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Home Economics Baby Boomer professors in retirement: inaugural study

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Abstract

This paper contains the report of the results of an inaugural study of home economists in retirement, inspired by the presumed negative implications to the profession of the retirement en masse of the interdisciplinary, integrated-oriented baby boomer professoriate. The descriptive research design (email survey, closed and open-ended questions, purposive sampling) was informed by a 'chain, stain and pain' conceptualisation of retirement, respectively still tied to work, a tainted retirement (dark emotions), and transitional changes. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis revealed that all six female respondents (four countries, two continents) experienced retirement chains, stains and pains but overall they enjoyed their careers and were equally enjoying retirement. The anticipated existential angst did not materialise, despite expressed obligations to the profession. Although most noted concern for the profession's future (fragmentation, specialisation, and philosophical lacuna), they concurrently envisioned hope and expressed confidence that the remaining professoriate could future proof it. Future research recommendations are tendered.

KEYWORDS: HOME ECONOMICS, RETIREMENT, INTERDISCIPLINARY, FUTURE PROOFING, PROFESSORIATE, BABY BOOMER

Introduction

Like many long-established disciplines and professions, home economics (family and consumer sciences (FCS), human ecology, human sciences) is facing the demographic reality of retiring baby boomers. Born between the middle 1940s and early 1960s, they range in age from 57-77. With the concurrent trends of early and delayed retirement (Carrière & Galarneau, 2011; Wan, Goodkind, & Kowal, 2016), the home economics profession and discipline face the possibility of losing hundreds, maybe thousands, of active practitioners as they enter their retirement life phase. The 'greying of the home economics profession' is the new normal (Dixon, 2017), especially the ageing of the professoriate who teach and socialise the next generation. The professoriate comprises home economists working within higher education settings as instructors, administrators, or both.

The ageing of this cohort will have a major impact on the future of the profession and the discipline, partly because many home economists were socialised to be generalists rather than specialists. This education oriented them toward an interdisciplinary, integrated philosophy of practice. McGregor (and colleagues) (2015) observed that as the baby boomer generation of home economists retires *en masse*, universities that do not cancel programs often hire people who are not home economists or FCS. Examples include sociologists to teach family, psychologists to teach individual growth and

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development, business and marketing scholars to teach consumer behaviour, and health scholars to teach wellness and wellbeing.

This hiring trend means the millennial generation of home economists (whose average age is 24) is likely being taught by people who may lack knowledge about our history and the philosophy of the field, let alone the interdisciplinary knowledge base as the old guard knows it. Indeed, in addition to teaching, their influence enters the realms of mentoring, research and professional coaching. This development (although not new) does not bode well for future proofing the profession, wherein we “anticipate future developments to minimize negative impacts and optimize opportunities” (Pendergast, 2009, p.517), always to ensure relevancy, viability and vitality. A future-proofed profession cannot be superseded by unanticipated future developments because it has strategically planned its effectiveness in the face of change (McGregor, 2011).

Literature review

The retirement literature contains information about how university professors perceive retirement before they have retired, but little research addresses the retired faculty members’ actual retirement experience (Fishman, 2012), with this perspective totally lacking in the home economics literature. The following literature review recounts several prevailing lines of thought in the university faculty retirement literature, factors that inform the aforementioned trend of baby boomer retirement within home economics: voluntary or involuntary retirement; early, planned or delayed retirement; the professor’s unique ‘life of the mind’; and the life course perspective, which views retirement as a major life transition. As an after-the-fact caveat, this literature provided a valuable background for interpreting the data despite that some studies are from the nineties.

Transitioning into retirement can take several years, during which people’s perceptions of their life can change along key dimensions: social, psychological, physical and economic (Floyd et al., 1992; Hershey & Henkens, 2013; Loureiro, Mendes, Camarneiro, Silva, & Pedreiro, 2016). Navigating the retirement process is a complicated affair because prior attachments do not evaporate overnight (Bingham, 2016). Many faculty retirees want to remain involved and be of service. They have thoughts and ideas about education, their discipline and profession that could pay huge dividends for future practitioners (Fishman, 2012; MacLachlan, 2016). These thoughts tie in with the timing of the retirement decision, and the degree of volition (i.e., conscious choice, intent and decision).

Voluntary and involuntary retirement

One key aspect of retirement is whether the decision is voluntary or involuntary, with the latter linked to negative effects on health, the psyche and marital status (Floyd et al., 1992; Hershey & Henkens, 2013; Loureiro et al., 2016). Involuntary retirement is associated with both a very negative initial crisis period and negative long-term changes into retirement compared to those who retire of their own volition (Floyd et al., 1992). Even when retirement was mandatory, university professors tended to say they retired for reasons other than being forced to (54%) (i.e., involuntarily), including being able to afford retirement and wanting more leisure time (McMorrow & Baldwin, 1991).

Early, planned and delayed retirement

The timing of retirement is another issue, whether it be early, as planned (phased or immediate) or delayed. In Canada, where retirement at age 65 is no longer mandatory (as of 2006), a third of Canadian university faculty members are expected to work beyond the traditional 65 retirement age (MacLachlan, 2016). This number reaches 75% in the United States (Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America [TIAA], 2014), where half of all faculty members are aged 50 and older (Bland, Risbey, Berberet, & Brown, 2004). The United States revoked mandatory retirement in the 1990s (Rapoport, Finlay, & Hillan, 2015). Rapoport et al. (2015) recounted American literature that found that (a) less productive faculty members opt for early retirement, (b) most senior faculty members want to work post-retirement age, but few actually take the option, and (c) women faculty tend to retire when they are ready to not when expected to.

TIAA (2014) coined the term *reluctant retiree*, reporting that most (65%) American university faculty members were reluctant to retire desiring instead to work beyond the age of 67 because their work was intellectually stimulating. Their reluctance stemmed from being at a loss for what to do after life in the academy. Their job defined them and was a key source of their life satisfaction (83%).

Pragmatically, many (77%) professors were reluctant to retire because of financial uncertainty, and the loss of health insurance benefits (67%) (see Bland et al., 2004).

Some faculty members resist retirement because they are not done what they came to do; that is, they want to leave a legacy for their discipline, profession or institution (Ferren as cited in ACE-Sloan Projects on Faculty Career Flexibility, 2010; Maril, 2014). Some professors view retirement as disappearing from the university, discipline and profession or some combination. “The current retirement culture [within higher education] renders people marginalized and invisible” (Friedman & Cullinane, 2013, p. 8; see also Allison, Thomas, & Larschan, 2016). “When retirees are provided meaningful opportunities for engagement and the opportunity for a continued sense of belonging through teaching, research, mentorships, or consulting, retirement becomes ‘thinkable’ for hesitant faculty” (Friedman & Cullinane, 2013, p. 9).

Rapoport et al. (2015) profiled Canadian university professors who both delayed retirement and phased into early retirement. They delayed retirement because they (a) were at the peak of their career, in the center of their field, and still immersed in their work; (b) felt they still had a huge capacity for new thought, ideas, methods and technologies; (c) were fascinated with the sophisticated work of their graduate students; and (d) felt they themselves had many years ahead of academic productivity. On the other hand, professors said they phased into early retirement because they were experiencing either (a) inequities in the system or (b) disadvantageous changes in their work environment, or they (c) wanted to spend more time with family or (d) no longer enjoyed teaching.

A study conducted when American retirement was mandatory found that half (45%) of surveyed university professors said they retired because they had to. The other half said they retired because they either felt they could afford to or wanted more leisure time. They did not retire because of declining health, a reduced interest in teaching or scholarship, or because they wanted more time for intellectual activities (McMorrow & Baldwin, 1991). In another study, senior faculty members said they would consider retiring *early* if they felt they were not attaining their desired job performance, felt burned out, were dissatisfied with their work environment, or were unappreciated by their colleagues or the institution (Bland et al., 2004).

Maril (2014) observed that his academic age cohort tended to retire from university couched in feelings of anger about entitled students, negative trends in higher education, being under-recognised, and not being done yet. They drifted into a disillusioned retirement, losing touch with the discipline and lifelong colleagues. In contrast, Allison et al. (2016) painted a positive and affirmative academic retirement picture. Most of their “academic contemporaries [do not] admit to complete retirement. There are multiple kinds of semi-retirement [and] multiple retirement is the order of the day” Nonetheless, Allison et al. (2016) did recognise that professors have to let go and “let younger people get on with it.” Those who cannot let go of academia experience “the lingering effect.” They continue teaching, researching and working with students, years into their retirement years. The academic’s unique ‘life of the mind’ may help explain this pattern.

Unique ‘Life of the Mind’

The general public tends to retire due to job stress, employers’ pressure to leave, a desire to pursue their own interests, and health reasons, age, or other circumstances (Floyd et al., 1992). University faculty tend to match this profile but also have unique reasons for retiring, mostly related to research and scholarship, teaching, and service, to either continue or discontinue them. Retirement for this group is challenging because they live “‘the life of the mind’” (Working Group on Faculty Retirement, 2012, p. 25). For the most part, their work is cerebral, entailing the pursuit of intellectual activities. McMorrow and Baldwin (1991) found that the most common reason professors gave for not enjoying retirement was missing intellectual interactions and intellectual activities. Nearly a quarter century later, one of the greatest needs of retired faculty is *still* the need to exercise their intellect (Friedman & Cullinane, 2013).

The Home Economics dilemma

From a life course perspective, the context surrounding the transition into retirement is expected to affect people’s perceptions of retired life. People have been embedded in an organisational or work context for many years, replete with its own nuanced circumstances. Transitioning from this context

to another can boost or erode confidence in the retirement decision. Retirement is a critical life event (Floyd et al., 1992; Hershey & Henkens, 2013). In the case of home economics, this event is now critical to the life of the profession and the discipline as we know it.

Retirement also constitutes a significant role transition (Hershey & Henkens, 2013). For retiring home economics university professors, it means leaving the pivotal role of socialising the next generation (see McGregor, 2011). For those invested in this role, retirement could lead to a diminished sense of self-worth, and a reduced satisfaction with professional identity and disciplinary contributions. Transitioning to retirement means figuring out how to make a different or ongoing contribution and defining a new sense of purpose (Wharton University of Pennsylvania, 2016).

In this study, the term old guard infers to guardians of the profession whose long investment is of interest. Most old guard home economics practitioners were socialised to see themselves as working for the good of society and humanity by strengthening individuals and families as a social institution. They were taught the merits of drawing on three sources of information and insights to help people to identify and solve problems: (a) an interdisciplinary knowledge base, (b) the home economics knowledge base, and (c) the individual and family's knowing and perspectives. Especially with the advent of Brown and Paolucci's (1979) three systems of action concept, many home economists were taught to integrate these three ways of knowing so as to help people address their daily and perennial problems (McGregor, 2008, 2009).

For some home economists, the mantra of a holistic, integrated and interdisciplinary philosophy became their life's work, and shaped their self and professional identities. This is illustrated in the recently-edited collection about American home economics leaders (active and retired) who contributed to advancing the quality and impact of the profession (McFadden, Ball, & Wootton Booth, 2016). Opportunities to socialise upcoming generations to the old guard's professional philosophy and approach may be curtailed upon the baby boomers' retirement from higher education institutions. This curtailment has the potential to really threaten the profession.

This threat is exacerbated because home economics lacks an understanding of the evolution of its academic profession in a long time perspective. "An academic trajectory is the evolution of an individual academic from the moment of choosing his/her field of specialisation and decision to work in the academic market through his/her retirement" (Kuri, 2005, p.3). Future proofing the profession requires studies about home economists in retirement because their departure can be viewed as a loss or an opportunity for the profession and discipline.

Research questions

The growing trend of retiring home economics professors, in effect, the loss of the old guard, prompted the following research questions:

1. How do they feel about retiring from a profession and discipline that they have contributed to for most of their lives?
2. What does it mean to them that they will no longer be actively involved formally socialising the next generation of practitioners?

Conceptual framework

To address these research questions, Bingham's (2016) simple conceptualisation of retirement was used, called the *chains, stains and pains of retirement*. His approach was deemed relevant (despite its somewhat negative tenor) because the premise of this study was that retired home economists would be wrestling with life after university and their intense engagement with young professionals for so long. Although not designed for home economists specifically, Bingham's (2016) approach is used in this study as a way to explore their anticipated existential angst, defined as being anxious about one's existence (McGregor, 2015).

Bingham (2016) argued that *chains* limit or hold people back during their retirement. Chains can confine, bind and restrain people, and include fear, people, obligations, activities, places and possessions. *Stains* are carried forward from work into retirement, and can tint, inhibit or discolour relationships, and present uncomfortable challenges. Stains include sadness, resentment, bitterness, anger, anxiety and guilt. Retirement *pains* come about as a result of changes experienced when in

the new state of retirement. If something is painful, it is strongly unpleasant, troubling, distressful, even annoying or tedious. Examples of retirement pains include less money, too much time, the loss of work-related camaraderie, and struggles with spousal or partner reconnections (see Figure 1, developed for this study using Bingham's terminology and a thesaurus).

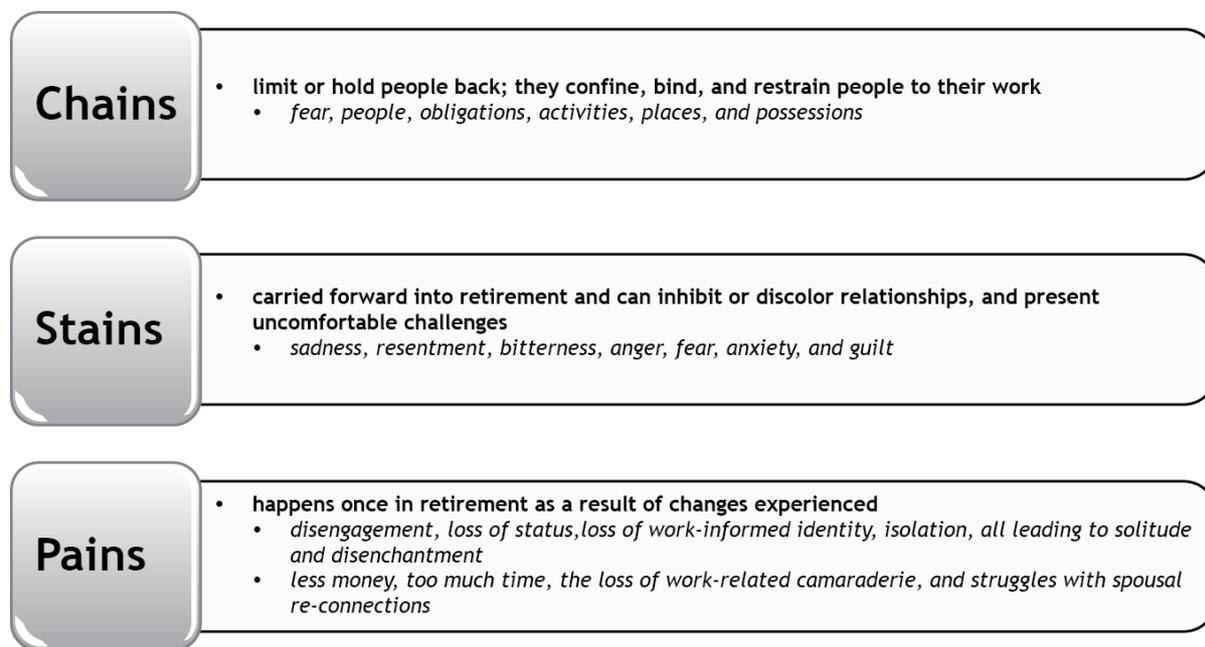


Figure 1 Bingham's (2016) chains, stains and pains conceptualization of retirement

Bingham (2016) assumed that being aware of the chains, stains and pains of retirement may help retirees make the most of their life after work by mitigating constraints, negative emotions and jarring changes. In order to deal with any possible existential angst in retirement, newly-retired university professors have to find ways to create meaning, discover new opportunities, make different contributions, and seek new measures of achievement and satisfaction once familiar signposts are removed (MacLachlan, 2016). Loureiro et al. (2016) agreed that retirement is a transition phase during which people have perceptions of gains and losses, and have to relearn and readapt. Losses include disengagement, loss of status, loss of work-informed identity, and isolation—all leading to solitude and disenchantment. Gains include improved quality of life and a sense of wellbeing, personal growth, more time with and for family and friends, and more leisure time as well as more focused time for research and scholarship (if desired), and community and cultural involvement.

Saeed and Sarwar (2016) identified nine combined factors that explained 65% of the variation of social issues experienced by retired faculty members in their study: retirement roles, depression, financial worries, adjustments, expectations, and changes in life responsibilities. All retirees will experience new rhythms to their lives, and will have to adjust and adapt accordingly along several dimensions: individual, marital (relational), family and community (Loureiro et al., 2016). Retired home economics university professors may also have to adjust along the dimensions of professional and disciplinary contributions, and they may have to deal with emotions attached to no longer being engaged with socialising the next generation. This is the first study of its kind for the home economics profession and discipline.

Method

This study employed a descriptive research design, desirable when little is known about a phenomenon (Dudovskiy, 2016). The results and findings cannot be generalised beyond the particular study, but they can be used to profile participants *in* the study (Blaxter, 2013; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009), thereby enabling the researcher to *describe* the situation more completely, laying the groundwork for future studies (Fox & Bayat, 2007).

Sampling and data collection

This positivistic, qualitative study employed purposive sampling, which involves selecting people on purpose because they can best provide information to answer the research questions (Patton, 2002). Using a blind carbon copy (BCC) email, 12 international retired home economists (six countries on two continents) known to the researcher were approached with a study invitation. This email contained a Word document that included 14 questions. There were 10 career and retirement decision-related questions as well as three open-ended questions informed by Bingham's (2016) conceptualization of retirement. For Questions 11-13, respondents were asked, for each of chain, stain and pain, a similar question. For example, "Using Bingham's model, please identify any *chains* that you feel are holding you back during your retirement as they pertain to professional and disciplinary chains, if any." The instrument concluded with an open-ended question - "Feel free to add additional comments about the topic of the impact on the future of home economics of the retirement of the baby boomer generation of interdisciplinary-oriented university professors." The design of the data collection instrument respected the open-ended approach of descriptive research (Fawcett & Downs, 1986).

Data were collected in June 2017. Invitees were given two weeks to return the completed WORD document by email. A reminder BCC email was sent after one week. This approach generated four completed surveys, with two invitees saying they would send their responses within the allotted time (one did). At the end of the two-week wait period, a total of five responses had been received. At that time, a BCC *thank you message* was sent. Upon receiving this note, two other invitees asked if they could complete the survey, explaining that they had been unavailable when the original invitation arrived (one did). Three of the retired invitees (all with active email accounts) never acknowledged receipt of the invitation (Canada, United States and Europe). One invitee opted out because she did not think she was retired yet.

In "purposive sampling the criterion [for response rates] is whether the realised net sample fulfills the researcher's objectives" (Schwarz, 2013, p.4). The final 50% response rate ($N = 6$) is considered good for email surveys (Sheehan, 2001; University of Texas at Austin, ca. 2010) and believed to be adequate to solicit data to address the research questions.

Data analysis

To deal with validity (i.e., not going beyond actual responses during data analysis due to the researcher's familiarity with the respondents), each respondent received a pseudonym before data analysis. On a whimsical note, each pseudonym echoed the name of a founding and/or influential home economist known around the world: *Ellen Swallow Richards*, *Marjorie Brown*, *Alice Ravenhill*, *Doris Badir*, *Dorothy Mitstifer*, and *Beatrice (Bea) Paolucci*. Merging the respondents' typed responses into one document yielded a 13-page, single-spaced, and typed dataset.

First, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and range), mainly Questions 1-10, presented as *General findings*. Then, responses to the three questions related to Bingham's (2016) conceptualization of retirement were amalgamated and presented as such, using direct quotations as evidence of findings. The same approach was used for Question 14, additional comments. These were presented as *Findings Related to Bingham's Conceptualization of Retirement*.

This procedure was followed with a thematic analysis of the amalgamated data from Questions 1-14, presented as *Findings from the Thematic Analysis*. One person (the author) repeatedly coded the data, achieving 90% intracoder reliability (Krippendorff, 1980). In this small sample, evidence of a theme included (a) a recurring idea that threaded its way through the data (albeit using different words), (b) the same words, phrases or sentences repeated across the data, (c) a few incidences occurring very forcefully, (d) a topic raised or discussed frequently, or (e) a large number of people expressing the same idea (Owen, 1984; Krueger, 1998; Morgan, 1998). This thematic evidence took the manifest form of direct respondents' quotes along with the researcher's interpretation of latent meanings (Aronson, 1994).

General findings

Table 1 reflects questions 2-9, focused on age at the time of the study, career profile, and retirement decisions (reported using descriptive statistics). This is followed with the findings for Question 10 pertaining to why they retired when and how they did.

Table 1 Responses to Questions 2 through 9: Age, Career Profile and Retirement Decisions

Numbered questions	Responses (n = 6)	
	Average	Range
2. What is your age?	69 years	62-75 years
3. How many years did you work in <i>higher education</i> (college, university, technical school) teaching home economics?	32 years	17-40 years
	Answer	n
4. Did you hold administrative positions in home economics (or related) units?	Yes	4
	No	1
	Unanswered	1
5. Did any of your courses pertain to (or contain sections on) the history and the philosophy of the profession/discipline?	Yes	6
	No	0
6. Would you say you personally employed and also taught students an interdisciplinary, integrative perspective?	Yes	4
	To some extent	2
	No	0
7. In what year did you retire (year and month)?	2009	1
	2012	2
	2014	1
	2016	2
8. Was your retirement decision voluntary or involuntary?	Voluntary	6
	Involuntary	0
9. Did you take an early, planned, or delayed retirement?	Early	0
	Planned	4
	Delayed	2

Final sample

The final sample frame comprised six female respondents from four countries (withheld to protect respondents' identities), with four from North America and two from Europe. Their average age was 69, ranging from 62 to 75. Respondents retired on average at age 64, meaning most had been retired about five years.

Career profile

Respondents had been home economics professors for an average of 32 years, ranging from 17-40. Most ($n = 4$) had both administrative and teaching experience (including Interim Chair, Director, and Dean). Virtually all ($n = 4$) respondents said they personally employed and taught from an interdisciplinary, integrated perspective, with two saying slightly or to some extent. The issue of interdisciplinarity came up several times in their answers to Questions 11-14, to be discussed. All (100%) respondents said they had taught courses about the philosophy and history of the profession/discipline, but the topic received nominal mention in the open-ended questions.

Retirement decision

Their average age at retirement was 64, ranging from 59-69. All (100%) respondents retired voluntarily, with most ($n = 4$) retiring when planned. Two delayed their retirement. No one took early retirement. Virtually all ($n = 5$) respondents had retired within the last five years, with half retiring in the spring/summer and two in the fall semester (one person did not complete this question). In

most instances, university professors are hired in the spring/summer semesters and retire the same month or semester they were hired.

Regarding fall retirements, Marjorie explained that she stayed until September so she could “finish work” with her students. Ellen explained that she retired in December upon nearing completion of her research project about the history of home economics. After serving in an administrative position for 15 years, she had made the decision to “retool’ to acquire information and strategies for doing historical research [which she conducted] during the next four years, prior to retirement [and continued to do so] for the first two years of retirement.”

Reasons for retirement

Regarding Question 10, respondents shared several common reasons for retiring when and how they did (see Table 2). Most respondents provided multiple reasons for retiring, with one respondent (Bea) giving a single reason, a state-offered retirement option. Ellen alone expressed a control sentiment. “Choosing this time to retire allowed me to be in control of these life transitions.” Marjorie said she “felt that it was the right time to go.” Ellen said “philosophically, I [was at] a good age at which to retire.” She was the only person who explicitly said she retired because she “had a comfortable retirement income.” No one else commented on their financial readiness for retirement. However, when discussing pains (changes) in retirement, Dorothy indicated that “I have less money and live on a tight budget.” Marjorie mentioned that she would like to “earn a little more money for myself [now that I am retired].”

Table 2 Reasons Given for Retiring Now

Reasons for retiring now	Responses
Research and Teaching	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no more research to do • wanted time to do research • teaching secondment was over • wanted to teach part-time in retirement so as to retain access to academic environment for research support 	
Younger generation	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • let the younger generation take over • make room for other academics in the pipeline • provide support for colleagues who are not retired 	
Be with husband (also retired), family, and friends	3
Opportunity to leave voluntarily	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state-wide special 5-year retirement plan option • chance to take Voluntary Redundancy (reduced salary followed with pension) 	
Health	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retired because she was healthy • had health issues 	
Take control of these life transitions	1
Could financially afford to retire	1

Two respondents took advantage of a system-offered retirement option. Bea clarified that “a special 5-year retirement plan was offered to all in the state [university] system and I took it.” Marjorie explained that she retired when she did “because there was an opportunity for voluntary redundancy (VR) which gave me a bonus of $\frac{3}{4}$ my annual salary, plus I could claim my pension and lump sum on retirement.”

The three most common reasons for retiring pertained to (a) research and teaching, (b) making room for the next generation, and (c) having time with family and friends, especially with husbands who were already retired (see Table 2). Regarding research and teaching, Alice said her “research projects had come to an end.” In contrast, Ellen looked at retirement as a time to do more research. “I wanted to do historical research in home economics/family and consumer sciences/human ecology at the

'end' of my career." Marjorie's exit route respected her "commitment and desire to still have access to the academic environment for ... what I planned to do next." This included writing a book.

Three respondents said they left higher education so the younger generation could take over or be supported. Alice expressly said it was "time for younger colleagues to take over." Ellen commented that "leaving a position leaves an opening for other individuals in the academic pipeline." From another perspective, Marjorie retired in such a way that she would still "have access to the academic environment for future support to my colleagues." Two retired for health reasons. Ellen retired because she "was healthy" and Dorothy retired because she "was having health issues."

Findings related to Bingham's Conceptualization of Retirement

The answers to the three questions related to Bingham's (2016) conceptualization of retirement are reported in this section, followed with the open-ended question. This is followed with the findings from a thematic analysis of the amalgamated data set. As a side note, those who held administrative positions during their careers tendered the longest answers to the questions about chains, stains and pains.

Chains in Home Economics retirement

As a reminder, Bingham (2016) proposed that chains limit or hold people back during their retirement. Two respondents said they were not experiencing chains. Alice said she could "not think of any chains" holding her back in retirement. Bea did not identify any chains holding her back *in* retirement but realised she *had* held herself back while working and "regretted not taking more risks during my career" (e.g., administrative positions, travel opportunities for research).

Two respondents identified obligations to the profession or to home economics colleagues as chains in their retirement. Marjorie said she felt an obligation to "my current colleagues as no-one will be reemployed to take our places and I do not wish a very successful course to fold. However, I do not feel that it is holding me back or confining me. I will admit however too much soul searching before I made the [retirement] decision." Doris clearly said "I feel some obligations to the profession. [...] Where I live there are few other home ec professionals at my level. I have a colleague with whom I work very closely, and if I did not participate to the extent that I am participating, some of the programs that we are involved in would not continue."

From a different perspective, Dorothy said her past experiences with fellow home economists were holding her back from joining associations in retirement. "I never got connected to the professional Association because at conferences I always find myself alone if I don't go with a friend. When you travel with Home Economists from your Country to international conferences and you are ignored because you are not part of the leadership or circle group you learn quickly to find other areas of interest. I find on both continents most leaders mostly pre-boomers and some boomers form a circle of groups that it is hard to penetrate... Based on the above I feel no chain to the organisation." Conversely, Ellen did not see these activities as chains in retirement. She said, "the obligations I had to organisations related to family and consumer sciences were of my own choosing." She still belongs to her national association.

Stains in Home Economics retirement

Bingham (2016) suggested that stains are carried forward from work into retirement and can tint, inhibit or discolour relationships and present uncomfortable challenges. Two respondents said they were not experiencing stains in retirement. To illustrate, Dorothy said "I am not bitter, angry or sad about it, therefore I have no stains. I have packaged the good skills and talents as a Home Economics and Family Studies Teacher into a Business."

The rest expressed issues that were staining and discolouring their retirement. Doris expressed futility or perhaps being put upon when she said "I feel like I have been holding the fort, so to speak, for home economics, with a couple of colleagues." The idiom 'holding down the fort' means taking care of something until someone comes back, assuming responsibility so as to maintain a secure position. Problems arise when people do not come back. Alice expressed "sadness regarding the development of the Department which was fused with Sportscience a couple of years after I left. Focus now very different than a human ecological one. Now on nutrition and sport performance. [I also feel]

resentment about how some conflicts between colleagues were settled over the years.” These emotions were still lingering into her retirement.

Ellen expressed regret, resentment, sadness and anxiety about a range of issues. “My major regret is that I did not begin advocating increased space and facilities for the College early in my appointment and was unable to move this to a priority in the campus plan. I feel some resentment toward the campus administration in place at the time and sadness that I did not aggressively push this issue. In the context of the broader profession and specifically AAFCS, I have some anxiety about the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge statements and when and how it would be appropriate to explore that conceptual framework as to current and future thinking and practice. This process should involve the philosophers of the profession as well as administrators and practitioners. Right now, there are not many philosophers in our ranks.”

Bea identified several competing stains or challenges. “The first year after retirement I was [still] wrapping things up including a SKYPE doctoral defense from another country and serving on university committees/institutes... There is occasional boredom [which] I think it is a normal part of retirement from an active, engaged career and choices to be made about what paths to choose going forward and whether this hybrid type of relationship I have with my former employer is the best way to continue.” On a more positive note, Bea said she is still giving “guest lectures at my home university and others. What is gratifying is picking and choosing the relationships to continue which in my case was a response to ‘we really need you’.” To counter the negativity of the stain concept in retirement, Ellen asked “Why not also consider the ‘gains’ carried into retirement?”

Pains in Home Economics retirement

Pains result from changes experienced *after* entering retirement (Bingham, 2016). All respondents identified pains in retirement. Bea expressed positive and negative changes. “I still get identified as a professor in several things that I do ... so the status continues, [but I] miss the structure and schedule of classes, on the other hand, like the freedom from grading and being able to travel.” Marjorie also commented on status. “I suppose I still like my status as visiting lecturer [and I] am developing a new identity for myself as a foodie/consultant/writer. This links in with ideally liking to ... retain status and identity.”

Like Bea, Dorothy expressed pros and cons to the changes she was experiencing in retirement. “I am still engaged with my department by teaching once [in] a while as a guest speaker. Go to lunch with friends but you feel the loss of status at certain circles. My relationship with my spouse has improved. Even though I have a lot of time and I am relaxed, I have less money and live on a tight budget... I don’t feel like going to conferences.”

Ellen also commented on her spouse, conferences and finances, but from a different perspective than Dorothy. Ellen said “My spouse is terrific... He attends some of the professional meetings with me and is supportive of the financial contributions we make to the Association as well as supporting various major gifts we have made to the universities where I earned my degrees or was employed.” Marjorie said her husband “is trying to organise my [time]. I am resisting... On the whole, it is working well and we are retaining our own identities and interests and he has always been very supportive of anything that I do.”

In line with the basic premise of this study, Doris said it pained her when she ran “into old home economists who complain at length that the new grads are not disciplined and have no knowledge. I feel these old home economists are very old-fashioned (they have been the ones who stopped at their bachelor’s degrees, most likely completed in the 60s and 70s. If you think the current crop of professionals is narrow-minded, you might talk to some of these women). They tend to be instrumental and knowledge-oriented, and they do not understand that home economics has changed.”

Ellen said “the greatest pain I have experienced recently is the death of people who were my mentors and colleagues. We shared experiences and commitments to our profession, and they often paved the way for my professional growth and achievements.” As with the stain concept, Ellen rejected the concept of pain in retirement. She said, “I do not feel disengaged from my profession. I miss the regular interaction with colleagues since moving to another state; however, I attend the meetings of the state affiliate of AAFCS here and have attended all the annual AAFCS conferences since my

retirement. I have had publications in [two FCS journals] since retiring. I have had more time to do the research and fine-tune those manuscripts, and most of the time I've had a co-author so I am still connected to colleagues and former students."

Like Ellen, Alice said she did not feel "pain but the opposite; how relevant the issues we worked with were... The necessity of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding these issues [is] now sort of rediscovered and recognized in other fields. That is ok. I feel proud over being involved a long time ago [with] such approaches in home economics."

Additional comments

Question 14 gave respondents a chance to add additional comments about the impact of the retirement of interdisciplinary-oriented university professors on the future of home economics. Five respondents answered this question, with Alice saying "I don't really know [what] you mean." Ellen's answer was "I have interspersed comments in previous sections that relate to this item. That's probably sufficient."

Marjorie still believed in the profession, saying "I feel that I have gained so much from my interdisciplinary profession and still wish to give something back." In an interesting twist, despite saying she "feels some obligation to the profession [and was] holding the fort [to keep her programs alive]," Doris said, "there are many more exciting things for women to do today than go into home economics."

Despite her belief in the profession, Marjorie expressed concerns about its future. "I am worried about the future of home economics as ... an interdisciplinary area... We need to retain visibility and not just fade away... I feel that whenever possible we still need to be involved in being influencers." She commented that the baby boomer professors who were "brought up in the [interdisciplinary] tradition have been fragmented by the increasing demands of the academic cross-cutting and cutting of courses in many institutions." To offset this fragmentation, she advocated for "some form of mentoring network... possibly under the aegis of the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE)." She also aspired to write a history of home economics in her country to aid in "reflecting on the changes but also considering what future for the subject field." Dorothy was more philosophical in her response, musing that "change is the only constant. Therefore with the boomers retiring the nature of Home economics too will change to meet current situation and needs which is different from the boomers and pre boomers time... I am sure all will be well if we plan well."

Findings from thematic analysis

An analysis of the amalgamated answers to Questions 1-14 (see previous section) revealed six themes related to the: premise of the study, future of the profession, role of interdisciplinarity, history and philosophy of the profession, academic engagement, and value to home economics of Bingham's (2016) conceptualization of retirement.

Premise of the study

Half of the respondents answered the questions in the survey without challenging the premise of the study (i.e., the threat to the home economics profession caused by mass retirement of professors who teach from an interdisciplinary perspective). However, the other half commented strongly and directly about the study's premise. Ellen agreed that "it is a spot-on statement about the demographic and philosophical transition ... of home economics/family and consumer sciences." Marjorie also embraced the study's premise when she acknowledged the peril created for the profession by the fragmentation of interdisciplinary-oriented programs.

Doris disagreed with part of the premise. "I do not agree that older home economists are interdisciplinary-oriented... Old home economists are very old-fashioned [and narrowminded] ... [Like them] I took my bachelor's degree in home economics in 1968 [but unlike them I did] study philosophy or history [in] my graduate degrees completed in 1991 and 2003." With her interdisciplinary and philosophical background, Doris lamented the future of her university's program, which she and a colleague are sustaining by working well into retirement with sessional teaching (five years and counting). If they personally withdraw from the program, the other part of the study's premise holds—there will be a threat to home economics caused by the retirement of professors who teach from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Future of the profession

A concern for the future of the profession was polarised. Respondents expressed hope and confidence in the future of the profession while acknowledging the harm of fragmentation and specialisation, and the lack of philosophical strength. Dorothy optimistically forecasted that “with the boomers retiring the nature of Home economics too will change to meet current situation and needs which is different from the boomers and pre boomers time... [All] will be well if we plan well.”

As did Dorothy, Ellen expressed hope for the future of the profession, saying “I hear about professors who continue to emphasize the integrative focus of human ecology and that their Millennial students ‘get it’ (they understand the connectivity and interdependent relationship)... It is inevitable that changes will be made, but I have confidence that there are enough current people teaching and mentoring students, and enough students who understand the philosophical foundation of the profession that it will endure.” Dorothy, however, cautioned that “we should include the [next generation] in identifying the needs and adapting the profession to meet their needs... We have to try to avoid imposing our ideas and values on [them and instead] guide them and help them to make right choices to create a new and strong Home Economics profession.”

Ellen spoke of “some anxiety about the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge statements.” Despite thinking it “would be appropriate to explore that conceptual framework as to current and future thinking and practice,” she acknowledged that “right now, there are not many philosophers in our ranks.” Marjorie said “I am worried about the future of home economics as... an interdisciplinary area [which has] been fragmented by the increasing demands of the academic cross-cutting and cutting of courses in many institutions.” Speaking about her own context, Alice said she felt “proud over being involved [with] interdisciplinary approaches in home economics” but at the same time expressed “sadness regarding the development of the Department [which used to embrace] a human ecological [focus].” Marjorie valued her interdisciplinary home economics background, and urged others to embrace the idea that “we need to retain visibility and not just fade away.”

Interdisciplinarity

Question 6 specifically asked respondents if they embraced and taught from an interdisciplinary, integrative perspective. Most answered yes (see Table 1) with the topic threaded throughout the data set. Alice recognised that “the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding these issues [has] now sort of [been] rediscovered and recognized in other fields. That is ok.” Ellen commented on this phenomenon as well. “There is a major push in institutions of higher education in the United States to do interdisciplinary work... Like so many of the historical concepts in home economics, other disciplines are ‘catching on’ and thinking these ideas originated in their field—when, in fact, home economics had this perspective all along.”

Marjorie said that despite having “gained so much from my interdisciplinary profession [I am] worried about the future of home economics as an interdisciplinary area.” Dorothy pushed the discussion in a new direction. “Instead of teaching interdisciplinary and integration, let us also teach interconnectedness of individuals and how to help the individuals to develop peace within so they can project it to their environment.”

History and philosophy of the profession and discipline

Question 5 asked respondents if any of their courses pertained to the history and philosophy of the profession. All said yes (see Table 1), but two discussed this topic in other questions, each from a different perspective. Dorothy said “I spent both my education and professional life as a Home Economist on two continents. I enjoyed teaching the mission the philosophy and interdisciplinary and integration of Home Economics. And [I] try to help my students to understand the mission and its application in family relationships and planning programs.”

From a less positive stance, Doris said “I took my bachelor’s degree in home economics in 1968 and I did not study any philosophy or history until my graduate degrees completed in 1991 and 2003.” With this foundational background under her belt, Doris now acknowledges “obligations to the profession” and is still teaching home economics part-time in retirement, “holding the fort, so to speak.” The author can personally attest to the strong philosophical and historical foundations of these programs, made possible by Doris and her colleague.

Ongoing academic engagement

Despite retiring on average five years ago, virtually all respondents were still actively engaged in sessional teaching, guest lectures and the like. Doris retired in June 2012 but is “still employed sessionally teaching [1-2 courses per year] in a home economics graduate program.” Bea (retired 2016) said she is “still involved [with] student interviews, awards, and research. I was on campus 2 days last week for meetings, also give guest lectures at my home university and others.” Marjorie (retired 2016) said she “decided to still carry on part-time teaching but not manage the masters course.” Dorothy (retired 2014) said she is “still engaged with my department by teaching once in a while as a guest speaker.”

Conceptualization of retirement for home economics

This study employed Bingham’s (2016) chain, stain and pain conceptualization of retirement (see Figure 1). Although most respondents did not take issue with this framing of retirement, both Marjorie and Ellen had concerns with the model’s negativity. Marjorie said “it is a very negative model—but usefully thought-provoking.” Ellen exclaimed that “I have a hard time relating to Bingham’s model—it couches retirement [in] totally negative terms. Does anything in his model address the positive benefits that come with retirement?” She questioned the validity of using Bingham’s (2016) model to understand home economists in retirement. “I disagree with the nearly total negative interpretation of the effects of retirement that are the essence of Bingham’s conceptualization... I’m surprised that you picked a model (Bingham’s paradigm) that is so negative... My responses to the discussion questions are probably weighted 95% positive and 5% negative, hardly consistent with his paradigm.” Other respondents may have had subliminal reactions to its negativity. Dorothy said, “I am not bitter, angry or sad about [retiring].” When answering the question about any pains experienced in retirement due to changes, Alice said, “This is not a pain but the opposite... I feel proud [to be] in home economics.”

Discussion

The discussion of the findings begins with a comparison of home economics retirees (see Table 2) relative to the general retirement literature. This is followed with a critique of the usefulness of using Bingham’s (2016) conceptualization of retirement to understand home economists in retirement, drawing on the thematic analysis. Study limitations are acknowledged followed with suggestions for future research.

Home Economics retirement profile compared to the literature

This study’s profile of academic home economists in retirement basically matched that of other academics. Regardless of the country in question, after working at university for an average of 32 years, respondents in this study primarily took voluntary, planned retirement at age 64. Canadian and American professors are expected to work beyond age 65 (MacLachlan, 2016; TIAA, 2014), and all four respondents from those countries fit that profile. No one took early retirement and no one left involuntarily. The two respondents who took advantage of a system-offer to retire sooner than expected framed their experience as a planned retirement. The overall tenor of the data set was positive, possibly explained by the voluntary retirement status of all respondents. Those who retire of their own volition experience more satisfaction with their decision (Floyd et al., 1992).

Three respondents indicated they were not done yet, and wanted to continue to influence the profession (ACE-Sloan Projects on Faculty Career Flexibility, 2010; Allison et al., 2016; Maril, 2014). To illustrate, Bea said, “I’ve chosen to stay active with colleagues around the world (most of whom are still employed).” No one said they retired because they did not want to teach, conduct research, or engage in scholarship anymore (McMorrow & Baldwin, 1991). Also, no one said they left because they felt unappreciated, were dissatisfied with work, or felt burnt out (Bland et al., 2004; Maril, 2014). No one said they held onto their position because it defined them or was a key part of their identity (Allison et al., 2016; TIAA, 2014). Instead, several respondents noted they were creating new identities, grounded in their home economics background (Allison et al., 2016; Wharton University of Pennsylvania, 2016).

Compared to the reasons *not* given for retirement, three of the stated reasons *for* retirement (see Table 2) paralleled other factors reflected in the literature, namely to a) wrap up or continue research and teaching, b) have more time with family (especially retired husbands) and friends, and c) make room for the next generation (Allison et al., 2016).

One person retired because of health issues. Another said she retired because she could afford to (Allison et al., 2016; McMorrow & Baldwin, 1991). Two respondents commented on the importance of retaining status as an academic. Two others spoke confidently about home economics retirees' ability to adapt and move forward (Allison et al., 2016; Friedman & Cullinane, 2013).

Given that virtually all of the respondents were still academically active (teaching, research, guest lectures, book writing), it seems logical to assume they were keen to continue with their 'life of the mind' (Working Group on Faculty Retirement, 2012). Ellen wrote a book, Marjorie aspires to write a book, and Bea continues to be involved with textbook writing. Doris is still teaching, which involves ongoing cerebral activity along many dimensions. Dorothy is using her home economics background in a new business, again an activity replete with intellectual engagement as well as business acumen (Allison et al., 2016).

It seems the home economists in this study loved their work but also valued the benefits of retirement (Allison et al., 2016; Loureiro et al., 2016). As Ellen put it, "My experience has been 95% positive. Retirement has been liberating for me, in part, because I could accomplish some of the professional goals I had not achieved while employed. In other occupations, people may be cut off from their workplace, but in a professional career setting such as academia and a career (professor/teacher) that encourages lifelong learning and service, there are many opportunities to continue to contribute and to grow."

Chains, Stains and Pains in Home Economics Retirement

By applying Bingham's (2016) conceptualization of retirement to this data set, an inaugural profile emerged of the chains, stains and pains of home economists in retirement. Only one person identified a chain that was holding her back—she was still teaching part-time in retirement because of a sense of obligation to the profession. Conversely, another person said she felt obligated to the profession but this was not holding her back in retirement. A third person intimated she *should* feel some obligation to the profession but did not. Now that she was retired, she did *not* feel chained to professional associations and did not want to attend their conferences. On the other hand, a fourth person said she valued her professional connections via associations and conferences while retired.

Respondents identified stains and pains in their retirement more so than chains. Stains can taint retirement. Collectively, the respondents expressed sadness, resentment, guilt, anxiety, worry, and doubt. These emotions were attached to such issues as (a) giving their life to university programs that will die without them, (b) not doing enough while employed to protect or prevent program loss and closures, (c) angsting over the lack of philosophical practitioners, and (d) worrying over the hybrid relationship they now have with their program and institution (a sort of transitional retirement limbo).

Collectively, respondents experienced an array of painful changes in retirement, including the (a) loss of structure and schedules, (b) potential changes to status and identity, (c) loss of regular collegial interaction, and (d) death of mentors and colleagues. One respondent said it pained her to (e) encounter the lingering cadre of "old home economists" who are wrongly judging the current generation. Overall, Bingham's (2016) conceptualization of retirement was useful for engendering insights from the study's participants. They experienced an array of challenging emotions (stains) and transitional pains, but to a lesser extent felt restrained in retirement (chains).

Unique home economics profile

As noted earlier, home economics lacks an understanding of the evolution of its academic profession in a long time perspective. This study revealed several unique characteristics of home economics academics in retirement, compared to the general retirement literature. Their issues included (a) the loss of university programs that socialise the next generation, (b) the lack of philosophers in our academic and administrative ranks, (c) a concern for the future of the profession due to fragmentation and specialisation, and (d) a strong sense of obligation to the discipline and profession. Respondents also commented on (e) the resurgence and rediscovery of interdisciplinarity by other

disciplines, something home economics has been doing for over a century. They saw this as a good thing.

No existential angst

One particular theme, expressed strongly by two respondents (Owen, 1984), opens the door for a conversation about understanding home economists in retirement. Both Marjorie and Ellen criticised Bingham's (2016) approach to retirement as far too negative. Although judged to be thought-provoking, they felt his model did not address the positive benefits of retirement. As a caveat, his conceptualisation was chosen because it mirrored the premise of this study—committed home economists who had given their life to an interdisciplinary profession would be deeply affected when they retired from active engagement, with fallout around their professional identity, sense of disciplinary contributions, and the future of the profession.

The two research questions reflected this premise or assumption. Question one focused on how they felt about retiring from a profession and a discipline they had contributed to for most of their lives. Question two asked what it meant to them that they would no longer be actively, formally, involved in socialising the next generation. Results (see Table 1) revealed that despite teaching home economics from an interdisciplinary and integrated perspective for an average of 32 years (including courses on the history and philosophy of the profession), virtually none ($n = 5$) of the respondents expressed qualms about retiring from their profession or being less involved in socialising the next generation (Doris was the exception). Yes, they experienced chains, strains and pains upon retiring, but the existential angst anticipated by the author did not materialise in this data set.

Most respondents answered the survey questions without challenging the study's clearly-stated assumption and premise, articulated at the beginning of the instrument: "The old guard of home economists (aged 55-77) were trained from an interdisciplinary, integrative perspective. They are now reaching retirement age *en masse* around the world, meaning the millennial generation will be socialised into the profession by people who are not home economists but are specialists instead. This study is about your opinions of the potential impact on the future of the profession and discipline of the retirement of interdisciplinary-oriented home economics university professors, yourself included."

The results suggest that most respondents totally enjoyed their careers and were equally enjoying retirement. Although several expressed concern for the future of the profession (due to fragmentation, specialisation, and philosophical lacuna), just as many (often the same people) envisioned hope and confidence for its future. They trusted those still in the academy to take care of the profession. With conviction, Ellen said, "I have confidence that there are enough current people teaching and mentoring students, and enough students who understand the philosophical foundation of the profession that it will endure." And to use her words again, Dorothy said "with the boomers retiring, the nature of Home economics too will change... [A]ll will be well if we plan well."

Limitations and recommended future research

If not for one respondent's very strong endorsement of the home economics dilemma driving this study, it would have been convenient to conclude that the author's underlying assumption was flawed. But Ellen, with 36 years experience as a home economics educator and administrator, affirmed that "I was intrigued by your introductory paragraph about the generation of professionals trained in the 'interdisciplinary, integrative perspective,' who are now retiring around the world. The current generation of students is being educated and encouraged in their identity as professionals—as 'specialists.' This is a spot-on statement about the demographic and philosophical transition (if not transformation) of home economics/family and consumer sciences." Accepting the study's premise as sound for now, the following suggestions for future research are tendered.

Upon reflection, the descriptive research design (email open-ended survey) may be problematic in its adequacy for generating the data needed to fully answer the research questions (Patton, 2002). The author is still convinced that some baby boomer retirees are experiencing existential angst. A follow-up study is recommended that employs a qualitative, interpretive research design. Focus groups or semi-structured interviews could be conducted using the same research questions. A thematic analysis could discern if similar issues and concerns arise, or if different information and insights emerge.

Another possibility is to have participants complete a diary or reflective journal for several years after entering retirement. Bea suggested a “follow up study in 5 years because the first year or two of retirement is all about adjusting and transitioning. Several of my friends have said they have nothing to do with their former employer/university after two years and don’t care to, not interested. Some drop it immediately.” Allison et al. (2016) concurred, noting that “there is a profound sense of completion in the act of leaving the field of play... There is no obligation for you to take up the bat again.”

Also, designers of future studies are encouraged to either (a) eschew Bingham’s (2016) negative-oriented approach to retirement, or (b) repeat it to see if others have the same push-back or ambivalence to its negativity. His model was useful for profiling home economists in retirement but resistance to its negativity was strong enough to warrant further examination. This study involved six purposively-selected respondents, reflecting a 50% response rate. Future efforts should have larger sample frames, and use purposive sampling combined with snowball sampling. In the latter, people already recruited suggest other people who are a good fit with the research question and so on until saturation. Despite achieving a 90% intracoder reliability coefficient, arranging for multiple coders would raise the possibility of more diverse interpretations of the results (Patton, 2002).

Finally, it was observed that those who held administrative positions during their careers tendered the longest answers to Questions 11-13 (i.e., chains, stains and pains). Future studies should focus on both administrators and regular faculty members and conduct comparative analyses. After all, administrators (Deans, Directors and Chairs) are in the political position to influence home economics and FCS programs in the future, so profiling their concerns seems prudent.

Conclusions

Although the retirement profile of the home economists in this study closely matched retirees in general, several unique features merit further examination, especially a concern for making room for the next generation juxtaposed against a sense of obligation to the profession and a concern for its future. The latter concern arises from the loss of programs, their fragmentation and specialisation, the lack of philosophical acumen, and the deaths of mentors and colleagues (and, by association, the loss of collective memory). Should researchers choose to engage with the home economics dilemma laid out in this study, they are encouraged to draw on conceptualisations or models of retirement that better balance the pros and cons. Ellen said it well: most home economists “are capable of redirecting their intellect and energies to other interests, pursuing current interests part-time, or moving and adjusting to new environments.”

Our reality is that an entire cohort of higher education home economics educators will be retiring over the next decade. This unprecedented exodus raises many concerns, with one being a reduction in the number of interdisciplinary, integrative generalists to socialise the next generation of practitioners. This inaugural study profiled a small sample of retired home economists from six countries on two continents, creating, for the first time, a home economist retirement profile. Per the constraints of a descriptive research design, these data describe only these six respondents. But, the study enabled the researcher to *describe* the situation more completely and lay the groundwork for future studies (Fox & Bayat, 2007). In the future, researchers could add questions focused on gaining context for each respondent. What portion of their career was spent as an administrator? How long had they been at their most recent university and was it a growing program or under threat? What legacy do they think they left personally?

Future proofing the profession (Pendergast, 2009) depends on gathering more data from retirees (Kuri, 2005). If other studies show that home economists leaving the professoriate do not have professional qualms about doing so, then assumptions may have to be redrawn about ‘the greying of home economics’ and its disciplinary impact. Maybe it is a time of opportunity instead of existential loss and dooms-day thinking. Dorothy’s words again ring true. She said that “with the boomers retiring the nature of Home economics too will change to meet [the] current situation and needs which is different from the boomers and pre boomers’ time... [A]ll will be well if we plan well.” Ellen, with 36 years experience in the academe, was hopeful as well. “It is inevitable that changes will be made, but I have confidence that ... the profession will endure.”

Biography

Sue L. T. McGregor (PhD, IPHE, and Professor Emerita) is a Canadian home economist (nearly 50 years) retired from Mount Saint Vincent University. She has a keen interest in home economics philosophy and leadership (along with consumer studies, transdisciplinarity, and research paradigms and methodologies). Sue is the recipient of Kappa Omicron Nu's (KON) Marjorie M. Brown Distinguished Professor Award (for home economics leadership), and is Docent in Home Economics at the University of Helsinki. With Donna Pendergast (Australia) and Kaija Turkki (Finland), she co-edited (2012) *The Next 100 years: Creating Home Economics Futures*. She published *Understanding and Evaluating Research* (SAGE) in 2018. Her home economics scholarship is at www.consultmgregor.com.

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