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Publication in IJHE provides wide exposure to journal articles and adds to the professional literature base of the field. Theoretical papers, literature reviews, and a wide range of genres along with research papers are invited for publication in the journal. As editor, I strongly encourage submissions to the International Journal of Home Economics.

In this issue a diverse collection of refereed papers are presented. Sue McGregor, Jay Deagon and I continue to ponder the philosophical questions related to our field, sharing ideas and offering thought provoking questions. Sue McGregor authors a paper that makes a case for augmenting three current home economics best practices with three vanguard next practices: (a) (eco)systems thinking with complexity thinking; (b) integrated with integral; and, (c) well-being and quality of life with the human condition, via the three systems of action philosophy, and human ecosystem theory. Jay Deagon and I present a paper that is based on the history of the field, with a focus on the place of spirituality. We weave together an insider home economist perspective of spiritual knowledges through two historical phases - the early years of home economics (1901-1915); and the middle years of home economics (1923-1992). There is a taken-for-granted assumption that spirituality is, and was always intended to be, a part of home economics and in this study we set out to investigate this assumption.

Extending these ideas into the challenge of contemporary times and engaging home economics leaners, June Matthews & Lesley Macaskill share their experience when students were asked to produce an informative and persuasive video for a Canadian online audience that addressed either the value and importance of Home Economics, or the aims of the United Nations’ 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

In this issue several applied studies investigate phenomenon related to home economics practice. Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil reports on a survey study designed to extend understanding of intergenerational communication from an Egyptian perspective with 35 respondents in the younger group and 46 respondents in the older group. Manpreet Chahal, Seem Sekhri & Ritu Mathur report on the development of demand-driven, disability-specific vocational training modules in garment manufacturing processes for persons in India with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment. Continuing the focus on textiles, Dolly Mogra shares her paper which details block printing as an ancient craft form of Rajasthan and outlines its demise due to a range of factors. Suggested measures such as skill oriented training programmes, marketing support, organised production with quality system, customer support, new product invention, timely availability of raw material and resources, improvement in infrastructure, government and other institutional assistance are proposed as methods to revive the traditional hand block printing profession.
The final refereed paper for this issue is authored by B.O. Ogunba & T. Otunla. With a focus on mutirion knowledge, this study investigated the knowledge of mothers regarding malnutrition and child care. Two hundred mothers in the case study hospital were selected randomly for the study. A structured interview schedule was used to assess the perception of mothers on the cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor in children, maternal knowledge on malnutrition and child care.

The final paper in this issue is not peer reviewed. Submitted by Wolfgang Chr. Fischer, this personal opinion piece aims to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the significance of private household production and hence it is of relevance for the field.

Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD
Editor, IJHE
Younger and elder generation's perceptions of communication with family and non-family members in Alexandria

Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil
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Abstract

The study seeks to understand communication perception and tendencies in younger and older respondents in Alexandria, Egypt, with regard to intra- and intergenerational communication, as well as self-disclosure in individuals aged 60 to 80 and young adults aged 18 to 25, in an attempt to learn more about communication topics. This is in order to define the best practices that the family should follow to preserve a knit family and strengthening the relationship between the generations. Two questionnaires were constructed that asked both closed and open-ended questions. Results suggest that the older generation tends to adapt to find a common interest with the younger generation. It is impossible to ascertain the depth of these conversations. Research findings regarding attitudes towards aging and the elderly in Alexandrian cultures are equivocal. This is likely the case in those cultures that have experienced exponential economic and technological boom in the last few decades where older people may have been left behind by the rush for business growth and modernisation. Nevertheless, there are suggestions that elderly individuals command a powerful and respected role in Alexandria cultural contexts. Younger generation believe that elderly people should be respected and that it is the offspring’s responsibility, especially that of the eldest son and his spouse in rural and urban regions, to care for parents and grandparents in their old age.

Key words: family, intergeneration communication, elder generation, younger generation, grandparents, grandchildren, best practices.

Introduction

Becoming a grandparent is an important step in adult life. For many people it is a joyful one, opening up possibilities for the grandparents themselves, for the grandchildren, and for the parents. Grandchildren provide a new focus for family relationship and can rekindle the kind of intimacy that might have been lost along the way– enriching lives across three generations. A difference in values and attitudes between one generation and another, especially between young people and their parents can occur.

Relationships beyond the immediate family (mother, father, sisters and brothers) can make a positive contribution to children’s emotional development and sense of themselves. An independent and developing relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is invaluable for everybody.
Perhaps the most important part of being a grandparent is having a second chance. Through the relationship with their grandchildren, grandparents can try and do better some of the things they felt less happy about as parents. And they can do again, or strengthen, what went well the first time round. Not only can they form new relationships with their grandchildren, they can also repair and rework the old ones - with their children.

Changes in infant mortality, epidemiology and life expectancy since the 1960s have led to demographic shifts in the world’s population. One consequence of such changes is a dramatically increasing proportion of elders in the population of almost every nation around the globe (Madey, 2000). Attempts are made to bridge the generation gap. The study examines the intergenerational communication attempts made by younger and older participants. Self-disclosure can be defined as a process of communication in which a sender deliberately reveals information about oneself that is significant and would not normally be known by others (Adler, Rosenfeld, & Proctor, 2007). While there are numerous contextual and personality factors at play when one determines whether or how deeply to self-disclose, the initial assumption was that a difference exists in self-disclosure levels of younger and older people. Additionally, it was assumed that when these two generations communicate with one another, the levels of self-disclosure would be different than if the groups were communicating within their own age group. The study seeks to understand communication perception and tendencies in younger and older respondents in Alexandria, Egypt, with regard to intra- and intergenerational communication, as well as self-disclosure in individuals aged 60 to 80 and young adults aged 17 to 25, in an attempt to learn more about communication topics; to define the best practices that the family should follow to preserve a knit family and strengthen the relationship between the generations.

Literature Review

Self-disclosure is the telling of the previously unknown so that it becomes shared knowledge, the “process of making the self known to others” (Jourard & Lasakow, 1958). Self-disclosure is dependent on the context and circumstances (Bette, 2010). As many people may have experienced, too much self-disclosure too soon can lead to problems. Those who disclose intimate details tend to be liked more than those who don’t.

People disclose more to people they like. Also, people prefer those to whom they have previously disclosed. The last two points effectively create a bond between a given characters. As with many elements of communication, the understanding of the disclosure the perception by the recipient is as important as the sender’s self-disclosure itself. The idea that self-disclosure is important in relationships is no big surprise. But while it may be easy to understand in principle, the complexity of the process means it is much harder to do in practice. The art of self-disclosing, then, is giving information to others in the right way and at the right time. Receiving intimate information is no less of a skill, involving the verbal and nonverbal communication of understanding (Dean, 2007).

Tracy Schmidt and Randolph Cornelius evaluated the content of self-disclosures of college students aged 20-23 (Schmidt & Cornelius, 1987). The majority of reasons for self-disclosure involved information sharing and sharing of feelings, although some students admitted to a strategy in relationship maintenance with a friend as the reason for disclosing. The students
also benefited from self-disclosure, as they saw the act helped them to become the kind of person they would like to be. This point is especially important in intergenerational communication, especially if the younger perceives the older generation as possessing desirable knowledge. In her article *Self-Disclosure with Friends across the Life Cycles*, Fran Dickson-Markman argues that throughout the lifespan, there is no real difference in amount, depth, honesty and intent of self-disclosure, which indicates that peer relationships across the life span are more similar than they are different. Her major finding was that as age increases, the negative valence of self-disclosure increases. Dickson-Markman also shows a correlation between length of friendship and the degree and amount of self-disclosure, which, when combined with her primary findings—indicates the need for longitudinal studies regarding this subject (Dickson-Markman, 1986). Ngozi Nkongho’s research focused on 107 elderly men and women from 6 senior centres in New York City who completed *Lohman’s Life Satisfaction Scale* and a modified version of Moriwaki’s self-disclosure questionnaire. As would probably be expected, what an elderly person disclosed to friends and to an adult child were different. Nkongho found that adult children typically receive disclosures related to Body and Health, and Financial and Living Conditions. Friends of the elderly, on the other hand, were the recipients of disclosures involving Achievement, Roles, Personality, Social Relations and Attitudes and Opinions. Perhaps most importantly to the field of general disclosure, Nkongho found a correlation between the amount a person would self-disclose and their general well-being. Regardless, this provides adequate evidence that individuals maintain different relationships in order to meet different needs (Nkongho, 1985). Magai, Consedine, Fiori and King (2008) examined changes in 200 African-Americans’ and European-Americans’ depressive symptomology, stress, sad and happy mood, and self-reported health as it relates to self-disclosure. After 4 weeks, health symptomology declined over time as the subjects disclosed more, indicating a correlation between health and self-disclosure (Magai et al., 2008). Jaye Bonnesen and Mary Hummert evaluated the quality of both painful self-disclosures (PSD) and non-painful self-disclosures (NPSD). They found that those who listened to the PSDs found them to be more painful, more intimate and less appropriate than NPSDs. The elderly people who utilised PSDs were more likely to be seen as fitting the negative stereotypes of the elderly as opposed to the positive stereotypes (Bonnesen & Hummert, 2002). Valerie Barker’s (2004) research agrees with Bonnesen and Hummert (2002). Barker (2004) takes the position that the PSDs of grandparents represent a form of identity management. From the perception of the adult grandchildren, grandmothers tended to disclose more and their disclosures were more indicative of PSDs than grandfathers, who were viewed through a more cynical lens. Grandfathers were perceived to be more strategic in their PSDs and were more likely to be perceived as using PSDs for control (Barker, 2004). Jeanne Tschann (1988) examined the element of self-disclosure and how it changes across gender and marital status lines. Intimate disclosure of married men to friends was found to be lower than that of unmarried men, and women irrespective of their marital status. The non-intimate disclosure level of all married persons was found to be lower than that of all unmarried people. This suggests that having a spouse fulfils a large part of the need for self-disclosure (Tschann, 1988).
Methodology

Two questionnaires (adapted from Bettes, 2010), one for an older generation and one for a younger generation, were constructed that asked both closed and open-ended questions that examined amount, depth, satisfaction, and topics of self-disclosure. Demographic data of gender, education, and age were collected for each group. Participants in the younger generation ranged from 16 to 25 with the most commonly occurring age group being 16-23. Participants in the older populations ranged from 60 to 80 with the most commonly occurring age group as 60-75. Participants were asked to answer what the top 3 topics were that they talk about with their peers, and then asked to answer what the top 3 topics were that they talk about with the opposite-aged population. In the majority of surveys, the participants indicated their top 3 choices by placing a number in the blank next to the answer. In a limited number of other cases, participants simply check-marked or placed an X in three blanks. In order to accept the answers of as many surveys as possible while respecting the salience of the viewpoints, six points were assigned to each question. A numeric answer translated into a specific number of points: 1=3 points; 2=2 points; and 3=1 point. In the event that a participant checked three answers without regard to order, all three answers were given a value of two points.

Research questions

- R1: What topics do older individuals talk about most often with their peers and what topics do older individuals most often talk about with younger individuals?
- R2: Which age group do older individuals most often talk to?
- R3: Which age group do older individuals most like to talk to?
- R4: Which group of people do older individuals talk to the most?
- R5: Which groups of people do older individuals feel most comfortable and least comfortable talking with?
- R6: Which topics do younger individuals most often talk about with their peers and which topics do younger individuals most often talk about with older individuals?
- R7: Which age group do younger individuals most often talk to?
- R8: Which age group do younger individuals most like to talk to?
- R9: Which group of people do younger individuals talk to the most?
- R10: Which groups of people do younger individuals feel most comfortable and least comfortable talking with?

Results

There were 15 males and 20 females (35 in total) in the younger group and 22 males and 24 females (46 in total) in the older group that participated in the study (Table 1).
A result of the first two questions, in the older participants’ response to question 1, the most talked-about topics between older individuals and peers was reported to be Current events/political issues, Family issues, and Health and wellness issues (Table 2). When the older participants were asked about intergenerational communication, they indicated they were most likely to talk about Family, Entertainment and Current Events/Political issues (Table 2).

Question 3 asked the participants: which age group they most often talk to? The older generation had a wider distribution of answers, though the top two answers for the older generation were the age groups of 50-59, 60-69, and 70-79. No answers were received for those aged under 20, and over 80 (Table 3). Out of the age groups that participants disclosed to, they were asked which they most liked to talk to. The highest number of responses from the older participants was in the 50-59 and 60-69 categories. The choices offered above 80, received zero response (Table 3).
followed by family members and finally acquaintances from social situations. Grandchildren or younger people and doctors and nurses each received zero responses (Table 4). To measure who people feel most comfortable self-disclosing to, participants were asked who they felt most comfortable talking—and, disclosing—to. The older population indicated that family members, friends and Grandchildren/younger people were the groups of people they felt most comfortable disclosing to: doctors and nurses, and acquaintances from social situations received no responses (Table 4). The opposite question was also asked of the older population to evaluate which group of people they felt least comfortable self-disclosing to. A majority of respondents indicated that doctors and nurses were the group that they felt least comfortable talking to. Complementing the previous question, no older respondents answered friends or family members (Table 4).

Table 4 Older participants’ response to the question “Which group of people do you talk to the most?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group (older)</th>
<th>% group of people do you talk to the most</th>
<th>% group of people feel most comfortable talking to</th>
<th>% group of people do you felt least comfortable self-disclosing to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandchildren</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintances from social situation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger people</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The younger generation completed a similar survey for purposes of comparison. When asked what they talked about most with peers, the younger participants’ responses were somewhat more diverse than those of the older participants and included Entertainment, Friends and Family as the top responses (Table 5).

Table 5 Topics the younger population indicated they talk most about with their peers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>% younger participants talked about most with peers</th>
<th>% topics they were most likely to discuss with those people older than them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and wellness issues (fitness)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current social and living situation</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances and expenditures</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishments / self-history</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current events/political issues</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conversely, the survey asked younger participants what topics they were most likely to discuss with those people older than them. The most participant answers to this question

8
were Current events/political issues, Accomplishments/self-history and Family, with Current social/living situations closely following behind (Table 5).

When the younger participants were asked what age group they most often talked to, their responses were more homogenous: 86% of the responses were in two categories—under 20 and 20-29. In addition, no responses in the younger participants’ survey indicated that they mostly talk to the following age groups: 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and 80 and above (Table 6).

Table 6 Younger participants’ responses to the question, “Which age group do you most often talk to and they most liked to talk to?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>% age group they most often talked to</th>
<th>% age group they most liked to talk to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 80</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked which age group they most liked to talk to, the younger participant, similar to survey question 3, primarily selected as their answers 20-29 and under 20. There were fewer categories without any responses for this question; only the 60-69 category received zero responses (Table 6).

The younger participants’ responses were very similar to those of the older participants for survey question number 6, asking which group of people they talk to the most. The most common answer was Friends, followed by family members and then acquaintances from social situations. The category “grandchildren or younger people” remained an option for the younger participant on questions 4 through 7, when it should have been changed to “grandparents or older people” to measure comfort, or lack thereof, in intergenerational communication. As was the case with the older participants’ response to this question, doctors and nurses and grandchildren or younger people received zero responses (Table 7).

Table 7 Younger participants’ responses to the question, “Which group of people do you talk to the most?” and “Which group of people do you feel most comfortable talking to?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Which group of people do you talk to the most?”</th>
<th>% group of people they...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>talk to the most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparents</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintances from social situations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandchildren or younger people</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When younger participants were asked which group of people they felt most comfortable talking with, the response was remarkably similar to that of the older participant. The responses indicated by the younger participants were friends, family members and Grandparents (Table 7).

Participants were then asked what they believed their reasons were for feeling comfortable in intergenerational communication. The questions were left open ended and were then compiled into generalised categories. The older participants indicated the factor that contributed most to their comfort level was the fact that many in the participants were used to relating to younger people via children or students. Other answers that arose included an interest in the lives of younger people, as well as similar experiences. The largest factor that makes some in the older participant uncomfortable with intergenerational interaction is the difference in interests between both groups. One participant reported they could not “see from their perspective,” while another said they did not want “to be seen as old-fashioned.” The factors contributing to comfort for the younger respondents were primarily the perceived wisdom, experience and knowledge of the elderly. Respondents also indicated that they felt older people would be likely to listen and be understanding. Many younger people also indicated a fear of being judged by the older people.

Discussion

In peer-to-peer communications in the older participants, Family, Current events/political issues and Health and Wellness issues were the topics the participants reported discussing most often. While it is impossible to ascertain the depth of these conversations, the subject matter suggests that the older participants tend to have surface-level conversations with their peers. When older individuals are communicating inter-generationally, the results of this survey suggest older people tend to adapt to find a common interest with the younger participants. Family is the number one response, likely because many who are over 60 have the most intergenerational contact with younger family members.

The next two categories in order are Entertainment and Current events/political issues. This may suggest that while older participants may try to adapt to the younger person’s choice of topics, they still retain a strong degree of independence in choice of topics.

The results suggest that older individuals have a tendency to talk most to people around their own age range. The survey suggests that even though many of the respondents are not particularly uncomfortable for a variety of reasons (the most-often-cited reason for older people being comfortable is that they have children or students that age), they may still prefer to talk to people of their own age. A limitation of this study that ties into several research questions is that the older adults who participated in this study were largely teachers, employers and business men, and therefore may have all the interaction they desire with individuals 20-29.

The study indicated the older participant was nearly evenly divided regarding who they talked to the most. Friends and Family were the top two responses. The third most popular response was Acquaintances from social situations. Older people indicated that Friends and Family were the groups of people the older population reported they were most comfortable talking
to, presumably indicating that older people would prefer to talk more with these two groups of people, as opposed to Acquaintances from social situations, older participants believe that doctors and nurses are impatient to discuss or even to listen to their chief complaints. Further study is needed to focus on social pressures on individuals to interact a certain way with people they may otherwise avoid.

Research questions 6-10 were essentially the same, only focusing on the younger participants. Younger individuals tend to have more surface-level conversations with their peers, as evidenced by the fact that the highest-ranking topic younger people discuss is Entertainment. When younger individuals have conversations with those older than them though, the most-discussed topics include Current events/political issues, Accomplishments/self-history, and Family. Interestingly, the study shows an ideology gap between younger and older people, politics seems to be a fairly common topic of intergenerational conversation, as evidenced by the fact that the subject is on both groups’ highest-ranked intergenerational discussion topics. It seems reasonable to conclude that younger people talk to older people about issues such as current events to gain insight into a different point of view, as younger people overwhelmingly said that knowledge and experience are the factors that drive them to interact with older individuals.

Responding to research question 7, the survey indicated that younger people, like their older counterparts, gravitated toward people their own age or slightly younger. This is further shown by the response to question 8: the younger participants’ responses of who they like to talk to are much less evenly distributed than the comparable survey question for the older participants and heavily inclined toward the younger age groups.

With regards to Table 7, the survey showed the younger individuals as more likely to talk to friends the most (43.0%), followed closely by family members (31.0%). Only 6% of respondents indicated that they talk most with social acquaintances. Interestingly, a majority of younger participants indicated they were most comfortable talking with family members (35.0%), even though they talked to friends more often. This could indicate that the younger participants hold superficial conversations with friends, while they disclose more deeply to family members.

The question asking younger participants which group of people they felt least comfortable with yielded probably the most surprises in the survey. A majority of younger participants indicated they feel least comfortable talking to doctors (51.0%) and nurses. In the survey administered, the most-cited reason that younger people feel uncomfortable talking to older individuals was a perceived lack of understanding in the older population. A significant number of younger individuals indicated a fear of being judged by their older counterparts as well.

Bonneson and Hummert (2002) and Barker (2004) describe pitfalls for older individuals to avoid. Painful self-disclosures, described by Bonneson and Hummert as negative, intimate self-disclosures, tended to make recipients of such more cognisant of the negative stereotypes of elderly individuals. When asked about the PSDs, adult grandchildren viewed the PSDs, especially those by grandfathers, as manipulative. Further research should evaluate
the reception of self-disclosure and communication attempts between generations in a
greater capacity than in a grandparent-grandchild dyad. Still, the benefits of self-disclosure
are likely to outweigh any potential consequences. Elderly people who self-disclose have a
higher sense of well-being (Nkongho, 1985). There is also a positive correlation between self-
disclosure and health (Magai et al., 2008). Further research could focus on those elements of
the questionnaire that were omitted from the study due to space constraints, including depth
of self-disclosure in peer-to-peer and intergenerational conversations, desire of populations
to communicate more or less with peers and with those younger or older than them, and
comparative comfort levels of self-disclosures of individuals of different ages.

Additionally, since the attitudes regarding communication and self-disclosure of all people of
a specific age group are not homogenous; it may be beneficial in future research to evaluate
factors such as marital status. As was mentioned before, Tschann (1988) found people who
are married are less likely to deeply disclose to friends, as their communication needs are
more fulfilled by having a spouse.

Further limitations to this study include a lack of random sampling in the participants, the
respondents in the older population responded to a solicitation to complete the survey, and
the younger participants were also self-selected. In addition, the younger population was
more diverse in age range, from 17-23 years old, and the younger population was more
responsive to requests for surveys, delivering roughly double the number of completed
surveys as did the older participant. Allowing survey questions 1 and 2 to be more open-ended
questions would facilitate a wider variety of responses, but may make it more difficult to
identify trends.

The research reported here is important for a number of reasons. First, it has helped to
extend understanding of intergenerational communication from an Egyptian perspective.
Second, by comparing intergenerational communication with intra-generational
communication, it has helped to better clarify what aspects of communication may be more
or less positive within a clearer frame of reference. Third, it has indicated that
intergenerational communication may indeed be more enjoyable with family members than
with non-family members, and hence greater attention should be directed to this distinction
in future communication-oriented research. Clearly, more research is necessary.

Biography

Dr Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil, associate professor of household management and
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Descartes University (France). She proposed the vision and mission for Home
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appointment, she served seven years as a lecturer of Home Economics at
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Mona’s research interest focuses on family resources
management, daily life activities, consumer behaviour, household environment,
food consumption and Home Economics education.
References


Creating sustainable livelihoods for persons with disability in garment manufacturing units

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Abstract

Growing awareness about the employability of persons with disabilities and acute skill shortage in the Indian garment manufacturing industry has triggered interest in finding manpower among them. Their highly developed alternative senses and training in daily living skills, mobility, use of aids and appliances, social skills and so on would help them to adjust to their disability and perform at par with the able-bodied. Thus, in light of the above, efforts were made to develop demand-driven, disability-specific vocational training modules in garment manufacturing processes for the target population, that is, persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment. Analysis of various tasks performed in different sections of the garment manufacturing units led to job mapping for the target population. Further, designing and development of final modules was carried out after carefully incorporating the feedback and recommendations of the various experts and results of field testing of the modules. Training in these disability-specific modules would open prospects for the person with disability in certain areas where they can perform various tasks successfully and competently. This would equip them with the required skills and hence, help them in getting gainful employment.

Key words: Persons with locomotor impairment, persons with hearing impairment, persons with visual impairment, garment manufacturing units, training modules

Introduction

Garment manufacturing units (GMUs) comprise suppliers of readymade garments for both domestic and export markets. These are very diverse in size and manufacturing apparel products ranging from simple work clothes to high fashion garments which involve tasks related to cutting, sewing, finishing and packaging of garments in bulk (Cooklin, 2007). Most of the jobs are repetitive, non-hazardous, non-locomotive and semi-skilled in nature which could be easily handled by persons with a disability if their capabilities were judiciously matched.

Being a home economist in the field of Clothing and Textiles (academic discipline under Home Economics), the researchers have made sincere efforts to extend their knowledge about empowering persons with a disability, and creating sustainable employment choices. Therefore, to make persons with a disability employable and respond to the needs of growing economy, they should be instructed with varied skills to match supply with demand for skills (Dhar, 2009). The technical qualification acquired through vocational training will offset the
effect of physical disability and is of value in the eyes of the potential employer (Murichan & Kareparampil, 1995).

According to the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (n.d.), Delhi (India), persons with disabilities constitute a significant six percent of India's total population. They have been living as an invisible minority due to lack of equal opportunities and prevalent barriers of physical environment and social attitudes. However, presently various initiatives are being carried out by government and non-government organisations for making public transport, buildings, roads, toilets and other public conveniences more accessible for persons with disabilities and also sensitising people towards inclusive environment. As a result, more and more persons with disabilities can access these facilities and become economically independent.

The most common definition and classification of disability used by the Government of India for all purposes was determined with the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act (PWD Act), 1995. The Act defines a person with a disability as a person suffering from not less than forty percent of any disability as certified by a medical authority which include blindness, low vision, hearing impairment, locomotor impairment, leprosy-cured person, mental retardation and mental illness (Banerjee, 2004).

According to the Census of India conducted in 2011, the three most prevalent disabilities are, locomotor impairment, hearing impairment and visual impairment and have been considered for the present study (Census of India, 2013). PWD Act further defines locomotor impairment as disability of the bones, joints or muscles leading to substantial restriction of the movement of the limbs or any form of cerebral palsy. Hearing impairment is a loss of sixty decibels or more in the better ear in the conversational range of frequencies. Visual impairment includes both blindness and low vision. Blindness refers to a condition where a person suffers from total absence of sight, visual acuity (sharpness of vision) not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 in the better eye with correction lenses or limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 degree or worse. Low vision is defined as the impairment of visual functioning of a person even after treatment or standard refractive correction (Banerjee, 2004).

Persons with a disability represent a huge pool of unrecognized and untapped potential. Their vast energy and hidden talent could be unlocked through training in a rich stimulating environment (Prasad, 1994). However, mainstream training programmes are inaccessible to persons with disabilities as the training curriculum and equipment are not adapted according to their needs. Due to the changes in job patterns, there is mismatch between existing training and skill-development programmes and the job requirements in the GMUs (Rungta, 2004). Therefore, in order to push the philosophy of inclusion with more energy and enthusiasm, disability-specific training modules need to be developed to match the new trends in the job market.
Objectives of the study

1. Segregation of tasks performed in different sections of GMUs to match the capacities of persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment (task analysis).

2. Formulation of training modules for them after incorporating feedback and suggestions from the experts (design and developmental process).

Materials and methods

The present study was undertaken to design demand-driven, disability-specific training modules to meet the challenges confronted by persons with a disability in accessing skill-based training and employment in the mainstream. The steps involved in formulation of training modules have been summarised in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Steps involved in formulation of training modules](image)

Checklist of tasks performed in GMUs

1. Skills and knowledge required to perform various tasks
2. Job mapping for the target population
3. Feedback and recommendations from the experts
4. Drafting of final module outlines
5. Drafting of detailed training modules
6. Field testing of the training modules with target population
7. Revision of training modules based on the results of the field test

Checklist of tasks performed in GMUs

Review of literature related to garment manufacturing process was done to establish the broad functioning of the GMUs. Besides, a consolidated list of GMUs in Delhi, India and National Capital Region (NCR) around Delhi, that is, Noida, Faridabad and Gurgoan was procured from Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), Gurgaon, India. Since the list was very extensive having 600 units, 25 percent of the GMUs from the list (i.e., every fourth unit...
from the list) were contacted through systematic random sampling technique. However, most of them were not employing persons with a disability and did not respond back. Only 25 GMUs expressed their willingness to participate in the study, hence the final sample comprised of these 25 GMUs. The final sample included 18 GMUs employing persons with a disability and 7 GMUs not employing them. Visits were made to these units to study the variety of tasks being performed in different sections of GMUs. The information was compiled to prepare a comprehensive checklist of tasks performed in different sections of the GMUs.

Skills and knowledge required to perform various tasks

In order to gain further information on each task performed in different sections of GMUs, task analysis was conducted. The skills and knowledge required to perform each task was studied using following tools:

Observation of operator at work in GMUs
The operators performing various tasks in the assembly line were closely observed to study the process, the physical abilities required and the work area available to perform each task.

Fact finding information from the operators and supervisors
Detailed information on each task was further acquired from the operators performing the tasks. Information was also sought from the line/floor supervisors in each section to ensure the reliability of the information gathered from operators.

Self-attempt to perform the job by researcher
Besides the above, the researcher also made an attempt to perform the tasks which were difficult to understand through observation.

Job mapping for the target population
The information gathered above facilitated the researcher in job mapping for the target population, that is, persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment. Physical capabilities required for executing each task were documented and analysed. This information was correlated with the capabilities of each target group. On this basis, tasks were segregated for each target group.

Feedback and recommendations from the experts
After job mapping, feedback was obtained on the tasks segregated for each target group from six industry experts, that is, Human Resource Managers, Production Managers or Industrial Engineers in the GMUs, six academic experts in the field of garment manufacturing and six special educators having experience of conducting training for the target population.

Drafting of final module outlines
The checklist developed after job mapping was modified according to the feedback and recommendations given by various experts. The tasks were then selected from the checklist for development of final modules outlines for persons with locomotor, hearing and visual
impairment. Care was taken that each module was a complete entity in itself and included multiple tasks for a versatile work profile.

**Drafting of detailed training modules**

Each module was then developed into a detailed reference manual for the trainer. The information regarding the skills and knowledge required for performing the tasks gathered earlier, review of literature and the recommendations given by the experts were utilised at this stage. These skills and knowledge were further divided into various activities and steps for ease in understanding. Care was taken to organise the content in a logical manner from simple to complex, whole to part, concrete to abstract and known to unknown. Besides, efforts were made to recommend training strategies according to the capabilities and limitations of each target group. During the process of development, feedback was taken from an expert in the field of education.

**Field testing of the training modules with target population**

Personnel-in-charge of 25 GMUs visited earlier were contacted again to identify a place to conduct training. Radnik Exports, a garment manufacturing unit in Delhi (India), was the only unit which showed great interest in the research and granted permission to carry out field testing of the developed modules. They had a separate training centre with requisite infrastructure. Moreover, the materials required for executing the training modules were also provided by the unit.

In order to identify trainees (persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment), two segregated vocational training institutions located in Delhi and NCR were shortlisted for each disability on the basis of availability of trainees and their willingness to participate. Purposive sampling technique was used to select five trainees (having an age above 18 years) possessing varying levels of severity of impairment for field testing each module. The professionals in these institutions conducted an assessment of these trainees to judge their level of interest and their suitability for training in the respective modules. After the evaluation of trainees, the parents were also contacted for their opinion and consent as wholehearted support from their parents or guardians was crucial for training.

Training of persons with different disabilities was carried out through appropriate training strategies and pre-determined training sequences. After initial orientation and adjustment training, the basic motions and skills of each task were demonstrated to each trainee individually using specialised training strategies. They were allowed to perform the task under constant supervision and given ample time to practice to achieve maximum output. Each trainee was observed individually and his/her progress was measured every two hours through time study, and efficiencies were calculated using following formula:

\[
\text{Efficiency (\%)} = \frac{\text{Total minute produced by an operator}}{\text{Total minute attended by him}} \times 100
\]
Where

\[ \text{Total minutes produced} = \text{Total pieces made by an operator} \times \text{Standard Allowed Minute (SAM) of the operation (minutes)} \]

\[ \text{Total minutes attended} = \text{Total hours worked on the task} \times 60 \text{ (minutes)} \]

(Source: How to calculate operator efficiency at work, 2011)

Revision of training modules based on the results of the field test

Any shortcomings noticed in the detailed drafts of the modules while conducting the training, were incorporated in the end for making these more comprehensive and sustainable.

Results and discussion

Based on the above mentioned materials and methods, vocational training modules leading to sustainable livelihood in the garment manufacturing process were developed for the persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment. The results have been discussed in two stages.

Stage 1: Task analysis

Delhi based garment manufacturing industry is known for its ability to develop value added women’s garments using latest trend, fashion, fabric, designs and technology (Glance on manufacturing centres of Indian Garment Industry, n.d.). Exploration of GMUs to study the various tasks being performed in different sections also revealed that all of them specialised in ladies wear. Therefore, considering the employment perspective, only those tasks which were commonly being performed for manufacturing high fashion ladies garments were incorporated in the final checklist of tasks performed in different sections, that is, fabric and accessory store, cutting, sewing, issue-receiving, washing, finishing and packaging.

It was also found that though none of these GMUs were fully accessible to needs of persons with a disability, those employing them had made an effort to do minor adjustments like employing them on the ground floor, providing signage and conducting mock drill for safe evacuation of premises during emergencies. Moreover, 8% of the units had already undergone accessibility audit and required changes were being made which would go a long way in determining the employment of persons with a disability in GMUs. Besides, newly constructed units coming up due to expansion of business were fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

Based on the information gathered on skills and knowledge required to perform various tasks, a detailed profile of each task including job skills and tools or equipment used for performing were recorded systematically for further reference during development of detailed drafts of training modules. Equipped with the required information, the researchers made efforts to match the compatibility of a particular job to the target population and to recommend job modifications or accommodations, if required.
Therefore, keeping in mind the need to specifically design and restructure the content of vocational training modules for the persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment, tasks from the checklist were identified and segregated which could easily be performed by them.

Segregation of tasks performed in fabric and accessory store
The various tasks identified in the fabric and accessory store were as follows:

- Receiving fabric packages and checking length and width of each package
- Shade sorting among fabric packages of same colour and preparation of batches
- Checking folded fabric packages (thaans) for any defects and folding back the checked fabric
- Checking rolled fabric packages for any defects on automatically moving fabric checking machines
- Re-packing of fabrics after checking
- Preparation of accessories and trim card for each garment
- Sorting out of defective accessories, thread trimmings, and so on
- Counting and arranging of accessories in different sections

All the above listed tasks required the use of vision for its inspection, hence could not be performed by persons with visual impairment. Moreover, most of these tasks were performed by the operator while standing and he/she had to move around the work area. Therefore, these tasks were not found suitable for the persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs. However, persons with hearing impairment could be eligible for performing all the tasks in fabric and accessory store as these were practical in nature. Practical demonstration by the trainer along with visual displays and practicing would train them to handle these tasks successfully.

Segregation of tasks performed in cutting room
The various tasks identified in cutting room were as follows:

- Spreading of fabric to form a lay
- Fixing of marker on top of lay
- Cutting of fabric lay
- Ticketing of cut garments
- Re-checking and sorting out defective cut pieces
- Re-cutting of pin tuck panel, embroidered pieces, yokes, and so on, using fixed pattern templates
• Bundling and bar coding of cut pieces for issuing to sewing room
• Position marking for darts, pockets, and so on, using drill marker
• Applying fusible interlinings using fusing machine and stacking fused pieces in serial order

As a rule, operators had to stand while performing tasks in the cutting room. But, in order to accommodate person with severe to profound degree of locomotor impairment in both lower limbs as a part of work force, minor modifications could be considered. Therefore, if a person with locomotor impairment in both lower limbs were provided with comfortable and movable high chairs and had good eye/hand coordination and manual dexterity, they could be eligible to perform tasks like ticketing and bundling of cut garment pieces, re-cutting of garment pieces and applying fusible interlinings using fusing machine.

Besides, a person with partial visual impairment could be eligible to perform ticketing and bundling of cut garment pieces, if he/she could read ticket number through adjustable magnifying glass fixed on work tables. On the other hand, persons with hearing impairment could perform all the tasks in the cutting room with adequate training and practice.

**Segregation of tasks performed in sewing room**

The various manual tasks identified in sewing room were as follows:

• Cutting of laces, straps, and so on, using a fixed template
• Inserting strap adjusters
• Inverting the stitched fabric flaps, collars, cuffs, waistband, button straps
• Inserting drawstring into the garment
• Marking points for pleat folding, pin tucks, cuff facing, neck band, sleeve attachment, buttons, buttonholes, lapel folds, loops, and so on.
• In line pressing and inspection
• End line inspection

All the manual tasks in the sewing room like cutting of laces, straps, and so on, using a fixed template, inserting strap adjusters and drawstring, inverting flaps, collars and waistbands, marking points, in-line pressing and inspection, and so on, could be performed by persons with hearing impairment. Besides, persons with any degree of locomotor impairment in lower limbs could also be eligible for training in these tasks (except in line pressing and inspection) provided necessary modifications, as suggested earlier, were made and they had good eye/hand coordination and manual dexterity. Moreover, persons with visual impairment could also be trained in the manual tasks performed in sewing room which required use of other sensory organs or body parts instead of vision and some amount of manual dexterity. These would include cutting of laces, straps, and so on, using a fixed template, inserting strap
adjusters and drawstring into the garment and inverting flaps, collars, cuffs, waistband, button straps.

In GMUs, a parameter for measuring and bulk cutting of various garment components like laces, ribbons, elastic, button loops, belt loops, and so on, was marked at the edge of the work table. However, persons with visual impairment would not be able to identify these markings. Therefore, templates of fixed length were prepared from thick cardboard sheet and fixed close to the edge of work table using an adhesive tape. This slight modification involving negligible cost and time would enable the persons with visual impairment to measure the component to be cut efficiently by feeling the edges of the template (Figure 2).

The various sewing tasks identified in sewing room were as follows:

- Operating single needle lockstitch machine and over-lock machine
- Stitching of tucks, darts, pleats, gathers (gathering foot)
- Assembling of different panels of garment and pieces to form parts like pockets, sleeves and collars
- Top stitching on garment parts
- Pocket, sleeve, collar, cuff, waistband or zipper attachment
- Application of attachments like pleat folder, binder, belt folder for waistband, loop or strap folder, hem folder

Sewing machine operation was a sedentary occupation and required specific physical movements to execute the operations. These operations were measured in terms of range and types of body motions which include movement of fingers, wrist, forearm and upper arm while stitching, forward and backward movement of thoracic region (part of body surrounded by ribs between the neck and the waist), reaching out to the left side of the work area for
getting hold of bundles of cut pieces ready for stitching and disposing to the right side, proper eye/hand/foot coordination, movement of left or right foot and ankle to press the pedal to control the speed of the machine and movement of right knee and thigh for pressing knee lift situated to the right of the operator. However, movement of right knee and thigh was not required if the operator was working on single needle lock stitch machine with under bed trimmer and auto lift. In this machine, all the three operations, stopping of machine, thread trimming and lifting of presser foot were performed by pressing of treadle backward at different levels.

Therefore, any person who was suffering from permanent locomotor impairment in one lower limb (had one functional lower limb to operate sewing machine) was eligible for training in sewing operations. Persons with hearing impairment could also be trained as sewing machine operators as they could perform all the physical movements required to execute the operations as mentioned above.

**Segregation of tasks performed in issue-receiving and washing section**
The various tasks identified in issue-receiving and washing section were as follows:

- Counting of garments in issue-receiving section
- Operating washing machine
- Operating hydro machine (machine used for draining excess water after washing of garments)
- Operating tumbler (drier)
- Helper tasks like removing tickets, manual rinsing and packing of garments after washing

The operator had to stand and move around the work place to perform the above listed tasks. Hence, these could not be performed by persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs. However, persons with hearing impairment could be able to perform all the tasks in issue-receiving and washing section.

It was found that these tasks could be performed by persons with visual impairment with slight modifications in the three machines in the washing section, that is, washing machine, hydro extractor and tumbler (drier). In all the three machines, they would feel the operation panel through tactile perception and operate the machines through press buttons (Figure 3a). However, they would not be able to set the time regulator through sense of touch. Therefore, a special circular dial made from aluminium sheet was developed by the researcher with assistance from Blind Relief Association, Delhi (India). This dial had embossed markings at intervals of 5 minutes (Figure 3b). Trainees with visual impairment would be able to feel the embossed markings and set the time efficiently.
A limitation would be posed for trainees with total visual impairment in operating the washing machine as it required monitoring of water level and temperature of water used for washing (Figure 4). However, if the persons with partial vision could view the water level and temperature display, then they would be eligible to perform the task.

Moreover, while operating the tumbler (drier), it was crucial to note the temperature of the inner chamber from the display unit while the machine was functioning (Figure 4). This should not exceed the prescribed temperature or the fabric could be damaged due to excess of heat. As a result, this task could not be handled independently by trainees with total visual impairment. However, persons with partial vision could view the temperature display and operate the tumbler (drier).
Therefore, persons with total visual impairment could be eligible to count garments in issue-receiving section and operate hydro extractor in washing section. While persons with partial visual impairment would be eligible to perform other tasks like removing tickets from garments, manual rinsing of garments, packing of garments after washing and also operate washing machine and tumbler (drier) if he/she could view the water level and/or temperature displayed on control panel of the machine.

**Segregation of tasks performed in finishing room**

The various tasks identified in finishing room were as follows:

- Operating buttonhole and button tacking machine
- Stitching hook and eye to the garment
- Cutting and trimming of trailing thread ends
- Operating thread sucking machine
- Identification and removal of various types of stains found in garments
- Initial and final pressing of garments
- Measurement checking according to the size specification sheet
- Checking for poor sewing, any cuts, fit and fall of the garment and proper attachment of cuffs, sleeves, collars, fasteners, labels, and so on,
- Preparation of accessory pouch and style-specific tags
- Button closing, inserting belts and waistbands and folding garments
- Tagging garments according to size, manually or by using a tag gun
- Packing garments in poly bags and pasting size stickers

All the above listed tasks required the operator to stand while working except when operating buttonhole and button tacking machine. Persons with one functional lower limb could be able to operate buttonhole and button tacking machine. Moreover, if necessary modifications were made as suggested earlier, persons with any degree of locomotor impairment in lower limbs could be eligible to perform all the tasks except operating thread sucking machine, pressing and checking fit and fall of garments which required standing. Again, persons with hearing impairment could be trained to do all these tasks through practical demonstration. Besides, tasks like operating thread sucking machine, preparation of accessory pouch and style-specific tags, tagging of garments, button closing, inserting of belts or waistbands, folding and packing of garments in poly bags could be performed by persons with visual impairment through sense of touch.

**Segregation of tasks performed in packaging room**

The various tasks identified in packaging room were as follows:

- Operating needle detector machine
- Final checking for labels, tags, and so on
- Size and colour assortment for packaging
- Box (carton) making for packaging
- Packing of garments in boxes as per the buyer’s specifications

All the tasks listed above except operating needle detector machine required standing, bending, lifting of packed garments, boxes and moving around the work area. Therefore, persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs could only be eligible to operate needle detector machine. However, persons with hearing impairment could be eligible to perform all the tasks in packaging room except operating needle detector machine as they would not be able to hear the buzzer sound produced by machine in case of any needle detection in the garment. Besides, tasks like operating needle detection machine and box (carton) making for packaging of garments could be performed by persons with visual impairment through sense of hearing and touch respectively.

As a result of above segregation, each task was defined in terms of types of physical activities required and its suitability for the type of impairment. This segregated list was then taken to the experts for feedback. It was recommended by a majority of the experts that more emphasis should be laid on teaching correct handling techniques and basic skills required for assembling garment components like collar, sleeve, pocket, and so on, as styles of garments keep changing frequently. Besides, the theoretical content should be restricted to a bare minimum so that trainees with minimal education could also pursue the course.

Experts agreed that persons with hearing impairment could learn to perform all the tasks shortlisted for them provided they are able to understand the basics of it. It was further expressed that the supervisors and the co-workers should be sensitised and trained in sign language to avoid any problems at work arising due to lack of communication. Moreover, they would be unable to respond immediately in case of an emergency sound alarm in the factory. Therefore, light flashers installed close to their work area would be required.

It was further expressed by industry experts that the scope of employment of persons with visual impairment in GMU was very narrow as 99% of the tasks required a certain degree of visual perception. Moreover, if they were employed as helpers, there would be great concerns for their safety on the work floor. Therefore, it was necessary to check the feasibility of shortlisted tasks, before developing any module for them. Two employees, one with partial (75% impairment) and one with total visual impairment at Radnik Exports (a garment manufacturing unit) were made to do all the tasks segregated for them above in each section during job mapping. The results of the study highlighted that they could be eligible to perform a majority of the tasks. Cost effective working aids designed for tasks like cutting of garment components using fixed templates (Figure 2) and operating machines in washing area (Figure 3b) as mentioned earlier helped in creating a versatile work profile for person with visual impairment.
Stage 2: Design and development process

Valuable inputs and suggestions from the various experts and results from the study of feasible tasks short-listed for persons with visual impairment led to the development of following modules:

**Modules for persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs**

Three modules were developed for persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs (Table 1). Module on Basic Sewing Operations—level 1 and Advanced Sewing Operations—level 2 were specifically designed for persons having one functional lower limb to operate the sewing machine. Besides, one module was developed for persons having severe locomotor impairment in both the lower limbs which could be implemented successfully only if the units were made accessible according to their needs. However, care was taken to include only those tasks in the module 3 which could not be performed by persons with visual impairment. This effort would lead to equal chances of employment for both these vulnerable groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Modules for persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td><strong>Duration/Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1: Basic Sewing Operations—level 1 (having one functional lower limb to operate the sewing machine)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 1: Orientation to the single needle lockstitch machine</td>
<td>160-200 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 1.1: Equipment familiarisation and its controlled operation</td>
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<td>Activity 1.2: Needle setting and threading the machine</td>
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<td>Activity 1.3: Paper sewing exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 2: Basic adjustments and overcoming minor sewing problems/faults</td>
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<td>Task 3: Sewing on fabric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 3.1: Basic sewing exercises on muslin fabric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 3.2: Use of seam guides, seam ripping and reducing bulk in seams</td>
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<td>Activity 3.3: Topstitching</td>
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<td>Activity 3.4: Disposal of fullness (darts, tucks, pleats)</td>
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<td>Task 4: Dexterity and work handling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2: Advanced Sewing Operations—level 2 (having one functional lower limb to operate the sewing machine)</strong></td>
<td>175-230 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Making and applying collars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 2: Making and applying pockets</td>
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<td>Task 3: Shirt sleeve attachment with placket and cuff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 4: Applying a zipper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 5: Making and applying waistband</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 6: Making hems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 7: Application of commonly used folder attachments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 8: Orientation to the over lock machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 8.1: Equipment familiarisation and its controlled operation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 8.2: Needle setting and threading the machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 8.3: Basic adjustments and overcoming minor sewing defects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 (cont) Modules for persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 3: Helper in Cutting, Sewing and Finishing (having severe locomotor impairment in both the lower limbs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 1: Preparation of cut work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.1: Ticketing of cut pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.2: Bundling of cut pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 2: Marking points for making pleats, pin tucks, attachment of cuff, facing, neck band and placement of button hole and button</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 3: Knowledge about various parts of basic garments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 4: Inspection of garments</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4.1: Checking of measurements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4.2: Checking for sewing defects, cuts or holes and proper attachment of garment components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 5: Cleaning of garment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 5.1: Trimming of trailing thread ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 5.2: Identification and removal of stains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 6: Tacking, hemming and stitching hook and eye or press buttons</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Modules for persons with hearing impairment**

Three modules were developed for persons with hearing impairment which covered all the major tasks performed in different sections of GMUs (Table 2). Few of the intermediate tasks which were found more suitable for persons having severe locomotor impairment in both lower limbs were not included in these modules so that all the disabilities have equal chances of getting gainful employment. Moreover, it is suggested that if the trainees have the required expertise and interest, they could further pursue the module on Advanced Sewing Operations—level 2 formulated for the persons with locomotor impairment (Table 1).

Table 2 Modules for persons with hearing impairment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Duration/Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1: Raw Material Inspection &amp; Cutting Operations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Raw material inspection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.1: Inspection of complete fabric packages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.2: Inspection and sorting out of accessories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2: Spreading of fabric to form a lay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3: Preparation of cut work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.1: Ticketing of cut pieces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.2: Re-checking and replacing of defective cut pieces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.3: Re-cutting of garment pieces after embroidery, pin tuck, and so on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.4: Bundling of cut pieces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 4: Operating fusing machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2: Basic Sewing Operations—level 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Orientation to the single needle lockstitch machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.1: Equipment familiarisation and its controlled operation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.2: Needle setting and threading the machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.3: Paper sewing exercises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2: Basic adjustments and overcoming minor sewing problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100-130 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil

140-175 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/5th Std + sign language & speech reading

160-200 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/5th Std + sign language & speech reading
Table 2 (cont)  Modules for persons with hearing impairment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 3: Sewing on fabric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.1: Basic sewing exercises on muslin fabric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.2: Use of seam guides, seam ripping and reducing bulk in seams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.3: Topstitching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3.4: Disposal of fullness (darts, tucks, pleats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 4: Dexterity and work handling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Module 3: Finishing and Packaging Operations

| Task 1: Knowledge about various parts of basic garments | 120-150 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil |  
| Task 2: Pressing of stitched garment |  
| Task 3: Inspection of garments |  
| Activity 3.1: Checking of measurements |  
| Activity 3.2: Checking for proper fit and fall of garment |  
| Activity 3.3: Checking for sewing defects, cuts or holes and proper attachment of garment components |  
| Task 4: Flat folding of garment |  
| Task 5: Tagging of garments |  
| Task 6: Packaging of final approved garment |  

Modules for persons with visual impairment

Two modules were developed for persons with visual impairment (Table 3). Most of the tasks included in these modules could be efficiently performed by persons with any degree of impairment. However, there were few exceptions, where tasks could only be handled by persons with some residual vision as discussed earlier during segregation of tasks.

Table 3 Modules for persons with visual impairment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Duration/Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1: Helper in Sewing and Washing</td>
<td>150-200 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Cutting of various garment components using a fixed template</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2: Inverting of flap, cuff or collar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3: Inverting of stitched fabric waistband</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 4: Inserting strap adjusters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 5: Inserting drawstring at neckline or at waistline of the garment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 6: Counting of garments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 7: Operating machines in washing area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 7.1: Operating washing machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 7.2: Operating hydro extractor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 7.3: Operating tumbler (drier)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (cont) Modules for persons with visual impairment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 2: Helper in Finishing and Packaging</th>
<th>140-180 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Knowledge about various parts of basic garments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2: Operating thread sucking machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3: Preparing accessory pouches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 4: Preparing stringed tags</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 5: Closing of various fasteners in garments before folding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 6: Inserting belt or waistband into the finished garment before folding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 7: Flat folding of garments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 8: Tagging of garments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 9: Packing of garments in poly bags</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 10: Operating needle detector machine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 11: Preparing boxes (cartons) for packaging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each module was then developed into a detailed reference manual for the trainer which comprised guidelines to the trainer, orientation and adjustment training and specific tasks with respect to each module. Guidelines provided all the requisite information on training strategies for persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment, preparatory work required, training sequence and evaluation process which facilitated the trainer in planning the training programme adequately. Orientation and adjustment training was included as a compulsory section for all the modules for orienting the trainees to the workplace, occupational safety and health hazards and positive work behaviour. Thereafter, specific tasks in each module were elaborated with respect to time required for each task, its learning outcome, materials required and the detailed procedure for performing along with suitable illustrations and evaluation exercises.

The procedure of performing each task as compiled in the modules was based on the primary information gathered regarding the skills and knowledge required for performing the tasks gathered earlier, recommendations given by the experts and the secondary information from the review of literature. However, it is recommended that these training modules should be reviewed periodically in order to ensure that the content of training keeps pace with changing production techniques as a result of new technological advances.

Each developed module was disability-specific, oriented to the requirements of industry, short term with flexible time duration. Eligibility criteria for each module were defined in terms of minimum physical and mental capacities required so that each person with a disability was individually evaluated. Moreover, each module was a complete entity in itself, included multiple tasks and emphasis was on teaching minimum knowledge and skills required to perform each task using industrial tools and equipment. Wherever possible, assistive working aids were suggested and focus was laid on good handling techniques. Training in social skills related to work behaviour and one month internship was incorporated for overall empowerment of the trainees.
Results of the field testing revealed that there were wide varieties of jobs in the garment manufacturing units that could be safely and efficiently performed by persons with a disability. They were found to be more focused while performing a task. The efficiency level (calculated through time study) of most of the trainees was comparable with that of the experienced operators or at times, even better. After initial training, trainees got an opportunity to work in the actual factory in Radnik Exports which further helped them in getting acclimatised to the working environment of the industry.

Finally, some of the tasks were revised as these required more elaboration of content in the detailed draft of modules. Moreover, suggestions were also given by the experienced operators and supervisors regarding the precautions to be taken while performing some tasks. All the required detailing was done and the suggestions were incorporated into the modules to make these complete in all aspects.

Conclusion

Persons with disabilities have a right to and can perform effectively, a variety of jobs in the GMUs. However, employability of each individual should be assessed separately and then matched with the requirements of the job. This realistic and positive approach of selective placement of persons with a disability would enable them to get jobs as per their capacity and ensure better adjustment in working environment. Further, training of persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment in these comprehensive and sustainable disability-specific training modules would enable them to acquire appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out jobs in GMUs efficiently. As a result, they would not only have improved life socially and economically in the mainstream, but also empower them with self-dignity and provide recognition in the family and society.

Biographies

Assistant Professor Chahal is presently working as an Assistant professor in Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, India and has 10 years of experience in teaching and research to her credit. She has presented research papers/posters in international and national conferences and has also won awards for the same. She holds life membership of esteemed associations like Textile Association of India and Home Science Association of India. E-mail: manpreetchahal.8@gmail.com

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Associate Professor Ritu Mathur is presently working as an Associate professor in Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, India and has 21 years of experience
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References


Historical overview of spiritual discourses in Home Economics: From big history to the late twentieth century

Jay Deagon & Donna Pendergast
Griffith University, Queensland, Australia

Abstract

This paper weaves together an insider home economist perspective of spiritual knowledges through two historical phases - the early years of home economics (1901-1915); and the middle years of home economics (1923-1992). There is a taken-for-granted assumption that spirituality is, and was always intended to be, a part of home economics and in this study we set out to investigate this assumption. The research brings together data in the form of digital texts available through the publically accessible Internet database – HEARTH. Texts incorporating relevant terms were identified using direct word searches and analysed using thematic content analysis. The study reveals four key ideas: the word ‘spiritual’ was scarcely used and when it appeared meanings were varied; home and family were identified as the most significant sites for development of spiritual ideals; spiritual concepts were considered to be a ‘highest ideal’ of home economics; and there were conflicts between material and spiritual aspects of home economics. These insights confirm that the effects of production, recontextualisation and reproduction of spiritual discourse are enmeshed into these chronological phases of home economics history, yet meaning is generally assumed and often the last mentioned of the ideals of the field, as evident through the artefacts investigated.

Key words: spiritual, discourse, ideals, home, family

Introduction

The spiritual dimension of home economics is mostly unknown, and is often ignored in the literature (Hawks et al., 2007; Henry, 1995; McGee, Nagel, & Moore, 2003; McGregor & Chesworth, 2005). Yet, from the very emergence of the field in the first decade of the 20th century, more than one hundred years ago, there has been a taken-for-grantedness about the inclusion of spiritual concepts as fundamental to the field. To illustrate, spiritual terminology is found in Anglo-American literature dating from the early days of the formation of the field, in comments such as:

...the pursuit of wealth, the spirit of commercialism and materialism cause a decline of imagination, poetry, literature and the drama. The great problem today is to restore to the soul of the people something of the ideal, to bring about a spiritual awakening, a renaissance of the ideal (Dewey, 1908, p. 102).

It is rare to find literature that explicitly links spiritual concepts with home economics and this dearth has been lamented by a number of scholars who argue that ‘spiritual wellbeing’, is
one of the basic components of home economics (Andrews, 1939; Baldwin, 1990; Bevier, 1928; Green, 2001; Henry, 1995; McGregor & Chesworth, 2005; Nickols-Richardson, 2001; Vincenti, 1983). Almost twenty years ago, Mitstifer (1996) noted the importance of locating shared meaning for spirituality related concepts in the home economics profession, stating that “… this sacred dimension, the ultimate meaning of our existence, cannot be found in any one of the organized [sic] religions, a broader spirituality is possible if the common roots can be found” (p. 28). Consequently, it has been argued that spirituality was always intended to be a part of home economics (McGregor & Chesworth, 2005; McGregor & Goldsmith, 1998). This examination set out to investigate the origins of spiritual concepts in historical home economics literature in order to investigate this claim.

Setting the scene: a contemporary conceptualisation for spiritual health and wellbeing

Locating shared meaning for spiritual concepts is a living process where big history, present times and possible futures have, do, and will continue to influence recontextualisation and reproduction of meaning (Bernstein, 2000). Recontextualisation is a Bernsteinian concept which provided the theoretical means to expose how primarily produced knowledge from macro society is altered, compressed and manipulated into more digestible ‘packets’ of knowledge for use by educators and/or home economists (Bernstein, 2000). Currently, there is no formally defined or mutually agreed framework to understand spirituality or spiritual wellbeing within home economics literature. To provide context for the reader, in a recent study, Deagon (2013, p. 329) characterised spiritual health and wellbeing as:

…a complex construct that serves a human need to: a) quest for self-knowledge to give meaning and purpose in life; b) nurture and maintain quality relationships with other people; c) develop a genuine appreciation of and connectedness to the natural world; and d) define individually and validate socially the mysterious connectedness of everything in the known and unknown universe.

This framework is a recontextualisation and amalgamation of twenty-first century academic literature, historical texts and Home Economists’ views and perceptions about spiritual health and wellbeing (Deagon & Pendergast, 2014). The research reported in this current paper comprises the background investigation which (re)discovered how spiritual discourses within historical home economics texts, spanning across a one hundred year time period, shaped and influenced this contemporary conceptualisation.

Methods

Data collection and sampling method

All texts were extracted exclusively within an internet-based research environment. The Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition and History (HEARTH) Project is an online database of historical home economics specific texts, made available through the Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University (http://hearth.library.cornell.edu). This site was the main source of data for the analysis of documents in this study. Documents dating between the
mid-1800s and 1990s were retrieved electronically from HEARTH including the AHEA’s *Lake Placid Conference Committee Proceedings* (LPCP). A direct word search of the HEARTH’s database was performed and the term “spiritual” was matched 9169 times in 2240 records. Some of the 9169 matches were duplicates, requiring the data to be cleaned. The text search was refined to include the phrase “home economics”, producing 703 individual pages which matched the search criteria in 425 records. Again, some of the 425 records were duplicates. The data were further reduced by adding “Lake Placid”, with 39 matches in 28 records located. Although these 28 records initially focused the analysis, some other references were used for intertextuality, which meant locating original works from authors cited in the sampled texts (Gee, 2011). Utilising extensive internet and databases searches, if primary sources were not able to be located via electronic means, these texts were omitted from further investigation. Ultimately, 28 early years texts dated between 1901 and 1915; and, 20 middle years texts dated between 1923 and 1992 - a total of 48 documents containing spiritual discourse were purposefully selected to focus the analysis. While conducting the research, these two historical phases were analysed as separate data sets. In this paper, the analysis is presented by themes identified to converge between these two time periods.

Analysis methods

Content analysis and qualitative theme development involved an iterative process of scanning and re-scanning the data using pencil-and-paper and also computer assisted programs *Microsoft Excel* and *Word* and *QSR International’s NVivo* (Davidson & Jacobs, 2008; Robertson, 2008). For the purpose of developing *tag cloud* theory, Pendergast’s (2010) method was followed. Using NVivo9.2 software the data was stored, coded, categorised and used to produce tag clouds. The analysis utilised word frequencies, weighted percentages, stem words (lemmas), synonyms, specialisations and generalisations to visualise hierarchical themes of language-in-use in the data. However, to retain the integrity of the historical documents, words such as home economics or well-being were not collapsed into home economics or wellbeing. The data collected provided an insight into the Bernsteinian concept of *discursive formations*, meaning a study of relationships between statements (Bernstein, 2000). That is, an investigation into relationships between spiritual terminology, home economics rhetoric and references to the *Lake Placid Conferences*. Bernsteinian theory was also utilised as the theoretical framework for comprehending the production, recontextualisation and reproduction of spiritual discourses (Bernstein, 2000).

Limitations to data collection within an internet-based research environment

There were two limitations to the collection method described above. First, using an internet-based data collection method restricted access to other documents published in print form or not containing the key words relating to home economics and spiritual discourse. Second, the data needed to be publicly available and acquired without monetary exchange for downloadable content. As a result, the findings of this study are limited to the data accessed using the described technique. This investigation highlighted the importance of digital archiving of historical and contemporary home economics literature for the purpose of unencumbered information sharing across international borders. The HEARTH Project is important in this regard because there are very few data sources available for the inquiring home economics researcher. Despite these limitations, the data collected provided a
sufficient data set for an in-depth analysis of spiritual discourses in home economics contexts. With the methods now outlined, the analysis of themes is presented next.

Findings

The Lake Placid Conferences (1899–1908) are often regarded as the global birthplace of the field of home economics. For this reason, we looked to this era for evidence of a possible foundation stone for shaping the profession, in terms of connection to and meaning of spirituality. The thematic analysis in relation to spiritual discourses and language-in-use in these historical texts generated four main ideas:

1. the word ‘spiritual’ was scarcely used and when it appeared meanings were varied;
2. home and family were identified as the most significant sites for development of spiritual ideals;
3. spiritual concepts were considered a ‘highest ideal’ of home economics; and
4. there were conflicts between material and spiritual aspects of home economics.

Each main idea is now discussed in detail.

Scarcity and various interpretations

In approximately 5070 whole pages of digitised text of the LPCP Volumes 1-10, the Journal of Home Economics (JHE) Volumes 1 -7 and the AHEA’s Home Economics Syllabus ranging between the years 1901 and 1915, only 263 single instances of the word spiritual were located. Similarly, in the period between 1923 and 1992, just 20 individual pages of text were identified to contain the term ‘spiritual’. It was observed that each time the word ‘spiritual’ appeared in the sampled texts there were various meanings. Each meaning seemed as individualised as each of the authors who referred to it.

Frequencies of cited references determined the key contributors to spiritual discourse between the years 1901 to 1915 were Annie Dewey (7), Caroline Hunt (5), Ellen Richards (4), Marion Talbot (2), AHEA (2), Alberta Thomas (1), Thomas Wood (1), Benjamin Andrews (1), Lucy Griscom (1), Elliot George Howard (1), Charles Ellwood (1), and David Kinley (1). An analysis of frequencies also revealed the language-in-use references as ‘spiritual development’ (8); ‘spiritual life’ (4); ‘the spiritual’ (2); ‘spiritual being’ (2), ‘spiritual growth’ (2), ‘spiritual advantage/s’ (2), and the remaining terms where noted once each ‘spiritual conditions’, ‘spiritual status’, ‘spiritual things’, ‘spiritual need’, ‘spiritual awakening’, ‘spiritual benefits’, ‘spiritual plane’, ‘spiritual training’, ‘spiritual content’, ‘spiritual relations’, spiritual aspects’, ‘spiritual essence’, ‘spiritual relationship’, ‘spiritual advancement’ and ‘spiritual key note’.

Within the middle years phase (1923-1992), the word spiritual was also used sparingly and variously. Many of the spiritual language-in-use phrases were reproduced by authors citing earlier LPCP texts. The word ‘spiritual’ most often preceded another concept; for example, ‘spiritual energy’, ‘spiritual keynote’, ‘spiritual insight’, ‘spiritual problems’, ‘spiritual

From these observations of the data, it was concluded that the term **spiritual** was used infrequently in these documents and no substantial singular discourses were located. When the term did appear, it was used with varying meaning and intent.

**Home and family: the most significant site for recontextualisation of spiritual discourse**

The first reference to ‘spiritual development’ appeared in LPCP Volume 1-3 in a report written by Alberta Thomas (1901) entitled *Household arts in country schools how to teach them*. Thomas’ (1901) text revealed the context under which ‘the girl’ was to be taught home economics. The following excerpt revealed that ‘spiritual development’ was regarded as the highest of ideals regardless of home economics specialisation, pedagogy, facilities or equipment:

> ...the ultimate aim of such instruction [home economics] is to give the girl a realizing [sic] sense of her responsibilities; to make her feel that it is just as necessary to place the house on a scientific bases as the farm; that whether she be wife, mother or sister, she is largely responsible for existing conditions and atmosphere of the home; that on her rest the decision of the problems as to whether the home shall be the place wherein each member shall reach his or her highest physical [sic], intellectual and spiritual development (Thomas, 1901, p. 53).

As observed with many of the LPCP texts, spiritual development was juxtaposed with physical, intellectual, moral, ethical development. In the above extract, the gendered role of girl/mother/wife/sister was responsible for the ‘atmosphere’ of the home. Spiritual concepts seemed to be included in education contexts as imparting a sense of responsibility and obligation to serve the family and ultimately, humankind. ‘The home’ was perceived to work on the same scientific basis as ‘the farm’; however, family was a spiritual institution not a scientific one.

Analysis established **home** and **family** as the most significant contexts or sites for ideation about spirituality to take place. Figure 1 is a tag cloud presenting a visualisation of the prominence of the terms ‘home’ and ‘family’ within the early years sampled pages. The tag cloud was constructed using frequency (f) and weighted percentages (wp) derived from NVivo9 word frequency query that displayed the top 80 words used in the sampled texts, after the removal of conjunction words such as ‘which’, ‘from’, and ‘an’.

Attention is drawn to the words spiritual (f = 131, wp = 2.37%), home (f = 101, wp = 1.98%), family (f = 68, wp = 1.33%) and life (f = 59, wp = 1.16%). Forming the next layer of significance were the words: we (f = 43, wp = .84%), development (f = 40, wp = .78%), material (f = 34, wp = .67%), work (f = 33, wp = .65%) and ideals (f = 29, wp = .57%) followed by household, I, all, living, economics, highest, science, human, must, should, what, has, ideal, one, personal, physical, social, some, food, have, more, individual, been, being, mental,
moral, sociology, versus, best, man, character, children, factors. The word frequency analysis revealed that within the early years of home economics spiritual concepts was most significant as an aspect of family life at home.

The home was observed to be a physical environment comprised of possessions and material items. The family was a grouping of individuals that reside within a home. The combination of home and family was considered a spiritual entity. Most often, where the word spiritual appeared in the texts, situated meaning indicated words and phrases such as atmosphere of the home; the home-maker, home and family life, home is a place and opportunity to develop, family life, family living, and members of the family. Observing proximity between the words spiritual, family and home confirmed a strong relationship between intended meanings of spirituality and the home and family.

Andrews (1907) built connections between psychology, scientific practices, home and family and suggested that family was a personal, and communal spiritual life. According to Andrews (1907) “home and the family are not fundamentally a material thing, they are a personal or spiritual life participated in by individuals” (pp. 152-153). The family was considered a spiritual unit. This ecological perspective of home and family seemed to be in competition with the dominant scientific and reductionist view of the home and family at that time. The
scientific view regarded the home and family as a material entity. However, the spiritual language-in-use that had connections with home and family were specialised spiritual discourses that included habits, attitudes, personal relations, feelings, appreciations, values and satisfactions.

Other articles that recontextualised spiritual discourses and built connections with home and family were contributed to by Annie Dewey and Ellen Richards. Dewey’s (1902, pp. 92, 96) notion of citizenship and active participation in society implicated spiritual development in terms of home and family being the place where ideals are established. Richards (1904b) inferred spiritual development to relate to higher ideals of hygiene education where the significant social goods were social, economic and individual efficiency. According to Richards (1904b) the benefits of hygiene education and the future of social progress connected spiritual discourse with creating an atmosphere and environment wherein ‘the child’ shall be permitted to attain ‘full intellectual and spiritual development of the soul’ (p. 65). In this instance atmosphere and environment suggested efficient management of the material things utilised in the home. Richards (1906) further referred to spiritual discourse in terms of environment modification, eugenics and the attainment of better housing and living conditions where students of home economics were inspired to study sociology, equality between the social classes, securing basic human needs and service to humanity.

In the year 1909, the first issue of the JHE was published. This journal contained articles which were not immediately produced within the Lake Placid Conferences environment. The JHE opened the production of spiritual discourse to wider audiences. External academic influences started to appear in relation to the production and recontextualisation of spiritual discourse. Of particular note were three articles which advocated for sociological aspects of the home and family to be incorporated into home economics curriculum. First, George Elliot Howard (1911) wrote about the significance of sociology in home economics and the family being a “unit of social progress”. Howard (1911) exclaimed “[r]eflect on the vast spiritual or cultural content of the word!” (p. 36). For Howard (1911) activities such as the production of ‘symbols, customs, modes, inventions, superstitions, beliefs, imperatives and ideals’ (p. 36), all take place within the home environment. Each of these signs and systems of knowledge have established relationships with spiritual discourses and their own suites of specialised knowledges (Crawford & Rossiter, 2006; Tacey, 2003). Howard implored home economists to include sociology in their practice for it would be “a serious mistake” not to do so (Howard, 1911, p. 36) and used the metaphor “a body without a soul” to describe household science (home economics) without sociology.

In 1911, Charles Ellwood also advocated for sociology to be included in home economics curricula. Ellwood (1911) inferred that home economics needed to be studied from an “intelligent” and informed knowledge base where the home and family served a significant social function to “the vast purpose in the total of human life” (p. 44). For Ellwood, family was perceived as traditional units of husband and wife, and parents and children. Ellwood clarified his position on family and noted distinct differences and also interrelationships between home economics, biological, material and spiritual factors. Ellwood (1911) implied the upmost importance of the spiritual function of the family as “real vital elements” (p. 44). For Ellwood (1911) it was not enough to satisfy the basic human needs of “nutrition and
health of all members of the family”; rather, “the real object of your science”, meaning home economics, was to secure “good homes” built on spiritual relationships that empower families with “nothing less than” the “highest type” of human beings (p. 44). This ‘highest’ ideal of individuals, home, life and family must incorporate not only scientific knowledge of home management (the material), but also biological and psychological factors at work in the functions of the family (the spiritual).

In the early 1900s, radical changes were occurring in relation to the political and legal rights of women and children. Within this emerging political environment, Kinley (1911) recognised diversity of family structures and that ‘spiritual’ referred to “the innermost recesses of family life” (p. 256). For Kinley, the “structure, or form, of the family” was “unimportant”; however, it was important that “the spiritual essence of the family-relationship” was maintained, perpetuated and remain (p. 256). The spiritual language-in-use in Kinley’s excerpt indicated the family being a spiritual relationship where there are significant connections between spirituality and family beliefs, ethics and making consumer choices.

Observations of emphatic and high modality terms, such as serious mistake, must, vital and important, indicated that Howard, Ellwood and Kinley, did not seem convinced that home economists were, in practice, addressing these vital and essential spirituality related aspects of the home and family at that time. The writings of Howard, Ellwood and Kinley supported Benjamin Andrews’ (1907) assertion that psychological factors, including spiritual life of the family, be incorporated into home economics frameworks as a highest ideal.

Highest ideals: benchmarks for home economics

Referring back to Figure 1, the words highest and ideal/ideals were in the top 80 words used in the texts. Spiritual discourses originating from each of author implied spiritual as a highest ideal. Highest ideal supposes that spiritual concepts were an overarching or ideal outcome of home economics education. This ideology was perceived to encase, surround and support mechanical or technical practices such as cooking, hygiene procedures, physical exercise, study material, course content and so forth. The purpose for developing highest ideals was to give home economists a standard to which their efforts could aspire—or a benchmark. A majority of the early home economics discourse related to establishing these ideals and standards so that the profession could focus the priorities of their work.

During the ideation phase of developing of the first home economics syllabus, under the heading of ‘ideals and standards’, it was suggested that home economics curriculum include an apportionment of time to study ‘spiritual life’ (Richards, 1904a, p. 53). By the year 1913, the concept of study of spiritual life that appeared in the AHEA’s Syllabus of Home Economics referred to the phrase ‘spiritual advancement’ and was positioned under the heading ‘Household and Institution Management’. Spiritual advancement was juxtaposed with the terms social and moral (AHEA, 1913, p. 69). The AHEA rationalised the theoretical considerations for such study as:

...the ultimate purpose of the study of all home problems is the fullest and best development of the individual, the family, and the larger group; the home as the place in which one’s affections center [sic] and where one finds
refuge, rest, or satisfaction; a knowledge of the character of problems of the home and larger groups, of the mate the physiological, psychological, and moral problems involved; realization [sic] of obligations and opportunities; the proper study of the basic facts, materials, and problems as a means of acquiring physical and mental development, manual dexterity, general and economic efficiency, culture and breadth of vision, and an appreciation of the interdependence of the individual, the home, the larger group, and the community, and mankind (AHEA, 1913, p. 69).

Using textual order techniques (Gee, 2011), it was noted that the term ‘spiritual’ was located on the last page of the syllabus, page 65, and did not appear on any other pages. Despite this, the surrounding text on page 64 (the last page) of the syllabus and referring to the excerpt above, the words ‘inspiration’, ‘ultimate’, ‘fullest and best’, ‘breadth of vision’, ‘interdependence’, and ‘mankind’ identified significant social goods. These terms suggested an elevated purpose or higher ideals of home economics manifest in the official syllabus document. The syllabus extract demonstrated that home economists envisaged this higher or ultimate purpose as working in conjunction with the more technical and scientific based curricula set down under the headings of ‘Food’, ‘Clothing’, ‘Shelter’ and ‘Household and Institution Management’.

If ‘spiritual’ elements of home economics were so esteemed and elevated in purpose, why was this concept reduced in importance to appear on the very last page of the syllabus? The slippage in spiritual discourse and wavering focus on the highest ideal of spiritual needs and development of children and families had not gone unnoticed. In 1902, Talbot (1902) wrote a report which criticised the direction of home economics and stated:

... colleges must keep to their own special field, using home economics as a subject for developing, not mechanical or manual facility, not even hygienic habits, but the meaning of the physical, social, moral, esthetic and spiritual conditions of the home to the individual and to society at large (p. 23).

Continuing her argument in 1905, Talbot (1905) also asserted that 'I would like to see the high school work develop a great deal beyond physics and chemistry and cooking' (italic emphasis added, p. 67). Confirmation of the observation of slippage in spiritual discourse, may be found in Marjorie Brown’s (1984) summation on tensions between, on the one hand, Richards, Dewey and Norton believed that ‘...if the physical and economic aspects of the home are improved, moral, intellectual, and aesthetic aspects of home life will progress’ (p. 50) and, on the other hand, Chown, Talbot and Andrews believed that development:

... of the individual capacities (freedom) within the family; emancipation from conditions of domination and repression in society. Through raising consciousness of the implications of "conditions of the physical, social, moral, aesthetic and spiritual conditions of the home to the individual and to society at large," not only will individual capacities be developed but "the conditions of society" can be changed to provide a more just and democratic society (Brown, 1984, p. 50).
Spiritual knowledge may have become taken-for-granted by Richards and Dewey; whereas, Talbot and Andrews advocated visibility of spiritual knowledge in home economics curricula. Including the term spiritual in their reports, Dewey, Richards, Hunt, Talbot and Andrews may have been seeking a highest ideal for home economics which included spiritual concepts. However, intent, embedded knowledge and meaning became diluted and varied. We believe that this slippage in discourse may have developed from an issue with framing and classifying spiritual knowledges (Bernstein, 2000).

The phrase ‘ideals and standards of living’ was the heading used when the committee was first framing and classifying what the syllabus ‘should’ contain (Dewey, 1908). In order to understand how an ideal becomes a standard, Annie Dewey (1908) clarified the process as “[T]here is no clear mental picture of an ideal; it is rather an emotion, a longing, a reaching out for something beyond” (p. 101). An ideal, therefore, fits within spirituality frameworks as an essential intangible variable. Interpreting an essential intangible variable in this instance refers to certain common ideas of home economics and spirituality; that is, individuals, self-identity, family, communities, communal domains, sustainable environments, environmental domains, and a transcendental domain that is a variable because of its perceived intangibility, individualised interpretation and socially constructed meaning (Deagon & Pendergast, 2012; Fisher, 2011).

Having ideals and standards are important because they clearly explain fundamental principles and overarching intentions of early home economics. At that time in history, early home economists understood that they were teaching skills that they wished to become ‘standard practices’ in teaching and learning. The question then, is how did early home economists envisage spiritual concepts manifest from an ideal to a standard?

We observed that embedded Christian ideals may have become ‘habits’ of speech, an embedded symbol or expression of faith and culture whereby early home economists related to their religious origins to inform the meaning of ‘reaching out’ for something beyond. This means a consciousness that moves beyond the personal, communal and environment domains to perceive of ‘something beyond’ which refers to the essential intangible variable capsulated within the transcendental domain (Fisher, 2011). It was through the highest ideals theme derived from embedded Christian origins, that we interpreted the highest ideals of home economics to be spiritual in nature, service-oriented, altruistic, humanistic and ecological in their intent.

Figure 2 is a tag cloud visual representation of the prominent concepts surrounding spiritual discourse within the JHE texts dating between 1927 and 1992, the second phase of interest in this study. Interestingly, when comparing Figure 1 (early years tag cloud) with Figure 2 (middle years tag cloud) the word ‘god’ only appeared in the middle years texts. Despite this observation, the significant function of Figure 2 was that names of early home economists who contributed to spiritual discourse become more prominent in this visualisation. Figure 2 is important because it revealed and confirmed the significant contributors to early spiritual discourses were Ellen Richards, Annie Dewey, Caroline Hunt, Alice Norton, Marion Talbot and Benjamin Andrews.
Of particular note was the work of Benjamin Andrews. He was identified as the only author from the early years to continue contributing to spiritual discourse in the middle years of home economics. In both the early years and the middle years Andrews (1907, 1939) lamented the impacts of dominant scientific, technical and mechanical paradigms which overshadowed the social and spiritual ideology of home economics. This scientific/spiritual dualism was found to exist in a number of other extracts and manifest as a conflict between the material and the spiritual aspects of home economics. This idea is explored next.

Tension and harmony: material and spiritual aspects of home economics

The home and family theme pointed to tensions between the material and the spiritual aspects of home economics. Conflicts were revealed between ‘the material’ or manual, practical, physical and scientific aspects of home economics and their relationship with ‘the spiritual’ benefits of home economics.

Despite the Darwinian inspired references to eugenics as a popular idea of the time, Dewey (1908) conveyed the material/spiritual tension as ‘mere shell of material side of life’ and
‘ideals of spiritual growth and development should supersede them’ (p. 105). Dewey ranked the spiritual aspects of home economics as a higher ideal than a material and physical reality. Our interpretation is that Dewey anticipated that once basic physical human needs (food, shelter and clothing) are met, the spiritual is a natural higher state of being.

Converging with the highest ideals theme above and considering the content of early home economics curriculum, Marion Talbot (1902) expressed concern that home economics was focusing on developing the subject for mechanical and manual purposes (that is the physical act of cooking and sewing); rather than ensuring that home economics also taught about the meaning behind the practices, such as “physical, social, moral, esthetic [sic] and spiritual conditions of the home” and their relationship to the individual and wider society (pp. 21-23). Talbot was concerned that the ‘broad sense’ of home economics was being disregarded and this was considered a conflict between the technical applications of knowledge as opposed to the contributions individuals can make to society taught through studies of the home.

Caroline Hunt also made a significant contribution to spiritual discourse in relation to material versus spiritual aspects of home economics. Hunt (1902a) stating that ‘spiritual life’ needed to be nurtured as a part of everyday work and family living (p. 56). Furthermore, Hunt’s (1902b) recalled that ‘grandmothers’ produced everything in the home by hand (farming, cooking, raising children and livestock, making and sewing fabrics) and the effects of the rise of commercialisation. Commercialisation had benefits and limitations, limitations including a decline in ‘beauty’ in material household items, and benefits including more ‘free’ time for women.

Hunt (1902b) referred to ‘spiritual development’ in terms of ‘rational’ and ‘wise’ living where food preparation and making material household items had tensions with commercialised food preparation (canneries, creameries, bakeries and so forth) and industrialised products (furnishing, curtains and so forth). In this way Hunt’s message was that home economics education was about making intelligent and educated decisions about a balance between the practicalities of material production of goods (labour saving and centralisation) and the spiritual benefits (beauty and enjoyment) of work undertaken by hand.

Interestingly, Hunt (1908) then inferred that there would be ‘moral and spiritual advantages’ in taking some foods (like ice-cream) and also public spaces under ‘city control’ (p. 163). Hunt was referring to a collaborative effort between households, business and government to ‘bring out the best which is in us’ where the ‘direct’ material benefits and ‘indirect’ spiritual and moral benefits of home economics activities would contribute to social reform through ‘united action’. Hunt alluded to active citizenship and expressed concern in relation to the self-interests and material gains of business, enterprise and government (capitalism) as in opposition to the spiritual benefits of household or municipal control over foods as well as preserving the integrity of built and natural environments. Hunt’s (1908) article revealed the intended use of the phrase ‘spiritual advantages’ as significant social goods of meeting basic human needs above self-interest, service orientation, building relationships between households and business, ethics, values, morals and cultivation of community spirit. With ‘spiritual benefits’ as an aspect of ecological and ‘rational’ living in relation to the production and consumption of food in private and public sites; Hunt’s writing manifest as an
acknowledgement of tensions between the material and the spiritual aspects of home economics.

Thomas Wood's (1902) article entitled Some Controlling Ideals of the Family Life of the Future exposed the conflict between the material and the spiritual in terms of western civilisation's obsession with selfishness, consumerism, overconsumption, the breakdown of marriages, neglecting children because of increasing work demands on parents, household waste, fashion and fads. Wood's (1902) article demonstrated synergies with spiritual wellbeing frameworks in relation to quality relationships and connectedness with self, others, the natural environment and a larger reality to life in an earthly sense (Deagon & Pendergast, 2012). The individual or personal domain manifest in terms of consciousness, self-questioning and ‘day by day’ work; the communal domain revealed that youths’ ideals were formed and developed within the site of home and family and also significantly influenced by formal home economics education (girls and boys); the environmental domain was observed as a reverence for the natural environment in terms of sensible and frugal use of resources; and the transcendental domain manifest as humankind, ‘work of ages’, ‘larger altruism’, ‘religious consciousness’, ‘the heart trilled’, ‘imagination fired’, ‘world progress’, and the ‘permanent and infinite’. Wood’s text was a significant demonstration of spiritual concepts being publically expressed through signs and symbols and recontextualised for home economics sites (Deagon, 2013). In this 1902 historic context, there was a realisation that pursuit of the material would cause harm to future generations.

In the middle years’ phase of home economics (1923-1992), analysis revealed that two pertinent issues remained in contention - how to reconcile the material aspects of home economics practice with spiritual ideals and how these spiritual ideals and standards were to manifest as outcomes, practice and assessment.

Reflecting on the life of Sarah Louise Arnold, Benjamin Andrews (1943) suggested that:

[W]hat expounded at the turn of the century is finding acceptance in the conviction that home and family life must have general teaching throughout the schools. This calls for the emphasis upon the personal and spiritual in home economics with all that science can contribute to the wellbeing of the family (Italic emphasis added, p. 340).

In this excerpt, Andrews explicitly stated that spiritual aspects of home economics be integrated more visibly in home economics practice. Considering Andrews’ privilege LPCP experiences and over 40 years of engagement within the home economics field, it is surmised that Andrews had not observed spiritual aspects of the home and family integrated into home economics policy and practice.

Warner (1954) recommended that localised knowledge of home economics ‘should’ teach about the meaning of physical, social, moral, ethics and spiritual conditions - not only the mechanical or manual facilities of the home. Warner implied that whole person and whole family development was an essential aspect of home economics practice. Warner also called
for active participation, equal division of labour and that through a love of people, each member of the family was responsible for happiness of the home.

A profound recontextualisation of spiritual knowledge within the home economics field occurred in 1983. This was a time of integrating history with science and spiritual concepts. First, Meszaros and Bruan (1983) mentioned the scientific/spiritual dichotomy and stated ‘our heritage of home economics is our ancestors, the men and women, trained in science and sensitive to the spiritual needs, who were dedicated to improving family living’ (p. 4). For Meszaros and Bruan, the early pioneers shaped the identity of home economics and spiritual concepts related to the spiritual needs of the family. Their statement connected the scientific/spiritual as a dualism but also integrated two seemingly untenable concepts together under the category of family.

With clarity and hindsight, Virginia Vincenti (1983) provided an anthology and contemporary view of the conflict between material/scientific/spiritual aspects of home economics. Vincenti (1983) argued that Christian religion, the Enlightenment and Darwinism play significant roles in informing early home economics philosophy. As a result, in a time when God did not seem as necessary, spiritual/secular/scientific paradigms were beginning to blur traditional spiritual/religious knowledges.

Teris and Clawson (1992) recontextualised spiritual discourse and gave us the first hints of global awareness, human values, and a stronger version of integrating the material and spiritual aspects of home economics emerged. Teris and Clawson (1992) cited Ellen Richards as calling for American families to embrace a ‘simplified way of life’ (p. 9) coupled with social action promoting family and global wellbeing. This was a call for responsible consumption and use of resources and an idealistic subordination or rejection of the material in favour of a more “spiritual” or simplified way of life.

The analysis revealed that several authors in the middle years called for material/scientific/spiritual aspects of home economics to be integrated, balanced and harmonised. Persisting with mechanical and technical practice in home economics worked against overarching highest ideals.

**Discussion**

This investigation of historical texts revealed and confirmed that spiritual concepts were a legitimate area of concern for some pioneering home economists. Insufficient specialised discourse informed any prescriptive intention within the first official home economics syllabus. In the early phase of the emergence of the field, home economists were not privileged with support to address spirituality as an aspect of practice; rather, spiritual knowledges seemed to be informed by individualised and indoctrinated Christian perspectives. Christian views seemed to be embedded cultural knowledge and taken-for-granted in discourse. However, a few home economists, for example, Andrews, Dewey, Talbot and in later years Baldwin and Vincenti, called for spiritual aspects of individuals, home and family to be more visible in policies and practices.
Of the texts analysed, the term ‘spiritual’ was mostly juxtaposed with another concept. Language-in-use referred to spiritual life, spiritual status, spiritual development, spiritual being, spiritual things, spiritual need, spiritual awakening, spiritual growth, spiritual advancement and spiritual key note. The word ‘spiritual’ was mostly used as a description of the esoteric knowledge of the author - intangible and often an indescribable intuition or feeling.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that, on the one hand, Richards (1904a, 1904b, 1906, 1908) and Hunt (1902a, 1902b, 1908, 1909) framed spirituality as taken-for-granted and embedded cultural and social knowledge within overarching ideology of home economics. On the other hand, Dewey (1906, 1908, 1910, 1913, 1915), Andrews (1907) and Talbot (1902, 1905) persisted with promoting spiritual knowledges and keeping spirituality in the foreground of ideology and practice. However, an accord was never reached in relation to the framing and classification of spiritual aspects of home economics. As a result of conflict between taken-for-granted cultural and social knowledge and specific calls for spiritual knowledge to be specialised, prescriptive official policy was never written, negotiated or agreed upon.

It is intriguing to note that the term ‘spirituality’ did not appear in either the early or middle phases of home economics. In collective representations of spiritual terminology, commonalities in discourse manifest as home and family being the most significant site for discourse production, and the highest ideal of home economics ideology. Conflict and tensions arose when mundane knowledge (the material, cooking, sewing, hygiene practices) overshadowed esoteric knowledge (spiritual, religious, character, morals, ethics and aesthetics). Within a predominately Americanised Christian context, early home economists used spiritual terminology variously. Interpretations of spiritual discourse, informed by various worldviews, were as individualised as the authors.

Conclusion

For many twenty-first century home economists, home economics is an inspirational and transformative academic discipline and vibrant area of study. Our investigation reveals that even during the early formation years of home economics, technology and globalisation were impacting on spiritual knowledges creating flux and crisis for framing and classification purposes (Best, 2000; Deagon, 2009). This investigation revealed that during the early and middle phases of home economics, meaning for spirituality was influenced by interdisciplinary approaches and global discourses about uncertain futures, excessive consumerism and environmental unsustainability. Our analysis of LPCP texts provided some stabilisation for spiritual knowledges in home economics sites by offering alternative views of spiritual discourse.

Following the early and middle historical phases of home economics, a distinct focus on spirituality was evident through the work of Henry (1995, 1997), who sought to explore the notion of wellbeing as the central purpose of the field. This work and work by others in the last two decades add further insight into the place of spiritual discourse in the field and are explored in other publications by the authors.
Since the foundation of home economics in the 1900s, home economists have called for spiritual aspects of home and family to be incorporated visibly into practice. In conclusion, this study has confirmed that spirituality was always intended to be an aspect of home economics curriculum and required explicit study in home economics curriculum content.

Biographies

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References


Engaging the YouTube learner: Promoting Home Economics through videos

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Abstract

Youth are intensely engaged as viewers and producers in the self-directed, participatory, and informal online learning culture of YouTube. These YouTube learners have developed learning styles that are commensurate with technology; therefore, to remain relevant, it is important for Baby Boomer-aged university instructors to adapt teaching methods accordingly. Students (N=211) enrolled in four classes of the undergraduate course entitled Professional Perspectives during the 2012-13 academic year at Brescia University College in Canada were asked to produce an informative and persuasive video for a Canadian online audience that addressed either the value and importance of Home Economics, or the aims of the United Nations’ 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family. Professional Perspectives is taken by students in the academic programs Food and Nutrition, Family Studies, and Nutrition and Families. The students’ online videos included ‘rap’ music, animations, whiteboard story presentations, interviews, puppet shows, pet actors, and time lapse photography. The purpose of this paper is to report on an in-practice example where an online video project enhanced students’ engagement in their learning. Other educators may also feel supported, encouraged, and more confident to use digital technology in their classrooms.

Key words: student engagement, online video, digital learners

Introduction

Positive student engagement, a cornerstone of effective and in-depth learning, has been defined as “a binding of students to each other, to meaningful learning activities, and to the institution” (Krause, 2005). For university faculty who teach courses in Home Economics, achieving positive student engagement can be a challenging endeavour, as many students, even those enrolled in Home Economics-related programs, may not see the value of our profession or why it is important to know its history and philosophical underpinnings. Collaborative learning, a key contributor to student engagement, is “the instructional use of small groups or teams where peer interaction plays a key role in learning” (Yazici, 2005, p. 217). Team learning improves problem-solving and communication skills, and enhances student achievement (Yazici, 2005). Collaborative learning is also an integral part of the learning environment for students in today’s classrooms and, according to Bloom’s Digital Taxonomy (a concept adapted by Churches (Churches, 2009), corresponds with higher order thinking skills such as creating, designing, constructing, planning, producing, filming, animating, mixing, re-mixing, directing, and video-casting. Collaborative video production in particular requires the coordination of the four types of knowledge - factual, conceptual,
procedural, and metacognitive (Krathwohl, 2002) - all of which are necessary for the intellectual development of students in professional programs such as those related to Home Economics education. As visual, kinaesthetic, and multi-sensory learners (Pendergast, 2009), “Digital Natives” (Prensky, 2001) prefer multimedia to reading and listening to a lecture (Matulich, Papp, & Haytko, 2008). The purpose of this paper is to describe the process and outcomes of an undergraduate university project where students utilised the talents commonly associated with today’s youth to create online videos and promote either (a) the practice, profession, and academic discipline of Home Economics, or (b) one of the aims of the United Nations’ (UN) 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The YouTube Learner

Students today have been called “Digital Natives” (Prensky, 2001), “Digital Millennial Learners”, or the “NetGen Learner” (Matulich, Papp, & Haytko, 2008). The term “YouTube learners” refers to this generation of students that prefers processing pictures, sounds, and video before text (Jukes & Dosaj, 2004, as cited in Chelliah & Clarke, 2011), and relishes learning within a social context (Keengwe, Onchwari, & Onchwari, 2009). YouTube, or more specifically, online video, is quickly becoming a primary source for learning. For example, the Khan Academy grew from YouTube video tutoring sessions for founder Salman Khan’s cousin into what Forbes’ Magazine called “the largest school in the world” (Noer, 2012).

Given that digital learners have developed learning styles that are commensurate with technology (Tucker & Courts, 2010), it is important for Baby Boomer-aged instructors to adapt teaching methods accordingly and strive for continuous improvement through teaching innovations (Matulich, Papp, & Haytko, 2008). It is important to engage these learners in a process that emphasizes 21st century learning skills (e.g., problem-solving, self-regulated learning, collaboration, and sharing ideas), as well as 21st century employability skills (e.g., communication, collaboration, creativity, leadership, and technology proficiency) (Chelliah & Clarke, 2011). Indeed, Duncum (2014) proposes that teachers embrace students’ interest-driven, informal ways of learning by seeing YouTube as a creative venue.

If institutional education is to remain relevant, we must first acknowledge that we have entered upon a very different world in which informal learning communities are now a major part of our students’ lives. They represent nothing less than a paradigm shift in education. We must acknowledge that students now come to us with the expectation of being able to employ their agency in exploring the world they are to inherit and change (Duncum, 2014, p. 35).

YouTube has been used in diverse university faculties to teach a variety of skills/topics, including clinical skills (Duncan, Yarwood-Roos, & Haigh, 2012; Carlos, Goss, & Morad, 2014), an introduction to anthropology (Tan, 2013), as well as business communication ethics and advertising (Lehman, DuFrene, & Lehman, 2010; Lester, 2012). Psychology students who produced YouTube video clips through a collaborative visual design approach had a significant reduction in obesity stigmatisation compared to controls (Zahn, Schaeffeler, Giel, Wessel, Thiel, Zipfel et al., 2014). Students in the intervention group progressed through four stages: the research phase (media-related knowledge acquisition), the theory phase (content
knowledge acquisition), the video production phase (knowledge transformation), and the reflection phase (self-evaluation and feedback) (Zahn et al., 2014).

Digital videos can be produced relatively easily and distributed even by those with little or no online media experience, and the tools for compositing visual images are almost as ubiquitous as word processing tools; therefore, students can learn the technology quickly without being overwhelmed (Shuldman & Tajik, 2010). Moreover, students in this digital age are already producing (and posting online) a plethora of self-generated videos. In fact, 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute (YouTube, 2015). YouTube also has more than 1 billion users, and people around the world are watching hundreds of millions of hours of YouTube videos on a daily basis (YouTube, 2015). This creates an extraordinary opportunity to provide information about our profession to a global online audience.

It is believed that much written communication may soon be replaced by voice and/or video, as we shift from reading and writing to focus on the “communication of ideas” (Prensky, 2010, p. 127). Prensky (2010) goes further to say that, for people in the 21st century, reading and writing are not the best ways to communicate their thoughts and ideas, and most communication materials with which we interact (e.g., news broadcasts, training videos, signs with symbols rather than words, maps based on Global Positioning Systems or GPS and voice technology) do not involve reading (and writing is used even less by the average high school-graduate). It is important for students to be good at putting ideas out there, clearly and succinctly, in “whatever medium they choose” (Prensky, 2010, p. 137). Instructors, therefore, must become more proficient and technologically savvy and allow digital learners to present their thoughts via other media outlets with which young people are “more comfortable and have more mastery” (Prensky, 2010, p. 127).

The role of theory in video production

Jonassen, Peck, and Wilson (1999) recognised the potential for video production to build knowledge, a key component of constructivist learning. Elements of constructivism that come into play during video production include being hands-on, collaborative, learner-centred, and inquiry-based (Tyner, 1994). It is also important for students to reflect on their experiences to build meaning from them, as this is a core component of the constructive process (Shewbridge & Berge, 2004).

Engagement theory is also useful to inform pedagogical discussions about video production. As conceptualised by Kearsley and Shneiderman (1998), engagement theory holds that technology is a catalyst to facilitate deeper learning through purposeful engagement in group projects with a practical use outside of the classroom. The theory is best summarised as ‘Relate - Create - Donate’ (Shuldman & Tajik, 2010). The first of these core ideas suggests that learning occurs in a social context (Relate). The second concept proposes that coursework be hands-on and project-based (Create). The third component is that the project must have an authentic ‘real world’ focus (Donate). Sharing student-generated videos with their peers and other public audiences can foster student motivation, leading to higher levels of student satisfaction and diligence (Shuldman & Tajik, 2010). The student-generated video project described in this paper draws upon both constructivism and engagement theory.
Context for the Project

The university course within which the online video project was completed is entitled Professional Perspectives. This course is a mandatory component of the Food and Nutrition program at Brescia University College and most students take it in their second year (of a 4-year program). Students in other Home Economics-related programs such as Family Studies and Nutrition and Families also enrol in the course. Professional Perspectives is an introduction to the philosophy of the Home Economics professions in North America and the evolving concepts of Home Economics as a field of study in higher education. The term Human Ecology, used in the course outline, remains from those years when Brescia University College’s Home Economics program was renamed Human Ecology. The objectives of the course are to describe the philosophy and purpose of human ecology theory and practice; explain the development and current status of human ecology professions; analyse relevant issues in human ecology; interpret systems theory as applied in human ecology; assess and reflect on personal strengths and areas for improvement; discuss concepts and legalities of professions and professionals; identify and value relevant professional organisations; and demonstrate basic skills necessary for professional performance. A requirement of today’s society is that Home Economics professionals must be proficient in using digital technology; therefore, the use of digital technologies was also incorporated into the undergraduate assessment program.

Description of the Project and Procedures

Students (N=211) enrolled in four classes of the course during 2012-2013 were asked to produce informative and persuasive online videos for a Canadian online audience that addressed either the importance and value of Home Economics, or one of the aims of the UN’s 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (Table 1). Students in project-based courses have reported higher levels of elaboration, critical thinking, and metacognition, as well as more opportunities to act and think independently (Stefanou, Stolk, Prince, Chen, & Lord, 2013); therefore, the instructors decided to harness digital learners’ expertise by assigning a project that would (a) engage them in higher-level cognitive processes such as analysing, evaluating and creating (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) as well as higher order thinking skills related to digital technology (e.g., filming, animating, mixing, remixing, publishing, videocasting, directing, and videocasting) (Churches, 2009); (b) encourage them to actively learn more about the profession, practice, and academic discipline of Home Economics; and (c) convey this knowledge to the public in new and creative ways. Further rationales for the project mirrored those reported by Schuck and Kearney (2003-04), including “building new literacies, creating authentic learning experiences, developing conceptual understanding, enhancing motivation, promoting expression and communication skills, developing collaborative learning skills, building technology skills, and building generic learning skills” (p.1). Moreover, based on UNESCO’s Education for Sustainable Development initiative, the instructors wanted to enhance the students’ skills in (a) critical and creative thinking; (b) oral, written, and graphic communication; and (c) technology and media, by showing how Home Economics empowers individuals, families, and communities.
### Table 1

Example of the assessment guidelines distributed to the students entitled Guidelines for Group Video Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Guidelines for Group Video Project</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You will work in groups of 3 or 4 on this assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To produce an informative video for a general audience that either explains the importance and value of Home Economics, or addresses one of the aims of the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (i.e., confronting family poverty and social exclusion; ensuring work-family balance; or advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity within families and communities).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your video should be factual, creative, original, well-organised, and 3-4 minutes in length. It should not include clips of other videos or copyrighted material (including music), but be entirely your original work. Any reference materials used in the development of your video must be acknowledged at the end. <strong>NOTE:</strong> Due to privacy issues, do NOT videotape people in a way that they could be identified. To do so would require their written informed consent and this is not being provided to you. Focus instead on creative ways to deliver your message. As ambassadors of Brescia, please respect the privacy of the people and/or places you may encounter in the production of your video and do not interfere with citizens’ normal rights and dignity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Executive Summary:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a group, you must also submit a 2-page Executive Summary of the issues, concepts, and information used in your video. Reference materials may include journals, books, review articles, and government publications. Materials obtained from the internet (not more than two) must be from verifiable, credible sources (e.g., Health Canada). Use the Vancouver (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors—ICMJE) Style of referencing. (If necessary, you may include an additional list of references for material used in your video but not in your Executive Summary.) Your reference page(s) will be in addition to the 2-pages allowed for your Executive Summary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prior to beginning the project, the students were informed that their videos may be posted on provincial and/or international websites. The course instructors discussed with the students the stages of group formation (i.e., forming, norming, storming, performing) (Tuckman, 1965), and asked each group to submit signed ‘Team Contracts’ to facilitate collaboration and problem-solving. A class website (part of an online open-source learning management system used by the university) (The Sakai Project, 2015) facilitated communication between the course instructors and students. It provided an online forum for discussion, as well as for sharing resources and solutions. The course instructors played a minimal role in providing either technical or content advice to the students, with the exception of privacy issues. Students were instructed not to film people in a way that individuals could be identified. The
course instructors were mindful of privacy legislation such as the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, 2013), and explained to the students that the university or course convenors did not have the capacity to maintain consent forms in perpetuity (i.e., once the videos are posted and possibly shared, the videos can literally exist forever in the virtual world and it would be impossible to remove a video should a participant request it). ‘Teamwork Progress Sheets’ and an ‘Executive Summary’ were submitted with the videos, which were shown in class at the end of the semester. The criteria for assessing the videos included overall presentation, organisation, content, originality, sources, and timing. The project contributed 20% of their final mark. Additional details on project guidelines and management may be obtained from the authors.

Project Outcomes

A total of 61 online videos were produced by the students. They used a variety of software and web-based programs (e.g., Animoto, Apple’s iMovie, Microsoft Windows Movie Maker, and Video Star) to create their videos and sought unique sources of information. For example, some interviewed members of their communities (e.g., new immigrants struggling with poverty and social exclusion); others interviewed family and friends to answer the questions about what they really valued and how they spent their time. Most groups tackled the project with interest and vigour, presenting their findings in a variety of ways (Table 2). The online video products were analysed by the course instructors using simple thematic analysis (Guest, McQueen, & Namey, 2012).

Table 2 Summary of Video Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Formats Used</th>
<th>Sample Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value and Importance of Home Economics</td>
<td>News broadcasts</td>
<td>Historical contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring Work-Family Balance</td>
<td>Game shows</td>
<td>Variety of career options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Poverty and Social Exclusion</td>
<td>‘Rap’ music</td>
<td>How to become a Home Economist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancing Intergenerational Solidarity</td>
<td>Time-lapse photography</td>
<td>Dispelling myths and stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animation</td>
<td>Importance of food safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prezi virtual presentation</td>
<td>Globalisation and disposable textiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whiteboard drawings</td>
<td>Male Home Economists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pets as actors</td>
<td>Challenges for working women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Statistics on Canadian families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animations</td>
<td>Statistics on social challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PowerPoint slides</td>
<td>Changes in family structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finger puppets interviews</td>
<td>Different definitions of a family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felt story boards</td>
<td>Importance of family meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photos with voice-over</td>
<td>Tips for daily living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original drawings</td>
<td>Policy suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original music</td>
<td>Relative vs absolute poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Characteristics of food insecurity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges of living in poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Groups most vulnerable to poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recipe for world hunger</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing community engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intergenerational programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging a Hestian approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bridging gaps with Home Economics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Encouraging active citizenship

The students’ pride in their and their peers’ online videos prompted them to show some of them at a national student conference organised by the students that year. The students also requested permission from the professors to post some of the online videos on the YouTube channel of Brescia’s Student Human Ecology Association (SHEA) https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNnipclbd6-KRGD95D_A-QA(). During the last class of the course, students showed their online videos and engaged their peers in discussion around the topics presented. Students reported to the instructors and their peers that they were engaged in their learning and were surprised to learn about the depth, breadth, and wide-ranging effects of Home Economics on people and their environments. The students also reported that they believed they were successful in achieving the objective of informing and persuading others, such as family and friends who participated in the video, about the importance of Home Economics. It is important to note that, similar to others who have included digital video production in post-secondary classrooms, ‘students seem[ed] to revise early and often without direct provocation from the instructor, and they [came] to appreciate revision as a vital part of the composition process - two rare phenomena when students write and rewrite essays’ (Meeks & Ilyasova, 2003). Furthermore, comparable to results found by Kearney and Schuck (2006), students also commented that the development of their movie making skills was a highly relevant part of their learning. This pedagogical strategy has also been used by Zahn et al. (2014), where students also progressed through four stages (i.e., research, theory, video production, and reflection) in the collaborative video design process. Also similar to Zahn et al. (2014), students in the course described here received immediate feedback from their peers during the final presentation of the online videos. Formal feedback from the instructors was provided separately to each group.

Limitations and recommendations

Although strikingly similar to the project described by Zahn et al. (2014), this was not a research study. Many students live in a single residence on campus; therefore, intervention and control groups were not possible as the sample would have been contaminated by close interaction among the four classes of students. The instructors assumed that the majority of students had access to some sort of device for filming (e.g., digital camera, cell phone with camera, camcorder, tablet); however, not all students did. The instructors also assumed a minimum level of digital knowledge and experience in students, but some had very little. In these groups, the students created ‘videos’ using animation programs or other video-creation software; therefore, filming per se was not required. Others who had limited access to equipment or limited digital knowledge or experience simply created a slide show using PowerPoint and added music and/or voice-over. As “Digital Immigrants” (Prensky, 2001), the Baby Boomer-aged instructors were often at a loss when responding to technical questions; thus, these questions were re-directed to the class as a whole and students readily offered solutions to their peers’ dilemmas. This online question and answer practice (through the class website) enhanced learning for both the students and the instructors. Similar to Zahn et al. (2014), the last class of the semester was reserved for in-class viewing of the videos, and for students to collectively reflect on their learning. It was the first time that the instructors or students had seen the outputs of this project (indeed, students were instructed not to post their videos online until they had been reviewed by the instructors). Presentation of online
videos in class without any prior vetting or previewing by the course instructors was a little stressful, particularly when it was discovered that two of videos included inappropriate content (i.e., breach of individual privacy, stereotypical images that may have been more detrimental than helpful in explaining the value of the profession and/or its professionals). Peer response to the inappropriate content was swift and provided the instructors with an unforgettable ‘teaching moment’ while the ensuing discussion was mediated and directed. While some instructors might see this ‘loss of control’ resulting in ‘mayhem’ in the classroom, the instructors appreciated that the freedom to create pushed students into deeper and more autonomous learning. Some students failed to appreciate the autonomy they were afforded by the instructors and criteria of the project, commenting that they wanted more guidance on ‘what they were supposed to do’ or ‘what was expected of them’. It was perceived by the authors that it was this uncertainty that propelled the students to take ownership over their work. Many groups were proud of their achievement and amazed by their final product. A more formalised pedagogical framework may assist future instructors of the course through what are fairly complex, open-ended tasks (Kearney, 2011). Kearney (2011) suggests that while guidelines for supporting student-generated video production tend to have a technical focus, more emphasis should be placed on educational issues such as “teacher roles, peer learning structures, and support for reflective processes” (p. 170). Despite these challenges, the authors believe other educators may find the digital video project described in this article to be a useful way to enhance digital learners’ engagement in learning about the practice, profession, and academic discipline of Home Economics.

Conclusions
Assigning the creation of videos about Home Economics for an undergraduate group project engaged Brescia’s digital learners and had the added benefit of creating new ambassadors for the profession. This outreach occurred when others were engaged in the development and production of the videos, and through sharing and circulating the videos with peers and social networks. Most importantly, students seemed to experience a shift in their own perceptions and gain a new appreciation for Home Economics during the process. Unlike other forms of written or hard-copy assessment, these projects continue to educate others, through viewing and sharing on the Internet.

Perhaps the students were more careful about the outputs of this project (i.e., videos) as they were assessed not only by their professors, but also by their peers and the public (for those already displayed on the student association website). This increased the level of accountability, as individual written assignment items such as essays are rarely viewed by anyone other than the instructor.

The complex process of video construction required students to “generate multiple solutions, cope with uncertainty, demonstrate nuanced judgment with media selection and adaptation... and put considerable effort into structuring information” - all characteristics of higher-order thinking (Brown, 2007, p. 107). For digital learners in particular, this project addressed digital learning strategies most relevant to their generation (e.g., filming, animating, directing, video-casting).
We encourage other educators to consider similar class projects to engage digital learners in activities associated with deeper learning. We also encourage Home Economics colleagues around the world to upload such digital creations, not only on student websites and YouTube, but also on the websites of our professional associations to promote Home Economics among the next generation of students who will be, undoubtedly, increasingly digitally-oriented.

Biographies

**June Matthews** is an Associate Professor in Food and Nutritional Sciences at Brescia University College, Canada. She belongs to local, provincial, and international Home Economics Associations, the Ontario Family Studies Home Economics Educators’ Association, the College of Dietitians of Ontario, Dietitians of Canada, the Canadian Public Health Association, and the Canadian Association for Food Studies. Her current research involves peer education and food skill development. She received the 2008 Brescia University College Award for Excellence in Teaching and was nominated for the 2011 Scholarships Canada ‘Dream Maker Award’ for making a positive difference in students’ education.

**Lesley Macaskill** is a Dietetic Training Coordinator/Lecturer in Food and Nutritional Sciences at Brescia University College, Canada. She belongs to local, provincial, and international Home Economics Associations, the College of Dietitians of Ontario, Dietitians of Canada, the Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health, and the Society for Nutrition Education.

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Vanguard next practice for home economics: Complexity thinking, integral thinking, and the human condition

Sue L.T. McGregor
McGregor Consulting Group

Abstract

Different from best practice, next practice favours what could work better and more powerfully—what is next? It entails outside-the-box thinking, and boundary-pushing innovations. This paper makes a case for augmenting three current home economics best practices with three vanguard next practices: (a) (eco)systems thinking with complexity thinking; (b) integrated with integral; and, (c) well-being and quality of life with the human condition, via the three systems of action philosophy, and human ecosystem theory. When scaffolded with these powerful new philosophical innovations, including transdisciplinarity, home economics professionals should be able to position themselves on the vanguard, at a time when the world needs us the most. Change is our challenge and we make change by our actions, which are informed by our philosophy.

Key words: complexity thinking, integral thinking, human condition, transdisciplinarity, vanguard leadership, next practice, best practice, integrated

Introduction

Not to sound too dramatic, but the world sits on a precipice. Individuals and families are facing overwhelming and unprecedented social, cultural, political, economic, technological, and environmental change. The profession must be intellectually and philosophically prepared to work with and for families as they face the challenges of the 21st century (Pendergast, McGregor, & Turkki, 2012). Home economics must be on the vanguard, on the leading edge of change (McGregor, 2012a).

Framing home economics as vanguard opens the door for an interesting conversation about what is next for home economics philosophy and practice. Vanguard is Middle French for avant (out front) and garde (guard). A vanguard is the front of any movement, leading the advance. Vanguard can also refer to intellectual movements, including home economics philosophy. Those in the vanguard are a creative group of leaders, active in the innovation and application of new concepts, theories, principles, approaches, and techniques in a given field (Harper, 2014; “Vanguard,” 2014).

Many home economists are keen to position their professional ambitions in larger frameworks that may be germane to the profession. In that spirit, this paper introduced the idea of next practices and identified several such conceptual, philosophical, and theoretical frameworks. The author undertook a survey of the broader literature and culled from it three next
practices; a survey means a careful and thorough look at a collection of ideas, presented with general descriptions.

In more detail, the paper discusses the idea of placing home economics on the vanguard of global change by augmenting three long-standing best practices with three innovative next practices: (a) (eco)systems thinking with complexity thinking; (b) integrated with integral; and, (c) well-being and quality of life with the human condition, via the three systems of action philosophy, and human ecosystem theory. Transdisciplinarity, another next practice for home economics, has been discussed elsewhere (see Brown, 1993; Daniels, 1980; McGregor, 2010a, 2011a, c). Although not included explicitly in this paper, the author considers it to be one of the most powerful next practices for the profession (augmenting multi and interdisciplinarity). After distinguishing between best and next practice as concepts, each of complexity, integral thinking, and the human condition is introduced, positioned against current home economics best practice(s), making the case for ease of transition from best to next practice (see Figure 1).

Distinguishing Between Best and Next Practice

Succinctly, best practice focuses on what is working now. It tends to rely on received wisdom (older, accepted thinking), and to deal with enduring problems by delivering tried-and-true
solutions. Hannon (2007) explained that practitioners tend to be heavily invested in best practices, intimating it is difficult to change directions if one is hanging onto established ways of doing things (see also McGregor, 2012a). Home economics professionals need to accept that our best may not be good enough, given the vagaries of the world. Indeed, best practice always needs to be augmented with next practice, especially if the profession aspires to find new ideas and directions. The hope is that next practice will become best practice, stimulating a new iteration of next practice, creating a cycle that keeps the profession dynamic, viable, and resilient.

Next practice favours what could work better and more powerfully—what is next? It entails outside-the-box thinking, boundary-pushing leadership, and philosophical innovations. In more detail, while fully aware of conventional best practice, those engaged in next practice would aspire to move the profession to new levels, in new directions, in new combinations, and in new relationships; that is, move outside the comfortable, familiar best-box. While best practice focuses on past innovations, next practice focuses on future innovations. Next practice strives for breakthroughs in thinking and solutions, leading to new practice, on the vanguard. Next practice emerges from a mobilised group of empowered practitioners who are motivated by a compelling purpose. They are conscious of the limits of current home economics best practice, and are keen to push further, higher, wider, and in new directions. Vanguard home economics practitioners would have a wide field of vision, a lively interest in the overall direction of the profession, and they would be constantly scanning their environments (Hannon, 2007; McGregor, 2012a).

Wals (2010) explained that next practices are exemplary niche practices (specialised but effective), which hold the promise to become mainstream (i.e., future best practices). He continued, noting that next practices can act as beacons and inspiration for future transitions, in this case, transitions in home economics practice. Wals proposed that next practices and their careful analysis can be extremely helpful, not only as a source of inspiration but also as stepping stones for improving the quality of leadership, practice, and learning. To that end, the remainder of the paper profiles three niche practices, vanguard next ideas for innovative home economics practice, extrapolated from scanning the wider academic, practitioner, leadership, and intellectual environments and contexts: complexity thinking, integral thinking, and the human condition.

**Complexity Thinking**

Complexity thinking, especially Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS), is an extension of family systems theory, family ecosystem theory, and human ecosystem theory, best practices with which home economics is very familiar (see Figure 2). Complexity is derived from the Latin verb *complecti* (to twine together) and the noun *complexus* (network) (Harper, 2014). By bringing the idea of complexity to systems and human ecosystem thinking, a next practice can emerge. Complex adaptive systems are, in fact, special cases of complex (eco)systems. Examples include families, stock markets, social insect and ant colonies, the ecosystem, the Internet, and cities.
A complex adaptive system (CAS) shows complex behaviour while it keeps adapting to changing environments. Systems are complex in that they are diverse and made up of multiple, interconnected elements (individuals, agents, teams, groups). Systems are adaptive in that they have the capacity to change and learn from experience, gaining resilience in the face of adversity; they are self-directed and self-(re)organising entities, able to survive and thrive due to their adaptability (Appelo, 2010).

Although it is accepted that systems in general can be complex, there are several reasons why adaptive systems are so complex (Appelo, 2010). They have both stabilising and reinforcing feedback loops; that is, they can stay on track and change directions. There are both multiple and opposing causes per each effect of an action on or within the system, with varying degrees of transparency. They exhibit the property of emergence. There are many relationships, both known and unknown, which make the CAS unpredictable and complicated. Finally, the overall behaviour of the complex adaptive system is the result of a huge number of decisions made every moment by many diverse individual agents, who are acting on local information, yet having global impact. They are changing as they accumulate lived experiences. In CAS, like families, people are never just observers. Their very presence influences the complexity and adaptation of the system; they can influence other agents, relationships, environments, and boundaries (Appelo, 2010; Holland, 1999).

Especially relevant for vanguard home economics is the idea that complexity thinking presumes the family is a self-(re)organising system, meaning it can become self-directed and is able to regroup and reorganise in the face of adversity. As it gains resiliency, the self-organising family system increases in complexity, eventually needing less and less guidance or management from outside sources (Davis & Sumara, 2008; Heylighen, 2008; Wheatley, 1994). As a caveat, the inherent notion of free will (the ability to make choices unconstrained by certain factors) does not negate the powerful impact of constraints from societal laws, regulations and norms, or the challenges emanating from nature (e.g., natural disasters, changing seasons, or gene aberrations).
With a deep respect for resiliency and increasing system complexity, home economics professional associations and higher education programs could orient home economists to appreciate the power of facilitating families becoming self-determined, autonomous, and empowered agents. Practitioners would assume people can self-organise, and can change their approach to, and the directions of, their lives. They have free will. More compelling is the fact that anything that is not constrained will self-organise (Wheatley, 1994). This fact means home economics practitioners have to help families become unconstrained; that is, become self-directed, instead of remaining too dependent on anything or anyone. Families (complex adaptive systems) need to be free to act so they can actively address human problems, and the human condition. They must not remain constrained by ideologies, or by perceived and/or real lack of opportunities, resources and such. It is because of their complexity that families can adapt, change, and become resilient.

**Integral Thinking**

In conjunction with (eco)systems thinking, the profession has long characterised its approach as integrative and holistic (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993, 1998). The experience in United States serves to powerfully illustrate this philosophical and intellectual tradition (see McGregor (2009, 2012b) for discussions of how home economics philosophy may differ due to region). The 1993 Scottsdale conference affirmed that the newly named Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) practice would be unified through its focus on an integrative approach, and on the discovery, integration and application of knowledge (American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences [AAFCS], 1993). The current AAFCS Body of Knowledge (BOK) intends for practitioners to employ an integrative, holistic approach (Nickols et al., 2009).

McGregor (2010b, 2011b, 2014b, c) contended that this well-established best practice can be augmented with integral thinking, another example of a niche, next practice. The basic idea of integral originated in the early 1900s (the same time home economics emerged as a discipline and profession), but the integral movement did not gain momentum until the early 1970s (see Molz & Gidley (2008) for a discussion of the evolution of this idea). Also, while both integrated and integral stem from the same Latin root integrare, to make whole or to make complete (Harper, 2014), integral achieves wholeness in a different way than does integrate.

To illustrate, the concept of integrated places heavy emphasis on harmony within systems. It strives for order, certainty, and sureness. Integrated means balanced and in a state of equilibrium so as to minimize tension and reduce chaos (in this case seen as an undesirable lack of order) (O'Sullivan, 1999). The idea of integrated worked best when the world was not so complex, and when complex problems were not so intricately bound together. Integrated, with its focus on order and balance, negates (or downplays) the challenges of today’s world: uncertainty, disorder, insecurity and the profound dynamics of global interconnections. Integral embraces these aspects of reality (Wilber, 2007).

Integral also values non-equilibrium because it sees chaos as order emerging, just not predictably (Whitt & Schultze, 2009). Not surprisingly then, integral respects the power of emergence, and it values the healthy tensions that hold things together as they evolve and emerge (instead of just pushing things apart). Integral respects the creative, dynamic, and
evolving nature of human processes. It also emphasizes diversity as much as it does unity (calling for a sense of unity in differences) while integrated more narrowly strives for uniformity of similar things (O’Sullivan, 1999).

Wilber’s (1995, 2001, 2007) approach to integral further presumes key roles for perspective and ideological awareness, and the melding of these perspectives to attain more holistic, comprehensive pictures of today’s many complex realities. In more detail, an integral vision assumes people will try to touch all bases, try to respect, learn from and integrate as many perspectives as possible. Wilber uses a four-cell matrix to illustrate his approach, with many levels. This paper focuses on the four quadrants, rather than the levels (see Figure 3). The quadrants represent the individual person (I), their outer, physical body and their behaviour (IT), the collective within which individuals live (WE), and the collection of global systems comprising the larger external environment (ITS).

![Figure 3 Ken Wilber’s Four Quadrants of Integral Thinking](image-url)

Although this idea is echoed in the familiar best practice we call human ecology, integral differs in that it calls for an \textit{integration} of these perspectives to address the complex
The main assumption of integral is that as soon as people begin looking at the world through the integral lens, everything has the potential to come into sharper focus, both in the foreground and the background, which is where the complexity may be most challenging. Once that lens turns and clicks (imagine a kaleidoscope), people gain rich lucidity, and are able to make better decisions for humanity. Home economics practitioners inspired by integral thinking would teach people to be as comprehensive, caring, and inclusive as possible, striving for deep clarity of the situation, and the wider context. Rather than excluding points of view, people would strive to adopt all views that are useful for dealing with their current dilemma or multilemmas, and do so by looking for things they would otherwise have ignored. The major issue is how much complexity is needed to adequately understand the situation from a holistic, integral perspective (Wilber, 2001, 2007). A complex world (sitting on a precipice) requires a complex lens; that is the promise of integral as next practice.

The Human Condition

For more than a century, the home economics profession and discipline has embraced the best practices of well-being and quality of life. In the broader literature, wellness and well-being are usually used in conjunction with individuals and families (and communities), while the notion of condition is usually associated with all of humanity (Simon, 1995). Home economics followed the former convention, focusing on individual and family well-being, and on local communities. With due respect to these longstanding ideas, there is room for a discussion of the human condition (Brown, 1993; McGregor, 2010c). Using United States again as an example, the human condition concept has long been an inherent part of AAFCS professional rhetoric and visioning; it just did not become best practice. The articulated focus of AAFCS is still well-being and quality of life of individuals, families and communities, rather than a focus on the home and family for the good of humanity (see McGregor (2010c) and Sekiguchi (2004) for discussions of this idea as it pertains to home economics).

Continuing with United States’ experience with the human condition concept, several examples illustrate the elusive presence of this idea in its philosophy and BOK. Most telling is the development of the mission statement of home economics for the former American Home Economics Association (AHEA, now AAFCS). Brown and Paolucci (1979), the commissioned authors, were inspired by Arendt’s (1958) book, The Human Condition (to be discussed shortly). The 1993 Scottsdale conference (where the name was changed) acknowledged that
the profession needs to take leadership in enhancing the human condition (AAFCS, 1993). The 1995-2000 AAFCS Strategic Plan identified, as a core value, “a healthy environment that positively affects the human condition” (Chadwick, 1999, p.6). The 1999 Summit on FCS in Higher Education (AAFCS attended this summit) recognised ‘improving the human condition’ as a core value of the profession (Summit Steering Committee, 1999). The current version of the AAFCS BOK places basic human needs at the core, with no mention of the human condition (see Nickols et al., 2009). However, Max-Neef (1991) argued that fundamental basic human needs are part of the condition of being human, meaning the human condition construct may be latently present in the AAFCS BOK.

Hannah Arendt’s Approach to the Human Condition

This paper draws on Hannah Arendt’s (1958) theory of the human condition. The roots of Arendt’s thoughts are deep in European history and political movements, raising various interpretations and arguments. Her philosophy is multidimensional and much debated. Although the nuances of Arendt’s original message about the human condition can be diluted when translated in English, the author believes her contributions are rich and have relevance for home economics. Her work continues to provide inspiration for our philosophy (see Brown & Paolucci, 1979; McGregor, 2010c).

Based on the assumption that understanding the human condition concept makes it easier to consider it as a next practice for home economics, it is now defined. As a preamble, the word condition refers to existing circumstances, to the current state of being (in this case, of being human). Humanity’s present condition reflects the totality of actions the human race has taken to date (leading to the world sitting on a precipice). Thus, the human condition refers to the current circumstances of a collective people; it is the positive and negative aspects of the current existence of being human (Simon, 1995).

With similar understandings, Arendt (1958) developed a theory of the human condition comprising three human activities: labour, work, and action (see Table 1). However, for her, labour did not mean paid work, work did not mean to labour, and action did not mean behaviour. Instead, (a) labour is what people do to survive; (b) work is what people do beyond what is necessary to survive, work that builds and contributes to the world around them (worldliness); and, (c) action is what people do in the public sphere, beyond labour and work, that gives meaning to their lives.

Table 1  Overview of Arendt’s (1958) Theory of the Human Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal laborans</td>
<td>Homo faber</td>
<td>Zoon politikon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techné</td>
<td>Poiesis</td>
<td>Praxis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and theory of how to do things</td>
<td>Skillful manufacture, production or creation</td>
<td>Voluntary, goal-directed action, done for its own sake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With labour, people ensure (reproduce) the conditions of living</td>
<td>With work, people ensure the condition of worldliness (a world fit for human use); humans cannot work without institutions, equipment; they build these artefacts while using them</td>
<td>With public action, people ensure the conditions of plurality of actors, with each person being equal but distinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household and nature</td>
<td>Buildings, laws, policies, institutions and artefacts</td>
<td>Public space for human togetherness; public life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 (cont) Overview of Arendt’s (1958) Theory of the Human Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal laborans</td>
<td>Artificial world, realm of sustainable, more or less permanent, structures and institutions</td>
<td>Realm of human affairs and new realities via web of relationships sustained through interactions (speech and action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realm of material things and the natural world</td>
<td>Fabricate and build stable and enabling institutions, laws and artefacts that serve as preconditions for creating public life</td>
<td>Common space where people encounter a community, a space where people’s actions can be witnessed, assigned meaning, and be remembered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour to meet material needs and sustain physical life (food, shelter, water, biological processes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>Durability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>Abundance</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arendt (1958) placed these three types of human activity in an ascending hierarchy, with action at the top because, as she understood it, action (especially political discourse) intimates human freedom. She theorised that humanity needs to engage in repetitive activities that sustain life (labour), and in activities that leave behind enduring artefacts and institutions for the collective human world (work). Humans must fulfil these two former activities so that meaningful (inter)action can take place through the shared enterprise of human conversations, solidarity, and togetherness.

Similarities between Arendt’s Approach and Home Economics Best Practice

This section profiles two powerful examples of the latent presence of the human condition concept in home economics best practice, respectively, three systems of action, and human ecosystem theory. First, Brown and Paolucci (1979) used Arendt’s (1958) theory to create the mission of the profession and to create their three systems of action approach, also predicated on Habermas’ (1984) theory of communicative action (see Table 2). They advised home economists to approach each situation in concert with those experiencing it, and to figure out together which combination of cope, adapt and change is appropriate for that context. They understood action to mean ‘think before you act,’ meaning home economists should think about each situation from these three different lens before taking any practical action (see also McGregor, 2007, 2014a).

Second, there are compelling similarities between Arendt’s (1958) human condition theory and home economics’ best practice of human ecosystem theory (Bubolz, 1990; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993) (see Table 2). There are close parallels between the four levels of environment (human group, human built, social-cultural, and natural) and the three human activities that shape the human condition: (a) labour in private, human group households, which draws on natural resources for sustenance and abundance; (b) work in the human-built and socio-cultural environments; and, (c) meaningful public action as part of the social and cultural elements of the socio-cultural environment. It is not a quantum leap to embrace the human condition idea as a next practice for home economics given its strong resonance with the current best practices of well-being, quality of life, and basic human needs, especially via the three systems of action philosophy, and human ecosystem theory.
Table 2  
Latent Evidence of Arendt’s (1958) Human Condition Concept in Two Home Economics Best Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three Human Activities</th>
<th>Three Systems of Action Best Practice</th>
<th>Human Ecology, Levels of Environments Best Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Conditions of Human Existence)</td>
<td>(Brown &amp; Paolucci, 1979)</td>
<td>(Bubolz, 1990; Bubolz &amp; Sontag, 1993)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Labour—freedom to make choices within the private household, between alternatives, to ensure efficient use of scarce resources, while striving for an abundant lifestyle; labour constitutes those repetitive, never-ending activities that sustain life; these biological processes ensure Life itself and individual survival as well as survival of the human species | Technical Action  
Meet basic needs  
Care giving needs  
Home/household maintenance  
Extract (and steward) resources from natural environments | Human Group comprising autonomous individuals who are mutually dependent upon each other, usually within a family unit, which shares goals, resources and a commitment to each other over time; note that household is different, referring to those living in the same dwelling space  
Natural Physical-Biological Environment (e.g., water, energy, climate conditions, seasonal change, land, animals, plants) |
| Nature as required to ensure the life-processes of the human species; run the risk of abusing nature if engaged in unsustainable production and consumption | Interpretative Action  
By way of stronger dynamics and understandings within families, a bridge is created to critical action | Human Built Environment comprising artefacts and infrastructure (i.e., housing, clothing, furnishings, tools, roads, bridges, buildings), consumer products and services, manufacturing systems, and other material possessions  
Socio-cultural Environment comprising social and economic institutions (e.g., markets, financial institutions, health care, education, justice system, local government) |

Work  
What we do beyond what is needed to survive; an enabling environment (social institutions, machines, technologies, laws, policies, artefacts) governed by institutionalised power, which creates a bridge between private and public, and creates a world fit to live in (now and in the future); work creates the collective human world

Action  
What we do beyond labour and work that gives meaning to our lives; public sphere, the realm of human affairs (especially political), which is a common conversation space for the exchange of meaningful words and deeds; shaped by plurality, identity, and solidarity, leading to a shared enterprise

Conclusion

This paper made a case for augmenting three current home economics best practices with three niche, vanguard next practices: (a) (eco) systems thinking with complexity thinking, and with Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS); (b) integrated with integral; and, (c) well-being and quality of life with the human condition via the three systems of action philosophy, and human ecosystem theory. These next practices are indeed beacons and inspirations for our future. Beacons serve to communicate an important message to everyone within a certain proximity (like a lighthouse or a signal fire on top of a mountain). These next practices speak
loudly to their potential to sharply and forever transform home economics practice. They serve to inspire, which means to breathe new air into something, in this case our practice as we move forward into the 21st century. These next practices fill us with the urge to do more for families, and do it differently.

All that is missing is a creative group of vanguard home economists who are active in the innovation and application of new concepts, theories, principles, approaches, and techniques. Those home economists would inspire others to embrace the idea of next practice, in particular the four ideas presented in this paper (see Figure 1). They would urge us to embrace transdisciplinarity while respecting interdisciplinarity. They would exhort us to move beyond integrated practice to draw on integral thinking. They would help us see the benefit of augmenting systems thinking with complexity thinking. And, long overdue, they would see that we expanded our reach by focusing on the larger issue of the human condition, which so powerfully affects well-being, quality of life, and basic human needs. Home economics philosophy, leadership, and practice, informed by transdisciplinarity, complexity, integrality, and the human condition, would place the profession on the vanguard of the 21st century and beyond.

Focusing on change and its inherent challenges has much to offer our profession. Change is our challenge and we make change by our actions, which are informed by our philosophy. The likelihood of us embracing the ideas in this paper is predicated on our ability to tease out how we process change as a key element of our professional identity. Many home economists see themselves as experts in practice, but this paper challenges them to see themselves as experts in next practices. The profession faces an urgent need to learn more about and be more aware of the many dimensions of our practice, including best and next practices. The next challenge is to relate these insights to wider and deeper frames of practice. Future studies can document evidence of best and next practices in home economics. Insights from that research can further the argument developed in this paper—that home economics must be on the vanguard of change.

Acknowledgement

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Biography

Sue L. T. McGregor, PhD Professor Emerita, Mount Saint Vincent University, is a Canadian home economist (45 years) with a keen interest in transdisciplinarity, integral studies, home economics philosophy, and consumer studies. She has 20 years’ experience with consumer policy analysis and development with the Canadian federal government. She is a Principal Consultant for The McGregor Consulting Group (founded in 1991) www.consultmgregor.com sue.mcgregor@msvu.ca
References


Invisibleness of traditional hand block printing in historical Mewar’s capital: Ayad

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Abstract

Rajasthan is known for its traditional, colourful art, which is spread across the state. The block prints, tie and dye prints, Zari embroidery, meenakari, woodwork, metal work articles are major products of Rajasthan’s art and craft. Block printing is an ancient craft form of Rajasthan that is being practiced since time immemorial. Udaipur was an important centre in Rajasthan where block printing gained a good prominence and the designs of the block printing were considered the most popular and best of all other designs. Block Printing of Ayad in Udaipur was well known for the intricate designs and the details that were made on the block prints. But this traditional craft disappeared and presently only two families are engaged in the hand block printing profession. It was concluded that due to poor infrastructure facility, lack of proper marketing support, rising cost of raw material, imitation of prints with other techniques, illiteracy, unawareness of current trends and absence of strategies to increase business enforced them to think about alternate income generating professions for livelihood. Suggested measures like skill oriented training programmes, marketing support, organised production with quality system, customer support, new product invention, timely availability of raw material and resources, improvement in infrastructure, government and other institutional assistance will be a milestone in reviving traditional the hand block printing profession.

Key words: Ayad, Challenging factors, Chippa, Rajasthan, Traditional Hand Block Printing Ancestral Profession (THBPAP)

Anyone can learn skills but it takes generations to learn a tradition.

Introduction

There are several modes of printing that can be seen in Rajasthan; some of them are handblock printing, printing ‘dabu’ (resist printing) and ‘chhint’ (sprinkling of colour) printing. However, the more famous among them is the hand block printing and it has become the generic word for all types of traditional printing styles. According to the kind of printing, the printer artisans, called “chhipas” (both Hindus and Muslims) were classified as ‘rangrez’ (ordinary colour dyer who dye in colours) and ‘nilgar’ (Indigo dyers who dye in indigo). The type of fabric printed included ‘chaddar’ (bed-sheets), ‘safas’ (head gear), ‘pagris’ (turbans) and ‘ghaghras’ (skirts) (UNIDO, 1997). The process involved is an art developed with experience. Some of the new substances which were being put to use for the purpose include madder, kesula flower, and bark of the babool tree, ratan jot, blue vitriol, heerakashish, red
vitriol and alum. According to Ganguly (2012) hand block printing is said to be over 2000 years old, and was first developed in China, the earliest known example is the Diamond Sutra from 868 AD, currently in the British museum located in the Bloomsbury area of London dedicated to human history and culture. Hand block printing is not only a traditional form of putting motifs and colour on cotton, but is also an eco-friendly form of printing on textiles. Yadav (2010) reported that chemical and artificial colours have replaced the traditional natural dyes used in block printing. Ishrath (2009) in study on “Revival of Traditional and Eco-Friendly Hand Block Printing in Bagru, Rajasthan” mentioned that in spite of poor living and working conditions, the expert craftsmen of Bagru have kept the three-centuries-old tradition of block printing alive in India. Since ancient and exotic art forms have taken a back seat due to western influence and globalisation, many Chhippas have given up the art of hand block printing as people have adopted modern and synthetic textiles. Yet, there are a handful of craftsmen who swear by the beauty of the art form and equate their work to worship. Arch Academy of Design reported in project on Block Print in Rajasthan that due to the persistent efforts, under Geographical Indication of Goods Registration and Protection Act.1999, Sanganeri Hand Block Textiles and Furnishings have been recognised as a unique identity in manufacturing. However, Ayad has a different picture, its glorious past of block printing is invisible due to direct and indirect reasons. Analysers studied challenging factors and suggested measures were discussed.

Objectives

The focus of the study is to identify the production process of traditional hand block printing of Ayad, Demographic Information of artisans, challenging factors faced by the block printing artisans that forced them to quit from their Traditional hand block printing ancestral profession (THBPAP). Besides all, suggested measures are also presented as an effort to revive the invisibleness.

Methodology

The study aims at the documentation of block Printing of Ayad, a printed textile of Udaipur, Rajasthan. To fulfil this aim, a descriptive study was planned, for which a questionnaire was structured with closed and open-ended questions and a purposive sampling method was followed. These questions deal with demographic details, history of craft, production process, colour, products, Reasons of shifting from THBPAP, and so on.

Sample Selection: For the collection of authentic data 80 artisans were selected and multi visit with interview method was implemented. 40 male and 40 female respondents were selected through purposive sampling techniques who were involved in THBPAP from minimum 2 to 25 years. All respondents were selected from individual families to envelop more reliable information. The principal research instruments used were; library searches, semi-structured interviews, small group discussions, and observations. Historical background, printing procedure, reasons for invisibleness and important suggested measures of revival were drawn out and discussed.
Results

Production Process
Previously, Block printing of Ayad has become popular, originally natural dyes were used but later on it has been replaced by chemical and artificial colours. The production process starts with wooden and metallic block making, preparation of the dye and the printing process, along with pre-printing and post-printing treatments accorded to the fabric. Black and red colours were noticeably used in Ayad's block printing.

Fabric Selection
The entire process of block printing runs through several phases starting with the procurement of cotton fabric, it was usually reja (course cotton cloth) prepared by weavers on handlooms.

‘Mulmul’ (cotton voile), ‘lattha’ (sheeting cotton fabric) and cotton cambric, and so on, were sourced from outside of Udaipur and used for block printing.

Pre Treatment: Long Processing Cycle
According to the respondents the grey cloth was soaked in cold water on the preceding night. Cow dung was then mixed in this water proportionate to the length of the cloth. Next day morning, cloth was thoroughly washed, with action repeated after another two days in the Ayad river area. Thereafter the cloth was soaked in ‘harda’ powder (obtained from the fruit of a tree) for 30 to 60 minutes so that it turned to yellow. It was then dried in the bright sun till the fabric became hot. The side of cloth exposed directly to sun rays absorbed the colours well so that they appeared sharp and fast. After this treatment, the cloth was beaten and kneaded to make it print worthy. However, preparing the cloth ready for printing took rounds of washing and drying manually and thus was higher labour intensive.

Colour preparation
Respondents reported that the herbs or minerals were used for preparing printing dyes by the skilled traditional printers. The vegetable dyes were made from (geru/ ochre) red soil, jaggery, and pomegranate rind, a spice called harda’, iron filings and horse-shoes. Flowers of kesula (Beutea Monosperma) were used splendidly due to abundance of availability. The red dye is developed from red soil (geru). The black dye is made through a long process; the iron-filings, horse shoes and jaggery were placed in a mud pot (matka in local language) of water and kept for more than 15 days. The extract became the black dye and it was used for six-to ten days. Respondents reported that later on, in order to meet the market demands to expand the range of colours, synthetic colours were being used. Artisans of Ayad were skilled; however, the artisans relied on their judgement for the quantitative estimates regarding the usage of colours and dyes. Overall the dyes for block printing were mainly obtained from herbs, roots, flowers, local minerals and iron pieces.

Developed Products
The principal items printed were Dari (Floor spread), Chaddar (bed cover), odhna (female unstitched upper garment), saafa (head gear), ghaghras (skirts) and printed yardages (running cloth material).
Ayad and its traditional hand block printing-

Ayad: A Pre-Historic Era of Chhipa

It is not known exactly from where the people who inhabited Ayad came from, but Ayad was chosen by men for habitation in about 2000 B.C along the bank of the small river Ahar. Ayad was the capital of Mewar long before Maharana Udai Singh declared Udaipur the capital of Mewar (Lodha, 2010). At that time Ayad became a great centre of trade and was frequented by the traders of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and other neighbouring states. The “Chhipa” community, engaged in this traditional craft has settled along the riverside from various parts of Northern and Western India, and has gracefully carried forward the traditional art of block printing, over successive generations.

History of Traditional Hand Block Printing

There is no authentic record for reference on backdating Ayad’s block printing practices. It is estimated that this art form was introduced long years back when a community of Chhipas (literally meaning people who stamps or prints) settled in Ayad. Their community works together in a place called Chhippa Mohalla (Printer’s houses), by the Ayad riverside like any other nomadic settlement. The bank of the river provided ample water which was an important ingredient in getting the printed fabrics. Members of the Chhipa community have for long been associated with block printing in all its aspects. However the younger generation is no longer interested in block printing.

Demographic Information:

Table 1 Age Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>20-30 years</th>
<th>30-40 years</th>
<th>40-50 years</th>
<th>Above 50 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 (17.5)</td>
<td>8 (20)</td>
<td>11 (27.5)</td>
<td>14 (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td>10 (25)</td>
<td>15 (37.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The profile revealed that 35% and 37.5% of respective male and female genders were aged above 50 years. 20% male and 22.5% female between 30 to 40 years, about 17.5% male and 15% female respondents were aged between 20-30 years.

Table 2 Educational Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Illiterate</th>
<th>Literate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Post-graduate</th>
<th>Professional training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>23 (57.5)</td>
<td>10 (25)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8 (20)</td>
<td>29 (72.5)</td>
<td>3 (7.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 depicts that 15% male and 20% female were illiterate who have never been enrolled in formal education. Over 25% male and only 7.5% female completed graduation and only one (male) completed professional degree.
Table 3  Family Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Up to 10,000 Rupee</th>
<th>10,000—20,000 Rupee</th>
<th>20,000 Rupee &amp; above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29 (72.5)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31 (77.5)</td>
<td>8 (20)</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Money is always an issue; economics is part of every profession. Perusal of data in Table 5 depicts that 22.5% male and 20% female respondents belonged to income range of Rupee 10,000—20,000 per month followed by 72.5% (M), 77.5% (F) respondents belonged to income up to Rupee 10,000 Per month. Remaining 5% (M), 2.5% (F) respondents belonged to income range of above Rupee 20,000 per month. The majority of respondent’s families continue to experience severe economic difficulties for the last three decades as income was not sufficient for joint family.

Table 4  Type of Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Joint family</th>
<th>Nuclear family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31 (77.5)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30 (75)</td>
<td>10 (25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data revealed that 77.5% (M) & 75% (F) respondents belonged to joint family (Couple with married and unmarried children and their parents) while remaining 22.5% (M) & 25% (F) belonged to nuclear family (couple with unmarried children). Preference to Joint family was common practice in Chippa community.

Table 5  Inspirations behind Adopting THBPAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Self interest</th>
<th>Family occupation</th>
<th>Other aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11 (27.5)</td>
<td>18 (45)</td>
<td>11 (27.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14 (35)</td>
<td>19 (47.5)</td>
<td>7 (17.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was found by the researcher that 27.5% (M), 35% (F) respondents were inspired by themselves due to their own interest and about 45% (M), 47.5% (F) respondents were inspired by their family occupation. Other factors like elders’ pressure, low education, and unawareness of other professions, family bonding and society norms were major factors for adoption of THBPAP. Respondents themselves could not explain much about the factors responsible.

**Mode of Learning**

All the respondents said that the art of hand block printing was mainly inherited from their forefathers. While interviewing the respondents, it was found that they had not undergone any special training to learn this art and all the skills of profession had been acquired from family members like father, elder brothers and each artist trained himself by the method of learning by doing. It was concluded that the ‘Chhipa’ women contributed to production besides their households. They were masters in preparing dyes, with a sharp colour sense.
Table 6  Years of Migration from THBPAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Last 20 years</th>
<th>Last 10 years</th>
<th>Last 5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24 (60)</td>
<td>12 (30)</td>
<td>4 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19 (47.5)</td>
<td>11 (27.5)</td>
<td>10 (25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has been observed from Table 3 that 60% male whereas 47.5% female respondents’ family left printing profession in last 20 years. Comparing to 30% (M) and 27.5% (F) also left their ancestral profession in last 10 years.

Table 7  Present profession

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Printing</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Government Job</th>
<th>Private Job</th>
<th>Combined sources + Hand Block printing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
<td>15 (37.5)</td>
<td>4 (10)</td>
<td>12 (30)</td>
<td>8 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 (2.5)</td>
<td>19 (47.5)</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td>5 (12.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the three decades, there has been a trend of adopting other profession by replacing THBPAP. As Table 7 clearly indicates that presently only one male and one female family is associated with hand block printing and screen printing unit for income generation. 37.5% (M) and 47.5% (F) were doing their own business on the other hand 30% (M), 22.5% (F) respondents stated that their male members were doing private jobs. It has also been recorded that female members were rarely allowed for job outside the home.

Identified Challenging Factors

According to the respondents’ discussions and researcher’s observation, major reasons were tabulated on three point scale and discussed analytically.

(i) Personal, Social, Cultural Factors

Discrimination on grounds of education and networks was widespread among the artisans. Both the established and start-up artisans faced limitations due to lack of cultural and professional understanding. Basic obstacle factors were family interference, lack of informal support by relatives, friends and others with feeling of discrimination (caste based, religion based, education based). It was observed that they did not have supportive networks at all levels. Table 8 shows some major challenging factors that need to be noticed.

Table 8  Personal, social, cultural factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Reasons</th>
<th>Highly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ergonomic problems</td>
<td>18 (45)</td>
<td>12 (30)</td>
<td>10 (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecisiveness regarding profession</td>
<td>27 (67.5)</td>
<td>13 (32.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid changes in Fashion &amp; modernity</td>
<td>27 (67.5)</td>
<td>13 (32.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-sightedness, unsecured future and irregular income</td>
<td>40 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ergonomic problems
Respondents reported that due to hard work, improper resources and bad working conditions; many problems such as back ache, fatigue, poor eye sightedness have started but due to poor economic conditions they were unable to afford medical facilities. Therefore, in hard circumstances they stopped printing work. Table no.8 reveals that 45% respondents were highly agreed, 30% were agreed whereas 25% disagreed with the reason mentioned and discussed with them.

Indecisiveness regarding profession
Due to the unorganised production and improper channels of distribution the banks and financial institutions were helpless. And this was because none of them were registered by the district industries centres. The major reason for the denial of registration facility to these artisans was that Pollution Control Board has denied the issuance of ‘No Objection Certificate’ which is a prerequisite for the registration itself. Due to non-registration of their small business, indecisiveness regarding profession lessens down their interest to expand the ancestral profession for the future. 67.5% respondents were highly agreed and 32.5% were agreed with same reason as depicts Table 8.

Rapid Fashion changes & Modernity
A comparatively faster, more mechanical and economical way of printing was taken up about three decades ago by other printing professionals. They have maximised an opportunity to mass produce the similar looking product although with the help of synthetic dyes and chemicals. The screen printed fabric is ideally suited to meet the requirements of price conscious consumer. With the changed scenario traditional block printers of Ayad were not improving themselves to cater to and attract new markets and modernity. On the issue of changing fashion trends in Table 8 clearly indicates that 67.5% respondents were highly agreed in comparison to 32.5% that were agreed.

Short-sightedness and unsecured future and income
It is clear from Table 8 that short-sightedness, unsecured future and irregular income were major responsible factors. Unregulated activities undertaken largely by the self-employed family members, that offer autonomy and flexibility for a broad range of decisions in terms of personal initiative and innovation, the size of the order, the choice of technique and the utilisation of income and all related things to profession was completely unorganised. In long term due to highly competitive world this practice had reduced family income, and social, educational and health security was found unavailable to them.

(ii) Technology and knowledge
An efficient execution of any job has always required experience with knowledge, now this knowledge and experience has a new dynamic dimension called technology. Table 9 shows the various prominent challenges.
Table 9  Technology and knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Reasons</th>
<th>Highly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Screen printed fabric</td>
<td>40 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional degree and knowledge</td>
<td>19 (47.5)</td>
<td>21 (52.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unawareness with latest technology</td>
<td>31 (77.5)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young and Educated next generation</td>
<td>37 (92.5)</td>
<td>3 (7.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Availability of Screen printed fabric**
All the drudgery related to washing, drying, soaking, colour preparation, block manufacturing and thereafter printing the impressions one by one is avoided when screen printing came into existence. It was mainly the ready-made dyes based upon chemicals and comparatively has more shine with quicker methods of printing. Due to cost effectiveness of screen printing traditional eco-friendly practices of printing lost their consumers and affects respondents’ livelihood. It was pointed out that not a single respondent disagreed with the fact and all were highly agreed for such an important reason.

**Lack of professional degree and knowledge**
Respondents from both gender groups confessed that running an enterprise even at home requires more than just the investment to set it up. Experience and present situation had taught them that in order to maximise their profits, entrepreneurial skills and education was necessary. At that time if they had a degree and education the situation was not like today, Ayad’s printing also became famous like Sanganer and Bagru in all over world. 52.5% respondents reported that they were agreed whereas 47.5% respondents highly agreed for failure in continuity of traditional profession.

**Unawareness of latest technology & new product innovation**
No systematic research work and technical support on the process has been initiated on hand block printing so far. In brief lack of new product innovation services and lack of research & development for upgrading production processes and controlling time factor at all levels adversely affected the profession of artisans. After survey it has been mentioned in Table 9 that 77.5% respondents were highly agreed and 22.5% were agreed with the fact of unawareness of latest technology.

**Young and Educated next generation**
92.5% respondents were highly agreed in relation to 7.5% respondents that were agreed with the nature of young generation’s competitiveness towards improving life revealed in Table 9. Traditional values and norms were rigid and youngsters’ interest has been decreasing to run their ancestral profession without changing its features. Unemployment pushed a major number of youths into other small business enterprises and private jobs with regular income.

**(iii) Marketing and Managerial**
Lack of strategic and goal oriented planning hinders effective communication and research in the field and directly cut the selling capacity of printing artisans. skilled labour, improper designing and market research, organisational, communication, strategy, competition, and
knowledge of market were major challenges reported by artisans. Some reasons are discussed in Table 10.

Table 10  Marketing and Managerial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Reasons</th>
<th>Highly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contract labour</td>
<td>28 (70)</td>
<td>12 (30)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased market demand</td>
<td>31 (77.5)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking prices of raw material</td>
<td>34 (85)</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less profit</td>
<td>37 (92.5)</td>
<td>3 (7.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor marketing skills</td>
<td>26 (65)</td>
<td>14 (35)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contract labour
For years, the Chhipas (Printers) continued to work as subcontractors without getting a direct access to the consumer. The artisans were employed on piece rate basis. Therefore, labour laws were ineffective to protect artisans’ rights. It was pointed out in Table 8 that all respondents were agreed with 70% was highly agreed that lack of trust and lack of long term relationships at all levels curtail artisans’ interest in the ancestral profession.

Decreased market demand
Rural people both male and female started to wear cheaper and synthetic blended clothes instead of cotton fabric. With the change in fashion trend female folk started to wear screen printed cost effective odhnies. Similarly, Saafa (head gear) was not the essential part of attire of young male group so demand rapidly came down. At that time no alternative and innovative products were produced by skilled artisans to generate interest among people. It has been pointed out that Ayad’s artisans concentrated only on local market they never tried to find out new market at national and international level. They even were failed to capture tourists who visited Udaipur. 77.5% respondents highly agreed and 22.5% somewhat agreed, on the other hand, no one disagreed with the fact of decreasing market demand.

Hiking prices of raw material
In each successive year the prices of raw material was increasing and respondents pointed out that their economic condition had not allowed them to purchase raw material; so they worked on job basis and profit was maximised by mediators. It was observed that their skills gave them satisfaction but not monetary profit. So, gradually family members started to substitute avenues to earn money. 15% respondents were agreed in comparison to 85% were highly agreed upon this aspect.

Less Profit
Many reasons were associated with the fact that mediators were earning more money whereas artisans were concentrating on their art work. Mediators were taking profit by their marketing strategies but in extended years poor artisans have lost faith and they started themselves to engage in other activities. It was clear that 92.5% respondents were highly associated with the reason mentioned related to less profit against hard work.
Poor marketing skills
Some artisans were still extremely talented but they did not have the ability to demand higher level of payment against their fine and intricate work. Lack of technical and managerial skills to operate their ancestral profession successfully indirectly slows down profit. Lack of clear understanding about the market prospects in domestic and export market pushed artisans from their ancestral profession.

(iv) Logistical and Economical
Respondents highlighted so many barriers like rent and lease related, resources problems (water, raw material, electricity, labour), procedure of finance (lack of knowledge, time consuming, complicated), high rate of interest, transportation and supply, fear of middle man, problems in arranging finance at various stages of work. Some are discussed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Reasons</th>
<th>Highly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Competition among artisans</td>
<td>30 (75)</td>
<td>10 (25)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower socio-economic status</td>
<td>40 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass production downgrades hand block printed fabric demand</td>
<td>31 (77.5)</td>
<td>9 (22.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man power requirement and time consuming profession</td>
<td>40 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor infrastructure</td>
<td>19 (47.5)</td>
<td>21 (52.5)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unavailability of raw material</td>
<td>36 (90)</td>
<td>4 (10)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High Competition
A tendency of undercutting each other and high competition among respondents, among market agencies at all levels had negative impact on the traditional profession. 75% respondents were highly agreed and 25% were agreed with the factor of in and out house competition that indirectly destructs their own business.

Lower socio-economic status
Lower levels of financial status forced artisans to depend upon mediators for order and supply. The artisans had little access to the market directly. The mediator community had control over the entire market setup; they procured goods from artisans on job work basis. The traditional artisans have therefore lost their strategic direction and developed conflict among each other in their endeavour to lower down the prices even if at the cost of quality. Actual worth of their art was cashed by mediators and their situation was not uplifted. Poor socio-economic status played a major role that the young generation was not at all interested in continuing the same profession. This reason was confirmed by all respondents.

Mass production downgrades demand of traditional hand block printed fabric
The traditional printing has not been able to cope with the pressures of the demand among middle income group consumers. These pressures led to the emergence of growth in screen printing industry which was able to handle large volumes in a short period of time. It has been clear from Table 11 that 77.5% respondents were highly agreed whereas 22.5% were agreed on the issue of mass production.
Man power requirement and time consuming profession
The conventional hand block printing process was much more painstaking due to the pre-
requirements of fabric preparation that involved washing, kneading, sun-drying, bleaching,
dyeing and printing. Further, the eco-friendly natural vegetable dyes were also prepared at
home, and required six to ten weeks for the entire process. The whole process is highly time
consuming and laborious and no income is still in hand; younger to elder group of respondents
were highly agreed with this responsible aspect.

Poor infrastructure
Traditional artisans set up their professional activity in residential areas of Ayad, but with the
expansion of work and population in the adjoining region founds lack of space, water and
other infrastructural facilities. Family planning was not very effective in Chippas’ families. A
lack of infrastructure such as business premises with the appropriate utilities (water and
electricity) and marketing skills crashed their income. It was recorded in Table 11 that 47.5%
respondents were highly agreed and 52.5% were agreed on poor infrastructure.

Unavailability of raw material
Some respondents reported that scarcity of raw materials means that unavailability even
when respondents had the money to purchase them. Mediators blocked raw material and sold
that on higher prices and on credit basis when they did not have money. Table 11 reveals that
90% of respondents highly agreed that there was black marketing of raw material.

(v) Government policies
It has been identified at two levels 1) lack of knowledge, and 2) lack of support. lack of
knowledge about advantages / concessions, tax concessions and rebates, and the policy of
the government has been to discourage the artisans about traditional profession. Respondents
reported lack of support; untimely information, no allowance for re-establishing,
reconstructing or reviewing for lost traditional profession. They did not get investment
allowance at any level from any agency. Two points are discussed in Table 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Reasons</th>
<th>Highly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absence of reliable Government Policies</td>
<td>24 (60)</td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Quality assurance mechanism</td>
<td>22 (55)</td>
<td>18 (45)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Absence of reliable Government Policies
Unawareness about supporting agencies, absence of reliable government policies and agencies
and their untimely utilisation pushed back artisans’ socio-economic profile. It has been found
during research that no labour union or labour welfare organisation was formed during that
time, whole production and marketing activity was governed in an unorganised manner.
Religious, social and political leaders had not taken interest in promoting traditional craft and
welfare of traditional artisans. The level of awareness about the existing schemes of social
security was low among families engaged in block printing. Some families have registered, but
they did not continue the policy and defaulted on payment of premiums in the following
years. So benefits of policy were not acquired in their crucial times. From Table 12 it has been observed 60% were highly agreed and no one was found to disagree with the reason.

**Lack of Quality assurance mechanism**

The testing facilities to check the quality of fabric and dyes used were unavailable in local area of Ayad and even in Udaipur Region. In the whole process no patenting or branding was followed, in the absence of proper guidance regarding banned dyes, quality management system; poor artisans were kept away from their ancestral profession. The artisans were not directly involved in marketing processes but the pollution department and other regulatory bodies had been taking action against them.

**(vi) Environmental Factors**

Safe environment was major challenging factor reported by artisans and discussed as follows-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Reasons</th>
<th>Highly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution in river</td>
<td>14 (35)</td>
<td>26 (65)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather dependency</td>
<td>40 (100)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pollution in river and Scarcity of water resources**

The pollution level has increased quantitatively and qualitatively. The enforcement from government has meant a lingering threat of traditional industry closure, especially due to the polluting nature of chemical colours. There has been hardly any technological upgrading to make the procedure less labour demanding and environmentally friendly. Ayad River has flowing water with washing areas built adjoining it, but this was dried due to growing pressure of the rising population in the adjoining city of Udaipur. Government rules and regulations had become strict to save Ayad River; it directly affected respondents’ profession adversely. 35% respondents were highly agreed and 65% were agreed with the reason of pollution and falling water level day by day in Ayad River as reported in Table 13.

**Weather dependency**

Seasonal fluctuations as climate plays a decisive role in block printing process, generally, the transfer of the colours used in printing on to the fabrics is better when the weather is warm. Hence, summer is the most suitable time for printing. Without the required heat, it is not possible to obtain the desired brightness and tone of the colour. The varying climatic conditions are used to permeate different hues and shades to the final product. The monsoon season is not suitable for block printing due to dampness in the weather which leads to colour leaking on the cloth if printing is continued. And during this season unemployment was a great problem for artisans. Table no. 13 defines that no one disagreed with the fact of seasonal influence.

Some small steps are pointed out to uplift artisans’ profile like timely help, provision of social security, education, technical support and organised activities are helpful. After discussing with experts and respondents, the following significant suggestions are required to revive the past glorious situation.
• Small focus groups should be identified according to their common problems and requirements to get a solution in the right direction.

• Consumer surveys should be essential to understand the requirements, tastes, problems and preferences of consumers.

• Training Programme should be organised on marketing skills for young and enthusiastic artisans who are keen to market their own products. Training of a variety of products ranging from bags, fashion accessories, pouches, jewellery, belts, decorated stockings, shoes, ornamental jackets, and home décor items will be introduced timely.

• Financial assistance should be spread out by involving Banks, NGOs and other supporting agencies.

• Educational support to the artisans should be promoted and regular technical upgrading also provided.

• Easy availability of raw material and resources should be ensured for continuous production.

• Identification of some enlightened and dynamic leaders having zeal to work for improving ancestral art as perfect profession should be motivated.

• Instead of formation of one big society encourage the setting up of a few marketing co-operatives to achieve economies of scale in terms of marketing and raw material sourcing.

• Artisans’ exposure to handicraft fairs and exhibitions should be promoted through government and supporting welfare agencies.

• They must be encouraged to run the common effluent treatment plants with the help of Government to save Ayad River and eligible for getting ‘NOC’ from pollution department.

• Simple improvements in the technology like drying of fabric through drying machines; printing by hand operated machines could be simultaneously promoted for generating interest in younger groups.

• The state government should consider the demand of infrastructure facilities and by providing space in industrial areas, so that they could register themselves as SSI units and be eligible to get access to the civic amenities and credit facilities.

• Hand block printing has good prospects in future also, therefore, it is a need to set up a mission to stimulate the old eco-friendly art and build up its market value with brand image.

• Export potential and market linkages are most required input for developing this profession.

• A training design centre with professional designers and CAD/CAM facility is required in the near future but initially collaboration with such centres fulfils life among dead profession according to market needs.
• Socio-economic security, accessibility to basic health services, education and boosting confidence are primary needs to revive the invisible profession of Chippa community.

• Clear understanding about the parameters responsible for the growth of eco-friendly traditional hand block printing profession is required as in future consumer awareness and demand will surely increase for herbal and organic printed-dyed fabrics.

Present research provides a composite picture about the responsible factors and suggestions to overcome and revival of age old hand block printing profession of Ayads’ artisans with new dimensions and glory. Personal, social, psychological, political and organisational factors directly and indirectly affected artisans’ ancestral profession in negative ways but timely action in a positive direction is necessary to use traditional skills of artisans that will not be earned through any formal education and degree. Present research in line with the Asia in CH Encyclopaedia in craft revival stated that a continuous engagement is needed with new generation, for dyeing and finishing techniques for hand printing to flourish again. For revival, the industry should be supported by huge research budgets and need continuous innovation in design, processes and new colour palettes in product development.

Biography

Dr Dolly Mogra has a PhD in Clothing Behaviour and Body Image of Adolescents for enhancement of personality. She has teaching experience of more than 16 years along with being active in image management counselling. She has been active in organising vocational training programmes for generation of income with skill development among backward sections of society.

References


Knowledge of mothers on malnutrition and nutritional status of children in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Abstract

Malnutrition remains a public health problem in Nigeria and one of the causal factors has been identified as ignorance on the appropriate recommendation by the World Health Organisation. This study investigated the knowledge of mothers on malnutrition and child care. Two hundred mothers in the hospital were selected randomly for the study. Structured interview schedule was used to assess perception of mothers on the cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor in children, maternal knowledge on malnutrition and child care. Anthropometric measurements were taken which were converted to Z-score indices to assess nutritional status of children. Results revealed that the mean age of mothers and children was 31.4±5.3 and 21.4±1.6 respectively. Mean number of children under five was 1.43±0.5. The major perceived cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor identified by mothers were lack of nutrients, sickness, improper care and diseases. Maternal knowledge on malnutrition and care of children was average (55.0%) and 60.0% respectively. The prevalence of malnutrition was stunting (16.5%), underweight (5.5%) and wasting (6.5%). Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship with the knowledge of mothers on child care and number of children (0.164), age of mother (0.194), years of maternal education (0.344) and social economic status of mothers (0.201) at p<0.01. The study concluded that knowledge of mothers on care of children and the cause of malnutrition is on the average and may be responsible for malnutrition in children. It is recommended that mothers should be aware of the appropriate care practices and causes of malnutrition in children.

Key words: mothers, care, knowledge and malnutrition

Introduction

African traditional role division has largely laid the responsibility of child care on women. This begins from conception and continues until infancy, teenage and adulthood (Smith & Haddad, 2000). The starting years of a child’s life are the formative years where the child needs special attention of mother, father and others who are entrusted with their care. The first three years of life are of prime importance from the development point of view, so care during this stage has a crucial influence on child growth and development (Santosh & Anju, 2009).

Ethiopia and Nigeria are countries with very high rates of malnutrition (Adewara & Visser, 2011). Population-based studies have shown that the greatest risk of nutritional deficiency and growth retardation occurs in children between 3 and 15 months of age because of poor
breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices ((Shrimpton, Victora, De Onis, Lima, Blossner, & Clugston, 2001). Undernourished children, as well as children with severe malnutrition, have a higher risk of dying than children with an optimal nutritional status (Caulfield, De Onis, Blössner, & Black, 2004). Severe acute malnutrition is caused by an inadequate food intake that may be the result of a variety of factors. Diseases cause secondary severe acute malnutrition through low food intake, decreased absorption and usage of nutrients, increased requirements and increased losses (Torún, 2006). When a diet is insufficient in protein and/or energy there will be a slowing down of linear height, failure to gain weight or weight loss (Wittenberg, 2004), and this is seen when the child is exposed to an acute food shortage (Golden & Golden, 2000). Deriving too much of one’s diet from a single source, such as eating almost exclusively corn or rice, can cause malnutrition. This may be either from a lack of education about proper nutrition, or from only having access to a single food source (Burchi, Fanzo & Frison, 2011).

The decision made by mothers depends on her individual characteristics, knowledge, prior experiences and external conditions that manifest in her behaviour towards ensuring her child’s health and nutrition are indicated as important factors for the prevention of child morbidities and mortality (Kalita, 2006). Poor feeding practices in infancy and early childhood, resulting in malnutrition contribute to impaired cognitive and social development, poor school performance and reduced productivity in life (World Health Organisation, (WHO), 2004). The type of care she provides depends to a large extent on her knowledge and understanding of some aspect of basic nutrition and health care (Asindi, Ibia, & Udo, 1900). Child care is mostly the responsibility of mothers; therefore, the mother’s knowledge about child care influences the nature and quality of care that is given to the child (Kamau-Thuita, Omwega, & Muita, 2002). Maternal diagnostic ability of child growth performance not only reflects a caregiver’s nutritional knowledge in abstract; a correct diagnosis is also a prerequisite for corrective action and would thus be positively associated with the child’s nutritional status (Luc & Harold, 2004). This study therefore investigated the knowledge of mothers about malnutrition and child care in Southwestern Nigeria.

**Methodology**

The Oni and Sons Memorial Children Hospital in Ibadan South West Local Government Area was purposively chosen for the study, which was approved by the hospital management board. Mothers were informed about the objectives of the study and that participation was voluntary. The researcher targeted mothers in the hospital clinic of which 200 mothers were randomly selected and interviewed about their socio economic characteristics, knowledge on malnutrition and child care. A pictorial method was also used as mothers gave their perceived causes of kwashiorkor and marasmus in children. The weights of children were taken with an electronic scale and measured to the nearest kilogram while the length/height were measured using the UNICEF length board/heightometer. Anthropometric measurements were converted to Z score to determine the nutritional status of children. The prevalence of malnutrition was calculated according to the Child Growth Standard of the WHO, 2009.

A three point Likert scale was used to determine the participants’ knowledge on malnutrition and child care. The 3 point scale included a score of 3 for agree, 2 for I don’t know and 1 for disagree for positive statements and vice versa for negative statements. Computer software
SPSS was used to analyse for frequencies, means, cross tabulations, and correlation. Social economic status (SES) of mothers was determined by the number of time saving devices used in food preparation in the kitchen with a maximum score of 6 marks. The score of 3 was determined to be low and 6 was high.

Result

Characteristics of mother and child

The maternal and children mean age in the study was 31.4±5.3 and 21.4±17.6 respectively. Household size was 4.47±1.7, number of children in household was 2.1±1.0 and number of children under five was 1.4±0.5. The maternal year of formal education had a mean of 13.4±3.3.

Table 1 Characteristics of mother and child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of child (month)</td>
<td>21.45</td>
<td>17.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height for age Z score (HAZ)</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for age Z score (WAZ)</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for height Z score (WHZ)</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of mother(years)</td>
<td>31.41</td>
<td>5.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of formal education</td>
<td>13.49</td>
<td>3.380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>1.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children under five</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio economic status (SES)</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perception of causes of malnutrition in children

The perceived cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor by mothers in the study was more than ten. The leading cause was for malnutrition (marasmus and kwashiorkor) as identified by mothers were lack of nutrients, diseases, sickness and improper care. Other perceived causes include dirty water and environment, diarrhoea and dysentery, lack of immunisation and teenage pregnancy. Approximately 20% of mothers do not know the reason for malnutrition in children.
Table 2  Maternal perception of causes of malnutrition in children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived causes of malnutrition</th>
<th>Marasmus</th>
<th>Kaburitor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freq. %</td>
<td>Freq. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of nutrients</td>
<td>131 65.5</td>
<td>122 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases and sickness</td>
<td>38 19</td>
<td>27 13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper care</td>
<td>34 17</td>
<td>34 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of breastfeeding</td>
<td>5 2.5</td>
<td>2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late introduction of complementary food</td>
<td>1 0.5</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirty water and environment</td>
<td>17 8.5</td>
<td>9 4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea and dysentery</td>
<td>6 3</td>
<td>2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual attack</td>
<td>1 0.5</td>
<td>1 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of immunisation</td>
<td>4 2</td>
<td>5 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy</td>
<td>1 0.5</td>
<td>1 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>34 17</td>
<td>41 20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature birth</td>
<td>1 0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby is okay</td>
<td>4 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maternal knowledge on signs and causes of malnutrition

Table 3 demonstrates the distribution for knowledge on malnutrition was low (16.5%), average (55.0%) and high (28.5%). Mothers are ignorant about the sign of malnutrition with red, easily removed hair (39%). Eight nine percent of mothers fill feed their only pap and can eat adult meal when they are five years old (81.0%). Mothers were aware that frequent and watery stool requires health (medical) attention (97.5%).

Table 3  Maternal knowledge on signs and causes of malnutrition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Signs of malnutrition</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>I don’t Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cracked lips is a normal occurrence in a child</td>
<td>26(13)</td>
<td>19(9.5)</td>
<td>155(77.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A child with a swollen stomach is sick</td>
<td>168(84)</td>
<td>15(7.5)</td>
<td>17(8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Frequent and watery stool requires health attention</td>
<td>195(97.5)</td>
<td>2(1.0)</td>
<td>3(1.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Occurrence of the head bigger than other parts of the body is abnormal in a child</td>
<td>177(88.5)</td>
<td>13(6.5)</td>
<td>10(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Red, easily removed hair shows that the child is a special being</td>
<td>36(18)</td>
<td>78(39)</td>
<td>86(43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A child should only take 3 meals</td>
<td>21(10.5)</td>
<td>1(0.5)</td>
<td>178(89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Children shouldn’t eat eggs</td>
<td>15(7.5)</td>
<td>0(0.0)</td>
<td>185(92.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Milk should be consumed daily for the first 2 years</td>
<td>141(70.5)</td>
<td>12(6.0)</td>
<td>47(23.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Baby shouldn’t be given pap only</td>
<td>178(89)</td>
<td>2(1.0)</td>
<td>20(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Baby can eat adult meal from 5 years</td>
<td>162(81)</td>
<td>4(2.0)</td>
<td>34(17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Score on malnutrition= Mean 26.9±2.4
Maternal knowledge on child care

As presented in Table 4 maternal knowledge revealed that child should receive polio, hepatitis B and tuberculosis vaccines immediately after birth (76.5%). Only 57.0 agreed that the solution of sugar and salt can be used at home to reduce frequent stooling of children. About 51.5% agreed that children could be fed complementary foods with feeding bottle while 45.0% disagreed with the statement. Only 45.0% agreed that breastfeeding should last for 2 years while 53.5% disagreed. The knowledge of mothers on child care was low (17.5%), average (60.0%) and high (22.5%).

Table 4 Maternal knowledge on child care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Child care practices</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>I don’t Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding is beneficial for both mothers and the child</td>
<td>187(93.5)</td>
<td>4(2.0)</td>
<td>9(4.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mothers can add water to breast milk from birth</td>
<td>48(24.0)</td>
<td>2(1.0)</td>
<td>150(75.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Formula milk should be added to breastfeeding at 3months</td>
<td>35(17.5)</td>
<td>6(3.0)</td>
<td>159(79.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Complementary foods can be fed in feeding bottles</td>
<td>103(51.5)</td>
<td>7(4.3)</td>
<td>90(45.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Growth monitoring stops after 9 months</td>
<td>6(3.0)</td>
<td>15(7.5)</td>
<td>70(35.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>It is necessary to take the Road To Health Card to the maternity always</td>
<td>143(71.5)</td>
<td>37(18.5)</td>
<td>20(10.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Immunisation is a death sentence to a child</td>
<td>4(2.0)</td>
<td>2(1.0)</td>
<td>194(97.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A child should receive polio, hepatitis B and tuberculosis vaccines immediately after birth</td>
<td>153(76.5)</td>
<td>9(4.5)</td>
<td>38(19.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A solution of sugar and salt can be used at home to reduce frequent stooling of children</td>
<td>114(57.0)</td>
<td>35(17.5)</td>
<td>51(25.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Complementary foods can be fed in plates</td>
<td>167(83.5)</td>
<td>5(2.5)</td>
<td>28(14.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A child should be breastfed for two years</td>
<td>90(45.0)</td>
<td>3(1.5)</td>
<td>107(53.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Complementary feeding should start at 6 months</td>
<td>172(86.0)</td>
<td>6(3.0)</td>
<td>22(11.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% in parenthesis, *Score for knowledge on care= Mean 30.64±3.3

Nutritional Status of children

The prevalence of malnutrition is 16.5%, 5.5% and 6.5% for stunting, underweight and wasting respectively. The presentation of malnutrition in the study area revealed WAZ (OR: 1.1; 95%C.I.: 0.17, 2.03); HAZ (OR: 0.6; 95%C.I.: 0.22, 1.02) WHZ (OR: 1.4. 95%C.I.:0.27, 2.63).

Table 5 Prevalence of malnutrition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malnutrition</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHZ(wasting)</td>
<td>7.0% (1.6-12.4 C.I.)</td>
<td>6.1% (1.7-10.5 C.I.)</td>
<td>6.5% (3.1–9.9 C.I.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAZ(underweight)</td>
<td>7.0% (1.6-12.4 C.I.)</td>
<td>4.4% (0.6–8.1 C.I.)</td>
<td>5.5% (2.3–8.7 C.I.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAZ(stunting)</td>
<td>23.3 % (14.3-32.2 C.I.)</td>
<td>11.4% (5.6-17.2 C.I.)</td>
<td>16.5 % (11.4-21.6 C.I.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maternal characteristics and malnutrition

Maternal knowledge on child care had a significant relationship with age of mother \( r = 0.194 \) \( p < 0.01 \), number of children \( r = 0.164 \) \( p < 0.01 \) and years of formal education \( r = 0.344 \) \( p < 0.01 \). Socio economic status (SES) had positive significant relationship with WAZ \( r = 0.148 \) and WHZ \( r = 0.193 \) at \( p < 0.05 \).

Table 6 Correlation analysis of relationship between maternal knowledge, maternal characteristics and malnutrition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malnutrition and maternal characteristics</th>
<th>Knowledge on malnutrition</th>
<th>Knowledge on child care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( r )</td>
<td>( p )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for age Z score (WAZ)</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight for height Z score (WHZ)</td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height for age Z score (HAZ)</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of mother</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of maternal education</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social economic status (SES)</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant

Discussion

Malnutrition is a leading cause of death amongst children under the age of five years in Nigeria. The first two years of a child’s life have been identified as a critical period when malnutrition is at its peak in most developing countries (WHO, 2003). The perceived cause of malnutrition in the study area for both marasmus and kwashiorkor in children by mothers was lack of nutrients, improper care, diseases and sicknesses; however, more than 20% of mothers in the study do not have an idea of the cause. Most of the mothers were ignorant of the signs of malnutrition in children and the knowledge of mothers on the cause of malnutrition and child care was on the average. The presence of red, easily removed hairs in children were acknowledged by 18% of mothers that the child is a special being instead of malnourished.

As recommended by the WHO and UNICEF the number of meals/day depend on the age of children, conversely mothers agreed that children should take only 3 meals/day. It is also the recommendation of WHO that infants start receiving complementary foods at 6 months of age in addition to breast milk, initially 2-3 times a day between 6-8 months, increasing to 3-4 times daily between 9-11 months and 12-24 months with additional nutritious snacks offered 1-2 times per day, as desired (WHO, 2003). Mothers agreed that children can eat complementary foods from feeding bottles and can eat adult meals when they are 5 years old. The benefit of the exclusive breastfeeding to child and mother was well known, but mothers were ignorant of the recommendation that children should be breastfed for the child’s first two years. The period from 6—24 months of age is a very vulnerable period as it is the time when malnutrition starts in many infants, contributing significantly to the high prevalence of malnutrition in children under five years of age world-wide (Daelmans &
Saadeh, 2003). Improvement of exclusive breastfeeding practices, adequate and timely complementary feeding, along with continued breastfeeding for up to two years or beyond, could save annually the lives of 1.5 million children under five years of age (Jones, Steketee, Black, Bhutta, & Morris, 2003).

Mothers have a wrong knowledge about the timing for polio, hepatitis and tuberculosis vaccines for children. Knowledge on child care when compared to knowledge about the signs of malnutrition in children was better as knowledge on signs of malnutrition was low. The use of ORT for the treatment of diarrhoea in children was not well understood by mothers as about half of the mothers do not agree to the use of ORT for the treatment of diarrheal diseases in children.

The prevalence of stunting was 16.5% in the study area with a higher prevalence in boys. This is in agreement with other studies in Ethiopia and other African region that boys were more malnourished than girls (Christiaensen & Alderman 2001; Yamano, Alderman, & Christiaensen, 2003). A strong body of evidence has shown that stunting is associated with cognitive deficits in young children (Sokolovic, Selvam, Srinivasan, Thankachan, Kurpad, & Thomas, 2014). Studies conducted on children aged 2-7 years in Peru, India and Vietnam have all observed that stunted children show poorer performance on cognitive tests compared with their adequately nourished counterparts (Watanabe, Flores, Fujiwara, & Tran, 2005; Kar, Rao, & Chandramouli, 2008; Crookston et al., 2011).

Knowledge on malnutrition had a negative relationship with malnutrition indicating that the higher the knowledge of mothers on malnutrition and child care, the lower the prevalence of malnutrition. The period of breastfeeding and complementary feeding is an important period when appropriate feeding practices must be adopted for the child to have normal growth and development. Mothers are the principal care provider for children under the age of five years and the type of care provided depends, to a large extent, on her knowledge and understanding of some aspects of basic nutrition and health care. The impact of malnutrition usually falls mainly on children under five years of age (World Food Programme, 2000). Many of these deaths are possibly associated with inappropriate feeding practices during early years of life.

Maternal knowledge on child care had a positive significant relationship with age of mother and number of children showing the impact of experience in child care. As mothers advance in age and have more children they tend to gain more experience in child care options and are more likely to have better caring practices than young mothers. This is corroborated by Das, Chattopadhyay, Chakraborty, & Dasgupta, (2013) study in India that revealed that mothers over 30 years of age have high caring practice scores. Early intervention is crucial in preventing these problems, starting during pregnancy. The two-year period starting with conception and continuing through to birth and infancy is known as the “window of opportunity”. Many studies have shown that there is a “window of opportunity” from when a child is born to 24 months of age. In this window, intervention is necessary in order to reverse the damaging effects of undernutrition, and ultimately stop the cycle of undernutrition (Victora, Adair, Hallal, Martorell, Richter, Sachdev & Singh, 2008).
The problem of malnutrition has an impact on health, education, and the economy of the affected countries. The incidence of malnutrition rises sharply during the period from 6 to 23 months of age in most countries, and the deficits acquired at this age are difficult to compensate for later in childhood.

Conclusion

Childhood malnutrition is related to maternal knowledge on care of children and the cause of malnutrition. This is further influenced by the age of mothers, years of formal education and socio economic status of mothers. Child development experts in Home Economics can provide education in child developmental milestones, causes and effect of growth faltering in children. Mother to mother support at the community level can also go a long way in reducing the prevalence of malnutrition. Mothers however should be trained in appropriate child care practices and also be able to identify signs of malnutrition in children for early intervention.

Biography

Beatrice Olubukola Ogunba, PhD is a Nutritionist specializing in Maternal and Child Nutrition. Her area of research has been in breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices in Nigeria. She is a Reader in the Department of Family, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Nigeria. She is currently working on the increase of exclusive breastfeeding rate and improved complementary feeding practices in Nigeria to ultimately reduce the prevalence of malnutrition in underfive children. Her commitment is behaviour change communication in feeding practices of mothers especially in rural areas.

Adetola Titilayo Otunla is a student in the Department of Family, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Nigeria. She is currently working with mothers of underfive children on the reduction of malnutrition. Specifically she is reviewing socio cultural factors that influence malnutrition in rural areas of Nigeria.

References


Introduction

This article aims to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the significance of *private household production* as often this crucial issue has been regarded in the relevant literature of Economics as a *quantité négligeable*. It is focussed on the development of private household production and its various factors which could help to minimize the loss of a buffer function in times of economic downturn. Once the ability to establish a self-sufficient private household with most of its vital areas of production is lost, the dependency on the market is inevitably created. Income in terms of money has to be the source of the members of the household’s activities to maintain a reasonable standard of living. Subsequently the dependency on the state of affairs of the national economy and given the integration into the global market the dependency on international markets becomes vital.

The private household can be defined as a social economic institution which encompasses socially a social institution and economically an economic institution, with the objective to satisfy the needs of the household members. Furthermore the institution of private household production can be well-defined as the household production where the production area of the private household includes all measures with the intention of providing goods and services for the private final consumption.

Centuries ago political economics was devoted to the development of private household production. Especially in the 19th century Karl Bücher and Gustav Schmoller tried to work out an historical integration of private household production into the economic division of labour as a development from the self-sufficient private household up to the modern economy with division of labour. In particular at the beginning of the industrialisation, and under the impressions of that time and taking into account future possible social and economic transformations, there was established an unchallenged and widely held thesis that in the course of the industrial and social progress private household production will be inevitably diminished, with some exemptions related to economic crises. Areas of private household production with a much greater economic efficiency possibly will be integrated into the external private business and public sector.

This prognosis of development advocated by Friedrich Engels and August Bebel, among others, has the basic idea that the private household is an obsolete traditional institution and the enclosed private household production is abolished, leading to a classical consumption unit. Furthermore the advocates for such a radical change of private household production have argued that private household production created a substantial disadvantage for the
development of emancipation of women, and they strongly demanded that women be integrated into the external sector.

This research demonstrates that ultimately the development of private household production, including the areas for instance of nutrition, storage, shopping, cleaning, clothes, natural domestic production and personal care of household members, is not primarily depending on the level of the economic division of labour, but substantially depending on the realised social and economic order and their further development.

In Western Societies, with their capitalistic economic order, the private households have undergone substantial changes: The possibilities for private household production declined in various areas, for instance the raising up of children, caring for elderly people, food production and meal preparation, production of household durables, clothes, and so on. Further and further dependency of households on income and money supply to acquire articles or items for consumption arises. The development of smaller and smaller household composition leads to both adults/parents in the so-called atomistic household (two parents plus two children at the most), including the development of one person households (nearly 50% of all private households), having to work and to shifting of a lot of household functions which are outside their own ability to fulfil.

There exists the household dependency on the national economy and what is provided, but today the dependency is imposed even on the international market, for example in Australia on the production of Chinese consumption goods and on many other Asian economies. These goods are produced cheaply, inexpensively in price, often in low quality and minor quantity. A private household with very little private household production has been successfully achieved by the intensive marketing and marketing research of larger and smaller companies which followed the traditional way of a capitalistic system where for the business the profits are possible and satisfactory.

**History of Economic Thought about Private Household Production**

Early in the history of economic thought, the economics of the Antique already deals with the private household and in particular with private household production, the main subject which is represented by Xenophon and Aristotle. Aristotle differentiates between ‘Ökonomik’ and ‘Chrematistik’, whereas he names ‘Ökonomik’ as a science of private household and ‘Chrematistik’ as a science of business. The term ‘Ökonomik’ originates very closely to the private household and leads to the economic and social administration of a house and ‘Öikonomiké’ therefore is the science of how to run a household in a good sense. The ‘Ökonomik’ deals therefore as a science with the total human relationships and all the activities in a house including the relationship between men and women, parents and children, landlord and slaves, and the goals to achieve the tasks which are set up to run a household and the agricultural production.

Economic thought of the Antique and its predominant subject of investigation of the private household and private household production was taken over by the Roman agricultural science but with a much stronger emphasis on private household production including the agricultural estate. The Latin term ‘familia’ means in its real sense not only a unity of
relatives and servants in the form of a larger family but also a unified society living together under one roof.

The economic thought with central recognition of private household is then represented in the following scholastic or Christian economic thought of the mediaeval ages and furthermore in the German head of household literature of the 16th and until the 18th century. This literature is a science of the house in a broader sense and this type of literature contains a conglomerate of ethnic, sociological, pedagogical, medical, and agricultural subjects. It is not only a simple accumulation of isolated knowledge but it is regarded as the principle of order and law of the head of the household. In the centre of this broader house is the Head of the household, he and only he alone is able to achieve a unity of the household community and therefore of the whole house. One has to bear in mind that the authors of this literature of the Head of household had not in mind a brutal, dominant, petty bourgeois head of the household, but saw in their head of household an idealistic, wise and well-rounded father of a family with a metaphysical background. As remarkable authors of this literature it could be named: Wolf Helmhard von Hohberg, ‘Georgica curiosa’ (1682) and Johannes Coler, ‘Oeconomia ruralis et domestica’ (1593).

In the middle of the 19th century Wilhelm Heinrich von Riehl is complaining in his populist publication ‘Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Socialpolitik’ (1851-1869) about the downfall of this type of house. He regards the more and more forthcoming industrial revolution and industrial development as the major factor for the downfall and for the deterioration of longstanding traditions for an economic activity within a house or what he calls the whole house. With a lot of emphasis he tries to convince ordinary people and politicians that the new economic thought and the industrial development are the evil and destroying the household production in the sense of a self-sufficient unit. In particular he regards the solution of the unity of household production and agricultural self-sufficiency as substantially dangerous for the general morals of the people.

Early in the 19th century the so called ‘Utopian’ socialists like Robert Owen, Charles Fourier and Henri de Saint-Simon, who inspired Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, regarded the progressive development of capitalism through the industrialisation within relatively free markets as detrimental to the well-being of ordinary people. They were early socialist or quasi-socialist intellectuals who created hypothetical visions of egalitarian, communalist, meritocratic, or other notions of ‘perfect’ societies without actually concerning themselves with the manner in which these societies could be sustained.

One of their solutions to this misery was the establishment of ‘closed’ societies within a restricted area or even in a compound, where private household production had been more or less centralised to create a society, which was able to work and live without the shackles of a bourgeois household in a capitalistic system. Some examples were the formation of an Owenite commune called New Lanark - roughly 2,500 people lived at New Lanark, many from the poorhouses of Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland - and New Harmony in Indiana in the United States, by Robert Owen, a Welsh businessman with social intentions to help his employees.
Charles Fourier was another ‘utopian’ socialist, who rejected the industrial revolution. He invented the concept of *phalanstère*, units of people based on a theory of passions and of their combination. Several colonies based on Fourier’s ideas were founded in the United States by Albert Brisbane and Horace Greeley. A *phalanstère* was based on the idea of a phalanx; this self-contained community ideally consisted of 1500-1600 people working together for mutual benefit. A few colonies were founded in the United States like La Reunion (Dallas), Brook Farm and North American Phalanx.

By the end of the 19th century the classical socialists based in their propagated so called ‘scientific socialism’ originated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were convinced that the existence of private households and their private production of goods and services will be made obsolete through the extensive development of capitalism and will end up in centralised private household production. This means that private household production would become an institutionalised service for the members of a socialistic system.

The political claim for a centralisation of private household production - in its various forms - in the sense of a radical and complete abolishment of private household production and its transformation into other types of public organised satisfaction of private needs has the underlying thought that with increased industrialisation in the non-private household sectors achieved, increasing productivity in private household production has only little benefits. Adolph (1919) for instance propagates the multi flat house with one central kitchen in particular with regard to similar benefits, which large factories are able to create economically.

In particular to release women from nearly all their engagements in private household production and their complete integration into the non-private household sectors, combined with the emancipation of women, with the claim of the transformation of private household production into forms of public organised satisfaction of private needs, has to be seen as one of the fundamental goals of socialism. Friedrich Engels declares private household production as a part of the bourgeois society and their economic order, and he claimed the abolishment of private household production would gain the economic benefits of the division of labour and importantly to realise the socialistic way of life.
Contrary to the enthusiasm of the Socialists for the benefits of the industrialisation including the socialisation of the national economy and furthermore of their vision towards a progressive emancipation of women, the representatives of the bourgeois and middle class society, for instance Albert Schäffle only permit the transformation of parts of private household production into centralised household production for people living in abnormal conditions, in times of war or in times of economic downturn. Therefore their plan was basically limited to public soup kitchens and nursing homes. An example of the establishment of public soup kitchens is the situation during WWI when, in the so called ‘turnip winter’ of 1917, approximately a quarter of the citizens in Hamburg had been provided with food in public soup kitchens. Similar soup kitchens were established in the Great Depression 1928-1932.

Implementation of the Private Household and Private Household Production within Economics

The rising economics at the end of the 19th century and its mathematical analysis with sets of equations for economic matters reduced the private household to an institution of sole consumption and private household production was abolished due to the incapability to quantify the various household internal economic processes. Economics of the 19th century is much more involved in the industrial progress and the establishment of a wider retail industry to provide an improved supply of goods and services as consumption for private households.

This silent secularisation occurred in the way that economics became a scientific discipline about the “laws” of the free market. This process was based on the assumption that economics could orientate on the methods of the natural science, incorporating the ideal of exactitude and the measuring to obtain precise solutions to market related processes, for instance analyses of competition, monopolies, cartels, duopolies, oligopolies, and perfect competition. Three economics texts from the late 1890s - by Gustav Schmoller (Germany), Herbert Foxwell (UK), and Thorstein Veblen (US) - represent the revolt against formalism and the resulting taming of capitalism. Although their styles and agendas were different, they are important representatives of the alternative theory that solidified on both sides of the Atlantic during the 1890s. They created an alternative to what Gustav Schmoller called the irrational twins: Manchester Liberalism and communism. This 1890s generation laid the foundations for the Middle Way between communism and Manchester liberalism, for a regulated capitalism with decent economic distribution and after the 1930s - as long as this theory was kept in place - also without major financial crises.

On the other hand the more historical and juridical orientated economics, the so-called ‘institutionalism’ or the German historical school was regarded as a minor discipline of economics. The economic process within private households has no more any place within economics because any economic activity has its final end at the ‘door’ of private households. The term ‘household management’ became at this stage exclusively the meaning of a rational allocation of household goods and services and after the purchasing of consumptive goods and services there is only the process of pure consumption and nothing more. The private households have not any more productive functions and activities; they have been transformed into an economic institution, which has been stripped of its various internal
activities and been degraded to a pure unit of consumption. This scientific view about the household production continued into the 20th century and a minority of economists like Erich Egner and Fritz W. Meyer apposed this limited notion of the private household and its productive activities as unrealistic.

Nevertheless the value of private household production within the accounting of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a national economy is by its concept completely neglected worldwide. The protagonists of honouring private household production have the long standing request for its implementation in the GDP.

Private Household Production and Division of Labour

One can identify within private household production and economic division of labour three major subject matters with regard to the integration of private household production into the development of an economy. These three subject matters are: Industrialisation of private household production, mechanisation of private household production, and Centralisation of private household production.

The industrialisation of private household production takes place in the trend of the industrial development through the improving process of the division of labour within an economy. Some private household production functions are transferred to the market and private companies are able to produce these former activities within the private household with a much more economical mass production and the involved benefits of the economies of scale. To which extent the transfer of some private household production functions into the market occurs depends on:

- the amount of costs for such a production either in the private household or in the private companies by considering the possibility to rationalise these productions;
- the technical production possibilities within the private household;
- the situation in the labour force, in particular for female part-time employment;
- the private household income;
- the stage of the possibility to produce goods and services for private households within the market;
- the employment opportunities of the members of the private household;
- the location of the private household, in particular in consideration of the degree of the self-sufficiency with natural resources like domestic animals, fruit and vegetables;
- the extent of the individuality of the goods and services required for the private consumption;
- the activity of the government’s policies with regard to the private household production.
The mechanisation of private household production appears as the household orientated production of goods and services for the private consumption with the support of a set of machines with technically improved efficiency. To which extent the transfer of some private household production functions into the market occurs depends on:

- the amount of costs for such a production either in the private household or in the private companies by considering the possibility to rationalise the production of labour-saving machines;
- the amount of household income;
- the situation in the labour force market;
- the leisure time possibilities;
- the standard of living;
- the grade of mechanisation of other private households production;
- the stages of life and the size of private households;
- the state of engineering of machines for private households use;
- the financial possibilities to purchase machines, for example leasing of machines and hire purchasing of machines for private household production;
- the activity of the government’s policies with regard to the private household production.

The mechanisation of private household production took place mostly at the turn of the twentieth century when machines were developed for large households in the first place rather than for small sized households. A typical example would be the refrigeration of foodstuffs for restaurants, canteens, and large sized households. The technical development of smaller units for refrigeration was developed after WWI and much more improved after WWII. Through various forms of marketing starting already in the 1950s and 1960s the main goal of companies producing machines for private household production like refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers, microwave ovens, vacuum cleaners and home entertainment units was to convince consumers to live in small sized private households. The three or four generation private household disappeared successively with the industrialisation and mechanisation of private households and elderly people were shifted to some form of centralised private households like nursing homes and serviced apartments.

The centralisation of private household production and its integration into the economic development has been a long standing political plea of some socialist groups to abolish private household production and liberate women from their historical household chores through centralised household production in large living complexes. Apart from the economies of scale through mass production and personnel employed in such complexes, including some improvement in social life, there are some disadvantages such as:

- minor possibility of centralisation by decentralising local settlement;
neglecting more specialised individual demand for goods and services for private consumption in particular in the section of food preparation;

possibility of wasting materials, energy, and maintenance of large machines through a reduced personal responsibility of employees in the centralised household;

neglecting the possibility to enjoy private household production functions as a means of spending leisure time, for example cooking as a hobby;

establishment of a large administration and control management;

intense dependence of the individual on non-private household institutions;

possibility of the destruction of the family as a preferred unit of the society.

One form of the centralisation of the private household production, that is the soup kitchens and workhouses, had been established a few centuries ago through the churches or other welfare institutions, in particular for impoverished people.

Figure 2 Soup Kitchen Montreal 1931

A soup kitchen, a bread line, or a meal centre is a place where food is offered to the hungry for free or at a reasonably low price. Frequently located in lower-income neighbourhoods,
they are often staffed by volunteer organisations, such as church groups or community groups. Soup kitchens sometimes obtain food from a food bank for free or at a low price, because they are considered a charity which makes it easier for them to feed the many people who visit the soup kitchen. The concept of soup kitchens hit the mainstream of United States consciousness during the Great Depression in the 1920s and 1930s. One soup kitchen in Chicago was even sponsored by American mobster Al Capone in an effort to clean up his image.

**Self-sufficient Private Household Production**

This section is intended to analyse the integration of private household production into the economy according to the three forms. The industrialisation of private household production seems to be the dominant form and the mechanisation of private household production has reached a grade of saturation, which can be shown on the equipment of private households with technical goods. Only the mechanisation has some further opportunities within the home entertainment goods like TV, audio, computers, and so on. The centralisation of private household production seems to be reduced to mainly for elderly people and their specific needs according to their lifestyle and according to their health in certain households like nursing homes and serviced apartments. This shift of former private household activities, in the sense that the young family is caring for the elderly, is a typical sign of a disintegration of a society. This development has its origin, among other factors, in the propagation of independent households wherever and whenever possible in the interest of mechanising and industrialising private household production.

Only a tremendous lack of food in times of war may create a return to private household production with public support to avoid starvation. One example was the activities during WWI when Germany’s U-boat campaign pushed Britain to the brink of being starved into submission. According to Randall (2014),

Between 1914 and 1917, almost six million tons of food was lost at sea through the German U-boat campaign. The Board of Agriculture implemented a Food Production Department to help farmers with equipment, fertilisers, animal feed and workers, which led to the creation of the Women’s Land Army (WLA). While country dwellers had space to grow food, most urban dwellers didn’t, and allotments became increasingly popular. In 1914 there were up to 600,000 allotments in the UK, reaching a peak of 1.5 million by war’s end. Home-grown produce could counteract food shortages during wartime, and a glut of legislation and changes in local government organisation helped raise the status of the humble allotment. City parks were transformed from flowerbeds into vegetable plots. Tomatoes grew in municipal glasshouses, cabbages, carrots and cauliflowers filled the beds and people could buy the produce at reasonable prices. George V’s support was evident when he insisted the land around the Queen Victoria Memorial should be used to grow potatoes instead of pelargoniums; all the royal parks followed his lead.
But this has changed within a few decades substantially: today the workforce has become so called ‘flexible’ and more and more people looking for work are facing either unemployment or just some contracts to be on call. But where is the possibility of these people to produce something useful for their consumption as household production, and where is a way for planning a relatively secured future? Long leisure time with all the temptation to forget the reality with alcohol, drugs, and so on. and the search for money becomes the ultima ratio, not the worries about the weather for their plants and the welfare of their domestic animals around the house.

![Figure 3](image)

**Figure 3** Today’s ‘garden

In attacking the received doctrines of economics, Galbraith stresses two major themes:

1. **Producers, not consumers, are sovereign.** Through successful advertising and salesmanship, producers/sellers ‘manage’ the preferences of consumers. Thus, it is producers, not consumers, who ultimately determine the volume and composition of output.

2. **Many of the wants being satisfied in our economy are non-urgent, even frivolous.** This follows from the notion that many wants are contrived by sellers and are not original with consumers themselves.

If we concede that Galbraith is right, the imbalance between corporate sellers and consumers could be seen in the following way: “The individual private consumer is typically an amateur dealing with a highly skilled professional, and will, also typically, lack the skill, knowledge, awareness or even the incentive (in respect to small transactions) to attempt to act as would the professional.” Furthermore, it might be said that consumers are not interested in goods as such, but in their properties or characteristics. Thus, the individual’s constrained choice involves both the spaces of characteristics and the space of goods, linked through the consumption technology. Individual preferences determine the relative weights given to the various characteristics in making choices, and thus different individuals may choose different goods or collections of goods even though they face a common consumption technology.

When daily life was much more uncomplicated than in modern times, people sold and bought goods with a minimum of legal intervention. Consumer affairs were based on the principle of
'caveat emptor', that means 'let the buyer beware'. The household composition determines, among other factors, whether the industrialisation, the mechanisation or the centralisation of private household production will proceed in a more encompassing manner in the sense of reducing the various facilities of private household production. When the trend of reduced size of private household increases over the next decades it will enlarge the dependency on money supply to buy and maintain industrial goods and services as well as to acquire private household equipment. This development is for private households in many cases irreversible. In addition, in the sphere of this process, the 'free market' does not supply anymore those obsolete goods, services and household equipment of an earlier stage of the industrialisation and mechanisation of private household production, once the industries have reached a new technical and organisational level.

The results of the Household Composition and Income and Consumption Sample Survey 2008 show in Germany in 2008 an unbroken trend to the Single Household. In 2003 the portion of one-person households was 36% and rose to 38% in 2008. Meanwhile from the 39.1 million private households in Germany about 15 million are one-person households. The portion of two-person households remained nearly unchanged with about 34%. In the beginning of 2008 the households with three and more persons made up the remaining 27% of all households. The portion of these multi person households added up to 30% in 2003. It is extraordinary that households with a single person and couples without children add up to 67.1% of all households in Germany in 2008.

Sometimes the relatively small proportion of expenditure in particular on food is taken as a sign of a developed ‘wealthy’ country (e.g. Germany), which obviously enables the average private household to spend far more on other goods and services, for example on leisure, entertainment, and culture as well as on housing, energy, and repairs of housing. Nevertheless, the food security of a country might be in doubt if a downfall in the economy through various reasons (e.g. war, natural disaster, worldwide depression) occurs.

In all sections of private household production there should be facilities to produce the relevant goods and services by the members of the private household simply by themselves.

- Planning of the sections of private household production
- Nutrition
- Internal transport
- Storage
- Shopping
- Household cleaning
- Clothing
- Gardening and domestic animal care
- Personal care of household members
The various sections could be illustrated with examples, for instance the questioning of nursing homes versus taking care of elderly people at home with some outside help. Or as an example for healthy food there could be the back yard garden with some fruit trees, vegetables, berries, and so on, instead of having just lawn. Today, instead of food production, large TV dishes are placed in the back yard. Finally for the section of cooking there could be a more well-rounded education of each generation in how to prepare fresh food in their ‘whole form’ like for instance a chicken, a whole fish, and a bunch of vegetables from the garden.

This enhanced *private household production* would lead to a reduction of market activities and obviously to a reduction in the dependence on money and income as well. Furthermore it would lead to a more well-rounded meaningful life and not only working under the threat of so called performance as ‘human resources’. Furthermore there should be considered the long standing principle that the market is not suitable for all areas of maintaining and developing a society and to a certain degree public services are needed to avoid private market power, for instance in the categories of education, health, traffic, defence, police and courts.

Current societies are embedded in a far-reaching reliance on the money supply but also on the embracing of ‘money’ as the *ultima ratio* of a human being’s life. On the other hand there is much more to life than the pursuit of money as some religions like the Christianity already have proposed. One might agree with Johansen and Sornette (2001), who argued in their article ‘2050: The End of the Growth Era?’ that

> the evolution from a growth regime to a balanced symbiosis with nature and with the Earth’s resources requires the transition to a knowledge based society, in which knowledge, intellectual, artistic and humanistic values replace the quest for material wealth.

**Conclusions**

In western societies, with their capitalistic economic order, the private households have undergone substantial changes: The possibilities for private household production declined in various areas, for instance the raising up of children, caring for elderly people, food production and meal preparation, production of household durables, clothes, and so on. Further and further dependency of households on income and money supply to acquire articles or items for consumption arises. The amazing lack of knowledge for household production and the disappearance of the teaching and research of home economics or domestic science, plus other factors such as women’s liberation, capitalist lifestyle, non-value of household work, have all contributed to various changes in the retail structure in an economy including the concentration of parts of the retail industry. There is often a rigorous neglecting of minority demand.

It is inherent for a capitalistic free market to reduce the number of people living in households, in particular the percentage of single person and two person households, and to find some ways to produce goods and services in a wider range with the intention to gain profits for the relevant companies. In this way, the private households were deprived of their
ability to produce essential goods and services by themselves, with no potential reassurance that in economic situations of retrogression or just ‘mild’ recession - notwithstanding the possibility to face a severe economic depression - with all the consequences in social and economic conditions for a meanwhile not existing society but a whole cluster of individualists. The knowledge about household production in various divisions, for example the divisions of nutrition and clothes, has vanished over the last century substantially in probably all Western Societies. Or in other words: who had been trained by his grandmother how to scale a fish or just take the feathers off a chicken? The list can be expanded.

In the course of time it has been proven beyond doubt that the old fashioned (and related) concept of *caveat emptor* has been denied for decades. It is indisputable that market failure relating to the lack of sufficient information about price, quality, durability, availability, time and environmental performance of consumer goods and services exists. It had been exposed that producers, not consumers are sovereign and that many of the wants being satisfied in western economies are not urgent, even frivolous. The supply of money has become the *ultima ratio* for many private households, in particular those situated in cities and where people have to live in blocks of flats. There are little opportunities to extend the private household production, perhaps only on a small piece of land in allotments in the cities. Furthermore, those citizens who cannot take part in the *cash economy* most likely have to face the worst outcome of a depression.

Furthermore the concentration within the retail sector has taken away the so called ‘corner shop’ where the local food production was sold and sometimes they provided for people a place of socialising. One example may be the current *Hypermarkets*, which are superstores combining supermarkets and department stores, which mostly have become an anonymous ‘shopping paradise’ for those people who still have the money available to purchase the latest fashion or just the luxurious items of food.

Private households and cash economy is another threat for the majority of private households, in particular for those private households which have virtually nothing to barter or even to be engaged in the cash economy. These private households have to spend their ‘last’ financial resources or even their ‘valuables’ in the cash economy to cope with the rough economic times. The lack of private household production is the penalty they have to suffer under.

*Inflation* is an added menace to private households depending on money supply. Inflation has an extensive notation within the History of Economic Thought. Once the inflation has reached a point of broader publicity, that is when the overwhelming majority discover the substantial increase of the price level everywhere in the markets, then the private households are caught in a severe misery and have to curtail their expenditures very drastically, if they are able to do so. The majority of private households have lost the ability to countervail the inflation in the free market and in the public service. In particular this matter can be detrimental once a high inflation or even a hyperinflation has taken place and then the misery of inflation can be identified as the cause of destruction of many private households and their members.
Finally food security could be enhanced by a mini-agricultural subsidy scheme for private household production. This could be implemented by tax concessions and/or direct subsidies. Given the historical experiences a policy of moral suasion has little effect on people’s decision: whereas in a free market society most people react on financial benefits to set in place the relevant activities. At present in many Western European countries there are certainly vacant and unused garden areas and small fields available to provide the necessary ground for vegetables and eventually even for domestic animal production. This scheme is not necessarily restricted to areas outside of small villages, which of course could provide the basics in a much easier way than in densely populated areas. Even in large cities there will be gardens and unused public land available, which then could be used to extend the concept of allotments. Overall this mini-agricultural subsidy scheme for private household production has the advantage in at least two major intentions: first it would provide a steady contribution of additional food to commercial food supply, in particular in times of economic downfall and restriction by the world market or in times of national crisis, and second it would create an alternative within the varieties of spending leisure time. Whether such a scheme would be seriously implemented and followed up this depends on the political will of governments and politicians. However one may have some doubts that this scheme could be regarded as a modern development rather than a step backwards into the early stages of the pre-industrial epoch. An important challenge in the future will be how private household production evolves within Western Societies with their dominant free market concepts, even with various market modifications and diminutive regulations?

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