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Factors Affecting the Enrollment of Students in Homemaking Programs in Junior and Senior High Schools of Southwestern Michigan

Cecile L. Herscher

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FACTORS AFFECTING THE
ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS IN HOMEMAKING
PROGRAMS IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
OF SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

by

Cecile L. Herscher

Western Michigan College

January 1956

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Cecile L. Herscher

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine some of the more important factors which affect the enrollment of students in homemaking programs in selected junior and senior high schools of Southwestern Michigan and to use these findings and conclusions in suggesting ways in which homemaking may become more effective in the educational program of the junior and senior high schools of Michigan.

Importance of the Study

There are 59 million women, 14 years of age and over, in the United States according to the U. S. Census for 1954. Greenleaf¹ states that fifty-seven per cent of all women are full time homemakers, while thirty-two per cent are gainfully employed in the labor market. One-half of these women are married and, therefore, have the dual role of homemakers and wage earners.

An important responsibility of the homemaker is to plan for the welfare of her family. She must be conscious of the seven basic principles of nutrition and use them in

¹ Walter James Greenleaf, Occupations and Careers, (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955) p. 52.

planning and preparing nutritious meals; have an extensive knowledge of consumer economics in order to spend the family's income wisely; know principles of applied science, art, and household mechanics in order to better furnish her home and make it more livable; and have a knowledge of textiles and fabrics in order to clothe her family economically and appropriately. Upon the homemaker more than any other member of the family, falls the responsibility for the welfare and happiness of the entire family unit.

Homemaking teachers have a real challenge to provide the type of homemaking curriculum which will meet the needs of the future homemakers. Boys as well as girls should be encouraged to enroll in homemaking classes since the job of homemaking today is becoming more and more a cooperative family effort. This is due to the fact, in many instances, both husband and wife are employed outside the home.

Definition of Terms

"Home Economics" is a study that is concerned with personal and family living, the feeding, clothing and shelter of the family, child care and guidance, the protection of health, the care of the sick, the managing of time, money, and other resources of the family, and everyday social relationships of the people. Home Economics is usually referred to as "homemaking" in most professional literature concerned with this area of education.

The "Homemaking I" program is usually designed for students in the ninth grade. Instructional units are included for this particular grade and age level. The "Homemaking II" program is organized for tenth grade students; "Homemaking III" for eleventh grade; and "Homemaking IV" for twelfth grade students.

The term "exchange units" refers to instructional units in homemaking which may be taught boys from agriculture or industrial arts classes while the girls regularly enrolled in the homemaking courses are being taught certain areas of industrial arts and agriculture by the shop teachers.

The term "F.H.A." is used to designate the Future Homemakers of America, an active organization in many schools of Michigan. To be eligible for organization, girls must either have had one year of homemaking or be currently enrolled.

Objectives of Homemaking

The functional homemaking program has definite objectives which have been accepted by the teachers of secondary schools. A committee of teachers in 1948 working under the leadership of Dr. Ivol Spafford² stated these goals as follows:

1. "To achieve a satisfying and functional philosophy of life with emphasis on personal and family living.

² Ivol Spafford, Fundamentals in Teaching Home Economics, (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1951) pp. 2-4.

2. To develop a wholesome personality and work out satisfying human relationships.
3. To broaden and enrich life.
4. To acquire techniques and skills needed in immediate personal and home living, and learn to use one's resources to attain the values set up as most worthwhile in life.
5. To find one's relation to and place in the vocational world and prepare for it."

The foregoing objectives are broad, general statements from which the teacher and the students together set their goals for actual class work based upon the individual needs of the students. The teacher who is alert and sympathetic to problems as they arise will make a real contribution to the students personally.

Various units will call for specific goals which will be set up by the students in an area such as the family living unit. For example, some of these might be:

1. To assist the students to obtain all possible benefits from home and family.
2. To contribute to happier homes.
3. To help students improve their personal appearance.
4. To help the students appreciate their families and homes.
5. To prepare the students for more areas of home-making responsibilities.
6. To provide educational units in safety.
7. To learn to manage the family's income.
8. To develop skills and abilities in the kitchen.

9. To provide instruction in child growth and development.
10. To help the students in making worthwhile use of leisure time.
11. To provide educational units in consumer economics.
12. To learn to get along with others.

Greenleaf³ gives the following short definition of homemaking: "It helps the individual live a more useful and satisfying personal, family, and community life." This must be recognized as the basic objective of all education.

The interpretation of these objectives through class activities and projects are often a determining factor in creating interest among the high school students in the homemaking program.

Related Studies

Several studies have been made in various sections of the country by homemaking teachers to determine why students select or reject homemaking courses in junior and senior high schools.

A cooperative project was sponsored in California in an effort to find out why students do or do not take homemaking courses, how homemaking courses help those who

³ Walter James Greenleaf, Occupations and Careers, (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955) p. 58.

do take them, and how the homemaking program could be strengthened. Forty-nine schools in California participated in this study in 1951-52. Some of the findings reported by Hall⁴ were as follows:

1. Every group of students agreed that the student's own interest was the greatest influence in her taking homemaking.
2. The parents thought their influence was greater than the students indicated it really was.
3. Almost every group regarded the influence of a brother, sister, girl friend, or a boy friend as important.
4. The students in the twelfth grade checked the influence of a counselor more frequently than did those in the ninth grade.
5. Approximately one-tenth of the present and former homemaking students took it because it was required.
6. Eighty-two per cent of the teachers thought the students were not taking homemaking because their schedule was too crowded.

The type of data varied when Morgan⁵ studied the reasons why students did not elect homemaking in their programs. Some of these were:

1. Preference for other work.
2. Dislike for the teacher.
3. Schedule too crowded.

4 Olive Hall, "Attitudes Toward Homemaking Education in the Secondary Schools of California", Journal of Home Economics, March 1955. pp. 165-170.

5 Elizabeth Morgan, "An Analysis of Reasons Why Students Do Not Elect Home Economics in Morgantown High School With Implications for the Home Economics Curriculum", (Unpublished Thesis, West Virginia University, Morgantown, W. Va. 1949).

4. Repetition of junior high school work.
5. Dislike for homemaking.
6. Disappointment in earlier courses.
7. Courses include information already learned at home.

A lack of understanding on the part of the girls and their mothers of the scope, nature, and purpose of home economics was a factor contributing to the failure of the school girls to elect homemaking. Johnson's⁶ findings suggest that lack of knowledge concerning the field of homemaking is general in many schools.

Co-educational homemaking classes were first started in the state of Michigan in the fall of 1933. The results obtained in this program were substantiated by a study in Ontario, California,⁷ in 1953. Greater satisfactions were indicated by students, parents, and teachers when girls and boys were in the same homemaking classes.

In the study made by O'Donnell⁸ the goals which the teachers reported for Homemaking I emphasized clothing and

6 Nina Beryl Johnson, "Factors Which Influence Girls in the Elections of Home Economics in the Senior High Schools of Sioux City, Iowa", (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, 1939).

7 Lois Finerty, "Boys Enjoy Homemaking in Co-educational Classes", Journal of Home Economics, October 1953, p. 592.

8 Beatrice O'Donnell, Taking a Look at What Girls and Boys Do in Homemaking Classes in Grades 9-12 in Michigan. (School of Education and School of Home Economics, Michigan State College, East Lansing, June 1953), pp. 8-9, 18.

personal appearance, and foods and hospitality as recognized needs, interests, and problems of teen-agers. Besides these, further needs recognized in Homemaking II were housing and home furnishings.

O'Donnell indicates that there is increasing recognition of importance in co-educational activities. Through these activities, relationships are established which will lead to intelligent selection of mates and more enjoyable home and family relationships.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

The Problem

The study was designed to ascertain the various factors which influence students in the election of homemaking in the junior and senior high schools of Southwestern Michigan.

Method of Investigation

The survey was conducted during the month of May 1955. Fifteen school systems were invited to participate.

Letters were mailed to fifteen school superintendents inviting them to participate in the survey. Since final examinations were in progress in two of the schools, they did not participate. However, in each case, either the Principal or the Homemaking teacher wrote the writer a letter stating the reason for not participating. Data were secured, therefore, from thirteen¹ or approximately eighty-seven per cent of the schools contacted.

Sample questionnaires were prepared for the seventh and eighth grade students, and ninth grades or the junior high school age group. The use of the questionnaire method

¹ Thirteen schools listed in the Appendix.

is highly recommended and supported by Good and Scates², who state that the "questionnaire is particularly useful when one cannot readily see personally all of the people from whom he desires responses or where there is no particular reason to see the respondents personally."

Permission was obtained from the superintendents of the various schools selected to use the questionnaires in their schools. The questionnaires were administered in each of the schools by the homemaking teacher and returned to the writer for tabulation and study.

Copies of the letters to the Superintendents of Schools and the homemaking teachers, together with sample copies of the questionnaires used in the study follow.

² Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates, Methods of Research. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1954. pp. 606-7.

Dowagiac City Schools DOWAGIAC MICHIGAN

May 10, 1955

Mr. Carl Brautigam
Superintendent of Schools
Central High School
Dowagiac, Michigan

Dear Mr. Brautigam:

As a part of my study for a Master's Degree at Western Michigan College, I am making a survey of high school girls' attitude toward and interests in homemaking.

I am asking the homemaking teacher and students in your high school to participate. I hope that we may count on your interest and co-operation. Perhaps the results will sow opportunities for increasing enrollment in high school and college and thus alleviate the present teacher shortage.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Cecile L. Herscher

Dowagiac City Schools

DOWAGIAC
MICHIGAN

May 10, 1955

Mrs. Judith Hayden
Homemaking Instructor
Cassopolis High School
Cassopolis, Michigan

Dear Mrs. Hayden:

As a part of my study for a Master's Degree at Western Michigan College, I am making a survey of high school girls' attitude toward and interest in homemaking. I hope you and your students will be willing to participate.

The enclosed questionnaires are for you and your seventh and ninth grade girls. Will you please have them checked and return them to me in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope, by Friday, May 20?

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Cecile L. Herscher

Seventh and Eighth Grade Homemaking

Occupation of father_____ Mother_____

Number in order the homemaking units liked best.

Foods_____ Good Grooming_____ Entertaining_____

Clothing_____ Child Care_____ Care of the Home_____

Home Decoration_____

List clothing projects made this year.

Apron_____ Skirt_____ Slippers_____ Pillow Cases_____

Beach Bag_____ Beach Robe_____ Others_____

Give reasons for choosing the above projects. _____

Indicate whether you plan to take more work in homemaking.

_____ Yes _____ No. Give reasons_____ Compulsory

_____ Like it _____ Parents request Others_____

Indicate other units desired for further study.

Homemaking I Questionnaire

Father's Occupation _____ Mother's Occupation _____

Did you take Homemaking in the seventh grade? ____ Yes ____ No

Did you take Homemaking in the eighth grade? ____ Yes ____ No

Why did you choose Homemaking this year? Check one.

____ Family influence ____ Need it for credit ____ Own Choice

____ Nothing else to choose ____ Plan to follow it as career

____ Required

Number in order the units liked best.

____ Clothing ____ Foods ____ Good Grooming ____ Child Care

____ Entertaining ____ Interior Decoration

Do you plan to take Homemaking next year? ____ Yes ____ No

Why? _____

What are your plans after high school graduation? _____

____ Go to college ____ Office ____ Get married

____ Waitress ____ Nurse ____ Armed Services

____ Others (Name) _____

Do you think boys should take Homemaking? ____ Yes ____ No

Why? _____

Would you like to be a Homemaking teacher? ____ Yes ____ No

Why? _____

Questionnaire For Homemaking Teachers

Is homemaking compulsory in the seventh grade in your school? Yes No

Do you think it should be? Yes No. Why?

What is the percentage of enrollment of girls in Homemaking I?

Do you think one year of homemaking should be compulsory
in high school? Yes No. Why?

List extra-curricular social activities which you supervise

Do you serve as consultant in the school lunch program?

Yes No

Do you assist other teachers in providing resource materials pertaining to family life education? Yes No

List the enrollment in your homemaking classes

Seventh	Eighth	Homemaking I	II	III	IV

Do girls who plan to go to college usually elect home-making courses and/or have opportunities in their schedules to do if they wish to elect homemaking?

In which grades is homemaking available to boys? _____

In which grades is homemaking available to girls?_____

What is the attitude of parents toward instruction in
homemaking for boys? Good Fair Poor Don't care

CHAPTER III

TABULATION OF THE DATA

As indicated in Chapter II, completed questionnaires were received from thirteen schools. An analysis of these questionnaires indicates that responses were received from ninety-six seventh grade students, forty eighth grade, and three hundred forty-four ninth grade students.

Homemaking teachers were requested to administer one questionnaire to the seventh and eighth grade students who were enrolled in homemaking classes and a second questionnaire to the ninth grade homemaking students. The teachers were asked to complete a third questionnaire themselves. The purpose of this chapter is to tabulate the responses to the questionnaires.

Responses of Seventh and Eighth Grade

Homemaking Students

The students in the seventh and eighth grades participating in this study gave information concerning the occupations of their parents, units of study liked best in their Homemaking classes and the reasons why they elected Homemaking.

Table I shows the various occupations in which the respondents' fathers and mothers were engaged. It can be noted from the tabulations that the factory workers out

numbered the other occupations of the fathers. Executives ranked second highest and contractors were third in order of frequency. Other occupations listed for fathers included such work as doctor, minister, painter, electrician, bartender, railroad employee, utility company, and city employee.

Table I
Rank-Order of Occupations of Parents
(Seventh and Eighth Grades)

Father		Mother	
Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
Factory	20	Homemakers	83
Executive	15	Factory	16
Contractor	14	Nurse	8
Salesman	11	Teacher	5
Carpenter	10	Saleswoman	5
Machinist	10	Office	5
Teacher	3	Beauty Operator	2
Farmer	3	Waitress	2
Others	35	Others	10

Of the mothers' occupations, homemaking ranked highest of all those listed. The homemaker was checked by eighty-three girls. The second highest was the factory worker, with sixteen of the mothers working in this occupation.

It can be noted from Table II that Foods outranked any other unit of subject matter in the choices of the seventh and eighth grade homemaking students.

Table II
Homemaking Units Liked Best By Students
(Seventh and Eighth Grades)

Units	Choices							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Foods	58	27	13	9	12	4	7	130
Clothing	25	41	18	10	5	2	7	108
Good Grooming	18	18	48	18	10	3	2	117
Child Care	13	14	15	20	9	8	11	90
Entertaining	12	12	17	7	9	6	10	73
Care of the Home	2	6	9	20	15	14	7	73
Home Decoration	2	3	6	7	15	19	10	62

Not only did more students check this item than any of the others but it also was checked first by a much greater number.

Good Grooming and Clothing were rated next in order of importance by the students. The latter received more first and second choices but was outranked greatly by Good Grooming as a third choice.

Students were requested to list the projects they made in clothing classes. These data are shown in Table III.

Table III
Clothing Projects Made By Students
(Seventh and Eighth Grades)

Project	Number of Responses
Apron	104
Skirt	35
Slippers	29
Pillow Cases	23
Beach Bag	8
Beach Robe	7
Others	32

The above data indicate that aprons were made by a large majority of the students. Skirts and slippers were next in order of frequency. Pajamas and slips were the most frequent items listed by the students in addition to those suggested in the questionnaire.

The reasons given by the students for choosing the clothing projects are given in Table IV.

Table IV
Reasons For Choosing Clothing Projects
(Seventh and Eighth Grades)

Reasons	Number of Responses
Compulsory	96
Own Choice	20
Class Choice	20

Most of the students who made aprons indicated they did so at the teacher's request. The students making skirts, did so, either as a class project or of their own choosing. Slippers, pillow cases, beach bags, and beach robes were all extra projects selected by the students.

Data given by the seventh and eighth grade students concerning their plans for further training in homemaking are presented in Table V.

Table V
Number Planning To Take Further Training
In Homemaking

Grade	Responses	
	Yes	No
Seventh	94	1
Eighth	16	15
Total	110	16

Practically all the seventh grade students intended to take more work in homemaking in the eighth grade, while only fifty percent of the eighth grade students planned to take further work in this field. Eighteen students did not respond to the question.

The students gave varied reasons for taking more work in homemaking. Table VI indicates that some schools require homemaking for eighth grade students.

Table VI
Reasons For Planning To Take More Work In
Homemaking

Reasons	Number of Responses	
	Seventh	Eighth
Compulsory Like It	76 54	0 16
Total	130	16

It was noted in Table V that ninety-four seventh grade students indicated that they were planning to take homemaking in the eighth grade. Table VI shows that seventy-six of these students were taking it because it was compulsory. Fifty-four students indicated that they were planning to take it because they liked it. Some students stated that the subject was compulsory but they found it very worthwhile.

All of the eighth grade students who planned to take homemaking in the ninth grade were doing so because they liked the subject.

Some of the reasons typical of the responses from the eighth grade students who indicated that they were not continuing with homemaking were "Homemaking isn't one of my main interests and I have no time in my schedule for it," "It is too easy," and "I plan to study in a different field."

Some of the responses of the eighth grade students who plan to continue in the homemaking field were "I enjoy homemaking the best of any other subjects and I plan to go to college and take further work," "I like homemaking and I think it is fun to do," and "It aids in learning about homes and housekeeping."

Homemaking units in which the seventh and eighth grade students expressed an interest for further study are reported in Table VII.

Table VII

Other Homemaking Units Desired By Students

Units	Number of Responses
Home Furnishings	24
Entertaining	22
Child Care	19
First Aid	13
Textiles	8
Others	43
Total	129

Home Furnishing, entertaining, and child care were selected in that order as units of work desired by both seventh and eighth grade students. Several students suggested such areas as first aid and textiles. Other areas listed were canning and preservation of foods, and further study in clothing construction processes.

Responses Of Homemaking I Students

Ninth grade students who were enrolled in Homemaking I courses were requested to provide information relative to their parents' occupations and their evaluation of the Homemaking I Course. These data are reported in Table VIII through Table XIV.

Table VIII shows the occupations in which the parents of the Homemaking I students were engaged.

Table VIII
Rank-Order of Occupations of Parents

Father		Mother	
Occupation	Number	Occupation	Number
Factory	108	Homemaking	220
Farmer	32	Factory	38
Truck Driver	21	Secretary	14
Salesman	12	Saleslady	6
Carpenter	10	Nurse	6
Mechanic	9	Waitress	6
Others	78	Others	9

There were one hundred eight fathers and thirty-eight mothers employed in factories. Thirty-two of the fathers were farmers and twenty-one truck drivers. Some of the most frequently mentioned occupations grouped together in Table VIII under "other" were government employees, railroad

employees, electricians, and teachers. Eight were listed as unemployed.

Two hundred twenty mothers were listed as housewives. Fourteen were listed as secretaries. Six each, were employed as salesladies, nurses, and waitresses.

Table IX shows that the majority of Homemaking I students had not taken the subject in the seventh grade.

Table IX
Previous Training In Homemaking

Grade	Yes	No
Seventh Grade	134	203
Eighth Grade	178	158
Total	312	361

On the other hand, a slight majority did indicate that they had taken it in the eighth grade. Although Table IX does not specifically indicate the number who were enrolled in homemaking in both the seventh and eighth grades, further analysis of the completed questionnaires indicates that many of the students were previously enrolled in the subject in both grades.

The reasons given for choosing Homemaking I are shown in Table X. A vast majority of the students chose

Table X
Reasons For Choosing Homemaking I

Reasons	Number of Responses
Own Choice	224
Required	51
Need for Credit	39
Family Influence	31
Career	23
Nothing Else to Choose	8
Total	344

homemaking because of their own interest in the subject. Only fifty-one indicated that the course was required of them. The need for credit ranked third in frequency of response. Twenty-three indicated that they planned to follow homemaking as a career. Eight had nothing else to choose to fit into their schedule.

It may be noted from the responses reported in Table XI that clothing was chosen by most students as the unit they liked best in homemaking courses. Foods ranked second in number of students designating this unit as their first choice. This is somewhat contrary to the data shown in Table II where the seventh and eighth grade students reported foods as their first choice, followed by clothing and good grooming in that order.

Table XI
Homemaking Units Liked Best

Units	Choices						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Clothing	146	84	42	25	14	13	324
Foods	118	82	33	14	12	11	270
Good Grooming	33	66	88	50	25	8	270
Child Care	16	23	49	59	42	28	217
Entertaining	7	13	29	58	74	33	214
Interior Decoration	5	9	11	26	43	95	189

Two hundred eleven students taking Homemaking I indicated they planned to take Homemaking II the next year. These data are reported in Table XII.

Table XII
Reasons For Taking Homemaking II

Reasons	Number
Important for later life	117
Fun to work with other girls	47
Gives good experience	43
Plan to follow it as a career	10
Like it	10
Need it for credit	7
Others	27
Total	261

Several of the students gave more than one reason for electing homemaking in their schedules for the next year. The reason most frequently given for continuing their study of homemaking was that it would help them in later life.

Of the students who did not plan to take Homemaking II, more gave as a reason "Insufficient time in schedule" than any other factor. These data are reported in Table XIII.

Table XIII

Reasons For Not Taking Homemaking II

Reasons	Number
No room in schedule	31
Following a college preparatory	20
Can learn homemaking at home	27
Not interested in homemaking	18
No reason given	8
Others	13
Total	117

Several students indicated more than one career objective following high school graduation as reported in Table XIV. About one-third of the students stated that they planned to work in an office immediately after graduation. Ninety-four planned to enter college and seventy-four had plans of married life upon completion of their last years in high school. Some of the other occupations in which the

Table XIV

Post High School Plans Of Homemaking I Students

Plans	Number
Office	102
College	94
Get Married	74
Waitress	11
Nursing	10
Armed Services	6
Others	27
Total	324

students indicated an interest were teaching, modeling, mortuary science, dress designing, and medicine.

Table XV shows the reasons given by homemaking students as to why boys should take homemaking courses.

Table XV

Reasons Why Boys Should Take Homemaking

Reasons	Number
To learn to cook	71
To learn to mend and darn	47
To help in emergencies	21
To be a better husband	14
To care for self, if bachelor	12
Boy's own interest	8
Good grooming	7
Other	13
Total	193

In Table XVI are reported the reasons given by homemaking students for boys not enrolling in homemaking classes.

Table XVI

Reasons Why Boys Should Not Take Homemaking

Reasons	Number
Not a boy's job	11
Would be called a "sissy"	9
Too messy	6
Too clumsy	5
Would not need it	6
Other	6

Forty-eight Homemaking I students reported they would enjoy being a homemaking teacher. Some of the reasons for this choice are shown in Table XVII.

Table XVII

Reasons For Selecting A Career
As A Homemaking Teacher

Reasons	Number
Enjoy working with young people	41
Enjoy my homemaking classes	24
Like to cook	21
Like to sew	21
Like the subject	20
Plan to make it a career	10
Others	6

Two hundred forty-three students stated that they were not interested in becoming homemaking teachers. As might be expected, the reason given most frequently was that they did not plan to teach. These data are reported in Table XVIII.

Table XVIII

Reasons For Not Selecting A Career
As A Homemaking Teacher

Reasons	Number
Do not plan to teach	162
Plan to work in an office	42
Plan to get married	24
Plan to teach some other subject	24
No reasons given	11
Do not like school	6
Others	28

Responses From Teachers Of Homemaking

Data were secured from thirteen homemaking teachers concerning enrollments in homemaking classes, activities and opinions of homemaking teachers, and practices followed in conducting homemaking classes. These data are reported in the remainder of this chapter.

The homemaking teachers were asked to indicate whether or not the subject was required in the seventh grade in their schools and to express an opinion relative to such a requirement. Table XIX shows that the majority of schools reporting do not require homemaking in the seventh grade.

Table XIX
Homemaking In Seventh Grade

	Yes	No	Total
Is it compulsory in your school?	5	8	13
Do you think it should be?	6	7	13

However, a slight majority of the teachers did not favor such a requirement. Two of the teachers stated they thought it should be compulsory in the seventh grade even though their schools did not offer it.

The reasons for or against making homemaking compulsory in the seventh grade are tabulated in Table XX.

Table XX
Opinions Of Homemaking Teachers Relative
To Making Homemaking Compulsory In
Seventh Grade

Reasons	Number
<u>For</u>	
Increase interest in homemaking	5
Receive information not available at home	2
Other	3
<u>Against</u>	
Tire of it before reaching High School	3
Curriculum too crowded	2
Not ready for instruction	2

The most frequent comment favoring homemaking in the seventh grade was to the effect that a greater interest in this area of work would be developed.

Other comments favoring homemaking as a requirement included such statements as "Introduce units of homemaking," "All need instruction in homemaking," and "Learn to acquire skills."

The per cent of girls in each high school who were enrolled in Homemaking I courses are reported in Table XXI.

Table XXI

Per Cent Of Girls Enrolled In Homemaking I

Per Cent	Number of Schools
91-100	5
81-90	1
71-80	2
61-70	2
Below 60	0
No response	3
Total	13

Five of the schools reporting indicated enrollments of more than ninety-one per cent in Homemaking I courses. Confusion could have arisen as to whether the question applied to all the girls in the ninth grade or to all girls in the four years of high school. The writer intended it to apply

to the ninth grade only. In either case, those reporting percentages of ninety-one or better were providing at least one year of homemaking education for the vast majority of high school girls.

The homemaking teachers were requested to give their opinions as to whether homemaking should or should not be compulsory in the high school. Nine of them stated it should be required while three were very much against it, and one was undecided. The reasons given for the various positions taken are reported in Table XXII.

Table XXII

Reasons Why Homemaking Should Or Should Not
Be Compulsory In High School

Reasons	Number
<u>For</u>	
All need it	8
Stimulates interests	3
Learn skills	2
Give background of knowledge of homemaking	3
Yes, if not taken in grades	1
<u>Against</u>	
Girls forced into the work do not have the right attitude toward it.	2
College preparatory courses take too much time	2
No, if required in seventh or eighth grade	1

Six stated that the students need homemaking in high school to help prepare them for future life. A few indicated that it would stimulate interest to the extent that the girls would want to take more than one year of homemaking in high school.

Two of the teachers thought that the students' attitudes and interest would be improved if they were allowed to choose the subjects which they should study and not be required to take any specific course.

The homemaking teacher is involved in numerous extra-curricular social activities as indicated in Table XXIII.

Table XXIII
Rank-Order Of Social Activities Supervised
By Homemaking Teachers

Activity	Responses
FHA Adviser	11
Banquets	7
Parties	7
Teas	7
Class Adviser	6
Student Council	4
Dance Sponser	3
Others	3

Eleven of the homemaking teachers served as FHA advisers. Banquets, parties, and teas were supervised by seven of the teachers while six teachers served as class advisers.

Homemaking I teachers were requested to indicate whether or not they participated in school lunch programs or provided assistance to other teachers in the area of home and family living. These data are reported in Table XXIV.

Table XXIV

Services Rendered By Homemaking Teachers In
School Lunch Programs And In Family
Education Programs

Service	Responses		
	Yes	No	Total
Consultant in school lunch program	2	10	12
Assist other teachers with resource materials concerning family life education	7	5	12

No response was received from one school relative to the above duties. Some of the areas in which the homemaking teachers helped their fellow workers were, furnishing resource materials in sociology, biology and social studies, and exchanging materials in health classes.

The homemaking teachers were asked to list the enrollment in their classes for the 1954-55 school year. Of all the schools, Niles reported the largest enrollments in homemaking in each of the grades, seven through twelve. These data are shown in Table XXV on the following page.

Table XXV
Enrollment In Homemaking Classes

School	Homemaking					
	Seventh	Eighth	I	II	III	IV
Bangor	0	0	34	16	10	10
Berrien Springs	0	0	40	11	9	0
Buchanan	38	37	41	32	19	0
Cassopolis	0	0	29	28	19	0
Centreville	0	0	25	10	12	0
Decatur	0	19	20	18	12	0
Dowagiac	80	30	67	64	27	0
Milwood	54	42	27	0	0	0
New Buffalo	0	0	38	19	14	0
Niles	167	84	115	111	87	86
Plainwell	0	0	42	18	13	3
South Haven	87	78	75	0	0	0
Three Rivers	0	45	47	38	10	0

Teachers of homemaking were requested to indicate whether or not college-bound girls had an opportunity to elect homemaking as part of their school program. These data are reported in Table XXVI.

Table XXVI
Opportunities In Homemaking Courses For
College-Bound Girls

Homemaking	Responses		
	Yes	No	Total
Opportunity to elect	9	3	12
Usually do elect	9	3	12

One teacher did not respond to the question concerning

opportunities for college-bound girls in homemaking courses. Another teacher indicated the girls had the opportunity to elect homemaking unless they were enrolled in commercial courses.

In Table XXVII are reported data concerning the availability of homemaking courses to all boys and girls.

Table XXVII
Availability Of Homemaking Courses To All
Boys And Girls

Grade	Boys		Girls	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Seventh	1	12	5	8
Eighth	0	13	8	5
Ninth	3	10	13	0
Tenth	0	13	12	1
Eleventh	1	12	12	1
Twelfth	1	12	12	1
All Grades	0	13	4	8

In one of the schools homemaking is offered to boys as an exchange unit with shop in the seventh grade. Three of the schools offer homemaking to the boys in the ninth grade. One school has an exchange unit with agriculture in the eleventh grade for the boys. The family living course is offered to the boys in the twelfth grade in one school. Only four of the schools responding offer homemaking to girls in all grades.

The opinions of homemaking teachers concerning the

attitudes of parents toward boys enrolling in homemaking courses are reported in Table XXVIII.

Table XXVIII
Attitudes Of Parents Concerning Homemaking
For Boys As Reported By Homemaking
Teachers

Attitude	Responses
Good	5
Fair	2
Poor	0
Do not care	3
No opinion	3

One teacher expressed the opinion that the parents' attitude toward boys taking homemaking was very good and that it was good experience in preparation for later life. In one school homemaking is offered to boys as an exchange with agriculture. Another school provided an exchange plan with shop. In both cases where the exchange was used, the parents' attitude was reported to be good. This correlates with the findings of Finerty¹ in the Ontario, California, study.

Often students present problems to the homemaking teachers and request help in solving them. Some of these

¹ Finerty, loc. cit. p. 592.

problems are reported in Table XXIX.

Table XXIX

Problems For Which Students Desired
Assistance During The Year

Problems	Frequency
Dating	7
Entertaining	7
Personal Grooming	7
High School Curriculum	6
Family Problems	4
Etiquette	2
Appropriate Clothes	2
Others	13

Dating, entertaining, and personal grooming were each mentioned by seven teachers as a high ranking problem of the students. Personal grooming was reported by six of the teachers, while six others indicated they were requested to help the students with other school subjects. Family problems were brought four times to the teachers. Other items were many and varied, a few of which were remodeling furniture, health problems, college requirements, getting along in other classes, baby sitting, and packing before trips.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors affecting the enrollment of students in homemaking programs in selected junior and senior high schools of Southwestern Michigan. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the occupations of the majority of parents of students who enroll for homemaking work in school?
2. What should be the nature of the instruction in homemaking programs in order to meet the needs and interests of students?
3. In the opinion of students and teachers, should boys as well as girls be enrolled in homemaking programs?
4. Should homemaking be a required subject for all girls either in the upper elementary grades or in high school?

Summary

1. Homemaking outranked all other occupations of the mothers of homemaking students. Factory work was reported as the occupation of the fathers of homemaking students more than any other type of employment.

2. Foods, clothing, and good grooming ranked in that order as the homemaking units liked best by seventh and

eighth grade students. On the other hand, the units preferred most by Homemaking I students were in the order of clothing first, foods second, and good grooming third.

3. Almost one-half of the seventh and eighth grade students made aprons as a project in homemaking classes. Skirts, slippers, and pillow cases were next in order of frequency. A large majority of the students indicated that the projects were required by the instructors.

4. Most of the seventh grade students planned to take homemaking again in the eighth grade. Forty-seven per cent of the seventh grade students stated that they were taking the subject again because they liked it. Family influence was responsible for thirty-one registering for homemaking. Others were taking it because the subject was required of eighth grade girls. One-third of the eighth grade home-making students planned to take homemaking in high school.

5. Home furnishing, entertaining, and child care were selected in that order as units of work for further study by seventh and eighth grade students.

6. Approximately one-half of the Homemaking I students reported that they had not taken homemaking courses in the elementary grades.

7. Homemaking I students were, for the most part, enrolled in the subject because of their own choosing rather than because the subject was required in high school.

8. Sixty-one per cent of the three hundred forty-four ninth grade students participating in the study indicated that they wanted to take a second year of homemaking in high school. A large majority of the students felt that the training received would be valuable in later life. The main reason given by students for not taking additional homemaking work in high school was because there was not room in their schedules due to the college preparatory curriculum and other factors.

9. The post high school plans of Homemaking I students included office work, college training, and marriage in that order. Forty-eight students reported that they would like to become homemaking teachers after graduation.

10. The majority of the Homemaking I students participating in the study believed that boys as well as girls should be enrolled in homemaking courses. The chief reason given by the students was that such training would help boys carry on the responsibilities involved in maintaining a home.

11. Homemaking was not required in the seventh or eighth grades in the majority of the schools participating in the study. In fact, in six of the schools, instruction in this area was not provided below the ninth grade. Most of the homemaking teachers did not believe the subject should be made compulsory in the upper elementary grades. In high school, however, the majority felt that the subject should

be compulsory for girls.

12. Eleven of the thirteen schools included in the study required Future Homemaking of America activities as part of the homemaking program.

13. Most of the schools did not provide homemaking instruction for boys either on the junior or senior high school level. However, the majority of the homemaking instructors believed that the attitude of parents was favorable toward boys enrolling for work in homemaking in school.

Conclusions

In so far as the data reported in this study are valid, and the facts obtained are accurate, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. A well balanced program of homemaking at the seventh and eighth grade level provides an excellent opportunity for adolescent boys and girls to cope with the many problems with which they are confronted during this period. Participation in the homemaking program in the upper grades also results in much enthusiasm for further study of homemaking during the high school period.

2. The occupations of the parents of the boys and girls enrolled in homemaking programs appear to have little effect on the choices of students electing the subject.

3. Homemaking teachers, in general, believe that homemaking should be required of all girls in the ninth

grade. In most schools it is not at present required.

4. The most important areas of study for homemaking students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades are clothing, foods, and good grooming.

5. Students, parents, and teachers, all favor the enrollment of boys as well as girls in homemaking classes.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the writer's findings in making this study:

1. More opportunities should be provided for seventh and eighth grade students to participate in homemaking programs.

2. At least one year of homemaking should be required of all girls either in the upper grades or early high school years.

3. Since success was indicated with co-educational classes, provision should be made in the school program for boys as well as girls to receive instruction in certain phases of homemaking. This may be accomplished through the use of exchange units with the areas of agriculture or industrial arts.

4. Since most homemaking teachers sponsor the F.H.A. organization, this program should be considered an essential part of the homemaking curriculum and time provided for it in the teaching schedule.

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APPENDIX

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PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Bangor High School, Bangor, Van Buren County
Berrien Springs High School, Berrien Springs, Berrien County
Buchanan High School, Buchanan, Berrien County
Cassopolis High School, Cassopolis, Cass County
Centreville High School, Centreville, St. Joseph County
Decatur High School, Decatur, Van Buren County
Dowagiac High School, Dowagiac, Cass County
Milwood High School, Milwood, Kalamazoo County
New Buffalo High School, New Buffalo, Berrien County
Niles High School, Niles, Berrien County
Plainwell High School, Plainwell, Allegan County
South Haven High School, South Haven, Van Buren County
Three Rivers High School, Three Rivers, St. Joseph County