

VALUES AND BENEFITS GAINED FROM STUDY OF VOCATIONAL
HOMEMAKING BY SELECTED FORMER KANSAS PUPILS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Today's living is in a world of rapid change. Technological, economic, and social advancements alter the pattern of living within each person's life span. Some of the changes which have implications for home economics education are: rural to urban to suburban living; increasing population; occupational changes; employment of women; mass communication and transportation; and new products, equipment, and services available to the family.¹

As a result of these changes, curriculum modification in home economics education and subsequent evaluation for usefulness to those enrolled will need to be made. Chadderdon acknowledged that considerable effort had been expended to collect data basic to home economics program planning and to determining effectiveness of programs. However, the job never ends since rapid social and technical changes occurring in the American society force consideration of new needs or changed emphases.² If home economics courses are to be meaningful to pupils in the future, learning experiences which point to current and possible future living conditions and problems must be included.

¹ Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics Instruction in the Secondary Schools, pp. 28-32.

² Hester Chadderdon, "Evaluation and Research," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, p. 69.

Legislation affecting home economics is passed periodically. The 88th Congress passed Public Law 88-210, the Vocational Education Act of 1963, which stated that "all persons in all communities of the State will as soon as possible have ready access to vocational training suited to their needs, interests, and ability to benefit therefrom."¹ The Act also provided for an evaluation of vocational education programs which receive federal funds.² Evaluations at intervals of not more than five years are provided for in Section 12(e) of the Act; the first such evaluation to be completed by January 1, 1968.³ In part, the national evaluation would be for the purpose of reviewing the status of vocational education programs to determine whether the needs and interests of those enrolled in vocational programs are being met; if the enrolled are receiving benefits from the program; and to make recommendations with respect to the same.

The proposed 1968 national evaluation project pertaining to home economics specified collecting a series of taped interviews which would provide a compilation of "statements of values and benefits from study of Home Economics by those who have been enrolled."⁴ The taped interviews were to have as subjects: (1) former students in vocational home-making, (2) former students in family living courses, (3) adults who

¹United States Congress, Senate, Vocational Education Act of 1963, Public Law 88-210, 88th Congress, HR 4955, p. 4.

²Ibid., p. 9.

³Ibid., p. 10.

⁴Elizabeth Ray and Mary Lee Hurt, "Evaluation Project in Home Economics Education," p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

have been enrolled in homemaking and/or parent education classes, and (4) individuals who have enrolled in home economics courses preparing for wage-earning occupations.¹

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

It was the purpose of this study to identify the values and benefits gained by young married Kansas women from enrollment in vocational homemaking.

This study was limited to former pupils of three Kansas high schools who had been enrolled in at least two years of vocational homemaking in the ninth grade and above. The selection of subjects was further limited to 1961 and 1963 graduates who were married and residing in Kansas; some who had children and some who were employed outside the home.

The three high schools chosen were representative of school size in which secondary home economics programs are offered in Kansas. The schools were selected from those recommended by Miss Elizabeth Hirschler of the Department of Vocational Home Economics Education, Kansas State Board for Vocational Education.

PROCEDURES

Literature concerning the assessment of home economics curriculum and the identification of problems, needs, and interests of homemakers

¹Ibid., pp. 1-3.

and high school pupils was reviewed.

A tape recorder and an interview schedule were used for collection of data. The interview schedule was adapted from one suggested for the 1968 national evaluation project pertaining to home economics. A preliminary study was conducted to refine the interview schedule and technique. A device for transcribing the data was developed.

Data from the interviews were tabulated, summarized, and analyzed. Conclusions based on the findings were drawn and recommendations made.

The taped interviews, collected between March and June, 1967, were forwarded to the Kansas State Board for Vocational Education for use in the 1968 national evaluation of vocational home economics programs.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

For the purpose of clarification the following terms were defined for use in this study:

Comprehensive program of study.

A program of instruction which is planned for the purpose of assisting youth . . . to understand and solve problems in home and family living. . . . Subject-matter areas include: child development; family relationships; food and nutrition; clothing and textiles; family economics and home management; housing, home furnishings and equipment; and family health.¹

Values and benefits. The good, the usefulness, and/or the helpfulness of study resulting from enrollment in vocational homemaking classes.

¹American Vocational Association, Inc., Definitions of Terms in Vocational, Technical, and Practical Arts Education, p. 11.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As background for this study it was necessary to review literature concerning the assessment of home economics curriculum and the identification of problems, needs, and interests of homemakers and high school pupils. Selected writings since 1960 and studies conducted in the last ten years were reviewed.

ASSESSING THE HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

An age of expanding knowledge and technological discoveries accompanied by social advancements presents problems and challenge to educators.

In 1965 Alexander and Michael assessed the three-year study and appraisal of curriculum developments made by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. They pointed out that the continuing central and most critical problem in all curriculum development was the "lag between a static content and a dynamic learner in a changing world."¹

Prior to that time, Coon called to the attention of home economics educators the necessity for revamping homemaking programs to meet changes

¹William M. Alexander and Lloyd S. Michael, "Current Curriculum Development: Problems and Prospects," New Curriculum Developments, Report of ASCD's Commission on Current Curriculum Developments, p. 96.

occurring at a quickening speed. She said:

modern living demands that the gap which has existed between what is happening to society and what the school does to prepare future members of that society should be closed as tightly as possible.¹

Home economics program emphases and course content should, according to Lawson, be determined by current problems, concerns, and strengths of the family. She advised that focus was needed in the homemaking program on insight and understanding of human growth and development, management of personal and family resources, and personal and family relationships.²

Chadderdon stressed the need for home economics curriculum studies at the state level to determine pupils' interests, experiences, and problems relating to effective home membership. Although considerable effort has been expended to collect data basic to home economics program planning and to determining effectiveness of programs, the effort cannot end since rapid social and technical changes occurring in the American society force consideration of new needs or changed emphases.³

The United States Office of Education made two national studies of home economics in secondary schools, one in 1939 and one in 1959.

¹Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics Instruction in the Secondary Schools, p. 27.

²Dorothy S. Lawson, "Education for Improved Family Living," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:15, December, 1964.

³Hester Chadderdon, "Evaluation and Research," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:69, December, 1964.

The latter study was conducted to learn what home economics teachers were doing to prepare secondary school pupils for living constructively as members of families, and to secure information needed for future program planning.¹ A sampling plan which would provide representative data from each state about the home economics programs in public secondary schools was developed. Schools with less than one hundred pupils, except in three thinly populated states, were excluded from the sample.² Responding to the study were 3,975 schools of which 3,796 (95 per cent) offered home economics.³ It was found that nearly half of all girls in the schools offering home economics were enrolled in homemaking the spring of 1959.⁴

Analysis of course content in the vocational home economics programs showed that 58 per cent of the time was spent on the areas of clothing (30 per cent) and foods (28 per cent). Time spent on other areas was: housing, 12 per cent; family relations, 9 per cent; child development, 8 per cent; health and home nursing, 5 per cent; management, 4 per cent; consumer education, 3 per cent; and other, 1 per cent.⁵

Time spent on areas of vocational home economics by grade was also computed. This analysis indicated that from ninth through twelfth grades less emphasis was given each year to the clothing and the foods areas.

¹ Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics in the Public Secondary Schools, p. iii.

² Ibid., p. 2.

³ Ibid., pp. 2, 19.

⁴ Ibid., p. 50.

⁵ Ibid., p. 79.

More emphasis was given each succeeding year to the areas of housing, management, and consumer education. Time spent in the family relations area varied: 9 per cent in ninth grade, 7 per cent in tenth, 10 per cent in eleventh, and 16 per cent in twelfth grade. Approximately the same emphasis (7 to 8 per cent of the time) was given to the child development area at each grade level. Health and home nursing was emphasized most at the tenth grade level.¹

According to Mallory, the findings of this study "gave answers to a number of questions about the status of home economics teaching; but it also raised questions about program content and emphases."²

The 1959 study influenced the Office of Education to bring together more than forty conferees in 1961 for the purpose of considering how a national group might give leadership to re-examination of the home economics curriculum in the secondary school.³

The results of the conference led to seven workshops sponsored cooperatively by the Office of Education and selected colleges of home economics during the years of 1962, 1963, and 1964.⁴ The approach to curriculum study in these workshops was the identification of basic concepts and generalization in the various subject matter areas: human

¹ Ibid., p. 87.

² Bernice Mallory, "Home Economics Curriculum Study," American Vocational Journal, 38:35, September, 1963.

³ Bernice Mallory, "Curriculum Developments," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, pp. 52-53.

⁴ Ibid., p. 53.

development and the family, home management and family economics, food and nutrition, textiles and clothing, and housing.¹ The outlines of the concepts and generalizations for secondary home economics were refined in the 1964 workshop and made available to individual states for use as resource material for curriculum development.

The knowledge explosion has affected home economics as certainly as it has affected other fields of education. Mallory declared, "The accelerated pace in accumulation of new knowledge, the pushing forward of new frontiers, the need for specialization and at the same time for breadth, all influence the curriculum content of home economics."² She also said that the selection of the most significant learnings to be taught is becoming more difficult because of the vast reservoir of knowledge being accumulated.³

The accelerated accumulation of new knowledge and the changing patterns of living, according to Stovall, necessitate teaching broader concepts and greater depth in home economics at the secondary level.⁴ Stovall further suggested that "in preparing pupils for a world of change, it appears that the instruction must be that which will help

¹U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, "Curriculum Resource Material: Conceptual Framework and Generalizations in Home Economics," p. 1.

²Bernice Mallory, "Home Economics Curriculum Study," American Vocational Journal, 38:34, September, 1963.

³Ibid.

⁴Ruth Stovall, "Secondary Education," Journal of Home Economics, 54:538, September, 1962.

pupils 'to learn how to learn' and thus become independent learners."¹ Curriculum emphasis should be on how application of what is learned can be made to new as well as current situations.²

Tyler proposed that emphasis in home economics be given to understanding basic principles and to the development of ability to apply these principles to new situations as they are encountered. He reasoned that focus should be on continued learning, on development of interest in the study of new problems as they arise, on ability to investigate questions in the area of home economics, and on attitudes appropriate to dealing with changing conditions and opportunities in this field. Tyler suggested that study of nutrition, family relations, home management, and art and home furnishings may have more relevance to current needs in this country than does food preparation and clothing construction.³

PROBLEMS, NEEDS, AND INTERESTS OF HOMEMAKERS AND HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS

Home economics educators gather information from many sources to determine how to make programs more effective: governmental reports, descriptions of the American family, and studies made of high school pupils and of homemakers. Selected examples of each follow.

The report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women

¹ Ibid., p. 537.

² Ibid., p. 538.

³ Ralph W. Tyler, "Education in a World of Change," Journal of Home Economics, 54:533, September, 1962.

expressed concern for the education of women for home and community living when it stated:

The teaching of home management should treat the subject with breadth that includes not only nutrition, textiles and clothing, housing and furnishings, but also the handling of family finances, the purchase of consumer goods, the uses of family leisure, and the relation of individuals and families to society.

Too little is currently known about effective instruction in homemaking skills, particularly about its timing.¹

When Moore described the changing American family, she listed problems and needs of homemakers of different social classes. She indicated that the greatest problems to those in the middle class were: management of time and money, child rearing, basic mental and physical health, leisure and recreation, family relationships, and skills for home operation.² Working class women tended to have additional problems in emotional control.³ Upper middle class women, according to Moore, could benefit from study of "time and money management, child rearing in all its aspects and especially in its mental health implications, in the intricacies of personal and family relationships within the family and in the community."⁴

A study conducted with 12,892 Texas high school youth obtained information pertaining to personal and social attitudes, problems,

¹President's Commission on the Status of Women, American Women, p. 33.

²Bernice Milburn Moore, "Families of America," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:10, December, 1964.

³Ibid., p. 11.

⁴Ibid., p. 88.

concerns, and interests in personal and family living. One portion of the inventory measured intensity of interest for ninety-eight statements about personal and family living on a three-point continuum ranging from "strongly interested" to "not interested."¹

Eleven items of major interest to ninth and tenth grade youth were identified. All but one item related to self. The items were:

FEEDING THE FAMILY

How to select, prepare, and serve food for various occasions
Danger of following food fads

CLOTHING AND FAMILY

How to have a place of my own for clothes and my other belongings
How to glamorize "hand-me-downs" and "made-overs"

DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS

More about children in order to be able to earn money baby sitting

Making toys and play equipment for children

PERSONAL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

What is acceptable behavior on dates
All kinds of information on the etiquette of dating

PERSONAL AND FAMILY HEALTH

How to take care of and entertain sick children
How to get rid of pimples and have a clear complexion

RELATION OF HOME MAKING TO VOCATION

Exploring job opportunities using homemaking training²

Youth in eleventh and twelfth grades gave priority to twenty-six items of special concern. These youth put emphasis on family living rather than on self. Items of major interest in the eleventh and twelfth grades were:

¹ Bernice Milburn Moore and Wayne H. Holtzman, Tomorrow's Parents: A Study of Youth and Their Families, p. 234.

² Ibid., pp. 246-247.

THE HOUSE AND ITS EQUIPMENT

- The effects of the place one lives on personality
- What sort of house and furnishings we could have on our income
- What to look for when you buy furniture
- What to look for when buying or building a house
- How to buy and take care of appliances for the home
- How to plan a house to fit our family needs
- Advantages of renting or owning a home

MANAGING TIME AND ENERGY AND WORK

- Getting the most from our family money
- What is involved in setting up and maintaining a home
- How to organize work to save time and energy
- How to understand and deal with problems families usually have
- To learn how the family can plan together, share work and responsibilities
- Investing the money one saves
- What kinds of insurance a family needs
- How one gets a good credit rating

FEEDING THE FAMILY

- Feeding small children and the rest of the family
- Buying foods which will give us the most for our money
- How to get the family members to eat what they ought to

PERSONAL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

- Expressing one's self well
- Information about divorce and its effect on the family
- Planning for marriage
- Learning democratic family practices
- What is to be considered in choosing a marriage partner
- How to meet people and feel at ease with them

PERSONAL AND FAMILY HEALTH

- What health problems a family is likely to face
- Keeping mentally and physically fit¹

Homemakers and high school pupils have been studied to collect data needed for home economics program planning and to determine the effectiveness of programs. Although many such studies have been made, only one summary of studies was located. This publication reported studies of home economics in high school and adult education programs

¹ Ibid., pp. 247-248.

completed between 1955 and 1958.¹

Garrett studied the factors which influenced election or non-election of home economics by girls in selected senior high schools of Washington, D.C. From the findings of the study she concluded: most students took home economics because of personal interest in the subject, home economics courses needed constant revision to meet the needs of the pupil, the home economics program was not meeting the needs of the pupils in many situations, and there was too much repetition in home economics courses.²

A study was made by a research team in Kentucky to determine what influenced students to take home economics and in what areas they were receiving the most help from home economics classes. The population for the study was girls in Kentucky high schools having vocational home economics programs in which homemaking enrollment increased or decreased 25 per cent or more between 1957 and 1961.³ It was found that the quality of the home economics program was the most important factor influencing enrollment. Students enrolled in home economics when they felt the program was of value, provided opportunities to learn what they needed

¹Ivoly Spafford and Edna P. Amidon, Studies of Home Economics in High School and in Adult Education Programs, 1955-58.

²Lula Dennison Garrett, "Attitudes of Senior High School Girls Toward Home Economics," Journal of Home Economics, 50:96, February, 1958.

³Ruby Simpson, Lucile Stiles, and Anna M. Gorman, "Enrollment in Home Economics--A Research Study," p. 3. (Mimeographed.)

to know, offered good preparation for marriage, gave opportunities for developing leadership, and was challenging.¹ Students reported they gained more help from classes in foods and nutrition, clothing, and grooming than in the areas of child development, consumer education, and housing and home furnishings.²

The American Home Economics Association, with the cooperation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, questioned 1,232 women from rural, urban, large, and small communities in thirty-five states to determine whether homemakers were adequately training their daughters for future homemaking roles and to determine what homemaking abilities were considered most essential. An overwhelming majority of the women responded that homemakers were not training their daughters adequately for future homemaking roles. These women rated skills low among the homemaking abilities they considered most essential. In order, the essential abilities were: (1) good management of time, (2) good management of money, (3) positive attitudes toward homemaking, (4) ability to gain the cooperation of others in the family, (5) good management of energy, (6) skills in housekeeping, (7) skills in food preparation, (8) use and care of equipment, and (9) skills in sewing.³

In 1957 Watkins conducted an evaluation of the homemaking program of a West Virginia high school. Subjects were pupils who had been

¹Ibid., p. 47.

²Ibid., p. 48.

³Joan Gaines, "Survey of Women's Clubs Produces Important Findings," Journal of Home Economics, 54:435, June, 1962.

enrolled between 1946 and 1949. Findings of Watkins' study indicated that 92 per cent of the married subjects believed that home economics was important and that it had been of help to them since they left high school.¹ Areas of study considered important by 90 per cent or more of the subjects were: social relationships, planning a home, good grooming, planning meals, and meat cookery. Home nursing, personal relationships, and freezing of meats and vegetables were considered important by 80 to 89 per cent of the women while 70 to 79 per cent considered furniture arrangement, jelly-making, freezing of fruits and cooked foods, and canning of fruits and vegetables important units.² Subjects indicated, in rank order, need for further training in the use of money, saving of energy, preparation of food for the sick, preparation of meals, management of time, planning well-balanced meals, and freezing and canning.³

A study was made in 1958 by Humphries of thirty-one young married Richmond, Virginia, homemakers who graduated from high school in 1950 but did not attend college. Eighteen of the subjects had studied home economics in high school; thirteen had not.⁴ Of those who had been enrolled, the reasons given for studying home economics were: liking it (50 per cent); interested in it (33 per cent); and to learn to be a good

¹Lucy Watkins, "Evaluation of Home Economics Program in Woodrow Wilson High School, Beckley, W. Va., 1946-1949, Inclusive, With Implications for Curriculum Changes," unpublished Master's thesis, p. 61.

²Ibid., pp. 29-40.

³Ibid., p. 67.

⁴Laura Ellen Humphries, "A Comparative Study of Two Groups of High School Women Graduates, One With and the Other Without Home Economics Education in High School," unpublished Master's thesis, p. 11.

homemaker and to learn to cook (22 per cent and 11 per cent respectively).¹

Subjects in Humphries's study indicated that foods and clothing units were the most helpful. However, prior to 1948 major emphasis in homemaking had been on clothing and foods; since the subjects were 1950 graduates, this may have had a direct bearing on the response given.² Subjects indicated that they had not received help and needed assistance in home management, budgeting, home and family relations, infant care, home nursing, interior decoration, and hobbies. Less than one-half of the subjects in the Humphries study reported having studied child care in homemaking.³

One hundred four graduates from a Wisconsin high school between the years 1951 and 1956 were subjects for Schubert's study of the problems and needs of young homemakers. All subjects were under the age of twenty-five and all had been married from one to five years.⁴ She found that one-third or more of the participating homemakers mentioned having difficulty with meal planning, seasonal cleaning, mending and remodeling clothing, discipline of children, making major decisions, and planning work schedules and family budgets.⁵ Although all the young homemakers encountered some difficulty in the areas of foods, clothing,

¹Ibid., p. 20.

²Ibid., p. 21.

³Ibid.

⁴Genevieve Schubert, "Problems and Needs of Young Homemakers-- Implications for High School Home Economics," unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, p. 3.

⁵Ibid., p. 154.

housekeeping, child care, and management, Schubert concluded that "the intangible phases of homemaking appear to be more troublesome and sensitive than the tangible ones."¹

In this study, Schubert also requested information concerning the chief source of preparation for homemaking activities and responsibilities. Ninety-six per cent of the young homemakers reported mothers and 64 per cent reported friends as the main source of ideas and techniques used for homemaking activities and responsibilities. More than half also listed their mothers-in-law. Other sources of help were: neighbors, 35.6 per cent; high school home economics, 33 per cent; and other relatives, 25 per cent.²

Fifty young married homemakers who had been enrolled in vocational homemaking in a Virginia high school were interviewed by Wright to identify their homemaking problems and sources of aid in helping with problems they encountered. Their greatest problem was found to be managing the family income. Other problems, in order of concern, were: feeding the family, caring for children, making a happy home, housing the family, home care of the sick, and clothing the family.³ Wright stated: "the homemakers were most emphatic in proposing that more attention be given to the management of money, time, and energy."⁴

¹ Ibid., p. 166.

² Ibid., p. 58.

³ Annie Fred Hines Wright, "A Follow-up Study of Homemakers Who Were Former Homemaking Students of Radford High School, Radford, Virginia," unpublished Master's thesis, p. 26.

⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

The subjects credited homemaking instruction, mothers, and husbands as principal sources of aid in helping with problems they encountered in the home. The study of homemaking in high school was mentioned more frequently than any other source of help; the only source used in meeting problems in all areas of homemaking and used most as a source of aid in the area of feeding the family; and practically the only source of aid used in meeting problems in making a happy home and managing the family income. Although homemaking was the principal source of aid in solving problems in money management, it was actually used as a source of aid with less than one-fourth of the problems encountered.¹

Ross, using an adaptation of Schubert's instrument, studied the problems of young Kansas homemakers to determine where home economics curriculum revision was needed. The homemakers in Ross's study were high school graduates under the age of twenty-six who had been married from one to five years. The subjects mentioned having most frequent difficulty with food preparation, housekeeping, and clothing.² They expressed no difficulty in shopping for food, washing dishes, care of cleaning tools, washing clothes, paying the bills, mowing the lawn, and interior decoration. Respondents expressed need for more work in the areas of management of resources, particularly of money; foods, including cooking

¹ Ibid., p. 49.

² Dora Charlottie Ross, "Expressed Problems of a Selected Group of Young Homemakers with Implications for a High School Home Economics Program," unpublished Master's report, p. 51.

experiences and study of the cuts of meat; and safety.¹

SUMMARY

Social, technological, and economic advancements and expanding knowledge are affecting the American family. Home economics, which focuses its attention on individual and family living, is being challenged to meet these changes which are occurring at a quickening speed. Meeting these changes calls for evaluating program emphases and course content according to current family problems and to pupils' interests, experiences, and problems relating to effective home membership. The knowledge explosion has created a need in home economics for specialization and at the same time for breadth. Teaching broader concepts and basic principles with emphasis on the development of ability to apply the principles to current and future situations is needed.

To determine how to make programs more effective, home economics educators gather information from many sources. Personal interest and quality homemaking programs were found to be the most important factors influencing enrollment in home economics. Problems and needs mentioned most frequently by homemakers dealt with the intangible phases of homemaking; managing the family income and time; planning work schedules, family budgets, and meals; caring for and disciplining children; and others. Interests of high school youth for personal and family living

¹ Ibid., p. 45.

changed from those closely associated with self at ninth and tenth grade to those associated with the family.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to identify the values and benefits gained by young married Kansas women from enrollment in vocational homemaking.

Because the data from this study were to be contributed to the home economics portion of the 1968 national evaluation of vocational education, the proposal was first presented for approval to two members of the Kansas State Board for Vocational Education: Mr. John Snyder, Director, and Miss Elizabeth Hirschler, Assistant State Supervisor of Vocational Home Economics Education. Consultative assistance for the proposal was also given by Dr. Johnnie Christian, Home Economics Program Specialist, U.S. Office of Education.¹

Discussion of remaining procedures is organized around the selection of subjects, the description of the interviewing method used, and the analysis of data.

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

The national evaluation project in home economics education specified selection of the samples of interviewees from communities and schools in which there had been a "stable 'good' vocational homemaking

¹Region VI and VII Representative, Bureau of Adult and Vocational Education, Division of Vocational and Technical Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

program over the last number of years."¹ Miss Hirschler established the following criteria which she used to identify "stable 'good' vocational homemaking programs" in Kansas:

A vocational homemaking program which offers at least three years of homemaking; two or more of those years to include a comprehensive or broad program of study. Class enrollment has been constant or increasing. The teacher will have done recent graduate work or kept up to date with developments in the fields of education and home economics.²

Three high schools, representative of different size Kansas high schools offering vocational home economics programs, were selected from those recommended by Miss Hirschler. Cooperation of the home economics teachers in each school and of the city supervisor in the largest school was secured. High school records were searched to get listings of all 1961 and 1963 female graduates who had taken two or more years of home economics, ninth grade and above.

Using the obtained lists, the writer contacted parents, relatives, and friends for married name and address of each subject. Contact by telephone, letter, or through parents was made to explain the study and to establish a definite time for the interview at the subject's convenience. If contact was made by letter, a post card for confirmation of interview time was included. (See Appendix A.)

Because it was believed that the population would be limited, ten

¹Elizabeth Ray and Mary Lee Hurt, "Evaluation Project in Home Economics Education," p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

²Miss Elizabeth Hirschler, Department of Vocational Home Economics Education, State Board for Vocational Education, Topeka, Kansas, in an interview, February, 1967. Permission to quote secured.

was established as an adequate sample of subjects for each school or a total of thirty for the study.

DESCRIPTION OF INTERVIEW METHOD USED

A tape recorder and an interview schedule were used for collection of data. The interview schedule was adapted from one suggested for the 1968 national evaluation project pertaining to home economics. (See Appendix B.) Questions pertaining to background information identified: (1) age of husband and wife at time of marriage, (2) number and ages of children, (3) housing, (4) education of subject, husband, and subject's parents, (5) employment of subject, husband, and subject's parents, (6) number and ages of siblings, (7) future plans, (8) when and why subject was first enrolled in a home economics class, (9) how many years of home economics classes were completed, and (10) the general areas of study undertaken in those classes.

Open-ended questions were used to elicit statements from each subject of values and benefits gained from home economics classes at the time of enrollment and those recognized after graduation. Values and benefits specific to child care, personal and family relations, home management, consumer practices, decision-making, and wage earning were ascertained.

Preliminary interviews were conducted in Manhattan, Kansas, with one 1961 and two 1963 graduates who met the established criteria. McCormick stressed the importance of pretesting an interview schedule on a small number of subjects to reasonably assure the investigator that

all subjects will attach intended meanings to the questions.¹ Purposes of the pretesting, based on suggested procedures by Burchinal and Hawkes, were: (1) to determine whether responses obtained fulfilled the research objectives, (2) to estimate the extent to which questions fitted respondents' language and thinking levels, (3) to obtain an indication of length of time required for interviews, and (4) to develop skill in use of the interview schedule and the tape recorder.² Revisions were made in the interview schedule after each testing. The third preliminary interview established that the procedure for recording was satisfactory and that revision needed on interview schedule was negligible.

For the study, interviews lasting approximately three-fourths of an hour were held with each subject. The interviews were conducted in as informal manner as possible. Subjects were told that recording was being done to save time, their comments would be kept anonymous, and that the data, if applicable, would be used in the national evaluation project. Throughout the interview the participants were encouraged to express themselves freely.

Authors differ in opinions on the strictness of following an interview schedule. Hall stated that a fixed order of questioning may be altered if a respondent happens to give information pertaining to

¹Thomas Carson McCormick and Roy G. Francis, Methods of Research in the Behavioral Sciences, p. 116.

²Lee G. Burchinal and Glenn R. Hawkes, "Home Interviews with Families," Journal of Home Economics, 49:168, March, 1957.

another question out of sequence.¹ This procedure was followed as it was necessary to alter the order of asking questions during some interviews. Probing for information was sometimes also required.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Because all data were recorded on tape, it was necessary to devise a form for transcribing the collected data. The form prepared included a check list for background information and space for verbatim responses to open-ended questions. (See Appendix C.)

Data from each taped interview were transcribed on separate forms. Responses were summarized and interpreted to answer the question, "What values and benefits were gained by the young married women from enrollment in vocational homemaking?"

¹Olive A. Hall, Research Handbook for Home Economics Education, p. 90.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the values and benefits gained by young married Kansas women from enrollment in vocational home-making. A description of the participants in the study; information concerning home economics enrollment and areas of study; and values and benefits derived from the study of home economics at the time of enrollment and those recognized after graduation are reported.

DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

The twenty-seven subjects for this study were young married women graduates of three Kansas high schools offering vocational home economics programs. Nine of the twenty-seven subjects graduated from a representative small-size, seven from a representative medium-size, and eleven from a representative large-size high school. Twelve subjects were 1961 graduates; fifteen had graduated in 1963.

The investigator, from observing neighborhood and housing, felt that different economic levels were represented among the twenty-six Caucasian and one Negro women subjects.

Information pertaining to marriage, children, education, employment, housing, and future plans was acquired from subjects.

The 1961 graduates had been married from one to five years and the 1963 graduates from less than one year to four years. The 1961 graduates had been married an average of 3.2 years and 1963 graduates 2.5

years; the overall average was 2.8 years.

At the time of marriage, age of the subjects ranged from seven-teen to twenty-two years; average age was 19.3 years. The age of the husbands ranged from eighteen to twenty-nine; average age at time of marriage was 21.4 years.

Of the twenty-seven subjects, eight were childless. Nineteen had a total of twenty-nine children or approximately 1.5 children per family. Of the twenty-nine children, sixteen were one year of age or younger; eight were 2 years old; two were 3 years old; and three, including one set of twins, were 5 years old.

Some type of further training beyond high school was reported by fourteen of the women. Three were college graduates. All but two husbands were high school graduates; sixteen had training beyond high school; five were college graduates.

At the time of the study, twelve of the twenty-seven subjects were employed; however, all but five had been employed at some time since their marriage. Eleven subjects were working at or had worked at clerical jobs. Occupations reported by the remaining subjects were: beautician, waitress, medical assistant, dental assistant, practical nurse, microbiologist, teacher, retail buyer and department head, IBM keypunch operator, and telephone operator. One subject reported having worked at two different jobs since marriage.

Of the ten subjects who had terminated their work, seven did so because of pregnancy. Other individual reasons for terminating employment were: unable to give proper care to child, planned to move,

husband objected to subject's working, husband graduated from college, and joined husband who was in military service. Some subjects reported having stopped working more than once.

Twenty-six husbands were employed at the time of the study and one was a full-time student. The employment and/or occupations reported were: twelve unskilled workers; two each in military service, farming, and pharmacy; and one each as a carpenter, co-manager of a farmer's market, computer operator, custom harvester, foreman in foundry, insurance agent, lineman for utility company, part-time preacher, plastic tool-maker, power plant superintendent, and worker in aircraft production planning. Some husbands were employed in more than one occupation.

Twenty-one of the subjects had one to four brothers and sisters; one was an only child. Two subjects had five siblings; the remaining three had six, seven, or nine siblings. One subject voluntarily indicated that she had been adopted.

Nineteen subjects reported renting their homes; five owned a home and four were in the process of buying. One subject reported living in a rented house and owning another.

A total of sixty-two responses were given to the question concerning future plans; the average number of responses for each subject was 2.3. Six of the twenty-seven subjects initially expressed uncertainty in answer to the question. Future plans concerning family, employment, housing, location, and education were as follows:

Future Plans:ResponsesFamily

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Start family | 4 |
| Have more children | 3 |
| Be a housewife, rear my children | 5 |
| Make my husband and children happy | 1 |
| Go with husband as he enters ministry | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 14 |

Employment

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Continue working | 4 |
| Return to work | 3 |
| Teach | 3 |
| Quit work | 2 |
| Family to become self-employed | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 13 |

Housing

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Want to build home | 4 |
| Want to buy home | 4 |
| Want new home | 1 |
| Want to move to new apartment | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 10 |

Change of Location

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Will move out of state | 5 |
| Move may be necessary | <u>5</u> |
| Total | 10 |

Further Education

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Continue or complete education | 4 |
| Master's degree for husband | <u>2</u> |
| Total | 6 |

The four subjects who indicated plans to continue working stipulated that they would do so until they were in better financial circumstances or until a child was expected. Two subjects planned to

return to work when their children were in school. One was planning to quit work until her children were in school.

Reasons given for moving out of state were employment, military service, and a desire to live elsewhere. Three subjects indicated that a move might be necessary due to husband's employment; two indicated husband's health as a reason for a possible move.

One of the four subjects who planned to continue or complete their education hoped to eventually get her Master's degree.

HOME ECONOMICS ENROLLMENT AND AREAS OF STUDY

Eighteen of the subjects reported initial enrollment in the home economics program in ninth grade; others in grades seven (three subjects), eight (three subjects), and ten (one subject). Two expressed uncertainty of grade level at first enrollment.

Thirty-five responses were given to the question asking why subjects had enrolled in home economics. Personal interest was the answer given by eighteen subjects. Seven indicated they took home economics because it was required, five felt it would prepare them for the future, three were encouraged by relatives, and two said it was an easy-credit course.

Because of the limitations of this study, all subjects had two or more years of homemaking: three reported enrollment for 2 years, nine for 3 years, one for 3½ years, eleven for 4 years, and three were uncertain about number of years they were enrolled.

The sixteen subjects who had taken home economics less than four

years were asked why they changed from the program. Reasons given were almost evenly divided between "not offered" (six responses) and "could not fit into schedule" (seven responses). One subject felt home economics was not beneficial.

Subjects were asked what areas of study they had undertaken in home economics classes while they were enrolled. Study in the following areas was reported:

| <u>Area</u> | <u>Number</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Clothing and textiles | 27 |
| Child care and development | 26 |
| Foods and nutrition | 25 |
| Personal and family relations | 23 |
| Grooming | 20 |
| Color and art principles | 18 |
| Home furnishings | 18 |
| Home management | 18 |
| Housing | 12 |
| Consumer education | 11 |
| Health and safety | 11 |
| Etiquette | 2 |

Sewing and cooking were immediate responses to the question asked. In most cases it was necessary to assist the subject in recalling other areas. Many subjects indicated difficulty in remembering specific areas of study undertaken four or more years prior to the interview.

VALUES AND BENEFITS DERIVED FROM HOME ECONOMICS

The organization of the Kansas Guide for Homemaking Education¹ has been followed in presenting (1) the expressed values and benefits

¹Kansas State Board for Vocational Education, Kansas Guide for Homemaking Education, p. iii.

derived from home economics at the time of enrollment, (2) the expressed values and benefits recognized after graduation, and (3) the recommended changes for home economics programs. Home economics learnings recognized in major family decisions, applied to wage-earning situations, and thought to be of importance to others are also reported.

Immediate Values and Benefits

The greatest number of values and benefits derived for the time of enrollment was in the area of clothing and textiles. Other areas, in rank order, were: foods and nutrition; personal and family relations; child care and development; home management and consumer education; and housing, home furnishings, and related art. Health and safety received no responses. Analysis of areas from which specific values and benefits were derived while subjects were enrolled, and the number of responses for each, are given in Table I.

The total number of responses to the question concerning values and benefits derived while enrolled in homemaking amounted to sixty-nine. Seven responses were not specific to any subject matter area. One subject said she decided to major in home economics at college as a result of class work. Other general comments were:

I learned a lot.

At the time I wasn't really interested in school. I liked home economics best of all my classes. I enjoyed cooking for dinners for parents and other classes; style shows.

Freshman year home economics taught a mother's responsibilities. That helped me understand why I had to help at home.

TABLE I

VALUES AND BENEFITS DERIVED BY TWENTY-SEVEN YOUNG MARRIED
KANSAS HOMEMAKERS FROM HOME ECONOMICS
DURING ENROLLMENT

| Values and Benefits | Responses |
|--|-----------|
| CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT | |
| Child care related to baby-sitting | 5 |
| Child care related to care of siblings | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 6 |
| CLOTHING AND TEXTILES | |
| Sewing for self | 18 |
| Personal grooming | 5 |
| Helped family save money by sewing for self | 1 |
| Choosing appropriate clothing for self | 1 |
| Matching colors | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 26 |
| FOODS AND NUTRITION | |
| Cooking for family, self, and/or friends | <u>13</u> |
| Total | 13 |
| HEALTH AND SAFETY | |
| Total | 0 |
| HOME MANAGEMENT AND CONSUMER EDUCATION | |
| Money management | 1 |
| Realizing there is more than one way to do something | 1 |
| Tips for working around the house | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 3 |

TABLE I (cont.)

| Values and Benefits | Responses |
|---|-----------|
| HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS, AND RELATED ARTS | |
| Limited decorating of own room | 1 |
| Desire to decorate own room | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 2 |
| PERSONAL AND FAMILY RELATIONS | |
| Etiquette | 2 |
| Understanding my mother's role | 2 |
| Working with others | 2 |
| Preparation for marriage | 1 |
| Getting along with people | 1 |
| Dating standards | 1 |
| Personality study | 1 |
| To be self-sufficient | 1 |
| Meeting with other girls to talk about "women things" | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 12 |

Preparation was more for the future.

I don't think I got as much out of it then as I do now. My goodness, I couldn't live without it now.

I really didn't get any values and benefits at that time that I can think of.

Values and Benefits Recognized After Graduation

Eighty-five responses concerning values and benefits from home economics since graduation were given by the twenty-seven subjects. The greatest number of values and benefits was in the area of clothing and textiles (twenty-seven responses). Other areas, in order of number of responses, were: foods and nutrition (eighteen responses); home management and consumer education (ten responses); personal and family relations (eight responses); child care and development (eight responses); housing, home furnishings, and related art (six responses); and health and safety (one response). Seven responses could not be identified with a specific subject matter area.

Positive comments in regard to values and benefits derived from home economics after graduation were:

I remember little hints and rules.

I know where I could look it [unanswered question] up.

My profession in home economics is a value or benefit.

I think just about everything I learned helps me somehow or another now, and everyday I think it helps me more.

Two subjects indicated that home economics classes had been of little help to them since graduation.

Child care and development. To the initial question of what values and benefits were received from home economics, eight of the twenty-seven subjects indicated values and benefits derived from child care instruction.

Later in the interview, the nineteen young mothers in the study were asked specifically how home economics helped them in handling their children. They contributed twenty-seven statements of which eleven were negative. Condensed replies to the question follow:

| <u>Child Care Values and Benefits</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|---|------------------|
| Little or no help | 11 |
| Psychological aspect of child care | 3 |
| More patience with child | 2 |
| Entertaining child | 2 |
| Knowing he is "normal" | 2 |
| Recognizing symptoms of illness | 1 |
| Nutrition for and feeding of child | 1 |
| Sewing for child | 1 |
| Disciplining child | 1 |
| Not "overly" protective of child | 1 |
| Learning child's needs | 1 |
| Management of household duties with child | 1 |

Typical statements given in answer to the question were:

I feel the way I was raised contributed more.

Mostly my mother helped me.

At the time I was taking it [child care] in high school, I had no idea that children were children like they are. After you have them you learn so much more.

I think I would have been more protective of her [daughter] if it hadn't been for that course [child care].

Fifteen suggestions for program change were made for the area of child care and development. Five subjects said more emphasis on this area was needed. One comment was, "We covered a little bit about all

ages; but not enough about any."

One subject suggested child care courses earlier to help with baby-sitting. Others, in recalling classroom work with children, suggested having more than one child come in and letting pupils take care of children "including some meanies."

Three subjects stressed study of infant care:

More is needed on infant care and that would be appealing to most teenage girls.

Infant care is needed more now because there are more girls getting married when they are younger; you know, right out of school without working at all.

Bathing a baby and childhood diseases should be taught. We studied how long a baby is, its average weight, and that it has a large head and not much neck, but we didn't have much on care. Then we jumped from when they were born to three-year-olds. I didn't even know how to fold a diaper when he came along. I had to learn everything.

Three suggestions were made pertaining to the young mothers' specific problems: tell how to explain a new baby to a first child, how to answer a child's questions, and to teach first aid related to children.

Clothing and textiles. A total of twenty-seven responses were made concerning values and benefits derived in the area of clothing and textiles. Sixteen of the responses dealt with sewing for self and/or family. Specific examples of these were: making maternity clothes (five); sewing for enjoyment (two); helping save money (two); and sewing to get the clothing wanted without having to hunt for it (one).

Other values and benefits derived in the area of clothing and textiles were: mending, repairing, and/or remodeling clothing (five responses); grooming and personal appearance (two responses); making

home furnishings, such as curtains (two responses); and pattern alterations and stain removal (one response respectively).

When subjects were asked what changes in the home economics program they would suggest in light of their experiences as a homemaker, eighteen responses were made for the area of clothing and textiles. Most suggestions dealt with clothing construction. Subjects recommended more sewing, longer class periods, smaller classes, ability grouping, and more freedom to progress for advanced pupils. Two subjects indicated that girls who needed help in class did not always get it. Another said, "It took so long to do things that you got disgusted before you got it done." One homemaker indicated that everything had to be done the teacher's way. Another said that she learned a great deal in the first year but then found the other years repetitive. The method of measuring for patterns was questioned by one subject. She said, "We would measure everything and then buy for just one measurement of the body. Then the patterns were too large."

Specific learnings were recommended: short cuts rather than all pattern guide details; costs of putting in a hem or replacing a zipper; selection of appropriate styles and colors for the individual; selection of clothing suited to needs of children; stain removal; and ironing white shirts.

Foods and nutrition. Eighteen responses concerning values and benefits were in the area of foods and nutrition. Eleven of the eighteen responses dealt with cooking, three with meal planning, two with canning, one with baking, and one with setting a pretty table. Two of the three

who felt meal planning was of value or benefit specifically mentioned the nutritional aspect of meal planning.

Subjects made more recommendations for program change in the foods and nutrition area than in any other subject matter area (twenty-six responses). The young homemakers placed emphasis on the need for study of meal management, meat selection and preparation, and "practical things."

Specific recommendations concerning the study of meal management included: meals to stretch the budget, meal preparation for in-laws, a variety of complete meals rather than snacks, something to be used for more than one meal, and use of left-overs.

Suggestions specific to the study of meat selection and preparation were: what to look for in different cuts of meat, different ways to prepare hamburger, and various ways of cooking low-cost meats.

"Practical things" to be studied included: casseroles, gravy-making, roasting a turkey, and baking. The subject who suggested baking said, "Most of the baking we did was real rich." Learning to make pie crusts and bread were each recommended twice. More laboratory work was prescribed by one subject who said that she had studied a lot about cooking but wished "we could have done it too."

Health and safety. Only one response was made relating to values and benefits in the area of health and safety: first aid for children. No recommendations for program change were made. Less than half of the subjects (eleven) reported having studied this area in homemaking classes.

Home management and consumer education. Ten responses concerning values and benefits in the area of home management and consumer education were given: eight specific to management and two to consumer education. Three responses each dealt with money and time management; two with organization of housekeeping duties and arrangement of kitchen utensils. The only consumer education values and benefits recognized were buying clothing and buying food for more than one week at a time.

Later in the interview subjects were asked how home economics had helped in managing the home. Answers centered around planning, and time, money, and energy management. One subject stated that homemaking classes had not helped her in managing her home. Condensed replies to the question follow:

| <u>Home Economics Contributions to Management of the Home</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|---|------------------|
|---|------------------|

Time Management

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Organizing, following a schedule | 4 |
| In food preparation | 3 |
| In house cleaning | 2 |
| Time savers; short cuts | 2 |
| Routine for dish washing | 1 |
| Flexibility | <u>1</u> |

| | |
|-------|----|
| Total | 13 |
|-------|----|

Money Management

| | |
|---|----------|
| Budgeting | 3 |
| Keeping within the budget | 2 |
| Making, repairing, and remodeling rather than buying new items | 2 |
| Deciding how to spend money | <u>1</u> |

| | |
|-------|---|
| Total | 8 |
|-------|---|

Planning

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Making menus in advance | 3 |
| Using shopping lists | 1 |
| Considering needs before wants | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 5 |

Energy Management

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Kitchen arrangement | 1 |
| Having things handy when bathing baby | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 2 |

The greatest benefit, according to the number of responses, was time management. "Budgeting time, especially now since the baby, helped," was one comment made. Another was, "I'm on a tight schedule because I work. Being able to keep a home and work away from home; that's two different jobs you're trying to do at the same time."

Only eleven subjects reported studying consumer education. However, a total of seventy-two responses were made by twenty-four of the subjects to the question asking what effects home economics had on their consumer role; the remaining three said home economics did not help them in their role of consumer.

Twelve general comments were made. Subjects said they watched for sales with consideration for cost and quality (six responses); shopped around (two responses); were more conscious of labels (two responses); and looked for brand names (two responses).

Effects home economics had on consumer role were identified in only three areas: clothing and textiles (thirty-one responses), foods (twenty-three responses), and home furnishings (six responses).

Responses for clothing and textiles effects on consumer role were mainly concerned with purchasing ready-made garments. Subjects said they looked at or considered: construction; quality and type of fabric; informative labels; color, style, and overall appearance; cost; amount of wrinkling; and present wardrobe. Of these factors, consideration of seam construction was mentioned most often. Labels were checked for laundering instructions, for information pertaining to colorfastness, and for fiber identification.

One subject considered economy of money and time when deciding whether to make or buy garments. Another subject learned to purchase fabrics and all notions at the same time.

Responses for foods effects on consumer role were mainly concerned with selection: meat (six responses), canned foods (three responses), and vegetables (two responses). Other responses were for the following shopping procedures: comparison of quality and food cost; cost comparison of similar food items; label reading; quantity buying if excess could be used later; and purposeful buying. Subjects were helped through home economics in planning to stay within the food budget, in judging the quantity of food needed for two people, and in deciding when to purchase a convenience food.

The six responses made concerning consumer education in the area of home furnishings dealt with consideration of color and/or line in furniture selection (three responses), of furniture construction in comparison to cost, of "shopping around" before buying large items, and of special features on equipment.

The reported effects of home economics on consumer role varied.

Statements concerning consumer education follow:

It would have helped more if I had taken it [consumer education] when older.

We didn't have that much on buying. We'd give the teacher a list and she would buy.

Looking for bargains isn't always the most important thing; you may not get the quality you want.

You get what you pay for.

I go around squeezing bread and poking things.

A food item perhaps two cents higher, but of better quality, may be a better buy than a cheaper food; you may end up throwing away part of the cheaper one.

If you're in a hurry, buy one [pie crust]; to impress, make it.

I look for labels in clothes, especially laundering instructions. With all the new blends, this information is essential. You could almost ruin it if not properly cared for.

Of twenty-three responses recommending program changes in the area of home management and consumer education, eighteen related to home management. Ten responses pertained to money management with two homemakers commenting, "What we had helped. Wish we could have had more." Five subjects specified need for more stress on home management including running the home. Two stated that time management "can't be stressed enough," and one suggested that short cuts in meal planning to save time should be taught in homemaking classes. Suggestions to help with decision-making was recommended by one homemaker.

Five subjects thought more consumer education was needed in home economics. Three specific recommendations were: have pupils check food prices at stores, study more about buying furniture, and study more on

purchase of appliances.

Housing, home furnishings, and related art. Six values and benefits from home economics concerned the area of housing, home furnishings, and related art. Five of the six responses indicated that interior decoration had been of assistance; one indicated that she used home economics learnings when arranging furniture.

Of the twelve recommended changes made by the young homemakers in the area of housing, home furnishings, and related art, only one dealt with housing: see different style homes.

Nine recommendations were made for change in the teaching of home furnishings. Four subjects recommended more information be given on furnishing the home. A reason given for this recommendation was, "A great deal of money is invested in furnishing the home." Other suggestions were: criteria for judging furniture at time of purchase; study of furniture styles; study of successful mixing of furniture styles; more projects, such as designing a shoe-box room; and drapery-making.

Study of color schemes and how to mix colors were suggested for inclusion in a housing, home furnishings, and related art area.

Personal and family relations. Twenty-three of the twenty-seven subjects reported studying personal and family relationships in home economics classes; however, only eight values and benefits were related to this area. Subjects said values and benefits were: a broader outlook about people, sex education, getting along with a mate, making a home for a husband, adjusting to married life, caring for the elderly, and family relations. One subject said, "All that we learned about

married life helps."

Subjects were asked, "How has home economics helped you in getting along with your family?" Thirteen felt home economics had helped them understand and appreciate family members. For seven subjects cooking or sewing at home won family approval. One subject was provided with a mutual interest to share with sisters. Another subject thought a Future Homemakers of America project provided an opportunity for the family to work together. Selected comments on how home economics helped in getting along with the family follow:

It helped me to understand them better and to understand their problems. We all have problems and we all have to help each other to understand them.

In high school we had to write about things we didn't like at home. And then we discussed how we could change them. My brother was a little older and he could do more and I thought I should be able to do that too. We'd talk about that at school . . . and that helped.

Each person is different.

That [getting along] helped when I wanted to apply it.

Ten subjects said they received no help in getting along with the family or saw no relationship between their home economics classes and getting along with the family. One such comment was: "I don't think it helped me at all. I felt secondhand." (Subject was adopted.)

Subjects were asked, "How has home economics helped you in getting along with your friends?" Seven reported that home economics did not provide help in getting along with friends. The remaining twenty subjects contributed twenty-three statements of ways in which home economics did help: by providing mutual interests (seven responses), by

learning to understand friends (six responses), through cooperation (five responses), by helping select and make friends (four responses), and by making and repairing clothing for friends (one response).

Three comments representative of the twenty-three positive statements are:

We all had problems growing up and we learned what to do with each other's problems and how to help each other. We talked about each other's problems and that's one way of helping.

By studying things [teenage moods] objectively, it gave us something to fall back on.

Class taught us how to bring out our personality; how to get in with the group and meet new people.

Only four recommendations for changing the program in the personal and family relations area were made:

Physiology and sex education changed from senior level to tenth grade; budgeting left for senior year.

More depth in fields of family and child development.

Maybe stress the responsibilities of marriage itself. I know when I was in high school we just laughed at the home economics teacher and thought she was telling us all kinds of fibs. I think if we could have more group discussions on these things it would help.

If you want to teach it [family relations]; teach it. Don't go half-way. Part of it was "hush-hush" and yet she [the teacher] was trying to get it across. It should be taught just real plain.

The subject who recommended more depth in study of the family and of child development did so because, "So often . . . people get married and do not realize the obligation of marriage and the obligations of having a family."

Major family decisions related to home economics training. Sixteen subjects reported having made major family decisions which were

influenced by home economics training. Decisions concerned housing (ten), purchasing of home furnishings (five), working before having children (three), being a working mother (one), and moving to a new location (one). Eleven subjects reported having made no major family decision attributable to home economics class learnings.

Values and benefits applied to wage-earning situations. An initial negative reaction was usually given to the question pertaining to use of skills and abilities gained in the homemaking program in a wage-earning situation. After probing, all but seven subjects recalled using home economics skills and abilities in a wage-earning situation. Sixteen subjects reported baby-sitting; two work in a rest home; and two restaurant work. Individual subjects reported the following wage-earning situations: buyer and manager of a sportswear department, work at a clinic, hospital aide, cleaning in a home, and secretarial work. The subject who had done secretarial work listed etiquette, self-improvement, and grooming as the home economics skills and abilities used. One subject indicated that baby-sitting took on a new meaning after studying child care in home economics. She said that,

after Child Care class, baby-sitting was more enjoyable than just a job. It was a challenge to keep them happy and getting them to do what I wanted. At first the thirty-five cents an hour was important; I didn't really care if the children were happy or not.

Values and benefits seen for others. Sixteen subjects said they directly or indirectly encouraged others to enroll in home economics. All twenty-seven former pupils said they would encourage others to enroll in home economics. Some of the reasons given to support their decisions were:

You learn things you don't even realize you're learning.

I really think it's the best thing because you learn to sew and I think all girls should know how to sew.

It helps you even if you're not married.

Any girl, anywhere, if she plans to have a home of her own should take home economics because it's used day in and day out.

You can learn about the new things in homemaking. Even if you are going on to college to train for a career which is outside the field of home economics you are going to have to have an apartment or house or something some day. You're going to be buying food and you might as well know about different qualities of food and things like that.

No matter what the person plans to do with his life, he has to live somewhere--alone or with someone. You need skills of getting along with others.

I would encourage my daughter to [enroll in home economics]. It's important to know how to make your own clothes and how to fix simple meals when baby-sitting.

I think it's very important to every girl. If she's going to be a homemaker, she's got to know what it's all about before she is a homemaker. Home economics class is the beginning.

DISCUSSION

The area of clothing and textiles ranked first and foods and nutrition second in number of responses for values and benefits gained from study. These findings are in accordance with reported studies. It may be possible that more time may have been devoted to these two areas than to other areas.

The fact that the foods and nutrition area ranked first in number of suggested changes for program improvement (25 per cent) indicates possible need for changes in content emphasis. Subjects stressed the need for more study of meal management, selection and preparation of

meats, and "practical things."

Relatively few responses indicated home management and consumer education values and benefits during enrollment (4 per cent) and after graduation (12 per cent). The second greatest number of recommended program changes (22 per cent) came in the area of home management and consumer education. When subjects were specifically asked how home economics training helped in management of the home and in performance of the consumer role, 72 per cent of the responses related to consumer education. Although only eleven subjects reported studying consumer education, the learnings were identified with home economics. Consumer education apparently is taught in connection with other areas more often than as a separate area.

All but four of the twenty-seven subjects reported having had instruction in personal and family relations; however, very few values and benefits were recognized from this area. Responses indicated more values and benefits derived from study during enrollment in home economics (17 per cent) than after graduation (9 per cent). Approximately one-half the subjects felt homemaking helped them understand and appreciate family members; three-fourths felt home economics helped them in getting along with their friends. If the major teaching objective of this area is to provide learnings to be used in adult life or in marriage, course content may need to be carefully analyzed.

All but one subject reported having studied child care and development. More than half of the subjects were mothers of children two years of age or younger, yet few values and benefits were recalled

from time of enrollment and recognized after graduation (9 per cent respectively). The relationship between motherhood and number of responses suggests a question of whether help needed in this area is being received through the secondary homemaking program. It is possible that more attention needs to be given to the study of infant care.

Eleven of the twenty-seven subjects reported studying health and safety in home economics but only one recognized a value or benefit derived from this area. If health and safety is of importance to the individual and to the family, the value of the area is conspicuous by its absence. It may be that more emphasis and time need to be devoted to the area in home economics teaching.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The American way of life is in a state of constant flux. As technological, economic, and social changes take place, the pattern of living for American families is altered. Changes affecting these families have direct bearing on the teaching of home economics.

If the home economics curriculum is to be meaningful for the future learning experiences which point to current and possible future living conditions and problems must be included. Curriculum evaluation, change, and re-evaluation is and will continue to be needed.

The knowledge explosion has created a need in home economics for specialization and at the same time for breadth. Ability to apply basic principles to current and future situations needs to be emphasized.

Studies show that home economics enrollment is influenced most by personal interests of prospective pupils and by the quality of homemaking program offered. Problems and needs mentioned most frequently in studies of homemakers deal with intangible phases of homemaking such as managing and planning. Investigation of personal and family living interests of high school youth has shown those interests to be associated with self for ninth and tenth grade pupils and associated with the family for eleventh and twelfth grade pupils.

The purpose of this study was to identify the values and benefits gained by young married Kansas women from enrollment in vocational homemaking.

The study was limited to 1961 and 1963 graduates who had been enrolled in at least two years of vocational homemaking, ninth grade and above, in three Kansas high schools. The selected high schools were representative of different size Kansas secondary schools offering vocational home economics programs. Of the twenty-seven subjects, nineteen had children and all but five had been employed outside the home at some time since marriage.

Collection of data was through use of a tape recorder and an interview schedule. The interview schedule used was an adaptation of one suggested for the 1968 national evaluation project pertaining to home economics. A preliminary study was conducted to refine the interview schedule and technique. The taped interviews were forwarded to the Kansas State Board for Vocational Education for use in the 1968 national evaluation of home economics programs.

It was found that more than two-thirds of the twenty-seven subjects had enrolled in home economics because of personal interest.

Subjects were asked to recall values and benefits received from homemaking classes during the time of enrollment and to report values and benefits recognized since graduation. A total of 154 responses was given: sixty-nine responses of values and benefits derived while enrolled in homemaking and eighty-five responses of values and benefits received since graduation.

Changes in the home economics program made in light of experience as a wife, and in some cases mother, were recommended by all but five subjects. A total of 103 recommendations were made.

The area of clothing and textiles ranked first in number of values and benefits derived by Kansas homemakers from home economics classes: 38 per cent of all responses for values and benefits recalled from the time of enrollment and 32 per cent of all responses for values and benefits recognized since graduation. Subjects found sewing for self and/or family to be the most important benefit or value received from this area since graduation. More of the recommendations for program concerned the classroom situation (56 per cent) rather than specific learnings.

Foods and nutrition ranked second in number of values and benefits responses (19 per cent for time of enrollment and 21 per cent for after graduation) and first in number of suggested changes for program improvement (25 per cent). Subjects' suggestions emphasized the need for more study of meal management, selection and preparation of meats, and "practical things."

Relatively few responses indicated home management and consumer education values and benefits during enrollment (4 per cent) and after graduation (12 per cent). However, when subjects were specifically asked how home economics training helped in management of the home and in performance of the consumer role, one hundred responses were made. Seventy-two per cent of those responses related to consumer education, although only eleven subjects reported studying in this area. The second greatest number of recommended program changes (22 per cent) came in the area of home management and consumer education.

All but four of the twenty-seven subjects reported having had

instruction in personal and family relations; however, very few values and benefits were recognized from this area. Responses indicated more values and benefits derived from study during enrollment in home economics (17 per cent) than after graduation (9 per cent). Approximately one-half the subjects felt homemaking helped them understand and appreciate family members; three-fourths felt home economics helped them in getting along with their friends. Of all recommendations for home economics program change, only 4 per cent dealt with the area of personal and family relations.

All but one subject reported having studied child care and development. The same proportion of values and benefits were recalled from time of enrollment and recognized after graduation (9 per cent respectively).

Of all values and benefits recognized after graduation, only 7 per cent were identified in the area of housing, home furnishings, and related art; however, fifteen major family decisions made concerning housing and the purchase of home furnishings were reported as being influenced by home economics learnings. Most recommended changes (75 per cent) in this area concerned the study of home furnishings.

Eleven of the twenty-seven subjects reported studying health and safety in home economics but only one recognized a value or benefit derived from this area.

Use of skills and abilities gained from home economics classes in wage-earning situations was reported by 74 per cent of the subjects. Sixteen subjects reported baby-sitting.

All subjects said they would encourage others to enroll in home economics.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusion, based on the outcomes of this study, seems warranted. Recognized values and benefits derived from enrollment in vocational homemaking by young married Kansas women were identified in all areas of study. More values and benefits were identified for the areas of clothing and textiles and foods and nutrition than for the areas of home management and consumer education; personal and family relations; child care and development; housing, home furnishings, and related art; and health and safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made:

- (1) Conduct the same study with a larger number of subjects and schools so data could be treated statistically. Comparisons could be made between and among the homemaking programs of schools of each representative size.
- (2) Combine interview technique used with a questionnaire. Use the questionnaire for obtaining background information.

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APPENDIX A

—

Kansas State University

Manhattan, Kansas 66502

College of Education
Holtzen Hall

Dear

I need your help! Certain graduates of Buhler, Onaga, and Wichita North High Schools who have had two or more years of home economics, ninth grade and above, and who are now married are being asked to participate in a national study of home economics. You are one of the thirty young women in Kansas who have been selected to participate in this evaluation of home economics programs. As a wife, and perhaps mother too, you are putting home economics into practice every day. That is why your opinions are important to us. We need to know how home economics classes have helped you and what additional help they could have provided to better prepare you for your future,

May I interview you about your home economics classes on at approximately ? The interview will take only twenty to thirty minutes as it will be tape recorded to save time. All information will be confidential.

Your cooperation in this study will be greatly appreciated. Won't you please fill out and return the enclosed post card today?

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Nancy Riemann
Graduate Student in
Home Economics Education

PLEASE RETURN THIS CARD IMMEDIATELY

Miss

Mrs. _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Could you be available for an interview at _____ on _____?

(Indicate "yes" or "no") _____

If the answer to the above question is no, is there another time on that day which would be better for you? (If so, what time is better?) _____

Are there any special directions needed for reaching your home?

If so, please mention them here. _____

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SELECTED FORMER KANSAS
HOMEMAKING PROGRAM PUPILS

I am Nancy Riemann from Kansas State University. I have been told that you were a student in the homemaking program at _____ High School.

In what year did you graduate from high school?

How long have you been married?

How old were you and your husband when you were married?

Do you have any children?

How many children do you have?

How old are they?

Do you own your own home? Rent? What?

Do you work--either full time or part time?

(yes) What do you do?

(no) Have you been employed at any time since your marriage?

What did you do?

Why did you stop working?

What work does your husband do?

What education or special training has your husband completed?

Where do your parents live?

How long have they lived there (here)?

What does your father do?

Does your mother work?

What education or special training have your parents completed?

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

What are their ages?

Have you continued your education since high school or do you plan to continue it?

(yes) In what way?

What are your plans for your future?

When did you first enroll in the homemaking program?

What encouraged you to enroll?

How many years of home economics did you complete?

Why did you change from the program?

What general areas of study did you undertake in home economics classes?

What benefits did you get from this program while you were in the classes?

What benefits are you enjoying now from those classes?

How has home economics helped you in handling your children (child)?

How has home economics instruction helped you in getting along with your parents, brothers, and sisters? with your friends?

How has this training helped you in managing your home?

What effects have those classes had on your role as a consumer?

Have you made any major family decisions concerning your home and family on the basis of the training you received in homemaking classes?

Have you ever used the skills and abilities gained in this program in any form of a wage-earning situation?

Would you encourage others to enroll in home economics classes?

Have you encouraged anyone?

Did they enroll?

Would you recommend any changes be made in this program in light of your experience as a wife and mother?

(wife and homemaker)?

Thank you for taking time to discuss your home economics experiences with me. Your willingness to contribute is appreciated.

APPENDIX C

Tape # _____

_____ Buhler

_____ Onaga

_____ Wichita

_____ 1961

_____ 1963

_____ Years married

_____ Age at marriage

_____ Husband's age then

_____ # of children

_____ ages

_____ Rent

_____ Own: house - mobile home

_____ Buying: house - mobile home

_____ Other

Work:

Employed since marriage:

Reason for quitting work:

_____ Pregnancy

Husband's work:

Husband's education:

Parents live in:

_____ Buhler

_____ Onaga

_____ Wichita

How long?

Father's work:

Mother's work:

Education:

Father's:

Mother's:

_____ Brothers Ages:

_____ Sisters Ages:

Subject's education since high
school:

Future plans:

First enrolled in home econ.

_____ 9th grade

Encouraged to enroll by:

_____ relative

_____ easy subject

_____ interest in sewing & cooking

_____ required

_____ preparation for future

_____ # of years completed

Why changed from program:

_____ couldn't fit into schedule

_____ not offered

General areas of study undertaken:

_____ child care

_____ clothing

_____ color & art principles

_____ consumer education

_____ first aid

_____ foods

_____ grooming

_____ home furnishings

_____ home management

_____ housing

_____ personal & family relationships

Benefits while enrolled:

Benefits now:

Handling children:

Getting along with family:

Getting along with friends:

Help in managing home:

Effects on role as a consumer:

Major family decisions:

Skills & abilities - wage earning:

Encourage others to enroll: _____ Yes

Have you? Yes No

Did they? Yes No

Recommended changes:

VALUES AND BENEFITS GAINED FROM STUDY OF VOCATIONAL
HOMEMAKING BY SELECTED FORMER KANSAS PUPILS

by

NANCY JELINEK RIEMANN

B. S., Michigan State University, 1963

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1968

The purpose of this study was to identify the values and benefits gained by young married Kansas women from enrollment in vocational homemaking.

The twenty-seven subjects were 1961 and 1963 graduates of three representative Kansas high schools. Nineteen had children and all but five had been employed outside the home at some time since marriage.

Collection of data was through use of a tape recorder and an interview schedule. A preliminary study was conducted to refine the interview schedule and technique. The taped interviews were forwarded to the Kansas State Board for Vocational Education for use in the 1968 national evaluation of home economics programs.

It was found that the area of clothing and textiles ranked first and foods and nutrition second in number of responses for values and benefits gained from study in homemaking.

Foods and nutrition ranked first and the area of home management and consumer education second in number of suggested changes for program improvement.

The following conclusion, based on the outcomes of the study, seemed warranted. Recognized values and benefits derived from enrollment in vocational homemaking by young married Kansas women were identified in all areas of study. More values and benefits were identified for the areas of clothing and textiles and foods and nutrition than for the areas of home management and consumer education; personal and family relations; child care and development; housing, home furnishings, and related art; and health and safety.