

Editorial

Home Economics Education as Needed in the 21st Century

Changes in society constantly require individuals to assimilate new knowledge and skills to form a lifestyle that improves their quality of life. Lifestyle is at the centre of home economics, a multidisciplinary domain that is based on the needs of the individual and society in a given setting and time. According to the needs of particular societies, home economics includes priority areas such as food, eating habits, healthy lifestyle, textile and clothing, home, consumerism, and personal and family economics. This content is treated in connection with the sustainable supply of goods and the formation of a lifestyle that promotes the sustainable development of society. Home economics education has an important role in children, youth and adults obtaining appropriate home economics literacy, which in turn may positively impact the quality of life of individuals, families and society. The aim of quality home economics education is to encourage lifelong learning. This is also evident in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, when individuals, families and society as a whole must change and adapt in many ways their patterns of behaviour and lifestyle habits that are part of home economics literacy.

This special issue of the CEPS Journal highlights different aspects of home economics. It discusses the importance of home economics in the 21st century and home economics education, especially the areas of nutrition, health and financial literacy.

The first paper, entitled *The Role of Home Economics Education in the 21st Century: The Covid-19 Pandemic as a Disruptor, Accelerator, and Future Shaper*, was written by the renowned professor and outstanding expert on home economics education worldwide Donna Pendergast and explores the role of home economics education in the 21st century. The author presents the five predicted future global megatrends – globalisation, urbanisation, digitisation cybersecurity and sustainability – as a consequence of the global pandemic. Using Voyant Tools, visualisations of the book *Creating Home Economics Futures: The Next 100 Years* are presented and compared to other key literary documents informing the field. The top ten words appearing most frequently in the book are: home economics, food, education, future, life, family, development, new, world and sustainable. Detailed analyses show that nutrition is one of the most important areas of home economics. The author continues by pointing out that education and learning have led to the repositioning of home economics as a field, and home economics literacy as the key strategy for ensuring that the field continues to remain relevant in the future.

The second paper, *Modern Aspects of Home Economics Education and Slovenia* by author Martina Erjavšek, defines the basic concepts and areas of home economics as an important part of everyday life. The paper highlights the multidisciplinary and importance of home economics education and literacy for the quality of life of the individual, the family and society. The author suggests that the existing curriculum of the home economics subject in Slovenian primary school should undergo content updating. The curriculum should include content on healthy lifestyle, nutrition, health, textiles, consumption, economics, family, the environment and sustainable development. The author suggests that theoretical knowledge should be transferred to concrete life situations and students should be given opportunities to develop an appropriate attitude to home economics content, that the appropriateness of naming the school subject home economics should be discussed, and that content tailored to the needs of the individual, the family and society should be included in home economics education.

The third paper, entitled *Project LifeLab Food and Health – Innovative Teaching for the Future: Development of Student Active Learning Tasks for Home Economics Education in the 21st Century*, was written by Cecilie Beinert, Nina Cecilie Øverby and Frøydis Nordgård Vik from Norway. The authors describe the case of food and health education, which are important areas of home economics education and literacy, and refer to the renaming of the subject Home Economics as Food and Health, which is a mandatory school subject in Norway. The subject has the unique advantage of giving all students, regardless of their social background, practical skills and knowledge, life skills that are important for their future health. The paper presents the LifeLab Food and Health project as a research-based and innovative teaching programme, and the perception of the project in the school setting in Norway is evaluated. This teaching programme is intended for use in Food and Health teacher education, but also in the education of primary and lower secondary school students in the same subject. The learning tasks developed and evaluated in the project generally received positive feedback from both students and teachers, mainly because they were designed as practical learning tasks targeting more theoretical content. The authors stress the importance of nutrition education that promotes critical thinking and the development of the skills needed to choose healthy food and a sustainable orientation in nutrition.

The fourth paper, entitled *Evaluation of the Implemented and Adopted Curriculum in Health Education in the Czech Republic with an Emphasis on the Drinking Regimen*, focusing on the drinking regimen, was written by Michaela Hřivnová. The main objective of the paper is to present the partial results of two extensive educational research studies carried out by the Faculty of Education,

Palacký University Olomouc emphasising an analysis and evaluation of the implemented and adopted curriculum in health education in the Czech Republic, with a primary focus on nutrition and fluid intake. Nutrition was identified as the most dominant sub-theme across all thematic units of health education. The results of the subjective evaluation of the implemented curriculum in health education suggest that in the area “Healthy lifestyle and health care”, the subtopic “Nutrition and health – healthy diet principles, drinking regimen, eating disorders” was most dominant. The testing of the level of adopted curriculum in the area of fluid intake revealed a problematic level of students’ knowledge. The issue of adequate nutrition and an appropriate diet and drinking regime needs to be taught by professionally and didactically competent teachers of health education. It is desirable to shape not only the cognitive, but especially the affective and behavioural abilities of students. The study results are important not only for health education, but also for home economics education, since nutrition content is an important part of home economics literacy.

The fifth paper, entitled *Education in the Area of Human Protection in Emergency and Crisis Situations in the Context of Health Education in the Czech Republic*, was written by Jitka Slaná Reissmannová from the Czech Republic. The present time brings a number of emergency and crisis situations including floods, fires or Covid-19, the management of which requires the active involvement of citizens. People will have to adapt to the new situation by being properly educated and acquiring the knowledge and skills that children will have acquired during their compulsory education. The education of students in the area of lifestyle and health must be included in health education and home economics, depending on how these topics are included in the national curriculum. The objective of the paper is to present the concept of elementary education in human protection in emergency and crisis situations in the Czech Republic and the related concept of undergraduate teacher training. The paper presents the results of an analysis of the curricular document governing elementary education in the Czech Republic, as well as the results of an analysis of a health education textbook, an analysis of the study plans of selected faculties of education in terms of human protection in emergency and crisis situations, and a questionnaire survey focusing on the awareness of future teachers in the area of human protection in emergency situations. The author suggest that human protection in emergency situations should be strengthened both in the context of health education and as part of teachers’ and future teachers’ education. This is also part of the permanent education of teachers.

The sixth paper was written by Australian author Jay R. Deagon and is entitled *I Do, We Do, You Do Home Economics: Explicit Instruction Connecting*

Content with Ideology. The author starts the paper with a very popular sentence: “Public perceptions of home economics are stereotypically that students learn cooking and sewing at school.” The paper advocates home economics as a holistic subject that contributes to complex issues through practical life skill education. The author explains the reasons for learning home economics in the 21st century and presents the ideology of home economics, focusing on the who, what, when, where and why of the disciplinary field. Deagon also discusses the name home economics and supports the view that it should be preserved, arguing that if the name is removed, in effect, the known and recognised ideology is also removed. She claims that the profession is working towards contributions of evidence-based home economics research to support our field and practices. The paper also addresses the importance of home economics literacy in the pandemic time. It turns out that the global pandemic has highlighted the prevalence of relevant home economics skills. It is important that education in the higher education programme also makes explicit the ideology of home economics, so that students become more confident in advocating their discipline

The last paper was written by Gregor Torkar from the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana and bears the title *The Sustainability of Pre-Service Teachers’ Consumer Behaviour for the December Holidays*. The paper presents consumer education in Slovenia and changes in December holidays over the last decades in Slovenia, describing the connection between consumer behaviour and culture and religion. The aim was to explore pre-service teachers’ consumer behaviour in the context of the December holidays in Slovenia, and to examine their views on sustainability issues in the context of December gifting by concentrating on themes derived from qualitative data. The results show that 95.4% of the respondents received gifts on Saint Nicholas Day, 60.0% at Christmas and 23.1% when celebrating the New Year during their childhood, whereas today Christmas is the most common gift-giving time in December. Students most often give their loved ones sweets, clothes and shoes, and cosmetics. The majority of the respondents spend less than 50% of their monthly income on gifts for the December holidays. The author emphasises the importance of education for sustainable development and notes that further studies of this kind are needed so that the findings can help improve consumer education.

The present issue of the CEPS Journal also includes three papers in the Varia section. The first Varia paper is by authors Jasminka Bobić, Adrijana Koscec Bjelajac, Marija Bakotić and Jelena Macan and has the title *Personality Traits and Changes in Depression Symptoms in Female University Students*. It examines the course of depressive symptoms in female students in a four-year study, and identifies predictive values of depression symptoms on four personality traits.

The results show that after the four-year period, the symptoms of depression increased both in intensity and frequency. The authors found that out of the four personality traits, only neuroticism was a significant predictor of total value of depression after four years, which means that students with higher scores on neuroticism would be more likely to react more strongly and with less emotional balance to a stressful period of study.

The second paper in the Varia section, entitled *The Role of Parental Self-Efficacy in Explaining Children's Academic Outcomes*, was written by Andreja Bubić, Antonela Tošić and Irena Mišetić. It investigates the contribution of parental self-efficacy and the perception of parental involvement to students' academic achievement, perceived academic control and achievement goals. The obtained results indicate parental self-efficacy as a predictor of perceived academic control and avoidance goals, whereas perception of parental involvement predicted perceived academic control, mastery approach and work avoidance goals.

The authors of the last Varia paper, entitled *Self-Concept in Immigrant School Children and the Impact of Length of Residence: Evidence from PISA 2015 for Current Educational Practice*, are Sandra Figueiredo, João Marôco, Margarida Alves Martins and Odete Nunes, who assessed the impact of the length of stay in the host country on the adjustment of immigrant children to school. The results show that students who have been in the country for a year or less have greater difficulties and increased significant differences compared to other migrant groups in the referred to indices of self-concept and inclusion. However, other groups, especially those with periods of long-term residence between four and five years, also face substantial levels of school maladjustment.

This issue of the journal also includes two book reviews. The first book was written by Danielle Dreilinger and has the title *The Secret History of Home Economics. How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live*. Published in 2021, the book presents a historical overview of the development of home economics in the USA. It highlights the role of women in the household and the areas of home economics education that are integrated into the education process according to the needs of society. The second book, *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Childhood and Children* by authors Anca Gheaus, Gideon Calder and Jurgen De Wispelaere, was published in 2019. It presents various topics that address the areas of children's education, schooling and knowledge from the perspective of philosophical questions, and prompts the reader to reflect on how to deal with children in the present and future society.