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THE ROLE OF THE HOME ECONOMIST IN THE
COLOMBIA EXTENSION PROGRAM

by

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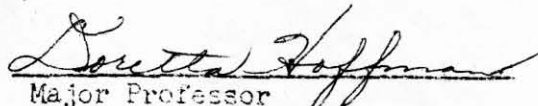
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CHAPTER I

EXTENSION SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES

A nation may fluctuate and change but it is never static. "Change does not just happen," according to Iver Spafford, "It is a continuous process. It is part of life itself." (1)

Today the United States is considered a world leader in technology. Early in its history it depended almost entirely on agriculture. Eventually the dependency on agriculture had decreased because of technological improvements. Now only a small percentage of people in agriculture provide an abundance of food.

Early in its development, the United States Extension Service played a major role in agriculture. Its fundamental task, according to Brunner and Yang (2), was to help people discover and develop their own resources by applying research findings to their daily lives. Agricultural extension improved both the rural family and community. Its major goal was to "help people to help themselves."

Extension work was done mainly through agricultural agents in the counties. University instructors worked closely with the farm communities to help improve conditions. In turn the agricultural agents offered demonstration plots that benefited not only the local community but also neighboring states.

General History

Extension Service in the United States reveals an evolutionary phase of

development. In many ways, extension work began years ago with George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. At the time the majority of the people were devoted to agriculture. Washington's correspondence to his wife on how to manage the plantation at Mt. Vernon showed his concern for successful farming. According to H. C. Sanders, et al (4) Thomas Jefferson also was considered a leading agriculturist.

A brief look into the Extension Service, sometimes referred to as "learning by doing," reveals in part why the United States occupies an important place in the world. Like today, early extension was concerned with providing food, clothing, and family life to the basic unit of society--the family.

Early farm groups offered information on agriculture and created a kind of democratic organization. The Philadelphia Society, formed in 1785, offered some insight into informal education and information among people living on farms.

The Farmer's Institute was another early form of education which supported the Extension Service. Massachusetts was the pioneer of such an organization in 1863. The Farmer's Institute held community meetings usually for three to five days in which various problems related to farm and home life were discussed. They also contributed to the agent's work at the county level. (33) Eventually these valuable contributions attracted the attention of the government which in turn influenced the future development of Extension Service.

The Morrill Act provided the opportunity for development of land-grant colleges in every state. The first state to request a college was Kansas and on March 3, 1863, Kansas State Agricultural College at Manhattan became the

first land-grant college. At the beginning, instruction was offered in four different departments. Scientific and classical courses were offered in College Proper, Agricultural Department, Mechanic Arts and Military Department.

Courses for credit in what is now termed "Home Economics" started in 1873. Domestic Economy, then "Domestic Science," were the original names. Its aim was "to elevate home standards and lessen labor." (43) The first courses offered were on sewing and millinery. After one century of its foundation, the home economics college now has the following departments: Clothing, Textiles, and Interior Design; Family and Child Development; Family Economics; Foods and Nutrition; General Home Economics; and Institutional Management. In addition, Home Economics Education faculty are located in the College of Education. Today, Kansas State University as a whole has eight different colleges. These are: Colleges of Agriculture, Architecture and Design, Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Home Economics and Veterinary Medicine.

Another government action which contributed to the development of Extension Service was the Hatch Act, 1887. This act created the Experiment Stations for the land-grant colleges whose main purposes, according to H. C. Sanders (4) were:

To aid in acquiring and diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects connected with agriculture, and to promote scientific investigation and experiment respecting the principles and applications of agriculture science.

This act provided money for the United States Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges to do experimental work so that facts and knowledge could be available to the people.

The Smith Lever Act, which was created in 1914 and amended in 1953, was largely instrumental in providing the extension service. Money was provided to support the personnel and programs in extension.

The provisions of this act pointed out the cooperative nature of the work. It was established that it should be carried out in connection with the land-grant colleges and in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Further it gave preference to plans which were the outcome of an agreement between the Secretary of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges. The scope of the work was broad. No limitations were placed on age, sex, race, or business, and subject matter was practically unlimited since it provided for the gaining of instruction in agriculture, home economics and related subjects. Regarding the educational aspect of the work, it specified that the Cooperative extension work was a function of a land grant college. Finally this Act particularly emphasized the practical aspect of the work to be carried. Information was to be imparted through demonstrations. (33)

The United States Extension Service not only has made meaningful contributions in this country's development, but has provided a guide and service to other developing countries. Eleven countries in Latin America used the United States Extension Service as a model. Other countries in Africa and Asia benefited as well.

The home economists and agricultural extension workers worked closely in the development of rural extension. Their leadership and initiative have helped the farm, home, and community. As a result of their common effort, many rural areas of the United States and the entire nation have benefited.

Development of Home Economics Extension

Home economics extension began with the demonstration method, which was designed "to contribute to more satisfactory home life in the open country as a reservoir for the production of future citizens." (5) This important technique continues to be a major contribution to rural extension.

As soon as the creation of the Extension Service was approved by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, its agencies had to attend to numerous problems. A food shortage resulted from World War I. Hence, the need to increase farm production called for Extension Service help. A large number of emergency demonstration agents were trained to help the extension agents. Farmers were engaged in activities such as production of food and feed. Girls and women were taught demonstrations related to gardening and food canning. (41) Consequently, the rapid and effective participation of the Extension Service and other organizations such as the Food Administration helped the United States to overcome such emergencies. Thus the Extension Service again emerged as a valuable institution.

As home life became more complex, the housewife's needs also increased. As the number of counties increased, extension workers had difficulty reaching the women. Those farm women who had received some training in home economics were a good resource for project leaders of county demonstration agents. (5) Home demonstration was also a major part of the general agricultural programs. Some states could afford only one home extension agent. Thus the suggestion was made to increase the number of state-wide specialists in home economics, particularly in areas without women county agents. To accomplish this task it was necessary to get the maximum cooperation of men extension workers, women's organizations, and project leaders among farm women. (5) In 1938, the Alliance for Guidance of Rural Youth evaluated possible ways of helping youth. This organization recommended additional courses in agriculture, home economics, and industrial arts at the elementary and high school levels. Supervised rural practice for the undergraduate, especially at teacher training institutions, provided basic course work in homemaking for those planning to teach in rural schools. (6)

Eventually the number of urban and suburban counties increased. This fact brought about changes in the home life which in turn required new orientation in the home economics programs. Some changes included: reduction of the family size and improvement of the rural women's education. Eventually married rural women were able to work outside the home, have more free time, and enjoy the modern conveniences of those in urban areas. In time, women were directing more of their interests toward community programs, such as the church and various community organizations.

By 1954, a noticeable change was taking place among rural communities. Some farmers were dividing their work interests among urban and rural activities. Additional income, security, and better retirement were some reasons for their decisions. The desire to rear children in a rural environment was also a powerful influence for remaining in the rural setting. The emphasis on rural and urban work created a problem for the extension home economist. She had difficulty reaching the family members because they were seldom home. Use of modern communications, such as monthly newsletters, radio and television, bulletins and pre-arranged visits to families helped solve some of the difficulties.

Efforts have been made to control migration within rural America. York has described one such organization, Rural Areas Development (RAD), which "represents an effort to accelerate the rural adjustment to technological advances by channeling many underemployed human and physical resources of rural areas into more productive use." (9) The Area Redevelopment Act (ARA), signed by President Kennedy in 1961, supplemented local initiative and provided capital and opportunity where unemployment was severe. (10)

As the rural migration took place, it brought a new task for the home economist. Aside from improving the material and human resources, she needed

to help people adjust to new living conditions. In 1972, Belden Paulson's work (11) on urban needs and problems provided insights into areas of housing, disadvantaged youth, consumer education, employment, city planning, and food and nutrition, particularly for low income families. However, urban and suburban programs have been emphasized in the food and nutrition field specifically through programs such as food commodities, food stamps, and youth programs.

"Many of America's rural people still suffer from hunger, poor health, sub-standard housing, limited transportation, illiteracy, and unemployment and under employment." (12) To help solve these problems the extension home economist helps family members understand their role in both family and society. Parents request help so as to rear their children, adjust to changes, and make good use of their time and money. She also suggests good nutritional and health habits to the family. In short, the extension home economist is trying hard "to live a life, earn a living, and mold a world." (15)

The home economist has the responsibility of providing information to improve family conditions. She recognizes both the physical and mental needs of each family member. For example, she may work in such areas as rural nutrition, clothing, shelter, or child care. She often works directly with attitudes, feelings, or emotions of the people. As Elsie L. Lenin (3) suggests, the role of the home economist requires that "she see life with some perspective."

The following areas are among those that the home economist agent in the U.S. has emphasized . . . nutrition, clothing and textiles, housing and home management, consumer education, family relations, and youth programs.

Nutrition

Nutrition is of major concern to the extension home economist in the

United States. A number of Americans suffer from malnutrition and the problem is most acute among low income families.

The nation's problem does not necessarily result from food quantity but food selection. Helen Guthrie (13) points out that carbohydrates and fats are of high proportion in the American diet. "Carbohydrates provide slightly less than half the calories in the typical American diet." Fat intake among Americans has been increasing notably. Even in 1966 the fat content of the American diet was 41 percent.

While most nutritional programs are directed toward those whose income and educational levels are lowest, other programs endeavour to cover all income levels. The people that the home economist hopes to reach include young marrieds, low income families, working women, aged and all rural and urban families who request assistance.

Nutritional programs usually focus on one of the following: nutrition and food service, food cost and selection, food safety and sanitation, nutrition and health. The programs may be planned to meet the specific needs of the particular community.

An example of the many programs in nutrition is presented in the Annual Report of the Kansas Cooperative Extension Service, 1972. (16) This nutrition program was prepared for 10,000 people in Wichita, Kansas now receiving commodities.

The objectives of the program include: to teach low resource homemakers and youth good nutrition; to teach the best use of the grocery dollar concerning nutrition; and to improve self-image by teaching food and preparation skills, cleanliness, and sanitation.

These objectives were fulfilled through one-to-one instruction by paraprofessionals in nutrition and methods of food preparation; group meetings

involving a demonstration of the material, plus active participation by the homemakers. Other programs included baking contests, puppet shows, camp experiences, films, and field strips. The government and county welfare agencies support these programs with food stamps and commodities.

Clothing & Textiles

As fashions change and costs rise, a greater need exists for the home economist to help women design and produce their own wearing apparel. Suitable clothing for children is another important area of interest, from man-made and natural fibers to numerous combinations. New textiles are produced frequently. People are often confused about their selection, use and care.

To help homemakers solve these problems, conferences have been sponsored by home economics extension personnel in some of the states. For example, a Workshop on Selection and Use of Textiles and Home Furnishings was offered to 500 persons in 19 Kansas counties during a two-day conference in 1972. Among the topics discussed were the use and care of fibers. (16)

Community leaders and others trained in the field demonstrated valuable techniques in sewing and related areas. These presentations took place in shopping centers and similar areas where large numbers of people were present.

While most programs are directed toward large groups, some are designed to appeal to specific audiences, such as low income families, housewives, or younger women. Local organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and Extension Homemakers Clubs, assisted in these efforts. (17)

People are naturally attracted to clothing. It is basic to life and affects one's self-image and being. People take pride in making their own clothes, in creating something new, in saving money.

Programs that help people see the results of their own efforts help create confidence and understanding. Clothing and textiles has an immediate interest and appeal, and the extension home economist has a unique opportunity of serving the community in this vital need.

Housing and Home Management

The physical, mental, spiritual, and social development of the individual begins at home and it is imperative that the best possible environment be provided. While an environment needs to be spacious, hygienic, and attractive, it also needs to provide security, guidance, and love. According to a report prepared by a committee concerned with cooperative work, "The primary goal of Extension's quality of living programs is the optimum development of the individual. In his hands rests the power to conserve, enrich, and extend all of society's resources." (20)

Shelter is a basic need. To own a house has been, and still is, the dream of many American families. However, many families do not purchase homes because of high costs, the trend toward greater mobility, or a variety of reasons. More educational programs are being developed to aid families in the selection and use of home resources, regardless of living situations.

Family needs are personal and often determined by one's situation. For example, a young family with children needs more living space than an older couple whose children have left home. Housing demands change according to one's particular needs. The problem is that many families--young and old--cannot maintain adequate housing. Many young people have difficulty purchasing a home, while others have trouble maintaining a home on a fixed income. Thus people of all ages need specific guidance regarding problems in purchasing and maintaining homes.

Families continually need orientation and the extension home economist is in an excellent position to provide information so people can better solve their problems. She may serve families within the many-faceted nature of housing and home management ranging from home selection, financing and furnishing to equipping, remodeling, and selling.

Consumer Education

The increase in American industry and advertising have made the consumer's choice of products more difficult. Inflated costs, price-fixing, marginal quality, and planned obsolescence are some realities with which consumers have to contend. (18)

The United States produces a great amount of goods. Now more than ever the consumer needs to be better informed about these products. To use his income wisely, he needs to know more about prices, brand names, and about the "gimmicks" used in selling and promoting products. The home economist can serve as a valuable link between the consumer and industry. Harries reinforced this idea when she said, "The professional home economist in business and education has a special role to play in acting as a communications bridge between the consumer and industry." (18) The home economist can direct and guide the consumer, and in turn, relay the consumers' needs to industry.

Family Relations

Modern social and economic changes affect the basic unit of American life—the family. Early marriage, separation, divorce, remarriage, changing family roles and mobility all affect the stability of the family.

A brief overview of some of these influences affecting the family may offer insight. A major influence is the number of early marriages. Many young people marry before they are prepared to accept responsibility. This

fact often increases the possibility of divorce. Another major influence is the high mobility among families. American families will move several times during their lifetime. They may move because of educational or employment opportunities, for cultural reasons, or any number of personal reasons. As a result, families have a need for guidance as they undergo new experiences and enter new environments. The extension home economist is a resource person who can be contacted in a new community.

The gradual change of traditional male and female roles, together with the women's liberation movement, have also influenced the family. More women are seeking employment outside of the home. Day care centers, homes for the elderly, and similar agencies have now made it possible for more family members to seek outside interests.

Poverty and poor living conditions continue to plague many families. The prevalence of the large size of the families in the low income groups adds to the poverty situation. The current size of the typical American family is becoming smaller. However, parents recognize that rearing even a small family still is costly.

Perhaps Lowell Watts (20) summarized best the over-all objective of family life education:

The objectives are to enhance our understanding of the functions of the family and its relation to the community; to contribute to the family's ability to promote the development of children; to understand the manner in which attitudes, values, and patterns of behavior are formed; to appreciate the way in which the husband and wife relationship can provide for mutual support; and to know about family planning.

Youth Programs

Working with youth today helps make better citizens for tomorrow. Organizations such as 4-H, a part of the Extension program, also help contribute to these goals. Similar organizations have been formed in many

communities which help develop skills in a wide range of fields, from home economics and agriculture to science and business, to art and industrial arts. Watts points out that these clubs "gave identity to program activity; they enhanced the basic competitive nature of project work. They established a formal vehicle for involvement of adults; and they developed an esprit de corps of great significance." (20)

New and better programs are continually being developed to meet the needs of youth. Recent additions include classes on drug and sex education, personal development, and ecology seminars. In this way, clubs continue to aid youth, to build character, and to help prepare them for life.

Summary

The Extension Service resulted from a pioneer movement in the United States. Although extension work began in the nineteenth century, it was officially established in 1914 by the Smith Lever Act. Its original purpose was to help people in rural communities. Since its beginning, extension has made important contributions. Extension programs have helped farmers grow better crops, improve management of their resources and assisted families in improving their home and farm life. They have made the community more aware of its resources and how to make best use of them.

The Extension Home Economist is dedicated to improving the quality of family life. She has the ability to teach the basic skills and understanding necessary for community progress. She is the bridge between the people, the community, and its resources.

Despite its progress, extension needs to continue working in those problem areas resulting from the rapid growth of urban population. Parents need more help in rearing their children and their children need and want more guidance.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF HOME ECONOMICS IN

OTHER COUNTRIES

A study of the history of the development of Home Economics Extension in Latin American countries reveals similar problems within the countries as well as some differences. Influences such as immigration, land topography, and geographical location are only a few of the many differences.

The United States was settled by European immigrants. Europe was already developed to a high degree. Hence the European immigrant contributed greatly to the new country. This phenomenon is also true in some other Latin American countries such as Argentina.

The majority of Latin American countries have a large percentage of rural stock. The developmental process is much slower in countries with a high percentage of rural population. Race and culture are some of the powerful factors in development. E. B. Rice (28) found that the rural population exceeds the urban in Central and South America. He reported that 53 percent of the population studied (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Chile) is rural ranging from 77 percent in Honduras to 32 percent in Chile.

Latin American countries depend on agriculture. In addition, many ancient customs, values, and living habits are still prevalent. As a result, many Latin countries need to work on such problems as over-population, malnutrition, and education. Both the home economist and government need to work closely in implementing new changes that will help these countries.

The Role of Women in Latin America

Women are still restricted to the home in many Latin American countries. The man is the head of the household and makes all decisions in addition to supporting his family. The idea of women holding outside jobs is difficult for Latin Americans to imagine. However, more developed countries, such as the United States, are proving that women can and do perform both tasks successfully. At present, there is a gradual change towards accepting women in fields that previously were entirely reserved for men.

Extension Service

Agricultural programs contribute to the national development of Latin America. Programs established in the twelve countries, mentioned by Rice, (28) were inspired by and received technical help from the United States. According to Rice, Mexico, Venezuela, and Argentina did not receive assistance from the United States, but only from small independent contributors. Brazil also received help from several private American institutions.

Most extension programs in Latin America were established in 1950 although the United States assistance began earlier. Paraguay and Peru were the first to start their extension programs around 1945. Uruguay was the last country to begin a program in 1964.

Rice's study of the extension work in the Andes includes a detailed description of the United States' contributions towards Latin America. Technical assistance was provided mainly by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and by the Institute of Interamerican Affairs (IIAA).

Three groups contributed to the area of agriculture. The Office of Foreign Agriculture Relations (OFAR) worked with matters related to coffee,

cocoa, and tropical foods. The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) dealt with rubber plant technology. The third group consisted of a team of experts from the United States. This group took on various tasks which were requested by any Latin American country. Food, health, and education were attended to by a public agency known as the Institute of Interamerican Affairs (IIAA).

Between 1950 and 1970, the United States' assistance was channeled by various organizations. The joint efforts and cooperation of OFAR, BPI, and IIAA resulted in the Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA) which was in charge of the technical assistance. In 1950, TCA and the Mutual Security Agency (MSA) merged into the Foreign Operation Administration (FOA). Later the International Cooperation Administration, ICA, merged with the Agency for International Development, AID. (28)

The interest and contribution of the United States in agriculture has been most helpful in Latin America. The advanced technological experience of the U.S.A. has helped these countries. A sound economic policy and educational program are important to any agricultural development. But the government, private industry, and the people themselves have to work on changing attitudes and habits too.

The education of Latin American women is important because they are the center of the home. This need is urgent in developing countries such as Colombia. Here the woman's role is not only wife and mother but also a teacher for her children. Children attend school for only a few years, if at all, because they are needed at home. The boys have to help their fathers on the farm and the girls are required to help with housework and the younger children. Sometimes the school is too far from the farms making it impossible for the children to get an education.

Lack of educational opportunities have also contributed to the

problems that affect the community and nation. Malnutrition, poor hygiene, poor use of resources, and improper home management are a few of the problems in Latin America. The Latin women need to be taught the responsibilities beyond child birth, such as proper child-rearing, child's diet, education, clothing, and well-being. The home economist needs to make women more aware of their family responsibilities. In this way, the extension home economist can be an asset to the improvement of the physical, social, economical, and emotional needs of the people. According to Linda Nelson (29) the home economics programs in Latin America need to focus on nutrition and food consumption, and such areas of human development as home management, family relations, and community development. The home economist has to emphasize the importance of decision-making that affect people now and in the future.

Latin women have few opportunities to make important decisions or to analyze the alternatives or consequences of such decisions. The quality of life depends greatly on decision-making and the use of resources (30). Programs need to be emphasized that involve more women in Latin countries.

The United States home extension worker has been used as a model for Latin countries. Hence much emphasis has been given to programs related to decision-making and consumer education. These subjects usually are taught in combination with food and nutrition, clothing and home management areas.

Argentina has one of the best programs in consumer education and home management. The Instituto Nacional de Tecnologia Agropecuaria (INTA) has been successful in assisting the program in different areas of consumer and home management.

Consumer education subjects are now included in areas of food and nutrition, clothing, electrical appliances, budgeting and use and care of consumer items.

In areas of home management, consumer education is directed towards helping the homemaker and youth club member in money management. In Rafaela, Santa Fe the Banco, Dinero Y Hogar (Bank, Money and Home) was organized to help people use these community services. (30)

Consumer education in Argentina has been expanded also by training female community leaders. Training leaders from the same community is useful because of the scarcity of extension agents. Difficulties in maintaining acceptable programs in Latin American countries are also affected by developments in transportation. Frequently lack of suitable vehicles will cause problems for the extension home economist or the size of geographical regions along with poor roads make travel difficult. Women often have to help with harvest and cannot attend meetings. Extension programs can be conducted for those who live and work together in the same communities.

In Brazil, consumer orientation has been mostly concerned with training high school teachers as well as homemakers from middle and upper income urban areas. Instruction is given in the form of short courses, and on the professional level, La Escuela Superior de Ciencias Domesticas (The School of Domestic Science) offers a course during the third year of home economics.

The Department of Home Economics at the University of Caldas in Colombia offers no formal course in consumer education. All consumer education is included in courses in family economics and home management. As the consumer market grows more complex, it is essential that more consumer information be made available.

In Venezuela a consumer education program was established in the rural areas. Peru had a consumer program in nutrition but it was canceled because of lack of funds. (30)

Child-care in Latin America is important because of the family size,

but it seems to be neglected. Paraguay's home extension program deals with home improvement, nutrition, food preparation, clothing construction, manual arts, and health. By 1972-73, home extension programs and subjects related to child-care and home management will be included.

Families should be taught how to cope with changes in society. The kind of thinking that still prevails in many Latin homes is that parents exist only to feed, clothe, and shelter their children. Parents and children need to work more closely on family problems. Today rearing a child means understanding, listening, communicating, and educating along with feeding, clothing and shelter.

Projects which offer additional income such as handicrafts, making clothing, raising animals, such as poultry and pigs, are ways that women help the families. These projects all serve as strong individual motivations for improving family life.

Home Economics Education in Latin America

Home economics in Latin America has experienced a slow development. A great need exists at the professional and paraprofessional levels to deal with large numbers of people who need to improve their living conditions. In 1972, the birth rate in Latin America increased almost three percent, a rapid rate that will be detrimental to the social, economical, and educational progress.

The importance of education in Latin America has already been noted. Unfortunately home economics education has been given little attention by lawmakers. The idea still prevails that home education should be provided in the home from generation to generation.

In some Latin countries the idea of education is strong. However,

when parents decide to educate their children, they tend to influence their children's decision in selecting a particular career. Consequently a child's decision depends a great deal on his parents. This influence was particularly true among upper classes. To maintain social position, parents influence their children to select a prestigious career. However, with the rapid change in attitudes and behavior, more careers in law, medicine, and veterinary medicine are now available to all who qualify.

Titles also play an important part in the family. Those who have earned a degree, or similar title, are able to participate in family decisions. In many Latin countries, the title "Doctor" is given to a person who receives a university degree. In contrast, the same title in the United States has restricted use.

The future of home economics in Latin America is in doubt. Some of the reasons may be attributed to lack of interest, but another reason is that the government is not fully informed about the differences between the roles of the paraprofessional home worker and the professional home economist. They have the same objectives of working with the family and its living conditions. The paraprofessional tends to work more in the area of physical needs, while the professional takes a leadership role and tends to make people aware of their values, goals, and available resources. Paraprofessionals generally receive two years training, while the professional receives four years or more. The home economist's duty is to clarify and explain her role through informational campaigns and on-the-job performance. This endeavor should start early while the career is new in the country.

The name "Home Economics" changes from country to country. In some it is called "Home Science," or "Domestic Economics," the most common. In Colombia, for example, it is called "Home Economics" after the United States.

In Spanish, "Home Economics" is associated with physical skills such as cooking, clothing, or money management, in spite of the fact that the profession involves more. The home economist knows that human needs are often greater than physical, and helps prepare people for emotional, social, and other behavioral problems. Home economics is unique in that it brings together knowledge resulting from physical, biological, and social investigations. These studies in turn help the individual and family become a better more active member of society.

The home economist does more than work with rural or disadvantaged people. She is involved in teaching, business, and social welfare. From the rural setting to the large cities the home economist makes valuable contributions. As an extension worker, a home economist in business, or whatever the role, she has the goal of helping the family.

Few countries in Latin America recognize home economics as a profession. In a large majority of countries, they are classified at intermediary levels or operate with other educational departments or schools. In some areas, this association is an advantage because agriculture, agronomy, and educational departments, the areas usually including home economics, have attained rank and prestige. Thus home economics gains some prestige by association. Professional cooperation among home economists and other agencies or departments is essential for more effective home economics development in Latin America.

In 1970-71, home economics institutions in Latin America were studied to determine the type of home economics programs offered. College-level programs were found in three universities in Brazil, one each in Colombia, Panama, and Puerto Rico. At the intermediary level programs are in Costa Rica, Uruguay, in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Nicaragua. In Chile three

universities have collaborated in training family educators. A program in Home Education in the Rural Education Department exists in Peru. As a result of constant changes in support, these programs have experienced little stability.

Considering the length of time home economics has been in Latin America, it has made remarkable progress. However, more emphasis needs to be given to creating more personnel at the professional levels. Also more government-sponsored projects are needed to help train home economics aides and leaders at the paraprofessional levels. Hoffman suggests (32) that in addition to more qualified personnel more government help and contacts are needed with foreign universities. Additional areas of development include better research and mass communication facilities. Modern communication is important because of the difficulties of reaching many communities. Oral communication is helpful because transistor radios are now common in the rural communities. Written communication is also important, but because of the high percentage of illiteracy, it has limited effect.

Before making recommendations, however, each country should review carefully its home extension programs in order to emphasize areas that need development or improvement.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF COLOMBIA

This chapter consists of a brief description of Colombia, South America. A description of the physical, social, educational, and economical characteristics offers insight into the country's growth and development. Colombia has progressed rapidly, yet much remains to be done. The following analysis will point out some of the country's goals and achievements.

Location and Size

Located in the northwest corner of South America, Colombia is a mountainous, tropical region adjoining the Isthmus of Panama. The third largest country in South America, it covers 440,000 square miles. One recent study compared the country's size to that of Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas combined. (21)

The Andes mountains run from north to south. Rivers are numerous but only two are navigable. The country is bordered on the north by the Atlantic and on the west by the Pacific. Both seacoasts are major ports and popular tourist attractions.

Climate and Products

Colombia is located just above the equator and maintains a relatively constant temperature year around. However, variations occur in the elevated areas. Levels above 6500 feet may be cool while regions below 3,000 feet are warm. Rainfall is prevalent during April, May, September, and December. These seasonal variations favor the production of bananas, coffee, cotton,

beans, pineapple, tobacco, sugar, rice and other tropical fruits. Cattle is another source of income. Aside from agriculture, Colombia also produces gold, petroleum, coal, platinum, and iron. Along with coffee, it is a world leader in the production of quality emeralds. (22)

Population and Classes

After Brazil and Argentina, Colombia is the third largest in population in South America. In 1972, it had 22,485,000 inhabitants. (44) Approximately 98 percent of the people live in the western area of the country. Some regions, such as Choco and Magdalena, are scarce in population because of humid temperatures and swamplands. Only two percent of the population live in the plains areas east of the Andes.

Colombia is composed of several ethnic groups: Indians, Negroes, Mulattoes, Zambos, Mestizos, and Whites. The groups are distributed as follows:

GROUPS	DESCRIPTION	PERCENT
Indian	-----	1-5
Negro	-----	4-6
Mulattoes or Zambos	Mixed Indian & Negro	17-24
White	-----	20-25
Mestizo	Mixed White & Indian	47-58

Whites and Mestizoes live in all parts of the country. (22) Negroes, Mulattoes, and Zambos are located in the coastal and water regions.

Colombia is composed of three broad social classes: upper, middle, and lower. The main criteria used to distinguish class level are family background, occupation, wealth, education, and life style. (22) In general,

education is considered the key to upward social mobility.

The upper class is divided into two broad groups: the old-line family members who have inherited positions of wealth and the nouveau riche or persons with newly-acquired wealth. Approximately 5 percent of the population is upper class.

Twenty percent of the population is middle class. This group, which is the most heterogenous, is composed of professionals, technicians, teachers, and white collar workers. Recently the middle class has grown because of increased educational opportunities. The lower class, which is the largest group, is composed mainly of unskilled laborers. This class needs the most assistance and is of great concern to the extension home economist.

For many, the rural migration to urban areas appears as an advancement. This is not necessarily the case as many unskilled find it difficult to obtain sufficient employment to sustain themselves and their families. The increased population in the urban areas has forced some in the upper class to migrate to suburban areas.

The Family

Migration, increased industry, and locale all influence the family. Many Colombians, however, still retain old family traditions and patriarchal kinships. Family ties are closely observed particularly in small towns and rural communities. Some decline in these traditions is taking place in urban families.

An event that plays an important role in Colombian families is that of the compadrazgo, the godparent and witness at baptism. This person becomes a respected member of the family and is included in most events. He is responsible for the health and welfare of the child in case of the parent's

death in addition to being responsible for the child's religious education.

The father plays an important role in the Colombian family. He is the head of the family, in complete control, and makes all final decisions. The mother, on the other hand, makes most household decisions and is responsible for the moral and religious training of the children. When she is the breadwinner of the family, she then makes all family decisions.

Social activities take place in the home and usually include friends and relatives. Most members of the family help celebrate special occasions such as baptisms, First Communion, and weddings. Weddings play an important part in all social classes and social receptions take place in a club or home, but never in church. Funerals usually take place in the home but occasionally in a funeral parlor.

In general, men are expected to assume protective roles over dependents. Women's roles are changing and they are now able to participate in more activities. Many are able to attend the university or gain work experience. Those who cannot attend the university often become primary school teachers. Today, more and more Colombian women are participating in politics and local events.

Children in the Colombian family are expected to be obedient and respectful. The social life for young, unmarried women takes place in the home, school, or in chaperoned events. Colombian society expects boys to become competitive leaders, while girls are expected to assume a more passive role.

Government

Colombia, like the United States, has three branches of government: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. The Legislative branch includes the

Congress and House of Representatives at the national level. At the local level, this power is represented by the assemblies and municipal councils. The Executive power includes the president of the Republic and cabinet members as well as governors of the departments. The Judicial branch is composed of the Supreme Court of Justice.

Colombians are either liberal or conservative depending upon their political affiliation. However, a new party called the National Popular Alliance is a serious threat to the two-party system. The Communist Party is relatively weak in Colombia in spite of the support of such organizations as the National Liberation Army.

During the 1960's, minor parties such as the Peoples National Front emerged. This particular party, headed by Camilo Torres, a Catholic priest, stood for social and economic equality. After his death, the party lost most of its power. Another less influential party was the Colombian Labor Party, formed in 1969, whose purpose was "to promote structural changes that would give masses access to the machinery of power." (22)

Although Colombia is considered one of the more stable governments in Latin America, it has faced many crises. The period of violence from 1948 to early 1960's was perhaps one of the worst events in its political history. Many rural people were killed and the survivors had to leave their homes. Their migration to the cities caused related problems in housing, unemployment, and poverty. This critical period also created an awareness on the part of government and the people as to the problems of the lower class. Large amounts of money were spent to help control migration and to guarantee a safe rural life. In 1957 women's suffrage was approved. The role of Colombian women changed rapidly. They are now contributing to the development of the country both as homemakers and leaders in government and industry.

Occupations

In 1965, 45 percent of the labor force in Colombia was agricultural, while in 1971 the urban population was 61 percent. (23) Migration may be one important cause of the rapid growth in urban population. The majority of the peasants live in the country but work as farmers either for themselves or other landowners. Many are engaged in factory jobs in urban areas.

Employment opportunities in Colombia are diverse. The most common are office workers, sales personnel, and transport operators; artisans, such as shoemakers and carpenters; construction, mechanics, and graphic arts; professionals such as agents, teachers, and administrators.

Many housewives in Colombia work outside the home. This phenomenon is mainly the result of increased independence and education. The city is attracting many rural women and those who cannot attend school acquire skills which allow them to obtain jobs. Others accept positions such as maids and factory workers.

Industrialization of Colombia has contributed to the unemployment rate. Machines have replaced laborers. Many people are out of jobs because they are not trained to accept new positions or operate machines. Additional job opportunities and training are badly needed.

Religion

Roman Catholicism is the official religion in Colombia. Approximately 96 percent of the population is Catholic and the remainder of such religions as Protestantism and Judaism. In general, religious freedom is allowed in the country.

The church provides spiritual guidance and shares with the government certain public privileges. In 1888 through an agreement between the Vatican and the Colombian government Roman Catholicism was declared the national religion, and the Church was given complete freedom to exercise its ecclesiastical power. In 1942 the revised Concordat established that all church decisions had to have presidential approval. (22)

The church in Colombia has considerable educational influence. Many pre-schools, primary, secondary, vocational, and professional schools are under the direction of religious orders. In public schools, the church exerts much influence particularly in rural areas. According to Robert J. Havighurst (42) Colombia is a prime example of church power and influence on education. This belief is also supported by Richard Renner:

Freedom of teaching, of learning, and academic and scientific freedom should be adapted to the values of the Catholic religion which the Colombian nation professes and which was always considered by the state (nation) as an essential element in the social order.

Religion also plays an important role in the home. It provides strength and guidance to each member. However, in matters related to personal conduct there has been considerable disagreement. The church requires that no contraceptive methods be allowed except the Rhythm Method. Yet both government and family are concerned over the increasing problems of large families. Today the average size of the Colombian family is eight members. In 1970, Colombia had an overall population growth of 3.2 percent, one of the highest in the world.

Another influence that affects the size of the family is the concept of Machismo. Mainly this term means that a man's virility is measured by the number of children in his family.

A change in the attitudes of the church toward family planning would

solve many problems. Fewer children in Colombian families would permit the incomes to go further to help meet basic needs. Better educational opportunities and more jobs would help combat poverty and hardships resulting from overpopulation.

At present the government is supporting many family planning programs. Their objectives for family planning include:

1. A better territorial distribution of population.
2. Efforts to decrease the population.
3. Reduction in the actual growth rate of population through decrease in fertility. (23)

Family planning programs would be more effective if the church and the government cooperated. To accomplish these objectives, various groups in health, education, agriculture, development, public works, and labor need to cooperate. However, there still exists the need to make people more aware of the existing problems of the rapid growth in population. Since this problem is more common among disadvantaged families, more programs should be directed toward them.

Education

Education in Colombia is free and non-compulsory. Illiteracy occurs more frequently in rural areas for some of the following reasons: (1) the farms are scattered, and as a result, children have to walk long distances to school; (2) sometimes children have to help their parents with farm work. According to the 1964 census, "27 percent of the population over the age of 15 were unable to read or write." (22) In 1973 the national census will take place. By that time it is expected that a literacy rate would have a considerable increase based on the government's efforts to improve education.

The school system consists of private preschool classes mainly for children whose family incomes allow such privileges. Most students attend a five-year primary cycle. Some take a high school period of six years. Others take a secondary level six-year course for the training of primary school teachers or technical and vocational courses.

Both public and parochial schools offer education in Colombia. Public schools generally handle the primary grades, while most of the secondary and academic schools, and some universities, are operated by Catholic religious orders. Technical and vocational education is generally supported by the government. However some private organizations support vocational education particularly in agriculture and home economics.

A 1968 census showed a wide range of vocational schools. The largest enrollment was in commercial schools, business and secretarial, with 638. Normal schools for the training of elementary teachers reported 239. General or unspecified vocations showed an enrollment of 178. Among others were industrial, 176, agricultural, 81, and nursing, 35. (21)

Several changes have been made in the high school. In 1962, a general curriculum was established for the first four years. This reform enabled the students to transfer from one school to another without losing credits. The same year night schools were created. These helped the student with limited income who worked during the day and attended school at night. The night school curriculum covered a minimum of seven years. In 1964 "Parallel Schools" were created. These schools were composed of two study sessions, one offered in the morning and the other in the afternoon. The student then chose the schedule that best fit his needs and finished high school in approximately six years. Another reform required high school seniors to devote part of their last year to teaching illiterates throughout the country. Another

advancement was the creation in 1968 of the National Institute of Middle Education. Its objectives were (1) to educate more people from varied social classes; (2) help students select their professions according to their interests and to prepare them for employment. The six-year curriculum consists of: (a) the first two years the student rotates through eight vocational subjects including general information and guidance; (b) the third or fourth year involves the selection of a subject of interest and guidance; and (c) in the fifth and sixth years, the student concentrates on the area of interest. (21)

Agricultural Education

In 1941 the Colombian government created a system of vocational agricultural education. (21) The program, which is both public and private, consists of a one-year prevocational school (the fifth year of elementary) and two years secondary agricultural education.

In 1963 4-S Clubs were created: Saber, Sentimento, Servicio, Salud (Knowledge, Kindness, Service, and Health). Approximately 600 4-S Clubs, with more than 12,000 members work on agricultural and home improvement projects. (21) Members are composed of both sexes and range from 10 to 21 years of age.

Agricultural Extension programs were created in 1954. These programs are under the Ministry of Agriculture at the national and state levels. The staff consists of agricultural engineers and home improvement workers. Today, these programs are administered by the Institute of Colombian Agriculture (ICA).

The Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA) also offers short courses for the advancement of rural cooperatives. Hygiene, leadership training, marketing cooperatives are among the subjects taught. To promote

these projects, resources include an extension and home economics specialist, a social worker, and a sociologist. (21)

The Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA) is devoted to training adults on the job. The program is three years in length, six months of which are devoted to industrial training. Programs such as SENA operate on a day and night basis and have proven successful. A high percent of the students are in agriculture with the remainder in commerce, industry, arts and crafts, and areas such as agronomy, animal husbandry, horticulture, and domestic industry. SENA is financed through a two-percent payroll tax. The United Nations Special Fund, International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) also provide assistance to the organization. (22)

In addition the Colombia educational radio and TV programs help to educate the people. For instance, Sutatenza radio broadcasts classes in reading, writing, arithmetic, religion, and areas related to agriculture and home economics.

The government's concern for reducing the number of illiterates has received much support from the people. To educate all members of the family has been one of the main goals. The awareness of the role of education in qualifying for jobs is causing a more favorable attitude toward education. The rapid increase of industry is attracting many people to work. To engage even in simple work now requires some education. Personnel with less than five years of primary school are rarely accepted in a job. In addition, industrialization favors literacy but it increases urban migration. Every day fewer people are willing to engage in farm work. This trend threatens agricultural production.

The Extension Service in Colombia

Like many Latin American countries, Colombia is showing more interest in problems such as illiteracy. The government is concerned about the future of the country especially the rural areas. Development of such communities requires cooperation among government, institutions, and various agencies responsible for land, credit, marketing, health, and education. Increased production, better cultural opportunities, and general improvement of life are among the main objectives.

The Extension Service in Colombia is devoted to educating people in the rural areas. In Colombia, agriculture has been the basis for its development. In June 9, 1953 the Extension Service was created by an agreement between the United States government and Colombia. This initial agreement resulted in the Service Technical Agriculture Colombian American. (24) The first Extension agency was located in 1954 at the Boyaca State. Six years later extension agencies were located in 15 counties.

Agricultural Programs

Agricultural programs were designed to improve and increase production. At the beginning, extension agents found problems in agriculture that affected production. Some of the problems were bad techniques in the use of land, lack of control of plagues and insects, wrong use of mineral, organic, and vegetable nutrients, and problems in the acceptance of new products. (24)

Practices that Boyaca farmers and other places have adopted include: In the area of potatoes, introduction of new varieties; improved quality of existing varieties; control of diseases, techniques of cultivation, selection, storage, and marketing. Farmers have also been teaching a new technique in the diffusion of cultivated plants. This technique, called "grafting," has

received excellent response.

In the area of land development, innovations were made in the preparation, management, care and conservation of land. Farmers have also been taught how to improve and increase the production of cattle, swine, chicken, and rabbits. (24)

Home Economics Education

Home improvement workers have done much of the home economics extension work in Colombia. The first professional department of home economics was created in 1962 at the University of Caldas in Manzales. Its main purpose was to prepare students to teach home economics in formal and informal situations as well as train extension personnel. The curriculum, which covers four years, includes: Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Arts and Crafts, Nutrition, Food Preparation, Family Economics, and Family Relations. In addition, Textile and Clothing, Teaching Techniques, Health and Hygiene, and Extension are offered.

Extension teaching starts with the "Theory of Rural and Urban Sociology" and the "Fundamentals of Extension" in the second year. "Methodology of Extension" (theory and practice), is scheduled for the third year. This latter course consists of visits to rural communities to gain better knowledge and understanding of the people. Students organize activities in community development.

During the fourth year students take part in actual extension work under the supervision of a full-time home economics teacher. This 12-week practice is directed toward community home improvement. Many students in the program are then sent to various ICA agencies throughout the country. The agencies in turn evaluate the students' work before graduation.

Youth Programs

Youth cooperatives with an agricultural emphasis were established in 1963 for the purpose of developing the personality of the youth as well as a sense of responsibility and cooperation. Their motto was "Do the best" and "Learning by doing." (24)

Additional support from churches, international organizations like CARE, Ford Foundation, Rotary Club, and various official and semi-official organizations also contribute. Attention should be given to establishing additional clubs throughout the country since they are in excellent positions to instruct youth and discover future leaders who are unable to attend formal education.

The home economist contributes to rural youth programs mainly in teaching and developing projects in the schools. In the extension work she cooperates with her co-workers to develop projects within the community. The most common programs are those related to agriculture and animal raising. However, girls are also taught matters related to the home.

Community Improvement

Although the major emphasis in the home economics program is upon homemaking, the development of club members and local leaders, it is also concerned with the improvement of the community. The home economist works with local organizations in order to create unity and cooperation within the community.

Community development emphasizes the resources available, makes people aware of their resources and how to use them, and instills a sense of pride and cooperation among the members. One example of national community development is Accion Comunal. Promoted by the government (Public Law No.

19, 1958) it was inspired by the model proposed by the International Cooperation Administration of the United States and by the United Nations.

Community development is a process of social action in which the people organize themselves, define their common needs and problems, and make plans accordingly. These plans are then executed with a maximum reliance upon community resources and supplemented with services from governmental agencies outside the community. (27)

Communal work is realized through voluntary gatherings of the community members to perform without pay, works of common utility such as roads, school buildings, bridges, health improvements and recreation including sports. The home economist suggests ideas, promotes meetings, encourages people to work in the community, and assists them in the development of these projects.

CHAPTER IV

HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA

No precise date is known when home economics in Colombia began. White's article (34) suggests 1940. In 1944 Ana Restrepo y del Corral, who was employed by the government, came on an official mission to the United States to observe home economics.

Upon returning to Colombia, she started a program on home living education for each year of the grade schools and another on home making education for high schools and vocational schools. In addition, a teacher training course in wage-earning occupation was planned for girls willing to be school teachers. Since there was a lack of well-trained personnel, exchange of teachers from the United States and Colombia was suggested.

By 1964, grade and high schools (21) had included home economics in their curriculum. Child care and home economics were included in the area of Manual Skills at the fifth grade level. At the high school level, home economics was included as a supplemental activity with emphasis on cooking skills.

At present, several vocational schools are operating at the intermediate level. After the girls receive their certificate as Home Improvement Worker, mejoradoras de hogar, they either work in social welfare organizations for low income groups or as rural home extension aids.

Some organizations are supporting programs for home economists but not at the professional level. The National Committee of Coffee Growers support vocational centers dedicated to extension work. The Manuel Mejia Foundation,

which is supported by the above-mentioned organization, is engaged in training personnel from the coffee areas to do extension work in the region. Training people from the same area in which they are to work has been very successful in Colombia.

In the 1960's home economics education advanced because of the addition of a professional curriculum at the University of Caldas. The need for this career training at a professional level arose with the beginning of the Extension Service. The government of Colombia recognized the need for much better personnel.

Rapid industrial development has affected the socio-economic levels because of the rapid increase in population without an equal increase in gross national products. The consequences are lack of sufficient food, malnutrition, poor sanitation, disease, low level of education, inadequate housing, among other family problems. Home economists and other professionals are needed to participate in and correct these current situations. Home economics extension has to benefit the rural and urban population especially with the severe problems caused by migration from rural to urban centers.

A great need exists for training new personnel and up-dating old ones. This responsibility is one of the professional home economist's tasks along with that of making the government more aware of the needs. Those who are already engaged in professional teaching need to acquire greater depth of knowledge in Consumer Education, Extension Methods, Mass Media, Family Economics, and Child Development. The home economics program at the University of Caldas, the only one of its kind in Colombia, differs from those in the United States. Home economists in Colombia are enrolled in a general home economics curriculum, while in the United States students have a choice as to their speciality.

Personnel prepared to engage in research also are needed to provide sound knowledge for the teaching and extension programs. The ideal situation is that one country does not have to depend on another for information. Unfortunately economic resources for research are limited.

The Role of the Home Economist in Colombia

The role of the home economist in Colombia is diverse. Despite being a new profession, home economics has already made valuable contributions. Living proof is the recognition of its potential by industry. Public and private organizations still deny the attention professional home economists deserve. As industrial development occurs, more job opportunities will be open to home economists.

Informal Education

Extension work is one of the biggest challenges facing the professional home economist. She has to confront problems related to ignorance, illiteracy, apathy, and poverty. She is faced also with difficulties related to communication, transportation, and lack of facilities. According to Rice's study (28) in 1969, 48 percent of the population were rural. This percent represents the large volume of Colombian population who need special attention.

Home extension work in rural areas has to deal with such programs as are related to nutrition, food preparation, food conservation, eating habits. The most common requests are in dressmaking, repairing, care and selection of clothing. Housing projects help improve the home. Furniture making is a common project. Handicrafts for sale or decoration are also popular among housewives. The home economics agent recognizes these interests without neglecting important programs such as child rearing, family relations, personal and environmental hygiene.

At the community level, programs may deal with development or improvement of community services. Recreation and health campaigns, literacy programs, orientation lectures involving husband and wife are common activities. These programs are needed in the rural areas where difficulties are encountered because of ignorance and illiteracy, and where loyalty to ancient traditions, beliefs, and patterns of living are strong.

Important contributions of the home economist to the extension service has been made through public services such as ICA and INCORA. For instance, in 1972, ICA employed two home economists at the national level, and ten at the regional level. (45)

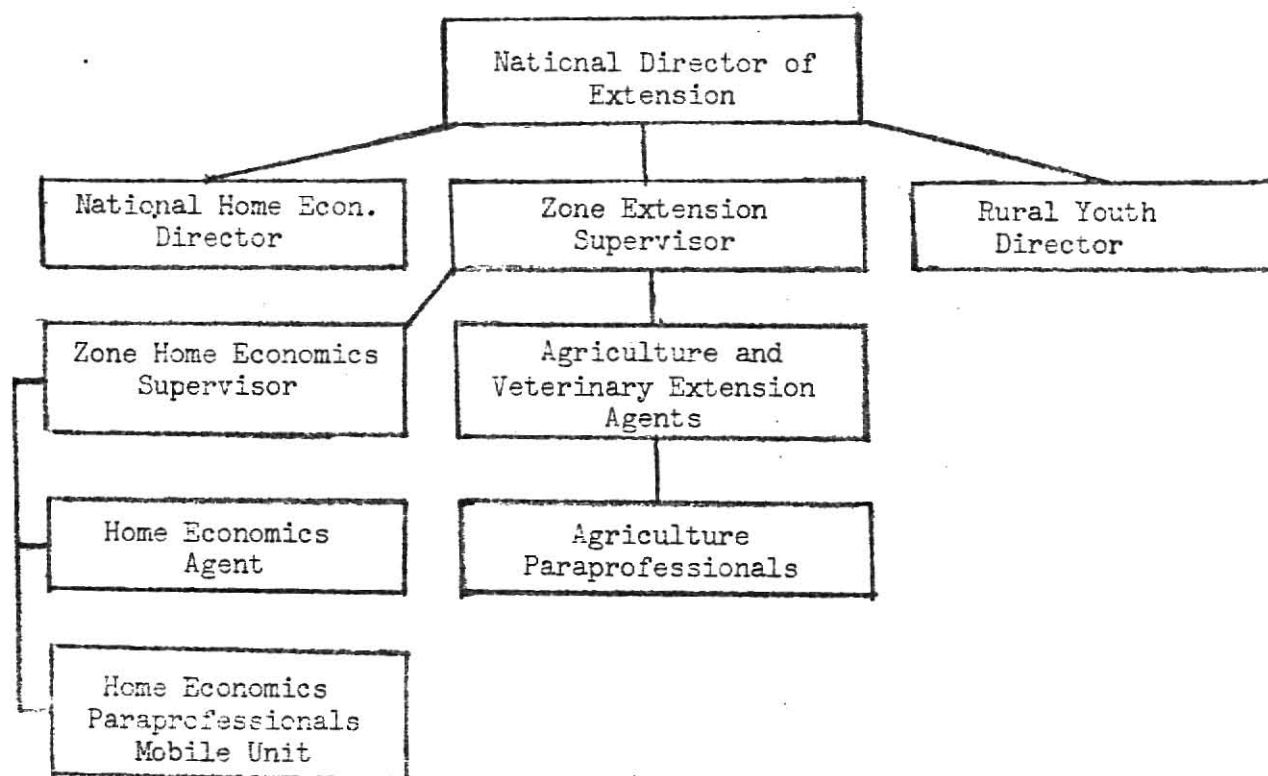
The home economist's role is that of a supervisor and coordinator. To accomplish the role she needs to be well-informed about the latest techniques especially the mass media. Radio and television broadcasts reach more audiences. The home economist needs to receive some training in these and similar areas.

Home extension programs are expanding in Colombia. One example is the work done in a specific sector of ICA's program. The ICA's work was chosen because this is a popular and well known government sponsored program.

For a better understanding of ICA a translation from a Spanish version follows: "The Colombian Agropecuary Institute (ICA) is a public institution which depends on the Agriculture Ministry and whose purpose is to promote, coordinate and carry out research, teaching, extension work and development of agriculture and livestock development. (40)

The institution (ICA) divided the country into zones to accomplish its mission more successfully. In 1972 the institution accounted for nine (9) zones. These zones did not have enough professional home economists hence the paraprofessionals often took their place.

The following diagram shows how the personnel responsible for the extension work is distributed.



As can be observed in the diagram the national home economist director, zone extension supervisor, and rural youth director are under the national director of extension. A home economist supervisor coordinates activities with the zone extension supervisor. In turn the zone home economist has under her authority the home economist agent, who can be a professional or paraprofessional, and the mobile unit. Both agriculture and veterinary extension agents are under the zone supervisor's direction. The paraprofessional helpers or aids are under professional agents.

Each regional zone accounts for several agencies, and each agency has the following personnel: one agronomist, one veterinarian, and one home

economist. The agronomist or veterinarian is the director of the agency depending on the source of income of the area. When there is not a home economist, the paraprofessional takes her place. Regional offices are located in the state's capital. The agencies are located in the main cities of the zone. Paraprofessional agents live in small towns or villages during the duration of the program.

Each extension aid or paraprofessional has been assigned to a certain number of villages. The one where the agriculture paraprofessional lives is the center of the program development for both agriculture and home economist. The paraprofessional home worker's program depends, to a large extent, on the agricultural paraprofessional's activity. He is the key to family motivation. For instance, if one of the projects is raising poultry, the home workers assist the agricultural practitioner with programs related to money management and nutrition. Most of these projects have been made through loans made possible by the home economist.

Generally the village home extension activities are arranged in three different sections. In the morning, the program is dedicated to young girls, in the afternoon to the homemaker, and in the evening to male adults. These arrangements may differ from place to place. The group meets once a week.

The mobile unit, which is formed by five paraprofessionals, carries out a program in the particular village assigned to it. The program is planned for 6 to 10 weeks after which the group moves to another place. The most common programs are those related to home improvement especially equipment construction, nutrition, health and hygiene, and handicrafts such as "macrame".

The mobile unit can make valuable contributions to the communities. The paraprofessional home economist establishes her residence in a community

while the program is in progress and stays until it is completed. In this way she maintains a direct contact with the people. New practices and improvement demand constant effort on the part of the home agent. The program can be better accomplished if she lives in the community on a permanent basis. Since no transportation problem exists, she is free to make as many personal visits to the home as necessary and the community members are able to attend required meetings regularly. Once the home economist worker has gained the support or trust of the community, projects are completed in a much shorter time and changes are accepted more readily.

At present the success of these programs is sometimes hindered by the lack of funds and by the limited participation of the homemaker since she is required to work on the farm. In those cases where she lives out of the village, the home extension worker experiences some difficulty in getting from place to place in scattered communities since she may not have transportation.

The professional home economist's role in the planning of these programs is important. Villages have to be served. The home economist's job and transportation facilities have to be improved to attract more professionals.

Areas of Concern in Colombia

The living conditions of the urban and rural people of Colombia are different. Those from metropolitan areas enjoy a better variety of resources than those in rural areas. Disadvantaged people both in urban and rural areas are victims of underdevelopment.

As a result of these conditions, individual development has been seriously affected. Malnutrition, poor hygiene, inadequate knowledge of

raising a family and little community interaction all deserve special attention.

Malnutrition

Studies conducted by institutions such as the Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (The Colombian Institute for Family Welfare) (ICBF) established that malnutrition, protein and calorie deficiency in infants, and adult chronic undernourishment, anemia, tooth decay and goiter result from quantity and quality of food. (37) The Colombian diet is heavy in starch. It is the basic ingredient in the meals of low-income families.

The low-income people's intake of calories is around 1,800. The normal standards for Colombians vary between 2,600 and 2,700 calories daily. (22) According to estimates in 1965 the daily food intake of Colombians was about "85.5 percent of carbohydrates, 10 percent protein (8.5 percent animal and 1.4 percent plant), and 4.5 percent fats and oils (3.5 percent plant and 1.0 percent animal)". (22) Today these figures may have changed somewhat because of high costs and other influences.

Diets are also affected by cultural patterns. Habits, traditions, and taboos are still strong in the families especially in the rural areas. Income and ignorance concerning the proper use of resources are detriments to the present nutritional conditions in Colombia. Also the size of the family affects nutrition because of the lack of money.

Malnutrition is mainly centered in the pre-school age. Statistics (37) show that around 66 percent of the Colombian children under five are malnourished. Moreover 25 percent of infant deaths are caused by malnutrition. In 1970 infant deaths per 1,000 births amounted to 76 (23) which indicates an alarming rate.

Family Income Needs

As a solution to malnutrition and economical problems women in rural environments need to engage in vegetable gardening and to raise animals. These activities help solve the above-mentioned family's limitations and offer then opportunities. In this way family members can influence others to participate in the programs.

The desire for income is a powerful motive. The desire to contribute to family needs is also powerful. Frequently the father's or breadwinner's, salary is not enough to fulfill basic needs, resulting in poor living conditions.

Whether the home economist is an extension agent or employee with an institution, she should encourage self-help programs. The Feminine Supervised Credit, and similar agencies, can help to develop those projects and benefit the family in many ways.

Health and Hygiene

Good sanitary conditions often result in good health. The high incidence of illness--especially infectious diseases--is more frequent in rural than in urban areas. Slum areas and rural settlements are in great need of water and sewage services.

Many factors increase the incidence of disease in the rural areas. Poor community services are a result of careless or ignorant hygienic practices. Most common are those related to food shortage and consumption, folk beliefs which forbid the intake of certain foods, and treatment of illness or disease without medical assistance. Intestinal diseases and malaria are the most common problems.

A variety of community projects are being developed by the government

and private organizations. One such project is the Voluntariado Hospitalario y de Salud, a Health Brigade, organized by The Time (a newspaper of Bogota) and teams sponsored by the Colombian producers of pharmaceutical products. This organization has volunteer mobile health units that visit the isolated rural areas in order to provide medical services such as immunizations, minor surgery, and tooth extractions. (22) Further, some rural areas have health centers which provide permanent service by a nurse, and weekly medical and dental service. Nutritional and public health instruction is also provided. The nurse and sometimes the nutritionist or the home economist help out. The service is provided in some regions by the Integrate Program of Applied Nutrition (PINA) or other organizations in the country. The cities also provide several hospital facilities for people of limited income.

Development of community projects offer help for many of these problems. However, many times a housewife is too timid to request help. Ultimately these projects will improve the community.

Recreation

Recreation service is limited in Colombian rural communities. Physical activity is important both to relieve daily stress and to help family heads avoid spending their salary at the community taverns at the risk of forgetting family responsibilities.

The home extension agent has an excellent opportunity to help develop the rural community. She is versatile enough as a home economist to call attention to the great needs of the community for assistance and help. For almost all communities, nutrition and health needs are predominant. A well organized community program will offer informational help for the family. In addition, an active program in the rural areas will help keep the young people

busy. If people can meet freely, enjoy games, movies, meetings, and literacy programs then organizations such as "The Communal Action" will contribute to their well being.

CHAPTER V

GUIDELINES FOR STRENGTHENING HOME ECONOMICS

EXTENSION IN COLOMBIA

Most countries need well-planned guidelines for implementing Home Economics Extension Programs because of cultural differences and idiosyncracies. Colombia is no exception.

The home economist needs to understand the physical, psychological, and cultural forces in Colombia to gain self-confidence in the work with the people. Those with different life styles tend sometimes to react adversely toward others. The agent's ability to empathize with the client and his situation is an essential key in achieving the desired changes in the community. The need to train local leaders also is important.

When the home economics extensionist develops a program, some key guidelines follow. She will want to:

- 1) Know as much as possible about the community: its geography, community background, people, research reports, and similar resources.
- 2) Become acquainted with community leaders, government employees, religious leaders, school teachers, nurses, and community leaders in order to make her mission effective.
- 3) Meet with the interested people in the community and suggest changes and solutions to their problems. People need to express their needs and decide together their

goals. Her projects should coincide with the community's needs.

- 4) Suggest possible solutions to the various community problems and determine alternative ways to reach the desired goals.
- 5) Prepare plans and submit them to the community leaders for discussion and approval.

Each time a project is completed, or partially completed, an evaluation should be made. In this way, problems can be solved and not postponed. (35)

To develop a good community program, Rogers (34) suggests: 1) The program needs to fit the cultural values and beliefs of the people; 2) The people should be included in planning changes; 3) An increase in the skill in self evaluation needs to occur; and 4) Attention should be given to leaders' suggestions.

Attracting Home Economists To Rural Communities

A nation's development is not only measured by its economical progress but by the educational level of its people. Countries with a high rate of literacy are usually those with a more sound economic development program and a low rate of population increase. The welfare of a nation depends on proper food, housing, clothing, education and recreation of its people.

Once people recognize the important relationship between education and progress, they will strive to work hard in these areas. However, this responsibility does not fall to the government or professional alone. Each individual has the responsibility to contribute. People of power will provide human and material resources but everyone needs to do his share. The integration of these forces is vital.

As a nation changes, so do its problems. The physical and individual problems of the rural areas, as well as the physical, emotional and social problems of the urban areas all need attention.

A home economist has to be in the "center" of things. That is, she needs to focus on the rural areas where the needs are greatest in areas such as over-population. She needs to concentrate on agricultural and economic progress, and to combat those forces that resist change. Thus home extension agents have a difficult but important mission.

Working with people is difficult especially in rural areas where life styles are different. Chabaud (39) discusses changing behavioral patterns through the teaching of home economics to women: "The nearer the place is to the families, and the more accessible to both mothers and daughters, the easier will be the adaptation to prevailing customs and the discovery of new knowledge." Much remains to be done to help educate women with families. The need to increase these human resources is important.

In addition to the work of the Extension Service, private organizations can help support programs that benefit the community particularly in areas without extension service. Rural work should not be delegated to the paraprofessional alone. Professional home economists have to provide the leadership. While the professional home economist has close contact with the community, unfortunately the number of professionals willing to work in such areas is decreasing. This is due in part to the variety of jobs offered in the cities.

It is the author's belief that the lack of enthusiasm to work in rural areas can be attributed to the following reasons: a) Since the majority of home economics students in Colombia are from the cities, they prefer to work there; b) Often students enroll in home economics by chance rather than by

true vocation or interest; c) And general disinterest in this type of work. Most women get married and neither the husband nor the family allows them to engage in hard work; d) Underpayment resulting from scarcity of funds, and lack of understanding of the differences in contributions of the paraprofessional vs. the professional. Frequently institutions prefer to employ paraprofessionals rather than professionals because the latter demand more money; e) Often parents disagree with rural work because it keeps their children away from home for long periods of time. Institutions who are engaged in extension services should employ personnel from their own regions. This would avoid to a large extent cultural conflicts because of regional differences. Government and private institutions have to work together in the support of training programs for new and old paraprofessionals.

Suggestions for Improving the Home Economist's Work

Principles to guide the home economist who wishes to work with rural communities are as follows:

- 1) A strong desire to work with people, and not view her job only as a means of making money.
- 2) A desire to motivate the rural people with whom she works so they can act independently.
- 3) A willingness to work with the whole community rather than a few selected people.
- 4) A cooperative effort in which her goals and those of the community are the same.
- 5) A desire to earn the respect of the community.
- 6) A sense of confidence in what she is teaching.
- 7) A desire to record experiences to improve techniques.

- 8) A sense of the latest scientific, technological, and social advances.

Finally the advancement of home economics in Colombia is not without growing pains. However, through the dedication and efforts of pioneer home economists, it will not be long before the profession is accorded the respect it deserves among the people of Colombia and the world.

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APPENDIX

ARA - The Area Redevelopment Act

USDA - The United States Department of Agriculture

IIAA - The Institute of Interamerican Affairs

OFAR - The Office of Foreign Agriculture Relation

BPI - The Bureau of Plant Industry

TCA - The Technical Cooperation Administration

MSA - The Mutual Security Agency

FOA - The Foreign Operation Administration

INTA - Instituto Nacional de Tecnologia Agropecuaria

ANAPO - The National Popular Alliance

INEM - The National Institute of Middle Education

ICA - The Colombbian Institute of Agriculture

INCORA - The Colombbian Institute of Agrarian Reform

SENA - Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje

ILO - The International Labor Organization

FAO - The Food and Agriculture Organization

STACA - The Service Technical Agriculture Colombbian American

CVC - Cooperation Autonoma del Valle

ICBF - The Colombbian Institute for Family Welfare

PINA - The Integrate Program of Applied Nutrition

THE ROLE OF THE HOME ECONOMIST IN THE
COLOMBIA EXTENSION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Colombia, which is located in the northern part of South America, has approximately 40 percent of its population in the rural areas. Its major problems are malnutrition and illiteracy. Illiteracy is high but it is improving through the efforts of the government and Extension Home Economics work. Still a crucial need exists for more competent personnel to care for the many problems which afflict the rural areas.

The purpose of this study is twofold: to evaluate the role of the home economist with respect to how she can assist and develop through extension services the people in Colombia. The second objective is to study the extension services in the United States, and those in less-developed countries in Latin America to suggest ways for implementing similar programs in Colombia.

This study consisted of a review of literature related to extension activities and additional information obtained through discussions with experienced home economists from both Kansas State University and University of Caldas in Colombia.

Some misconceptions of the role of the home economist still exist in Colombia both at the professional and non-professional levels. Hence it is vital to establish a permanent organization for Home Economics at the national level. Such an association with the appropriate assistance will attract more qualified people. Through the help of the government, home economists, and the people themselves, more and better programs in extension will result.