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**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
FOR HOME ECONOMICS**

International Journal of Home Economics

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Foreword from the President

The founding of the International Journal of Home Economics (IJHE) is truly a great accomplishment of the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE).

It has long been a desire for many IFHE members from around the world to have our own academic journal in order to share recent findings and expertise in home economics fields.

I believe it provides an important stepping stone for the IFHE to commence the next 100 years with a great stride forward in further promoting IFHE as a highly esteemed professional organization. It will certainly contribute to encouraging our members, especially young scholars, to engage in IFHE more actively.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Dr Donna Pendergast for her invaluable contribution in making the IJHE a reality. I also thank Carol Warren, Chair of the IFHE Publication and Communication committee, for providing procedural support, and also, to all IFHE members and especially Executive Committee members for their unwavering support for this project.

I encourage members and non-members to contribute to IJHE by perhaps nominating for membership of the Editorial Board and by providing manuscripts for publication. The journal is a symbol of the international scope of the home economics profession.

Lilha Lee, PhD
IFHE President

Foreword from the Publications Committee Chair

Celebrating the centenary of IFHE has enabled us to not only celebrate our achievements but to look forward to the future with a clear strategy for ensuring the sustainability of the home economics profession. As the only worldwide organisation concerned with home economics, it is critical that IFHE provides leadership and opportunities for global networking, sharing of resources and professional learning.

The launch of this first edition of the International Home Economics Journal is a proud moment for home economics professionals and for the committed individuals who have worked hard to establish this journal. Thank you to the members of the IFHE executive committee, the Executive Director and members of both the Publications and Research committees for their valuable expertise and input. In particular, thank you to Associate Professor Donna Pendergast who has overseen the development of this first edition.

As we create the future, we hope this journal will be a tool for furthering our profession and marketing the Federation. The publication of this first edition is a key element of our future direction and a step towards raising the profile of the profession. The future of this journal will rely on the support and input from members and home economics professionals throughout the world.

We hope you enjoy this journal and find it a valuable resource in your professional lives.

Carol Warren
Chair, IFHE Publications Committee

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The publishing of the International Journal of Home Economics (IJHE) is a milestone for IFHE. It is in the form of an electronic journal, hereafter referred to as an e-journal, which reflects the contemporary times in which it is launched. The benefits of e-journals are vast, including:

- reduction of barriers to information dissemination traditionally experienced with paper publications such as time (for delivery) and geography (distance, service availability)
- cost efficiencies
- ability to include interactive components.

The e-journal also adds a layer to the professional culture of home economics at a global level. Having a truly international venue for publishing high quality research and dialogue about, for and from members of the profession - and those aligned with it - contributes to the professional growth of those within, as well as the profession itself.

Increasingly, academics are required to publish in high quality journals as a basic benchmark for their own professional standards and ambitions. Hence, the aim of IFHE is to achieve the highest quality in this e-journal. To realize that goal, there is a need to continue to refine and develop from this starting point. The e-journal requires: a prominent international editorial board; high quality submissions; a thorough and comprehensive review process; a high quality finish. In this first Issue, we believe we have commenced this tradition.

Issue 1 features an outstanding editorial board, comprising the current executive members of IFHE. It also launches the IFHE Position Statement: Home economics in the 21st century (he21C), an important policy direction for IFHE, along with a series of invited responses from highly regarded home economists from around the globe. Each of these home economists provides new insights and ideas, some supporting and others offering alternative ideas, in keeping with the principle that he21C is an organic and responsive document that will evolve over time.

In the peer reviewed section of the journal, there are two articles. One is a cross-cultural comparison between Scottish and Australian home economists about some of the ideas and directions outlined in he21C. Using data from a survey, Yvonne Dewhurst and Donna Pendergast reveal in their study of home economics teachers' beliefs that the name of the profession remains a contentious issue, and one that will need some attention by advocates of he21C. They note high levels of agreement with many of the beliefs and values articulated in he21C. Importantly, their work suggests that there is a need to encourage further dialogue and contribute to professional practice by providing opportunities for reculturing and building community in order for the initiatives of he21C to have a chance of succeeding. The establishment of a community of enquiry and a climate of trust is suggested as a means of building collaboration and belonging, bridging the gap between research and practice by actively engaging members of the profession.

International Journal of Home Economics

The second peer reviewed paper is contributed by Sue L.T. McGregor, Donna Pendergast, Elaine Seniuk, Felicia Eghan and Lila Engberg. It is a theoretical journey of sorts, exploring the ideological parameters of the home economics profession. It points to the possibility of conceptualizing future home economics practice with a focus on the human condition. The authors invite home economists to engage in the philosophy shared in the paper, believing that it is in the destiny of the profession to consider such issues in order to align practice with theoretical belief systems.

With this editorial comment, I invite all members and those interested in contributing to the IJHE to be aware of invitations for editorial board membership, calls for papers, and opportunities to provide professional judgments through the review process. The e-journal can only be a high quality enterprise if we make it happen. I look forward to your contributions to this vision.

Donna Pendergast, PhD
Editor, IJHE

Introducing the IFHE position statement *Home Economics in the 21st Century*

Donna Pendergast, PhD

A triumph for process

The development of the IFHE Position Statement, hereafter referred to as he21c, represents an important series of achievements for IFHE. As convener of the committee responsible, I had the opportunity to work with others to facilitate the development of this document and see it as a process triumph for the international organization, principally from two perspectives:

- utilizing globalization in beneficial ways to further the interests of the profession
- the effective employment of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT's) to optimise the consultation processes.

In order to appreciate the process triumph, it is important to consider the chronology. The Think Tank committee met in Bonn, Germany in February 2005 and agreed to facilitate the development of a Statement or Position Paper about Home Economics. The venture was exciting, involving the development of this Position Statement for utilisation as a platform by home economists around the world. It was hoped that such a platform would serve to bring together the common elements of the field, while acknowledging its necessary diversity for local contexts. The position statement was regarded as a long overdue platform for home economists worldwide to utilise in various ways: in schools, universities, industry, business, government and so on to provide a cohesive and internationally agreed perspective on the field. The committee was particularly interested in providing a living document to address issues of lack of convergence around the core, image, name and profile of the profession.

The overall process of developing this Position Statement was:

1. Email invitation to selected home economists from around the world commissioning them to prepare a draft statement based on the following questions:
 - What is home economics?
 - What is unique about home economics as a field of study and how can this uniqueness be employed to further the profession?
 - What contribution does home economics make?
 - What are the key elements of home economics?
 - What name should 'home economics' be?

- What evidence is there of the impact of the subject/field in a range of contexts including: education, health, business etc?

Fourteen initial invitations were sent to individuals recommended to the Think Tank committee, asking them to prepare discussion papers using the questions. As a result of this, other names were suggested and a further five invitations were issued. Many of those invited were extremely busy and unable to meet timelines proposed, so times were adjusted so that as many initial papers as possible could be developed. Some of the writers collaborated, while others circulated papers within their own region. Some submitted theirs without consultation. In the end, five position papers were submitted.

All Think Tank members were sent the draft Position Statements in advance of the February 2006 Leadership meeting held in Berlin, Germany, and came along to the meeting prepared to discuss their views on the value and contribution of each piece. The members scrutinized the papers, and discussed and highlighted aspects that were supported, rejected and so forth. Importantly, the process to follow this meeting was refined.

2. Using the feedback from the Berlin Think Tank Committee meeting, the author agreed to prepare a draft Position Statement with the date of June 2006 targeted for a substantial draft. Other members of the Think Tank committee provided ongoing feedback and advice during this phase.
3. A draft was discussed at a Helsinki Research meeting where several members of the Think Tank Committee were in attendance. A group of around twenty international research home economists met prior to an international home economics conference. The group served as a useful sounding board for the initial draft.
4. Feedback was incorporated into a redrafted Position Statement.
5. Regional liaisons and Vice Presidents facilitated, along with Think Tank members, consultation of the draft Position Statement within their region, using a proforma the Think Tank committee developed. This process was carried out over a four month period with feedback required by December 2006.
6. Simultaneously, an IFHE website discussion list available to all IFHE members was established providing another avenue for individual feedback on the Position Statement.
7. Feedback from these consultation processes was circulated to Think Tank members prior to the February 2007 Leadership meeting held in Bonn.
8. Final changes were made to the Position Statement during the Bonn meeting, and for several weeks subsequent to this.
9. In mid-2007 the Final Draft of the Position Statement was submitted to the IFHE President and IFHE Executive for consideration and adoption.

10. he21C is scheduled for adoption at the 2008 World Congress and Council meeting. It is reprinted in its entirety on the following two pages.

It is apparent from this process that extensive consultation was sought and achieved, using a variety of communication methods. The Think Tank committee communicated extensively and predominantly relied upon the electronic medium of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), such as email. The committee met face-to-face just three times since the inception of the initiative and quite often members of the committee were not able to be in attendance in person. The consultation phase also relied on digital technologies in the main for soliciting feedback and for presenting their views to the working party. It is apparent that from a process point of view, the effective employment of ICTs to optimise the consultation processes typified the development of he21C. This approach also enabled a more extensive consultation to occur. There is no member of IFHE who did not have an invitation to provide feedback on the various drafts of the paper and many availed themselves of this opportunity. In all, there were almost fifty separate opinions received. In many cases one response might represent several hundred people as it was provided by a professional organization or a committee representing a group. In this way, the process truly featured an egalitarian globalization device where the interests of one group over another were not privileged or favoured.

In addition to these process or operational triumphs, the development of a timely and contemporary statement - the product - will, I believe, serve the Federation well, providing a platform for the collective membership that transcends the boundaries of geography and culture.

he21C is an attempt to locate the profession in the contemporary context by serving as a platform, looking ahead to viable and progressive visions of Home Economics for the twenty-first century and beyond. It is expected to be used to provide defensible arguments for individuals and professional groups requiring such support and is the product of extensive global consultation with members of IFHE and the home economics profession.

Biography

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



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
FOR HOME ECONOMICS

Home Economics in the 21st Century

Prepared by the Think Tank Committee of IFHE in consultation with internationally prominent home economics scholars and members of the Federation 2005-2007, under the leadership of Dr Donna Pendergast. This is an organic document developed for the next decade with the intention of ongoing review and providing a foundation for the work of the Federation, its individual and organizational members.

Preamble

The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) was established in 1908 following the conception of the profession over a period of more than a decade, informed by various initiatives around the world at that time. This Position Statement acknowledges these historical origins and subsequent Declarations, Glossaries and Definitions adopted by IFHE, yet insists on locating the profession in the contemporary context, looking ahead to viable and progressive visions of home economics for the twenty-first century and beyond.

This IFHE Position Statement - *Home Economics in the 21st Century* - serves as a platform to achieve this goal. It intends to encapsulate the diverse nature of the field and hence throws a broad net to embrace its multiplicity and the various ways in which it has adapted to meet specific requirements, in terms of educational, business, social, economic, spiritual, cultural, technological, geographic and political contexts.

This Position Statement can be used to situate Home Economics in contemporary society, and may serve the purpose of providing defensible arguments for individuals and professional groups requiring such support.

Home Economics

Home Economics is a field of study and a profession, situated in the human sciences that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities. Its historical origins place Home Economics in the context of the home and household, and

this is extended in the 21st century to include the wider living environments as we better understand that the capacities, choices and priorities of individuals and families impact at all levels, ranging from the household, to the local and also the global (glocal) community. Home Economists are concerned with the empowerment and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, and of facilitating the development of attributes for lifelong learning for paid, unpaid and voluntary work; and living situations. Home Economics professionals are advocates for individuals, families and communities.

Home Economics content draws from multiple disciplines, synthesizing these through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary inquiry. This coalescing of disciplinary knowledge is essential because the phenomena and challenges of everyday life are not typically one-dimensional. The content (disciplinary bases) from which studies of home economics draw is dependent upon the context, but might include: food, nutrition and health; textiles and clothing; shelter and housing; consumerism and consumer science; household management; design and technology; food science and hospitality; human development and family studies; education and community services and much more. The capacity to draw from such disciplinary diversity is a strength of the profession, allowing for the development of specific interpretations of the field, as relevant to the context. This disciplinary diversity coupled with the aim of achieving optimal and sustainable living means that home economics has the potential to be influential in all sectors of society by intervening and transforming political, social, cultural, ecological, economic and technological systems, at glocal

levels. This is driven by the ethics of the profession, based on the values of caring, sharing, justice, responsibility, communicating, reflection and visionary foresight.

Home Economics can be clarified by four dimensions or areas of practice:

- as an *academic discipline* to educate new scholars, to conduct research and to create new knowledge and ways of thinking for professionals and for society
- as an arena for *everyday living* in households, families and communities for developing human growth potential and human necessities or basic needs to be met
- as a *curriculum area* that facilitates students to discover and further develop their own resources and capabilities to be used in their personal life, by directing their professional decisions and actions or preparing them for life
- as a *societal arena to influence and develop policy* to advocate for individuals, families and communities to achieve empowerment and wellbeing, to utilise transformative practices, and to facilitate sustainable futures.

To be successful in these four dimensions of practice means that the profession is constantly evolving, and there will always be new ways of performing the profession. This is an important characteristic of the profession, linking with the twenty-first century requirement for all people to be 'expert novices', that is, good at learning new things, given that society is constantly and rapidly changing with new and emergent issues and challenges.

IFHE Position Statement

Essential Dimensions of Home Economics

The thread or essential ingredient that all subjects, courses of study and professionals identifying as home economists must exhibit has at least three essential dimensions:

- a focus on fundamental needs and practical concerns of individuals and family in everyday life and their importance both at the individual and near community levels, and also at societal and global levels so that wellbeing can be enhanced in an ever changing and ever challenging environment;
- the integration of knowledge, processes and practical skills from multiple disciplines synthesised through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary inquiry and pertinent paradigms; AND
- demonstrated capacity to take critical/ transformative/ emancipatory action to enhance wellbeing and to advocate for individuals, families and communities at all levels and sectors of society.
- Ensuring the interplay of these dimensions of Home Economics is the basis upon which the profession can be sustained into the future. Because of these attributes, Home Economics is distinctively positioned to collaborate with other professionals.

The name 'Home Economics'

The preferred name of the field of study and profession is 'Home Economics'. Historical records of the Federation document the challenges various names, titles and terminology have posed for IFHE, including the complexity of translation. Internationally, the field of study has consistently retained the name Home Economics and is recognised both within and beyond the boundaries of the profession. The Federation is committed to re-branding and repositioning, not renaming the profession.

Impact of the profession

Home Economics is a vital profession currently enjoying renewed attention in the present era. Our contemporary world is characterised as one of unprecedented transition from industrial to knowledge-based culture and globalised economy, with all encompassing effects on society and

culture. The information age is complex, diverse and unpredictable, yet has a strong commitment to retaining those elements of society that are valued, while looking ahead to the imperative of improving the world in which we all live such that sustainable development is possible. Herein lies the potential for Home Economics and the reason for renewed attention to the field of study, as this is the key imperative of the profession.

Examples of enacting the transformative powers of Home Economics professionals include:

- Home Economics professionals were instrumental to instituting the 1994 International Year of the Family which centred 'family' as a political issue and has impacted on family life in many countries of the world
- Poverty alleviation, gender equality and social justice concerns are a priority of Home Economics professionals, with many projects and initiatives conducted in such areas
- IFHE is an International Non Governmental Organization (INGO), having consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC, FAO, UNESCO, UNISEF) and with the Council of Europe
- Home Economists partner with other Non-Governmental Organisations to improve the lot of families world wide. Specific areas of collaboration/cooperation include: Peace Education, gender issues/ women's empowerment, women's reproductive issues, HIV/AIDS, intervention projects for families in distress and other human rights issues
- Home Economists are active in lobbying for issues that will improve the well-being of a diversity of families and households
- Home Economists serve as consultants in major businesses and organizations dealing with personal home economics, care and consumer services. They are also active entrepreneurs in their own rights
- The current four-year theme on Sustainable Development for World Home Economics Day is a strong stand that impacts on family life positively

- Home Economists are strong advocates for individual and family wellbeing worldwide, evident in for example the development of relevant curriculum for schools and universities.

Directions for the Decade

The focus on the decade ahead is on future proofing, which describes the elusive process of trying to anticipate future developments, so that action can be taken to minimise possible negative consequences, and to seize opportunities. Future proofing the Home Economics profession and the Federation is a challenging task but one which is necessary to ensure a sustainable vision both for the profession, and for individual members. The International Federation of Home Economics has commenced its future-proofing strategy by focussing on questions of sustainability, advocacy and the active creation of preferred futures for Home Economics, relevant disciplinary fields, and the profession itself, while critically reflecting upon and being informed by its historical roots. The 2008 IFHE World Congress *Home Economics: Reflecting on the past; Creating the future*, is a future oriented first step towards this strategy, as is the development of this Position Statement, *Home Economics in the 21st Century*.

Keyword Glossary

Expert Novice - a person or profession good at learning new things; also known as adaptive experts

Family - self definition

Future-proofing - anticipating future developments to minimize negative impacts and optimize opportunities

Glocal - global and local contexts taken together

Lifelong Learning - the need for continual learning and on the sets of generic skills and capacities that will equip individuals and societies to embrace the expanded notion of learning

Please contact the International Federation for Home Economics for any enquiries regarding this document office.ifhe@t-online.de

Some Danish remarks
A Response to the IFHE Position Statement
Home Economics in the 21st Century

Jette Benn, PhD

The Position Statement gives us an excellent chance to show the surrounding world in academia and professions worldwide, what we mean by home economics and how we deal with this subject. But in order to stand by home economics we may be a little too happy with ourselves, the subject and the profession. Therefore I will add a few comments based on research within home economics and my work as educator and in IFHE mainly in the research committee.

Definition and field of home economics

We must be able to argue for our field and to explain to colleagues from other disciplines, or in the school, or other institutional and social settings what we more specifically mean by home economics. We need to encircle the field in order to be able to define home economics science by its own rights. By this I mean, that the field is not architecture, engineering, psychology or pure chemistry. It holds its core from the individual, the family, the home, household and its surroundings, and analyses problems critical from the perspective of the individual, the family and/or the home; otherwise our subject disappears into other disciplines more well defined and described than home economics. So the broadness of our field is also our weakness.

The content includes as described materials essential for our lives, which we use and consume. But we are not merely consumers, we are producers as well. That is an essential aspect of our field, and it has an important meaning in education, as production give us a possibility to perceive with all senses, to express care and aesthetics, to economise and ecologise.

In the four dimensions or areas of practice I wish to add:

- as an academic discipline—we need to develop home economics research, it may be through co-operation and courses, and also to support the research by furthering publication and presentation by home economics professionals within IFHE and outside.
- as an arena for everyday living which might be where we meet one another personally and professionally
- as a curriculum area, a special field and topic, home economics pedagogy, and education has and will continually develop means, ways, methods, and materials, which facilitate home economics education and aims at *Bildung* for everyday life.

- as a societal arena to influence and develop policy which might well be done from the bottom towards the top.

Directions for the decade

We need to be able and capable to define and describe the field relating to other fields but also as a certain area of everyday life and culture taking the standpoint from the human being in her surroundings.

Biography

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

On identifying our profession

A Response to the IFHE Position Statement

Home Economics in the 21st Century

Marian L. Davis, PhD

Background and Influences

First I wish to commend the IFHE Think Tank Committee on the Position Statement, and to thank IFHE Office and AAFCS colleagues who contributed data for this paper.

Home economics developments have followed historical changes which influenced perceptions of our profession. Early identities considered include: eugenics, ecology, eugenics, domestic science and housewifery, but home economics became the accepted term, bringing needed recognition to the home where the very fabric of society is woven. National development would have been impossible without good nutrition, safe homes, sanitation, and nurturing relationships. Home economics was founded in response to a recognised need, even more desperate today as families worldwide are generally less stable, more mobile, and facing more pressures than 100 years ago. Outlining developments influencing challenges we now face gives context for discussion (Davis, 1993). These outlines follow.

Industrialization and urbanization

Most early 1900s populations were rural and had to be largely self-sufficient. Meeting survival needs was integrated in the home. Early industrialization moved people to growing cities, jobs, faster transportation, crowded living conditions, and less time or space. Families were less self-sufficient in providing their own food, clothing, shelter, and livelihoods as an integrated process, but having to rely more on outside sources.

Producer/consumer/commercialism

The consumer image of family grew as the family evolved from largely self-sufficient producer to dependent consumer of goods and services. Yet it is often home economics professionals who produce those goods and services, and family remains the prime producer of human beings on which all society depends.

Societal perceptions of home

As commercial/industrial sectors grew, status of the home seemed to fade and took the name image with it. More spectacular societal achievements often relegated the 'home' to lower priority in funding, legal, academic, and social respect despite solid accomplishments and political declarations to the contrary. Growing attitudes seemed to accept weakening families as socially innocuous. Yet in times of stress or tragedy, most individuals turn first to family for comfort and support, and home economics supports it.

Gender

Home is traditionally the domain of women, most early home economists were women, and linking 'home' and 'women' in a world with low status of women likely influenced perception of both profession and name in male dominated worlds.

Colonialism

As home economics grew in Europe and the USA, colonialism influenced its spread in developing countries, often reflecting the geography, terms, and culture of the colonial power. Local concepts of home economics are influenced by local regard for home and women and by how well basic home economics principles are adapted to local culture and geography.

Rise of specialties

While early home application of home economics subjects was more integrated, new research and academic knowledge led to distinct specializations which became compartmentalised, isolated, and commercialised. These have played major roles in withering the founding goal of integration and fostering academic and professional fragmentation. This outline invites a conceptual review:

Concepts of home economics

Basic human needs

Meeting basic human needs essential for survival and development are the core cluster subjects of home economics and no other profession. Needs for shelter, nutrients, protection, nurturance, management, and adornment are fundamental and universal.

Means and ends

Growing industrialization, commercialization, and consumerism, and rise of specialization all contributed to images of specialties as distinct, independent areas with business involvement more important than home. Specialists often see their own focus as an autonomous end in itself, unaware of what links them together or why they are in home economics. Yet all home economics specialties are the component 'means' to the overriding 'end' purpose of integrated human development. Just as specialised body organs are interdependent to sustain life, component areas of home economics are interdependent to create a greater whole: the development of human beings. Each area plays a critical role, but it is their transcending interaction that distinguishes home economics.

Duality

Even as families evolved from producers to consumers, their basic needs remained the same. For example: people require protein whether it comes from the family dinner table, a restaurant, or grocery freezer. The knowledge base of home economics subjects is the same regardless of delivery system. So some needs may be met within the home or through specialised outside agencies or companies that serve the home. Advanced studies may differ by delivery system, but this within/outside duality shows that our profession serves the entire

spectrum from the home to transnational corporations whose goods and services serve basic, integrated human development, whether it comes from within or from outside sources that extend home functions.

Preventive and curative

Home economics addresses developing human beings at their earliest stages and throughout life in its most intimate setting. First patterns of good nurturance, housing, nutrition, and other needs promote healthy, optimised human development. In so doing, they prevent problems that begin in the home and grow into social and economic problems that fill hospitals and prisons, drain resources, shrivel productivity, and leave lifelong scars. Needs initially unmet often require later curative agency efforts, at greater human and financial cost and less effectiveness. Hence home economics could be seen as preventive social welfare.

Perceptions and terms

Terms identifying the profession usually depend on perceptions of it, and those range widely both within home economics and in other groups with whom we work: the UN system and member states, other disciplines, and the public. Some perceptions are specialty-oriented, and some more comprehensive. Many names have a two-word pattern: one, the nature of our content (what it is about) such as home, consumer, human, family, or a specialty; and the other is the nature of our pursuit (what we do with it) such as studies, economics, sciences, development, or services (Davis, 1993).

Within the profession

Home economics, like any name once established, triggers identity images that tend to stick, though images may differ in different groups. Such variability heightened identity concerns to keep or change the name.

Among reasons cited for keeping the name are:

- *The content image rather than the name should be changed*
- *Nothing is gained when new names are defined in terms of home economics*
- *It has wide recognition*
- *Logistics and costs of name change would be expensive*
- *Translations might be difficult and related names already claimed.*

Among reasons cited for changing the name are:

- *It is out of date, limited, and anachronistic, thus damaging our effectiveness*
- *It is no longer all we do; our mission is greater, and people don't grasp its scope*
- *It has little business and academic community respect*

- *Foundations and granting agencies give it low priority*
- *We need an inclusive, easily understood, concise name that unites us.*

Those keeping the name grasped its integration, but often felt that only they really understood it. We all know colleagues who respond to their specialty name, but not home economics. Those who changed names generated variety that masks unity within the profession and confuses those outside. Names have proliferated while many academic programs have been dismembered or eliminated: Nutrition may go to medicine, child development to psychology, clothing to business, all disintegrating along specialty lines. Academic departments struggle to recall what links them together, even as need for unity increases. IFHE organizational members, academic, and business units often have totally different names.

Of a 2007 list of eighty-two non-US IFHE member organizations (IFHE, 2008), seventy-four names available in English used many combinations of thirteen terms. Home economics had thirty, then education, consumer, human ecology, facility/management, home science; and five related terms appeared once.

A 1993 AHEA list of 306 higher education units (American Home Economics Association, 1993) included combinations of seven terms: home economics, human ecology, family and consumer sciences (FCS), human environmental sciences, human resources, human sciences, and human development. By 2007, 112 academic units had 17 terms and their combinations: Family and consumer sciences and variations, then human sciences, human ecology, human environmental sciences, human development, and twelve other terms used once (American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, 2007). Forty-one of the fifty-three non-FCS names used human. More units exist, but multiplicity of names and complexity of institutional administrative structures make tracking changes very difficult. US IFHE state association members may have the same name, but other groups have different terms. Many IFHE countries experience similar diversity.

Most names use a comprehensive term, not a collection. We are home economics, not a listing of housing and foods and management, because it is component blending that merges into integrated development. A parent doesn't feed a child thinking *now I'm doing foods*, then do laundry, thinking *now it's clothing*, then compare labels, thinking *now it's consumer*. Development is cohesive, suggesting that names interrupted with 'and' lose both cohesiveness and impact. Term proliferation has contributed to that loss.

UN system and member states

Both the United Nations system and its member states have long built separate components of home economics into goals and projects (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007). Some in the 1960s and 1970s with UNESCO, FAO, and UNDP were labeled home economics. IFHE is the only umbrella home economics organisation having consultative status with UNESCO, FAO, UNICEF, and other UN agencies, and was a prime mover in the 1994 UN International Year of the Family. It has struggled to gain recognition and respect in the system, and many segments have made recognised contributions. From early UN Human Development Reports with its Human Development Index (United Nations Development

Program, 1991) through 2007 Millennium Development Goals (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007), conferences cite children, food, housing, population, women, sanitation, family, nutrition, ageing, and other home economics specialties as key global concerns. Yet the comprehensive term home economics is rarely acknowledged.

Other Disciplines

As higher education systems evolved from traditional natural sciences and humanities to include social sciences, the later added applied sciences such as nursing, social work, and home economics generally have lower status. Traditional academics are often more likely to acknowledge specialties rather than the umbrella term. Similar terms involving home economics may be claimed by several fields: 'ecology' by 'environment', 'life sciences' by biology, 'human sciences' by sociology, and 'human development' by child or national development (Davis, 1996). Disciplines working with a specialty may regard it well, but not understand its component role in a larger whole.

The Public

Although our field has expanded and evolved greatly in its 100 years, unless people have knowingly experienced its benefits, most remember its early cooking and sewing image. I recall being introduced as home economics program specialist at Girl Scout national headquarters, and being asked, "Oh, are you the one who makes all those Girl Scout cookies?" School programs suffer when understanding is limited and competing with other subjects. Many who still stereotype home economics as separate household skills may have heard that it has changed, but don't know how.

Where to next?

Current Status

The journey of name changes demonstrates hope for unity under one name, but shows that neither traditional nor new names approach that. Even colleagues cannot find us, and others wonder why they should regard a profession that cannot decide what to call itself. Name proliferation does not work. These and other factors suggest great need for one name worldwide.

The above invites questions including:

- *What questions and criteria must we employ?*
- *Can we survive as a jumble of labels, or is it 'united we stand under one name; divided we fall under multiple names'?*
- *Should our identity focus on the what rather than the where?*
- *What are implications of our changes that parallel 100 years of global changes?*
- *Should identity be based on history or timeless function?*

- *Should identity be inwardly oriented for use within the profession, or outwardly oriented to convey its ultimate nature to a world often confused by specialty means that build end development? Can it do both?*
- *When specialties meet an immediate need, can we retain perspective in context of the whole?*
- *Where do we go from here and with what strategies?*

Criteria: Possible identity criteria would:

- *Focus concisely and comprehensively on our ultimate goal*
- *Reunify and revitalise the profession*
- *Show what links us together, transcending our specialties into a unified whole*
- *Convey clear meaning within and outside the profession*
- *Be easily understood and translated*

Possibilities

The IFHE Position Statement recommends “re-branding...not renaming” as it acknowledges “historical origins. . . yet insists on locating the profession in the contemporary context.” Suggestions may help stimulate dialogue.

The home economics name brought needed attention to home where human development begins. Later outside sources addressing those same needs brought location beyond home, and methods beyond economics. While home is where the what happens, the what is the ultimate focus, not the where. The what uses the previously noted two-word pattern of content as human and pursuit as development, suggesting a re-branding of human development because that is ultimately what we do, whether from within or outside the home. Easily understood, it is already in use.

Some child development experts define human development as “ways in which people change... (or) stay the same from conception to death” (Papilia, Olds, & Feldman, 1998). Yet one cannot have child development without nutrition, without housing, without management, and other home economics components. Human development is an integrated, lifelong process.

UN Human Development Reports define human development as “the process of increasing peoples choices (and) formation of human capabilities...” (United Nations Development Program, 1991) at macro- and micro- levels. They emphasise sectors including many home economics components as being developmental, but guard that ultimate beneficiaries of macro-development are people, not industrial growth. Dictionaries define development to “bring out capabilities,” or “unfold inherent possibilities” (Barnhart, 1951). The 2007 UN Development Agenda notes conditions of the “enabling framework” as including nurturance, health, nutrition, and other areas of home economics, suggesting that we are an “enabling process” of positive human potential. IFHE consultative status in UN agencies could be

strengthened by being known as human development, and seeing that we are their social infrastructure, and our goals parallel theirs.

Dialogue

Wishing to keep a cherished name is understandable, and we here bring a wide range of experiences influencing a level of readiness either to reconfirm home economics or to consider rationales for other options. Either way, we will need strategies. Our history shows that keeping the name home economics needs a powerful strategy to clarify and expand its image. Changing the name would need a powerful strategy to ensure clear and unified understanding of it. Either way, we need systematic, constructive dialogue of openness, optimism, and respect. Can we do that? Are we willing to try?

Like many of you, I grew up in this profession and am passionately dedicated to its potential, whatever its name. It involves every human being on earth: earlier, more comprehensively, intimately, powerfully, and profoundly than any other profession. A Chronicle of Higher Education article describes us as “serious scholars with a progressive past, a promising future, and an array of accomplishments worthy of celebration” (Schneider, 2000). For that future to keep its promise, IFHE provides a structure and network to discuss constructive strategies that will impact the success or failure of our next 100 years and our potential to benefit to humankind. May our centennial celebrations begin those steps now.

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Biography

Professor Emeritus Marian L Davis, PhD has a background in home economics education, international relations, and international education. She taught at the University of Nigeria, with UNESCO/UNDP in the Philippines, with Chinese women's colleges, and Florida State University. She served on the US National Commission for UNESCO, was vice-chair of AHEA International Section/IFHE Liaison, was on IFHE-US Structure Committee, and represented IFHE at the 1979 UN consultative status hearing. She authored *Visual Design in Dress* and numerous professional articles. Email: mldavis@fsu.edu

Recasting Home Economics for the 21st Century

A Response to the IFHE Position Statement *Home Economics in the 21st Century*

Geraldene B Hodelin, PhD

The timeliness of a Position Statement on Home Economics by the International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE) to coincide with its centennial celebration is a stroke of genius. Among other attributes, this Statement reaffirms the identity of the Federation as a global entity that continues to pull together professionals from five continents who share similar focus and visions on human betterment. Further, it has provided timely reminders and an updated language for professionals who must continue to articulate the field, the cultural relevance and academic imperatives of the discipline for the benefit of stakeholders and observers alike. The authors profess in the preamble that the Statement provides a place to begin the new dialogue on the meaning, purpose and focus of home economics in our changing and globalised world communities. This is despite the modern economic trend to downsize, to rename and in extreme case to eliminate the field in its recognizable form from higher education. If the statement gives sound backing to those who care to keep the discipline as part of academia, then the effort to so far is worthwhile.

There is an attempt to provide a broad yet exclusive definition for the field of study called home economics. This challenge is reasonably overcome. The significant commentary in the Statement that creates the important bridge between the past and the present and speaks volumes about previous assumptions and the emerging values that are to be included in the definition. It postulates that:

Its historical origins place Home Economics in the context of the home and the household, and this is extended to the 21st century to include the wider living environments as we better understand that the capacities, choices and priorities of individuals and families impact at all levels, ranging from the household, to the local and also to the local (glocal) community.

The above sentiments should not be minimised nor ignored in any way. As a matter of fact it should be reflected on and its broadest meaning applied to the education of future home economists so that emerging professionals can easily find their places within the field in ways that fuel their scholarly activities that contribute to the continuing development of the home economics profession.

Inquiry in the field of home economics as indicated in the statement has been interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary not only because the content for the field draws from other disciplines, but also because the human issues that the field is concerned with are multi-dimensional in focus and substance. That is in no small way part of what defines the uniqueness of the field. This is perhaps the glue that holds the diverse sub-disciplines together as a field of study and as a profession. Whether professionals are engaged in

knowledge generation, reflective practice or direct application, it is unlikely that the scholarly pursuits or application activities can focus on a single dimension home and family at any one time, because the human subject which is the focus of our professional activity is multifaceted and contextual.

It is appropriate then for the statement to remind the readers that the content (disciplinary bases) from which studies of home economics is drawn is dependent upon context. It is context that accounts for focus and perspectives in different groups or cultural settings. It is the lack of acknowledgement of context that often causes unflattering comparisons and detracts from the intended purpose, meaning and definition of the field of home economics. The resulting disillusionment of some professionals and policymakers when context is removed from definition threatens the validity of the field at its core. Context then must not only be noted it must be appreciated. So too must the eco-centricity of the discipline. Context and eco-centricity are inextricably linked and so it is appropriate for the statement to include the following:

This disciplinary diversity coupled with the aim of achieving optimal and sustainable living means that home economics has the potential to be influential in all sectors of society by intervening and transforming political, social, cultural, ecological, economic and technological systems, at glocal levels. This is driven by the ethics of the profession, based on the values of caring, sharing, justice, responsibility, communicating, reflection and visionary foresight.

The inclusion of the above statement reminds the readers of the full meaning of context as well as fluidity of the construct over time and space.

The four dimensions identified in the Position Statement, academic, everyday living, curriculum and societal arena, provide sound guidance in respect of scope and focus of home economics as a profession. It is my view however that a fifth dimension should be included. The preparation of self is a critical issue for many practitioners. The absence of a clear definition of the home economics discipline in many contexts of work and study makes it difficult to nurture appropriate role models. Home economists, by virtue of the values and standards articulated in this Position Statement are expected to become transformative forces in the lives of ordinary people. To be convincing to policymakers and benefactors, the practitioners need to become that which they advocate. This requires academic, social, political and emotional preparation of self, if professionals seek to operate at the level where desired social changes can be negotiated with the appropriate powerbrokers. I am satisfied, that like other professions for example, medicine or law, the home economics practitioner is not only academically credentialed, he or she must also be socially and personally credible. The message that home economists promote is values, attitudes and lifestyle. This message transcends time and culture and are grounded in human betterment and should never be unclear or misunderstood.

Self-formation, resulting from appropriate self preparation in which a clear sense of socially acceptable values and standards for everyday living and for professional practice are not just learned but understood seems to be a requisite imperative. By virtue of what home economists do in their everyday work, many need to get to the final stage of Maslow's

hierarchy (self actualization in which awareness is the first stage) in order to be convincing as practitioners. If the profession truly seeks to enable human betterment, its practitioners need to exhibit full understanding of this dimension.

The fifth dimension then should be personal awareness. This dimension is reflected in one's comfort with being a role model for what is being advocated and to visibly promote the notion that, 'all I learned about influencing people and working in partnership with human subjects I learned in home economics'. This journey is not an event, it is a process. In this process lies the fulsomeness of the fifth dimension, because it forces the home economist to keep growing professionally. It takes a lifetime for individuals to self actualise, so there is little chance for even the experienced professional becoming complacent.

Retaining the name home economics is another powerful comment in the Position Statement. This comment is a confirmation of the profession we practice and the rationale for maintaining the IFHE as a professional organisation around which professionals can coalesce for networking, support and scholarly nurturance. IFHE has committed to rebranding and repositioning the profession. This commitment reflects confidence in the future professionals who will guide future directions. This is excellent commentary that draws attention not only to the impact of the home economics profession through IFHE over the years but also to the Federation's intention to aid in the sustainability of the field in changing global environments. By its response to relevant, pertinent, current and emerging concerns for families and household, home economics should provide the platform for professionals to equip themselves to become a transformative force in households and families in communities in the five regions served by the Federation.

An important example of the enacting of the transformative powers of home economics not identified by the authors of this Statement that could extend the otherwise excellent list provided and that would synchronise with the fifth dimension mentioned earlier in this response is that:

Home Economists are role models and world beaters in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as in private sector organisations and government organisations. Their expertise when applied in occupations that address the needs of rural people, women, children and the aged; in areas of education and development, have helped to eradicate prejudices, and promote gender equity and wealth development among traditionally disadvantaged groups.

Finally, the new vocabulary introduced in the Position Statement, represents timeliness in the incorporation of the global language of development and sustainability. There should be time set aside by home economics professionals to expand the futuristic perspectives articulated in the Statement. The place to begin a new conversation on the discipline of Home economics, its anchor in the past as well as its nurturance and growth for the future is no later than the 100th birthday of the International Federation for Home Economics. On the 100th anniversary of the IFHE this is an important Position Statement to publish. This conversation started has revisited and seeks to update the definition, scope, focus and future direction of a field that often begs for clarity, so that practitioners, students and observers can converge on similar expectations, intent and actions. Let us all as home economics professionals continue the

conversation now started in this Position Statement in the interest of professional and personal growth and let us do this with respect for context and culture for improved understanding, sharing and practice. Congratulations to the IFHE!

Biography

Dr Geraldene Hodelin, PhD is the immediate former Dean of the Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies of the University of Technology, Jamaica. Geraldene is the President-elect (2006-2008), Chair of the United Nations Committee, the Centennial Committee, and member of the Think Tank of the IFHE. She is a past president of the Jamaican Home Economics Association and currently chairs the Think Tank Committee of the Caribbean Association of Home Economists and is editor of the *Caribbean Journal of Home Economics*. Email: gerihodelin@gmail.com

The Position Statement: The philosophical platform

A Response to the IFHE Position Statement

Home Economics in the 21st Century

Ayako Kuramoto, D Med.

It is a wonderful and historical event for home economics that the IFHE adopts the Position Statement. Japanese home economists have been doing our research, education and extension based on our mission, e.g. some statements in the Lake Placid Conference (1902), *Home economics: A definition* (Brown & Paolucci, 1979), The Statement in the Scottsdale Meeting (The American Home Economics Association, 1994), The Definition of Home Economics in Japan, or others for a long time. Those are very important and useful for us whenever we consider our temporary state and future vision. Home economists have been coming back to it to consider ourselves when we met crisis or challenge.

In Japan, in 1970 the first definition was established, triggered by the request from the IFHE. At that time many home economists, concerned to what home economics should be and should do to people and society, discussed it for a long time. It was an epochal event for Japanese home economists. It described home economics as follows:

Meaning of Home Economics

Home Economics is an empirical science where the progress in family life and the promotion of human development and welfare of people are to be attained through studies in various problems centred on family life and in the related social environments from both physical and mental sides.

Philosophy or important beliefs concerning Home Economics

The field of Home Economics is fundamentally concerned with family life, which is the basis of human life. The range of studies in Home Economics, therefore, need to be extended to social phenomena which interact with family life today.

Such studies and researches are necessary to promote human welfare The Japan Society of Home Economics (1971).

It inspired home economists to establish The Principles of Home Economics, which was first introduced into the curriculum as the new basic and philosophical subject for home economics in higher education after World War II guided by the General Head Quarter, Civil Information and Education. In 1984 the definition was revised based on the broad discussion for developing the Future Plan of Home Economics in the Japan Society of Home Economics. It is "Home Economics is an integrated science, a practical science centring around family life. Researchers are conducted to determine the interaction between human beings and the environment surrounding them, while natural, sociological and anthropological studies are made on the material as well as the human aspects of our life. The results thus obtained are used as the basis for improving our living conditions as well as promoting our welfare" (The

Japan Society of Home Economics, 1984). In addition the Division of the Principles of Home Economics was established as the new division in the Japan Society of Home Economics. Furthermore, many authors and editors wrote the new books on the principles of home economics, and many students and teachers study it for the fundamental philosophical subject for home economics. After that home economics in Japan sometimes met the challenges. We always came back to the Definition when we discussed our state and what we should do/work for. I think the philosophical foundation like the Position Statement is important for home economics and all home economists.

Today we are in the twenty-first century, and the situation of everyday life and home economics have been challenged and changing, with globalization, global warming, food crisis, food safety crisis, global networking. Dr Atsuko Yamaguchi and I translated *Rethinking Home Economics: History of Women and a Professional* (Stage & Vincenti, 1997; Japanese translation, 2002), and we understood the similar history and the difference between the United States of America and Japan. We learned a lot of home economists struggled with the challenges and tried to develop home economics. I think it shows that home economists can learn from each other. By learning about each other and networking, we have to consider the new foothold to meet the new agenda and needs in the world, each region, and each country.

The Position Statement of IFHE will be sure to lead the new home economics in the world to meet the new agenda and needs of individual, family, community and society. It will become the new historical compass for the world home economics.

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Biography

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Future Proofing: Transdisciplinary Ambassadors for the Human Condition

A response to the IFHE position statement
Home Economics in the 21st Century

Sue LT McGregor, PhD

I am honoured to be invited to share my response to the 2008 IFHE Position Statement. Position statements are intended to provide direction and a focus for the organization. Because they express how the organization wishes to be perceived by the public, its members and its stakeholders, these statements should be clear and defensible. IFHE has enriched its integrity as a professional organization by inviting responses to its Position Statement. While these solicitations open the door for more clarity, they also invite the inclusion of additional, perhaps, contending ideas. What better way to engage in future proofing in order to ensure a sustainable vision and reality for the profession!

Home Economics is a profession

I want to reaffirm IFHE's assertion that home economics is a profession and clarify what that truly means, the deep and profoundly moral import of that characterization of our work (Brown & Paolucci, 1978):

A profession provides a set of services that is beneficial to society as a whole, a social end. Home economics holds the challenging reality that laypeople think they can provide services for individuals and families given that everyone lives day-to-day in some form of home environment. A profession recognises this and builds its practice on human ethics and concerns, not just technical how-to practice.

The set of services provided for the benefit of society involves intellectual activity, especially moral judgements, which require that each professional continually engage in scholarly activity focussed on the critique of existing knowledge and how it matches the evolving needs of individuals and families in today's environment.

Education for the profession (study) is vigorously supervised to ensure that those practising in the field are prepared to engage in morally defensible work. Entrance into the practice of the profession is thoroughly screened through a process of licensing or certification to ensure morally defensible work.

Because of the level of competence and independent, intellectual, morally grounded thought required to practice in a profession, the scope and purpose of the profession is necessarily limited, but not the complexity of knowledge and practice in the profession. And, although the field may have to generate specializations in order to deal with the scope of the profession, all off shoots

will adhere to the same agreed-to social end (see first point), making the profession holistic and sustainable.

The knowledge appropriate to home economics is not unique. What is unique is that the field pays attention to the problems that families encounter from one generation to another (perennial problems), and then draws information and insights from a number of disciplines. After critically examining them, the home economist organises these insights into knowledge that has practical use for the social ends of the profession, currently the well-being and quality of daily life for individuals and families (see section The Human Condition).

To be a professional, home economics practitioners must engage in self reflection and self critique so that they can present themselves to the public in such a way that society is clear about what they offer. Otherwise, the field runs the risk of not asking the appropriate questions, posing the wrong problems, missing the underlying causes of symptoms that families are trying to cope with, thereby engaging in unprofessional practice and unethical conduct. To prevent this disastrous circumstance, pre-service and in-service initiatives must respect the spirit of inquiry and facilitate constant attempts to improve and refine theory and practice. As a true profession and professional, we must critique the human condition, which means investigating and denouncing social and individual damages caused by power imbalances in society. We must strive for praxis, that is, remain concerned with real inequality in society and then seek to link the insights gained from our ongoing critique to engage in social and political action.

Human sciences

I was drawn to the first sentence in the Position Statement, the suggestion that home economics is a profession situated within the human sciences. Recently, the highly respected leadership honour society of Kappa Omicron Nu, and some academic programs socializing people into the profession, have opted to embrace the name human sciences for the profession (respectfully rejecting home economics, human ecology and family and consumer sciences). Conveniently, before reading the IFHE Position Statement, I had prepared a short, yet to be published, position paper on the recent trend to use the term human sciences for home economics.

The human sciences was the original label for anything left over after the natural sciences have been accounted for. Today, the human sciences has evolved to represent the combination of both the humanities and social sciences. Even though there is some fluidity in how these two spheres are identified, the following is a safe enough distinction. Those practicing in the social sciences tend to use the scientific method to study humanity (sociology, psychology, political sciences, economics, history, anthropology, linguistics). Their goal is to quantify human interactions. On the other hand, those in the human sciences, the humanities, are committed to studying aspects of the human condition from a non-scientific approach (classics and literature, philosophy, religious studies, women's studies, art, jurisprudence and law, and ethnic and cultural studies) .

Consider that the human sciences is traditionally devoted to the practical needs of society, has the socio-historical reality as subject matter, is concerned with forces that rule society, and society's resources for promoting healthy progress (Dilthey, 1883). Home economics has always said it is about individual and familial well-being within the context of community and society. There is a big difference in the foci of these two areas of study. In the home economics programs that have shifted focus to Human Sciences, there is a very noticeable change in language. Instead of saying family and individual well-being, these programs are now choosing a different noun—human: human needs, human problems, human well-being, the human condition, humankind. Barbara McFall (Research Associate with KON) clarifies that she feels the moniker Human Sciences allows practitioners to embrace the totality of the human experience and enables us to take up the original nineteenth century Lake Placid conceptualizations of the profession with a focus on the full human experience that favours: (a) immediate environments, not necessarily home, and (b) the social being, not necessarily family (personal communication, August 18, 2005).

To play devil's advocate, consider that home economics has evolved over 100 years by drawing insights from the natural, social and human sciences to develop its own body of knowledge, concepts and philosophy. We have stood outside these three spheres as a unique discipline. Does it make sense to name the profession after one of these sciences (dropping "the" and saying human sciences)? Or, can we consider KON and like-minded organizations to be visionaries, embracing a new conceptualization of human sciences, seeing this as an opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary work that transcends the arbitrary division between the arts and the sciences and involves the study of a number of disciplines in relation to a central problem—the human condition (University of Sussex, 2008). Consider this verbal soup to stimulate thinking? I do not have an answer. But, I direct you to the Position Statement wherein IFHE provides its rationale for retaining the name home economics (a name I support).

Re-branding or ambassadors

In the Position Statement, IFHE says it has decided to re-brand the profession instead of renaming it, and then to reposition it in the world. I have another suggestion. What about reframing ourselves as ambassadors of the profession, in addition to or in lieu of re-branding? Whereas branding means putting a mark on something to indicate ownership, being an ambassador entails advancing the interests of the profession, guided by its values, mission and philosophical underpinnings. Ambassador stems from the medieval Latin word *ambactia*, mission. The word brand is Old English for torch (they eventually burn out). I know some will disagree with this point. You will argue that, to be more visible and accessible, we have to be able to define a distinctive characteristic by which people come to know us, a trademark. I suggest that if we re-brand, we do so intending to create ambassadors instead of just conceiving the profession as a trademarked product or service. As ambassadors, we can reposition the profession firmly in the centre of the twenty-first century (McGregor, 2007b).

Interdisciplinary

I agree with the comment that a strength of home economics, if done well, is to prepare practitioners' minds to see connections among a diverse collection of sister disciplines to help

inform their work with families. This is what is meant by an interdisciplinary approach to practice. I do not agree that these disciplinary bases are foods, clothing, shelter and the other areas identified in the second paragraph of the Position Statement. Rather, I was always socialised to believe that home economics degrees are structured so that we take courses from other disciplines (economics, psychology, sociology, law, philosophy, business) so we can find ideas that help us bring unique approaches to help families meet their basic needs, usually understood to be those areas listed as content in the second paragraph: foods, shelter, relationships, resource management, child development and so on. In addition to taking courses from disciplines that are not focused on the family itself, home economics students take especially designed courses focused on family needs, processes and skill sets—a marriage of other disciplines and family-tailored courses. Their minds are trained to tease out content, theory and principles from aligned disciplines and then draw on the synergy created when connections are made between these insights and home economics' mission and philosophy so as to inform practice that is focused on individual and family needs and functions.

Transdisciplinary

Also, in the second paragraph, IFHE asserts that home economics content is synthesised through transdisciplinary inquiry. While I wish with all of my heart that this were so, I am not yet convinced, and I am a little uncomfortable that IFHE takes this position. On the other hand, I am totally convinced that transdisciplinary inquiry is something we should aspire to achieve. In her treatise on the basic ideas by which American home economists understand themselves, Brown (1993) states emphatically that "what is needed is [a] transdisciplinary conceptual framework" (p.244). She shares evidence that the profession had not achieved this ideal in 1993, and I do not think we are there yet, in 2008. But, we are taking small steps forward. We are now using the word transdisciplinarity in our professional discourse, something very, very recent, I would say within the last three years. I wrote two papers about transdisciplinary inquiry (McGregor, 2004, 2007a), Kaija Turkki and colleagues use the term in Finland, and the new home economics journal recently launched in Pakistan (2007), *Nurture: Research Journal for Human Civilization*, self-identifies as an international, transdisciplinary journal (<http://www.chek.edu.pk/indexnurture/>).

Why transdisciplinarity for home economics? Because human problems do not fit neatly within the boundaries of one discipline, and because the academy does not have all of the answers to solve (even pose) problems related to the human condition; hence, an approach is needed that goes beyond academic boundaries and merges with civil society—that is the transdisciplinary approach. The products of transdisciplinary work are: (a) a framework that gives meaning to the work done within different disciplines (including home economics), and (b) a way to reflectively bring these disciplines into context with human purpose (Brown, 1993). Brown explains that this approach does not eliminate the need for intensive specialization; rather, it respects the tension between the rational, fragmented academic approach and the complex, emergent richness of the lived world of human beings. The result is work that contributes to enhancing the human purpose and human condition so we have a liveable world.

Turkki (2006) recognised this purpose recently when she rejected the term generalist, proposing a new kind of specialisation within home economics. We would become integral specialists with expertise that integrates, links bridges, sees connections, looks for patterns, coordinates and communicates. This innovation in home economics thinking scaffolds Brown's (1993) suggestion that home economists need a transdisciplinary approach in order to facilitate interdisciplinary inquiry, and vice versa, in order to make meaningful connections with civil society and humanity.

Pendergast (2001) urges us to be expert novices (adaptive experts), good at relentlessly learning new things and letting go of things that do not work anymore. Transdisciplinarity is one of those new things we have to learn. So is integral leadership and practice, but I have no space here to develop the idea save to say it moves us beyond integrated holistic practice towards work grounded in the new sciences of chaos theory, quantum physics and living systems theory (McGregor, 2008a).

The human condition and the human family

I note in the Position Statement that one of the four areas of practice for home economics is the societal arena where we are supposed to work for empowerment and well-being of individuals, families and communities (via transformative practice to facilitate sustainable futures). As well at page 3, well-being is identified as an essential dimension of home economics. Taking direction from Marjorie Brown, I suggest that we expand our thinking to move beyond well-being to embrace the human condition as our new valued social end, especially if we are engaging in transformative practice to facilitate sustainable futures, both of the profession and the world's (McGregor, 2006). Focusing on well-being, as we have traditionally conceived it, compromises our ability to enhance the human condition (Brown, 1993). Let me explain.

Again, I am working on a position paper about the human condition and home economics practice, as yet unpublished. I draw heavily on Brown's (1993) critique of home economics practice to date, with its focus on well-being. With deep insight, she maintains that home economists tend to see the world in fragments that they understand one piece at a time. Due to this fragmentation, they have come to understand well-being as coming in separate packages (economic, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, environmental and personal autonomy) with little concern for the moral or cultural imperatives of seeing them separately. Indeed, with the best of intentions, McGregor and Goldsmith (1998) describe in detail the seven dimensions of well-being.

Brown (1993) maintains that home economists who do not see the world holistically have a mind full of little islands with no bridges between them (p. 109). They assume that, "because the world is fragmented, well-being is to be achieved by individuals and families separately and independently from other persons and from society" (p. 106). To rectify this stance, she suggests that we move from seeing well-being comprising any number of different dimensions to seeing it as based in very basic normative concepts and principles (p. 111). By normative, Brown means stating how things ought to be as opposed to being positivistic wherein one states, factually, how things are. In effect, instead of describing the economic, social, physical and emotional states or conditions of families and individuals, we should go further

and interpret those conditions using concepts such as: justice, equity, equality, fairness, freedom, human rights, human responsibilities, human security, resilient communities, violence and non-violence, participation, power, interests, et cetera.

Using the concept of the human condition, instead of family well-being, home economists would deal with each dimension of wellness or well-being from the assumption that one cannot address one separate element without considering the impact on or of other elements. They would progress from perceiving families as separate, distinct social entities with labels based on what they look like (same sex couples, single, common-law). Instead, home economists would see them as a basic democratic unit in the world with functions they are responsible to ensure social progress and prosperity of the entire human family (McGregor, 2006, 2008b). Home economists would cease to see well-being as the purview of individuals or specific family units or family types and begin to be concerned with the wholeness of the human family. Our practice would change profoundly. The result would be an approach to daily practice, policy, curricula and research that focuses on the condition of the human family instead of the fragmented approach that has held us back from reaching our potential as powerful transformative change agents on the global stage. Talk about future proofing! Thanks for your attention to my thoughts.

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Biography

Professor Sue LT McGregor, PhD is a Canadian home economist and Director of Graduate Education in the Faculty of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Prior to that, she was a member of the Human Ecology Department for 15 years. Sue's work explores and pushes the boundaries of home economics philosophy and leadership, especially from transdisciplinary, transformative, new sciences, and moral imperatives. She is a member of the IFHE Research Committee, a Kappa Omicron Nu Research Fellow, a board member of the Iowa State FCS doctoral Leadership Academy, and a Board member for the *International Journal of Consumer Studies*. Email: sue.mcgregor@msvu.ca

Home Economics - a Dynamic Tool for Creating a Sustainable Future

A response to the IFHE position statement
Home Economics in the 21st Century

Kaija Turkki, PhD

Introducing my approach

I see the IFHE Position Statement as one tool for home economics professionals to create a sustainable future for our profession and for all individuals who want to be partners in this life long learning process. Producing such documents as a Position Statement is a learning process that has reached its first stage of development of building up our profession in multiple ways. The greatest influence—I hope—could be that as many as possible, both young and senior professionals, colleagues in the East, West, South and North, as well as those working in any subject matter area, would recognise and be aware of the enormous possibilities home economics encompasses in the present world locally, nationally and globally. The thinking that has been created inside our profession fits the needs of our present society perfectly and prepares us for the future. It is up to us whether we really rise to the challenge and use our capabilities to promote our goals. I hope this Position Statement assures us that we have created a knowledge base that directs us to meet the challenges of the future as well. Without hope and clear future goals no field or project can succeed. This Position Statement serves both these purposes.

I see the IFHE Position Statement as a summary of our professional history and its results. It is a history of the relationships between individuals, family, community and society. This summary does not indicate that we have collected all our achievements into one pile, but reflects efforts to see what is behind the visible facts, finding the common threads and the glue between separate units and essential dimensions we have discovered. This summary can be regarded as our common wisdom. The value of our past achievements lies greatly in noticing and understanding the combining ideas and forces that keep the processes moving and results in something new again and again. It also covers the ability to see the relation between the whole and the single parts, including all small actions of diverse persons and groups. The processes studied are not linear, but mainly zigzag back and forth, and their borders are not strictly defined but in constant movement. This reminds us of the changing character of everyday life and of home economics as a human science and field. This does not prevent us from viewing ourselves as specialists of some subject area (such as foods, housing or textiles), but it reminds us of the qualities of life. Our history proves that we are a life supporting profession, which is why we have to strive to understand the realities of life, the qualities of human beings and to keep our focus on these challenging premises. If we know our roots and understand the fundamentals, we can base our future actions on solid grounds.

I see the IFHE Position Statement as one example of the willingness to listen to others, to learn from others and to build a common vision. It relies on the idea that worldwide communication and networking is possible and can have promising results showing the power of crossing borders for new perspectives. It is amazing how easily people from opposite ends

of the world from different educational structures can find common understanding if there is a common target and will. With this connection it is important to remind ourselves of several key resources and characteristics that home economics professionals possess and have used efficiently from the very beginning, such as communicating, building networks and new links, planning and organizing new things or events, creating communities and being promoters for various social and cultural innovations on small and large scales. We have always been action orientated, and it is human action and behaviour that counts in all sectors and levels of our society from the personal level to the highest political institutions. Being open to new ideas and working to improve the necessities of life are resources that always have a purpose.

Finding one's way and choosing one's directions

I have been involved as a member of the Think Tank Committee in this process, which allows me to look at the paper both from the inside and the outside. I have noticed how important it is to take an outsider's view, especially so for professionals in fields that base their knowledge on multidisciplinary grounds or work in broad subject areas as we do. The outsider's view can also be regarded as an impetus for learning new things.

My response reflects various reactions based on my experiences. After this two– to three– year process I am very convinced how important it is for all professionals to stop and to take a look at one's own way of thinking and acting. As a university educator my special interest is to support those younger professionals who are still discovering how to practice home economics. It has been so rewarding to receive genuine feedback from our own students in Finland and students from abroad, many of whom I have not personally met. Some students get the point very easily and start to form their own ideas and make action plans. For some students finding their approach seems to be much more difficult, and they need a different kind of support to go ahead. The same happens with senior professionals. We need facilitating methods and approaches on how to start rethinking and reframing our profession.

This is my story, and after telling this story it will still remain my story. However, I hope many of you can find something similar that pushes you ahead in your own journey. There are many ways to reach the goals. A story is always a result of a process which has both a history and a future, but this story does not follow a timeline. The starting year for my story is 1988, to which I will return later.

The title of my response is nearly the same as I used in my keynote presentation in South Africa in July of 2006. I want to recall it because it is one of those international gatherings that has made a great impression on me because of the holistic nature of the experiences I had during that two-week journey, which included the SAAFECs (South African Association of Family Ecology and Human Science) Conference and the IFHE Council Meeting. The discussion around the first draft of this Position Statement was held during the Council, and we received the first reactions outside the group. All the comments were encouraging. Also, the quality of the conference presentations had a great influence on me. They were quite different in their content and emphasis from my earlier experiences, but they were also very much in line with my thinking. I noticed that the society was very much present not only in the facts but in the feelings as well. The research presentations were stories of people's lives and their living

conditions, bringing to mind their history and focusing on the future. I had experienced something new and received much food for thought.

I have chosen some citations from the Position Statement that are very meaningful to me, but I want to emphasise that this Position Statement should be studied and evaluated as one whole document without critiquing separate sentences or paragraphs. The whole is more than the sum of its parts, and it is important to read the introductory part and the preamble carefully. Any paragraph or even sentence might be meaningful for others in certain situations or contexts. This paper is - as stated - an organic document with the intention of ongoing revision. I propose that this challenge be included in the action plan of IFHE bodies and that further it should be discussed by all those bodies that educate young professionals or make decisions for future research and study programs. If the message of our Position Statement remains unclear to any professionals, that should be addressed as well.

Discovering the history

I would say that the most important issue in my professional life has been to discover the history of home economics that was not present in my university education in the 1970s. In my case I believe that to discover its national and international history within a short period of time has been a lucky coincidence. In 1988 I participated in the IFHE Minneapolis Congress and was the first person to hold the position of acting professor in home economics related to teacher education in Finland. My main duty was to establish a new university major entitled home economics. The national and international histories are entwined, and it has been relatively easy to see the key trends and connections between the countries. Surprisingly, a similar discussion has been taking place on an international level and in Finland from the very early stages. I truly revere those documents produced around the turn of the twentieth century. The definitions set forth are brilliant, and the links between the profession and society are clearly stated. I am grateful to all the international pioneers in various countries, and I am also grateful to my earlier Finnish colleagues and especially Professor Sysiharju and her team, who published a historical research based on the 100 years of history of home economics teacher education in Helsinki (Sysiharju 1995). We use it with our first year students in their introductory course to home economics. Year after year many students fall in love with the contents of that book. I am proud of the history of my country and the IFHE is part of that history (Ryynänen 2007).

This Position Statement has been released at a time when many historical documents are being published inside our Federation, by several member organizations, some countries, universities and so on. In this connection I want to point out one achievement, the History Archives at Cornell University (www.aafcs.org/cornell.html) which celebrated its opening last October. Our American colleagues have done a great service not only for themselves but also for professionals and researchers around the world, making huge amounts of historical documents available electronically. Please visit the website—you will be rewarded.

Relating

Relating is one of my favourite concepts and is very meaningful for home economics. To demonstrate this I want to recall some details from our history. Many international

publications have cited a definition from 1902 as the first in a higher educational context. Whether or not it is the first, it only matters that it introduces home economics as an ecological framework and points out the importance of relations. According to this definition,

“Home economics in its most comprehensive sense is the study of laws, conditions, principles, and ideals which are concerned on the one hand with man’s immediate physical environment and on the other hand with his nature as a social being, and is the study especially of the relation between these two factors” (Horn 1981).

It seems to me that we have taken the first parts of this definition very seriously, but have not given enough attention to the relations specially emphasised in the last phrase. Now it is time to recall our resources and abilities in building relations as one key competence. Relations is a very multisided concept with many meanings. There are relations between people, between things, between nations, cultures or countries, between different parts of our body or elements of nature. Behind these relations there are various processes that keep life going. The more competent we are in understanding those relations and the continuous changes within them, the better picture we have of the situation as a whole. Relating something to something else means a new combination, it calls for new actions and results in new connections. How we relate human beings to different environments defines many of our competences and qualities of life. Our future expertise relies greatly on our capability to outline those relations and to create actions supporting them. The basis for an ecological framework is in the relations between a human and the environment and in striving to figure out the whole and to keep life in balance. Human ecological thinking, according to many home economists, has always regarded natural, cultural and socioeconomic environments as meaningful elements which make up the whole. This is one of the key issues and strengths in our field. From the point of view of relations, this opens up huge challenges for research on the qualities of those relations shaping our world and influencing us and our broader environment.

These ideas are clearly present in this Position Statement, both implicitly or implied. The paper challenges us to be aware of them and to continue our capacity building as communicators, networkers, bridge builders, integrators, investigators, innovators, facilitators and educators. These roles, together with any subject area specialty or combination, greatly serve our future and lay a solid foundation for the profession.

Building the whole

Building the whole has been mentioned several times in this response, and it refers to the idea of holism. Families and households are whole units with various interrelated parts. If one member is sick, that influences other members and affects resource use. The same metaphor can refer to a person or even the globe in aiming for a sustainable future. Our everyday life is full of examples like this. The scale may be small or large, but the rules to establish the whole remain the same. The whole is more than the sum of its parts has been a much cited statement over the centuries. The thought originates in Greek philosophy, announced by Aristotle in *Metaphysics*.

Holism argues that the properties of a given system (for example, biological, social, mental, economic, linguistic.) cannot be determined or explained by the sum of its component parts alone. Instead, the system as a whole determines in an important way how the parts function. To keep the whole as a whole requires some special knowledge of how to deal with the whole. We do have that knowledge inside our profession as a huge part of our practices are based on this kind of knowledge creation. It is time to ask whether we recognise this knowledge and how we value it.

The Position Statement informs us, 'The capacity to draw from such disciplinary diversity is a strength of the profession, allowing for the development of specific interpretations of the field, as relevant to the context.' I fully agree. This is a very important statement about our profession, and we have to ask ourselves how well our study programs, school curricula, research agendas and higher education structures support this quality. I hope we are not blind to those critical items that in fact form the very basis of our whole identity. In order to utilise the full capacity of our profession, some changes are necessary in our thinking. Many of those regard our disciplinary basis and paradigm shifts.

This Position Statement demonstrates complementary viewpoints and alternative directions, and creates various tools and frameworks to develop this understanding further. Many of these relate somehow to a systemic approach and ask for systemic thinking that combines understanding the whole, being sensitive to various feedback and believing that some new emerging issues may also result. This kind of dynamic is present in our human ecological heritage, but unfortunately is too often underestimated. I regard systemic knowledge as one key competence in our present and future worlds. We may not have recognised how well, for example, the idea of systems intelligence, which is highly appreciated in connection with innovative work communities or teams, corresponds to those ideas developed inside our field. By looking at how it is defined, we may notice some similarities to our own theoretical grounds and approaches.

According to Hämäläinen and Saarinen (2004), systems intelligence is a basic form of intelligent behaviour. It can be counted as a philosophy of life based on situational awareness, common sense, a way out of egocentricity and the goal of achievements reachable by common efforts. It accounts for the complexity of the whole. Hämäläinen and Saarinen emphasise that these qualities will be fundamental elements of expertise in knowledge intensive societies.

Systems intelligence recalls human action that connects sensitivity about a systemic environment with systems thinking, thus spurring a person's problem-solving capacities and invoking performance and productivity in everyday situations. These processes are very complex in their nature, and we can through our research and teaching make them visible. Doing this is a question about sensitivity to the situation and the ability to see relations and to take action in relying on our senses and inner wisdom. It is a question of combining different kinds of knowledge, both individual and collective. It invites us to participate in inter— and transdisciplinary inquiry.

By examining the whole, we can point out connections to many structural issues that give us our identity and place us in certain categories. In the 100-year history of our field, one of the key discussions has been the division between professionals who are either specialists or generalists. This division has structured our university education and has had an influence on the IFHE and many other important bodies. This is one of those examples that largely originates from outside the field, and that has been a powerful guideline without understanding all principles behind it. I believe that many dualistic classifications are too limited for our purposes, and we should get rid of many of them or find some alternative ways of thinking.

Knowing others and respecting diversity

Home economists are not the only ones to work for families and consumers or to be interested in food, housing, child development, parenting, economics, textiles and design. This brings us to the question of how well we are known by others and how much they appreciate our expertise. Having a multidisciplinary background inside our profession challenge us to develop our understanding of new perspectives and the viewpoints of others. This also demands that we are constantly interested and open to new things, as the Position Statement points out. Knowing our own strengths, respecting diversity and relying on a holistic way of producing knowledge and creating new actions will lead us towards a sustainable future. This also supports the mission announced by our Federation.

The paper emphasises that home economics as a profession is changing all the time. Our families and societies are in turbulence, and our educational structures and other professions or disciplines are changing as well. But it is also important to know and discuss the issues that remain the same. Permanence and continuity have central roles to play in structuring the values and processes needed for well-being that Home Economics has underlined from the very beginning. Behind permanence and continuity there are several moral principles or other human commitments that form the basis for our profession's promotion of equality, social coherence and human rights. Our core task is to relate these issues to the dynamics necessary for development and progress. The dynamic character of our field can easily be transferred to new situations, and this is our strength. Our capacity in relating, linking, communicating etc. can put us in a unique position. We might have that missing piece of knowledge that makes the project functional or brings together diverse opinions. This can happen in educational or research settings, in community building, around family or consumer services or in striving for family-work balance. The path is not easy, but it achieves the goals that our profession has had for more than a hundred years. One of our achievements is that today and hopefully also tomorrow, more and more other groups and professionals share the same goals. The world is calling for this kind of knowing. Home economics professionals can be regarded as pioneers in various matters. Sustainability is one, usability another, and social innovations may be counted as well. All these can be regarded as trends in the present discourse, and many other professionals in other sciences or arts introduce themselves as experts in these areas. There are several research centres and diverse networks on the Internet promoting these themes. It is sad to notice that few professionals from our field have joined those forums.

As a part of knowing others, it is useful to ask ourselves if we know each other or respect and support our own colleagues. You can find several examples of negative criticism towards

earlier research without evidence. It also happens quite often that many researchers prefer to make citations from other fields of sciences, but are unable or unwilling to make reference to home economics research. This may have some unexpected consequences, such as the difficulty of getting home economics journals included in the citation indices used to calculate the impact factors to which the scientific world looks (McGregor 2007). Without going into the problems with these measurements, I just wish to remind us of the practices or working cultures that we may have created but have never discussed thoroughly. I hope that this Position Statement calls us to be critical towards our own work as well. We can learn from other fields, but we should not copy practices that do not support our final goals.

Working for global responsibility and sustainable vision

I would like to quote Eleanore Vaines's interpretation of the diverse worldviews our professionals may have (Vaines 1997, 2004). Introducing the family perspective on everyday life, she proposes that we be familiar with a motto such as "The World is our Home" or "The World is an intimately interrelated organic whole—our Home". It is possible to believe in these and to plan your personal and professional endeavours according to these metaphors.

IFHE is a forum for global networking and has had a great impact on international and global levels, as pointed out in the Position Statement and reported by various historical documents. It has been greatly appreciated, and much more could be added. I want to point out the work our professionals have done for decades in developing countries to support education, human rights, nutrition, the women's movement and so on. You may want to collect a special list based on the achievements of your institute or country. This is also the area where huge challenges are waiting for us and our knowing today and tomorrow.

However, as a whole my concern is that until now our activities have to a great deal been based on the local interests without real global awareness. I argue that we should use much more of our capacity to reach the global context. For example, there are quite few research on global education or research using global frameworks. We use international research and data, and sometimes we even collect data around the world, but this does not always mean that the global dimension is included. We have great opportunities to strengthen our longstanding commitments to the United Nations and other international organizations. Many of their initiatives, such as Education for All, the UN Millennium Goals and the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development are calling us.

Each region certainly has its own emphasis. In Europe, at the EU level, many decisions have been made to promote different aspects of Global Education, including multicultural and intercultural education, sustainable development, human rights, peace education, equality, cultural diversity and citizenship (Maastricht, 2002). Following these initiatives, the Finnish Ministry of Education has launched the forum Education for Global Responsibility (Kaivola & Melen-Paaso 2007), which takes a critical look at various phenomena and concepts and is trying to build sustainable systems and a sustainable future. This forum is addressed specially for teacher education and research.

I am impressed with the treasure we have in our theoretical grounds and professional practices. It is a great privilege for our field and profession that our ecological heritage was

founded—partly due to the energy crisis and the rise of the ecological movement—in the 1960s. Present discussion on climate change makes this message even stronger. This is one example where our predecessors have been far ahead of their time. They had both a future vision and the tools to approach it. This also reminds us of the necessity to recall our history. A sustainability paradigm together with a knowledge base of resource management and human qualities accompany us in this exciting and meaningful journey.

The process must go on

During the Jubilee Year 2008, it is time to celebrate our achievements. This year provides us with plenty of new publications, new research and other achievements to bolster our discussion and help us make new plans. I invite you to use these possibilities to introduce this material to those who do not know our field but might be valuable partners tomorrow.

The IFHE can facilitate our work in various manners, but most final results are dependent on how well we influence our working environment on local and personal levels. I encourage you to be aware of what is going on at the strategy level in your institute, university or country. It is that thinking, planning and decision making that directs our future. How well we are aware of that discussion and how well our voice and our contributions are recognised are very important. Our actions and achievements are not recognised if we are not present at various forums and levels and if we don't see our relations to others. This is the direction in which the Position Statement leads us.

I see the Position Statement largely as a discussion between society, knowledge-building bodies such as universities and the profession. Our success in the future is greatly dependent on how well we succeed in our interaction between these three forums. We (our profession) certainly are part of society and knowledge-building bodies, but if we are not sensitive enough to their developments and if our voice is not recognised, our profession cannot flourish. If we have no influence on education policy, it might be that our ideas are not implemented. Home economics is a very society-related profession, and one of our capabilities must be to learn to read society and to be able to empower ourselves to work at different forums and levels of society.

Developing one's ability to relate your own work to the strategy level can be very rewarding. You may notice that many of the small issues or emphases you are working with every day are just those that are discussed at policy level too. The language might be different, but the goals come very near to ours. When I look at the discussion going on at the European Union level or in my country, it is so easy to find many examples. The same goes for education and research policies. There are many important initiatives that we can bring to our knowledge base as valuable resources.

In higher education the most important question is what our research is like and what the grounds are for our study programmes. In Finland these questions have been focused on very much during last 15 years. We have noticed that it is valuable to do research on the fundamentals of home economics and to push our researchers to ask the very basic questions on family and everyday life based on different philosophical, theoretical and methodological grounds. The international research discussion with various conferences, workshops and

publications has been an essential part of this development process (Turkki 1999; NCRC 2002; Rauma et al. 2006; Tuomi-Gröhn 2008). At the university level all our research is assessed regularly by international reviewers. These are the forums in which we can relate our research to that of others and bring our special topics and approaches to the public discussion. It is also a way to renew our knowledge base. By asking new kinds of research questions, we can create new thinking and renew our practices.

This response is largely based on my research project entitled Home Economics as a Discipline and Science (Turkki 2007). I have had the pleasure of sharing my thinking with colleagues coming from different countries and backgrounds. It has been a great learning experience. I have noticed how valuable it is to produce various frameworks to figure out the essential elements of our broad knowledge base. These frameworks seem to be very helpful in the international discussion because frameworks mainly deal with the basic phenomena, processes and structures, and not the subject or culturally sensitive contents as such. The purpose of frameworks is to reveal the relations and figure out the wholes.

We have the future—we are our future

The future has always attracted people. It can be scary; it can be inspiring; it can be rewarding. To me, home economics is a future profession, and I see the future as a great innovator and an object for investments (Turkki 2004, 2005). The future challenges us to build on our historical knowledge base and achievements. Without history, we do not have a future. Moreover, most young people are attracted by the future. Many of them want to be active builders of their future, and they are able to use the tools as the Internet, discussion forums, new communities of practice and so on. Future thinking should have a place at the school level and at university study programs. Within home economics it could be regarded as one kind of specialization. We can educate ourselves as future specialists based on our integrated body of knowledge.

I agree with the closing section of the Position Statement that calls future proofing the Home Economics profession and the Federation a challenging task but one which is necessary to ensure a sustainable vision both for the profession and individual members.

Closing comments

This process has reminded me several times that we need ethical rules or codes at the international level. I know that some professional associations have created and published their own (such as AAFCS). Under the IFHE we certainly have adopted some ethical codes, as pointed out in the Position Statement, but it might be time to make them visible and bring into the discussion. More clearer ethical awareness could strengthen our image as a human science and human profession which the Position Statement affirms. Ethical codes together with the moral principles our profession has committed ourselves to a promising and sustainable future. The process used in establishing this Position Statement may be usable in developing ethical codes. It certainly is an area that needs worldwide dialogue.

Finally I want to thank the IFHE for this initiative and especially our leader Donna Pendergast for facilitating this process. I also thank my fellow members of the team for demonstrating

the diversity of our field and outlined the huge challenges that face us. I hope that as many as possible take this Position Statement as one tool to raise a discussion with students and colleagues, or perhaps to initiate some similar processes focused on your own organization or country. By sharing this paper with students you may allow them to have the feeling of being an active part of a great international community where they also have a central role to play and can show themselves to be as expert novices, good at learning new things. Lifelong learning has been and will remain our mainstream strategy.

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Biography

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Choosing our future: Ideologies matter in the home economics profession

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Abstract

This paper explores the possibility of conceptualizing future home economics practice with a focus on the human condition. It is our belief that home economics brings much that is unique to the work of advancing the human condition. In order to consider this possibility, we argue that concentrating on underlying ideologies and paradigms that underpin professional practice is where professionals should direct their energy. To that end, we: (a) briefly discuss the concept of the human condition, (b) set out the relationship between ideologies and paradigms, (c) provide an overview of selected prevailing and emergent ideologies and paradigms, and then (d) position home economics practice within this dynamic paradigmatic context. This paper, crafted through a cooperative framework, builds on work shared with aligned fields and disciplines. Special attention is given to practical perennial problems, values reasoning, three systems of action and a pluri-science approach for enlightened home economics practice that appreciates the power of ideologies.

Introduction

In 2004, a small group of home economics colleagues interested in exploring the intellectual foundation of home economics posted an electronic paper they collaboratively developed at the Kappa Omicron Nu (KON) Human Sciences Working Paper series titled *A satire: Confessions of recovering home economists* (McGregor et al., 2004). The paper discussed implications of grounding our practice too heavily in the expert, how-to, quick-fix technical approach. In this current paper, we provide a possibility for re/conceptualizing enlightened practice that is removed from this perspective and instead focuses on the human condition, thereby creating an opportunity for practices that feature justice, freedom, security, peace, non-violence, prosperity, opportunities, potential, and human rights with accountability.

In order to make this ideological shift, it is necessary to reflect on ideological origins. An ideological conundrum emerged during the formative years of our profession in the 1900s (Pendergast, 2001; Pendergast & McGregor, 2007). At the Lake Placid Conferences in New York State, there were two camps of people trying to articulate a path for our profession to follow. There were those who wanted to take a scientific, capitalistic road, contrasted with those who wanted our profession to walk a sustainable, people-focussed path - two very different ideologies. The former camp won, and our profession unfolded, practising within scientific, empirical and capitalistic ideologies, with attendant paradigms (Brown, 1993). McGregor et al. (2004) argue that these winning ideologies no longer serve individuals and

families in the present human condition. If we want to reduce the impact of certain ideologies, and advance the influence of others, we have to understand those impacts and use this understanding to reframe our practice.

The human condition

Improving the human condition is a different end result than our profession’s traditional aim of enhancing well-being and quality of life. McGregor and Goldsmith (1998) discuss our profession’s traditional, descriptive understanding of the concepts of well-being and quality of life, that: standard of living reflects actual reality; quality of life is one's perception of and satisfaction with that reality; and well-being comprises the indicators of this reality. Brown (1993) asserts that our profession sees well-being as a collection of separate dimensions that can describe people’s conditions, and makes the case for a normative approach that would have us interpret those conditions using concepts such as justice, equity, fairness, freedom, human rights, human security, resilient communities, participation, power, responsibility, interests (see Table 1).

Table 1 Descriptive versus normative approach to practice

Descriptive dimensions of well-being and quality of life, describe “what is”	Universal normative principles or values that help us think about “what ought to be” for the human condition
<p>Economic—the degree to which individuals and families have economic adequacy or security</p> <p>Physical—concern with or preoccupation with the body and its needs plus maintaining the integrity of the human body by protecting it and providing sustenance</p> <p>Social—the social space of the family as a group, the social needs of the individual played out daily in interactions via interpersonal relationships within the family group and with the larger community, including the workplace</p> <p>Emotional—the mental status or inner space of individual family members versus the group as a whole</p> <p>Environmental—concern for our role in the earth's diminishing resources</p> <p>Political autonomy—family and individual's internal sense of power and autonomy based on moral and ethical freedom, concern for the welfare of the community and nation</p> <p>Spiritual—captures a layer of well-being, a sense of insight and ethereal, intangible evolution not readily imparted by either social or psychological well-being as they are conventionally defined</p>	<p>justice</p> <p>equity</p> <p>fairness</p> <p>peace</p> <p>freedom (from and to do)</p> <p>equality</p> <p>human rights</p> <p>human security</p> <p>resilient communities</p> <p>participation</p> <p>power</p> <p>responsibility</p> <p>interests</p> <p>sustainability</p> <p>solidarity</p> <p>non-violence</p> <p>inclusion</p> <p>diversity</p> <p>democracy</p> <p>tolerance and acceptance</p> <p>participation and involvement</p>

Source: Extrapolated from McGregor & Goldsmith, 1998 and Brown, 1993

The actions of people create the conditions within which people live their lives. The human condition shows how people came to be in their current situation, what that looks like, and what it could look like in the future (Arendt, 1958). Best viewed through the lenses of justice, security, freedom and peace, this assumption moves far beyond the descriptive stance conventionally adopted in home economics, taking us to a more normative perspective. What could the human condition be like if we want to ensure human betterment, empowerment, sustainability, and the peaceful advancement and potential of the human race, globally? Addressing this question could be a new focus of home economics, provided we are open to examining the ideological and paradigmatic underpinnings of our practice.

If we accept Griffith's (2003) assumption that the predicaments humans face stem from the reality they create, then understanding the beliefs, values and assumptions behind human actions brings us closer to appreciating how we can experience, at the same time, the indifferent and aggressive side of human nature and our potential for compassion, love and cooperation. Paradigms and ideologies help explain how humans can be capable both of immense sensitivity, selflessness and inclusiveness and also of greed, hatred, prejudice, competition, and selfishness. In many parts of the world, the human condition is characterised by suffering, war, oppression, poverty, vain striving, disappointment, ignorance, disconnectedness, disillusion, and a crippling proliferation of idolatry (Taylor, 1992; Wilson, 1991). However, there is also a powerful, global movement that characterizes the human condition as one of potential, one of: hope, passion, tenderness, solidarity, respect, sensuality, gentleness, forgiveness, love, faith, care, family, community, collaboration, and environmental stewardship.

Primer on ideologies and paradigms

People tend to resist new ideas because they have favoured ways of viewing the world, and of making sense of what happens to them. These favoured views encompass ideologies and paradigms.

Ideologies

In current times, ideologies are understood to be the ruling ideas of the times; hence, they merit careful study and scrutiny. They are prescriptions for a preferred way to live our lives (Dillman, 2000; Kuhn, 1962). This gives ideologies a lot of power, and it gives people who control the propagation of ideologies even more capacity to influence and control society. Although there are political, economic, epistemological and social ideologies (Rejai, 2003), our discussion refers to ideology as a concept in social thought and comes with assumptions about what is worthy of belief and attention, what is accepted as true, and what is valued. Ideologies comprise two dimensions: (a) how society should work, and (b) the rules or blueprint most appropriate to achieving this ideal arrangement (Johnson, 2005). Successful ideologies become so ordinary that they are invisible, unquestioned. They are successful because they: (a) explain people's place in nature, society and history; (b) contain beliefs and values that people accept as true and worthy; (c) are plausible enough to mesh with common sense understandings of facts about social reality; and, (d) are useful in serving the needs and interests of those in power, and useful in justifying that they stay in power (Ady, 2000; Duerst-Lahti, 1998). One such success story is that of patriarchy. Contemporary society

works within the overarching ideology of patriarchy. This ideology, and the impact it has had on the development of home economics over the past one hundred years, has been explored in depth by Pendergast and McGregor (2007). They urge the home economics profession to refuse compliance with this dominant ideology.

Paradigms

While ideologies provide beliefs, assumptions of truth and values (Chawla, 2004; Zube, 2002), paradigms are self-contained systems of meanings within which everything is explained, or sometimes ignored. Paradigms constitute a way of viewing reality that is meaningful for the community sharing the beliefs of their ideologies (Heath, 2003). Paradigms are familiar thought patterns; they provide structure, dependability and define who we are. Paradigms provide the lens through which people make sense of their world, by giving meaning to lived experiences within the prevailing values and belief systems of ideologies. Some liken paradigms to watchtowers, from which people observe life within the ideological camps (Zube). Figure 1 shares a brief synopsis of family life lived within the neoliberal ideological camp and attendant paradigms. It is a powerful example of the insidiousness of ideologies.

Figure 1 - Family life lived within the neoliberal ideology

The neoliberal ideology values decentralization, privatization, deregulation, and individualism (currently operating in tandem with the ideology of capitalism). The industrial and materialistic paradigms assign meaning to profit, growth, production, and wealth as a means to progress, all in conjunction with another paradigm, mass consumerism. Through the values of this ideology, people do not see any problems from these paradigms when they observe cutbacks to social services, education and health. They watch what is going on, and conclude that things are right, and as they should be. They readily accept policy makers' explanations that it is more important to strengthen the economy than to strengthen families. They accept the belief that families are valued only as producers and consumers. They support government initiatives to make economies stronger so there are jobs for the workers, goods and services for consumers to buy, and help to be efficient in these processes.

People standing in their observation tower happily assign positive meaning to neo-liberal values of profit, success, wealth, materialism, production, consumption, efficiency and competition. Hence, because everyone is supposed to be out for oneself, people making sense of this world through attendant paradigms tend to argue against any policy that props people up with welfare, unemployment insurance, and free public education and health care. Because this ideology assumes that individuals should be able to take care of themselves, thought patterns held by people observing this reality enable them to conclude that such support is not needed; rather, if people cannot succeed, they have failed, and deserve what they get (McGregor, 2001).

Pendergast and McGregor (2007) ask home economists to face a change in ideologies and paradigms, acknowledging that it can be very unsettling. People move through paradigmatic

change slowly, progressing through three predictable stages: denial, stretching things to fit and, finally, letting go of the familiar way of practicing. This most difficult part of a paradigm shift requires letting go of one trapeze and swinging through the air almost in free-fall before grasping the next, a maneuver requiring bravery and determination (Adams, 2000). The next section sets out our arguments for why ideologies matter in home economics and offers suggestions for what home economists can do to privilege the human condition, if they accept this message.

Ideologies and paradigms matter in home economics

It is our argument that the home economics profession historically became too comfortable viewing the world through the Newtonian, empirical, positivistic paradigms - something our profession calls technical practice (Brown, 1993). This has led to a comfortable acceptance and familiarity with this technical approach at a time when families and communities need more from us. Our level of comfort with technical practice would not be an issue, except that the ruling ideas of times past led to policies and elite actions that repressed intellectual challenges related to addressing or improving the human condition. If our present professional practice and understanding espouses the guidance of a mission of empowerment, efficacy, and enlightenment, its members can no longer cling to the way they have been making sense of the world. We can no longer condone values, assumptions and beliefs of ideologies that put money, profit and economic growth before human and social development, empowerment, sustainability, and the ecosystem (McGregor et al., 2004).

Table 2 and Table 3 contrast the dominant ideologies and attendant paradigms, respectively, with the emergent, contending ideologies and paradigms. The information contained in these tables was drawn from several compelling documents (see Daly, 1996; Elgin & LeDrew, 1997; Engberg, 1990; Friends of the Earth, 2003; Hines, 2000; International Forum on Globalization, 2003; Korten, 1998; McGregor, 2001, 2006; Merryfield, 2001; Shanahan & Carlsson-Kanyama, 2005; Wheatley, 1999). Our analysis of the information in Tables 2 and 3 helps us present the case that awareness of dominant and emerging ideologies and paradigms gives home economists the potential to change and to practice differently. The right column in each table suggests the need for particular philosophies, valued ends, theoretical orientations, research methodologies and analytical frameworks, if our profession is to accept this great challenge of working for the human condition.

Drawing on past practice

As we strive to practice while standing in the emergent camp (the right columns), the home economics profession has a rich heritage from which to draw. Over the years, scholars in home economics have developed unique ideas to inform their practice. As well, they have drawn ideas from others and adapted them to our stated mission of optimizing and enhancing the quality of life and well-being of individuals and families. There are also aspects of scholarship and practice in allied disciplines that home economists can turn to in a collaboration to conceptualize enlightened practice focused on the human condition. Table 4 is a preliminary step in our attempt to model these ideas to facilitate future discussion. This combination of typologies, traits, approaches, perspectives, theories, and intellectual processes is conducive to practicing with our feet planted in both camps. Agreement about

Table 2 Comparison of dominant and emergent ideologies

Dominant ideologies	Contending and emergent ideologies
Patriarchy	Humanist, feminist
Neo-liberalism	Sustainable people-focused networks
Capitalism	Mindful markets e.g., feminist, ecological & behavioral economics
Globalization	Localization
Conservatism	Participatory democracy
Christianity	All world religions
Social Darwinism (evolutionism)	Equality, diversity, pluralism, egalitarianism

Table 3 Comparison of dominant and emergent paradigms

Prevailing paradigms	Contending & Emergent paradigms
Industrial & materialistic	Reflective & living systems
Mechanistic	Holistic & life-centered
Newtonian (linear, disconnected, fragmented)	New sciences (quantum physics, chaos theory) (holistic, connectedness and relatedness)
Positivistic, empiricist, scientific (facts & value neutral)	Post-positivistic, narrative, interpretive, reflexive and other ways of knowing
Reductionist (categories, microanalysis, specializations)	Contextual, holistic dialogue and discourse focuses, critical sciences, collective philosophy
Scarcity/competition	Abundance (plentitude & creativity)
Relativism (quick fix, no absolute truth, deconstructive and popular postmodernism)	Collectivism. Critical, reflective and constructivist (narrative, constructive and liberatory postmodernism)
Mastery over resource management	Stewardship & co-managed sustainability
Transmission & transaction	Transformative
Multi & interdisciplinary	Transdisciplinary
Eurocentric & ethnocentric	World centered & world people centered
Egocentric	Eco-centric (environment & planet focused and harmony with nature and other species)
Control, mastery, efficiency	Emancipatory, empowerment, efficacy
Consumerism & conspicuous consumption	Global citizenship, consumer-citizen and conscious consumption
Materialism, material gain and success & social achievement	Relationships & people focused to develop balance between inner & outer lives

how to order these will emerge from a much richer, profession-wide conversation. As an interim measure, we suggest that, taken together, the ideas in Table 4 have potential to inform ongoing initiatives concerned with the development of common conceptual frameworks (e.g., McGregor & MacCleave, 2007).

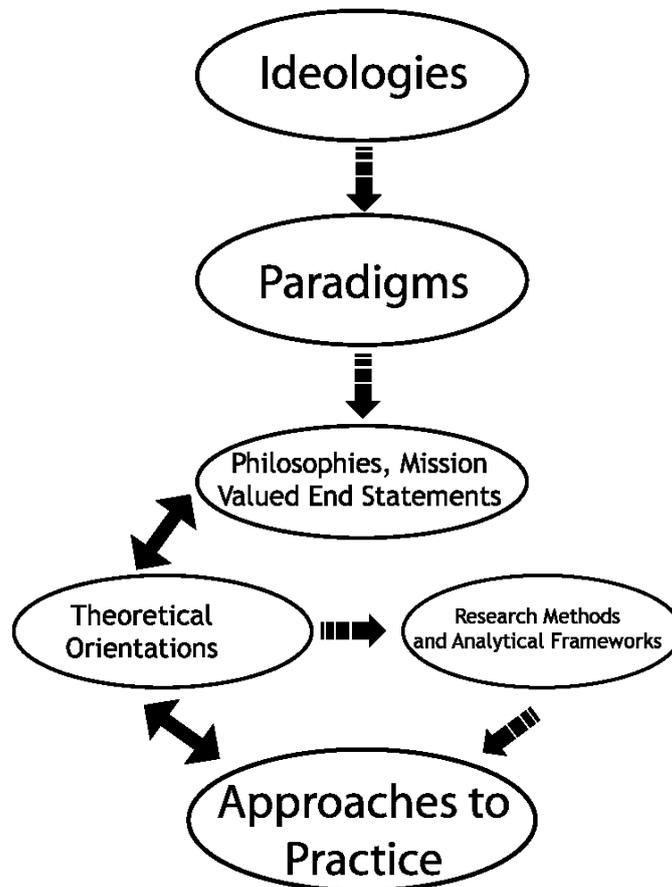
Table 4 Approaches to practice conducive to working within the contending and emerging ideologies and paradigms

Unique to home economics	Adapted by home economics	Shared with allied disciplines
Practical, perennial problem solving approach	Values Reasoning	Transformative learning
Three systems of action	Critical science approach	Transformative leadership
Participatory consumerism	Family is the basic democratic unit	Transdisciplinary inquiry
Focus on everyday life for family and household	Reflective practice	Postmodern understandings
Well-being theory	Family ecosystem theory	Human and social development (augmenting economic development)
Qualities of living concept	Human ecosystem perspective	Consumer citizenship
Philosophical well-being	Global perspective	Knowledge management
Reflective human action theory (drawing on the new sciences)	Quality of life concept	Communities of practice
Typology of home economic types	Inter-disciplinarity, holistic and integrative approach	Critical thinking
Consumerism as structural violence	Systems theory	Participatory action
Whole economy approach	Dialectic approach	Action research
	Social change agent	Sustainability
	Authentic pedagogy	Mentoring
	Life-world approach	Intellectual curiosity
		Post-positivistic theoretical and research approaches
		Participatory production
		Patriarchal influence
		Morality of consumption

Home economics as an expression of emerging ideologies and paradigms

Ideologies produce the paradigms, which, in turn, determine and inform accepted theoretical orientations and perspectives, attendant research methodologies and methods, and analytical frameworks. A profile of home economics practice as an expression of the emerging ideologies and paradigms (the right columns of Table 2 and Table 3, and the common conceptual framework tendered in Table 4) indicates that our professional practice has the potential to remain strong if we are aware of the how ideologies and paradigms shape our practice. Figure 2 represents this idea.

Figure 2 Relationship between ideologies, paradigms and practice



While it is imperative that we gain an understanding of what our practice would entail if we embrace this collection of ideas, it is beyond the scope of this paper to explain all of the ideas in Table 4. We attempt to tease out three particular approaches: the practical perennial problem approach (including value reasoning), the three systems of action approach, and the pluri-science approach, originally tendered by Brown and Paolucci (1979), and shared more recently with the home economics profession by McGregor (2007).

We believe that these three disciplinary standards provide a substantial anchor for our future practice ensuring that it is contextual, emancipatory, empowering, and sustainable, leading to rich potentialities for the human condition. As a caveat, we acknowledge there are competing sources from which we could develop our understanding of home economics practice, which are also beyond the scope of this paper. Succinctly, as we identify in this paper with Western home economists' reliance on Jurgen Habermas's (1970, 1973) critical theory, we honour a different philosophy of home economics emerging in the East (namely Japan) based on a different German philosopher, Otto Bullnow (Fusa, 2004; McGregor, 2005). As well, we recognize that European and Scandinavian home economists also rely on the philosophical works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (phenomenology), Edmund Husserl (life world) and Martin Heidegger (being-in-the-world) (Tuomi-Gröhn, 2008).

Practical, perennial problem approach and values reasoning

Families typically deal with three different types of problems: technical, theoretical and practical. Technical problems involve finding a known way to deal with the issue at hand, "how do I select foods that are nutritionally adequate?" Theoretical problems entail determining a cause and effect relationship, "what effect do poor eating habits have on my physical health?" Practical problems involve judgements about what should be done, decisions that require reasoned, moral thought and action, "am I obligated to be well nourished?" The term practical problem also can refer to the technical problems families face in their everyday lives as they strive to meet material needs (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1992). A practical, moral problem that endures from one generation to another generation is called a perennial problem. With a profound impact on the state of the human condition, at any point in time, these problems are conventionally associated with the perpetual family needs of shelter, nourishment, clothing, resource management and consumption, and personal development and family relations. Although each generation and culture deals with these problems differently, they are enduring problems with which home economists are concerned (Brown & Paolucci, 1979).

Values reasoning is a process that improves individual critical thinking and reasoning abilities to make morally defensible decisions to address perennial practical problems by arriving at reasoned judgements through examination of underlying values, as well as superficial facts. Through this process, home economists rationally decide what should be done to solve a practical, perennial problem by using facts and values (Kieren, Vaines, & Badir, 1984; McGregor, 1996; Vaines, 1980). This approach means we deal with personal, individual and social change. We balance personal interests with general, universal interests, and balance the betterment of our own daily lives with the human betterment of others (Smith, 1993). Because a majority of problems addressed by families are value-laden rather than value-neutral, solutions to practical perennial problems involve value judgements. These decisions may appear as personal choices. But, on a deeper level, they have social consequences; thus, it is imperative to build capacity in this area of practice. The use of values reasoning helps people decide and support their claims and stick to their values and beliefs as they decide what action to take. The resultant decision is more likely to be well informed and free from distortions or bias. This reasoning process incorporates the central tenet of what is fair or just, and this notion is applied before taking any action. Table 5 provides more detail on the steps involved in this important process.

Three systems of action approach

Philosophers in our field developed, and continue to promote, a triad of practice, calling it three systems of action (Brown & Paolucci, 1979; Johnson & Fedje, 1999; McGregor, 2007). They are referring to the three ways of thinking about a practical, perennial problem: (a) technical (coping skills, care giving skills, getting by); (b) interpretative (talking, listening, relationships); and, (c) critical/emancipatory (political and self-power, and social action). The systems of action approach is a way to take ownership of actions and practice from a stance of integrity and accountability. Brown and Paolucci would have practitioners approach each problem situation by engaging in all three ways of thinking about the problem. Instead of presuming that what was done in the past will work again, consideration of situations from

Table 5 Steps for values reasoning process

<p>Steps for values reasoning process</p> <p>The whole values reasoning process is complex, elaborate, exacting, and involves seven basic steps (Eghan & MacCleave, 2006; MacCleave & Eghan, 2005; Mayer, n.d.; Metcalf, 1971). It is intended to help develop both one's (a) inclination and ability to think critically and (b) to reason well about values issues, moral questions and the insidious ideological import (Arcus & Daniels, 1993). These seven stages (and sub-steps) include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying the value question or value claim: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distinguish value claims from factual claims so one does not confuse the two. ▪ Select a value claim or value question to analyze in an area of concern or interest. ▪ Clarify the phenomenon being evaluated to make sure everyone shares the same meaning and understanding (or at least appreciates any discrepancies in meaning sharing). 2. Assembling supporting and refuting factual statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate supporting and refuting statements ▪ Create a Reasons Assembly Chart, with supporting claims on one side and refuting claims on the other 3. Assessing the truth of statements using either or both of empirical and analytical means 4. Clarifying the relevance of facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and pair a value principle(s) with each factual claim to reveal why the factual claim is relevant to the overall value claim ▪ Identify points of view from which each factual claim is made (moral, religious, legal, political, health, economic, beauty, intellectual, prudential) ▪ Reorganize facts in the Reasons Assembly Chart according to points of view to help make the relationship between the values and facts explicit and apparent 5. Making a tentative value judgment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine the information on both sides of the Reasoning Assembly Chart (point of view plus facts and value principles) ▪ Test your judgement by formulating a practical syllogism (reasoning from general to specific) to either accept or reject your original value claim based on any new information. Where relevant, moral points of view take precedence over other views 6. Testing the acceptability of the tentative value judgment by determining if you can accept the value principle (the norm) implied in your judgement by using one or more of these four principle tests (the first two are the most common tests used): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Universal consequences test (What would happen if everyone did what you proposed? How would you like it if everyone did that?) ▪ Role exchange Test (Would you change places with those affected by your decision, based on your proposed solution to the problem?) ▪ New cases test (Would the same decision hold in another case?) ▪ Subsumption Test (Is there a higher principle (stated norm) involved in this judgement? Is the judgement logically related to this higher order principle (it should be)? Is this higher order principle acceptable?) 7. Making a final judgment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accept, reject or modify your value claim based on your test

all three perspectives results in determination of which combination of actions is most appropriate, in full consultation with those affected by the decision (Brown, 1980). Each action will now be discussed.

Practice from a technical approach looks at the how to questions. It involves helping people gain skills necessary to meet material, day-to-day needs and delivering technical skills to enable families to cope with, or survive, the daily impact of change. Technical action is concerned with accomplishing goals using criteria set by an expert. From a technical approach, home economists see families as clients that we serve. This conveys an exchange process wherein the client is dependent on the expert. If clients do not succeed, they can, in turn, blame the expert for bad advice, and the expert can blame them for not following directions. From a technical perspective, our profession often provides families with the technical skills to produce or procure physical goods or services required for the good life, without ever questioning what makes this the preferred way of life, or whether it is sustainable. We tend to do things the way we were taught, the way it's always been done, from fear of being fired, because that is what is in the textbook, because that is what we were told to do, or because everyone does it that way. The technical approach is not bad; however, on its own, it is inadequate for the long-term sustainability of the family as a social institution and for advancement of the human condition.

Interpretative practice enables people to understand, adapt to and conform to change, instead of just coping or getting by. Achieved by helping individuals and families talk and communicate about values, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, feelings, and meanings, this approach helps them understand why they decide to act, or not act, in certain ways. Cooperative dialogue and conversations in the home can help people begin to understand and interpret complex concepts, the values important in their culture, and what others expect of them in their society. Through this action, reasoning and judgement habits are developed and used, where values, attitudes and habits are formed, and where social relationships are learned. When this action in a home is healthy, families are able to work for individual self-development, and successfully prepare members for their roles in society. This approach to practice would entail facilitating a process so that both home economists and family members change inside as they gain more control of their situations. Both would work together to design and redesign things to make events meaningful and challenging, so everyone can realize their potential. The goal would be to facilitate people changing their beliefs about themselves and their near community so they have more positive expectations, and so they can be more creative and autonomous in the future, improving their human condition.

Emancipatory practice involves self-reflection and self-direction to determine what is, how it came about, and what we should be doing, so that communities, societies and the world are better places. Concerned with understanding power dynamics that are oppressive or limiting, and with helping people take moral, ethical actions for the good of all people, with ideas that have been developed unconsciously, are taken for granted, are perpetuated, and left unexamined, emancipatory action helps individuals and families be reflective so they can reach their full potential as citizens in the larger global community. This type of practice is called emancipatory because it frees individuals and families from distorted societal, media and political messages (informed by ideologies). In this unencumbered state, they can engage

in an evaluation process that allows them to judge the adequacy of their environments against their own needs and goals, and vice versa.

The types of problems and questions dealt with using the systems of action approach are messy and complex, with no ready-made answers. They require thinking and personal and professional moral justification. They require that we take into consideration the current context, and not assume that what we did before will work again. They require that those who are affected by the decision are part of the problem solving process (Brown, 1980). In summary, the systems of action approach requires that home economists see themselves as practitioners who:

- are eager to see the complexity of life as opportunity and potential instead of obstacles and scarcity;
- see people as partners rather than as clients;
- help people build capacity for their future success instead of just getting by in a crisis;
- focus on capabilities and assets instead of just needs and deficiencies;
- see strength and goodness in people to facilitate empowerment, instead of dwelling on the negative, exercised by holding power over someone;
- believe that everyone has the inherent capacity to grow and change through diversity rather than seeing people as perpetual victims; and,
- believe that community and context are everything, rather than assuming that people are isolated and left on their own.

In many ways, we can feel good about our early years as a profession, But, we have strayed far from contending ideas of a home economics philosophy that could focus on global, contextual, ecological, and holistic paradigms (Brown, 1993; McGregor et al., 2004). Brown believes that today's generation of home economists could grapple with the reality that emerged from thinking informed by the past ideologies and attendant paradigms (see Table 2 and Table 3). We believe that by valuing and evaluating our past, we can pick out what was good, as well as uncover what led us to an over-reliance on technical practice to the exclusion of the other two approaches to problem solving (interpretative and emancipatory). Using this strategy, home economists would ask themselves, among other things:

- Did I approach each situation as unique and work with the family to see which combination of these three actions we think is best for their specific problem, at this point in time? Or, did I assume that I was the expert with all the information they needed to cope and get by?
- Did I create a situation where they could feel safe talking about the issues or did I just give advice, facts and tips?
- Did I help them create a space where they could find their own inner strength and power so they were motivated to change things so others are better off, or did I just lecture and preach, judge and give out handouts?

A pluri-science approach

To meet the challenges of addressing the human condition via practice informed by emerging ideologies and paradigms, and to truly embrace a systems of action, values reasoning approach to practice, we will have to learn to balance our over-reliance on empirical science with the analytical, critical and interpretative sciences (Brown & Paolucci, 1979; MacCleave, 2005; Vincenti & Smith, 2004), what we are calling a pluri-science approach. Our notion of what counts as knowledge has to expand beyond that of conventional empirical science, wherein only knowledge generated using the scientific method is considered valid, true, and legitimate; findings are not valid if the procedures are biased and informed by values and norms. On the other hand, analytic science seeks to clarify what concepts mean to people, and the language used to communicate this meaning to others. Critical science concerns itself with power and privilege, the abuse of which leads to oppression, exploitation and marginalization. Interpretative science moves us into the realm of human interactions, to understanding motives, reasons or intentions of someone's behaviour. The latter three intellectual approaches to generating a knowledge base from which to solve perennial problems are related to meanings and actions associated with living day-to-day in our social-cultural context. Within a pluri-science stance, home economists will place less importance on technological and scientific human progress and more importance on the context of daily life so they can hear the voices of those involved, examine their own role in this context, and better interpret the significance of all voices - voices that are informed by ideologies and paradigms.

Discussion

Through this paper, we set up a profound challenge for our profession. This is a call for a far-reaching shift in the way we live in the world as home economists. This paradigmatic shift entails reinterpreting ourselves as being expert novices, people good at learning new thinking, new skills, new processes, new content, new understandings, and so on. In that way, we are never experts at one thing, but become expert at reflecting, rethinking, and renewing (Pendergast, 2001, 2006a).

To effect ideological clarification leading to actual shifts in paradigms, two things have to happen. First, the power of those who are strong adherents to the prevailing ideologies needs to be challenged if the old system is to be replaced. Then, a new view of power, that of the contending camp, has to be made legitimate. It is important to note that the adherents holding power depend heavily on intellectuals to help them prescribe the values and assumptions of the dominant ideologies so that they can perpetuate themselves (Chawla, 2004; Pendergast & McGregor, 2007). McGregor et al. (2004) suggest that we were those intellectuals, complicit in perpetuating the neo-liberal market ideology, embracing the capitalistic notion of economics, consumerism and corporate-led globalization without examining the power it has over us, and our families. They believe that we sank into the mire of group-think, that mode of thinking that people engage in when their desire to conform to the consensus of the group (the prevailing ideologues) is so strong that it overrides their ability to appraise alternative courses of action other than the one being discussed (Janis, 1971). To get out of this uncomfortable quicksand, Pendergast and McGregor suggest that we need to take control and proffer new notions of power. We can be those intellectuals leading

the vanguard of change for an enhanced human condition. We can become the new power brokers of a collection of ideologies and paradigms that privilege the human condition over currently privileged institutions such as economics and politics.

Facilitating a new professional self

Ideological revelations and paradigm shifts lead to a new way of thinking on a large scale. Being asked to embrace alternatives to mainstream ideas is hard work for those in any profession (Brown, 1993; Hodelin, 2004). Our inner professional self is the core that we use to evaluate the external world and our place within it (McGregor, 2006). A change or loss of paradigms, and revelations of the power of ideologies, could mean a loss of professional selfhood to some professionals. Being shaken to the core is a very unsettling thought. This intellectual engagement will be daunting, and fraught with resistance, but also will be profoundly liberating and enlightening. The need to shift paradigms and embrace new ideologies is pressing. To secure widespread agreement that we are at a time when professional dialogue is paramount, we need to approach change with tolerance, forgiveness and sensitivity. For new ideologies and paradigms to evolve in our profession, we need to act to:

- nurture the trait of open-mindedness so that people can neutralize their desire to maintain old notions of power (Heath, 2003);
- create an enabling environment of safety and trust;
- respect colleagues as people who have been shaped by, and live by, their beliefs and learning;
- create a non- judgmental environment, one of affirmation of everyone's contribution to this profession-wide shift; and,
- afford an opportunity for individual professionals and small groups to find their own voice while recognizing that all are capable of moving ahead together for the good of humanity.

The technical voice of the phrase "we need to..." is intentional. We need to understand our past, and we need to choose our future in this time of major convergence (Pendergast, 2006a).

Conclusion

We must not forget that home economics is action oriented (Brown, 1980, 1993). Members of our profession are supposed to be socialized to expect that the actions they take with individuals and families will lead to something better (Brown, 1980; Brown & Paolucci, 1979; Vaines & Wilson, 1986). Underwood (2003) explains that understanding ideologies involves studying the existing system of thoughts and ideas in relation to the socio-historical context within which they are situated. Pendergast (2006a,b) observes that local, national and global issues and actions, which impact the human condition, are converging toward a common centre. She suggests that our home economics profession also is at a convergent moment, amenable to the challenges of paradigm shifts and the embrace of new ideologies. A successful convergence needs a focus. In our case, we can take direction from a respected

elder, Margaret Bubolz (1996), who calls for our profession to focus on human betterment by striving to achieve four great values: (a) economic security (wherewithal to live: food, clothing, shelter, basic essentials); (b) justice (equity, fairness in life chances, in resources and possibilities), (c) freedom (freedom from drudgery, unnecessary work, illness - freedom of action and thought); and, (d) peace.

We urge home economists to consider our idea that any practice grounded in the presently dominant ideologies and attendant paradigms is not conducive to long-term sustainability of human kind. Examining ideologies that inform our practice reveals unduly biased, dogmatic and distorted thinking that may have emerged in the form of obstacles to seeing how the world really works (Duurst-Lahti, 1998; Johnson, 2005). From these insights, we can take action to develop and promote an ideological and paradigmatic framework that encourages people to integrate and live in the modern world. This focus on the underlying ideologies and paradigms shaping professional practice is where professionals could direct their energy to take advantage of this convergent moment in our profession.

In conclusion, ideologies and paradigms matter - they can make or break our practice. Through ideological and paradigm awareness, home economics practice can become freer (rather than stem from an unexamined internal compulsion - the satire), more enlightened (informed by an awareness of alternative approaches and influences), and more impartial (rather than influenced by indoctrinated ideological beliefs). Power revealed is power gained. From this free, enlightened and impartial stance, we can remain viable, relevant, and sustainable, and we can turn our professional attention and subsequent action to the human condition. We believe that home economists are destined to engage in this work.

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Home Economics in the 21st Century: A Cross Cultural Comparative Study

Yvonne Dewhurst, Donna Pendergast, PhD

Abstract

A feature of the 2008 International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE) World Congress is the launch of the IFHE Position Statement - Home Economics in the 21st Century (IFHE, 2008) – hereafter referred to as he21C. This paper reports on findings of a survey administered to investigate home economics teachers' level of agreement with the propositions in the Position Paper using extracts taken verbatim as triggers, along with general questions about home economics. The survey was administered to a convenience sample in Scotland and in Australia, with a total of 264 responses. A cross-cultural comparison of findings identifies similarities and differences, revealing a high level of agreement with many of the extracts taken from the Position Paper, both within and across cultures. The overwhelming majority (93%) concur that home economics is multidisciplinary and located within the human sciences, while 96% of respondents agree that home economics prepares individuals for their personal and professional lives. However, several aspects were clearly contentious, including the lack of agreement about the retention of home economics as the preferred name of the field. These findings offer valuable insights into the degree of connection the IFHE Position Paper makes with home economics teacher professionals, potentially highlighting the areas where most focus is required for development work by the IFHE. The clearly contentious issues relate to the stance in he21C to focus on re-branding and repositioning as well as renaming the profession, presenting a strategic challenge for the Institute. The survey findings and subsequent discussion lead to the recommendation that IFHE extend the present research to Africa, Asia and the Americas and use the findings to build professional learning communities in all five (including Europe and the Pacific) IFHE regions to reculture members of the profession, so that the beliefs espoused in he21C are adopted.

Introduction

The International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE) is the only global organisation representing the profession of home economics. With members from 49 countries, IFHE has been developing the field of study, research and practice for the last one hundred years. The position paper—he21C—is a proactive attempt to locate the profession in the contemporary context by serving as a platform, looking ahead to viable and progressive visions of home economics for the twenty-first century and beyond. The product of extensive global consultation with IFHE members and the home economics profession, it is intended to be a

compass for the profession, and to be used to provide defensible arguments for individuals and professional groups in the field.

It is based on agreed beliefs and understandings, and engages some of the key challenges the profession must face. Not surprisingly to those familiar with the history of the field, of these challenges, the name of the profession remains one of the most contentious and potentially divisive issues. Launched at the July 2008 IFHE World Congress, he21C is an initiative aimed at collective reform, creating an opportunity for change in this contemporary field of study.

The views held by home economics teachers about he21C are of interest to ascertain the degree of connection with practitioners in the field, particularly since most people first experience the field of home economics (by whatever name) as a student in school. Furthermore, the teaching profession is currently experiencing a time of challenge and uncertainty, both broadly as a profession (OECD/UN, 2001), and specifically for home economics teachers (Pendergast, 2006). As home economics teachers look to their professional communities for leadership and inspiration, he21C may be a tool that offers cohesion for the home economics professional community. Herein lies the potential for he21C to serve as a catalyst for reculturing, a process which *“creates a climate of trust in which teachers can pool resources, deal with complex and unanticipated problems, and celebrate success”* (Hargreaves, 1995, p.17).

The Context

Home economics as a profession is at what Pendergast (2006) calls a convergent moment, or opportunity phase. This concept of ‘convergent moment’ holds that a number of important societal and historical factors are currently aligning, providing a never before experienced opportunity to re-vision the profession. Pendergast argues that these convergent factors must be seen as a catalyst for major reform - making this a defining moment for the profession. Evidence of this opportunity can be seen in the broader educational reforms sweeping the nations around the globe, as systems and structures take on board and reconsider what makes an appropriate education for participants of the twenty-first century and beyond (OECD/UN, 2001; Anderson, 2004). Within such a climate of change, this study seeks to explore the views of two groups of home economics teachers, both located in contexts where education is under review, and both with a history of home economics being challenged and feted over the last century. The contexts of Scotland and Australia located in two IFHE regions (Europe and the Pacific) were selected because of the origins of the researchers.

Home economics in schooling in Scotland and Australia - the teaching context

In order to gain insights into the working environments of the respondents to the survey, this section outlines the Scottish and Australian contexts, drawing out some key features of each.

According to the key text *Effective Learning and Teaching in Scottish Secondary Schools: Home Economics* (SEED, 1996) home economics plays an important role in shaping societal, human and family betterment. It suggests that the subject is defined by and concerned with *“using and managing human and material resources for the benefits of individuals, the family and society”* (SEED, 1996, p vii). It goes on to identify its contribution for all pupils, in

relation to personal development and life skills, technological, creative and aesthetic capabilities in the home and workplace, leisure pursuits and career opportunities available in home economics, industry, caring and service sectors. The opportunities for interdisciplinary and core inserts such as health and technology are emphasised, as well as the development and integration of specialist knowledge, transferable and specialist craft skills and management capabilities.

Scottish curriculum reform (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, 1997) endorsed this rationale, while reinforcing the key position of the subject in helping to improve the problematic Scottish Diet. The reform organised the learning into three contexts namely: Health and Food Technology, Lifestyle and Consumer Technology and Fashion and Textile Technology. An audit of the courses available (Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) website, 2008) provides illustration for a wide range of courses involving a range of transferable and life skills and knowledge acquisition at different levels within these contexts. Increasing numbers of countries are introducing Technology Education into school curricula (Stein et al., 2000) for reasons of enhanced economic growth (Jarvis & Rennie, 1998) and the development of general educational outcomes such as creativity, problem solving, decision making, independence, critical evaluation and thinking skills (Barlex, 2000). The most recent Scottish curriculum developments (Scottish Executive, 2006) endorse these and other outcomes through four overarching capacities, namely developing students to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. Each curriculum area contributes to these capacities and home economics situated within the areas of health and wellbeing and technologies, is effectively positioned to meet learners' needs within the current social inclusion model for Scottish education.

From a distillation of curricula documentation in the UK, Horne et al., (2003) identified the social/interpersonal, cognitive and manual skills established in home economics, and defined such life or living skills as those of transition, of growing up and finally of independence. In acquiring the majority of these skills, the perceptions of young people surveyed was that they relied heavily on informal channels (mainly mothers), with the influence of formal education being low for a number of skills. Horne et al., suggest that such informal learning prohibits standardisation, may resort to self learning resulting in errors and misunderstandings, and cannot address gaps identified thus impeding the development of young people as empowered consumers. For pupils who had studied home economics, formal learning was more pronounced in the areas of food preparation, food hygiene and nutrition, suggesting that formal education is an optimum channel for the acquisition of living skills.

For the purposes of this comparison, the situation in the state of Queensland in Australia is provided. Home Economics appears in the curriculum for the first time in the Middle Phase Stage 2, typically in Years 8-9/10. In this context, it is often under the umbrella of one of the Key Learning Areas (KLAs), usually Technology or Health and Physical Education, or it may also appear as a separate subject. It is most commonly offered as an elective area of study. *The Home Economics Education Subject Area Syllabus and Guidelines Level 4 to Beyond Level 6* (Queensland Studies Authority, 2005) identifies the focus of home economics as:

... the wellbeing of people within their personal, family, community and work roles. Home economics encourages personal independence, living effectively within the wider society, and promoting preferred futures for self and others in contexts related to food and nutrition, human development and relationships, living environments and textiles (p.3).

In the postcompulsory years, Home Economics is a stand alone, approved subject. According to the *Home Economics Senior Syllabus* (Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (QBSSSS, 2001, p.4), studies in Home Economics aim to develop in students:

- Knowledge and understanding of the diversity of individuals and families, and of the basic needs that underpin their well-being
- Knowledge and understanding of the concepts, principles, processes and practices that inform the fields of study
- Understanding of the range of contexts, perspectives and issues that influence individual and family well-being
- Reasoning processes that are fundamental to critical and effective participation in a range of life roles related to food, textiles and living environments
- Skills and understandings to take informed, practical action that promotes the wellbeing of individuals and families in the contexts of food, textiles and living environments
- Commitment to active, informed and collaborative participation to promote the wellbeing of individuals and families in the context of a socially just and ecologically sustainable environment.

A two-year course of study in Home Economics must draw from the three areas of study: food studies; living environments; and textile studies. Each of the areas of study consists of a core plus electives. The minimum requirements for the two-year course of study are the core areas of study plus one elective from each of two areas of study. The general objectives of the syllabus are expressed in terms of: Knowledge and understanding; Reasoning processes; Practical performance; Attitudes and values (QBSSSS, 2001).

A number of perennial problems plague both Australian and Scottish home economics in schools, such as gender bias; low status; commitment to name. The reasons for these issues have been explored and explained in the home economics literature (see for example Brown, 1993; Pendergast & McGregor, 2007), and are connected symptoms of the ways in which home economics is viewed in education and the wider society. These problems are worth highlighting because they provide insights into the context in which the respondents of this survey work and indirectly provide an argument for the need for the he21C initiative.

Gender bias

Home economics in Australia, Scotland and most parts of the world, remains under the influence of a deeply gendered history, despite endeavours to move it to a more neutral identity (cf. Paechter & Head, 1996; Pendergast, 2001; Thompson, 1992). While much has

been done in schools to tackle gender bias in perceived higher status subject areas, the situation in more marginalised subjects has been less productive, leaving teachers isolated and disempowered in the fight against gendered regimes. Attempts to challenge perceptions and assumptions about home economics have occurred at both the official and the unofficial level. For instance, in the United Kingdom, *The Sex Discrimination Act 1975* made curriculum access, on the basis of being male or female unlawful in schools, while the publication of *Equal Opportunities in Home Economics* (1983) by the Equal Opportunities Commission expressed concern about the acceptance of traditional assumptions, sexist attitudes and values, and the support and tolerance of this by the majority of teachers, parents and pupils. At this time home economics had the widest gender differential of all subjects with the overwhelming majority being female (Attar, 1990). While attempts to make the subject gender free continue, the low proportion of boys at examination level is still evident today. Analysis of Scottish entries for 2000-2007 (SQA website, 2007) confirms male candidate entries decreasing in the area of textiles while averaging around 7% for higher level courses. However, Hospitality courses attract an average of 40% male candidates reflecting a growing commitment by the secondary education sector in meeting vocational aspirations and new curriculum initiatives.

This pattern is repeated in the Australian context. In Queensland for instance, in 2007, 211 males compared to 2684 females studied home economics in the final year of school, a total of 2895 students of 33655, or 8.6% of student enrolments. At the same time, 1413 males and 3564 females were enrolled in hospitality courses, a total of 4977, representing participation by 15% of Year 12 students. The proportion of males to females in hospitality courses is almost 1:3, much higher than the approximately 1:9 for home economics (Queensland Studies Authority, 2007). The effect of the gendered nature of the home economics enrolments is continued low status. The effect of the growth of hospitality, which has a closer gender balance, is of legitimising hospitality and increasing its status in comparison with home economics. Pendergast and Cooper (2003) identified the challenges the shift towards hospitality has created for the home economics profession, given the accelerated rate of implementation and uptake of vocational subjects over the last decade or more, including: increased demand on the physical resource requirements to meet industry standards (i.e. kitchens and other pedagogical spaces being redesigned as commercial sites); administrative issues such as flexibility in timetabling; choices between home economics or hospitality being included on student subject choice lists; the perceptions of home economics and hospitality being confused; and the major issue of the availability of appropriately qualified teachers to deliver it, the assumption being that home economics teachers are capable of this (Pendergast & Cooper, 2003), a particular challenge given there is already a teacher shortage of specialized home economics teachers (Pendergast, Reynolds, & Crane, 2000).

Low status

Low status concerns preoccupied the first (1896) British Association for Home Economics Teachers (Bird, 1993) and the belief externally that home economics is a low status area of knowledge continues today (Riggs, 1995; Pendergast, 2001), often perpetuated by intentional attacks to devalue the field. One notable example of this is the book by Attar (1990) titled: *Wasting Girls' Time: the history and politics of home economics*. This is not a localised trend,

but a global pattern. For instance, in Australia, the Department of Employment, Education and Training (1990, p.1) noted that:

Home economics is a classic example of a subject that has been bedevilled by perception of its relatively low status...it was a subject designed explicitly for girls and taught almost exclusively by women. Its focus was the private rather than the public sphere of activity, and unpaid rather than paid work. Its orientation was more towards the practical rather than the academic.

Low status is incontrovertibly connected to perception and image. Subject department image serves as a metaphor for its activities and values. For home economics, its complexity can be obscured by the overt and visual nature of its learning outcomes. However, if the field of study does not accurately articulate and display its core intentions, others can create an image expressing "value systems which hold allegiance to other fields of study" (Martin, 1998, p 39). Alongside the activities, settings and statements made in school departments, Martin (1998) argues: "[A]n image will also be perpetuated and coloured by historical anecdote, local mythology, animosities from past battles, ideas of pecking orders, assumptions, benign ignorance, ingrained attitudes..." (Martin 1998, p.40).

Name

In 2003 and 2004 the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), a national body in Scotland responsible for the development, accreditation, assessment and certification of qualifications other than degrees, commissioned research in three stages to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of the name 'home economics' (Marr, 2004). In the first stage home economics teachers, pupils studying home economics and careers advisers' views were sought. The findings showed that seven out of ten respondents (and eight out of ten teachers) wished a name change and one that would encompass all of the disciplines. There was also a lack of clarity about the subject focus being 'academic, vocational or practical life skills' (Marr, 2003 p.52). SQA concluded to change the name. Before proceeding to a final name selection, the views of the wider stakeholder community were sought, namely college and university staff where findings mirrored those of the first stage. The most popular words for a new title were food, health, technology, consumer and studies. Using these, the five names were offered for ranking to all previously surveyed stakeholders in the third stage. These were Health and Food Technology, Food and Textile Technology, Consumer Studies, Food, Textile and Consumer Technology and Health and Consumer Studies (the first two being the preferred choices of teachers and the most preferred overall). A change of government followed by the introduction of a major national curriculum initiative has affected the impetus for change and to date the name home economics remains in Scottish schools. It is worthy of note that, while a majority were in favour of a name change, there were strong and conflicting views and concerns about the names put forward.

Explaining these problems

As well as stereotypical views, outmoded prejudices and assumptions, the current position of home economics also stems from a number of constraining ideologies, which have hindered its progress. As Pendergast and McGregor have noted "[P]atriarchy is generally accepted as the basis upon which most modern societies have been formed" (2007, p.4) and often unwittingly

and well intentioned, home economics has been and continues to be compliant to its values and beliefs by reinforcing these and perpetuating stereotypes (Attar, 1990; Eyre 1991). Within modernist society this ideology operates on the basis of creating dualisms where one side is privileged (desirable) and the other marginalised (undesirable). As an ideology it favours men over women, bestowing power to the former and dependency to the latter (Pendergast, 2001). While females undertake subservient roles thus conceding to the supposition that there is an essential difference between themselves and males, this perpetuates the value system. Such modelling impacts on the socialisation and education of future generations thus reinforcing inequities in society. Dualism, functioning as the apparent norm in society has had particularly detrimental effects for home economics where home and work are divided into masculine and feminine spheres and into a hierarchy, with men in the more powerful positions (Thompson, 1992; Pendergast & McGregor 2007). The idea that home economics is women's knowledge located in the private, mostly unpaid rather than the public (highly valued and paid) domain; that it has become associated with lower achieving pupils; that it is positioned as a practical subject: that it is taught mainly by women, all exemplify dualism and add to its devaluation. Attar (1990) notes the perception of home economics as a weak academic subject limited to girls not clever enough to study higher status subjects results in its failure to attract more academic students. One of the effects of this is that home economics tends to be dropped by more academic pupils when it comes to subject choice (Paechter & Head, 1996; Blythman, 2006).

In debating its identity as part of the quest for recognition and legitimisation, there are those both internal and external to the profession who perceive that home economics is hindered by its name. They claim that to rid itself of its historical shackles and encapsulate its radically changed content and lessening focus on the home, a name change is necessary. Throughout its history the name change journey has persisted without resolution. Over the years, home economists involved internationally in the debate have bowed to reflect the contemporary pressures and drives of a multitude of internal and external voices. One home economist noted "*[T]he old fashioned terminology is viewed as being one of the fundamental problems behind the negative and undefined nature of consumer science today*" (Collins, 2004.p.5). After the (1994) International Year of the Family and resultant endorsement of the family, international home economists changed their name to incorporate the word 'family' (Pendergast, 2001, p.45). These demonstrate instances of seeking contemporary, in- vogue credibility and respectability, as Schweitzer notes "*a concession to the spirit of the times*" (2006, p.85).

The trend in name change in the USA has been steady since 1983 (Haley et al 1993, Kerka 1996, Munya, 2001) while in the UK, Further Education and Higher Education programmes and discipline related journals, the name of home economics has already, in all but one degree programme, disappeared (UCAS website, 2008, Kirkbride, 2006 p.9). In 1999 the *Journal of Home Economics* became the *International Journal of Consumer Studies*. The national IHEc (Institute of Home Economics) amalgamated with the UKFHEF (United Kingdom Home Economics Federation) to become the Institute of Consumer Sciences incorporating home economics in 2000 before its dissolution in 2007; this after an independent review revealed that with a decreasing membership, the national body "*demonstrated the characteristics of an organisation in terminal decline*" (Fisher, 2006). Name grappling may have been a

contributory factor here, with members feeling estranged, lacking a sense of belonging and identity. From a higher education perspective, Hutchison (1993) grappled with the name and its content in the UK, suggesting that in Higher Education *"a key reason for changing the title is to disassociate courses with the subject, as it is perceived in schools"* (Hutchison, 1993. p.4). With emphasis on industrial applications, a name change was justified to reflect this, in the hope of enhancing career opportunities for graduates, attracting research funding and increasing male recruitment. The words 'consumer' and 'management' were considered appropriate for inclusion into degree titles.

Once more the discipline is looking to gain credibility by highlighting what is valuable within a patriarchal ideology: family and home are marginalised, technology and consumer are privileged (and patriarchal) positions. Understandably, home economics wants to raise the bar but Davies (1995) argues that the discipline is in danger of losing credibility by changing what is already a globally recognised professional name. Pendergast & McGregor (2007) agree with this assessment, arguing that the name change debate is symptomatic of the profession acting in a compliant fashion with patriarchy. The name change debacle is cited as evidence of *"manifestations of a profession striving to be accepted by those in power, on their terms—an unachievable vision given patriarchal ideology"*. Schweitzer (2006) has urged the profession to constructively deal with the name change issue, which in her view *"must be resolved on a global scale"* (p. 86). Vincenti (1997) explained that some of those attending the Scottsdale Conference in the United States, where the decision was made to change the name to Family and Consumer Sciences, *"felt [the Conference] had created a new profession that not only built upon but transcended home economics"* (p. 306). It appears that this has not been borne out over time; a serious decline in membership of professional bodies indicates that the change of name has served to alienate, disenfranchise, and dilute the identity of the profession. The name of the profession remains a contentious issue worldwide, inside and outside the profession and this preoccupation with the label contributes to the oppression of the field.

MacFarlane notes that *"[P]erceptions are not neutral and no subject has a place in the curriculum by innate right"* (1994, p. 3) yet home economics in schools while striving to meet the needs of today's young learners, is a typical example of a marginalised subject with negative stereotypes where some teachers in their ongoing battle for recognition, have become compliant in order to survive, whilst others continue with tenacity to seek resolution. Bernstein (1984) argues that *"[W]e must be concerned with image, not because we want to manufacture it but because we need to discern how our signals are being received (indeed whether they are being received), and how these perceptions square with our self-image"* (p.15). Myths which go unchallenged can flourish, ultimately achieve status or received wisdom in national legend; and the future of any subject area cannot be fully understood without reference to its legacy. Notwithstanding the change of content and pedagogy, the school subject continues to be perceived using outdated language and clichés. As a result subject perception is shaped by external observers and it may or may not reflect its essence. Like perceptual awareness, *"what we see is what we expected to see"* (Gombrich, 1960, p.53).

Fortunately, moves to take leadership in this global dilemma are evident in he21C. But are home economics teachers amenable to chart home economics in the school context using this compass? The survey attempts to provide some insights into this question.

Methods

Instrument

The survey comprised two sections, the first with four (4) open-ended questions of a general nature. The second section had nine (9) extracts taken verbatim from the text of the Position Paper (see Table 1). This paper focuses on the findings of this section. Extracts were selected that were: pivotal to he21C; of particular relevance to the Scottish and Australian study population; and provided some clear directions on some of the contentious issues in the profession, such as those related to the name. Respondents completed a Likert scale response to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the extracts, and had the opportunity to add extended comments. During piloting, statement validity was ascertained.

Respondents

The survey was administered in two cultural contexts - Scotland and Australia, specifically Queensland. Both were convenience populations, based on the country of origin of the researchers. In Scotland, it was administered to a convenience population, this being the full cohort of delegates at the 2007 national home economics conference. There were 220 responses, representing an 87% response rate. It was assumed that participants' voluntary attendance at a professional development event predisposed them to comment willingly on their field of study. Six questionnaire responses were excluded as these delegates were not qualified, practising home economics teachers; the remaining delegates chose not to respond. Views expressed are considered nationally representative as, of the 32 local authorities who administer Scottish education, only two of these were without home economics teacher representation. In Australia the same survey was administered to a convenience sample of teachers attending a conference in July 2007. While the conference organisers were unwilling to distribute the survey to all delegates, a request to complete the survey, which was placed in a convenient location at the conference, was provided through a general announcement. 44 surveys were completed, representing approximately a 25% response rate.

Limitations/Bias

The number of Australian responses is less than the Scottish responses and reduces comparison validity.

Results

Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the extracts taken from he21C, the majority agreeing with most of the extracts and thereby finding common ground in its scope, parameters, and purpose. The extract with most agreement (94%) for Scottish respondents is extract 4, the breadth of content for home economics; for Australian respondents (91%) it is extract 1, the definition of home economics. While there is overall a strong degree of alignment between Scottish and Australian respondents, in the area of the name and the re-branding strategy (E8, E9), there is a notable

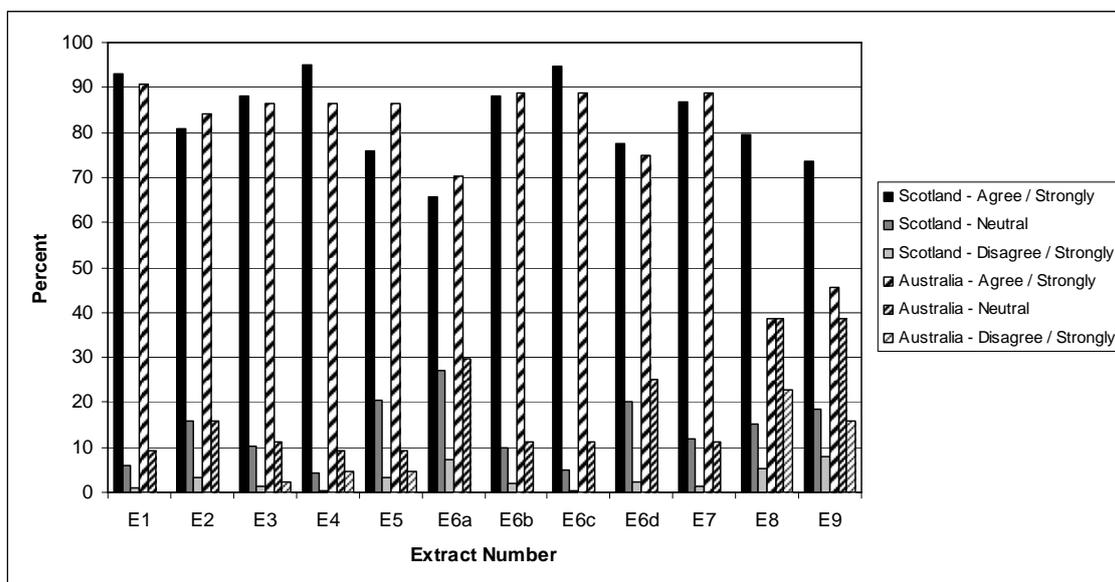
Table 1 Extracts from the *he21C*

Extract Number	Extract
E1	Home Economics is a field of study and a profession, situated in the human sciences that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities.
E2	Its historical origins place Home Economics in the context of the home and household, and this is extended in the 21st century to include the wider living environments as we better understand that the capacities, choices and priorities of individuals and families impact at all levels, ranging from the household to the local and also the global community.
E3	Home Economists are concerned with the empowerment and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, and of facilitating the development of attributes for lifelong learning for paid, unpaid and voluntary work; and living situations. Home Economics professionals are advocates for individuals, families and communities.
E4	The content (disciplinary bases) from which studies of Home Economics draw is dependent upon the context, but might include: food, nutrition and health; textiles and clothing; shelter and housing; consumerism and consumer science; household management; design and technology; food science and hospitality; human development and family studies; education and community services and much more.
E5	The capacity to draw from such disciplinary diversity is a strength of the profession, allowing for the development of specific interpretations of the field, as relevant to the context.
E6	Home Economics can be clarified by four dimensions or areas of practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. as an academic discipline to educate new scholars, to conduct research and to create new knowledge and ways of thinking for professionals and for society. b. as an arena for everyday living in households, families and communities for developing human growth potential and human necessities or basic needs to be met. c. as a curriculum area that facilitates students to discover and further develop their own resources and capabilities to be used in their personal life, by directing their professional decisions and actions or preparing them for life. d. as a social arena to influence and develop policy to advocate for individuals, families and communities to achieve empowerment and wellbeing, to utilise transformative practices, and to facilitate sustainable futures.
E7	The profession is constantly evolving, and there will always be new ways of performing the profession, This is an important characteristic of the profession, linking with the 21 century requirement for all people to be 'expert novices', that is, good at learning new things, given that society is constantly and rapidly changing with new and emergent issues and challenges.
E8	The preferred name of the field of study and profession is 'Home Economics.
E9	The profession is committed to re-branding and repositioning, not renaming the profession.

difference with Australian respondents indicating less support than their Scottish counterparts. In responding to extracts 6a, (one of the dimensions of home economics as an academic discipline) and 6d (as a social arena related to policy initiation and development), the majority of respondents agreed with the sentiments; however for both cohorts, Scottish and Australian, these illustrate a small but measurable decline in comparison to extracts E1-

E5, E6b, E6c and E7. A significant minority of respondents (from 20%- 27%) neither agreed nor disagreed with extracts 6a and 6d.

Figure 1: Combined Australian and Scottish Results: Responses for all extracts (n=264)



A closer analysis of the specific extracts, along with comments from the open response/comments section that followed each extract where respondents could add comments or explain their choice, provides greater insights into the statistical findings. The following is reported:

Extract 1

While the overwhelming majority (93% Scotland, 91% Australia) of respondents agreed on the home economics definition offered in extract 1 and the multidisciplinary nature of the field, some wished for identification of the 'range of disciplines'. Regarding the range, one teacher commented:

This may be a weakness if other disciplines feel they should deliver these elements, especially if (school) management support a cross curricular approach.

Another questioned whether those outside the field recognised the range. As sustainability is becoming more of a contemporary issue, its prominence within the definition was consistently endorsed through positive comments by respondents.

Extract 2

Again, the overwhelming majority of respondents agreed (81% Scotland, 84% Australia) with extract 2 relating to the wider living environments of individuals and families, some citing the necessity for an adaptable curriculum structure which would include global issues without

weakening any syllabus by becoming too wide, resulting in a need for *“more information/resources”* and responsive timetabling in order to make space to teach global issues. Some respondents suggested that this aspect of home economics requires much higher prominence, as much to assist future global citizens, as to rid the subject of outdated and intransigent perceptions associated with cooking and sewing. Another pondered on the changes to family structures and work patterns and suggested more emphasis on the home: *“especially when we are dealing with ...so many fractured families”*. For both countries this quote seems pertinent *“keep the subject up to date... but the roots must not be forgotten”*.

Extract 3

There was a sense from the comments, that in highlighting the wellbeing and empowerment of individuals, families and communities, extract 3 portrayed an inclusive, sensitive and caring approach, independent of ability levels and that these values were favoured by the majority of respondents (88% Scotland, 87% Australia). Some suggested that family as a concept is undergoing change, is having to deal with a range of pressures and its importance to society should not be undervalued. One teacher commented:

With such fundamental changes affecting family life, it is so important to maintain these values which HE upholds.

Teachers offered help towards a solution by proposing that this area requires further emphasis in the curriculum and that whether activities are paid work or voluntarily based, the results will be beneficial to society at all levels. One respondent noted however that the extract:

...would probably fit any educationalist whether in the formal teaching profession or elsewhere.

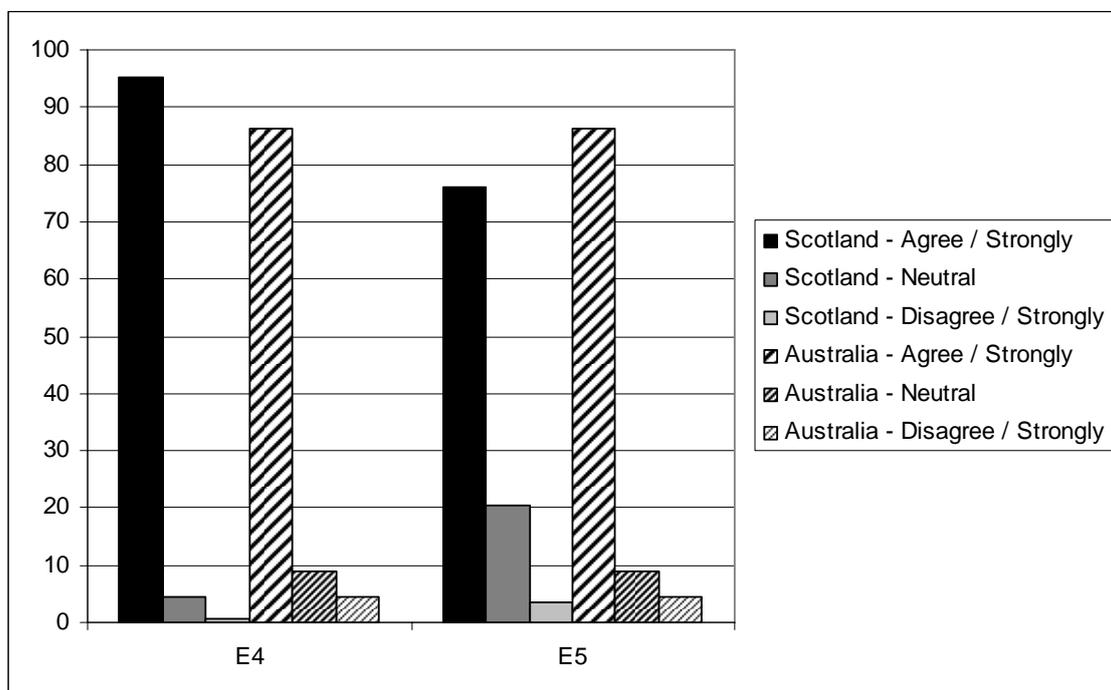
Extracts 4 and 5

Respondents also agreed with extracts 4 and 5 outlining the content of home economics (95% Scotland, 87% Australia), see Figure 2, with fewer comments made in comparison to other extracts. Curriculum breadth and depth was welcomed to allow pupils to: *“progress academically”*. While agreeing, some indicated that such a long and varied list of content may suggest vagueness or a view that home economics was a *“jack of all trades”* while another lamented that *“in schools this has been reduced and marginalised with other disciplines taking parts of home economics over”*.

While 75% of Scottish respondents and 87% of Australian respondents appraised such discipline diversity positively, comments expressed some reservation and uncertainty, for example:

Whilst this may be strength, it can also be a downfall if we pick and mix too much it may really lack specific direction (Scotland).

Figure 2: Combined Results: Responses for Extracts 4 and 5



This was also noted by Australian respondents:

yes, but this is also a drawback as our study has always had problems in identifying itself as a stand-alone discipline as we cover such a broad area across the core disciplines of Science, Humanities, Arts and Technology ...

and

...sometimes it's difficult to find the exact place that it sits in the curriculum.

However, this was balanced by views expressed regarding strength in diversity, the ability to make continued and further strong contributions to cross- curricular themes as they emerge while also:

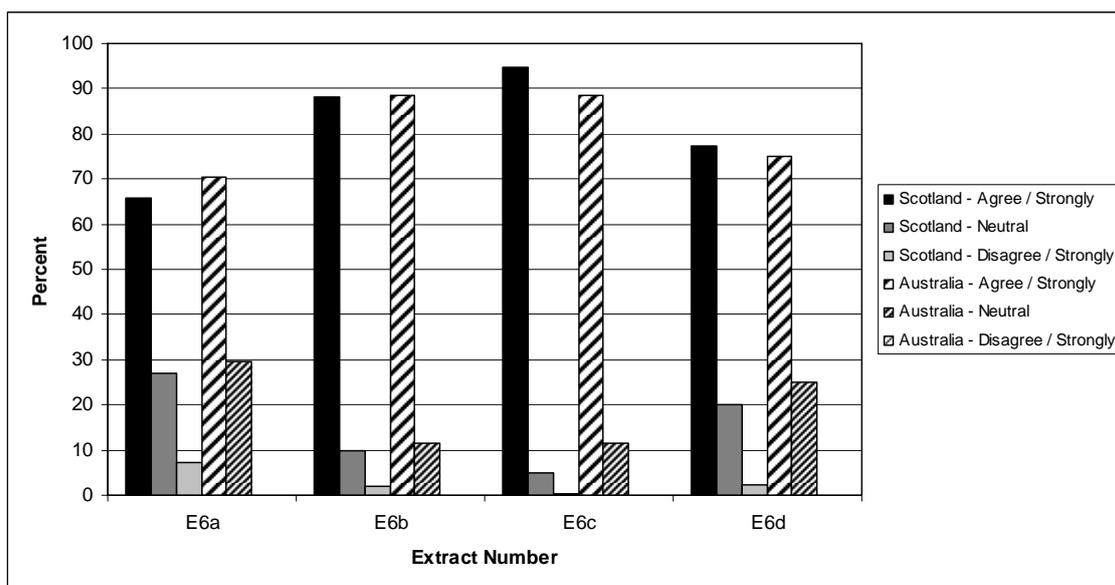
...developing the whole person. This is a real strength which draws students to this subject (Australia).

Extract 6

This extract had four subsections. The researchers were keen to find out from respondents their degree of agreement with the quite disparate aspects which have been brought together as the four dimensions of practice, viz: academic discipline; arena for everyday living; curriculum area; social arena to influence and develop policy (see Table 1).

Of the four dimensions offering clarification of home economics, there was a high degree of concordance from respondents (Scottish 88%, Australian 89% agreed/strongly agreed) for the dimension concerning home economics as an arena for everyday living and for the dimension as a curriculum area (Scottish 94%, Australian 89% agreed/strongly agreed) - see Figure 3. Comments reiterated the importance of life skills and the necessary repositioning of home economics as a core component of the curriculum.

Figure 3: Combined Results: Responses for Extracts 6a to 6d



Nearly two thirds of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed with the academic discipline dimension, with almost one third of all respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing (27% Scotland, 30% Australia). Supporting comments identified facets of the existing home economics curriculum suggesting there should be a sustained drive for the academic dimension of the discipline, as exemplified in one teacher's comment:

We fought long and hard for the academic recognition of HE, many teachers seem to have forgotten this (Scotland).

One Australian respondent commented:

I believe we need to educate and recruit new people who are properly qualified in our area. I am concerned about some of the people being trained in our area.

Of the Scottish teachers who disagreed (7%), only one justified her position by relating it to the skills/knowledge balance of home economics:

...I think the practical skills (are) more important.

The fourth dimension - as a social arena to influence and develop policy - had high levels of agreement by the majority of respondents (77% Scottish and 75% Australian respondents

agreed/strongly agreed). Those who agreed commented that this should be a priority for the profession, especially in Scotland with a recent, newly elected parliament where there may be the opportunity to influence and redirect thinking at that level. With the demise of the national association for home economists in the UK it was suggested that it is: *“not so prominent as it may have been”*. One Scottish teacher commented that:

if you have knowledge in a certain field, you inevitably use it to influence your interaction with others in all encounters.

36% of Scottish respondents expressed some difficulty in determining full meaning from some of the extracts. The policy dimension and the academic dimension share a small decline in majority agreement when compared to the other two dimensions. As teacher respondents, the *curriculum* and *everyday living* dimensions may be closer to their lived world. The percentage of respondents who disagreed with any of the four dimensions is small, ranging from 0-7%.

Extract 7

Almost 90% of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed with extract 7 and several comments highlighted and supported the continuing professional development needs of teachers and a productive partnership between school management, local authorities and the relevant education department to commit to this as: *“Innovation, adaptability and moving with the times in an ever changing world is vital”* (Scotland). One teacher suggested the possibility of research days which could be initiated through the recently introduced Chartered Teacher Programme in Scotland which provides opportunity for postgraduate study. Yet, even though supporting the extract, some negative views emerged, evidenced in this comment from a teacher:

Sad fact of reality is that many HE teachers are not as stated above and are still applying policy & practice learned years ago (Scotland).

Extracts 8 & 9

Regarding the extract *“the preferred name of the field of study and profession is home economics”*, there was a marked cultural difference in responses where 80% in Scotland yet only 39% in Australia agreed/strongly agreed. An equal percent (39%) of Australian respondents neither agreed nor disagreed suggesting a split response for the retention of the name. 22% of Australians disagreed, while only 5% in Scotland disagreed. See Figure 4.

Examples of justifications for keeping the existing name included its international recognition, the avoidance of confusion among the wider population and a lack of appropriate alternative titles to encompass its true nature. Others could think of no better alternative. While loyal to the name, some comments advocated a change to the internal ‘workings’ of the subject i.e. the learning and teaching rather than the name, or for home economists to adapt and promote what it is and can be. One Scottish respondent proposed that a minority

within the profession lacked confidence in the discipline itself. One respondent suggested that a change of name:

would derail the subject and could lead to its downfall (Scotland)

another

it is the quality of the people and what they do that speaks loudest (Scotland).

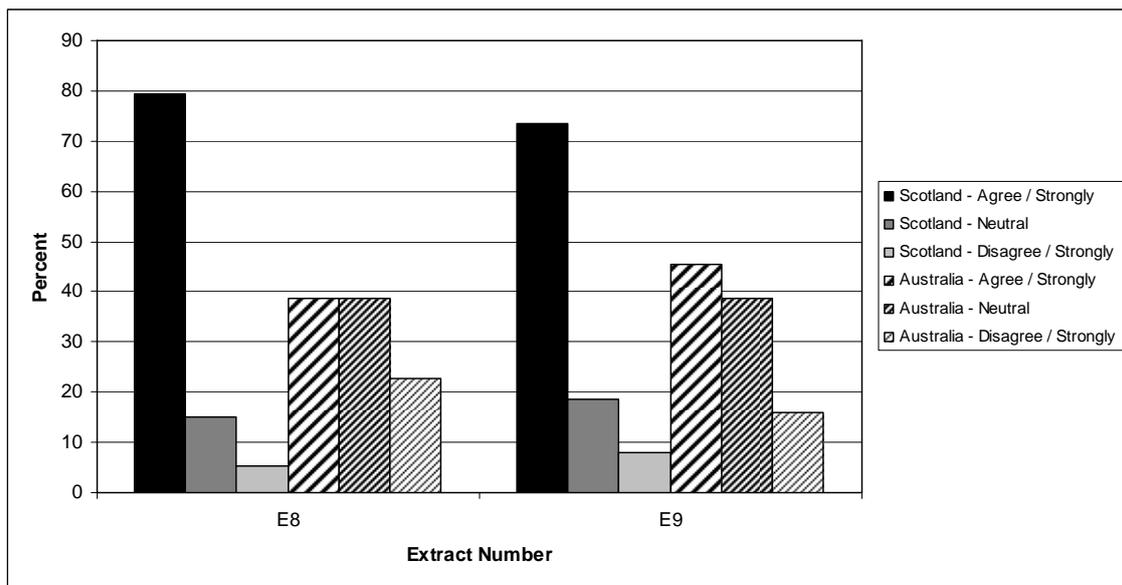
Australian advocates of the name argued that:

In too many schools it has been renamed, thus diminishing what is taught e.g. food technology

and

retain the name as it focuses on the individual and family

Figure 4: Combined Results: The Extent of Support for Extracts 8 and 9



Those who rejected the retention of the name suggested home economics was too domesticated, not sexy enough, too old-fashioned, not illustrative enough of modern trends or of its technology base, nor did it reflect the work being done where pupils progress into a diverse range of careers. Specifically, Australians opposed to the name made the following arguments:

This name is old fashioned and does not reflect modern trends. The subject is much wider than the home.

I find the name dated - in the 50s/60s. But I don't know of a better alternative

Food & Technology is a better name. I don't think Home Economics is applicable today - too old-fashioned.

In order to modernise the area, I think there needs to be a shift away from calling it home economics. I think this title gives people outside the profession a very limited idea of the subject - a 1950s perspective of the way we live - not a 2007 perspective.

And predictably, others can't think of a better alternative:

Only because I can't think on anything else that describes it better

and

But what else?

For the extract on re-branding and repositioning, there was also a marked cultural difference in responses where 73% in Scotland and 45% in Australia agreed/strongly agreed. A slightly smaller percent (39%) of Australian respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and likewise, only 19% of Scottish respondents. 16% of Australians disagreed, while only 8% in Scotland disagreed. This comment is typical of those who disagreed:

We need to look to the future, determine our direction and roles and market our expertise accordingly in an information rich society.

For those who agreed or strongly agreed with the re-branding direction, the following comment was typical:

we need an umbrella name to remind us that health/food/textiles/design etc are all concerned with the same field.

The Scottish respondents who agreed/ strongly agreed with this final extract commented that re-naming had been given too much priority and the areas of 're-branding' and repositioning and also revitalising, had been left behind. Working together was highlighted as being essential to its success. Maintaining a place alongside other subjects in the secondary school curriculum is also a concern at this time and so engagement with these strategies may endorse the subject's position:

This... is essential if we are to find our rightful places under the Curriculum for Excellence initiative (Scotland).

The internal workings of the discipline surfaced, in terms of pedagogy:

We need to keep pupils interested, never mind the name! (Scotland).

On occasion, some of the comments made by respondents devolved responsibility for home economics to systems or person outside the profession, or suggested an inability in sharing responsibility.

Discussion

In this study, respondents reported agreement with most of the extracts taken from he21C. However, an analysis of the comments supplied by respondents often conveyed a sense of disempowerment, repression, frustration and inadequacy. Such sentiments are neither novel nor new in the profession (McGregor et al., 2004). Particularly the areas of name and repositioning were areas of disagreement, both within each cultural group (and especially Australian respondents), and when comparing Scotland and Australian responses. Ironically, teachers in Scotland agreed to a name change in a previous study (Marr, 2004) yet here, just three years later, this study found majority support (80%) for its retention. Such vacillation also displays uncertainty and fails to create optimal conditions for change. Additionally, Consumer Studies was one of the names suggested by Marr but as with other options it was viewed as a narrow interpretation, unable to convey the integrity of the subject which has traditionally identified itself with breadth, the latter expressed in extracts 4 and 5 where teachers overwhelmingly agreed. The importance of projecting a consistent message is underlined by Bernstein (1984, p.64) who notes:

[R]ecognition comes from consistency. The identity must be transmitted time and time again. And the constituent part of the identity (the cues) must be consistent with each other.

In the relationship between home economics in higher education and schools Hutchison (1993, p.4) acknowledges that *"each is influenced by the other"* yet while well intentioned, in removing home economics from degree titles the sector exemplifies compliant behaviour, failing to appreciate the negative influence and, that each sector actually relies on the other.

There is also a lack of agreement as to the best alternative and it has been suggested (Schweitzer, 2006) that any name change should be conducted on a global scale, yet the title is internationally understood and is used by the International Federation for Home Economics which is in turn represented on international organisations. Furthermore, Martin warns that *"[A]ltering the name on the door can just be a way of putting up a barrier to the further intrusion of innovation"* (1998, p.39). This fracturing and shifting sands in a name change suggests a loss of common purpose and weakness (Brown, 1993; Pendergast, 2006) a lack of professional perspicuity, as well as illustrating the *"ceaseless need to seek societal legitimation and credibility"* (Pendergast, 2000, p.3). The problem of changing the name obscures more than it reveals. The fact that he21C is clear and directive in its stance on the name issue, stating without vacillation that *"the preferred name of the field of study and profession is home economics"* is a positive step for the profession.

Teachers and home economists in other professions need to be aware that by selecting certain areas of knowledge and particular activities, resources and experiences, they are also likely to be selecting particular values and attitudes. These will have an impact on how the subject is viewed, irrespective of the name given or courses taught. Clearly the overwhelming majority of teachers in this survey welcomed the diversity of disciplinary bases described in the he21C, agreeing this to be a strength. However the statistics for candidate entries in 2008 to the range of home economics courses in Scotland and Australia illustrate an increasing number of students choosing to study hospitality rather than home economics courses (SAQ

website, 2008; QSA, 2007). While this may raise the numbers of pupils in departments, it relegates home economics to a less favoured position. Teachers, in order to survive, may have taken the line of least resistance and allowed department courses to become largely practical, thus devaluing other learning skills. To promote and emphasise mainly practical skills would seem to reinforce attitudes which are held by others and pupils who vote with their feet as their needs and career aspirations are not being met. The often marginalised status of the home economics curriculum may become self-fulfilling when learners choose to study other subjects (Moss & Briwnant-Jones, 1983). Home economics as the vehicle for marginalisation, becomes the victim (Pendergast, 2001). In a similar situation and rather cruelly, but perhaps to encourage action, Moss and Briwnant-Jones (1983) suggested that *"Home Economics will attain the status its teachers deserve, rather than the status deserved by the subject"* (p.339).

Teachers need to address themselves to a wider range of subject-based and higher order skills than is currently the case. They need to look beyond the 'how to' technical practice and consider the (why) interpretive and emancipatory practices as well. They can, however, hold on to traditional practices in order to create a personal comfort zone which then inhibits or distorts the curriculum. Sometimes change is more apparent than real where efforts are made to create an impression of development, but this is expressly to do with protecting existing practice rather than projecting some genuine change fairly accurately to those outside the field. Currently, home economics in secondary schools in Scotland and Australia is at a critical juncture owing to difficulty in recruiting students to the profession (Pendergast, 2001; Buie, 2006; McKenzie et al, 2008). Added to this, the home economics teaching profession in Scotland is ageing with almost half of the teachers over 50 - a higher proportion than in any other subject, a pattern repeated in Australia (Pendergast, Reynolds & Crane 2001; McKenzie et al, 2008) and many other parts of the world. If the supply of teachers to teach the growing hospitality courses cannot be sustained, this teaching may fall to colleagues in the further education sector, destabilising home economics even further.

Summary and Conclusion

This research has highlighted several areas where focus is required for attention by IFHE, if it is committed to the intent of he21C. While limited to a comparison between two countries, the responses to the beliefs and positions advocated in he21C clearly show that there is some disparity between strategic directions set out in the document and beliefs held by teachers in the profession.

It is important to emphasise that the majority of the study respondents in Scotland and Australia agreed with most of the he21C extract propositions. In particular:

- E1 Home Economics is an area of study and profession in human sciences – 90% agreement
- E2 Historical origins of family and household translate well to contemporary living – 80% agreement
- E3 Home Economics is about empowerment, lifelong learning and advocacy – 85% agreement

- E4 Wide interdisciplinary base – 90% agreement
- E5 Disciplinary diversity is a strength – 80% agreement
- E6b Home Economics is a practice area for everyday living – 90% agreement
- E6c Home Economics as a curriculum area – 90% agreement
- E7 Profession constantly evolving – 90% agreement

There was less agreement with home economics as an academic discipline or an area to influence and develop policy. These responses are understandable from teachers who value practice and diversity (high agreement with E1-E4, E6b and E6c) but may not feel they can influence or develop policy from their position in the educational hierarchy.

- E6a Home Economics as an academic discipline – 70% agreement
- E6d Home Economics a social area to influence and develop policy – 75% agreement

The two areas for particular attention are:

- E8 Preferred name 'home economics' – around 60% agreement
- E9 Commitment to re-branding – around 60% agreement

Since IFHE has committed, through extensive international consultation, to keep the name Home Economics, further support and acceptance needs to be gained for the re-branding process. This will involve all members of the profession.

Having been trialled in Europe (Scotland) and the Pacific (Australia) it is recommended that this study be replicated in Africa, Asia and the Americas to assess agreement of the he21C proposals by home economics teachers across all IFHE jurisdictions.

As noted at the outset of this paper, there is a need to encourage further dialogue and contribute to professional practice by providing opportunities for reculturing and building community, essentially creating a climate of trust in order for the initiatives of he21C to have a chance of succeeding. The establishment of a community of enquiry is suggested here as a means of building collaboration and belonging, bridging the gap between research and practice by actively engaging those concerned (Pardales & Girod, 2006). Cassidy et al. (2007) describe such a community as composing groups of individuals from varying backgrounds and perspectives, committed to creating deeper understanding and practical solutions.

The concept of community works on the managerial concept of capacity building - working together for greater possible outcomes. Strengthening of social and institutional relationships are the focus for synergistic relationships, where benefits for all parties are the outcome. In this approach, there is an enhancement of individual's learning, and the possibility of advancing whole communities. Communities are often characterised by:

1. Wholeness, incorporating diversity

2. Shared values
3. Caring, trust and teamwork
4. Participation in a two-way flow of influence and communication
5. Reaffirmation of self and building morale; and
6. Institutional arrangements for community maintenance.

As the leading global Institute for home economics, IFHE is well placed to establish such communities. It is an international non-governmental organisation serving as a platform for international exchange within the field of home economics. It has consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC, FAO, UNESCO, and UNICEF) and with the Council of Europe. This community of enquiry would further strengthen two IFHE aims of global networking among professionals and providing opportunities for professional sharing.

Yet, there is an obstacle to overcome at the outset. In research commissioned by IFHE to better understand its membership (TNS infratest, 2004) membership and participation rates by home economics teachers is surprisingly low. The largest category of IFHE members are academics at university (47%), with 23% retired, 23% researchers, while just 15% are teachers in schools, the group of interest in this study. Furthermore, school teachers are significantly more often short term members, typically only remaining for between 1-5 years. So perhaps engaging in community building strategies with a focus on home economics teachers may be a mechanism for engaging teachers in IFHE, and thereby affecting the aspirational goals set out in he21C. Such a mode of operation, could offer insight into home economics teachers' professional thinking and may ameliorate comments such as this defensive, unquestioning position from a Scottish respondent, "*I am not involved sufficiently at a level where these manoeuvres are being undertaken*" and from a keynote speaker at the home economics conference in Scotland, "*I am a home economist who wants to initiate discussion about topics, then think, rethink, question and reflect*" (Renwick, 2007). The former may, for whatever reason, represent a reluctance to be fully self reflective about her own beliefs and the latter, the other end of the spectrum. Without a national association in Scotland, the space for such professional dialogue and the opportunity sought in comments from extract 9 to work together on repositioning is ripe.

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