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Perception towards home science: A comparative study among home scientists and non-home scientists

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Abstract
Home science is the science that includes all the things that concern the person, home, family members and resources. It is the education for "better living" and the core of this education is the family ecosystem. It also deals with reciprocal relations between the family and its natural and man-made environment. The perception of a lay person is that it is a subject about home making and household chores. They are only partly correct because the area covered by the subject of Home Science is vast and varied. Its scope extends far beyond the 'home' and is not limited to cooking, laundry, needlework and home decoration. In fact it is the only subject which prepares young learners for the two most important goals in their lives looking after their home and family and preparing for a career or vocation in life.
Objective: To study the perception of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists towards Home science.
Method: The research design was cross-sectional in nature. 80 respondents were selected from Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow. Purposive random sampling technique was used to collect the data. The data was analyzed by using "t" test and ANOVA.
Result: The results showed that there are no significant differences between the perception of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists but mean differences between Home scientists and Non-Home scientists were observed.
Conclusion: There isn't much difference in the perception towards Home science. However the level of awareness about the curriculum in Home science varies from Home scientists to Non-Home scientists.

Keywords: Home science, Home economics, perception.

Introduction
Home science (also known as family and consumer sciences, human ecology, Home economics) is the profession and field of study that deals with the economics and management of the home and community [6]. Home science is a field of formal study including such topics as consumer education, institutional management, interior design, home furnishing, cleaning, handicrafts, sewing, clothing and textiles, commercial cooking, cooking, nutrition, food preservation, hygiene, child development, managing money, and family relationships. This teaches students how to properly run a family environment and make the world a better place for generations to come [2].
Home Science is a vital profession currently enjoying renewed attention in the present era. Our contemporary world is characterized as one of unprecedented transition from industrial to knowledge-based culture and globalized economy, with all-encompassing effects on society and culture [7]. The information age is complex, diverse and unpredictable, yet has a strong commitment to retaining those elements of society that are valued, while looking ahead to the imperative of improving the world in which we all live such that sustainable development is possible. Herein lies the potential for Home Economics and the reason for renewed attention to the field of study, as this is the key imperative of the profession [6].
The term "Home science" may call up stereotypical images of girls busily sewing and cooking, images that have led many people to view this field as fundamentally narrow, dull, and socially conservative. The women's movement was often critical of home science, seeing it as a discipline that worked to restrict girls and women to traditional domestic and maternal roles [5]. Some saw home science as a vehicle for creating vocational and economic opportunities for girls and women and for educating boys and men about domestic skills, while others sought to enforce traditional models of sex roles and family life. However, even the most conservative models of home economics offered some women a path to careers as teachers and researchers [8].

Objectives
1. To know the attitude of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists towards home science as a degree.

2. To study the perception regarding the course/curriculum/department of Home science among Home scientists and Non-Home scientists.
3. To know the attitude of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists towards home science in the changing scenario.
4. To study the perception among Home scientists and Non-Home scientists regarding the job opportunities/placements of students pursuing courses in Home science.
5. To know the importance and relevance of departments of Home science as perceived by Home scientists and Non-Home scientists.
6. To study the relevance of the title "home science" with regard to the courses offered in it; as perceived by Home scientists and Non-Home scientists.

Methodology

In order to execute the inquiry and to achieve the desired objectives, a systematic approach was adopted to know about the perception of Home scientists and Non- Home scientists regarding Home science. The procedure is presented under following headings-

Research Design- A research design is the specification of methods and procedure for acquiring the information needed. The research design for the present study was cross-sectional research design. Cross-sectional method was used because this method is extensive and can be used to collect data from a large sample at a particular point of time.

Sampling Design- The sample for the present study consisted of 80 respondents (40 Home scientists and 40 Non- Home scientists). Purposive random sampling technique used to select the sample from the selected area.

Methods of data collection- As the study is exploratory in nature, survey method was adopted to collect the information from the target population. A well-structured interview schedule was given to the subjects for their response. Interview schedule was used with great care so as to have minimum possible biasness. "English" version of the interview schedule was used. Perception towards Home science was compared among Home scientists and Non-Home scientists using a questionnaire.

Data Analysis- For the analysis of data the following steps were followed:

(A)Coding- A coding plan was developed in which code numbers were given to every question and its responses and then tabulated on the coding sheet.

(B)Tabulation- The coded data was transferred from the coding sheet to comprehensive tables to give a clear picture of the findings.

(C)Statistical Analysis- The descriptive statistic applied was t-test and ANOVA.

A) Attitude towards home science as a degree

Sl. No.	Questions
1	Home science is a professional course.
2	Equal importance should be given to Home science as other science courses.
3	Home science is the best choice for girls only.
4	Home science is always the last option to study.
5	M.Sc. degree of Home science should not be given to B.A. students.
6	Specialization in Home science elective should be there in masters.
7	There must be honors degree during bachelors and masters.
8	Home science should be treated equivalent to arts subject.
9	Home science should incorporate in civil services.
10	Degree of Home science is less considerable in comparison to other courses.
11	Home science is not a satisfactory degree.

B) Attitude towards home science in the changing scenario

Sl. No.	Questions
1	Home science is attaining higher status in Indian society.
2	Home science is the best way to generate self-employment.
3	Home science has shifted women from kitchen to professional activities.
4	Drudgery can be reduced by the education of Home science.
5	Establishment of Home science colleges is important for children and women welfare.
6	Being subject of female dominance Home science has revolutionized women education.
7	Home science extension programme facilitate action among farm families.
8	Home science enables women as a professional person to contribute to the nation.
9	Home science creates awareness about family control methods.

C) Perception toward the course/curriculum/department

Sl. No.	Questions
1	Curriculum should be such that people get aware of its relevance to life.
2	Home science must have technology based curriculum.
3	The unstructured curriculum creates negative attitude towards Home science.
4	Course should be developed keeping in mind both boys and girls.
5	Seats for M.Sc. should be up to 60.
6	The course should be made practicable according to the changing circumstances.
7	Scientific survey should be done before preparing the curriculum.
8	Curriculum should be prepared using concepts from other fields as well.

D) Perception towards job opportunities/placements

Sl. No.	Questions
1	Elective in the subject gives you more job opportunities.
2	Internship in the IVth year of graduation enhances placements chances.
3	The elective food & nutrition is more productive in terms of job.
4	Even in the newspaper, almost jobs are related to food & nutrition.
5	There is lack of job in the area of Human development as compared to Food & Nutrition.
6	Most of the colleges provide PhD in Food & Nutrition and Human Development only.
7	There is no specialization at Masters level in most of the colleges.
8	Resources Management has very less number of job opportunities.
9	Extension & Communication is considered irrelevant at master's level in most of the colleges.

E) Rank the departments according to its importance and relevance

Sl. No.	Departments
1	Food & nutrition
2	Human development
3	Clothing & textiles
4	Resource management
5	Extension & communication

F) Do you feel the title "home science" is relevant to the type of courses being offered in it? (Yes/no)

Results & discussion

Table 1: Attitude of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists towards Home science as a degree

Respondents	n	Mean	S.D.	t	p-value
Home scientist	30	21.83	3.98	1.242	0.698
Non-Home scientist	30	20.60	3.70		

The above table reveals that t(calculated) value is less than t(table) value, therefore no significant association was found between the attitude of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists towards Home science as a Degree, hence the null hypothesis has been accepted but there is a slight difference between the mean of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists. The reason is that Non-Home scientist perceived Home science as a non-professional degree which is equivalent to arts subjects and is always the last option to study.

Table 2: Attitude of Home scientists and Non- Home scientists towards home science in the changing scenario

Respondents	n	Mean	S.D.	t	p-value
Home scientist	30	18.57	2.35	1.050	0.353
Non-Home scientist	30	17.87	2.78		

As the t (calculated) value is less than t (table) value therefore no significant association was found between the attitude of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists towards Home science in the changing scenario, hence null hypothesis has been accepted but differences between the mean of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists was found because Non-Home scientists disagree that Home science has shifted women from kitchen to professional activities.

Table 3: Association between Home scientists and Non-Home scientists regarding the perception towards course/ curriculum/ department

Respondents	n	Mean	S.D.	|t|	p-value
Home scientist	30	17.50	3.41	0.655	0.450
Non-Home scientist	30	18.03	2.87		

The above table reveals that t (calculated) value is less than t (table) value therefore no significant association was found between the perception of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists regarding course/ curriculum/ Department of Home science, hence null hypothesis has been accepted but there is a slight difference between the mean of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists. The reason is Home scientists believe that the curriculum of Home science is not well structured. It should be technology based.

Table 4: Association between Home scientists and Non-Home scientists regarding perception towards job opportunities/ placements

Respondents	n	Mean	S.D.	|t|	p-value
Home scientist	30	10.80	2.35	0.215	0.803
Non-Home scientist	30	10.93	2.44		

As the t (calculated) value is less than t (table) value therefore no significant association was found between the perception of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists regarding job opportunities/ placements in Home science, hence null hypothesis has been accepted but very slight differences between the mean of Home scientists and Non-Home scientists was found because Home scientist believe that food & nutrition is the only elective having more job placements as compared to other electives.

Table 5.1: Perception towards Departments of Home science according to its importance and relevance among Home scientists (HM) and Non-Home scientists (NHM)

Departments / Ranks	I		II		III		IV		V	
	HM (%)	NHM (%)	HM (%)	NHM (%)	HM (%)	NHM (%)	HM (%)	NHM (%)	HM (%)	NHM (%)
Food & Nutrition	43.3	35.0	6.7	11.7	0	3.3	0	0	0	0
Human Development	5	5	18.3	25	10	15	11.7	5	5	0
Clothing & Textiles	1.7	1.7	25	10	23.3	18.3	0	16.7	0	3.3
Resource Management	0	8.3	0	3.3	13.3	11.7	31.7	23.3	5	3.3
Extension & Communication	0	0	0	0	3.3	1.7	6.7	5.0	40	43.3

It is found that majority of the Home scientists (43.3%) as well as Non-Home scientists (35%) rate Food & Nutrition as most important and relevant branch of Home science. This is because both Home scientists and the Non-Home scientists

agreed to the fact that Food and Nutrition has much more scope as compared to the other departments. Also, Most of the public, especially non-home scientists perceive food and nutrition as the main course of study of the subject Home science. Then the overall ranking of the rest of the departments is shown in the table below:

Table 5.2: Ranking of Departments according to its importance and relevance among Home scientists (HM) and Non-Home scientists (NHM)

Departments	Food & Nutrition	Human Development	Clothing & Textiles	Resource Management	Extension & Communication
Home Scientists	Ist	IIIrd	IInd	IVth	Vth
Non-Home Scientists	Ist	IInd	IIIrd	IIIrd	IVth

Table 6: Do you feel the title "Home science" is relevant to the type of courses being offered in it-

Sl. No.	Respondents	n	Yes		No	
			F	P	F	P
1.	Home scientists	30	7	23.3%	23	76.6%
2.	Non-Home scientists	30	21	70.0%	9	30.0%

Most of the Home scientists (76.6%) said that the title "Home science" is not relevant to the type of courses being offered in it whereas majority of Non-Home scientists (70.0%) said that the title "Home science" is relevant to the type of courses being offered in it. This is because Non-Home scientists is not much aware of what is being taught in Home science.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the perception of Non-Home scientists towards Home science isn't much different from that of Home scientists, however it can also be concluded that the level of awareness regarding the curriculum of Home science is weak among Non-Home scientists. Interestingly, it can be understood that both Home scientists as well as Non-Home scientists consider Food and Nutrition as the most relevant department in Home science.

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