

SECONDARY HOMEMAKING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES
TOWARDS SELF-DIRECTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

by

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SECONDARY HOMEMAKING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SELF-DIRECTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In order to lead a happy and a successful life, a person needs to be able to set his goals in life and direct his activities in such a way as to accomplish these goals, as nearly as is humanly possible in a day and age when many outside factors determine an individual's destiny. The mature person must be self-directive to have a full and creative life. This quality of self-direction is not an inherent trait but a learned process. Since schools may be very powerful in the development of self-direction, it seems of value for the home economics educator to find ways in which schools can help develop this quality.

Purpose of the Study

This problem was based on the premise that students grow towards maturity if they are surrounded by an atmosphere created by people willing to help them grow in responsibility for their own actions. In order to contribute to an understanding of teaching students to be self-directive, this thesis attempts to answer two questions:

1. What are some criteria which homemaking teachers can use to select learning experiences to help students become self-directive?
2. What attitudes do high school homemaking students have towards the kinds of learning experiences which should help them develop some ability to be self-directive?

The answer to the first question was derived from setting up tentative criteria based on educational literature and then having these criteria checked by home economists.

The second question was answered by having high school students check a device which was formulated to illustrate the criteria in terms of school experiences.

Limitations of the Problem

This study was limited in the following ways:

1. The data for answering the second question in the study were collected by means of the questionnaire method.
2. The sampling was confined to senior girls who were taking homemaking in classes at junior and/or senior level in 20 schools in the state of Oregon. These junior and senior classes may or may not have the prerequisite of two years of high school homemaking.
3. The findings of this questionnaire can only be applied to this particular group which may or may not be a representative sample of Oregon high school homemaking classes.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study five terms were used frequently--attitudes, beliefs, believe, criterion, learning experience, and self-directive. The writer used the meaning of these words as they were found in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (12) and in the Dictionary of Education (5) and adapted these meanings for use in this study.

Attitudes: The Dictionary of Education defines "attitude" as "a readiness to react towards or against some situation, person, or thing, in a particular manner, for example, with love or hate or fear or resentment, to be a particular degree of intensity." (5, p.48) This writer will use the term "attitude" as meaning a person's reaction towards or against a certain situation, person, or thing.

Beliefs: "Belief" is defined in the Dictionary of Education as "the acceptance of a proposition as true or of a situation or object as actually existent." (5, p.57) In this study the word "belief" was defined as accepting a proposition to be true. The words "attitudes" and "beliefs" will be used interchangeably because whereas "attitude" denotes action, the word "belief" also implies action. The words "believe" and "belief" were used throughout the questionnaire.

Believe: Webster defines the verb "believe" as meaning "to think; to judge." (12, p.79) In this study the verb "believe" will mean to think about or judge a certain situation, person, or thing.

Criterion: Webster's dictionary defines "criterion" as "A standard of judging; a rule or test by which anything is tried in forming a correct judgment respecting it." (12, p.197) In this study the writer used the word "criterion" as being a standard by which learning experiences can be judged.

Learning Experience: The Dictionary of Education defines a "learning experience" as "a purposeful activity that has meaning to students at their developmental level, carried through to completion and evaluated." (5, p.214) This is the definition to be used here.

Self-directive: The definition for the word "direct" is given in Webster's dictionary as "1. Serving or qualified to direct. 2. Amenable to direction. 3. Serving to point direction. 4. To point out to (one) the right way or road. 5. To regulate the activities or course of; specif., to govern or control; to give guidance to." (12, p.234)

"Self" is defined as "having its own or a single nature or character...a being in the relations to its own identity. Personal interest or advantage." (12, p.767)

Putting these two words together would result in the word "self-directive" being defined as the personal regulation of activities for the individual's welfare and for the welfare of the group.

Method of Procedure

In order for teachers to help students develop the quality of self-direction, some guides need to be found. To help accomplish this task, it was decided to formulate a list of criteria which teachers could use in setting up learning experiences that would move their students in the direction of becoming self-directive.

Criteria to be Used by Homemaking Teachers

A list of criteria which seemed necessary for the development of self-directive students was formulated and the criteria were combined into the five groupings which are given below.

1. Administrative Organization Related to the Homemaking Department: This group includes those criteria which have to do with the executive planning and management of the homemaking department.
2. Learning Climate in the Homemaking Department: This group includes those criteria which describe

classroom atmosphere conducive to self-direction in students.

3. Beliefs of the Homemaking Teacher: This group includes self-directive learning experiences which homemaking teachers accept as being true.
4. Group-Individual Relationships within the Homemaking Class: This group includes those criteria concerned with the individual student's relationship with the teacher and the rest of the class.
5. The Emphasis on Teaching Homemaking Students to Think Effectively: This group includes those criteria which stress the importance of effective thinking for self-directive students in order to realize problems that are present and to be able to solve them.

After the topic headings of the criteria were decided upon, the criteria were studied and categorized under the correct title.

Evaluation of Criteria

A jury of judges composed of 15 Home Economics Educationists was chosen to evaluate this list of criteria by checking a device which showed whether or not the judge believed each statement in the list was or was not a criterion for helping a student to be self-directive. These 15

educationists included some present graduate students and faculty in the School of Home Economics and School of Education, Oregon State University, along with past graduate students and the State Supervisors of Homemaking Education in Oregon.

A letter was prepared to accompany this evaluative device. This letter explained how these criteria were formed and the reason why they were formulated. It asked that suggestions or criticisms be made with regard to additions or deletions, questioning of clarity, or rewording, and most important by far, their reactions as to whether or not each statement was a criterion. After evaluating the criteria listed, the judge was asked to list any criterion she believed should be included in the list and to give the category under which it should be stated. Other comments that the judge might wish to make were requested.

Upon the return of these criteria, they were again thoroughly studied in view of the answers given by the jury of judges; and a revised list of criteria was made. Because so very few changes in the list were suggested, these criteria were accepted with very few minor changes and without having a larger group react to them.

Determining Students' Attitudes Towards Self-Directive Learning Experiences

The writer then prepared a device to find the attitudes that high school students had towards the kinds of learning experiences which should help them develop some ability to be self-directive.

It was decided that each criterion should have two illustrations of learning experiences for students to answer. If the student answered "yes" to the first illustration, this would indicate going towards self-direction. In the second illustration a "yes" answer would indicate little or no desire to be self-directive. These illustrations were gathered from classroom practices which the writer had observed in the past and believed fit the situation. In this device the students would be asked to answer "yes" or "no" according to what they believed about each statement. In this way the writer could determine the attitudes that students have towards learning experiences which help them develop some ability to be self-directive.

After these illustrations were decided upon, a trial run was made of the device. The people included in this trial run primarily consisted of high school teachers and home economics educators. Most of them had been sent the criteria to be evaluated, so they were familiar with the study.

The letter (Appendix A) which accompanied the trial run of this device defined the purpose of the device as one to determine students' attitudes towards some activities which might be considered as helping students become self-directive. The people were asked to evaluate the device by checking whether each statement would or would not show self-direction. They were also asked whether or not each statement described the criterion. For convenience in checking the illustrations, a list of the criteria was included.

The results from this device indicated the need for many changes. New illustrations were developed and the wording of many of the original illustrations was changed.

On the questionnaire (Appendix A) to be used by the students, these illustrations did not appear in the same order that they did when they were sent on the trial run. The numbers of the 32 illustrations were written on pieces of paper, folded, put into a bowl, and then drawn out one at a time. This determined the random order of the statements as they appeared on the questionnaire that the students answered.

The directions written on the questionnaire asked that the students place a check mark in the space which they believed better answered the question. The students were told to check the list as they believed regardless of

whether or not the item could be done or was done in their school. The directions indicated that there was no right or wrong answer to any of the questions and that it was important to answer all questions.

Students answering the questionnaire were asked to indicate how many years they had enrolled in homemaking and their future plans after high school. The questionnaire provided a space for free response of the first item and for the second, three items were listed to be checked. These were titled 1. School (nursing, beauty, business, college); 2. Married by September 1962; 3. Work.

Requests were sent (Appendix A) to 30 homemaking teachers in Oregon asking them if they would have their students fill out a questionnaire. This letter explained that the questionnaire was designed to determine students' attitudes towards some activities which might be considered as helping students become self-directive. The letter said that it would take no more than 15 minutes for the students to answer the questionnaire. The recipients of this letter were asked to answer "yes" or "no" to two questions--

1. I will be glad to have my classes participate,
2. The administrator of the school has given his permission for us to participate in this study.

The teachers were also asked what number of questionnaires were needed for each senior girl in the advanced homemaking class to have one.

Answers were received from 22 teachers and only two of them said that they could not participate in the study because they did not have an advanced homemaking class. Eight teachers did not answer the letter, and it was learned that one of these teachers did not have an advanced homemaking class. The total number of questionnaires (Appendix A) and the letter of directions (Appendix A) were mailed. This letter of directions to the teachers asked that the students put a check mark in the "yes" space or the "no" space in the left hand margin before each question. Since some items might not apply to every school, the students were to be instructed to answer each statement according to what they believed should be done and not necessarily what was being done. The importance for the students to answer all questions on the questionnaire and that they should not be allowed to discuss the questions before answering them was emphasized. The individual's attitudes rather than the group's attitudes about each statement were desired. Because the students might hesitate to answer some of the questions truthfully if the teacher read the answers, it was suggested that a student volunteer be asked to collect the papers and seal them in the enclosed envelope.

The 20 teachers who had their students participate in this study returned 383 of the 450 questionnaires that they had asked for. It was found that 30 of these 383

questionnaires could not be used because they either were not complete or had been answered in such a way as to make them irregular. For example, several students answered both "yes" and "no" or answered down the center between the "yes" and "no" columns.

This study is based on the data gained from compiling the results of these 353 usable questionnaires.

Summary

The criteria to be used by the homemaking teacher were formulated and a jury of judges evaluated them. The writer prepared a questionnaire to determine students' attitudes towards self-directive learning experiences, and 20 teachers gave these questionnaires to their senior girls in advanced homemaking. The 353 usable questionnaires which were returned formed the basis for analyzing students' attitudes towards self-directive learning experiences.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Most of the literature concerning the teaching of high school students to be self-directive is written in general terms about all areas of high school subject matter or subject matter fields other than home economics. In spite of this fact, home economics teachers have been interested in and attempting to teach their students to be self-directive.

The writer believes that most of the literature in this field falls under five categories which she has stated in terms of the area of home economics. These five premises have become the framework for this review of literature, for the criteria which grew out of reviewing the literature and for the analysis of data.

1. The administrative organization of the school system affects the extent to which a homemaking teacher may allow students to be self-directive.
2. The learning climate in the homemaking department itself, regardless of the administrative organization of the school system, determines the extent to which students are able to become self-directive.
3. The homemaking teacher affects the students' desires to be self-directive by the methods of teaching she uses and her relationship with students.
4. The relationships between individual students, and between individual students and the group determine the ability of each student of the group to become self-directive.

5. Learning to think effectively is essential in order to learn to be self-directive.

These five premises have been restated in topical form in order that they may become the major considerations for this review of literature.

Administrative Organization Related to the Homemaking Department

Executive planning and management may affect the self-directive development of the students in a school. It is the planning and management of the school policies and the physical environment which allow this self-direction in students.

The Dictionary of Education defines "administrative organization" as "(1) the scheme or plan used in the assignment of duties and responsibilities and the determination of staff relationships so that all phases of operating a school system may be efficiently managed, produce maximum results in meeting educational objectives and result in optimum personnel relationships; (2) the personnel responsible for the management and the direction of the affairs of a school or school system, regarded collectively." (5, p.15)

This definition points out that administrative organization includes the entire planning and management of the school which is done by the school administrators. These

educators are responsible for planning and directing all of the affairs of their school systems. Duties and responsibilities need to be assigned to the staff, and relationships between staff members should be determined. Administrative organization is the term for the over-all executive management of the school.

It has been said that

education is the process of making and preventing changes in human beings. These changes are made in individuals. The process of making these changes is to adjust the individual to certain phases of his environment and to give the individual the power to change the environment in such a way as to meet his need. (6, p.50-51)

The administrative organization of the school and of the homemaking department set the environment in which the student is placed to learn. The term, administrative organization of a school, in its broadest sense should not only include the physical environment of the school itself, the room plan of the homemaking department, and also the equipment and resources available but more importantly, this environment includes the policies set down by the school board, the building principal, and the classroom teachers.

If homemaking teachers believe in students being self-directive, they probably will want to follow, as closely as the administrative organization of the school will allow, Knowles' belief that

In order that problems be problems to the learner, it is significant that the goals of the broad learning quest be set by the learner. It is also significant that the learner participates in the organization of the total learning situation. (7, p.60)

Homemaking students can gain in self-direction by helping to set the goals for their homemaking classes, suggesting ways of accomplishing these goals, discovering and using resources to accomplish the goals, and helping to evaluate how nearly the goals were reached. These self-directive actions of students, however, need to be approved by the school administrative personnel.

Jones (6, p.50-51) recognizes the fact that students are in the midst of an environment of physical objects and physical forces and that other human beings known as society are included in this environment. He also recognizes that students should have the power to change this environment to fit their needs. This power to change entails being able to make choices.

Students may make choices and participate in the organization of the learning situation only if the physical environment permits them to do so. Students cannot plan to select and purchase the groceries for use in the homemaking department kitchens if there is no grocery store conveniently located to the school. Likewise, students cannot choose the grocery store at which they need to shop if they

come and go on buses. These, of course, are not only administrative policies but realities of the framework in which present day schools operate. Administrative plans for school purchases limit such activity of students. Such methods might be buying by requisition only, telephoning in school orders, or not providing teachers the time to take students shopping.

A multi-teacher department can limit choices with regard to units to be studied and space to be used. Students cannot elect to study yeast bread and plan to bake bread in the homemaking kitchens if another class is preparing meals at that time. The space and equipment provided in a homemaking department limit the number of students who can use it at one time.

Tyler (10), in speaking of conditions that are effective for learning, realizes the need for adequate and appropriate materials. Students learn to use a variety of resources only when a variety are provided and the teacher along with the administration allows them to be used. If the teacher always assigns specific pages to read in a given text in order to study a certain subject, the student is not apt to learn to use other references which would give additional information on the same subject. The student cannot learn to use a wide variety of resources if there are only a limited amount available. Learning to use

many kinds of resources may be affected by the audio visual aids that the school provides, the field trip opportunities which a community provides and which the school allows, and the items which local stores will allow a school to borrow and the school's policy about borrowing such items.

There are three criteria which are important to the administrative organization as related to the homemaking department. These are

1. The student participates in the organization of the learning situation.
2. The student is provided a physical environment which allows opportunities to make choices.
3. The student learns to use a variety of resources.

Learning Climate in the Homemaking Department

Webster's dictionary defines "climate" as "the trend of fundamental concepts and attitudes pervading a community, nation, or era." (12, p.154) The learning climate in the homemaking department is the atmosphere in the classroom which is conducive to helping a student grow towards maturity. This atmosphere is reflected by the attitudes of the teachers and administrators towards their students and the process by which learning is to take place in the classroom.

It is noted that

Much of what the school does will be done as a result of the type of emotional climate or atmosphere that is provided or developed within the classroom, in the counselor's office and in other areas where groups of students are brought together under the supervision of a person charged with the responsibility for their growth. Since it is in the classroom that students spend most of their school life, however, it is the classroom which bears the major responsibility for creating the environment where healthy emotional growth and maximum intellectual growth can occur. (2, p.95)

This learning climate may be either conducive to self-direction or it can hinder self-direction. The atmosphere may be one in which students feel free to help decide what will be studied in their homemaking classes, or it may be one in which students fear to suggest subjects which they wish to study individually or which they wish the class could study. This atmosphere is depicted in the way teachers act, by the facial expressions they use, by what they say and the way in which they say it, in the methods of teaching they use, and by the way they interact with their students and the relationships that are formed.

If students are to feel free to participate in decisions about the organization of their learning environment, they need to feel that they can make errors without harmful consequences. Teachers may consciously or unconsciously influence students' feelings about problem solving by the effect of grades on the situation, or by showing disapproval--a look on the face, a tone of voice, a gesture,

or a choice of words. When students attempt to solve problems by trying out alternative solutions, they are apt to make errors. They will find some solutions to problems work better than others. The students may not explore these alternative solutions to problems if they fear that harmful consequences will result.

Students need to be given many opportunities to make choices. An example might be the student who tries to solve the problem of finding her best way to put her hem in her skirt. If the teacher accepts only one kind of hem as being of good quality, the student will not try other methods of putting in a hem. If the teacher approves of different students trying out different ways, then the students feel secure in exploring alternative solutions to other problems. The students should feel a functional freedom in the classroom, and they should be unafraid to disagree with the teacher's or group's policies or values. (9)

Students can learn from their mistakes if they are not made to feel that they have failed because what they have done is not "right" in the teacher's eyes.

In a supportive classroom environment one can afford to make mistakes; he can afford to try. He can afford to take part in class discussions; to put forth a tentative answer; to advance a proposal for the solution of a problem. He can afford to be a part of a group which has for its goal exploring these ideas and possible solutions to problems. (2, p.92)

Teachers are responsible for setting up this supportive classroom environment for the students. In a supportive environment teachers will allow their students to make mistakes, because they realize that people often learn the most under such circumstances. When teachers have this kind of attitude about mistakes, students will feel free to try things out and accept their mistakes as learning experiences rather than failures. For example, the students will express their ideas in class if they think that the teachers will accept them as a contribution to be considered by the class. When the students' suggestions are passed off as unworthy to even be considered, teachers will find that they hesitate to express themselves.

Instead of supplying a supportive climate, teachers often cause anxiety in their students by applying pressure to the learning situation. More would be accomplished by teachers utilizing the motivation that is within their students. (2) A greater degree of satisfaction is gained from learning when the students learn because they are motivated from within. The students who recite back what teachers expect them to because they are compelled by outside forces gain little satisfaction; and if knowledge is gained, it may soon be forgotten or seldom be used.

All people hesitate to admit being ignorant and students feel the same way. Students fear to admit that they

do not know something, yet it is important for teachers to realize this so that these subjects may be studied. If the students fear to admit their lack of knowledge, how will teachers know what to teach? Waetjen (11) points out that teachers should present lessons so that the students are not insecure in admitting that they do not know something. Only when students recognize and express their need for greater understanding will the teachers be able to really help. An example is the high school student who does not really understand how her body is growing and developing. As the girl realizes how limited her knowledge is about the subject of body development, she may want to ask questions to satisfy her curiosity. Sometimes the girl hesitates to ask such questions because she does not want to admit how little she really knows about this subject, or she may hesitate to ask because the climate in the classroom tends to restrain such questions.

Teacher-made tests provide one way to measure knowledge about a subject, but the test results may not be valid. Waetjen (11) states that performance and anxiety have a correlation. A small amount of anxiety may be of help to students, but Waetjen (11) points out that the greater the anxiety is, the lower the performance will be. Adults may not realize when children have anxiety because they try to hide it. Certainly teachers should strive to eliminate

anxiety from the classroom situation if students are to become self-directive instead of trying to satisfy teachers.

Lessons, assignments, and projects which allow students to make choices help them to become self-directive. Making choices entails being allowed to make decisions. The mistake that many schools make is that students, as they progress through school, are allowed to make fewer and fewer choices and decisions. This point is emphasized by the statement

children are given the greatest opportunity to make decisions when they are least able, from the standpoint of experience, to make them. Succeeding school years, instead of increasing opportunities for choice, prescribe more and more the children's learning experiences. Too often the attitude of the school seems to move from the 'Let's find out' in primary classrooms to an exclusive 'What are the facts?' concern in the upper school grades. (2, p.87)

Some teachers think that students are incapable of choosing activities which are good for them; however, Combs contends that

Students will select what is good for their growth if they have a wide enough field of experiences and the opportunity to do so. This means more than the opportunity to elect a course, a club or activity. Opportunities will have to be carried into every aspect of the classroom so that the curriculum comes truly alive. It means freedom from threats, rewards and punishments developed to move the student toward the school's goals for him. It means a classroom environment and a school

atmosphere in which the student feels free to have his own ideas and express himself, to explore what he basically is and make his own selection of the stuff of growth in terms of what he finds. (2, p.90)

The goals of a school must be carefully planned to meet the needs of the students. If the school believes in students becoming self-directive, opportunities should be given the students to help plan their own curriculum. In order for students to be able to do this, they must explore and find out more about themselves and realize which learning experiences will best help them grow towards maturity.

Jones states

In an investigation recently conducted, some of the most brilliant high school students frankly stated that, in their opinion, teachers interfere with their study, and were a hindrance rather than a help. (6, p.115-116)

Undoubtedly these students had a desire to learn and the understanding of what they needed to learn, but they lacked the climate conducive to learning.

From the literature which was reviewed the writer evolved two criteria which are important to the learning climate in the homemaking department. These criteria are

1. The student feels free of anxiety or fear.
2. The student feels freedom in his learning environment to make choices.

Beliefs of the Homemaking Teacher

The beliefs of the homemaking teacher are those propositions which she accepts as being true. These beliefs are important in helping students become self-directive.

Self-directive students must see the relationship between their goals and the way they are going to accomplish them. They gain incentive through understanding the correlation between a task and a goal. They do not mind working if such work helps them attain the desired results. Clapp states, "Pupils should be conscious of the relationship between each task and the realization of a larger purpose."

(1, p.2)

Waetjen says

Another motivational difficulty in current education practices would be that incentives gain power primarily through the authority of the teacher rather than through the direct relationship between the task and goals of the learner. There is a constant external agent of gratification. It would be foolhardy indeed to anticipate that in another situation, outside the school, where the teacher is absent, the same motives would be operating.
(11, p.28)

Students who lean heavily upon their teachers to motivate them cannot become self-directive. They need to learn to motivate themselves through an interest in accomplishing personal goals. Neither can students become self-directive

if they can gain satisfaction for jobs well done only when they get approval from their teachers. As adults, present day students will not always get recognition for a job well done. Teachers need to prepare their students for the future and not just for the present. Then too, people need to gain self-satisfaction for completing those jobs which no one else may ever realize were done, consequently students need to learn to gain self-gratification in accomplishing tasks which fulfill personal goals.

Tyler says

Behavior that is satisfying to the person carrying it on tends to remain with him, become part of him, and in that sense is learned, while that which is dissatisfying or painful tends to be blotted out. (10)

This points to the fact that if knowledge learned is to be retained, goals must be made which are of personal value to the students and which give personal gratification.

From these concepts, two criteria which are important to the beliefs of the homemaking teacher in helping her students become self-directive are evolved. These criteria are

1. The student gains incentive through seeing a direct relationship between a task and his goal.
2. The student receives self-gratification in accomplishing a task which fulfills a personal goal.

Group-Individual Relationships
Within the Homemaking Class

"Group-individual relationships" means the way people in a group react to each other in a harmonious workable unit and also the way each individual feels as a member of a unit and as an individual apart from the unit. In this study one assumes a unit to be a class and an individual member, a student.

A class needs to function as a unit but at the same time allow for the individual needs of each student. A teacher should consider each individual in the group and not just think of the group en masse. Dewey (3) says that school rooms are set up to accommodate the masses which then hinders the development of the individual. He further states that

...Another thing that is suggested by these school rooms with their set desks is that everything is arranged for handling as large numbers of children as possible; for dealing with children en masse, as an aggregate of units; involving, again, that they be treated passively. The moment children act, they individualize themselves; they cease to be a mass and become the intensely distinctive being that we are acquainted with out of school, in the home, the family, on the playground, and in the neighborhood. (3, p.32-33)

If administrators, parents and teachers wish to help the individual develop as well as promote group relationships in the homemaking classroom, then the department needs to

be physically set up to do this. Teachers should be able to move the furnishings and equipment so that group activities can take place or so that individual activity is possible.

In order for students to feel they are members of a group and at the same time feel they are distinct individuals in the group, there must be good lines of communication. The students should feel free to communicate their personal needs and ideas to the group. Individuals need to be free to disagree with the group if they so desire. This self-expression of students should allow them to communicate their ideas to the group but not allow them to dominate the group.

Teachers work towards bringing about changes in their pupils. These changes do not occur in all pupils at the same time, nor in the same way, nor in the same amounts. (6) Each student is different from every other student. Because of this individuality, teachers need to think of a group as a collection of individuals and they should plan class activities to satisfy the needs of the individuals as they work within the group. (9) Not only should teachers realize that these differences exist within the group, but so should the students. The class should plan its goals, keeping these differences in mind. Waetjen (11) says that

a class must realize that one of the most important group goals is to facilitate the learning of all members.

Combs reinforces this idea by contributing

A teacher is not a director or coercer, but a situation provider; a kind of friendly representative of society, skilled in understanding people and able to create situations that set them free to become the very best they can. (2, p.90)

This writer believes that teachers have an obligation to provide situations from which students can learn and to guide students into realizing the learning experiences that can be gained. The best learning situations are those which help students want to grow towards maturity.

Clapp (1) describes successful teachers as those realizing that pupils learn only by their own efforts but who can secure and direct students to make maximum effort. Teachers cannot force students to learn; students must feel the need for learning and going about this task themselves. Teaching a subject does not mean that students have learned the subject, it only means the material is there to be learned if the students want to learn it and realize the importance for knowing it. In helping students learn, teachers should act as guides rather than as authoritarians. Students who have no guidance may be apt to flounder and may have little or no feeling of direction. In the case of more difficult complex tasks they are apt to give up before

they have a chance to succeed. It is not easy to guide the efforts of students as they work with complex problems.

(10) The tendency is strong to either have teacher-dominance or student-dominance rather than to set a structured framework in which students can use self-direction to attain their goals.

Dewey describes authoritarian teachers and tells how they may have become that way.

Teachers--and this holds especially of the stronger and better teachers--tend to rely upon their personal strong points to hold a child to his work, and thereby to substitute their personal influence for that of subject-matter as a motive for study. The teacher finds by experience that his own personality is often effective where the power of the subject to command attention is almost nil; then he utilizes the former more and more, until the pupil's relation to the teacher almost takes the place of his relation to the subject. In this way the teacher's personality may become a source of personal dependence and weakness, an influence that renders the pupil indifferent to the value of the subject for its own sake. (4, p.49-50)

Personal influence from teachers can help to enthuse or depress students. This personal influence is a part of the learning climate. The climate may be such that students become so intent upon pleasing their teachers that they only pursue those areas that are suggested by their teachers. Students must desire to learn about a subject and set

up activities from which they can learn if they are to be self-directive. Dewey says

The operation of the teacher's own mental habits tends, unless carefully watched and guided, to make a child a student of the teacher's peculiarities rather than of the subjects that he is supposed to study. His chief concern is to accommodate himself to what the teacher expects of him, rather than to devote himself energetically to the problems of subject-matter. 'Is this right?' comes to mean 'Will this answer or this process satisfy the teacher?'-- instead of meaning, 'Does it satisfy the inherent conditions of the problem?' (4, p.49-50)

Students should learn because they desire to grow toward maturation rather than because they want to please their teachers. It is a great responsibility for the teachers to see that students are not hindered from becoming self-directive because of the authoritarian personality of their teachers.

From the literature which was reviewed in this study, the writer evolved three criteria which are important to the group-individual relationships within the homemaking class. These criteria are

1. The student feels free to communicate his needs with those in his group.
2. The student feels he is a part of the group but also feels he is a distinct individual.
3. The student goes ahead by himself with learning activities with teacher guidance rather than teacher leadership.

The Emphasis on Teaching
Homemaking Students to Think Effectively

In order for a student to become self-directive he must be able to think effectively. To think effectively means to be able to reason out problems in such a way as to produce results desired by the student in accordance with the society within which he lives. Students cannot hope to adequately direct their own actions or solve their own problems unless they acquire the ability to think effectively.

There are many terms connected with the word "thinking" being used today. Some of these terms are

- Thinking effectively
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Problem solving
- Scientific method

There have been books written on these and much discussion was given to this by the Education Policies Commission last spring. They recommended that this become the major goal of education.

This study is concerned with self-direction in students. Before students can be self-directive, they must be able to plan their course of action and this entails thinking. They will need to think in such a way as to produce results which satisfy themselves and also fit into the society in which they live. Each student is just one

individual in a society, and he needs to be aware of how his actions may affect other people.

In order for students to think effectively and produce the desired results, they must employ systems of thinking. They must think critically about things and not just accept something at "face value". They should be able to be creative in their thinking so as to produce new and different results. They need to be able to apply the problem solving technique and the scientific method in order to find solutions to new problems.

Students who are self-directive in the classroom must be able to recognize problems that are present in a particular subject matter area and to think creatively about those problems in order to apply the problem solving methods. Whiting describes creative thinking as

That mental process in which past experience is combined and recombined, frequently with some distortion in such a fashion that one comes up with new patterns, new configurations, and new arrangements. (13, p.2)

There are three steps to creative thinking: 1. saturation, 2. incubation, and 3. illumination. (13) When trying to think creatively about a subject, students need to find all there is to know about the subject. Reading about the subject or listening to someone tell about it is not enough; the accumulation of knowledge about the subject is just the start. This knowledge must be culled over and

thought about over a period of time. Eventually these thoughts may combine into an order which makes a new creative idea.

In order for students to recognize problems, surely these students must have some curiosity as to what is going on around them. This curiosity should include the covert as well as the overt. Dewey says

An inert mind waits, as it were, for experiences to be imperiously forced upon it...the curious mind is constantly alert and exploring, seeking material for thought, as a vigorous and healthy body is on the qui vive for nutriment.
(4, p.30-31)

The exploring mind is a curious mind, and without this curiosity students would not even realize a problem existed. Teachers are responsible for arousing this curiosity. They need to give students something to be curious about. Many times teachers do not arouse curiosity within their students because they are too busy purveying facts and dispensing knowledge, in the form of minute facts which must be given back to the teacher in rote fashion. Knowledge can, however, be purveyed in such a manner as to arouse curiosity. (6) The teaching methods that are used will help to determine whether or not the students' curiosity will be stimulated. Perhaps the role that teachers play in arousing curiosity is best summarized by Dewey.

The teacher has usually more to learn than to teach. Rarely can he aspire to the office of kindling or even increasing it. His task is rather to keep alive the sacred spark of wonder and to fan the flame that already glows. His problem is to protect the spirit of inquiry, to keep it from becoming blase from overexcitement, wooden from routine, fossilized through dogmatic instruction, or dissipated by random exercise upon trivial things.
(4, p.33-34)

Students who explore and are curious will find many problems that need to be solved. In fact, all during life these students will find the need for being able to solve problems. If schools are preparing students to meet their future needs, emphasis should be on how to solve new problems.

The suggestion is made that students should be given considerable experience with unorganized materials and encouraged to state clearly the problems that arise from them. If students learn the process of how to solve problems, they learn far more than if they learn the solutions that other people have found to these same problems. The most important learning experience that students can have is to learn a method which enables them to solve their own problems. (8)

Problem solving entails realizing there is a problem, studying the problem, thinking of alternative solutions to the problem, trying out the solutions to the problem and

evaluating each solution to see which best fits the situation.

Dewey wrote that

If the person has some acquaintance with similar situations, if he has dealt with material of the same sort before, suggestions more or less apt and helpful are likely to arise. But unless there has been experience in some degree analogous, which may now be represented in imagination, confusion remains mere confusion. There is nothing upon which to draw in order to clarify it. Even when a child (or a grown-up) has a problem, to urge him to think when he has no prior experiences involving some of the same conditions, is wholly futile. If the suggestion that occurs is at once accepted, we have uncritical thinking, the minimum of reflection. To turn the thing over in mind, to reflect, means to hunt for additional evidence, for new data, that will develop the suggestion, and will either, as we say bear it out or else make obvious its absurdity and irrelevance. (4, p.12-13)

Past experiences and prior knowledge help students to solve new problems because they provide a basic foundation upon which to build. When applying past experiences to present situations, students need not accept them at once as the absolute answer. These experiences should be critically analyzed and studied in order to see how they should be changed to fit the new problem.

In helping students to become self-directive it is necessary to place an emphasis on teaching homemaking students to think effectively. Six criteria have been evolved by this writer which seem to fall into this category.

1. The student recognizes his own needs and problems.
2. By the use of the problem solving method, the student is able to work out new problems for himself.
3. The student uses a combination of past experience plus new learnings to solve problems pertaining to self.
4. The student develops an awareness to the covert as well as the overt things around him.
5. The student has curiosity.
6. The student uses creative thinking in solving a problem.

Summary

The literature shows that homemaking teachers who want their students to be self-directive must realize the importance of 1. the administrative organization related to the homemaking department, 2. the learning climate in the homemaking department, 3. the beliefs of the homemaking teacher, 4. the group-individual relationships within the homemaking class, and 5. the emphasis on teaching homemaking students to think effectively.

To help students become self-directive, the administrative organization of a school should provide opportunity for students to participate in the organization of the learning situation, to provide a physical environment which allows opportunities for choices, and to provide

opportunities for a wide use of resources. The executive planning and management of these opportunities help to develop self-directive students within the school.

The learning climate in the homemaking department facilitates changes in the responses or behaviors of students. Before students can become self-directive they need to feel freedom to operate in their own way as they make choices. Attitudes pervading in the learning environment may either be conducive to self-direction or hinder it.

Beliefs of homemaking teachers will affect their students. Teachers should help students see a direct relationship between their tasks and their goals. In realizing this relationship of task to goal they help give their students self-gratification when these tasks are accomplished.

Group-individual relations emphasize the individuals which make up a group. Self-directive students need to feel that they are distinct persons in a group with freedom to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. They should be able to work with either the group or as individuals pursuing their own academic interests. Students recognize that they require teacher guidance rather than teacher leadership.

To be self-directive, being able to think effectively is essential. Recognizing one's own problems and being able to solve them entails one aspect of being able to

think. Teachers play a big role in helping students to learn to think effectively.

Only through the cooperation of students, their parents, their teachers, and their school administrators all working together can students develop self-direction.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This study was made to determine the attitudes of senior homemaking students towards some learning experiences which help students become self-directive.

In order to determine these attitudes, this writer established criteria which aid in selecting learning experiences that help students become self-directive. After these criteria were determined and the learning experiences formulated, the data for this study were collected by use of the questionnaire method.

These data fall into groupings, as follows:

1. Background of participants.
 - a. Distribution of participants according to high schools.
 - b. Number of years enrolled in homemaking by participants.
 - c. Future plans for participants.
2. Attitudes of participants towards some self-directive learning experiences.
3. Attitudes of participants who had different kinds of future plans.
4. Attitudes of participants who had been enrolled in either one year or four years of homemaking.
5. Learning experiences that showed less than 67 per cent of the participants answering "yes" or "no".

The data collected from the questionnaire can only be applied to the particular group which answered this questionnaire. The group used in this study may or may not be a representative sample of high school homemaking classes. There was no attempt to determine this.

Background of Participants

Distribution of Participants According to High Schools

Table A (Appendix B) lists the names of the 20 Oregon schools which participated in this study. The questionnaires were given to only senior girls taking homemaking in classes at the junior and/or senior level in these 20 schools.

Four hundred and fifty questionnaires were sent to the 20 participating schools and 383 were returned, answered. The remaining 67 questionnaires were not returned. Out of the 383 which were returned, 353 or 92 per cent were usable. The 30 questionnaires which were not used either lacked answers to some of the statements or had some answers which could not be understood.

All of the questionnaires were usable from 13 of the schools and two schools had over 90 per cent of their questionnaires usable. Three schools had 80-90 per cent of their questionnaires usable, and two schools had 70-79 per cent usable questionnaires.

Number of Years Enrolled in Homemaking by Participants

To determine the influence of a different number of years of homemaking upon senior students' attitudes towards these self-directive learning experiences, it was important to know the number of years which students had been enrolled in homemaking.

The number of students enrolled in homemaking for one, two, three, four, five, or six years were listed according to participating schools (Table B, Appendix B).

Since the questionnaires were filled out in the middle of January, the school year 1961-62 was considered as one year of homemaking for which students had enrolled.

Out of the 353 usable questionnaires, four students indicated that they had been enrolled for just one-half year, one said she had been enrolled for one and one-half years, and one reported that she had been enrolled three and one-half years. Instead of making separate categories, these six participants were placed in the next category above their number of years enrolled in homemaking. For example, the four students who reported one-half year of homemaking were given credit for one year.

The questionnaires showed that 15 per cent of the students had been enrolled for one or less years of homemaking at the time these questionnaires were filled out; 16 per cent had been enrolled one and one-half or two years; 27

per cent had been enrolled three years; 35 per cent had been enrolled three and one-half or four years; and six per cent had been enrolled five years. Only one per cent had been enrolled six years.

The one category which had the largest percentage of students was the four-year category with 35 per cent. The one-year category combined with the two-year category equalled a total of 31 per cent. Only seven per cent had been enrolled for more than four years.

Out of the 20 schools participating, six schools had senior students in their advanced homemaking classes who had been enrolled one year or less. This showed that there were some schools which have girls in advanced homemaking who have had no prior training in a homemaking class.

The amount of previous training in formal homemaking classes may have implications for teachers in the way they plan the sequence of curriculum for their schools and for the administrative organization of setting up the classes.

Future Plans of Participants

In order to group the participants' future plans, the students were asked to check these items: 1. going to school next year, 2. getting married shortly after graduation, 3. working next year, or 4. a combination of these. Table C (Appendix B) was set up to analyze this information.

Almost three-fourths of the students planned to go to school next year--47 per cent planned to only go to school; two per cent planned to get married as well as go to school; 13 per cent planned to go to school and work; and two per cent planned to go to school, work, and get married. The analysis of these data also showed that 44 per cent of the girls planned to work at least part time, and only 17 per cent planned to get married before September. These data do not show what type of schooling these students planned to follow.

The striking feature of these data is that the largest percentage of girls participating in the study planned to go on to school and that the smallest percentage planned to get married. The statement is often made that homemaking is for the girls who plan to get married right away, not for the college bound girls. These data then may have implications for teachers as to learning experiences for senior students. They also raise the question as to the caliber of students that actually do take homemaking. Or they may equally well show that young people may answer questions in ways that they believe adults wish. A follow-up study would need to be made to determine how many of these seniors did seek further education.

Attitudes of Participants Towards
Some Self-Directive Learning Experiences

The data on students' attitudes towards some self-directive learning experiences are organized according to the five groupings of criteria and the criteria which fall into each grouping.

Each criterion, in turn, has two learning experiences which determine the attitudes of the students by the way the students judged them. The (a) learning experience listed under each criterion indicates going towards self-direction and the (b) learning experience indicates little or no desire to be self-directive.

The questionnaire was based on the assumption that students' answers to the 32 statements indicated their attitudes towards wanting to be self-directive or not wanting to be self-directive.

When students answered "yes" to learning experience (a), they had positive attitudes towards this self-directive learning experience; the "no" answers signified negative attitudes. When students answered "no" to learning experience (b), they had positive attitudes towards wanting a more self-directive learning experience; the "yes" answers signified negative answers. Positive attitudes to self-directive learning experiences were shown by "yes" answers on all (a) items and "no" answers on all (b)

items. The phrase "positive attitudes" will be used to indicate students' responses on the questionnaire which indicate going towards self-direction.

Administrative Organization of the Homemaking Department

Criteria concerning the administrative organization of the homemaking department consists of a group of three for which learning experiences were set up. Table D (Appendix B) was prepared to help analyze these data.

Criterion 1. The Student Participates in the Organization of the Learning Situation. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I think my teacher and I should decide how to do my home experiences.*
- (b) I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience.**

Learning experience (a) showed very little difference in the "yes" and "no" responses of the 353 students. Out of the 353 students, 51 per cent answered "yes" and 49 per cent answered "no". The students were either equally

*Each learning experience (a) indicates going towards self-direction. For a positive attitude towards self-direction, the student needs to answer "yes".

**Each learning experience (b) indicates little or no desire to be self-directive. For a positive attitude towards self-direction, the student needs to answer "no".

divided on their attitudes about this experience, or it may mean that this statement was a poor illustration of desire to be self-directive.

Learning experience (b), however, showed that 82 per cent of the students answered "no" to it while only 18 per cent answered "yes".

Criterion 2. The Student is Provided a Physical Environment Which Allows Opportunities to Make Choices. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like our homemaking room because we can rearrange it to fit what we are doing in class.
- (b) I think we should learn to work in the homemaking room without rearranging it.

With a response of 55 per cent yeses, learning experience (a) showed slightly more "yes" answers than "no" answers by the 353 students. Learning experience (b) showed only slightly more "no" answers than "yes" when 58 per cent of the 353 students answered negatively.

These two experiences did not show any clear difference as to students' attitudes towards self-directive learning experiences. Either the students were equally divided in their attitudes towards these experiences or the questions were poor.

Criterion 3. The Student Learns to Use a Variety of Resources. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.
- (b) I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.

Both learning experiences (a) and (b) showed that three-fourths of the 353 students had positive attitudes towards these self-directive learning experiences. Experience (a) showed 73 per cent "yes" answers and learning experience (b) showed 78 per cent "no" answers.

Learning Climate in the Homemaking Department

This group has two criteria for which learning experiences were set up. Table E (Appendix B) was prepared to help analyze these data which were gathered.

Criterion 4. The Student Feels Free of Anxiety or Fear. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I am glad the teacher does not get angry when I accidentally break something in the kitchen.
- (b) I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.

Out of the 353 usable questionnaires, 43 students did not answer the first statement because they had not had any experiences in the foods laboratory yet. These 43 answers (12 per cent) were put under the "No Answer" column in Table E (Appendix B). Of 353 students, 82 per cent of them answered learning experience (a) in the "yes" column and only a minor six per cent answered "no". For learning experience (b) 79 per cent showed "no" answers and only 21 per cent answered "yes". These percentages indicated that the students have positive attitudes towards these self-directive learning experiences.

Criterion 5. The Student Feels Freedom in His Learning Environment to Make Choices. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class.
- (b) I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our homemaking class.

For learning experience (a), 93 per cent of the students had positive attitudes and only a minor seven per cent had negative attitudes. For learning experience (b), 71 per cent had "no" answers and only 29 per cent had "yes" answers. The results of these two experiences indicated

that most of the students had positive attitudes towards these self-directive learning experiences.

Beliefs of the Homemaking Teacher

This group has two criteria for which learning experiences were set up. Table F (Appendix B) was prepared to help analyze these data which were gathered.

Criterion 6. The Student Gains Incentive Through Seeing a Direct Relationship Between a Task and His Goal. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to work on a homemaking assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.
- (b) I do not see why the homemaking teacher asks us to do certain assignments.

Ninety-two per cent of the students answered learning experience (a) in the affirmative and only eight per cent answered "no". Learning experience (b), however, was of questionable significance since 50 per cent answered "yes" and 50 per cent answered "no". Either the students were equally divided in their attitudes towards this experience or it was a poor question.

Criterion 7. The Student Receives Self-Gratification in Accomplishing a Task Which Fulfills a Personal Goal. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to make a garment that I know I will wear.
- (b) It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.

Out of the 353 usable questionnaires, 35 students (10 per cent) did not answer the statement about learning experience (a) because they had not had a sewing unit yet. Even without these 35 students, 87 per cent of the students had "yes" answers and only a negligible three per cent had "no" answers. For learning experience (b), most of the students, 90 per cent, had "no" answers. These figures showed that most of the students had positive attitudes about these learning experiences.

Group-Individual Relationships Within the Homemaking Class

This group has three criteria for which learning experiences were set up. Table G (Appendix B) was prepared to help analyze these data.

Criterion 8. The Student Feels Free to Communicate His Needs With Those in His Group. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.
- (b) I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.

For learning experience (a) there were 79 per cent who answered "yes" and only 21 per cent said "no". Learning experience (b) showed 86 per cent "no" answers and only 14 per cent answered "yes". These answers showed that most students' attitudes towards these self-directive learning experiences were positive.

Criterion 9. The Student Feels He Is a Part of the Group But at the Same Time Feels He Is a Distinct Individual. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.
- (b) I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.

Learning experience (a) showed that 88 per cent of the students answered "yes" and only 12 per cent answered "no". Learning experience (b) showed that 67 per cent answered "no" and 33 per cent answered "yes". Almost twice as many students answered "no" as did those that answered "yes" for learning experience (b). These percentages showed that most students had positive attitudes towards these learning experiences.

Criterion 10. The Student Goes Ahead by Himself With Learning Activities With Teacher Guidance Rather Than Teacher Leadership. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.
- (b) I wish the teacher would check everything I do to be sure I do not make a mistake.

Learning experience (a) showed 83 per cent of the students answered "yes" and only 17 per cent answered "no". Learning experience (b) showed little difference with 56 per cent that answered "no" and 44 per cent answered "yes". The answers did not clearly show whether the students' attitudes were divided equally or whether it was a poor question.

The Emphasis on Teaching Homemaking Students to Think Effectively

This group has six criteria for which learning experiences were set up. Table H (Appendix B) was prepared to help analyze these data which were gathered.

Criterion 11. The Student Recognizes His Own Needs and Problems. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.

- (b) I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.

Learning experience (a) had 92 per cent "yes" answers, and learning experience (b) had 89 per cent "no" answers. These high percentages definitely pointed towards desiring to be self-directive.

Criterion 12. The Student Is Able to Work Out New Problems for Himself by Using the Problem Solving Method. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to plan and do my class work with as little help as possible.
- (b) I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.

Learning experience (a) was quite close with 58 per cent "yes" answers as compared to 42 per cent "no" answers. Learning experience (b) had 73 per cent "no" answers and only 27 per cent "yes" answers.

Criterion 13. The Student Uses a Combination of Past Experience Plus New Learnings to Solve Problems Pertaining to Self. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.
- (b) I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.

Learning experience (a) had 93 per cent "yes" answers which was very high. Only seven per cent answered "no". Learning experience (b) had 67 per cent "no" answers and only 33 per cent "yes" answers.

Criterion 14. The Student Develops an Awareness to the Covert as well as the Overt Things Around Him.

The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I think I should be aware of how the homemaking room looks.
- (b) I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.

Learning experience (a) had a majority of 92 per cent "yes" answers and only eight per cent "no" answers. Learning experience (b) had 76 per cent "no" answers and only 24 per cent "yes" answers.

Criterion 15. The Student Has Curiosity. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I usually wonder why my classmates behave as they do.
- (b) I usually accept my classmates' behavior without question.

Neither learning experience (a) nor learning experience (b) showed much difference in their answers. Learning experience (a) had 58 per cent "yes" answers as compared to

42 per cent "no" answers. Learning experience (b) had 46 per cent "no" answers as compared to 54 per cent "yes" answers. Either the students' attitudes were equally divided on these experiences or the questions were poor.

Criterion 16. The Student Uses Creative Thinking in Solving a Problem. The two learning experiences for this criterion which students were to judge are

- (a) I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.
- (b) I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.

Learning experience (a) showed 87 per cent "yes" answers and only 13 per cent "no" answers. Learning experience (b) showed 87 per cent "no" answers and only 13 per cent "yes" answers.

Attitudes of Participants Who Had Different Kinds of Future Plans

Tables 1 and 2 were designed to find out whether the future plans of the students seemed to have any effect on the students' positive attitudes towards self-directive learning experiences. Positive attitudes towards self-direction, it needs to be remembered, were shown by either negative or positive responses depending on the particular question in the questionnaire.

In the preparation of these tables, the 353 usable questionnaires were sorted according to the future plans of the students which included 1. school; 2. married; 3. work; 4. school and married; 5. school and work; 6. married and work; 7. married, work, and school. All learning experiences from Tables D, E, F, G, and H (Appendix B) which showed 67 per cent or more of the students who expressed positive attitudes towards them were included in these tables. This means that 67 per cent or more answered "yes" to learning experience (a) and/or 67 per cent answered "no" to learning experience (b). Positive attitudes towards self-directive learning experiences were shown by "yes" answers on all (a) items and "no" answers on all (b) items. Twenty-four of the 32 learning experiences showed 67 per cent or more positive attitudes about self-directive learning activities. Tables 1 and 2 bring out the special groups' responses to these 24 learning experiences.

Out of the 353 participants, 164 planned to go to school next year; 81 planned to work; 45 planned to go to school and work; 25 planned to get married; 22 planned to get married and work; eight planned to go to school and get married; and eight planned to get married, work, and go to school. These figures are shown on Tables 1 and 2 in the body of the thesis and on Table C (Appendix B).

Table 1
Responses of Participants Who Plan to Go on to School

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Participants Answering Positively	School		School & Married		School & Work		School, Married & Work	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1b. I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience.	290	136	83	7	88	37	82	6	75
3a. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.	257	123	75	7	88	32	71	5	63
3b. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.	274	134	82	8	100	32	71	5	63
4a. I am glad the teacher does not get * angry when I accidentally break something in the kitchen.	289	140	85	6	75	41	91	5	63
4b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.	278	141	86	6	75	31	69	7	88
5a. I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class.	328	153	94	7	88	44	98	8	100
5b. I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our homemaking class.	249	115	70	6	75	37	82	4	50
6a. I like to work on a homemaking assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.	323	152	93	7	88	42	93	6	75

*43 out of the 353 students did not answer this question because they had not had a foods unit yet.

Table 1 (cont.)

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Participants Answering Positively	School		School & Married		School & Work		School, Married & Work	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
7a. I like to make a garment that I ** know I will wear.	307	143	87	6	75	43	96	6	75
7b. It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.	316	146	89	8	100	44	98	8	100
8a. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.	280	132	80	7	88	37	82	6	75
8b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.	304	151	92	6	75	40	89	6	75
9a. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.	311	153	93	7	88	43	96	6	75
9b. I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.	238	111	68	5	63	30	67	4	50
10a. I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.	292	136	83	8	100	39	87	7	88
11a. I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.	326	152	93	8	100	43	96	6	75
11b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.	314	150	91	8	100	40	89	8	100

**35 out of the 353 students did not answer this question because they had not had a sewing unit yet.

Table 1 (cont.)

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Participants Answering Positively	School		School & Married		School & Work		School, Married & Work	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
12b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.	256	129	79	6	75	32	71	7	88
13a. I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.	327	154	94	8	100	42	93	6	75
13b. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.	236	117	71	6	75	31	69	4	50
14a. I think I should be aware of how the homemaking room looks.	324	151	92	8	100	43	96	6	75
14b. I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.	269	139	85	8	100	30	67	6	75
16a. I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.	308	151	92	7	88	42	93	5	63
16b. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.	306	154	94	7	88	38	84	7	88
Total number of students	353	164		8		45		8	
Total number of statements in which 67 per cent or more of the students' attitudes were towards self-direction	24	24		24		24		24	
Total possible positive responses indicating attitudes towards self-direction	8472	3936		192		1080		192	
Total attitudes towards being self-directive of 353 participants according to their future plans	7002	3363	85	167	87	913	85	144	75

Table 2

Responses of Participants Who Plan to Marry, Work, or Both Marry and Work

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Participants Answering Positively	Marry		Work		Marry & Work	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1b. I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience.	290	19	76	67	83	18	82
3a. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.	257	18	72	53	65	19	86
3b. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.	274	18	72	61	75	16	73
4a. I am glad the teacher does not get angry * when I accidentally break something in the kitchen.	289	17	68	63	78	17	77
4b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.	278	19	76	57	70	17	77
5a. I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class.	328	23	92	75	93	18	82
5b. I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our home-making class.	249	19	76	56	69	12	55
6a. I like to work on a homemaking assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.	323	22	88	73	90	21	95
7a. I like to make a garment that I know I ** will wear.	307	20	80	69	85	20	91

*43 out of the 353 students did not answer this question because they had not had a foods unit yet.

**35 out of the 353 students did not answer this question because they had not had a sewing unit yet.

Table 2 (cont.)

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Par- ticipants Answering Positively	Marry		Work		Marry & Work	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
7b. It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.	316	18	72	70	86	22	100
8a. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.	280	15	60	70	86	13	59
8b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.	304	16	64	65	80	20	91
9a. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.	311	18	72	64	79	20	91
9b. I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.	238	21	84	51	63	16	73
10a. I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.	292	24	96	60	74	18	82
11a. I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.	326	22	88	76	94	19	86
11b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.	314	20	80	68	84	20	91
12b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.	256	13	52	51	63	18	82
13a. I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.	327	21	84	75	93	21	95
13b. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.	236	16	64	47	58	15	68

Table 2 (cont.)

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Par- ticipants Answering Positively	Marry		Work		Marry & Work	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
14a. I think I should be aware of how the homemaking room looks.	324	20	80	76	94	20	91
14b. I usually do not notice how my class- mates react to my ideas.	269	17	68	53	65	16	73
16a. I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.	308	17	68	66	81	20	91
16b. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.	306	17	68	65	80	18	82
Total number of students	353	25		81		22	
Total number of statements in which 67 per cent or more of the students' attitudes were towards self-direction	24	24		24		24	
Total possible positive responses indicating attitudes towards self-direction	8472	600		1944		528	
Total attitudes towards being self-directive of 353 participants according to their future plans	7002	450	75	1531	79	434	82

Learning experience number 4a, "I am glad the teacher does not get angry when I accidentally break something in the kitchen," had a total of 289 students who responded positively. There were 43 students who did not answer this question because they had not had a unit in this area of home economics. Learning experience 7a, "I like to make a garment that I know I will wear," had a total of 307 students who showed positive response. There were 35 students who did not answer this question because they had not had school work in this area.

Since there were 353 participants and each of them could have had a maximum of 24 positive responses towards these 24 learning experiences selected for Tables 1 and 2, there was a possible total of 8472 positive answers. Out of the 8472 total possible positive responses towards self-direction, there were 7002.

Participants Planning to Go to School

One hundred and sixty-four of the 353 participants' future plans were for school only. These 164 participants could each have answered 24 times in a positive manner towards these learning experiences selected for Table 1. There were 3363 or 85 per cent of the 3936 possible positive responses which indicated the students had attitudes towards self-direction.

Eight of these 353 participants planned next year to go to school as well as get married. Each of these eight participants might have had a maximum of 24 positive responses towards the 24 learning experiences selected for Table 1. Out of the 192 possibilities there were 167 or 87 per cent.

Of the 353 participants, 45 planned to go to school and work at the same time. It is possible for each of these 45 participants to have had 24 positive responses towards these selected learning experiences. Instead of the 1080 responses which might have indicated attitudes towards self-direction, there were 913 or 85 per cent.

There were eight of the 353 participants who indicated that they were going to get married, work, and go to school. A maximum expression of 24 positive attitudes by each of these eight participants would give a possible total of 192. Instead of 192 there were 144 or 75 per cent pointing towards positive attitudes.

Participants Planning to Get Married

Twenty-five of the 353 participants who planned to get married could each have had a maximum of 24 positive responses towards the learning experiences selected for Table 2. Instead of the 600 possibilities which indicated towards self-direction, there were 450 or 75 per cent.

Some students planned to combine work and marriage. The percentages of positive answers which showed self-direction for these students is included in the category of "Students Planning to Work" which is described later. The attitudes of those students who planned to go to school as well as get married were described previously in the section, "Students Planning to Go to School."

Participants Planning to Work

Eighty-one of the 353 participants planned to work next year. Each of these 81 participants could have reacted positively to the 24 statements which are included in Table 2. Out of the 1944 possible answers indicating to be self-directive, there were 1531 or 79 per cent of the group.

Of the 353 participants there were 22 who planned to get married and work. A maximum of 24 positive responses by each of these 22 participants would give a possible total of 528. Instead of 528 there were 434 or 82 per cent who had positive responses to the 24 statements on the questionnaire.

Range of Responses of the 353 Participants

When 353 participants were separated according to their future plans, there was some difference shown in

their responses towards being self-directive. The range of these responses towards being self-directive was from 75 per cent to 87 per cent. Most of the large group of participants who said they had school somewhere in their plans, checked 24 statements on the questionnaire in such a way as to indicate that about 85 per cent of their responses tended towards self-direction. The small group of eight participants who planned to go to school, marry, and work had a lower positive response of 75 per cent. The group who planned to marry also had a lower response of 75 per cent positive attitudes towards self-direction, whereas the group who planned to work only were slightly higher with a 79 per cent response and the group who planned to marry and work showed 82 per cent.

Within each of the four categories--school; school and married; school and work; married, work, and school--the percentage of students who showed positive responses to attitudes towards self-direction differed with the particular statement which was being judged.

The participants who had planned only to go to school showed among the 24 statements percentages ranging from 68 to 94 (Table 1). Six of the learning experiences showed 68-80 per cent of the participants responding in a positive manner, eight showed 81-90 per cent and 10 had 91-100 per cent.

The group planning to only marry had positive responses to these 24 learning experiences ranging from 52 to 96 per cent. Eight learning experiences had percentages ranging from 50-70, 10 ranged from 71-80, four ranged from 81-90, and two ranged from 91-100.

The group planning to work only showed positive responses to these 24 learning experiences ranging from 58 to 94 per cent. Seven of these 24 learning experiences ranged from 58-70 per cent, six were from 71-80, seven ranged from 81-90 and four from 91-100.

The data for these 24 learning experiences on Tables 1 and 2 were compared to the data found on Tables D, E, F, G, and H (Appendix B). An analysis of these data showed that the percentage of positive responses for each of these learning experiences by the group which planned to go to school was usually higher than the percentage for the same learning experience by the total group. Those categories which included work, marriage, or a combination of them more often had a lower response for each of these learning experiences as compared to the response by the total group. There is no great difference but it is worthy to recognize that there is some difference.

In the category of the students who plan to marry, 21 of the 24 statements showed a lower percentage of positive responses than shown by the total group. The participants

who planned to work had 18 of the 24 statements which were lower than the total group's percentages.

Attitudes of Participants Who Had Been Enrolled
in Either One Year or Four Years of Homemaking

Table 3 was designed to find out whether the number of years that students had enrolled in homemaking seemed to have any effect on the students' positive attitudes towards self-directive learning experiences.

The 353 usable questionnaires were sorted according to the number of years the participants had enrolled in homemaking. Many students have one year of homemaking in high school. If girls so desired and if it were advisable for them to do so, they could enroll for four years in many school systems. The responses of these two groups were compared with each other and with the total group.

All learning experiences from Tables D, E, F, G, and H (Appendix B) that showed 67 per cent or more of the students having positive attitudes towards them were included in this table. Twenty-four of the 32 learning experiences showed that the 353 participants had 67 per cent or more positive responses by answering "yes" to all (a) items and "no" to all (b) items. The positive responses towards these 24 learning experiences were categorized on Table 3 according to those students who had enrolled for one year of homemaking and those who had enrolled for four years.

Fifty-one of the 353 participants had enrolled for one year and 125 had enrolled for four years. These figures are found on Table 3 and Table B (Appendix B).

The 51 participants who had enrolled in homemaking for one year could each have had a maximum of 24 positive attitudes towards these learning experiences in this table. Out of the 1224 possible responses indicating desire to go towards self-direction, there were 971 or 79 per cent.

Each of the 125 students who had enrolled in homemaking for four years could have had a maximum of 24 positive responses which expressed attitudes towards these selected learning experiences. Instead of the total 3000 possibilities towards self-direction, there were 2505 or 84 per cent.

Whether the 353 participants had one year or four years of homemaking did not seem to make any great difference in their attitudes towards self-direction.

The percentages of attitudes did vary according to the learning experiences judged in each category. The attitudes of those participants enrolled in one year of homemaking varied from 59 to 94 per cent according to the learning experience. The category of four-year enrollment showed percentages from 68 to 99.

The data for these 24 learning experiences on Table 3 were compared to the data found on Tables D, E, F, G, and H

Table 3

Responses of Participants Who Have Been Enrolled in Homemaking
for Either One or Four Years

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Par- ticipants Answering Positively	Years of Homemaking			
		1 Year		4 Years	
		No.	%	No.	%
1b. I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience.	290	34	67	105	84
3a. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.	257	34	67	88	70
3b. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.	274	35	69	98	78
4a. I am glad the teacher does not get angry when * I accidentally break something in the kitchen.	289	36	71	108	86
4b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.	278	43	84	89	71
5a. I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class.	328	44	86	124	99
5b. I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our homemaking class.	249	30	59	97	78
6a. I like to work on a homemaking assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.	323	45	88	120	96
7a. I like to make a garment that I know I will ** wear.	307	46	90	107	86

*43 out of the 353 students did not answer this question because they had not had a foods unit yet.

**35 out of the 353 students did not answer this question because they had not had a sewing unit yet.

Table 3 (cont.)

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Par- ticipants Answering Positively	Years of Homemaking			
		1 Year		4 Years	
		No.	%	No.	%
7b. It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.	316	41	80	116	93
8a. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.	280	40	78	94	75
8b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.	304	46	90	102	82
9a. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.	311	45	88	109	87
9b. I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.	238	32	63	86	68
10a. I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.	292	39	76	106	85
11a. I usually know in what areas of my home- making class I need more practice.	326	48	94	116	93
11b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.	314	46	90	107	86
12b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.	256	39	76	86	69
13a. I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.	327	44	86	117	94
13b. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.	236	36	71	99	79

Table 3 (cont.)

Learning Experiences Towards Which at Least 67 Per Cent of 353 Participants Showed Positive Attitudes	Total Participants Answering Positively	Years of Homemaking			
		1 Year		4 Years	
		No.	%	No.	%
14a. I think I should be aware of how the homemaking room looks.	324	44	86	116	93
14b. I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.	269	38	75	89	71
16a. I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.	308	41	80	113	90
16b. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.	306	45	88	113	90
Total number of students	353	51		125	
Total number of statements in which 67 per cent or more of the students' attitudes were towards self-direction	24	24		24	
Total possible positive responses indicating attitudes towards self-direction	8472	1224		3000	
Total attitudes towards being self-directive of 353 participants according to the number of years enrolled in homemaking	7002	971	79	2505	84

(Appendix B). When the responses of the 51 participants who had had one year of homemaking were compared to the responses of the 353 participants, it was evident that for 16 of the 24 learning experiences the percentages which indicated desire to be self-directive were slightly less than for the total group.

Eight of the learning experiences on Table 3, however, showed that the participants who had one year of homemaking had a slightly higher percentage of positive responses to them than did the total number of participants. These eight learning experiences were

- 4b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.
- 7a. I like to make a garment that I know I will wear.
- 8b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.
- 11a. I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.
- 11b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.
- 12b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.
- 13b. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.
- 16b. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.

The participants who had been enrolled for four years of homemaking (Table 3) usually showed a slightly higher percentage of positive responses to these 24 learning experiences than did the total group of participants (Tables D, E, F, G, and H; Appendix B). Learning experience 13b which says, "I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test," showed the greatest amount of difference with the four-year group showing 79 per cent positive responses compared to the 67 per cent by the total number of participants. There were, however, 10 learning experiences which showed either the same percentage or a lower one for the four-year category. These 10 learning experiences were

- 3a. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.
- 3b. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.
- 4b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.
- 7a. I like to make a garment that I know I will wear.
- 8a. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.
- 8b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.
- 9a. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.

- 11b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.
- 12b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.
- 14b. I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.

Summary

The methods that have been used to analyze the data of the 353 participants' responses to the questionnaire concerning their attitudes towards being self-directive indicate that the questionnaire itself is worth being re-fined further and being standardized.

Learning Experiences That Showed Less than 67 Per Cent of the Participants Answering "Yes" or "No"

Tables D, E, F, G, and H (Appendix B) were reviewed to find out which learning experiences had 67 per cent or less of the participants answering "yes" or "no".

The eight learning experiences which fell into this category were studied to see why the percentage of "yes" answers was so nearly the same as the "no" answers. The first learning experience in the questionnaire would illustrate this. Fifty-one per cent said, "yes, I think my teacher and I should decide how to do my home experiences." Forty-nine per cent checked this item negatively.

Learning Experience 1a. I Think My Teacher and I
Should Decide How to do My Home Experiences.

Knowles (7) said that students should set their own goals and help set up the learning situations which fulfill these goals. In this thesis it has been pointed out previously that homemaking students can gain in self-direction by helping to set the goals for their homemaking classes and suggesting ways of accomplishing these goals but that these self-directive actions need to be approved by the administration.

Learning experience 1a which was set up to show self-direction on the part of the students by participating in the organization of the learning situation, showed 51 per cent of the students answering "yes" and 49 per cent of the students answering "no". About half of the students agreed with the statement as it read and thus indicated that they would like to work together with the teacher in deciding how to do their home experiences.

The other half of the students answered "no" to this statement but there was no reason given why they disagreed. Perhaps they wanted the teacher to tell them what to do rather than thinking it through themselves. Then again, maybe the students did not want the teacher's help but would rather do it by themselves. The possibility also arose that these students had never worked on a home

experience and so were not familiar enough with the situation to wisely judge either "yes" or "no".

Learning Experience 2a. I Like Our Homemaking Room Because We Can Rearrange It to Fit What We are Doing in Class and Learning Experience 2b. I Think We Should Learn to Work in the Homemaking Room Without Rearranging It.

Criterion 2 states that students should be provided a physical environment which allows opportunities to make choices. Jones (6) said that students should have the power to change their environment to fit their needs and he explained that this environment included physical objects, physical forces, and people. Learning experience 2a and 2b asked the students to give their attitude about changing the classroom environment by rearranging the room.

About half the students answered learning experience 2a and 2b in such a way as to show that they would like to be able to rearrange their homemaking room. This rearranging entailed being able to change the environment. The rest of the students had negative attitudes about rearranging the room.

Those students who had positive attitudes towards being able to make choices in rearranging their homemaking room may have seen the need to do so in order to work on various class activities and they may often have rearranged their own departments.

On the other hand, those students who showed negative attitudes towards rearranging the homemaking room may not have realized that it was possible to rearrange some homemaking rooms. Their classrooms may be set up in such a way that equipment and furnishings cannot be adapted to different class situations. Also, their teachers may like everything to have specified places. Such homemaking rooms and teachers may hinder students from becoming self-directive. In many other school subjects, the classrooms are set up in one way and never changed, and perhaps these students have not thought about rearranging a classroom before. Outstanding authorities such as Trump say school curricula are frozen by classroom walls, partitions and equipment.

Learning Experience 6b. I Do Not See Why the Homemaking Teacher Asks Us to Do Certain Assignments.

Clapp (1) was previously quoted as saying, "Pupils should be conscious of the relationship between each task and the realization of a larger purpose." (1, p.2) Criterion 6 for which learning experience 6b was set up stated that the student gained incentive through seeing a direct relationship between a task and his goal.

In the tabulation of the questionnaires, 50 per cent of the students answered "yes" that they did not see why the homemaking teacher asked them to do certain assignments and 50 per cent said "no".

The 177 students who answered "yes" evidently could not see a direct relationship between their assignments and the goals that were set for the class. Perhaps this was because the students did not realize what the class goals were. Then too, the teacher may not have carefully planned how she would help the students realize the connection between the assignments and the goals they desired to attain.

The students who answered "no" may actually have seen the connection between the assignment and the goal, or they may have misread the question. The statement, "I do not see why the homemaking teacher asks us to do certain assignments," suggested a negative thought and the students who answered "no" to it may not have realized that they had a double negative which made a positive attitude. The wording of this question may have accounted for this even division between "yes" and "no" answers.

Learning Experience 10b. I Wish the Teacher Would Check Everything I Do to Be Sure I Do Not Make a Mistake.

Clapp (1) described successful teachers as those who realized that pupils learn only by their own efforts but that teachers can direct students to make maximum effort. He further went on to say that students must feel the need for learning and for going about this task by themselves. Criterion 10 agreed with Clapp (1) by stating that the student should go ahead by himself with learning activities

with teacher guidance rather than teacher leadership. Learning experience 10b was set up to go with this criterion.

In analyzing the answers given on the questionnaires it was found that 44 per cent answered "yes" they wished the teacher would check everything to be sure they did not make a mistake and 56 per cent answered "no". These percentages were quite close.

Those students who answered "no" evidently had no desire for the teacher to check everything they did. This may be because they liked to do things by themselves or because their teacher refused to check each step.

Some students are fearful of making mistakes and so actually demand approval by the teacher at each step they make. These kinds of students may be the ones who answered "yes" they wanted everything checked. Sometimes it is the teacher who insists upon checking every little detail and demands perfection. Grading may have affected students' attitudes towards this statement. Then too, the teacher may not have helped the students realize their need for directing some of their own tasks with teacher guidance rather than teacher leadership. The students may be so used to authoritarian teachers that they did not know how to react under a teacher who allowed self-direction.

Learning Experience 12a. I Like to Plan and Do My Class Work With as Little Help as Possible.

Authorities say that if students learn the process of how to solve problems they learn far more than if they learn the solutions that other people had found to these same problems. The statement was also made that the most important learning experience that students could have was to learn a method which enabled them to solve their own problems. (8)

Criterion 12 states that self-directive students should be able to work out new problems for themselves by using the problem solving method. In order for students to have practice in working out new problems for themselves they should try to do their assignments with as little outside help as possible. Learning experience 12a was set up to show students' attitudes towards this self-directive experience.

The percentages of "yes" and "no" answers about this learning experience showed only a small difference. Fifty-eight per cent of the students answered "yes" and 42 per cent said "no".

Those 204 students who answered "yes" to learning experience 12a showed growth towards self-direction by working out their own class assignments. The 42 per cent who answered "no" to this statement may not have meant that

they did not want to be self-directive but that they would rather have had others help them do their work than be self-directive. Many students dislike work and will take the easiest route to finishing a job. If easy work means letting others help you, these students may forsake being self-directive in order to get their work done faster and with less strain. These "no" answers may also have meant that the students were incapable of doing the work without considerable help and they realized this need for assistance. Perhaps the students did not know how to go ahead on their own because they did not know how to use the problem solving method.

Learning Experience 15a. I Usually Wonder Why My Classmates Behave as They Do and Learning Experience 15b. I Usually Accept My Classmates' Behavior Without Question.

Dewey (4) described the curious mind as constantly being alert and exploring. The Review of Literature in this thesis pointed out that without curiosity students do not even realize that problems exist.

Learning experience 15a and 15b were set up to go along with criterion 15 which said that self-directive students must have curiosity. The questionnaires showed that the percentage of students who answered "yes" to these statements was about the same as of those who answered "no".

Nearly half the participants were not curious about their fellow students.

The Review of Literature described the need for teachers to help arouse curiosity within their students. The lack of this motivation by the teachers may have accounted for those students who showed a lack of curiosity. Then again, maybe these students were curious about some things but not about their classmates' behavior.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine how students could be helped to become self-directive. In order to achieve this purpose it was necessary to formulate some criteria which could help homemaking teachers select self-directive learning experiences and to find out what attitudes high school homemaking students had towards some learning experiences which were illustrative of these criteria and which should help them develop an ability to be self-directive.

Sixteen criteria were formulated. Each criterion, in turn, had two learning experiences which showed some attitudes according to the way the students judged them. One learning experience (a) indicated going towards self-direction and the other learning experience (b) indicated little or no desire to be self-directive. The criteria and their learning experiences were divided into five categories. These criteria and their learning experiences listed according to categories are as follows:

I. Administrative Organization Related to the Homemaking Department.

1. The student participates in the organization of the learning situation.

a. I think my teacher and I should decide how to do my home experiences.

- *b. I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience.
- 2. The student is provided a physical environment which allows opportunities to make choices.
 - a. I like our homemaking room because we can rearrange it to fit what we are doing in class.
 - b. I think we should learn to work in the homemaking room without rearranging it.
- 3. The student learns to use a variety of resources.
 - *a. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.
 - *b. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.

II. Learning Climate in the Homemaking Department

- 4. The student feels free of anxiety or fear.
 - *a. I am glad the teacher does not get angry when I accidentally break something in the kitchen.
 - *b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.
- 5. The student feels freedom in his learning environment to make choices.
 - *a. I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class.
 - *b. I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our homemaking class.

*These are the 24 learning experiences which showed enough response to be useful in indicating an attitude towards self-direction.

III. Beliefs of the Homemaking Teacher.

6. The student gains incentive through seeing a direct relationship between a task and his goal.
 - *a. I like to work on a homemaking assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.
 - b. I do not see why the homemaking teacher asks us to do certain assignments.
7. The student receives self-gratification in accomplishing a task which fulfills a personal goal.
 - *a. I like to make a garment that I know I will wear.
 - *b. It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.

IV. Group-Individual Relationships Within the Homemaking Class.

8. The student feels free to communicate his needs with those in his group.
 - *a. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.
 - *b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.
9. The student feels he is a part of the group but at the same time feels he is a distinct individual.
 - *a. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.
 - *b. I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.

10. The student goes ahead by himself with learning activities with teacher guidance rather than teacher leadership.

- *a. I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.
- b. I wish the teacher would check everything I do to be sure I do not make a mistake.

V. The Emphasis on Teaching Homemaking Students to Think Effectively.

11. The student recognizes his own needs and problems.

- *a. I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.
- *b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.

12. The student is able to work out new problems for himself by using the problem solving method.

- a. I like to plan and do my class work with as little help as possible.
- *b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.

13. The student uses a combination of past experience plus new learnings to solve problems pertaining to self.

- *a. I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.
- *b. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.

14. The student develops an awareness to the covert as well as the overt things around him.

- *a. I think I should be aware of how the homemaking room looks.

- *b. I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.

15. The student has curiosity.

- a. I usually wonder why my classmates behave as they do.
- b. I usually accept my classmates' behavior without question.

16. The student uses creative thinking in solving a problem.

- *a. I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.
- *b. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.

A questionnaire was sent to homemaking teachers to be given to senior students in advanced homemaking. This questionnaire revealed the attitudes of the students towards these 32 learning experiences. The conclusions made in this thesis were based upon the 353 usable questionnaires which were returned.

Twenty-four of the learning experiences had at least 67 per cent of 353 participants respond in such a way as to indicate an attitude towards self-direction. Each of these 24 statements have an asterisk in front of the number of the learning experience given previously.

An analysis of these 24 learning experiences was made to see if it could be determined whether the background of the participants seemed to have any effect on the way they

answered the questionnaire. The following results were found:

1. The future plans that the students had for next year did not have any effect on the way they answered these 24 statements on the questionnaire.
2. Students with the same future plans did not judge each learning experience the same way.
3. The number of years the students had been enrolled in homemaking seemed to have no effect on their answers.
4. Students who had been enrolled in homemaking for the same number of years did not judge each learning experience the same way.

Eight of the learning experiences had approximately the same number of positive and negative responses. These learning experiences are

- 1a. I think my teacher and I should decide how to do my home experiences.
- 2a. I like our homemaking room because we can rearrange it to fit what we are doing in class.
- 2b. I think we should learn to work in the homemaking room without rearranging it.
- 6b. I do not see why the homemaking teacher asks us to do certain assignments.
- 10b. I wish the teacher would check everything I do to be sure I do not make a mistake.
- 12a. I like to plan and do my class work with as little help as possible.
- 15a. I usually wonder why my classmates behave as they do.
- 15b. I usually accept my classmates' behavior without question.

No definite conclusions can be drawn from analyzing these eight learning experiences but it was thought that perhaps

some of these learning experiences needed to be worded more clearly on the questionnaire.

a number of students may not have had experience or were not aware enough of certain things to wisely judge the statements.

even though the learning experience may have been designed to help students become self-directive, the students may have wanted to be more self-directive than the statement implied.

the students did not realize some of the learning experiences were possible to do or that they could be done in more than one way.

almost half the students did not want to be self-directive or realized that they needed more direction than the statements allowed.

grades and teacher approval affected the way students answered.

students would rather do their work the easiest way possible regardless of how the work was achieved.

Some of the schools participating in this study had girls taking advanced homemaking who had not had any previous training in a homemaking class. This lack of previous training in a formal homemaking class may have implications for teachers in the way they plan the sequence of curriculum for their schools and for the administrative organization of setting up the classes.

Authorities in the field of home economics education need to be given an opportunity to express themselves on this topic of self-direction. Some questions they might answer are

1. What does self-direction mean to them?
2. How much self-direction can or should be used at the various developmental levels of the student?
3. How can teachers use self-direction in their students to the best advantage?

This questionnaire seems to give enough results to be worthy of further refining and of standardizing. The following suggestions are made:

1. Changes which may improve the questionnaire.
 - a. Directions to the teachers and to the students need to be made stronger and more clearly stated.
 - b. Learning experiences need to be used which all students can wisely judge.
2. Further study which may improve the questionnaire.
 - a. Find out why the students answered the statement in such a way as to depict little or no desire for self-direction.
 - b. Take a larger sampling and include students from more than one area of the United States.
 - c. See how much effect other classes and activities have on the way students answered the statements.

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APPENDICES

A P P E N D I X A

Letter Which Accompanied
Trial Run of the Questionnaire

Corvallis, Oregon
November 21, 1961

Dear

Some of you have been kind enough to help me with my first device and so are familiar with my thesis topic and the criteria I am trying to set up. I would like to have your help in perfecting a second device, which will be the last, to be used in my thesis.

The first device consisted of rating statements as to whether they were or were not criteria for teaching a student to be self-directive. *Below you will find a list of these criteria which can be used by home economics teachers.

The second device consists of statements which, for your convenience, are numbered to correspond to the number of the criteria they are to illustrate. Each criterion has two illustrations for students to answer. One indicates going towards self-direction, the second indicates little or no desire to be self-directive. When this device is given to students, these items will be renumbered from 1 to 32.

The purpose of this second device is to determine students' attitudes towards some learning experiences which might be considered as helping students become self-directive.

Would you please evaluate this second device by checking whether this belief would or would not be self-directive. Also, please check to see if each belief describes the criterion. You may make comments on the attached blank sheet. Be sure to list the number of the belief you are commenting on.

I would very much appreciate your prompt return of this questionnaire. Thank you so very sincerely for your effort in helping me set up the devices for my thesis.

Yours truly,

(Betty Burklund)

*A list of the criteria were sent along with this letter but are omitted here.

Student Questionnaire

NO NAME PLEASE

WHAT I BELIEVE AS A HOME ECONOMICS STUDENT

Directions: Please put an "x" in the space you feel best answers what you believe about each statement.

Remember this check list is to be marked the way you believe regardless of whether or not what is stated in each item can be done or is done in your school. There is no right or wrong answer. Please answer all questions. Work quickly, going straight through the check list.

YES NO

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| — | — | 1. I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class. |
| — | — | 2. I like to plan and do my class work with as little help as possible. |
| — | — | 3. I think I should be aware of how the home-making room looks. |
| — | — | 4. I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience. |
| — | — | 5. I like our homemaking room because we can rearrange it to fit what we are doing in class. |
| — | — | 6. I like to make a garment that I know I will wear. |
| — | — | 7. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects. |
| — | — | 8. I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our homemaking class. |

YES NO

- — 9. I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.
- — 10. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.
- — 11. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.
- — 12. I usually wonder why my classmates behave as they do.
- — 13. I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.
- — 14. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.
- — 15. I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.
- — 16. I do not see why the homemaking teacher asks us to do certain assignments.
- — 17. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.
- — 18. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.
- — 19. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.
- — 20. I am glad the teacher does not get angry when I accidentally break something in the kitchen.
- — 21. I think my teacher and I should decide how to do my home experience.
- — 22. I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.
- — 23. I think we should learn to work in the home-making room without rearranging it.

YES NO

- — 24. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.
 — — 25. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.
 — — 26. I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.
 — — 27. I usually accept my classmates' behavior without question.
 — — 28. I wish the teacher would check everything I do to be sure I do not make a mistake.
 — — 29. I like to work on a homemaking assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.
 — — 30. I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.
 — — 31. It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.
 — — 32. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.

— Number of years enrolled in homemaking

Please put an "x" in each space that describes your plans for next year.

— School (Nursing, Beauty, Business, College)
 — Married by September 1962
 — Work

Letter Sent to the 20 Homemaking Teachers
Asking for Their Help

Corvallis, Oregon
 November 29, 1961

Dear

I am a student at Oregon State University working on a master's thesis. The subject of my thesis is on helping homemaking students become self-directive.

As part of my thesis I have set up a questionnaire to give to senior girls in advanced homemaking classes. This questionnaire is designed to determine students' feelings towards some activities which might be considered as helping students become self-directive.

Would you be kind enough to help me by having the senior girls in the advanced homemaking classes in your department fill out these questionnaires? These questionnaires which would need to be filled out in class are short and simple. They should take no more than fifteen minutes to answer. Please be sure your school administrator approves also.

Please answer the following questions and return this letter to me promptly so that I may prepare the correct number of questionnaires and mail them to you on January 3, 1962, in order that you may have them returned to me by January 20, 1962.

Sincerely,

(Betty Burklund)

Answer Yes or No

- I will be glad to have my classes participate.
- The administrator of the school has given his permission for us to participate in this study.

Number of Questionnaires

- Please send me the number of questionnaires so that I may give one to each senior girl in the senior homemaking classes in my department.
 (Do not try to pick up senior girls in other classes)

Letter Sent to the 20 Homemaking Teachers
Giving Directions About the Questionnaire

Corvallis, Oregon
January 2, 1962

Dear

Thank you for your prompt answer to my letter of November 21, 1961. I appreciate very much your help in having the senior girls in your Junior-Senior homemaking class fill in these check sheets.

Please ask your students to put an "x" in the YES space or the NO space for each question according to their beliefs. I realize that some items probably may not apply to every school, therefore instruct the students that they are to answer each statement according to what each individual student believes should be done and not necessarily what is done. It is important that they answer all questions.

In order to get the individual's attitudes rather than the group's attitudes, do not allow the students to discuss the items while answering the check sheet.

The students may hesitate to answer some of these questions truthfully if they think that you, as their teacher, might read the answers. May I therefore suggest that a student volunteer be asked to collect the papers and seal them in the enclosed envelope?

It surely will be appreciated if you are able to return these check sheets to me by January 20, 1962.

Best wishes to you for the new year!

Sincerely yours,
(Betty Burklund)

A P P E N D I X B

Table A

Distribution of 353 Participants
According to High Schools Which They Attended

Schools	Number of Participants	Usable Questionnaires	
		No.	%
A Albany Senior High School	12	12	100
B Bend High School	18	16	89
C The Dalles High School	30	30	100
D David Douglas High School, Portland	63	63	100
E Gervais High School	14	14	100
F Grants Pass High School	32	32	100
G Harrisburg High School	7	7	100
H Jefferson High School	9	8	89
I Junction City High School	7	7	100
J Klamath Falls High School	17	16	94
K Medford High School	65	49	75
L Molalla High School	13	13	100
M Newberg High School	20	16	80
N North Marion High School, Aurora	8	8	100
O Ontario High School	17	17	100
P Oregon City High School	17	12	71
Q Scappoose High School	12	11	92
R Siletz High School	4	4	100
S Silverton High School	12	12	100
T Woodburn High School	6	6	100
Total	383	353	92

Table B

Number of Years Enrolled in Homemaking by Participants

Schools	Usable Questionnaires		Number of Years of Homemaking											
			1 Year		2 Years		3 Years		4 Years		5 Years		6 Years	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A	12	100					9	75			3	25		
B	16	100	1	6	5	31	5	31	3	19	2	13		
C	30	100	18	60	8	27	4	13						
D	63	100	19	30	13	21	15	24	12	19	2	3	2	3
E	14	100			1	7	6	43	7	50				
F	32	100					3	9	28	88	1	3		
G	7	100			1	14	6	86						
H	8	100					3	37	5	63				
I	7	100					3	43	1	14	2	29	1	14
J	16	100	7	44	1	6	6	37	2	13				
K	49	100	5	10	13	27	4	8	24	49	3	6		
L	13	100			2	15	3	23	8	62				
M	16	100			3	19	2	12	11	69				
N	8	100					1	12	7	88				
O	17	100			4	24	13	76						
P	12	100					2	18	5	41	5	41		
Q	11	100			2	18	3	27	6	55				
R	4	100	1	25	2	50	1	25						
S	12	100					1	8	6	51	4	33	1	8
T	6	100					6	100						
Total	353	100	51	15	55	16	96	27	125	35	22	6	4	1

Table C
Future Plans of 353 Participating Students

Schools	Future Plans															
	Total		School		Married		Work		School & Married		School & Work		Married & Work		Married, School & Work	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A	12	100	8	68	1	8	1	8			1	8	1	8		
B	16	100	9	56			5	31			2	13				
C	30	100	18	60	3	10					3	10	5	17	1	3
D	63	100	26	41	5	8	20	32	2	3	5	8	4	6	1	2
E	14	100	8	58			3	21			3	21				
F	32	100	9	29	2	6	13	41	1	3	3	9	3	9	1	3
G	7	100	5	72			1	14			1	14				
H	8	100	1	13	2	24	4	50					1	13		
I	7	100	2	29	2	29	1	14			1	14	1	14		
J	16	100	8	50	2	13	3	18			2	13	1	6		
K	49	100	22	46			10	20			12	24	3	6	2	4
L	13	100	3	23			5	38	1	8	3	23			1	8
M	16	100	9	56	2	13	1	16			3	19			1	6
N	8	100	3	38			4	49			1	13				
O	17	100	11	64	1	6	2	12	1	6	2	12				
P	12	100	1	8	4	34	3	25					3	25	1	8
Q	11	100	7	64	1	9	2	18			1	9				
R	4	100	1	25					3	75						
S	12	100	8	67			3	25			1	8				
T	6	100	5	83							1	17				
Total	353	100	164	47	25	7	81	23	8	2	45	13	22	6	8	2

Table D

Administrative Organization Related to the Homemaking Department

Teacher's Criterion	Learning Experiences	Students' Beliefs			
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
1. The student participates in the organization of the learning situation.	a. I think my teacher and I should decide how to do my home experiences.	179	51	174	49
	b. I think my teacher should tell me what I should do for a home experience.	63	18	290	82
2. The student is provided a physical environment which allows opportunities to make choices.	a. I like our homemaking room because we can rearrange it to fit what we are doing in class.	195	55	158	45
	b. I think we should learn to work in the homemaking room without rearranging it.	148	42	205	58
3. The student learns to use a variety of resources.	a. I like to use new references, books, and magazine articles on a class assignment.	257	73	96	27
	b. I wish we had one text and no extra references in homemaking as we do in other subjects.	79	22	274	78

Table E
Learning Climate in the Homemaking Department

Teacher's Criterion	Learning Experiences	Students' Beliefs					
		Yes		No		No Answer	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
4. The student feels free of anxiety or fear.	a. I am glad the teacher does not get angry when I accidentally break something in the kitchen.	289	82	21	6	43	12
	b. I am afraid to tell the teacher when I make a mistake because she might lower my grade.	75	21	278	79		
5. The student feels freedom in his learning environment to make choices.	a. I like to help decide what we will study in our homemaking class.	328	93	25	7		
	b. I think the homemaking teacher should decide what we are to study in our homemaking class.	104	29	249	71		

Table F
Beliefs of the Homemaking Teacher

Teacher's Criterion	Learning Experiences	Students' Beliefs				No Answer	
		Yes		No			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
6. The student gains incentive through seeing a direct relationship between a task and his goal.	a. I like to work on a home-making assignment when it helps answer some questions I have asked about the subject.	323	92	30	8		
	b. I do not see why the home-making teacher asks us to do certain assignments.	177	50	176	50		
7. The student receives self-gratification in accomplishing a task which fulfills a personal goal.	a. I like to make a garment that I know I will wear.	307	87	11	3	35	10
	b. It does not make much difference what I sew, I never will wear it anyway.	37	10	316	90		

Table G

Group-Individual Relationships Within the Homemaking Class

Teacher's Criterion	Learning Experiences	Students' Beliefs			
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
8. The student feels free to communicate his needs with those in his group.	a. I feel good when our homemaking class discusses family problems which help me understand my family.	280	79	73	21
	b. I wish my classmates would not talk about their problems in class, there is not anything we can do about them.	49	14	304	86
9. The student feels he is a part of the group but at the same time feels he is a distinct individual.	a. I like to have a chance to use my own ideas in carrying out assignments.	311	88	42	12
	b. I think all class members should have exactly the same assignment.	115	33	238	67
10. The student goes ahead by himself with learning activities with teacher guidance rather than teacher leadership.	a. I like to have my teacher let me do things by myself.	292	83	61	17
	b. I wish the teacher would check everything I do to be sure I do not make a mistake.	155	44	198	56

Table H

The Emphasis on Teaching Homemaking Students to Think Effectively

Teacher's Criterion	Learning Experiences	Students' Beliefs			
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
11. The student recognizes his own needs and problems.	a. I usually know in what areas of my homemaking class I need more practice.	326	92	27	8
	b. I never seem to have any problems that I need to work on.	39	11	314	89
12. The student is able to work out new problems for himself by using the problem solving method.	a. I like to plan and do my class work with as little help as possible.	204	58	149	42
	b. I never am able to plan or do my class work alone to my satisfaction.	97	27	256	73
13. The student uses a combination of past experience plus new learnings to solve problems pertaining to self.	a. I like to apply to my real life problems what I have already learned as well as what I am studying.	327	93	26	7
	b. I usually forget what I have learned after I take a test.	117	33	236	67

Table H (cont.)

Teacher's Criterion	Learning Experiences	Students' Beliefs			
		Yes		No	
		No.	%	No.	%
14. The student develops an awareness to the covert as well as the overt things around him.	a. I think I should be aware of how the homemaking room looks.	324	92	29	8
	b. I usually do not notice how my classmates react to my ideas.	84	24	269	76
15. The student has curiosity.	a. I usually wonder why my classmates behave as they do.	206	58	147	42
	b. I usually accept my classmates' behavior without question.	191	54	162	46
16. The student uses creative thinking in solving a problem.	a. I like to discover and use new ideas to work out a project.	308	87	45	13
	b. I do not like to try new things, because I get confused.	47	13	306	87