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Challenges at Different Career Stages Among Secondary Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges faced by secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers in Illinois. Specifically, the study sought to identify and categorize a list of challenges encountered during their first years in the FCS profession as well as challenges that veteran FCS teachers are facing in their current teaching assignments and to determine job satisfaction levels at each career stage. FCS teachers in Illinois within the state's directory completed an online questionnaire. Twenty challenges were identified. Only two of the top five challenges, equipment and funding, continued to be areas of concern throughout teachers' teaching careers. Overwhelmingly, FCS teachers indicated strong satisfaction levels with their jobs. Knowing the challenges identified by FCS teachers at different career stages can assist school administrators and FCS professionals in providing specific support to address these problematic areas in efforts to improve retention rates among FCS teachers.

Background

Family and consumer sciences (FCS) education was identified as a teacher shortage area in many states, including Illinois, by the United States Department of Education (2017). Werhan and Whitbeck (2017) confirmed that states were struggling to fill FCS teacher vacancies, and the shortage of FCS teachers was expected to grow. Teacher retirement and attrition are two of the main culprits for the increased need of FCS teachers (Gaytan, 2005). Retirement is an inevitable reason for FCS teachers to leave the classroom; however, the reasons teachers choose to leave the classroom early are often linked to the number and types of challenges they face (Boone & Boone, 2007).

Cochran-Smith (2004) suggested that a teacher shortage is in large part a demand problem that can be solved only if retention is increased. Thus, one way to increase the number of FCS teachers is to decrease the number who leave through attrition. However, little evidence exists on the retention and challenges of FCS teachers. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the challenges faced by all secondary FCS teachers in Illinois. A crucial first step to preserve the future of the profession is to gather empirical data that accurately identifies the current challenges facing FCS teachers. An understanding of the concerns of teachers at

different stages in their careers allows FCS professionals and school administrators to identify more specific ways to provide support. This in turn could improve the retention rates among FCS teachers.

Attrition and Reasons for Leaving

Attrition among teachers is the single largest factor determining the demand for additional teachers in all subjects in the United States (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Specific to Illinois, 60% of school districts reported difficulty filling positions and 16% had to cancel programs or classes because of teacher shortages (Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, 2016). The reason many are exiting the teaching profession is due to the education-related problems encountered; thus, the ability to handle the challenges faced can result in a teacher staying or leaving the classroom.

Challenges faced by career and technical education (CTE) teachers are quite extensive (Arnett-Hartwick & Cannon, 2020; Arnett-Hartwick & Halger, 2018; Dainty, Sandford, Su & Belcher, 2011). Frequently reported challenges for teachers were classroom management and discipline, motivating students, insufficient supplies, insufficient preparation time due to high teaching loads, and relationships with colleagues. Other challenges cited by CTE teachers included the following: (a) time management; (b) facilities and equipment; (c) working with special populations; (d) budgets and funding; (e) curriculum development; (f) student motivation; (g) school policies and procedures; (h) mentorships; and (i) poor or lack of administrative support. Although the challenges identified above are true for teachers, are they also true for the subgroup of FCS teachers?

Challenges

Teaching in CTE, of which FCS is a service area, is a rigorous yet frequently underrated challenge (Cushall, 2002). Lack of state mandates for curriculum, funding, and the need for educating the community about what FCS education truly about is just three of the challenges faced by today's FCS teachers.

Lee (2013) found the biggest challenges causing frustration among FCS teachers was students' lack of motivation and poor behavior in class. Other challenges included lack of funding for supplies, larger than desired class sizes, and lack of time to prepare for lessons. Additionally, Arnett and Polkinghorne (2010) identified five factors causing dissatisfaction among FCS teachers. These factors were (a) role of high school counselors, (b) image of FCS, (c) lack of administrative support, (d) inclusion of special needs students, and (e) impact of *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Furthermore, Dainty, Sandford, Su and Belcher (2011) found that student respect was considered extremely important as a retention factor among FCS teachers. Particular to beginning FCS teachers, Nichols and Mundt (1996) found that classroom control,

equipment, and budgets were the most important competencies necessary for surviving the first years of teaching. Additionally, reflecting on their first-year teaching experiences, FCS teachers reported that confidence needs to be improved in the area of curriculum development (Dainty, Sandford, Su & Belcher, 2011) as well as implementing routines and procedures (Cook, 2020). Although some research exists of the challenges among FCS teachers, there is a need to research current challenges faced by beginning and veteran teachers in FCS to determine if challenges change or continue at the different career stages.

Theoretical Framework

Career satisfaction has been a determinant of a teacher's decision to remain or leave the profession (Ubom & Joshua, 2004). Previous research indicated beginning teachers expressed strong dissatisfaction as the primary reason they left their jobs due to problems within their teaching assignment (Voke, 2002). Self (2001) suggested that teachers resolve the question of whether to remain in education through "satificing" rather than through optimizing. That is, the level of satisfaction is the rationale basis for a teacher leaving as opposed to trying to improve the situation.

Several researchers have studied the job satisfaction among FCS teachers and have found positive results. Arnett and Polkinghorne (2010) found that 95% of Illinois FCS teachers were very satisfied or satisfied in their teaching career with less than 5% indicating dissatisfaction with their job. Other previous job satisfaction studies yielded similar results. Lee (2013) and Tripp (2006) found more than 80% of FCS teachers were satisfied with their teaching career.

The theoretical framework that has guided research related to job satisfaction primarily focused on intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Garton and Robinson (2006) stated that the Motivation-Hygiene Theory centered on intrinsic and extrinsic factors could explain why teachers leave their positions.

Herzberg (1966) developed the Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction, also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory. The central tenet of this theory was that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction were influenced by two substantially different sets of work-related factors termed *motivators* and *hygiene*. Motivators are intrinsic factors of work while hygiene (maintenance) factors refer to extrinsic factors. Examples of motivator (intrinsic) factors include recognition, achievement, growth, and responsibility; whereas job instability, poor collegial relationships, and negative supervision are associated with hygiene (extrinsic) factors. Both motivator and hygiene factors have been reported to influence job satisfaction or dissatisfaction among teachers.

The Motivation-Hygiene theory operates on two mutually exclusive continuums. On the one hand, the job satisfaction continuum is impacted by motivator (intrinsic) factors and varies from a level of satisfaction to a level of no satisfaction. On the other hand, the job dissatisfaction

continuum is impacted by hygiene (extrinsic) factors and operates from a level of dissatisfaction to a level of no dissatisfaction. Both the motivator and hygiene factors, however, may prove to facilitate negative experiences in the classroom.

As applied to this study, if FCS teachers encounter problems, they may be more likely to be isolated within their work environments, be non-participatory in school functions or professional development, or discontinue their interest in their jobs. If so, teachers are more likely to leave the teaching profession as a result and seek alternative types of employment due to dissatisfaction with the job (Garton & Robinson, 2006). For example, a FCS teacher who receives little administrative support may become frustrated, which becomes a hygiene factor that would push the teacher to the negative end on the dissatisfaction continuum and, ultimately, may cause job dissatisfaction with perhaps a voluntary exit from teaching. Therefore, because job satisfaction is determined by intrinsic and extrinsic factors, understanding these categorical factors among beginning and veteran FCS teachers can prove beneficial for teacher retention.

Methodology

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges faced by secondary FCS teachers in Illinois. The primary objective was to identify and categorize a list of challenges encountered by FCS teachers during their first years in the education profession as well as challenges faced by veteran FCS teachers. The secondary objective was to determine the level of satisfaction among FCS teachers at different career stages.

The following research questions provided direction for the study: (a) What are the challenges faced by beginning FCS education teachers? (b) What are the challenges faced by veteran FCS teachers? (c) Are there differences in the challenges faced by beginning teachers and the challenges faced by veteran teachers? (d) What is the level of satisfaction among FCS teachers at each career stage?

Method

A questionnaire adapted from Boone and Boone (2007) was used for this qualitative study. The questionnaire consisted of two open-ended questions and one Likert-scale question. The first question asked respondents to describe two challenges they encountered as a beginning

teacher in FCS. The second question asked respondents to describe two challenges they were currently facing. The third question asked respondents to identify their current level of satisfaction as a FCS teacher using indicators of extremely satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied and extremely dissatisfied. Beginning teachers were classified as the first four years of their teaching career. The questionnaire was placed online using SurveyMonkey.com. IRB approval was received from the primary researcher's university before the study began. The sampling frame was established using the state's secondary FCS teacher directory, and the entire population was studied.

A cover letter that included the questionnaire link was emailed to every teacher in the accessible population. They were given one week to complete the questionnaire. To increase the response rate, Dillman, Smyth, and Christian's (2009) method was used. The methodology of Dillman et al. (2009) called for two subsequent weekly emails to be sent to remind respondents to participate in the research study. The response data from the two open-ended questions was divided into three stages for analysis. In stage one, the researcher transcribed the data. In stage two, the researcher and two other reviewers independently coded the data to establish themes; results were then compared for consensus to establish trustworthiness of the data. In the third stage, the data was summarized and interpreted (Ary et al., 2006).

Findings

The 128 respondents, which included 38 beginning and 90 veteran FCS teachers, provided responses to the questionnaire. The majority of the respondents were female (98%) and worked in a school located in suburbia (42%) or a town (less than 3,000) (33%). Data analysis produced 20 categories, which Table 1 ranks by beginning teacher problems. The categories included classroom management, image, equipment, funding, lab management, time management, student motivation, lack of administrative support, number of class preps, curriculum, faculty relationships, students with special needs, extracurricular responsibilities, knowing policy and procedures, parents, job security, enrollment numbers, mentorships, variance in student abilities, and professional development (Table 1).

Of the top five challenges, only two, equipment and funding, were identified as a continuous challenge at each career stage (Table 1). Respondents beginning their teaching career were most concerned with classroom management, image, equipment, funding, and lab management. Whereas, veteran respondents indicated they were most concerned with student motivation, curriculum, funding, lack of administration support, and equipment.

Classroom Management

The number one challenge for beginning teachers was classroom management (25.0%). Seven respondents indicated classroom management was a current challenge (5.5%), giving it a rank of 8 out of 20 challenges identified in this category. Examples of responses included "classroom control," "how to handle behavioral problems on the spot," "students swearing, blatantly not following directions, talking back, and sleeping in class" and "students would test their limits making classroom management a constant struggle."

Table 1

Challenges Experienced by Beginning and Veteran FCS Teachers

	Beginning Problems			**Veteran Problems**		
	Rank	*f*	%	Rank	*f*	%
Classroom management	1	32	25.0	8	7	5.5
Image	2	25	19.5	7	10	7.8
Equipment	3	19	14.8	5	14	11.0
Funding	4	17	13.2	3	19	14.8
Lab management	4	17	13.2	0	0	0.0
Time management	5	15	11.7	9	7	5.5
Student motivation	6	13	10.2	1	29	22.7
Lack of administrative support	7	12	9.4	4	15	11.7
Number of class preps	8	11	8.6	13	3	2.3
Curriculum	8	11	8.6	2	25	19.5
Faculty relationships	9	8	6.3	11	4	3.1
Students with special needs	10	7	5.5	12	3	2.3
Extracurricular responsibilities	11	4	3.1	13	2	1.6

Knowing policy and procedures	12	3	2.3	0	0	0.0
Parents	13	2	1.6	14	1	0.8
Job security	13	2	1.6	10	6	4.7
Enrollment numbers	13	2	1.6	6	11	8.6
Mentorships	14	1	0.8	0	0	0.0
Variance in student abilities	14	1	0.8	13	2	1.6
Professional development	14	1	0.8	12	3	2.3

Image

Twenty-five respondents (19.5%) indicated that the image of FCS education was a challenge during the beginning stage of teaching. The image problem decreased to 7.8% and ranked seventh as a challenge among veteran teachers. Both beginning and veteran FCS teachers shared similar comments which included "constantly educating the administration, parents, and other staff members of the value of FCS and that it is not just cooking and sewing!" "FCS classes are seen as a dumping ground for students who do not 'fit' into other classes or have worn out their welcome – we are the last resort," "FCS is considered a blow-off class or an easy A," and "just lack of respect."

Equipment

Equipment issues ranked third among identified challenges for a beginning teacher (14.8%); whereas, it was the fifth-ranked challenge cited by veteran teachers (11.0%). Mutual comments were shared by beginning and veteran FCS teachers regarding equipment challenges. The most common statement was "working with outdated or broken equipment." Other shared statements included "having to hold food labs in a regular classroom" and "how to keep students productively busy when there aren't enough machines for everyone."

Funding

Funding (13.2%) was the fourth-most reported concern by beginning teachers and ranked third as a current challenge (14.8%). Beginning FCS teachers indicated that they did not know

how to budget: "I did not learn how to budget in my undergrad so I had to learn by trial and error and hoped I had money at the end of the semester," and one questioned the budgeting process: "Where and how does the budget for FCS work?" A veteran FCS teacher noted that she met budget shortfalls with her own money: "With the lack of funding, often times I just buy my own materials." Other concerns mentioned by teachers include "shrinking budgets," a desire "to find other sources of funding opportunities," as well as the consequences of uncertainty related to funding: "With an uncertain budget, will my program and position be cut?"

Lab management

Lab management was within the top five challenges (13.2%) listed by beginning FCS teachers, but this was not a concern for veteran FCS teachers (0.0%). Beginning FCS teachers questioned "how to have students make up missed labs?" and listed "students not taking labs seriously," not having "the time to shop for groceries," being "unsure how to budget for foods lab for the entire year," "having different expectations of cleanliness, procedures, and content when there are multiple foods teachers teaching the same class," "overcrowding in labs – more than 6 students in a kitchen unit and how to handle this?" and "time management in labs" as concerns.

Student motivation

The number one challenge cited by veteran teachers was student motivation (22.7%). Beginning teachers ranked student motivation as the sixth-most identified challenge (10.2%). The most common response among veteran teachers was "lack of student motivation." Other statements included, "students doing just enough to get by," "student apathy," and "students just don't want to learn or be there."

Curriculum

Twenty-five veteran FCS teachers indicated challenges with curriculum (19.5%) whereas, curriculum was only identified by 11 beginning teachers as a challenge (8.6%). Comments from veteran FCS teachers included "coming up with new and interesting teaching strategies," "seeking learning activities that provide interdisciplinary learning," "finding ways to engage the students is difficult," and "rewriting my lesson plans because I feel they are outdated or not interesting anymore." Several beginning teacher respondents noted "that being expected to teach in all areas of FCS with limited experience or knowledge in the subject matter."

Differences between Beginning and Veteran Teachers

Noticeable differences between challenges shared by beginning and veteran teachers included the number of class preps, time management, enrollment numbers, and job security. Challenges communicated by beginning teachers that were not ranked as high by veteran teachers included number of class preps, which was 8.6% and declined to 2.3%; and time management decreased from 11.7% to 5.5%. On the reverse, enrollment numbers were mentioned by two respondents as a beginning teacher challenge but increased to 8.6% as a veteran challenge and job security increased from 1.6% to 4.7%.

Several challenges were mentioned by teachers at the beginning of their career that were not cited as problems for the veterans and vice versa. Early career challenges included lab management (13.2%), mentorships (0.8 %), and knowing policy and procedures (2.4%). Whereas, veteran challenges that were less of an issue among beginning FCS teachers included job security (2.4%) and professional development (2.4%).

Overall, 96% of both beginning and veteran FCS teachers were either extremely satisfied (46.1%) or satisfied (54.0%) with their career as an FCS teacher. Of the 38 beginning FCS teacher respondents, 37 indicated extremely satisfied (14.8%) or satisfied (14.0%) with their satisfaction level with only one respondent having marked dissatisfied (0.7%). Veteran FCS teachers indicated their level of satisfaction as extremely satisfied (31.1%) or satisfied (40.0%) and four were dissatisfied (3.13%) (Table 2).

Table 2

Satisfaction Level among Beginning and Veteran FCS Teachers

	Extremely Satisfied		Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Extremely Dissatisfied	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
Beginning FCS Teacher	19	14.8	18	14.0	1	0.7	0	0.0
Veteran FCS Teacher	40	31.3	46	40.0	4	3.13	0	0.0
Totals	59	46.1	64	54.0	5	3.9	0	0.0

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges faced by FCS teachers in Illinois at different career stages. The primary objective was to categorize a list of challenges identified by respondents who were beginning teachers and those with more experience, and to determine if the challenges differed between the two career stages. The secondary objective was to determine the level of satisfaction among FCS teachers at different career stages.

Challenges Identified

Nearly all 20 challenges identified by FCS teachers have been reported in previous studies as challenges among teachers. The findings in this study provide reference solely for FCS teachers offering school administrators and FCS education professionals' evidence on which to base retention efforts.

The number one challenge for beginning FCS teachers was classroom management (25.0%). Respondents were more likely to experience discipline issues as a beginning teacher than as a veteran teacher (5.5%). Consistent with Lee (2013) and Nichols and Mundt (1996), classroom control continues to be a major concern for beginning FCS teachers. As a continuous early career stage challenge, more attention needs to be dedicated to classroom management in teacher preparation programs and for induction programs to provide continuous professional development on the topic. Without classroom control, instructional time is narrowed to deal with inappropriate student behavior.

Image was indicated to be more of challenge for beginning FCS teachers (19.5%) than as a veteran teacher (7.8%) challenge. Arnett and Polkinghorne2010) also found the image of FCS as a dissatisfaction factor among FCS teachers. While established, more stakeholders need to take advantage of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences FCS Branding Initiative that raises awareness on the importance of FCS. This initiative offers a toolkit containing ideas, activities, and resources as well as use of conceptual icon for FCS teachers to use in the education and advocacy efforts. Even with this national initiative and with marketing not directly part of the job description, FCS teachers need to educate and communicate the importance of FCS to administrators, colleagues, counselors, parents, students and the community to garner and sustain support for the local program. Ways to tout the FCS discipline is to partner with local community entities such as the farmer's coop to host a community or school garden, establish a sewing club that occupies a community space (rotation) to repair minor clothing issues for community members, engage the broader community for authentic evaluation of student projects, or engage in service-learning projects to design gowns or bags for nursing home occupants. With each activity, publicize the events in the local newspapers, submit for spotlights to new stations or within the school new feeds, social media, and on the

school/community websites. Constant and consistent messaging of the importance of the FCS curriculum can help change the image of FCS education.

The challenges of equipment and funding, which go hand-in-hand, were challenges for both the beginning and veteran respondents. These two challenges were consistent with results from previous research (Arnett-Hartwick & Cannon, 2020; Arnett-Hartwick & Halger, 2018; Nichols & Mundt, 1996). Specifically, for equipment, beginning FCS teachers (14.8%) and veteran FCS teachers (11.0%) had similar concerns with outdated, broken, or lack of equipment and inappropriate instruction facilities. Given the economic times, most schools are reducing line items from the budget thus equipment cannot be improved without money. The comments associated with the funding challenge experienced by beginning (13.2%) and veteran (14.8%) FCS teachers revealed different concerns for each career stage. Beginning FCS teachers were more concerned with the surface challenges of funding such as how does funding work within the school system or budgeting for classes, whereas the veteran FCS teachers described deeper concerns. These concerns centered on self-initiative in terms of using personal money to obtain necessary classroom supplies, seeking alternative external funding sources, and their own job security.

Lab management was a concern for the beginning FCS teacher (13.2%) and not for veteran FCS teachers (0.0%). This challenge has not been described as a concern in previous research. Beginning FCS teachers in this study indicated they need more instruction on how to manage a lab and more direct observations during clinical experiences in their university education program. Time management, operation budget, policies, and student roles are examples of topics to be addressed. From the results, lab management becomes less of a concern with more experience.

Respondents, particularly veteran FCS teachers, struggled with student motivation and curriculum. These challenges were identified in the literature as problems FCS teachers encountered (Cook, 2020; Dainty, Sandford, Su & Belcher; Lee, 2013). Student motivation and curriculum can be a cause and effect result. For example, if the instruction is not interesting, students will not be engaged in the material thereby decreasing student motivation, involvement in discussions, and work produced. Veteran FCS teachers in this study stated they want to learn new teaching methods and activities to update their curriculum. Seeking professional development opportunities or belonging to social networks such as the FCS teacher Facebook page are avenues to modernize or generate new ideas with their instruction habits.

Three challenges were identified for beginning, but not veteran, teachers were lab management, mentorships, and knowledge of policy and procedures. Learning the school culture and assimilating into the teaching profession is part of the induction phase, which can be daunting and overwhelming, all while maintaining the daily tasks of teaching. Arnett-Hartwick and Halger (2018) and Cook (2020) also found that school policy and procedures and working conditions (mentorships) were identified as retention factors for beginning teachers. As teachers

invest and have tenure, their mind-set shifts to job security and the need for professional development, which were identified as problems in this study for veteran FCS teachers.

Challenges as Motivator and Hygiene Factors

Applying the results to this study's theoretical framework, the challenges can be classified as noted above into two categories based on Herzberg's (1966) theory: motivator (intrinsic) and hygiene (extrinsic) factors. According to Herzberg, the challenges identified can be located on the negative end of the two factors' respective continuums: no satisfaction (motivator's continuum) and dissatisfaction (hygiene's continuum). That means both factor sets can contribute to unfavorable experiences for a teacher, thus decreasing their satisfaction level. Attempts to intervene to alleviate challenges can shift the levels of satisfaction towards the positive ends of each factor's continuum. However, if the identified challenges are not resolved, it could potentially impact teachers and cause them to leave the teaching profession.

For example, image was identified as a challenge, which is considered a hygiene factor, located on the negative end of the dissatisfaction continuum. If measures are taken, such as educating others to have a better understanding of the FCS curriculum or garnering support from administrators, which can impact the perception of other stakeholders such as guidance counselors and students, image is no longer an explicit problem. Thus, the image problem slides to the positive end of the continuum. If nothing is done to correct the problem of a poor image of FCS, the problem stays at the negative end of the continuum, and according to the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, it is more likely the teacher will leave their teaching position.

Despite the number of challenges, the FCS teacher respondents as a whole, were either very satisfied or satisfied with their teaching career (96.0%). The positive satisfaction levels are consistent with other results from Arnett and Polkinghorne (2010, Lee (2013), and Tripp (2016). Strong satisfaction needs to be communicated as a reason to pursue FCS teacher education as a career path.

Conclusions

Many FCS teachers potentially leave the profession because of problems they face in their teaching assignments. This study identified the challenges of FCS teachers at different career stages, both as beginning teachers and veteran teachers. Despite the identified challenges, FCS teachers as a whole in Illinois are satisfied within their teaching assignment.

Those responsible for the preparation and retention of FCS teachers must recognize problems faced by FCS teachers in order to identify specific ways to support its teachers. FCS professionals can develop and coordinate in-service workshops and opportunities for

professional development on topics based on the challenges identified from this study. Additionally, these results pinpoint potential problematic areas for administrators to be aware of and address for beginning FCS teachers as well as FCS veteran teachers to be successful. A limitation of the study is that it only surveyed teachers in one state. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other populations.

An understanding of the concerns from beginning and veteran teachers is a first step. Adequately preparing FCS teachers and supporting experienced teachers to handle potential problems can increase job satisfaction and reduce teacher attrition in efforts to eliminate the FCS teacher shortage in Illinois.

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Family and Consumer Sciences College Students and the Perceived Role of the Internet in Developing a Spiritual Blueprint

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What role does the internet play in developing a spiritual blueprint of meaningful beliefs for decisions in daily life of family and consumer sciences (FCS) college students? Does it influence their spiritual blueprint positively or negatively? What online spiritual activities do students engage in most frequently? A selective sample of 87 female students with some interest in spirituality completed a researcher-designed questionnaire. Fifty-five of these students indicated they were "committed" to a form of spirituality and 32 indicated they were open and "exploring." Committed participants were significantly more likely to use the internet for spiritual guidance. All participants considered the internet to be a more positive than negative influence in developing a spiritual blueprint that was useful to their daily life. Recommendations are provided for FCS departments related to formal courses, nonacademic settings and programs, and educational activities to help students develop a blueprint of spiritual guidelines.

College students who are planning to become Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professionals are engaged in complicated tasks and processes as they prepare for meaningful work, relationships, and identities (Arnett, 2004; Barry, Nelson, Davarya & Urry, 2010; Hodder, 2009). Those who develop a set of meaningful beliefs and principles to guide their choices are likely to navigate the complexity successfully (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Horton, 2015). More specifically, McGregor and Chesworth, (2005) note that spiritual qualities are essential for navigating daily life and thus are integral to the FCS profession. These qualities include caring, compassion, joy, hope, connectivity with self and others, humility, authenticity, generosity, sense of purpose, forgiveness, and many others associated with well-being (Astin & Astin, 2010; Harlos, 2000; Rockenbach, Mayhew, Davidson, Ofstein, & Clark Bush, 2015). We refer to this set of qualities as a *spiritual blueprint* that students can draft, develop, and flexibly adapt—then use as a guide for making various life decisions, solving challenging problems, and becoming confident FCS professionals (Emmons, 2000; Kimball, Boyatzis, Cook, Leonard, & Flanagan, 2013; Miller & Ewest, 2013; Rehm & Allison, 2009).

Today's technologically-connected college students are likely to draw upon the internet to gain spiritual information, share ideas, seek higher purpose, find answers to

spiritual questions, and strive to nourish their well-being—a process that Klenke (2007) calls "e-spirituality." Given unlimited information and proliferating social interactions online (Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003), some are concerned that students are unduly influenced in confusing directions (Ameli, 2009; Bryant & Astin, 2008; Hall, Edwards, & Wang, 2016; Yust, 2014). Students often interpret the internet environment as best utilized for a "solo" quest (Kolikant, 2010), leaving out opportunities for deeper spiritually important relationships. In terms of FCS college students, it is not clear if the electronic culture plays a large or small, enriching or corroding, role in the process of developing spiritual guidelines. Therefore, this research study was undertaken to learn more about how FCS college students perceive the internet in view of their spiritual blueprint.

Review of Literature

This study was based on existing knowledge that students can reflectively assess their spiritual needs and strengths in light of personal and social experiences as well as environmental factors (Ertmer & Newby, 1993). Because students define spirituality in individualized ways, they each can formulate a personally relevant spiritual blueprint to help them intelligently reflect (Emmons, 2000) on their "possible selves" (Dunkel, 2000; Markus & Nurius, 1986) and apply to enhance everyday life experiences.

Exploring or Committed Spirituality

Hodder (2009) categorized spirituality into two basic expressions, each with advantages and disadvantages, but attracting different types of college students. Some individuals are drawn to open exploration, personalized and tentative beliefs, questions more than definite answers, and unique spiritual practices. Whereas their spiritual blueprint is advantageous for providing creativity and appealing variety, a lack of structure potentially can lead to isolation, transience, and a confusing spiritual base (Wink & Dillon, 2002). Other individuals are drawn toward familiarity, confident answers, stability, and influence of an organized spiritual community. Although they likely have a relatively clear spiritual blueprint, along with deeper shared experiences with like-minded people, this consistency may interfere with spiritual autonomy, probing for depth, and flexibility when change is warranted.

For this research study, the two categories were adapted, designating one group of students as "exploring" because they remain open and tentative as they draft and revise a meaningful spiritual blueprint. The other category was designated as "committed" because those in this group already have a relatively clear blueprint that is useful and valid for them. Despite differences, research shows both types of students include personal meaning, interest in helping others, and concern for human rights (Arnett, 2004; Miller & Ewest, 2013). What is not clear is how each group utilizes the internet to develop a spiritual blueprint; such knowledge could be valuable in assisting a variety of FCS college students in making decisions and generating meaningful experiences.

Positive and Negative Influence of the Internet on Spirituality

Spirituality is empirically associated with numerous "worldly" benefits including academic success (Constantine et al., 2006); protection against alcohol abuse; good mental and physical health (Horton, 2015; Rew & Wong, 2006); and resilience (Astin & Keen, 2006). There are some indicators that online spiritual experiences produce similar

benefits. The emotional process of bereavement can be eased with online memorials, where survivors attest to the memorable qualities of the deceased (Krysinska, Andriessen, & Corveleyn, 2014). Young adults claim that interactivity in electronic communities produces spiritual benefits such as becoming more confident or less depressed (Yust, 2014). Keating (2013) found that online support groups help in dealing with various physical and mental health issues by providing useful information, posting scriptures, demonstrating love, and sharing similar experiences. College students seem to incorporate the internet as a natural extension of their general spiritual experiences. They go online to "fortify rather than to substitute for offline relationships" (Lee, 2013, p. 133) and assess electronic friendships as positive.

In contrast, other researchers have found that the internet interferes with positive spirituality by presenting too many distractions and stealing time from reflection (Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003)—leading to isolation, self-indulgence, and anxiety (Klenke, 2007). Bryant and Astin (2008) found that many college students spiritually struggle with unexpected circumstances, disruptive events, questions about suffering, or confusion about their identities; it is unclear how the internet is associated with spiritual struggle. Floridi (2011) warns that the deeply spiritual question of "Who am I?" has become "Who am I online?" College students may share too much, put themselves at risk, be captive to shallow associations, and allow the internet too much power in shaping their spiritual development. The constantly shifting information and interactions of the electronic world often comes at the expense of authentic relational communities (Yust, 2014). Given conflicting research results, we wanted to know more about FCS students' perceptions of the role of the internet in developing a spiritual blueprint—recognizing potential differences between committed students and exploring students.

Purpose of the Research

Therefore, the overall purpose of this study was to investigate the extent that FCS college students draw upon the internet to develop a spiritual blueprint as a guide for decisions and experiences. Specific research questions were: How much time do FCS students spend searching online for spirituality-related information? To what extent do students consider the internet to be helpful in making spiritually meaningful decisions in daily life? To what extent do they perceive the internet influences their spiritual blueprint positively and negatively? What online spiritual activities do they engage in most frequently? Of those who participate in online spiritual communities, what are reasons for doing so?

We also investigated potential differences in internet use between FCS students who were committed to a foundational spiritual blueprint and students who were interested but open and exploring spiritual beliefs. We hypothesized:

- a significant difference in frequency of turning to the internet between FCS college students who were committed to a relatively clear spiritual blueprint of beliefs and principles and students who were exploring, tentative, and open.
- a significant difference in committed and exploring students regarding participation in online spiritual communities.
- a significant difference in the extent to which the internet has influenced committed and exploring FCS majors to question their core beliefs.

Finally, we drew from our findings to discuss educational implications and suggest ideas for practice.

Method

Survey research was used to examine the extent to which FCS college students turn to the internet to explore and experience spirituality and believe the electronic environment influences them positively and/or negatively. Students who were already committed to specific spiritual beliefs were compared to exploring students who were interested but open, flexible, and questioning spiritual ideas.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

This sample was recruited from two required upper-division classes in a family sciences department at a large university, after approval for the study from the university Institutional Review Board. Classes in this department prepare students to work with diverse children, adolescents, and families and develop analysis skills for professional work. Within the broad scope of family sciences, students plan a wide variety of careers in areas such as education, extension, family therapy, nursing, school counseling, and social services.

Students completed a paper and pencil questionnaire during each class on a pre-designated date. The study was described, and informed consent documents were completed before questionnaires were distributed. No names were put on the questionnaires, but each was assigned a number and kept in a separate location. Several participants checked an item indicating that they did not have any involvement or interest in spirituality, and these surveys were set aside and not used for this study. There were only two males, so the researchers also set aside these males' questionnaires and used a female only sample; this made sense given that research suggests some gender differences. Females are more likely than males to use social networks for spiritual issues, engage in spiritual practices, and experience spiritual growth (Crosby & Smith, 2015). Females are also more likely to be conflicted between selfless caring for others and developing their own selfhood (Sointu & Woodhead, 2008). The final sample was 87 females from 18 to 23 years old.

Instrument and Data Analysis

The questionnaire used in this study was based on the research questions, concepts from the literature, and an assumption that each participant could answer items based on their construction of spirituality. Demographic items related to gender, race, age, and religion (if relevant to participant) were included. They were asked about the influence of the internet: "To what extent has the internet influenced your spiritual beliefs?" with options ranging from "no influence at all" to "a major influence." "To what extent has your internet activity influenced your core spirituality in a negative way?" (and a positive way) with options ranging from "no influence" to "a major influence." The frequency ("rarely or never" to "very frequently") to which participants used the internet to practice typical spiritual activities such as attending online spiritual services, engaging in prayer, or practicing generosity with time, money, or other resources was also included in the questionnaire. Frequency data were examined to describe perceptions of the exploring and committed, separately, and combined.

Respondents were divided into those who were: "spiritually committed," and "spiritually interested but still open, curious, or exploring," Students who were spiritually committed and exploring were compared using the independent samples t-test, to statistically test our hypotheses and identify any potential differences.

Results

Fifty-five (55) participants were considered spiritually committed: six African American, one Asian, 41 Caucasian, and seven Hispanic. The remaining 32 exploring participants were: one African American, three Asian, 23 Caucasian, 4 Hispanic, and 1 Middle Eastern. Both groups combined were: seven (8%) African American, four (5%) Asian, 64 (74%) Caucasian, eleven (12%) Hispanic, and one (1%) Middle Eastern. Faiths were listed by fewer than a quarter of the sample, but those who did identify were Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim. Forty-nine out of 55 (89%) committed participants and 30 out of 32 (94%) exploring participants indicated they spent under one hour per day on the internet with a focus on spirituality.

Descriptive Findings

Internet and Spiritually Important Decision Area

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed the internet had helped them make decisions in important life areas from 1 for "strongly disagree" to 5 for "strongly agree." Although the differences between the two groups were small, they used the internet for different decision-making areas (Table 1). Committed participants used the internet to the greatest extent for decisions pertaining to their future career, and to the least extent for romantic relationships. Exploring participants used the internet to the greatest extent to boost overall well-being, and least for decisions related to family of origin.

Table 1

Extent of Using the Internet to Make Spiritually Important Decisions

	Committed		Exploring	
Decision Areas	M	SD	M	SD
Romantic relationships	2.82	1.02	2.94	1.19
Future career	3.16	1.10	2.84	1.19
Family of origin	2.90	1.00	2.59	1.04
Overall well-being	3.05	1.13	3.09	1.23
	n=55		n=32	

Internet as Positive or Negative Influence

Participants were asked about the degree to which the internet positively influenced their spiritual blueprint and the degree to which it was a negative influence. Table 2 shows approximately half of the committed participants perceived the internet to

Table 2

The Internet's Influence, Positively and Negatively, on the Spiritual Blueprint

	Positive Influence		
	Committed (n=55)	Exploring (n=32)	Combined (n=87)
Major influence	2 (04%)	7 (22%)	9 (10%)
Moderate influence	15 (27%)	12 (37%)	27 (31%)
Minor influence	28 (51%)	11 (34%)	39 (45%)
No Influence	10 (18%)	2 (06%)	12 (14%)
	Negative Influence		
	Committed	Exploring	Combined
Major influence	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)
Moderate influence	4 (07%)	3 (09%)	7 (08%)
Minor influence	31 (56%)	13 (41%)	44 (51%)
No Influence	20 (36%)	16 (50%)	36 (41%)

have a minor positive influence and about a quarter considered the internet to have a moderately positive influence on their spiritual blueprint. Slightly over one-third of exploring participants considered the internet a positive influence to a moderate extent, and another third reported the internet a positive influence to a minor extent. The internet played a stronger positive influence (moderate) for the explorers than for the committed (minor). The majority of both the committed and exploring participants, 92% and 91% respectively, considered the internet to be negatively influential only to a minor extent or not at all. Although the internet's influence on the spiritual blueprint was perceived more positively than negatively, this positive effect was to a minor or moderate extent and not a major extent for both groups.

Online Spiritual Activities

As indicated in Table 3, fewer than half of participants were involved with spiritually related online activities at least once a week. The committed group participated online much more frequently in traditional activities of prayer, studying scriptures, attending online services, and sharing beliefs. More than one-fourth of all participants practiced forgiveness or generosity in a way that involved the internet, potentially indicating some relational spirituality of the internet.

Table 3

Online Activities Supporting a Spiritual Blueprint at Least once a Week

Activity	Committed	Exploring	Combined
Prayer	25 (45%)	4 (12%)	29 (33%)
Study of scriptures	24 (44%)	1 (03%)	25 (29%)
Attend spiritual services, events	19 (34%)	0 (00%)	19 (22%)
Practice forgiveness	18 (33%)	8 (25%)	26 (30%)
Sharing faith beliefs	17 (31%)	1 (03%)	18 (21%)
Generosity	17 (31%)	8 (25%)	25 (29%)
Online communities	12 (22%)	1 (03%)	13 (15%)

Reasons for Participating in Online Communities

Although some research suggests online communities can be significant for spiritual development (Klenke, 2007), less than one-fifth of exploring and committed students in this study participated in them. When they did participate, it was mainly for communicating with like-minded people and getting personal support or advice as opposed to challenging themselves through debate or engaging in social advocacy (Table 4).

Table 4

Reasons for Participating in Online Spiritual Communities

Reasons	Committed	Exploring	Combined
Idea exchange with likeminded people	19	7	26
Support from others with same needs	15	8	23
Ideas for decisions in my life	12	6	18
Online identity or presence	2	2	4
Debate for different views	2	2	4
Advocacy for my views	1	--	1

Results of Hypotheses Testing

The paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare committed and exploring students for frequency of going on the internet to enhance their spiritual blueprint. S significant difference was found in the frequency scores of those with the committed status (M=1.84, SD=92) and the exploring (M=1.47, SD=.62) status; t (83)=2.22, p=0.029, supporting the study's hypothesis. Furthermore, these results suggest that committed participants generally use the internet more readily or frequently than exploring students to enhance their spiritual beliefs and principles.

Results also indicated a significant statistical difference in online community participation scores of the committed group (M=1.65, SD=.95) and the exploring

(M=1.323, SD=.60) group t(82.8)=1.99, p=0.050. These results suggest that online community participation differed for the two groups of students, with the committed students participating in spiritual online communities significantly more frequently than exploring students.

Finally, the hypothesis that committed and exploring students would differ in the extent the internet has influenced them to question their spiritual principles and moral guidelines was not supported: Analyses of the data did not show a significant difference in the scores for the committed (M=1.64, SD=.75) and the exploring (M=1.94, SD=.95) status; t(85)=-1.63, p=0.106.

Discussion

This study's sample reported that participants spent less than one hour online daily on spiritual matters, and the time they did spend was viewed as adding a positive influence on their spiritual blueprint—but to a minor or moderate--and not a major extent. These results support researchers who believe that young adults turn to the internet as a supplement or an extension rather than a primary source of spiritual meaning making (Lee, 2013). Rather than considering physical and electronic environments as dichotomous, they appear to seamlessly adapt spirituality to both digital and physical cultures. Whereas these are general time patterns, additional research could concentrate on times when they do engage in intense internet activity for spiritual reasons to determine more specific patterns and gain depth.

Both committed and exploring students seek insight into well-being from the internet, although committed participants might go online for spiritually important future career decisions to a greater extent than exploring participants and exploring students go online for more general spiritual well-being. Perhaps a defined spiritual blueprint facilitates focus on specific life areas of pending importance whereas exploration by its nature may cast a wider net for seeking a sense of generalized well-being.

Many researchers argue that the internet facilitates shallow relationships, lack of focus, struggle, and even nefarious activity (Bryant & Austin, 2008; Bryant et al., 2003; Floridi, 2011). In contrast, nine of 10 FCS students in this study considered the internet to be positively influential to a minor or moderate extent, and negatively influential only to a minor extent or not at all. These results support claims that this generation of "digital natives" incorporate technology as a natural part of their lives (Kolikant, 2010) and are not unduly affected by the vast online frontier open to them. Because this sample was comprised of FCS students, their education in critical thinking, decision-making skills, and healthy lifestyle content might also contribute to their positive use and keen ability to critically assess internet content and activity (McGregor, 1998; Rehm & Allison, 2009).

Both exploring and committed students go online for spiritual activities, but committed students participate more in traditional practices (prayer, scripture, online sermons). Although it was hypothesized that a non-directional difference would exist in the extent each group frequented the internet for spiritual activities, it was somewhat surprising to the researchers that committed students were more inclined to engage online. Additional research could tell us more about questions such as: Do committed students know what they are seeking, and are they limiting opportunities for critical thinking? Do exploring students need more guidance and mentoring to make internet exploration more useful?

Online spiritual activities for both groups were most prevalent for idea exchange with likeminded others, support, and help for decisions—all reasons focused on self-development and personal growth which is appropriate for their stage in life (Arnett, 2004). Although students feel comfortable in the electronic world (Lee, 2013), solo activities were more frequent, with only a quarter of this sample engaged in online spiritual communities. It is interesting that committed students participated to a significantly higher degree than exploring students, perhaps because it is easier to find or belong to a community with others who have a similar and relatively clear spiritual blueprint. It is noteworthy, however, that both exploring and committed students indicated somewhat high frequencies of online forgiveness and generosity of time, money, and talents. These findings reflect some concern for others and relational spirituality, possibly due to the nature of FCS as attracting students who seek a helping profession. Qualitative and quantitative studies could focus on the development of meaningful communities and how they can be used to enhance the spiritual blueprint of diverse members within.

Implications for Educational Practice in FCS Programs

Colleges often give serious attention to grades, test scores, graduation rates, and other quantifiable external indicators of success. Unfortunately, this can lead to neglect of the inner life of meaning, purpose, and connectivity (Rockenbach et al., 2015).

> The spiritual realm and the deeper life questions it brings to light *do* play a role in the young adult journey, making attention to these issues on the part of practitioners, administrators, and faculty a clear necessity. Indeed, there are critical implications of struggling spiritually that are intimately tied to the students' sense of well-being and adjustment to the adult world. Failure to recognize the seriousness of these facets of students' lives is to leave them quite alone on their quest to understand central issues of meaning. (Bryant & Astin, 2008, p. 23)

Because online spirituality (Klenke, 2007) is part of the modern search for meaning, it points to a unique area to be incorporated into the practice of FCS college education.

Spirituality at the overall organizational level "allows the human capacity for innovation and creativity to flourish" and "seeks to tap into the fullness of human potential" (Porth, McCall, & Bausch, 1999, p. 211). FCS departments could initiate ongoing attention, dialogue, events, and visuals portraying an environment where spiritual qualities are important. Because course structure is also important (Heischman, 2009), online, traditional, and hybrid academic courses could be offered (Harlos, 2000) to explore philosophical ideas (e.g. What is the meaning of internet spirituality?) and skill-based applications (e.g. How can positive internet spirituality be facilitated? What role does it play?) Individual spiritual qualities (meaning, community, hope, forgiveness, etc.) could be examined thoroughly considering specialized careers such as secondary education, extension, merchandising, and nutrition sciences, to name a few.

Spiritual topics could be layered within typical course offerings. For example, child development courses could teach spiritual development along with cognitive, social, and physical development. Hodge (2005) discovered that memories and experiences with

grandparents deeply affect young adults' spiritual perspectives, suggesting that gerontology or adult development courses could include spiritually focused topics. Team-taught courses in partnership with other programs also interested in enhancing spirituality such as social work or the arts could be valuable.

Service learning and capstone courses are natural places to gain realistic insights that can be applied to their spiritual blueprint. Students could explore ways the internet is used regarding their careers, how it enhances or detracts from qualities of inner life, how it can bring students from different service areas together to dialogue about issues and share challenges and successes. These types of experiences address a community need and, in this process, develop knowledge, attitudes, and actions to create deeper relationships (Bauman et al., 2014; Emmons, 2000).

Most departments of FCS also produce programs and sponsor activities/events outside of the formal classroom to probe specific issues. Workshops, brown bag discussions, guest speakers, book clubs, or other creative methods of programming might be designed and provided by FCS instructional professionals and students. Such activities can take place in libraries, residence halls, student unions, computer labs, and other common areas where varied programs can be set up to assist students' meanings and thus spiritual blueprints. Educational activities could be transferred to online programs, video programs, web sites, webinars, and electronic interactive discussions.

Imaginative activities and assignments can be adapted to guide students in creating a spiritual blueprint. For example, Erasmus (2012) required human ecology students to design a road map depicting detours and crossroads, with which students reflectively considered experiences of process and change, identified new ways of knowing, and could be adapted to reflection on spiritual qualities. Traditional ecograms and genograms can be adapted (Hodge, 2005) to examine spiritual beliefs, major challenges, changes over time, formative relationships, family context, and other issues tailored to their own spiritual needs and interests. Harlos (2000) suggests using fables or case studies to analyze spiritual values. Such activities can help FCS students creatively portray universally acknowledged spiritual notions such as authenticity and compassion, nurture these traits, and apply them to enhance everyday life.

Professors might guide college students through critical thinking and practical reasoning (Brown, 1980; Laster, 1984) to identify and critique spiritual challenges of the internet, examine individual and social contexts, examine diverse perspectives, consider personal meanings, critically examine the oppressive and empowering consequences of interweaving spirituality, the internet, and concrete experiences. Students deconstruct as well as construct, experiencing changes in spiritual interest, activities, and beliefs (Hall, Edwards, & Wang, 2016). Students could compare temporal patterns of internet use and influence on how they draw on spirituality when they face obstacles, what does affect them negatively as they search the internet and what they find valuable, and the role of others or connections with a community in their development of a spiritual blueprint.

Limitations

The study should be considered in view of several limitations. Defining and measuring spirituality pose major challenges (Kapuscinski & Masters, 2010), so these results should be interpreted with caution. The cross-sectional nature of the survey is limited to data

obtained at one point in time. Differences across socioeconomic class, race/ethnicity, and gender were not captured in this study. Finally, the results are self-reported data.

Conclusion

Given how little is understood about the role of the internet in shaping FCS students' spiritual blueprint, along with many contradictory findings from the existing general body of literature, more empirical research is needed. Because the notion of a spiritual blueprint appears to be a valuable resource for navigating complex life issues, it is important to support FCS college students and try to understand what they believe and experience spiritually both on and off the internet (Rehm & Allison, 2009).

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University-Level Methods Courses for Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Education

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This paper profiles one of two university-level, pre-service teacher (PST) education methods courses that filled an observed gap in existing family and consumer sciences (FCS) and home economics teacher education textbooks. Following completion of a course focused on basic professional philosophy, lesson planning, and assessment, students participated in a second course concerned with higher-level, more abstract knowledge dealing with educational philosophies, curriculum development approaches (models), course outline planning, and the development of modules and units. Together, both courses accommodated the seven basic knowledge bases that prepared PSTs to teach. This discussion is provided as inspiration for redesigning university-level curricula that socialize PSTs into FCS education.

Introduction

Higher education degree programs socialize lay people into the--family and consumer sciences (FCS)[1]--profession (McGregor, 2011). One such program is FCS teacher education focused on pre-service teachers (PSTs) with no prior teaching experience (Borg, 2006). College students are gradually introduced into their future teaching role beginning as an observer and ending with increasing professional competency as an educator (Virginia Wesleyan University, n.d.). Success at teaching (and perceptions of said ability) is dependent on PSTs having access to "the knowledge needed to teach" (Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 168). Therefore, "the extent and quality of teacher education matters for teachers' effectiveness" (Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 166).

Many textbooks have been written about how to prepare PSTs to become effective FCS educators (e.g., Alexander, Holland, & Rambo, 2018; Blakenship & Moerchen, 1979; Chamberlain & Kelly, 1981; Cross, 1973; Fleck, 1980; Hall & Paolucci,1970; Hatcher & Halchin, 1973; Hitch & Youatt,1995; Spafford, 1935). At issue herein is their lack of chapters on FCS philosophy (the exception being Alexander et al., 2018); educational philosophy; curriculum development approaches and theories; and course outline, module and unit planning and development. Textbooks have focused, instead, on the more pragmatic, on-the-ground micro aspects of teaching: lesson planning (including goals and objectives), instructional strategies, questioning, and assessment and evaluation.

When I used to teach home economics (FCS) teacher education methods courses at the university level, I could not find a teacher education textbook that included all these topics. This paper shares what I developed over a 20-year time frame in the absence of this instructional

1 The ideas herein also pertain to home economics, family studies, human ecology, home sciences, and other names used for the profession around the world. Although the practice being recounted was by a Canadian home economist, the term FCS was used to respect the American name change in 1994.

resource. During that educational enterprise, I developed two university-level FCS teacher education methods courses, one focused on the more immediate micro aspects of teaching and the other on the macro, philosophical, and pedagogical dimensions.

As a caveat, due to space limitations, this paper focuses on the latter, but readers are invited to contact the author for information about the former. As a further caveat, this paper reports a Canadian experience with full appreciation that FCS education in the United States is part of career and technical education or general teacher education. These institutional arrangements may compromise what American FCS readers will find applicable, but international perspectives play a role in advancing home economics education and so are respectfully tendered for consideration in this paper.

The intent of my two courses was to socialize FCS PSTs to the idea that teaching is *much more* than being in front of the students and marking their assignments afterwards. Teaching involves contextual knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and educational and FCS professional philosophy and theory as well as subject-matter content (Shulman, 1986, 1987). A comprehensive and philosophically and intellectually rigorous orientation to teacher education will inspire and sustain FCS teachers more than just the how-to approach that anchors most existing textbooks.

Table 1
Home Economics and FCS Teacher Education Textbooks (1930s-2010s)

1930s		
Spafford (1935)	*Fundamentals in Teaching Home Economics*	John Wiley & Sons
1970s		
Hall and Paolucci (1970)	*Teaching Home Economics*	John Wiley & Sons
Hatcher and Halchin (1973)	*The Teaching of Home Economics*	Houghton Mifflin
Blakenship and Moerchen (1979)	*Home Economics Education*	Houghton Mifflin
1980s		
Fleck (1980)	*Toward Better Teaching of Home Economics*	Macmillan
Chamberlain and Kelly (1981)	*Creative Home Economics Instruction*	McGraw-Hill
1990s		
Hitch and Youatt (1995)	*Communicating Family and Consumer Sciences*	Goodheart-Wilcox
2010s		
Alexander, Holland, and Rambo (2018)	*Teaching Family and Consumer Sciences in the 21st Century*	Curriculum Center for FCS

Philosophy and theory both ground and guide behaviour and provide a sustainable context for teaching regardless of subject matter. Understanding educational philosophies helps PSTs gain insights into their own teaching philosophy. The same holds for knowledge of educational theories, models and curriculum approaches. The core elements of a teacher's philosophy (personal, professional, and educational) can influence the courses s/he designs, what is taught and how, and the learning environments created (Beatty, Leigh, & Dean, 2009). The approach herein augments the existing FCS teacher education textbooks (see Table 1) and serves as inspiration for redesigning university-level curricula that socialize PSTs into FCS education.

Practice Context

My approach unfolded over 20 years while teaching two, 12-week courses in a Bachelor of Education (BED) degree program at a Canadian university. Students were expected to come to the program with FCS-related content obtained in earlier degree programs (e.g., foods, clothing, family studies, child development, consumerism, housing). This two-year BED did not integrate education with content (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The university's BED degree did follow the triadic norm of mixing (a) foundational courses and (b) methods courses (e.g., science, family studies, English, mathematics) with (c) a teaching practicum under the mentorship of a cooperating teacher (Akarsu & Kaya, 2012).

Seven Knowledge Bases

Both courses were designed to help FCS PSTs (a) apply their evolving philosophical and theoretical conceptions of teaching in the real world and (b) develop their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Put simply, teachers with PCK will have gained knowledge about pedagogy (the science and theory of teaching) so they can teach content and subject matter (Shulman, 1987). It is one thing to know about a subject but quite another to teach others about it (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

PCK manifests when PSTs can alter both content knowledge (subject-matter) and pedagogical knowledge (i.e., what, how and why to teach) and then integrate these into a structure and approach that makes learning meaningful to students. With PCK, pre-service teachers can effectively teach grade-level content respecting students' learning styles (Akarsu & Kaya, 2012; Cochran, 1999; Shulman, 1986, 1987). Actually, PCK is now recognized as on equal footing with six other knowledge bases (see Table 2) that PSTs need to know about when teaching per Shulman's (1987) seminal work (see also Gess-Newsome, 1999; Morine-Dershimer & Kent, 1999).

The two courses I developed respected all seven knowledge components with the aforementioned caveat that the BED program did not teach FCS-related subject-matter content. Research supports this course-design decision with Darling-Hammond (2000) commenting that "measures of pedagogical knowledge . . . are more frequently found to influence teaching performance and often exert even stronger effects than subject-matter knowledge" (p 167). That being said, FCS PSTs did receive the opportunity to develop lessons, modules, units, and courses around areas where they might feel unprepared content wise. A nutrition student might choose to do a lesson on childcare. A family studies graduate could design a course on clothing and textiles.

Table 2
Seven Basic Knowledge Bases for Teaching (adapted from Shulman, 1987)

Knowledge Base	Description
Content	Content unique to disciplines and sub-disciplines
Curricular	State-approved plus other curricula, programs, materials and resources related to content to be taught; also, curriculum development theory and approaches/models
Philosophical	Educational philosophies that determine beliefs about the aims of education shaped by the perceived relationship among education, learning and society - transcends subject matter
General Pedagogical	Broad principles of classroom management, learning environment organization and communication, instructional strategies, assessment and evaluation, and personal pedagogical knowledge gained from experience and fuelled by beliefs and reflection - transcends subject matter
Learners	Individual learners and learning style theories
Educational Contexts	State and school board governance and financing, community and cultural characteristics, laws and educational policies, educational research
Pedagogical Content	Each teacher's personal and professional understanding of and expertise in melding subject matter content with 'how to teach' informed by the six other types of knowledge

Appreciating that teachers' performance is influenced by the interaction between content knowledge and pedagogical skills (Darling-Hammond, 2000), per Table 2, the first methods course focused on (a) content knowledge, (b) general pedagogical knowledge that transcends any subject and (c) knowledge of learners. The second course (discussed in this paper) dealt with (a) PCK, (b) curriculum knowledge, (c) philosophical knowledge, and (d) knowledge of educational contexts (to a small extent). It also taught FCS PSTs how to design a course from scratch, which includes developing modules and associated units with an appreciation of instructional resources. This course instilled professional autonomy, educational expertise and accountability, because it was grounded in philosophy (McGregor, 2012).

FCS University-Level Teaching Methods Course

After completing the first methods course, the PSTs progressed to a second course

concerned with higher-level, more abstract knowledge. It dealt with educational philosophies, curriculum development approaches, course outline planning, and the development of modules and units (see Figure 1). This course served two purposes. It provided the PSTs with the (a) more immediate, pragmatic skill set of developing courses, modules and units as well as the (b) more abstract skill of appreciating the power and role of philosophy, models and theory in education especially when developing curricula.

Figure 1
Course Objectives, Modules and Units for FCS Methods Course

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the basic **educational philosophies**, over 10 **curriculum orientation** perspectives, and over 10 **kinds of curriculum**
2. Gain detailed understanding of steps involved in **curriculum development** (includes philosophical rationale, scope and sequence), and each of **implementation** (technical top down) and **enactment** (nontechnical bottom up) approaches
3. Understand and apply theory related to **developing curriculum products: course outlines, modules, and units** (**lesson plan** development was in the previous course)

LEARNING MODULES AND UNITS

MODULE ONE: ***Educational Philosophies, Curriculum Orientations and Development***

Unit 1 (Course Objective 1)

- Develop a critical understanding of both educational philosophies and curriculum orientations. "*What is the curriculum? What is knowledge? What should students be learning? Who should decide what should be taught? How are such decisions to be made*?"

Unit 2 (Course Objective 2)

- Gain a deep appreciation of the processes, strategies, and approaches to designing (developing) new curricula and redesigning existing curricula.

MODULE TWO: ***Developing Curriculum Products: Course Outlines, Modules, and Units***

Unit 1 (Course Objective 3)

- Effectively design a complete course from the provincial family studies curriculum

Unit 2 (Course Objective 3)

- From the above course, choose one module and successfully create its supportive units

Educational Philosophies

An educational philosophy reflects assumptions about and shapes perceptions of (a) the purpose of education and a particular educational program; (b) what content is of value; (c) how students learn; (d) what material, methods and resources to use; and (e) how (when and by whom) learning should be assessed (McGregor, 2019; Ornstein, 1991; Sowell, 2000). The FCS PSTs were exposed to key educational philosophies that can inform curricular design and

teaching pedagogy: cognitive process, perennialism, essentialism, academic rationalism, curriculum as technology, social reconstructivism, social adaptation, progressive, existentialism, personal-global, and humanistic (personal relevance, holistic). These fall along a continuum of teacher- versus student-centered learning (Oliva, 2001; Parkay & Hass, 2001; Sowell, 2000). For an assignment, students read instructor-shared documents about educational philosophies and created a comprehensive summary chart.

After gaining preliminary knowledge of the various philosophies, students collaboratively examined various curricula for evidence of which philosophy was at play. Provincial and territorial state-approved curricula as well as examples from other sources were investigated. This type of information is most evident in the curriculum document's rationale and philosophy section. Otherwise, students looked for key words used to explain the curriculum, words that were indicative of specific philosophies (e.g., outcomes, child-centered, mastery, employment, social action). This exercise also sensitized the PSTs to the power of language in curriculum documents. Words reveal philosophies, ideologies, assumptions, premises, beliefs and values of and about education and learning, both latent and manifest. It is common for multiple philosophies to be combined in one curriculum. Table 3 illustrates this exercise with the main philosophies identified.

Table 3
Curriculum Educational Philosophies (examples from Sowell, 2000)

Academic Rationalism and a hint of Progressive "In the *Kansas Curricular Standards for Social Studies*, the primary purpose of the program outcomes and their accompanying standards and benchmarks are to help students . . . to develop proficiencies needed for employment . . . and develop the skills and attitudes needed to cope with contemporary society" (Sowell, 2000, p. 295). This learning will depend on the principles of (a) integrating knowledge and (b) making learning authentic and relevant to students' lives.
Academic Rationalism and Cognitive Learning The Fort Worth middle school Science II curriculum "will focus on academic achievement of all students and will ensure that every graduate possesses the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to pursue post-secondary education and/or obtain meaningful work" (Sowell, 2000, p. 301). This will be achieved via the scientific method, laboratory experiences and thinking critically and creatively.
Progressive and Social Adaptation The Epsom Central School's English language arts curriculum "will strive to develop and stimulate the individuals' intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth, so that the individual can readily adapt to our ever-changing society [through the] mastery of the basic skills of learning [and with] self expression" (Sowell, 2000, p. 306).
Humanistic (holistic) and Personal Global The Stoughton High foreign language Spanish IV curriculum will "foster the widest

opportunities for the intellectual strengthening and personal maturation of every student [so he/she can] participate effectively in society [and gain increased awareness of] the fragile interdependence of man and his [sic] planet" (Sowell, 2000, p. 312).

Curriculum Development Approaches

The FCS PSTs then learned about the two most basic approaches for developing a curriculum: (a) the implementation, technical approach (top down) and (b) the enactment, nontechnical approach (bottom up) (Sowell, 2000). Although they were encouraged to understand the technical approach, because it would be their reality when they entered the teaching profession, they were invited to appreciate the beauty of the enactment approach, which involves teachers and students in its creation. As a caveat, other BED courses exposed the FCS PSTs to curriculum theories (e.g., value-, process-, structure- and content-oriented theories) (see Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead, & Boschee, 2011).

Technical Implementation

The *technical* approach is so named, because it assumes a rationale and systematic approach to designing an outcome-based, teacher-centered, objective, context-neutral curriculum created by a nonteacher-populated committee. It is handed down to teachers to use with little say in its development. Implementing a curriculum created and imposed by a higher education authority or government agency is the most popular approach to curriculum development. Educators have nominal (often invited only) input into its development. There is an off chance of being selected to sit on the curriculum-design committee as a content expert specialist and even less chance of pilot testing it before its official launch. This approach tends to be informed by the academic rationalism, essentialism, perennialism, and cognitive process educational philosophies (Sowell, 2000).

Nontechnical Enactment

Much rarer is the enactment or nontechnical approach to developing a curriculum. This approach reflects the tenets of progressive (child centered), holistic, global, and social reconstructivist educational philosophies where learners and teachers, to varying degrees, co-create the learning experience. Instead of a committee, teachers are the main authors and architects of the curriculum working in a community of learners. Teachers are "the major source of curriculum knowledge because they know their students and teaching contexts. They also know when the curriculum needs revision" (Sowell, 2000, p. 9). Outcomes are not predetermined but emerge as the curriculum is enacted with teachers drawing from the elements in Table 2 to develop a curriculum for their context. Instead of using a preconceived, prescribed curriculum, the enacted curriculum "comes into being" (Sowell, 2000, p. 15) as it is developed by students and teachers in a given context.

The FCS PSTs were not expected to design a top-down curriculum from scratch in this course, but samples of FCS- and home economics-related curriculum documents were explored collaboratively, so they could discern the typical organizational format used to communicate its intent and contents. For the technical approach, this ranged from (but is not limited to) title, rationale, philosophy, goals, objectives and outcomes to topics, scope and sequence, materials,

instructional strategies, resources, and assessment and evaluation (Sowell, 2000).

Course Syllabus Design

The FCS PSTs were then required to design a course outline (syllabus) from scratch. A curriculum is prescriptive; a course outline is descriptive. Although often interchanged, a course syllabus (a planning tool) is technically more detailed than a course outline. That said, both terms are used interchangeably herein as is the common convention. The syllabus contains three main features: (a) information about the course (name and description, goals and objectives, topics, readings [organized into modules and units], assignments and evaluation scheme, meeting times and places, and instructor contact); (b) what is expected of the students (attendance, course policies and procedures, late or missed work, technology, inclusion and accessibility, classroom rules and etiquette); and (c) school policies (Bain, 2004; Gannon, 2018; Posner & Rudnitsky, 2001).

Again, over the years, I developed a course outline model for their use (see Appendix A). This was supplemented with Posner and Rudnitsky's (2001) approach to developing a course from scratch. As an independent assignment, the PSTs were expected to read and summarize this approach and then use it, as well as Appendix A, when developing their syllabus. Posner and Rudnitsky (2001) provided a 36-step process to create a course outline: (a) get oriented (includes gaining familiarity with state curricula, available textbooks, others' outlines, and standards and outcome documents; (b) set a direction (map out a draft, tentative plan); (c) develop a course rationale; (d) develop then refine the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) (goals); (e) cluster ILOs to form units (their term for modules); (f) organize the units (includes scope and sequence); and (g) develop general teaching and instructional strategies (plan the learning environment). A detailed summary of their approach is available on request (see McGregor, 2019, for more on course rationales).

Modules and Units

As an assignment, the FCS PSTs were then required to choose one module (with its specific units) from their recently designed course and develop it in detail. A recurring challenge was explaining how module and unit differ, because they are often conflated creating much confusion. A unit is an individual thing regarded as single and complete. A module is a set of units that can be used to construct a more complex structure (Anderson, 2014), in this case, a course. The PSTs were taught the principle that a module is the larger entity comprising smaller units, which are subdivisions of the module. To mitigate confusion, they were advised to focus on discerning these two course organizational elements (i.e., a large structure with smaller structures nested in it) instead of worrying about what they are called.

Appendix B showcases the model I developed over time to help the PSTs with this aspect of course outline development. Posner and Rudnitsky (2001) clarified that there is no rule for how big a module (or unit) should be (e.g., number of ILOs, objectives, sessions or classes). Educators are to take guidance from the principles of (a) coherence (i.e., logical agreement among parts) and (b) scope to decide its size. Respectively, a manageable, coherent module is set up so students can see it as a set of learnings (units) that relate to each other. To that end, the subject matter should be broken into parts that can then be joined with other parts, so students can see the whole picture (including how the modules fit together to complete the course

objectives). For an example, see Figure 1.

Scope refers both to what is considered relevant to achieving the learning goals and the extent to which the module or unit deals with this specific content; in other words, what to teach at what detail (North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 2000). In principle, educators should have as many modules and units as necessary to address the course rationale and cover all the course ILOs, goals and objectives (Posner & Rudnitsky, 2001).

Conclusion

This paper shared an overview of one of two university-level FCS teacher education methods courses. It was designed to augment existing FCS teacher education textbooks (see Table 1) and serve as inspiration for redesigning university-level curricula that socialize PSTs into FCS education. Such courses would balance the so-called how-to micro aspects of teaching with a macro-level philosophically and intellectually rigorous orientation to being a FCS educator. FCS practitioners are encouraged to approach publishing companies about preparing and releasing a more comprehensive FCS teacher education methods textbook that respects the comprehensiveness needed when new teachers enter the real world.

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Appendix A
Course Outline Model

- Provide basic information (school's name, instructor's name and contact information, course name, grade level, classroom number, course Moodle URL if relevant)
- Identify any prerequisites (so students can access their readiness for the course)
- Provide course rationale and course description (i.e., justify content and show how course fits into the curriculum or a larger program)
- State both course goals (end point) and general student learning objectives (steps to get there)
- Clarify logic used to organize the course, sometimes called the course's conceptual framework (e.g., this could be a textbook's table of contents, moving from theory to application, from abstract to concrete, increased levels of complexity)
- Describe intended teaching approach (e.g., lecture, labs, field trips, role playing, games)
- Specify texts and readings (where located) and whether mandatory or optional. Try to have a range of readings (e.g., texts, articles, web pages, popular press)
- Identify items students need for course (e.g., computers, lab coats, binders)
- Provide an evaluation scheme. List assignments, tests, exams and such with dates and weights or value (%). Explain grading practices and scales/rubrics. Give students some sense of workload (e.g., time, level of difficulty) required to complete course components
- Specify any other course requirements aside from class attendance (e.g., field trips, service learning, community engagement)
- Set out the course modules and units in detail (e.g., a schedule of classes) with dates for each class including topics, readings, deadlines, holidays, due dates, drop dates (display using chart or table)
- Clarify how the modules and units fit together as a whole, so that students can "see" the course in its entirety
- Outline course (and likely some school) policies (e.g., attendance, late assignments, makeups) including expected behaviour before, during and after class

Appendix B
Module and Unit Model

- Each **module** (usually 2-3 per modules course) is organized around a theme, issue or problem representing the key building blocks of the course. The module can correspond to a chapter topic in a textbook or ideas from standards/outcomes for the area of study.

- Give each module a title reflecting the broad topic being covered.

- Review provincial (state) guidelines and approved textbooks for age-appropriate content and tasks for this area of study. Then, clearly indicate the course *goal(s)* and intended (student) learning *objectives* (ILOs*)* to be reached in each module. For each goal, provide a rationale statement that describes why students are learning this particular content.

- Decide on the sequence of the modules (the order they will be taught) using tips from textbooks or curricular documents for how to cluster them.

- Then, break each module down into manageable ***units***, usually 2-3 units per module, with 1-2 lesson plans per unit, deciding on their sequence as well.

- Identify the resources and materials that are necessary to implement the modules and units. Gather facts and documents from a *variety of perspectives* about the themes. Create a filing system, one file for each module, and file the information as you find it (paper or virtual such as Pinterest). When satisfied that you have the scope and depth that you need to teach the topic, create a narrative (like a term paper) for each module (theme or topic) (about five pages long, single spaced) and convert into PowerPoints, handouts et cetera, *if* you are ready to distill it this far. This will become the content you later teach in each lesson. This is a live document, a work in progress.

- Now that you know better *what is going to be taught,* decide on the time frame required for each module and unit. For modules, divide the number of weeks for the course by the number of modules to get an estimate (12 weeks/4 modules = 3 weeks for each module). Decide how many classes (days - lessons) are required for each unit within each module.

- Next, create a day-by-day timeline of each unit's activities and lessons. To do this, try figuring out the number of classes per week. Using the information pulled together so far, *block out a series of daily lessons* that are representative of important elements of the unit and progressive in nature – a flow chart works here. When more detail is needed, follow guidelines previously provided for developing detailed lesson plans.

- Assess learning at end of each module (at the end of the 3-4 weeks). *If* the module has a culminating activity that represents assessment of the module's learning goals, this activity should be clearly described in the course outline. Do the same for the units, if relevant.

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A Study of Appalachian College Students' Attitudes Toward Marriage

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This paper provides an analysis of research designed to explore college students' attitudes related to marriage. Seventy-seven students participated in this research. Findings from this study support previous research showing that college students considered marriage desirable and important. Outcomes from this investigation also align with the findings of previous research (Campbell and Wright, 2010; Servaty and Weber, 2011) that showed young adults continue to view marriage as a committed, monogamous, and lifelong relationship. These findings add to the limited knowledge base on emerging adults' attitudes towards marriage. Applications for family and consumer sciences educators are included.

Introduction

Perspectives and practices related to marriage in the United States (U.S.) have their roots in the philosophies and practices of those who founded the nation we know today (Cott, 2000). Coontz (2006) discussed the changes in and romanticizing of marriage within our culture over time. A few previous studies (Campbell & Wright, 2010; Hippin, 2016; Martin, 1984; Servaty & Weber, 2011) investigated college students' attitudes toward marriage. This paper highlights an investigation that builds on prior research as it gauges family and consumer sciences (FCS) college students' in Kentucky on their attitudes related to marriage.

FCS educators have the responsibility to study and understand how the definition of marriage is evolving and how families are changing over time as a part of the broader profession's body of knowledge (Nickols, Ralston, et al., 2009). This research article has implications for FCS educators to use within courses to meet student learning outcomes related to National Standards for FCS Education (National Association of State Administrators of FCS, 2018), in particular two areas of study, Family (Area of Study 6.0), and Interpersonal Relationships (Area of Study 13.0).

Review of Literature

Martin and Martin (1984) investigated attitudes of U.S. college students regarding cohabitation, marriage and divorce, and marital and extramarital sexual relations. In their review of the literature, they discussed how marriage and family life have changed considerably since the industrial revolution. Much has changed since the

1980s. Cherlin (2004) suggested that a nationwide trend of "marital deinstitutionalization" existed. He noted that individuals within the U.S. viewed marriage as more of a lifestyle choice, rather than a milestone to adulthood at that time. Hippen (2016) argued that attitudes towards marriage have changed due to the addition of the life stage of emerging adulthood, a stage that "falls between adolescence and young adulthood and ranges from the late teens to the mid- to late- twenties" (p. 1).

The purpose of this study was to understand how the current generation of college students' views are changing, or not changing, considering the recent groundbreaking court cases over marriage (see *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 2015, for example). Demographic trends also demonstrate a decline in marriage rates and changes in family forms (Miller, 2020). Society's views of marriage seem to be changing: Are the views of today's college students also changing?

By investigating college students' opinions on an issue such as marriage, future trends within the family and society might be predicted. Trends among college students now can be compared to past trends, and this can indicate future trends. Since college students will soon be among the parents, teachers, and leaders of our country, it is important to investigate their perspectives. Hippen (2016) claimed, "research on marital and long-term relationship attitude change during emerging adulthood is absent in the existing literature" (p. 21). Therefore, this research has added to the limited knowledge base on emerging adults' attitudes towards marriage.

The foundation for this study lies in a previous study by Servaty and Weber (2011), who researched the influence of gender on Midwestern college students' attitudes toward marriage. This study includes college students from the Central and Appalachian regions of Kentucky. This research was guided by the following question: How do college students from Central Kentucky and the Appalachian region view marriage?

Methods

Participants

Participants consisted of 77 undergraduate college students from Eastern Kentucky University. Eastern Kentucky University is a regional, coeducational, public institution of higher education offering general and liberal arts programs, pre-professional and professional training in education and various other fields at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and multiple doctoral degrees. Located in Central Kentucky, Richmond, Madison County, the university serves more than 16,000 students with 22 counties in the traditional Appalachian service region of Kentucky.

Research Design

The researchers used a descriptive research design to obtain the current status of young adults' views on marriage. Data were collected via online self-administered questionnaires, which is an efficient way to gather data directly from students enrolled in higher education institutions.

Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

A survey developed by Servaty and Weber (2011) was used in this study. An online version of the survey was sent out to a random sample of 500 college students using a list of email addresses provided by the university. A cover letter was included explaining the research and the voluntary nature of the participation. An explanation was

also provided to the students, discussing the option to opt-out of taking the survey at any time. Participants were provided with a link to continue, which took them to the online survey. No personal identifiable information was collected, only general demographic characteristics. However, skipping the demographic questions did not preclude the participant from continuing to take the survey. Participants were also provided with the option to not answer any question if they were uncomfortable. The survey included opinion statements such as "one of my goals is to be married" and "cohabitation is more popular than marriage." Participants selected a response on a six-point Likert scale that best reflected their opinion, which ranged from the choices of "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," including options of "neither agree nor disagree" and "choose not to answer."

Data Analysis

Survey results were downloaded into an Excel file. There were no missing responses for the marriage attitude statements. The responses ("Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "Neither Agree nor Disagree," "Agree," and "Strongly Agree") were coded with the numbers one through five, and univariate descriptive summaries were produced using the statistical software package Minitab.

Results

Table 1 provides a summary of the students' responses to the statements about marriage. Counts and percentages are given for the five possible responses for each statement.

Discussion

This study expanded the original Servaty and Weber (2011) survey of undergraduate students at a Midwestern university regarding attitudes toward marriage. The research was guided by the following question: How do college students from Central Kentucky and the Appalachian region view marriage?

This study confirms the findings of Campbell and Wright (2010) and Servaty and Weber (2011) that young adults continue to support the definition of marriage as monogamous and lifelong, with a strong belief in having a committed partner and disapproving of infidelity. Comparing the findings of this study to the findings of Servaty and Weber (2011), most participants in both studies either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- One of my goals is to be married
- Cohabitation is more popular than marriage
- The principal purpose of marriage is love
- Marriage should last forever
- Infidelity in a marriage is unacceptable
- Marriage is a monogamous partnership
- Personal fulfillment is a purpose of marriage

Additionally, the results of this study aligned with Servaty and Weber's (2011) findings that young adults do not agree that marriage is old fashioned, thus, making the case that marriage is a viable social institution that is not becoming obsolete.

Table 1
Summary of Responses to Statements about Marriage

	Response				
Statement	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
One of my goals is to be married.	2 (2.60%)	4 (5.19%)	9 (11.69%)	23 (29.87%)	39 (50.65%)
Cohabitation is more popular than marriage.	1 (1.30%)	15 (19.48%)	21 (27.27%)	30 (38.96%)	10 (12.99%)
The principal purpose of marriage is love.	1 (1.30%)	3 (3.90%)	5 (6.49%)	27 (35.06%)	41 (53.25%)
A fundamental purpose of marriage is to have and raise children.	10 (12.99%)	22 (28.57%)	16 (20.78%)	21 (27.27%)	8 (10.39%)
Marriage should last forever.	0 (0.00%)	4 (5.19%)	16 (20.78%)	23 (29.87%)	34 (44.16%)
Infidelity in a marriage is unacceptable.	0 (0.00%)	1 (1.30%)	5 (6.49%)	16 (20.78%)	55 (71.43%)
Marriage is old-fashioned.	27 (35.06%)	27 (35.06%)	14 (18.18%)	6 (7.79%)	3 (3.90%)
Marriage is a monogamous partnership.	2 (2.60%)	4 (5.19%)	5 (6.49%)	12 (15.58%)	54 (70.13%)
Personal fulfillment is a purpose of marriage.	2 (2.60%)	20 (25.97%)	19 (24.68%)	28 (36.36%)	8 (10.39%)
Marriage is needed for a civil society.	10 (12.99%)	21 (27.27%)	28 (36.36%)	15 (19.48%)	3 (3.90%)

This study did not support Campbell & Wright's (2010) and Servaty and Weber's (2011) finding that individuals believe one of marriage's purposes is to have children. A majority of the participants in this study either strongly disagreed/disagreed or neither agreed/nor disagreed. According to Hamilton, Martin, Osterman, and Rossen (2019), the number of live births and birth rate has been declining for the past decade and more 39 percent of all children are born outside of marriage in 2018. According to this report, the lowest birth rate in 32 years was reported in 2018.

For the statement, "Marriage is needed for a civil society," Servaty and Weber (2011) found most males either agreed or strongly agreed, while the majority of females were undecided. For this study, most of the participants were undecided. This research also had more participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement than participants in Servaty and Weber's (2011) study. Servaty and Weber (2011) speculated that students may have not previously considered a connection between marriage and a civil society. This may also be the case with the findings of this research.

It is important to note that although most participants in both studies indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Infidelity in a marriage is unacceptable," there was an interesting discrepancy within the data for these two items. For Servaty and Weber (2011), 13.6% males stated they strongly disagreed with the statement, "Infidelity in a marriage is unacceptable," while no females strongly disagreed. However, for this study no males and nor females strongly disagreed with the statement, "Infidelity in a marriage is unacceptable." With respect to the statement, "Marriage is a monogamous partnership," many more respondents in Servaty and Weber's (2011) research were undecided than those in who participated in this study.

Implications

This research has several implications for FCS educators. This research contributes data related to recent college students' attitudes regarding marriage, thus providing up-to-date research on human development issues. This article describes a basic research project that can be used by FCS educators to introduce students to research methodology. The table in the data section is user friendly, thus making reading and understanding the research findings less daunting for FCS students. FCS educators can replicate the research study within their own classes to demonstrate how to conduct research and analyze data. Then, students could be guided through a discussion of the findings from their class research as it relates to the student's personal perspective regarding marriage and the student's personal answers to the questions.

This article can provide a starting point for FCS students to obtain questioning and reasoning skills, thus assisting students in meeting the Reasoning for Action standard as set forth by the National Association of State Administrators of FCS (2018). FCS educators can provide students with the information from the research article and utilize several of the Process Questions (National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences, 2018) for two Areas of Study, Family (Area of Study 6.0) and Interpersonal Relationships (Area of Study 13.0) to engage in class discussions or personal reflections. For example, students can discuss the findings of the research and explore how these attitudes could impact seeking out a mate or relationships in general. FCS educators can facilitate a class discussion of the most recent findings in light of previous findings or ask the students to write a critical reflection comparing the findings of this research to previous research. FCS teachers can ask students to retrieve information from previous generations and evaluate it by comparing to the current research, then discuss how the previous research was relevant to previous generations and how the current research can be applied in students' lives today and in the future.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the participants of the study were limited to college students at one university. Therefore, the sample size was small, and the results cannot be generalized to the overall population of college students. Another limitation was that the measures of attitudes toward marriage were limited in scope, thus allowing only for a limited set of responses. This also contributed to the limited types of analyses that could be used to assess the participants' attitudes. Also, the response rate was 15.4%, so there may be some bias in the results due to nonresponse.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future studies can expand the knowledge base by surveying young adults from other geographical regions. Additionally, the research can be duplicated with a younger cohort, such as teenagers. Understanding geographic and cultural variability in attitudes toward marriage is important for local policy advocacy and for designing appropriate family life education programs.

As previously mentioned, there may be a relationship between the answers where participants disagreed in this study with the statement, "A fundamental purpose of marriage is to have and raise children," and the decline in birth rates or the number of children being born outside of marriage. We recommend further examination of these relationships in future research. Additionally, although differences exist in findings related to responses to items such as "Infidelity in a marriage is unacceptable" and "Marriage is a monogamous partnership," these might be attributed to the difference in time in the study, we recommend that other factors such as the value base of the community where the research is conducted be considered.

Conclusion

It has been suggested that marriage, as a social institution within the U.S., may be vanishing due to changes in generational attitudes (Cherelin, 2004). Research has shown attitudes toward marriage to be desirable and important within the emerging adult cohort (Servaty & Weber 2011; Hippin, 2016). This analysis of a small group of college students' opinions reveals that college students in the Central Kentucky and Appalachian region primarily view marriage as a viable social institution. Despite having fewer participants in this research, when the percentages from the answers are compared to Servaty and Weber's (2011) results, very few differences were found between undergraduate responses at a midwestern university and undergraduate responses from Central Kentucky and the Appalachian region.

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