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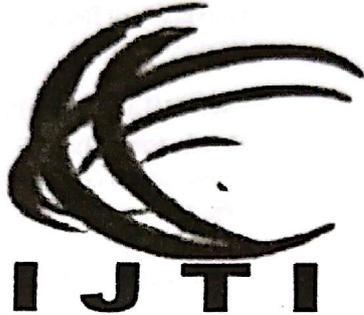
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ESTABLISHMENT OF MEAN BODY MEASUREMENTS FOR DRAFTING BASIC PATTERNS FOR FEMALE ADOLESCENT STUDENTS' DRESSES (MEDIUM FIGURE) IN ANAMBRA STATE

Dr. C. E. Uzoezie
Department of Home Economics,
Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe,
Anambra State.

P. N. Ezike
Department of Home Economics,
Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe,
Anambra State.

and

N. N. Bob-Eze
Department of Home Economics,
Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe,
Anambra State.

Abstract

Mean body measurements for drafting basic patterns for female adolescent students in urban and rural public secondary schools were established. Basic block patterns of bodice, sleeve and skirt for medium figure size were drafted. The patterns were transferred to fresh paper and pattern instructions were marked on all the pattern pieces. Toilers were sewn from the pattern pieces and worn by models. The study also tested the fit of the basic dresses that were constructed. The fit of the basic dresses on the models were evaluated by teachers, students and seam stresses. Quasi-Experimental research design was adopted for this study. A sample of 960 subjects was drawn from a population of 9,606 female adolescent students. Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting the sample. Instruments for data collection were: body measurement chart and evaluation chart. Findings showed that the mean hip measurement for female adolescent students in both urban and rural secondary schools for medium figure size was 34.27 inches. The findings also revealed the mean ratings of the judges on the fit of the basic dresses for medium figure size ranged from 3.88 – 4.92. Recommendations were made based on the findings.

Garments such as gowns, shorts, blouses, skirts, trousers and coats which people generally put on can be called clothes. According to Horn and Gurel (1981), it is referred to as the second skin. Our values and life-style reflect more vividly on our clothing than in other aspects of human activities. It is difficult to separate the way a person looks from the way he or she acts. For instance, sports uniform can change an individual into an aggressive competitor (Marshal, Jackson, Stanley, Kefgan and Tochie-Specht, 2000). Also casual clothing makes one feel free and relaxed.

Clothing is what differentiates man from other animals. It is one of the means through which man exhibits his superiority over the rest of creation and to win admiration. Clothes are worn by all categories of people-infants, toddlers, school children, adolescents and adults; and for different occasions. At times, one's choice of clothing are influenced by the opinion of those around him. Some considerations that will help in choosing clothing according to Clayton (1994) are figure type, sex, age, time and activity. Anyakoha and Eluwa (1991), added that the type of occasions and activities one engages in, garment style, body build and size are some of the factors to consider when choosing clothes no matter the age-adult, children and adolescents.

Adolescents are often conscious of their physical appearance and may spend a great deal of time and energy worrying about what others think of them. According to Brandenburg (2000), clothing is probably the most conspicuous and visual badge of group belonging. Girls are particularly attracted to members of the opposite sex. Their self concepts largely depends on how attractive they believe themselves to be. This is because their personal and social adjustments are largely influenced by their age-mate attitudes towards their clothes. Hurlock (2006) opined that most adolescents are anxious to conform to what the group approves.

One of the primary requirements of clothing for female adolescent students in urban and rural secondary schools is that their clothing meets the approval of their peer group. The demand for clothing by female adolescents is greater due to the numerous activities they engage in, such as social activities, sports, entertainments and so on. These factors and the desire to be fashionable cause female adolescents to want to acquire more clothing than they really need (Ezike, 2004). Most of them regards clothes as so important that they go into open conflicts with their parents and teachers either for objecting to their way of dressing or refusing to buy their choice of styles. This choice of style may not take care of the accelerated growth sport in height and weight. The fact that growth during this period is so rapid, certain dress styles should be chosen depending on the occasion. Whichever dress styles that are chosen, must still make them look fashionable and well dressed in order to improve their status (Anikweze, 2003).

The garment manufacturing industries and producers of custom-made garments in Nigeria make use of free-hand method of cutting which is wasteful in terms of fabric, time and energy and will not be suitable for large-scale production of garments (Iloje, 1995). In Addition, Akubue (2004), observed that in free-hand method of cutting fabric, the structural design of the fabric is sometimes distorted. There is also the tendency of not getting proper fit in using this method.

The clothing construction industries in developed countries make use of block patterns for large scale production of garments. Patterns are very important in garment construction because they have been found to save money, time and energy (Okeke, 2009). The use of pattern in garment construction is very important because it gives the sewer self-confidence in fabric cutting. With the use of patterns, one can turn out large quantity good fitting garments. Pattern usage makes for creativity in designing. It is also economical, in that money can be saved from buying same style patterns of different sizes.

Pattern usage is the only way to achieve good fit in garment (Shailong and Igbo, 2009). A block in garment production refers to the shapes and form in which a garment is presented. It is the shape of garment parts which are outlined and adapted to make a pattern. According to Bray and Hagggar (1994), block pattern is a plain pattern of a bodice, sleeve, and skirt which can be used as foundation, basic or master pattern and is constructed to fit a figure. It is the plain block pattern that is used as a basis from which style adaptations are made (Aldrich, 2002).

Commercial patterns are useful for effective clothing construction, but unfortunately, they are not available due to the ban of the importation of clothing and textiles materials. Kaka (1990), also observed that garments made from these commercial patterns do not fit perfectly because of the apparent differences in the body structure and postural alignments of the Africans which differ from those of the Europeans. The garment producers in Nigeria indulge mostly in custom-made garments, that is, garments made to fit a particular individual (Iloeje and Anyakoha, 2003). This method is slow and does not encourage mass production of clothing articles (Shailong and Igbo, 2009). It is therefore necessary to evolve ways of mass producing standard garments for Nigerians and female adolescents in particular.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to develop basic block patterns (medium figure size) for female adolescent student's dresses and to test the fit of the dresses that are to be constructed. Specifically, the study was designed to:

1. determine the mean body measurements of female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) in urban and rural secondary schools in Anambra State that are needed for drafting bodice, sleeve and skirt for medium figure size.
2. find out the mean ratings of the judges on the fit of the basic dress (bodice, sleeve and skirt) for medium figure size).

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the body measurements of female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) in urban and rural secondary schools in Anambra State required in drafting basic block patterns for medium figure size.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the judges on the fit of the basic dress (bodice, sleeve and skirt) for medium figure size.

Methodology

Design of the Study

The study adopted ex-post facto research design. According to Nworgu (2003), ex-post facto research design is similar to experimental study in the sense that it also seeks to establish cause-effect relationships but differs from it in that the researcher usually has no control over the variables of interest and therefore cannot manipulate them.

Population for the Study

The population for the study comprised all the female adolescent students (13–16 years) in the two hundred and sixty (260) public secondary schools in the six (6) education zones in Anambra State for 2013/2014 academic session.

Aguata Education Zone	-	-	1,182
Awaka Education Zone	-	-	2,060
Nnewi Education Zone	-	-	1,730
Ogidi Education Zone -	-	-	1,512
Onitsha Education Zone	-	-	2,110
Otuocha education Zone	-	-	1,012
TOTAL:			9,606

Source: Ministry of Education Awka.

Sample for the Study

Multi stages sampling technique was adapted. In the first stage, three (3) education zones of Awka, Nnewi and Onitsha were randomly selected. In the second stage, two (2) local government areas from each of the three (3) education zones were randomly selected. The next stage, random sampling was used to select two (2) secondary schools from each of the local government areas making a total of twelve (12) secondary schools. In the final stage, the class lists were used in random selection of eighty (80) female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) from each of the selected secondary schools giving a total of nine hundred and sixty (960) students which is about ten percent (10%) of the population.

Instrument for Data Collection

Two types of instruments were used for this study. The first was the Body Measurement Guide for Female Adolescent Students (B M G F A S) adopted from Bray (1972) which was used in collecting data on the body measurement of female adolescent students. The second instrument was the evaluation instrument. The data obtained with the first instrument were used in drafting basic block patterns of bodice, sleeve and skirt for medium figure size and used in cutting and constructing foundation space dresses for the figure size of medium which were worn by models. These models were selected from the sample. The judges critically observed the models and scored the fit of the dresses using the instrument. The instruments were validated by three clothing experts. Cronbats' Alpha technique was used to determine the internal consistency of the instruments using test re-test procedure. A co-efficient of 0.85 was obtained. The body measurement of fifteen (15) female adolescent students in a study area that did not form part of the study were taken twice on a two weeks interval. The data collected the first time were correlated with the data collected during the second time.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

This involved the actual taking of body measurements of female adolescent students, drafting of basic block patterns of bodice, sleeve and skirt, cutting and constructing space the foundation dresses, evaluating the dresses, correcting and producing the final pattern pieces. Descriptive (mean) and inferential statistics (t-test and ANOVA) were used to analyze the data.

Results

The results for the study were presented in line with the purposes and hypotheses which guided the study. They are presented in tables below:

1. Body measurements of female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) in urban and rural secondary schools required to draft basic block patterns of bodice, sleeve and skirt for medium figure size.

Table I – Mean body measurements of respondents with medium figure

S/N	Body Measurements	Urban Mean ? ₁ N = 160	Rural Mean ? ₂ N = 160	Mean of Urban and Rural ? ₃ N = 320
Bodice				
1.	Bust	32.65	31.35	32.00
2.	Hips	34.53	34.06	34.27
3.	Waist	25.54	25.96	25.75
4.	Back width	12.94	12.39	12.66
5.	Chest width	12.02	11.53	11.77
6.	Shoulder length	4.56	4.82	4.69
7.	Back length	15.08	14.89	14.98
Sleeve				
1.	Top arm	10.72	10.96	10.84
2.	Sleeve length	20.55	19.66	20.10
3.	Length of elbow	9.86	8.87	9.36
4.	Wrist	6.98	6.52	6.75
Skirt				
1.	Hip dept	7.88	7.36	7.62
2.	Skirt length	20.70	19.62	20.16

Data in table I revealed the difference in mean body measurements of female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) in urban and rural secondary schools required to draft block patterns of bodice, sleeve and skirt for medium figure. It presented the average mean body measurements obtained for each of thirteen (13) body parts measured. It ranged from 4.56 inches – 34.53 inches for urban secondary schools and 4.82 inches – 34.06 inches for rural

secondary schools.

2. Mean ratings of judges on the fit of the dress (bodice, sleeve and skirt) for small figure.

Table 2: Mean ratings of judges on the fit of the dress on medium figure.

S/N	Dress Parts	SA	A	UD	D	S	x
Bodice							
1.	Neckline	300	-	-	-	20	4.75
2.	Shoulder seam length	216	70	10	-	24	4.42
3.	Bust ease	306	10	-	-	4	4.92
4.	Upper back	308	-	-	-	12	4.85
5.	Waist ease	286	-	-	3	4	4.67
6.	Waist placement in front	245	45	-	3	-	4.58
7.	Waist placement in back	245	45	-	3	-	4.58
8.	Front bodice waist dart length	97	170	13	4	-	4.01
9.	Back bodice waist dart length	97	170	13	4	-	4.01
10.	Armhole dept	278	-	10	-	32	4.54
Sleeve							
1.	Ease at biceps	96	170	10	4	4	3.98
2.	Sleeve cap ease	98	172	25	2	-	4.07
3.	Sleeve length	300	12	-	-	8	4.86
4.	Armhole seam	300	12	-	8	-	4.89
Skirt							
1.	Front dart length	202	74	20	1	14	4.37
2.	Back dart length	300	12	-	-	8	4.86
3.	Ease at hip	85	170	10	5	5	3.88
4.	Ease at thigh	287	10	13	-	10	4.76
5.	Skirt side seam curve	296	20	-	-	4	4.89
6.	Skirt side seam	287	21	-	1	-	4.83
7.	Hemline	282	10	-	2	38	4.65

Table 2 showed that the judges strongly agreed that nineteen (19) out of the twenty one (21) items have mean scores that ranged from 4.00 to 4.96. The judges also agreed that two (2) other items in the basic block dress would give fairly satisfactory fitting to the students. The mean scores of the two (2) items ranged from 3.88 to 3.98.

Testing of Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 1

H₀: There will be no significant difference in the mean body measurements of female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) in urban and rural secondary schools with medium figure size.

Table 3: T-test on the mean body measurements for respondents with medium figure.

Variables	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	T. Crit.	T. Calc.	Remark
Urban female students	480	17.67	0.45				Ha
				958	1.96	-11.0	
Rural female students	480	18.02	0.52				

HA = Hypothesis accepted

Analysis on Table 3 showed that the mean scores for female adolescent students in urban and rural secondary schools stood at 17.67 as against the mean scores of 18.02 obtained for rural secondary schools. When these two mean scores were treated to a t-test analysis, the calculated t-value of -11.0 was less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 958 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis 1 was accepted. The conclusion was that there was no significant difference between the mean body measurements for female adolescent students (13-16 years) in urban and rural secondary schools for medium figure.

Null Hypothesis 2

H₀: There will be no significant difference in the mean ratings of judges on the fit of the dress (bodice, sleeve and skirt) for medium figure.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA on the fit of the basic block dress for medium figure.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio crit.	F-ratio calc.	Decision
Between groups	0.08	2	0.04			
				3.62	1.27	Ha
Within groups	53.61	60	0.89			

The result in table 4 showed that the calculated F-ratio of 1.27 was less than the critical F-ratio of 3.62 at 958 degrees of freedom and alpha level of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis 2 was accepted as stated. This implied that the fit of the basic block dress (bodice, sleeve and skirt) as measured by the mean ratings of the judges did not significantly differ for small figure.

Discussion

The mean body measurements of thirteen body parts of female adolescent students in urban and rural secondary schools in Anambra State for medium figure size were calculated and presented in table 1. The result revealed that the mean measurements for bust, waist and hips for medium figure were 32.00 inches, 25.75 inches and 34.27 inches respectively.

The findings agreed with Bray and Haggart (1994) who stated the basic measurements for drafting bodice, sleeve and skirt for females. Akubue (2004) observed that some measurements are basic and essential for the construction of every pattern, while some are supplement and may be useful when working on a particular design or figure.

The mean body measurements were utilized in the drafting of the basic block patterns (bodice, sleeve and skirt) for the target group using flat pattern method. Aniekweze (2003) earlier agreed that pattern method is one of the good methods of obtaining patterns used for making clothing.

Since no significant differences were found in the mean body measurements of female adolescent students (13 – 16 years) in urban and rural areas tested, one set of block patterns was developed for both. In standardizing the block patterns, trial fitting of the patterns was made with calico fabric. The drafted patterns were trued, cut and assembled and worn by models. The mean ratings of the fit of the dress were satisfactory. It goes to confirm the view of Marshal, Jackson, Stanley, Kefgal and Touchie – Specht (2000) that manufacturers of patterns toiled their trial garment. The mean scores from the judges on the fit of the dress were used for the final correction. The dresses were loosened, ironed properly and placed on fresh paper. The patterns were then transferred to the paper. Pattern markings were then indicated on them and these were the basic block patterns for female adolescent students medium figure.

Conclusion

Patterns are basic necessities in the construction of dresses and garments. They are quiet variable for large scale productions. The good fit obtained must have resulted from accurate body measurements taken, precision in the drafting of the basic block patterns

(bodice, sleeve and skirt) and the development of the blocks as well as good construction techniques employed in assembling the pattern pieces.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been proffered based on the findings of the study:

- ❖ Producers of custom-made garments should use the basic block patterns obtained from the study to make dresses and garments for female adolescents' medium figure.
- ❖ Students who study clothing both at senior secondary schools and higher institutions should use the result of the findings to produce dresses and garments in their entrepreneurship class.
- ❖ Seamstresses should use the basic block patterns to improve their teaching and can also use the patterns to adapt and develop different styles for exhibitions.

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