

**INVESTIGATING THE TEACHING OF HOME ECONOMICS IN PRIMARY
SCHOOLS: A CASE OF ST. MAURICE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN LUSAKA DISTRICT**

BY

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**A Research report submitted to Chalimbana University in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the award of the degree in primary Education**

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DECLARATION

I Bibien M Chulumanda declares that this is my work and that it has not been submitted for any award at this university or any other university. The works of other people in this report have been cited authentically.

DATE.....

SIGNATURE.....

APPROVAL

This work of Bibien M Chulumanda has been approved to have met the minimum requirements for the award of the Bachelor’s Degree in Primary Education.

Name of supervisor.....

Date.....

Signature.....

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my mother Cecilia Chulumanda and my brothers who have been my inspiration in academia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work could not have been completed without the invaluable help of so many people.

To start with, sincere gratitude to my supervisor Madam Kalirani for her superb guidance. I will remain indebted to her.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the teaching of home economics at St Maurice primary school in Lusaka district. The study was guided by the following objectives;

1. To investigate the teachers' and learners' perceptions on the teaching of home economics in primary school.
2. To examine the extent to which instructional materials contributed to the teaching and learning of home economics.
3. To suggest ways to improve the teaching of home economics at St Maurice primary school.

This study used a case study research design. A sample of five teachers, the head teacher and 17 pupils was used. Data was collected using semi-structured interview guide and a focus group discussion. These were administered to the respondents and data was analyzed by grouping the emerging themes from the findings.

The findings reviewed that teaching of home economics as a practical subject is very important as it has a great impact on a learner. It is a way of imparting wisdom, knowledge, values, attitudes, morals and skills to learners that even if they dropped out of school or if they never acquired tertiary education they would still be able to sustain themselves. Home economics can be a way of reducing poverty and lack of employment, it can also be a way of improving the health of a country.

The use of instructional materials cannot be ignored as it is a very important tool in the teaching of home economics. The findings reviewed that if teaching materials are not available the outcome is undesirable unfortunately, the school does not provide all the required materials for practical lessons.

However, this can change if the administration would offer the needed support to the H.E department as well as if the teachers could encourage their learners and sensitize them on the importance of this subject. Additionally, the school needs to develop a sustainable source of income instead depending on the school administration.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents a brief background regarding the topic under discussion, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objective of the study, research questions, and delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework and definition of operational terms.

1.1 Background of the study

Home economics is one of the vocational subjects taught in primary schools. This subject is designed to provide sufficient practical skills to prepare learners for subsequent training or entry into the real world (C.D.C) (2013) quoting Okpala (2005), describes home economics as a skill oriented, decision making subject, that equips learners with skills and knowledge which will help them to be self-reliant and at the same time contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the family and society.

Before the coming of the missionaries, technical, vocational and entrepreneurship training was provided through family socialization system. After the missionaries came schools were introduced, these schools had workshops in which some trades or crafts were taught. By then these were to meet the needs of the missionaries. After Independence in 1964, the government followed the steps of the missionaries and introduced trade schools. This was done with the objective to improve productivity, develop a nation with creative, versatile and employable people, reduce poverty, improve housing and health care, promote self-reliance as well as ensure greater participation of the women in development.

Home economics as a field of study is divided into four major groups which are; food and nutrition, clothing and textile, home management and needle work. The aforementioned groups of home economics cannot be properly taught without the provision of both human and material resources. Even with the contribution of home economics to the growth and development of national economy there are still some problems associated with home economics which is the problem of teaching the subject “home economics”.

Over the years there have been a series of challenges faced by most teachers in teaching home economics in primary schools. According to Dempsey (2010:123), “Without funds the material resources cannot be made available and this would lead to poor quality teaching which in turn has a negative effect on learning abilities of the individual.” Furthermore, poor motivation and frustrations on the part of the students is also another contributing factor to poor performance of the learner in home economics. It is for this reason that the researcher thought of carrying out a study on the challenges of teaching home economics at St. Maurice primary school in Lusaka district of Lusaka province of Zambia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

During my teaching practice, I heard a lot of complaints from both teachers and pupils on the challenges they encountered in home economics and this was the reason why I decided to investigate on the teaching of home economics in primary schools.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the teaching of home economics at St. Maurice primary school in Lusaka district.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To investigate the teachers’ and learners’ perceptions on the teaching of home economics in primary schools.
2. To examine the extent to which instructional materials contribute to the teaching and learning of home economics.
3. To suggest ways to improve the teaching of Home Economics at St. Maurice primary school.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the teachers’ and learners’ perceptions on the teaching of Home Economics in primary schools?

2. What extent do teaching and learning materials in home economics contribute to the effectiveness of the subject?
3. What measures can be put in place to ensure the effectiveness of teaching of home economics in primary schools?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study may help the Ministry of General education to enhance the teaching of home economics. It may also help the educational administrators as well the teachers to find ways and means to curb the challenges which teachers face when teaching home economics in schools. It will also help teachers to adopt more effective methods of teaching home economics.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study was conducted at St. Maurice primary school in Lusaka District.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

In every research, it is obvious to have some limitations or problems. As for this research the following were the limitations:

The researcher was not given enough time to search for the information due to covid-19 school closures.

The research cannot be generalized to all schools as only one school was used as a sample.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on a theory called complexity. There are four main theories that can contribute to the complexity theory body of knowledge which include;

System theory; often called the mother of complexity theory. It deals with ideas surrounding self- organization and adaptability.

Chaos theory; gives an understanding on feedback loops and non-linear system.

Network theory; this is more practical and relies on the real world instead of theoretic.

Adaptive systems theory- adaptive self-organization theory; this is the study of the actions and reactions to others behavior. It studies the organization of things that do not have centralized control.

Throughout history, the mission of home economics education has always been that of empowering people to increase control over their lives by passing on the knowledge and skills considered important for a healthy and productive life. What gives this subject its new characteristic is that it has always drawn from multiple disciplines, “synthesizing this through interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary inquiry” (IFHE, 2008). As further stated in the IFHE position statement (2008) “This blending of disciplinary knowledge is necessary because the occurrences and challenges of everyday life are not typically one dimensional.” Owing to the validation of this difficult natural standard, the home economics field of study has been able to develop, ordering and meeting the economic and socio-cultural needs of the time and the context it is taught in fact.

Berthoz (2004:132) outlines that the subject helps young people to enhance living in their current domestic and personal relationships and to plan well for their future relationships and families.

This theory relates well with this topic as it looks at how to be organized, easily adapt and how to be creative in the real world. All these skills are taught in home economics.

1.10 Definition of Operational Terms

Home economics: It is a field of study which deals with related disciplines that addresses the everyday world of individuals and families by focusing on the provision of food, shelter and clothing.

Teaching: It is the imparting of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes into a learner either formally or informally.

Investigating: It is carrying out an inquiry on a particular subject or study.

1.11 Acronyms

CTS: Creative and technology studies

FNS: Food and nutrition studies

HE: Home economics

PR: primary

ST: Saint

1.12 Summary

This chapter had presented the introduction of the study. It gave an insight on what this research is all about. Outlined is the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, questions, significance of the study and acronyms.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews related literature on the teaching of home economics in primary schools. This chapter will be organized under the following sub-headings; importance of teaching practical subjects and the challenges of teaching home economics in primary schools.

2.1 The Importance of Teaching Practical Subjects in Primary Schools

Earl (351:2013) states that, "Practical subjects are vital in the development of a learner's mind, brain and soul." Therefore, it should be taught to every learner starting from primary schools to secondary. Similarly, The Herald (23:2013) also states that, "Learners should be taught practical subjects in primary schools so that they can acquire skills that will help them to create employment instead of seeking for it." This is true for these practical subjects do not only offer knowledge to learners but skills too. Woodley (2009), further acknowledges that practical work supports skills development, experimental learning, and learning in different ways and the development of personal learning and thinking skills. The goal and objectives of teaching practical subjects is that learners and the populace acquire specific mechanical or manipulative skills required in industrial arts or applied sciences. He further states that the goal and objective of vocational or practical subjects are to provide trained manpower in different skills for example agriculture, industries, commercial and economic development, give training and impart necessary skills leading to the production craftsmen, technicians and other skilled people who will be enterprising and remain self-reliant in the long run.

Masri (57:2000) emphasizes that, "home economics is a unique and dynamic field of study. Its central theme is the improvement of lives of individuals. Luckily home economics is a field of study that draws knowledge from many disciplines including humanities in order to fulfill its objectives. It focuses on the welfare of individuals, families and society. Additionally, Ducci (69:1991) indicates that, "home economics contribute meaningfully to the solutions of the solutions of the problems of society such as unemployment, poverty and malnutrition. This is true as the learners of home economics learn skills such as banking, bed making, cooking, sewing to mention just a few. These skills can be used as a means of survival even when one has no job after school.

Leedy (56:2001) found that home economics as a vocational subject is required to equip learners with knowledge of skills and attitudes necessary for the effective management of a home. For one to effectively run a home it requires skills wisdom, dedication, care, intelligence, unusual patience and a strong power of observation and imagination. One can only acquire all these through a practical subject like home economics. When learners are taught practical subjects they have freedom to do this work on their own hence helping them to develop individual abilities. In a similar study, Haggerty (1999), states that learners have more opportunities during their practical lessons to develop special and unique talents. It is supported by Cooke, (21:2001), who states that practical subjects make the learners to be independent in life and be able to take their own decisions and rely on them. In short it helps learners to develop confidence. This is seen after managing to do the given activity in practice. Camara (35:1997) records that, “Practical subjects bring freedom in teaching and learning which makes it enjoyable. Through becoming involved in investigations and discoveries for oneself learners gain insight in a lot of things. Learners realize their potential and feel secured in their learning process thereby strengthening their self-concept, Giddens (54:2006) quoting Lahey (34:2004) postulates that practical subjects help learners to perceive things critically the way they exist. Finally, Cohen (76:2011) states that, “Education should serve everyone not just a few chosen ones.” When learners are taught practical lessons they gain skills and these skills can be applied in real life in an event where one drops out of school just after primary schools. Millar (23:2008) adds that, “Practical subjects help learners with skills of how to find solutions to problems through investigations and analysis.” The Curriculum Framework (2013) also indicates the importance of teaching and learning practical subjects is that it provides competent leadership and team work in learners. It further states that through the learning of home economics the country is able to appreciate its ethics, cultures, customs and traditions as well as uphold the national pride and unity. The educating our future policy also states that practical subjects act as a vehicle for improved productivity and income generation as well as an instrument for the minimization of inequalities among the people.

Therefore, it is important that practical subjects like home economics are taught effectively in schools starting from primary level to secondary level.

2.3 The Challenges of Teaching Home Economics in Primary Schools

Likando and kalisto (51:2016) indicates that,” The syllabus is too wide and heavily loaded, there is insufficient time allocated on the time table. This might be the reason why pupils perform badly in this subject. The other reason might be that a lot of subjects are integrated in home economics from grade five to seven. To support this, Chilele (32; 2011) also states that, “There is work overload in the home economics syllabus which makes it difficult.” This puts a teacher in a difficult position that they end up failing to catch up with time given to teach these lessons. Since creative and technology studies (C.T.S) consists of art and design, home economics and technology studies which are all practical in nature, it makes it hard for teachers to adequately allocate enough time to each component of C.T.S thus other teachers would rather focus one component of the subject (Likando and Kalisto, 2016). Haambokoma et al (2002) establishes that “Material resources are mostly insufficient and lacking in most schools.” Instructional materials are a major challenge in the teaching and learning of home economics. Similarly, Arubayi and Obunadike (2011), found that inadequate instructional materials and unwillingness to improvise is a great impediment to home economics. Furthermore, Mbwerengwa (2004) found that inadequate resources lead to inadequate practice in home economics. Mahudi (2015) states that, “lack of financial resources has resulted in most teachers conducting more theory lessons at the expense of the practical ones thereby creating a barrier between theory and practical components.” In agreement, Asuquo (26:2007) states that, “Knowledge of teachers must be updated through further training programs for example, new trends in equipment and machinery.” Most teachers lack cookery and needle work skills which makes it difficult for their teaching of these skills. He further states that the need for all teachers to teach the many subjects one majored in affect how lessons are taught. Backus (2005) indicates that teachers do not have enough time for proper planning of practical work. Sithulisiwe and Zodwa states that the teacher-learner time of interaction is not adequate this is due to high number of pupils in classes. He further stated that other teachers lack interest in home economics. Bryan (2003), they are beliefs that impact the teachers and learners influences on what they do. Sishuwa and Likando (2019) pointed out that home economics is perceived as a subject that only involves cooking and washing of dishes. In conclusion, it is for this reason that this study will investigate the teaching of home economics in primary schools.

2.4 Teaching Strategies Used in Teaching Practical Subjects

Teaching strategies are methods and techniques that a teacher can use to support their pupils through the learning process. Methods used in the teaching of practical subjects includes descriptive method, demonstration, field trips, group work, projects method, experimental and teacher's expository methods (Muzumara, 2011)

According to Weaver and Cencil (2005) defines demonstration as a means of any planned performance of an occupational skill, scientific principle or experiment. Demonstration is a teaching strategy where the teacher has formal authority and shows learners what should be done, this type of a lesson involves a presentation, or any other activities for example a teacher of home economics can use this method when teaching stiches. They are several teaching strategies. Studies indicates that some teachers emphasize the use of question and answer technique, others use a lot of programmed instructions. However, others use the lecture method especially if the concept is totally new to learners, (Carkhuff, 2018). Weston and cranton (2018) states that projects method is an effective method used to teach in vocational subjects. Additionally, Odubiyi (2009) states that the other method used is experimental learning. This is a type of learning where lessons are taught through experiments. Furthermore, teachers of practical subjects use field trips as a teaching strategy. These are lessons conducted outside the classroom either within the locality or far away from school. The reason is as a result of the need to illustrate the natural development or technological application of certain themes dealt with in class, (Aggarwal, 2008).

2.5 The Use of Instructional Materials in the Teaching of Home Economics

Instructional materials are essential tools in learning every subject in the school curriculum. They allow the learners to interact with words, symbols and ideas in ways that develop their abilities in reading, writing, listening, solving, viewing, thinking, speaking, using media to mention but a few (Bokuye, 2019). According to Faize and Dahan (2011) instructional materials are prints and non-prints items that are designed to impart information to learners in the education process. Examples of instructional materials includes chalk board, textbooks, models, articles, magazines among others.

Yusuf, (2005) in his study reviews that instructional materials play a very important role in the teaching and learning process. Instructional materials are often used to compensate for the

inadequacies of sense organ or reinforce the capacity of the dominant organs (Ekpo, 2001). Instructional materials help learners to understand theory together with practical, for instance you can teach how to bake a cake but for learners to concretize the lesson there is need for them to have a practical which is done by using instructional materials. Tyler (1950) states that home economics department should have well organized instructional materials, corners, units or rooms where some of the things for learning are found. These rooms can have things like stoves, needle work areas, sewing machines to mention just a few. Teaching of home economics is aimed at making the learners skillfully self-reliant, producers of essential goods and services, future home-makers and intelligent consumers (Edet, 2001). The earlier mentioned is acquired by effective learning which also requires the use of instructional materials. In support Ode (2001), states that acquisition of competency in skills training requires practice which also requires facilities.

Furthermore, Adeogun (2001) indicates that instructional materials are very important in teaching home economics and their importance is evident in the performance of learners. According to Vygotsky, human mind develops through interaction with materials in the learning process where people learn from each other and their experiences to successfully make sense of the materials they interact with. Instructional materials are used to enhance the memory level of learners, to facilitate the teaching and learning process, for the improvement of learners' accumulation, it also serves as tools used by the teacher to correct wrong impressions and illustration things that learners cannot forget easily. He further states that instructional materials assist in giving sense of reality to the body of knowledge under discussion, it gives lessons a personal look and encourages creativity it also permits the students and teachers to experience in concrete terms the learning activities that promote the idea of self-evaluation, (Bukoye, 2019).

2.6 Summary

This chapter discussed related literature on the teaching of home economics in primary schools. It included importance of home economics, its challenges, teaching strategies and teaching materials used in home economics. Literature reviews that teaching home economics has a lot of benefits than what can be imagined, among them is the positive effect it has on preserving the culture through lessons such as bead work and basket weaving, imparting wisdom, knowledge, skills, values, morals, skills and attitudes that can be used later in life. The methods used and the

teaching materials matter to get effective results. Literature also indicated that they are challenges in teaching home economics unfortunately the greatest of it all is lack of teaching materials for practical lessons as well as lack of teaching facilities.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter focused on research methodology. According to Wellington (22:2000), "A research methodology is the activity of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the approaches you use in data collection." This chapter presented research design, target population, sample techniques, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is defined as the scheme, outline or plan used to generate answers to research problems (Orodhol, 2013). It is needed because it facilitates the smooth sailing of the research. This study used a case study research design and the study is purely qualitative.

3.2 Target Population

The target population of this study was the school head teacher, teachers and pupils from St. Maurice primary school in Lusaka district. In this study both males and females were involved as respondents to avoid gender biasness. A research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that are the main focus of scientific inquiry. It is for the benefit of the population that researches are done. However, due to large sizes of populations, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it is too expensive and time consuming. This is the reason why researchers rely on sampling (Jaeger, C. 1997). The population for this study was comprised of the Head teacher, teachers and pupils from St Maurice primary school.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size was the school administrator, teachers of home economics and 17 learners of home economics.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

This study used purposive sampling this is to help provide conceptual richness in the company of stratified sampling. Using judgment, the researcher purposively targeted the teachers and learners of home economics together with their administrator. According to Mugenda and

Mugenda (1999:50) “purposive sampling allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of their study.”

3.5 Research Instruments

The quality of research depends greatly on the quality of data collection tools used. The researcher used oral interview and focus group discussions in order to get the intended data. These research instruments were to help gather in-depth information on the subjects due to the open ended questions of the interview guides and the focus group discussion. Semi-structured interview guides were subjected to the head teacher and the teachers. The focus group discussion was conducted with 17 grade seven pupils.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher first sought permission from the school administration and the target group before going to conduct the study. This was done in form of a letter obtained from Chalimbana University, requesting for permission to carry out the research. The researcher ensured that all interviews and discussions were conducted using the guide of a well- structured interview and focus group discussion guide at all appointed times.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data collected was qualitative data. It was analyzed using simple narration, charts and tables. The qualitative data was analyzed according to the described and interpreted themes emerging from the findings.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher first got permission from the relevant authorities before interviews were conducted. Thereafter, further explanations were given to the interviewers on the purpose of the study so that relevant data could be gathered. The researcher maintained confidentiality in the research work. Having to conduct this research in the time of covid-19, the researcher allowed virtual interviews with teachers who were not available in school at that particular time. The researcher also followed the healthy guidelines when conducting the research.

3.9 Summary

This chapter discussed the research methods used and procedures to carry out the research. The research clearly explained why it was appropriate to use a case study where as the targeted population was the head teacher, teachers and pupils at St Maurice primary school. Hence, the sample was drawn using purposive sampling together with stratified sampling techniques, working with people as respondents ethical considerations were upheld with regards to covid-19 measures were put in place.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents findings based on the data collected from selected respondents who participated in answering the interview guides together with the focus group discussion administered to them with regard to investigating the teaching of home economics at St Maurice primary school in Lusaka district.

4.1 Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

The findings are presented in line with the objective, which are;

1. To investigate the teachers' and learners' perceptions on the teaching of home economics in primary schools.
2. To examine the extent to which instructional materials contribute to the teaching and learning of home economics.
3. To suggest ways to improve the teaching of home economics at St Maurice primary school.

4.2 Findings from the Head Teacher

This section contains the findings from the interview guide administered to the head teacher.

4.2.1 Promoting the Teaching and Learning of Home Economics

In order to find out if the school promotes the teaching of home economics the researcher asked questions with regard to improving the teaching of home economics. The head teacher indicated that:

I personally keep encouraging my teachers to upgrade in home economics.

The school also promotes home economics through giving teachers home economics classes with qualifications and interest in the subject and one who is able to teach the subject well. The head teacher further said

We usually give H.E to teachers who have interest, the required qualification and one who is able to teach the subject well.

In order to have good results the teachers and parents need to work hand in hand hence the researcher asked the head teacher to what extent do teachers and parents collaborate for better learning of pupils? The head teacher indicated that:

These teachers go out of their way to provide materials needed for the lessons. In a case where the school does not have materials the teachers tell their learners beforehand to come with the needed materials from home of course with the concept of their parents.

In line with promoting the teaching of home economics the researcher also asked if teachers are always present at the time of teaching home economics. He indicated that the teachers who are given the responsibility to teach this subject take it seriously to an extent of maintaining their consistence in teaching. The head stated that:

Teachers are very consistence in home economics this is because it is there area of specialization. In a case where a teacher is committed they is always a substitute teacher to stand in.

The head teacher was also asked what is the minimum qualification for teachers of home economics in his school, he responded saying:

The minimum average qualification is a diploma.

4.2.2 Teaching Strategies

To find out on how effective is the teaching of home economics. The researcher asked what strategies teachers use in the teaching and learning of home economics. In his response he indicated that among the strategies used are group work and demonstration. The head teacher said:

Teachers incorporate different teaching strategies in each and every lesson to be specific others use group work, demonstration to mention just a few.

The researcher also asked if the teachers are monitoring effectively the learning of pupils in home economics he indicated that:

Very effective actually, they monitor the pupils always especially during their practical work. We see them advertise some of the products they come up with from their practical work and other teachers buy.

4.2.3 Performance of Pupils in Home Economics

The head teacher pointed out that home economics learners' performance is overwhelming not only in home economics but other subjects too. The average pass rate is at 80% which is an indication of good performance. This was gotten after asking what the performance of learners has been. The head teacher said:

The average percentage is 80%. It is amazing how our school has been performing since the specialization in primary schools, I think this is because of the commitment of our teachers and the interest of learners in the subject.

4.3 Findings from the Teachers

This section presents the findings from the teachers

4.3.1 Understanding Home Economics as a Subject

The researcher hoped to find out the understanding of home economics, luckily teachers expressed different perceptions on the matter. Among the findings were that home economics is a subjects that is concerned with our everyday activities, it includes imparting skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that are essential for a successful life.

Teacher A responded saying:

Home economics is a very important subject that need to be taught to every pupil in school as it is part of everyone's life.

Teacher B also indicated that:

It is a disciplinary field of study which ensures to equip learners with knowledge to equip learners with knowledge, practical and social skills and attitudes that are essentials for success.

Teacher C and Teacher D said:

It is a subject that involves skills in our everyday activities.

Teacher E also added:

It is a subject that deals with skills, these skills are practical skills like cooking and serving food.

4.3.2 The Importance of Home Economic

To find out the importance of teaching home economics the researcher asked what is the purpose of teaching home economics. The responses indicated that it is a way of helping learners to develop skills that are necessary in an individual for example cooking and cleaning.

Teacher A responded saying:

The purpose of teaching home economics is to help develop skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to sustain the health of people.

Teacher B also added:

The purpose of teaching home economics is to see that the set objectives are achieved and that makes a teacher believe the knowledge and skills are fully imparted into a learner by putting the theory into practice for instance they learn bread making in class and then later they do a practical on bread making.

Teacher C further stated that:

It is to help learners to acquire knowledge and practical skills which they can use to sustain their life.

4.3.3 The Attitudes of Teachers and Learners towards Home Economics

The researcher tried to find out the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of home economics, this is because the attitude of teachers has an impact on learning. The findings indicated mixed perceptions most of which indicated to have a good attitude toward the teaching of home economics.

Teacher A responded saying:

I have a good attitude.

Teacher B also added:

Home economics is an interesting subject that can shape an individual and put them in the rightful way of living particularly in the eating habits that are supposed to be strictly followed, so who would not want to take part in this subject.

Teacher C also indicated:

My attitude towards the teaching of home economics is to help develop a conducive environment for a learner in a particular classroom.

Teacher D further stated that:

Teachers' attitude towards the teaching of home economics has been lessen by this specialization that has been introduced even in primary school this has led to male teachers leaving the subjects for female teachers only.

The researcher also asked if the attitude of teachers can affect the teaching and learning of home economics the response indicated that indeed it can affect it negatively:

Teacher A and B agreed saying:

Yes it can affect the delivery of the subject.

Teacher C also agreed adding that:

The teacher's attitude affects the teaching of home economics for not putting in much effort as they do not help learners in other components that they do not teach them, like the needlework part, other teachers do not help learners as they do not have the knowledge and just say it is a boring component in H.E. If teachers can work on this bad attitude towards needle work H.E would be the best performing subject.

The attitude of learners also has an impact on the teaching of a subject, if the attitude is positive even the outcome is positive then if its negative even the results are negative. When the

researcher asked whether the attitude of a learner can affect the teaching of home economics teachers responded saying;

Teacher A said:

Negative attitude of a learner does affect the teaching of the subject for example, if a teacher is teaching needlework and asks pupils to provide their own materials some pupils will not bring the materials not because they do not have but because they do not want to.

Teacher B also said:

The learners negative attitude is usually planted by the teacher because you would find that if a teacher has a bad attitude towards a subject they teach even the learners will have a negative attitude towards it.

Teacher C also added:

The teaching of home economics is affected when learners are just being taught theory and not doing practical work this is because that is a part that makes learners like the subject. As a teacher you have to motivate the learners by finding ways and means of doing practical lessons of either food and nutrition, needlework to mention just a few, this is where the interest of pupils is.

Teacher D also supported saying:

The learners' attitude towards the subject is crucial if we are to talk about effective learning. You would find that a learner decides not to do the work given to them without any excuse.

Teacher E also indicated that:

Learners attitude has contributed or affected the teaching of home economics because the learners have little or no interest in home economics because they think what is taught in the subject is common sense and can be understood by anyone.

4.3.4 Instructional Materials

Effective learning is tightly tied to the use of instructional materials, home economics being a practical subject is not an exception. When the researcher asked if the school usually have all the needed materials all the time, the response was that instructional materials are not *always* enough sometimes teachers use their resources or rather ask learners to bring from home.

Teacher A indicated that:

In most schools, this has been the reason why they just have it at junior level due to lack of materials to use in practical lessons.

Teacher B also added that:

No, a teacher just depends on learners to bring from home otherwise the school do not provide enough materials to deriver all lesson.

Teacher C also added saying:

The materials for effective teaching are not enough and this has led to the subject been theoretical rather than practical.

4.3.5 Teaching Strategies Used In the Teaching and Learning of H.E

When the researcher asked what kind teaching strategies are used in the effective teaching of home economics they indicated that among them are group work, demonstration, field trips, discussion, question and answer and projects methods.

Teacher A gave examples of strategies which included:

Group work, demonstration, field trips, discussion, question and answer together with practical.

Teacher B stated that:

The strategies used are research, quiz, discussion, demonstration and theory.

Teacher C also added that:

Discussion methods, role play, discovery method, demonstration method, problem solving method oral exposition and case studies.

Figure 4.1: Teaching strategies used as indicated by teacher

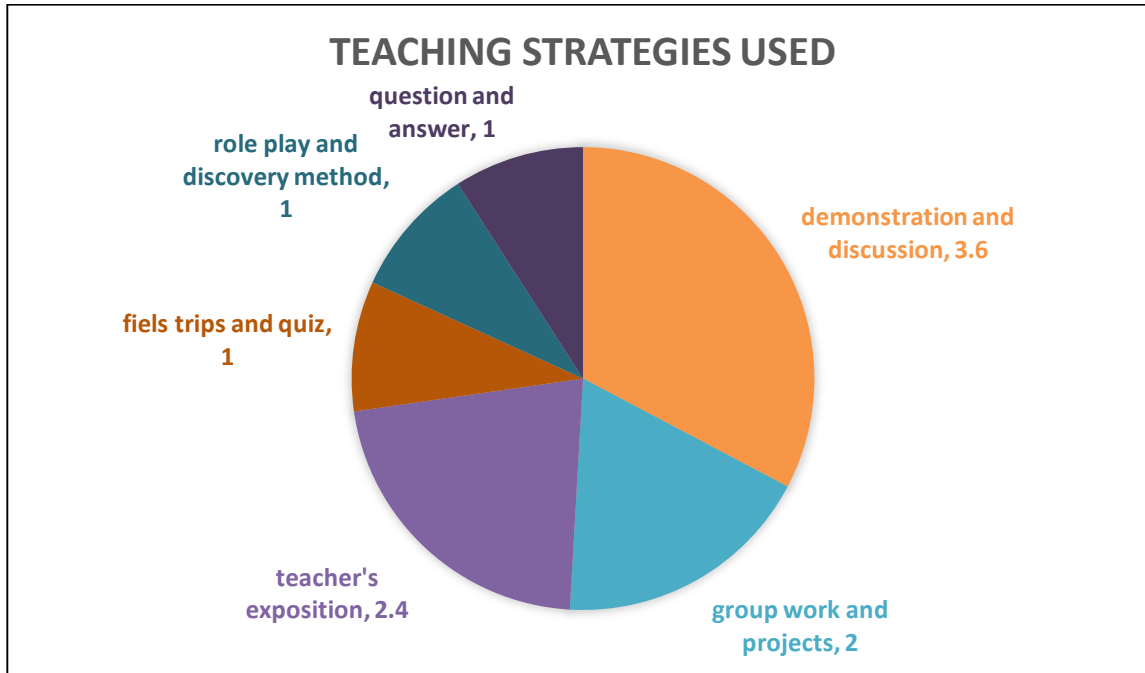


Figure 1. Indicates all the teaching strategies the teachers mentioned. Looking at the response from the teachers, teachers stated that demonstration and discussion are mostly used followed by teachers' exposition then group work and projects while these others are rarely used for example field trips, quiz, role play and discovery method as well as question and answer.

4.3.6 The Challenges Teachers Encounter in the Teaching and Learning of Home

Economics

The teachers expressed their concerns on the obstacles that affect the smooth delivery of home economics among them included lack of teaching materials, lack of proper facilities for practical lessons, lack of support from the administration, negative attitude of both the teacher and learners among other challenges.

Teacher A expressed the concern:

Lack of materials has been a great challenge for example when it comes to practical lessons, pupils have to provide their own ingredients. This school does not have H.E

rooms that would facilitate good practical lessons. Lack of support from the school administration most of the times if you approach them asking for materials they refuse saying your subject is too expensive and the school has no such money.

Teacher B emphasized:

Especially in primary school materials are not provided for us and this lack of funds for buying necessities has made H.E to be incomplete hence producing average results.

Teacher C also added:

The attitude of learners is negative, I have never seen a negative student do better unless the attitude is changed. The school managers do not support this subject at all and the other challenge is that they are no rooms specifically for H.E for example cookery rooms, laundry rooms and needlework rooms.

Teacher D stated that:

There are some topics which needs practical lessons now you find that schools do not offer support then this becomes a challenge to those learners who come from less privileged homes to contribute the needed materials for the practical.

Teacher E indicated that:

The challenges that are faced in the teaching of H.E are caused by the incompetence of certain teachers. Some of the teachers have no interest in the subject causing improper teaching or no teaching at all.

The researcher also asked what can be done to help change the culture of things at this school. The teachers indicated that teachers need to encourage learners in order for them to do better, there is need to sensitize learners on the importance of the subject. Furthermore, the school administration needs to start supporting the subject and also help build the needed facilities. Another teacher said starting up something that can sustain the H.E department rather than been dependent on the administration.

Teacher A indicated that;

Practical lessons should be taken seriously all the time this can help improve the performance and interest of learners which in return will help them acquire knowledge and skills that they can use in their everyday life. Therefore, the school administration must render full support when need arises.

Teacher B stated that;

The only solution to help improve the teaching of home economics is to start up something that can be helping the section itself unlike depending on the administration that does not receive enough funds.

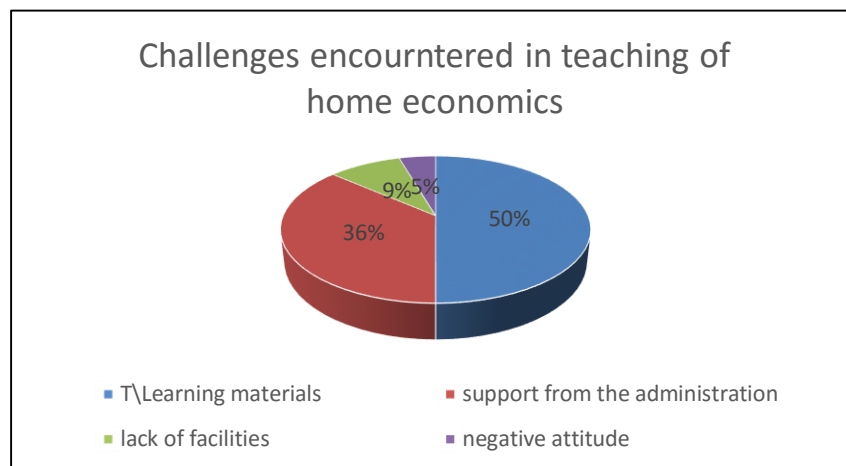
Teacher C also indicated that;

What the school needs is sufficient books for reference for both learners and teachers. Another thing is the need to build more rooms for practical learning as well as providing all the equipment for each lesson.

Teacher D advised;

Educational institutions should equip all the student that are training to be teachers in primary schools. The teachers of home economics should have frequent workshops so to improve their attitude towards the teaching of home economic.

Figure 4.2 : Challenges encountered in teaching of home economics as presented by teachers



The figure 4.2 indicates the summary of the findings on the challenges teachers face in the teaching of home economics. The findings from teachers indicated that the biggest challenge they encountered is lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of support from the administration, lack of facilities and negative attitude of both teachers and learners towards the subject.

4.4 Findings from the Pupils

This section contains views of 17 grade seven and six pupils who participated in the focus group discussion.

4.4.1 Teaching and Learning Materials for H.E

When the researcher asked pupils if materials for learning practical lessons were always available whenever they needed to conduct a practical. They responded saying materials are a challenge and a threat to the learning of home economics.

One learner stated that:

All the time I have been at this school, we just contribute some money for us to buy the needed materials to conduct a practical.

Another learner added saying:

Most of the time our teacher tells us to contribute some money so that we can buy what is needed, but sometimes she just tells us to come with things from home.

All the learners said that the attitude of most teachers is very good. They further stated that they really enjoyed the teaching and learning of home economics.

A named learner stated that:

Our teachers really enjoy teaching us H.E they make sure we understand fully.

Another learner added:

Our teacher likes teaching H.E she is usually slow and soft which in turn helps us understand the subject. It is really interesting to do practical, unlike other subjects we get to have a lot of funny while learning.

Another learner said:

Home economics is really interesting, our teacher is good at it and it helps us cooperate that is why I like it.

4.4.2 The Teaching and Learning Environment for Home Economics

The researcher also asked if the learning environment was good, if they had home economics rooms or not? From the findings and the naturalistic observation, it was noted that the school had no special room for H.E practical lessons.

Learner A indicated that:

Our school has no special environment meant for practical lessons...we usually do them in our various classes and sometimes outside.

Learner B agreed saying:

When its needlework time we do the practical lessons in class and when it comes to cooking lessons we do it outside, if the lesson requires using a stove the teacher just says verbally without practice.

Another learner added:

The classrooms are there and our teachers make things happen but they is nothing like a laundry room or needlework room.

4.4.3 Time Allocated to Home Economics

The researcher also tried to find out if H.E is given enough time on the time table hence, asked the learners how many times did they learn H.E every week. The findings indicated that they had three home economics lessons of which tow where theory lessons and one was a practical lesson. Except this become very difficult to meet during the covid-19 pandemic as time for contact was reduced drastically.

Learner A said:

We learn H.E three times a week, in our class we have a practical lesson usually on Fridays though it is not every week.

Learner B also indicated that:

We learn H.E three times a week. Home economics used to be very interesting before the covid-19 thing we used to spend a lot of time when practicing but now we only have a short time sometimes we do not even finish the lesson.

4.4.4 The Attitude of Teachers towards the Teaching of Home Economics

The researcher asked how teachers conducted the teaching of home economics. Learners expressed mixed feelings saying other teachers are very good at their work others find it difficult to balance the teaching of home economics.

Learner A stated:

Our teacher's attitude is good that is why I like the subject

Learner B added saying:

Our teachers are good to us. Except others do not like it very much, the teacher we had in grade five never taught us anything to do with sewing we only started learning about it in grade six when we got a new teacher.

Learner C also said:

When it is time for home economics our teacher just gives us the books we only get to enjoy when we are doing practical lessons because then she is active.

4.5 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study which sought to investigate the teaching of home economics at St Maurice primary school.

The results of the study revealed that the teaching of home economics is essential in primary school as it helps develop learners' ability to be creative and innovative as well as stand out among others. It also helps impart wisdom, knowledge and skills among others.

The effective teaching of home economics depends greatly on the type of teaching strategies used and teaching materials available.

From the teachers' and learners' perspectives the challenges that home economics face are lack of teaching materials, teachers' incompetence, lack of teaching equipment and facilities, pupils' and teachers' bad attitude towards the subject.

To help curb this, the findings reviewed that teachers together with the head teacher should come up with a plan that would sustain the flow of teaching and learning materials.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

This research has discussed qualitative data only.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

5.2 The Importance of Teaching Home Economics in Primary Schools

The importance of practical subjects cannot be over emphasized especially to primary school learners. The research indicated that teaching home economics is an important method of imparting knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that can be used in a life time of a learner. Similarly, Woodley (2009), acknowledges that practical work supports skill development, experimental learning as well as thinking skills. Furthermore, home economics is a way of solving some problems that the society face on a daily basis. These includes unemployment, poverty, lack of creativity and nutritional problems. This is in line with the findings of Ducci (1991) who stated that home economics contribute meaningfully to the solutions of the problems of society such as unemployment, poverty and malnutrition. Skills like sewing, gardening, cookery and laundry are taught to the learners. These skills can be used later in future of the learners even if a learner dropped out of school they would make out something meaning of their life. In a similar report Haggerty (1999) noted that as practical lessons are under way learners are presented with an opportunity to develop unique talents. Home economics can be a source of income if taken seriously, these learners can use the skills they learnt in their classes to make money thereby becoming independent. Home economics helps the country to perceive its culture through the lessons taught, among them is basket making, knitting and crocheting and respect. In a similar finding, home economics is a way of appreciating the ethics, culture, customs and traditions of this country.

5.3 Teaching Strategies used in Home Economics

In the teaching faculty, the teaching strategies used when delivering each and every lesson has a great impact on how the concept of that particular lesson is perceived by the learners. Different teaching strategies are used for different topics and groups. The teachers used demonstration, discussion, field work, projects, drama and role play, problem solving methods, group work and quiz methods. Similarly, Muzumara (2011) states that methods used in teaching practical

subjects includes descriptive method, demonstration, field trips, group work, projects method, experimental and teacher's expository method.

5.4 The Challenges that are encountered during the Teaching and Learning of Home Economics

Teaching of home economics is associated with a lot of challenges. It was observed that these challenges are a hindrance to the quality delivery of the subject. Among the challenges includes poor attitudes towards the subject by both the learner and the teacher, lack of teaching materials, lack of support from the administration and lack of proper facilities to conduct practical subjects.

Instructional materials are very essential in the learning of every subject, this is because they allow learners to interact with the real world of the lesson learnt. The teachers at St Maurice together with learners indicated that the provision of all the required materials every time they are conducting a practical lesson was a great draw back. Haambokoma et al (2002) established that teaching resources are mostly insufficient and lacking in most schools. Parents also contribute a few things to see that pupils learn. However, depending on learners to be a source of teaching materials cannot always be liable this is because some parents cannot always provide the needed resources and other parents are less privileged hence fail to provide for their children. If teaching resources are not available the performance of pupils go down similarly, (Adeogun 2001) states that instructional materials are very important and their impact is evident in the performance of those learners who are subjected to practical work. Furthermore, Mbwerengwa also found that inadequate instructional materials has led to inadequate practice in home economics.

Lack of facilities where practical work can be carried on is also a challenge. It was also observed that the school does not have home economics laboratories. They conduct their practical in their classes or outside. This affect them in that some works are not done properly for example if learners needed to bake a cake they will have to bake it at a teacher's home because the school does not have a cookery room. However, H.E department should have well organized instructional materials, corners, units or rooms where some of the things for learning are fund (Tyler, 1950).

Furthermore, the school does not come on board to help provide the needed resources for practical lessons. It was observed that the administration does not offer a helping hand to the home economics department. Therefore, most of the times the department itself together with pupils and their parents provide what is needed. However, this becomes a challenge to the smooth teaching and learning of home economics.

Teachers' incompetence is another challenge that has brought down the performance of learners in home economics. It was observed that some teachers are not fully equipped for the work to an extent of only teaching theory because they know nothing about practical lessons. It even becomes worse if the teacher also has a negative attitude towards the teaching of the subject. When this is put together it leads to learners developing a negative attitude towards the subjects thereby absenting themselves from classes or not paying attention to instructions. This in turn affects the performance of learners as well as the objectives of the Ministry of General Education and the country at large.

5.5 Ways that can be used to improve the teaching and learning of home economics

One of the would be game changer of home economics is support from the school administration. If the school administration can come on board and help the H.E departments in primary schools they would be a lot of change. The teachers also suggested that learners should be made aware of the importance of this subject as this can help motivate and build a positive attitude towards the subject. The schools should not only depend on the administration to be the sole provider of everything they need but instead the department should engage in ventures that would sustain them. For instance, gardening, baking, poultry, craft work, cookery to mention but a few.

5.6 Summary

This chapter provided the discussion of the study based on the research participants' response. The discussion was based on the objectives. The chapter also discussed how various literatures reviewed of a similar nature to the topic under study related to the objectives. This chapter discussed the investigation of the teaching of home economics in primary school. The things discussed under this chapter are its importance in the curriculum, teaching strategies, learning and teaching materials as well as the challenges.

The study revealed that home economics changes the perspectives of learner; it helps build their capability to be creative and innovative in their environment even after school. It also revealed that the teaching of home economics is greatly affected by lack of teaching materials, lack of equipment, lack of laboratories and failure to improvise.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study

6.1 Conclusions

The study investigated the teaching of home economics at St Maurice primary school in Lusaka district. In conclusion, the findings of the study indicated that home economics is a very important subject which is supposed to be taught to every child in primary school. This is because it equips learners with unique knowledge and skills that they can use to sustain their lives in future.

It also indicated that teaching of home economics comes with specific teaching strategies that work perfectly well for a proper delivery of home economics. Among the recommended methods are descriptive, discussion, experimental, field trips, group work, projects, demonstration and teachers exposition methods. These methods combined together with the right teaching materials make the teaching of home economics effective leaving an everlasting impact on a child's life.

Unfortunately, the teaching of home economics is negatively affected by the high shortage rate of teaching materials and lack of teaching facilities in primary schools. Teachers' incompetence and bad attitude cannot be left out on the list of the things that negatively affect the teaching of this subject.

6.2 Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. The Ministry of General Education should build the necessary facilities for practical lessons and provide the needed materials for all the practical subjects in primary schools.
2. The school administrators together with their teachers should venture into a sustainable project or business that could help them buy the needed materials for practical subjects.
3. Teachers should adopt more effective methods of teaching home economics in primary schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEAD TEACHER

My name is Bibien Chulumanda Mwape and currently studying with Chalimbana University. Bibien Chulumanda Mwape is a researcher who wishes to seek your views on a number of issues pertaining to teaching of home economics in primary schools. The questions are intended for an educational research.

1. How do you promote the teaching of home economics at your school?
2. What are the qualifications for the teachers who teach home economics classes?
3. What is the average experience of teachers that teach home economic classes?
4. What strategies do your teachers apply in teaching home economics?
5. How effective are your teachers in monitoring pupils learning of home economics?
6. Are the teachers committed to the teaching of home economics?
7. To what extent do your teachers and parents or guardians of pupils collaborate for better learning of pupils?
8. What is the average of learners' performance in home economics subject?
9. What is the absenteeism rate for the teachers of home economics?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

My name is Bibien Chulumanda Mwape studying with Chalimbana University. The aim of this research is to seek your views on a number of issues pertaining to the teaching of home economics in primary schools. You have been chosen to participate in the study.

The questions are intended for an educational research.

1. How do you understand home economics as a subject?
2. What is the purpose of teaching home economics?
3. What is your attitude towards the teaching of home economics?
4. Do you have enough materials for the teaching of home economics?
5. How can the attitude of a learner affect the teaching of home economics?
6. What strategies do you use in teaching home economics?
7. Can the attitude of teachers affect the teaching of home economics?
8. What advice can you give to the learners to help them improve their attitude towards the learning of home economics?
9. What challenges do primary school teachers face in the teaching of home economics?
10. What are the causes of the challenges of teaching of home economics?
11. What are the solutions to improve the teaching of home economics?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 3: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FOR LEARNERS

I am Bibien Chulumanda Mwape studying with Chalimbana University, a researcher who wishes to seek your views on a number of issues pertaining to the teaching of home economics in primary schools. You have been chosen to participate in the study. This focus group discussion will be conducted on learners from grade 5-7.

1. How do you understand the term home economics?
2. How many times do you learn home economics in a week?
3. Do you have enough materials for learning home economics?
4. What is the attitude of teachers towards the teaching of home economics?
5. Do you like learning home economics subject?
6. Do you have a good learning environment for home economics practical?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.