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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Rethinking Home Economics careers in the struggle for women's education in Botswana:

Taboka Ndikimbela

**Thesis presented for the Degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Gender and
Transformation,
Faculty of Humanities in University of Cape town
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Supervisor: Professor Amina Mama

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Approval page

This thesis has been examined and approved as meeting the required standard fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Social Science in Gender and Transformation. I confirm that I have read the final version of **Taboka Ndikimbela's** dissertation and that it is submitted for examination with my approval

Supervisor

Date.

University of Cape Town

Dedication:

This project is dedicated to Sisi Banenkosi Toddy whom I regard as a daughter, a sister and a friend. Her sense of humor alongside with her social and financial support throughout the project development was extremely remarkable and positive. She is a powerful young woman. I encourage her to stand for her academic freedom.

Acknowledgement:

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the following persons:

- Professor Amina Mama, my supervisor, for her intellectual critique, support and encouragement throughout the project. I am especially grateful for her willingness to read my work and arrange for special meetings during a time that has been difficult for me.
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- Caroline Kariuki and David Bhala for assisting and most willingly proof reading my work.
- Chiedza, Gwini and Dube for shared times of positive discussion and relaxation.
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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore gender experiences of Home economics professionals in Botswana educational institutions with the aim of presenting argument against this colonial mentality that still lingers in the education system of Botswana and result in Home economics teachers suffering professional indignity in schools and colleges. In Botswana, Home economics teachers do not easily progress to senior positions like other subject teachers do. However they always find themselves overloaded with both domestic and public activities. This situation prevents them from being fully and effectively productive in their day-to-day duties.

The researcher of the paper is a Home economics teacher, first in secondary school and now in colleges of education. She has a first hand experience of this indignity and it is this frustration that sparked her to do so much research and create a correct image of this long neglected or down trodden noble subject. To do this; the following research questions were addressed through out the study:

- 1) What is the status of Home economics teachers in Botswana educational institutions?
- 2) What kinds of constraints do Home economics teachers and their students in Botswana educational institutions envisage?
- 3) What is the response of Home economics teachers to dynamic institutional marginalisation?

The investigation was carried through qualitative data collecting methods using written narratives and in-depth interviews from four Home economics professionals. Respondents were chosen mainly on the bases of the fact that they were Home economics professional and they were also willing to speak out and document their life histories about Home economics in Botswana educational institutions.

Literature review from four selected former British colonies formed the foundation of the history of education and how the birth of Home economics brought along with it feminine stigma. It was found out that it is no exaggeration that one of the legacies of European culture in Botswana is the institutionalised education. Colonial education was seen as a powerful instrument in restructuring Africans from their cultural perspective to a new social set up meant to keep Africans in perpetual subordinates to the master community, 'the whites.' As a result, dynamic Home economics subjects were deliberately not given their correct profile because it was a socio political aim to give African women the barest ideas of Home economics under the term Domestic science in preparation for their role as baby sitters, kitchen hands under the only people who employed; the colonial masters. The researcher feels strongly that Botswana is still a victim of this misconception as it continues to treat Home economics as a nonacademic subject meant for the less able learners and only girls. The word Domestic science has given the subject a feminist nature and so in a male chauvinistic society like Africa generally Home economics suffers devastating gender discrimination.

The study also found out that Botswana education policy does not enforce the teaching of Home economics at primary level hence the subject is not examined at the end of primary school program.

Home economics is a dynamic social science subject and like all other sciences it command a content depth and width that begins from primary school to higher degree. Colonial education has created havoc in the attitude of curriculum planners and this must be corrected. In Botswana, Home economics does not enjoy the same regard in the school curriculum as all other subjects because of the manner in which it was introduced to the school by the colonial rulers. The decision by school curriculum developers that enforce subjects grouping encourages schools to offer Home economics to girls. Selection procedures in both junior and senior secondary schools are gender discriminatory hence weak girls are expected and sometimes channeled to do Home economics even if they may not want to opt for it. Academically strong students are discouraged from taking Home economics even if they want to opt for it. This misconception has influenced curriculum designers, teachers and the community to take it so lightly that teachers specialised in it are constantly frustrated. All this comes as a result of the low status of the subject hence it is taught mainly by female teachers. It was further found out that multiple formal procedures bar career progress for Home economics teachers. This include activities such as teachers' participation in sports, Home economics teachers placement in catering committees, subject time tabling, lumping of several optional subjects under one head of department and limited opportunities for Home economics to further their education and over crowded Home economics syllabi in secondary schools. In response to this caliber of gender inequality, the investigation found that Botswana Home economics teachers individually twist the situation to their advantage. Like Nigerian women, some Botswana Home economists use the same opportunity to develop their entrepreneurship skills that they use to earn additional income, others quit teaching and join other organization and deploy the same skills under different office title and it also became evident particularly with the researchers experience that some Home economics teachers struggle for their academic freedom.

Chapter one

Background of the study:

Introduction:

Education equality is not only a fundamental right, a demand for simple justice and democracy, but it is also viewed participation of women and the incorporation of womens' perspective at all levels of education, the national principles of democracy, development, unity, self-reliance and "*botho* as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the active" cannot be achieved in Botswana. *Botho* according to the Botswana vision 2016 (1997) refers to one of the tenets of African culture- the concept of a person who has a well rounded character: who is well mannered, courteous and disciplined, and realises his or her full potential both as an individual and as a part of the community to which he or she belongs.¹

In a truly democratic state there are no unimportant people, be they able or disabled bodied, adult or children, women or men. Equality is a cornerstone for every country whose national principle includes democracy. In terms of humanism, all human beings have equal dignity. Therefore every citizen must be accorded equal rights to education and training. Women must be empowered with education that will enable them to participate squarely in the public realm, and equip them with skills to build a positive self-concept coupled with the freedom to choose a career without fear of being sexually victimised. The demand for gender equity is central to the constitution of Botswana. As such every citizen, (women included) is entitled to equal opportunities for education. It is for this reason that Botswana is a signatory to the Convention of the Elimination of

¹ The presidential task group (1997) Long-term vision for Botswana; Vision 2016, towards prosperity for all. Gaborone: Botswana government, (pp. 2)

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¹ The presidential task group (1997) Long-term vision for Botswana: Vision 2016, towards prosperity for all. Gaborone: Botswana government, (pp. 2)

Discrimination against women (CEDAW). Among other things, CEDAW calls for the elimination of discrimination against women and the establishment of equal rights with men in education.

By endorsing the September 1997 Blantyre head of states declaration on Gender and Development, Botswana committed itself to placing gender firmly on the agenda of the SADC programme of Action and Community Building Initiatives. This should ensure among other things equal representation of women and men in the decision making of member states and SADC structures at all levels including targeting, at least thirty percent of women in political and decision making positions by appropriating the necessary measures to achieve these aims.² The commitment by the Head of the States of SADC is a response to the recommendation by the 4th United Nations World Conference held in Beijing in 1995. This conference also demanded that the world begin to redress and formulate strategies for women to equally access education and training.

The background:

Gender inequality is created by any system that restricts women's access to public spheres, by isolating them and excluding from public spheres, while burdening them and confining them to domestic and private sphere responsibilities. In Botswana this is practically true of both home economics teachers and their educatees in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Although home economics work is composed of tedious and unpaid activities tied to child bearing, house work and support of family members, in reality, access to home economics in secondary schools is determined mainly by one's sex. Sex is the biological construction of maleness and femaleness. Sexism is similar to

² SADC: Gender and Development (1997) A declaration by heads of state or government of the Southern African Development Community and the prevention and eradication of violence against women and children. Gaborone: Botswana government, (pp. 22)

racism in the sense that it is composed of prejudices and discriminatory practice against women.

Subject combination and choice in senior secondary schools is one of the many factors that determine students' academic freedom and choice for selecting future careers. My teaching experience suggests that many girls in senior secondary schools do not opt for home economics but rather they are forced to take it. This exercise disadvantages them even when they want to access higher education and training and would want to pursue a different course other than home economics. Many girls who do well in home economics at senior school level eventually find themselves 'trapped' in the field of Home economics education training against their will. Many Home economics teachers have come to being as a result of this discrimination and they continue to be marginalized at their workplaces. From my personal experience they are looked down upon and treated as inferior. In other words, the institutional culture that prevails in secondary schools does not take cognisance of gendered home economics roles in a way that facilitates home economics teachers to perform effectively and efficiently.

To unfold the gender discrimination and subordination that many home economics teachers go through and live with, I will reflect on my history of education, both as a female Home Economics student and as a female teacher in a feminised department. My education history dates back to 1967 when I started my primary schooling in a small home village called Sebina in the North central part of Botswana. In retrospect I remember that the school principal and the deputy were both males, but all the other teachers were females. Strangely, through out the seven years of my study, our class monitor was always a boy chosen by our teacher. His duties were mainly to supervise us

when we did our daily cleaning and submit a list of those who made noise when the teacher was out. Having a male class prefect was based on the assumption and belief that men are natural leaders. By so doing these boys were socialized for higher social positions later in life. In upper primary, they were sometimes given the classroom keys so that they could come early in the morning and open the classroom for us to sweep and arrange furniture.

This patriarchal ideology of female subordination was practiced and accepted without resistance from the oppressed. Girls were being prepared for subservient roles where they would be expected to obey their male counterparts commands without question. This is evidence that schooling is about power and it is in the interest of the people holding powerful positions in a society to maintain the status quo so that economic and social privileges pass on to males. Thus for the most part, schooling is defined by the ideology of those in power, in the same way that knowledge is a factor of the same ideology.

Although primary school teachers were required to teach all subjects, they did not do so in all curriculum activities. Subjects such as needlework and woodwork were gendered. Mokone (2000) explains that both needlework and craftwork were blocked in the timetable so that girls were grouped in one class and boys in the other.³ Selected female teachers guided and supervised girls while male teachers did the same for boys. These subjects were taught as craft classes where by girls were assigned tasks such as sewing, weaving, and knitting while boys were exposed to basic woodwork or carpentry. Boys prepared items such as wooden spoons, whisks, stools, axe handles, pestle and mortars. These items were sold to raise money for the school. Contrary to boys, girls demonstrated

³ Mokone (2000) "Problems faced by primary school teachers in teaching of home economics": (A case of Lerale primary schools) Unpublished Bachelor of Education project, University of Botswana; (pp. 2)

their needlework skills by knitting booties, sewing dresses for dolls, sewing aprons and also braided small place mats. Interestingly even though these items were useful items, they were not sold. They were given away to individual girls who prepared them to be used as references later in life. From a gender point of view, girls' projects did not attract monetary value because the school was under the control of male power. Therefore any masculine project was given credit and valued above feminine projects. The sexist attitudes gave the impression that girls' sewn and knitted articles were inferior and less useful for sale. Besides, the phenomena of gendering Home Economics in formal schools has now manifested such that some male primary school teachers do not subscribe to men teaching Home Economics.

The three successive school heads during my five years of secondary school were all males. The head boy and his deputy in this institution were given more respect than was the head girl and her assistant. The former held assembly on chosen days of the week, made announcements in the dining hall and conducted evening church service on Sunday. The head girl read chosen passages in the bible that were later interpreted by the head boy. I noticed that the discrimination against females was specifically connected to prejudices against women. And these prejudices were often linked to sexist attitudes that sustain the subordination of women. Culturally women have no say where men are gathered.

I also noticed that the teaching of science, mathematics and agriculture subjects was male dominated. Although Home economics were regarded as a science subject, it was the single subject that was taught by female teachers and done exclusively by female students. As a result it was perceived as a weak subject because its classroom activities

were centred on private roles. Less gifted students were forced to do home economics because those in power felt that there was 'less' or 'no thinking required' at all.

I attended formal home economics classes at junior secondary level. As a student, there was no subject choice available for me. I suppose teachers took it upon themselves to choose 'option subjects' for us. Besides in my school home economics was paired with agriculture; this meant that girls had to do home economics while boys did agriculture.

Agricultural practical projects included the production of vegetables such as green leafy vegetable, tomatoes, beetroots, carrots and onions. They also raised livestock such as goats, pigs chicken and produced eggs. The department of agriculture sold this produce to the school as well as to villagers. The Home economics department too bought some ingredients from the school farm to prepare dishes relevant to some topics in the syllabus. However, once the ingredients were prepared to make various dishes, the school policy dictated they be eaten free instead of having them sold to raise funds for the Home economics department.

Needlework projects were either a child's garment or a self-fitting garment. Individual students were required to cut, sew and cost any article they had been assigned to construct, but these items were given out free. In doing this, secondary schools clearly demonstrated how education institutions failed to recognize males and females as equal beings with equal human resource potential to socially and cognitively develop independent and self-reliant citizens of Botswana.

Besides following the syllabus, home economics students, were expected to cook for teachers from other schools each time our school hosted sports activities. These teachers would be assisted by their students, and students too would not only lose out on Home

economics but also on other subjects as well, given that they would spend the whole day cooking. As a result Home Economics disadvantaged many of us from participating actively in sports and other extra mural activities. When the school held big functions like prize giving, teachers' days and completers' ball, home economics teachers would not attend since they would be cooking for visitors and parents. Our lessons were also disrupted each time the home economics department was instructed to cook for education officials visiting our school. Other subject teachers did not bear with us but instead mocked us and called us cooks. This had a negative effect on our working relations. It was clear that they despised home economics subject, the subject teachers and their students. Teachers saw home economics as a field for training girls to be domestic workers and good house wives who would be able to cook good food for their family members. School curriculum appeared to be preparing girls to become good wives for educated men rather than equal partners who would also participate in the economy and educational development. Such was the reason for making home economics a purely feminine subject.

I neither chose to be a teacher nor to specialize in Home Economics after completing O level education. myself and some other girls who studied Domestic Science at Junior Certificate level were channelled to study for a diploma in secondary education in Home Economics. However boys and a few girls whose parents were elite were able to make informed decisions and pursue other careers other than Home Economics education. They have since aspired for better employment opportunities.

The diploma in Home Economics for secondary education offered in Swaziland was a two-year program while other secondary education programmes took three years. This

duration for the diploma in Home economics disadvantaged Home Economics teachers because when they started teaching, their salary was a scale below that of other teachers who had a three-year diploma in secondary education. This created friction between Home Economics teachers and other subject teachers. As such Home Economics teachers felt betrayed, less motivated and developed low self-esteem.

Soon after I started teaching, I realized teaching Home Economics was extremely strenuous; I also faced lots of gender challenges in my teaching career. First Home Economics as an option subject was paired with subjects such as Agriculture, Woodwork, Design and Technology. These subjects were perceived as masculine and powerful while Home Economics were seen as a soft and feminine subject. Because of its femininity Home Economics accommodated girl students only. I was particularly stressed when I discovered that other subject teachers in the school undermined the Home Economics subject. As a result, students as well developed a negative attitude towards the subject. Teachers often discouraged the academically gifted girls from opting for Home Economics. Likewise parents were influenced by other teachers to discourage their children from opting for this subject. As a result I found myself teaching weak students most of the time. Bright students were spread among the so-called powerful and masculine optional subjects such as Agriculture and Design and Technology.

It was common practice that during the student practical cookery lessons, other teachers would send notes to remind me to call them to come and eat the free food when it was ready. Although I ignored such notes, teachers would eventually come to eat and this disturbed my cookery practical lessons. Home Economics students did not have a fair

plate taste evaluation of their products since teachers from different subjects ate most of the food.

Like any other practical subject, Home Economics required the services of laboratory assistants. This was not provided for since it was perceived as an unnecessary expense. As a result my teaching activities were stretched from teaching theory classes to drafting relevant practical dishes, ordering ingredients, buying ingredients, delivering, storing them and setting up experiments for students and conducting practical classes and finally replacing ingredients in the stores. Home Economics activities were endless and tedious yet non-rewarding in terms of personal satisfaction, self-esteem, power and freedom, personal development and equal employment opportunities in the teaching force.

On weekends, home economics laboratories were often used for preparing food for teachers attending some meetings and / or taking part in sports activities. This arrangement underpinned home economics teachers and some of their students. We did not utilize weekends independently as other community members. I had no time set aside to spend with my family members and do personal business.

It was extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to run normal classes when there were official visitors in the school. It was the responsibility of the home economics department to cater for their feeding. In schools located in rural areas, this exercise was so bad that at times official visitors stayed for a full week and this meant disturbing Home Economics classes for a full week. What stressed me most was that in many instances we the Home Economics teachers, missed opportunities to attend meetings with senior education officials because of these domestic roles. In such meetings, crucial issues such as departmental problems, pay structures, teaching conditions and student

discipline were discussed. As a result our input as teaching members was totally excluded due to the gendered nature of our subject.

The other constraint I faced as a Home Economics teacher in many secondary schools was that I was often placed in committees that deprived me of the opportunity to develop some skills other than those centred on reproduction in the private sphere. These were committees such as catering and general school cleaning and counselling. Each time I demanded to be placed on one committee such as student discipline, examination, curriculum, timetable and subject allocation my request was turned down.

Because of this kind of institutional culture, many home economics teachers in secondary schools found it very difficult to progress to senior management positions. Above all, I also noticed that secondary school administrators were not conscious of women's' multiple roles. It was through this drudgery and subordination in secondary schools that many Home Economics teachers manipulated the system to their advantage. They individually fought for their academic freedom using diverse weapons. Some teachers extended their Home Economics skills to empower them with public responsibilities such as entrepreneurship skills. Others continued to work as teachers but extended their Home Economics to other related fields such as hotel and tourism, gender and transformation, family law, guidance and counselling and social work. On the other hand some teachers completely dropped home economics as a career and started new job careers in different footings.

In 1999 I was recruited to join colleges of education. Although I did not want to work in primary colleges of education; I took the post for one good reason, lecturing in colleges required one to have a minimum qualification of masters degree. This I felt was the

easiest possible way to acquire a higher degree without waiting for another ten or more years.

I knew that life would not be easy out there because the college that I was posted to had been running for over five years without a qualified Home Economics lecturer. Any female lecturer who did not mind teaching a Home Economics topic was usually given the opportunity to teach. However no one was given the responsibility of ordering books, buying equipment and keeping an inventory up to date. The Home Economics laboratory was used as a kitchen and a dining area for staff and official visitors, a tearoom and / or sometimes a common room. When I first came to the college, the Home Economics department had no funds allocated to it. This was because there was no one available for preparing departmental annual requisites, budgets and reports.

Subject lumping is another major constraint that home economics lecturers in primary colleges of education face in Botswana. Home Economics, Agriculture, Music, Physical Education and Art Design and Technology are all clustered under the banner of practical subjects. One head of department is supposed to take the overall responsibilities for these dynamic subjects and subject lecturers. In all cases that I know of, such head of departments completely lacked sight of what other subjects required hence they failed to prioritise resource allocations on equal and just grounds. It became very difficult for head of departments to defend subjects that they did not teach. To cite just one example, my head of department is a music teacher.

Although the two subjects are both grouped as practical subjects, they do not need the same resources and human power. While it is crucial that home economics have a laboratory assistant, music does not need one. But the head of the department may not see

this from a home economics point of view. To date there are no Home Economics laboratory assistants in primary colleges of education.

My individual life reflection as a Home Economics teacher only gives part of the position of the home economics profession in Botswana in terms of gender constraints. Therefore, there is need for an investigation to be carried out to explore the extent to which my personal experience reflects a systematic process of gender discrimination and marginalisation.

Research problem:

This study explores gender related constraints experienced by Botswana Home Economics teachers in secondary schools and how these impact on their individual careers and social development. Although I acknowledge that the government is doing a lot to ensure gender equality in educational institutions in Botswana, it is evident that gender discrimination in secondary schools creates a hostile environment for home economics teachers and their students. This situation prevents them from being fully and effectively productive in the teaching and learning of their subject. Home Economics teachers do not easily progress to senior management positions as other secondary school female teachers. They are over loaded with both classroom and domestic activities. Above all, they are subjected to the negative attitudes of their colleagues. (However my opinion is subject to approval or disapproval). In other words, many Home Economics teachers are dissatisfied with the teaching conditions as these marginalise and gender discriminate their subject. In response to this institutional discrimination and oppression, home economics teachers are taking dynamic decisions to fight the gender inequality in

Botswana secondary schools. As a result the department of teaching service management (TSM) is losing many home economics teachers who join other ministries and non-governmental organizations in search of greener pastures and satisfying job opportunities. Some leave the teaching force even before they pay back the Botswana government sponsorship loan for their higher education training. As of now, the teaching service management (TSM) is currently facing a serious Home Economics teacher shortage problem. There is evidence that suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction have certain consequences on Home Economics teacher's behaviour. Such behaviour will include among other things withdrawal from the profession. Ige (2001) asserts that teacher shortage and high teacher turn over in some subject area such as Home Economics, give a particular urgency to the study of teacher job satisfaction⁴. In this regard it can be expected that satisfied workers are less likely to seek other employment opportunities than dissatisfied.

Significance of the study:

There seems to be little or no research that has been undertaken in relation to gender discrimination against Home Economics professionals in educational institutions in Botswana. It is hoped that the findings of this study will shed light on the issues raised, regarding findings arising from this Teaching Service Management (TSM) of the constraints faced by both secondary and tertiary Home Economics teachers and lecturers respectively. Findings of this study will also draw attention to areas of the Home Economics syllabus that need revisiting and restructuring by the curriculum designers in Botswana. Findings and recommendations from this study will encourage further

⁴ Ige (2001) "Gender influence on job satisfaction: A case of private primary schools in Gaborone city." Unpublished Masters in Education project: University of Botswana. (pp. 4)

research on gender related issues in education institutions. Finally, the results of the study will form a future reference point for researchers and readers exploring gender and Home Economics Education.

Scope of the study:

This study is limited to only Home economics teachers in Botswana. This refers to those teachers who specialise in teaching home economics subject without pairing it with any other subject. Home Economics teachers, who train in universities, study Home Economics, as a multi disciplinary field that is not combined with any other subject other than those that are Home Economics oriented. On the other hand those who trained in local secondary colleges of education pair Home Economics with another subject of their choice; In other words they have an option to study Home Economics as either a major subject or as an elective. As a result they have a chance to shift from teaching Home Economics to the second subject without leaving the teaching profession. These teachers will not be included in this study.

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study is to explore gender dynamics experiences of Home Economics teachers and lecturers in Botswana educational institutions. Consequently, the study will investigate and determine factors, the career histories and views of teachers / lecturers on gender and their understanding of equal employment opportunities. In addition the study will investigate the dynamic marginalisation and constraints faced by Home Economics department as a result of the subject image. The study will be carried through the following research questions;

Research questions:

- 1) What is the image of Home Economics in Botswana education institutions?
- 2) What kinds of constraints do Home Economics teachers and their students in Botswana educational institutions envisage?
- 3) What is the response of Home Economics teachers to dynamic institutional marginalisation?

Chapter two

Literature Review

Introduction.

In this chapter, secondary sources were used to explore the history of women and colonial education in selected countries within the sub Sahara region namely; Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria and Botswana. By tracing the history of colonial education, the intention is to uncover how the legacy of colonialism evoked and cultivated gender discrimination in modern organizational structures. Subsequently the chapter will focus on how Home economics were introduced in British colonial schools and how it was used as a weapon to eliminated girls from education hence they were exposed to domestication. Domestic science as it was initially called, was feminine a subject that had no status in the public spheres.

The four countries were chosen first because of the availability of information; secondly they were all colonized by Britain. However, it is evident that even though they are all former British colonies, their colonial master did not expose them to the same degree of exploitation and educational dispensation. For instance countries such as Zimbabwe, Uganda and Nigeria were rich in mineral resources and they had fertile land suitable for agricultural production. This wealth attracted colonial masters to settle and extract these resources for trading. Consequently, their colonial education focused on manual labour and industrial education that discriminated against women.

On the other hand, Botswana was colonized mainly to provide the passage that joined the railway strip from Mafikeng to Bulawayo and the Zambezi. The railway was necessary for transportation of goods and labour to and from any of the lucrative colonies. Besides

the railway line, Botswana was also used for game hunting. Botswana was very dry and poor, as a result, Britain controlled Bechuanaland education with minimum expense hence Britain did not build any schools for Botswana. People relied on missionary and community schools.

From the above brief notes, it is evident that colonial education was largely directed towards women becoming better wives to learned males, mothers and guardians of families in a stable society. In other words, colonial education promoted inequality between sexes, or competition between males and females. It aimed at inscribing women in their domestic roles, subordinate and separate from males. In these specialised institutions (Home crafts) where Domestic Science was taught, this subject was not attached to a qualification or accreditation like other subjects. These girls could not be employed using skills acquired from this subject. As such, to date the subject is treated as a sub status subject and attached to household or private activities rather than being seen as a core subject that attract public activities.

In all the mentioned countries Home Economists have suffered as a result of institutional stigma attached to their subject hence they responded to this magnitude of educational marginalisation in various forms.

Colonial and missionary education in Zimbabwe:

Introduction

White settlers in Rhodesia wanted to exploit marketing opportunities for commercial farming of maize, tobacco and cattle. To secure this wealth, white settlers introduced racial segregation and Africans were moved from fertile land to reserves. Rhodesia was

also rich in gold, thus British settlers needed cheap labour to work in their industrial gold mines and in commercial farms. Education for Africans in Rhodesia was perceived to be segregation intended for the overall maintenance of European socio economic privileges. As a result African education focused on manual labour and industrial skills. This kind of education prepared Africans for cheap labour in white settlers' commercial farms and mines.

Documented information by various writers such Schmidt as (1992), Kuster (1999), Mhlaba (1996) and Mungazi (1991) on pre-colonial education suggest that formal education in Zimbabwe was pioneered by and was autonomously in the hands of missionaries as early as 1850. These missionaries belonged to different Christian church denominations that included among others, London Missionary Society, Roman Catholic Church, Dutch Reformed Church, Methodist Church, Jesuits and Seventh Day Adventist. Unlike in Botswana, the Ndebele people and the Shona people were reluctant to accommodate Christianity as some form of social and spiritual development. They were suspicious of any hidden agenda. Besides the few who joined Christian schools, later withdrew because they felt Christian activities were time consuming and less rewarding in terms of material products such as performing agricultural chores and herding cattle. Kuster (1999) indicated that people expected some financial compensation for the time they spent in schools. It seemed reading and writing were not automatically cherished as an accomplishment of western civilization⁵

From my point of view there may have been other reasons for African people's reluctance to accommodate missionary education. From the outset the two partners,

⁵ Kuster, (1999) African education in colonial Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. North America: Transaction publishers, (pp. 40)

namely missionaries and Africans did not agree on the curriculum. There was no formal communication between the two parties. As such Africans felt that they were being used to accomplish the white men's objectives. The second point that I share with Schmidt (1993) is that the early missionaries were largely ignorant of the rules and the ways of African life. The crusade against "savage brutal custom" such as beer drinking and polygamy evoked a great deal of resentment and mistrust among Africans⁶.

In view of this kind of approach, missionary education was not attractive to Africans. In a society where power was solemnly in male hands it was a ground rule that they needed to understand and trust the missionary's mission before they could release their wives and daughters. Missionary education posed a threat to class and power conflict in the sense that, if missionaries were given the platform to convert African men, respected rulers and head of families, then African men would lose their power to control both their resources and women. Missionaries finally sang 'glory Halleluiah' in 1890 when Rhodesia was colonized and education was implemented in partnership with British South African Company (BSAC) The partnership came as a result of defeating indigenous people and later domesticating their property, burning their fields and forcing them to send their children to school to train as skilled labourers for European owned industries. This was the motive of colonial education for indigenous people.

Mhlaba (1996) described colonial education in Zimbabwe as a tool that was used to create two classes in societies. The colonial education system created a rich educated class and a poor illiterate class. However, a class of poor illiterate whites was

⁶ Schmidt, E. (1992) Peasants, traders, and wives: Shona women in the history of Zimbabwe, 1870-1930. Harare: Heinemann, (pp. 75)

undesirable.⁷ It was in the light of the above perception that white and black education was separated to ensure an unequal class society. This practice demanded natives to receive low quality education composed of a mainly non-academic oriented curriculum. The curriculum in native schools included reading, writing, basic arithmetic and moral education that included good manners, respect for those in authority, the importance and dignity of labour and above all cleanliness. Because the education of Africans remained largely the responsibility of Christian organizations, it stressed the learning of morals and religious values as the most important objective. Such curriculum prepared boys for disciplined hard unskilled labour in both South African and Rhodesian mining and farming industries. Girls schooling was mainly the extension of domestic work. In other words native girls' education was geared towards providing domestic services for both missions and European women with household activities. Schmidt (1992) reported that an "interview response from a Wesley Methodist minister stated that the objective of education of African girls was to mould girls into obedient mothers, and teachers for young children and suitable wives for educated mission men; i.e. the emerging elite Africans in Rhodesia. African teachers, evangelists and preachers needed good wives to help them as junior partners".⁸

The above religious objective entails the current patriarchal ideology of women's subordination as well as the sexism in the division of labour and further ties women in unpaid reproductive roles. As such colonial schools indirectly instilled in both men and

⁷ Mhlaba, S, (1996) "Gender and class inequality in the access to higher education in colonial Zimbabwe." Unpublished paper: University of Zimbabwe, (pp. 9)

⁸ Schmidt (1992) Peasants, traders, and wives; Shona women in the history of Zimbabwe, 1870-1930. Harare: Heinemann, (pp. 131)

women the notion that women were not to compete with men in the public sphere.

Women who were regarded lucky were often trained to teach preschool children.

Mungazi (1991) argues that the Bible (the core Christian curriculum tool) carried an explicit message of obedience that became an instrument of control. In the context of colonial condition it became synonymous with oppression.⁹ Although Mungazi does not deeply discuss the history of education and oppression from a gender perspective, he acknowledges that the one type of education given to women was disempowering and oppressing. Above all missionary education discriminated against African women by emphasizing the notion of control by men.

Higher education during colonial Zimbabwe:

In the early 1920s Africans demanded higher education. In response to this demand, missionaries mounted pressure on the white capitalist community to provide financial assistance for developing educational facilities for the natives. Schmidt (1992) asserts that consequently, the introduction of upper primary schools was implemented side by side with policies that totally excluded girls from the western education. With the new native policy, girls could only be schooled up to standard 3. As such girls did not learn English as it was introduced only in upper primary. Schmidt (1999) pointed out that in the 1930s African men who were trained as church ministers and evangelists at Waddilove were required to register their wives in 2-3 years Home craft course that

⁹ Mungazi, D. (1991) Colonial education for Africans. New York: Praeger Publishers, (pp. 77).

taught cookery, needlework, and laundry skills¹⁰. The education they received continued to impair their cognitive development and extended their domestic roles.

Eventually when the policy was amended to accommodate girls in upper primary schools, they were expected to pay school fees as opposed to boys who did not¹¹. To further disarm girls Mhlaba (1996) reports that “circular 75 of 1910” was issued and it stated that “Girls should not be allowed to attend mission schools without written permission from their fathers”.¹² In response to the circular some parents stopped their female children from going to school. They did this because while they realized the benefit accrued from the education of their sons, the situation with their daughters was different. Nevertheless circular 75 of 1910, was enforced until 1950. During the period between 1910 and 1950, the government established single sex schools for native education. The first government school was opened in 1946 as a boy’s school only. In 1948, the first girl school was established and 29 girls were admitted. The second boys’ high school was established in Gwelu in 1957 (Fletcher boy’s school). These were the only schools in the colony that offered courses leading to university qualification. Further more the first establishment to introduce A-Level was made in 1966 and this was for boys only¹³.

Perhaps with all these reflections it is unjustifiable to say culture denied girls their right to education in Zimbabwe. Mhlaba and Schmidt blame both the gender biased and gender blind policies introduced by successive colonial governments for the greater responsibility for gender inequality. Mungazi in his part blames missionaries for using

¹⁰Schmidt (1992) Peasants, traders, and wives: Shona women in the history of Zimbabwe, 1870-1930.

Harare: Heinemann, (pp. 169)

¹¹ Schmidt (1992) Peasants, traders, and wives: Shona women in the history of Zimbabwe, 1870-1930.

Harare: Heinemann, (pp. 135)

¹² Mhlaba. S, (1996) “Gender and class inequality in the access to higher education in colonial Zimbabwe”

Unpublished paper: University of Zimbabwe. (pp. 7)

¹³ *ibid.* (pp. 16)

the word of God as a weapon for controlling Africans and discriminating against women in education by restricting them to domestic science.

It is reported that in 1936, when Jesuits considered constructing an African secondary school, the education committee strongly recommended that secondary education should be for boys only, because education for girls was first of all in her home and close home contacts are essential for her. Kuster (1999) noted that only exceptional girls were given the opportunity to progress beyond village schools. They were trained at local missions as teachers or nurses; i.e. extension of their nurturing and care taking duties, but they should not attempt advanced academic work.¹⁴

As a response to the recommendation from the education committee, African secondary schools were mainly targeting boy children and a few girl children from high-class families such as evangelists, teachers and preachers. There was only one A level school which was boy's school only; this meant girls were intentionally barred from university entry.

Mlambo (1995) pointed out that even after Home economics was declared a curriculum subject in 1980, it had no place as an A level subject. The subject earned less respect, low image and status because of its inexistence in the A level curriculum. It was not recognized as a requirement for any course to the university. In 1985 University of Zimbabwe introduced Home economics under the Faculty of Education and in 1994

¹⁴ Kuster S (1999) African education in colonial Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. North America: Transaction publishers, (pp. 132)

Bachelor of Arts degree (Food technology) was introduced in Solusi Mission University.¹⁵

The second option, which was available for students who did not secure places in mission schools, was through night schools and distance learning. Nevertheless both options did not suit girls. Girls' household chores required them to be at home attending to mission or European kitchens. Besides, the native education policy prohibited girls from attending night schools. Mhlaba (1996) cited the policy as it stated "In the case of girls, we don't allow them into night schools for obvious reasons".¹⁶ I wonder which were the obvious reasons. Education through correspondence proved to be difficult because it was costly. It attracted people with steady and reliable income: Secondly, the protocol of corresponding demanded flexible working conditions and reliable postal services. Thus it was not viable for people who lived in rural places. As such female youth continued to be excluded from accessing higher education until 1981 when the country received its independence.

Although I acknowledge the effort of the University of Zimbabwe to redress the gender imbalance in accessing higher education, there is need to do more than admitting. Indeed they also need to create an environment within their curriculum that will address the issue of retention. Siyakwazi (1998) argues that equality does not only entail access to schooling, but it also entails equal treatment of both sexes within the school.¹⁷ According to her literature this is not happening at the University of Zimbabwe, at least in male

¹⁵ Mlambo P (1996) "Attitudes of teachers and students to the place of Home economics in a mixed curriculum." Unpublished Masters in Education thesis: University of Cape town, (pp. 31)

¹⁶ Mhlaba. S, (1996) "Gender and class inequality in the access to higher education in colonial Zimbabwe" Unpublished paper: University of Zimbabwe. (pp. 17)

¹⁷ Siyakwazi P (1998) Female education in Zimbabwe: Attitudes of teachers and lecturers. Tonota journal of education; volume 6, number1, 1998/99 (pp. 35)

dominated faculties, yet this institution claims to be addressing the national gender inequality problem. In this case sexual harassment often operates to prevent women from registering in courses that are male dominated.

Conclusion:

Evidence from the above discussion demonstrates how education in colonial Rhodesia excluded females from the education system. Women in colonial Rhodesia were subjected to racial, class and gender discriminations.

Postcolonial Zimbabwe has made significant efforts to reduce female disparities in accessing higher education in isolation to primary and secondary schools. This clearly goes against the notion that education is a process rather than a one step activity. Primary and secondary education is a pre requisite for accessing higher learning. Therefore the attempt to curb educational inequality should also be emphasized at all levels of the education system.

History of colonial education in Uganda;

Just as in Zimbabwe, education in Uganda was initially under the control of missionaries whose major aim was to win converts and spread the word of God. The education they offered, however, first single handed and later in conjunction with the colonial government did not go beyond preparing women for the domestic life. But Musisi (1992) pointed out that even after Uganda was colonized, education was left entirely in the hands of missionaries until 1918.¹⁸ But when the colonial government finally took charge of the national education in Uganda from missionaries, it was reluctant to regulate the pace of

¹⁸ Musisi N (1992) Colonial and missionary education: women and domesticity in Uganda 1900-1945. (Ed) (pp. 173)

girl's education and they did not plan for women to enter higher education. Similarly in Zimbabwe, colonial administrators introduced education policies that marginalised girls' access to secondary school. To effectively achieve their objectives, single sex schools were introduced for indigenous people.

Evidence from Kwesiga (2000) and Kuster (1999), suggests that, besides colonial administrators' policies that discriminated against women education, missionaries in Uganda had conflicting religious background. As a result, religion was viewed as either a barrier or facilitator towards access to education too. Although missionaries were under different denominations, documents show that as early as 1900 plans for establishing schools were already underway. Kuster (1999) confirmed that, a number of both Anglican and Catholic schools opened doors to girls and boys by 1903. These schools did not attract Muslim children for fear of being converted to Christianity. From 1903 till 1958 Muslim children, especially girls, did not go to school."¹⁹ Girls from Muslim society suffered triple discrimination, that of their gender, class and their religion.

When the colonial administrators finally took over the control of education from missionaries, they also excluded girls from education above primary level. Instead of allowing girls to further their education, home-craft centres and infant welfare were introduced. Musisi (1992) cites the example of Gayaza girls' boarding school. This school was aimed at training daughters of chiefs and clergies as future wives of the same class society.²⁰

¹⁹ Kuster, (1999) African education in colonial Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. North America: Transaction publishers, (pp. 317)

²⁰ Musisi N (1992) Colonial and missionary education; women and domesticity in Uganda 1900-1945. (Ed) (pp. 173)

To confirm the seriousness of women discrimination against colonial education, Kwesiga (2002) contends that, in 1938 there were over hundred girls qualified to enter secondary schools, but only twenty-eight girls were receiving secondary education in the whole of Uganda. No girls' schools were at the level of boys; schools such as Namilyango, Kisubi, Nyakasura or Bado. Musisi (1992) reported that these girls were admitted in boys' schools on an experimental basis. Twenty years later, only 295 girls were in secondary schools as compared to 2819 boys.

When Makerere College was opened in the early 1930s it did not cater for female scholars. To emphasize government's effort to stop women from accessing higher education, it is also reported that in 1952 Education annual report warned against unqualified women going to study overseas. It was not until 1938 that education governors recommended that a women's hostel be built at Makerere College to facilitate women's admission.²¹ In the same year missionaries established three girls' secondary schools. Women students were finally admitted to Makerere College in 1945. It also reported that the first women who were accommodated in the Hall of residence were met with hostility from college administrators. Female students were not allowed into common rooms and they were also denied the opportunity to take part in the activities of students' guild.

Musisi (1992) asserted that, when women's education was finally improved, it was done for two main reasons; first to ensure that clever boys, for whom higher education was expedient, would be able to look forward to educated mates. Secondly it was geared

²¹Kwesiga, J, (2002) Women's access to higher education in Africa: Uganda's experience. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, (pp. 206-207)

towards combating the high infant mortality rate and unhygienic living conditions.²² In this case education for women was not only desirable, but it was necessary.

Post independence education in Uganda:

Post independence education in Uganda was faced with massive shortage of personnel because the highly skilled colonial personnel were compelled to leave the country due to political pressure. The state response to address the problem benefited men and women who qualified to be trained to specialise in required personnel. Because they were few women who had been to secondary schools, this meant that they did not qualify to be trained for highly skilled positions. As such more funds were spent on higher education than primary and secondary education. This exercise extended the exclusion of women from entering higher education. The government was only concerned with the production of manpower rather than eliminating inequalities within the education system.

Further Kwesiga (2000) reported that there were no girls' schools opened since 1959 hence girls who completed primary level, joined the home craft, which either prepared them to be house maids or secretaries. The government officially reported it could not afford to set up new girls' schools.²³ On the other hand there was no effort made, either to restructure available schools to accommodate both boys and girls or completely convert some boys schools to be girls schools.

Kuster (1999) reported that "when the government took over from the colonial government, schools were left in the control of the community to be run as national, regional and institutional schools; consequently, these statutory bodies demanded

²² Musisi N (1992) Colonial and missionary education: women and domesticity in Uganda 1900-1945. (Ed) (Pp.180)

²³ *ibid* (pp. 200)

exorbitant school fees. Many parents could not afford to pay high fees demanded by good quality schools and when faced with such a problem, they chose to either not send their girl children to school or to send them to cheaper schools which did not prepare them to compete fairly for access to higher education.”²⁴ When in 1992 the Uganda government declared free education in higher education, the low class society did not benefit because they could not afford to foot the expensive school fees needed to prepare their children to access the free higher education. Girls, whose primary education had been marginalized, continued to suffer the blow. “Free higher education for all” excluded many girls who had long been dumped by the system. At this point in time there was need to promote girls’ progression to higher education where they could also enjoy the fruits of the free education for all.

Lack of deliberate efforts to promote girls’ progression to higher education was further demonstrated by the curriculum structure within the formal education. More often than not, subject combination and option arrangement at secondary schools limited the girls choices more than those of boys: For instance, they reduced their opportunity to compete for various state opportunities for higher education. Kwesiga (2002) pointed out that subjects such as Domestic Science were introduced to train girls to be homemakers rather than to be educationists. Surprisingly, technical subjects such as Woodwork, Metalwork and Technical Drawing are rarely offered in girls’ schools. It is also evident that in mixed schools where these subjects are offered they are paired with Domestic Science.²⁵

²⁴ Kuster, (1999) African education in colonial Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. Transaction publishers, North America. (Page 31)

²⁵ Kwesiga, J, (2002) Women’s access to higher education in Africa; Uganda’s experience, Fountain Publishers; Kampala. (Page 207)

Men and women who were brought up in a patriarchal, male dominated environment ran colonial education in Uganda. As a result, their organizations were blind to the shortcomings of the education that they were going to offer. The introduction of single sex education crippled women's career development even after independence. Instead of being provided with academic education, women were shovelled to Home crafts that prepared them for domestic labour mainly for European families.

History of women and education in Nigeria;

The history of education in Nigeria provides the best example of how some African societies transformed the European ideology of domesticity to fit its indigenous cultural assumptions and changing needs without creating conflicts. The history further shows how Nigerian women used the new techniques and knowledge gained from Domestic science to create and exploit new economic opportunities without creating any conflict between indigenous people and British rulers.

Under colonial domination, the colonial government and missionaries encouraged the adoption of western concepts of domesticity through the agency of schools and churches. This means, right from the outset, missionaries introduced dual education that separated girls' education curriculum from that of boys. Although both sexes received the same instructions in reading, writing, arithmetic and scripture, in addition to this the curriculum prepared boys and girls for different life skills. Boys were taught agriculture, industrial skills as well as technical skills that prepared them for prospective employment opportunities created by the colonial economy. On the other hand girls focused on domestic subjects that prepared them for vocations and private occupations as mothers

and wives. The primary goal for girls' education was to inculcate good morals and good behaviour. The educational goal had no intentions of equipping girls with academic or employment opportunity skills. Dressmaking played a central part in the role of girls' education. The subject provided a medium for imparting other western middle class virtues such as orderliness, neatness and obedience. Denzer (1992) expressed that these elite boarding schools, provided specialized type of education for less privileged girls who were sent to marriage training homes.²⁶ Marriage homes as described by Denzer (1992) trained girls betrothed to young men in the emerging new class of educated Christians and teachers. Prospective husbands paid fees for training their fiancées, many of whom had no formal education. These homes did not empower girls for the economic success in the rapidly changing society. This course was taught in vernacular language, no examination or testing was conducted; hence no certificate was awarded for this course. When pressure for the demand for women education mounted, the colonial government introduced home craft centres and certificate of merit. However, Okafor (1971) pointed out that these schools too did not constitute a certificate for employment.²⁷ It was not until 1953 that vocational training centres were established in Nigeria. These were the first women educational institutions that were taught by qualified instructors and also qualified its graduates for employment opportunities. Like in Uganda needlework became very popular and the demand for better and specialized training for such crafts as pattern drafting, pattern sizing, cutting and finishing garments improved the quality of women's craft ship. In response to the demand for training, many women entrepreneur established private sewing institutes. In this regard, Domestic Science training promoted

²⁶ Denzer L (1992) Domestic science training in colonial Yorubaland, Nigeria. (Ed) (pp. 120)

²⁷ Okafor N (1971) The development of universities in Nigeria. London: Long man group, (pp. 156)

many opportunities for self-employment. It was also evident from Okafor (1971) that many young educated women established some small scale businesses such as bakeries, restaurants, cafes and hotels²⁸ By doing this Nigerian women were together responding and resisting to the African ideology of domesticity imported by the colonial regime and missionaries. They twisted the rope from being a domestic tool to a women empowering instrument.

Access to universities was very limited for women because most of them did not get the opportunity to enter formal education. The education system absorbed mainly princesses and daughters of evangelists. Home economics as an independent subject, was not offered in any of the Nigerian universities until 1965 when it was introduced in the University of Nigeria.

Although the history of education in Nigeria was not discussed in detail, the literature from the discussion shows that Domestic science teachers in Botswana can also use the response of Nigerian women as reference point. The history of education in Nigeria is unique in the sense that it provides a solution for the current Home Economics teachers who feel powerless to compete for other career opportunities.

Pre-colonial education in Botswana

Pre-colonial history of education is commonly depicted as compromising a whole system of beliefs or religion as well as means of socializing children into the accepted norms of the society. It was geared largely to parenting and building relations between siblings and neighbours with special emphasis on the aged as repositories of wisdom. To clarify roles played by these diverse local cultural groups Parsons (1985) described pre colonial

²⁸ Okafor N (1971) The development of universities in Nigeria. London: Long man group, (pp. 160)

informal education of Botswana as having been guided by two major aims namely; (1) preserving the cultural heritage of the extended families, clans and generations and (2) adapting members of the new generation to their physical environment and teaching them how to control and use it²⁹. Needless to say the pre-colonial education in Botswana was an essential practical training that intended to enable individuals to play useful roles in the society.

Cultural education was also gender constructed. Vanqa (1996) described it as a formal Setswana education that was characterized by *bojale and bogwera*; (adolescent initiation for girls and boys respectively).³⁰ *Bojale* consists of formal instructions on matters concerning womanhood, domestic roles, sex education and positive attitudes towards men. Because *Bojale* coincided within menarche, it further qualified girls for motherhood and marriage even at tender ages of 14-16. Contrary to *Bojale*, *Bogwera* (which was boys initiation school) did not declare its graduates ready for marriage until ten years post initiation. This arrangement adversely affected girls because not only did it subject them to early marriages but also to marrying men much older than them since their male age mates were not ready. As a result the age gap between men and women served to reinforce sex subordination and abuse of women by men. In many cases girls found themselves trapped in forced marriages that were initiated and arranged by their parents.

²⁹ Parsons. N. 1985) The Southern comparative and history of education: education for the 21st century in Southern Africa, Pretoria: Sage, (pp. 22).

³⁰ Vanqa T (1996) The history of education in Botswana. Gaborone: Macmillan, (pp. 19)

History of colonial education in Botswana:

Introduction

Bechuanaland (as Botswana was called during the colonial era) became a British colony in 1830, unlike neighbouring Rhodesia, Zambia and South Africa, Bechuanaland was a very poor colony, as a result, the colonial master vested very little interest in it. The result was that they did not settle in the colony at all and they had no interest in education

Unlike in other African colonies, Britain completely left education in the hands of missionaries. The Bechuanaland colonial master built no schools in Botswana. All schools constructed during the colonial era were built either by the missionaries of different denominations or various ethnic groups. For example, Bangwato communities in Serowe and Palapye built Moeng and Swaneng secondary schools. Bangwaketsi in Kanye built Seepapitso secondary school while Bakgatla built Molefhi secondary school in Mochudi. Roman Catholic Church built St Joseph's and Mater spei secondary schools and Moeding secondary by London Missionary Society. According to the Report of the Education Department (1965), when Botswana was granted independence in 1966, she had 251 primary schools nation wide, of which 91 offered full primary program and the remaining were offering primary schooling up to standard 4 or 5. It is also reported that there were only (9) secondary schools in the whole country. Four of which were up to junior certificate level while the other five combined both junior certificate and O level. But one obvious difference with colonial education in Botswana is that the country never experienced the phenomenon of single sex schools. But this does not in any way confirm gender equality in the education system. There were two teacher training colleges, one in Serowe and the other in Lobatse. The country had no state university except for

University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS) that was founded in Lesotho in 1964.³¹

Because Britain did not actively participate in the provision of schools, her influence on school enrolment as well as gender discrimination was minimal too. Both missionaries and Batswana communities built only mixed schools. However, missionaries were not too keen to fully absorb women as Christian teachers or evangelists. As a result churches were organized such that ministers and male deacons were male. Parsons (1985) viewed this as reflecting the patriarchal nature of both Tswana and western societies.³² This clearly explains why in 1881 ten males were reported to have graduated as evangelist teachers, while there were no women amongst this group of elites. This however does not mean that women were not active in Christianity and educational development. Their contribution was in the form of resource skills including raising funds for maintaining and developing educational infrastructure. The notion of underpinning women to the private sphere was emphasized then. This is the reason why the missionary organization did not see the need to develop women evangelist teachers. Parsons (1985) alleged that a Dutch Reformed Church priest remarked that women did not need education for labour because they were born to toil and that they find joy in drudgery.³³ This confirms that missionaries used the Bible to exploit and domesticate women. It was also evident from the approach used by missionaries that gender and class determined access to education. They first taught African leaders how to read and write, next were their children, and

³¹ Republic of Botswana (1966; "Report of the Education Department 1965-66." Un published report Printed by Botswana government printers, (pp. 4)

³² Parsons. N. The Southern comparative and history of education: education for the 21st century in Southern Africa.1985. Pretoria: Sage (pp 28).

³³ *ibid.* (Page 17)

preferably their sons. Ordinary people were the last to be targeted. Because of this, there were very few educated women when the country got its independence.

From the above statistics and report, it is evident that when Botswana got her independence, access to basic education was a serious national problem. It is also documented that access to education during pre colonial and colonial rule was not based on merit but rather on class and power relations coupled with gender preference. As a result, girls were attracted to lower primary education that gave them a chance to acquire skills to only read and write. In other words, from the on set girls had very limited access to upper primary education. As a result secondary education was exclusively for the chosen few, mainly sons of chiefs and evangelists and very few of their daughters. The statistics below clearly confirm gender patterns and imbalance in accessing higher education and it is a reflection of a result of gender discrimination by missionaries and colonial education. For example between 1963-70, 30 male and 3 female Botswana students were sent abroad to further their education and 28 male and 2 female Botswana students were sent to U.B.LS to further their education.³⁴

Looking at the above figures: it is clear that first a very small percentage of Botswana accessed higher education within a period of seven years. Second it is evident that there was gender inequality in accessing both formal education and eventually higher education. There are several reasons why girls could not be attracted to post primary schools on an equal scale with boys even though mixed sex schools were available. The cultural belief that girl's education was less valuable when compared to that of boys, subjected girls to education exclusion. As a result during economic hardships, poor

³⁴ Republic of Botswana (1966) "Report of the Education Department 1965-66" Un published; printed by Botswana government printers, (pp 25-29)

families withdrew their daughters from schools to engage them in employment labour in order to raise funds to pay school fees for their sons. Sometimes parents preferred their daughters to get married in order to receive bride price that could be used to pay school fees for their sons. Forced marriages were also common and they increased the risk of girls' exclusion from schools.

Above all before 1966, schools operated without an education policy and national education officers. Most of the strategies used were borrowed from neighbouring countries such as Rhodesia or South Africa. There is no doubt that most of the policies that discriminated girls from accessing formal education in the two neighbouring countries also applied to the Botswana education system then.

Contemporary educational structure in Botswana:

Basic education spans for 10 years of which every child is supposed to spend 7 years in primary school, 3 years in junior secondary school. Two years of post basic education are spent at senior secondary school. Children progress automatically from primary to junior secondary schools, but at the end of the three years of junior secondary school, they write examinations that determine their admission to senior secondary school. In other words junior certificate examinations are norm referenced. Their main purpose is to rank pupils in order of merit and the proportion of high and low grades are approximately determined in advance. It is the results of this examination that determine individual children's access to senior secondary schools. Those who are not absorbed by government schools, utilize the resources provided in private schools, study groups, or distance learning to acquire senior secondary education and skills. Utilizing other resources other than government

schools is costly and may only be attempted by people with consistent incomes. Private bodies that run private schools and study groups, sometimes charge exorbitant school fees that bar many of them from accessing senior secondary schools.

Because of the limited number of senior schools in the country, both boys and girls drop out at the end of the junior level of education. Evidence from various sources show that 2 out every 3 junior secondary school drop outs are girls. To address the problem of junior secondary school dropouts, in 1974 brigades were established to train these youth and prepare them for various employment opportunities. These centres offered technical courses such as brick laying, carpentry, mechanics, dressmaking and welding. Statistics from Women's Affairs (1999) show that in 1994 and 1995, 30% of the enrolled populations were females while the remaining 70% were male students.³⁵ One main reason why these institutions could not attract many girls was that the gendered curriculum and as such girls who were absorbed in these institutions could only be placed to do either secretarial courses or dressmaking. As it is, bricklaying, carpentry welding and mechanics are male dominated fields. To this day these courses still attract very few women partly because of the gender stereotypes and partly because students receive inadequate information about the gender neutrality of these courses. It is possible that they may not know that such courses have been officially declared gender neutral by the government. But what remains is that access to brigade courses as discussed in this paragraph practically marginalizes female applicants and so they are still colonized by males.

³⁵ Republic of Botswana (1999) National gender programs. Gaborone: Women's Affairs Department, (pp 12).

Gender equity in educational institutions;

The transition between junior education and senior education brings along a lot of challenges for female students and the education system itself. While I acknowledge that the education policy gives girls the opportunity to access formal education, I still feel that the government should establish a strong policy that can be used to hold or retain girls in school through out their formal education. Amongst the multiple challenges that many girls face, is dropping out of school due to pregnancy. NDP 7 1991-1997, (1991) acknowledges that pregnancy is one of the main factors that reduce girls' opportunities to participation in higher levels of education. It was reported that 650 girls dropped out of secondary due to pregnancy in 1989 and this suggests that three quarters of all secondary school dropouts were females³⁶. In response to the stated challenge, BERA (1992) argued that "the fact that more girls leave schools as mothers and have to provide for their children suggests that the government needs to create measures for female headed households and provide for such mothers to acquire educational skills for better jobs."³⁷ This discrimination practises was further challenged by student teachers in Molepolole College of Education because it discriminated against female students particularly those who were not married. To clarify this Women's Affairs Department, (2000) asserts that

"Prejudicial treatment also applied to students in colleges of education. In 1993 the Molepolole College of education Students Representative Council (SRC) submitted an application before the high court seeking to declare this policy discriminatory against female students and therefore unconstitutional. The court ruled in favour of SRC. It was found that the practice was discriminatory, as it did not apply to all students such as married students who were given special

³⁶ Republic of Botswana, (1991) National Development Plan 7: 1991-97 Gaborone: Ministry of finance and Development Plan, Botswana, (pp. 332).

³⁷ BERA (1992) Girl child study: Opportunities and disparities in education. Gaborone: UNICEF, (pp. 17)

attention. The court also found that twelve months suspension from school was too long compared to three months leave granted to civil servants.”³⁸ I have also noted that the policy on education in Botswana portrays education as though all education consumers are the same. Variables such as age, sex, social class, marital status and physical disabilities create huge differences among education consumers. There is even a major difference between the fully able bodied girl and a girl with a disability in terms of both vulnerability and access to education in Botswana. Policy makers should therefore appreciate that girls with disabilities are more susceptible to unplanned pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and other sexual transmitted diseases. There is a striking omission on what should be done to assist disabled girls who drop out as a result of pregnancy.

Finally, I must say that the struggle for readmission of girls who dropped out due to pregnancy has been very long. However it is not surprising that it took such a long time for the government to acknowledge school dropouts as human beings with the same rights as those who impregnated them. History of colonial education tells us that, before independence unmarried female teachers in Botswana were also subjected to this ruthless discrimination of suspension pending expulsion for falling pregnant. Although it was inhuman and morally wrong to punish unmarried pregnant teachers, one may ask why male teachers who were responsible for such pregnancies were not subjected to the same punishment. The gender discrimination act entitled “The Teaching Service Law number 34/64” was enforced in 1964 and it read “it is administratively correct to suspend pregnant unmarried teachers for two years. In the teaching service the penalty of suspension will be detained in the form of interdiction that may be followed by

³⁸; Botswana Government, (2000) The report on review of all laws affecting the status of women in Botswana. Gaborone: Women’s Affairs Department, (pp.20)

dismissal.³⁹ As a result, for ten solid years, unmarried female teachers were victimized without any mercy from the colonial education policy, Vanqa (1996) reported that many female teachers left teaching and never came back.⁴⁰

Gender stereotype in the education system:

Mosimakoko (2000)⁴¹ and Siyakwazi (1998)⁴² both asserted that gender bias and stereotypes still exist in the Botswana education systems. Republic of Botswana (1999) revealed that classroom research that an overwhelming majority of teachers in all educational institutions are gender unaware, resulting in more attention being given to male learners than to girl.⁴³ With this kind of research findings, it is critical that gender equitable strategies be formulated and enforced. These strategies should aim at removing gender disparities. However elimination of gender disparities can only be achieved through the review of curriculum and education materials. This can be done if the curriculum review includes gender awareness courses infused at all levels of education and by extending the exercise to pre service teacher training programs and workshop facilitators.

Findings from a study carried out by Ramahobo (1992) revealed that in terms of performance, boys are dominant in hardcore subjects, while girls under perform across all subjects but perform slightly better in the arts subjects at secondary education level.⁴⁴ To

³⁹ Bechuanaland Protectorate; "Teaching service law number 34/64"

⁴⁰ Vanqa T (1996) The development of education in Botswana: The role of teacher's organization. Gaborone: Macmillan, (pp 108).

⁴¹ Mosimakoko M (2000) "Gender and the self-concept: The teaching and learning of science in schools; A case of Botswana." Paper presented at the 4th Biennial conference on teacher education, (Pp. 202)

⁴² Siyakwazi P (1998) Female education in Zimbabwe: Attitudes of teachers and lecturers. Tonota journal of education: volume6, number1, 1998/99 (page 35)

⁴³ Republic of Botswana (1999) National gender program. Gaborone: Women's affairs department, (pp. 13).

⁴⁴ Ramahobo L (1992) The girl child in Botswana: Educational constraints and prospects. Gaborone UNCEF, (pp.2)

address this national problem, she recommended that the curriculum and evaluation unit initiate a review of all curriculum materials. This included evaluation of textbooks, subject syllabi and examination procedure and practices. The aim of this recommendation was to provide girls with friendly strategies in classroom and eventually in the education system as a whole.

Although I agree with the researcher that the curriculum is central to implementing education policy, I strongly feel that a change of curriculum on its own may not bring about the desired development in the education system of Botswana. There is need to address the communities views on gender and education. Parents, teachers and lecturers need to understand the concept of gender and how it impacts on the academic performance of the individual learners. Each party needs to understand its role in the education system. The community needs to understand how a non-gender balanced curriculum impacts negatively on the cognitive development of an individual, national education quality and eventually the economic development of a country.

In the same vein, the policy on women and development initiated by the government of Botswana recommended that the school systems should; “encourage female students through affirmative action to take science subjects and adopt specific measures to redress the gender imbalance observed in the schools.”⁴⁵ It is not clear whether any of these recommendations has been implemented to date. If they were taken seriously, at least 50% of the population enrolled in institutions such as vocational and technical colleges in Botswana would be composed of female students. But this is not happening if one

⁴⁵ Republic of Botswana (1995) Women in development policy. Gaborone: Women’s affairs division, (pp.32)

considers that the highest female enrolment that was recorded in 1998 was only 37.4%.

The subsequent section will discuss the subject in detail.

Access to higher education in Botswana:

Higher education and training in Botswana comprises the following institutions; the national university commonly known as The University of Botswana. This is the only institution that offers various degree programs with an enrolment of above ten thousand students. There are five Institutes of Health Sciences that are responsible for training nurses for a diploma qualification. Another institute The Botswana Accounting College, a newly opened college offers accounting courses up to degree level. The third institute, Botswana College of Agriculture, is responsible for training various cadres in agricultural science from diploma up to degree level and is affiliated to the University of Botswana. The country has a total of six colleges of education, out of which four cater for primary education and the other two cater for secondary education and are affiliated to the University of Botswana. They offer diplomas on primary and secondary teacher training education respectively. There are 46 vocational and technical colleges offering courses ranging from auto Mechanics, Hotel and Tourism and Electrical Engineering. They cater for approximately ten thousand trainees.

Statistics from NDP 8 (1997) show that in 1990 and 1991 primary teacher training colleges of education enrolled 85% and 86% female students respectively⁴⁶. Recent statistics from the Central Statistics Office (2001) show that female enrolment has dropped drastically since 1996. In 1997, 1997 and 1998 primary teacher training colleges

⁴⁶ Republic of Botswana (1997) National Development Plan 8; 1997-2003. Gaborone: Ministry of Finance and Development planning, (pp 343)

of education enrolled 72.5%, 65.8% and 58.4% female students respectively.⁴⁷ It is important to note that the overall enrolment of colleges has not increased. This means that the number of female intake has been dropped. There is no reason given for reducing the female intake, however one can only speculate that it was done to maintain the gender balance in college enrolment.

Although the above statistics suggest that females dominate primary teacher training colleges of education admission, it is also evident that from 1994 male admission in primary teacher training colleges of education rose sharply because lower certificate were not appealing to boys.

Bulletin statistics (2001) shows that vocational and technical colleges enrolled only 27% and 30% female students in 1990 and 1991 respectively. In the subsequent years female enrolment increased in vocation and technical colleges from 36.6% in 1997 to 37.4% in 1998.⁴⁸

The statistics on vocation and technical colleges reveal that until 1996 female intake to these colleges was always below 30%. There are several reasons for this kind of scenario; the first and fore most was that these colleges offered some courses that were regarded as unsuitable for women. The courses included among others Auto Mechanics, Plumbing, Electrical and Building construction. The courses are considered to be male fields. Women and development (1996) expressed that the female intake in these institutions lags far behind that of males. They argue that constrains affecting girls' participation in vocational and technical colleges are; gender bias in the education system and in teaching

⁴⁷ Republic of Botswana (2001) Statistical bulletin. Gaborone: Central statistics office (pp. 17)

⁴⁸ Republic of Botswana (2001) Statistical bulletin. Gaborone: Central statistics office, (pp. 17)

materials.⁴⁹ In light of the gender bias that exists in Botswana technical colleges and other colleges that are dominated by men, Raseroka (1991) reported that Botswana Polytechnic (the first technical college in the country which was later upgraded to form Faculty of Engineering and Technology in UB) opened in 1976 with no female hostels.⁵⁰ What does this mean? *No accommodation no access to an institute (bold, my emphasis)*. Beetle (1990) reported in her investigation on the Botswana College of agriculture enrolment policy that the college predominantly admitted male students. The argument forwarded, was that the Ministry of Agriculture might be reluctant to employ female agricultural demonstrators.⁵¹ Beetle's evidence ties well with my experience during my study in Swaziland where I did my Diploma in secondary education 1979-1981. I can capture my experience my experiences then as follows:

“Amongst programs that Botswana students were sponsored for was the Diploma in Animal Production and Health. This program totally discriminated against female applicants. The program was strictly recommended for male students only. Graduates from this program were highly respected and they attracted very high posts in both government and non-government organizations. Many of them eventually became veterinary officers opportunity women were denied by the education system in Botswana.”

Finally, to shed light on the female enrolment in the University of Botswana, Statistics Bulletin (2002) reveals that between 1990 and 1995 more female students than male students were enrolled in the University of Botswana. Although the female to male proportion is higher, it is still true that the majority of registered female students are in

⁴⁹ Republic of Botswana (1995) Women in development policy. Gaborone: Ministry of labour and home affairs, Women's affairs division, (pp 9).

⁵⁰ Raseroka (1991) “A bibliography essay of research on women in Botswana.” Paper presented at the 34th annual meeting of African Studies Association, St Louise, and Missouri. (pp 13)

⁵¹ Beetle (1990) “An investigation on the Botswana agricultural college enrolment policy.” Paper presented at the 34th annual meeting of African Studies Association, St Louise, and Missouri. (pp17)

education and social science, courses that extend women's domestic roles to the public sphere.

Conclusion:

Evidence from the colonial education in the above selected countries shows that women education was mainly for domestication and seclusion. Very few women benefited from the colonial education system; the few that benefited were either chiefs' or priests' daughters. It is also clear that missionary and colonial education functioned in a complex and contradictory manner; it liberated women from the particular subordinate inherent roles in traditional society by introducing them to new career and earning power, yet it limited them to subordinate roles in a newly emerging social structure. To effectively discriminate women in education systems, girls are often channelled to take subjects that are perceived as feminine and easy. Many women in Botswana found themselves trapped in the field of Home economics education as a result of the extension of domesticity from the legacy of colonial education.

History of Home Economics education in Botswana

From as early as the 1920s education development in Botswana was catered for in partnership between the colonial government and missionaries. However the missionaries had the lions' share since they were the first to settle among the indigenous people. Because of this, missionaries controlled the larger part of the curriculum development and its implementation while the colonial government was responsible for financial and policy designing and enforcement. The missionary's interest in education was mainly based on basic reading, writing, praising the word of God and learning practical skills for subjects such as handcraft and agriculture. Their counterparts had their interest vested in

industrial education that would prepare male trainees for the world of work. This was a golden opportunity to provide cheap labour in the neighbouring South African and Rhodesian mines and farm industries. As such this was not ideal education for African women.

According to Community Development report (1979) there were few other mission secondary schools such as Mater Spei, St Joseph's and Moeding Senior secondary schools that offered domestic science as an extra curricular activity for girls.⁵²

Mhango (1995) asserted that by 1965, the Dutch Reformed Church in Mochudi had already started running two-years Home Economics craft school for girls. Non-Governmental Organizations such as Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), Botswana Council of Women (BCW) and Botswana Girl Guides (BGG) continued to offer home economics to female students and these mushroomed countrywide.⁵³

It was not until 1975 that Home Economics and Agriculture were formally accepted as curriculum subjects in junior and senior secondary schools. However, they were offered as optional subjects. As a result this denied students the opportunity to register for both subjects even if they wanted to. From my junior secondary school experience, there was no option because girls were asked to do Home Economics while boys did Agriculture. The option was only available at senior secondary level, but even then, in many instances subject teachers preferred students who had previously been exposed to the same subject at junior level; alternatively students who did very well in all subjects enjoyed their choice. Administrative personnel and other subject teachers discouraged bright students

⁵² Community Development (1979) Report on home economics piloting scheme 1967-69. Gaborone: Department of community development, (pp. 4)

⁵³ Mhango W (1995) "Home economics and empowerment through research: Implications for programs in Botswana" (ed) University of Botswana. (pp. 4)

against enrolling for Home Economics. Science students were often advised that they were wasting their time if they opted for home economics. Weak female students were grouped together to make packages for home economics classes. The Ministry of Education acknowledged the situation described above when she clearly pointed out that brilliant pupils are still discouraged from doing practical subjects in favour of all academic curriculum.⁵⁴ The above statement sent the message to every Motswana who could read and write that Home Economics is a low status subject.

Ten years after the introduction of practical subjects, Agriculture was accepted as a core subject at junior secondary level and Home Economics was paired with Design and Technology/ Woodwork, yet another 'masculine' subject. But there were still no efforts made to win a reasonable number of male students in Home Economics.

Letsogile (1989) carried out a study that investigated male attitudes towards Home Economics. Her findings draw the following backlogs as the major stumbling blocks for male students' enrolment in Home Economics; parents influence male children not to enrol for feminine subjects such as Home Economics. School personnel look down upon the subject and male students expressed fear of a subject that was over loaded with activities through out the course. They complained about the subjects' content as gender biased and also felt that because Home Economics was not taught at primary schools they needed an awareness programme before making their subject choices.⁵⁵

In 1986 Home economics was officially introduced in primary schools. The first blunder made in introducing Home economics in primary schools was to do so before recruiting or training Home Economics lecturers in primary colleges of education. Some primary

⁵⁴ Ministry of Education (1977) Education for Kagisano. Gaborone: Government printers, (pp 5-6).

⁵⁵ Letsogile T, (1989) "An assessment of male students in selected secondary schools in Botswana." Unpublished Masters Science thesis: State university of Iowa, (pp 13)

Colleges of Education operated without Home Economics lecturers despite the fact that Home Economics were an official subject. In one college the administrative personnel suggested “any female lecturer interested in either sewing, knitting or cooking could lecture the students” This was done without even consulting the subject syllabus. Secondly, the then in-service education officers in primary department needed an awareness course on how to approach the subject. When teachers realised they could not receive any assistance from their education officers, many of them chose not to teach the subject at all. As a result the ability to teach Home Economics in primary schools barred male students from accessing the subject at junior secondary level; thus denying them the educational right to make a choice. This adversely affected female students, because when male students opted for masculine subjects as their junior secondary school option, female students were forced not to opt but take what was left for them. In response to this, Ige (2001) pointed out Home Economics teachers in junior secondary schools often express concern over form one student’s lack of basic knowledge regarding the content of Home Economics. When teachers were asked “what are some of the problems you encounter in junior secondary schools?” one respondent answered; “Students do not seem to have any knowledge in Home Economics, making it very difficult for teachers to determine a starting point. Home Economics teachers therefore filter their way through the whole of first year, teaching students basic content that may have been covered in primary schools”⁵⁶ The above response shows how deep the cut goes. By failing to address the Home Economics problem at primary school level, the problem manifests and impedes the teaching of the same subject at secondary level.

⁵⁶ Ige (2001) “Gender influence on job satisfaction.” (A case of private primary schools in Gaborone city) Unpublished Masters in Education thesis: University of Botswana, (pp. 23).

Although the University of Botswana was opened in 1974, it was not until August 1994 that the Home Economics degree programme was introduced. On the other hand primary school teachers who acquired their first Degree in Primary Education with the University of Botswana before 1996 did not acquire any Home economics skills in their program. This scenario demonstrates the slow progress in further training for Home Economics teachers through out the history of education in Botswana.

To date the University of Botswana does not offer Masters and PhD programs in Home economics related disciplines. Botswana has only five home economics secondary school teachers with a Masters Degree in Home Economics and this includes Home Economics Principal Education Officers. Some Home Economics teachers who obtained their first degree as far back as 1989 are still waiting to be nominated and recommended for further training. But because the subject has a low status in the curriculum, these professional teachers are still to work very hard to fight for their academic right. To address their dissatisfaction, Home Economics lecturers in colleges are taking advantage of the minimum lecturer requirement qualification to pursue the Master's Degree in Home Economics related fields. This enables them to venture onto high status fields.

Countrywide, there is no local Home Economist PhD hold. There is only one Home Economics student pursuing PhD abroad. This situation is different from other subjects that are either gender neutral or those that are male dominated, both in secondary education department and teacher training department.

Conclusion

Home Economics education is a highly gendered area of education and yet very little attention is given to this subject. Home economics teachers too are not satisfied with the rank discrimination and low status subject that denies them equal opportunity to educational advancement. But interestingly, besides class enrolment and teacher education, Home Economics have attracted significant males. The big question is; when is Home Economics a feminine field and when is it a masculine one? This question remains unanswered.

Chapter three

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

Methodology is a theory of how a research is carried out, or simply principles about how to conduct a study. Methodology aims at helping readers understand in the broadest possible terms, not the end results of an inquiry, but rather the process. Methodology can either be quantitative or qualitative, depending entirely on the design of the instrument used for collecting and analysing data. To carry out this study the researcher chose the qualitative approach. Qualitative methodology is an explorative research that relies on naturalistic enquiry and focuses on process, understanding and interpretation and inductive analysis. Patton (1997) highlighted advantages of qualitative methodology as being to produce a wealth of detailed data from a much smaller number of people and or cases. In addition it provides an in-depth and detailed report through direct quotation and careful descriptions of situations or events⁵⁷.

Data was collected through written narratives, in depth open interviews and gathering of Botswana Education policy documents.

3.1 Rationale for use of policy documents:

The researcher used policy documents mainly the Education policy and Home Economics syllabi for all levels of education. These were used mainly to complement data from respondents; however, in other cases both respondents and the researcher used them as reference. The Education policy recommendations, curriculum structure, syllabus content, assessment of each level and time allocated the subject, gave a clear picture of the workload of the Home Economics teachers and how this and other envisaged

⁵⁷ Patton Q (1997) How to use qualitative methods in education. London: Sage publications, (pp. 9)

constraints affected their status. Respondents as indicators displaying how education communities ranked the status of Home Economics with other subjects indirectly cited these documents.

The use of these documents promotes institutional marginalisation of Home Economics teachers and further makes it very difficult for them to advance in their career: be promoted to senior education positions or get opportunities for further education like other subject teachers. Without these policy documents, arguments brought forward to answer my research questions would not have much substance, infact they form the corner stone of data used.

3.2 The target group:

The target group was composed of four respondents that consisted of three female Home Economics professional teachers and one male respondent who is now an ex Home Economics professional teacher. In the case of this study, the crucial factor regarding the target group is not the number of respondents but rather the potential of each person to contribute to the development of the insight and understanding of subject under study. In carrying out this study, the researcher combined the purposive technique and quota approaches, both of which are regarded as non-probability techniques. Quota technique means there is no special criterion used for selecting the research group except the availability of the group and the fact that they are components of the identified population. On the other hand, when using purposive approach, Cohen (2001) explains that researchers can hand pick the cases to be included in the study on the bases of their judgment based on their typicality.

The study was conducted in and around Gaborone. This location was targeted because it was both a central place and a metropolitan area where most of assertive Home Economics teachers have managed to secure dynamic employment opportunities. In addition, access to potential informants was convenient even with the cheapest transport and limited time. In many instances follow up interviews for data collection were made possible through telephone communication.

Above all, this is the only place where the targeted potential informants were aware of the institutionalised culture that marginalizes Home Economics teachers and at the same time were willing to talk and document their teaching experience without fear of being victimized by those in positions of authority. In a way, respondents were using this investigation to question the relationship among discourses and power holders in education institutions.

3.3 Preliminary enquiry:

Preliminary enquiry on the data-collecting instrument was conducted to validate the narrative guide before the actual narrative writing was conducted. The enquiry was carried out on Home Economics teachers who had similar characteristics to the selected population sample. The researcher therefore selected one Home Economics teacher and one Home Economics lecturer in a college of education for the test. They each wrote their stories in three and a half weeks. From their feedback, it became evident that additional time was needed to write clear and detailed individual stories. They also requested that some of the narrative guide be restructured because they were not clear.

3.4 Written narratives:

Narrative refers to a set of detailed stories used to describe human and institutional activities. Plummer (1983) describes narratives as a full documents about one person's life in her / his own words gathered over a period of time. This data collecting technique was chosen because it provided a platform for accessing data on the subjective reality of individual Home Economics teachers /lecturers. This is in line with Cohen et al's (2001) assertion that personal narratives are rich in the subjective involvement of the storyteller and they offer an opportunity for the researcher to gather authentic, rich and respectable data.⁵⁸ Written narratives form primary literature that is rooted in the cultural context, scenes and events that give meaning to actions. Teachers' stories in this study gave pictures of how institutional cultures stem from the ideology of gender inequality in education and how these directly and adversely impacts on the social, academic and career development of Home Economics teachers/ lecturers and their students. In this case, narratives were used to the extent that they opened up to the researcher and give a deeper view of their life experience. They made the familiar strange and the strange familiar. What this means is that some activities for instance engaging Home Economics teachers in cleaning committees and excluding them from examination committees may sound fine, but when respondents narrated the whole set up of how educational culture viewed and discriminated Home Economics teachers; it unfolds the truth as though it is something we are not familiar with yet we are.

This means educational reports, stories or history related by these informants provided means by which those truths which cannot be otherwise told, were uncovered. This experience offered the researcher an opportunity to import fragments of data from various

⁵⁸ Cohen et al (2001) Research methods in education 5th edition. London: Rout ledge falmer, (pp.304)

real events in order to speak to the heart of the social conscience of Home Economics teacher.

Enquiring by narrative writing was conducted with the view to provide evidence on gender discrimination in the education system in Botswana. This also means that the study articulated mainly female Home Economics teachers' voices to provide valuable insight into the manifestation of the patriarchal ideology and power relations not only in secondary schools but also in primary colleges of education in Botswana. Indeed, Cohen et al (2001) points out that narratives provide valuable insight into the ways in which educational personnel come to terms with the constraints and conditions in which they work⁵⁹ Likewise, Goodson (1983) argues that narratives have the potential to make a far reaching contribution to the problem of understanding the links between "personal troubles" and "public issues", a task that lies at the very heart of the sociological enterprise⁶⁰. The importance of narratives was best confirmed by the fact that the teachers continuously, most often unsolicited, import narrative data in their account of classroom events. It is this data that they carefully reflected and documented to conceptualise social activities. Finally, stories or narratives have a legitimate place as an enquiry method in educational research and Thody (1997) places them at par with interviews as a source of evidence for research.⁶¹ Essentially, narratives are interactive and cooperative techniques, directly involving the researcher.

⁵⁹ Cohen et al (2001) Research methods in education 5th edition. London: Rout ledge falmer, (pp. 163)

⁶⁰ Goodson D (1983) The use of life history in the study of teaching. in Hammersley. Driffield, (ed) The ethnography of schooling. Nafferton books: (pp. 129)

⁶¹ Thody A (1997) Lies, damned lies and story telling; Educational Management. London: Rout ledge falmer (page331)

3.4.1 Administering written narratives:

A month before data was collected; a letter was written and addressed to the Office of the President to seek permission to carry out this study in Botswana (see appendix i). But before permission was granted, the researcher informally approached the targeted group and introduced herself, explained the purpose of the study and described the concept of the topic to be investigated. Thereafter the researcher selected the research subjects or respondents: However to avoid bias, the researcher went through the following procedure to locate potential contacts: She started with the key person, (in this case the Home Economics Regional Education Officer) whom she considered knowledgeable. Patton (1997), describes key persons, as those persons who are particularly knowledgeable and articulate; people whose insight can prove particularly useful in helping the researcher understand what is happening.⁶² From the key person the researcher requested for a list of potential referrals and then the researcher conducted an onsite observation. Onsite observation according to Merriam (1998) involves the informal discussion with participants to discover those who may be targeted as good informants.⁶³ In other words those who can express their thoughts, feelings, opinions and their perspective on the topic being investigated were identified during onsite observation.

Through these informal meetings, the researcher was able to identify and confirm parties willing to document their life stories. What this implies is that, though informants were selected, the final decision to take part in this exercise was based on the potential respondent's willingness to establish and maintain a close intimate relationship with the researcher. Such a relationship gave the researcher the opportunity to seek clarity of

⁶² Patton Q (1997) *How to use qualitative methods in education*, London: Sage publications. (pp. 95)

⁶³ Merriam.S (1998) *Case study research in education. A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey –Bass Publishers, (pp. 77)

issues during and after narratives and interviews had been carried out. Sometimes she consulted them even during data analyses.

The issue of anonymity was addressed before the actual data collection was carried out, for unlike other methodologies, personal narratives reveal intimate details (names, places, schools and events) and provide a scant cover for prying eyes. Thus there is need for protection of anonymity of the research participants without stripping away the rawness of the real happenings. However, although all my respondents wanted to be known to their readers, after discussing this issue with the supervisor the researcher finally identified them with their official positions.

After the Office of the President had granted the permission to conduct the fieldwork, the researcher personally distributed the narrative framework to all respondents. Respondents were given 4-5 weeks to complete writing their assignment. This means teachers/lecturers related their stories reflecting about those constraints they had experienced in educational institutions. However the researcher made frequent visits to guide and check the progress of the respondents document. In cases where respondents were not easily accessible, telephone communication was found to be ideal in clarifying few complex issues. Telephoning was found to have been extremely convenient because it was cheap and it gave the researcher the opportunity to access many respondents in a short period of time. Respondents also took advantage of the easy communication mode and telephoned to seek clarification on the subject under study. The researcher also found out that the use of the telephone during data collection did not physically interfere with the respondent's privacy. However telephones were used where minimum discussions were required, for example to make follow-ups and confirmation of appointments rather than giving main

instructions of the research tool. The researcher physically collected the written stories, read them and prepared interview guides.

3.5 In-depth open interviews:

Interview involves verbal exchange between two or more people using a common language to explore a topic of mutual interest. This data collecting technique sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasizes the social position of the data. Touliatos et al (1992) describes interviews as a method of person-to-person verbal communication in which one person, the interviewer, asks another person, the respondent questions designed to elicit information or opinions. It is a conversation for a purpose.⁶⁴ On the other hand, Patton (1997) describes in-depth interviews as interviews that involve asking open-ended questions, listening to and recording answers and then following up with additional relevant questions.⁶⁵ Interviews whose questions are posed in an open ended style permit individuals to respond in their own words, thus providing an insight into their feelings, background, hidden motives and interest. These questions stimulate the respondents to think about and express what they consider most important.

In addition, interviews were also chosen because they provide a direct contact between the researcher and the selected participants to be used in the study. Besides affording first hand data, interviews afford an opportunity for clarification of items or responses and for observation of the respondents. The direct contact between the interviewer and the subject makes it possible to establish a pleasant relationship that helps to clarify items

⁶⁴ Touliatos, J (1992) Research methods in human ecology/ home economics. Iowa: State University Press. (pp. 177)

⁶⁵ Patton Q (1997) How to use qualitative methods in education. London: Sage publications, (pp. 108)

misunderstood by the respondents; to communicate in a common language and record exactly what has been stated by the respondent.

Since this research study remained qualitative data, unstructured or open-ended interview questions were designed. This meant that the questions gave the interviewees an opportunity to respond in their own terms and allowed an open situation with flexibility and freedom. The questions were flexible in that the interviewer only provided an outline of a suggested topic as well as a general framework of questions that were geared towards answering the research questions. However, Cohen (2001) notes that although the research purpose governs the question asked, their context, sequence and wording depend entirely on the hands of the interviewer⁶⁶. But this does not mean that open-ended interviews were casual, for in their own way they were carefully planned.

Respondents in the unstructured interviews were encouraged to be open and express their feelings freely since these kinds of interviews are very good tools for exploratory researches. Interviews were not exclusively subjective or objective, they are inter-subjective: This is because they enabled the participants to discuss their interpretation of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. In this sense interviews were not simply concerned with the collecting of data about life, but they were part of life themselves; their human embedded element was inevitable.

⁶⁶ Cohen et al (2001) Research methods in education 5th edition. London: Rout ledge falmer, (pp. 263)

3.5.1 Administering in depth open interviews

In this study interviews were used to validate and intensify narrative documents. This is the reason why they were conducted following the narrative enquiries and not before. After the researcher had carefully read each essay, she prepared separate interview guides to elicit dynamic stories that required different interpretation and a back up approach. This was because each respondent had his or her own unique experience. The interview guide assisted the interviewer to be consistent in the data collection process and hence reduce the possibility of bias.

Each respondent agreed with the researcher on the venue, date and time that was convenient for the interview to take place. Two interviews were conducted at the individual respondent's offices; one was conducted in the researcher's car during lunch hour and the last was conducted at the respondent's residential place. Each interview lasted for 15-25 minutes. Three interviews were conducted in *Setswana* and one in *kalanga* (researchers indigenous languages).

Conversations between the interviewer and the respondents were recorded on audiotape. The use of the audiotape recording increased the accuracy of data collection and it also permitted the interviewer to be more attentive to the interviewee. Toulitas et al (1992) confirmed that the use of tape recorder permits a complete and unbiased transcription of the response later after the interview.⁶⁷ In addition, Patton (1997) asserts that the use of the tape recorder does not eliminate the need for taking notes.⁶⁸ Since the audiotape is selective and filters out important contextual factors, (thus neglecting the visual and non-verbal communication), the interviewer noted down any significant and useful

⁶⁷ Toulitas. J (1992) *Research methods in human ecology/ home economics*. Iowa: State University Press, (pp 185)

⁶⁸ Patton Q (1997) *How to use qualitative methods in education*. London: Sage publications, (pp. 137)

observations during the interview. Taking notes served two main purposes; firstly, it accorded the researcher the opportunity to formulate new questions as the interview moved along, particularly where she found it appropriate to check out something that was said earlier. Secondly, the researcher took notes about what was said to facilitate later analysis, including locating important quotations from the tape itself.

When each interview session was complete, the researcher closed the conversation by thanking the respondent and collecting his or her telephone and fax number in case there was need for further communication.

The recorded data was then taken back to University of Capetown (UCT) where the researcher took her time to carefully transcribe it to English then type and compile it. It took the researcher up to four and half hours to transcribe and type data from each interview session.

3.6 E-mail and telephone follow-ups

As interview data was transcribed and narrative reread for analyses, there were some cases that needed further clarification from the respondent's point of view. One such case was when the Home Economics teacher reported that O level Food and nutrition syllabus was composed of too many activities that were seen as constraints for both teachers and students. These activities made it difficult and sometimes impossible for teachers and students to fairly participate in other formal school activities such as sports. The same respondent claimed that Fashion and Fabrics syllabus was not as loaded as the Food and Nutrition one. To confirm her claim, the researcher telephoned her to send by fax a copy of Fashion and Fabrics syllabus. In addition the same respondent was asked to make a list

of activities that they do in preparation for Food and Nutrition practical and send it by email.

3.7 Conclusion:

As fieldwork was carried out, the researcher used this opportunity to collect useful government publications such as different syllabi and secondary school assessment tools that were later used as reference during data analysis. In addition it became evident that information from primary sources such as telephone interviews and email questionnaires contributed significantly to the data discussion and analysis.

3.8 Limitation of the study

In spite of all arrangements to collect data and write the report, the study was carried out in a very tight and limited time budget. Secondly, the timing for collecting data was not very suitable for most of my respondents. The respondent in senior secondary school was conducting form five Food and Nutrition practical assessments in May and June. University of Botswana was engaged in a three months teaching practice assessment activity. However, they strained their working schedule to create time and space to respond to my call.

Chapter four

Data analysis (i):

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four focuses on analysing narratives, in depth interviews and education policy documents rooted mainly in matters that concern the curriculum and curriculum implementation. This include among other concerns, the curriculum, formal procedures that are followed to enter Home Economics field, Home Economics syllabi and assessment tools. However, the first part of this chapter deals with the respondents' and researcher's profiles. These profiles are better placed here because they make it easy for readers to refer as they read the analyses.

The chapter on curriculum related constraints was developed as a result of respondents' data that was rooted mainly in aspects such as subject grouping in schools, syllabi, assessment tools and entry to Home Economics in schools. To elaborate this argument, the researcher will give a brief explanation to show how each curriculum constraint relates to research questions. In as much as the education policy recommended that at junior secondary level, Home Economics be an optional subject that is paired with male dominated subject such as Design and Technology and Agriculture, chances are; Home Economics is likely to attract female students only. When these girls do well particularly in other Science at the end of junior level education, they are grouped and placed as pure Science students. Once chosen a pure science student, one is not legible to opt for Home Economics related subject. What this means is that; at senior secondary level Home Economics will always be channelled to students who have not done well. Those that have done well are always better placed in other subjects. This is a curriculum constraint

that negatively impact on the image and status of the subject. The big question is why such a gender blind policy. In my own perception, the answer to this big question is that policy makers whom I guess are males in the majority perceives Home economics as an easy subject that entirely deals with private roles only hence can be passed by every body including those that failed science.

4.1 Definitions of Home Economics:

The definition of Home Economics varies according to the level of education. In general, Home Economics is a field of study that integrates the principles of many disciplines. The major focus of the field of Home Economics is the concern for people's well being. According to Hoeflin (1987) Home Economics is integrated because each discipline is a total part of itself, but can be more effective when supported by other fields. For instance one may wonder how effective it is to design and produce clothing without understanding consumer needs and want.⁶⁹ Its scope include the following subjects; Mathematics, Science, Social science, Business and Management, Art and Design, in addition to courses in Food and Nutrition, Sanitation, Health, Textile and clothing, Child development and consumer economics.

At junior level Home Economics entails Clothing and Textile, Home Management, Childcare and Food and Nutrition. However, at senior level, each area is taught as an independent subject. This means in Botswana, students who opt to do Home Economics at senior level further choose from the three major courses namely, Food and Nutrition, Fashion and Fabrics and Home Management.

⁶⁹ Hoeflin r, et al (1987) Careers for professional: Perspective in Home economics. Oklahama: Hunt publishing company, (pp101).

4.2 Interviewees / respondents:

Interviewees in this study consisted of professional teachers who participated in data instrumentation by answering questions during interviews. These are the same people who are otherwise addressed as respondents. In the case of this study, all respondents who wrote narratives were later interviewed.

4.3 Respondents' profiles

The first respondent is a 44-year-old female Home Economics lecturer in the University of Botswana effectively from January 2003. She has 18 years of teaching experience in various secondary schools before she joined colleges of education where she worked for 5 years. She is currently holding a Master's degree in Home Economics education with specialization in Family Relation and management achieved in 2001. Other qualifications include Diploma in secondary education and Bachelor of education: these were obtained in 1981 and 1994 respectively. Through out the data discussion she will be referred to as "the university lecturer."

The second respondent is a 44-year-old female Home Economics teacher and deputy head of a junior secondary school in Botswana. She has 24 years teaching experience in secondary schools. Her highest qualification is honors in education management, followed by a Bachelor's degree in Home Economics education obtained in 1986 and last is a diploma in secondary education that she obtained for in 1980. Through out the data discussion she will be referred to as "the deputy head of a junior secondary school."

The third respondent is a 43 years old female Home Economics teacher in a senior secondary school. She has 23 years teaching experience. Her highest qualification is a Bachelor's degree in Home Economics education that she obtained in 1997. Before then

she held a diploma in secondary education completed in 1981 from the University of Swaziland. Through out the data discussion she will be referred to as “the Home economics teacher in a senior secondary school.”

The forth respondent is a 32 year old ex Home Economics male teacher. He graduated with a diploma in secondary education in 1994 and he taught for 5 years before he resigned to join Botswana Defence Force where he is employed as a military dietician. He is holding a Bachelor’s degree in catering which he obtained in 2000. Through out the data discussion he will be referred to as the “male Home Economics teacher”

4.4 The researcher / myself / I:

Through out this study, the above terms are used interchangeably to mean the scholar who initiated, carried out the study fieldwork through out and finally wrote the final report. However in the methodology chapter, particularly in the interview section, the subject is some times addressed as an interviewer. Having said that, the researcher is a 43 years old female Home Economics lecturer in a Primary college of education. She has 19 years of teaching experience in various secondary schools before she joined colleges of education where she worked for 3 years. She is currently studying for a Master’s degree in Gender and transformation. Other qualifications include Diploma in secondary education and Bachelor of education that were obtained in 1981 and 1998 respectively.

4.5 Observation of the profile:

All female respondents’ ages range between 43-44 including that of the researcher. Younger female respondents could not be attracted to this study because they were not ready to openly document their experiences. I am afraid they prefer to be silent partly

because they still hope to progress in both career and education wise. Their unwillingness to participate stems from the fear of being victimised by those in power.

Except for those who joined colleges of education, such teachers still hold first degree and they have no hope of being sponsored for master degree programs. The youngest respondent, a male teacher quickly made up his mind and joined an organisation that is highly respected. He is most likely to acquire a master's degree in one of the Home Economics related field before the age of 40. He was prepared to talk publicly about his experience because he has nothing to lose since he has already parted ways with the Botswana education system.

4.6 Home Economics syllabi visas time allocation:

In order to effectively discuss this section of the study, the researcher found it necessary to introduce the following documents: (1) The three year junior secondary school syllabus; (2) Botswana general certificate of senior secondary education; Food and Nutrition assessment syllabus and (3) Botswana general certificate of senior secondary education; Fashion and Fabrics assessment syllabus. These documents were used to complement data reported by respondents.

Time allocated to Home Economics in secondary schools is not sufficient enough to adequately cover all topics and objectives at the earliest possible time desired by curriculum developers. The content of syllabi is weighed against time allocated to teaching the subject and these pose major constraints that frustrates and torture Home Economics teachers through out their teaching profession. To support my argument, below is the breakdown of the Home Economics syllabus time allocation per term for three years. It is assumed that a syllabus contains a list of topics or concepts to be taught in three periods per week per class in a term.

⁷⁰**Form I and II**

Term 1 = 11 weeks = 33 periods

⁷⁰ Republic of Botswana (1994) Three-year junior secondary syllabus; Home economics. Gaborone Curriculum development division and Ministry of education Botswana, (pp iii)

Term 2 = 11 weeks = 33 periods

Term 3 = 11 weeks = 33 periods

Form III

Term 1 = 11 weeks = 33 periods

Term 2 = 11 weeks = 33 periods

Term 3 = 05 weeks = 15 periods⁷¹

From the above breakdown it is evident that time allocation is rigid and calculated for every single minute that students spend in school.

Because of time allocation factor, Home Economics teachers often use most of the time they are supposed to be with their families assisting students to complete projects. Consequently, both Home Economics teachers and students spend a lot of their time including holidays, weekends and after school hours working towards achieving goals and meeting syllabus requirement. Were it not for insufficient time allocated for Home Economics subjects in secondary schools, such a constraint would not exist. Interestingly Home Economics is the only practical subjects suffering this blow. Other practical subject such as Agriculture, Design and Technology and Science are allocated up to five periods per week per class at junior level while at senior level they are allocated seven periods per week per class. They were allocated enough time because they are seen as core subjects that are male dominated hence of high status and image.

But what is even surprising is that some junior schools allocated Home Economics less than three periods per week per class. This is due to the increase in the number of optional subjects in different schools. I agree with one respondent in this study who expressed that the syllabus does not give teachers and students space to breathe. One

⁷¹ Republic of Botswana (1994) Three-year junior secondary syllabus: Home economics. Gaborone: Curriculum development division and Ministry of education Botswana, (pp. iii)

deputy Head of a junior secondary school expressed her feelings about the syllabus and time allocation in her capacity as a teacher and school administrator:

“Home economics is allocated two periods per week per class but the syllabus is too broad. Because of insufficient time allocated to Home Economics, teachers have no option but to use teaching strategies such as lecturing. Teachers are now teaching for examinations instead of developing life skills. They are examination conscious. Home Economics teachers countrywide teach during afternoons, weekends and even during school holiday, this is unfair to both students and teachers. But this appears to be the only option to engage in, in order to finish the examination syllabus. In addition to the broad syllabus and insufficient time allocation, form one students do not bring any basic Home Economics exposure from primary schools.”

Teachers in this study further expressed dissatisfaction with the syllabus assessment tools. From teacher’s point of view and my experience, Home Economics practical assessments take a lot of time allocated for content delivery.

On the other side, senior secondary school teachers who participated in the study brought to my attention, that the current Food and Nutrition syllabus was even more strenuous than the previous syllabus. Indeed the Home Economics senior teacher reported in the interview that:

“By Home Economics syllabi we are referring to Food and Nutrition and Fashion and Fabrics separately. The Home Management syllabus will be implemented next year. The new Food and Nutrition syllabus requires students to run two practical exams, research project and a written examination in two years. This is in fact very strenuous for both students and teachers. This exercise further strain the department financially because even after implementing the new syllabus, the expenditure was not weighed against the departmental financial budget. However I am happy that Fashion and Fabrics is fair although a research project is also a requirement.”

In addition to the above interview response she also narrated in her story that; “Food and Nutrition used to have one practical examination and one theory examination, but with the latest Food and Nutrition syllabus it is continuous assessment from form four. At form four we run practical assessment. This is done even before we have covered enough skills to practically examine our students. The second practical is run at form five. We mark the two practical assessments. Personally, I sometimes question the reliability of this assessment. Not because teachers are not capable of marking or they do not want to mark, but

because this is a lot of work. We do the rest of the marking and the moderator only marks 30% of the group. Besides marking there is a lot more work”

To get a clear picture of how the Food and Nutrition practical is carried out. I made a follow up to the same respondent through a telephone conversation and asked her to outline how a practical assessment tool is administered at senior schools. She responded by emailing the following notes:

This is what we do for every practical that we conduct:

- We prepare students for the planning session
- We supervise them when they plan (This session is supervised for 1.5hrs)
- After planning we collect student paper work and check individual dish choice against his / her shopping list.
- Compile the shopping list for the whole group
- Place an order
- Buy ingredients, deliver and store them.
- Share ingredients according to individual order list.

Finally we facilitate the smooth running of the actual practical examination that is two hours per session. Sometimes we run up to three sessions a day. After every practical session we give students 30 minutes to evaluate their products and then we commence marking individual finished products. But when we are running these practical examinations, other Food and Nutrition classes that are not taking part are denied the opportunity to utilize the laboratory. They also miss their lessons because these practical demand most of the time and finally we do not make it for other lessons. Sometimes practical assessment may go on for a week or two, this means other students too are disadvantaged for a whole week or two.”

From the manner in which the senior teachers described the administration of the assessment tools, it is clear that they are not different from chef cooks working in restaurants except that teachers hold professional qualifications to educate. The work that the Home economics teacher is describing is not motivating for a senior secondary school teacher. This is domestication.

In addition to the torrential assessment in senior secondary school, students are expected to carry out a mini project. No matter how small these individual projects may be, they

still need to be closely supervised by the same teachers carrying a heavy workload. Suppose one of the Home Economics teachers like many of them do, is teaching three 'form five' classes, it is unrealistic for her to supervise 60 individual students research projects in three months and do so competently to produce excellent results. This is totally unacceptable and illogical. Time allocated for the students' project is inadequate. In fact there is no special time allocated for research and so the students are expected to make use of the time allocated for the Home Economics lesson. Although I appreciate that this activity develops students' research skills the same activity does not take into account that Home Economics students are already overstretched.

4.7 Entry to junior, senior school and primary colleges of education:

According to education policy point regulations, student's entry to optional subjects such as Home Economics, Art, Music, Religious Education and Commerce is determined by individual choice at secondary education level. As an experienced teacher I have come to understand that there are some external forces that influence individual student's subject choice particularly in Home Economics. Such external forces include gender and sexuality.

There are two entries in which students are supposed to be given the opportunity to make these choices. The first selection takes place just after a student's registration in form one (beginning of junior secondary school). The second opportunity when students are required to select subjects of their choice is during form four registration. But I doubt if this is a second opportunity given that the optional subject selected is subject to confirmation that the same optional subject had been selected at junior secondary level. Having said that, students' entry to junior and senior secondary schools is very crucial to

students' choice of subjects and eventually their career choice. Teachers as educators are supposed to assist students make a wise and informed decision during their subject selection. This is a role that many educators fail to perform diligently and effectively partly because of subject grouping and also because of their gender perception about some subjects including Home Economics. Consequently failure of teachers to correctly implement the subject grouping exercise impact adversely on Home Economics teachers who always remain with a lion's share of weak students. Teaching weak students means that one has to work extra hard to make them pass. For the sake of clarity, we will discuss entry to junior and senior secondary schools separately.

4.7.1 Entry to junior secondary schools:

The government paper no. 2 of 1994 recommends that all junior secondary students take a minimum of ten and maximum of eleven subjects. Each student takes eight core subjects namely, English, Setswana, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Agriculture, Design and Technology, Social Studies and Moral Education. Each student should take a basic computer course. In addition, each student should select a minimum of two and a maximum of three optional subjects. At least one of the selected subjects should be from the following groups:

- (1) Practical subjects: Home Economics, Commerce, Principle of Accounts and Office Skills.
- (2) General Studies: Religious Education, Third Language, Art, Music and Physical Education.⁷²

From the brief summary of Botswana basic education curriculum, I tried to place Home Economics in the curriculum map and partly tracked down its position in the curriculum and through out the data discussion.

All respondents and the researcher in this study have taught in junior secondary school before, however they expressed great disappointments in the students that enrolled for

⁷² Republic of Botswana, (Government paper no. 2 of 1994) The Revised National Policy of Education. Gaborone: Ministry of education, (pp. 63-64)

Home Economics at form one. Their concern is that they get students who have no background or any slightest exposure to Home Economics. I was not surprised at their bitter complaints. Their concerns are consistent with findings from studies carried out by Silitshena (1998), Ige (2000), Mokone (2000) and Lefhang (2000). Findings from these studies have shown that because Home Economics is not examined in primary schools, teachers do not give the subject much attention. In fact Mokone (2000) reported that in primary schools Home Economics was mostly taught by students in teaching practice. There were several other reasons pertaining to lack of attention given to Home Economics at primary schools. To mention just a few: lack of laboratories, incompetent teachers and negative attitudes of primary school teachers towards the subject. Thus primary school teachers not only despise Home Economics but they hardly expose students to it. It pains to report that at this point in time, there are no initiatives made to enforce the teaching and learning of Home Economics in primary schools. A subject introduced in secondary schools in 1974 is still not catered for at primary level. This has not been happening with other subjects, at least with Agriculture and Design and Technology that were once paired with Home Economics. They are now core subjects enforced to be taught to any student who choose them regardless of his or her gender

Having expressed their concern on the subject's poor attention at primary schools, the respondents in this study felt that students were not properly advised about subject choices. The deputy head of a junior school reported that *"we gather students in the hall and teachers explain different areas of Home Economics and its importance to learners. In three hours the exercise is done, students have done their choice and that is it."*

The senior Home Economics teacher who also taught at a junior secondary school remarked in an interview that she could hardly remember such an exercise. She recalled that teachers placed all girls in a long queue randomly grouped in different classes that were later assigned different subject clusters and the same was done to boys. This exercise ensured that 4 or 6 complete classes were formed for each stream of junior level. The teachers then decided which class was to take Home Economics and the other options. It was assumed correct and just to stack girls in the Home Economics classes and boys in the so-called 'masculine' classes. The male Home Economics teacher reported in an interview that he was oriented before he chose to study Home Economics at junior secondary school but he could not remember how long the orientation took and what the orientation entailed.

Evidently teachers give students the opportunity to choose their optional subjects at junior education level, however, the choice is fragile since the students are not given enough chance to scrutinize and analyse the optional subjects at hand. This may explain why there is an obvious gender imbalance in Home Economics.

Besides this limitation, the teachers reported that few male students enrolled in their Home Economics classes. They associated the male under representation in their Home Economics classes with a number of issues such as insufficient dissemination of information about the subject, the poor image of the subject and attitudes of other students, teachers, parents and administrative personnel. To confirm the negative peer attitudes towards Home Economics, the male Home Economics teacher in this study reported that his classmates mocked him after he selected Home Economics at junior secondary school. This is what he had to say:

“I liked Home Economics from the first day I was told about it at junior secondary school. But when I took a step to opt for this subject, I became a laughing stock among other boys in the school. My classmates mocked me and they thought I chose the subject because I wanted additional good food; some male teachers called me *‘Phara meseseng.’*”

(Phara meseseng is a sarcastic way of addressing a male being who is believed to be a weak character that spends most of his time amongst females) *Despite all odds, I did well in Home Economics and my subject teachers were very supportive.*”

To further emphasize the negative attitude of the school community towards Home economics the deputy head of a junior school wrote;

“Most teachers, parents and students look down upon Home Economics Education because it is a profession associated with women’s domestication. They view Home Economics as a subsidiary subject for junior certificate. This kind of attitudes negatively affect Home Economics students, it lowers their self-esteem. Male students who select Home Economics, receive nasty and discouraging comments from either teachers or other students.”

The two respondents clearly explain the informal culture of the school community, and how these cultures impact on teachers and students and how the same attitudes create gender imbalance in subject selection at junior secondary schools. This revelation concurs with Letsogile’s (1989) findings that some male students like Home Economics but they do not register for the subject because of fear of being laughed at and mocked by their friends⁷³.

4.7.2 Discourses and biases in selection for Home Economics at senior schools:

All four teachers who participated in the study had taught in senior schools before, however, the deputy of the junior school felt she had lost touch with the Home Economics culture at senior secondary schools. In their written narratives, the other three respondents were concerned mainly with the image or status of Home Economics and how this affected students’ subject selection. Their arguments suggested that students

⁷³ Letsogile T, (1989). An assessment of male student’s attitudes towards Home economics in selected secondary schools in Botswana. Unpublished Masters of Science: Iowa state university, (pp. 70)

were neither given an equal opportunity to choose optional subjects nor was the selection procedure transparent enough to convince them that the students do exercise their educational rights. If students are not selecting subjects of their choices then who does it? In many instances respondents often said; *“we are given or we were given”* The argument surrounding the subject besides this remarkable phrase is what individual respondents in the study reported;

When asked how they selected Home Economics students for senior schools? The male Home economics teacher responded

“Bright students were not encouraged to select Home Economics subjects at all. We were subjected to average and below average performance students. Science teachers who were supposed to select the cream of the school overruled student’s choices. I can still recall one incident that happened in one senior secondary school in 1998. Two male and two female students refused to select the pure sciences and they opted for Food and Nutrition. Both Science teachers and administrative officers were very angry with the Home Economics department for instigating these four students.”

The university lecturer responded

“During my secondary school teaching, probably because of the low status attached to my subject. I did not choose students who enrolled in Home Economics, the administrative personnel and head of practical subjects made the selection and gave me those that were found suitable for doing Home Economics. I was not informed officially but I observed that I was always given the low achievers... I was neither given the opportunity to select my own students or students given the opportunity to select subject of their choices. I recall the experience from my senior secondary school. I was new in the school; in that fateful Friday morning, a group of students gathered outside the Home Economics laboratory and they started making noise. When I asked who they were and what I could do to assist them, one girl boldly answered; “we have been rejected by teachers from the Agriculture and Design and Technology department. So this is the only place we can go.” This meant Home Economics was a dumping subject for the rejects.”

Although the first respondent was not specific, he brought to my attention that science teachers overruled student’s choice and made choices that suited them as teachers of a high status subject. The question is why should science teachers, the very same people

given the opportunity to organize timetables suitable for their lessons, choose the cream of the school for their subject? Although administrators are charged with facilitating good relations among teachers, and between teachers and students as well as facilitating a friendly environment for learning and teaching, their attitudes seem to be the source of conflicts among subject teachers. In this case science teachers have the powers from the school administration to overrule the students' subject choice, and hence undermine Home Economics department and subject it to enrolling low achieving students. In an interview with the senior Home Economics teacher I asked if she could recall any incidence where she felt Home Economic teachers were not given the opportunity to see through the student selection procedure; She sadly related

“As I talk to you now, there is a case. One student transferred from school X last week; she was sent to register for Food and Nutrition. There was no official note from the administration to explain the position of the child. But when I interviewed the student, I learnt she had not been doing any of the Home Economics subjects for a full term (February –April) since beginning of form four. I sent the student back to office. But before I knew it, the same student was pushed in one of the Fashion and Fabric class. The administration personnel are encouraging other subject teachers to despise our Home Economics”.

Evidently the behaviour of school administrators appears to be an influential factor in the marginalisation of Home economics in some education institutions. Further more the teacher's response may further be interpreted to mean that students do not choose optional subjects but they are told which subjects to take by the school administration. This is evident in the case where a student first reported to a Food and Nutrition class but was denied access, and was later thrown into the Fashion and Fabrics class. Why was this student not accommodated to an optional subject that she was pursuing in her previous school? I can only speculate that the other optional subject classes were full. In deed if administrative personnel's attitudes were neutral to all subject teachers, it could have

been procedural to consult the senior Home Economics teacher to resolve this particular problem. I am not surprised that this is happening granted that so far countrywide, there are only two Home Economics teachers who hold senior administrative position in senior secondary schools. I suppose that if the subject was well represented, the situation would obviously be different because such administrators would fight to lift the image of the subject and they would understand the impact from a Home economics teacher's point of view.

Teachers in the study indicated that they are subjected to situations where they are forced to enrol more students than the policy requires and this poses a problem when sharing departmental facilities. To mention a few, laboratory space is designed to accommodate a maximum of twenty students per class. In many senior schools that offer Food and Nutrition, the space provided does not accommodate more than ten stoves, (ten stoves allow two students to work together during practical lessons) yet when one had more than twenty students in a class, more than two students are expected to share a single stove during a practical lesson. This not only causes congestion during practical lessons, but it also subjects students to unsafe working conditions. Nevertheless, school administrators do not see it from that point of view; they see Home Economics as just a cooking and sewing course. As far as school administrators are concerned, the conditions under which students perform home economics tasks do not matter. One wonders whether male dominated optional subjects go through this kind of discrimination.

The respondents also mentioned gender imbalance in senior secondary schools particularly during the interview session. I suppose that even though there are few male students in the Home economics classes, it appears as though Home Economics teachers

too are not making any effort to win more male students to gender balance their classes. In deed the Home Economics senior teacher in the study pointed out that she was comfortable with at most four male students in the Home Economics class. When asked why? She indicated she was afraid that if more than four male students were placed in the same class, they might be too playful or even resist certain roles. But the same teacher reported, "*from my experience male students who registered for Home Economics were just as serious as female students.*" From her verbal report and her facial expressions this particular respondent appeared uncomfortable with equal gender representation in Home Economics classes. She did not seem to realize that gender balance in Home economics classes might bring a positive perception towards the Home Economics department.

The second female respondent, the university lecturer, reported that although she may have registered a few male students in her Home Economics classes in the secondary schools where she taught, the few who enrolled did extremely well. She also reported that in many instances their performance was better than that of girls. It makes sense that these male students who enrol in Home Economics should do so well, given that unlike girls, they exercise their academic freedom, the right to choose subjects that they want against all odds. I noted from teachers' responses that very few female students choose Home Economics willingly.

The Home Economics senior teacher expressed bitterness about what she calls the lack of appreciation by school leaders, having never been commended by the school head teacher for the hard work that they do. She used examination results to measure their efficacy and power in teaching the subject. She reported, "*When final results are released and our students have done well, no one seems to realize they did well because we worked hard*

extra. Other subject teachers turn around and pass comments such as 'no one can fail cooking and eating, sewing and dressing...'

To respond to her concern I will refer to findings from a study of attitudes of teachers and students by Mlambo (1995) that cautioned that the mere fact that the subject has consistent good results does not necessarily suggest that both teachers and students are working hard. She found out that high percentage of pass rate is sometimes interpreted as a sign of a subject that offers little challenge or simply an easy subject associated with less intellectually able students in secondary schools.

4.7.3 Entry to primary colleges of education:

Of the four respondents, only the university lecturer had taught in a primary college of education. She reported that entry to primary colleges was fair. She further explained that the program in primary colleges of education requires a credit for a student to study any Home Economics subject. She was also pleased that in these institutions, student entry procedures were very transparent and Home Economics lecturers were involved in the selection of their students.

4.8 Conclusion:

The discussion suggests that Home Economics teachers and students in secondary schools are faced with numerous constraints that include among other things, the syllabus content that is crowded with exhausting domestic activities. Assessment tools were described as tedious and endless. As a result, this does not only strain teachers and students, but it also limits them from taking part in other formal activities in schools hence negatively impact on teachers progress to senior positions. Entry to Home Economics fields is characterized by gender bias. Selection for students for Home

Economics at junior schools does not take into account that the students are not exposed to How Home Economics at primary schools hence girls are mostly channeled to take Home Economics as their option subject. Dynamic biases that include gender bias surround selection of students for entry to senior secondary schools. I have since found out that some school administrators take a lead in pulling and placing Home Economics department down.

Chapter five

Data analyses (ii)

5.0 Introduction:

Chapter five continues the data discussion, however, the chapter deals with career constraints facing Home Economics teachers. The following areas were discussed extensively namely, Home Economics teacher involvement in sporting activities, the school time table, catering committees, opportunities for further education, Home Economics teacher promotion and finally teachers response to institutional marginalisation. As discussions are carried through, it became evident that some issues emanating from the curriculum cannot be avoided hence they form part of the dynamic institutional marginalisation.

It also became evident that formal benefits and procedures that appear neutral yet has different impact on Home Economics and other subject teachers exist in education institutions in Botswana. These include norms about Home Economics teachers being involved in catering and school cleaning committees. Norms about system reward and recognition that determine behaviour and processes that determine which form of work and committee are valued. For instance teachers taking part in sports activities are recognised and rewarded because they are seen as valuable in educational institutions. On the other hand Home Economics teachers who are involved in catering and in general cleaning are not recognised and rewarded because these activities are not valued.

5.1 Dynamics of institutionalised marginalisation;

Dynamics of institutionalised marginalisation, as a discussion subject will explore education institutional cultures in Botswana. This entails how formal procedures and

various school settings impact on the career work of Home Economics teachers. Some formal procedures and benefits appear neutral yet in practice they are punitive to Home Economics departmental personnel.

5.2.1 Involvement in Sports activities;

The four Home Economics teachers who narrated their educational history, each reported several marginalisations that they face both in secondary schools and colleges of education. Amongst these marginalisations is the concern of Home Economics teachers' involvement in extra curricular activities. Extra curriculum activities play an important role in the placing of teachers to positions of power. Data from the four teachers' involvement in sports is discussed below.

The university lecturer reported that she was active in sports from the beginning of her secondary school teaching, but she later discovered that her gender role and teaching roles jeopardized her chances to be appointed to the position of senior officer in sports. She felt that the highest post one could get as an active sports woman was that of a team coach. The university lecturer further expressed that as a female teacher she was restricted to coaching female students only. In regard to reinforced gendered divisions, it was the view of Home Economics teachers under study that female teachers who are actively involved in sports are better placed as coaches while men are actors who are capable of being placed as sports masters. The deputy head teacher of a junior school reported that she was a sports organizer for three years; she was adamant that she beat male teachers to the post. On her part, women not necessarily Home Economics teachers are given equal opportunity to win the post of sports mistress. She blamed other women for lagging behind due to the demand of private matters such as children, boyfriends, or

husbands. Interestingly, when the same person was asked if she was presently active in sports, she replied “no.” She further described her marital status then as that of a single woman with no children. This may imply that since she is now married with two children, she can no longer cope with sporting activities. In this case sports may be seen as posing role conflicts for female teachers particularly those who are married. In other words, single and childless female teachers, will easily cope with training students for various sports activities unless they are Home Economics teachers. If this is the case then Home Economics in secondary schools has a permanent bottleneck for its teachers.

The other two teachers, one female and the other an ex home economics teacher now employed by the Botswana Defence Force, reported that they could not participate in sports because Home Economics demanded most of their time. One of the Home Economics teachers wrote *“Sports activities are carried out during weekends, after afternoon lessons, this is the time that most Home Economics teachers use for supervising practical projects”* This statement has two implications regarding Home economics teachers. First, if Home Economics teachers choose to be actively involved in sports, their subject becomes a barrier and alternatively if they choose to effectively teach their students, sports become a barrier. This is so because, although procedures such as time at work is viewed as a symbol of commitment, Home Economics teachers may not be viewed as committed even though they spend weekends, holidays and late afternoons at work.

Secondly, this constraint does not affect teachers alone, it equally affects students who have interests in sports; sometimes they are made to take a decision that they are not happy with. This includes conducting afternoon and weekends lessons when they are also

required to take part in sports. But what remains to be brought to light here is that as long as a teacher does not actively participate in any extra curriculum activity, his or her contest for senior positions is crippled. Extra curricula activities play a very important role in placing teachers on positions of power.

The university lecturer raised the concern about the accommodation arrangement of teachers who accompany students for sports.

Although some Home Economics teachers may want to actively participate in sports there are a number of barriers that they have to overcome before they can fully engage in sports. The first point is that, just like other women they may face accommodation problems in some of the schools that they are supposed to visit. The government is not ready to pay for hotel expenses for teachers who have to spend the night away from home during sports events. Male teachers do not seem to mind, to an extent that they do not mind sleeping in classrooms.

Because the government or schools do not arrange for teachers accommodation, female teachers including female Home Economics teachers, feel vulnerable in regard to sexual harassment and HIV/ AIDS contraction from rape.

5.2.2 School timetables

Except in the case of the deputy head teacher of the junior school, all teachers reported that they were never placed on the timetable, curriculum, or examination committees. The Home Economics senior teacher reported she was on the curriculum and examination committee because of her post as senior teacher in Home Economics. She was placed on this committee because of her position, in other words if she was not a senior teacher she not have been in the timetable team. The deputy head teacher of a junior school reported that in her school, one Home Economics teacher volunteered to join the timetable committee. However during the interview she reported that the same teacher reportedly wished to resign from the committee. Although we did not discuss the reasons for her

quitting, the discussion generally indicated that it might be due to time constraints related to Home Economics related activities.

The male Home Economics teacher reported that

“In all the schools that I have been to, the timetable was a special baby for Mathematics and Science departments. They were given this freedom to make sure that they prepare a timetable that suits their department. It was believed that Science and Mathematics needed more concentration than all other subjects, as a result, less respected subjects such as Home Economics were always scheduled either towards lunch or after lunch. I personally had afternoon lessons every other day except Friday that was scheduled for general cleaning. They also worked examination time tables such that Home Economics papers were always written last because they believed it was easy to mark, and they also argued that Home Economics was a half department.”

This kind of attitude towards Home Economics teachers prevailed during my time as a Home Economics teacher in secondary schools and I do not think it was a coincidence that this teacher reported the same pattern of behaviour. My experience was:

In all the four senior secondary schools that I taught in, the timetable was prepared by science and mathematics teachers; but what I do not know is whether they volunteered or they were placed by the school administration. Having said this, I did not notice this kind of marginalisation in the junior schools though. It could be true that in junior secondary schools teachers volunteered for the post of timetabling. On the other side of the coin the deputy head teacher may have been defending her school and her position when she stated that teachers in her school are given the opportunity to volunteer to prepare the timetable.”

One of the three ladies reported that she was once chosen to be staff secretary. She was very excited about this post since she felt she had been chosen on the basis that women are good at taking notes.

5.2.3 Catering committee:

From the respondent's reports, Home Economics teachers are always placed on the catering committee where they can easily extend their private roles to public spheres. The following are some quotations from the respondents;

The male Home Economics teacher wrote: “Home Economics teachers were placed wherever cooking was likely to be necessary. For instance during my stay in FX

secondary school, I was elected chair person prize giving, but this was a strategic position to cater for feeding of gatherings that attended prize giving, parents days and completer balls...”

The deputy head of a junior school responded from an interview question by explaining that: “In a lot of cases people think Home Economics teachers will do it, but in this school it is different. The catering committee is composed of all female teachers. But I have noticed that Home Economics teachers are not comfortable with the arrangement because their laboratory remains the central place for these activities hence Home Economics teachers are accountable. To reduce the strain, we have agreed to only run big functions such as prize giving day and completers party in the Home Economics laboratory. Activities such as cooking for sports teachers, education officials and others are done by the support staff in the school kitchen...”

When asked which committee she used to choose to participate in while she was in primary colleges of education, the university lecturer boldly replied: “There was no reason for me to choose a committee because at the end of it all, one of the senior officers would impose that I join the catering committee. Once when I was a lecturer at college, I was placed on the graduation committee. To my shock my participation in this committee was solely geared towards food catering for graduation days. Actually within the graduation committees were sub committees for luncheons, graduation programs, transport, sitting and photographs. But all Home Economics lecturers were all pushed to food catering. This scenario existed until I left.”

The Home Economics teacher wrote; “In principle we are supposed to choose but even when we do not opt for catering committee we always find ourselves tied to it. This happens because of the misconception of the school community; they regard home Economics teachers as cooks.”

From the above response, there is a tendency that Home Economics teachers are perceived as school domestic servants. They are sometimes not given the respect that the other teachers get. In cases where they are placed in catering committees it is possible they may be denied the opportunity to access academic committees such as timetable or examination committees.

However, in contrast, the deputy of a junior school claims that her school does not only place Home Economics teachers on the catering committee but rather all female teachers make up the catering committee. What follows is that since all Home Economics teachers are female, they are therefore destined to be in the catering committee. She further acknowledged that Home Economics teachers are not comfortable with the laboratory

being used for big functions in the school. What this means is that Home Economics teachers are strained by this exercise that they always find themselves tied to. In essence she is confirming that school administrators impose catering services in the school on Home Economics teachers. To be in the catering committee, is inevitable for Home economics teachers. In the oral response the university lecturer emphasised “*there is no reason for me to choose....*”

Finally, from the respondents’ reports, committees in both secondary schools and primary colleges of education are allocated on the basis of the subject that one is teaching. It would suffice to say although part of the education policy may sound gender friendly across all subjects, what actually takes place in some educational institutions is the opposite.

5.2.3 Opportunities for further education:

Opportunities for further education for Home Economics teachers in secondary schools were reportedly bleak. All respondents expressed disappointments in the government failure to provide equal opportunities for Home Economics teachers to further their education. Two female home Economics teachers with 23 years and 24 years teaching experience respectively felt they could have been rewarded for their dedication and loyalty to their work in secondary education with at least sponsorship to undertake a Master’s degree. The male respondent who taught for only five years before he left reported;

“There were many pressing issues that forced me to make up my mind and leave Home economics education. In Home Economics education there was no future prospects in educational advancement. For example, there were many Home Economics teachers who acquired a diploma in secondary education in the early 80s and they were still waiting for the Ministry of Education to either promote

them or send them for further studies. In her written narrative, the university lecturer reported this in regard to further education;

“It is indeed a challenging job but can also be terribly frustrating especially when you want to further your education. I personally went through this frustration; where I taught in senior secondary schools with a Diploma qualification for fourteen years. I applied for scholarship, as I had got a school in Oklahoma State University. The Ministry of Education denied me the chance because they felt I did not follow the correct channel. This was a total blow in my life; my spirit of teaching Home Economics was dying a slow death.”

From the respondents' view regarding their career as Home Economics teachers in relation to further education, it seems that the major and the most unbearable constraint for most teachers is lack of opportunities to further their education. From their history narratives and interviews two of the respondents left the teaching service management (TSM) mainly because opportunities for further education were too narrow. It is also evident that the other two Home Economics teachers in the study had made several attempts to leave Home Economics career without success.

5.3 Teacher's promotions

The question of equal opportunities to senior positions for Home Economics teachers was met with mixed feelings. Many felt that Home Economics teachers do not progress professionally because of the subject's low status.

One respondent who holds the post of deputy head teacher argued that Home Economics teachers competed equally with other subject teachers for senior positions, but this is the same respondent who when asked whether she still wanted to pursue teaching Home Economics responded: “*Certainly not, Home Economics has failed to reward me for my loyalty and dedication to the subject. I feel I could have advanced professionally with Home Economics.*” As long as the Secondary Department does not give Home Economics teachers the opportunity to further their education, the department is denying

them the chance to compete effectively for vertical positions in their careers. Indeed senior positions not only require teaching experience, but also consider academic qualifications seriously.

The respondent mentioned above also reported in her narrative that she waived teaching for a year to sponsor herself for a post graduate honours in education management and acknowledged that the qualification attained equipped her with skills and has placed her where she is today. She reported that this qualification enabled her to compete effectively and fairly with other teachers for positions of power. Strangely she has been a junior secondary school deputy head teacher for ten years now and she cannot move up the career ladder. In spite of this, she sees herself to be still competing fairly well with other teachers.

The other three respondents also drew my attention to the issue of promotion where by Home Economics teachers cannot compete effectively for the positions of head of department. Home Economics as a subject does not qualify to have an independent head of departments in the school. It is often grouped with other practical subjects such as Art, Music, Physical Education, Design and Technology as well as Agriculture under one cluster that is headed by one head of department. In many cases head of departments for this cluster of subjects are males teaching either Design and Technology or Agriculture. In primary colleges of education the positions of Home Economics lecturers were filled 4-5 years back. For this reason, Home Economics lecturers do not stand on level ground for winning head of department positions for practical subjects. To date in all four primary colleges of education in Botswana, none has a Home Economics teacher heading the department.

The Home Economics senior teacher reported that although she was never promoted, with the encouragement of an administrator she applied for a vacant senior post that had been advertised. She could not get promoted because during the interview she discovered she had been nominated for further education in Britain. As a result she lost the opportunity for promotion. Seven years after completing her course in 1997, nothing has come by and any encouragement from the senior officers has not been forthcoming. To sum up her views, this is what she feels about equal opportunities regarding senior positions.

“Home Economics teachers do compete with others for positions above head of department ship, but it is difficult to say we compete squarely or fairly because besides being teachers, women are perceived to be less capable of managing organisations. We’ve got to double our efforts to compete with our male counterparts...”

“There are two discriminating variables here; first all Home Economics teachers are females and second, Home Economics as a subject involves domestication. Yes, these variables qualify Home Economics to be undermined, both as women and as teachers who teach a low status subject.”

From the data obtained one may strongly concur that the Home Economics department is marginalized because of its association with femininity, its historical background as well as its extended domestication roles. Placing Home Economics teachers on catering committees pose possibilities of extreme manifestation of domestication, female subordination and imposition of patriarchal ideology. Through this discussion one may conclude that Home Economics teachers feel excluded from male dominated school committees. In addition school environment does not take cognisance of Home economics roles in a manner that facilitates Home Economics teachers to perform effectively and fully develop personal satisfaction in their careers.

5.4 Strategies for pursuing career advancement:

Despite the constraints on Home Economics teaching field, the study revealed that teachers make use of the skills that they have acquired from Home Economics education to equip them to be independent. Two of the respondents have already left Teaching Service Management (TSM). Leaving a profession might be viewed as a sign of dissatisfaction that results from some or all of these constraints; namely, lack of opportunities for further education, promotion coupled with other institutional discrimination.

The only male Home Economics teacher in the teaching profession ever who held a Diploma left teaching after five years. He joined the Botswana Defence Force where he is employed as chief military dietician and supplies officer. The same year he joined the force, he was sent to France to study military diet service and catering course and he is now in Britain studying for a Master's Degree in Dietetics

The second respondent, currently a lecturer at the university of Botswana, requested for a departmental transfer from secondary schools to colleges where she taught for two years from where she was sponsored for a Master's Degree by the government of Botswana. Her second degree earned her a chance to fit in the University of Botswana as a lecturer. She is currently making arrangements to undertake a PhD study towards the end of 2004. Although the other two teachers who participated in this study are still teaching in secondary schools, one of them (Home Economics senior teacher) felt she would not want to go outside Gaborone because she has invested in a number of income generating projects. To explain her position, she said *"Besides all these constraints, at the end of the day Home Economics has empowered me, it was through this struggle for equal*

education and employment opportunities that I became assertive and started using Home Economics skills to manage my personal resources. I have developed leadership skills and innovative skills that I use outside my formal employment.”

The last respondent, a deputy head in a junior secondary school, waived teaching for a year to join her husband in South Africa. In the same year she enrolled for a postgraduate program; Bachelor of Education Honours in Education Management. She believes that this degree earned her credits to win the position of deputy head teacher that she is currently holding.

Finally, myself, as another victim of gender inequality in the education system in Botswana, found myself in a position where I had to rethink my career in Home Economics. I was offered the opportunity to undertake a Master's Degree in one of the Home Economics related areas, I took a chance and registered for a course in Gender and Transformation. But the struggle is still continuing.

5.5 Conclusion:

The data analysis has uncovered detailed information about how Home Economics teachers experienced dynamic marginalisation in some educational institutions in Botswana. The discussion further demonstrates how Home Economics teachers have developed dynamic strategies to assist them pursue their career advancement. However, detailed summary conclusions drawn from the data analysis in chapters four and five will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter six

Summary and conclusions

6.0 Introduction:

This final chapter will reconstruct in summary form what the data analysis has revealed regarding the career experiences of Botswana Home Economics teachers. As summary and conclusions are constructed, all efforts will be made to answer the research questions formulated in this study. This refers to the three questions addressing: (1) the status of Home Economics in Botswana, (2) Home Economics teachers constraints of various kinds and (3) how Home Economics professionals respond to dynamic institutional marginalisation together with curriculum constraints. This chapter will further draw recommendations based on the findings of this study and literature review as well as the researcher's background story.

6.1 The status of Home Economics in Botswana educational institutions:

The study findings revealed that Home Economics has long been regarded as a 'feminine' subject and is looked down upon and treated as a low status or second-class subject. These devaluations and attitudes are reflected in various formal procedures and activities that take place in Botswana educational institutions and in decisions taken by curriculum developers and educational policy makers.

The Botswana educational policy decision that neglects Home Economics teaching at primary education level does not only pull the subject down and lower its image but also strains Home Economics teachers at junior school. The fact that the teaching of Home Economics at primary education level is not compulsory and is not examined by the PSLE (Primary School Leaving Examination) does not give Home Economics the

opportunity to be given the recognition it deserves. Consequently, when students leave primary schools to junior secondary schools, they either bring along little or no Home Economics skills to junior secondary schools. Eventually, this adversely impacts on the students' lack of informed choices when they enter junior secondary schools. At this level students are required to choose optional subjects that they will study through out their three years of junior secondary level and eventually this choice also confined them to the same subject choice at senior secondary level provided they have not done very well in Science

The study also revealed that negative attitudes from other subject's teachers and the school administration towards Home Economics discourage male students from enrolling for the subject hence the field is feminised. In many instances intellectually weak girls are channelled to study Home Economics because it is perceived to be easy while academically powerful students are reserved for the high status subjects such as Design and Technology, Agriculture and Science. Lack of support from school administrative personnel came out as a serious gender constraint to the Home Economics department as a whole. Due to lack of support from school administrative personnel coupled with poor image and the low subject status, Home Economics lessons are mostly placed either towards lunch or after lunch. Some school administrative personnel together with timetable committees feel morning sessions are more suitable for what they term as the 'difficult subjects' such as Science, Mathematics and Design and Technology. This negative practice is further repeated in the internal examination time tables where Home Economics examination papers are always placed last with petty excuses such as; Home Economics subject is easy, students are few, hence there is less marking work involved.

6.2 Home Economics curriculum and syllabus related constraints:

Decisions taken by curriculum developers to group subjects as either core or optional subjects, places a stigma on most of the non-core subjects of which Home Economics is one. As a result Home Economics suffers double marginalisation; from being a subject taken almost exclusively by females and being an optional subject.

It also became evident that the decision by the curriculum developers to lump optional subjects such as Agriculture, Home Economics, Art, and Music in secondary schools and primary colleges of education limits the chances for Home Economics teachers to access the position of head of department. This is so because when these subjects are grouped together in one department, chances are that one out of four that Home Economics teachers will be promoted to head the department in the secondary schools or primary colleges of education.

In addition the study found out that the Home Economics junior secondary school syllabus was too broad especially when weighed against the time allocated to the subject through out the three years. Home Economics is not allocated sufficient time because it is not valued as an academic subject rather it is viewed as an easy subject that provides domestic services to educational institutions.

The problem is further aggravated by the demand for the syllabus assessment tools to be carried out through several continuous assessment projects. In an attempt to address the above problems, Home Economics teachers and students find themselves compelled to work overtime, this includes making use of afternoons, weekends and school holidays to cover the syllabus in time. Not only does this arrangement bar them from actively taking part in other extra curriculum activities such as sports which are an important route to

achieving promotions, but also interferes with their private and social life and adversely denies them the opportunity to effectively compete for promotions.

The study further revealed that at senior secondary schools, Food and Nutrition assessment posed a serious strain to both teachers and students. It was found out that there are too many assessment tools that are supposed to be supervised and marked by Home Economics teachers. However Fashion and Fabrics assessment tools were found to be reasonable.

6.3 Home Economics teachers career development:

Several dynamics operate to hinder career progress for Home Economics teachers in Botswana. Participation in sports activities, Home Economics teachers' placement in catering committees, subject time allocation and lumping of several optional subjects under one head of department and limited opportunities for further education are some examples of dynamic institutional cultures that marginalize women teachers.

Their opportunities to take part in extra curricular activities are denied by individual teachers' urge and obligation to facilitate completion of Home Economics continuous assessment projects. Although Home Economics teachers are aware that their inability to take part in extra curricular activities such as sports might reduce their chances to be recommended for higher education posts, they do not have a way out, as long as the demand of the Home Economics syllabi remains the same.

Experiences from these educators imply that it is unquestionably assumed that Home Economics teachers' domestic roles carry on into their professional lives with the same lack of valuation. As a result they are still perceived as cooks in some secondary schools and primary colleges of education hence they are mainly placed on catering committees.

The study also brought to light that Home Economics teachers in secondary schools are not given equal opportunities for further education at least up to master degree level. Currently there are only five Home Economics teachers who hold a Master Degree but the case is different in other subjects. As a result some Home Economics teachers are bitter and they leave teaching to seek greener pastures. They do this partly because when denied the opportunity to further their education, they are inevitably denied equal employment opportunities.

6.4 Home Economics teachers' response to institutional marginalisation and curriculum constraints;

With regard to how Home Economics teachers respond to institutional discrimination, poor subject status and curriculum constraints; Individual teachers have taken diverse steps to address the situation. It was revealed that some leave teaching and join other organizations and at least one teacher used the skills she acquired from Home Economics to venture into business while she continues teaching. It also became clear that some educators, in their struggle for further education have gone to the extent of individually sponsoring themselves.

Home Economics teachers narrative experiences have shown that it was through the equal education and employment opportunity struggle that they become assertive and empowered. However, Home Economics teachers struggle as individuals rather than collectively. As a result, the individual response does not seem to solve the problem at national level but rather it depletes the field of Home Economics even more. For example, the Botswana Home Economics Association, which should be fighting for Home economics teachers' rights, has never been active.

6. 5 Conclusion:

Although the researchers' background story reflected experiences that suggested Home Economics was marginalized in Botswana educational institutions, from the beginning she had mixed feelings because she thought the marginalisation was a coincidence. It was through out this exhaustive research guided by her hypothesis and promoted by diverse literature reference of diverse geo cultural environment in Sub Saharan Africa, confirmed locally by written up narrative experiences and interview data drawn from professional Home Economics teachers that she came face to face with the true realities of gender discriminations in education systems. She wishes to confidently state that this thesis has eloquently conveyed the intended messages to readers, government and people of Botswana that among the many curricular irregularities in the education system of Botswana, the perception of gender subject is as much behind time as there is time behind us. And if we do not change this perception here and now, it is mere political rhetoric to talk about education equality and education for all.

The literature review clearly states and evidently confirms that this kind of marginalisation has come a long way hence a legacy of African colonial education. History of education in many sub Saharan countries demonstrate that Home Economics was despised from the outset when colonial education was introduced to Africans. The introduction of Home Economics (that was then known as Domestic Science) in Home crafts was meant to exclude women from educational and career development hence it was provided as training for women for domestic activities at household level only. Domestic Science as it was called was not intended to be a career but rather a free service

provided for educated men and white employers by non-educated women; it is for this reason that to date it is still feminised and valueless. Although Domestic Science was finally introduced in education curriculum in many sub Saharan schools, the gender stigma is still attached to it hence the extension of domesticity from private sphere to public spheres.

Home Economics teachers feel they are discriminated both as women and as teachers who teach a sub standard subject. Because of this discrimination, they are faced with multiple constraints rooted in the curriculum structure and its implementation procedures. Further institutional cultures have proved to marginalize the Home Economics department to the extent that they do not fairly compete for positions of power. This study also drew my attention to the fact that Home Economics secondary school teachers and primary college of education lecturers are denied the opportunity to compete fairly for positions of Head of department by lumping Home Economics with many other subjects that are not related to its field. As a result to date Home Economics professional teachers in Botswana secondary schools and primary colleges are dissatisfied because they are discriminated against by modern Educational Organisations. However, it is evident that Home Economics teachers are positive against these discriminations. As an individual and a victim of the system, their response to educational marginalisation has empowered me more. Responses from four educators inspired me to continue struggling for my educational right and never give it up.

Finally this study has accorded me the opportunity to understand the conditions under which Home Economics was born and how its birth perpetuated gendered roles that discriminate some teachers in African educational institutions, particularly those that

were colonized by Britain. This new knowledge is a healing therapy in the sense that it has provided me with the answers to many questions of gender discrimination in educational organizations. By doing this I feel I am gender transformed and gender aware of curriculum politics.

University of Cape Town

Recommendations

7.0 Introduction:

In this section, some of the findings established in the study are extrapolated to make a number of recommendations. Information from the respondents also generates rich answers to the problem under study. On the basis of the summary findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher draws the following recommendations:

7.1 Gender balancing enrolment in Home Economics

Schools in Botswana should aim at enrolling an equal proportion of boys to girls in Home economics classes. Introducing gender awareness education in schools is one way to encourage gender balance in Home Economics classes. Teachers in general need to support gender balancing, but they may not effectively play their role if they themselves are gender stereotypes. This can be achieved by training teachers to ignore gender stereotype and adopt positive and gender neutral attitudes. This will enable teachers to be gender conscious and thus encourage male students to opt for Home Economics. This recommendation is based on the finding that Statistics Bulletin (2001), established that there are more girls than boys in both primary and secondary schools and that the enrolment of boys to girls in Home Economics classes is far below the proportion of boys to girls in secondary schools.

7.2 Enforcing the implementation of effective teaching of Home Economics in Primary schools.

It is crucial that Home Economics be effectively taught at primary school level. To do this the Ministry of Education must provide facilities such as Home Economics laboratories and other basic equipment in primary schools while the curriculum

development officers need to provide the requisite materials such as syllabus, stationeries, teacher's guides and textbooks. They also need to closely monitor how Home Economics is taught at the primary school level. Likewise, both male and female students need to be well informed about Home Economics and its related career opportunities. This recommendation is based on findings from studies carried out by Lefhang (2000), Letsogile (1989) and Mokone (2000) revealed that Home Economics is not given much attention in primary schools. In addition, the Ministry of Education does not provide primary schools with facilities that enforce the teaching of Home Economics. It is only after facilities, information and stationary are provided that this subject will reach a stage where it attracts an equal number of boys and girls in secondary schools that people may develop positive attitudes and eventually raise the image of the subject.

The third recommendation is based on the suggestion made by one of the respondents in the study that a liberal approach be adopted whereby all students regardless of gender undertake optional subjects on a rotational format. In this case junior secondary school students rotate on all the optional subjects in first year during which they carry assignments, projects and tests on all the optional subjects. Then beginning of second year, students could choose one or two option subjects for further study that can be reflected in their junior certificate. In this kind of approach students will be equally informed about all optional subjects. Their grades may also motivate them to choose subjects without gender biasness. Male students will also no longer be caught up in situations where they suppress their desire to study Home Economics for fear of being laughed at by their classmates. I believe that this approach will not only address the gender balance in Home Economics enrolment in secondary schools, but it will also lift

the image of the subject. Male students who do well in Home Economics will be motivated to select a career in Home Economics related field and eventually more males would opt to teach Home Economics in secondary schools. The same approach is currently used in some South African schools in the North West Province.

7.3 Review of Home Economics syllabus

Although it has been noted that the syllabi may be reviewed after five years, it is recommended that Home Economics teachers in junior and secondary schools be part of the task force assigned to this duty. In order to address the syllabi concerns such as the content and assessment constraints and the gender imbalance in Home economics, it is necessary that submissions from various schoolteachers and students be taken into consideration as they may provide valuable information on the content and assessment of the Home Economics syllabi. In this way a suitable, friendly and non-gender stereotyped Home Economics syllabus can be developed for the Home Economics department as a whole. Curriculum developers need to pay attention to the relationship between the time allocated and the workload of Home Economics lessons in secondary schools. This should reduce the strain of stretching Home Economics class activities to weekends and school holidays and the teachers can have enough time to take part in other school activities.

7.4 Further study

Since the study revealed that Home Economics teachers in secondary schools could not compete for educational advancement on the same footing as other subject teachers, it is recommended that a follow up study be undertaken to find out the extent to which a similar process of marginalisation manifests itself among Home Economics teachers in secondary schools and primary colleges of education. Evidence from such a study should show the pattern of Home Economics teachers undertaking further education and how this impacts on their promotions to senior positions.

7.5 Diversifying Home economics higher education programmes.

Findings from literature review show that Home Economics is a multi disciplinary subject, but out of this diversity, the university of Botswana caters for Home Economics education only. Powerful areas such as Dietetics, Hotel and Tourism, Fashion Designing and many others are not provided for at this university and where ever they are provided they are studied without a link to Home Economics, hence they are invaded by the same males who despise Home Economics. Therefore diversifying Home Economics programmes at university level will inspire male students to study it at formal education level especially when they know they can further pursue it at higher education level.

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Appendix i

Personal Home Economics life history:

Personal reflection about home Economics in Botswana secondary schools:

Please write your personal life experience as a home economics teacher professionals in Botswana. These are reflections of your educational experience as a Home Economics teacher in secondary schools and a lecturer in colleges of educations.

Below are guidelines for your history of education. How ever you may include additional information outside these guidelines

HERSTORY GUIDELINES:

Who/ what inspired you to teach Home Economics?

What are your views about teaching Home Economics in education institutions?

What makes home economics special or not special to you?

Talk about attitudes of other teachers and administration towards Home Economics.

Did you choose to do Home Economics at secondary level and finally training as a home economics teacher?

Do you think or don't think your gender contributed to you career choice?

As a teacher how did you select your students for the course / Did you meet challenges in selecting students for subjects?

Which committees were you placed in your school? (what was the rationale or reason for selecting you into these committees)

Do think you gender roles affected your selection into these committees?

Do you think your gender roles affected the teaching of home economics? (Give reasons and explanations).

How did your reproductive role / family life conflict with working conditions?

Does / Did teaching home economics give you job satisfaction? (Explain briefly)

Do you compete squarely with other subject teachers for positions above those of Head of Departments? (please elaborate).

Did you compete fairly with other subject teachers for personal educational advancement? (please elaborate).

ADDRESSING CONSTRAINTS:

How did you overcome these constraints?

Are you still teaching Home economics and what is your teaching load like?

If you are no longer teaching home economics , how is it like?

How long do you intend pursuing this career under the current challenges? (elaborate)

How did home economics empower you as a woman/ man?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggest what you think can be done to address the gender inequality faced by home economics professionals in Botswana education institutions

Appendix iii
Written narratives

Deputy school head:
Junior secondary school:

I am a deputy headmistress in this junior secondary school. I took Home Economics teaching as a career in 1978 at the University of Swaziland (Luyengo) where I gained a Diploma in Secondary Education, Home Economics. After qualifying I taught for four years at a junior secondary school before I went for further education in 1986 at University of Cardiff, Britain. I then devoted the last twenty-three years to teaching Home Economics taking advantage of my diverse teaching experience as both senior and junior secondary school teacher.

I took interest in teaching Home Economics because of the realization of the great need for qualified Home Economics teachers in Botswana. My gender did not contribute to my career choice. It was through my interest that I took the subject with high hopes of participating in economic development of the country.

One major problem with teaching Home Economics in Botswana secondary schools is its poor image. Most teachers, parents and students look down upon it because it is a profession associated with women domestication. They view it as a subsidiary subject for junior certificate. This kind of attitude negatively affects those girls and lowers their self-esteem. Male students who select Home Economics, receive nasty and discouraging comments from either teachers or other students.

Worst of all it is offered as an option subjects where new students (form 1s) are gathered together in a hall and Home Economics teachers explain areas of Home Economics and its importance to learners. Then learners are supposed to choose. Student choice is limited to a maximum of twenty students per class for Home Economics. This means even if more students were to choose to do Home Economics eventually in a particular class the number will still need to be cut down to twenty. However, very few boys opt to do Home Economics.

Administrators who are not knowledgeable in the subject do not give it the seriousness it deserves as more attention is given to subjects such as Agriculture because they produce immediate results.

From my own point of view, I feel I have not competed fairly with other subject teachers in terms of personal educational advancement. I am saying this because from 1986 when I obtained my first degree to date I have not been ear marked for sponsorship. My fear is that Home Economics scholarship is no longer offered on grounds of competency and commitment. You have got to belong to the girls' choir in order to advance.

Teaching Home Economics in junior secondary school does not at all give me personal satisfaction as well as personal dignity. Besides constraints mentioned above there are many other reasons that contribute to my dissatisfaction. To mention just a few; lack of adequate and proper laboratories coupled with inadequate supply of equipment. Insufficient funds allocated to Home Economics. In junior schools we are hardly allocated enough money to cover the departmental need. We cannot buy additional equipment, sometimes we even run short of money for purchasing ingredients.

Home Economics is allocated two periods per week per class but the syllabus is too loaded. As a result of insufficient time allocated Home Economics, teachers have no option but to use teaching strategies such as lecturing. Teachers are now teaching for examination instead of developing life skills. They are examination conscious. Home Economics teachers countrywide teach during afternoons, weekends and even during school holidays, this is unfair to both students and teachers. But this appears to be the only option to engage in, in order to finish the syllabus. In addition to the broad syllabus and insufficient time allocation, form one students do not bring any basic Home Economics exposure from primary schools. So unlike other subject teachers, we are faced with a problem of building Home Economics background skills at the same time rushing to finish the syllabus within the stipulated time

Finally I was also strained by a habit in schools that any activity that requires food preparation becomes a Home Economics teacher's task. This is regardless of what day of the week. Home Economics teachers unlike other subject teachers do not easily secure time during the week or weekend to spend with their family members.

I remember that once I was selected to be a staff secretary. I am convinced I was selected on bases that women are good at taking minutes. I was also appointed senior teacher Guidance and Counseling because it was believed that women as mothers are good candidates for counseling. Having said this, I was once a sports organizer for three years, a field that was and still is dominated by males.

As a result of my disappointment in this subject, I must point out that though I still teach Home Economics, my interest in the subject has died. The subject has not really empowered me with much. In 1993 I temporarily left teaching and joined my husband who was in South Africa working for Anglo America Company. It was then that I took the opportunity and sponsored myself to study Bachelor of Education Management (Honors). As a woman I got empowered by joining women in educational management in secondary education and that made me realize my full potential in education management. Education management reinforced my commitment and competence in teaching. Education management helped me find success and recognition for myself.

As a citizen of this country, I will not loose hope in Home Economics education. The first move that I feel would mark transformation in Home Economics is affording both female and male students equal opportunity to access Home Economics in junior secondary schools. From there an option at senior level will be meaningful to their future career choice. I would also suggest Home Economics teachers and education officers to adopt a positive attitude towards one another to give this subject a promising image.

Home Economics subject matter changes rapidly due to research developments and findings, changes in industries and social needs, change of technology hence the need for the syllabus to continue changing to meet and satisfy the national development needs.

Provision of standardized laboratory equipment in junior secondary schools will promote effective teaching and learning. However, I am aware that the government has embarked on serious cost cutting as such financial constraints remain hence they impede supply of laboratory equipment.

Home Economics teacher:**Senior Secondary School:**

My name is Mrs. T. I am senior teacher grade I for practical subjects. I started teaching Home Economics after completing Diploma in Secondary Education Home economics at the University of Swaziland (Luyengo) in 1981. As a young woman I was inspired by my first Home Economics teacher the late (Mrs Matome) I enjoyed cooking and sewing. Besides, the nature of the subject enabled me to combine skills from diverse fields such as Science, Biology, Sociology, Mathematics and Art.

When I joined teaching I realized it was not as interesting as I had imagined. I was faced with numerous problems some of which emanated from teachers negative attitudes and some from lack of support from administrative personnel

First, the administrative personnel always felt Home Economics is not worthwhile subject since it is more expensive to run than other subjects. They claim Home Economics teachers buy and eat from their laboratories. Other subject teachers on the other hand do not accept Home Economics as an academic subject. For instance they sometimes pass nagging remarks such as “If I were teaching Home Economics, all my students were going to pass; no one can fail cooking in this world.” This is very frustrating especially when you realize that your colleagues look down upon your subject. When internal examinations are written Home Economics is always scheduled last because we have fewer students than other subjects. This kind of behavior is even extended to students; so much that those who are doing Home Economics have developed low self-esteem. Poor image about them selves and some have lost confidence in themselves.

Gender contributes to student’s enrollment in Home Economics subjects in senior secondary schools. Although the department encourages both male and female students to enroll in Home Economics subjects, it is evident that very few male students opt to enroll in one of the Home Economics subject. One determining factor for enrolling for Home Economics is that a student should have done Home Economics at junior secondary

school. In many cases we get more students than what our laboratories can accommodate. This happens because all girls who have done Home Economics before but are weak in all other option subjects, are always thrown into Home Economics because it is believed no one can fail it. In other words Home Economics is a dumping place for weak students.

Home Economics teachers are also perceived as school catering officers. Whenever there is an occasion Home Economics department is expected to cater for the feeding. This is done in such a way that sometimes we are expected to let our lessons suffer.

The teaching of Home Economics in secondary schools conflicts with family and social life. I devote extra if not all my time to students either for remedial or completion of projects. During school holidays, Home Economics teachers have to be at school assisting students finish their course work projects. As a result my family get a very small share of my time.

With the latest syllabus Home Economics teachers are supposed to mark student projects at only P3.00 per candidate. This is abuse of Home Economics teachers. Why are we not paid for the work that we do for moderators?

Currently I am involved in the following committees; examinations, curriculum and library. Well concerning the two committees i.e. examination and curriculum, I am a member by virtue of my post as a senior teacher. I volunteered myself to library committee because I am a qualified teacher librarian.

Home Economics teachers do compete with others for position above Headship of Department, but it is difficult to say we compete squarely because besides being teachers, women are perceived to be less capable of managing organisations. We've got to double our efforts to compete with our male counterparts. The other question is competing fairly with other Home Economics teachers; There is a lot of favoritism from the Senior Education Officers of Home Economics. You've got to be their girl to be easily recommended for scholarship and sometimes promotion.

I have communicated my dissatisfaction to the school head. At one point I arranged to see both the deputy, and permanent secretary as well as the Director of secondary education and finally the Department of Anti corruption. All that I wanted was the transparency

concerning progress to higher positions in secondary education structure. I was just questioning where I went wrong.

Besides all these constraints, at the end of the day Home Economics has empowered me, it was through these struggles for employment opportunity and equity that I became assertive and started using Home Economics skills to manage my personal resources. I have developed leadership skills and innovative skills that I use outside my formal employment.

University of Cape Town

Home economics lecturer:**University of Botswana:**

My name is Elizabeth Miss. X. I am a lecturer in the Faculty of education under the Home Economics department. My Home Economics career began in the home where patterns of behavior and attitudes influence good health through out life. I was very much influenced by my family especially my mother who has always been a central part of my life. Some explicit and implicit skills that I learned from her influenced me to some extent to train as a Home Economist. For instance she was a member of Botswana council of Women (BCW). This was a non-profit making organization that trained women from the early 1960s in the skills of managing their homes. I used to mimic her in cooking. To my surprise at that young and tender age, I did not question why Botswana Council of Men did not exist.

Anywhere I later did Home Economics at junior secondary schools and finally trained as a Home economics teacher. I chose Home Economics for my career because my career teacher convinced me that home Economics was for females while Agriculture was for male students. I realized when it was only too late that what my career teacher told me about Home Economics was not true. To date many people are not aware that gender roles are socially constructed hence a lot has changed since the industrial revolution.

Teaching Home Economics is very challenging because it involves teaching students of different backgrounds in terms of their culture and ethnicity. There is always a lot of diversity in Home Economics classrooms or laboratories especially if it's a mixed gender class. The most challenging thing is to teach in a school with inadequate facilities. This means as a teacher you will be required to improvise where possible. It is indeed a challenging job but can also be terribly frustrating especially when you want to further your education. I personally went through this frustration; where I taught in senior secondary school with a Diploma qualification for fourteen years. I applied for a scholarship; and got a school in Oklahoma State University. The Ministry of Education denied me the chance because they felt I did not follow the correct channel. This was almost a total blow in my life, my spirit of teaching Home Economics was dying a slow

death. My salary at that point in time was enough to buy grocery yet the job was really involving, as I was always kept busy even after working hours. For instance I would supervise the cleaning of the laboratories after working hours, check inventory and update records. Make order for the department and collect them from the shops and let alone the extra curriculum activities that were compulsory. Nevertheless there was no over time pay for all these. The other thing that was not appealing to me was the issue of transfers I was transferred from one school to the other more than five times. I felt this was a raw deal it must have been a way of separating me from my family because this did not happen to my counterparts who were married then.

Generally Home Economics was frequently accorded a low status by both administrative personnel and other subject teachers. It is considered an appropriate subject for female students and the less able. Home Economics subjects are perceived as food and cooking. These misconception and socially constructed roles are a clear form of gender discrimination that never appealed to me.

During my secondary school teaching, I was never placed in any committee probably because of the low status attached to my subject. I did not choose students who enrolled in Home Economics, the administrative personnel and Head of practical subjects gave them to me. Although I was not told directly, I observed that I was always given the low achievers. I was never satisfied with teaching of Home Economics in secondary schools. The following is a summary of what dissatisfied me; the salary was too low yet the job demanded extra working hours to assist students finish their projects; living conditions were not good, I did not like shared accommodation which I feel denied me the privacy space. Sometimes this kind of accommodation exposed single female or single male teachers to sexual harassment. When I had my two children I was still expected to share yet married teachers who lived alone had the opportunity to stay alone. Laboratory facilities were inadequate. Being a Head of Department was not feasible because I was a Diploma holder. A lot of time was wasted before I was sent for further training; in short, this meant I could not compete fairly with other subject teachers for promotions.

To overcome these constrains I asked for a departmental transfer to the State House where I worked as an Administrative dietitian. The salary was good, there were no transfers, and overtime was communicated in writing and paid for. I was happy except for

one thing, there was no provision for further education. I served for three years and went back to teaching. I was finally sent for further education in 1994. Life continued to be difficult even after I obtained a first degree. My son was depressed and sick for a long time but my Education Officers could not post me to a school in town where he could easily receive medical attention. In 1997 I left secondary education and joined Teacher Training and Development. Two years later I went for my second degree and when I came back I decided to leave Teaching Service Management. I am now working for the University of Botswana with a much better salary than what I used to get. The working conditions are good here; I have a well-furnished office with air conditioner, a computer and a telephone of my own. This may sound and look small but it gives me personal dignity and job stability. I can ask my friends to meet me in my office without fear of disturbing other officers. My teaching load is nine hours per week and I enjoy the employment flexibility. I do my work at my own pace and come to work at the most convenient time.

My intention is to pursue this career until my retirement age. Otherwise I am happy to say Home Economics has been an eye opener to me, it helped me to lead an independent life and to stand for my rights.

I would recommend that Home Economics Senior Education Officers should ensure that both female and male students at primary schools and junior secondary schools equally access the subject. I am saying this because Home economics plays a very important part in the moulding of student behavior and attitudes. At Primary Colleges of Education Home Economics should be compulsory for all students regardless of gender. There is need for the Ministry of Home Affairs to conduct workshops to schools with the aim of sensitizing them on gender roles and how they marginalize youth in their career path.

Male Home economics teacher:**Botswana Defense Force:**

My name is Mr X. I am a senior dietitian in a military organization. This is how my Home Economics career developed. I liked Home Economics from the first day I was told about it at junior secondary school. To my disappointment, when I opted for the subject at junior secondary school I became a laughing stock among other boys in the school. My classmates mocked me, they thought I chose the subject because I wanted additional good food. Despite all I did well in this area because my subject teachers were very supportive. At senior secondary school I opted for Food and Nutrition but few other teachers were not happy with my subject choice. They expressed concern and indicated that this was not a subject for male students. However my Home Economics teacher (Ms Letsogile) supported me through out, I carried on with the subject and I passed.

Then I decided to pursue Education in Human Nutrition, my sponsorship was denied because Home Economic careers in The Ministry of Education were mainly geared towards teaching Home Economics in general. I was finally sponsored by the Ministry of Education to do Diploma in secondary education Home Economics.

After completing my program of study I was employed by The Teaching Service Management. To some point I enjoyed teaching Home Economics, but as the only male in the field of women, there were lots of challenges too. The first challenge that I met was that I was not wholly accepted in the community. The question that I often overhead asked was “How can a man teach Home Economics?” At first students undermined my credibility in teaching the subject until after a month or so.

Home economics is a very busy subject; the syllabi in both junior and senior secondary schools are too crowded. As both a teacher and a student you hardly breathe, it's a project after another. On the other hand, the community generally looks down upon Home Economics. When one is employed as a Home Economics teacher she /he earns very little respect from his colleagues, students, parents and school administrative personnel.

As a Home Economics teacher, I was always placed in the following committees; prize giving committee, Parents Teachers Association, and Guidance and Counseling committees. It was evident that my position there was strategically for food catering.

Teaching Home Economics as a gendered field had an impact in my family, for instance my wife did not feel comfortable with other women or relatives say if I involved myself in an activity that she thought was feminine. She often complained that I act like a woman.

Besides all that I have talked about, there were more pressing issues that forced me to make up my mind to leave Home economics teaching. In Home economic teaching I did not see future prospects in educational advancement. For example there were many Home Economics teachers who acquired Diploma certificate in secondary education during the 80s and they were still waiting for the Ministry of Education to make up its mind its either promote them or send them for further studies. The salary was too low and the attitudes of school administration was negative towards Home Economics department. They denied Home Economics teachers the opportunity to equip their lab appropriately like other laboratories.

I worked for only four years and I decided to quit and join the Botswana Defence Force where I was employed as senior dietician. I love my job here, the salary is good, and employment conditions are reasonably fair. I am currently doing first degree in stores and supplies management and if all works according to plan I will be going abroad next year to do Masters in Business and Administration. My duty involves catering for top government officials and dignitaries in the army. However my department caters for the entire force

Having said this, I strongly agree that Home Economics education empowered me as a male pioneer in a once misconceived female discipline. If it were not of Home Economics I wouldn't be where I am today. Home Economics is a unique subject that equips its learners and teachers with survival skills, above that, it grooms and develops individuals to identify their hidden creativity.

I have two major recommendations, The Ministry of Education needs to take a massive step forward in sensitizing schools on gender issues and how gender roles change with time and technology and how gender roles affect our subject choice and eventually career

opportunities. In addition to that Home Economics will never be taken seriously, if it is not taught at primary schools, as less than half of the junior secondary students access it, there is thus no equal opportunity to education in Botswana.

University of Cape Town

Appendix iv**Interview transcription:****Botswana Defence Force officer****18th June 2003****14:00 -14:20pm****Introduction:**

Good afternoon Mr X. I am happy that you gave me the opportunity to interview you even though your schedule is very tight. It is not my intention to carry out a long interview because I have already read your narrative. The aim of this interview is firstly to interact face to face with you. Secondly, there are some experiences that you wrote about and would like to hear more about. However, I want you to feel free and if there are questions that you are not ready to answer, I will appreciate and respect your decision. The tape I have at hand will be used to record our conversation directly. The information from this interview will be confidential.

Thank you sir, we are now starting.

Question: Did you feel comfortable as the only male in Home Economics education field?

Response: To some point I enjoyed teaching the subject and relating with other subject teachers. But there were few things that challenged Home Economics department in general: not specifically myself as a male teacher. To mention just a few, both junior secondary schools and senior secondary schools Home Economics syllabi content is too much, attitudes of other subject teachers towards Home Economics department is costing the credibility of the subject.

Question: What can you say about these syllabi?

Response: Home Economics syllabus content in junior secondary schools was too crowded because it included Home Economics from all the four areas i.e. Food and Nutrition, Fashion and Fabrics, Home Management and Child Care. With topics from all these sections, Home Economics were allocated two periods per week per class. This is insufficient for a practical subject especially where students lack the background of the

subject. It was partly because of this problem that we had to conduct extra lessons on weekends and during school holidays.

Question: I understand that within the five years of teaching you had a chance to teach in senior secondary schools. Can you brief me on how you selected or enrolled students for your subjects?

Response: Bright students were not encouraged to select Home Economics subjects at all. We were subjected to average and below average performance students. Science teachers who were supposed to select the cream of the school overruled student's choice. I can quickly recall something that happened in Francis town senior secondary school in (1998). Two powerful male and female science students refused to select the pure sciences and they opted for Food and Nutrition. Both Science teachers and administrative officers were very angry with the Home economics department.

Question: Is science not a pre requisite for studying Home Economics related programmes?

Response: Home Economics is a science subject and for one to pursue it further, you need science backup. This is why it is possible for people who never did Home Economics in secondary schools to penetrate to specialize in areas such as Food Technology, Textile Science Fabric Technology; these subjects require both Chemistry and Physics. But our education system is only developing people who can venture into Home Economics education. This is not equality. Above Home economics education, Home Economics fields become male dominated.

Question: Which committees were Home Economics teachers mostly placed and why?

Response: Home economics teachers were placed wherever cooking was likely to be necessary. For instance during my stay in Francis town senior secondary school, I was elected chair person prize giving, but this was a strategic position to cater for the feeding of gathering that attended the prize giving, parents days and completer balls

Question: What about academic committees such as timetable, curriculum and examination?

Response: The timetable was a special baby for Mathematics and Science departments. They were given this chance to make sure that they prepare a timetable that suits their department. It was believed that science and mathematics needed more concentration

than all other subjects, as a result, less respected subjects such as Home Economics were always scheduled either towards lunch or after lunch. I personally had afternoon lessons every other day except Friday that was scheduled for general cleaning.

Question: You have moved from a feminine institution to a masculine institution; would you agree that you are using skills that you mostly tapped from a feminine institution?

Response: Every thing that I am doing here is basically what I acquired from Home Economics Education for example, inventory management which involves ordering procedure for consumable and non consumable resources, receiving goods and distributing resources to other departments.

Question: Our interview is coming to an end, would you want to say something that you think would benefit me as a researcher and Home Economics education in Botswana?

Response: Yes, I want to say this about Home Economics. At higher education institutions such as the University of Botswana there is need for diversity in Home Economics career opportunities. This diversity may attract both male and female students and eventually male students will equally enroll for Home Economics from grassroots level. The current program is restricted to Home Economics education only. Thank you.

Interview closure: Thank you very much for your cooperation and assistance in making my field work a success. I will be leaving for Cape town in a few weeks to analyse the data and write a report, it is my hope that when I call you for any information regarding your experience in Home Economics education, I will still get the same positive and encouraging reception. Thank you very much.

Deputy head mistress junior secondary school

19th June 2003.

13:00 –13:15pm

Introduction: Good afternoon Mrs. X. I am happy that you gave me the opportunity to interview you even though your schedule is very tight. May I take this opportunity to apologies for keeping you during lunch break. It is not my intention to carry out a long interview because I have already read your narrative. The aim of this interview is firstly to interact face to face with you. Secondly, there are some experiences that you wrote about and would like to hear more about. However, I want you to feel free and if there are questions that you are not ready to answer, I will appreciate and respect your decision. The tape I have at hand will be used to record our conversation directly. The information from this interview will be confidential.

Thank you *mme*, (*mme* is a setswana word for madam) we are now starting.

Question: The first thing I am interested in is the issue of school committees; you have indicated that you were once a sports organizer for three years. From your experience, how was it?

Response: Sporting activity is one area that is male dominated. I worked hard to earn the position, but on the other hand the school administration was very supportive. But I often had role conflicts because as a sports organizer you are frequently out for sporting activities and this interfered with Home Economics teaching schedule.

Question: What about the family roles?

Response: I was not married and I had no children then, so I would not say sports activities posed conflict in my family roles. They only interfered with my home economics roles.

Question: Do you think it would be different now?

Response: Yes, it will be different because my husband may not like the idea spending weeks out, besides my children need me, above all I am now an administrator.

Question: Can you say your views as an administrator concerning Home Economics teachers' placement in school committees?

Response: As a deputy I oversee all the school committees and we encourage teachers to place themselves in any committees of their choice. Although Home Economics teachers do not usually take part, I can only speculate that it is because of extra work they have in the department. Having said this, one of our Home Economics volunteered to be part of the timetable committee.

Question: Who is in the catering committee?

Response: In a lot of cases people think Home Economics teachers will do it, but in this school it is different. Catering committee is composed of all female teachers. But I have noticed that Home Economics teachers are not comfortable with the arrangement because their laboratory remains the central place for these activities hence Home Economics teachers are accountable. To reduce the strain, we have agreed to only run big functions such as Prize giving and Completers party in the Home Economics laboratory. Activities such as cooking for sports teachers, education officials and others are done by the support staff in the school kitchen.

Question: Do you think Home economics teachers get equal chance to further their education?

Response: As an individual I have not benefited from Home Economics sponsorship. Its sixteen years since I obtained my first Degree and there is nothing promising. But as a whole I think there is a problem with our education officers. Of late I see people who have completed their first Degrees two three years ago, going back for their Masters Degree. This is done despite the fact that a lot of those holding Diploma qualification are still waiting. This does not make sense to me at all. We could be having more of those Diploma holders sponsored to do first Degree. We have teachers who have been teaching for 6-10 years and they still hold Diploma qualifications, this is not right.

Question: As a school administrator, would you want to pursue Home Economics further?

Response: Certainly not. Home economics education has failed to reward me for my loyalty and dedication to the subject. I feel I could have advanced professionally with the subject. Secondly I am not happy about the assessment procedures used in junior

secondary school Home Economics. In addition to assessment the syllabus is just not right, in the sense that it no longer develop living skills. This is so because everything in the syllabus is done in preparation for examination. Students are not given the opportunity to be innovative, creative and gradually develop life skills. For example when they sew an article, they do not create that article, the teacher provide the pattern, and during sewing the teacher is always following students through out because the project must be completed in time to be examined. Time allocated to the subject is insufficient. i.e. two periods per week per class for such a broad syllabus is just madness. There is no gender balance in the subject enrollment as a result this pose a problem of lack of recognition.

Question: What is your suggestion?

Response: In other countries where Home Economics is offered as a curriculum subject, all students regardless of their gender, are given the opportunity to access the subject. For instance what we could be doing is, for the Home Economics, Agriculture, and Art, students would equally rotate on all these subjects from form one to form two. Then they select one subject which they feel should appear on their junior secondary certificate and proceed with it up to form three. By virtue of equal exposure students' choice will be gender neutral.

Question: Do you recommend fellow Home Economics teachers for any position above Head of Department?

Response: If they qualify I do encourage them to apply and I recommend but sometimes they do not apply then I am stuck too because one has to initiate the promotion opportunity.

Interview closure: Thank you very much for your cooperation and assistance in making my field work a success. I will be leaving for Cape town in a few weeks time to analyse the data and write a report, it is my hope that when I call you for any information regarding your experience in Home Economics Education, I will still get the same positive and encouraging reception. Thank you very much.

University lecturer

19th June 2003

16:30 –16:50pm

Introduction: Good afternoon Miss X. I am happy that you gave the opportunity to interview you even though your schedule is very tight. I know you are supposed to be going for a break and rushing to collect your children from school. I really appreciate your understanding. It is not my intention to carry out a long interview because I have already read your narrative. The aim of this interview is firstly to interact face to face with you. Secondly, there are some experiences that you wrote about and would like to hear more about. However, I want you to feel free and if there are questions that you are not ready to answer, I will appreciate and respect your decision. The tape I have at hand will be used to record our conversation directly. The information from this interview will be confidential. Thank you *mme*, (we are now starting).

Question: You have diverse teaching experience both secondary and tertiary and university. From your experience can you comment on Home Economics teachers' contribution in sporting activities?

Response: Although some Home Economics teachers may want to actively participate in sports there are a number of barriers that they have to overcome before they can fully engage in sports. The first point is that, just like other women they may have faced accommodation problem in some of the schools that they are supposed to visit. The government is not ready to pay hotel fare for teachers sporting accommodation. Male teachers do not seem to mind, to an extent that they do not mind sleeping in classrooms. The second point is that timing for sports activity collides with the time most needed by Home Economics teachers for pushing their practical work. Sports activities are carried out either over the weekend and or after afternoon classes. In secondary schools sports leadership is male dominated, no matter how much effort you put in it you may not easily progress any further than being a team coach. Finally the one exercise that I found unbearable was that many administrators appointed Home Economics teachers in sports committees. Such teachers later find themselves trapped to cook for visiting teachers participating in sports activities.

Question: Besides sporting you indicated that you never attached yourself to any other committee; do you mind telling me why?

Response: There was no reason for me to choose because at the end of it all, one of the senior officers would impose that I join catering committee. Once when I was in colleges, I was placed in the graduation committee. To my shock my participation in this committee was solely geared towards food catering for graduation days. Actually within the graduation committees were sub committees such luncheon, graduation program, transport, sitting and photographs. But Home Economics lecturers were all pushed to catering. This scenario existed until I left colleges.

Question: What can you say about the Home Economics syllabus at junior secondary and tertiary level?

Response: The content of the three year junior secondary school is too broad, there is need for it to be reduced this would allow students to develop adequate skills that can be extended to the world of work. In primary colleges of education the standard is far below that of senior secondary level.

Question: Why do you think the standard of the syllabus in colleges is low?

Response: I am not sure, but I think this boils down to the habit of utilizing any female lecturer to teach the subject. Some of these people were given the opportunity to sit for meetings that were responsible for designing the syllabus. This is what they produced. Besides, at college level, Home Economics has never had an education officer to facilitate the official launching of the subject, there is still one Home Economics curriculum officer countrywide. This is pulling the subject down.

Question: Can you comment on the student enrollment in senior secondary schools and primary colleges of education?

Response: When I was a senior secondary school teacher, I was neither given the opportunity to select my own students or students given the opportunity to select subject of their choice. I recall the experience from Tutume Mc Connel senior secondary school. I was new in the school; in that fateful Friday mourning, a group of students gathered outside the Home Economics laboratory and they started making noise. When I asked who they were and what I could do to assist them, one girl answered; “we have been rejected by teachers from the Agriculture and Design and Technology department. So this

is the only place we can go.” This meant Home Economics was a dumping site for the rejects.

In primary colleges of education Home Economics enrollment is strictly based on Home economics grade acquired at form five final examinations.

Question: What can you say about attitudes of male students towards Home Economics

Response: In secondary schools and primary colleges of education I had very few male students enrolling for Home Economics each year, this came to be as a result of their negative attitudes towards the subject. Having said this the few who enrolled did very well and in many cases they did better than female students.

Question: In your own opinion, would you say Home Economists are given the same opportunity to progress to management positions in both secondary and tertiary institutions?

Response: There are very few Home Economists who are progressing. There was a wave in the early 90s when Home Economics teachers were fairly promoted to senior management positions. Since then their progress to management positions has been very slow. Evidence shows that those who were appointed deputy school heads then have not been promoted any higher. I know and you know three who have been there since 1990. Why can't they move up? One of them even stepped down in 1999.

In primary colleges of education the following subjects are clustered together to form practical subjects, they are; Home Economics, Art and Design, Agriculture and Music. One Head of Department heads these subjects. Imagine Home economics headed by Music lecturer. Some one who is not acquainted with the subject needs and skills may not effectively represent the subject. All in all this is denying Home Economics teachers the freedom to be Head of Department in primary colleges of education

Question: Would you suggest this comes as a result of the subject's low image?

Response: There are two discriminating variables here; the first one is that all Home Economics teachers are females and the second is that Home Economics as a subject involves domestication. Yes, these variables qualifies Home Economics to be undermined hence its subject teachers.

Question: Thank you very much for your informative response I am sure this information will be valuable to my research report. But before we end this interview I

want to give you the opportunity to either summarize or give a brief comment on your views about the position of Home Economics in educational institutions.

Response: There is need to look closely onto the syllabus and opt for restructuring its content, assessment and possibly allocate more time for the subject, as it is now, it is very strenuous and rigid. The punitive attitudes currently displayed by other subject teachers and administrative personnel towards Home Economics department create an environment that does not promote gender equality in educational institutions.

Interview closure: Thank you very much for your cooperation and assistance in making my field work a success. I will be leaving for Cape town in few weeks to analyse the data and write a report, it is my hope that when I call you for any information regarding your experience in Home Economics education, I will still get the same positive and encouraging reception. Thank you very much.

Senior secondary school teacher

22nd June 2003

10: 00 - 10: 25am

Introduction: Good morning Mrs. T. I am happy that you gave the opportunity to interview you even though your schedule is very tight. I know you are supposing to be breaking and rushing to collect your children from school. I really appreciate your understanding. It is not my intention to carry out a long interview because I have already read your narrative. The aim of this interview is firstly to interact face to face with you. Secondly, there some experiences that you wrote about and would like to hear more about. However, I want you to feel free and if there are questions that you are not ready to answer, I will appreciate and respect your decision. The tape recorder I have with me will be used to record our conversation directly. The information from this interview will be confidential. Thank you *mme*, (we are now starting).

Through your narrative history I learnt you have spent your entire life teaching Home Economics in senior secondary schools in Botswana. You have very valuable insight about Home economics politics. Our discussion today is mainly to clarify some issues that you touched in your document.

Question: In your own opinion, would you say Home Economics teachers are targeted and placed in certain committees?

Response: In principle we are supposed to choose but even when we do not opt for catering committee we always find ourselves tied to it. This happens because of the misconception of the school community; they regard Home Economics teachers as cooks.

Question: Besides catering, do Home Economics teachers opt for any other committee?

Response: No we don't. Our hands are already full. Having said this, I belong to two more committees examinations and curriculum.

Question: What is the enrollment procedure for form four students?

Response: The policy states that practical subjects should enroll students Who were did Home Economics at junior secondary school and it further recommend a maximum of twenty students per class for practical subjects. Other subject teachers just don't agree with this, such that sometimes we are forced to take (not select) students who have never

done Home Economics before, we also find our classes with more than twenty students per class. And the worst is that our department is used as a dumping area for weak students.

Question: In issues like this how does the department respond?

Response: It is difficult to return a weak student who has nowhere to go. In many cases, if there is available space, we take them provided they have done Home Economics at junior secondary. We do not register students who had not done Home Economics. But we have many of such cases, as I talk to you now there is a case pending from last week. One student transferred from Kgari Sechele, last week she was sent to register for Food and nutrition. There was no official note from the administration. In addition she had not been doing any of the Home Economics subjects for a full term (February –April) since beginning of form four. I sent the student back to office. Before I knew it, the same student was accommodated in one of the Fashion and Fabric class. The administration personnel are encouraging other subject teachers to despise our Home Economics.

Question: Do you really think Home Economics is despised or this is because you are angry?

Response: If Home Economics were not despised we would be allocated students of equal academic competency; we would not be called cooks. Why is the Agriculture teacher not called a farmer and Design and Technology not called a carpenter?

Question: What can you say about enrollment of male students in Home Economics subjects?

Response: We encourage boys to do Home Economics, but this is only when they have been exposed to the subject at junior secondary schools. It is interesting that this year we a lot of male students who enrolled for Home Economics. But personally I feel the best number of male students per Home Economics class should be four.

Question: Why do you think male students are better fewer than not equal to female students?

Response: Sometimes they are too playful; sometimes they resist certain roles. But honestly I have observed this kind of behavior from those male students who did not do Home Economics in junior schools.

Question: Do you think male students who do Home Economics opted for it because they wanted access to delicious food?

Response: It could be true but I don't believe it. From my own experience, male students who opt for Home economics are just as serious as female students.

Question: As an individual do you enjoy teaching Home Economics?

Response: I don't enjoy teaching Home economics but I cannot leave Gaborone because my family is based here. My children go to a private school in Gaborone.

Question: You indicated that the Home Economics syllabus you are following now is new, but you do not seem to be very comfortable with it. Can you briefly comment on it?

Response: By Home Economics syllabi are referring to Food and Nutrition and Fashion and Fabric separately. The Home management syllabus will be implemented next year. The new Food and Nutrition syllabus requires students to run two practical exams, research project and a theory examination in two years. This is very strenuous for both students and teachers. This exercise further strains the department financially. However I am happy that Fashion and Fabrics is fair although a research project is also a requirement.

Question: Is the curriculum development office aware of the difficulty in assessing Home Economics

Response: Yes they are aware. Unfortunately we will have to wait until the syllabus is reviewed. This can only be done after five years.

Question: Do you think Home Economics teachers are promoted fairly to post above Head of Department?

Response: Home Economics teachers do not get equal opportunities right from posts of Head of Department. Right now I feel I am over due for a post of Head of Department, but because our subject is grouped as practical subjects, I could not get the opportunity, instead it was given to design and technology teacher.

Question: As Home Economics teachers do you ever get some encouragement to apply for positions of Deputy or Head of school post?

Response: I received some encouragement once from some who knew me as a friend. I applied and was invited for an interviews, unfortunately that was the same year I was nominated to go for further study. I had to choose between promotion and further

education. It is now six years since I completed my study; I am still where I was before I went for further study. I have not received any encouragement from senior officers in this school.

Interview closure: Thank you very much for your cooperation and assistance in making my field work a success. I will be leaving for Cape town in few weeks to analyse the data and write a report, it is my hope that when I call you for any information regarding your experience in Home Economics education, I will still get the same positive and encouraging reception. Thank you very much.

University of Cape Town