

THE EFFECT OF A BASIC FOODS PROGRAM ON THE PURCHASING
AND PREPARATION HABITS OF WOMEN
RECEIVING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

An assessment of the effect of a 10-week basic foods program on the food practices of homemakers receiving public assistance was made in the evaluation areas of planning, shopping, preparation; responsibilities allotted to children; inventory checklist; knowledge, and housekeeping. Interviews of the women before and after the course were used to test the hypotheses that as a result of the course the women would demonstrate increased food purchasing and preparation knowledge and increased efforts to economize in food purchasing and preparation areas.

A comparison of background factors to initial scores indicated that knowledge scores tended to increase with increased level of education and previous home economics education. As well, younger homemakers scored higher in knowledge, allotted fewer responsibilities to children, and had higher housekeeping scores than older women at the initial interview. Higher initial scores in practices were obtained by younger women, those with previous home economics education, and those who had been on welfare the shortest length of time.

Examination of knowledge scores for improvement showed that a total of 18 women scored at the satisfactory level at the second interview as opposed to 9 before the

course. Arbitrary "satisfactory" levels of score were selected to enable more detailed comparisons and a 10% increase from initial score was considered to be indicative of change or improvement. Purchasing and preparation scores showed 20 of the 27 homemakers were at the satisfactory level after the course as compared to 18 before the course. As well, 3 and 4 homemakers raised their scores in the subsections of planning, and preparation respectively.

Four homemakers made a definite increase in total purchasing and preparation score while 9, 3, and 3 women improved their scores in the subsections of planning, shopping and preparation respectively. The scoring indicated no effect of the program in relation to responsibilities allotted to children. Five homemakers increased the number of inventory checklist items on hand to a "satisfactory" level of recommended purchases at the time of the second interview. Housekeeping scores were generally lower at the second interview.

A comparison of background and attendance factors to increase in score indicated younger homemakers made a greater improvement in knowledge and purchasing and preparation scores, and attended more lessons than older homemakers. Improvements in purchasing score increased with previous home economics education and as level of education increased.

No clear relationship was evident between initial scores or increases in score and number of children, reason for being on welfare and length of time on welfare.

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INTRODUCTION

Professionals working in poverty-stricken areas are now stressing the importance of education as a means to improving the situation of impoverished families. The mother's food practices are basic to the family's well-being, yet often noted is the mother's inability to effectively use the food allowance. She may have difficulty managing on a small budget if she lacks the knowledge and skills for careful shopping and economical-nutritional meal preparation.

Welfare officials believing the effect of economic assistance may be strengthened by educational assistance are attempting to improve the capability of the homemaker to manage on a food allowance. The sponsors of homemaker-educational programs believe that food purchasing and preparation habits can be improved if knowledge accompanies realistic alternatives to poor practices.

One such educational program was offered in the City of Winnipeg and the purpose of this study was to assess its effect on the food purchasing and preparation habits of women receiving public assistance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definitions of "poor" found in literature dealing with the problems of low-income groups include both a description of the level of living and the yearly income (Barton et al., 1970; Beavers, 1965; Dhalla, 1966; Ferman et al., 1965). The descriptions usually present a picture of overcrowded, dilapidated, uncleanly housing, broken homes and parental neglect of children (Dhalla, 1966). A more precise measure in North America is the generally accepted poverty line of a yearly income of less than \$3,000. A large portion of the families classified as poor on the basis of income are headed by women. Canadian figures state that 50% of families headed by women have an income below this level as compared to 21% of families headed by men (Dhalla, 1966). American figures for 1965 cite more than two and one-half million families headed by women with yearly incomes of less than \$3,000 (Sherman, 1965).

Public assistance programs have been criticized for institutionalizing poverty cases rather than alleviating their problems (Hess, 1964; Meyers, 1970). The essence of this argument is that the habits and attitudes of public assistance cases are passed on from generation to generation by the process of socialization, and that financial

assistance alone does little to produce desired changes. Sherman (1965) frankly stated that as attention focused on people from impoverished backgrounds, it became apparent that the cycle of poverty was a transmitted heritage and that women were its primary perpetuators. The practices or habits of the mother are passed on to the children. These practices include food purchasing, preparation, and general homemaking habits. The food practices of the low-income groups are poorer mainly due to lack of funds, lack of education, and lack of cooking and managerial skill.

The lack of funds affects the portion of the family income which is spent on food. Pennock (1964) in a survey of spending and consumption in a low-income area of Kentucky, reported that food and beverages took more of the budget than any other single category of expenditures. From a Winnipeg survey in 1970, Rubin reported that low-income homemakers spent 50% of their income on food.

The lack of funds also limits the mobility, and buying power of the family. Meyers (1970) described the fate of the low-income homemaker as "buying when she can, buying in the neighbourhood at whatever the prices happen to be, buying the quality and the amount she can afford." The low-income consumer is unable to economize by buying in bulk, or to wait until "specials" will reduce costs. The immediacy of needs prevents these economizing practices.

Whereas the average-income consumer has freedom of time, place, quality, amount and method of purchase, the low-income consumer is severely restricted. As well, limited mobility results in more frequent use of small neighbourhood grocery stores where selection is limited, prices are higher and credit is available. Weeks (1965) reported from a study of a low-income group that credit was used by young families and its use increased with family size and income. Ferman (1965) criticized food allowances for failing to take into account the frequent use of credit at small neighbourhood stores or the inability to buy in quantity or to take advantage of special sales. Calloway (1970), Caplovitz (1963), and Rubin (1970) pointed out that as well as limiting mobility, the lack of funds is evident in limited equipment and facilities for preparing, caring for and serving food.

The lack of education of low-income homemakers has hindered their efficiency as shoppers and in meal preparation. American sources reported that over 60% of women who head poor families have no more than a grade school education (Sherman, 1965). Ferman (1965) identified limited literacy, inability or inexperience in reading contracts or labels, and of knowledge of packaging deceptions as barriers to effective shopping. Oppenheim (1965) concluded from a project assessing the success of a New York

educational program with Puerto Rican women, that women with less than a 5th grade education learned the least. However, the greatest change took place in the group with the lowest level of education, and the shortest time of residency in the city. Bishop (1965) reported from a survey of factors influencing homemakers' food buying practices that as level of education increased, the use of recipes or cookbooks greatly increased.

Ferman (1965) criticized the food allowance for assuming the low-income homemaker would be a careful shopper, and a skillful cook who would prepare all the family meals at home. Some evidence makes it clear that food practices of low-income groups require improvement as efficient, economical practices are crucial to managing on limited resources. Reports from other workers indicate that the poor exhibit limited management ability. For example, Weeks (1965) found low-income homemakers seldom planned food purchases or menus. Similar observations were made by Ugelow (1965); he believed that these poor practices were related to sketchy meals and in turn to inadequate diets.

There are 3 distinct approaches to food aid in North America. These can be simply categorized as low-income independent self-help, government sponsored food assistance, and educational programs.

Groups of low-income persons have themselves organized to alleviate their problems. The self-help food store projects in operation in Canada is a major example. Rubin (1970) stated the belief that food store projects represent a concrete attempt by low-income consumers to help themselves. The food store projects were defined as community buying programs initiated and operated by the low-income consumers on a voluntary, non-profit basis. The plans involved the set-up and maintenance of community food stores aimed at achieving lower food prices through neighbourhood community action. These stores had a majority of membership of those below the poverty line. In 1970, there were 10 food store projects in existence and 10 planned. Membership recruitment occurred in low-income neighbourhoods and public housing projects by means of public meetings, social events, canvassing, and the media. The store purchased food in bulk, repackaged and sold at discount prices to members. Some such groups have been able to extend their services to include informal neighbourhood food and nutrition services and meal service programs. Winnipeg has been unique in showing cooperative buying between individual food store projects, and attempting home delivery of foods. The Winnipeg Buyers Association, a group of 270 people, has offered counselling on food purchases and budgets, and has expanded to household and common drug items, bakery goods,

poultry, eggs, meat, fruit, and vegetables. Members were encouraged to save money, to learn how to shop weekly instead of daily, and no credit was available. Although these food stores have been initiated and operated mainly by the self-sufficient poor as opposed to welfare dependent persons, families living on welfare assistance can enjoy the economizing benefits of buying from these stores.

Food cost and quality surveys conducted in low-income areas of Omaha, Nebraska in 1969, and Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1970, both concluded that neighbourhood grocery stores in poverty areas charge the highest prices, had the lowest quality foods, and the poorest sanitary conditions (Captain et al.; Rubin, 1970). The Winnipeg survey comparing food pricing and quality between 25 chain, small retail, and citizen group stores concluded that on the whole, food store projects had substantially to moderately lower prices than other stores surveyed.

For welfare recipients in Canada, major food aid has been based on welfare programs of cash assistance or the direct provision of meals, while the U.S. food aid programs have been based largely on food supplements and food distribution. A small percentage of Canadian welfare recipients have been issued assistance in the form of food vouchers. These vouchers have restricted where the recipient can shop and what can be purchased. Criticism of the voucher system

has also included complaints that the basic consumer right of choice is limited and that the use of vouchers is degrading (Rubin, 1970). As of 1970, there were no known plans to abolish the voucher system in Canada.

The American food stamp program differed from the Canadian voucher system in that vouchers were a part of the regular assistance rates while stamps were a purchased commodity. Food stamps allowed the poor to purchase cheaper food by redeeming the stamps at grocery stores (Lyng, 1970). The rationale of the use of stamps was to improve general level of nutrition. Criticism of the food stamp program was mainly that the stamps were limited to food purchases and were not a cash supplement. Because the stamps were not free, not everyone could afford them, nor could they afford to meet the program's regular participation requirement. Difficulties also arose in administration and political situations and in some cases the stamps did not reach the poor.

Canadian food distribution programs have been limited in size and number. Wheat farmers have attempted to donate surplus amounts to native people. Several food manufacturers have given surplus products to welfare institutions. Individual food retailers have offered damaged and spoiled goods at below cost price to welfare institutions. Special drives for food hampers have been conducted

by agencies especially at Christmas. However the lack of an agency to handle and distribute surplus products has been a limiting factor in such efforts, and companies have been reluctant to tie up personnel in this area.

Rubin (1970) suggested the refinement of the present system to a uniform guaranteed income program or the approach of self-help and cooperative enterprises with public and private assistance and government regulations concerning the market place. Existing Canadian food and nutrition services were felt to be impractical as booklets and other information did not reach the poor, nor were these assistance programs problem solving in nature. Rubin (1970) stressed the need for educational programs.

In recent years, assistance has been offered in the form of educational programs. Some programs are geared to improving the low-income person's ability to manage on a limited income, while other programs aspire to the long term goal of self-sufficiency for families now dependent on public assistance. However, the underlying philosophy common to most educational programs is to provide the opportunity and to improve the ability of low-income persons to help themselves.

Weeks (1965) stated that points essential to the success of any such program are: that the people be aware that the program exists; that they see the relationship

between the program and their own basic needs; that they be encouraged and assisted to gain the necessary confidence to participate; that they be assisted to make application of learnings to solution of problems; that each new learning be reinforced by repeated exposure to content to be learned and that mutual acceptance exist between learner and those who teach. In other words, it is not enough to offer the course, and to present the subject matter. If the people are to benefit from the program they must actively participate in it, and be assisted in applying the newly gained knowledge.

The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, expanded food and nutrition education program, through land-grant colleges and universities sought out and was working with more than 150,000 poor families (Meyers, 1970). Those who evaluated the program observed that new insights and understanding about poverty were reaching higher levels of government and society. Included in these insights were what promises to function best as leverage for change. The proposed combination for change was educational, economic and psychological or motivational leverage. Education was noted to have a long term and multiplier effect as the mother's knowledge would be passed on to her children by example. Each dollar added to a poor person's income was believed to reduce the overall effect of being poor,

especially psychological problems. Motivation was essential for either participation or application of knowledge.

The Oregon State University Extension Service in cooperation with the State Public Welfare Division offered a program to female welfare recipients, the goal of which was to help women become independent (Strawn, 1970). The program began with demonstrations on budgeting, hair styling, and clothing selection. After 2 weeks the participants were employed half days at a variety of jobs such as nursing homes, hospitals, motels, day care centers, laundries, restaurants, and stores. Some have been hired by these cooperating employers. The greatest value of the course was showing the ladies they were capable of doing things of which they were not aware. Of 19 participants, 5 were permanently employed and off welfare 1 year later, 2 had returned to school and 4 had temporary employment.

A program was presented in New York City to teach Puerto Rican women the types of stores and markets in the city, ways in which foods and commodities may be paid for, and the purchase of food in forms, qualities, and amounts that would be most economical and nutritious (Oppenheim, 1965). The project on the whole was concerned both with ways of getting the participation of the women for whom the program was directed, and the effectiveness of methods used.

The results of the program implied that one approach to reaching large numbers of people might be to have prepared teaching material that can be administered by a person indigenous to the community. They found also that motivation and reassurance were of utmost importance in persuading the women to come to an educational activity.

Ugelow (1965) reported from a pilot study that after a homemaking program of 4 seasons emphasizing meal planning, shopping and preparation of low-cost dishes that improvement occurred for each subject in at least 1 area. Noted were increased use of skim milk powder, more nutritious meals, and preparation of casserole and other items not formerly used. This program was expanded from 4 to 11 weeks and had served 3,390 mothers by the end of 1964. Participation in class demonstrations was highly stressed as the "learn to do by doing" approach was used. Although they felt this large number of participants had benefitted, no actual evaluation was carried out.

Rubin (1970) pointed out the lack of food market studies about the low-income consumer and on the food marketplace from a consumer viewpoint. As well, there have been few evaluations of food aid programs or suggestions for new programs. Certainly the discipline of home economics is well suited to meet this challenge as, since its inception, home economics has had as its central aim to help individuals

and families develop basic competences that are essential to effective living. While some steps have been taken, the potential service to low-income groups has not been realized.

Accordingly, an evaluation of the basic foods program offered by the City of Winnipeg Public Welfare Department was undertaken to assess the effect of the course on the food purchasing and preparation habits of women receiving public assistance.

THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FOODS PROGRAM

The City of Winnipeg Department of Public Welfare undertook to provide assistance to welfare recipients through an educational program, as well as through financial support. With the cooperation of the Department of Education, it was possible to offer a 10-week homemaking course to women receiving public assistance. The overall goal of the course was to help the women fulfill their roles as mothers by subtly providing stimulation, encouragement, and renewing their interest in homemaking. The more specific objectives focused on the homemakers' capabilities in purchasing and preparing food. The Department of Public Welfare stated its specific objectives for the course as listed in Table 1.

Classes were held one evening a week in the home economics facilities of a centrally located high school where subject matter was presented by home economics teachers. The 10-week foods course outlined in Table 2 was a highly unstructured program. The unit had been promoted as a cooking course with no implication of a homemaking upgrading situation. Teachers were instructed to present information or carry on objective-related discussions in conjunction with activities at their own discretion whenever the opportunity arose. Table 2 is therefore indicative of

Table 1
Department of Public Welfare Foods Program
Objectives

Objective number	Statement
1.	<u>To teach how to use food allowances effectively</u> by buying standard not "gimmick foods," avoiding expensive packaging, buying house brands, taking advantage of food sales, comparing prices, understanding food grades, buying food in season, buying appropriate quantities, increasing ability to bake goods, planned buying and meal preparation, greater use of skim milk powder, eggs and less tender meat cuts.
2.	<u>To teach how to prepare simple foods well</u> with emphasis on eggs, cereals, basic meats, cheese, vegetables, sauces, baked goods, soups and desserts.
3.	<u>To teach how to use and care for basic kitchen equipment.</u>
4.	<u>To teach how to choose nutritious foods.</u>

Table 2
Outline of Ten Week Foods Program

Meeting number	Lesson content*
1	sandwiches - hot and cold homemade salad dressing
2	muffins - plain and bran
3	juice, porridge, mock maple syrup, french toast, pancakes
4	cabbage salad casseroles - salmon, macaroni, rice use of leftovers
5	meat roll, tea biscuits, rolls, jelly desserts, fruit
6	cream soups, cream sauce, fresh vegetables, chowder
7	pastry filling, tarts
8	cakes - butter boiled icings
9	snacks for final meeting
10	serving of food, entertaining

* objective-related discussion was incorporated at the discretion of the teacher.

the main topics.

Participation in the course was on a voluntary basis. Homemakers were invited to attend the program by a member of the Public Welfare staff. Those homemakers who indicated any interest were encouraged to attend and were offered a cash incentive. Payment of the incentive was made before completion of the course, and therefore if the homemaker failed to attend at least 1 lesson, the amount was deducted from the first post-course regular assistance payment.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Program objectives listed in Table 1 served as the basis for this research and another related study. Wolczuk (1970) concerned her research with the nutritional aspects of the course as an outgrowth of objective 4. No attempt has been made to assess the effect of the course on the use and care of basic kitchen equipment. Objectives 1 and 2 were considered in the formation of this research design and the following hypotheses.

Hypotheses

As the purpose of the homemaking classes was to improve the mothers' ability to select foods and to prepare simple economical meals as well as to improve the dietary status of the families, it was hypothesized that after completion of the classes the homemakers would demonstrate:

- a) increased food purchasing and preparation knowledge,
- b) increased efforts to economize in food purchasing and preparation practices.

Variation in effect of the classes on these increases was examined in relation to the following characteristics of the homemakers: age, education, number of children, length of time and reason for being on welfare,

previous exposure to home economics education and number of lessons attended.

The hypotheses were assessed through a series of questions concerned with the basic home economics taught and designed to permit 5 areas of evaluation before and after the course.

The first hypothesis, that knowledge of food preparation and purchasing would increase as a result of the course was assessed by the change of scores on 12 questions dealing with basic measurements, food grades and differences between competitive food products (Table 3). Increase in this kind of knowledge was considered desirable in order that the homemaker could follow recipes more successfully in preparing simple economical meals and in order that she could be better able to select lower priced foods of good quality. Subjects were marked right or wrong in response to the questions. Those subjects scoring 50% were considered to have a "satisfactory" level of knowledge.

The second hypothesis, that efforts to economize in purchasing and preparation practices would increase was evaluated in three areas. Each area was scored before and after the course to provide a measure of change (Table 3).

Planning, purchasing and preparation habits were scored as a measure of economical practices. An arbitrary scoring system was devised to enable more detailed

Table 3
Evaluation Area Questions and Scoring System

Area	Questions	Scoring
Knowledge (maximum = 12)	Difference between vegetable grades	1
	Difference between meat grades	1
	Ounces in a pound	1
	Larger - 3 pints or 1 quart	1
	Meaning of grade A and B	1
	Number in a dozen	1
	Number of quarts in a gallon	1
	Ounces in a Canadian quart	1
	Difference between whole and skim milk	1
	Difference between butter and margarine	1
	Teaspoons in a tablespoon	1
	Tablespoons in a cup	1
	Inventory checklist (maximum = 6)	unprocessed cereal
unprocessed rice		1
skim milk powder		1
standard, choice or house brand canned vegetables		1
standard, choice or house brand canned fruit		1
margarine		1

-- Table 3 continued --

Area	Questions	Scoring		
Purchasing (maximum = 27)	Compare brand prices	3	2	1
	Shopping place	regularly	sometimes	never
	Grocery shop by telephone	large chain or economy	medium chain	independent store
	Use of corner store	never	sometimes	regularly
	Use of credit	1 to 2 x wk	3 or more x wk	daily
	Butter and margarine	never	occasional	regularly
	Skim milk	more margarine	approx; $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$	more butter
	Compare package weights, sizes etc.	regularly	partial	none
	Convenience food items	regularly	sometimes	never
		1 or none	few	many
Responsibilities allotted to children (maximum = 12)	Amount of food shopping	little to none	moderate	all to much
	Age of children shopping	over 12	10 to 12	9 or younger
	Eat meals together	3 meals	2 meals	1 or none
	Children make meals	none or snacks	some, older children	all

-- Table 3 continued --

Area	Questions	Scoring			
Preparation (maximum = 24)	Preparation of food	3	2	1	
	Plan supper	mother morning or earlier	combination after prev. meal	children just before	
	Serve food to children	regularly	sometimes	never	
	Try new recipes	regularly	sometimes	never	
	Homemade soup	regularly	sometimes	never	
	Use of recipes	moderate	few	none	
	Bake weekly	regularly	occasional	never	
	Casseroles	regularly	sometimes	never	
	Planning (maximum = 15)	Check newspapers for food sales	regularly	sometimes	never
		Use grocery list	regularly	sometimes	never
Shopping frequency		1 x wk or less	more than 1 x wk	daily	
Decide purchases before going to store		yes	half	no	
Plan meal		morning	after prev. meal	just before	

-- Table 3 continued --

Area	Questions	Scoring
Housekeeping (maximum = 12)	Livingroom floor: clean	1
	neat	1
	Livingroom furniture: clean	1
	neat	1
	Kitchen counter: clean	1
	neat	1
	Kitchen floor: clean	1
	neat	1
	Outside appearance: clean	1
	neat	1
Dust: absent	1	
Odor: not apparent or pleasant	1	

comparisons to be made. Categories were formed from the subjects' responses, and were assigned values of 3, 2, 1, for the most desirable, intermediate, and poor practices respectively. Subjects were scored according to their practices. A 66% score was considered "satisfactory." Scores for each subject, in each area and a total score were obtained and were compared for post-course increase in relation to background factors.

A second area was concerned with the responsibilities assigned to children (Table 3). It was felt that the mother should be largely responsible for food purchasing and preparation rather than the children. The mother's experience qualified her as the most suitable person to food shop if economical considerations were important. A large degree of responsibility allotted to the children in this area was therefore considered undesirable or poor practice. Frequent shopping, meal preparation, and self-service by children was therefore scored low (1). Moderate responsibility for older children was scored as intermediate (2) and the situation where the homemaker was primarily responsible was scored as the most desirable practice. A comparison was made between precourse and post-course scores.

An inventory checklist was also completed at both visits to assess the effect of the course on the purchase

of recommended items (Table 3). As house and choice brands, skim milk powder, food in season and other economizing factors were stressed, the checklist was designed to reveal the changes in purchasing practices which occurred in view of the suggestions made at the course. Homemakers were scored 1 point for each recommended purchase they had on hand.

Also measured was the cleanliness of the home to see if there would be a carry-over of high standards of cleanliness from the classes to the home. Two points were allotted for living room furniture, living room floor, kitchen counter, kitchen floor, and outside appearance of the home. One point was given if the item was clean, another point if it was neat. In addition, a point was given if the home did not have an objectionable odor. Another point was given if it was not dusty. The maximum possible score was 12 points. According to Wolczuk (1970), a score below 6 points was considered low, and a very neat home would have a score of 10 points or more.

Study Subjects

Classes in both foods and clothing were offered concurrently by the Department of Welfare. Participants were placed into either the foods or clothing classes at the discretion of the department personnel. At the time of registration each participant was asked if she would

cooperate with persons from the University of Manitoba who wished to do a survey on the course. No objections were expressed, and all were considered eligible study subjects.

Homemaker-family characteristics are given in Table 4. Twenty-eight women enrolled in the classes; of these 27 were subjects in the course evaluation. One homemaker could not be located after the course and was therefore omitted from the results.

Average number of children was 4.3. To study the relationship of family size to performance in the evaluation areas, family size was categorized according to Dhalla (1966). In this system, a small family has 2 or less children, an average has 3 or 4, a large family 5 to 8, and a very large more than 8 children.

Homemaker age ranged from 20 to 51. Homemakers over 30 were classed as older homemakers and those under 30 as younger homemakers.

Educational level was categorized according to the division in the Manitoba school system. The primary level represents grades 1-6, the junior high level, grades 7-9, the senior high level, grades 10-12. Four subjects were at the primary level, 19 at the junior high level, and 4 at the senior high level of education. No homemakers had received any other type of education or training.

Home economics education was noted. Ten homemakers

Table 4

Homemaker-Family Characteristics

Subject number	Total household size	Number of children	Homemaker age	Education	Home economics education	Length of time on welfare**	Reason for being on welfare	Number of lessons attended
1	7	5	36	junior high	none	3	unemployed husband	7
2	6	5	35	junior high	home economics	1	deserted wife	3
3	6	5	33	senior high	home economics	3	deserted wife	7
4	6	5	29	junior high	home economics	4	deserted wife	9
5	5	3	28	junior high	none	1	deserted wife	9
6	5	4	32	junior high	home economics	-*	deserted wife	0
7	5	4	32	junior high	none	-*	deserted wife	0
8	8	7	38	junior high	none	3	deserted wife	10
9	10	4	25	junior high	home economics	2	unemployable	10
10	2	0	28	junior high	home economics	2	unemployable	10
11	5	4	25	junior high	none	2	deserted wife	3
12	6	4	32	senior high	home economics	3	unemployed husband	8
13	4	3	27	junior high	none	2	unemployed husband	9
14	5	3	51	primary	none	4	unwed mother	6
15	4	3	37	junior high	none	-*	deserted wife	5
16	4	3	24	senior high	home economics	2	deserted wife	8
17	7	6	32	primary	none	4	deserted wife	7
18	6	4	26	junior high	none	2	deserted wife	9
19	3	2	24	senior high	home economics	2	deserted wife	8
20	11	10	33	junior high	home economics	4	deserted wife	9
21	3	2	27	junior high	none	2	deserted wife	10
22	6	5	33	primary	none	4	deserted wife	9
23	4	3	20	junior high	none	1	deserted wife	10
24	7	1	41	junior high	none	2	deserted wife	6
25	6	5	31	primary	none	3	deserted wife	5
26	5	4	41	junior high	none	2	deserted wife	7
27	13	12	38	junior high	none	4	deserted wife	8

* provincial case information unavailable.

** 1 = 1-2 years; 2 = 3-5 years; 3 = 6-10 years; 4 = over 10 years.

had taken some formal home economics classes while 17 had no previous exposure to home economics education.

Length of time on welfare was classed as less than 2 years, 2 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, and more than 10 years. Reason for being on welfare was due to unemployed husbands, unwed mother, unemployable women, and deserted women.

The number of lessons attended was classed as, low 5 or less, average 6-8 and high 9-10.

Information related to the 5 evaluation areas, age, education, family composition and number of lessons attended was obtained directly by questioning the homemaker. Information related to welfare history was obtained indirectly, that is, from the Department of Public Welfare, to avoid antagonism between subject and researcher. Information was not available for 3 provincial welfare cases.

Research Instrument

An interview schedule was the instrument used to assess the effect of the homemaking course on the knowledge and practice in food purchasing and preparation. The schedule was designed to incorporate questions related to each of the 5 evaluation areas (Appendix A).

In the preliminary portion of the interview, household composition, education of homemaker, background in

home economics, and general housekeeping scores were obtained. Non-test questions were also asked to relax the subject, and to break any pattern which might encourage calculated answers.

The main period of the interview consisted of questions related to determination of practices within the 5 evaluation areas. Questions were intermingled, using a logically presented order that still avoided a definite or predictable pattern. Questions were mainly open-ended with the exception of those pertaining to specific facts. As understanding and ability to communicate varied with each respondent, probing or rewording of questions was usually necessary to obtain full and valid answers.

The final portion of the interview consisted of the inventory checklist during which the interviewee was asked to check her cupboards for the presence of products within the list. Notation was made of the recommended purchases on hand.

Interviews were carried out in September, 1968 before the course and in February, 1969 after the course. At no time was the survey related to the Department of Public Welfare to avoid possible intimidation of the subjects which could lead to invalidation of the results. No contact was made with the subjects except for the actual interviews, and in September no mention was made of a second

interview. The homemakers were told that the purpose of the interviews was to improve the course in which they would (or had) participate(d). Subjects were cooperative during both visits to their homes. A two month time lapse was permitted after completion of the course before the post-course interviews were made. This delay was deliberate in order to assess more accurately if teachings had been incorporated into permanent practice. The course was said to have "definitely" affected their knowledge and practices if changes were evident after this time lapse.

Responses were reviewed, responses scored, tabulated, and mean scores calculated. As the means represent population data from a small group, only simple numerical comparisons of change were made within the evaluation areas. The nearest whole point the equivalent of 10% or more calculated from the maximum possible score was selected as indicative of change, as the effects of the course were not expected to be great. The relationship of the non-class factors to the increases and post-course scores was assessed.

In a study of this nature complete control is impossible. The results and discussion therefore, recognize the possible association between the course and the subject's performance, and should not be read as a direct or causal relationship.

RESULTS

General Purchasing and Preparation Knowledge

The increase between precourse and post-course mean scores as shown in Table 5 indicates a tendency to improved knowledge for the group. Nine homemakers made definite improvements in knowledge score, while the number scoring at the satisfactory level or above increased by nine to a total of 18.

In Table 6, the data have been arranged to reflect the relationships between the non-class factors and knowledge scores. Where the distribution of subjects among the categories of a factor is very uneven, the apparent relationships must be viewed with some caution. From the changes in score between interviews, certain relationships appear evident or suggested:

- a) Younger homemakers decidedly improved their knowledge mean score, and furthermore there was a greater increase in the net number of younger homemakers scoring at the satisfactory level than older homemakers.
- b) There was a tendency for knowledge scores to be higher with increased educational level, and previous home economics education.
- c) Homemakers with the least number of children made a definite increase in knowledge mean score.

Table 5
 Scores for General Purchasing and Preparation
 Knowledge

Subject number	Score	
	Precourse	Post-course
1	5	9*
2	8	8
3	8	8
4	5	7*
5	8	12*
6	6	6
7	4	4
8	6	7
9	8	10*
10	5	6
11	4	6*
12	5	9*
13	4	5
14	7	7
15	6	7
16	5	6
17	2	3
18	4	4
19	4	10*
20	3	4
21	4	6*
22	3	4
23	6	7
24	4	4
25	3	6*
26	1	1
27	5	5
Mean score	4.93	6.33
Range	1-8	1-12
Maximum score	12	12
Number scoring at "satisfactory" level	9	18

* increase in score of 2 points or more.

Table 6

Relationships Between Non-Class Factors and Scores for General
Purchasing and Preparation Knowledge
(maximum = 12)

Factor	Categories	Total in category	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score	Change in no. answering 50% of questions correctly
Homemaker age	under 30	11	5.18	7.18*	+ 6
	over 30	16	4.75	5.75	+ 3
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	3.75	5.00	+ 1
	7-9	19	5.10	6.21	+ 5
	10-12	4	5.50	6.75	+ 3
Previous home economics	none	17	4.47	5.70	+ 4
	some	10	5.70	7.40	+ 5
Number of children	2 or less	4	4.25	6.50*	+ 3
	3-4	13	5.23	6.46	+ 3
	5-8	8	5.00	6.63	+ 3
	over 8	2	4.00	4.50	0
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	4.95	6.05	+ 6
	unmarried mother	1	4.00	5.00	0
	unemployable	2	6.50	8.00	+ 1
	unemployed husband	3	5.66	8.33*	+ 2
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	7.33	9.00	0
	2-5 years	10	3.90	4.80	+ 4
	6-10 years	5	5.40	7.80*	+ 3
	over 10 years	6	4.17	5.00	+ 1

* increase in mean score of 2 points or more.

however because of the small number of women in the category, any general implication regarding the effect of family size is doubtful.

- d) Women with unemployed husbands definitely increased their knowledge mean score, although there was a tendency for women on welfare for other reasons to increase mean scores as well.
- e) No clear relationship was evident between length of time on welfare and knowledge mean scores however, homemakers on welfare for 6-10 years were the only group that made a definite increase in knowledge mean scores.

Food Purchasing and Preparation Practices

The homemakers tended to increase in the mean total score for food purchasing, and preparation practices as shown in Table 7. Tendency toward improvement was evident in subsection mean score increases, where 9, 3, and 3 women made increases in planning, shopping and preparation scores respectively. As well, the net number of women reaching the satisfactory score level increased for planning and preparation subsections.

Study of Table 8 for relationships between the total scores for purchasing and preparation practices and non-class factors indicated the following trends and increases:

Table 7

Scores for Food Purchasing and Preparation Practices

Subject number	Subsection scores										Total score	
	Planning		Shopping		Preparation		Preparation		Preparation		Pre-course	Post-course
	Precourse	Post-course	Precourse	Post-course	Precourse	Post-course	Precourse	Post-course	Precourse	Post-course		
1	11	12	20	16	15	16	16	46	44			
2	13	12	23	25	20	20	22	53	57			
3	15	14	20	21	22	22	22	57	57			
4	12	14*	21	20	17	19	19	50	53			
5	8	8	17	19	21	22	22	46	49			
6	14	14	16	16	20	20	20	50	50			
7	9	10	20	20	18	19	19	47	49			
8	10	7	17	17	17	17	17	42	41			
9	13	14	19	17	18	19	19	50	50			
10	12	6	20	20	13	15	15	45	41			
11	15	14	22	22	17	18	18	54	54			
12	11	10	19	21	18	19	19	48	50			
13	10	11	15	16	14	15	15	39	42			
14	10	13*	14	14	16	16	16	40	43			
15	8	14*	15	16	15	17	17	38	47*			
16	5	5*	18	18	16	16	20*	39	47			
17	12	12	24	24	20	21	21	56	57			
18	14	14	12	16*	21	21	21	47	51			
19	11	14*	21	21	17	19	19	49	54			
20	9	11*	21	26*	15	17	17	45	54*			
21	10	11	19	22*	16	19*	19*	45	52*			
22	7	10*	16	16	13	15	15	36	41			
23	8	7	17	15	16	16	16	41	38			
24	10	13*	18	17	21	21	21	49	51			
25	9	11*	15	17	18	22*	22*	42	50*			
26	9	9	21	21	14	14	14	44	44			
27	12	13	12	15	10	12	12	34	40			
Mean score	10.51	11.37	18.22	18.81	16.88	18.19	18.19	45.56	48.37			
Range	5-15	6-14	12-24	14-26	10-21	12-22	12-22	34-57	38-57			
Maximum score	15	27	27	27	24	24	24	66	66			
Number scoring at "satisfactory" level	18	21	16	14	18	22	22	18	20			

* increase in score of planning 2 points or more; shopping 3 points or more, preparation 3 points or more; total 7 points or more.

Table 8

Relationships Between Non-Class Factors and Total Purchasing
and Preparation Scores
(maximum = 66)

Factor	Categories	Total in category	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score	Change in number scoring 66%
Homemaker age	under 30	11	45.64	49.45	+ 2
	over 30	16	45.63	48.44	0
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	43.50	45.25	0
	7-9	19	46.00	48.57	0
	10-12	4	48.25	52.00	+ 1
Previous home economics	none	17	43.89	46.65	+ 2
	some	10	48.60	51.03	0
Number of children	2 or less	4	47.00	52.00	- 1
	3-4	13	41.38	47.23	+ 2
	5-8	8	47.75	48.75	0
	over 8	2	39.50	47.00*	0
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	41.14	49.34*	+ 3
	unmarried mother	1	39.00	42.00	0
	unemployable	2	47.50	45.50	- 1
	unemployed husband	3	44.67	45.67	0
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	46.67	48.00	0
	2-5 years	10	46.10	49.60	0
	6-10 years	5	47.00	46.40	0
	over 10 years	6	43.50	48.00	0

* increase in mean score of 7 points or more.

- a) There was a tendency for younger homemakers to make a greater increase in mean score than older homemakers. As well, the number of younger homemakers at the satisfactory scoring level was increased by 2.
- b) There was a tendency for mean scores to be higher with increased education. As well, the improvement in score was greater with increased education.
- c) Homemakers with some previous home economics education scored higher than those with none.
- d) Although number of children and mean scores showed no patterned relationship, women with the most children made a definite improvement in mean score.
- e) The deserted women made a definite increase in mean score while the others did not. The net number of deserted women scoring at the satisfactory level was increased by 3.
- f) There was no clear relationship between length of time on welfare and mean scores.

(i) Planning

Examination of mean scores for the planning subsection in relation to non-class factors in Table 9 indicated the following trend and increase:

- a) Although there was no relationship between

Table 9

Relationships Between Scores for Planning and Non-Class Factors
(maximum = 15)

Factor	Categories	Total in category	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score	Change in number at satisfactory level (66%)
Homemaker age	under 30	11	10.55	11.18	- 1
	over 30	16	10.69	11.50	+ 4
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	9.50	11.50*	+ 2
	7-9	19	10.89	11.26	+ 1
	10-12	4	10.50	11.75	0
Previous home economics	none	17	10.12	11.12	+ 3
	some	10	11.15	11.80	0
Number of children	2 or less	4	10.75	11.00	- 1
	3-4	13	10.31	11.31	+ 2
	5-8	8	11.13	11.50	+ 1
	over 8	2	10.50	12.00	+ 1
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	10.48	11.48	+ 4
	unmarried mother	1	10.00	11.00	0
	unemployable	2	12.50	10.00	- 1
	unemployed husband	3	10.67	11.67	0
Length of time on welfare (not including provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	9.67	9.00	0
	2-5 years	10	10.90	11.50	- 1
	6-10 years	5	11.20	10.80	0
	over 10 years	6	10.33	12.17	+ 2

* increase in mean score of 2 points or more.

homemaker age and mean score, the net number of older homemakers scoring at the satisfactory level was increased by 4.

- b) Homemakers with the lowest level of education made up the only educational category that definitely increased the mean score for planning.
- c) There was a tendency for planning post-course mean scores to increase as number of children increased.

(ii) Shopping

Study of Table 10 for increases and trends in the shopping subsection mean scores in relation to non-class factors revealed:

- a) Shopping mean score tended to be higher with increased education, although educational level had little effect on improvement in mean score.
- b) Homemakers with some previous home economics education tended to a higher mean score but there was little effect of this experience on score change.
- c) Homemakers with the most children definitely increased their mean score, while the other family size categories showed slight if any improvement.

Table 10

Relationships Between Scores for Shopping and Non-Class Factors
(maximum = 24)

Factor	Categories	Total in category	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score	Change in number scoring 66%
Homemaker age	under 30	11	18.00	18.45	0
	over 30	16	18.38	19.06	- 2
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	17.25	17.75	0
	7-9	19	18.16	18.74	- 2
	10-12	4	19.50	20.25	0
Previous home economics	none	17	17.29	17.82	- 1
	some	10	19.80	20.50	- 1
Number of children	2 or less	4	19.50	20.00	- 1
	3-4	13	17.31	17.77	0
	5-8	8	19.50	19.50	- 1
	over 8	2	16.50	20.50*	0
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	18.33	19.24	0
	unmarried mother	1	15.00	16.00	0
	unemployable	2	19.50	18.50	- 1
	unemployed husband	3	17.67	17.00	- 1
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	19.00	19.67	+ 1
	2-5 years	10	18.50	19.00	- 2
	6-10 years	5	18.20	18.40	+ 1
	over 10 years	6	18.00	19.16	0

* increase in mean score of 3 points or more.

(iii) Preparation

An examination of Table 11, for trends or increases in relation to preparation mean scores and non-class factors showed:

- a) Younger homemakers tended to a higher mean score but age had little effect on the improvement in score.
- b) Level of education had little relationship to mean scores, however the net number of homemakers scoring at the satisfactory level was increased by 4 homemakers at the junior high level.
- c) Women with some previous home economics education tended to a higher mean score and greater improvement than those women with none.

Responsibilities Allotted to Children

Homemakers made no change from initial scores for responsibilities assigned to children. Seventeen of the homemakers scored at the satisfactory level on both occasions as shown in Table 12.

Examination of Table 13 for trends regarding responsibilities allotted to children in comparison to non-class factors indicated none were evident.

Inventory Checklist

The mean score for inventory checklist showed little

Table 11

Relationships Between Scores for Preparation and Non-Class Factors
(maximum = 24)

Factor	Categories	Total in category	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score	Change in number scoring 66%
Homemaker age	under 30	11	17.09	18.64	+ 1
	over 30	16	16.75	17.88	+ 3
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	16.75	18.50	0
	7-9	19	16.63	17.74	+ 4
	10-12	4	18.25	20.00	0
Previous home economics	none	17	16.47	17.71	+ 3
	some	10	17.60	19.00	+ 1
Number of children	2 or less	4	16.75	18.50	0
	3-4	13	17.23	18.15	+ 1
	5-8	8	17.50	19.00	+ 2
	over 8	2	12.50	14.50	+ 1
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	17.24	18.62	+ 3
	unmarried mother	1	14.00	15.00	0
	unemployable	2	15.50	17.00	0
	unemployed husband	3	16.33	17.00	+ 1
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	19.00	19.33	0
	2-5 years	10	16.70	18.10	0
	6-10 years	5	17.60	19.20	+ 2
	over 10 years	6	15.17	16.66	+ 1

* increase in mean score of 3 points or more.

Table 12

Scores for Responsibilities Allotted to Children

Subject number	Score	
	Precourse	Post-course
1	9	9
2	9	9
3	9	9
4	9	9
5	9	9
6	10	10
7	10	10
8	9	9
9	10	10
10	N/A	N/A
11	12	12
12	7	7
13	7	7
14	8	8
15	7	7
16	9	9
17	9	9
18	5	5
19	9	9
20	10	10
21	8	8
22	7	7
23	12	12
24	9	9
25	9	9
26	8	8
27	6	6
Mean score	8.70	8.70
Range	5-12	5-12
Maximum score	12	12
Number scoring at "satisfactory" level	17	17

Table 13

Relationships Between Responsibilities Allotted to Children
and Non-Class Factors
(maximum = 12)

Factor	Categories	Totals in categories	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score
Homemaker age	under 30	11	9.00	9.00
	over 30	16* (15)	8.47	8.47
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	8.25	8.25
	7-9	19* (18)	8.83	8.83
	10-12	4	8.50	8.50
Previous home economics	none	17	8.47	8.47
	some	10* (9)	9.11	9.11
Number of children	2 or less	4* (3)	8.66	8.66
	3-4	13	8.77	8.77
	5-8	8	8.75	8.75
	over 8	2	8.00	8.00
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	8.90	8.90
	unmarried mother	1	7.00	7.00
	unemployable	2* (1)	10.00	10.00
	unemployed husband	3	8.00	8.00
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	10.00	10.00
	2-5 years	10* (9)	8.56	8.56
	6-10 years	5	8.60	8.60
	over 10 years	6	8.17	8.17

* no children in one household therefore change in category total.

tendency to increase as a result of the course. As well, the group mean score was below 50% both before and after the course, as shown in Table 14. However, the number of homemakers having at least half the recommended purchases on hand increased by 5.

Table 15 indicates some trends and increases in inventory mean scores in relation to non-class factors:

- a) Homemakers at the lowest level of education definitely increased their inventory mean score while those with more education did not.
- b) The unmarried mother and homemakers with unemployed husbands increased their inventory mean score, although no increase was evident across all categories.
- c) Length of time on welfare showed no direct pattern with change in inventory mean score. However, the group on welfare the longest made an improvement in mean score.

Assessment of Housekeeping

Although the group mean score for housekeeping decreased as shown in Table 16, the number of high level homemakers was the same before and after the course. Furthermore, 5 homemakers made an increase in score to indicate improvement in housekeeping. However, the number of average scores decreased, placing 4 more homemakers at a

Table 14
Inventory Checklist Scores

Subject number	Score	
	Precourse	Post-course
1	0	3
2	5	4
3	2	2
4	3	4
5	3	2
6	0	0
7	4	4
8	3	3
9	2	2
10	1	1
11	1	2
12	2	2
13	1	2
14	2	4
15	5	3
16	1	3
17	3	4
18	2	3
19	2	3
20	3	3
21	2	4
22	1	3
23	3	3
24	4	2
25	2	2
26	0	0
27	1	2
Mean score	2,15	2,60
Range	0-5	0-4
Maximum score	6	6
Number scoring 3/6	10	15

Table 15
 Relationships Between Inventory Checklist Scores and Non-Class Factors
 (maximum = 6)

Factor	Categories	Totals in categories	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score
Homemaker age	under 30	11	2.1	2.8
	over 30	16	2.2	2.4
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	2.0	3.3*
	7-9	19	2.3	2.4
	10-12	4	1.8	2.5
Previous home economics	none	17	2.2	2.7
	some	10	2.1	2.4
Number of children	2 or less	4	2.3	2.5
	3-4	13	2.0	2.3
	5-8	8	2.4	3.1
	over 8	2	2.0	2.5
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	2.4	2.7
	unmarried mother	1	1.0	2.0*
	unemployable	2	1.5	1.5
	unemployed husband	3	1.3	3.0*
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	3.7	3.0
	2-5 years	10	1.6	2.2
	6-10 years	5	1.8	2.4
	over 10 years	6	2.2	3.3*

* increase in mean score of 1 point or more.

Table 16
Housekeeping Scores

Subject number	Precourse		Post-course	
	Score	Level	Score	Level
1	9	A	11*	H
2	12	H	12	H
3	3	L	1	L
4	9	A	0	L
5	11	H	11	H
6	9	A	9	A
7	5	L	1	L
8	10	H	2	L
9	12	H	4	L
10	10	H	11	H
11	12	H	12	H
12	8	A	5	L
13	4	L	0	L
14	10	H	6	A
15	8	A	9	A
16	10	H	2	L
17	10	H	10	H
18	11	H	11	H
19	7	A	6	A
20	1	L	0	L
21	9	A	12*	H
22	0	L	10*	H
23	2	L	5*	L
24	4	L	0	L
25	7	A	0	L
26	4	L	10*	H
27	1	L	0	L
Total at levels	9L, 8A, 10H		13L, 4A, 10H	
Mean score	7.33		5.93	
Range	0-12		0-12	
Maximum score	12		12	

* increase in score of 2 points or more.

** High (H) 10-12; Average (A) 6-9; Low (L) 0-5.

low level of score.

A comparison of housekeeping scores to non-class factors presented in Table 17 indicated:

- a) There was a tendency toward or definite decrease in mean score for all categories except women without previous home economics education and women who had been on welfare for less than 2 years. These categories showed some tendency to increase in housekeeping level. The net number of high level homemakers with no previous home economics increased by 2.
- b) Post-course mean scores showed a tendency to decrease with increased level of education.
- c) In the post-course mean scores, the decline in score between interviews became more marked as the number of children increased.

Number of lessons attended, Table 18, had no bearing on improvement in score. A comparison of the number of lessons attended with the non-class factors as presented in Table 19, indicated that younger homemakers attended more lessons. No other pattern was evident.

Table 17
Clean-Neat Scores and Non-Class Factors
(maximum = 12)

Factor	Categories	Totals in categories	Precourse mean score	Post-course mean score*	Change in number of high level homemakers
Homemaker age	under 30	11	8.82	5.91	- 2
	over 30	16	6.31	5.94	+ 1
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	6.75	6.50	0
	7-9	19	7.05	6.31	+ 1
	10-12	4	7.00	3.50	- 1
Previous home economics	none	17	6.29	6.49	+ 2
	some	10	8.10	5.00	- 2
Number of children	2 or less	4	7.50	7.25	0
	3-4	13	8.15	6.54	- 2
	5-8	8	7.50	5.75	+ 1
	over 8	2	1.00	0.00	0
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	6.91	5.86	0
	unmarried mother	1	4.00	0.00	0
	unemployable	2	11.00	7.50	- 1
	unemployed husband	3	9.00	7.33	0
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	8.33	9.33	0
	2-5 years	10	8.30	6.80	0
	6-10 years	5	7.40	3.80	0
	over 10 years	6	5.17	4.33	0

* increase in mean score of 2 points or more.

Table 18
Number of Lessons Attended

Subject number	Number of lessons attended	Level of attendance*
1	7	A
2	3	L
3	7	A
4	9	H
5	9	H
6	0	L
7	0	L
8	10	H
9	10	H
10	10	H
11	3	L
12	8	A
13	9	H
14	6	A
15	5	L
16	8	A
17	9	H
18	9	H
19	8	A
20	9	H
21	10	H
22	9	H
23	10	H
24	6	A
25	5	L
26	7	A
27	8	A
Mean	7.2	
Maximum number	10	

* Low (L) 0-5; Average (A) 6-8; High (H) 9-10.

Table 19

Relationships Between Numbers of Lessons Attended and Non-Class Factors

Factor	Categories	Totals in categories	Mean attendance	Number low 0-5	Number average 6-8	Number high 9-10
Homemaker age	under 30	11	8.6	1	2	8
	over 30	16	6.2	5	7	3
Homemaker education	grade 1-6	4	7.3	1	1	2
	7-9	19	7.1	5	4	10
	10-12	4	7.8	0	4	0
Previous home economics	none	17	7.2	4	5	8
	some	10	7.3	2	4	4
Number of children	2 or less	4	8.5	0	2	2
	3-4	13	6.5	4	4	5
	5-8	8	6.8	2	2	4
	over 8	2	8.5	0	1	1
Reason for being on welfare	deserted wife	21	6.9	6	6	9
	unmarried mother	1	9.0	0	0	1
	unemployable	2	10.0	0	0	2
	unemployed husband	3	7.0	0	3	0
Length of time on welfare (not including 3 provincial cases)	less than 2 years	3	7.3	1	0	2
	2-5 years	10	8.0	1	4	5
	6-10 years over 10 years	5 6	7.4 8.3	1 0	3 2	1 4

OVERVIEW

The assessment of the effect of the program in relation to the 5 evaluation areas indicated the course was beneficial to the individual homemaker in several aspects. At the initial interview, 9 of the 27 subjects scored at the satisfactory level for general purchasing and preparation knowledge, while at the second interview this number had increased to 18. As well, 9 homemakers had definitely improved their knowledge score.

The improved practices reflected in total and subsection scores of planning, shopping and preparation for individual homemakers implied improved knowledge and use of suggested alternatives to poor practice. Purchasing and preparation practice scores showed 20 of the 27 homemakers were at the satisfactory level after completion of the course as compared to 18 before the course. As well, 3 and 4 homemakers raised their scores to the satisfactory level in the subsections of planning, and preparation respectively. Four homemakers made a definite increase in total score while 9, 3, and 3 women improved their scores in the subsections of planning, shopping, and preparation respectively.

The teachings in the course had been supported by preparation of foods appropriate to the objective-related

discussion points, thus providing the homemakers with tangible examples of the efforts she could make to economize. Suggestions made were evidently practical as homemakers were preparing at home some dishes illustrated at the course. Consequently the scores were raised in the preparation area. The program could have been perhaps of greater impact if this principle of information presented with individual example was extended to the planning or shopping problems of each homemaker. The information presented was limited in applicability because of the varied composition of the group in age, number of children, income and quantity of food to prepare. Discussions with the homemakers at the second interview revealed that variation in the size of family proved a problem in use of recipes. Some homemakers were unable to adapt medium-quantity recipes to a large family. Homemakers with large families expressed a desire for recipes and hints to handle meal preparation for a larger than average family. As well, some homemakers commented that the information was too basic. Perhaps, some division in classes is necessary according to the subject's initial capability level. Greater attention to the needs of individual subjects may have provided the information and motivation necessary to induce desired changes. More individual attention may have resulted in more persons improving their scores.

The author agrees with Wolczuk (1970) that for future courses the homemaker-aides presently employed by the Department of Public Welfare are the logical persons to follow through the classroom instruction and to encourage the carry-through of principles in the home. In fact, these aides might also give guidance to the instructors as to areas of greatest need, since teachers had no exposure to the actual home situation of participants. Using women indigenous to the group has been an increasingly important technique in American educational programs and it could be used here as well (Sheehan, 1969; Smith et al., 1965; Spindler, 1967).

The scoring indicated no effect from the program in relation to responsibilities allotted to children. Both before and after the program, 17 homemakers were rated at the satisfactory level of score. Scores for individual homemakers showed no change, possibly due to the nature of categories. In the short time period of the study, the age distribution of the children did not change to result in different scores in this evaluation area. As well, since the course was not emphasizing this aspect of economizing practices, little change could be expected.

The mean score for the inventory checklist showed little tendency to increase as a result of the course. However 5 more homemakers increased the number of

recommended purchases made, to have on hand at least half the items at the time of the second interview. This brought the total number of homemakers at that level to 15, as opposed to 10 at the first interview. This finding implies the suggestions made to the homemakers during the program were practical as well as economical in nature and provided the women with realistic alternatives to less economical purchases. This supports the belief of educational workers that programs can improve the low-income homemaker's ability to manage on a food budget through increased basic food purchasing and preparation knowledge and through the provision of practical and realistic alternatives to poor practices (Caplovitz, 1963; Rubin, 1970).

The attempt to assess the impact of the program, on the housekeeping habits of the women, indicated the program had little long term effect. The same assessment method used by Wolczuk (1970) immediately after completion of the course showed a definite improvement in housekeeping score. However, 2 months later at the second interview date of this study, mean scores for housekeeping were generally lower. It appears therefore that some carry-over of higher standards of cleanliness from the lessons occurred, but was not permanent.

Factors to Initial Scores

A summary of the relationship between initial

scores, and the non-class factors is shown in Table 20. Initial scores indicate that younger homemakers scored higher in knowledge, responsibilities allotted to children, and housekeeping. Knowledge tended to increase with increased level of education and previous home economics education. Other factors appeared to have no bearing on knowledge scores.

Homemakers efforts to economize, as assessed by purchasing and preparation practices, responsibilities allotted to children, and the inventory, varied with the background factors to indicate that higher scores were obtained by younger women, those with increased education, homemakers with some previous home economics education, and those who had been on welfare the shortest length of time.

Factors to Increase in Scores

A summary of the relationship between background, attendance factors, and the increase in mean scores is shown in Table 21. Knowledge mean score improvement diminished as age increased, or in other words the younger homemakers made a greater improvement in score. As well, younger homemakers made a greater improvement in total purchasing and preparation score. Improvements in purchasing score increased with previous home economics and as level of education increased. These findings are in

Table 20

Summary of the Relationships Between Non-Class Factors and Initial Scores

As factor increased	Score			
	Knowledge	Purchasing and Preparation	Responsibilities to children	Inventory Housekeeping
Age	↓	---	↓	↓
Education	↑	↑	---	---
Previous home economics	↑	↑	↑	↑
Number of children	---	---	---	---
Length of time on welfare	---	---	↓	---

Key: ↑ increased
 ↓ decreased
 --- no observable trend

Table 21

Summary of the Relationship Between Factors and Increases in Mean Score

As factor increased	Score			
	Knowledge	Purchasing and Preparation	Responsibilities to children	Inventory Housekeeping
Age	↓	↑	---	---
Education	---	↑	---	---
Previous home economics	↑	---	---	---
Number of children	---	---	---	---
Length of time on welfare	---	---	---	---
Number of lessons attended	---	---	---	---

Key: ↑ increased
 ↓ decreased
 --- no observable trend

agreement with Weeks (1965) who found the younger and better educated women were more active participants in an educational program. As Wolczuk (1970) and this study point out, younger homemakers derived greater benefits from the program, and were more inclined to attend more lessons. Logically then, greater effort should be made to solicit more younger homemakers for this type of course. No other factor related trends were evident.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Hypothesis 1

Nine homemakers definitely improved their basic food purchasing and preparation knowledge scores. The greatest gains had been made by the younger homemakers and those with some previous home economics education.

The first conclusion of the study is therefore that participation in the course resulted in increased levels of general purchasing and preparation knowledge for younger homemakers, and those with previous home economics education.

Hypothesis 2

Four homemakers definitely improved their total purchasing and preparation scores while 9, 3, and 3 women improved their scores in the subsections of planning, shopping and preparation respectively. The number of women who had on hand at least half the recommended purchases after the course had increased by 5.

The second conclusion of the study is therefore that participation in the program resulted in some increased efforts to economize as reflected in planning, purchasing and preparation habits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In future programs of this nature, the effect might be more marked if the sponsors attempted to include more younger homemakers, or to group the women according to additional background factors such as family size. As well, more attention to the homemaker's individual problems, and greater use of specific examples might strengthen the course material.

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APPENDIX

FOODS AND NUTRITION DEPARTMENT
 SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS
 UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Household name: _____ Household number: _____

Date: Q1 _____ I1 _____ to _____
 Q2 _____ I2 _____ to _____

Given name	M or F	Age	Occupation (in detail)

Family composition: M _____ F _____ 11-17 _____ 0-11 _____

1. Who usually buys the food? _____ age: _____
2. Who usually prepares the food? _____ age: _____
3. What is the last grade in school completed by this person (buyer)?
 - _____ (a) 1-6 grade school
 - _____ (b) 7-9 junior high
 - _____ (c) 10-12 senior high
 - _____ (d) more than above, specify _____
4. What is the last grade in school completed by the head of the family, if other person than above?
 - _____ (a) 1-6 grade school
 - _____ (b) 7-9 junior high
 - _____ (c) 10-12 senior high
 - _____ (d) more than above, specify _____
5. Has the homemaker-buyer ever taken part in a course in: (check as applicable and specify)
 - _____ (a) homemaking _____
 - _____ (b) cooking _____
 - _____ (c) home economics _____
 - _____ (d) health _____
6. Of what religion is the homemaker-buyer? _____
7. Of what nationality is this person? _____

- 2 -

8. Approximately what is the family income? _____

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT CONSULT PARTICIPANT ON THE FOLLOWING BUT BE CERTAIN TO COMPLETE,

9. How long has this family been receiving social assistance? _____

10. For what reason is this family on welfare? _____

11. Is the homemaker-buyer in good health? _____

Note any sick children _____

12. INTERVIEWER PLEASE COMPLETE ON VISITING:

LR FLR	dr_____	LR FUR	dr_____	KTC CNT	dr_____	KTC FLR	dr_____
	ms_____		ms_____		ms_____		ms_____
	cl_____		cl_____		cl_____		cl_____
	nt_____		nt_____		nt_____		nt_____

OUT APP	dr_____	DST	prs_____	OD	unpl_____
	ms_____		abs_____		ntap_____
	cl_____				pls _____
	nt_____				

(Following can be asked)

No. of rooms constituting home _____

Telephone: no_____ yes_____ more than one (no.) _____

Newspaper: no_____ yes_____

Dining area in addition to kitchen: no_____ yes_____

Single family or multiple family dwelling: _____

SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS

1. Who does most of the food shopping? _____
2. Do you know how much you spend for food each week?

3. Do you make a special trip to the store when foods are on sale? _____
4. Do you check the newspapers for food sales? How often?

5. Before you shop for groceries do you write down everything you will buy or do you try to remember? _____

6. How long before supper do you decide what you will have for supper? _____
7. Do you serve the food to the children or do you let them help themselves? _____
8. Do you cut recipes out of the newspapers or magazines and try them? Often? _____
9. Do you compare the different brands of food for price on all items? _____
10. Where do you buy most of your groceries? (qualify as to size of store) _____
11. Do you buy any at another store? _____
12. Do you ever food shop by telephone? (determine frequency) _____

13. How do you get the groceries home? _____

14. How often do you buy groceries? (Qualify) _____

15. How much of the food shopping do the children do? What store are they sent to? _____
16. Ages of the children sent to the store? _____
17. What items do the children buy? _____

18. How often do you use the small corner store?

19. Do you buy on credit at the store?

20. Do you make homemade soup? How often?

21. How far in advance do you decide what will be in each meal? _____
22. Do you make casseroles? What kind? How often?

23. Do you bake each week?

24. Do you use skim milk powder? Do you use more skim milk powder or more other milk? _____

25. When you shop do you compare package weights?

26. Do you know what the difference is between different grades of canned vegetables? (ask for explanation)

27. Do you know what the difference is between meat grades?

28. Do you know what "convenience" foods are? (explain)

Do you buy many of them? _____

29. Does your family eat each meal together? How many?

Can you tell me how many ounces are in a pound? _____

Which is more 3 pints or one quart? _____

What does grade A mean to you? _____

What does grade B mean to you? _____

How many items are there in a dozen? _____

How many quarts are there in a gallon? _____

How many ounces are there in a Canadian quart? _____

What is the difference between whole milk and skim milk?

What do you think the difference is between butter and margarine? _____

How many tsp. are there in a tablespoon? _____

How many Tbsp. are there in a cup? _____

Do you keep track of your food expenses by writing them down or saving your bills? _____

Do the children make any of the meals for themselves or for the family? Ages of those children? _____

Inventory Checklist

Cereals: of raw or unprocessed _____
 of partially processed _____
 of instant or highly processed _____

Rice: raw _____
 partially processed _____
 highly processed _____

Milk: whole forms _____
 canned forms _____
 skimmed powder _____

Canned vegetables:
 of standard grades _____
 of choice grades _____
 of fancy grades _____

Brands purchased: i.e. house or national _____

Canned fruit: standard _____
 choice _____
 fancy _____

Brands purchased: i.e. house or national _____

Fats: margarine amount _____
 oils amount _____
 butter amount _____

Number of items which could be counted as convenience items _____

Cleanliness of kitchen 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 _____

Shopping frequency correspond with amount of food present?

Co-operativeness of respondent _____