

IMPLICATIONS OF STUDENT NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND
EXPERIENCES FOR PLANNING HOME-MAKING
EDUCATION CURRICULA

By

VILENA LANDERS

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IMPLICATIONS OF STUDENT NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND
EXPERIENCES FOR PLANNING NUTRITION
EDUCATION CURRICULA

Thesis Approved:

Millie Pearson
Thesis Adviser

Katharine Kunkler

June Cozine

Robert Morrison
Dean of the Graduate School

361530

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CHAPTER I

HOMEMAKING, AN EDUCATIONAL NEED

Education is a continuous process by which the individual grows and develops and becomes increasingly well-adjusted in the changing society in which he lives. As the individual matures physically, mentally, socially, spiritually, and emotionally, education must provide experiences that will enable him to form desirable habits, to broaden his mental vision, to deepen his understanding of his status in and responsibility to society and to acquire skills to meet and solve problems encountered from day to day.

Learning is the heart of the educative process. For generations the school stressed rote learning--the acquiring of knowledge for its own sake, the learning of principles and generalizations apart from life situations, now the ability to organize old and new learning to make new behavior patterns and to meet new situations is the emphasis.

Learning in school today is considered satisfactory if it builds up attitudes, ideals and appreciations; sets standards; and leads to understanding principles and perceiving relationships in new situations. Such learning calls for a new type of experiencing. This type builds personality. The individual is different because he has learned, and a storehouse of

learning has been provided--understandings, appreciations, insights, abilities, knowledge, and skills to be drawn upon when needed in new situations (Teaching is successful to the degree that it results in pupil learning.)

The individual also has much need for knowledge, not because knowing things has value in itself, but because it contributes to doing things which he considers essential and worth while.

The way people live, the values they cherish and for which they are willing to work, and the success with which they achieve those values are the result of learned ways of behaving--learned through many experiences both in and out of school. The earliest education had for its purpose an imitative person. Life changed little, and education was training for and initiation into adult activities. Patterns were set by the elders and children followed them. The early school supplemented the life of the neighborhood as an educational agency. It's primary purpose was to teach by rote learning the skills of communication and computation needed in every day living.

The person who would live successfully today must learn a great deal more than he would a generation ago. The person with a broad concept of the purpose of education is capable of continued growth. He can set his own goals of behavior, make decisions regarding conduct and be willing to accept responsibility for his actions. Such a person will be not only self-directing but self-supporting. Progress will be

shown in reaching the objectives of education by the manner in which personal development and maintenance needs are met as well as the needs in home and family living, civic and social responsibilities, recreational interests, and vocational activities.

Research shows us that childhood experiences have a great influence upon the amount of success we can have in our personal lives. Home environment means something more than physical features of the house, the sizes of the rooms, and the arrangement of the furniture. It includes the human environment, too. The ideals and standards of those in the home become a part of the human environment. What the parents and grandparents do, say, and believe influences the children greatly and the adults more than is often realized. Attitudes are caught not taught. The kind of relationships developed among the family members plays an important part in our daily happiness and long time success in living. The little things of everyday life have a great bearing upon the relationships for it is the little things which serve as expressions of personal attitudes.

Concern for the rights of others is important. In a democracy each member is important and at the same time recognizes the importance and rights of others. This good relationship when maintained in the family is carried over into the community. This is important because the community is the home of our homes.

The biggest business in the world today is homemaking. It should be kept in mind that this does not mean house-keeping. Homemaking means more than keeping the house in order, the food prepared, and clothes washed and ironed. It includes doing those necessary things, but the great job is to provide a home climate in which each member is likely to achieve his greatest growth, physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. Most people, regardless of profession, have been, or live, in homes, and homemaking is the most vital of all businesses, because the home is believed to have more influence upon individuals than any other one phase of the environment. Here personality is formed and modified. It is believed that the strength of the nation lies within its homes. Even though this is true we often have inactive partners in the business of homemaking. This may be because family members do not share in planning and do not understand their responsibility. People generally will do their part if they understand and have some direction. Other things are at stake than the work to be done. Each family member owes his best to his partners. He also must learn to adjust to the family group. This in turn prepares him to live and get along in the world.

Home life affords unique opportunity to develop ability to live in a democracy. In a family group which, though small, includes both sexes, older and younger members, and individuals of differing temperaments and abilities, we must learn to adjust. Conflicts of interest are sure to arise,

but mutual agreement is usually possible. Each conflict as it arises gives occasion for discussion, a democratic method for the settlement of issues. When parents and children are gathered together at the table or beside the fire, or more formally, in family councils, there are countless opportunities for discussion, in the course of which leadership may be assumed, as a matter of course, by those with fuller experience and expert knowledge. Understanding of others, freedom from prejudices, and the ability to see both sides of a question are habits of mind which may be acquired gradually. And, further, genuine cooperation is possible in a group where each member, even the youngest, is treated with equal courtesy and consideration; where, in the processes of working, and playing together, common interests are developed in such a way as to foster a sense of responsibility, and a willingness to forego individual activities for the common good.

Since the school is an organized educational agency, it should recognize the values inherent in the democratic ideal and should make every effort to incorporate learning experiences which tend to foster their development. The home-making program is built around the problems arising in personal home and family life. It deals with the work, interests, and needs of the family group, respect for individuals, their ownership and privacy. It fosters responsibility, and willingness to work together for the common good. The home-making program should be built around family life, the work of the family, their recreation, their thinking and planning

for and with each other. It includes a study of such areas as the management of money; the nutritional needs of the family; clothing for the family; the management of time, energy, and human resources; the care and guidance of children, and housekeeping. The study of personal problems in these areas develops self-confidence, initiative, leadership ability, cooperativeness, judgment, and efficiency.

Final responsibility for what formal education means to students rests largely in the hands of the teacher. The teaching job is many-sided; the teacher's role has many facets. Basically the job is that of providing learning experiences which will promote the fullest growth and development of the individual student. The role of the teacher is that of an experienced leader and guide. What the student learns depends in part upon the learning experiences he has-- the activities carried out; the subject matter studied; and the knowledge, skills and techniques emphasized as of greatest worth. His learning also depends upon the kind of person the teacher is, her adjustment to life, her relationships with pupils, and the learning she has.

The job of teaching is not the teacher's alone, but the leadership in most instances rests with her. The final goals of teaching are changes in ideals, attitudes, and behavior-- new ways of looking at things, new ideas and values, new ways of doing things already known, new habits to replace unsatisfactory ones. These may or may not take place during the time the teacher is associated with the student. She may have

started this growth, but other experiences are needed before noticeable achievement can be acquired.

Home economics is taught through the use, care, and management of the department as well as through the class discussions and special activities carried out by the pupils. Inappropriate or too expensive furnishings and equipment, disorderly storage, careless handling of supplies, and working without a financial plan may be more effective instruments for teaching than the problems discussed in class. Unless these problems are solved in an efficient manner, the teacher has lost rather than gained. She has encouraged poor homemaking rather than good.

The home economics teacher should endeavor to build on the worth-while teachings of the home and obtain the cooperation of home members in the work the school is emphasizing. Pupils should be led to appreciate the work of their parents and the difficulties against which they have oftentimes struggled and to understand the real worth which frequently lies beneath their sometimes unpolished manners and poor material surroundings. The life goals of many parents center in providing for their children a better opportunity than they, the parents, had and in improving home conditions. Home economics teaching should contribute to the realization of both these aims, and parents who see them being achieved will become strong allies of the work.

A program of work--a calendar of activities--should be planned by the teacher, showing in a systematic way the

experiences she plans to use in achieving the objectives of the department. This should be a flexible program, however, to be adjusted as new conditions arise and indicate a need for change.

The teacher has a responsibility to see that home economics is not thought of as one of the frills of education, on the one hand, nor that its values are measured only as it teaches the skills of cooking, sewing, and housewifery, on the other hand.

Home economics is as wide as home and family life itself. Its teaching is successful largely to the degree that it contributes to the forming of a workable philosophy of life. Narrowly presented, home economics may warp attitudes toward life and hinder the development of a proper sense of values. Broadly planned and wisely taught with the needs and characteristics of the adolescent in mind, home economics has an unusual opportunity to be of educational value to youth while they are growing into happy, wholesome, well-balanced manhood and womanhood. In modern society, education for effective home and family life is much too important to be left to chance, and should be so planned that it meets, in part at least, the needs of the people. Hence, this study was made of student needs, interests and experiences in an effort to locate their implications for homemaking curricula.

CHAPTER II

A STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The home is quite generally accepted by leading educators as being the most important single agency contributing to the growth and development of individuals. Those persons who select homemaking education as their field of service assume much responsibility in that they must deal with not only the ideals basic to good personal, home and family life, but must concern themselves with the continuous development and evaluation of teaching content and materials.

Believing this, the writer attempted to find information regarding student needs, interests and experiences as a basis for planning homemaking education curricula which would meet present and future needs as to enrich the homemaking program and help girls to become more efficient homemakers for tomorrow.

A comparative study was therefore planned of the needs, interests, and experiences cited by homemaking students and the opinions of former students and community leaders. It was hoped that the data collected would bring to light definite implications for curriculum planning in homemaking education, which would be justified by a review of current educational literature.

In order that the reader may better understand the situation in which this experimentation took place, namely the high school of Okemah, Oklahoma, a brief description of the location and characteristics of the homemaking department and its students it made.

The town was named Okemah after a Kickapoo Indian chief of this name which means high person. It is an urban town of 4,000 people, located in the east central part of Oklahoma. It is on two highways midway between Tulsa and Oklahoma City. The people derive their income largely from farming, stock raising and petroleum. This means that a large number of the students enrolled come from surrounding areas, rather than from the town itself. The total enrollment in both junior and senior high school is approximately 930 students. Rural students who are transported in this district number 323, which is approximately 35 per cent of the total enrollment.

The high school building is located on a hill in the south eastern part of the town near the junior high school and a large grade school. The band and shop buildings are also near by.

Within a short distance from these buildings is a combined lunch room and homemaking cottage. The homemaking department which was built two years ago is the pride and joy of the community. It consists of a large all purpose laboratory, a living room, a dressing room, and a store room. In the all purpose room there are two permanently installed unit kitchens and shelving to house 99 tote trays, the depart-

mental books, magazines, and bulletins. Furnishings include tables for cutting garments or food service, chairs, sewing machines, and the teacher's desk. Adjoining the all purpose room is a dressing room with a triple mirror, also a general store room with rods upon which to hang finished and unfinished garments. A nicely furnished living room completes the homemaking department. The furnishing of this room was a student project for the girls in home furnishings.

There are six homemaking classes--four of high school level and two of junior high, totaling 110 students. Clothing construction and selection, meal planning and table service, home nursing, child care, textiles, and home furnishing are some of the phases of homemaking taught.

Heretofore the content studied and the learning experiences provided the students have largely been selected by the teacher on the basis of her earlier knowledge and preparation. The realization that this type of planning was questionable and that too little was known about student needs, prompted the writer to try to obtain additional information. It was believed that a study of the past experiences, the present recognized needs and interests, and the future plans of students now enrolled in homemaking classes would supplement information already collected by the school and would provide much information of significance in planning curricula. It was further believed that the information from students would be of greater value if supplemented by reports from recent graduates, and by the opinions of leaders in the community.

The writer assumed that the information when obtained would reveal clues which would be helpful in planning a homemaking education curriculum.

CHAPTER III

INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM SELECTED OKEMAH STUDENTS

The purpose of this report as stated earlier was to obtain and verify information regarding the needs, interests, and experiences of high school students in Okemah, Oklahoma.

Although the 40 students included in this study lived quite close together in a rather simple environment and had many of the same problems, they still were quite different individuals. They ranged from the quiet conservative almost fearful type to the vivacious more aggressive type. There were some girls from whom it was difficult to get a complete sentence due to their timidity, while others chatted all the time. There were some who always looked neat, and others who were less neat regardless of the kind of clothes worn. There were those who had a vivid imagination that carried them beyond the boundary lines of assignments and those who could carry out an assignment only when it was outlined for them step by step. There were those who had interesting suggestions for new things to investigate, and new things to study. There were others who never seemed to have any particular ideas of their own. All these facts and many more known by the teacher were a part of the information contributing to this study, yet it was believed that written answers were needed to both supplement and justify the teacher's opinion

of the emphasis to be placed on curriculum planning.

A questionnaire¹ devised to obtain information regarding the homes, families, clubs, organizations, special abilities, likes and dislikes as well as the homemaking tasks they wished they knew how to do was given to 40 Okemah high school students during the spring of 1956.

Fifteen of the 40 families represented by the participating students enrolled own their homes, the remainder rent. The families living in town totaled 22 while 18 lived in the country.

Since the people in this community derive their income largely from farming, stock raising, and petroleum; it is not surprising to find that many of the students' fathers are engaged in these occupations. Information found in answers to this question are tabulated and arranged in order of frequency in Table I, page 15. These answers also reveal that some of the fathers were employed on jobs which required no special training while some were unemployed at the time. Ten of the fathers were engaged in the petroleum industry, eight in farming (or had farmed), eight were skilled laborers, four were engaged in distributive services and three were unskilled laborers. Two fathers were engaged in personal services, two were unemployed, and one was on Old Age Assistance. One girl left her question unanswered.

Twenty-two of the 40 girls stated that their mothers were not working outside the home, and it is presumed they were following the usual homemaking tasks that are essential

¹Questionnaire. Appendix, p. 39.

TABLE I

FATHER'S OCCUPATIONS AS REPORTED BY 40 HOME MAKING STUDENTS

Order of Frequency	Types of Occupations	Number Employed
1	Petroleum	
	Truck Driver	6
	Refinery	1
	Driller	1
	Engineer	1
	Foreman	1
	Total	10
2	Farming	
	Farmers	7
	Retired Farmer	1
	Total	8
3	Skilled Labor	
	Mechanic	3
	Construction	2
	Welder	1
	Clerk	1
	Carpenter	1
	Total	8
4	Distribution	
	Service Station	
	Manager	2
	Salesman	1
	Lumber yard	1
	Total	4
5	Unskilled Labor	
	Laborers	3
	Total	3
6	Personal Services	
	Minister	1
	Public Relations	1
	Total	2
7	Unemployed	2
	Total	2
8	Deceased	1
	Total	1
9	Pension	1
	Total	1
10	Unanswered	1
	Total	1
	Total	<u>40</u>

to the care of a family. Two of the mothers are deceased. The remaining 16 mothers were managing their homes, carrying on the usual household duties, and also working outside the home. This work included clerking in stores, cooking in lunch rooms, teaching, practical nursing, laundering and dry cleaning work. According to statements made by the girls in these families the girls assisted in the general duties of the home.

Since psychologists say interests are basic for accomplishment, one of the first questions asked was that of individual preferences in choice of subject matter. The answers given showed that homemaking education was not always the best liked subject taken in school. History was named as the best liked subject by 13 of the group and homemaking was next in popularity, being listed as first choice by ten students. English was listed first by seven students and typing, literature, mathematics and general science each listed as preferred by six. General business held the major interest of three of the girls. Two gave their first choice to band, two to biology and one girl preferred chorus.

If the homemaking curriculum included the activities listed by 40 homemaking girls in Okemah High School in answer to the question What part of homemaking do you like best, then it would include every phase of homemaking. The answers to this question were summarized, and tabulated in the order of frequency. They are found in Table II, page 17. As shown by the table the majority of the girls preferred food preparation

TABLE II

HOMEMAKING ACTIVITIES LIKED BEST BY 40 HOMEMAKING STUDENTS

Order of Frequency	Class Activities Liked Best	Number Reporting
1	Study of Food Preparation	21
2	Study of Clothing Construction	16
3	Study of Home Nursing	3
4	Study of Home Furnishing	2
5	Study of Marketing	2
6	All of it	2
7	Study of House Cleaning	1
8	Study of Child Care	1
9	Eating	1
10	Keep room clean	1
11	None of it	1

and clothing construction. The other phases liked rather generally were nursing, home furnishing, marketing, house cleaning, and food preparation. One girl said she liked all phases of homemaking, while another one stated she did not like any of them.

Realizing that many individual differences and many interesting evidences of student growth are shown by their choices of reading material, attention is called to the choices made by these 40 homemaking students. Their answers to the query of what magazines and books they enjoyed were tabulated in the order of frequency and are shown in Table III, page 19. The "slick" magazine choices totaled 41. The next most prominent might be classified as popular, political, and current news. In this category were listed Reader's Digest, Saturday Evening Post and Collier's, which were reported by 16 students. Look and Life classified as pictorial educational magazines were next in popularity with nine readers. The two teen age magazines listed by the group were Seventeen and American Girl and were claimed as preferred by a total of eight readers. Women's magazines such as Woman's Home Companion, McCall's, Ladies Home Journal, and American Home interested four girls most highly. The educational type such as Geographic and Science were chosen as favorites by three of the group, while the Sports magazine was enjoyed by one. The "pulp" magazines, Movie Screen, True Confessions and True Stories held the highest attention of eight girls.

TABLE III

MAGAZINES READ BY 40 HOME MAKING STUDENTS

Kinds Read	Number Reporting
Slick	
Popular, Political and Current News	
Reader's Digest	9
Saturday Evening Post	6
Collier's	2
Total	16
Pictorial Educational	
Life	6
Look	3
Total	9
Teen Age	
Seventeen	7
American Girl	1
Total	8
Woman's Magazines	
Woman's Home Companion	1
Recalls	1
Ladies Home Journal	1
American Home	1
Total	4
Educational	
Geographic	1
Science	2
Total	3
Sports	
Sports	1
Total	1
Pulp	
True Stories	
Movie Screen	5
True Confessions	2
True Stories	1
Total	8
Total	49

The character of the books named by the group was less varied. Seven girls reported they read fiction, five historical novels, and three said they enjoyed bibliography, while the other three listed non-fiction, baby care, and "any" kind.

All of the way from infancy to old age individuals have many important human needs to be met. The extent to which these needs are met determines one's success in building good family life. How well the family needs are met in the homes of 40 homemaking girls is indicated partially by their answers to the inquiry concerning what things were liked best about their homes. By referring to Table IV, page 21, the reader will find that ten of the girls claimed to like everything about their homes, while another group of ten gave answers which indicated good family relationship. These ten girls indicated that they enjoyed the companionship, friendliness, and understanding of the home. Four of the girls registered appreciation for the freedom to do things, while four others liked the family discussions. Three enjoyed the meals and two appreciated the cooperation in the family and the support of their father. One liked the location of her home and another one particularly enjoyed her room. One girl gave no answer and one said she did not like anything about her home.

The special activities in which the girls reported interest varied. Sports were listed first by 32 of the 40 girls. This did not mean that they participated in these sports, but likely that they held their interest as spectators. Music was next in popularity with 14 stating chorus, and three

TABLE IV

THINGS 40 HOMEMAKING STUDENTS ESPECIALLY
LIKE ABOUT THEIR HOMES

Order of Frequency	Types of Statements Made	Number Times Reporting
1	Enjoyed Everything	10
2	Enjoyed the companionship, friendliness, and understanding	10
3	Enjoyed family discussions	4
4	Enjoyed the freedom to do things	4
5	Enjoyed the meals	3
6	Enjoyed the television and radio	2
7	Appreciated the feeling of security	1
8	Appreciated the cooperation	1
9	Liked the location	1
10	Appreciated the support of the father	1
11	Enjoyed her	1
12	Gave no answer	1
13	Liked nothing	1

favoring band. The Four H Club and the Future Teachers of America tied in popularity with seven listings each. Drama held the interest of six and debating of four. Camp Fire interested two, and nursing and homemaking one each. Church clubs held most of the girls interest with a total of 17 answering. Pop Pirates (the sports club) was claimed by seven, the Spanish Club by two, and Art by one. It was noted that the same number were interested in music as were interested in church clubs. This may be one result of the rather close relationship between the public school and the church in this community.

Nineteen of the girls reported that they had specific work to do in the home. The remainder said they helped with the general housework, took care of the younger children and kept their rooms clean. One girl, whose mother was deceased, worked as a partner in doing the housework with her father, who was retired. Two of the girls lived with their father and a grandmother since there was no mother in the home.

When asked if they had an allowance, 16 stated yes and 22 no, while two wrote sometimes. Ten of the 16 stated that they saved some of their allowance, but six indicated they did not save any.

Answering the query as to their plans after completing high school 16 said they planned to go to college and 12 had other plans, while eight were undecided. Two wanted to work for the telephone company and two thought they would like to be Wives.

The colleges the students planned to attend varied as to the location and kind. These in the order of frequency named were Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Oklahoma University, Tulsa University, East Central State College, Bacone College, and one college located in Florida, as well as various hospitals for nurses training. Business colleges were also listed. No one college was mentioned by more than six persons. Eight girls who said they planned to go to college were undecided as to their choice of an institution.

Choosing one's life work is a very important step to take thought 40 homemaking students when some of them realized they were not ready to make a definite decision as to what they planned to do. The statements made are tabulated in the order of their frequency in Table V, page 24. Twelve of the girls were undecided as to their future work. Nine followed the feminine instinct to be homemakers while eight wanted to train for nursing. Four girls stated teaching as their choice and four others wanted to be telephone operators. Two girls wanted to do secretarial work, and one planned to be in Civil Service.

Many girls may attend college and work a while before marriage, but they all seem to look forward to the homes they plan to have and which they believe will give them comfort, peace, and beauty. This was true of the 40 homemaking girls who answered the question regarding their intentions to marry. Thirty-nine of the girls answered 'later', due to the fact they wanted either to attend college or to work a while,

TABLE V

VOCATIONS CONTEMPLATED BY 40 HOMEMAKING STUDENTS

Order of Frequency	Types of Vocations Chosen	Number Times Reporting
1	Were Undecided	12
2	Be a Homemaker	9
3	Be a Nurse	8
4	Be a Teacher	4
5	Be a Telephone Operator	4
6	Be a Secretary	2
7	Be in Civil Service	1

and one girl stated she planned marriage in the near future.

Past experiences have shown that the displeased and irritated students have special ideas about the kinds of things they would like to learn, hence the question--if you were your mother what changes would you make in the home? Answers to this question will be found in Table VI, page 26. As was expected, a variety of answers were received. They ranged from statements which expressed satisfaction to those which might indicate complete frustration. Seventeen of the 40 girls said they were satisfied with their homes, either saying or implying they would make no changes. There seemed to be some concern over the organization and distribution of home responsibilities since eight reported that they would, if in charge of the home, organize activities and distribute responsibilities differently. Seven said they would make changes about the meals, but it is not known what changes each would make. Some referred to the time of serving and some to food choices. Others were concerned with redecorating the home, changing the furniture, and operating on a budget. One girl wanted the family to live together in one place. Another girl was undecided as to what changes she would make.

Probably one of the best evidences for the planning of the homemaking curriculum is found in the students own statements of their needs which they expressed in their answers to the question regarding what homemaking tasks they wished they knew how to do. These summarized statements are found

Table 1

Table 1. Summary of the results of the analysis of variance for the dependent variables.

Table 1. Summary of the results of the analysis of variance for the dependent variables. The table shows the F-value, degrees of freedom, and significance level for each variable.

Variable	Source of Variation	F-value	df	Significance
1	Age	17	1, 17	
2	Sex	8	1, 17	
3	Education	7	1, 17	
4	Income	6	1, 17	
5	Occupation	5	1, 17	
6	Marriage	4	1, 17	
7	Family size	3	1, 17	
8	Unemployed on the day of the survey	1	1, 17	
	Total	100		

Table 1. Summary of the results of the analysis of variance for the dependent variables. The table shows the F-value, degrees of freedom, and significance level for each variable.

in Table VII, page 23. The answers included the homemaking duties that are usually performed in the home. Twenty-six of the girls wanted to know more about cooking and meal planning while 12 wanted to learn more about sewing. Eight were interested in home furnishing and decorating and seven wanted child care. Five wanted to know more about nursing and first aid, and another group of five expressed their need for knowledge about the budgeting of time and money. Four considered dating and marriage very important and three wanted just general housework. The other five girls thought managing a home, making a home comfortable, and learning to entertain, to market, and to launder were equally important.

TABLE VII

HOMEMAING TASKS 40 HOMEMAING STUDENTS
WANTED TO KNOW HOW TO DO

Order of Frequency	Types of Statements Made	Number Reporting
1	Be a good cook and plan meals	26
2	Learn to sew, embroider, and crochet	15
3	Study home furnishing and decorating	8
4	Study child care	7
5	Study home nursing and first aid	5
6	Learn to budget time and money	5
7	Study dating and marriage	4
8	Learn general housework	3
9	Study home management	1
10	Learn to market	1
11	Learn to entertain	1
12	Make a comfortable home	1
13	Learn to do laundry	1

CHAPTER IV

EXPERIENCES AND OPINIONS OF FORMER STUDENTS

Personal interviews were held with 20 recent graduates to get information as to their experiences while attending high school classes. They were asked what use they had made of the training received in their high school homemaking classes. They were also asked to give their opinion of the phases to be included in future homemaking programs for high school and the feasibility of having night classes in homemaking for adults. Of these 20 graduates, 12 were married, four had moved from Okemah, six were in college, five were working part time, and ten were full time homemakers. Regarding the use they had made of their home economics training, eleven stated cooking was most important to them, seven said sewing, and two said both. In answering the question about the homemaking each had had in high school, and what they considered had been least valuable, five or one fourth of the group contacted said cooking. All of these five were either working or in college and had little opportunity to make use of their cooking. This may have been the reason for their feeling that their work in food preparation was of little value. However, ten of the women said that their high school work in clothing was least valuable. It is not

known whether these ten are among the less skilled group, whether they disliked clothing construction or whether they believe it is not expedient to make clothes. All of them were definitely in favor of night classes offering more homemaking education for adults. They recommended a broad curriculum for the preparation of future homemakers specifically suggesting the inclusion of foods and nutrition, sewing, child care, home furnishing and decoration, home management, home nursing, meal planning and table service, budgeting, consumer education, landscaping, personal adjustment, etiquette, family relations, laundering, good habits, personal grooming and design, sex education and color combinations. Although no specific suggestions were made in regard to the detailed content to be taught, the women were consistent in their recommendation of a broad homemaking education program. While some admitted they were not skilled in all phases of homemaking, they still expressed belief that the homemaking education program should incorporate some work in every phase of family life, even though to do so, homemaking skills as such, likely would have to be developed through home experiences. All recommended an opportunity for adults to continue the study of homemaking.

CHAPTER V

THE OPINIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF ADULTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Through interviews the writer wished to obtain information regarding the experiences and opinions of selected adults in the community which would provide further information regarding student needs, interests, and experiences.

Twenty adults were contacted for personal interviews. These people were leaders in the community with various occupations. All of them were homemakers; 18 lived in town, the other two were farmer's wives. Those who worked outside the home included two teachers, a grade school principal, a beauty operator, a florist, the manager of the school lunch room, the home demonstration agent, and a secretary. The 20 women were selected because they represented various activities and groups and because they were in a position to know the kind of life taking place in that particular community. They included a doctor's wife, the president of the school board, the wife of the superintendent of schools, a minister's wife, and an 82 year old grandmother.

Two questions were asked each interviewee. One was "What have you seen in home and family life that should have significance for the teaching of home economics in the high school?" The other was--"What in your opinion should be

included in the homemaking program in high school?" Considerable interest was shown and the answers were many and varied. A summary of the answers made by people never gives much insight into how individuals think. Hence the decision to include four case studies. No attempt is made to repeat verbatim, the comments made by these four people, but rather to report the ideas expressed in as simple and concise language as possible. The reports of the interviews were selected by the use of Fisher and Yates Table of Random Numbers¹. The following reports were given by:

A Grandmother:

Students could practice cooking at home what they have learned at school, being sure to leave the kitchen cabinets as they found them. If they learned more about budgeting finances they would be more capable of careful buying after they are married. This might keep down family problems. Mending learned in school would be very beneficial later in the home. Character building is very important. Students should learn to do daily chores in an efficient manner. Landscaping taught in a simple form would encourage girls to have more beautiful homes.

A Beauty Operator:

The planning of meals is very important particularly learning to substitute when one does not have certain foods on the shelf. To be an efficient housekeeper, learning to prepare meals when the mother is working is good experience. A study of family relationship is one that cannot be stressed too much.

A County Home Demonstration Agent:

Parents should be more in sympathy with what is taught in school. They need to be more familiar with the subject matter. If a girl comes home enthused and wanting to try a

¹Lindquist, Statistical Analysis in Educational Research (Cambridge Mass. 1940), pp. 262-264.

project and the parent discourages her, then the teacher and pupil have both lost. Good school and parent relationships should be encouraged.

A Homemaker:

Girls should be taught to make a comfortable home, one where the children can bring their friends. The home is the place where all the members can be themselves, parents should not be too strict. Having slip covers for the protection of the divan and chairs will cause children to feel free to play. Learning to prepare food for the family will help students to understand family nutrition. All high school girls should be taught child care and development so that there will be less need for them to learn at the expense of their first child. The oldest child in a family should not have to suffer for the mistakes the mother makes. Also general information should be included regarding the determination of babies' feeding formulas, and schedules. Young mothers need to understand that babies are different and that all recommended schedules need slight adjustments to meet individual needs. A study of child psychology would be wonderful. The later life of a person is very much affected by his home life as a child. There should be good humor in the home. High school girls should be helped to see the comical and the pleasant sides of home life rather than the little tragedies and irritating frustrations for it is this ability to maintain good humor that makes home life successful.

The suggestions made by the four women seemed to be representative of the attitude of the majority of the adults in the community. They like others, expressed the belief that girls should be taught many homemaking skills. The grandmother referred to general homemaking skills, being concerned about family life as a whole. The beauty operator emphasized the need for knowing meal planning and food preparation. Wise use of time, and efficient management were cited as problems she recognized as common to working women. The county home demonstration agent cited the need for developing good parent-student-teacher relationships while the homemaker seemed to be more interested in the atmosphere of the home and the growth

and development of the children. The comments of each of these women point to important phases of homemaking education. While their comments were not identical they were so closely related as to indicate their common belief that good home life cannot be promoted without the inclusion of all areas of homemaking education.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM PLANNING

Today education recognizes that learning to be effective must be related to the learner. Effective homemaking education will therefore become a vital part of the lives of the students. In good family life, each person is aware of the friendly, warm, affectional relationships in his family and feels that he is wanted, loved, and appreciated by the family group. How well we meet the needs of our future families is determined to a great extent by an outstanding homemaking educational curriculum.

Realizing that many girls do work for awhile and then marry, it is evident that the homemaking education curriculum should be planned to meet the needs, interests, and experiences of the group concerned. Also realizing that some of the girls will not attend college to further their knowledge in homemaking, it appears to be very important that they develop a philosophy of life which emphasizes personal and family living when taking homemaking in high school.

The students indicated their needs, and interests, and the experiences they would like to have as future homemakers in their statements requesting that many phases of homemaking be included in the high school program.

The graduates that are in their own homes and those who expect to be, realize their loss by not having had more training in homemaking. Statements given by them reveal that they see a need for more knowledge in the care of a home than that related to cooking and sewing. They also realize that the teacher plays a very important part in the program. One graduate stated that she would have learned more in cooking if she had had a good teacher. The success of a teacher will be measured by the extent to which her teaching goes beyond the classroom.

The leaders of the community realize the importance of having happier and healthier homes in the future. Opinions given by them indicate that the homemaking program in high school has a definite effect on these homes and that a broad program definitely would seem to be advisable.

Homemaking skills were referred to by all three groups. They also referred to family relations as having a definite place in the program. There seemed to be nothing unusual in the needs and desires of the high school girls. They were similar to those needed by girls in other areas. Their lack of concern for responsibility in the home would seem to suggest that much of the effort to train should be devoted to home management, meal planning and table service, child care, home furnishing and decoration, clothing, home nursing, and other phases of homemaking which would influence them to have healthier and happier home life.

According to the data given, it would seem that the homemaking program for high school students should be broadened from a program of one year of sewing and one year of cooking as has been the custom in Okemah in the past to include many phases of homemaking. This would provide a more complete program.

A future homemaking curriculum which would be based upon the needs, interests, and experiences of high school girls would have to be broader in scope than that represented by the activities of any one student, in order that the needs of all students might be met. A good curriculum is not achieved immediately, but is planned over a long period. It should be dynamic and functional.

Five basic steps are essential in planning a curriculum: the obtaining of information regarding student needs, interests and experiences; the setting up of objectives and their interpretation into behavior outcomes; the determining of the learning needed to achieve the objectives; the selecting of educational experiences for acquiring the learning needed; and the deciding upon ways of measuring the extent to which learning has been acquired.

This study has helped the writer to accomplish the first of these five steps thus paving the way for continued work in curriculum planning. Another year working with the people in this community should make possible many improvements in the homemaking education program offered.

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APPENDIX

INFORMATION REGARDING HOME-MAKING STUDENTS

1. Name _____ Grade _____
2. Address _____ Age _____ Telephone _____
3. Is your home owned? _____ Rented? _____
4. Occupation of Father _____ Mother _____
5. Does your mother work outside the home? _____
6. What are your favorite school subjects? _____
7. What part of Home Economics do you like best? _____
8. What magazines and books do you enjoy? _____
9. What do you like most of all about your home? _____
10. Check the activities and organizations in which you are interested.
Band _____ Dramatics _____ Girl Scouts _____
Camp Fire _____ Debating _____ Pop Pirates _____
Church _____ 4 H _____ Sports _____
Chorus _____ F.T.A. _____ Others _____
11. Do you have a specific job at home? _____ What? _____
List your responsibilities in your home. _____
12. Do you have an allowance? _____ Do you save part of it? _____
13. What are you planning to do when you finish high school?

14. Do you expect to go to college? _____ Where? _____
15. What would you like to do for your life's work? _____
16. Do you plan to marry and have a home? _____ Soon? _____ Later? _____
17. If you were in your mother's place, what change would you make in the management of the home? _____
18. What homemaking tasks do you wish you knew how to do? _____

VITA

Vilena Landers

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Education

Thesis: IMPLICATIONS OF STUDENT NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND
EXPERIENCES FOR PLANNING HOMEMAKING EDUCATION
CURRICULA

Major Field: Home Economics

Biographical and Other Items:

Personal data: Born, August 10, 1901 at Chandler,
Oklahoma

Education: Undergraduate Study, East Central State
College, 1946-1948. Graduate Study, Oklahoma
University, 1950-1951. Oklahoma Agricultural
and Mechanical College, 1954-1956.

Experiences: Homemaker, 1925-1956; Teacher, 1919-
1932, 1948-1956.

Member of Oklahoma Educational Association, National Education
Association and Okfuskee County Association.

Date of Final Examination: May, 1956.