

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CARIBBEAN
EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL HOME ECONOMICS
SYLLABUS AND SCHOOL-BASED
ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to make the system of education in the English-speaking Caribbean more relevant to Caribbean needs, a change from the British system was made. A representative group of Caribbean educators and administrators was invested with the responsibility for guiding and managing the development of syllabuses and examinations for each subject studied in the Caribbean high schools. This group was expanded into the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). The CXC worked in conjunction with teachers to plan for a Caribbean based curriculum. Teachers in the Caribbean cooperated in territorial sub groups by the subjects they taught, to develop curricula for use in secondary education. The Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) is the body now responsible for Caribbean education affairs instead of the Universities of London, Oxford, or Cambridge in the United Kingdom.

The establishment of the CXC has led to a number of changes in Caribbean education. The changes have been introduced at different stages over the ten year period of the CXC's existence. Reactions to the changes are consistent with their introduction. Some changes are still new and interesting to teachers. Studies are now being developed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the CXC system. No studies have been completed in home economics as yet. Teachers are anxiously looking forward to information that will reinforce or guide their

approach to home economics, using the CXC syllabus and School-Based Assessment (SBA) guidelines.

The CXC is the examining board for graduating secondary school students. The CXC was formally established in 1973. It offers secondary certification at the basic level for entry into employment and at the general level for entry into employment and higher education. A two year syllabus must be completed by the students before they are eligible to write the final examinations.

The home economics syllabus was put into effect in 1980 and the subject became examinable in 1982. The annual CXC newsletter 'CXC News', among other things, offers a progress report on reactions to the syllabus and the evaluation techniques for school based coursework. The newsletter gives information about reactions to the syllabus and data needed by teachers to help them use the CXC materials. Information from 'CXC News' is used for in-service workshop sessions for teachers by their individual ministries and by CXC for materials revision. An investigation of teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the syllabus and SBA materials over the period 1981-1983 is now needed to provide information for new workshop sessions for teachers. This information would be valuable for future 'CXC News' publications for home economics. This study of teachers' perceptions could be used for CXC planning and the introduction of new literature to help teachers to use the syllabus and SBA materials more effectively.

Significance of the Study

The Caribbean region has a mixed heritage with cultural traditions handed down by African slaves and Asian immigrants, the Dutch, the

French, the Portuguese, the South American Indian, and the British who as the last colonisers have the strongest influence on the countries in the Caribbean. This diversity of tradition leads to differing perspectives in some situations. Home economics because of its people-oriented nature, is very susceptible to cultural diversity. Home economics is often perceived as a medium for passing on and maintaining the culture of a society. More than any other subject it is likely to show differences in perspective.

Teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of curriculum materials and their acceptance of the materials, can influence the teaching of home economics and student performance in a significant way. Since the examinations developed by the CXC seek to measure student performance in home economics, a study of teachers' opinions of the usefulness would provide valuable information for decision making. Constant revision of the materials is necessary to ensure its effectiveness in meeting curriculum goals. The study could detect areas needing change and initiate revision for improved quality.

Statement of the Problem

This study is aimed at assessing Caribbean home economics teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the CXC syllabus and school-based assessment guidelines. The results of this study could provide timely and helpful information for CXC decision-makers and Caribbean home economics teachers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine teachers' perceived usefulness of the objectives,

- content, and SBA guidelines.
2. To examine the effect of teachers' use of the syllabus and SBA guidelines on their teaching methods and use of teaching resources.
 3. To determine the influence of selected variables, such as age of teacher; years of study; size of class; years of teaching experience; in-service programs related to CXC; and teaching qualifications; on teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the syllabus and SBA guidelines.
 4. To make recommendations based on the findings of the study to CXC decision makers and participators as a basis for curriculum and syllabus revisions.

Hypothesis

1. There are no significant differences in the usefulness of the CXC content, objectives, and SBA guidelines as perceived by teachers working in any English-speaking Caribbean country.
2. There is no relationship between teachers' perceived usefulness of the syllabus and its effect on teaching methods and resources.
3. There is no relationship between students' performance on the CXC examination and teachers' perceived usefulness of the CXC materials.
4. There is no significant relationship between the selected variables of age, experience, in-service CXC workshops, class

size, enrollment, teaching qualifications, and teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the materials.

Assumptions

It was assumed that:

1. Teachers' opinions are a strong indicator of the usefulness of syllabus materials.
2. Teachers' responses to the questionnaire reflect their honest agreement or disagreement with the questions.
3. Student performance is related to teacher/student interaction with the syllabus materials.
4. The instrument is a valid means of determining teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the materials.
5. That the variables selected have the most pertinent influence on the syllabus units.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study is restricted to teachers in the English speaking Caribbean who use the CXC materials.
2. The study is limited to questionnaire type research with responses which are restricted to selected statements.
3. Student achievement in home economics can only be generalized in terms of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines which have been used for 1982-1983.

Definition of Terms

Syllabus - the term used for the program of study to be followed by

students to directly fulfill examination requirements.

Caribbean region - countries of the former British West Indies, Guyana in South America, Belize in Central America, and The Turks and Caicos islands.

School-based assessment guidelines (SBA) - instructions for teachers to assign grades to students on projects done as a part of the in-school course work component to complete the syllabus content.

Student performance - observable or measurable work produced by students in response to the course outline.

Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) - the official examining board of educators responsible for administering and scoring examinations in the English speaking Caribbean.

External examination - organized measurement of student performance conducted outside of the normal school evaluation.

Perceptions - teachers' opinions of the related information.

Procedure of the Study

The methodology chosen for the study was a survey. It was conducted to determine teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines and the relationship of their perceived usefulness on the use of teaching methods and teaching resources.

1. A brief introduction was written to give the background of the study; explain the function of the CXC; and the relevance of the study to home economics.
2. A review of literature was centered around the history of the CXC; the development of the syllabus; the rationale behind the subject areas of home economics chosen for teaching; and a

review of curriculum development and evaluation to establish the key concerns of the study.

3. The objectives of the study were planned and a questionnaire developed to elicit data on teachers' background, opinions of the syllabus and SBA guidelines, and students' examination results. The questionnaire was pilot tested in stages by international graduate students who had taught in the British system, and Caribbean teachers working in the USA. The advisory committee reviewed the questionnaire. The results of the pilot test and the revisions of the advisory committee were incorporated in the questionnaire.
4. The questionnaire was developed with the use of the Likert-Scale in order to present the opinions of the teachers on the usefulness of the CXC materials. Items of the same quality were incorporated to achieve consistency. The items were developed so that teachers would use the whole range of the Likert-Scale in their responses and avoid rote checking of the statements. The scale ranges from strongly agree 1 to strongly disagree 5 on the items. Some items give directions which would receive reverse scores in the computations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE CARIBBEAN SYLLABUS

In order to ascertain the breadth and direction of the CXC syllabus and School-based Assessment guidelines in terms of modern curriculum development, a review of the principles of curriculum development and evaluation follows. The review looks at trends in curriculum evaluation and curriculum development.

The need for relevance in the content of home economics makes it necessary for the curriculum to be constantly updated. The field of home economics must keep abreast of trends so that the teaching of its subject matter meets the needs of the society. Home Economics curriculum development has established competencies which are needed for better teaching of home economics (Lee, 1961). The concepts and generalizations compiled for introduction into the home economics curriculum (AHEA, 1967) support home economics as in the forefront of curriculum development since it was one of the first subject areas to develop curriculum materials for competency based education (Home Economics Teacher Educators, 1978). An important competency intrinsic to preparation in home economics is the ability to plan and organize a curriculum that is of service to the community. The curriculum aspect of home economics is of major importance since it is the most effective instrument for helping people to adapt to time and place (Hatcher,

1973). Continual curriculum reviews and development are crucial to the aims, goals, and objectives of home economics.

Trends in Curriculum Development

The curriculum can be described as a way of preparing young people to contribute to their culture (Taba, 1962). The curriculum is also considered as an organization of assessed needs, desired outcomes, and planned instruction involving the social and personal interests of the group to be served (Unrah, 1975). A well planned and organized curriculum is essential to meet the aims of the program of study. If one conceives of curriculum development as a task requiring orderly thinking, one needs to examine the order in which decisions are made (Taba, 1962). This ensures that all relevant considerations are brought to bear on the decisions and the way in which they are made. Thus the Taba model of curriculum development gives a step by step sequence to establish an orderly method of approaching curriculum development. This sequence is given as diagnosing needs; formulating objectives; selecting content; organizing learning experiences; deciding what to evaluate and identifying methods of evaluation.

The Zais' eclectic model retains all the elements of Taba's sequence but arranges the elements in a parallel sequence which allows for interrelatedness (Zais, 1976). The model shows four parts of the curriculum process which are the aims, goals, and objectives; content; learning activities; and evaluation. Underlying the four elements are the curriculum foundations. These are identified as the nature of knowledge; society/culture; the individual; and learning theory.

The foundations are themselves derived from broader philosophical assumptions. Zais suggests that philosophical assumptions can and do influence value judgements made about the four foundations listed earlier. The model only attempts to portray the parts of the curriculum 'in static terms' which, according to Zais, can be manipulated by the developer as necessary. The major forces that influence the substance and design of a curriculum are present in the model along with the main variables and the relationships planners need to consider.

An essential part of curriculum development activity in the initial stage is "creating the master plan" (Hunkins, 1980). In generating this master plan, Hunkins suggests that curriculum developers need to identify the main tasks necessary for developing, implementing, evaluating, and maintaining the curriculum instructional plan - the curriculum program. The Hunkins curriculum model has seven major stages. These stages are curriculum conceptualization; legitimization; diagnosis, development and experience selection; implementation; evaluation; and the maintenance of the curriculum system. Evaluation during the curriculum development and summative evaluation are a part of the total planning activity which fits into the cycle to feed data into adjusting and reviewing the quality of the program.

Vocational Curriculum Development

The Battelle Columbus Laboratories Study (p. 16) proposes a curriculum sequence that is specifically directed to vocational and technical education. The first step is expanded beyond a mere diagnosis of needs as done in the Taba model. The diagnosis of needs

is extended to include administrative decisions for curriculum organization and implementation as well as identification of constraints. The curriculum organization takes into account the individual characteristics of the learner and the performance objectives and their measures of achievement. Both of these contribute to meeting learner needs. Identifying and planning learning experiences is the next step. Incorporated in this step is the development of strategies; instructional methods to achieve learner objectives; and the development of evaluation measures for student performance. Support needs in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other facilities precede implementing the courses and programs. Two phases of evaluation conclude the sequence. The first phase is evaluating student performance through achieved objectives and occupational goals such as job placement, job performance, and employer satisfaction. The last phase is program evaluation. It can be used in both formative and summative ways. The Battelle Study offers a comprehensive curriculum sequence which can be related to most aspects of vocational and technical curriculum development and review.

The vocational and technical curriculum can be enhanced by a systematic approach to curriculum development. This method uses a combination of resources to limit academic failure, extend efficiency, and reduce training time (Tracey et al., 1968). The systematic approach uses comprehensiveness and interdependence in its stages, components, and concepts. This technique aids in better identification of the stages of program evaluation of the measureable outcomes (Wall, 1973). A logical process is followed in the systems approach. It sets

the solution to curriculum problems against a background of relevant conditions, values, and development trends. All these contribute to analysis and the constant improvement of programming and instruction in vocational education (Tracey, 1968).

The vocational/technical curriculum must be data based, dynamic, explicit in its outcomes, fully articulated, realistic, student oriented, evaluation conscious, and future oriented if it is to be successful (Finch and Crunkilton, 1979). It is based not only on what a person should know but on what a person should do. The stages of curriculum activity must be purposeful because the curriculum is designed to do something. Objectives indicate what is to be done in the curriculum.

Curriculum Direction by Objectives

An objective is a statement of intent, communicated to describe the change expected of learners when they have successfully completed a learning experience (Mager, 1962). Performance objectives determine the mastery to be achieved by the students. They are extremely useful in curriculum because they identify the acceptable level of performance. Objectives help to make activities explicit and clarify directions for educators and administrators as well as learners (Davies, 1976). Objectives are concerned with the tactics and achievement of intermediary targets which lead to the anticipated ends as set out by curriculum aims, goals, and objectives (Hunkins, 1980).

The development of performance objectives is an integral part of the vocational and technical curriculum. Objectives have a special relationship to educational goals. Bloom and others in their taxonomy

of educational objectives outline three major categories of objectives: the cognitive, psychomotor, and the affective. The cognitive domain deals with knowledge, comprehension, application, synthesis, and evaluation. The psychomotor domain includes perception through the sense organs; mental, physical, and emotional set (readiness for a particular action); guided responses; mechanism; and complex overt response. The psychomotor is involved with motor and manipulative skills. The affective domain is concerned with values, attitudes, appreciations, and interests which are described as receiving (attending); responding; and valuing (Bloom, Krathwohl, Masia, 1964). The need for a fourth domain was identified to cover areas which Bloom et al. had not developed sufficiently. The perceptual domain categorizes objectives in areas concerned with sensation; figure perception; symbol perception; perception of meaning; and perceptive performance (Moore, 1967). These various categories of objectives are used to give specific directions towards meeting the educational goals of the vocational and technical curriculum.

Uniqueness is an integral part of the vocational curriculum since it thrives on relevance (Finch and Crunkilton, 1979). Any justification of the use of objectives in the curriculum must take into account the notion of relevance. Objectives are relevant if they can be demonstrated to show their connection to the real world and the problems that actually face people. They must establish how they are relevant and to whom they are relevant. The advantage of relevance is the clarification they give to planners' intentions (Davies, 1976).

The planning of instructional objectives is a key factor in systematic curriculum development and evaluation. Objectives are

stated in the instructional form to guide the planning of instruction, the selection of resource materials, and the choice of teaching strategies. Instructional objectives are also useful for assessing student performance and the evaluation of teaching effectiveness (Hannah and Michaelis, 1977). Objectives are the means of collecting data which can be used to make a judgement about curriculum directions after curriculum development has taken place.

Summary

Curriculum development is concerned with the social and educational interaction of students. Regardless of the curriculum model used, the system must be directed at serving the needs identified based on the philosophical ideas related to students and the society. The curriculum must prove its relevance to the society's needs with clear statements of intentions that can be met by the instructional process. Evaluation is an integral part of curriculum development and will serve to assure on-going quality in curriculum development.

Evaluation in the Curriculum

Evaluation is an important part of curriculum development from two standpoints. It determines the extent to which educational objectives are achieved (Tyler, 1950) and it focuses on collection of data for decision making (Stufflebeam and others, 1971). Evaluation maintains the credibility, effectiveness, efficiency, and practicality of the curriculum. It sustains curriculum quality and detects problems that could influence that quality.

Defining Evaluation

The use of the term evaluation can cover a variety of meanings leading to evaluating anything about the school curriculum: its objectives, scope, personnel, students, importance of various subjects and the extent to which objectives are put to use (Taba, 1962).

Evaluation is defined by Sax (1974) as a process through which a value judgement or decision is made from a variety of observations and from the background and training of the evaluator.

Evaluation is primarily concerned with decision making (Stufflebeam, 1971). The process is directed at obtaining and providing useful information for making decisions. It is a continuing activity involving many methods, steps, and operations. The activity is centered around collecting, organizing, analyzing, and reporting data to fit into systems and subsystems that meet the needs and goals of evaluation. Stufflebeam claims the data is useful when it meets the predetermined criteria developed through the interaction between evaluator and client. The descriptive or interpretive data collected leads to decision making when it presents a choice of alternatives on which to act. Evaluation can be seen not as one process (Hunkins, 1980) but as a cluster of processes used to determine whether the curriculum in its design, development, and innovation, is fulfilling the aims and expectations of the curriculum developers.

The Process of Evaluation

The process of evaluation should be continuous and an integral part of curriculum development and instruction. Evidence of progress,

strengths, and weaknesses are needed throughout the period of use (Taba, 1962). The appraisal of the educational effectiveness of a curriculum, its instructional materials and procedures should be conducted as a continuous process. Educational evaluation must be a systematic process of determining the effectiveness of educational endeavors in the light of evidence (Ahman and Glock, 1981).

An important part of evaluation is the process of attributing value to intentions, actions, decisions, performances, process, people, and objects. It requires understanding if the result is aimed at improvement and is dependent on accurate data collection. Thus the process of evaluation related to the collection of accurate and useful information is a central part of meeting evaluation goals. The goal of evaluation is to use the accurate information provided for improving understanding and facilitating decision making (Davis, 1980).

The Purpose of Evaluation

Rossi and Freeman (1982) suggest that one purpose of evaluation is to judge the worth of ongoing programs and estimate the usefulness of attempts to improve them. A second purpose is to assess the quality of innovative programs and initiatives and in addition, to increase the effectiveness of program management and administration. Meeting various accountability requirements is another important purpose in evaluation. The purpose of evaluation influences the type of evaluation that is to be done. There are several evaluation models which can be chosen to fit the particular situation, its concerns, and issues. The CIPP (content, input, process, product) model is useful for decision making and accountability purposes. Stake's responsive

model is designed to fit the needs and concerns of the client. The flexibility of the responsive model makes it valuable for meeting any number of purposes (Guba and Lincoln, 1982).

It is possible through evaluation to record in what respect the curriculum is effective and where it needs improvement (Tyler, 1970). The record must take into account the extent to which instructional objectives have been achieved and the process of making an assessment of student growth (Cross, 1973). Evaluation is often associated with the assignment of grades to students-product evaluation. This is only one aspect of evaluation. The program, process, and the product contribute to the basis for evaluation decision making. In occupational home economics, planning new programs; instituting program changes; making better use of resources; and developing in-service programs for teachers are all parts of the evaluation process (Terrass and Comfort, 1979). The main goal of process evaluation is to detect or predict defects in the procedural design of the program and determine if it is being implemented as planned (Wentling and Lawson, 1975). The teacher's effectiveness is a part of the procedural design for the implementation of the curriculum. Thus evaluation gives the teacher the opportunity to consider and correct deficiencies (Popham, 1973).

Central to any evaluation is the teacher's role in the instructional process. A teacher who has accepted but not understood a curriculum idea can by some "strange inverted alchemy" render it useless (Beeby, 1966, p. 36). Changes in the educational process are most often reflected by teachers' approach to "developments in educational media" (Crabtree and Hughes, 1969). In service education becomes essential when new concepts and methods are put into use. Teachers

are capable of "exerting considerable control over the destiny of an innovation" (Helsel, 1972, p. 68). They can choose not to use it or to sabotage it by careless and indifferent implementation if they are not convinced of its usefulness. The diagnostic function of evaluation can be directed towards identifying teachers' familiarity with, and use and acceptance of, curriculum materials.

Summary

Evaluation is an integral part of curriculum development because it provides information for sustaining and renewing the curriculum. Regardless of the wealth of terms used in defining evaluation, the purpose of the evaluation maintains the unity of the concept. The purpose is to obtain accurate information to make a value judgement. Evaluation can be directed to assess a program, process, or product. The aims, goals, and objectives of the individual evaluation exercise determines the type of evaluation used, the information produced by the evaluation, and the judgement to be made. All the elements involved in curriculum contribute to the nature and result of the evaluation. The teacher's effectiveness is an important part of program evaluation, since the teacher controls the quality of the innovation of a program. All factors of the evaluation must be well coordinated to ensure the accurateness of the information obtained.

The Development of the Caribbean
Examinations Council Examination

Introduction

The Caribbean community has long recognized the need for setting

its own standards for the curriculum and evaluation of its high school students. The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) now functions as the regional body for conducting examination affairs in the Caribbean after two decades of deliberations by Caribbean educators to control the education system.

Caribbean education was the responsibility of the British colonizers since the 18th century. Ever since independence was granted to India in 1947 other colonies of the English Empire started to seek control of their countries' affairs. This became a reality for countries in the Caribbean in the early sixties. The granting of political independence ought to have been paralleled with the responsibility for education being solely in Caribbean hands but this did not occur.

The British System of Secondary Education

Caribbean schools are patterned after the British school system. Curriculum materials and organization of curriculum ideas are referred to as a syllabus. This is usually an outline of the topics within each subject area. These topics are taught during the school year and the syllabus may be covered over a period from two to five years (Beauchamp and Beauchamp, 1972). The British system is based on the use of external examinations to evaluate the performance level of each student who leaves secondary school. The examinations are prepared in individual subjects by the examination board. The boards are not connected to the secondary schools but are offshoots of the Universities which see these examinations as preparing students for entry into the Universities. The boards issue a syllabus developed by

the universities which in most cases is completed by schools over a two year period. Secondary school syllabuses are guided by the external examination syllabuses which are either the General Certification of Education ordinary or advanced level, or the Certificate of Secondary Education. The choice of teaching materials is influenced by the needs of the examining boards (British Information Services, 1966). The British exported this system to the Caribbean countries of their empire. British universities administer secondary examinations in the Caribbean from their headquarters in either London or Cambridge. Thus Caribbean education was controlled externally by these examinations and internally by British oriented curricula.

Philosophical Issues in the Formation of the Caribbean Examinations Council

Many Caribbean patriots thought this system of education was not relevant to Caribbean needs, problems, or development. Their argument was that independence could not be complete while the curricula of their countries were still geared to British evaluation measures. Caribbean high school students were pursuing higher education in Britain because of their British based education and were coming back to the Caribbean to perpetuate the same cycle. Foreign examinations, examining boards, and universities should not control Caribbean curriculum directions (CXC, 1975).

Decisions on curricula, syllabuses, and measures of evaluation should be managed in the Caribbean, by Caribbean people. Doctor Eric Williams, first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago 1956-1980, proposed the idea of a Caribbean organization setting and marking

examinations with a Caribbean bias as early as 1946. Freedom from colonial conditioning can only be accomplished by having an education system truly rooted in Caribbean circumstances and managed by Caribbean peoples (Williams, 1968). Doctor William Demas, first director of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom), described the system as intolerable in the face of Caribbean cultural and intellectual independence (Demas, 1973).

The practice of external examining bodies directing Caribbean education is not in the best interests of high school students. These examinations are designed to meet the needs of only a few of the students since the British system was specifically designed to service its universities. The Caribbean students who will go the British university route to a higher education are in the minority. A syllabus that can only be interpreted in the light of a university entrance examination has no general usefulness for the high school population and its variety of aspirations (Walter, 1983).

Establishment of the Caribbean Examinations Council Board

The Caribbean advisory committee at its 7th meeting in Jamaica in July 1961, made a unanimous decision to set up a West Indian Examination council (CXC, 1975). The establishment of the West Indies Federation was the initial step in organizing a framework for regional educators to start discussions. These were carried on by the committee until the disbandment of the federation in 1962. Political incompatibility among the leaders caused the end of the talks. This delayed Caribbean cooperation on curriculum development

and evaluation. Another conference in 1964 restarted the talks which decided the form the education change should take and the site of the headquarters of the new Caribbean organization. In 1965 the Caribbean Free Trade Association (Carifta) was created and this Association provided a base for the cooperation of Caribbean leaders in planning for education (Archives Record, 1966).

The replacement of Carifta with the Caribbean Community and Common Market in 1973 provided a focal point for deliberation through a regional education desk within the Caricom Secretariat (Caricom News, 1974). The CXC had been formally established in 1972 with the signing of the Montserrat Accord. The agreement between fifteen English speaking countries - Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands (withdrew in 1977), Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Guyana, Montserrat, St. Kitts/Nevis/Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Turks and Caicos Islands set the seal for the existence of the CXC. The formal inauguration of the CXC was held in 1973 in Barbados (CXC, 1975).

Curriculum and Syllabus Development

The curriculum and syllabuses were compiled for English, Geography, Caribbean History, Integrated Science, and Mathematics. Panels were set up in each subject area to develop the syllabuses. Territorial sub-committees operated in each country to develop the curricula from which the syllabus would be compiled. Curriculum materials were assessed by the panels and decisions made about what was to be included in the two year course of study (SUBSEC Minutes, 1975). The panels and territorial sub-committees collaborated with the School Examinations Committee (SEC)

on how the syllabus should be evaluated. The draft syllabus and the corresponding evaluation techniques were pilot tested. Adjustments were made and the syllabus put into circulation. The first examinations were held in 1979. Home Economics, since it was not a subject area with a single distinct body of knowledge, skills and values presented a challenge. More time was needed to design a syllabus capable of meeting the needs of a Home Economics program for the Caribbean.

Home Economics Syllabus Development

A panel of eight Home Economists were selected with representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and the CXC headquarters and Western Zone office. The first meeting of the panel was held in August 1976. The terms of reference given by the council were:

- to draft syllabuses for implementation in September 1980.
- to suggest the role of Home Economics in the overall purpose of the educational process, including the interrelationship among subjects in the total school curriculum.
- to state the general objectives of the subject, skills to be learned, attitudes to be promoted, projects to be accomplished.
- to provide guidelines for syllabus implementation. For example appropriate texts and teaching strategies for the achievement of objectives.
- to make recommendations on the achievement of syllabus requirements.
- to offer suggestions on the evaluation of syllabus areas.

(Minutes of the panel meeting, 1976).

In the attempt to fulfill the terms of reference the panel elected to approach the problem by compiling a definition of Home Economics for the Caribbean. They then set out to put together all the Home Economics programs in the Caribbean so that the curriculum and syllabus that would be devised, would reflect Home Economics as it was taught in the majority of the countries. Evaluation techniques would be selected to match the new program. The panel members were each given responsibility for one or more territories. They were expected to visit each territory and with the help of the national committees, assess the state of Home Economics in the territories (Home Economics Panel, 1976).

Discussions and meetings were held with a wide sample of Caribbean Home Economics teachers through their ministries of education and their local associations where it existed. From the information requested and collected, the panel formulated a definition of Home Economics for the level of the subject required for the CXC evaluation (Panel Minutes, Second Meeting, 1976). The panel functioned as a curriculum development unit from this stage onward. Each territory was asked to submit its programs, a listing of facilities, personnel and other related statistics for the schools that would follow a secondary school Home Economics curriculum. The panel then followed a continuous system of concentrated and coordinated effort which selected, developed, and integrated materials from all the countries to produce a Home Economics syllabus acceptable to all the countries and an evaluation system which would be used by the CXC to assess student performances in Home Economics. This was executed with input from teachers,

education ministries, teacher training colleges, vocational and technical institutions and the universities (Panel Minutes, 1978).

The Home Economics syllabus was field tested at different stages. The result was then put into circulation. Three areas of the field were chosen to start with - management, clothing and textiles, and food and nutrition (Panel Minutes, 1979). Management was selected as the core subject. Its combination of family and child relations, housing, consumer education, family economics, and population studies among others made it ideal to establish the integrative function of Home Economics. The trial syllabus was accepted with very few modifications. In-service workshops were organized to familiarize teachers with the materials (CXC, 1980). Home Economics became examinable in 1982.

Philosophical Background to the Program Design

The definition put together by the panel describes Home Economics as a systematic study of the natural and social phenomena of the home and the family aimed at improving the quality of life. Its major concern is to help individuals to identify and develop attitudes, skills, values, and knowledge which will enable them to make a meaningful contribution to family and community life (Panel, 1977). It is organized around a study of the management function which is seen as using the mental skills of critical judgement and decision making based on a knowledge of wise consumer practices and an appreciation of the value of thrift and self-sufficiency (CXC, 1980).

In fulfilling the definition given, the Home Economics syllabus was designed to incorporate the disciplines inherent in the natural

sciences, the social sciences and the creative arts and build on them as the field of Home Economics usually does in a way that is applicable to the Caribbean lifestyle. These are applied through the management function as it relates to clothing, housing, food, and human relationships in the family and the wider community (Pollard, 1979).

Management Rationale

The management syllabus follows present day trends in Home Economics curriculum development. It is designed to expand on living or survival skills. It is not a new subject to the Caribbean Home Economics curriculum. The structure of management is different, but it should not appear wholly unfamiliar to Caribbean teachers (CXC Western Zone Office, 1978). Secondary Home Economics programs in the region pursue the areas of the management core as separate subject units. It is a significant part of Home Economics in many schools. As a skills based subject it is valuable for improving the lifestyle of the Caribbean community. The approach it takes is a disciplined and scientific one which will make a positive contribution to individual development (CXC, 1980). This approach could lead to the transference of order and organization to students' lives as citizens and as workers contributing to the growth of their society (Panel Minutes, 1977).

The Western Zone Office in presenting management as an examinable subject gave the rationale that management in combination with the other two areas would make a significant contribution to the development of Home Economics. It will meet the criterion for a vocational/technical program supplying knowledge and skills for specific occupations. Management will be useful for preparing school leavers for work

orientation and career advancement because of its strong emphasis on decision making, planning and organization (CXC, 1978). The syllabus prescribed for use in the high schools can aid in the strengthening of the position of Home Economics in the education system. It can reinforce the claims for recognition that Home Economics seeks and deserves.

Food and Nutrition

The food and nutrition curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for the acquisition of skills in the planning and presentation of foods. In developing the syllabus, the subject committee stated its purpose as a basic requirement for all round development of every student and their health and well being (Panel, 1978). In addition it prepares students for employment at the para-professional level as well as entry into further education. One of the reasons food and nutrition was selected as a single area to be studied was because of its importance in the cultural bonding of the Caribbean peoples. On another level, the problem of malnutrition is a serious one to developing nations. It is therefore essential that Caribbean education takes this into account. The school curriculum should provide the basic knowledge about foods and their properties and provide experiences geared towards ensuring attention is paid to nutritional standards throughout the Caribbean (CXC, 1980).

Clothing and Textiles

The rationale behind the clothing and textiles curriculum sees justification for boys and girls to be involved in the subject matter.

(Traditionally food and nutrition has been of more interest to male students.) Clothing is of primary interest to both sexes at this stage of their development. The elements of style, design, color, form, and coordination are interesting to teenagers as a part of their growing maturity. Psychologically, the study of clothing and textiles contributes to the development of social awareness, self concept and personal development. It can contribute to the ability to make wise choices in the care and use of fabrics and garments. The subject can instill an appreciation for beauty that comes from participating in the creative experiences the syllabus can offer. The syllabus is designed so that the student may be prepared for employment, continuing education and leisure (CXC, 1980).

Home Economics is seen as especially valuable to the high school student at the entry employment and the higher education level (Panel, 1970). The place of the Home Economics syllabus in the Caribbean education system is unquestionable. Its field of application which is the home is a primary and immediately accessible part of the student's life (CXC, 1980).

The Caribbean School System

In some Caribbean countries the students are expected to follow a general school curriculum for the first three years. The curriculum is usually developed through the ministries of education curriculum development units. The curriculum is then subject to modifications by the individual schools as the facilities of staffing, resource material, and physical conditions permit. In the last two years of schooling the student follows a syllabus that leads to a national or regional

examination which seeks to assess the student's level of achievement on his graduation from high school. The Home Economics students can choose to write any one of the three subjects or all of them (CXC, 1980). The two year CXC syllabus begins in the fourth year of the student's secondary education. It still follows the British system to that extent. The school curriculum is guided somewhat by the foundation knowledge students will need to have, to do well at the external examination.

The CXC certification, like the British system, is offered at two levels. The Basic Proficiency is suitable for terminal certification and as evidence that a student has completed a high school education. The General Proficiency is suitable for entry into higher education. Grades 1 and 11 of the Basic Proficiency are equivalent to the American high school diploma. Grades I to III of the General Proficiency are accepted for both employment and higher education.

Conclusion

Overseas education bodies recognize the General Proficiency as a qualification to most secondary school leaving certificates. The United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States are among those. The USA national council for the evaluation of foreign students credentials accepts two Basic Proficiency subjects at Grades 1 and 11 as equivalent to one General Proficiency subject at any of the upper grades (CXC, 1982). The CXC suggests that candidates aspiring to further study should take Home Economics management and either both or one of the other two areas (CXC, 1980).

Summary

This chapter looked at the history of the formation of the Caribbean examinations council, the British system on which Caribbean education was based and the philosophical ideas that led to an education system relevant to the Caribbean. The development of the home economics curriculum and syllabus is traced to its culmination into the CXC syllabus. The chapter has discussed the rationale behind the home economics subjects chosen. The aims of Management, Food and Nutrition and Clothing and Textiles were also discussed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study was to obtain information about teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the CXC syllabus and School based assessment (SBA) guidelines as preparation for measuring student performance in home economics. The syllabus was investigated by attention to specific areas - the content, objectives, the School based assessment guidelines, changes in teaching methods and resources, and student performance measured by grades received on the examination. Other selected variables were investigated for their influence on the use of the syllabus. The following objectives were used to give direction:

- To determine teachers' perceived usefulness of the objectives, content and SBA guidelines.
- To examine the effect and utilization of the syllabus on teaching methods and resources.
- To examine the relationship between teachers' perceived usefulness of the materials and student performance as measured by the examination.
- To determine the influence of selected variables such as age of teachers; years of study; size of class; years of teaching experience; CXC in-service workshops; and teaching qualifications on teachers' opinions of the syllabus and SBA

guidelines.

- To make recommendations of the findings, to CXC decision-makers and participators.

This chapter seeks to describe the methodology used in this study. It is divided into four sections. These sections are: the development of the instrument; the selection of the population; data collection and the methods used to analyze the data.

Development of the Instrument

The questionnaire was developed to gather data on teachers' opinions of:

- the home economics content as it is set out in the syllabus.
- the objectives which give direction for student learning.
- the SBA guidelines which describe the evaluation techniques to be used by teachers in marking and recording student coursework performance.
- the changes that might have taken place in the teaching of home economics through the use of the syllabus and SBA materials.
- and student performance at the basic and general levels of the CXC examination from grades 1 through 5.

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit background information and identify extraneous influences on the data. The section includes: age and years of teaching; country of residence; teaching qualifications and years of study; population of school and surrounding community; secondary school enrollment and average class size; percentage of participation in the CXC; and numbers of students

by grades received at the examination.

The second section was formulated to assess use of the syllabus, sample assignments, self-constructed assignments and the SBA guidelines for student evaluation on coursework. Teachers were asked to give opinions of the syllabus on:

- the content of the syllabus as a guide for curriculum planning for their classes.
- whether or not the CXC objectives were achievable, relevant to home economics, and the community or country environment, and the goals of home economics in that community.
- what are the perceived effects of the syllabus and SBA guidelines on preparation and teaching strategies and resources.
- how useful is the information provided by the SBA guidelines for setting and marking course work assignments.

Additional comments were requested from teachers on any of the sections of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was developed using a Likert-Scale to organize the data in a computable system. Items were stated so that teachers were encouraged to use the entire range to respond and to prevent rote checking of the statements. Six items gave directions which would be scored in reverse order compared to the other statements.

To facilitate the SAS statistical computations, numerical values were assigned to all the possible responses in the questionnaire. The assignment was arranged so that items 2, 4, 6, 17, 26, and 34 received the reverse scores. Disagreement with these items represented an agree score in the computations. The following table explains the values given to the degrees of opinions (Table I).

TABLE I
VALUES GIVEN TO LIKERT-SCALE

	Reverse Values	Positive Values
Strongly Disagree	1	5
Disagree	2	4
Undecided	3	3
Agree	4	2
Strongly Agree	5	1

Some of the items were developed so that the ratings on one would be the same as rating on the other if the teacher were answering accurately. A number of items of the same quality were introduced in the questionnaire in accordance with Best (1981) who suggests that the reliability of a test may be raised by increasing the number of items of equal quality. The questionnaire was planned so that the teachers' consistency of response could be monitored.

General comments were assigned a value which only served to indicate the absence or presence of a comment. All comments were recorded as stated to provide support information for the recommendations to CXC decision makers.

The questionnaire was tested by a group of six people made up of international graduate students from Africa and the Caribbean and ex-Caribbean teachers working in the United States. All members of

the group had taught under the British system. The group was asked to check for language use, clarity of the questions, directness and precision of the questions, and relevance and purpose of the questions. The investigator's advisory committee reviewed the questionnaire and added their suggestions. Revisions were made and the final questionnaire produced.

Selection of the Population

The CXC provided a list of 156 schools in the English speaking Caribbean who participated in the CXC examination and who had used the syllabus and School-Based Assessment guidelines.

The territories were stratified according to the number of schools participating in the CXC examination in each territory. There are 3 strata (A, B, and C). In stratum C participation ranged from 1-15 schools. In stratum B participation ranged from 16-25 schools and in stratum C were antigua and Barbuda, Belize, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Stratum B was made up of Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago. Jamacia was the only country in stratum A and had more than twice the number of participating schools than any other territory. Strata C and B were sent questionnaires for each school in the group while stratum A was sent questionnaires for a random sample of half its participating schools. Stratum A was sent the largest number of questionnaires (Table II). The effect of stratification in this design is to adjust for the number of schools and the sizes of these schools.

TABLE II
NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES SENT AND RECEIVED

Country	Questionnaires Sent	Questionnaires Received
Antigua and Barbuda	8	7
Barbados	18	0
Belize	3	1
Guyana	25	24
Jamaica	36	28
St. Lucia	3	2
Trinidad and Tobago	25	0
St. Vincent and The Grenadines	3	2
TOTAL	121	64

April 31st was the deadline date.

Collection of Data

Questionnaires for each school in each territory were sent to the CXC registrar of that territory. Letters seeking permission from the ministry of education in that country and giving information on the distribution and return of the questionnaires accompanied the questionnaires. On receipt of permission, the CXC registrar was directed to mail the pre-addressed envelopes containing the questionnaires to the schools named. The respondents were asked to return questionnaires to

to the CXC headquarters in Barbados because this was a central point for most of the countries. The questionnaires were hand collected from CXC by a correspondent of the researcher.

Reminders were sent one month after the questionnaires were mailed along with letters to contact persons in each country to encourage a greater number of responses. Seventy-eight questionnaires were recorded as having been received. Thus the possibility existed that replies would come from 78 individuals. Of the teachers receiving questionnaires, 64 responded. Due to a change in school policy, some teachers did not use the CXC materials or participate in the CXC examination as planned. Therefore, of the 64 responses, 3 were unusable. Thus 93.75 per cent of the responses were useable for the study.

Analysis of Data

The analysis of the data was conducted by computing percentages to give information about the subjects to be surveyed. Percentages were also used to analyze the teachers' responses to individual items concerned with the content, objectives, SBA guidelines, preparation for teaching and the use of teaching methods and resources. The data was collapsed in cases where variables such as grades and opinions were investigated as part of a two way analysis.

Table III presents an analysis of the data collected.

TABLE III
DATA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis	Questions Used for Analysis	Statistical Analysis
One	1-34	One way analysis of variance and LSD test
Two	35-53	Pearson Chi square
Three	1-34 and basic/general grades	Pearson Chi square
Four	Age, country, qualifications teaching experience, years of study, syllabus use, population, enrollment, class size, in-service workshops	Two way analysis of variance

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the CXC materials. In addition the influence of selected variables was investigated to determine their relationship to teachers' opinions. The hypotheses investigated were:

- H₁ There are no significant differences in teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and school-based assessment guidelines.
- H₂ There are no relationships between teachers' opinions of the CXC materials and changes in teaching methods and resources.
- H₃ There are no relationships between the selected variables and teachers' opinions of the materials.

Description of Subjects

The descriptive data concerns a sample of 60 home economics teachers in eight countries in the English speaking Caribbean who use the CXC materials in their secondary home economics programs. As shown in Table IV, the variables were age, teaching experience, qualifications, class enrollment, percentage of participation in CXC home economics, use of CX materials, and in-service workshops.

TABLE IV
DESCRIPTIVE DATA CONCERNING THE SAMPLE OF
CARIBBEAN HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS

Descriptive Variables	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
<u>Age of Teachers</u>		
21-30	24	40.00
31-40	22	36.67
41 & over	14	23.33
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<u>Teaching Experience in Years</u>		
0-3	3	5.00
4-7	14	23.33
8-11	9	15.00
12 & over	34	56.67
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<u>Qualifications of Teachers</u>		
University/college (4 year)	38	63.33
Teacher training institution (2-3 years)	16	26.67
Technical training (2-3 years)	6	10.00
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<u>Home Economics Enrollment (Class Size)</u>		
20 & under	20	33.33
21-30	30	50.00
31-40	7	11.67
41 & over	3	5.00
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<u>School Participation in CXC Program</u>		
0-25%	10	16.67
26-50%	11	18.33
51-75%	7	11.67
76-99%	4	6.67
100%	28	46.66
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<u>Teacher Use of Syllabus for Lesson Plans</u>		
Yes	53	88.33
Sometimes	5	8.33
No	2	3.33
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.00</u>

TABLE IV (Continued)

Descriptive Variables	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
<u>Teacher Participation in CXC Workshops</u>		
Yes	37	61.66
Uncertain	4	6.67
No	19	31.66
	60	100.00
<u>Teacher Participation in Ministry of Education Workshops</u>		
Yes	45	75.00
Uncertain	5	8.33
No	10	16.67
	60	100.00
<u>Population of Community Where Teaching</u>		
2,901-5,000	15	25.00
5,001-10,000	7	11.67
10,001-15,000	17	28.33
15,001-20,000	14	23.33
20,001 & Over	7	11.67
	60	100.00
<u>Secondary School Enrollment</u>		
200 & Under	5	8.33
201-500	13	21.67
501-1,000	24	40.00
1,001 & Over	18	30.00
	60	100.00

Investigation of the variable related to age showed that 40.0 percent of the teachers were in the 21-30 age group, 36.67 were in the 31-40 category, and 23.33 percent were in the 41 and over range. Of the teachers who responded to the number of years teaching experience completed, 56.67 percent had 12 years and over experience, 15.00 percent were in the 8-11 year range. There were 23.00 percent of the teachers in the 4-7 year category, and 5.00 percent had 0-3 years teaching

experience. More than half the teachers, 63.33 percent, had a college or university based education, 26.67 percent had a teachers' certificate of education, and 10.00 percent had been trained at a technical institution.

Fifty (50.00) percent of the teachers indicated that their class enrollment was between 21-30 students. There were 33.33 percent in the 20 and under category. The remaining responses showed a distribution of 10.00 percent in the 31-40 range and 5.00 percent in the 41 and over group.

The extent of participation in the CXC program was identified on the table as 46.66 percent. This was the percentage of full participation. In the 76-99 percent range, 6.67 percent participated. The 51-75 percent range showed 11.67 percent while the 25.50 range indicated that 18.33 percent of the teachers were recorded in this category. A 16.67 percent response rate was evident in the 0-25 percent category.

Response to the use of the CXC syllabus for planning lessons elicited data that showed 86.33 percent of the teachers used the syllabus all of the time. A smaller group of 8.33 percent used the syllabus some of the time. The least number, which was 3.33 percent of responses, were recorded for teachers who did not use the syllabus guides.

A percentage of 61.66 teachers had not participated in the CXC in-service workshops for preparing teachers to use the syllabus and SBA guidelines. Over thirty (31.66) percent had been present at the workshops, while 6.68 percent were uncertain if they had participated in CXC run workshops. The workshops run by local ministries of

education showed 75.00 percent did participate, 16.67 percent did not participate, and 8.33 percent were uncertain.

The majority of teachers (28.33 percent) work in a community where the population is in the 10,001-15,000 range. Twenty-five (25.00) percent of the teachers work in a population range of 2,901-5,000, 11.67 percent in the 5,001-10,000 range, 23.33 percent in the 15,001-20,000 range and another 11.67 percent in the 20,001 and over range.

School enrollment showed that 8.33 percent worked in schools where the enrollment was in the 200 and under range and 21.67 percent were in the 201-500 enrollment range. The highest percentage, 40.00, worked in the 501-1,000 enrollment category. Thirty (30.00) percent of the teachers worked in schools where the enrollment was 1,000 and over.

Teachers' Opinions of the Content

Table V reveals that in response to the statement that the material is easily adapted to the planning of lessons for a class (Item 1), 5.00 percent strongly agreed. The highest response rate, 78.33 percent, was recorded for teachers who agreed. Over ten, 11.67, percent disagreed, and no respondent strongly disagreed. The responses recorded in the undecided category were 5.00 percent.

In response to Item 2, that CXC materials were easily available, 5.00 percent strongly agreed. The 36.67 percent who agreed had the second highest response rate. The highest percentage, 38.33 of teachers disagreed with Item 2 and 8.33 percent strongly disagreed. There were 11.67 percent undecided.

TABLE V
TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF THE CONTENT

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. The material is easily adapted to planning lessons for my class.	3	5.00	47	78.33	3	5.00	7	11.67	0	0
2. It is easy to get copies of the syllabus and SBA guidelines.	3	5.00	22	36.67	7	11.67	23	38.33	5	8.33
3. The content to be covered is similar to what I have always taught.	4	6.67	37	61.67	7	11.67	8	13.33	4	6.67
4. Teaching resource materials are easily available to support the content.	0	0	6	10.00	6	10.00	35	58.33	13	21.67
5. The content builds on student's previous knowledge.	2	3.33	42	70.00	12	20.00	3	5.00	1	1.67
6. The content is too advanced for my class.	0	0	5	8.33	14	23.33	38	63.33	3	5.00
7. The school based assessment marking system is similar to other marking systems I have used.	0	0	21	35.00	12	20.00	22	36.67	5	8.33
8. The content is at the right level for students.	1	1.67	34	56.67	19	31.67	4	6.67	2	3.33

Item 4 showed 10.00 percent agreeing that it was easy to obtain resource materials for teaching the content. Teachers who disagreed were 58.33 percent with 21.67 percent strongly disagreeing. The undecided category had a 10.00 percent response.

Less than 2.00 percent, 1.67 percent, strongly agreed that the content was at the right level for students (Item 3). A total of 56.67 percent responded in the agree category. Of those who disagreed 3.33 percent strongly disagreed and 6.67 disagreed. A relatively high response rate of 31.67 percent was recorded for teachers who were undecided.

Teachers' Opinions of the Objectives

A 36.67 percent response was recorded in Table VI for those teachers who agreed that the objectives can be achieved in the two year period set for the syllabus (Item 11). A low response of 3.33 percent of the teachers strongly agreed. Of the teachers disagreeing, 21.67 percent disagreed and 3.33 percent strongly disagreed. Thirty-five, 35.00, percent were undecided.

In responding to Item 12, a majority, 78.33 percent, agreed that the objectives identified the most important aspects of the topic. Low rates of response were recorded for strongly agreed, 3.33 percent and disagreed another 3.33 percent. No teacher strongly disagreed while 15.00 percent were undecided.

Item 13 also had a majority, 70.00 percent, agreeing that the objectives state the level of performance to be achieved by the student. For this item, 3.33 percent strongly agreed and 10.00 percent disagreed. A low percentage of 1.67 was recorded for those

TABLE VI
TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF THE OBJECTIVES

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
9. The objectives are stated in a clear, concise, interesting way.	6	10.00	48	80.00	3	5.00	3	5.00	0	0
10. The objectives encourage me to teach the topics.	1	1.67	46	76.67	11	18.33	2	3.33	0	0
11. The objectives can be achieved in the two year period set for the syllabus.	2	3.33	22	36.67	21	35.00	13	21.67	2	3.33
12. The objectives identify the most important aspects of the topics to be studied.	2	3.33	47	78.33	9	15.00	2	3.33	0	0
13. The objectives state the level of performance to be achieved by the students.	2	3.33	42	70.00	9	15.00	6	10.00	1	1.67
14. The objectives meet the goals of home economics in my school/community.	3	5.00	32	53.33	17	28.33	8	13.33	0	0
15. The objectives use the performance terms which identify the behaviors and abilities expected of the students; e.g. to know, to apply, to demonstrate.	8	13.33	43	71.67	9	15.00	0	0	0	0

who strongly disagreed. Those undecided were 15.00 percent of the responses.

Five percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the objectives meet the goals of home economics in their school/community (Item 14). Over 50 percent, 53.33, agreed with the item. Of the remaining responses, 13.33 percent disagreed and 28.33 percent were undecided.

Teachers' Opinions of the Effect of the Syllabus on Preparation for Teaching

Table VII shows most of respondents agreed that the materials require more in depth lesson preparation (Item 16). The response rate for the two agreement categories were closely aligned with 45.00 percent who strongly agreed and 46.00 percent who agreed. There was no respondent who strongly disagreed while 3.33 percent disagreed. The responses for those undecided were 3.33 percent.

In response to Item 17, that less time was spent teaching the topics, 1.67 percent agreed and 1.67 percent strongly agreed. A percentage of 58.33 disagreed with 35.00 percent strongly disagreeing. There were responses of 3.33 percent from those who were undecided.

Item 20 showed 63.33 percent agreeing that they were happy with the course outline they organized using the CXC materials. Those who disagreed were 6.67. The respondents strongly disagreeing were 1.67 percent. A 28.33 percent response was recorded for those undecided.

The majority of respondents were in agreement with the statement that very little illustration of the topic is needed to make students understand the lessons (Item 21). Less than 2.00 percent, 1.67, strongly agreed with another 1.67 percent responding agreed. The

TABLE VII
TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF THE EFFECT OF THE SYLLABUS ON PREPARATION FOR TEACHING

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
16. The material requires more in-depth lesson preparation.	27	45.00	28	46.00	2	3.33	3	5.00	0	0
17. I spend less time than previously teaching the topics listed in the CXC syllabus.	1	1.67	1	1.67	2	3.33	35	58.33	21	35.00
18. I feel confident that my lesson plans meet the objectives of the syllabus.	4	6.67	33	55.00	19	31.67	3	5.00	1	1.67
19. I spend more time on individual work for my students.	16	26.67	40	66.67	4	6.67	0	0	0	0
20. I am happy with the course outline I have organized using the CXC materials.	0	0	38	63.33	17	28.33	4	6.67	1	1.67
21. Very little illustration of the topic is needed to make students understand the lessons.	1	1.67	1	1.67	0	0	40	66.67	18	30.00
22. I need a wider variety of books, audio/visual aids, field trips, and resource persons to support my teaching.	41	68.33	17	28.33	0	0	2	3.33	0	0
23. My students do more independent work than previously.	9	15.00	24	40.00	17	28.33	12	20.00	2	3.33
24. The assessment booklet gives me clear direction for determining the validity and reliability of my evaluation measures for coursework.	5	8.33	24	40.00	17	28.33	12	20.00	2	3.33

highest response of 66.67 percent was recorded as having disagreed, followed by 30.00 percent strongly disagreeing. No respondent was undecided.

The respondents who strongly agreed with Item 22 were 68.33 percent. The teachers who agreed that a wider variety of books, audio/visual aids, field trips and resource persons were needed to support their teaching were 28.33 percent. Only 3.33 percent disagreed and no teacher strongly disagreed.

Teachers' Opinions of the School-Based Assessment Guidelines

The responses to teachers' opinions of the school-based assessment guidelines were recorded in Table VIII. The table showed that 51.67 percent of the respondents agreed that they had no problems following the information in the scoring guide (Item 25). There were 13.33 percent who strongly agreed. No respondent strongly disagreed while 16.67 percent agreed. The remaining respondents, 18.33 percent, were undecided.

Responses to the expectations for coursework were precise or thoroughly explained (Item 27), had 1.67 percent strongly agreeing. The highest percentage of responses, 51.67, came from teachers who agreed. Five percent strongly disagreed and 25.00 percent disagreed. There were 16.67 percent undecided.

Less than half the respondents, 48.33 percent, agreed that the instructions for profiles were easy to use (Item 28). Those who strongly agreed were 3.33 percent. There were 11.67 percent disagreeing and 1.67 percent who strongly disagreed. A relatively high

TABLE VIII
TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF THE SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
25. I have no problems following the information in the scoring guide.	8	13.33	31	51.67	11	18.33	10	10.67	0	0
26. The guidelines for marking practical ability (p. ii) have useful examples that are easily understood.	6	10.00	37	61.67	10	16.67	7	11.67	0	0
27. The expectations for project coursework (p. iii) are precisely worded and thoroughly explained.	1	1.67	31	51.67	10	16.67	15	25.00	3	5.00
28. I find the instructions for profiles (p. iv) easy to use for my students.	2	3.33	29	48.33	21	35.00	7	11.67	1	1.67
29. I can use the details for setting written assignments without further explanations.	2	3.33	36	60.00	11	18.33	8	13.33	3	5.00
30. I can use the information given in the table of specifications (p. viii) for completing the profiles.	2	3.33	38	63.33	15	25.00	5	8.33	0	0
31. I feel comfortable using the mark scales (p. iv) for recording course marks.	6	10.00	29	48.33	17	28.33	8	13.33	0	0
32. I feel procedures for measuring and evaluating my students' work during the year are clearly set out.	1	1.67	34	56.67	12	20.00	13	21.67	0	0

TABLE VIII (Continued)

Items	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
33. I think criteria for determining good and poor performance on practical ability are well explained.	1	1.67	34	56.67	14	23.33	11	18.33	0	0
34. The setting and marking of coursework assignments for school-based assessment is not difficult for teachers to do.	4	6.67	21	35.00	6	10.00	23	38.33	6	10.00

response rate, 35.00 percent, was recorded for those undecided.

Item 32, that procedures for measuring and evaluating students' work during the year, were clearly set out had 1.67 respondents strongly agreeing with the item. A percentage of 56.67 agreed while 21.67 percent disagreed. There were 20.00 percent undecided.

In answer to Item 34, 6.67 percent of the respondents agreed that the setting and marking of coursework assignments is not difficult for teachers to complete. Thirty-five percent agreed with the item. There were 10.00 percent of the respondents strongly disagreeing and 38.33 percent disagreeing. The remaining 10.00 percent of the respondents were undecided.

Teachers' Opinions of the Amount of Use of Teaching Methods and Resources

There were three categories for teaching methods and resources - used more, used less and no change in the use of teaching methods. In the category of used more teaching methods, the highest percentage was shared between more booklets, magazines and newspapers and Caribbean based information both of which had 85.00 percent of the responses in the used more categories. The teaching methods that had the highest percentage in the used less category were lectures with 31.67 percent, take home tests, 30.00 percent, and 18.33 percent group student projects. In the no change from previous use category, 73.33 percent said their use of field trips had not changed. In response to the use of touch/visual and audio/visual aids, 70.00 percent said there was no change in their use of these

resources. Formal testing measures had the third highest percentage, 55.00 percent, for the no change category. The category of used more teaching methods recorded the highest average percentage for all teaching methods and resources listed (Table IX).

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one states there is no significant difference in teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines.

The investigation of teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus materials was conducted using a goodness-of-fit statistic based on the Pearson Chi-square statistic. The opinions were identified on a five level Likert-scale with the categories of strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. An examination of the table of opinions showed that the two extreme cells, strongly agree and strongly disagree, had cell counts of less than five. The Pearson Chi-square test has improved validity when used with cells that have counts above five. A collapse of the data on opinions was conducted so that three cells with counts of more than five could be computed. The data was therefore investigated with three categories: agreed, undecided, and disagree (Table X).

The test statistic value obtained was $X^2 = 16.2$. The p. value is less than .005. Thus, the decision is to reject the null hypothesis. There are significant differences in teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines (as shown in Table XI).

TABLE IX
TEACHERS' USE OF TEACHING METHODS AND RESOURCES

Methods and Resources	Use More		Use Less		No Change		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lectures	13	21.67	19	31.67	28	46.67	60	100
Role playing	21	35.00	7	11.67	32	53.33	60	100
Independent study	54	90.00	2	3.33	4	6.67	60	100
Teacher supervised study	43	71.67	3	5.00	14	23.22	60	100
Group discussions	33	55.00	7	11.67	20	33.33	60	100
Single student projects	47	78.33	1	1.67	12	20.00	60	100
Group student projects	21	35.00	11	18.33	28	46.67	60	100
Text books	43	71.67	2	3.33	15	25.00	60	100
Booklets, newspapers, magazines	51	85.00	2	3.33	7	11.67	60	100
Touch/visual and audio/ visual aids	14	23.33	4	6.67	42	70.00	60	100
Field trips	11	18.33	5	8.33	44	73.33	60	100
Community resource persons	30	50.00	10	16.67	20	33.33	60	100
Indigenous materials and design sources	46	76.67	1	1.67	13	21.67	60	100
Caribbean based infor- mation	51	85.00	1	1.67	8	13.33	60	100
Regional craft techniques and skills	39	65.00	1	1.67	20	33.33	60	100
Formal testing measures; e.g. paper and pen class tests	23	38.33	4	6.67	33	55.00	60	100
Take home tests	13	21.67	18	30.00	29	48.33	60	100

TABLE X
THREE CATEGORIES OF DATA INVESTIGATED
ON TEACHERS' OPINIONS

	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Frequencies	22	32	6
Percent	36.67	53.33	10.00

TABLE XI
RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTED

Hypothesis	Chi-squared	DF	Significance Observed	Decision
H ₁ No difference in teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines	16.2	2	0.005	Reject
H ₂ No relationship between teachers' opinions and use of teaching methods	9.268	4	0.0547	Fail to Reject
H ₃ No relationship between selected variables and teachers' opinions				
a) Age	5.068	4	0.2803	Fail to Reject
b) Grades	0.839	8	0.9927	Fail to Reject

Acceptance level = .05.

Hypothesis Two

To investigate the relationship between teachers' opinions of the syllabus and their use of teaching methods and resources. The Pearson Chi-square statistic was used. In this case, the hypothesis may be interpreted as to whether teachers' opinions of the syllabus in each of the opinion categories - agree, undecided, disagree - show a relationship with teaching methods and resources. The test statistic value obtained was 9.268 with an observed significance level of 0.0547. The decision, therefore, is not to reject the null hypothesis. In failing to reject the hypothesis, it is indicated that there is no relationship between teachers' opinions and use of teaching methods and resources. When using the Chi-square statistic, it is usually advised that cell frequencies of more than 5 should be used. This is not the case with the data analyzed here. Most of the observations are concentrated in three categories which are cross classified with data concentrated in the agree or undecided categories. It is therefore appropriate to use the Chi-squared statistic even though it should be remembered that the test may not be valid when these tables are so sparse.

Table XII is a cross classification of teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines and their use of teaching methods and resources. There are three categories used here for opinions - strongly agree, agree and undecided.

There are three categories for teaching methods and resources - used more, used less, and no change from previous use of teaching methods.

TABLE XII

A CROSS CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF THE SYLLABUS
AND THEIR AMOUNT OF USE OF TEACHING METHODS AND RESOURCES

Teachers' Opinions of Syllabus	Used More Teaching Methods	Used Less Teaching Methods	No Change from Previous Methods	Total
<u>Strongly Agree</u>				
Responses	1	2	-	3
Percent	1.67	3.33	-	5.00
<u>Agree</u>				
Responses	39	13	3	55
Percent	65.00	21.67	5.00	91.67
<u>Undecided</u>				
Responses	1	-	1	2
Percent	1.67	-	1.67	3.33
<u>Total</u>				
Responses	41	15	4	60
Percent	68.33	25.00	6.67	100.00

The two way classification of the variables shows that in the three categories of opinions, 5.00 percent of the teachers sampled, strongly agreed with the items investigated, 91.67 percent agreed, and 3.33 percent were undecided. There are three categories for teaching methods and resources. Over half of the sample, 68.33 percent, said they used more teaching methods, 25.00 percent used less, and 6.67 percent had no change from their previous use of teaching methods and resources. The 3 X 3 table is sparse. The largest cell frequency occurs for teachers who used more teaching methods and agreed with the usefulness of the CXC materials.

Hypothesis Three

Table XIII is a two-way contingency table of age versus teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines.

TABLE XIII
A CROSS CLASSIFICATION OF AGE OF TEACHERS AND THEIR
OPINIONS OF THE CXC MATERIALS

Age	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Total
<u>21-30</u>				
Frequencies	-	22	2	24
Percent	-	36.67	3.33	40.00
<u>31-40</u>				
Frequencies	2	20	-	22
Percent	3.33	33.33	-	36.67
<u>41 and over</u>				
Frequencies	1	13	-	14
Percent	1.67	21.67	-	23.33
<u>Total</u>				
Frequencies	3	55	2	60
Percent	5.00	91.67	3.33	100.00

The variable age though usually considered continuous, was investigated as converted into a discrete variable for the purpose of analyzing the data. Age is divided into three categories: 21-30, 31-40, 41 and over. The table is again sparse, with 5 of the 9 cells having counts of

less than five. The intention here is to investigate hypothesis 3 and determine whether teachers' opinions are independent of their ages. In spite of the sparse data set, the Chi square statistic was used for this test of independence. The test statistic value obtained was 5.068 and this was assumed to be distributed as a Chi-square statistic with 4 degrees of freedom. Even considering the susceptibility of the Chi-square statistic to sparse data, this technique was used as the most appropriate in the situation. The raw data indicated an observed significance level of 0.2803 which suggests that teachers' opinions are not related to their age. Thus the decision was not to reject the null hypothesis.

Grades

The grades used to measure student performance at the CXC are classified at two levels. The levels are the Basic Proficiency for entry into employment and the General Proficiency for entry into higher education. At both levels, the grades are divided into five categories from grade I, the highest to grade V, the lowest. The grades were defined in two ways for the purpose of analyzing the data. In the first instance, the grades were defined as a measure of student performance of the sample. In the second case, grades were defined as the average performance level of any teacher or any school in the sample. Here the grades of schools, in the subject, management, were averaged to give results representative of one school or one teacher. The performance level was then determined for that school or teacher.

Figure 4 shows that 86.67 percent of the schools had a performance level of grade I, 1.67 percent had grade II and 5.00 percent had grade III. For the remainder of the sample, 3.33 percent had grade IV and another 3.33 percent had grade V.

Table XIV is a cross classification of teachers' opinions of the syllabus and their performance level. There are 3 categories for the opinion level which are: strongly agree, agree, and undecided. Of the three categories, 91.67 percent fell into the agree category. There are five categories, grades I, II, III, IV, and V, for the performance level. Of these schools, 86.67 percent fell into category I (grade I), 1.67 percent had grade II, 5.00 percent had grade III, 3.33 percent had grade IV while another 3.33 percent had grade V, the last category. The two way Table XIV is sparse with the largest count occurring in the agree, grade I categories.

The investigation of teachers' opinions and grades showed that the test statistic value obtained was 0.839 with an observed significance level of 0.9927. The indications are that the cross classification of the two variables of opinions and grades show no relationship. Thus the decision was not to reject the null hypothesis.

Student performance at the Basic Level in Figure 1 showed that the majority of students received grades two and three. At the general level the highest number of grades, as shown in Figure 2, were received in the grade 3 category. Combined student performance at the basic and general levels in Figure 3 indicated grade 3 as the highest grade received by students followed by grade two and grade four.

TABLE XIV

A CROSS CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF THE SYLLABUS AND THEIR SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE LEVEL ON HOME ECONOMICS MANAGEMENT

Percent of Teachers' Opinions	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Grade V	Total
<u>Strongly Agree</u>						
Frequencies	3	-	-	-	-	3
Percent	5.00	-	-	-	-	5.00
<u>Agree</u>						
Frequencies	47	1	3	2	2	55
Percent	78.33	1.67	5.00	3.33	3.33	91.67
<u>Undecided</u>						
Frequencies	2	-	-	-	-	2
Percent	3.33	-	-	-	-	3.33
<u>Total</u>						
Frequencies	52	1	3	2	2	60
Percent	86.67	1.67	5.00	3.33	3.33	100.00

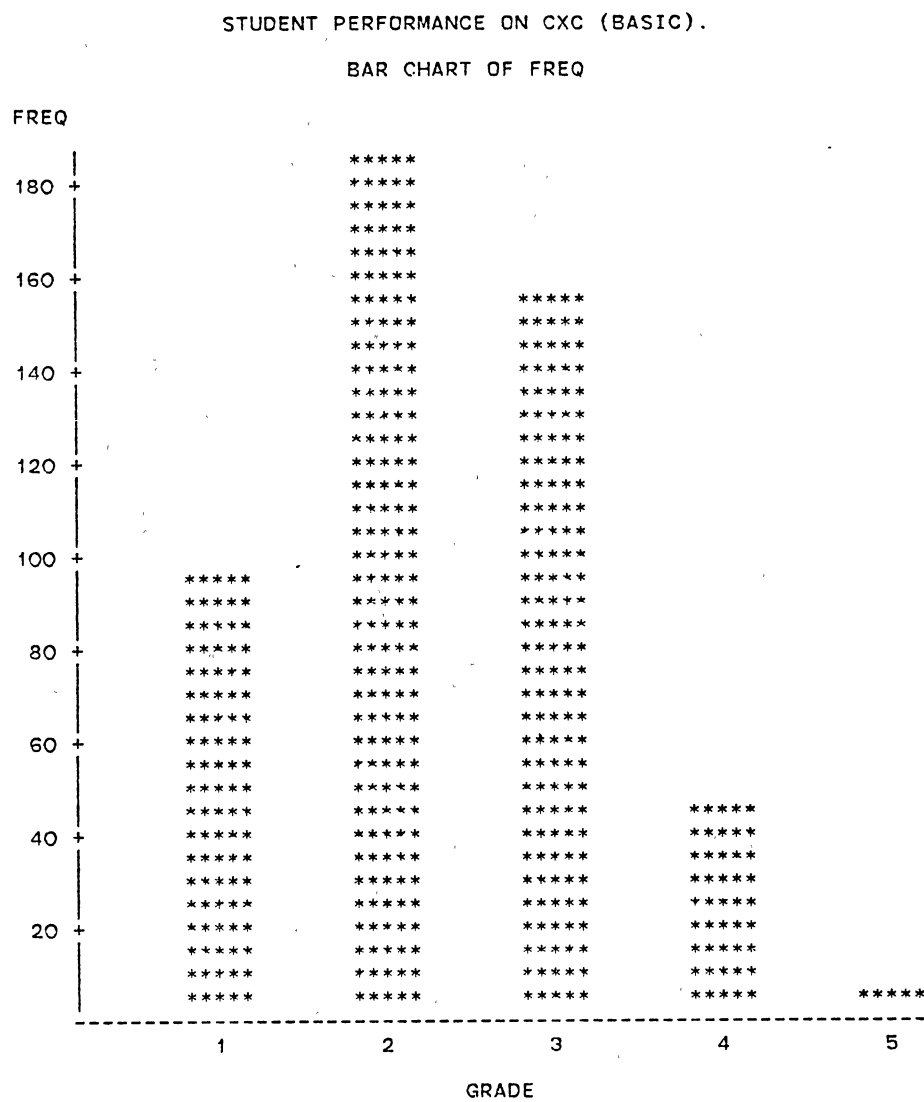


Figure 1. The Grades Received by Students Who Took Food and Nutrition, Management and Clothing and Textiles at the Basic Proficiency Level of the CXC.

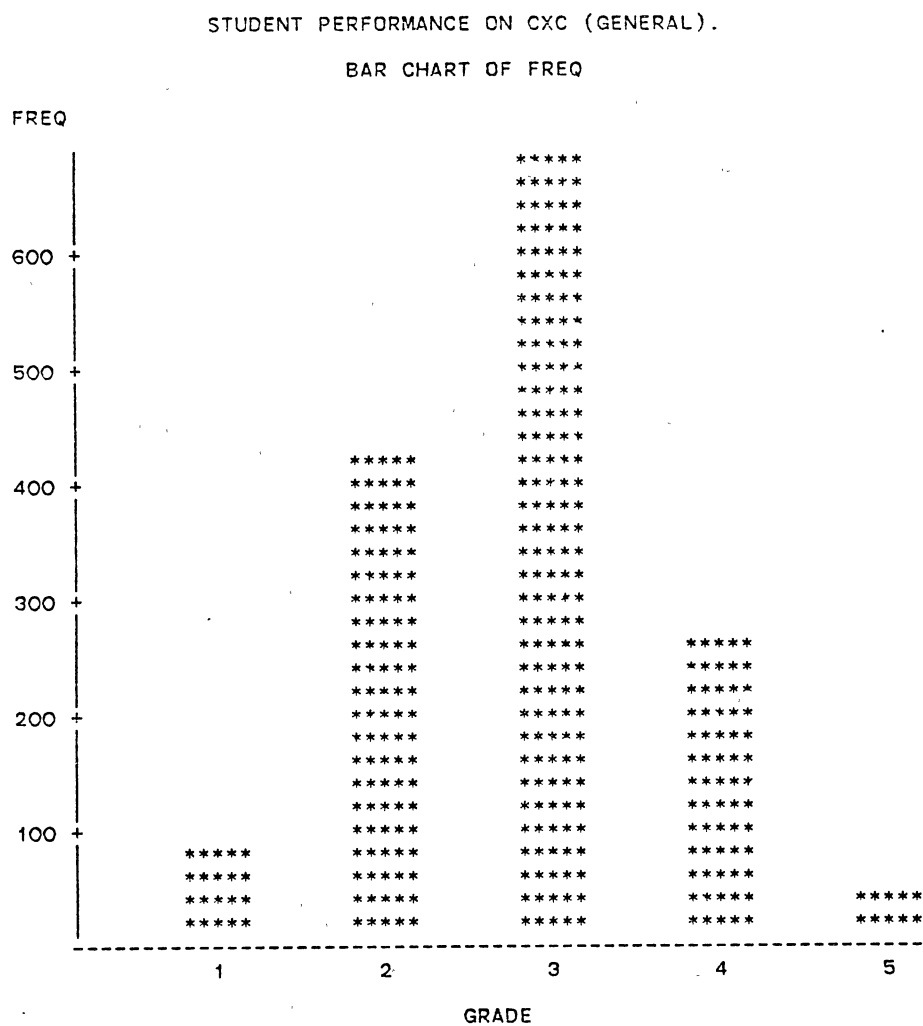


Figure 2. Grades of Students Who Took Food and Nutrition, Management and Clothing and Textiles at the General Proficiency Level of the CXC Examination.

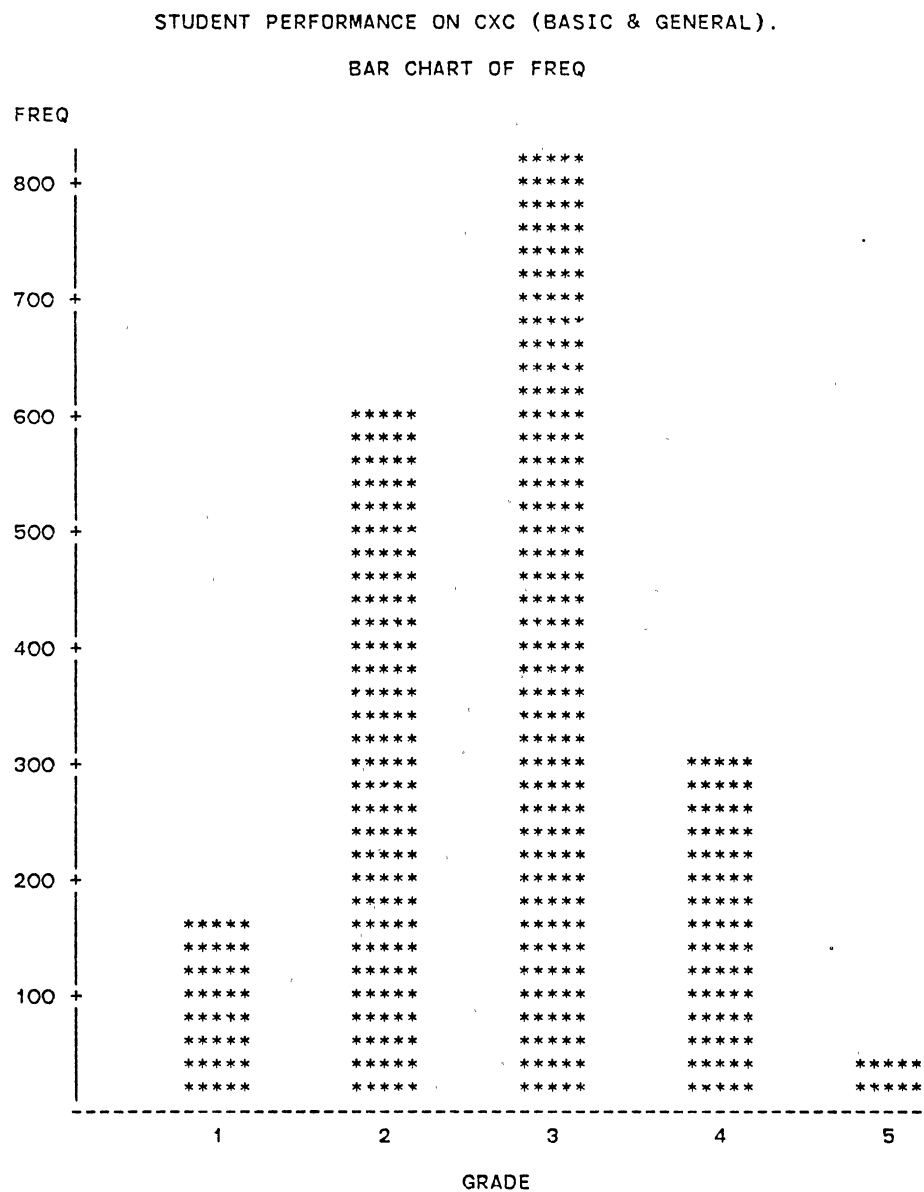


Figure 3. Combined Grades of Students Who Took Food and Nutrition, Management and Clothing and Textiles at Both the Basic and General Proficiency Levels of the CXC Examination.

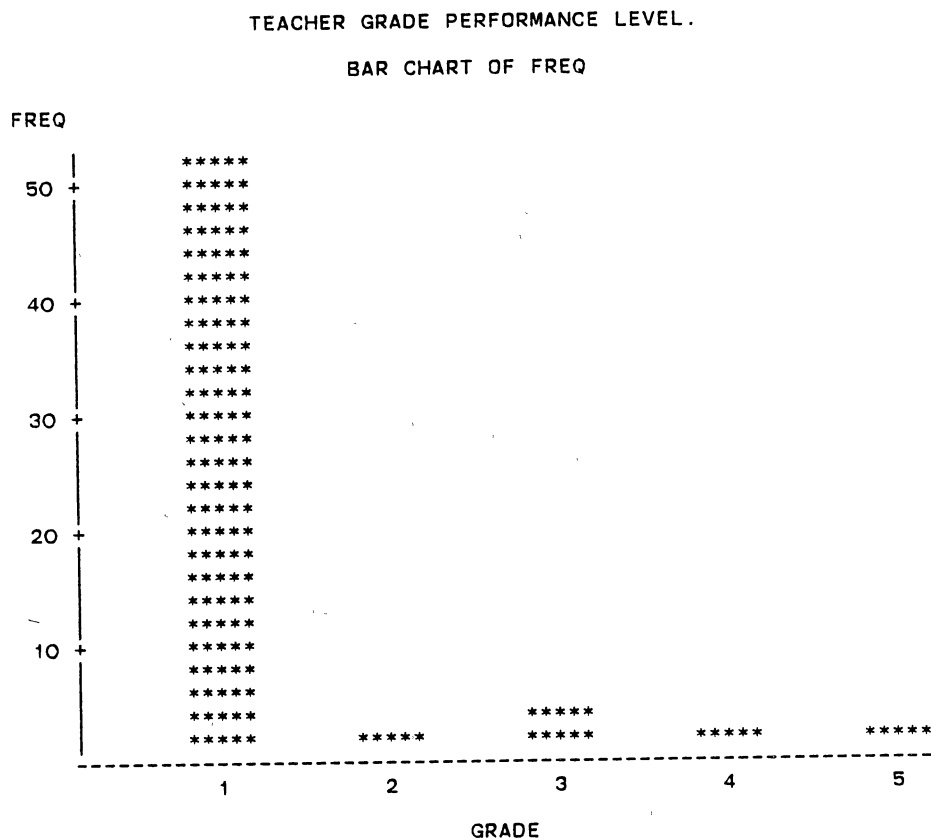


Figure 4. A Performance Level for the Teachers Within Schools. Grade I is the highest and grade V is lowest. The chart in this figure summarizes the grade level for the schools sampled for management based on their teacher's performance. The highest grade attainable is grade I while grade V is the lowest.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and school based assessment guidelines. The information coming out of the study could be valuable to CXC decision makers in initiating revision and improving the quality of use of the CXC materials by Caribbean home economics teachers. The analysis may be useful for assessing teachers' needs for the teaching of CXC home economics and for planning in-service programs. The data were gathered from teachers (N = 60) in eight countries in the Caribbean.

In analyzing the data collected on the teachers studied, it was noticed that less than half (46.66 percent) of the teachers indicated their schools had full participation. The CXC syllabus is still considered new to many Caribbean teachers. The CXC has been in operation for four years as compared against the British GCE, which functioned from the beginning of the West Indian Education System. Younger teachers are perhaps more willing to attempt a new syllabus; hence the fact that the majority of teachers responding were in the 21-30 age category.

Participation in CXC workshops was recorded as 61.66 percent while participation in workshops sponsored by local ministries of education was 75.00 percent. When this data is compared with the proportion of teachers who are still undecided about the syllabus, there still seems

to be a need for more workshops. The CXC in combination with local ministries could increase the percentage of primary participation of the teachers in the dissemination of the CXC home economics information through in-service workshops.

There were three null hypotheses tested. H_1 - There is no significant difference in Caribbean teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines. A goodness-of-fit statistic was used to test teachers' opinions of the content, objectives, effect of the syllabus on preparation for teaching, and the SBA guidelines. The test showed distinct differences between the categories of opinions. Teachers who were undecided were in the majority, followed by teachers who agreed and finally teachers who disagreed. The decision was to reject the hypothesis.

From this investigation of hypothesis one, it can be concluded that teachers do differ in their opinions of the syllabus and SBA guidelines in significant ways. Items 3, 6 and 8 were of the same quality and were useful for analyzing how consistent teachers were in their opinions of the content. Over eleven (11.07) percent of the teachers were undecided about the content being similar to what they always taught (item 3). There were 23.00 percent undecided that the content was too advanced for students (item 6) and 31.67 percent undecided that the content was at the right level (item 8) for students. Teachers were therefore not consistent in their response. The possibility does exist that the difference might have been due to teachers considering the content below their students' ability.

An examination of the findings showed that of all the sections: content, objectives, SBA guidelines, and preparation for teaching, the

highest percentage of cumulative scores in the undecided category occurred in the section on the SBA guidelines. The extent of uncertainty in the SBA guidelines is significant. Teachers may have found it somewhat difficult to respond to the statements. The phraseology of the SBA statements could have been threatening to teachers in a subtle way since it could be seen as referring to teachers' ability to use the evaluation systems. Another reason could be that teachers needed to read specific pages in the SBA guidelines to make a response, and the booklet was unavailable.

Confidence in lesson plans is an important aspect of the teachers' effectiveness during curriculum innovation. The section in preparation for teaching showed that in response to the statement, 'I feel confident that my lesson plans meet the objectives of the syllabus' (item 18), 31.67 percent were uncertain. Considering the importance of teachers' confidence in their lesson plans, it is significant that the level of uncertainty is so high. Teachers recorded a high percentage of agreement, 96.66 percent, with item 22 which stated that a wider variety of books, audio/visual aids, field trips and resource persons were needed to support teaching. The conclusion is that teachers do need help in preparing for teaching CXC home economics in addition to their previous participation in CXC workshops.

H_2 - There is no relationship between teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines and their use of teaching methods and resources. The decision was not to reject the null hypothesis. The observed significance value (.0547) was close to the acceptance level (.05). It indicates some relationship but the observed significance value was not small enough to consider rejecting the hypothesis. It

is possible that the sparseness of the cells might have an effect on the results, since the raw data shows a pattern of teachers who agree corresponding with changes in the use of teaching methods. In computing the percentage of the use of teaching methods and resources, the majority of respondents indicated they had used more teaching methods. This supports the trueness of the results in that most teachers in the agree, undecided and disagree categories all recorded that they used more teaching methods and resources.

H_3 - There is no significant relationship between selected variables and teachers' opinions of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines. The variables selected were age of teachers and grades of students. The results of the test of age by teachers' opinions of the materials led to the decision not to reject the null hypothesis. The findings on this hypothesis indicated that the majority of teachers in the 21-30 age group agreed that the syllabus was useful. Similar results were found for the 31-40 age group, which also had a 36.67 percent agreeing. The results showed that age was no indicator of teachers' opinions of the CXC materials. The age variable was analyzed as a discrete rather than a continuous variable. More information might have been obtained if the age categories were smaller. Smaller categories may have shown a higher percentage of difference since wide categories tend to cloud marginal differences.

The second variable investigated was grades. Grades were defined in two ways: (a) It is a measure of student performance and (b) As the average performance of any teacher or any school. Grades recorded for student performance showed that at the Basic Proficiency Level, the majority of students received grade II, the second

highest grade. Grade III had the next highest number of students followed by grade I, grade V and grade IV. At the General Proficiency Level, the highest numbers of students were recorded in grade III followed by grade II, grade IV, grade I, and grade V. The students who took the General Proficiency Level seemed to have lower ratings on the five grade categories since the majority of students were recorded as receiving grade III.

The core subject management was used to test teachers' performance. The average performance of any teacher for management at the Basic and General Proficiency combined was grade I. The cross classification of grades and teachers' opinions showed no relationship. Thus the decision was not to reject H_3 . The data on management grades were limited in that the majority of teachers seemed to have recorded only those grades which they considered 'pass' grades. Thus most of the management grades reported were in grade I basic or general. On the other hand teachers may have enrolled only those students who they felt were clever enough to 'pass' the examination. Thus the best students would take the examination and receive the highest grades. This made the tables so sparse that decisions that can be made about the data are restricted to teachers with students who received grade I on the examination.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of the study were limited by the sparseness of data in some of the cells. All the data from one of the largest countries was received after the deadline date for the study and could not be included in the sample. Thus it is suggested that a

similar study could be conducted to ascertain the reliability of the results of the present study.

Teachers' opinions of the syllabus and the SBA guidelines are different, especially in areas where they need to agree if they are to influence student performance on the CXC home economics syllabus. In service workshops on the use of the syllabus and management of the SBA guidelines should be given for practicing and prospective home economics teachers.

There is no relationship between teachers' opinions and their use of teaching resources. There is, however, strong response to the need for more support materials in their teaching of home economics and wider availability of the syllabus and SBA guidelines. The CXC should consider ways of increasing the availability of the syllabus and guidelines and involve teachers in developing curriculum and resource materials to support their teaching. In addition, a data bank of assignments should be developed for use with school-based coursework.

In their comments about the CXC syllabus and guidelines, teachers gave additional information in areas not covered on the questionnaire

A needs assessments should be conducted to determine teachers needs in the specific area of management and to a lesser extent clothing and textiles.

The uncertainties expressed by teachers on the SBA section on opinions led to the conclusion that an entire study could be conducted on the School-based component alone. Teachers need to find out how students are performing on the SBA component as separate to their whole performance on the CXC examination. Many teachers feel that

this is the area where their students have the weakest results. Publications should be issued regularly to a wide sample of teachers to give them ideas on improving the quality of their use of the syllabus. Teachers feel that in these early stages, they need the confidence of reading about problems they are likely to face and solutions to these.

Recommendations

The study was undertaken to determine Caribbean teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines. Other studies based on the recommendations, could supply a fund of data for CXC decision makers. Such data could be helpful in making decisions about revisions to syllabus materials, conducting in service workshops, and introducing a curriculum management component specifically related to CXC in pre- service teacher training programs. It is recommended that:

1. A similar study could be conducted to ascertain the reliability of the results of the present study because of the limited sample and the sparse information on grades.
2. In-service workshops on syllabus use and management of the SBA guidelines should be given for practicing and prospective home economics teachers.
3. The CXC should consider increasing the availability of copies of the syllabus and SBA guidelines to teachers.
4. Teachers should be involved in developing a data bank of assignments to be used for school-based coursework.
5. Research should be initiated to survey teachers for additional

information on teachers needs in specific areas.

6. Curriculum and resource materials should be developed to support the teaching of home economics using the CXC syllabus and SBA guidelines.
7. Publications should be issued regularly to a wide sample of teachers to give them ideas on improving the quality of their use of the syllabus.
8. A study should be conducted on student achievement over the school-based component of the CXC syllabus.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHERS' COMMENTS ON CXC HOME ECONOMICS

APPENDIX A

TEACHERS' COMMENTS ON CXC HOME ECONOMICS

"The CXC materials on home economics/food and nutrition is very scant and difficult to come by. The project coursework needs more explanation."

"The syllabus could be modified in such areas as:

- (a) catering for large numbers;
- (b) care and use of large scale equipment; and
- (c) the topic - demography could be modified."

"The school-based assessment should start from Year I-Term III instead of year I-Term II. Two assessments and the project are recommended."

"More training is required in the use of the CXC materials."

"More teacher training is required in item writing for multiple choice questions and questions for specific coursework assignments."

"There should be two distinct syllabuses for Basic and General Proficiencies rather than the same for both Proficiencies as now pertains."

"Training sessions already conducted were of a very high standard but I suggest that teachers now involved in teaching CXC home economics should have lesson models for students at the examination level."

"The content of the CXC syllabus is similar to what I have taught except for some aspects of management. Teachers need help in the

teaching of management."

"I would like more information on the grading of student projects. The training with the Ministry of Education in collaboration with CXC personnel in my country has helped me a lot with handling the information printed in the syllabus."

"There seems to be a strange discrepancy between the performance of the less able students and our above average students in that the former are able to get good grades at the GCE and the latter poor grades in CXC."

"Resource persons, willing to share their knowledge, are needed."

"Materials for teaching the topics are hard to come by."

"Preparation time for home economics is not enough."

"Too much coursework practical is given and not enough help from CXC."

"Tests and materials are not enough and the few used are not easily obtained."

"In some cases it is difficult to find teaching materials because there are very few textbooks available. My school receives textbooks but rarely is there one from the recommended reading list. Sometimes my students do so much I find it difficult to award the marks suggested by the grading system."

"There should be more workshops in CXC home economics."

"I received much enlightenment in the workshops. The lectures were very helpful."

"I am pleased that a study is being done on CXC home economics. This is new for us and we are glad someone is showing an interest. We need a lot of help especially in management."

"I am not competent to teach some topics in the management syllabus. For example, house and floor plans."

"The syllabus is too wide. Too much is expected from teachers and students, especially for home management."

"Equipment is limited and too much paperwork is involved for the teacher."

"Explanation on the area of project work is too vague."

"More workshops are needed to assist teachers with marking school-based projects."

"Teachers need to know exactly what is required by students in practicals."

"More dialogue is needed between teachers and CXC headquarters."

"Some of the topics in the syllabus are not very familiar to us and texts are not easily available to assist."

"The grading system is considered to be unfair as there are five grades and only two are considered as 'pass' grades."

"Textbooks for management are difficult to obtain and those we have are not adequate."

"Teachers need to be upgraded in skills and techniques especially those preparing students for examination level."

"The CXC syllabus is quite relevant and acceptable."

"The grading system for coursework is reasonable, but the grading system for the examination is somewhat debateable, since students in most cases acquire two B's and a C and end up with a grade III. If the grade III at the General Proficiency level was regarded as a clear pass then the results would be less frustrating to students and teachers alike. Being a contact teacher for my Parish, I have had some

training on CXC materials through seminars and courses."

"The grading system is too high. For example, 'C' should be considered a pass.

"More workshops should be held for teachers."

"I find it difficult to set the school-based assessment and I strongly feel that all students should use the same material for these tests."

"I have had very little training in CXC coursework and would greatly appreciate the syllabus being broken down especially the home economics management."

"More workshops are needed to help teachers understand the syllabus."

"The range of marks is too high especially in grade II. This range could be narrowed and grade III be equivalent to 50-60 percent."

"I have been stimulated by the CXC syllabus to improve my teaching skills and keep abreast of related resources and materials in the subject."

"Seminars need to be held on a regular basis especially for schools in the rural areas.

"Although we have been on training programs, the criteria for the project are still not clear. If samples of projects were used, then teachers would have a clearer picture of what to look for when grading projects. Sometimes marks, allowed by the teachers for the application section, are too much. This you generally find out after CXC has re-graded it. On the whole the CXC syllabus is quite an interesting one and some teachers find it a pleasure to teach."

"More up-to-date information is needed in order to cover the

syllabus adequately."

"The objectives can only be achieved in the two year period set for the syllabus depending on the ability of the students you have to teach."

"I would appreciate some extra training in the management area as I will be teaching it soon."

"The CXC training program was informative but now problems have arisen during the implementation."

"The students are at a disadvantage as teacher only has the officially supplied texts and these are limited. The local library offers little information on home economics."

"Teachers in my school enjoy having home economics more related to the Caribbean. The projects we do give us a chance to explore our local goods and materials and manage our subject based on our local environment rather than teach things the British way."

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE

O K L A H O M A S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

Department of Home Economics Education
and Community Services

October 11, 1983

Mr. W. W. Beckles, The Director
Caribbean Examinations Council,
Block A Garrison,
Christ Church,
Barbados. West Indies

Dear Mr. Beckles:

During 1980-82, as the deputy principal of Carnegie School of Home Economics in Guyana, I worked with my staff and other Home Economics teachers on the CXC syllabus. One of the areas on which we frequently took issue was the teachers' perceptions and interpretations of the material. In the light of the differences displayed by that small group, I saw the need to do a more in-depth study of teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the material.

I am now in the process of beginning graduate research to investigate teachers' perceptions of the syllabus and school-based assessment material issued by the CXC to determine end significance to student achievement on the examination. The results of this study could provide a fund of information for CXC decision makers and be beneficial to Home Economics teachers who use the CXC materials.

I would like your help. It would be invaluable if CXC could make inputs that would ensure the study is realistic, relevant, and has potential usefulness for the CXC. I would willingly consider suggestions for researching other problems in Home Economics which you feel are urgent. A copy of my research proposal and the questionnaire will be sent for your review as soon as it is completed.

Please send me copies of the sample assignments for school based-assessment as well as any other instructional materials CXC has issued to teachers for the 1982 and 1983 examinations. I am already in possession of (1) Guidelines to Teachers on Setting and Marking Coursework for School-based Assessment and (2) Home Economics Syllabus, June 1982. My correspondent in Barbados is:

Mr. Volville Forsythe
Caribbean Development Bank
Wilkey St. Michael
Barbados

He can be contacted for costs incurred on salable CXC materials and postage.

Your help and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Sincerely yours,

Hazel Waldron
Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University

Elaine Jorgenson
Thesis Adviser
Oklahoma State University



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION
AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS
125 HOME ECONOMICS WEST
STILLWATER, OK 74078
(405) 624-5046 or 624-5047

December 15, 1983

The Registrar,
Caribbean Examinations Council

Dear

We are in the process of studying the perceptions of Caribbean Home Economics teachers. This study is designed to determine the usefulness of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) syllabus and school-based assessment Guidelines for teaching Home Economics at the CXC level.

Your cooperation, in facilitating the participation of Home Economics teachers in your country, would be invaluable. The study will be used by CXC for helping to make decisions that will affect Home Economics teachers and administrators in the Caribbean.

Would you, on our behalf, issue the enclosed questionnaires to the Home Economics Officer for distribution to the teachers. The questionnaires can be returned by the individual teachers to CXC headquarters in Barbados or collectively by your office to:

Hazel Waldron
c/o Dr. Bertrand Drakes, Head of Research
Caribbean Examinations Council
Block A. Garrison, Christ Church
Barbados, West Indies

Thank you for your cooperation.

Elaine Jorgenson
Dr. Elaine Jorgenson
Thesis Adviser
Oklahoma State University

Hazel Waldron
Hazel Waldron
Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University

B. Drakes
Dr. Bertrand Drakes
Head of Research
Caribbean Examination
Council



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION
AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS
125 HOME ECONOMICS WEST
STILLWATER, OK 74078
(405) 624-5046 or 624-5047

December 15, 1983

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are seeking your permission to include the Home Economics teachers in your country in a study of the Caribbean Examinations Council syllabus materials. The purpose of the study is to collect information of teachers' opinions of the usefulness of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) materials for teaching Home Economics at the CXC level. The result of the study will be useful for Home Economics teachers and their administrators as well as CXC decision makers.

We consider the participation of your country, an indicator of your vision and fore-sightedness in helping to improve the standard of education in the Caribbean.

Thank you for your consent and cooperation.

Elaine Jorgenson

Dr. Elaine Jorgenson
Thesis Adviser
Oklahoma State University

Hazel Waldron

Hazel Waldron (Guyana)
Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University

Bertrand Drake

Dr. Bertrand Drake
Head of Research
Caribbean Examinations
Council

125 Home Economics West
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078
United States

Dear Teacher,

We are conducting a study of your feelings about the usefulness of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) syllabus and School-based Assessment Guidelines. After two years of participating in the CSC examination in home economics, we would like your opinions on how the material has been useful for teaching home economics at the CXC level.

The following questionnaire will take approximately twenty-five (25) minutes to complete. Be as frank as you wish and please fill out all the sections. Please return the completed questionnaires to:

Hazel Waldron
c/o Dr. Bertrand Drakes, Head of Research
Caribbean Examinations Council
Block A Garrison, Christ Church
Barbados West Indies

If you would like a copy of the research findings please ensure the name and address of your school is filled in. Do not put your own name on the questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Elaine Jorgenson, Ed.D.
Thesis Adviser
Oklahoma State University

Hazel Waldron
Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University

Check (✓) the correct responses in the boxes given.

<u>Age of Teacher</u>		<u>Years of Teaching Experience</u>	
20 years and under	()	0 - 3 years	()
21 - 30 years	()	4 - 7 years	()
31 - 40 years	()	8 - 11 years	()
41 years and over	()	12 years and over	()
<u>Country of Residence</u>			
St. Lucia	()	Antigua and Barbuda	()
Guyana	()	Trinidad and Tobago	()
Jamaica	()	St. Kitts	()
Grenada	()	Nevis and Anguilla	()
		Montserrat	()
		Barbados	()
		St. Vincent	()
		Dominica	()
Other _____			
<u>Name and Address of School in which Teaching</u>			

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHER

	Teaching Certificates Held	Years and Dates of Study	Type of Institution(s) Where Studied
Certificate of Education			Technical College ()
Degree			Teacher's Training ()
Other			College or University ()

POPULATION OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT WHERE TEACHING

2,901 - 5,000 ()
 5,001 - 10,000 ()
 10,001 - 15,000 ()
 15,001 - 20,000 ()
 20,000 and over ()

<u>SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</u>	<u>AVERAGE HOME ECONOMICS CLASS SIZE PER TEACHER</u>
200 and under ()	20 and under ()
201 - 500 ()	21 - 30 ()
501 - 1,000 ()	31 - 40 ()
1,000 and over ()	41 and over ()
Other ()	

PLEASE CHECK (✓) THE CORRECT RESPONSE

Does your school participate in the CXC Home Economics Examination?

Yes () No ()

Does your school participate in the British Overseas (GCE) Examination?

Yes () No ()

If your school participates in both examinations, give the percentage of students participating in the CXC examination.

0 - 25% ()

26 - 50% ()

51 - 75% ()

76 - 99% ()

100% ()

If your school does not participate in the CXC examination, do not complete the rest of the questionnaire. Please return the sections you have completed to the address given. Thank you. Your cooperation will be valuable.

HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS' RESULTS BY NUMBER, GRADE AND YEAR

Directions: List the numbers of students who received Grades I-V in each subject area for years 1982 and 1983.

Number of Students and Grades Received from CXCBasic

Subject	Year	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Grade V
Management	1982					
	1983					
Clothing and Textiles	1982					
	1983					
Food and Nutrition	1982					
	1983					

General

Subject	Year	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV	Grade V
Management	1982					
	1983					
Clothing and Textiles	1982					
	1983					
Food and Nutrition	1982					
	1983					

PLEASE CIRCLE THE CORRECT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

DO YOU USE

- the CXC syllabus and School-based Assessment Guidelines when planning for your classes? Yes / Sometimes / No
- the CXC School-based Assessment sample assignments? Yes / Sometimes / No
- self-constructed school-based assignments from the syllabus? Yes / Sometimes / No
- your local curriculum guide along with the CXC syllabus for your CXC classes? Yes / Sometimes / No

HAVE YOU

- worked with CXC staff in developing questions and assignments? Yes / Sometimes / No
- participated in marking sessions at CXC headquarters? Yes / Sometimes / No
- participated in training courses run by CXC? Yes / Sometimes / No
- participated in training courses run by your Ministry of Education for CXC? Yes / Sometimes / No

Directions: What are your opinions of the CXC syllabus and school-based assessment guidelines as a guide for curriculum planning for your classes? Please place a (✓) in the box next to each statement according to the strength of your opinion.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The material is easily adapted to planning lessons for my class.					
2. It is easy to get copies of the syllabus and school-based guidelines.					
3. The content to be covered is similar to what I have always taught.					
4. Teaching resource materials are easily available to support the content.					
5. The content builds on students' previous knowledge.					
6. The content is too advanced for the class.					
7. The school-based assessment marking system is similar to other marking systems I have used.					
8. The content is at the right level for students.					
OBJECTIVES					
Are the CXC objectives achievable, relevant to Home Economics, and to your community or country environment? Please indicate your opinions by checking (✓) the correct column.					
9. The objectives are stated in a clear, concise, interesting way.					
10. The objectives encourage me to teach the topic.					
11. The objectives can be achieved in the two year period set for the syllabus.					
12. The objectives identify the most important aspects of the topics to be studied.					
13. The objectives state the level of performance to be achieved by the students.					
14. The objectives meet the goals of Home Economics in my school/community.					
15. The objectives use the performance terms which identify the behaviors and abilities expected of the students, e.g., to know, to apply, to demonstrate.					

EFFECTS ON TEACHING

What do you see as the effects of the syllabus and school-based assessment guidelines on your preparation and strategies for teaching? Please indicate by checking (✓) the correct column.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16. The material requires more in-depth lesson preparation.					
17. I spend less time than previously teaching the topics listed in the CXC syllabus.					
18. I feel confident that my lesson plans meet the objectives in the syllabus.					
19. I spend more time on individual work for my students.					
20. I am happy with the course outline I have organized using the CXC materials.					
21. Very little illustration of the topics is needed to make students understand the lessons.					
22. I need a wider variety of books, audio/visual aids, field trips, and resource persons to support my teaching.					
23. My students do more independent work than previously.					
24. The assessment booklet gives me clear direction for determining the validity and reliability of my evaluation measures for coursework.					

SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

What is your opinion of the usefulness of the information provided in the guidelines to teachers on the setting and marking of coursework assignments? Please check (✓) the correct column.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. I have no problems following the information in the scoring guide.					
26. The guidelines for marking practical ability (p. ii) have useful examples that are easily understood.					
27. The expectations for project coursework (p. iii) are precisely worded and thoroughly explained.					
28. I find the instructions for profiles (p. iv) easy to use for my students.					
29. I can use the details for setting written assignments without further explanations.					
30. I can use the information given in the table of specifications (p. viii) for completing the profiles.					
31. I feel comfortable using the mark scales (p. iv) for recording coursework marks.					
32. I feel procedures for measuring and evaluating my students' work during the year are clearly set out.					
33. I think criteria for determining good and poor performance on practical ability are well explained.					
34. The setting and marking of coursework assignments for school-based assessment is not difficult for teachers to do.					

EFFECT ON TEACHING

Have you perceived changed in your teaching in any of the following areas since using the syllabus? Please check (✓) in the appropriate column.

Use More	Use Less	No Change from Previous Teaching	
_____	_____	_____	lectures
_____	_____	_____	role playing
_____	_____	_____	independent study
_____	_____	_____	teacher supervised study
_____	_____	_____	groups discussions
_____	_____	_____	single student projects
_____	_____	_____	group student projects
_____	_____	_____	text books
_____	_____	_____	booklets, newspapers, magazines
_____	_____	_____	touch/visual and audio/visual aids
_____	_____	_____	field trips
_____	_____	_____	community resource persons
_____	_____	_____	indigenous materials and design sources
_____	_____	_____	Caribbean based information
_____	_____	_____	regional craft techniques and skills
_____	_____	_____	formal testing measures, e.g., paper and pen class tests
_____	_____	_____	take home tests

Others. Please describe _____

Please add any comments you wish in relation to use of the syllabus, the grading system and the training you have had on the CXC material.

VITA

Hazel Waldron Forsythe

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL
HOME ECONOMICS SYLLABUS AND SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Major Field: Home Economics Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Georgetown, Guyana, South America to Rupert
and Isolene Waldron; married Vibert Forsythe.

Education: Graduated Guyana Teachers Training College in 1969;
received the Bachelor of Education Honors Degree, University
of Bristol in July 1977; completed requirements for the
Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University,
Stillwater, Oklahoma in July 1984.

Professional Experience: Grade I Class I teacher of home economics,
Vergenoegen Community High School, Essequibo, Guyana, 1969-
1971; Senior Instructor, Carnegie School of Home Economics,
Georgetown, Guyana, 1971-1973 and 1977-1979; Deputy Principal
Carnegie School of Home Economics, 1979-1982; Acting Principal
Carnegie School of Home Economics, 1980-1981.

Professional Organizations: Guyana Home Economics Associations,
Caribbean Association of Home Economists, American Home
Economics Association, International Federation of Home
Economists, Phi Upsilon Omicron, and Omicron Nu.