

Panorama of Present Status of Home Science Subject

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ABSTRACT

The world is moving at a faster speed with new industrial demands increasing day by day. Therefore, the formal education is attempting to meet the needs of these industry demands by developing skills in students during their study years. Home science as a subject offers various skills to students but the pity is that their skills are not recognized by the industries. So the students are not getting proper jobs in these industries. This is the basic reason behind low enrollment of the students in the subject. Keeping these aspects in mind a research project entitled “Status of Available Training Packages, Development of Entrepreneurial Skills and Identification of Future Needs in Home Science Graduates” was submitted to ICAR, New Delhi. This paper is a part of that study and the objectives of it are to explore present status and general perception about the subject from Home Science teachers and to find out the factors responsible for the less enrollment. An attempt was also made to find out recommendation for future which could help to increase the enrollment. Data was collected through a questionnaire which was mailed to home science teachers during 2017. The results show that rigidity in the mindset of the society regarding the limited scope is the prime cause. Teachers perceive that it is a professional and interesting subject which could be a job provider if we can focus on industry collaboration.

Keywords: Formal education, national skill sector, skill education.

INTRODUCTION

Home science subject deals with home and its related aspects. Its students, study all the dimensions of the home, aiming at making home a better place to live in. It is a science which works in line with principles of art. All the elements of art are blended together, and on the other hand, it is a science because it uses various scientific principles for its study. In spite of a multidimensional approach, this subject is losing its shine. The number of students getting enrolled is decreasing. A good number of students in the country are going to academics for acquiring formal education. But for job recruiters, relevant job-related knowledge is more important than degrees. Young job seekers have been realized that skill development courses are better than studying in universities. Millions of the students become graduate every year, however, only a handful from elite colleges and universities succeed in becoming part of the professional haut monde but a staggering majority lags behind. As a result, more than 50 per cent of new graduates around the world felt that they were unhappy with their chosen field of study. Majority of students who

are studying Home Science are also sailing in the same boat with millions of other students from India. Karen et al. (2010) in their study regarding improvement in the efficiency of home science education concluded that effective policy, proper monitoring followed by evaluation is a challenge for both subject and government too. In Kenya, the government is working on education through its commission and as a result, government is directly free from policy decision. While working on education policy their approach is make it in line with national development goals. The tragedy with the home science is this that whenever the government is working on education improvement, the subject itself gets secondary treatment. Due to this the subject is always suffering and struggling for survival. Dubey (2016) in her study on “Analyzing the Home Science Curriculum and its Perceptions Amongst its Stakeholders” concluded that all stake holders should come together to enhance the positivity attitude for the subject. Workshops for syllabus, changing need of society, strategies like making the subject compulsory, improving creativity, and marketing and placements of students should be the steps which could help in improving the interest in subject.

Deliberations by entrepreneurs and famous persons of the subjects, seminars, and career guidance were some of the interventions, which could be taken up. Nomenclature itself sometimes creates confusion in the general masses about the content and opportunities of subject. Thus change in name along with adoption of more professional approach which highlights its temperament towards science and practical could help. Maina and Kitainge (2018) conducted a study on “Improving Home Economics Education: A Review of Factors Militating Inclusion of Home Economics (Home Science) Studies in Kenyan Secondary Schools” with the purpose to explore the factors militating inclusion of Home Economics studies in secondary schools in Kenya. The study concluded that the lack of facilities and funds were the basic problems faced by institutes teaching home science. Also in the schools which are enrolling girls students have good facilities for the subject and in co-education schools it has fewer options. So we should promote more and more boys to take home science so that we can improve the mood-set as well as enrollment with basic facilities. Vatta *et al.* (2018) in a study concluded that rigid mind set of people regarding the subject, less appointment of teachers, less spelled job roles and low industrial collaboration were the causes of poor enrollment. Considering job needs of hospitality and tourism, beauty, textile, apparel, home furnishing and handloom, sales and marketing; collaboration with curriculum development agencies, identification of industrial needs, etc. could be remedial measures. A study entitled “Status of Available Training Packages, Development of Entrepreneurial Skills and Identification of Future Needs in Home Science Graduates” funded by Indian Council of Agriculture Research, New Delhi was carried out in 2017 with objectives of exploring the general perception about the subject among Home Science teachers, identifying factors responsible for the less enrollment, and finding out the recommendations for the future.

METHODOLOGY

Since the project is related with identification of skill gap in Home Science, the sample comprised of the teachers of Home Science, entrepreneurs (who are from home science) and research scholars. Total seventy seven respondents participated in the study. To get the qualitative information regarding skills taught at UG level, skills needed for self-employment, new skills which need to be incorporated in the syllabus, a tool was designed and administered in Phase I. Further one more tool was designed after in-depth and comparative study of Syllabus of Home Science taught at Agriculture and Traditional universities. The gap was analyzed which was then further aligned with the skill packages available on

the NSDC website. On the basis of qualitative information provided by the respondents, a comprehensive report was prepared. For quantitative information, the responses (Phase-II quantitative information) were recorded carefully. Each answer was coded initially. On the basis of the answer given, yes was marked as 1 mark and answer no was marked as zero for a particular question. The marks were calculated and presented in the result section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perception about Home Science

The respondents from different the streams *viz.*, Extension education (24%), Textile and apparel Designing (22%), Human development (20%), Foods and nutrition (18%) and Family resource management (16%) drawn from twelve states *i.e.* Rajasthan (38%) and Karnataka (18%), Gujarat (8%), Madhya Pradesh (7%), Maharashtra (5%), Punjab (4%), Delhi (4%) and Telangana (4%), participated in the research. Nineteen per cent of the respondents suggested that the nomenclature was not appropriate and 15 per cent said that it should be changed, while 7 per cent quoted that the skills taught in home science were general, which should be studied only by girls. Four percent mentioned that it was not a career oriented course (Table 1).

Table 1: Perception of Home Science in a general manner
n=77

Particulars	Percentage
Home science is concerned with the management of only home	7
Nomenclature of the subject was not appropriate	15
Name should be changed	19
Home Science is limited to household work only	3
Skills taught are general	7
Meant only for girls	4
Not career oriented	4

Hence efforts must be made to make it skill oriented with sufficient hands-on experiences. It should be well popularized among the people to increase the scope. Further a change in the nomenclature will also help to increase the number of students at higher level. Keeping this thing in mind, the nomenclature of home science has been changed to 'community science' by all the agriculture universities in India from the academic session 2017-18. Only 3 per cent felt that home science was limited to household only. Seven percent reported that skills taught in home science were general and 4 percent said that it was meant only for girls. Only 4 percent respondents out of all said that home science was not a career oriented course.

The results are in relevance with the study of Dubey (2016) in which she concluded that the subject required the change in nomenclature to make it more suggestive to the students and there was a need to adopt a more professional approach by highlighting its scientific methodologies and practical works”.

Opinion of Home Science Teachers about the Subject

The results presented in Table 2 show that most of the respondents (85%) considered Home Science to be an easy subject, as it offered less theory and more practical.

Table 2: Opinion of teachers about the subject

n=77	
Particulars	Percentage
As a profession	69
As an interesting subject	76
Overall scientific development of home and family	90
As a facilitator for the student	69
Easy to understand, less theory, more practical	85

Ninety per cent of the respondents agreed to the fact that it promoted overall development of home and family. Seventy-six per cent considered it to be an interesting subject, while 69 per cent felt Home Science subject to be a profession. Home science was felt as a facilitator for the students by 69 per cent.

Factors responsible for less enrollments in Home Science

Since the enrollment of students is related to the perception about home science, efforts were made to study the possible reasons for fewer enrollments in home science. The major reasons were lack of awareness about the subject (63 %) and lack of awareness regarding the scope and depth of the subject (69 %) (Table 3).

Seventy per cent opined that home science was a less dynamic subject and practicals were not linked to the job providers. The other possible reasons were high competition with the existing subjects (54 %), availability of less job opportunities in the field of home science (51 %) and low campus placement (61 %). More and more new subjects are coming every day. They provide a high competition to home science (54 %). Home science has a low value in terms of profession and people want to pursue a socially recognized profession (45 %).

Table 3: Factors responsible for less enrollment in home science

n=77	
Particulars	Percentage
Less job opportunities	51
Less awareness regarding social and economic worth of the subject	67
No campus placement	61
Less dynamic practical are not linked to job providers	70

High competition with the existing subjects	54
Person wants to pursue a socially recognized profession	45
Lack of awareness regarding the scope and depth of the subject	69
Lack of awareness about the subject	63

These were the reasons which were listed for fewer enrollments of students in home science need to manage their professional life with their family life. Home science can definitely help them to do so. Hence efforts must be made to link home science degree courses with campus placement. The subject should be widely publicized in order to gain popularity among the masses. These results can be supported with the results of AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) 2015-16 which show that home science is losing its enrollment at all the levels–

Enrollment at under graduate level in Home Science in total was 65000 students out of which 10675 were male; Total 650 Ph. D students were there in Home Science, out of which 13 were male; Total 9912 were enrolled for M. Sc., out of which 845 were males; If this data is to be compared with agriculture, 4849 students were enrolled in PhD while 22132 were enrolled in M. Sc. It is evident that less than .002 per cent students got enrolled in Home Science during the year 2015-16.

Fewer enrollments are matter of serious concern. As the name suggests, it is generally perceived as the science of home is cooking, stitching, laundry, and child bearing. However, its scope is much wider. The perception about the subject needs to be improved.

CONCLUSION

Home science is a subject in which we study various subjects like Management, Nutrition, Human Development, Clothing and Textile and Extension Education. In spite of a multidisciplinary approach results are less visible. There was need to tune up the courses with the current scenario to make subject not only more interesting but also employable. Based on the above findings, following recommendations can be made for the future improvements

Home science should be linked with practical education and skill development. The nomenclature should be changed. It should be widely publicized. Separate placement should be there in home science colleges to provide the job opportunities. The curriculum should provide hands on experiences. Skill development trainings should be made an integral part of home science curriculum in all the five fields at the UG level. The subject should be open for boys and for the students from all the facilities.

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