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**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
FOR HOME ECONOMICS**

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.

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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



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 global

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

- 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 it's 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
- Global 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@ifheet-online.de

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

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 over 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

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: mdavis@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

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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

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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).

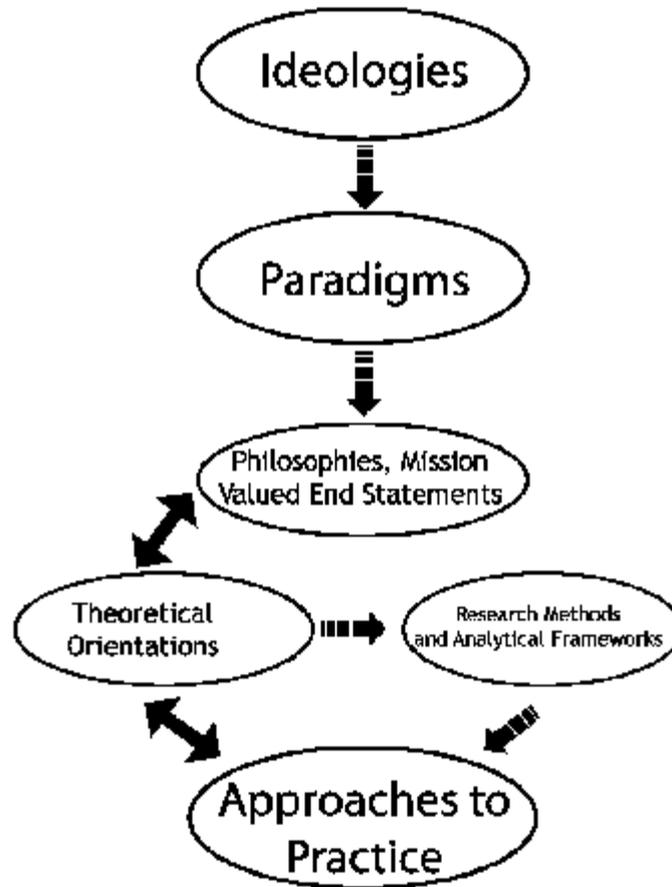
Table 4 Approaches to practice conducive to working within the contending and emerging ideologies and paradigms

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

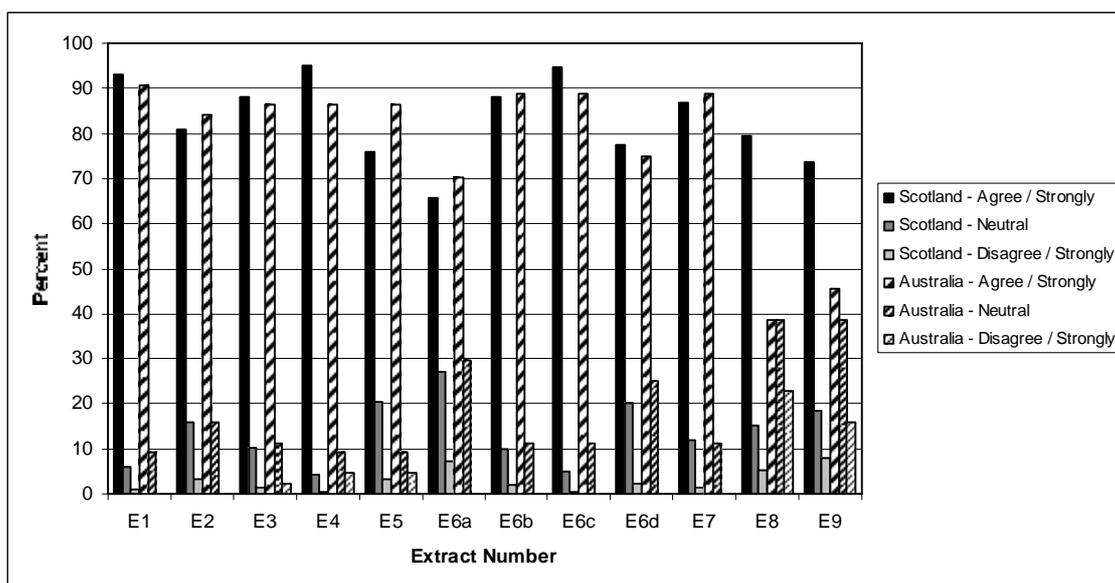
Table 1 Extracts from the he21C

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.

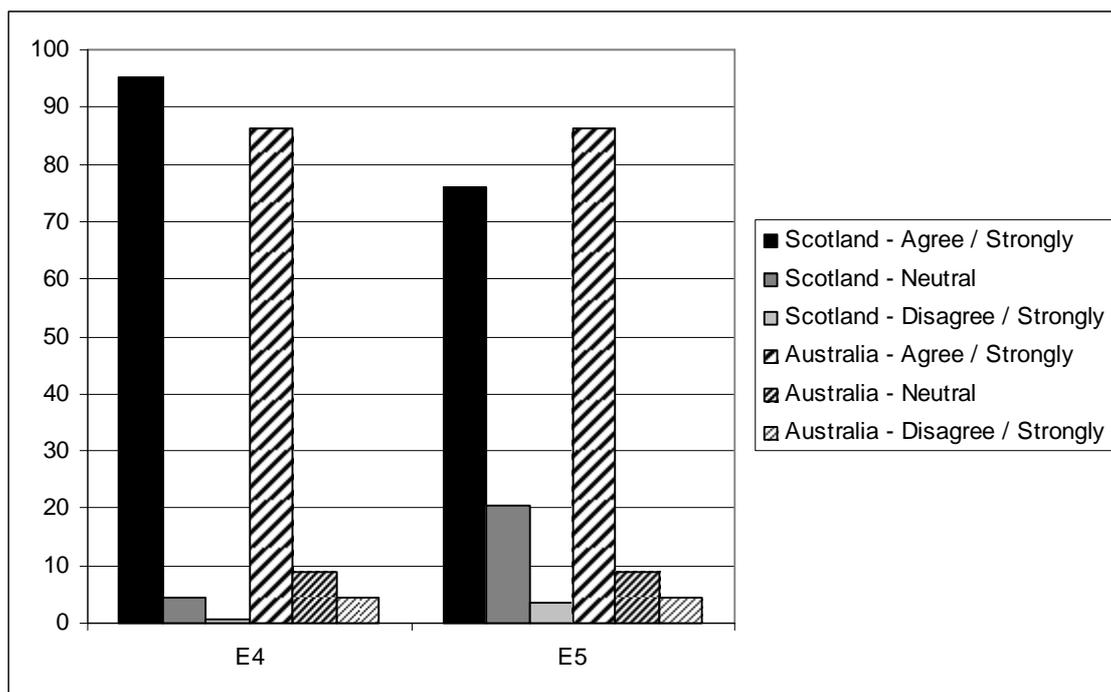
Extracts 4 and 5

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:

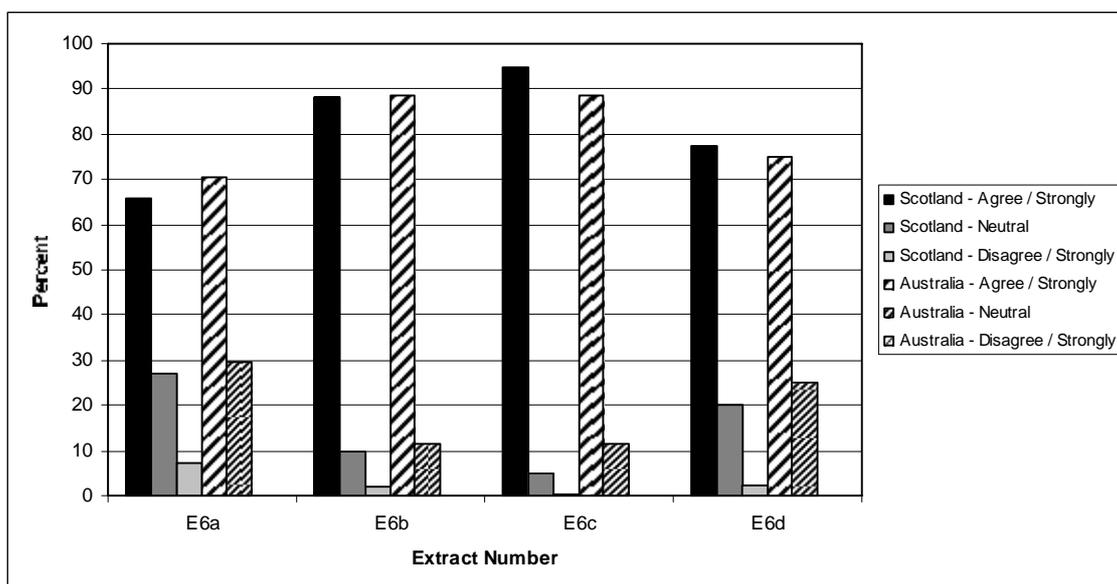
...developing the whole person. This is a real strength which draws students to this subject (Australia).

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).

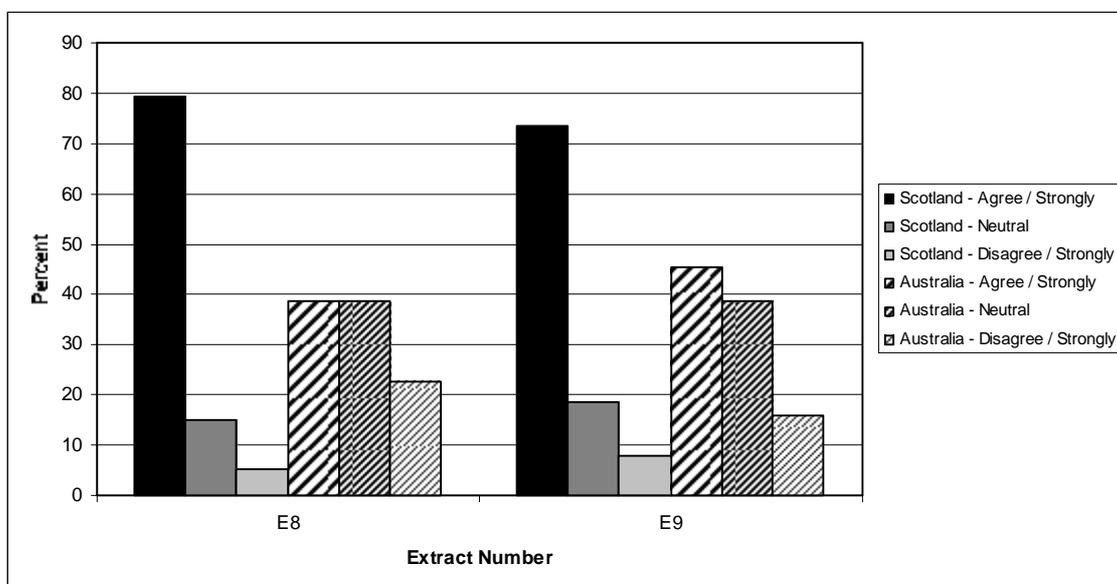
Australian advocates of the name argued that:

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; OSA, 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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Notes for Contributors

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Twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year.

Focus

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

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

Contributors

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

Author's biography

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

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

A separate first page should include the full title, a short title for use as a running head, author name(s), institutional and e-mail address(es), and indicate the author responsible for correspondence related to manuscript submission. The title should be on page 1 and not exceed 10 words (50 characters), and should be followed by an abstract of 100–200 words and up to five keywords. Material which requires substantial editing will be returned to the author.

No footnotes or endnotes are permitted, only references. Please avoid using italics and bold. Spellcheck using UK English. All pages should be numbered. Contributors should be aware that they are addressing an international audience. Jargon should be avoided and local terminology clarified for an international audience. Authors should use non-discriminatory language. Measurements should be in metric units. Articles should be original work and where appropriate, should acknowledge any significant contribution by others.

Tables, figures and illustrations

Figures, diagrams and images must be cited in text and captions provided. Figures should be at a professional standard and supplied as separate electronic files (eg TIF, JPG, GIF). Tables must be cited in text and captions provided.

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The details required for books are:

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

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

The details required for journals are:

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

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

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**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
FOR HOME ECONOMICS**

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Issue 2, 2008

This issue provides the Home Economics professional with a range of current topics of interest to the field. In the peer reviewed section of the journal, there are three articles, each of which has undergone a double-blind peer review process prior to acceptance for publication. These papers share a common thread—all are reporting on research with a focus on Home Economics students, and while each has a very different perspective from which to report, there are some clear messages for the Home Economics profession to note. The first paper by Martha Dallmeyer, Kevin Randall and Nina Collins provides an interesting insight into the development of a late night food service operation, making connections between this initiative and the four dimensions or areas of practice of Home Economics, viz: academic discipline; every day living; curriculum area; and societal arena to influence and develop policy—outlined in the IFHE Position Statement, 2008. The second peer reviewed paper is contributed by Mary Mullaney, Clare Corish and Andrew Loxley. An interesting study is reported, with surprising results. The 4 year longitudinal study investigated the nutrition and lifestyle knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of a group of Irish student Home Economics teachers over their four year study in a Home Economics degree program. Nutrition knowledge test results increased significantly over the study period, however this increase in knowledge was not linked to behavioural change. For example, levels of exercise were lower than those reported by their contemporaries, alcohol consumption was high and a higher percentage of the group smoked than reported by contemporaries. There were no associations evident between nutrition and lifestyle knowledge, and behaviour, making them poor role models. The third peer reviewed paper provides insights into factors affecting subject choice for Senior Cycle in Ireland, where there has been a trend away from the selection of Home Economics. In this paper, Jenny O'Donoghue and Mary Mullaney report on a strong link between students choosing Home Economics and having had exposure to the subject prior to having to make the decision. I could not help but make links between this paper and the previous paper by Mullaney et al—how interconnected are they? Does the less than desirable role model teacher impact on the student choosing Home Economics?

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

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Home Economics, relevant disciplinary fields, and the profession itself, while critically reflecting upon and being informed by its historical roots.

There were two key themes for the Congress:

1. Reflecting on the Past—this conference theme was significant given the 100 year celebration of IFHE.
2. Creating the Future—this conference theme provided the opportunity for developing the attributes associated with sustainability, advocacy and the active creation of preferred futures. Applications of key factors impacting on the field, along with disciplinary areas served as the focus for application in the addresses. The overall approach was developmental over the duration of the Congress.

The final section of this issue of IJHE is the review of two books relevant to Home Economics that were recently published. The first is the 100 year history of IFHE, launched at the Congress. Reviewed thoroughly by Sue McGregor, this book is mandatory reading for all professional home economists. The second book review submitted by Suzanne Piscopo provides insights into the first of a series of four books by James McIntosh.

IJHE processes

I remind readers that the aim of IFHE is to achieve the highest quality in this e-journal. To realize that goal, there is a need to continue to refine and develop our processes. The e-journal requires: a prominent international editorial board; high quality submissions; a thorough and comprehensive review process; a high quality finish. This issue retains the high caliber editorial board, comprising the executive members of IFHE prior to Council in July 2008.

Editorial board membership

I invite you to submit an Expression of Interest for Membership of the IJHE Editorial Board. Please provide a brief résumé providing the following information: qualifications; professional employment experience; publications record; editorial board experience; IFHE region membership; Home Economics fields of expertise. Please ensure the Criteria for Board Membership listed below are met prior to submitting your application to avoid disappointment. A maximum of 5 pages is required, submitted to: Editor@IFHEJournal.org.

Criteria for editorial board membership

- Must be a productive and respected researcher with expertise in one or more research methodologies and one or more Home Economics specialisations.
- Must have a background in research including academic preparation (minimum Masters degree) and have published in refereed journals.
- Must have current membership of IFHE or willingness to join during tenure on the Editorial Board.

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

Home Economics in higher education: Enhancing student learning and promoting responsible student behavior

Martha Dallmeyer, G. Kevin Randall, Nina Collins

Abstract

Numerous challenges exist for Home Economics/Family and Consumer Sciences Departments and their universities. For universities, one challenge is the promotion of responsible social behavior by students, especially in light of the abuse and overconsumption of alcohol so often associated with the new found freedoms on campus. For HE/FCS Departments, high construction costs and maintenance expenses associated with a quantity foods laboratory often result in food service students working at various sites off campus to gain needed experience, leading to lack of consistency in student experience and reduced oversight by faculty. This paper illustrates how HE/FCS food service courses can benefit not only the department and its majors, but also can support and strengthen the university's comprehensive alcohol action plan—ultimately enhancing the educational experience for students university wide.

Home Economics in higher education: enhancing student learning and promoting responsible student behavior

Creating opportunities for students to experience learning at various levels within the “real world” is a challenge to higher education units with limited resources. This, we believe, creates an ideal context for Family and Consumer Sciences departments (HE/FCS hereafter). One of the aims of the International Federation for Home Economics is to “Provide opportunities through practice, research and professional sharing that lead to improving the quality of everyday life for individuals, families and households worldwide” (www.ifhe.org/34.html). According to Anderson and Nickols (2001),

...from the very beginning of family and consumer sciences, practitioners and friends of the field have discussed and debated what content should comprise our body of knowledge.... The body of knowledge includes unique concepts that integrate the study of individual, family and community systems throughout the life course in the context of concerns and trends (pp. 14-15).

Higher education has been called upon to foster critical analysis of social issues within its curriculum (Antonaros, Barnhardt, Holsapple, Moronski, & Vergoth, 2008; Taylor, 2008). For universities, one of the challenges is the promotion of responsible social behavior by students, especially with the opportunities for abuse and overconsumption of alcohol. This abusive behaviour, often begun in high school, could expand rapidly with the new found freedoms for the university student and may lead to tragic results on campus (Schaffer, Jeglic, & Stanley, 2008; Spoth, Randall, Trudeau, Shin, & Redmond, 2008). Planning experiences for university students to see directly how their major can impact the well-being

of their peers is sometimes difficult to achieve. In keeping with Boyer's (1990) call for the integration and application of knowledge, Anderson and Nickols (2001) suggested that units of HE/FCS should enjoy a firm foothold on today's campus because the curriculum's strength is the integration and application of knowledge. This paper illustrates how HE/FCS food service courses can benefit not only the department and its majors, but also can support and strengthen the university's comprehensive alcohol action plan—ultimately enhancing the educational experience for students university wide.

A shared mission: The department and university

First, HE/FCS Department couched its mission and vision within that of Bradley University, a private comprehensive university in the mid-western United States. The University's mission included an emphasis on engaging students in learning through teamwork and leadership opportunities, group projects and collaboration with faculty on research and creative production, and a similar call for collaborative involvement by students and faculty with business, cultural, and other entities that provide benefits to the community. The Department's vision statement is to offer

... a local and global focus, empowering graduates to respond to diverse and complex family and consumer issues. It is the department of choice for those studying the interaction of family systems, the relationship between individuals and their environment, and the global influence on well-being and the community (www.bradley.edu/academics/ehs/family/vision.shtml).

It is the Department's aim that graduates will have gained the skills to live out this mission within their chosen careers.

The call for responsible student behavior

Second and tragically, the University suffered two alcohol-related deaths during the 2007-08 academic year. In direct response to these tragedies, as well as other concerns related to alcohol misuse, the President charged a task force to develop a Comprehensive Alcohol Action Plan (Bradley University, 2008). This plan states,

There are two aspects to changing student behavior with regard to alcohol consumption: building a positive community and empowering student leaders. Building a positive community suggests that the University provide opportunities for students to join communities (or social groups) that have a common factor that attracts and maintains student affiliation (p. 4).

One specific part of this plan includes the following,

Late night programming is used, in part, on some campuses as a strategy for changing the campus environment regarding alcohol use and abuse... Late night events are great opportunities for students to interact socially with each other in a safe and alcohol-free atmosphere on campus. The overall goal is to cultivate a more positive campus environment for students (p. 24).

A multi-faceted approach for preventing and treating campus alcohol concerns has been recommended (DeJong & Langford, 2002; Johannessen, Glider, Collins, Hueston & DeJong, 2001) and involves multiple levels of influence (e.g., individual factors, group processes, institutional and community factors, and public policy). Although a week-end intervention program is not new (Narayan, Steele-Johnson, Delgado & Cole, 2007; Siegal & Cole, 2003), including an academic department in intervention is a new approach to a perennial problem for colleges and universities. As a result of this call for action and the supporting empirical evidence in the literature, the HE/FCS Department found itself ideally prepared to serve the University and its students.

Initiating a partnership: The department, the university, and corporate food service

Students in the HE/FCS Department, with the exception of those majoring in retail merchandising, enroll in food service courses. However, because of construction and maintenance expense, the department does not have a quantity foods laboratory. Unfortunately in the past, students enrolled in food service courses worked in various sites off campus to gain needed food service experience. This resulted in lack of consistency in student experience, and reduced oversight by HE/FCS faculty.

Food services at Bradley are contracted to Eurest Dining Services, a subsidiary of the international Compass Group PLC, headquartered in London. Within this corporation, over 360,000 food service professionals are employed worldwide in more than 90 countries throughout Continental and Eastern Europe, North and South America, South Africa and Asia as well as the United Kingdom. Eurest Dining Services is the corporate dining leader and provides food services to most of the Fortune 500 companies in the United States. Currently, Eurest Dining Services has a 63 year continuous contract for food services at Bradley University. This is the longest continuous education division contract in the food service industry in the United States. During each academic year, a minimum of 5000 people per day are served in the six food service operations on the Bradley University campus.

In order to promote positive, non-alcoholic environments conducive to social interactions for week-end late nights on campus, the University converted a former cafeteria into a coffee house type of setting. The challenge for Eurest was how to have students “buy in” to this situation. The HE/FCS Department was approached by the Director of Eurest Dining Services at Bradley, inviting oversight of this new facility. Clearly, the creation of this new on-campus late night food service operation supported the HE/FCS mission, “providing opportunity through practice, research about student preferences, and professional sharing” (Bradley University Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, 2008) with other departments and units on campus, leading to improved quality of life for students. Collaboration in projects to assist learning is supported by numerous studies (Henry, 2004; Zlotkowski, 1998). Henry suggests that collaborations have several benefits including the opportunity to build beneficial partnerships. Requirements in two courses, Food Service Systems, and Management in Food Service, were added as a result of this initiative, and students were exposed to the process of developing a food service system—an actual operation developed and implemented by students for students. The potential for Eurest Dining Services to see the HE/FCS

Department as an integral part of their operation on Bradley's campus, in addition to the role played by the late night food service operation as part of the campus-wide plan to mitigate alcohol abuse, could provide essential future-proofing for the HE/FCS Department (IFHE, 2008).

Implementing a late-night food service operation

As students learned about food service systems, the planning and development of this late night foodservice in a university residence hall began to evolve. This process began with the identification of inputs and the branding of the facility. Students enrolled in Food Service Systems, began by naming the food service facility to complement the adjacent student lounge. A contest was held to name a facility that would attract students as a fun place to "hang out." Each student submitted possible names for the facility along with a corresponding logo and uniform suggestion. The Eurest Dining Services staff selected the winning name and rewarded the students by providing credit at the university bookstore for each winning student entry. The name selected was *Lydia's Late Night*. Lydia Moss Bradley was the founder of this private university. After the University President approved the name, a picture of the founder was placed in the new food service operation. HE/FCS students developed a logo to coordinate with the name and suggested uniforms consisting of black t-shirts with the logo *Lydia's* with a moon and stars on the front. A glowing *Late Night* and numerous glowing stars were printed on the back of the t-shirts. Staff will wear black baseball caps with *Lydia's* and stars glowing on the front of the cap.

Eurest Dining Services assisted with the menu planning process by providing a basic skeleton menu. HE/FCS students identified food items that would coordinate with the different types of activities occurring in the adjacent student lounge such as tacos, nachos, churros, and other similar food items for a Hispanic culture evening. This assignment was followed by each team of two students developing the specific menu suggestions from the list submitted by the rest of the class. Each team of students learned to cost their menu items and evaluate vendor sources. Next, each team staffed *Lydia's Late Night* for the selected weekend of co-managing with Eurest Dining staff by scheduling their classmates for two hours of laboratory experience. The required laboratory experience for each student varied each week.

Additional needs for staff in this late night food service operation included an orientation and training sessions for staff. HE/FCS students identified training needs for the class; these included sanitation, equipment utilization, procedural training, food production training, service training, and opening and closing of the operation. Students who had not completed a Food Service Managers Sanitation Certification recognized by the State of Illinois Department of Public Health were required to complete the online training and successfully pass the state examination before the first laboratory experience in the food service operation. Very few of the students had experience with using food service equipment. Required laboratory experiences focused on how to use and clean all food service equipment were added. Each student learned Eurest Dining Services facilities' policies, procedures, and food production processes. Food Service Systems Course participated in an orientation to *Lydia's Late Night* food service and subsequent training on serving customers. During the fall semester in the *Lydia's Late Night* food service operation, all students had at least one early laboratory experience—opening a food service operation—and one late laboratory experience—closing a

food service operation. Throughout the fall semester, students compiled a personal evaluation journal, comparing and contrasting the student operation, *Lydia's Late Night*, to textbook information in food service systems.

During the spring semester, students in the Management of Food Service course will continue to utilize the student food service operation, *Lydia's Late Night*, to apply food service system concepts related to management, marketing, financial management, inventory management, service, and system outputs. Throughout this guided, applied experience, students in these courses will collaborate with Eurest Dining Services, University Student Activities, Residential Living staff, Multicultural Student Services staff, peers across campus, and with a variety of University departments and other administrative units.

HE/FCS students who work in *Lydia's Late Night* will have experienced creating a place that promotes the well-being of their peers through the provision of a non-alcoholic alternative to on and off campus drinking—a fun place. This has provided the department with a quantity foods laboratory that will be maintained and upgraded by a worldwide food service company and will not require departmental resources. Overall, this plan provides a curriculum initiative to support the important foundation, knowledge and skills for the foods, nutrition and dietetics students in food service, and also creates a laboratory for students to promote responsible social behavior on campus. According to Anderson and Nickols (2001), "...school and work create transition points for individuals as they develop" (p. 16). The initiative described in this paper shows how courses within a curriculum can provide students with expected knowledge in every food service course, but also can expose students to the many layers of opportunities within an eco-system consisting of a university's priorities, a department's curriculum requirements, and the intersection of the heart of HE/FCS: the individual's well-being and community vitality (Anderson & Nickols).

Summary

The new late night food service operation serves all university students nine weekends each semester. HE/FCS students divided into two-student teams to plan a designated three night laboratory experiences with associated menus. Students were involved in the programming, and in developing theme-based foods to reflect the activities planned by Student Activities, Residential Living, or the Multicultural Student Services. These programs included cultural nights, popular student nights with bands, game nights, craft nights, movie nights, live comedian entertainment nights, and special celebrations such as homecoming, parents' weekend, Halloween, and holiday celebration weekends.

This collaboration provides an enhanced academic experience, as well as opportunity for HE/FCS students to impact their campus community and enhance the well-being of individual students on their campus. In addition, students who complete these courses will see the HE/FCS four dimensions or areas of practice (i.e., academic discipline, every day living, curriculum area, and societal arena to influence and develop policy (IFHE, 2008)) promoting university policy, departmental curriculum goals, and student well-being. In sum, the development of this new campus late night food service operation a) supported the FCS mission, and solved a problem of providing a quantity food service laboratory for students—without any departmental expenditure; b) supported the university mission regarding the

multifaceted development of students to enable them to become leaders, innovators, and productive members of society by requiring teamwork and leadership through group projects and collaboration with faculty on research and creative production; and c) created a unique response to the University's comprehensive alcohol action plan.

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Findings from a 4-year longitudinal study: *The professional implications of the nutrition and lifestyle knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of student Home Economics teachers*

By Mary Isobelle Mullaney, Clare A. Corish, Andrew Loxley

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nutrition and lifestyle knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of a group of Irish student Home Economics teachers over their four year professional Bachelor in Education (Home Economics) degree programme. Nutritional knowledge was measured yearly using an adapted version of the test devised by Parmenter and Wardle (1999). Food, alcohol consumption and exercise were measured using a 7-day reported dietary/exercise diary. Nutrient intake data were determined using (WISP©) dietary analysis. Anthropometric data were collected and body mass index calculated.

When starting college, student Home Economics teachers had broadly similar anthropometric, dietary and lifestyle characteristics to those of their contemporaries. The mean body mass index was identical (24.4 (SD 4.3) kg/m²) to that reported in the North South Ireland Food Consumption Survey (Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance, 2001) for females aged 18-35 years. Thirty-eight percent were overweight or obese versus 33.6 % in the 2001 survey and 41% in the most recent Survey of Lifestyle, Attitudes and Nutrition (2007). Many students had inadequate intakes of key nutrients, one in three students smoked (16 of 48) and alcohol consumption was high. Only one student was very active. These findings did not vary significantly over the course of the study though the level of activity decreased significantly.

While knowledge test results increased significantly from a mean of 55% (SD 8%) to 67% by Year 4, an increase in knowledge was not linked to behavioural change. Students had a positive attitude towards their role as future role models though only 65% of them indicated that they were pursuing the career of their choice.

Introduction

No printed word, nor spoken plea can teach young minds what they should be. Not all the books on all the shelves—but what the teachers are themselves.

Rudyard Kipling.

The nutrition and lifestyle behaviours of future Home Economics teachers is worthy of investigation for two reasons. Firstly, a case is often made that dietary and associated lifestyle behaviour problems could be tackled if pupils were exposed to both the theoretical information and practical skills contained in Home Economics (St. Angela's College, 2006). Food preparation skills (the lack of which are often identified as an obstacle to a healthy diet) are developed during the undergraduate Bachelor of Education (Home Economics) programme. If this hypothesis is correct, those who pursue a career in Home Economics could be expected to have better than average dietary and lifestyle behaviours and those in preparation for that role could be expected to move closer to this ideal. Secondly, as teachers, these students will

model their dietary and lifestyle behaviours for second level pupils and will teach curricular content related to nutrition and lifestyle.

There is often an assumption that providing people with the information necessary to choose healthy foods will ultimately lead to an improvement in diet. Harnack et al., (1997) and Wardle et al., (2000) showed that knowledge was an important factor in explaining variations in food choice. However, several other studies have failed to establish a link between nutrition knowledge and food intake (Axelson et al., 1985; Shepherd & Stockley, 1987; Shepherd & Towler, 1992; Stafleu et al., 1996). It may be argued that specific types of knowledge are more linked to behaviours than others (Worsley, 2002) and that many factors affect both food choice (Shepherd, 2002; Buttriss et al., 2004) and the application of knowledge to everyday life. A similar situation pertains to physical activity and smoking, with many studies failing to establish links between knowledge and participation in physical activity or smoking habits (Jones et al., 1992). This student group shares many similar characteristics and, therefore, variables such as gender, age, educational level and food availability were controlled for, facilitating exploration into the links between nutrition knowledge and dietary behaviour.

However, consideration must also be given to the conflict which could occur between the effect of increasing knowledge and the transition from home to college life. This transition may facilitate the development of poor dietary habits and physical activity patterns leading to weight gain (Hovell et al., 1985; Senekal et al., 1988; Levitsky et al., 2004). This is perhaps due to changed living arrangements (Jones et al., 1992; Brevard et al., 1996), limited budgets, availability of high-fat/high-energy foods, increased alcohol consumption, smoking initiation, lack of cooking skills, weight reducing diets and meal skipping (Braddon et al., 1986; Williamson et al., 1990; Burke & Bild, 1996; Grace, 1997; Roberts, 2001; Gaffney et al., 2002; Beasley et al., 2004; Shankar et al., 2004; American Dietetic Association, 2006).

The expectation that all involved in health promotion should model good practice is controversial (Veach & Cissell, 1999), as on equality grounds an overweight/underweight teacher could be considered to have as much right to the profession as a teacher within a healthy body mass index (BMI) range. He/she may indeed be a better teacher. In spite of this, Benz-Scott & Black (1999a) consider that following a specified healthy lifestyle should form part of a code of ethics for all involved in health education. They are adamant that 'the influence of a message can be significantly diminished when there is a disparity between what the messenger recommends and the professional's own behaviour' (1999b, p. 610). Capwell et al., (2000) discussed this idea in their paper on the *Development of a Unified Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession*. The idea of the importance of role modelling is based on the work of psychologist Albert Bandura (1977) on social learning theory. We learn through imitation, particularly of those we admire (Blomquist, 1986) with the notion that models are one of the most important pedagogical agents in the history of education (Bucher, 1997) being widely acknowledged. Teacher education manuals advise us that 'when what is said comes in conflict with what is done, pupils are more likely to follow the example' (Cohen et al., 2004, p. 186). This puts a large onus on the teacher and requires discussion as to whether we can ask more of teachers than of others by encouraging them to live by the values they espouse. While we do not think that a healthy BMI should be a prerequisite to teaching, nor an indicator of an effective teacher, it could be argued that health educators have a special responsibility to be positive health role models by fulfilling their health potential and modelling the healthiest behaviours of which they are capable. Indeed, this has been the subject of previous research (Glover, 1978; Nakamura & Lescault, 1983; Brandon & Evans, 1988; Clarke et al., 1988; Whitley et al., 1988; Jenkins & Olsen, 1994; Cardinal, 1995; Benz Scott & Black, 1999b; Davis, 1999; Veach & Cissell, 1999; Dinger et al., 2000; Poulsen et al., 2002). Teachers have been found to

be a powerful influence for promoting exercise to their students (Drummond et al., 2002). The importance of role modelling has been widely accepted concerning nurses and doctors role in health promotion. Recent studies advocate the importance of including self health as part of nursing education in order to improve professional practice (Clément et al., 2002; Stark et al., 2005). 'Nurses need to take more responsibility for practicing positive health behaviours' (Shriver & Scott-Stiles, 2000). Doctors are also encouraged to be more active so that they will pass on this experience to patients (Rogers et al., 2005). The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (1996) in the USA has seen fit to issue guidelines for school health programmes to promote lifelong healthy eating for staff and students. The influence of school is viewed as going beyond the classroom and including normative messages from peers and adults regarding foods and eating patterns. Pupils are more likely to receive a strong, consistent message when healthy eating is promoted through a comprehensive school health programme which includes role models for healthy eating (Young, 2005). The challenge of pursuing a healthier lifestyle is one which, therefore, merits discussion among Home Economics teachers in order to maintain credibility in the light of the dietary problems of society, particularly as the dietary habits of childhood and adolescence have been shown to continue to adulthood (Brown et al., 2000; Hamilton et al., 2000). The problem is to what extent any health professional is prepared to change their lifestyle to more faithfully reflect their professional role (McMahon, 1984).

A number of previous studies have explored the health behaviour of health educators such as Jenkins and Olsen's (1994) national survey in the USA, while Nakamura and Lescault (1983) focused on California. Kubik et al., (2002) examined classroom food practices and eating behaviour of middle school teachers from 16 schools in the Western USA. All these studies found that many educators did not model healthy behaviour. O'Dea and Abraham (2001) investigated the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours related to weight control, eating disorders, and body image in Australian trainee HE and PE teachers. They found participants held misconceptions and would give inaccurate advice to adolescents wanting to lose weight. Female trainee HE teachers were seen to have a poor body image and disordered eating, similar to young women in Western countries in general. While it would appear that HE teachers are ideally placed to provide accurate nutrition information to pupils; act as positive role models; mediate children's food, nutrition and weight concerns (Mooney et al., 2004); promote self-esteem and interpret media messages (O'Dea & Abraham, 2001), little is known about the nutritional behaviour, knowledge and attitudes of these teachers in Ireland. This study also explored prospective HE teachers' attitudes to role modelling.

Methods

The research was approached from a post positive perspective using an iterative approach and a number of instruments. Students who commenced study in the two colleges offering Home Economics teacher preparation in Ireland in 2004 were surveyed over the four years of their degree courses. Nutrition and lifestyle knowledge and behaviours were measured each year of the study. Attitudes were measured in Year 1 and 4. Food consumption and nutrient intake patterns were explored through a '1 week' food and exercise diary (IUNA, 2001). This method is appropriate for use in highly literate motivated populations (Bingham et al., 1994). Dietary data were analysed using the Weighed Intake Software Package (WISP©) (Tinuviel Software, Warrington, UK), to ascertain mean daily macronutrient, dietary fibre and micronutrient intakes. The activity level of this group was measured using a self-reported diary in which respondents described the activity they participated in daily, the level of intensity and the duration during one week (adapted from the instruments used in national and international surveys (Health Promotion Unit, 2003: Institute of European Food Studies, 1999)). Anthropometric measurements including weight, height and waist circumference were taken

following WHO guidelines (WHO, 1995). A sample of practicing teachers was also measured in order to contextualise the findings from the main study. Demographic information was also collected. Nutritional knowledge was measured using the nutrition knowledge test of Parmenter and Wardle (1999) adapted to students of nutrition within a BEd (HE) programme. This test was piloted with groups of Home Economics undergraduates in years 2, 3 and 4 of the course, a group of primary school student teachers and a group of human nutrition and dietetics students in order to establish its validity and internal consistency. Attitudes were measured using a modified version of *the Pan-EU Survey on consumer attitudes to physical activity, body-weight and health* (IEFS, 1999). A further Professional Image Questionnaire was distributed prior to course completion which investigated students' attitude to HE and to their future role. Questions based on a Likert scale were used to measure attitude to healthy eating and lifestyle, values recorded were coded negative to positive and a total numerical and percentage value arrived at in relation to each topic. A brief interview also took place upon completion of the study to give feedback to the students and ask about the effect, if any, of study participation.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS©) Version 12 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL) was used to input and import data and analyse results. Nutrient intakes and anthropometric data were compared with those recommended by the FSAI (1999) and with the NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001), with particular emphasis on macronutrients and key micronutrients identified as important to females aged 18-35yrs. The nutrition and lifestyle behaviours observed in the student group were compared with NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001), SLAN (HPU, 2003) and CLAN (HPU, 2005) using descriptive statistics. Possible associations between behaviour, knowledge and attitudes were explored using Spearman's Rank Order Correlations.

In order to explore if associations exist between dietary and lifestyle behaviours and students' knowledge and attitudes towards nutrition and healthy lifestyle practices on entry to college, a minimum level of nutrient intake of those nutrients identified as important for Irish females in this age group was identified and students achieving these minimum standards were categorised for the purposes of this study as 'compliant eaters'. The Lower Reference Nutrient Intake value (LRNI) (COMA,1991) was used to establish the cut off points (Table 1) as these minimum values only cover 2.5% of the population and deficiency is probable below this level of intake. The lower end (12g/d) of the recommended range for dietary fibre was selected (COMA, 1991).

Table 1 Thresholds used to define compliant eaters

Nutrient	Cut off point (min levels)
Total Fat*	< 33% of total energy
Dietary Fibre*	≥ 12g
Calcium**	≥ 430mg
Iron**	≥ 7.5mg
Folate**	≥ 160µg
Vitamin C**	≥ 32mg

*(COMA, 1991),** (FSAI, 1999)

Results

Data were collected from 51 (all but one who declined to participate) undergraduate BEd HE students in February 2004 from the two colleges in Ireland offering this course and each subsequent February for the course duration. All who were admitted on the courses through the Central Applications Office (CAO) had achieved a minimum of 420 points in the leaving certificate examination plus satisfied matriculation requirements for the Irish Universities (TCD and NUI) (with the exception of 2 mature students who had met mature entry requirements). All but one student had studied Home Economics at second level. All were female and 96% ($n=49$) were aged 18-22 years. Seventy-nine percent ($n=38$) were from social classes I, II, or III (Central Statistics Office (CSO) census classification, 2007). The numbers varied slightly from year to year due to the number of students in the year group and illness.

Anthropometric data

Anthropometric data were gathered from 50 students in Year 1. The mean BMI was 24.4 kg/m² (SD 4.3), identical to that reported in those of similar age and gender by IUNA (2001). Overweight (BMI 25-29.9 kg/m²) or obesity (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²) was observed in 38% ($n=19$) of this group. Mean waist measurement was 76cm (SD 8.67); however, 13 of the group had a waist measurement greater than 80cm putting them at greater risk of a number of chronic metabolic disorders. There was no significant change in these findings throughout the study. Table 2 presents the BMI categories as identified in Year 1 and 4.

Table 2 BMI categories of HE teachers, student HE teachers and North South Ireland Food Consumption Survey

BMI	NSIFCS* $n=265$	HE Teachers $n=61$	Students Year 1 $n=50$	Students Year 4 $n=49$
% Underweight	2.3	0	2	4.1
% Normal weight	64.2	50.8	60	59.2
% Over weight	24.5	31.1	28	24.5
% Obese	9.1	18.0	10	12.2

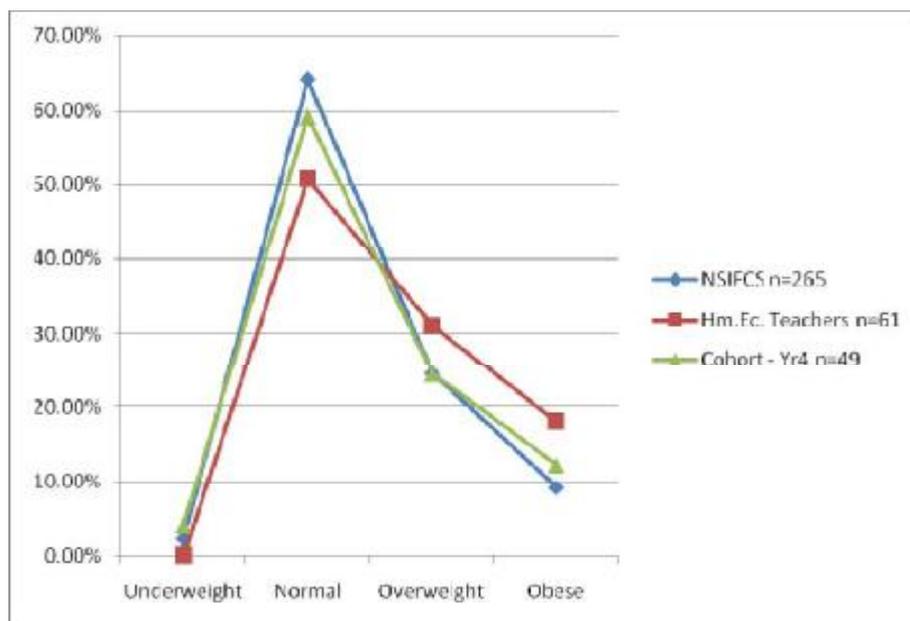
*NSIFCS, North South Ireland Food Consumption Survey (IUNA, 2001).

n = Number of respondents (n for student group differed slightly from Yr 1-4 as 3 left course and 3 rejoined)

To investigate if the anthropometric data observed in this study were reflective only of student life, the BMI of a group of practicing HE teachers was also ascertained. Weights and measures were obtained from 61 teachers and the results are presented in Table 2. Of the 75 eligible teachers attending an Association of Teachers of HE branch meeting, almost half were overweight (BMI > 25 kg/m²) or obese (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²) (49.1%, $n=30$). A higher percentage of the teachers were found to be in the overweight and obese categories than in SLAN (HPU, 2003a) and NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001) (Table 2) but all the teachers were not in the 18-35 year age group. They represent a broader age range (22-65 years) and therefore the HE teachers' BMI data may have been more appropriately compared with the findings of age 36+ from NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001). The teachers' age was not sought as it was thought too personal in addition to weight and height and may have limited participation further. Even accounting for a 1kg variation, 21 (34%) of the teacher group were classified as overweight or obese. This is in line with findings

from NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001) where 33.6% of women aged 18- 35 years were classified as overweight or obese, and indicates that the teacher group behaviour is at best similar to their contemporaries and possibly worse. Figure 1 based on the data in Table 2, displays the comparison of BMI in the student group, the HE teachers and participants in NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001). The results are seen to be broadly similar.

Figure 1 Comparison of teacher and student BMIs with the findings from NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001)



Dietary intake

Dietary diaries were obtained from 48 students in Year 1. Underreporting of energy intake is a common problem in dietary studies. The Modified Schofield equation (COMA, 1991) was used to identify individuals with an EI/BMR below 1.1 and these were categorised as under reporters and their data excluded from dietary analysis (as described in the NSIFCS [IUNA, 2001]). This left a total of 35, 36, 37, 42 dietary diaries respectively in each year. The percentage underreporting is compatible with other studies (Gregory et al., 1990; Price et al., 1997; Becker et al, 1999; McGowan et al., 2001). Fewer students underreported as the study progressed. Proportionally more participants deemed to have underreported were in the overweight and obese BMI categories as is also an established trend (McKenzie, 2002). Of those deemed to record their diets accurately in Year 1, 71% were in the normal range of BMI compared with only 31% of under reporters.

The mean daily intakes of macronutrients across the four years compared to findings in the NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001) are shown in Table 3. Student Home Economics teachers had significantly higher energy intakes ($P < 0.5$) than those reported in the NSIFCS although there was no significant difference in percentage energy derived from fat or carbohydrate. This is explained by the fact that under-reporters were excluded from this study. The participants in this study had a significantly lower percentage energy ($P=0.003$) derived from protein. The respondents in both studies had a percentage energy intake derived from carbohydrate lower than recommended (FSAI, 1999) with a corresponding higher than recommended percentage energy derived from fat and protein.

Table 3 Macronutrients, energy, sugars and alcohol. Year 1-4 with reference to Recommended Dietary Allowances and North South Ireland Food Consumption Survey for females aged 18-35 years

	RDA	NSIFCS		Year 1 Baseline mean		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		n=27 Year 1-4 P	n=27 change in % total energy P
		Mean (SD) n=269 % of total energy	Mean (SD) n=35 % of total energy	Mean (SD) n=36 % of total energy	Mean (SD) n=37 % of total energy	Mean (SD) n=42 % of total energy	Mean (SD) n=42 % of total energy						
Energy (kcal/day)	2150-2300*	1848 (473)	2171 (422)	1937 (311)	2022 (295)	2162 (337)							
Energy (MJ/day)	8.5 with desired body weight and without desired physical activity*	7.7 (2.0)	9.12 (1.77)	8.3 (1.3)	8.5 (1.3)	9.1 (1.4)						0.346*	
Protein (g)	~50.2g= mean RDA	66.5 (17.5)	72.7 (16.9)	67.9 (13.98)	70.1 (14.4)	75.7 (12.7)						0.021*	0.045
Fat (g)	< 33% of total energy**	74.8 (24.2)	88.2 (26.1)	79.4 (17.0)	81.5 (17.6)	79.3 (17.5)						0.265	0.005*
CHO (g)	> 47% of total energy**	217.9 (59.9)	263.8 (44.2)	242.1 (40.72)	246.3 (41.6)	280.2 (37.0)						0.132	0.263
Sugars (g)		83.9 (33.9)	114.7 (27.52)	97.6 (29.35)	102.2 (25.48)	132.8 (43.1)						0.003*	0.020
Alcohol (g)			13.3 (18.8)	11.7 (16.5)	8.3 (8.1)	13.4 (20.6)						0.468*	0.222*
Alcohol* / (g) consumers†			n=32 19.9 (19.9)	n=35 16.1 (17.4)	n=38 10.7 (7.6)	n=35 18.7 (22.3)						0.257*	

*RDA, Recommended Dietary Allowance (satisfies 97.5% of the population), (FSAI, 1999).

** = reported consumers including under-reporters.

n = Number of responde ts.

** (COVA, 1991).

***0.75g/kg of body weight; mean body weight = 66.9kg.

CHO, carbohydrate. Sugars are a sub-set of CHO.

†Friedman Test. Significance -P<0.05.

Table 4 Mean daily intakes of micronutrients Year 1-4 comparison with North South Ireland Food Consumption Survey and recommended intakes.

Vitamin	EAR		RDA	RNI*	NSIFCS Women, 18-35yrs n=269	Baseline data n=35		Year 2 n=36		Year 3 n=37		Year 4 n=42		Sig P	n=27
	COMA (1993)					FSAI (1999)	WHO/FAO (2002)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		
Retinol (µg)					475 (528)	326 (152)	357 (251)	329 (148)	378 (275)					0.823*	
Carotene (µg)					1971 (1496)	2183 (1220)	2079 (1189)	2148 (1676)	2926 (1855)					0.134*	
Vitamin A (µg)	400		600	600	804 (608)	690 (245.8)	703 (359.4)	686.6 (331.0)	866 (441.8)					0.305*	
Vitamin D (µg)			0.10	5	2.8 (3.1)	2.2 (1.5)	2.73 (2.3)	2.6 (2.3)	2.4 (1.6)					0.228*	
Vitamin E (mg)				7.5	8.9 (17.7)	7.4 (3.2)	8.2 (4.6)	7.97 (4.3)	8.5 (3.6)					0.278*	
Thiamin (µg)			100/MJ	1.1	1.5 (2.9)	1.5 (0.4)	2.3 (5.0)	1.6 (0.9)	1.7 (0.6)					0.297*	
Riboflavin (mg)	1.1		1.3	1.1	1.8 (2.6)	1.6 (0.5)	2.5 (5.2)	2.0 (1.1)	2.0 (0.8)					0.057*	
Niacin (mg)			1.6/MJ	16	20.1 (8.6)	21.3 (6.0)	21.3 (8.8)	21.2 (7.3)	22.7 (7.0)					0.104*	
Vitamin B ₆ (mg)			.013/g protein	1.2	2.9 (5.2)	2.2 (0.5)	2.9 (5.2)	2.4 (1.9)	2.4 (0.8)					0.406*	
Vitamin B ₁₂ (µg)			1.4	2.4	3.6 (3.1)	4.2 (1.6)	4.6 (4.5)	4.1 (1.8)	4.5 (1.8)					0.279*	
Folate (µg)	140		300	400	247 (120)	244 (83)	262 (139)	251 (95)	310 (142)					0.626*	
Vitamin C (mg)	30		60	40	99 (191)	103 (48)	95 (63)	99 (57)	179 (152)					0.388*	
Iron (mg)	10		14		14.3 (19.4)	11.3 (4.9)	12.3 (12.6)	11.9 (5.1)	12.4 (4.4)					0.037*	
Calcium (mg)	550		800		714 (312)	839 (243)	795 (255)	912 (388)	950 (277)					0.027*	

RDA= Recommended Dietary Allowance (satisfies 97.5% of the population).
 RNI= Reference Nutrient Intake (satisfies 97.5% of the population) therefore mean
 consumption below these levels do not necessarily indicate deficiency.
 EAR= Estimated Average Requirements (satisfies 50% of the population).

re= retinol equivalents.
 * Friedman Test.
 Significance $p < 0.05$.
 n= Number of respondents.

In keeping with the data on 18-35 year old females in NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001), the mean daily intake of dietary fibre (reported as non-starch polysaccharide) was low (12.2g (SD 2.8)) in this study versus 11.8g (SD 4.1) in NSIFCS. Only one student achieved the recommended intake (COMA, 1991) of 18g NSP/day. This increased to three students in year 4 or 50% who achieved the minimum threshold of 12g/day as specified by COMA (1991).

The mean daily intakes of micronutrients across the four years compared to findings in the NSIFCS (IUNA, 2001) are shown in Table 4. Vitamin intakes are of particular concern to young females as they may be at risk of deficiency (IUNA, 2001). Their intake levels did not differ significantly over the course of the study. Folate's role in the prevention of neural tube defects and the recommendation from the FSAI (1999) that anyone capable of becoming pregnant should take a dietary supplement of 400µg/d in addition to dietary folate highlights the importance of this vitamin for this age group. In Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively, 3, 5, 4 and 1 student/s did not reach the EAR of 140 µg for folate. Fifty percent ($n=21$) of the student group (accurate reporters) did not have an intake of 300µg of folate per day in Year 4. As shown, the mean daily intake of folate for three out of the four years, was lower than the RDA of 300µg.

Vitamin C is also of concern because of its role in non-haem iron absorption but intakes were adequate in this group of students. Vitamin D is important for bone health as it improves the utilisation of calcium and phosphorous supplied in food (Briggs & Calloway, 1979; De Luca, 2004). This group consumed significantly less Vitamin D in Year 1 ($P=0.023$) than the NSIFCS sample though this may not be a problem as Vitamin D is synthesised in the body with sufficient exposure to sunlight. However, according to the 'Recommendations for a National Policy on Vitamin D Supplementation for Infants in Ireland' published by the FSAI (2007), Ireland's northerly latitude means that Vitamin D production from sunlight is severely compromised, and there is some evidence that sub-optimal levels of Vitamin D in Ireland are widespread (FSAI, 2007).

The mean daily intake of iron and calcium over the four years are also presented in Table 4. These levels increased significantly throughout the study and while calcium levels appear adequate many; 49% ($n=17$), had intakes which were below the EAR of 10mg/d for iron in Year 1, 64% ($n=23$) in Year 2, 38% ($n=14$) in Year 3 and 31% ($n=13$) in Year 4, indicating that a large number of students did not meet the average iron requirement for their age and gender.

A significantly lower intake of iron was observed in Year 1 in the student group than that observed in the same age group in the NSIFCS ($P=0.001$) with only 23% meeting the RDA for iron. However, the mean daily intake for calcium was significantly higher among the student group than in the NSIFCS ($P=0.005$) although 31% did not achieve the RDA of 800mg.

Based on having achieved the minimum level of intake of those nutrients identified in Table 1, only 20% ($n=7$) were defined as compliant eaters in Year 1; this figure dropped to 8% ($n=3$) in Year 2, but increased and remained at 19% ($n=7$ & $n=8$) in Years 3 and 4 respectively. It is acknowledged that this does not define optimal eating but rather a low level threshold. Few students ($n=2$) could be regarded as 'compliant eaters' throughout the study, even though the levels of the nutrients specified were set at minimum recommendations (LNRI), not at the RDA or even at the level of EAR which would meet the average needs of 50% of the population.

Table 5 Mean percentage correct answers on the Nutrition knowledge test

		Baseline n=51	Year 2 n=48	Year 3 n=49	Year 4 n=49	
Category	no. of Qs	Mean % (SD)	Mean % (SD)	Mean % (SD)	Mean % (SD)	Significance (P)***
Correct	220	54 (8)	60 (7)	63 (8)	67 (6)	<u>0.000*</u>
'Don't know' or unsure	220	24 (10)	18 (9)	18 (10)	13 (6)	
CDA	52	62 (8)	66 (9)	70 (8)	75 (8)	<u>0.000*</u>
UOT	29	31 (9)	37 (11)	39 (11)	44 (9)	<u>0.000*</u>
FGC	79	63 (11)	68 (9)	69 (11)	73 (8)	<u><.05**</u>
Lifestyle	9	40 (13)	51 (17)	51 (14)	56 (14)	<u>0.000*</u>
N&H	32	47 (11)	57 (11)	60 (11)	64 (10)	<u><0.05**</u>
CF	19	53 (14)	60 (14)	61 (14)	69 (12)	<u>0.000*</u>
Iron	8	51.7 (14.7)	58.8 (14.4)	58.7 (15.8)	63.0 (15.6)	<u>0.008*</u>
Fat	43	59.7 (12.5)	65.6 (11.1)	67.7 (13.4)	72.8 (9.9)	<u><0.05**</u>
Folate	2	87.3 (26.2)	89.6 (23.0)	87.8 (21.7)	88.8 (21.1)	<u>0.820*</u>
Vitamins	8	61.8 (17.4)	64.3 (14.5)	69.4 (14.9)	73.2 (12.9)	<u>0.000*</u>
Vitamin D	2	44.1 (19.1)	47.9 (20.5)	50.0 (17.7)	50.0 (28.9)	<u>0.540</u>
Vitamin C	3	30.5 (19.9)	31.8 (20.7)	38.7 (19.8)	34.5 (16.7)	<u>0.063*</u>
Calcium & BoneHealth	9	43.5 (17.4)	53.5 (16.7)	51.1 (19.5)	63.9 (14.4)	<u>0.000*</u>
Salt & Sodium	10	62.9 (20.5)	68.8 (13.8)	75.3 (12.9)	82.9 (11.7)	<u>0.000*</u>
Dietary Fibre	21	61.9 (13.6)	66.5 (11.6)	67.2 (12.0)	73.5 (9.5)	<u>0.000*</u>
Cholesterol	7	20.7 (18.4)	27.1 (17.3)	30.4 (19.1)	39.1 (26.8)	<u>0.000*</u>
Energy	15	42.9 (11.9)	42.6 (13.6)	45.1 (13.2)	49.6 (10.2)	<u>0.007*</u>
Sugar	13	66.3 (14.8)	68.8 (13.1)	71.5 (13.2)	74.2 (12.6)	<u>0.011*</u>
CHO	12	67.1 (13.8)	72.2 (11.5)	72.8 (10.4)	74.8 (12.0)	<u>0.006*</u>
Protein	9	66.4 (19.8)	73.4 (17.2)	71.8 (21.4)	78.9 (13.7)	<u>0.000*</u>

*Friedman Test.

** One way repeated measures ANOVA Wilks' Lambda.

***Significance= $P \leq 0.05$.

CDA= Current dietary advice.

UOT=Understanding of terms.

FGC=Food groups & constituents.

N&H= Nutrition & health.

CF=Choosing foods.

n= Number of respondents

No associations were observed between total nutritional knowledge or any individual component of nutritional knowledge as defined within the knowledge test i.e. ‘food choice’, ‘food groups and constituents’, ‘nutritional terms’, ‘knowledge of specific nutrients’ as reported in Table 5 and intakes of energy, fat, dietary fibre, calcium, iron, or folate. Furthermore, no relationship was observed between overall score on the knowledge test and being a ‘compliant eater’ or being in a healthy BMI range.

Lifestyle practices

Lifestyle practices such as exercise levels, alcohol consumption and smoking were also investigated as they have an effect on nutritional status and health. Respondents were judged active, moderately active or sedentary based on their reported level of activity as shown in Table 6. As this group is composed of college students participating in a course which involves very little physical work, their college day was considered sedentary. Activity was thus reported in terms of leisure time activity. Only one student could be described as very active in year 1, 2 & 4. These findings compare unfavourably with the CLAN survey (HPU, 2005) which reported that 10% of female students were very physically active, 54% were fairly active, 29% were not very active and only 7% were not at all active. Home Economics student teachers spent on average 0.5 hours/week in vigorous activity, significantly less ($P=0.000$) than their contemporaries (1.4 hours/week reported in NSIFCS). The students’ knowledge about the benefits of exercise based on the results of the knowledge test was not associated with their levels of exercise. Their levels of exercise decreased significantly throughout the course of the study.

Table 6 Reported exercise levels Years 1-4.

Definition	Year 1 <i>n</i> =48 <i>n</i> (%)	Year 2 <i>n</i> =48 <i>n</i> (%)	Year 3 <i>n</i> =49 <i>n</i> (%)	Year 4 <i>n</i> =49 <i>n</i> (%)
not very active*				
< 3x30 minutes of strenuous activity per week or < 5x20 minutes mildly strenuous activities per week	18 (37.5)	28 (58.3)	32 (65.3)	31 (63.3)
moderately active*				
3x30 minutes of strenuous activity per week or 5x20 minutes mildly strenuous activities per week	29 (60.4)	19 (39.6)	12 (24.5)	17 (34.7)
very active*				
>3x30 minutes of strenuous activity per week or >5x20 minutes mildly strenuous activities per week	1 (2.1)	1 (2.1)	5 (10.2)	1 (2)

SLÁN (HPU, 2003a). *Level of leisure time activity. *n*= Number of respondents

As shown in Table 7, alcohol consumption remained high throughout the study. In Year 1, although the mean daily intake of alcohol (13.2g/d (SD 21.1)) appears higher in the student group than the mean daily intake of alcohol reported by the NSIFCS (12.9g/d (SD 15.2)), this

difference is not significant ($P=0.92$). Interestingly, despite underreporting, the mean alcohol consumption for under reporters ($n=13$) was 13.5g/d, slightly higher than the 13.2g/d among those defined as valid reporters. This represents more than one and a half units of alcohol per day on average and 21g/day (SD 23.4) among consumers of alcohol deemed to have accurate diaries ($n=22$). As most students do not consume alcohol daily, it would appear that many consume excessively, intermittently. No association was observed between knowledge about alcohol and consumption of alcohol.

Table 7 Mean daily intake of alcohol and smoking behaviour

Mean daily intake of Alcohol (g). Mean (SD)				
Diaries	Baseline	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Accurate reporters	$n=35$ 13.2 (21.1)	$n=36$ 12.9 (16.2)	$n=37$ 9.1 (8.3)	$n=42$ 13.3 (21.6)
Under-reporters	$n=13$ 13.5 (11.1)	$n=12$ 8.3 (17.6)	$n=12$ 6.0 (7.1)	$n=7$ 14 (14.2)
Consumers: accurate reporters	$n=22$ 21.0 (23.4)	$n=28$ 16.5 (16.6)	$n=31$ 10.8 (8.0)	$n=30$ 18.6 (23.7)
Student smoking rates. % (n)				
Diaries	Baseline	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	$n=48$			$n=49$
Non smokers	67 (32)	n/a	n/a	71 (35)
< 10 per day	13 (6)	n/a	n/a	10 (5)
≥10 per day	21 (10)	n/a	n/a	18 (9)

n = Number of respondents

Tobacco smoking behaviour is of interest because of the recent increase in young females smoking (HPU, 2006). Investigation of smoking practices showed that the majority (67%, $n=32$) do not smoke as shown in Table 7. However, 1 in 3 smokes as opposed to 1 in 4 in the CLAN (HPU, 2005) study. Cigarette consumption was also higher with average consumption of 12 (SD 6.8) cigarettes/day in those who smoke as opposed to 7/day in CLAN (HPU, 2005) and 9.9/day in females aged 18-34 at 3rd level in SLÁN (HPU, 2003). A bias towards a higher incidence of smoking was observed in the rural college (14 in the rural versus 2 in the urban college). None

of this changed significantly over the course of the study. No associations were observed between knowledge about smoking and smoking behaviour.

Nutrition and related lifestyle knowledge

A total of 51 Home Economics students completed the knowledge test under examination conditions in February 2004 (Year 1). The average percentage of correct answers from the 220 item test was 54% as shown in Table 5. The correct responses significantly increased to 67% by Year 4.

Specific knowledge was the most problematic for this group with the lowest mean score achieved for the 29 questions regarding 'understanding of terminology' (31.4% (SD 8.6)). The highest mean scores related to 'food groups and constituents' and 'current dietary advice' with a mean of 63% and 62% respectively. Although these could be considered to be the more practical applied areas of knowledge and all but one respondent had studied Home Economics at second level, the test results indicate relatively low levels of nutritional knowledge in this group initially but this did improve significantly while not achieving what may be considered desirable for future teachers.

The level of detailed knowledge about obesity was low. While 63% ($n=32$) of respondents knew obesity was the most common nutritional disorder in the world, 90% did not know that obesity is represented by a BMI $\geq 30\text{kg/m}^2$. Similarly in relation to dietary fat, only 12% correctly identified that polyunsaturated margarine does not contain less fat than butter and only 20% of respondents knew that oil does not have fewer calories than butter.

Although 88% of students knew that when drunk in excess, alcohol has a destructive effect on all organs, detailed knowledge relating to alcohol was low with over 80% unable to identify the amount of ethanol (8-10g) in 1 unit of alcohol and over 88% unable to recognise the upper legal blood alcohol level limit for driving in Ireland. In Ireland, about 6000 people die each year from smoking-related diseases according to the Health Promotion Unit (2006). The average knowledge score in relation to smoking was 63%. Knowledge in all areas increased significantly over the study period.

Attitudes to Home Economics and their future role

All students agreed that they knew more about nutrition and health as a consequence of studying their college HE course. However the students were less well informed than they consider themselves to be about all the areas of nutrition that were explored. However, there was not as much agreement when it came to this knowledge having a perceived impact on health or behaviour. Only 24% ($n=12$) of this student group thought that people of their age who had not studied HE or other nutrition-related courses are more at risk of diet-related illness than those who have (45% disagreed). The vision this student group present of HE would indicate a belief that educating students about healthy eating is core to the subject of HE. Ninety-two percent of the group agreed that one of the aims of HE is to help students improve their food choices. Forty-one percent ($n=20$) thought that the HE curriculum at second level is sufficiently focused on healthy eating and lifestyle. Their responses regarding the role of the teacher further support this view. Only 10% agree that the teacher's main

purpose is to get pupils through examinations. The most important role for the HE teacher, as perceived by these students (92%, $n=45$) was 'promoting a healthy diet and lifestyle'. The student group appeared to set a high value on their role as models for pupils in the future, as this came up frequently in the Interview, with comments such as 'I believe HE teachers are seen as role models to a lot of students, therefore, it is important that they should follow their own advice' (Student 219, 2007). Eighty-four percent of respondents agreed that HE teachers are important role models for pupils with a mean agreement level of 65%, and no one disagreed with this sentiment. Most students (61%, $n=30$) also recognised that a variety of factors affect their teaching of healthy eating, as well as the influence of an over/underweight teacher. Only 20% ($n=10$) believed that their lifestyle is their own business and has nothing to do with their pupils' learning. Some (39%, $n=19$) thought that post-primary school pupils are more influenced by TV than by their HE teachers when it comes to food and related lifestyle choices. However, 35% ($n=17$) thought pupils, in general, do not have the ability to separate the message from the messenger. It was clear that the student group agreed with the importance of the health-promoting role of the HE teacher and this student group considers role modelling an important component of being a HE teacher.

I believe Home Economics teachers are seen as role models to a lot of students; therefore it is important that they should follow their own advice (Student 219, 2007).

... with my present dietary habits as well as my present body type, I could be seen as a hypocrite for endorsing ideas I clearly don't put into practice (Student 216, 2007).

However, the students current behaviour does not support the contention that they will all make particularly good role models for pupils regarding nutrition and associated lifestyle behaviours. The student group were consistent in believing they and other HE teachers would be more effective in delivering a healthy eating message if they were a healthy weight themselves ($P<0.05$). However, these beliefs were not correlated with BMI, Nutrition knowledge test scores or being a compliant eater ($P>0.05$).

Discussion

This study demonstrates that a group of student teachers completing their four-year undergraduate degree in Home Economics in 2007 did not implement current dietary and lifestyle advice during their course of study. Anthropometric measurements show 38% of the group were either overweight or obese, associated with increased risk to health and quality of life and that one was underweight, associated with reduced long term bone health. The anthropometric data collected from practicing HE teachers do not support the theory that the college years are different or worse than the rest of life, rather that it is part of a continuum.

The dietary behaviour of this group of BEd HE undergraduates on starting college was very similar to others in Ireland of the same age and gender. Their general level of knowledge about nutrition was better than their detailed knowledge. There would appear to be a high degree of confusion about many topics such as fat. While nutrition knowledge improved during the four years of the course, this was not associated with an improvement in dietary and lifestyle practices. As only two respondents could be described as 'compliant eaters'

throughout the four years of the study (using the LRNI as previously described in Table 1), their ability to act as role models for pupils would be questionable.

The students' young age, their experiences of being away from parental control and their level of risk perception perhaps have an effect that outweighs their knowledge and attitudes. To quote some students "I smoke too much but I am too young to care right now...I think when I get older this will improve" (Student, 222, 2004). Perhaps another determining factor is habit, with these students blaming lack of time and pressure of college work for the mismatch between what they know they should do and what actually occurs. "As a Home Economics student I am very aware of the changes I should make to my lifestyle, but unfortunately being a Home Economics student also leaves you with little time to actually implement these changes" (Student, 216, 2004). "It's easier said than done basically" (Student, 219, 2004). It may also be that cultural traditions have a profound influence on the food choices made by these students (Patterson et al., 1995; Gore, 1999; Siewe, 1999; Shankar et al., 2004) which knowledge alone cannot correct. Like any complex human behaviour, food choice is influenced by many interrelating factors and there are many barriers to change (Shepherd and Raats, 2006).

Conclusion

Despite increase in knowledge over the four year period, nutritional behaviour was poor with few students being identified as 'compliant eaters'. Levels of exercise were lower than those reported by their contemporaries, alcohol consumption was high and a higher percentage of the group smoked than reported by contemporaries. There were no associations evident between nutrition and lifestyle knowledge, and behaviour in this group. Despite a high degree of awareness regarding the importance of a HE teacher role modelling good nutritional and lifestyle behaviour, many of these students' behaviours would not set future pupils a good example. Consideration needs to be paid by teacher educators to the provision of self health modules as part of undergraduate education programmes as on several US health and nutrition courses and as suggested by O'Dea & Abraham (2001). Additional research is required into the impact of role modelling on pupil behaviour. The value of knowledge in a subject like HE must be questioned if it is not associated with any change in behaviour as perceived in this case. Furthermore, the credibility of the case for universal access to the subject would be more compelling if objective proof existed that it had an impact on behaviour. Further discussion needs to take place among the profession on a code of ethics which would address the issues discussed here.

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Investigating subject selection of Home Economics in Ireland

Jenny O'Donoghue, Mary Isobelle Mullaney

Abstract

Since 2001 there has been a decline in the number of students studying Home Economics at Senior Cycle in Ireland (State Examinations Commission, 2007). This non-compulsory period of education taken by students between the age of fifteen and eighteen aims to prepare students for the challenges of higher education and the world of work. This paper reports on findings from a survey administered to students (n=153) in three schools investigating factors influencing their selection of Home Economics and the reasons behind their decision. A strong link was found between students choosing Home Economics and having had exposure to the subject, such as having previously studied the subject; having an older sibling who had studied the subject; having received a talk on it; or having investigated what the subject was about.

It can be predicted that the trend towards a decline in the selection of Home Economics could have future repercussions for the teaching profession. Even more far reaching however is the well being of students as individuals and as members of families and society, who by not being exposed to Home Economics may be missing out on a subject that 'does not teach a skill for the sake of that skill, it teaches for application, it teaches informed decision-making in endless scenarios, it teaches evaluative and critical thinking skills, it empowers individuals—no matter what their context' (Pendergast, 2001a, p. 8). Efforts need to be made to increase the level of exposure to Home Economics that each student receives, with significant efforts made at critical points in students' progression through the education system.

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing the selection of Home Economics (HE) at Senior Cycle (SC) level in Ireland. HE is a subject which promotes 'the improvement of living conditions in the home, the institutional household, and the community' (Stage & Vincenti, 1997, p. 17). In Ireland, it has undergone much change in recent years, with the introduction of a revised SC syllabus in 2002.

The context of declining student selection since 2001 could lead to a reduction in the number of HE teaching positions available, and prevent students from developing the 'knowledge, understanding, skills, competence and attitudes necessary to contribute to a personal and family environment conducive to human development, health, leisure, security, and happiness' (Department of Education and Science [DES], 2001, p. 2); which are the aims of the course.

Context

Curriculum in Ireland

In Ireland, education has always been highly valued. Throughout history, Irish people have continually shown a desire to attain an education, by availing of it where it has been offered (DES, 2004a). Further, the Irish Government regards education as a 'central plank in the economic, social, and cultural development of Irish society' (DES, 2004a, p. 5). According to the DES, the European Union (EU) is continuing to recognise that valuable education and training must be provided in order to create a proficient, knowledgeable, and innovative economy, and, an all-inclusive society where everyone has the 'opportunity and the incentive to participate fully in the social and economic life of the country' (DES, 2004a, p. 7).

In Ireland, education is compulsory between the ages of six and sixteen. At approximately age 12 students begin second level education. This consists of a three year Junior Cycle (JC), an optional one year Transition Year (TY) programme which aims 'to promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of pupils and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participative and responsible members of society' (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment [NCCA] 2008, p. 1), and a two year SC.

Senior Cycle Education in Ireland

At SC level, students take a minimum of five subjects; most students take six or seven. Three are compulsory: Irish, English and Mathematics. Admission to third level is based on the results of a student's best six subjects. A modern European Language is also required by many universities. There are written summative external examinations in every subject at the end of a two-year cycle administered by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) and a number of subjects are further assessed including coursework assessment in HE, History, and Geography (DES, 2004b). The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is responsible for reviewing the subject content and relevance of the 34 SC syllabi currently offered. Since 1999, a number of syllabi have been revised, and some new subjects have been introduced (DES, 2004b).

Position of Home Economics within the curriculum

When the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) was founded in 1908, some of its goals were: the improvement of the quality of everyday life for individuals, families and households through the management of their resources; the promotion of the concept of families and households as operating within a larger social, economic and physical environment; and to express the home economics concerns for individuals, families, and households at the United Nations and among other international non-governmental (Stage & Vincenti, 1997). Leaders at the time did not confine HE to the home. One century later, there is a perception, perhaps reinforced by the name, that HE is practiced only within the home. Brown and Paolucci (1979, p. 23) describe the discipline's fundamental rationale as:

Enabling families to build and maintain systems of action leading to individual self-formation and to enlightened, co-operative participation in the critique and formation of social goals and means of accomplishing them.

HE is concerned with facilitating and empowering people to achieve a better quality of life. Barry (1991) argues that if home economists fight to make the subject vibrant and influential, it can earn its rightful place within the national curriculum.

A revised syllabus in Senior Cycle Home Economics

Society is continuously changing, so for HE curriculum to be relevant, on-going review should be carried out. Until 2002, there had been no review of SC HE since 1975. This suggests a failure to fulfil the purposes of curriculum. A HE Course Committee (SC) was established in 1987 by the NCCA to carry out the review. A revised syllabus was approved in April 1997, but was only introduced in September 2002 and first examined in June 2004. The delay in implementing the syllabus was due to assessment issues. The Association of Teachers of Home Economics in Ireland (ATHE) indicated that teachers were not in favour of a practical cookery examination at SC, and so, a Food Studies Practical Coursework Journal was developed by the HE Course Committee as the mode of assessment for practical cookery. Initially, students were required to complete six assignments with two practical applications per assignment. In September 2005, the number of assignments was subsequently reduced to five, with one practical application of each. The practical work itself is not assessed, however, it is a requirement, thereby placing considerable pressure on teachers and students, and posing difficulties for schools without appropriate facilities (Rohan, 2007). The revised syllabus promotes active teaching methodologies, linking and integrating content, and enables teachers to creatively support the diverse learning styles of students. An outline of content is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Revised SC Home Economics Syllabus Content

Area		% of course
Core	Food Studies	45
	Resource management and consumer studies	25
	Social studies	10
Elective 1	Home design and management	
Elective 2	Textiles, fashion and design	20
Elective 3	Social studies	
Total		100

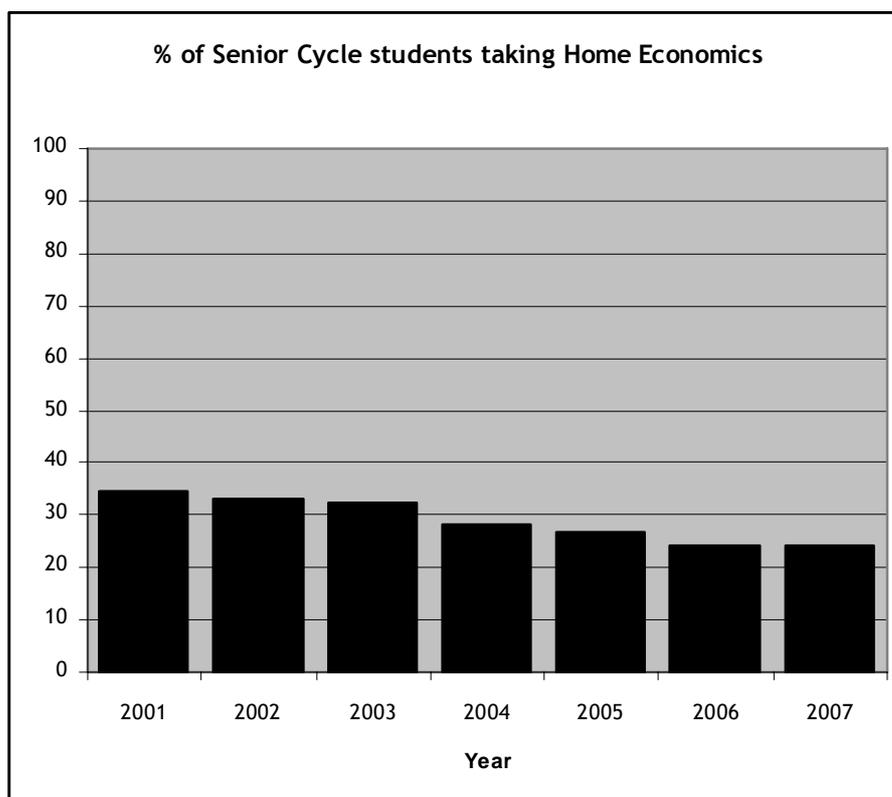
(DES, 2001)

Selection of Senior Cycle Home Economics

SEC statistics indicate that the overall numbers taking the SC have fallen in recent years, possibly due to a decrease in birth rates between 1980 and 1990. Accordingly, the number taking SC HE would be expected also to reduce. However, analysing the percentage of SC students taking HE, gives a more meaningful interpretation of the take-up (see Figure 1).

Between 2001 and 2003, the take-up of HE reduced by about 1% each year. However, when the new syllabus was examined for the first time in 2004, the take-up decreased by more than 4% by comparison to the previous year. An overall decrease of 10.3% was recorded between 2001 and 2007. There appears to be a relationship between the introduction of the revised syllabus and the take-up of SC HE, with an 8.1% decrease in take-up since 2003.

Figure 1 Percentage of Senior Cycle students taking Home Economics (Adapted from SEC, 2007)



Indeed, in 2006 a school inspection report concluded that the decline in numbers was 'due in the main to the recent introduction of the revised Social and Scientific Home Economics syllabus' (DES, 2006, p. 1). While the reduction in national take-up of HE and the introduction of the revised syllabus occurred simultaneously, there is no evidence to suggest that the new syllabus is the main reason for the decline in numbers. Rather than focussing only on this as the sole factor, it is worth exploring the full range of considerations that may be contributing to the decline in numbers.

Challenges faced by Home Economics

A number of issues are typically identified as challenges of the HE profession, including: low status; gender bias; positioning as a non-compulsory subject; student achievement levels. Each of these will be briefly explored.

The Status of Home Economics

Lawson (1993, p. 8) explains that the field of HE appears to have an 'elusive professional status'. Being formally established in the early 1900s, the subject has a relatively short history by comparison to other professions, and has no renowned 'intellectual leaders' or Nobel prize winners. He explains how few outside the field of HE would have heard of Ellen Richards, Beatrice Paolucci or Marjorie Brown. Coppack (1996, p. 15) describes HE as a 'discipline which ties together the most important elements of human living. It could be argued that few disciplines have such a noble and worthwhile mission as does home economics'. If it has such a worthwhile mission, then it is reasonable to question why home economists not taking a 'public stance on critical issues that impinge directly on the family/household' (Lawson, 1993, p. 8). It appears to be the celebrity chefs who are campaigning against issues such as childhood obesity, and television presenters who are giving advice on money management. As Lawson (1993, p. 8) argues, 'Home Economists are seldom represented on consumer panels, statutory boards, media columns, and talk-back radio'. Attar (1990, p. 78) explores the possible reason why home economists have not been more vocal about their field, saying that they, 'seem to have been forever caught between two fears: the fear of marginalisation if they remain as they are, complete with low status and a feminine identity, and the fear of annihilation if they dare to change too much'. Creekmore's comments on the subject of HE, while they may not be written about the present day situation of the subject, are nonetheless relevant today:

Home economics today is in turmoil. There seems to be among us in the field a frantic search for identity and status, a general confusion about what we are doing and what we ought to be doing, and embarrassing sense of guilt about our "image", and, among the dedicated professionals, a deep questioning of the meaning of home economics and its reason for being in today's world (Creekmore [1968] cited in Pendergast 2001b, p. 33).

The field of HE lacks an exclusive body of knowledge. Coppack (1996) highlights the well-known saying, 'knowledge is power', and explores the associated notion of status and respect. HE lacks the respect and status it deserves, because it is 'perceived as consisting of facts taken from other disciplines' (Coppack 1996, p. 15). This, combined with the non academic elements of HE, influence the public's poor perception of the discipline. 'The public does not accord status to praxis that reflects the joy and challenges of daily life yet shuns the arcane character of traditional professions' (Lawson 1993, p. 8). In an Australian survey, documented by Pendergast (1991, cited in Pendergast, 2001b), students felt that more time should be given to practical skills, and less time to theory. This would however, lower the status of HE even further in the eyes of many, reinforcing "stereotypical images of the subject as 'cooking and sewing', which in the context of the feminisation of the subject [reinforce] its negative image" (Pendergast, 2001b, p. 47). HE has never achieved the academic status which its practitioners hoped for (Attar, 1990) and with the recent closure of one of Ireland's HE teacher education colleges, the visible presence of HE at third level in Ireland is further diminished.

Gender balance within Home Economics

In 2007, 90% of SC HE candidates were female. It is very difficult to separate HE from a long history of gender stereotyping, as Lawson (1993, p. 8) notes 'From its inception, home economics has been regarded as women's work and despite the family focus of the founders, the field has been populated largely by women and has directed its message to a female audience.' Madden McLoughlin (1993) draws attention to the underlying suggestion in textbooks of marital failure being attributed to the home not functioning in a manner that is pleasing to the husband. 'A subject then which reinforces female subjugation naturally loses popularity with the more enlightened female (and indeed male) of the 1990s. This may in part explain the falling numbers of students studying Home Economics' (Madden McLoughlin, 1993, p. 4). As part of this research, Dublin schools were contacted to determine if SC HE is offered, and if so, how accessible is it to students, that is, in how many subject groupings is it offered. Seven boys' schools responded, two of which offer SC HE. While the sample was not nationally representative, this lack of provision could be a wider occurrence. However, Madden McLoughlin (1993, p. 5) suggests that 'sex differences in the pupils' own choices' has a greater effect on SC HE take-up than provision of the subject.

Position of Home Economics in schools

HE is not a compulsory subject in Ireland; students choose whether or not they wish to study it. A number of new subjects, for example, Religious Education, have been introduced to Senior Cycle curriculum recently and this could be one of the reasons for a decrease in take-up of HE. Also, the range and number of subjects offered in schools is affected by local resources available such as: the size of the school; specialist study facilities; and the number, expertise, and availability of teachers.

With ever-increasing demand for places at third level, it is worth examining levels of achievement in SC HE. In Ireland the scores of an applicant's six best subjects are added together to get the total number of 'points'. Each third level course has a minimum points entry requirement, determined by: the number of places available on the course; the number of applicants; and the points they achieve. Based on supply and demand, the points increase when the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available on the course. Students must apply through a Central Applications Office (CAO) which administers access to third level, and each student may be offered one course which they can either accept or reject.

A number of weaknesses in the points system have been highlighted by the DES (1999). These include: students selecting subjects in order to maximise their points, rather than choosing subjects that might enhance their personal and social development; a tendency to teach subjects to achieve highly in the examinations rather than meeting the aims of the curriculum; and a negative affect on students' personal development, placing them under high levels of stress.

Levels of achievement in Senior Cycle Home Economics compared with other subjects

At Higher Level, the rate of failure for SC HE is low by comparison to other subjects, which is encouraging. However, the number of 'A' grades is low when compared with other subjects.

Table 2 shows achievement rates in SC HE in 2008, alongside a selection of other popular optional SC subjects, as well as the recently introduced subject, 'Religious Education'.

Table 2 Percentage of 2008 cohort who achieved an 'A' grade or failed a selection of SC subjects (Higher Level)

Subject	'A' grade %	Fail %
Home Economics	8.5	3.4
Religious Education	13.0	5.6
Business Studies	11.2	6.3
Biology	16.6	7.9
Geography	8.0	2.9

(SEC, 2008)

Of the five subjects shown, HE has one of the lowest percentage of 'A' grades. Why then, with so many students competing to get a place in third level, would anyone choose a subject where it seems they have less possibility of achieving a high grade than in other subjects? By contrast, HE has one of the lowest failure rates of the subjects highlighted, with the exception of Geography. This could encourage a proportionally larger number of 'low achievers' to take SC HE which in turn has an averaging effect.

While SC HE is accepted for matriculation at third level there is no course which specifically requests that a student have SC HE. Even the college of HE education does not require SC HE as a prerequisite for entry. Subject choice restrictions are often placed on students by the requirements of their chosen third level course. Many courses do not accept Irish as a modern language, and so students are obliged to take an extra language and many courses require a science subject, leaving the student with only one or two choices.

Given the familiar along with the unique challenges in the Irish context, this study sought to investigate the factors influencing the selection of Home Economics in Senior Cycle. Details of the research design now follow.

Research methodology

Objectives of the research

1. To investigate what influences students' choice of SC HE.
2. To investigate if students have studied HE at a previous level and if this influences their choice of HE at SC level.
3. To find out if students are prevented from choosing HE due to timetabling or other school organisation factors.

4. To examine students' perception of HE and identify to what extent, if any, this influences their decision.
5. To ascertain which areas of HE students find most interesting.
6. To find out which approaches students prefer, for example, theory, practical cookery etc.

Research approach

A quantitative approach was employed for this study, with a group administered survey the research instrument. This allowed information to be gathered from a large number of respondents and the conditions in which the survey was administered ensured a 100% response rate.

Respondents

A convenience sample of SC students in three co-educational schools in South Dublin was surveyed: a Community School; a Comprehensive School; and a Private Secondary School. It was anticipated that the sample would yield data from students of both genders within a range of varied facilities and opportunities. The design called for approximately one hundred and fifty students, this being fifty from each school, and this sample was comprised of students who had not chosen to study SC HE (referred to for ease as non-HE students) and students who had (HE students).

Research design

The survey instrument was comprised of mostly closed questions, although provision was made for respondents to add comments. Some questions were dichotomous, requiring that one box be ticked, while others were multiple-choice, requiring that one or more boxes be ticked.

Respondents were asked to specify which HE courses they had studied previously and to record their level of agreement or disagreement with statements concerning their choice or rejection of HE with regard to perceived:

- ease or difficulty
- gender issues
- importance of HE
- subject status/popularity
- general interest in HE
- parental pressure to take/not take HE
- conflict/connections with other subjects

To avoid a long survey where students skipped non-applicable questions, two different surveys were designed for non-HE students and HE students. The two surveys were printed on different colour paper to make the process less complicated for both respondents and researcher.

Research analysis

SPSS (version 12) was used to analyse survey data. Descriptive statistics were used to develop the profile of the sample. Cross-tabulation identified if there were links between the factors mentioned in the research objectives and the students' selection of SC HE. Respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with a number of statements was calculated to give an overall picture of attitude toward HE and each group's level of 'positivity' was presented.

Participation in this study was voluntary, and consent was sought from school principals *in loco parentis*. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity from the outset, and specific schools were not identified. Data were handled and reported anonymously. The findings are limited due to the sample size but despite the restricted time-frame and resources available, an important researchable question was posed and an insight gleaned into its answer.

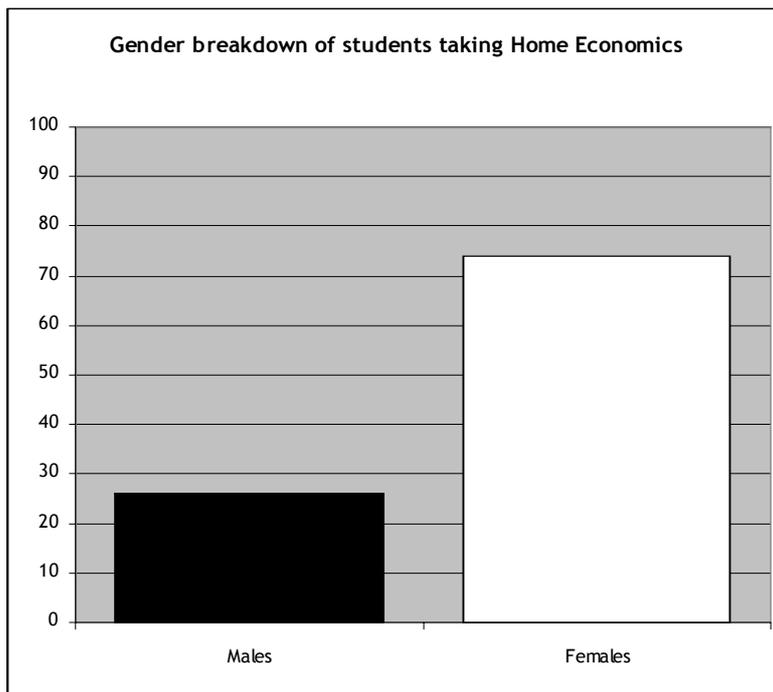
Research findings

Survey population

The total number of respondents was 153 comprising: 56 from a comprehensive school; 44 from a secondary private school; and 53 from a community school. The questionnaire was administered during class time and achieved a 100% response rate. Of the total respondents, 52.3% ($n=80$) were non-HE students (not studying SC HE), and 47.7% ($n=73$) were HE students (studying SC HE). The sample comprised 50% males ($n=77$) and 50% females ($n=76$).

The breakdown of male and female respondents studying SC HE is shown in Figure 2. The percentage of respondents studying SC HE who were male was 26% ($n=19$) and female was 74% ($n=54$).

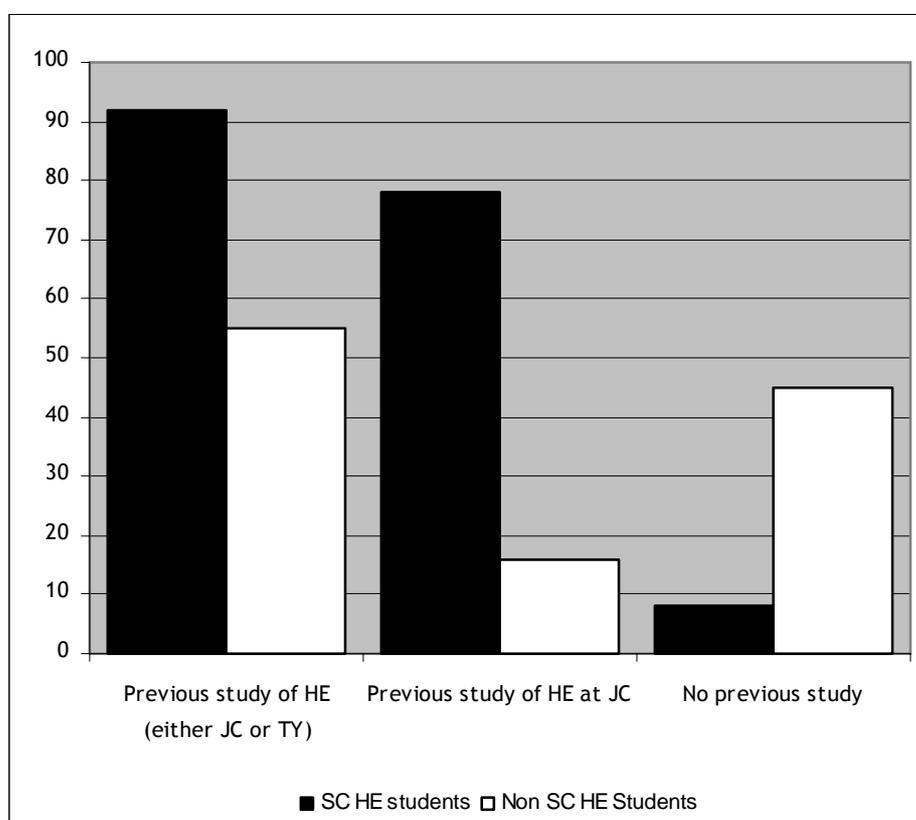
Figure 2 Gender breakdown of respondents studying SC HE



Previous exposure to Home Economics

Respondents were asked if they had previously studied HE at school. The take-up of SC HE was higher among respondents who had (Figure 3), with 92% ($n=58$) previously studying HE for either Transition Year (TY) or Junior Certificate (JC). 78% ($n=49$) had studied it at JC, and 8% ($n=5$) had not studied it previously. By contrast, 55% ($n=37$) of non SC HE respondents had previously studied HE for either TY or JC, 16% ($n=11$) had studied it at JC, and 45% ($n=30$) had not studied it previously. A one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level. Of the 153 respondents, 113 (73%) had studied HE previously; 90 had liked it, 15 had disliked it and 8 were unsure.

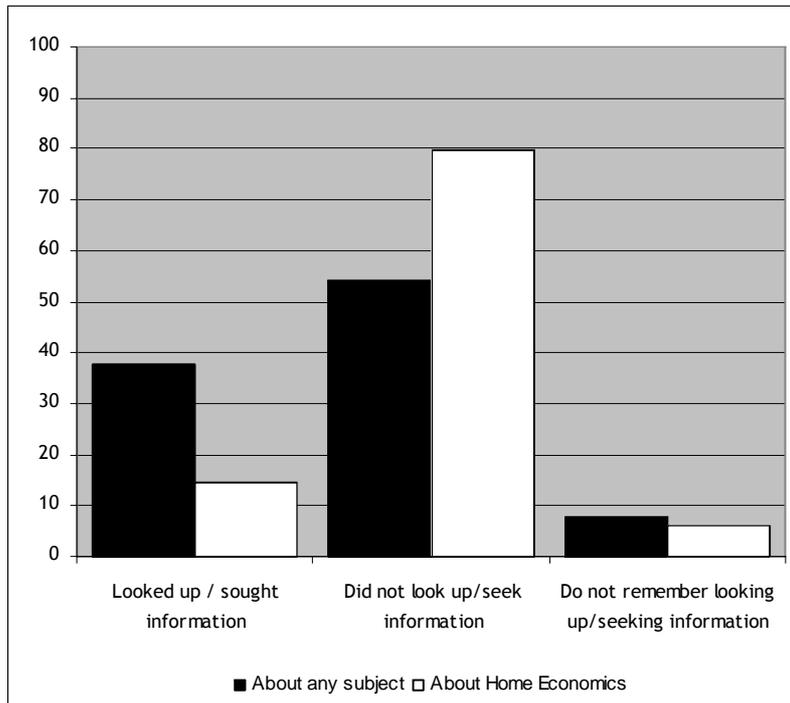
Figure 3 Affect of previous study of HE on take-up of SC HE



The majority of respondents (74.7%, $n=112$) did not have an older sibling who had studied SC HE. However, when the HE and non HE groups were compared; 16% of students studying HE at SC had an older sibling who had studied it before them, while 9% of students not studying HE at SC had an older sibling who had studied it before them.

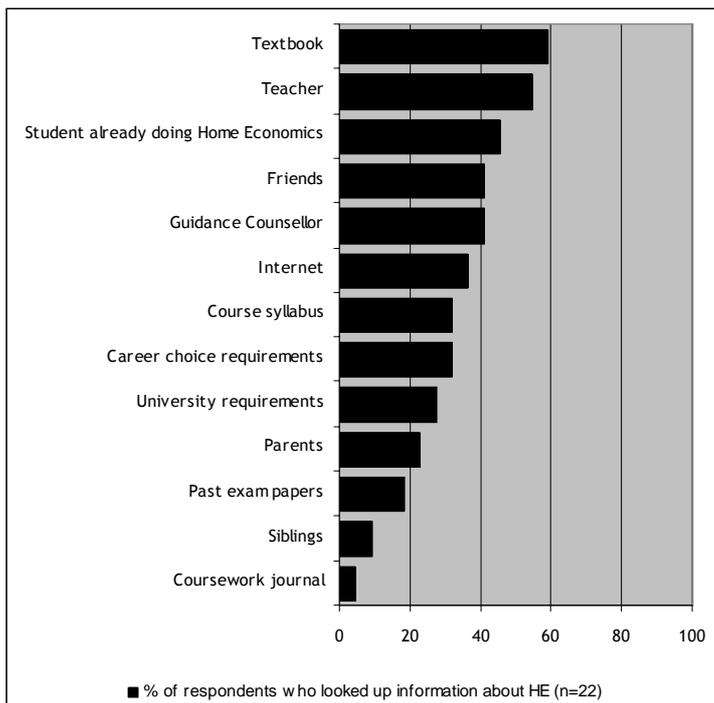
Respondents were asked if they investigated or sought information prior to choosing their SC subjects, with just 38% ($n=57$) responding in the affirmative. Even less (14.4%, $n=22$) looked up or sought information specifically about HE.

Figure 4 Percentage of respondents who looked up information prior to choosing SC subjects



The majority of respondents who had sought information specifically in relation to HE (Figure 5) obtained information or advice from the textbook and people, whether that was a teacher, guidance counsellor or a friend.

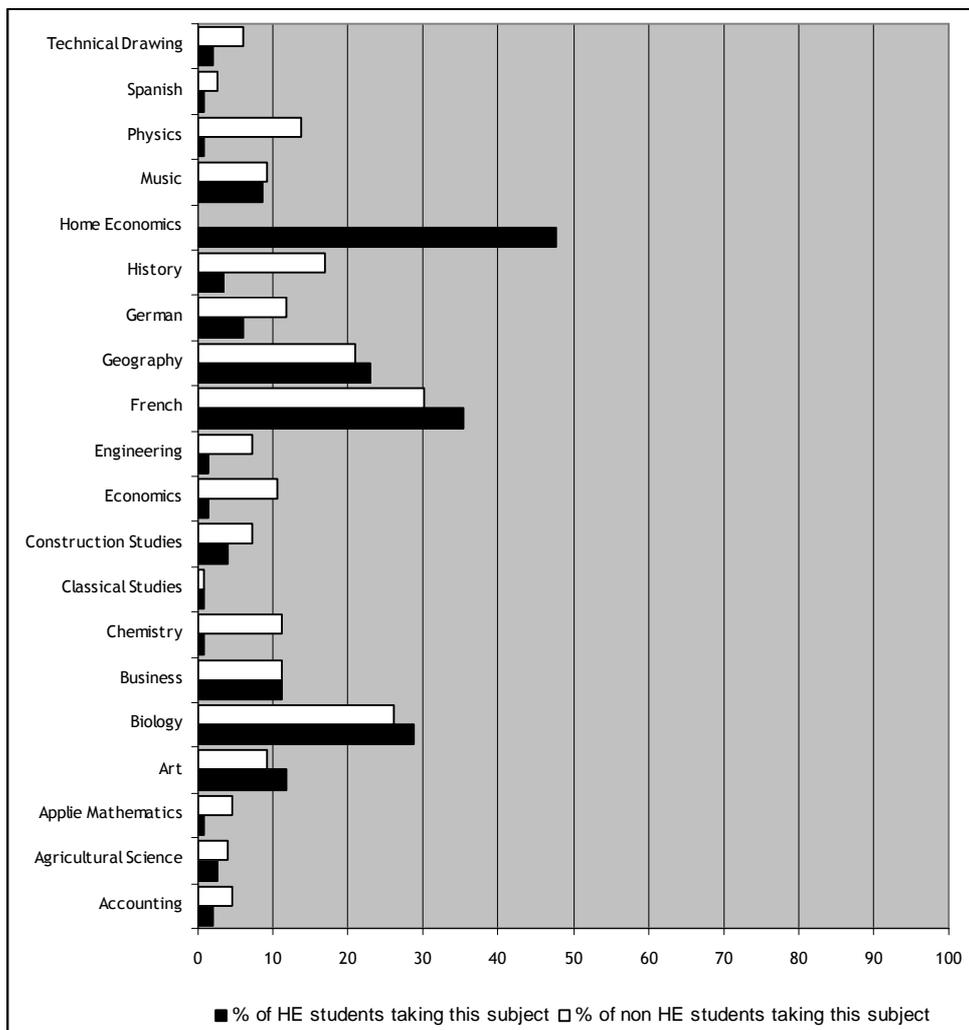
Figure 5 Sources of information about HE used by respondents



The questionnaire asked respondents to state their level of agreement with statements in relation to why they chose or rejected SC HE. Fifty two percent of HE students had heard good reports about the subject before choosing it, 27% of non-HE students had heard bad reports about the subject before choosing it. Six non-HE students specifically stated that they did not choose SC HE because they heard there was a lot of work involved.

Competition with other Senior Cycle subjects

Figure 6 shows which subjects respondents chose to study at SC.



The most popular other subjects studied by HE students in this study were French (35.3%, $n=26$), Biology (28.8%, $n=21$) and Geography (22.9%, $n=17$). This appears to be the most popular subject combination for this cohort. The most popular subjects for non-HE students were French (30.1%, $n=24$), Biology (26.1%, $n=21$), Geography (20.9%, $n=17$), and History (17.0%, $n=14$). Even though the majority of non-HE students are males and the majority of HE students are females (Figure 2), similar subjects were popular among both groups.

Of the non-HE students, 13 specifically stated that they decided not to study SC HE because they preferred other subjects and 16 said they did not choose SC HE because it was not as useful or relevant for their chosen career or college course, as other subjects. These students did not specify which career paths they had chosen. By contrast, 9 HE respondents specifically stated that they chose SC HE because it would be useful in their chosen career or college course, giving examples such as, HE teaching, nursing, nutrition and dietetics, early childhood education, special needs assistant work, Montessori teaching, and interior design.

Many HE students (64%, $n=47$) thought there was a reasonable overlap of content between HE and other subjects while non-HE students (46%, $n=37$) were unsure about content overlap.

Respondents' levels of positivity towards Home Economics

As part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with a number of statements in relation to why they chose or rejected SC HE. The statements were posed positively for HE students and negatively for non-HE students. To achieve a score for positivity, non-HE students, scores were transposed. A sum of scores for each statement was found, and thus, a 'positivity' level acquired. Some neutral statements were phrased identically on both questionnaires, and were dealt with separately.

For non-HE students, a high level of *disagreement* with a *negative* statement indicated a 'positive' attitude towards HE, shown in green, in Table 3. The highest *disagreement* level was 71.9% for, 'My parents did not want me to do it'. This indicates that parents of non-HE students generally did not discourage their children from taking SC HE. The lowest *disagreement* (34.1%) was for; 'it is not easy to do well' indicating that many non-HE students think it is difficult to do well in HE. A 40.6% *disagreement* level was found for, 'If I work hard, it would still be difficult to get an A'.

To compute the 'positivity' level for HE students, the same procedure was carried out; a high level of *agreement* with a *positive* statement indicated a 'positive' attitude towards HE (shown in blue in Table 4).

For HE students, the highest level of *agreement* recorded was 75.7% for 'I liked it better than the other subjects offered'. A 62.3% *agreement* level was recorded for the statement 'If I work hard, I could get an A'. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the scores of non-HE students (40.6% 'positivity' level) and HE students (62.3% 'positivity' level) for this statement. A statistically significant difference ($p<.05$) was found, indicating that HE students were more confident that they could get an 'A' than non-HE students.

Table 3 Negative attitudes towards HE from non-HE students

Non HE students' level of disagreement	
My parents did not want me to do it	71.9%
The term 'Home Economics' put me off	66.3%
I did it for Junior Cert or Transition Year but disliked it as a subject	62.5%
I would not like the practical element of the subject	61.9%
It sounds harder than other subjects	61.3%
It is not a useful subject	58.8%
I heard bad reports about the subject	57.2%
Very few of my friends were doing it	55.3%
You learn life skills which are not useful beyond school	55.3%
I disliked the fact that a new course was introduced recently	53.4%
I do not think that it is an important subject in today's society	52.2%
I have little interest in cooking, textiles, nutrition etc.	50.9%
It does not deal with practical problems of every day life	49.7%
I do not think it is a popular subject	47.2%
I think the subject has a poor image	46.9%
There is a coursework journal to do so I would have to work hard throughout the year	45.0%
It was timetabled at the same time as another subject I wanted to do	40.9%
If I work hard, it would still be difficult to get an A	40.6%
It will not get me the points I need to get into college	38.8%
I do not like it as much as the other subjects that were offered	36.6%
There is not enough overlap of content with other subjects	35.6%
It is not easy to do well	34.1%

Table 4 Positive attitudes towards HE from HE students

HE students' level of agreement	
You learn valuable life skills which are useful beyond school	75.7%
It is a useful subject	74.3%
I have an interest in cooking, textiles, nutrition etc	71.9%
I would like the practical element of the subject	71.9%
I did it for Junior Cert or Transition year and liked it as a subject	69.9%
I think it is an important subject in today's society	67.8%
It deals with practical problems of every day life	65.8%
There is a coursework journal so my grade is not dependant on the final exam	64.0%
If I work hard, I could get an A	62.3%
There is good overlap of content with other subjects	56.5%
I liked it better than the other subjects offered	54.1%
A lot of my friends were doing it	51.0%
I think it is a popular subject	50.0%
I heard good reports about the subject	47.3%
It did not clash with other subjects I wanted to do	45.9%
It sounds easier than other subjects	39.7%
I think the subject has a good image	39.7%
It is easy to do well	39.4%
It will get me the points I need to get into college	37.0%
My parents wanted me to do it	36.3%
I like the sound of the term 'Home Economics'	35.3%
I liked the fact that a new course was introduced recently	33.6%

As discussed already, a 34.1% *disagreement* level was recorded for non-HE students for the statement 'it is not easy to do well'. For HE students a 39.4% agreement level was recorded for the opposite statement, 'It is easy to do well'. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare these scores and there was not a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level, suggesting that neither group think it is easy to do well in SC HE, but HE students think it is possible to get an 'A' if hard work is put in. The mean 'positivity' level of each group was found, along with the standard deviation, and these are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Comparison of 'positivity' of non-HE students and HE students

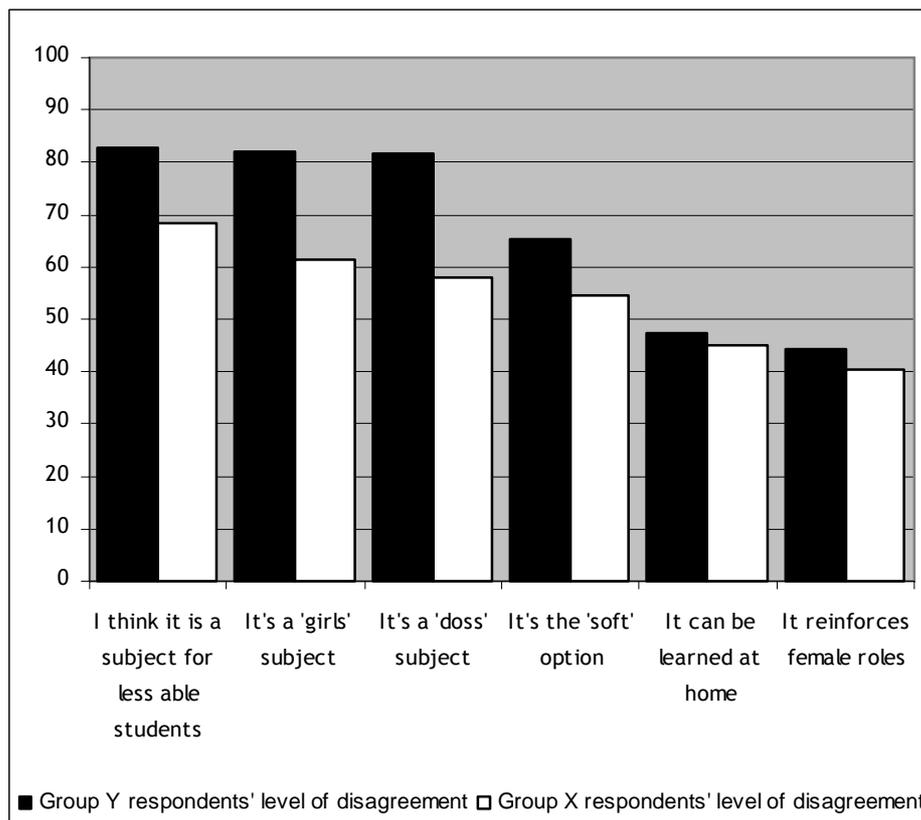
	Non-HE students	HE students
Mean	51.0	54.1
Standard Deviation	10.5	14.5
Minimum	34.1	33.6
Maximum	71.9	75.7

While HE students were more positive towards HE than non-HE students (3.1% more) this is not statistically significant ($p \geq .05$).

Analysis of neutral statements

The neutral statements were dealt with separately to the positive and negative statements. Both groups' level of disagreement was explored (Figure 7). Each of the statements could be viewed as either positive or negative.

Figure 7 Students' level of disagreement with neutral statements



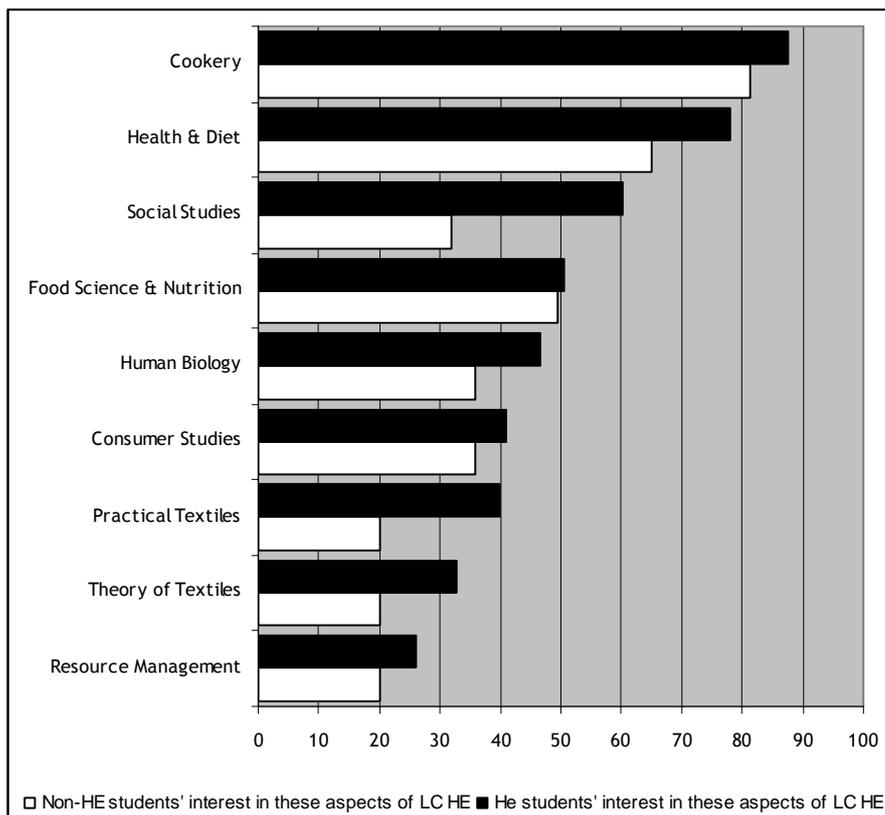
HE students showed a very high level of disagreement with most of the statements. There was an 82.9% *disagreement* level with the statement, 'I think it is a subject for less able students'. This would validate this group's low level (33.6%) of agreement with the statement 'It is easy to do well' as reported earlier. For the statement, 'I think it is a subject for less able students', non-HE students' disagreement level was lower than HE students' (68.4%). For 'It is a 'girls' subject', an 82.2% *disagreement* level was recorded from HE students, 61.6% from non-HE students. However, there was only a 44.2% (HE students) and 40.6% (non-HE students) disagreement with 'It reinforces female roles'. The largest divergence between the two groups was for the statement, 'It is a doss subject' (difference of 23.4%). The word 'doss' is a slang term used to label certain subjects as worthless or irrelevant.

For all statements, HE students showed a higher level of disagreement than non-HE students. The mean level of disagreement for all of the neutral statements was 12.6% higher for HE students than it was for non-HE students. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the two means and there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level.

Respondents interest in aspects of Senior Cycle Home Economics

Respondents were asked to identify areas of interest to them regardless of whether they were presently studying HE or not (Figure 8).

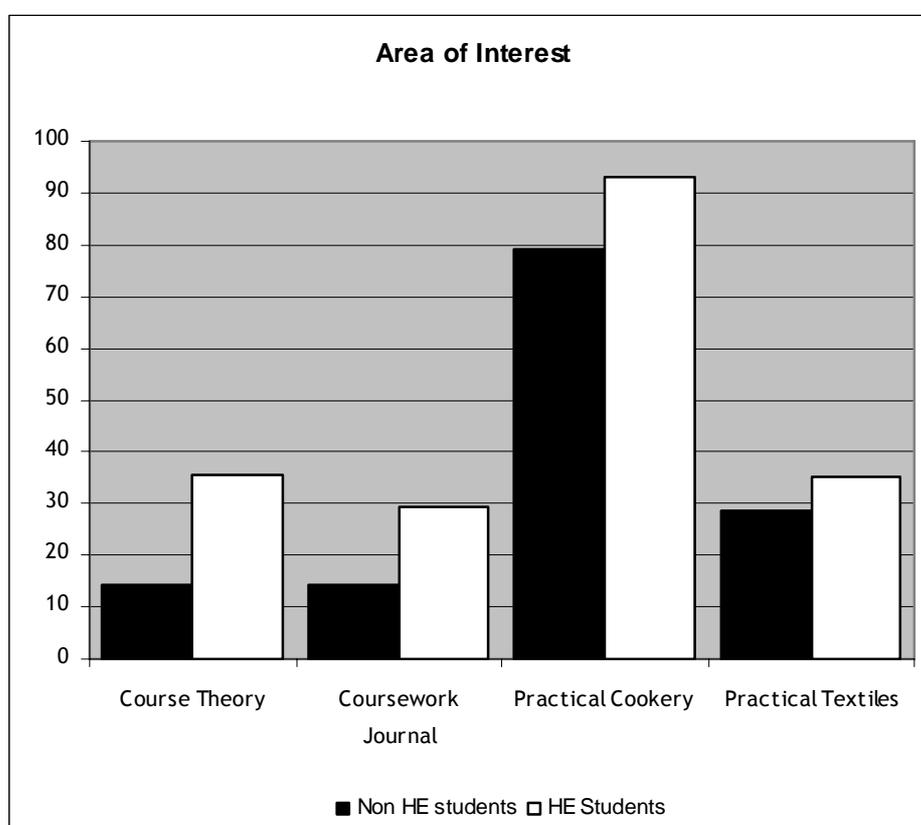
Figure 8 Percentage of respondents who identified areas of interest within HE



Both groups showed the most interest in 'cooking', identified by 87.7% ($n=64$) of HE students and 81.3% ($n=65$) of non-HE students. The lowest area of interest was 'resource management' (26%, $n=9$) of HE students and 20% ($n=16$) of non-HE students. For most areas, HE students showed slightly more interest than non-HE students. HE students showed a much higher interest than non-HE students in the areas of 'social studies' and 'practical textiles'.

Students were asked to specify their level of interest in the following teaching approaches of the revised SC HE course; course theory; coursework journal; practical cooking; and practical textiles (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Percentage of respondents who identified interest approaches of the HE course.



All respondents showed great interest in 'practical cooking'; 79.2% of non-HE students ($n=63$), and 93.2% of HE students ($n=68$). The areas of least interest to non-HE students were 'course theory' and 'coursework journal' (14.3%, $n=11$). HE students showed least interest in 'coursework journal' (29.2%, $n=21$). Two HE students specifically stated they 'did not like' the 'coursework journal'.

For non-HE students there was a 45% *disagreement* level (Table 4) with the statement 'There is a coursework journal so I would have to work hard throughout the year', suggesting that just over half of these respondents may have been deterred by the notion of continuous assessment. For HE students, there was a 64% *agreement* level (Table 5) with the opposite

statement, 'There is a coursework journal so my grade is not dependent on the final exam', suggesting that more than half of the respondents appeared to be 'positive' about continuous assessment.

When given an opportunity to add extra comments, seven HE students specifically stated that they liked cookery, and 6 felt that more time and emphasis should be given to it. Four HE students stated that they liked textiles. Ten HE students found HE to be an enjoyable subject, and said that is why they had chosen it. Ten HE students stated that they had chosen SC HE because it was a useful and important subject.

However, when non-HE students were given an opportunity to add extra comments, 13 of them said they had not picked HE because they had no interest in it or did not like it. One student said they had "No interest whatsoever. I know about hygiene, cooking etc. Why should I waste my time learning it in school?!"

Three non-HE students did not pick HE because they felt that they were not good at the 'practical elements' of the subject. Five non-HE students (three of whom were male) said they did not choose SC HE because they think it reinforces female roles or is a subject for girls. One student said that "The aprons are too female and degrading."

Discussion and conclusion

Possible reasons for the decline in take-up of Senior Cycle Home Economics

Each of the schools surveyed had experienced a decrease in SC HE take-up. At the time of the survey, the Comprehensive school had only 10 students from a year group of 150 studying SC HE. So why are increasing numbers of students choosing not to study HE?

Respondents chose SC HE because they placed high value on its content, agreeing that it is an important subject in today's society, which teaches crucial life skills useful beyond the classroom (Table 5). They showed great interest in the area of 'practical food studies'. One student commented that "It's a useful subject in today's society and there's a lot more to it and behind it than a 'girls' subject. It helps all people!"

By contrast, non SC HE respondents do not consider it relevant to their chosen career path, and they feel it would not get them sufficient points to proceed to college (Table 4). One student stated that HE "Has no real relevance to what I want to do in college or later in life"

Only 27% ($n=41$) of respondents were aware that a new SC HE syllabus had been introduced, and so it can be deduced this was not the main factor affecting the take-up of SC HE among these respondents.

Coursework journals

When asked about coursework journals, many students not studying SC HE were not in favour of continuous assessment, while more than half of the students studying SC HE were. When asked to specify their level of interest in areas of the course, the 'coursework journal' was

the least popular with both groups. The coursework journal was chosen by the HE Course Committee (SC) to examine practical cookery. Interestingly, both groups showed great interest in 'practical cookery'. Many students indicated that they enjoy the practical elements of the assignments, but dislike writing them up. This raises questions about the suitability of the Coursework journals as an assessment technique.

Grade achievements in Senior Cycle Home Economics

In comparison to other subjects, SC HE has a lower percentage of 'A' grades and a higher pass rate, suggesting that many 'lower ability' students are taking HE. Many respondents felt that HE would be a difficult subject to do well in.

Many SC HE respondents were unhappy with their choice to study HE and found it much harder than anticipated. Eight respondents specifically said they were not happy studying SC HE and could see that they had made the wrong choice. This could indicate, for example, that respondents were misinformed about what would be required of them; that they were not prepared for the increased level of work required by SC as opposed to JC; that the SC HE course is too demanding for students; or that these respondents are 'less able' students. A number of respondents considered the scope of the course to be too wide.

Status of Senior Cycle Home Economics

The status of HE is influenced by people's opinions of it and what they perceive it to be. The perception of the name 'Home Economics' may influence the subject's status, however, many non SC HE respondents disagreed that the name dissuaded them from choosing the subject. Many respondents who chose SC HE said that the name did not influence their decision.

Gender balance within HE was examined, with more females sitting the SC HE examination than males in 2006. A high number of SC HE respondents said they disagreed that it is a girls' subject, while fewer non SC HE students disagreed. However, many respondents agreed that HE 'reinforces female roles'. While the majority of each group see HE as a subject for both sexes, there is an underlying factor which 'reinforces female subjugation' Madden McLoughlin (1993). One respondent stated that HE is 'a redundant subject that is basically training girls to be housewives, especially with regards to sewing and looking after babies'; an interesting comment, considering that the 'Textiles, fashion and design' elective is not taught in this respondent's school and that childcare does not feature on the revised syllabus. Coppack (1996) states that power and status are attributed to knowledge, however most respondents indicated a dislike for 'course theory' in HE but liked and valued 'practical cookery'. An increase in the amount and recognition of practical work may improve students' enjoyment of HE. However, the status would most likely decrease, and 'stereotypical images of [HE] as 'cooking and sewing', which in the context of the feminisation of the subject reinforce *its* negative image' (Pendergast, 2001b, p. 47), and may therefore cause less students to choose it at SC.

Clashes with other subjects

New subjects, such as Religious Education, may be influencing the take-up of SC HE, however, Religious Education is not taught at SC in the three schools surveyed, so no clash was

experienced with it. The Comprehensive and Secondary Private schools give students four groups of SC subjects, and they must choose one from each group. This is the method used in many schools, some of whom offer HE in more than one subject grouping, while others only offer it in one group, thus creating competition between HE and other subjects. In one of the schools surveyed, students are asked to list subjects in order of preference and the school aims to accommodate every student. Many non-HE, respondents stated that HE was timetabled at the same time as another subject they wanted to do. It would be interesting to carry out a nationwide study of students to discover if take-up of SC HE is higher in schools where students have an unrestricted choice of subjects.

A high number of SC HE respondents found there to be a good overlap of content between SC HE and other subjects. This is encouraging, considering the reduced amount of physiology on the revised SC HE syllabus. The previous HE syllabus would have been highly compatible with SC Biology.

Exposure to Senior Cycle Home Economics

This study reveals that many of the SC HE students had more exposure to HE in various forms than the non SC HE students had.

It was reported that most SC HE respondents had studied it previously, for JC or TY. It seems that previous study of HE is almost a prerequisite to students choosing SC HE. SC HE respondents who had previously studied HE said they had a positive experience, and this may have influenced them to choose SC HE. Nearly half of the non SC HE respondents had not studied it for JC, and many said that this was why they did not consider SC HE as an option. This then poses a serious question; why did the students not chose it for JC? In order to promote the subject, efforts could be made during first year and TY to expose students to HE. Many schools provide short modules where students can get a feel for what HE is all about. Ultimately, each student's choice of SC subjects is their own decision. However, if students are given exposure to HE at various stages prior to choosing their subjects SC, then at least they would be in a position to make an informed decision.

A higher occurrence of older siblings who had studied SC HE was reported among respondents who were studying the subject themselves, than among those who were not studying it. Respondents may be unaware of the possibility that real exposure to HE, even indirectly through a sibling, does not turn them off the subject, as they may become aware of what to expect of SC HE

It was reported that many respondents did not look up information or seek advice prior to choosing subjects for SC. Further research could consider if their decision is based solely on subject talks received in TY, or are they just choosing subjects they did for JC, and not even considering alternatives for SC?

Most respondents received talks prior to choosing SC subjects. The talks are time-consuming, but critical in informing students about subject options, as more than half of the respondents said they did not look up information or seek advice prior to choosing their subjects. This issue is a concern for all subjects, not just HE

Recommendations

Schools can promote Home Economics by: providing well resourced HE facilities; timetabling HE in as many subject groupings as possible; and by ensuring adequate time for the subject, including one double class period per week. Teachers can promote Home Economics by: keeping up to date with developments in the subject; planning work to ensure integration of theory and practical aspects of the subject; using active teaching methodologies in delivery of content; providing practical activities and by availing of the continuous support given by the HE Support Service and ATHE.

Efforts can be made to increase the level of exposure to HE that each student receives, especially at critical points in students' progression through the education system; in 6th class before JC subjects are chosen, and in TY when HE 'taster' modules are taught. Students should be empowered to make informed decisions regarding their subject choices.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate possible reasons for the recent decrease in the take-up of SC HE, and to explore factors influencing students' decision to choose or reject the subject for SC. If the decline in take-up of HE continues, it could have repercussions for the future availability of HE teaching positions, but, more seriously deny students who would benefit from the subject, the opportunity to acquire and develop knowledge, understanding, skills, competence and attitudes important for both personal and family well being, and development, health, leisure, security, and happiness' (DES, 2001); which are the aims of the SC HE course.

If a similar study was carried out in the future, it would be beneficial to increase the sample size and look at the national situation, or to survey students at different stages in their education, for example, in sixth class, and again at the end of TY after students have chosen their SC subjects, but before they begin to study them.

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Biographies

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IFHE Congress Keynote and Plenary Papers

Families need more earthworms: On the utility of living together—a plea

Thomas Gröbly

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

Abstract

'Families need more earthworms - on the utility of living together—a plea'. My thoughts evolved from that title. Earthworms are wonderful animals. Their contribution to nature is of tremendous value. Without them we would not have much to eat. They are a foundation for the variety of fauna and flora we depend on existentially. However the title also needs to be understood the other way round. 'Earthworms need more families'. The family is an important place. It is a breeding ground for values such as respect for nature, sustainability, frugality, meaning of life, quality of life, the ability to maintain a relationship or the development of global awareness. Humankind is confronted with major tasks: the handling of nature in a sustainable manner, the fight against poverty, misery, violence as well as the remodeling of the economic system based on profit into a system based on life. A further challenge is demographics: a decreasing number of young people have to look after an increasing number of old people. Women are asked to have more children. However it is not that simple as free women and free men refuse to be objectified. The family's status in society needs to be improved in order to increase the birth rate and to strengthen the family as a breeding ground for values. People with a great sense of responsibility, empathy and global awareness do not appear out of nowhere. They only develop their skills within the frame of an unconditional, loving and emotionally committed relationship. Society's ideational and financial appreciation is essential for families to fulfill these tasks. The concept of an unconditional basic income is one approach. However with regard to home economics, people are also challenged to act self-reliantly and to uphold the value of unconditional relationships.

Introduction and thesis

'Families need more earthworms - on the utility of living together—a plea'. My thoughts evolved from that title. Earthworms are wonderful animals. Their contribution to nature is of enormous value. Without them we would not have much to eat. They are a foundation for the variety of fauna and flora we depend on existentially. However the title also needs to be understood the other way round - 'Earthworms need more families'. The family is an important place. It is a breeding ground for values such as respect for nature, sustainability,

frugality, meaning of life, quality of life, the ability to maintain a relationship or the development of global awareness.

We live in a complex globalized world but I will restrict myself to the role of families in developed countries. By 'family' I refer to all forms of living with children, not necessarily based on biological relation, but also to social institutions such as schools or the crèche. The call for reevaluation of middle-class families with a mother, a father and two children, in my opinion, is outdated. I am an advocate for a variety of families: extended families, small families, collective families or single parent. The criteria for a healthy environment in which children can live and grow, whether in shared houses or schools and crèches, is a committed and loving relationship. It is neither gender specific nor bound to blood relation or to a man and a woman living in partnership. Where up to a hundred years ago it was a social necessity for a woman to have children, this today has become a conscious decision¹. Konrad Adenauer said People have children anyway². He was wrong. The issue of 'children' is not an issue of 'women' or an absolute necessity; it is a social and political challenge. Women can't be blamed for the aging of our society.

The origin of economy lies in home economics. In it we find a vast creation of values. That is why I understand all the work performed by families and communities as economy. I don't separate private enterprise from domestic work because it is problematic for the ethical question of the good life. Domestic work is usually underrated or its value negated. Cooking, cleaning and looking after children are being idealized and reduced to acts of love. To make an overstatement: there is no private enterprise without domestic work. The topic of this congress is 'reflecting the past and creating the future'. I will analyze the present, specify challenges and discuss steps towards the future for you to create "this future".

White man and ethicist

I grew up as a white man in a middle-class family. Today, I am 50 years old. I experienced 'house economics' through my mother. I did not see it as a chore, but rather as a natural matter of course. It is only today that I recognize the great effort my mother has put into it. My father was occupied by his challenging job as an engineer and left it to my mother to do all the chores and look after my two brothers and me. In my first profession I was a farmer. That's probably why I am fond of earthworms. I was thirty years old when my daughter was born and it was clear that my partner and I would share our chores.

Why am I telling you that? I am convinced that my life experience has led me to my current thinking. My thoughts shall be a contribution towards an analytical discussion. The intention is to show ways how to tackle the challenges the future has in store. Ideally, my thoughts shall encourage you and give some hope.

¹ Antje Schrupp: *Methusalems Mütter. Chancen des demografischen Wandels.* Königsstein/Taunus 2007. S. 64f.

² ebd. S. 38

Ethical assumptions

I won't serve you perfect solutions on a silver platter. Instead, I offer plausible and well-founded solutions. If you do not agree with them we will have to engage in a dialogue. I will happily give up my position as long as you can come up with valid arguments. Freedom is pivotal. As long as I have the freedom to make a case I must allow you the same right. Only through participation and dialogue will we be able to make decisions.

In order to explain the importance of families and the 'home economics' for future challenges, I will take two steps. It is assumed that families are often exposed to the risk of poverty.

First I try to follow a question through to its logical conclusion. The conclusion becomes my central theme. Families are of great importance for the adaptability to future needs, within them values and norms penetrate to the deep layers of humans. Young people grow into individuals through loving and committed relationships and develop values needed to face positive challenges such as happiness, solidarity, frugality, critical faculty and global awareness. Families shape the view of the world, of humans, of women and men, and also shape the patterns of behavior and consumption. The family defines what kind of personality young people eventually will have. What is needed is a radical support for families.

Second I am mapping out passable approaches for the here and now against the background of my central ideas. The increase of self-confidence of mothers, fathers and workers in house economics, or the political revaluation of families, education and professional development as well as financial improvement are all worth mentioning. It means for schools to consistently extend their daily structures and it means to introduce all-day school. There are plenty more ideas.

The method in both steps is based on change of perspective. In other words I will put myself in my opponent's shoes. If I am not in a position to get an answer from another person I will address the question to myself, such as what do children expect from life in 20 or 50 years. There is a high possibility that in 50 years they wish for clean water, healthy food, clean air, social life, acceptance, and to live in a safe world. It is also an ethical challenge not to diminish the options of action. If people in 20 years are forced to deal with rubbish, with open and structured violence based on social injustice or with diseases of civilization we have caused by our behavior now their options of action will be limited. Ethics is often being blamed for being an instrument which could be applied almost at will in a pluralistic world. Ethics is not user-defined because fundamental values such as the right to live, right to food, self-determination, integrity or human dignity are inalienable. They have a high degree of plausibility and must not be abandoned. In contrast other values such as loyalty towards the country or the company are negotiable. The most important foundation of our society is freedom. I understand freedom as "freedom in relatedness"³. Freedom without relationship and commitment is arbitrary which leads to injustice and violence. Freedom in relatedness means to stick to ethical norms which provide a good life for everyone, today and in the

³ Vgl. Ina Praetorius: *Handeln aus der Fülle*. ;Gütersloh 2005. S. 2003. S. 103

future. This is the crucial resource we need in order to solve our problems. Whoever sees in it a limitation of freedom is putting his personal interests above everybody else's.

My thoughts are based on abundance. In abundance I see the beneficiary results of nature, culture and tradition. I did not create earthworms but earthworms create beautiful things for me, they provide me with healthy soil and healthy food on a daily basis. On a cultural note I benefit from preliminary works of farmers who painstakingly grew seeds, enabling us to feed ourselves. Also our Jewish Christian and Greek-antique tradition provides us with a basis of values that enables us to live in harmony. The achievements of our mothers (and fathers) are of crucial importance for today's theme:

The law is not, as many may believe the beginning of good human action, it is the result of it. To feed and to be fed, to be treated well, rules that consider life and good action together form a flow, whose world historical beginning is not reconstructable, whose permanent new source most people experience: we all are born as helpless babies and would not survive, let alone would not be able to contribute to a good life if there wasn't a mother who gives her body and spirit for nine months, and if there wasn't a community that for years offers the necessary comfort as initial abundance. ⁴

To consider this abundance as a starting point means at the same time to express a certain attitude to life. I am thankful for everything that is around me and therefore I will be able to pay respect to life in all its forms.

To talk about abundance could be seen as cynicism whilst a certain shortage many people are suffering from is being repressed. I see it the other way round: appreciation of abundance enables us to handle shortages better, to see starvation and misery as a scandal and to campaign for a better distribution of goods. To talk about abundance is an answer to the 'era of shortages' ⁵ because with the attitude of being abundant frugality and solidarity will rise. In order to prevent terror, war and misery more people are needed, capable of living a good life based on low energy consumption and use of fewer resources.

Challenges of the future

The 'era of shortages' is a major challenge for the future. We are being challenged on different levels.

Ecology

Our lifestyle and our system of production are jeopardizing the relatively stable ecosystem⁶. Once that stability is not guaranteed anymore our adaptability will be overstrained and we will inevitably face vast social crises. Sealing and wrong cultivation will destroy soils. Erosion

⁴ Ina Praetorius: Handeln aus der Fülle. ;Gütersloh 2005. S. 2003. S. 93

⁵ Isidor Wallimann, Michael N. Dobkowski (Hg.): Das Zeitalter der Knappheit. Ressourcen, Konflikte, Lebenschancen. Bern 2003

⁶ Hans Ruh, Thomas Gröbly: Die Zukunft ist ethisch - oder gar nicht. Frauenfeld 2006. S. 71ff.

caused by wind and water, contamination through pesticides, waste and salinization will in 10 years make 30 percent of the soil⁷ almost useless for agriculture worldwide. Air, water and biodiversity will also be affected. Man-made climate change is dramatic. Conclusion: the ecological foot print as an expression of our use of nature is by far too big. Considering that all people are equal one person should only have one ecological foot print. In Switzerland the number is 2.9, in the USA 5.6, in Bangladesh 0.3 and world average is around 1.25. It means that the developed countries need three planets in order to survive in the long term.

Economy

Poverty and misery are a scandal. Swiss sociologist and UN special envoy for food Jean Ziegler equals death from starvation with murder, because the world has enough food for everyone. In 2002 one billion people lived in poverty on one US dollar a day. Around 2.6 billion lived on two US dollar a day and daily 100.000 people died from starvation.

Economic globalization has indeed improved the situation in some countries, but has at the same time widened the gap between rich and poor. I see it as a goal to abolish extreme poverty. Provocatively I claim that we can solve the problem relatively fast. There is enough food for around 12 billion people, there is enough money, and considering the logistic masterpiece of globalized cross-border trade the abolishment of extreme poverty should be a possibility. Economic globalization as we know it today cannot realize it because it is blind towards ecological and social needs. In regard to social needs not everybody has the right to live a humane life. People become needless. The fatal consequences can be found in unemployment of the youth; loss of acceptance, loss of meaning and often open violence. People's life is at risk because human beings are more expensive and less predictable than machines. Talking about one's own responsibility puts a mask on the fact that subject to the terms of competition, only the healthy, strong, smart and privileged can win. It widens the gap between have and have-not. To live the American dream is the exception. Systemic toleration, if not 'creation' of overworked, sick and needless people is not only a violation of their dignity it is also an economic insanity. Next to high costs one can also expect an increase in violence. An increase in police force undermines the quality of life of the poor and just as much of the rich.

Energy

We are at the end of the fossil era because we are running out of oil and gas. The oil peak is real, a truth hard to accept. The maximum possible oil production will be overstepped in a few years and therefore decline. At the same time the yearly oil consumption will increase by approximately 2 percent. We must convert our economic system fully into a solar energy system within the next few years. This only works with a change of lifestyle. A life and the management of our economy by the principle of 'smaller, slower, closer' will be necessary.

⁷ Hans Ruh, Thomas Gröbly: *Die Zukunft ist ethisch - oder gar nicht*. Frauenfeld 2006. S. 171.

This indeed contradicts the popular ideals but could definitely be a chance. The meaning of 'downshifting'⁸ is to cut down your working hours in favor of a better quality of life.

Population growth - Demography

It is often said that our planet is over-populated. On one hand it is true but on the other hand there are still 20 percent of people in developed countries using 80 percent of the world's resources. On top of that the Chinese are beginning to copy our lifestyle and wish to drive a car. If we tried to stop the Chinese to drive a car because we worry about the climate we would lose our credibility. We rather should admit that our lifestyle is not to be generalized. We must scale down our ecological footprint.

In demographic terms the family structures have gone through a major shift. The number of children has declined; marriageable age and the divorce rate have increased. Developed countries often complain about the increase of old people who need to be looked after by a declining number of young people and that the pension scheme will collapse. Here it needs to be said that life expectancy has dramatically risen. This of course means that the birth rate will decline not because of women having fewer children; the reason is a higher population dwarfing their numbers⁹. Nevertheless the current situation does not invite to raise children. German political scientist Antje Schrupp said:

*Of course there are external elements that influence women's life and they are not convenient: A globalized and more competition orientated economy make it hard to maintain private and personal relationships. The growing social insecurity creates a climate of angst and irritation which discourages personal risk taking - and having a child is always a risk.*¹⁰

Demographic development is a big challenge because we have to reconstruct our society. To tell women to have more babies won't work. Women refuse to be objectified. The call for middle-class values and virtues is unqualified, "because competition, self-interest, individualism and autonomy are all together invented by the middle-class"¹¹. They won't be able to bring back altruism and the care for each other. However Antje Schrupp also sees big chances:

*Despite all problems the aging society offers us the unique chance to finally say good bye to the patriarchal concept of human nature whereby a grown up man at his peak of performance is the measure of all things. We should seize that chance*¹².

⁸ Antje Schrupp: Methusalems Mütter. Chancen des demografischen Wandels. Königsstein/Taunus 2007. S. 82.

⁹ Antje Schrupp: Methusalems Mütter. Chancen des demografischen Wandels. Königsstein/Taunus 2007. S. 15.

¹⁰ Ebd. S. 13.

¹¹ Ebd. S. 66

¹² Ebd. S. 23

Who and what controls our world?

Being confronted by all these challenges I am asking the question about the control tools. The deeper sense of neo-liberalism says that the ‘invisible hand’ of the market leads to the best of all worlds. Problems like poverty, starvation, water shortage or ecological destruction refer to the non-functioning market. Had water, as an example, economical value its price mechanism would lead to a more careful handling of water and prevent wasting it. Since there is no freedom within equals in this market, it creates poverty, exploitation and destruction of the environment. ‘Free’ market also creates a problem for public and existentially necessary goods such as climate, air, knowledge, water, seeds and food. Who still thinks about the earthworm? To protect it is economically absurd. Privatization through patents and exclusive rights plays into the hands of a small number of influential people. In the end it will be the spending power and not starvation and thirst that decide if I have access to water and food. However it contradicts human dignity and the right to food. By commodification of these goods the democratic control will be lost. Pure market control intensifies that problem.

Single players like multinationals are powerful to such an extent that their propositions often have to be adopted as they stand by laws of countries or by regulations of world trade. It not only means a loss of a country’s significance it is also a loss for farmers, employees and people without a voice. For investors and banks to have an important control function plays also a part in the concept of economic globalization. Investments are normally done in places where profits are the highest. Consideration for long term social and ecological sustainability hardly exists. Capital intensive and large-scale industrial projects have preference. In this case there are mostly not only greater risks for the environment there is also a breach of democratic co-determination and an abuse of human dignity. I am a strong advocate for democracy and wish for a strengthening of democratic co-determination on all levels. Where do science and technology stand? We inevitably depend on scientific research and technological achievement. Science and technology can indeed aim for goals but it is not clear how sensible the goals are and if society has a desire for them.

Ethic thesis and demands

The future is ethical - or not at all. Ways to a functioning society. Under that title I have together with Hans Ruh written a book in 2006. The title is the thesis at the same time. In order to tackle the challenges of the future we must not orientate ourselves neither on technical nor ecological principles. We only have a future if we follow a moral point of view and ethical standards. I refer to the definition of “moral point of view” by William K. Frankena:

One takes the moral point of view,

- if he does not let himself be guided by the principle of egotism,
- if he follows principles,
- if he is prepared to generalize these principles and

- if he, considering all that, respects the wellbeing of every fellow human being to the same extent¹³.

From that point of view there exists an absolute priority of human rights and the existential needs of every human being regardless of sex, race, age, health or ecological performance. It means that interests in profits are always second rate. The radical demands for ecological sustainability, not to use more than what grows back or regenerates, has as well absolute priority over economical interests.

Values evolve from families. That's why earthworms need families

How can human beings mobilize their inner strength in order to subject their individual interests to global requirements? How can we achieve global awareness? Everybody knows by their own experience, and studies prove it as well, that moral call can hardly move people to act. Even financial incentives do often fail. However to learn what others are doing does make a difference. A study looked into hotel guests' behavior why they reuse their towels instead of changing them daily. Moral call to environmental awareness was not very effective (38%). Financial incentives such as donations to environmental organizations did not work either (36%). Only the information that nearly 75% of hotel guests do reuse their towels had an impact on 48% of the guests. This might be a banal example but it tells us that crowd behavior does have the strongest impact¹⁴. Thus we can hope for a snowball effect when a certain number of people act sensibly, with the future in mind.

Primary values and strong personalities with a global awareness evolve from close-knit and committed relationships. Exactly that happens in families. Trust and self-respect evolve from here. Trust is a precondition of any economy management but is undermined in a competition orientated working world. Where do people capable of remaining open to criticism evolve from? Where resource orientated criticism is integrated in a culture of error lived in a positive way, where failure and error are absorbed by a healthy relationship. How do people become loveable? To be surrounded by loveable people. How do people develop solidarity and learn to lobby for the frail? By experiencing empathy and solidarity themselves and seeing it as an improvement in their lifestyle. How can people living by the rule 'less, slower, smaller' experience it as rewarding? By having learnt how to enjoy freedom and peace.

Challenges for families - Future of families

A plea for proliferation of living together. My story of the earthworm and the family connects here. Both are in need of fertility. Good soil for an earthworm is equal to the culture of openness, equal opportunities and freedom in a family. They make quality of life possible. They provide the basis for everyone to develop their potentials.

¹³ William K. Frankena: *Analytische Ethik. Eine Einführung*. München 1994. S. 138.

¹⁴ Sonntag, Nr. 5, 3. Februar 2008, S. 50

Families need more earthworms

The title addresses the existential importance of the soil and the environment. Around 50% of people live in cities and have little relation to nature. Besides water I see the soil as being a problem in the 21st century. We can perceive water with our senses; the same does not apply to the soil. City people consider soil often as dirt. Healthy farmland is a habitat for a vast variety of creatures. Earthworms and many other creatures not only build up humus they also dig long corridors which provide the soil with air, enhancing the retention capacity of water. One square meter of healthy soil absorbs up to 150 liters of water per hour whereas compacted soil through industrial agriculture only absorbs 10 liters. Healthy soil contains around 300 earthworms per square meter, bad soil only 16. Healthy soil helps to prevent flooding, needs less fertilizer, erodes less and produces healthier food. Healthy soil is a highly efficient protection for the climate because carbon dioxide stored in humus is being bound and cannot escape into the atmosphere. Nutrition as part of "home economics" must not only point at the health of food but also at the health of the ecosystem. There is a need for regional, seasonal and unprocessed food, in the best case from organic farming. That knowledge and awareness can be built up in families.

Earthworms need more families

Household chores and family work are of existential necessity for the adaptability to future needs, however they are like foreign bodies in a world ruled by economy. How can devotion be rationalized? What does it mean to look after a sick child if time is money? Home economics works in a different way. It is based on 'love' and not on cost-benefit calculation. It would be impossible to raise children under the condition of economic rules because devotion, acceptance, comfort, genuine closeness or love can't be purchased with money. The cost-benefit equation finds its purpose outside the activity, whereas home economics as 'love' economics ends in itself. I love a certain person because I just do and I look after a sick child because it just needs to be looked after. There is no real explanation for these actions. Exactly that devotion is the core of home economics and must not be jeopardized. Such altruistic relationships are the foundation of an upbringing of discerning and creative human beings. They need free space and we must create it. Countries as well as enterprises must create it because it is about our adaptability to future needs.

To turn home economics into 'love' economics of course has its danger when devotion is being idealized. That kind of work is being upgraded since I understand economy as a system where 'home economics' is part of it.

Outlook - What steps lead towards that direction?

1. Demand on the society

Briefly I would like to outline what these thoughts could mean. It is important to me that the achievements of home economics are brought to light. The Swiss national statistics contains a so called satellite account. For Switzerland the achievements of home economics make up around 40% of the GNP. This great and unpaid performance not only justifies a conceptual appreciation but also a financial improvement. It is a serious question why not to bear the

costs of raising children collectively. It is self-evident in terms of old age pension. Why not the same with parenting since children are our future?

A different approach is the concept of *unconditional basic income*. Everyone should be capable of satisfying their existential needs if human dignity was more than a slogan. Demographic 'problems' could be solved through unconditional basic income independent of work for everyone¹⁵. Apparently our economy is not capable of guaranteeing work and income for everyone so one can live a life in dignity. Some have no work at all because they can't keep up with pace and demand. Some work a lot but are not able to live of it, the so called working poor. Others in turn work too much, for this reason fall ill (burn out) and live in fear to lose their job. At the same time it is not clear at all who contributes what to the durable society. Perhaps a mother does more good than a bank manager. Wage is hardly an appropriate indicator of performance. The idea of a basic income independent of work evolved from that thought. Everyone has the right to an unconditional basic income. It is high enough to just cover the existential costs. It has its various advantages. No one needs to accept any work out of existential fear. The position towards employers is a better one. The bureaucracy of unemployment insurance fund or pension scheme can be abolished. It strengthens families and equal opportunities for women and men. This concept enhances the freedom of everyone and the possibility to develop and live one's own potential and passions. At last the balance between family and career will be improved.

2. Demands on people in home economics

If my thesis proves to be right people in home economics will be able to draw on the society with great confidence and to encourage each other. As we could witness it needs genuine and reliable relationships with young people. It is especially important in our times where people increasingly communicate digitally. That kind of care must also be of value for people on the other side of the globe as well as for nature. It means in practical terms: a diet of seasonal, regional and organic food or clothes produced with organic cotton through fair trade.

Our work sharing society is taking us to a point where we won't be able to produce our own supply anymore and instead are forced to buy everything. It has simplified life on a big scale and enhanced dependency at the same time. We are highly qualified at work and blind in consumption. In view of the complexity of production, produce, additives, processing and transport we hardly know anything. A strategy to strengthen autonomy is a strengthening of local supply and the enhancement of the capability of making self produce. This is not a denial of the global market. However it should only be the exception and local supply the norm. The conversion should start in families. Earthworms could be an example. They feed locally and hence strengthen the eco system rather than weaken it.

Creating the future - Creating the future with enthusiasm

Not only families but also all players in the society have an obligation. However today we talk about the role of families. Considering the abundance I have described before you are now

¹⁵ Hans Ruh, Thomas Gröbly: Die Zukunft ist ethisch - oder gar nicht. Frauenfeld 2006. S. 213ff.

encouraged to tackle the exciting and fascinating task with relish. What's better than taking part in this project 'creating the future'? It is exciting to lead others and one self to a global awareness, to work on it so I can see myself as part of the world. There is already plenty of bad news about violence, abuse and exploitation every day. There is no need to deny the dark side but there is an urge to deprive it of its force. Let's use our energy for the 'love' economics so we can happily live together. Let's do it with enthusiasm and humor and let it rub off on others. And let's say a toast to all earthworms and all human beings.

The role of education in equipping individuals and families to be resilient and active participants in the global community

Ursula Renold

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Abstract

Switzerland has great significance to the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) as it was founded in Fribourg in 1908. Following the most recent world congresses in Asia and Africa, you have now returned to Europe for your 100-year anniversary. This paper will contribute some thoughts on the theme of your congress from Switzerland's point of view, and from the viewpoint of professional education. Here, I can make a link to the founding congress of 1908, as education was already central (the topics were: The training of home economics teachers, the Necessity of involving the greatest number of girls in home economics education).

As I would like to show, home economics has played a role that should not be underestimated in the development of professional education in Switzerland. And home economics education will play a key role if we want to equip the coming generations to master the global social challenges (Creating the Future).

A look back

Reflecting the Congress motto of “Reflecting the Past - Creating the Future” I will also first take a look back. As I found out from a piece of historical research, home economics has played an important role for the discussion of women’s education in Switzerland. Initially, it provided access to education for an increasing number of women (e.g. 1895: there were Frauenarbeitschulen (colleges for women’s work) in 30 places; in 1921 there were already 671 institutions). A “Federal Decree on the household and professional training of the female sex” in 1895 spelled out the importance of home economics for the beginnings of women’s education in Switzerland.

In the early days, the foremost priority was to prepare women for their duties in the home and the family. This cemented the dualistic idea of reserving gainful employment for men, and tying women to the home. But there were also first steps in a different direction: as an offshoot of home economics schools, for example, training schools were set up for (female) gardeners, that is, for a trade that would enable them to earn a living. The training of home economics teachers - one of the few areas of teaching that was undisputedly accessible to females - contributed to professionalising women’s education. The qualitative development

of home economics lessons also led towards professionalisation (issues of developing curricula were addressed early on).

Economics starts with Home Economics

A few decades later (Second Swiss Frauenkongress in 1921) the discussion around home economics education received a new direction and the pioneers spoke with growing self-confidence. Previously, home economics education had served to professionalise the activity as housewife and mother (performance of household duties); now it became a factor in economic power. The activists introduced this consciously into the debate.

Bertha Trüssel argued: “Individual enterprise is the starting point for the economy. Up to 60% of the consumer economy lies in the hands of the housewife. The better she (...) manages, (...) the more she will contribute to raising the economy and the general culture of our country. Better instruction and enlightenment of young women about the links between domestic and public economy is an urgent necessity.”

The call became loud, to rationalise home economics and give it a scientific basis. Reasons for this included a comparison with the male domain of agriculture: “If, most recently, an Institute for Animal Nutrition (...) is to be set up as an annex of the agricultural department of the Federal Institute of Technology at the demand of the Schweizerischer Bauernverband [Swiss farmers’ association], then we should not describe it as immodest if housewives, in view of the economic significance of their work, beg for the satisfaction of their economic needs” (Julie Merz).

The proponents of home economics education worked towards making home economics a publicly recognised profession (with a professional association, scientific basis, access to subsidies etc.).

The campaigners for home economics education were particularly conscious of their purchasing power (and the influence associated with it). They would certainly also like to have known the monetary value of their work. This economic connection - the value of housework - is now known (see SFSO Pilot study 2004). The figures for Switzerland:

- The value of unpaid work in the household is put at CHF 172 billion, of which women perform more than two thirds.
- At 31 hours a week, women spend almost twice as long on house and family work as men (17 hours).
- Unpaid work in Switzerland is estimated at over 70% of Switzerland’s gross value added in the economy as a whole.

This gives us pointers (only estimates, of course) to the value of home economics. But what about the value of education in this field? This is what I would like to investigate next.

Basic skills for everyday life

The economy starts with home economics (the motto of the association Hauswirtschaft Schweiz): the pioneers already recognised this, and it is now more applicable than ever. Recognising links between home economics and the economy should now be part of

everyone's basic skills, independent of educational background or gender. There is much in favour of giving sufficient space to home economics education. I should like to give some reasons for this:

- Climate change and ecological menace is now the most pressing problem, in the population's perception as well. To combat this actively, we require knowledge. Which products are environmentally friendly, or CO₂-neutral, how does personal action affect the global context, where is the greatest effect possible? (example)
- Product diversity is constantly growing, new labels are created, additives are put in food, products are refined using new technologies. Finding your way around here is not a trivial matter. Responsible consumers need background knowledge even for their daily shopping.
- Consumers' purchasing decisions have far-reaching consequences, e.g. for the working and living conditions of the producers. We should all be aware of these (ethical aspects)
- Diseases of civilisation (obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases) are on the advance and will - in addition to the personal harm to those affected - also have adverse consequences for the economy. Improved knowledge about diet and health education from early childhood could counter this.
- Daily activities such as cooking have become trendy: just think of the cookery shows on all channels and the cult status of TV chefs. This is where we should meet young people and enthuse them, to counter the paradox that in parallel to the trends mentioned, less and less cooking is done at home and eating on the hoof is increasing.
- How to handle money, managing a household budget, has to be learned too (debt is continually increasing, particularly among young people; in Switzerland there is a larger than average number of children/adolescents living in households that receive social benefits).
- Skills for everyday life (bringing up children, running a household, organising living together) are no longer automatically learned in the family of origin, or cannot be transferred 1:1. There are still too few role models of new lifestyles (e.g. fathers who also do housework and raising children). Here, home economics lessons can prepare the way.
- New lifestyles require new skills and problem-solving strategies. The ever more frequent combination of family and career, and shared responsibility between both parents, brings relief on the one hand, because the responsibility no longer lies solely with the mother. But this also requires more communication and coordination, e.g. for unforeseen events. Parents with shared responsibility have to agree on standards in bringing up children and in the household (it is, for example, interesting that there are gender-related differences in couples who share the housework: fathers spend 70% of the time that mothers do playing and doing homework with children, while

for washing and ironing clothes this is only 7%, for cleaning and tidying up 17%, and for preparing meals 24%).

- Preparation for daily tasks makes sense. According to a Swiss study, working in a household with children has comparable requirements with running a small business.
- Along with social change comes new tasks; e.g. the care of elderly relatives. This requires models and skills.
- Home economics education can contribute to integrating children with a migration (CH: more than one fifth of schoolchildren have foreign nationality) and intercultural learning. In shared activities, knowledge transfer and exchange about different traditions is possible, even when linguistic ability is limited.
- Home economics education is interdisciplinary and demonstrates diverse interlinkages.
- Home economics education is creative and practical, and is fun. It can serve as a balance to other lessons while still teaching knowledge.

Education on all levels

Home economics education links directly to the daily life of every individual and is therefore not tied to a particular level of the educational system. Corresponding topics should be addressed from kindergarten up to specialised university level.

Just as home economics constantly has to engage with new social trends, educational systems have to adapt continually to new situations and prepare themselves for the future. Thus, in Switzerland, we have comprehensively modernised the education sector over the last few years. Which overarching themes were pursued can be demonstrated using professional home economics education as an example:

Complete integration into the national education system (of which the pioneers dreamed) was achieved with the introduction of a three-year apprenticeship (Berufslehre) to become a home economics professional (previously, the training lasted only one year, as for many women's professions). In the past few years the range of educational opportunities was further completed with a shorter basic training and a multiplicity of advanced courses.

One thing that is completely new is a basic professional education for people with practical skills (basic diploma in VET on home economics). It lasts two years and includes the option, if there is aptitude and interest, to switch to an apprenticeship and so continue the career. The background to this new educational vessel is our aim to bring as many young people as possible into education post-compulsory schooling.

In the tertiary sector there is - harmonised with the different demands of the practice - an impressive range of advanced training possibilities:

- Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Home Economics Management
- Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Social Institution Management

- Basic Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Home Economics Management
- Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Home Economics Management
- Basic Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Housekeeping
- Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Farming
- Basic Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Farming
- Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Facility Management
- Basic Federal Diploma of Higher PET in Caretaking

Swiss campaigners in 1920 demanded a professorship for home economics and the possibility of taking doctorates; they reported enthusiastically of professorships in the USA. Today we are not far off, as the University of Applied Sciences degree in Facility Management (Betriebsökonom/in FH) has made annexation to the university level a reality. And home economics is also a subject for teacher training at university level. Research projects considering issues from the home economics sector in recent years, including some at universities, complete the overall picture (e.g. SNSF project HausArbeitsEthik).

Transparency and modularisation

We consider compatibility with the whole education system - and thus accompanied by the possibility of taking unconventional education paths and switching fields - to be important prerequisites for the further development of a branch of education. Transparency is particularly important; precisely in fields where a lot of women traditionally trained, and which in Switzerland were often organised differently from the courses that were more often chosen by men.

[It is notable that the course in Facility Management is integrated into a field (Zurich University of Applied Sciences) that traditionally has more male students - whether this will bring more of a gender balance in home economics education or more inequalities remains to be seen ...]

To change occupational images and gender stereotypes, many measures are needed, and above all, patience. We have prioritised this aspect as well, and supported numerous measures to raise people's awareness; which of course include making traditionally female careers attractive for men.

One further important objective of our educational reforms is to account appropriately for education acquired in a non-formal way. Skills that an individual has acquired in a job, in household and bringing up a family, or in voluntary work, can today be validated and taken into account when acquiring a professional qualification. It should be obvious that these possibilities are of particular significance in home economics.

Education of the future

The challenges for which our educational system must prepare its students as well as possible are often of a global nature. Equally, our educational systems are embedded in an

international context. The engagement with international trends and the positioning of our educational system is therefore one of the key tasks. Priorities that we have set in this regard in Switzerland include

- Implementing the Bologna reforms at university level
- International recognition of degrees
- Participation in the Copenhagen Process for more transparency and mobility in professional training
- Participation in the EU Programme Life Long Learning, and in the EU Framework Programmes for Research.

Attractive Swiss system

Not everything has to be changed. We can be proud of what is established, and can recommend it further. The dual Swiss professional training system is attracting interest in numerous countries. We therefore want, in the coming years, to focus particularly on the international development of professional training, and intensify our contacts accordingly...

Conclusion

We have seen that home economics knowledge is significant in the daily life of each individual, and home economics knowledge is also important for the design of our future. In view of this, that your professional association is organised at international level, and that you have a regular exchange, is greatly to be welcomed.

Celebrating the past: A critical reflection on the history of IFHE and the Home Economics profession

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Abstract

This plenary paper is built upon the history of home economics including its international dimension, which we regard history as a great resource. Our basic framework emphasizes the on-going important need for interaction between the profession, societies and universities that educate new professionals and encourage generation of new knowledge. Our paper has three parts. The first focuses on history and its multiple dimensions followed by the analysis of some leading trends that have influenced our profession and consequently our professional practice and pre-service education. Examples are mainly from the U.S. The second part widens international dimensions to other countries, and moves discussion to international communities as promoters for our profession. The third examines our field and profession to reveal some essentials that has been present and fundamental, but seldom discussed. These 'hidden dimensions' or silent knowledge have a central role in our profession's future. This section points out the importance of family and everyday life, which should be made more visible and powerful in our societal systems in the future. We discuss some of our resources available through our professionals' efforts and through IFHE activities to strengthen these qualities and focus more on future needs. Our rich and valuable history will help us to meet these challenges.

Introduction

This Plenary session is built on history. We hope to communicate the idea that history has many roles to play and that it can be approached in diverse ways. We regard history as a great resource and want to bring the international dimension to it. This paper looks at our history from a U.S. or North American perspective and from Finnish or European perspective because of our own backgrounds. There are a lot of similarities between these two regions, but also many essential differences. However, our aim is not to introduce the history of these regions, but to demonstrate some historical emphasis that in our understanding has an important role to play in our profession.

The presentation title is very demanding and challenging. "Celebrating" the past connotes to us something very positive, but without struggles or misunderstandings or ignorance, you

might never notice the richness or the multidimensional character of your work or profession. To critically reflect “on the history of IFHE and on the home economics profession” we have selected perspectives we think have shaped and structured our field in many countries and internationally.

Activities related to home economics/family and consumer sciences have been run around the world for centuries, under different cultural and political systems or climate conditions by individuals and professionals with quite diverse educational backgrounds or resources. However, the human basic needs and everyday activities follow the same basic rules around the world across generations. This tension between similarities and differences makes our profession and international networking rich. It pushes us to learn more from our international colleagues to cultivate our own thinking and it prepares us to meet the challenges of our rapidly changing, globalized world.

We are celebrating IFHE this week which has provided a forum and integration platform for us. It has supported many professional activities with limited economic resources, but an abundance of intellectual, social and cultural resources and primarily women’s power.

Our basic framework for this presentation emphasizes the on-going need for and importance of interaction between our profession, societies and universities that educate new professionals and encourage generation of new knowledge. We believe that you all can find your own position within this frame.

The paper has three parts.

The first focuses on history and its multiple dimensions followed by the analysis of some leading trends our profession has followed and which have structured our professional practice and education. Examples are mainly from the U.S. The second widens international dimensions to include European ones and moves discussion to international communities as promoters for our profession. The third examines our field and profession to reveal some essentials that have been present and fundamental, but seldom discussed. These ‘hidden dimensions’ or ‘silent knowledge’ have a central role in our future profession.

Part I: What can we learn from our history

History and its value for our profession

Through the mid-century 20th century, the U.S. was a leader in conceptualizing home economics which provided well paid positions for college-educated women for this growing profession. Many internationals came to the U.S. to obtain advanced degrees and to study our curriculum and programs. Times have changed and today the focus is on other regions where the field seems to be faring better than in the U.S. Why? Our presentations may shed some light on this question by examining it historically.

History is a field and mode of inquiry that interprets the past by using sources with meanings that have become obscure because of changes in language over time, cultural differences, and historical accidents such as loss of parts of documents and inaccurate recording of events

and intentions (Howard, 1982). It does not predict what people will do, nor does it determine what they should do, although it can help inform ethical decisions.

History is concerned with developing understanding through an historian's engagement with the sources. It uses common language, not jargon or operational definitions, making it understandable to historians and non-historians. In fact, Becker (1966) argues that everyone needs historical insight continuously as history evolves every moment.

Historical research attempts to discover not a mere event or person, but why it happened or why a person was as he/she was. Real historical activity is seeing and establishing, through evidence, connections between the focus of study and its context. However, because points and connections are almost endless, any particular history cannot make all the possible connections (Vincenti, 1981, p. 25). Therefore, historians must test their own prejudices and point out the inconclusiveness of their own assumptions, as well as other possibilities offered by the sources. Historians and their work are part of an ongoing conversation affected by the past and affecting the future. Therefore, a historian cannot write the history, only a history of something (Vincenti, 1989, p. 88).

An historical investigation looks over time at the interplay between events, thoughts and the larger social context to reveal patterns of continuity and inconsistency not apparent when examining individual experiences (Vincenti, 1981). Historical self-knowledge can facilitate critical self-examination by clarifying who we are, what we value, and what changes need to be made for our future.

Although historians bring their individual knowledge and experience (referred to as their second record) to their interpretation of something that happened in another time and place, it is essential that they understand the experiences and context of the authors of the historical records to avoid confusing their own second record with that of the past. Hagel, the philosopher, explained that historical thinking requires concrete analysis whereas scientific thinking isolates its subject from its interconnections with its context. When scientific findings are used solely in deciding what should be done, philosophers refer to this irrational thinking as a naturalistic fallacy that Runes (1960) defines as an error in reasoning that derives ethical conclusions from non-ethical premises. An example is assuming that "what is common practice" is equivalent to "what ought to be."

By conceiving an object or idea within its context, it is possible to understand the complexity of factors which influence it. An historical perspective allows the real possibilities to become more apparent and decisions to be made with more efficiency than is true only by thinking abstractly. Abstract thought used in the scientific method isolates things, takes them out of context and treats them as though they were autonomous, ignoring their interrelationships and their interaction with more than a very limited set of factors in their context (Peterson, 1979, p. 68 in Vincenti, 1981, p. 24).

History tries to understand what has happened beyond people's intentions and actions (Linge, 1976, p. xi) and how particular people and situations have come unintentionally to be and to be understood as they are. Relevant to everyone, the purpose of history is to better know

who we are and how we will live in this world. For example, interpersonally, by asking what experiences brought another person (spouse, student, parent, or client) to hold a particular perspective or feeling, we can gain a deeper understanding of the other and develop empathy and insight that can improve the relationship and our own way of responding to this person and others.

History challenges us to enter into dialogue with the sources (print, audio, visual, artefacts, and oral history interviews), asking what questions each is answering and testing our prejudices about what happened and why. Yet, it is not merely a means to increase self-consciousness, but a way of being and approaching the world, an integration of what we know with who we are (Vincenti, 1989, p. 84).

Identifying and justifying history's approach and assumptions as distinctly different from the sciences does not denigrate either. Each asks different questions; each is useful for our professionals and everyone.

In summary, history can help us determine which of our prejudices are founded and which are not. It helps us understand human nature generally and in particular people, relationships and everyday situations. It can help us understand ourselves now and consider what kind of person we want to become and how we want to interact with other people. It can help us understand why our present has come to be as it is and help us find meaning in life by interpreting experiences.

It can help us examine consequences of choices made by revealing long- and short-term effects on those affected. History can help us consider the consequences of particular definitions of success and which subsequent actions were successful and why. It can also help us understand alternatives when the consequences of past actions were disappointing. Therefore, it can help us envision better possibilities than we would recognize otherwise. Because disciplines and professions have been considered communities, Selznick's identification of historicity as one of seven key values or interacting variables essential for the development and nurturance of community life is relevant to our discussion here. A sense of history, rootedness, belonging, and commitment to others are qualities for strong communities. Having a common history/heritage allows us as a professional community to understand our possibilities and limits and it also contributes to our ability to make sound collective judgments about the goals for the evolution of our profession (Baldwin, 1995, p. 25). By learning about what has influenced us in the past and influences us today, we can consider the legacy we want to leave to future generations.

Historical reflection on the profession: The U.S. as a case example

We in the U.S. and possibly a number of other countries hold attitudes about history that fail to recognize its value. Three underlying influences on U.S. attitudes about history are positivism, capitalism with its market mentality, and individualism.

Positivism

After the 17th century Enlightenment, when Descartes denied that history was a serious field of study, historians tried to make their field respectable by developing it into another

science. The overwhelming success and prestige of the natural sciences during the 17th and 18th centuries intensified the 19th century romantic era's craving for a natural science of history (Berlin in Weinsheimer, 1985). In the formative years of our profession Ellen Richards described the ideal college curriculum for women as including "history as a science" (Richards, 1898, p. 24). Luckily, historians realized the inappropriateness of this goal and conceded that history is an interpretive rather than a descriptive field.

Positivism is a philosophical ideology and movement based on beliefs that all valid knowledge is 1) factual, based upon "positive" data derived from observation and experience and 2) logic and pure mathematics, e.g. statistics and methodological rules. Also called empiricism, it draws from the scientific method that uses careful observation and experimentation. Scientific research controls conditions (variables), isolating phenomena from its context, to eliminate bias, thus assuming objectivity (Britannica, 2008).

Science seeks to discover natural laws, principles, i.e. generalizations, that describe things as they are and how they work, making it possible to predict and therefore, control natural and social environments and human behaviour. Positivism considers other ways of coming to know something as less valid or invalid, such as those used in history and theology. This belief prompted non-sciences and professions to strive to adopt empirical methods and assumptions (Britannica, 2008). It ignores non-scientific aspects of life, accepts its descriptions of human experience and society as givens, ignoring ethical issues and humans' need to create meaning deeper than description.

Psychology, sociology, and economics have been influenced by positivist philosophers. Although positivism has been controversial, it has been "tenaciously held by many scientists" (Britannica, 2008). From the positivist's perspective, progress is made by replacing scientific theories with new ones based on new facts discovered about "the way the world really is". Consequently, the old is denigrated and the new is revered as more valid and closer to the truth.

Positivism has created a hierarchy of disciplines and increasingly narrow specializations resulting in a reduced understanding of life as an integrated whole. If epistemology were part of general education, would it increase understanding that although history and science use different approaches, they both generate value knowledge.

Capitalism and market mentality

Capitalism, its resulting market mentality, and individualism are not separable, but I will attempt to discuss them separately while recognizing overlap. Capitalism grew out of the notion that individuals should be free to pursue their own economic self-interest competitively with minimal limits needed only to protect others right to do the same. Its success is dependent on continual growth in demand. Since people's needs are limited, demand has to be created by planned obsolescence and advertising promoting the new and rejecting the old in order to increase demand. This has led to materialism resulting in an expanded work week, lost weekends, increased stress, greater emphasis on convenience, little time for family life, reduced family communication, overscheduled children, less creative play and exercise, more impulsiveness and less self-discipline, record levels of

personal debt and bankruptcies, and frequent consumption of fast food resulting in an obesity epidemic. The belief that time is money has also increased the pace of life with intrusive and time consuming E-mails, text messages, and phone calls we don't want.

Callahan's (2004) book, *The Cheating culture: Why more Americans are doing wrong to get ahead*, also points out a decline in our civility toward each other when it comes to economic advancement. According to Callahan (2004), cheating has increased in educational institutions as it has in business, politics and other aspects of society. Education is seen as a commodity to be obtained with the lowest cost in time, energy and money. What is valued is what can clearly lead to that goal. Higher education has become quite vocationally oriented, making most majors (not just home economics/FCS programs) today preparation for paid employment. Many students see college not as a means to becoming a better person and increasing our ability to improve our society, but as a means to a good job with a high income. The vocational perspective prepares students for the workplace "as it is" in terms of values, power relationships, assumptions, and use of humans instrumentally. It accepts the economy and its impact on individuals, families, society, and the world "as they are." Because it ignores ethical questions, it is not concerned with what is right and just, in making society "as it should be".

Individualism

During the last 25 years, these growing trends just described have become norms contributing to deterioration of the quality of life. Competition pits people against each other and emphasizes individual self-interest rather than the greater good. History helps us to understand that some of our ethical mores have eroded over time in an effort to get ahead individually. Bellah and his colleagues, in their 1985 book, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, described American individualism as arousing in us a strong desire for autonomy and self-reliance, while we also hold a deep conviction that life is empty unless shared in interdependent community with others. The language of our culture of individualism encourages a negative view of community life and a preoccupation with achieving our own private desires as a means to fulfilment. The "rat race" results from pursuing what can never give life meaning in the fullest sense because getting ahead is relative to others, not based on a level of living. As others "get ahead" we must continually raise our standards to measure our "success" and our self-worth. When we are on this competitive treadmill, we become impatient with reflective study of how our lives got this way for fear of falling further behind our moving target. We have lost a lot of the meaning of life for lack of time to ponder it and to live in deeper relation to each other. Many have lost the meaning and benefit of education as we focus on our individual competitive race toward economic success. Mary Catharine Bateson (1994), anthropologist, pointed out that we have a great capacity to recognize the interdependence between ourselves, others, and our environment, but we have encouraged ourselves to focus too narrowly. Our specialized views of knowledge, careers, self-interested goals and gratification, often culturally defined, have weakened our ability to see the interdependence of ecosystems. We believe life is a competition for dominance or power over other people, leading us to believe that the earth and its resources are to be conquered and dominated because they exist for our use. Bateson (1994) argues that we need to reemphasize an integrative, interdisciplinary perspective and

collaboration with others because we need each other because we each possess needed and unique expertise and perspectives.

Ellen Richards, one of the founders of our profession in the U.S. presented a paper entitled, "The social significance of the home economics movement," at the 1908 Lake Placid Conference on Home Economics. In it she wrote, "The home has a distinct ethical as well as economic meaning. It should include mutual helpfulness in spiritual matters as well as mutual economic benefit" (p. 14). However, she lamented, the consequences of industrialization have removed much of the productive work of the home and shifted values and relationships within families from cooperative labour needed for survival to more individualistic consumption of goods and services obtained from outside the family. She also acknowledged economic exploitations of factory workers by the "successful" men who did not furnish decent housing for labourers, who worked such long hours that they had little time and energy [left for their families]. . . . Family members "slept under the same roof, but had no common life and no common interests" (p. 15).

This trend has increased over our 100 years to the point that family members can be even in the same car or same room, but all are electronically connected to different activities, reducing opportunities to get to know each other, negotiate common activities, discuss problems, and learn ethical reasoning and social skills. Science and technology, individualism, and capitalism have brought us here. Without an historical perspective, we may not realize the impact of our daily lifestyle choices on our and others' families, our societies, and the world.

This argument espousing the value of historical inquiry is not meant to diminish the value of empirical research, ethical reasoning and critical inquiry, but to encourage use of historical knowledge in addressing issues of individuals and families, which impact society and the global village (See Hultgren & Coomer, 1989). Thus, in order to plan and act responsibly and meaningfully now, an historical perspective in our personal and professional lives is essential. For instance, making wise decisions about our future would be impossible if we were suddenly struck with amnesia. How would we be able to determine the best course of action? We wouldn't know who we are; we wouldn't remember insights from past experiences, we wouldn't understand our interrelationships with others. An historical perspective is essential for sound professional practice that is truly beneficial to families, consumers and society. Brown (1984) argued that our profession has been influenced by positivism, capitalism, and individualism to our own detriment and that of those we serve. They have influenced the amount of funding available for different types of research. Non-scientific and non-financially oriented concerns of people and families have had much less funding available than the sciences and athletics, even though they have immensely important contributions to make. As a profession and individually as professionals, we are all influenced to some extent by these powerful contextual forces. It is difficult to maintain a reflective and skeptical focus in a culture that doesn't respect deep questioning of the dominant ideas of the society.

However, with historical insight, we can learn to communicate better within our own society by understanding our philosophy, research, and practice within an international context that provides a diverse array of perspectives and practices that stimulate self-reflection. An

historical understanding provides insight about what options might work well in our own country and culture that a present-oriented perspective cannot provide. Such insight also helps us to understand our international and global interdependence. We have the power to change, to strengthen our profession and its impact, if we have the knowledge, skills, and desire to look beyond our status quo. With an understanding of alternative modes of inquiry, including history, we can help individuals and families understand how their situations came to be and realize options previously invisible. Historical understanding can help us see beyond the present and avoid getting swallowed by these cultural values. We owe it to those we serve to develop an historical perspective on what is happening in the world and why. With such depth of understanding, we will be more likely to be reasoned and ethical decision makers and able to enable our constituents to be the same. We can contribute to the tempering of excesses in our society and individual and family lifestyle choices that will lead to more meaningful lives and a better world.

Part II: International communities as promoters for our profession

An historical understanding of IFHE can help us create a collective memory which would strengthen us as a collaborative, international community. Those who have been active in the IFHE or other similar international organizations have a different view on international issues than those without such experiences. Our new history book introduces the various international activities and achievements of our profession in detail. It also introduces many personal accounts and insights that reflect international thinking. We invite you all to read the history book and to use it as a resource in your work and personal life (The IFHE History Book, 2008).

We believe that home economists around the world have been quite international from the very early stages of the profession. However, there are great differences between regions and countries in dealing with international issues, reconciling international and national activities, and seeing their value for our own countries. Reflecting on the meaning of 'international' has been nearly missing in our discussions, and defining 'international' and/or 'global' may differ greatly.

The first part of this paper mainly focuses on US history and the North American perspective, which are important for all of us to become familiar with because they have had such a clear influence on many educational and professional activities in all regions. Many of you or professionals in your countries have been educated in US universities or may have used textbooks, research articles or course material that originated in the US.

This part of the paper takes another approach to international issues based on European experiences and the possibility of reflecting on home economics internationally. In my case (K.T) the IFHE has provided an excellent forum in which to make personal and professional connections widely in Europe and all four other regions, and to communicate with researchers worldwide. This all has had a great influence on my thinking and my understanding of home economics. Under the next heading we will reflect on some main points of IFHE history and how this international community—our global platform—can contribute to our personal and professional lives. The third part presents some results.

Making it together - The IFHE as a global platform

The IFHE History Book (2008) clearly reveals that we have had a strong message, but has our voice been heard in critical arenas that influence structures such as educational systems and national policies that affect home economics (family and consumer issues)? The answer is **yes** and **no**, and we certainly can bring our voice to the various new forums that have been created as well as make our voice stronger. It can be made stronger only by our members working together on activities and by strengthening our networks. The strength of our voice is also dependent on how successful we are in making our message understandable and appropriate for the diverse situations that we are involved in. Our history as well as our present situation strongly confirms the plurality and various forms of our professional practice. This variety of practice can be a great resource if different solutions complement each other and if constructive communication brings more expertise and new kinds of networks and interest groups within our reach. Unfortunately, plurality can also result in fragmentation which separates units starting to build their own orientations.

By looking at our history, we can find hundreds of examples of the achievements of home economists. Much of this work is invisible and not recognized in any public records. On the other hand, home economics is present everywhere in our societies, but we say - even amongst ourselves - that home economics has disappeared. Something that is sure—and we hope you agree—is that our societies are calling for our expertise and knowledge on many frontiers and in all countries. Our work is focused on the fundamentals, the necessities of human life that will never disappear. As a professional organization, it is our task to ensure that our understanding and practice addresses the needs of each era. At this point in time, it is time to summarize our activities, clarify our main goals and real competences, and to use our international networks to bring this all together.

Our engagements and ownership of IFHE

The IFHE is a very special and unique forum. How we see the IFHE is very much dependent on how we are engaged in this Federation. We can engage IFHE in different ways. Through our membership we can pursue our own interests or be linked to our professional organization or our work community. Whether we build our relationship to the IFHE at a national level, regional level or international level makes a difference. For many members the World Congress is their only concrete link to the IFHE, but similarly our history reveals that there are many who are committed to this Federation at several levels and for several decades on a voluntary basis. There are many examples of whole families participating in the IFHE and enjoying their experiences. We have seen so much continuity and human commitment to our organization, and without it, this 100-year milestone could not have been realized. All the members and participants of even one single Congress are important, but because the number of members is a very critical issue for any organization, we want to reflect on this matter a bit more.

We can approach this issue by counting the possible members who could have joined. From this perspective we can say that the IFHE is an international organization that has attracted only a limited number of people. If we count all the professionals who have been educated and who have worked under this organization, the number of individual members has varied

greatly over the past 100 years, with the largest membership being in the 1970s and 1980s. The peak was in 1979 when 2775 individual members paid their fees. The number of member organizations has been in general between 100 and 200. Most professionals are linked to the IFHE through their member organizations, which can be professional associations, educational institutes or other organizations related to home economics. This is why the critical question is how these member organizations have integrated an international dimension and the IFHE into their professional activities. How well do they support their members and development of international understanding, and how eager have they been to bring an international or global perspective to the work of their organization? We have heard many times that international issues have been designated as the responsibility of single persons, which seldom produces sustainable results. One single person can certainly be an excellent role model to inspire others, but usually cannot create changes in thinking and behaviour on a larger scale.

The different types of relationships we have with the IFHE greatly effects how strongly we feel towards this organization. The concept of ownership or mental ownership is very useful in this context. The notion of mental ownership has much in common with engagement, commitment and feelings of responsibility (Breiting 2007). If you feel mental ownership, you certainly can link the IFHE more closely to your personal or professional life, and you can create many more resources around it. We are sure that there are a large number of home economists with a high level of mental ownership in this Federation. The problem with the IFHE is that our actions can be focused in so many directions that it is impossible to account for all of them and to draw a complete picture of all our achievements and results. For many it is quite difficult to identify what is an IFHE activity and what is not. We have a visibility problem and an accountability problem, which we will return a bit later.

By being involved with various activities of the IFHE since Oslo Congress in 1984, I developed bonds to the IFHE that are multidimensional and rich. For me the IFHE is a worldwide network where you can reach nearly all countries and access the diversity of other members. The traditions of holding conferences and meetings in various parts of the world and of including cultural events, even home visits, open our eyes and demonstrate new ways to practice our field and daily life. It is difficult to measure the value of hospitality and friendship and the understanding gained from such experiences. The value and importance of all these personal contacts and networks enrich and make great contributions in my work as a university teacher as I try to share these insights with my students. The IFHE has made the relationships to many international organizations such as the United Nations concrete and real to us and reminds us that we can have an influence. I hope that many of you experience strong feelings and pride concerning the International Year of the Family in 1994, which we regard as a huge achievement, and that you approve of the successful networking that resulted from it. As a whole I regard my membership and work for the IFHE as an investment. It is an investment in myself, our students, and our profession. I feel that the IFHE is my international home.

Our global challenges and responsibilities

From our history book we have noted the importance of our consultative status to various agencies and our activities with the United Nations. At the Federation level several valuable contributions have been recorded. The UN has also provided many home economics career

possibilities, which should be promoted much more within our professional bodies and educational systems. Our representatives have maintained continuous communication between the IFHE and the UN. Unfortunately, in the history book we read “that our UN representatives have not been provided with sufficient support and information from members.” Certainly they have been left alone too often.

Quoting again from our history book, “If IFHE is to continue to engage in and have an influence on UN activities, and through these activities, to advocate on behalf of families and households worldwide, the issue of wider involvement of IFHE members is an issue that will need attention in the future.” The possibility is there to be involved with various themes and topics. It is just a question of whether we can educate our professionals to see the value of this kind of international work and whether we can formulate our message better to fit the present issues on the UN agenda.

This section (II) entitled “*International Communities as Promoters for our Profession*” has briefly introduced the tremendous resources that we all have under the IFHE, but has also pointed out many concerns that need more attention. Internationally, many different voices and dimensions have resulted in a fragmented image. On the other hand, the richness of our field is built on diversity and multiplicity. We need interpreters, approaches and frameworks that help us to decipher that complexity and to integrate our knowing. Interaction with society will remain central.

Our final section (III) points out the importance of family and everyday life, which should be made more visible so that it can have power in our societal systems in the future. We discuss some of our resources available through the efforts of our professionals and through activities of the Federation to strengthen these qualities and to focus more on future needs. Our rich and valuable history will help us to meet these challenges.

Part III: Demonstrating the diversity and capturing the whole

This third part tries to look beneath the surface to reveal something that is regarded as valuable to and characteristic of our profession. These qualities have been practiced, but not often discussed. This is why their presence in and influence on our profession have both positive and negative sides. We call these characteristics ‘hidden dimensions’ or ‘silent knowledge’. The IFHE and our profession might have achievements that we have not even discovered ourselves. We will reflect on our goals and missions, our research contributions, the multiplicity of our practices and our relationship to society.

Reflecting on Our Goals and Missions

We, the IFHE and our profession, have always had a mission that is clear enough for all to follow. This mission has been titled a bit differently and reformulated several times, as the IFHE history book explains (2008). Our mission will be discussed during this Jubilee Congress as well. We give the mission our full support, but at the same time we realize that there are other professionals besides us who have the same mission to serve individuals, families and communities and to promote well-being. Something we want to say is that the mission is not enough to guide us further. We need *visions* - preferred states - that we want to achieve, and

we need functional tools that enable us to take the steps to fulfill that mission. Home economics is a mission-orientated field, but at the same time it is practical, philosophical and future-orientated. Without a vision, no real progress can be made.

Upon reflection on our achievements, it is not completely clear whether our daily activities have followed our mission and a clear vision. We have followed certain lines and built structures that might not allow us to use the *full capacity* the profession of home economics is capable of, based on our long and rich history.

When approving our goals and missions we have to pay attention to the fundamentals of home economics. Our goals must be related to the body of knowledge we have created and to the practices we use in our teaching, research and other areas of action (see Kieren, Vaines & Badir 1984; Vaines 1992). It is important keep this in mind and to critically examine whether our everyday practices and research procedures follow the goals to which we are committed. In this way the fragmentation that has been one of our main ‘problems’ throughout our history can be avoided. The other concern is that of ‘specialization’ - not the specialization as such—but how it has been introduced to our students, new generations and as those outside our field. We are wondering if our specializations have followed the needs of society closely enough. Behind the *fragmentation* and *specialization* we can find some reasons we should consider. Many scholars, such as Marjorie Brown (1985) in her philosophy book, Rosemary von Schweitzer (2006) in her new theory book or Sue McGregor (2006) in her transformative practice book, have pointed out our restricted view of human beings, family and everyday life, and society. Several examples can be pointed out in education, in research or in the work done for business and administration etc.

The world is changing and so is home economics. Our history verifies that home economics can be practiced in various ways, which we regard as richness of our profession. Home economics is largely context based on and expected to result in diversity in our products and achievements. However there is—and will remain—a common fundamental *core* for our profession worldwide that supports some degree of unity. Our task is to discover and to use this core as our key resource and nurture it in our activities, whatever they are. This core serves us on a personal and professional level, the family context, in our communities and in all sectors of our societies and in international forums. We have to create for ourselves a clear understanding of this core and how it is constructed. Otherwise our message will remain ‘messy’, as our history book also documents. And if our message is messy, it is very difficult for people outside our profession to understand our premises and for us to work together effectively.

Reflecting on our research contributions

Research is an essential source for new knowledge, and what kind of research is carried out in our profession is not a trivial issue. The importance of scientific discussion and knowledge has been present under the IFHE from its beginning, but it took a relatively long time before research was emphasized in our World Congresses. The first research sessions were in Ottawa in 1980, but it took until Minneapolis in 1988 to have a full scale research program including published abstracts (Brittin, 1988). The history book details the activities run by the research committee. The discussion under the committee has been innovative and highly professional,

but many great ideas or proposals have never been completed for many reasons. It is quite hard to work on a voluntary basis under time limitations and very often with a lack of support from your background organization.

In this jubilee congress we have nearly 400 research presentations. This can be regarded as an excellent achievement, and we congratulate all the researchers who have contributed. The research presented here reflects very well *our traditions* in higher education and the university sector. It is a result of how we educate our researchers and the research strategy of each university or country. The research also reflects the qualities of the units under which home economics researchers are located.

After being involved in five screening processes (since 1992) of about 1700 abstracts submitted to the IFHE, I feel a responsibility to raise the question of whether the research and all the hard work behind it has been the best possible investment for the future development of our federation and our profession. We have had far too little discussion of the premises of research as well as of how to get young researchers involved and how to get your research financed or published. This is not a new concern since it has been discussed several times in our publications. But it clearly has resulted in some negative effects on our federation as well. The lack of a stronger research emphasis has led researchers in many countries to find other forums and organizations in which to identify themselves as researchers. The message of the IFHE as a research forum has not been clear. This is why we welcome all the initiatives during this Jubilee Congress to strengthen our research and to connect the research to professional practices. A strong connection between research and practices in both directions characterizes us well. However, it is good to remind ourselves that the Federation cannot change the situation. The main target groups are our universities and research organizations.

Reflecting on our practices

Understanding and reflecting on practices is the most important focus our professionals can take. It has been our strength historically, and should be taken even more seriously in the future. It is a question for all of us, not just researchers or teachers, to think about. It may start from reflecting on your practices in your own daily life, and extend to how you identify your contributions on an international scale. We might pose many questions to ourselves and our work communities, such as how to teach, how to do research, how to communicate, how to support your colleagues and students, how to keep contact with other professionals and how to react to something that looks strange. Asking why may be even more difficult. Practices can function as *integrating bodies*, and most subject issues, dimensions and processes are connected to practices.

The qualities and dimensions of our practice

Our practices reveal our understanding of knowledge, of our values and of our relationship to society, culture and nature. With our actions we build our relations to different environments and reflect our knowing (Turkki, 2007). The complexity of everyday life and the huge variety of various processes related to family and consumer issues make this challenging. We process elements from various origins, which results in many new combinations and relations to be

recognized. Further, the human commitment and hidden messages inside these relations need more attention. This simple framework has followed us from very beginning and teaches us something very basic about us and about human nature.

Reflecting on the practices of the past and present is challenging but rewarding. It may lead us to create that fundamental core for our profession that many of us are looking for. It can be said that we have primarily looked at practices from the outside and have not succeeded in revealing their inner contents, dimensions or value based on the human point of view in all its variety. To be part of a human profession means knowing what a human is like? Much of our research has certainly been in this line, for example, estimating the value of housework or women's work in general or working on health or environmental issues, but in most cases the reasons and rationality for the research have been defined narrowly and not based on the qualities and value of those practices to people. The approach has not been based on everyday life realities.

Social and cultural issues need more attention. Human action is socially and culturally constructed. In our societies we all greatly enjoy our cultural and social achievements, but in regards to our field, we may not have emphasized enough our similar achievements, our cultural and social innovations, that we have created and practiced. In Finland some years ago, researchers in the field of social policy invited 100 key persons to nominate a few social innovations that have had remarkable contributions to Finnish society and its welfare. The list of social innovations is interesting and has much in common with our field. (Taipale, 2006). The IFHE may establish a similar worldwide project to collect a hundred of the best social innovations from each country. As a result, during our next conference we may introduce 10,000 social innovations that our professionals have invented or promoted. The Finnish list includes innovations such as free school lunches for all children, a special kitchen cabinet, some traditional food items, the North Karelia project to change food habits etc.

Discussion on social or cultural innovations is not strongly enough present in defining innovations in our societies (Wilenius, 2005; Himanen, 2004; 2007). Innovation has been highly technology driven and has not resulted in enough human friendly solutions. It is also true that the discussion on sustainable innovations is just getting underway (Hautamäki, 2008). Another aspect is how to assess and measure social and cultural contributions or well-being including these contributions in a comprehensive manner. Many countries and international forums are examining and generating new measuring tools that we should focus our interest on because of our approaches and knowledge base. Our holistic approach can connect social and cultural dimensions to ecological, economic and technological ones. This is something our practices promote since we work with people we have opportunities to have their voices heard, such as consumers, citizens and members of various defined groups in all sectors of society. These opportunities also challenge us to strive for balance between the various groups and perspectives we deal with. New combinations of ideas result in discovering some new qualities.

Various human commitments (such as values, ethical codes or cultural sensitivity) that function as uniting elements between economical or technological and social or cultural dimensions are embedded in our activities. This has helped us to create and promote human

approaches to economics or technology that are different from the approaches from within the pure sciences and economics. We need appropriate competences to bring these perspectives together because we realize, and have been committed to throughout our history, that this is the only way to reach sustainability. Relating, uniting, coordinating and innovating are examples of processes in our professional practices that are difficult to point out but essential for achieving valuable results.

Our commitments challenge us to be specialists in human approaches. We believe that this area should be given more attention in order to reveal all the nuances of our past achievements. This is an exciting journey to which more passengers should be invited and which also leads us to pay more attention to knowledge and learning. In our history, education and development processes represent our stance, and our practices have focused on preventative efforts and are mostly based on long term goals (Bubolz 1996). We certainly do have all the competence needed to reach a *sustainable future*. Education for all is a real vision we have adopted, but unfortunately many of us limit the education to the specialists of education.

Knowledge, ignorance and learning

Understanding knowledge and its relation to practices is very relevant in our field but too often taken for granted. All citizens living in information or knowledge societies should be interested in different dimensions of knowledge and how to create new knowledge. We can also improve our message if we show evidence of our real understanding of knowledge and its relation to our research and education practices. We have many scholars such as Eleanore Vaines (1992; 1997; 2004) who has addressed this issue in a fundamental way while creating frameworks for a family perspective on everyday life. Her 'many ways of knowing' maps reveal different interpretations of knowledge but also analyze knowing as a quality of people, groups and societies that are meaningful in our interpretations of practice. She also relates knowing to time, space and power structures with which we constantly straggle. Her approach corresponds fully to that of the home economics perspective and is rooted in our history (Turkki, 2004b). Paying attention to different dimensions of knowledge and doing research on knowledge-creating processes can enrich our body of knowledge in a remarkable manner.

Besides the concept of knowledge, we should not neglect that of 'ignorance'. The researchers in the Club of Rome have held an interesting debate on ignorance, its presence at all levels and its different forms (Neuvonen, 2004). In present societies we appeal to evidence-based knowledge, but we may ignore the fact that most of the problems of society are due to ignorance. At a personal level ignorance can be based on a lack of basic education or motivation, or can be caused by manipulated information. At the systems level it may be dependent on outdated structures, a false analysis of situation, or a lack of vision. Applying this to our practice, we should ask whether it is a question of ignorance or just a hidden dimension. To discover our ignorance is one part in our reflective journey.

Education has had and will have a central role to play in home economics, and our profession has been very strong and highly innovative in education at various levels and in many sectors of society. It is the core of our intellectual heritage, and teacher education should be

regarded as its main generator. Our focus in education has always been preventive. If we succeed in educating all our citizens to have the capacity to supplement their basic needs related to food, housing, care and safety jointly with their communities, many of the present problems could be avoided in the future. The preventive quality makes education and learning key resources in our societies. Recalling our premises to work on a long term basis and to envision the future, we certainly can claim that home economics has always been committed to the idea of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning includes all forms of education, and not just formal. Learning in everyday life, while taking care of our daily activities, is our future classroom.

Education and communication together can build strong competences in our professionals within and outside teacher education. Home economics is about relations and communication. We help people create relations between themselves and different aspects of their environment, including nature and cultural and social environments. Human actions are tools in creating those relations. Our specialty in contents such as food, services, housing, family finance, gender issues, health and child care serve as our means of communication. We try to bring our home economics message to the forum, our networks, task groups and teams to make it available publicly. The more competent we are in building relations and in strengthening communication, the more deeply embedded we are in society.

Promote holistic and integrative thinking

Home economics can be seen as a combination of human development, healthy living, social responsibility, the sustainable use of resources and cultural diversity (Turkki 2001; 2004a). In our daily life these are integrated and form an interdependent whole. This makes it important to build competences and to support thinking that helps us to structure the whole and to recognize the importance and constant movement of various relations, which can be made meaningful and their influence on the whole can be revealed. In our definitions or theoretical approaches, some of the strong lines that we have followed can be regarded as our collective achievements. They have been introduced and practiced in different formats. The two fundamental approaches discussed here are household or family resource management and human ecological theory, which we do not claim have been perfected, but they have included everything needed to cover and introduce our key messages. At the moment there is an urgent need to reflect on them further. Both of them can also be indicated as titles of university study programmes or names of institutes. This gives them visibility. We are sure that most of you know the basic premises of these theoretical approaches (e.g. Deacon & Firebaugh 1978; Hallman 1991; Goldsmith 1996; Engberg et al. 1996; Goldsmith & McGregor 1999; Rettig 2003; von Schweitzer 2006).

These theories have evolved over time into several emphases and applications. The fact that their origin lies in other fields demonstrates the applied nature of our profession. However, these theories have many implications and directions that progress to critical science and beyond. Their value and importance has received a greater emphasis over the past few decades because of environmental and global concerns. Their grounds lie on systemic premises. Both theories emphasize the relation between home and society and between human action and the environment, which has convinced us to give them a special place in

our history. They will lead us into the future, helping us to maintain our diversity of ideas, methodologies and applications.

We believe that our ecological heritage, which includes strong human and social commitments and integrates ideas about resource management, can help us promote sustainability and better understand interrelated and connected wholes. Throughout our history we have paid attention to both economic and ecological thinking and promoted cultural understanding, which have transformed our practice. Productivity, sustainability and creativity can be combined together (Turkki 2007).

In Finland we have much experience in working with these frameworks within household or consumer economics and in home economics education historically. Many research applications have been introduced in our international household and family research conferences since 1990. One of our aims has been to cross disciplinary borders and to pay close attention to different theoretical approaches, research methods and paradigms. Since 1994 these premises have also framed and formed our Finnish national home economics curriculum (National Board of Education 2004). Home economics is a compulsory subject for boys and girls, and we have teacher education in home economics at the level of the Master's degree to allow and encourage a strong research emphasis. For our centennial in 1991 the historical research done on our achievements and crises will serve as a valuable resource which can be used to reflect on the profession and to build a holistic understanding of it (Sysiharju 1995).

Many other characteristics should be pointed out to clarify our progress in Finland and other countries. The qualities of a society in a broad sense certainly contribute to the presence and form of the home economics profession. In Finland we can say that our society supports home economics and home economics education quite well. Many of our educational and social policy issues are in line with home economics concerns, especially consumer affairs and citizenship issues. We have long traditions in household and consumer research (National Consumer Research Centre and TTS-Institute, 2008). The same goes for women and family organizations and adult education systems (Finland, 2008). Our investments in technology and international issues may also have an important influence in many respects. Transferring all teacher education to the university level and raising the requirements of teacher education to the Master's degree level were important actions that have strengthened our ties to social, behavioural and human sciences (see Jakku-Sihvonen & Niemi 2006). However without a strong interest in new kinds of research based on theoretical, philosophical and practical grounds, no greater progress could have been realized. Rethinking home economics and focusing on human action in everyday life have provided the basis for many innovations (Turkki 2007; Tuomi-Gröhn 2008). Difficult times and "our crises" in the 1920s, 1940s and 1990s have pushed us to develop valuable and sustainable insights that have led to new thinking and practices.

Reflecting on our relationship to society

It is not easy to see home economics in our societies. Can you point it out? Where and how is it manifested in our education systems, in the media, in politics and in business? Even countries that have never had home economics as a subject can certainly have home

economics issues in many forms. We can also argue that some activities labelled home economics may not actually support the premises of this profession.

Reflection on our relation to society has been discussed in this paper. Few would claim that our field and profession does not relate to society. However, we have a reason to say that our relation to society is one issue that has been greatly neglected, forgotten and hidden away. This should not be the case. The future of home economics as a profession is greatly dependent on how successful we are in clarifying and strengthening our links to society and how our messages are received. It is time to make our many societal contributions more visible and to become accountable for those relations. Within our profession we have created a broad base of knowledge, but many outsiders have the understanding that our focus is narrow and trivial without direct links to present society. Now it is time to bring our knowledge and expertise to the forums that are establishing new procedures and are indicators of societal contributions, social responsibility, sustainability, multiculturalism and citizenship, and work-life balance issues, all of which have an influence on our everyday life and on most of the professional activities we are involved in.

From our research we know how critical it is if we cannot identify the value of such things as household work, education or social services. We also know how critical it is if children do not have good food and a good living environment. We waste human potential and innovative capacity in all societies if we do not learn to read the society and its dynamics and bring different dimensions together. Our role as advocates for individuals, families, consumers and communities is to promote the understanding that connects economical issues to those of human potential, respects the diversity of people and their resources, integrates cultural and technological innovations, and respects nature and acknowledges its limits. We do have that expertise, but we still struggle to make those connections and unite ourselves intellectually. It is also important to work diligently on our key subjects of health and welfare, nutrition and food safety, consumer and family management, housing and living environment, gender issues, and education. There will be new knowledge and innovations generated, but these areas will remain necessities.

Our societies need the contributions of our professionals. Many of these needs have been added to the agendas of the international organizations that the IFHE works with. Calls for expertise to address environmental and climate change, health and safety, cultural diversity and human rights and trust-building are numerous. The call for education will never abate. All these calls represent needs at all levels of society from basic human needs to global systems (Turkki 2007). In addition, new needs offer opportunities and challenges. The presence of these fundamental needs within our profession provides a reason to reflect on our education systems, research policies and our professional practice. This centennial celebration and these valuable historical documents provide new tools for further reflection. This year is also an excellent opportunity to evaluate our international federation to determine whether we could develop closer links to other organizations and networks that have goals similar to ours. Our members surely have great ideas to bring to the common forum. New initiatives may be linked with themes already announced, such as *Education for All*, *Education for Sustainable Consumption and Education for Global Responsibility*, which we hope will stimulate contributions in all countries, regions and at the global level. Our common network - the IFHE

- provides a common forum in which to work together and to learn from each other. Our common commitment and our cultural and national diversity are meaningful and important resources to help us promote any of those themes, and many of our members are already working on them.

This section (III) entitled, “*Demonstrating diversity and capturing the whole*” has reflected on our profession and our professional practice from personal to professional and local and global dimensions, providing some recognized and hidden dimensions that can strengthen the core of home economics. These findings bind us tightly to our societies as active contributors. This section also has reflected on the uniqueness of our knowing - home economics knowing.

Conclusion

Our history informs us that home economics has a sustainable mission. After looking at our profession on an international scale and through its hundred year history makes us to conclude that we are serving our societies in multiple ways and we have created a knowledge base for our profession that is fundamental to the society. Since we are a life supporting discipline and field, we address many basic life-sustaining elements such as food, housing/shelter, and care of people in various cultural, social, and natural environments using our ecological heritage. We are convinced that we have a role to play in the continuously changing present and future world because advocacy for individuals, families and communities as basic units of all societies and cultures around the world is and will remain relevant. As long as we are loyal to our profession and able to integrate our knowledge with others, we will make progress with promising results. Change is our challenge.

We cannot escape our history, but we can generate it as an enriching resource. We invite you all to learn from reading our history and analyzing it at various levels—locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. We also have to learn to analyze our societies better. The phenomena of everyday life are very complex, being connected and influenced by various structures and processes in our societies and in families as depicted by various theoretical models or frameworks and demonstrated through our professional practices.

These claims are not easy ones to fulfill. They invite us to continuously develop our competences as professionals. This is why the universities and all other bodies that have responsibilities to educate new professionals and create new knowledge and new thinking have key roles. They create joint social activities within our own countries at national level and among international partners. They have a responsibility to continuously reassess their own structures and operations and look critically at the foundations of society. For society-oriented and mission-oriented professions such as home economics, it is essential to understand the interaction between the profession, society and the universities, which is a key message of this presentation.

The main task of a professional organization is to provide a forum that invites professionals to share their experiences and knowledge with others in on-going debate and discussion. We can learn so much by listening to others. Our Federation is very rich in its diversity, which is a great resource we could utilize more efficiently. This centennial celebration provides us an excellent forum to rethink our premises and to identify new perspectives for our work. We

hope that this week will function as a renewing experience for many of us so we return home with new energy and hope.

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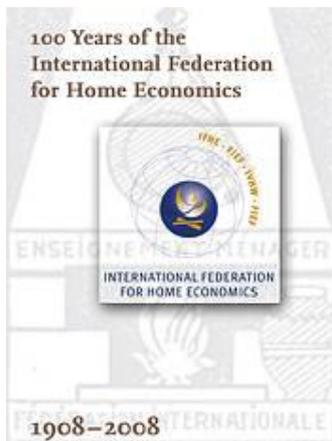
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Book Review: 100 years of the International Federation for Home Economics

Sue L.T. McGregor



Arcus, M. (Supported by the IFHE History Committee). (2008). 100 years of the International Federation for Home Economics, 1908-2008. Bonn, Germany: International Federation for Home Economics. ISBN 978-3-9812393-0-0. 442 pages, Hardcover, dimensions of A4 paper www.ifhe.org/299.html 45.00 Euro plus shipping.

The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) marked its 100 year anniversary in 2008 and prepared a written history as part of the celebration. The book was officially launched at the July centennial congress in Lucerne, Switzerland by Margaret Arcus (Canadian). 100 years is such a special occasion and this book really is an appropriate commemorative symbol. The cover of the book is intriguing. The original corporate logo is used as a watermark and the most recent logo is overlaid, also as a watermark. They blend together to stylishly represent the melding of 100 years. It is very heavy to lift but delicious to touch. You just want to close your eyes and enjoy the silky sensation of the feel of the cover and the inner pages. But please, do open your eyes to read it because it is chock full of IFHE delights.

A labor of love, the book reflects a true intellectual contribution to the profession. As the adage goes—we need to know where we came from in order to move forward. There is a preface, a table of contents, acknowledgments, lists of tables, photographs and illustrations,

both a name and a subject index, a reference list and several informative appendices. The book was vetted with 20 topic experts and re-worked using their feedback. The content is organized into two parts. Part 1, The History of IFHE, comprises five chapters, and accounts for half of the book. Part 2, IFHE Around the World, is one chapter containing regional, sub-regional and country reports prepared especially for this centennial story. Part 2 plus the Appendices account for the other half of the book.

In the 2-page Preface, Arcus explains the work of the IFHE History Committee and some challenges involved in preparing this compelling written history of the Federation. She recounts the loss of two boxes of original documentation in 1954, the challenge of reading the earlier documents prepared in the French language (IFHE moved from Switzerland to France in the middle of the century), and technical decisions about remaining true to original spelling, punctuation and the like and referencing styles. These details will matter to some people, and I am grateful that they are clarified for us. A most useful clarification is about the decision to use a Nexus typeset, which has the special, and initially distracting, feature of the use of the ligature ct, a connection of two separate letters into one. So, every time you encounter a word with c and t in it (like *Director*), you will see the t curled back so it joins the c. After awhile, you don't notice it—promise!

Part 1 traces an engaging history of IFHE organized into five chapters: (a) the founding of IFHE, (b) the nature of IFHE (mission, aims, etc. (c) the governance of the federation, (d) the work undertaken by IFHE, and (e) the future of IFHE. I will discuss each chapter in more detail, and direct you to a good summary of the first four chapters at pages 206-215. In 10 short pages in Chapter 1, Arcus draws us into the origins of IFHE during the very early days of the 20th century. She recounts the founding congress, the formal establishment of the Federation in Fribourg, Switzerland, and the first statutes detailing how the new International Office would function. Appendix A is a chronological, point form overview of the major milestones of IFHE, from its inception in 1908 to the Centennial Celebration in 2008 (five pages). Chapter 2 (40 pages) sets out the nature of IFHE by profiling the evolution of thinking and practice around such ideas as: aims and mission, name, corporate logo, the location of the head office, official languages, categories of membership, finances for the federation, and ongoing revisions of statutes (1922, 1954, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s). This chapter is enriched with many colored photos and illustrations, old and new.

Chapter 3 (25 pages) turns to a discussion of the governance structure of IFHE over the last century. The main instruments for running the organization are discussed in interesting detail: the Congress Assembly, the Council, the Executive Committee, Commissions/Standing Committees/Committees of the Council/Task Forces, the Secretariat (head office), the President, and the role of volunteers. From what I have heard about the internal politics of IFHE, the account shared in this book is a rather tame overview of the system of governance, but then again, Arcus used only written documentation and we all know that the dynamics often do not get set down on paper. I guess each member will have her own lived experiences to fit into the overall profile of the 'small p' political life of the organization. A few years ago, I noticed a huge improvement in the level of service provided by IFHE's head office. Arcus explains that in 2005, the current Executive Director implemented a Quality

Management System (QMS) to improve work efficiency. The implementation of this QMS formed the basis of PhD of the current webmistress and quality manager.

Chapter 4 (127 pages) tells the story of what IFHE has accomplished through its work over the last century. Arcus recounts, in splendid detail, the nuances of the 21 world congresses held by IFHE, and even provides the programs for each congress in Appendix B. If you presented at a congress, check the Appendix to see if your name is memorialized in this book. She then profiles the evolution of IFHE's modes of communicating with members and the public, from the original *The Bulletin* through the Newsletter to the website www.ifhe.org. She also identified three books published by IFHE and explained the publication policies and procedures developed by IFHE. In the third section of this chapter, Arcus shares the trials and tribulations of the IFHE documentation center and archives, referring to this as our international library. The archivists amongst us will be moved by this part of our story.

Still in Chapter 4, Arcus turns our attention to the Resolutions that have been passed by IFHE over the last century. She provides the original wording for almost 200 resolutions, in Appendix C, creating a repository of rich, marvelous insights into our social and political conscience over the last 100 years. This is a major contribution of the book, paving the way for future thesis and dissertation projects. Indeed, she posits at p. 126 that "Little information is available on the outcomes of IFHE's many resolutions."

The Federation has consultative status at several agencies in the United Nations (starting in 1952) and with the Council of Europe (starting in 1970). In her discussion of IFHE's role as an international non-governmental organization (INGO), Arcus identifies 20 Statements and Position Papers prepared by IFHE (on such topics as food, the advancement of women, social development, poverty eradication, and the family) and the 20 major INGO meetings attended by IFHE (1972-2008). She then shares a compelling analysis of the issues arising for IFHE in its international work (e.g., heavy reliance on a small core of aging volunteers, public's perception of what is home economics, and inadequate funding to support such pressing initiatives). She includes a separate section in Chapter Four (14 pages) on the provocative and influential role IFHE played in implementing the UN International Year of the Family (IYF, 1994).

Continuing in Chapter 4, Arcus discusses the activities undertaken by IFHE to help clarify home economics terms and definitions in a complex international setting. I was not aware that, in 1963, home economics was defined in a Glossary of Terms, by an IFHE Committee on Terminology. Other related initiatives culminated in the 2008 IFHE Position Statement: Home Economics in the 21st Century, released at the July 2008 centennial celebration, and reprinted in the book at pages 164-166. In a span of 16 pages, Arcus tells the story of how IFHE's Programme Committees evolved over the years. IFHE did not have Programme Committees until 1981, when five original committees were established. Arcus describes the basic work of each of these five committees (including names changes and mergers with new renditions) and then adds sections for eight new committees that emerged between 1982 and 2003 (see Figure 3).

Arcus also discusses the establishment of the Young Professional Network (YPN) for students and recently graduated professionals of the Millennial and Generation Y age cohort and the Senior Advisory Committee for ex officio, retired (or invited) members of IFHE committees (established in 1998). The former is an attempt to recruit and involve students. Interestingly, there is no mention in IFHE's archives of involving students until 1968. YPN was established in 2002, and now has its own website at IFHE, www.ifhe.org/238.html. They define themselves as "a group of dynamic enthusiastic globally aware members of IFHE who feel empowered and proud to actively promote home economics."

Arcus concludes Chapter 4 with a discussion of the IFHE/Nestlé Student Study Abroad Program started in 1986 and suspended in 2000 (12 students to date), IFHE's three recognition awards, and the dynamics behind the eventual establishment of a World Home Economics Day. In 1981, March 20 was recognized as a day when members of the profession can promote IFHE, promote home economics and engage in activities that raise funds for IFHE. Arcus concludes the chapter with a overview of how IFHE moved from a collection of member countries to regionalization, wherein countries are organized into regions, four in 1973 and five regions in 1980. The intent was to expand the base of IFHE beyond that of Europe so as to improve communications, increase solidarity, expand availability for INGO related initiatives, undertake inter-nation research, and strengthen governance in regions outside of Europe's head office. Although in a separate section of the book, in Part 2, Arcus shares 20 pages of regional, sub-regional and member country reports (31 of 57), especially prepared for this written history. Everyone will enjoy reading their country's story and will wonder why their country is not included. I hope this section is an impetus for people to maintain records of related initiatives so rich accounts of country and region success stories are provided for the 200th celebratory history.

Chapter 5 is titled The Future of IFHE. I would have placed this chapter at the end of the book, instead of the end of Part 1. Regardless, Arcus shares a summary of the first 100 years of IFHE at pages 206-215, organized using 25 sub-headings. She then turns her gaze to the future, looking through the lens of seven dimensions of IFHE: world congresses, resolutions, IFHE as an INGO, programme committees, documentation center (archives) and institutional memory, and finances. She poses valuable reflective questions for each of these aspects of the lived life of IFHE. I appreciate these questions. Having read its compelling history, I am prompted to offer more ideas about IFHE for our reflective consideration and action, and I anticipate others will be so moved. I wonder about the impact of the: (a) worldwide decline in volunteers, (b) the worldwide decline in association membership, (c) the worldwide decline in the number and scope of university home economics programs, and (d) the lack of respect for the role of the family as a social institution. What about the struggle to get the Millennial generation involved in the profession?

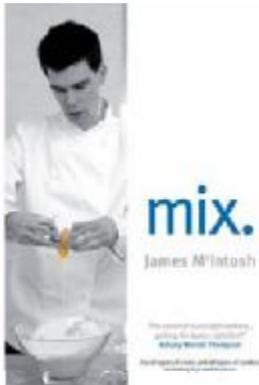
Reading the book also prompted me to see new opportunities. IFHE could work to strengthen the connections between all generations: Millennial youth, Generation X, Boomers and Seniors. It could seek best practices for the nuances of running an international NGO facing financial constraints. IFHE can support graduate students intrigued with the themes, position statements, resolutions and such, leading to new research and commitment to the Federation. IFHE needs to reiterate the future proofing stance adopted in the 2008 Position

Statement. It should invite further comments about the Position Statement. I also recommend other program committees, to take us beyond the current focus on content areas (reflecting the plague of specializations and fragmentation) to embrace processes and contexts. Consider: (a) a Human Condition/Human Needs Committee, (b) a Sustainable Home Economics Committee, (c) a Professional Competency Committee, (d) even a New Intellectual Approaches Committee. Under new leadership, IFHE approved a new Philosophy and Leadership ad hoc committee at the 2008 Council Meeting in Switzerland.

After I finished reading, I asked myself, "What would an outsider see if she or he read IFHE's story as recounted in this book?" I think they would gain a sense of the tremendous pride and deep commitment of a small cadre of worldwide volunteers working for a worthy cause. They would gain an appreciation of the scope and magnitude of the reach of IFHE, especially at the United Nations—most people do not know about this aspect of IFHE. They would see that IFHE has come into the 21st century with renewed purpose, an articulated position statement, and a sound technological infrastructure respecting the global nature of its membership and its work. The story gives readers a sense of, as Arcus said, "the inner life of the background of IFHE from day-to-day, over time." Readers will also experience an undertone of scarce resources, financial constraints, and a dwindling volunteer base couched in hope and connection to the future for the sake of the human condition and the family as a social institution. A heartfelt thanks to Margaret Arcus and the IFHE History Committee for honoring our past so we can honor our future. Rethinking the work of IFHE and the profession is forever enriched by this intellectual contribution to the field.

Book Review: mix.

Suzanne Piscopo



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

This pocket size 100 page book is brimming with recipes, variations of recipes and practical advice which James McIntosh presents using a light-hearted approach. The focus is mainly on basic and traditional recipes, perhaps more well known in Britain and in countries with a British heritage. However, there are also some classic international recipes such as crème brûlée, Genoese sponge and Dacquoise Pavlova, as well as more globalised recipes such as pesto, aioli and couscous. The recipes cover a range of basic mixtures which can be used for starters, sauces, main dishes, desserts, snacks or accompaniments—though James has chosen to use a simple classification of either savoury or sweet items. It's not clear however what criteria were used for sequencing within this classification—perhaps James wanted readers to read through the list to locate a recipe. The Index at the back does help of course.

The recipes make good use of vegetables and fruit, and sometimes a vegetarian version of a dish is given as well. Yet, clearly James did not intend placing emphasis on healthier cooking. Perhaps, as a Home Economics professional, I was expecting some effort at showing recipe modification to decrease the sugar or fat content of recipes and/or to add fibre. Tips on adding wholemeal flour to shortcrust pastry, choux pastry, scones and biscuits could perhaps have also been included. Moreover, teachers would have to be careful if using this book in a Primary or Secondary school setting as some recipes use alcohol. A glossary of key terms would have also been handy, for example, to bake blind, rubbing in, folding in etc.

Overall, however, this book has much going for it. It provides a good foundation for learning basic cooking processes, offers valuable safety and practical tips for achieving a good product, and encourages users to be a bit adventurous with their tastebuds. It is the first book in a series of four. I look forward to reading the next three, especially if they follow the same stated principles of “No fiddle, no fuss, just food.”

LEADING HOME ECONOMIST WINS PRESTIGIOUS COOKBOOK PRIZE

Press Release 17 December 2008

This year’s prestigious Gourmand Cookbook award for Best UK Series Cookbook has been given to Home Economist James McIntosh, for his book *mix*. James will now qualify for the Gourmand Best World Cookbook award, which is to be announced in May 2009 at the annual Gourmand gala dinner.

Eduard Cointreau, the president of Gourmand, explains that “the main objective of the Gourmand World Cookbook awards is to reward and honour those who cook with words”, and to help readers find the very best of the 26,000 food and wine books published every year. Previous winners include *Larousse Gastronomique: The World’s Greatest Cookery Encyclopaedia* by Prosper Montagne and PH10 by Pierre Herme. This year there were approximately 6,000-8,000 entries.

mix, which is published by Word4Word, is the first of four pocket-sized cookbooks by James McIntosh, the UK’s leading Home Economist. It is a terrifically comprehensive guide to basic proportions in cookery, giving the quantities needed for simple, everyday family food. It contains over 170 recipes, from how to make white sauce to how to prepare pastry and is an essential cookery book. James includes useful tips on saving money on food and fuel, as well as variations on all recipes.

Forthcoming titles in the James McIntosh Series will include dinner., veg. and cake.

Notes for Contributors

Frequency of publication

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

Focus

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

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

Contributors

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

Author's biography

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

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

Manuscripts

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

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The details required for books are:

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

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

The details required for journals are:

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

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

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