It was also observed by the researcher that dry cleaning activities need to maintain fabric was neglected due to low income. Such activities include ironing, starching cloth and use of appropriate cleaning agent to wash their clothes. Price perceptions have effects on their purchase behavior. Consumers perceive price differently for different products. Most persons have individual price perceptions and buy products that are priced at what they are willing to pay for those products (Ehrenberg, Schriven and Barnard, 1997). Consequently, the products they prefer are over-priced. High price may be considered a sign of quality or a prestige signal it sends to others about the purchaser. A strong price/quality perception suggests a firm belief that the price of a product is a good indicator of its quality and is a symbol of prestige. Family heads from can fall into trouble when they allow prestige of using a costly cloth to override other basic needs of the family.

Hypothesis

Table 3 indicated that there is significant difference between the mean scores of high, middle and low socio-economic families in Ogwashi-ukwu town of Delta State on clothing problems of low socio-economic families. Socio-economic reflects intergenerational transitions as well as accumulation of income and savings, income, age, marital status, family size, religion, occupation, and education are all predictors for wealth attainment (Marmot and Michael, 2004). These factors might be responsible for the different responses of group of respondent since the factors are not the within the groups.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study showed that socio-economic status of family influences the style of life a family lives especially in clothing. Educational qualification, occupation and income are key determinants of individual social strata in a society. It was found out that families of low income level (low socio-economic status) had difficulty to satisfy basic needs since they lived below N20000 in Ogwashi-ukwu. Inferiority complex, media influence, pressing basic needs, inadequate income, poor maintenance culture of clothes among others were identified problems confronting families of low socio-economic status. It was also found that differences socio-economic status families influenced their disposition towards problems facing clothing.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Government should sponsor television jingles, drama and talk shows to sensitize the low socio-economic group on appropriate clothing value of local clothing items.
2. People, irrespective of socio-economic group should learn to develop self-confidence and not to depend on their clothing for self-esteem.

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