

ASSESSING CLOTHING CONSTRUCTION SKILLS OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION STUDENT TEACHERS

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The purpose of this study was to determine Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) student teachers' clothing construction skills as perceived by cooperating teachers and the student teachers themselves. A survey instrument was developed and mailed to the 15 individuals from one North Carolina university who had completed their FCS education student teaching during the previous six years. The survey was also mailed to their 15 cooperating teachers. The survey listed the competencies developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for Clothing Design, the state-approved high school clothing class. Student teachers and their cooperating teachers were asked to rate the student teachers' levels of competence for each clothing skill from 1 = lowest skill level, to 4 = highest skill level. Surveys were completed by eight of the 15 cooperating teachers (53%) and 10 of the 15 student teachers (67%). Findings indicated that student teachers rated as adequate their sewing machine operations skills and their construction skills; however, they rated their serger operation skills as marginal. Student teachers rated themselves highest for the following competencies: connecting the power source to the sewing machine ($M = 4$); connecting the foot pedal to the machine ($M = 4$); changing a needle ($M = 4$); threading the machine ($M = 3.9$); and backstitching ($M = 3.9$). They perceived themselves as weakest in the following competencies: adjusting serger for rolled hemming ($M = 1$); troubleshooting and repairing serger ($M = 1.5$); threading serger ($M = 2$); adjusting serger tension ($M = 2$); and cleaning, lubricating, and storing sewing machine ($M = 2.2$). Like the student teachers, cooperating teachers rated student teachers as adequately prepared in their sewing machine operation and construction skills; however, they, too, noted that students' serger skills were marginal. Cooperating teachers rated students most highly for: connecting the power source to the machine ($M = 3.9$); connecting the foot pedal to the machine ($M = 3.6$); threading the machine ($M = 3.6$); and finishing a seam with the serger ($M = 3.6$). Cooperating teachers rated student teachers lowest in: adjusting serger for rolled hemming ($M = 2.3$) and troubleshooting and repairing the sewing machine ($M = 2.3$).

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