

# IJHE

ISSN 1999-561X

# International Journal of Home Economics

Volume 8 Issue 1 2015



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

**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
FOR HOME ECONOMICS**



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

**IJHE editor**

Donna Pendergast      Australia  
E-mail:                      [d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au)

**Book review editor**

Donna Pendergast      Australia  
E-mail:                      [d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au)

**Editorial administrator & graphic designer**

Joy Reynolds              Australia  
E-mail:                      [j.reynolds@griffith.edu.au](mailto:j.reynolds@griffith.edu.au)  
[www.joyreynoldsdesign.com](http://www.joyreynoldsdesign.com)

**Website**

For more information please visit the International Journal of Home Economics website: <http://ijhe.weebly.com/index.html>

**Frequency of publication**

The International Journal of Home Economics is published twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year to e-mail: [intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com](mailto:intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com)



International Federation for Home Economics  
Kaiser Friedrich Strasse 13  
53113 BONN  
Germany  
Tel: 0049 (0) 228 9212590  
Fax: 0049 (0) 228 9212591  
E-mail: [office@ifhe.org](mailto:office@ifhe.org)  
Web: [www.ifhe.org](http://www.ifhe.org)  
ISSN 1999-561X

**IJHE Editor**

**Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD**  
School of Education and Professional Studies  
Griffith University  
Gold Coast, Australia  
*Philosophy, research, education*

**Editorial Board Members**

**Dr Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil**  
Department of Home Economics, Alexandria University  
Alexandria, Egypt  
*Food management; consumer studies; household activities and everyday life*

**Associate Professor Jette Benn**  
Institute of Didactics, The Danish School of Education, Aarhus University  
Denmark  
*Home Economics education; Home Economics philosophy and history; consumer and nutrition education*

**Dr Vassiliki Costarelli**  
Human Ecology Laboratory, Department of Home Economics and Ecology, Harokopio University  
Athens, Greece  
*Nutrition and cancer; nutrition in childhood and adolescence; disordered eating attitudes and behaviours; nutrition in pregnancy/ postpartum depression; nutrition and the athlete*

**Dr Jay Deagon**  
Griffith Institute for Educational Research  
Griffith University  
Mt Gravatt, Australia  
*Home Economics research, education and policy, spiritual health and wellbeing, local and global citizenship, sustainable futures, social change*

**Professor Meei-Ruey Hsu**  
Department of Tourism, Ming Chuan University  
Taiwan  
*Curriculum and instruction; gender education; hospitality education; teacher education*

**Associate Professor Amoroso Catherine Leslie**  
The Fashion School, Kent State University,  
Ohio, United States of America  
*Historical and biographical research, apparel and textiles, entrepreneurial activity, consumer behaviour, arts and crafts (or handicrafts)*

**Professor Sue LT McGregor**  
Faculty of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
*Consumer and global citizenship; consumer studies, policy and education; Home Economics leadership; Home Economics philosophy; transdisciplinary and integral inquiry*

**Kathryn McSweeney, MEd**

St. Angela's College  
Lough Gill, Sligo, Ireland

*Educational assessment; empowerment and advocacy studies; social marketing; teaching strategies in textiles studies; textile and embroidery samplers*

**Associate Professor Seema Puri**

Department of Nutrition, Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi  
India

*Aging; food security; infant and child nutrition; institutional management; nutrition*

**Dr Janet Reynolds**

Principal Education Officer, Teaching & Learning, Department of Education & Training  
Queensland, Australia

**Professor Kaija Turkki**

Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, University of Helsinki  
Finland

*Consumer citizenship; FCS in higher education; global education; Home Economics in higher education; Home Economics philosophy; household activities and everyday life*

**Dr Hena Yasmin**

Department of Home Economics, Faculty of Agriculture  
Swaziland

*Child care and development; consumer education; education; HIV/AIDS; household technology; nutrition*

**Professor Taemyung Yoo**

Department of Home Economics Education, College of Education, Gyeongsang National  
University  
Korea

## Contents

Editorial Volume 8 Issue 1 .....	1
Donna Pendergast	
Younger and elder generation's perceptions of communication with family and non-family members in Alexandria.....	3
Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil	
Creating sustainable livelihoods for persons with disability in garment manufacturing units.....	14
Manpreet Chahal, Seema Sekhri & Ritu Mathur	
Historical overview of spiritual discourses in Home Economics: From big history to the late twentieth century.....	33
Jay Deagon & Donna Pendergast	
Engaging the YouTube learner: Promoting Home Economics through videos .....	53
June Matthews & Lesley Macaskill	
Vanguard next practice for home economics: Complexity thinking, integral thinking, and the human condition.....	64
Sue L.T. McGregor	
Invisiblensness of traditional hand block printing in historical Mewar's capital: Ayad .....	78
Dolly Mogra	
Knowledge of mothers on malnutrition and nutritional status of children in Oyo State, Nigeria .....	92
B.O. Ogunba & T. Otunla	
Non-refereed .....	102
Private household production .....	102
Wolfgang Chr. Fischer	
Notes for contributors .....	118

Donna Pendergast

---

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

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

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

In this issue several applied studies investigate phenomenon related to home economics practice. Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil reports on a survey study designed to extend understanding of intergenerational communication from an Egyptian perspective with 35 respondents in the younger group and 46 respondents in the older group. Manpreet Chahal, Seem Sekhri & Ritu Mathur report on the development of demand-driven, disability-specific vocational training modules in garment manufacturing processes for persons in India with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment. Continuing the focus on textiles, Dolly Mogra shares her paper which details block printing as an ancient craft form of Rajasthan and outlines its demise due to a range of factors. Suggested measures such as skill oriented training programmes, marketing support, organised production with quality system, customer support, new product invention, timely availability of raw material and resources, improvement in infrastructure, government and other institutional assistance are proposed as methods to revive the traditional hand block printing profession.

## International Journal of Home Economics

The final refereed paper for this issue is authored by B.O. Ogunba & T. Otunla. With a focus on nutrition knowledge, this study investigated the knowledge of mothers regarding malnutrition and child care. Two hundred mothers in the case study hospital were selected randomly for the study. A structured interview schedule was used to assess the perception of mothers on the cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor in children, maternal knowledge on malnutrition and child care.

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

Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD  
Editor, IJHE

## Younger and elder generation's perceptions of communication with family and non-family members in Alexandria

Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil

Alexandria University, Egypt

---

### Abstract

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

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

### Introduction

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

Relationships beyond the immediate family (mother, father, sisters and brothers) can make a positive contribution to children's emotional development and sense of themselves. An independent and developing relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is invaluable for everybody.

Perhaps the most important part of being a grandparent is having a second chance. Through the relationship with their grandchildren, grandparents can try and do better some of the things they felt less happy about as parents. And they can do again, or strengthen, what went well the first time round. Not only can they form new relationships with their grandchildren, they can also repair and rework the old ones - with their children.

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

## **Literature Review**

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

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

Tracy Schmidt and Randolph Cornelius evaluated the content of self-disclosures of college students aged 20-23 (Schmidt & Cornelius, 1987). The majority of reasons for self-disclosure involved information sharing and sharing of feelings, although some students admitted to a strategy in relationship maintenance with a friend as the reason for disclosing. The students

also benefited from self-disclosure, as they saw the act helped them to become the kind of person they would like to be. This point is especially important in intergenerational communication, especially if the younger perceives the older generation as possessing desirable knowledge. In her article *Self-Disclosure with Friends across the Life Cycles*, Fran Dickson-Markman argues that throughout the lifespan, there is no real difference in amount, depth, honesty and intent of self-disclosure, which indicates that peer relationships across the life span are more similar than they are different. Her major finding was that as age increases, the negative valence of self-disclosure increases. Dickson-Markman also shows a correlation between length of friendship and the degree and amount of self-disclosure, which, when combined with her primary findings—indicates the need for longitudinal studies regarding this subject (Dickson-Markman, 1986). Ngozi Nkongho's research focused on 107 elderly men and women from 6 senior centres in New York City who completed *Lohman's Life Satisfaction Scale* and a modified version of Moriwaki's self-disclosure questionnaire. As would probably be expected, what an elderly person disclosed to friends and to an adult child were different. Nkongho found that adult children typically receive disclosures related to Body and Health, and Financial and Living Conditions. Friends of the elderly, on the other hand, were the recipients of disclosures involving Achievement, Roles, Personality, Social Relations and Attitudes and Opinions. Perhaps most importantly to the field of general disclosure, Nkongho found a correlation between the amount a person would self-disclose and their general well-being.

Regardless, this provides adequate evidence that individuals maintain different relationships in order to meet different needs (Nkongho, 1985). Magai, Consedine, Fiori and King (2008) examined changes in 200 African-Americans' and European-Americans' depressive symptomology, stress, sad and happy mood, and self-reported health as it relates to self-disclosure. After 4 weeks, health symptomology declined over time as the subjects disclosed more, indicating a correlation between health and self-disclosure (Magai et al., 2008). Jaye Bonnesen and Mary Hummert evaluated the quality of both painful self-disclosures (PSD) and non-painful self-disclosures (NPSD). They found that those who listened to the PSDs found them to be more painful, more intimate and less appropriate than NPSDs. The elderly people who utilised PSDs were more likely to be seen as fitting the negative stereotypes of the elderly as opposed to the positive stereotypes (Bonneson & Hummert, 2002). Valerie Barker's (2004) research agrees with Bonnesen and Hummert (2002). Barker (2004) takes the position that the PSDs of grandparents represent a form of identity management. From the perception of the adult grandchildren, grandmothers tended to disclose more and their disclosures were more indicative of PSDs than grandfathers, who were viewed through a more cynical lens. Grandfathers were perceived to be more strategic in their PSDs and were more likely to be perceived as using PSDs for control (Barker, 2004). Jeanne Tschann (1988) examined the element of self-disclosure and how it changes across gender and marital status lines. Intimate disclosure of married men to friends was found to be lower than that of unmarried men, and women irrespective of their marital status. The non-intimate disclosure level of all married persons was found to be lower than that of all unmarried people. This suggests that having a spouse fulfils a large part of the need for self-disclosure (Tschann, 1988).

## **Methodology**

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

## **Research questions**

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

## **Results**

There were 15 males and 20 females (35 in total) in the younger group and 22 males and 24 females (46 in total) in the older group that participated in the study (Table 1).

Table 1 Demographic data of participants

	Age	Gender			Education		
		Male	Female	Total	Diploma	Bac+4	Higher education
Older	60-75	22	24	46	28	18	
Younger	17-23	15	20	35	7	23	5

A result of the first two questions, in the older participants' response to question 1, the most talked-about topics between older individuals and peers was reported to be Current events /political issues, Family issues, and Health and wellness issues (Table 2). When the older participants were asked about intergenerational communication, they indicated they were most likely to talk about Family, Entertainment and Current Events/Political issues (Table 2).

Table 2 Topics the older participant indicated they talk about most with peers and those younger than them

Topics	% Older talk about most with peers	% Older talk about most with those younger than them
Health and wellness issues	36	12
Current social and living situation	10	15
Entertainment	8	30
Finances	15	3
Accomplishments / self-history	9	25
Friends	5	5
Current events/political issues	35	30
Family and family issues	35	36

Question 3 asked the participants: which age group they most often talk to? The older generation had a wider distribution of answers, though the top two answers for the older generation were the age groups of 50-59, 60-69, and 70-79. No answers were received for those aged under 20, and over 80 (Table 3). Out of the age groups that participants disclosed to, they were asked which they most liked to talk to. The highest number of responses from the older participants was in the 50-59 and 60-69 categories. The choices offered above 80, received zero response (Table 3).

Table 3 The older participants' responses to the question which age group do you most often talk to

Age group	% the age group older participants often talk to	The age group they most liked to talk to
70-79	6	3
60-69	24	20
50-59	30	22
40-49	9	12
30-39	9	15
20-29	22	12
Under 20	0	16
Total	100	100

The next question asked participants which group of people, as opposed to the age ranges, they talk to the most. For the older population, friends were the most-chosen answer,

followed by family members and finally acquaintances from social situations. Grandchildren or younger people and doctors and nurses each received zero responses (Table 4). To measure who people feel most comfortable self-disclosing to, participants were asked who they felt most comfortable talking—and, disclosing—to. The older population indicated that family members, friends and Grandchildren/younger people were the groups of people they felt most comfortable disclosing to: doctors and nurses, and acquaintances from social situations received no responses (Table 4). The opposite question was also asked of the older population to evaluate which group of people they felt least comfortable self-disclosing to. A majority of respondents indicated that doctors and nurses were the group that they felt least comfortable talking to. Complementing the previous question, no older respondents answered friends or family members (Table 4).

Table 4 Older participants' response to the question "Which group of people do you talk to the most?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Table 6** Younger participants' responses to the question, "Which age group do you most often talk to and they most liked to talk to?"

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

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

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

**Table 7** Younger participants' responses to the question, "Which group of people do you talk to the most?" and "Which group of people do you feel most comfortable talking to?"

"Which group of people do you talk to the most?"	% group of people they...		
	talk to the most	felt most comfortable talking with	feel least comfortable talking to
Family members	31	35	0
Grandparents	20	22	
Friends	43	43	3
Acquaintances from social situations	6	0	0
Doctors	0	0	51
Nurses	0	0	0
Grandchildren or younger people	0	0	6

When younger participants were asked which group of people they felt most comfortable talking with, the response was remarkably similar to that of the older participant. The responses indicated by the younger participants were friends, family members and Grandparents (Table 7).

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

## **Discussion**

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

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

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

The study indicated the older participant was nearly evenly divided regarding who they talked to the most. Friends and Family were the top two responses. The third most popular response was Acquaintances from social situations. Older people indicated that Friends and Family were the groups of people the older population reported they were most comfortable talking

to, presumably indicating that older people would prefer to talk more with these two groups of people, as opposed to Acquaintances from social situations, older participants believe that doctors and nurses are impatient to discuss or even to listen to their chief complaints. Further study is needed to focus on social pressures on individuals to interact a certain way with people they may otherwise avoid.

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

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

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

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

Bonneson and Hummert (2002) and Barker (2004) describe pitfalls for older individuals to avoid. Painful self-disclosures, described by Bonneson and Hummert as negative, intimate self-disclosures, tended to make recipients of such more cognizant of the negative stereotypes of elderly individuals. When asked about the PSDs, adult grandchildren viewed the PSDs, especially those by grandfathers, as manipulative. Further research should evaluate

the reception of self-disclosure and communication attempts between generations in a greater capacity than in a grandparent-grandchild dyad. Still, the benefits of self-disclosure are likely to outweigh any potential consequences. Elderly people who self-disclose have a higher sense of well-being (Nkongho, 1985). There is also a positive correlation between self-disclosure and health (Magai et al., 2008). Further research could focus on those elements of the questionnaire that were omitted from the study due to space constraints, including depth of self-disclosure in peer-to-peer and intergenerational conversations, desire of populations to communicate more or less with peers and with those younger or older than them, and comparative comfort levels of self-disclosures of individuals of different ages.

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

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

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

## **Biography**

*Dr Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil, associate professor of household management and family sciences, at Alexandria University, is liaison of IFHE in Egypt, coordinator of a scientific convention between Alexandria University (Egypt) and Paris Descartes University (France). She proposed the vision and mission for Home economics' department at the Faculty of Specific Education. Prior to this appointment, she served seven years as a lecturer of Home Economics at Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Mona's research interest focuses on family resources management, daily life activities, consumer behaviour, household environment, food consumption and Home Economics education.*

## References

- Adler, R., Rosenfeld, L., & Proctor, R. (2003). *Interplay: the process of interpersonal communication*. New York City: Oxford University Press, USA.
- Barker, V. (2004, May 27). *Grandparents' painful self-disclosure: what do young adult grandchildren think?* Retrieved from [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p112689\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p112689_index.html).
- Bettes, W. (2010) Intergenerational Communication: An Evaluation, *JCCC Honors Journal* 1(1).
- Bonneson, J.L., & Hummert, M.L. (2002). Painful self-disclosures of older adults in relation to aging stereotypes and perceived motivations. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 21(3).
- Dean, J. (2007). *Getting closer: the art of self-disclosure*. Retrieved from <http://www.spring.org.uk/2007/02/getting-closer-art-of-self-disclosure.php>
- Dickson-Markman, F. (1986). Self-disclosure with friends across the life-cycles. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 3(2).
- Jourard, S.M. & Lasakow, P. (1958). Some factors in self-disclosure. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 56(1),91-98.
- Madey, S. F. (2000). The social psychology of aging. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 22(3) 133-261.
- Magai, C., Consedine, N.S., Fiori, K.L., & King, A. (2009). Sharing the good, sharing the bad: the benefits of emotional self-disclosure among middle-aged and older adults. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 21(2).
- Nkongho, N.O. (1985). The Relationship between self-disclosure and well-being among the elderly. *Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society*, New Orleans, LA.
- Schmidt, T.O., & Cornelius, R.R. (1987). Self-disclosure in everyday life. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 4(3).
- Tschann, J.M. (1988). Self-disclosure in adult friendship: gender and marital status differences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 5(1).

## Creating sustainable livelihoods for persons with disability in garment manufacturing units

Manpreet Chahal, Seema Sekhri & Ritu Mathur

---

University of Delhi, India

### Abstract

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

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

### Introduction

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

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

effect of physical disability and is of value in the eyes of the potential employer (Murichan & Kareparampil, 1995).

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

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

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

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

## Objectives of the study

1. Segregation of tasks performed in different sections of GMUs to match the capacities of persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment (task analysis).
2. Formulation of training modules for them after incorporating feedback and suggestions from the experts (design and developmental process).

## Materials and methods

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

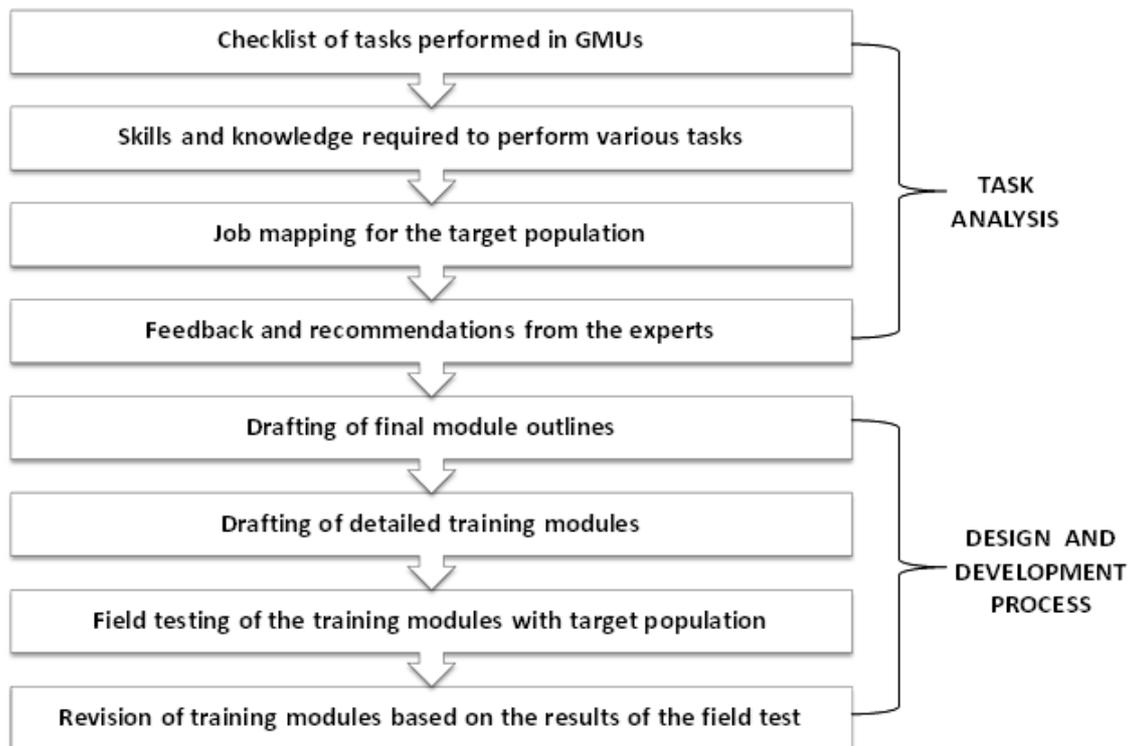


Figure 1 Steps involved in formulation of training modules

### Checklist of tasks performed in GMUs

Review of literature related to garment manufacturing process was done to establish the broad functioning of the GMUs. Besides, a consolidated list of GMUs in Delhi, India and National Capital Region (NCR) around Delhi, that is, Noida, Faridabad and Gurgaon was procured from Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), Gurgaon, India. Since the list was very extensive having 600 units, 25 percent of the GMUs from the list (i.e., every fourth unit

from the list) were contacted through systematic random sampling technique. However, most of them were not employing persons with a disability and did not respond back. Only 25 GMUs expressed their willingness to participate in the study, hence the final sample comprised of these 25 GMUs. The final sample included 18 GMUs employing persons with a disability and 7 GMUs not employing them. Visits were made to these units to study the variety of tasks being performed in different sections of GMUs. The information was compiled to prepare a comprehensive checklist of tasks performed in different sections of the GMUs.

### **Skills and knowledge required to perform various tasks**

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

#### *Observation of operator at work in GMUs*

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

#### *Fact finding information from the operators and supervisors*

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

#### *Self-attempt to perform the job by researcher*

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

### **Job mapping for the target population**

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

### **Feedback and recommendations from the experts**

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

### **Drafting of final module outlines**

The checklist developed after job mapping was modified according to the feedback and recommendations given by various experts. The tasks were then selected from the checklist for development of final modules outlines for persons with locomotor, hearing and visual

impairment. Care was taken that each module was a complete entity in itself and included multiple tasks for a versatile work profile.

#### **Drafting of detailed training modules**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Where

$$\text{Total minutes produced} = \text{Total pieces made by an operator} \times \text{Standard Allowed Minute (SAM) of the operation (minutes)}$$
$$\text{Total minutes attended} = \text{Total hours worked on the task} \times 60 \text{ (minutes)}$$

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

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

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

## **Results and discussion**

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

### **Stage 1: Task analysis**

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

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

Based on the information gathered on skills and knowledge required to perform various tasks, a detailed profile of each task including job skills and tools or equipment used for performing were recorded systematically for further reference during development of detailed drafts of training modules. Equipped with the required information, the researchers made efforts to match the compatibility of a particular job to the target population and to recommend job modifications or accommodations, if required.

Therefore, keeping in mind the need to specifically design and restructure the content of vocational training modules for the persons with locomotor, hearing and visual impairment, tasks from the checklist were identified and segregated which could easily be performed by them.

#### *Segregation of tasks performed in fabric and accessory store*

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

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

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

#### *Segregation of tasks performed in cutting room*

The various tasks identified in cutting room were as follows:

- Spreading of fabric to form a lay
- Fixing of marker on top of lay
- Cutting of fabric lay
- Ticketing of cut garments
- Re-checking and sorting out defective cut pieces
- Re-cutting of pin tuck panel, embroidered pieces, yokes, and so on, using fixed pattern templates

- Bundling and bar coding of cut pieces for issuing to sewing room
- Position marking for darts, pockets, and so on, using drill marker
- Applying fusible interlinings using fusing machine and stacking fused pieces in serial order

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

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

#### *Segregation of tasks performed in sewing room*

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

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

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

adjusters and drawstring into the garment and inverting flaps, collars, cuffs, waistband, button straps.

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

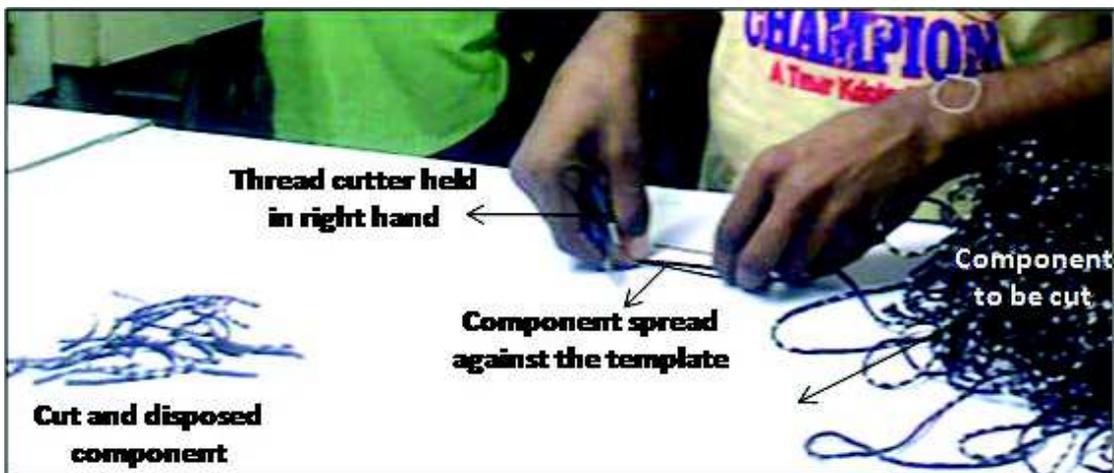


Figure 2 Person with visual impairment cutting button loops using a fixed template

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

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

Sewing machine operation was a sedentary occupation and required specific physical movements to execute the operations. These operations were measured in terms of range and types of body motions which include movement of fingers, wrist, forearm and upper arm while stitching, forward and backward movement of thoracic region (part of body surrounded by ribs between the neck and the waist), reaching out to the left side of the work area for

getting hold of bundles of cut pieces ready for stitching and disposing to the right side, proper eye/hand/foot coordination, movement of left or right foot and ankle to press the pedal to control the speed of the machine and movement of right knee and thigh for pressing knee lift situated to the right of the operator. However, movement of right knee and thigh was not required if the operator was working on single needle lock stitch machine with under bed trimmer and auto lift. In this machine, all the three operations, stopping of machine, thread trimming and lifting of presser foot were performed by pressing of treadle backward at different levels.

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

#### *Segregation of tasks performed in issue-receiving and washing section*

The various tasks identified in issue-receiving and washing section were as follows:

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

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

It was found that these tasks could be performed by persons with visual impairment with slight modifications in the three machines in the washing section, that is, washing machine, hydro extractor and tumbler (drier). In all the three machines, they would feel the operation panel through tactile perception and operate the machines through press buttons (Figure 3 a). However, they would not be able to set the time regulator through sense of touch. Therefore, a special circular dial made from aluminium sheet was developed by the researcher with assistance from Blind Relief Association, Delhi (India). This dial had embossed markings at intervals of 5 minutes (Figure 3 b). Trainees with visual impairment would be able to feel the embossed markings and set the time efficiently.

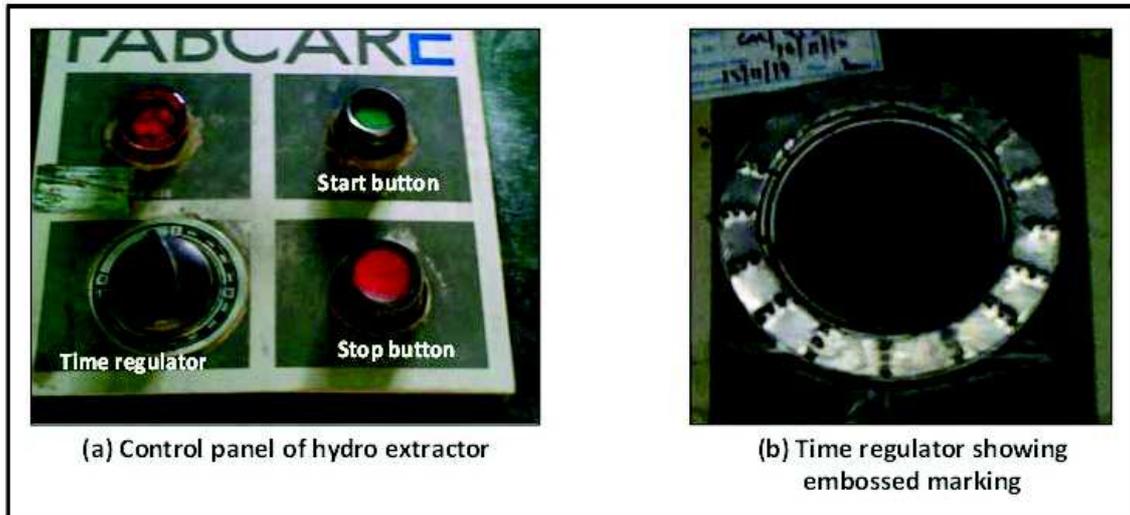


Figure 3 Operation of hydro extractor

A limitation would be posed for trainees with total visual impairment in operating the washing machine as it required monitoring of water level and temperature of water used for washing (Figure 4). However, if the persons with partial vision could view the water level and temperature display, then they would be eligible to perform the task.

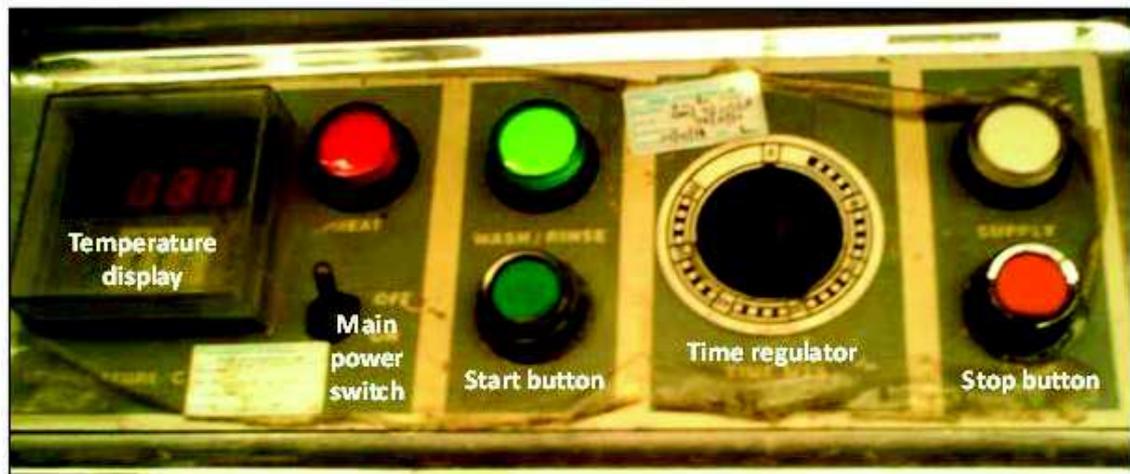


Figure 4 Control panel of washing machine and tumbler (drier)

Moreover, while operating the tumbler (drier), it was crucial to note the temperature of the inner chamber from the display unit while the machine was functioning (Figure 4). This should not exceed the prescribed temperature or the fabric could be damaged due to excess of heat. As a result, this task could not be handled independently by trainees with total visual impairment. However, persons with partial vision could view the temperature display and operate the tumbler (drier).

Therefore, persons with total visual impairment could be eligible to count garments in issue-receiving section and operate hydro extractor in washing section. While persons with partial visual impairment would be eligible to perform other tasks like removing tickets from garments, manual rinsing of garments, packing of garments after washing and also operate washing machine and tumbler (drier) if he/she could view the water level and/or temperature displayed on control panel of the machine.

#### *Segregation of tasks performed in finishing room*

The various tasks identified in finishing room were as follows:

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

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

#### *Segregation of tasks performed in packaging room*

The various tasks identified in packaging room were as follows:

- Operating needle detector machine
- Final checking for labels, tags, and so on

- Size and colour assortment for packaging
- Box (carton) making for packaging
- Packing of garments in boxes as per the buyer's specifications

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

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

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

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

## Stage 2: Design and development process

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

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

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

Table 1 Modules for persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs

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

Table 1 (cont) Modules for persons with locomotor impairment in lower limbs

Module 3: Helper in Cutting, Sewing and Finishing (having severe locomotor impairment in both the lower limbs)	
Task 1: Preparation of cut work	100-130 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/Nil
Activity 1.1: Ticketing of cut pieces	
Activity 1.2: Bundling of cut pieces	
Task 2: Marking points for making pleats, pin tucks, attachment of cuff, facing, neck band and placement of button hole and button	
Task 3: Knowledge about various parts of basic garments	
Task 4: Inspection of garments	
Activity 4.1: Checking of measurements	
Activity 4.2: Checking for sewing defects, cuts or holes and proper attachment of garment components	
Task 5: Cleaning of garment	
Activity 5.1: Trimming of trailing thread ends	
Activity 5.2: Identification and removal of stains	
Task 6: Tacking, hemming and stitching hook and eye or press buttons	

### Modules for persons with hearing impairment

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

Table 2 Modules for persons with hearing impairment

Content	Duration/Education
<b>Module 1: Raw Material Inspection &amp; Cutting Operations</b>	
Task 1: Raw material inspection	140-175 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/ 5th Std + sign language & speech reading
Activity 1.1: Inspection of complete fabric packages	
Activity 1.2: Inspection and sorting out of accessories	
Task 2: Spreading of fabric to form a lay	
Task 3: Preparation of cut work	
Activity 3.1: Ticketing of cut pieces	
Activity 3.2: Re-checking and replacing of defective cut pieces	
Activity 3.3: Re-cutting of garment pieces after embroidery, pin tuck, and so on	
Activity 3.4: Bundling of cut pieces	
Task 4: Operating fusing machine	
<b>Module 2: Basic Sewing Operations—level 1</b>	
Task 1: Orientation to the single needle lockstitch machine	160-200 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/ 5th Std + sign language & speech reading
Activity 1.1: Equipment familiarisation and its controlled operation	
Activity 1.2: Needle setting and threading the machine	
Activity 1.3: Paper sewing exercises	
Task 2: Basic adjustments and overcoming minor sewing problems	

Table 2 (cont) Modules for persons with hearing impairment

Task 3: Sewing on fabric	
Activity 3.1: Basic sewing exercises on muslin fabric	
Activity 3.2: Use of seam guides, seam ripping and reducing bulk in seams	
Activity 3.3: Topstitching	
Activity 3.4: Disposal of fullness (darts, tucks, pleats)	
Task 4: Dexterity and work handling	
<b>Module 3: Finishing and Packaging Operations</b>	
Task 1: Knowledge about various parts of basic garments	120-150 hrs of training + 1 month internship in industry/ 5th Std + sign language & speech reading
Task 2: Pressing of stitched garment	
Task 3: Inspection of garments	
Activity 3.1: Checking of measurements	
Activity 3.2: Checking for proper fit and fall of garment	
Activity 3.3: Checking for sewing defects, cuts or holes and proper attachment of garment components	
Task 4: Flat folding of garment	
Task 5: Tagging of garments	
Task 6: Packaging of final approved garment	

*Modules for persons with visual impairment*

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

Table 3 Modules for persons with visual impairment

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

Table 3 (cont) Modules for persons with visual impairment

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

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

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

Each developed module was disability-specific, oriented to the requirements of industry, short term with flexible time duration. Eligibility criteria for each module were defined in terms of minimum physical and mental capacities required so that each person with a disability was individually evaluated. Moreover, each module was a complete entity in itself, included multiple tasks and emphasis was on teaching minimum knowledge and skills required to perform each task using industrial tools and equipment. Wherever possible, assistive working aids were suggested and focus was laid on good handling techniques. Training in social skills related to work behaviour and one month internship was incorporated for overall empowerment of the trainees.

Results of the field testing revealed that there were wide varieties of jobs in the garment manufacturing units that could be safely and efficiently performed by persons with a disability. They were found to be more focused while performing a task. The efficiency level (calculated through time study) of most of the trainees was comparable with that of the experienced operators or at times, even better. After initial training, trainees got an opportunity to work in the actual factory in Radnik Exports which further helped them in getting acclimatised to the working environment of the industry.

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

## Conclusion

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

## Biographies

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

*Associate Professor Seema Sekhri is presently working as an Associate professor in Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, India and has 20 years of experience in teaching and research to her credit. She has also authored one textbook and a number of publications in recognised journals. Recently, she has completed her 3 year term as a head of the department of Fabric and Apparel Science. So far she has been supervisor for five doctoral studies. She holds life membership of esteemed associations like Textile Association of India and Home Science Association of India.*

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

*in teaching and research. So far she has been supervisor for three doctoral studies and has a number of research publications / chapters in the books to her credit. She holds life membership of esteemed associations like Textile Association of India and Home Science Association of India.*

## References

Banerjee, G. (2004). *Legal rights of persons with disability*. New Delhi, India: Rehabilitation Council of India.

Census of India. (2013). *Data on disability*. Retrieved from <http://censusindia.gov.in/>

Cooklin, G. (2007). *Introduction to clothing manufacture*. New Delhi, India: Om Book Service, Darya Ganj.

Dhar, M.L. (2009, January 06). *Skilled workforce—A national priority*. Labour, Press Information Bureau, Government of India. Retrieved from [pibmumbai.gov.in/scripts/detail.asp?releaseId=E2009FR1](http://pibmumbai.gov.in/scripts/detail.asp?releaseId=E2009FR1)

*Glance on manufacturing centres of Indian Garment Industry*. (n.d.) Retrieved March 9, 2014, from <http://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/market-research-industry-reports/glance-on-manufacturing-centers-of--indian-garment-industry/glance-on-manufacturing-centers-of--indian-garment-industry1.asp>

Murichan, S.J.J., & Kareparampil, G. (1995). *Persons with disabilities in society*. Trivandrum, India: Kerala Federation of the Blind.

*National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled Persons*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2014, from National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled Persons website <http://www.ncpedp.org/employ/em-law.htm>

*How to calculate operator efficiency at work?* (September, 2011). Retrieved from <http://www.onlineclothingstudy.com>

Prasad, L. (1994). *Rehabilitation of the physically handicapped*. Delhi, India: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

Rungta, S. K. (2004). *Training and employment of people with disabilities: India 2002-An AbilityAsia Country Study*. International Labour Organization. Retrieved from <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/ability/download/indiafinal.pdf>.

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

Jay Deagon & Donna Pendergast

Griffith University, Queensland, Australia

---

### Abstract

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

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

### Introduction

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

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

It is rare to find literature that explicitly links spiritual concepts with home economics and this dearth has been lamented by a number of scholars who argue that 'spiritual wellbeing', is

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

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

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

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

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

## **Methods**

### **Data collection and sampling method**

All texts were extracted exclusively within an internet-based research environment. The *Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition and History* (HEARTH) Project is an online database of historical home economics specific texts, made available through the Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University (<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu>). This site was the main source of data for the analysis of documents in this study. Documents dating between the

mid-1800s and 1990s were retrieved electronically from HEARTH including the AHEA's *Lake Placid Conference Committee Proceedings* (LPCP). A direct word search of the HEARTH's database was performed and the term "spiritual" was matched 9169 times in 2240 records. Some of the 9169 matches were duplicates, requiring the data to be cleaned. The text search was refined to include the phrase "home economics", producing 703 individual pages which matched the search criteria in 425 records. Again, some of the 425 records were duplicates. The data were further reduced by adding "Lake Placid", with 39 matches in 28 records located. Although these 28 records initially focused the analysis, some other references were used for intertextuality, which meant locating original works from authors cited in the sampled texts (Gee, 2011). Utilising extensive internet and databases searches, if primary sources were not able to be located via electronic means, these texts were omitted from further investigation. Ultimately, 28 early years texts dated between 1901 and 1915; and, 20 middle years texts dated between 1923 and 1992 - a total of 48 documents containing spiritual discourse were purposefully selected to focus the analysis. While conducting the research, these two historical phases were analysed as separate data sets. In this paper, the analysis is presented by themes identified to converge between these two time periods.

### **Analysis methods**

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

### **Limitations to data collection within an internet-based research environment**

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

sufficient data set for an in-depth analysis of spiritual discourses in home economics contexts. With the methods now outlined, the analysis of themes is presented next.

## Findings

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

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

Each main idea is now discussed in detail.

### Scarcity and various interpretations

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

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

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

elements', 'spiritual interests', 'spiritual values', 'spiritual gifts', 'spiritual family', 'spiritual aspects', 'spiritual unit', 'spiritual conditions', 'spiritual needs', 'spiritual development' and 'spiritual life'.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Attention is drawn to the words spiritual (f = 131, wp = 2.37%), home (f = 101, wp = 1.98%), family (f = 68, wp = 1.33%) and life (f = 59, wp = 1.16%). Forming the next layer of significance were the words: we (f = 43, wp = .84%), development (f = 40, wp = .78%), material (f = 34, wp = .67%), work (f = 33, wp = .65%) and ideals (f 29, wp = .57%) followed by household, I, all, living, economics, highest, science, human, must, should, what, has, ideal, one, personal, physical, social, some, food, have, more, individual, been, being, mental,



scientific view regarded the home and family as a material entity. However, the spiritual language-in-use that had connections with home and family were specialised spiritual discourses that included *habits, attitudes, personal relations, feelings, appreciations, values and satisfactions*.

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

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

In 1911, Charles Ellwood also advocated for sociology to be included in home economics curricula. Ellwood (1911) inferred that home economics needed to be studied from an "intelligent" and informed knowledge base where the home and family served a significant social function to "the vast purpose in the total of human life" (p. 44). For Ellwood, family was perceived as traditional units of husband and wife, and parents and children. Ellwood clarified his position on family and noted distinct differences and also interrelationships between home economics, biological, material and spiritual factors. Ellwood (1911) implied the utmost importance of the spiritual function of the family as "real vital elements" (p. 44). For Ellwood (1911) it was not enough to satisfy the basic human needs of "nutrition and

health of all members of the family”; rather, “the real object of your science”, meaning home economics, was to secure “good homes” built on spiritual relationships that empower families with “nothing less than” the “highest type” of human beings (p. 44). This ‘highest’ ideal of individuals, home, life and family must incorporate not only scientific knowledge of home management (the material), but also biological and psychological factors at work in the functions of the family (the spiritual).

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

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

#### **Highest ideals: benchmarks for home economics**

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

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

...the ultimate purpose of the study of all home problems is the fullest and best development of the individual, the family, and the larger group; the home as the place in which one’s affections center [sic] and where one finds

refuge, rest, or satisfaction; a knowledge of the character of problems of the home and larger groups, of the mate the physiological, psychological, and moral problems involved; realization [sic] of obligations and opportunities; the proper study of the basic facts, materials, and problems as a means of acquiring physical and mental development, manual dexterity, general and economic efficiency, culture and breadth of vision, and an appreciation of the interdependence of the individual, the home, the larger group, and the community, and mankind (AHEA, 1913, p. 69).

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

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

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

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

... of the individual capacities (freedom) within the family; emancipation from conditions of domination and repression in society. Through raising consciousness of the implications of "conditions of the physical, social, moral, aesthetic and spiritual conditions of the home to the individual and to society at large," not only will individual capacities be developed but "the conditions of society" can be changed to provide a more just and democratic society (Brown, 1984, p. 50).

Spiritual knowledge may have become taken-for-granted by Richards and Dewey; whereas, Talbot and Andrews advocated visibility of spiritual knowledge in home economics curricula. Including the term spiritual in their reports, Dewey, Richards, Hunt, Talbot and Andrews may have been seeking a highest ideal for home economics which included spiritual concepts. However, intent, embedded knowledge and meaning became diluted and varied. We believe that this slippage in discourse may have developed from an issue with framing and classifying spiritual knowledges (Bernstein, 2000).

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

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

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

Figure 2 is a tag cloud visual representation of the prominent concepts surrounding spiritual discourse within the JHE texts dating between 1927 and 1992, the second phase of interest in this study. Interestingly, when comparing Figure 1 (early years tag cloud) with Figure 2 (middle years tag cloud) the word 'god' only appeared in the middle years texts. Despite this observation, the significant function of Figure 2 was that names of early home economists who contributed to spiritual discourse become more prominent in this visualisation. Figure 2 is important because it revealed and confirmed the significant contributors to early spiritual discourses were Ellen Richards, Annie Dewey, Caroline Hunt, Alice Norton, Marion Talbot and Benjamin Andrews.

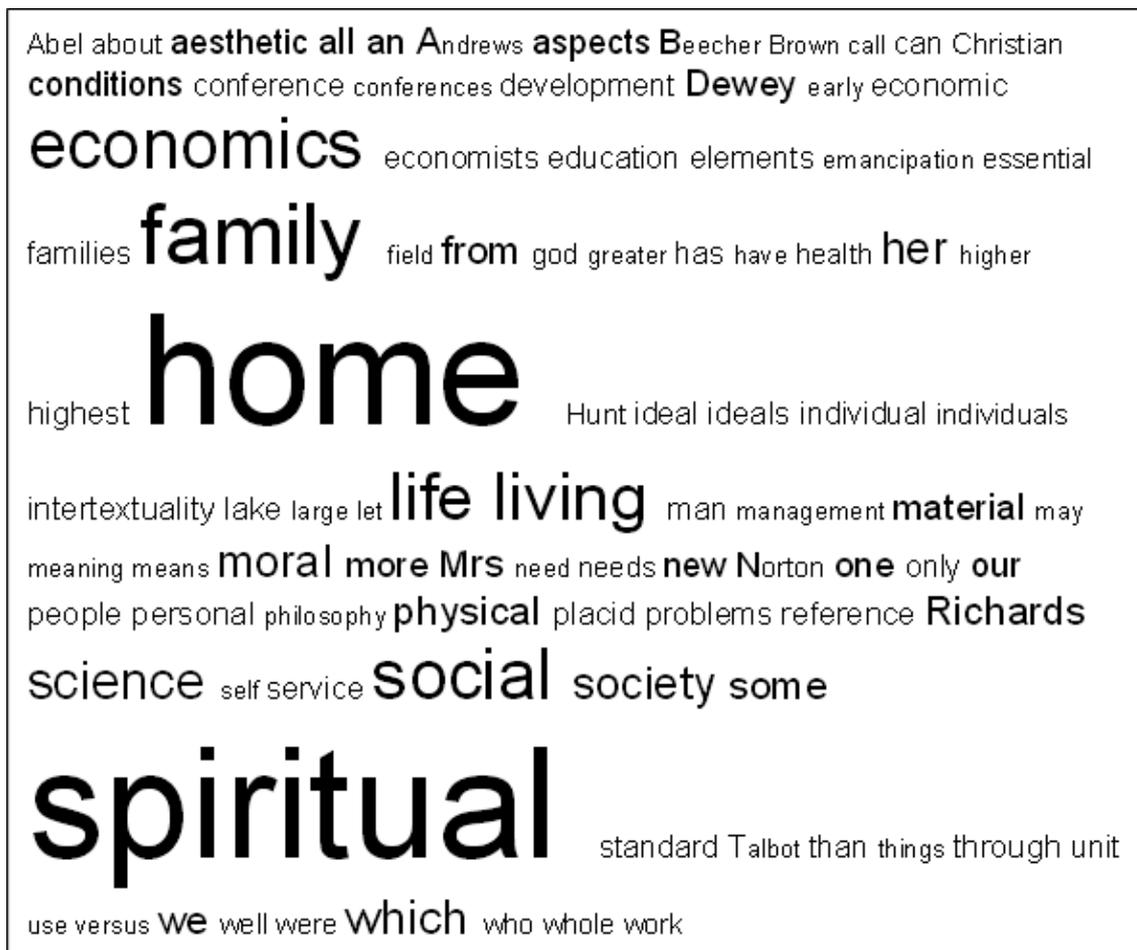


Figure 2 Tag cloud of middle years of home economics spiritual discourse texts dating between 1923 and 1992.

Of particular note was the work of Benjamin Andrews. He was identified as the only author from the early years to continue contributing to spiritual discourse in the middle years of home economics. In both the early years and the middle years Andrews (1907, 1939) lamented the impacts of dominant scientific, technical and mechanical paradigms which overshadowed the social and spiritual ideology of home economics. This scientific/spiritual dualism was found to exist in a number of other extracts and manifest as a conflict between the material and the spiritual aspects of home economics. This idea is explored next.

#### Tension and harmony: material and spiritual aspects of home economics

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

Despite the Darwinian inspired references to eugenics as a popular idea of the time, Dewey (1908) conveyed the material/spiritual tension as ‘mere shell of material side of life’ and

‘ideals of spiritual growth and development should supersede them’ (p. 105). Dewey ranked the spiritual aspects of home economics as a higher ideal than a material and physical reality. Our interpretation is that Dewey anticipated that once basic physical human needs (food, shelter and clothing) are met, the spiritual is a natural higher state of being.

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

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

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

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

acknowledgement of tensions between the material and the spiritual aspects of home economics.

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

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

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

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

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

Warner (1954) recommended that localised knowledge of home economics 'should' teach about the meaning of physical, social, moral, ethics and spiritual conditions - not only the mechanical or manual facilities of the home. Warner implied that whole person and whole family development was an essential aspect of home economics practice. Warner also called

for active participation, equal division of labour and that through a love of people, each member of the family was responsible for happiness of the home.

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

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

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

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

## **Discussion**

This investigation of historical texts revealed and confirmed that spiritual concepts were a legitimate area of concern for some pioneering home economists. Insufficient specialised discourse informed any prescriptive intention within the first official home economics syllabus. In the early phase of the emergence of the field, home economists were not privileged with support to address spirituality as an aspect of practice; rather, spiritual knowledges seemed to be informed by individualised and indoctrinated Christian perspectives. Christian views seemed to be embedded cultural knowledge and taken-for-granted in discourse. However, a few home economists, for example, Andrews, Dewey, Talbot and in later years Baldwin and Vincenti, called for spiritual aspects of individuals, home and family to be more visible in policies and practices.

Of the texts analysed, the term 'spiritual' was mostly juxtaposed with another concept. Language-in-use referred to spiritual life, spiritual status, spiritual development, spiritual being, spiritual things, spiritual need, spiritual awakening, spiritual growth, spiritual advancement and spiritual key note. The word 'spiritual' was mostly used as a description of the esoteric knowledge of the author - intangible and often an indescribable intuition or feeling.

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

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

## **Conclusion**

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

Following the early and middle historical phases of home economics, a distinct focus on spirituality was evident through the work of Henry (1995, 1997), who sought to explore the notion of wellbeing as the central purpose of the field. This work and work by others in the last two decades add further insight into the place of spiritual discourse in the field and are explored in other publications by the authors.

Since the foundation of home economics in the 1900s, home economists have called for spiritual aspects of home and family to be incorporated visibly into practice. In conclusion, this study has confirmed that spirituality was always intended to be an aspect of home economics curriculum and required explicit study in home economics curriculum content.

## Biographies

*Jay Deagon is a home economist, adjunct research fellow at the Griffith Institute for Education Research and a sessional academic with the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University. Her research is devoted to home economics, spiritual health and well-being, sustainability and citizenship. She has received a number of awards for academic excellence including twice recipient of the King & Amy O'Malley Scholarship, and an Australian Post Graduate Award. She is also founder of HomeEcConnect, an online social network that advocates home economics education as a vehicle for achieving optimal and sustainable futures for all. E-mail: j.deagon@griffith.edu.au*

*Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD is Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. Donna researches and writes about Home Economics philosophy, education and practice. Donna recently completed her 4-year term as Vice President of the Pacific Region and is presently a co-opted member of the IFHE Executive. She continues to serve the profession as Chairperson of the IFHE Think Tank Committee and Editor of the International Journal of Home Economics. She has served as National President of the Home Economics Institute of Australia, and President of the Queensland division. She is one of the few Australians appointed a Fellow of the Home Economics Institute of Australia for her outstanding contribution to the field.*

## References

- American Home Economics Association. (1901). Syllabus on Home Economics for Study Clubs. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings*, (Vol. 1-3, pp. 94). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- American Home Economics Association. (1913). *Syllabus of home economics*. Baltimore: Ellen Richards Memorial Fund.
- Andrews, B. (1907). Psychic Factors in Home Economics. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 9, pp. 152). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Andrews, B. (1939). Respite, Circumspice, Prospice. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 31(8), pp. 514). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.

- Andrews, B. (1943). Sarah Louise Arnold. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 35(6), pp. 340). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Baldwin, E. (1990). Family empowerment as a focus for home economics education. *Journal of Vocational Home Economics Education*, 8(2), 1-12.
- Bernstein, B. (2000). *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity: theory, research, critique* (Revised ed.). Oxford, England: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Bevier, I. (1928). Home Economics in Education. In B. Andrews (Series Ed.) Books on the Home, Retrieved from HEARTH Project, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Mann Library database Retrieved from <http://hearth.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=hearth;idno=5738553>
- Brown, M. (1984). Home Economics: Proud Past-Promising Future 1984 AHEA Commemorative Lecture. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 76(4), pp. 50). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Crawford, M., & Rossiter, G. (2006). *Reasons for Living: Education and Young People's Search for Meaning, Identity and Spirituality: A Handbook*
- Davidson, J., & Jacobs, C. (2008). The Implications of Qualitative Research Software for Doctoral Work: Considering the Individual and Institutional Contexts. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 8(2), 72-80.
- Deagon, J. R. (2009). *'Spiritual' Discourse models at work in Queensland Studies Authority curriculum documents: a content and discourse analysis of the middle phase of learning syllabuses and support material*. Unpublished Master of Education Thesis, Griffith University, Gold Coast.
- Deagon, J. R. (2013). *Cross-cultural views and perceptions of spiritual health and well-being in home economics sites: public expressions and social enactments*. Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, Griffith University, Gold Coast.
- Deagon, J. R., & Pendergast, D. (2012). A framework for investigating spiritual health and wellbeing in home economics. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 5(1).
- Deagon, J. R., & Pendergast, D. (2014). Home economists' views and perceptions of spiritual health and wellbeing: a collective affirmation statement. *Journal of the HEIA*, 21(2), 2-12.
- Dewey, A. (1902). An Adirondack Home Institute. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 4, pp. 92-96). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Dewey, A. (1908). Ideals and Standards of Living for Large Numbers. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 10, pp. 101-105). Ithaca, NY: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Ellwood, C. A. (1911). Courses in Sociology. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 3 (1), pp. 44). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.

- Fisher, J. (2011). The Four Domains Model: Connecting Spirituality, Health and Well-Being. *Religions*, 2(1), 17-28.
- Gee, J. P. (2011). *An introduction to discourse analysis: theory and method* (Third ed.). New York, USA: Routledge.
- Green, K. (1990). 1990 AHEA Commemorative Lecture: Our Intellectual Ecology: A Treatise on Home Economics. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 82(3), pp. 43). Ithica, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Green, K. (2001). Our Intellectual Ecology: A treatise on Home Economics. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 93(3).
- Hawks, S., Smith, T., Thomas, H. G., Christley, H. S., Meinzer, N., & Pyne, A. (2007). The forgotten dimensions in health education research *Health Education Research*, 23(2), pp. 319-324.
- Henry, M. (1995). *Well-being, the focus of home economics: an Australian perspective*. Doctoral dissertation, University of New England.
- Henry, M. (1997). Family wellbeing: insights gained through the process of critical reflection. *Journal of the HEIA*, 4(4), 48-51.
- Howard, G. E. (1911). What Courses in Sociology, Pure or Applied, should be included in College Departments of Household Science? In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 3 (1), pp. 36-43). Ithica, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Hunt, C. (1902a). Symposium of Current Thought as Indicated in Recent Publications. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 4, pp. 56-58). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Hunt, C. (1902b). Tendencies Toward Public and Private Industries in Women's Work. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 4, pp. 56-58). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Hunt, C. (1908). Household Industrial Problems. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 10, pp. 163). Ithaca, NY: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Kinley, D. (1911). Aspects of Economics of Importance in Household Science. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 3(3), pp. 254). Ithica, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- McGee, M., Nagel, L., & Moore, M. K. (2003). A study of university classroom strategies aimed at increasing spiritual health *College Student Journal*, 37(4), 583-594.
- McGregor, S. L. T., & Chesworth, N. (2005). Positioning human spirituality in home economics. *Journal of the HEIA*, 12(3), pp. 27-44.

- McGregor, S. L. T., Pendergast, D., Seniuk, E., Eghan, F., & Engberg, L. (2008). Choosing our future: Ideologies matter in the home economics profession. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 1(1), 43-62.
- McGregor, S. L. T., & Goldsmith, E. B. (1998). Expanding our understanding of quality of life, standard of living, and well-being. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 90(2), 2-6+.
- Meszaros, P. S., & Braun, B. (1983). Early Pioneers. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 75, pp. 4). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Mitstifer, D. I. (1996). *Power, and the Emancipative Dimension of Family Well-being*. Paper presented at the Toward a Theory of Family Well-Being, Nashville, Tennessee.
- Nickols-Richardson, S. M. (2001). Our collective soul. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 93(3), 32-32.
- Nickols, S. Y., Ralson, P. A., Anderson, C., Browne, L., Schroeder, G., Thomas, S., & Wild, P. (2009). The family and consumer sciences body of knowledge and the cultural kaleidoscope: research opportunities and challenges. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 37(3), pp. 266-283. doi: 10.1177/1077727X08329561
- Pendergast, D. (2008). Sustaining the Home Economics profession in contemporary, convergent times M. O'Donoghue (Ed.) *E-Book—Global Sustainable Development: A Challenge for Consumer Citizens* Retrieved from <http://www.educationforsustainabledevelopment.org/introduction.html>
- Pendergast, D. (2010). Connecting with Millennials: Using Tag Clouds to Build a Folksonomy from Key Home Economics Documents. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 38(3), 289-302. doi: 10.1111/j.1552-3934.2009.00019.x
- Pendergast, D. (2013). An appetite for home economics literacy: convergence, megatrends and big ideas. *Journal of Asian Regional Association for Home Economics*, 20(2), 57-65.
- Richards, E. (1904a). Practical Suggestions from the Lake Placid Conference on Courses of Study in Home Economics in Higher Education. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 6, pp. 80). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Richards, E. (1904b). Report of Committee on Personal Hygiene. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 6, pp. 65). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Richards, E. (1906). Euthenics in Higher Education: Better Living Conditions. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 8, pp. 33). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Robertson, S. P. (2008). The Qualitative Research Process as a Journey: Mapping Your Course with Qualitative Research Software. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 8(2), 81-90.
- Tacey, D. (2003). *The spirituality revolution: the emergence of contemporary spirituality*. Australia: HarperCollinsPublishers.

- Talbot, M. (1902). Report of Committee on Courses of Study in Home Economics Colleges and Universities. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 4, pp. 21-23). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Talbot, M. (1905). Summary of Sessions, Teaching of Home Economics in Country Communities. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings, Washington* (Vol. 7, pp. 67). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Teris, N., & Clawson, B. (1992). Human Values: Issues for Home Economics. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 84(4), pp. 9). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Thomas, A. (1901). Household arts in country schools how to teach them. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Lake Placid Conference Proceedings*, (Vol. 1-3, pp. 53). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Vincenti, V. (1983). Antecedents of Reformism. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), *Journal of Home Economics* (Vol. 75, pp. 26-31). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.
- Warner, W. (1954). Home Management at Lake Placid. In American Home Economics Association (Ed.), (pp. 717). Ithaca, New York: Albert R. Mann Library, Cornell University.

## Engaging the YouTube learner: Promoting Home Economics through videos

June Matthews & Lesley Macaskill

Brescia University College, London, Canada

---

### Abstract

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

**Key words:** student engagement, online video, digital learners

### Introduction

Positive student engagement, a cornerstone of effective and in-depth learning, has been defined as “a binding of students to each other, to meaningful learning activities, and to the institution” (Krause, 2005). For university faculty who teach courses in Home Economics, achieving positive student engagement can be a challenging endeavour, as many students, even those enrolled in Home Economics-related programs, may not see the value of our profession or why it is important to know its history and philosophical underpinnings. Collaborative learning, a key contributor to student engagement, is “the instructional use of small groups or teams where peer interaction plays a key role in learning” (Yazici, 2005, p. 217). Team learning improves problem-solving and communication skills, and enhances student achievement (Yazici, 2005). Collaborative learning is also an integral part of the learning environment for students in today's classrooms and, according to Bloom's Digital Taxonomy (a concept adapted by Churches (Churches, 2009), corresponds with higher order thinking skills such as creating, designing, constructing, planning, producing, filming, animating, mixing, re-mixing, directing, and video-casting. Collaborative video production in particular requires the coordination of the four types of knowledge - factual, conceptual,

procedural, and metacognitive (Krathwohl, 2002) - all of which are necessary for the intellectual development of students in professional programs such as those related to Home Economics education. As visual, kinaesthetic, and multi-sensory learners (Pendergast, 2009), "Digital Natives" (Prensky, 2001) prefer multimedia to reading and listening to a lecture (Matulich, Papp, & Haytko, 2008). The purpose of this paper is to describe the process and outcomes of an undergraduate university project where students utilised the talents commonly associated with today's youth to create online videos and promote either (a) the practice, profession, and academic discipline of Home Economics, or (b) one of the aims of the United Nations' (UN) 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

### The YouTube Learner

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

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

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

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

knowledge acquisition), the video production phase (knowledge transformation), and the reflection phase (self-evaluation and feedback) (Zahn et al., 2014).

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

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

### **The role of theory in video production**

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

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

### Context for the Project

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

### Description of the Project and Procedures

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

Table 1 Example of the assessment guidelines distributed to the students entitled Guidelines for Group Video Project

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

Prior to beginning the project, the students were informed that their videos may be posted on provincial and/or international websites. The course instructors discussed with the students the stages of group formation (i.e., forming, norming, storming, performing) (Tuckman, 1965), and asked each group to submit signed 'Team Contracts' to facilitate collaboration and problem-solving. A class website (part of an online open-source learning management system used by the university) (The Sakai Project, 2015) facilitated communication between the course instructors and students. It provided an online forum for discussion, as well as for sharing resources and solutions. The course instructors played a minimal role in providing either technical or content advice to the students, with the exception of privacy issues. Students were instructed not to film people in a way that individuals could be identified. The

course instructors were mindful of privacy legislation such as the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, 2013), and explained to the students that the university or course convenors did not have the capacity to maintain consent forms in perpetuity (i.e., once the videos are posted and possibly shared, the videos can literally exist forever in the virtual world and it would be impossible to remove a video should a participant request it). ‘Teamwork Progress Sheets’ and an ‘Executive Summary’ were submitted with the videos, which were shown in class at the end of the semester. The criteria for assessing the videos included overall presentation, organisation, content, originality, sources, and timing. The project contributed 20% of their final mark. Additional details on project guidelines and management may be obtained from the authors.

**Project Outcomes**

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

Table 2 Summary of Video Characteristics

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

### Encouraging active citizenship

The students' pride in their and their peers' online videos prompted them to show some of them at a national student conference organised by the students that year. The students also requested permission from the professors to post some of the online videos on the YouTube channel of Brescia's Student Human Ecology Association (SHEA) [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNnipclbd6-KRGD95D\\_A-QA\(\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNnipclbd6-KRGD95D_A-QA()). During the last class of the course, students showed their online videos and engaged their peers in discussion around the topics presented. Students reported to the instructors and their peers that they were engaged in their learning and were surprised to learn about the depth, breadth, and wide-ranging effects of Home Economics on people and their environments. The students also reported that they believed they were successful in achieving the objective of informing and persuading others, such as family and friends who participated in the video, about the importance of Home Economics. It is important to note that, similar to others who have included digital video production in post-secondary classrooms, 'students seem[ed] to revise early and often without direct provocation from the instructor, and they [came] to appreciate revision as a vital part of the composition process - two rare phenomena when students write and rewrite essays' (Meeks & Ilyasova, 2003). Furthermore, comparable to results found by Kearney and Schuck (2006), students also commented that the development of their movie making skills was a highly relevant part of their learning. This pedagogical strategy has also been used by Zahn et al. (2014), where students also progressed through four stages (i.e., research, theory, video production, and reflection) in the collaborative video design process. Also similar to Zahn et al. (2014), students in the course described here received immediate feedback from their peers during the final presentation of the online videos. Formal feedback from the instructors was provided separately to each group.

### Limitations and recommendations

Although strikingly similar to the project described by Zahn et al. (2014), this was not a research study. Many students live in a single residence on campus; therefore, intervention and control groups were not possible as the sample would have been contaminated by close interaction among the four classes of students. The instructors assumed that the majority of students had access to some sort of device for filming (e.g., digital camera, cell phone with camera, camcorder, tablet); however, not all students did. The instructors also assumed a minimum level of digital knowledge and experience in students, but some had very little. In these groups, the students created 'videos' using animation programs or other video-creation software; therefore, filming *per se* was not required. Others who had limited access to equipment or limited digital knowledge or experience simply created a slide show using PowerPoint and added music and/or voice-over. As "Digital Immigrants" (Prensky, 2001), the Baby Boomer-aged instructors were often at a loss when responding to technical questions; thus, these questions were re-directed to the class as a whole and students readily offered solutions to their peers' dilemmas. This online question and answer practice (through the class website) enhanced learning for both the students and the instructors. Similar to Zahn et al. (2014), the last class of the semester was reserved for in-class viewing of the videos, and for students to collectively reflect on their learning. It was the first time that the instructors or students had seen the outputs of this project (indeed, students were instructed not to post their videos online until they had been reviewed by the instructors). Presentation of online

videos in class without any prior vetting or previewing by the course instructors was a little stressful, particularly when it was discovered that two of videos included inappropriate content (i.e., breach of individual privacy, stereotypical images that may have been more detrimental than helpful in explaining the value of the profession and/or its professionals). Peer response to the inappropriate content was swift and provided the instructors with an unforgettable ‘teaching moment’ while the ensuing discussion was mediated and directed. While some instructors might see this ‘loss of control’ resulting in ‘mayhem’ in the classroom, the instructors appreciated that the freedom to create pushed students into deeper and more autonomous learning. Some students failed to appreciate the autonomy they were afforded by the instructors and criteria of the project, commenting that they wanted more guidance on ‘what they were supposed to do’ or ‘what was expected of them’. It was perceived by the authors that it was this uncertainty that propelled the students to take ownership over their work. Many groups were proud of their achievement and amazed by their final product. A more formalised pedagogical framework may assist future instructors of the course through what are fairly complex, open-ended tasks (Kearney, 2011). Kearney (2011) suggests that while guidelines for supporting student-generated video production tend to have a technical focus, more emphasis should be placed on educational issues such as “teacher roles, peer learning structures, and support for reflective processes” (p. 170). Despite these challenges, the authors believe other educators may find the digital video project described in this article to be a useful way to enhance digital learners’ engagement in learning about the practice, profession, and academic discipline of Home Economics.

## **Conclusions**

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

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

The complex process of video construction required students to “generate multiple solutions, cope with uncertainty, demonstrate nuanced judgment with media selection and adaptation... and put considerable effort into structuring information” - all characteristics of higher-order thinking (Brown, 2007, p. 107). For digital learners in particular, this project addressed digital learning strategies most relevant to their generation (e.g., filming, animating, directing, video-casting).

We encourage other educators to consider similar class projects to engage digital learners in activities associated with deeper learning. We also encourage Home Economics colleagues around the world to upload such digital creations, not only on student websites and YouTube, but also on the websites of our professional associations to promote Home Economics among the next generation of students who will be, undoubtedly, increasingly digitally-oriented.

## Biographies

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

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

## References

- Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: a revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Brown, C. (2007). Learning through multimedia construction - a complex strategy. *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, 16(2), 93-124.
- Carlos, W. G., Goss, K., & Morad, M. (2014). YouTube-based critical care educational videos go viral. *Medical Education*, 48, 522-548. doi: 10.1111/medu.12457
- Chelliah, J., & Clarke, E. (2011). Collaborative teaching and learning: Overcoming the digital divide? *On the Horizon*, 19(4), 276-285.
- Churches, A. (2009). *Bloom's Digital Taxonomy*. Retrieved from: <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com>
- Duncan, I., Yarwood-Ross, L., & Haigh, C. (2013). YouTube as a source of clinical skills education. *Nurse Education Today*, 33, 1576-1580. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2012.12.013>
- Duncum, P. (2014). Youth on YouTube as smart swarms. *Art Education*, March 2014.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., Namey, E. E. (2012). *Introduction to Thematic Analysis in Applied Thematic Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

- Jonassen, D. H., Peck, K. L., & Wilson, B. G. (1999). *Learning with technology: A constructivist perspective*. Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kearney, M. (2011). A learning design for student-generated digital story-telling. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 36(2), 169-188.
- Kearney, M. & Schuck, S. (2006). Spotlight on authentic learning: Student developed digital video projects. *Australasian Journal of Education Technology*, 22(2), 189-208.
- Kearsley, G. & Shneiderman, B. (1998). Engagement theory: A framework for technology-based teaching and learning. *Educational Technology*, 38(5), 20-23.
- Keengwe, J., Onchwari, G. & Onchwari, J. (2009). Technology and student learning: Toward a learner-centered teaching model. *Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education Journal*, 17(1), 11-22.
- Krathwohl, D. (2002). *A revision of Bloom's taxonomy: an overview*. *Theory into practice*, 41, 212-218.
- Krause, K-L. (2005). Engage, inert or otherwise occupied? Deconstructing the 21st century undergraduate student. *James Cook University Symposium 2005, Sharing Scholarship in Learning and Teaching: Engaging Students*. James Cook University, Townsville/Cairns, Queensland, Australia.
- Lehman, C. M., DuFrene, D. D., & Lehman, M. W. (2010). YouTube video project: A "cool" way to learn communication ethics. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 73(4), 444-449. doi: 10.1177/1080569910385382
- Lester, D. H. (2012). Social media: Changing advertising education. *Online Journal of Communication & Media Technologies*, 2(1), 116-125.
- Matulich, E., Papp, R. & Haytko, D. L. (2008, December 5). Continuous improvement through teaching innovations: A requirement for today's learners. *Marketing Education Review*, 18(1), 1-7.
- Meeks, M., & Ilyasova, A. (2003). A review of digital video production in post-secondary English classrooms at three universities. *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 8 (2).
- Noer, M. (2012, November 2). One man, one computer, 10 million students: How Khan Academy is reinventing education. *Forbes*. Retrieved from: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelnoer/2012/11/02/one-man-one-computer-10-million-students-how-khan-academy-is-reinventing-education/>
- Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada. (2008). *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*. Retrieved from: [http://www.priv.gc.ca/resource/fs-fi/02\\_05\\_d\\_15\\_e.asp](http://www.priv.gc.ca/resource/fs-fi/02_05_d_15_e.asp)
- Pendergast, D. (2009). Generational dynamics: Y it matters 2 u & me. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 2(2), 84.
- Prensky, M. (2001). Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5), 1-6.

- Prensky, M. (2010). Why YouTube matters. Why it is so important, why we should all be using it, and why blocking it blocks our kids' education. *On the Horizon*, 18(2), 124-131.
- Schuck, S., & Kearney, M. (2003-04). *Students in the Director's Seat. Teaching and Learning across the school curriculum with student-generated video*. Teacher Learning and Development Research Group. Faculty of Education, University of Technology, Sydney.
- Shewbridge, W., & Berge, Z. L. (2004, January-March). The role of theory and technology in learning video production: The challenge of change. *International Journal on E-Learning*, 31-39.
- Shuldman, M, & Tajik, M. (2010). The role of media/video production in non-media disciplines: The case of health promotion. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 35(3), 357-362.
- Stefanou, C., Stolk, J. D., Prince, M., Chen, J. C., & Lord, S. M. (2013). Self-regulation and autonomy in problem- and project-based learning environments. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 14, 109-122.
- Tan, E. (2013). Informal learning on YouTube: Exploring digital literacy in independent online learning. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 38(4), 463-477. <http://dx.doi.org.10.1080/17439884.2013.783594>
- The Sakai Project. (2015). *About the Sakai Project*. Retrieved from: <https://www.sakaiproject.org/about-sakai-project>
- Tucker, J., & Courts, B. (2010). Utilizing the Internet to facilitate classroom learning. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 7, 37-42.
- Tuckman, B. (1965), Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384-399.
- Tyner, K. (1994, September/October). Video in the classroom: A tool for reform. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 96(1), 18-27.
- Yazici, H. J. (2005). A study of collaborative learning style and team learning performance. *Education & Training*, 47(2/3), 216-229.
- YouTube. (2015) *Statistics*. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/yt/press/statistics.html>
- Zahn, C., Schaeffeler, N., Giel, K. E., Wessel, D., Thiel, A, Zipfel, S., & Hesse, F. W. (2014). Video clips for YouTube: Collaborative video creation as an educational concept for knowledge acquisition and attitude change related to obesity stigmatization. *Education and Information Technologies*, 19, 603-621. doi: 1007/s10639-013-9277-5

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

Sue L.T. McGregor

McGregor Consulting Group

---

### Abstract

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

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

### Introduction

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

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

Many home economists are keen to position their professional ambitions in larger frameworks that may be germane to the profession. In that spirit, this paper introduced the idea of *next* practices and identified several such conceptual, philosophical, and theoretical frameworks. The author undertook a survey of the broader literature and culled from it three next

practices; a survey means a careful and thorough look at a collection of ideas, presented with general descriptions.

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

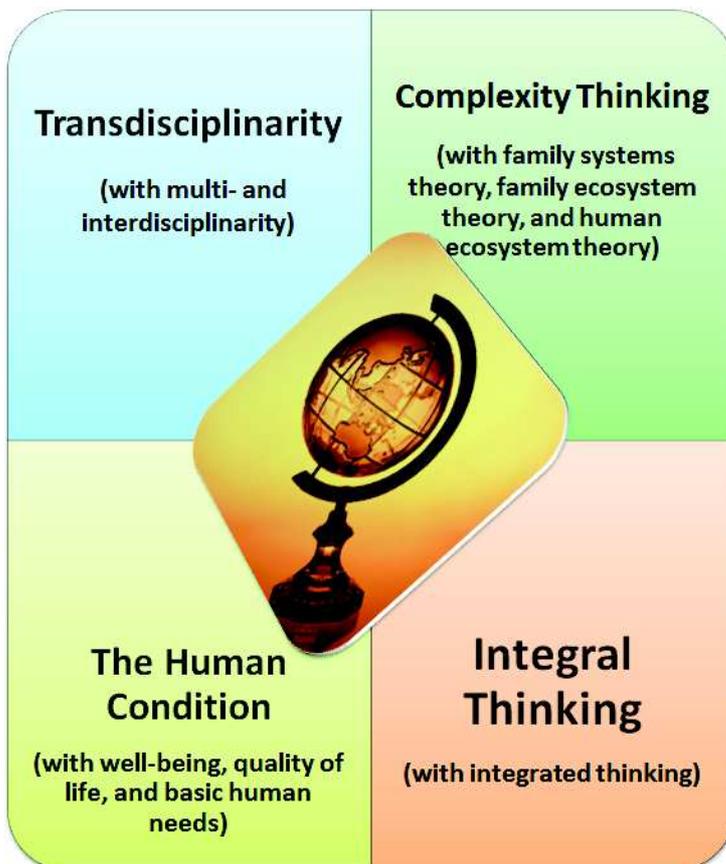


Figure 1 World on a Precipice, Requiring Home Economics Next Practice

### Distinguishing Between Best and Next Practice

Succinctly, best practice focuses on what is working *now*. It tends to rely on received wisdom (older, accepted thinking), and to deal with enduring problems by delivering tried-and-true

solutions. Hannon (2007) explained that practitioners tend to be heavily invested in best practices, intimating it is difficult to change directions if one is hanging onto established ways of doing things (see also McGregor, 2012a). Home economics professionals need to accept that *our best may not be good enough*, given the vagaries of the world. Indeed, best practice always needs to be augmented with next practice, especially if the profession aspires to find new ideas and directions. The hope is that next practice will become best practice, stimulating a new iteration of next practice, creating a cycle that keeps the profession dynamic, viable, and resilient.

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

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

## Complexity Thinking

Complexity thinking, especially Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS), is an extension of family systems theory, family ecosystem theory, and human ecosystem theory, best practices with which home economics is very familiar (see Figure 2). Complexity is derived from the Latin verb *complecti* (to twine together) and the noun *complexus* (network) (Harper, 2014). By bringing the idea of complexity to systems and human ecosystem thinking, a next practice can emerge. Complex *adaptive* systems are, in fact, special cases of complex (eco)systems. Examples include families, stock markets, social insect and ant colonies, the ecosystem, the Internet, and cities.

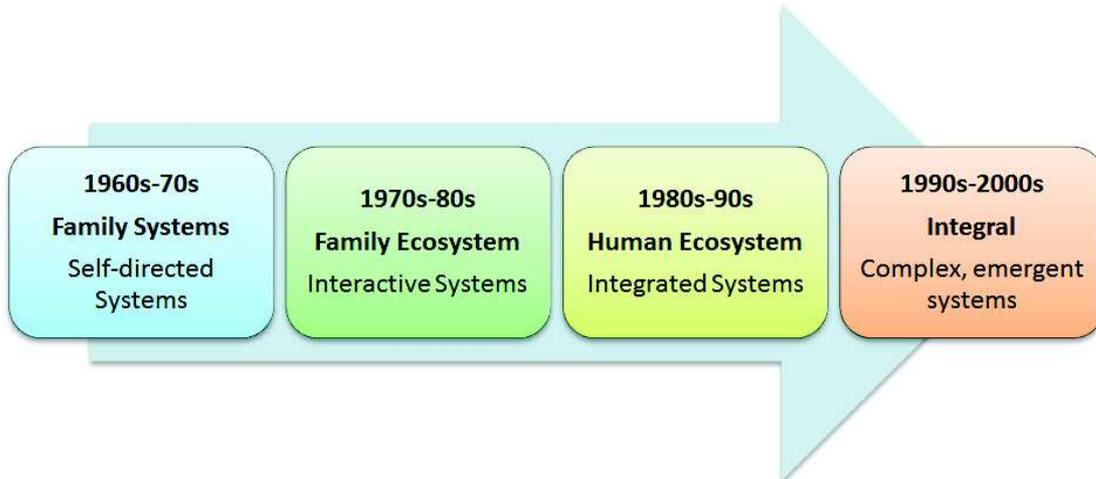


Figure 2 Evolution of Complex Systems Thinking Within Home Economics

A complex adaptive system (CAS) shows complex behaviour while it keeps adapting to changing environments. Systems are *complex* in that they are diverse and made up of multiple, interconnected elements (individuals, agents, teams, groups). Systems are *adaptive* in that they have the capacity to change and learn from experience, gaining resilience in the face of adversity; they are self-directed and self-(re)organising entities, able to survive and thrive due to their adaptability (Appelo, 2010).

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

Especially relevant for vanguard home economics is the idea that complexity thinking presumes *the family* is a self-(re)organising system, meaning it can become self-directed and is able to regroup and reorganise in the face of adversity. As it gains resiliency, the self-organising family system increases in complexity, eventually needing less and less guidance or management from outside sources (Davis & Sumara, 2008; Heylighen, 2008; Wheatley, 1994). As a caveat, the inherent notion of free will (the ability to make choices unconstrained by certain factors) does not negate the powerful impact of constraints from societal laws, regulations and norms, or the challenges emanating from nature (e.g., natural disasters, changing seasons, or gene aberrations).

With a deep respect for resiliency and increasing system complexity, home economics professional associations and higher education programs could orient home economists to appreciate the power of facilitating families becoming self-determined, autonomous, and empowered agents. Practitioners would assume people *can* self-organise, and *can* change their approach to, and the directions of, their lives. They have free will. More compelling is the fact that anything that is not constrained *will* self-organise (Wheatley, 1994). This fact means home economics practitioners have to help families become unconstrained; that is, become self-directed, instead of remaining too dependent on anything or anyone. Families (complex adaptive systems) need to be *free to act* so they can actively address human problems, and the human condition. They must not remain constrained by ideologies, or by perceived and/or real lack of opportunities, resources and such. It is *because* of their complexity that families *can* adapt, change, and become resilient.

### Integral Thinking

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

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

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

Integral also values non-equilibrium because it sees chaos as order emerging, just not predictably (Whitt & Schultze, 2009). Not surprisingly then, integral respects the power of emergence, and it values the healthy tensions that hold things together as they evolve and emerge (instead of just pushing things apart). Integral respects the creative, dynamic, and

evolving nature of human processes. It also emphasizes diversity as much as it does unity (calling for a sense of unity in differences) while integrated more narrowly strives for uniformity of similar things (O’Sullivan, 1999).

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

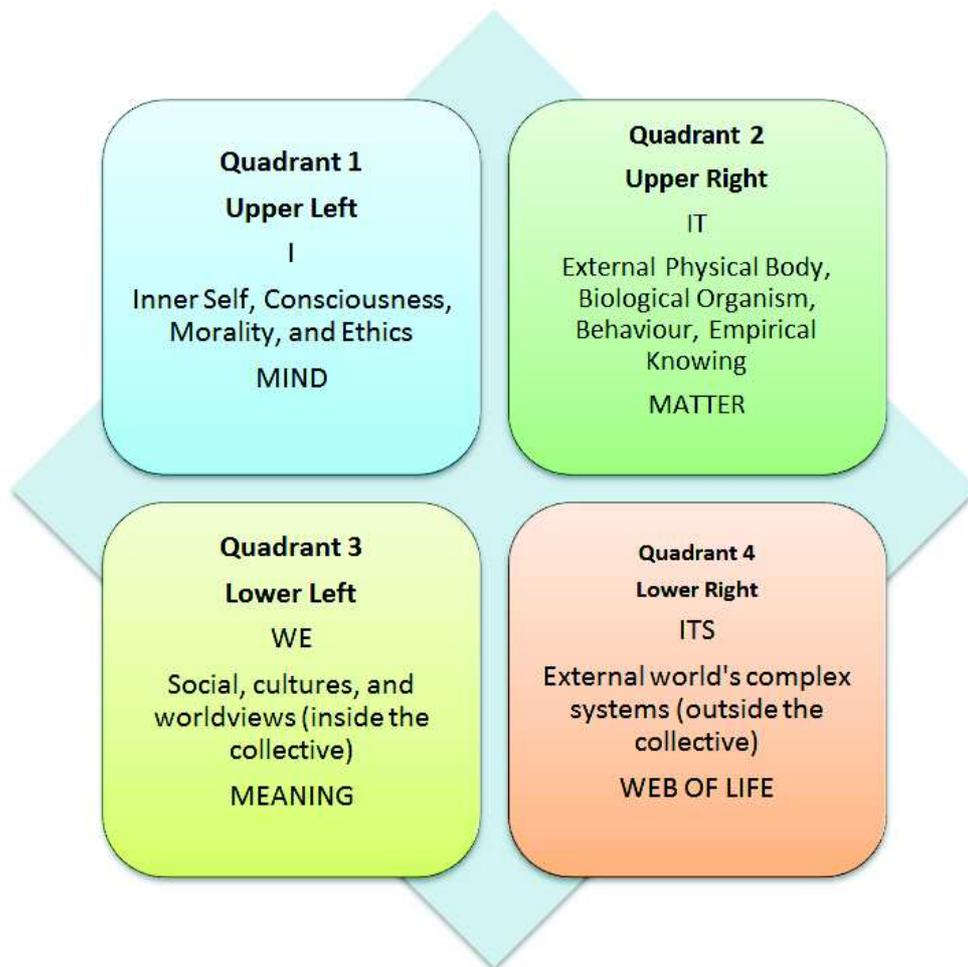


Figure 3 Ken Wilber’s Four Quadrants of Integral Thinking

Although this idea is echoed in the familiar best practice we call human ecology, integral differs in that it calls for an *integration* of these perspectives to address the complex

problems facing humanity (see McGregor, 2010b, 2014b, c). In contrast, the human ecosystem perspective provides insights into levels of environments but it *does not* explicitly challenge us to integrate insights gained from examining each level, as does integral. Integral also challenges leaders to find the patterns that connect these four world views. This approach is preferred to that of falling back on what is comfortable and standing in just one quadrant (one cell). Indeed, standing in one quadrant can result in an imbalance, a flat, one-dimensional approach to understanding the human condition. Human problems cannot be solved if they are approached from just one perspective, because leaving out even one view of the world yields an incomplete picture of reality. Too much is missed, thereby compromising people's ability to deal with the complexity of life (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2009; Wilber, 2007).

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

## The Human Condition

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

Continuing with United States' experience with the human condition concept, several examples illustrate the elusive presence of this idea in its philosophy and BOK. Most telling is the development of the mission statement of home economics for the former American Home Economics Association (AHEA, now AAFCS). Brown and Paolucci (1979), the commissioned authors, were inspired by Arendt's (1958) book, *The Human Condition* (to be discussed shortly). The 1993 Scottsdale conference (where the name was changed) acknowledged that

the profession needs to take leadership in enhancing the human condition (AAFCS, 1993). The 1995-2000 AAFCS Strategic Plan identified, as a core value, “a healthy environment that positively affects the human condition” (Chadwick, 1999, p.6). The 1999 Summit on FCS in Higher Education (AAFCS attended this summit) recognised ‘improving the human condition’ as a core value of the profession (Summit Steering Committee, 1999). The current version of the AAFCS BOK places basic human needs at the core, with no mention of the human condition (see Nickols et al., 2009). However, Max-Neef (1991) argued that fundamental basic human needs are part of the condition of being human, meaning the human condition construct may be latently present in the AAFCS BOK.

**Hannah Arendt’s Approach to the Human Condition**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Labour Animal laborans	Work Homo faber	Action Zoon politikon
Realm of material things and the natural world	Artificial, fabricated world, realm of sustainable, more or less permanent, structures and institutions	Realm of human affairs and new realities via web of relationships sustained through interactions (speech and action)
Behaviours to meet material needs and sustain physical life (food, shelter, water, biological processes)	Fabricate and build stable and enabling institutions, laws and artefacts that serve as preconditions for creating public life	Common space where people encounter a community, a space where people’s actions can be witnessed, assigned meaning, and be remembered
Life Productivity Consumption Abundance	Permanence Stability Durability Sustainability	Freedom to act (agency) Disclosure of identities Plurality and unity Solidarity (togetherness)

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

**Similarities between Arendt’s Approach and Home Economics Best Practice**

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

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

**Table 2 Latent Evidence of Arendt’s (1958) Human Condition Concept in Two Home Economics Best Practices**

Three Human Activities (Conditions of Human Existence) (Arendt, 1958)	Three Systems of Action Best Practice (Brown & Paolucci, 1979)	Human Ecology, Levels of Environments Best Practice (Bubolz, 1990; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993)
<p>Labour—freedom to make choices within the private household, between alternatives, to ensure efficient use of scarce resources, while striving for an abundant lifestyle; labour constitutes those repetitive, never-ending activities that sustain life; these biological processes ensure Life itself and individual survival as well as survival of the human species</p> <p>Nature as required to ensure the life-processes of the human species; run the risk of abusing nature if engaged in unsustainable production and consumption</p>	<p>Technical Action</p> <p>Meet basic needs</p> <p>Care giving needs</p> <p>Home/household maintenance</p> <p>Extract (and steward) resources from natural environments</p>	<p>Human Group comprising autonomous individuals who are mutually dependent upon each other, usually within a family unit, which shares goals, resources and a commitment to each other over time; note that household is different, referring to those living in the same dwelling space</p> <p>Natural Physical-Biological Environment (e.g., water, energy, climate conditions, seasonal change, land, animals, plants)</p>
<p>Work</p> <p>What we do beyond what is needed to survive; an enabling environment (social institutions, machines, technologies, laws, policies, artefacts) governed by institutionalised power, which creates a bridge between private and public, and creates a world fit to live in (now and in the future); work creates the collective human world</p>	<p>Interpretative Action</p> <p>By way of stronger dynamics and understandings within families, a bridge is created to critical action</p>	<p>Human Built Environment comprising artefacts and infrastructure (i.e., housing, clothing, furnishings, tools, roads, bridges, buildings), consumer products and services, manufacturing systems, and other material possessions</p> <p>Socio-cultural Environment comprising social and economic institutions (e.g., markets, financial institutions, health care, education, justice system, local government)</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>What we do beyond labour and work that gives meaning to our lives; public sphere, the realm of human affairs (especially political), which is a common conversation space for the exchange of meaningful words and deeds; shaped by plurality, identity, and solidarity, leading to a shared enterprise</p>	<p>Critical, Emancipatory, Empowerment Action (social change and agency)</p> <p>Interpretative Action communication, language, meaning, identity, values clarification, connections</p>	<p>Socio-cultural Environment—(a) the presence of other humans and (b) social and cultural elements such as patterns, values, meanings, and language</p>

### Conclusion

This paper made a case for augmenting three current home economics best practices with three niche, vanguard next practices: (a) (eco) systems thinking with complexity thinking, and with Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS); (b) integrated with integral; and, (c) well-being and quality of life with the human condition via the three systems of action philosophy, and human ecosystem theory. These next practices are indeed beacons and inspirations for our future. Beacons serve to communicate an important message to everyone within a certain proximity (like a lighthouse or a signal fire on top of a mountain). These next practices speak

loudly to their potential to sharply and forever transform home economics practice. They serve to inspire, which means to breathe new air into something, in this case our practice as we move forward into the 21st century. These next practices fill us with the urge to do more for families, and do it differently.

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

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

## Acknowledgement

An earlier version of this paper was presented in PowerPoint form at the 2012 AAFCS Conference Super Seminar: Using Cutting Edge Leadership Approaches to Transform FCS Practice. Also, I am deeply grateful for the insightful comments from the peer reviewers, some of which have made their way into the paper.

## Biography

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

## References

- American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences. (1993). *A conceptual framework: Scottsdale, Arizona—October 21-24, 1993*. Retrieved from Kappa Omicron Nu website: <http://www.kon.org/scottsdale.html>
- Appelo, J. (2010). *Complexity thinking*. PowerPoint retrieved from Slideshare.net website: <http://www.slideshare.net/jurgenappelo/agile-management-complexity-thinking>
- Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Brown, M. M. (1993). *Philosophical studies of home economics in the United States*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University
- Brown, M., & Paolucci, B. (1979). *Home economics: A definition* [mimeographed]. Alexandria, VA: AAFCS.
- Bubolz, M. M. (1990, April). The family ecosystem: Macro and micro interdependence. *Paper presented at the Conference of the Society for Human Ecology*. East Lansing, Michigan.
- Bubolz, M., & Sontag, S. (1993). Human ecology theory. In P. Boss, W. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. Schumm, & S. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 419-448). New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Chadwick, A. (1999). The family of man. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*, 91(5), 6-8.
- Daniels, C. E. J. (1980). The organizational structure of home economics: A consideration of terminology. *Journal of Consumer Studies and Home Economics*, 4(4), 323-339.
- Davis, B., & Sumara, D. (2008). Complexity as a theory of education. *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry*, 5(2). Retrieved from <http://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/tci/article/viewFile/75/278>
- Esbjörn-Hagens, S. (2009, March). An overview of integral theory. *Integral Institute Resource Paper No. 1*. Retrieved from <http://integrallife.com/integral-post/overview-integral-theory>
- Hannon, V. (2007). *'Next practice' in education*. London, England: Innovation Unit. Retrieved from <http://www.innovationunit.org/sites/default/files/Next%20Practice%20in%20Education.pdf>
- Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action* (T. McCarthy, Trans). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Harper, D. (2014). *Online etymology dictionary*. Lancaster, PA: Self-published. Retrieved from <http://www.etymonline.com/>
- Heylighen, F. (2008). Complexity and self-organization. In M. Bates & M. N. Maack (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Sciences*. London, England: Taylor & Francis. Retrieved from <http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/Papers/ELIS-complexity.pdf>

- Holland, J. (1999). *Emergence*. Reading, MA: Perseus Books.
- Max-Neef, M. A. (1991). *Human scale development*. New York, NY: The Apex Press. Retrieved from [http://www.daghammarskjold.se/wp-content/uploads/1989/05/89\\_1.pdf](http://www.daghammarskjold.se/wp-content/uploads/1989/05/89_1.pdf)
- McGregor, S. L.T. (2007). Intellectual showcasing: Articulating the thinking behind our practice. *Nurture: Research Journal for Human Civilization*, 1(1), 2-7. Retrieved from <http://chek.edu.pk/NURTURE2007.pdf>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2009). International conceptualizations of a 21st century vision of the profession. *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*, 18(1), <http://www.kon.org/archives/forum/18-1/mcgregor.html>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2010a). Historical notions of transdisciplinarity in home economics. *KON FORUM*, 16(2). Retrieved from <http://www.kon.org/archives/forum/16-2/mcgregor.html>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2010b). Integral leadership and practice: Beyond holistic integration. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences* 102(1), 49-57.
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2010c). *Locating the human condition concept within home economics* [McGregor Monograph Series 201002]. Seabright, NS: McGregor Consulting Group. Retrieved from <http://www.consultmcgregor.com/documents/publications/human-condition-monograph-2010.pdf>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2011a). Knowledge generation in home economics using transdisciplinary methodology. *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*, 16(2). Retrieved from <http://www.kon.org/archives/forum/16-2/mcgregor2.html>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2011b). The Wilberian integral approach. *Kappa Omicron Nu Human Sciences Working Paper Series*, [http://www.kon.org/hswp/http://www.kon.org/hswp/archive/mcgregor\\_2.htm](http://www.kon.org/hswp/http://www.kon.org/hswp/archive/mcgregor_2.htm)
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2011c). Transdisciplinary methodology in home economics. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 4(2), 104-122.
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2012a). Next practice innovations in FCS. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*, 104(1), 46-50.
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2012b). The role of philosophy in home economics. *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*, 19(1), <http://www.kon.org/archives/forum/19-1/mcgregor2.html>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2014a). Marjorie Brown's philosophical legacy: Contemporary relevance. *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*, 19(1), <http://www.kon.org/archives/forum/19-1/mcgregor3.html>
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2014b). Reflections: Making fruit salad of the profession: A rejoinder. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*, 106(4), 55-56.
- McGregor, S. L. T. (2014c). The promise of integral-informed FCS practice. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*, 106(1), 8-14.

- Molz, M., & Gidley, J. (2008). A transversal dialogue on integral education and planetary consciousness. *Integral Review*, 4(1), 47-70.
- Nickols, S., Ralston, P., Anderson, C., Browne, L., Schroeder, G., Thomas, S., & Wild, P. (2009). The family and consumer sciences body of knowledge and the cultural kaleidoscope. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 37(3), 266-283.
- O'Sullivan, E. (1999). *Transformative learning*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Pendergast, D., McGregor, S. L. T., & Turkki, K. (2012). *Creating home economics futures*. Brisbane, Australia: Australia Academic Press.
- Sekiguchi, F. (Ed.). (2004). *A philosophy of home economics*. Fukushima, Japan: Koriyama Women's University Press.
- Simon, J. L. (Ed.). (1995). *The state of humanity*. Boston, MA: Blackwell.
- Summit Steering Committee. (1999, February 3-6). *FCS summit open space session notes*. East Lansing, MI: Kappa Omicron Nu. Retrieved from <http://www.kon.org/summit/notes.html>
- Vanguard. (2014). In *The Free Dictionary*. Huntington Valley, PA: Farlex. Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/vanguard>
- Wals, A. (2010). Message in a bottle: Learning our way out of unsustainability. *Inaugural lecture presented as UNESCO ESD Chair at Wageningen University*. Wageningen, the Netherlands. Retrieved from <http://groundswellinternational.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/learning-our-way-out-of-unsustainability.pdf>
- Wheatley, M. (1994). *Leadership and the new science*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler
- Whitt, R., & Schultze, S. (2009). The new 'emergence economics' of innovation and growth. *Journal on Telecommunications and High Technology Law*, 7(2), 217-316.
- Wilber, K. (1995). *Sex, ecology and spirituality*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- Wilber, K. (2001). *The theory of everything*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- Wilber, K. (2007). *The integral vision: A very short introduction*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

## Invisiblensness of traditional hand block printing in historical Mewar's capital: Ayad

Dolly Mogra

---

Sardar Krushi Nagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, Banaskantha, Gujarat

### Abstract

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

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

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

### Introduction

There are several modes of printing that can be seen in Rajasthan; some of them are handblock printing, printing 'dabu' (resist printing) and 'chhint' (sprinkling of colour) printing. However, the more famous among them is the hand block printing and it has become the generic word for all types of traditional printing styles. According to the kind of printing, the printer artisans, called "chhipas" (both Hindus and Muslims) were classified as 'rangrez' (ordinary colour dyer who dye in colours) and 'nilgar' (Indigo dyers who dye in indigo). The type of fabric printed included 'chaddar' (bed-sheets), 'safas' (head gear), 'pagris' (turbans) and 'ghaghras' (skirts) (UNIDO, 1997). The process involved is an art developed with experience. Some of the new substances which were being put to use for the purpose include madder, kesula flower, and bark of the babool tree, ratan jot, blue vitriol, heerakashish, red

vitriol and alum. According to Ganguly (2012) hand block printing is said to be over 2000 years old, and was first developed in China, the earliest known example is the Diamond Sutra from 868 AD, currently in the British museum located in the Bloomsbury area of London dedicated to human history and culture. Hand block printing is not only a traditional form of putting motifs and colour on cotton, but is also an eco-friendly form of printing on textiles. Yadav (2010) reported that chemical and artificial colours have replaced the traditional natural dyes used in block printing. Ishrath (2009) in study on “Revival of Traditional and Eco-Friendly Hand Block Printing in Bagru, Rajasthan” mentioned that in spite of poor living and working conditions, the expert craftsmen of Bagru have kept the three-centuries-old tradition of block printing alive in India. Since ancient and exotic art forms have taken a back seat due to western influence and globalisation, many Chhippas have given up the art of hand block printing as people have adopted modern and synthetic textiles. Yet, there are a handful of craftsmen who swear by the beauty of the art form and equate their work to worship. Arch Academy of Design reported in project on Block Print in Rajasthan that due to the persistent efforts, under Geographical Indication of Goods Registration and Protection Act.1999, Sangneri Hand Block Textiles and Furnishings have been recognised as a unique identity in manufacturing. However, Ayad has a different picture, its glorious past of block printing is invisible due to direct and indirect reasons. Analysers studied challenging factors and suggested measures were discussed.

## **Objectives**

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

## **Methodology**

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

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

## Results

### Production Process

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

### *Fabric Selection*

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

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

### *Pre Treatment: Long Processing Cycle*

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

### *Colour preparation*

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

### *Developed Products*

The principal items printed were Dari (Floor spread), Chaddar (bed cover), odhna (female unstitched upper garment), saafa (head gear), ghaghra (skirts) and printed yardages (running cloth material).

### Ayad and its traditional hand block printing-

#### *Ayad: A Pre-Historic Era of Chhipa*

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

#### *History of Traditional Hand Block Printing*

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

### Demographic Information:

Table 1 Age Distribution

Gender	20-30 years	30-40 years	40-50 years	Above 50 years
Male	7 (17.5)	8 (20)	11 (27.5)	14 (35)
Female	6 (15)	9 (22.5)	10 (25)	15 (37.5)

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

Table 2 Educational Profile

Gender	Illiterate	Literate	Graduate	Post-graduate	Professional training
Male	6 (15)	23 (57.5)	10 (25)	0	1 (2.5)
Female	8 (20)	29 (72.5)	3 (7.5)	0	0

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

Table 3 Family Income

Gender	Up to 10,000 Rupee	10,000–20,000 Rupee	20,000 Rupee & above
Male	29 (72.5)	9 (22.5)	2 (5)
Female	31 (77.5)	8 (20)	1 (2.5)

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

Table 4 Type of Family

Gender	Joint family	Nuclear family
Male	31 (77.5)	9 (22.5)
Female	30 (75)	10 (25)

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

Table 5 Inspirations behind Adopting THBPAP

Gender	Self interest	Family occupation	Other aspects
Male	11 (27.5)	18 (45)	11 (27.5)
Female	14 (35)	19 (47.5)	7 (17.5)

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

### Mode of Learning

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

Table 6 Years of Migration from THBPAP

Gender	Last 20 years	Last 10 years	Last 5 years
Male	24 (60)	12 (30)	4 (10)
Female	19 (47.5)	11 (27.5)	10 (25)

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

Table 7 Present profession

Gender	Printing	Business	Government Job	Private Job	Combined sources + Hand Block printing
Male	1(2.5)	15(37.5)	4(10)	12(30)	8 (20)
Female	1(2.5)	19(47.5)	6(15)	9(22.5)	5(12.5)

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

## Identified Challenging Factors

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

### (i) Personal, Social, Cultural Factors

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

Table 8 Personal, social, cultural factors

Identified Reasons	Highly agree	Agree	Disagree
Ergonomic problems	18 (45)	12 (30)	10 (25)
Indecisiveness regarding profession	27 (67.5)	13 (32.5)	0
Rapid changes in Fashion & modernity	27 (67.5)	13 (32.5)	0
Short-sightedness, unsecured future and irregular income	40 (100)	0	0

*Ergonomic problems*

Respondents reported that due to hard work, improper resources and bad working conditions; many problems such as back ache, fatigue, poor eye sightedness have started but due to poor economic conditions they were unable to afford medical facilities. Therefore, in hard circumstances they stopped printing work. Table no.8 reveals that 45% respondents were highly agreed, 30% were agreed whereas 25% disagreed with the reason mentioned and discussed with them.

*Indecisiveness regarding profession*

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

*Rapid Fashion changes & Modernity*

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

*Short-sightedness and unsecured future and income*

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

**(ii) Technology and knowledge**

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

Table 9 Technology and knowledge

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

#### *Availability of Screen printed fabric*

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

#### *Lack of professional degree and knowledge*

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

#### *Unawareness of latest technology & new product innovation*

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

#### *Young and Educated next generation*

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

#### **(iii) Marketing and Managerial**

Lack of strategic and goal oriented planning hinders effective communication and research in the field and directly cut the selling capacity of printing artisans. skilled labour, improper designing and market research, organisational, communication, strategy, competition, and

knowledge of market were major challenges reported by artisans. Some reasons are discussed in Table 10.

Table 10 Marketing and Managerial

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

#### *Contract labour*

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

#### *Decreased market demand*

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

#### *Hiking prices of raw material*

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

#### *Less Profit*

Many reasons were associated with the fact that mediators were earning more money whereas artisans were concentrating on their art work. Mediators were taking profit by their marketing strategies but in extended years poor artisans have lost faith and they started themselves to engage in other activities. It was clear that 92.5% respondents were highly associated with the reason mentioned related to less profit against hard work.

*Poor marketing skills*

Some artisans were still extremely talented but they did not have the ability to demand higher level of payment against their fine and intricate work. Lack of technical and managerial skills to operate their ancestral profession successfully indirectly slows down profit. Lack of clear understanding about the market prospects in domestic and export market pushed artisans from their ancestral profession.

**(iv) Logistical and Economical**

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

Table 11 Logistical and Economical

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

*High Competition*

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

*Lower socio-economic status*

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

*Mass production downgrades demand of traditional hand block printed fabric*

The traditional printing has not been able to cope with the pressures of the demand among middle income group consumers. These pressures led to the emergence of growth in screen printing industry which was able to handle large volumes in a short period of time. It has been clear from Table 11 that 77.5% respondents were highly agreed whereas 22.5% were agreed on the issue of mass production.

*Man power requirement and time consuming profession*

The conventional hand block printing process was much more painstaking due to the pre-requirements of fabric preparation that involved washing, kneading, sun-drying, bleaching, dyeing and printing. Further, the eco-friendly natural vegetable dyes were also prepared at home, and required six to ten weeks for the entire process. The whole process is highly time consuming and laborious and no income is still in hand; younger to elder group of respondents were highly agreed with this responsible aspect.

*Poor infrastructure*

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

*Unavailability of raw material*

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

**(v) Government policies**

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

Table 12 Government policies

Identified Reasons	Highly agree	Agree	Disagree
Absence of reliable Government Policies	24 (60)	(40)	0
Lack of Quality assurance mechanism	22 (55)	18 (45)	0

*Absence of reliable Government Policies*

Unawareness about supporting agencies, absence of reliable government policies and agencies and their untimely utilisation pushed back artisans' socio-economic profile. It has been found during research that no labour union or labour welfare organisation was formed during that time, whole production and marketing activity was governed in an unorganised manner. Religious, social and political leaders had not taken interest in promoting traditional craft and welfare of traditional artisans. The level of awareness about the existing schemes of social security was low among families engaged in block printing. Some families have registered, but they did not continue the policy and defaulted on payment of premiums in the following

years. So benefits of policy were not acquired in their crucial times. From Table 12 it has been observed 60% were highly agreed and no one was found to disagree with the reason.

#### *Lack of Quality assurance mechanism*

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

#### **(vi) Environmental Factors**

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

Table 13 Environmental Factors

Identified Reasons	Highly agree	Agree	Disagree
Pollution in river	14 (35)	26 (65)	0
Weather dependency	40 (100)	0	0

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

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

#### *Weather dependency*

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

Some small steps are pointed out to uplift artisans' profile like timely help, provision of social security, education, technical support and organised activities are helpful. After discussing with experts and respondents, the following significant suggestions are required to revive the past glorious situation.

- Small focus groups should be identified according to their common problems and requirements to get a solution in the right direction.
- Consumer surveys should be essential to understand the requirements, tastes, problems and preferences of consumers.
- Training Programme should be organised on marketing skills for young and enthusiastic artisans who are keen to market their own products. Training of a variety of products ranging from bags, fashion accessories, pouches, jewellery, belts, decorated stockings, shoes, ornamental jackets, and home décor items will be introduced timely.
- Financial assistance should be spread out by involving Banks, NGOs and other supporting agencies.
- Educational support to the artisans should be promoted and regular technical upgrading also provided.
- Easy availability of raw material and resources should be ensured for continuous production.
- Identification of some enlightened and dynamic leaders having zeal to work for improving ancestral art as perfect profession should be motivated.
- Instead of formation of one big society encourage the setting up of a few marketing co-operatives to achieve economies of scale in terms of marketing and raw material sourcing.
- Artisans' exposure to handicraft fairs and exhibitions should be promoted through government and supporting welfare agencies.
- They must be encouraged to run the common effluent treatment plants with the help of Government to save Ayad River and eligible for getting 'NOC' from pollution department.
- Simple improvements in the technology like drying of fabric through drying machines; printing by hand operated machines could be simultaneously promoted for generating interest in younger groups.
- The state government should consider the demand of infrastructure facilities and by providing space in industrial areas, so that they could register themselves as SSI units and be eligible to get access to the civic amenities and credit facilities.
- Hand block printing has good prospects in future also, therefore, it is a need to set up a mission to stimulate the old eco-friendly art and build up its market value with brand image.
- Export potential and market linkages are most required input for developing this profession.
- A training design centre with professional designers and CAD/CAM facility is required in the near future but initially collaboration with such centres fulfils life among dead profession according to market needs.

- Socio-economic security, accessibility to basic health services, education and boosting confidence are primary needs to revive the invisible profession of Chippa community.
- Clear understanding about the parameters responsible for the growth of eco-friendly traditional hand block printing profession is required as in future consumer awareness and demand will surely increase for herbal and organic printed-dyed fabrics.

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

## Biography

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

## References

- Ganguly D. (2012). *A Brief Study on Block Printing Process in India*. Cited from <http://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/44/4344/a-brief-study-on-block-printing1.asp>
- Lodha S. (2010). *Prehistoric Era of Ayad*. Cited from <http://udaipurtimes.com/prehistoric-era-of-ayad/>
- UNIDO-CDP. 1997. *Diagnostic study; Artisan the textile hand printing cluster*, Jaipur, Rajasthan. Cited from [www.clustercollaboration.eu/...Artisan](http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/...Artisan)
- Yadav Shreya (2010). *Value addition of kota doria sarees through block printing and machine embroidery*. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis, MPUAT. Udaipur.

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

B.O. Ogunba & T. Otunla

*Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State, Nigeria*

---

### Abstract

*Malnutrition remains a public health problem in Nigeria and one of the causal factors has been identified as ignorance on the appropriate recommendation by the World Health Organisation. This study investigated the knowledge of mothers on malnutrition and child care. Two hundred mothers in the hospital were selected randomly for the study. Structured interview schedule was used to assess perception of mothers on the cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor in children, maternal knowledge on malnutrition and child care. Anthropometric measurements were taken which were converted to Z-score indices to assess nutritional status of children. Results revealed that the mean age of mothers and children was  $31.4 \pm 5.3$  and  $21.4 \pm 17.6$  respectively. Mean number of children under five was  $1.43 \pm 0.5$ . The major perceived cause of marasmus and kwashiorkor identified by mothers were lack of nutrients, sickness, improper care and diseases. Maternal knowledge on malnutrition and care of children was average (55.0%) and 60.0% respectively. The prevalence of malnutrition was stunting (16.5%), underweight (5.5%) and wasting (6.5%). Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship with the knowledge of mothers on child care and number of children(0.164), age of mother(0.194), years of maternal education(0.344) and social economic status of mothers (0.201) at  $p < 0.01$ . The study concluded that knowledge of mothers on care of children and the cause of malnutrition is on the average and may be responsible for malnutrition in children. It is recommended that mothers should be aware of the appropriate care practices and causes of malnutrition in children.*

**Key words:** mothers, care, knowledge and malnutrition

### Introduction

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

Ethiopia and Nigeria are countries with very high rates of malnutrition (Adewara & Visser, 2011). Population-based studies have shown that the greatest risk of nutritional deficiency and growth retardation occurs in children between 3 and 15 months of age because of poor

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

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

## Methodology

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

A three point Likert scale was used to determine the participants' knowledge on malnutrition and child care. The 3 point scale included a score of 3 for *agree*, 2 for *I don't know* and 1 for *disagree* for positive statements and vice versa for negative statements. Computer software

SPSS was used to analyse for frequencies, means, cross tabulations, and correlation. Social economic status (SES) of mothers was determined by the number of time saving devices used in food preparation in the kitchen with a maximum score of 6 marks. The score of 3 was determined to be low and 6 was high.

## Result

### Characteristics of mother and child

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

Table 1 Characteristics of mother and child

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

### Perception of causes of malnutrition in children

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

Table 2 Maternal perception of causes of malnutrition in children

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

### Maternal knowledge on signs and causes of malnutrition

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

Table 3 Maternal knowledge on signs and causes of malnutrition

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

\* Score on malnutrition= Mean 26.9±2.4

### Maternal knowledge on child care

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

Table 4 Maternal knowledge on child care

S/N	Child care practices	Agree	I don't Know	Disagree
1	Exclusive breastfeeding is beneficial for both mothers and the child	187(93.5)	4(2.0)	9(4.5)
2	Mothers can add water to breast milk from birth	48(24.0)	2(1.0)	150(75.0)
3	Formula milk should be added to breastfeeding at 3months	35(17.5)	6(3.0)	159(79.5)
4	Complementary foods can be fed in feeding bottles	103(51.5)	7(4.3)	90(45.0)
5	Growth monitoring stops after 9 months	6(3.0)	15(7.5)	179(89.5)
6	It is necessary to take the Road To Health Card to the maternity always	143(71.5)	37(18.5)	20(10.0)
7	Immunisation is a death sentence to a child	4(2.0)	2(1.0)	194(97.0)
8	A child should receive polio, hepatitis B and tuberculosis vaccines immediately after birth	153(76.5)	9(4.5)	38(19.0)
9	A solution of sugar and salt can be used at home to reduce frequent stooling of children	114(57.0)	35(17.5)	51(25.5)
10	Complementary foods can be fed in plates	167(83.5)	5(2.5)	28(14.0)
11	A child should be breastfed for two years	90(45.0)	3(1.5)	107(53.5)
12	Complementary feeding should start at 6 months	172(86.0)	6(3.0)	22(11.0)

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

### Nutritional Status of children

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

Table 5 Prevalence of malnutrition

Malnutrition	Boys	Girls	All
WHZ(wasting)	7.0% (1.6-12.4 C.I.)	6.1% (1.7-10.5 C.I.)	6.5% (3.1–9.9 C.I.)
WAZ(underweight)	7.0% (1.6-12.4 C.I.)	4.4% (0.6–8.1 C.I.)	5.5% (2.3–8.7 C.I.)
HAZ(stunting)	23.3 % ( 14.3-32.2 C.I.)	11.4% (5.6-17.2 C.I.)	16.5 % ( 11.4-21.6 C.I.)

### Maternal characteristics and malnutrition

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

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

Malnutrition and maternal characteristics	Knowledge on malnutrition		Knowledge on child care	
	r	p	r	p
Weight for age Z score(WAZ)	-0.010	0.01	0.112	0.01
Weight for height Z score(WHZ)	-0.043	0.01	0.060	0.01
Height for age Z score(HAZ)	0.022	0.01	0.065	0.01
Number of children	0.040	0.01	0.164*	0.01
Age of mother	0.057	0.01	0.194*	0.01
Years of maternal education	0.091	0.01	0.344*	0.01
Social economic status(SES)	0.115	0.01	0.201*	0.01

\*significant

### Discussion

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

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

Saadeh, 2003). Improvement of exclusive breastfeeding practices, adequate and timely complementary feeding, along with continued breastfeeding for up to two years or beyond, could save annually the lives of 1.5 million children under five years of age (Jones, Steketee, Black, Bhutta, & Morris, 2003).

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

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

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

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

The problem of malnutrition has an impact on health, education, and the economy of the affected countries. The incidence of malnutrition rises sharply during the period from 6 to 23 months of age in most countries, and the deficits acquired at this age are difficult to compensate for later in childhood.

## Conclusion

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

## Biography

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

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

## References

- Adewara, S. O. & Visser, M. (2011). Use of anthropometric measures to analyze how sources of water and sanitation affect children's health in Nigeria. *Environment for Development Discussion Paper Series*. EFD DP 11-02.
- Asindi, A.A., Ibia, E. O., & Udo, J. J. (1990). Mortality pattern among Nigerian children in the 1980s. *J Trop Med Hyg* ; 94, 152-155.
- Burchi, F., Fanzo J., & Frison E. (2011). The role of food and nutrition system approaches in tackling hidden hunger. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 8 (2): 358-73
- Caulfield, L. E., De Onis, M., Blössner, M. & Black, R.E. (2004). Undernutrition as an underlying cause of child deaths associated with diarrhea, pneumonia, malaria and measles. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 80, 193 - 198.

- Christiaensen, L., & Alderman, H. (2001). Child Malnutrition in Ethiopia: Can Maternal Knowledge Augment The Role of Income? *Africa Region Working Paper Series No. 22* Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp22/wp22-1.pdf>
- Crookston, B. T., Dearden, K. A., Alder, S. C., Porucznik, C. A., Stanford, J. B., Merrill, R. M., Dickerson, T. T., & Penny, M. E. (2011). Impact of early and concurrent stunting on cognition. *Matern Child Nutr*; 7, 397-409.
- Das, N., Chattopadhyay, D., Chakraborty, S., & Dasgupta, A. (2013). Infant and Young Child Feeding Perceptions and Practices among Mothers in a Rural Area of West Bengal, *India Ann Med Health Sci Res*, 3(3), 370-375.
- Daelmans, B. & Saadeh, R. (2003). *Global initiatives to improve complementary feeding*. In Moreira, A.D. (Ed). SCN Newsletter: Meeting the challenge to improve complementary feeding. United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition, Lavenhem Press, UK.
- Golden, M. H. N. & Golden, B. E. (2000). *Severe Malnutrition in Human Nutrition and Dietetics*. 10th ed. United Kingdom: Churchill Livingstone
- Jones, G., Steketee, R., W., Black, R. E., Bhutta, Z. A., & Morris, S. S. (2003). How many child deaths can we prevent this year? *Lancet*. 362(9377), 65-71.
- Kalita, A. (2006). *Maternal behaviour change for child health and nutrition* Social Initiatives Group ICICI Bank, Mumbai.
- Kamau-Thuita, F., Omwega, A. M., & Muita, J. W. (2002). Child care practices and nutritional status of children aged 0-2 years in Thika, Kenya. *East Afr Med J*, 79, 524-529.
- Kar, B.R., Rao, S.L., & Chandramouli, B.A.(2008). Cognitive development in children with chronic protein energy malnutrition. *Behav Brain Funct*; 4, 31.
- Luc C. & Harold, A. (2004) Child Malnutrition in Ethiopia: Can Maternal Knowledge Augment the Role of Income? *Economic Development and Cultural Change*; 52, 2, Article DOI: 10.1086/380822
- Santosh, S., & Anju, M. (2009). Maternal Knowledge and Child Health *J Hum Ecol*, 25(1), 51-54
- Shrimpton, R., Victora, C. G., De Onis, M., Lima, R. C., Blossner, M. & Clugston, G. (2001). Worldwide timing of growth faltering: implications for nutritional interventions. *Pediatrics* 107, e75.
- Smith, L.C. & Haddad, L. (2000). *Explaining Child Malnutrition in Developing Countries: A Cross Country Analysis*. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Washington, D.C.
- Sokolovic, N., Selvam, S., Srinivasan, K., Thankachan, P., Kurpad, A. V. & Thomas, T.(2014). Catch-up growth does not associate with cognitive development in Indian school-age children *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 68, 14-18.
- Torún, B. (2006). Protein-Energy Malnutrition in, *Modern Nutrition in health and disease*. 10th ed. United States of America: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Wittenberg, 2004.

- Victora, C. G., Adair, L. F. C., Hallal, P. C., Martorell, R., Richter, L., Sachdev H. & Singh (2008). Maternal and child undernutrition: consequences for adult health and human capital *The Lancet*, 371(9609), 340–357, 26
- Watanabe, K., Flores, R., Fujiwara, J., & Tran, L. T. H. (2005). Early childhood development interventions and cognitive development of young children in rural Vietnam. *J Nutr*, 135, 1918-1925.
- Wittenberg, D. F. (2004). Nutritional disorders in, Nutritional and metabolic disorders in, *Pediatrics and Child Health*. South Africa: Oxford
- World Health Organization (2004). *Child growth standards: length/height-for-age, weight-for-age, weight-for-length, weight-for-height and body mass index-for-age: methods and development*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- World Health Organization (2009) *Child growth standards: growth velocity based on weight, length and head circumference: methods and development*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- World Health Organization (2003) *Guiding principles for complementary feeding of the breastfed child*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- World Food Programme. (200). *Food and Nutrition Handbook*. Rome: World Food Programme.
- Yamano, T., Alderman, T., & Christiaensen, L. (2003) *Child Growth, Shocks, and Food Aid in Rural Ethiopia* World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3128, August 2003 Retrieved from <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813-9450-3128>

Non-refereed

## Private household production

Wolfgang Chr. Fischer

---

### Introduction

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

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

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

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

development of emancipation of women, and they strongly demanded that women be integrated into the external sector.

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

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

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

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

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

Economic thought of the Antique and its predominant subject of investigation of the private household and private household production was taken over by the Roman agricultural science but with a much stronger emphasis on private household production including the agricultural estate. The Latin term '*familia*' means in its real sense not only a unity of

relatives and servants in the form of a larger family but also a unified society living together under one roof.

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

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

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

One of their solutions to this misery was the establishment of 'closed' societies within a restricted area or even in a compound, where private household production had been more or less centralised to create a society, which was able to work and live without the shackles of a bourgeois household in a capitalistic system. Some examples were the formation of an *Owenite* commune called New Lanark - roughly 2,500 people lived at New Lanark, many from the poorhouses of Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland - and New Harmony in Indiana in the United States, by Robert Owen, a Welsh businessman with social intentions to help his employees.

Charles Fourier was another ‘utopian’ socialist, who rejected the industrial revolution. He invented the concept of *phalanstère*, units of people based on a theory of passions and of their combination. Several colonies based on Fourier’s ideas were founded in the United States by Albert Brisbane and Horace Greeley. A *phalanstère* was based on the idea of a phalanx; this self-contained community ideally consisted of 1500-1600 people working together for mutual benefit. A few colonies were founded in the United States like La Reunion (Dallas), Brook Farm and North American Phalanx.



Figure 1 Perspective view of the urban area of Charles Fourier's Phalanstère

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

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

In particular to release women from nearly all their engagements in private household production and their complete integration into the non-private household sectors, combined with the emancipation of women, with the claim of the transformation of private household production into forms of public organised satisfaction of private needs, has to be seen as one of the fundamental goals of socialism. Friedrich Engels declares private household production as a part of the bourgeois society and their economic order, and he claimed the abolishment of private household production would gain the economic benefits of the division of labour and importantly to realise the socialistic way of life.

Contrary to the enthusiasm of the Socialists for the benefits of the industrialisation including the socialisation of the national economy and furthermore of their vision towards a progressive emancipation of women, the representatives of the bourgeois and middle class society, for instance Albert Schäffle only permit the transformation of parts of private household production into centralised household production for people living in abnormal conditions, in times of war or in times of economic downturn. Therefore their plan was basically limited to public soup kitchens and nursing homes. An example of the establishment of public soup kitchens is the situation during WWI when, in the so called ‘turnip winter’ of 1917, approximately a quarter of the citizens in Hamburg had been provided with food in public soup kitchens. Similar soup kitchens were established in the Great Depression 1928-1932.

### **Implementation of the Private Household and Private Household Production within Economics**

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

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

On the other hand the more historical and juridical orientated economics, the so-called ‘institutionalism’ or the *German historical school* was regarded as a minor discipline of economics. The economic process within private households has no more any place within economics because any economic activity has its final end at the ‘door’ of private households. The term ‘household management’ became at this stage exclusively the meaning of a rational allocation of household goods and services and after the purchasing of consumptive goods and services there is only the process of pure consumption and nothing more. The private households have not any more productive functions and activities; they have been transformed into an economic institution, which has been stripped of its various internal

activities and been degraded to a pure unit of consumption. This scientific view about the household production continued into the 20th century and a minority of economists like Erich Egner and Fritz W. Meyer apposed this limited notion of the private household and its productive activities as unrealistic.

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

### **Private Household Production and Division of Labour**

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

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

- the amount of costs for such a production either in the private household or in the private companies by considering the possibility to rationalise these productions;
- the technical production possibilities within the private household;
- the situation in the labour force, in particular for female part-time employment;
- the private household income;
- the stage of the possibility to produce goods and services for private households within the market;
- the employment opportunities of the members of the private household;
- the location of the private household, in particular in consideration of the degree of the self-sufficiency with natural resources like domestic animals, fruit and vegetables;
- the extent of the individuality of the goods and services required for the private consumption;
- the activity of the government's policies with regard to the private household production.

The mechanisation of private household production appears as the household orientated production of goods and services for the private consumption with the support of a set of machines with technically improved efficiency. To which extent the transfer of some private household production functions into the market occurs depends on:

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

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

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

- minor possibility of centralisation by decentralising local settlement;

- neglecting more specialised individual demand for goods and services for private consumption in particular in the section of food preparation;
- possibility of wasting materials, energy, and maintenance of large machines through a reduced personal responsibility of employees in the centralised household;
- neglecting the possibility to enjoy private household production functions as a means of spending leisure time, for example cooking as a hobby;
- establishment of a large administration and control management;
- intense dependence of the individual on non-private household institutions;
- possibility of the destruction of the family as a preferred unit of the society.

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



Figure 2      Soup Kitchen Montreal 1931

A soup kitchen, a bread line, or a meal centre is a place where food is offered to the hungry for free or at a reasonably low price. Frequently located in lower-income neighbourhoods,

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

### **Self-sufficient Private Household Production**

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

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

Between 1914 and 1917, almost six million tons of food was lost at sea through the German U-boat campaign. The Board of Agriculture implemented a Food Production Department to help farmers with equipment, fertilisers, animal feed and workers, which led to the creation of the Women's Land Army (WLA). While country dwellers had space to grow food, most urban dwellers didn't, and allotments became increasingly popular. In 1914 there were up to 600,000 allotments in the UK, reaching a peak of 1.5 million by war's end. Home-grown produce could counteract food shortages during wartime, and a glut of legislation and changes in local government organisation helped raise the status of the humble allotment. City parks were transformed from flowerbeds into vegetable plots. Tomatoes grew in municipal glasshouses, cabbages, carrots and cauliflowers filled the beds and people could buy the produce at reasonable prices. George V's support was evident when he insisted the land around the Queen Victoria Memorial should be used to grow potatoes instead of pelargoniums; all the royal parks followed his lead.

But this has changed within a few decades substantially: today the workforce has become so called ‘flexible’ and more and more people looking for work are facing either unemployment or just some contracts to be on call. But where is the possibility of these people to produce something useful for their consumption as household production, and where is a way for planning a relatively secured future? Long leisure time with all the temptation to forget the reality with alcohol, drugs, and so on. and the search for money becomes the *ultima ratio*, not the worries about the weather for their plants and the welfare of their domestic animals around the house.



Figure 3 Today's 'garden'

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

1. Producers, not consumers, are sovereign. Through successful advertising and salesmanship, producers/sellers ‘manage’ the preferences of consumers. Thus, it is producers, not consumers, who ultimately determine the volume and composition of output.
2. Many of the wants being satisfied in our economy are non-urgent, even frivolous. This follows from the notion that many wants are contrived by sellers and are not original with consumers themselves.

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

When daily life was much more uncomplicated than in modern times, people sold and bought goods with a minimum of legal intervention. Consumer affairs were based on the principle of

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

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

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

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

- Planning of the sections of private household production
- Nutrition
- Internal transport
- Storage
- Shopping
- Household cleaning
- Clothing
- Gardening and domestic animal care
- Personal care of household members

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

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

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

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

## Conclusions

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

It is inherent for a capitalistic free market to reduce the number of people living in households, in particular the percentage of single person and two person households, and to find some ways to produce goods and services in a wider range with the intention to gain profits for the relevant companies. In this way, the private households were deprived of their

ability to produce essential goods and services by themselves, with no potential reassurance that in economic situations of retrogression or just 'mild' recession - notwithstanding the possibility to face a severe economic depression - with all the consequences in social and economic conditions for a meanwhile not existing society but a whole cluster of individualists. The knowledge about household production in various divisions, for example the divisions of nutrition and clothes, has vanished over the last century substantially in probably all Western Societies. Or in other words: who had been trained by his grandmother how to scale a fish or just take the feathers off a chicken? The list can be expanded.

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

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

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

*Inflation* is an added menace to private households depending on money supply. Inflation has an extensive notation within the History of Economic Thought. Once the inflation has reached a point of broader publicity, that is when the overwhelming majority discover the substantial increase of the price level everywhere in the markets, then the private households are caught in a severe misery and have to curtail their expenditures very drastically, if they are able to do so. The majority of private households have lost the ability to countervail the inflation in the free market and in the public service. In particular this matter can be detrimental once a high inflation or even a hyperinflation has taken place and then the misery of inflation can be identified as the cause of destruction of many private households and their members.

Finally food security could be enhanced by a mini-agricultural subsidy scheme for private household production. This could be implemented by tax concessions and/or direct subsidies. Given the historical experiences a policy of moral suasion has little effect on people's decision: whereas in a free market society most people react on financial benefits to set in place the relevant activities. At present in many Western European countries there are certainly vacant and unused garden areas and small fields available to provide the necessary ground for vegetables and eventually even for domestic animal production. This scheme is not necessarily restricted to areas outside of small villages, which of course could provide the basics in a much easier way than in densely populated areas. Even in large cities there will be gardens and unused public land available, which then could be used to extend the concept of allotments. Overall this mini-agricultural subsidy scheme for private household production has the advantage in at least two major intentions: first it would provide a steady contribution of additional food to commercial food supply, in particular in times of economic downfall and restriction by the world market or in times of national crisis, and second it would create an alternative within the varieties of spending leisure time. Whether such a scheme would be seriously implemented and followed up this depends on the political will of governments and politicians. However one may have some doubts that this scheme could be regarded as a modern development rather than a step backwards into the early stages of the pre-industrial epoch. An important challenge in the future will be how private household production evolves within Western Societies with their dominant free market concepts, even with various market modifications and diminutive regulations?

## References

- Adolph, Robert (1919) *Einküchenwirtschaft als soziale Aufgabe*, Berlin, Germany.
- Bebel, August (1922) *Die Frau und der Sozialismus*, 50. Auflage, Stuttgart und Berlin, Germany.
- Bielfeld, Gretha (1930) Die Mechanisierung des Haushalts und ihre volkswirtschaftliche Bedeutung, in: Veröffentlichung des Instituts für Hauswirtschaftswissenschaft an der Akademie für soziale und pädagogische Frauenarbeit in *Berlin, Heft 6*, Langensalza, Germany.
- Brunner, Otto (1956) Hausväterliteratur, in: Handwörterbuch der Sozialwissenschaften, 5. Band, Göttingen, Germany.
- Brunner, Otto (1952) Die alteuropäische "Ökonomik", in: *Zeitschrift für National-ökonomie*, Bd. 13, Wien, Austria.
- Egner, Erich (1964) Die volkswirtschaftliche Funktion der Familienhaushalte, in: *Jahrbuch für Sozialwissenschaft*, Bd. 15, Göttingen, Germany.
- Egner, Erich (1958) Eigenart und Aufgabe hauswirtschaftlicher Forschung, in: *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 114. Band, Tübingen, Germany.
- Egner, Erich (1953) Die Rolle des Haushalts in der Geistesgeschichte, in: *Hauswirtschaft und Wissenschaft*, Jg. 1, Heft 1, Hamburg, Germany.

- Fischer, Wolfgang Chr. (2013) *Private Households and Money Supply*, Eul Verlag, Köln, Germany.
- Fischer, Wolfgang Chr. (1990) Zentralisierung der Hauswirtschaft—eine Alternative zur traditionellen Aufgabenverteilung im privaten Haushalt? In: *Zeitschrift Erwägen Wissen Ethik (EWE) vormals: Ethik und Sozialwissenschaften (EuS) zu Genderthemen*, EuS-Heft 2, Jg. 1, Paderborn, Germany.
- Fischer, Wolfgang Chr. (1982) *Entwicklung der privaten Hauswirtschaft*, Burg-bücherei, Baltmannsweiler, Germany.
- Fourastié, Jean (1962) *Machinisme et Bien-Être; Niveau de vie et genre de vie en France de 1700 à nos jours*, Paris, France.
- Fürth, Henriette (1919) Gemeinwirtschaftliche Förderung der Haushaltung und der Lebenskraft, in: *Schriften der Gesellschaft für Soziale Reform*, Heft 69, Jena, Germany.
- Giedion, Siegfried (1948) *Mechanization takes command; a contribution to anonymous history*, New York, USA.
- Johansen, Anders & Sornette, Didier (2001) *2050: The End of the Growth Era?*, Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, University of California at Los Angeles, USA.
- Lancaster, Kelvin (1991) *Modern Consumer Theory*, Brookfield, USA.
- Lexis, Wilhelm (1907) Konsumtion, in: *Wörterbuch der Volkswirtschaft*, 2. Band, zweite, völlig umgearbeitete Auflage, Jena, Germany.
- Lütge, Friedrich (1966) *Deutsche Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Ein Überblick, dritte, wesentlich vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage*, Berlin-Heidelberg-New York, Germany-USA.
- Meyer, Fritz W. (1967) Die Haushaltung in der Nationalökonomie, in: *ORDO, Jahrbuch für die Ordnung von Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Bd. XVIII, Düsseldorf-München, Germany.
- Meyer, Fritz W. (1960) Was bedeutet „Regulation“ für die Teilzahlungsbanken, in: *Festschrift zum zehnjährigen Bestehen der Mittelrheinischen Kundenkredit-bank*, Dr. Horbach & Co., K. G., Neuwied, Germany.
- Ordinaire, Eduard (1835) Abriß der von Fourier vorgeschlagenen Einrichtung der lusterweckenden Gewerbsthätigkeit, in: *Archiv der politischen Ökonomie und Polizeiwissenschaft*, 2. Bd., Heidelberg, Germany.
- Plassmann, Christa (1969) Die Investitionsleistungen der privaten Haushalte in der BRD; in: *Die Finanzen des privaten Haushalts*; Festschrift für Walter Kaminsky; Frankfurt.
- Randall, Amanda (2014), 'The Great War on a plate', *Family Tree*, 30(10), 72-75, Great Britain.
- Reichenau, Charlotte von (1943) Die Hauswirtschaft als Produktion und die Wissenschaft, in: *Hauswirtschaftliche Jahrbücher*, 16. Jg., Heft 2, Stuttgart, Germany.

- Reinert, Erik S. (2013) Civilizing capitalism: “good” and “bad” greed from the enlightenment to Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), in: *Real-World Economics Review*, issue no. 63.
- Richter, Claire (1919) *Das Ökonomiat; Hauswirtschaftlicher Großbetrieb als Selbstzweck*; Berlin, Germany.
- Riehl, Wilhelm Heinrich (1861) Die Arbeiter, Eine Volksrede aus dem Jahre 1848, in: Die Eigentumslosen; Der deutsche Pauperismus und die Emanzipationskrise in: *Darstellungen und Deutungen der zeitgenössischen Literatur*. Hrsg. Carl Jantke und Dietrich Hilger, Freiburg und München, Germany.
- Schäffle, Albert (1896) *Bau und Leben des socialen Körpers*, 1. Bd., 2nd edition, 1st & 2nd volume, Tübingen, Germany.
- Seeberg, Stella (1967) Langlebige Haushaltsgüter und Haushaltsinvestitionen, in: *Aspekte des hauswirtschaftlichen Strukturwandels*, in: Beiträge zue Ökonomie von Haushalt und Verbrauch, Heft 3, Berlin.
- Strauß, Beatrice (1927) *Die Konsumtionswirtschaft; Ihre Parallelentwicklung mit der Frauenberufsfrage*; Dissertation Universiät Frankfurt, Germany.
- Terry, Chris, Jones, Ross & Braddock, Richard (1988) *Australian Microeconomic Policies*, 3rd edition, New York, Toronto, London.
- Tschammer-Osten, Berndt (1973) *Der private Haushalt in einzelwirtschaftlicher Sicht. Prolegomena zur einzelwirtschaftlichen Dogmengeschichte und Methodologie*, Berlin, Germany.

### Website

For more information please visit the International Journal of Home Economics website: <http://ijhe.weebly.com/index.html>

### Frequency of publication

The International Journal of Home Economics is published twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year to e-mail: [intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com](mailto:intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com)

### Focus

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

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

### Contributors

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

### Author's biography

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

*Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD is Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. Donna researches and writes about Home Economics philosophy, education and practice. Donna recently completed her 4-year term as Vice President of the Pacific Region and member of the IFHE Executive. She continues to serve the profession as Chairperson of the IFHE Think Tank Committee and Editor of the International Journal of Home Economics. She has served as National President of the Home Economics Institute of Australia, and President of the Queensland division.*

## Manuscripts

Manuscripts should be sent electronically to Professor Donna Pendergast, School of Education by e-mail at [d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au). Please send files as Microsoft Word documents (doc, docx) or in Rich Text Format (rtf). Paper length should not exceed 6000 words. Each document should be double-spaced, with generous margins.

A standard coversheet must be submitted with all manuscripts. It is available from the IFHE website and from here: <http://ijhe.weebly.com/index.html>.

Papers submitted without coversheets will be returned to authors. A separate first page should include the full title, a short title for use as a running head. The title should not exceed 10 words (50 characters), and should be followed by an abstract of 100-200 words and up to five keywords. Material which requires substantial editing will be returned to the author.

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

## Tables, figures and illustrations

Figures, diagrams and images must be cited in text and captions provided. Figures should be at a professional standard and **supplied as separate electronic files** (e.g., TIF, JPG, GIF). Tables must be cited in text and captions provided. **Include all tables, figures and illustrations in the correct location in the manuscript. All tables should be in text, not provided as an image.**

## References

References should follow the American Psychological Association system (APA Publications Manual, 6th Edition).

The details required for books are:

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

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

The details required for journals are:

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

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

### **Copyright**

Manuscripts submitted for publication must not have been previously submitted or published. Accepted papers become the permanent property of IJHE. By submitting a manuscript, the author(s) agree that copyright for their articles are automatically transferred to the IJHE, if and when articles are accepted for publication. The copyright gives IJHE the exclusive rights to reproduce and distribute the article.

### **Proofs**

Proofs will be sent electronically to the corresponding author for return within 72 hours. It is the author's responsibility to ensure the accuracy of these proofs. Correction other than printing errors should be kept to a bare minimum.

IJHE

# IJHE

ISSN 1999-561X

# International Journal of Home Economics

Volume 8 Issue 2 2015



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

**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
FOR HOME ECONOMICS**



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

**IJHE editor**

Donna Pendergast            Australia  
E-mail:                        [d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au)

**Book review editor**

Donna Pendergast            Australia  
E-mail:                        [d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au)

**Editorial administrator & graphic designer**

Joy Reynolds                 Australia  
E-mail:                        [j.reynolds@griffith.edu.au](mailto:j.reynolds@griffith.edu.au)  
[www.joyreynoldsdesign.com](http://www.joyreynoldsdesign.com)

**Website**

For more information please visit the International Journal of Home Economics website: <http://ijhe.weebly.com/index.html>

**Frequency of publication**

The International Journal of Home Economics is published twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year to e-mail: [intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com](mailto:intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com)



International Federation for Home Economics  
Kaiser Friedrich Strasse 13  
53113 BONN  
Germany  
Tel: 0049 (0) 228 9212590  
Fax: 0049 (0) 228 9212591  
E-mail: [office@ifhe.org](mailto:office@ifhe.org)  
Web: [www.ifhe.org](http://www.ifhe.org)  
ISSN 1999-561X

**IJHE Editor**

**Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD**

School of Education and Professional Studies  
Griffith University  
Gold Coast, Australia  
*Philosophy, research, education*

**Editorial Board Members**

**Dr Mona Sharaf Abdelgalil**

Department of Home Economics, Alexandria University  
Alexandria, Egypt  
*Food management; consumer studies; household activities and everyday life*

**Associate Professor Jette Benn**

Institute of Didactics, The Danish School of Education, Aarhus University  
Denmark  
*Home Economics education; Home Economics philosophy and history; consumer and nutrition education*

**Dr Vassiliki Costarelli**

Human Ecology Laboratory, Department of Home Economics and Ecology, Harokopio University  
Athens, Greece  
*Nutrition and cancer; nutrition in childhood and adolescence; disordered eating attitudes and behaviours; nutrition in pregnancy/ postpartum depression; nutrition and the athlete*

**Dr Jay Deagon**

Griffith Institute for Educational Research  
Griffith University  
Mt Gravatt, Australia  
*Home Economics research, education and policy, spiritual health and wellbeing, local and global citizenship, sustainable futures, social change*

**Professor Meei-Ruey Hsu**

Department of Tourism, Ming Chuan University  
Taiwan  
*Curriculum and instruction; gender education; hospitality education; teacher education*

**Associate Professor Amoroso Catherine Leslie**

The Fashion School, Kent State University,  
Ohio, United States of America  
*Historical and biographical research, apparel and textiles, entrepreneurial activity, consumer behaviour, arts and crafts (or handicrafts)*

**Professor Sue LT McGregor**

Faculty of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
*Consumer and global citizenship; consumer studies, policy and education; Home Economics leadership; Home Economics philosophy; transdisciplinary and integral inquiry*

**Kathryn McSweeney, PhD**

St. Angela's College

Lough Gill, Sligo, Ireland

*Educational assessment; empowerment and advocacy studies; social marketing; teaching strategies in textiles studies; textile and embroidery samplers*

**Associate Professor Seema Puri**

Department of Nutrition, Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi

India

*Aging; food security; infant and child nutrition; institutional management; nutrition*

**Dr Janet Reynolds**

Principal Education Officer, Teaching & Learning, Department of Education & Training

Queensland, Australia

**Professor Kaija Turkki**

Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, University of Helsinki

Finland

*Consumer citizenship; FCS in higher education; global education; Home Economics in higher education; Home Economics philosophy; household activities and everyday life*

**Dr Hena Yasmin**

Department of Home Economics, Faculty of Agriculture

Swaziland

*Child care and development; consumer education; education; HIV/AIDS; household technology; nutrition*

**Professor Taemyung Yoo**

Department of Home Economics Education, College of Education, Gyeongsang National

University

Korea

**Contents**

Editorial Volume 8 Issue 2 .....	1
<i>Donna Pendergast</i>	
Societal factors in elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.....	2
<i>Mildred O. Ekot</i>	
Home Economics as professional practice.....	19
<i>Kerry Renwick</i>	
Activity level as correlate of post-pregnancy anthropometric changes among women .....	36
<i>Patricia Mbah</i>	
Notes for contributors .....	50

Donna Pendergast

---

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

This is the 16<sup>th</sup> issue of the IJHE. The journal has now established a profile as a strong contributor to the profession of Home Economics globally. In 2016 we will have the added benefit of publishing some of the best refereed publications that have been submitted to the World Congress, to be held in Korea later this year. This means that 2016 and 2017 will be bumper issues of the Journal.

As the IJHE moves into its 10<sup>th</sup> year in 2017 we will be working on renewing and extending our editorial board membership. If you are suitably experienced and hold a doctoral degree please consider submitting an Expression of Interest when the formal call is made.

Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD  
Editor, IJHE

## Societal factors in elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Mildred O. Ekot

University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria

---

### Abstract

*This study investigated the societal and community factors in elder abuse in the context of family care giving in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria to provide empirical data on the problem in the area which hitherto had been based on speculations and unconfirmed media reports. The population consisted male and female elderly, aged 70 and older. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 5,600 elderly people. A structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data collected were analysed using basic descriptive statistics, in particular frequency, percentages and mean scores. Findings revealed that self-reported emotional/psychological abuse was the most common form of abuse experienced by the elderly in the study (56.5%), closely followed by financial/material abuse (52.3%) and neglect/abandonment (40.5%), followed by physical abuse (18.8%), while sexual abuse was the least experienced form of abuse (9.5%). The societal and community factors contributing to elder abuse in the study include: witchcraft accusation, absence of social security, false prophecies, delayed pensions, and eroding of the extended family and intergenerational support systems. From this study it is recommended that programmes be organised to raise the public awareness of the growing problem of elder abuse in order to reduce the high prevalence of abuse revealed in the study, prompt payment of gratuities and regular pensions to retirees, and the need for the establishment of old people's home.*

**Key words:** abuse, elderly, family, neglect, care giving, societal

### Introduction

One of the problems faced by elderly people globally is the problem of abuse and neglect. Increasing longevity and life expectancy has increased the number of elderly persons with chronic health conditions, thus causing greater demand for long-term care and greater burden on the part of the caregiver (Durrant & Christian, 2006). Although the majority of families provide their aging parents or relatives with good quality care, many others overburdened with care giving demands expose their elderly parents or relatives to a range of abusive behaviours, while still others abdicate their care giving responsibilities. Moreover, although the elder may be capable of caring for her own basic needs, the extra strain on finances or time can cause the caregiver to lash out under stress (Volz, 2010).

### Definition and problem of elder abuse

Elder abuse refers to all types of mistreatments and abusive behaviours toward an older adult or the infliction of harm on an older adult (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010; Wolf, 2000). It encompasses any act of commission or omission that results in harm or

endangering the health and welfare of an older adult (Sellas & Krouse, 2009). In Nigeria in general and Akwa Ibom State in particular, elder abuse include all poor treatment of the elderly by young people and family members, such as verbal abuse, name calling, locking up in a room, being treated like a child, and not supporting with money for feeding and general upkeep. It may include beatings, indecent touching, extortion of money, non-visiting, denying access to grandchildren, accusations of witchcraft (Ekot, 2012). Due to poverty and other social problems, some children do not provide filial support to elderly parents: others verbally abuse their parents for having failed to provide them with educational opportunities, may refuse to visit them, and sometimes do not allow them to know their grandchildren; many other children and family members who are sick or are unable to achieve comfortable living standards publicly accuse their parents as being witches and the ones responsible for their woes.

Providing care for the elderly in Nigeria as in other parts of the world is becoming very demanding for family members because of precarious economic conditions and the increased involvement of women in paid employment or in other income generating activities, such as farming, trading, and paid manual labour, to improve the economic base of their families. Since institutionalised care of the elderly is not common in Nigeria, the majority of the elderly live in their families or with family members as it is the traditional role of children to support their parents in old age. Many elderly live with their adult children, grandchildren and other relatives, while others reside in their own homes with paid caregivers, home help, or grandchildren. Sijuwade (2008) maintains that both in developing and developed countries, the elderly as well as their caregivers prefer that they be taken care within the family. Families overburdened with the task of care giving to the elderly may expose them to various kinds of abuse and sometimes abandonment without alternative arrangements for care, since institutionalised care is not commonly available. Walker (2002) confirms that in most industrial and pre-industrial societies, the family has been the main provider of care to their elderly relatives. Since the elderly typically live with family members, it is often assumed that they are very well cared for and not subjected to any form of abuse. But various studies reveal that family members perpetrate the majority of reported incidents of abuse of elderly individuals (Boldy, Webb, Horner, Davy & Kingley, 2002 as cited in Ekot, 2012; Cavanagh, 2003).

Sijuwade (2008) explains that to abuse, neglect and abandon the elderly are all types of poor quality care for the elderly. Due to physical impairments, many elderly require care or help in activities of daily living (ADL), but the demand of care giving may cause the caregivers at times to intentionally or unintentionally abdicate their responsibilities. Sijuwade explains that in the case of abuse, the caregiver actively harms the elderly; in the case of neglect, the caregiver is passive, insensitive, lacks empathy and ignores the care of the elderly, while abdicating the responsibilities of taking care of the elderly constitute abandonment. Thus, abuse of the elderly most often occur in the context of care; and because of the level of poverty and other social factors in Nigeria, many children and family members are unable to fulfil filial responsibilities to elderly parents and elderly relatives. For instance the study by Ekot (2012) revealed that 56.5% of the elderly resided in their own homes with paid home help or relatives, 9.8% resided in the homes of their daughters to receive care, 12.5% resided

in their son's home, and 10% resided in extended family compounds with family members, 4.7% resided in the houses of their relatives, while 6.5% lived alone.

Bonnie and Wallace (2003) maintain that failure by a caregiver to satisfy the basic needs of the elderly or failure to protect the elder from harm constitute abuse or mistreatment. This implies that a lack of care of the elderly or any decline in quality care of the elderly may constitute abuse.

### Forms of elder abuse

Elder abuse can take many forms, including physical, financial, psychological, sexual abuse and neglect (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2010). Other forms of abuse are violation of basic human rights and medication abuse; and in Nigeria abuse may include witchcraft accusations, and a lack of respect.

**Physical abuse:** Physical abuse is the use of physical force for causing discomfort, which may or may not result in body injury, physical pain, or impairment (Peri, Fanslow, Hand, & Parsons, 2008). The APA (2010) stated that when a caregiver or other person uses enough force to cause unnecessary pain or injury, even if the reason is to help the older persons, the behaviour can be regarded as abuse.

**Financial abuse and material abuse:** Financial abuse is the misuse of an older person's funds or property through fraud, trickery, theft or force, including misuse of money or property, convincing an older person to buy a product or give away money, stealing money or possessions, misusing bank or credit cards, misusing joint banking accounts, forging a signature on pension cheques or legal documents and misusing a power of attorney (Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network, 2007). In Nigeria, financial abuse may also include non-payment of pensions and gratuities to the elderly which cause harm. Material abuse may involve dispossession of land and other properties and stealing cooked food or food stuff.

**Emotional or psychological abuse:** Emotional or psychological abuse involves verbal assault (such as name calling), humiliation (being treated as a child), and intimidation (threats of isolation or placement in a nursing home) (Berk, 2001). In all cases, it diminishes the identity and self-worth of older people, and can provoke intense fear, anxiety or debilitating distress (Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network, 2007).

**Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse include inappropriate touching, photographing the person in suggestive poses, forcing the person to look at pornography, forcing sexual contact with a third party, or any unwanted sexual behaviour, such as rape, sodomy, or coerced nudity (APA, 2010). In Nigeria, sexual abuse may involve forcing a widow to engage in sexual acts in the guise of widow inheritance.

**Neglect:** Neglect is intentional or unintentional failure to fulfil care giving obligations, which results in lack of food, medication, or health services or in the elderly person being left alone or isolated (Berk, 2001). Sijuwade (2008) asserts that when caregiver is neglectful, it means there are lapses in the quality of care and in carrying out the responsibility, while abdicating the responsibilities of taking care of the elderly constitute abandonment.

**Violation of human rights and medication abuse:** Violation of basic human rights is the denial of an older person's fundamental right according to legislation, while medication abuse involves the misuse of an older person's medications and prescriptions such as withholding medication, overmedicating, sedation, and not complying with prescriptions refills (Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network, 2007). In many cases, some elderly people may suffer more than one type of abuse at the same time.

### Factors contributing to elder abuse

Several risk factors contribute to elder abuse. Based on the Applied Ecological Model, Peri et al. (2008) categorised risk factors; into individual risk factors, family level risk factors, community-level risk factors and society-level risk factors. Some of the changes that occur with aging may place an older person at a higher risk for abuse and neglect, especially the frail, *oldest-old*, the cognitively impaired, the most dependent and the isolated. Family factors that may contribute to abuse include caregiver stress, financial problems, and intergenerational family dynamics. Community and societal factors make up the macro systems in the Applied Ecological Model, referring to larger societal ideologies and cultural values that have an impact on elders and their families, thus contributing to elder abuse. For example, high cost of living, societal attitudes toward the elderly, undervaluing of older people in society as a whole, ideas about the intergenerational transfer of wealth, community facilities and housing policy (Schiamberg & Gans, 2000; Peri et al., 2008). Other community and societal risk factors include negative attitudes and incorrect assumptions about aging, cultural norms, and society's acceptance of violence culture. Moreover, the Modernisation Theory of elder abuse espouses that modernisation has changed family life thereby influencing exchange relationships between children and their parents increasing the risk for abuse (Durrant & Christian, 2006). Political Economy Theory refers to society's marginalisation of old people as a cause of elder abuse (Centre for Substance Abuse Prevention, 2010; Fulmer, Guadagno, Dyer, & O'Connolly, 2004).

### Empirical studies on elder abuse

Most of the studies on elder abuse generally are conducted in advanced countries, and selected African countries. For instance, Acierno, Hernandez-Tejada, Wendy-Muzzy & Kenneth-Steve (2009) in their National Elder Mistreatment Study in the United States revealed that past year prevalence was 4.6% for emotional mistreatment, 1.6% physical mistreatment, 0.6% sexual mistreatment; current potential neglect was 5.1%, current financial exploitation by family was 5.2%, and lifetime financial exploitation by a stranger was 6.5%. Another US study of Elder mistreatment by Laumann, Leitsch and Waite (2008), found that a higher percentage of older adults reported verbal mistreatment (9.0%), followed by financial mistreatment (3.5%), and physical mistreatment by a family member (0.2%). Younger adults were more likely to experience verbal and financial mistreatment. In the study, older adults with physical vulnerabilities were more likely to experience verbal abuse, and those with poor reported health were more likely to experience financial abuse. Odds of verbal mistreatment were higher for women and those with physical vulnerability and were lower for Latinos than for whites. The likelihood of financial mistreatment were higher for African Americans and Lower for Latinos than for whites; and were lower for those with spouse and romantic partner than for those without partners.

Biggs, Manthorpe, Tinker, Doyle, and Erens (2009) in their first national prevalence study on mistreatment of older people in the United Kingdom found that the predominant type of reported mistreatment was neglect (1.1%), followed by financial abuse (0.6%), with 0.4% of respondents reporting psychological abuse, 0.4% physical abuse, and 0.2% sexual abuse.

Soneja (2000) in a research on elder abuse in India revealed key factors associated with abuse to include lack of values system, negative attitudes towards older persons, inadequate housing facilities, space and living arrangements, lack of adjustments, and financial and mental dependence by the elderly on their families. In Korea a study by Lee (2008) which was conducted to identify significant indicators for the degree of elder abuse, found that, functional ability, cognitive problems, economic strain, caregiver burden, informal social support, and financial support were significantly associated with elder abuse. Teaster, Dugar, Mendiondo, Abner, and Cecil (2006) in the study of abuse of adults age 60 and older reported that considerable adherence to the misconceptions and the negative stereotypes of the elderly was yet another basis of abuse of the older people. The study by Peri et al. (2008) on elder abuse and neglect in New Zealand indicated that high costs of living and high interest rates contribute to burdens of families increasing the risk for abuse.

The few research studies conducted in Nigeria have considered the prevalence of elder abuse in different parts of the country such as Sijuwade (2008) in a Lagos study and Igbokwe and Asogwa (2010) in a study of the prevalence of abuse of the elderly in domestic setting in Enugu State. Ekot (2013) identified the familial factors in elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State. Empirical data on the community and societal factors in elder abuse in Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria is lacking, hence the need for this study. Community and societal factors refer to larger societal ideologies and cultural values that have an impact on elders and their families thus contributing to elder abuse. Previously elder abuse was generally viewed as a taboo and non-existence, as people believed that the elderly were respected in the Nigerian society, well taken care of in the family context, and therefore not exposed to abuse. Reports on elder abuse in area were mostly based on speculations and unconfirmed stories, as such the study helps to create awareness and sensitise family members, and the public on some of their actions that constitute abuse, as an important step in causing a change in attitudes and behaviour toward the elderly. Results obtained from this study if adopted by the State Government will serve as a baseline data for the development of appropriate programmes and policies for the aged, and will guide the government to devise preventive and intervention strategies to tackle the problem of elder abuse in the state. This study contributes to the international pool of knowledge on elder abuse, to allow the findings of various overseas studies on the phenomenon to be compared to the Nigerian context.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the community and societal factors in elder abuse in the context of family care giving in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria to provide empirical data on the problem in the area which previously had been based on speculations and unconfirmed media reports. Specifically the study sought to:

- identify forms of abuse common among the elderly in Akwa Ibom State

- determine the community and societal factors contributing to elder abuse by family members in Akwa Ibom State.

### Research Questions

- What are the forms of abuse common among the elderly in Akwa Ibom State?
- What are the community and societal factors contributing to elder abuse by family members in Akwa Ibom State?

### Methodology

#### *Research Design and area of Study*

Information for this paper was extracted from a field survey carried out between March and June 2011 in Akwa Ibom State which is one of the states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, located geographically in the south-eastern corner of the country, as a part of a larger project on the condition of the elderly used by the author in 2012. A survey research design was adopted for the study.



Figure 1 Map of Nigeria showing the location of Akwa Ibom State

Source: Akwa Ibom State Investment Guide (2008)

#### *Population for the study*

The population for the study consisted of all male and female elderly persons aged 70 years and older from two senatorial districts out of the three political divisions in Akwa Ibom State

estimated to be about 56,000 (National Population Commission, 2009). This constitutes the *old-old*, and the *oldest-old* (age 85 and older) segments of the elderly population in the state.

#### *Sample for the study*

Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to select a sample size of 5,600 elderly which is 10% of the estimated population. In the first stage, two senatorial zones out of the three in Akwa Ibom State were randomly selected, and used for the study. The second stage involved proportionate distribution of the sample size into all the 21 local government areas that make up the selected senatorial zones. Twenty villages including the local government headquarters were thereafter purposively selected from each of the local government areas. The last stage involved accessible and snowball sampling of respondents from each of the selected villages to give the total of 5,600 respondents, representing 10% of the study population.

#### *Instrument for data collection*

Structured questionnaire was used for the study. The structured questionnaire contained three sections: Section A, was multiple choice questions designed to obtain socio demographic data from the elderly. Section B which was adapted and reviewed from Acierno et al. (2009) elicited information from the elderly with respect to the forms of abuse, while section C which was developed based on literature elicited information on the community and societal factors in elder abuse. This section contained a four point rating scale questions with responses rated as Strongly Agree (A) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SA) = 1. The instrument was validated by experts in the subject area. Drafts of the instrument were submitted to two lecturers in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike and one from University of Uyo, to read, correct where necessary, and to add other suggestions to ensure the validity of the instrument. Based on their inputs, some of the items were dropped and some modified. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's alpha co-efficient, and a reliability index,  $\alpha = .86$  was obtained showing that the instrument was highly reliable. This was to ensure the consistency of measures if retested, meaning the findings of the study could be generalised for the whole state since the instrument could be tested in other areas not covered in the present study.

#### *Data collection and analyses techniques*

The researcher administered copies of the instrument by hand with the help of 12 assistants, 10 of whom were primary health workers in the different local government areas. The research team first held advocacy meetings with village heads, community leaders and church pastors to explain the purpose of the research, obtained permission and solicited assistance on area of information dissemination to their subjects and church members. This helped to prepare the minds of the people before the date of questionnaire administration. On collection of data, members of the research team were shared into six groups of two each who covered different areas simultaneously. The teams moved from house to house, and obtained information on likely compounds to locate elderly people. Informed consent was obtained in each compound and copies of the instruments were administered to only those

who were willing to take part in the research. The respondents were guided to complete and return the instrument on the spot, and administration of the instrument lasted 10 weeks. Since many of the respondents were unable to complete the questionnaire as a result of impairments or literacy level, the researchers read or interpreted the questions into local dialect to non-literate respondents, and their responses were ticked in the appropriate columns in the instrument. Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using frequency counts, percentages and Means for the rating scale questions. A Mean score of 2.5 or more was pegged as the cut-off point for affirmative or agreed response, while any Mean score below 2.5 was regarded as non-affirmative response and therefore considered as disagreed or rejected by the respondents.

### **Findings of the study**

The following findings were made:

1. Common forms of abuse among the elderly in Akwa Ibom State (see Table 1).
2. Societal and community factors contributing to elder abuse by family members in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria (see Table 2).

Table 1 shows the forms of abuse common among the elderly in Akwa Ibom State, with emotional abuse most often, closely followed by financial and material abuse, and neglect/abandonment, while physical and sexual abuse are not very common. The highest number of respondents that reported ever experiencing any of the sub-forms of abuse in each case was taken for the number reporting a particular form of abuse. That is, Emotional/psychological abuse 3164 (56.5), financial and material abuse 2927 (52.3%), neglect and abandonment (40.5%), physical abuse 1055 (18.8%), and sexual abuse 532 (9.5%).

Table 2 shows that the respondents accepted or agreed to twelve out of the sixteen items identified as factors contributing to elder abuse at the environmental/societal level in Akwa Ibom State by scoring means of 2.5 or more.

The observation above shows the factors accepted by the respondents as contributing to elder abuse at the societal and environmental levels in Akwa Ibom State (Table 2). These include witchcraft accusation and suspicion, absence of social security for all elderly, false prophecies by some pastors/prophets causing children to desert their aged parents, delayed pension for retired workers, the current violent nature of society resulting in violent ways of resolving conflicts even with the elderly, eroding of the extended family and intergenerational family support systems. Others are migration of young people to town while the aging parents are left alone in the village, thus increasing risk for abuse, high cost of living, lack of government homes for the elderly, modernisation, which has influenced exchange relationship between children and their parents, and negative stereotypes and attitudes towards older persons, in decreasing rank order.

**Table 1** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the common forms of abuse experienced by the elderly in Akwa Ibom State

Forms of Abuse	Frequency	Percentage (%) **
<b>Emotional/Psychological abuse</b>		
Verbal attacks (scolding, yelling at, humiliation/name calling )	3164	56.5
Being ignored	2072	37
Harassment/coercion	1008	18
Witchcraft accusation or suspicion	2156	38.5
<b>Physical Abuse</b>		
Physical assault (hitting, slapping, etc.).	1055	18.8
Restraining or locking up in the house	859	15.3
Injury (cuts, bruises or other marks)	817	14.6
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>		
Sexual Molestation (Kissing, fondling, etc.)	420	7.5
Touching in a sexual way	532	9.5
<b>Financial Abuse and material abuse</b>		
Taking money or possessions	2320	41.4
Not making good decisions about elderly finances.	2927	52.3
Being forced or tricked to bring out money	2282	40.8
Dispossession of land or other properties	714	12.8
Theft of food and foodstuff	1899	33.9
<b>Neglect and abandonment</b>		
Non regular visits	1788	31.9
Non provision of money for upkeep	2268	40.5
Lack of help with activities of daily living	1696	30.3
Neglect of medical needs	1788	31.9
Denial of access to grand children	2012	35.9
Lack of help in house care/ washing clothes	1704	30.4

\*\* Multiple responses

**Table 2** Mean scores of responses on the community and societal factors contributing to elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State

S/N	Items	Means	Decision **
1	Negative stereotypes and attitudes against the elderly lead to abuse.	2.61	A
2	Older people are undervalued or not respected because they are no longer in paid employment or other productive ventures.	1.84	D
3	Abuse is caused by violent ways of resolving conflicts in the society even with the elderly.	2.83	A
4	High cost of living contributes to financial pressures that can cause abuse	2.74	A
5	Modernisation negatively influences care giving exchange relationship between children and parents resulting in abuse.	2.65	A
6	Migration of young people to town leaving behind elderly parents in the village increase abuse risk.	2.79	A
7	System of land inheritance and sharing of farm assets can increase conflicts between children and parents if not handled properly	2.10	D
8	Eroding of the extended family system is a factor in elder abuse	2.80	A
9	Young people generally resent the elderly because of their frail looks	2.04	A
10	False prophecies from pastors/prophets instil fears in children causing them to desert their aged parents	3.35	A
11	Elderly people accused of witchcraft are usually abandoned by their children.	3.55	A
12	Children are not obligated to fulfil filial responsibility to their parents in modern age.	1.64	D
13	Modern wives encourage their husbands to neglect/abandon their aged parents	2.34	D
14	Delayed pension for retired workers is a serious factor for abuse.	3.29	A
15	Absence of social security for the elderly increases financial dependence, exposing them to abuse	3.40	A
16	Lack of Government homes to run to may force some elderly persons to remain in abusive homes	2.69	A

\*\* A=Agreed, D=Disagreed

Other factors identified in the literature as contributing to elder abuse in other places were rejected or given non-affirmative response by the respondents in this study, since they recorded mean scores of less than 2.5 which was the cut-off mean, as set in the study. These include abusing older persons because they are no longer in productive ventures, system of inheritance of land, which can increase conflicts with parents and children if not properly handled, and the general resentment of the elderly by young people because of their frail looks. Other factors rejected include the notion that children in this modern age are not obligated to take care of aging parent, and believe that modern wives encourage their husbands to neglect and abandon their aging parents.

### Discussion of findings

Table 1 show that emotional/psychological abuse was the most common form (56.5%) of self-reported common among the elderly in Akwa Ibom State, followed by financial and material abuse (52.3%), neglect and abandonment (40.5%) and physical abuse (18.8%), while sexual abuse was the least (9.5%). The findings are consistent with others which found emotional

abuse to be the most commonly reported (Iborra, 2009; Acierno et al., 2009), but inconsistent with others which found financial abuse to be the most common form (Dimah & Dimah, 2002; Cripps, 2001). The finding is at variance with the study by Dong, Simon and Gorbien, (2007) which found neglect to be the most common form of abuse. The finding that sexual abuse is the least common is in tandem with other studies which revealed low rates of sexual abuse (Acierno et al., 2009; Iborra, 2009). The revelation that physical abuse is less common in the study is not surprising as there is a general belief on the lethal curses attached to physical attack on the elderly persons in Akwa Ibom State. Many young people fear that the elderly might invoke curses on them, and especially women who they fear would *beat their breasts* for such a young person who would dare to inflict on them physical assaults, which is believed to result in calamity and untimely deaths. Ajomale (2007) argues that due to the level of respect accorded the elderly in Nigeria, it is uncommon to have cases of beatings and deliberate infliction of injury on the elderly. The percentage of the elderly reporting abuse generally and especially reporting physical abuse is worrisome considering the traditional culture of the people in the state which previously was that of respect and reference for the grey hair of the elderly.

Table 2 identified witchcraft accusation and suspicion as the most salient societal/community factors contributing to elder abuse in this study by obtaining the highest means score of the respondents. This is not surprising as the problem of witchcraft concerns has gradually taken a centre stage in all spheres of discussions in Akwa Ibom State. There is no doubt that in the state people attribute to witchcraft almost every personal failure, social evil, academic and even political failures, and most often, elderly family members and small children are usually blamed. While the state government has enacted a law prohibiting the labelling of children as witches, the elderly still suffer from such labelling without intervention from any quarters. This finding is in tandem with the submission by the WHO (2010) that in some traditional societies, isolated older women are accused of witchcraft. The finding corroborates other findings which found allegations of witchcraft against frail and vulnerable older women as a factor for abuse in South Africa (Ferreira, 2004; Ferreira & Lindgren, 2008). A study conducted in Ghana found that many poor, often elderly women were accused of witchcraft, and some were murdered by male relatives while those who survived were subjected to a range of physical, sexual and economic abuses (Adinkrah, 2004).

The findings of the study identified the absence of social security for the elderly as a major societal factor contributing to elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State. This lends support to the assertion by Ajomale (2007) that the lack of social security system in the country to carry the burdens of the elderly people allows all forms of abuse to occur. Igbokwe and Asogwa (2010) in their study found the absence of social security as contributing to high incidence of elder abuse in Enugu State.

Findings in Table 2 revealed that false prophecies by some pastors/prophets cause some children to desert their aged parents leading to abdication of filial responsibilities and abuse. This is linked to the problem of witchcraft that has already been discussed. Akwa Ibom State plays host to the highest number of mushroom churches (fast spreading churches) in the whole of the country, and most often many pastors and prophets in some of these churches

prophecy to people that their parents are the cause of their misfortunes. This most often usually results in abuse and sometimes total abandonment of elderly parents.

Delayed pension for retired workers has been identified as societal or community factor contributing to the abuse of some elderly in Akwa Ibom State based on the mean score of above 2.5 (Table 2). This confirms the frequent inhuman treatments given to pensioners in the name of documentations and screening exercises by the state government. WHO (2002) confirms that elder abuse involves abuse by systems, that is, the dehumanising treatment older people suffer at health clinics and pension offices, and marginalisation by the government.

The findings of the study has revealed that the current violent nature of society results in violent ways of resolving conflicts even with the elderly, thus leading to cases of abuse. In recent times, society has been exposed to a deluge of violent activities including, homicide, political violence and assassination of opponents, kidnapping, militancy, and recently the Boko Haram insurgents. This agrees with the submission that persistent exposure to violence can have a desensitising effect on the society, leading to tolerance of violence as an accepted means of venting frustration and anger or seeking revenge (Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network, 2007). Iborra (2009) confirms that the acceptance or *normalisation* of violence causes it to pervade everyday activities contributing to the possible appearance of abuse.

The result has revealed that the eroding of the extended family and intergenerational family support systems contribute to elder abuse in the study. This is in support of the observation by WHO (2002), that industrialisation has eroded long-standing patterns of interdependence between the generations of a family, often resulting in material and emotional hardship for the elderly. Observation shows that many young people today seem to be less committed to kinship network, and so do not support elderly relatives who may be lacking the financial and human capital or resources for self-care.

Table 2 indicates that migration of young people to town while the aging parents are alone in the village increases their risk for elder abuse and neglect in Akwa Ibom State. Many children of the elderly move to urban areas in search of economic pursuits leaving their parents without any form of help. Peil, Bamisauje, and Ekpenyong (2010) support that increasing levels of migration may deprive old people of their children's assistance. Also, migration of young couples to other areas leaving elderly parents alone in societies where older people were traditionally cared for by their offspring has been identified as a society's risk factor in elder abuse (WHO, 2002).

Findings show that high cost of living in the society is a factor for elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State. This finding is consistent with that of Peri et al. (2008) who indicated that high costs of living and high interest rates contribute to burdens of families increasing the risk for abuse. A study in Enugu State, Igbokwe and Asogwa (2010) found unnecessary high cost of goods and services for the elderly such as walking sticks, food items and medical services, as contributing highly to the prevalence of abuse. The problem of high cost of living generally affects the whole family and not only the elderly.

Table 2 further revealed that lack of government homes for the elderly in Akwa Ibom State is one of the reasons many older persons remain in abusive situations even when seriously abused, and a societal factor in abuse. It is the opinion of some respondents that some abused elderly people would prefer to move into old people's home instead of suffering alone or suffering abuse in the hands of caregivers. This revelation is inconsistent with Peri et al. (2008) who maintained that some communities have a strong belief that residential care for the elderly is unacceptable, thereby putting older people at risk of abuse if the family is unable and unwilling to provide the requisite care at home. Although some older persons would not accept moving into a care facility because of the associated stigma, availability of such facilities in the state would help adult children who may be unable to accommodate elderly parents/ relatives and provide primary care for one reason or the other, and those unable to arrange for home help for them.

Findings of the study uphold the Modernisation Theory of elder abuse that espouses that modernisation has change family life thereby influencing exchange relationships between children and their parents increasing the risk for abuse (Table 2). This is in consonance with the views Durrant and Christian (2006) that modernisation and advanced technology do change the ways in which people live and make decisions, influencing family life and functioning, including care giving relationships between adult children and their elderly parents. The influence of modernisation is not only felt in the area of elder abuse, but in other aspects of family life such as changing roles of family members, which has made care giving responsibilities very tasking and difficult to offer effectively, especially for women who are supposed to be primary family caregivers.

Negative stereotypes and attitudes directed towards the older persons by the public have been identified as societal and community factors contributing to elder abuse in the study (Table 2). In the Nigerian society today, it is common for young people to tag the elderly with such negative and derogatory names as *old school*, *grey hair*, *confused* or *wicked*. Teaster et al. (2006) reported that considerable adherence to the misconceptions and the negative stereotype of the elderly is yet another basis of abuse of the older people. These stereotypes may lead to insensitive responses to the needs of older persons, which in turn can lead to abuse (Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network, 2007).

Results in Table 2 revealed that the respondents in the study rejected other factors suggested as societal and community factors contributing to elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State by scoring weighted mean scores of below 2.5, which was the cut-off point for acceptable responses. These include abusing older persons because they are no longer in productive ventures, system of inheritance of land which can increase conflicts with parents and children if not properly handled, the general resentment of the elderly by young people because of their frail looks, the notion that children in this modern age are not obligated to take care of aging parent, and the notion that modern wives encourage their husbands to neglect and abandon their aging parents. These findings contradict the Political Economy Theory, which refers to the society's marginalisation of old people as a cause of elder abuse (Centre for Substance Abuse Prevention, 2010). This theory focuses on the challenges faced by elders once they lose their role and must depend on others for well-being (Fulmer et al., 2004). Rejection of items 12 and 13 in Table 2 explains the filial duty of children to parents in old-age irrespective of

the era in question. More so, no wife would be able to influence a man or vice versa to abandon his/her parents except he or she has a personal reason or predisposing cause to do so.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the community and societal factors in elder abuse in the context of family care giving in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study identified societal and community factors contributing to elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State to include witchcraft accusation and suspicion, absence of social security, false prophecies, delayed pensions, culture of violence, and eroding of the extended family and intergenerational support systems. Others are migration of young people to town leaving behind their aging parents, high cost of living, and absence of elderly care homes, modernisation, and negative stereotypes towards older persons in decreasing rank order.

The study has revealed the high pervasiveness of the problem of elder abuse in Akwa Ibom State. It has confirm that elder abuse is not only a function of personal characteristics of the elderly, or family related such as stress of care giving, but that many factors in the community and society generally contribute to the widespread problem of abuse of the elderly in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

## **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Public awareness programmes and public education campaigns that define elder abuse should be organised, to raise the public's awareness on the growing problem of elder abuse in order to reduce the prevalence of abuse in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Conflict resolution should be taught at all levels of education, to enable young people to imbibe the culture of amicable conflict resolution, thus eliminating the current violent nature of resolving conflicts in society.
3. Social amenities such good medical care, housing, and potable water would help to change people's attitudes and beliefs surrounding witchcraft.
4. Governmental social security for the elderly in Akwa Ibom State and Nigeria would reduce the financial burdens on caregivers or at least support serve as support to depend on if neglected by their children.
5. Prompt payment of gratuities and regular pension to retired workers, would help reduce the risk of mistreatment associated with regular documentations and screening exercises which pensioners are frequently exposed to.
6. Government-established old people's homes in Akwa Ibom State would cater for the needs of those who might require such homes for the placement of their aged parents in

case of role conflicts or by geographical separation arising from employment. By so doing, the rate of neglect and abandonment would be greatly reduced.

## Biography

*Mildred Ekot lectures in the Department of Human Ecology, Nutrition and Dietetics, University of Uyo, Nigeria, and currently the Coordinator of Post Graduate Programme in the Department. She holds a PhD in Human and Family Development. Her research interest is in family life issues, especially issues concerning vulnerable family members—the elderly and children.*

## References

- Acierno, R., Hernandez-Tejada, M. S., Wendy-Muzzy, B. S., & Kenneth-Steve, M.S. (2009). *National Elder Mistreatment Study*. Report submitted to the US Department of Justice, New York. Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/226456.pdf>
- Adinkrah, M. (2004). Witchcraft accusations and female homicide victimization in contemporary Ghana. *Violence against Women, 10*(4), 325-356.
- Ajomale, O. (2007). *Elder Abuse: The Nigerian Experience*. [www.inpea.net/images/yinkapaper\\_ElderAbuse\\_Nigeria\\_Dec07.pdf](http://www.inpea.net/images/yinkapaper_ElderAbuse_Nigeria_Dec07.pdf). Accessed on 23/3/2010
- Akwa Ibom State Investment Guide (2008). *Brief Profile of Akwa Ibom State*. Retrieved from [aakwaibominvest.ng/brief-profile-of-akwa-ibom-state](http://aakwaibominvest.ng/brief-profile-of-akwa-ibom-state)
- Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network (2007). Retrieved from [www.albertaelderabuse.ca/page.cfm?pg](http://www.albertaelderabuse.ca/page.cfm?pg)
- American Psychological Association (2010). *Elder Abuse and Neglect: In search of Solutions*. Retrieved from [www.apa.org/pi/aging/resources/elderabuse.aspx](http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/resources/elderabuse.aspx)
- Berk, L. E. (2001). *Development through the Lifespan*, (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Biggs, S., Manthorpe, J., Tinker, A., Doyle, M. & Erens, B. (2009). Mistreatment of Older People in the United Kingdom: Findings from the First National Prevalence Study. *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect, 21*(1), 1-14. Do1. 10.1080/08946 56080 2571870.
- Bonnie, R. J. & Wallace, R. B. (2003). *Elder Mistreatment: Abuse Neglect and Exploitation in an Aging America*. Washington D C.: National Academy of Sciences. Retrieved from [www.nap.edu/catalog/1040.html](http://www.nap.edu/catalog/1040.html) on 10/10/2010.
- Cavanagh, K. (2003). Understanding Women's responses to domestic violence. *Qualitative social work, 2*(3), 229-249.
- Centre for Substance Abuse Prevention (2010). *Elder Abuse: Uncovering Substance abuse and Elder Abuse* (Ceusource). Retrieved from [ceusource.com/texts/payment/.html](http://ceusource.com/texts/payment/.html)
- Dimah, A. & Dimah, K. (2002). Gender Differences among abused Older African Americans and African Americans Abusers in an Elder Abuse Provide Agency. *Journal of Black Studies 32*(5), 557-573.

- Dong, X., Simon, M. A. & Gorbien, M. (2007). Elder Abuse and Neglect in an Urban Chinese Population. *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 19(3 / 4), 79-96.
- Durrant, T. J. & Christian, O. G. (2006). *Caregiving to Aging parents. Forum on Public Policy*. Retrieved from [www.forumonpublicpolicy.com/archive/07/durant.pdf](http://www.forumonpublicpolicy.com/archive/07/durant.pdf)
- Ekot, M. O. (2012). Challenges of Elderly Caregiving and Elder Abuse in Domestic Settings. *Journal Home Economics Research (JHER)*, 16, 184-194
- Ekot, M. O. (2013). Familial Determinants of Elder Abuse in The Context of Family Caregiving in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, *Journal Home Economics Research (JHER)*, 18, 211-221
- Ferreira, M. & Lindgren, P. (2008). Elder Abuse Neglect in South Africa. A case of Marginalization, Disrespect, Exploitation and Violence. *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 20(2), 91-107. Retrieved from [www.scisocialcareonline.org.uk/topic.asp?guide=963e6011-5431-4215-97fa=37783fe115e7](http://www.scisocialcareonline.org.uk/topic.asp?guide=963e6011-5431-4215-97fa=37783fe115e7)
- Ferreira, M. (2004). Elder abuse in Africa: What policy and legal provisions are there to address the violence? *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 16, 17-32.
- Fulmer, T., Guadagno, L., Dyer, C. B. & O'Connolly, M. T. (2004). Progress in Elder Abuse, Screening and Assessment. *Journal of American Geriatric Society*, 52, 297-304.
- Iborra, I. (2009). *Elder Abuse in the Family in Spain*, (Report). Valencia: Queen Sofia Centre. Retrieved from [www.abuel.org/docs/1spainfamily.pdf](http://www.abuel.org/docs/1spainfamily.pdf)
- Igbokwe, C. C. & Asogwa, L. O. (2010) Prevalence of Abuse of elderly in Domestic setting in Enugu State, Nigeria. *Journal Home Economics Research (JHER)*, 12, 239-248.
- Laumann, E. O., Leitsch, S. A. & Waite, L. J. (2008). Elder Mistreatment in the United States: Prevalence estimates from a Nationally Representative Study. *Journal of Gerontology*, 63, S248-S254.
- Lee, M. (2008). Caregiver stress and Elder Abuse among Korean family caregivers of older, Adults with disabilities. *Journal of family violence*, 23(8), 707-712. Do 1:10, 1007/510896-008-9195-27.
- National Population Commission [NPC] (2009). 2006 *Population and Housing Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, Priority table. Nigeria: NPC
- Peil, M., Bamisauje, A. & Ekpenyong, S. (2010). Health and Physical Support for the elderly in Nigeria. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 4(2), 89-106. Retrieved from [www.springerlink.com/content/ul30653864673497/](http://www.springerlink.com/content/ul30653864673497/)
- Peri, K., Fanslow, J., Hand, J. & Parsons, J. (2008). *Elder abuse and neglect: Exploration of Risk and Protective factors*, Research Report No 1/08. New Zealand: Families Commission
- Schiamborg, L. & Gans, D. (2000). Elder Abuse by Adult Children: An applied ecological framework for understanding contextual risk factors and the intergenerational character of quality of life. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 50(4), 329-359.

- Sellas, M. & Krouse, L. H. (2009). *Elder Abuse*. Retrieved from [www.medscape.com/public/copyright](http://www.medscape.com/public/copyright)
- Sijuwade, P. O. (2008). Elderly Care by Family Members: Abandonment, Abuse and Neglect. *The Social Sciences*, 3(8), 542-547.
- Soneja, I. (2000). *Elder Abuse in India*. Retrieved from [www.who.int/hpr/ageing/Report%india.pdf](http://www.who.int/hpr/ageing/Report%india.pdf)
- Teaster, P. B., Dugar, T., Mendiondo, M., Abner, E. & Cecil, K. (2006). *Abuse of Adults age 60+. The 2004 survey of Adult Protective Services-Abuse of Adults 60 years of Age and Older*. Retrieved from [www.elderabusecenter.org/pdf/2-14-06percent2060FACTpercent20SHEET.Pdf](http://www.elderabusecenter.org/pdf/2-14-06percent2060FACTpercent20SHEET.Pdf)
- Walker, A. (2002). The care of the Elderly People on Industrial Society: A Conflict between the Family and the State. In P. Krishnan & K. Mahadeva (Eds.), *The elderly populations in Developing World Policies, Problem and Perspectives* (pp 3-28). Delhi: B. R. Publishing Co.
- Wolf, R. (2000). Introduction: The nature and Scope of Elder abuse. *Generations*, 5, 6-12. Retrieved from [www.asaging.org/generations/gen-24-2/intro.html](http://www.asaging.org/generations/gen-24-2/intro.html)
- World Health Organisation [WHO] (2002). *World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva: WHO. Retrieved from [whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2002/921545615\\_chap5\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2002/921545615_chap5_eng.pdf)
- World Health Organisation [WHO] (2010). *Older People-a New Power for Development*. 1st October International Day of Older Person. Retrieved from [www.who.int/aging/projects/elder\\_abuse/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/aging/projects/elder_abuse/en/index.html)

## Home Economics as professional practice

Kerry Renwick

*The University of British Columbia*

---

### Abstract

*When professionals engage in and with their professional practice they assert a claim of extraordinary knowledge. Within Home Economics such a claim is a challenge when everyday lived experiences are in and of themselves ordinary, of which everyone apparently has knowledge of. Professional application of knowledge has an explicit focus on the wellbeing of others and therefore is what constitutes professional practice. Home Economics educators engage in professional practice when we connect with students and their families to build capacity for a life well lived.*

*This paper considers the professional practice of Home Economics education using Aristotle's consideration of human action through the dispositions of techné, episteme and phronesis. Each provides unique understandings about the relationship between ideology and action, and therefore professional practice. Using these three dispositions to understanding professional practice is a positioning that is different to current market ideology that pervades every social and cultural institution, especially schools. Using McGregor's (2010) eight unique contributions of Home Economics enables discussion about the professional practice of Home Economics in a market-orientated era. The paper concludes with a discussion about what the three dispositions for human action offers Home Economics educators as they focus on what they do with their students in classrooms that also has meaning outside the school gates and beyond the school years.*

### Introduction

There has been much consideration and dialogue around the value of educators being reflective practitioners but there remains something of a void when it comes to the profession or a field within the education profession seeking to reflect upon its purpose, intent and presence within the broader context of education. Engaging in reflection of achievements, thinking of them as challenges and opportunities, is an important aspect of professional practice. When educators reflect on their professional practice they need to consider the adequacy of their professional knowledge as it relates to both social needs and problems (Schön, 1995).

This paper explores what professional practice is within the field of Home Economics as it is an important debate to be had for purposes of both evolving our field and to keeping it relevant in changing social circumstances and contexts. Within this paper this is set out in three moves:

- i. an initial discussion that describes the relationship between the professional and practice,
- ii. consideration of professional practice as human action in Aristotelian terms, and
- iii. analysis of McGregor's (2010) unique contributions of Home Economics as forms of Aristotelian human action and therefore professional practice.

The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE, 2008, p. 1) defines Home Economics in its position statement on *Home Economics in the 21st Century* as a field and a profession "that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities". According to the Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA) the practice of Home Economics is to support individual and family wellbeing, through a range of expertise including childcare, design, health, housing, marketing and textiles. There is also a listing of professional skills and attributes including critical reflection, communication, collaboration, design, management and social justice that are apparently utilised by home economists based in industry and education contexts. These listings and descriptions identify personal attributes and contexts that act as boundaries for membership of the profession but neither fully addresses why it is a profession.

### **Describing the professional and the practice**

Within the debate about what Home Economics is, and what is, can, and should be, called Brown (1980), McGregor (2010) and Thompson (1988) draw on a particular philosophical positioning. Brown (1980, 1993) argues for a Habermasian philosophical position to create inter-subjective understandings and a critical view of society that cannot support the (inequitable) status quo. McGregor (2010) discusses the relationship between Home Economics and the human condition in both current and future times that aligns with Aristotle's concept of the common good (Smith, 1999). Thompson (1988, 1992) draws on Aristotle's human actions to argue for the work of Home Economics as a profession that considered "relationships—of people, things and ideas" (1988, p. 3). Further Vincenti (1990) reasons "[v]alues and value judgements are an integral part of [our] professional practice" (p.192). Vaines (1990) discussed the importance of Home Economics as a profession philosophically informed by its mission as a process orientated discipline (Perzeszty, 1984) and described by Smith (2004) as a pragmatic, integrative approach.

There is also discussion about what is the actual work of home economists (East, 1980, McGregor, Barabovsky, Eghan, Engberg, Harman, Mitsifer, Pendergast, Seniuk, Shanahan & Smith, 2004; McGregor, Pendergast, Seniuk, Eghan & Engberg, 2008; Richards, 2000). Central to this discussion is the place and role of family in a democratic society. As one of its organisational aims IFHE argues the importance of "education for home and family life ... for all age levels and in all societies" (n.d.). A critical element of how home economists work is through educative processes that draw on inter and transdisciplinary approaches (Hodelin, 2008; McGregor, 2008; Turkki, 2008; Vincenti, 1990). These approaches are transformative (Brown, 1985) because of the intent to empower individuals and families for the purpose of action (Hodelin, 2008) where "[p]ractice always forms and transforms the one who practices, along with those who are also involved in and affected by the practice" (Kemmis et al., 2014,

p. 25). Whether home economists are working in schools or community settings they have an educative practice as a core objective. Therefore any consideration of the professional practice of Home Economics can be seen in what Green (2009) describes as a certain predisposition instilled in the membership that expects “an appropriate (professional) attitude regarding conduct and relationships” (p. 7).

Green (2009) argues that professional practice has been an under theorised concept, that profession and practice have been contested but in ways that have left each to be used in unproblematic ways. What is *professional* and what is *practice* are implied in most contexts with an assumption that what is meant is shared, that the recipient knows and understands the meaning. Schön (1995) points to an increasing mismatch between professional knowledge and the situations of practice arising from complexity, instability and value conflicts. Home Economics, perhaps uniquely, has a history of considering its philosophical positioning as much as its pragmatic responses to describe its work (Hodelin 2008; McGregor et al. 2004; Smith, 2004; Turkki, 2008). This does not necessarily mean that there is one position within or across the profession. However what is shared is the focus of professional practice of family-in all of its many forms and that the field is action orientated (McGregor et al., 2004, 2008; Vincent, Smith & Fabian, 2004) through educative processes asking, “how should one live well?” (Smith, 2004, p. 124).

In exploring what a professional is, Macklin (2009) disputes the more traditional view of a professional as being someone who works in a particular occupation described as a profession (i.e. law, medicine, accounting). Rather he argues that the professional chooses and undertakes their work with an explicit intent to focus on the wellbeing of others. Thus there are many different types of work that can be described as professional where the practitioner is in *being* with the work, functioning in a *mode* or where the practice is an adjective rather than a noun thereby including trades, allied health and education. The Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA) describes Home Economics as having a “focus on households and families; enhance everyday living by enabling individuals to make informed choices; act as advocates with a primary interest in households and families; and educate in the broadest sense” (n.p.). Teachers of Home Economics are therefore professionals not because they have particular expertise in teaching about family studies, food or textiles but because they connect with students, their families and the wider community in shared learning about these areas. The shared learning makes sense in the context of individual lives outside the school gates or community setting. It is able to do this because it draws on what is possible as well as building capacity for a future *well lived*.

Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008) eschew practice as individualistic in that it focuses on the practitioner’s knowledge and action. Instead they describe practice as social because the practitioner rarely acts alone rather their practice is both orientated toward and by others as well as by moral agency. This is a position that has been articulated by Kieren, Vaines & Badir (1984) in their treatise of the Home Economics profession. Kemmis (2010a) describes the construction of practice as the result of interactions, with “histories, cultural and discursive resources, social connections and solidarities, and locations in material-economic arrangements and exchanges” (p. 140). Kemmis’ description resonates closely with current practices in Home Economics at several levels. Practice is a core component of what home

economists do (McGregor et al., 2004, 2006). Construction of practice exists between Home Economics and with students who undertake their classes or the clients they work with in the community, each a slightly different Community of Practice (CoP) (Handley, Sturdy, Fincham & Clarke, 2006) but with an identity that has been shaped by shared interests and activity through situated learning (Saltmarsh, 2009). It is within these CoPs that there are possibilities for developing skills and capacities for individuals, families and communities to live and create better lives (McGregor, 2010; Thompson 1992).

Consideration of what is *professional practice* for Home Economics is especially valuable in an era that has de-professionalised feminised fields such as teaching (Apple, 2008; Brennan, 2009) and Home Economics (Stage, 1997). McGregor, Pendergast, Seniuk, Eghan and Engberg (2008) have described how philosophy, ideologies and paradigms can impact on the work of home economists while giving “home economists the potential to change and to practice differently” (p. 47). This is significant when financial growth is put ahead of people, community and the environment. They go on to explore how technical practice, interpretative practice and critical/emancipatory practice. They see these as “systems of action approach [that] is a way to take ownership of actions and practice from a stance of integrity and accountability” (p. 51). Professional practice for home economists is not about reproducing social inequity through narrowly defined and prescribed technocratic work (McGregor et al., 2004). Instead there is considerable scope and possibility in acknowledgement of the power used by and on the profession to engage in practice that is both critical and empowering (Brown 1980, 1985, 1993; Freire, 1970, 1972; Giroux & Giroux, 2006; Kincheloe, 2003; Vincenti, 1990). This is dependent on the capacity of Home Economics to draw on current lived realities of the students and clients they are working with, to be able to understand future possibilities and generate action to get *there* (McGregor, 2010; Thompson, 1992).

### Professional practice as Human Action

Professional practice invariably involves a balance between theoretical rigour and practical relevance (Carr, 2006) with particular tensions within the relationship between the two. Saugstad (2002) provides two perspectives on the relationship between theory and practice. He describes one as a normative relationship where practice is required to adapt to theory, and is critically described by Schön (1995) as when theory and technique are applied to practice through its instrumental problems. Thus learning about practice is no longer situated learning. The second perspective described by Saugstad (2002) is where theory is defined through practice, and described as *learning by doing*. It is this second perspective that is closest to the ideas contained within the IFHE Mission Statement (2008) that begins with an emphasis on what occurs in families and households and then moves to position this practice in context of social, economic and environmental context. While theory is often understood as everything that isn't practice, both have particular knowledges. Aristotle (trans. 2011) provided a differentiated way of understanding knowledge related to its function and aim, and that corresponded to intellectual abilities (Saugstad, 2002). In claiming that Home Economics is transformative because it empowers and generates action it allows a person to ask “What can or should I do now/next?” It subsequently allows for number of responses together with consideration of how things turned out, all of which requires more than technical knowledge and action (Kemmis et al., 2014).

Smith (2004) in writing about Eleanor Vaines' work, reasons that it is about challenging assumptions of everyday life, transcending the meanings of the everyday and thus a philosopher's act. Carr (2009) writes about the importance of philosophy in determining ideology and action. He looks to the work of Aristotle to invoke a meaning for practice and action with more substance than is implied in contemporary understandings. Aristotle's classification of human action continues to be widely used (Bartlett & Collins, 2011) to describe and analyse professional practice across a range of professions including medicine (Anders Ericsson, 2008; Gallagher, 2004); human resource management (Winstanley & Woodall, 2000); tourism (Tribe, 2002); education (Carr, 2006; 2009, Green, 2009; Kemmis, 2012) and Home Economics (Thompson, 1988, 1992). Aristotle provides us with three different human actions in his classification—*techné*, *episteme* and *phronesis*. Thus each of these human actions has its own aim, characteristics and therefore unique form (see Table 1.) What follows is a brief description of these three human actions together with some consideration of what they mean in the context of Home Economics.

Table 1 Aristotelian human action

	<i>Techné</i>	<i>Episteme</i>	<i>Phronesis</i>
<b>Aim</b>	To produce something	To seek truth	To do what is right
<b>Form of action</b>	<i>Poiesis</i> : instrumental action	<i>Theoria</i> : contemplative action	<i>Praxis</i> : morally committed action
<b>Characteristics</b>	variable, pragmatic, context-dependent, instrumental rationality, craft knowledge.	universal, scientific, invariable, context-independent, theoretical knowledge.	variable, pragmatic, context-dependent, oriented toward action, practical wisdom.

Based on Carr (2009), and Kinsella & Pitman (2012)

*Techné* is a form of human action that draws on knowledge about the production of *something* utilising strategies, skills and techniques. The practice of *techné* relies on the practitioner making judgement about how a goal is to be achieved, both pragmatically and consciously (Carr, 2009; Kinsella & Pitman, 2012). As an instrumental form of knowledge the profession of Home Economics has a strong disposition for *techné* through *poiesis* (or instrumental action) and is best represented in the concern for how “the perpetual family needs of shelter, nourishment, clothing, resource managements and consumption, and personal development and family relations (McGregor et al., 2008, p. 51) are managed.

While home economists have strong claims to make about *techné*, McGregor et al. (2004, 2008) outline concerns for the profession's focus on *techné* almost to the exclusion of other human actions and is echoed in Vaines' work (Smith, 2004). They argue that the result has been to limit the capacity of the profession to be able to engage intellectually; to be complacent about routine and resistant to change; to be complicit with hegemonic discourse and therefore unable to provide students, families and communities with what they really need. Further, according to Pendergast (2002), the result has been that home economists have not engaged sufficiently in theorising (*theoria*) and I would argue that there has been limited attention to the profession's claim for *phronesis* (practical wisdom). As a result, home

economists have been too easily marginalised and are continually forced to engage in the defence of the profession and field.

*Episteme* represents the second human action as the intellectual activity to seek truth. To do this requires contemplation or *theoria*, a pre-disposition for thinking about knowing why things *are*. Thus *theoria* as human action, in contemporary terms is too often defined as a search for *the* truth through invariable and objective criteria. In this aspect of human action the intent is to understand the general nature of how things work with the practicality of specific, operational details (Higgs, 2012; Reid & Green, 2009). This interpretation is heavily influenced by positivistic science and many writers such as Harding (2013) argue that it is both hegemonic and masculine in its orientation. She posits that “Objectivity has not been ‘operationalized’ in such a way that scientific method can detect sexist and androcentric assumptions that are ‘the dominant beliefs of an age’—that is, that which are collectively (versus only individually) held” (p. 62).

Within the context of Home Economics *theoria* draws on the sciences as described by Aristotle. There are scientific *truths* related to food such as raising agents and nutrition or the flammable properties of fabric. However in debating if Home Economics is a human/social science, McGregor (2010) draws the profession into the postmodern debate about the inevitability and legitimacy of many *truths* and impossibility of any single fundamental and universal truth that the profession both seeks and positions itself on. Having been too often categorised (and derided) as a girls or female dominated field (Pendergast, 2002) that focuses on family, in any and all shapes and forms, Home Economics should, more than any other profession, be able to accommodate and engage in *theoria*. Where one is able to seek truth that is standpoint dependant (Harding, 2013; Reid & Green, 2009).

The third Aristotelian human action is *phronesis*, referred to as wise practical reasoning (Eisner, 2002). It is here that the peculiarity of situations and entities are recognised. This draws on the professional’s understandings about subjectivity, ethics and the potential for transformation to make wise judgements in practice (Kinsella, 2012; Thompson, 1988, 1992). Smith (2004) claims that while Vaines doesn’t use the term *phronesis* in her work there is substantial “evidence that it is guided more by an underpinning of practical wisdom (*phronesis*) than practical reasoning” (p. 126). In their discussion of *phronesis* Kinsella and Pitman (2012) assert that professional ethics needs to emphasise the moral purpose of the work that is done rather than focus on ethics of practice, typically seen in the form of codes of conduct. “Adopting a professional language that is based in a moral framework involves a shift in foci of what is central” (p. 168) requires home economists to reposition how the technical and epistemological cores give rise to our professional practice.

*Phronesis* utilises a form of practice called *praxis* that focuses on doing what is *right*. This requires not only contemplation but also action, thus considerations of *praxis* as a human action makes use of both practice and theory reflexively. According to Kemmis (2010b, p. 10) *praxis* “is a form of conscious, self-aware action, as distinct from technical action (*poiesis* or making action) and as such it is about knowing what is being done simultaneously with the doing”. Home economists make decisions every day about how they work with other people’s

children or with clients who may be vulnerable. But do these decisions also have a phronetic quality (Kinsella, 2012; Thompson, 1992)?

Each of these human actions represents different pre-dispositions that determine the focus and description of human activity. In describing professional practice Carr (2009) claims that it cannot be adequately described as only *techné* and the reliance on *episteme* raises potential for distorting and diminished views of the social context in which the professional practice is operating. Instead Carr (2006; 2009) argues that only through *phronesis* can professional practice be adequately conceived as *practical philosophy*, as morally committed action. When discussing the reliance of the Home Economics profession on technical practice (i.e. *techné*) McGregor et al. (2004) have described it as an *addiction* that precludes any other possibilities for professional practice, especially those that allow for interpretative and emancipatory possibilities. Further McGregor et al. (2008) argue that the privileging of *techné* has drawn home economists into being complicit with reinforcing disadvantage and oppression. As Saltmarsh (2009) writes, professional practice requires the professional to think about how they make a difference in the lives of those they are working with. The challenge here is not to follow rules or obey convention blindly but to engage in critical reflexivity about our work with others.

### Home Economics professional practice as Human Action

McGregor (2010) has identified eight unique contributions of Home Economics. She argues that Home Economics is a profession without rival and is distinct because of the academic and professional contributions that Home Economists make. As an example, reality in Australian schools is an ongoing narrowing of the curriculum and pedagogical approaches in the drive to privilege functional literacy and numeracy at the expense of other subject areas. Literacy and numeracy has to be about *something* as they are skills that are to be used within social contexts (Peterat, 1989). Home Economics is one area of study that provides opportunity for contextualised and situated learning that has application well beyond the school gates and years. Drawing on its unique contributions home economists have the capacity to readily build on what their students or clients can do and bridge between the school and the family/community settings.

The describing of the unique contributions of Home Economics by McGregor (2010) is done within context of the profession and the perpetual debate about what the profession should call itself to remain relevant in contemporary times. No other profession is challenged to review their titles as frequently (Davis, 2008; Hodelin, 2008; IFHE, 2008), in order to justify the field and to be held accountable for the work being claimed both by those within the field as well as those outside it. Instead what McGregor does is to deftly manage the perennial and wasteful debate about the naming of Home Economics and explores the work focus of home economists. It is through McGregor's description that it is possible to explore the professional practice of Home Economics as Aristotelian human action.

Green (2009) argues that knowledge and practice have a reciprocal relationship that is crucial in defining what is distinctive in a field of professional practice. Further Schön (1995) claims, "[t]he professional depends on tacit knowing in action" (p. 48) and "is dependent on tacit recognitions, judgements, and skilful performances" (p 49). These *knowing practices* are

authentic and have integrity demonstrating both *moral-ethical* and *moral-political* characteristics. To determine if Home Economics has such *knowing* practices, McGregor's (2010) eight contributions were reviewed together with the descriptions provided. Each of the contributions represents the reciprocal relationship between knowledge and practice, as described by Green (2009), and in this analysis, as ways of knowing (Saugstad, 2002; Smith, 2004). A hermeneutic cycle (Bredo, 2006) was used to interpret the whole text (i.e. the eight unique contributions). Then the descriptions of each contribution were interpreted. By pulling apart McGregor's descriptions of each form of action it was possible to interrogate them about possibilities for *knowing practices* and assisted in understanding each contribution as distinct text. This is an iterative or cyclical process to understand text through reproducing and re-experiencing of the author's creative process (Bryman, Bell & Teevan, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). This process enables interrogation of Home Economics practice and profession according to Aristotelian human action. The resultant determinations are presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4 together with specific discussion.

Table 2 Home Economics as Aristotelian human action—*techné*

Form of Home Economics Action as <i>Techné</i>	<i>Poiesis</i> : instrumental action Knowing practices such as
Focus on Everyday Life	routines and practices found in the ordinary course of events.
Interdisciplinary and integrative/Holistic	draw information and insights from a number of disciplines to address problems faced by families.
Prevention, Education and Development	work with families to ensure the acquisition of skills and modes of thinking essential for functioning in society (education)
Systems of Action (technical, interpretative and critical)	cope with change by learning new skills and techniques
Practical Perennial Problems	focus on problems experienced every generation (perennial)
Critical Reflective Practice	manage and cultivate our knowledge base.
Functional Definition of Families as social institutions	become family literate to advance our unique approach to working with and for families.

Based on Carr (2009), Kinsella and Pitman (2012) and McGregor (2010).

When reviewing Table 2 it is possible to see how there is a strong focus on producing things through instrumental action. *Techné* acknowledges the skillsets of home economists working with individuals, families and communities to be able to *do*. This is, and continues to be a strength however it is also a problematic. Too often it is only what some home economists do or what others see us doing. Interestingly what emerges from McGregor's descriptions of the work shows *techné* being as much about what our work, as home economists is or should be when undertaken with others, as it is about how we ensure that our practice is evolving and growing with changing circumstances.

Attention to *episteme* and the identification of *theoria* was the most difficult to achieve in this process. The first challenge was to grapple with the positivistic notions of scientific and universal aspects of this form of human action. Within the context of the Home Economics profession that focuses on family in multiple social contexts that are global, the seeking of invariable and context-independent is not cogent with the field with its focus on seeking the common good (Smith, 2008) and therefore impossible to achieve. Following Harding (2013) the interpretation of *theoria* applied here is a need to be cognisant of the legitimacy of many

truths. The second challenge was to determine if there was a single *theoria* that applied to all or if there were different *theoria* at play according to the perceived contribution.

Table 3 Home Economics as Aristotelian human action—*episteme*

Form of Home Economics Action as Episteme	Theoria: contemplative action Knowing practices such as
Focus on Everyday Life.	Families are an essential component of every society through human history and represent more than a source of human capital.
Interdisciplinary and integrative/Holistic	
Prevention, Education and Development	Being critical of our work means being aware of power differences and how they impact on the lives of people, privileging few and disadvantaging many
Systems of Action (technical, interpretative and critical)	
Practical Perennial Problems	
Critical Reflective Practice	Values informing our work include security, equality, justice, rights, Freedom and peace.
Functional Definition of Families as social institutions	

Based on Carr (2009), Kinsella and Pitman (2012) and McGregor (2010).

In the analysis common threads were identifiable and therefore themes of contemplation emerged. In reality the statement about values, that inform our work within the contributions, fitted this category of human action but two other statements were added to reflect what else was deemed as being important but only implied *theoria*. Key words such as social justice, equity, justice, communities of practice, critical, power relationships reflect critical theory as being both broad and evolving and questions the assumption that (Western) nations are unproblematically democratic and free (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002). There are theorists that have used critical theory to inform philosophical positing of Home Economics (Brown, 1980, 1985, 1993; Vincenti, Smith & Fabian, 2004) and that it is not solely Eurocentric (McGregor et al., 2008). The educative work of home economists aligns with Freire's (1970, 1972) work on critical pedagogy. By using a humanistic focus built on the assumptions that everyone has that capacity for engaging, conversing, exchanging ideas and negotiating with others (Freire, 1972), the pedagogy is positioned as one that is being enacted for all (Renwick, 2013, 2014).

As discussed earlier the privileging of *techné* is problematic in the profession and relying on *theoria* alone is not an option for viable and evolving professional practice either. Lather (1986, p. 261) highlights the potential for the overuse of theory when it “leads to a circle where theory is reinforced by experience conditioned by theory”. Home economists have not made sufficient use of *theoria* compared to the emphasis of *techné*. Subsequently engaging in any discussion and debate about the area of work claimed has been inadequate. This, according to Lather (1986), enables only a limited understanding in the field about how “[a]ny practice grounded in the presently dominant ideologies and attendant paradigms is not conducive to long-term sustainability of human kind” (p. 257). As a result, there are times when Home Economics professionals have been commandeered to facilitate work that is actually working against the interests of families (McGregor et al., 2004) thereby opposing the claimed ideal of the profession to work for families. This highlights the importance for finding a middle ground that accommodates the ethical utilisation of both *theoria* and *techné*. It is possible to find this in *praxis*.

Table 4 Home Economics as Aristotelian human action—*phronesis*

Form of Home Economics Action as Phronesis	<i>Praxis</i> : morally committed action
Focus on Everyday Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>valuing home life and families for more than their contribution to paid work role and consumerism.</li> <li>helping families help themselves become empowered as contributing world citizens.</li> </ul>
Interdisciplinary and integrative/Holistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>commitment to integrative, holistic, interdisciplinary practice.</li> <li>pay attention to the problems families encounter daily and inter-generationally.</li> <li>generate a knowledge base that is used for the current accepted social end of the profession: well-being and quality of daily life</li> </ul>
Prevention, Education and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work with families to instil a preventative approach to living day-to-day</li> <li>work with families to develop a focus on evolution and progress, especially as regards the improvement of the range and critique of choices available for everyday life (development)</li> </ul>
Systems of Action (technical, interpretative and critical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adapt to change by gaining deeper understandings and insights into values, attitudes and meanings, leading to stronger familial relationships</li> <li>engage in social action and change power relationships to improve the human condition for everyone.</li> <li>reasoned action-think about something before acting.</li> </ul>
Practical Perennial Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>approaches to solving perennial problems have to change because context changes.</li> <li>assumptions are undermined-i.e. what once worked will automatically work again.</li> </ul>
Critical Reflective Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage in morally defensive, ethical practice guided by critical, personal reflection.</li> <li>engage in dialogue in communities of practice.</li> <li>critique current social and political contexts leading to insights into pervasive power relationships that serve an elite few.</li> </ul>
Functional Definition of Families as social institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work with families as the basic democratic institution underpinning society—the cornerstone of civilisations, deserving of support</li> </ul>
Profession as a holistic system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate professional leadership when our philosophy, theory/knowledge and practice intersect.</li> <li>ensure integrity of our practice using this unique, ethically responsible approach.</li> </ul>

Based on Carr (2009), Kinsella and Pitman (2012) and McGregor (2010).

Since McGregor (2010) is claiming that Home Economics, as a profession, is informed by values such as social justice and equity and peace, these values not only position the profession within boundaries of particular theory but these same values also identify the *moral-ethical* and *moral-political* stance of the profession. As a profession Home Economics has long since claimed a social justice agenda, as events such as Lake Placid occurred in a

time when women were typically and routinely excluded from normal (democratic) social life including voting, higher education, professional careers or any employment after marriage. In looking to what home economists do, McGregor describes a substantial body of action that is readily claimed as *praxis*, as evidenced in Table 4. Lather (1986, p. 262) observes that “[f]or praxis to be possible, not only must theory illuminate the lived experience of progressive social groups; it must also be illuminated by their struggles”. This is clearly evident in the professional practice described in Table 4.

IFHE (2008, p. 1) articulates the position that “Home Economists are concerned with the empowerment and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, and of facilitating the development of attributes for lifelong learning for paid, unpaid and voluntary work; and living situations”. It is this position that requires action that is *praxis*. Clearly there is both a *moral-ethical* and *moral-political* stance being taken here (Thompson, 1988, 1992). There is nowhere for home economists to hide if they are seeking to avoid difficult conversations or to claim that they don’t get involved in politics. If we are to work with every family then we need to know that:

- Social justice and equity are pre-requisites for health (WHO, 1986) and education,
- Poverty in every form or manifestation is bad for health and therefore those living in low and middle socio-economic circumstances experience illness and disease disproportionately to the wealthy (Renwick, 2013, 2014), and
- There is a relationship between socioeconomic background and how well young people do at school. For example, in Australia teachers may have a class consisting of students aged up to 18 months apart in chronological age but will have to cater for a difference in performance that can be up to three years (Thomson, De Bortoli, Nicholas, Hillman & Buckley, 2010; Wood, 2003).

Who, if not home economists, are in a better position to work with and for families, to not only develop skills that can improve daily life but to do so in a way that changes their world for the better? Surely this is critical if the profession is to rightly claim professional leadership and integrity (Brown, 1980, 1985; McGregor, 2008; Smith, 2004; Turkki, 2008; Vincenti et al., 2004). In reality the eight unique contributions of Home Economics provided by McGregor (2010) and the associated descriptions and justifications makes a strong case for Home Economics professional practice as *phronesis*, and therefore a need for closer consideration of what we actually do while also thinking about what we do, that is *praxis*.

Engaging in professional practice is a struggle (Peterat, 1989; Smith, 2004) “to become, and to be, the excellent, skilled, and moral practitioner of his or her trade or occupation” (Macklin, 2009, p. 88) and draws on all three of the Aristotelian human actions to be realised. To engage in professional practice does not require the professional to be consciously aware of their use of these three actions at any one time. However to deny each and all, is to ignore what is both possible and needed in claiming that the work is professional. For home economists to engage in professional practice we have to identify what is the *good* that is being sought (Brown, 1980, 1985, 1993; Peterat, 1989; Smith, 2004; Thompson, 1988, 1992; Vincenti, 1990) and to make decisions about which options and resources are available and

how they are used. For home economists this *good* is about engaging in professional practices that are critical to working with families, we aim to empower.

## Conclusion

This paper has described the relationship between profession and practice using Aristotle's human actions. McGregor's eight unique contributions made by Home Economics were interrogated using a hermeneutic cycle to determine the extent to which they intentionally focus on the wellbeing of others—a key attribute of a profession. To do this a profession must be able to demonstrate shared work and principles that reflect a moral commitment. The very first issue of this journal focused on the launching of the IFHE position statement: Home Economics in the 21st Century, a policy document for Home Economics together with contributions from numerous home economists globally explores this very idea. The unique contributions developed by McGregor when analysed as Aristotelian human actions is another facet that supports the various claims that Home Economics is a profession.

While Home Economics has much to claim as professional practice we, as a profession, need to engage in practice in ways that acknowledge not only what is done but why and for what purpose (Peterat, 1989; Thompson, 1992). The conceptualisation of Home Economics through Aristotle's human actions provides insights into our work, as social practice, that is guided by moral agency. As a profession Home Economics has been and continues to be contested by those within but usually in response to those outside the field. As a result practitioners are adept in defending the value of Home Economics. On the other hand practitioners have also been complicit in making Home Economics an agency of hegemonic demands and thereby not acting in the interests of those individuals, families and communities we have professed to work for. By exploring and developing our professional practice through *techné*, *episteme* and *phronesis* home economists are in a strong position to engage in reflective practice (Smith, 2004; Thompson, 1988, 1992). If, as Higgs (2012) contends, practice is a pre-cursor of knowledge then Home Economics as a profession has plenty to draw from in order to understand and develop its own *praxis*.

## Biography

*Dr Kerry Renwick is a lecturer in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia University. Her research areas include critical pedagogies; health education and promotion; and food and nutrition education. In an Australian context, she has served on the boards of the Victorian Home Economics and Textiles Teachers' Association (VHETTA) and the Health Education Association of Victoria (HEAV) including a term as President. Kerry was instrumental in the development and introduction of Home Economics as a secondary specialisation in the Bachelor of Education (P-12) at Victoria University, Melbourne Australia. kerry.renwick@ubc.ca*

## References

- Anders Ericsson, K. (2008). Deliberate practice and acquisition of expert performance: a general overview. *Academic Emergency Medicine*, 15(11), 988-994.

- Apple, M. W. (2008). Controlling the work of teachers. In D. J. Flinders & S. J. Thornton (Eds.), *The Curriculum Studies Reader* (pp. 199-213). Routledge.
- Bartlett, R.C., & Collins, S.D. (2011). Outline of Nicomachean Ethics. In *Aristotle's Nicomachean ethics*. University of Chicago Press, 2011.
- Bredo, E. (2006). Philosophies of educational research. In R.K. Yin, J.L. Green, G. Camilli, & P.B. Elmore (Eds.). *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 3-31). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brennan, M. (2009). Steering teachers: Working to control the feminized profession of education. *Journal of Sociology*, 45, 339-359.
- Brown, M. M. (1980). *What Is Home Economics Education?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Brown, M. M. (1985). *Philosophical studies of Home Economics in the United States: Our practical-intellectual heritage* (Vols. 1 and 2). East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.
- Brown, M. M. (1993). *Philosophical studies in Home Economics: Basic ideas by which home economists understand themselves*. Michigan State University.
- Bryman, A., Bell, E., & Teevan, J.J. (2012). *Social research methods* (3rd Canadian ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Carr, W. (2006). Philosophy, Methodology and Action Research. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 40(4), 421-435.
- Carr, W. (2009). A Postmodern Perspective on Professional Practice. In B. Green (Ed.), *Understanding Researching Professional Practice* (pp 55-64). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Davis, M.L. (2008). On Identifying our Profession. *International Journal of Home Economics* 1(1), 10-17.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (Vol. 3). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.
- East, M. (1980). *Home Economics—Past, present, and future*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Eisner, E. (2002). From episteme to phronesis to artistry in the study and improvement of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education* 18, 375-385.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Herder and Herder.
- Freire, P. (1972). *Cultural action for freedom*. Ringwood, VIC: Penguin.
- Gallagher, A. (2004). Dignity and respect for dignity—two key health professional values: implications for nursing practice. *Nursing ethics*, 11(6), 587-599.

- Giroux, H. A., & Giroux, S. S. (2006). Challenging neoliberalism's new world order: The promise of critical pedagogy. *Cultural Studies↔Critical Methodologies*, 6(1), 21-32.
- Green, B. (2009). Understanding and Researching Professional Practice. In B. Green (Ed.), *Understanding Researching Professional Practice* (pp. 1-18). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Handley, K., Sturdy, A., Fincham, R., & Clark, T. (2006). Within and Beyond Communities of Practice: Making Sense of Learning Through Participation, Identity and Practice. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(3), 641-653.
- Harding, S. (2013). Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What Is "Strong Objectivity"? In L. Alcoff, & E. Potter, (Eds.) *Feminist Epistemologies* (pp. 49-82), New York, NY: Routledge.
- Higgs, J. (2012). Realising practical wisdom from the pursuit of wise practice. In E.A. Kinsella & A. Pitman (Eds.) *Phronesis as Professional Knowledge* (pp. 73-86). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Hodelin, G.B. (2008) Recasting Home Economics for the twenty-first century. *International Journal of Home Economics* 1(1), 18-22.
- Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA). *Home Economics-Home Economics Profession*. Retrieved from: <http://www.heia.com.au/home-economics-profession>
- International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) (2008). *Home Economics in the 21st Century*, IFHE Position Statement 2008.
- International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) (n.d.). Mission Statement. Retrieved from [www.ifhe.org/127/](http://www.ifhe.org/127/)
- Kemmis, S. & Grootenboer, P. (2008). Situating praxis in practice: Practice architectures and the cultural, social and material conditions for practice. In S. Kemmis & T. J. Smith (Eds.) *Enabling praxis: Challenges for education* (pp. 37-62). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Kemmis, S. (2010a). What Is Professional Practice? Recognising and Respecting Diversity in Understandings of Practice. In C. Kanes (Ed.), *Elaborating Professionalism, Innovation and Change in Professional Education* (Vol 5) (pp 139-165). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Kemmis, S. (2010b). Research for praxis: knowing doing. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 18(1), 9-27.
- Kemmis, S. (2012). Researching educational praxis: spectator and participant perspectives. *British Educational Research Journal*, 38(6), 885-905.
- Kemmis, S., Wilkinson, J., Edwards-Groves, C., Hardy, I., Grootenboer, P., & Bristo, L. (2014). *Changing Practices, Changing Education*. Singapore: Springer.
- Kieren, D., Vaines, E., & Badir, D. (1984). *The home economist as a helping professional*. Winnipeg, MB:Frye Publishing.

- Kincheloe, J. (2003). Critical ontology: Visions of selfhood and curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 19(1), 47-64.
- Kinsella, E.A., & Pitman, A. (2012). Phronesis as professional knowledge: Implications for education and practice. In E.A. Kinsella & A. Pitman (Eds.) *Phronesis as Professional Knowledge: Practical Wisdom in the Professions* (pp. 163-172). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Kinsella, E.A. (2012). Practitioner reflection and judgement as phronesis: A continuum of reflection and considerations for phronetic judgement. In E.A. Kinsella & A. Pitman (Eds.) *Phronesis as Professional Knowledge: Practical Wisdom in the Professions* (3pp. 5-52). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Lather, P. (1986). Research as Praxis. *Harvard Educational Review*, 56(3) August, 257-277.
- Macklin, R. (2009). Moral judgement and Practical reasoning in Professional practice. In Bill Green (Ed.) *Understanding Researching Professional Practice* (pp. 83-100). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- McGregor, S.L.T. (2008). Future proofing: Transdisciplinary ambassadors for the human condition. *International Journal of Home Economics* 1(1), 25-31.
- McGregor, S.L.T. (2010). Name Changes and Future-proofing the Profession: Human Sciences as a Name? [online]. *International Journal of Home Economics*, 3(1), 20-37..
- McGregor, S.L.T., Baranovsky, K., Felicia Eghan, F., Engberg, L., Harman, B., Mitstifer, D., Pendergast, D., Seniuk, E., Shanahan, H., & Smith, F. (2004). A Satire: Confessions of Recovering Home Economists. *KON Human Sciences Working Paper Series*. Retrieved from: <http://www.kon.org/hswp/archive/recovering.html> .
- McGregor, S.L.T., Pendergast, D., Seniuk, E., Eghan, F., & Engberg, L. (2008). Choosing our future: Ideologies matter in the Home Economics profession. *International Journal of Home Economics* 1(1), 43-62.
- Pendergast, D. (2002). Marginal Subjects: Towards a Site of Possibility in the teaching of Home Economics. In Yin Cheong Cheng (Ed.), *Subject Teaching and Teacher Education in the New Century: Research and Innovation*. (pp. 375-408). The Hong Kong Institute of Education & Kluwer Academic Publisher.
- Perzeszty, A. (1984). Economics, Home Economics and the "New" Home Economics. In P. Thompson (ed.) *Home Economics Teacher Education: Knowledge, Technology and Family Change, Yearbook 4*. (pp. 195-214). Teacher Education Section, American Home Economics Association.
- Peterat, L. (1989). Service or transformative Knowledge? The Potential of Home Economics. *Journal of Vocational Home Economics Education* 7(1), 71-79.
- Reid, J. & Green, B. (2009). Researching from the Standpoint of the Practitioner. In B. Green (Ed.) *Understanding Researching Professional Practice* (pp. 165-184). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Renwick, K. (2013). Food Literacy as a form of critical pedagogy: Implication for curriculum development and pedagogical engagement for Australia's diverse student population. *Victorian Journal of Home Economics*, 52(2), 6-17.

- Renwick, K. (2014). Critical health literacy: shifting textual-social practices in the health classroom. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education*, 5(3), 201-216.
- Richards, M. V. (2000). The postmodern perspective on Home Economics history. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 92(1), 81.
- Saltmarsh, S. (2009) Researching context as a "practiced place". In B. Green (Ed.) *Understanding Researching Professional Practice* (pp. 153-164). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Saugstad, T. (2002). Educational theory and practice in an Aristotelian perspective. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 46(4), 373-390.
- Schön, Donald A. (1995). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Smith, T. W. (1999). Aristotle on the Conditions for and Limits of the Common Good. *American Political Science Review*, 93(3), 625-636.
- Smith, M.G. (2004). Reimagining Home Economics as a Vital Force in Education. In M.G. Smith, L. Peterat, & M.L. de Zwart, (Eds.), *Home Economics Now: Transformative practice, ecology, and everyday life; a tribute to the scholarship of Eleanore Vaines* (pp. 99-110). Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press.
- Stage, S. (1997). What's in a name? In S. Stage, & V.B. Vincenti (Eds.) *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the history of a profession* (pp. 1-13). Cornell University Press.
- Thompson, P. J. (1988). *Home Economics and feminism: The Hestian synthesis*. Home Economics Publishing Collective.
- Thompson, P. J. (1992). *Bringing Feminism Home: Home Economics and the Hestian Connection*. Home Economics Publishing Collective.
- Thomson, S., De Bortoli, L., Nicholas, M., Hillman, K., & Buckley, S. (2010). *Challenges for Australian education: results from PISA 2009: the PISA 2009 assessment of students' reading, mathematical and scientific literacy*. Retrieved from: <http://research.acer.edu.au/ozpisa/9>.
- Tribe, J. (2002). Education for ethical tourism action. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 10(4), 309-324.
- Turkki, K. (2008). Home Economics—a dynamic tool for creating a sustainable future. *International Journal of Home Economics* 1(1), 32-42.
- Vaines, E. (1990). Philosophical Orientations and Home Economics: an introduction. *Canadian Home Economics Journal*, 40(1), 4-11.
- Vincenti, V. B. (1990). Home Economics in Higher Education: Communities of Convenience or Purpose? *Home Economics Research Journal*, 19(2), 184-193.

Vincenti, V., Smith, F., & Fabian, C. (2004). Critical science: What it could offer all family and consumer sciences professionals. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 96(1), 63-70.

Winstanley, D., & Woodall, J. (2000). The ethical dimension of human resource management. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 10(2), 5-20.

Wood, D. (2003). Effect of Child and Family Poverty on Child Health in the United States. *Pediatrics*, 112, 707-711.

World Health Organisation (WHO) (1986). *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/ottawa/en/>

## Activity level as correlate of post-pregnancy anthropometric changes among women

Patricia Mbah

Michael Okpara University of Agriculture

---

### Abstract

*The study was carried out to determine the effect of activity levels on anthropometric changes among women. Women of varying parities (n=300) were selected randomly by means of multistage cluster sampling of which 50 women were nulliparous (no child), 70 had one child, 86 had 2-3 children while 94 had 4 children or more. Activity level (AL) was estimated from the calculation of energy expended (EE) of the women per day while the anthropometric status was estimated with the measurement of body mass index (BMI). The results of the study showed that energy intake of the women were not significantly affected by parity although highest energy intake was observed for women with 4 children or more ( $P>0.05$ ). The percentage of women who were overweight was 38.7% while 35.3% women were obese. About 25.6% of women had normal weight. The mean weight, BMI, Waist circumference, Hip circumference and WHR (Waist Hip Ratio) of the women were 79.14kg, 28.39cm, 98.0cm, 124.69cm and 0,812 respectively. The effect of parity on these anthropometric measurements of women was highly significant ( $P<0.01$ ) on mean body weight, BMI, waist and hip circumference. Women with 4 children or more had the highest significant mean body weight, BMI, waist and hip measurement ( $P<0.05$ ). The results also indicated a significant increase in mean body weight, BMI, waist and hip measurement with increasing parity. There was also a significant ( $P\leq 0.05$ ) increase in energy expended with increased parity. Women with 4 children or more had the highest mean EE (3404.80 kcal) while nulliparous women had the lowest mean EE (2192.44 kcal). AL correlated positively with anthropometric status of all the women. The trend of these results indicate a need for programmed nutrition counselling for women with varying parities to avert impending complications associated with overweight and obesity.*

**Key words:** activity-level, anthropometry, post-pregnancy, women

### Introduction

Activity level and post-pregnancy anthropometric changes among women of varying parities indicates that maternal experience may be critical period for the establishment of weight gain and obesity among women. Women of child bearing age who actively performed the reproductive roles of pregnancy, lactating or weaning are considered as nutritionally vulnerable especially in developing countries of the world (Kawatra & Sehgal, 2004). Women's bodies react differently before and after childbirth and motherhood present a great

challenge. Pregnancy is noted to be one of the major causes of changes in physical structure in women (Rosenberg & Keteyian, 2003).

Physical activity plays a critical role in obesity development in Africa because urban women are more sedentary than their rural counterparts (Mokhtar, Elati, Chabir, & Bour, 2001). Sedentary lifestyles are increasingly involved in the prevalence of obesity (Taubes, 1988) The process of modern transport, labour saving devices, and TV viewing, has brought about a number of consequences affecting physical activity patterns that contribute to obesity (Goldblutt, Moore & Stunkard, 1995).

Martinez and Fruhbeck (1999) showed that age is an important aspect affecting the number of hours spent sitting down at work, in leisure time as well as the time spent walking. Also, that the proportion of individuals not participating in any sport increases with age. Increasing physical activity patterns are considered a major modifiable factor affecting excessive body weight gain, and key goal in reducing obesity rates (Barlow & Dietz, 1998).

### Physical activity patterns

Physical activity is described as a rating of how much energy a person expends within a specific period of time (CDC, 2005). Physical activity when properly practiced leads to physical fitness (Prentice, 2005). Over the years, large number of studies evaluating Westernised dietary changes in various population in developing countries have been carried out, but little is known about the physical activity levels (PAL) in these populations (Torun et al., 1996; Stein, Johnson & Greiner, 1988) which has been said to be due to difficulties in measuring total daily energy expenditure in free-living situations (WHO, 1998). PAL is needed to quantitatively compare the patterns of physical activity between urban and rural dwellers that shared the same genetic traits and cultural background (often seen in rural-urban migrants and rural residents of the same group), which would be useful for determining the effect of urbanisation (Yamauchi, Umezaki, & Ohtsuka, 2001). The PAL is useful as it allows for comparison of individuals of different body size. PAL values are a universally accepted expression of energy expenditure and help to convey easy understanding of the concept of physical activity pattern (Ferro-Luzzi & Martino, 1996). PAL values also provide an insight in understanding physical fitness. According to Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2005) the terms in Table 1 are commonly used in discussion of exercise and physical activity.

Table 1 Exercise and physical activity terms

Term	Meaning
Physical activity	Physical activity is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in an expenditure of energy.
Physical fitness	Physical fitness is a set of attributes a person has in regards to a person's ability to perform physical activities that require aerobic fitness, endurance, strength, or flexibility and is determined by a combination of regular activity and genetically inherited ability.
Regular physical activity	A pattern of physical activity is regular if activities are performed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most days of the week, preferably daily</li> <li>• 5 or more days of the week if moderate-intensity activities (in bouts of at least 10 minutes for a total of at least 30 minutes per day) or</li> <li>• 3 or more days of the week if vigorous-intensity activities (for at least 20-</li> </ul>

	60 minutes per session).
<b>Moderate-intensity physical activity</b>	<p>Moderate-intensity physical activity refers to a level of effort in which a person should experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some increase in breathing or heart rate</li> <li>• The effort a healthy individual might expend while walking briskly, mowing the lawn, dancing, swimming, or bicycling on level terrain, for example.</li> <li>• Any activity that burns 3.5 to 7 Calories per minute (kcal/min).</li> </ul>
<b>Vigorous-intensity physical activity</b>	<p>Vigorous-intensity physical activity may be intense enough to represent a substantial challenge to an individual and refers to a level of effort in which a person should experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large increase in breathing or heart rate</li> <li>• A <i>perceived exertion</i> e.g. the effort a healthy individual might expend while jogging, mowing the lawn with a no motorised push mower, participating in high-impact aerobic dancing, swimming continuous laps, or bicycling uphill, carrying more than 11.4kg up a flight of stairs, standing or walking with more than 23kg for example.</li> <li>• Any activity that burns more than 7 kcal min</li> </ul>

Source: Centres for Disease Control and Prevention

## Ways of monitoring physical activity intensity

To determine whether a person's pulse heart rate is within the target zone during physical activity.

### Moderate-intensity physical activity

A person's target heart rate should be 50 to 70% of his or her maximum heart rate. This maximum rate is based on the person's age. An estimate of a person's maximum age-related heart rate can be obtained by subtracting the person's age from 220. For example, for a 50-year-old person, the estimated maximum age-related heart rate would be calculated as  $220 - 50 = 170$  beats per minute (bpm). The 50% and 70% levels would be:

- 50% level:  $170 \times 0.50 = 85$  bpm, and
- 70% level:  $170 \times 0.70 = 119$  bpm

Thus, moderate-intensity physical activity for a 50-year-old person will require that the heart rate remain between 85 and 119 bpm during physical activity.

### Vigorous-intensity physical activity

A person's target heart rate should be 70 to 85% of his or her maximum heart rate. To calculate this range, follow the same formula as used above, except change 50 and 70% to 70 and 85%. For example, for a 35-year-old person, the estimated maximum age-related heart rate would be calculated as  $220 - 35 = 185$  beats per minute (bpm). The 70% and 85% levels would be:

- 70% level:  $185 \times 0.70 = 130$  bpm, and

- 85% level:  $185 \times 0.85 = 157$  bpm

Thus, vigorous-intensity physical activity for a 35-year-old person will require that the heart rate remain between 130 and 157 bpm during physical activity (CDC 2005).

### **Justification of the study**

There are metabolic changes during pregnancy and lactation, which result in higher intake of nutrients (Prentice, 2005). Could these demands be responsible for the prolonged effect, which results in changes in anthropometry with parity? Lack of physical activity has been seriously implicated as one of the predisposing factors for general increase in an individual's body fat (CDC, 2005). Could activity level be responsible for the anthropometric changes among the post pregnant women in Lagos State? The specific justification for this study therefore was to determine the influence of activity level on post-pregnancy anthropometric changes among nulliparous and multiparous women in mainland local government area of Lagos state.

### **Objective of the study**

The general objective of this study was to determine how physical activity affects anthropometric changes among women of different parities in Mainland Local Government area of Lagos State.

The specific objectives were to:

- Assess the differences in the activity level of nulliparous women and women with varying parities in Lagos State.
- Determine the correlation between BMI, Waist Hip Ratio (WHR) and activity level of women with varying parities and compare them with nulliparous women.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

The following research hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. There will be no significant difference in the activity level of nulliparous women and women with varying parities.
2. There will be no significant relationship among body mass index, waist/hip ratio and activity level of nulliparous women and women with varying parities.

### **Materials and methods**

This study was carried out in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State. Lagos Mainland Local Government Area is centrally located in Lagos State ranging from the popular Oyingbo market through old Yaba road, Murtala-Mohammed Way, which is parallel to Herbert Macaulay road and terminates at the well-known Ikorodu road (NPC, 1991). Mainland Local Government is selected for this survey because it is one of the oldest and centrally located LGA in Lagos state.

Mainland Local government is one of the Local Government Areas in Lagos State with two development councils namely Yaba and Ebute-Metta. Mainland LGA has 32 identified communities 25 (78%) of which are urban. The rests are semi-urban. The LGA has one general hospital 10 health/maternity centres, 128 registered private hospitals, 58 public Primary Schools and 33 public Secondary Schools (CERUD, 1993).

### **Study design**

The survey design employed to investigate the post-pregnancy changes in anthropometry and among women in Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State with a structured interview technique developed to obtain information on the respondent's demographic data, behavioural data, anthropometric data and activity level as it relates to parity.

### **The population**

The population of women in Lagos State is 2,714,512 out of which 205,335.25 reside in Lagos Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State. (NPC, 1991). The projection for 2002 for Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State as recorded by NPC (1991) was 387,425.

### **The sample**

The sample for the study consisted of those women within the age group of 15-49 years of age. The figure was given by NPC (1991) as 96,081.4, which is 24.8% of the population of Mainland Local Government Area. 1% of 96,081.4, is approximately 960. Out of this, 300 women were selected through multi-stage cluster sampling.

Multistage cluster sampling is a complex form of cluster sampling where by using all the selected clusters may be prohibitively expensive or not necessary. Under these circumstances, multistage cluster sampling becomes useful. Instead of using all the elements contained in the selected clusters, the researcher randomly selects elements from each cluster. Comprising 50 women without children (Nulliparous), 70 with one child, 86 with 2-3 children and 94 with four children or more.

### **Measuring instruments**

The following measuring instruments were employed during data collection.

- A digital scale for weight
- A flexible non-stretch tape for waist/hip
- A graduated vertical measuring rod for height

### **Activity level**

The activity levels of the subjects were calculated based on the energy expenditure of each respondent per day. This was done using Bowman (2001) formula:

$$\text{Energy used} = \text{BMR} + \text{PAL}^* + \text{TEF}^{**}$$

where BMR (basal metabolic rate) for intensive activity =0.605, moderate activity= 0.554 and 0.404 for light activity.

\*pal= physical activity level, \*\*thermal energy of food.

Subjects were asked to report time spent on activity carried out.

## Results

Table 2 contains results on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents presented in frequency and percentages.

Table 2 Demographic and socio economic characteristics of respondents

A. Age	Frequency	Percent
<20	12	4.0
20-24	24	8.0
25-29	78	26.0
30-34	90	29.5
35-39	51	17.5
40-44	45	15.0
Total	300	100%
B. Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Non-formal Education	24	8
Primary	30	10.0
Secondary	126	42.0
Tertiary	120	40.0
Total	300	100%
C. Profession	Frequency	Percent
Trading (Self-Employed)	165	55
Paid Employment	54	18
Students	81	27
Total	300	100%
D. Family Monthly Income	Frequency	Percent
N5,000	18	6.0
N6,000- N10,000	30	10.0
N11,000-N15,000	93	30.5
N16,000-N20,000	138	46.0
>N21,000	21	7.5
Total	300	100%
E. Parity Level	Frequency	Percent
None	50	16.7
1 Child	70	23.3
2-3 Children	86	28.7
4-Children or more	94	31.3
Total	300	100%
F. Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	198	66.0
Unmarried	87	29.0
Divorced	15	5.0
Total	300	100%

In the table below, 4% of the respondents that participated in the study were below 20 years of age, 8% of them were between 20 and 24 years old, 26% of them were between 25 and 29 years; 29.5% were between 30 and 34 years of age; 17.5% of them were between 35 and 39 years old, whereas 15% of them were between 40 and 44 years old.

In terms of education, 8% of the respondents did not have any formal education; 10% of them had only primary education; 42% had both primary and secondary education; while 40% had up to tertiary education. 55% of the respondents were self-employed, while 27% were still in school.

Table 2 shows that 6% of the respondents were on monthly income of N5,000; 10% of them were on monthly income range of N6,000 to N10,000; 30.5% of them were on monthly income range of N11,000 to N15,000, 46% of them were on monthly income range of N16,000 to N20,000, whereas 7.5% of them were earning N21,000 or more monthly.

Further analysis reveals that 66% of the respondents were married, 29% were single parents, while 5% were divorcees.

### Bio data Of Respondents

Table 3 Behavioural characteristics of Respondents

A. Physical Activity	Frequency	Percent
Light	159	53.5
Moderate	78	26.0
Intensive	63	20.5
Total	300	100%
B. Use Vitamin Supplement	Frequency	Percent
Yes	138	46.0
No	168	54.0
Total	300	100%
C. Lactation Duration	Frequency	Percent
< 1 month	33	11
1-6 months	63	21
7-12 months	84	28
13-18 months	54	18
19-24 months	16	5.3
Not yet bearing children	50	16.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

Result on the mean, standard deviation, maximum, and minimum weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), waist, and hip and waist-hip ratio of women in Lagos state are shown in Table 3. The mean weight of women investigated in this study was 79.14kg and the mean BMI of the women was 28.39. The waist and hip measurement of the women had mean of 98.0cm and 124.69cm respectively. Also, the mean waist and hip ratio was 0.81.

The effect of parity on anthropometric measurement of women in Lagos state was highly significant at  $P < 0.01$  on mean body weight, BMI, waist circumference and Hip circumference. However, parity had no significant effect on mean waist–hip ratio of the women (Table 4).

**Table 4** Descriptive analysis of anthropometric measurement of women in Mainland LGA. Anthropometric measurement and status of women in Mainland Local Government Area in Lagos state as affected by parity.

Anthropometry	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Weight (kg)	46.3	112.5	79.14	12.50
BMI	16	49	28.39	5.37
Waist (cm)	65	130	98.0	13.88
Hip (cm)	85	155	124.69	13.65
WHR	0.60	0.812	0.706	0.39

Women with 4 children or more had the highest significant mean body weight, BMI, waist and hip measurement. Also as parity increases, there is a significant increase in mean body weight, BMI, waist and hip measurement. The nulliparous women had the lowest significant ( $P < 0.05$ ) mean body weight; BMI, waist and hip measurement compared to women with at least a child. However, parity had no significant effect on mean WHR of the women involved in this study (Table 5 below).

**Table 5** Effect of parity on Mean Body weight, BMI, waist, Hip and Waist-Hip Ratio (WHR) of women in Mainland Local Government in Lagos state.

Parity	Body weight(kg)	BMI	Waist (cm)	Hip (cm)	WHR
0	59.53d	20.90d	75.65d	104.10c	0.74a
1	73.44c	26.49c	96.32c	123.43b	0.78a
2-3	80.61b	29.77b	105.44b	130.10b	0.81b
4	92.49a	32.55a	108.66a	133.55a	0.88b

Means with the same letter(s) in columns do not differ significantly based on Duncan multiple range test at  $P < 0.05$ .

The Body mass Index status of the women investigated was analysed as shown in Figures 1 and 2 below. On the overall, 77 of the women had a normal BMI and were significantly smaller in number compared to those that were overweight (116) and obese (106). (Figure 1).

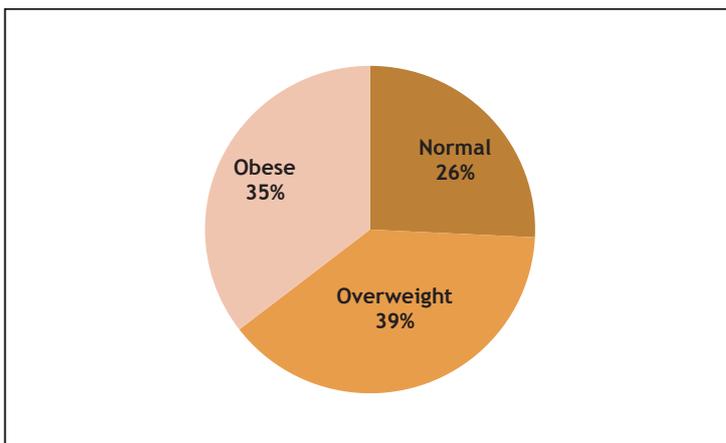


Figure 1 Overall Body Mass Index status of women in Lagos state.

Further analysis showed that the 50 nulliparous women involved in this study had normal BMI. The number of women with normal BMI decreased as the parity (for women with 2-3 children and women with 4 or more) increased as shown in Figure 3. In addition, the number of overweight and obese women increased as parity increased, with the highest number of obese women found among those with parity 4 or more (Figure 2).

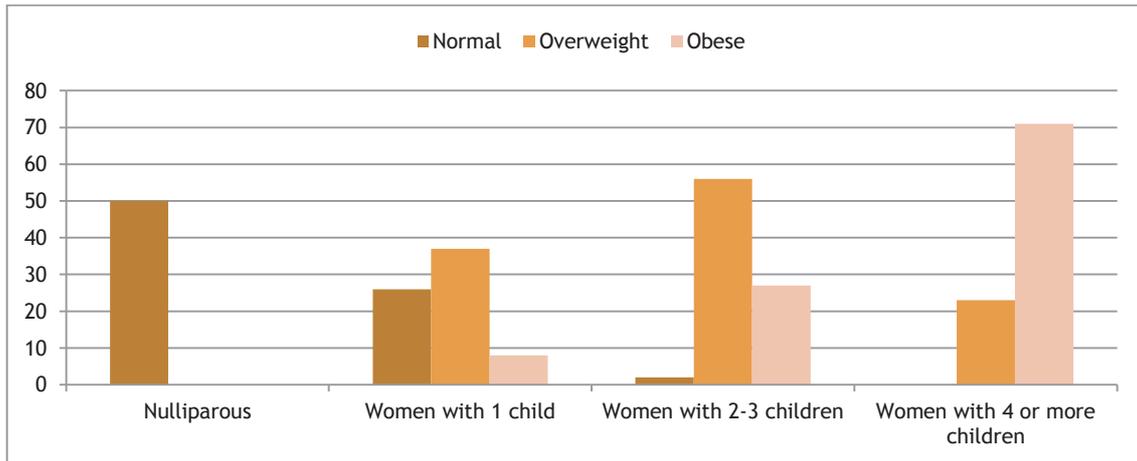


Figure 2 Effect of Parity on Body Mass Index (BMI) of women in Lagos state.

The status of the women with respect to waist-hip ratio was analysed and the result are contained in Figure 3 below. Most of the nulliparous women (46) had ideal WHR compared to women with at least one child. The number of women with overweight WHR status significantly increased with parity, while within the category of women with 2-3 and women with 4 or more children, there was no significant ( $P > 0.05$ ) difference in the number of women with ideal and overweight WHR status.

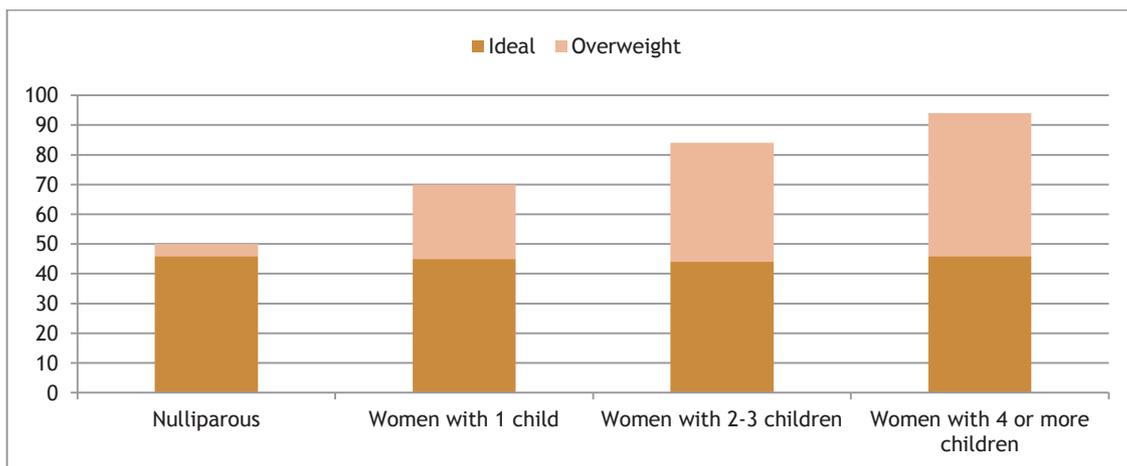


Figure 3 Effect of Parity on Waist-hip ratio status of women in Lagos state.

**Activity level of nulliparous women and women with varying parities**

Parity effect on energy expenditure was significant at  $P < 0.01$ . Women with parity 4 expended the highest energy (mean = 3404.80 kcal) followed by women with 2-3 children (mean =

3009.28) and the lowest energy expenditure was expressed by the nulliparous women (mean = 2192.44). Also, energy expenditure was significantly lower among nulliparous women compared to women with at least one child as shown in Table 5.

#### Activity level of nulliparous women and women with varying parities

Parity effect on energy expenditure was significant at  $P < 0.01$ . Women with parity 4 expended the highest energy (mean = 3404.80 kcal) followed by women with 2-3 children (mean = 3009.28) and the lowest energy expenditure was expressed by the nulliparous women (mean = 2192.44). Also, energy expenditure was significantly lower among nulliparous women compared to women with at least one child as shown in Table 5.

**Table 6** Effect of Parity on energy expenditure of nulliparous women and women with varying parities in Lagos state.

Parity	Mean Energy expenditure
Nulliparous	2192.44d
Women with a Child	2704.68c
Women with 2-3 children	3009.28b
Women with 4 or more children	3404.80a

Means with the same letter are not significantly different based on Duncan Multiple Range Test at  $P < 0.05$ .

#### Correlation of activity level and anthropometric parameters of women with varying parities

The results of correlation matrix among BMI, parity and activity level of women involved in this study are contained in Tables 7 to 11 below. The relationship between parity and BMI was positive and significant ( $P < 0.01$ ) with r-value of 0.74. Similarly, Parity correlated positively and significantly with activity level of women with r-value of 0.902 (Table 7).

**Table 7** Overall correlation of nutrient intake, BMI and activity level of nulliparous women and women with varying parities

		Energy intake	Parity	Activity level	BMI
Energy intake	Pearson Correlate	1	0.037	0.053	0.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.52	0.361	0.948
	N	300	299	299	0.299
Parity	Pearson Correlate	0.037	1	.902*	.740*
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.52		0	0
	N	299	299	299	299
Activity level	Pearson Correlate	0.053	.902*	1	.736*
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.361	0		0
	N	299	299	299	299
BMI	Pearson Correlate	0.004	.740*	.736*	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.948	0	0	
	N	299	299	299	299

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 8: Correlation of BMI and activity level of nulliparous Women

		Energy intake	Activity level	BMI
Energy intake	Pearson Correlate	1	0.1	0.079
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.488	0.586
	N	50	50	50
Activity level	Pearson Correlate	0.1	1	0.241
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.488		0.092
	N	50	50	50
BMI	Pearson Correlate	0.079	0.241	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.586	0.092	
	N	50	50	50

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 9 Correlation of Nutrient intake, BMI and Activity level of Women with Child.

		Energy intake	Activity level	BMI
Energy intake	Pearson Correlate	1	-0.046	-0.232
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.708	0.053
	N	70	70	70
Activity level	Pearson Correlate	-0.046	1	0.086
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.708		0.479
	N	70	70	70
BMI	Pearson Correlate	-0.232	0.086	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.053	0.479	
	N	70	70	70

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 10 Correlation of nutrient intake, BMI and activity level of women with 2-3 Children.

		Energy intake	Activity level	BMI
Energy intake	Pearson Correlate	1	-0.002	.275*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.989	0.011
	N	85	85	85
Activity level	Pearson Correlate	-0.002	1	0.115
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.989		0.294
	N	85	85	85
BMI	Pearson Correlate	.275*	0.115	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.011	0.294	
	N	85	85	85

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 11 Correlation of nutrient intake, BMI and activity level of Women with 4 or more children

		Energy intake	Activity level	BMI
Energy intake	Pearson Correlate	1	0.039	-0.138
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.709	0.185
	N	94	94	94
Activity level	Pearson Correlate	0.039	1	0.358
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.709		0
	N	94	94	94
BMI	Pearson Correlate	-0.138	.358*	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.185	0	
	N	94	94	94

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## Conclusion and recommendations

This study has succeeded in examining the relationship between activity level and post-pregnancy anthropometric indices among childbearing age women in Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State. The survey results indicated a significant change in the anthropometric characteristics of the post-pregnant women in Lagos State when compared to nulliparous women. Weight gain is observed in this study to be a function of individual increase in sedentary activity as the situation may demand. Although results of the study revealed increase in BMI with increasing parity. However, multiparous women seem to engage in more intensive activities than the nulliparous women.

The survey on anthropometric changes and activity level of post pregnant women presented a clue to the relationship and variation among different BMI and activity levels of women. The results from the study survey equally recorded that with increasing parity there is tendency to increasing BMI and physical activity level (PAL). This study therefore recommends as follows:

- There is an urgent need for adequate non-formal awareness campaign on increased activity level for childbearing age women.
- Nutrition education should be given a boost with emphasis on how it affects anthropometric status of childbearing age women.
- Physical activity in form of routine exercise awareness campaign should be given a boost.
- Physical activity should be encouraged in line with adequate nutrient intake.
- Women should be counselled to understand the need for exercise during their physiological and vulnerable stages.

## Biography

*Patricia Etuna Mbah (PhD, MSc, M.Ed., BSc/Ed) is a Professor of Home Economics. She believes and advocates the vision and mission of the philosophy*

and objectives of Home Economics. She commenced her working career after graduation and National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) with the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria as a Lecturer in 1993 and, having reached the pinnacle of academic progression in the College of Education system in 2005 she joined Michael Okpara University of Agriculture in search of academic satisfaction and to engage in more challenging academic research and development. Patricia currently heads the Home Economics/Hospitality Management & Tourism department among other responsibilities. She is also the liaison co-ordinator for International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) for Nigeria.pat\_mbah@yahoo.com

## References

- Barlow, S.E, & Dietz, W. H (1998). Obesity evaluation and treatment; expert committee recommendations. *Paediatrics* 102, 29-32.
- Bowman, B.A, & Russell, R.M (2001). *Present Knowledge in Nutrition* (8th ed., pp. 406-531) ILSI Press Washington DC.
- Centre for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] (2005). Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/nccphp/dnpa/physical/terms/index.htm>.
- CERUD (1993) *Investment opportunities and Prototype Development Projects study*. (pp. 111-121) Lagos State Government: Centre for Rural Development, Lagos State University, Ojo (1993).
- Ferro-Luzzi, A., & Martino, L. (1996). *Obesity and physical activity in the origin and consequences of obesity*. Ciba foundation Symposium no 201, pp. 207 -227
- Goldblutt, P.B., Moore, M.E, & Stunkard, A.J. (1995). Social Factors In Obesity. *JAMA* 191, 1039-1044.
- Kawatra, A., & Sehgal, S. (2004). Nutrient Intake Of Lactating Mother From Rural And Urban Areas. *Indian Journal of Social Research* Vol. 39 (2), 91-99.
- Martinez, J.A., & Fruhbeck, G. (1999). Regulation of Energy Balance and Adiposity: a model with new approaches. *J. Physiol Biochem.* 52, 255-258.
- Mokhtar, N., Elati, J., Chabir, R., & Bour, A. (2001) *Diet culture and obesity in Northern Africa*. Symp: Obesity in Developing Country Am. Soc. For Nutr. Sc. 3166(01), pp. 887S-9005.
- National Population Commission [NPC] (1991). *National Population Commission Final Results of 1991*. Population Nigeria. p.10
- Prentice, A. (2005) *Calcium Requirement in Pregnancy and Lactation*, Nutrition Foundation of India October 2005.
- Rosenberg, R.A., & Keteyian, S.J. (2003). *Fundamentals of Exercise Physiology for Fitness, Performance and Health*. McGraw Hill Companies, New York.

- Stein, T.P, Johnson, F.E, & Greiner, L. (1988). Energy Expenditure and Socioeconomic status in Guatemala as Measured by the doubly labelled water method. *Am. J. of Clinical Nutrition*, 47, 196-200.
- Taubes, B. (1998). As obesity rates rise, experts struggle to explain why. *Science* 280, 1367-1368.
- World Health Organisation Expert Committee (1998). *Physical Status: The Use and Interpretation of anthropometry*, Geneva; WHO.
- Yamauchi, T., Umezaki, M.M., & Ohtsuka, R. (2001). Influence of Urbanisation on physical activity and dietary changes in Huli-speaking population: a comparative study of village dwellers and migrants in urban settlements. *British J. of Nutrition* 85, 65-73.

#### Website

For more information please visit the International Journal of Home Economics website: <http://ijhe.weebly.com/index.html>

#### Frequency of publication

The International Journal of Home Economics is published twice a year. Papers for review will be accepted throughout the year to e-mail: [intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com](mailto:intjournalhomeeconomics@gmail.com)

#### Focus

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

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

#### Contributors

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

#### Author's biography

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

*Professor Donna Pendergast, PhD is Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. Donna researches and writes about Home Economics philosophy, education and practice. Donna recently completed her 4-year term as Vice President of the Pacific Region and member of the IFHE Executive. She continues to serve the profession as Chairperson of the IFHE Think Tank Committee and Editor of the International Journal of Home Economics. She has served as National President of the Home Economics Institute of Australia, and President of the Queensland division.*

## Manuscripts

Manuscripts should be sent electronically to Professor Donna Pendergast, School of Education by e-mail at [d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.pendergast@griffith.edu.au). Please send files as Microsoft Word documents (doc, docx) or in Rich Text Format (rtf). Paper length should not exceed 6000 words. Each document should be double-spaced, with generous margins.

A standard coversheet must be submitted with all manuscripts. It is available from the IFHE website and from here: <http://ijhe.weebly.com/index.html>.

Papers submitted without coversheets will be returned to authors. A separate first page should include the full title, a short title for use as a running head. The title should not exceed 10 words (50 characters), and should be followed by an abstract of 100-200 words and up to five keywords. Material which requires substantial editing will be returned to the author.

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

## Editorial assistance

Sue L. T. McGregor PhD (Professor Emerita) is offering her services as an editor and proof reader to help people get their manuscripts ready for submission for peer review (or graduate papers, reports, book chapters, theses, dissertations). If you are interested, contact her directly to negotiate a price that reflects the nature of your job. [sue.mcgregor@msvu.ca](mailto:sue.mcgregor@msvu.ca), [www.consultmcgregor.com](http://www.consultmcgregor.com), Canada country code +1902-823-2625, Skype: sue.mcgregor7

## Tables, figures and illustrations

Figures, diagrams and images must be cited in text and captions provided. Figures should be at a professional standard and **supplied as separate electronic files** (e.g., TIF, JPG, GIF). Tables must be cited in text and captions provided. **Include all tables, figures and illustrations in the correct location in the manuscript. All tables should be in text, not provided as an image.**

## References

References should follow the American Psychological Association system (APA Publications Manual, 6th Edition).

The details required for books are:

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

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

The details required for journals are:

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

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

### **Copyright**

Manuscripts submitted for publication must not have been previously submitted or published. Accepted papers become the permanent property of IJHE. By submitting a manuscript, the author(s) agree that copyright for their articles are automatically transferred to the IJHE, if and when articles are accepted for publication. The copyright gives IJHE the exclusive rights to reproduce and distribute the article.

### **Proofs**

Proofs will be sent electronically to the corresponding author for return within 72 hours. It is the author's responsibility to ensure the accuracy of these proofs. Correction other than printing errors should be kept to a bare minimum.

IJHE