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July 28, 1995

Date

HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR'S PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS: DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Gwendolyn Tenpenny Erwin
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my loving parents,
James Owen Tenpenny Jr. and Brenda Jean Tenpenny,
who have modeled perseverance and determination to overcome challenges in reaching their dreams. They instilled in me an insatiable desire for learning, and I thank them for giving this gift.

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ABSTRACT

Home economics is at a crossroads between what it is, what it has been, and where it is going. At present, home economics is examining how it is being perceived by those who have an impact upon its image. High schools are perhaps the primary location where students first have contact with home economics education, and guidance counselors have an impact upon the opportunity students have to interact with home economics curricula. This study examined how guidance counselors in one state perceive home economics in secondary programs and its contribution to the overall school curriculum. The study revealed a heavy reliance on the teacher's success to market a program, the need for more specific visibility for both teacher and curriculum in their involvement in the community and the school, and a disparity between what is actually taught and what home economics curriculum requires. Interestingly, the study also revealed a significant relationship between a low image consumer and homemaking program and the existence of an occupational home economics program.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The home economics national organization, American Home Economics Association, has recently become the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (We're the American Association of Family and Consumer Science, 1994). It has, in effect, redefined its mission and purpose. It has faced the challenge of examining what and where it has been as well as where it is headed. One of the related critical issues of its mission and purpose is how it teaches essential living skills for the students of today, and the citizens for tomorrow. Placed into action, the conceptual framework decisions which were made in Scottsdale (Positioning the Profession, 1993) will provide intense challenges for home economics. What will home economics become? What critical life skills will change in order to address changes in society and culture?

Statement of Purpose

The goal for this study was to ascertain from guidance counselors their perceptions of secondary home economics programs. Previous

research (McInnis, 1992) revealed reasons to believe that while some programs were positively integrated into the total school curriculum others were not. Guidance counselors were targeted for this study due to their influence on enrollment figures in high school home economics programs. They were also selected because of their multi-faceted role involving parents, communities, administration, and students in the school curriculum. The study focused on the perceptions of guidance counselors. It is assumed by this investigation that these perceptions will assist home economics in its future planning as the field strives to redefine its mission, improve its image, redefine its content, and accept leadership for the future as it teaches critical life skills.

Statement of the Problem

Research pertaining to current home economics programs indicated that some home economics programs were accepted into the high school curriculum while other were not (McInnis, 1992). Home economics programs experiencing a decline in enrollment appeared to have a negative image while the other schools seemed to have a positive image. High

schools have had the opportunity to teach critical skills for life, yet with change, those skills need re-defining. If home economics is to remain in the school curriculum, changes must occur to improve its image, define critical skills, and its mission. Home economics has worn many hats in the past, teaching occupational home economics, consumer and homemaking, and general education skills. In response to the demands of the future, home economics cannot simply continue on the same path under all of these responsibilities. The responsibilities have shifted home economics focus from teaching essential living skills to training occupations and teaching skills for life. Home economics must distinguish its identity clearly, so it can affect a more diverse population. Challenges of society are more complex; therefore requiring special focus on specific needs. It is necessary to listen to guidance counselors as they work between students, administration, and parents to determine what school curriculum is most valuable.

Definition of Terms

For clarification, the following terms are defined to assist in reading and comprehending the study.

1. Occupational Home Economics; instructional programs, services, and activities at all educational levels for preparation for employment in occupations utilizing the knowledge and skills of home economics from particular areas such as clothing management, child care, and food service.
2. Consumer and Homemaking; instructional programs, services, and activities at all educational levels for the occupation of homemaking including, but not limited to, consumer education, foods and nutrition, family living and parenthood education, child development and guidance, housing and home furnishings, home management, and clothing and textiles.
3. Life Skills; Essential skills used in daily in both work and family settings, i.e. communication techniques, budgeting, decision making, conflict management, interpersonal relationships, etc.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to gather perceptions of Tennessee guidance counselors. The perceptions of guidance counselors provide unique information to the status of secondary home economics programs. Before assessing actual interview data, a survey of literature related to the topic was carried out through searches of The Educational Resources Information Center Abstracts, Dissertation Abstracts, and Government Publications. The search considered documents published prior to the current year, 1995, and served to establish a framework for understanding the issues related to home economics education.

Home economics has equated itself with many diverse ideas and conceptions. This was evident throughout its history. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, involvement in contemporary social issues such as school lunch programs for children and teenagers were paramount as it was labeled with 'efficiency', and was viewed as a science working for the good of the home. It was a time when home economics was

moving into the home functions such bread making, weaving, and clarifying all which contributed to the management of homes (Justin, 1929). It was natural to associate ideas relating to nutrition and meal preparation, yet home economics adopted ideas of furnishings of the home, income divisions, and family budgeting (Bevier, 1917). Even during its earliest development, home economics strove to meet the needs of the family as families learned to adapt to their environments and utilize their resources.

Home economics originated with risk-takers in the creation of a new field of study proclaiming to study the "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" (Bane, 1928) and striving to find the appropriate balance between the two. From these endeavors, home economics has evolved to include the focus on the individual in the context of the family as well as the study of families, themselves. Whether it was involved in national rescue missions or one-on-one relationships, home economics faced contemporary challenges with boldness. It was a time when family education was enhanced as home

economics assisted families in developing better communities and equipping families with practical living skills (Williamson & Lyle, 1954).

The time came for home economics to face the challenge of examining its mission, image, and purpose. The debate regarding focus on an individual or a family was one of the issues for the Scottsdale conferences (Positioning the Profession, 1993). Yet, it should be noted that such debate is not new. Home economics debated whether the focal point should be the family or focus on the individual even during the thirties when the family witnessed decline despite home economics progression (Zuill, 1933).

Part of that challenge was focused on home economics and its identity. How others have see it, impacts its status and its influence. During the past decade, home economics has battled issues over image that are contrary to the early commitments at Lake Placid (Brown, 1984). It was apparent that the Lake Placid Conferences sought to focus on an interdisciplinary model with its primary emphasis on the individual as it related to the family, not the vocation of a homemaker. The dilemma originated from issues concerning the mission of home economics and what

is taught. Home economics, within high schools, has taught basic living skills, yet 'basic living skills' have inevitably been redefined producing an identity issue and stress point for home economics.

Although there are many factors related to home economics and its future development, one valuable avenue that has offered various opportunities has always been the high school classroom. It is assumed that critical issues are addressed more effectively through home economics programs at the high school level where students are allowed more interaction with their teachers. For clarity, this chapter focuses on four dimensions of home economics as they all contribute to the quality and life-expectancy of home economics.

- The unfolding of home economics curriculum in terms of how to define general living skills, how to define preparatory skills for college, and how to define vocational training.
- The successful home economics programs, how success is defined, and what are the contributing factors to success.
- The importance of a strategy for marketing those new developments in home economics pertaining to name changes and redefinition of field.
- The image development of home economics, based upon how it is perceived by students, faculty, administration, and the community at large focusing primarily on educational realms.

Defining Home Economics...Who Are We?

Teaching Critical Living Skills

Home economics teaches critical skills as it addresses current issues in hopes that students will develop these essential skills for living. These skills focus on balancing both work and family through financial planning, communication techniques, nutrition, decision making, etc. Home economics is the only field to examine the family and all its interrelated parts (Scott, 1959). Some interesting patterns emerged from the review of the literature regarding the issue of teaching critical living skills. Living skills included in the early stages of the development of home economics curriculum were consumer education, care and guidance of children, home equipment, home care of the sick, first aid, and education for the family (Blankenship & Moerchen, 1979). Soon, after vocational home economics provided instruction which enabled families to improve their family life quality through the more efficient development and utilization of their human and material resources (Williamson & Lyle, 1954).

The objective to serve the community through teaching practical living skills was initiated by the early home economists, and the curriculum has grown to incorporate new challenges. Some of those challenges include addressing conflict in both family and work, teen pregnancy, fitness, family economics, AIDS, and other current social issues. Home economics planned and implemented the tasks of the home as it measured its success by assessing the development of individuals and families in these competencies (Scott, 1959).

Holt (1988) asked high school teachers to identify critical content areas they thought were important to the well-being of students. Teachers stated that content such as budgeting, parenting, relationships, and decision making were essential skills for life; however, when the same teachers were asked to give time allotments for each of the critical areas, results were surprising. Teachers gave more time to the content areas they stated to be less important, i.e. sewing and food preparation and less time to the more critical issues, i.e. areas previously mentioned (Holt, 1988). The critical content teachers stressed as essential, in fact, occupied less of their time,

and the less important content areas were taking most of the classroom time (Holt, 1988).

Essential living skills are the most important aspect of home economics curriculum and these skills are continually changing. According to Wogensen (1989), critical thinking was noted as an essential skill that most students lacked. She stated that the classroom was ultimately the teacher's responsibility; therefore, teachers needed to assume control (Wogensen, 1989). If Holt and Wogensen's research can be projected to the current situation, teachers need to make a change. The current Tennessee home economics curriculum includes those essential living skills, so teachers need to be focusing on these areas. The teacher was faced with the challenges of adapting to diversity, incorporating creativity, providing critical analysis, and modeling appropriate behavior (Wogensen, 1989). Also as teachers face a future of modern technology and increased social issues, their jobs becomes more complex. To adequately teach, the classroom environment needs to be conducive to what outcomes are desired, i.e. teachers must model what they teach. In order to effectively teach essential skills, teachers must develop new ways to

approach and resolve conflict while promoting healthy relationships which incorporate cooperation (Wogensen, 1989). Another method of conveying the relative importance of certain skills involves the allocation of classroom time (Holt, 1988).

Home economics has traditionally attempted to assist families in promoting the welfare of its members. With advancing social change, home economics has been forced to adapt to society's needs. Indicators of social distress like child abuse, teen suicide, and violence were listed in McKenry's paper (1993) as needing rigorous research and attention; therefore, home economics faces students with abusive families, suicide, and teen pregnancy, all of which become obstacles in creating and maintaining a learning environment.

It is obvious that challenges in all areas of education are becoming more complex; therefore, new approaches are needed to deal with contemporary social problems. Those issues with which students face are not confined to the home. They bring them to school. In order to be relevant and enhance learners, it is necessary for home economics to confront these issues as part of the overall training in individual and family

competence. By definition, home economics has always been where the action took place, so "we cannot pass the buck" (Vickers, 1986). Teaching essential living skills is not always an easy subject to teach due to its multi-dimensional quality. Living skills affect all participants in work and family environments and are used frequently. Therefore, home economics should utilize its unique holistic perspective of the family as it teaches essential living skills. As changes in the environment are realized, home economics needs to determine how essential skills are best defined, and how the subject matter must change in relation to the current society (Blackwell, 1962).

Occupational Home Economics

By definition home economics has a dual role, one that taught essential living skills under consumer and homemaking education and another that focused on occupational education. In reality, "living skills" have also served a dual role -- somewhat within a general education role (i.e. everyone should take these) and partly within the framework of providing skills for the vocation of homemaker. Occupational home

economics has focused on enhancing job preparation. It is through occupational home economics that students have the opportunity to train for a specific job and gain work placement experiences through the junior and senior years of high school. The content areas to study for employment were child-care, food service, housemaid, household decorator, and cook (Hawkins, Prosser, & Wright, 1951). These courses were designed to fulfill entry level occupations in home economics related occupations (Blankenship & Moerchen, 1979). These courses were also designed to meet the needs in the job market for the selected areas. The occupational home economics curriculum is designed to equip students with general knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for specific occupations (Blankenship & Moerchen, 1979). Within the state of Tennessee, home economics occupational courses exist primarily in the areas of food service management, child care and guidance, and clothing management. It should be noted, however, at least in Tennessee that the model for training for these occupations is distantly different from those of some other specific trades and industries. For example, a university or college degree is not required for a high school teacher of trades and industries. Whereas, an

occupational home economics teacher must obtain a bachelors degree and an additional teaching endorsement for that specific occupation which also requires additional training. This model appears to be a holdover from the days when homemaking was considered a "vocation". Considering today's dual career families, such a conception appears outdated. Although certainly the importance of maintaining a home should not be minimized, today's conception is probably closer to recognizing these skills as "general living skills" (appropriate to all, not just to women) rather than as a vocation. This model of teacher training helps compounds the confusion of roles for home economics

How Is Success Defined?

Definition of Success

Success in home economics can be defined in a variety of ways. Indeed, how to evaluate programs is a matter of debate within the field (Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center, 1987). McInnis (1992) initiated a project examining content being taught, teacher's course

schedules, teacher's academic history, and other course related information. McInnis noted a difference in some outstanding programs where enrollment matched capacity, and new positions were being sought. And other programs which were declining in enrollment were on the decline. In some of these weaker programs, they had only part-time teachers while others taught only one home economics course.

Club Involvement

According to findings in McInnis' (1992) research, popular student organizations were part of the stronger home economics programs. Thus, the role of student organizations, especially Future Homemakers of America (FHA), becomes relevant to the definition of stronger programs. Other supporting research (Borders, 1987) stated that the student organization, FHA, provided students with real-life experiences to test their learned skills. Incorporating FHA in the day-to-day life of home economics enabled every student to participate; therefore, all students received leadership opportunities, community involvement, and personal challenges (Borders, 1987). Through Future Homemakers of America, Parker (1987) noted that

students were introduced to their community and its needs as one community involved in "Global Connections" to reach others through their community. FHA also offered achievement opportunities through competitive events which allowed students to compete certain skills, i.e. job interview and illustrated talk, against other schools and districts. Each student was awarded because every student was a winner. The researcher found these experiences assisted students in developing their own strengths and was a worthwhile experience for them (Stanford & Couch, 1985) The link to homemaking as a vocation, however, appears tenuous. On the other hand, consumer and homemaking provides students with skills that help balance work and family life (Tennessee Department of Education, 1989). The focus, as stated in the FHA Information Sheet (1994), rather is to provide members "the opportunity to expand their leadership potential and develop skills for life." Considerations of name changes for FHA recognizes that evolving status and may follow the name change on the national level. Overall, FHA contributes to home economics programs. It is through its efforts that students are given laboratory settings or practice

settings to implement what they had learned in class resulting in well-trained individuals.

Redefining The Mission

Today, home economics teachers are faced with the challenges of balancing past roles with evolving needs. How can 'we' best meet the current needs of the students? Family life education has been highlighted, and home economics teachers "are more often closer to their students' home situations than other teachers" (Smith, 1992). Therefore, home economics teachers have real opportunities to assist students in reaching their potential. The change in the curriculum of home economics needs to become reality, and not just discussion. If all students continue visually seeing home economics in the image of clothing construction and food preparation, home economics will not remain essential for all students (Smith, 1992). The skills of clothing construction and food preparation, alone are not essential for students today as they prepare for work and family. Other skills are more practical for daily living and require

preparation and practice, i.e active listening, conflict management, family relationships, budgeting, etc.

One example of home economics changing its focus through addressing career skills which incorporate critical thinking is New York State's reform in 1986. Now decision making, personal management, career planning, personal development are focal programs that provides students as they take responsibility in roles of home managers, consumers, family members, and wage earners (Katz, Dalton, & Giacquinta, 1994). Other states such as Virginia and Florida have also refocused their curriculum to prepare students for balancing work and family through essential living skills.

Redefining home economics, however, also necessitates marketing the programs. The challenge to market and advertise a desired image must be developed in such a way to influence the perceptions others have. Cooperative extension home economics, also faced an image dilemma that paralleled secondary home economics i.e. teaching community quilt making, embroidery, and canning. The current agendas focus around addressing critical issues, expanding global education, and development of

new technologies (United States Agriculture, Food, and Environmental System, 1993). Again, marketing issues were presented for extension to approach the changing society, and the same was true with secondary home economics.

Perceptions of Home Economics

From the Student's Perspective

One of the most valuable perceptions of home economics can be heard from the students of its programs. This is because students tend to voice their opinions openly and honestly when they discussed the level of impact home economics had on their lives. Due to their daily involvement in home economics courses, students share unique experiences that contribute to their perceptions of the profession.

In one study, Caputo and Benzley (1988), gathered information from students regarding home economics. Caputo and Benzley gathered data concerning personal hands-on experiences in home economics, and the visibility of home economics classroom equipment, i.e., the clothing and

foods lab classrooms with their sewing machines and food preparation equipment. The study by Caputo and Benzley supported the idea that the image and definition of home economics was influenced by its class offerings such as consumer and homemaking and family economics. In addition, the identification with the highly physical laboratories was a major factor in students perceptions. Implications were linked to future planning because today's students "will become the administrators, parents, counselors, legislature, and tax-paying patrons that directly support or challenge home economics programs" (Caputo & Benzley 1988). Therefore, the perception each student develops through his or her own experiences of home economics will influence future decisions and perceptions concerning the profession.

Caputo and Benzley gathered data regarding the perception of home economics through questionnaires given to elementary and middle school students. This study gave insight to where students formulated their opinions. The question, "how would describe home economics?" generated the participants responses. Sixth graders mostly answered "I don't know" to their questions about home economics except for two students who

answered that home economics was for people who had computers in their homes. As students entered the seventh and eighth grades opinions changed. Males tended to associate home economics with cleaning the house and taking out the trash where as females focused on sewing and cooking for a family. Throughout the middle school years, students said home economics gave them the facts about life, such as taking care of children and managing the house (Caputo & Benzley, 1988). Despite the origin, these definitions were true for these students; hence becoming a visible image in their minds.

Another study (LeBleu & Smith, 1994) interviewed college students in home economics related field of studies. This research focused on gathering perceptions of college students, so that factors that influenced their career decisions could be identified. Participants stated that most of their early perceptions of home economics came from early images based on gender role expectations and stereotypes. These experiences were associated with which parent did what activities in the home. These perceptions were formulated very early in their childhood, yet they were not associated with the term home economics. It was not until the high school

years that perception began to have specific ideas or mental pictures attached to them.

During the high school years, home economics was identified by these students as either contemporary (child-development, family relations, clothing selection) or traditional (cooking, sewing, and marriage preparation) and specific stigmas attached themselves to each (LeBleu & Smith, 1994). Included in these perspectives was an idea that home economics was better "suited for those thought to be intellectually less capable" which has major applications for home economics especially as it relates to declining enrollment (LeBleu & Smith, 1994). By the time students reached college, their perceptions were broadened. The college experiences of these students formed attitudes inclusive of specialty areas that fall under the home economics umbrella i.e. interior design, fashion merchandising, food services, nutrition, early childhood education, family life development, and consumer education. It was also the time they noted the importance of home economics content in their lives (LeBleu & Smith 1994).

It is obvious that students' perceptions have had great impact on home economics. They are sources which offer new perspectives that change with time and seek to address current issues. Burge and Cunningham (1985) collected data from juniors and seniors in high school and explored their definitions of consumer and homemaking. The interviews were designed to capture the students' ideas about consumer and homemaking. The sample included 289 males and 258 females all of which were involved in a consumer and homemaking class. Students focused on the importance of learning to become a good parent, and that all students should take a consumer and homemaking class. On the other hand, this study revealed that students had suggestions concerning the content in home economics. They suggested that current issues should also be taught in other classes, in the home, and from parents to supplement classes in home economics (Burge & Cunningham, 1985). Overall, students agreed that home economics was appropriate for both sexes implying a positive equality among sexes. These perceptions focused on the valuable parenting education they received from home economics and the link to families incorporating this philosophy.

From the Parent's Perspective

As perceptions were examined by the researcher, one factor that influences student's perceptions is their parents. Parental knowledge and perception is linked to the perceptions students have especially during the early years. Ley (1984) focused on parental knowledge and awareness of home economics, stating that out of the 414 parents researched, positive attitudes were collected, yet there were noted discrepancies between parent's perceptions and what they thought actually was taught in the classroom.

Parents traditionally have been active in the lives of their children, yet during the past decade, this involvement has declined. Research has reacted to this decline in search of the impact parents have on school curriculum and its resources. Therefore, parents' perceptions not only affect students but the future of selected curriculum for education (Ley, 1984).

Within Ley's research, parents were favorable toward home economics overall, yet 52% voiced that they were not in favor of home economics being mandatory of all students. Therefore, it was evident that

parents' perceptions did not coincide with their personal opinions of mandatory home economics. It was interesting that through the eyes of parents, home economics taught valuable curriculum, yet there was a missing link.

These parents also tended to be very traditional in their perception of needed skills stating that meal planning, food preparation, nutrition, home management, health, clothing care, and clothing construction were all extremely important in home economics. However, areas like families, knowledge of other cultures, values and moral development, interior design were lower on the scale of importance.

From the Communities' Perspective

As these perceptions developed, recognition that the broader community was also an important constituency emerged. Communities not only included students and parents, but also included businesses and other professionals. Research indicated that community members who were involved with schools were also strong in community activities. This evoked a more positive image toward home economics (Love, 1983). It is

obvious that as people become more active in their community, they also become more active in their schools. It was evident from Love's research that schools rely on community support which is linked to legislation; hence providing more opportunities for funding and up-dated curricula (Love, 1983). It was through the community's perception that images of home economics were established. These images affect how communities responded to legislature and how they supported governmental laws affecting education.

Love (1983) concluded that it was necessary for schools to be in contact with their communities. Current images of home economics programs relied on the involvement of the communities in the schools. In essence, the stronger more visible schools or programs thrived, and the weaker ones struggled to exist. Among those schools which alienated themselves from the community were schools of "lower income, older, and less educated community members" which in turn added to the negative feelings towards consumer and homemaking curriculum (Love, 1983).

From the Guidance Counselor's Perspective

Guidance counselors' perspectives of home economics are also important both from a vocational (prospective careers) and from a general education (advisement of students) perspective. Inana (1985) found that guidance counselors needed information concerning home economics employment opportunities as they assisted students in selecting a career. Counselors indicated the necessity of positive relationships with the teachers and suggest both working together as they prepared students for job possibilities (Inana, 1985). Overall, counselors were not knowledgeable about careers in home economics, and this may contribute to a shortage of home economics teachers (Mears, 1981). Counselor's perceptions of job opportunities in the home economics fields influenced the availability of student awareness. The teacher also contributes to this deficiency and needs to assist counselors by providing current literature (Love, 1983).

It seems that guidance counselors knowledge of home economics is connected to their perceptions of home economics. In the marketing of the professional literature, the impact of stereotypes is critical. According to Simerly's research (1993), people's perception usually evolved from

perceptions that were formed and eventually influenced not only people's minds but their behavior. If a person's behavior is connected to what perceptions they have, then home economics has a gap to bridge. The remnants of negative perceptions of home economics seem to have a carry over effect. For a field in which change is inevitable such a pattern may be difficult to combat. If home economics focuses on living skills and living skills change with the evolving society then those persons with only minimal contact with the field a generation ago will perceive the field as dated and irrelevant. In Simerly's research (1993), images were modified when people's information sources produced highly disconfirming data and forced people to re-examine their opinions. Therefore, marketing is connected to the perceptions and images home economics have affecting its future (Green, 1990).

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Qualitative research allows participants to tell their stories in hopes that their perspectives evoke new appreciation and understanding of their worlds (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). For this study, a qualitative method of interviewing was selected so that the participants could speak for themselves concerning their perceptions of home economics education. Data were gathered through a series of nine interview questions that offered probing ideas concerned with home economics education in the high school setting (Appendix B). Additional probes were used when more information was needed or when the researcher believed the question was not understood or was misinterpreted.

Open-Ended Interview Research

The perspective in conducting this study was based on open-ended interviewing described by Reinharz (1992) and Glesne and Peshkin (1992). The objective was to investigate the perceptions of guidance counselors in

selected schools through interviews based on reality where generalized theories could be made (Reinharz, 1992). The objective was to develop an understanding of the guidance counselor's perception about secondary home economics as they interpreted it from their own personal experiences. Such insights can increase understanding of how counselors view home economics and its significance in the high school curriculum. Ultimately, guidance counselors can impact the future of home economics in secondary schools.

Participants

Guidance Counselors

High school guidance counselors were targeted based on their involvement with school administration, parents, and students, hence providing a well-rounded perspective. Guidance counselors often serve as liaisons between all groups mentioned. Thus, they develop a unique viewpoint concerning the role of home economics. In addition to their

diverse role, they have an impact on students as they select courses concerned with career planning.

The Department of Education Home Economics Consultant provided names and addresses of 620 home economics programs which were reviewed. The decision was made to focus only on Consumer and Homemaking Education in order to eliminate the variation created by Occupational Home Economics Education. Previous research (McInnis, 1992) provided means of ascertaining whether or not a certain program had a positive (stronger) image in the school or a negative (weaker) image. Positive image schools basically had high enrollments while negative image schools were showing a steady decline in enrollment.

Advisors from The University of Tennessee and The State of Tennessee Department of Vocational Education selected eighteen possible schools, representing the three geographical locations of Tennessee inclusive of rural, large suburban and inner city school types. These selecting criteria did not reveal any significance, yet the criteria served to provide a diverse sample population. The population included nine positive image schools and nine negative image schools, so that sample was

evenly distributed. Two guidance counselors of the initial sample refused to participate in the study, so two additional schools were selected.

Guidance counselors varied in years of experience and knowledge of home economics. They were not given any information prior to the interview, so that the interview remained as bias-free as possible. Except for two counselors, none of the participants had any additional background in home economics. Guidance counselors ranged in age. Sixteen of the eighteen participants were women.

As part of the human subject requirements for the University of Tennessee, each school principal was contacted and asked to provide written permission for the research to be conducted in his or her school. In addition, each counselor was asked to sign a consent form stating that his or her name would remain confidential and neither school or counselor would be identified on audio tapes or in manuscripts. Consent forms were obtained by all eighteen cooperating school principals and guidance counselors before interviews were initiated.

Because the focus was upon Consumer and Homemaking, whether or not the school also had occupational home economics was not a factor in

the selection process. Inadequately, six participating schools also contained occupational home economics programs. These occupational home economics areas are concerned with job preparation primarily in the areas of food service and child care.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in order to test validity and clarity of both the interview format and interview questions. Two schools were chosen as pilot study groups and feedback sessions were conducted after each interview to analyze interview clarity and format. Overall, results from the pilot study were very helpful. Two questions were reorganized, so they were more conducive to qualitative research, i.e. not encouraging simple responses.

Researchers

The primary researcher and interviewer is a graduate student in the College of Human Ecology at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Her undergraduate degree is in Vocational Home Economics Education from

Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee. She has two years teaching experience in home economics prior to her graduate studies. She taught both Occupational Home Economics, i.e. clothing management and child-care and guidance, as well as Consumer and Homemaking.

The researcher's advisor is the Associate Dean of Research and Business Administration at the College of Human Ecology at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. He is currently Professor within Child Development and has served as a faculty member of several land-grant universities accredited by American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. He has been quite involved in the recent debates regarding the direction of the profession having served on the American Home Economics Association strategic planning task force and as a participant in The Scottsdale conference. His perspective on human ecology stems from a systemic developmental perspective. He has had limited contact with the field prior to doctoral studies and has no previous high school teaching experience.

Interviews

Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes in length using open-ended questions. Interviews were conducted in the guidance counselor's office or guidance conference room. Interviews were audio-taped using a series of nine open-end questions which is in Appendix B, and additional probes were used when appropriate.

As interviews evolved, many themes became apparent. During the last 6 interviews new information appeared relating to the guidance counselor's role in influencing students in their course selections. A question concerning the guidance counselor's role in career planning with students was included in the latter interviews. This addition allowed participants to describe their relationship with students along with how they presented home economics to their students.

Interpretation Methods

Data analysis began with the first interviews which provided a framework to develop common themes. Each interview was transcribed and copied so that analysis could begin. First interviews were categorized

with a letter and a small plus or minus sign at the top indicating whether it was a positive image school or a negative image school. Transcriptions were then read and re-read to identify common themes. These themes were developed during two brainstorming sessions with the researcher and the researcher's advisor. Both of which re-read transcriptions a third time before including a third party. The role of the third party served as a check point for the researcher as reoccurring themes were discussed.

A data matrix was organized so that common themes could be confirmed and explored. The matrix identified data in terms of how many schools thought certain issues were important. From here, the data was discussed between researcher and advisors in order to create check lists to insure validity. These issues quickly became critical themes relevant to the identity of home economics in the high school curriculum Quotations representing specific themes were identified (Appendix D). Each interview is identified by a letter only, to protect confidentiality.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION

As the analysis of data began, common themes concerning home economics began to appear. Through additional reading and discussion of interview transcriptions, specific themes recurred and were identified. It was clear that certain issues were important and current in minds of guidance counselors. A data matrix was organized so that common themes could be confirmed and explored. Areas such as skills for living content, definition of program success, teacher influence concerning enrollment, and the future of home economics were addressed. A chart was organized to indicate the level of frequency each theme occurred. Discussions between researcher and advisors led to the creation of a checklist. The checklist served to assess data more carefully; hence enhancing validity. These issues appeared to be critical to home economics and its future development.

Reoccurring Themes

The Role of the Home Economics Teacher

> "*How would you describe a successful home economics program?* A teacher who is a go-getter, and ours is. A teacher who is totally dedicated to it; it takes that. It also takes people who will push the program, which we try to do. Our home economics teacher is more involved in this school than any other teacher. She is more concerned with the welfare of her students than almost any teacher I know."

The most obvious reoccurring theme discovered was the role of the home economics teacher. This role continued to be the center of discussion as the term "successful" home economics was defined. Each guidance counselor had various aspects they felt needed to be included in a successful home economics program. Factors such as unlimited funding, college scholarships, new technical equipment, and program visibility were mentioned. Yet, the most common determinant of a successful home economics program was by far, the teacher's role and influence. The role of the teacher was depicted through ideas such as how to make home economics visible, how to change parent's perceptions of home economics, how to 'sell' home economics to students, and how to teach practical living

skills. Most counselors described the teacher and the program as being meshed together, so that both contributed to the other's identity. In other words, the identity of home economics programs was conveyed through its teacher. The teacher's involvement in his or her program was linked directly to the "success" of the program. Guidance counselors repeatedly stated it was impossible to separate a teacher from his or her program's success.

Marketing a home economics classroom was discussed with emphasis on how students begin spreading the word about what courses to take. Many times, they advertise home economics as a "crip" course, but a majority of students are attracted to home economics by the subject matter and friendliness of the teacher. The teacher repeatedly became the subject matter when describing a home economics program to either a new student, a parent, or school board member. Overall, the counselors see the teacher as the main contributor in describing and defining home economics and its role in the high school curriculum.

In addition to the teacher's role being significant to the life of the home economics program, the teacher's role in the school and community

were also linked together. The relationship between the teacher's involvement in community and school life affects the popularity of the program.

> "*How do you contribute a teachers' extra curricular involvement in both school and community?* 95 percent success of the program. I would have to go to feeder schools and talk about the value of our program and what it can do...I would have to sell our program."
> "I just think it makes a difference when the community is aware."

A teacher's outside involvement is perceived to have an impact on the school and on the home economics program. Guidance counselors thought it was necessary to have positive relationships between community and school because first impressions remain with people. It is obvious that marketing involves the day-to-day activities; therefore, making the role of the teacher very influential.

Guidance counselors emphasized how valuable "lab" experiences are to students and that practical living skills procedures and concepts are better taught when actively incorporated through class participation. Lab experiences focus on role playing relationship concepts, mock job interviewing, and other action-oriented learning techniques. Yet, for the

most part, these methods or experiences were perceived as characteristics of teachers rather than curriculum, i.e. good teachers were able to enhance these experiences through special closeness with students. Some counselors found themselves connecting with part of their personal experiences as they drew information from meaningful learning experiences. They attributed these experiences to courses that allowed them to practice the concepts followed by self-evaluation techniques. It was this segment of home economics that provided hands-on experience for them as students, and continued to be in the forefront of their minds. Even though other classes offer lab opportunities, home economics was noted for the relationships between teacher and students through the avenue of hands-on activities. The personal relationship between student and teacher added to the excitement of the learning through hands-on activities.

> "I observe that there's a different type of relationship between that student and the teacher than in your traditional classroom. They seem to have closeness, you know, more than just a friendship, a special kind of friendship but yet it's a very disciplined relationship."

What The Guidance Counselor Did Not Say
(Undetermined Role In Career Preparation)

The second critical theme appeared through what guidance counselors did not say. All participants omitted mention of certain aspects which are important to the home economics community such as interior design and teacher preparation. None of the participants placed home economics at the level of math and science as those subjects that build foundations for further academic studying. This oversight is noticeable, especially in defining home economics, and assessing its positions and importance in the overall school curriculum. When asked to define home economics or to describe an ideal home economics program, guidance counselors excluded the issue of pursuing higher education degrees or certifications in the area of home economics. This is very interesting because all participating guidance counselors perceive home economics as a valuable part of the curriculum even if their particular school could not be classified as a strong program with high enrollment.

The idea that home economics offered content applicable for all students was strongly stated. Suggestions were given in hopes that all students in the future would be required to take a semester of family life or

relationship management, yet the plans to continue that education into a career path was not part of the career planning agenda.

Many college faculty might have expected high school programs to serve as feeders for college programs, yet little evidence existed that guidance counselors perceived the field in this manner. Guidance counselors found value and importance in teaching living skills and assisting young people in better communication and relationship skills, yet there was no connection to pursuing a career in home economics outside limited occupational careers. Careers in teaching, counseling, interior design, foods and nutrition, or child development were not associated with home economics. Even in the schools where Occupational Home Economics was taught, the response to future employment revolved around local catering, fast food chains, or local day-care centers. It was surprising to hear comments affirming home economics and its content, yet in the midst of statewide conversion to a dual track high school curriculum where vocational or college tracks must be selected, home economics was not clearly defined with either track[1].

[1] It is note worthy that guidance counselors did not reveal the gender of their home economics teachers. It was not until after the interviews that one home economics teacher was identified as being male.

Quality of Students

The next theme related to the academic level of students placed in home economics classes. Numerous references were made regarding the academic competence of students that are placed in home economics classes. Concerns about the academic level of students are mentioned despite the role counselors said they had in placing students in various courses. Counselors are concerned that despite the affirming attitude that home economics offers essential skills needed by all students, all students are not involved in home economics programs. Schools that also had occupational home economics programs, witnessed decline in enrollment.[2]

> "I would say it's not your top of the line that's in there. Kids are trying to find an easy way out are the ones that sign up for home economics because they think it's an easy class. They think when you say hands-on and activities that you're doing and not learning."

It is assumed that confusion regarding the role of occupational education has led to image and student quality problems. This could be contributed to

[2] A chi-square analysis was conducted examining these relationships among the schools in this sample. Analyses (using Yate's correction for low sample size) revealed that these schools with occupational programs had declining enrollment, whereas those schools without occupation alprograms tended to have increasing enrollments, $x^2(1) = 6.31$, $\rho<.05$.

the low paying jobs that home economics occupations has taught; therefore, identity confusion has resulted in the perspectives of many.

Another issue that guidance counselors struggled with was relating their personal past experiences in home economics as their conception as a model of the current program. It was difficult for some of them to answer questions without referring to previous home economics situations despite the current changes. Although the current focus offers education for relationships, parenting, child-care, and budgeting. Responses continue embracing the valuable living skills of the past. The skills of sewing and mending, cooking and planning meals, and household cleanliness and management are embedded in the minds of many.

Student Organizations

Throughout the interviews, guidance counselors were asked to assess role of the home economics student organization, Future Homemakers of America. Many counselors stated that the student organization had potential to supply hands-on opportunities for students. Clubs were viewed as important in terms of being a tool, but not crucial to the definition of

home economics. In cases where guidance counselors described FHA as very active were also those programs of high enrollment.

Content...what we teach

It is clear that guidance counselors are in favor of home economics in the high school setting, and they have clear ideas concerning its content. It was noted that counselors stated content focused on family relationships, interpersonal conflict management, etiquette, decision making, child development, parenting, etc. Guidance counselors described their role of assisting students in career planning as being very complex, and they desired a curriculum that promoted the before mentioned essential living skills.

These topics are all part of the current home economics curriculum, in Tennessee, yet it is worth noting that discrepancies exist in most schools between what guidance counselors state as their ideal curriculum, and what they apparently believe is actually happening. When they described current home economics, they had very limited perspectives. The researcher noted that suprisingly guidance counselors were not familiar with the correct

course titles of home economics. Their perspectives focused on the occupation of the homemaker, food preparation and clothing construction, unlike how they described their ideal home economics course that incorporated budgeting, family relationships, parenting, and interpersonal relationships.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The comments of the guidance counselors set within the context of the background of the researchers and combined with the evolving nature of the field, help provide suggestions for direction for home economics secondary programs. The themes suggest that perhaps the most critical question is how home economics will define essential living skills in relation to educational study. Major issues involve (a) the historical vestiges of identifying homemaking as a vocation, (b) the model of home economics occupational training when compared to other trades and industries[3], (c) the misperception that high school programs serve as a feeder for college professional programs, and (d) the need for home economics to serve as general education for all students in the area of practical living skills. The results of this study lead to the conclusion that all of these issues are appropriate and that a more focused approach to secondary home economics better serves students in the field.

[3] This situation may be unique to Tennessee but likely has implications beyond the state.

Where Do We Belong?

In response to the confused identity of home economics in high school curriculum, home economics needs to redefine its place in occupational education. As part of occupational education, goals are centered around preparing students for the work place. Home economies has been at this crossroads for many years. Today, the researcher did not see homemaking defined as an occupation by guidance counselors (Although it should be mentioned a few still perceived home economics as a "coming out course for young ladies"). The important living skills of today primarily focus on equipping individuals as they relate to family functioning and finding a balance between work and family. Moreover, these skills as redefined by the guidance counselors had broader application within the home setting but could also be applicable to the work place. The recognition that homemaking is not defined as a vocation is not intended to demean or denigrate the important work in the home, but rather to suggest that for most individuals homemaking is a part of life (and training is necessary for this task) that is in addition to what is perceived as a "vocation". This study proposes that in order to expand the life of home economics, it must

be defined more clearly and focus on its relationship to education for the work place. This might suggest that work and family balance is crucial as students develop skills that affect other areas of their lives. Home economics has the opportunity to teach a unique perspective on home and work as both contribute to the well-being of the individual. Every student will share and contribute to a family, yet not many students will be part of a home economics related career.

How can home economics best meet the needs of students? This is the most important question because when individuals' needs are met and they are functioning at higher academic, social, and emotional levels, they contribute more to the work place and ultimately the family. If home economics will focus on equipping individuals for the future through practical life skills that are required for both family and work, it will secure a place in the future of the high school curriculum.

In redefining the role home economics plays, it is necessary to examine its curriculum. The curriculum must move forward with the changes of time in order to remain relevant and useful. This study considered many areas which home economics needs to re-develop and start

anew. One area is the occupational home economics setting. If home economics responds to the perceptions of guidance counselors, it has a place in teaching useful life skills for individuals preparing for the home and work place. Yet, home economics must decide what it is and what is not. If life skills are the focus of high school home economics, then home economics needs to relinquish the training of workers in child-care, food service, clothing management and other vocations. In order to most effectively equip students in life skills, home economics needs to focus on necessary life skills of individuals, and not attempt to also train for specific occupations at this level. Within Tennessee, for example, it would appear that these occupational areas could become part of the general occupation educational programs parallel to the programs in cosmetology, health science, technology, and building trades, etc.

Moreover, the researcher concluded from the interviews that linkages to these particular occupations contributed to the reduction of the status of home economics because these occupations have been linked with low paying skills. The tasks to train students for specialized vocations and to also teach practical life skills have become too wide spread to be

effective. It is proposed by this study to closely examine placement of occupational home economics and re-evaluate the most beneficial mechanisms to teach life skills for *all* students. The question is not just where do 'we' fit in vocational education, but how can "we" teach valuable knowledge and skills which are applicable for all individuals (i.e. within family and work force aspects of life). This education would then cut across all vocations.

What Do We Teach?

The next step in leaving the crossroads of where we belong is determining what we teach. It is obvious through the guidance counselors responses toward home economics that essential skills for living are needed in the secondary high school setting. From their perceptions, it is assumed which content areas are most important (i.e. budgeting, parenting, child development, etiquette, conflict management, interpersonal relationships).

In response to the question concerning what critical content should be included, home economics is given new direction as current needs are requested, yet in the day to day of most home economics programs,

counselors perceived programs which were not focused on the future. The skills required from the past decade are changing tremendously; therefore, home economics constantly needs to redefine its content, goals, and objectives. In today's society, skills like business etiquette, interpersonal relationships, communication, and decision making contribute to the well-being of students as they prepare for home life and the work place. If individuals are equipped with these skills, they will enhance the quality of life in their homes, personal relationships, and careers. This approach gives credence to the linkages between work and family.

Curriculum innovation currently addresses teen issues such as AIDS, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and homelessness all which confront the public schools. For example, the Tennessee home economics curriculum is updated and revised every six years in order to identify the current social issues facing students. Issues that guidance counselors state as important i.e. budgeting, family life, child development, parenting, nutrition, and interpersonal relationships, are addressed in current home economics curricula and are available to all home economics teachers in Tennessee. The questions might become: Do teachers incorporate these topics? Are

counselors aware of this? How might these areas become more visible? Is there a relationship between a home economics program success and the guidance counselor's perception of what is being taught?

Future projections for home economics curriculum changes center on the enabling the individuals to improve both work and family environments. For if home economics focuses on equipping individuals for both work and family life, family and work will reap the benefits. Brown (1984) stated that the mission of home economics needs to reclaim its heritage as it concerns itself with nurturing the individual through interdisciplinary methods. Home economics has the unique focus for teaching ideas about family through an integrated method where all parts of the family influence and impact one another, yielding a strength for home economics curriculum in that these specific content areas all contribute to the well-being of the individual.

As new directions are being implemented, the skills most valuable to individuals must be emphasized. Skills such as food preparation and clothing construction are not invaluable, yet in today's world, they are not critical for maintaining and developing the lives of all students. Home

economics must focus on preparing students to implement critical thinking, to practice self-evaluation, and to stress goal setting which all affect students' home and career lives. This study proposes that home economics proceeds into the future teaching what 'we' do best, equipping individuals for a brighter future. This approach also requires rethinking the subject-matter discipline approach to the field at the secondary level and thus the college preparation aspect that accompanies the subject-matter approach. Rather than thinking we need to address specialty areas of nutrition, interior design, child development, etc. as disciplines, we need to look at needed competencies for living and to ensure that the current curriculum is being taught from that perspective. The emphasis here will then become equipping individuals for living as they develop skills for family and work life.

Role of Student Organizations

As future plans begin to unfold, it is necessary to determine who home economics belongs to, what we offer, and then provide assistance in achieving these new goals. As life skills are being taught for all vocational

and college preparatory students, student organizations provide opportunities to expand into the communities. The role that student clubs could have in integrating area businesses and personnel with schools is essential to 'acting' out the needed life skills as well as providing positive resources for home economics programs. Therefore, student organizations are viewed as one critical tool in enhancing the teaching of life skills; in fact, they serve as laboratories for students.

During these on-site lab or practice opportunities, they provide safe environments for working in groups, developing 'real life' skills, providing future career contacts, and inviting positive relationships with community members. Student organizations provide a means to implement the skills taught in the classroom through guest panelist, career days, and mock job settings. In essence this is what guidance counselors of successful home economics clubs communicated that they were doing and this approach is critically consistent with the mission and purpose.

As home economics prepares for the future, student organizations are tied to redefining its content because they provide direct access to the world students face. This study proposes the natural adoption of clubs as they

provide opportunities which develop future leadership while building lasting individual qualities. As part of meeting the future and acting out new directions, home economics might need to restructure the student organization through a name change because Future Homemakers of America lends itself to only providing information for homemakers. Home economics today is concerned with a stage before homemaking, the stage of equipping individuals, the makers of families and careers. Home economics needs to practice utilizing the resources given in order to effectively be included in educating the future generation.

The Role Of The Teacher

Because most schools had only one teacher constituting the home economics faculty, this placed the characteristics of that specific teacher at the forefront. This portrayal of program identity influences the perception of the home economics program to parents, faculty, and students. Results generate stereotypes leaving the perception of both faculty and students about home economics to be exactly what they see. Therefore, home economics teachers need to be aware of what outsiders visibly see from

their classrooms i.e. kitchens, sewing equipment, child-care furniture, household and living room accessories, because first impressions are sometimes the only impression.

The focal point of home economics seems to be the teacher. Resources need to be available for teachers to advertise their programs and to assist them in "telling their story", otherwise someone else will assume that power. Teacher education programs should consider means of educating new teachers as they face recruitment within the high school setting, marketing their profession to other colleagues, and meeting the needs of their community. The impact of the teacher in home economics is evident because he or she is likely the only teacher in the discipline at a given school (or even in a given community). Such a status places special demands on teacher preparation programs.

The teacher's role is significant for certain ideas they offer and contribute; it is time to embrace this role, and offer living skills that are crucial to all individuals. Marketing who "we" are as home economics educators needs to depict future marketing plans because society's

perceptions come not as "clean slate(s)" (Clark, 1993) but as a result of present efforts.

Quality of Students

Disturbingly, in many schools, the academic quality of students that enroll in home economics courses today are mostly lower achieving students. The majority of special needs students do in fact take home economics courses. Conclusions can be inferred that if home economics teaches what is valuable and necessary for all students, enrollment and career planning sessions would incorporate a critical thinking focus within home economics.

Such a perspective may be linked with attitudes which are tied to the specific occupations being taught by home economics within occupational programs (i.e. child care/food service) which are perceived as low-skilled, low-paying jobs rather than providing contemporary critical skills such as computer literacy or high-tech, of some of the other high-profile courses.

Counselors discussed the deficiencies that students have in life skills, but they had difficult separating this need that sewing and baking are still

essential with today's social challenges. Through this information, new opportunities for home economics begin to surface. Hands on lab opportunities incorporating budgeting, personal goal setting, social/business etiquette, relationships, etc. are part of home economics education and apparently the experiences are remembered. Home economics is challenged to welcome this means of teaching valuable living skills. As one guidance counselor stated it would be helpful if freshman classes could include, "how to use a *Quicken*® program," in order to learn basic computer and personal finance skills. Students are the clientele for home economics and in secondary programs, a diverse population is able to be served. Therefore, home economics needs to evaluate its classroom structure and its academic challenges offered to students. Teachers need to be more aware of their impact and influences in program publicity; hence, reaching a larger group of students.

Marketing Home Economics

It should be noted that guidance counselors overall are not present in home economics classrooms; in fact, only four out of eighteen visit the

classrooms regularly (Appendix C). The remainder visit the classrooms seldom or not at all. This finding is useful because of the impact guidance counselors have over program enrollment figures and career planning is extremely important in the lives of program development and student participation. Previous studies by Love (1983) and Inana (1985) found a need for guidance counselor knowledge in areas of home economics careers and in selecting courses for high school planning. If guidance counselors are involved in the home economics classrooms, they would develop a positive rapport with both teachers and home economics programs. They serve as advertisers among students, parents, and faculty. Teachers need to be actively utilizing their on-site resources i.e. school personnel, guidance counselors, and other faculty.

Careers in home economics were not discussed; therefore, insight was learned as these perceptions affect the decreasing number of college freshman entering home economics related fields. It is not until these students are sophomores in college do they transfer into home economics departments. The "inverted pyramid" distribution of majors by class so common in higher education home economics programs (i.e. more than

twice as many seniors as freshman) reflects this situation (Food and Agricultural Education Information System, 1991). There was a missing link between the high school home economics programs and higher education or technical training fields. This link to higher education was not spoken and appeared to not be even comparable. This repetitive theme sets the stage for new research concerning the gap between home economics fields in continuing education and high school arenas. Moreover, the role of secondary programs in career preparation is brought into question. Marketing future careers in home economics is crucial to its lifespan and the responsibility belongs to the teacher as he or she interacts with students, communities, teachers, guidance counselors, and other faculty as each contributes to the "success" of the program within a schools curriculum.

How Do We Face The Future?

In conclusion, this study has attempted to assist home economics in leadership for the future unlike its history of being a follower. It is through leaders who were willing to take risks that home economics began, and it will not proceed until risk takers emerge once again. The perspective of

guidance counselors provided information that helped to identify roads to strong and weak programs. Directions proposed in this paper are not new -- individual examples consistent with these recommendations abound. Yet, the interviews helped provide a cohesive picture to the varied issues and allowed a more comprehensive analysis of the total picture. Plans to restructure the home economics identity and purpose generate plans for the future. Sorting through curriculum renovations and new strategies for the future are part of the re-focusing process, yet the movement forward depends on our decisions now. Will "we" permit new direction? It is through marketing techniques that facilitate this progress. The time is clearly marked through the nation's focus on families and individuals, parents fighting for safer environments, and education reformation. Home economics has made progress for the future through the official name change of the professional organization, yet it cannot stop. It is time to walk bravely and confidently holding pride in its heritage, yet anticipating the future.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
Consent Forms

By signing this consent form, I am giving my permission for Wendy K. Erwin, graduate student at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, to collect data for the study "Determinants of Successful Home Economics Programs." I am aware that at collection will be through voluntary interviews with guidance counselor(s) at my school.

I understand the purpose of this study and am aware that at no time will my school or guidance counselor(s) will be named or identified. I am aware that the interviews will be audio taped for research purposes and will be destroyed in March 1995 at the end of the research project. At all times, my school and counselor(s) will be under no obligation and may discontinue at any time. Interviews will be scheduled at the convenience of the counselor(s) and will last approximately 45 minutes in length. All tapes and consent forms will secured in a locked cabinet in the Office of the Dean, College of Human Ecology, to insure confidentiality. Consent forms will be on file for an additional 3 years in the home of the researcher in a locked file cabinet.

If you have any questions or comments, I am to contact Wendy K. Erwin at the following address:

Office of Dean
1215 West Cumberland Avenue
College of Human Ecology
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-1900
(615) 974-0966
FAX: #(615) 974-2617

Date: _____

Principal's Signature: _____

STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

Determinants of Successful Home Economics Programs

The purpose of this study is to examine the image of home economics through the perceptions of guidance counselors. Each guidance counselor and school will be identified through pseudonyms only; therefore, acting in strict confidence.

In order to capture the perspective of guidance counselors, interviews will be scheduled. Interviews will last approximately 45 minutes in length at the convenience of the counselor. Interview questions will focus on the perception of home economics and its curriculum within the school setting. Participation is completely voluntary; subjects may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

Interviews will be audio taped for transcribing purposes and counselor and school names will not be identified. Counselors will sign a consent form before interview to insure confidentiality. Tapes will be erased at the end of the study, May 1995. Counselors will not be expected to participate any further unless they have comments or questions. Consent forms will remain on file in a locked file cabinet for 3 years in the home of the researcher.

On the back, you will find a Participant Consent Form. Please read and sign. There is an enclosed stamped envelope for your convenience. Thank you for your time and attention. If there are any questions, please contact me at the following address:

Wendy K. Erwin
Office of the Dean
College of Human Ecology
1215 West Cumberland Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-1900
(615) 974-0966

Sincerely,

Wendy K. Erwin

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

By signing this participant consent form, I am aware of the purpose of this interview and understand my involvement. I understand this interview is audio taped for transcribing purposes and my name and school will not be identified. I also understand my involvement is strictly voluntary; therefore, I may discontinue at any time without penalty.

Guidance Counselor _____

Date _____

Guidance Counselor Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX B:
Structure of Interviews

Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your home economics program to a new freshman? ...to a parent? ...to a school board member?

2. In your opinion, what defines a successful home economics program?

3. If you were granted a magic wand, to improve education, how would you improve home economics programs?

4. To what extent do you visit classrooms? ...home economics classrooms?

5. What have you observed in home economics classes?

6. Tell me about your teachers' involvement in extra-curricular activities? ...clubs?

7. If home economics were mandatory for all students, what content would you include?

8. Your home economics program is most like what other club/organization in your school?

9. Tell me about where you see home economics in 5 years?

Interview Structure

Interviews were conducted at eighteen high schools across the state of Tennessee. In each school, the guidance department was contacted via telephone to schedule an interview meeting. All schools but two had only 1 participating guidance counselor and researcher present during the interviews. Two of the selected schools had three guidance counselors and the researcher present.

Interviews were conducted on site of the selected school in the participant's office of guidance office conference room. The interviews were audio taped for transcribing purposes with the consent of both school principal and school guidance counselor(s). Each interview was approximately 45 minutes in length. Interview questions involved the participants' present knowledge of home economics education. Two counselors had previous experience in the field of home economics, but there was no preparation prior to interviews. Each interview involved a series of nine questions. Questions were open-end, so participants would discuss all parts of home economics. The researcher added probing questions to guidance counselor(s) responses to enhance discussion.

After interviews were conducted, each participating school received a thank you note. The researcher included two different home economics brochures for the guidance department to use in assisting their students in possible home economics career options.

APPENDIX C:
Interview Data Matrix

Appendix C:
Interview Matrix

School	School includes Occ./C&H	Critical Content	Define Success	Includes FHA
A:	yes, child care	parenting; coping		only by name
B:	no	child development; cleanliness	diverse; general HEC; family life and life skills	xtra only
C:	yes, food service	foods; parenting; budget	broader curriculum.; more equipment and technology	could be, not
D:	no	Adult Living; home economcis I		
E:	yes, food service/child care	HEC I; family living; foods; child development		used to n/a now
F:	no	personal fitness; grooming; sewing	co-ed classes;foods; HE I-4	
G:	yes, food servie I, II	cooking; budgeting; everyday skills	meets the needs of students	knows of it/ n/a
H:	no	family; textiles; FHA; nutrition; run a houshold	diverse,home ec I, semester coursed, budgeting	no, but knows
I:	shares w/ other HS	technology; group work; child development, nutrition, ettiquitte	relevant issues; amount of scholarship $$	n/a
J:	no	manners; budgeting; child development, relationships	high enrollment	very positive for stud.
K:	no	relationships	student motivations;critical issue	drop b/c qual. of stud.
L:	no	child development; adult living	FHA in class	real strength
M:	yes, comm. foods/child care	sewing; budgeting; survival adult living	funding; new image	most active in school
N:	yes, foods	home mgt; family planning; budgeting; cooking; shopping	not just work; family life	very active/due to tchr.
O:	adding this yr. child care	family health; child development; parenting; foods	meet needs of student; not just cooking and sewing	
P:	no	dating;sex education; family life; conflict resolution	enrollment	not visible
Q:	no	budgeting; parenting;	visibility; addressing future	
R:	no	career plan; budgeting; consumer ed.; parenting; c. dev.; housing; nutrition;	teacher;adm.support; g.c. input	great asset

Appendix C:
Interview Matrix

School	Tchr's Xtra Curricular Involvement	PR/Marketing	G.C. in classrooms	Future?
A:	95% success of program	needs visibility	60%time in office	retired;no concern for HE
B:	makes program visible/+success	go feeder school	1@ month	FHA;never disappearing
C:	very influential if she's involved community and school	n/a	not much	change parent/stud. perception
D:	beg. tchr yes; older tchr. too tired for this		in/out daily	
E:	a lot with child-care facilities		everyday(sees girls)	turn bk. the wheel for HEC
F:	Yes! you can't separate these	visible in sch	very often	
G:	greatly		n/a	yes,b/c kids need to cook
H:	main source	teacher	not much	FHA, +tech, critical content
I:			not much/welcome	beef up 9th grd course/+tech.
J:	good teacher will increase #'s		none	stay w/ times! add occ. (child care)
K:	very involved		seldom	scarey w/out reform/-qual. kids
L:	more than any other teachers.	computers +	yes if invited	yes, serving students
M:		rid of "homemaking"	not much	move bk to bach living; sewing
N:	know their student; make it fun		daily	sees it declining due to adm.;
O:		sends prob. stud. to HEC	rarely	foods fits in great/child care too
P:			not often	more money
Q:	influences greatly		not often	moving with society's needs
R:	more than any other teacher		very often	growth; +food service; service to all

Appendix C:
Interview Matrix

School	Teachers' influences enrollment	Describe HEC
A:	n/a	do not have...family life, child development
B:	tchr.+rapportw/stud./sub. matter	practical skills
C:	effct. stud. perception	normal HEC; sew and cook
D:	tchr. #1 influences enrollment	2tchrs; best in county; get to eat.
E:		hands on for both tech/college
F:		prepares y.ladies;grooming;prepare meals; sew; care of clothes
G:	greatly, kids spread word	
H:	yes	practical aspects of living
I:		Intro. course
J:	yes	enrtry HEC I; IA for honors; fam.; health; per. care; budgeting; textiles; child care
K:	yes;closeness b/n tchr./stud.	hands on activities; sewing; cooking; and all fundamentals are taught
L:	yes	education for a life time! includes FHA as oppt. for students
M:		primarily. child care, foods, and one clothing class
N:	makes everyone included	mostly occupational;foods;service; clothing;design
O:	yes,one on one communication	health; interpersonal relationships; foods dept; +next yr. adding child-care!
P:	holds key to success	not just cook /sew;not girls only;different
Q:		practical things such as budgeting; good elective
R:	greatly!	need to take;wonderful teacher;great benefit and well rounded courses for all student.

APPENDIX D:
Supporting Data

Quotes Supporting the Common Themes from Guidance Counselor's Perspectives on Home Economics

The following quotes are presented as evidence in support of the common determinants found in data analysis from the perspective of the guidance counselor. Note: All participants do not have a clear answer for each question. Throughout the responses, there are additional comments in italic displaying the researcher's additional comments for clarity.

"How would you describe your home economics programs to new freshman?"

We don't have home economics program. *What do you have?* We have had home economics. What happened is when they started adding more courses to the curriculum for graduation requirements, se had to eliminate a lot of the extra courses because of the requirements...what we have is Family Living and Child Development.

What we usually do is have an orientation program and we have the students to come over and we just kind of explain each department. We just take each class, class by class and tell what the teacher has written up, the little package that they send us and just read it and let them ask questions about it.

We have the normal Home Economics. I. We have a variety of semester classes from classes that teach you to cook, classes that teach you to sew, and classes...I might add that the home economics. curriculum can feed into, we've got an institutional food program and it can feed into that. We have a four year program that they can take some home economics. all four years.

Well we have an exceptionally good home economics program here. We have two teachers that are really on the ball and we had so many requests for home economics first term we had to add a couple of sections. I would mark it probably one of the best in the country.

The general home economics program itself lends itself to not well I said the technical path, but there are job opportunities for college bound students too. The classes they take like they take interpersonal relationships and that class in itself would be good for any teenage to take in terms of learning about themselves and getting along with others. If I was going to put it into simple terms, to learn about themselves to learn to healthy and happy.

Our home economics program has a good opportunity for you to become acquainted with some subject areas that would help you be a better prepared young lady, to make yourself look more attractive, to learn you how to prepare a meal for your boyfriend and later your family, teach you some good grooming techniques, and it would also teach you how to buy the products for your home...

Well, there's a wide variety of courses offered in the home economics program, the youngster would want. The trouble is within our program, now this is really kind of strange, because it's going to change. What the problem was, with entering freshmen now, or as freshmen as they've entered in the past, they haven't really had room in their curriculum, except for a elective, and it was rare that the home economics program picked that up... But there are a wide variety of home economics. courses offered for half credit, and that creates a problem because in the block scheduling system...you've got Adult Living...Consumer Homemaking.

We have a chart that outlines the courses that we have and what grades they should take what particular courses, and we tell them if they're interested in the home economics area that this is the course line they would follow for the various grade...and we have a course description for each of those classes and a handbook or registration packet that we give them and we tell them that for each course here's the description and go over it with them for that. *For Parents?* I wouldn't change it a whole lot...emphasize to them the practical aspects of how it could help the student.

We have an introductory program and it is one of several options that students have to elect their freshman year.

We have a basic entry level course in home economics which is called Home Economics I and a course designed for students who are in honors level courses. And within home economics I, they talk about things life family communication, health, personal hygiene, budgeting, taking care of your money, planning, building a home, relationships with people, they cover a real broad area of topics in there. And then after the introductory course, all the courses are more specialized in nature, such as for second year home economics you might choose to take a half year of family life and child-care. You might choose to take a course called Textiles and Clothing Design where you can learn to sew. You learn to choose your material, find your pattern, learn how to fit a pattern to yourself, you learn basic sewing elements.

I would try to build it up that it's a very innovative program. There are a lot of hands-on activities there. There are a lot of issues discussed that are kind of controversial. It's not your traditional classroom, sitting down taking notes, because it's a lab situation. There will be different aspects, depending on which class, but the general home economics. I class is kind of an overview and she will do a little of sewing, a little cooking, and all the fundamentals. So, for an 8th grade student that I'm trying to encourage, you know, I'll try to just explain it's not a sit down, take notes kind of class.

Well, since I have a home economics background I always try to help them to know that it's education for a life-time and that the things that they'll do in home economics will be things that they will use for a life-time and I also always try to help them know a little bit about Future Homemakers of America because they have so many wonderful opportunities for themselves, not just to acquaint them with the immediate things that they are going to be doing but to help them think about how it's going to serve them in the future.

I guess right now our home economics. program is primarily child care, vocational child care, as well as the nursery, the students bring their children to the teen-room center. We focus on that one first and that's the one I always mention. And we also have a nutrition and foods, and we also have one clothing class. And that's it.

Well, our home economics program is an occupational program and I would explain it to the students, that those that were interested in the areas of food management, service, clothing, production, management, service, and design, that it was a good program for any of that and it does not mean they can't go to college, but it might man they have a way to help work their way through college. And I would explain to them all of the many of the jobs that are available if they go into that program.

We have a lot of programs that appeal to different needs of the students. We have family health programs, we have interpersonal relations, we have a good foods department and so there are a lot of needs I think are being met through the home economics department.

Well, I would tell them it was probably different from what their perception would be. We don't just cook and sew in our home economics. classes anymore. It's not just a class for girls, it's got men in it. Times have changed and it's different.

Right now our home economics program is not that big. What we have to offer right now is the, I'll call it a generic home economics. class, which is the same curriculum as the home budgeting things, so in trying to get a freshman to take that or encouraging them to take it as an elective I would explain to them the benefits that they would reap from it, you know, as far as practicalities.

Oh, I would describe it as something you definitely need to get into. We have a really good home economics program here, with a wonderful teacher. She has won awards. She is a wonderful teacher. Our program is so good with her and her classes are so good. My child is a freshman this year and she is in Personal Life Management, and she is a definite academic track student, college bound student, but she is in the class because I think that highly of it.

"What defines a successful home economics program?"

I would see a successful home economics program being one where the kids didn't think that it just involved cooking and sewing, like I used to think of when I was in school. It would have to be more diverse today, in the 90's, to entail child rearing skills and other skills. More so than what we have been programmed to think of it as. Cooking and sewing. If you take home economics., you learn to sew. I think it's more than just that.

I think for one thing involving both sexes, making the children feel that it's a department that they can achieve and do well and still learn practical applications for every day life, because in today's time children don't know how to do what they used to know how to do in the good old days of well, 15-20 years ago. They've changed so and they don't have chores to do, so a lot of these little things like putting a button on and you know, cooking an egg or making coffee, it's just not a part of many of our children's everyday life. They don't get to do those practical things that they can learn how to do in say, straight home economics.

An ideal school probably would have more departmentalization within the home economics department, so it would have to be a large enough enrollment to sustain that, of course. But, that would give each teacher an area to sort of specialize in and maybe a broader curriculum for the students to choose from. Probably more equipment than we have. *Okay. Meaning technology or...* Yes. Whatever equipment they would need for all of these extra courses. We have the basic sewing machines and kitchens...

One that provided information and learning experiences for any students be it college bound or not college bound, gave them... opportunities to work out of school experiences, I think they need that. Hands on and in class hands on as well. And have a diverse type of student. I think for a while there, home economics programs were tending to turn into somewhat of a dumping ground. I think it was kind of a trend for a while. Not only here but all over. I think that picture is changing and is changing. It's in the process of changing...back to something that's going to be looked at as a constructive area to pursuit in high school, not only in jobs, but in terms of lifestyle.

I think one of the first things that I would say that I want a good orientation program for freshmen, and I would like to have a class that could have boys as well as girls, and we do. It's coed, we offer it to fellows, and I've been surprised over the last few years over the number of boys that are taking home economics, but we ought to have a good freshman orientation course, such as the General Home Economics I that (pause), we only have one home economics teacher. Frankly, I'd like to have another half position. We have an adequate teaching area where we could have two programs, and I would like to have a second, for my sophomores. I think if we begin to get into foods, have a semester of foods, a semester of I guess we could call it Personal Living, we have a course we call Family Living, we have one we call Parenting , I think we can stretch our titles out a little bit and we could accomplish maybe a little bit too much. Home economics can offer so many excellent programs.

Just one that basically meets the students needs, you know, in terms of what it is they're after in the home economics. program.

Oh, gee. I think we've got a great one here. It's so diversified. It starts off in the ninth grade with a general home economics class that gives them a little bit of everything. And then it's broken down from there on where it takes the combination of all those classes, it breaks them down and you have like a semester of the textiles and clothing, a semester of housing and interiors, a semester of child development, a semester of family and individual health. And it takes every area and breaks it down and concentrates it into a semester package. The students love it. They're successful in it and they see, especially since we have a lot of teenage mothers, a lot of them go the child development route and family individual help and classes like that to help in their parenting. So, to me a strong home economics program number one would start off with a course that would give them a taste of what home economics is about, the overall picture. But then it would emphasize the family and life skills and child rearing and stuff like that, and I think our program is designed to where it meets the needs of the children in that area, yes, it's a very important aspect. And if they feel like their needs are being met they try harder, they feel successful, and they are successful. And that's important also, to build their self-esteem.

Do you want me to be honest with you? Okay, our program has fallen over the years. For what reason, I do not know, because it certainly a great deal to offer and it's extremely important in the fabric of life as these students will know it beyond high school and college. So it definitely has a place and there is a need, but we're going to loose it if we don't make some changes. Home economics at the high school level is going to have to be more relevant to the issues and concerns and it's going to have to appeal to students because home economics will be in competition with, in this particular school, with the arts, so there's vocal music and fine arts art, band, which students may take three or four years, and drama, which students may take every year...

Okay, one way you can define a successful home economics program would be based upon the number of students that want to continue from the previous years in home economics. They might want to take the second year or they might want to divide up and take a food management class which goes into a block schedule of up to three hours a day. They might choose to take some of the semester classes. Another way you can determine success of a home economics class through the interest of students would be how well they succeed in the classroom based on the spring, they have these programs or competitions that they go to and compete with other groups of students from other schools, they're given a different topic to discuss on and sometimes we bring back, will we always bring back an award.

Well, I would think a successful home economics. program, talking about here, not a graduate or anything coming out, but just the program here. Okay. Being one that a student is real motivated and inspired by something, maybe some of these controversial issues that have been discussed, and doing something with it, and talking in other classes with their classmates, some of the things that have been talked about, I would feel would be very successful.

I think for a successful program I would look at how students feel about it, probably keep in touch with their reactions to the class and then I'll just have to go back to looking at FHA Heroes and if they're really doing a good job in the classroom.

Funding. Absolutely. We get a lot of funds. When you work in the room you can tell that they have funds to make it that. I mean, it's a nice room, it's like in a church nursery or something, it's just real nice and pleasant. And from what I understand, I don't know that for a fact, but I understand that they got a lot of money for it. I think money is the biggest.

It would be one that gives the students many of the things they need to know to be a success, not just in the work area, but in their home, family life, and it would just give them a well-rounded background in all the many different areas of home life as well as working.

I think that would involve just what I've been talking about, that it actually meets needs, that it's not just sewing and cooking and the things we used to perceive home economics as being, but that it actually is meeting the needs that today's students have, and that unfortunately includes early parenting.

It is an elective in the school, and if it's filled, then that says students want to take it, because it's not something they have to take. And I think that would be one way to judge.

I think first of all the kids need to be made aware of that the program even exists. I mean, they know they have to have a math, a science, and an English and such as that, so first of all I think a type of marketing type of thing to let them know. And then I think that the teacher has to be, or teachers, have to be able to answer the questions, specific questions that the kids have of why should I take this class, the teacher should have a full range of the knowledge of that...

Again, a teacher who is a go-getter, and she is. A teacher who is totally dedicated to it, it takes that. It also takes I think, people who will push the program for her, which we try to do. We try to help our students decide and now that we are one the two path program, we are on the high schools that work, they either take the technical path, the college path or a dual path, and we try to get everybody to do the dual path, so they will have some of both, and it would take administration that is supportive of it, it would take the guidance counselors who will help the students to decide on it. But the kids aren't going to continue to sign up for it if the teachers aren't good. I think it takes the curriculum being sound and the teacher to be a real goo one, and we've got both.

"What content would you include?"

Family living. I guess that would go along with child-care, parenting part, because being able to develop relationships and being able to be a family member and how to get along in a family is important today because statistics tell us a lot of things that happen on domestic disputes and so forth. Being able to get along.

Probably one would be Parenting, I think that's a real good one, and a lot of our students, several of our students are parents, who are teenagers, and just the regular old home economics class, where they learn how to do basic things you would think people would teach at home they don't.

I would think that the foods class, to know how to cook, in my own opinion is that it is not as important now to know how to sew, not so much, time you go to Walmart or somewhere and buy already made clothes, but I think sewing, I think that some parenting classes should be included. Those two at least I would say. So maybe just basic economics type things of daily living skills, you know, how to run a house budget.

I guess Adult Living. That would be the one that would be most appropriate for both boys and girls.

I still feel like they need a general home economics class. I think they need a general homemaking class. I think they need either a family living, or something along that line. And then they need some core courses you know like that.

When I look at the curriculum of Lifetime Wellness I see a whole lot of what we used to call basic home economics, personal fitness, personal grooming, things that we need to do to make yourself live a little bit longer and take better care of yourself and some things you shouldn't do, with an emphasis on drugs, tobacco and alcohol. Home economics, I think down through the years has been that good developmental course. And it has been an excellent, excellent for young ladies and men, of course we have gentlemen in some of our coming out course.

I honestly think it's something that's beneficial for all. I really do and I tell kids that. People say well, why do I need to learn how to cook, well, you're going to find out. There are many skills that they teach besides just cooking, but I'm looking at the skills that they teach in terms of getting along in life in general.

I think home economics is something that to me is, emphasizes a family and how to run a household. Get some programs in the inner-city, let them see how FHA can be an asset to them there.

I'd probably use something like, I'd give them a history, which is really interesting, because I'd probably tell them that the Italians were eating pasta and olive oil many, many years ago...I probably would teach financing, I probably would teach cooking, I probably teach the social graces and included in that I probably would teach international social graces, because I think they would think that was just neat. And I would have whatever foreign student we had come in and teach what was hospitable in their country. I think you have to have a product for students to really feel like they've done something. They might want to cater something or fix a meal and invite the principals in. They always think that's big stuff. If you can't communicate your ideas are like having a barrel or a basket over your ideas, if you're unable to communicate them. A critical unit. I think child development is extremely important, family relations.

All sorts of skills. Manners, budgeting child-care and development, prenatal care, the whole bowl, but relationships. Social skills.

Today it seems we're deteriorating so that we just can't get along with people, and kids have so much anger, and in that particular class you can discuss these things and try to get to the root of them. It's one of the only classes in out high school curriculum that you can do that. Yes, I would like to see it be made mandatory that every student before they graduate would have to take one home economics. class.

Child development and probably something along the lines of the Adult Living class. And I wish it were mandatory.

Kids need to know how to sew a button on, put a hem in something, fix a simple meal. Right, talk about some budgeting needs, survival, adult living.

Home management. If it were required for all, home management and a little bit of individuality so that they could think they were best at and what they wanted to do, and as far as home economics was concerned, it would help them in being able to successfully plan their own family life, budget, and everything. So it would be a good overall program on how to plan their family life.

Well, I guess several of the ones, the family health, child development, the parenting class, if we're able, well, we will offer a parenting class next year, and the child-care class, because I think most of our students are going to have children and too many of them are not having good parenting models at home, and so I would like for them to know more about how to treat their children and how to parent well.

Well I definitely think one thing that isn't being taught in ours right now is conflict reformation, you know, that's really a good topic. And some of the traditions, I see nothing wrong with having cooking, nutrition and how to sew buttons on and some of the guys take home economics too.

I think the parenting, budgeting all that should be promoted. We get a lot of kids that are not, they don't know how to budget themselves and as far as, you all know, there's teen pregnancy, and if they don't learn it from home they've got to get it somewhere. And a lot of times if they do learn it from home it's not very appropriate practices. I think the budgeting and parenting and all that should definitely be included.

I would include career planning, I would include financial management, I would include just plain old everyday things of living, I would require some knowledge of the kitchen, I would require things like balancing checkbooks and doing some of the things that they do in consumer economics. I really consider some of those things very important. Parenting would be first almost on my list because as guidance counselor I see some of the students who have not been parented correctly and because they've not been parented correctly they're in no win situations, so the only way to break that cycle I think is to educate these students on how to parent. I think they need to know child development. I think they need to know parenting skills and those skills are probably more important than the consumer, than the economics skills in some ways, but I would definitely put parenting and child development.

"Describe the role Future Homemakers of America has on home economics."

I don't that it has a terribly significant role here in recruiting students or changing the perception. But it could. I think that could be one of the things that we could undertake that, at least in my judgment, they have not done a lot here. Yeah, once again, I think that once the kids get in the organization, it's something that is vital to them, and they can see, or they maybe don't see, but they benefit from the organization and if nothing else, just develop a self-concept and leadership and those things that are sort of by-products of the organization, but I don't think it is a drawing card for students to start in the program.

Well I think it's an important part, and I think it's important for the students to learn leadership. But it's very difficult for the teachers to work it in the curriculum, and our students didn't want to meet after school, so that's a problem. Yeah, I think FHA can be a real draw. You can have programs through FHA and bring in guest speakers that really add to your program.

I don't know if I am comfortable answering that. I can speak of years past. There was time when it was very strong factor. I'm not sure that it is or isn't. Fight now, I don't think it has the impact it has at one time. I don't think it has the significance it had at one point. That's just personal feeling.

I think it has some relationship. I think it has some strong relationship. They have changed the name a little bit, and I don't know if that was good or not.

We've got a group that went to nationals...Our home economics advisors have a real strong program in FHA and they do very well at the competitive level. That keeps student interest going, too. Any time they can be in a club that gets them a trip somewhere, they're happy to participate.

Okay, in our school I don't think we're as active as I would like to see them be. In fact, I'm sure there are still contests that you can go to periodically, and to my knowledge we are not taking the students. One of the reasons again, is the liability in driving students and our county has discouraged it. Another is again, your quality of student. You know, you don't want to take somebody that's going to embarrass you either. But, I would say, I mean, we do have an organized FHA club and a Hero, I believe we're now Future Homemakers, we were at one time HERO, but that's when we had our occupational classes. But, I would say we're not real active.

It involves every student. With the activities that go on in the classroom, everyone has an opportunity to be involved, everyone has an opportunity to be involved, everyone has an opportunity to develop leadership skills or to work in their area of expertise wherever they feel comfortable. To me that's the real strength of it. The individual involvement in the class level and in the wonderful unlimited opportunities for going beyond that with lay organizations, get up and being involved a chapter level and the other levels.

That's probably our most active club. They have a lot of activities from time to time. But I guess it takes a lot of preplanning for them to get to and fro.

I would say the home economics does a little more real planned club activities than the other student organizations do. They have better participation I think. There are some things about their participation that I would change if I could, or I would suggest it, but I find that they're real, real dedicated and that the kids enjoy most of it.

It's not as strong as I remember that organization in the past. I mean there's still those kids that are involved in things, but it's just like we've a conflict revolution, now we do have peer counseling, and they sort of form like their little club and their extra-school activities and I don't see that kids today investigate FHA. They're not even connected.

I think so if you are in a situation where you wanted to promote home economics curriculum, I think that you need some and that is a very good, being able to do it, because it is already established and it just makes things a little bit easier than trying to start up a whole new club or whatever, I mean, you've got the stuff to begin with. It needs changing a little.

Her club, she makes sure that her students, I don't think that she makes it mandatory for them to join her FHA, Hero club, but she works very effectively with them. They are active and they do a lot more than a lot of clubs in the school. It's as good as any other. There is no other club probably that functions better than hers. Now there are several that do very well, but hers is right up there with them. So I would compare hers, I would compare the FHA, Hero Club favorably with all the clubs. They do just as much and they work very hard, they go to things, they participate in competitions. They do a lot of things. *That's great. Do you think the club is a needed part?* As strong as her program is she would probably do just as well if she didn't have a club, but because it is so strong then it makes her students probably do better as far as the club. I think it's good for them. I think it's good for them to go and compare themselves to others and see how they're doing in comparison, and they do well. So I think it's helpful to them because they can what they're doing. They can see where they have a good program and I think it makes them feel good to know that.

"How would you describe a teacher's extra curricular involvement in both community and school in relation to the success of a program?"

Ninety-five percent success of the program. And I think a lot of schools have that problem, especially with, I consider home economics to be vocational just like other vocational prep, because we have vocational home economics and then we have the home economics classes. Some people think we as guidance counselors are supposed to sell a program. I think a teacher sells their own program pretty much, and if I had a program that I felt was not being successful, and I was the teacher, and I know it mandated my having a job, then I would have to sell that program. I would have to go to the feeder schools and talk about the value of my program and what it can do, the positive effects of being a part of program, I would send fliers out to parents.

Definitely. In fact, we really do have, our teachers here in the program are very active in the community. You know. in fact one of them is just always doing something. She's involved past the regular school day. She does homebound, that kind of gets her into the community, she has after school classes, because she's a ladder teacher, and I just think it makes a difference when the community is aware, and she's the type person, well she's been here a long time, first of all, and she's the kind of person that kids can relate to and even like, and you know, know that she's concerned about them because she's involved in other things other than just say, that program, other after school classes.

Yes, I think it is. Whether our home economics department is that involved or not, I'm not sure, but I think that again, if the home economics teacher gets very involved working with the whole school and is out in the community, then the whole community know the home economics teacher, then that's probably going to make the program more popular. Yeah, I think especially in a small town, because in small towns everyone knows everyone and he said about people knowing her, and I have personally known of students choose to take it because they knew who the teacher was.

Well, it depends upon what stage of life you're in, what stage of life the teacher's in. If you're a beginning teacher I think the beginning teacher should be a sponsor of a club and do extra curricular activities, but when you get to be my age, then to me, somebody else should take a turn. Everybody should have a turn with sponsoring clubs, but when you're older you just don't feel like doing all those extra activities.

We have a lot. A lot other than sports, we always have sports. Everybody has sports. Everything form Future Teachers to Interact. They are all are sponsored by teachers. All of them have sponsors. There are in that they have interaction with the child care facilities here in town. Where the students will go out. The some of the girls are well some of the boys too work in the restaurants...involved in the food services. This is in the plan where they work probably two years from now...where the have an opportunity to work in foods service...working with the nutritionists in the hospital or some type of nutrition. I don't know what direction that is going, but it will somehow.

Oh definitely. A positive correlation there, very definitely, definitely a positive relation. That old saying, you get out of anything what you put into it, it is I think applicable to that situation. If the youngsters in you class know that if they perform their tasks well that they're going to have an opportunity to go somewhere to compete against other youngsters, that's an opportunity that they still enjoy.

I guarantee it, she spends more after school hours than any teacher on this campus. She's down here, you know, school's out at 2:00. It's rare that she leaves here before 5:00.

So what the teachers do is incorporate a lot of what other teachers would do outside, or as extra curricular, they incorporate that in the classroom as much as they can, and give the students the exposure. So, we're limited to be able say that contributes to the successful part just because the students don't have the feasibility or time.

In our school? Holy Toledo. I guess she could run anything by herself. For example, she teaches in the home economics department. She's only part-time. But she could probably cater lunch to the entire school without skipping a beat. She's wonderful. She's a real addition to the staff. She's involved in all kinds of extra things at school and I know that, and whoever takes the children on competitive trips. And some of the students could potentially be competitive who take home economics.

Very, in our school, our home economics teacher is very active in other things within our school and is always willing to volunteer and help. You know, the one thing we had, a school play, was it last year or year before last, she volunteered that they would make the costumes, or as much of the costumes as possible. When we have, like programs or receptions or something, she's always willing to volunteer. Occasionally, you know, we'll go and ask, but if she's in a meeting, she doesn't hesitate to volunteer. Of course at the time same time she doesn't hesitate to say I just don't have time. So we don't feel like we're imposing when we need something. So I think she fits in with the faculty just fine.

They pull their loads and they work longer and harder. From my observation they're here when others are gone. They're here early and they're here late. I think that most people who teach home economics that's the way it is. If they have a good youth relation. And I think that they're here early and late, I think a lot of times it's because they're dedicated.

Overall, in home economics, teachers do a better job of knowing their students. I realize a lot of technical courses are so busy just trying to make sure they've got the technical skills that they need, well that's the same thing, home economics is highly technical. You know food service, food production, clothing, management and production, but I do think the home economics teachers are a little bit better about knowing their students, knowing the family background and I think that's wonderful. And they're a little better about referring students to guidance than the other areas are.

I think that the teacher or teachers need to be known and so that their activities can be known as well, and if they are out in the community, and people say, hey that's the home economics teacher or whatever, then they tend, and I know this from experience. As you know, I'm a guidance counselor they'll come by and start talking about guidance activities, and if they know that you a re a football coach, they'll come up and start talking about football, so if you meet them in an extra-curricular activity like a club or something, it will eventually evolve around to hey, what do you do in the school. So I think it is important to be known.

Our home economics teacher is more involved in this school than probably any other teacher except one, that I can think of. She is one of three chair persons of our whole high school that work committee. We have three people that make up the chair people of our steering committee, and she is one of them. She has been active in everything that this school has done. She is more concerned about the welfare of students here than almost any teacher that I know. She's very involved in school. She's not one of these people that thinks her program is the only program. She wants her students to do well in her program but she also understands that they have five other classes, six other classes. I can speak from experience, having my child in there. She does not load them with impossible tasks being in her class. She helps them, she works with them. She goes through step by step in everything they do. She is really good. She's so involved and she's back in her little cubbyhole doing her little thing. She knows what's going on in the rest of the school. She's very vocal. When she see injustices done she's very verbal in what she thinks is right and wrong about the way things are done here. She, I have nothing but praise for her. She's really a person that, if all the teachers at this school were as dedicated as she and as involved as she is, this school would be the top school in the state of Tennessee, because she's such a go-getter. She's up here at 5 o'clock every afternoon. She has worked overtime, she's everywhere, she's done everything. She has a child too, that she brings with her, and she sits here patiently while she dedicates her time. She dedicates more time to her job than she probably should. She has really, she's done so much on all levels of the school life. She is really one of the people that we should pattern ourselves after because she is interested in everything.

"Where do you see home economics in the next five years?"

You hear a lot of talk about nutrition now, so nutrition is being big topic across the school because everybody is geared toward the way a kid performs in school or the way he acts depends upon the nutrition and we know that, and I know that with my own body. If we're eating a good meal, you feel better, you can do better. So I see schools, our systems moving toward that direction. We may eventually have a nutrition class. I would just like to see a nutrition class within itself, within the schools, to teach kids how to eat. So, I can see it being positive. I don't see it a negative effect from nutrition at all, in having it in my school.

I think the only thing that would make a difference in the future is that they are requiring so many more classes for them to graduate and many of our students cannot take advantage of the home economics program because they are failing other classes and they have to take what's required and that fills their schedule, because our requirements are even higher than the state. So, a child who fails a required class, they don't really have much room to always get a home economics class.

Yeah, I think it would still in the curriculum. I think it's going to change its focus, it has changed its focus recently over the past five or ten years and I think it will continue to change with the times. I think there always is going to be a niche, a certain population. It won't be as important as it might have been in the past because our society has changed so much but I think there's always going to be a niche of a certain population of students that will do that.

I do, I do, I see a wheel turning back. You know for home economics I don't see it being something of less important, but more important than it's been say in the past 7-8 years.

I see home economies probably declining in some school systems because of the over emphasis on say, college prep. I think if a school system is smart, they are going to be emphasizing the home economics program was it goes in a different direction. For years, it was from the same major concept, this is going to make you a good housewife and mother. I think it goes so much beyond that now. And we're getting away from the old traditional stereotypes.

I honestly think it's something that's beneficial for all. I really do and I tell kids that.

I honestly see it staying around. I really don't see it dying. It may, things seem to go in cycles. But, I don't see it where it's lost interest so much to the point where it's gone. I just don't see that happening. But it may have a period where it is at low numbers, but I only see it as part of a cycle, and I do believe it will come back around. I think the need for it is too great for it to go away completely. Teenage mothers need to know more than just child development. They need to know how to run a household an they need to know what all is involved in it, and they don't have that teaching at home for the most part because so many of them are from dysfunctional homes. And, they need to be taught things like cleanliness and organization of a household, things like that, just the practical things. And I know that's all the female end of it, but I have a couple of males who have custody of their children. Well, they need to know the same thing. They need to know how a household is run as well so that they can develop homes that are stable, safe homes for their child.

It's going to leave us if it isn't changed. If there aren't major changes made in the curricula as we now know it. Of course, you have to remember, I didn't make it a point to read the state curriculum when you came. So it may be that all the framework is there and it's just a matter of implementation, the money for computers, money for materials. I don't know how much Quicken costs, and you've got to have a computer that has the capacity to tolerate it. And you don't want one computer for 25 children. You want 14 computers for 25 children so that you've got two to a computer. And make it interesting. I would upgrade the technology as quickly as possible. We'd lose the program I'm afraid.

Well, there's only one way to go and I guess that's up, because our general society is changing. Students are different from what they used to be five years ago as far as attitudes and, some of them are living on their own, you know. And everything's changed. You can't always stay on 1990's you just have to change with the times.

Well, unless we have some real changes within our school, it scares me, it really does. Because I don't see it getting stronger here. I would say in five years, at the rate we're going, it will be just, it will be unable for me to put anybody, I'm not sure I will want to put any strong student in there. And part of that is not all the teacher's fault, it's again the caliber of kid that I'm seeing some through. I don't feel bad when a kid signs up, knowing there might be a problem there with this person, but maybe they will get something that will help them in life. Maybe they will learn some attitude adjustments while there.

I think that home economics will continue to grow and change and be around, you know. And we'll be here serving students and helping them to the best they can be.

The reason I don't is from a practical standpoint, is a lot of their money comes through vocational and that's not the route vocational wants them to take. They want them to take the large block and keep these kids. And they're not interested in the short semester classes. And that's why I don't think it's going to go.

I would like to see it double what it's doing now, but unfortunately, it seems to be declining. And I abhor this, I really do, I think it's terrible. You go to the home schools and they won't even have a home economics teacher in the school, and I'm going to throw stones. I think a lot of it is because administration doesn't see quite the value of it that they should, and you know, it's terrible to think of here's a school with a thousand high school students and them not having any home economics classes in there.

I think that the resources are the main things, the main thing that stands in the way of implementing a program like the child-care program. I think our superintendent is sold on it, I know our home economics. teachers are sold on it. But we have to have a place and we have to have the equipment and things that go with it, so getting counties to fund it, and I'm sure that's true everywhere, that this is an expensive program, it will be an expensive program, but I can't think of one that's needed more. And our home economics teachers are fighting to get this implemented.

Well, I hope we will still see it and I definitely think here, probably stronger than ever, and I think it is because we are offering more semester classes and we're touching a larger group of kids. You know this whole tech prep, college prep thing, I maybe pulled the wrong string here, I just was opposed to the concept to have two different, distinct preps, but here in our school we try to say it's all one thing, you know.

I'm thinking back right now to my home economics classes I had when I was a freshman in school, and I don't see it being like that at all. I mean we had, we did the cooking, we did sewing, we did, I think we may have had some instruction on childbirth, I'm not even sure, but anyway, I don't see it being like that. I think it's going to be something that's going to have to accommodate the way the society is, because homemaking is not the way it used to be. You know, we have a lot of single fathers, we have the mothers, and then we both of them working, so I see it being more open to the way the society is going.

I think with move toward the high schools that work program and with the move on the state's part on going to the technical path, I think there's going to be growth. I think there's going to have to growth, because we have to have something to offer these students and if we don't offer them some more tech prep classes, I think home economics. is one of the ones that need to be offered. I've already been talking and thinking with our coordinator, our supervisor, about a foods class for institutional type food services, a food service class, where they go into the foods class and they would know how to do foods, institutional, we have a pretty large number of special ed. kids. We have 130 or so, for the special ed. programs, and while they can't achieve a lot of academic things, these are areas that they could work in. Food services and those types things, and if I had my way, it would grow tremendously, because I know what benefit it can be to them. We also need those kids, especially in parenting classes, because they won't know otherwise. My opinion is that it needs to grow. I think we need to develop more course. I think we need to offer some things. She has now, there are six classes of home economics. and they're loaded, there's no room in any of them. We could have five more. We didn't even get to have textiles and clothing and nutrition and the foods class this year because there's no room. So, we've got the demand here if we had another teacher like her. Which, if we didn't have another teacher like her, and you're not going to find many like her, so I really, but we need it. And I foresee a growth because of the high schools that work program and because of the tech prep, I foresee growth.

VITA

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