ISSN 1999-561X

IJHE

International Journal of Home Economics

Volume 2 Issue 1 2009

IFHE is an international Non Governmental Organisation (INGO) in consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC, FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF) and with the Council of Europe

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HOME ECONOMICS

This refereed journal is an official publication of the International Federation for Home Economics. Electronic access via IFHE website for subscribers and members only: www.ifhe.org

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Web: www.ifhe.org
ISSN 1999-561X

International Journal of Home Economics

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International Journal of Home Economics

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Editorial

Issue 1, 2009

Welcome to the new Editorial Board Members of the International Journal of Home Economics. Following the call for membership of the board last year, eight people have been appointed. They represent a diverse range of specializations in the Home Economics field, and each is a prominent scholar in their own right, recognised internationally in their field. Being a global journal, there is a need for a global editorial board. This is still being shaped, with the following countries currently represented: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Korea, Swaziland and Taiwan. I remind readers that the aim of IFHE is to achieve the highest quality in this e-journal. To realize that goal, there is a need to continue to refine and develop our processes. The e-journal requires: a prominent international editorial board; high quality submissions; a thorough and comprehensive review process; a high quality finish. I encourage you to contribute to building this dream by submitting high quality papers for review, and by assisting in the extension of the editorial board to include a larger number with wider global representation.

Issue 1, 2009 provides the Home Economics professional with a range of current topics of interest to the field. In the peer reviewed section of the journal, there are four articles, each of which has undergone a double-blind peer review process prior to acceptance for publication.

Also featured in this Issue are three plenary addresses from the IFHE World Congress, held in Lucerne, Switzerland last year. While more than 1000 Home Economists were in attendance, many others in our profession could not be there. All keynote and plenary papers were published as a book for delegates, and these papers are now being reprinted progressively over the next Issues of the IJHE, in the order in which they were presented at Congress. This will make the important messages from the presentations more widely available to all Home Economists internationally. The theme of the Congress, Home Economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future, was embedded in the presentations at the Congress. The Congress celebrated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE) and looked ahead to the future years of the professional body and the field of study it represents. The title of the conference and the subsequent thematic directions served to focus Home Economists and allied professionals on the questions of sustainability, advocacy and the active creation of preferred futures for Home Economics, relevant disciplinary fields, and the profession itself, while critically reflecting upon and being informed by its historical roots.

The final section of this Issue of IJHE is the review of an important artifact developed to celebrate the 100 year centennial of IFHE. A DVD detailing the establishment and development of IFHE will serve as a key record of the first 100 years of the professional organization, and provides insights into the future

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Practical wisdom, understanding of coherence and competencies for everyday life

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Abstract

The focus of this article is Home Economics education in the primary and lower secondary school in the 21st Century. Practical wisdom, understanding of coherence and competencies for everyday life are suggested as aims of Home Economics education. It is argued that these elements should be included as part of general education and 'Bildung' in late modern society. (Bildung is the German word for education, but it is used as a pedagogical term in English literature as it has another and more specific meaning than the word education.) This article raises the following questions: what, how and why should these elements be included?

A literature review and developmental work within two Home Economics classes over two years commencing with observations and interviews, followed by an action research approach, is reported. The work was further used for developing textbooks for Home Economics education in the primary and lower secondary school with the following titles: 'Home Economics in words and actions' and 'Home Economics in thoughts, words and actions'. This paper shares the concept of a new paradigm based upon a critical pedagogy, which for Home Economics education implies to know, to be able to, to want, and to be. This paper will share a Scandinavian perspective of Home Economics in order to enrich the global understanding of different ways of knowing and experiencing the profession.

Introduction

The new millennium marks the second century of the profession of Home Economics. After more than 100 years of Home Economics education we ought *to be able, capable and willing* to educate in and to practice Home Economics. We should be able to educate the *reflective practitioner*. This concept is developed by Schön (1983) and further described by Vaines, Badir and Kieren (1988) as the reflective Home Economics professional. There are implications if we cannot achieve this for Home Economics education, as the late modern society puts pressure on the human being to be reflective. The global society and late-postmodernism of the new millennium have great impact on and significance for Home Economics education.

In keeping with previous historical research of Home Economics in school and teacher education, there are four periods. The first from 1890s to 1920 was the *Introduction*, the second from 1920—1960s was the *Stabilising and refining period*, and the third from 1960—1990s was the *(Re)Creative time* (Benn, 1999a, 1999b, 2000a). The Introduction period was focused on defining aims and content of the profession, the Stabilising period was dealing more with methods—both teaching methods and methods concerning practical work. The third period came as Women's Liberation was having a significant impact and housekeeping was devalued and limited so that the aesthetic-practical creative processes in Home Economics were seen as a plausible aim.

At this time, the profession can be said to be in the Fourth period, which could be termed the "didactics of challenges". The expression didactics of challenges was developed by Karsten Schnack (2000). 'Didactics' is used here in the Nordic sense of the word, as encompassing all aspects concerning education, not merely methods. (For a further description of the history of Home Economics see Benn 1999a, 1999b, 2000a). The challenges at issue concern what it means to be a "Home Economist" in the new millennium and what it means to be educated in the 21st Century.

This paper will share a Scandinavian perspective of Home Economics in order to enrich the global understanding of different ways of knowing and experiencing the profession. In particular, the paper is informed by curricular innovations in Denmark during the 1990s. In Denmark, new curricula and approaches were developed as official documents for Home Economics in the primary and lower secondary school (the Danish Folkeskole) in 1994 and 1995 and for Home Economics teacher education in 1997, 1998 and 2000 (Ministry of Education). It is essential to understand the theory and thinking behind these earlier developments in order to develop a newer concept or paradigm for the school and Home Economics teacher education, as well as for research within these areas (Smith, 1991; Thomas & Smith, 1994). There is ideological conflict between the aims expressed in the official documents and the practices in school and teacher education that must be considered. An attempt to overcome this has been made in a developmental project within the school setting (Benn, 2000b). This developmental project was initiated by one year of classroom studies in two schools and classes, followed by another year with an action research approach changing what seemed to be the problems in Home Economics education. The paper draws on this project which involved interviews of teachers and pupils, observations and literature review attempting to examine the main problems, possibilities and perspectives that are facing Home Economics (Attar, 1990; Benn, 2000; Hjälmeskog, 2000; Petterson, 2007; Tornieporth, 1979).

It should be pointed out that during the latest years the Danish Ministry of Education has adopted a narrower view of education. According to this, the aims of the 1994 curriculum, which are still valid, must be accomplished by setting measurable national goals. This tendency towards evaluation, which can be seen in many European countries, is based on a shift in paradigm within education policy brought about partly by the OECD PISA surveys and comparisons and other studies, and partly by a shift in political power. (OECD is the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an internationally standardised assessment that was jointly developed by participating countries and administered to15-year-olds in schools.) Evaluation focuses in particular on easily measured results as part of cost-benefit analysis, while qualitative and less easily measured aspects, the so-called soft values, are not taken into consideration to the same degree.

The main research focus in this article is the general problem encountered within the Danish Home Economics education as a result of the theory-practice dilemma or dualism. Also of interest is the "translation" of the curriculum and syllabus, that is, how the overall aims of Home Economics are matched with possibilities and realities in the school context. The findings of the classroom study reveal a lack of clarification of goals in the single teaching period and a lack of evaluation and involvement of pupils as responsible parts of the education process.

The subject Home Economics in primary and secondary school

School subjects may belong to:

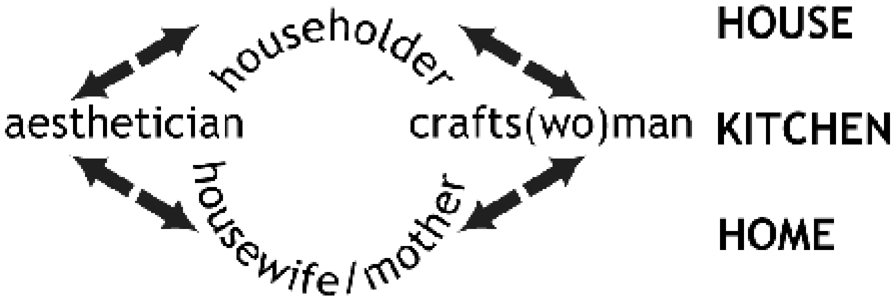
- the classical subjects within education (languages, math, religion);
- be rooted in a science or an applied science; or
- be grounded in recognised problems in society (Schnack, 2000; Nielsen, 2000; Klafki, 1997).

Where does Home Economics belong? Does Home Economics have its own basic science? Is Home Economics necessary in order to obtain a 'Bildung' in the classical sense? Has it been created in order to cope with societal problems? The author believes that only the last question can be answered with a definite yes. Home Economics was part of modern society's utility-oriented philosophy in the late 18th Century. One of the reasons for introducing Home Economics into schools and teacher education was its applied use of natural science (Benn, 2000a). How then can a subject like this be justified today when many tasks formerly done in the home have been taken over by society and industry?

To answer these questions, this paper will take a closer look at the issue. Firstly, it must be stressed that Home Economics revolves around the home, household or everyday life as this is lived and experienced in a Scandinavian environment. In this context there is a diversity of homes and households, but there are common features. It is essential that Home Economics educators bear this context in mind. But, as seen in earlier research and studies of Home Economics education in history and today (Benn, 1996, 2000b), there are different views of what the profession should focus on, which can be highlighted through four different teacher *ideal types* within the Home Economics profession, see Figure 1. These comprise: (a) householder, (b) crafts(wo)man, (c) housewife/mother, and (d) aesthetician.

As indicated in Figure 1, the four ideal teacher types have different contextual relations, house is the whole setting in which people live together, whereas kitchen is a room or place in or outside the house where cooking and other work for the house is managed. Lastly home is the place where people feel they belong. The main aims of education differ for the different ideal types:

Figure 1: Everyday life's settings and Home Economics' teachers' ideal types (Benn, 1996, 2000a)



- *the householder* has preferences towards the theoretical or analytical parts of household/Home Economics—*episteme*—and towards an understanding of economy, ecology, nutrition and other necessary scientific tools bound to the content of Home Economics. (The references are all here in Swedish language: Gustavsson (2001): Vidensfilosofi (Philosophy of knowledge)).
- *the crafts(wo-)man* focuses on the practical actions —*techne*—, the handicraft skills and the pragmatic advantages of what is learned: the ability to use artefacts, tools and materials and foods through practical actions. Here the actions are said to be in a kitchen—it might be any place where practical handicraft is done.
- *the housewife/mother* values the unreflected doxa or the meaning of care; in other words, the more ethical parts of Home Economics. Therefore this ideal type is related to home in a broad sense.
- *the gastronome or aesthetician* values the artificial, sensory im- and ex-pression—poiesis.

Episteme is one type of knowledge: the theoretical-scientific knowledge as described in an Aristotelian way of thinking, and is connected to the first ideal type. Another type of knowledge is techne: the practical-productive capability, including both handicrafts and arts, which are the focuses of the ideal types of the crafts(wo)man and aesthetician respectively. The latter may also be related to poiesis and the housemother to doxa; together they compose phronesis or practical wisdom. This exemplifies that the teacher needs to take all ideal types in their professionalism in order to cover all knowledge and learning areas of Home Economics.

Returning to the question of what it means to be a reflective practitioner—a Home Economics professional—it is clearly impossible to find a simple and unambiguous answer. This question will be explored by connecting with the qualitative data collected in the study.

Methods

The qualitative study was conducted over three years in two schools in two different communities and in two Home Economics classes. The first year was used for observations, interviews with pupils in both classes (12 in both classes in autumn, and 12 and 22 respectively in the spring, both boys and girls) and with the teachers, and by the end of year one, planning was made for changes in the second year. In the second year, an action research approach was undertaken and changes were made concerning supporting pupils' active involvement in responsibility, making tasks more problem-oriented: some based on pupils' preferences and others decided by the teacher. Different evaluation procedures were also introduced and carried out. Interviews of the pupils were also used as stimulus for change. The third year was spent on transferring results for a textbook for grade 4—7: *Home Economics in words and actions*, and a teachers' guide to support this.

In the interviews, teachers responded to the question using the words *to know*, *to be able to*, *to be willing to* and *to be*, which hearken back to the cover page of an old issue of the English Home Economics Journal Modus: *to be able, capable and willing*. (In Aristotelian terms it would mean to be knowing (episteme), capable (techne) and wise (phronesis)). The question is then to be able, capable and willing *to do what*? Perhaps, *to be able to solve an everyday problem*? This mastering of everyday life is what Methfessel (2004) points to in the article *Haushalt und Bildung – Anmerkungen nach Pisa*, which is translated as mastering of everyday life necessities by learning some basic competencies. These basic competencies must be aimed at emancipation, self-decision, participation and empowerment to fulfil the aims of education or 'Bildung', when you recognise education as a means for the human being to navigate in life (Klafki, 1985, 1998; Methfessel, 1996).

Home Economics, education and learning:

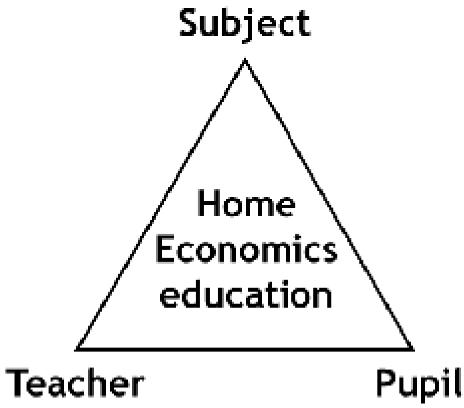
The core content of the Danish Home Economics curriculum is described as handicraft, cooking, foods, meals, nutrition, consumption and hygiene. But these core issues have to be put into a broader context concerning health, environment, culture, and technology, meaning that education should aim at the ability to see and understand the connections between what one does in a home/household context and what one wants, taking into account one's own needs and those of one's family, but also the consequences for others. From this stance, professionalism involves working not only with isolated core subject matter items in Home Economics, such as food, textiles, housing and hygiene, but also with related perspectives, such as the significance of these areas for health, and the quality of life, and for resources, and the environment, taking into consideration social and cultural aspects, technological and societal connections, ethical and aesthetic aspects, and working with these towards action competence. Working with just the core items alone would make education easier to plan, conduct and measure. The problem is, however, that it would not fulfil the need for children's Home Economics education in the 21st Century in the risk society (Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992). Education needs to aim at emancipation, citizenship and solidarity. Education and professionalism also imply being able to organise one's subject beyond the sense of planning without pupil involvement, or using a curriculum without thinking it through; rather, it means working in and with the subject and its content in co-operation with the pupils. This idea is presented visually in Figure 2.

This model requires that Home Economics teachers' professionalism also encompasses what we may call subject educational/didactic thinking, which means "that a teacher always has to transform—translate, arrange, mediate, reconstruct—the subject professional in an accessible way for the pupils. (Didactics is used in the Scandinavian and German sense of the word to mean consideration of how to obtain a 'Bildung'—in other words, to be educated. The pedagogical questions raised are: How, what, who and why.) The teacher must assist the pupils in interpreting (breaking) the code,"(Schnack, 2000, p. 19, author translation). Breaking the code means finding:

- the elementary
- the fundamental and
- the exemplary.

These three components comprise elements in teaching and thinking of teaching.

Figure 2: The didactic triangle



First, the elementary is the essential and basic (not just elementary) content that opens one aspect of life, or the world, up to the pupil. In Home Economics, it refers to *everyday life, the household area*, for example, content as the basic meaning of food, the sense of the food while it is being prepared and eaten, and the meal eaten together with others.

> *The effects on a child of contents that are mastered are the 'fundamental'. In a fruitful didactic unlocking (presentation) it is possible for a child to achieve considerably more insight than merely an understanding of the learning content. The child (learner) gains insight into reality itself, and even into means of dealing with it. (Krüger & Yonge, 2007, p.215)*

In other words, it refers to what is of fundamental importance in the lives of children and youngsters in their encounters with Home Economics, themes that will 'move' them.

> *There is a path from the elemental to the fundamental that should always be kept in mind, and kept open by a teacher. The elemental has an unlocking function and facilitates presenting the contents to a child, but it is valid didactically only if it is transformed into a fundamental learning experience by a child/learner. (Krüger& Yonge, 2007, p.215)*

Finally, the exemplary refers to commendable themes, themes useful for the unfolding and expansion of the subject: the professionalism. An example of that could be 'our daily bread'.

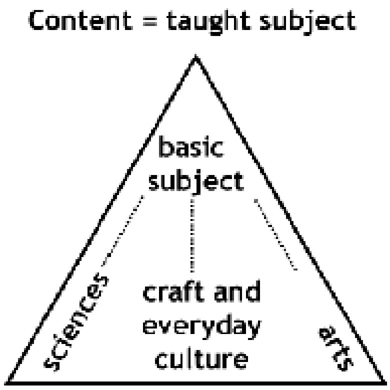
In this exemplary issue, it is possible to work with bread in a cultural context as well as nutrition, as symbol or material. Bread can be produced or bought, and made a subject for all sorts of investigations.

In the European context, the basic field of Home Economics must have the home or the household and everyday life at its core. Home Economics is a broad subject field. It consists of (transferred from the subject of music):

- the basic subject,
- sciences,
- arts (expressed as aesthetics) and
- crafts and everyday culture.

This is a markedly different way of conceptualizing Home Economics than that used in North America or other global contexts. It is unique to the European context. Each element of Figure 3 is now described.

Figure 3: Content of subject (Nielsen, 2000, p. 72)



One by one these parts act towards a "full Home Economics education", empowering people to be able, capable and willing to act, or should I say towards the reflective (competent) practitioner, or perhaps to obtain a practical wisdom and an understanding of coherence. In reality the single parts or roles can not be seen as featured here, but you do see these differences in teaching content and methods in the school. All bits and pieces from the expressions can more or less be referred to the official documents, from textbooks and from reality. In the Danish primary and lower secondary school ("Folkeskolen") the subject is belonging to the group of practical-aesthetical (or music) subjects. It might as well have been put to the group of natural scientific subjects or into the social sciences or the humanities.

With regard to science, the subject of Home Economics, in contrast with other practical-aesthetic subjects, has been very closely connected to natural sciences. Gradually, the cultural and societal sciences have been added as elements of the basic sciences. These changes are now evident in the official laws, regulations and policy instruments (the school act, curricula, syllabi etc) concerning primary and secondary school and teacher education. A second element of Figure 3 is Arts and aesthetics. In Home Economics it can be impressions, expressions and sensory experiences within food composing, producing, eating, tasting and the meal occasion. A third element is the basic subject, in Home Economics; it is simply said home and economics. The problem is that defining the basic in Home Economics is not as simple as may be read in this article. Home Economics as a basic field or subject is defined in curricula, syllabi and textbook. Introducing the Danish understanding from the Ministry of Education, Home Economics was presented as food, cooking, meals, hygiene and consumption in relation to culture, environment and technology. The core element of Figure 3, Craft and Everyday Culture, encompasses handicraft as the expression of practical and partly tacit knowledge, which are what some teachers and pupils alike see as the essential part of Home Economics. Pupils like the practical work. But today everyday culture and life also includes the aspect of consumerism, as crafts and care (and art) have been taken over by professionals (industry, social services, official art, life/the fine arts, etc.). Crafts or practical-productive capability, at core, encompass or strive to encompass both science and arts/aesthetics (Nielsen, 2000). In schools, practical knowledge has been considered inferior to theoretical knowledge, which is part of our heritage from classical Greek society and also a general view of practical work in the society. Gustavsson (2001) notes that:

> *The theoretical, which is connected to human beings' intellectual capacity, and the practical, which is bound to the hands and the body, have, according to longstanding tradition, been viewed as separate from each other. Theoretical knowledge has been seen as superior to practical knowledge. A central thought, when we talk of practical-productive capacity today is that, when our actions and our ability to reflect are connected, we think and act at one and the same time, (p. 33, author translation).*

Through practical-productive action, pupils can experience theory or vice versa, when offered the right opportunities.

Actions and competencies

Up until now there has been a presentation of Home Economics in a Danish context in the school setting. The aim and content has been discussed in the light of the late modern society, with the aim of education as empowerment, citizenship and critical thinking. The pupil is seen as an active and responsible participant in education; and the teacher as a responsible and reflective practitioner planning and thinking Home Economics. The figures presented reinforce this understanding.

The developmental work gave rise to a broader understanding of Home Economics, as Home Economics education encompasses a broad range of elements, which are neither learnt nor expressed in the same way. This idea refers to the forms of action developed for the official Home Economics guidelines (Ministry of Education 1995). See Table 1 for an elaboration.

Our understandings of what constitutes the professional teacher must include the ability to organise and arrange learning situations that include all the different and differing activity forms profiled in Table 1—not necessarily at the same time but in the course of the whole Home Economics education (which, in Denmark, demands a minimum of time and resources—at least one year with 3 classes a week or more intensive courses several times). The action forms cover the whole range of knowledge described earlier as episteme, phronesis, and techne.

Table 1: Actions or action forms within Home Economics (Benn, 2001)

Actions—Action forms	Expanding comments	Examples
Analytic Actions	The theoretical part, in which knowledge of different conditions gives rise to discussion – background information found in different materials, on the Internet or as teacher's or pupil's introductions or …	To analyse a recipe, a label, a composition of smells, tastes, colours, textures and temperatures, to …
Communicative Actions	The social part, comprising dialogues, discussions in connection with tasks and problems	To be able to submit and discuss for example the choice of a dish, its energy consumption, its nutrient composition, price, … To make a recipe.
Practical-Craft Actions	The practical part, comprising production and reproduction (of known dishes)	To be able to cook, bake, roast, clean ….by use of ordinary methods and techniques
Expressive Actions	The aesthetic part, comprising impressions and fantasy which can be transformed into different expressions	To be able to compose a dish according to taste, colours and texture, serve it beautifully …
Impressionistic Actions	The individual part, comprising sensorial, emotional, physical and intellectual, social and other experiences in connection with practical and theoretical activity and action	To sense for example a variety of foods, to develop skills by use of different materials and tools, to develop a "new language" by working with Home Economics themes and an understanding, which expands the individual's possibilities

Challenges and perspectives

Home Economics is knowledge in action or thoughtful practice. Both concepts express dialectic coherence between theory and practice. Home Economics professionalism (Home Economics in action) or competencies in thoughtful practice can be expressed in the following concepts and terms:

- understanding of coherence
- everyday life competencies
- responsibility, and
- carefulness.

These concepts are expanded in Table 2. Many Home Economics professionals may object that these concepts are too broad and do not adequately take into account the interpretation, understanding and accomplishments of Home Economics and the ability to use basic techniques and methods and to make nutritiously correct choices. Home Economics also comprises these aspects, but the very essence of Home Economics professionalism is to ensure that pupils or students are able to participate actively in everyday life, now and in the future. They must also be able to act on a practical level, but this does not necessarily mean they only have to learn technical processes, such as 'how to follow the recipe'. Rather they have to be able to question modes of acting: individual, social, and societal (and global).

Table 2: Competence elements of professionalism in Home Economics education (Benn, 2001)

Elements in Home Economics professionalism / Competencies	Aims	Examples
To know	Understanding of coherence (knowing)	to know the coherence between what you do and the result", for example, between resource use and the environment, between intake of food and drink and health
To be able	Everyday life competencies (capable and cope-able)	To be able to cook and to handle everyday life. To be able to sense and create a delicious meal
To want	Responsibility and (willing) participation	Citizenship might be a better term for the concept – to participate in solving the problems of everyday life for example concerning foods, taking a stand on production, choice and no choice, "the food policy of Home Economics, the environmental policy of... and so on"
To be	Caring	The life world – to care for each other for example when working and planning together in the school and at home, to assist others …

Practical wisdom and understanding of coherence

This broad way of thinking is presented on behalf of the empirical study and on theories from the field of education and pedagogy, mainly from a Nordic and central European understanding, both within general pedagogy, but also from Nordic and European Home Economists, as well as economists from Americas and Australia as can be seen in the references of the article.

To know, to be able, and to want to be regarding Home Economics and the aims written in Table 2 are what formed the foundations for the research project in the school and the subsequent development of textbooks. It means that the teacher has to take into consideration that all elements are covered in the course of education but not at the same time. It is also a means to present the broadness and importance of the field for pupils, parents, curriculum planners and school administration.

In short, teacher professionalism within Home Economics—the reason for being educated within Home Economics—implies that one is able to plan and create a learning environment and situation that offers pupils opportunities to obtain an understanding of coherence and competencies, which can be used in everyday life, and make them responsible and caring participants in life. This is not a fundamental answer to the question of what it means to be a Home Economics professional; in other words, it is not a canon-based way of thinking, which regards the profession and education as something obtained through definite texts and tasks. Rather, what is offered here are some perspectives on, and considerations of professionalism and content in Home Economics from a European context.

One answer to the question of whether Home Economics is necessary in education today is, that if one wants to be able to make choices that are meaningful for the individual and the group and are perhaps also meaningful in terms of cultural heritage—not only as nostalgia but as a necessary tool for promoting action and development and for understanding the coherence between nature and culture and between home and society. The Norwegian philosopher Erling Lars Dale (2000) has explicitly mentioned Home Economics as being part of an ethical education:

> *The school subject **Home Economics** is important, for example, for fostering positive attitudes towards carrying out tasks and taking care of obligations in everyday life…. Home Economics can be seen as a basic element in the students' ethical language, which encompasses care, responsibility and equal values in human interrelations (p. 34, author translation).*

It is hoped that the European notions of Home Economics introduced in this paper will appeal to Home Economists around the world, further extending our conversation about what we ought to be able, capable and willing to do as Home Economists in the 21st Century.

Biography

Associate Professor Jette Benn, PhD is employed in the School of Education, University of Aarhus, Copenhagen, Denmark. Jette researches and writes about home economics and consumer education, history and practice. Jette is Chair of the IFHE research committee, and is referee of journals within the area of home economics and has been working both within Nordic and international research projects. She has been involved in curriculum development for the Ministry of Education and developed textbooks for the school. She serves as the National Liaison of IFHE. Email: benn@dpu.dk

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Preserving integrity:
University program changes

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Abstract

This paper proposes and outlines connections among personal, professional and program integrity during regime changes. If members of the Home Economics profession rethink the place of these three types of integrity within their practice, especially during regime changes, they can live and practice with conviction, speak with legitimacy and credibility about the profession, and act with authority and confidence. Eleven principles are tendered to help Home Economics professionals practice with integrity within a dynamically changing context.

Nearly everyone has a story, or has heard someone tell a story, about the reorganization, restructuring or closure of a Home Economics or Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program, department, or college The authors are no exception. Carver (1979) commented on this phenomenon in our profession, as did Firebaugh (1980), reporting on closures dating as far back as 1967. Our intent is to make this political reality more visible in the literature. Grounding the discussion within the context of professionalism, ethics and moral integrity sets the stage for further dialogue as this powerful wave of change spreads across the country, even the world.

Why integrity matters and how regime change compromises it

Several issues emerge at the onset of this professional controversy. There is no question that Home Economics has established a proud heritage of accomplishments of improving the daily lives of individuals and families. Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professionals throughout the world have contributed knowledge, research, service and expertise to address the many and varied issues faced daily by individuals and families. Given these contributions, it seems unthinkable that anyone would attempt to dismantle or undermine secondary and university programs in Home Economics whose primary purpose is to socialise new generations of practitioners to improve the quality of life and augment the human condition. Perhaps it is because those making the decisions regarding the departments, programs, and profession are uninformed or do not understand the integrated nature of a profession that generates research and knowledge to address the complex problems that people face daily as a result of human actions and social realities. Pendergast and McGregor (2007) further argued that these decision makers often are grounded in a patriarchal ideology that favours natural sciences over human sciences, men's work over that generally associated with women, or both. From this stance, decision makers assume the FCS profession lacks the sophistication of other fields of study; hence, they conclude it is a less-than-legitimate area for scholarly endeavour. Quite the contrary.

The contributions of the FCS profession have helped shape and sustain the family as the primary social unit of society. People need assistance and preparation to learn how to "be in a family"; it does not come naturally (McGregor, 2008a). Without this support, the most basic social unit at the heart of our ever-changing society cannot fulfil its contributions to human life. Marjorie East (1978, p. 141) claimed, "Home Economics is a focus on the home in order to improve humanity". With this as its raison d'être, the Home Economics profession has a powerful role to play in society with attendant moral and ethical responsibilities. Indeed, FCS is a profession and as such is defined by a number of characteristics including personal and professional integrity via:

- the provision of services that benefit society as a whole
- a high level of intellectual activity, especially moral judgments
- adherence to a recognised code of ethics with attendant sanctions if the public is harmed
- strict supervision of education and socialization into the profession (involving licensing, certification and advanced degree credentials)
- a limited scope and purpose dependent on complex knowledge and practice with adherence to an agreed upon social end (Brown & Paolucci, 1978; McGregor, 2005).

In interpreting Brown and Paolucci's (1978) work, Vaines (1980) explained that while a mission-oriented profession (like Home Economics) needs knowledge to accomplish practice with moral overtones, a discipline-oriented field sees knowledge as the end in itself. It is clear that FCS's role is different from the pure disciplines that seek knowledge for the sake of more knowledge (Brown, 1980). As professionals with a moral imperative, Home Economists are expected to exhibit certain moral and ethical characteristics and actions that set us apart from those who are not bound by the same codes. People entering the profession need a special form of socialization if they are to embrace this moral imperative. This socialization should happen within philosophically grounded FCS programs (Gentzler, 1987; McGregor, 2006a, 2006b; McGregor & MacCleave, 2007), something that has been profoundly compromised due to Home Economics program closures and restructuring.

Specifically, over the last few decades, those who have not understood the magnitude of our contributions have made program-related decisions based on their knowledge and perceptions of our work, decisions that have profoundly impacted FCS's future (see Barnes, 2001). In response, to avoid losing faculty positions, members of the Home Economics profession have tended to capitulate and/or have fallen prey to:

- the whim of the person(s) in charge,
- his or her (their) political agendas and ideological stances, and
- their (mis)understandings of our profession (Pendergast & McGregor, 2007; Vincenti, 1997).

The purpose of this paper is to look at the professionalism, ethics and moral integrity inherent when FCS professionals experience supervisors, administrators and governing boards making decisions that negatively influence the profession's ability to accomplish its mission.

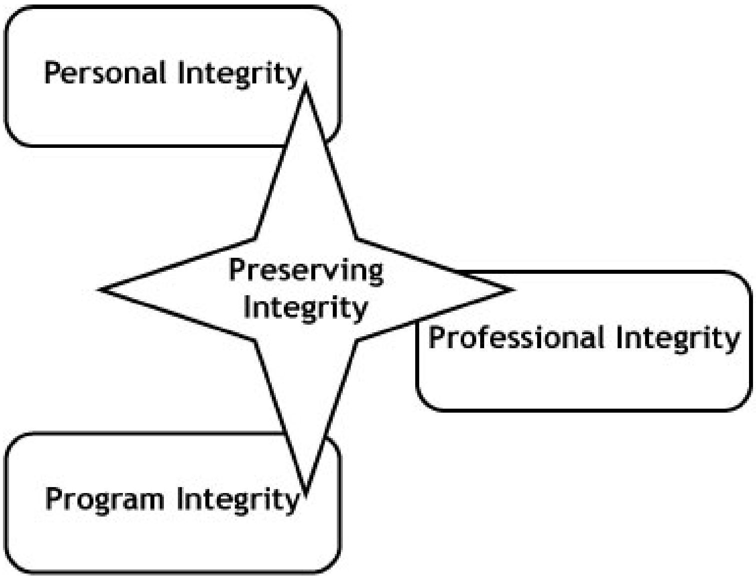
Ethics and morally grounded practice are at the heart of Home Economics (Craig, 1991). Although a review of FCS literature provided an adequate overview of ethics, little was revealed about personal and professional integrity related to FCS and Home Economics program changes. Current FCS literature does not contain any discussion of the intricate process of maintaining one's personal integrity, or the profession's integrity, during regime mandates and changes. This paper serves to initiate and inform that discussion. To that end, it does not look at individual decisions, programs, or incidences that have impacted on the profession; rather, this paper aims to help FCS professionals understand themselves as they wrestle with their personal questions and ruminations related to program reconfigurations and closures.

Professionalism, ethics and integrity

Houle (1980) identified 14 compelling characteristics of professionalism. Two of those are related to ethics and integrity. First, as part of professionalism, people should contribute to the creation of a subculture through acculturation into the profession. This subculture includes the lore, traditions, prestige systems, special language and other features that are not generally understood by those outside the profession. Second, this subculture respects ethical practices and settings where ethics can be discussed and dialogued. These ethical activities should contribute to ongoing public acceptance and personal esteem enjoyed by the profession.

The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) lists, as a core value of the organization, and by association, of individual members: "integrity and ethical behaviour." Ethics is an integral part of professionalism; integrity is a fundamental element of ethics. Ethics is considered as one of five branches of philosophy. It studies people's actions and queries: *What should I do? How should I act?* Ethics is a requirement of human life. It is a means of deciding a course of action. Without ethics, actions may very well be random, aimless and even unethical. If actions are considered unethical, it could be said that people lack scruples or principles, or ruthlessly seek a personal advantage (Laundauer & Rowlands, 2001; McGregor, 2006c). Ethics refers to the quality of one's inner character or to one's moral philosophy of what is right and wrong behaviour. One's system of ethics must consist of elements that help one deal with both emergency situations and regular, day-to-day choices. One of these crucial elements is the virtue of integrity. Personal integrity refers to the reputation of a person while professional integrity refers to the reputation of an entire profession, shaped by the actions of its individual members. Each is outlined below, as is the notion of the resultant integrity of the program after a regime change (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Preserving Three Types of Integrity During FCS Program Regime Changes



Personal integrity

Integrity is the modern name used to describe the actions of those persons who consistently act from a firmly established character pattern of doing the right thing (Wakin, 1996). This character trait is called a virtue, a moral habit generally resulting in gaining and maintaining one's value system. Integrity is the virtue of practicing what one preaches or believes to be right. Any deviation from what one knows to be right is an attack on one's own life, and a threat to others. One has to be able to look oneself in the mirror. To have integrity, one has to be a person of principle, meaning that one understands, accepts and lives by one's principles. Personal integrity refers to the complex notion of moral wholeness or unit of the self (Ascension Health, 2007b). To act without integrity means others may become mistrustful, because one's actions are not predictable (Laundauer & Rowlands, 2001).

The key to integrity is consistency on a daily basis. It means being bound by and following moral and ethical standards even, and especially, when making life's hard choices. The Latin root of the word integrity is similar to that of integer, meaning whole number. The concept of wholeness, or consistency, is clearly relevant to integrity (Sherman, 2003). To act with integrity is to engage in behaviour and make decisions that are consistently in line with one's principles. Other words often used when trying to define integrity are: scrupulous, honest, truthful, open, fair, faithful, as well as those already mentioned, including: principled, whole, trustworthy and consistent (The Teal Trust, 2002). Morality aside, behavioural integrity is the extent to which people's actions align with their espoused principles (Simons, 2002).

Different types of personal integrity

Personal integrity can be separated into four different categories: self-integration, self-identity, standing for something, and moral purpose (Cox, La Caze & Levine, 2001). These definitions, distinguished below, provide professionals with various ways to maintain personal integrity, depending on how they understand the concept.

Self-integration. People can endorse certain things they want in their lives and then outlaw other things that get in the way of these higher order desires. This is called integrity as self-integration (Cox et al., 2001). The capacity to overcome temptation, when faced with something that one has outlawed, is seen as a display of character, a sign of one's integrity. As well, people can maintain self-integration integrity in other ways. For example, a Home Economics professional may endorse always having some role to play in the field, and will inhibit any other desires that get in the way of having that role. When a department is closed, if people really endorse having some role in the field, they will find a way to do that, even if the department is closed. They do not lose their self-integration integrity if they move on and find a way to apply FCS practice outside the field of FCS. Also, people's self-integration integrity can be challenged in ways other than by encountering an outlawed desire—it can involve inner conflict over principles, values, commitment and wishes, which are always in flux. Self-knowledge is crucial to self-integration integrity.

Self-identity. The second type of personal integrity pertains to maintaining one's identity. This process entails holding steadfastly to one's commitment rather than ordering and endorsing certain desires (the intent of self-integration integrity). It means doing the right thing even though no one else is watching. Identity integrity stays in place whether the test is adversity or prosperity; acting from this stance always costs something, sometimes everything. Ultimately, identity integrity is an issue of commitment (De Bly, 2003).

Standing for something. The third type of personal integrity refers to when people stand up for what they believe in, and they do this standing within a community of people trying to discover what in life is worth doing. This position of integrity means being able to stand up for what one believes, while respecting the judgments of others. People striving for this type of integrity face a challenge because they can easily be seen as fanatical, someone who does not give proper respect to the deliberations and views of others. Exemplary figures of integrity stand by their judgments in the face of enormous pressure to recant. This approach is different than fanatically standing by something, with *fanatic* meaning unruly passion, extreme devotion to a cause, and overzealousness. Without respect for others' deliberations and judgments, it would be easy to become a fanatic (Cox et al., 2001). Retaining professional integrity would mean retaining respect for others as one consistently stands up for what one believes (professional assertiveness) (McGregor, 2006b).

Moral purpose. A final type of personal integrity involves the morality of the commitment to which people intend to remain true. Because this type of integrity is concerned with deliberating about how to live, people have integrity if they intellectually pursue the nature of a morally good life. People would consistently display intellectual integrity in all moral deliberations, and then act with moral purpose. There are some things, however, that people of integrity cannot do, no matter how intelligible and defensible their actions are—such actions are just not right. Judgment of this type of integrity would involve either (a) judgments about the reasonableness of another's moral point of view, rather than the absolute correctness of their view; or (b) judgments about how intellectually responsible the person was when he or she thought about the moral question (Cox et al., 2001). The key to applying this notion of integrity is to make sure that the action one is judging is definitely a moral project. Failing to complete a book is not reflective of a lack of integrity, no matter how committed the person was to writing the book, because writing a book is not a moral project. Being committed to preventing the commission of evil, and then letting that evil event happen, could be construed as a lack of integrity because the person did not apply his- or herself intellectually or rigorously enough to address the moral problem.

Professional integrity

Whereas the previous section presented a perspective on *personal* integrity, this section focuses on *professional* integrity. Each profession has a set of core values by which it identifies its very essence. These values constitute the profession's moral conscience, its sense of what is right and scrupulous. A conscience is an inner voice that guides everyday decisions to act. Part of each practitioner's decision involves the application of the profession's values to a particular situation (Brown, 1980). Professional integrity refers to people acting in accordance with the core values of their chosen profession—acting with a professional conscience, the quality of being true to one's profession (Ascension Health, 2007a; Sherman, 2003).

Wakin (1996) theorised about professional integrity. His thinking coincides with the thinking in our field, and is a useful way to view the FCS profession's discourse on the topic. Like Brown and Paolucci (1978), he maintained that professions exist to serve some societal need. Because of the critical, personal service they provide to society, members of professions are educated and supported by the society they serve. He cited as examples: health practitioners, educators and peacekeepers. Brown (1980) added Home Economics. This inherent link to the community is why professions require integrity. This obligation is especially germane to family and consumer sciences. We serve society by ensuring that individuals and families are strong, resilient and empowered. To act with professional integrity, each member of the profession has the responsibility to have personal integrity, and the best of us create environments that nourish the integrity of others (Sherman, 2003).

Integrity of personal service professions

Brown (1980) distinguished between personal service professions and impersonal service professions, with Home Economics being an example of the former, as are medicine, education and social work. By their very nature, personal service professions are imbued with ethics and integrity. FCS service is personal because it often requires face-to-face contact, an inherently high-touch approach, high levels of personal trust, and location-specific requirements not readily replicated elsewhere (e.g., meeting in a family home). Citing Halmos (1971), Brown offered a powerful profile of Home Economics as a personal service profession (rather than impersonal service, like engineering). The full intent of Home Economics professionals is to bring about a change in the person(s) they serve. More to the point, the intent is to foster changes in the system of concepts that a person uses when interpreting and acting upon the self and the environment. As well, FCS provides services with specific ends that are in the interests of those served and of larger society. Such ends are examined and judged within the profession in collaboration with those persons served;

hence, they are called valued ends rather than predetermined or given by some expert (called a given end)—to value something means it is important to you.

The actions of FCS professionals also have moral overtones because any decisions made assume that doing one thing is better for the person being served than doing something else. These are called value judgments, because they concern both the values held by the people being served and the values of the FCS professional, as to what is the desired, valued end. The actions of FCS professionals intentionally affect the lives of other people; hence, FCS professionals have a moral obligation to determine what goals or end states are desired by the people they serve. Their guiding, normative question is, "What should be done?" (Brown, 1980). This question must be posed from a position of professional integrity. Because the Home Economic professional's intervention purposively affects the lives of those served, the latter must have a voice—agency—in determining the nature of the valued end results of the intervention (McGregor, 2007).

Brown (1980) asserted that Home Economics can assume this moral position in their work because, in the case of personal service, the relationship between the professional and people being served is reciprocal. The prevailing attitude is one of mutual respect, trust, unity, sympathy, confidence and interdependence. The assumption is that to have a true understanding of the import of professional activity, the FCS professional must understand the meaning the person being served attaches to the valued end. Also, members of personal service professions believe that people can take action because they are conscious beings and because they assign meanings and purpose to things in their life. As well, members of personal service professions believe that humans are capable of critical reflective thought and self-initiated action (self forming). From this stance, FCS professionals believe they can effect changes in the persons they serve by working collaboratively with them in a context of respect and mutual gain. To that end, Brown believed Home Economic professionals must practice from a position of deep integrity because there is such great moral significance and obligations in their professional actions.

Relationship between professional and program integrity

These assertions beg the question, "How does a deeper, personal understanding of professionalism, attendant ethics and moral integrity relate to the integrity of program changes?" We posit that the connection is undeniable. When FCS academic units are under threat of changes that diminish their ability to prepare FCS professionals, FCS practitioners have a special responsibility to the institution, colleagues and the professional community to act with professional integrity. This response entails taking guidance from a communal set of values associated with being FCS professionals. When people subscribe and act in accordance with this value set and accompanying principles, constraints are placed on their behaviour; that is, their professional integrity is bound up in competing moral principles and values. Integrity is the bridge between character and conduct (Wakin, 1996). If, when a department in under threat, people act expediently, in desperation, in a make-shift manner, or in a way that renders a personal advantage, it can be said that they did not act with professional integrity—the professional community of FCS is affected by their actions. Each time a secondary or university program is threatened, the profession as a whole is compromised. Furthermore, if people are members of a profession, then '*who I am*' (integrity) must involve their social role as a practicing professional. The social aspect of integrity is very significant because, when people fail to act with professional integrity when programs are under threat, the whole professional community is diminished.

Wakin (1996) noted that, in all professions, the issue of personal competence is directly related to professional integrity. The obligation to be competent is a moral one. Competence refers to the capacity and power to take action. Wakin suggested that even those colleagues and superiors who tolerate incompetence (academics acting without power) are culpable in a breach of professional integrity. So, the case can be made that when Deans, Chairs, Vice Presidents and Provosts tolerate the restructuring of programs that stem from persons acting without the power they claim to have, or for their own self interest, the former are contributing to the breach of integrity of the Family and Consumer Science profession. This line of reasoning applies also to cases where fellow colleagues take initiatives to change existing organizational arrangements, changes that affect the integrity of program offerings, and potential graduates.

Furthermore, this line of thinking can be taken to actions that happen outside one's home institution. Wakin (1996) made the case that if professionals do not take joint responsibility for the conduct undertaken by other members of the profession, they are breaching professional integrity. Simply put, if one discovers that a sister institution is trying to merge, restructure or close an existing program, and one does not take action to address the ethical implications of these changes, one "sins against professional integrity" (p. 5). Home economists may find it difficult to accept Wakin's assertion that we are sinning against professional integrity if we do not speak up for other programs. An automatic, defensive response is, "*Why do I have any responsibility for what happens at another university*?" He would answer that, because only fellow professionals are capable of evaluating the competence of others in their field, they must accept the professional responsibility of upholding the standards and mission of the entire profession. Fellow FCS processionals are best able to spot failures of leadership, abuses of power, or the venalities of conduct (personal gain) that interfere with achieving the profession's mission.

Wakin (1996) also recognised the conundrum faced by people in these situations, that their obligation of professional integrity may be pitted against personal loyalties and friendships. He maintained that where the stakes to the professional community and society at large are high enough, professional integrity should win out. This obligation is complicated when the program is led by those who have tenure, are not interested in leaving, are not conversant with leading edge innovations in the field, or some combination. As well, Griffore and Phenice (2005) pointed to the vulnerability of human ecology programs when there is no cohesiveness or support amongst the faculty affected by pending or imminent program changes. This collegial solidarity is difficult but necessary in the presence of university-wide resolve to eliminate programs, in concert with a lack of support from university administrators. Even the best efforts from outside the school can be undermined when the internal professional integrity is weakened or missing.

Another dimension of professional integrity that plays a role in program changes is our obligation to the future generation of Home Economics practitioners. Pre-professionals are supposed to learn the importance of the social and community obligations of their chosen profession. They should learn that they inherit the responsibility to maintain standards and conduct in the entire profession, and not just for themselves. Society gives them the authority to act as a professional. With this authority and autonomy comes a serious professional obligation to society (Brown, 1980). If their pre-professional socialization does not prepare them for this, they may not develop the confidence to act with integrity. Worse yet, when departments are moving through the painful process of restructuring or closure, students are exposed to deep tensions and the nuances of professional integrity being played out on their watch. As FCS programs experience restructuring and other changes, FCS professionals have a profound obligation to the next generation. This obligation exists because professional integrity reflects on not only the reputation of individual FCS and attendant organizations, but also on the image and credibility of the profession as perceived by others (McGregor, 2007). It is important that the tradition of ethical behaviour be carefully maintained and transmitted with enthusiasm to future generations. Any breaches of professional and personal integrity could be devastating to society in the long term, because these breaches will taint the socialization of the incoming generation of practitioners (Wakin, 1996).

Program integrity after a regime change

In all but a few cases, the regime does change. The final section of this paper discusses the challenge of trusting the integrity of the results of the program changes. Has the integrity of the programs been retained or compromised? To discuss this aspect of the issue, we turn again to the idea that wholeness and integrity complement each other. Wholeness refers to being intact, pure, unadulterated, not corrupted, not breached (Cox et al., 2001). If a Home Economics program is divided or siphoned off to other departments, it is no longer intact. If foreign substances (people or subject matter) are introduced into a stable program, it can become adulterated. If faculty members cannot leave the emerging new unit because of job security issues, they may be corrupted over time by being demoralised. If the walls of the department are being climbed or scaled by others wanting resources (or saying the department does not have any resources so they pull the walls down), then the department is being breached (Pendergast & McGregor, 2007). When any of these situations materialise, the integrity (wholeness) of the entire unit is in jeopardy.

Consequently, one aspect of integrity inherent in regime changes at universities is whether we can trust the integrity of the results of the changes. What does the new program structure look like and can we trust that it is serving society? If we accept that families have five basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, family relations/human development, and resource management and consumption) (McGregor, 2008a), then any program that leaves any of these out lacks integrity. If we assume that any program that shapes future FCS professionals should be interdisciplinary (McGregor, 2008b), then any program that does not have students taking courses from a collection of related disciplines lacks integrity. If we assume that families are better served if Home Economic professionals are prepared in fundamental family processes (decision making, communication, problem solving, resource management, etc.), then any program that omits these lacks integrity. If we assume that families are better served if FCS professionals have skills in leadership, policy and advocacy, a critical science perspective and knowledge of the history of the profession (McGregor, 2008b; McGregor & MacCleave, 2007), then a program that excludes these lacks integrity.

Standing up for such a comprehensive approach to Home Economics programs is a challenge if people believe they can maintain personal and professional integrity only if they do not engage in blaming, criticizing or breaching etiquette. But it is a legitimate stance to take. FCS has a solid record of historically endowing comprehensive university programs with integrity, and we are obligated to assert their merit. Any deviance from this comprehensiveness, any short cuts, any taking of people's arguments for change at their word (without speaking out), can reduce the integrity of any results that stem from regime change. And program fragmentation does occur. At many universities, whole FCS departments are broken up and then the smaller pieces are transferred to other departments, usually medicine, agriculture, sociology, business or education and, recently, human sciences or human development (Griffore & Phenice, 2005; Pendergast & McGregor, 2007). In some instances, these programs within FCS colleges have become so large, they have become new colleges. The result is a total breach of integrity of the professional offerings. Often, the professional orientation courses, capstone courses, and the collection of processes needed to work with families and represent their interests are lost as well: leadership, management, policy and advocacy, communication, problem solving and decision making. Without this grounding in FCS principles and processes, the future of the profession is compromised, along with its integrity. How can the Home Economics profession remain ethically responsible if it is not preparing graduates who have the historical grounding, skills, competencies, processes, principles and values to serve society and its members? How can the new program arrangements have professional integrity if people are forced to acquiesce or agree to embrace the new model for the sake of saving their jobs or a funded position or rescuing bits and parts of the program?

Principled conclusion

Maintaining program integrity and professional and personal integrity is a complicated dance, often with unwilling partners. Yet, we know the dance continues—program changes are inevitable, for many reasons. FCS professionals have to find a way to live through these changes with personal and professional integrity. A recommended strategy is to assume a principled approach to practice. It is very important that FCS professionals determine what their principles are, as well as the principles of the profession, so they have a moral benchmark when they encounter these very difficult and life altering situations (The Teal Trust, 2002).

If FCS professionals act from a principled stance, others may not agree with what they are saying, but they will respect them and know that they are acting with personal integrity. This respect helps ensure open lines of communication. If FCS professionals believe they cannot live with how a program is being transformed, their decision to stay or depart must come from a place of personal and, ideally, professional integrity. Regarding the latter, in order to make sure FCS professionals can strive to ensure that university program changes respect the underlying principles of the profession (professional integrity), resulting in program integrity, it is imperative that mission and vision statements, codes of conduct and ethics, framework documents, body of knowledge documents and the like actually contain these principles and are readily available to all practitioners (McGregor, Pendergast, Seniuk, Eghan & Engberg, 2008; McGregor & MacCleave, 2007).

This paper proposed and outlined connections among personal, professional and program integrity during regime changes. Our intent was to make this political reality more visible in FCS professional discourse in such a way that members of the profession feel more empowered to preserve all three dimensions of integrity. This approach is a more powerful professional stance than assuming that one is a victim of forces beyond one's control (Sherman, 2003). To that end, several principles are worth remembering, if Home Economic professionals want to practice with integrity within a dynamically changing context:

- gain self-knowledge, especially through taking an inventory of both personal and professional values and principles (McGregor, 1997);
- assume the responsibility to act in accordance with the core principles and values of the profession as well as one's own value system, and work on acknowledging and reconciling conflicts between these value systems;
- become familiar with, and critique, the profession's code of ethics, principles, missions, and philosophical underpinnings (McGregor, 2006a) so that one can be ready to defend them during regime changes;
- make decisions that are consistently in line with one's principles. Doing this on a daily basis builds one's character and readies one to meet the really difficult situations;
- respect the difference between, but total interdependence of, personal integrity (reputation) and professional integrity (reputation);
- retain respect for others and their judgments while consistently standing up for what one believes (professional assertiveness);
- intellectually pursue the nature of "What is the good life, what is right and wrong, what should I do?" These initiatives prepare one for situations that can compromise one's personal and professional integrity;
- begin to perceive maintaining integrity as both a process of elucidation and cleansing (coming clean with oneself);
- accept the challenge that one has responsibility for what happens at other institutions because the results impact the integrity of the entire profession. Not acting in these situations places society and the profession at risk;
- accept one's responsibility to the future generation of the FCS profession by ensuring a tradition of ethical, moral behaviour, especially during regime changes;
- accept that FCS university programs are susceptible to regime changes (for many reasons) (Barnes, 2001), recognise the ways that wholeness of these programs can be breached, and prepare to embrace different notions of integrity as these changes play out;

- Finally, even though this paper was about individual practitioners, the power of the collective profession needs to be used more overtly. If a principled individual practitioner practices from a place of inner integrity, there is a better chance of the entire collective moving towards a similar, principled position. From this stance, members of the profession could recognise the need to act politically as well as personally when circumstances warrant.

Integrity is a quality of spirit that lives in all of us (Sherman, 2003). A professional stance of personal integrity can lead to enhanced professional and program integrity during regime changes. If members of the profession rethink the place of these three types of integrity within their practice, especially during regime changes, they can live and practice with conviction, speak with legitimacy and credibility about the profession, and act with authority and confidence.

Authors' note

The message in the paper has relevance to the entire profession, regardless of the name used in various countries. In this paper, we use Home Economics and FCS because that is the name used in our part of the world and in some other countries. The label does not negate the message.

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Corporate involvement in education: Considerations for Home Economics educators

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Abstract

Fuelled by the ideology of privatization and market place values, corporate involvement in public education is on the increase. This paper explores different levels of corporate involvement, examining the discourse used, and contrasting each with an alternative discourse linked to the original intent of public education of preparing students to participate in a democratic society and act in the common good. It raises questions and suggests actions for Home Economics educators to ensure that their mission not be compromised by hidden agendas.

Introduction

McGregor (2003b) challenged Home Economists to take up critical discourse analysis to uncover the ideological underpinnings of text and talk. She pointed out that language is not neutral and that it is a professional responsibility to "take the voice of those in power into question to reveal hidden agendas and motives" (p. 2). This paper examines the discourse used in the educational system around the issue of corporate involvement in education. According to Molnar (2003/4), corporate involvement in schools "has become so pervasive that it is virtually invisible" (p. 83). Notwithstanding this claim, some authors have begun to make the invisible visible by critically examining corporate involvement in education to determine implicit ideologies and underlying political agendas (e.g., Apple, 2001; Goodman & Saltman 2002; Kohn & Shannon, 2002; Saltman, 2000).

This paper concentrates on corporate interests in the public school system but some of the information also applies to tertiary institutions (see for example, Roosevelt, 2006). To begin, the focus will be on the language related to corporate sponsorship, contractual agreements (including product placement), and choice and contrasting two points of view on corporate involvement in schools. One, located in economic/managerial discourses connected with marketplace values that are most often associated with the neo-liberal agenda of free market capitalism. The other, located in political/moral discourses of societal values is associated with a liberal education in a democratic society functioning to create an educated citizenry committed to the common good. Implications for Home Economics educators and actions that can be taken to counter the dominant discourse of the marketplace that prevails will be discussed.

Corporate sponsorship

For almost a century, groups outside the education sector have been involved in education (Molnar, 2001). The most common involvement is reflected in the language of sponsorship. For example, posters, pamphlets, videos, CDs, ready made lessons, and student handouts produced by organizations or corporations are called sponsored educational materials (SEMs). Local businesses and corporations sponsor incentive programs providing rewards for educational achievement. Organizations and corporations sponsor scholarships or particular school events such as motivational speakers or educational programs such as field trips. Others sponsor particular school initiatives by donating products, such as computers, or supporting fund raising opportunities that involve either (a) the sale of products with a portion of the profits returned to the school or (b) reimbursements to the school for the collection of labels. Corporations "adopt" schools (Fearnley, 2000) providing a wide range of support from donations and in-store fundraising events to volunteerism for special school projects.

Corporate sponsorship may not appear to be controversial and the significant contribution to funding and supporting education is often welcomed. This understanding of sponsorship is located in economic discourse, akin to the way it is used in television or the arts, whereby it is reasonable for a corporation to support a project or activity in return for limited advertising during its course. This is a fairly modern use for the term sponsor, first appearing in the 1930s (Barnhart, 1988). When sponsor is used in this way, it is quite acceptable for outside interests to choose sponsorships and donations that produce measurable returns in support of their marketplace goals. Indeed, the norm of self-interest is deemed desirable, and this is considered a "win-win" opportunity as both parties gain. The organization or corporation gets positive exposure with a large audience who are potential consumers of their goods or services, and the education system gets much needed funding and educational resources. Proponents argue that students are exposed to advertising everywhere and so this exposure is insignificant in the scheme of things.

Opponents take issue with the motivation behind corporate sponsorship in education and express concern that the education system has unwittingly become an ambassador for corporate interests and promoters of the neo-liberal ideology of marketplace values (e.g., Apple, 2001; Giroux, 1998; Korten, 1995; Shaker, 1998, 1999). This intrusion of corporate interests in schools can be described as undermining the credibility and integrity of public education (Gariepy, 1998) as schools become "branded" spaces (Klein, 2000) that are "cashing in on kids" (Molnar, 1999, p. 1). Concern is expressed regarding the disparity created between sponsored schools and those that are not, and contend that this exclusion might exacerbate already existing inequalities in the education system or lead to schools competing for sponsorships (Shaker, 1998). Questions are raised related to the power that the sponsoring organization can gain over educational programs and schools. Also, the accuracy and efficacy of some of the SEMs is questioned. Wrong or misleading information is common (e.g., Giroux, 1998). There is evidence of corporations associated with cigarettes and alcohol funding anti smoking and responsible drinking projects to give themselves a veneer of legitimacy by appearing to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem (see for example, Hardy, 1999; Eyre, 2002).

Rather than producing students who are consuming subjects ready for the marketplace, opponents of corporate involvement in schools argue for an "educated person" who is an autonomous, critical thinker participating in a democratic society working toward a common good. These arguments point to another use of sponsorship that is grounded in political/moral discourse deriving from as far back as 1651 (Barnhart, 1988). In those days, sponsor was used in the sense of "sponsor in baptism," and involved making a solemn promise to assure religious education (Barnhart, 1988). So, the notion of a sponsor was that one assumed a moral responsibility for the person or people being sponsored. To sponsor also meant, "to provide a surety or guarantee" (Barnhart). It is still used in this way today as in sponsor a child in a foster care plan or when an organization sponsors a refugee family. In teacher education, a sponsor teacher is one who agrees to mentor and guide a student teacher, and has a similar responsibility in that they provide an ethical assurance that the student teacher is qualified to join the profession when they determine whether the student teacher passes or when they provide a reference for the student teacher. Here, the underlying meaning of sponsorship is more akin to altruism and genuine philanthropy when money or goods or services are given in support of a cause or event without a sense of gain but rather as a socially, morally, responsible contribution to the common good.

Contractual agreements

Corporate involvement in education also includes contractual agreements with schools and school boards. The most common contractual agreements are known as "pouring rights" that allow only one beverage company the exclusive right to sell drinks in a particular school or school district (Dunsmore, 2001; Molnar, 1999, 2001, 2003/4; Sheehan, 1999). Schools, or even whole school districts, sign exclusive sometimes multimillion-dollar marketing agreements with beverage providers like Pepsi and Coca Cola. This is essentially a monopoly arrangement for the corporation as only their branded drinks can be sold on the premises during school hours. The contract involves establishing a set price for the product and usually stipulates that no one else in the school can sell the product for a cheaper price. There is often a signing bonus, money paid up-front for signing the agreement and the contract can also have additional conditions such as access to the school through other promotions to increase the soft drink volume. The percentage of the profits returned to the school is usually established by the volume sold (Dunsmore, 2001). In addition to beverages, it is not uncommon for schools to contract out food services to McDonalds, A&W, Subway and the like (Schaefer, 2000).

Contracts can also involve advertising space and naming rights. Advertising space can range from space in school washrooms, to school buses, to school rooftops, to product placement in exam booklets and textbooks. Naming rights is a form of recognition or acknowledgment of a corporation's contribution to an institution. The corporation gets its name attached to school property. It may be the school itself or gymnasiums, theatres, computer labs, libraries, or the like (Molar, 2002).

There are also contracts that impose certain conditions in exchange for SEMs and donations. This can include provision of televisions and satellite dishes in exchange for compulsory daily viewing of news programs with commercials (Shaker, 1999) or computers with internet connection that also includes advertisements but could also include monitoring of students' web browsing habits for commercial use (Miller, 1999).

Similar to sponsorship, the use of contracts in educational settings can hold different meanings, depending on the dominating discourse. A political/moral discourse would locate the concept in social contract theory that holds to the view that persons' moral and/or political obligations are dependent upon a contract or agreement, hypothetical or otherwise, between them to form a civil society (D'Agostino, 2003; Friend, 2004). Although social contract theory has been critiqued by feminists and race scholars (Friend, 2004), it nonetheless is a powerful, influential theory that has shaped our collective consciousness regarding political and moral obligations and responsibilities. Social contracts or agreements from this point of view have to do with policy makers and educators upholding a public trust to do what is in the common or public good.

For those who argue from a political/moral point of view, the further encroachment of corporations in education is considered a violation of this public trust. They claim that, as corporations appropriate space and time, educational programs or activities in schools that are in the common good are displaced. Concern is expressed regarding: the continued undermining of public education (Giroux, 1998; Kuehn, 2003); the loss of public space (Klein, 2000); the potentially biased curriculum (Dunsmore, 2000); the questionable financial gains (Sheehan, 1999); and violation of the ethical commitment to do no harm to students, for example, sanctioning advertising to children at this vulnerable and suggestible age (Commercial Alert, n.d.). There is also a concern that allowing the corporate presence is an endorsement of consuming as a moral imperative. An implicit contract is formed between corporations and people, including children (Schor, 2004), whereby the former agrees to provide products for consumption and the latter agree to consume. Rather than students becoming consuming subjects, opponents argue for critical thinkers who consume responsibly. In addition, there is a fear that all the fundraising for school programs and projects masks the decrease in government funding for public education. Then, in the form of ironic backlash, when schools and school districts start to generate revenue themselves, governments responsible for funding public education often reduce the tax dollars allocated to schools and as government funding decreases, the need for outside funding increases. When this happens, schools/school districts are put in the position of soliciting, rather than negotiating. The power is on one side; that of the corporate business interests.

On the other hand, those who hold to the neo-liberal economic discourse of the capitalistic marketplace view a contractual agreement as strictly a business agreement for the exchange of goods or services. While the schools and school districts get much needed funds and some of the most advanced educational tools, the corporations get longer term access to students and the general public. The short term, relative benefits for education can be substantial. Schools can be outfitted with state of the art technology, with world-class fitness and sports facilities, with theatres, and the like.

The dialogue of choice

Since the 1980s, choice has increasingly become part of the discourse in education, particularly increasing choice within public schools (Levin, 1999). Choosing schools has always been an option for **some** parents. They could send their children to private schools. They could choose to live near the school they wished their children to attend. Within high schools, there has often been an element of choice in the selection of some of the courses students take. However, the role of public education was generally considered to provide a common educational experience contributing to the social cohesion, stability of society, and democratic participation (Levin, 1999).

More recently however, democratic participation has been interpreted as individual choice rather than action in the common good. Apple (2001) characterises this as transforming democracy from a political concept to an economic concept. Choice in the form of consumer satisfaction and autonomy of special interest groups is used to reform the education system (Buckley & Schneider, 2007). This has given rise to magnet schools designed to cater to special themes, charter schools and voucher systems.

Charter schools are publicly funded elementary or secondary schools that have been freed from some of the rules, regulations, and statutes that apply to other public schools, in exchange for some type of accountability for producing certain results, which are set forth in each charter school's charter (National Education Association, n.d.). A charter school is not usually governed by a district school board but by their own board. They operate under a charter that they negotiate with an authorizing agency. In exchange for greater autonomy, they accept greater accountability for student results and are supposed to lose their charter if they do not reach their stated goals. Charter schools can be either for-profit or non-profit.

A voucher is a full or partial tuition reimbursement that parents receive from the government to use to send their child to any eligible school, public or private that they choose (Fowler, 2003). The voucher amount represents tax dollars already being collected from citizens and used for education. Parents receive a voucher and present it to the school of their choice. Schools are not to charge tuition beyond the value of the voucher.

Choice alternatives have allowed for increased corporate involvement in education. Corporations can manage and/or own schools and market educational programs through education management organizations (EMOs), that purchase 'contracts' from the district to manage schools and provide educational content (Molnar & Reaves, 2001; Shaker, 1999). They can participate in Public Private Partnerships (P3s), agreements between public school boards or government ministries of education that usually involve the private company or corporation building a facility that can be used for a fee by the public institution. This is not exclusive to education. Similar negotiations are proceeding for roads, bridges, government buildings, and so on. But in education this is mainly manifested as lease back schools. Done under the guise of cost saving, study after study has shown that P3s do not save money and actually cost more in the long run as schools are no longer public assets (Mackenzie, 2007).

For-profit and lease back schools are just the beginning of a wide range of commodification of educational services allowing corporate involvement in curriculum, textbooks, examinations, distance education, building maintenance, janitorial services, and selling seats to international students. These are all commercial enterprises designed to generate income for the owners, shareholders, or both. Maintenance and janitorial services are often privatised under the guise of cost cutting, but they also serve to "union bust", as these services are outsourced (Shaker, 1998) for greater profitability for the corporation. Additionally, school boards are “buying” into the business model seeking sources of generating income such as selling seats to international students, initiating distributive (on-line) learning, selling education overseas (BCTF Research Division, 2007), and privatizing such things as audiology and tutoring services (Thomson, 2003).

An examination of the dialogue of choice requires teasing out the values, beliefs, underlying assumptions, and motivations that have given rise to this emphasis on choice. Many of these educational reforms have been shaped by the market ideology of accountability and economic efficiency. The advocates of this point of view claim that public schools have become monopolies, are increasingly bureaucratic, and are stagnant and uncreative places. Privatization is touted as the way to improve learning, increase opportunities for students, and encourage the use of different, innovative and creative teaching methods (Levin & Belfield, 2003; Lubienski, 2003). Common arguments suggest that markets are much more efficient at allocating resources and distributing rewards than government bureaucracies and that by subjecting public education to market pressure and competition student achievement will improve (e.g., Carnoy, 2000). Thus, the whole movement to standards, standardization, and standardised testing feeds into the choice model as test scores are used to rate and compare schools. The bottom line is schools will either become more effective or go out of business and the business can be very lucrative (Ellwood, 2003). Albert (2002) estimates that over $3 trillion dollars are spent on education globally each year. It is evident that choice is really consumer choice. This means that education becomes a commercial enterprise, and students become clients or consumers of educational products.

Those who hold to the view that education should serve the common good express concern with the consumer model. They worry about the use of public funding for privatised educational services claiming that private sector will only invest in schemes that make money. What is masked it the privilege it gives to those who have the advantage to engage and or exploit the model. They point out that corporations have an obligation to their shareholders not the public. An additional concern is related to trade agreements. As education becomes privatised and commodified, it becomes subject to trade agreements (Kuehn, 2000). According to Barlow (2000), predatory and powerful entrepreneurial transnational corporations aim to dismantle public education by subjecting it to the rules of international competition and the discipline of the World Trade Organization. Korten (1995) claims, "the real agenda of those promoting these trade agreements is not to eliminate borders, but rather to redraw them so as to establish what once belonged to the community, to be shared among its members, now belongs to private corporations for the benefit of their managers and shareholders" (p. 156). Giroux (1998) argues that educators must reclaim public schools as a public good where democratic values, human rights, economic justice and cultural diversity as ideals replace the trend to corporate interests and narrow consumer demands.

Discussion

What is evident in education today are competing discourses that highlight enduring tensions regarding the purposes of education. Two contrasting discourses that appear to be the most dominant have been presented; (a) an economic discourse linked to corporate capitalism and the neo liberal commitment to marketplace efficiency (Apple, 2001; Saltman, 2002, 2003); and (b) a political/moral discourse concerned with education as an important element in maintenance of democratic values and civil society (Kuehn, 1998; Saul, 1997). Apple (2001) suggests discourses of neo-conservatism and religion are also at play.

The economic discourse is very powerful at this moment in history as neo-liberalism ideology is dominant on the political scene in many parts of the world. Neo-liberalism posits the market as the solution to all social problems characterised by wide scale privatization, liberalization of trade, and reduction of government involvement in regulating the private sector. Under this ideological system, democracy becomes synonymous with capitalism, couched in "free" markets, "free" enterprise and individual choice thereby transforming it from a political concept to an economic concept (Apple, 2001; Dobbin, 1998). Democracy becomes the right of consumer choice. The notion of a community committed to common values, where rights come with responsibilities, is replaced by the concept of a shopping mall where people are objectified as consumers. The discourse of efficiency replaces the ethical, political, cultural discourse of democratic values. One discourse aims for equity, efficacy, and diversity while the other potentially exacerbates inequalities in society (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Two Competing Discourses

Characteristic	Economic/Marketplace Discourse	Political/Moral Discourse
Ideological Underpinnings	▪ neo/liberal, corporate capitalism	▪ democratic participation is essential to creating a civil society
Key Values	▪ managerial efficiency	▪ democratic values, social justice
Conception of Education	▪ education is an economic concept ▪ corporate controlled ▪ education as commerce, profit making, supports the economics system; a private good ▪ education is a tradable commodity ▪ market driven, private ▪ prepares students for the global economy	▪ education is a political concept ▪ public controlled ▪ education as an institution that supports social cohesion and stability of a society; a common good ▪ education as a social right ▪ free, universally accessible, public ▪ prepares students for civic engagement
Metaphors	▪ education/schooling as a shopping mall ▪ students as consumers, good corporate citizens ▪ teachers as managers/accountants	▪ education/schooling as a community committed to common values ▪ students as autonomous citizens in a democratic society ▪ teachers as pedagogues and fellow citizens

This situation has serious implications for public school educators in general, and Home Economics teachers in particular, as both are mission oriented fields and usually mission oriented fields locate their professional values in a political/moral discourse (e.g., Brown, 1980; 1985; 1993; Hargrove, 1988; Vaines, 1990). However, it is important to note that dualistic thinking is not the goal here; rather, it is to create the conditions whereby we can examine the world around us and the language used, to fully understand the underlying beliefs and motives in order to determine our position. It may not be an either/or decision, but recognition of the potential effects of one discourse dominating. Some of these tensions have been enduring in education and Home Economics, for example, the tension between a liberal education that emphasises active participants in a democratic society and vocational education where students are prepared with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enter the world of work (e.g., Apple, 1997; Brown, 1993).

Implications for Home Economics education

When the economic discourse and a neo-liberal agenda dominates, public education and Home Economics education is threatened in many ways. This has been characterised as increasing intrusion of corporate interests and presence in schools, actual predation by corporations as schools provide captive audiences for marketing, and as a move to dismantle and take over the education system (Smith, 2003). Others have highlighted the way it compromises curriculum and pedagogical approaches, what counts as knowledge, and the meaning and future of work, leisure, consumption, and culture (e.g., Saltman, 2003). What implications does this discourse have for Home Economics programs? The next section highlights two implications that appear most pertinent: (a) misinterpretation of the name of our profession and the intent of our programs and (b) undermining and/or compromising Home Economics educational program programs.

Misinterpretation of the name of our profession and programs

The field in Canada, and in many places around the world, is known as Home Economics. In the United States, family and consumer science has become the accepted label. Both these descriptors contain terms, “economics” and “consumer”, more likely associated with the economic/marketplace discourse. The general public and people with whom we work could interpret these labels as an indication of our association with the ideologies of neo-liberalism and capitalism. As Home Economists/family and consumer scientists, it behooves us to clearly articulate and communicate the ideological positions that guide the profession and our work in educational settings. If these two labels are linked to free marketplace discourses, they become steeped in individualism, mindless materialism and maintaining the status quo.

Since its inception and continuing today, Home Economics has been concerned with improving the well-being and quality of life of individuals and families (Brown, 1993). However, the improvement in quality of daily life tended to concentrate more on the material quality of life than on non-material aspects of life (Brown, 1985, 1988). Embracing the concept of quality of life adds a political/ethical dimension to Home Economics that has been commonly ignored (Arcus, 1999; Brown, 1985, 1993) even though there have always been some in the field who have argued for a more critical approach because it helps us reveal power imbalances, inequalities and injustice (e.g., Brown, 1985, 1993; Johnson & Fedje, 1999). The most recent position statement created by the International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE, 2008, p. 1) states

Home Economists are concerned with the empowerment and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, and of facilitating the development of attributes for lifelong learning for paid, unpaid and voluntary work; and living situations.

Empowerment is generally used to describe the multi-dimensional processes that help people gain control over their own lives. This implies being able to identify the power structures, to probe beneath the surface of words and texts, and to challenge “taken-for-granteds” and hegemonic practices. Thus Home Economists themselves have to have these skills, abilities and dispositions, in order to give "more adequate political-moral and intellectual direction to Home Economics" (Brown, 1985, p. 985), and to think carefully about the terms they use and the values and beliefs behind what they do (Brown, 1993).

As a recent example, McGregor has challenged members of the profession to question how they understand the notion of consumerism. She agrees with Brown (1993) that we “bought into” capitalism without critically examining its import on family well-being. To counter the fallout from 100 years of perpetuating capitalism and free markets, she argues for a conception of citizen-consumer in a mindful market. Citizen-consumers see themselves as a citizen first and a consumer second, and consume in a responsible manner contributing to the creation of a more just society (e.g., McGregor, 2001, 2003a, 2008).

Undermining Home Economics educational programs

One of the common topics in Home Economics curriculum is nutrition and healthy eating. Home economics educators encourage students to evaluate food products and make choices that support health and well-being. However, when school officials allow corporations exclusive control of beverages that when consumed in large amounts are a danger to health, or when they invade and displace educational and nutritional alternatives, as is the case of fast food outlets replacing teaching cafeterias, they are explicitly endorsing these products thus contradicting and undermining the efforts of Home Economics teachers.

Many Home Economics courses are skill based. For example, students learn basic food preparation techniques and sewing or craft processes. Depending on which discourse one is embracing, our idealised goal of empowerment and emancipation could be compromised if we are seen to be preparing low-wage workers instead of autonomous critical thinking citizens. Apple (1998) warns that when the economic discourse of the marketplace prevails, students are often regarded as future workers “who themselves can be bought and sold to the highest bidder" (p. 344) and education as an investment in "human capital" where the knowledge and skills obtained are measured in terms of their benefit to the labour force. Students then can become prey to the destructive effects of globalised competition, where action taken to maximise profits and minimise costs means searching the world for the cheapest labour. The credibility of Home Economics courses could be undermined if they are seen as training grounds for the low-wage food service industry and sweatshop conditions of clothing manufacturing. In addition, the goals of empowerment are not fostered if Home Economic courses are seen as preparing women only for the stereotypical role of unpaid homemaker.

Home economics educators should also be concerned with corporate interests outside the schools that have started private programs that may cover some of the same curriculum traditionally taught in Home Economics. Under a system embedded in the discourse of efficiency, it is not that far-fetched to think that franchised corporations such as "Kids Can Sew"™, or cooking schools, or Baby Sitting certification courses become competition for Home Economics courses undermining the work that Home Economists do in schools and leading school administrators to think that Home Economics courses are not needed since the information and skills can be obtained elsewhere.

Courses developed by for-profit companies can be marketed to students all over the world via distributed learning that is delivered on-line. This can lead to the loss of local programs that respond to local contexts. "Magnet" schools, where only one school in the district offers certain courses, for example, textiles and fashion design, may be privileged because they appear efficient, leading to programs being dropped at other schools undermining the contribution that Home Economics makes to the broad liberal general education of students. Because the facilities for Home Economics classes are expensive to build and to maintain, and the courses are expensive, as they require additional supplies and equipment, if there are cheaper alternatives, school boards would be happy to divest themselves of these costs.

Also, if Home Economics educators, who believe in a critical science perspective, are put in the positions of competing with these privatised programs, they are put in the position of compromising their values. Teaching and learning to think critically is not always valued when marketplace values dominate. Technical modes of practice could override interpretive and critical modes as Home Economics teachers are pressured to 'sell' their programs.

The rise of standardised, 'high stakes' testing also has an impact on Home Economics programs. Teachers become forced to 'teach to the test' to be competitive with other schools, and to maintain imposed rankings. The tests often rely on memorization of facts (e.g., Popham, 2001) thus devaluing the critical thinking/practical reasoning approaches and the creative and innovative thinking advocated in fields like Home Economics. As well, as students are pressured to do well in core subjects (science, math, English, etc.), Home Economics and other 'practical' subjects are often pushed to the margins.

Considering Action

The dilemmas that arise for Home Economics educators who do not embrace the market ideology (thereby questioning sponsorship, contracts, and the consumer choice model of education that leads to privatization and corporate control) relate to: (a) our political/moral responsibility to our mission of contributing to the welfare, well being and empowerment of families locally and globally; and (b) to the ethical principles that are at the foundation of mission oriented professions: prevention from harm, and avoidance of coercion, bias, and indoctrination (Brown, 1993; 1980). Tenets of no harm, coercion, bias or indoctrination are powerful allies when confronting corporate intrusion into the education system, and Home Economics curricula. There are things we can do. Four suitable actions are presented as an invitation for others who feel compelled to take on the power of this pervasive discourse. These, and related actions, help shift power back to the profession, students, families, and communities. They help create an alternate discourse, one that favours social justice, peace, security, democratic participation—the antithesis of the neo-liberal free market and corporate-led globalization discourse.

Develop ethical screens

Regarding sponsorships or sponsored teaching materials, professional groups can develop guidelines for acceptance and/or use. As early as the 1950s, professional associations cautioned against the uncritical use of free or sponsored material (e.g., Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1953; 1955). These efforts continue today. Some groups are putting together educational packages to help teachers and students distinguish genuine philanthropy from corporate hype (Ainger, 2001). Teacher unions have developed ethical screens for fund-raising, corporate sponsorships, and partnerships (see for example, BCTF Policies on Privatization, n.d.). Some cities, universities, schools and school districts are declaring themselves "Sweat Free," committing to ensure that nothing that is purchased or sold on campus comes from a sweatshop or involves child labour (Maquila Solidarity Network, 2005). There are college student groups who are lobbying for codes of corporate social responsibility and ethical purchasing policies that include language such as "sweat free", "fairly traded", "organic" and "locally produced" (Maquila Solidarity Network, 2005).

Home Economics teachers, and educational institutions with Home Economics programs could also benefit from the development of ethical screens as they are often offered "free" sponsored educational materials, whether it be recipe pamphlets, posters, nutritional information, videos, CDs, sample products, sample textbooks, or ready made lesson plans or unit plans. Home economics teacher associations and professional associations also seek sponsors for conferences or other events. Sometimes, these sponsorships can cause ethical dilemmas if the values of the sponsor are at odds with the values and beliefs of the association as happened in Canada several years ago when a speaker initially declined an invitation to speak upon hearing that a major sponsor of the conference was a corporation with links to deaths from baby bottle disease. The key to determining whether to accept offers from organizations or corporations is to understand what notion of sponsorship is dominating, and whether that is aligned with our mission and its guiding principles.

Teach from a critical science perspective

To teach from a critical science perspective means providing students with opportunities to critique the prevailing ideologies and forces of exploitation in our society. Rather than accepting messages in teaching resources and materials provided free by corporations at face value, some Home Economics teachers, working from a background of critical pedagogy, could use them as an opportunity to expose "false consciousness" (Brown, 1980; Fay, 1987). Used in this subversive way, the materials become powerful tools for teaching critical thinking, information literacy, media literacy, critical thinking and practical reasoning where students learn to examine, critique and articulate ethically defensible actions.

Join advocacy groups

Groups of committed people working persistently on common concerns can have an impact if they agree on what is in the common good. Blake (1999) describes how the strength and collaboration of teachers, parents, organizations and concerned citizens helped to fight corporate intrusion in the form of Youth News Network (YNN). In my local school district, students, teachers and parents were able to stop a cell antenna from being placed on the top of a local high school (McMurtry, 2003). Various groups from around the world are now advocating for a ban on commercialism in schools (e.g., Commercial Alert; Campaign for Commercial Free Education). Lobby groups are making a difference, especially regarding the ubiquitous vending machine. In light of the increasing evidence of rising obesity in young people and considering possible litigation over breach of their responsibility, schools, school districts and even larger jurisdictions are reconsidering and renegotiating their contracts with beverage corporations and developing school food policies. Home economics educators have a central role to play here.

Conduct and publish research

Some contend that school choice and privatization are here to stay and that researchers should work toward developing sound school choice policies (Fowler, 2003). Others argue that the educational system will be unrecognizable if we continue to let marketplace values infiltrate the school system (Gariépy, 1999). The research on the consequences of choice discourse and action is light on empirical evidence (Goldhaber, 1999, 2000; Fowler, 2003), and reports are often contradictory. For example Brazier (1999) and McDonald (2002) claim that voucher systems do not raise student achievement and significantly disadvantage students from low-income families whereas Caire (2002) argues that voucher programs offer a positive alternative to inadequate public schools. Both Fowler (2003) and Lubienski (2003) suggest that the claim that charter schools are innovative and creative is unfounded. Gorard, Fitz and Taylor (2001) found that in the United Kingdom the introduction of school choice led to less socio-economic stratification in schools, but Howe, Eisenhart and Betebenner (2002) found the opposite occurred in Colorado.

At present, the economic/marketplace discourse is so pervasive that "year after year, professional education journals remain silent on the moral and pedagogical implications" of commercialism and schools (Molnar, 2003/4, p. 83). There are opportunities for scholars of Home Economics education to conduct research and report to the field and elsewhere (e.g., McGregor, 2003a). It is especially important that we engage in this research because of our mission, and because our programs are being particularly hard hit by the impact of this discourse. This paper also points out the need for research from Home Economists from other jurisdictions as the author and most of the references reflect a North American perspective.

In closing, as part of our professional responsibility in the critical struggle for social justice and human empowerment and well being, it is important to ensure that freedom and democracy as ethical, social, and political ideals are upheld and not subordinated by market ideology. This means challenging corporate power inside and outside the classroom.

Acknowledgments

The author acknowledges the assistance of Dr. Sue McGregor in reading and responding to various versions of this paper.

Biography

Dr. Smith is a retired high school Home Economics teacher currently working in the Teacher Education Program at the University of British Columbia in Canada. She is responsible for Home Economics education. She holds a PhD in Curriculum Studies in Home Economics. She teaches both pre-service and graduate students in face to face and on-line courses. Her research interests include global education, action research, teacher development, and Home Economics curriculum and instruction.

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Food or nutrition literacy? What concept should guide Home Economics education

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Abstract

With the rise of health problems like obesity and Type 2 diabetes, the typical response by government bodies is to suggest people are suffering from nutrition illiteracy and therefore there is a need for nutrition education programs. This paper argues that a greater emphasis on food rather than nutrition may be a better route to take in effecting behaviour change. It advances food literacy as a concept that can rise above the transmission of information about nutrients and elaborates what this as an educational goal might mean for Home Economics programs in schools.

Introduction

Several years ago, I had a conversation with a colleague who was both a Home Economist and a dietitian. She made the comment that for her the difference between the two was food. In her words, Home Economists are food specialists. Dietitians are not. For her the strength of being a Home Economist was the knowledge of how to select, prepare and enjoy food whereas a dietitian's approach was more therapeutic, analysing diets and making recommendations for improvement. At an international conference on health education and school health, held in Vancouver in May 2006, I found it interesting that the current "buzz words" were "ecological" and "systems" approaches. As a Home Economics educator it intrigued me that the health education community seemly has just become aware of concepts that have guiding Home Economics/family and consumer science for decades. The other concept that was frequently mentioned was "health literacy". I became interested in the concept of "literacy" as it is being used in health education and what this meant in terms of nutrition. Interestingly, nutrition is often used as an example in the literature to explain health literacy (e.g., St. Leger, 2001). About the same time, I was approached by a Masters student who was interested in investigating how nutrition should be taught at the middle school level (Cimbaro, 2005). It had been suggested to her that having a conception of nutrition literacy might be a place to start.

These events, the conversation, the health conference and the meeting with the Masters student, led me to wonder whether the focus in Home Economics should be nutrition or food. My inquiries led me to see that increasingly those involved in nutrition who were not Home Economists (e.g., dietitians, nutritionists, nutritional scientists) were expanding the concept of nutrition moving beyond traditional biological definitions and concerns to including more food-related content. Home economics has typically included a study of food and nutrition, placing food first. The concept of food studies in Home Economics education has also been expanded to include global issues (e.g., Smith, 1990; Smith, 1996). Would elaborating a conception of food literacy assist in the formulation of defensible educational curriculum and instruction?

I am a recently retired high school Home Economics teacher who is currently working as a Home Economics teacher educator, so I am locating this inquiry in the context of public school education (although some may find that the concept elaborated has usefulness in other areas). My intent is to elaborate a concept that may be useful for teachers of Home Economics.

Method of inquiry

In questioning the key concepts of a field of study, I am really pursuing a conceptual question (Brown, 1980). The theoretical framework then is analytic inquiry (Portelli, 1987) that aims to identify, examine, understand, develop or improve the attributes of a concept or set of concepts. Analysis of concepts is essentially a dialectical business and such analyses are in constant need of re-examination and clarification (Wilson, 1969). Frequently new concepts are developed because the old ones are inadequate in allowing educators to perform the task for which the concept was created in the first place (Coombs & Daniel, 1991). Walker and Soltis (1986) state conceptualizing means, “developing ways of thinking and talking about something, including making distinctions, defining names and noting significant features” (p. 29). This form of inquiry is important in curriculum studies because conceptual clarity is required to build conceptual frameworks. It includes defining attributes (what the concept is ‘like’ or ‘not like’). If our concepts are incoherent, poorly understood, or have blurred attributes, educators will have difficulty translating them into adequate curriculum and instructional practices policy (Coombs & Daniels, 1991; Lynch, 1995; Thomas & Arcus, 1992; Walker & Avant, 1995). Therefore the task is to tease out the theoretical foundations behind the choice of particular forms of practice (Caplan & Holland, 1990). This paper builds on other inquiries in health education (e.g., Smith & Peterat, 2000), in Home Economics (Brown, 1979, 1996; Thompson, 1992; Reynolds, 2002, 2003; Smith, Peterat & deZwart, 2000; Vaines, 1994, 1997, 1999), and in determining the relationship between health and Home Economics (e.g., Arcus & Thomas 1992). I propose to articulate the beginnings of a conception of food literacy and elaborate what it means for Home Economics curriculum and instruction.

Locating the study – Home Economics education and health education – parallel journeys?

There has always been a close connection between Home Economics and health. Some of the early “crusaders” for Home Economics in Canada came to advocate Home Economics from health concerns (e.g., Adelaide Hoodless; Alice Ravenhill). Health education and Home Economics education share some of the same roots. Both were advocated as school subjects to ameliorate conditions in society and both have been part of the public school curriculum in Canada and internationally since the late 1800s when children became the focus of efforts to improve society and amend socials ills such as improper sanitation, inadequate housing, poor diets, high mortality rates among children, the spread of communicable diseases, criminal activity, and child labour (Peterat & deZwart, 1995; Smith & Peterat, 2000). With compulsory education, children became a captive audience, and schooling was seen as the logical place to protect and improve their health and the social condition. Hygiene was the initial concern especially of those who lobbied for the teaching of domestic science or Home Economics in the belief that healthy homes, with better food, cleanliness, water, ventilation and clothing, would contribute to productivity (Peterat & deZwart, 1995).

As the years progressed, health education evolved into single-issue approaches, for example, sexuality education, AIDs education, drug education, and even driver education. Cries for more holistic approaches have given rise initiatives such as Comprehensive School Health (Canadian Association for School Health, 2006), Health Promoting Schools (Stewart-Brown, 2006), The World Health Organization's Global School Health Initiative, and Healthy School Initiatives (Kolbe, 2006). While all of these are whole school programs, they do include a curriculum and instruction component.

Home economics evolved in schools as separate topic areas. It is not uncommon to find courses in Food Studies, Family Studies, Textile Studies, Housing and Interior Design, and so on. Within the specialty areas, there have been concerns about the dominance of technocratic rationality that gave rise to the "cooking and sewing", "stitching and stirring" stereotype.

The amelioration of social ills is still seen as a function of schooling. Public policy, especially in education, tends to be reactive and subject to the whims of powerful stakeholders. During the past decade, the public school system in my home province of British Columbia (and I am sure elsewhere) has been pressured to address the health status of students, particularly obesity. Our Provincial Health Officer (Kendall, 2003) specifically recommended the inclusion of healthy nutrition in curriculum but he did not explain how this nutrition component might be addressed. The Ministry of Education responded by adding nutrition content into an already existing mandatory health and careers course. When nutrition education is mandated as part of health related course, Home Economics teachers become concerned about the duplication of the goals, objectives and content of Home Economics education (Thomas & Arcus, 1992). The question then arises, in what ways is the teaching and content of nutrition similar or different in health and Home Economics courses and is nutrition the right concept to address the problem of obesity.

Re-thinking Home Economics

Historically, Home Economics, sometimes called domestic science, grew out of a movement which sought to improve living conditions in a society wrote with many changes brought on by industrialization. It was during the Lake Placid Conferences which took place over a ten-year period from 1899 to 1908 that Home Economics was conceptualised as: the study of the laws, condition, principles and ideals concerned with man's immediate physical environment and this nature as a social being and especially the relationship between the two for the purpose of improving the quality of his daily life Thus, since its inception, Home Economics has been concern with improving the well-being and quality of life of families. Brown (1985), and others have pointed out, the improvement in quality of life tended to concentrate more on the material quality of life. As a result the profession developed as one that give emphasis to disseminating scientific knowledge and practical know-how. Food and nutrition courses therefore included information giving related to the nutrients but also information on how to prepare food to retain nutrients, how to plan meals that would provide balanced nutrients, and so on. For many (e.g., Brown, 1985; Vaines, 1997), including myself (Smith, 1992, 1995) the concept of quality of life adds a political/ethical dimension to Home Economics which has commonly been overlooked. In 1979, a report Home Economics: A Definition authored by Brown and Paolucci was released that contained the following mission statement:

> *The mission of Home Economics is to enable family, both as individuals units and generally as a social institution, to build and maintain systems of action, which lead 1) to maturing in individual self-formation and 2) to enlightened cooperative participation in the critique and formulation of social goals and means for accomplishing them. (p. 23)*

Systems of action:

The mission or general goal(s) of the profession must take into account the systems of action which the family has historically had within it and which contributed to personal and family well-being as well as to the ideas and ideals of society:

1. Purposive, rational action (means-end action) or work to secure the animal necessities of life, physical and social, and to secure the goals of civilised living.

2. Symbolic interaction, that is, language and social norms and values with underlying meaning involved.

In light of the loss of freedom for the family to act, families need to institute a third system of action:

3. Emancipative action which provides critical consciousness of social forces and which them formulates social goals and values and judges critically the means by which to accomplish those goals and values (p. 22)

A mission statement is an outline of the ultimate goal of a particular field of study that guides the practice of its members. Brown (1980) went on to outline what this mission would mean for Home Economics education. Some states in the US used the systems of action approach as a way to reframe curriculum and instructional practices making sure that each lesson included technical/instrumental "how to" information, an opportunity to explore the meaning of the topic especially as it relates to the student's everyday life (communicative action), and a critical examination of the topic exposing underlying values and beliefs, issues related to power, and concerns related to social justice (emancipative action). Some even went so far as to frame their curriculum and instructional practices around critical science/practical reasoning inquiries where each unit and/or lesson was guided by a practical reasoning value question such as: Am I ethically obligated to nourish myself? What should be done about food security in my community? Should child labour be allowed? What values should guide my consumer choices? and so on.

Other authors have contributed to extending the conception of Home Economics education. For example, Thompson (1992) who encourages systems thinking and in particular the ability to negotiate in both the Hermean (patriarchal, male dominated, public sphere, political economy) and the Hestian (private sphere, household and everyday life, family perspective) system; Vaines (1994) who encourages ecology as a unifying theme; my own work in elaborating a global perspective as an educational goal in Home Economics (Smith 1992; 1995); and MacGregor (2001) who extends this by including what it would take to create cultures of peace. Vaines (1995) in particular highlights many ways of knowing. She classifies the three systems of action as scientific/analytic ways of knowing and reminds us that lifeworld and narrative knowledge are also part of Home Economics epistemology.

These were all efforts to move the profession of Home Economics and Home Economics education beyond the technical, instrumental orientation that had come to include critical thinking and making reasonable judgments taking into consideration social justice, contributing to the common good, and the implications for the planet as our home, grounded in the particularity and concreteness of everyday life and the ability to take action.

The rise of health literacy

Changing health behaviour is a common purpose in health education but there is significant variation in the assumptions about knowledge, learning, people and society, and in the purposes/goals of education (Thomas & Arcus, 1992; Timmreck et al., 1988). Typically it is the information-giving mode that prevails despite the lack of evidence to substantiate the claim that knowledge will effect behaviour change (Mace, 1981; Reynolds, 2002). The term "health literacy" was first used in health education about thirty years ago to refer to the ability of patients to read and comprehend things like prescriptions, appointments, and other health related materials but has only been elaborated and taken seriously recently (Rootman & Ronson, 2005). In 2000, Nutbeam elaborated the concept of health literacy as follows:

> *Level 1, 'functional health literacy' reflects the outcome of traditional health education based on the communication of factual information on health risks, and on how to use the health system. Such action has limited goals directed towards improved knowledge of health risks and health services, and compliance with prescribed actions.*
>
> *Level 2, 'interactive health literacy' reflects the outcomes to the approach to health education which have evolved during the past 20 years. This is focused on the development of personal skills in a supportive environment. This approach to education is directed towards improving personal capacity to act independently on knowledge, specifically to improving motivation and self-confidence to act on advice received.*
>
> *Level 3, 'critical health literacy' reflects the cognitive and skills development outcomes which are oriented towards supporting effective social and political action, as well as individual action. Within this paradigm, health education may involve the communication of information, and development of skills which investigate the political feasibility and organizational possibilities of various forms of action to address social, economic and environmental determinants of health. (p. 265)*

St. Leger (2001) elaborated what this notion of health literacy would mean for schools (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1: levels of health literacy in a school setting (St. Leger, 2001, p. 201)

Health literacy level and educational goal	Content	Outcome	Examples of educational activity
Functional health literacy (level 1) (communication of information)	Transmission of basic information about: ▪ hygiene ▪ nutrition ▪ safety ▪ drugs ▪ relationships ▪ sexuality ▪ parenthood	Increased knowledge of the factors that inhibit and enhance health	Classroom-based lessons Reading books and leaflets
Interactive health literacy (level 2) (development of personal skills)	Opportunities to develop specific skills, for example: ▪ problem solving ▪ food preparation ▪ hygiene ▪ communication	Improved capacity to be independent and take care of own health through health- related behaviours (e.g., physical activity, no tobacco use) and to access health information and services	Small group work in schools Individual tasks with the outside community involving the curriculum Tasks analysing current health issues and discussing at school
Critical Literacy (level 3) (personal and community empowerment)	Classroom and community learning opportunities which address social inequities, determinants of health, policy development and ways of affecting change	Capacity to participate in community and societal action to bring about health improvement for disadvantaged groups	Involvement in school–community issues which students have chosen and which confront current policies and practices

At the health conference I mentioned in the opening of this paper, this version of health literacy appeared to be widely accepted by the international audience.

The similarities between the levels of health literacy and the three systems of action in the Brown and Paolucci mission of Home Economics are unmistakable. The mention of food preparation in St Leger’s elaboration of health literacy level 2 represents an overlap with, or encroachment on, typical Home Economics curriculum.

It appears then that health and Home Economics have been travelling a similar path. Each trying to move out of a technical rational positivist paradigm to include more interpretive and critical understandings of the content covered in each program. Both subject areas are informed by nutrition science research so I will take a little diversion to determine what is going on in that area.

Nutrition science

Within the field of nutritional sciences, a typical definition has been "the science of foods and the nutrients and other substances they contain, and of their actions within the body (including ingestions, digestion, absorption, transport, metabolism, and excretion)" (Whitney & Rolfes, 2002, p. 2). However, there are also broader definitions that include the social, economics cultural, and physiological implications of food and eating (Whitney & Rolfes, 2002, p. 2). Participants at a meeting held at the University of Giessen that included representatives from the International Union of Nutritional Sciences and the World Health Organization endorsed The Giessen Declaration, a revised definition and purpose of nutrition science "to meet the challenges and opportunities faced by humankind in the twenty-first century" (Beauman, et al., 2005, p. 783). The declaration (p. 784) stated that

> *…originally conceived and as now usually studied and practised, nutrition is principally a biological science. This classic biological dimension of nutrition science is and will remain central. Descriptively it is concerned with the interactions of food and nutrition with physiologic, metabolic and now also genomic systems, and the effects of these interactions with health and disease. Prescriptively it deals with the nutritional control and prevention of disease and the improvement of health in humans, at all levels from individuals to populations; and also with animals and plants usually as human resources.*

But, in light of global priorities such as protection of the environment, poverty and enabling "the long-term sustenance of life on Earth and the happiness of humankind" (p. 784), they recommended expanding the science to include two more dimensions, social and environmental. The new definition became:

> *Nutrition science is defined as the study of **food systems**, **foods and drinks**, and their nutrients and other constituents; and of their interactions within and between all relevant biological, social and environmental systems. (p. 784, emphasis mine)*

Within nutrition science then, food is being given greater priority. This may be a response to what Pollan (2007) calls *nutritionism*, when nutrition moves beyond a scientific subject to become ideology. He borrows this term from Scrinis (2006, p. 97) who says:

> *The reductive focus on nutrients and biomarkers (whether these be protein, the glycemic index or body mass index) removed from all other contexts and frameworks of understanding food and the body … I call nutritionism… still dominates most nutrition research, dietary advice and policy formulation, and much lay thinking. Nutritionism provides scientific legitimacy for, and drives the development and marketing of, nutritionally-modified processed foods, functionally-marketed foods, fad weight-loss diets, and nutritionally-modified GM crops.*

Food has become an abstract idea and over time the general public has lost consciousness of the connection between food and the land and nature. The ideologies of individualism, industrialization and corporate capitalism prevail with food as a commodity that is taken for granted.

Why literacy?

The term literacy has appeared more frequently in the literature to describe the goals of education. The field of literacy studies is alive with debate about different 'types' of literacy and their practical application in everyday life. It is apparent that literacy is being used in a wider sense that its original meaning (the ability to read and write). General literacy has broadened to include negotiating, critical thinking and decision-making skills. Specific literacies often refer to competences that belong to an area, such as eco-literacy (Capra, 1999), domestic literacy (Thompson, 2004), and financial literacy (Franklin, 2007). The trend is to speak of literacy not as a measure of achievement in reading and writing, but more in terms of what it is that literacy enables us to do. Many refer to Friere (1992) who describes literacy as an active phenomenon, deeply linked to personal and cultural identity and who transformed literacy from a received ability to read and write to an individual's capacity to put those skills to work in shaping the course of his or her life. For example, this understanding is quite evident in Capra's (n.p.) eco-literacy:

Being ecologically literate, or eco-literate, means, in our view, understanding the basic principles of ecology and being able to embody them in the daily life of human communities.

Since Nutbeam (2000) was providing a conception that would move health education beyond information giving it is not surprising that he should choose the term literacy.

Food literacy

Up to this point I have demonstrated that both Home Economics and Health have been re-conceptualised to move beyond transmission of knowledge and technical/instrumental approaches to educational topics. Both fields are informed by nutrition science. Nutrition science has broadened to include a greater emphasis on food, in particular the environmental and social dimensions of food. Thomas and Arcus' (1992) analysis of Home Economics and health education, determined that food was the domain of Home Economics. Most courses in Home Economics are labelled Food and Nutrition, placing food first. An analysis of the Canadian Home Economics Journal showed that over half of the articles were related to food and nutrition with the most frequent concept being food preparation (Young, 1989). With nutrition science expanding to include more than just biological considerations of food, food is moving into an area of overlap between health and Home Economics. Thus it is important for both subject areas to clearly articulate what food as an area of study means and what food literacy as an educational goal would entail.

Food literacy – current uses of the term

Currently the term food literacy is not widely used but I will highlight a few examples in school programs and out of school programs. I will also bold face some of the key terms related to food literacy as an educational goal.

A Guide to Food and Fiber Systems Literacy Food (Leising, 1998) is available from Agriculture in the Classroom in the United States. It is a curriculum designed to infuse agriculture into all grades. In it literacy is defined as "possessing knowledge and understanding of the food and fiber system" and the ability to "synthesize, analyze, and communicate basic information about agriculture" (p. 4).

An elementary school project in Hawaii is described as food literacy (Irwin, 2006). "By 'food literacy' curricula we are referring to food-based lessons that teach key healthy eating concepts through hands- and minds- on student activities in which student acceptance of healthier foods is fostered through student preparation and consumption of healthy foods" (n.p.). They based their program on Food is Elementary© (Demas, n.d.) a curriculum that teaches children about food and nutrition through dynamic multi-cultural lessons that engage all the senses.

A European project uses food literacy as a horizontal theme in adult education and counselling (Schnogl, et al., 2006). Food Literacy is defined as "the ability to organise one's everyday nutrition in a self-determined, responsible and enjoyable way" (n.p.). The objective is to develop food literacy as a "personal core competence".

East Carolina University has a Food Literacy program, for adults, that focuses on food and nutritional well-being of people in eastern North Carolina. Topics include weight management, dietary supplements and information about diseases often associated with obesity, such as heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

Harvard University Dining Service has The Food Literacy Project that claims to cultivate an understanding of food from the ground up. Education focuses on four integrated areas of food and society: agriculture, nutrition, food preparation and community. Ultimately, the project goal is to promote enduring knowledge, enabling consumers to make informed food choices.

This is not extensive but it shows that the current outlines of food literacy are not necessarily consistent. They tend to be descriptive or programmatic with underlining values and ideologies not always apparent. For example, "synthesis and analysis" and "making informed choices" are mentioned but the basis of critical thinking is not elaborated so the decisions could be either "selfish" or "fair-minded" (Paul & Scriven, n.d.). When just content listed, the possibility exists that transmission approaches will prevail seeking compliance, for example, to food guides or diet plans. When learners are referred to as consumers it could mean that the program is based on ideologies of individualism and corporate capitalism encouraging values that see food as a commodity.

Teasing out some of the attributes of food literacy as an educational goal

To focus on food literacy and the ability to act on knowledge and principles about food rather than nutrition, requires a conception that will move us beyond being "industrial eaters" (Vaines, 1995). Berry (1990), for example, contends

> *The industrial eater is, in fact, one who does not know that eating is an agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and uncritical — in short, a victim. When food, in the minds of eaters, is no longer associated with farming and with the land, then the eaters are suffering a kind of cultural amnesia that is misleading and dangerous (n.p.).*

For Vaines (1995) and Peterat et al.,(2004), eating is an ecological act thus we need a conception that reconnects us with food and the environment. We need a conception where food is not seen as a thing or commodity to be manipulated but something to be revered. We need a conception that restores what Berry (1990) calls "the pleasures of eating". What he is referring to is the cultivation of an appreciation for the intimate connection between our human lives and the natural world and for the gardens, fields and pastures from which our food comes and understanding that healthy soil and environment is essential for healthy food. We need a conception that embraces connectedness and the understanding that all things including food are interconnected with one another. The food system interacts with the family system, with the ecological system, with the economic system, with the political system, and so on. We need a conception that explores the socio-cultural-spiritual significance and enjoyment of sharing food and eating together.

Since we are talking about education, not training, nor indoctrination or coercion, food literacy must enable students to debate, evaluate, and judge for themselves the relative merits of contesting positions (Jickling, 1992). For example, the difference between an ego-centric and eco-centric worldview (Vaines, 1994), and the various actions that could be taken to create a better world for all ensuring the welfare and fair treatment of all living things (Smith, 1996). Food literacy also requires offering "rich experiences" (Barab & Roth, 2006) and in depth coverage of topics that allow for knowledgeable participation in a particular ecosystem (in this case the food system) and increased possibilities for action in the world.

Whether implicit or explicit, all educational programs have particular point of view regarding: educational aims; conception of the learner; conception of the learning process and environment; and a conception of the teacher's role (Miller & Seller, 1990). I will briefly sketch what a food literacy educational program would need to consider under each of these headings.

Educational aims

Most education programs are guided by some vision of that it means to be educated. To speak of food literacy as an educational goal means adding that component to our ideal of an educated person (Thomas & Smith, 1994). We want students to know that their food choice matters (Riley, 2005) and how they eat determines how the world is used. Usually educational aims include specifying what knowledge is of most worth. A food literate student would understand that there are what Vaines (1999) calls "Many Ways of Knowing". She articulates at least three ways of knowing: Lifeworld (the world of lived experience); Scientific (analytical/empirical; interpretive; critical science); and Narrative (stories, yours, mine, ours). She claims (p. 17) that:

> *Appropriate use of all these ways of knowing can help us to see what we have been unable to perceive before, help us to know rationally what we had heretofore missed and to become people who care deeply for all living systems. When these many ways of knowing are brought together, knowing, seeing, becoming and doing become ways in which we can actively participate in shaping our new stories.*

Considering the many ways of knowing means including students' life experience (e.g., growing, preparing, experiencing food with others), and the life experience of others who are close to food (e.g., food producers, food transformers, etc.). It means exploring stories and creating new stories of growing, acquiring, preparing, using, and celebrating food across generations, within and between cultures, and in the various places we live. The food system and determining what to eat is so complex, that students need the opportunity to study the topics in much greater depth. Superficial treatments of topics, as in memorizing the major nutrients to regurgitate on an exam, is not sufficient and runs the risk of diminishing the pleasure of eating good, nutritious, real food. Food studies would include the relationship between eaters and food, not eaters and nutrients.

Conception of the learner

For food literacy, it is appropriate to consider other descriptors than "consumer" (as in students will learn to make "better" or "wiser" consumer decisions). Pollan (2005) suggests "co-creaters". Learners can co-create food knowledge and experiences. Also, in food literacy, learners are conceived as ones who can make reasoned decisions and take defensible action given a depth of knowledge and the opportunity to experience various perspectives on food. They have the ability to anticipate complexity, to understand systems (the food system and how it is part of the ecological system), to identify ideological oppression (e.g., the power of corporate capitalism), to distinguish fact from opinion (e.g., related to GMOs, fish farms, factory farming, etc.); recognise stereotypes and clichés (as in the obesity myth); recognise bias, emotional factors, propaganda and semantic slanting; recognise different value orientations; determine which information is relevant; recognise the adequacy of data; check consistency; formulate appropriate questions; predict probable consequences; and identify unstated assumptions. So many of the issues and questions related to food are moral questions so students need some way to test the adequacy of their decisions or choice. They would need to be initiated in moral reasoning since their food decisions often have consequences for other people.

Conception of the learning process

The 'banking' concept of education is not appropriate. Instead learners are encouraged to explore 'generative themes' (Freire, 1972). Food literacy education can also be informed by ecological theories of learning (Barab, & Roth, 2006; Sterling, 2004) that suggest that rich experiences 'in' and 'with' the topic rather than 'about' are central for students to develop affordance networks and effectivity sets. Affordance networks are nested components that designate the possibility for action and may encompass information, material or people that can be activated in reaching a particular goal. Effectivity set refers to behaviours an individual can take in creating and activating an affordance network. Knowing is conceptualised as an activity, achieved in a context or setting by engaging in meaningful actions or practices in that environment. Frequently constructivist pedagogy (e.g., Gabler & Schroeder, 2003), active learning and problem-based learning are cited as possibilities for ecological knowing.

Conception of the teachers' role

Educative programs aiming to develop food literacy require teachers to move from instrumental modes to reflective, transformative modes of practice (Vaines, 1997). In considering sustainable food futures Caraher and Reynolds (2005) outline a series of principles for education that include: developing critical thinking skills; addressing multiple problems at the same time; re-skilling to counteract the deskilling that has taken place with the rise of the global industrial food market; emphasizing re-investing in community and public spaces as sources of locally grown foods; and providing a critical framework for decision-making including questioning the role of food companies in marking in the educational environment (summarized from p. 14). What is not explicit in this list in no particular order: using storytelling and narratives to explore the meanings (e.g., cultural, social, geographical) of food; examining the elements of traditional and local food patterns for those elements that may be helpful for health (of ourselves and the environment) and ecological sustainability; exploring and strengthening our connections to food (including food preparation); and exploring and strengthening our connections to those who produce our food.

Summing up

Teasing out the foundational beliefs about a concept using analytic inquiry is useful but has its limitations and to use Vaines' (1999) terminology is only one way of knowing. Continuing to expand the concept of food literacy with knowledge gained from narrative and lifeworld studies would further elaborate the conception. There is much hope for the future when we re-connect with food and adopt a stance of food literacy. Vaines (1994) asks us to "imagine ourselves in harmony with air, water, people, plants and events" and to see that "our actions come to reflect our connectedness, our symbiotic relationship with everything and everyone" (p. 10). In doing so, the ordinary, the mundane task of everyday life such as food provision become meaningful and sacred. In relation to food, Vaines (1999, p. 23) made the following statement:

> *Everyday life activities such as eating, drinking, and sharing together become the rituals and ceremonies of celebration that give us a sense of deep meaning and purpose. This sacred nature of food and everyday life cannot be taken for granted. As we live we are also choosing. If we are unable or unwilling to move out of our old stories where food is seen as a thing, a commodity to be manipulated, and eating is an industrial act, then we will experience life that has lost its savor.*

Vandana Shiva (2005, n.p.) recently wrote:

> *If we relocate ourselves again in the sacred trust of ecology, and recognise our debt to all human and non-human beings, then the protection of the rights of all species simply becomes part of our ethical norm and our ethical duty. And as a result of that, those who depend on others for feeding them and for bringing*

> *them food will get the right kind of food and the right kind of nourishment. So, if we begin with the nourishment of the web of life, we actually solve the agricultural crisis of small farms, the health crisis of consumers, and the economic crisis of Third World poverty.*

Articulating a conception of food literacy is just a beginning. For Home Economics, we need to fit this into a larger conception of domestic/family literacy but that is beyond the scope of this paper. I began this inquiry because I was puzzled by the emphasis on nutrition (nutrients and food guides) and wondering whether what people really need in this day and age is food literacy. I have begun the process of elaborating what that might mean for Home Economics educators. I view this is as just a beginning and as an invitation for others to continue to question, explore and extend this concept.

Biography

Dr. Smith is a retired high school home economics teacher currently working in the Teacher Education Program at the University of British Columbia in Canada. She is responsible for home economics education. She holds a PhD in Curriculum Studies in Home Economics. She teaches both pre-service and graduate students in face to face and on-line courses. Her research interests include global education, action research, teacher development, and home economics curriculum and instruction.

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Sustainability
Considering the pillars of sustainability as a theoretical paradigm

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Reprinted from:
Pendergast, D. (2008). Home economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future. Proceedings of the IFHE XXI World Congress, July 26-31, Switzerland. Switzerland: IFHE.

Abstract

The need for a common theoretical framework and underpinning with regards to the use of the term 'sustainability' in connection with food is important. Its current use covers a number of different meanings, ranging through economics and food supply systems to agri-food systems. This paper explores the issue of sustainability using a model developed for WHO. Using this as a tool, the impacts of food security and the global food system can be analysed and audited. Key to this are a critique of the global food system and its emphasis on free trade and consumers, the argument is put forward that global trade needs to be regulated to ensure human and environmental health.

Conclusions are drawn for Home Economic teachers in terms of the role they play in food advocacy. This moves beyond teaching about the food system 'as-it-is', to education concerning the background to the food system and how we, as both consumers and citizens, can act and exercise power. The model can be used to both inform teaching practice about sustainability and to frame a response at a school/community level to wider influences in the food system. Education on its own is judged not to be sufficient.

Introduction background

The issues of food and sustainability have received much public attention in the last couple of years, this has been driven by the world oil crises (peak oil); changes in climate and natural disasters and related economic global dilemmas (see Lang and Heasman, 2004). It is important to remember that the food system is driven by oil, oil to produce fertilizers, oil to transport food around the globe. This led to an interest in local and regional food, with some cities and areas looking to supplying regional and seasonal food (e.g., transition cities see www.transitiontowns.org/ and some countries through the formation of national food policies). Of less concern and less of a driver for action have the achievement of the millennium goals concerned with addressing inequality.

Despite some examples of positive movement in terms of sustainability there has been little overall change. In fact many would say that the concerns with food have only become an issue as the developed world sees its own standards of living threatened. As many developing countries face food challenges the price of food on the world market is increasing and agencies such as the World Food Programme (WFP) are having to cut back on supplies to those in need. Even countries in the developed world are seeing increases of the numbers living in food poverty, with food/fuel prices rising and consumers cutting back on healthy options.

One of the key problems is the application of classic economic models of growth to food growing and production based on the assumption that unparalleled growth with economies of scale is the only way to feed the world. In the developing world readjustment programmes have resulted in moves away from growing traditional subsistence crops to growing food for sale and the development of larger units of food production so small farms become less viable within this approach, especially as support systems explicitly support this move. All this is based on a classic economic model of surplus, cash exchange and wealth trickling down the system. Such an approach does not address issues of public health or national food security. At the time of writing this there is sufficient food to feed the world's population. The problems are not the amount of food per se but those of:

- The uses to which crops are put, for example, for animal feed instead of feeding humans.
- Lack of entitlement to food, even in times of crises, such as famine, there is food but not everyone can access that food (Sen, 1981; Caraher and Carr-Hill, 2007).
- The growing economies of China and India are diverting food for human consumption into food for animal feed.
- A food system which is based on price and profit as opposed to fairness and equity.

Also the underpinning model of operation of many policy developments and actions is a focus on the individual as a 'consumer' making sustainable choices. The policy developments more often eschew regulation in favour of agreements with the food industry to do the right thing. Alternative approaches are based on a model where the individual is a citizen and has rights (and duties) and regulation of the food industry.

The 'real' costs of food have not traditionally been factored in with the hidden costs absorbed elsewhere as in transport costs, the loss of valuable bio-diversity and damage to the environment. These costs are picked up elsewhere and probably more disproportionally by those in the developing world. Just as new (sustainable) thinking was being applied to the area of food a new series of crises have hit, rising fuel prices, a series of global crop failures, a reduction in planting of some basics and the general distressed state of global economic markets. Recent climatic events have resulted in less food crops being grown and the oil crisis has led to land being used for the growing of bio-fuels. All this leading to a situation where there is less food available and thus higher prices; the law of supply and demand. These changes have also been accompanied by changes in welfare systems and taxation in countries. We are seeing a new class of food poor, emerging (Caraher and Carr-Hill, 2007). These are the working poor who are food compromised and nutritionally insecure. These are groups who may have enough and often surplus to eat (calorie wise) but may have lack key nutrients in their diet. This leads to the growth in so-called diseases of lifestyle such as diabetes and CHD. While working in Australia recently the increase in the work of food banks and their work was starkly evident with schools setting up breakfast clubs as more and more pupils come to school hungry. In Germany changes in welfare provision have led to more and more of the population seeking food relief through food banks a situation repeated in Canada (Riches, 1997).

Globalisation of food systems is premised on the principle of free trade and liberalisation of trade barriers, the underlying belief is of benefits to all (See Sachs, 2005). The neo-liberal economic approach also assumes that approaches such as subsidies and taxation on food imports are barriers to trade are not encouraged. Yet Malawi has recently introduced support for farmers to grow foods for home consumption and cut down on imports by imposing taxes and this has resulted in increases in health status and more food being available for the local population. These processes were introduced in the face of great opposition from major aid agencies and financial institutions.

It is important to remember that there are potential winners in the increase in food prices, for example wheat growers who have in recent years sold their crop at barely subsistence levels are now commanding prices of up to three times last year's prices on the world market. But in reality the big winners are not the farmers but the produces and manufacturers of food products. But bread prices have risen, rice is in short supply, and key groups are feeling the pressure, look at the number of food riots and social unrest that has arisen because of increases in food prices.

This paper starts with an examination of globalisation and power in the food system, then moves onto food miles and sourcing (foodsheds) as an examples of hidden costs and briefly looks at packing as an additional cost. 'Who wins and loses' in all of this is them explored using coffee as an example, before moving on to discuss these issues and the implications for home economics.

Globalisation and concentrations of power in the food system

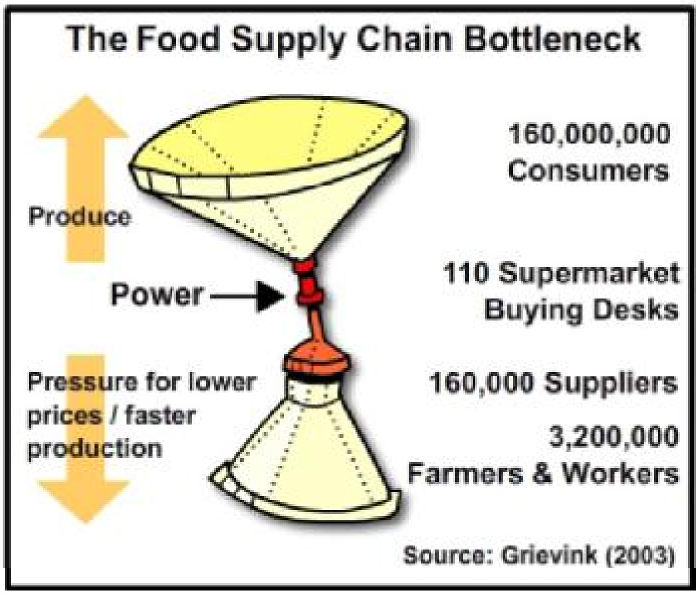
There are clearly benefits from a globalised world, for example Castells (1996) in his work on Network Society sets out the benefits of global communications which are partially responsible for making the world smaller and introducing the benefits of technology to developing and transition countries, for example it is clear that the mobile phone has social and economic benefits in Africa unlike the countries of the developed world where its are functions are social. In this respect I want to make one crucial point, the association of free market liberalisation and economies based on this principle with liberal societies is at one level misleading as it is not with a straight forward relationship (Hertz, 2001). Many development reports identify the Scandinavian countries among the best places to live and many of these have barriers to food trade based on public health principles (e.g., Norway and its use of VAT, Sweden and its banning of advertising to children). Other countries such as the UK and Australia advocate protection systems based on voluntary agreements with the food industry. The problem becomes one where public health concerns are subservient to those of business and trade. Key impacts of globalisation of the food system include:

- Development of huge multi-national companies who control what is grown, where it is grown and prices.
- Loss of biodiversity.
- Homogenisation of culture.
- Less emphasis on public health.

Figure 1 highlights the concentration of power for the majority of foods grown in Europe. The power and control are located at the bottle neck with the 110 buying desks who determine the type and price of goods that eventually appear on the supermarket shelves. This has implications for growers and the consumer with what is called the funnel effect, with this process of concentrating power being repeated globally with respect to most commodities. It results in a concentration of buying power, with fewer buying desks and fewer outlets and less power in the hands of the grower. The buying desks of the large trans-national corporations, whether retail or fast food, do not want to be dealing with a large number of small producers. This leads to concentrations in the growing and production of food. There have been changes over time in who controlled the food system in the early 1900s farming was dominant with the manufacturing sector assuming dominance in the middle of the century, this changed in the 1960/70s to manufacturers and wholesales with the retailers emerging as dominant in the last 20 years of the 20th century and in the this century. This dominance by the retailers has been challenged by the food service sector (fast food, take-away and restaurants) but is currently slowing down, with the global economic crises, as more and more households are economising and eating at home.

The concentration of power is further represented by a north/south divide with the major international companies being based or originating in the rich north.

Figure 1. The supply chain funnel in Europe from farmers/producers to consumer



An example of the power of the food industry comes from Idaho in the United States, the premier potato growing state and shows what can happen with retail or restaurant power over the food system:

- In Idaho the average potato farm is 400 acres. Before selling anything the grower is half a million dollars down.
- Profit is premised on potatoes selling for $5/hundred-weight.
- Growing to specification for the fast food and major retailers leads to factory farming. Growers are reliant on one or two buyers for their produce (due to contract specification), thus leaving them vulnerable to price re-negotiations.
- In 1996 prices fell to $1.50, influenced by cheap imports from Canada (Schlosser, 2001).

In Idaho in the past 25 years, the number of potato growers has halved while in the same period land devoted to potato growing has grown. The results are pretty obvious—the demise of small growers and local communities with the growth of corporate farms. In North America, russet, one variety of potato accounts for 75 percent all potatoes grown with the vast majority going to supply the food service sector to produce frozen French fries (Steel, 2008, Reader, 2008). Potato growers one year in every four end up selling their produce at a cost below what it takes them to produce it.

There is a very big and real question over the long and short-term sustainability of the current global food system, with aspects of the new local/regional food security and supply being examined. The current system is based on 'false' accounting, where the global food supply system is not held to account for the impacts that the system has on the environment or human or social health (Lang & Heasman, 2004). The World Health Organisation has challenged the global food industry over its role in promoting certain types of fats and processed foods and the impact on human health (Fleck, 2003; WHO, 2003). The sugar lobby in the United States responded with threats to 'scupper WHO' by lobbying for an end to Government funding (Boseley, 2003). More recent examples come from the area of advertising where the food and advertising industries are engaged in heavy lobbying to limit the restrictions on advertising to children. This has resulted in many governments entering into voluntary agreements with the industry, essentially allowing them to regulate themselves (Caraher, Landon and Dalmeny, 2006)

These market forces act in tandem with the social changes that are occurring to give large corporations power to dictate the agenda to growers the demands of the global food economy and the pressure to grow crops for cash have implications for local communities. The economic reality is that small farms cannot survive in this global economy and must either amalgamate or sell out to bigger outlets or corporations, This has an impact on local communities in terms of their sustainability. In addition, as the Prevention Institute (2004) in the US points out, the links between agriculture and health can be seen in the areas of:

- Over production of a range of unhealthy food products
- Use of and exposure to toxins

- Dangers to farmer and worker health and safety
- Antibiotic resistance
- Food-borne illness
- Respiratory illness and poor air quality.

The establishment of intensive agriculture in areas of the world where it is harder to measure or control the effects of such intensification can have an impact on local economies and cultures such as future degradation to the environment, as well as costs to the health care system as diet-related non-communicable diseases take a toll. So while we as consumers may not directly pay for this our fellow human beings do.

Food miles, foodsheds and packaging- an example of more hidden costs

One of the fallouts of the global food chain is the movement of food between and within countries. The distance food travels in the United Kingdom between producer and consumer rose by 30 percent in 15 years at the end of the twentieth century (Paxton, 1994; Steel, 2008). This has been called the 'food miles' effect. The increase in food miles results in pollution, use of pesticides and packaging and a rise in hidden costs when effects are passed on to other areas. It is now recognised that food miles is too simple a metaphor and more recent developments have moved to carbon costs and life cycle analysis but for the moment let us work with the idea of food miles accepting its limitations. This 'externalisation' of costs in travel results in damage to the environment and human health. The costs are paid through other budgets such as indirect health costs by a contribution to cardiovascular disease and food poisoning treatment or environment costs such as pesticide and nitrate pollution. In the European Union it is said that consumers pay three times for their food: firstly, across the counter as they buy it; secondly, as part of their contribution to subsidies of agriculture through the Common Agricultural Policy; and thirdly, in the form of cleaning up environmental pollution caused by intensive agriculture (Pretty et al., 2000).

Many initiatives have started focussing on the provision of local food. Toronto has one of the longest and best documented initiatives where it looks to sourcing food from within its natural foodshed (Akin to a watershed, a foodshed is the area around an urban area that 'captures' food products through its transport networks.) (Lister, 2007). Despite Toronto's many successes it struggles in the wake of a global system that transports food many miles and processes it. Key factors, concerning Toronto, according to Lister include:

- There are more food banks offering assistance to the poor than McDonald's outlets.
- The disappearance of rural communities from the city fringe as the city expands.
- Fewer farms and farmers.
- More than 60 percent of the City's fresh produce is imported from the United States (compared to almost all of the city's food coming from within 350 kilometres in 1960).

- In the city there are ‘gaps in the urban fabric’ with some communities and areas not having a supermarket within walking distance and there is a dominance of fast food outlets.

Toronto is not unusual in these respects but it has a history of activism and of documenting these concerns. In some recent work in London and Preston (a northern English city) we found

- More take-aways than shops in some areas.
- Complete meals from take-aways were sometimes cheaper than the cost of the raw ingredients from local shops.
- Healthy food options were not always available locally.
- Food prices varied from area to area often in small distances.
- Members of ethnic groups could not always buy a culturally appropriate food locally.
- Cars were necessary to access healthy options in supermarkets, which were not located in local areas. (Bower et al., 2008: Lloyd et al., 2008)

Many of the above problems are a consequence of the ‘free market’ being left to its devices. There is a case for regulation and directing the food industry to provide services and food to those in need. Instead food policy seems to focus on self-help and education, certainly necessary but on their own insufficient to address the problems of inequality. This raises the question of what a food system might look like to which we now turn to offer some answers.

Another aspect of the existing system is that the more miles food travels the greater the packaging and storage costs. Figure 2 shows the ultimate in ‘meaningless’ packaging where the banana with its own natural packaging is further packaged, clearly unnecessary and unsustainable.

Such approaches to packaging are part of the marketing of food and have little to do with the quality or nutritional status of food.

Figure 2: Packaging of a banana by UK retailer

Analysis of the food system

With respect to the food system Figure 3 shows what a healthy food system might look like, conceptually, with the concerns of nutrition, food safety and environment (sustainable food supply) being the pillars on which the system is built (WHO, 2002). In reality the systems are much more complex and can include issues such as concentration of power in a small number of companies, cultural dominance of food with appropriation of cuisines from the south as marketing devices and the McDonaldization of cuisine (Ritzer, 2000).

Figure 3: The Three Pillars supporting healthy food and nutrition policies

The three pillars of nutrition, food safety and environment (sustainable food supply) were developed by WHO as guides for national governments for the achievement of national health and nutrition plans in line with the provisions of the International Conference on Nutrition (WHO/FAO, 1992). Figure 4 tries to capture some of this complexity and recognises there are many issues hidden in each of the pillars. All this is taken a step further in Table 1, where the three pillars of the system are developed in relation to key elements of the food system ranging from production (agriculture) to consumption.

The actions in Table 1 are summarised from a workshop held with participants in a WHO workshop

Figure 4: A complex system of pillars necessary to support a healthy food system

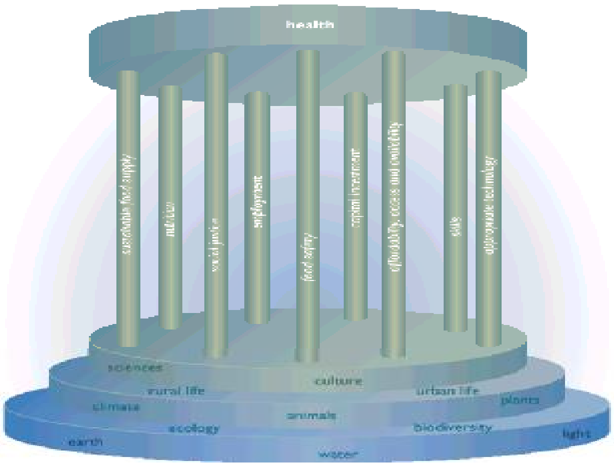


Table 1 Linkages between the three pillars of the WHO-E Food and Nutrition Action Plan

Sector	Nutrition	Food safety	Environment
Agriculture	Local production Livestock, etc Security Seasonal variation	Use of pesticides Fertilisation Transport Breeding practices Animal health	Reduction of pollution Appropriate technology and mechanisation Urban planning Sustainable local development
Food processing	Healthy processing Production of food Labelling Low fat, sugar Fortification Dietary style	Hygiene; Storage Transport GAP (good agricultural practice) HACCP Quality assurance Food standards	Waste disposal Water contamination
Retail and distribution	Quantitative & qualitative redistribution Nutrient preservation Availability; Freshness Accessibility Affordability	Hygiene Packaging Transport Storage Distribution	Waster disposal Transport Freons from cooling facilities Smooth border crossing
Catering	Healthy preparation Food variety Meal planning	Hygiene Storage Transport	Waste disposal Anti smoking policy Organic waste

Sector	Nutrition	Food safety	Environment
	Proper technology Dietary habits	Strengthening control & penalties	Tourism regulation for waste disposal
Consumers	Health education Choice; Knowledge Attitude; Culture Awareness; Fiscal policy	Hygiene Legal protection of consumers	Waste management Education Awareness of pollution Indoor air pollution
Media	Information; Education Exchange of expertise Health promotion	Information Education	Information; Recycling Education about proper waste management
Other	Promotion of healthy eating at all levels; Obesity—risk factor influencing health insurance Social & cultural aspects Migrant needs; Tourism Exception situations…	Eating raw food of animal origin Condition of food preparation Inadequate food storage	

Winners and losers

The key point is that cheap food is an illusion. The costs are absorbed by someone, somewhere in the food chain whether the coffee grower in Africa who receives 9p per kilo for a product that eventually sells for £17.11 per kilo in the UK high street (see Table 2), or the loss of local diversity, or the increase in food miles and pollution that the consumer eventually picks up in other areas. Policy makers tend to approach the three pillars in silos rather than as aspects of a total food economy which meet and intersect at different points. Below coffee is presented as an example of this process of winners and losers.

Table 2: Who makes money from coffee? Winners and losers

- Grower in Africa gets 9p per kilo for green coffee beans
- Exporter buys it for 17p
- Transport to port for grading etc for 29p
- Importer in UK pays 34 p per kilo
- Roaster in Oxfordshire pays 41p (new price is £1.06, with moisture loss)

- Supermarket, having paid for processing, packaging, distribution and marketing now charge £17.11 per kilo—that is, between farm gate and shopping trolley, price goes up by 7,000%
(Source: Based on data in Pendergrast, 2001).

Source: Adapted from Pendergrast (2001) and Oxfam (ND).

Globally five major global roasters (Procter and Gamble, Nestlé, Sara Lee and Philip Morris with 40 percent of world trade) the key driver is price for the major roasters. So they go where the coffee is cheapest, in recent years this has been the far-east (Vietnam) where World Bank policies have resulted in a glut of coffee with lower prices for growers globally. So the basic grade coffee bean, for instant coffee (which accounts for about 80 percent of the total coffee market), can travel across the globe for processing. In 1990 the world coffee trade was worth US$30billion, of which producing countries received US$12billion by 2004 global revenues were in the order of US$55billion but only US$7billion went or stayed in exporting nations. The cost for consumers stays the same or increases slightly the main beneficiaries are the roasters and retailers.

This situation is repeated within countries where growers and producers lose out in relation to the retailers. Cuts in the cost of food result in these cuts being passed down the line to producers and growers. Fair trade has made inroads into people's consciousness and many buy goods on this basis but it accounts for a small proportion of overall sales. The current global economic difficulties have resulted in consumers in the developed world cutting back on fair trade and organic produce as prices increase, as such goods are more expensive. In times of affluence consumers may be prepared to pay more but in times of recession they become price sensitive. So we know in the UK that the sale of organic produce has reduced. In the UK in the last year the cost of the household food basket has increased by 20 percent with:

- Basmati rice increasing by 60 percent.
- Beef by 5 percent.
- A dozen free range eggs by 47 percent.

This has made most people more price conscious and undermined some of the gains made on sustainability and fair trade concerns with the consumer becoming more price conscious as opposed to ethically driven. The decrease in sales of organic produce and the shift by consumers to cheaper retailers (the 'hard discounters') are some immediate indicators of this. This has resulted in a new price war with the four major retailers in the UK beginning a price war on key items. The consequences of this price war may be good in terms of outcomes for the consumer but bad for producers as they are the ones who absorb the lowering costs. While such increases (20 percent overall for a food basket) are worrying and will undoubtedly impinge more on low income and price sensitive groups, the reality is that food spending as percentage of total spending is low and can be absorbed (11 percent is the average UK spend on food). Such increases across the globe have potentially catastrophic consequences, in developing countries there is an over reliance on basics (such as rice or wheat) as the mainstay of the diet and increases in food prices result in food insecurity and up to 80 percent of daily income having to be spent on food.

Discussion

The economic arguments over who benefits from trade are rife, the advocates of globalisation claim that free-trade benefits all while those who view the issue with a public health lens are more sceptical. There is a battle going on with the tensions being those of profit and health.

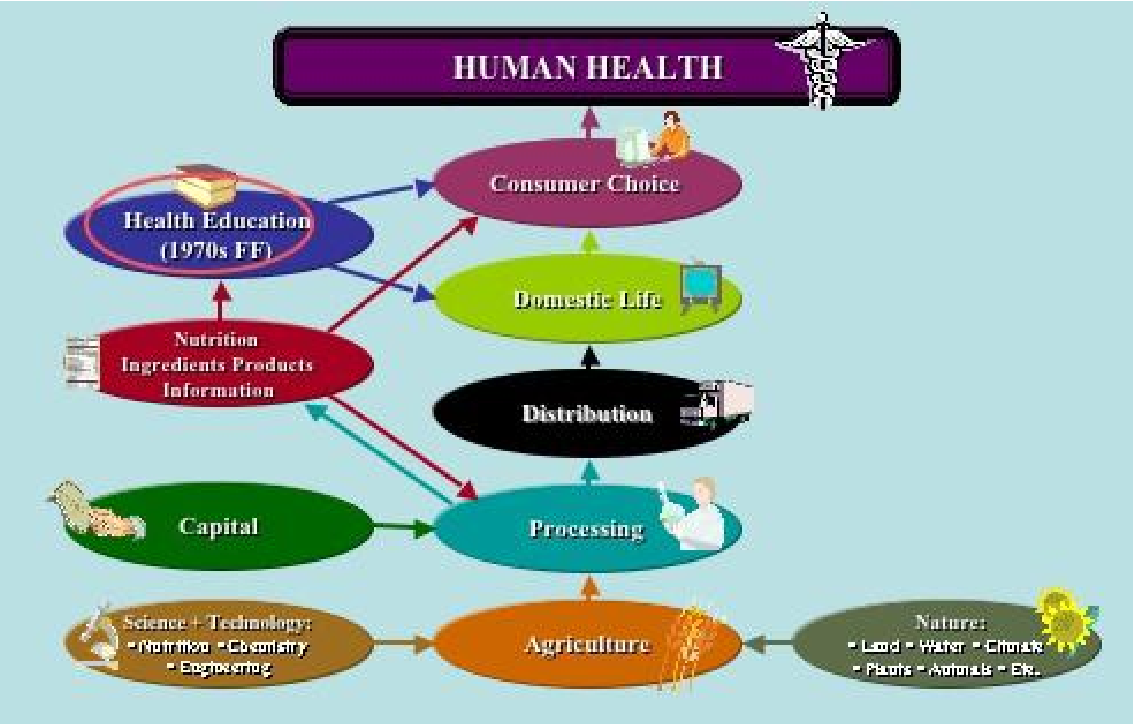
The flows of capital, ideas and health benefits or favours the developed over the developing world. For public health nutrition the consequences of globalisation of the food system means:

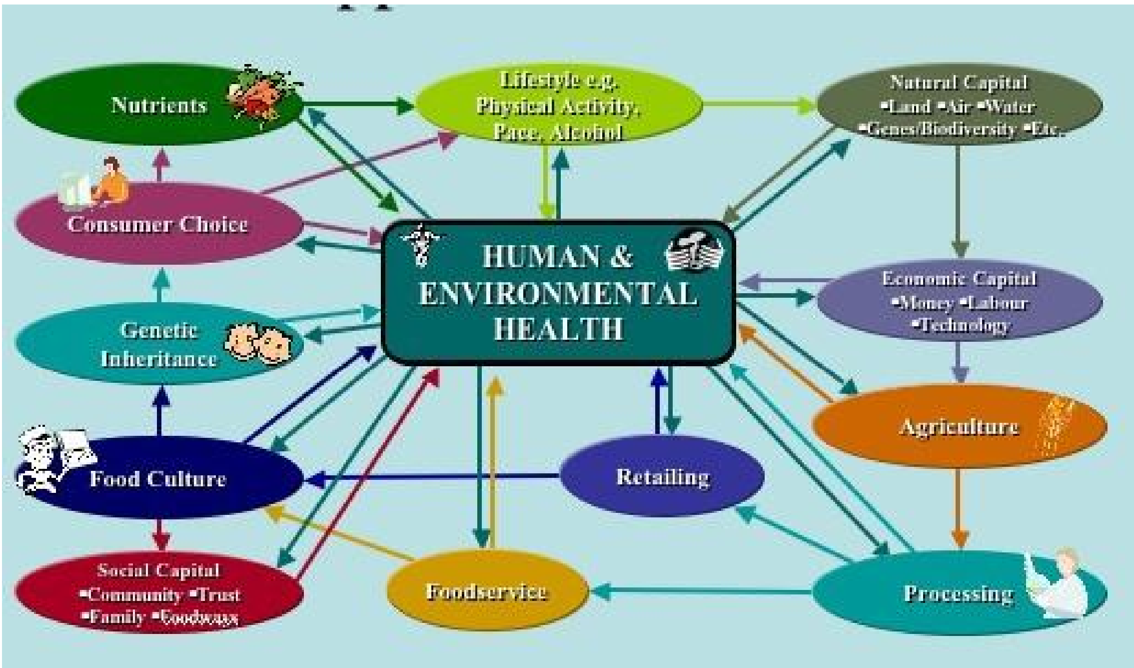
- Older and fatter populations.
- While there is some narrowing of disease patterns between the developed and developing worlds, although the greater burden lies with the developing world alongside this are degradation of natural environments and pollution and ecological costs to the developing world.
- Increases in relative poverty in countries and between countries -food security.
- More uniform cultural behaviour with respect to food.
- Power moves from national or government agencies to trans-national corporations (TNCs).
- Capital in the form of money flows out of the country and within countries from rural to urban areas.
- Local food systems and small holdings developed over centuries are replaced with larger units, fewer working the land and implications for fall back (food security) in times of scarcity.
- There is a food war going on represented by two dimensions which can be seen in figure 5 below.

The productionist paradigm sees human health best served by an efficient and productive food chain built on a model of more and greater efficiency. The ecological paradigm works from a different set of values where the drivers are human and environmental health and the system works to deliver on these values.

What this means for home economics is that there is a need to move beyond teaching about the food system 'as-it-is', to education concerning the background to the food system and how we, as both consumers and citizens, can act and exercise power. The models above can be used to both inform teaching practice about sustainability and to frame a response at a school/community level to wider influences in the food system. Education on its own is judged not to be sufficient for food advocacy or food citizenship.

Figure 5. The models of the productionist paradigm of food production (left hand side) and the ecological paradigm (right hand side) (Lang and Heasman, 2004).





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Consumers and future consumption:
Patterns, advocacy, traits, projections and sustainability of home economics

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Reprinted from:
Pendergast, D. (2008). Home economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future. Proceedings of the IFHE XXI World Congress, July 26-31, Switzerland. Switzerland: IFHE.

Abstract

This year marks the hundredth year of Home Economics existence as a profession. Founded in 1908, it has grown from a mere domestic science course to position girls firmly in the home to a global colossus in the study and practice of the arts and science of consumerism. This paper examines the challenges facing Home Economics in meeting growing and varying consumer demands and the steps taken to mitigate them. There is growing apprehension and subdued pessimism on the ability of Home Economics to meet future consumer demands. Uncertainty of the future and institutional failures are blamed for threatening the sustainability of the profession and its supporting systems. The paper prescribes the wheel structure principle as the solution to the perennial identity and legitimacy problem facing Home Economics. The philosophy of the wheel postulates that with education and available technology and capital, an optimum and stable structure would be developed for Home Economics within limits of acceptable social, economic, and ecological sustainability standards. The functional structure should be simple, flexible, vary between nations and regions, and must be guided by proven competitive advantage attributes such as sufficient resource availability and socio-economic stability.

Introduction

In hundred years of it existence, Home Economics since its inception in 1908 has grappled with the challenges of satisfying the diverse and divergent needs and demands of an ever-increasing population of consumers. Some consumers at the fringes of poverty are seeking to satisfy the basic necessity of life—food, clothes and shelter. Others are so sophisticated in their demands that they upstage the level of available knowledge and technology for providing the goods and services that will satisfy their wants. Home Economics is juxtaposed in this extreme demand continuum and saddled with the task of providing solutions to the multiplicity of consumption demands. Consumer demands are heterogeneous because of variations in wealth status, culture, traditions, geographic locations, and natural resource endowments within and between groups, states and regions. Human errors such as destructive use and bad leadership on the one hand and natural disasters namely earthquakes, famine, droughts, and disease outbreaks add to the complexity of consumer demands and the difficulty in meeting them. Differences in consumer tastes and preference and the liberty to exercise consumer sovereignty over the choice of goods and services and the price to pay place additional burdens on Home Economics as a service provider in the food and hospitality industry. Education and technology are projected as viable tools for arresting the gamut of challenges posed by various and varying food demands as a result of population increase, cultural differences, rising urbanization, and declining resource availability.

Home Economics has consistently taken ambitious steps to accommodate these vagaries in human consumption demands within the ambit of human capability and resource availability. The profession has tried name change, increased its scope of coverage, and has stretched into virtually every field of learning in search of identity and legitimacy. The scope widens into thematic and geographic boundaries to include food and feeding habits, healthcare and healthy living, clothing and interior designs, family and household welfare, and housing and human security. Many proponents and practitioners express subtle pessimism over the future of the profession. They fear the ability of Home Economics to satisfy consumer demands in a progressively and predominantly patriarchal society (Pendergast and McGregor, 2007)). The trends, patterns and nature of future consumers and their consumption demand and how sustainable the resources and systems could be are of grave concern to the present professionals. This paper examines some of these challenges that face Home Economics and attempts to make prescriptions to mitigate them. The paper is structured in three parts. The fist part looks at the nature of consumers and their consumption and attempts some prognosis about future consumption patterns. The second part analyses the structure of Home Economics and its role and potentials in providing goods and services for consumers. The third part attempts to prescribe how Home Economics would be structured to achieve stability and the much desired identity, legitimacy and sustainability.

Nature of consumers and their consumption patterns

Typology of consumers

Consumers are varying in nature and quantity of goods they consume just as there are diversity and variability in the quantity of goods and services available. These issues must be considered in structuring consumer education, in food services planning, and food supply chain implementation with a view to obtain clarity on trends and patterns of consumption for easy predictions. Population is a major determinant of the volume of consumption goods demand. While total population informs the quantity, population composition has direct relationship with the type and quality of products demanded. Transport and communication infrastructure as well as the administrative arrangement in place determine the extent and efficiency of distribution. The composition of the population, the amount of resource available and the efficiency of resource use together determine the quantity and quality of products consumed and the sustainability of the consumption.

Historical accounts reveal that young adults in their teens are more voracious and impulsive in their consumption habits than the much younger and older generations. Nowadays, new consumer items such as mobile phones, computer and video games, iPods, t-shirts, jeans and fast foods have become young people’s passion and obsession (Benn, 2004). This group of consumers fall under the category that Benn (2004) regard as egocentric. The egocentric consumers aim at fulfilling their own needs without any consideration for the consequences or for the interest of the other groups.

The younger generations are more egocentric and would want to satisfy their needs first before those of the older generation. In other words parents or older relations can control their consumption. The older ones mainly parents are constrained by the limiting nature and finiteness of resources. They are therefore consumers of the last resort who only take the leftovers after children and the vulnerable groups would have consumed. Benn (2004; Page 114) calls this latter group of consumers the eco-centric that is those who show care for themselves, the family and others plus the environment. Irrespective of the nature of the consumption item, whether food, clothing or amenity services, this dual consumption pattern seems to persist. It is also documented that women are more consumption frenzy than men both in traditional rural societies and in modern urban society. Urban women are notorious for habitual shopping for clothes, cosmetics, and ornamentals, cars and electronics. Women control shopping for family grocery, family feeding, and feeding the children.

In traditional African societies, women are more associated with consumption than men. Their traditional role of home management, food preparation, and taking care of children places them at vantage position to satisfy their consumption appetites while the men are at work away from home. The stay-home role gives women more eating opportunity than men. This voracious eating habit of women is depicted in the story told of a newly married woman in an African community. On her first arrival in her husband's home she was shown the yam and cocoyam barns from where she should fetch yams tubers and cocoyams for food. She was however advised always to examine the food items and choose from those on the verge of going bad and leave the healthy ones that stand better chances of going farther into the year. The young lady is reported to have accepted with nostalgia and retorted, "All of them were going to be eaten anyway, so there was no point bothering with the selection". This remark did not go well with the parents in-law who immediately sent her packing. The story portrays the young lady as not being mindful of sustainable use.

Consumption patterns

In the past, people ate food in their natural forms, with minimal processing and change in form. People ate food purely for growth, bodybuilding, and for good health. With increasing urbanization and modernization and desire to increase the shelf life of food items and other household consumer goods, consumers began to discriminate in their choices, tastes and preferences and the forms they desire in food and product consumption. This led to increased food processing, form changes, and value adding. With much processing and flavouring came the fear possible introduction of cancerous agents. Modern medicine started detecting cancer in patients and began to associate it with their eating habits. The fear of picking cancer and other deadly diseases from food and drinks crept in and started gripping consumers. Consumers became apprehensive of what choice of food they make, what they eat, and the quantity of it to consume. This growing concern over possible contracting of deadly disease from eating increased the burden on Home Economics concerning food preparation, and menu planning with a view to reducing the chances of food intended for human consumption becoming a disease vector.

Increasing chances of picking up diseases from food consumption habits inform and guide peoples eating habits. Many consumers cut down on the quantity and variety of food they eat in order to stay healthy. They eat special food or skip food entirely to reduce their chances of obesity. Consumers are conscious of the fat, cholesterol, sugar, and caffeine contents in their food. These compounds are causative agents of some of the most deadly diseases such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Home Economics is expected to provide food in the right quantity and composition to avert the occurrence of these deadly diseases. This it can do by identifying the right kinds of food and their methods of preparation. Responses to the impending threat to health from feeding habits have been extensively studied and documented. In response to the correlation between eating habits and some debilitating diseases British secondary schools have introduced compulsory cooking classes as a step towards fighting childhood obesity. In pursuing this objective, 800 cookery teachers are to be trained over a there-year period (IFHE, Undated). According to a new government policy as part of the obesity strategy, all schools will be teaching cookery by 2011. The aim is to prepare people for the future so that they can teach the younger generation to be healthier adults in future. A spokesperson for the government reported that if they had undertaken the cookery programme 30 years previously, they might not have the obesity crisis they have presently (IFHE, Undated). The interrelationship between consumption and the health status of the consumer and the importance of using their mutual relationship to optimal benefits cannot be overstressed. Consumption patterns have significant impacts on human and environmental health and raise serious dilemma on how consumer education can help to unravel the physiological mystique. Unfortunately, the interpretation of consumption as reasoned behaviour or action is being rendered irrelevant in a modern society where consumerism is overly governed by globalization, cultural change, and the liberation of the individual (Benn, Jensen and Jepson, 2004).

Today, revelations are emerging to the effect that too much food, too much processing of food, and too much food flavouring could be injurious to health. In the past, when food was scarce and processing was minimal, the food was more organic and healthier. People lived longer and life expectancy was high. Recently, the eating habits have changed as modern technology has contributed to increasing availability and palatability of food but with increased chances of falling prey to food-induced diseases such as obesity. Excessive weights are breeding grounds for chronic diseases such as Type II Diabetes, Heart Disease and High Blood Pressure (Pendergast, 2006). She reported that rates of obesity in children rose in many countries of the world in the past couple of decades. In Australia, obesity in children is reported to have almost doubled between 1985 and 1995 to the degree that one in every four children born fall outside the healthy wealth range. Obesity in children stems from increasing consumption habits of children who presently consume more kilojoules than they did 10 year ago and spending their leisure time on less vigorous activities such as watching television, playing video games, and surfing and searching the Internet (Pendergast, 2006: Page 10). Young people advocate for increased consumption now on the ground that technology would take care of future consumption problems. They believe that with availability of finances consumption would proceed without restrictions (Benn, 2004). In the final analysis, success or failure of the Home Economics profession will depend on how well it can plan and deliver the right quantity and quality of food in time. It also includes the ability of the profession to reduce or eliminate these food-related diseases in the society.

Trends and traits

Home Economics is both an art and science bringing the artistic aspects of food, clothing and homes into the science of domestic and industrial food preparation and preservation technology. Within the science discipline, it embraces both social, biological and physical sciences in its education and training, research, and food service practices. These diversities add to the complexity of defining the limits and shape of Home Economics as both an educational discipline and a profession. Questions of whether it is art or science and where it can find a home within any of the disciplines contained in its structure remain a nagging dilemma for practitioners and clienteles. By embracing virtually every field of study and every aspect of life and human existence in it study and practice, the profession faces problems of focus and identity.

Attempts at positioning and repositioning Home Economics and giving it legitimacy in the domain of education, skills development and professional practice have met with the same derogatory and discriminatory treatments. In spite of the efforts to give it recognition, it is still regarded as “a subject designed exclusively for girls, and taught exclusively by women” (Pendergast and McGregor, 2007: Page 8). Even now that student and staff composition has significantly changed with a lot of male students and staff injected into its teaching and practice, it still carries the original ill-conceived stigma. For the past couple of years, the International Federation of Home Economists (IFHE) has been obsessed with the charting a future for the profession. The focus and identity of the profession have also been on the cards and in the shopping list of the organization. These concerns are relevant and help stimulate critical thinking but we must acknowledge that there is a limit to which one profession can go in solving world and human problems. There must be a cut-off point and a limit to the extent it can go before it loses focus and identity. Home Economics cannot teach everything from arts to science to applied science and technology. Given that it is multidisciplinary in design but it should not strive to replace or displace other disciplines in its programmes – education, training and practice. On the contrary, it should cooperate and collaborate with other disciplines mainly from an interdisciplinary perspective. Projecting the multidisciplinary image could be misleading and would have the tendency to exceed boundaries and limits. It will be tantamount to “Jack of all trade and master of none”. For example, in North America, McGregor (2006) reports that home economists are grappling with homelessness, gentrification, and problems associated with excessive urbanization, and isolated rural communities. These are problems mostly handled by the housing departments elsewhere. The ideology of keeping it simple but efficient, where ‘simple’ in this context does not necessarily mean small. Rather, it means reduction of complexity to allow for flexibility in the subjects taught at school and the goods and services provided for consumers.

Family traits and genotypic characteristics should form part of the study in family science. A study of disorders of genetic origin and family life cycle are vital to the understanding and control of deadly diseases that cause infantile and maternal mortality. In this regard, Home Economics should collaborate with medical sciences in the control and eradication of such diseases to build healthier families and prevent premature deaths in children and young mother and prevent mother-daughter diseases.

Gender inequality and the future of home economics

The future of Home Economics depends largely on the continued struggled for especially in Africa. As long as gender discrimination and insensitivity remain and patriarchy rules the social system, especially in traditional societies, women and girls will continue to burdened with household chores including child care and food preparation. They view these domestic responsibilities not from the light of their relative ability to perform better than men. Rather, they see them from the disadvantaged and low status ascribed to them by the society. The old mentality that "the place of the woman is in the kitchen" continues to govern the patriarchal attitude of men in many traditional cultures. Even the recent challenges posed by women in delving into areas of learning and professions that were previously regarded as the prerogative of men and boys has not changed this mindset. Subjects and disciplines such as Mathematical, Physics and Engineering, where women never dared and where males had dominated are no more the exclusive domain of men. Agriculture as a subject and as a profession suffered the same fate, which Home Economics currently suffers. It was derogatorily consigned to males as the group with the physical ability to handle the drudgery inherent in farming. The study of agriculture was not the domain or in the shopping list of women seeking university education. Women could not associate with a profession and practice that would soil their hands or their beautifully painted long nails. They stayed home to take care of the house, the children, and to prepare food for the men at work. Men took up the challenge and transformed agriculture into a lucrative, life saving, wealth creating and money-spinning profession. Today, women have rushed into agriculture and farming and are even trying to outdo men in the practice of the profession.

Advocates of face-lift for the profession have prescribed deconstructing the terminology and have promoted name change as a strategy for erasing the male – female dichotomy, which creates the impression that it is a feminist organization. This will facilitate the pooling together of production resources, which are currently segregated along gender lines and are held in the two opposing camps. While the physical land and capital and the authority to allocate them are held by men, women and girls constitute the bulk of the farm labour force. We once again draw a parallel between the challenge Home Economics is currently facing and that which the Nursing profession faced in the recent past. The nursing profession was previously regarded as exclusively women profession. Nursing education and training was consigned to girls who could not pursue formal secondary education. These 'dropouts' were relegated to the less academic and more practical nursing training and profession. It is supposedly in this less rigorous discipline that they can cope with their debased competency. The nursing profession was later mainstreamed into the formal system of education up to tertiary level. Its complimentary role in the medical profession significantly elevated its status such that it has become a gender-neutral profession. The stakeholders in Home Economics – professionals, practitioners, students and clienteles should make the profession sufficiently attractive though enhancing its employment creation prowess, improve on its wealth creation ability, and make its services aesthetically appealing to entice men and boys.

Home Economics should break away from running as a charitable and social service that attracts no financial reward. It should be as financially competitive as other professions such as law, medicine and engineering. Its education and training programme should build-in this competitiveness in the curriculum. Efforts should be geared towards disabusing the minds or removing the stigma that associates Home Economics with only child bearing, childcare, domestic chores, washing and ironing of clothes etc. Even now that the society associates Home Economics with women, the same society acknowledges that the best chefs worldwide are men. What a paradox and irony of history that in spite of this attribute, men do not join this leader in the hospitality industry where the great potentials exist for them to excel.

Home economics practitioners and professionals should be more creative, more innovative, and more competitive. They should be dynamic and sensitive to changes and take advantage of advances in technology to keep their profession on a dynamic and not static or conservative path.

Pendergast and McGregor (2007) largely blame patriarchy as responsible for the stifling and stunting the growth and development of Home Economics. This view inadvertently assumes a defeatist stance and ascribes the practice and involvement in the activities of Home Economics solely to women. In the new social and economic order in which we have witnessed women priests, female astronauts, female agriculturists, female heads of state, women taxi drivers and motor mechanics coexisting with male nurses, this patriarchal theory should be downplayed. We should try to distinguish between cultural and traditional imperatives that are embedded in the society in which we live. Although some of these cultures are draconian and retrogressive we should devise strategies and neo-liberal ideologies to eradicate such repressive cultural and traditional practices. Some of these gender insensitive cultures existed when women stayed home as full-time housewives and naturally they took care of the home and children when men were away at work. In modern day societies, families should choose between the wife taking up a wage-paying job outside the home against the unpaid social responsibility of taking care of the home and children. There are tradeoffs in which family members (husband and wife) could both work and hire and pay a worker to take care of the home and children. Alternatively, one of them could stay home and take care of the home. Any one of them can play this role; it does not have to be the woman. It seems to be an accident in nature that women are more endeared to children and in working at home than men. Could it be the natural phenomenon that bonded mother and child together for nine months during pregnancy that makes children closer to their mothers than their fathers, especially during early childhood?

We can draw parallels between women's affinity with Home Economics practice with the picking of green tea leaves in a tea farm. Tea picking is predominantly done by women and girls on the understanding that they have the tender hands and touch, which the juvenile leaves desire and deserve. This has not made picking tealeaves a ludicrous operation and has not left it an exclusively female affair. The deciding factors in the entry and exist into every economic activity are mainly the financial rewards. As long as the financial rewards are sufficiently attractive there will be no gender segregation. Pendergast and McGregor (2007) submit that, Home Economics still remains in a compliant and marginalized position and that many of the strategies and decisions about name changes for the profession are manifestations of attempts by the profession to seek recognition from those in power.

Advocacy and the future of home economics

As Home Economics attains the mature age of 100 years, the anxieties and fears of many beneficiaries and benefactors centre on the future of the profession. Questions on how to brand the profession, the roles it will play, how it will be positioned to effectively address individual and family problems within its mandate in the world continue to resonate (Pendergast, 2006). Home Economics has been blamed for failing to reconstruct its own field beyond the confines of modern and patriarchal society and has suffered untoward consequences as a result. It demise and waning influence at certain levels of education and training and in practice are attributed to its failure to make impressive and identity defining impacts.

Over the years the profession has changed its name about three times. It started with Domestic Science at inception in 1908 and changed to Home Economics and now to Consumer Sciences. Other local names and clichés have also been given to the profession in many countries. An attempt to name it "Human Ecology" at some point, which would have downplayed its feminist portrayal failed for what Pendergast (2006; Page 6) called "dominance of patriarchy". In consonance with its name changes there have been challenges in its placement in the scheme of things in government and industry. Many governments have grappled with its placement in their administrative structure. In some of these governments it has found home in Ministries of Agriculture, Home Affairs, Industry and Tourism (hospitality industry), and in Economic Affairs. This dribbling about stems from the its seeming lack of finiteness and identity. In education and training institutions it grapples with positioning itself in the Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Consumer Sciences and Hospitality Industry, Faculty of Social Sciences, and lately in the Faculty of Gender and Women Affairs. The same non-deterministic stance faces the profession in the subjects taught and the services provided. Home Economics Education includes virtually all the subjects in the principal fields of arts as well as social, physical and biological sciences. When and where shall the limits be applied and defined to carve out an identity for the profession? This identity crisis facing Home Economics stems from the failure to delimit its boundary of operation. There is a limit to everything: the length of time to search for identity; decision on a befitting name; definition of limits and scope, and consolidation of the optimum size. The multidisciplinary nature of the profession lends itself to an erroneous tendency to accommodate virtually all disciplines of learning in one single profession. I am inclined to proffer the towing of an interdisciplinary rather than the multidisciplinary or multipurpose approach as a solution to the identity and legitimacy challenges. Let the latent competency possessed by the profession from its comparative advantage direct and shape its future form and delivery of goods and services.

The moral of the story of the wise tortoise should educate the advocates of name and form change for Home Economics. Folklores in African traditional societies associate the tortoise with extreme wisdom in the animal kingdom. Its excessive wisdom however put the male tortoise in trouble with its father in-law who slammed him with a fine of a goat as penalty. The poor but wise tortoise could not afford a goat but had just enough money for a cock. It then invoked its wisdom to solve the problem of providing a goat for the father in-law. It put a cock in a stuffed goatskin and tied a rope around the neck of the stuffed animal and was dragged it along en-route to its father in-law's home. Along the road, the cock crowed to the astonishment of onlookers who could not comprehend the mystery of a cock-sounding goat.

Although the tortoise ignored the unsavoury remarks of the passersby, the truth remained that what they saw outside is not what was inside. A different picture was being presented externally, but the true picture was hidden inside. The morale of this story is that no matter how Home Economics tries name changes, its identity remains with what it can achieve and not what name it bears. No matter how much it camouflages, its true identity remains. The cock acted naturally in spite of the efforts to hide and misrepresent its identity. The many names of domestic science, home science, human sciences, human ecology, human development, and nutritional sciences (Pendergast and McGregor, 2007), which the Home Economics has assumed, have still not given it a definitive identity. These names have been fashioned to neutralize the famine gender bias that the name Home Economics portrays to no avail and the blame game against patriarchy continues.

Education and training

The gender connotation of Home Economics has serious implication about its future roles and form. The ingrained feminism in the name and the pronounced aim of the founders make it a prerogative if not an exclusive preserve of women and girls. According to Pendergast (2006) quoting Manders (1987:3), the subject as a field of study aims at unifying the then home oriented courses to assist in giving girls a sense of responsibility from a scientific basis in the house. New paradigm shifts make this stance currently irrelevant now and in the future. With more working class than fulltime housewives nowadays this name connotation is no more valid. Through education and training necessary changes and new ideas borne out of societal dynamics, research and innovation breakthroughs, cultural practices, and technological changes can be disseminated to new breed of professionals, practitioners and consumers. In recent times Home Economics education is responding to cultural imperatives and is structuring courses to accommodate and respect the cultural underpinnings in their domain. At the University of Pretoria in the Republic of South Africa people's interaction with the environment is studied from a cultural and existential approach. Courses are developed to investigate the interrelationship between beliefs, values and attitudes within and between social groups. The interaction between food and culture as well as factors influencing food habits and choice of food for different cultural and ethnic groups in the country are included in the curriculum. Consumer behaviour, demographic characteristics of consumers, marketing strategies, and the role of market leaders in the food markets are all included in the curriculum of the University. There are also studies in socio-cultural, technological, psychological, physiological, nutritional, and public health requirements that influence food choices and acceptability. These factors are interrelated and they mutually reinforce each other to bring about clarity to guide decision making on food choices.

Home Economics education in developed countries such as the United States include at high school level courses that start that early to investigate how new technology and research findings affect human nutrition, biotechnology, food processing and human diets They also include for study the nature of international cultures and cuisines, family values and traditions, and parental care The utility of this holistic approach to educational cannot be overstressed in this era of globalization, liberalized economies that promote tourism, ecotourism and international cooperation. Yet in spite of all these, broken homes and marriages, crimes and juvenile delinquencies, child abuse, and the population of street kids are increasing assuming alarming proportions. The phenomenon points to institutional failures and cultural erosions and the failure of early childhood education to inculcate these values into the receptive and accommodative juvenile child.

The practical nature of the profession compels it to produce job-creating and not job-seeking graduates. Home Economics education and training programmes should therefore factor in this self-employment attribute in the development of curriculum and in the training of students. This is the comparative and competitive advantage the profession has over the finite and single subjects such as, mathematics, chemistry biology, art etc. The future of the profession therefore rests on the ability of its teaching, research and development programmes to explore the attributes of the profession and use them to promote the quality of its service delivery. Home Economics activities education should be geared towards developing employability skills and entrepreneurship in students. This should be guided by astute knowledge of trends in technological and managerial skills.

The Role of Technology

Modern technology has contributed significantly to the pace and depth of revolutionary changes in the Home Economics profession now and in the future.

Computers, the Internet, electronic and digital systems of communication have increased the speed of information flows and knowledge generation. Thus distal separation and geographic boundaries are no more barriers to sharing ideas and knowledge between institutions. Inter-institutional collaboration in teaching, research and exchange of services have been made easy by modern technology especially information and communication technology (ICT).

Technology has bridged the gap in waiting time in the delivery of services in the food service industry. Microwaves combine the attributes of speed with precision. Robots have increased the speed and accuracy in producing products and packaging them for the market. Cell phones, electronic and digital systems (cameras, televisions and videos) have increased the coverage and presentability of products and services in the hospitality industry and Home Economics in particular. These modern devices have changed the lifestyle of women who still remain major players in the profession.

Future Projections and Limitations

Predicting the future of Home Economics regionally and globally is an onerous task for many reasons. First, there is the uncertainty and therefore the unpredictability of the future. Second, the inter-twining and interconnectivity of Home Economics with many other disciplines increase the influence of exogenous factors in any attempt to predict its future with any measure of exactitude. Third, the rapid rate of population growth coupled with racial and cultural diversity in world population increase the complexity and difficulty in future predictions. Lastly, the rapid rate of technological, change is constantly shifting baseline data, and making future consumption demands not easily predictable. While various tools of prediction have been developed, their effectiveness is symptomatic of the amount and quality of data or available information. However, McGregor (2006) prescribes the injection of new and younger professionals to support the older ones in reshaping the future of the profession. According to her "there must be a cohort of leaders perched on the edge of the profession (feeder roots) who are continually seeking new ideas and paradigms to shape the practice" (McGregor, 2006: Page 4). Using the root system metaphor for Home Economics McGregor (2006: Page 6) she warns that "Those advocating for philosophical change should ensure that the new approach contains parts of the old ways of practice that are still working (transport roots) as well as new ways to think about practice (feeder root with soil attached)".

The sustainability challenges facing home economics

Much concern has been expressed over the sustainability of the Home Economics profession in the past and apprehensions are being expressed over the prospects of achieving it in future. It is not clearly whether the fear being expressed over sustainability is hinged on the present structure or on a different structure in future. Given that a finite scope of converge, an acceptable name, and acceptable identity are still being debated, the sustainability goal remains indeterministic. Pendergast and McGregor (2007) insinuate that the alliance of the profession with fields such as medicine, science, agriculture, architecture, and business has accorded it pseudo-legitimization. They brand the alliance a ploy intended to lure the profession into the patriarchy that has systematically encumbered its independence.

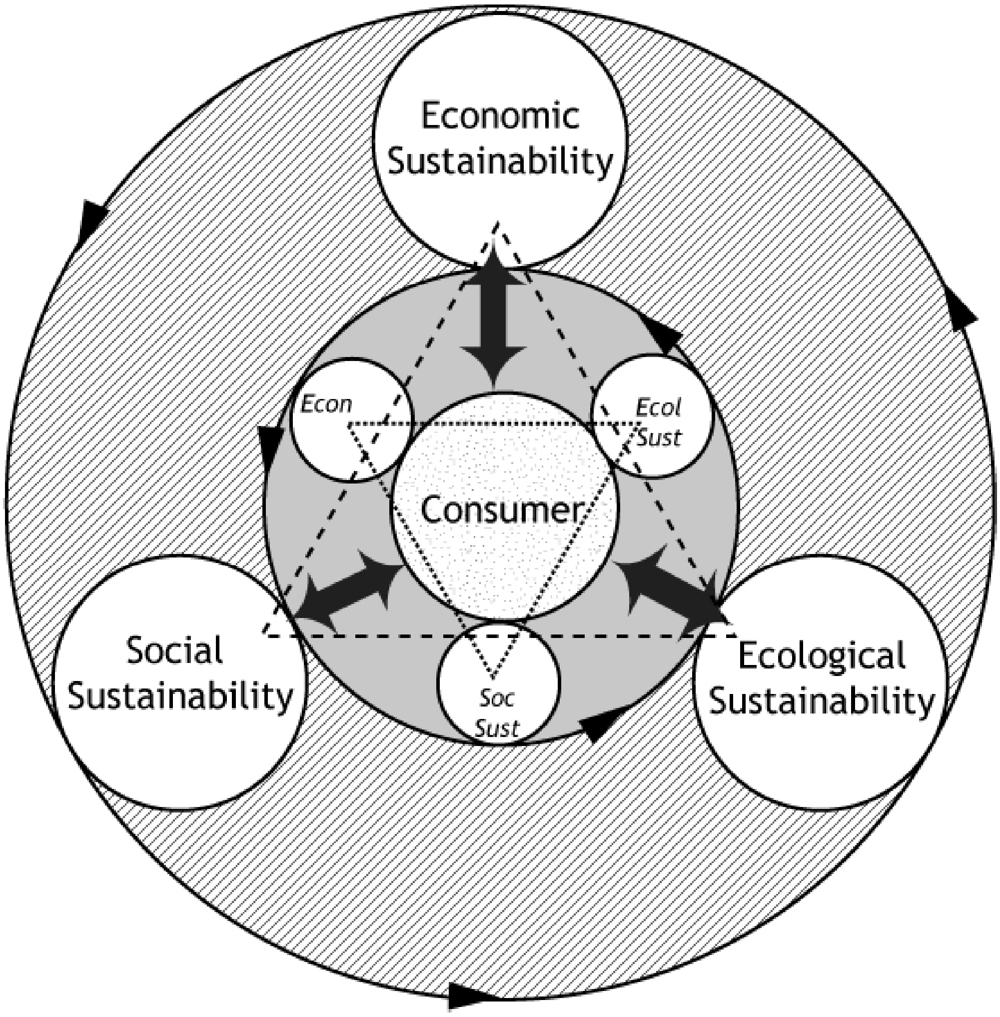
This perceived patriarchal and feminist divide inherent in Home Economics generates ill feelings that seriously mar the future and sustainability of the profession. Introduced as a feminist agenda to remove the gender inequality in the society the profession has faced inhibitions in its growth and expansion in a predominantly patriarchal society. While the factors – land and capital are controlled by men; women are the active producers and constitute the bulk of the labour force. Women are known to be more prudent with sustainable consumption while men are known for ostentatious and conspicuous consumption. Attributes of thrift in managing resources and saving for the rainy day are linked to women than to men. Children in traditional societies are reported to echo these opposing attributes of the male and female when they chant "Mothers give at the nick of time but fathers give after it has become too late". It is also believed that when mothers give they do so in pinches with a view to saving for the future whereas fathers give big to satisfy the immediate wants without much precaution taken against possible lack in future. The two scenarios point to the fact that women are more prone to integrating sustainable consumption in their habits than men. With Home Economics education and practice currently dominated by women, they stand better chances of bringing about sustainability for the profession. According to Moore (1994) quoted by Grover, Hemmati and Flenley (1999) in the Northern Province of Zambia, children under the age of five in female-headed households exhibit less likelihood of being malnourished than in families that are relatively better off but where both parents are resident. Several schools of thought submit that women are more conscious of the environment in their consumption than men. It is further alleged that in many developing countries, women constitute the larger population of the inhabitants afflicted with poverty. They have the highest proportion of the unemployed; and the least access to food. This skewed access to resources necessary for human livelihoods has connotation for the sustainability of the profession in the future. With women known for their competency and efficiency in resource use it follows that a society with more female population is likely to achieve better sustainability than the one with less women as resource managers. Dowd (1996) reported that in Africa, women are responsible for 95 per cent of the work related to serving food for their families and directly produce 80 per cent of the food. Women are generally saddled with the responsibility of preparing food for the family, taking care, and in feeding the children. It is therefore no surprise that Home Economics deals primarily with food, children, and families given that more women are enrolled and engaged in the profession and its activities.

The wheel ideology illustration for home economics

Home Economics as an area of learning and a profession should be viewed as a wheel. One of the attributes of a wheel is that it is not cost-effective to reinvent it. Thus, Home Economics having been established a century ago in 1908, like the wheel should not be recreated. Instead, it should be modified, improved and adjusted to fit the dynamics in consumer demands within the socio-economic and biophysical environment within which it operates. The wheel has many sizes, which are determined by the purpose, the weight it should carry, and the speed of its rotation or travel. The wheel has working parts that give it stability and identity. The hub is the core or epicentre of the wheel around which all other working parts gravitate. I Home Economics the consumer serves as the hub and determines the size and shape of the profession The spokes link the hub with the rim to provide shape and strength to the wheel. Tools such as education and technology represent the spokes of the wheel in Home Economics.

Figure 1 depicts Home Economics in the light of three concentric wheels – the smallest inner, a bigger middle, and the largest outer wheel. The shape of the wheel is determined by the ability of professionals and practitioners to harness resources to establish a Home Economics structure. A smooth and complete circle for the wheel is indicative that a stable state has been attained within limits of the available resources and expertise. The operational structure of the institution is determined by capital, education and technology. The two-directional arrows imply that there is a link between the consumers and the size of the profession (rim). The arrows also show the flexibility and dynamism that exists in the structure in which the scale can be upgraded to a bigger size or downgraded to a smaller one without compromising the stability of any chosen level of operation. The triangular link connotes the inter-connectedness and symbiosis that exist between the three pillars in their simultaneous contribution to stability and sustainability. The size of the wheel is a representation of identity and legitimacy for the profession. At any level of operation, the identity of the profession is defined at that level with respect to what the operation offers in education training and practice. Trimming the size of the profession implies it should focus only on disciplines and areas where it has the most comparative and competitive advantage. McGregor (2006) admonishes that Home Economics should not just align with other departments or use the language of accepted male dominated disciplines Instead, the professionals in this field should be assertive and stand up for the profession without stepping on the rights of others.

Figure 1: The wheel structure model for home economics sustainability



The level of technology available or affordable will delimit the size and degree of complexity and operation of the profession. New equipment and machinery, which enhance productivity and quality of products and services all contribute to shaping the future and image of the profession. The varying degrees of technological advancement in different counties and differences in the capacity to import the state of the earth but costly technology should compel practitioners to look inwards for techniques. Traditional and local knowledge could be harnessed to develop appropriate technology for surmounting local challenges in food, medicine and clothing development to embellish the Home Economics profession.

The state of the economy represented by the amount of capital as well as the level of technology also defines the scope of operation of the profession. The two factors work in tandem to determine the diameter of the wheel and therefore the scope and coverage of the profession. The quality, integrity and stability of Home Economics is controlled through education and training which represent the spokes in the wheel. Education and the literacy level of consumers have direct bearing on marketing information on what is available, where they exist, how to procure them, and the price to pay. The level of education also affects the consumers' knowledge and ability to exercise their rights in making right choices based on sound judgments.

Sustainability of the profession is achievable if the profession is practised within the ambience of the three pillars of sustainability – social, economic and ecological sustainability. In the figure, the rim of the wheel represents the limit of attainable level of efficiency given the amount of capital and level of technology available. The rim rests and rotates on the three pillars, which simultaneously monitor and control the extremities of the revolutions of the wheel. The pillars act as spools or rollers that determine the consistency, conformity and continuity in the practice of the profession. It implies that the three pillars must be properly and stably positioned before sustainability can be achieved. The absence or neglect of any one of the three creates a skewed condition and a state of instability that would produce detrimental consequences on sustainability.

Social sustainability

Social sustainability considerations must be an integral part of all Home Economics education and practice. Unless a programme is socially acceptable no matter how economically viable or intellectually opulent it might be it is bound to fail. Success of the profession for example will depend on how well it respects the culture and traditions of the people for example feeding and clothing habits, the leadership structure and hierarchy, social stratifications, and cultural ramifications. There are numerous cases of technological breakthroughs that otherwise would have transformed the social architecture of consumers and their societies but they failed social acceptability tests. Practitioners that are worth their training should not promote the consumption of pork in a predominantly Muslim society. In Kenya the Luo tribe by virtue of their proximity to Lake Victoria relish in eating fresh water fish. Historically, the Luos have remained in government opposition since the county's independence in 1963. The tribes that dominate the ruling party in government automatically hate fish eating because the opposition relishes in it. The zenith of this social divide and political imbroglio was reached when a top government official was visiting to officiate during a convocation ceremony in one of the national universities in the country. An uninformed housekeeper who had prepared the guestroom of the official put a beautiful but fish-shaped ceramic soap dish in the official's bathroom. It took a timely intervention of somebody with good knowledge of the social and political divide to replace the obnoxious fish effigy to avert a disaster. If that mistake had stayed uncorrected heads would have rolled in the Catering and Hostels Department of the University. It would have also caused the University drastic cuts in its budget allocations. This experience demonstrates how social discord could be elevated to acrimonious political bitterness.

The Yellow maize Experience in Nigeria

The case of the yellow maize technological breakthrough in Nigeria is a further demonstration of planning without social considerations. In the 1960s, a green revolution was achieved in the Western Nigeria when a high-yielding but yellow maize variety was developed to replace the low yielding, indigenous but white coloured maize variety. Unfortunately this did not take into consideration consumer taste and preference into consideration in a rigid society that has been used to white maize meal eko from the local variety. The women totally rejected the yellow maize in spite of the high yields. The technological achievement failed social acceptability and the people reverted to their old white maize meal. It is not often that these social tensions are known to Home Economics programme planners and practitioners in their many ramifications. Research should therefore be an integral part of the planning and practice of Home Economics to reveal these pertinent contributors to the sustainability of the profession.

Economic sustainability

Economic sustainability should consider whether the capital requirement for setting up the profession is available in sufficient quantity. It should further evaluate whether the future capital requirements will be available timely and in the right quantity. The sources of capital and the quantity should be known and guaranteed with some measure of certainty. There are many cases of projects, which were started but could not muster enough capital to see it to completion and became abandoned midstream. Other cases of education projects that were set up but could not generate enough income to sustain itself and therefore stalled abound. The technology to be utilized is also a cost item and is dependent on whether it will be available locally or needs to be imported. Either way, procurement of technology could be costly and its upgrading could be capital intensive. The input and output markets at all levels—domestic, regional and global must be assessed to ascertain their feasibility. Possible inter regional or international barriers and tariffs that would guarantee uninterrupted supply of inputs must be carefully assessed.

The human capital assessment requires that adequate number of personnel that would help develop and transfer knowledge be provided for all teaching, research and development programmes in Home Economics. It takes having the full compliment of the teaching and training staff and sufficient physical infrastructural facilities to transfer knowledge to learners. Their sources of procurement and replacement should also be identified and necessary provisions made for continued supply. Economic viability and sustainability involves designing programmes that are cost effective and financially self-sustaining. A grandiose and bogus programme that fails to generate sufficient income and revenue to keep it profitable over time is not sustainable. Ability to structure all production and consumption programmes within the tenets and ambit of the three pillars of sustainability remain the secret for the success and sustainability of an investment.

Home Economics does not need to reinvent the wheel. Rather, it should respond to the economic, social and technological changes as they inform and shape the tastes and preferences of consumers and plan programmes and activities that conform to demand dynamics. Where conditions allow for expansion in response to changing demand, the profession should respond accordingly. On the other hand if the situation calls for reduction as the imperative, it will be foolhardy on the part of the practitioners to remain rigid and refuse to downsize. In other words, the secret of success, which will see Home Economics through another century of existence is to be responsive to the dynamic changes and paradigm shifts that inform consumer demands. McGregor (2006) used the root system metaphor to illustrate the functions and factors that influence the practice of Home Economics as a profession. The philosophy of the metaphoric illustration is that the profession should be kept alive by constantly responding to the dynamics and paradigm shifts in the society and matching the changes with robust responses. She advocates coexistence of both old and young professionals to play mutual and supportive roles with one another while individually playing their specialized roles to shape the future of the profession.

It is this principle of responsiveness that Lee Iacocca applied in his bailout mystery for Chrysler Motor Company from the brink of bankruptcy between 1978 and 1983. He did not advocate for or undertake the formation of a new company (reinventing the wheel). Rather he reorganized the need for the company to produce more demand or market-driven products. His venture into the production of more aerodynamic and more fuel-efficient cars saw the birth of the K-Car and the minivan. Within two years of assuming office as the Chief Executive Officer of Chrysler, Lee Iacocca turned out a profit of $11.6 million from the status ante quo position of over $3 billion loss for a company that was tottering on the brink of bankruptcy. This feat enrolled Iacocca in the annals of auto company icons alongside Ford, Sloan Durant or Chrysler (Anastakis, 2007). His accolades on this score are innumerable and include "the most widely recognized business executive of all time"; "a cultural icon instantly recognized by millions"; and "An American Western Mythical Hero" (Anastakis, 2007). Home Economics should take a cue from this remarkable innovation in Chrysler, curtsey of Lee Iacocca's creativity to deal with its problem of identity, legitimacy and sustainability. It is noted that it was not Iacocca's engineering training that catapulted him to this historic height. It was his managerial, communication and marketing abilities that collectively contributed to this remarkable entrepreneurial feat.

Today the Home Economics profession is yearning for the like of Lee Iacocca to turn the centenarian organization around to meet the challenges of improving human welfare under the aegis of emerging social and economic challenges in a globalised world. McGregor (2006) postulates that sustainability within Home Economics practice requires that people must be more future-oriented, and critical thinkers to influence and shape changes that would benefit and not harm humanity.

Shifts in resource use, increasing financial cost, and rising ecological damage create distortions that jeopardize sustainability. The recent hikes in the petroleum price to over $100 a barrel, the Middle East and the Gulf crises, and events in the United States (the presidential elections and the economic downturn) would combine to produce external shocks to economic systems worldwide and send ripples that impact on the buying powers of consumers at all levels. The consumer services are expected to begin to these external shocks by making adjustments that will help place consumers at the same level of satisfaction at the new socio-economic environment.

Ecological sustainability

Ecological or environmental protection is vital to systems sustainability. The environment plays the multiple role of providing amenities for recreation in the hospitality industry. The environment is also the receptacle and reservoir for wastes from production and consumption activities. Its multiple role is jeopardized if consumption and production of goods and services fail to acknowledge the limited capacity of the environment.

Home Economics as a profession and women as the principal service providers in the household would suffer from water pollution and clean water shortages. Similarly, deforestation and forest degradation will affect the collection of fuel wood for cooking and heating; housing construction materials; availability of fruits and medicinal materials. Increasing demands for these amenity resources from rising populations and increasing misuse are increasingly reducing the chances of future generations to have enough for their future use. With over 80 per cent of sub-Sahara African (SSA) households still relying on solid fuel for cooking and heating (UNDESA, 2005) the threat to the sustainability of the resources is substantial. The SSA sub-region remains a laggard in global ecological protection standards with 41 of the 53 countries or 77 per cent of African states that lie in the sub-region exceeding the world average percentage of people using solid fuel for cooking and heating (Nwonwu, 2007).

Home Economics research and development is expected to find solutions that will minimize the rate of depletion of these vital resources to ensure sustained supply for the present and future generations. A women group in Kenya has come up with an improved homemade stove that uses minimum quantity of firewood or charcoal for cooking. The technology of the Improved Jiko Project in Kenya is built on two principles. There is the: reduction of heat loss on the one hand and the provision of mud block to absorb, store and slowly release heat to add to the direct heat from the firewood or charcoal. The improved jiko is an improvement on the old technology that stands on a tripod with three openings for feeding charcoal or firewood into the fire. The improved jiko has only one opening through which charcoal or wood is fed into the fire thereby reducing heat loss from air flows that blow the fire or flame away target to be heated.

Recycling is also an aspect of ecological sustainability. As waste is converted into useful products output per unit of resource is increased and damage to the environment by waste products is minimized. Recycling also contributes to the reduction of toxic materials that could destroy not only the physical environment but also human and animal lives. Toxic wastes could bring about ecosystem damage and destruction of biodiversity. Serious cases of toxicity have caused massive loss of human, plant and animal lives causing drastic reduction in the number of productive human and material resources and consumption items. Human and animal wastes have been turned into manure that serve as inputs into food production. Bio-diesel and biogas are becoming increasingly popular as cleaner and alternatives forms of fuel than fossil fuel.

Conclusion

This year marks the centenary anniversary of Home Economics as a discipline and a profession. Founded in 1908 the profession has passed through many stages of identity and legitimacy crises leading to restructuring and transformations and name changes. Many professionals and practitioners in the field have made tremendous contribution towards shoring up its existence and competitiveness in the annals of professional history. However, many advocates of change believe that the profession has not yet reached its state of stability and deserving recognition. This group considers that the profession is still engulfed by the identity and legitimacy crisis. Much pessimism has been expressed over the future of the profession and its ability to effectively contribute to humanity especially families and children. With Home Economics formed with women and girls' empowerment in mind, the continued retention of patriarchal dominance over tenure rights and control of production resources is remains a threat to the future and sustainability of Home Economics.

The enormity of responsibility and gamut of expectations heaped on Home Economics seem to exert a crushing weight on the profession. Efforts at meeting these challenges through education, training and research have not yielded the desired results especially from the perspective of Home Economics professionals and practitioners. There are growing concerns over the ability of the profession to meet future consumer demands and satisfy their wants, needs and welfare. There is even a greater danger of threats to the existence and sustainability of the profession. This paper has attempted to allay these fears by prescribing the wheel mechanism as the panacea to both the perennial and future problems of Home Economics existence locally, regionally and globally. This wheel philosophy postulates that the scope of coverage and the activities undertaken by the profession must be guided by the ruling indicators and principles of social, economic and ecological sustainability. The principle recognizes the consumer as the hub or epicentre of the Home Economics wheel. Education, technology and capital are used as tools that mimic the spokes of the wheel to define the identity and stability of Home Economics. The tools will position Home Economics firmly within limits of established stable state and constantly allow it make necessary adjustments that will keep the defined size stable. The defined scope (rim) represents the frontier and boundaries of influence of Home Economics practice should remain firm by conforming to the social, economic and ecological sustainability standards. All three conditions work in tandem to maintain the stability of the structure. Any attempt to ignore any of them would tip off the balance of the wheel and its state of equilibrium.

The implication of the wheel metaphor for Hone Economics is that there is a limit within which the profession will operate given the quantum and level of available resources – human and material. The level of technology available or achievable should be used in partnership with the available resources to develop a stable structure for the profession. This means that the size and contents of Home Economics could vary within and between nations and cannot be the same globally. The quantum and nature of available resources, the socio-economic conditions, the level of education, and the state of technology of states should guide the structuring of the Home Economics profession.

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The Global Food Supply
The Malaysian Home Economist's Response.

Tan Suri Napsiah Omar

Reprinted from:
Pendergast, D. (2008). Home economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future. Proceedings of the IFHE XXI World Congress, July 26-31, Switzerland. Switzerland: IFHE.

Women's Institute of Management, Malaysia

On 4th June 2008, Malaysians were shocked when petrol prices went up by 40%. Not less than one month earlier, the cost of rice spiralled by equal proportions. However this is not a Malaysian problem only. Shortage of food supply is a global problem. Whilst producers of oil keep hiking up their prices, would not the world consumers, want to think up of some solutions and wait for the day when we can tell the oil producers to eat up their own oil? Whilst countries compete in the bio-diesel industry, do consumers realise that this industry is fed by wheat, rice, etc.? Feedstock represents the principal share of total biofuel production costs. For ethanol and biodiesel, feedstock accounts for 50-70% of overall costs. When a man's stomach is hungry, ask him whether he wants his wheat or rice or sacrifice to the bio-diesel development. You know what his answer is going to be!

Analysing and interpreting recent trends and emerging challenges in the world food situation is critical in order to provide policymakers with the necessary information to mobilise adequate responses at the local, national, regional and international levels. The lobbying must be continuous until solutions are provided for by governments. It should not be confined only to one or two high profile world consultation or dialogue. The consciousness and urgency must be drummed into the minds of all strata of society. Governments must be answerable as to how they spend taxpayers' monies. Corruption must be eradicated at all levels of authority. At consumer level, correct eating habits and the curb on food wastage must be a priority in the education regime of all citizens, of all ages.

The Plight of the Poor

At the microeconomic level, whether a household will benefit or lose from high food prices depends on whether the household is a net seller or buyer of food. Since food accounts for a large share of the poor's total expenditures, a staple-crop price increase would translate into lower quantity and quality of food consumption. Household surveys provide insights into the potential impact of higher food prices on the poor. Surveys show that poor net buyers in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Zambia purchase more staple foods than net sellers sell. The impact of a price increase is country and crop specific. For instance, two-thirds of rural households in Java own between 0 and 0.25 hectares of land, and only 10 percent of households would benefit from an increase in rice prices.

In sum, in view of the changed farm-production and market situation that the poor face today, there is not much supporting evidence for the idea that higher farm prices would generally cause poor households to gain more on the income side than they would lose on the consumption-expenditure side. Adjustments in the farm and rural economy that might indirectly create new income opportunities due to the changed incentives will take time to reach the poor.

Many of those who are the poorest and hungriest today will still be poor and hungry in 2015, the target year of the Millennium Development Goals. Research has shown that 160 million people live in ultra poverty on less than 50 cents a day. The fact that large numbers of people continue to live in intransigent poverty and hunger in an increasingly wealthy global economy is the major ethical, economic, and public health challenge of our time.

Five Actions for Immediate Changes

Whilst maintaining a focus on long term changes is vital, seven researchers from IFPRI have come up with five actions that should be taken immediately:

1. Developed countries should facilitate flexible responses to drastic price changes by eliminating trade barriers and programs that set aside agriculture resources, except in well-defined conservation areas. A world confronted with more scarcity of food needs to trade more — not less — to spread opportunities fairly.
2. Developing countries should rapidly increase investment in rural infrastructure and market institutions in order to reduce agricultural-input access constraints, since these are hindering a stronger production response.
3. Investment in agricultural science and technology by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and national research systems could play a key role in facilitating a stronger global production response to the rise in prices.
4. The acute risks facing the poor — reduced food availability and limited access to income-generating opportunities—require expanded social-protection measures. Productive social safety nets should be tailored to country circumstances and should focus on early childhood nutrition.
5. Placing agricultural and food issues onto the national and international climate-change policy agendas is critical for ensuring an efficient and pro-poor response to the emerging risks.

The World Food Situation

In December 2007, Joachim von Braun wrote:

> *The world food situation is currently being rapidly redefined by new driving forces. Income growth, climate change, high energy prices, globalization, and urbanization are transforming food consumption, production, and markets. The influence of the private sector in the world food system, especially the leverage of food retailers, is also rapidly increasing. Changes in food availability, rising commodity prices, and new producer-consumer linkages have crucial implications for the livelihoods of poor and food-insecure people.*

Many parts of the developing world have experienced high economic growth in recent years. Developing Asia, especially China and India, continues to show strong sustained growth. Real GDP in the region increased by 9 percent per annum between 2004 and 2006. Sub-Saharan Africa also experienced rapid economic growth of about 6 percent in the same period. Even countries with high incidences and prevalences of hunger reported strong growth rates. Of the world's 34 most food-insecure countries, 22 had average annual growth rates ranging from 5 to 16 percent between 2004 and 2006. Global economic growth, however, is projected to slow down from 5.2 percent in 2007 to 4.8 percent in 2008 (IMF 2007a). Beyond 2008,world growth is expected to remain in the 4 percent range while developing-country growth is expected to average 6 percent (Mussa 2007). This growth is a central force of change on the demand side of the world food equation. High income growth in low-income countries readily translates into increased consumption of food, as will be further discussed below. Another major force altering the food equation is shifting rural-urban populations and the resulting impact on spending and consumer preferences. The world's urban population has grown more than the rural population; within the next three decades, 61 percent of the world's populace is expected to live in urban areas (Cohen 2006). However, three-quarters of the poor remain in rural areas, and rural poverty will continue to be more prevalent than urban poverty during the next several decades (Ravallion, Chen, and Sangraula 2007).

A Made-in-Malaysia System

I wish to now share with you a dramatic animal production breakthrough developed by a Malaysian, Mr. N. Yogendran:

In light of the global food crisis, the FAO is being urged to restructure world agriculture and food production. This Made-in-Malaysia system may be just the answer in the areas of livestock farming.

As the world food crisis threatens billions with hunger and starvation, an international call has been made for the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) emergency conference in Rome (June 3 to June 5 2008) to completely restructure world agriculture and double world food production. Malaysia is beginning to answer this call with the Deep Tropical animal production system, which is based on the tremendous all year round biomass production from grass farms in rainforest climates.

Developed from basic research by Mr. Mohd Peter Davis, an agricultural scientist from the Institute of Advance Technology, Universiti Putra Malaysia, and pioneered by livestock entrepreneur N. Yogendran, the system can help make Malaysia self sufficient in milk, beef, goat and lamb meat and has the potential to turn the whole of Borneo and the peninsula into a major world supplier.

Protein Requirement

Human beings have a biological requirement for carbohydrates (usually supplied by rice, bread and potatoes), fruits and vegetables (for fibre and vitamins) and protein (best supplied by fish, milk, eggs and meat). The protein requirement is the most difficult and expensive to supply. To enjoy a good productive life, every person needs one gram of protein per kg body weight per day. A 60kg person therefore needs 60g of protein per day, which can be supplied for example with 300g meat (chicken, beef or lamb) or two litres of milk. For a world population of 6.6. billion, that is a tall daily order.

Malaysian's Deep Tropical animal production system, which took 20 years to develop from basic research right up to successful commercial farms, is designed to help meet this challenge and supplement the milk and meat now produced mainly in temperate climates by grazing animals on pastures. European-type grazing of animals in the humid tropics has a sorry history due to four basic biological problems that have proven extremely difficult to overcome by conventional farming:

1. Poor productivity of temperate animals and crosses with tropical animals in the humid tropics;
2. Heat stress;
3. High tropical disease and parasite burden; and
4. Poor nutrition from native grasses and high maintenance of improved pastures to keep out the jungle plant species.

These problems have prevented Malaysia from becoming self-sufficient in milk, beef and mutton. Despite the country's historically tiny population, now only 27million, Malaysia has never been more than 50% self-sufficient food.

Deep Tropical System

The Deep Tropical System simultaneously solves all these biological limitations by housing productive temperate breeds in cool climate barns and hand feeding with young cut grass from grass farms. This stunningly simple solution improves the health, nutrition and welfare of what we term happy domestic animals. Successful models of small-scale commercial Malaysian sheep and goat farms already exist around Malaysia. The intensive farming system is now going large-scale.

A RM50mil ($15.4 mil) dairy farm in the Malaysian state of Pahang has just been established with pregnant Jersey cows air freighted from Australia and housed in cool, hygienic climate barns. These are being fed highly nutritious 35-day-old, fresh-cut grass from a nearby grass farm. Grass greatly reduces feed costs, is the natural food of ruminant animals, and is useless as human food or for anything else. Malaysia's all-year-round perfect rainforest climate supports the highest rate of biomass production in the world and with our management techniques, grass grows 91cm in 35 days and can be harvested 10 times per year for up to three years before ploughing and re-seeding.

The first calves and marketable milk from the new dairy farm are scheduled in June. Scaling up, a RM1 bil ($300 mil) investment with farms totalling 60,000 cows would lift Malaysian self-sufficiency in milk from the present 5% to 25%. The same dairy farms will produce cattle for the prime beef market and replace 75% of live cattle presently imported for fattening in Malaysia.

Pilot studies on smaller commercial farms demonstrate that the Deep Tropical farming system can produce three times more milk and beef per hectare of land compared to the best New Zealand grazing farms. Sheep farming based on the same system is even easier and can be established more rapidly than dairy farms and with less investment to meet the urgent food demand. The minimum commercial scale is a 100- sheep farm.

Call for Emergency Action!

Looking to the future, Malaysia can become self-sufficient in milk and ruminant meat in a remarkably short time with the Deep Tropical system. The future also looks bright for Malaysia and Indonesian Borneo with vast lands for Deep Tropical farming to supply top quality milk and halal meat for world markets.

In the face of food riots in 40 countries and mass starvation threatening developing countries on a scale never before seen in history, an urgent call to double world food production is receiving tremendous support from governments and institutions around the world. Leading the call for the FAO Rome Conference is Helga Zeppa-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute and chairperson of the Civil Rights Solidarity Movement (BuSo) in Germany, “Food is something you eat; food is what you offer your neighbour. Don’t speculate: double food production, eliminate both the World Trade Organisation and the diversion of food to biofuels!”

At the request of 82 countries, the United Nations Human Rights Council held a Special Session in Geneva on May 22 to discuss the world food crisis. The initiating countries come from the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Group of Arab States and at least 15 other countries, including China and Italy. Their pre-meeting statement is inspiring: “The world can produce enough food to feed twice the entire global population. Therefore, in a world overflowing with riches, hunger is not inevitable. It is a violation of human rights”.

In an unusually bold statement on April 25, Nina Fedoroff, editor of the prestigious journal Science wrote: “There is an acute need for another jump in global agricultural productivity, a second Green Revolution. Can it happen? Will it happen?’

However, these growing humanitarian calls to defend the welfare of the world’s population are not universally shared. Ever since the false theory of Thomas Malthus 200 years ago- that the earth is overpopulated and (population) must be reduced to protect the food supply-evil people have used this flimsy excuse to hold back development and decrease population in poor countries.

Throughout history, mankind's creative discoveries and inventions have enabled the human populations to expand by leaps and bounds above the population of wild animals. The graph of world population since the invention of agriculture 10,000 years ago is really the chart of wave upon wave of scientific, technological and social breakthroughs to the present day. With only a few million people on earth before agriculture, the world population grew to 300 million from B.C and leapt magnificently following the European Renaissance and the rise of modern science and technology to the 6.6 billion people we have today. It had predicted to rise to nine billion by 2050. In the post-World War 2 recovery, world food production doubled in 17 years up to 1970. The Green Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s involving hybrid super seeds enables China and India to become self-sufficient and major exporters of rice.

Scientific Food Production.

The developing green agricultural revolution with genetically improved crops and domestic animals, combined with the rapid development of nuclear power with its cheap and abundant electricity and desalinated water, was well on target to eliminate world hunger. But then everything began to grind to a halt! Scientific progress from the 1970s was systematically sabotaged by the international coordinated anti-nuclear, anti-pesticide, anti-technology campaign of the green environment movement. This was followed in 1995 by the World Trade Organisation's insistence, against all humanitarian arguments, that free trade is more important than food.

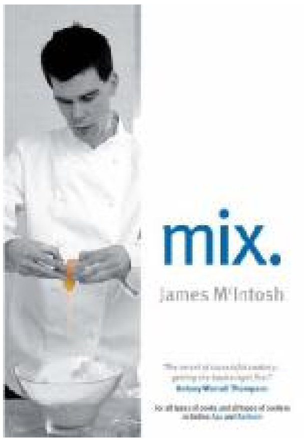
Now, with our agriculture shattered and biofuels destroying anywhere between 10% and 20% of world food, we have ended up with today's completely unnecessary man-made humanitarian catastrophe with millions facing hunger and starvation. Malaysia only produces half of its food and is also directly threatened with starvation, as during the Occupation when the food ships were stopped by war-time naval blockade. History must not be allowed to repeat itself. (Source: The Star June 1, 2008)

As we do not have sufficient answers to all these questions,

- research is needed to qualify and quantify environmental effects coming from the use of technical devices in households,
- research is needed to identify sustainable technologies for sustainable housekeeping worldwide,
- research is needed to identify 'best practices' of doing good housekeeping.

But research alone will not improve sustainability. We also need a dissemination of the learning.

All this seems to be a major field of work, in which you and your fellows are kindly invited to participate. This afternoon we will form a new programme committee on 'Household Technology and Sustainability', a working platform on which we will discuss our activities. According to my ideas this will start from building a network of people engaged with household appliances and technologies in order to identify 'best practices' and work on their dissemination. I'm looking forward discussing further details with you.

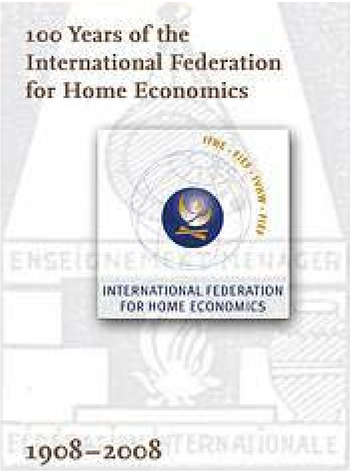


McIntosh, J. (2008). mix. Evesham: Word4Word. ISBN: 978-1906316143. 100 pages, paperback, dimensions 14.8 x 10.8 x 1 cm www.bookdispensary.com/acatalog/James_McIntosh.html £4.99

In Volume 1 Issue 2 of the International Journal of Home Economics, the first book in a series being developed by James McIntosh titled *mix.* was reviewed by Dr Suzanne Piscopo. The author has won the prestigious Gourmand Award for the 'Best in the World' Cookbook in a Series for this, his first book. In her review, Dr Piscopo stated that 'I look forward to reading the next three, especially if they follow the same stated principles of "No fiddle, no fuss, just food."'. It seems that this is what impressed the judges. Edouard Cointreau, president of the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, says that *mix.* is the Best Series Cookbook in the World because it stands out from other entries: "We selected *mix.* because of its innovative concept that really helps the readers with practical, easy recipes. Series of books like the James McIntosh series are important: they package useful information in clearly defined groups corresponding to the various needs of the diversity of readers."

DVD Review: What's past is prologue
A review of the IFHE 100 years DVD
Reflecting the past – creating the future

Katrina Toronyi



International Federation for Home Economics 1908–2008 (2007). (DVD, 60 mins), Nancy B Leidenfrost (executive producer), William A Meaux (producer director), Jeffrey Herberger (editor director), Longthrow Multimedia International LLC www.ifhe.org/299.html 15.00 Euro plus shipping.

Summary

The International Federation for Home Economics 100 Years 1908-2008 (DVD) is a 60 minute document, which highlights selected events, activities, and leaders in IFHE's history. The DVD is a pictorial view and a narrative of our history with International music. It addresses our: work, governance structure, accomplishments, and partnerships, including UN NGO work and some educational outreach in countries (IFHE, 2007).

Contents include an Introduction to The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) 100 Years 1908-2008 DVD (by Mary Ann Perry) and highlights from Congresses.

Introduction

The mission of the International Federation for Home Economics is to provide a international forum for home economists to develop and express the Home Economics concerns for individuals, families and households at the United Nations and among other international non-governmental organizations whose interests parallel those of Home Economics (IFHE, n.d.). As the only global organization representing the field of Home Economics, the International

Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) has taken an important role in the development of social policy surrounding the wellbeing of the family. For the last 100 years, IFHE members spanning 49 different countries have come together to extend their commitment to individuals and families by advocating for and strengthening these ties through education.

Reflecting the Past – The Last 100 Years

The creation and purpose of the DVD, as developed by the IFHE History Committee, was to not only visually chronicle the work of IFHE, but to also instil pride in its past and current members in what they were and are a part of – the bigger overall picture of accomplishments. (IFHE, 2007) The DVD is very effective in outlining the history and rationale behind the congress themes which are based on issues affecting families of the world during that particular place in time. Each topic has a lasting relevance today and information even from 1908 is still very much relevant to families in 2008. As outlined in The 100-Year History of the International Federation of Home Economics document (IFHE, 2007) the IFHE History Committee hoped to accomplish the following four goals in relation to the making of the DVD.

- To update our members and to celebrate our 100 years and its future anniversaries in our country organizations

The DVD succeeds in updating IFHE members with a brief glance at its extensive history of accomplishments. The DVD does not and can not, for obvious reasons, go into great detail about each IFHE Congress held from its inception in 1908 to 2008. However it does a good job of relating the themes chosen to the relevant world issues for the time.

- To introduce potential members to IFHE's mission

As someone from the Millennial generation, I found the DVD to be useful in terms of summary of the brains of the profession, but I felt that it lacked a demonstration of the heart of the profession. This truly resides in the members and families we help educate. The core of IFHE remains that people will turn to each other for information; thus reaffirming the human experience. With all of the historical changes in the last 100 years, IFHE was still able to target the needs of individuals and families relevant to the times, which shows that as an organization IFHE is able to adapt and change while never compromising its true purpose.

- To inform faculty at and in universities – Home Economics, family and consumer sciences classes and in collaboration with other classes addressing international social and environmental issues, and in college orientation programs of high school students to bring new students into our profession

Faculty involved with Home Economics and human ecology at the high school and university levels will be able to use this DVD as a good foundation for teaching and will be able to have a solid platform from which to build the future of the profession.

- To inform potential collaborators or co-operators in other professional organizations, country governments, and private sectors about our international professional work on global issues and expertise in conducting educational programs

This is something that definitely is addressed in the DVD. It showcases the work of the IFHE which at times can be overshadowed by more prominent issues. Each and every one of these more prominent issues has a profound effect on the family and family systems.

Creating the Future – The Next 100 Years As we look back on all the work done in the last 100 years – who are we now? Today in the twenty first century, the situation of everyday life and Home Economics has been challenged and changing, with globalization, global warming, food crises, food safety , global networking (Kuramoto, 2008). This however, should not be perceived as a negative outlook; there are a great many positive aspects that challenge and shape our profession. The statements made by Dr Thelma B. Thompson regarding The New Millennium Statement reflect the commitment IFHE has to maintaining its advocacy for families and especially those living in poverty and rural communities. The IFHE Historical Committee effectively utilizes this visual medium to convey its purpose. Through initiatives like this, IFHE can successfully hope to preserve its past while moving forward with its present. Although this is but one medium of communication in reaching generations across the globe, this is truly a case of "what's past is prologue" (Shakespeare, 1604).

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Biography

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Notes for Contributors

Frequency of publication

Twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year to e-mail: editor@IFHEJournal.org.

Focus

The International Federation for Home Economics is the only worldwide organisation concerned with Home Economics and Consumer Studies. It was founded in 1908 to serve as a platform for international exchange within the field of Home Economics. IFHE is an International Non Governmental Organisation (INGO), having consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC, FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF) and with the Council of Europe.

This refereed journal brings together emergent and breaking work on all aspects of Home Economics, and most importantly, how we might improve and renew the everyday work of Home Economists. It features quantitative and qualitative, disciplinary and trans-disciplinary, empirical and theoretical work and will include special editions on key developments. It aims to push the boundaries of theory and research—to seek out new paradigms, models and ways of framing Home Economics.

Contributors

The International Journal of Home Economics welcomes contributions from members and non-members, from a variety of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives.

Author's biography

Please provide a brief (less than 100 words) paragraph for each author, including current role or memberships and an E-mail address for correspondence. For example:

> *Associate Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD is Program Director in the School of Education, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. Donna researches and writes about Home Economics philosophy, education and practice. Donna is a member of the IFHE Executive, Chairperson of the IFHE Think Tank Committee, and Editor of the International Journal of Home Economics. She has served as National President of the Home Economics Institute of Australia, and President of the Queensland division. She was Editor of the Journal of the Home Economics Institute of Australia for ten years and serves on several Editorial Boards. E-mail: d.pendergast@uq.edu.au*

Manuscripts

Manuscripts should be sent electronically to Associate Professor Donna Pendergast, School of Education by E-mail as d.pendergast@uq.edu.au. Please send files as a Microsoft Word document (doc) or in Rich Text Format (rtf). Paper length should not exceed 6000 words. Each document should be double-spaced, with generous margins.

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References

References should follow the American Psychological Association system (APA Publications Manual, 5th Edition).

The details required for books are:

Names of authors or editors (year of publication). Title of publication. Place of Publication: Publishers, for example:

Pendergast, D. (2001). *Virginal mothers, groovy chicks & blokey blokes: Re-thinking home economics (and) teaching bodies*. Sydney: Australian Academic Press

The details required for journals are:

Names of authors or editors (year of publication). Title of article. Title of journal, volume (issue), page numbers, for example:

McGregor, S. L. T. (2007a). Consumer scholarship and transdisciplinarity. *International Journal of Consumer Studies, 31*(5), 487–495.

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IJHE

International Journal of Home Economics

www.ifhe.org

ISSN 1999-561X

ISSN 1999-561X

IJHE

International Journal of Home Economics

Volume 2 Issue 2 2009

IFHE is an international Non Governmental Organisation (INGO) in consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC, FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF) and with the Council of Europe

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HOME ECONOMICS

This refereed journal is an official publication of the International Federation for Home Economics. Electronic access via IFHE website for subscribers and members only: www.ifhe.org

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ISSN 1999-561X

International Journal of Home Economics

The International Journal of Home Economics gratefully acknowledges the assistance and support of the Griffith Institute for Educational Research.

International Journal of Home Economics

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Editorial

Issue 2, 2009

This is the second issue of the second volume of International Journal of Home Economics. As usual there is a selection of peer reviewed papers, reprints of articles from the IFHE Home Economics Congress 2008 in Lucerne, Switzerland and a book review.

The first of the peer reviewed papers, "A Millennial recruitment and retention blueprint for Home Economics professional associations" by Sue McGregor and Katrina Tse Toronyi covers the contemporary topic of recruitment of Millennial Generation members to Home Economics organisations. This topic builds on my keynote, "Generational dynamics—Y it matters 2 u & me" presented at the Congress and which is also included in this issue. The Journal continues the theme of generational dynamics with Stefan Wahlen, Hanna Posti-Ahokas and Emma Collins reflecting on the IFHE's position statement and how the dimensions within are experienced by Home Economists by "Linking the loop" and connecting young professionals around the globe. And finally, the theme carries on with a review of James McIntosh's award winning cookbook series, "Mix" by two Y-Generation members, who trialled recipes and expressed their opinion of the content and layout of the books.

Vital and imperative Home Economics issues within Africa are presented in two separate articles. Beatrice Oganah and Nkeiruka Nwabah address the twin malnutrition and globalisation problems of obesity and undernutrition that are sweeping Nigeria in "Nutrition transition and its consequences" with a call for national nutrition education and greater political involvement. "Factors associated with the increase in the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections" by Hena Yasmin, Nishi Surana, and Lambert Olympia addresses the STI and HIV pandemic throughout Swaziland and the necessary steps for authorities to take to improve the health consequences.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their congratulations and good wishes on the conferment of my Fellowship to the Australian Institute of Home Economics. I am truly grateful and honoured to be recognised in this way.

Finally, I invite the members of International Federation of Home Economics community to self-nominate for the role of guest editor for a special issue of the Journal. Please send your nominations with your suggestions for a theme for the special issue to editor@IFHEJournal.org with the words "Guest Editor" in the subject line. Authors, please continue to send your contributions to the Journal.

Donna Pendergast, PhD
Editor, IJHE

A Millennial recruitment and retention blueprint for Home Economics professional associations

Sue L.T. McGregor PhD, Katrina Tse Toronyi BSc PHEc

Mount Saint Vincent University, Mount Royal College

Abstract

This paper draws on (a) generational analysis theory, (b) demographic, character, and value profiles of the Millennial Generation (aged 18–26), and (c) the literature on association membership trends to develop a strategic Millennial blueprint for Home Economics professional associations. The premise of the paper is that if Home Economics organisations are able to demonstrate, and then deliver, a commitment to Millennial professionals, these same professionals will commit to the associations, and the profession.

The profession is at a convergent moment that needs to be managed and cultivated, with part of this process entailing new respect for the Millennial Generation (Pendergast, 2008, 2009). Baby Boomer Home Economics professionals (aged 47–64) feel a need for stability, balance, validation, and support. Generation X Home Economics professionals (aged 27–46) need to be retained (to feel challenged, rewarded, and recognised). Millennial professionals (Generation Ys, working aged 18–26) need to be *attracted* to the profession in the first place, and once this is achieved, university socialisation and attendant professional associations have to *continue to appeal* to them (McGregor, 2006; Pendergast, 2006, 2008, 2009; West, 2007).

Even though the Millennial Generation is in huge demand in the workplace, there is no guarantee they are going to be demanding careers in Home Economics. They have to be *convinced* of the contributions they can make to the profession and attendant associations, and that they will be supported in this role. We are challenged by this requirement. Pendergast (2009) explains that commitment to professional work is a function of age. The Millennial Generation are not at the age yet where they feel any professional commitment, making it imperative that we future-proof the profession by being ready for them when they *come of age, professionally*. This paper, written by a Baby Boomer and a Millennial, shares a discussion of what might be involved in the process of attracting and respecting this cohort, the most significant generation in the 100-year history of our profession, aside from our founders.

Several papers presented at the 2008 International Federation of Home Economics IFHE) congress are published in this issue of the *International Journal of Home Economics*, including a paper by Pendergast (2008) on generational dynamics. Following her lead, we also drew on generational analysis theory, while turning to the literature on association trends, to develop a strategic Millennial recruitment and retention blueprint for Home Economics professional associations. Our profession is experiencing declining membership due to retirements and fewer entrants into the profession (Clarke, 2000). A smaller and changing membership base means Home Economics associations have to get ahead of the game. These associations must understand the Millennial generation, and find out *what makes them tick* (Day, 2008; Smith, 2008).

To that end, as part of our analysis, we created a very detailed profile of the Millennial generation, drawing from a wide-ranging discussion of the values, beliefs, and character traits often attributed to this generation (Cranston, 2008; DiGilio & Lynn-Nelson, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Martin & Tulgan, 2001; McBride & Nief, 2008; NAS Recruitment Communications, 2006; Pooley, 2005; Rothberg, 2007; Smith, 2008). We also created a demographic profile (see Beaton, 2007; Deloitte Development, 2005; Liesse, 2007; Lynch, 2007; Sobon, 2001). After creating a long list of characteristics (n=30), we explored the collection for themes, choosing four to organise the Millennial profile: technological prowess (*n*=4), workplace needs and preferences (*n*=13), meaningful engagements (*n*=6), and leadership and authority orientations (*n*=6) (see Figure 1). We used this profile to prepare a four-pronged model for professional associations servicing and benefitting from Millennial professionals, the focus of this paper.

Figure 1: Themes informing a values, beliefs, and character profile of Millennial professionals

Generational analysis theory

Pendergast (2006, 2008, 2009) is the first to bring generational theory to the Home Economics professional dialogue. Generational analysts agree that each generation (spanning 20 years) has its own defining experiences, and an identifiable set of assumptions, values, attitudes, and approaches to life. Each generation is influenced by the political, social, economic, cultural, and technological environment of that period. Each generation acquires *shared* aspirations about their role in society (McCrary, 2006; Notter, 2007; Strauss & Howe, 1991, 1999; Washburn, 2000). Readers can find detailed discussions of the nuances of generational theory in Pendergast's discussion of generational dynamics (2008) and her broader overview of the theory in her 2009 article on future-proofing the profession using insights from generational theory. This paper focuses on a discussion of professional association trends and how these trends can inform future-proofing Home Economics.

Professional association trends

In order to engage in realistic planning, Home Economics associations need to augment a deep appreciation of the character of the Millennial Generation with an awareness of the trends faced by professional associations. The current association *business environment* and culture is a direct result of the values, experiences, and needs of the Boomer Generation, and, to a lesser extent, Generation X. With the coming of age of the Millennial generation, things will have to change. Modern professional associations need a critical mass for long-term sustainable growth and impact, and Boomers are retiring en masse (Clarke, 2000; West, 2007). Two recent studies widely respected in the study of association trends in North America were consulted for this paper. These studies were tendered by Brooks (2007) and Dalton and Dignam (2007; see also Dalton & Inzeo, 2007). We are convinced that Home Economics associations can draw on the insights from these studies to position themselves within this milieu.

Projected membership growth

Brooks (2007) reports that, overall, associations in the United States of America (USA) are projecting a very nominal increase in membership over the next 10 years (55 million in 2015, up from 51 million in 2005, an 8% increase). Obviously, not every association is going to benefit from this trend, especially those already experiencing membership decline, like Home Economics associations (Clarke, 2000). The latter are unlucky in that they are experiencing a widespread devaluing of their services, despite that their remit is deeply needed in society at this time. In particular, citing USA Bureau of Labour statistics, Brooks reports that education, child care, and elder care will experience the least job growth. On the other hand, he notes that *high-end idea* professions are ascending as are their associations, including higher education, information technology (IT), design, consulting, and financial services. Brooks explains that these *idea professions* are characterised as having entrepreneurship and creativity, traits to which Millennials are deeply drawn. Conversely, Millennials are also very civic- and community-oriented, intimating they can be drawn to associations focused on care, nurturance, and education, if the messaging is right and authentic—that includes Home Economics associations.

Millennial memberships

Although, in general, Generation X and Boomers are more likely to belong to an association (33%) than are Millennials (24%), digging deeper, we discover that this statistic is misleading. When one looks at the pattern for *each group* when it is 25 years of age (the age of leading edge Millennials), one can see that 24% of Millennials belong to professional associations, compared to 15% of Generation X, and only 12% of Boomers when they were aged 25 (Brooks, 2007). This pattern suggests that Millennials will opt to belong to professional associations *if* they are attracted to the mission and purpose. This implies that they should be actively recruited and nurtured with resonate messaging. We found an intriguing account of their opinions about association memberships at a young Millennial's blog (see Figure 2). A careful read of Bob's Blog reveals some of the dominant values held by this generation: a sense of entitlement; self image of an up-and-coming star and a legacy in the waiting; a penchant for networking, dovetailing, and multitasking; and a need to feel valued, appreciated, involved, and accommodated.

Figure 2: A Millennial's opinions about association membership

Young professionals have strong opinions about the benefits of belonging to an association, including Bob (age 25), a young professional. We learn at his Blog that Bob (a microcosm of Millennials) feels that professional memberships break down barriers between employers and the profession. They allow people to attach to a profession as well as a job or position, remembering that Millennials change jobs often while retaining connections to a large profession or sector. Through memberships, they can build a network of industry or sector peers *and* they can gain increased insights into their chosen career, different than those gained on the job. Being able to join an association tells Millennials that the association is acknowledging them as young professionals in the field, more so if discounts and lower fees are in place. The latter help them make a stronger case to employers to pay the fees for them. Bob suggests that association memberships help keep up-and-coming stars involved and engaged, better to advance the profession and field of interest. Finally, he posits that today's new Millennial members will be tomorrow's leaders, so why not start the legacy now?

(Bob at Young Association Professional Blog, personal communication posted December 8, 2007). http://youngassociationprofessional.blogspot.com/2007/12/what-is-minimum-age-for-your-membership.html

Brooks (2007) predicts that associations providing the right benefits and opportunities will prosper. This forecast means associations have to understand the new generation of practitioners and respect the tensions that exist between them and the established members (Boomers and Generation Xers—see Figure 2). His findings provide encouragement for Home Economics associations and insights for their recruiting initiatives, vis-à-vis the Millennial generation. A telling example is his finding that those who belong to professional associations report higher job prestige (57% compared to 43% for non-association members). They tend to earn 50% more, and are much more likely to report high job and life satisfaction (45% compared to 36% for non-members). Because job prestige, higher earnings, and high job and life satisfaction are keystones of the Millennial generation, Home Economics associations need to pay attention to Brooks's insights.

Benefits of Membership

One challenge for struggling professional associations (including Home Economics associations) is that members of Generation X and Generation Y are half as likely to join a fee-based organisation than previous generations (Brooks, 2007). A somewhat contradictory finding is that a cost-benefit calculation is not the key reason people decide to join an organisation; rather, it is a balance of personal benefits and the value that joining offers to the larger community of interest, the profession (Dalton & Dignam, 2007). Dalton and

Dignam's (2007) timely study focuses on how satisfied professionals *are* with their memberships. They approach this topic from two perspectives: (a) satisfaction with how membership benefits people personally, and (b) satisfaction with how membership benefits the field. They further break this down by generations (pp. 37–39). They discover large differences between the four *living* generations (Silents [Pre-War], Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials, defined as under 30 years of age). Of interest to this discussion are their findings vis-à-vis Millennials.

In more detail, Dalton and Dignam (2007) find that Millennials believe: (a) professional development and educational programs, (b) access to career information and employment opportunities, and (c) opportunities to network with other professionals in their field are very important benefits that are *not* being delivered satisfactorily by associations. While Millennials feel more positive about (d) opportunities to gain leadership experiences, they are far less satisfied with the ability of associations to deliver this benefit than were other generations.

Dalton and Dignam (2007) also report on Millennials' feelings about the benefits that associations bring to the field in general. They reference four different benefits of membership, noting that, although Millennials feel these benefits are important, they also feel that associations are not satisfactorily delivering. In descending order, Millennials are least satisfied with the ability of associations to: (a) promote greater public awareness of contributions from the field, (b) support student education and entry into the field, (c) promote greater appreciation of the role and value of the field among practitioners, and (d) provide standards that support quality. Home Economics associations need to keep both frames of satisfaction in the forefront of their recruitment and enrichment strategies—personal benefits and benefits to the field.

More on Millennial professionals

Dalton and Dignam's (2007) study refutes the perception that the unique attributes of the Millennial Generation spell doom for the future of associations. Their one caveat is that this doom may be warranted if associations cannot find ways to meet this generation's need for networking and accessing information sources. As well, associations should not underestimate the benefits to be gained from engaging Millennials in ad-hoc involvement with writing, presenting, and reviewing the content of any association initiative. Their worldview is quite revealing and valuable, leading to more meaningful and authentic initiatives.

Furthermore, Dalton and Dignam (2007) find that women working in female-dominated settings have a greater sense of value from their association memberships than do women in more gender-balanced settings. This is a valuable insight for a basically women-based membership, such as Home Economics associations. Many work in the more gender-balanced academy. Ironically, at a time when fewer Home Economics professionals are entering the academy and many are leaving or retiring, Dalton and Dignam find that academics are among the strongest association supporters. They are the least likely to drop out, most likely to volunteer, and far more likely to promote associations.

Dalton and Inzeo (2007) also find that half of the respondents in their study had dropped membership in an association, and that people are more likely to do this now (55%) than 15 years ago (50%), a 10% increase. Given the upward trend to leave an organisation after joining, Home Economics associations need to bear this in mind as they design strategies for recruiting and retaining Millennials. If Millennials are not engaged or do not feel valued, they will simply leave. A way to engage them is with technology (McIntosh, 2008). In general, people who join professional associations today are increasingly comfortable with high-tech; yet, they still require high-touch experiences filled with human meaning, especially members of the Millennial Generation (Brooks, 2007).

Perceived need for associations

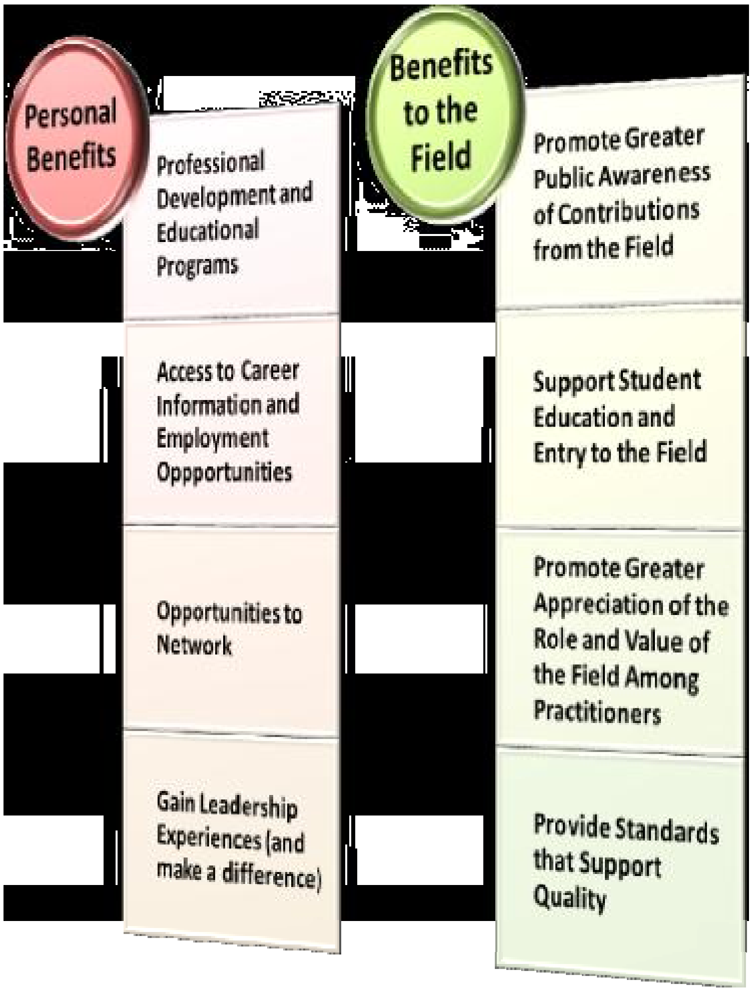
Dalton and Inzeo (2007) find that, regardless of whether people are members of professional associations or not, close to three quarters agree that there is just the right number of professional associations to choose from in their area of professional interest. Also, despite membership status, half of the respondents (51%) feel that the need for associations in 5 years time will be the same as now, if not greater (40%).This belief is a positive finding for Home Economics, a profession with very few associations focused on the profession in general (respecting that there is a proliferation of specialisation associations). Also, associations can capitalise on the perception that professional associations will be needed in the future even more than they are today, and that Millennial professionals will be *the* energy core of these associations.

Millennial recruitment and retention blueprint

By way of a summary, associations need to *sell* Millennials on their organisation, convincing them that they can gain new skills, and that there will be a chance to use the ones they have now. Millennials need to be convinced that joining the association will be a springboard for their career, *and* a way to serve the larger community, and the field. The organisation has to create a corporate culture that is stimulating and structured to allow Millennials to grow, contribute, and gather transportable skills (Harvey, 2008). Knowledge of generational profiles and association trends enriches professional associations' cross-generational conversations about how best to reach, serve, respect, and enrich membership (Notter, 2007).

Given the information shared in this paper so far, it is a given that what worked for previous generations of Home Economics professionals, by way of recruitment, socialisation, and professional enrichment, may not work for the Millennial generation—their learning styles, values, habits, icons, and points of reference are simply too different. Taking into account the nature of the Millennial generation, and the association membership trends with which Home Economics associations are dealing, we respectfully offer a strategic Millennial blueprint for consideration by associations servicing members of this profession. (* See author notes at end.) We refrain from suggesting how to manage them in the workplace or in higher education settings (as learners); instead, we focus on how to attract and inspire them within the context of professional associations. We use Dalton and Dignam's (2007) taxonomy of personal and professional benefits as a way to present our ideas about how to appeal to and respect their character traits, values, beliefs, attitudes, and learning styles (see Figure 3). We recognise that Pendergast (2009) includes strategies for attracting and retaining Millennial professionals (at pages 519–520). Although there is some redundancy between her specific strategies and ours, we feel the model we used to organise our strategies is a useful and innovative contribution to the ongoing discourse that Pendergast (2006) started with her keynote in Finland on this topic. Figure 4 shares a snapshot of some of the more leading-edge initiatives contained in the following text.

Figure 3: Taxonomy of Personal and Professional Association Membership Benefits (Dalton & Dignam, 2007)



Personal benefits

Professional development and educational programs

- Organise professional development experiences around essential *learnings* (intellectual and philosophical competencies and predispositions) rather than just content/subjects;
- They are the most educated generation in history. To continue to cultivate the attributes of lifelong learners, associations have to continually train them,

especially using modules and units to ensure information is delivered in bites. While training, keep the messages short and repeat the key messages, using multi-mode technologies;

- Because they prefer to gain and use transferable skills, they need to become generalists with portable, general knowledge that is not job- or firm-specific. Do this in combination with becoming expert novices (good at *continually learning* new knowledge, skills, abilities, and world views, Pendergast, 2006);
- Although they want to be told the answers and how to do things, they have to learn how to deal with uncertainty, ambiguity, change, and complexity. Any professional inservicing or socialisation initiatives need to bear this trait in mind;
- Professional development (PD) initiatives also need to teach and further augment the Millennial's existing collaboration, cooperative interaction, and team work skills;
- PD efforts need to employ digital, online platforms to recruit, (re)train, and retain them, and to aid their professional growth and development;
- They appreciate a combination of high-tech proficiency (e.g., websites) and personal contacts (high-touch);
- They have and appreciate energy, so plan dynamic PD events rather than stagnant, conventional approaches;
- They are a racially and ethnically diverse generation, meaning they are generally more accepting and less judgmental of others. This cultural trait has to be managed and respected during recruitment and professional enrichment activities;
- Because they value a sense of community, consider combining meetings and learning events with entertainment, thereby creating a *feeling of community*;
- They have come from a social, empowered, collaborative, and technology-driven environment, so increase engagement by making sure enrichment activities are not offered in isolation; and,
- Because they are high achievers and want to get ahead, plan and deliver summer and ongoing online training opportunities.

Access to career information and employment opportunities

- Establish career or professional development blogs and support Friendster, MySpace, and Facebook social networking connections;
- This generation likes to scope out an organisation first, looking for possibilities and opportunities. To aid them in this pursuit, prepare and provide a lot of information about the organisation, in many high-tech, colourful, upbeat, and modern formats and recruitment campaigns; and,
- Create an Interactive BioPAGE where Millennials and others can update their professional bios at their leisure.

Opportunities to network

- Offer conference travel top-ups to draw them to events (this way, they can meet and collaborate with others and expand their networks);
- If they like what the organisation is offering them, and what they can bring to the organisation, they can tell their huge network of friends with a click of a mouse (especially via blogs) or a button on their cell-phone or Blackberry;
- Consider Millennials as your best ambassadors (they tell each other *everything*), and create a Home Economics ambassador program as well as a branding initiative for the organisation; and,
- Focus on the good consequences of good behaviour. One slogan might be: *join the association so you can learn and be networked, thereby improving your chances of being there for yourself and others.*

Gain leadership experiences (and make a difference)

- Present Millennials with the challenges facing the profession and families; they are not afraid to work, and they relish taking a stand for something bigger than themselves; they want to produce something worthwhile;
- They are great sources of innovation, so involve them at every facet of the organisation;
- They crave mentoring, and partner well with mentors; also, they like to be mentors. So, establish generational mentoring systems.
- Associations need to inspire them to dream bigger, rather than just motivate them;
- Because they want to try new things (or become an overall expert), design customised advancement plans for them to move around within the organisation; they value very clear progression tracks. Remember, they are multitaskers (at least with technology);
- They need to know, regularly, how well they are doing. So, provide feedback-oriented leadership. They do not mind monthly, regular meetings. Performance reviews should be on a quarterly basis rather than annually;
- Because they are interested in the big picture, and in exposing themselves to as many different aspects of the organisation as possible, take steps to include them in future scenario-building and forecasting exercises; share the vision of the organisation. If they embrace it, they will not fade into the background;
- Generate group projects and initiatives, and recruit Millennials to lead them. Assign a more senior member as a mentor and guide in these projects;
- Associations may have to rethink their hierarchal organisational structure because Millennials prefer egalitarian leadership styles; and,
- Associations that traditionally employ a deliberative approach will have to become future-focused, able to rapidly make decisions so strategies do not

become obsolete; perpetually up-to-date Millennials will not stand for dated and stagnant policies and strategies; include them in the leadership process.

Figure 4: Snapshot of Innovative Millennial Strategies for Home Economics Associations

- Create an interactive BioPAGE
- Position association as civic-minded
- Provide feedback-oriented leadership
- Create Home Economics ambassador program
- Customise advancement plans for lateral and upward movement within the association
- Customise new slogans, often
- Create generational mentoring systems
- Create peer mentoring systems
- Develop membership discounts for Millennial teams (recruit teams of Millennials)
- Offer a lapsed membership alumni program
- Create a Rising-Star membership category, a reduced fee to entice young professionals. This initiative gives them an opportunity to join for a significant discount;
- Offer discounts for referrals, especially group/team referrals
- Choose a Millennial as the organisational gatekeeper (the go-to-person)
- Target Assistant Professors and new teachers
- Offer conference travel top-ups
- Offer tuition top-ups
- Actively work with employers

Benefits to the field

Promote greater public awareness of contributions from the field

- Making the case that professional associations are a key part of civil society will appeal to Millennials, who are very civic-oriented;
- The identity of who pays association dues (self or others) does not affect the Millennials' perception of the value and benefit of becoming a member. In light of this, Home Economics associations could develop a strategy to convince employers of the value of Millennials belonging to their association, and the value of paying the Millennial professional's membership fee; and,
- Associations must create and deliver deliberate and convincing messages for a variety of publics about the positive contributions of the field.

Support student education and entry into the field

- Consider tuition top-up bursaries (many Millennials want to go to graduate school);

- Maintain an incredibly efficient gatekeeper because they do not deal well with waiting in line for bureaucracy; they will simply go elsewhere. The ideal go-to candidate is a fellow Millennial;
- Because they have such a lived experience with, and value of, teams, consider recruiting teams of young Millennial professionals (giving team discounts for memberships);
- Consider Millennials as your best ambassadors (they tell each other *everything*). Create a Home Economics ambassador program, as well as a branding initiative for the organisation;
- They tend to move around a lot (coming and going from organisations and jobs); be ready for this by designing a lapsed membership alumni program letting them know that the door is always open, that they are needed and valued;
- Offer a *rising star membership*, a reduced fee to entice young professionals. This initiative gives them an opportunity to join for a significant discount;
- Set a discount for referrals, appreciating that Millennials love to network and share information with peers;
- Appreciating that the back end of the adult aged Millennials (aged 18–24) may be different than the leading edge (aged 25–30), do appropriate research and prepare different messages for this contingency;
- Because many new teachers are from the Millennial Generation, target teachers when recruiting and developing professional enrichment experiences; and,
- Continue to promote and facilitate the creation of web-based and real-time communities of practice, both as learning centres and as venues for professional community building.

Promote greater appreciation of the role and value of the field among practitioners

- Because academics are among the strongest association supporters, Home Economics associations should actively target assistant professors who are in a unique position to influence entry-level Millennials;
- Worthy of repeating, foster a culture of mentoring and self-accolades, and create ambassadors for the profession;
- With a Millennial bend, continue with the national, state, and local conferences and gatherings but with special attention to professional community-building and respectful conversations and dialogue circles;
- Draw on the self-managed mentoring initiatives provided by, for example, Kappa Omicron Nu (KON) to facilitate self-reflection leading to wider intraprofession respect for the field (see http://kon.org/Mentoring/index.html); and,

- Again, follow the lead from KON and develop *webs of inclusion* that lead to lasting networks, which can transform people, and bring them together http://kon.org/leadership/web_inclusion.html.

Provide standards that support quality

- Continue to maintain up-to-date certification opportunities and content, thereby ensuring Millennials that the association is providing quality standards;
- In some countries, Home Economics professionals can be registered with the state and licensed to practice; the professional standards that inform related legislation have to be kept current;
- Continue to update and promote national standards for Home Economics and allied fields.
- Continue to update the emerging "body of knowledge" statement, soliciting Millennial input;
- Augment and redesign university degree programs to reflect the changing knowledge base and attendant competencies (e.g., McGregor & MacCleave, 2007); and,
- Create and enforce Codes of Professional Conduct or Codes of Ethics to ensure both accountability and integrity in practice.

Discussion

Millennials are being billed both as high-maintenance and high-performers, seen as both a challenge and a deep opportunity for growth and dynamics within the profession (Pendergast, 2006, 2008, 2009). As a caveat, although Home Economics associations need to personify generations, they should not generalise the stereotype developed for the Millennial Generation to all Millennial individuals. Generalisations about generations can be avoided simply by engaging with each person. They will be able to tell you if they feel they *fit the profile* (Notter, 2007). As James McIntosh (2008, p. 128), a UK Millennial (or self-described Gen Cusp), said recently at the IFHE Congress, "Just ask us."

A powerful way to ensure a high level of engagement is through purposeful mentoring of Millennial professionals by current Home Economics professionals from both Generation X and the Boomers, and vice versa; Millennials have much to teach previous generations. Each generation can learn from the other, especially if each acknowledges and respects individual value systems and approaches to life and work (see Table 1, drawn from Buckley, Beu, Novicevic, & Sigerstad, 2001; Hammill, 2005; Kasina, 2005; Thielfoldt & Scheef, 2005; and Zemka, Raines, & Filipczak, 1999).

Again, we face a challenge. Pendergast (2009) explains that Millennials expect to move up the leadership position ladder based on demonstrated merit, instead of the current *waiting-in-line-for-seniority* mentality. The profession has to find a way to manage the tensions that will emerge when the Boomers and their value system retire and slide down the professional ladder at the same time the Millennials with their value system are climbing up the same ladder (again see Table 1). Better yet, the current generation of Home Economists inadvertently may be creating a very crowded nest if they stay involved in leadership

Table 1: Comparison of value premises of Boomers, Generation Xers and Millennials

Boomers Aged 47–64	Generation X Aged 27–46	Millennials (Generation Y) Aged 18–26
• individualism • self sufficient • rejected establishment but now value sensitive authority figures • question authority • low trust levels • family and friends • health and wellness • value freedom of choice • value change • value competition • value success • personal growth and fulfilment • optimistic • self-promotion • self-absorbed • workaholic • work to get ahead and move up the ladder • desire quality • work for consensus • win someone to their side • like holding meetings • like micro-managing • need hands-on involvement • like sharing personal visions • like loose structures, task forces, temporariness • feel honoured when asked to speak publically about work • value inspiration and motivational support • value conformance to team norms • value conflict resolution • value being open • value a community of individuals and feeling connected • value a mix of spontaneity and discipline • try to balance materialism a generosity	• self-resilient • independent • sceptical • self-centred • efficient and pragmatic • good at juggling things and managing processes • value creativity • value access to information, lots of it • scarcity mentality • economically conservative • low perceived job security • appreciate directness and being up-front • appreciate specific, focused feedback • can seem aloof and isolated because they value individual autonomy • accept (tolerate) diversity • varying interpersonal skills • comfortable with winning and losing • not civic minded • do things their own way • reject rules • suspicious of bureaucracy • friends are not family • cautious in commitments • won't sacrifice life for work • entrepreneurial spirit • resist micro-management (find it intrusive and untrusting) • perceive structure as inhibitive • prefer projects • like access to best office and technologies • like working on computer-aided projects • want to advance on their accomplishments not on how well they play the political game	• feel they are special • like to be nurtured • need a supervised environment and structure • plan and are goal-directed • team oriented • active in communities • live for and through technology • very civic minded • social activists • celebrate diversity • reinvent rules • curious • naive about how workplace functions (not work savvy) • work is a means to personal fulfilment • work has to be meaningful • friends equal family • entrepreneurial • tolerant • social with peers • impatient with advancement • extreme fun • drawn to competence • value education and skills building • value mentoring and guidance • like positive reinforcement

positions in their retirement years, at the same time the Millennial Home Economists may want to move into these positions. Part of future-proofing Home Economics may involve helping Boomer Home Economists learn to let go, make room, and move over—to share power as well as different notions of leadership.

It goes without saying that Home Economics associations will need to embrace technology as a critical component of their operational infrastructure (Pendergast, 2009). Failing to make this ongoing investment will limit any Home Economics association's ability to meet the new expectations of the Millennial Generation (McIntosh, 2008; West, 2007). More importantly, Millennials need to feel there is an alignment between their personal values and those espoused by organisation(s). This alignment means the latter must ensure that its culture is authentic, and that its policies and practices align with its espoused core mission and values, and with the goods and services offered by the association (Clarke, 2000; Rose, 2007).

Conclusion

Home Economics associations have to adopt creative flexibility and be willing to adapt their recruitment, socialisation, and training initiatives (when deemed appropriate). These adaptations will help convince Millennials that Home Economics associations are aware of the subtle nuances that *make them tick* as a generation (DiGilio & Lynn-Nelson, 2004), and as a Home Economics professional. The Millennial blueprint shared in this paper is one such initiative, and it is needed. As one example, AAFCS membership declines 3% every year, and has done so for the past 30 years (Clarke, 2000). The need to maintain and increase membership is critical to each Home Economics organisation's survival, and that of the profession at large.

Importantly, the Millennial blueprint shared in this paper conforms to Clarke's (2000) theoretical model of *membership response motivation* for professional associations. It accounts for all six elements of membership: (a) respect for geographical separation (bridged with technological innovations); (b) acknowledgment of cultural diversity; (c) retention of the profession's history while respecting its future potential; (d) political and leadership opportunities; (e) psychological attachment to a meaningful mission and goals; and (f) social interaction, plus a socially significant mission and agenda. If Home Economics organisations are able to demonstrate and deliver a commitment to Millennial professionals, these same professionals will commit to the associations and to the profession. Ending with a cliché—the future of the profession depends on it.

Authors' note

*For clarification, we had in mind such organisations as the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) and all state affiliates, the Family and Consumer Sciences Education Association (FCSEA) and state affiliates, Kappa Omicron Nu (KON) and affiliates, the International Federation of Home Economics and its regional offices, the Canadian Home Economics Foundation (CHEF), provincial associations in Canada, and the Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA). All sister organisations on the other continents can benefit from this blueprint, if their demographics merit the adoption of such strategies.

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Nutrition transition and its consequences: Implications for the Nigerian child

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Abstract

Adequate nutrition in the early years of life is an essential condition for children to develop to their full potential. Studies have confirmed the main nutritional problems in Nigeria to include: inadequate intake of energy, protein, vitamin A, iron, and iodine; poor infant feeding and care practices; and diet related noncommunicable diseases. Added to this is the emergence of the phenomenon "nutrition transition," which is promoting a double-barrelled nutritional condition where both under- and overnutrition exist simultaneously. The implications of this phenomenon, and the roles of the private sector and regulating agencies in alleviating the double burden of malnutrition, are the major thrust of this paper.

Introduction

Nigeria has the greatest population in Africa of about 144 million people (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2006). It is often implied that one in six Africans is a Nigerian (Akinyele, 2007). Administratively the country has been operating a democratic system since 1999 and is made up of 36 states, 774 local government areas with a 3–tier government system at the federal, state, and local government levels. Nigeria may be described as a nation with diverse cultures, and ethnic, religious, and political interests. The country, according to Maziya-Dixon et al. (2004), comprises as many as 250 different ethnic groups of which Edo, Fulani, Hausa, Igbo, Idoma, Ibibio, Ijaw, Kanuri, Tiv, and Yoruba are regarded as the largest groups.

It is estimated that about 75% of the population are women and children with over 70% residing in rural areas. The low-income groups constitute the bulk of the population (Management Sciences for Health (MSH), 2006; Maziya-Dixon et al., 2004).

Recent studies in nutrition have focused on the emerging duality of the burden on malnutrition. From the beginning, the problem was undernutrition. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2002) revealed in the World Health Report that undernutrition together with micronutrient deficiencies are the highest risk factors for disease and death, especially among young children. Evidence abounds that severe undernutrition kills globally 10.8 million children under 5 years annually (Pelletier & Frongillo, 2003). Presently the growing threat of overnutrition and its health, development, and socioeconomic repercussions cannot be ignored as under- and overnutrition live side by side in more households (Jongwook et al., 2006). Currently, individuals, families, and communities globally are seen making the rapid transition from undernutrition to poor nutrition (Le Gales-Camus, 2006).

This phenomenon, referred to as *Nutrition Transition,* may be attributed to the changing nature of globalised food supply, and easier access to technologically processed high fat and sugar foods coupled with more sedentary lifestyles. These may create a lethal mix that may lead quickly to overnutrition.

The picture painted above may be similar to the emerging trend among the different income groups in Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria National Planning Commission (2001), and Joiner et al. (2006), reported the existence of the multiple problems of food insecurity, malnutrition, and the double burden of disease both in Nigeria and other developing countries. For instance, it is becoming common to see a robust and overweight mother in her market stall or attending a local health clinic with her obviously undernourished child. Secondly, some of our cultural values are posing a challenge to the prevention and management of obesity, especially because being overweight is equated with affluence and happiness. It is also important to mention the *fattening room culture* (in south eastern Nigeria), which encourages betrothed girls who are of marriageable age to *indulge*, in order to put on extra weight as this is a sign of affluence for the prospective groom's family.

A recent national survey in Nigeria revealed that over 40% of its households are food insecure; 42% of the children undersized, 25% are underweight, 10% are emaciated; and 12% of nursing mothers are found to be undernourished (Maziya-Dixon et. al, 2004). MSH report on Nigeria (2006) showed that infant mortality rate per 1000 live births is 100; maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births is 800, and life expectancy at birth for both sexes is 44 years. There is therefore an urgent need to evaluate the food and nutrition situation in Nigeria to ascertain its implications for the growth and development of the Nigerian child.

Objectives

The objectives of this paper are to:

- evaluate the state of child nutrition in Nigeria,
- examine the concept of nutrition transition and its implications for child development and productivity, and
- determine the role of private sector and regulatory agencies in alleviating the double burden of malnutrition.

The state of child nutrition in Nigeria and its implications for child survival

It has been established that diet and nutrition play dominant roles as determinants of disease conditions of both under- and overnutrition. The former results in protein energy malnutrition (PEM) and micronutrient deficiencies (vitamin A deficiency diseases (VAD), iodine deficiency disorders (IDD), and anaemia), while the latter is responsible for diet-related noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases (CVD), obesity, hypertension, Type II Diabetes Mellitus, osteoporosis, dental diseases, and so on.

Adequate nutrition in the early years of life is essential for children to develop to their full potential. This will ensure the healthy human resources the country needs for sustainable economic growth and development (Pelletier, 2002). This vision is consistent with that of the

World Summit (to which Nigeria is a signatory) on nutrition, food, and the rights of children and women. Malnutrition in early pregnancy predisposes the foetus to ultra-uterine growth retardation, low birth weight (LBW), and, worse still, nutrition-related noncommunicable diseases in adulthood (Baker, 1995). The theory of the foetal origin of chronic diseases, which suggests a link between maternal undernutrition in foetal developmental stage and overweight problems in young children and the resultant increased risks of chronic diseases in adulthood, is supported (Baker, 1995; Joiner et al., 2006). There is therefore the need to act on undernutrition in the critical foetal period and the early childhood years. This could prevent chronic diseases later in life.

However, malnutrition with poverty as an underlying cause remains a major barrier to development in Nigeria (Hodges, 2001). The main nutritional problems identified according to Federal Government of Nigeria National Planning Commission (2001) and PROFILES (2006) are:

- Inadequate intake of energy and protein (PEM),
- Micronutrient deficiency,
- Poor infant feeding and caring practices, and
- Nutrition related noncommunicable diseases.

Inadequate intake of energy and protein

Inadequate dietary intake has been identified as the major factor responsible for the first nutritional problem mentioned above (Federal Government of Nigeria National Planning Commission, 2001). Food intake studies showed that the national daily per capita average intake of energy and protein amounted to 2,071 Kilocalories and 54 grams per day, respectively. This implies that households consumed less food than they require. Also, a "food share" analysis performed using 1993 data suggested that most Nigerian households spend more than 75% of their income on food alone (Federal Government of Nigeria National Planning Commission, 2001). This is an indication of food insecurity, and children are the most vulnerable victims of inadequate food in the family. Current data shows that 52% of child deaths are related to PEM, making this the single greatest cause of child mortality in Nigeria (PROFILES, 2006).

Micronutrient deficiency

Micronutrient deficiencies have impacted negatively on the food and nutrition condition of the Nigerian child. Prominent among these deficiencies is VAD, IDD, and iron deficiency anaemia. A national survey conducted on the nutritional status of children under 5 years reported deficiencies in their iron, iodine, zinc, and vitamins A and E status (Maziya–Dixon et al., 2004). Available data reveal that 20% of children are iron deficient, only one third have optimal iodine levels, 29.5% suffer anaemia, marginal deficiency of vitamin A is 20%, and 25% of Nigerian women of reproductive age are reported to be deficient in zinc (Maziya-Dixon et al., 2004). These levels of deficiency are of public health importance and therefore require immediate intervention from relevant agencies.

Poor infant feeding and caring practices

Poor infant feeding and caring practices has also been reported. There has been a decline in the number of children that are exclusively breastfed. Only 17% of children under 6 months are exclusively breastfed (Maziya-Dixon et al., 2004). Available data also reveal that 21% of infant deaths are related to poor breastfeeding practices in Nigeria (PROFILES, 2006). Breast milk has been reported to be the best food for infants under 6 months, followed by complementary foods that are adequate in protein of high biological value, together with the continuation of breastfeeding until the child is 2 years old (Dewey, 2003).

Again, most children (especially those in rural areas) are fed complementary foods that are inadequate in quality and quantity and are force fed (Le Gales–Camus, 2006; UNICEF, 2001; Davies–Adetugbo, 1997). For example, two thirds of infants between the ages of 6 and 9 months old are not fed small quantities of foods of animal origin like fish, eggs, crayfish, poultry, and meat, which are rich in protein of high biological value (PROFILES, 2006; Okolo, Adewunmi, & Okonjo, 1999; Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN)/UNICEF, 1994). These children, therefore, lack nutrients in their diets that are essential for their survival, growth, and development.

Nutrition-related noncommunicable diseases

Data on chronic diseases and its impact in Nigeria show that more than 24% of the disease burden is attributable to chronic diseases (WHO, 2005). Available data shows that about 22% of Nigerian men and 30% of Nigerian women are overweight or obese. Lack of physical activity and high intake of foods rich in fat and sugar increase the risk of weight gain or obesity. Although little information is available, there are indications that childhood obesity may be increasing. Le Gales-Camus (2006), reported the incidence of a 5-year-old boy, Mallory, in a poor rural area in Tanzania, who had been diagnosed as obese by his local community health centre. His diet consists mainly of porridge and animal fat and he has nowhere to play outdoors. There may be many children like Mallory in Nigeria, who are not captured in statistics.

Obesity in children is an important predication of adult obesity. Sixty percent of children who are overweight have one additional risk factor for CVDs like hypertension or hyperinsulinaemia, cancers, and Type II diabetes, which previously was considered an adult disease (WHO / FAO, 2003). The foetal origin of chronic diseases may also be another explanation. Statistics from the Nigeria Nuclear Agency (2008) revealed that 100,000 new cases of cancer were being diagnosed every year. According to the 2008 report, one out of every four persons above 50 years will have cancer. That implies that about 50,000 Nigerians will have it. One fifth of this group are people in the upper socioeconomic group who can afford to travel abroad to seek effective treatment. These foreign treatments cost $15,000–$20,000 . This constitutes an economic drain on the country.

Joiner et al. (2006) opined that underdevelopment or undersizing in children is associated with an increased risk for obesity due to impaired fat metabolism and other metabolic shifts. Evidence also abounds that a larger period of exclusive breastfeeding reduces the risk of developing obesity later in childhood (UNICEF, 1999; Lutter 2003; PAHO/WHO, 2003).

Diabetes, hypertension, stroke, CVDs, and some cancers are all health problems associated with obesity.

Conclusively, the consequences of these problems are reflected in the damning statistics on nutrition and survival. In Nigeria, 1 infant in 10 dies before its first birthday and 1 child in 6 dies before the age of 5 years (PROFILES, 2006; Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 1990). These rates are the highest in Africa (Akinyele, 2007).

Nutrition transition and its implications on development

Diets of populace in developing countries have always been dictated according to food supplies, and this has gone through a state of rapid transition. The concept of transition has been described by Popkin (1993); Bongaarts and Watkins (1996); and Bulatao and Lee (1993) with two extant theories of change.

The first relates to *demographic transition*, which is a shift from a pattern of high fertility and high mortality to one of low fertility and low mortality (usually present in developed countries). The second *epidemiologic transition* first proposed by Omran (1971) describes a shift from a pattern of high prevalence of infectious diseases and malnutrition resulting from poverty and poor environmental sanitation, to a high prevalence of chronic and degenerative diseases associated with lifestyle. These two theories of transition have been associated with diet, activity pattern, and lifestyle (Enweonwu, 2008; Okonkwo, 2002).

The framework of epidemiological transition was used in this paper to explain the distribution of diseases. Epidemiological transition is a concept that describes the shifting pattern of nutrition and health indicators in human history. It is classified into four stages, namely:

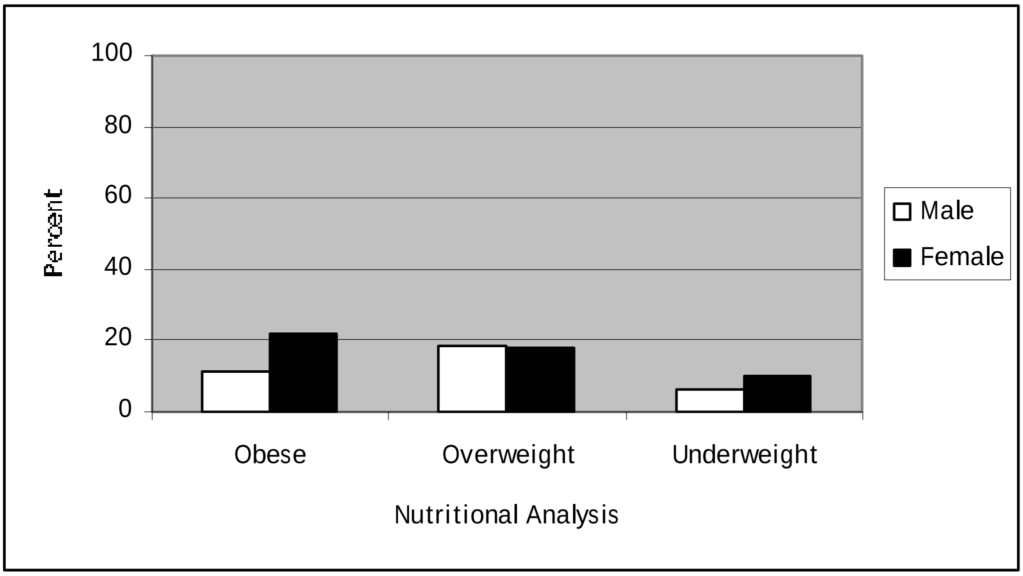
1. pestilence and famine,
2. receding pandemics,
3. degenerative and man-made diseases, and
4. delayed degenerative disease.

Enweonwu (2008) observed that initially, sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) was greatly affected by stage 1 of this transition, and developed countries by stage 3, that is, undernutrition and its consequent complications, and overnutrition with the high burden of noncommunicable chronic diseases (NCDs), respectively. Unfortunately with globalisation in many parts of SSA, evidence abounds that this transition, which contributes to a greater burden of chronic diseases, is occurring in Africa (Okonkwo, 2002). It is worthy to state here that chronic diseases have not displaced acute infectious diseases in developing countries. Rather it has created what is now known as the double burden of disease (Yach, Hawkes, Gould, & Hofman, 2004; SCN 2006a, 2006b).

Findings are beginning to emerge that Nigeria might be caught in between two or more stages of the transition. WHO (2006) report that chronic diseases, communicable diseases, maternal and perinatal conditions, and nutritional deficiencies will still be the leading cause of death in Nigeria in 2015, the year in which the Millennium Development Goals are expected to be achieved. A separate study conducted in 2 suburban northern communities in Nigeria by

Bakari et al. (2007) to determine the prevalence of obesity, overweight, and underweight in adults revealed both overweight and underweight, with the former being more prevalent (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Prevalence of Obesity in Northern Nigeria



Source: Bakari et al. (2007).

The implication of this revelation is that more than a third of the population is either overweight or obese, while a smaller percentage are underweight.

Nutrition transition is marked by a shift away from the relatively monotonous diet based on indigenous staple grains or starchy roots, grain legumes, vegetables and fruits, and limited food of animal origin, to more varied diets of processed foods, more foods of animal origin, more sugar, fat, and alcohol (Popkin, Horton, & Kim, 2001), that is, a shift from traditional to modern meals and snacks. This shift is also accompanied by reduced physical activity at work for adults and play for children. This could be as a result of advanced technologies that promote sedentary lifestyle. These trends could lead to rapid increase in weight and obesity.

Historically as a country becomes more industrialised, personal and community resources improve, and the eating patterns tend to shift from traditional agricultural-based low-fat, high-fibre diets, to diets high in animal foods, and processed and refined foods, which are low in fibre and high in fats and sugar, and which are sometimes referred to as Western diet (Vorster, Bourne, Verter, & Onstbuzien, 1999; Rastogi, 2004). Furthermore, there is the peril of decreased physical activity caused by industrialisation and information communication technology (ICT) in combination with increased consumption of dietary fat and refined foods. The proliferation of fast food eating outlets cannot be ignored. In the past couple of decades in Nigeria, the operation of fast-food organisations has increased. These restaurants are common sights on major roads, especially in urban and semiurban towns.

With the advent of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, there has been a rapid growth in overall health, social, and economic development. Unfortunately, this has not resulted in decrease in infectious diseases. Rather, there is a trend toward chronic and degenerative diseases, as has been earlier implied in this paper.

The effect of these issues to economic development is that scarce national and family resources will be spent on medical treatment of these children instead of on their educational development. Secondly, life expectancy of the children is reduced as a result of disease burden, thereby wasting all the resources used in training them to adulthood without their making input to economic development. Thirdly, physical and intellectual development of the children will be compromised; this is because most irreversible faltering growth and development occur during childhood. Hence, the adage of *children being the leaders of tomorrow* with limited intellectual resource may have grave consequences for policy formulation, and hence, economic development. Consequently, it is not out of place to assume that nutrition is the key to national development.

The role of private sector and regulatory agencies in alleviating the double burden of malnutrition

In the bid to tackle these nutritional problems in Nigeria, government and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and private corporations through their contributions (referred to as cooperate social responsibility), have played certain roles that have impacted positively in reducing the double burden of nutrition in Nigeria, especially in urban settings. For the private multinational corporations, these positive impacts have been in the form of sponsorship of enlightenment campaigns on the dangers of certain lifestyle, seminars, symposia, and, at times, free medications.

The efforts of government at both Federal and State level is concentrated more in treatment of under- and overnutrition and its inherent health problems, instead of preventing its occurrence. One of the expected government roles in prevention is in the provision of school meals for children in primary schools. This is one government policy that is expected to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2 (that is, reducing hunger and increasing school enrolment). Three years after the Home Grown School Feeding and Health Programme (HGSFHP) was launched in Nigeria, the few states that piloted the programme stopped it almost immediately after inception. Corruption and lack of funds were two of the reasons proposed. Apart from providing a meal a day for the children, the programme was expected to include vitamin supplementation and deworming of children. If this programme had been sustained, it was expected to reduce anaemia, stunting, and underweight in school age children, and, above all, increase school enrolment.

Another expected role of government is the provision of functional health care systems. This includes health institutions (primary, secondary and tertiary health institutions), personnel, equipment, and so on. (Nigeria is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 and the Africa Charter on the rights and welfare of the child adopted by the OAU, now known as African Union in 1990.) Although these institutions are available mainly in urban towns, they are plagued with problems of dilapidated structures, inadequate medication, and unending striking in the workforce, just to mention a few.

Public water supply, which is a statutory responsibility of government as enshrined in the constitution, is almost nonexistent. Individuals and families source water, using crude methods such as digging of shallow wells and fetching from open streams and rivers. To be safe, these water sources require further treatment, which is not done. This trend has consequently resulted in waterborne diseases, especially diarrhoea, in children. Only a few rich families can afford boreholes.

However, some government agencies have made their impact. Prominent amongst them is the National Agency for Food Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) through its Director General.

Following the proliferation of fast-food eateries in the country, NAFDAC has initiated workshops for these operators as a means of sensitising them for regulation while awaiting the approval of enabling laws from the National Assembly. Also, due to expanding food supply, processed food manufacturers have been given various deadlines on food fortification with vitamins A, E, and D. Presently, all sugars, flours, vegetable oils, and corn flours are fortified with vitamin A (Akunyili, 2007).

Some NGOs have devised programs on cancer awareness, Diabetes Mellitus, and obesity. One shortcoming of these programs is that they are restricted to only a short period, for example, breast cancer week, breastfeeding week, and so on. After this period, nothing is heard until the following year when it is celebrated again. There is a need to sustain these campaigns all year round as a form of public education.

Wives of public office holders (Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Governors, and Local Government Chairmen) under the aegis of a foundation, annually engage in programs on deworming school-age children, vitamin supplementation, food gifts, workshops, and symposia, for which most times they collaborate with private profit organisations to achieve.

In spite of all these separate individual attempts at tackling the double burden of malnutrition resulting from nutrition transition, there is the need for coordination and regulation for all those involved. Nigeria has the cheap advantage of using the experience of the developed world, and taking its destiny in its hands and preventing the spread of diseases of overnutrition now, before it is too late, considering the fact that Nigeria does not have the resources and technology at our disposal, unlike the Western world. There is the need for strict legislation and regulation of fast-food operations. The need for nutrition education for the public is also imperative at this time. This will enable people to make wise and healthy food choices. The time to act is now.

Conclusion and recommendation

From the foregoing, it has been established that nutrition is a major modifiable determinant of both infectious and chronic diseases. Evidences abound to show that changes in social behaviour and diet have both positive and negative influences on health throughout the life cycle. Dietary adjustments may not only influence one’s health but also predetermine whether or not one will develop one or more chronic diseases later in life.

Despite this knowledge, in Nigeria less priority is given to addressing the rising public health problems associated with chronic disease, such as inadequate health care systems and limited resources budgeted for health care, which often are used on treatment rather than prevention. There is also lack of political will and strategies to deal effectively with chronic diseases, because such diseases are still regarded as diseases of the affluent, who should be able to pay for medical treatments outside the country.

Also, some of Nigeria's cultural values are posing a challenge to the prevention and management of obesity especially, because overweight is equated with affluence and happiness. Nutritionally superior traditional indigenous foods are being replaced with modern processed fast foods, which are mostly refined foods dense in energy.

Furthermore, there is limited data on prevalence of CVD, obesity, Type II Diabetes Mellitus and high blood pressure.

The following recommendations are made:

1. There is the need to incorporate nutrition education as a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools' curriculum.

2. The Federal Ministry of Health and its agencies should begin to regulate fast-food operations with enabling laws and public enlightenment to promote healthy eating cultures, especially among impressionable school children.

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Linking the loop:
Voicing dimensions of Home Economics

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyse how individuals working within the field of Home Economics describe the profession against the background of the Position Statement published by the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) in 2008 and discussion papers detailing the Position Statement published in the first issue of the International Journal of Home Economics (IJHE). This paper links individual statements on the meaning of Home Economics provided for Linking the Loop project with four key dimensions or areas of practice of Home Economics, as defined in the IFHE Position Statement, and reflects the statements against generational theory. A qualitative content analysis of 94 statements provided by Home Economists around the world provides an insight to the variety in understanding and defining the field—a process that is essential to secure a viable future for the profession.

Introduction

Home Economics; what it is, what it encompasses and what as a profession it seeks to provide and prove are subject to much debate. Home Economics is not a new subject but one that has been around for a long time: Even the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle was concerned with the organisation and management of households in the meaning of *oikos* (Richarz, 1991). In modern times, efforts to formalise domesticity go back as far as the mid-1800s with one of the most influential early examples being the Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home (Beecher, 1845), written by Catherine Beecher (1800–1878). As was encompassed then, over 150 years ago—Home Economics embraces a wide range of applications and many diverse areas of life, both inside and outside of the home setting. As Arcus (2008) highlights, increasing concern for household-related topics resulted, at the beginning of the 20th century, in the foundation of the International Federation for Home Economics. She further describes the shared interest of the Home Economics pioneers "in the well-being of the family and in strengthening the home to benefit the broader society" (Arcus, 2008 p. 2–3).

Current discussions within the international field of Home Economics have focused around the process of developing of a position paper for the International Federation for Home Economics. Pendergast (2008a, p. 5) has pointed out that the Position Statement: "is an attempt to locate the profession in the contemporary context by serving as a platform, looking ahead to viable and progressive visions of Home Economics for the 21st century and beyond."

This paper looks at the Position Statement as "an organic document developed for the next decade with the intention of ongoing review and providing a foundation for the work of the Federation, its individual and organizational members" (IFHE, 2008 p. 6).

Here, the aim is to look beyond the Position Statement and reflect it against the statements made by individual Home Economists for the project *Linking the Loop* (LTL) initiated by the Young Professionals Network (YPN) of IFHE. Whilst elaborating on how individual members of IFHE describe different dimensions of Home Economics and by identifying specific characteristics from the statements, we can advance the discussion to produce a viable and progressive vision of Home Economics. Beyond these issues, this paper provides an empirical background for the Position Statement. Also, empirical evidence in addition to what experts and individual members already made available via the Position Statement is presented here. This analysis helps to further strengthen Home Economics as a profession, a scientific discipline, an arena to influence policy, a curriculum area, and, very importantly, to help to contribute towards people and communities in their everyday life.

Discussing Home Economics

The following section introduces the main characteristics of the Position Statement and the discussion around it as published in the International Journal for Home Economics (IJHE). We also present the *Linking the Loop* project, which provides the empirical basis for the analysis.

The IFHE Position Statement

The IFHE Position Statement *Home Economics in the 21st Century* (hereafter: HE21C) was launched at the IFHE Home Economics Congress 2008 in Lucerne, Switzerland. HE21C was developed through a 4-year consultation process with members and experts of IFHE to serve as a basis for Home Economists to discuss the field, to elucidate basal dimensions of Home Economics, to initiate the process of rebranding Home Economics, and to highlight commonalities, challenges, and the societal impact of the profession. Inter- and transdisciplinary approaches to Home Economics as a profession and a field of study are described and located within society at the beginning of the 21st century. Hence, Home Economics is illustrated as consisting of four dimensions or areas of practice (IFHE, 2008, p. 1):

- Home Economics as an *academic discipline* to educate new scholars, to conduct research, and to create new knowledge and ways of thinking for professionals and for society
- Home Economics as an arena for *everyday living* in households, families, and communities for developing human growth potential and human necessities or basic needs to be met
- Home Economics as a *curriculum area* that facilitates students to discover and further develop their own resources and capabilities to be used in their personal life, by directing their professional decisions and actions or preparing them for life

- Home Economics as a *societal arena to influence and develop policy* to advocate for individuals, families, and communities to achieve empowerment and wellbeing, to utilise transformative practices, and to facilitate sustainable futures.

HE21C was published together with seven discussion papers submitted by Home Economics professionals representing the different regions of the world. These papers illustrate a variety of conceptions and highlight some key issues for future work on positioning and rebranding Home Economics. Here, some of the key statements made in the discussion papers regarding the role of HE21C are presented and the concepts and ideas provided regarding the challenges faced by Home Economics professionals highlighted.

On the basis of Japanese experiences in defining the philosophy and principles of Home Economics, Kuramoto (2008) states that HE21C can help to provide a philosophical foundation and historical compass for the field, thereby increasing its capacity to meet the new agenda and needs of the individual, family, community, and society in all parts of the world. Also, Turkki (2008) sees the statement as the common wisdom of Home Economists that enables the recognition of possibilities for Home Economics as a field in the present world and also in the future.

Benn (2008) emphasises the need for Home Economists to better argue for the field in order to define Home Economics as a science in its own right. Benn predicts that, without strongly defining Home Economics as a field specifically looking at individuals and their immediate surroundings, the field is at risk of being lost among other disciplines. On the basis of analysis of the historical development and the identity of Home Economics, Davis (2008) calls for a systematic, constructive dialogue to ensure a clear understanding of the field and its name.

According to Turkki (2008), the profession is strongly linked to society, and Home Economists need to empower themselves to work in different forums and levels of society. In her response to the statement, Hodelin (2008, p. 19) argues for the importance of personal awareness and the continuous "academic, social, political and emotional preparation of self". This allows for Home Economists to take professional action enabling an impact on social change. McGregor (2008) calls on Home Economists to become ambassadors of the profession; "advancing the interest of the profession, guided by its values, mission and philosophical underpinnings" (McGregor, 2008, p. 27).

Dewhurst and Pendergast (2008) have studied how HE21C has been received by Home Economics teachers in Scotland and Australia. The results show a high level of agreement on the multidisciplinary nature and the potential of Home Economics to prepare individuals for their personal and professional life. Still, the preferred name of the field and rebranding of Home Economics are shown as areas of weaker commitment to issues presented in the HE21C. The authors call for extended community-building strategies in order to engage Home Economics practitioners to work to achieve the common goals set in the HE21C.

The discussion presented here shows that Home Economics is subject to a continuous process of change and redefinition, and, in many ways, is fighting for its existence. The multidisciplinary nature of Home Economics is shown through the great differences in how individual Home Economists see and promote the field. Still, HE21C is strongly valued as a serious, collaborative attempt to provide a cohesive and internationally recognised perspective of the field (Pendergast, 2008a).

Linking the loop

Members of the IFHE Young Professionals Network (YPN) initiated *Linking the Loop* (LTL) as a project first presented at the World Home Economics Congress 2008. LTL is an ongoing project developed with the aim of providing a stimulus for Home Economists around the world, inaugurated at the IFHE World Congress 2008. As the name suggests, the project aims to link Home Economists around the world, allowing their voices to be heard. Regardless of whether IFHE members are able to physically be present at IFHE meetings, the project facilitates their involvement and contribution. The project therefore highlights the diversity of the Home Economics profession, and offers insights into the work being achieved internationally in the field by professionals representing and working across the generational spectrum. It acts as a signal to the global arena that Home Economics has a body of strong, motivated professionals who are enthusiastic about taking the profession forward into the 21st century.

For *Linking the Loop* IFHE members were asked to contribute to the project by providing a statement, answering the question: *What does Home Economics mean to you?* Further, they were asked to indicate name, year of birth, and country/nationality, and to provide a photo. The responses were collated and presented as a slideshow at the IFHE Congress 2008 in Lucerne and have subsequently been added as an ongoing scroll on the IFHE website (www.ifhe.org). As an ongoing project that, like the subject with which it deals, is continuously adapting and evolving, the project will continually be updated with each major IFHE meeting. *Linking the Loop 2* is expected to be presented at the IFHE Council meeting in Ireland, 2010. The LTL concept initially targeted *new* members (i.e., those young in age and/or new to the profession) with the foresight of being a way of marketing Home Economics to a wider audience. However, the response to the project was so positive, from members of all ages and generational locations, that it was extended to include all respondents. LTL is strongly inspired by generational theory. Based on the work of Strauss and Howe (1991) on generational dynamics, this theory provides an insight to diversity in thinking about our profession.

Generational theory

Generational theory (Strauss & Howe, 1991) was introduced to the field of Home Economics by Donna Pendergast (2001, 2008b) as being critical to the future of Home Economics. Pendergast (2008b) links the well-developed theory seeking to understand and characterise cohorts according to their birth generation with the profession of Home Economics. Given that the history of the profession spans a century and its future depends on the retention and attraction of present and future generations, understanding the generational dynamics offers a strategic method of better understanding and embracing the future of the profession. Thereafter, generational theory can be used to understand and reflect on the origin of different approaches to Home Economics.

Pendergast (2008b) distinguishes the following generations: The Progressive Generation (having influence 1901–1924 during the GI birth generation) is the founding generation of Home Economics. They gave the domestic sphere a scientific underpinning, and faced the initial battle for equality of women and men, thus proving to be highly progressive and revolutionary. They are succeeded by the Missionary Generation (having influence 1925–1942 during the Silent birth generation) who, affected by the economic situation, depression, and wars, faced the profession with a strict view of management and thriftiness. The GI Generation (having influence 1943–1960 during the Baby Boomer birth generation) is labelled as upcoming affluence in the Western world. This generation was witness to the consumer revolution where consumer values were the driving force of culture and the economy. This experience is recognisable in the characteristics of the cohort—being more economically optimistic, conservative, and used to being the leading cohort in society, particularly in terms of affluence. The following Silent Generation (having influence 1961–1981 during the Generation X birth generation) incorporates an emanating consumerism and relevant critical scientific approaches, including feminist studies.

The subsequent Baby Boomers (having influence 1982–2002 during the Generation Y birth generation) are a distinctive group named such due to the post World War II rise in fertility. Baby Boomers typically reject and/or define traditional values, and are regarded as a privileged group, growing up in an improving advancing world. Generation X, a reactive cohort, display individuality, rebellion, and confidence, and are far more pragmatic than their predecessors. In contrast, Generation Y (1982–2003) grew up in a globalised world, with notions of post-modernity including issues of fragmentation and further individualisation. Born into an advanced technological multinational world, this cohort is separated from its previous generations not only by age, but also by values, beliefs, and digital literacy. Comfortable in an arena of continuous mass communication, this generation displays inconsistent qualities with regard to values and attitudes and freely swing or switch loyalties depending on their immediate wants and/or needs.

Finally, Generation Z (those born post 2003) are thought to present society with a cohort of active consumers, with a strong social conscience and work ethic—ideal for trying to reconfigure the profession to set it up in the 21st century. However, information on this generation is largely speculative due to a lack of research to date and the fact that members are still very young. In accordance with generational theory, the statements of *Linking the Loop* were categorised by date of birth and the relating cohort, or generation of birth, of the person who made the statement. The indication of date of birth and country of origin makes it possible to distinguish between generations and regions.

Analytical approach

The following chapter explains the course of action and the context in which the work was carried out, and gives a concise account of the analysis process. Description of the interpretive framework and method of analysis is followed by characterisation of LTL statements according to dimensions of Home Economics presented in HE21C, and an analysis of generational and regional variation in the statements. Finally, the discussion puts the results into theoretical context, relating them to the considerations on the future of the Home Economics profession.

The analytical focus in this paper is on statements that are offered by IFHE members, and on how these individuals culturally construct *Home Economics* in their statements made through the *Linking the Loop* (LTL) project. Individuals made concise affirmative statements about what Home Economics personally means to them. The term *interpretive framework* refers "to a set of assumptions, ideas and principles that define a particular, theoretically informed perspective and a set of appropriate practices for the process of interpretation, thus opening the data to particular interpretations" (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006, p. 103) and provides a lens for systematic and reflected examination of the statements of LTL and thus as individual praxis to think, reason, comment, and theorise on Home Economics.

Content analysis that encompasses both quantitative and qualitative characteristics (Wolff, 2007) was applied to the analysis of the LTL statements. A quantitative analysis on the regional and generational distribution of the statements lays the foundation for further qualitative analysis. In the quantitative analysis, the LTL statements were classified under the four dimensions of Home Economics as

1. an academic discipline;
2. an arena for everyday living;
3. a curriculum area; and
4. a societal arena to influence policy.

(IFHE, 2008).

For the purpose of this research, each author made the initial classification independently. Collaborative qualitative analysis was then continued, with the researchers discussing and agreeing on each classification. An awareness of the influence of each researcher's tacit knowledge in applying the categories to the statements (Silverman, 2006) was maintained throughout, thus guaranteeing that the qualitative approach highlights a content specific analysis. Moreover, the role of the authors as researchers was not to criticise or to assess statements made in LTL statements but to scrutinise the statements to identify dimensions and interrelating functions. Certain limitations come along with this approach. These will be considered in the discussion later in the paper.

After preliminary examinations of HE21C and the individual LTL statements, the analysis was focused on the four dimensions or areas of HE practice, as defined in HE21C. Hence, it was important to align the statements with HE21C to enhance the discussion on what Home Economics means to individuals. The LTL statements can be regarded as naturally occurring empirical data (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006) because they have not been created for the purpose of being a subject of analysis (Silverman, 2006). However, we have to keep in mind that the statements are intended for public display and therefore it can be assumed that the participants of *Linking the Loop* have put special effort in the production of these personal expressions.

The 94 statements available were published at the 21st World Congress of IFHE in 2008. The statements give an idea of and exhibit the way in which *Home Economics* is meaningfully discussed and reasoned about. The statements define an acceptable and intelligible way of conduct with respect to it at a certain point in time, the year 2008. The individual cultural texts are not analysed as discrete, closed-off entities, but as texts that get their meaning within a network of intertextual relations (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). After the initial classification, LTL statements were re-organised by the age of respondents and by regions. Conclusions are drawn on the whole process, highlighting both the commonalities with HE21C and the new elements raised in the individual statements.

Individual statements and dimensions of Home Economics

The issues in discussion and some new elements raised from the LTL statements will be presented in the following results section. For the purpose of analysis, 94 statements received from the *Linking the Loop* (LTL) project in 2008 are used. The statements sent by Home Economists represent all IFHE Regions, namely Africa, Asia, Americas, Europe, and the Pacific. Judging by the age of respondents, a significant number of statements come from students and young professionals, reflecting the original intent of the project. However, the age range of the respondents is wide. The oldest contributor was born in 1943, and thus belongs to the Baby Boomer generation. The youngest participant is a member of Generation Y, born in 1992. Hence the difference between oldest and youngest contributor comprises nearly 5 decades.

The 94 individual statements submitted were first categorised according to the four dimensions/areas of practice of Home Economics, as defined in HE21C. Many of the statements referred to more than one dimension. Some statements could not be explicitly classified under any of the dimensions, mainly due to linguistic or translation challenges that made some of the statements incomprehensible. A fifth dimension: *Home Economics as a profession* strongly arising from the individual statements was also included. This category can also be found in HE21C, but is not explicitly mentioned in the four dimensions of Home Economics. The profession is an overarching level that can be applied to all the four areas of practice. The dimension of the profession will be considered further in the discussion section.

In analysing the statements as entire, we can examine the use of single words in the frame of the sentence, such that we can emphasise how the dimensions are couched within the statement. By proceeding this way, the statements were categorised under one or more dimensions. Thus, overall 43% of the statements were classified under more than one dimension/area of practice. The following table summarises the division of the statements according to the primary dimension reflected in the statement. The primary dimension was defined by identifying the focus of the statement, or the starting point for defining the meaning of Home Economics. This is clarified through the following example from one statement: “Home Economics is a subject which all should study; it is useful for our everyday life”. Here, Home Economics is first seen as a curriculum area (primary dimension) that is further applied in everyday life (secondary dimension).

Table 1: Division of LTL statements according to the primary reference to the dimensions of Home Economics

Dimension / Area of practice		Mentioned as the primary dimension	% of all individual statements (***n*** = 94)
A	Academic discipline	13	13.8
B	Arena for everyday living	40	42.6
C	Curriculum area	15	16.0
D	Policy arena	7	7.4
E	Home Economics as a profession	12	12.8
	Other	7	7.4
		(*n* = 94)	100.0

As indicated in Table 1 above, everyday life and life skills are mentioned the most often (42.6%). The other dimensions: academic discipline (13.8%), curriculum area (16%), and Home Economics as a profession (12.8%), are almost equally reflected. The least mentioned area of practice was identified as *policy arena* (7.4%). In order to consider the relationship between the categories, attempts are made to describe these categories according the statements of LTL. Moreover, the relationship between the categories and the persons giving the statements will be highlighted in the subsequent sections when analysing the differences in the statements provided by Home Economists of different ages and from different parts of the world.

The voice of different generations

The generational division used in this analysis is based on work by Strauss and Howe (1991) and Pendergast (2001, 2008b). Although the inputs from the GI Generation (1901–1924), the Silent Generation (1925–1942), and Generation Z (2003+) were not represented in LTL statements, we can still include three generations and a period of five decades in the analysis. Table 2 indicates the dimensions of Home Economics according to generational location.

All three generations place a strong emphasis on Home Economics as an arena for everyday living. Notable here is the increased diversity in the statements provided by representatives of Generation X. For the generation in mid-adulthood, entering more powerful positions within the profession, Home Economics is seen in a more holistic way than it is seen by Baby Boomers, who exhibit a transfer of values and carry experiences of responsibility thus far. This reflects the traits of the Generation X cohort who, in contrast, assert their own individualistic values in an effort to build on their beliefs of variety and freedom. Generation X is currently at the reactive stage of the generational cycle. It is important to recognise that statements of this generation displayed a sense of achievement, an overprotective attitude, and pride about their profession: "It is a great hope for sustainability, to provide us with the best quality of everyday life we can get, for our families, communities and countries." This is reflective of the stage in life at which this generation is situated.

Table 2: Dimensions of Home Economics by generational location

Dimension / Area of practice	Baby Boomers born 1943–1960 (***n***=18)		Generation X born 1961–1981 (***n***=41)		Generation Y born 1982–2003 (***n***=35)	
Academic discipline	3	(16.7%)	7	(17.1%)	3	(8.6%)
Arena for everyday living	8	(44.4%)	13	(13.7%)	19	(54.3%)
Curriculum area	4	(22.2%)	7	(17.1%)	4	(11.4%)
Policy arena	0	(0%)	7	(17.1%)	0	(0%)
Home Economics as profession	2	(11.1%)	4	(9.7%)	6	(17.1%)
Other	1	(5.6%)	3	(7.3%)	3	(8.6%)

The decrease in the focus on Home Economics as an academic discipline among the youngest Generation Y and the general declining trend on the focus of Home Economics as a curriculum area may perhaps reflect the shift of the field beyond academic spheres towards commercial and industrial areas. Generation Y members are characterised as focussing on fun lifestyles as a belief system, and display elements of uncertainty, flexible loyalty, and short-term desires. This laissez-faire attitude, in addition to the fact that Generation Y members have developed through an unstructured training/educational environment (in comparison to their Baby Boomer and Generation X predecessors), offers an explanation for the move away from the institutional perspective of Home Economics purely as an academic sphere. Generation Y, the digital natives, are the millennial generation—thus witnessing a wider world, an international arena in which they are players. This is further identified through the focus on networks, communication, and wider global partnerships, that is:

> "The ability to work as part of a supportive network to create a positive living environment."
>
> "It is about involving people in examining their own conditions and beliefs and the ability to deal with the ever changing situations within the micro and macro environment."
>
> "Home Economics is one subject that can be brought outside the classroom and applied to everyday life."

Spatial reflections on Home Economics

In addition to generational considerations, it is interesting to highlight possible differences between the regions of IFHE. The International Federation for Home Economics is divided into five different regions, according to the respective continents or spatial areas. The regional division was completed according to the IFHE regional structure. The regional variation of the individual statements regarding the primary dimension of Home Economics is indicated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Dimensions of Home Economics according to region

Dimension / Area of practice	Africa (***n***=8)		Americas (***n***=7)		Asia (***n***=22)		Europe (***n***=54)		Pacific (***n***=3)	
Academic discipline	2	(25%)	0	(0%)	7	(31.9%)	3	(5.6%)	1	(33.3%)
Arena for everyday living	4	(50%)	4	(57.1%)	5	(22.7%)	27	(50%)	0	(0%)
Curriculum area	1	(12.5%)	1	(14.3%)	6	(27.3%)	7	(13%)	0	(0%)
Policy arena	0	(0%)	1	(14.3%)	1	(4.5%)	4	(7.4%)	1	(33.3%)
Home Economics as profession	1	(12.5%)	1	(14.3%)	1	(4.5%)	9	(16.7%)	0	(0%)
Other	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	2	(9.1%)	7	(7.4%)	1	(33.3%)

Most of the contributors came from the Asian and the European region; there was a limited number of statements from the regions Africa, Americas, and Pacific. Thus, the results of the regional differentiations that can be derived from the statements are concentrated on the European and the Asian region. However, it is interesting to notice that in Asia, emphasis was placed on Home Economics as an academic discipline whereas for Africa, Americas, and Europe the main emphasis was on Home Economics as an arena for everyday living.

The results indicated in the table above offer suggestions on how the opinions stated in LTL reflect the meaning of the field of Home Economics for professionals in the distinct regions. For instance, Kuramoto (2008, p. 22) cites as a representative of the Asian region, citing the Japanese Society of Home Economics: “Home Economics is an integrated science, a practical science centring around family life.” This coincides with the high percentage (31.9%) of Asian statements corresponding to the dimension of Home Economics as an academic discipline. This high percentage could be considered as reflective of the general educational culture that differs by region. Asia is regarded generally as a region with high academic emphasis, in contrast to countries in other regions. The cultural importance of education is highlighted as being fundamental to success in countries such as Japan, in contrast to America where emphasis on educational value is not depicted as the sole determinant of success or failure ("Educational systems of Japan and the US," 2009). Another issue raised and integrated with this example is the role of regional organisations and their influence on the perception of Home Economics. It can be argued that in Europe, for instance, Home Economics professionals are more concerned with practices of everyday life, whereas Asian Home Economists refer to academic aspects of the profession. The focus on different dimensions of Home Economics is discussed in more depth in the subsequent sections.

Home Economics as an academic discipline

The first dimension of Home Economics as stated in the HE21C is as an academic discipline "to educate new scholars, to conduct research and to create new knowledge and ways of thinking for professionals and for society" (IFHE, 2008, p. 6). The statements of LTL affiliated to this dimension of Home Economics as an academic discipline referred to *knowledge based profession, integrated discipline, field of study and profession, integrated and practical science*, and *scientific educational system*. Moreover the statements that primarily categorised Home Economics as an academic discipline often referred to the dimension of Home Economics as an arena of everyday living. Therefore, it is often emphasised that Home Economics as an academic discipline is mainly concerned with research drawing from and feeding into the everyday life of individuals, consumers, families and communities. Hence, the aspect of quality of life is important, as academic research creates knowledge about everyday life and helps to clarify challenges and problems. These interdependencies also relate to the other categories of curriculum area and developing policy, as will be shown in the following parts of the analysis.

Home Economics as arena of everyday living

Home Economics "as an arena for everyday living in households, families and communities for developing human growth potential and human necessities or basic needs to be met" (IFHE, 2008, p. 6) was the dimension/area of practice mentioned most often. Given that the other dimensions are strongly associated with the everyday life dimension, special importance can be assumed. This area is therefore rather broad with a wide variety of declarations made in the statements. Some aspects that particularly stand out include: *well-being, quality of life, a happy life,* and *a positive living environment.* However, tasks and skills are also identified as being important in the professional environment of Home Economists in the area of practice of everyday life. For example: "It is not only to do with cleaning, cooking, and laundry" but moreover "understanding, creating, and managing economic and human resources." Tasks and skills are also strongly associated with the following dimension: Home Economics as a curriculum area.

Home Economics as a curriculum area

HE21C describes Home Economics "as a curriculum area that facilitates students to discover and further develop their own resources and capabilities to be used in their personal life, by directing their professional decisions and actions or preparing them for life." (IFHE, 2008, p. 6). In this analysis, statements grouped into this category were those shown to highlight education, teaching, and/or the application of knowledge and skills. As mentioned previously, Home Economics as a subject or teaching area is closely related to everyday life. Statements supporting this approach focus on practicalities and applications of the taught subject, dealing with life-skills such as coordination, balance, self-sufficiency, and management:

"Home Economics is about learning and applying the knowledge and skills" and "the best opportunity that a person has to learn the life-skills." It is seen by individuals as a[n] "(essential) subject" providing "education" and "manual training" or simply "preparation for everybody's life." The spread of generational responses categorised in this way indicate that a higher proportion of Baby Boomers used these expressions in their statements, reinforcing the attention this generation places on institutional leadership. Asian statements place emphasis on the curriculum arena, mirroring the focus on academic issues in the Asian region as previously discussed.

Home Economics as a societal arena to influence and develop policy

In the final dimension, Home Economics is portrayed "as a societal arena to influence and develop policy to advocate for individuals, families and communities to achieve empowerment and wellbeing, to utilise transformative practices, and to facilitate sustainable futures." (IFHE, 2008, p. 6). Although of importance for the profession, this dimension was less often found in the LTL statement of individuals than were other dimension. This could be considered surprising given the high number of Generation Y respondents, whom it can be assumed have grown up in a digital, globally aware society. However, this category presents an area of the profession that is fairly underdeveloped and underutilised, and it cannot be assumed that Generation Y individuals are any more qualified for policy formation and development than their predecessors. All statements that were categorised in this group were from Generation X. It is reasonable to suggest therefore that these statements reflect an unmet need in the profession that the *nomadic, depressed generation* focus on as important. This raises issues as to whether the statements reflect not only what Home Economics means to individuals, but what the participants aspire it to be. Phrases used by individuals who identified the meaning of Home Economics primarily around this dimension included "advocate" or "empower citizens", "work towards public policies" or addressing "communities" and "contribute to society" to raise the issue of an "ability to cope and adapt sustainably to changing environments."

Discussion

The results of the investigation show how the statements of individual Home Economists relate to HE21C. It is interesting to see the centricity of everyday life and life skills above all other dimensions of Home Economics in the statements provided by Home Economists from all over the world. Individuals define the meaning of Home Economics through its focus on effective practice, which is underpinned by a strong knowledge base. Hence, one individual statement comes to the conclusion that Home Economics "provides a great link between theory and practice. It encompasses all disciplines and touches all aspects of our life. It is truly the best education anyone can receive. It has a transformative function." (Baby Boomer, Asia).

In the LTL statements, Home Economists stress the impact of the profession and the power it gives to an individual to work for the best of consumers, families, communities, and the society. However, one of the key points to be highlighted as a result of this research is that Home Economics and its meaning is not easily defined. The heterogeneity of the statements reflects the diversity of Home Economics. It also perhaps indicates that although the HE21C identifies the key dimensions of the field by way of building a concise definition, in reality it is not possible to fully recognise all the dimensions that exist. Regional variations, societal norms, and cultural differences all influence how Home Economics is taught, considered, and ultimately used by individual professionals across the world. The limited regional and generational analysis conducted here indicates that the profession is seen differently according to the respondent's location or age. These results strongly support the recommendation given by Dewhurst and Pendergast (2008) on conducting further research on how Home Economics is seen by different groups and thereby enhancing our ability to work towards commonly agreed goals. The challenge of diversity is, on the other hand, one of the biggest strengths of Home Economics.

The present analysis suggests that the Home Economics profession can be depicted as having four dimensions that are complementary; they reinforce each other as well as act alone. Since Home Economics is deeply rooted in the everyday living of all individuals, Home Economists aim at supporting individuals and families in their everyday life within their communities. The work of professional Home Economists is carried out at the level of individuals, families, and communities but similarly at the wider societal arena where policies, products, and services for individuals and families are continually being developed. These processes are mediated through the academic discipline that provides the theoretical framework for the professional activity within Home Economics at micro and macro levels of the society. The curriculum area links the academic knowledge to the lives of individuals, thus aiming at achieving an optimal and sustainable way of life.

Although this study was carried out with the highest accuracy, limitations are not absent due to the nature of research. As mentioned in the methodology section, the data is naturally occurring and throughout the analysis the authors were aware that the statements have been produced with the intent of public display. In addition, it is reasonable to surmise that the statements may, perhaps unconsciously or without intent, represent not only what Home Economics *is* and what it means but also what it *was* or *might be* in the future. It is also reasonable to suggest that given the opportunity to present personal approaches and ideas about the subject and profession, that participants also could have displayed an element of what Home Economics *could* or *should be* in the future. These can be understood as constraints of this study: It appears impossible to track the evolvement of such statements.

Moreover, the process of simplification that was applied to the categorisation of the LTL statements, that is, the process of reducing the statements into organised units, can also be seen as a limitation: Pre-designed categories (the dimensions of Home Economics as given in HE21C) as a coding scheme may have limited the outcome of the analysis. On the one hand, categories help to organise the statements, but on the other hand these categories can deflect attention away from uncategorised issues (Silverman, 2006; Wolff, 2007). However, with the intent to align the statements of LTL with HE21C, and being aware of the constraint, the dimension of *profession* was included, as it occurred in the statements.

Conclusion

The aim of this investigation was to analyse how individual voices fit in accordance with collaboratively produced ideas on the nature, role, and impact of the Home Economics profession presented in HE21C. After all, individual Home Economists are fundamental in creating the image of the field and the profession in their respective contexts. Home Economics is discussed in a variety of contexts at all levels: in the daily life of families, educational settings, civil society, and academics. It is a major challenge for IFHE and other Home Economics organisations to provide individuals with tools to argue for the central role of Home Economics in our societies at present and in the future. The HE21C can become a powerful tool if spread and used widely by professional organisations and individuals representing the profession. The Linking the Loop project will continue to challenge Home Economists to provide their individual views on the field, and to consider their work in light of what they do and what they strive to achieve, thereby providing IFHE with the opportunity to see how Home Economists continuously redefine and realise the profession in different parts of the world.

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Factors associated with the increase in the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections

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Abstract

This study was based in Swaziland. An interview guide was used to collect data. Respondents comprised of 60 pregnant women in the clinic. Data was collected and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. It was revealed that there is a need to educate people about all types of STIs as well as their symptoms. Excess alcohol consumption, multiple sexual partners, rape, poverty, unemployment, failure to treat a partner, and not being treated when infected were the leading factor that increased the transmission of STIs.

Introduction

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections that can be transferred from one person to another through sexual contact. Historically, the terminology used to describe infections and diseases acquired through sexual contact has signified the social stigma attached to these infections. For example, until the 1970s STIs (syphilis in particular) were known as venereal diseases, a term derived from the name of the goddess of love, Venus, and the Latin word for desire. As the term became laden with moral judgments, and as medical and public health professionals began to see the need for a more accurate technical description, the term STD (sexually transmitted disease) became standard (Berman & Workowski, 2004). STIs pose one of the greatest threats and challenges to public health in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1993 the World Bank ranked STIs, excluding HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), as the second most important cause of healthy life lost in women aged between 15 and 44 years (World Bank, 2000). As it does with much infectious disease, Africa bears the greatest burden of STIs. The annual incidence of curable STIs in 15 to 59-year-olds in sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to be between 11% and 35%. However, in the United States of America, western Europe, and Australia, the incidence ranges between 1% and 4%; in parts of the developed world, such as Scandinavia, certain STIs have been eliminated; and in other developed areas, the prevalence and incidence of these infections are low and declining (Adler, Foster, Grosskurth, Richens, & Slavin, 1998; Kamwendo, Forslin, & Danielsson, 1996; Christenson & Stillstrom, 1995). The major primary manifestations of STIs throughout the world include urethritis in men, and cervicitis and vaginitis in women. With infections of the lower reproductive tract, women can experience abnormal vaginal discharge, a burning feeling with urination, abnormal vaginal bleeding, and genital pain and itching (Carel, 2000). Currently, the number of people infected with STIs is increasing and certain factors appear to increase the transmission of the infections. Those most at risk for contracting STIs are people who have unprotected sex, that is, sex without using a latex or polyurethane condom; those who have multiple partners; and those whose sex partners include intravenous drug users who share needles. Studies show that Americans between the ages of 16 and 24 are at greater risk for acquiring STIs than are older adults because younger people are more likely to have multiple sexual partners rather than a single, long-term relationship. Additionally, young people may be more likely to have unprotected sex and they may find it difficult to tell their sexual partners they are infected with an STI. Young people may also be embarrassed or unable to seek treatment for STIs. This means that they are not only more likely to pass the disease to other young people; they also have a greater risk of suffering the long-term consequences of untreated STIs (Cohen, 2001).

The crash of the STIs pandemic

STIs are significant because their consequence on the world goes well beyond their ability to cause acute symptoms such as genital discharges or ulcers. The health consequences of STIs affect women excessively and cause death to unborn children, infertility, ectopic pregnancies, chronic pain, and cancer. In the African region, 50% of infertility cases among women are considered to be due to tubal infection, which is usually caused by gonorrhoea or chlamydia (Cates, Farley, & Rowe, 1996). The repercussions of infertility for a woman are often severe and may result in domestic violence and social ostracism. Cancer of the cervix is the most common cancer among women in the African region and causes more deaths than any other cancer (Chokunonga et al., 2000). In addition to the personal and social consequences of STIs, there is a substantial economic cost. The World Bank estimates that the number of days of productivity lost due to HIV, syphilis, and chlamydia infection almost equals that claimed by malaria and measles (World Bank, 2000). Commonly reported STIs among sexually active adolescent girls both with and without lower genital tract symptoms include trachomatis (reported in 10 to 25% of sexually active adolescent girls), gonorrhoea (3 to 18 %), syphilis (0 to 3%), trichomonas vaginals (8 to 16%), and herpes simplex virus (2 to 12%). Among sexually active adolescent boys with no symptoms of urethritis, commonly reported STIs include trachomatis (9 to 11%) and gonorrhoea (2 to 3%). As early as 1996, WHO estimated that more than one million people were being infected daily. About 60% of infections occur in young people less than 25 years of age, and 30% of this age group is less than 20 years. STIs occur more frequently in girls than boys by a ratio of nearly 2:1 (Anonymous).

The association between HIV and STIs

The first evidence for the relationship between HIV and STIs came from epidemiological studies that showed a higher prevalence of HIV among individuals who had a history of STIs (Plummer, Simonsen, Cemeron, & Ndiya, 1991). Subsequent data from biological studies show that the shedding of HIV into genital fluids is increased both from genital ulcers and from the inflammatory process associated with non-ulcerative STIs (Hoffman, Royce, Cohen, & Kazembe, 1997). Supporting this finding is that successful treatment of an STI lowers the HIV concentrations in seminal fluid (Ghys, Fransen, Diallo, & Ettiegne-Traore, 1997). Other studies indicate that STIs not only make people more infective but women with chlamydia infection or gonorrhoea may also be more susceptible to acquiring HIV. This is because they have a disproportionate increase in CD4 cells in the endocervix and it is this cell line that is the target for HIV infection (Levine, Pope, & Bhoomkar, 1994).

STIs and HIV/AIDS in Swaziland

Swaziland has one of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in Africa, with estimates ranging from 33% to over 36% of the adult population with either HIV infection or AIDS (VAC, 2008). Identified significant risk factors include high population mobility, high risk heterosexual contact with both multiple partners and commercial sex workers, and a high incidence of STIs (National Emergency Response Committee, 2006), and these factors are prevalent in Swaziland.

Activities to strengthen the control of STIs have been ongoing in Swaziland for more than a decade; but until 2003 no accurate data existed on trends in the prevalence of STIs (National Emergency Response Committee, 2004). The HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care (HAPAC) project therefore supported in 2003, with assistance from the Sexually Transmitted Infections Reference Center in Johannesburg, South Africa, a first round of biennial surveillance of the prevalence of the major STI in Swaziland. Data on STIs in Swaziland were scarce at the start of the HAPAC program in 2002. The HAPAC program therefore proposed to conduct biennial sentinel surveillance of the major STI in Swaziland among antenatal clients, with assistance from the …. A first round in 2003 showed that the prevalence in Swaziland of STIs, such as gonorrhoea, chlamydia infection, syphilis, and trichomoniasis, and other reproductive tract infections, such as bacterial vaginosis and candida, continues to be among the highest in the world. In response, STI care activities were further strengthened and a second surveillance round was held in 2005. Since the start of the HIV pandemic, multiple interventions have been initiated in Swaziland for the prevention of STIs (Joint National AIDS Programme (UNAIDS), 2007).

A World Health Organization (WHO) expert committee meeting in 2006 concurred that it is biologically plausible for all STD pathogens that cause genital ulcers or inflammation to be a factor in increased infectiousness or susceptibility to HIV (WHO, 2006). Other STIs, such as gonorrhoea and chlamydial and trichomonal infections may also enhance susceptibility (Abdool & Abdool, 2000). Trichomoniasis may be a far greater risk than genital ulcer disease because of its extensive prevalence in many parts of the developing world (Soderlund, Zwi, Kinghorn, & Gray, 2000). The prevalence of STIs, and thus the pattern of disease, varies greatly between world regions and within countries. In Western countries, at present, the herpes simplex virus (HSV) is the most common cause of genital ulcer disease (GUD); in many developing countries, syphilis and gonorrhoea appear to be the most common causes (Caldwell, Caldwell, & Orubuloye, 1998). Infection rates are approximate since facilities for testing and treatment are scarce in developing countries.

In response to the increasing HIV/AIDS crisis in Swaziland, the European Commission and the Government of Swaziland agreed on a 3-year HAPAC Programme to address the major problem identified by the Government of Swaziland. The problem is the high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) increasing the risk for HIV infection (Government of Swaziland, 2007). According to the nursing sister in charge of the Out Patient Department (OPD) at the Mbabane Government Hospital they attend to over 200 cases of STIs on a daily basis. That equates more than 73,000 patients a year. There is also a shortage of staff, the committee was informed that there was only one nurse specializing in the treatment of STIs and, furthermore, the department has to attend to between 150 and 200 patients a day and 60 in the evenings.

Factors associated with the transmission of STIs

Factors that could be contributing to the continuous rise of STIs are that many people who have been infected remain unaware of their infection, many people who are aware of their infection do not seek care, and many of those who seek care are wrongly diagnosed or treated. Many do not complete the course of treatment or are not cured for other reasons, such as the patient having a low resistance to infection or the illness being resistant to treatment (Muwanga, 2007).

Prostitutes tend to have large numbers of sexual partners; prostitution without the use of safer sex precautions has always been associated with the spread of STIs. However, STIs are transmitted in any form of sexual relationship, so it important that all members of the community who are engaged in sexual relationships use safer sex precautions, regardless of the nature of their relationships (Piot, Kapita, Ngugi, & Mann, 2004). The greatest contributor to STI transmission was found to be alcohol, because when people are drunk they fail to control themselves and have unprotected sex (Swaziland Government: Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, 2006). Poverty is another factor that contributes to STI transmission. Men sexually abuse women in exchange for food and money. The other contributing factor is the country's lack of employment, which especially affects women; they engage in prostitution as a way to earn a living. Another factor that contributed is the failure to spread messages regarding STIs countrywide (Maruping, 2007).

According to Van Vrenken (2004), some factors that increase a person's chances of getting STIs are:

- Sexual activity at a young age. The younger a person starts having sex, the greater are his or her chances of becoming infected with an STI.
- Many sex partners. People who have sexual contact — not just intercourse, but any form of intimate activity — with many different partners are more at risk than those who stay with the same partner.
- Unprotected sex. Latex condoms are the only form of birth control that lessens one's risk of contracting an STI. Spermicides, diaphragms, and other birth control methods may help prevent pregnancy, but they do not protect a person against STIs.

United Development Programmes (UNDP, 2008) observed that although 50–80% of all HIV-infected women have only one male sexual partner, society's tolerance towards male promiscuity puts all women at risk. Therefore Swaziland National AIDS Programme (SNAP) is convinced that men hold the key to slow the spread of STIs among all the people of Swaziland (UNDP, 2008).

Cases of STIs are increasing, even though the use of condoms has increased since the onset of the AIDS epidemic. Public health officials believe that many factors are responsible for the increase in STIs, among them trends in sexual behaviour. In the last several decades, the age at which people have sex for the first time has shifted downward, while the average number of partners with whom a person has sex during his or her lifetime has increased. Together, these trends increase the risk of exposure to an STI (United Nations, 1998).

Transmission of STIs

STIs are transmitted by infectious agents—microscopic bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi, and single-celled organisms called protozoa—that thrive in warm, moist environments in the body, such as the genital area, mouth, and throat. Most STIs spread during sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal), but other forms of sexual contact, such as oral sex, can also spread disease (Department of Health, 2007).

Some STIs are transmitted in ways other than by sexual contact. Certain viral STIs, such as AIDS and some types of hepatitis, may be transmitted by contact with infected blood. For instance, viral STIs may pass between people who share infected needles, and a person can become infected from a transfusion of infected blood. Some STIs may pass from an infected mother to her child. Infection may occur before birth, when the infectious agent crosses the placenta (the organ in a pregnant woman's uterus that links the blood supplies of mother and baby) and enters the baby's bloodstream. Infection also may occur during childbirth, as the baby passes through the birth canal, or after birth, when the baby consumes infected breast milk. STIs cannot be transmitted through shaking hands or other casual contact, or through contact with inanimate objects such as clothing or toilet seats (The International Working Group on Vaginal Microbicides, 1996).

Depending on the STI, a person may still be able to spread the infection if no signs of disease are present. For example, a person is much more likely to spread herpes infection when blisters are present than when they are absent. However, a person can spread HIV infection at anytime if she/he has not developed symptoms of AIDS (International Working Group on Vaginal Microbicides, 1996).

Viewing all these problems the overall purpose of the study was to determine the factors associated with the transmission of sexually transmitted infections. Thus, the objectives of the study were: to identify the various types of STIs in Swaziland; to discover the knowledge of people about STIs; to determine the people's safe sex practices; to recognise the factors increasing the risk of transmission of STIs; and to suggest ways of preventing STIs.

Methods

The study was descriptive in nature, investigating the factors associated with the transmission of STIs. The target population of the study was pregnant women from Luyengo clinic, Swaziland. The sample consisted of 60 pregnant women of Luyengo, who were recruited between January and March 2007. The subjects were selected using purposive method of sampling due to the sensitive nature of the study. An interview schedule was developed from relevant literature. The purpose of the study was explained to the subjects, who were reassured that their information would be confidential. A face-to-face interview was used to collect data. As stated by McLead (1990), interviews are well suited to the African environment, because African people still do not feel free to talk about themselves, and need encouragement to talk about themselves and interviews facilitate this. The data was collected over a period of three months from January to March 2007. The SPSS program was used to obtain descriptive statistics, namely frequencies and percentages, for the interview items relating to each objective.

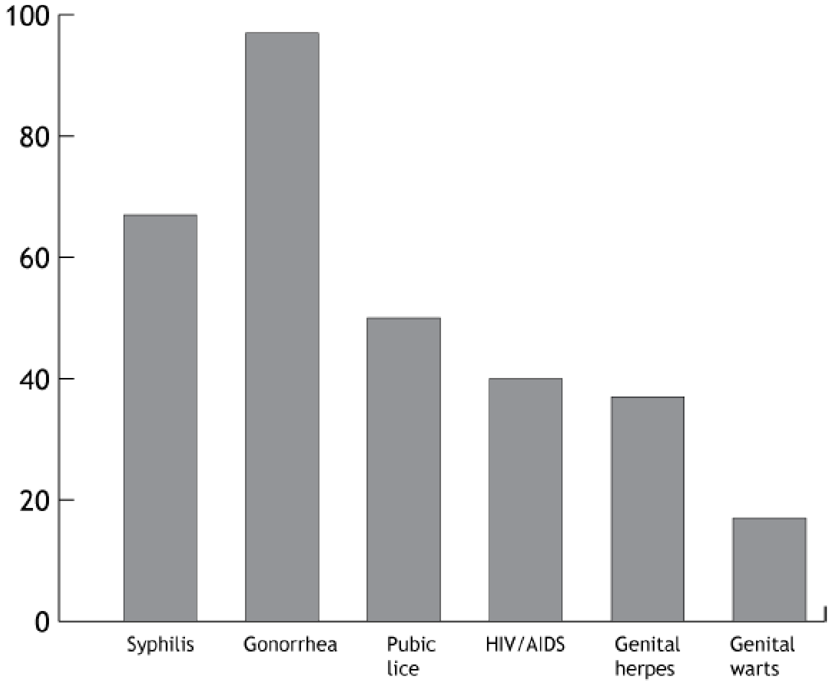
Results

The aim of the study was to determine the factors associated with the increase in the transmission of STIs. The data collected related to participants' knowledge about STIs, safe sex practices, factors increasing the transmission of STIs and the participants' demographic characteristics. The findings will be useful to the Ministry of Health, non-government organisations (NGOs), and other projects that deal with issues of STIs and HIV/AIDS.

Common types of STIs

Figure 1 indicates that the majority of the respondents know about gonorrhoea, since 97% named it as a common type of STI. The other common types of STIs that were identified by the respondents include syphilis (identified by 67% of respondents), pubic lice (50%), HIV/AIDS (40%), genital herpes (37%), and genital warts (17%). Table 1 shows that the symptom most commonly identified by respondents as potentially indicating the presence of an STI was yellow discharge with a bad smell (identified by 63% of respondents), while lower abdominal pain was named by 3% of respondents.

Figure 1: Common types of sexually transmitted infections known by respondents.



Factors that make women more vulnerable to STIs

Figure 2 reflects that 63% of the women believed that women are vulnerable to STIs because women retain semen within their body after sexual intercourse, which increases the risk of infection. The other factors that were named were that some women exchange sex for material (17%) and it is impossible for most women to force their men to use condoms.

Figure 2: Respondents' beliefs about factors that make women more vulnerable to STIs

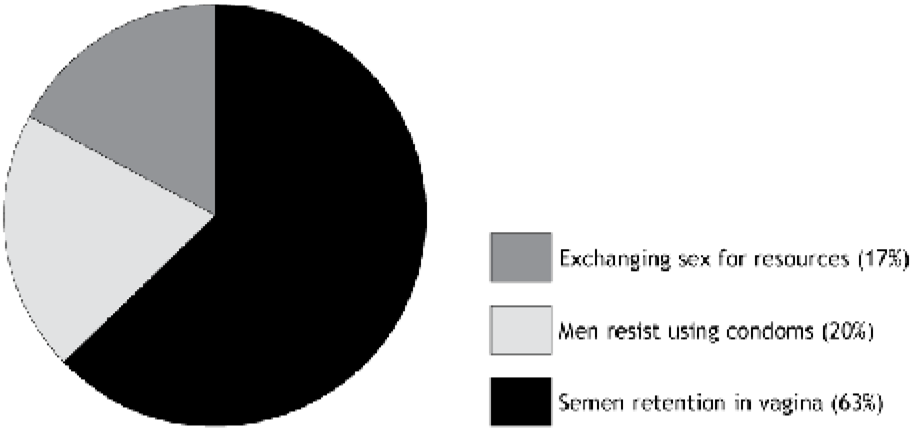


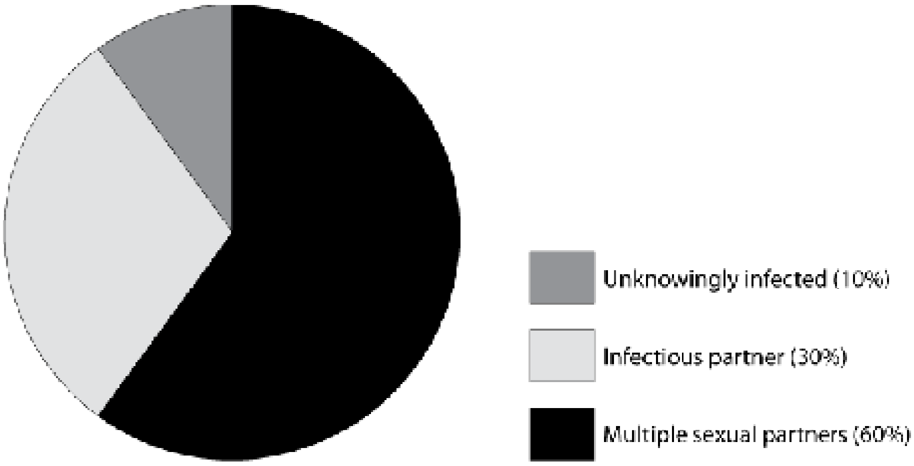
Table 1: Symptoms related to STIs

Symptoms	*n*	Frequency	Percent
Yellow smelling discharge	60	38	63
Painless blisters	60	32	53
Painful rash	60	14	23
Vaginal itching	60	14	23
Genital sores	60	12	20
Stomach pains	60	10	17
Low grade fever	60	6	10
Symptom less	60	6	10
Heart problems	60	6	10
Blindness	60	4	7
Lower abdominal pains	60	2	3

How people are infected

Figure 3 shows that 60% of the respondents believed that nowadays most people have more than one sexual partner, and that if a person can be faithful to his or her partner the rate of STIs may decline. Ten percent of respondents believed that some people may not be aware they are infected and continue to be involved in unprotected sex not knowing they are spreading infections, since some of the STIs are symptomless or have a delayed onset of symptoms.

Figure 3: Respondents' beliefs about factors that how STIs are transmitted



The most appropriate place for treatment of STIs

The participants were asked as to indicate what they thought was the best place for treatment of sexually transmitted infections. The result indicates that the majority (93%), of respondents identified doctors and nurses as the best people for treating these infections. These participants said that a place where one can find a doctor or nurse, such as a hospital or clinic, is a place to go when infected, because the staff conduct blood tests and prescribe proper medication. However, 7% of the respondents preferred traditional healers.

People diagnosed with sexually transmitted infections

It was revealed that 67% of the pregnant women were diagnosed with sexually transmitted infections and were undergoing treatment, and some were already treated. The remainder were found to be uninfected.

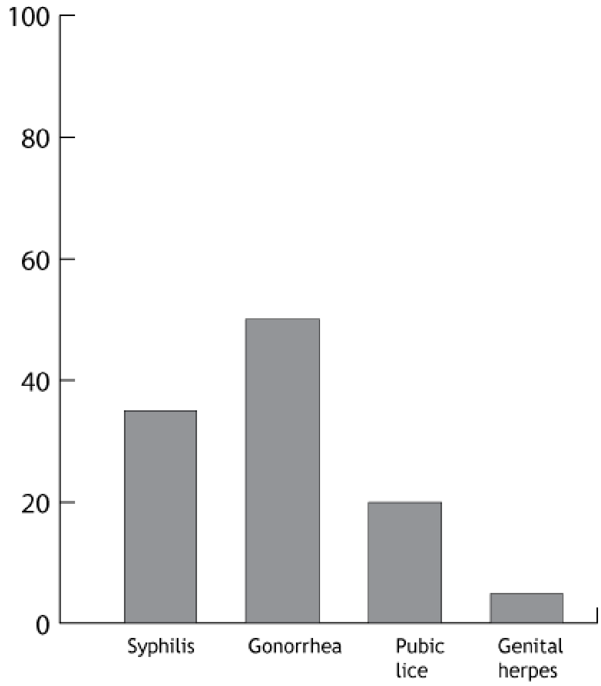
How often were the people infected?

The study indicates that out of those that were infected 70% were infected once and 30% were infected more than once. This may be because the partner did not get treated.

Types of STIs diagnosed

Of those who were infected, 50% were infected with gonorrhoea, 35% with syphilis, 20% with pubic lice, and 5% with genital herpes. This information is shown clearly in Figure 4.

Figure 4: The number of STIs diagnosed



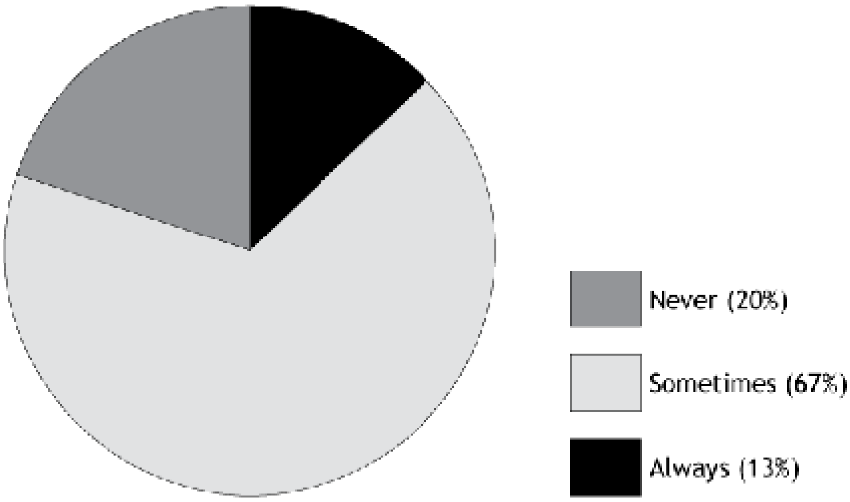
Where the people were treated

Of those people who were diagnosed, 95% were treated in the clinic, and 5% were treated both in the clinic and by traditional healers because they believed that the medication prescribed by the nurse needed to be supplemented with traditional medicine. None was treated at a pharmacy.

Use of a condom

Figure 5 shows how often the participants use condoms. Sixty-seven percent did not use a condom every time they were involved in a sexual activity, and most of them used it not to prevent STIs, but as a contraceptive. Another 13% of the people always used a condom before the pregnancy, and 20% of the women did not use a condom at all.

Figure 5: Use of condom by respondents



Factors increasing the risk of transmission of STIs

Table 2 indicates the factors that were identified as those responsible for increasing the rate of transmission of STIs. Excess alcohol consumption was the most commonly identified factor (identified by 80% of respondents), and the sexual behaviours of truck drivers were identified by 3% of respondents. The other factors are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Factors increasing the risk of transmission of STIs

Factors	*n*	Frequency	Percent
Excess alcohol consumption	60	48	80
Multiple partners	60	32	53
Drug abuse	60	16	27
Uneducated about STIs	60	16	27
Rape	60	14	23
Poverty	60	14	23
Unemployment	60	12	20
Prostitution	60	10	17
People want to infect others intentionally	60	10	17
Failure to treat partner	60	6	10
Polygamy	60	6	10
Misunderstandings in relationships	60	6	10
Men want enjoyment	60	4	7
Fear to seek treatment	60	4	7
Truck drivers	60	2	3

Discussion

The findings showed that the STI that was most commonly identified by the women was gonorrhoea (97%), followed by syphilis. The most common symptoms identified with STIs was yellow discharge with a bad smell which is a symptom of gonorrhoea. This is consistent with Morar and Ramjee's (2000) statement that the most common STIs are gonorrhoea and syphilis. These researchers also stated that STIs have been well known for hundreds of years and the English language has short words for most of the common STIs: the "pox" (syphilis) and the "clap" (gonorrhoea). Although completely preventable in theory, congenital syphilis rates in Africa have been as high as 4,500 per 100,000 live births in Ethiopia and 1,000 per 100,000 in Zambia. About one third of these infections result in abortion and another third leave the child permanently incapacitated (Dallabetta, Laga, & Lamptey, 2006).

Most women believed that women are more vulnerable than men to STIs because the vagina receives semen during sexual intercourse and it stays within their bodies for some time after intercourse, and infections carried by fluids can infect the woman. The findings were in line with Whiteside, Hickey, Ngcobo, and Tomlinson's (2004) statement that biological and socioeconomic factors raise the vulnerability of women to STIs and HIV. The fact that semen stays in a woman's body after the sexual activity tends to increase the risk of infection. Social factors are man-made and are easier to manipulate. Females have a weak position, compared to males, and this power imbalance is maintained by sociocultural practices.

Forty percent of the respondents said that the rate of STI transmission has increased with time, as people have multiple sexual partners; only 10% attributed the increasing rates of transmission to people having unprotected sex as a result of not knowing they are infected, since some infections are, at times, asymptomatic; further, participants mentioned that some people may engage in sexual activity in the dark and are thus unable to see the condition of their partner's genitals. These results are consistent with Bailey et al.'s (2007) statement that numerous STIs are directly spread by sexual behaviour, especially by unprotected sex or multiple sexual partners. The transmission occurs through the transfer of fluids, including saliva, and close physical contact of infectious regions. Unsafe sexual behaviour is also associated with other risk factors such as alcohol or drug abuse (D'Costa, Plummer, & Bowner, 1985).

The respondents agreed that the hospital is the best place for treatment of STIs, as hospital treatment involves blood tests and the prescribing of medication by well educated doctors and nurses. The findings showed that 93% preferred to be treated in the hospital, and 7% preferred traditional healers as a result of having experienced traditional healing throughout their lives, and thus having a belief in this form of treatment. No participants identified pharmacies as an appropriate place of treatment, as no tests are conducted, and medication is prescribed only on the basis of the client's description of the problem. According to the Nursing Sister in charge of the Out Patient Department at the Mbabane Government hospital, the hospital staff attend to over 200 cases of STIs on daily basis (United Development Programs, 2002).

Women presenting to a clinic or hospital to report pregnancy undergo tests to determine their health status and are treated for STIs if required. The results showed that 63% of the women were diagnosed with STIs. Of those diagnosed with STIs, 30% had been infected more than once. One out of five pregnant women has a STI and one out of four patients who have a STI carries HIV. The STI that was most commonly diagnosed among the respondents was Gonorrhoea (diagnosed among 50% of respondents). The other STIs that were diagnosed included syphilis, pubic lice, and herpes (Kingdom of Swaziland, 2005).

The results also show that 70% of the women who were infected became infected through unprotected sex with their partners who had engaged in sexual activity with other people. The results of the study were in line with health care professionals' suggestion that condom use is the most reliable way of decreasing the risk of contracting STIs during sexual activity, but safer sex should by no means be considered an absolute safe guard (Lawson & Latre, 2002).

Twenty-five percent of participants indicated that they were infected with STIs through toilets seats. This result is consistent with findings that some infections, including pubic lice, can be contracted other than through sexual intercourse, For example, according to Poles (year), transmission of STIs can occur through nonsexual direct skin contact. Other participants were infected from a single sexual experience with people they did not know. These participants stated that they consume alcohol; this consumption may have contributed to these participants' sexual behaviour, as it has been stated that alcohol intoxication may reduces one's commitment to safe sex practices (Shain, Piper, & Newton, 1999).

The majority of the participants were treated in the clinic or hospital. The results showed that a nurse or doctor treated 95%, while 5% were treated both at the clinic and traditional healers. These findings are in accordance with results of a national survey, which showed that some clients have agreed to be attended to by traditional healers (Mdluli, 2002).

Practices of the people towards safe sex

Condom use is increasing but some people do not use a condom every time they have sexual intercourse. The findings showed that only 13% of the women always used a condom before they fell pregnant; 67% only sometimes used a condom during sexual activity; and 20% never used a condom. As part of their culture, Swazi women believe that decisions regarding condom use belong to the male, because he is the head of the family.

Factors increasing the risk of transmission of STIs

Several factors were associated with the transmission of STIs. These were rape, misunderstandings in relationships, men's reluctance to use condoms, excess alcohol consumption, truck drivers, prostitution, lack of education regarding STIs, drug abuse, intentional transmission, having multiple partners, polygamy, homosexuality, poverty, fear of seeking treatment, and a partner's failure to obtain treatment. Respondents believed that addressing these factors may decrease the rate of STI transmission.

The findings reflect that 80% of STI transmission is due to excess alcohol consumption. Specifically, when people are intoxicated they forget about the use of a condom. The results were consistent with Mbizvo, Kasule, and Gupta's (1997) report that alcohol contributes to the rate of STI transmission due to the people's lack of control when intoxicated. Mbivo et al. also stated that poverty is another factor that contributes to STI statistics because women may be coerced into sexual activity by men in return for food and money. Due to lack of employment, some women engage in prostitution as a way to earn a living; this study suggests that prostitution was a factor that increased the rate of STI transmission (Hornik, McDivit, & Yoder, 1999). This study showed that 23% believed poverty to be a factor that increases the rate of STI transmission (Mbizvo et al., 1997). According to Bermans and Workowski (2004), prostitutes tend to have large numbers of sexual partners; prostitution without the use of safer sex precautions has often been associated with the spread of STIs. According to Hornik et al., Non Government Organizations fail to spread the messages about STIs, and the findings showed that 27% of people are not educated about STIs. Overall the study showed that people get infected through having unprotected sex with multiple partners. If alcohol consumption can be decreased the rate of STI transmission may also decline, because studies have shown that alcohol is the leading factor in the risk of transmission of STIs.

Conclusion

Improved treatment of STIs will lower HIV incidence by about 40%. Pregnant women lack knowledge on types of STIs, and most of them do not consider HIV/AIDS as STIs. Only common types of STIs, such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, pubic lice, genital warts, and genital herpes, are known among respondents. Thus, a change in women's knowledge and behaviour is necessary. However, women alone do not carry the responsibility for prevention of STI transmission. Men, in their political and economic positions of power as well as in their sexual partnerships, are responsible for change, as it is women's subordination -- lack of control over their bodies and their lives -- that is the primary STI risk factor. Monogamous relationships are most conducive to reducing transmission of STIs and also HIV/AIDS. Introduction of new programmes in health centres, schools, clinics, and hospitals that specialise in STIs and HIV must be introduced to create awareness among people.

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IFHE Congress Keynote and Plenary Papers

Generational dynamics
Y it matters 2 u & me

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Reprinted from:
Pendergast, D. (2008). Home Economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future. *Proceedings of the IFHE XXI World Congress, July 26–31, Switzerland.* Switzerland: IFHE.

Abstract

The global history of the profession of Home Economics spans a century, with six generations making significant contributions to the journey this far. In order to create and sustain a vibrant and preferred future for the profession, it is essential to focus on attracting and retaining present—as well as future—generations of Home Economics professionals. Understanding that we each belong to a generation, and that generations have unique yet predictable values, cycles, strengths, and weaknesses—generational dynamics—is a strategic way of embracing the future. I regard generational theory to be one of six key elements contributing to an opportunity phase, or a "convergent moment" (Pendergast, 2006—see Supplementary Material). This concept of convergent moment is that a number of important societal and historical factors are currently aligning, providing a never-before-experienced opportunity to re-vision our profession. It is my conviction that these convergent factors must be seen as a catalyst for major reform – making this a defining moment for our profession. In that context, this plenary paper provides insights into the generational dynamics that impact on the Home Economics profession and the need to better understand and utilise this information as a basis for future directions for the profession. In particular it investigates Y-Generation members as Home Economics professionals and proposes imperatives for the profession to be ready to embrace the future and the unique approaches of the individuals who are the key members for the future.

What is generational theory?

Generational theory seeks to understand and characterise cohorts of people according to their birth generation. It is a dynamic sociocultural theoretical framework that employs a broad brushstroke approach, rather than an individual focus. Generations are defined not by formal process, but rather by demographers, the press and media, popular culture, market researchers, and by members of the generation themselves (Pendergast, 2007).

For example, in a recent Australian newspaper, Y-Generation was used informally to describe cohorts of young people. Here are some article headings:

- Y are they out of control? (Courier Mail, 29.01.08)
- Opposition blames parents for out-of-control Y geners (Courier Mail, 29.01.08)
- Generation Y rebels a blast from the past (Courier Mail, 29.01.08)
- Court calls it assaulting a police officer—to a gen Y it's a badge of honour (28.01.08)

It is also used in formal contexts such as research publications:

- Generation Y and work in the tourism and hospitality industry: Problem? What problem? (Cairncross & Buultjens, 2007)

The concept of generational dynamics is not new. It is based on work done by historians William Strauss and Neil Howe in the 1980s and early 1990s on generational changes in Anglo-American history. Their work has been described as "brilliant," "applicable to everyone around the world," and "enlightening." It is widely used in marketing and communication fields, in product development, in higher education, and in the media as a way of targeting defined populations. Of relevance to this paper is that it has been used by professions and professional association researchers to predict membership and to develop strategic directions to target, engage, and retain selected generations (cf. Brooks, 2004; 2006).

A generation is typically defined as the average interval of time between the birth of parents and the birth of their offspring, with, on average, a birth generation 20–22 years, and a lifespan four times that generational length. We are all born into a generation, but we might be: on the cusp with another generation; early; late; or in the middle of the generation. This is our generational location. The basic notion is that as members of a generation, we typically share a birth year range, opening us up to a set of experiences, and a set of social and economic conditions that in turn shape our generation in particular ways. This subsequently influences our collective thinking and leads to the acquisition of broad and common values and beliefs. In other words, if you're born in 1950 and grow up in the '60s and '70s, you'll be different at age 50 than you will if you're born in 1970 and grow up in the '80s and '90s. The acquisition of values and belief systems principally occurs during the formative or childhood years of each generation. As demonstrated in Table 1, a typical lifespan and the social role associated with the values and belief systems goes through four phases—acquisition, testing, asserting, and transferring.

Table 1: Four Phases in Life

Phase of life	Ages	Social Role
Childhood (formative years)	0–20	*Growth* being nurtured, acquiring values & belief systems
Young adulthood	21–41	*Vitality* testing values
Mid Adulthood	42–62	*Power* asserting values, managing institutions
Elderhood	63–83	*Leadership* transferring values, leading institutions

Source: Adapted from http://home.earthlink.net/~generationwatch/gw_background.html

The origins of generations as a concept is American, but it is widely applicable to Anglophones, that is, those who speak English natively or by adoption and have a cultural background associated with the English language, regardless of ethnic or geographical differences. With the effects of globalisation and the permeation of information and communications technologies (ICTs), especially access to the World Wide Web (WWW), the creep of Anglophone influence and the monoculturalisation of society means the number of people who can be included in the generational cohorts are increasing dramatically. Many professional organisations with a global reach, such as IFHE, utilise English as the main language for information dissemination, and this reinforces and facilitates the reach and effect of generational patterns and impacts.

According to Howe and Strauss (2000), generations follow a repeating cycle, with four generational types typically following in the order of: prophet; nomad; hero; and artist. When the generational types are tracked across the lifecycle, there are characteristics that appear consistently throughout successive generations based on this factor. These are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Characteristics of generational types

Lifecycle Type	IDEALIST prophet	REACTIVE depressed/ nomad	HEROIC	ARTISTIC adaptive
Childhood Nurture received	Relaxed	Underprotected	Tightening	Overprotected
Young adulthood Style Nurture given	Reflecting Tightening	Competing Overprotective	Building Relaxed	Remodelling Underprotective
Mid Adulthood Attitude	Judgmental	Exhausted	Energetic	Experimental
Elder hood How perceived Leadership style	Wise, visionary Austere, safe	Persuasive Pragmatic	Busy, confident Grand, inclusive	Sensitive, flexible Pluralistic
Motto	Truth	Persuasion	Power	Love
Positive attributes	Principled, resolute	Savvy, practical, perceptive	Rational, competent	Caring, open-minded
Negative attributes	Selfish, arrogant, ruthless	Pecuniary, amoral	Overbold, insensitive, unreflective	Indecisive, guilt-ridden

Source: Adapted from Strauss & Howe, 1991

Generations move as a collective through society, passing through the four phases of life, occupying different phases at different times and always maintaining the unique generational characteristics with them. There is no absolute consensus as to the calendar years constituting each generation, but the generational boundaries adopted in this paper are commonly adopted by generational theorists. See Table 3.

Table 3: A summary of living birth generations

Birth years	Generational Name	Age range in 2008
1901–1924	GI	84–107
1925–1942	Silent	66–83
1943–1960	Baby Boomer	48–65
1961–1981	Generation X	27–47
1982–2002	Generation Y	6–26
2003 +	Generation Z	5 or less

Each generation acquires values and belief systems principally during the formative or childhood years of each generation. Table 4 provides a summary of the typical values and beliefs for selected generations, which also incorporates the features of the generational type.

Table 4: Differences between selected generations

Factors	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Beliefs & values	Work ethic Security	Variety Freedom	Lifestyle Fun
Motivations	Advancement Responsibility	Individuality	Self discovery Relational
Decision making	Authority Brand loyalty	Experts Information Brand switchers	Friends Little brand loyalty
Earning & spending	Conservative Pay up front	Credit savvy Confident investors	Uncertain spenders Short-term wants Credit dependent
Learning styles	Auditory Content-driven Monologue	Auditory/visual Dialogue	Visual Kinaesthetic Multi-sensory
Marketing & communication	Mass	Descriptive Direct	Participative Viral Through friends
Training environment	Classroom style Formal Quiet atmosphere	Round-table style Planned rRlaxed ambience	Unstructured Interactive
Management & leadership	Control Authority Analysers	Cooperation Competency Doers	Consensus Creativity Feelers

In summary, generational dynamics theory brings together four elements:

- repeating trends based on generational type (idealist, reactive, heroic, artistic)
- recognition that the formative years of childhood where exposure to a range of factors determine the fundamental values and belief system of the generation
- lifecycle stage (childhood, young adulthood, mid adulthood, elder hood) and hence characteristics evident for the generational type at that stage
- the relevant birth generation with its unique attributes at any given time (e.g., Baby Boomer, Generation X).

At the moment, for example, members of the Baby Boomer Generation, which is an idealist or prophet generation, are entering elder hood. See Table 5 for the cyclic location of the most heavily populated living generations in 2008.

Generation	Phase of Life	Social Role	Stage of cycle
Silent	Elder hood	Leadership: transferring values, leading institutions	Artistic
Baby Boomer	Elder hood	Leadership: transferring values, leading institutions	Idealist
Generation X	Midlife	Power: asserting values, managing institutions	Reactive
Generation Y	Young adulthood	Vitality: testing values	Hero
Generation Z	Childhood	Growth: being nurtured, acquiring values & belief systems	Artistic

The prophet or idealist generation is regarded as a “driven” generation, with clear agendas and purpose, such as the Baby Boomer Generation. The civil rights movement is an example of the type of energy and direction a prophet generation might have. This is followed by the nomad or reactive generation, which is typified as extremely cynical and often depressed, and a generation that is a response to the energy and enthusiasm of the previous prophet generation. Generation X is a nomad generation, and is regarded as a pessimistic and depressed generation. The next in the cycle is the hero generation, who are conventional and committed, usually with respect for authority and with civic pride. The hero generation usually produces some key influential international leaders. The generation following the hero generation is the artists’ generation, which is regarded as emotional and indecisive, and at the opposite end of the continuum from the hero generation in terms of leadership and initiative.

Generational theory, like other forms of supposition and speculative analytic tools, provides a particular way of reflecting on the past and if harnessed effectively, of future-proofing the Home Economics profession. However, it is important to add a caveat to this theoretical conjecture with respect to the Y-Generation. Whilst generational theory takes on board the social and economic times during formative years of a generation and thus provides the basis for characteristics of that generation, a major societal paradigm shift has occurred in the last 25–30 years that has aligned with the formative and hence values acquisition years of our most recent full birth generation—the Y-Generation. The last 25–30 years has been an era of unprecedented transition from industrial to information-based culture and economy, from print-based to multi-mediated, digital approaches to communication effects of information and communications technologies (ICTs), globalisation and the emergence of the digital native. The simultaneous alignment of Generation Y and The Information Age has had an enormous impact, creating a larger than usual generation gap – or values difference, between previous generations and the Y-Generation, a gap accentuated by what is now recognised as the most significant shift in our society to date, with similar but smaller shifts occurring with the introduction of the printing press in the 15th century, and, before that, alphabetic literacy in 4th century.

Y-Generation

Y-Generation is the first generation born into The Information Age, and for this reason members are known as digital natives (Prensky, 2005/6). Everyone alive today whose birth precedes them is known as a digital immigrant. Digital natives are characterised as: operating at twitch speed (not conventional speed); employing random access (not step-by-step); using parallel processing (not linear processing); employing graphics first (not text); being play-oriented (not work); and being connected (not standing alone). They get more screen time (TV, computer) than fresh air. Consider the following:

- 97% of Australian Y-Generation students, including 82% of Indigenous students, have access to computers at home;
- 87% of Australian students use a computer at home on a frequent basis;
- 74% of students use the internet frequently as a tool for finding information and almost 70% for communication;
- socioeconomic background does not have a great effect on use of computers or confidence (Thomson & De Bortoli, 2007).

A recent American study of more than 7000 Y-Generation members found:

- 97% own a computer
- 94% own a mobile phone (Reynol & Mastrodicasa, 2007)

and in terms of use of their computer, typical usage includes the following types of patterns:

- 69% of 17–25 year old females and 56% of males regularly visit Facebook.com, which is a social networking website launched in early 2004, with more than 66,000,000 active users (have used it in the last month) globally, and a daily new user average of 250,000 with an average of 44 photos per user, totalling 1.7 billion photos (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook#Statistics).

These statistics corroborate the Y-Generation traits of being connected, play-oriented, and graphics-first explicitly.

Frequent change and technological progress are the comforting realities for the Millennial Generation, yet the same environment provides unsettling challenges for those generations before, including Generation X, the Baby Boomers, and, long before them, the Silent Generation. All of these generations happen to share society at this time, but it is the Millennials who are at ease in our contemporary world. Ironically, it is most likely to be X-Generation and Baby Boomers who are the mature role models, policy-makers, and leaders of the Y-Generation. With the sophistication of ICT it is possible to be almost anyplace, almost anytime. This shift into virtuality brings with it an end to enclosure, which was a key characteristic of generations prior to the current Y-Generation. They can access a range of mass communication technologies, engaging in on-line chats with others around the world, gaining essentially unlimited access to information on the worldwide web, and, in so doing, stepping beyond the constraints of time, distance, and space. They are a product of previous generations, yet they have been mediated in ways unlike any other generation. They represent a swing in values and attitudes that is unlike any generational shift of those groups alive today. While the key events shaping Y-Generation are yet to be confirmed, it is likely to include the following factors that significantly impacted on them during their formative years:

- Digital revolution: Internet, WWW, e-mail, chat lines, blogs, SMS texting (The Information Age)
- School violence
- Terrorism: For example, September 11, 2001 Terrorist attacks in America (The Age of Terrorism). The total number of victims is recorded as 2 998, the overwhelming majority of whom were civilians, including nationals from over 80 different counties (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11,_2001_attacks).

So what does this mean for the Home Economics profession?

Home Economics generations

Home Economics has formally existed as a global enterprise since the establishment of IFHE in 1908, though its roots existed long before then in many parts of the world. Since this time, there have been six birth generations. Table 5 provides a summary of some of the major shifts in the evolution of Home Economics aligned with the generational periods. The final column identifies the generation to which the policy leaders, academics, and decision-makers having the greatest impact on the evolution of the field and taking on position of responsibility typically predominantly belong/ed. The final row in Table 6 includes predictions related to Generation Z.

Table 6: Home Economics evolution charted against generations

Birth years	Birth Generation Name	Home Economics Evolution[1]	*Generation/s influencing Home Economics evolution*	
			Major generation with influence at leadership level	Generation cycle
1901–1924	GI	Home Economics founded technical practice with a social mission—sanitation / public health; management & family with a scientific base; highly progressive and revolutionary; complied with first wave of feminism, legitimised and scientised women's work	Progressive	Prophet/ Idealist
1925–1942	Silent	Shift to greater focus on management and thriftiness as a result of decline in world economy as a result of wars and depression; retained scientific legitimacy	Missionary	Nomad/ Reactive
1943–1960	Baby Boomer	Loss of social mission as affluence emerged, particularly at the end of this era; focus on personal; consumer explosion in latter years	GI	Hero
1961–1981	Generation X	Consumerism expanding; feminism (radical) highly critical of Home Economics; decline in status; heightened attempts at legitimacy	Silent	Artist
1982–2002	Generation Y	Globalisation, postmodernity, lost academic wars (Failed/unconvincing) Attempts at equalitarianism and transformative practice	Baby Boomer	Prophet/ Idealist
2002–2024	Generation Z	Reconfiguring profession—"Neo"[2] Home Economics; revisioning family forms; ethics and morality; ICT; sustainability…	Generation X	Nomad/ Reactive

What this table demonstrates is that any birth generation comes into influence in terms of power and responsibility typically at two or three generation cycles hence. So, at this moment, it would be expected that Generation X might be increasingly seen in positions of responsibility in IFHE, with Baby Boomers remaining active members, often as managers, but taking on less responsible positions and acting as beacons for leadership advice. Silent

[1] While the Home Economics evolution presented in this table might be highly contestable by region, it is intended to provide a global trend in the focus of Home Economics

[2] "Neo" has been added to stake the claim by me that a new direction for Home Economics is required

Generation members should be positioned as elders, leading and transferring values of the profession.

In the Home Economics profession around the world today, there are some Silent, many Baby Boomer and X-Generation, and a few Y-Generation members. There will probably be some GI generation members as well. The wider paid workforce currently has four distinct generations, each with its own values, work and communications styles, leadership expectations, and much more. Most of those in the paid workforce will be from two generations—Baby Boomer and Generation X (Rodriguez, Green, & Ree, 2003). This is a relatively typical pattern across many professions, particularly those reliant on a model of volunteerism.

IFHE generations

In 2004 at the IFHE World Congress in Kyoto the results of a comprehensive study conducted on the members of IFHE was presented. This study, with a 47% of total membership response rate, aimed to identify the benefits of membership and to evaluate the commitment of members to IFHE. From the results, several items proved relevant to understanding the generational attributes of IFHE:

- 25% of IFHE members are retired
- retired members are the most active members of IFHE
- nearly every second person (47%) has been a member of IFHE for 10 years or more (so they must be Generation X, Baby Boomer, or later generation)
- the longer people are members the more likely they are to be active, with almost 40% of those members of 10 years or more being active, compared to 25% 5–10 years; and less than 10% 1 year or less
- those who have been members for 10 years or more retreat from responsibility but still work on committees
- those who have been members 5–10 years take the most responsibility
- 79% of respondents are involved in teaching & education (Fauth, 2004).

Among other key advice given, the research concluded that:

- winning new and younger members is a big challenge and important to the future of IFHE
- to remain future-compliant IFHE has to move with the times and must maintain its vitality and attractiveness, e.g., via professional networking (Fauth, 2004).

What does this tell us about IFHE and generational effects? Unfortunately, there is no data available to determine the actual balance of membership according to birth year and hence to determine generational location. However, based on the data provided by the respondents to the IFHE survey, it can be deduced that in 2004, at a minimum the membership of IFHE was comprised of around 25% Silent Generation members (born 1925–1942). Table 7 presents a collation of general population percentages for each generation, association members, and the predicted IFHE membership spread according to generation.

Table 7: Generational patterns in the general population work and association membership

	% of current population	% of working-age adults	% belonging to associations	% Member-ship of IFHE	% IFHE best guess in 2008
GI	3	0	9	nd	3
Silent	14	8	20	25	25
Baby Boomer	27	42	32	nd	45
Generation X	15	24	26	nd	20
Generation Y	41	26	16	nd	7

Source: Brooks, 2006; Pendergast, 2006

It is clear that IFHE and I suspect most Home Economics professional organisations do not reflect the general societal trends of association membership. There is a much higher percentage membership comprising Silent and Baby Boomers than expected, with lower percentages for Generation X and Generation Y. How can this be accounted for? Some possible explanations include:

- decline in Home Economics profession over several generations
- refusal of individuals to align themselves with Home Economics

Another important feature of the IFHE membership is that 79% of respondents are involved in teaching and education. Hence, a further factor could be the overall decline in school and tertiary studies in the field leading to a decline is new memberships in X and Y-Generations.

With respect to general trends for professional organisations and how IFHE compares, an extensive study, Generations and the Future of Association Participation (Brooks, 2006), to determine characteristics of association membership including civic mindedness provides a good benchmark for comparison. This study found that in general, for associations:

- about a quarter (26%) of the cross section of the working population belongs to an association
- membership varies significantly by generation
- Baby Boomers are significantly more likely than younger generations (X & Y) to belong to associations
- it is predicted that Generation X will join associations at similar rates as Baby Boomers, that is, membership is more a function of age, however the overall numbers are smaller due to a population decline in Generation X
- this trend is likely to be followed by Generation Y
- age is a stronger predictor of association membership than generation. As Generation X and Y move into their peak professional years they are likely to

join associations at similar rates as Baby Boomers – but actual numbers will decline significantly.

These trends are predicted on the basis that associations are proactive in appealing to young workers and keeping older workers. Herein lies the challenge for IFHE and for Home Economics professional organisations, and for the profession in general.

Strategies for generational planning for IFHE

There are four generations that will be affiliated with IFHE over the next two decades. There are three main imperatives required to work with these generational cohorts:

- Silent and Baby Boomer – focus on retention and active membership
- Generation X—focus on attracting, giving responsibility to, and retaining
- Generation Y—focus on attracting and retaining.

Before considering generational specifics, a recent publication *Where the winners meet: Why happier, more successful people gravitate towards associations*, by Brooks (2008), has identified some startling patterns about people who are members of professional associations, including:

- association members earn, on average $10,000 more per year than non-members, even if they have the same education levels and job types
- association members are 19% points more likely to say they are "very satisfied" with their jobs than are non-members
- 45% of association members compared to 36% of non-members said they were "very happy" about their lives.

It is suggested in the study that associations should provide services to attract "winners,", such as:

- Career advantages: As an explicit career enhancing benefit, associations can act as conduits between senior executives and ambitious young members
- Continuing education: Associations should focus on predicting what their members need to learn and offer appropriate educational programs
- Community: Particularly in jobs that require frequent moves at the beginning of an employees career, tangible industry or professional community may be socially valuable to upwardly mobile members
- Opportunities to serve: Motivated association members may desire opportunities to serve both their associations and their related charities
- Accountability: Entrepreneurial members are attuned to accountability and measurable results in their lives and careers and will expect evidence that associations are accountable to members and the industries or professions they represent (Brooks, 2008).

Each of these insights is relevant for all generations. Following are additional strategies based on generational insights.

Silent and Baby Boomers—retaining and active

The Baby Boomer and Silent Generation are currently dominating the modus operandi of the profession. This, I predict, extends beyond IFHE to include other professional organisations, university academics, and researchers, and those working in business and private enterprise. Attend any Home Economics executive meeting, event, or conference around the world and a quick scan around the room will support the proposition that the leadership roles—and also the general membership—are dominated by people aged in their late-forties or older. These leaders value regularity and predictability; they prefer to work alone, to draw on other experts, and to develop expert knowledge in their field. Their work ethic is one of high commitment and hard work, with a preparedness to invest long hours, often at night and on weekends. They are likely to be career Home Economists who have gradually risen to positions of authority over a career focussed primarily in the same field. They regard leadership positions as 'earned' through this process. Most Silent Generation and the first-born of the Baby Boomers are retired, and for a profession such as Home Economics that relies on volunteerism as the basis for much of its professional leadership, there exists a common pattern of sliding from the paid to the unpaid workforce, and retaining leadership roles. This lengthens the potential impact of this generation on the field.

Baby Boomers will be moving from positions of responsibility but if they follow typical trends will remain active members of committees, as many Silent Generation members currently are. They are imperative to retain as the core of IFHE for the next two decades. Strategies recommended to keep them active include:

- Enhance work and career satisfaction, e.g., IFHE might create special interest groups that specifically address issues such as retirement and estate planning
- Fund semiretirement employment options, e.g., assist with phased retirement by providing opportunities for part time involvement
- Keep retired workers involved in association communities, e.g., special emeritus status at educational and networking events
- Honour and overtly recognise the contributions of these generations
- Engage Silent and Baby Boomers as mentors for younger generational cohorts.

Generation X—attracting; giving responsibility to; retaining

Generation X professionals are increasingly performing management/leadership roles in the Home Economics profession at this time. Generation X members need to be retained and nurtured by the profession – these are, after all, the emerging leaders. This is a challenge to the Home Economics profession as this group are less single-minded about their career aspirations than Baby Boomers, hence many will not persevere with slow-moving promotional opportunities or lack of recognition in a field that is devalued generally in society. Succession-planning to engage Generation X in leadership roles is essential. There is a risk that in Home Economics, as in other fields where leadership through volunteerism and long-earned experience dominates, the Baby Boomer Generation will continue to remain in leadership and policy development roles long after Generation X are ready for these challenges. This may be a temptation because there are simply more individuals available from these generations and this is seen as an expedient solution to the problem of attracting and retaining Generation X leaders. This will stifle the profession and is to be avoided.

Strategies recommended to attract, develop responsibility of, and retain X-Generation members include:

Attract

- establish a training and learning culture
- provide flexibility and opportunities for fun and relaxation
- provide benefits that support paid and unpaid work commitments.

Develop responsibility

- engage mentoring and coaching practices
- provide specific constructive feedback on performance that is structured around clear outcomes
- have a clear vision of the profession/organisation as a basis for shared understanding. There should be clearly articulated plans, teams, and operational approaches
- Facilitate opportunities for Generation X to take on leadership roles
- Generation X must be positioned as the leaders of the profession.

Retain

- allow individuals to manage as much time as possible and do not change plans abruptly
- include opportunities for fun, relaxation, and flexibility. Generation X regard this as better security than financial security
- establish flexible working hours, job sharing, telecommuting capacities
- do not run meetings, conferences, and events on weekends or at night. Do have day time events that are short and can be completed flexibly if necessary
- have regular meetings and frequent feedback using available technologies as a preference to face-to-face frequent meetings with limited agendas
- feedback should focus on the broader picture, not minutiae and detail
- publicly recognise the contribution of Generation X members.

Generation Y—attracting; retaining

There is a growing corpus of theory on the work practices, values, and motivators of the Y Generation. Boomer (2007) regards one of the priorities for attracting and retaining Y-Generational members to be embracing a "training and learning culture" within the profession. The top three motivators for MilGens are:

1. Meaningful work that makes a difference to the world
2. Working with committed coworkers who share their values
3. Meeting their personal goals (Allen, 2004).

In Table 8, key generational traits and values are used to provide a basis for suggested strategies for attracting and retaining Y-Generation members in the Home Economics profession. This is not an exhaustive list, but a sample of the kind of possibilities that must be canvassed to make the profession viable for the MilGen to consider.

Generational theory, Home Economics, and beyond

At the outset of this paper I stated that it is my contention that Home Economics is at a convergent moment with respect to charting the future of the profession. Generational theory is one important, evidence-based tool that can be garnered in the challenge to future-proof the profession.

Table 8: MilGen values and motivators with Home Economics strategies

MilGen work values & motivators	Suggested strategies for the Home Economics profession to consider
Flexibility	expectations of flexible working hours, job sharing, telecommuting *opportunity for part-time commitments to individual projects* conduct meetings, conferences and events during work days *provide virtual meeting opportunities eg Skype and MSN*
Networking & Communicating	utilise the latest available communications technologies such as web based discussion forums; sms; iPods *introduce an e-journal and other forms of e-communication as the professional 'face' of Home Economics* respond to communications quickly
Mentoring	*establish mentoring models that focus on individual development* use the time span of 5 years for career planning
Ethics	*provide opportunities for individuals to make a difference – real capacity to action dreams* have high levels of morality and ethical standards
Education – lifelong learner and personal growth	*provide self-guided on-line workshops and the like* establish a training and learning culture

MilGen work values & motivators	Suggested strategies for the Home Economics profession to consider
Authentic experiences	*connect theory with practice and ensure a global perspective* provide incentives that align with the real world *prioritise personal and family health and well-being*
Collaborative teams	use collaborative teaming as a basis for work tasks and structure these into projects *provide resources based on collaborative teams* facilitate leadership at team level *conduct collaborative team training programs*
Instant results	shift from function-based work to project-based work. This might mean restructuring committees and the like away from function to specific tasks *provide recognition and increased responsibility for results well received*
Entrepreneurial	provide opportunities for creativity and challenge – roles must be seen as important and as being valued *encourage members to make their own opportunities for advancement* provide a reward-for-performance system. This can mean that those teams that are performing should be resourced, while those that are underperforming should receive no support *additional responsibilities are welcomed as they are seen as a chance to aggregate new skills*
Balance work and family	unlike Baby Boomer and Generation X, family comes first, so workplaces need to be family friendly, e.g., provision of childcare facilities and a tolerant attitude to children *conferences and meetings should include family and provide childcare* programs established that are geared towards health of Generation Y and their family
Multiple pathways – nonlinear thinkers	*will be seeking opportunities to diversify* looking for opportunities to move in nonlinear pathway
Technologically savvy	*access to information must be immediate and 24/7* internet is a main interface for communication

Source: Pendergast (under review)

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Supplementary Material

The concept of "convergent moment" is that a number of important societal and historical factors are currently aligning around the profession, providing a never-before experienced opportunity to revision our profession. It is my conviction that these convergent factors must be seen as a catalyst for major reform – making this a defining moment for our profession. The factors, along with a brief summary, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Convergent Factors in the Home Economics profession*

Convergent Factor	Brief Explanation
100 year history of the profession	The past century since the inception of Home Economics has been one of invention, development, and changes in roles for men and women generally in society. This current decade is unlike any of the 10 before, as it signifies a major shift in society, with the effects of globalisation, information and communications technologies, and the loss of enclosure, all making this decade unlike any previously experienced. It represents a societal paradigm shift.
Consumption and globalisation	The global pattern of a divide between the developed and developing countries where around 20% of the world's population consumes 80% of the products and services, and the remaining 80% consumes the remaining 20%, has created problems for both groups, with the effects of abundance sometimes being described as "affluenza," while the effects of underprovision lead to poverty, undernutrition, lack of educational opportunity and more. There is a lack of parity between the globalisers and the globalised.
Generational theory	The sociocultural construction of society based on generations provides a valuable insight into the current issues confronting the Home Economics profession. The future of the profession lies in the hands of the Y and Z Generations, the characteristics of which must be contended with and embraced by the profession if it is to pave its preferred future.
Societal context of the "New Times"	The idea of societal paradigm shift from modernity to postmodernity is played out in workplaces, schooling, new literacies, new families, and communities. Given that Home Economics engages and operates among these contexts, it must embrace and lead the fundamental dimensions of "new times." The Age of Terrorism and the Information Age are facets of the new times.
Family changes	Major changes are occurring in individual and family characteristics around the globe. The United Nations identifies four trends that impact families around the globe: changes in family structures; demographic ageing; the rise of migration; and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Given that this is the unit around which Home Economics revolves, it is critical that an understanding of this site as an opportunity to stimulate reform is understood.

Convergent Factor	Brief Explanation
The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)	In a recently released document titled "*Guidelines and recommendations for reorienting teacher education to address sustainability,*" the importance of the world's 59,000,000 teachers to educate for developing understandings about sustainable development is articulated and strategies for action outlined. It is argued that "the core themes of education for sustainability include lifelong learning, interdisciplinary education, partnerships, multicultural education and empowerment" (UNESCO 2005, p.15). The approach urges a multidisciplinary approach, noting that "no one discipline can or should claim ownership of Education for Sustainable Development" (2005, np). The societal goals of sustainability as presented by UNESCO are: environmental stewardship; social equity, justice, and tolerance; and quality of life for all people in this generation and the next – all of which, but particularly the latter, resonate with Home Economics in the context of both education and as a profession. It seems that there is growing alignment with the intentions of Home Economics, and this is being recognised at a global level.

*Detailed explanations of these factors can be found in Pendergast (2006).

International Journal of Home Economics

Home Economics Futures
Possible scenarios and where they take us
Visionary insights into the future 2028

James McIntosh, Emma Collins, Christina Collins

Reprinted from:
Pendergast, D. (2008). Home Economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future. *Proceedings of the IFHE XXI World Congress, July 26–31, Switzerland.* Switzerland: IFHE.

Abstract

One hundred years on from the birth of IFHE we are at a valuable point in time to reflect and reminisce on our past, but more importantly to reassess and look forward into a world that is dramatically different to the world our ancestral Home Economists knew.

IFHE and, indeed, Home Economics as a profession, is made up largely of members of the Baby Boomer and earlier generations, with significantly different values and belief systems to those of the succeeding Generation X and Y. The significant generational shift that has occurred between these two generations can be held partly responsible for the changes in Home Economics as a result of postindustrialisation, globalisation, and internationalisation. It is these forces which now drive us further into an era of "New Times" (Pendergast, 2006) bringing with it challenges and implications to all areas of our field. It is our role as Home Economists to bridge the gap between different generations to ensure our advancement and recognition.

Future Home Economists, that is, Generation X, Y, and Z, behave and respond differently as consumers, requiring alternative marketing mediums, demanding innovative products that fit with their lifestyles. With the predicted increase in global population the demands of the consumer will become even greater, not only in service industry and business but also in community health and education.

It is at this point in time—now—that we need to take stock of this situation and to turn it to an advantage for the profession, linking the lessons from our past to the successes of our future. Through the following insights into global health, education, and consumer futures we present a selection of the possible scenarios we may face. It is through such future speculating that a possible glimpse of the world in 2028 can be envisioned, along with the contribution of the Home Economics profession.

Home Economics focuses on improving quality of life for the individual, family, and community. These areas are constantly changing and developing. In order to present futures scenarios that encompass all three areas of importance to the

profession, this paper takes on the perspective of communities in terms of health and development, contributed by Emma Collins; the individual from an educational perspective, contributed by Chrissy Collins; and the family as a consumer buying unit from a consumer education approach, contributed by James McIntosh.

Global community health and sustainable development

Emma Collins

How might we see the shape of our profession in the year 2028? The questions we ask ourselves are:

- What should we do to develop the field?
- What should we do to encourage and develop talent?

The simple answer to both these questions is to continue to reach out, collaborate, and persevere as we have done for the last 100 years. But we argue there are more strategic and rewarding initiatives to bring together so preferred futures can be mapped and achieved, taking a proactive rather than reactive approach to the future. The generational shift that is characteristic of this time ensures that we have to continue not only as we have done in the past but to graduate and more forward, taking big steps into the digital era, the "New Times" in which we now live – irrespective of culture or geographic location. We need to ask ourselves not only what we want to achieve, but also what we need to achieve for the sustainable quality of life for our future – both within the field and our own organisation.

> OK please tighten your seatbelts; we are going on a journey. Let's time travel to 2028 to look at Home Economics 20 years from now!

As we all know, Home Economics is not a new subject but one that has been around for over a century. Let's celebrate our successes. As was encompassed then, over 100 years ago, Home Economics embraces a wide range of applications and many diverse areas of life, both inside and outside of the home setting. However, the world has changed dramatically over the past 100 years. From the foundation years when it was harnessed as revolutionary and progressive, Home Economics as a profession has evolved through the generations. With each generation comes a new focus for the profession. Little did our predecessors realise just what they were starting – a movement that would face not only the challenges of feminism, but also those of the industrial revolution, world wars, modern medicine, and, more importantly, the information age, advance of chronic disease, the emergence of new diseases and pandemics (like HIV, SARS and Malaria), re-emergence of old ones (like Ebola, Measles and Mumps), globalisation, terrorism, and unprecedented population growth. In the last 100 years since Beecher, Parloa, Farmer and Richards, Home Economics has struggled with combating against its stereotypical images of the 1950s, the women's movement of the 60s and 70s, the 80s' evolution of health promotion, and the changing technologies of the 1990s. Now in our ever-increasingly small world, as a result of dramatic global development we, as professionals upholding our profession, have a new set of challenges that require flexibility and adaptation. We find ourselves now at a "convergent moment" (see Pendergast, 2006) with the opportunity to realign, reform, and revision what we are doing and where we are going.

Pendergast (2008) pointed out that most of us—79% in fact—are academic educators in the field of Home Economics. I would argue that all of us are. 100%. The difference is that the majority of us work in educational institutions, but our role as educators is equal. Education, and being a symbol of Home Economics education, is fundamental to our being—our skeleton if you will. What we need to develop is the meat on these bones. It feels like Home Economics is becoming increasingly anorexic. We need flesh to protect ourselves from the stones being thrown at us, damaging our reputation. So where do we find this flesh? What is it and why do we need it? Well there too is an easy answer. The flesh is here—the padding we need, the protective layer that makes our IFHE body strong enough to move forward and evolve lies in front of you, behind you, to your left and right. Look around. Our Congresses highlight this—we already have the basis of what we need. But that doesn't mean to say we don't need a bit of fattening up. Education, research, development, international collaboration, characterising, socialising, even fantasising… are just some of the ways we do this. We have new generations of impressive, technologically advanced individuals chasing our tails to work in their way, to communicate in ways which they demand, to be e-friendly, digital, accessible.

Are you looking sufficiently terrified yet? Let's see, I think so! But relax, take a deep breath. You may be surprised and comforted by the fact that it is daunting for younger members of the profession too—we are "cusp-gens"—born in-between the dominant Baby Boomers generation and the digi-generations after us. It is a daunting world, a fast world, but one that is full of excitement and opportunity. Being a cuspy-X/Y-gen I can remember the very special Christmas of 1998 when our family present was a home computer. Wow—the wonders of it—a significantly large heavy box going by today's standard. It was huge, it gurgled. But it was a turning point for us, I was excited about the prospect of starting my studies and being able to word process my assignments—no longer having to write them out a million times! This will, I am sure, ring bells with you all, significant occasions, the purchase of your first laptop, first computer, first mobile phone. I was 18 when I was given my first cell phone. My generation remembers stuff like that, as may you—the generations ahead of us on the other hand will gaze in wonder when we talk of not having phone with a built in camera and a memory far greater than the box that Santa delivered in 1998. The point is that the X, Y, and Z—the future of our profession and organisation—are valuable resources. They have knowledge to share. Just as we look to the Baby Boomers for guidance, wisdom, and mentoring, so we look to the future Home Economists for their vision and abilities. As Pendergast (2008) explains, our generational location can be used to pinpoint and account for our collective thinking, common values and beliefs. At this precise point in time the values and beliefs and policies are determined predominantly by processes and practices led by Baby Boomers, with less input from succeeding Generation X and Y members. This pattern is repeated across institutions and organisations around the world (see Pendergast, 2008). Why this is particularly memorable is because of the digital paradigm shift that aligns with the generational shift in society—meaning the gap is far greater than ever before. This is not an issue from which to shy away and avoid but one to embrace and harness as a rare opportunity for renewal. As a "cuspy" we can offer our services in bridging the gap between our generations, learning from those who have paved the way for us and reach out to those yet to discover what we do.

One way in which we need to do this is by looking at our communities and assessing how needs have changed. The community needs today are hugely different from those of Beecher's time and will alter still in the course of the next 20 years, to 2028. But the way in which communities have developed and are developing offers us a key insight into where we position ourselves and find our place in the coming years.

Community development requires attention. Whether you take your local community, school, workplace, home, organisational, national, or global community—one thing remains the same, ironically this is the universal change we are seeing in communities around the world. Communities are changing. On the larger more generalised scale, population dynamics, as a result of the vast extent of globalisation and pressures of internationalisation, are not what they once were; the "New Times" ahead of us are shaped by these forces dictating behaviour in our communities—but more on this from James McIntosh later.

Communities are facing many challenges and the fact that each and every community is different puts us in a strong position. Home Economists proclaim and shout about their flexibility, multidisciplinary approach and ability to see the heart of issues being confronted but simultaneously addressing the whole. Communities across the world need us—with this knowledge and these skills. With the ever increasing demand for sustainability and "green" living we are needed more than ever. Teaching young mothers how to feed many children healthily whilst on a tight budget and still have food for themselves; educating children about where their food really comes from and witnessing the curious disbelief when they realise milk doesn't just come from a plastic carton at the supermarket/store; leading consumers to understand and want to purchase products that have not flown thousand of air miles. These are simple personal examples and I am sure you have many more. The point is, communities in their traditional sense have modernised and diversified. You only need to look at the population of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK), my home country, to see just one example of the variety of people that we need to reach. A beautifully designed English leaflet proclaiming the latest healthy eating advice is not going to reach half the population – in part due to illiteracy but more importantly the avenue of communication. Communities have spread wider now—and are likely to develop even further. Our community members are used to "talking," whether that be in the true sense of the word or via instant messaging (IM), chat rooms, blogs, text (SMS), or networks etc. And this communication is 24/7; not like phoning your parents on the landline before bedtime with a mug of cocoa. Communities are global. And with this comes global challenges.

One such challenge which I consider to be fundamentally important is that of the ever-increasing global population and its direct and indirect consequences on our work—particularly in terms of health, development, and sustainable livelihoods.

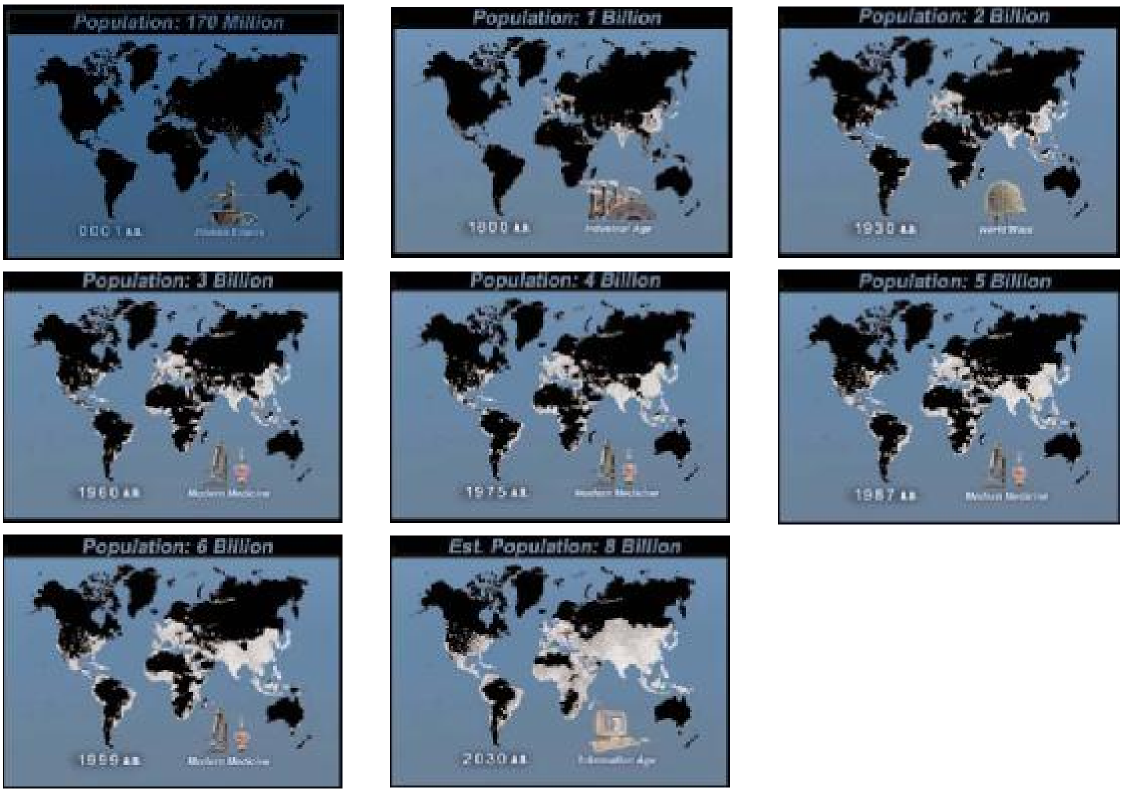
Population concern has been a politically sensitive subject and one that was not recognised by policy makers and the media for many years. It is now however, becoming increasingly publicised as the issues that it raises have direct implications on quality of life. From the gender imbalances in China and the low fertility in Japan, to the vast migration in Europe and high birth rates in some African countries, population issues can, and are no longer being ignored.

The issues the world currently faces due to the dramatic changes in world population can be described as both a law, condition, and principle and most definitely constitute an ideal when considering the relationship between physical environment and social wellbeing. Compare this to the definition of Home Economics as stated at the 4th Lake Placid Conference in 1902:

> the study of the laws, conditions, principles and ideals concerned with mans [sic] immediate physical environment and his nature as a social being and specially the relation between these two factors. (Maskow, 2008)

To capture this, let us take a moment to see just what has happened to population growth, as represented in Figures 1, and how prominent this issue is to our future. Pay particular attention from the early 1900s to the predicted 2030 estimates.

Figure 1: World Population 1 AD—2030 AD



Source: Population Connection (2002)

The population of the world has increased from 1.65 to 6.6 billion in the last century. It is predicted that it will continue to rise above 9 billion and peak just below 10 billion somewhere between 2050-2070. In 2028 world population is expected to be at least 8 billion (United Nations, 2002a).

With the unprecedented global population increase that we will witness over the coming years Home Economists need to reassess capacities to incorporate these further areas of research and practice. Population growth brings with it many challenges; one of the most significant being population ageing. With an ageing population in many countries we need to address the community needs of both our successors and predecessors in terms of health, development, and quality of life.

Population ageing is ensuring that all countries, regardless of their development, north, south, east, and west of the digital/nondigital divide, will experience this process at varying levels of intensity. Many countries are already beginning to face the challenges of an elderly population. In Japan, the ageing population is already causing increasing concern. Annually on September 15th the Japanese celebrate "Respect for the Aged Day." As a matter of habit, the Japanese Statistics Bureau announce on this day an estimate of the elderly population. In 1899 the percentage of those over 65 was 10%. The proportion in 2005 was 21% and it is expected to reach 35% by 2040 (Smil, 2007). This shift in population means that by 2050, Japan will have 3 times as many people over 65, than children under 14. In 2050 there could be 5 million people over the age of 90, with half a million centurions (Smil, 2007).

However, East Asian countries are not the only ones with problems of this nature – Europe too is ageing considerably with estimates indicating 29.2% of the population will be over the age of 65 in 2050 (United Nations, 2002b).

It must be remembered that the forces of population ageing will have varying impacts across the world. The needs of the growing aged cohort in wealthier countries where infant and child mortality has long been reduced thanks to improved sanitation and immunisations, contrast significantly to those where child birth and death rates remain high. These countries require significant economic advancement to be in a position to tackle the ageing time bomb predicted in the coming years. However, all countries at some point will experience a demographic boom resulting in huge dependency on working age adults in all communities. This is already starting to become evident in Japan. Lessons are to be learnt from the countries experiencing it now (United Nations, 2002b).

So, what are the consequences and where do we fit in?

As people live longer, retirement, pensions, and social security systems require change, and medical treatment and healthcare services are forced to adapt to the increased demand of chronic disease. Healthcare services and health promotion are likely to focus more on preventative care and move into the community as many areas of the world have to deal with increasingly diverse public health and social problems. As family size and structure alters, care and employment shifts also occur as there are fewer available kin to care for older generations. With dramatic shifts in population proportions, social and economic systems must adjust quickly. Further consequences include social and political pressures as a result of resource redistribution and compromise, intergenerational conflict, and increasing demands on the working population.

Ageing populations challenge the perceptions of working life, families, communities, education, and learning as we know them. As the family, the smallest community unit, remains the single most important source of support for older individuals, and similarly the heart of Home Economics, the ability for professionals in our field to adapt and encompass these future challenges is vital, especially given that in the 21st century we are dealing with families of all shapes and sizes. It is highly probable that in our generations the "young old" will be responsible for the care of at least one "oldest-old" family member. Many communities around the world will have to adapt and change their methodologies and approaches to health and social services. Examples of some strategies being currently developed and used include:

- reduced prejudice against older workers, e.g., Working Age Act in the UK
- flexible working practices
- developing a network of Elder Experts
- increased engagement of ethnic minorities
- progression pathways for the 50+
- promoting learning opportunities for older people
- reduce barriers to active lifestyles in older age groups
- improve access to health promotion services
- fuel poverty programmes
- digital lifelong learning strategies
- digital inclusion strategies
- senior volunteer programmes
- WHO's Age-Friendly City programme

So you see as with the proactive and innovative global attitude required to tackle demographic change so it is for us. There is much argument surrounding the population debate – is it the sheer number of people that is causing the problem or is the world capable of sustaining such a high number IF we make the right choices about the way in which we live and what we consume? Either way, Home Economists have a part to play. We have the skills to nurture and guide communities through these changes, to motivate and encourage, to step forward as leaders in educating our successors and predecessors about the coping mechanisms and essential abilities they will need in the future.

Current and future strategies in Home Economics education

Chrissy Collins

Excuse me Miss!—I'm trying to get your attention: an education perspective.

Welcome to 21st-Century Learning. I am so fortunate. For the last few years I have been lucky enough to be teaching in the HE faculty in my school, with no other subjects to think about. My classroom is a place that promotes opportunity, success, experimentation, creativity, and fun (well at least I aspire for it to be this). I hope to connect, capture, and captivate my students. But ultimately I am seeking to prepare my students to participate effectively in a rapidly changing environment through empowerment, essential life skills, critical thinking, intellectual rigor, social enquiry, and the use of technology. But this can be achieved only in partnership with the students and so as educators we need to focus on the preferred learning tools of the generation we are inspiring.

As an educator our core business is students, and their behaviours, skills, and knowledge. The educational needs of individual 21st-century students have changed dramatically from those of 20th-century students. These changes must be supported. We used to teach content and particular skills but know the 21st century is demanding life skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem solving, and linking this all back to world globalisation in order to ensure our students are connected and relevant in today's society. Now we are teaching our students how to thrive in a rapidly changing society.

We used to teach students sewing and cooking because they needed these skills, families had little disposable income, and these skills were used in everyday living. For many individuals and families this is still the case, especially in developing countries, but for many more this status quo is changing as disposable income is more readily available and the generation who see products as "disposable" comes in to increasing independence. Many no longer mend a torn sock, they simply replace it with a new one—no sewing skills needed here.

The world of education is a fluid one, with change in learning and teaching as well as educational philosophy happening all the time. Futures scenarios are suggesting that by 2028, the traditional education system that we know will be different with lifelong and e-learning predominantly being learnt beyond the classroom and must be supported by technology (OCED, 2003). We know that students are spending increasing amounts of time accessing, socialising, and living in the virtual world using technology. Like it or not, as educators, we need to face this change head on.

So getting out of our comfort zone, what happens in the future often depends on decisions made today. Futures scenarios are not meant to predict the future, but rather are descriptions that reflect different perspectives on past, present, and future developments, which can serve as a basis of action. They can be defined as "consistent and coherent descriptions of alternate hypothetical futures that reflect different perspectives on past, present, and future developments, which can serve as a basis for action" (OCED, 2006). These scenarios are a very useful way to think creatively and holistically on issues we take for granted to assist us in getting out of our everyday routine and prepare for what is ahead.

This is not a predication or a forecast of the future, but a plausible description of what may lie ahead. The Z Gen are now entering our preschool classrooms and as Home Economists we need to be ready, to cater for their educational needs and more importantly their needs and demands as consumers. So we must sit back and ask ourselves these “futures” questions:

- Where are we going?
- What is Home Economics and education going to look like?
- Do we want to encourage this or discourage it?
- How can we get there?
- Do we have the tools to do this?

As teachers, and Home Economists, we have a responsibility to our profession and our students to prepare ourselves to teach in this exciting world, the everyday world of these “New Times.” So I think our answer is that we want to encourage this. But this begs the question: Do we have the tools to embark on this challenge?

The Millennials (Pendergast, 2007) are digital learners and are literate, beyond our traditional definition of reading, writing, and speaking. Digital literacy is simply the next step in the literacy continuum.

How literate are you? Do you know, can you use, is included in your pedagogy the following digital literacies:

Table 1: Examples of digital literacy’s of students in classrooms today

Podagogy	Online Learning
(iPod + podogogy = anytime learning)	Skype
Internet 2.0	MSN / IM
e-earning	Google
Wikis	Google Earth
Webquests	Youtube.com
Facebook.com / myspace.com	Teachertube.com
Blogging	Del.icio.us
e-portfolios	RSS
Online collaboration	SMS / MMS
Online testing	Virtual pen pals
Web-cams	

The World Wide Web—And the new www—whatever, whenever, wherever

Or are we still using the technology to produce word documents and send students out on a treasure hunt activity, search, find, copy, and paste?

The only certainty in life and education (and for that matter Home Economics) is change and we will continually have to change the way we teach, and accepted practices have become redundant over time. Internet 2.0 has seen the emergence of blogs, wikis, podogogy; the skills and insights that make up digital literacies are expanding daily. If there was one overarching aspect to this, it is the rapid and exponential rate that the traditional teaching methods we work with simply can't keep up. This has huge implications for our profession and is a strong argument for getting personally involved both as a facilitator and a consumer of these tools.

Since your students already know how to use this technology, why aren't you? Remember we are building futures here – we need to realise and embrace the potential that new technologies can bring learning. There is NO reason we are not using or understanding it.

The onus is on teacher educators to develop pedagogically appropriate teaching and learning strategies for their Millennial students. These strategies must be informed by sustained educational research that seeks to understand the MilGen (Pendergast, 2007) from their perspective (Donnison, 2007).

21st-Century Skills

Information doubles, knowledge halves.

As an audience we need to remember to always critically read digital data as the information on the internet expands. But as facilitators we have to guide our students so that they develop excellent critical thinking skills as they will encounter significantly more information in their life time than we will in ours.

Step out—let's connect and collaborate our classrooms

We can use the same technology the authors did in order to put this paper together. From three separate corners of the world we were able to communicate virtually, all connected at the one time, talking, debating, negotiating, and finalising our plans for this manuscript.

Connecting learning with the community beyond the confines of the classroom requires resources and skills to link classrooms with the broader world. For many students the best connections made within their learning sees concepts being taught with concrete links to their world. I would love to 'Skype' you into my classroom as an 'expert' for a lesson. Introduce your students to their global peers and provide them with the opportunity to collaborate. Remember learning is social. Why do this? Well if students can learn to collaborate and work with their global peers, then our future leaders will survive in this world of globalisation. By way of example in March, James McIntosh Skyped into my classroom in Melbourne (Australia) from London (United Kingdom) to teach marketing of food products from an industry and profit-conscious point of view. As the virtual teacher in my classroom, he was able to contribute expertise I would otherwise have not been able to incorporate.

Intergenerational programming

Intergeneration programming refers to any informal relationship between youth and adults. Programs take advantage of the concept; youth learn from or help the older adult, and the older adults serve as teachers or receivers of new concepts. Opportunities become available for different generations to come together to share experiences, knowledge, and skills that are mutually beneficial and foster positive long-term relationships. Examples of intergenerational programs include: letter writing or e-mail correspondence between the older person and the child; and blogging or using Facebook.com to share insights into each other's world and allow others to interact in the dialogue, creating greater links and multi-gen involvement (Ohio State University, 2008). Food for thought: international intergenerational program exchanges. IFHE could act as the facilitator and we could network the world's Universities, classrooms, families, and households. What a way to break down isolation.

Real stories

Home Economics students in Nagoya, Japan are linking up with those in Singapore using digital technology. Disseminating information, sharing knowledge, and globally connecting their understandings of Home Economics. This is enabling two learning communities to connect as one, where possibilities are now available, where they weren't previously, and to connect required travel and physical attendance. Now students are virtually attending and participating in activities around the world.

Keep up

Information and communications technologies (ICT) are changing at a rapid rate. Keep up, stay relevant, use your students and your networks to assist you. Stay globally connected and practice what you preach. We must all maintain our own professional learning in this area. Why? Because better methods are needed to teach Generation Z when they arrive into your classroom. Innovative approaches to accommodate for individual learning needs can be achieved by diversifying the curriculum. If students have increased ownership and creative rights, they are likely to put more time and effort into the outcome. We see this everyday in food production classes around the world. Give your students the opportunity to express themselves to the world and be heard.

Change can be confronting, but exciting if you let it. These proposals are viable and achievable for us all. All journeys begin with a single step; take one into contemporary learning. Meet the needs of all young people by providing a broad and diverse range of opportunities covering all interests, abilities, and learning styles.

Our educational philosophies, pedagogical practice, and teaching tools are changing and advancing all the time. It is important to reflect on personal professional practice and keep up to date with educational change and development. That's not to say that this is not happening in pockets of practice of Home Economics around the world – but let's not be part of the pack, let's lead from the front.

Out in the community, I want people to be talking about HE, our principles, our values, our connections, and our relevance to their lives. Our reputation needs to excel, setting the benchmark for education around the world. From this our profession will again experience enrolment growth, as more individuals and communities become aware of who we are and our value to global connections.

Welcome to 21st Century Learning.

The ***digi***Consumer—the Whisk theory of consumer education

James McIntosh

I'm a Home Economist too—but my work is very different to that of Emma and Chrissy.

As a child I had an idyllic life. I grew up in Northern Ireland with a mum and a dad and a brother. Dad was a farmer and mum a Home Economics teacher. They taught me food from the farm to the fork. How to care for animals and grow fruit and vegetables. Mum taught me how to shop for food, store it, cook it, preserve it, and enjoy it, and have a healthy diet.

I was lucky: My brother William and I had a great childhood. Love, care, warmth, food, clothing, and shelter—the hall marks of our profession. Then last year life changed. My dad was 56 and he suddenly dropped dead. Losing your father is a very difficult time. Our family of James, William, and Mum and—now; no dad. William lives with mum on the farm in Northern Ireland and I live in London. Our family changed. Through no fault of our own one key member went. The family had to be redefined. I use this personal example as it shows the reality of our work. The keystone of Home Economics—the family—constantly changing.

In the intervening years I lived in Scotland for university, flew around the world and had great jobs as a Home Economist. I had a glamorous career, mainly because I networked. Then in 2004, in Kyoto it happened. This Australian lady, Dr Donna Pendergast, spoke in a language I understood. She even entitled her plenary address in text talk. She was new to me in Home Economics; I was intrigued. I listened on, and realised what she was saying. Why had it never clicked with me; *Mr Kitchen gadget man*. **Home Economics and the internet = new.** This was my "wake up moment"—what if I could...

- Demonstrate food and cookware to various social demographics?
- Harness the internet for client bookings, and market HE services by digital communication. Sell my services by cross referencing on the site, i.e., a client books recipe development on line so food styling is advertised. Cleverly done to up-sell, so, say a manufacturer requires recipes for saucepans, a picture of a beautifully styled saucepan of food is displayed, or say it's for cakes, a beautifully styled cake is shown.
- Have a wow website. Raise THE professional profile.
- Make HE digital.

This is all as a result of a Plenary session entitled "is it 2 L8 4 the family?" (see Pendergast, 2004).

In short, Whisk—*a fresh approach to Home Economics* was born. The UK's only HE consultancy with a nationwide team of Home Economists working under the Whisk brand. All web-based. My business card clearly says I'm a Home Economist and the IFHE logo is there too as Whisk is a corporate member. I employ only degree-educated Home Economists. I provide quality. It's more expensive, but it's top of the league. In the UK I know when we hit our quality mark, when we are employed over the more fashionable consumer-friendly media-hyped celebrity chefs with little cost difference. We can all do this by sharing the milestones we reach in our sectors. Remember in industry we make your research a reality. You tell us how society is changing and consumer aspects of it. This tells me about how to progress brands and create safe, good-value consumer products. We display the practicalities of research in everyday life.

Home Economics in the UK is dying. Slowly and painfully, the televised Celebrity Chefs are taking the lead. I'm sure you are all aware of Jamie Oliver—a Whisk client. His food in schools, healthy eating, funky cookery—that's how we, the Home Economists, fed Britain when She was recovering after the war. We are being superseded by media personalities who know little of the skills of the home and family. Our Institute of Consumer Sciences incorporating Home Economics closed in 2006. We are Britain, we lead the world in many things, but HE? That's not a profession. I remember the day I started a dream job with the UK's leading woman's magazine—Good Housekeeping, I was a consumer researcher in the famous Good Housekeeping Institute. The UK consumer trusts Good Housekeeping's advice on quality of home goods. In the pub the night before I started, my friend Jason pulled a gingham skirt out of his bag for me and said "work uniform." I laughed but was professionally hurt. Well it shows more of him than me, but that's the attitude towards us.

I am not a chef; I would not call an engineer a mechanic. I have academic qualifications to allow me to apply my knowledge, science, marketing, and communications to consumers. I represent the manufacturer's face for cookers, saucepans, bakeware, and large and small electrical appliances in the UK and some parts of Europe.

I'm an entrepreneur who is also a Home Economist. I look for business opportunities in consumer communication. Teaching, training, styling, and developing. A young man dressed smart casual, who is always on time, but even more importantly, always available, due to his use of ICT, including: an interactive website; Blackberry with 24 hour e-mailing and texting; Skype; and other virtual communication capacities. Whisk has 68 blue chip domestic appliance clients in its portfolio. I adopt the Microsoft philosophy "work smarter not harder." It could all go wrong tomorrow; it's business, a cruel hard place. But the forecasters are in my favour – businesses based on digital culture are predicted as the future successes.

The old saying, *sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me*, is a lie. Words hurt, bones mend. We must be strong and stop letting those who look on us negatively influence our profession. In the past we have done many great things in IFHE. We were one of the first NGOs to submit a Resolution to the United Nations recommending that they designate an International Year of the Family. This Resolution became a reality when the UN General Assembly proclaimed unanimously that 1994 would be the International Year of the Family (IYF) (Arcus, 2008). Be proud of our achievements. How I get by in business is to remember the good days, the day the business jumped and had a success. As my late father taught me, there will be many more bad days than good ones, so remember and celebrate our successes.

I'm *digital*, it's how I communicate. We are a new breed, different—digital. Where do we fit in? Family, which one? Do I have one? We graze as we go rather than eat; we need new, faster, better, brighter, and smaller. We aspire to make a cake yet don't, but want and have good-value products to make it; we want information about it with no time for the practical in our home lives. Problem is, I'm a cusp X / Y Generation. I'm actually analogue like most of you—what Pendergast refers to as a digital immigrant (Pendergast, 2007). I'm only 30; it's hard to keep up—so then we have Generation Z. The oldest of them is 5–6 years old now. What are they going to be like?

B&Q is one of the UK's largest Do It Yourself (DIY) and homewares retailers. On the 27th June 2003 to national acclaim press inches (or centimetres for the metric among us) were given to a member of staff who turned 90 years old while still in employment with the company. Let me stress that my generation may also work for companies like B&Q. To help a customer with their DIY issues we may look on the web or perhaps lookup a book for the answer when this 90-year-old employee may well know the answer from life experience. As Chrissy mentioned earlier, *Information doubles, knowledge halves*. A mix of all generations produces what is required for the passing on of *life skills*, not only the knowledge, but also the implementation. Too often I hear Home Economics teachers extol the virtues of not teaching children basic cooking skills like making pastry with the justification that it can be purchased readymade. I believe it is the job of the Home Economist to continue to teach these skill as by knowing how to make items like pastry I know the science behind it, I know how this influences time and household management, and most importantly I know in my job the tolerances of handling pasty during a demonstration. I reject the claim that there is no need to know how to sew, cook, and clean. Yes, throw away socks in need of repair—this has more to do with new / humanmade fabrics that last longer and by the time they go into holes they are thin all over and totally worn out. We are in danger of becoming:

- those who know and do
- those who know but do not do
- those who just do not know.

The practical side of HE is important—we cannot eat, live, or shelter digital. So digital and analogue need to work together, especially in this time of transition.

Let's look at a sponge cake (see Supplementary Material). I don't know about you, but I do love a bit of cake. This is where I bring in *Whisk theory*. It's not scientifically analysed, but as an illustration. Think of the planets revolving around the sun like fat and sugar being creamed together to make a sponge cake—each planet spins while it turns around the sun, that's how Mr Kenneth Wood named the world's first kitchen mixer's mixing action; planetary action. So as the earth moves round the sun, so does the cake mix in the mixer bowl. The whisk spins round as it's mechanically driven around the bowl. This incorporates more air into a mixture, in turn allowing the baked product to rise well. Think of each of the planets revolving around the sun as being a family unit, some different sizes and shapes from each other- the grains of sugar in the cake mix. Each one spins a bit; our families get knocked and changed. All the planets go round the sun at different rates, but in the end all come back to the start again: That is consumerism. Fashions come and fashions go, trends disappear and come back. A good example is of one of my clients: *Rayburn, an Aga product*. In the 1960s British households were converting Rayburn cookers from solid fuel to gas or oil. Today, because of green factors, countryside management schemes, et cetera solid fuel is gaining rapidly in production share at the moment, as it is carbon neutral. It is worth bearing in mind that in the 1960s and 1970s the Home Economists were selling these new products of gas and electricity to cook on in the home—that's our job, be it industry or education; it's to guide.

Interesting eh? Back to the cake.

Think of egg being added to our cake mixture, like a big meteorite hitting earth, it goes a bit curdled and odd, but then with the addition of flour (that's us, the Home Economists), it comes ok again, reshapes, remodels and repairs. Surely that's our roll as family advocators. Whatever shape that it will be today is a new concept, it's not suburbia any more, and it's different now. We have a greater role now than ever. People don't know things any more, parents don't pass to children any more, a generation forgets. We need to stand up and say we are here. I see a family in my work as a consumer buying unit that I'm trying to market to, understand, and explain product advantages to—to provide the best value for their purse.

In my life as a Home Economist I am in business to represent the manufacturers of premium brands, to sell and communicate, but ultimately to allow the consumer to get the best value and the product they need to solve their dilemma. Commercial awareness is important. A "product advocate" if you like.

I don't want to see an article about this plenary session saying *it was lovely to see the youth present at the Centenary Congress*. I want to see you out there, fighting for our profession, standing up for our profession, as we have done for the last 100 years. But the fight needs to be less chaotic and uncoordinated—we need to understand what we are fighting for, whom we are fighting, and when the fight has been won. We are so disjointed as a profession it's time to stop talking and start doing things. This world is evolving rapidly with technological and globalisation effects. If you can't use a computer, learn. If you can't Skype, ask us, we can show you. We need you to understand and embrace new technologies to help us in our work—evangelising to a digital generation.

You can even poke me from your own living room. It's not as odd as it sounds: a poke is a virtual communication. *Ping,* it says, *I don't have time to leave a voice-mail, but I need to speak to you* so you poke the person. This cuts down further on our social contact as we poke people rather than talk to them. What does this mean for consumerism? Could you *poke your automatic washing machine* to start? Poke your local supermarket / store to deliver your food all from your computer? Yes you can. Digital is here. We are a new type of consumer. How do we do it? Well, I started this talk with the family; it's always about grass roots.

We need to change to survive. In the words of Microsoft (2007) at the launch of Windows Vista in 2007, *The "Wow" starts now*.

Celebrate the past, Create our future.

Acknowledgments

This Plenary session presentation has been sponsored by *Whisk – a fresh approach to home economics* www.whisk.biz

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Supplementary Material

Raspberry Jam Sponge
James McIntosh, Whisk Ltd www.whisk.biz

Makes 8 slices
200g (8 oz) butter, softened
200g (8 oz) caster sugar, warmed and sifted
200g (8 oz) self raising flour, warmed and sifted
4 medium eggs, at room temperature, lightly beaten
1 x 400g jar of good quality raspberry jam, warmed
248ml / ½ pint whipping cream, lightly whipped to soft peaks
200g (8 oz) fresh raspberries

Here's how to make it

- Preheat the oven to 180°C / 350°F or 170°C in an Electric Fan Oven / Gas Mark 4.
- Place the butter and sugar into a mixer and beat until light and fluffy.
- Add the eggs and mix lightly. The mix will curdle, don't panic! Consult a Home Economist.
- Tip in the flour, mixing gently to combine. Do not over mix.
- Place into a lined 23cm (9") spring form tin and place into the oven for 35-40 minutes. You know it's ready when the top springs back if gently pressed and the top is golden.
- Remove from the oven and cut in half, spread the warmed jam over one half of the sponge immediately and top with the other half. Set aside to cool.
- When cool, top with whipped cream and raspberries. Yummy.

Individual empowerment as a Home Economist

Sue L.T. McGregor PhD

Reprinted from:
Pendergast, D. (2008). Home Economics: Reflecting the past; creating the future. *Proceedings of the IFHE XXI World Congress, July 26–31, Switzerland.* Switzerland: IFHE.

Abstract

The theme of the 100th-year celebration of IFHE is Reflecting the past—Creating the future. I was given the topic of individual empowerment as a Home Economist, leading me to conclude that the conference planners believe we cannot create the future we want for the profession unless each one of us can find our own inner power, become empowered. Ellie Vaines, my friend and professional mentor, once told me that Home Economists cannot empower anyone; rather, we can facilitate a process by which people find their own inner power, voice, and agency. Dugan (2003, p.1) agrees, explaining that "if I can help you build your own power base, the power is yours, not mine." Upon hearing me say this in a class, a graduate student reframed the word empower by inverting the "em" to "me," creating the idea of me-power. I was inspired by this idea; it deeply informed today's talk.

Also, Nachshen (2004) explains that while a universal definition of empowerment may not be possible (it is such a buzzword right now), it is possible to examine empowerment in specific contexts, in our case Home Economics. She also clarifies that empowerment can exist at three levels: community, organisational, and individual. The higher number of empowered individual Home Economists we have, the more likely we are to collectively develop empowered organisations and communities (including individuals and families).

Figure 1: Ellie Vaines and Sue McGregor 1998 Finland

Three professional orientations to being a Home Economist

Before I begin this discussion, I would like to share Vaines's (1993) idea about choosing an orientation to being a Home Economist. She basically said we could opt for one of three orientations: (a) technical, (b) empowerment, or (c) we can choose not to choose an orientation. If we opt for a technical orientation to being a Home Economist, we buy into the competitive, efficiency, scarce resources, consumption, technology, economic growth, empirical science, management focused, expert, power-over, piecemeal, and fragmented approach to practice (see McGregor et al., 2004 for a detailed discussion of what this orientation looks like in practice, and Pendergast & McGregor, 2007 for a profile of Home Economics practice within the ideology of patriarchy).

If we choose not to choose an orientation to being a Home Economist, we end up practicing *individualised interpretations of the field* rather than practicing from a common, accepted philosophical position informed by scholarship and reflective dialogue. Vaines (1993) characterises this as a powerless position. McGregor and MacCleave (2007) tender a discussion of the degree of (dis)agreement about the profession's philosophical competency base, and McGregor (2004a, 2006b) offers the idea of philosophical well-being, making the case for collective agreement rather than individual stances.

Vaines (1993) then tenders an empowerment orientation for Home Economics as a third, preferred option, one that features *power with* people. From this position, Home Economists would embrace the following ideas:

- the world is a network of interrelated, living systems respecting the delicate, complex webs of life;
- people envision themselves as self-forming;
- people work together for the common good (the human condition);
- society is a community of persons actively involved in shaping a moral vision of daily life;
- power is shared;
- leadership is inclusive and transformative (power through people);
- efficiency (doing the thing right) is balanced with effectiveness (doing the right thing) and sustainability (not compromising others or other species);
- children become OUR children;
- change is a process of transformation within community;
- many ways of knowing and perceiving are essential (instead of just empirical); and,
- Home Economists are active participants and collaborators in communities.

I have embraced her empowerment orientation in this talk. Also, I concur with Mberengwa and van der Merwe (2004), also Home Economists, that empowerment creates *power that releases power* of self-cure as people gain control over their professional lives. This power leads to a more potent and efficacious sense of professional self and to more critical understandings of social and political power relationships at play. The objective is that the nurturing and release of this inner power becomes so much a part of professional life that Home Economists can unconsciously apply their understandings of self and others' power for the betterment of humanity.

Defining empowerment

Power is a measure of how much one thing or person can affect, influence, or change another. Indeed, "power" is Latin for *to be able*. Adding the prefix *em* (Latin for *in*) to power modifies the word to create *empower*, which in simple terms means to invest with power or to equip or supply with an ability; to enable. To empower also means to give authority to someone, or give the means, ability, or opportunity to do something (Answers.com, 2008). This definition may seem quite simple, but the idea of empowerment is anything but simple. There are many, many ways to define empowerment. Page and Czuba (1999) wisely suggest that a common understanding of empowerment is necessary to allow people to know it when they see it, and that this definition is framed by context and specific people. They further confirm that empowerment is: multidimensional, occurring on many levels; involves interconnected, social relationships; and, is a process, path, and journey.

To provide some common ground for this talk, I suggest that within the context of Home Economics, empowerment can be viewed as a "process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources and control over their own lives. In doing so, they gain the ability to achieve their highest personal and collective aspirations and goals" (Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda, 1998, p.91). Empowerment is the process of increasing the assets and enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and subsequent, intended outcomes (Narayan, 2002). He explains that four elements are always present when efforts to develop empowerment succeed: access to information (because information is power); inclusion and participation (who, how, and what role); accountability; and organisational capacity to work together, self-organise, and mobilize resources. This tells me that professional associations and academic training programs have to ensure these four elements are respected, if they want to ensure that individual Home Economists can find their me-power and become empowered to enable families to gain empowerment. This can happen through professional socialisation.

Professional socialisation and empowerment

Each profession has a culture, lingo, and normative experiences that define it (Kieren, Vaines, & Badir, 1984). Empowerment should be rooted in this professional culture. Home Economics is a profession into which novice members are socialised, meaning they learn this culture and how to live within it (Kieren et al.). Most significantly, the *foundation for achieving individual empowerment* is established through the professional socialisation process (Mberengwa & van der Merwe, 2004). Cornelissen (2006), a Home Economist, explains that "professional socialisation starts at the beginning of the educational programme and is a continuous, life-long process of learning formal knowledge, skills, and rules, as well as informal and tacit knowledge, norms, values and loyalties within the profession. The process gradually leads to a professional identity" (p.41). Richardson (1999) describes socialisation as a social exchange process by which people *intellectually internalise* the values, attitudes, and beliefs of their chosen profession, and develop a commitment to a professional career.

Summarising related literature, Lichty and Stewart (2000) identify three phases of socialisation into Home Economics and a related career path, phases that occur over a period of several years: (a) *the anticipatory phase*, including academic training, career preparation, development of personal expectations of their new profession and career, and acquiring their first position; (b) *the entry and induction phase*, where the newcomers first confront the differences between what they expected and what they are actually experiencing as they learn their new roles; and (c) *the continuing socialisation phase* that occurs as the newcomer learns skills, adjusts to the position and to colleagues, and begins to feel like an insider. Their last phase parallels that of Richardson (1999): a developing commitment to a professional career in Home Economics, necessitating ongoing social exchange among fellow Home Economists.

An integral part of this conversation, this professional exchange process, must be about empowerment. Home Economists must be committed to an ongoing intellectual engagement with notions of power, change, efficacy, consciousness, and making a moral and ethical difference. Vaines (1993) agrees that choosing not to choose an empowerment orientation to practice means we either rely too heavily on a technical approach or, worse yet, end up with a whole collection of individual practitioners dancing to their own tune of what it means to be a Home Economist, without consensus on a coherent, consistent, critical orientation to practice. The public sees a disjointed, fractured profession, leading to the *perception* of powerlessness and a resultant loss of legitimacy (Pendergast & McGregor, 2007). This can be very harmful for the profession, because one of the five characteristics of a recognised profession is practitioner autonomy in exercising professional judgement and public recognition of those judgements as legitimate and authorised (Jackson, 1970; Kieren et al., 1984).

Communities of practice and empowerment

To ensure that this conversation can take place, Home Economists can use their me-power to build and enrich professional communities of practice (CoPs). Practitioners in a profession must push the limits of their field of study or the body of knowledge becomes stagnant. A special kind of practice, in a special kind of community, is needed for this transcending work. CoPs are venues within which this boundary-pushing activity can have a healthy life and profoundly change practice in the field (McGregor, 2006b). CoPs are a "way of *talking about* the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action" [italics added] (Wenger, 1998 p.5). The intent of these communities of practice is to steward a particular practice, to nurture, enrich, spread, and entrench a valued contribution to the profession; hence, to the human condition. Empowerment should be about all Home Economists getting involved in solving their own, professional problems so they can better serve families in society. Empowerment can lead to new ways of learning from each other and taking action together as professionals. Personal empowerment (me-power) can lead to collective Home Economics actions that achieve collective power to break the boundaries and work on the vanguard of change. This entails a strong enough sense of self-efficacy to engage in social change agency (to be discussed shortly) (informed by Mberengwa and van der Merwe, 2004).

Self-efficacy and empowerment

Because empowerment involves a process by which people increase their intrapersonal power (Napier, 2006), those Home Economists who have found their me-power (have become empowered) will find a renewed (maybe a new) sense of self-efficacy, accompanied with a decrease in self-blame. Self-efficacy is a person's *perception* of their ability to make a difference by planning and taking action to achieve a goal; it is their belief that they are capable of successfully acting out *specific* behaviours. The higher the self-efficacy, the more likely people are to persevere, to embrace an empowerment orientation to their practice (Vaines, 1993). Also, self-efficacy affects what people will *try* to achieve, because it includes their self-confidence in their ability to successfully perform a specific type of action (McGregor, 2007).

Self-reflective capability (a person's predisposition to speculate on their actions) is closely tied with self-efficacy. It entails analysing their own experiences, thinking about their thought processes, and altering their thinking, ultimately altering their actual behaviour as a Home Economics professional. A related concept is self-regulation, wherein people think for themselves before they take action, and apply a moral compass to this intellectual exercise. Mitstifer (2006) refers to this as reflective human action theory. People can keep tabs on their professional behaviour, comparing what they observe themselves doing with internal or external norms and/or standards. Finally, linked to the process of self-regulation is self-esteem, the degree to which people have a high or low opinion of themselves (their sense of self-worth) (McGregor, 2007). Obviously, finding and releasing me-power opens the door for profoundly enriched Home Economics practice, grounded in self-esteem, self-reflection, self-regulation, and self-efficacy.

Social change and empowerment

An empowered Home Economist is a force to be reckoned with! This force can effect far-reaching social change. Indeed, an *agent* is a force that causes a change. In the case of the profession, change agents are people who deliberately try to bring about a change or an innovation, or whose actions result in change. They are conscious architects of events. Agency has the Latin root of *agere* which means "to do." *Change agency* is the state of doing, of being in action and exerting power and influence to accomplish a desired social or political end. Bennet (2000) ardently suggests that being a change agent entails knowing oneself before being able to effect change in the outside world. He submits that people have to be aware of their own biases, perceptions, capabilities, limitations, prejudices, assumptions, motives, beliefs, values, expectations, and the baggage and jewels they carry around with them. Not being aware of their inner self means people run the real risk of misunderstanding or misinterpreting the external world they encounter. If this failure to correctly understand the situation leads to harm for individuals and families, then the Home Economics professional is behaving unprofessionally and irresponsibly. Conversely, *self-knowledge* can mitigate such damage, leading to professionals who are accountable and answerable to themselves and the public at large (McGregor, 2006b).

This is another reason why it so important for individual Home Economists to find their me-power (to become empowered). Empowered people can work with others to change society at the broad level. They feel like they can advocate for change through modifying policies and practices that traditionally lead to oppression, exploitation and marginalisation of citizens (Napier, 2006). Through the insights gained from revealing their inner power and voice, Home Economists are much better positioned to help individuals and families find the resources they need to enhance *their* self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-autonomy so they can take better control of their lives, drawing on their own strengths and those of others.

Social change agents are committed to a better way and a better world. They have the courage and commitment to challenge existing power bases and arrangements and societal and cultural norms, even in the face of uncertainty, resistance, and possible failure. Such leaders do not wait around for someone else to take the lead; rather, they exhibit initiative, break bottlenecks, think outside the box, and reframe setbacks as learning opportunities. They motivate others to the cause, maybe even inspire them, so momentum is built and sustained. These Home Economics leaders care about enabling others to find *their* inner power, capabilities, and the fortitude to stay with the cause over the long haul. Finally, these politically astute and socially sensitive Home Economists find ways to work in less visible, even covert ways, while not sacrificing transparency and accountability (McGregor, 2006b).

An empowered Home Economics change agent stands a much better chance of *also* enabling individuals and families to become self-determining and connected to empowered others, perpetuating the new cycle of power-with people (Vaines's (1993) empowerment orientation to practice) (Napier, 2006; Mberengwa & van der Merwe, 2004). The alternative is not welcomed; lacking empowerment entails stress, frustration, and hopelessness (no connection to the future) because people are deprived of control and influence over their lives (Nachshen, 2004).

Personal transformation, paradigm shifts, and empowerment

Aside from power and efficacy, consciousness is another concept that underlies the notion of empowerment (Gutierrez, 1995). Consciousness is understood to be a human's ability to be aware of his or her own thoughts through the process of introspection (inward looking) and self-contemplation (Merleau-Ponty, 1945). *Consciousness raising* is a key component of personal transformations. People need to undergo personal transformations as a prelude to finding their inner power (Mberengwa & van der Merwe, 2004). From these transformations, people grow, gain strength, and develop confidence in their own capacities. This growth often comes with a price though, the loss of a familiar way of viewing the world and seeing oneself in the world; a paradigm shift (McGregor, 2006b).

Changing who we are changes how we practice (Palmer, 1998). Finding our inner voice entails changing how we know ourselves to be as a Home Economist. Because people's values, deeply held beliefs, and attitudes (worldview) are very difficult to recognise and also very difficult to change, the process of personal transformation is challenging. But, Home Economists owe it to themselves and others to make a concerted, orchestrated effort to look deep inside and have the courage to find their inner voice and power so they can stand on their principles and professional philosophy (their me-power base) when they practice. Two useful theories to help Home Economists appreciate the tensions and complexity of clarifying and then transforming their world views (as a tool for finding their me-power) are transformative learning and transformative education. Although transformative learning can occur during events happening in a person's life course, transformative education best happens if it is planned for and facilitated (McGregor, 2008). Without going into detail, I recommend that Home Economists familiarise themselves with these two theories, and use the insights they gain: (a) to appreciate the process involved when living through a disorienting dilemma that leads to (un)intended and life changing inner reflection, and (b) to encourage professional associations to plan transformative educational experiences that help Home Economists find their me-power. As a start, I humbly offer two works I have written that deal with my lived experiences of transformative learning (McGregor, 2004b) and transformative education (McGregor, 2008). Both experiences contributed to my ongoing journey of building my me-power base from which I practice my profession.

Empowerment as an expert novice and integral specialist

So far, I have developed the case for why it is important for Home Economists to gain individual empowerment and, to a lesser extent, how they might go about this personal journey. This entailed weaving together the ideas of orientations to being a Home Economist (privileging the empowerment orientation), purposeful professional socialisation, creating communities of practice, building self-efficacy, becoming a change agent, and intentionally striving for personal transformation and paradigm shifts (or at least paradigm clarification). The result should be stronger, wiser, philosophically-well Home Economists, secure in their own power and voice. But, saying each Home Economist should find his or her me-power is not enough. I feel compelled to explore what this power base might comprise, given today's realities. To help me do this, I turn to a fellow Home Economist, Donna Pendergast from Australia.

Figure 2: Donna Pendergast

Pendergast (2001) wisely coined the phrase *expert novice* to describe a new approach to practice. Instead of assuming a technical orientation to practice, being just a technical expert, Home Economists can strive to be an expert at being a novice. Because the world, people and communities are changing so fast, we have to change too. To do that, we have to become amenable to expecting change, and become comfortable with continually having to learn new things while letting go of expertise if it is not meeting the needs of society anymore. This means being secure in who we are as a professional.

Along the same line of thinking, Kaiji Turkki (Finland) offers us the idea of an *integral specialist*. She tenders a new definition of *specialisation* (rejecting the term generalist), explaining that if we choose to see Home Economics as holistic and integrated (rather than a collection of experts in separate subjects and content areas), we would all become new kinds of *specialists* with "expertise that integrates, links bridges, coordinates and communicates" (2006, p.46). With these new innovations in mind (expert novice and integral specialist), the next section of this paper will offer suggestions of what this me-power base might comprise, given the demands and opportunities individuals and families face in the 21st century.

Figure 3: Kaija Turkki

To help me set up this discussion, I will use the metaphor of the journey, because empowerment is a process akin to a journey. Members of any profession are always on a professional journey. The etymology of journey is Middle English for *a day's travel*. By my rudimentary calculations, Home Economists have been traveling for over 36,500 days to get to their current professional crossroads (365 days per year times 100 years). Many individual members of this professional community may be tired travelers that have reached a decisive point in time—they have reached the proverbial crossroads (McGregor, 2006a).

Figure 4: Crossroads

One has to wonder about the nature of the conversations unfolding at this juncture in our 36,500 -step, 100-year-long journey. People who are tired and lost (fading inner me-power) often ask the locals, who know nothing of the preceding journey, for directions; they engage in trivial small talk rather than substantive conversations (the Latin word *trivia* literally means "three roads") (McGregor, 2006a). In a recent analysis of Home Economics thinking, I discovered evidence that several individuals are engaged in deep reflection and dialogue, striving to be unwavering and resolute in their contemplations about the 21st-century vision for the profession (McGregor, in press). If each of us stopped to take the time to reflect on these new directions, to see how well they resonated with our perception of what it means to be a Home Economist, I am convinced that many of us would become newly and refreshingly empowered, would find a new inner voice from which to practice.

Figure 5 (at end of paper) presents a summary of the leading-edge, proposed elements of a 21st-century Home Economics philosophy from which to find individual empowerment as a practitioner (McGregor, in press). These ideas are contrasted with those that we have carried with us during the last century, and used to draw strength and define who we are as Home Economists. We embraced integrative and holistic practice rather than integral practice; multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary practice instead of transdisciplinarity; transactional and transmissional management instead of transformative leadership; complicated, perennial family problems instead of complex, emergent social problems of humanity; the scientific way of knowing rather than critical, narrative, and other ways of knowing; fragmented specialisations and separate subjects rather than practicing from a common philosophical base; effective and efficient practice to ensure well-being and quality of life rather than efficacy to enhance the human condition; and isolated and disconnected individual actions rather than communities of practice based on rich webs of relationships.

As well, we valued balance, certainty, and security and tried to reduce tension, conflict, and change. We avoided chaos and hoped for constancy. We saw our body of knowledge as subject-centred rather than agency-centred. We operated within the confines of patriarchy rather than trying to position Home Economics beyond the boundaries of this crippling ideology. We were coopted into the capitalistic, consumer-centred economy instead of opting for consumer citizenship and mindful economies of care and locality. We strived for mastery of content and specialisations and aspired to be technical experts instead of fostering stewardship and empowerment. Home was a place for shelter and furnishings, rather than the centre of humanity. We accepted Newtonian science as the basis for all knowing, leading to fragmented approaches to practice and problem solving rather than embracing the new sciences (chaos theory, quantum physics, and living systems theory). We focused on competent practice rather than on education for life competence. Our pedagogies involved transactional and transmissional learning rather than transformational learning and authentic pedagogies that value the lived experiences of students. We took daily life for granted, assuming it could be managed rather than advocating that everyday life is sacred for humanity necessitating reflective leadership. The list goes on.

Brown (1993), McGregor et al. (2004), and Pendergast and McGregor (2007) have shouted loudly... this way of knowing ourselves as Home Economists was not wrong, just not enough. Times changed, families changed, the world changed. As we worked harder and harder, yet saw families face wider and deeper challenges, some of us began to lose confidence in who we are—our individual inner power diminished and our social agency and political influence declined right along with it. This pattern of socialisation in the profession need not continue. There are new voices shining their light into our future (see Figure 5). We can draw on their messages for strength as we look deep inside to explore our personal and professional philosophies (belief systems about what it means to be a Home Economist) and decide if we need to change—to transform and morph into someone new. Profession-wide, individual empowerment will generate profound energy upon which we can all draw as we practice in the 21st century. It starts with each one of us, and grows. Individual empowerment as a Home Economist is our future imperative.

Figure 6: Stand together in our me-power

Source: http://www.oxford.anglican.org/files/images/stand.jpg

We all need to stand up with pride and say, "I am strong. I stand within my power and gather energy, ideas, and people around me. I am a pioneer, working on the edge, having fun while I do it. Families, communities, the human condition and the planet matter; hence, Home Economists matter because, *from our new me-power base*, we can help others become energised, focused, relentless change agents for the good of humanity."

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Figure 5: Emerging elements of professional philosophy, new foundation for me-power

Expert Novice Integral Specialist Efficacy Change

Reflective human action Respect chaos emergence

Human protection Home as habitation Empowerment

Transdisciplinarity Transformative Citizenship

Celebratory, reflective leadership Human Condition

Communities of Practice Education *around* sustainability

Inner Me-Power Base

Qualities of living Home as place for humanity

Wholesight—many ways of knowing New sciences

Education for life competence Integral practice beyond patriarchy stewardship

Holomovement Authentic pedagogy Everyday life is sacred

Web of complex relationships Human security Body of knowledge is agent-centred

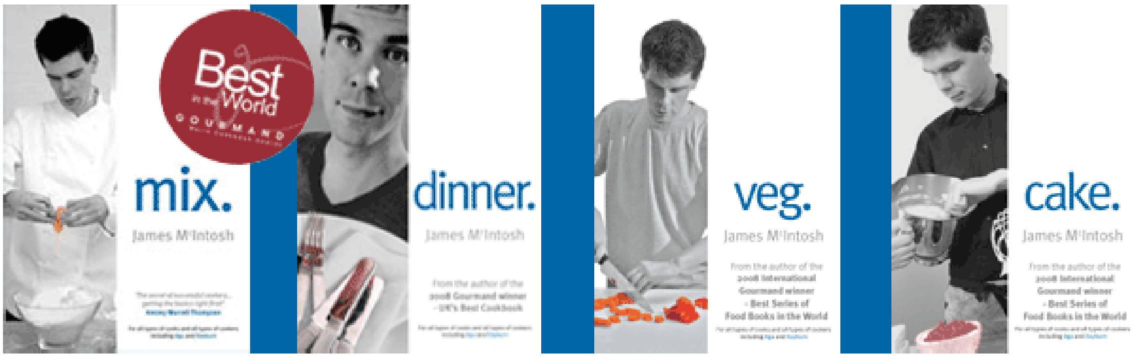
Patterns Multiple levels of reality Critical consciousness raising

Source of image: http://tbn0.google.com/images?q=tbn:WaGHHqviAzV3aM:http://www.galleryofinspiration

Book series review: mix.

mix., dinner., veg., cake.

Caitlyn Reynolds (17) & Geoffrey Reynolds (18 ¾)



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Two Australian MilGenners were asked to review the James McIntosh cookbook series. McIntosh aimed the books at a basic level to show how to "cook for a family on an everyday budget [...] how to prepare food with little or no waste [...and how to] produc[e] home-cooked food that's not complicated to make. No fiddle, no fuss, just food." His target market includes "young people who want to learn to make great everyday meals" so we thought we'd find some of the people who have featured a great deal in this issue of the International Journal of Home Economics.

Caitlyn Reynolds

I've been cooking for a while now so I've developed as a cook to a stage where I can remember recipes by heart. I know what tastes good together and I'm making my own recipes. However, when I started it was a completely different story. The recipes that were available for me were complicated and used unfamiliar terminology. There was many a trip to Wikipedia. Having a set of books like James McIntosh's would have been a godsend. Most recipes are basic and uncomplicated with easy to understand language. The books don't assume I have copious amounts of prior knowledge and most things are well explained. There aren't many ingredients or steps which also makes this an easy to understand set of books.

I made three recipes: lamingtons, chicken mushroom pie, and macaroni and cheese. They were all quick, easy and achievable. I understood everything that was required and enjoyed making them. Most importantly, though, they tasted good. However, the cook books themselves aren't much to look at. What can I say? As a Milgenner, I like pictures and colours.

Geoffrey Reynolds

I made one complicated recipe, the Red Velvet Cake, and also flipped through all four books. Whoa, that's a lot of recipes! 170! There were some terms and practices I was unfamiliar with. For example, AGA, GCSE, Rayburn, cast iron, glacé cherries, coley, putting shallots on a skewer (I think Australians call spring onions *shallots*), dessert apple, clove, knob butter, cracked or Bulgar wheat, star anise.

Search Facility

I found an explanation of the difference between bi carb and baking soda but I can't find it again. An electronic or online version that I can search would be a nifty feature.

Weird

Some of the stuff seemed a bit odd like using meat waste to make gravy. Beetroot in a cake. Chilli in a cake, wait, what? I was disappointed that the tomato sauce was for having on pasta and was not a condiment.

Cool!

I enjoyed the comments and trivia, like "Get tore in," as an Irish phrase and that the word *chowder* comes from New England. I guess it's weird that I like the trivia more than the recipes. Some cool things include the kitchen blowtorch (yeah!), the recipe for Bloody Mary vegetables with vodka. I'd make that just to see what it tasted like. Tips and variations, trivia, how to cook rice, kitchen blowtorch , oh and quick and easy recipes.

The author says that many men find cookbooks daunting but I don't find cookbooks daunting at all. I do agree that these are basic cookbooks and most of my questions were based on regional availability of ingredients rather than skill level. There's not much microwave cooking but there were very quick stovetop recipes. I've seen some cookbooks that have a full A4 page on how to make a cake, and this has one tiny page per recipe. I think that's what's meant by basic. I don't think it means simple like mashed potatoes.

I would use these books if I left home because the meals sound edible. Vegetable fried rice sounds pretty good and easy. There's a great description on how to cook rice. I always screw up my rice and this recipe is 20 minutes on the stove, which is not much longer than in the microwave. The explanations at the bottom of the recipes are practical and at the start of the *cake.* book it tells you what might have happened if your cake fails. I like how the author sorts *dinner.* into main, starters and accompaniments. That's helpful. I like how it has lots of suggestions for other ways to use the recipes.

Red Velvet Cake

The recipe itself is rather straight forward but my inexperience with cakes (it was my first) made it harder. The use of a specific type of cake tin was a little annoying because we didn't have two of a kind, so I used two different shaped ones. The recipe used a lot of food colouring—I barely had enough—and it had unexpected day-after results. The American icing took a lot of time and elbow grease (I used a whisk). The total upside is that the cake tasted delicious and despite the time and complexity of the recipe, I *will* make it again.

Biographies

Caitlyn (born 1992)

Caitlyn has just turned 17 and is in her final weeks of high school, where she took *Home Economics: Cooking* to year 10 but discontinued due to the very traditional style of teaching. She bakes to de-stress and developed her own gooey chocolate pudding recipe. Caitlyn enjoys cooking shows like Masterchef and Jamie Oliver, and likes to whip up a variety of pasta sauces for penne or gnocchi. As a female in a media-saturated age, Caitlyn is overly aware of her body image, and knows how to maintain her weight through food choices.

Geoffrey (born 1991)

Geoff is 18 ¾ and taking a rest from university where he normally studies History. He can cook spaghetti bolognaise, pizza (if he has a base to start with), crumbed chicken breast, mashed potatoes, and steamed vegetables. He can follow instructions on pre-packaged food. He has always been a fussy eater, doesn't like beans and won't eat steak but has recently discovered Cajun seasoning and alternates between that, and mixed herbs. He occasionally gets a spatula mixed up with an egg flip. He recently spent a whole week cooking for the family while his mother was away—normally he cooks one night a week. As Geoff flipped through the books he had more questions than comments.

Notes for Contributors

Frequency of publication

Twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year to e-mail: editor@IFHEJournal.org.

Focus

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Contributors

The International Journal of Home Economics welcomes contributions from members and non-members, from a variety of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives.

Author's biography

Please provide a brief (less than 100 words) paragraph for each author, including current role or memberships and an E-mail address for correspondence. For example:

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Manuscripts

Manuscripts should be sent electronically to Associate Professor Donna Pendergast, School of Education by E-mail at d.pendergast@uq.edu.au. Please send files as a Microsoft Word document (doc) or in Rich Text Format (rtf). Paper length should not exceed 6000 words. Each document should be double-spaced, with generous margins.

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References should follow the American Psychological Association system (APA Publications Manual, 5th Edition).

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Pendergast, D. (2001). *Virginal mothers, groovy chicks & blokey blokes: Re-thinking Home Economics (and) teaching bodies*. Sydney: Australian Academic Press

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McGregor, S. L. T. (2007a). Consumer scholarship and transdisciplinarity. *International Journal of Consumer Studies, 31*(5), 487–495.

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International Journal of Home Economics

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ISSN 1999-561X