

Influences on the Decision of South African Students to Study Family Ecology and Consumer Science

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This paper identifies the factors that influence South African students to choose Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a field of study. It uses factor analysis to address the question. The results suggest that prospective students choose Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a service rendering profession, where they as professionals will contribute to making the world a better place, help families to improve the quality of their lives and assist families with development and empowerment on both a community and industry level. Understanding the motivation to study consumer sciences can help programs better attract new students to the field.

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Career choices among South African Family Ecology and Consumer Science students are important to analyze in order to comprehend why prospective professionals choose this discipline. Career choices should be regarded not only as one specific action taken at one time, but also rather as a process over time. In this process the shaping of a professional identity is closely connected to the process of professional socialization.

Cohen (1981, pp.14), defines professional socialization as a complex socialization process by which a person acquires the knowledge, skills and sense of professional identity that are characteristic of a member of that particular profession. It involves the internalization of the values and norms of the professional group into the person's own behavior and self-concept. Weidman, Twale and Stein (2001, pp.4) define socialization in a broad sense as the process by which people acquire the knowledge, skills and disposition that make them more or less effective members of society. Higher education is a first step where the individual is initiated into the process of professional socialization.

Professional socialization is a process of becoming, which begins with the students' recognition of attributes identifying the ideal professional, and is followed by an attempt to model themselves after the professionals. Thornton and Nardi (1975, pp.875) characterized the role acquisition as a developmental process based on serial

passage through a sequence of levels, each reflecting more intense role commitment. Indeed, identification with and commitment to a professional role are not accomplished in full during the professional preparation period, although it continues to evolve once novices begin with their professional preparation. Hence, as applied to the present view of the professional socialization process, it appears that there are different states of identity and commitment which overlap, rather than being mutually exclusive. A developmental approach to role acquisition contains both social and psychological dimensions and can be divided into different areas of professional socialization, namely anticipatory, formal professional socialization processes.

This process covers the preparatory and recruitment phases as the student enters professional programs with stereotypical images and preconceived expectations. The dilemma is whether individuals choose the profession that suits their professional characteristics and interests or whether other elements in society influence this process and to what extent (Page 2005, pp.105). Akers (1985, pp.69) describes this as a preparatory process for a change in role or status, which means that before the actual transition can take place, new norms and expectations associated with new roles or status must be assumed and new roles or status attempted. Cohen (1981, pp.35) uses Merton's explanation of anticipatory socialization and states that it is the initial introduction of the individual to the profession through the acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes and expectations which are generally of the stereotyped character, but an introduction that had been made on the grounds of a decision to train for the profession

Anticipatory socialization also refers to the processes of socialization in which a person "rehearses" for future roles, positions and social relationships (Appelbaum and Chambliss 1997, pp.76). Social and psychological adjustments to a role begin during this first period. Individuals develop images of what they feel will be expected of them and start to prepare them psychologically for what they expect the roles to be. This anticipation is usually influenced by what individuals want and need, therefore there tends to be a relative degree of connection between individuals and their conceptions of future roles.

The anticipatory professional socialization period represents the springboard for formal socialization, and, in order to estimate the impact of formal socialization on students, it is necessary to be informed about their attitudes, aspirations, orientations and goals at that particular point in time. Are some aspects of the professional socialization process more important than others for students of Family Ecology and Consumer Science? Vaines (1983, pp.187) states that a number of questions remain to be explored which focus on who chooses to enter a field such as Family Ecology and Consumer Science. She also poses the question of what the most salient factors are which determine who enters a field such as Family Ecology and Consumer Science. The purpose of this paper is to identify the factors that influence South African students when they decide on Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a field of study.

METHODOLOGY

We apply an Analytical Survey research method to this study. The population for this study comprises of all 1019 undergraduate (first, second, third and fourth year students) and postgraduate students registered at seven South African universities offering Family Ecology and Consumer Science undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The measuring

instrument used to collect the quantitative and demographic data for the study was a structured, standardized and previously validated questionnaire, Anderson (1976), known as the Professional Socialization Influences (PSI) questionnaire to identify those influences relevant to Family Ecology and Consumer Science at different periods in the professional socialization process. The research instrument established the sources that influence students to choose Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a field of study.

The questionnaire was deemed applicable as the aspects addressed in the questionnaire were still relevant to the South African context and could therefore be seen as reasons why South African students would select the profession. Five response options were provided for each statement: much positive influence; some positive influence; no influence or did not apply; some negative influence; and much negative influence. The sources of influence reflected in the various test items were: oneself, people, the subject field, and the educational institution.

For descriptive purposes, we calculated the frequencies for all independent variables, these include, university where the student are registered, student year of registration, and demographic variables such as age, marital status, gender, race and home language. The frequencies also provide a basic description of the reasons for choosing a Family Ecology and Consumer Science degree as a field of study. It is presented according to the following grouping: Much influence in a positive way, Some influence in a positive way, Much influence in a negative way, Some influence in a negative way and No influence. We also apply Bivariate Correlation procedures to compute pair-wise association for a set of variables and display the results in a matrix. We also used Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy to determine how suited the data was for factor analysis. Small values of KMO would indicate that factor analysis might not be appropriate for the data. Kaiser (1974) as reported in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (2003, pp.7-1), suggest that values of .9 are good and values below .5 are unacceptable. The principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was applied.

While factor analysis has often been used to determine relationships among variables, it is increasingly being used to correlate items within a single questionnaire (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2003, pp.7-1). This use of factor analysis identifies those items which appear to belong together, and reduces a relatively large number of questionnaire statements to a smaller set of underlying dimensions or factors. To assess whether the factor scores differed according to the variables of university where respondents were registered and the students' year of registration, mean ranks were calculated on the factor scores using a Kruskal-Wallis test. Mean ranks were then used to compute Chi-Square statistics to determine significant differences between factor scores and selected variables. If significance was prevalent, Bonferroni Post-Hoc Test analyses were conducted to determine where the difference lies.

RESULTS

The Professional Socialization Influences questionnaire for undergraduate and postgraduate students sought to find answers on, "My decision to do a Family Ecology and Consumer Science degree was influenced by". We did a frequency analysis of the 409 valid questionnaires that were completed by the undergraduate and postgraduate (40.1% of the 1019) students who were registered at the seven South African universities

offering Family Ecology and Consumer Science. Within the South African higher education landscape (after the 1994 election) universities (for purposes of comparison) are grouped as historically advantaged universities (HAU) and historically disadvantaged universities (HDU). The HAU represent the traditionally 'White' universities while the HDU are the traditionally 'Black' universities. For the purpose of the study the historically advantaged universities were Free State, Pretoria, Potchefstroom, and Stellenbosch while the historically disadvantaged universities were Vista, Zululand and Western Cape.

From the descriptive data it can be seen that 65.5% (268) of the students were registered at the previously advantaged universities. At these universities the field of study is well-known and established. Students at these universities are aware of what is required of them, and should they graduate, whether work would be available. In the previous dispensation students from these universities stood a better chance than 'Black' and 'Coloured' students of finding jobs in the health sector, industry and services (hotel) industry. At the previously disadvantaged universities where 34.4% (141) of the respondents were registered the field of study was in its infancy. Lecturers were grappling with finding ways to give the field of study higher visibility among students. Considerable motivation is required to establish this particular field at these universities. As the field was in its infancy, students of colour in the previous dispensation found it difficult to obtain work once they graduated. In most instances the 'Coloured' and 'Black' students were to become Home Economics and Needlework teachers. Only since the new democracy came into being did these career fields in the health sectors, food, clothing and hotel industry, formerly open to White students, become open to 'Black' and 'Coloured' students as well. The process of affirmative action and the need for companies to improve their equity profile now enable students of colour to obtain work more easily.

The age group of most undergraduate respondents was 20-29 years (69.4% or 284). A small percentage (16.6% or 68) of the respondents was 17-19 years old. The postgraduate age profile differs for the different races. For the white population 16 respondents were between 20-29 years old when embarking on postgraduate studies. For these students the opportunity and funding were in place if they wished to continue postgraduate studies immediately after graduating. Within the 'Coloured' and 'Black' race groups, funding is usually a problem; therefore students first go and work to accumulate funding for postgraduate studies, so that they fall into an older age group when they embark on postgraduate studies. An interesting observation from the data is the high percentage of 'Black' students (37.1% or 13 of the 35 postgraduate students who responded to the questionnaire) who selected a traditionally 'White' university to further their postgraduate studies. This could be explained by the fact that students perceive a traditionally 'White' university to be more research focused and in all probability these students were funded as these universities are under pressure to improve their equity and access profiles. This is supported by the Department of Education (2002: 9) National Plan for Higher Education that states that the increased competition between institutions has further fragmented and, in some cases, intensified the racial divides in the higher education system. The opening up of access to higher education for Black students at all institutions after 1994 has adversely impacted on student enrolments at the HDU. Most of the respondents registered were single, only (7.8% or 32) were married. The majority of the respondents spoke Afrikaans (57.2% or 234). The spread of the other official languages spoken were Zulu (14.1%), English (8.8%) and Xhosa (9%), while (10.9%)

represented seven other African languages. The highest percentage of respondents (65.5%) were registered at the Afrikaans speaking universities (Free State, Pretoria, Potchefstroom and Stellenbosch), therefore the predominant language was Afrikaans. At the previously disadvantaged universities where the student population is 'Black', respondents indicated their mother tongue as their home language; however, the medium of instruction at these universities is English.

INFLUENCES ON THE DECISION TO STUDY FAMILY ECOLOGY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

The process of selecting Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a profession, together with the aspects that influenced this process, can be seen as a realization of the first stage of professional socialization, namely anticipatory socialization. As stated by Akers (1985, pp.69), this stage is described as a preparatory process for a change in role or status. This is when the prospective professional becomes aware of the behavioral, attitudinal and cognitive expectations of the profession. It can also be seen as a process of anticipating a future role, thinking about its facets, beginning to enact the behavior and adopting the values of the future role.

The responses to statements representing aspects influencing South African students when they decided on Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a field of study at South African universities are presented Table 1. It should be noted that although 409 students responded, not all of them always answered all the statements; therefore the numbers of students who responded to the different statements in the questionnaire differ.

These results indicate no clear trend to confirm that the aspects covered by the questionnaire had influenced South African Family Ecology and Consumer Science students in either a positive or a negative way. However, the respondents did indicate that many of the aspects did not influence them when they decided to study Family Ecology and Consumer Science at a South African university.

Table 2 illustrates the aspects that elicited the highest percentage of positive responses from the respondents, indicating that these aspects did in fact influence them when choosing Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a profession. The aspects, 'a desire to help others' (75.3%), 'a desire to improve the quality of family living' (74.7%), 'a desire to help people learn to do things' (74.6%) and 'entrepreneurial possibilities of the course' (74.0%) showed the highest number of positive responses. This result supports both the Family Ecology and Consumer Science definition of Stage and Vincenti (1997, pp.306) of "enhancing the quality of life of individuals, families and communities" and underpins the mission of the profession, namely that the reason for the existence of the profession is to understand human qualities of individuals, families and communities (Brown and Paolucci, 1979, pp.35). There is unanimity in the basic altruistic thrust of the profession. Students chose the program for its intrinsic value rather than for its extrinsic value. This is supported by Kieran, Vaines and Badir (1982, pp.37) who viewed the profession as a practice system linked by theory through a reflective process. They maintain that the profession constitutes a method of developing human

Table 1: Influences on the decision to study Family Ecology and Consumer Science (N=409)

Aspects	Much influence in a positive way		Some influence in positive way		Some influence in a negative way		Much influence in a negative way		Did not influence	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
A secondary home economics teacher n = 403	102	25.3	85	21.1	18	4.5	11	2.7	187	46.4
Peer reaction to my plans to enter the field n =399	54	13.5	107	26.8	34	8.5	18	4.5	186	46.6
A secondary school experience in the field n = 399	73	18.3	116	29.1	28	7.0	17	4.3	165	41.4
Belonging to clubs associated with cookery and needlework n=403	38	9.4	48	11.9	22	5.5	20	5.0	275	68.2
Symbols obtained in secondary school for Home Economics and Needlework n= 399	80	20.0	91	22.8	15	3.8	14	3.5	199	49.9
Lack of knowledge of other career alternatives n=401	31	7.7	62	15.5	46	11.5	28	6.9	234	58.4
Wanting to prepare for wife or wife/mother role n=399	26	6.5	57	14.3	19	4.8	22	5.5	275	68.9
Wanting to prepare for both a career and family role n=402	116	28.9	134	33.3	17	4.2	13	3.2	122	30.3
A desire to help others n=405	147	36.3	158	39.0	14	3.5	7	1.7	79	19.5
A desire to help the world be a better place n=405	120	29.6	160	39.5	17	4.2	5	1.2	103	25.4
A desire to be seen by males as a good prospect for marriage n=402	26	6.5	41	10.2	23	5.7	37	9.2	275	68.4
A desire to improve the quality of family living n=404	123	30.4	179	44.3	12	3.0	7	1.7	83	20.5
A desire to help people learn to do things n=405	141	34.8	161	39.8	18	4.4	7	1.7	78	19.3
The high female composition of the field n=402	69	17.2	95	23.6	39	9.7	20	5.0	179	44.5
The general acceptance of the field as suitable for a woman n=403	57	14.1	108	26.8	41	10.2	28	6.9	169	41.9
What I thought it would be like to work in the field n=402	107	26.6	159	39.6	22	5.5	14	3.5	100	24.9
My perception that it would be an easy course n=404	16	4.0	67	16.6	41	10.1	37	9.2	243	60.1
No other course available to register for n=400	13	3.3	22	5.5	24	6.0	28	7.0	313	78.3
Not accepted in the first choice for a degree n=402	34	8.5	23	5.7	23	5.7	32	8.0	290	72.1
Did not have entry requirements for science courses n=400	23	5.8	30	7.5	20	5.0	28	7.0	299	74.8
Did not have entry requirements for other courses n=401	19	4.7	27	6.7	25	6.2	26	6.5	304	75.8
Entrepreneurial possibilities of the course n=400	165	41.2	131	32.8	20	5.0	11	2.8	73	18.3

capabilities. These authors describe the profession as acting from a problem-solving framework to deliver a service to families and communities. In a study done by Jenkins and Mason (2000, pp.57) in the USA where students were asked why they chose the Family and Consumer Science field as a profession, their responses were: “wanted to be part of a profession that held such power to make a difference”, “help families”, “I liked the range of opportunities to help others, especially the youth”, “I have a desire to work with people” and “Family and Consumer Science allows me to help people”.

Table 2: Positive Influences on the decision to study Family Ecology and Consumer Science

Aspects	Much influence in a positive way		Some influence in a positive way		Total
	n	%	n	%	%
A desire to help others n=405	147	36.3	158	39.0	75.3
A desire to improve the quality of family living n=404	123	30.4	179	44.3	74.7
A desire to help people learn to do things n=405	141	34.8	161	39.8	74.6
Entrepreneurial possibilities of the course n= 400	165	41.2	131	32.8	74.0
A desire to help the world be a better place n=405	120	29.6	160	39.5	69.1
What I thought it would be like to work in the field n=402	107	26.6	159	39.6	66.2
Wanting to prepare for both a career and family role n=402	116	28.9	134	33.3	62.2

The entrepreneurial possibilities of the program were the fourth (74.0%) most important reason for selecting Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a profession. Schenk (2003, pp.87) states that there is a new career paradigm emerging within the context of global realities, namely entrepreneurial education. In discussing the changing context for higher education in South Africa, the New Academic Policy for Programmes and Qualifications in Higher Education document of the Council for Higher Education emphasizes that higher education is asked to prepare students for a work environment characterized by self-employment (Department of Education, 2002:3). Students see the program more as a vehicle to employability than employment. Given the above nature of the new career environment, it is self-evident that Family Ecology and Consumer Science students’ conscious adoption of an entrepreneurial view to their career are becoming an essential part of contemporary career behavior.

Respondents were requested to indicate if the aspects listed in the questionnaire influenced them in a positive or negative way, or whether it had no influence on them selecting Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a profession. Admission requirements to the Family Ecology and Consumer Science programs were not

considered to have an impact on the respondents' choice of the profession. Respondents in this study identified 'no other course available to register for' (78.3%), 'did not have entry requirements for other courses' (75.8%), 'did not have entry requirements for science courses' (74.8%) and 'not accepted in the choice for first degree' (72.1%) as significantly not influencing the choice of Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a profession.

The profession was traditionally identified with feminine pursuits. This is also substantiated by the low enrollment of males in the field (3.4% or 14 of the total number of respondents). However the female role attached to the profession, such as 'wanting to prepare for wife and wife/mother role' (68.9%), and 'a desire to be seen by males as a good prospect for marriage' (68.4%) were some of the factors that had the least influence on respondents' choice of the profession. These results are contrary to the general "cook and stir" perception of the profession.

Some aspects had no clear influence on students selecting Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a career such as "A secondary home economics teacher", "Peer reaction to my plans to enter in the field", "The high female composition of the field", "The general acceptance of the field as suitable for a woman", and "A secondary school experience in the field". One finding counters the conclusions in a USA study done by Anderson (1976, pp.103), which stated that the secondary home economics school teacher and a secondary school experience were the major influences for students to choose the profession as a career. Home Economics at secondary school level was not a prerequisite for the admission of students to Family Ecology and Consumer Science programs in South Africa.

An important implication emerging from these results is that altruistic considerations influence students to select Family Ecology and Consumer Science, which shows that students have a positive view towards people, their worth and integrity. Students seem to hold the perception that humans can change, and are able to cope with changes. In addition, the effective Family Ecology and Consumer Scientist have an attitude that reflects ethical standards and respect for the integrity of the people they will be working with.

FACTOR ANALYSIS RESULTS

Factor analysis attempts to identify underlying factors that explain the patterns of correlations within a set of observed variables. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett Test were performed to determine if the data were suitable for factor analysis. The result was as follows; the KMO was .851, which is higher than .5 and it could therefore be concluded that the data were suited to factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test for sphericity Approx. Chi-Square = 2998.854 with df (degrees of freedom) 190 and Significance level = .000 implies that the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix can be rejected. These two measures therefore indicate that all the items except two on the list may be grouped into appropriate factors. The items 'peer reaction to my plans to enter the field' and 'lack of knowledge of other career alternatives' exhibited low communalities and were therefore deleted for the final factor analysis.

Eigenvalues are the most commonly used index for determining how many factors to take from a factor analysis. (SPSS, 2003:7-3). Using the criterion of retaining

factors with Eigenvalues greater than one, five factors were identified, using the Principal Component method of extraction. Each factor was given a name that reflects the concept or idea linking the variables most clearly. Factor loadings for each variable (item) in the Rotated Component Matrix are also included in Table 3. Since absolute factor loadings equal to or greater than .40 are generally considered large enough to warrant interpretation, an item was retained if the factor loading was .40 or greater. In factor analysis, the first factor extracted removes the maximum amount of common variance, while each subsequent factor accounts for as much as possible of the remaining variance. The amount of variance accounted for each factor in this study is identified by the Eigenvalues reported in Table 5. A high score on a factor indicates that the respondents were more likely to be influenced by that factor.

As reported in Table 3, a factor analysis of the influences on the decision to study Family Ecology and Consumer Science revealed five factors: the service ideal; educational requirements; female role perception: secondary education experience and possibilities of the program. This result seems to indicate that influences during anticipatory socialization are largely centered on perceptions of what students want to do in and with the profession.

The first factor 'Service Ideal' emerged almost unilaterally as the source of influence at this time in the socialization process. In this particular sample, 24.2% of the variation is explained by the 'Service Ideal' factor, and corresponding percentages by the other factors. The items 'a desire to make the world a better place' and 'a desire to help others with loadings of .836 and .834 respectively, mean that there is a very high positive correlation between these items and the 'Service Ideal' factor. This result supports the view of Kieran et al. (1982:69) that students chose the field for a career to enable them "to work with and help people" and this links with students perceiving Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a helping profession.

The second factor, with an explained variance of 19.1% was the respondents' view of 'Educational Requirements' to enroll in the Family Ecology and Consumer Science program. The items with high factor loadings such as 'did not have entry requirements for science courses' (loading= .817) and 'did not have entry requirements for other courses' (loading=. 744) have high correlations with the 'Educational Requirements' factor. This result suggests that for the 19.1% explained variance, Family Ecology and Consumer Science was not a program of first choice, but was selected as a program to enter higher education.

The third factor "Female Role Perception" with an explained variance of 7.9%, was to be expected, since Family Ecology and Consumer Science is a female dominated field. This factor indicates that the respondents were influenced by this perception and that the motivation was the acceptance of a profession suitable for women and the nurturing role played by women in the helping process. This is supported by the fact that there were only (3.4%) 14 male respondents of the total 409 respondents to the questionnaire.

The fourth factor, explaining 6.0% variance is 'Secondary Education Experience'. The aspect 'a secondary school experience' has a correlation of .792 and therefore shows a strong relationship to the factor. The small amount of variation explained by the fourth factor implies that most Family Ecology and Consumer Science programs do not require students to have had a related school subject as an entry requirement for the program.

Table 3: Factor Analysis of Influences on the decision to study Family Ecology and Consumer Science

FACTOR NAMES AND QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS	FACTOR LOADINGS	EIGENVALUES	% VARIANCE EXPLAINED
Factor One: Service Ideal		4.8	24.2
A desire to help the world become a better place	.836		
A desire to help others	.834		
A desire to improve the quality of family living	.796		
A desire to help people learn to do things	.772		
Wanting to prepare for both a career and family role	.649		
Factor Two: Educational Requirements		3.8	19.1
Did not have entry requirements for science course	.828		
Not accepted in the first choice for a degree	.782		
Did not have entry requirements for other courses	.781		
No other course available to register for	.760		
Factor Three: Female Role Perception		1.5	7.9
The general acceptance of the field as suitable for woman	.782		
The high female composition of the field	.701		
Wanting to prepare for wife or wife/mother role	.659		
My perception that it would be an easy course	.513		
Factor Four: Secondary Education Experience		1.2	6.0
A secondary school experience in the field	.792		
Symbols obtained in secondary school for Home Economics and Needlework	.757		
A secondary home economics teacher	.734		
Belonging to clubs associated with cookery and needlework	.421		
Factor Five: Possibilities of the programme		1.0	5.1
Entrepreneurial possibilities of the course	.604		
What I thought it would be like in the field	.753		

The fifth factor that emerged from the factor analysis was ‘Possibilities of the course’, explaining 5.1% of the variance. The aspect ‘entrepreneurial possibilities of the course’ had a strong correlation with this factor, with a loading of .770. The researcher is of the opinion that the knowledge and skills that students gain in the Family Ecology and Consumer Science program especially in the Foods, Clothing and Housing Interior modules can be entrepreneurially used for the financial benefit of both the students and the people that they will be working with. Although these five factors emerged as

influences on the decision to study Family Ecology and Consumer Science, correlations between the factors were quite varied when selected variables were taken into account.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DECISION TO STUDY FAMILY ECOLOGY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

Factor scores for each respondent represent the overall response to a particular factor and take into account the responses on all of the sub-items associated with that factor. Mean ranks calculated from the factor scores are used in a Kruskal-Wallis test. The mean ranks are used to compute a Chi-Square statistic to see if there are significant differences between factor scores across categories of respondents. This analysis is done for each factor across two demographic categories, namely 'university registered at' and 'year of registration'. Significance levels for the relevant factors that are less than .05% demonstrate that there are statistically significant differences between categories for these factors.

There are significant differences between respondents registered at different universities on the 'Service Ideal' ($p = .000$), 'Educational Requirements' ($p = .039$) and 'Secondary Education Experience' ($p = .014$), however there were no significant differences on 'Female Role Perception' and 'Possibilities of the programme' at the 5% level of significance between the categories. For the variable year of registration there were significant differences on the factors 'Service Ideal' ($p = .001$), 'Educational Requirements' ($p = .000$) and 'Possibilities of the course' ($p = .000$).

To determine how the variable 'university registered at' affected the factor scores for each factor Bonferroni Post-Hoc test analyses were conducted. An examination of the Bonferroni Post-Hoc Test for the variable 'university registered at' indicated that the 'Service Ideal' factor influenced students more at the historically disadvantaged universities of Vista, Western Cape and Zululand than at Pretoria University, which is a historically advantaged university. Programs at the historically disadvantaged universities are more geared towards community development and empowerment where they engage in practices to address the challenges of everyday living for individuals, families and households. At Pretoria University more emphasis is placed on industry and they render an education within the framework of product development, consumer facilitation, and retail and store management. This phenomenon is in line with the first and third world situation that exists in South Africa where the 'White' population has developed to a consumer orientated society and the predominantly 'Black' and 'Coloured' communities are still grappling with development and empowerment issues. The 'Black' and 'Coloured' situation can be a reflection of the poor 'White' problem and where Home Economics played a role in the alleviation of poverty for the 'White' community. Students of the historically disadvantaged universities see the role of Family Ecology and Consumer Science in the new millennium as helping people to help themselves, that is, empowering people to realize their goals, as also stated by Peterat and Smith, (2000, pp.174).

For the factor 'Secondary Education Experience' Vista University students were more positively influenced by this factor than those of Zululand University, as these students were predominantly being trained as secondary school educators in Home Economics. With reference to 'Student year of registration' the results of the Bonferroni

Post-Hoc Test indicated the comparisons were significant. Non-significant differences are not reported for ease of presentation.

The 'Service Ideal' factor influenced 4th year and postgraduate students more than 1st and 2nd/3rd year students with mean differences of .638 and .479 respectively at a significance level of $p = .000$. The factor 'Possibilities of the Programme' influenced 4th year and postgraduate students with factor scores on average .458 more than the 1st year students at a significance level of $p = .002$. The same factor influenced the 4th year and postgraduate students with factor scores on average .587 more than 2nd/3rd year students at a significance level of $p = .000$.

The Family Ecology and Consumer Science 4th year and postgraduate students have developed a professional self-image on a social and economic level. On social level students are concerned with the welfare of the people they will be working with. They enter the profession with an idealistic view of the profession and retain this view up to their graduation and beyond. Within this idealism they also remain practical, as the second level of their self-image development helps them to realize that the possibilities of the program are in keeping with the economic reality of the world of work.

For the factor 'Educational Requirements' the 1st year students were more positively influenced by this factor than 4th year and postgraduate students with a mean difference of -.441, a difference which is significant at a level of $p = .003$. For the same factor the 2nd/3rd year students were more positively influenced by this factor than the 4th and postgraduate students with a mean difference of -.607 and a significance level of $p = .000$.

Educational requirements are still fresh in the minds of 1st and 2nd year students; thus these factors played a positive role in selecting Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a career. These results are an indication of the anticipatory socialization stage of professional socialization and are supported by Appelbaum and Chambliss (1997, pp.76) when they refer to this stage as the time when a person rehearses for a future role, position and social relationships. South African students who were registered in 2001 and who had selected Family Ecology and Consumer Science as a prospective career and profession developed an image where they have started to prepare themselves according to their expectations of their roles in the field of Family Ecology and Consumer Science. It can be gleaned from the result that prospective students choosing Family Ecology and Consumer Science see it as a service rendering profession, where they as professionals will contribute to making the world a better place, help families to improve the quality of their lives and assist families with development and empowerment on both a community and industry level. This can also be seen as a manifestation of the current political, socio-economic and cultural situation of the new democracy in the country.

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