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Title	Home economics education in the secondary level in the Philippines: from investigation of a home economics teacher( fulltext )
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Citation	東京学芸大学紀要. 総合教育科学系, 58: 371-378
Issue Date	2007-02-00
URL	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/2309/65486">http://hdl.handle.net/2309/65486</a>
Publisher	Committee of Publication of Bulletin of Tokyo Gakugei University
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# Home Economics Education in the Secondary Level in the Philippines

— From investigation of a home economics teacher —

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(Received for Publication; September 29, 2006)

Key words: Philippines, home economics, curriculum, objectives, instructional materials and methodologies

## Introduction

The study of home economics is the study of life itself, that of preparing oneself to manage the different aspects affecting one's way of living in the home, in the community and in the society. In the Philippines, home economics is focused on teaching the students the value of the home, the family and the society, and the subject also gives the students a lot of time to do practical work to prepare them for home life in the future. In the secondary level, Technology and Home Economics (THE) is offered from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> year. Although in some special science high schools, Technology and Home Economics (THE) is offered only from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> years with a full concentration on the technological part, which is computer education.

## Methods

In the process of gathering data for the input, the researcher floated questionnaires in order to verify the data. The survey form was mailed to the teachers of home economics subjects from August to December, 2004 all over the Philippines. And a reply was requested from them. 162 home economics teachers returned the survey form. The recovery rate was about 80%. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was employed to analyze and interpret the data. All the data gathered were painstakingly encoded and interpreted using MS Excel and SPSS programs.

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Outline of Home Economics Education in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the subject Technology and Home Economics (THE) is also moving towards the use of technology in line with the modernization that the whole world is geared to. It is very evident that this subject is aimed at the best interest of the students in terms of gaining enough knowledge, skills and value formation while undertaking work at home that the students must give importance to. For this reason, the subject allows ample time in training the students during laboratory work after discussing different theories, which in turn will give the students enough experience to deal with the different trades of everyday life. When it comes to the subject, the Department of Education under the leadership of the former Secretary of Education, Raul S. Roco,

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home economics was affected when the Basic Education Curriculum was revised in 2002. Prior to the revision, home economics was treated as a single subject, but with the revision, it was integrated with three other subjects and was called MAKABAYAN collectively though still being taught as a separate subject. To achieve the aim, the Department of Education has restructured the curriculum into five learning areas namely, Filipino, English, Science, Mathematics and MAKABAYAN with stronger integration of competencies within and across these learning areas. MAKABAYAN is comprised of Social Studies, PEHM (Physical Education, Health and Music), Values Education and Technology and Home Economics (THE). With this, MAKABAYAN will be a laboratory of life or a practice environment for holistic learning to develop a healthy personal and national self identity. This requires an adequate understanding of Philippine history and our politico-economic system, local cultures, crafts, arts, music and games. In the Philippines, both genders attend technology and home economics classes but during the secondary level, there are some subject matters THE wherein the boys are separated from the girls. Before the implementation of MAKABAYAN, home economics was a good 80-minute period everyday, now it is only 40-60 minutes and the number of days vary according to the schedule agreed upon by all the teachers of MAKABAYAN.

## 2. Home Economics in the Secondary Level

Taking a closer look at the topics taught in THE subjects in the Philippines, its objective is to acquire productive and entrepreneurial skills, work ethic and occupational knowledge essential both for making an intelligent choice as regards to one's career and for specialized training in one's occupation.

The above-mentioned topics are taught in Regular Public/Private High Schools and Agricultural High Schools. Moreover, high schools in the Philippines can be classified into 3 categories: *Regular Public/Private High Schools, Agricultural Laboratory High School and Special Science High Schools*. The three different types of high schools offer different approaches in teaching home economics, though they all have the same goal, which is to prepare the students for future life, and to make them an active part of the society and the community but at the same time be an active homemaker and very good at that. In schools like the Ramon Magsaysay Technological University that has a laboratory high school (meaning that it is a university that offers education courses and the students – teachers can have their practicum at the same university in its secondary laboratory department.), food production makes up most of the topics. In addition, food preservation is part of the answer to the ever-growing problem of hunger and malnutrition in the Philippines. The objective of food preservation is to encourage homemakers and students to preserve at home. As for industrial arts, handicraft is one's creation of articles using tools or simply by manual skills. It prompts family economics leading to national economic growth and development which could be attained through one's love of work and creativity. Through creativity, one's unique ability to use manual skills in making articles out of raw materials will move on using handy tools. When the students are trained to do some handiwork it begins to improve family economics and can be turned into a small cottage industry and moves on rapidly to national economic progress.

This is primarily the reason why the home economics subject in the Philippines teaches Entrepreneurship, because with or without school training any one can start a small entrepreneurship which can be expanded to a larger one with the help of family members. Family members working together for a cause will have more earnings for their daily expenditures, more savings and more employment. Concentration on their family industry and aiming to improve the quality of their products will mean success and more power. Home economics in the Philippines helps the students to set their goals in the event that they cannot afford to continue on with higher education, this subject in high school will enable them to be prepared and face their future with hope and positive attitude.



Photo 1 Students' activity

### 3. Results of the investigation

#### 1) Characteristics of the Sample

As for the teacher respondents' years of instruction experience, 1 to 5 years were about 10%. The teachers having 20 years of experience were about 23%. 60.5% of the teachers have a major degree in home economics. 25.9% of the teachers have major degrees in mathematics, social studies, science and so on. And 51.9% of the teachers can teach all of the topics required for a school year, but 45.7% of them cannot teach. 87.5% of them said that all of the textbooks were unavailable for students' use. 29.4% of the teachers answered that both genders were studying home economics together, and 66.7% of the teachers answered that they were learning separately. (Table 1)

Table 1 Teacher's attributes

(%)

<b>Age</b>	20~29	30~39	40~49	50~	N.A.			
	3.7	30.2	36.4	20.4	9.3			
<b>Year of Experiences.</b>	1to5	6to10	11to15	16to20	21to25	26to30	Over30	N..A.
	14.2	17.9	17.9	14.8	10.5	8.6	4.3	11.8
<b>Major</b>	Home economics	Industrial	General	Others	N.A.			
	60.5	4.3	0.6	25.9	8.7			

(n=162)

#### 2) Time allotment and populations

As mentioned previously in this paper, the change in the curriculum has affected the time allotment of home economics. It is now 40-60 minutes either everyday or 4 times a week and even 3 times a week. The schedule depends on the agreed time by MAKABAYAN teachers.

40 to 60 minutes of school hours was 86.4%. 47.5% of the teachers answered that the school hours for home economics was enough. However, the teachers who answered that it was short were 48.1%.

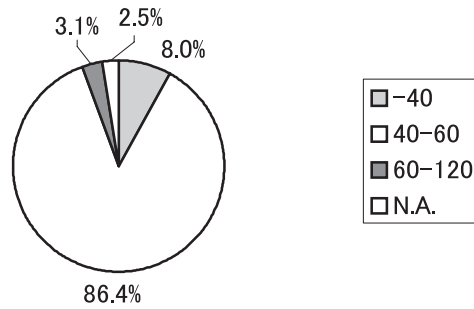


Fig. 1 Time allotment

38.9% of the teachers responded that the number of students per class is 41-60 persons, -80 persons (35.2%), -100 persons (about 5%). The teachers were teaching many students.

Fig. 1 shows the time allotment of home economics in relation to the number of respondents.

The population ranges from 20 to 100 students in high school. Fig. 2 below shows how many respondents have the most number of students and the least number of students in a class.

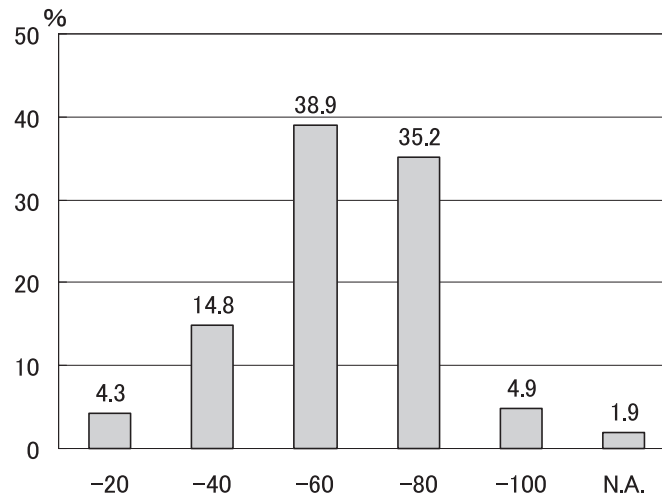


Fig. 2 Population per class

### 3) Facilities

Table 2 shows the data about the facilities in the Philippines used purposely for home economics. In terms of satisfaction with the facilities and equipment, the chart below shows the teacher-respondents' reaction. To reiterate further, this research has 162 Filipino teacher-respondents. 61.7% of the teachers used a cooking room/kitchen, 32.7% of them used a sewing room, and 77.8% of them used a computer room. As shown in table 3 we requested them to respond in one of five degrees from "very satisfied" to "not at all satisfied". About 30% of them responded "very satisfied" and "fairly satisfied" for the size and equipment, utensils, and about 40% of them for sanitation. About 20% of them were satisfied with Sewing room size. But 50-60% of them were not satisfied in the number of units and printers in the computer room.

Table 2 Facilities (%)

	Kitchen	Sewing Room	Computer Room	Industrial Arts Room
Yes	61.7	32.7	77.8	44.4
None	32.7	63.6	20.4	51.9
N.A.	5.6	3.7	1.8	3.7

(n=162)

Table 3 Degree of satisfaction of facilities (%)

Facilities	Degree of Satisfaction	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not at all Satisfied	Don't know	N.A
<b>Cooking room / Kitchen</b>	Size	4.3	25.3	25.9	24.7	8.0	11.7
	Equipment	6.2	21.0	27.8	30.2	4.9	9.9
	Utensils	4.9	24.7	22.8	34.6	4.3	8.6
	Sanitation	8.0	33.3	22.2	17.9	9.3	9.3
<b>Sewing Room</b>	Size	3.7	19.1	18.5	31.5	8.0	19.1
	No. of Sewing Machines	3.7	15.4	26.5	32.1	6.8	15.4
<b>Computer Room</b>	Size	13.6	25.3	22.8	22.8	8.6	6.8
	No.ofUnits	6.8	30.9	27.8	22.8	4.9	6.8
	No.ofPrinters	4.3	25.9	32.1	27.2	3.7	6.8
<b>Industrial Arts Room</b>	Size	5.6	26.5	21.0	21.6	4.9	20.4
	No.ofMachines	6.8	17.9	27.2	23.5	4.9	19.8
	Tools	5.6	17.9	31.5	24.1	4.3	16.7

(n=162)

#### 4) Methods in Teaching Home Economics

Shown in table 4, the use of technology in the lecture or any other activity in the Philippines is as shown. 94.8% of home economics teacher used a discussion/lecture method, 78.1% of them used laboratory work /hands-on-training. Teachers also used other methods for example brainstorming, role playing, group work and demonstrations. Varied methods are applied so as not to bore the students and to always make them enthusiastic for learning THE.

Table 4 Methods in teaching (%)

Dichotomy label	Count	Pct. of Cases
lecture	147	94.8
text book	80	51.6
work sheets	48	31.0
laboratory works	121	78.1
audio visual aids	59	38.1
field trip	22	14.2
survey	14	9.0
research	51	32.9
others	5	0.5

(n=162) (M.A.)

We requested the teachers to check about the instructional materials that they use in THE classes. 72.8% of the teachers used flat Materials (photos, charts, graphs, etc), and an overhead projector (11.7%) was seldom used. Film Showing, for example TV & Video, was used by about 20% of them. In teaching Home Economics, different instructional materials are also used to make the teaching of the subject more challenging and at the same time fun.

#### 5) Topics Taught

The teachers were asked to rate the topics in terms of importance. Shown in table 5, the tables on these categories show how the teachers find some of the topics in terms of importance and contribution to the well being of the students. Home economics teachers responded that Home Life, Home Management, Food and Nutrition and Computer Education were very important

contents. But about 70% of them thought clothing and sewing were important topics in home economics.

Table 5 Topics taught (%)

	Very important	Not so important	Not important	N.A..
Home Life	90.1	1.9	0.6	7.4
Home Management	90.1	2.5	0.6	6.8
Food and Nutrition	91.4	2.5	0.0	6.2
Culinary Arts	83.3	9.9	0.0	6.8
Clothing	77.2	13.6	1.2	8.0
Sewing	74.1	17.3	1.2	7.4
Family and Child Care	87.0	6.2	0.0	6.8
Nursing the Sick	83.3	9.9	0.0	6.8
Computer Education	94.4	1.2	0.0	4.3

(n=162)

## 6) Teachers' opinions

The teachers evaluated the ideas and answered those according to what they think in terms of the weight of impact home economics education has based on the ideas that affect the students the most. Shown in table 6 of this category, teachers were asked about their opinion on some ideas listed about home economics education and its effect on the students' development and well being. To reiterate further the following ideas represented through the tables are: it is imperative for both genders to learn home economics; it is imperative for both genders to learn industrial arts; home economics is a subject which will train the students to be better in terms of home management and hone their entrepreneurial skills for better life in the future; home economics education gives the students a better perspective of home life in its wholeness; home economics education lets the students appreciate the value of being a homemaker and entrepreneur regardless of gender; and the school should make all the necessary means to provide the department with all the things and materials for effective teaching and learning of the subject. For example, 93.8% of the teachers answered that both genders were studying home economics together.

The table 6 shows that teacher-respondents are almost unanimous in evaluating the ideas of how home economics influence the students' life to better prepare them for the future, and that is by starting them early through home economics education.

Table 6 Teachers' Opinion (%)

	Yes	No	N.A.
H.E.For both gender	93.8	3.7	2.5
I.Arts for both gender	88.3	8.0	3.7
Entrepreneurship	96.3	0.6	3.1
Better perspective	96.3	0.6	3.1
Value formation	96.9	0.0	3.1
School support	92.6	3.7	3.7

(n=162)

## Conclusion

The following are the researcher's recommendations on how to further improve the instruction of home economics. These recommendations are based on the author's personal point of view following the results of the data gathered and of further readings and observations.

1. Home economics in the Philippines helps the students to set their goals in the event that they cannot afford to continue

on with higher education, this subject in high school will enable them to be prepared and face their future with hope and positive attitude.

2. Since home economics education plays a very important role in teaching the students how to value the home and society, there should be more activities that will train them to be better homemakers and better members of society.
3. Home Economics as what has been mentioned previously in this paper follows the objective of MAKABAYAN being a “laboratory of life “because it is a conglomeration of every aspect in our lives, be it a homemaker and educator or a student. It helps us prepare for what the family, the community and the society is embarking on. It is a training ground for us to face the reality of life.
4. To attain the goals of teaching Home Economics, the parents and the community should always be involved in some school-based activities, involving the parents and the community will help students to appreciate the subject more.
5. The school plays a vital part in the success of teaching the subject; therefore it is recommended that the school should try as much as possible to provide the teachers with all the materials and equipment that will further improve the teaching-learning process. By doing so, the teachers can expand further to teach the subject and in the end, the students will benefit from it all.

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### Abstract

This research aims to study the home economics education in high school between in the Philippines a terms of its introduction and importance to the curriculum and its effects on the students, the different topics in the subject, the duration and frequency of the lesson, the class population, the objective of home economics education, the instructional materials and methodologies employed by the teachers and the subject's contribution to the well-being of the students, the family and the society.

This study can determine the depth of home economics education in the Philippines; moreover it seeks to study if there are some areas that can be further developed to improve the teaching – learning process of the subject.

**Key words:** Philippines, home economics, curriculum, objectives, instructional materials and methodologies

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