

PROBLEMS FACED BY HOME ECONOMISTS WORKING WITH
DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS WITH IMPLICATIONS
FOR PRESERVICE EDUCATION

By

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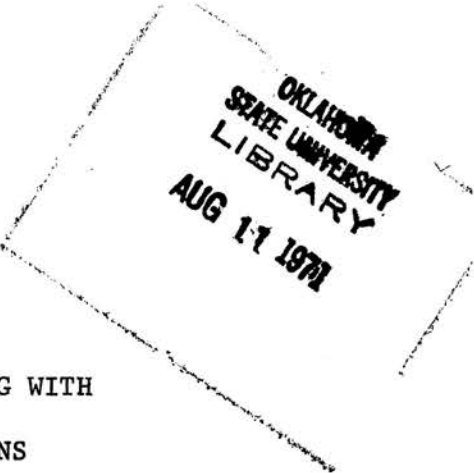
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Problem

In recent years much attention has been given to the disadvantaged population in the United States. Home economists' concerns for this segment of our society are inherent in the profession. Many graduates of home economics education programs have been concerned with disadvantaged youths, but they have faced problems in effectively working with this group.

Some colleges and universities are reviewing their curricula and experimenting with new experiences for home economics education majors. These experiences have ranged from observation in inner city schools to living and teaching in the ghetto. With the improvement of preservice home economics education, it is hoped graduates have had greater confidence and been more effective and satisfied with their first job than those graduates without specialized training.

Statement of the Problem

This study proposed to discover the problems Oklahoma State University home economics education graduates faced as they began working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age. On the basis of the data collected, recommendations were made to assist all home economics education majors at Oklahoma State University in

their future work with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age.

Objectives of the Study

More specifically the objectives of this study were:

1. to discover the problems home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University faced as they began working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age
2. to make recommendations, on the basis of data collected, which would benefit all home economics education majors at Oklahoma State University in their preparation to work with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age.

Significance of the Study

During summer work with the Headstart program, the researcher found it difficult to relate to disadvantaged children and their needs. As she thought back on her four years of experience in Cooperative Extension and secondary schools, she recalled several youths who were members of low-income families. The researcher expected the same results from them as she did from middle class children. As she became acquainted with the Headstart children, she saw many differences between them and other children she had known most of her life. She considered ways in which she could have provided more realistic experiences for her former students and 4-H'ers.

Home economics education graduates have been employed in many occupations serving the disadvantaged outside the secondary school. Project Headstart has provided opportunities for home economists to

work with low-income families. Those trained in child development and home economics education have been employed as teachers in the classrooms to give disadvantaged pre-schoolers a head start in their future experiences in school. College graduates with courses in nutrition have helped in planning snacks and hot lunches for the youngsters, as well as in basic nutrition education for children and their families. In some cities home economists have helped mothers learn to repair clothing, clean areas of their homes, use their money to meet family needs and solve other problems which mothers mentioned in informal discussions.

With the increasing number of day care centers for pre-school children of low-income working mothers, home economists with a background in nutrition will be in even greater demand. Building good food habits in these children will be as important as providing a good noon meal.

Home economics education graduates will be likely candidates for employment in day care centers as well as Headstart programs. For home economists who prefer to work with the disadvantaged, there are opportunities to teach in inner city schools. Peace Corps and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) also offer experiences. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare also needs people who are interested in serving the low-income. Cooperative Extension now has positions in the inner city.

Although founded to assist the rural population, Cooperative Extension has gradually placed more emphasis on urban dwellers. Most 4-H home economists now serve both rural and urban youths and some are employed solely to work with city children. In addition to those home

economists employed by Cooperative Extension, others have occasionally volunteered to assist with program planning or teaching 4-H, Girl Scouts or in a community center.

The researcher recognized the many occupations for a graduate with a major in home economics education. She speculated that students who plan to work with the disadvantaged on a paid or volunteer basis could be better prepared for this task in their preservice education.

In recent years the focus of many national, state and local programs has been on the disadvantaged segment of our society. Since federal and private funds have been available to help this group, teacher educators should be learning as much as possible about their needs so financial support can be used effectively. Much research has been done with pre-schoolers and drop-outs. Experiments in the preservice education of elementary school teachers have led to improvements in the training of inner city teachers. Most of the work which has been done to help the home economist assist low-income families has been through in-service education. If preservice education of home economics educators could include information regarding the disadvantaged, perhaps the graduates could be more effective during their first year on the job.

Assumptions

This study was planned and conducted on the basis of the following assumptions:

1. Some home economics education students who graduated from Oklahoma State University between May, 1967 and May, 1969 have worked with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age on a paid or

volunteer basis.

2. Many of these graduates have faced problems while working with disadvantaged youths.

3. The kinds of problems which graduates faced will have implications for course content and experiences to be taken by home economics education majors at Oklahoma State University.

4. Preservice education of home economics education students which relates to working with the disadvantaged can improve student competencies to work with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age.

5. Not all home economists can or should work with the deprived (Youmans, 1969).

Limitations of the Study

The sample which was interviewed included Oklahoma State University graduates from May, 1967 through May, 1969 who majored in home economics education and completed the requirements for vocational certification. Only subjects who also fit the following criteria were included in the sample.

1. The subject had worked with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age for at least six months after college graduation and prior to March, 1970 in a volunteer or paid capacity.

2. The subject was currently employed in an occupation where she felt at least 20 percent of the group was disadvantaged.

3. The subject was currently residing in Oklahoma.

4. The subject was willing to participate in a personal interview.

Suggestions for changes were made for selected aspects of the Oklahoma State University home economics education curriculum, but

the suggestions may have implications for other teacher education programs.

Definition of Terms

These definitions were formulated and adapted from the review of the literature. For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

Disadvantaged refers to individuals in the United States "in the lowest socio-economic and cultural segment of our population" (Sasse, Winter, 1968-69, p. 117). Those who qualify for assistance under the Economic Opportunity Act would be included in this definition. The terms disadvantaged, low-income, underprivileged and deprived will be used interchangeably.

In-service education refers to "all efforts of administrative and supervisory officials to promote by appropriate means the professional growth and development of educational workers..." (Good, 1959, p. 288).

Preservice education refers to "the academic and professional work in ... teachers college or university that a person has done before employment as a teacher" (Good, 1959, p. 410).

Secondary school age is operationally defined as youths in grades seven through 12 or 11 to 18 years of age. The term, teen-ager, will be used interchangeably with secondary school age.

Procedure

The following procedure was employed in this study:

1. The literature was reviewed.
2. A questionnaire was developed and mailed to all Oklahoma State

University home economics education graduates who received a Bachelor of Science degree from May, 1967 through May, 1969.

3. The returned questionnaires were hand sorted according to the criteria given in the Limitations of the Study (p. 5).

4. An instrument was developed to use for the interviews.

5. Eighteen subjects whose answers to the questionnaire met the criteria listed in the Limitations of the Study (p. 5) were interviewed.

6. Recommendations were formulated for topics and experiences to be included in courses taken by Oklahoma State University home economics education majors which might benefit them as they work with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age.

Summary

A statement of the problem, objectives of the study, procedure and other relevant information have been included in this chapter. Related literature which has provided the theoretical background for this study is reviewed in Chapter II. In Chapter III the procedure employed to collect the data is described. An analysis of the data is found in Chapter IV with the summary, conclusions and recommendations presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The disadvantaged segment of our society was brought to the attention of Americans during the 1960's and many national, state and local programs were established to aid this group. Labels such as "poor", "culturally deprived", "socio-economically disadvantaged" and "low-income" have been used to identify these people who are different from the middle class sector of society.

The need for the involvement of home economists in working with the disadvantaged was recognized by one of the profession's early leaders, Mrs. Ellen H. Richards. As chairman of the Lake Placid Conferences from 1899-1908, she spoke of how a knowledge of home economics could "free the spirit for the more important and permanent interests of the home and of society..." (New Directions, 1959, p. 4). The Lake Placid Conferences culminated in the recommendation that steps be taken to form a national organization to be called the American Home Economics Association (AHEA).

In 1959 the AHEA's Committee on Philosophy and Objectives of Home Economics stated some new directions toward which they felt the profession should head. Several of the committee's statements dealt with the disadvantaged although this currently popular label was not

attached. New Directions has been used as the philosophical foundation for work with disadvantaged in the 1960's. The following are excerpts from this publication.

We believe that the clearest new direction for home economists is to help people identify and develop certain fundamental competences that will be effective in personal and family living regardless of the particular circumstances of the individual or family... If home economics is to meet the challenges of today and of the future, we believe it must serve more individuals and families and serve them more effectively... How can we help individuals and families achieve satisfaction and beauty in their own lives, dignity and assurance in their relationships with others, build strength within the home and democracy in the community?... Home economics educators are challenged to focus instruction on development of the competences important to the pattern of effective living; to co-operate in developing an educational program that will reach men, women, boys and girls of varying abilities and from different cultural, social and economic groups... (New Directions, 1959).

To many home economists, the previous statements from two landmarks in the life of home economics in the United States have added stimulation to their own convictions. As Eppright (1959, p. 690) said, "For years, we have realized that mainly we reach the great middle class of our population... to reach families of all economic classes is a challenge of the future."

Home Economics and the Disadvantaged in the 1960's

Throughout the years, many home economists have served all segments of our society, including the disadvantaged. The AHEA has given leadership to the idea that its members be concerned with working with all families in America. Its programs and literature have been centered on current issues. As the Executive Committee planned its emphasis for the 1960's, "no one foresaw that the conscience of the country

would be turned to a concentration of the problems of the inner city and society's hitherto forgotten segment, the disadvantaged of the inner city, of rural areas and the migrant" (LeBaron, Spring 1968-69, p. 187).

As the issue of the low-income population became more prominent, the Association's president appointed a Committee on Resources for Low-Income Families. At the recommendation of this committee, a national workshop was scheduled for March, 1965. Prior to the convening of this workshop, several noteworthy accomplishments were made by home economists working with the disadvantaged. Kell and Herr (1963, p. 218) considered the need to reach low-income students in home economics classes. They emphasized the importance of learning more about these students to plan and carry out "effective educational or counseling procedures."

The need for pilot programs "to point out methods of working with the disadvantaged" was stressed by Wolgamot (1964, p. 29). She also mentioned the need for gathering and distributing ideas from successful projects carried out by fellow home economists across the country. Wolgamot predicted that low-income families might "present the most difficult and the most practical problems the home economics profession has ever faced."

Home economics research on the disadvantaged was lacking in the early 1960's as evidenced by a review of research findings and titles of completed home economics theses, 1961-62. From 485 theses completed during this period, only two related to low-income people and these concerned the use of USDA-donated foods (Wolgamot, 1964).

At least one meeting was scheduled for employees in various occupations who worked with disadvantaged individuals. Welfare directors, teachers, caseworkers, home economists, economists and credit and life insurance representatives met at New York University on February 14, 1964 to discuss buying and consumption practices of low-income families (Oppenheim, 1964).

Beavers (1964, p. 110) explored the contributions home economists could make to these families. In considering the work of the Extension home economist, she mentioned two major contributions Cooperative Extension could make: "how to make the best use of available resources and how to help increase available resources."

As the above ideas were being published in the early 1960's, plans were underway for a national workshop sponsored by AHEA at the University of Chicago Center for Continuing Education. The following were the objectives for the workshop, Working with Low-Income Families:

- (1) To increase home economists' understanding of the nature, size and scope of the problems of poverty and its impact upon society.
- (2) To develop an appreciation of the culture of low-income families.
- (3) To further knowledge of the services of various agencies and organizations working with low-income families.
- (4) To identify the contributions of home economists to programs serving low-income families.
("Progress Report," 1964, p. 658).

Each objective was explored in depth during at least one of the nine sessions held March 15-19, 1965. The sessions included speeches followed by group discussions or a related film. Preceding the first meeting, the two hundred invited participants were able to visit and discuss some of Chicago's agencies which assist low-income families.

In considering an overall view of poverty, Nolan (1965, p. 7) included the philosophy and history of home economics and its work with the deprived. "Home economics, because of its concern for family living and its special knowledge, has a unique responsibility to reach those families whose need for help is the greatest."

"Changing the Culture of the Disadvantaged Student" was the topic discussed by Davis (1965, p. 24). He pointed out that "These children need, most of all, teachers who will encourage them to try, to hope, to believe in their futures, and to believe in their abilities." His challenge to home economics teachers was particularly forceful.

The home economics teacher must learn to take her students where she finds them. We must abandon deliberately and finally the prim, sheltered, traditional world of the classroom arranged for "nice middle-class children." We must start dealing with the strange, harsh, and sometime frightening realities of the real slum world and the behavior of the student from these disadvantaged families. For them, life is often hard, cruel, and deprived. They cannot be reached by those teachers who want to keep their own hands "germ-free" and their minds neatly ordered in the conventional lesson plan (p. 25).

Another speaker at the Workshop, Chilman (1965), reminded teachers that they must sensitize their eyes and ears to understand the attitudes, beliefs, feelings and values of disadvantaged students. This task might take concentration and continual determination before the middle class teacher really felt empathy for her students.

Vocational education was challenged to assume its huge responsibility to provide opportunities for deprived students who need this training. As children of low-income parents, these students need salable skills to break the chain of poverty. "For those employed in the vocational programs, the recognition of each individual student's

worth and potentiality and the attempt to meet his needs are all important" (Arnold, 1965, p. 172).

One could continue to cite appropriate excerpts from each of the 21 speakers at the Workshop. Two general ideas, however, were emphasized by several speakers. One was that few college graduates were equipped to work with low-income people. The following was a typical statement. "The young teacher just out of college usually knows nothing about the actual values, motives, and feelings of the lower socioeconomic community" (Davis, 1965, p. 31).

The second idea expressed was a concern regarding the strong middle class bias in home economics subject matter. "There is a need for further experimentation as to how home economics subject matter can be translated not only into increased information, but also into actual changes in the behavior of disadvantaged families" (Chilman, 1965, p. 55).

At the conclusion of the conference participants were challenged to disseminate the information they had received. By accepting the privilege to attend, each also accepted the responsibility of assisting in the organization of regional workshops patterned after the national one. It was hoped that the regional meeting would be effective in communicating the realities of low-income families to home economists and others working at the local level.

A similar meeting, The Conference on Home Economics Program Development for Disadvantaged Youth and Their Families, was held at Pennsylvania State University on June 28-July 9, 1965. The four major purposes of the conference were to

- (1) Increase home economists understanding of the culture of the disadvantaged,

- (2) Observe home economics programs in action,
- (3) Consider the need for initiating new home economics programs to help the disadvantaged and
- (4) Explore cooperative programs with community agencies.
(Gravatt, 1966, p. 1).

Following the 1965 Workshop more home economists saw the need for combining efforts with other agencies and other professionals. As Sherman (1965, p. 436) stated, "...to encourage and promote co-operation ventures with other existing groups and agencies...is the challenge!"

Problems transcending all areas of home economics have been recognized in recent years. Brill (1966) pointed to the difficulties in communicating with the disadvantaged. In addition to providing suggestions for breaking down barriers, she reviewed the fundamental concepts of working with others.

To encourage all home economics teachers to recognize the high proportion of disadvantaged students in their classrooms, Beach (1966, p. 780) discussed aspects of upgrading the program. Many home economists have been concerned with upgrading the subject to make it competitive with academic courses. The author's suggestion was to consider upgrading in terms of making home economics "more closely related to the needs and abilities of students currently experiencing it." Perhaps these students would become ambassadors of formal education in their homes and neighborhoods if they found a portion of their education to be relevant.

In the Report on Home Economics in the Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities, McGrath (1968, p. 2) stated that many home economists were aware of problems of low-income individuals and were convinced that the profession "must play a more active role in the solution of social problems." He also reported that "the need for home

economists trained in urban extension is great, and the supply falls far short of the demand" (McGrath, 1968, p. 78).

Fleck (1968, p. 32) recognized the increasing proportion of disadvantaged students in large cities and the "special challenge to home economics to provide meaningful programs" for them. She stated that many home economics teachers would not only have to be well prepared to work with the disadvantaged in these cities, but would have to be geared to urban education in general. "The strongest way to attack this problem of the disadvantaged in urban areas is through education, and home economics must share in this responsibility" (Fleck, 1968, p. 33).

Home economics teachers have also been encouraged to share in the responsibility of educating disadvantaged youth by the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968. Part F of Title I authorized allotments of funds on a matching basis to states for Consumer and Homemaking Education.

At least one-third of the Federal funds made available under this section shall be used in economically depressed areas or areas with high rates of unemployment for programs designed to assist consumers and to help improve home environments and the quality of family life [PL 90-576, Part F, Sec. 161 (d)].

The 1968 Amendments required each state to submit a plan which would "set forth in detail the policies and procedure to be followed in the distribution of funds to local districts and to state the uses to be made of these funds" (Lamar, 1969, p. 43).

Part I of the Oklahoma State Plan (1970, p. 18) reported 258 vocational home economics programs in economically depressed areas of the state. "A State-wide survey made by vocational home economics showed

that 34.7 percent of the secondary students in home economics are disadvantaged and/or handicapped."

With the experiences of home economists in the occupations serving disadvantaged individuals have come problems. These problems are not peculiar to home economists, but are common to all adults who work with disadvantaged youths.

Problems in Working with Disadvantaged Youths 11-18 Years

Communication

One of the greatest problems of working with disadvantaged youths is communication (Brill, 1966; Goldberg, 1964 and Johnson, 1970). The teen-agers' vocabulary is often limited, pronunciation poor and they may be unable to speak in complete sentences or thoughts (Jones, 1970). Ghetto slang is often unknown to the non-inner city adult (Smith, 1969). A survey of 30 urban teachers showed the teachers "were not only unable to give a precise description of their students' speech, but had no idea of how to go about making a description" (Shuy, 1969, p. 1). Some youths are handicapped to the point they do not speak or understand the English language (DeRoche, 1970 and The People Left Behind, 1967). Gallington (1970, p. 18) also pointed to the tremendous communication gap between youths and elders in the inner city from the "constant rejection and unkind treatment from elders."

Physical Problems

A disproportionately high rate of physical disability exists among inner city children (Gallington, 1970). These disabilities may stem

from a lack of information about prenatal care by the mother or a lack of proper nutrients or sufficient amounts of food after birth. Physical problems may also result from malnutrition (Jones, 1970). A team of six physicians summed up their findings from a 1967 survey in the rural South,

...the boys and girls we saw were hungry - weak, in pain, sick; their lives are being shortened; they are, in fact, visible and predictably losing their health, their energy, their spirits (The People Left Behind, 1967, p. 5).

Chronic illness is more prevalent among the poor than among the rich and this fact also affects youths' school attendance (The People Left Behind, 1967).

Mental Problems

Mental disabilities in disadvantaged youths have also posed problems to adults working with the youths (Frazier, 1968). Some children are slow learners due to genetic endowment. Others "bear the scars of intellectual understimulation in their early years" (Goldberg, 1964, p. 168) and improper prenatal care and poor diets "which result in mental retardation" (Jones, 1970, p. 342). Although some problems have been classified as mental, they may actually be a result of the child's lack of exposure to middle class experiences necessary for success in the middle class oriented school (Johnson, 1970 and Sasse, 1968-69). "Many inner-city parents have low educational aspirations for their children and provide little or no reading material for them" (Ruth, 1969, p. 60).

Educational Aspirations

Low educational aspirations will pose problems for those adults who believe education is the answer to the plight of the disadvantaged child. Since this child's orientation is toward present fulfillment, he may see little value in continuing high school or attending college, but instead may suffer through the days until he can legally leave school (Frazier, 1968; Goldberg, 1964; Johnson, 1970 and Moore, 1969). He may also discover his education is not relevant to his needs and future (Englander, 1971; Gallington, 1970; Moore, 1969 and Smith, 1969). Youths who are members of racial, religious or ethnic minority groups are likely to see or hear about discrimination in employment. This will undoubtedly lower the educational aspirations of many youths (Simpson and Yinger, 1965). Low educational levels seem to be self-perpetuating, so teen-agers are also handicapped by their parents' poor schooling (Gallington, 1970 and The People Left Behind, 1967). Parents of disadvantaged youth are also "sometimes so completely immersed in a struggle to provide for basic needs that they have little time to demonstrate concern for their advancement" (Lockette, 1970, p. 67).

Life Style

A lack of educational goals for their children is only one of the many ways an inner city family's life style may differ from that of the middle class family. Other differences are in the facilities, equipment and supplies available in the home (Beach, 1966; Goldberg, 1964 and Kell and Herr, 1963). An "ignorance of the life these children lead outside school" (Schueler, 1965, p. 177) can hinder the adult in preparing youngsters for their present and future. Problems for an

adult who is working with disadvantaged teen-agers also arise from his lack of knowledge of the ethnic group membership and its affects on the child's image of himself and of his world (Bettelheim, 1965; Hill and Burke, 1968 and "Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged," 1969). Adult workers do not only face problems in relating to deprived teen-agers, but also in working with the low-income parents (Crow, Murray and Smythe, 1966).

Self-Concept

Another problem of disadvantaged youths is their low self-concept (DeRoche, 1970 and Moore, 1969). "The poor are widely convinced that individuals cannot influence the workings of society. Furthermore, they doubt the possibility of being able to influence their own lives" (Irean, 1968, p. 4). They often face tasks with reluctance, fear and a defeatist attitude (Beach, 1966; Johnson, 1970; Jones, 1970 and "Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged," 1969). The fear of failure is generated by the sense of scholastic inadequacy which is a part of the self-concept of the vast majority of disadvantaged students (Meyer, 1968). Youths of racial minorities, particularly the blacks, are likely to have a low self-concept as a result of their skin color (Jones, 1970). This low self-confidence often discourages adults who are attempting to assist deprived teen-agers.

Social Problems

Social maladjustment is another problem facing those who work with underprivileged children. Moore (1969) reports that secondary school youths do not participate in school activities. Discrimination faced

by youths who are members of racial, religious or ethnic minority groups also influence their adjustment to a school established on middle class values (Simpson and Yinger, 1965). The school is "an important part of the child's social world and the low-income child in the (mainly) middle-class school room is generally observed to be a social outcast" (Chilman, 1966, p. 57). Affection, approval and attention are needed by these children from peers, parents and other adults. Problems arise when the middle class adult believes the ghetto child does not have social values (Morris, 1969). Teachers need to study the values and culture of their students and use their findings as a basis for education, not as a stumbling block (Smith, 1969).

Disruptive Behavior

Behavioral problems are also faced by adults who work with deprived youths (Frazier, 1968; Johnson, 1970; Jones, 1970; Moore, 1969 and Ruth, 1969). Gallington (1970) stressed the withdrawal tendency of disadvantaged students. According to Trubowitz (1968, p. 28) a teacher must "realize he may sometimes be defied, see fighting and hear profanity." Tanner (1969) believed discipline was necessary for socialization and the idea that good teachers do not have discipline problems was a myth. A possible reason for behavioral problems may stem from the adult's lack of knowledge about the low-income youth and his potential (Hogg, 1967 and Schueler, 1965). "Physical aggression is learned as an approved and socially rewarded form of behavior" for the inner city adolescent (Jones, 1970, p. 343). Problems occasionally arise from a youngster's limited attention span and difficulty in concentration (Johnson, 1970). Disadvantaged learners are visually

oriented and are more interested in doing something concrete rather than being introspective (LeBaron, 1968-69). Adults are apt to discover discipline problems if they spend too much time lecturing on abstract ideas.

Poor School Attendance and Migration

Truancy problems also characterize inner city youths (Jones, 1970 and Ruth, 1969). Whether the activity is required or voluntary and whether it is liked or disliked, attendance may be poor compared with that of the middle-class child. Expulsion from school occurs frequently from disruptive behavior (Moore, 1970). Teen-agers of migrant workers are also handicapped by frequent moving and the need to work daily to help support their families or care for younger children (Gallington, 1970 and The People Left Behind, 1967). Each time a parent must enroll his children in school, he loses time and money from his job. Migrant youths are often rejected by the community, school and other disadvantaged students. Rejection by the school results from the lack of financial assistance "to provide additional classrooms, teachers, transportation, equipment, text books, and supplies" for these youths (Haney, 1966, p. 264). Attendance laws in some communities bar transients from attending school (Haney, 1966).

School Facilities

Those working with youths in the inner city may also face the problems of obsolete facilities (Maczynski, 1968). Although funds have been provided to up-date equipment, the job of repair and replacement has been larger than the money available. "The schools that house

the culturally disadvantaged child have been depicted as having the oldest, most dilapidated, and most inadequate buildings..." (Frazier, 1968, p. 24). Those working with rural youths may have poorer facilities than urban schools. A low-income rural community with low educational aspirations is likely to spend very little money on schooling (The People Left Behind, 1967). A school which has a large influx of migratory workers during a portion of the year may also face problems of inadequate educational facilities (Haney, 1966).

Preparation to Work with Disadvantaged Youths

One of the greatest problems facing the adult who is working with disadvantaged teen-agers is his own weakness in relating to this group of youngsters. He may dislike the deprived and resent being placed in a position where he must work with a large percentage of them. He may have a negative or prejudiced attitude toward the deprived, especially if there are racial differences (Hickerson, 1966 and Jones, 1970). Intolerance may be a dominant feature of his personality and he may lack the interest or ability to cooperate with other professionals who are working with low-income individuals ("Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged," 1969). Problems may also result if he is not physically strong or emotionally stable. A lack of training to work with the disadvantaged may be the overriding factor for most of his problems (Maczynski, 1968). "It is generally agreed, therefore, that the education of inner city youth will be made more effective by improved preservice and in-service education of the teachers..." (Associated Organizations for Teacher Education, 1970, p. 3).

Education as it Relates to the Disadvantaged

Although many people have agreed that adults have faced problems as they have worked with disadvantaged youths, they have blamed teacher education programs for the problems. Since most home economists and other college graduates who work with disadvantaged youths have majored in education, the discussion of preservice and in-service education will be confined to teacher education on the secondary school level.

Preservice Education

Lane (1968, p. 9) stated that "the charges of inadequacy being levelled at the public schools are to a large extent actually criticisms of teacher education programs." Some educators have charged that "teachers are not doing a good job preparing teachers to work with them" (Ornstein, 1968, p. 437). Davies (1967, p. 217) stated that teacher educators and student consumers of teacher education were "out of touch with the realities of teaching in disadvantaged areas." Bossone (1970) observed that most teacher education programs totally ignored the teachers' attitudes and causes of intolerance.

The Task Force on teaching English to the disadvantaged (National Council, 1965, p. 168) reported, "The teacher is a product of his own culture, his professional and academic background, his past experience, and the teaching materials he has become accustomed to using." Agreement with this idea was voiced by Crow, Murray and Smythe (1966), Goldberg (1964) and Lane (1968).

Today, a serious problem exists in obtaining and retaining competent teachers for these children. Many college graduates look to the suburbs for their first teaching job. Here they can be relatively

free from violence that occurs not only in the schools, but also in their neighborhood. The suburbs offer salaries which compare favorably with those of other areas. On the other hand, if an idealistic young graduate accepts a job in a ghetto school, he is likely to leave after the first year in search of a school where he will find success.

Middle class teachers, despite their desire to be helpful to the culturally deprived child, and despite their best intentions, often get bogged down because they cannot transcend their own value system to meet that of the children (Bettelheim, 1965, p. 11).

"The upshot is that teacher dropout is increasing along with classroom problems" (Tanner, 1969, p. 367).

Trubowitz ("How to Teach," 1968) discovered that the teacher who succeeded in a ghetto school had no abnormal expectations at the beginning. This teacher found that bizarre behavior among his students was just that.

According to Usdan and Bertolaet (1966, p. 108), "There appears to be a reservoir of idealistic young people awaiting the call to perform useful social services." How can we channel these youths into a satisfying career of teaching the disadvantaged?

The answer seems to lie in the preparation students receive for teaching. As undergraduates, if they are exposed to the environment of the disadvantaged, they should be more effective in understanding these children during the first year of teaching (Associated Organizations for Teacher Education, 1970).

Many teachers have recognized their own inadequacies as they have worked in inner city schools. "Although teacher candidates have long questioned the relevance of certain prescribed courses, their present objections are based on their need to deal more effectively with

cultural realities" (Galloway, 1967, p. 213).

High school youths have also realized the problems as evidenced from a statement which emerged from the New York City Workshop of disadvantaged youths. "How can we sensitize teachers to work more effectively with deprived young people?" (Hill and Burke, 1968, p. 136).

Legislators, as well as educators and youths, have recognized the need for changes in preservice education. A provision of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 suggested some financial assistance be given for preservice teacher training "to provide an understanding of the growth and development problems of children from low-income backgrounds" (Passow, "Instructional Content," 1967, p. 353).

Educators have felt that many of the problems facing adults as they work with disadvantaged youths could be alleviated through preservice education (Goldberg, 1964; Hickerson, 1966; Matczynski, 1968; Riessman, 1962; Smith 1969 and Stevenson, 1970). Being in the midst of these problems, most secondary schools have not been able to reorganize or devise satisfactory programs for educating the deprived. The institutions of higher education must, therefore, "develop satisfactory teacher preparation programs for the production of the kinds of teachers needed at the secondary level to work with the disadvantaged" (Whiting, 1969, p. 231). McGrath (1968, p. 4) stated that "if home economists are to play a significant role in improving American life, then education must prepare them to do so." A 1970 survey revealed that 200 institutions included or planned to include "programs designed specifically to prepare teachers for disadvantaged students" (Heggen, 1970).

Content. If institutions of higher education are to develop satisfactory teacher preparation programs, they need some ideas of the content to include. Several educators have proposed topics and experiences they felt should be part of the preservice education for teachers of the disadvantaged.

One proposition centered on experiences with actual disadvantaged youths and adults in their own community (Crow, Murray and Smythe, 1966; Davies, 1967; Haubrich, 1966; Hickerson, 1966; Passow, 1967; Price, 1970; Riessman, 1962; Schueler, 1965 and Smith, 1969). Some educators have encouraged experiences with the disadvantaged not only during student teaching, but also early in the college program (Schmitt and Woodin, 1970 and Smith, 1968). Suggestions have included contact with students in school, in non-school related activities, with community agencies (Passow, 1967) and baby sitting in a deprived area (Crow, Murray and Smythe, 1966).

Adults who have successfully worked with disadvantaged youths can add much information and practical experience to the preservice program (Crow, Murray and Smythe, 1966; Haubrich, 1966 and Passow, 1967). Although their skills are needed in the inner city, they should be used in the teacher preparation program whenever possible, since through this contribution their experience will be shared with more students.

Behavioral and social scientists could "apply research and theory from their disciplines to the specific needs and problems of disadvantaged populations" (Passow, 1967, p. 463). These professionals also have much to offer through their urban sociology, cultural anthropology, history of minority groups, urban education, literature of minority groups, foreign language, art of communication, social psychology,

juvenile delinquency, municipal government and other appropriate courses.

Another proposition called for methods courses to be taught simultaneously with subject matter and skills training courses (Price, 1970). This idea assumed that departmental barriers must be broken to allow professionals from all areas to work toward a program which would benefit the student whether in elementary or secondary teacher education. Problems faced by all teachers of the disadvantaged are essentially the same regardless of the age of the child (Haubrich, 1966). At the National Seminar on Vocational Teacher Education (August 11-22, 1969) a recommendation was made "to identify and implement a common core of professional vocational teacher education courses." Programs about the disadvantaged were suggested for inclusion in this core.

Some educators have proposed the inclusion of individualization in teacher preparation programs to allow the student to explore areas of particular interest to him (Haberman, 1966). If students were treated as individuals during their preservice education, they might be more inclined to treat their students as individuals. The need for a person-centered orientation by teachers was voiced by Price (1970).

Throughout the discussion of content, one can see the need for close cooperation among professors and between professor and teacher education student. Ornstein (1968) emphasized the need to lift the barriers between these individuals for the good of disadvantaged youths.

Secondary Education Programs. Many pilot programs have been launched in preservice elementary education and successful results incorporated into training programs. Experimentation has also been done with secondary education programs.

To interest more students in considering jobs in the inner city, Michigan State University has required all education majors to observe teaching in nearby urban schools. The second activity for students interested in further work has been to volunteer in tutorial programs for disadvantaged children. Three months of study and practice teaching in Flint inner city schools have been followed by a six month program in the Detroit schools. Dean, director of teacher education, hopes that this program will not only increase interest in urban teaching, but also better prepare prospective teachers ("Teachers for the Inner City," 1968).

The Hunter College Training Program has also attempted to improve the preservice training of students interested in teaching in ghetto areas. Although most colleges with similar programs have tried to give their students varied experiences in different urban areas, Hunter has had its volunteer students concentrate on the problems of one school. Visiting the community and talking with its leaders and citizens have been important parts of the program. Following a period of observation, student teachers have gradually worked into the classes before completely taking charge. After graduation these students have become full-time teachers in the same school and have faced no shock or disillusionment (Riessman, 1962).

Western Michigan University, on the other hand, wanted to experiment with students residing in the inner city. A living-learning center for 36 student teachers was proposed to provide five major opportunities: (1) an educational resource center, (2) an instructional materials center, (3) the engagement of students in community activities, (4) an orderly transition from student to student teacher to teacher

and (5) to strengthen local educational programs by the university (Heikkinen, 1966).

The Cooperative Urban Teacher Education (CUTE) program used the possibility of living in the inner city as an optional experience. CUTE is also different in that students attending 23 Midwest colleges and universities are eligible to spend one semester in the inner city schools of Wichita, Kansas; Kansas City, Kansas and Missouri; or Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The program has won the interest and support of many organizations not related to education in these four cities.

Results. Of the projects and research studies which have been completed, most have reported that by aiming preservice teacher education toward working with the disadvantaged, more college graduates have accepted jobs in the inner city (Clothier and Swick, 1969 and Riessman, 1962). Not only have they been more confident during their first year, but they have also been more effective and satisfied with their jobs and have remained in positions for a longer time than first year inner city teachers without specialized training. "The possibility of recruiting capable young teachers through special teacher education programs has been explored and appears promising; the time has now come when this movement should be extended to non-volunteers" (Hogg, 1967, p. 73).

Home Economics Education. The above findings have been taken from research in secondary teacher education. Studies must also be done in the area of home economics education. The report from the Oklahoma Home Economics Advisory Committee Meeting on May 20, 1969, stated that teachers needed experiences working with the disadvantaged. Kell and

Herr (1963, p. 218) recognized the weakness in the background of many high school home economics teachers when they stated,

No doubt many middle class teachers have little conception of the material surroundings or of the atmosphere of the homes to which girls return after school. One implication is that somewhere within the preparation of teachers there should be field experience giving the feel, the smell, and the taste of the "culture of poverty." Important also is a knowledge of the customs and traditions of various subcultures.

If home economics is to be involved in helping the low-income family, special attention must also be given to the teen-age family members.

We have ventured far enough into the inner city to learn that if we are to be successful there, some of us will have to learn a few basic skills: cooking, sewing, cleaning, making do and doing without. Where will our middle-class college students learn them? (LeBaron, 1968-69, p. 189).

One AHEA Foundation fellowship participant in 1968 focused on identifying implications for the undergraduate curriculum for those students particularly oriented to the disadvantaged as a career and to those who recognized that they would be living in suburbs and wanted to be prepared to deal with urban problems - even if they were not employed. He proposed the following experiences:

- (1) Develop several alternating means for students to have direct experiences with the disadvantaged...
- (2) Provide a special course on basic skills and problem-solving of the disadvantaged...
- (3) Offer elective courses in the social sciences and also in health and welfare.
- (4) Require certain courses in anthropology, family life patterns, bureaucracy, adoption and diffusion of ideas, and communication.
- (5) Continue seminars which include topics related to the social issues of our times. (Powers, 1969, p. 337).

Hurt (1970) compiled information from several colleges and universities regarding preservice programs for vocational home economics teachers. She discovered they have offered student teachers "a

variety of experiences to help them become sensitive to the needs of socially, culturally, or economically disadvantaged individuals and families" (p. 19).

An experiment in the preservice education of home economics teachers has already been completed at Pennsylvania State University. From September, 1965 to December, 1967, 13 home economics education sophomore and junior volunteers participated in a special program for teaching the disadvantaged. These students attended 15 hours of seminars to review previously-learned concepts from sociology, psychology, child development, family relationships, home management and education. The core of the experiment involved ten weeks of living with a disadvantaged family and holding a job in the community. The job was typical for the neighborhood with such characteristics as low pay, routine work and association with fellow employees. Following the 15 hours of post-testing and discussion, it was deemed feasible by a consensus of participants and project personnel to incorporate such experiences into the curriculum of home economics education majors (East and Boleratz, 1968).

An experimental project in the preservice program of home economics education majors is currently in its third semester at Oklahoma State University. In the spring of 1970, eight student teachers volunteered to participate in the one credit hour project. They met for one hour each week during the eight weeks they were on campus. Activities included speakers, visits to a day care center and participation in the "Ghetto" game (Toll, 1969). During the seven weeks in the student teaching center, each student teacher participated in a program of her choice, working with low income citizens of the community. All

participants felt their student teaching experience had been enriched by this project and that they were better able to work with disadvantaged youths in their classrooms. This project has been continued during the fall of 1970 and spring of 1971 with an enrollment of eight and 14 student teachers, respectively.

Although the majority of Oklahoma State University home economics education graduates will not be working in inner city schools, most will have disadvantaged students in their classrooms. It is important for teachers to attempt to understand these children even though this can be a very difficult job.

Conclusion.

Urban teacher education sequences should not survive and multiply only because there is a vogue for them, or because they have something like charisma, or because they are expedient, or because of providence rather than adequate institutional support. They should survive because they make sense, but only if they do (Button, 1969, p. 200).

After a student has graduated, he should not be left in an inner city school and forgotten. The preparation of teachers is a continuous process; therefore, in-service training should be continued for the benefit of the teacher and the college because most of teacher education will occur in this setting (Gant and Masterson, 1969). Administrators and counselors should also be included in these meetings to improve their understanding of the pupils.

In-Service Education

Many home economists, teachers and other adults working with disadvantaged youth have become educated about these youngsters on the job. Although experience has often been called "the best teacher,"

it can be a slow painful process for youth and adults. The experiences of home economists in various jobs have indicated a need for special training.

The need for in-service training dealing with disadvantaged youths has been stressed by several educators (Haubrich, 1966; Johnson, 1970; Jones, 1970; Schmitt and Woodin, 1970; Smith, 1969 and Stevenson, 1970). A provision of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 suggested that some financial assistance be given for in-service training to make teachers' efforts "more effective for the child from low-income backgrounds" (Passow, 1967, p. 354). Hickerson (1966, p. 98) called for the institution of "massive in-service educational programs concerned with the education of the economically deprived" for administrators and counselors, as well as teachers.

Home economists have also stressed the need for in-service education. One participant in the Conference on Buying and Consumption Practices of Low-Income Families reported on the results of a questionnaire mailed to the presidents of all State Home Economics Associations regarding the activities within the state to strengthen the family life of low-income families. She said that "many home economists stated that they felt unprepared to work with low-income families" (Stewart, 1964, p. 7).

Home economists have satisfied their need for in-service education through reading, graduate courses, sensitivity training and simulation games, direct experiences, conferences and workshops. The previously mentioned 1965 AHEA Workshop, Working with Low-Income Families, stimulated the organization of many conferences. The Conference on Home Economics Program Development for Disadvantaged Youth and Their

Families was an example and has been mentioned earlier in this chapter. Besides hearing speakers and working in discussion groups, participants had an opportunity to see Pittsburgh's inner city and visit agencies trying to help low-income families (Gravatt, 1966).

The National Workshop on Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged was held March 12-14, 1969.

This workshop was attended by 171 leaders from the field of vocational education and other groups which work with the disadvantaged. Its purpose was to acquire practical information and guidance for planning, organization and operation of meaningful programs and services. Among the 12 papers presented at the workshop were analyses of various programs for the disadvantaged and proposals for improvement of this clientele ("Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged," 1970, p. 43).

Vocational and technical educators in Oklahoma high schools participated in one of several identical three-day workshops held during June, 1970. The theme of the in-service education was "A Special Effort to Meet a Special Need," and the objective was to aid the participants in helping their deprived students. General topics included characteristics of the disadvantaged student, curriculum and reference materials for the disadvantaged youths and the teacher, effective methods for teaching disadvantaged youths and preparing proposals for funding special programs.

These are only a small sample of the many conferences and workshops on disadvantaged youths which home economists have attended. The impact of such meetings on each participant cannot be measured. Bossone (1970, p. 184), however, cautioned against declaring success on the basis of the enthusiasm of participants.

Teachers who flock to the federally supported institutes and workshops with breathless idealism generally leave with a better understanding of such students but they still do not know what to do with them in the classroom.

Summary

A brief history and philosophy of home economics as it relates to the disadvantaged, with special emphasis on progress in the 1960's, has been included in Chapter II. Home economics education graduates have worked with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age through various occupations and volunteer organizations. Through this contact graduates have faced many problems they had never previously recognized.

Preservice education exists to prepare a student for her future occupation. By reviewing problems faced by graduates as they work with disadvantaged youths, teacher educators might discover methods to prepare their students more adequately for post-college work. Since education does not end with college graduation, it is important to consider in-service education related to the disadvantaged. Chapter III will describe the procedure employed to collect the data for this study.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

This study was conducted to discover what problems were faced by home economics education graduates as they began working with disadvantaged youths. To reach the objectives of the study, the literature was reviewed to discover what work had been done by home economists and others to help disadvantaged youths. Problems were identified and preservice and in-service education were explored from research which had been recently reported. Methods of collecting data were also reviewed, and the interview method was selected by the researcher. Kahn and Cannell (1957, p. 16) defined the interview as "a specialized pattern of verbal interaction - initiated for a specific purpose, and focused on some specific content area, with consequent elimination of extraneous material."

The interview method was selected because

where the focal data of the investigation are the attitudes, perceptions, or interests of persons, the direct and often most fruitful approach to obtaining the pertinent data is to ask the individuals themselves (Burchinal and Hawkes, 1957, p. 167).

Another advantage to the interview was that the researcher could detect any uneasiness, hesitation, excitement and other individual reactions to the questions as they were presented. The subject was also likely to respond more completely if she talked rather than wrote (Hall, 1967). If the answer was incomplete or not understood, the interviewer

could use probes to "elicit information in addition to the first response" (Adams, 1958, p. 25).

A personal interview assured a 100 percent subject response, whereas with a mailed questionnaire it is more difficult to achieve a complete return. The researcher discussed the techniques of interviewing with Bizzle (1970) and McKinney (1970). Both had recently used this method in home economics research at Oklahoma State University.

When formulating an interview schedule, one must consider the types of interviews. Hall (1967) described four types of interviews which she felt were applicable in home economics research. In a structured interview, each question has predetermined responses which are permitted, whereas an open-end interview allows any reply to the questions. "A focused or depth interview is one in which the persons are known to have been involved in a particular experience" (p. 100), and the nonstructured interview "permits the interviewee to express his feelings with a minimum of questioning or guidance" (p. 101).

Within the interview schedule different types of questions may be used. They may range from structured to open-end (Good, 1963). Both structured and open-end questions were used by the researcher (see Appendix B).

Selection of Sample

The population for the study was identified as home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University who received a Bachelor of Science degree from May, 1967 through May, 1969. The criteria used to determine the sample of subjects used in the study were: (1) experience in working with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18

years of age for at least six months after college graduation and prior to March, 1970 in a volunteer or paid capacity, (2) currently employed in an occupation where she felt at least 20 percent of the group was disadvantaged, (3) currently residing in Oklahoma, and (4) willing to participate in a personal interview.

To select the sample for the study, a letter and questionnaire were mailed to all home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University who received a Bachelor of Science degree from May, 1967 through May, 1969. The letter was revised twice and the questionnaire four times prior to being mailed. Five subjects pretested the second revision of the questionnaire and seven pretested the third revision. The fourth revision involved minor format changes and no pretesting was done.

Letters and questionnaires (see Appendix A), each with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, were mailed to 159 graduates on March 6, 1970. A return of 56.6 percent was received after three weeks, at which time a follow-up postcard was sent to those who had not responded to the initial mailing of the questionnaire (see Appendix A).

An additional 8.8 percent return of the questionnaire was achieved after three weeks, bringing the total response to 65.4 percent. Sixteen personal letters (see Appendix A) were mailed to those who had not responded and whose address was believed correct. A copy of the original letter, questionnaire and self-addressed, stamped envelope were also enclosed. Another 8.8 percent return was received for a total response of 74.2 percent.

On May 11, 1970 the 118 returned questionnaires were hand sorted according to the criteria described above. Nineteen respondents

met the qualifications to be a subject.

Each subject was telephoned at her place of business during the week and told she had been selected to be part of the sample. The researcher asked if the subject were still willing to participate, and asked for a preferred week during the summer when she would like to be visited. Each subject was told the interview would take between 30 and 45 minutes, that it would be kept confidential and that no preparation was needed by the respondent prior to the interview.

One to two weeks prior to the researcher's visit, each interviewee was called again to establish the date, time and place of the interview. At this point, one subject withdrew from the study. Eighteen subjects were included in the study.

Development of the Interview Schedule

For this study an instrument to be used in the interview was developed (see Appendix B) by the researcher to discover the problems faced by home economics education graduates who worked with disadvantaged youths. A review of the literature provided the background for the development.

The first seven questions attempted to obtain background information from the subject regarding her on-the-job experience and perception of disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age. The researcher was interested in the jobs each subject had had since college graduation in which she had worked with disadvantaged teen-agers as well as the length of time she had worked in these jobs. Strict guidelines for identifying the disadvantaged were not given to the subjects because the researcher did not want each graduate to feel she had to spend

time evaluating each youth against the criteria before returning the questionnaire. The researcher also felt that to reach her objectives, each subject's perception of the disadvantaged was more important than school or welfare records which identified the family as a poverty family. It was necessary, therefore, to ascertain the criteria used by each interviewee in categorizing the youths with whom she had worked.

Questions 7c through 12 gathered information regarding the problems she faced in working with deprived youths 11 to 18 years of age. In addition to the problems she faced, the researcher was interested in how each subject solved her problems, the processes she used for solving problems that failed and problems she would still face. Since it was assumed that some subjects might not have faced problems when working with disadvantaged youths, it was decided to determine why they did not face problems.

To reach the second objective of the study, questions 13 and 14 were included to gather data from each subject regarding her preservice education. The researcher was interested in the courses and experiences in each subject's undergraduate training that helped prepare her for working with the disadvantaged as well as additional assistance she wished she had had in her preservice education.

Questions 15 through 17 attempted to ascertain where the subject might have received information about the deprived which could have aided her in solving the problems she faced while working with them. The researcher inquired about the subject's experience with disadvantaged individuals of all ages during her life. The interviewee's indirect contact, such as reading and talking with friends who had worked

with deprived, was also questioned. Question 18 was included to allow the subject to mention any related information.

Pretesting the Instrument

Before the researcher interviewed the subjects, she tested the instrument on six home economics education graduates from four different institutions. Each home economist was contacted by telephone in the same manner as those subjects in the study sample. The researcher asked if she would be willing to participate in the pretest and an appointment was made with each.

The instrument was tested to determine the phraseology of the questions, the suitability of open-end versus structured questions, the appropriate order of the questions and the effectiveness in obtaining the desired information. Another purpose of the pretest was to provide the interviewer with practice so the questionnaire could be "used informally and with ease" (Adams, 1958, p. 24).

Comfortable chairs and an informal situation were used for each interview. All subjects were asked if the interview might be tape recorded to save time involved in writing answers to each question and to insure accuracy in quoting the interviewee's statements. After each agreed, a portable cassette recorder which the researcher planned to use during the study was set up. During this time an informal conversation was used to establish rapport with the interviewee. Each subject was then told that her name, voice, place of employment or town would not be used in the study.

After each pretest interview, the researcher asked for the subject's opinion regarding the formality of the situation, difficulty in

answering questions which had not been given to her before the interview, the wording of the questions and the length and pace of the interview. The researcher was also interested in whether she wrote too much, talked too much, whether her comments seemed biased and whether the subject felt compelled to answer certain questions.

As a result of each evaluation, the researcher altered the interview schedule before the next pretest. She also decided to write responses to questions 1 through 6 and 15 through 17 during each interview, but to tape the entire session so as not to break the continuity by starting the recorder.

Gathering the Data and Recording

The data for the study was obtained from personal interviews with 18 home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University. The home economists in the sample included junior and senior high school home economics teachers (vocational and general); Headstart, Job Corps and special education teachers; extension home economists and a social welfare home economist.

Three interviewees planned to be on campus during the summer, so they were interviewed in Stillwater. The researcher traveled 2,221 miles around Oklahoma to visit the remaining 15. The travel schedule was planned, where possible, to allow the interviewer to visit all subjects in the same area of the state on the same trip.

Prior to the formal interview, an informal conversation was used to establish rapport with the interviewee. The researcher reviewed the two objectives which had been stated in the initial cover letter and reminded the respondent that the interview would be confidential.

The interviewer also asked if she might record the interview. Each subject readily consented to the use of the tape recorder. If one had objected, the researcher would have taken notes during the interview. After the interview, which lasted between 20 minutes and one hour, the researcher again spoke informally with the subject.

After visits to various sections of the state, the researcher reviewed the tapes and checked them against the data she had written on questions 1 through 6 and 15 through 17. Responses to the remaining questions were scribed and pertinent comments transferred to a large tape for storage and later review.

The data was then analyzed by grouping the answers for each question. Percentages were computed and tables developed for the responses to some of the structured questions. The data was presented under the following divisions: description of subjects, perception of disadvantaged youths, problems faced by subjects and preservice education as it relates to the disadvantaged.

Summary

Chapter III has described the procedure used in this study. Information has been included concerning the selection of the sample, development of the instrument, pretesting the instrument and gathering the data and recording. Chapter IV will present an analysis of the data which has been collected.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter is concerned with a brief description of the subjects and their perception of disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age. In addition the first objective of the study, to discover the problems faced by home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University who have worked with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age, is presented. Three case studies are included to describe the representative problems in greater detail. The final section presents suggestions by the subjects for assistance in the preservice education of home economics education majors at Oklahoma State University.

Description of Subjects

The subjects for the study included 18 graduates from Oklahoma State University who had received Bachelor of Science degrees between May, 1967 and May, 1969. Each subject met the criteria established for the study as evidenced from the mailed questionnaire she had completed and returned. All subjects had majored in home economics education and received a Standard Vocational Teaching Certificate. The largest proportion, eight, graduated in May, 1967. One each graduated in July, 1967 and July, 1968 while three finished in May, 1968 and five in May, 1969.

From the data compiled from question 1 of the interview (see Appendix B), it was determined that all subjects were currently employed full-time in 11 different types of jobs. The largest number were vocational home economics teachers in Oklahoma (Table I).

TABLE I
PRESENT TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTED BY SUBJECTS

| Type of Employment | Number of Subjects |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Vocational home economics teacher | 7 |
| Occupational home economics teacher | 2 |
| General home economics teacher | 1 |
| General home economics - Junior High - summer Headstart teacher | 1 |
| Vocational home economics - Junior High - remedial reading teacher | 1 |
| Home economics teacher for Bureau of Indian Affairs | 1 |
| Extension home economist | 1 |
| Life Skills instructor for Job Corps | 1 |
| Special Education teacher | 1 |
| Headstart teacher | 1 |
| Department of Public Welfare - Bureau of Children's Services | 1 |
| TOTAL | 18 |

Of the 18 subjects, 13 were home economics teachers who worked with about 913 girls and 73 boys of secondary school age during 1969. The vocational teachers taught foods and nutrition, clothing, housing, family relationships and consumer education in the public schools. The occupational teachers trained their students for immediate employment. One subject taught job orientation, child care and food service while the other taught skills for employment in a laundry, cafeteria, hospital and for housekeeping. The general home economics teacher taught beginning and intermediate clothing to 120 girls in an all black school. Two subjects taught home economics in the morning and junior high students in other courses during each afternoon. The home economics teacher employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs taught at a boarding school, but had responsibilities only in the classroom.

The remaining subjects were employed in five different areas. The Extension home economist worked with about 840 girls and 560 boys annually through the 4-H program. She trained adult leaders in home economics skills so they could teach their local 4-H members. This subject also planned and conducted county programs for 4-H youth in addition to her work with adult home economics Extension members throughout the county.

The Life Skills instructor for Job Corps each year worked with about 1,500 girls between the ages of 16 and 22 soon after their arrival at the Job Corps Center. Her program included personal appearance, personality development and clothing repair skills to aid in the physical, social and emotional development of each girl. Since all students arrived with a different level of ability, she had a series of lessons and tasks through which each girl could progress at her own

pace. Upon the successful completion of each task, the student could move on to the next until she had finished the course. Although her students lived at the Center, the subject's only responsibilities were in the classroom.

Although the special education home economist had previously taught vocational home economics for one year, her current class included 11 educable students between the ages of eight and 12. One girl and three boys were 11 or 12 years of age. These students, with IQ's between 70 and 78, stayed with the subject all day as she taught them in all areas. Her goal was to help them so they could function in society.

The Headstart teacher had also been a vocational home economics teacher, but was presently teaching 15 four year olds during the afternoon. In the morning she visited their homes, conducted training classes for the paraprofessionals, conducted sewing classes for five to ten Headstart mothers and led discussion sessions with the mothers.

The Department of Public Welfare home economist worked in the Bureau of Children's Services. At the time of the interview she was helping about ten children from birth until the age of 18 who were in foster homes throughout the county. She was also responsible for investigating couples who wished to adopt a child. At that time she was counseling with four unwed pregnant girls from low-income homes. Her case load also included deprived children who had been in juvenile court. Although the families of most of her clients received Aid to Families with Dependent Children, she also worked with individuals who were potential public assistance recipients.

Each subject had many responsibilities as part of her current full-time occupation; however, the researcher included only the highlights of each type of employment. Although their responsibilities were different, each subject had worked with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age between ten and 34 months. The following figures, compiled from question 2 (see Appendix B), were taken at the time of the interview (Table II).

TABLE II
TOTAL MONTHS SUBJECTS HAD WORKED WITH DISADVANTAGED
YOUTHS 11 TO 18 YEARS OF AGE SINCE
COLLEGE GRADUATION

| Months | Number of Subjects |
|--------|--------------------|
| 10 | 5 |
| 11 | 2 |
| 18 | 4 |
| 20 | 2 |
| 28 | 1 |
| 30 | 1 |
| 32 | 2 |
| 34 | 1 |

The subjects represented 17 different counties of various economic income levels. The income of families in the county in which a subject

is employed influences the facilities and people with which she works. In 1960 the United States Bureau of the Census determined the percent of families in each county which had an annual income of under \$3,000. This information is presented in Table III.

TABLE III
ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS* OF FAMILIES IN COUNTY
OF SUBJECT'S PRESENT EMPLOYMENT

| Percent of Families With Incomes Under \$3,000 | Number of Subjects | Percent of Subjects |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Under 30% | 7 | 38.9 |
| 30-40% | 5 | 27.7 |
| 40-50% | 3 | 16.7 |
| Over 50% | 3 | 16.7 |
| TOTAL | 18 | 100.0 |

*Source: U. S. Census of Population: 1960.

Thirty-nine percent of the subjects were employed in counties declared by the government to have less than 30 percent of its families earning under \$3,000 a year. The 30 to 40 percent group was represented by 27 percent of the subjects, while the 40 to 50 percent and over 50 percent categories were each represented by 17 percent of the subjects.

The contact a subject had had with disadvantaged individuals of any age was important to the researcher. It was felt that experience with people other than those between the ages of 11 and 18 would influence a subject's work with teen-agers. Contact with youths 11 to 18 years of age in situations other than the subject's present employment would also influence her current work.

A review of previous full-time employment held by the subjects since college graduation revealed that 33 percent had been employed in positions where they considered at least 20 percent to have been disadvantaged. None of the subjects had done any volunteer work in which they had worked with disadvantaged individuals since their college graduation. Several indicated they had been too busy with their full-time jobs.

Data from question 15 (see Appendix B) indicated that 11 subjects (61 percent) had worked with disadvantaged individuals of ages other than 11 to 18 as part of their full-time jobs. A majority (64 percent) of these 11 subjects had worked with parents, while others had worked with a variety of ages.

A subject's present work with disadvantaged youths would also be influenced by other experiences she had had with the deprived. Question 16 (see Appendix B) was asked to discover the types of experiences represented by the group. Of the 18 subjects, 11 reported they had had other experiences with disadvantaged individuals in addition to their full-time jobs.

Of the seven who reported volunteer work, two had taught Bible School and two had been Junior leaders in 4-H. Other volunteer experiences mentioned were church, Headstart, Girl Scouts, visiting the aged,

candy striper in a hospital and Christmas party for low-income youngsters. Five subjects said they had had friends in their high school who were disadvantaged, and six said they had known deprived individuals in the community in which they were raised. One subject had lived in a very small, poor town in Alaska for six years prior to college enrollment, and she knew a large number of disadvantaged Indian children who lived in the church supported orphanage near her home.

Part-time jobs which added experience with the disadvantaged prior to college graduation were reported by four subjects. These jobs included grocery store clerk and secretary in the student employment agency on a college campus. One subject was employed by the Department of Public Welfare for three summers. Due to the heavy case loads of full-time employees, the subject worked with the aged, unwed mothers and the disabled as a case worker. As county summer assistant with Extension, another subject spent most of her time preparing samples using commodity foods. She offered these, recipes and advice when asked at the commodity distribution centers. A fourth subject worked in a fish cannery with disadvantaged adults. She said of this experience, "It was not the most exhilarating, but it helped me understand the boredom that low-income people face every day."

One subject responded under the "other" category that she currently had disadvantaged neighbors with whom she had become acquainted. None of the subjects reported college friends who were disadvantaged. Sixty-one percent of the subjects had had experiences with deprived individuals in addition to their full-time jobs.

In-service education is another influence on an individual's work with disadvantaged youths. This education may be formal or

informal. The researcher asked each subject in question 17 (see Appendix B) if she had had any of the five opportunities listed in Table IV to learn about disadvantaged individuals since she graduated from college.

TABLE IV
IN-SERVICE EDUCATION ON DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS TAKEN BY SUBJECTS

| Type of Education | Number of Subjects | Percent of Total Subjects |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Reading about disadvantaged | 16 | 88.9 |
| Discussion with friends | 15 | 83.3 |
| College credit courses | 12 | 66.7 |
| Contact with other groups who work with disadvantaged individuals | 11 | 61.1 |
| Personal research | 2 | 11.1 |

When a subject replied in the affirmative, she was asked to describe the opportunities she had had. The most frequently used sources of reading about the disadvantaged were professional journals. Other magazines and newspapers also were used often.

Most of the friends who aided the subject's understanding of disadvantaged individuals were teachers. Friends employed in social work occupations were also helpful to the subjects.

Courses or on-the-job training had been taken by 12 of the subjects interviewed. Three subjects found their on-the-job training very helpful and three others found much value in the three day workshop for vocational teachers of the disadvantaged. Vocational and technical teachers working in low-income areas of Oklahoma were invited to participate in this workshop which was held in June, 1970. Topics included in the program were characteristics of the disadvantaged, curriculum and reference materials, effective methods for teaching disadvantaged youths, resources and proposals for funding special programs. Both lecture and discussion were used in each group of 60 participants.

Family relationships courses including adolescent psychology, Family Crisis and Readings in Family Relations and Child Development were also mentioned five times as a helpful part of in-service education. Other courses named were curriculum development, social psychology and courses in special education.

Several groups and agencies were mentioned by the subjects as resources for learning about the disadvantaged. Employees of the Community Action Program were named on three occasions, while the health and welfare departments were both mentioned by two different interviewees. The schools and courts had also been used by two subjects. Each of the following had assisted one home economist interviewed: county nurses, Extension, Salvation Army and Area Manpower Institutes for Development of Staff.

Research with the disadvantaged had been done by two subjects. One said hers was through a course she took, while the other did some research on her own. A total of 100 percent of the subjects had had in-service education opportunities.

Perception of Disadvantaged Youths

Each subject was asked to consider the youths between 11 and 18 years of age with whom she had worked most recently. She was asked on the questionnaire (see Appendix A, question 3) and during the interview (see Appendix B, questions 3 and 4) the percent of 11 to 18 year olds she considered to be disadvantaged at her most recent employment. A comparison of figures quoted at the time of the interview showed that 68.5 percent of the subjects quoted within ten percent of the percentage reported on the questionnaire (Table IX, Appendix C).

Each subject was asked why she perceived the youths as disadvantaged (see Appendix B, question 5). The seven categories listed on the questionnaire were for the researcher's use only. This was an unstructured question and no suggestion was made to the subject to channel her thinking toward specific reasons for her perception. All the replies were categorized into the eight groups listed below (Table V).

Along with low-income, subjects also mentioned that families were on welfare and that youths could have free school lunches. One subject said the disadvantaged youths wanted to borrow money frequently.

Several subjects who mentioned the home as a reason for the youths' disadvantage based their conclusion on the condition and location of the home. Others described the disadvantaged home as having one parent, large families or poor meals. The type of parent employment was also mentioned. Four subjects said they identified deprived youths as a result of home visits.

Those who said the youths with whom they worked lacked middle class values felt this was a disadvantage to the youngsters. Not having a bath and unwillingness to follow adult directions were listed as

results of this lack. Others said the youths had not been exposed to the middle class or did not appear to wish to participate with those in the middle class.

TABLE V
BASIS FOR PERCEIVING YOUTHS 11 TO 18 YEARS OF AGE
AS DISADVANTAGED

| Basis | Number of Subjects |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Low-income | 14 |
| Home | 8 |
| Lack of middle class values | 6 |
| Handicaps | 6 |
| Race | 6 |
| Clothes and appearance | 5 |
| Nature of job | 2 |
| Class discussion | 1 |

The researcher believed a subject's perception of certain youths as disadvantaged would be influenced by her contact with others on the job. Each subject, therefore, was asked whether her employer, fellow employees, other youths or written records identified any of the youths as disadvantaged (Table VI). Question 6 (see Appendix B) was

structured and a positive or negative response was sought for each of the four categories.

TABLE VI
IDENTIFICATION OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS BY SELECTED SOURCES

| Source of Identification | Number of Subjects |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Fellow employees | 14 |
| Employer, principal, department head | 10 |
| Other youths | 6 |
| Written records | 4 |

Another area in perception of disadvantaged youths is that of problems they face in their everyday life. Question 7 (see Appendix B) attempted to gather this information from each subject. Most interviewees were quick to respond confidently that youths did face problems. One said, "yes," after a thoughtful pause and another said she was sure they did but she did not know whether she could identify any special problems. Some of the problems mentioned verbally during the interview were:

1. Some books are not written for these type of people. They don't understand the words. Education is not valued. They have inadequate education. Teachers force middle class values.
2. Teachers and students don't realize their problems. They can't communicate with teachers and students.

The lower class didn't feel others accepted them and the higher class want to accept them but they didn't know how.

3. Early marriage seems to run in these families. They drop out of school at 16.
4. They do not have the clothes other girls have. They're starved for affection.
5. They lack modern facilities at home. Parents are divorced.
6. Many youths work from 4 P.M. until midnight and spend most of their earnings on their family.
7. Some of these kids are disadvantaged to the point they don't even know how to cope with things that come up every day.

Question 7a (see Appendix B) was concerned with special handicaps.

The handicaps mentioned most often were mental (six times) and eyesight (five times). Closely related to mental handicaps was the inability to read, which was stated by three subjects. Other physical handicaps besides eyesight were the responses made by three interviewees and two subjects mentioned home eating. The following handicaps were each stated by one subject: social; speech; lack of spending money, lack of equipment, privacy and a place for teen-agers to study at home. One subject said the deprived were not wanted by the middle class girls and this "could have been a beautiful chance to interact." Regarding the existence of special handicaps, most of the interviewees stated that the disadvantaged did not have many more than the middle class youths. This was especially true for physical handicaps because the subjects could usually think of only one or two disadvantaged youths who were physically handicapped.

Problems in the attitudes of disadvantaged youths (see Appendix B, question 7b) were mentioned by all subjects except one who said they

probably had these problems but she never knew of any. Those attitudes discussed most often dealt with the school. As the Job Corps employee stated, "They have already failed out of a school system where they had to study and they don't like failure." Another subject felt that since these youths did not have a good attitude toward parents and teachers, "teachers need to instill good attitudes in them." Several mentioned that their lack of value in an education caused attitude problems and resulted in poor attendance. Others said many parents wanted their children to get through high school and this became the main goal of the youths. As a general home economics teacher in an all black high school stated, "I think attitudes toward education and school may be changing a little. A lot of them have been thinking, 'maybe this is the only way I'm ever going to make it'."

Other interviewees mentioned problems in attitudes regarding their home. Some are discontented and nice things at home are especially important during the dating years. Others "have the idea they can continue on welfare like Mom and Dad." The Department of Public Welfare home economist said that some foster care children "have the feeling of being a welfare child." Other problems of disadvantaged youths which were stated verbally during the interview were:

1. They don't respect other people's property.
2. Stealing and lying are accepted at home.
3. They want their own way and can't get along with others.
4. Some of them give up very easily.
5. They don't like for me to come to their homes. They don't want me to see where they live.
6. Attitudes toward being black are changing.

7. Some Indian students have a kind of resentment to authority.

Subjects did recognize many problems regarding the attitudes of deprived youths. An occupational home economics teacher stated,

They want to be accepted by the teacher and especially by their peer group. They get confused in their mind of how they're going to do this. Sometimes they do this by inappropriate behavior such as causing trouble, talking back and stealing. I don't think they like school at all. They've already developed a negative attitude toward it because, I think, of these continuous failures.

A vocational home economics teacher said,

If I tried to get them to have middle class values and attitudes, they had problems. I think they work in their own culture very well with their own attitudes, but when their culture and ours (or the middle class culture) tries to mix, then there are problems.

Problems Faced by Subjects

Prior to the beginning of this study, the researcher assumed that many of the subjects had faced problems while working with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age. Although 17 interviewees described the problems they faced, one said she really had not encountered any. "If it was a problem, I didn't know it or I just didn't see it," was her reply. Since she did not recall facing any problems, she was asked if there was something about her background which might have contributed to working with these girls (see Appendix B, question 12). She said, "I didn't go looking for problems. I just tried to help these girls."

Each subject was questioned about the special discipline problems she might have faced in working with disadvantaged youths (see Appendix B, question 7c). Fifty-six percent said they did not face any special problems with this group. The remaining eight subjects mentioned the following special discipline problems: students were forced to go to

school; they were not used to as much discipline as the middle class youngster; blacks thought they should be treated with more dignity; money was stolen in the classroom and students talked back to teachers. The social welfare home economist said she only faced discipline problems as she assisted foster and natural parents in working out problems with their children. Other problems resulted from destructive boys who broke their chairs and desks and shot paper wads, 30 boys and girls in one class with no laboratory facilities and problems students had had in the class prior to home economics.

Question 8 (see Appendix B) was asked to ascertain what problems were faced by each subject as she started working with disadvantaged youths. Five problems were mentioned by more than one subject (Table VII).

TABLE VII

PROBLEMS FACED MOST OFTEN BY 17 SUBJECTS WHILE WORKING WITH
DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS 11 TO 18 YEARS OF AGE

| Problem | Number of Subjects |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Understanding culture and values of youths | 6 |
| Motivation | 4 |
| Reaching youths' level of understanding | 3 |
| Rudeness to adults | 3 |
| Stealing | 3 |

Thirty-three percent of the subjects said they had difficulty understanding the way of life of their disadvantaged students. As one vocational home economics teacher stated,

I've never lived like them or thought like them or had attitudes similar to theirs. I ran into the problem at first of thinking that everyone should think like me or their standards should be comparable to my standards. I don't think that that's the way to go about it.

The social welfare home economist said she faced many adjustments when she left the academic and middle class environment and began working with her clients. Her primary problem was "accepting them where they were" and adjusting to the dirty, rat-infested homes of the youths with whom she worked. The home economics teacher for the Bureau of Indian Affairs felt her major problems were solved after she learned more about her students and their values and customs. The home economics teacher in the all black school also faced racial problems because,

I'd never been around a black person in my life. I couldn't understand ghetto English, I hadn't seen the inside of a housing project, I didn't know what a AFDC payment was or how a matriarchal society operated. The girls were very shy and wouldn't look at me when they talked.

Four subjects said they had difficulty in motivating the disadvantaged youths with whom they worked. Once stimulated, they were apt to become quickly disinterested. The most successful approaches involved the youths in planning projects and topics to be covered in class.

Problems were faced by three teachers who had difficulty at first in getting down to the educational level of their students. They found repetition was very important as was encouraging their students to admit that they did not understand the teacher.

Rudeness to adults included cursing, foul language, refusing to do what was asked, talking back and "smarting off to the teacher."

In an effort to solve this problem, the following methods were used: spanking, ignoring the youth, sending him to the principal and assigning a chapter to be copied from the text book which dealt with "an area I thought might help them."

Stealing from the classroom was also given by three teachers as a problem they faced. Both money and supplies were mentioned, but youths stealing from other youths was not a problem.

Several additional problems were mentioned once by the subjects. One vocational home economics teacher said her main problem was that "they have a tendency to think you're not much brighter than they are." An example she gave was of a student who had brought cookies purchased from a store for her home project. Another teacher said her students thought they should be left to do what they wanted. The disadvantaged youths tried to emulate another vocational home economics teacher. This problem resulted in her use of some of the supplies and materials which would be accessible to her students as well as some of the equipment they might have some day. She also attempted to point out her failures, such as showing them a poor angel food cake she had made at home.

Another vocational teacher felt most of her problems stemmed from her students' dependence upon welfare. The Extension home economist faced problems in gaining the confidence of the youths. Failure to do daily homework assignments, tardiness, lack of self-confidence, lack of response in class discussions, sleeping during films and home problems also plagued the subjects. One teacher felt her main problem was that she did not expect to face problems with her students. The special education home economist said her chief problem was in having the same

children in her classroom all day. One teacher had problems with an individual student who was highly emotional. Another had no middle class students, only those from the upper and lower classes who were mixed in each class. One discovered her Indian students to be very quiet while another faced open knives on the desks of many of her disadvantaged students.

In question 18 (see Appendix B) each subject was allowed to mention other problems or comments she had regarding her work with disadvantaged youths. One said she felt education was the answer to their problem. Another said, "They aren't dumb. People might as well face it. They are just as intelligent as everyone else if you can get their intelligence going the right direction."

Several comments were made that working with the disadvantaged was a challenge. "I think sometimes they've got problems that if you could just get them to talk about them that it would help these disadvantaged so." This idea was undoubtedly behind the feeling that the "individual approach is the best approach." An occupational teacher stressed using this approach to build confidence. A vocational teacher summarized the opinions of several subjects when she said;

There needs to be a lot of attention given to them. Not so overtly that they think they are special. To listen and have an interest in them would be the main thing. I really think there needs to be a lot done.

Case Studies of Problems Faced by Subjects

Each subject was asked to recall special discipline problems (see Appendix B, question 7c), problems she faced when she first started working with disadvantaged youths (question 8), how she solved these problems (question 9), what problems she would still face (question 10)

and processes for solving problems that did not work (question 11). Since these questions are interrelated, the data obtained from them will be presented in three case studies. To select the three representative subjects to be used for the case studies, the researcher used a table of ten thousand randomly assorted digits (Snedecor and Cochran, 1967, p. 543).

Subject 6

This Extension home economist, a May, 1967 graduate, was currently employed in a county where she estimated at least 25 percent of the youths with whom she worked were disadvantaged. She had been employed in this position 18 months and worked with about 840 girls and 560 boys annually who were between the ages of nine and 19. Her former employment was as an Extension home economist for 14 months in another county, but she did not feel any of the youths there were disadvantaged.

In her present job, this subject also worked with adults, 25 percent of whom she felt were disadvantaged. She had done some volunteer work with deprived individuals in church and 4-H before her college graduation. Although she had had no courses or in-service training since college graduation, she had read extensively about the disadvantaged in professional and lay publications.

In response to the question regarding discipline problems she had faced, she could not recall any special ones. She said she expected problems because disadvantaged youths probably did not mix as much with society.

Problems she faced when she first started working with disadvantaged youths included imposing her values on them and problems in

gaining their confidence. To solve these problems, the subject said she had to be constantly "open and broad-minded enough to listen to them." She said they had ideas she had never thought of. To gain the youths' confidences, she visited their homes to talk with the parents. She felt more successful with the youths if she had gained the parents' friendship.

The subject said she would still face two main problems in working with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age. "I probably will always have to fight this thing of imposing my own values upon them. We need to put information before them and let them make a decision." Her second problem involved "getting educational materials down on their level where they can understand."

To answer the question regarding the processes for solving problems that did not work, the home economist described a program for disadvantaged youths between the ages of nine and 19. It was held Monday through Friday for half of the day throughout the summer. She felt older deprived teen-agers would be ideal in helping the younger participants in the program. In such an experience she found that one girl did an outstanding job while a second one was more interested in having fun. The subject decided that if the program were held again, she would screen the youth employees more carefully.

This subject described her work with the disadvantaged as "challenging." She said, "You have to be more thorough in planning and working with them. I learned you have to go at a slower pace and go back and repeat."

Subject 12

This subject, a May, 1967 graduate, was employed half-time as a vocational home economics teacher and half-time as a junior high remedial reading teacher. She felt that 65 percent of her high school home economics girls were disadvantaged and 85 to 90 percent of her junior high reading students were deprived. This teacher had been employed in this position for 32 months and worked with about 33 high school girls and 33 junior high students (25 boys and 8 girls) annually.

Her past experience with disadvantaged individuals came from her home community and high school which were near the town of her current employment. Books and magazines dealing with remedial reading for the disadvantaged had provided opportunities for her to learn more about the deprived. She had also had contact with the health department and several friends who taught remedial reading and elementary school children. Although she had had no college courses since her 1967 graduation, this subject had participated in a two-day workshop for remedial reading teachers as well as the three-day workshop for vocational teachers of the disadvantaged.

When questioned whether she faced any special discipline problems while working with disadvantaged youths, the subject said, "No, not in the high school because they've learned to respect." She did face problems in the junior high because they were younger and each class had boys as well as girls.

The subject did not recall any problems she faced when she first started working with high school disadvantaged girls, but she did have trouble "going down low enough on the reading level" of the junior high

students. She said, "I was teaching above them." This subject discovered that by working with them individually she was able to solve this problem.

She said she felt she would still face two main problems in working with disadvantaged junior high school youths. One was discipline and the other involved "getting them to identify with someone who has appropriate behavior." The subject knew which boys were the gang leaders outside of school and she thought if they would participate in school activities they could be guided by the faculty to improve their behavior.

The subject recalled one process for solving her problems which did not work. When she asked the students to read aloud to the class they would stammer or would not read.

As a summary to her work with the disadvantaged, the subject said she would like to work with smaller groups of the same sex in junior high. She felt this situation would be similar to her home economics classes and would solve her problems with the junior high group.

Subject 16

This subject had graduated in May, 1969 and had been employed ten months as a vocational home economics teacher. She said at least 75 percent of the 115 girls with whom she had worked were disadvantaged.

During the year she had taken some of her classes to observe in the kindergarten where there was also a high proportion of disadvantaged. Prior to her college graduation she had had experience with deprived individuals in a local hospital where she had worked as a candy striper for four years. The subject's other contact with the

disadvantaged in her home community was on the school bus. She had done her student teaching in a school system which had a large proportion of these students. Since college graduation, her only opportunity to learn about the deprived was through reading magazines and newspapers.

The subject did not face any special discipline problems with her disadvantaged girls. The primary problem she faced when she first started to work with them was that her Indian students would not talk in class. Since most of her students were Indians, she finally blurted out during the second week of classes, "Somebody talk! I feel like I'm talking to a wall." She said this solved her problem because they started to talk in class.

A problem this subject felt she would still face is that next year she will have the younger sisters of some students who "tried to run the school two years ago." She could not recall any processes for solving problems which she tried that did not work.

The subject summarized her work with the disadvantaged by saying, "You have to go a little slower with them." She also said it was difficult for her to compare students because with the high proportion of deprived in her student teaching center and at her present job, she really had not taught many non-disadvantaged students.

Preservice Education as it Relates to the Disadvantaged

One of the purposes of preservice teacher education is to provide assistance to the college student as she prepares for the teaching occupation. Since each subject had graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree and standard vocational home economics certificate from

Oklahoma State University, she would have been enrolled in about the same courses as others in the study. Each interviewee was asked (see Appendix B, question 13) what in her undergraduate training helped prepare her for working with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age. One subject replied emphatically, "nothing." Two others described their training as "superb" and "very valuable."

Courses in the Department of Home Economics Education were recalled several times in response to this question. Methods of Teaching Home Economics was a three credit hour course mentioned by six subjects as helpful to them. One vocational teacher recalled learning about different social classes and their problems and this has been a help to her. Techniques and Materials in Home Economics Education, a three credit hour course, was listed as helpful to four subjects. One was glad she had to give "interesting and exciting demonstrations" as part of the course and another said this was very realistic because she found she had to show her disadvantaged students rather than only tell them. Two teachers said that as part of the course, they were required to consider projects for students from deprived families and tell how they would present the material to them. Another vocational teacher recalled the History and Development of Extension Service course as helpful because an Extension home economist from another state spoke about her work with the disadvantaged.

Courses in the Family Relations and Child Development department at Oklahoma State University were also mentioned frequently as helpful when working with the deprived. Seven subjects stated that courses from this department were very useful to them on the job. Specific areas mentioned were adolescent psychology (by two subjects), child

psychology, family and social organization and nursery school observation. Of the three who found this observation helpful, one said she could "learn a lot about people in general just from what kids go through." Another said she was glad to have been able to observe "all different kinds of kids." The third stated that observation followed by a seminar allowed her to learn about normal behavior which made it easier to pinpoint abnormal actions.

Courses in the practical basics in all areas of home economics were cited as useful to four subjects. Although sewing and nutrition were singled out by one subject, the Department of Public Welfare home economist said nearly every area of home economics was valuable to her in her current work. A vocational teacher stated she had taken the basic courses too early and had not anticipated how she could use the information in teaching.

The sociology and psychology departments were both mentioned twice by subjects. One said she wished she had taken educational psychology in the Family Relations and Child Development department rather than in the Educational Psychology department.

The only opportunity, as part of their undergraduate courses, these subjects had to work with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age was through the student teaching course. Two subjects said they had taught in a disadvantaged community and felt fortunate for this experience.

With her undergraduate courses in mind, each subject was asked what might have helped prepare her for working with disadvantaged youths (see Appendix B, question 14). The researcher has attempted to separate these suggestions into those related to home economics and

those related to other areas, although several suggestions could be included in either area. Some of the suggestions would require a semester course while others might be accomplished within one class hour.

Courses suggested in the area of home economics included additional Family Relations courses and sex education (three subjects). One interviewee suggested that each department offer a section of their core course for home economics education majors. She envisioned these to be included late in the undergraduate program with emphasis on the application of the material to teaching high school students. Other topics suggested were the use of commodities, health care, fit in clothing and sequence in teaching.

Courses suggested in other areas on the undergraduate level included audio-visual materials (two subjects), pre-law and black literature. Sociology suggestions were made by eight interviewees. Understanding other cultures (three subjects), racial and cultural minorities (two subjects) and social work were the topics given. Two teachers who had attended the three-day workshop for vocational teachers on working with the disadvantaged, felt this should be included as part of the preservice teacher education program. Additional psychology courses were recommended by seven interviewees. Areas of psychology included behavior problems (three responses), analysis of problems, personality and attitudes, and abnormal psychology. Other topics suggested were drugs, the track system and information about trade and industrial programs for high school students.

Actual experiences with the disadvantaged, followed by seminars, during college were requested by ten subjects. Most felt these experiences would not only help their understanding of the deprived,

but also increase their self-confidence. Suggestions to observe in schools having a high proportion of disadvantaged students were made by three interviewees. They compared this observation experience with that of observing in the nursery school where they learned so many things about the children. Three other subjects felt student teaching in these schools was important. One vocational teacher said her student teaching experience was very idealistic and she had no discipline problems. She thought by extending the length of student teaching, she could have had the idealistic experience in addition to teaching in a deprived school. One teacher thought a live-in experience might have helped her, but she emphasized that it should be a guided experience. Another teacher suggested a visit to homes of the deprived to see actual situations.

Several courses in the preservice education of these subjects were considered valuable in working with disadvantaged youths. Many suggestions were made by the subjects for courses and activities they wished they had had. Table VIII groups the major suggestions into seven categories.

Summary

The 18 subjects in this study had a varied background in experience with disadvantaged individuals. Although 11 different types of jobs were represented, the majority were employed as vocational home economics teachers. The subjects' in-service experience was also varied and each had different reasons for perceiving youths as disadvantaged. Some subjects could recall many problems they faced when they started working with disadvantaged, while others could only

remember one or two problems. The processes for solving the problems which were successful for one subject were sometimes a failure for others.

TABLE VIII
SUMMARY OF MAJOR SUGGESTIONS FOR PRESERVICE EDUCATION

| Course or Activity | Number of Subjects |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Experience with disadvantaged youths | 10 |
| Sociology | 8 |
| Psychology | 7 |
| Family Relations | 3 |
| Observation in disadvantaged schools | 3 |
| Student teaching in disadvantaged schools | 3 |
| Audio-visual aids | 2 |

Each student named courses which were part of her preservice and in-service education and which she felt helped her in working with disadvantaged youths. She also mentioned experiences she thought might have helped her. The findings were presented in detail in Chapter IV, and Chapter V will contain the implications of this data.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was undertaken to discover the problems faced by home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University as they began working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age. A review of the literature revealed work which had been done by home economists to help deprived youths, problems that were faced and pre-service and in-service education which assisted adults in working with these youths. On the basis of the literature reviewed, an interview schedule was developed.

A letter and questionnaire were mailed to 159 home economics graduates from Oklahoma State University who received Bachelor of Science degrees from May, 1967 through May, 1969. From the 74.2 percent return, 18 graduates met the following criteria established by the researcher: (1) experience in working with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age for at least six months after college graduation and prior to March, 1970 in a volunteer or paid capacity, (2) currently employed in an occupation where she felt at least 20 percent of the group were disadvantaged, (3) currently residing in Oklahoma and (4) willing to participate in a personal interview.

The researcher interviewed those subjects who met the above criteria to reach the first objective of the study, to discover the problems home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State

University faced while working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age.

The data gathered from the 18 interviewees were analyzed. Responses were categorized into the following four areas and discussed in Chapter IV: (1) a description of the subjects, (2) their perceptions of disadvantaged youths of secondary school age, (3) problems they faced while working with these youths and (4) preservice and in-service suggestions which would aid the home economist in working with deprived youths.

Summary of Findings

A majority (94.4 percent) of the subjects faced problems while working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age. Twenty-three different problems were mentioned by 17 interviewees. The five most often mentioned were: (1) understanding the culture and values of the youths (33 percent of the subjects), (2) motivation (22 percent), (3) reaching youths' level of understanding (17 percent), (4) youths' rudeness to adults (17 percent) and (5) stealing by youths (17 percent).

A majority (94.4 percent) of the subjects suggested courses and experiences which they felt might have helped prepare them for working with disadvantaged youths. Those suggestions mentioned most often included: experiences with disadvantaged youths (56 percent), sociology courses (44 percent), psychology courses (39 percent), family relations courses (17 percent), observing and student teaching in schools with a high proportion of deprived students (17 percent) and an audio-visual course and a course similar to the three-day workshop for teachers of the disadvantaged (11 percent).

Conclusions

One of the purposes of preservice education is to provide assistance to the college student as she prepares for an occupation. Since the researcher found a majority of the subjects faced problems while working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age, she concluded there was a need to consider these problems in the preservice education program. If the opportunity to learn more about disadvantaged youths were included prior to student teaching, each major would be able to incorporate some of the ideas into her student teaching experience. It was also concluded that these opportunities might be incorporated into home economics education, family relations, psychology and sociology courses; field experiences as part of courses and summer employment.

One of the purposes of in-service education is to provide assistance to the home economist in her occupation. The researcher discovered that the subject who had had in-service education experiences faced fewer problems as she worked with disadvantaged youths. The most valuable experiences reported by the subjects included graduate courses and workshops dealing specifically with the disadvantaged; therefore, it was assumed that these might be beneficial to home economics education graduates.

Subjects who graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1969 faced fewer problems while working with disadvantaged youths than those who graduated in 1967. With recent emphasis on the deprived individual, the researcher concluded that perhaps there had been increased discussion in undergraduate courses which had brought problems to the attention of the students and added some understanding of disadvantaged youths.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed by the researcher to assist home economics education majors at Oklahoma State University in their future work with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age. These recommendations may also have implications for other teacher education programs.

1. A list of courses offered at Oklahoma State University which place emphasis on the disadvantaged could be compiled and the list used as recommendations for electives for home economics education majors.
2. The Methods of Teaching Home Economics and the Techniques and Materials in Home Economics Education courses should continue to include discussions on the disadvantaged student.
3. Home economics education majors might be encouraged to consider summer employment or experiences between semesters in which they could work with disadvantaged individuals.
4. As many majors as possible might be assigned to observe in schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged students.
5. Student teachers might be placed in a school with a high proportion of disadvantaged students. Frequent seminars should be conducted at which time student teachers could discuss their work with each other and a university instructor.
6. Student teachers could be encouraged to participate in community programs for the disadvantaged.
7. All majors might be encouraged to participate in in-service education relating to the disadvantaged following their college graduation. This would include reading, graduate courses and workshops.

8. The researcher recommends that a follow-up study be conducted to determine the effectiveness of any changes in preservice education as it relates to working with disadvantaged youths.

This chapter has included a summary of the study's findings, conclusions and recommendations. Since a great majority of the subjects in this study faced problems while working with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age, there is a need to plan for more exposure to the deprived before a home economics education major graduates.

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APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE FOR OBTAINING SAMPLE

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**Department of Home Economics Education
372-6211, Ext. 486

74074

March 6, 1970

Dear O.S.U. Graduate:

I am presently a master's degree student at Oklahoma State University in the Department of Home Economics Education. I am conducting a research study under the direction of Dr. Joan Baird.

The objectives of the study are two-fold. One is to determine the kinds of problems faced by home economics education graduates from Oklahoma State University who have worked with disadvantaged youths of secondary school age. A second objective is to make recommendations for changes in the Oklahoma State University home economics education curriculum so future graduates will be better prepared to work with the disadvantaged.

Your assistance is needed to determine what proportion of graduates have worked with disadvantaged youths 11 to 18 years of age. From this group of graduates, a sample will be selected for a personal interview. Those in the sample will be asked further questions concerning their work with the disadvantaged and the problems they have faced.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Karen Cross
Graduate StudentDr. Joan Baird
Thesis Adviser

Enclosure

PLEASE READ THE ACCOMPANYING LETTER, then answer the following questions.

The term "disadvantaged" refers to individuals in the lowest socio-economic segment of our population. When responding to the following questions, use your own judgement of whom you consider disadvantaged.

1. Have you worked with individuals whom you consider disadvantaged since receiving your B.S.? (Please check appropriate answer.)

_____ Yes _____ No

If you answered "yes" please continue with question 2.

If you answered "no" please go to question 6.

2. Please check the following age groups of disadvantaged with whom you have worked since receiving your B.S. Beside each age group checked, write the approximate number of months you worked in either a volunteer or paid capacity. Please give your job(s) title(s).

| | MONTHS | TITLE OF JOB(S) |
|---------------------|--------|-----------------|
| _____ Under 5 years | _____ | _____ |
| _____ 5-10 years | _____ | _____ |
| _____ 11-18 years | _____ | _____ |
| _____ 19-30 years | _____ | _____ |
| _____ 31-65 years | _____ | _____ |
| _____ Over 65 years | _____ | _____ |

3. If you have worked with youths between 11 and 18 years of age, approximately what percent of them would you consider to be disadvantaged?

_____ percent

4. Would you be willing to answer additional questions in a personal interview if you are selected as part of the sample?

_____ Yes _____ No

5. Do you expect to move from Oklahoma before November, 1970?

_____ Yes _____ No

6. Your name _____
 (First) (Middle) (Last) (Maiden)

Address _____

_____ Phone number _____

Present occupation _____

Business address _____

_____ Phone number _____

When did you receive your B.S. degree from O.S.U.? _____

(Month) (Year)

April 1, 1970

Dear O.S.U. Graduate:

On March 6, 1970 a questionnaire concerning your work with disadvantaged youths was mailed to you with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. I realize how busy you are, but your return would be very helpful to me even though you may not have worked with disadvantaged youths.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please disregard this post card if you have returned your questionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Karen Cross

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**Department of Home Economics Education
372-6211, Ext. 486

74074

April 20, 1970

Dear

On March 6, 1970 a questionnaire concerning your work with disadvantaged youths was mailed to you. I know you are very busy in April, but your return would be very helpful to me even though you may not have worked with disadvantaged youths.

I have enclosed my original letter which explains my study and a brief questionnaire. You may return the completed questionnaire to me in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please disregard this letter if you have returned your questionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Karen M. Cross
Graduate StudentDr. Joan Baird
Thesis Adviser

Enclosures

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SUBJECT NUMBER _____

1. What jobs have you had in which you have worked with disadvantaged youths 11-18 years of age?

Vocational Home Ec. _____ Extension _____ Social Work _____

Jr. High Home Ec. _____ Headstart _____ Other _____

2. How long did you work with these youths? (1) _____
(2) _____

3. Approximately what was the total number of boys and girls you worked with?

Girls (1) _____ Boys (1) _____

(2) _____ (2) _____

4. As you think about these youths, how many of them would you classify as being disadvantaged?

(1) _____ (2) _____

5. What made you think these youths were disadvantaged?

Clothes _____ Low Income _____ Class discussion _____ Home _____

Handicaps _____ Race _____ Other _____

6. Did any of the following people talk about these youths and identify them as being disadvantaged?

Your employer or department head _____ Other youths _____

Fellow employees _____ Written records _____

7. As you think about the disadvantaged youths with whom you have worked, do you think they faced any special problems in their everyday life?

a. Did they have any special handicaps?

b. Did they face any special problems in their attitudes?

c. Did you face any special discipline problems with them?

8. Do you recall any problems that you faced when you first started working with these disadvantaged youths?

9. In thinking about these problems you mentioned, do you recall how you proceeded with solving them?

SUBJECT NUMBER _____

10. What problems do you feel you would still face in working with disadvantaged youths 11-18 years of age?
11. What processes for solving problems did you try that did not work?
12. If you do not recall facing any problems, is there something about your background which may have contributed to working with these youths?
- Previous experience
 - College training
 - Training after graduation
13. As you look back on your undergraduate training, what helped prepare you for working with disadvantaged youths?
14. As you look back on your undergraduate training, what might have helped prepare you for working with disadvantaged youths?
15. As part of your job(s), have you had any experience with disadvantaged individuals of ages other than 11-18?
- Yes _____ No _____ Ages _____
- Number worked with _____ Length of time _____
16. Have you had any experience with disadvantaged individuals of any age outside of your job(s)?
- Yes _____ No _____
- Volunteer work _____ Home Community _____ College _____
- Part-time jobs _____ High School _____ Other _____
- Ages _____ Number worked with _____ How Long _____
17. Have you had any of the following opportunities to learn about disadvantaged individuals since you graduated from college?
- Reading _____ Courses _____
- Research _____ Other groups or agencies _____
- Friends who have worked with disadvantaged individuals _____
- Describe any opportunity(ies) you have had.
18. Do you have any other problems or comments you wish to mention regarding your work with disadvantaged youths?

APPENDIX C

PERCEPTION OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS BY SUBJECTS

TABLE IX
 PERCENTAGE OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS 11 TO 18 YEARS OF AGE
 AT SUBJECT'S MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT

| Subject Number | Percentage of Disadvantaged Reported Questionnaire | Interview |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 85 | 65-75 |
| 2 | 20 | 15-20 |
| 3 | 100 | 95 |
| 4 | 25 | 50-66 |
| 5 | 20 | 80-90 |
| 6 | 25 | 25+ |
| 7 | 30 | 30-35 |
| 8 | 85 | 90 |
| 9 | 50 | 82 |
| 10 | 25-33 | 33 |
| 11 | 70 | 90 |
| 12 | 25 | 65 |
| 13 | 75 | 85 |
| 14 | 20 | 28 |
| 15 | 25 | 35-40 |
| 16 | 65-75 | 75 |
| 17 | 50 | 75 |
| 18 | 100 | 100 |

VITA

2

Karen Meriem Cross

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PROBLEMS FACED BY HOME ECONOMISTS WORKING WITH DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR PRESERVICE EDUCATION

Major Field: Home Economics Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Lockport, New York, January 4, 1943, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Gifford; married to George R. Cross, 1966.

Education: Graduated from Royalton-Hartland Central High School, Middleport, New York in June, 1961; received the Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York in June, 1965; completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1971.

Professional Experience: 4-H Extension home economist in Steuben County, New York, 1965-1966; home economics teacher in Little Valley Central School, Little Valley, New York, 1966-1967; home economics teacher in Fulton Junior High School, Fulton, New York, 1967-1969; graduate teaching assistant in Home Economics Education, Division of Home Economics, Oklahoma State University, 1969-1971.

Professional Organizations: American Home Economics Association, Oklahoma Home Economics Association, Kappa Delta Pi, Omicron Nu, Phi Upsilon Omicron.