



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE INTERPLAY OF THE COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS' SEVEN SUB-DISCIPLINES AND DZUP IN ADDRESSING KEY ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF HUMAN WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was done to assess the extent the College of Home Economics was able to achieve its objectives and create awareness among students on its various degree programs through DZUP's Monday noontime radio program "Ekonomiyang Pantahanan. Specifically, it was conducted to describe the participation of the College of Home Economics in the DZUP's noontime radio program; to assess the interplay of the seven sub-disciplines in creating an impact in addressing issues of the daily life of Filipino individuals, families, and communities through DZUP's noontime radio program; to identify effective ways of realizing the objectives of the college in enhancing the quality of life of Filipinos; and to examine the effectiveness of the radio program as an alternative way to promote the College of Home Economics courses as fields of study for students in the undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate levels. Twenty-two faculty members from the seven sub-disciplines served as program guests and shared insights on various topics such as housing, family, elderly productivity, foods, waste management, consumer rights and responsibilities, resource management, and entrepreneurship. Live and taped episodes of the program were transcribed and translated from Filipino to English and the interplay of the different sub-disciplines through the sharing and discussions of the guests on their assigned topics was analyzed. The seven sub-disciplines, through the faculty members, showed a collaborative effort in addressing daily life issues and concerns of individuals, families, and communities. The program was successful in creating better awareness on the college's various programs and services through the interplay and the recognition that was given to the program as finalist to the 33rd Catholic Mass Media Awards last October 19, 2011. The College of Home Economics should continue this collaborative effort so that more individuals, families, and communities will benefit from its various programs and services.

Key words: Home Economics, Sub-disciplines, Interplay.

INTRODUCTION

Many colleges and universities all over the world are suffering a significant decrease in enrolment in their home economics and related degree programs. This decrease resulted to either merging various areas into one degree program, or totally closing the program. The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and several state organizations, have been exploring various options to address the crisis, such as promoting a positive image of the profession and subject area recruiting, developing alternative certification programs and improving collaboration efforts, networking, and mentoring designed to retain existing Family and Consumer Science teachers. (Smith and de Zwart, 2007). In the Philippines, 17 out of 23 colleges and universities offering Bachelor of Science in Home Economics and related courses have zero enrolment (CHED, 2010). Specifically, an Agricultural College in Aborlan, Palawan has graduated only 61 Bachelor of Science in Home Economics in the last five years (Manarpaac, 2010); a state university in Batangas City has its last batch of Bachelor of Science in Home Economics graduates in School Year 2003 and that there were no more enrollees in the succeeding years (Letter Oct. 15, 2010); a

college in Central Mindanao, Musuan, Bukidnon has produced only 105 Bachelor of Science in Home Economics Education in the last five years (Letter December 6, 2010). The above data indicate an alarming situation, which calls for a unified action among colleges and universities that recognize the importance of home economics in the life of Filipino students. The significance of home economics in the educational system could not be ignored because it focuses on the nature and challenges of daily life in relationship to other peoples, social systems, and material resources. It strives to increase the resourcefulness of people and leads them to a more satisfying, sustainable, and quality life as they contribute to their own nurture and those of others (Smith and de Zwart, 2000). Florencio (1995) said that "society influences households and households influence society" and "where there are homes and families, there will be home economics." In the University of the Philippines, Home Economics has been in existence as a college discipline since November 12, 1921, a full forty years before the establishment of the College of Home Economics (CHE) by the Board of Regents on July 27, 1961. (UP Diliman, CHE website). The mission of Home Economics is to enhance the quality of day-to-day living of families and consumers and to prepare them to face changes. It aims to educate men and women for effective and satisfying personal

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and family life and responsible citizenship; to prepare leaders in the various fields of home economics education, family life and child development, nutrition, food science and technology, hotel and restaurant administration, clothing technology and interior design; to provide leadership in home economics research; to contribute to the enhancement of the quality of life of Filipinos through community extension and volunteer service programs; to address the constitutional provision to strengthen the family as the foundation of the nation; and to enhance appreciation and valuing of home economics (CHE Catalogue 2006-2010).

In its effort to carry on its objectives and promote its seven sub-disciplines as fields of specialization, on September 1, 2010, the CHE signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with DZUP 1602, UP Diliman's official community radio, to participate in one of its noontime programs. The program entitled *Ekonomiyang Pantahanan* was aired every Monday from 12:00 nn to 1:00 pm from September 6, 2010 to February 28, 2011. It is a form of public service where the invited faculty members shared insights on various topics that address daily living concerns in the areas of food science and nutrition; clothing, textiles, and interior design; family life and child development; home economics education; and hotel, restaurant, and institution management. The first airing was held on September 6, 2010. The present state of home economics as a discipline worldwide, the desire of the University of the Philippines, College of Home Economics to increase awareness on the role of home economics in providing practical solutions to problems that individuals and families encounter in their daily life, and to examine the interplay of the sub-disciplines in addressing issues and key concerns of human well-being, aroused interest in this study.

METHODOLOGY

This research-documentation utilized mostly secondary materials and other strategies in obtaining the data needed such as: listening to the live program every Monday from 12:00 nn to 1:00 pm; securing recorded interviews of the various episodes from September 2010 to February 2011; transcribing recorded interviews (Filipino); translating transcribed interviews from Filipino to English; and collecting photographs of the guests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CHE's Participation in the DZUP 1602 Noontime Program "*Ekonomiyang Pantahanan*"

The initial schedule that was developed and circulated to all departments by the College Dean shows a collaborative effort of the seven sub-disciplines, through the faculty members, in achieving the objectives by which the noontime show was conceptualized (See Table 1).

The Interplay of the CHE sub-disciplines and DZUP's Noontime Program "*Ekonomiyang Pantahanan*"

The sharing of the faculty members on the various topics related to housing, clothing, food and nutrition, family relationship, child development, and entrepreneurship shows an interplay of the CHE sub-disciplines in creating an impact

in addressing issues of the daily life of Filipino individuals, families, and communities through DZUP's noontime program entitled "*Ekonomiyang Pantahanan*". The various topics that were discussed were divided into six themes such as: Well-being, Wellness, Household Management, Preparing for the Holidays, New Year, New Life, and Tender Loving Care.

Theme: Well-being

Well-being was the theme for the month of September. According to Marshall, et al. (1995) well-being is a "state of being where all members of a community have economic security, respected, valued and have personal worth, feel connected with those around them, able to access necessary resources, and able to participate in the decision-making process affecting them". Following this definition, the sharing of the faculty guests touched on economic and physical well-being through efficiency in management and the control of things in the home, as well as social-psychological well-being through interpersonal relations and personality development within the family, which are considered as the two dimensional aspects of well-being (Brown, 1993). The topics that were chosen to address the theme were good parenting, breastfeeding, and clothing requirements of people with special needs. Below are the sharing of an alumna and faculty members from the departments of FLCD, FSN/FT, and CTID.

- Many of the graduates have made a good name for themselves and the College of Home Economics in various fields of endeavour.
- The beauty of having several sub-disciplines is the connection among these disciplines and their ability to respond to every problem of the Filipino family or any community.
- As early as infancy, children could already be included in the decision-making process through routine activities which give the children clues on what activities to expect for the day.
- The importance of uniformity in disciplining children, the role of grandparents in child discipline, and the need for parents and grandparents to discuss the best way to discipline children to avoid confusing them.
- Mothers should continue breastfeeding for at least two years or until they still have milk with complementary food at six months.
- Breastfeeding establishes closeness between the mother and the child because every breastfeeding is a bonding time.
- Clothes should be used to fully communicate the message that a person wants to put across.
- There are many inexpensive ways to make clothes more interesting such as adding accessories like necklaces, earrings, or shawls.

Theme: Wellness

Wellness was the theme for the month of October. Wellness embraces the concept of self-responsibility, self-direction, choice, and optimism (Montague, J., Piazza, W., Peter, K.,

Table 1. Ekonomiyang Pantahanan's Monthly Themes, Topics, and Departments In-Charge

Month/Theme	Topic	Department In-charge
September	General Home Economics	Alumni
Well-being	Child Development	Family Life and Child Development (FLCD)
	Nutrition for Infants and Children	Food Science and Nutrition/ Food Technology (FSN/FT)
	Special Clothing Needs	Clothing, Textiles and Interior Design (CTID)
October	Elderly Productivity	Home Economics Education (HEED)
	Waste Management in Lodging and Institutions	Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management (HRIM)
Wellness	Spiritual Spaces	Clothing, Textiles, and Interior Design(CTID)
	Food as an Anti-oxidant	Food Science and Nutrition/Food Technology (FSN/FT)
November	Time and Energy Management	Home Economics Education (HEED)
Household Management	Child Rearing	Family Life and Child Development (FLCD)
	Food Recycling	Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management (HRIM)
December	Food Preservation	Food Science and Nutrition/ Food Technology (FSN/FT)
	Consumer Rights and Responsibilities	Home Economics Education (HEED)
Preparing for the Holidays	Menu Planning on a Budget for the Holidays	Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management (HRIM)
January	How to Lose Weight	Food Science and Nutrition/ Food Technology (FSN/FT)
New Year, New Life	Budget Home Interiors after the Holidays	Clothing, Textiles, and Interior Design(CTID)
	Wardrobe Makeover	Clothing, Textiles, and Interior Design(CTID)
	Starting a Business	Home Economics Education (HEED)
February	Planning for the Day of Hearts	Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management (HRIM)
Tender Loving Care	Tips on How to Keep the Fire Burning	Family Life and Child Development (FLCD)
	Food Safety	Food Science and Nutrition/ Food Technology (FSN/FT)
	Care for Clothing	Clothing, Textiles, and Interior Design (CTID)

Eippert, G., and Pogiali, T., 2002). It is an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices towards a more successful and positive affirming existence (Hettler, 2008). It is a personal choice that affects one's well-being – a precursor or pre-condition for well-being grounded in mental, physical, and emotional health (McCusker, 2002). These characterizations were clearly exemplified in the sharing of the invited faculty members which touched on “self-responsibility, self-direction, choice and optimism.” They make people become more aware of available choices that would lead them to a more successful and satisfying life. Below are some of the insights of the faculty members from the departments of HEED, HRIM, CTID, and FSN.

- Retirement is not the end for senior citizens but the beginning of an equally exciting and productive life through engagement in small business and other productive undertakings.
- Old age as a gift from God (quoted from Pope John Paul II) reminds people, especially the young, to appreciate and give importance to old age.
- Use food substitutes for expensive food items, label foods before storing, observe the FIFO (First In, First Out) principle, keep food preparation area always clean, use local produce, standardize recipes, and observe family members' food preferences to avoid possible wastage.
- When families manage their wastes, they lessen leftovers and toxic substances that are harmful to the body.
- Designing a house is not only for aesthetic purposes but also to give every individual a chance to achieve a healthy body, peace of mind, and harmony with the environment.
- Having a spiritual space in the house is beneficial in regaining strength for the next day's work.
- Fruits and vegetables are important in combating illnesses because they are rich in anti-oxidants.
- Rice is a good source of anti-oxidant; foods that turn brown when peeled are rich in phenolics, like *guyabano*; fibers help in preventing colon cancer; the body has the ability to fight free radicals produced by the body, but

there are free radicals that cannot be eradicated by endogenous anti-oxidants, so additional anti-oxidants from foods are needed.

Theme: Household Management

The theme for the month of November, Household Management, revolves around managing household resources, like time and energy, to fully utilize the 24-hour a day every family member has; managing and disciplining children in the most effective way; managing leftover foods so that wastes are avoided and resources are conserved and preserved; and the importance of food safety and shelf-life in food preservation to ensure safe, healthy, and nutritious foods for the family.

Below are some of the essential sharing of the faculty members from the departments of HEED, FLCD, HRIM, and FSN/FT.

- Prioritize things to be done giving time for work and rest.
- Schedule tasks that require high energy during peak energy level while those that need less energy during low energy level.
- Parents should help their children to realize their wrong doing so that they know why they are being punished, thus, avoid committing the same mistake.
- Threatening a child may work at a younger age because they are afraid of the punishment, but not to children five or six years old because they already know when parents are serious or not on their threats.
- The safest shelf-life of refrigerated foods is three to four days only, considering that proper storage practices have been followed.
- Food recycling is convenient, time-saving, and makes people resourceful and creative.
- The most important consideration in cooking or preserving food is using clean raw materials and cooking equipment and storing them properly.
- Protein-rich foods are easily attacked by microorganisms and they proliferate very fast, so consider post-harvest characteristics to ensure the high quality of preserved or cooked foods.

Theme: Preparing for the Holidays

They say that Filipinos are fond of eating and they always find ways to celebrate just to have an excuse to eat and bond with relatives and friends. The theme, Preparing for the Holidays was very fitting for the month of December because it is this time of the year when everyone eagerly anticipates the coming of Christmas. The topic consumer rights and responsibilities discussed how to become vigilant consumers so that in the process of preparing for the holidays, consumers are able to make the right choices (products and services) that give their money's worth. The topic, menu planning on a budget for the holidays, gave tips on how to celebrate special occasions like Christmas in the most affordable way.

Below are some of the insights from the faculty members from the departments of HEED and HRIM on the theme.

- When consumers perform their responsibilities properly or follow the law, they could claim that they are always right.
- Consumers should analyze information included on product labels, inform authorities of market malpractices, and inspect expiration dates to ensure safe food consumption.
- Budgets should be realistic and the size of the family should be considered because allocations are affected by the number of family members.
- Prepare foods that are acceptable to the family members, use inexpensive substitutes for expensive ingredients, and use herbs to make dishes more special.

Theme: New Year, New Life

The beginning of a New Year is a great time to start a brand new chapter in one's life. This is the reason why many people resolve to adopt new ways of doing things to make relationships more fulfilling, the surroundings more liveable, and the source of income more stable for a more satisfying life. The topics in line with the theme for January, New Year, New life, were about starting the New Year right: gaining a new body look through balanced diet and exercise, creating a new arrangement for the interior of the house using practical and inexpensive materials, planning inexpensive, practical, yet elegant wardrobe, and starting a small business as a source of additional income.

Below are some insights from the sharing of faculty members from the departments of FSN, CTID, and HEED.

- The extra fat in your body did not get there instantly and so you cannot easily get rid of it either.
- A very practical technique to lose weight is the use of a small plate when eating meals where rice, pasta, or bread occupies one fourth of the plate, green and yellow vegetables occupy one half of the plate, and meat or fish occupies the remaining one fourth.
- A new house arrangement is one way of welcoming the New Year which could give additional inspiration to every family member especially if this is beautifully done.
- A traditional and classic theme stays for a longer time and could be easily combined with modern materials.

- A person who has a good knowledge of his or her body will be able to choose more suitable clothes for various functions.
- Create an illusion of waist by having a contrast between top and bottom for a skinny figure, fuller top using gathers and similar details on the bust area, a fuller arm by using sleeves with gathers or folds, and creating a taller illusion for a petite figure by wearing high heels, hats or head accessories, monochromatic colors, and vertical lines that are spaced just right.
- Entrepreneurs should possess the competencies needed to handle the business successfully.
- Business is not based on luck but on the preparation one does and God's guidance.

Theme: Tender Loving Care

"The greatest thing you'll ever learn is to love and be loved in return". These lines from Natalie Cole's love song entitled "Unforgettable with Love" encapsulate the theme for the month of February, Tender Loving Care. This theme gave emphasis on the importance of spending time with loved ones to show how much they are loved and cared for despite limited budget, time, and other resources. Tender loving care does not only refer to relationships among family members. It also shows how basic needs are provided like ensuring safe food for family members and taking care of clothes to prolong their use, thus realizing some savings for the family. Using Helen Steiner Rice's famous love quotes to put these insights in a nutshell, "marriage is sharing and caring, giving and forgiving, loving and being loved walking hand in hand, talking heart to heart, seeing through each other's eyes".

Below are some of the significant sharing of the faculty members from the departments of HRIM, FLCDD, FST/FT, and CTID.

- Love is never measured by how much money one spends, but on how much quality time one gives to loved ones.
- Choose an inexpensive place to go to or stay at home and prepare whatever food is available and serve it in a creative manner.
- Couples (including other significant people) can use the love languages to show their love for each other such as: doing a service, giving gifts, physical touch, and words of endearment.
- Achieving a happy and meaningful life as a husband and wife is a give-and-take relationship.
- Food safety is concerned with ensuring that the food we eat is free of harmful microorganisms.
- The least wanted microorganisms we should distance ourselves from are: *Salmonella*, originating from birds, specifically from their intestines; *E. coli* 0157:H7, a normal flora in the intestines of animals; *Staphylococcus aureus*, a normal flora of the skin, nose, and throat; *Campylobacter*, a bacterium that is ingested by eating.
- Dry garments thoroughly before storing, fold knitted fabrics, t-shirts, and sweaters instead of hanging them, and use hangers for linens to prevent the fibers from weakening.
- The objective of caring for our clothes is to restore them to their new or seemingly new condition.

Effective Ways of Realizing the CHE Objectives in Enhancing the Quality of Life of Filipinos

The College of Home Economics, through its committed leaders, has remained proactive in finding effective ways of addressing issues, problems, and concerns of human existence such as food and nutrition, child care, clothing, and shelter. Various developments were undertaken to ensure the delivery of quality services to its public. From its very few undergraduate courses in the earlier years, the College of Home Economics on its 50th year takes pride of developing and administering seven bachelor degree programs; seven graduate programs; and three post-graduate programs. Also, CHE expound its involvement through education, research, community extension work with partner communities and agencies, and public service through the DZUP noontime program entitled “*Ekonomiyang Pantahanan*”. It is the “youngest undertaking” of the college through the active involvement of the administration and faculty members from the seven sub-disciplines. The rich sharing of one alumna and 21 faculty members, who are experts in their own fields, from the seven sub-disciplines is a clear manifestation of the continuous commitment of the college in addressing issues and concerns that affect the life of individuals, families, and communities.

Effectiveness of the Joint Program of DZUP and CHE in Promoting the Various Courses and Services of the College

The joint program of DZUP and CHE is another effective alternative way of promoting the various courses in the college as fields of specialization for undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students within and outside the university. This was clearly affirmed when the program, though still very young, captured the attention of the organizers of the Catholic Mass Media Awards Foundation, Inc. Its nomination as finalist in this prestigious award together with other well-known radio public service programs made more people aware of the programs and services that the college offers. The awarding ceremony was held last October 19, 2011 at the San Carlos Seminary Auditorium, EDSA, Guadalupe, Makati City and was attended by prominent people from the academe, publishing companies, and prestigious institutions and organizations. It was also broadcasted in local television network, radio stations, and local major newspapers giving more exposure to CHE and its various programs and its commitment to public service.

Conclusion

The airtime of DZUP’s *Ekonomiyang Pantahanan* was perfect for family members’ listening pleasure. It also coincided with the lunch time of private and government employees, thus giving them the opportunity to listen and learn from the sharing of the guests while having lunch. The topics were informative and enriching touching on wellness, well-being, and other needs of individuals, families, and communities. It also showed the interconnectedness of various segments of the academe (CHE and DZUP), in finding practical and creative ways of solving daily life’s problems. The participation of the faculty members from the various departments contributed hugely to the success and achievement of the program’s objectives. The faculty members shared up-to-

date information, supported by research, on the topics that were discussed. The insights given by one guest were confirmed, re-affirmed, elaborated on, and enriched further by the faculty guests in the succeeding episodes. The professional, yet, informal hosting skills of the program anchors, their thorough knowledge of the college’s history and home economics as a discipline and as a profession, played a significant role in the success of the program. It is recommended that CHE and DZUP continue creating other programs that will benefit the listeners and provide the college more exposure. CHE should also continue finding other effective ways of promoting its degree programs to attract more students and its other services to benefit more people. Also, CHE faculty members should continue their spirit of volunteerism that was clearly demonstrated in the DZUP and *Ekonomiyang Pantahanan* radio program especially on projects and activities that benefit students, families, and communities and to continue conducting and disseminating researches that will advance home economics as a discipline and as a profession and other areas that will improve/enhance the Filipinos’ quality of life.

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