

Privation of Home Sciences a Skill Based Subject to opt by the Students of Undergraduate Level

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Abstract

Home Sciences is an exclusive, professional as well as skill-based subject. In actuality, people are not considering its valuable because of its perception of being joined to home activities. The research determines student, teacher and mother related factors influencing the student to adopt Home Sciences as a subject at undergraduate level. This study is quantitative, in which the data is collected by making three different questionnaires. The first one is filled by the students of Home Sciences at undergraduate level, the second is filled by the teachers who teach undergraduate level and the third questionnaire is filled by the mothers who had studied this subject at any level in their educational career and they have decided to have their girls enrolled in this subject. The analysis is concluded on the percentages which determine the deficits and ideas stated by the three types of respondents. Data results indicate that lack of facilities, finance problems, un-trained teaching staff and a very extensive syllabus make students unwilling to choose this subject even though they know its career opportunities. Teachers do not consider it the most useful subject at undergraduate level but consider it helpful for girls at home. Mothers are agreeable to having more creative teachers for this subject to teach their girls so it can be more useful for them in order to deal with everyday problems.

Keywords: Privation, Home Sciences, Issues, Undergraduate level, Skill based, Subject

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Introduction

The field of Home Sciences represents many disciplines including consumer science, nutrition, food preparation, parenting, early childhood education, family economics, human development,

interior design, textiles, apparel design, as well as other related subjects. The increase in home Sciences enrollment must be initiated for the welfare of the society (Lauglo, 2005).

Home Sciences, is a subject of diversity and relationship which has depth and capability to deal with our personal and social life matters. Even the subject name has now changed in most countries, it has adopted the new term of "Family and Consumer Science" or "ConsumerSciences" to reflect the fact that the field covers aspects outside of home (Chang, Singh, Mo F, 2007). The scenario of this research is to identify why Home Sciences it is not a growing subject in Pakistan and worldwide like the others for example, medicine, business, marketing etc.

According to Ellen Richards, the first President of Home Economic Association,

“Home Economics / Home Sciences aims at freedom of home from dominance of things and their due subordination to ideals; the simplicity in material surroundings which will free the spirit for the more important and permanent interests of the home and society, the ideal home life for today unhampered by the past.”

It is being chosen in schools and colleges till graduate level (Lichtenstein, 2010) but limited numbers of students select it for higher studies. However, Home Sciences opens up a vast array of career choices for the young learners.

In present times, the popularity of Home Sciences course has declined. In undergraduate level, grade eleven and twelve, the focus is more on courses that prepare one for university rather than the life skills. Besides, Homemaking and Home Sciences courses have developed a negative connotation because of a not mentioned or streamlined professional importance. The research was focused on the undergraduate level learners who choose to opt for Home Sciences. The subject is chosen because of its necessity in our modern society where everyone is far too busy in life to cater to their relationships, to foster love and belonging, to cater to the need to raise cultural values

and give importance to human beings instead of only earning a livelihood or demanding their rights. The young girls are receptive and intent, eager for instruction and the teacher's guidance and facilitation. Even in this industrialized era, we live in an organic world wherein it is mandatory to extend the skills for natural living which are enjoyable. So, it is not feasible to let this skill-based subject vanish, but efforts are required to modernize it. Secondly, the importance of Home Sciences must be emphasized by upgrading its career opportunities.

The subject must win appreciation from the public, we must spread the conviction that Home Sciences make students well equipped to make good decisions in life and solve problems in their academic and professional careers as well as their personal lives. It is observed that although some very intelligent students may get the highest percentage in studying difficult subjects but these youngsters may fail to bring together subjects in studies and household responsibilities.

Enrolment in Home Sciences has been low compared to the other academic oriented subjects, at the undergraduate level. Home Sciences is an optional subject and it can help in adopting professional fields of study that deal with the economics and management of the home and community. Home Sciences develops relationship between individuals, families, communities, and the environment. As a subject of study, it prepares students for homemaking or professional careers, or assists them in preparing to fulfill real-life responsibilities at home. It molds the learner into a responsible person who can handle day to day challenges since it teaches rights and duties as a consumer.

Various factors have been identified as barriers to successful inclusion of Home Sciences for instance, there have been general complaints from parents and teachers that Home Sciences is an expensive subject (Sifuna, Kaime 2007). As a result, many parents have found it difficult to

contribute towards Home Sciences expenses, and only students who can afford the cost opt for the subject, while others enroll in other optional subjects (O'Donnell 2001). It is also noticed that lack of adequate facilities hinders student enrolment stability in the Home Sciences subject. Furthermore, the teachers also need training in this field (Maina and Kitainge, 2018).

The future prospects for the undergraduate students of Home Sciences are bright. After the Bachelor's degree in Home Sciences, you can opt for Masters and Ph.D. Therefore, the researcher's intention is to document the factors hindering Home Sciences studies at the undergraduate level. Depending on specialization, the option of working as a dietitian, food scientist, textile designer, interior designer, apparel designer, family counsellor, teacher, researcher and social worker for the Home Sciences students exist. (Bickman, 1998).

The 21st century woman is balancing a full-time career, besides managing her home and family. In an ideal situation, where the woman is also working, the husband might chip in with the household responsibilities such as cooking food and taking care of the needs of the children. Unfortunately, it is not the case in most homes, even if they are nuclear families. It is the woman's duty to cook meals, teach the children, manage the household expenses, do the laundry, and ensure that she has enough energy to focus on her job (Ndiga, 2004).

Given this challenges faced by the modern-day woman, it is good if some academicians are of the opinion that introducing Home Sciences as a compulsory subject in the syllabus is beneficial. The guiding principle is that if we want to save this professional skill-based subject for its numerous benefits, it must be preferred at the undergraduate level.

1.1 Objectives

1. What are the factors that induce under graduate students to opt for Home Sciences?

2. Why do teachers opt to teach Home Sciences at the under graduate level?
3. Why do mothers of under graduate daughters choose Home Sciences as a subject?

Research Methodology

The research has used quantitative method in which a structured questionnaire was used to gather data. The design was adopted from Aming'a questionnaire model used in her study in Kenya after amendments according to the research requirement. The researcher chose to investigate the Undergraduate level because it is the base line for majority of the youngsters to choose any career. The sample was purposefully selected with 100 students studying this subject at an undergraduate level and 30 teachers teaching this subject at the undergraduate level, and 40 mothers who had studied this subject at any level of their education and they had their girls in schools enrolled in this subject, the researcher wished to investigate why they had chosen the subject of Home Sciences for their girls. The response rate was 100% because of the purposive sampling and an explanation of the research objectives which encouraged all to facilitate in the study so the issue of the subject could be raised in the world.

The test and retest techniques were used to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Results and Discussion

3.1 Student Related Factors

The attitude of students towards the subject is important to study, especially if they are studying the subject at the undergraduate level because they set an example to their juniors. In the analysis, three-point Likert scale Agree=1, Disagree=2, Not Sure= 3 (**Table 1**) was used. The results were concluded on the percentage scores of the statements.

Statements measuring attitude of students	1	2	3	Total (N)

Career opportunities in Home Sciences make students reluctant to choose the subject.	30	60	10	100
	%	%	%	
Lack of adequate facilities distract students away from enrolling in the subject	75	20	5%	100
	%	%		
Home Sciences subject is taught by a cooperative staff.	40	60	0%	100
	%	%		
Home Sciences is more important than the other subjects in the curriculum.	40	50	10	100
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences is a practical subject that develops skills relevant to daily life.	80	15	5%	100
	%	%		
Home Sciences encourages self-development	65	30	5%	100
	%	%		
Home Sciences offers the promise of a financially rewarding career.	50	25	25	100
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences should be compulsory at the undergraduate level.	15	65	20	100
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences syllabus is too vast to cover adequately.	60	30	1%	100
	%	%		
Home Sciences offers solutions to our difficulties.	65	15	20	100
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences must be selected because it deals with real situations.	55	15	30	100
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences does not have trained staff to teach.	65	5%	30	100
	%		%	
Home Sciences laboratories need more facilities to help in learning.	80	5%	15	100
	%		%	

Home Sciencesneeds to update its laboratories, apparatus and equipment.	85 %	0%	15 %	100
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Table 1: Attitude of students towards Home Sciences

The results presented in **Table 1** shows that, majority of students around 60% disagree that career opportunities in Home Sciences distracts them from not choosing the subject, but a lack of adequate facilities make students anxious not to enroll in the subject is stated by 75% of the students.

60% students disagree with having a cooperative staff to teach Home Sciences, while 50% also disagree with considering Home Sciences as being more important than all other subjects in the curriculum. But 80% consider it as a practical subject that develops skills relevant to daily life and 65% agree that it encourages self-development. Around 50 % students agree that Home Sciences offers promise of a financially rewarding career but along with this they disagree that Home Sciences should be compulsory at the undergraduate level. Students agree 60% that Home Sciences syllabus is too wide to cover adequately and about 65% consider Home Sciences subject as offering solutions to our difficulties.55% students say that Home Sciences must be selected because it deals with real situations, while 65 % agree that Home Sciences does not have trained staff to teach, while 80 % of respondents say that Home Sciences laboratories need more facilities to help in learning and 85 % consider that Home Sciences need to update its laboratories apparatus and equipment.

The survey concluded the overall attitude of students showed willingness to study Home Sciences with the decision to opt for it with certain modifications such as the revision of syllabus, provision of facilities, training of teachers in the use of the latest equipment for conducting practical work.

3.2 Teacher Related Factors

Teachers were also included in the study to find out how positive or negative they felt about the subject they were about to teach and to encourage students to opt for this subject or to highlight the hurdles in the way to adopting Home Sciences at the undergraduate level. A three-point Likert scale was used where 1=Agree, 2=Disagree, 3=Not Sure (**Table 2**).

Statements measuring attitude of teachers	1	2	3	Total (N)
Home Sciences is the most useful subject at undergraduate level.	23 %	77 %	0%	30
Home Sciences is an easy subject to teach.	23 %	43 %	33 %	30
Home Sciences curriculum is too lengthy to cover adequately.	83 %	17 %	0%	30
Home Sciences needs creativity from teachers who teach it.	50 %	33 %	17 %	30
Home Sciences has appropriate content for the undergraduate level learners.	33 %	63 %	3%	30
Home Science syllabus needs to be revised.	63 %	10 %	27 %	30
Lack of Home Sciences equipment makes teaching almost impossible.	83 %	17 %	0%	30
Home Sciences faculty needs training to enhance their skills.	43 %	53 %	3%	30
Lack of facilities makes students anxious not to enroll in Home Sciences.	50 %	27 %	23 %	30
The content the students are supposed to cover cannot be covered within available time.	73 %	7%	20 %	30

Table 2: Attitude of teachers towards Home Sciences.

The results presented in **Table 2** shows that; majority of the teachers (77%) disagreed with the statement that it is the most useful subject at undergraduate level and 43 % disagree that it is an easy subject. But 83% agree that its curriculum is too lengthy to cover adequately, while 50% agreed with the view that it needed creativity in teachers to teach it, while 63% disagreed that it had appropriate content for the undergraduate level. 63%of teachers agreed that Home Sciences syllabus needs to be revised and 83% agreed that lack of Home Sciences equipment makes teaching almost impossible. Nevertheless 53% disagreed that Home Sciences faculty needs training to enhance their skills, 50% agreed that lack of facilities make students anxious not to enroll in Home Sciences, while 73% agreed that the content the students are supposed to cover cannot be covered within available time. The overall attitude of teachers showed that they were a little reluctant to recommend this subject because of their experiences and lack of opportunities available for them to teach it.

3.3 Parent Related Factors

Mothers (parents) are also stakeholders in the subject selection who can demand better state of affairs in the subject or who are anxious to remove deficiencies from the subject to be adopted for their girls.

Statements measuring attitude of parents	1	2	3	Total (N)
Home Sciences is the most useful subject at undergraduate level.	63 %	38 %	0%	40
Average girls find Home Sciences to be an easy subject to study.	45 %	33 %	23 %	40

Home Sciences is not career oriented.	30	45	25	40
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences needs creativity to teach it so that more girls may adopt this subject.	48	35	18	40
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences has the capability to make girls creative.	63	30	8%	40
	%	%		
Home Sciences teaches every day skills to girls.	65	20	15	40
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences is a helpful subject to deal with life problems.	58	25	18	40
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences trains girls to enhance their skills.	65	25	10	40
	%	%	%	
Home Sciences is an expensive subject.	58	20	23	40
	%	%	%	
Lack of facilities makes girls anxious not to enroll in Home Sciences.	80	13	8%	40
	%	%		
Home Sciences is a helpful subject in our daily problems.	70	25	5%	40
	%	%		

Table 3: Attitude of teachers towards Home Sciences

The results presented in **Table 3** shows the attitude of mothers towards Home Sciences, so that 63% agree that it is the most useful subject at undergraduate level but only 45% agreed to considering Home Sciences an easy subject to study by average girls, while 45% disagreed that it is not career oriented, while 48% agreed that Home Sciences needs creativity from teachers to teach it so that more girls may adopt this subject, while 63 % agreed that it has the capability to make girls creative, and 65% agreed that it taught every day skills to girls. 58% agreed that Home Sciences is helpful subject to deal with life problems, 65% agreed that Home Sciences trains girls

to enhance their skills but 58% also said that it is an expensive subject, 80% agreed that lack of facilities make girls anxious not to enroll in Home Sciences and 70% agreed to it being a helping subject in our daily problems. The overall attitude of mothers was positive and they were willing to choose Home Sciences for their girls but in some improved, working conditions. Mothers confided that they wanted to make their daughters creative with enhanced skills which would help in their lives.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The attitude of students, teachers and mothers showed that they knew the career opportunities in Home Sciences but lack of adequate facilities like laboratories, apparatus and equipment make students reluctant to enroll in the subject. They felt satisfied with the staff but insisted they needed syllabus to be revised and knew that Home Sciences developed skills relevant to daily life and encouraged self-development. Teachers disagreed with Home Sciences being made compulsory at undergraduate level and mothers also considered it an expensive subject. The researcher recommends that the subject needs to be followed from primary to higher level but the intention of the researcher was on highlighting Home Sciences for its value, suggesting syllabus revision for practical importance. The research would open new horizons in curriculum development for authorities, guide educational administration, compel parents and even students to think about the need of the day in order to opt for a subject which can deal with diverse roles and responsibilities. The subject has ingenuousness for everyone and encourages one to look into ways of getting solutions of their problems in order to make life comfortable and smooth.

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