

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF HOME  
ECONOMICS AS A FIELD OF STUDY

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FIELD OF STUDY

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By

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## INTRODUCTION

Every individual wants to lead a happy satisfying life; a thinking individual works toward wholesome home and family relationships and a feeling of security as a citizen. In a democratic society an adolescent continually is faced with basic human needs which when satisfied enable him to live happily in the adult world in which he soon finds himself. Spafford sums up human needs as follows:

The individual should have work that is worth while, individually satisfying, and socially useful; recreation that is re-creative and relaxing; food, shelter, and clothing that meet the physical and esthetic demands of the individual; normal and satisfying sex life. He should live under conditions and should practice health habits which contribute to optimal health for him. He needs to have a feeling of security---physical, social, and emotional; to see worth in himself and to have that worth recognized by others.....The values in life which mean most to him, for which he is willing to work and sacrifice, should be clear to him, and life should be seen as a dynamic, challenging, and joyful experience.<sup>1</sup>

It is these needs or drives which determine the behavior of an individual. Although they are basic in every individual, their strength or importance varies with personal differences. One person may be striving constantly for more power while another desires approval from his social group, yet their basic needs are similar. Human needs may be classified as biological, social, and economic. The biological needs (those of food, shelter, and clothing) are met primarily by the home, while the environment outside the home has a great influence upon the individual's social and economic needs.

The school is concerned with social and economic needs. It helps the individual make choices when solving his problems by guiding him toward an understanding of his needs and by giving him a sense of direction when attacking related problems. According to Jones and Hand, education is

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<sup>1</sup> Ivol Spafford, A Functioning Program of Home Economics, p. 49.



concerned "...with helping individuals discover their needs, assess their potentialities, develop their life purposes, formulate plans of action in the service of these purposes, and proceed to their realization."<sup>2</sup> Thus, educators are obligated to provide learning experiences which enable the individual to assume full responsibility for more integrated behavior in the society in which he finds himself.

Home economics training is concerned primarily with problems of personal, home and family living and for this reason is important in a democratic society where the home is the basis of culture. The functional home economics program attempts to supplement home experiences and to meet those needs of students which are not satisfied in the home environment. Desirable personality growth, good human relationships, the selection and creation of worthwhile values, the development of good attitudes, and the recognition of vocational abilities and opportunities are stressed just as much as are the skills and techniques of carrying on routine homemaking tasks.

Firmly believing that one of the important responsibilities of education is to help the student recognize and understand his needs as they affect his behavior in facing life problems, the author has tried to determine the reasons some college freshmen girls study home economics and others feel that home economics has no contribution to their plans for a career.

There are many reasons why youth enter college and why they choose the study programs they do. One of the basic personality needs is that of approval: approval of family, of associates, and of society in general. This is evidenced in many of the choices man makes. Little children constantly do things which they feel bring the approval of others. Parents and

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<sup>2</sup> Guy M. Whipple, Guidance in Educational Institutions, Part I, p. 25.

educators have long known this and use this principle as a means of disciplining children. College students show their desire for approval by selecting study programs approved by parents or by letting friends and teachers influence them. All this is done in an effort to find one's place in society. The study program chosen is a symbol of a desire for a satisfactory place in society. Choosing a study program leading to a vocation in a popular field has always been a means of satisfying the need for approval, the need to travel with the 'gang'. At one time or another housewifery, nursing, teaching, stenography, and many other vocations have met the needs of women who needed to be a part of a prominent and popular group of the era.

The social drive for recognition through achievement or mastery is a deciding factor for the choice of a study plan for some students. Recognition from associates is gained in a community where youth seldom go to college. College under these circumstances sometimes causes a student, particularly one whose social needs have not been met and the sense of inferiority is intense, to acquire a feeling of importance and even superiority over his family and friends. The mastery of a certain area of a subject matter and the subsequent vocation provides a great amount of satisfaction to some individuals. The opportunities provided for advancement, the recognition given, the salaries received, the standards held, and the responsibility required of a worker in a given career--any one of these may satisfy the needs of those individuals who feel the need for achievement, mastery, or power. Frequently evidences of these needs are seen in choices college students make.

The economic needs of individuals frequently enter into the picture when a student considers the possibilities of a college study plan. The

immediate problem is the expense entailed in fulfilling requirements. Laboratory fees, extra equipment, and supplies add to the expense of going to college. Some plans not only entail heavy expenses, but also require a long period of study. Some students consider a college study program in the light of the salary they will receive when they have completed the requirements which permit them to enter a vocation. Although economic needs may be a deciding factor in choosing a vocation, it is not considered the wisest reason for this decision, according to guidance experts. The decision is sound only in relation to the ability of the individual.

Frequently a biological need, the sex drive, is the reason for a student's decision to go to college. In some communities where the number of young men is noticeably small, the prospects of marriage are limited or unfavorable so the young women who want to become wives and mothers seek an environment where young men are more numerous. A coeducational college campus offers a promising solution to this problem for many girls. For them the choice of a study plan is secondary to that of finding a mate, and interests, the influence of other individuals, or the possibility of an 'easy' course determine their college careers. In some instances a study plan is chosen which prepares for a career in case it is necessary to contribute to the economic security of the family later.

Another factor which frequently enters into the choosing of a study plan is the time required. Those courses requiring many class hours are considered very undesirable by students who do not see the value of such learning experiences, who feel that their time is spent to a better advantage elsewhere, or who must earn while going to school and therefore must have much free time.

Class work which seems applicable to problems of daily living is sometimes the reason for a choice of a study plan. Again the needs of the individual and the values he holds determine his problems of daily living. It might be an urge for a greater appreciation of art, literature, or music or the need to learn how to spend money wisely that causes a student to enroll in a particular area of education.

Oftimes students have a genuine interest in an area of education or a particular ability that needs to be developed. These students go to college because it is the place where such needs can be satisfied. According to Peters, "It is the sole purpose of schooling to accelerate learning as compared with the pace at which it would proceed without schooling."<sup>3</sup> Systemitized learning through solving pertinent problems enables a student to acquire knowledge, skills, and understandings in a four-year period which would require several times that long if these problems were solved by trial and error investigations. A college education saves time and materials and upon completion of the study program, a student is able to go about his work more efficiently and effectively.

The selection of the best study plan in the light of the needs of the individual is of utmost importance to the student and to society since the completion of a study plan results in a vocation, and through a vocation the individual is contributing in some manner to the society in which he finds himself as well as satisfying his own needs. If his vocation is unsatisfactory, not only is the individual unhappy, but he frequently becomes a

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<sup>3</sup> Charles C. Peters, The Curriculum of Democratic Education, p. 27.

burden of society because of his attitude or through employment. Therefore, the needs which determine the behavior of the individual should be clearly understood by that individual, and self-guidance should result. Starch, Stanton, and Koerth believe the student choosing a career has a great responsibility. "The most important factors in the selection of that vocation which is to bring rich satisfactions and lasting pleasures are study and analysis of self through knowledge of one's qualifications in terms of intelligence, personality, interests, and special aptitudes."<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately these are not always the determining factors. The student may overestimate or even underestimate his abilities and thus make a poor choice of a vocation.

The adviser or teacher frequently does not know the reason for a student's choice of study plan. If the student himself does not understand his own motives, the facts he presents may be misleading. Also, his understanding may be thorough and accurate, and yet the reasons voiced are seemingly unsound or unintelligent. In such instances it is impossible for the college adviser to guide the student toward the proper course without a great deal of effort and time spent in determining the real reasons or drives which brought the student to him in the first place.

The rudiments of vocational planning should be gained long before a student enrolls in college. An understanding of basic human needs as they affect behavior is essential if an individual is going to have an integrated personality. Guidance in the high school curriculum is necessary for the student to fully understand himself and in order for him to understand how

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<sup>4</sup> Daniel Starch, Helen Stanton, and Wilhelmine Koerth, Controlling Human Behavior, p. 304.

he can contribute best to the society in which he lives.

Understanding that students have a great many reasons for their behavior, (these sound or unsound, intelligent or unintelligent and sometimes unknown to them) the author developed a questionnaire to determine why college freshmen girls enrolled at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical college did or did not choose home economics as their study plan. From the results of the questionnaire, the author hopes to get a better understanding of the kind of guidance needed in the secondary schools and in colleges.

## THE PROBLEM

The fact that there is a shortage of home economists is widely known, not only to educators, but to all administrators in fields where home economists are employed. Many theories are voiced regarding the cause of this shortage, but the real reasons remain unknown. Competitive bidding among administrators for home economics teachers, the lack of sufficient personnel in experimental kitchens of commercial firms, and the many positions which are vacant because qualified home economists cannot be found are but a few of the reasons for a recruitment program among our young people. This program to be effective must meet the needs of these young people. A starting point for developing a recruitment program is to determine the reasons students give for enrolling in home economics. Also, it is essential that educators understand the reasons why some consider home economics of little value and choose other plans of study. If the reasons given by either group are a result of misunderstanding, then home economists have the task of correcting these misunderstandings at whatever point they may arise. The recruiting of future home economists is only one way of relieving the shortage in the profession, but for the purposes of brevity, it is the only one considered in this study.

A concern over the critical shortage of women entering home economics professions led to this study. The writer hoped that the reasons given by college freshmen for taking or not taking home economics would help educators have a better understanding of the way youth think and what they recognize as logical reasons for selecting study plans. Only by understanding how youth look at vocational and professional areas of preparation can adults

interested in guidance help them make wise decisions. It was also hoped that the evidences gained would help educators locate probable misconceptions and point up ways in which they might be remedied thereby helping youth increase or clarify their general knowledge and understanding of home economics. Until young people fully understand what home economics has to offer and how it may meet their many needs, the crucial problem in home economics professions, that of inefficient or limited personnel, cannot be solved.

For the purposes of this study a questionnaire<sup>1</sup> was developed which when answered would give reason why freshmen girls attending Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College did or did not enroll in home economics. In order to gain some insight into the students' understanding of the field, three general questions were asked: "(1) How would you define Home Economics?", "(2) What is studied in Home Economics?", and "(3) What occupations does a degree in Home Economics prepare one for?" The remaining portion of the questionnaire was devoted to a list of reasons for enrolling in this field. These reasons had come to the attention of the author through reading, casual conversation with students and faculty, and special interviews with both students and professional home economists. The questionnaire was so arranged that a small space was provided before each statement for the student to check whether or not it influenced her choice, and additional space was available immediately after each statement for an added explanation. Also, extra space was provided for students to add other reasons not listed.

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibit A, "Questionnaire Answered by a Home Economics Student", pp. 30, 31, 33.



(The questionnaire was distributed to 190 freshmen girls. One hundred girls not enrolled in home economics were contacted in the college dormitory by personal interviews to give a brief explanation of the study being made and to ask if they would check the questionnaire. Arrangements were made for the questionnaire to be turned in to the housemother of the dormitory.) The interview method was used because it tended to make the study more personal and, therefore, more important to the checker than did an explanatory letter or note. (Ninety questionnaires were given to freshmen home economics students by instructors in regular classes.)

This questionnaire had 99 statements dealing with reasons for taking or not taking home economics. These statements were automatically grouped into related areas for purposes of discussion and ease of tabulation. Each item was considered only once although some seemed to fit into several groups. In these instances the statement was included in what seemed to the writer to be the most logical area. Knowing that many laymen define home economics as only cooking and sewing or as foods, clothing, and housekeeping, an effort was made to emphasize some of the less-well understood purposes of home economics in these statements. In order to do this some ideas were repeated by stating a reason several different ways. The writer hoped that this repetition also would point up some of the misunderstandings students have regarding home economics. Particularly would this be true if a student checked two similiar statements differently. An example of this duplication can be found in these statements: "One learns to live happily with others", "It helps one to understand other people", and "An understanding of people is developed". These statements were listed on the questionnaire as items 49, 60, and 91, respectively. Since it was possible for one student to check all

three items, each was tabulated separately rather than giving one total.

(A review of the returned questionnaires shows that the students contacted have only an elementary understanding of home economics. Most non-home economics students believe home economics is a study of those factors which contribute to better homemaking and housewifery, particularly, cooking, sewing, child care, and home management, and that it prepares one for dietetics, teaching, demonstration work, homemaking, and interior decoration. Freshmen home economics students, however, have a more comprehensive understanding of these vocations and add child guidance and social welfare to the list of possible careers.)

The two groups contacted consistently chose study plans according to their interests and abilities. Their answers seemed to indicate that they gave much thought to what they could do best and liked to do, and were not dependent on others for direction. At least, if others influenced them, they did not record it. They also seemed to choose their study programs with reference to the future rather than the present. First of all, they desired a vocation which not only had greater opportunities for earning, but was not over-crowded. The economic element, salaries and the expense involved in preparing for a vocation, according to these students, was secondary to interests and abilities.)

After making this over-all study of all the returned questionnaires, tabulations were made according to the student group answering and to the areas in which the statements checked fell. Table I<sup>2</sup> includes a summary

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<sup>2</sup> Table I, "A SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR CHOOSING HOME ECONOMICS GIVEN BY 78 FRESHMEN," p. 12.

Table I

## A SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR CHOOSING HOME ECONOMICS GIVEN BY 78 FRESHMEN

Types of Statements Made	No. Times Reported
<b>A. Personal Interest</b>	
1. My own personal interest	66
2. I especially like homemaking	43
3. I like little children	41
4. I especially like sewing	35
5. I especially like cooking	27
6. I liked high school work and want more	25
7. I like interior decoration	24
8. I like an active life	17
9. I dislike things studied	4
10. I must take something	3
11. I dislike sewing	2
12. Other interests are neglected	1
Total.....	288
<b>B. Type of Class Work Offered</b>	
1. Wholesome attitude toward family living is studied	53
2. Wise use of money is studied	48
3. Modern methods of homemaking are stressed	46
4. Class work is practical	43
5. Wise use of time and energy is studied	40
6. Classes stress personal health	27
7. Subject matter is out of date	1
8. Classes are repetition of high school	1
Total.....	259
<b>C. Promotes Social Development</b>	
1. It helps one to understand other people	47
2. One learns to live happily with others	45
3. An understanding of people is developed	36
4. Good character traits are developed	35
5. Classes stress personal development	24
6. Social improvement is stressed	20
Total.....	207

Types of Statements Made	No. Times Reported
<b>D. Vocational and Professional Opportunities Provided</b>	
1. It provides for homemaking and for earning at the same time	46
2. Preparation makes several careers possible	36
3. Openings in this area	35
4. Opportunities for earning	30
5. The salaries paid are good	18
6. Careers require much responsibility	9
7. Challenging responsibilities of a career	5
8. Opportunities to earn while in school	4
Total.....	183
<b>E. Values Gained</b>	
1. General values gained	53
2. Opportunities for creativeness	25
3. Class work stresses current problems	17
4. Opportunity to weigh values is provided	16
5. Class work promotes self-reliance	16
6. Opportunities for self-expression	12
7. Individuals are helped to choose standards	10
Total.....	149
<b>F. Need This Information</b>	
1. I desire to improve my own home	50
2. I need this information	42
3. It meets immediate personal problems	41
4. I did not learn to keep house at home	5
Total.....	120
<b>G. Atmosphere and Procedures of Class Work</b>	
1. Classes are interesting	39
2. Student interests are considered	23
3. Individual help is given	20
4. I like freedom in classes	19
5. Students help plan class activities	14
6. Classes are monotonous	3
7. Teachers plan all class work	2
Total.....	120
<b>H. Skills Developed</b>	
1. Homemaking skills are learned	63
2. Skills of housewifery are developed	43
Total.....	106

Types of Statements Made	No. Times Reported
<b>I. Personal Ability and Previous Preparation</b>	
1. My personal ability	40
2. My previous preparation	24
3. I learned to keep house at home	10
Total.....	74
<b>J. Influence of Others</b>	
1. Parents influenced me	28
2. Former teacher influenced me	18
3. Boy friend influenced me	8
4. Popularity of field	7
5. Printed publicity regarding field	7
6. Girl friend influenced me	3
Total.....	71
<b>K. Personal Progress Can Be Measured</b>	
1. Personal progress can be seen	34
2. Achievements can be seen	32
Total.....	66
<b>L. Breadth of Study Program</b>	
1. Breadth of education provided	20
2. Electives satisfy other interests	20
3. A broader understanding of world affairs is promoted	5
4. Limited general education is provided	4
5. Much specialization is required	3
6. The few electives do not meet my needs	2
Total.....	54
<b>M. Difficulty or Ease of Work</b>	
1. Professional standards are high	8
2. Chemistry is too difficult	4
3. Class work is difficult	2
4. Class work is easy	1
Total.....	15
<b>N. Time and Money Required</b>	
1. Class work frequently saves money	6
2. Careers require long working hours	4

Types of Statements Made	No. Times Reported
3. Class work is expensive	2
4. Time spent in classes	1
Total.....	13
O. Personal Contacts	
1. Social activities are provided	4
2. Classmates are largely girls	3
3. Classes with men are few	2
Total.....	9

of the reasons given by 78 home economics freshmen for selecting home economics as their major. A review of this table shows that the 99 statements included in the questionnaires were grouped into fifteen specific areas, these arranged in their order of importance as determined by the total number of times the items included were checked by students.

A careful examination of Table I will show that Sections A, C, E, F, H, and L all refer to student interests. Section A deals with statements of specific interests, likes, and dislikes. Section C refers to students' desires for social approval, while section E refers to the values to be gained. Section F is concerned with the types of information needed, section H to the skills developed, and section L to the breadth of the study program. These areas from one point of view are quite different, yet they are also closely related in that they show specific interests and purposes.

Since the consideration of personal interest is of utmost importance when choosing a career, attention is called to the fact that of the 78 questionnaires returned by home economics students, 66 indicated a choice of

study program according to personal interests. Many students checked specific interests, such as child care, as areas which they would like to study further. However only 25 specified that they had had homemaking in high school and therefore wanted more. A few girls expressed a dislike for certain phases of home economics, but evidently their interest in other phases of this led them to choose it as their major.

According to totals shown in section C, many students were interested in learning to live happily with others. They desired personalities which permitted them to participate in society; however, a comparison of the totals of the individual items with those in section L shows that a comparatively smaller number of students considered the breadth of their educational program. Since only a few considered the breadth of the plan and even less checked that their plan provided a limited general education, several possible explanations might be made for this seeming lack of interest. In the first place, a freshman may not have an understanding of the meaning of the terms "broad education" and "general education", or she may not know exactly what her chosen program will provide. Then again, the student may understand her need for living with her immediate friends and at the same time not realize that a broad education should enable her to contribute more effectively and easily in any society.

According to the summary in section E, 53 of the 78 home economics freshmen reporting indicated that they chose home economics because of the general values gained; however, the accompanying explanations were vague or omitted entirely. Also, the specific values listed in the questionnaire were not checked as extensively as might be expected and therefore did not support

the general statement. On the basis of these facts, the writer concluded that these freshmen girls either do not have an understanding of values or they do not know what possible values can be gained from their courses of study. In either case an added effort on the part of teachers is necessary to show students how important values are in their lives. Twenty-five students recognized their need for creativeness and believed this need could be satisfied in home economics classes, particularly cooking and sewing. Two important characteristics of an integrated personality, self-reliance and self-expression, were recognized as a need which could be fulfilled in home economics by only 16 and 12 freshmen students, respectively.

It is significant to note that in section F, 50 girls enrolled in home economics because they wanted to improve their homes. According to the explanations given, some had their parental home in mind while others were thinking of homes they hoped to have. If girls are preparing for homemaking rather than a wage-earning profession, one explanation for the shortage of home economists is apparent. Forty-two girls felt that they needed the information to be gained in home economics classes while 41 chose this area because it would help them solve immediate personal problems. From one point of view these statements duplicate each other. The writer cannot distinguish between them because the few explanations included could not determine whether future or immediate needs were involved.

The statement "Homemaking skills are learned" was checked by 63 girls according to the summary shown in section H. Since a large number had indicated that they desired to improve their own home, the frequency of the checking on the above statement adds proof of their need for information



about homemaking. The repetitious statement "Skills of housewifery are developed" was checked by 43 students. These figures tend to show the importance of the development of homemaking skills to young women.

Statements indicating specific needs, as "I desire to improve my own home", and general needs, such as, "I need this information", were included in the questionnaire. According to the summary<sup>3</sup> specific needs were checked more frequently than were general needs. This tends to prove that college freshmen have specific purposes which are clear to them. These purposes vary and one cannot assume that a girl would check all statements pertaining to specific needs but that she would check those most important to her at the time.

According to these students, girls interested in home economics actually made their choices of study plans on the basis of the type of content offered.<sup>4</sup> Each of the first five items in section B pertaining to content was checked by more than 50 percent of the home economics students contacted. The reader will note that the checking of similiar statements in sections A and C show the same tendency. While the total number of checks on items grouped under the heading "Type of Class Work Offered" places this second in the summarizing table, the number of checks on individual items places several of them in almost the same catagory as many statements found in other sections. Since no student checked any single item of the questionnaire more than once, the "number of times reported" also indicates the number of students reporting on

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p.p. 12, 13, 14, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

the particular item. However the total number of times items in a group are checked does not indicate the number of students reporting because several of the items in the group are similar in idea though worded differently. When single items in this group are studied, the reader will find that over 50 per cent of the girls enrolled in home economics checked each of the first five items. This bears out the conclusion that most students select their study programs because they like that particular type of work.

Closely related to the type of class work offered is the general atmosphere found and the procedures used in carrying out class work. A summary of the checking of statements in this area is found in section G of the same table. One-half of the girls contacted thought their classes interesting. Democratic class procedures, included in items 2, 3, 4, and 5 of this section were not recognized as frequently as the author believed they should be since much emphasis is placed upon democratic activities in professional home economics education courses. There are at least two possible explanations for this. First, students may not recognize the purposes of opportunities provided for student participation in class work, or democratic procedures actually may not be employed in freshman classes.

Another class procedure, usually recognized by educators as democratic, is the guiding of students to evaluate the results of their class activities and to measure the personal growth made. This is done as a means of deciding upon next steps and of revising study plans as needed. Individual items in the section dealing with this phase of democratic classroom procedures were recognized by almost half of the 78 home economics students.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

Thirty-four students checked the statement 'Personal progress can be seen' and 32 believed that 'Achievements can be seen'. The ability "to see worth in himself"<sup>6</sup> is one of the requisites for living a happy satisfying life, yet less than 50 per cent indicated that recognition of accomplishments was important to them.

The number of times students checked items in section D, Vocational and Professional Opportunities Provided,<sup>7</sup> does not run quite as high as do others. This likely indicated that approximately 50 per cent of the girls selected home economics for preparation in homemaking rather than for its earning possibilities. Whether all girls at this age level are predominately concerned with marriage and home cannot be said, yet this is the general opinion of many people. However psychologists refer to this as an age when the sex drive is developing and is an unconscious motive. Whatever the explanation, the statement "It provides for homemaking and for earning at the same time" was checked by over 50 per cent of the students while the remaining items were considered by less than half.

The summary of the items denoting influence of others<sup>8</sup> implies that students are not dependent upon outside opinions to a great extent when choosing their college study plan. Twenty-eight of the 78 said their parents influenced them and 18 followed the advice of their teachers. Only seven girls said they chose home economics because of its popularity. The results of the checking of statements in this section strengthens facts brought out by

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<sup>6</sup> Spafford, Loc, cit.

<sup>7</sup> Table I, Op. cit. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

the checking of items in sections A. and B. There, it will be remembered, personal interest and the content offered seemed to be the determining factors in the selection of study programs.

In comparison with other items in Table I, the frequency of checking the statement pertaining to personal ability was low. Yet this might not be significant because interests and needs were high. In specialized professions, ability is an important factor when choosing a career; however, everyone is a homemaker of some type, and if there are interests, either general or specific, the situation need not be an alarming one. It is possible that these students recognized their inability and made their choice in view of these needs. That there is a need for the development of abilities pertaining to personal interests is clearly shown in sections F and H where the students contacted specified they needed the information and skills which were learned in home economics classes. In section I only 40 girls believe their personal ability in homemaking warrants further study and development.<sup>9</sup> Of the 24 girls who had previous preparation, the majority had home economics in high school, while ten had learned to keep house at home. Again the consistency shown by these students in checking this questionnaire is significant. They realized their lack of ability. Less than one-third had previous preparation while the majority said they needed the information. They also wanted to develop homemaking skills and were interested in the type of class work offered.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 14

Very few of these students considered the difficulty or ease of class work. Only two said they found it difficult while four thought chemistry was too difficult. Only one student believed her study plan was easy. Evidently interest and the type of work offered overshadowed the difficulties students foresaw.

Current opinion of college administrators that time and money influence the students' choice of college study programs does not seem true in this study. A study of the economic conditions of the freshmen contacted was not made here; yet reference to an earlier thesis<sup>10</sup> shows that in 1941 home economics freshmen came from families of more fortunate circumstances. This might be true here, and might be the cause of their lack of concern for the use of time and money.

A sociological theory which indicates that women are on the defensive against the rest of the world and therefore have a selfish attitude might be a motive for choosing a study plan where for the most part there are few classes with men. However, here, young women seem to choose their study plan on the basis of what they need and like rather than because of their classmates. The largest number of girls checking any one item referring to personal contacts provided was four, while the total number of checks in this area was only nine as compared with 288 under "Personal Interest" and 259 under "Type of Class Work Offered".

Not only did the home economics students checking this questionnaire show consistency in their reasons for selection of home economics, but the entire group of 78 freshmen girls tended to have similar reasons. No one

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<sup>10</sup> Ruth Taylor, A Study of Information Now Available Regarding Freshmen Home Economics Students at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Unpublished Thesis, 1941.

case of radically different thinking was found. Personal growth in relation to interests was important to them as was the skills and abilities that are developed in home economics classes. This seems to indicate the use of sound reasoning. At the same time they were not particularly concerned about the possibility of hard work and difficult classes. Their interests pertained to personal and immediate needs rather than broad or worldly motives.

There is some evidence to the fact that the "Basic Course in Home Economics" had influenced the thinking of these students in that they tended to check the statements dealing with purposes and values gained in those phases of home economics which they had just completed. A comparison of the answers on the three initial questions and the checks on the 99 statements on the questionnaire<sup>11</sup> shows a great inconsistency. As has been previously stated, the home economics students failed to see the whole field of home economics. The majority thought home economics was the study of things which have to do with the home, such as cooking, sewing, child care, and first aid, and a number included consumer buying which was the unit of study just completed by these students in the "Basic Course". With this limited picture of home economics in mind, the girls then checked the 99 statements, consisting of a list of both general and specific values and purposes to be studied in home economics classes. Here, they checked many more phases of their chosen field than they mentioned in their discussion. Family relationships, wise use of time, energy, and money, and personality development were recognized by over 50 per cent when specific contributions of home economics were listed.

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<sup>11</sup> Exhibit A, Loc. cit.

Since most of the girls contacted had been in school for a semester and a half, it is likely that they were able to see the contributions of home economics in the separate phases as they had studied them in their college classes. At the same time they were unable to tie these "newly-acquainted" contributions to their older ideas, and thus include them in their overall definition.

A summary of the reasons why 38 freshmen girls attending Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College did not choose to enroll in home economics is given in Table II<sup>12</sup>. These reasons were grouped in the same related areas as they were for home economics students in Table I; however one area "Personal Progress can be Measured" was not considered at all by these freshmen who are enrolled in the Schools of Arts and Science, Commerce, Education, and Engineering.

(Probably the most significant evidence gained from these non-home economics freshmen is that they, too, did some serious thinking before they chose their study plan. Seventy-nine per cent indicated that they chose their field because of personal interest.

Since the questionnaire was keyed to the values hoped for and the purposes of home economics, the checking by non-home economics freshmen did not show specific misconceptions regarding home economics, but it did show a lack of understanding.) Only in the first three sections of Table II does one get any insight into their understanding. One wonders how these students

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<sup>12</sup> Table II, "A SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR NOT CHOOSING HOME ECONOMICS GIVEN BY 38 FRESHMEN", p.p. 25, 26, 27.

Table II

A SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR NOT CHOOSING HOME ECONOMICS GIVEN BY 38 FRESHMEN

Types of Statements Made	No. Times Reported
<b>A. Personal Interest</b>	
1. My own personal interest	30
2. I had enough in high school	13
3. I dislike things studied	6
4. I like an active life	6
5. Other interests are neglected	5
6. I dislike sewing	4
7. I dislike working with children	3
8. I especially like sewing	3
9. I especially like cooking	3
10. I dislike cooking	3
11. I like little children	1
12. I dislike housekeeping	1
Total.....	78
<b>B. Personal Ability and Previous Preparation</b>	
1. My personal ability	16
2. My previous preparation	14
3. I learned to keep house at home	12
4. Lack ability in some area	3
Total.....	45
<b>C. Vocational and Professional Opportunities Provided</b>	
1. Job possibilities are limited	15
2. Opportunities for earning	11
3. Salaries are too small	6
4. Opportunities to earn while in school	2
5. Openings in this area	2
6. Preparation makes several careers possible	1
7. It provides for two careers	1
Total.....	38
<b>D. Type of Class Work Offered</b>	
1. Classes are repetition of high school	5
2. Class work is not practical	4
3. Wholesome attitude toward family living is studied	2
4. Wise use of time and energy is studied	1
5. Subject matter is out of date	1
Total.....	13



Types of Statements Made	No. Times Reported
<b>E. Influence of Others</b>	
1. Parents influenced me	7
2. Former teacher influenced me	4
3. Girl friend influenced me	1
4. Printed publicity regarding field	<u>1</u>
Total.....	13
<b>F. Difficulty or Ease of Work</b>	
1. Chemistry is too difficult	8
2. Class work is difficult	3
3. Professional standards are high	<u>1</u>
Total.....	12
<b>G. Atmosphere and Procedures of Class Work</b>	
1. Classes are monotonous	5
2. Classes are mostly drudgery	1
3. Instructors dictate class work	1
4. I like freedom in classes	<u>1</u>
Total.....	8
<b>H. Breadth of Study Program</b>	
1. The few electives do not meet my needs	3
2. Much specialization is required	1
3. The breadth of education provided	1
4. A broader understanding of world affairs is promoted	1
5. Limited general education is provided	<u>1</u>
Total.....	7
<b>I. Personal Contacts</b>	
1. Classes with men are few	3
2. Classmates are largely girls	1
3. Home economists work with only a few people	<u>1</u>
Total.....	5
<b>J. Time and Money Required</b>	
1. Time spent in classes	3
2. Careers require long working hours	<u>1</u>
Total.....	4

Types of Statements Made	No. times Reported
<b>K. Values Gained</b>	
1. General values gained	<u>3</u>
Total.....	3
<b>L. Promotes Social Development</b>	
1. One learns to live happily with others	1
2. Good character traits are developed	1
3. It helps one to understand other people	<u>1</u>
Total.....	3
<b>M. Skills Developed</b>	
1. Skills are not developed	<u>2</u>
Total.....	2
<b>N. Need this information</b>	
1. I need this information	<u>1</u>
Total.....	1

would have checked a questionnaire pertaining to their own fields.

Despite the fact that the questionnaire did not enable the 38 students to clearly indicate their understanding of home economics, a few general facts can be ascertained from the summary. (These students were not particularly critical of home economics; neither did they generally dislike it. In fact a number of them indicated that home economics was their second choice and several were planning to choose their electives in this area.) However, 12 said they learned to keep house at home and felt this was more practical than going to school to learn housekeeping, and 13 had enough home economics in high school.

Evidently home economists' salaries were not considered too small because only six checked this statement; however 16 girls or (approximately forty per cent believed the job possibilities in home economics were limited.)

Like the home economics freshmen, these girls were not influenced by others to any great extent. Only seven said their parents influenced them. Neither were they concerned about time and money, nor was the sex of their classmates a deciding factor in the choice of a study plan.

A questionnaire keyed to home economics probable does not bring in the real reasons why students do not choose it as their college study plan. Another questionnaire would have to be developed by someone who thoroughly understood the values and purposes of those fields being studied. Probably a single statement "Why I did not take home economics" would have provided better and more positive results for this study. Time did not permit the issuance of another questionnaire.

From the answers to the three initial questions asked, insight is gained into the students general understanding of home economics. The majority of the girls considered home economics a study of the art of home-making which prepared a student to be a homemaker, teacher, demonstrator, dietitian, or interior decorator. This inability to understand the total contributions of home economics should provide educators with the incentive to make a greater effort to interpret home economics to the public. A better understanding of the values of home economics should be a major objective of all recruitment programs.

The totals from any questionnaire fail to show how individuals actually checked it. True, not all individuals check alike, but a careful examination of a few of the returned questionnaires will help the reader judge the reliability of the tabulation and summaries just presented. In order to show more clearly the kind of individual checking, two questionnaires were selected,

one from the home economics group<sup>13</sup>, and one from the non-home economics freshmen.<sup>14</sup> These two questionnaires were selected because of the way in which the girls defined home economics together with the completeness with which they checked the statements. To be sure there were others which were almost as good, and then there were some which were incomplete in every detail.

A study of these selected questionnaires will show that these freshmen had a good understanding of what home economics is, yet did not know about the entire field, nor did they understand the many trade and vocational possibilities. The first questionnaire cited shows that the student chose home economics because of interest and professional opportunities as well as the type of class work offered. All the returned questionnaires from the home economics freshmen were similar in that no single reason was ever given as determining a choice of study plan. This particular student seemed to have a fair knowledge of what is to be gained by majoring in this area. She checked most of the opportunities offered by the various phases of home economics.

The commerce student on the other hand did not choose home economics because she believed commerce met her interests and needs better. Although she checked "Courses are of little value to homemakers", she explained that she believed them to be of "great value" and showed specific interest in cooking. This checking is characteristic of the way in which non-home economics students checked the questionnaire. The main reasons for not taking home economics is that they believe they can get the needed information outside of school or they have obtained it already. They do not seem to feel home economics important; neither do they say they dislike it.

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<sup>13</sup> Exhibit A, Op. cit. pp. 30, 31, 32

<sup>14</sup> Exhibit B, "Questionnaire Answered by a Non-Home Economics Student". pp. 33, 34, 35.

Exhibit A. Questionnaire Answered by a Home Economics Student

OKLAHOMA A. AND M. COLLEGE  
Home Economics Education

School Household Arts in H.E.

OPINIONS REGARDING HOME ECONOMICS HELD BY COLLEGE FRESHMEN

There are many opinions as to what Home Economics has to offer young women interested in receiving a higher education. Please give your opinion by following the instructions indicated below.

Briefly state your opinion.

I. How would you define Home Economics?

*It is a study of the home; its interior, its influence, its education of consumer buying, cooking, sewing, and home life. Home economics may vary into many different fields.*

II. What is studied in Home Economics?

*Home Life* *Hotel Administration*  
*Dietician-Household Science* *Design (Clothing)*  
*Household Arts* *Consumer Buying*

III. What occupations does a degree in Home Economics prepare one for?

*Home Demonstration Agents*  
*Dieticians*  
*Teachers*

There are many things which influence our choice for doing or not doing. Some of these reasons we can remember, some we cannot. In section IV there is a long list of possible reasons for choosing your college study plan. Please underscore the word which pertains to you and place an (x) before any of the following statements which helped you to choose or not choose Home Economics as a major. Check as few or as many items as you need to show why you made your choice. Give reason (s) for checking each item in the space provided.

EXAMPLE:

I (DID) (DID NOT) CHOOSE TO ENROLL IN HOME ECONOMICS BECAUSE:

X PARENTS INFLUENCED ME. THEY THOUGHT I COULD LEARN THAT AT HOME.

OR

THEY WANTED ME TO BE A SECRETARY.

IV. I (DID) (DID NOT) CHOOSE TO ENROLL IN HOME ECONOMICS BECAUSE:

1. Parents influenced me.
2. Boy friend influenced me.
3. X Of opportunities for earning. *H.E. is opening new fields and larger ones.*
4. X Of my personal ability. *I had ability to decorate and create.*
5. X Of my own personal interest. *I liked Homemaking and what it req.*
6. Of my previous preparation.

7. I dislike things studied.
8. Professional standards are high.
9. Class work is difficult.
10.  Of general values gained. *you learn knowledge in all fields.*
11. Of time spent in classes.
12.  I need this information. *I will need it in the future.*
13. Girl friend influenced me.
14. Class work is easy.
15. Job possibilities are limited.
16. Former teacher influenced me.
17. Of printed publicity regarding field.
18. Of popularity of field.
19. Chemistry is too difficult.
20.  Of openings in this area. *They will be bigger and better.*
21.  Of the breadth of education provided. *you have large ed. in many things*
22. Much specialization is required.
23. Classes with men are few.
24. Courses are of little value to homemakers.
25. Other interests are neglected.
26. Subject matter is out of date.
27.  Courses meet immediate personal problems. *I will learn about family life.*
28. Social improvement is stressed.
29.  Achievements can be seen. *you will achieve better homes.*
30. Skills are not developed.
31. I must take something.
32. Instructors dictate class work.
33. Lack ability in some area.
34.  Modern methods of homemaking are stressed. *I will not be lost in the modern world.*
35. Initiative in class work is stifled.
36.  I desire to improve my own home. *I have learned much to apply to my own home.*
37. I did not learn to keep house at home.
38.  Class work is practical. *you do not learn anything you will not use.*
39.  Student interests are considered. *Teacher's are understanding.*
40.  Homemaking skills are learned. *Learn to budget home.*
41.  Personal progress can be seen. *you better yourself.*
42.  Wise use of time and energy is studied. *Learn to budget time and energy.*
43. Classes are repetition of high school.
44.  Wholesome attitude toward family living is studied. *Learn to be good family.*
45. Class work is expensive.
46.  Wise use of money is studied. *Learn to spend economically.*
47. Of opportunities to earn while in school.
48. Class work is not practical.
49.  One learns to live happily with others. *Better outlook on life - Happier.*
50.  A scientific approach to housewifery is given. *Save time & energy.*
51. Classes are monotonous.
52.  Good character traits are developed. *Better personality and character.*
53.  Skills of housewifery are developed. *Learn to be efficient.*
54. Classes are mostly drudgery.
55. I like freedom in classes.
56. Individual help is given.
57.  I especially like homemaking. *you will always use homemaking.*

58.  Classes are interesting. *You learn interesting things about the home.*
59.  I dislike working with children.
60.  It helps one to understand other people. *Get along better with family + friends.*
61.  I especially like sewing. *Economical to make own clothes.*
62.  Teachers plan all class work.
63.  I dislike housekeeping.
64.  Social activities are provided.
65.  Of opportunities for self-expression. *Classes afford discussion.*
66.  I like little children.
67.  Electives satisfy other interests. *you are not limited in H.E.*
68.  Individuals are helped to choose standards. *you are helped to choose.*
69.  I dislike cooking.
70.  Classmates are largely girls.
71.  Class work promotes self-reliance. *you become adapted to world*
72.  Salaries are too small.
73.  I like interior decoration. *This is the field I hope to major in.*
74.  Careers require long working hours.
75.  The few electives do not meet my needs.
76.  I dislike sewing.
77.  Of opportunities for creativeness. *you design interiors and self-expression*
78.  Preparation makes several careers possible. *is satisfied.*
79.  Careers require much responsibility.
80.  I especially like cooking.
81.  The salaries paid are good.
82.  A broader understanding of world affairs is promoted.
83.  Classes stress personal health. *They teach healthfulness.*
84.  Class work frequently saves money.
85.  Students help plan class activities.
86.  Classes stress personal development. *you learn to develop personality.*
87.  The possibility of a career is good.
88.  Social activities are limited.
89.  Opportunity to weigh values is provided.
90.  Challenging responsibilities of a career.
91.  An understanding of people is developed.
92.  I had enough in high school.
93.  I liked high school work and want more. *I was always interested in H.E.*
94.  Class work stresses current problems. *you learn of current affairs.*
95.  I like an active life. *H.E. done efficiently is always active.*
96.  Home Economists work with only a few people.
97.  Limited general education is provided.
98.  I learned to keep house at home. *I have kept house for 2 years.*
99.  It provides for two careers, homemaking and a wage-earning job  
(homemaking and teaching.) *you learn homemaking efficiently and can also  
teach for income.*
100.  Others, please specify.

Exhibit B. Questionnaire Answered by a Non-Home Economics Student

OKLAHOMA A. AND M. COLLEGE  
Home Economics Education

School Commerce

OPINIONS REGARDING HOME ECONOMICS HELD BY COLLEGE FRESHMEN

There are many opinions as to what Home Economics has to offer young women interested in receiving a higher education. Please give your opinion by following the instructions indicated below.

Briefly state your opinion.

I. How would you define Home Economics?

*Home economics, to me, is a subject teaching the science of homemaking. It deals with the various problems a housewife must face and teaches her how to prepare a home for her family.*

II. What is studied in Home Economics?

*It deals with the preparation of food and the selection of best foods to eat. It helps to teach what to look for in clothes and how to make them, also how to adapt yourself to conditions of living, care of children and training.*

III. What occupations does a degree in Home Economics prepare one for?

*The most important degree to young women, of course, is the Mrs., and it does prepare you to be a successful homemaker. There are many phases of H.E., as teaching it, or as a dietitian, but it prepares one to be a well-rounded woman of the world.*

There are many things which influence our choice for doing or not doing. Some of these reasons we can remember, some we cannot. In section IV there is a long list of possible reasons for choosing your college study plan. Please underscore the word which pertains to you and place an (x) before any of the following statements which helped you to choose or not choose Home Economics as a major. Check as few or as many items as you need to show why you made your choice. Give reason (s) for checking each item in the space provided.

EXAMPLE:

I (DID) (DID NOT) CHOOSE TO ENROLL IN HOME ECONOMICS BECAUSE:

X PARENTS INFLUENCED ME. THEY THOUGHT I COULD LEARN THAT AT HOME.

OR

THEY WANTED ME TO BE A SECRETARY.

IV. I (DID) (DID NOT) CHOOSE TO ENROLL IN HOME ECONOMICS BECAUSE:

1. Parents influenced me.
2. Boy friend influenced me.
3. X Of opportunities for earning Behind Com would prepare for better living.
4. X Of my personal ability. I particularly like shorthand and typing.
5. X Of my own personal interest. Never liked to sew or draw, liked to cook.
6. X Of my previous preparation. H Club 6 years, learned in my home how to keep house



7.  I dislike things studied. \_\_\_\_\_
8.  Professional standards are high. \_\_\_\_\_
9.  Class work is difficult. \_\_\_\_\_
10.  Of general values gained. *I prepared to learn firsthand so values would be small.*
11.  Of time spent in classes. \_\_\_\_\_
12.  I need this information. \_\_\_\_\_
13.  Girl friend influenced me. \_\_\_\_\_
14.  Class work is easy. \_\_\_\_\_
15.  Job possibilities are limited. *more limited than girls with Commerce degree.*
16.  Former teacher influenced me. \_\_\_\_\_
17.  Of printed publicity regarding field. \_\_\_\_\_
18.  Of popularity of field. \_\_\_\_\_
19.  Chemistry is too difficult. \_\_\_\_\_
20.  Of openings in this area. \_\_\_\_\_
21.  Of the breadth of education provided. \_\_\_\_\_
22.  Much specialization is required. \_\_\_\_\_
23.  Classes with men are few. \_\_\_\_\_
24.  Courses are of little value to homemakers. *No, I believe them of great value.*
25.  Other interests are neglected. \_\_\_\_\_
26.  Subject matter is out of date. \_\_\_\_\_
27.  Courses meet immediate personal problems. \_\_\_\_\_
28.  Social improvement is stressed. \_\_\_\_\_
29.  Achievements can be seen. \_\_\_\_\_
30.  Skills are not developed. \_\_\_\_\_
31.  I must take something. \_\_\_\_\_
32.  Instructors dictate class work. \_\_\_\_\_
33.  Lack ability in some area. \_\_\_\_\_
34.  Modern methods of homemaking are stressed. \_\_\_\_\_
35.  Initiative in class work is stifled. \_\_\_\_\_
36.  I desire to improve my own home. \_\_\_\_\_
37.  I did not learn to keep house at home. \_\_\_\_\_
38.  Class work is practical. \_\_\_\_\_
39.  Student interests are considered. \_\_\_\_\_
40.  Homemaking skills are learned. \_\_\_\_\_
41.  Personal progress can be seen. \_\_\_\_\_
42.  Wise use of time and energy is studied. \_\_\_\_\_
43.  Classes are repetition of high school. *what courses I had would be the same.*
44.  Wholesome attitude toward family living is studied. \_\_\_\_\_
45.  Class work is expensive. \_\_\_\_\_
46.  Wise use of money is studied. \_\_\_\_\_
47.  Of opportunities to earn while in school. \_\_\_\_\_
48.  Class work is not practical. \_\_\_\_\_
49.  One learns to live happily with others. \_\_\_\_\_
50.  A scientific approach to housewifery is given. \_\_\_\_\_
51.  Classes are monotonous. \_\_\_\_\_
52.  Good character traits are developed. \_\_\_\_\_
53.  Skills of housewifery are developed. \_\_\_\_\_
54.  Classes are mostly drudgery. \_\_\_\_\_
55.  I like freedom in classes. \_\_\_\_\_
56.  Individual help is given. \_\_\_\_\_
57.  I especially like homemaking. \_\_\_\_\_

58.  Classes are interesting. \_\_\_\_\_
59.  I dislike working with children. \_\_\_\_\_
60.  It helps one to understand other people. \_\_\_\_\_
61.  I especially like sewing. \_\_\_\_\_
62.  Teachers plan all class work. \_\_\_\_\_
63.  I dislike housekeeping. \_\_\_\_\_
64.  Social activities are provided. \_\_\_\_\_
65.  Of opportunities for self-expression. \_\_\_\_\_
66.  I like little children. \_\_\_\_\_
67.  Electives satisfy other interests. \_\_\_\_\_
68.  Individuals are helped to choose standards. \_\_\_\_\_
69.  I dislike cooking. \_\_\_\_\_
70.  Classmates are largely girls. \_\_\_\_\_
71.  Class work promotes self-reliance. \_\_\_\_\_
72.  Salaries are too small. *Teachers salary is too small, now, in H.E.C.*
73.  I like interior decoration. \_\_\_\_\_
74.  Careers require long working hours. \_\_\_\_\_
75.  The few electives do not meet my needs. \_\_\_\_\_
76.  I dislike sewing. *never liked to sew because my mother cooked.*
77.  Of opportunities for creativeness. \_\_\_\_\_
78.  Preparation makes several careers possible. \_\_\_\_\_
79.  Careers require much responsibility. \_\_\_\_\_
80.  I especially like cooking. *I would like to take a course in just cooking.*
81.  The salaries paid are good. \_\_\_\_\_
82.  A broader understanding of world affairs is promoted. \_\_\_\_\_
83.  Classes stress personal health. \_\_\_\_\_
84.  Class work frequently saves money. \_\_\_\_\_
85.  Students help plan class activities. \_\_\_\_\_
86.  Classes stress personal development. \_\_\_\_\_
87.  The possibility of a career is good. \_\_\_\_\_
88.  Social activities are limited. \_\_\_\_\_
89.  Opportunity to weigh values is provided. \_\_\_\_\_
90.  Challenging responsibilities of a career. \_\_\_\_\_
91.  An understanding of people is developed. \_\_\_\_\_
92.  I had enough in high school. \_\_\_\_\_
93.  I liked high school work and want more. \_\_\_\_\_
94.  Class work stresses current problems. \_\_\_\_\_
95.  I like an active life. \_\_\_\_\_
96.  Home Economists work with only a few people. \_\_\_\_\_
97.  Limited general education is provided. \_\_\_\_\_
98.  I learned to keep house at home. *I kept house at home.*
99.  It provides for two careers, homemaking and a wage-earning job  
(homemaking and teaching). *It does provide for two, both of them very  
[respectable].*
100.  Others, please specify. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A review of this study regarding the reasons 116 freshmen girls at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College did or did not enroll in home economics shows that both home economics and non-home economics students lack an understanding of this area of education. True, home economics students had a broader understanding than did non-home economics students, but neither group was able to cite anything like a complete listing of the offerings. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the home economics teachers, both in colleges and in secondary schools, to give their students a more comprehensive picture of the values of home economics in the lives of everyone, men as well as women. At the same time, they should interpret their programs to the general public and try to reach in-school as well as out-of-school youth and adults. From this study it was found that the influence of parents was not a deciding factor in the choice of study programs, but in some instances girls did follow their parents' advice. Certainly a clearer understanding of the value of home economics and of its many personal, vocational, and professional possibilities would make outside influence more pertinent. At no time would home economists want to overinfluence youth in their choice of vocational preparation. Reference here to influence means that which is given in helping youth to thoroughly understand vocational opportunities and to analyze their own abilities. Again, attention is called to the fact that vocational guidance should be the type which helps a youth make a wise decision rather than that which dominates his course of action.

The students contacted in making this study lacked an understanding of

the trade and professional opportunities open to qualified people. To prepare for a career a student needs to know, first of all, what he can do when the requirements of a study plan in a given area are completed. Certainly the titles "Home Demonstration Agents", "Dietician", and "Teachers" do not show a clear and complete understanding of the occupations for which a degree in home economics prepares one because these are only a few of the many positions now held by trained home economists. (Vocational guidance should be an essential part of the educational program in all secondary schools. *Con*) If a special guidance program is not available, the home economics teacher should assume the responsibility of interpreting home economics to students and to the adults in the community.) Colleges also should include vocational guidance in their programs in order that the students secure a thorough understanding of the vocations they desire.

From this study it will be seen that study programs are selected with a purpose. The majority of the students contacted knew what they wanted to do when they finished college. Some of the non-home economics freshmen explained that home economics was their second choice. This explanation indicates that college girls seem to give much thought to the selection of a career and to the consideration of possibilities in accordance with their needs. These students seemed to have a strong sense of direction which psychologists refer to as an essential factor for success in a vocation.

For the most part the purposes students had for choosing a study program was related to their interests and abilities. They consistently checked types of class work in keeping with their interests. Psychologists for many years have pointed out that interest is essential for learning and that an understanding of direction makes for speedy learning. Outstanding speakers brought

to the campus for Home Economics Career Day in April, 1947, stressed the importance of interest and ability for success as "women of the world" and urged students to make a thorough investigation of the possibilities within various professions before getting too involved in a study program. As has been previously stated, every girl will be a homemaker of some type and has certain interests in this area of living. The homemaking teacher should understand these interests, whether they are great or small, and try to develop them to the utmost. (For those who are not interested in specialization in education for homemaking, concentrated courses in general home economics should be provided both in secondary schools and colleges. This would enable non-home economics students to secure an understanding of the problems of homemaking and to develop the more universal skills and abilities necessary for efficient homemakers.)

Although the home exerts a great deal of influence in the lives of youth, the girls contacted in this study did not feel that their parents helped them determine their study plans to any great extent. This independence in making decisions should cause educators to be more conscious of the need for educational programs which promote the development of worthwhile values; aid in the discovery of personal needs, interests, and abilities; and provide for vocational guidance so students can recognize opportunities in the light of their capacities.

(The fact that these girls seem unafraid of work leads one to believe that the school program should be one which challenges the youth's acumen rather than one which allows for only a minimum amount of thought and study.) Also, if time and money are not a determining factor in the choice of a vocation, the educator should not hesitate to include time-consuming or more expensive

activities in the program which are valuable to the individual in preparing him for his chosen profession.

The apparent lack of interest in the use of democratic classroom procedures leads the author to believe that added effort should be made to include such procedures more effectively in the classroom and to interpret these procedures to the students as they relate to everyday living. A student engaging in democratic class activities which pertain to personal problems and who sees the achievements resulting from these activities will develop more interest in a subject matter area which in turn is conducive to more effective learning and living.

Interest in social activities was noticeably deficient. This is to be deplored in a changing world where man is becoming more and more dependent on a larger area for satisfaction of his needs. His environment is ever changing and growing larger so that he must learn to live happily with all people. Therefore, (it is the responsibility of the school to provide learning experiences which develop social values and attitudes, enabling the individual to contribute satisfactorily to society.) *Con*

(If educators understand why students do or do not choose home economics as their college study program, they then have a basis for planning a recruitment program.) All of the students contacted had some knowledge of home economics which was accurate but limited. (Since interest seems to be a determining factor in the choice of study plans, educators in colleges and secondary schools need to capitalize on student interests and to make each class activity a real, living experience based on individual needs.) This functional program necessitates a better understanding of the student and his environment. *Con*

(The fact that the freshmen contacted in this study listed only a few of the long-established professions and recognized only the everyday activities of homemaking leads the writer to believe that an explanation of the offerings of home economics is needed, not only to home economics students but to the community as a whole.) Career Day, which provided home economics students at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College with the opportunity to hear firsthand the possibilities of many careers within the field of home economics, is evidence that the teachers recognize the students' lack of understanding. However, there seems to be no other specific effort to point up the many careers possible. There are several possible explanations for this lack of attention in the classroom pertaining to vocational opportunities available. First, the home economics teachers may have a limited knowledge and understanding of the field, or they may be so busy that they themselves fail to investigate the opportunities. Another reason may be that home economists are so specialized that they do not see the possibilities outside their special interest and therefore do not interpret the opportunities of the whole field to their students. Whether the lack of knowledge among students is due to the lack of understanding on the part of the teachers cannot be said, but it is quite possible that this is true.

(Publicity pertaining to vocational opportunities in the field of home economics can be carried out very much like publicity on any other subject. There is a need for literature to be written on the subject.) This includes books as well as magazine and newspaper articles. Traveling libraries would serve the secondary schools more fully since most school libraries cannot afford a great number of current books at one time. (Exhibits in the school

building and in prominent places in the community would let the public know what home economists are doing in the world today. Assembly programs are another means of reaching both students and adults. Perhaps most important of all would be the enlistment of authoritative speakers in various professions to give the students and the public firsthand information. This need not be a large scale program, and several such events could be held throughout the school year for those who are ready to consider a career. Only as the contributions of home economics to the individual and society are understood can a growing interest in this area of education and subsequent professions be attained.)



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