

Ethnicity and Occupational Shift: A Case Study of Itinerant Tailors in Selected Areas of the South-South Region in Nigeria

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Abstract

Occupation refers to a productive activity or task which one occupies oneself with, and is regularly paid for. Occupation for most people is a means to meet ones basic needs of life. This research is set out to understand the relationship between Ethnicity and career choices, and occupational shift amongst itinerant tailors in South-South region of Nigeria. 300 persons were purposively selected from Bayelsa, Rivers State and Delta State respectively using the snowball sampling technique. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential data analysis technique. The findings of this study revealed that people choose their occupations based on the socio-economic conditions and when their status stabilizes, there is the tendency to move to a better satisfactory job.

Keywords: Ethnicity, Occupation, Occupational Shift

1. Introduction

The co-existence of various human groupings often results in disintegration and/or identification based on sameness/ similarity of cultural practice(s). Any identification of people based on common customs inevitably results in ethnicity. As a result, the operational characteristic of ethnicity is the equipment of members with a sense of unity that, to a great extent, makes them attach more importance to themselves, unmindful of the overall auspices under which they exist. In the words of Power (2010: 7), ethnicity "... is the glue that holds ordinary society together." Consequently, members of one ethnic group dwell in cultural unity. In corroboration of the foregoing, Eriksen (2008:171) states that ethnicity relates to "aspects of human relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as culturally distinctive". The key phrase here being 'culturally distinctive' underpins the notion that ethnicity fans the flames of intra-ethnic peculiarities (often times, ethnic hegemony) founded on common beliefs, worldview and culture. Obafemi citing Obiechina (2011:38) informs that, "Enlightenment and refinement...are the sole preoccupations and defining essence of the culture of any ethnic group" hence, "the inseparability of culture and ethnic development". The point being made here is that ethnic development plays a vital role in determining the attitudinal composition of a people. The collective action of any human grouping is dependent on how such social group perceives the world in which they live in and act, including their choice of employment. The spate of employment swap among various ethnic groups in Nigeria has become an issue of scholarly concern. This trend is attributable to the rising joblessness among Nigerian youths who are left with the sole option of contesting for few available job opportunities. Curiously, the problem of unemployment has increasingly threatened the corporate survival of many third world countries (Curtain, 2000), including Nigeria. Ever since the 1980s, unemployment in Nigeria has attained a frightening proportion, with countless number of able-bodied Nigerians demonstrating the willingness to work, to no avail. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2011), Unemployment Rate in Nigeria increased to 23.90 percent in 2011. Historically, from 2006 to 2011, Unemployment rate in Nigeria averaged 14.6 percent reaching an all-time height of 23.9 percent in December 2011 and a low record of 5.3 percent in 2006. The foregoing underpins the fact that unemployment in Nigeria has continuously escalated. Apart from the contest for slim job opportunities caused by massive unemployment, occupational shifts among varying ethnic groups in Nigeria could be traced to ethnic values and technological growth. In the light of the face-off between humanity and machine, many workers have been displaced, workers have been de-skilled and the production processes de-humanized. This has increasingly reduced the need for human workers. Thus, this scenario where more workers lose their jobs as a result of technology in addition to the teeming population of new entrants into the labour market has created the enabling environment for the unemployed to resort to their ethnic values as a critical determinant of what Wilson(1997:2) refer to as "ethnic labour-market niche". Several researches suggest that labour market '*niching*' which is a situation where a specific ethnic group dominates a particular trade, is related to the flow of immigrants, with particular skills, experiences and human capital attributes, to a given destination in conjunction with the opportunity structure encountered at that destination or the policies of receiving governments (Wilson, 1997; Fagade, 2002 and Carlos, 2006). This is most observable in Nigeria where migrant Fulani's who are renowned for cow rearing and trading continue to dominate the trade in other parts of the country especially in Southern Nigeria. In the same vein, a section of Igbo ethnic group are known for migrating to other areas and dominating a specific trade such as itinerant tailoring (popularly known as *obioma*). In the light of the foregoing, this study is concerned with the latter as it hopes to investigate the worldview and

peculiarities of the Igbo ethnic nationality, with emphasis on the factors that determine their choice of trade. The idea is to unravel the circumstances that have necessitated their abdication of itinerant tailoring in recent times and if it is related to the reasons why the Hausas entered the trade.

2. The problem Stated

The residents of major cities in the south-south region such as Port Harcourt, Warri and Yenagoa are mainly civil servants, artisans and traders. The psyche and choice of occupation of this population have been greatly altered as a result of the oil boom in the region. Many individuals and ethnic groups have, as a result denigrated their hitherto means of living. This denigration has led to abdication and then displacement by other ethnic groups. This is the case of itinerant tailoring in Port Harcourt, Warri and Yenagoa. Members of the Igbo ethnic group who used to be key players in the trade have suddenly abandoned this trade to the Hausa ethnic group. Much as this occupational shift between these two ethnic groups does not necessarily wreck any immediate havoc on the society, it calls for scholarly investigation to understand the manifest and latent causes of occupational shift and how it is related to socio- cultural characteristics of the ethnic groups involved. It is noteworthy to state that published literature abounds on the topic of ethnicity. Most of them have addressed the relationship between ethnicity and gender, ethnicity and employment, ethnicity and politics/leadership, among others. However, there hardly exists any evidence of research in the issue of ethnicity and occupational shift in Nigeria. This is the knowledge gap which the present study addresses. The main objective of this study is to understand the phenomenon of occupational shift in Nigeria, a case study of itinerant tailors. Efforts shall be made to examine specific reasons why a particular ethnic group dominates an occupation, reasons that inform the dominance of itinerant tailoring by the Igbo's in the past, the possible causes of the shift of itinerant tailoring from the Igbo ethnic group to the Hausa ethnic group, also to find out if the career choice of an ethnic group is related to their socio-economic conditions and if the Hausa's are contented with itinerant tailoring more than the Igbo's or if there is a likely shift in the near future.

2.1 Research Questions

The following research questions shall guide this study:

- What are the reasons that inform the Igbo dominance of itinerant tailoring in the past?
- What were the causes of the shift of itinerant tailoring from the Igbo ethnic group to the Hausas?
- Is the career choice of an ethnic group related to their socio-economic conditions?
- Are the Hausas contented with itinerant tailoring more than the Igbos or are we likely to see another shift in the near future?

2.2 Conceptual clarification

Ethnicity: Ethnicity, in the context of this study, refers to selected cultural and, often times, physical features that form a yardstick for classifying a group of people into groups or categories, considered being significantly distinctive from others.

Ethnic Group: Ethnic Group is a large body in which membership is usually by birth. Members of an ethnic group share a common ethnic identity, nationality, language, religion, tribe or race.

Occupation: Occupation refers to a productive activity or task with which one occupies oneself and is regularly paid.

Occupational Shift: This explains the transitions in work roles that include a change of employers or actual jobs.

3. Review of literature

Occupational shift explains the substantial change into a new field of professional activity or the substantial change of the work contents related to the job before and after the occupational change. There is no disputing the fact that most economies have shifted away from one based primarily on manufacturing to one increasingly dominated by service and professions. Many claim that the nature and structure of jobs careers and occupations have also changed substantially (Evans, Kunda, and Barley, 1994; Hall, 1996; Rousseau, 1997). This is the case of itinerant tailors as regards to ethnicity, yet with a few exceptions scholars have paid little attention to studying the issue of occupational shift (Barley and Kunda, 2001). The nature of occupation contract has also changed for many people, thereby altering the structure of peoples work live (Evans, Kunda and Barley 2004). Many people now take or engage in occupations on temporary basis in other to make ends meet and move on when a better offer and opportunity steers at them. Several causes have been identified for shift in an occupation; economic theory for example suggests that workers will change their occupation to improve wages over their career. Zangelidis (2008), Kambouror and Marovskii (2009) argued that One major cause of occupational shift is the wages or salary gotten from such occupation. On the other hand, Sicheman and Galor (1990) opine that occupational shift can be seen as a type of positive career mobility as on average, most people seem to move to

higher ranking occupations. However, a number of studies find substantial returns to experience accumulated within an occupation and argue that any loss of occupation is positive or negative are largely dependent on the cause of the change. This paper seeks to understand why the Igbo's shifted from doing the work of itinerant tailoring popularly called "obioma" and why the Hausas took over the same trade, and this can be known if we understand the socio-cultural background of both ethnic groups (i.e., Igbo's and Hausas).

3.1 Socioeconomic Attributes of the Igbos and Itinerant Tailoring

The Igbo, sometimes referred to as Ibo, are one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa. Most Igbo speakers are based in South – Eastern Nigeria it is believed the Igbos originated in an area 100 miles north of their current location at the confluence of the Benue and Niger rivers. Afigbo (1992) is of the view that the Igbos and perhaps the Idoma and Ijaw appears to be one of the only surviving coherent ethnic groups from the first set of proto – kwa speakers to penetrate the forest area of the southern Nigeria and who at a time coupled areas as far to the west as Ile – Ife in Yoruba land. The Igbo political organization was a decentralized one devoid of kings or governing chiefs unlike other ethnic nationalities that practices a centralized system of government. Although title holders were respected because of their accomplishment, they were never revered as kings (Onwuka, 2002). Their responsibilities in society were to perform special functions to then by the assemblies not to make laws or state policies. Traditionally, the igbos are rich in culture and the society is an agrarian one with their main staple being yam and cassava. The Igbo culture, being receptive to change, individualistic and highly competitive, gave the Igbo man an unquestioned advantage over his compatriots in securing credentials for advancement in Nigeria colonial society (Achebe 2012:74) Thus, generally the Igbos are very hardworking and this can be traced to their culture which encourages competition and self achievement. The Igbo land was severely distorted as a result of the civil (Biafra) war which took place between July 1967 through January 1970, and it had devastating effect on the Igbo's. Civil wars and conflicts generally have attracted comments from scholars given the frequent occurrence as well as the associated consequences in several countries of the world. However, the indelible consequence of these wars has spurred conflict scholars to a better understanding of their causes, duration, severity and outcomes (Thyne, 2006: 937 – 961). Sambanis (2001) however insists that not all civil wars are the same; he opines that each war is as different as the society that produces it (Sambanis 2001: 259 – 252). In any case, ethnicity could be said to be at the centre of politics in divided societies. The Nigeria civil war, popularly know world over as the "Biafran War" was fought from 2 July 1967 to 15 January 1970. The war was between the eastern region of Nigeria and the rest of Nigeria. War as acceptable component of intergroup relations is usually resorted to when every other option may have failed. This is given because it has devastating and tremendous consequences on both individuals and groups. To a great extent, the thirty month Nigeria civil war without mincing words had a devastating effect on the Igbos both socially and economically. The focus of this section is not to talk about the causes of the Nigeria civil war because it had already been discussed in several works (Forsyth, 1997; St Jorie, 1992; Achebe 2012) rather our concern is to look at the consequence it had on the Igbo economy. It is evident based on the foregoing that the Igbos loss a great deal during the civil war. Food production came under severe threat as the outbreak of the war disrupted production, lives were loss, properties, farmlands and business were also loss during this period. It is also a known fact, that a considerable number of people died either in combat or war related causes, the argument is that over one million lives may have been lost, from starvation, disease, combat or even shock (Igbokwe 1995: 15). One major aspect of the civil war which affected the Igbo economy was the economic blockade placed on Biafra by the federal government of Nigeria. The blockade was placed essentially to prevent the export of palm produce and crude oil so as to destroy the economic basis of the secessionist republic (Ikpe 1994:94). With time the blockade became affected as hunger and starvation ravaged the Igbo territory, as Achebe (2012:209-210) succinctly puts it:

"The Biafrans paid a great humanitarian price by ceding a great deal of territory to the Nigerians and employing this war strategy. The famine worsened as the war raged, as the traditional igbo society of farmers could not plant their crops".

Indeed the economic blockade seriously list the foundation of the Igbo economy, with practically nothing coming in from outside, the people were forced to produce virtually anything they need and this in turn introduced a change of a special kind of Igbo. Here, the ingenuity of the Igbos came to play again, as a means of survival new crops were discovered and incorporated into the Igbo food economy. For instance, bitter leaf was used to cook soup, because the bitter taste reduced the need for salt, lemon grass was used to make tea to mention but a few (Harniet- Sievers, 1997, Ikpe, 1994). The federal government's actions soon after the war could be seen not as conciliatory but as outright hostile, with the introduction of a banking policy that nullified any bank account which had been operated during the war by the Biafrans. A flat sum of twenty pounds was approved for each Igbo depositor of the Nigerian currency, regardless of the amount of deposit (Achebe 2012: 234). Thus, the after effect of the civil war and the federal government banking policy left the Igbos with little or nothing, the Igbos had to move out scattered virtually everywhere just to make ends meet, they started doing

other jobs such as going into trade, itinerant tailors “obioma” etc. No matter how one looked at it, the civil war had grave economic consequences for Igbo economic life in general.

3.2 Socio-Economic attributes of the Hausas and itinerant Tailoring

The Hausa people are racially diverse but culturally homogenous people of northern Nigeria and South–Central Niger. The Hausa- Fulani Empire unlike the Igbos practices a centralized system of government where power comes from the top. The Emir is both the traditional and political ruler and they were absolute and autocratic; other chiefs had to show loyalty to the king by executing the kings instruction efficiently. These chiefs, the members of the Emirs household, and the Mallams (professional teachers), constitute the ruling class “*isarikim*”, the lower class “*talakawa*” comprised of peasants, serfs and slaves. The Hausas are very rich in culture, such as performing of magic and tricks, wrestling, festivals, etc. These celebrations provide entertainment as it cements relationship between villages. The typical Hausa life is consumed with caring for family and making ends meet as such till date they still practice some form of communal living. They believe any position they are in is endorsed by Allah as such they don’t struggle for material things. Hausas have long been famous for wide range of itinerant trading, which includes shoe making, tailoring, fetching of water “*Meruwa*” etc. But our focus in this work is itinerant tailoring, which was hitherto occupied by the Igbos. The researcher seeks to find out why the Igbos left the occupation and why the Hausas took over the job, and if there is a possibility that in the near future the Hausas might also abandon it for something else.

3.3 Theoretical Explanations

Vocational Personalities and Environment Theory

This theory was propounded by John Holland and it was developed to organize the voluminous data about people in different jobs and the data about different work environments to suggest how people make career choices and to explain how job satisfaction and vocational achievement occur. Holland suggested that “people can function and develop best and find job satisfaction in work environments that are compatible with their personalities” (ICDM, 1991). Holland based his theory of personality types on several assumptions. People tend to choose a career that is reflective of their personality, because people tend to be attracted to certain jobs, the environment then reflects their personality. He classifies these personality types and environment into six types which he labeled realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional (RIASEC). He opined that the closer the match of personality to job, the greater the satisfaction. All types are part of us; however, one type is usually evidenced most strongly. We may even resemble up to three of the types, Holland developed a hexagon model that illustrates some key concepts; consistency, differentiation, identity and congruence. This theory also maintains that in choosing a career, people prefer jobs where they can be around others who are like them. They search for environment that will let them use their skills and abilities, and express their attitudes and values, while taking on enjoyable problems and roles. For Holland, behavior is determined by an interaction between personality and environment. Holland’s Vocational Personalities and Environment theory actually explains well the rationale and mental process that informs a people’s choice of career and occupational transitions (shift). The major argument of this theory (which states that people function and develop best and find job satisfaction in work environments; and this determines if they continue in a job or move to another), for the researcher, did not sufficiently explain the socio-economic factors that determines a person’s choice of job satisfaction and decision to “shift”. Hence, the theory was not adopted as the theoretical framework for this study.

Supers Theory
Donald Super (1957) and other theorists of career development recognize the changes that people go through as they mature, career patterns are determined by socio-economic factors, mental and physical abilities, personal characteristics and the opportunities to which persons are exposed. People seek career satisfaction through work roles in which they can express themselves, implement and develop self concepts. Career maturity, a main concept in Supers theory, is manifested in the successful accomplishment of age and stage development tasks across the life span. Self- concept is an underlying factor in Supers model, “... vocational self-concept develop through physical and mental growth, observations of work, identification with working adults, general environment and general experiences”. As experiences becomes broader in relation to awareness of world of work, the more sophisticated and vocational self-concept is formed. Super opined that self concept changes overtime and develops as a result of experience, as such, career development is lifelong. Supers theory, despite its beautiful explanation of the phenomenon of occupational choices and transitions, the theory did not clearly explain the relationship between ethnicity and occupational shift. Donald Supers theory did not capture the underlying factor in occupational shift and career choices which are seeking to eke out a living and survive.

3.4 Theoretical Framework

The major theoretical viewpoint for this study is “*Planned happenstance theory*” propounded by John Krumboltz. The original theory known as social learning theory of career decision making (SLTCDM), has recently been

developed into the learning theory of counselling (Mitchell and Krumboltz, 1996). The more recent version attempts to integrate practical ideas, research procedures to provide a theory that goes beyond an explanation why people pursue various jobs; while the two theories were published at different times, they can be regarded as one theory with two parts. Part one (SLTCDM) explains the origin of career choice and part two (LTCC) explains what career counsellors can do about many career related problems (Mitchell and Krumboltz, 1996: 234). Most recently, Krumboltz has been developing and integrating ideas about the role of chance ‘happenstance’ in career decision making. The following are influential factors to career choice as identified by Krumboltz:

- a) Genetic endowment and special abilities (Race, Gender and Physical appearances and characteristics)

Individuals differ both in their ability from learning experiences and to get access to different learning experiences because of these types of inherited qualities.

- b) Environmental conditions and events (Social, cultural and political, Economic forces and Natural forces and resources)

All these items listed above are generally outside the control of any one individual. Their influence can be planned or unplanned.

- c) Learning experiences

Each individual has a unique history of learning experiences that result in their occupational choice. They most times don't remember the specific character or sequence of these learning experiences, but rather they remember general conclusions from them. There are two main types of learning experiences and these include: Instrumental learning experience, Preceding circumstances/stimulus, Behavioral responses (overt and covert); Consequences and Associated learning experience: Here individuals perceive a relationship between two or more sets of stimuli in the environment (e.g observation, reading or hearing about occupations.) This can result in occupational stereotypes.

The major argument of this theory is that a people's choice of career is often times influenced by emergent situations, which Krumboltz called 'Happenstance', e.g. socio-economic conditions, natural forces, political factors that surrounds the individuals. This theory explains the influencing factor that informed the choice career of itinerant tailors and the possible reasons why there is shift in occupation too. This theory is adopted as the theoretical framework for this study primarily because it considers all ramifications that influence a person's career choice and occupational shift. Krumboltz "planned happenstance" theory posits that people enter certain trained occupation based on the circumstances surrounding them, and this further determines how long they will stay in the trade or shift occupations. The phenomenon of occupation shift in itinerant tailoring can best be explained in the context of the ethnic group involved in this trade and their circumstances. And as Krumboltz stated; environmental conditions, social, cultural and political traits, economic forces and natural resources influence a people to engage in a trade as a survival strategy.

3.5 Hypotheses

1. The Igbo's entered itinerant tailoring due to economic hardship.
2. Ethnic groups will shift from a less profitable occupation if they are driven by wealth accumulation.
3. When an ethnic group leaves a trade because it is less lucrative another ethnic group will occupy it.

4. Methods

This study utilizes the survey design to obtain the required data. The population of the study includes the itinerant tailors in Port Harcourt, Warri and Yenagoa cities. This is in addition to Other Igbos and Hausas living in the study areas. The study employs the simple random, purposive and snowballing sampling techniques because the number of itinerant tailors and Igbos residing in the three states cannot be correctly ascertained. However, the simple random sampling technique was used to select the three states out of nine states in the Niger Delta region. The purposive sampling allowed the researchers to deliberately select some of the target respondents for this research, while the snowballing technique was used to reach more of the respondents having identified a few of them. The researcher selected a sample size of 300. The principal data collection instrument used in this study is the questionnaire. The data collected for the study were analyzed using three types of data analysis techniques namely simple percentages, descriptive tools such as histograms, pie charts, trend graphs and chi-square statistical method.

5. Results

Socio-Demographic Data of respondents

Table 4.0: Questionnaire Distributed and Retrieved

SN	States	No. Distributed	No. Retrieved	%
1	Bayelsa	100	90	90
2	Delta	100	92	92
3	Rivers	100	98	98
	Total	300	280	93

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4.0 above provides information on the number of questionnaires distributed, retrieved and collated for analysis. From the table, 100 questionnaires were distributed in each of three states highlighted in the table making 300, and a total of 280 of them were retrieved and duly collated for analysis.

Table 4.1: Age distribution of respondents

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage %
15-20	62	22
21-25	108	39
26-30	99	35
31 and above	11	4
Total	280	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The age distribution of respondents is presented in Table 4.1 above. Data reflected in the table reveals that 62(22%) of the respondents are between the ages of 15 and 20 years, 108(39%) of the respondents fall under the age bracket of 21-25 years of age, 99 (35%) of the respondents fall under the age bracket of 26-30 years old, while 11 (4%) of the respondents said they are 31 years and above.

Table 4.2: Sex of respondents

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	280	100
Female	0	0
Total	280	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4.2 above reveals data on the sex composition of the respondents in this study. Data reflected in the table shows that all the respondents 280(100%) are males. This shows that itinerant tailoring is more of a masculine activity when compared to other styles of tailoring, e.g.: static tailoring or fashion designing as it.

Table 4.3: Marital status of respondents

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage
Single	78	28
Married	170	61
Separated	22	8
Widowed	10	4
Total	280	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4.3 above provides information on the marital status of the respondents in this study. From the table, it is easy to see that 78(28%) of the respondents are between are single, 170(61%) of the respondents are married, 22(8%) of them are separated from their spouse, while 10(4%) of the respondents are widowers.

Table 4.4: Educational level of respondents

Response Option	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	200	71
Primary education	50	18
Secondary	7	3
Tertiary education	0	0
Vocational education	23	8
Total	280	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4.4 reveals the educational status of respondents in this study. Data reflected in the table reveals that 200(71%) of the respondents do not have any formal education, 50(18%) of the respondents have primary education, 7 (3%) of the respondents have secondary education, none has tertiary education, while 23 (8%) of the respondents have some level of vocation education.

Table 4.5: Number of years in itinerant tailoring occupation

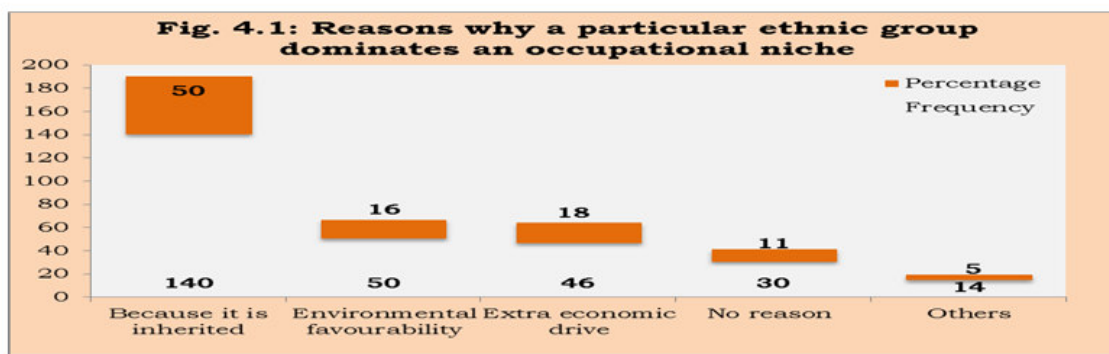
Response Option	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	70	25
1-3 years	128	46
4-6 years	52	19
7-9 years	30	11
10 years and above	0	0
Total	280	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4.5 reveals the number of years that respondents have been in the occupational niche of itinerant tailoring. Data reflected in the table reveals that 70(25%) of the respondents have been in the mobile tailoring trade for less than 1 year, 128(46%) of the respondents have been in the trade for 1-3 years, 52 (19%) of the respondents have been in it for 4-6 years, 30(11%) of them have been in it for 7-9 years, while none have been in the occupation for 10 years and above.

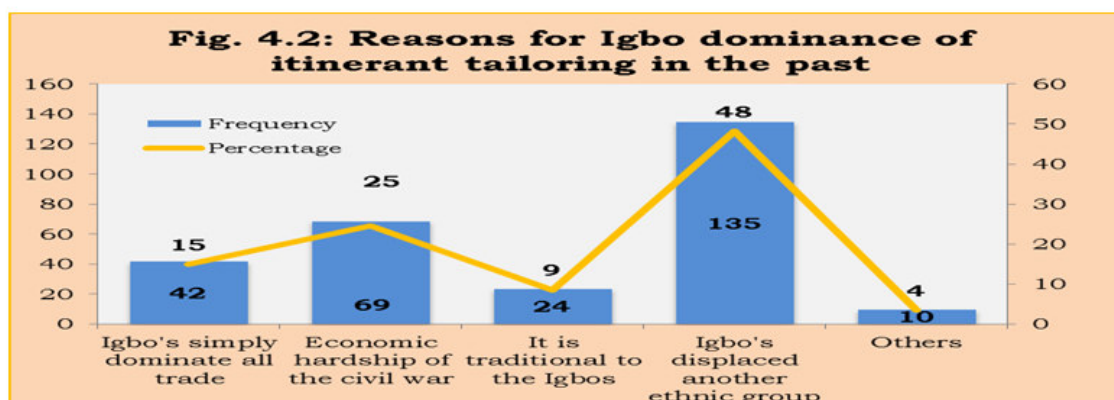
5.1 Ethnicity and Occupation Shift in Itinerant Tailoring

In this section, the primary concern is to provide empirical link between ethnicity and occupational shift in itinerant or mobile tailoring between the Igbos and Hausas in the study areas. To achieve this, the data gathered from the field are presented using descriptive models such as bar charts, trend graphs, histograms and pie charts.



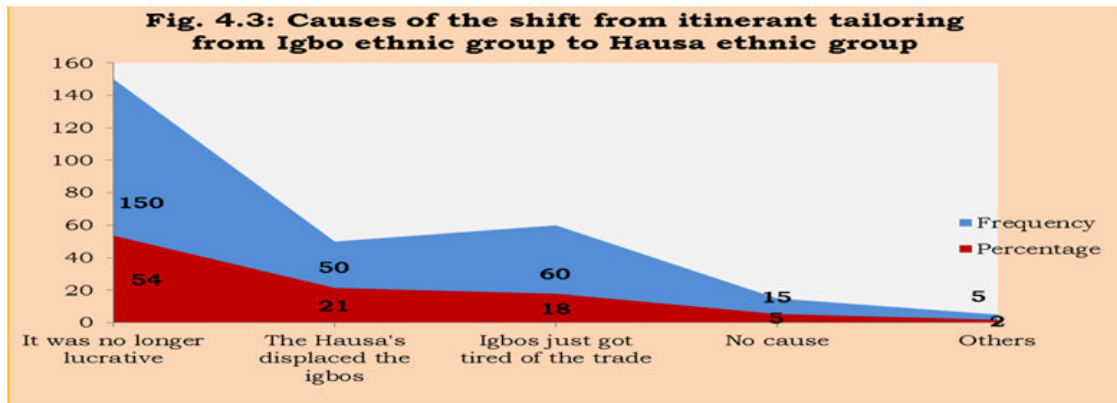
Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.1 above reveals data on the reasons why a particular ethnic group dominates an occupational niche. From the data in the chart, 140(50%) of the respondents said because it is the inheritance of the said ethnic group, 50(16%) of the respondents said it is because of environmental favourability or advantage, 46(18%) of the respondents said it is because of the economic drive of such ethnic group, 30(11%) of them said no reason for the dominance, while 14(5%) of them said others.



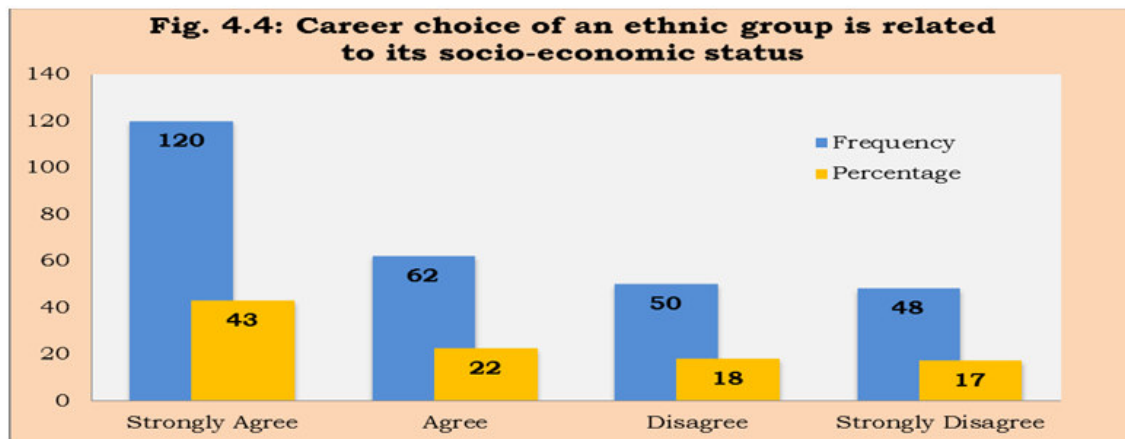
Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.2 above reveals data on the reasons why the Igbo ethnic group dominated the occupation of itinerant tailoring in the past. From the data in the chart, 42(15%) of the respondents said it is because the Igbos simply dominate all trades, 69(25%) of the respondents said the economic hardship imposed by the civil war led the Igbos into all kinds of trade including itinerant tailoring, 24(9%) of the respondents said itinerant tailoring is traditional to the Igbos, 135(48%) of the respondents said the Igbos displaced another ethnic group, while 10(4%) of them said others.



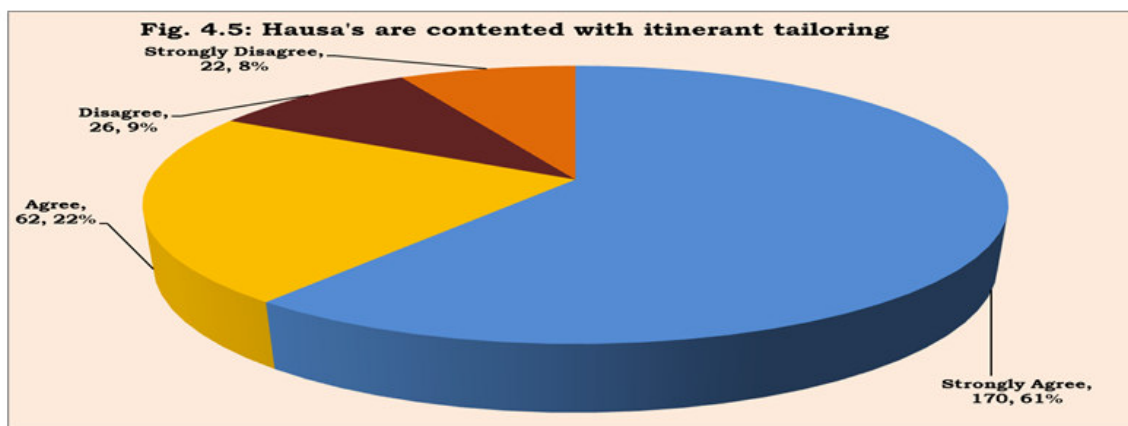
Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.3 above reveals data on the causes of the shift from itinerant tailoring from Igbo ethnic group to Hausa ethnic group in the study areas. From the data in the chart, 150(54%) of the respondents said it is because itinerant tailoring became less lucrative, 50(21%) of the respondents said the Hausas displaced the Igbos, 60(18%) of the respondents said the Igbos just got tired of the occupation, 15(8%) of the respondents said there is no cause for the shift, while 5(2%) of them said others.



Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.4 above reveals data on whether the career choice of an ethnic group is related to the group's socio-economic status. From the data in the chart, 120(43%) of the respondents strongly agree, 60(22%) of the respondents agree, 50(18%) of the respondents disagree, while 48(17%) of them strongly disagree.



Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.4 above reveals data on whether the Hausas who now dominate the occupation of itinerant tailoring in the study areas are contented with the trade or another ethnic shift is likely to occur in the future. From the data in the chart, 170(61%) of the respondents strongly agree, 62(22%) of the respondents agree,

26(9%) of the respondents disagree, while 22(8%) of them strongly disagree.

5.2 Test of Hypotheses

H₁: The involvement of the Igbos in itinerant tailoring is likely to be a result of the economic experiences of the civil war

Table 4.6: Igbos entered itinerant tailoring due to the economic hardship of the civil war

Respondents	SA	A	D	SD	Total
Bayelsa	50	22	10	8	90
Delta	53	18	11	10	92
Rivers	49	10	20	19	98
Total	152	50	41	37	280

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.6 above reveals data on whether the Igbos entered itinerant tailoring due to the economic hardship they experienced during the civil war in Nigeria. 152 of the respondents strongly agree, 50 of the respondents agree, 41 of the respondents disagree, while 37 of them strongly disagree.

Table 4.7: Chi Square computation for hypothesis 1

Area	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(o-e/e) ²
Bayelsa	50	48.86	1.14	1.31	0.03
	22	16.07	5.93	35.15	2.19
	10	13.18	-3.18	10.10	0.77
	8	11.89	-3.89	15.15	1.27
Delta	53	49.94	3.06	9.35	0.19
	18	16.43	1.57	2.47	0.15
	11	13.47	-2.47	6.11	0.45
	10	12.16	-2.16	4.65	0.38
Rivers	49	53.20	-4.20	17.64	0.33
	10	17.50	-7.50	56.25	3.21
	20	13.47	6.53	42.62	3.16
	19	12.16	6.84	46.82	3.85
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 =$		15.99		

Source: Field Survey, 2014

At 6 df, the table value of χ^2 at 0.05 level of significance is = 12.59.

Decision rule: The generally accepted decision rule for the application of chi-square χ^2 test states that we accept null hypothesis if calculated value is less than the table value and reject hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than table value. In this study, since calculated value for χ^2 is 15.99 and table value is 12.59, the hypothesis which states that “The involvement of the Igbos in itinerant tailoring is likely to be a result of the economic experiences of the civil war” is hereby accepted. This leads to the conclusion that there is a relationship between economic hardship imposed by the civil war situation and the involvement of the Igbo ethnic group in itinerant tailoring in the study areas.

H₂: The more the value of an ethnic group in a distinct occupation is driven by wealth accumulation, the more they are likely to shift from a less profitable occupation like itinerant tailoring

Table 4.8: Ethnic groups will shift from a less profitable occupation if they are driven by wealth accumulation

Respondents	SA	A	D	SD	Total
Bayelsa	60	18	4	8	90
Delta	63	18	5	6	92
Rivers	61	10	20	7	98
Total	184	46	29	21	280

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.8 above reveals data on whether the shift by ethnic groups from a less profitable occupation such as itinerant tailoring is as a result of the value they place on wealth accumulation. 184 of the respondents strongly agree, 46 of the respondents agree, 29 of the respondents disagree, while 21 of them strongly disagree.

Area	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(o-e/e) ²
Bayelsa	60	59.14	0.86	0.73	0.01
	18	14.79	3.21	10.33	0.70
	4	9.32	-5.32	28.32	3.04
	8	6.75	1.25	1.56	0.23
Delta	63	60.46	2.54	6.47	0.11
	18	15.11	2.89	8.33	0.55
	5	9.53	-4.53	20.51	2.15
	6	6.90	-0.90	0.81	0.12
Rivers	61	64.40	-3.40	11.56	0.18
	10	16.10	-6.10	37.21	2.31
	20	9.53	10.47	109.65	11.51
	7	6.90	0.10	0.01	0.00
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 20.91$				

Source: Field Survey, 2014

At 6 df, the table value of χ^2 at 0.05 level of significance is = 12.59.

Decision rule: The generally accepted decision rule for the application of chi-square χ^2 test states that we accept null hypothesis if calculated value is less than the table value and reject hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than table value. In this study, since calculated value for χ^2 is 20.91 and table value is 12.59, the hypothesis which states that “The more the value of an ethnic group in a distinct occupation is driven by wealth accumulation, the more they are likely to shift from a less profitable occupation like itinerant tailoring” is hereby accepted. This leads to the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between the value placed on wealth accumulation by an ethnic group and the shift from a less profitable occupation like itinerant tailoring in the study areas.

H₃: If the ethnic group occupying an occupational market niche abandons it because it is not lucrative anymore, other ethnic groups with relative need for survival will move into the trade.

Respondents	SA	A	D	SD	Total
Bayelsa	58	21	5	6	90
Delta	60	16	5	11	92
Rivers	65	10	20	3	98
Total	183	47	30	20	280

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Figure 4.10 above reveals data on whether the exit of a particular ethnic group from an occupational niche because it has become less lucrative will necessarily lead to another ethnic group cashing into the occupation as a means of survival. 183 of the respondents strongly agree, 47 of the respondents agree, 30 of the respondents disagree, while 20 of them strongly disagree.

Area	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(o-e/e) ²
Bayelsa	58	58.82	-0.82	0.67	0.01
	21	15.11	5.89	34.73	2.30
	5	9.64	-4.64	21.56	2.24
	6	6.43	-0.43	0.18	0.03
Delta	60	60.13	-0.13	0.02	0.00
	16	15.44	0.56	0.31	0.02
	5	9.86	-4.86	23.59	2.39
	11	6.57	4.43	19.61	2.98
Rivers	65	64.05	0.95	0.90	0.01
	10	16.45	-6.45	41.60	2.53
	20	9.86	10.14	102.88	10.44
	3	6.57	-3.57	12.76	1.94
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 24.89$				

Source: Field Survey, 2014

At 6 df, the table value of χ^2 at 0.05 level of significance is = 12.59.

Decision rule: The generally accepted decision rule for the application of chi-square χ^2 test states that we accept null hypothesis if calculated value is less than the table value and reject hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than table value. In this study, since calculated value for χ^2 is 24.89 and table value is 12.59, the hypothesis which states that “If the ethnic group occupying an occupational market niche abandons it because it is not lucrative anymore, other ethnic groups with relative need for survival would move into the trade” is hereby accepted. This leads to the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between the shift from a less profitable occupational niche by one ethnic group and the influx of another ethnic group into that occupation as a means of survival.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

The problematic of this study is to investigate the relationship between Ethnicity and Occupational Shift in selected areas in South-South region of Nigeria. The major questions asked in this study led to a lot of findings that revealed the relationship between Ethnicity and Occupational Shift. In research question one of this study, the researcher observed that 54.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the involvement of Igbos in itinerant tailoring is as a result of the economic experiences of the civil war. Another 17.9% equally agreed to the hypothesis. The findings of this study also revealed that the more the values of an ethnic group in a distinct occupation is driven by wealth accumulation, the more they are likely to shift from a less profitable occupation like itinerant tailoring. 184 of the respondents strongly agreed to this, 46 more also agreed; and 29 and 21 strongly disagreed and agreed respectively. The third question raised in this study inquired that if the ethnic group occupying an occupational niche abandons it because it is not lucrative anymore, other ethnic groups with relative need for survival will move into the trade. The findings of this study revealed that majority of the respondent strongly agreed to this. 65.4% of the respondents strongly agreed to this hypothesis, another 16.8% equally agreed and only 17.9% disagreed. 83.3% of the respondents firmly agreed that once an ethnic group abandons an occupation for something more lucrative, another ethnic group seeking survival will move into the trade. For this group of respondents, the occupation of itinerant tailoring is first a survival strategy in an economy where there are very few lucrative jobs, and once an ethnic group leaves it, another ethnic group will move into the trade.

6. Summary

Occupational Shift has been identified to be motivated by changes in socio-economic status of a people and the strife to improve on ones standard of living. Krumboltz (1996) argued that occupational choice is first influenced by emergent situations peculiar to a people. Itinerant tailoring used to be the known trade of the Igbos; who were usually called “*obioma's*”, but a cursory look at the society today reveals that the Hausa's have taken over the trade. At every nook and cranny you will find a Hausa tailor. The findings of this study revealed that economic conditions often times determine ones choice of occupation. The Igbo people's choice of this business can be traced to their socio-economic experiences and history. The Igbos experienced a civil disturbance that shook the foundations of their economic life- the Igbos ended up with 20pounds to start their lives all over. This forced the Igbos to scatter all over Nigeria to seek means of survival. The case of the Hausas dominating the trade now is not far from that of the Igbos, the Hausas are actually experiencing serious socio-economic stagnancy and underdevelopment. Poverty, illiteracy and underdevelopment in the North are clearly alarming. This situation has made many Northerners to leave their region to seek survival in other regions. In Rivers State, Bayelsa and Delta State, the Hausas do all manner of jobs irrespective of how much they earn from such jobs; shoe repairers/menders, water vendors, bin collectors, gatekeepers and itinerant tailoring. The research also observed that the trade of itinerant tailoring actually started with Ghanaians in the 1980's. Political unrest in the early 1980's led the country to her worst economic crisis since independence (www.imf.org). Ghana experienced an economic decline from 1981-1983, with the GDP growth rate reading as low as -6.9% (ReSAKSS, 2013). This economic hardship forced many Ghanaians to migrate to neighbouring countries for succor. In Nigeria alone, more than one million Ghanaians lived in Nigeria considering the number expelled by the Buhari/Idiagbon military administration of 1983. The obvious here is that the unique historical events and social processes of every ethnic group affect their choice of occupation and possible transition. The occupational shift by the Igbo's from itinerant tailoring to other businesses reveals that every group in the country experience different challenges and the people strive to better their living conditions. This research has revealed the history of the trade of itinerant tailoring, and the socio-economic explanations of its existence.

7. Recommendations

One of the objectives of sociological investigations is to critically measure a social phenomenon, describe it and proffer solutions where necessary. This research has unearthed gaps in the structure of the society that served as precipitating factors to the choice of the trade- itinerant tailoring and causes of the observed transitions. Hence, the following recommendations; every ethnic group and community in the country all have their peculiar

challenges and needs. Therefore, any developmental policy and steps should put that into consideration. Poverty may be a general issue in the country, but the historical events and social process that caused poverty in different societies differ. Also the study on itinerant tailoring also revealed that it is a trade selected in the strive to eke out a living. The implication of this is that majority of Nigerians rely on petty commodity production (PCP) for subsistence, and if the state can assist the PCP trade with financing and conducive environment, it may just grow into a very large business and not just a transient trade for those struggling to make ends meet.

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