

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF
OKLAHOMA PROGRAMS

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
December, 1998

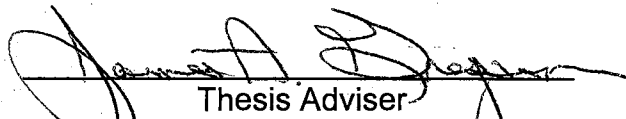
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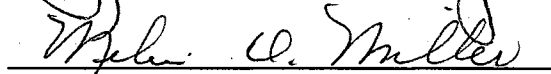
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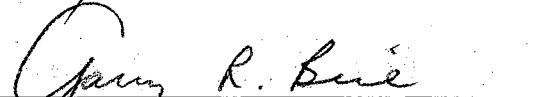
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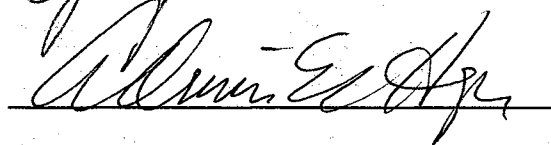
OKLAHOMA PROGRAMS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My genuine appreciation is extended to my committee Dr. Melvin Miller, Chairman, Dr. James Gregson, Dr. Ray Sanders, Dr. Garry Bice and Dr. Adrienne Hyle for their positive encouragement, their expertise, and their patience with this novice researcher. Each of them brought unique insights to my course work and special contributions to this research process.

A special thanks goes to Dr. James Gregson for serving as dissertation adviser for this study. His classes were challenging, thought provoking and above all rich with thoughtful preparation. He has been a patient guide and a wonderful teacher. Dr. Melvin Miller is truly a gifted vocational educator whose wisdom and experience provided a foundation that helped me refine and articulate my own philosophy of teaching. I appreciate the active participation of Dr. Ray Sanders. His expertise and encouragement gave me confidence to pursue my goals. I thank Dr. Garry Bice for entering this project midstream. His His challenging classes helped me understand the importance of vision in education and to utilize that vision in my practice. Dr. Adrienne Hyle is truly a gifted encourager. Her positive attitude always renews my confidence and motivates me to try harder. I have learned from each of these individuals and consider it an honor to have them as my committee.

I am most grateful to the teachers who provided interviews for my study. They graciously gave their time and insights to help me achieve my goal. I

learned from them and was inspired by their beliefs, their stories and their experiences.

I will always remember discussions “on the road” with three special friends who provided me with empathetic support. Kathy Sanders is a once-in-a-lifetime friend who has challenged me in every good way. David Hand brought a joy to our group with unique humor and spiritual insight. Jeff Ogle shared our struggles and was a wonderful listener.

Finally, I am most grateful to my family. My husband Larry and my children Chris and Katie encouraged me through their prayers and their love and understanding. My parents Fred and Marguerite Meyer have always made me believe I could do anything I ever wanted. My brother Fred and my sisters June and Joan and my Aunt Frieda echoed that faith. I appreciate their confidence in me. It has made all the difference.

Dedicated to all
Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers
who work each day
to prepare their students
for a happy, successful future.

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CHAPTER I

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

The question of how Family and Consumer Sciences programs benefit students has been a topic of discussion for parents, teachers, administrators, and legislators since the field of study was formally introduced in the beginning of the twentieth century. As a significant curriculum reform targeted toward feminizing women's education during the Progressive era, the programs were called home arts, domestic sciences, and home economics (Powers, 1992). A discipline once thought to be essential has now been given a place of less importance. Home economics courses, required for female students in the past, are now elective or have been omitted from the curriculum altogether. Movements such as back to basics, cultural literacy, increased math and science requirements, and emphasis on core curriculum have separated the attention away from the components of the curriculum designed to prepare students for family and work roles (Way & Rossman, 1994).

A 1995 American Vocational Association survey of state governors indicated levels of support regarding a variety of educational issues and subject areas. Sixteen governors responded to the survey citing their priorities as basic skills, higher level academics, computers, employability skills, tech prep,

curriculum integration and work-based learning. Ranking low in levels of support were social skills, music and art, Family and Consumer Sciences, vocational student organizations and sex equity efforts. The 1995 federal legislature voted to rescind funding for Family and Consumer Sciences programs by cutting Consumer and Homemaking funding from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990.

In light of these movements, teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences have not only become committed to political action, but have remained committed to their task as educators. Departing from the traditional cooking and sewing focus for home economics, many Family and Consumer Sciences teachers have consistently updated their course offerings and curricula to meet the needs encountered by students in the family, the workplace, and society (Yahnke, Mallette, Love, Gebo, Felstehausen, & Pomraning, 1993). Major instructional emphases include but are not limited to: balancing family and work; managing resources for individuals and families; preventing and responding to family crises; strengthening parenting skills; understanding the impact of new technology on family life and work; and transferring life management skills to the workplace (Laster, 1996).

At the 1994 American Vocational Association annual convention in Dallas, Texas the Family and Consumer Sciences Division presented its vision and mission statements to describe the focus of the profession. The statement "Family and Consumer Sciences education empowers individuals and families across the life span to manage the challenges of living and working in a diverse,

global society. Our unique focus is on families, work, and their interrelationships” (Fox, 1996, p. 2) sets forth the vision. The following mission statement further describes the work of the profession:

The mission of Family and Consumer Sciences education is to prepare students for family life, work, and careers in Family and Consumer Sciences by providing opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed for:

- Strengthening the well-being of individuals and families across the life span.
- Becoming responsible citizens and leaders in family, community, and work settings.
- Promoting optimal nutrition and wellness across the life span.
- Managing resources to meet the material needs of individuals and families.
- Balancing personal, home, family and work lives.
- Using critical and creative thinking skills to address problems in diverse family, community, and work environments.
- Successful life management, employment, and career development.
- Functioning effectively as providers and consumers of goods and services.

- Appreciating human worth and accepting responsibility for one's actions and success in family and work life (Fox, 1996, p. 2).

Background of the Problem

When A Nation at Risk was released, an onslaught of criticism toward public education ensued (1983). Reform issues have come and gone. However, interest in improving the education of students to prepare them for adulthood has not waned. Although educators disagree regarding the origin and solutions of the problems in education, there is unified concern that students leaving high school are ill-prepared for entering the workplace that awaits them (Bailey, 1991; Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Simon & Dippo, 1987; Spitze, 1984). That concern prompted the establishment of The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills known as SCANS which issued reports identifying the skills needed by high school students to prepare them for college, specialized skills training, apprenticeships or jobs in a high performance workplace. Those reports were mailed to public school superintendents across the nation with the focus of guiding the actions of local districts in developing learning experiences to prepare students for work (SCANS, 1991, 1992).

The original intent for the inclusion of home economics now known as Family and Consumer Sciences as part of the vocational curriculum was to prepare young women for their life work as homemakers (Powers, 1992). As the roles of women and men have become less distinct, the focus of Family and

Consumer Sciences has shifted to preparing individuals for various life-work roles including those assumed in the family. The emphasis of vocational education has historically rested on providing students with specific skills and knowledge for the world of work. Thus one of the goals of vocational education programs is preparation of students for work in a better job than would have been possible without training (Wirt, 1991).

Rehm (1989) questioned the view that vocational education's sole purpose is to increase the productivity of the individual in the nation's workplace. Way (1995) repeated this concern by stating that the "instrumental rationality" or workplace focus of vocational education may lead to the removal of the study of the family within vocational education. The consistent call for home economics educators to remind legislators and other policy makers of the critical relevance of consumer and homemaking programs to the preparation of effective workers and family members is solid evidence of this concern (Harrod, 1994; Bridges, 1996). Therefore, a need remains for researchers to discover, define, and describe issues regarding the relationship between preparation for occupational work and preparation for other life work roles, specifically the work of the family (Way, 1995; Way & Rossman, 1996).

The family imparts a system of ethical behaviors, which includes the attitudes and practices that form the work ethic. The family also provides a support system that is a basis for the worker's success in the essential skills of problem-solving and building and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships (Cooke, Rossmann, McCubbin, & Patterson, 1988; Erickson,

1993). The mandates and requirements for vocational education programs have set preparation for occupational work apart from preparation from other “work-like” life roles. Copa stated that “work and family life roles and responsibilities form essential aspects of vocational life and should therefore be the focus of vocational education” (1994, p. 324). Way (1995) stated that it is a mistake to disconnect preparation for work life from other key life roles including the work of the family. While it is a generally accepted belief that vocational Family and Consumer Sciences educators encourage the development of the individual as a family member and a worker, there is an absence in the literature of the specific ways in which they address this development.

Statement of the Problem

Although much has been written regarding the reconceptualization and reform in vocational education, there lacks an understanding of how Family and Consumer Sciences teachers prepare students in the development of work competencies for a changing workplace and family (Copa, 1994; Fraser, 1997; Grimstad & Way, 1993; Lewis, 1990; Rehm, 1989; Wendland & Torrie, 1993).

Research Questions

The following questions emerged from the review of literature and provided direction for the completion of the study:

1. What should high school students know to assume adult roles in the changing family and workplace?

2. How do Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students to assume adult roles?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to discover and describe the beliefs and practices of selected Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in preparing students for the adult roles they will assume as family members and workers in the post-industrial era.

Significance of the Study

The study has the potential for significance both inside and outside the profession of Family and Consumer Sciences. The first area is to address an absence in the literature regarding how Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students to assume adult roles in the family and the workplace. In addition, the study may also serve as a resource for professional development. The study is an examination of the practice of sixteen Family and Consumer Sciences teachers and may prove useful to enhance the professional practice of others. The results of the study may be used as a communication tool to those outside the profession to explain the value of educational experiences provided in Family and Consumer Sciences in Oklahoma.

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that teachers and educators of Family and Consumer Sciences programs provided responses to the research questions that indicated their beliefs, attitudes, and practices when carrying out their professional responsibilities.

Limitations

The purposive nature of the sample of respondents in the study limits the generalizability of findings. Therefore, the findings will not be transferable to all areas of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Delimitations

The scope of this study was confined to interviewing the selected respondents and the examination of materials used in their Family and Consumer Sciences programs in the state of Oklahoma.

Definition of Terms

The following are the operational definitions of the terms used in the profession or culture of Family and Consumer Sciences educators and in this qualitative study. These terms are a collection of those found in the review of literature that may be considered unique to Family and Consumer Sciences educators or qualitative research.

1. Home Economics: An educational discipline designed to prepare students for homemaking. The term is defined as “the science and art of home management, including household budgets, purchase of food and clothing, child care, cooking, nutrition, and the like” (Morris, 1988, p. 630).

2. Family and Consumer Sciences: The name replacing the discipline of home economics in 1995. The new name was developed and accepted in 1993 by the American Home Economics Association that subsequently changed its name to the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. This name was adopted to more accurately describe the focus and activities of the discipline.

3. Family and Consumer Sciences Program: A program includes the teacher, the curriculum, and the vocational student organization supported by the school district, the state department of vocational education. A school may have more than one program in order to address all areas of the discipline.

4. Future Homemakers of America (FHA): The vocational student organization established to complement the Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum.

5. National Association Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences: An affiliate of the Family and Consumer Sciences Division of the American Vocational Association serves as a resource to assist teachers in practice and professional development.

6. American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences: The

Professional organization including the sections of colleges and universities, elementary, secondary and adult education, extension, business, home and community, human services, and research. This organization helps to formulate and articulate public policy on critical social issues at the local, state, national and professional levels. It represents members as an advocate to Congress, with state legislatures, government agencies, as well as with national and international policy-making bodies. The association publishes The Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences and sponsors a certification program for Family and Consumer Sciences professionals.

7. Category: Sets of recurring regularities in the data that have internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. Internal homogeneity refers to the extent to which the data in a category fits together in a meaningful way. External heterogeneity refers the extent to which differences among categories are bold and clear (Patton, 1990).

8. Culture: The collection of behavior patterns and beliefs that constitutes standards for deciding what is, standards for deciding what can be, standards for deciding how one feels about it, standards for deciding what to do about it, and standards for deciding how to go about doing it (Patton, 1990, p. 68).

9. Naturalistic Inquiry: The study of real-world situations as they unfold naturally; non-manipulative, unobstrusive, and non-controlling; openness to whatever emerges—lack of predetermined constraints on outcomes (Patton, 1990, p. 40).

10. Credibility: The extent to which the study is worth believing.

Credibility is contingent upon the credibility of the researcher, rigorous techniques of data collection and analysis, and a fundamental appreciation of naturalistic inquiry, and qualitative research methods (Patton, 1990).

11. Thick Description: The detailed, in-depth descriptions of interviewees that provide the data for researchers to synthesize and analyze to build a comprehensive picture of the studied culture.

12. Prompts: Verbal or non verbal expressions to elicit a continuation or response. These may include “floating prompts” such as raising an eyebrow or repeating the last remark with a questioning tone as the respondent mentions an item of interest or “planned prompts”. Planned prompts are used when the respondent needs an opportunity to consider and discuss phenomena that do not come readily to mind or speech (McCracken, 1988, p. 35). An example is when the respondent introduces a term and the researcher may say “describe what you mean by....”.

Organization of the Study

The report of the study was organized into five chapters described as follows: Chapter One is an introduction to the background of the studied problem, which has been stated as a lack of understanding of the extent to which Family and Consumer Sciences teachers attempt to prepare students in the development competencies for work and family life. The chapter includes the research questions, describes the purpose of the study, identifies the

assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study and defines the terms that were used in the study.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two presents an overview of several topics related to Family and Consumer Sciences, changes in family and work, and school reform issues and proposed solutions. An account of the beginning of home economics in public schools spotlights the commitment of women who were concerned about the welfare of families and children and identified ways of empowering them to become physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally healthy. As social change has influenced the family and the workplace, home economics has continued in this commitment and has become Family and Consumer Sciences to better reflect the mission.

Change has generated concern as to the effectiveness of public schools. A review of publications regarding school reform issues provided insights into possible solutions for addressing concerns. Among this literature are the recommendations made by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills and other governmental suggestions. The review continues with a description of the changes taking place in the family and the changes in the nature of work. The section also includes a report of research completed regarding the connections between the roles assumed in the family and those assumed in the workplace. The review concludes with a description of the new home economics Family and Consumer Sciences. Included are the focus, concerns, and vision for the future.

The third chapter is a rationale and explanation of the method used to gain access to the culture of Family and Consumer Sciences professionals. This chapter describes the qualitative research study specifically the long interview and document analysis methods of data collection. The long interview method allows the researcher to enter the world or culture of the professional and to view the culture through his or her experience (McCracken, 1988). The analysis of related documents augments interview data by providing illustrations of classroom materials and program characteristics.

Chapter Four presents the data collected in the interviews and document analysis and depicts the culture of Family and Consumer Sciences and its relationships to educational issues. The categories and themes identified in the data are organized into subtopics and supported with quotations and examples. It is a careful analysis and presentation of the professional practice of veteran Family and Consumer Sciences educators. The chapter compares the categories from the literature review with the interviews and related documents.

Chapter Five summarizes the findings of the study and identifies possible implications for practice in the profession. Also included are suggestions for continued research.

Summary

As change has impacted individuals in the family and in the workplace, educators have been compelled to examine the ways students are prepared to meet the responsibilities of adult roles. As long as public education is viewed as

an important contributor in preparing students for adult life, it is critical to inspect and assess the value of the requirements, offerings, and activities that are carried out in classrooms. This study was designed to identify and describe the relationship between Family and Consumer Sciences programs and the skills identified as necessary for students to assume adult roles. The information included may prove beneficial in creating the recognition and better utilization of a resource already available.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

Developing a focus for a review of literature requires a careful examination of the statement of the problem identified for the study. Such an examination of this study's problem statement required inquiry into various issues such as: home economics education which is now known as Family and Consumer Sciences education; change in family life; the nature of work and work competencies; education reform; and the work of the family. The study also included an in-depth review of the qualitative research method beginning with a general survey of qualitative research and continuing with a summary of the long interview and document analysis methods of data collection.

The following review of literature was conducted to discover the themes and categories relating to Family and Consumer Sciences programs and the ways these programs prepare students to assume adult roles in the workplace and the family. The review began with a historical reflection upon the beginning of home economics and its evolution into Family and Consumer Sciences. One permeating theme of this reflection was that the enduring purpose underlying the practice of home economics was the equipping of individuals to face the

challenges of change throughout the lifespan whether in the workplace or in the family. It appeared that continuing social change and technological advances have created new though different opportunities for Family and Consumer Sciences professionals to utilize their expertise and make significant contributions to the lives of others.

The review continued with a summary of the changing nature of both work and the family and the implications for education. Also included is an overview of the relationship between work and family and the theories addressing that connection. The changes described in these sections sounded an alarm to business and government that individuals were not prepared to function effectively as they assumed adult roles. This alarm resulted in a wave of reform issues that have had a profound effect on educational practice. Among the results of concern are studies that report what students should know before they leave public education. These studies are summarized to provide a clear focus for educators. The review proceeded with an examination of the current issues challenging Family and Consumer Sciences, the ways these issues are being addressed, and the suggestions for further study.

The final component of the review of literature included a survey of qualitative research methods with specific attention given to the methods of the long interview technique and document analysis. These two methods were used to collect data for the study.

Home Economics: Responding to Social Change

As the twentieth century began, the question of how to prepare young women for their future roles in society was in full debate. Young men were being prepared for their work in vocational programs designed to appeal to the interests of “hand-minded” boys (Powers, 1992, p. ix). According to Powers (1992), vocational education for women was initiated to address two principle issues: the threatened decline of the family and the gender inequalities of a capitalistic workplace. These issues generated intense debate over the social, political and economic roles of women that has endured throughout the century (Burggraf, 1997). However, the development of the discipline of home economics was a powerful tool to prepare women for home and family life. The following sections relate some of the efforts directed toward this mission.

Home Economics as a Career

Although Quilling (1991) traced the evolution of home economics back to the work of Francis Bacon in the 17th century, the beginning of the profession actually began from the writings of one woman. Bacon’s influence was in looking at everyday objects and determining how they affected thought and action, but Catherine Beecher’s influence was powerfully direct. In her 1843 publication, Treatise on Domestic Economy, Beecher elevated domestic endeavors to a respected career status (Powers, 1992). Beecher’s text reflected a systems approach. She viewed the American woman as an essential

component in building a moral nation that could fully participate in and enjoy democracy. Her treatise standardized American domestic practices and advocated a system that integrated psychological, physiological, economic, religious, social, and political factors. In addition, Beecher crafted a plan for how the specifics of the system should work. The plan was disclosed in her book which sold for fifty cents and made knowable the “mysterious arts of household maintenance, child rearing, gardening, cooking, cleaning, doctoring, and the dozen other responsibilities middle class women assumed to keep their children and husbands alive and well” (Sklar, 1973, p. 152).

Although her life was a collection of contradictions, Catherine Beecher was nonetheless a major contributor to expanding the role of women beyond housework. She was an expert on domestic economy, a writer on the moral education of children and religion, and urged women to involve themselves as teachers. However, she had no home, no children, no conversion experience, and was unwilling herself to teach (Sklar, 1973). Regardless of her lack of personal experience as a wife and mother, her impact on the evolution away from the traditional role of women is undeniable. Beecher’s greatest contribution may therefore have been that she established the role of women in society as separate but equal to that of men (Powers, 1992). Above all, she advocated education as a means to achieve that role.

A New Field of Study

Home economics has been described as both a discipline or area of study and also as a profession including areas of specialization (East, 1980).

Educational experiences were broad in scope and included the subjects of nutrition, food preparation, clothing, housing, family finances, home management and home nursing. The development of home economics as a field of study began with a framework based upon a number of professional, disciplinary, and philosophical models (Hitch & Youatt, 1995). An examination of each model is necessary to achieve a thorough view of the ideology of the discipline.

The Science of Home Economics

One model established the profession as a science with the assumption that if the home was managed using the efficiency of scientific methods, the output would be of high quality. The pioneer of this model was Ellen Swallow Richards. As the first female student and graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Ellen Swallow established a reputation as a scientist. Her primary area of study was the environment and she was committed to discovering ways of preserving it. As Beecher believed in a systems approach, Richards was also motivated by a holistic view of individuals and their environments. Her inspiration came from a statement from the preamble of the first board of health in Massachusetts:

No Board of Health... if it rightly performs its duty, can separate the physical from the moral and intellectual natures of man... These three qualities are... indissoluble, and mutually act and react upon one another. Any influence exerted to the injury of one, inevitably, though perhaps indirectly, injures the other and are acted upon by the forces of nature that surrounds us" (Clarke, 1973, p. 36).

To Ellen Swallow this statement described the relationship between the basic units of physical and social environments: the home and the family. If humans were to live in harmony with their environment, they must learn how to do so from the beginning of life in the most basic social structure, the family. To accomplish this, it would be necessary to educate the largest "half" of the population, the women (Clarke, 1973, p. 77).

Swallow's focus as a scientist cast a scientific orientation to the profession of home economics. A scientific approach to the study gave credibility to its professionals. Advocates of professional homemaking were in general agreement that a woman's place was in the home rather than at work in industry. The hope was that the education for homemaking through the scientific approach would elevate the status of women. This focus commanded knowledge in a broad range of subject matters including child development, nutrition, food preparation, aesthetics, clothing, housing, finances, home management, and home nursing (Hitch & Youatt, 1995). Eventually areas of specialization offered skills and abilities for careers in nutrition and dietetics, fashion design, textiles, and merchandising, child development, and interior design.

The Business Approach

Advocates of the business model conceptualized homes as businesses and homemaking as a management problem that required the knowledge and skills of budgeting and finance, along with the ability to analyze household tasks in the same ways industry used task analysis (Powers, 1992). The leader of this movement was Christine Frederick who adopted time and motion study techniques to kitchen and other household activities in order to help the homemaker be more efficient and productive. This scientific management approach supported by Frederick Winslow Taylor was the principal factory model of the day and is sometimes credited for the success of the American industrial movement. Frederick, and those who supported this model, were convinced this approach "would revitalize homemaking as a profession and influence daughters to avoid the unnatural craving for careers which was taking women away from their essential responsibilities" (Powers, 1992, p. 16.) The social goals of this approach were to incorporate the cultural trends so as to elevate the work of women and thereby empower them. However, the traditional boundaries of gender roles remained.

Domestic Feminists

Domestic feminists adhered to the idea of a woman's priority as the family and home, but extended the obligations to the family from the home to the broader family of society. Frances Willard termed this approach "the home

going forth into the world” (Powers, 1992, p. 16). Preserving and improving the environment and social issues involving women and children of the working class were of major concern. From this perspective the contributions of women were not those accomplished by political activism, but by being trained and disciplined in the management of the home, family, and activities in the community. These were the benefits women offered to the nation’s well-being. The social complexity of the industrial revolution in America had resulted in the upheaval of the traditional family by threatening its preservation. The transition from rural to urban life brought individuals in contact with a more heterogeneous community and the divorce rate climbed.

Proponents of domestic feminism then advocated an education for women to keep husbands well-fed and happy at home. With homemaking as a career, women may be discouraged from pursuing a career in industry and would consequently keep the American family intact and healthy while functioning in a separate, but equal role. Critics of this view included Jane Addams and Susan Kingsbury who were proponents of trade and industrial education for women. Their view was that women had always worked and women who were employed outside the home should not be considered “peculiar interlopers” who were laying hold of a place which did not rightly belong to them (Kliebard, 1992, p. 140). These women who championed the cause of vocational education for girls were concerned that home economics would be the only form offered, therefore limiting career options to that of homemaking. They debated that too much emphasis was placed upon cooking. Adelaide Hoodless, a Canadian, voiced

this accusation "I think that [cooking] is one very clear evidence of man's hand in our educational organization, because he has provided more liberally for cooking lessons than for any other branch of industrial education for girls" (cited by Kliebard, 1992, p. 142). Significant concern was expressed that male students in vocational programs were receiving more rigorous intellectual instruction than female students received. This concern is evident in one address given in 1910

...the girls and boys are taught the possibilities of breadwinning as agricultural laborers, agriculturists, gardeners, florists, or whatever you will. When it comes to the boy, he learns the chemistry of the soil, and gets down to the fundamental things in those particulars, but the girl is taught cooking and sewing. I am not saying that cooking and sewing are not necessary, but when we cheat a girl out of the training she ought to have for her breadwinning capacity, and substitute something which has nothing to do with the trade she is trying to learn, then we make a great and grave mistake. (Kliebard, 1992, p. 141)

Home Economics Became a Vocation

Undertones of the rights of women are evident in the writings of the early leaders in home economics. Although differing views of the role of the American woman flourished, there was a unity of purpose in home economics professionals. All were committed to the issues of women, children, and families and to building a better life for individuals and communities. With this united focus, the discipline of home economics permeated the curriculum of the American high schools during the early years of this century educating young women "to make the whole world more home like" (Powers, 1992, p. 22). Higher education programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels were established

to prepare professionals in extension and community service, secondary teaching, institutional management, and government research (Mize, Rhoden, and Sweaney, 1983). During the Sixth Lake Placid Conference in 1904 the following general definition of home economics was recorded that identifies its professional purpose

Home economics stands for the ideal home life of today unhampered by the traditions of the past. The utilization of all resources of modern science to improve the home life. The freedom of home from the dominance of things and their due subordination to ideals. The simplicity in material surroundings which will most free the spirit for the most important and permanent interests of the home and society. (cited in Quilling, 1991, p. 253)

As the Smith-Hughes funding in 1917 enabled vocational education to establish home economics programs, teachers, supervisors, and teacher educators took their places to carry out the mission of the profession of home economics (Osborn & Lewis, 1983; Powers, 1992).

Beginning with the first Lake Placid Conference in 1899, the American Home Economics Association was committed to the inclusion of home economics in the public school curriculum and the education of future homemakers. Joining with the National Education Association and the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education, the AHEA lobbied for expanded home economics programs across the nation. The profession was marketed extensively in the Journal of Home Economics, Vocational Education Magazine and Vocational Summary (Powers, 1992).

A Nation in Turmoil

Subsequent decades brought turmoil to Americans. World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II introduced new challenges to their everyday lives. The loss or disabilities of family members and threatened economic collapse made the management of resources even more important than in the past. Navratil and Johnson described the activity of home economists as critical

With unemployment and lost savings bringing disaster to families, home economists played a critical role by offering advice on nutrition, home management for working women, recycling materials, conserving household supplies, extending equipment life, and stretching limited resource. They increased efforts to restore family strength, self-esteem, and living conditions. Clearly, they played a vital role during this era (1997, p. 61).

During this time professor and political activist Martha Van Rensselaer assumed a role of influence to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Herbert Hoover. McBreen reported a letter written by Professor Van Rensselaer calling for emergency assistance for those individuals and agencies concerned with child and family

At this critical time we must concentrate on a few of the most vital measures... Keep families together; families which in normal times maintain their own integrity now require the assistance of the Nation even to maintain a minimum standard of living... Make childbirth safe for both mother and infant... Supplement home facilities for maintaining child health ...serving school lunches... the obligation of the community to provide facilities and group activities and recreation... maintain educational facilities for children and families... to meet the present crisis (1983, p. 16).

Home Economics: A Vital Mission in a New Era

The decade of the 1980's brought increased concern regarding education (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In 1984 C. LeMoyné Smith, publisher and educator, identified the changes in our culture related to the information age and cited the ways that home economics curriculum was being created and revised to address those changes. Smith listed a broad range of trends including more home computers, more work and learning at home, the growth of self-help efforts, increased emphasis on the significance of the family, a stronger need for consumer information and education, and higher levels of stress in all areas of life.

Smith (1984) stated that home economics teachers were specifically equipped to manage these changes because of four specific characteristics inherent in the discipline. First, home economists are change initiators and can assist interpreting, utilizing, and directing these trends in the classroom, the home, and the marketplace. Second, the preventive nature of home economics is important in managing change. Traditionally, home economists have responded to the social-economic needs of the day. Third, the central issues in home economics skill-building are: resource management, value analysis, decision making, critical thinking, and problem solving. Fourth, the synergy or interrelationships among all aspects of the environment is the foundation of home economics education. Smith (1984) stated that this foundation sets the stage for higher levels of creativity, responsibility, self-knowledge, and family

stability. He identified the result as wiser judgment when seeking alternative solutions in problem solving.

From Home Economics to Family and Consumer Sciences

During the 1960s and 1970s feminism had brought profound change to the roles of women in American society. As women continued to enter the workplace in increasing numbers, the traditional homemaker became a part-time or full-time employee often pursuing a career. Reflections on the original mission resulted in a type of "identity crisis" questioning the professional focus of home economics amidst extensive change. Efforts to select a name that more closely described the profession resulted in colleges and departments of "human ecology" and "human environmental science" but the name home economics remained in secondary schools as familiar terminology. As the twenty-first century neared, the professional organizations recognized the need to better reflect the mission of the profession by selecting a name to replace home economics. During the fall of 1993, the American Home Economics Association proposed a conceptual framework including a name change for the profession from home economics to Family and Consumer Sciences. The AHEA became the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. In 1994 the Home Economics Division of the American Vocational Association agreed to adopt the name Family and Consumer Sciences. The National Association of Vocational Home Economics Teachers followed by adopting the name of the National Association Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences. This change supports

the unifying approach to the study of the relationships between individuals, families, and communities and the conditions in which they function (Hitch & Youatt, 1995).

As the profession was publicly addressing the changing family and workplace through a name change, a statement of vision, and mission statements, federal funding was discontinued. In 1995, the Clinton Administration proposed cutting 34 programs from the Department of Education. Consumer and homemaking programs were among these cuts and were rescinded by the 104th Congress in 1995. The justification for the elimination of funding for this program was described in a Department of Education report

The purpose of this program is to assist states in conducting consumer and homemaking education programs that prepare youth and adults for the occupation of homemaking. This program can be supported with non-federal resources. All states currently have active, well-established consumer and homemaking programs that will continue without direct federal support. (p. 1)

Compared to the previous description of Family and Consumer Sciences programs, this justification appears limited as to the scope of such programs. The effect of the rescission of federal support has yet to be determined.

Family and Consumer Sciences: Responding to Change

The mission of the profession of Family and Consumer Sciences is empowering individuals, strengthening families, and enabling communities. Curricula are designed with the mission statement as a basic framework for

meeting the needs of students as they assume adult roles. According to one curriculum guide, programs

... directly address the changing needs of individuals, families and society. Through family and consumer sciences education, students are prepared for the complex lifelong roles of family member, parent, worker, citizen, and leader. The reciprocal role of the family and the workplace is essential to the development of the individual and society. (Kansas State Board of Education, 1994, p. 5)

In addition to the intent of the mission statement, it is important to notice the significance placed upon preparing students for change. The history of the discipline of home economics reveals the ways the profession addresses change in families since its origin in the nineteenth century. As the above example exhibits, Family and Consumer Sciences is concerned with preparing for the changes encountered by individuals, families, and communities. Wilson (1991) stated the discipline has maintained its vitality in society by being alert to social change and incorporating these important changes in teaching students. Calling this a "dynamic" approach to curriculum development, Wilson (1991) attributed the anticipating and addressing of change the component that has allowed vocational home economics to maintain its viability and significantly contribute to the career education of adolescents (p. 12). Any attempt to fully describe the changes that have impacted the roles of employees in the workplace and family members at work in the family would be an overwhelming task. The following sections are brief accounts of these changes as they have been experienced by individuals in the roles they assume at work and in the family.

Overview of the Contemporary Context of Work and Family

For most individuals the two most significant life roles are those assumed in the family and at work. Interest in the relationship of these two roles has resulted in research conducted in the fields of sociology, psychology, management and organization, human resources, and Family and Consumer Sciences (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kline & Cowan, 1985; Reagor & Way, 1995; Schultz, 1989; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990.) The influence of work on the family has increased as women have continued to enter the workforce and as men have taken a more active role in family life and family work. The interrelationship of these two spheres requires an examination of the responsibilities and expectations of assuming an adult role in each one.

A Change in the Nature of Work

The changes and challenges facing America today will have a profound impact on the workplaces of the future. A competitive global economy, environmental crisis, and spiraling technological advances have combined to propel Americans into a postindustrial society (Wirth, 1992).

Working in the Postindustrial Age. The arrival of the information age has resulted in a continuously increasing reliance upon the use of technology to meet the problems presented by shifts in the way Americans learn and transact business. The individuals who will succeed in the future are those who have developed critical thinking skills that enable them to adapt to rapid change

(Wirth, 1992). No longer can Americans depend only on the traditional skills learned in common schools, vocational-technical schools, or even college to carry them through a lifetime career. Lifelong learning has become a necessary reality, not only for those who will succeed in professions, but also for those who will succeed in jobs or occupations.

Education for Work in the Future. For at least twenty years, two very dissimilar beliefs that address educating for the future have been argued. Burkeen (1992) has identified these views as deskilling and upskilling. Proponents of the deskilling notion view technology as encompassing the need for workers to think and make decisions. Workers will need only to follow directions and push buttons. Computer technology will usurp the traditional human element involved in critical thinking. In contrast, advocates of the upskilling viewpoint place computer technology in the arena of executing the tedium of non-thinking chores. Those who design, operate, and maintain the computers will utilize highly complex thinking and decision-making skills. Burkeen (1992) cited changes in the workplace that, in reality, will demand both deskilling and upskilling. These changes will require employees to be competent in a variety of skills that must be updated as technology advances. In addition, change will require workers to assume a variety of roles or functions rather than narrowly defined occupations.

Mass Production vs. Specialty Goods and Services. The nature of work for Americans is evolving away from producing large quantities of identical or very similar goods and services into the production of specialized goods and

less routine services (Berryman & Bailey, 1992). This evolution requires workers to be flexible, responsible for a wide range of duties, and able to make decisions both as individuals and with groups. Traditionally, the industrial age focus was on Frederick Taylor's model of making as many units as possible in as little time as possible to drive down the cost per unit. Extensive efficiency studies were conducted to determine ways for employers to get more for less from their employees. Schools also embraced Taylor's model (Gray, 1993). One author commenting on the structure of schools stated "clearly the dominant motivating force in most instances was economic, not educational" (Callahan, 1962, p. 116). A shift in the focus of production in the American workplace from generic to specialization challenges the effectiveness and appropriateness of Frederick Taylor's model of scientific management.

Diverse Skills and Expertise. As the demand for custom-designed products and services becomes greater, so will the demand for workers with a greater diversity of skills and higher levels of technological expertise (Berryman & Bailey, 1992). Employees who were once considered manual laborers, such as mechanics or technicians, now use complex technical manuals to repair and maintain equipment. Because of rapidly growing technology, obsolescence is occurring in shorter periods of time. Workers are now being required to upgrade their knowledge to keep abreast of technology.

The importance Americans place on immediate gratification is expanding the need for quick response in the marketplace. This demand for fast turnaround is forcing a decentralization in management and decision making

(Burke, 1992.) Production teams, rather than high level management, are collaborating to make decisions about problem solving strategies, quality control, and cost effectiveness.

Wirth (1992) cited the example of modular manufacturing that substitutes for the assembly line. This approach utilizes groups of workers with equipment to assemble an entire product or project. The workers coordinate their tasks and assist each other when one falls behind. Irregularities are identified and corrected by the group members. Supervisors spend less time dealing with employee problems, but must develop a more holistic view of the production-to-consumer process. This view is characterized by the awareness that the end product or project is dependent upon each of the components in its makeup. The key to successful production is not just making an excellent product-- success is producing high quality goods and services that continuously satisfy the needs of the customer.

Global Competition. The intensity of international competition adds another factor into the American workplace. A global economy broadens the market for products and services while bringing the demand for additional skills and abilities in transacting business in differing cultures. Success in the international business system, which is in constant change and cultivation, is not solely dependent upon technological expertise, but includes a set of key human skills (Wirth, 1992). The ingredients of this critical set of skills include solving problems in unique ways, matching the needs of customers with innovative products, and bringing together fresh ideas and creative actions. Wirth (1992)

stated that companies heavily involved in technological change need employees able to function well in more fluid non-routine situations. Employees who are well educated appear to be best suited for flexible responsibilities and continued learning. Better educated individuals are also more equipped to serve as team members in problem-solving and decision-making. Thinking symbolically and analyzing situations are skills that are emerging as critical in an international market.

Implications for Education. To summarize, a global economy, environmental concerns, and effective utilization of increasing technology require a repertoire of skills that will enable individuals to function in the jobs of tomorrow (Wirth, 1992). Throughout the predictions regarding the workplace, the common threads of upskilling, problem-solving, critical thinking skills, creativity, making meaning from abstractions, and interpersonal relationship skills intertwine to form the cords that will secure individuals to employment in the future. Education and the ability to learn are the critical qualities needed in the workers of the future (Wirth, 1992). According to Feller (1996), the spotlight is on all of the nation's schools to prepare students for a demanding and fickle workplace.

The Changing Family

Because the world is dynamic, there have always been changes transpiring in society. Until the 1960s change was less accelerated, less radical, and less perceptible in daily life than it is today (Schneider, 1994). A slower

pace of change made occurrences less noticeable and adaptation less traumatic. Since the 1960s families have become more diverse in structure and are living in less stable environments. The rapidity of change has permitted little time for adjustment. Schneider (1994) stated that the lack of time for adjustment has raised many questions about the impact of change on the family and suggested that the viability of the family is hanging in a "cloud of doubt" (p. 5).

The Family and Its Work in a Postindustrial Era

Prior to beginning a discussion of the family, it is appropriate to clarify what is meant by the term. Traditionally the family was the nuclear family or ideal image of the family consisting of two parents and their children, who were related by blood, marriage or adoption (Kieren, 1994, p. 11). However, social changes such as marriage, non-marriage, divorce, custody patterns and childbearing have altered that view of the family and today, many patterns of families exist. Therefore, there is no single standard pattern of the family. For the purpose of this research, the following definition will describe what is meant by family: persons who live together and may be related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Family work is defined as: the actions of meeting the needs of family members including physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs. The success of the family is determined by how well it carries out its family work such as the nourishment, sheltering, socialization, caregiving, providing social and economic support, and intimacy (Kieren, 1994). Erickson (1993) described

family work as including the provision of money, materials, tools, and skills to help people improve their handling of a situation; sharing people's tasks; and helping people mobilize their psychological resources so that they might master their emotional problems.

Evidences of Family Change. Change in families and in society is occurring more rapidly than ever before. Some believe that the decreasing rates of marriage, rising divorce rates, and plunging fertility rates are indications that the family as an institution is about to disappear. Others see the family as in transition eventually emerging as stronger than before (Schneider, 1994; Skolnick & Skolnick, 1989). Current population reports regarding family groups reveal that for the total number of families with children under the age of eighteen, 31% are maintained by single parents (U. S. Bureau of Census, 1995). This percentage has increased from 13% in 1970. Of these single parent families, 85% were maintained by mothers and 15% by fathers in 1995 compared to 90% maintained by mothers and 10% by fathers in 1970. These reports are for all races of family groups with children including those that maintain their own household; those that live in the home of a relative; and those that live in the home maintained by a nonrelative.

Ideologies of Family Change. The writings of Schneider (1994) and Smith (1994) have placed less emphasis on the observed changes taking place in the family and focused on the underlying ideologies that impact family change. Bellah (1985) observed that due to the enormous emphasis on independence and self-reliance, the survival of the American family is striking. In other words,

the focus on individuality in the socialization of children has limited the individual's capacity to function productively in groups such as the family. Since the family has been identified as central to all societies, its threatened disappearance is a grave concern. Therefore, the discovery of ways to maintain its viability involves different approaches. Understanding change involves an examination of thought over the last century and how it shapes and controls today's meanings.

The Family as a Source of "Truth". Prior to the industrial revolution, seekers of the "Truth" turned to the ancient scriptures or sought wisdom from elders in the family or community. The industrial revolution brought the scientific method as the key to understanding. Bellah (cited in Schneider, 1994) stated that the turn from theology to science for explanations of the world resulted in material wealth. As people were able to accumulate wealth, material possessions became truth. This truth satisfied the craving of the human heart that had heretofore relied upon ancient scriptures and wisdom of the elders.

Science and the Family. The outgrowth of embracing scientific rationalism led to four types of thought prevalent today (a) positivism, (b) relativism, (c) reductionism, and evolutionism. Positivism incorporated the notion that no knowledge is real unless it is based on observable fact. An example relating this to the family is defining family health as the absence of pathology (Kieren, 1994). Relativism is the denial of any norm or standard. Value is determined by usefulness and function and may change from one situation to another. This mode of thought allows individuals to be completely

free and responsible to no one (Schneider, 1994). Evidence of relativism is the allegiance given to short term solutions and immediate gratification. Relating to the family, this view rejects the possibility of the long-term commitment and devalues marriage (Schneider, 1994, p. 6). The reductionism perspective reduces analysis to a lower level. Humans are studied as a lower life form using scientific methods to assess their behavior. An example of this perspective is relying on a student's test score as assessment rather than discovering the meaning he or she has made of new learning. Finally, evolutionism explains the progress or improvements over an extended period of time through the survival of the fittest. Those who are unable to adapt or survive on their own such as the elderly, the disabled, and the young are cast aside in favor of more productive individuals.

Ideal vs. Reality. Smith extended Schneider's discussion to question family ideology and the notion of the "ideal family". She rejected the ideal in favor of family households in some shape or form and stated that adherence to the ideal is giving in to the control of the dominant class (1994, p. 156). According to Smith, working toward an ideal is masking reality. Therefore, to the Family and Consumer Sciences practitioner the allegiance to the ideal is a deception and contrary to the real intentions of the profession. The major concern of ideology as it relates to change is that the perspectives described above are used to predict the future and predictions often are fulfilled simply because they have been predicted (Schneider, 1994, p.7). Kieren (1994) suggested professionals should address family change by giving up the

monolithic, ethnocentric definition of family and moving on to acknowledging, exploring and serving family diversity (p. 14).

The Family-Work Connection

Literature addressing the connection between family and work may be categorized into two major areas: the theories explaining the interrelationships between work and family and the family's role in vocational selection and development. This section is an overview of both areas.

Family Members in the Workplace. During the years between 1950 and 1991, the number of married women in the workforce has more than tripled and accounts for 60 percent of all working women (Bravo, 1995). Although many mothers work to improve economic conditions, other motivations include self-actualization and career advancement. As the 1990's arrived, 75 percent of married mothers with school-age children were working outside the home. Fifty eight percent of mothers with preschool children were employed (U. S. Bureau of Census, 1991). Although work and family roles throughout history have influenced one another, they are often treated as separate spheres of life with separate goals, values, and commitments. This separation leads to conflict and stress, which impact effectiveness in both the workplace and the family (Zedick & Mosier, 1990).

A Complex Workplace. As the family and work roles of men and women have changed to become more integrated, the nature of work has become more complex. As stated earlier, work is being transformed by forces pushing toward

a postindustrial society, global competition, and crisis concerning our indiscreet treatment of natural and human environments (Wirth, 1992). Automation, government cuts, re-engineering, and mergers will eliminate many jobs, deskill some work and raise the skills needed for others (Arenofsky, 1995). These transformations are reconfiguring society by making demands of the workers that impact career performance and successful relationships at the family level (Schneider, 1994).

A Complex Family Life. The nature of family life has also become more complex (Kismaric & Heiferman, 1996). Hall (1994) stated that our society is experiencing an expanding base of single parent families and households where both adults are working. Divorce affects 41 percent of all children and 12 percent of children born during the 1980s were born to parents who were not married (Lawhon, 1991). Single parents must assume each responsibility of providing for the family and making a home for the children. In the past, these single parents were women. However, more single fathers are assuming custody of young children than in prior years (Schultz, 1989). While some parents may be single for only short period of time and then remarry, many remain single for the duration of parenthood responsibilities.

Work and Family Challenges for Education. Social changes have created compelling personal concerns that employees bring to work: upheaval in family or other personal relationships, inadequate child and aging parent care systems, and problems managing resources and obligations (Stater, 1989). The growing rate of teen pregnancy and parenthood, child abuse and family violence, and

challenges in health and nutrition are but a few concerns that threaten the well-being of individuals and family. Although schools cannot solve the structural or cultural problems that have fundamentally changed opportunities for success in the workplace and family of the future, education can improve preparation for both (Feller, 1996; Way, 1995). Therefore, there is need for education to address these critical areas.

The Family 's Role in Vocational Selection and Development

The Family as a Source of Opportunity. The family's influence upon vocational selection and development operates along two interdependent dimensions (Burge, 1989; Grimstad & Way, 1993; Schulenberg, Vondracek, & Crouter, 1984). The first dimension includes the opportunities provided by the family for the developing individual such as education, financial resources, role models, and knowledge sources. Studies reported by Adegoke, Schultz and Hausafus (1993) revealed the particular impact of the mother on the daughter's vocational decisions. The working mothers' education, attitude, and ability to succeed in combining work and family roles were the factors bearing on the daughters' decisions to establish herself in a career.

Socioeconomic Status Impacting Family Relationships. The second dimension is the relationships in the family including socialization practices and the relationship between the parent and the child. However, the most powerful influence of the family on the vocational development of the individual is the socioeconomic status of the family (Schulenberg, et al, 1984). The higher this

status is, the more occupational aspirations and expectations the individual family member has. For example, middle class husbands are more likely to “realign their domestic roles to accommodate their wives’ employment” than are working class husbands (Schulenberg, et al, 1984, p. 139).

Other Influences. Family effects on work life also include career choice, attitudes toward work, skills practiced at home that transfer to the workplace, strategies for sharing household and child care duties, and the reciprocal effects of work and family satisfaction (Shultz, 1989). Additional family influences include family size, birth order, and the number of years between siblings. Societal changes have affected the family and have thus affected its impact on vocational development. Examples of these changes are: equal opportunity legislation; shifting sex-role prescriptions; and increased rates of maternal employment.

Theories of Relationships Between Work Life and Home Life. Interest in the impact of the family on vocational development and work roles has triggered the formulation of several theories. Zedeck and Mosier (1990) summarized five models of relationships between life at work and life at home. The spillover theory suggested that what occurs in the work environment is similar to what occurs in the family environment. In other words, the family environment affects work performance. Problems at home equal problems at work. The compensation theory postulated that individuals make up in one area for what is missing in another. If home life is unhappy, the worker overcompensates to be successful at work. If work is threatening, home is regarded as a safe haven.

In contrast, segmentation theory proposed work and family as distinctly separate and not influencing one another. Because these two spheres have no relationship, an individual can function successfully in one without any influence on the other. Problems may occur in one area and have no relevance in the other.

Another theory, the instrumental, stated that one environment is a means by which things are obtained in the other environment. For example, the rewards of working lead to a good family life and provide the means to enjoy life.

Finally, the conflict theory suggested that success in one area requires sacrifice in the other. Work and family are incompatible because the norms and requirements of each are in tension. Men and women sometimes experience this theory in different ways. For men, work interferes with family. For women, family interferes with work.

Whether a theory described above provides a comprehensive explanation for the work/family connection, the consensus is that issues in the family affect the roles in the workplace. The most often observed problem and by far considered the most critical is that of good child care (Erickson, 1993; Schultz, 1989; Way & Rossman, 1994; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). The responsibilities of parenting bring the concerns of child care both in engaging caregivers and in missing work to care for sick children or to attend children's activities. Zedeck and Mosier (1990) reported 8 days per year missed for child care and related errands. Their study also found that forty-eight percent of female employees and twenty-five percent of male employees spent unproductive time at work for

child-care issues. The study further identified additional family issues that affect work including marital tension, satisfaction with non-work responsibilities, global well-being, family role sharing and bargaining, amount of time spent in carrying out family responsibilities, wife abuse, children's behavioral problems, housekeeping and child care tasks, family size, and aging parents (Zedeck & Mosier, p. 247-248).

Education in a Postindustrial Era

The publication of A Nation at Risk in 1983 created intense interest in the need for educators to prepare students for their future roles. Responses to this call for accountability resulted in a flurry of reform efforts resulting in regulatory solutions such as focus on basic skills in core subjects, increased graduation requirements, and more rigorous teacher preparation mandates. Reform in education has proved to be not just another trend to appease critics or elicit support for education. Rather, it has intensified into an examination of the fundamentals of learning, philosophies of schooling, and demands of the family and workplace (Way, 1995). This examination has resulted in a variety of approaches to prepare students for the future. These include a focus on making connections between knowing and doing, integrating academic and vocational education, school-to-career experiences, interdisciplinary teaching, and content in context approaches to education (Parnell, 1996). Today's high school students will be the parents, workers, and citizens of the future. Therefore, both young men and women must develop the abilities not only to balance work and

family roles but also to function competently in both areas. Knowledge and skills are needed in both domains (Adegoke, Schultz, & Hausafus, 1993).

Changing Roles: Implications for Education

The literature describing implications for education is primarily focused on the skills needed for the workplace rather than the family (America 2000, 1991; Ennis, 1985; Perkins, 1993; SCANS, 1992, Watts & Castle, 1993). However, authors in Family and Consumer Sciences literature identified the same skills as necessary for the family (Badir, 1991; Berenbaum, 1992; Burge, 1989; Felstehausen & Couch, 1991; Felstehausen, Couch & Wragg, 1993; Smith, 1993). The changing nature of the workplace then requires educators to examine the effectiveness of the current methods of preparing students to assume their roles as workers. The gravitation toward an information based society involves knowledge work as the principal mode of work (Schlechty, 1990). Despite the realization that work environments are experiencing dynamic change, learning environments have remained static throughout this century (Perlman, 1992). Beverly Anderson, director of the private education consulting firm InSites stated "If changes do not occur in teaching and learning, all the other changes have little value" (Anderson, 1993, p. 16).

Traditional Settings and Methods. Traditional classrooms with five rows of six desks each pattern the setting where learning happens. In the typical high school classroom, students are expected to learn most of their information from books and lectures. In a world of symbols and abstraction, they work almost

exclusively with words and numbers, unable to transfer what they learn in school to application in the real world. Too often attempts toward the development of critical thinking skills are reserved for the gifted students. Rote memorization, completing worksheets, and other busy work occupy students' time in school, but offer little for them to carry away to home or work.

New discoveries about the human brain are placing challenges on traditional classroom activities (Caine & Caine, 1994; Jensen, 1996; Shore, 1997). Parnell (1996) cited the failure to help students use the magnificent power of the brain as the greatest sin committed in today's schools. He continued by challenging educators to help students make connections between knowing and doing; academic and vocational education; school and other life experiences; knowledge and its application; subject matter disciplines; subject matter content and context of use (Parnell, 1996, p. 18).

Learning as an Individual Endeavor. Learning subject matter in school has historically been a highly individual enterprise. Striving for individual success leads to the absence of a sense of society or collective enterprise (Bellah, et al, 1985; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 1995). Little opportunity is given for students to learn as teams. When such occasions occur, one or two group members often complete the assignments while the other members indulge in distractions. When these students are required to work in teams on the job, they are confronted with a puzzling dilemma. Since they have been conditioned not to cheat by sharing, motivated learners must adjust to participate in group efforts by giving and receiving assistance. Those who

utilized the achievers to avoid schoolwork must learn to become a part of the group by assuming their work role. The need to develop the ability to work cooperatively was described long ago by John and Evelyn Dewey

Work is essentially social in its character, for the occupations which people carry on are for human needs and ends. . . Everything about this scheme is dependent upon the ability of people to work together successfully. If they can do this, a well-balanced, happy, and prosperous society results. Without these occupations, which are essentially social life--that is human life--civilization cannot go on. (1915, p.164)

Perhaps the rigid solitude of work at school has continued out of tradition or as an attempt to efficiently manage large groups. However, the question or challenge is how to educate students to develop interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, and creativity. The field of cognitive science has produced a knowledge base that includes extensive information about how people of all ages learn best. Right brain/ left brain education, individual learning styles, multiple intelligences, whole language, and applied academics are but a few of the attempts to discover how humans learn best (Calvin, 1996; Gardner, 1985; Williams, 1983). These efforts have potential for the benefit of students at all levels through higher education and corporate training. Schools have been successful in organizing, managing, and conveying large bodies of conceptual and factual knowledge. However, standard pedagogical practices make the key aspects of using this knowledge invisible to students (Brown, Collins & Holum, 1991).

Learning Effectively. Berryman and Bailey (1992) stated that schools at all levels profoundly violate what is known about how people learn effectively

and how they apply knowledge to new situations. They listed five mistakes made by traditional education systems that negatively impact the transition from school to work.

1. Knowledge learned in school is transferred to new situations.

Research indicates that students have difficulty transferring learning from school to situations outside school and from outside of school to school situations. In other words, students appear to tuck knowledge into separate compartments of their lives and learning does not cross over from knowledge to practice.

2. Learners are passive vessels into which knowledge is poured.

Emphasis on content and “coverage” are evidences of this widely held assumption. As long as the textbook is taught, students learn its content. This view inhibits the students’ opportunity to explore, invent, and discover ways to utilize subject matter.

3. Learning is reflected when the appropriate response is made to a stimulus. This assumption stems from behaviorism. The use of stimulus-response has resulted in fractionation of knowledge—breaking apart knowledge into factual segments. Without recognition of the larger context of knowledge, students are prevented from making meaning of learning (Oliver, 1989).

4. The right answer is an indicator of true learning. This focus discourages problem-solving and again thwarts a student's efforts to make meaning of new knowledge.

5. Decontextualized learning insures transfer to real-world situations.

John and Evelyn Dewey wrote long ago that statements of facts do not reveal the value of the facts. They continued by stating that when children receive only book knowledge, one fact is as good as another; children have no standards or judgment of belief (1915, p. 73).

As the above discussion reveals, the challenges facing the workplace of the future have also become the challenges of our educational systems. These challenges include educating students to use a new set of thinking skills that carryover into a myriad of situations. The appearance of schools may change (Perlman, 1992). Students may learn at home at their own interactive computer terminal. However, while the present structure of school remains, its potential must be maximized. Berryman and Bailey (1992) stated that educators must "capture the power of the fact that human beings are naturally sense-making, problem-solving, and environmentally interactive" (p. 133).

A Nation at Risk Revisited

As mentioned earlier, A Nation at Risk ignited concern over declining student performance. The report was the work of the National Commission on Excellence in Education that had been charged by the Secretary of Education T. H. Bell to examine the quality of education in the United States and develop a report within an eighteen month timeline. The commission was to

- assess the quality of teaching and learning in our Nation's public and private schools, colleges, and universities;
- compare American schools and colleges with those of other advanced nations;

- study the relationship between college admissions requirements and student achievement in high school;
- identify educational programs which resulted in notable student success in college;
- assess the degree to which major social and educational changes in the prior quarter century have affected student achievement; and
- define problems which must be faced and overcome if we are successfully to pursue the course of excellence in education. (1984, p. 1-2)

The result was a scathing report of deficiencies that included declining student achievement, illiteracy, poor performance by gifted students, falling SAT scores, lack of higher order thinking skills, declining achievement in science and math, and poor reading skills. The challenge was put forth to create “a learning society” with a commitment to a set of values and education system for all to achieve at their full potential (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1984, p. 17).

As the report was dispersed, educators began to propose solutions to address the identified deficiencies that extended from focusing on the development of basic skills to developing higher order thinking skills to restructuring schools altogether. Over the past decade, concern has not declined. Educators are continuing to focus on reform issues (Carroll, 1990; Clark & Astuto, 1994; Dempster, 1993; Edwards, 1993; Felstehausen, Couch & Wragg, 1993; Perkins, 1993; Watts & Castle, 1993; Wirt, 1991).

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills

Perhaps the most comprehensive and familiar attempt to address work competencies in education was the work of the Secretary's Commission on

Achieving Necessary Skills directed by the Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin. The commission was composed of representatives of education, business, labor, and state government. Their charge was to define a common core of skills that prepares students for jobs in a new economic environment.

The SCANS Reports. The commissions efforts resulted in a series of reports commonly referred to as the SCANS reports. These documents were distributed to all American school districts and outlined a set of skills discovered that consisted of the five competencies summarized below

- Resources - Allocates time, money, material, facility and human resources;
- Information - Acquires, evaluates, organizes and maintains, interprets and communicates, and uses computers to process information;
- Interpersonal - Participates as a member of a team, teaches others, serves clients and customers, exercises leadership, negotiates, works with cultural diversity;
- Systems - understands systems, monitors and correct performance, and improves and designs systems;
- Technology- selects, applies, maintains and troubleshoots technology. (SCANS, 1994, p. 2-6)

In addition to the identification of core skills, the commission offered extensive explanations, suggestions, and examples for implementation considered to be helpful for teachers.

America 2000. In 1991 the United States Department of Education devised a long-term strategy for American schools that called for a change in attitude about learning. This strategy which is known as America 2000 set forth six goals for education and a four-part strategy for reaching the goals. In the forward of the strategy, President George Bush observed the actions directed toward reform and suggested a change of attitude toward preparing students:

Until now, we've treated education like a manufacturing process, assuming that if the gauges seemed right, if we had good pay scales, the right pupil-teacher ratios, good students would just pop out of our schools. It's time to turn things around—to focus on students, to set standards for our schools—and let teachers and principals figure out how best to meet them. (p. 4).

The goals identified in the report were as follows:

- Every child starts school ready to learn;
- Raise the high school graduation rate to 90 percent;
- Ensure that each American student leaving the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades can demonstrate competence in core subjects;
- Make our students first in the world in math and science achievements;
- Ensure that every American adult is literate and has the skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
- Liberate every American school from drugs and violence so that schools encourage learning. (p. 4)

The strategy for achieving the goals included four parts: (a) improving existing schools; (b) inventing new schools; (c) advocating lifelong learning; and (d) regarding education as a family and community effort. Family involvement was described as an integral component of achieving success.

For too many of our children, the family that should be their protector, advocate and moral anchor is itself in a state of deterioration. For too many of our children, such a family never existed. For too many of our children, the neighborhood is a place of menace, the street a place of violence. Too many of our children start school unready to meet the challenges of learning. Too many of our children arrive at school hungry, unwashed and frightened. And other modern plagues touch our children: drug use and alcohol abuse, random violence, adolescent pregnancy, AIDS and the rest. (p. 17)

When President Bush left office, President Bill Clinton led a continuation of the intent of previous government initiatives directed toward preparing students for the workplace. The Goals 2000: Educate America Act was

designed to provide assistance to local schools to focus on basic skills.

Affirming the American system of local control, Goals 2000 promised to support schools in the teaching of basic skills, parental involvement, prevention of violence, money for improvements, alternative assessment, creating partnerships in business and community and developing a rigorous vocational program.

The Family Involvement Initiative. Carrying the commitment to education further was the Family Involvement Initiative, which provides for the establishment of a parent information resource center in each state by 1998. Secretary of Education Richard Riley encouraged families to spend time together in learning by expecting children to reach their full potential, limiting the watching of television, reading together, monitoring homework and encourage challenging classes, and setting a good example by avoiding the use of drugs and alcohol.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act. Probably of greatest interest to vocational educators was the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994. Among the findings of Congress in researching the need for this legislation is

the workplace in the United States is changing in response to heightened international competition and new technologies, and such forces, which are ultimately beneficial to the Nation, are shrinking the demand for and undermining the earning power for unskilled labor (p. 8).

The goals of this act were for students to receive a meaningful high school diploma and/or skill certificate recognized by employers; employers to be able to hire competent workers; and for America to compete in a global

economy. States were encouraged to design programs and utilize funds to meet their specific needs. The Act recommended the formation of local partnerships between elementary schools and secondary schools and local businesses as an investment in future workplace productivity and competitiveness.

Among the strategies identified in the School-to-Work Act as ways to accomplish its goals were: school based learning, work based learning, and connecting activities; the integration of academic and vocational learning; connecting secondary and higher education through articulation; and exposing students to a variety of career awareness, exploration, and development activities. The Act which included a ninety-one page description of needs, strategies, and guidelines represented a comprehensive effort to address preparing individuals to enter and function in a changing workplace.

Qualitative Inquiry

While educators face criticism of their effectiveness expressed in degrees or percents of the achievements of their students, these numbers often fall short of describing the reality experienced in the classroom. Common occurrences and ideas may be hidden from traditional scientific approaches to inquiry.

Garrison (1989) asserted that the positivist paradigm borrowed from the physical sciences is ill-fitting method of studying humans and consequently distorts reality. The insider's perception of reality is contributory in accurately describing situations and behaviors and is therefore at the heart of this study (Fetterman, 1989). Qualitative research has long been accepted in the field of anthropology

and is now a respected method of gathering information to describe educational issues. Such studies are naturalistic in that they are unobtrusive and can be conducted without disrupting the individuals in their normal settings (Patton, 1990).

Utilizing Qualitative Methods

As the focus of the research problem for this study became clear, the decision was made in favor of a qualitative methodology of research. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offered the following generic definition of qualitative research:

Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand. (p. 2)

Qualitative Data Collection

According to Patton (1990), there are three types of data collection utilized in qualitative research: (1) the in-depth interview; (2) direct observation; and (3) written documents. The in-depth open-ended interview attempts to ascertain what is "in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1990, p. 278) and to determine the perspective of the individual being interviewed. The interviews

provide insight into how the individuals organize their world and how they see themselves in their culture. The process reveals the thoughts, ideas, and outcomes of their actions and captures related information not available from direct observation. Data from direct observation includes detailed descriptions of the actions, activities, and behaviors of the individuals observed (Patton, 1990). Observation allows the researcher to experience a program without relying upon the reports of others and subsequently take the reader of the research into the observed setting. Written documents offer information from resources such as records, correspondence, printed curriculum, reports and publications.

Qualitative research is a people-oriented approach to the study of human endeavors. The major strength of qualitative data is that its collection is accomplished through naturalistic methods in "real-life" settings providing broad, but rich descriptions of the studied culture. Another strength of qualitative research is flexibility. As the study progresses, new insights occur and the researcher may adjust questions to delve deeper into the culture. McCracken (1988) stated that discovery of how many and what kinds of people share an attribute is not the goal of qualitative inquiry. It is to discover the categories and assumptions of a culture and how that culture builds its world around them. McCracken (1988) referred to this process as mining the terrain rather than surveying it.

The Long Interview

Although qualitative methods of inquiry are effective methods of building a representation of the studied culture, they often demand many weeks or months for gathering information. However, interviews with members of a culture are information intensive and may be conducted within manageable blocks of time and other resources. The long interview is one method of data collection that is particularly effective in gathering information to provide an insightful, perceptive picture of a culture. McCracken (1988) defined this method as:

... one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory. For certain descriptive and analytic purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing. The method can take us into the mental world of the individual, to glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world. It can also take us into the lifeworld of the individual, to see the content and pattern of daily experience. The long interview gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves. (p. 9).

The Role of the Researcher. McCracken (1988) further described the power of the long interview method with the acknowledgement of the researcher's participative role. The researcher who is a member of the studied culture may draw upon his/her "own understanding of how they themselves see and experience the world that they can supplement and interpret the data they generate in the long interview" (p. 12). The researcher must listen not simply cognitively, but with experience and imagination to find matches for emerging patterns, categories, and themes expressed by the person being interviewed.

Steps in the Long Interview Method. The long interview involves the completion of four major steps or stages in the research process.

1. Research begins with a comprehensive review of related literature.

Through the process of this investigation, the researcher begins to identify problems and form assessments that may guide subsequent steps. The literature review creates distance between the researcher and the research by expanding the knowledge of the researcher beyond his/her own experience. It also guides the development of the interview questionnaire. The critical process of the literature review is more than a collection of the ideas of previous scholars. The review is a process of qualitative analysis that results in mastery of the area studied.

2. The second step of the method involves the review of cultural

categories. The researcher's familiarity with the culture is of particular value as he/she draws out of experience the systematic properties of the topic and separates the "structural from the episodic and the cultural from the idiosyncratic" (McCracken, 1988 p. 32). In addition the examination of the cultural categories and their interrelationship builds the pattern for interview questions.

3. Prior to beginning the interview process, the questionnaire is

formalized. Merriam (1988) stated "the key to getting good data from interviewing is to ask good questions" (p. 78). Questions are presented in a way that respondents can tell their own story in their own terms. Therefore, questions are phrased in a general and nondirective manner moving respondents to talk freely.

4. Finally, the interviews are transcribed verbatim and after examination, data are analyzed using a five step process: (a) an inspection of each utterance, ignoring its relationship to other aspects of the text; (b) observing these in context and comparing them to the literature review; c) locating interconnections; (d) identifying patterns and inconsistencies, categories and themes; and (e) bringing themes together in a thesis or conclusion (McCracken, 1988, pp. 29-48).

Limitations of the Method

Creswell (1994) identifies limitations as a way to establish the boundaries of a research study. By addressing these limitations the truth of the study is validated.

1. Researcher Bias - The long interview may be considered a limited source of data because individuals interviewed are able only to report their perspective of experience. Personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and lack of awareness are examples of characteristics that may distort perceptions. Burlingame (classroom communication, Spring 1995) suggested writing a memo prior to the literature review and the interview process. This personal memo is a description of the researcher's own cultural categories, assumptions and experiences and serves as a point of reference to identify possible bias (see Appendix A for memo).

2. Selection of Subjects - Patton (1990) stated that there are "no rules for sample size" in qualitative research (p. 184). However, while the number of

persons interviewed is relatively small, they are selected purposefully. For this study, persons selected for interviews were considered information-rich regarding the area of interest. The basis for selection was that their overall careers intensely reflect the goals of the profession of Family and Consumer Sciences or they have experienced outstanding specific successes in the profession.

3. Instrumentation - Although the researcher conducting the interviews serves as a "kind" of instrument in gathering and analyzing data, the procedure ensures that the interviews will illustrate the respondents' view of the culture without adopting the researcher's bias (McCracken, 1988).

4. The Questionnaire - The interviews may be termed unstructured or semi-structured. The questions asked are drawn from the review of literature by the researcher and are supplied as prompts for open-ended discourse.

Questions are designed to cover topics in the same order for each respondent.

5. Researcher/Respondent Relationship - Qualitative research demands a much more complex relationship between investigator and respondent (McCracken, 1988, p. 25). Therefore, there must be a balance between formality and informality that will permit openness and freedom to speak, but not a great degree of familiarity. A relationship of substance must be established so that the respondent experiences a connectedness to the study.

6. Anonymity - McCracken (1988) suggests that anonymity of subjects results in more candid responses.

7. Analysis of Data - The researcher determines the categories, themes, relationships, and assumptions through lived experience and the review of literature. These are used as templates to search out the systematic properties of the interview data. Interview transcripts are examined for key words and concepts. These words and concepts are then organized with supporting quotations from the interview transcripts. The “intuition” of the researcher used in this process is a powerful analytic device (McCracken, 1988, p. 45).

8. Reliability and Validity - Reliability is the extent to which a procedure yields the same answer each time it is carried out and validity is the extent to which it gives the correct answer (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 19). In qualitative studies, these issues translate to credibility. Patton (1990) stated credibility is dependent upon three elements of inquiry: rigorous techniques of gathering and analyzing data; the credibility of the researcher; and the belief in the phenomenological paradigm. For this study, particular attention was given to each of these elements.

Summary of the Long Interview Method

McCracken (1988) has distinguished the long interview in qualitative methodology from the unstructured interview, participant observation, the focus group, and the in-depth interview as a streamlined method of inquiry. The investigator can mine data from respondents without “intimate, repeated, and prolonged involvement in the life and community of the respondent” (McCracken, 1988, p. 7). Perhaps its most important characteristic is that it is focused on

discovering cultural categories and shared meanings rather than the feelings or opinions of individuals.

Document Analysis

As stated earlier, qualitative inquiry is a multimethod approach to research and may utilize a combination of techniques for data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Merriam (1988) and Patton (1990) identified documents related to the area of the studied problem as a source of data especially useful because they are not specifically created for the purpose of research projects. In addition, Merriam (1988) described documentary data as particularly good sources for qualitative research because they can “ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated” (p. 109). Guba and Lincoln (1981) stated that analysis of documentary data “lends contextual richness and help to ground an inquiry in the milieu of the writer. This grounding in real-world issues and day-to-day concerns is ultimately what the naturalistic inquiry is working toward” (p. 234).

The Process of Document Analysis

Locating Documents. Documents used for collecting research data may include diverse written sources described as “just about anything in existence prior to the research at hand” (Merriam, 1988, p. 105). To find relevant documents Merriam (1988) suggested “seeking out a paper trail for what it can reveal about a program” (p.110). Therefore, documents for this study included a

broad range of curriculum materials provided by the individuals interviewed

The Question of Authenticity. Merriam (1988) stated that it is the investigator's responsibility to determine as much as possible about documents used for data. This determination includes the origin of documents and reasons for writing with special consideration given to the context in which it was written.

Organizing Data from Documents for Analysis. Merriam (1988) described the functions of data found in documents as furnishing descriptive information, verifying hypotheses, offering historical understanding, and tracking changes and development. Therefore, data gleaned from related documents may be organized in the same manner as data from research interviews. The investigator used the templates developed from the review of literature to identify congruent themes and categories. These themes and categories were then compared and contrasted to the interview data. However, it should be noted that new themes may emerge from documents that lead to a reexamination of literature and interview data. In this sense the analysis process is somewhat spiral rather than linear.

Summary of Literature Review

The review of literature provided an outline of themes and categories related to the problem under investigation. The initial step was an in-depth search of the discipline of home economics education and its evolution into Family and Consumer Sciences education. The overriding theme was that throughout the history and development of Family and Consumer Sciences, the

ongoing focus has been to equip individuals to face the challenges of an ever changing workplace and family life.

As the world has entered the postindustrial era, the nature of work has changed from the confines of the industrial or factory model to a global sophistication that requires a greater diversity of critical thinking skills and technological expertise. Traditional family life has expanded to include a variety of family formats that incorporate an expansion of roles and responsibilities. Together, changes in work and family have set forth new challenges for individuals, families, and communities.

Changes in work and family roles have powerful implications for education and have resulted in powerful efforts directed toward reform. Both local communities and national organizations have called for reform in education to meet the demands of change. While some reform efforts have been superficial or of limited impact, others including the SCANS reports and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act have opened lines of communication between government, business, educators and families to provide a comprehensive education to the nation's young people. This study is designed to examine one aspect of that comprehensive educational effort.

A review of qualitative inquiry and analysis was instrumental in determining the format for this research. The naturalistic and unobtrusive attributes of interviewing and document analysis made these two methods of data collection appropriate for the study. The research was designed to acquire the most relevant and accurate data to form a description of the culture of Family

and Consumer Sciences practitioners and how their practice prepares students for adult roles in the family and at work.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF STUDY

Introduction

The study represented an attempt to develop a deeper understanding of how current vocational programs in Family and Consumer Sciences were preparing individuals for the multiple roles they will eventually assume in the family and the workplace (Way, 1995). A logical place to begin this investigation was with the culture of individuals working in the instructional area of vocational Family and Consumer Sciences programs to acquire data regarding their beliefs and practices. For qualitative research purposes, a culture is defined as the collection of behavior patterns and beliefs that constitutes standards for deciding what is, what can be, how one feels about it, what to do about and how to go about it (Patton, 1990, p. 68). In this case teachers who are currently teaching in comprehensive high schools form the targeted culture. The nature of the inquiry elicited the utilization of qualitative research strategies to present a description of the culture promoting education in the profession of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Although speaking one's beliefs and testing the reality of those beliefs through practice is for many individuals a moral dilemma, the insights gained

from anonymous interviews proved valuable in seeing into the world of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers and professionals. Whether or not teachers can articulate a philosophical basis for what they do in their classrooms, the personal descriptions of these activities were accounts of lived experience. Therefore, the qualitative long interview method was an appropriate method for gathering such information.

The use of different methods or techniques of research provided an alternate perspective or a view through a different lens in a study (Morse, 1994). Such an approach provided a holistic or more encompassing picture of the studied phenomenon. Therefore, McCracken's (1988) method of qualitative long interview analysis was used to investigate the thoughts, feelings, and practices of Family and Consumer Sciences professionals. Although this method is recognized as standing alone in qualitative research, this study also employed gathering data from other sources such as documents along with interviews (Morse, 1994). Therefore, examples of instructional materials and related data was also examined to gain a more comprehensive perspective of Family and Consumer Sciences programs.

The purpose of the study was to portray a distinct view of how Family and Consumer Sciences professionals believe their programs prepare students for their future in the family and workplace. Research during the years since A Nation at Risk was published has resulted in a variety of attempts to assist students in preparing for adult roles. An extensive study by the U. S. Department of Labor produced the SCANS report that defined skills needed by

high school students in order to advance to pre-college studies, advanced vocational studies, or work in a high performance workplace. Examples of methods to improve student performance include a focus on basic skills in core subject areas, increased graduation requirements, and rigorous mandates for teacher education. Brain based education, teaching for learning styles, interdisciplinary instruction, and integrating curriculum represent efforts in designing learning experiences to improve student performance (Caine & Caine, 1994; Jensen, 1996; Shore, 1997). This research was an attempt to increase the understanding of the role Family and Consumer Sciences programs have in preparing students to assume adult roles in the family and workplace.

Sample Selection and Description

The primary decision in collecting data through interviews is determining whom to interview (Merriam, 1988). The persons selected for this study provided a purposeful sample of professionals in the area of Family and Consumer Sciences in the state of Oklahoma. The intent of a purposeful sample is to interview sources that are information rich and exemplify characteristics of interest (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). It is important to "seek out groups, settings, and individuals where (and for whom) the processes being studied are most likely to occur" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 202). Therefore, traditional sampling techniques governed by specific rules to acquire a random sample were not appropriate. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) identified the criteria of adequacy and appropriateness of data in qualitative research.

Adequacy refers to the amount of data collected, rather than to the number of subjects, as in quantitative research. Adequacy is attained when sufficient data have been collected that saturation occurs and variation is both accounted for and understood. Appropriateness refers to selection of information according to the theoretical needs of the study and the emerging model... In qualitative research, the investigator samples until repetition from multiple sources is obtained. This provides concurring and confirming data, and ensures saturation. (p. 230)

McCracken (1988) stated that "less is more" when selecting individuals for interviews. In other words, it is more important to work intensively with a few subjects than in a cursory manner with many subjects. McCracken (1988) further suggested that as few as eight subjects may offer sufficient data for most interview studies. However, sixteen teachers were interviewed for this study.

Teacher Selection

To select teachers for interviews, members of the Family and Consumer Sciences staff of the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education were asked to identify Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in Oklahoma considered to be rich in information regarding the practice of Family and Consumer Sciences education. A list of 25 names was submitted to the researcher. Teachers on the list were contacted by letter, then a telephone call was made to each teacher to set an interview appointment. (See Appendix C for interviewee letter.) Appointments were made by consent and availability and a reminder note was mailed a few days prior to the interview appointment. (See Appendix D for reminder.) Prior to the interview, a consent and agreement form was signed by the teacher. (See Appendix E for consent and agreement form.)

Subsequent to the interviews, a thank-you note was mailed as an expression of appreciation for the interview with the teacher.

Teacher Description

The teachers selected for the study were teaching in Oklahoma comprehensive high schools at the time of the interviews. The principal qualifications for their inclusion in the study were at least five years of classroom teaching experience and a recommendation as a good interview subject by her state program specialist. It should be noted that all of the teachers interviewed are female. At the time of this research, there were no male vocational Family and Consumer Sciences teachers teaching in Oklahoma comprehensive high schools. The teachers selected came from a variety of schools and communities. Most are the only Family and Consumer Sciences teacher in their school. All of the teachers also sponsor a Future Homemakers of America chapter. None of the teachers taught in an urban school.

Teacher 1. This teacher has taught for ten years and presently teaches in a very small rural community in central Oklahoma that she characterized as very conservative. The religious influence is very strong. Her school has approximately 120 students. Most of the parents of her students have not attended college.

Teacher 2. Teacher 2 teaches in an Oklahoma panhandle community

many would term remote. She has taught at this very small school for nineteen years. The community has very few resources except agriculture. Therefore, many of her students may be from low income families.

Teacher 3. This teacher has also taught for twenty years at a small town school near larger communities. The school has about 175 students. Most of the students' parents did not attend college. Many of them commute to a large city about an hour away.

Teacher 4. This teacher has taught for twelve years in a suburban school district with a high socioeconomic level. Most students have many opportunities for travel and extracurricular activities. The school has approximately 1500 students and consistently ranks high in academics and athletics.

Teacher 5. Teacher 5 has taught at both the junior high and high school levels. She presently teaches in a small town near a large metropolitan area. The school has about 450 students. Her students come from a variety of socioeconomic levels, but are mostly middle-class.

Teacher 6. This teacher has taught for thirty years, the last twenty-five in her present school. The school has about 800 students. The town has a population of approximately fifty thousand which is a decline over the past 20 years. Many are college educated and have mid to high middle class incomes.

Teacher 7. This teacher has taught for fifteen years and presently teaches in a small town near a large city. The school has approximately 300 students. Many parents work in the nearby city, but the community is considered rural. The teacher described the community as blue collar or lower middle class.

Teacher 8. Teacher 8 has taught for 18 years in Oklahoma after teaching three years in another state. Her community and school are very small, but near a town of approximately 60,000. She holds a master's degree.

Teacher 9. Teacher 9 has taught for 16 years in a small community near a large city. The graduating class this year has eighty members.

Teacher 10. Teacher 10 has taught 24 years in her present school which is in a small community of approximately 10,000 about 45 miles from a large city. There are approximately 300 students in the school. The teacher holds a doctoral degree and has been very active in Family and Consumer Sciences professional organizations.

Teacher 11. Teacher 11 has taught twelve years, three years at her present school. Her school is suburban with almost 2,000 students. She holds a master's degree.

Teacher 12. This teacher has taught five years in a very small conservative community. There are approximately 150 students in the school. She has taught both middle and high school levels at three different schools.

Teacher 13. This teacher holds a master's degree in Home Economics. She has taught in her present school for thirty six years. The school has approximately 300 students. Her community has approximately 6,000 population about 40 miles from a large city.

Teacher 14. This teacher also holds a master's degree. She has taught for 24 years in a suburban school of approximately 1200 students. She has

been very active in activities of Family and Consumer Sciences professional organizations.

Teacher 15. This teacher teaches in a suburban school with a cross section of socioeconomic levels. There are approximately 1200 students in the school. She has taught for 22 years in Oklahoma and one year in another state.

Teacher 16. Teacher 16 teaches in a small town school located near a large city. The school has approximately 650 students. She has taught for 15 years.

Collection of Data

The data for this research was gathered by conducting semistructured face-to-face interviews and examining documents related to Family and Consumer Sciences education. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim. The collection of documents included program reports submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education and materials descriptive of program activities submitted by the persons interviewed.

Collection of Interview Data

The method of long interview requires six significant steps to study a culture. These steps are: (1) the identification of a problem or development of a research question; (2) the review of scholarly literature related to the research topic; (3) the design of the interview questionnaire with open-ended questions related to the research topic; (4) the interview process in which each subject

provides taped responses to the interview questionnaire; (5) the analyses of data obtained in the interviews; and (6) a written report of the results and conclusions of the study (McCracken, 1988, p. 5).

The questionnaire is a tool designed to permit respondents to tell their own stories on their own terms and to gain access to the world of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers and professionals (McCracken, 1988). Careful consideration was exercised in forming questions that would not lead or sway respondents. The questionnaire is composed of open-ended questions focusing upon programs and the ways they prepare students to assume adult roles at work and in the family.

McCracken (1988) regarded the questionnaire as indispensable in guiding the interview and described its four functions (p. 24). To begin, the questionnaire ensures that the researcher covers the areas of the study in the same order for each respondent. Another function of the questionnaire is the scheduling of prompts to encourage the respondent to delve more deeply into the topic. These include benign probes such as "tell me more about (a subject mentioned by the respondent)" or "how is (a subject mentioned by the respondent) accomplished?" Such prompts manufacture distance in that they do not lead into a response, but encourage elaboration on an already referenced subject. Thirdly, the questionnaire offers guidance and direction for the interview. McCracken (1988) stated that the interview has the potential of becoming chaotic because of the power of language unleashed (p. 38). The questionnaire provides a semblance of order to the experience. Finally, the

questionnaire allows the researcher to concentrate on the responses of the interviewee. The questionnaire may be modified after the interviewing process begins should categories be identified that require attention. (See Appendix B for questionnaire.)

Data from Documents

Using more than one method of data collection enables the researcher to build on the strengths of each method and minimize the weaknesses of any one approach, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the data (Patton, 1990, p. 245). McCracken (1988) suggested that for some studies the long qualitative interview method may provide a narrow scope of the realities present in a culture and therefore should not be used in isolation. For this reason document analysis was implemented as an additional method of data collection. A rich source of information about programs are the records and documents generated for the program's function and evaluation (Patton, 1990). Merriam (1988) described documents as a "ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator" (p. 104). According to Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994), data from documents have always been important to social science, but a systematic technique for analysis of documents remains to be developed. However, there is agreement that "documents are products of a system within which they are defined and made meaningful" (p. 464). Foucault (1973) suggested that documents should be converted into "texts" to be read and interpreted (p. 47). Using this suggestion, the documents collected were

examined and analyzed for themes that matched those which emerged from the review of literature and the interviews.

Of particular interest to this study are the instructional materials used to carry out the goals of Family and Consumer Sciences and the reports submitted to describe activities of Family and Consumer Sciences programs. These documents were used to provide additional insights and to augment the themes and categories that emerged from the interviews. In addition, the documents provided a stimulus for generating questions for the interviews.

Research Instruments

The Researcher

McCracken (1988) identified the researcher as a "kind" of instrument in the collection and analysis of data which are usually unorganized and demand techniques of observation that allow the researcher to sort and winnow the data. It is the researcher who pursues the patterns of association and assumption. This requires keen listening skills using one's background experience and imagination to locate a match for the patterns in the data. The diverse experiences of the researcher "become a bundle of templates to be held up against the data until parallels emerge" (McCracken, 1988, p. 19). The researcher for this study has been a teacher at a senior high school for the past thirteen years. Issues relating to school reform and the omission of support for

programs at the federal level led the researcher to investigate the ways these programs address student preparation for life-work roles.

It is the responsibility of the researcher to be aware of and identify beliefs, assumptions and biases that may affect the procedure or outcomes of the research study. As suggested by Burlingame prior to the review of literature and data collection, the researcher wrote a memo or description (see Appendix A) of these beliefs, assumptions and biases (class lecture, Spring 1995). The memo offered an opportunity for reflection upon the professional philosophy and practice experienced by the researcher and an awareness of biases that could have a blinding effect during questionnaire construction and data analysis.

The Questionnaire

Subsequent to the review of literature, the researcher combined the categories discovered with her personal associations and assumptions and developed the questionnaire. This instrument served as a guide for the interview and may be modified during the data collection procedure when additional categories emerge. Delso (1993) termed data not mentioned in the literature as "counterexpectational" data. This type of data further expands the researcher's view of the culture and may be used to take issue with the theories established in the area of research and the concepts reported in the review of literature.

An interview question is a stimulus designed to produce a response from the person being interviewed. Patton (1990) stated that questions should be

open-ended, neutral, singular, and clear. An open-ended question does not identify dimensions, but allows the respondent to select from his/her full range of possible responses. Questions should not contain material that steers the respondent toward a specific position, nor should they be presented in topic groups. Unclear questions may result in the experience of negative emotions for respondents. Terminology used should be easily understood to avoid making individuals feel uncomfortable, ignorant, confused, or hostile (Patton, 1990).

The first step in formalizing the questionnaire is the construction of a set of biographical questions designed to define the roles of speaker and listener. These questions were directed toward obtaining information regarding the respondent's educational and professional background (see Appendix B). The most important components of the questionnaire are the "grand tour" questions (McCracken, 1988). These are designed to stimulate the respondent to tell her own story on her own terms. The researcher was careful not to overspecify or identify a perspective thereby influencing the response. As the interview progresses the researcher assumed no personal knowledge of the subject area providing only prompts to stimulate further discussion.

Analysis of Data

The final phase of the study is the analysis of the qualitative data acquired through the interviews and document analysis. McCracken (1988) terms this phase as the most demanding and least examined aspect of the qualitative research process. Marshall and Rossman (1989) identify five modes

of analytic procedures: organizing the data; generating categories, themes, and patterns; testing the emergent hypotheses against the data; searching for alternative explanations of the data; and writing the report (p. 114).

All interviews were taped by the researcher and transcribed verbatim by a person employed by the researcher. A transcriber was used to avoid frustration and limit familiarity with the data that may hinder the accuracy of analysis. Transcriptions were developed using Microsoft Word for Windows 95 7.0, printed for file copies, and saved in the computer files and on disks. Files were created for all collected documents and notes regarding curriculum activities.

The purpose of data analysis is to determine the categories, relationships, and assumptions that reflect the respondent's view of the culture. McCracken (1988) identified three resources with which the researcher begins the analysis: 1) his/her own experience relative to the studied topic; 2) the results of the review of literature which indicate what should be there; and 3) a sense of what took place in the interview itself (p. 42). With these tools the researcher begins to reconstruct a neoteric view, one that is different from the researcher's own and also unlike that of any respondent.

Using McCracken's (1988) process of analysis five steps were taken to examine and analyze the data. To begin, the researcher listened to the tapes while reading the transcripts to check for accuracy. Notes on topics discussed by the respondents were made in outline form and examined to see if they could be entranceways to developing categories. McCracken (1988) described the investigator as the instrument. During this process, recognition and intuition

from both experience and the literature review provide powerful association abilities for developing categories. The second stage of the process was examining the categories created and discovering relationships between them. Next, these relationships began to be refined into a field of patterns and themes. Then the themes were "harvested and winnowed" to draw out general themes and organized hierarchically in order of importance (McCracken, 1988, p. 46). Finally, the themes were brought together into a theses or conclusion.

McCracken (1988) described the resulting product:

It is here that a process of transformation takes place in which the cultural categories that have been unearthed in the interview become analytic categories. By this time one is no longer talking about the particulars of individual lives but about the general properties of thought and action within the community or group under study... Fully possessed of general and abstract properties, the investigator's observations are now "conclusions" and ready for academic presentation. (p. 46)

The computer files of the interview transcriptions provided an efficient means of organizing the data. Microsoft Word for Windows 95 7.0 was used for processing the data. The editing features and "find text" command was essential in developing cultural categories. Using the categories, charts were constructed to portray the relationships of the categories in the themes evident in the culture. Quotes that gave particular support to a category or theme were copied from the interview transcripts to be used in the chapters that follow.

Summary

The discovery of the ways Family and Consumer Sciences programs in Oklahoma prepare students to assume adult roles in the family and at work was

the result of conducting in-depth interviews with teachers and other professionals and the examination of curriculum materials and program records. The transcriptions of interviews and related documents were examined and analyzed to identify the categories and themes of the culture of Family and Consumer Sciences educators. These were then analyzed to determine the congruencies with the skills identified as necessary for today's students.

Following the analysis of data, the final two chapters of the study were completed as a written report. Quotations from interviews and examples of the collected documents were used to support the findings. Chapter IV is an synopsis of the interviews and document analysis identifying and describing the cultural categories and themes that illustrate how programs prepare students for the adult roles they will ultimately assume. Chapter V begins with a summary the focus of the study, relates the themes discovered to that focus, and compares the themes of the collected data to the review of literature. The chapter concludes with implications for the profession of, and suggestions for further inquiry.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to discover and describe the beliefs and practices of selected Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in preparing students for the adult roles they will assume as family members and workers in the post-industrial era. Using the long interview method along with analysis of curriculum documents, 16 teachers who were described in the preceding chapter participated in the data collection phase of the study. Each of these teachers was actively teaching in a comprehensive high school in a program supervised by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education. The teachers were recommended by their supervisors as excellent teachers and are identified only by number. According to McCracken, the teachers who practiced in a specific profession are considered members of a culture, that of teachers teaching vocational Family and Consumer Sciences in Oklahoma (1988). They were not chosen to represent some part of the larger world, but rather to provide a glimpse of the character, organization, activities, and logic of their culture (McCracken, 1988).

This chapter reports the qualitative data generated as a result of the interviews and examination of curriculum materials. From the review of literature

in Chapter II, two issues emerged that provided direction for the completion of the study. These two issues were:

1. What should high school students know to assume adult roles in the changing family and workplace?
2. How do Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students to assume adult roles?

The outline used to create the format for the interview was based on these two questions and was thus used for the following presentation of findings.

Therefore, the chapter consists of: (a) the findings and quotes from the Family and Consumer Sciences teachers who were interviewed, (b) the contribution of curriculum materials or the analysis of documents (c) a graphic of the themes and concepts of emerging from each question, and (d) a summary of findings.

What Do Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach?

Family and Consumer Sciences is a broad content field encompassing a variety of course offerings. Respondents articulated two major categories as they reported what they teach (see Figure 1. Diagram of What Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach). The first is best described as course titles. Course titles are set forth by the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Technical Education which provides curriculum guide for each course. These curriculum guides were published by the Curriculum and Instructional Materials Center in Stillwater, Oklahoma and were also examined for the document analysis component of this study. The second category is teaching for

life and included the ways teachers saw their mission in preparing students for life after high school and the specific skills will make them successful. These specific skills framed the themes identified in the interviews (McCracken, 1988.)

Course Titles

Most of the teachers interviewed taught a basic course titled Foundations for Living I. The foreward of the foundation for Living I curriculum guide published by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education provided a description of the course

The concepts in *Foundations for Living, Volume I* have been designed to facilitate basic knowledge and skills in child development, clothing and textiles, consumer education, food and nutrition, housing and home furnishings, and personal and family relationships. Attention is also given to student knowledge of, and participation in, the vocational and home economics youth organization, Future Homemakers of America. Emphasis of the basic skills provided in *Foundations for Living, Volume I* should encourage the student to think critically about the future and the role of each individual in it. The teacher's role in implementing the concepts in the classroom is to prepare the student for the role of family member and contributing member of society. It is our belief the use of *Foundations for Living, Volume I* in the Oklahoma vocational home economics classroom will benefit those students served by us. (p. vii)

The Foundations for Living I course was usually offered in a year long or two semester format and may be taken by any high school student. The curriculum guide used in this course had the following topics: Involvement in FHA/HERO, Career Options, Child Care Skills, Today's Clothing and Textiles, Developing Consumers, Food Science and Nutrition, Living Space, and Relationships.

Teachers further described what they teach using course titles:

The way this program is designed, I teach Foundations for Living I and II. I teach Work Orientation and Consumer Education, Adult and Family Living. And then we rotate a semester of Advanced Clothing and Foods with Child Care and Housing (Teacher 1).

I teach Foundations for Living and I use the core curriculum for that. The students seem to like Foundations for Living I and it works well because we stay on a schedule and get more things covered (Teacher 16).

I have this year four sections of Foundations I and last term I taught a semester of Housing and Home Furnishings and a semester of Food and Nutrition. This term I am teaching a semester of Marriage and Family Life and Parenting. Next year we will change and have less sections of Foundations I. We will have Foundations II next year which we did not offer at all this year and we will offer one term of Consumer Ed. and Work Orientation and the other term we will offer Housing and Home Furnishings and Food and Nutrition (Teacher 8).

I have two classes of Foundations for Living for ninth graders, I have a split semester of Adult and Family Living and Clothing, Textiles, and Merchandising class. Back to back I have Personal Foods and Nutrition classes. Then I have a Child Development I and a Child Development II class. I also supervise a work-study program for seniors who choose to work two hours a day and will be released from school for that period of time. I coordinate in our school the school-to-work program... (Teacher 9).

Although schools may have their own titles for classes, course titles were familiar to the Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in Oklahoma. The use of Oklahoma curriculum guides was widespread among the teachers who were interviewed. The teachers described them as excellent useful resources. The guides are updated periodically and their contents were familiar to most teachers. When the teachers used course names within their own culture, specific content areas, topics, and skills are apparent.

Teaching for Life

Teachers also described what they teach apart from course titles and

class labels. This second category offered additional insight into how teachers view their mission. The major theme of these descriptions was preparing students for life as happy, successful adults. According to Maslow, successful development comes from meeting personal needs (Decker, 1995). The basic needs are both physiological including food, clothing, shelter, and psychological including safety and security, love and belonging, and self-esteem. Instruction in Family and Consumer Sciences classrooms and vocational student organizations had a unique fit with Maslow's theory in comparison with other disciplines.

(Laugh) I teach life. I teach young men and young women how to survive in the world. We are the only discipline that teaches about the family and I think this is very, very important. So I try to relate that into all the different areas that I teach to them basically getting along in this world (Teacher 13).

The name is Family and Consumer Sciences which some people think is a trumped up name for Home Economics. And maybe it is. I think it basically summarizes what we teach. I try to teach a very broad based curriculum, very geared towards preparing students for life after high school, life on their own... (Teacher 12).

I'm a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher. That means that I teach a little bit of lots of life skills. We've changed a lot through the years. It used to be more of a cooking and sewing type curriculum. I think that was the emphasis a lot of people thought we had, but I don't believe that ever was our main emphasis (Teacher 10).

I teach Foods and Nutrition, but I also feel like I am teaching students a better way of life (Teacher 11).

I teach life skills, but the most essential life skills to students. I think what they learn in my classes will benefit them in whatever walk of life they enter. The main thrust is learning to manage your personal life, managing your health and nutrition, your money, making ends meet and then building relationships with each other that will prove satisfying, learning to get along with other people and build family relationships (Teacher 5).

Well I mean I can list course titles, but what I really feel like I teach (and this really is just how I feel about what I do) I feel like I give high school students the step up. The things that I teach are things that they're going to learn out in the cold cruel world one way or another (Teacher 4).

I would say survival skills. If I could describe any particular thing, I think that I teach classes that actually put into practice all the academics that are taught in all the other classes, we just put it into practical language kids really understand (Teacher 9).

I just think each of the different areas that we teach in Family and Consumer Sciences is an area of life and it is something that they have to explore when they get out on their own. So if they have a little bit of background then this is one of the things that they are going to feel a little freer to try or do differently (Teacher 13).

I think everything we teach presents something that they can carry with them. I always encourage them you know "I don't want you to become a parent today, but out there in the future I want you to remember the things we have talked about" (Teacher 1).

And I'm a firm believer that if you don't teach towards life, then you are shortchanging your students. Because where else are they going to find it. It's not going to be in the history class, it's not going to be in the algebra class, it's not going to be... you know, those questions are not going to find answers in anything else that they take (Teacher 14).

I think we take a lot of what we teach now and we try to show our students how it's basic survival skills, life skills and that kind of thing, not just cooking and sewing and that kind of thing like what it used to be even when I was in high school (Teacher 2).

Comprehensive life skills

Preparing students for life was not limited to learning to perform skills in the home or on the job. Teachers described their role in preparing students for life as comprehensive rather than confined to one topic or area of interest.

I teach students. When I speak of Family Living, they say what do you teach? I say basically from A to Z (Teacher 6).

(Laugh) I teach Family and Consumer Sciences comprehensive. From cradle to grave, consumerism, decision-making... I teach it all (Teacher 7).

Comprehensiveness, however, stops short of the description that teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences have of what they teach.

The Big Picture

Teachers believed they connect knowledge and skills with real life. In other words, theirs is an important component to the "big picture." For teachers the challenge was to help students apply what they learned to their individual experience rather than tucking it away into pockets of knowledge.

They're used to the memorization and just learning facts and now they actually have to take their life and put their life into the picture. They've never been challenged to do that. So it really kind of floors them for a little bit (Teacher 14).

They look at today, but they don't look... I think my students would say that I have this carved in wood above the door. The Big Picture. I call it the Big Picture. Looking at where I want to be a year down the road, five years down the road and how I'm going to get there (Teacher 14).

The notion of the big picture was not only described as a challenge for students, but also a challenge for teachers as they planned learning experiences.

I think you kind of look at the total picture of what these students need, what do I have to offer in those areas, what is available and kind of put it all together (Teacher 6).

You begin to see such a big picture of how all of this goes together. It's really beneficial (Teacher 15).

You have all the pieces, but when they come through our classes, we can put all those pieces together and they can see the big picture. I think we are able to give them the big picture (Teacher 9).

However the concept of succeeding in the big picture was comprised of basic skills that teachers identified as necessary for any pathway that students chose. Teachers described their activities as connecting course content to the real world.

Skills Connecting to the Real World

The category of teaching skills that connect students to the real world encompassed six themes described by teachers. Every teacher interviewed specifically identified reinforcement in basic academic skills and competence in communication, relationships, decision making and good work habits as unique components of what they teach. Several teachers also included health and wellness in their curriculum descriptions.

Basic Academic Skills. The basic academic skills of reading, writing, computation are reinforced within Family and Consumer Sciences classes.

I always emphasize to them that in the job, you still have to have the basic skills of math, reading and writing as well as the people skills (Teacher 1).

We start out a chapter by learning the vocabulary. I think it is real important that they do develop the vocabulary and that their basic skills are reinforced. Reading and writing and being able to communicate (Teacher 7).

I do teach math, but not algebra or geometry or anything like that. There are just so many areas and you can do it so many different ways. You can take one thing and teach it so many different ways. There's never a dull moment (Teacher 11).

They use a lot of math skills because I have a lot of hands on things whether it is a tape measure or a measuring cup. They have a hard time with fractions (Teacher 16).

But I give a lot of reaction papers and set up small group studies where they have to take case work and then work together to find solutions. Not only just in verbal skills, but in writing skills (Teacher 14).

If I could describe any particular thing, I think that I teach classes that actually put into practice all the academics that are taught in all the other classes, we just put it into practical language kids really understand. For example this is the reason why I need to know percentages because when I go to buy clothes and they are on sale, how much am I going to save (Teacher 9).

While teachers agreed that they reinforce academic skills and that these skills were essential, they said that they specifically taught the following additional essential skills.

Communication. Teachers identified communication as a needed skill for students to develop and implement into their daily lives in the family and in school and work situations. Changes in family structure and exposure from outside influences such as television and movies have transferred negative patterns in communication skills. Students have observed an artificial communication model that has different results when incorporated into real life situations. This has had a profound effect on their interpersonal relationships.

I think that the major thing that most of our students are lacking nowadays is communication with their family (Teacher 2).

I'm finding with young couples, it's communication. With so many divorced parents, too many of our young girls are looking for that love from a male. And it is really showing up. They are getting married young, having families, and then five years later getting divorced. Because they have grown up during that time. They feel like they have their personal life, their personal opinions and they don't have to take the other person's point of view. That where I see a big difference. We talk a lot about communication and working together (Teacher 16).

A direct approach to the study of communication was often a beginning for Family and Consumer Sciences classes even in specialized areas. Teachers

reported that a unit in communication engenders self-awareness, group understanding, and cohesiveness that extends throughout the students' experience in the class.

Communications are very important. I believe that they should be able to listen and then follow through (Teacher 15).

What we cover in there is careers, a look at yourself, communication. I focus in on that (Teacher 16).

We start with the communication unit because we feel like the foundation for all relationships in work and school and family, everything goes back to our skills in communicating (Teacher 6).

As far as basic communications, with all my students in the Adult and Family Living areas in that curriculum that I teach, we probably spend three weeks in that area because I have several resources that I use to fit in that particular packet of curriculum for those students. (Teacher 9).

I carry over communications in every unit. I go back to what we learned in the financial planning, the credit carries over into the marriage unit. The banking. All of this. Once we have had it, that's not the last they hear of it. We are going to refer back and bring it into the next unit (Teacher 6).

We talk about the different types of communication mirroring and paralinguistics, verbal and nonverbal, I messages. We talk about all the ways in which use our whole body and communicate to others and are we being clearly understood. Do we clearly understand? How do you ask questions in a way in which you don't turn somebody off... (Teacher 9).

As may be expected, there was sometimes resistance when the lesson calls for introspection or deals with personal issues. However, teachers were committed to help students develop communication skills in relationships.

Communication is the main unit and the kids do not like that unit. They do not like the communication unit. I don't know why. We do a lot of fun things, but in general they just don't like that. That worries me a little bit, because that's such a key to every relationship they are going to have. And I still do it even though they don't like it and hopefully they will pick something up. Even if it is just talking about things like the "silent treatment" you know in relationships when one person plays that role. I think it's so important (Teacher 12).

Relationships. Communication skills are closely tied to successful relationships. Included in the Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum were family relationships, peer relationships, and relationships in work situations. Since the beginning of socialization is family relationships, particular attention was given to developing healthy relationship skills in a family context. Again, students followed patterns observed in a personal world of change with input from media sources.

And they look at it as normal. That's what bothers me and that is one of the most disturbing trends that I see. They see it as normal. I know that it is not normal and that that is not how people really are, and in my opinion it is not good or right. But these students that are developing some of these concepts and see that, that's not normal in a relationship (Teacher 3).

The subject areas are consumer education, money management which are very important; a lot of parenting and family relationships; marriage, because I feel that's one of our major needs in our society. A lot of our students don't have a family background that has given them any idea about what a family and a good relationship should be. Maybe if they can get a little bit of that here, it will help them in the future (Teacher 12).

I would say relationships and caring about each other is probably more important than anything (Teacher 4).

The Marriage and Family course ... is very strong in personal development, learning relationship skills, learning how to communicate. We talk just briefly about getting married. I don't stress a lot of wedding units. We just briefly talk about it and we go more into the relationship aspect of it. Then it goes into different crises, which I feel is very important. Different crisis areas of relationships, divorce, death, child abuse, different things like that. We go into these and learn resources that they can use (Teacher 3).

The main thrust is learning to manage your personal life, managing your health and nutrition, your money, making ends meet and then building relationships with each other that will prove satisfying, learning to get along with other people and build family relationships (Teacher 5).

So I do quite a bit on relationships. Mainly in the marriage and family course, but we touch on it in all the courses (Teacher 8).

Developing relationship skills for the workplace was also a topic of concern for teachers. Teachers addressed this concern in both a direct or instructional way and an indirect way using cooperative learning as a teaching strategy.

In relationships, not only will it be your relationship in dating or marriage or with your children, but it will be carried over on the job. Conflict resolution is one of the big things we work on too. How do you resolve conflicts? You are going to have them in every area of your life. It all works in together to try to make a total person that can go out and work with others (Teacher 6).

We talk about employee relationships and that they will have to be able to get along with a variety of people even though you may not see eye to eye with that person (Teacher 1).

In my Careers class we talk a lot on that and employee relationships. We touch some on it in the other classes, but I do more in depth in my careers classes (Teacher 13).

In a work orientation class, we look a lot at on the job situations of how to act and react because of people losing jobs because they can't get along with people, not because of lack of skills (Teacher 1).

Teachers described the value of providing instructional experiences where students work together with other students in a workplace simulation. This may be considered indirect instruction in developing relationship skills.

Sometimes I'll let them get together with their friends and sometimes I'll arbitrarily assign them. I tell them in the beginning, don't complain, don't tell me that you can't get along with this student or you don't like them because that's not my problem. You're going to be working with people in your life and you may not like them, you may intensely dislike them, but you may have to work with them. And you need to learn that for what you're doing for your goal you're trying to reach whether it's finishing a project or putting these steps in order, you put that aside and you work towards that goal and you put your personal feelings aside. They usually don't like that, but they do work with it. I think that's a real important thing to emphasize to them (Teacher 3).

I also teach people skills, how to get along with others. I grade really hard the first few times we have food labs on how they get along with others. Their team work...I grade on that (Teacher 11).

Teachers agreed that the ability to develop and maintain satisfying relationships in the family and in the workplace is an essential component healthy family life and successful careers.

Decision-making and problem-solving. Students came from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. For a variety of reasons they may not have practiced good decision-making or problem-solving skills. Often they allowed others to make decisions for them and did not realize that they could develop the ability to make wise choices that would impact their future in a positive way.

Poor decision making was manifested among the teenage population in many ways including pregnancy, drug abuse, eating disorders, car accidents and traffic problems, and numerous others. Teachers were genuinely concerned about the difficult consequences suffered by students and their families and friends because of poor choices.

We wrack our brains trying to think what would be the key, what do we need to do. So we have really gone to the decision making part of it thinking that emphasizing that more (Teacher 12).

They have just forgotten how to use their own computer that is between their ears. Problem solving...there are ways that we can take some of the emotional aspects out of problem solving (Teacher 14).

Teachers expressed empathy and seemed to understand why students have difficulty making wise decisions.

But we have to be realistic in all areas. Teach all of it and really try to encourage positive choices. Decision making. Decision making. Peer pressure. How to handle situations. You know, I see kids make choices that I never made and never would have made. But you have to just

understand where they are in their lives. What situation they have come from and try to help them learn how to deal with that and move on. If they have made bad decisions, life isn't over. They just have to go on and they can make better decisions from then on (Teacher 12).

As I said awhile ago, I've looked a lot to find media presentations where we can all center in on one story and look at the characters and how did they identify problems and how did they find solutions what worked and what didn't work. So that we can all talk from a more objective situation (Teacher 14).

As the topic of positive relationships was both a direct and indirect component of the curriculum, decision making and problem solving are directly addressed and then woven into classroom experiences.

I think the real focus of what I teach is decision-making and putting that in the light of values clarification and goal setting, where students want to go with their lives. I really try to impress that upon them because so much of the time when you're working with adolescents, they are present oriented. Just what is going on today in my life (Teacher 14).

We do a lot with decision making particularly in the Adult and Family Living class. Something else we just started this year is we do goal writing. We write at least two short and long term goals and we talk again about decisions there and how the decisions you make today do affect tomorrow and do affect their future (Teacher 1).

Going along with that is decision making and time management. I'll use that in helping them see how important it is and I'll use myself as an example and my husband in how important things are in whatever their role is in the family (Teacher 3).

I think that I encourage those things. Initiative, creative solutions, maybe looking at things more than one way, problem-solving... all of those things relate to a work role (Teacher 7).

They have their freedom in my class to express their thoughts and their opinions on certain subjects that would be inappropriate in English or history or math. Because what we are talking about is how you live and what you think is important and how you make decisions and how you set your goals and those things are not concrete (Teacher 7).

Taking the skills and the decision making and putting into one big package so hopefully, they can work with that. It's a little overwhelming to them in

the beginning because they're not used to it. They're not used to it at all. They're used to the memorization and just learning facts and now they actually have to take their life and put their life into the picture. They've never been challenged to do that. So it really kind of floors them for a little bit (Teacher 14).

In addition to classroom experiences, the Future Homemakers of America student organization formally utilized decision making in its activities. A five step decision-making model is incorporated into every FHA project and competitive STAR event. Evidence of the use of this model was a requirement for the planning stage in any official FHA competitive STAR event or program.

Goal-setting. Closely associated with decision making and problem solving was goal-setting. Teachers regarded the goal-setting process as essential to the management of time, money and other resources. Several teachers described experiences in teaching goal-setting.

When we talk about time management, I try to emphasize how important time management is in reaching your goals. One thing I start out with every year is we do a small unit on goal setting. By the time a student is a senior, they will say oh we are doing this again. It's important to set goals. "But we did that last year." That was last year, you have to set new goals. They are used to that now. They have to set some short term goals, to the end of the term so they will know at least if they have achieved them. At the end of the term, we look at them and discuss whether they have reached them or not. I think things like that are important, because whatever their roles are, then I think goal setting is important (Teacher 3).

I read an article several years ago that I always use with them that says that it has been proven that people who write their goals down are more likely to reach those goals than people who do not. That's one of the reasons I have them write them down. I usually hand them back to them a couple of times through out the year and not only do they write them I have them write at least one or two things they can do to help achieve that goal. I usually hand them back the first of the year at the beginning of second semester and say "Have you accomplished any of these goals? Do you need to change your goals or do you need to change how you plan to reach those goals? Take them back up and give them to them at the end of the year to see whether or not they have met any goals. It

seems to be a struggle and a battle to keep them working toward that, but at least we are working on it (Teacher 1).

I think anytime that they give thought to their future in terms of goal setting or planning or thinking about it... I have so many students that this is it. High school is as good as it ever was for mom and dad. This is it. They don't know to think about anything other than now. This is the best time of their lives, they think. If we open up opportunities of thought to setting goals and delaying maybe some of the things that mom and dad did immediately at their age, I think it is of value (Teacher 7).

Teachers saw the value in setting and working toward goals set by the individual and encouraged students to practice this skill. Covey (1994) described goal-setting as the common denominator of successful individuals and organizations.

Therefore, it was an important part of preparing students for the future.

Wellness. The final theme teachers reported in the interviews was that of wellness. As may be expected, teachers identified nutrition as an important component of maintaining physical wellness.

Of course, there is a lot of wellness in that first nine weeks when we study about the individual, we do a lot on wellness, making good decisions, avoiding things that would be harmful to us... we do a lot on wellness, health and nutrition, understanding the relationship between diet and health (Teacher 7).

In the area of Foods and Nutrition, I just really get excited about talking to kids about nutrition and the things that they can really do in their everyday patterns of eating that can make them feel better and learn better. Whether it's just everyday living, or athletics or if they're trying to do some kind of weight control (Teacher 4).

Hopefully they will have a better understanding of nutrition and health and their bodies and why it's important to eat correctly (Teacher 5).

Nutrition is a big issue to me and we go in-depth... the vitamins, of what they do for the body, what kids are eating today, how they can change their eating habits, how sports comes into this whole issue, how you can have stamina and how you can have strength when you are starving your body as a wrestler or a runner. What stresses are we under that deplete our bodies so much? What are we doing to replace what we're losing? How you can become depressed clinically because you're eating sugar

and all this kind of stuff and your blood sugar just goes up and down constantly. Why you're not performing in class is because you're not eating right and your blood sugar is not up to level or above. Then you are working out of your lower part of your brain which is your involuntary responses (Teacher 9).

A lot more emphasis on fruits and vegetables and the relationship to overall health. The top 10 killers of Americans are diet related. So I try to tie that and stress that to my students. Sometimes that is kind of hard to get across to teens because they don't think they'll ever die ... but I think that I try to emphasize to them that even their parents can't provide them with a lot of this information because things have changed since they were in school (Teacher 10).

Quite a bit of nutritional pamphlets and brochures. I think I subscribe to 5 in this department. The Wellness Letter. The kids like them. In fact they read today... high school students won't go to the library. They get in groups and discuss. They discussed this one "I Drank So Much I Almost Died" (Teacher 16).

Traditionally emphasis was placed on food preparation. From the teacher comments above, good nutrition and its relationship to overall health and wellness has replaced the cooking focus once prevalent in foods classes.

Summary

When Family and Consumer Sciences teachers were asked to describe what they teach, their responses fell into two perceptions or categories. The first category was course titles or subject areas. Courses included a variety of titles encompassing the instruction of foods and nutrition, housing and home furnishings, child development and parenting, clothing, and consumer education. The second category was the broad concept of teaching life including putting what is taught into life context or "the big picture." The themes in this category were basic academics, communication, relationships, decision-making or

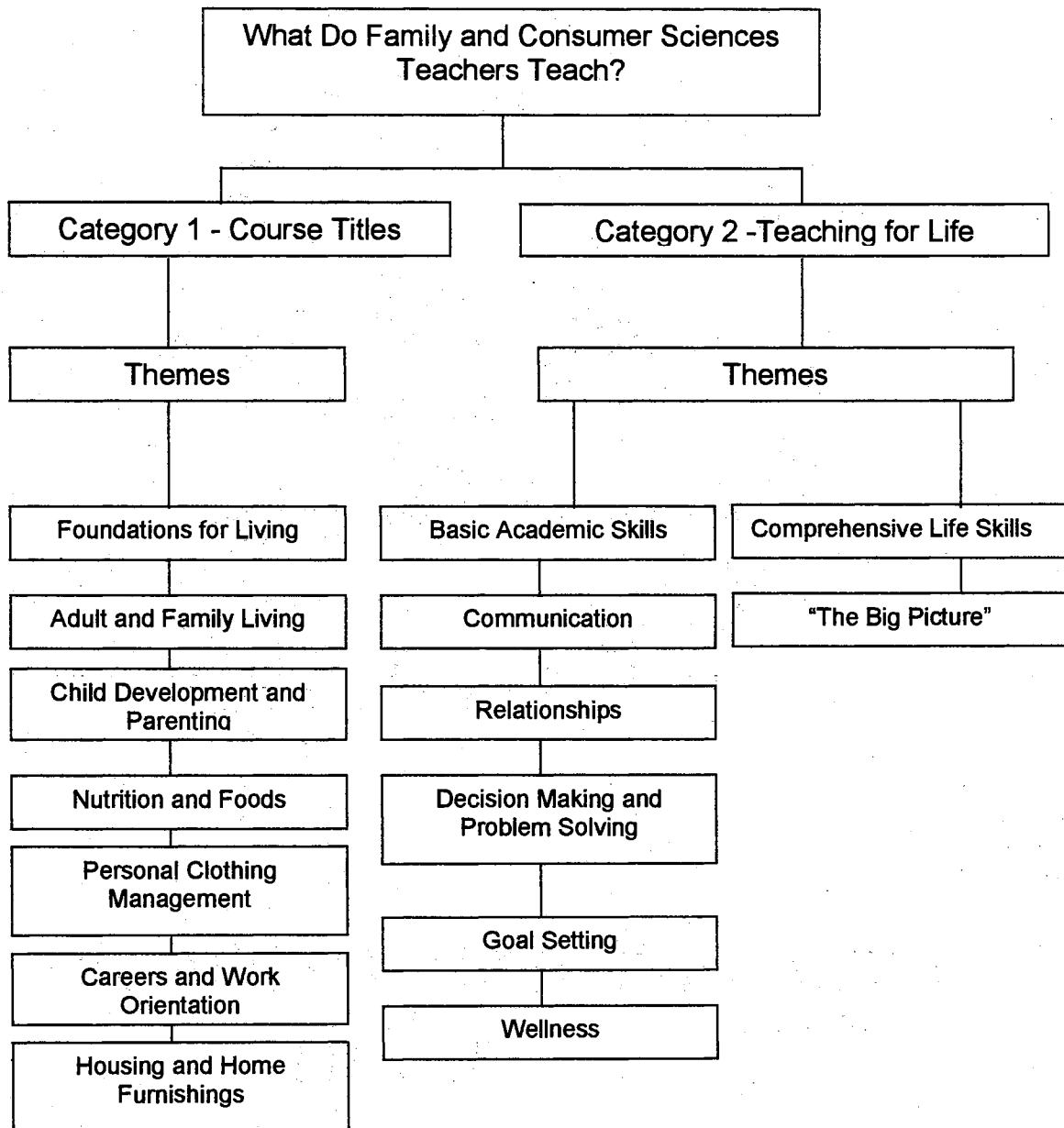


Figure 1. Diagram of Categories and Themes of What Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach.

problem-solving, goal setting, and wellness.

How do Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach?

Teachers used a variety of instructional strategies to present content material. The decisions regarding class activities are made on an individual basis. Each teacher interviewed described a variety of teaching methods and many said they never use the identical format from one year to the next. The following discussion includes two categories of how teachers teach (see Figure 2 Diagram of How Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach). The first category is a description of the teaching strategies used in Family and Consumer Sciences classrooms. These strategies are the themes articulated by teachers as they described their practice. The second category is a description of the resources teachers use to augment traditional curriculum guides, packets and textbooks.

Teaching Strategies

A variety of instructional strategies were used in Family and Consumer Sciences courses both in and out of the classroom.

I try to use a variety of teaching styles. I'm the kind of person that I get bored very quickly if I'm doing the same thing over and over and despite the fact that I teach the same thing each year, I very seldom teach it in the same way. I try to also stay very alert to what is happening in the world and try to bring that in (Teacher 1).

Well I try to use a variety of teaching methods. Of course the state provides curriculum for us to follow in all of these different areas. I try to go by that for the most part, but I vary if I see something on TV that is newsworthy, recent I'll videotape it (Teacher 5).

All Family and Consumer Sciences teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and I do that too. I call them hands on experiences, classroom discussions, worksheets, workbooks, guest speakers, field trips, demonstrations, lectures. (Teacher 6).

I try to do something different. I try not to do the same thing two days in a row. I have a very short attention span myself... (Teacher 7).

I like a variety. If you look at my board and see what is going on for the week, I try not to do the same thing for days in a row. You mix it up and use those different instructional strategies to keep the interest with the students (Teacher 6).

I try all kinds of different things from doing things out in the commons area to some written work, doing things in a group setting (Teacher 11).

But I have pulled things out and put things back in for several years. I don't teach the same lesson plan every year. I just don't. I go through and take things out and put things in. But it depends a lot on how many I have in class and how many or what type of learning styles I have. Learning styles are real important (Teacher 11).

The above comments reflected that a variety is necessary for meeting the needs of students. Teachers reported the challenge both to meet the needs of students and appeal to students interest in the selection of subject matter and creating learning experiences.

I try to stay well read with journals and materials and the news but I think students definitely have some input because I like to pride myself on thinking that I'm trying to meet their needs (Teacher 10).

Teaching has changed since I started in 1962. You could give information in 1962 and the students wrote it down and took notes and kind of absorbed it. But our students today have access to the internet. They have access to television and they are used to being entertained. And so my teaching has changed because I'm more of an entertainer now hoping that they will get some of the concepts that I'm trying to get across (Teacher 13).

Teachers were committed to challenging students to think and reported a constant effort in working toward that goal.

I really try to make them think. They don't like to do that, they get mad when I make them think (Teacher 5).

I try to bring an element abstract thinking into their heads. It really floors them because somewhere we lose that in our kids. When they are little and starting out in education, I think they have a lot of that creativity and then it gets stifled somewhere about fifth, sixth, seventh grade and suddenly they begin they just have to find the problems in the book and where is the answer and they forget to keep that mental process going. That's so important to survival. They've got to have it (Teacher 14).

I utilize a lot of audio/visual things, I utilize a lot of little involvement games and things with the students. We do crossword puzzles and word searches and things like that. Even though sometimes they complain about them I think it does help them in their word association, their thinking skills. I use a lot of depending on the subject, a lot of activities, I try to keep the students involved. Again, in block scheduling they can't sit for 85 minutes. They could for 45, but they can't for 85 minutes (Teacher 3).

A lot of what I try I've searched long and hard for case studies and video programs where they have to do a lot of higher level thinking, a lot of analysis and practical applications. Again, they are not used to that. We have raised a media generation. They just want to turn it on, let it go, and turn it off. They want to watch, they don't want to participate (Teacher 14).

We evaluate some different types of child care activities. They evaluate children's books. They evaluate a television program for children. They evaluate a toy and they evaluate a computer program for children. They learn the things that they are looking for and then they actually look at it (Teacher 8).

I'm always on my feet supervising the students at all times, moving about it's very exhausting. I make sure that they're following through and that everything is visible to me like what they're doing in their lab areas. So that's very stressful, that takes a lot of planning (Teacher 9).

My classroom is very interactive from the moment they walk in until the moment they leave. I've got a teacher I'm working with right now. She is very left brained... hand out a paper, work on it, stay quiet and I am just gnawing at the bit because I just can't see this working with our curriculum. I just think that the teacher has to get out there and get in touch with these kids. I'm very much a people person. I'm a touch person. I'm an interactive person. That's just my teaching style (Teacher 14).

The variety of teaching strategies was categorized into two groups regarding the intensity of involvement on the part of students and regarding the intensity of involvement on the part of teachers. Subject area, class climate, resources, and time constraints are variables that contribute to the selection of a teaching strategy. The following is a discussion with examples of how Family and Consumer Sciences teach.

Teacher Intense Strategies

Teachers approached their practice with high expectations from students and those expectations set the tone for teacher and student efforts.

I've learned that having expectations of your students is or has a great deal to do with how well they are going to perform in your classroom (Teacher 1).

So I try to do a lot of teaching with love and consideration and caring. They miss the class, the types of things we do. They like me (Laugh). We try to learn. We use a variety of things. We have a good time, yet they know what I expect of them. They get a lot of love and attention and care. My students blend together quite well because we work at it (Teacher 6).

The notion of the teacher as an information giver was the focus of teacher intense strategies of instruction. When teachers used these strategies, they were the active parties in the process, while students participated with varying degrees of involvement. Although they used the teacher intense strategy of lecture for introducing units and providing specific instruction, teachers described student intense strategies as the most desirable and effective.

Lecture. Lecture is a teaching method that encourages listening skills which is a vital part of effective communication and note taking which is usually a

requirement for success in both college and business. However, teachers considered the attention span of students and attempt to limit the amount of time require to sit and listen.

So we do our vocabulary and then we listen to a lecture where I introduce the concept and at that time I will usually do a follow-up with some sort of activity where they break up into groups or tables or get with a partner and they will do some sort of activity that relates to the concept (Teacher 7).

I teach some by lecture. That is how I start every unit and I try to end all of it up in some kind of activity (Teacher 15).

I definitely think they need to learn some note taking, lecture skills, because a lot of times they are just fed information and they don't know how to discern it for themselves. Especially if they are going on to college. They need to know that so we do some of that (Teacher 12).

I do a lot of lecturing, a lot of group work with my students, a lot of cooperative teaching with students (Teacher 9).

I've made it a rule in the last three years to try not to lecture or discuss more than ten to fifteen minutes because I know none of us can sit longer than fifteen minutes and take in information without producing something ourselves. So I'm more careful about that, and whatever I happen to do that I only verbally give them instruction or information for fifteen minutes. Then they have to take that information in some way and produce something from it or do a group activity (Teacher 9).

Discussion. One of the characteristics of the high school student population was that they are intensely social and therefore, very verbal. Although they were somewhat shy in front of the group making a presentation, they usually spoke freely in open discussion settings. Teachers utilized this resource by creating opportunities for discussion as part of their information sharing strategy. Although students participated, their participation was usually voluntary and was guided by the teacher and focused on instructional goals.

So I use discussion a lot. I use some lecture. We use... a lot of times I'll have a question on the board and the students get to go write the answers

on the board as a way to start off. I also keep a large notepad and sometimes I have a question on that. Especially if it is something I know we're not going to get to that day so that day we still have it and it's not erased off the board for us. So I try to do different things to get their attention at the start of a new unit (Teacher 1).

We have lots and lots of class discussion on different topics (Teacher 5).

We do a lot of discussion over that. They learn a lot from discussion (Teacher 11).

I'll see something going on in that group and I'll just step back and let that group discuss for a few minutes and then I'll have them to refocus and we'll continue on. I think the interaction between the students is good. Not only for their personal life right now, but out there in job situations in which so many people are now working together, not just on an individual basis. This is one of the things I am understanding employers are telling us that they need to learn to work together (Teacher 1).

Examples and stories. Discussion was often guided and enhanced with stories and examples provided by teachers. Students responded to reports of real people even though they must remain anonymous. Teachers used stories to engage the imagination and to connect concepts with the real world in a way that gives credibility to instruction.

I will often use examples. Many of my students know my friends and my family without ever meeting them because I will use them as examples. I will often use people that remain anonymous that I may not want them to know their name. Good or bad. Kids like that. They like hearing because then they will ask questions (Teacher 3).

But I try use a lot of real life examples. Examples of people that they know and also graduates we have and different experiences that they are familiar with. Because sometimes that definitely brings it home more to them (Teacher 12).

Demonstration. Utilizing the teachers expertise in showing a specific method or technique was identified as one effective way to give instruction.

I use demonstration of course in the clothing area that we are studying right now. That is basically the only way to teach is demonstration

methods because my biggest problem right now is getting students to think and read and follow directions (Teacher 5).

Evaluation. Evaluation offered an opportunity for teachers to give feedback to students regarding their work, but was usually viewed in a negative manner. Past experiences as students served as reminders of how students may feel when evaluation is not used in a constructive manner.

I remember one that... he loved to give pop quizzes and his pop quizzes were over things that really weren't important and that probably influences some of the way I do testing today is because when I make a test out, I try to think of what do I want them to remember five, ten years from now... not just some little trivial question and I think he played a vital, important part in that because I would get so aggravated because there weren't the things that I thought were important. For example, one of the questions I still remember was "How much beef does the average American consume?" Well, that has changed. It's not the same today so does it have any impact on anything then or now as far as I was concerned (Teacher 1).

A variety of methods were used to assess student progress, but evaluation was considered one of the least favorite teaching strategies.

Evaluation is my least favorite thing about teaching and I use some tests just old fashioned objective/subjective tests. But more than tests I really use projects, project work, lab work, activities, quizzes. I like quizzes a lot because they are real short and I think they probably are a better teaching tool than a unit test. I just don't like to evaluate, I really wish that I could just teach and not have to evaluate. (Teacher 4).

Role modeling. Finally, perhaps the quietest, least intrusive teacher intense strategy was that of being a positive example for students. Teachers reported that they believe students observe how they conduct themselves in their families and schools. Attempting to put the concepts taught in the classroom into practice in their personal lives gave genuine credibility that students could observe.

Probably the most important role that I have or that we should have is just being a role model ourselves. Whether it's by just being on time, by being professionally dressed, by just setting an example of what the students need to be as they go into the adult roles themselves. That means if we are going to give a test then we should have the test ready and it should be done professionally. If we want the students to learn to meet deadlines then we should meet the deadlines that we set for us. I think trying to cover as much information as we possibly can in the classroom, making use of the classroom time properly to show the students all the different areas of family management, parenting, that kind of thing (Teacher 2).

So I have the philosophy usually that you get from students what you expect from students and what you model to the students. I try to use in my teaching, teach with respect and caring toward them and an attitude that each of them is very important and special. Each has worth. I think when they feel good about themselves, you will get more in return from them. So I try to do a lot of teaching with love and consideration and caring (Teacher 6).

I think that we as Family and Consumer Sciences teachers have to be good role models for our students because we're finding students who are victims of parents who are drug addicts. I know just in my classroom how different my students are than when I first started teaching... my students know that I do care about them and I do serve as a role model for them. My personal life is away from school and I try to live a life, as I've always tried to live, that doesn't give them any reason to doubt that I'm a person that they can trust (Teacher 2).

Student Intense Strategies

Student intense learning experiences involved a variety of resources that required planning and management. This was a challenge for teachers who teach four, five, or six different classes per day. However, teachers reported diverse experiences in planning and carrying out instructional activities and described these activities as the most powerful learning tools.

Hands on. Teachers identified a hands on or learning by doing as the best way for students to learn. The content matter in Family and Consumer Sciences

was conducive to hands on learning. This approach is not only an effective instructional tool, but also accounts for some avoidance of usual discipline problems.

Hands-on learning I think is the very best. I mean I don't learn until someone shows me and then I do it. I mean that's the best way to learn. And I think about the fact that I didn't start using computers until about 6 years ago, I mean really using computers and it's a situation where I've had to go and take classes where I actually do the work and that probably has helped me more than anything (Teacher 4)

A lot of my challenges to my students are hands on activities. It's not so much reading out of the book as "you have these cognitive skills and you're going to apply them." That's how I teach (Teacher 16).

Lots of hands-on. The students enjoy the hands-on. It cuts down on discipline problems if they are doing hands-on. And oftentimes, it allows them the opportunity to get up and not always be in a seat. But yet at the same time, there is still learning going on (Teacher 1).

We always want to do as much hands on as possible because first of all, the students get more interested. We always want to keep their interest piqued. Then obviously, you're going to have a lot of the battle won (Teacher 12).

It's a hands-on class. And a lot of people learn better that way. They learn by doing. That's another learning style. A lot of them learn by doing instead of listening or writing it down. I can see that with the students (Teacher 11).

I love the hands-on. I like the labs. I like watching them make it and do it and me just troubleshooting. I guess that's how I teach (Teacher 15).

Some teachers described the hands on learning in combination with more traditional strategies. They gave the instruction and then designed opportunities for students to practice what they had learned. It is unlikely that students would have immediate opportunities to reinforce learning with practical experience without the teacher's thorough preparation.

I feel like it is real important for them to have some experience. So what we do... it's a School-to-Work program now. I teach theory for nine weeks and then we have different sites set up where we go and do practical experience (Teacher 5).

We have an exchange day with an elementary school. We go there for a day and we do what their students are doing and we have little partners. Our big student has a small student as a partner and we do what they do and see what they do hands on. Then we come back and plan and compare for them coming to us for a day. My students are in charge of all the activities and if we're there, we see them out on the playground doing physical type activities. Then when they come to us, we plan where we will see more of the intellectual development hands-on. Small muscles coordination, listening skills and so forth. Within the two days, they have been able to actually observe all areas of the child's development. Social-emotional, intellectual, physical (Teacher 6).

The last nine weeks of school my students write lesson plans and actually go to the community center, which is about a quarter mile from our school and they're bussed there during the hour that I have them and they teach. So they prepare two days and they teach three. So they get hands-on experience with children, it's not all book-learning, they actually get to follow through with arts and crafts projects and coming up with a theme and following through with a bulletin board and all that. So that's a very hands-on type class in the spring (Teacher 9).

And I had so many other responsibilities that the kids totally ran that booth. We had administrators and teachers coming by saying "Who did all those hats?" I said, "We made them." Their eyes got real big and they "You did?" The superintendent said "You made all of those?" I said "Yes, in fact one of the kids walked in one day and said 'y'all aren't doing anything in here' and one of the girls turned around and said 'yes we are, we're running a business!'" They were ecstatic when they found out we had made \$165.00 on those hats (Teacher 1).

Laboratory experience. Another hands on strategy was the utilization of laboratory experience. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers normally referred to food preparation areas and sewing areas as laboratories. This reference may stem from the influence of Ellen Swallow Richards on the profession of home economics. Richards' approach was to regard the management of the home as a scientific endeavor including conservation of time,

energy, and other resources. Although food preparation and clothing construction comprised a small portion of today's activities in Family and Consumer Sciences, they were still among the favorites of students. Teachers viewed laboratory experiences not only as practical application of instructional content, but reinforcement of basic academic skills as well.

Taking what we teach them in the classroom and applying it to everyday living instead of just applying to an answer to a test. I think that's one of the hardest things for my kids to understand is how to take something that we learn in class and use it in the lab. They can answer a question on a test but they can't take that same information and process it when we're in the lab. So I question whether or not they do that at home or in the family too. For example knowing that $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup can be measured by using a $\frac{1}{2}$ and a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, they can tell me that on a test and then go into the lab and not be able to do it. They go to look for the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup and they don't have one and they can't remember that that's what it was. The same person could make a 100% on a test but they get in the lab and they can't see that (Teacher 2).

The Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education curriculum guide for instruction in foods and nutrition classes is titled *Food Science and Personal Nutrition*. As the title states, the study of food was from a scientific perspective. Activities were designed to incorporate scientific principles with food as a familiar medium.

We will still have food preparation labs, but in every unit I'm doing a food science experiment also (Teacher 12).

Simulations. Closely related to a hands on method of teaching were simulation activities. Teachers described activities in the financial areas that require pretend budgets and stock market trading.

We do look a lot at budgeting... sometimes we do that in the Family Living class as well. They may select a job... we use the newspaper with a set amount. Looking at that amount of money... they also use the newspaper to find out how much it is going to cost to rent an apartment or a house

and use that budget for that. Sometimes I have them to draw if you had an accident and you are out this much money, how are you going to manage now (Teacher 1).

One activity that is just a real short activity that I do is I save all of the grocery supplements or ads that come in the mail and I'll save those for a period of several months and then I put the kids into groups. This takes only one day. I put them into groups and ask them to pretend like they're living in an apartment together and they have to plan their meals for 5 days. They use the grocery ads to choose their foods. So they need to come up with 5 menus, a market order, and a total cost. Then they divide that by 4 or however many are in their group and they're always amazed at what they could actually eat five meals for (Teacher 4).

They choose stocks and follow them for nine weeks and at the end of course it is all on paper I give them Millionaires for the one who make the most money and Milk Duds for the ones who lost (Teacher 1).

One recently marketed simulation activity involved the use of the Baby, Think It Over doll. Specifically designed to encourage students to postpone sexual activity resulting in pregnancy, the dolls were designed to provide authentic experiences of the responsibility of caring for a newborn child. Dolls were checked out to students who were responsible for caring for them or arranging for a babysitter if they could not provide the required attention. The dolls were computerized to cry when they need attention. The computerized component was tamper protected. The normal check out period was one or two nights. Teachers reported that the Baby, Think It Over dolls provided a somewhat realistic experience in caring for a newborn and indeed encourage students to "think it over."

Last year when we had the "Baby Think It Over" I had more comments from parents and more students come in with "Well, this isn't for me!" after they had spent the night taking care of the baby all hours of the night when it would wake up. I had several parents say "We don't want that thing back at our house!" And I said "Aren't you glad it's a doll and not a real baby?" "Oh, I sure am." So they kind of changed (Teacher 13).

I just got the "Baby Think It Overs" a couple of years ago. Lot of hassle with that, but I think it has helped I'm not sure yet what I think about the Baby, think it over dolls. When they bring them back they always say "I'm not having any kids for a long time". I don't know whether they will remember that two years from now when they're all alone and you know, that's going to be the real test (Teacher 5).

This is the first time I had set the controls myself. What I didn't know was I put it in a demo mode and the first two girls that took them...the baby cried every 15 minutes because it was in this demo mode. One of them came back to school the next morning and she said "I hate this baby." She had show animals so she had to tuck it inside of her coveralls and take it with her even to the barn because it kept crying every 15 minutes. Her parents told her they loved it (Teacher 1).

Was she going to become pregnant without me being able to control her actions? And after that experience I think the girl assured her dad that she'd do whatever she needed to do to make sure that that didn't happen. She said that she'd probably have killed the baby twice in the process if it had been a real baby, because she got so angry. She just couldn't release that responsibility she had to see it through. The crying, the loud noises that the baby makes, it's just a real shrill sound, it's close to real life. It's a real good experience...(Teacher 9).

I can talk about "you're not ready for a baby—you don't want to take on these responsibilities." But when they have to actual practice it, it makes it come in a lot better (Teacher 13).

Research. Teachers assigned research experiences for students to discover, analyze, evaluate, and report information in each subject area. Every teacher interviewed had a library or media center available for their use. Computer resources included a variety of hardware and software and some were equipped with internet access.

We do research in the library. We are hooked up to the internet in the library and so my kids had a little access to it (Teacher 13).

For example, minerals one day. They do a report. We go to the library. They choose a nutrient or a mineral and then maybe we come back and they do group work for reporting to the class. The whole group (about 4 or 5) will get in front of the whole class and just tell about the information about all of the minerals or any kind of nutrient that they have chosen.

They discuss that and they tell the whole class about it. Now the class does get an audience or participation grade for this too (Teacher 11).

I talk about Shaken Baby Syndrome, they do research in the library on various genetic disorders so that they will know that everyone doesn't have a healthy baby (Teacher 5).

Everything was on the computer and it's real colorful and animated and everything. All of their instructions are on the computer but they also have a manual. She said that they become so adept at gathering the information on their own, exactly what I've been complaining about that my students can't do (Teacher 5).

Research assignments were viewed as reinforcement of basic skills because they involved locating materials, organizing information, and producing results in a written or verbal format. Another strategy involving research and presentation skills was the development of projects.

Projects. Similar to simulations and laboratory experiences, projects offered students the opportunity to organize and apply information. Projects were completed as individuals or groups. They were designed to challenge students to higher levels of thinking and often require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Teachers described a variety of experiences involving projects.

Usually in each unit, we have one major project (Teacher 5).

We do a lot of things that hopefully prepare them when they have their first apartment, when they go to the dorm, when they don't have mom around to rescue them for everything and so we do a lot of projects that way (Teacher 13).

You may hop around and do different things but they never get to see the whole picture, but when you're able to take them and give them a project and it's their idea, and you give them the components which they need to be successful at that and you watch them moving in those different directions and bring the whole thing together just like with the cookbook last year (Teacher 9).

They get into the projects a lot. I am always looking for projects. I think that is a preparation for work. In work essentially what you are doing is a project and you have to work with people to do it (Teacher 8).

Then we set up our own business. It was a... we made tote bags. They named it... thought I would never forget. Anyway they made tote bags from scratch and we set it up kind of like a factory. If you made tote bag handles, that's all you did the whole hour or block. Somebody made handles, somebody made pockets. We used the embroidery machine to give each one a different theme. They were canvas. They were really popular. We sold lots of them. In fact we started taking orders for them. The kids were really enthused. Every week they would trade off their job so eventually they had done everything. Eventually they could make the whole bag themselves. It was a really good learning experience (Teacher 8).

Often the completion of projects were the result of cooperative learning experiences designed by the teacher.

Cooperative learning. Teachers described a variety of experiences they designed to achieve learning goals. Such activities involved students working together with designated roles and guidelines. Students were responsible to keep the group on task and encourage one another toward completion.

They are very comfortable with the cooperative teaching, where they work in a group to produce something and they all take ownership of the grade that they come up with (Teacher 9).

My classes are... when we are taking notes, they are structured. When we are doing other things, they are not as structured. They work a lot on their own. It's pretty chaotic sometimes, but there is learning going on. We do a lot of cooperative learning (Teacher 11).

Lot of times, we will give them a little assignment by tables and ask them to work out, figure out, discuss something at their table and then come back and present it to a group. Sometimes they work on a demonstration or a project and share it with the group (Teacher 6).

Many students function very well independently in their thinking and following through process. But we have a lot of students that need that encouragement and ideas from others to really put things together. I think they learn from each other. We have students that are from learning labs,

we have students that are from TMH (Trainable Mentally Handicapped) classes to the gifted and talented to the National Merit finalist. So we have a real cross section of students. I think they really can learn from each other sometimes in the smaller groups better than they learn from a large group. A lot of times students will interact with each other in a small group and they would say the same things in the total group (Teacher 6).

We just finished filming commercials for our grains unit. That was a lot of fun for them. That was one way that they learned. They had to incorporate some kind of skit with rice or oats something like that. They had to tell all of the nutrients and they could do anything. They were videoed. They weren't videoed in front of everybody, they were videoed by themselves and everybody else watched the video. That is one way of learning (Teacher 11).

They interact in groups and team a lot. Cooperative learning groups. For instance in the dating, parent-teen unit. The class gets into groups and they form a panel and each panel group works together and then they participate on that so they work together there (Teacher 6).

But really the way that I see kids learning the very best is cooperative learning in groups where you give them a project to work on and some problem solving activities using resources. Whether that's labs involving food preparation or projects to complete or activities to complete. Or whether it's just coming up with a discussion idea. I think this group work is great. Kids need to learn to work together (Teacher 4).

Cooperative learning experiences were also reported outside of the classroom involving individuals other than students. These experiences were different from field trips in that they were activity oriented rather than observation oriented. The following example was such an experience.

I would team my students up with an elementary teacher. They would go for a week and they would team up with that teacher and do anything she wanted. They might be reading to students in the hall. They might be doing math with them in the hall. They might be doing bulletin boards, they might be grading papers. They might be playing with the kids during recess. Whatever that teacher's class was doing at the hour we were there. It gave them an opportunity to with hands-on, but it also gave them an opportunity to look at a career in teaching and look at careers in child development so they have a better understanding (Teacher 15).

In this situation, the high school students had different learning goals than the elementary students. However, the experience allowed both to achieve their objectives.

FHA. A student who chose to participate in FHA had an additional learning opportunity in Family and Consumer Sciences that extended beyond traditional classroom activities. Involvement in FHA offered a variety of opportunities for leadership, community service and connecting learning to the real world.

Well I think FHA gives us an excellent opportunity to use what we've learned in the classroom because your doing projects, contests, and activities, and so what you learn in the classroom you can take out and actually do through projects which then again is PR for your community and helps to educate the community as well (Teacher 2).

We do the volunteering. We help out needy families. We have about 60 in ... that were adopted. Our principal's wife coordinated that. Sent out the letters. We help the nursing homes here 3 or 4 times a year. We help Ronald McDonald House every year. We do the penny drive (Teacher 16).

Leadership. The biggest thing volunteerism. That is one of my biggest concern is who is going to take on those jobs that do not get a salary? I'm very, very worried that we are raising a generation of kids and it's probably even older than these that if they don't get a paycheck for it they won't do it. So I want to leave a legacy that kids feel that it is right to do something, it is good to do something because it is the right thing to do (Teacher 14).

I like the programs in FHA. I think that is the frosting on the cake for Family and Consumer Sciences and I can see that many, many students can relate to our field through the FHA program and I just think that this is one of the things where we have the pluses where some of the other teachers don't have those good things (Teacher 13).

It was a beautiful thing when it all came together. That girl had to take the responsibility. It was her project. She had to follow through with it. The growth that I saw in her. The next year she came back and she wanted to do Illustrated Talk and she won first place and went to nationals. It totally changed that girl's life. In leadership, in taking responsibility for being a

better person, seeing that she had something to offer that no one else had ever tapped (Teacher 9).

We have a real smoking problem so they have gotten all kinds of information from the American Heart Association and Lung Association. They got pledge cards so they can pledge to be smoke-free. We have probably 8 or 9 really nice prizes that were donated from various stores and the kids that sign up to take the pledge will be in a drawing for the prizes and we give out 2 or 3 a day (Teacher 5).

Utilizing Resources for Instructional Activities

Teachers identified a variety of resources used in Family and Consumer Sciences classroom including state curriculum guides, textbooks, computers and software, videos, guest speakers, and field trips. Major resources for Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in Oklahoma were the curriculum guides published by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education and textbooks in every instructional area published by major textbook companies such as Glencoe and Goodheart-Willcox. State curriculum guides were published in both teacher and student editions. Teachers often referred to these guides as "curriculum". Textbooks normally had teacher editions and teacher resource guides. Some also had student activity guides. Each of the teachers reported the use of these resources in varying degrees. The examination of these documents served as a method of ensuring the quality of the interview data (Merriam, 1988).

Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education Curriculum Guides. The Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education recommends the use of curriculum guides in Family and Consumer Sciences programs. These guides are published by the Department through the

Curriculum and Instruction Materials Center and are written by CIMC specialists, Family and Consumer Sciences teachers, and professionals from the community and business sector.

The following curriculum guides are recommended for implementation in comprehensive high schools: Comprehensive Guide for Exploratory Home Economics Programs (1994); Foundations for Living I (1989); Foundations for Living II (1991); Adult and Family Living (1991); Marriage and Family Life (1985); Parenting and Child Development (1994); Impact of Technology on the Family (1992); Personal Clothing Management (1985); Housing and Home Furnishings (1993); Food Science and Personal Nutrition (1996); and Consumer Education (1997). Each teacher is given a copy of the teacher edition and teachers may order student editions. Supplemental instructional videos and CD-ROM materials are offered to augment many of the curriculum guides.

Each curriculum guide is organized into instructional units that are based on performance objectives. Units include suggested activities, handouts, information sheets, supplement lists, transparency masters, activity sheets, assignment sheets, job sheets, tests and answers. To assist teachers in identifying activities promoting the development and reinforcement of basic skills symbols or icons are used in the left margins to flag specific skills (Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education, 1991). These skills include the following:

1. Reading skills involving the use of print for obtaining and applying

alternatives, developing solutions, examining assumptions, and evaluating outcomes.

8. Employability skills required to obtain employment and develop a career. Such skills include career analysis and selection, job searching, completing applications and resumes, interviewing and business etiquette, and personal management skills required for keeping one's job and maturing in one's work.

9. Social studies skills involving human society and its distribution and relationships. This includes the areas of history, geography, government and politics, economics, psychology, sociology, demographics, current events, cross-cultural studies, consumer issues, environmental issues, and ethical concerns in science and technology.

Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum guides are updated periodically as the need for publishing new information arises. Teachers reported using these guides as a framework for most classes supplemented with other textbooks and materials.

But I guess basically the state curriculum is what drives and is the underlying emphasis of the program and then I try to bring in a lot of current resource materials and things to supplement that because I don't feel like that is an end in itself, it's a beginning but it does give me direction and also, I think it's helpful for my students to realize that this is kind of the direction that other family and consumer sciences classes are taking obviously a teacher, new school will emphasize different things but it's kind of a common that's the reason I've tried to stay with that fairly closely and just to enrich and extend where I feel necessary (Teacher 10).

Curriculum guides. I use a textbook with each one of my semester courses and I pull things out of the curriculum, but I don't use all of it (Teacher 8).

I use the core curriculum and that's just kind of my springboard... what I use to then jump off (Teacher 13).

Family and Consumer Sciences Textbooks. Textbooks, teacher resources guides and student activity guides are published by several textbook companies. These resources are specifically designed for teaching students of varying abilities, evaluating students, encouraging students to think critically about chapter content and helping students form their own conclusions.

Additional Publications and Materials. Teachers reported using a variety of materials from consumer organizations, public health institutions, and commercial businesses. These materials change from year to year. They include videos, charts, posters, computer software, and activity books directed toward the topics covered in Family and Consumer Sciences.

I use a variety of sources. I do use curriculum. Of course this year was state adoption. I have gotten several new books this year and I am incorporating them. I am constantly on the outlook for different things and there are sources that come across my desk from the mail. Sometimes I run across things I can use. I always use the newspaper everyday. Sometimes I find things in there... I've pulled it together myself using a variety of sources (Teacher 1).

I basically use our core curriculum from the CIMC. I do use the curriculum and I buy the curriculum for all the areas that I teach for each student. Now I use the core curriculum book more as a textbook than a workbook because of the cost of them. At one time I did use them consumable and I bought new ones every year for the students. Now what I do is I buy them and I find that for example, in foundations for living I, with mainly freshmen using them, the books will last 2 or 3 years and then I have to replace them because they do start falling apart. The last year that I use them I let the students write in them. Then I do give the students that year the opportunity to keep them if they would like and if they don't I recycle them. I try to utilize different activities to teach the core curriculum (Teacher 3).

One of the things that I think is real important is to be prepared and usually I am everyday looking to the future about two weeks at a time, and

trying to make sure that all the materials are available. Because I don't use textbooks for every class, I use curriculum (Teacher 9).

Some teachers relied heavily on textbooks as the principal resource for a course. Others did not.

I have found out it works better to go through there myself and read and compose the study sheet. We grade the study sheet in class and then they have an open book test. They learn more that way. They try harder with the open book and I think after doing all three, they know the information (Teacher 16).

One of the things, and I know I'm probably a minority here, I don't really use textbooks that much (Teacher 3).

Sometimes content came from less traditional resources.

I pick the things to teach from looking at the headlines. And when you look at the headlines, they deal with everything from dietary problems to inflation to child abuse to marital situations to the Clinton episode (Teacher 14).

As far as choosing what to teach, sometimes that's determined by what's in the news. You know if there's something that's real current and it's a current topic, I may just pull things from that area, I may feel like that's real important (Teacher 4).

Computers and computer software. The newest resource tool in classrooms was the computer which was used with content related software and internet resources. All teachers who were interviewed had at least one computer in her classroom. However, computers were utilized in a variety of ways including teacher management activities and student learning activities.

We went to the computer lab today where they were researching about special needs. Caring for children in crisis, child abuse, evaluating child care services and community resources and then looking at and exploring careers related to children (Teacher 6).

At the time of the interviews, most teachers had internet access in their schools but not in their classrooms. Tapping this new resource was a goal of the

teachers and there was concern about funding for computer resources.

Computers had been added to many classrooms through the acquisition of technology grants offered by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education. Computer labs, systems, and related software were on the shopping lists of several teachers.

My own classroom is getting somewhat outdated with computer technology because of the lack of money to buy new equipment. Some of what I have I purchase myself or I wouldn't have now (Teacher 10).

We need to bring our classrooms up to date in technology. We don't need to be the last area that gets the computers or the ones that gets the rejects. We need to be as technical as the business area is. Such as being on the internet. In our area, it's just as important to have a computer to be accessible to the internet as it is in the business area. We've got to use the information that's there for our student's benefit as well (Teacher 2).

Sometimes they are not quite as supportive with some of the new technology. It's difficult to get funding for the computer programs. I do have a notebook computer for my department which I am very happy to have. We have computer labs that we have access to when we are doing resumes and any type of project or report. They want us to have access to it, but they are still a little leery about what we do with it (Teacher 12).

I use the computer some and I'm just learning myself so I'm not as good as I want to be. We do research in the library. We are hooked up to the internet in the library and so my kids had a little access to it. Our new superintendent is great and we are going to have the internet in all of our rooms hopefully next year. So I can hardly wait... I hope they get it here early enough in the summer that I can come out and play so I'll know at least a little more than the kids to start with (Teacher 13).

The computers are not being utilized as much as I would like to. I'm trying to get enough software, to get enough systems going. Right now it's just in small group work while other people are doing other things. But I would eventually like to get to the point if space all that lends itself, where we could take the same software program and use it in small group work (Teacher 14).

But, I would like to put in, we're real big on technology now and we're getting more and more computers, and I wrote one of the grants to buy

computers to put in modular units. Hopefully if we can get that it would be a start to setting up and if I can convince them to give me that space next door then I would like to put in different modulars that the students could work through. I think I could give them more lab experience in the foods unit by doing that (Teacher 5).

I have right next door here a brand new computer lab that is going in...20 computers. They belong to the science lab. They wrote a grant for those. I hope to be able to hook in and use those when they are not in use so that we can get on and do some of our resume writing and letters of application. I also hope to get into some of the software available in Family and Consumer Sciences in several different areas. I don't know if that will happen or not (Teacher 15).

I asked the business department for some computers and got four and they are being updated. We will be able to have six computers in the classroom and the software to go with it. I have had to dig for what is out there (Teacher 16).

A lot of the Apple computers that I have that a few years ago that I was involved in now the software is, it just doesn't have the clips and the things to draw the students in so a lot of that you know I don't utilize anymore because it is not appealing to the students. At the time it was but now it's not so now we need to move on to bigger and better things and so that's why I'm looking at the internet and hoping to have a few stations so that more than one student or group can be on the internet at a time and that way if we have a question, just like the other day we were researching housing trends well, we couldn't drop and go down to the library because the junior class was in their doing their research for their term paper so all I could do is let the librarian know I needed some information. Well, she searched the internet for me and got some printouts for me. But, had we had that in our classroom we could have immediately gone over and done that research and have been able to have those answers that day instead of days later when it really didn't fit the moment when we were really interested. They're very excited. When they found out we were going to get the internet access in the classroom they were extremely excited about those opportunities (Teacher 10).

I also hope to get into some of the software available in Family and Consumer Sciences in several different areas. I don't know if that will happen or not (Teacher 15).

The above comments from teachers indicated a willingness to incorporate computers and the accompanying resources into classroom instruction.

However, the use of computers as an instructional resource was still in the beginning stages.

Videos. Students were accustomed to television as a source of information and enjoyed its use in learning situations. Videos were used both as instructional tools and scenarios for higher levels thinking activities.

I use lots of videos and lots of study tours (Teacher 13).

I've searched long and hard for case studies and video programs where they have to do a lot of higher level thinking, a lot of analysis and practical applications. Again, they are not used to that. We have raised a media generation. They just want to turn it on, let it go, and turn it off. They want to watch, they don't want to participate. That is really the focus of my classroom—it's participation (Teacher 14).

I use videos a lot, I use a lot of things off of television to reinforce things (Teacher 3).

Of course the state provides curriculum for us to follow in all of these different areas. I try to go by that for the most part, but I vary if I see something on TV that is newsworthy, recent I'll videotape it. I use lots of videos because I think there are lots of things on TV that are pertinent and important (Teacher 5).

Guest speakers. Community and business provided a resource of expertise in a diversity of topic areas that teachers said enhance their normal classroom presentations. Guest speakers offered a fresh perspective and a varied set of life experiences. Their credibility, enhanced by their expertise, gave students avenues of assistance for the future. Guest speakers shared information for family situations.

I know that's idealistic for me to think that what I have said that five years from now they're going to remember everything. But I invite lots of speakers to come in, like the domestic violence people, psychologist/marriage counselor, and hopefully if they do have problems they'll have some kind of idea of resources to turn to. I also want them to

understand that they probably will have problems so they need to learn how to work through those (Teacher 5).

We are going to have a panel of ministers and talk more about communications. I have an attorney come in about divorce. Our statistics are very high, 1 out of 2 (Teacher 16).

We have a thing call the Tri-County Area Prevention Agency. It serves three counties. They do all kinds of different programs on relationships. Their primary objective is to help teenagers develop good relationships. I have them come out quite a bit and they do lots of neat little programs on communication. She was here last week and did a thing on problem-solving. She was here the week before and did a thing on anger management. I try to pick things that are up-to-date. In anger management, we have talked a lot about road rage and violence among kids. We have had some fights and we have talked about how those could be handled differently. So I do quite a bit on relationships. Mainly in the marriage and family course, but we touch on it in all the courses. Dating violence. We have had several speakers in FHA on date rape, family violence. We have done several projects with Safe House over here. So if they don't get that in class, it's in FHA (Teacher 8).

Guest speakers also provided insight for success in the workplace.

I have had speakers who were either head hunters or from the employment agencies to try and share with them about the professional image, about what those agencies can serve. They always tell them as a young person, just hit the streets, you are not ready to come to us yet. I try to have other professional people in to speak from time to time so that they get an idea of what those people do (Teacher 15).

He came over and talked to the kids about what they were looking for in an employee, how to present themselves when they came in to ask for an application. That was really good (Teacher 8).

They tell them things on the application that will cause their application to be tossed. It's been real good to have people come in from all different areas and tell them what it's going to be like (Teacher 12).

Field trips. Experiences outside of the classroom offered information in a contextual format. These real-world experiences supported classroom instruction in a variety of topic areas. However, these trips were sometimes

expensive and the additional supervision and liability was a concern that sometimes limited these experiences.

I'm always willing to take them places. To let them see things that they are not used to seeing cause sometimes it's something I haven't seen either and I learn from it too. They look forward to it but they also... it's good experience for them too. We have gone to a bank before. We have been to the courthouse at Pryor when we were studying about some legal matters especially with adoption cases and custody cases and a lawyer talked to us and took us right into the courthouse just to see what a courtroom looked like (Teacher 12).

We take field trips. Usually we go to one of the hospitals and then we may go to Frankhoma pottery and some other things. It's hard to do anymore, because so many of the companies can't let you in. I chose Frankhoma because it was different (Teacher 16).

In a smaller community sometimes it is difficult to plan a field trip because oftentimes you have to travel quite a distance, but Tulsa is within close driving range that we can have some access to different options. We go to a funeral home in Adult and Family Living when we do the death and dying unit which most kids haven't been to a funeral home. If someone died in their family, a lot of times the funeral home wasn't part of it and they don't understand what happened...the expense involved. In parenting and also in family living, we go to St. Francis Hospital which has a neonatal unit and also a birthing unit. We go to Baby Superstore or some baby store and they have to find prices for all the different things required for a baby. In Food Science, we usually take a trip to some type of restaurant that is very unusual to the students here like an Indian cuisine or a very ethnic or oriental restaurant. Not the type that they are used to having. We try to do something different because they have all had the Italian and the Mexican, but a lot of times they haven't experienced anything else. A Lebanese restaurant... sometimes we'll do something like that. We also have toured a hotel kitchen in Tulsa, the Adam's Mark Hotel. They took us through and showed us about food services and dining room management...how they handle the big groups that they have (Teacher 12).

Day care centers, Wal-Mart if you can believe for a number of field trips. When they are looking and comparing costs of things. In the child care unit, we have them check the cost of baby needs and we take them on a field trip to do that. To the grocery stores, we don't have a grocery store near us where we can walk to it and with a teacher teaching five classes of foods, can you imagine? And then doing meals so you are working with 20 cooking groups so can you imagine buying everything for twenty meals

after school? So we do that and plan where we can buy most of the things for two meals. The parenting group, I am taking them to used clothing stores and furniture stores that have household and clothing and we have several really nice resale shops that you can get very good quality things at a very reasonable price. In Family Living, we do more field trips. In the marriage unit, we are going to a bridal shop next week. We go to shops where they have the bridal registry. We call it couple registry. Because in Family Living, we run forty some percent males and fifty some percent females. So we gear everything to both. We usually visit a house when they are learning about buying a house. Sometimes in the past, we have gone to a car lot. We don't do that every year. But when we are buying a car. Sometimes we go to the bank or a credit union. It has been easier for them to come to us (Teacher 6).

One time at Hillcrest we were in a larger room. They have a video and then the tour. It was more close. They saw a preemie that was drug addicted. They went into what is going to happen to that child when it hooked up to all the IVs. It will probably be blind, hearing and all that. It made a big impact. We have quite a few pregnant teens here (Teacher 16).

I use lots of videos and lots of study tours. We were in a housing unit a couple of weeks ago and I took my Foundations III class to Oklahoma City and we toured the Ronald McDonald house which really an eye opener for the kiddoes. And then we toured an underground home. And it was kind of fun to listen to the students think about an underground home. And then listen to them after we had been through the home and on the way back (Teacher 13).

One tour we did, we looked at houses that were in construction starting with one that only had the foundation, then we looked at the next part where it had the studs and everything, then ... until we saw the finished product. That was really interesting (Teacher 8).

One teacher described these ancillary experiences as having an additional benefit apart from direct instruction. Having guests in the classroom and being in the role of a guest on a field trip was viewed as good practice in practicing good manners and showing respect.

But how do I use all those? How do I really go about teaching? As I mentioned, by having the opportunity to have a lot of people come in and us take our students into the community, I feel it is so important that we emphasize and they learn respect, consideration, what is appropriate

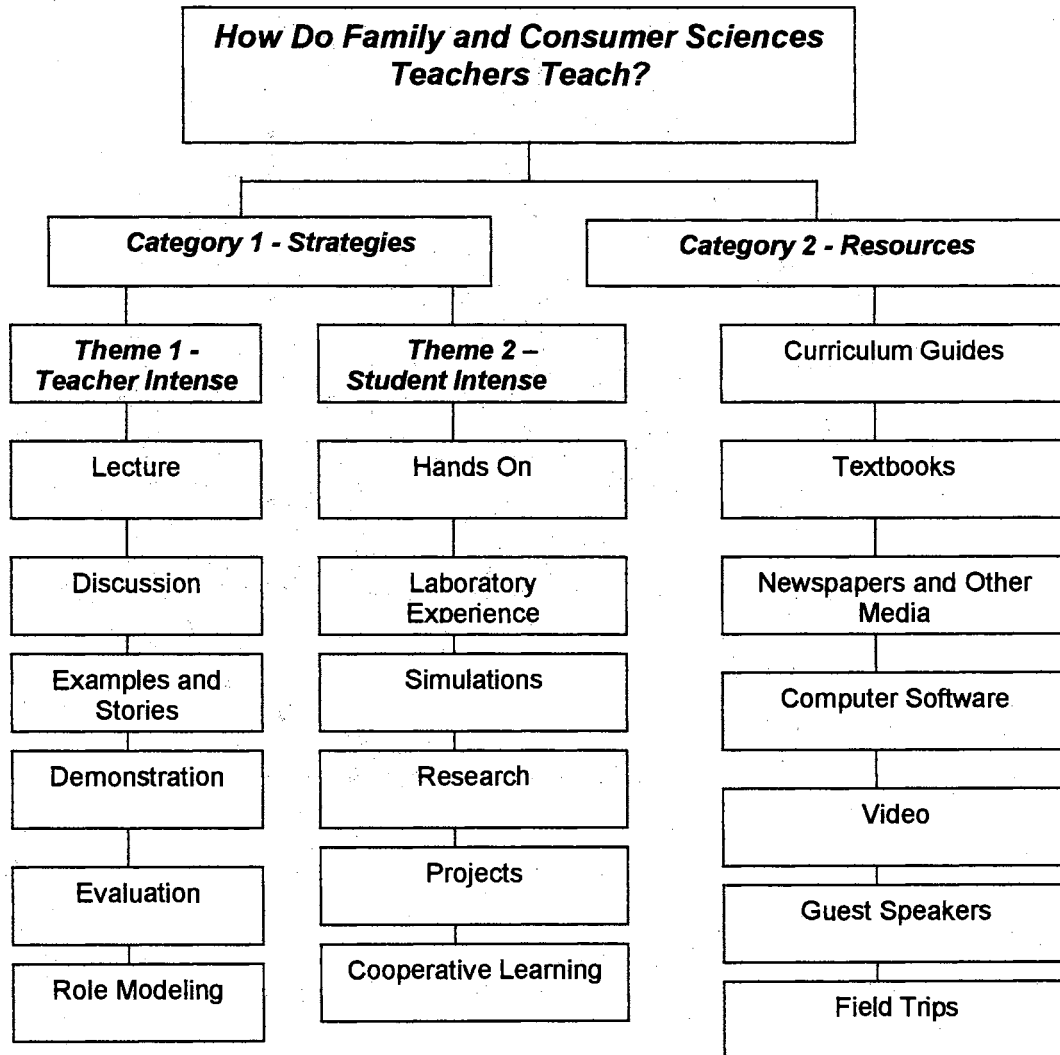


Figure 2. Diagram of Categories and Themes of How Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach.

when and where. Just like I may say in the classroom, I want a fairly structured organized, not much chaos and that sort of thing, but I still want them to have it be a time of, where they can enjoy and have fun while they are learning. But then a lot of times I say when guests come in, you really need to know what is appropriate (Teacher 6).

Summary

When teachers were asked how Family and Consumer Sciences teachers teach, their responses included the two major categories of strategies and resources. Teachers cited both teacher intense and student intense strategies for teaching. Teacher intense strategies include: lecture, discussion, examples and stories, demonstration, evaluation and role modeling. Student intense strategies included hands on activities, laboratory experiences, simulations, research, project construction, and cooperative learning and FHA activities.

Resources used in Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum included state curriculum guides, textbooks and ancillary materials, newspapers and media, computers with software and internet, videos, guest speakers, and field trips. The key to both instructional strategies and resources was to use a variety to address diverse student interests, needs, and abilities.

Why do Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach What They Teach?

The responses to why Family and Consumer Sciences teachers what they teach fell into two major categories: reasons for career selection and reasons for what they teach in their daily lesson plans see Figure 3 Diagram of Why Family and Consumer Sciences Teach What They Teach).

Career Choice

Teachers reported that they enjoyed the subject area, believed that it was important for students to learn, and they were making a contribution to generations of the future.

I got a desk for Christmas one time and I just played school. I never really thought about teaching anything else (Teacher 11).

But I knew I wanted to be a teacher, I never considered anything else. When I was a child (they still tell this story) I lived on a farm. I would dress my pets up and they were my students. I was the teacher. So I've always had that assertive personality and wanted to teach. Big surprise (Teacher 14).

I think probably from about 8th grade on I made the decision to become a teacher. I really thought it would probably be math because I had always enjoyed math. Then I got to Algebra II and had a different teacher. His teaching style and my style of learning didn't seem to click. So at that time, I started thinking "maybe I don't want to go math." I'm really not sure... I had always enjoyed sewing. I was a 4H member and was active in a lot of the foods and the sewing activities. Public speaking was also a strength for me in 4H. I had good home economics teachers. I don't think they ever really pointed me in that particular direction. I think I just began to look at my own particular interests and started thinking about what I enjoy doing and some way came to that conclusion. Somewhere after Algebra II when I decided I didn't want to be a math teacher... so I'm not sure there is one particular thing that steered me in that direction. I just... looking at my own interests. I think another factor was I knew I wanted a career, but I also knew I wanted to be a wife and a mother. I always felt like if I chose not to work or have a career, even what I was learning would be useful in my own home or family situation. There were five years that I didn't work. All of that paid off. So even if I had chosen not to be in a career, I felt like it was something that would have value for me (Teacher 1).

Enjoyment in teaching Family and Consumer Sciences. Teachers

expressed joy in their day to day teaching.

Why do I teach Family and Consumer Sciences? I love it. I think it is probably the most important thing they can take in high school. I think it should be required... at least parts of it. Maybe a Foundations I class or something for every student. Our world today, with the family situation the

way it is, where so many have only one parent or two parents working and gone a lot. Even my own family, I see a big difference from the things that my mom taught me and the things that my daughter at age 16 ought to know but doesn't. So if they don't get those at home, I feel like they at least need a taste of it here (Teacher 8).

I loved everything that was involved in the curriculum and what was taught (Teacher 14).

Important for students to learn. Practicing teachers believed that what they teach holds relevance to their students. They reported an ongoing challenge to include topics of instruction that are useful to students.

I just can't imagine myself doing anything else. I am a good teacher, I am a very caring person, I am a very helpful person. There are different types of people who are good at different types of things and I am a helper. I love to see learning take place. I would hate to be an English teacher or a math teacher and not be able to give the kids some hands-on experience and taking those ideas or those learning concepts and put them in a real-life situation. I enjoy seeing the kids go through all the learning styles, taking all the learning styles and teaching to those particular needs and then having them come together as a group, knowing those learning styles, and have to work with one another in a cooperative effort. Even though it's exhausting, all the physical activity that we do, I love it (Teacher 9).

I kind of like to think of my classroom as being kind of a window to the world where we can pull in different things whether it be speakers or resource materials or projects, activities, whatever, because I feel like the program has to be based on student interest with my guidance. Obviously we can't do everything they think they want to do but I think that they feel like they have some input, and want them to have input into planning the class (Teacher 10).

I also like to work with people and learn new things. I learn probably as much as they do. I learn a lot of things. It's not like ancient history that is not going to change. Our area changes continually. There is all kinds of new findings on pregnancy and childbirth and child rearing. There are new things constantly being developed in our area. Once again, I like the flexibility and I find it a challenge to stay informed about the new things that are going on (Teacher 7).

Having had the strong background in high school, it was kind of a natural interest for me to go into and I'm so glad I chose it. I love it. I love it. I

think it's probably the most worthwhile class a student could probably have in their whole education (Teacher 12).

I just love the subject matter too, I think that family is real important to everyone, good work ethics are number one to everyone, and I have the opportunity to teach the whole realm of everything. Of all the jobs of teaching in the school I think we by far have the best of all. We can be so creative in everything that we do and we can teach to that child's needs more than any other teacher can through different types of equipment and curriculum(Teacher 9).

Contribution to the future. Equipping students with the skills they need for satisfying family life and successful careers was seen as making a contribution to the future.

I teach what I teach because I want the students to learn how to cope and I want them to look at their future and how to balance themselves whether it's school and work or school and their personal lives. So many of them still don't know (Teacher 16).

I've had chances to move out of the classroom but I guess I just feel like that was my calling in life and I feel like this is where I can make the biggest impact on individual students and for that reason I enjoy teaching it. Of course some of the subject areas, perhaps I enjoy a little bit more than others but I think the variety of what we teach keeps it exciting for me and then keeping up with technology and changing resources that's one thing that keeps me renewed (Teacher 10).

I feel like every day that I teach whatever area in Family and Consumer Sciences, I am helping somebody else with their future (Teacher 16).

Curriculum Decision Making

The second category of answers to why teachers teach what they teach dealt with the daily decisions of what to teach students. Teachers described a variety of reasons for this determination including social change, the needs and interests of students, and individual growth and experience.

Social change. As the industrial age is overtaken by the information age, the roles of individuals as family members and workers require different responsibilities. In the past, women were homemakers who cooked, sewed, and took the principal role in raising the children. The home economics curriculum was focused on the teaching of cooking, sewing, and home management. Today men and women assume a variety of responsibilities in the home and on the job.

We don't have sewing machines in our department. We have eliminated clothing construction. They are under the stairs somewhere in storage and I have given them to the junior highs. The junior highs can use them. They have always been big on sewing and cooking. Actually, my students are thrilled when they walk in the room and see that they are not going to have to battle that zipper one more time. And really if they want to go that direction, if they want an in depth sewing project, we have the vo-tech right across the way that teaches fashion design (Teacher 14).

Well I given up a lot especially in the clothing construction area and I love sewing or used to when I time and that was a personal joy of mine; a lot of food preparation, those are some skills that are still necessary to an extinct but probably not when you compare them to the other life skills that we teach that have certainly cut back on the amount of time I spend on those two particular areas because lets face it most of us buy our clothes. We still need some basic construction skills but, including myself too, most of my clothing is bought. We eat out so much, we need to have more emphasis on how to select a good meal not so much on the hands-on preparation (Teacher 10).

We thought that was important. We were the care keepers of the family, we were the nurses raising the children at home and it was a home environment. You learned how to preserve foods and do yeast breads. I could do the best bound buttonhole and I taught those things. It was those skills, I was so skill oriented. In a way that was our strength because people enjoy hands on things. I still have my former students come up and say "I'm the only one in my family that can make yeast bread." And that gives me a certain amount of pride, but it also worries me because I think "I'm not teaching this anymore" (Teacher 14).

Family and Consumer Sciences has become a subject of study for all

students. Once a class designed to prepare women for their role in the home, teachers reported that male students benefit from their instruction.

I hope we can continue to overcome the stigma that we have, that it's basically for females. I'd like to see us become more advanced in our technology and in our thinking and also in the way that we teach. I think we have some teachers that are still teaching from way back when and haven't really progressed. We need to make the public aware that we are teaching the science of a family and the science of being a consumer and those are two major aspects of our society. We're not just teaching cooking and sewing, our programs are just as important as English and Math and that sort of thing. I know our classroom and our subject is known as an elective and I wish it would become more required in some of our school systems(Teacher 2).

People are always surprised when they ask me do you have boys in your class and I say about 40%. They are very surprised about computer technology and can't imagine why we would have a need for a computer in our classroom. I want them to realize that we work with all levels of students. I have everything from trainable to the valedictorian in the same classroom. I think that is a unique aspect of our program that we have something to offer to all students. Even mixed in a particular class. I hope people realize we are changing in that we are not what it was when they were in high school. My program is not what it was five years ago. It's not what it was even two years ago and I hope with my new internet access it is going to change. That is important for people to realize is that really strong programs are the ones that are continuing to change and update and are trying to meet the students' needs (Teacher 10).

A particular social concern of today's was identified as postponing pregnancy beyond the teenage years. This concern was addressed with the Baby Think It Over dolls and many other discussions and activities.

That's what we are really afraid of is that it has been glamorized here. The girls are just ohhhh let me see your baby, it's so sweet, oh I'd love to have a baby. That's really scary. We are trying to give them a realistic view of that as much as possible. It's hard. They get those ideas in their heads about how romantic everything is... You're in such a quandary (Teacher 12).

Another specific social change is the break up of the family reflected by the increased divorce rate.

So that's probably been one of the biggest changes I've made... what I can see that no matter what they do, if they stay at home, if they work out of their home, if they are employed, no matter what job they have, this is something that will possibly be a skill that they could use or need. And especially, particularly, I always try to bring in a statistic that many of them will be single, divorced, widowed, single parents, guys that are single, and that this might be a skill they would need to know (Teacher 3).

One teacher expressed concern for the students of the future regarding changes in our society.

So there has really been tremendous change. And what concerns me is that universities are eliminating the programs to train teachers for our field. Where are we going to get teachers? At the time when this area of study is needed the most, we are addressing it the least. Like I said, you don't have to go any further than the newspaper. There's nothing on the front page of the paper that says "John's in trouble because he didn't remember his quadratic equation." (Teacher 14)

Needs and interests of students. Teachers described their role in teaching as preparing students for life. Today's teachers went beyond the traditional stereotypes of cooking and sewing in home economics classrooms. The needs of today's students included only basic skills in these areas and were addressed in the areas of preparing students for a variety of roles at home and in the workplace.

Many think its home economics, cooking and sewing. We have been beyond that for many years. We always focus on what the student of today needs. How do we need to continually update the curriculum, change it. What new courses need to be developed (Teacher 6).

I think there is a lot we can teach kids, but maybe adjust it so that it's not "old-fashioned". Things have changed even since I started teaching. When I took home ec, all we did was sew and cook. We didn't do anything about the family. We did all kinds of tailoring and things like that. But those aren't as practical anymore (Teacher 8).

I don't think they know we are diversified as we really are. I think many people still think of us as stitchin' and stewin'. My former students realize where I'm coming from, but I don't think the general public really knows

that we teach all these different areas and how all these different areas are integrated into family life (Teacher 13).

I guess just the fact that you have to constantly stay updated in this subject you can't just sit back and use your lesson plans from ten years ago and expect to keep the kids excited and expect to stay updated and I think that's what keeps me excited (Teacher 10).

People don't sew except for hobbies...they don't sew like they used to do. So I think they need to know the basics like the parts of the machine and how to set it up and those kinds of things but, we don't spend a lot of time sewing. And the same with foods (Teacher 13).

As I mentioned, one area that I was really interested in at first, when I first started teaching and in high school and college, was clothing, sewing and tailoring. That was very important for me to teach them to do that. Now I realize that's not really that important. Another thing was I used to think that we had to in the Foods lab, we needed to teach them everything and I realize, especially with block scheduling, we can't do a lot of foods labs. We can't do as many as they'd like, they'd like to do something every day in the kitchen. But just giving them the skills, right now I feel like, for example I can just teach them how to read a recipe, how to shop for groceries, how to pick the right choices on food or even nutrition that they can take that further if they want to. The same thing in Clothing, if they can have the basic skills on how to learn to thread a machine, read a pattern guide, how to do that, then if they want more information they can go from there (Teacher 3).

I want others to know that we're not about what people think we were umpteen years ago. We have definitely changed and we are trying to meet the needs of students today and hopefully the future (Teacher 5).

We have always emphasized the family and all aspects of family relationships. I think now I see my program with more emphasis on child development, nutrition...we still do a little bit of food preparation, but that's a very small part of the curriculum today. The clothing construction units are down-sized as far as amount of time span in that area. Now we look more at home decorating items or fast projects that students can learn basic skills in utilizing a computerized sewing machine with embroidery capabilities. Also I do a lot with consumer education I think is probably one of our most important skills that we can provide students in helping them with money management skills. Anything from banking to credit to purchasing a home all aspects of that because many families are not providing those types of training for their students and I feel like that's an important aspect (Teacher 10).

Teacher growth and experience. As teachers gained experience in their practice, they became more attuned to meeting the needs and interests of students and attempted to address those needs and interests.

“Life does not survive on the strength of a muffin with no tunnels in it.” That’s not what’s going to get you through the tough times. So it had to take a completely different mental approach on my part to really say I have got to put that aside and realize that with the struggles the family is facing today in relationships and all the outside forces that are there that challenge the very core of what we believe, we have got to get on the tougher issues (Teacher 14).

The reason I teach certain topics more is because of my experience. You know as you live your life, you know the things that are really important or the things you wish you had known or had been exposed to as you remember (Teacher 12).

The dynamics that take place in the class, it’s so unique unlike any other class I’ve had before. So when I see where my strengths are with those students and when I see the weaknesses I have to say to myself “how am I going to teach this group of kids where they’re going to learn the most, using what resources I have?” (Teacher 9).

A lot of times I make those decisions based on what the kids have expressed an interest in. That is usually when I make my changes. When I hear them talking about...I think “oh we can do some stuff with that.” Because if I can get them on board and get them interested (it’s like this technology thing on this embroidery machine.) They like that (Teacher 15).

They see that what we are doing is really valuable to them. They can use it. Another thing is students come back and say “Do you remember (a handout)? Do you have another copy of that?” I encourage them to keep their notebooks. They tell others in the community. Parents will say they have discouraged their students because they needed more college prep. They say I talked with a mom whose student you had. They think it should be required (Teacher 6).

Attempting to address the needs of students was not without opposition.

Like I said, I have to consider that when I’m teaching them the curriculum because if I’m teaching the eight parts to making a motion in parliamentary procedure I try to relate it to their future. I might say that they might be in an organization that uses Parliamentary Procedure and that if they’re at

least familiar with it, because many times they will say "why do we need to know this? We will never use this." And I will have to say that for many of them and for many of what I see their parents do, they probably don't think that they will ever use it and I just have to say that this is something that based on my opinion and based on curriculum, CIMC's opinion, that this is important (Teacher 3).

As teachers achieved more practical experience, they revised their curriculum choices to meet the needs of specific groups.

I think part of it is determined by the students and the flavor of the class. Sometimes you have to have a real structured environment for some classes and some classes can just be real free-spirited (Teacher 4).

Experience also helped teachers manage curriculum within time constraints.

Several schools had adopted alternative schedules that decreased the number of total minutes spent in a course. Teachers believed that it is important not to waste the students' time teaching them unnecessary information.

I try to utilize and really see my students and what they need when I decide what to teach and how to teach it. In the back of my mind, I always think to myself "Why do they need this?" If they ask me why are we studying this, what can I tell them? I will admit there are a lot of things that I guess they are timeless. I have taught them for years and used the same things for years and years and years. There are some things I change. Sometimes I change the way I teach things and then sometimes I'll drop something. This isn't important. They don't need it. Or we just won't have time for it. What I have found is that a lot of the fun activities I have had to drop because in the block schedule, there isn't enough time. You have to cut to the chase, you have to cut to the core (Teacher 3).

Teachers with several years of experience had learned the value of community support. The climate of the community where the school is located was also a consideration for teachers when determining their course content.

I've been here long enough that I can do almost anything I want to. The students I have now are kids of students I had when I first came. I do a lot of sex education...now we call it human development because the words sex education kind of scares some people. But I have a very good resource from the health department that comes out and we do three

intensive days of sex ed. We talk about STDs. We talk about family planning. We talk about their human anatomy. And I think if I were a first year beginning teacher, I would do that when I came. We are kind of a Bible belt community and we have lots of churches in our town or community. We have of course Baptist churches, Friends, Catholic and I have lots of kids that are very involved with their church. I had one girl that is one of my A students that chose not to sit in and listen to the lady. She said "I just don't think I'm ready for this." I said "Fine." They know they have the option that they can do what they want to (Teacher 13).

This community has a strong religious influence where they believe that the wife should be at home. So I tell them it is hard to get started as far as getting all the finances and housing together. You may not be allowed to work outside the home, but there are some things you can do with your skills in the home (Teacher 1).

Our community is small which is good in many ways. But they are also a very conservative community. We have to be very careful as to how far we go with certain issues. We have to get a lot of parental input, a lot of permission forms for different classes especially even with things about personal development. Everything has to be approved by the school board, because it is very conservative. Our community is different. We also have a very religious community (Teacher 12).

Summary

Teachers described why they teach what they teach in two distinct categories: career choice and curriculum decisions. Teachers reported enjoyment and satisfaction from their chosen careers because they loved the subject area, they felt it was important for students to learn, and they believed their teaching was a positive contribution to their students future. Curriculum decisions were based on evolving social changes, needs and interests of the students, and the individual growth and experience of the teacher.

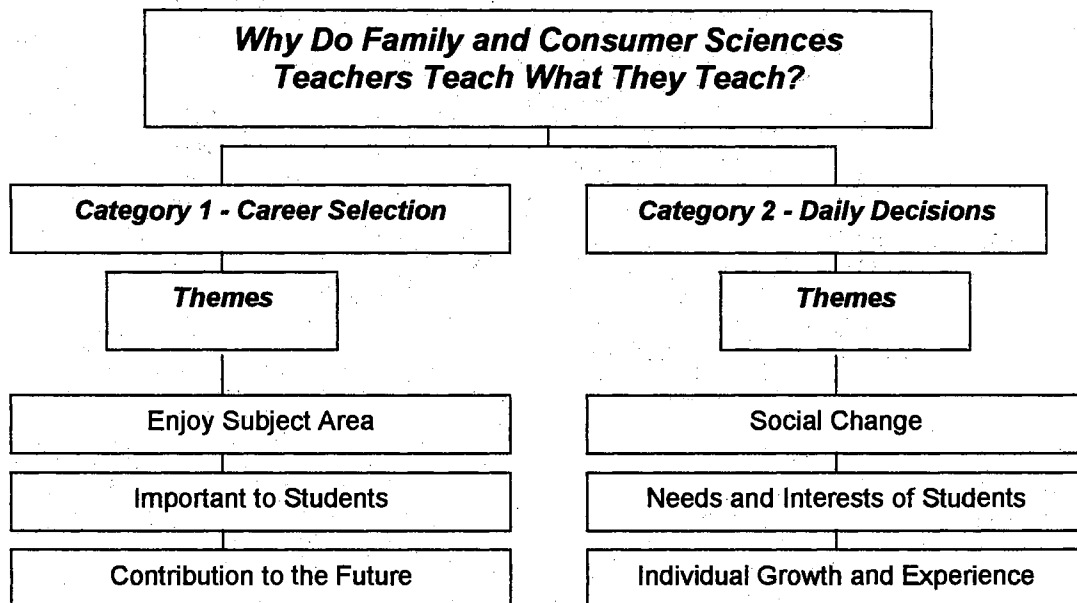


Figure 3. Diagrams of Categories and Themes of Why Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Teach What They Teach.

How do Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Prepare Students for Adult Family Roles?

One permeating theme revealed in the review of literature for this study was the initial purpose for the establishment of the discipline of home economics now known as Family and Consumer Sciences. That purpose was the equipping of individuals to face the challenges of change throughout the lifespan whether in the workplace or in the family. The areas of instruction nutrition and foods, marriage and family life, parenting and child development, clothing management, and housing and home furnishings are specifically taught in a family context. The teachers interviewed described how they prepare students for adult roles in the family in two categories: preparation and prevention (see Figure 4 Diagram of How Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Prepare Students for Adult Family Roles).

Preparation

The family which is the basic unit of our society is the means by which individual basic needs are met. Instruction in Family and Consumer Sciences classes directly addresses meeting basic needs.

We are the only discipline that teaches about the family and I think this is very, very important. So I try to relate that into all the different areas that I teach to them basically getting along in this world (Teacher 13).

Everything I think, that we teach, not only does it prepare them for basics in the work place with communication skills and critical thinking and the other things that go along with just the learning, but at home as well. They have what they need in their private life at home to have a successful

home life and they have what they need in the work place. They have the best of both worlds (Teacher 9).

I think what we teach is one of the most important things to succeed in life. We teach them people skills and family skills and family life. We teach them to try to be better and happier family members. We teach them to be better parents and to prepare healthier meals for their children. I think sometimes we have to take on a parenting role as a teacher. We are everything. We are the mother, the doctor, the teacher, the professor, the mediator. We are everything. I would like people to know that we teach them to get ready for life. To have a good career and a good happy home. A good family life. I think that's one of the most important things (Teacher 11).

Addressing basic needs was most often reported in the areas of nutrition and child development.

I think the nutrition aspect and the child development aspect is extremely important. I don't teach the child development classes, but of course that always bleeds over into whatever you're doing. And I think that's real important because of the abuse situation. A lot of times I think kids, it's not that they want to abuse their children they just don't know what to expect from them. I would say relationships and caring about each other is probably more important than anything (Teacher 4).

What I teach is real important. Proper nutrition for females because 99% of them will have children probably and they will want to be fit because they want healthy babies and they want to be healthy. They want to feed their children healthy meals.

We are right now in society where both parents work. It's really hard for one parent to stay home and I try to teach them that there are healthy meals out there that they can prepare. They can prepare them instead of this processed freezer stuff that a lot of people feed their children. I incorporate some consumer ed with the coupons and the grocery store. A lot of them know about the grocery stores, which one has the best buys... (Teacher 11).

If they are not going to become parents themselves as biological parents, they are going to be professionally acquainted with children or they are going to be step parents or have nieces or nephews to be dealt with. As some sort of authority figure, they are definitely going to have contact with children. So I feel like every day in child development prepares them for their future life because they will...the world involves children and they will be dealing with them on some level (Teacher 7).

Preventative

Often instruction is of a preventive nature. Teachers expressed that they help students avoid problems in their families before they arise.

I would like to think that it is a preventative, that Family Living is a preventative class. Maybe if we think about our options and know statistically what people before us have done and what kinds successes and what kinds of failures they have had, then these students have a head start. They know a little bit about what to expect from a relationship, marriage, parenting, then they will be hopefully better parents or better partners or better individuals as a result of having studied (Teacher 7).

A lot of time in functional-dysfunctional families because I think that is something we have learned a lot about in our society. It's something we haven't educated people about...how to have families function in a healthy way, in a loving nurturing way so that we don't recreate those cycles that don't work in families (Teacher 15).

An awareness that each student will have a responsibility to function as an adult leader or role model was a basic concept in preventing problems.

When you move away from your family, you will be assuming these responsibilities hopefully in your life for people in your community, your family and yourself and I am going to give you an opportunity to practice those here so when you move out there, you are in that leadership role (Teacher 9).

Of course, we discuss that the male needs to be involved in parenting. He needs to be involved in relationships with his family not just go to work and be the breadwinner. There's a lot more that needs to happen. A lot of their families have been like that. The father emotionally detaches himself from the family. His main job, he believes, is to provide for the family and the emotional part, he will let mom handle that (Teacher 12).

I feel like it makes them aware that everyone in the family has a role. I try to stay away from traditional roles. I really encourage the guys to be in my class. Even though this particular school system does not encourage them heavily. We are a rural area and we still are pretty traditional. Some of the guys I know are teased for being in here. I try to help them see how

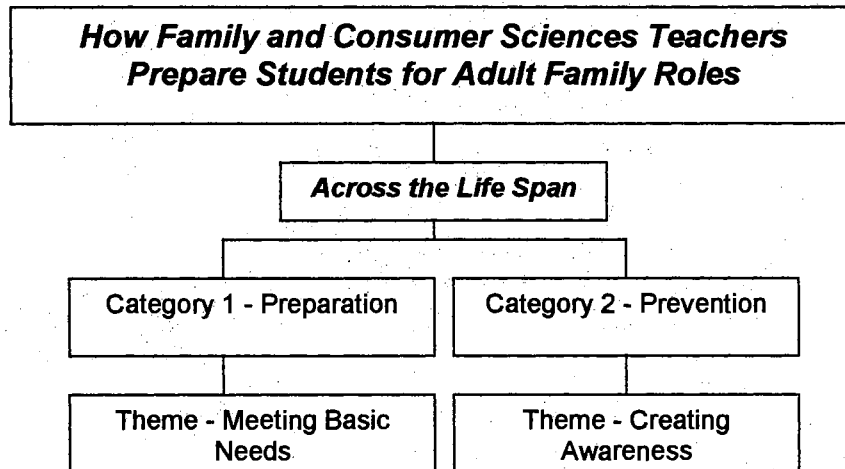


Figure 4. Diagram of Categories and Themes of How Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Prepare Students for Adult Family Roles.

you are going to have to balance a job with your family responsibilities (Teacher 8).

A lot of our students don't have a family background that has given them any idea about what a family and a good relationship should be. Maybe if they can get a little bit of that here, it will help them in the future (Teacher 12).

Whether the focus of instruction is preparation or prevention, teachers described their activities as crossing the lifespan. This approach reflects the complexity of preparing for family life.

The family life cycle I think is very interesting to study and to let them realize that the role they play when they start out is probably a lot different than the role they will play in their forties and the role when they are in their seventies. And to know that just because this is how your life is now when you start your marriage, things are going to change because of your life experiences and different situations that arise. When we talk about that with the kids we always have them find where their family is...you know, the roles that are going on. I think it helps them realize why their parents are the way they are at times (Teacher 12).

The stresses that they might be faced with in the sandwich generation... their parents are starting to be in that generation. To let them know that these things are probably going to happen in their life also. You can't avoid it, you can just prepare for it and deal with it as it comes up. The roles have changed so much in families. You know the roles of women especially it seems have changed. I have a lot of students that are very '90s oriented. They are very modern in what they think and I think it's wonderful. As long as they are realistic about it. You know, that there are still things or roles that you are going to have to play even if you want to be the career woman and have a completely 50-50 relationship with your spouse. You know there is realism that has got to come in there (Teacher 12).

Summary

Teachers described how they prepare students for adult roles in the categories of preparation and prevention. Although most of the discussion was in general terms, the specific topics of nutrition and parenting were identified.

Teachers also described their activities as preparing students for their roles throughout the life span.

How do Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Prepare Students for Adult Work Roles?

While Family and Consumer Sciences is the only discipline with the family as its focus, teachers described how they prepare students for adult roles in the workplace in two categories (see Figure 5 Diagram of How Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Prepare Students for Adult Work Roles). The first category was direct instruction for entering the workplace and the second was integrating work concepts and habits into their instruction.

Instruction for Entering the Workplace

Teachers reported direct instruction of workplace concepts in the areas of Career exploration and acquiring a job. These activities involved utilizing career assessment tools, completing applications, and developing interviewing skills.

Career exploration. Some teachers described career exploration units in Foundations for Living I or II classes. The units in these curriculum guides included career exploration, Family and Consumer Sciences related careers, locating a job, job success, and climbing the career ladder.

We do career units of course. The basics that probably everyone does. We do job interviews (Teacher 12).

I have several students that are enrolled in my child development classes that do want to pursue a career in child development in some way or

another, whether it's elementary education or it's a higher level working with children (Teacher 9).

I have another student who wants to be a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher. I don't discourage her because there is a need for her. A lot of people say that is a dying subject, but it's not and I think it's going to be growing more (Teacher 12).

We have an opportunity to open some thoughts because they do have a...they don't have a ...they are so needy. They don't have a very realistic idea of how quickly their future is going to be looking them in the face. And how unprepared they are going to be if they don't start immediately doing something (Teacher 7).

Teachers described activities beginning with an assessment of career interests and educational aptitude. Activities included informal interest inventories and formal tests designed to give students choices based on their performance.

Using the PLAN test which all of them take, we try to come up with a direction for their next two years of high school and we explore careers (Teacher 7).

Getting a job. Some high schools students have already entered the workplace and provided experiences on which to build.

A lot of them work so we can talk about the situations that they have that arise at their workplace. Some of them have had more jobs than I have. They have had a lot more experience in different situations (Teacher 12).

Teachers included job applications and resumes' in their job location unit.

Some of the paperwork I think prepares them. I try to have them fill out more than one job application form so that they realize that "uh-oh when they go there it's not going to look just the same as this." And I tell them that every application that I have ever filled out has been different from the next one. I learn with them. I remember on an application once learning "oh that's what that means." I had seen that before, I can't remember just what it was. Sometimes I learn from the kids and they teach each other. I try to have them write the letter so that they know how to do that (Teacher 15).

Then into careers, investigating occupations, of course all the forms and letters and interviewing and so forth (Teacher 6).

Then we look at applications, resumes, we do mock interviews (Teacher 1).

For example, when I talk about how to dress for a job interview, or how to dress for a job, many of our students, even if they go to church, they dress very casually. Many of them have a very difficult point of reference on how to really truly dress for a job...how they should look, what's appropriate and what's not appropriate (Teacher 3).

Developing a strong work ethic for today's workplace was included as a topic of instruction. Good attendance, being on time, and interpersonal relations were cited specifically.

We talk a lot about work ethics. We talk about harassment. We talk about different gender related roles. Basically, I liken their role as a student to their role as an employee. When we get on their case for being tardy, but in real life one tardy may be the end of their job. Here they get a lot of chances. I try to talk about the work ethic as much as possible. A lot of them want to get by with as little as possible or I tend to see a true attitude of "that's not my job, I shouldn't do that." We try to talk about the fact that to do a good job on your job, you have to go above and beyond. If you want advancement or recognition or promotion, you are going to have to do more sometimes than what specifically is your job (Teacher 12).

Well, encouraging them to be there. Because I think 80% of doing your job is showing up (Teacher 4).

I said "on the job, what are some attitudes that an employer would look for?" They came up with some different things that they would not tolerate and so forth and we talked about different people that work in the class. We also talked about cleaning up after themselves and how they feel when they have to clean up other peoples' mess. So I try to relate what we're doing in class to their roles at work (Teacher 5).

Integrating Work Concepts

Teachers described their day to day classroom activities as opportunities to integrate workplace skills. Many reported efforts to relate a variety of subject

matter to the workplace. Although these are not necessarily technical skills, they are areas required in virtually all workplace situations.

Communication. Teachers recognized that communication skills are essential for success in the workplace and identified this as a specific strength they had in preparing students.

I feel like so many of our students in high school when they get in the workplace struggle so much with this because of the lack of experience. They don't have the confidence to be able to get past the trash of what is going on with the verbal and the nonverbal, to be able to make an impression on somebody that they need to address the issues that they have. So we do a lot in communications (Teacher 9).

Interpersonal relationships. Working with others to achieve goals was identified as a requirement for success in the workplace.

I do a lot of group work because I feel like that's a skill that will benefit students not only in my classroom but also in the work force (Teacher 10).

All the programs that my students volunteer for create, develop, follow through with and see come to reality is basically what they're going to be doing in the workplace; decision-making, creating, problem-solving, learning how to work interpersonally with everybody in the group, with the ones who are the helpers, the leaders, every type of personality (Teacher 9).

That gets them ready for the workplace. That is what I can contribute, being on time. I stress to them that if they are tardy during a food lab they are putting everyone else in their group in a bind. It takes responsibility and it takes teamwork. Getting along with others. When they work with someone, they have to get along with them whether they like them or not (Teacher 11).

We do lots of team teaching and peer teaching in here. I believe that the workplace is like that. I am always going to other teachers or people and saying "this is what I want to do. How do I do this?" Or I need some ideas for this. I think they need to get comfortable doing that with students in their class (Teacher 15).

But you know studies tell us that people lose their jobs, not because they can't do the job, but because they can't get along with their coworkers. So

that tells you right there that they have got to have the people skills. So if we can concentrate on that, we not only affect them as a person and in their family, but as a person in their job (Teacher 14).

Work habits. Working in the classroom gave teachers the opportunity to identify and encourage the development of a variety of strong work habits.

I would like to think that all high school classes are preparing them for work roles in the fact that they have to learn to communicate and they have to learn to be responsible and reliable. Attentive, good listeners, good communicators. They are going to need to learn initiative. I think that I encourage those things. Initiative, creative solutions, maybe looking at things more than one way, problem-solving... all of those things relate to a work role. Whether you are an entrepreneur or an employee, the principles that we teach encourage success. How do you teach looking at things more than one way? Maybe I should say I encourage them not to be just instant gratification people, but to appreciate earning and goal-setting and celebrating accomplishments. They can listen to each other. When they are discussing a concept and they listen to each other, they learn empathy. We don't understand other people's situations or what they are going through if we never think about it. It's kind of an appreciation of all people (Teacher 7).

Work habits included attendance, being on time, time management and project completion. Respect toward others and observing good manners was also identified as important work habits.

I also teach them if they work hard, that their supervisor will notice that working hard is real important. That is something I can see, I can see a hard worker and their supervisor will too. A supervisor will see a lazy person too. They're going to choose the hard worker over the lazy person. I try to teach them that everything needs to be done right, not just thrown together because they always say, "well they're not going to care." But they will care. I try to stress that to them (Teacher 11).

Well, I try to relate daily, in class, what they are doing in class to work. Like the grading system I've used for many years and I got at Vo-tech and they get 5 points a day on using their time and their accuracy, attitude, cleaning up after themselves and so on. The other day I was going over that and I said "this is how you're graded in class and I don't think it's fair to you to give you one grade only on the finished project". So I grade

them on how I think the work place would grade them and we talked about each of these things (Teacher 5).

And I am not going to hound them and remind them for it. I think that's the way it is in a job. If I'm gone and my students did the work that I left, I'm responsible for grading it and getting it back to them. If they are gone, they are responsible for finding out what they missed. It just never even occurs to me (I don't care how long I've been teaching) I never occurs to me to say "you were gone yesterday, this is what you need to do." It just doesn't cross my mind. If someone will ask me for their work, I'll say any of you that were absent yesterday this is what you need to make up (Teacher 15).

If they don't finish their sewing project, I have them come in after the year is over and have them finish it. I tell them the one thing that is important to me in all of sewing is that you finish what you start. I think that carries over into the job (Teacher 15).

You had to be a perfectionist almost. I can say that I don't think I demand that of my students. I am more concerned that they finish a project and that they feel good about themselves and they feel like "I have a skill" (Teacher 1).

I think probably being dependable, being on time, really applying themselves to their work, not just there for a paycheck, but there to do a good job. Being responsible, being on time, not putting the blame on someone else for the reason they're late, or they don't like the job because so-and-so's the boss or whatever (Teacher 2).

A lot of my class is hands-on and some may have jobs that are hands-on and some may really not have a hands-on. I guess a lot of jobs are hands-on, but just people skills. I try to teach them that and punctuality. Responsibility, I have worked pretty hard at trying to teach them that. They think if they are late, they are not hurting anybody but themselves, but they are when they are in a food lab or doing a presentation, it throws everyone behind (Teacher 11).

Manners, you know, how do you eat if you're asked to go to a job interview over lunch? What table etiquette is important. How to dress. They think that the table etiquette is real silly, but they want to know it. It's real interesting because I do the table etiquette unit the week before prom, I always do it the week before prom. You know they make all these comments and then the next week when they come back in they say "I was the only one that knew which fork to use" so they really are happy that you've done it but they don't want you to know that they don't know that already (Teacher 4).

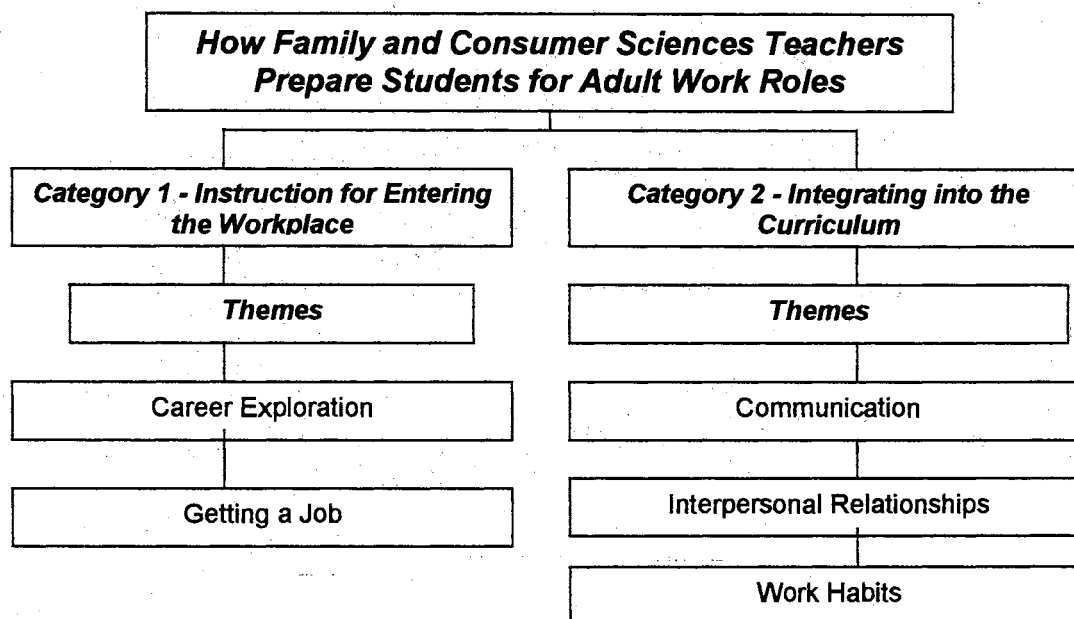


Figure 5. Diagram of Categories and Themes of How Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Prepare Students for Adult Work Roles.

Both of them are jobs, in that it takes everyone working together to make the family a success and it's the same thing at the work place. So each person has to do his or her own part, and maybe a little bit more beyond that, in order to make it a success. That means helping out in the home, or at work, if someone's having a little bit of trouble getting the job done to step in and help and once again learning responsibility and being on time, being on task and that kind of thing. I think that learning to take responsibility for your actions and accepting consequences and not laying the blame on others are some things that are real important (Teacher 2). Again I think if we zero in on teaching them and expecting and they start using respect for each other, consideration, cooperation, submitting to authority, adjusting to expectations, learning responsibility for themselves, learning to organize. A lot of what I teach is organizational skills, the things I require of them. The expectations in the classroom. It's going to help them as they become adults out on their own to be able to function. We all no matter how high we go, there is someone that we have to submit to, someone we have to consult with. Whether it be in the family, on the job, in the community, in the church, where ever. It is a continual process learning to interact with other people, learning to get along with people. I think if they can learn it in the classroom on a daily weekly basis, it will carry over (Teacher 6).

Summary

The ways Family and Consumer Sciences teachers described how they prepare students for adult roles in the workplace were divided into two categories: direct instruction for entering the workplace and integrating work concepts and habits into their instruction. Direct instruction included career exploration and entering the work force. The integration of work concepts into the curriculum included communication, interpersonal relationship skills, and developing good work habits.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to discover and describe the beliefs and practices of selected Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in preparing students for the adult roles they will assume as family members and workers in the post-industrial era. As this study progressed, the researcher gained a new respect for the profession of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers. Each teacher provided a variety of examples of how she prepares her students for their futures in families and work situations.

The review of literature revealed a change in the family and in the nature of work that presented challenges for education. The skills identified as necessary for success in the workplace were confirmed as skills also necessary for success in the family. Semi-structured interviews and document analysis were employed to determine the ways Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in Oklahoma address the preparation of students for adult roles in the family and the workplace. Chapter V is a summary of the findings and reports the conclusions which emerged from the

categories and themes defining the practice of Family and Consumer Sciences in Oklahoma. The chapter concludes with recommendations for further studies, implications of this research, and recommendations for practice.

Summary of Findings

The review of literature regarding the history of home economics, the contemporary context of work and family, and the education needed for a postindustrial era resulted in the following two research questions:

1. What should high school students know to assume adult roles in the changing family and workplace?
2. How do Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students to assume adult roles?

Findings of the Review of Literature

As the current century began, efforts to prepare women for their adult roles were focused toward equipping them for their role as a homemaker. Though women were entering the workforce in record numbers, they retained the responsibilities as homemakers and as keepers of the family. The discipline of home economics was formalized with the foundational purpose of equipping individuals to face the challenges of change throughout the life span whether in the workplace or in the family. Therefore, home economics was a powerful tool used to prepare women for home and family life. However, as women were needed in the workforce to replace soldiers serving

in battle during World War II, the traditional role of females as homemakers was expanded to include full-time or part-time work outside the home.

Although the pioneers of the profession of home economics were scientific in practice, committed to addressing social change often through political action, a stereotype of confinement to the home engaged in cooking and sewing activities developed. Whether real or imagined, the perception of home economics instruction was focused on a limited view of the role of the homemaker. The feminist movement during the seventies challenged the traditional roles of both women and men. As these roles were challenged, the stereotype of home economics education caused the effectiveness of programs in schools to be questioned resulting in the elimination of many programs across the nation.

While remnants of the traditional roles of homemaker and breadwinner remain, the effects of the feminist movement on the family and on the workplace are undeniable. "Families have become more dependent on the earnings of women and the economy has become dependent on women workers" (Burge, 1989). As the century draws to a close, the once nuclear family has a less traditional appearance. The influence of work on the family has increased as women have continued to enter the workforce and men have taken a more active role in family work. Work and family issues are intertwined having strong influences on the roles required for success and happiness in both arenas. The adult roles of men and women in the workplace and at home are no longer based on gender. The arrival of the

information age has resulted in continuing change in the ways Americans learn and transact business. The nature of work requires skills in communication, in interpersonal relationships, and in problem-solving to address ongoing patterns of change.

Public education has been an effective tool in preparing students for their adult roles. Exponential change has presented multiple challenges to teachers as they plan and carry out experiences for their students. Reform efforts have resulted in the intense examination of the fundamentals of learning, philosophies of schooling, and demands of the family and workplace. Included in these efforts were the SCANS reports, America 2000, the Family Involvement Initiative, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. Each of these targeted the preparation of students to perform better in the family and in the workplace through a variety of strategies. Particular attention has been directed toward traditional academic subjects including math, science, foreign language, and social studies. However, little attention has been given to the ways in which Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students for adult roles in the family and in the workplace (Way, 1995).

The review of literature indicated that the complexity in the nature of the family and in the nature of the workplace required change in the ways educators prepare students to assume adult roles. Specifically the SCANS report outlined a set of skills or competencies necessary for success in the

workplace. These competencies which have been widely distributed and utilized as a guide for educational planning are summarized below

- Resources - Allocates time, money, material, facility and human resources;
- Information - Acquires, evaluates, organizes and maintains, interprets and communicates, and uses computers to process information;
- Interpersonal - Participates as a member of a team, teaches others, serves clients and customers, exercises leadership, negotiates, works with cultural diversity;
- Systems - understands systems, monitors and corrects performance, and improves and designs systems;
- Technology- selects, applies, maintains and troubleshoots technology. (SCANS, 1994, p. 2-6)

In addition to the SCANS report, the Department of Education presented a strategy directed toward a change in attitude regarding education specifically targeting the family as an integral component of achieving success. The strength of family was recognized as essential to preparing students for adult roles. However, there has been little attention given to Family and Consumer Sciences as a resource available to prepare students for family and work roles. In fact, federal funding for Consumer and Homemaking programs has been eliminated and increased requirements in core subjects have resulted in programs being dropped from course offerings.

The review of literature revealed few studies addressing the ways Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students for adult roles in the family and workplace. This study addressed that issue.

Findings from the Interviews

Sixteen Oklahoma Family and Consumer Sciences teachers were interviewed using the following five questions:

1. What do you teach?
2. How do you teach?
3. Why do you teach what you teach?
4. How does what you teach prepare students for adult roles in the family?
5. How does what you teach prepare students for adult roles in the workplace?

Interview transcripts were “mined” for recurrent categories and themes (McCracken, 1988). The following summary of results was obtained from the interviews.

1. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers teach life skills that include basic academic skills, communication, relationships, decision-making and problem-solving, goal setting and wellness. These are skills that are specifically identified as necessary in the SCANS reports (1994).

2. Life skills are taught comprehensively in the context of the “Big Picture”. The “Big Picture” is a system, a comprehensive approach to life planning that includes ongoing design and improvement, trouble-shooting and correction. Teachers teach skills necessary across the life span for family life and work life. In other words, skills are taught in the context of how they will be applied to one’s life. Contextual learning involves a complex interplay

between information and experience and directly affects the way the learners brain is "wired" (Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991; Shore, 1997).

3. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers teach a variety of subject areas including careers and work orientation, family life, nutrition and foods, parenting and child development, clothing, and housing and home furnishings. An integral part of all subjects is consumer education which includes time and money management, consumer decision-making, and resource management. The management of resources is a specific competency identified in the SCANS reports (1994).

4. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers use a variety of strategies including the teacher intense strategies of lecture, discussion, examples and stories, demonstration, evaluation, and role-modeling to teach their students.

5. These teachers also use a variety of student intense strategies including hands on experiences, laboratory experiences, simulations, research, projects, and cooperative learning. These strategies provide situations that take abstract tasks into authentic contexts so that students understand their relevance. The diversity of situations help students transfer what they learn to real life experiences (Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991).

6. Among the resources implemented by Family and Consumer Sciences teachers are Oklahoma curriculum guides, textbooks, newspapers and other media, computers, software and other technology, videos, guest speakers, and field trips. This diversity of resources provides students with opportunities of gaining, organizing, interpreting, and using information in a

variety of ways. The management of information and ability to select and use technology are identified as necessary skills (SCANS, 1994).

7. Teachers selected their careers because they enjoyed the subject area and felt that it was relevant and important to students. They also believed they were making an important contribution to the future.

8. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers described their daily practice as addressing social change to meet the needs and interests of students. This confirms the suggestion that home economics (Family and Consumer Sciences) content should contribute to the solution of enduring problems of families; be based on an awareness of current family life and social issues and those projected for the future (Felstenausen & Couch, 1991).

9. Teachers changed their content and presentation based on their own growth and experience. Staying informed through a variety of resources was described as a key to building relevant curriculum. Teachers were aware of personal likes and dislikes and their bearing upon curriculum decision making.

10. Teachers prepare students for family roles across the life span by teaching students how to meet basic needs for themselves and others.

11. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers create an awareness of family related issues and crises that acts as a preventive to problems in the future.

12. Teachers prepare students for adult work roles directly through

instruction and activities in career exploration and in job acquisition skills.

13. Teachers integrated work competencies into the curriculum including communication, interpersonal relationships, and good work habits. Team work and cooperative learning were specifically identified as strategies often used in Family and Consumer Sciences coursework. Such activities are specifically important in developing the following necessary skills including leadership, negotiating, and becoming an effective team member (SCANS, 1994).

Conclusions

Although much has been written regarding the reconceptualization and reform in vocational education, there is limited information regarding how Family and Consumer Sciences teachers prepare students in the development of work competencies for a changing workplace and a changing family life. This study sought to discover what, how, and why Family and Consumer Sciences teachers teach what they teach and explain how their practice prepares students for adult family and work roles. The following conclusions emerged from the finding of the study.

Teachers are Teaching What Students Need to Learn

Family and Consumer Sciences teachers reported teaching their course content in a comprehensive family context with most instructional and Future Homemakers of America (FHA) activities focused on family and work

issues. The teachers interviewed for this study described what they teach using both broad concepts and course titles. The broad concepts of basic academics skills, communication, interpersonal relationships, decision making and problem solving, and goal setting were distinct themes that specifically relate to the competencies outlined as necessary in the SCANS report of 1994. Only the wellness theme is not specifically included in the SCANS list. However, wellness may be included as an important component in the management of human resources which is listed in the SCANS competencies. In addition to the competencies, the SCANS report targeted the family as a critical component for achieving success. While the SCANS report is not the only tool for measuring what students need to know, it does represent an extensive effort by the Department of Labor to prepare students for the world of work. Therefore, Oklahoma curriculum guides are designed to target the SCANS skills.

The course titles reported by the teachers were those set forth by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational Technical Education and supported by curriculum guides. These curriculum guides are provided for teachers to guide their course planning and activities. The guides are designed to reinforce basic reading, writing, math, and science skills; speaking and listening skills; working with others; problem-solving skills with analysis and application in complex situations; employability skills; and social studies skills. While the use of curriculum guides is widespread, none of these teachers reported using it as their principal source of information. Ongoing change in

curriculum topics required the use of multiple sources of information such as literature, media, and guest speakers regarding issues in popular culture that related to the needs of students.

Teachers are Using Effective Teaching Methods

School reform efforts have created intense interest in the fundamentals of teaching and learning in preparing students for the future. The Oklahoma Department of Vocational Education Family and Consumer Sciences Division provides ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers. Through workshops and other activities, teachers are informed about and encouraged to implement a variety of strategies to enhance student learning. Teachers reported using a variety of teaching strategies in which both they and their students take an active part in the learning process. While teachers described their role as lecturer, discussion leader, story teller, demonstrator, evaluator, and role model, they reported student activity as the principal teaching and learning method. However, teachers emphasized student involvement as the critical component in student learning.

Making connections between knowing and doing emerged as the best way to prepare students for adult roles (Berryman & Bailey, 1992; Caine & Caine, 1994). The teachers interviewed believed that it is a mistake to assume that learning automatically transfers to real world situations. They focused on student intense activities such as hands on experiences, simulations, research, and projects as effective strategies to connect

instruction to real life (Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991). The descriptions of teaching strategies reflected a Deweyan approach drawing from experiences of the students and designing instructional activities that focused on the development of problem solving skills. Many of these instructional activities were carried out in cooperative learning situations.

Family and Consumer Sciences Education is Vocational Education

The status of home economics as vocational education began with the Smith-Hughes Act funding in 1917 with the intent of preparing young women for their vocational roles as adult homemakers. Young women were instructed in strategies of managing resources efficiently to improve home life. Assuming their responsibilities as American women meant freeing their homes from the "dominance of things" or materialism and focusing on the more important and permanent interest of the home and society (Quilling, 1991, p. 253).

As the twentieth century draws to a close, the roles, the resources, and the responsibilities of both men and women have grown broader, more complex, and more comprehensive. Gender role stereotypes are less defined in the home and in the workplace. Responsibilities include a broad variety of both family and work activities. Resources include an ever-changing array of technological tools that impact home life and work life. During the 1904 Lake Placid Conference, the original statement of purpose was recorded beginning with "...home economics (now Family and Consumer Sciences) stands for the

ideal home life of today unhampered by the traditions of the past” (Quilling, 1991, p. 253). Although there has been much change in the American family and workplace, the original purpose statement holds true today.

Many individuals are not aware that Family and Consumer Sciences has been considered vocational education formally since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. As a rule, comprehensive high schools in Oklahoma do not offer occupational programs in Family and Consumer Sciences. These occupational programs are offered at area vocational-technical schools and include food service, child care, and fashion production. Such programs are designed to prepare students for specific jobs or careers. However, as the teachers interviewed described what, how, and why they teach, it was evident that they are preparing students for their adult roles. Skills necessary for success in the workplace are also necessary for success in the family. Teachers described these skills as basic academics skills, communication skills, interpersonal relationships, decision making and problem solving, goal setting, and wellness taught in a family context. They expressed that this instruction is an essential foundation to success as an adult and with the exception of basic academic skills and problem solving is not present in any other high school coursework.

Family and Consumer Sciences Programs are Transformative

Learning in the Family and Consumer Sciences classroom involves more than the transmission of facts and ideas. Teachers described what they

taught as comprehensive life skills presented in a “Big Picture” format. The content and the presentation of coursework is transformative in nature. In other words, Family and Consumer Sciences makes a difference in the lives of the students. Berryman and Bailey (1992) stated that research indicates that students have difficulty transferring learning from school to situations outside school and from outside of school to school situations. Students appear to tuck knowledge into separate compartments of their lives and learning does not cross over from knowledge to practice. However, the teachers interviewed concluded that students indeed report using the knowledge gained in Family and Consumer Sciences classes. The subject areas are applicable to every student because they relate to real life situations. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers attempt to teach within the students’ life experiences. Therefore, learning in Family and Consumer Sciences is not decontextualized.

Family and Consumer Sciences classrooms are busy places. Although there are times when teachers lecture, students are most often engaged in active learning. Assignments and activities are designed as opportunities to explore, invent, and discover ways to utilize subject matter. This approach allows students to make meaning of learning by incorporating that learning into their own lives. Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies beyond “right answer” responses. This type of assessment reveals to both the teacher and the student whether or not true learning has taken place.

Recommendations

The interactive nature of the long interview often raises questions beyond those addressed in the research project (Burlingame, 1995). Such is the case for this study. When the analysis of the review of literature was coupled with the data gathered from the teacher interviews, several issues emerged that may require additional inquiry for understanding. The recommendations are divided into the two broad areas of issues relating to practice and suggestions for further research.

Recommendations Relating to Practice

The following recommendations address issues that relate to the ongoing teaching of Family and Consumer Sciences in secondary schools:

1. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers expressed concern that they have been marginalized from other core subjects including English, math, science, social studies, fine arts, and foreign language. In Oklahoma fewer than one percent of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers are men. There are no men teaching Family and Consumer Sciences in Oklahoma comprehensive high schools. Courses are viewed among the less rigorous and teachers report that they feel like their classes are a "dumping ground." Often teachers are called upon to act as hostesses or perform custodial duties while teachers of other subjects are not asked or required to perform such tasks. Legislators, most of whom are male, have focused on core subjects, fine arts, and foreign language as requirements while cutting

funding for vocational Family and Consumer Sciences programs in comprehensive high schools. These attitudes reflected by counselors, administrators, and legislators cause teachers to question how the profession could receive such little regard when the American family is deteriorating. Oklahoma teachers have been encouraged to spotlight what they do with public relations efforts. To summarize teachers believe what they teach is critical to the success of their students. However, there remains a need to take a more active position in educating others about Family and Consumer Sciences. Therefore, it is recommended that Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in Oklahoma promote the ways their programs prepare students for adult life through public relations strategies.

2. Although the male enrollment in Family and Consumer Sciences has increased, females still represent the largest portion of students enrolled. As the roles of men and women have become less defined, men are assuming more responsibility in the areas addressed in Family and Consumer Sciences classes. Parents, students, and counselors should look at Family and Consumer Sciences as addressing the problems of individuals, families, and communities rather than just the problems of women. Efforts have been made to encourage males to enroll in Family and Consumer Sciences course through special recognition of non-traditional students, but it is recommended that additional efforts should be made to increase male enrollment.

3. Family and Consumer Sciences students would benefit from

integration with core subject areas. The contextual nature of Family and Consumer Sciences provides a frame of reference for students to connect new learning. Teachers report there is no time in the traditional school day to plan such integration and many existing resources regarding the subject are philosophical rather than practical in nature. In other words, resources identify the need to integrate with "academic" subjects, but do not offer ways to accomplish such integration. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers explore ways of integrating their coursework with core subject areas and carry out such activities.

4. School reform efforts brought additional concerns regarding Family and Consumer Sciences education. Block scheduling has given more students the opportunity to take classes, but has increased class size which may limit the number of hands on experiences offered to students. Other reform efforts which focus on core subjects have limited the number of electives students can take. Lowered enrollment is a threat to the viability of programs especially in rural communities. The need for hands on activities and availability of equipment should be considered when counselors or administrators assign enrollment numbers to Family and Consumer Sciences classes. Therefore, it is recommended that class size not exceed the available resources.

5. Teachers believe what they do is critically important for students. Many expressed the belief that at least one Family and Consumer Sciences class should be required to graduate from high school. A class such as

Foundations for Living I would be a good choice for this requirement. It is recommended that serious consideration be given to requiring such a class for graduation.

2. A teacher shortage is already evident in Oklahoma. Teacher education programs are offered at three state universities Northeastern State University, University of Central Oklahoma and East Central University. No programs are offered at the two major universities, Oklahoma State University or the University of Oklahoma. Because teachers believed what they do is important, they expressed concern regarding who will take their places upon retirement. Teacher education programs should be made more accessible to students.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations address opportunities for further research to broaden the knowledge base regarding Family and Consumer Sciences education.

1. Selected teachers reported rich descriptions of their teaching experiences, but there is little information regarding the extent to which students practice what is taught once they leave school and enter the adult world. Teachers made reference to former students returning and sharing their reflections about what they learned in Family and Consumer Sciences classes, but further study would provide more accurate descriptive data. Therefore, it is recommended that follow-up research be conducted to

determine the extent to which students use information and skills learned in Family and Consumer Sciences.

2. Teachers who participated in this study were identified by supervisors as rich in information and exemplifying characteristics of interest which is Family and Consumer Sciences education in comprehensive high schools. The investigator recognized that these teachers may not be representative of all Family and Consumer Sciences teachers. Further study should be done to determine the extent to which the findings from this study are descriptive of all Family and Consumer Sciences teachers.

Although efforts have been made to educate the public regarding the value of Family and Consumer Sciences education, few inroads have been made with decision-makers. Global competition in math and science have monopolized the interest of policy makers in education. Ironically, the skills identified in the SCANS report as essential to success in a global workplace are those Family and Consumer Sciences teachers identified in their descriptions of what they teach as they were interviewed for this study.

Implications of the Study

This qualitative study has given the investigator a rich description of the way Oklahoma Family and Consumer Sciences teachers view their practice. Although there were curriculum resources directed toward preparing students for adult roles in family and work, there were no studies from the perspective of practicing Family and Consumer Sciences teachers regarding

this topic. Therefore, if this study has achieved the goal of the researcher, it has provided valuable insight into an already existing resource available for preparing students for adult family and work roles.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1995) the goal of qualitative research has not reached completion with only inquiry and understanding. The aim of qualitative research is further directed toward the construction of new interpretations of what was previously held as truth. This constructivist challenge requires the reader to become transformed as they are informed. Such is the case with this research. It is the hope of the researcher that this study will challenge the existing stereotypes and provide new insights into the practice of Family and Consumer Sciences education as a valuable resource for students.

Decision makers in the school community who guide students in planning their school experiences as well as policy makers at the administrative and legislative levels who determine requirements are obligated to understand the reality of available resources. It is time to put the stereotypes aside and examine the actual practice of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers. Such an examination may expand the opportunities available for students in preparing for adult roles in the family and at work.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM

From: Susan C. Reynolds
Subject: Family and Consumer Sciences Education
Date: August 18, 1997

This memo is a reflection of my personal conceptions, assumptions and experiences concerning Family and Consumer Sciences programs in secondary schools. It serves as a record of my preconceived understanding of these programs and is a basis from which to reference personal biases. It also serves as a method of manufacturing distance in the data analysis process of the research study.

Personal History Relevant to the Study

- B. S. Ed. Northeastern State University, Vocational Home Economics Education, 1983
- Oklahoma Department of Education Standard Certification Vocational Home Economics & Secondary School Administration - current

Personal Definition

Family and Consumer Sciences programs are those which may be called by other names such as home economics, human ecology, human environmental sciences or others. The primary focus is on the family. They typically have as their central mission that of home economics: "...the work of the family requires knowledge and skills in the area of individual, child, and family development; textiles and clothing; nutrition and foods; housing and living environment; and consumer and resource management."

Personal Conceptions

- Emphasis on math, science and other "academic" subjects has devalued Family and Consumer Sciences programs.

- Skills taught in Family and Consumer Sciences are viewed as unimportant or taken for granted.
- Students enrolled in these programs are those whom counselors believe cannot succeed in other classes.
- Today's American families face more serious challenges than at any other time in history.
- The role of the father is being minimized or overlooked.

Personal Challenges

- Funding from the federal government for consumer and homemaking programs has been cut.
- Students do not see classes as important during the time they are enrolled. Relevance is apparent only when knowledge is later put to use.
- The cooking and sewing stereotype still exists.

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix B**Research Questionnaire and Interview Outline**

Date:		Place of Interview:	
Start Time:	End Time:	Assessment of Rapport: Lo 1 2 4 5 Hi	
Tape Number	Begin Number	End Number	
Transcribed by:			
Subject:		Gender:	
1. Describe the community where you grew up.			
2. What was your high school experience like?			
3. Describe your college experience.			
4. What factors contributed to your career choice?			
5. How long have you been in the Family and Consumer Sciences profession?			
6. Describe your involvement in the profession.			

The following pages contain the research questions and notes to assist in prompting the respondent when necessary to keep her talking.

Formal Questionnaire

7. What do you teach?

Tell me more about...(something mentioned in response)

8. How do you teach?

Tell me more about....(a subject in the response)

9. Why do you teach what you teach?

Tell me more about.....(something mentioned in the response)

10. How do you prepare students to assume adult roles in the family?

Tell me more about(something mentioned in the above response)

11. How do you prepare students to assume adult roles in the workplace?

Tell me more about(something mentioned in the above response)

After each topic is discussed, use the following prompts when necessary to keep the respondent talking:

Topic:

POSSIBLE PROMPT QUESTIONS INCLUDE

Tell me more about _____.

How is _____ accomplished?

Why do you see _____ as important?

How do students _____?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SEARCH LETTER

NAME
TITLE
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear:

As a doctoral student in Occupational and Adult Education at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma, I will be conducting the data collection segment of my dissertation research during the coming semester. The focus of my research is the examination of how Family and Consumer Sciences programs enable students to assume adult roles in the family and in the workplace.

I plan to use the long interview technique with teachers who are presently teaching in comprehensive high schools in Oklahoma. The audio taped interview will consist of five open-ended questions regarding the focus of the study. All interviews will be conducted in classrooms if possible and will be anonymous. In addition to the interviews, I am examining samples of materials and activities used in Oklahoma Family and Consumer Sciences programs.

Because you were recommended as an interview subject, I am seeking your personal participation in the interview process. I am excited to begin this part of the research process and will contact you soon by telephone to discuss an interview time. I believe this project may reveal significant information about Family and Consumer Sciences programs in Oklahoma.

Your willingness to assist me in this project is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Susan Reynolds

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW REMINDER LETTER

DATE

INTERVIEWEE NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE ZIP

Dear _____ :

Thank you for your willingness to assist me in data collection by granting an interview. This letter is to confirm my earlier telephone conversation with you regarding an appointment.

As we discussed, this interview is a part of my dissertation research. The focus of my study is how Family and Consumer Sciences programs enable students to assume adult roles in the family and the workplace.

The interview will require approximately one hour to complete. I appreciate your willingness to participate and share your time with me.

Your interview is scheduled for:

Date: _____
Time: _____
Location: _____
City, State: _____

I am looking forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Susan Reynolds

APPENDIX E
CONSENT AND AGREEMENT FORM

CONSENT AND AGREEMENT FORM TO CONDUCT RESEARCH INTERVIEW

General Information

You have been asked by a graduate student of Oklahoma State University working on a doctoral dissertation to be interviewed regarding your views concerning how Family and Consumer Sciences programs prepare students for family and work roles.

The interview serves two purposes:

1. Data collected in the interview will be used by the student interview to complete a dissertation relating to Family and Consumer Sciences education.
2. Information gathered by the student researcher may be used in scholarly publications of the student and/or the dissertation adviser.

The interview will last for approximately one to one and one-half hours and will be recorded on audio tape. The questions asked have been developed by the student researcher and will be asked of all interviewees. Using the tapes, all recorded interviews will be transcribed verbatim for analysis. The dissertation may include a review of these transcripts.

Individuals interviewed will not be identified or referenced in discussions and in written materials dealing with the interview or research topic.

No interview will be accepted or used by the student researcher for analysis unless this consent form has been signed by all parties. The form will be filed and retained for at least two years by the student researcher.

Subject Understanding

- I understand that participation in this interview is voluntary and that there is no penalty for refusal to participate.
- I understand that I may refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the interview at any time.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time.
- I understand that the interview will be conducted according to commonly accepted research procedures and that information taken from the interview will be recorded and transcribed.
- To assure the integrity of the transcription and to validate my responses to the interview questions, I understand that the tape recording will be preserved for a period of at least two before being destroyed.

I understand the interview will not cover topics that could reasonably place the subject at risk for criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability or deal with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol.

I may contact the dissertation adviser, Dr. James Gregson, Occupational and Adult Education, 403 Classroom Building, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078; (405) 744-9200.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I understand that I will not be identified or referred to by title or name in written form. I sign this form freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Signature of Subject)

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject to sign it and provided the subject with a copy of this form.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Signature of Student Researcher)

APPENDIX F
THANK YOU LETTER

DATE

NAME
TITLE
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP

Dear :

Thank you for the opportunity of interviewing with you at _____ last week. I sincerely appreciate the time you took away from your busy schedule to assist me in gathering information.

Your experience and professionalism in Family and Consumer Sciences education will prove to be invaluable as I analyze the information for my dissertation.

The insights you offered through your experience have been of great benefit to me. If I may be of assistance to you in any way, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Susan Reynolds

APPENDIX G
IRB APPROVAL FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: February 25, 1998

IRB #: ED-98-085

Proposal Title: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR ADULT ROLES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES PROGRAMS IN OKLAHOMA

Principal Investigator(s): James A. Gregson, Susan Carol Reynolds

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT
NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE
APPROVAL PERIOD.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR
PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE
SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: 

Chair of Institutional Review Board

cc: Susan Carol Reynolds

Date: February 26, 1998

SUSAN REYNOLDS

DATE: December 1, 1998

TO: Institutional Review Board and Graduate College
203 Whitehurst Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

FROM: Susan Reynolds

SUBJECT: Change in Dissertation Title

Please be advised that the title of my dissertation has been changed from "Preparing Student for Adult Roles: A Qualitative Study of Family and Consumer Sciences Programs in Oklahoma" to "Family and Consumer Sciences: A Qualitative Study of Oklahoma Programs." The current title is more accurately descriptive of the study.

VITA

Susan C. Reynolds

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF OKLAHOMA PROGRAMS

Major field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born 1947, Tulsa, Oklahoma, daughter of Robert Frederick and Marguerite Meyer. Husband, Larry, one son, Christopher, and one daughter, Samantha Katherine.

Education: Received a Bachelor of Science degree in Vocational Home Economics Education from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, May 1983; completed Master of Science degree in Education Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, July 1989; completed requirements for Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, December 1998.

Professional Experience: Teacher of Family and Consumer Sciences at Broken Arrow High School 1983 to present; adjunct instructor for Family and Consumer Sciences department Northeastern State University, 1996 to present.

Professional Activities: Member of American Vocational Association, Oklahoma Vocational Association, National Association Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences, Past President of Oklahoma Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences; member of American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and Oklahoma Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.