AN INVESTIGATION OF CONSUMER TRAITS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO MERCHANDISE BORROWING WITH UNDERGRADUATES

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Merchandise borrowing is defined as purchasing items with the intention to return them once they have been used satisfactorily. The purpose of this research was to identify consumer traits that influenced merchandise borrowing. Selected psychological characteristics, a social group influence variable, and a selected demographic characteristic were investigated for their influence on attitudes toward merchandise borrowing. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires from 268 college students. Participants (18.3%) indicated that they had borrowed merchandise in the past. Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing were significantly related to social group influence and retail employment. Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing were also significantly related to prior borrowing behavior. Social group influence appears to be a key variable in predicting attitudes toward merchandise borrowing.

Non-normative consumer behavior is consumer misconduct in the acquisition, usage, or disposition of goods and services (Callen & Ownbey, 2003). One consumer behavior that can be labeled as non-normative is merchandise borrowing also referred to as deshopping[1] (Schmidt, Strurrock, Ward, & Lea-Greenwood, 1999; King & Dennis, 2003), serial wardrobing, (Speights & Hilinski, 2005), or retail return fraud (Chandler, 2005). With the exception of shoplifting, limited research attention has been paid to fraudulent consumer behaviors such as merchandise borrowing.

Merchandise borrowing is defined as purchasing items with the intention to return items once they have been used satisfactorily (Piron &Young, 2000). Clothing is a frequently borrowed item (Piron &Young, 2000) and retailers are aware of the practice (Kang, 2004; Chandler, 2005; Mercer, 2005; Merrick & Brat, 2005). Merchandise borrowing is associated with women (Piron & Young, 2000) and reasons for borrowing include wearing something for a special occasion and borrowing due to the high prices of products (Schmidt *et al*., 1999; Piron & Young, 2000). Those who disapprove of the behavior are as likely to borrow in the future as those who approve (Piron & Young, 2000). Some borrowers blame the store for their borrowing activities. They indicate that they borrowed due to stores' lenient return policies or because stores can "afford it" (Schmidt *et al*., 1999; Piron & Young, 2000).

The cost of merchandise borrowing to U. S. retailers is estimated at $16 billion a year (Kang, 2004; Merrick & Brat, 2005) and represents about 9 % of total returns (Merrick & Brat, 2005). It has been estimated that merchandise borrowing costs the average household of four, $225 per year in increased prices (Speights & Hilinski, 2005).

Some retailers are attempting to curtail merchandise borrowing by altering their return policies. In signs located by the cash wraps, Express notes "that it may refuse returns if the customer returns items too often, takes back too much merchandise, or returns goods to more than one store” (Chandler, 2005; Merrick & Brat, 2005). Gap, which formerly held a “no-questions-asked return policy”, requires clothes kept no longer than two weeks to be returned unworn, unwashed, and with the tags on (Chandler, 2005).

Some stores are using technology such as Verify-1 to identify customers that too frequently return merchandise (Guy, 2004). Although stricter return policies help stores reduce costs, fight fraud, and increase profits, these policies may also turn loyal customers away. Strict return policies may, for example, prevent experimentation with innovative products by some consumers because they are afraid they will not be able to return the product if it does not perform as anticipated. As research on merchandise borrowing is limited, the purpose of this research was to investigate whether selected consumer traits influence attitudes toward merchandise borrowing.

Literature Review

Aberrant Consumer Behavior

Fullerton and Punj (1993) defined aberrant consumer behavior (ACB) as “behavior in exchange settings which violates the generally accepted norms of conduct in such situations and which is therefore held in disrepute by marketers and by most consumers” (p.570). Fullerton and Punj identified two major factors they believed resulted in ACB. The factors were consumer traits and predispositions (hereafter referred to as consumer traits) and characteristics of market settings. Consumer traits consisted of four subfactors: psychological characteristics, social group influences, demographic characteristics, and consumers’ state of mind (or predisposition). Market settings consisted of six components: type of product offered and displayed, physical environment, level of security, attitudes of sales associates (e.g., degree to which associates are polite, helpful), public image of the store (e.g., extent to which the business is perceived as friendly), and antecedent state of the store (e.g., the extent of crowding). Fullerton and Punj did not report any tests of these proposed relationships.

Merchandise borrowing is a type of aberrant consumer behavior as it is a type of fraudulent behavior that represents victimization of the marketer (Speights & Hilinski, 2005). The purpose of this research was to examine whether any direct relationships existed between components of consumer traits and attitudes toward merchandise borrowing. To begin the investigation, researchers focused on three of the subfactors of consumer traits (i.e., psychological, social group, demographic). The review of existing research relative to each consumer trait investigated and resulting hypotheses follow.

Psychological Characteristics

Fullerton and Punj (1993) provided examples of psychological characteristics they thought might be influences on ACB. Their example contained personality traits (i.e., impulsive, responsibility), level of moral development, unfulfilled aspirations, propensity for thrill seeking, psychological problems, and attitudes toward big business[2]. Fullerton and Punj discussed how each of these components might influence ACB. For example, they speculated that consumers’ attitudes toward big business might impact ACB because consumers may be willing to victimize large businesses they perceived as impersonal and as prosperous. They speculated that unfulfilled aspirations might influence ACB because individuals can experience a discrepancy between “widely held material aspirations (i.e., materialism) and the availability of legitimate means to realize them” (p.572). Based on Fullerton and Punj (1993), two psychological characteristics (e.g., attitudes toward business, materialism) were selected for inclusion.

Cynicism was also selected for study because of its connection to materialism (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003).

Attitudes toward business. Wilkes (1978) divided housewives into three groups: pro-business, neutral, or anti-business to examine whether differences existed between these groups in their perceptions of the seriousness of various fraudulent activities. He was also interested in whether they knew anyone who participated in these activities. Wilkes asked participants to react to 15 different fraudulent consumer situations and indicate how "wrong" the behavior was and how often their friends would participate in the behavior. Participants did not differ in their responses on the basis of their attitudes toward business. 'Returning a worn dress' (i.e., merchandise borrowing) was rated as more wrong than shoplifting. Several respondents indicated their friends had worn a dress and then returned it.

Although Wilkes (1978) did not find a relationship between attitudes toward business and attitudes toward merchandise borrowing, undergraduates in Piron and Young's (2000) research reported that they borrowed merchandise because they believed large retailers in particular could assume the costs associated with borrowing. As a result, we decided to reexamine possible relationships between attitudes toward business and attitudes toward merchandise borrowing.

Cynicism and materialism. Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) investigated relationships between cynicism and fraudulent consumer behaviors (labeled as unethical retail disposition) using two research studies with undergraduates. In their first study they found as compared to participants who were low in cynicism, participants high in cynicism were more materialistic, more likely to blame the seller for borrowing activity, and to indicate the borrowing was due to uncontrollable circumstances.

The second study also with undergraduates as participants aimed to further examine relationships between cynicism and attitudes toward 19 fraudulent behaviors. The fraudulent behaviors were classified into four types: fractionally benefiting consumers (e.g., using an expired coupon), substantively benefiting consumer (e.g., changing price tags), no harm/no foul (e.g., downloading music without paying), and deceptive borrowing (e.g., using merchandise and then returning to the store). Participants high in cynicism indicated behaviors that either fractionally benefited or substantively benefited consumers were less wrong than participants low in cynicism. Assessments of the wrongness of the other two types of behavior (i.e., no harm/no foul, deceptive borrowing) were unrelated to participant's level of cynicism.

Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) found cynicism was related to materialism. However, no direct test of a relationship between materialism and attitudes toward merchandise borrowing was made. Richins and Dawson (1992) identified three areas of materialism: acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success that may be related to attitudes concerning merchandise borrowing. The first area, acquisition centrality, is concerned with the extent to which individuals "place possessions and their acquisition at the center of their lives" (p. 304). People who are high in acquisition centrality may be likely to borrow merchandise because of the importance they place on having material things if only for a short period of time. The second area, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, is concerned with the extent to which individual's view material possessions as "essential to their satisfaction and well-being in life" (p. 304). People who score high in this area of materialism may also borrow merchandise because they view belongings as critical to their quality of life. Therefore, borrowing would raise the quality of their life at least on a temporary basis.

The third area of materialism, possession defined success, is concerned with the extent to which individual's "judge their own and others' success by the number and quality of possessions accumulated" (p. 304). Again, individuals who score high on this area of materialism may also borrow merchandise because they view objects as an indicator of their achievement in life.

In this research the focus was on investigating whether any or all three areas of materialism were related to attitudes toward merchandise borrowing. An additional interest was confirming that cynicism is unrelated to attitudes toward merchandise borrowing. Therefore, it was hypothesized (H1) that attitudes toward merchandise borrowing were related to psychological characteristics. Specifically, it was hypothesized that:

(H1a) Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing are negatively related to attitudes toward business.

(H1b) Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing are not related to cynicism.

(H1c) Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing are positively related to materialism.

Social Group Influence

Social group influence is persuasion stemming from members of a group that guide another's behavior without the force of laws (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Important others can influence borrowing behaviors in both negative and positive ways. This influence emerges out of interaction with group members and can result in norms for behavior. These social norms can include "general expectations for behavior, the expectations of valued others for our behavior, our own expectations for our behavior, and standards that evolve out of observations of other's behavior" (Cialdini & Trost, 1998, p. 152). Thus, misbehavior can be learned in a social group and can be conducted as a group behavior or as individual behavior (Fullerton & Punj, 1993). King and Dennis (2003) found borrowers often indicated that they learned borrowing from their family members or friends or were encouraged to borrow by others who held positive opinions about borrowing. Findings from King and Dennis (2003) suggest social approval may be an important influence on attitudes toward merchandise borrowing. Thus, it was hypothesized that:

(H2) Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing are positively related to social group influence.

Retail Employment

Callen and Ownbey (2003) investigated whether relationships existed between college students' perceptions of ethical and unethical consumer behaviors and participants' demographic characteristics. Demographic characteristics included employment status and previous employment by an apparel retailer. Participants were asked to read scenarios depicting different consumer behaviors including merchandise borrowing and to react to them. Participants who were employed full-time were less accepting of merchandise borrowing than those who were employed part-time or unemployed. However, previous employment with an apparel retailer had no impact. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

(H3) Attitudes toward merchandise borrowing are negatively related to retail employment status.

In addition to the psychological variables (i.e., attitude toward business, cynicism, materialism), social group variable, and retail employment status, we were interested in possible relationships between attitudes toward merchandise borrowing and prior borrowing behavior. Thus, we hypothesized that:

(H4) Prior borrowing behavior is positively related to attitudes toward merchandise borrowing.

Method

Data Collection

A convenience sample was drawn from a Midwestern university in the United States. Instructors of undergraduate courses were contacted by email and telephone for permission to ask students enrolled in their courses to participate. Three instructors agreed to allow their classes to be contacted for a total of 300 possible participants. Researchers attended each class, briefly explained the topic of the research, and solicited volunteer participants. If a class member agreed to participate, he or she was given a questionnaire and consent form. A total of 274 individuals participated. Some questionnaires were incomplete resulting in 268 useable questionnaires.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of five sections. In the first section participants responded to an eight-item attitude toward business measure (Wilkes, 1978) and to the Richins and Dawson's (1992) 18-item materialism scale. Reported reliability for the total materialism scale was α =.88; for the possession-defined success (success) subscale α ranged from .74 to .78; for the acquisition centrality (centrality) subscale α ranged from .71 to .75; and for the acquisition as the pursuit of happiness (happiness) subscale α ranged from .73 to .83. Participants indicated the extent of their agreement with items in each measure by choosing a response using seven-point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. To obtain a score on the attitude toward business and materialism scales, items contributing to a measure were summed together so that a high score reflected more of the attribute than a low score.

In the second section, merchandise borrowing was defined for participants. Participants were asked to indicate the number of borrowers they were familiar with, to indicate with a yes or no response whether they had borrowed in the past, and to indicate reasons for their borrowing behavior. Social group influence was measured by the number of borrowers participants knew well. In the third section of the questionnaire, participants were asked to respond to eight attitudinal statements concerning merchandise borrowing. These statements were developed based on the research findings of Piron and Young (2000; 2001). Participants indicated their degree of agreement with each statement using seven-point Likert scales. Three additional statements were developed to measure participants' intention to borrow merchandise in the future. Participants indicated their intentions by agreeing or disagreeing with statements using seven-point Likert scales. To obtain a score for each participant, items contributing to each measure were summed together.

In the fourth section participants were asked to supply demographic information concerning their age, gender, marital status, major, current employment by a retailer, and income. In the final section of the questionnaire, participants were asked to complete a five-item cynicism measure (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003). Participants indicated their degree of agreement with each statement using seven-point Likert scales. The reported reliability was α = .83. To obtain a score on the cynicism measure individual items contributing to the measure were summed together so that a high score reflected more of the attribute than a low score (see Table 1 for sample items of measures).

Table 1
Measurement Items and Reliabilities

Variables (# of items)	Sample items	Reliability	Source
Attitude toward business[a] (8)	American businesses are honest. Business is responsive to consumers.	α = .63.	Wilkes (1978)
Cynicism[a] (5)	In spite of what some people say, the lot (situation, condition) of the average man is getting worse not better.	α = .63	Rosenbaum & Kuntze (2003)
Materialism[a] (18)		α = .88	Richins & Dawson (1992)
Dimensions			
Possession-defined success (6)	Some of the most important achievement in life include acquiring material possessions.	α = .74	
Acquisition Centrality (7)	I like a lot of luxury in my life.	α = .79	
Acquisition as the pursuit of happiness (5)	I'd be happier if I could afford more things.	α = .79	
Morality of borrowing[a] (4)	Merchandise borrowing in stealing.	α = .85	Developed by researchers
Intention to borrow[a] (3)	I will likely borrow merchandise in the next 12 months.	α = .80	Developed by researchers
Social group influence[b] (1)	How many people do you know engage in merchandise borrowing?		Developed by researchers

[a] Items were accompanied by seven-point Likert scales that ranged from –3 = strongly disagree to 3 = strongly agree.
[b] Participants indicated a number.

Results

<u>Participant Characteristics</u>

The final sample consisted of 268 college students. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 54 years with mean of 21 years. Most participants were female (89.8 %) and almost all participants were single (95.1 %). Most participants were retail merchandising or design related majors (68.9%). Most participants (79.2%) indicated that they were currently employed and around half of them (52.9%) were working at retail stores. Almost all participants (92.8%) reported incomes of less than $20,000.

Some participants (18.3%) shared that they had borrowed merchandise in the past. Of these participants, most had borrowed (82.6%) fashion-related products (e.g., clothing and accessories). Other products that individuals borrowed included a feather bed, a bedroom set, cosmetics, CDs, DVDs, and tools. The five most frequent reasons borrowers indicated for their borrowing activities were to look good (75%)[3], to save money (72.9%), because merchandise was high priced (70.2%), to attend special events (68.7%), and due to low income (58.3%).

Nearly forty percent of the participants (39.8%) indicated that someone well known to them borrowed merchandise. Products that these well known others borrowed also were primarily fashion-related products (82.3%). While 30.6% of existing borrowers agreed with statements indicating they planned to continue to borrow in the future, only 5.4% of nonborrowers indicated they intended to borrow in the future. To see whether any difference existed concerning future intention to borrow between borrowers and nonborrowers, an independent t-test was conducted. As compared to nonborrowers, more borrowers indicated they intended to borrow in the future (t = 4.514, p < .001).

Reliabilities of Measures

To assess reliabilities of all measures, Cronbach's alpha was used (See Table 1 for reliabilities based on this data). The initial reliability for the attitudes toward business scales was α = .60. To increase the reliability of the attitudes toward business measure, one item was excluded[4.] In addition, the item excluded did not particularly address an opinion concerning a business practice. As a result, reliability slightly increased to .63.

To identify the construct dimensions of the attitudes toward merchandise borrowing measure, exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted. This process resulted in two factors with eigenvalues greater than one (See Table 2). Three items loaded on both factors. As a result, these items were eliminated because they did not discriminate between the two factors. This left four items in the first factor and explained 52.36 % of the variance. These items were labeled "morality of merchandise borrowing". Items contributing to each were summed together to create a score for each participant. After eliminating the three items, the second factor contained only one item. This item was concerned with reasons behind merchandise borrowing. The item was eliminated from further analysis because of issues concerning reliability as it was a one-item scale. The reliability of the renamed measure morality of merchandise borrowing was determined using Cronbach's alpha and is reported in Table 2

Table 2

Exploratory Factor Analysis Results for Attitudes toward Merchandise Borrowing

Scale items[ab]	Factor 1 item loading The morality of borrowing (α = .85)	Factor 2 item loading Blame the store
Borrowing is immoral (-)	.683	.000
Borrowing is wrong (-)	.877	.128
Borrowing is stealing (-)	.820	-.109
Borrowing is inappropriate (-)	.817	.112

Borrowing is the store's fault	.000	.910
Borrowing is honest	.654	.466
Borrowing is not illegal	.750	.459
Borrowing is okay	.790	.305
Eigenvalues	4.546	1.038
% of variance	52.356	17.439

(-) These items were reverse coded.
[a] Range: -3 = Strongly disagree; 3 = Strongly agree
[b] Three items were eliminated from further analysis because these items loaded high on two factors. These items were: Borrowing is honest; Borrowing is not illegal; Borrowing is okay.
In addition, a fourth item was eliminated because the content of the item did not address the morality of merchandise borrowing. Rather this item addressed responsibility for merchandise borrowing. This item was borrowing is the store's fault.

Hypotheses Testing

To examine hypothesized relationships (H1, H2, H3), multiple regression analysis was employed using the enter method. The five psychological characteristics (e.g., attitude toward business, cynicism, centrality, happiness, success), social group influence, and retail employment status were designated as independent variables and morality of merchandise borrowing was designated as a dependent variable. Several tests were conducted to confirm that the multiple linear regression models created would not violate assumptions of regression analysis. A plot of the residual values versus the normal quintiles and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated the model was normally distributed. A plot of the residual values versus the estimated linear combination of the variance assessed the homoscedasticity of each model and indicated that the model was not heteroscedastic. A scatter plot of the residual values versus the fitted values of each model indicated that the model was linear. To examine the relationship (H4) between prior borrowing behavior and morality of merchandise borrowing, bivariate correlation was employed.

Hypothesis 1. The results of regression analysis did not support hypothesis 1a, that morality of merchandise borrowing was negatively related to attitudes toward business. The results of regression analysis did support hypothesis 1b. Morality of merchandise borrowing was not related to participants' level of cynicism. One materialism subscale, acquisition centrality, was negatively related to morality of merchandise borrowing ($\beta = -.183$, $p < .01$). Participants who placed importance on material possessions agreed that merchandise borrowing was immoral to a greater extent than participants who placed little importance on material possessions (see Table 3). Overall, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Table 3
Enter Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Morality of Merchandise Borrowing
(n = 207)

Independent variables	Dependent Variable (β) Morality of merchandise borrowing
Psychological characteristics	
Attitudes toward business	.040
Cynicism	.074
Materialism	

Success	-.010
Centrality	-.183*
Happiness	.101
Social group influence	.181*
Retail employment	-.192
R Square	.114
Adjusted R Square	.101
F	4.162**

Note. Retail employment was coded as 1 for yes and 0 for no.
*$p < .01$, **$p < .001$

Hypothesis 2. Social group influence was positively related to morality of borrowing ($\beta = .181$, $p < .01$). Participants who knew many borrowers indicated merchandise borrowing was moral (see Table 3). Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3. Retail employment status was negatively related to morality of merchandise borrowing ($\beta = -.192$, $p < .01$). Participants who were working at retail stores agreed that merchandise borrowing was immoral to a greater extent than participants who were not working at retail stores (see Table 3). Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported.

Hypothesis 4. Morality of borrowing was positively related to prior borrowing behavior ($r = .216$, $p < .001$). Participants who considered merchandise borrowing to be moral indicated they had borrowed merchandise in the past. Thus, hypothesis 4 was supported.

Discussion

Merchandise borrowers represented approximately one fifth of the total participants, most frequently borrowed clothing and accessories, and indicated they would continue to borrow in the future. These results are similar to the findings of Piron and Young (2000; 2001). Further comparisons to the Piron and Young results revealed participants in this study provided similar reasons for borrowing (i.e., attend special events). These analogous findings may be due to similarities in demographic characteristics (e.g., undergraduates, age, income) between the participants in this research and those in the sample drawn by Piron and Young.

For psychological characteristics, we found the materialism subscale, acquisition centrality, was helpful in explaining attitudes concerning the morality of borrowing. Participants who agreed that possessions and their acquisition were at the center of their lives indicated merchandise borrowing was immoral. Perhaps, this was because participants who had high acquisition centrality preferred to own products rather than borrow them. This interpretation is consistent with theorizing by Graham (1999). Attempting to conceptualize materialism and specific consumer behaviors, Graham tied each area of Richins and Dawson's (1992) materialism construct to Belk's (1985) consumer characteristics. Graham theorized that the acquisition centrality area of materialism was related to the consumer characteristic possessiveness, which she proposed would result in a preference to own (as opposed to lease or rent) an object.

Attitude toward business was not related to attitudes concerning morality of borrowing. Perhaps the non-significant relationship is a result of the instrument used to measure attitude toward business. An established measure was used rather than developing a new one. Although the measure addresses the honesty and integrity of businesses, it does not address issues relating to the size, scope, social responsibility, or amount of profitability of businesses. These are issues over which some consumers have expressed concern. Researchers building on this work may want to develop a specific measure of attitudes concerning retailers rather than business in general.

The non-significant relationship between cynicism and attitudes concerning morality of borrowing is inconsistent with findings of Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003). Rosenbaum and Kuntze found individuals high in cynicism held positive attitudes toward engaging in fraudulent consumer behaviors. These behaviors however, did not include merchandise borrowing. Although cynicism is related to materialism, it appears materialism is a slightly more useful concept than cynicism in explaining merchandise borrowing as a type of fraudulent consumer behavior.

The social group influence variable (i.e., borrowing of well known others) was significantly associated with attitudes concerning morality of borrowing in this age group. Participants who knew many borrowers held positive attitudes toward merchandise borrowing. (In other words, they indicated that merchandise borrowing is not immoral, it is honest behavior, and is not stealing). Our findings are consistent with those of King and Dennis (2003) who noted that borrowing was often learned and encouraged by family members or friends. However, this finding must be viewed with caution as the social group influence variable was measured by only one item, the number of people well known to the participants who engaged in merchandise borrowing.

It was current employment by a retailer that differentiated between those who indicated merchandise borrowing was immoral versus moral rather than being employed at all (Callen & Ownbey, 2003). Participants who had work experience with a retailer possibly understood the costs involved with merchandise borrowing. These participants may also have had experiences with consumers lying to them about reasons for returning used merchandise. They may have felt frustrated having to accept a return that they believed was fraudulent and thus hold negative attitudes toward the behavior.

Implications for Researchers

This research reflects initial steps into explaining merchandise borrowing behavior as a form of aberrant consumer behavior and investigated selected psychological, social, and demographic variables that influenced this behavior. Even though attitude toward business and cynicism were not related to merchandise borrowing, other researchers may want to investigate other psychological characteristics that may be useful in explaining merchandise borrowing. For example, need for affiliation, compliance, impulsiveness, and level of moral development (Fullerton & Punj, 1993) might prove to be useful characteristics for understanding merchandise borrowing. In addition, other social group variables including need for social approval and social validation might exert an influence on borrowing. Gathering data from a diverse group of individuals would allow investigation of several demographic variables including income, age, ethnicity, and education on both attitudes toward and actual borrowing behavior.

According to Fullerton and Punj (1993) characteristics of the market setting might also be worthy of investigating to understand merchandise borrowing behaviors. In particular, type of product, attitudes of sales associates, and public image of the store (e.g., extent to which the business is perceived as successful) might influence both attitudes toward merchandise borrowing and borrowing behaviors.

There are limitations associated with this research. First, we asked participants to self-report on a form of behavior that although it is not illegal, some might describe as fraudulent. It has been documented that college students' self-reported conduct concerning moral and immoral behaviors are influenced by the perceived desirability of the behavior (Randall and Fernandez, 1991). Thus, it is possible that participants' responses may not reflect the actual extent to which they practiced this type of behavior. Although the percent of those reporting that they engaged in merchandise borrowing was similar to those reported by other researchers (Piron &Young, 2000; 2001), these participants may have engaged in merchandise borrowing to a greater degree than they reported. We recommend future researchers include measures of social desirability such as the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (Paulhus, 1991) when investigating merchandise borrowing and other consumer behaviors that raise issues of morality.

Second, only 49 participants admitted to acting fraudulently. Any significant results reported based on these participants need to be viewed with some caution as this is a relatively low number to use as the basis for firm conclusions.

Implications for Educators

Social group influence was the most important consumer trait for explaining attitudes concerning merchandise borrowing. Social group influence (i.e., borrowing of well known others) may provide a normalizing effect for merchandise borrowing. In other words, if an individual's friends and family engage in this type of behavior, it appears normal and therefore, appropriate. To deter merchandise borrowing, family and consumer science educators could discuss the practice of borrowing in relevant consumer courses and educate students on the costs of borrowing that is passed onto consumers. They might also address the topic of borrowing as a form of shoplifting and draw comparisons between motivations for shoplifting and for merchandise borrowing to highlight how both can result from social group influences.

Since participants who borrowed indicated they planned to borrow in the future, the use of consumer-based return authorization systems is a key tactic to deterring borrowing behavior because it targets frequent borrowers. Use of return authorization systems to detect borrowers allows a retailer to identity fraudulent returners before they inflict too much cost on the retailer, at the same time allowing the retailer to extend a liberal return policy to nonfraudulent returners (Speights & Hilinski, 2005). For those businesses that cannot afford or implement authorization systems (e.g., small independent retailers), classroom discussion could be centered on how to develop a return policy for retailers that deters borrowing yet promotes customers' purchasing decisions.

Endnotes

[1] King and Dennis (2003) define deshopping as the "deliberate return of goods for reasons other than actual faults in the product, in its pure form premeditated prior to and during the consumption experience" (p. 153). Although both definitions indicate a consumer is buying an item with no intention of keeping it, Piron and Young (2000) in their definition indicate the item gets used satisfactorily then returned. King and Dennis do not indicate that the item needs to be used to be deshopped but only that it is returned for reasons other than faults in the product.

[2] In Fullerton and Punj's (1993) discussion of future research, they noted that new factors and interactions need to be identified and analyzed.

[3] Participants were allowed to indicate more than one reason.

[4] Item excluded was "Pollution is a serious problem."

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SELF-OBJECTIFICATION AND APPEARANCE-BASED TEASING DURING ADOLESCENCE

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Self-objectification theory posits women and girls who self-objectify treat themselves as objects to be looked at and adopt an outsider's perspective of their appearance. Our purpose was to identify how experiences of being teased related to self-objectification. Participants (n = 64) were adolescent females recruited from high schools. Data consisted of personal narratives that detailed an incident of appearance-based teasing. A content analysis of the narratives revealed participants were teased about their clothing, facial characteristics, weight, height, and hair. Ignoring teasing was reported as the most frequent response to a tease. High self-objectifiers reported purchasing new items to change their appearance in response to being teased.

In Western cultures, adolescence has traditionally been viewed as synonymous with the teenage years (Lloyd, 1985). Adolescence is a transitional period when childhood roles are redefined and as a result, adolescents may experience confusion over their sense of self and identity (Steinberg, 1985). Adolescence is not only a time of establishing and reestablishing identity, but also of increased self-awareness, self-consciousness, preoccupation with image, and concern with social acceptance (Kaiser, 1997). In this transitional period, peers exert an increasing influence and adolescents become increasingly aware of the self in relation to others. One of the ways adolescents exert influence on each other is by teasing. Understanding appearance-related teasing during adolescence is important because teasing can have prolonged, even permanent, effects on an individual.

Researchers have offered various definitions of teasing (Keltner, Capps, Kring, Young, & Heerey, 2001). Keltner et al. (2001) defined teasing as "an intentional provocation accompanied by off-record markers that together comment on something relevant to the target" (p. 234). Provocation as a tease involves an act, either verbal or nonverbal, that is intended to have some effect on the target. The off-record component of a tease accounts for its ambiguity as well as the sometimes humorous nature of a tease. Thus, teasing is an interpersonal behavior some people perceive to be fun and a matter of joking and others view as cruel and a means of hurting someone's feelings (Kowalski, 2000).

Teasing is one form of peer interaction that is directly tied to appearance and dress. Dress includes all body modifications made (e.g., tattooing, teeth whitening) as well as all body supplements (e.g., apparel, footwear) added to the body (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). Only a few researchers have addressed the subject of a tease directly with adolescents. (Eder, 1991; Kowalski, 2000; Mooney, Creeser, & Blatchford, 1991; Thompson, Coovert, Richards, Johnson, & Cattarin, 1995). More often, researchers have asked adults to reflect on and recall their experiences with teasing during their adolescent years (Cash, Winstead, & Janda, 1986; Kowalski, 2000). Researchers interested in the effects of teasing have focused their attention mostly on how body satisfaction, body image, or self-esteem is affected by weight-or size-related teasing (Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainder, & Story, 2003; Furman & Thompson, 2002; Gowen, 1998; Mottet & Thweatt, 1997). However, there are aspects of appearance other than weight that could be the content of a tease and could impact adolescents. In addition, there is limited research addressing how adolescents actually respond to incidents of appearance-based teasing and whether they perceived their responses as effective in halting the teasing. In addition, no one has investigated what role personality variables such as self-objectification might play relative to adolescent's perceptions and responses to teasing. The extent to which an individual may self-objectify could be an important personality variable to consider because self-objectification deals with the degree to which an individual treats him or herself as an object to be looked at and to what extent the individual takes an outsider's perspective on their appearance (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). If a young girl takes an outsider's perspective on her appearance, her reaction to being teased about some aspect of her appearance might be quite different from someone who does not take this view. Therefore, self-objectification as a personality variable may influence the impact of appearance-based teasing on an adolescent as well as influence responses to appearance-based teasing.

Thus, our research objectives were to identify 1) the content of teases experienced by adolescent girls and 2) the perceived effectiveness of the participant's responses to the teaser. We also investigated whether level of self-objectification was linked to any differences in the following: (3) experiences with teasing (i.e., how adolescents felt about being teased), (4) responses to a tease (i.e., how they reacted to being teased), and (5) made to appearance or in purchasing behavior as a consequence of being teased.

Theoretical Background

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) describe self-objectification as a form of self-consciousness characterized by habitual and constant monitoring of one's appearance. Objectification in women occurs when an individual separates her body from her being and views her body as representing her. Female adolescents might be prone to self-objectify because adolescence is a time of increased self-awareness, self-consciousness, and preoccupation with image (Sontag, Petue & Lee, 1997; Steinberg, 1985). When individuals self-objectify, they "adopt and internalize an outsider view" and treat themselves as objects to be looked at and evaluated (Muehlenkamp & Saris-Baglama, 2002, p. 371). Self-objectification can lead to "continual self-monitoring which raises self-consciousness and contributes to feelings of shame and anxiety"(Muehlenkamp & Saris-Baglama, 2002 p. 371-372) as well as depressive symptoms (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, and Twenge (1998) predicted that self-objectification "can be triggered and magnified by certain situations" (p.270). They contended that individuals are most likely to self-objectify in situations that accentuate their awareness of others' perspectives on their bodies and appearance. Being teased about some aspect of appearance is a situation where awareness of another's perspective on ones' appearance is heightened.

Applying tenets of self-objectification to a situation of teasing, appearance-related teasing could be viewed as a negative experience for a self-objectifier because attention is drawn to their appearance, something they are already acutely aware of. As a result of a negative comment made about appearance (i.e., a negative tease) a high self-objectifier might become more emotionally upset over being teased, experience more embarrassment, or feel more humiliation than a low self-objectifier. For example, a high self-objectifier, after getting teased about wearing a specific clothing style may make attempts to alter her appearance. Because a self-objectifier is interested in being socially appropriate and fitting into different situations as opposed to standing out, in response to being teased about clothing, a high self-objectifier would likely respond to the tease by obtaining and wearing different clothing.

Content of a Tease

Teasing about appearance is important during adolescence because physical appearance is a primary factor influencing social approval and acceptance (Georgesen, Harris, Milich & Bosko-Young, 1999; Kowalski, 2000). For a teaser who desires to hurt his or her victim, a key means of doing this is to imply that the person is not socially acceptable in terms of appearance. Furthermore, those who tease may choose to tease about specific body parts or aspects of appearance the target is not able to control, making the experience even more impactful on the individual (Kowalski, 2000) than if teased about other aspects. Researchers have documented that individuals are frequently teased about aspects of their appearance.

Cash (1995) in his investigation of what people were teased about asked 111 college women to reflect on their adolescent years. These women reported they had experienced appearance-related teasing (72%) often during their middle childhood to early adolescent years. Facial characteristics and weight were the most frequently reported content of a tease.

Subsequently, Alberts, Kellar-Guenther, and Corman (1996) asked undergraduate students to provide an example of being teased and to share what they had been teased about. Respondents' answers were categorized into six broad categories: things said, appearance, romance/sex, abilities, teasing, and identity. The things said category included comments about speech such as having an accent, making inappropriate statements, or verbal errors. The appearance category included comments about not having a tan, being bald, being hairy, being ugly, being short, and comments concerning a variety of other physical characteristics. The romance/sex category included aspects of the sex life, having an undesirable or not having a romantic partner. The abilities category included teases that made fun of the respondents' abilities or lack of them, such as individuals' ability to walk, dress, or cook. The teasing category included teases the respondents had taken part in previously. The identity category included teases that made fun of the recipients' personality or personal characteristics, such as eating too much or shopping too much. Researchers determined that there was a significant difference between the topics in their likelihood of occurrence such that respondents were more likely to report identity and appearance teases than other types of teases.

Kowalski (2000) had male and female undergraduates write narratives about their experiences with teasing during their adolescent years. The content of the teases were categorized into seven categories: relationships, body parts/appearance, behavior, intelligence, medical conditions, social group, and other. Women reported being frequently teased about body parts and appearance. Men were also teased frequently about their appearance but were equally teased about their relationships. When these individuals were teasing others, the reported content of the tease most often dealt with behaviors, followed closely by body parts, and appearance.

Responses to Teasing

Eder (1991) conducted an ethnographic study focused on teasing with Caucasian adolescents between the ages of 10-14. Her research team observed informal peer interactions during lunch periods on a regular basis over a three year period. In this context, not responding to teasing appropriately could have important consequences in terms of failing to develop social bonds. Eder found the most popular responses to teasing were ignoring it, telling a teacher, and retaliation. Students reported most of the teachers or other adults in the classroom just ignored teasing incidents.

Georgesen et al. (1999) assessed both the frequency with which undergraduate students teased and their reactions when experiencing teasing. Personality and teasing history information were collected and life narratives of past teasing experiences were elicited from female and male undergraduate students. People who had favorable experiences with teasing in the past responded positively to teasing encounters. In contrast, people who had been adversely affected by teasing responded negatively. The more one was teased by others in the past, the less reported forgiveness for the teaser. When asked what the most effective response to being teased was, participants indicated the most effective response involved humor.

Negative Effects of Teasing

There are numerous documented negative outcomes associated with teasing during adolescence about one aspect of appearance—weight. Fabian and Thompson (1989) in research with females aged 10 to 15 found teasing about weight to be associated with low body esteem, high levels of depression, and greater eating disturbances. In related research, Thompson, et al. (1995) also found with adolescents (aged 10-15) that being teased about weight lead to increased restrictive eating and negative body image. Eisenberg, et al. (2003) examined adolescents in grades 7 to 12 and found that teasing about body weight was consistently associated with low body satisfaction, low self-esteem, high depressive symptoms, and thinking about and attempting suicide, even after controlling for actual body weight.

Teasing that occurs during adolescence can have prolonged, sometimes permanent effects on the target. Cash, et al. (1986) conducted a survey to see if what people remembered of being teased as children or teenagers affected their present body image. People who reported being teasing by peers during childhood about their appearance were more likely to report being dissatisfied with their present body image than those who were not teased. In subsequent research Cash (1995) reported similar long-term residual effects of appearance-related teasing. Adult participants (71%) who reported they had experienced appearance-related teasing said that their current body images had, to some extent, been affected by the experience. Women who reported having had prevalent and distressing experiences with teasing held dissatisfying and disturbing body images.

Positive Effects of Teasing

While there is evidence that adolescent's experience with teasing can be negative, there are several pro-social functions associated with teasing (Eder, 1991). Eder found that peer teasing functioned as a means of initiating cross-sex interactions. Teasing was a safe way to show liking without being held accountable. Teasing was also a way to enhance feelings of closeness, unity, and was a means for teaching social norms. For teasing to be a positive experience, Eder (1991) noted that the target must respond in a playful manner; however she also noted that "the ability to respond appropriately to playful attacks may be one of the more difficult interactional skills to develop" (p. 183).

Method

Selection of Participants

Participants were 64 adolescent girls recruited from four middle schools and high schools located in a major metropolitan area in the Midwest. The participants' ages ranged from 12 – 17, with an average age of 14.3 years. They were Caucasians (*n* =27), African-American (*n* = 22), multiracial (*n* = 8), Asian (*n* = 4), and Hispanic (*n* = 3). After being contacted by a youth program director, principals of four schools indicated an interest in the research and agreed to allow recruitment of students from their schools. A time was arranged to meet with the principal of each school to explain the nature of the study, the recruitment process, and to arrange for administering the questionnaire to the participants.

There were two requirements for inclusion in the research. The first requirement was that the potential participant had to have experienced being teased about appearance in the past six months. The second requirement was that the potential participant's age had to be between 12 and 17. The questionnaire and research procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board (#0504S60608).

Parental consent forms were given to potential participants to give to their parents or guardians to sign. The participants were then asked to return the forms to the program director. Subsequently the school program director identified the adolescents who were willing and eligible to participate. Researchers were directed by teachers to collect the data during regular school hours. Before the questionnaire was administered to the volunteers, the nature of the study was explained to them. A participant assent form was discussed and signed by all participants.

Instrumentation

Teasing. Data on experiences with teasing was collected through the use of autobiographical narratives (Kowalski, 2000). In a pilot study (*n* = 6) participants were asked to write about a teasing incident during the past six months when they had been teased about some aspect of their appearance. This general request to write a brief story about teasing did not produce detail in responses. Therefore, the instructions to participants were revised to include specific questions participants were asked to respond to in their narratives. These questions were as follows: what were you teased about? What specifically was said to you? How did you respond to being teased? Did your response stop the teasing or did the teasing continue? Was it important to you that the person stop teasing you? How did you feel about being teased? Did you change anything about your appearance or anything else as a result of being teased? Did you buy any new items as a result of being teased? Is there anything else you would like to share about being teased?

Self-objectification. Participants' level of self-objectification was measured using a scale developed by Noll and Frederickson (1998). This scale assesses the extent to which individuals view their bodies in observable, appearance-based, objectified terms as opposed to nonobservable, competence-based, non-objectified terms. The measure consisted of 10 items that identify different body attributes: Five were physical appearance attributes and five were physical competence attributes. Physical appearance attributes were 1) sex appeal, 2) muscle tone, 3) weight, 4) attractiveness, and 5) measurements. Physical competence attributes were 1) health, 2) physical coordination, 3) stamina, 4) physical energy level, and 5) strength. Respondents ranked the 10 attributes from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important) according to how important they perceived each to be. To assess level of self-objectification, the physical appearance and physical competence scores were summed separately. Final scores for each participant were the result of the difference between the sum of the competence scores and the sum of the appearance scores (i.e., appearance scores minus competency scores). Scores can range from –25 to 25. High scores indicate individuals are high self-objectifiers.

Data Analysis Technique

A content analytic approach to data analysis outlined by Berelson (1952) was used to analyze responses. This approach consisted of a careful reading of the participant responses focusing on the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences in order to quantify them. According to Paoletti (1982), content analysis produces quantitative data from verbal communication. The narratives that the participants provided were defined as "text"; accordingly, this text was coded and placed into categories.

To meet the research objectives, all types of words with respect to each research question were coded. The primary researcher coded the data to determine the frequencies of certain words within the text and to quantify these frequencies objectively to determine the following: 1) content of teasing; 2) effectiveness of responses to the tease; 3) experience with teasing; 4) responses to a tease; and 5) changes to appearance or purchasing behavior as a consequence of being teased. The frequency of similar responses to each question was calculated to identify its pattern. As the patterns emerged from the data, individuals' comments on specific issues were included to support the findings.

Findings and Discussion

Content of Tease

Although 64 female adolescents participated, some participants shared more than one teasing incident; as a result our data represents 77 teasing incidents (see Table 1). Participants were teased about multiple aspects of their appearance. The specific items that served as the focus of a tease were categorized into the following seven categories: clothing (26.0%); facial features (16.9%); weight (15.6%); height (14.3%); hair (11.7%); body (10.4%); and other (5.2%). Items grouped into the clothing category included entire outfits, shoes, glasses, and contact lenses. Items classified as facial features included makeup, acne, teeth, forehead, or nose. Weight- related teasing included either overweight or underweight. Height-related teasing included either being tall or short. Hair-related teasing included hairstyles. Teasing about the body included hips, skin color, and feet. Other aspects of appearance-related teasing content included being considered as boyish, having skin diseases (other than acne), and having an attractive overall appearance compared to others (see Table 1).

Table 1

Teasing categories based on teasing content

Teasing Category	Specific content	Total %	*n*
Clothing	Clothing in general	16.9	13
	Glasses (**)	6.5	5
	Shoes (**)	1.3	1
	Contact lenses (**)	1.3	1
	Total	26.0	20
Face	Acne	5.2	4
	Forehead	3.9	3
	Makeup	2.6	2
	Nose	2.6	2
	Teeth	2.6	2
	Total	16.9	13
Weight	Overweight	13.0	10
	Underweight (*)	2.6	2
	Total	15.6	12
Height	Tall	7.8	6
	Short	6.5	5
	Total	14.3	11
Hair	Hairstyles	11.7	9
	Total	11.7	9

Body	Racial skin-color (*)	3.9	3
	Large "butt" (**)	2.6	2
	Feet (**)	1.3	1
	Skin (**)	1.3	1
	Tanned skin (**)	1.3	1
	Total	10.4	8
Other aspects of appearance	Boyish (**)	2.6	2
	Skin disease other than acne (*)	1.3	1
	Attractive appearance (*)	1.3	1
	Total	5.2	4
Total		100	77

*Teasing content found only among low self-objectifiers
**Teasing content found only among high self-objectifiers

Clothing was the most frequent focus of a tease perhaps because clothing is visible and could easily serve as the stimulus for a tease. Teasing about clothing might take place early in the school year as new students enter into an established environment of older students. Older students may want to communicate the established hierarchical power structure of the organization and use comments about clothing to "put new students in their place." One participant shared that she was teased about her clothing because she was new to the school.

In addition, clothing may have served as the basis for many teases because adolescents place importance on their clothing (Littrell & Eicher, 1973). Clothing is important to social acceptance during adolescence and some adolescent groups develop informal dress codes (Eicher & Baizerman, & Michelman, 1991). Not wearing the "right" clothing may have made some adolescents the target of a tease because the clothing symbolized the wearer's otherness. One participant noted, "I was teased about my clothes because I didn't wear Abercrombie and Fitch often and because I was wearing something different from everyone else."

Our findings are somewhat inconsistent with those of Cash (1995) who found that facial characteristics and weight were the most frequent subjects of a tease. From participant's comments it was apparent that teasing about clothing generally stemmed from wearing clothing items that deviated in some way (e.g., less fashionable) from what was considered the norm for the school. Clothing may have been the focus of teases among these adolescents because they may have assumed that people freely choose what to wear and have control over their clothing unlike other body characteristics.

Effectiveness of Responses to Teasing

In order to determine whether participants perceived their responses were effective, we inquired about whether participants' responses stopped the teasing. Out of the 64 participants, 43.8% revealed their response stopped the teasing; 54.7% reported their response did not stop the teasing; and 1.6% reported they were unsure about the success of their response in stopping the teasing. For those participants whose response did not stop the teasing, 62.9% indicated it was important to them to stop the teasing.

If a successful response to a tease is stopping the teasing, responses to teasing were not perceived to be successful because more than half of the participants indicated their responses did not stop the teasing. Noteworthy is the finding that telling an adult about the teasing successfully stopped the teasing in few instances (see Table 2).

Table 2

Participants' responses to teasing that stopped and not stopped teasing

Participant's Actual Response	Response that stopped teasing		Responses that did not stop teasing	
	n	%	*n*	%
Ignore/walk away (38.9%; n = 26)	12	42.9	14	35.1
Say something back to the teaser (23.9%; n=16)	8	28.6	8	21.6
Tell the teaser to stop (11.9%; n=8)	3	10.7	5	13.5
Tell an adult about the teasing incident (**) (7.5%; n=5)	1	3.6	4	10.8
Get into a fight (**) (7.5%; n=5)	2	7.1	3	8.1
Laugh it off (6.0%; n=4)	2	7.1	2	5.4
Cry (*) (4.5%; n=3)	0	0	3	8.1
Total	28	100%	39	100%

<u>Experience with teasing and Self-objectification</u>

Participants' self-objectification scores ranged from -21 to 25, with a mean of .28 and a median of 1.0. Participants who scored at the median or higher were classified as "high self-objectifiers" (*n* = 34). Alternatively, those participants who scored lower than the mean were classified as "low self-objectifiers" (*n* = 33) (Fredrickson et al., 1998; Noll & Fredrickson, 1998; Strelan, Mehaffey, & Tiggemann, 2003). All responses to a specific question were examined together within the high and low self-objectifying groups, respectively.

<u>Teasing experience (i.e., participants' feelings about teasing)</u>

<u>Five patterns of teasing experiences.</u> Participants' responses about their teasing experiences were categorized into five categories. The first category contained statements reflecting negative opinions and general attitudes toward being teased. Included in this category were statements such as, "Teasing is bad" and "Being teased makes people feel bad about themselves, but makes the other people feel good about themselves." The second category contained statements concerning feelings and emotions participants experienced as a result of being teased. Included in this category were statements such as "I was mad" or "I felt depressed." The third category contained statements about the residual effects of teasing on the target. Included in this category were statements such as "I felt lowered self-esteem," or "It made me feel really self-conscious." The fourth category contained statements indicating prosocial experiences of teasing. Statements placed here included statements such as "It depends on what they are teasing you about," or "It depends if it is my friends, then I took it as a joke." The fifth category contained statements about behaviors participants either engaged in or considered engaging in as a result of being teased. Examples are "It made me fight," or "I went to the bathroom to cry" (see Table 3).

Although both groups reported similar patterns in responses to teasers, being teased about their appearance may have signaled "failure" to high self-objectifiers. One high self-objectifier wrote, "It was kind of hard because then it made me think about myself and the way I looked. I guess it lowered my self-esteem. Another high self-objectifier noted, "I think teasing brings your self-esteem down and it makes you hurt inside." One low self-objectifier wrote, "I don't care what they say," and another commented, "I don't let it bother me because it happens to me so often."

Table 3
Five Patterns of Teasing Experiences

Category	How felt about being teased	Low self-objectifiers		High self-objectifiers		Total	
		%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Opinions/ Attitudes towards teasing	Did not like it	16.7	8	8.8	5	12.4	13
	Did not care/mind	12.5	6	10.5	6	11.4	12
	Hated being teased	6.3	3	5.3	3	5.7	6
	Felt that teasing is bad**	0	0	3.5	2	1.9	2
	Felt that teasing is wrong	2.1	1	1.8	1	1.9	2
	Felt teasing is not cool**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Felt that teasing makes other people feel good about themselves*	2.1	1	0	0	1.0	1
	Felt that easing should stop**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Felt that teasing is hard to endure**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Total	39.7	19	35.3	20	37.1	39
Emotional aspects of teasing	Hurtful	6.3	3	12.3	7	9.5	10
	Angry/upset/mad	14.6	7	3.5	2	8.6	9
	Sad	2.1	1	5.3	3	3.8	4
	Embarrassed	2.1	1	3.5	2	2.9	3
	Depressed**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Horrible**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Frustrated**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Felt stupid**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Total	25.1	12	31.8	18	30.1	30
Residual effects on teasing target	Felt bad about myself	6.3	3	3.5	2	4.8	5
	Felt self-conscious	4.2	2	3.5	2	3.8	4
	Felt lower self-esteem	2.1	1	3.5	2	2.9	3
	Felt bothered	2.1	1	1.8	1	1.9	2
	Felt I am not wanted	2.1	1	1.8	1	1.9	2
	Felt insecure*	2.1	1	0	0	1.0	1
	Total	18.9	9	14.1	8	16.2	17
Prosocial aspects of teasing	Felt teasing is playful, depending on the content or who did it	10.4	5	14.0	8	12.4	13
	Total	10.4	5	14.0	8	12.4	13
Action/ Behavior	Felt like fighting*	6.3	3	0	0	2.9	3
	Cried**	0	0	3.5	2	1.9	2
	Felt like standing up for myself**	0	0	1.8	1	1.0	1
	Total	6.3	3	5.3	3	5.7%	6

* Specific content identified only among Euro-American participants
**Specific content identified only among non Euro-American participants

<u>Responses to a Tease (i.e., participants' reactions to teasing) and Self-objectification</u>

Sixty-seven responses to being teased were identified and classified into nine categories. Overall, the largest number of participants (38.9%) indicated their response was to walk away or ignore the tease. Other responses included saying something back to the teasers

(23.9%) and telling the teasers to stop teasing them (11.9%). Although infrequent, some participants mentioned that they told adults about the incidents (7.5%), got into fights (7.5%), laughed off the teasing (6.0%), or cried (4.5%) (see Table 4).

Comparing low to high self-objectifiers, patterns in the participants' responses to being teased were similar. The response patterns from the two groups revealed the largest number of participants in both groups had either walked away or had ignored what had been said. However, only high self-objectifiers reported crying as a response to teasing and only low self-objectifiers indicated willingness to report teasing incidents to adults after being teased. The crying in response to a tease might be explained by the fact that high self-objectifiers are likely to be concerned about their appearance; thus, comments about their appearance could evoke strong emotions. In addition, perhaps high self-objectifiers felt no need to tell adults about the teasing because they were willing to accept another's negative appraisal of their appearance (the tease). One high self-objectifier participant shared, "I yelled at [the teasers], stood up for myself, but I see now that they were actually right [when they teased me about my clothes]." (see Table 4).

Table 4

Responses to Teasing Based on Self-objectification Level

Response	Level of self-objectification	Participants' Responses (Quotes)
Ignore/ Walk away	*High* (*n* = 14; 41.2 %)	I didn't do anything. I ignored it a lot of the time, but it was kind of hard to sometimes, because they did it all the time.
	Low (*n* = 12; 36.4 %)	I said, "OK, whatever, look at yourself before you say something," and walked away. Just ignored them. I just said, "Okay" in a quiet voice, and walked away. Then I turned around and said that if I want to wear a skirt, that's my decision; they should respect that.
Say something back to the teasers	*High* (*n* = 8; 23.5 %)	I told her that it wasn't right for her to do that. I said that wasn't very nice, and that it hurt me. I yelled at them, stood up for myself, but I see now that they were actually right. I also explained to her that my glasses were $300 and contacts were $400 – I couldn't afford new ones all the time.
Say something back to the teasers	*Low* (*n* = 8; 21.2 %)	I said, "It is me, and it's not you," or I walk away and sometimes say things back. I said it doesn't bother me because someone is not going to take it and fight them.
Tell teaser to stop	*High* (*n* = 4; 11.8 %)	I told them to stop teasing me, but they didn't listen to me. I said, "Shut up and leave me alone."
	Low (*n* = 4; 12.1 %)	I rolled my eyes and told them to stop it.
Telling adults about the teasing incidents	*High* (*n* = 1; 2.9 %)	Sometimes I talk to people, and I write it down.
	Low (*n* = 4; 12.1 %)	I wanted to go tell my mom.
Get into a fight	*High* (*n* = 2; 5.9 %)	I hit him on the side of the head with a pop can. I became really violent with him after that on many occasions.

	Low (*n* = 3; 9.1 %)	I would get into a fight.
Laugh it off	*High* (*n* = 2; 5.9 %)	I tried to laugh it off**.**
	Low (*n* = 2; 6.1 %)	I laughed; it was kind of funny.
Cry	*High* (*n* = 3; 8.8 %)	I just ran to the bathroom to cry; I didn't say anything. I was quiet. I cried sometimes because it was always hard to handle, and I was getting so sick of it.
	Low (*n* = 0; 0%)	Not found

Changes in Appearance or Buying behavior based on Self-objectification

Among the 64 participants, 37.5% indicated that they did make a change or changes to their appearance or they purchased new items as a result of being teased. Participants tried to modify their hair (50%), followed by clothing (44.4%) and weight (41.7%). Participants who were teased about clothing specifically mentioned making a change in an attempt to halt the teasing: "Because I don't want the same thing to happen, I don't wear skirts any more. I always wear pants." Another participant who was teased about her hair stated, "I went to buy some stuff for my hair so it can grow." In addition to trying to change their hair or clothing, participants believed their weight was something they could also change as a response to being teased. Participants mentioned the following responses with respect to being teased about their weight: "I stopped eating for days at a time"; "I tried to lose weight"; and, "I started working out."

The majority (74.2 %) of low self-objectifiers indicated they did not make a change to their appearance as a result of being teased. In contrast, about half (48.5%) of the high self-objectifiers indicated they changed their appearance in response to and about half did not (48.5%) (see Table 5). Individuals who would be sensitive to the standards of outsiders (i.e., high self-objectifiers) would likely change their behavior in response to negative comments from others (i.e., teasing). Thus, our finding that some high self-objectifiers attempted to change their appearance in response to being teased is consistent with self-objectification theory. One possible explanation for why only some and not all high self-objectifiers changed their appearance in response to being teased is that some aspects of appearance are easier to change than others. It is possible when some high self-objectifiers were teased about their appearance they felt they did not have control over the aspect they were teased about, so they did not try to change anything. Comments from two high self-objectifiers illustrate, "I didn't really [change anything] because I can't suddenly become really skinny," and "I can't help being short. I can't change my height." Another possible explanation for why some changed but not others is some of the high self-objectifiers reported they selectively reacted to the teases received from others. For example, one high objectifier wrote, "Because the person who teased me isn't someone who has an influence over me."

Table 5
Self-objectification Level and Modification of Appearance

	Low self-objectifiers		High self-objectifiers		Total	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Yes, I did change.	8	25.8	16	48.5	24	37.5
No, I did not change.	23	74.2	16	48.5	39	60.9
Other (Both)	0	0	1	3.0	1	1.6

Conclusions

The incidents of teasing reflected in our data demonstrate that adolescent girls were teased about multiple aspects of their appearance and frequently teased about their clothing. Our data conflicts with Cash (1995) who reported that facial characteristics and weight-related teasing among adolescent girls occurs with greater frequency than all other types of appearance-related teasing.

Our findings are consistent with other researchers who have reported ignoring the teaser is the most frequent response by adolescents to being teased (Scambler, Harris & Milich, 1998). Participants may have decided to ignore teasing comments for a variety of reasons. For example, if the goal of a teaser is to use the tease to upset an individual, then any reaction would mean the teaser gains an advantage over the teased. Teases may have also been ignored because advice on how to deal with teasing often includes the suggestions to ignore the teasing (Schindler, 1998).

Pawluck (1989) and Alberts (1992) indicated there is a range of possible responses to teasing. Although the most frequent response by these adolescents to teasing was to ignore it, participants did respond back to their teasers, and several told the teaser to stop the teasing. These findings support those of Drew (1987) who found teasing victims typically respond with serious verbal responses, and that they do so because they are responding to the negative intent inherent in this type of teasing. However, all children may not be equally capable of using such a strategy.

Being teased for most of our participants was not a positive experience. Overall, participants reported negative feelings and emotions about being teased, regardless of their level of self-objectification. This finding is consistent with both Kowalski (2000) and Thompson, Coovert and Stormer (1999) who also found that teasing about appearance often induced hurt feelings, depression, and negative self-evaluations.

Several high self-objectifiers reported they cried in response to teasing whereas none of low self-objectifiers reported crying. A strong emotional response to being teased is consistent with the idea that a self-objectifier would be sensitive to the comments of others and willing to take their perspective (i.e., outsider) and views to heart concerning their physical self.

The exact reasons as to why the high self-objectifiers reported less frequently that they told adults about teasing incidents were not explored in depth with participants. It is possible that they may have recognized what was “wrong” with their appearance or their body in comparison to others when they were teased and within the time it would take to tell an adult, decide to agree with the assessment.

Shopping for and purchasing clothing as well as other products used to alter appearance was considered an effective strategy for deflecting teasing comments. Perhaps peer teasing about appearance can be viewed as a type of shopping motivation among adolescents. Of those participants who went shopping in response to being teased, the majority were high self-objectifiers. These individuals may have been trying to modify and shape their appearance to be congruent with the teasers’ (i.e., outsiders’) views.

Many participants clearly wanted the teasing to stop. Frequently participant’s strategy to halt the teasing was to ignore it and in some instances, ignoring the behavior did stop some teasers but not all. So what can we be done to help adolescents respond effectively to teasing? Teasing is a form of harassment. Since school environments intended to be inclusive learning environments, perhaps the best strategy for an adolescent to take in response to harassment is to report the incident to adults who hold responsibility for the learning environment. Although there may be norms against reporting incidents (i.e., being a “tattle tale”) discussing the incident with an adult may be the only successful recourse to an ineffective request to halt the behavior.

There are several directions that others might take in understanding the role and impact of teasing during adolescence. Our study provides a foundation for further investigation of what role self-objectification may play in adolescents' experiences with teasing using positivistic methods. Using our findings to develop quantitative items to measure experiences and responses to teasing along with other variables including self-esteem or depressive symptoms, would allow for direct testing of postulates of self-objectification theory with adolescents, an unexplored application of the theory.

There are several other personality variables (e.g., self-monitoring, self-esteem, introversion) that are worthy of investigation because they may assist in explaining differences in responses to teasing. Further investigation of teasing as a motivation to buy or shop is worthy of our attention. In addition, why adolescents do not seek help from adults would be an area to explore in future research.

In addition, the findings of this study reveal hopeful suggestions for educators through curriculum development. Although teasing during adolescence is a complex topic, educators can make students aware of how teasing can hurt other people's feelings in a variety of courses including health and child development. In a health course or a child development course, teasing can be included as an issue that has both short term and long term effects and one that has both negative and positive outcomes. Although tragic, stories about teenagers that commit acts of violence in high schools are often tied to teasing incidents. These events as well as stories about violence against the self (e.g., teen suicide) that are tied to teasing could be included as topics for discussion. Students could be involved in developing strategies for zero tolerance for negative teasing, halting negative teasing, and for effective responses to teasing.

There are several limitations to our research. We are not certain that the teasing events shared with us are reflective of participants' everyday lives because participants were asked to write about a specific teasing experience they recalled during the past six months. Recalled incidents may be especially powerful and exaggerated with time. Responses, especially those responses suggesting long-term impact (e.g., prolonged lowered self-esteem) may not be associated with a less memorable everyday incident of teasing. Thus, events reported to us may reflect exceptional experiences rather than everyday experiences with teasing.

Participants' level of self-objectification may also have influenced their recall of teasing because high self-objectifiers are likely to be better attuned to the comments of others concerning their appearance than low self-objectifiers. In addition, findings related to self-objectification must be interpreted with caution. Participants' self-objectification scores were measured at the time of data collection and the teasing incidents reported by the participants happened in the previous six months. The extent to which a participant self-objectified could have changed from the time of the teasing incident to the time that self-objectification was measured. Thus, any findings related to self-objectification must be viewed with caution.

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FOOD AND NUTRITION RELATED VALUES IN FINNISH HEALTH EDUCATION AND HOME ECONOMICS SECONDARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

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The purpose of the study was to examine value-oriented food and nutrition information in the most commonly used Finnish health education and home economics secondary textbooks (n=7). Information was categorized into individual (nutrition, health, psychology, and sensory quality), social (social life, culture, religion, society, politics, economy) and environmental system level (ecology) according to the nutrition ecology model (Spitzmüller & Leitzmann, 1994). Value-oriented information was expressed mostly at the individual level emphasizing the importance of food as a source of vital nutrients and health. Food was also considered as an important source of pleasure and part of social life. Home economics textbooks in general focused on societal, cultural, economical and environmental aspects more than health education textbooks which were mainly health-oriented.

Textbooks have an essential role in instruction posing both negative and positive effects on development of instruction (Heinonen, 2005). A good textbook should reflect the current pedagogical thinking and contain the contents and objectives of different subjects provided by the national curriculum (Heinonen, 2005; Mikkilä-Erdmann, Olkinuora & Mattila, 1999).

The Finnish National Board of Education used to review all textbooks for quality before the year 1992. This practice improved the quality of textbooks and raised their importance in instruction. Possibly, partly due to this practice, the Finnish instruction culture has been accused of being too textbook-centered (Mikkilä-Erdmann et al., 1999).

Based on our earlier studies (Rauma, Himanen, & Väisänen, 2006) we know that Finnish home economics teachers' differ from each others in their teaching practices. Home economics teachers who follow the national and local curriculum use more pupil-centered methods in their teaching and are not as likely to use textbooks as a guide for how and what to teach. In contrast, teacher-centered methods focus more on textbooks, trends in home economics and on the instructor's own interest, use less modern student-centered teaching methods and integration e.g. science and mathematics.

According to Heinonen (2005) textbooks-centered teaching usually results in teacher-centered methods and can even be an obstacle in the development of teaching. In some cases textbooks can have positive influence on development pupil-centered methods (Heinonen, 2005). Therefore, it is important to know what textbooks we use in teaching and how they could be developed to enhance student-centered teaching.

Nutrition Education in Finnish Basic Curriculum

Finnish basic education needs to follow the national curriculum and guidelines on teaching set by the Finnish National Board of Education. In the national curriculum food and nutrition education is incorporated into two different disciplines: home economics and health education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004). Both subjects are required for all pupils in secondary school (in grades 7-9). In primary school health education is incorporated into different subjects such as environmental and natural studies (in grades 1-4), biology/geography and physics/chemistry (in grades 5-6) (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004).

The contents of home economics curriculum is comprised of the following four topics: family and living together, nutrition and culture of food, the consumer and a changing society, and home and environment. Health education curriculum (for the grades 7-9) includes respectively topics such as growth and development; healthy choices in daily living; resources and coping skills; and health, society and culture. Examples of specific nutrition topics are: nutritional needs, dietary recommendations, special diets, food quality and safety, meal planning and basic food preparation methods (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004).

The main goal of nutrition education is to educate pupils about nutrition and encourage them to adopt everyday food habits in order to maintain good nutrition and health (Contento, 1995; Nupponen, 2003). Based on the current learning concept all instruction should provide knowledge, skills and critical value consideration (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004). It is emphasized that health education should take into account the pupils own priorities and context of everyday life (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004; Kannas, 2005; Svedbom, 2005). In addition to the food and nutrition content knowledge and specific objectives of different subjects, the national curriculum provides that all instruction is based on basic values such as human rights, equality, democracy, natural diversity, preservation of environmental viability, and the endorsement of multiculturalism. Furthermore, the recently launched curriculum provides that responsibility for the environment, well-being and sustainable future should be taking into account in all education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004).

Values in Nutrition Education

Dietary guidelines as well as our daily food choice reflect value-orientation. In the contemporary society, health is accepted as basic value, however, in addition to health, there are several other value-oriented factors that can be linked to food and nutrition which are not so easily defined (Figure 1).

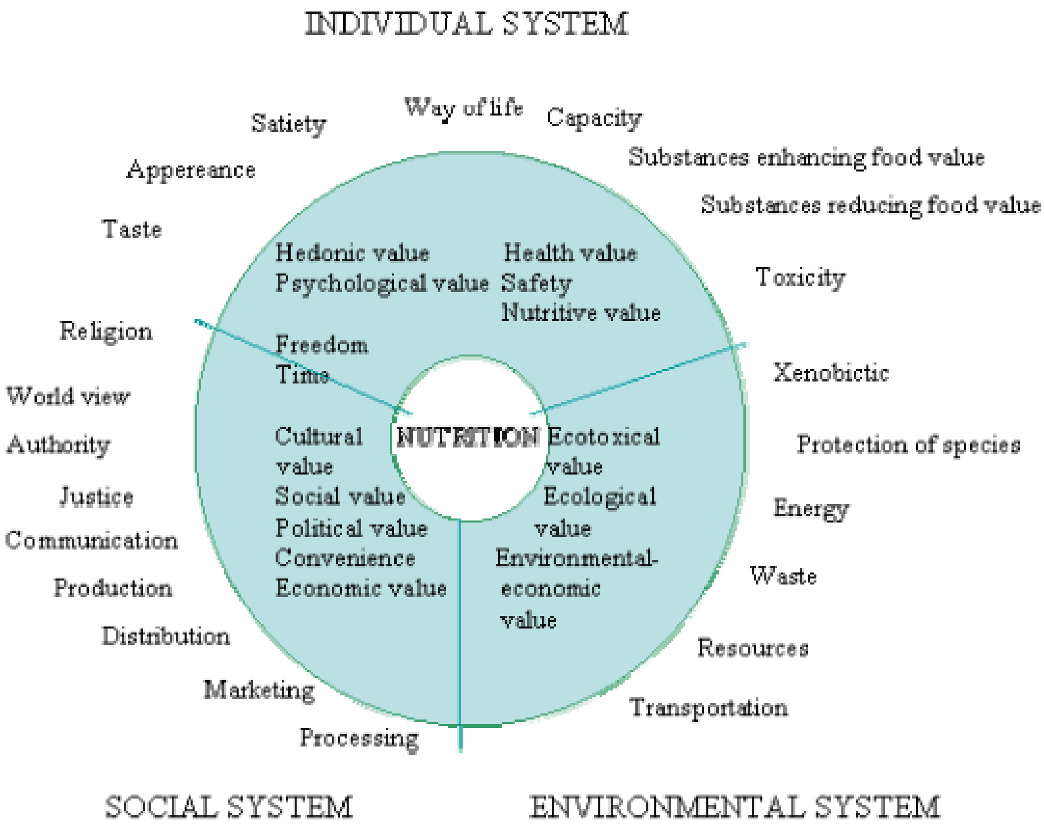

Figure 1. Nutrition Ecology Model (Spitzmüller & Leitzmann, 1994).

The nutrition ecology model shows that both food choice and food consumption have individual, social and environmental effects. It also relates food and nutrition to general values such as health, hedonic, social, political, cultural and ecological values (Table 1).

Considering values in individual or social level, one can see similarities between the nutrition ecology model and Rescher's (1982) general classification of value orientations as well as Scheler's (1973) value-modalities.

In addition, the nutrition ecology model takes into account environmental values which can be compared with Schwarz's universal values. Schwarz's universal value theory has been used, for example, when studying motivation and values related to the consumption of organic foods (Grunert & Juhl, 1995; Kihlberg & Risvik, 2006). In Finland Schwarz's theory has been applied when studying attitudes towards food and meals (Puohiniemi, 2002), as well as to identify the values regulating the food choices (Tiilikainen, 1999). In both of these studies connections between food choice and values were recorded. Ethical principles are also discussed in the context of biotechnological production of food (Häyry, 2000).

Table 1
Similarities between nutrition ecology model and different value theories

Spitzmüller & Leitzmann (1994)	Freedom	Self-direction	Schwartz (1992)
	Psychological value	Stimulation	
	Hedonic value	Hedonism	
	Authority	Achievement	
	Economic value	Power	
	Health, safety	Security	
		Conformity	
	Cultural value	Tradition	
		Benevolence	
	Justice, ecological value	Universalism	
	Values in individual system	Self-orientated values	Rescher (1982)
	Values in social system (e.g. social, cultural, political values)	Other-orientated values - in-group-orientated values (family-, profession-, nation-, and society-orientated values) - mankind-orientated values	
	Hedonic value Economic value	Values of the agreeable and the disagreeable	Scheler (1973)
	Health, nutrition value	Vital values	
	Justice, cultural value	Spiritual values	
	Religion	Values of the holy and the unholy	

Values can be defined in several ways, depending how they are understood (for example, value subjectivism v. objectivism). In this study, we use the term values based on value constructionism (Niiniluoto, 1984) which means that values are considered socially constructed artifacts of human beings, used primarily to justify behaviour.

Values in society are subject to change and this change can be seen also in our basic curriculum. When secularization, liberalization and pluralism have taken place in Finnish society, ethical educational thinking has been changed from ethical objectivism to ethical constructivism and subjectivism, emphasizing the individual choices of pupils instead of values of society (Launonen, 2000). This change has been verified also in the study of moral ideas in the Finnish ABC books (Koski, 2001). This study indicated the transformation in moral education from the divine harmony to social (ideals of welfare state) and individual harmony.

Textbooks are essential learning tools, and they reflect and represent the values of our society. Therefore, it is important to know what textbooks we use in teaching and how they could be developed. Textbooks have traditionally been studied by the different researchers from the viewpoint of readability, pedagogy, and content knowledge (Väisänen, 2005). whereas the value dimension has rarely been examined both in national and international scale (Selander, 1991). In this paper we research how different values linked to food and nutrition are expressed in selected health education and home economics secondary school textbooks.

The Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine value-oriented food and nutrition information in selected Finnish health education and home economics secondary school textbooks. Value-oriented information is defined as references which reflect the values related to food and nutrition on an individual, social and environmental level.

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What kind of value-oriented information related to food and nutrition is found in the textbooks?
2. How is this information expressed in different textbooks?

Data and Method

Study data consisted of four home economics and three health education most commonly used textbooks (Table 2). All books were published after launching the latest National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in 2004.

Table 2

Home Economics and Heath Education Textbooks (N=7) and analysed Food and Nutrition Contents

Textbook[a] (ABBR, No. of pages)	School year[b]	Food and Nutrition Titles[a] (No. of analysed pages[c])	Reference
Home Economics			
Basic domestic skills (Hecon 1, 263 p)	7	Feeling good - please Our common dining table yesterday, today, and tomorrow (65 p)	Hämäläinen, Isotalo, Kojo, & Mäkinen, 2005.
Good Food, Mood and Company (Hecon 2, 359 p.)	7-9	Energy for your day Get together (85 p.)	Immonen, Liimatainen, & Palojoki, 2004.
Domestic skills 7 (HEcon 3, 306 p.)	7	Shopping for food Evaluating food choices (65 p.)	Haverinen, Löytty-Rissanen, & Näveri, 2006.
Domestic skills 8-9, an optional course (HEcon 4, 240 p.)	8-9	Choices and responsibility Let’s celebrate Differences between food cultures (52 p.)	Harjula, Haverinen, Löytty-Rissanen, & Näveri, 2004.
Health Education			
Dynamo (HEd 1, 248 p.)	7-9	Food is a pleasure − entity matters (23 p.)	Orkovaara, Cacciatore, Furman, Hirvihuhta, Hämäläinen, Kekki, & Korteniemi-Poikela, 2005.
For your health (HEd 2, 444 p.)	7-9	Food matters Earth as an environment (partly) (49 p.)	Reinikkala, Ryhänen, Penttinen, Penttilä, Pesonen, & Vertio, 2005.
Health Stairs (HEd 3, 372 p.)	7-9	Live to eat or eat to live? Am I what I eat? Evaluating meals (30 p.)	Eloranta, Kalaja, Korhonen, Nykänen, & Välimaa, 2005.

[a]Authors’ translation [b]Pupils are 13-16 years old in grades 7-9.
[c]In addition, nutrition related texts from other parts of books; the number of pages includes these texts.

In a theory-based qualitative analysis, a framework was adapted from the nutrition ecology model presented by Spitzmüller & Leitzmann (1994). This model was chosen because it represents the scientific approach which encompasses the entire nutrition system, with special consideration of the effects of nutrition on health, the environment, society, and the economy (Leitzmann, 2003).

Textbooks and especially food and nutrition chapters (Table 2) were read thoroughly, and sentences and phrases expressing value-oriented information concerning food and nutrition either on the individual (nutrition, health, psychology, sensory quality), social (social life, culture, religion, society, politics, economy, time) or environmental level (ecology) were extracted from the text. In our analysis we classified as value-oriented information the expressions where adjectives such as good, bad, right, wrong, nice, wise or ideal were found, and sentences where informative, persuasive and commanding comments related to food behaviour were reasoned by individual, social or environmental factors shown in nutrition ecology model.

Results

Value-oriented information indicating the implications of food was seen in every level researched (Table 3). Health-oriented expressions were abundant in all textbooks studied. Generally, home economics textbooks considered cultural, societal, economical and environmental issues more than health education textbooks which were mainly health-oriented.

Value-oriented information consisted of expressions in which the importance of food was emphasized from the individual, social or environmental point of view. They included straight value statements such as: "A good meal is…", "It is important to eat…", "It's good to prefer…" and "It's wise to choose…". In addition, value-orientated information concerning food behaviour included informative (I), persuasive (P) as well as commanding (C) knowledge, comments and advice. Examples of value-oriented expressions are given in Table 3, and after that value-dimensions on individual, social and environmental system level are considered in more detailed.

Table 3
Examples of Food and Nutrition Related Value Expressions

Individual system	Social system	Environmental system
Nutrient intake	*Social life*	*Environment*
"It is good to eat raw or minimally processed vegetables. The nutritional value in fresh vegetables is the best." (I, P) (HEcon 1, p. 141)	"It is important to eat peacefully with family members." (P) (HEcon 3, p. 224)	"Choosing regional food is a commendable environmental act." (P) (HEd 1, p. 119) "Vegetarian food production requires less natural resources and causes less releases and contaminants than production food of animal origin. Organic food is also a good choice for the sake of the environment." (I, P) *(HEcon 2, p. 78)*

Health "A balanced diet strengthens your muscles and bones and improves performance. It makes your hair shine and keeps your skin beautiful. Therefore don't be content with and eat just any food. Wrong eating habits in adolescence have a strong effect on health problems in the future." (I, P, C) (Hed 2, p. 164)	*Culture* "It is important to appreciate and preserve your own food traditions in the international world." (HEcon 4, p. 200)
Food safety "We Finnish people are fortunate to have clean drinking water, of good quality." (HEd 1, p. 107)	*Economy* "Meat is an expensive foodstuff. Therefore you should think carefully, what kind of meat is needed and how the food will be prepared." (I, C) *(HEcon 2, p. 215)*
Sensory quality and psychology "Enjoy food with all your senses. Enjoyment begins from the aroma of food, delicious appearance and color." (C) (HEcon 2, p. 43) "Good food is an important source of pleasure and enjoyment." (HEd 2, p. 152)	*Society and politics* "It is good to prefer domestic vegetables and berries." (P) (HEcon 1, p. 89) "It would be ideal that every country could produce enough food for the needs of its own population." *(HEcon 1, p. 107)*

Value expressions on the individual system

Value-oriented information related to nutrition and health as well as the pleasure of eating was mentioned in every textbook. The importance of food was emphasized because it is a source of energy and vital nutrients. "It is important to get enough vitamin D from food during the wintertime in Finland when there is lack of sunlight." (HEd 3, p. 268) "It's important to eat enough at the lunch to be able to concentrate your studies." (HEcon 2, p. 69)

Textbooks considered healthy food choices and the effects of food consumption on health frequently. The most typically used value-expressions were such as "healthy food", "good meal", "good diet", "wise choice" and "right eating habits".

"A good meal is diverse, balanced, moderate and gives pleasure." (HEcon 3, p. 222)

"What does a person eat when he/she is following a good diet? He/she selects diverse foodstuffs containing vegetables, potatoes, grain and dairy products, meat, fish and egg as well as little bit fat..." (HEcon 4, p. 38)

Recommendations were reasoned by the importance of own well-being and self-respect as well as avoiding consequences of unhealthy diet (e.g. overweight and diseases). "Diabetes, overweight, coronary heart disease and hypertension are the most common national diseases, and the risk of developing them could be best decreased with a good and healthy diet." (HEcon 4, p. 40) "With your own choices you can effect what do you look like, how healthy you stay and how well you will shape up in the future --- It's worthwhile to take care of your own body. Your food choices have far-reaching consequences. Weigh up therefore what you put in your mouth." (HEd 5, p. 120)

When dealing with weight control and appearance, health education textbooks criticized beauty and body image formulated by the media. They emphasized healthy weight and differences between the individuals.

"Reducing weight doesn't make you a more gorgeous, popular or valuable person than what you already are!" (HEd 1, p. 114) "Normal weight is the best option for the sake of our health." (HEd 2, p. 174) "How much one should weigh or what is an ideal weight, are strange questions. If people in any case are different and individuals, why should the ideal weight be the same for every man of the same height?" (HEd 1, p. 111)

Psychological and hedonistic valuations were seen in the sentences where pleasure of eating or sensory properties of food (e.g. delicious appearance, taste or flavour) were explained. There were recommendations on enjoying eating. Feasting is appropriate on occasion, but moderation is important most days, while still enjoying the food. "Good food is an important source of pleasure and enjoyment." (HEd 2, p. 152) "Enjoy your food with all your senses. Enjoyment already begins from the food aroma, delicious appearance and color." (HEcon 2, p. 43) "Fragrant bread encourages a good mood and the taste of it rewards the baker." (HEcon 2, p. 285)

It is good to feast, if you remember moderation! (HEd 1, p. 108)

Textbooks consisted also consist of expressions in which health and hedonistic values were combined together, and with the social and cultural aspects of food. "From food I easily get the nutrients I need. Moreover, good bread, vegetables, berries, and fruit as well as fish and meat, all taste good!" (HEd 1, p. 107) "A good meal consists of appetizing aroma, eye-pleasing colors, a warm atmosphere and nice company." (HEcon 1, p. 109) "Sweets and confectionery are an essential part of the food culture and the enjoyment of life." (HEd 1, p. 109)

<u>Value expressions on the social system</u>

Value-oriented food and nutrition information in the context of the social system dealt with time management and convenience, social life, culture, religion, economy, society, and politics. Straight value statements concerned mainly social life, however, there were a few indicating the cultural value of food. The social value of food was mentioned in every textbook and in four of the textbooks the importance of the shared family meal was emphasized. "A shared dinner with the family is a nice way to get to together after the school or work day, there's enough reason to give back its' proper worth again." (HEd 1, p. 110) "Hospitality has always been valued and people want to offer delicious taste experiences for their guests." (HEcon 4, p. 194)

The importance of food was also demonstrated when writing about food traditions and feasts. Value statements related to food and multiculturalism were built in two home economics textbooks (HEcon 1, HEcon 4). "People offer their best when celebrating, that is how the organizer of the feast can honor his/her guests." (HEcon 1, p. 114) "It is important to appreciate and preserve one's own food traditions in the international world." (HEcon 4, p. 200) "There are special characteristics of the culture of food in different countries and continents..." (HEcon 4, p. 216)

Time management, convenience, and the economic value of food were discussed predominantly in home economics textbooks. However, health education books mentioned the importance of the free school meal (HEd 1, HEd 3) and the expense of gluten-free diet (HEd 2). "Using industrially prepared food has its place, when there is not much time to prepare food or the amount of food to be prepared is small." (HEcon 1, p. 110) "The price of bread varies a lot and hence it's worthwhile to compare the price per unit and kilo." (HEcon 3, p. 92) "Grain products are an essential part of the Finnish diet, and therefore it is wise to pay attention to food value and price of the grain products." (HEcon 3, p. 92) "It is wise to eat the school meal, because it is planned for your health. It is an important and even free meal." (HEd 1, p. 108)

The importance of food within the society was discussed by including the influence of consuming domestic and local food on employment and the economy (HEd 1, HEcon 2, HEcon 4). Domestic food choices were encouraged due to their environmental value (HEcon 3), cleanness, freshness and good taste (HEcon 1). In some home economics textbooks (HEcon 1, HEcon 2) Finnish foodstuffs (natural products) were claimed to be the best in the world. "Domestic rape oil is a good choice for cooking and baking." (HEd 1, p. 107) "It is good to use raw material and products from your own region. This also promotes employment of the neighbouring area." (HEcon 2, p. 78) "It is worth promoting the consumption of domestic foodstuffs, because they are clean and suitable for the Finnish diet." (HEcon 1, p. 109) "Individual who seeks exotic fish to eat will not be disappointed, because in the lakes of Finland swim the most delicious fish in the world." (HEcon 1, p. 157)

Value statements expressing the importance of food on a global level were rare. Only one home economics book (HEcon 1) considered unequal distribution of food, and mentioned that it would be ideal if every country could produce all food on their own. Another textbook considered (HEcon 4) a balance in world trade and mentioned fair trade products as possible tools by which one could influence the balance of the world trade. The picture of the fair trade mark was illustrated in every home economics textbooks, but it was discussed mainly in picture captions.

Value expressions on the environmental system

Home economics textbooks contained more environmental information compared to the health education textbooks. However, ethical (including animal welfare) or environmental aspects were mentioned as possible reasons for food choices in all the textbooks reviewed. "The reason for changing to vegetarian regimen is usually an ethical choice." (HEcon 1, p. 102) "Typical reasons for choosing a vegetarian regiment are health, animals' rights, economics, the environment or religion." (HEd 3, p. 276)

The impacts of food consumption on nature were mentioned in one health education textbook (HEd 1) and in all home economics textbooks. "What kind of food we eat and how it is produced is important to the environment. The production of food supplies is linked to many environmental factors from farming to transportation and processing." (HEcon 2, p. 78) "By choosing domestic or organic food products, you can have an impact on environment." (HEcon 4, p. 44)

Typically, the environmental level comments on food choice in these books were related to the production and transportation of food. Although there were statements about farming, producing, transporting, packaging of food and the impact on nature and energy ecology, they were discussed quite separately, and the model of food system was not portrayed in any of the textbooks.

Value statements related to food ecological value were few. Instead, there was general advice on how to make pro-environmental food choices in all of the home economics textbooks and in one health education textbook (HEd 1). Some textbooks not only advised individuals to make positive environmental food choices, but also encouraged individuals to do so (HEcon 2, HEcon 3, HEd 1). "By eating domestic, locally produced and mainly plant originated food, you will save energy and natural resources." (HEcon 2, p. 78) "Organic foods are also good choice for the sake of the environment." (HEcon 2, p. 78) "Choosing local food is a commendable environmental act." (HEd 1, p. 119) "When choosing vegetables, take into account ecological aspects (method of production, country of origin, packing material)." (HEcon 3, p. 89)

Pro-environmental food choices in these books included organic food as well as domestic/local food. In addition, the pictures of environmental package markings were presented. In home economics textbooks, there were also some other statements concerning the consumption of food from the environmental point of view. These were related to vegetarian food (HEcon 2), canned and convenience food (HEcon 3) as well as food packages (HEcon 1, HEcon 3). "Vegetarian food production requires fewer natural resources and results in less environmental damage than production of food of animal origin." (HEcon 2, p. 78) "It is also worthwhile to paying attention to environmental concerns when choosing canned foods but also other convenience products." (HEcon 3, p. 102) "Pro-environmental choices include the use refillable products, for example, soft drink bottles." (HEcon 1, p. 49)

Discussion

The value of health was the most often cited reason for making food choice in Finnish home economics and health education textbooks. After this came hedonic and social values. Generally, home economics textbooks considered cultural, societal, economic and environmental issues more than health education textbooks which were mainly health-oriented.

Value-orientation compliments the current national curriculum goals for better health. However, when explaining the implications of food and nutrition in the context of society or the environment the value dimension may be out of focus. Sustainable development is one of the cross-curricular themes in the Finnish basic education curriculum and hence it should be more visible in the textbooks concerning food and nutrition topic. Environmental aspects are rarely expressed in health education textbooks, and the model of food system is not portrayed in any of the textbooks. Furthermore, nutrition related problems and equitable distribution of food on a global level are considered very little in textbooks although human rights and equality are set as basic values in education.

The situation is identical with nutritional sciences where research has been mainly dominated by the health aspects of food (Leitzmann, 2003). However, in past decades many researchers in nutrition sciences and nutrition education (Cannon & Leitzmann, 2006; Hoffmann, 2003; Coveney, Smith, & Carter, 1999; Clancy, 1999; Gussow, 1999) have suggested broadening the concept of nutrition to be able to rise to the challenge of sustainable development. It is important to notice that food is determined in part by the quality of the environment and the environment is influenced by food consumption habits (Leitzmann, 2003). In order to educate and empower pupils to sustainable food consumption and nutrition, one needs to give information on the impact of food consumption on all three levels including the individual level (health), society level, and environmental level. Clancy (1999) has suggested that nutrition educators should use sustainable development as a framework for their thinking in order to make nutrition education more relevant in communities.

Summary

The Finnish home economics and health education textbooks 1) emphasize the health and hedonistic value of foods, 2) tell less about social values, and 3) focus least on the ethical and environmental values connected to food and nutrition. Food was considered foremost as an important source of nutrients, which can have both a positive and negative impact on the health of the individual. In addition, food was an important source of pleasure and part of a

social life. We hope our study broadens understanding on several value-oriented factors influencing on food choice and nutrition behavior. Since the pedagogical content knowledge of both home economics and health education is broad, it is recommended that social and environmental aspects are discussed as well as individual aspects when writing new textbooks in these disciplines.

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GENDER AND CREDIT BEHAVIORS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSUMER EDUCATORS

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Consumer educators are faced with the challenge of educating students about the appropriate use of credit cards, but research on credit responsibility among students is sparse. Although many extant studies report the number and types of credit cards held by students, few have investigated students' attitudes and behaviors such as financial independence, financial confidence and security, or credit recovery. This study uses descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to examine these attitudes and behaviors across genders. The findings provide valuable direction for consumer educators in terms of helping students become responsible users of credit cards.

Abuse of credit cards by consumers in the United States is widespread. Consumer advocates and financial industry analysts note that the problem will likely worsen over the coming decade (Mandell 2000, 2001). Although research on credit responsibility and related behaviors is becoming more frequent, the literature remains fragmented. College students are known to be heavy users of credit and are a popular target for investigation of financial attitudes and behaviors (Armstrong & Craven, 1993; Hayhoe, Leach, Turner, Bruin, & Lawrence, 2000; Lytton & Grable, 1997; Lyons, 2004; Roberts & Jones, 2001; Warwick & Mansfield, 2000, Xiao, Noring, & Anderson, 1995).

Several studies report the number and types of credit cards students hold and the amount of debt, but few go beyond investigating basic financial practices to examine students' underlying attitudes and behaviors. Armstrong and Craven (1993) demonstrated that females tend to have a higher number of credit cards than males, but found that on average, females carry lower balances. In contrast, Joo, Grable, and Bagwell (2001) reported no differences between genders in terms of the number of credit cards held, balances, amount of monthly payment, or general attitudes toward credit. Hayhoe, Leach, and Turner (1999) found that females are more likely to have four or more credit cards.

Lyons (2004) identified financially at-risk college students, noting that while females do not appear to hold excessive amounts of credit card debt, they do have a problem making payments on time. Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) reported no gender differences in terms of making minimum payments. The majority of researchers investigating differences in the level of financial confidence among males and females report that men tend to be more confident than women (Churaman, 1988; Lytton & Grable, 1997; Prince, 1993). However, Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) found no significant difference in financial confidence.

Although these studies examine various aspects of gender, few have explored the role of gender on financial independence, financial confidence and security, or credit recovery behaviors. This information would help consumer educators to become successful counselors for the college student population. This study explored financial attitudes and credit behaviors of college students including:

- financial independence (being responsible for one's own finances);

- financial confidence and security (being confident in one's ability to manage his/her own finances and being well prepared to face the future);
- financial stressors (being unable to purchase necessities and to save for emergencies);
- positive credit card usage (e.g., paying the full balance of credit cards each month, paying on time);
- negative credit card usage (e.g., carrying maximum balances, making late payments); and,
- credit recovery behaviors (e.g., seeking financial help, refinancing, attending seminars).

The findings of this study will extend the growing body of academic literature on credit behavior and provide guidance for consumer educators in terms of understanding gender differences in the financial attitudes and credit behaviors of college students.

Method

Data for the study were collected using a sample of college students at a large southeastern university in the United States. The data were collected using a survey methodology. To produce adequate representation across groups of college students, the authors collected the data in undergraduate and graduate classrooms across a variety of majors including business, hospitality, retailing, sport management, and communications (*N*=278). The survey included questions on a variety of credit issues and behaviors including financial independence, financial confidence and security, financial stressors, positive and negative credit card usage, and credit recovery behaviors. Five-point Likert-type scales were used to measure each of the focal constructs. The scales are presented in the Appendix. In addition to financial independence, financial confidence and security was measured using a scale developed specifically for the study anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree (reliability = .79 and .86, respectively). Financial stressors were measured using the Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) scale anchored by never and very often (reliability = .80) and credit card usage was measured using the Roberts & Jones (2001) scale anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree (reliability for positive credit card usage = .87; reliability for negative credit card usage = .86). Credit recovery behavior was measured using a scale developed specifically for the study, anchored by never and very often (reliability = .61).

Financial independence, as well as financial confidence and security were measured on five-point Likert-type scales anchored by strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5). Scoring high on the financial independence and the financial confidence and security scales indicates that an individual is responsible for their own finances, is very confident managing their own finances, and is well prepared for his or her future. Financial stressors were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by never (1) and very often (5). Scoring high on the financial stressors scale indicates that an individual is unable to provide for basic needs such as clothing or utilities, does not have savings in place for emergencies, and cannot discuss financial matters without experiencing stress. Positive and negative credit card usage was measured on five-point Likert-type scales anchored by strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5). A high score on the positive credit card usage scale indicates that an individual does not carry the maximum balance on credit cards, pays off the balances each month, makes payments on time, and rarely takes out cash advances. In contrast, a high score on the negative credit card usage scale indicates that an individual carries the maximum balance on credit cards, is often unable to make the minimum payment, makes late payments, and often takes cash advances on the card, and worries about how payments will be made. Credit recovery behaviors were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by never (1) and very often (5). A high score on the credit recovery behaviors scale indicates that an individual has attempted to seek help from others to manage debt, has attended financial planning seminars/classes, or has refinanced or consolidated debt.

In addition to information on credit behaviors, the survey included questions about the number of credit cards held, school loans, and demographics. Seventy-five subjects were captured in a pretest of the instrument in order to assess clarity and order of questions as well as metric scale properties. Frequencies and descriptive statistics are reported to facilitate analysis of demographic information and background information on credit held by respondents. Independent samples t-tests were used to examine differences between females and males for financial independence, financial security, financial stressors, credit card usage, and credit recovery behaviors.

Results

The sample included 118 males (42.4%) and 160 females (57.6%) ranging in age from 19 to 39 years (mean = 22 years). The majority of respondents were Caucasian (75.8%) followed by African American (17%), Other (2.9%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2.2%), Hispanic (1.8%) and Native American (0.4%). Thirty-nine percent of respondents were seniors, 33% are juniors, 20% are sophomores, 6% are freshmen, and the remaining 2% are graduate students. The percentage of female respondents holding at least one credit card was 87% compared to 76% for males. Males reported having between 1-4 credit cards (mean = 1.71) compared to females having between 1-5 credit cards (mean = 2.04). An independent samples t-test revealed that this difference is significant (t=-2.279, p.=.024, mean difference, -.325).

The t-test for differences between males and females for financial independence was significant (t=2.975, p=.003, mean difference, .445), as is the t-test for financial security (t=3.738, p<.000, mean difference, .450). These results suggest that males are significantly more financially independent as well as more financially confident and secure compared to females. The t-test for financial stressors yielded a non-significant result (t=.789, p=.431, mean difference, .067), while the test for positive credit card usage indicated a significant difference between males and females (t=-2.006, p=.046, mean difference, -.338). Therefore, it appears that there is not a significant difference between male and female respondents in terms of financial stressors. However, females indicated higher levels of positive credit card usage. No significant difference is indicated by the t-test for negative credit card usage (t=-.862, p=.390, mean difference, -.090), suggesting that there is no variation in terms of negative credit card usage among male and female respondents. In terms of credit recovery behaviors, the test revealed a significant difference between males and females (t=2.076, p=.033, mean difference, .175), with males showing significantly higher incidence of engaging in credit recovery behaviors.

Discussion

It is important to acknowledge that generalizations of the findings of this study may be limited because the sample was drawn from a single university in the southeast. Readers should bear this in mind when interpreting the results. The results of this study support those of Armstrong and Craven (1993) and Hayhoe *et al.* (1999), demonstrating that female students tend to have a higher number of credit cards as compared to males. This is contradictory to the study by Joo *et al.* (2001) which reported no significant differences in the number of credit cards held. Our findings indicate that male students tend to have a higher level of financial independence than female students, which is a contribution of the current study to the developing body of academic literature related to the financial attitudes and credit behaviors of college students.

The results of this study support the findings of the majority of the extant literature, demonstrating that male students have a higher level of financial confidence and security (Churaman, 1998; Lytton & Grable, 1997; Prince, 1993). However, this is contradictory to the findings of Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) which indicated no significant difference in the financial confidence of male and female students. Our findings indicate no difference in the level of financial stressors on male and female students. Although Roberts and Jones (2001) examined financial stressors, the study did not address differences in gender.

In terms of positive and negative credit card usage, Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) found no differences between genders for making minimum payments or for paying interest, which contradicts our finding that female students engage in higher levels of positive usage, but agrees with our finding of no significant differences in negative usage between genders. However, our contradictory finding in terms of higher positive usage could be due to the fact that more females in our sample have credit cards, providing them with an increased number of opportunities to engage in credit card usage behaviors in general. Our negative credit card usage finding contradicts that of Lyons (2004) which demonstrated that female students were more likely to have problems making payments on time.

An additional contribution of this study is the inclusion of a comprehensive measure for credit recovery behaviors. Though Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) reported that across both genders, students tend to engage in credit recovery behaviors reactively rather than proactively, the results did not explore specific differences in recovery behaviors. Our results suggest that male students more often engage in credit recovery behaviors such as seeking help from others, attending financial planning seminars/courses, refinancing and consolidating credit card debt. Taken together, our findings indicate that female students have more credit cards, are less financially independent, less confident and secure, and engage in credit recovery behaviors less frequently than male students. Understanding these types of differences in the credit behaviors of male and female students provides essential information to consumer educators and counselors for the development of targeted programs to educate young consumers before credit card abuse becomes a problem.

Future research is needed to profile at-risk students. Though a few researchers have used demographics for profiling, psychographic information could be very useful for understanding why female students appear to be at higher risk than male students. Examining the student's family and social history may be useful to explore the influence of family and friends on credit behaviors. In addition, longitudinal studies that follow students from high school through college and beyond could provide useful information about credit behaviors in the long-term.

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Appendix - Measures

Scale	Items
Financial Independence (strongly disagree to strongly agree)	I am fully responsible for my finances. I am paying for my own college education. I would describe myself as financially independent.
Financial Confidence & Security (strongly disagree to strongly agree)	I am confident managing my finances with no outside help. I have always managed my finances on my own. I am well prepared to face my financial future. I am financially secure enough to handle unforeseen expenses immediately. I do not need outside help when managing my basic finances.
Financial Stressors – Hayhoe *et al.* (2000) (never to very often)	I am not able to purchase clothing. I am not able to pay utilities. I am not able to save for emergencies. I am not able to discuss financial matters without getting upset. I cannot afford to keep my car running.
Positive Credit Card Usage – Roberts & Jones (2001) (strongly disagree to strongly agree)	I always pay off my credit cards at the end of each month. I am never late on credit card payments. I never go over my credit limit. I rarely take cash advance on my credit card.
Negative Credit Card Usage – Roberts & Jones (2001) (strongly disagree to strongly agree)	My credit cards are usually at their maximum limit. I frequently use available credit on one card to make a payment on another card. I worry how I will pay off my credit card debt. I often make only the minimum payment on my credit card bills. I am less concerned with the price of a product when I use my credit card. I am more impulsive when I shop with credit cards. I spend more when I use a credit card. I have too many credit cards.
Credit Recovery Behaviors (never to very often)	I have sought financial help from others. I have attended financial planning seminars/courses. I have refinanced my credit cards using a loan or another card. I have consolidated my credit card debt.

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FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS: IMPACT OF AN EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE

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The purpose of this study was to explore the early field experiences of two family and consumer sciences (FCS) pre-service teachers. With the shortage of family and consumer sciences teachers and classroom management as the second most common reason for teachers leaving the profession, FCS education cannot afford to lose potential FCS teachers (Pickard, 2004; Tran, 2003). Providing early field experiences prior to the student teaching practicum for pre-service teachers can be a beneficial part of teacher education programs and help clarify teaching beliefs among pre-service teachers. Qualitative techniques were used to conduct and analyze individual interviews regarding early experiences. Implications for professional development and teacher education programs are discussed.

With classroom management issues being cited as the second most common reason for leaving the teaching profession and with the shortage of family and consumer science (FCS) teachers, common sense dictates that pre-service teachers be provided instruction to develop skills essential to success (Pickard, 2004; Tran, 2003). Essential skills include classroom management, teaching methods, and building confidence to sustain a teaching career. Particular to FCS are planning instruction for food and textiles laboratories, implementing the critical science perspective, and understanding the cognitive development of students.

A pre-service teacher is a student pursuing a degree to become a teacher at the postsecondary level. One way for pre-service teachers to practice teaching is through their student-teaching practicum. The first-hand experience and knowledge about the public school environment and secondary school students that are gained during practicum provide pre-service teachers with a frame of reference for the skills they are building. Many teacher educators and practicing teachers agree that university courses do not duplicate real life. Therefore, field experiences among pre-service teachers are often described as the most important part of teacher education programs. The term field experiences, denotes the entire range of in-school experiences, including structured observations, course-related field experiences, and student teaching.

Field experiences often are not meaningful and insightful for pre-service teachers, leaving them with an untrue perception of the duties of teaching. Hoy and Woolfolk (1990) found pre-service teachers are more likely to have unrealistic optimism about dealing with problems of teaching in general, and they will be confronted with reality shock as they begin teaching. Also, with student teaching usually occurring at the conclusion of formal classroom preparation and preceding the first full-time teaching job, pre-service students realize during this critical time either that teaching is their desired career path, teaching is not for them and opt out, or earn their degree and not teach, thus emphasizing the importance of early field experiences.

Pickard (2004) reported that practitioners who were in a ten-week student teaching program, agreed that a longer placement would be helpful. The mentor teachers especially voiced the need for a longer placement for the pre-service teacher. This research strengthens the need for early field experiences by giving pre-service students more exposure and experience in the classrooms so they may have a better understanding of teaching. The purpose of this study was to explore early field experiences of family and consumer sciences pre-service teachers.

Early Field Experiences

Early field experiences can be defined as observing, assisting, or directly participating in a variety of formal and informal educational settings early in the pre-service student teacher education program. These experiences are distinct from the student teaching practicum because pre-service student teachers enter the classroom at the beginning of their teacher education program with little or no coursework in education. During this time, they are not expected to assume teaching responsibilities, but to observe, assist, and participate in as many activities as possible. Activities considered appropriate for participation include developing classroom materials, making short lesson presentations, assisting in laboratory demonstrations, and grading student work.

Research has suggested that early exposure to the teaching field, other than observations, gives pre-service students an opportunity to examine whether teaching is the career they want to pursue. In addition, early exposure helps to clarify beliefs about teaching. By providing early field experiences to teacher education students, they can become better teachers by articulating their purpose, choosing appropriate instructional strategies, and understanding high school students' social and cognitive background (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). All pre-service teaching experiences can contribute to the professional development of the pre-service teacher and as an opportunity to contribute to the profession more broadly.

One estimate suggested that the 100,000 teachers needed to fill vacancies left by retirees or teachers leaving the profession will be filled by new entrants to the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Often new teachers do not feel prepared for the challenges of today's classrooms; only about 35% of recent graduates feel *very well prepared* to implement curriculum for performance standards (Quality Teacher, 2002). Most educators, including recent teacher education graduates, are not prepared for the challenge they face. Professional educators (secondary school teachers and administrators) "have strong convictions that the more real world classroom experience received by the new recruits to teaching, the better it will be for their ultimate decision to pursue a career in teaching and for the overall development of the teaching profession itself" (Bruckerhoff & Carlson, 1995, p. 433).

The No Child Left Behind legislation enacted in 2001, further emphasized teacher quality and accountability, aiming for a *highly qualified* teacher in every classroom who "knows what to teach, how to teach, and has command of the subject matter being taught" (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, Para. 2). Pickard (2004) explained that not only must FCS teachers master the subject content knowledge, they also must have the ability to help prepare students for the mandated academic achievement tests. As schools are ranked based on student scores, FCS programs that do not reinforce and make application of the academic skills will become luxuries few school districts can afford to keep.

Most pre-service teachers, have only been on one side of the desk, as students and not on the other side as a teacher. Therefore, exposure to real teaching is beneficial for pre-service teachers early-on in their teacher education program. Benefits of early field experiences include: (a) provides an introduction of the realm of teaching; (b) exposure to students and the classroom; (c) preparation for the student teaching practicum; and (d) clarification of their career choice.

Collaboration

For pre-service teachers to have early field experiences and to complete their student-teaching practicum, partnerships between a university and a school (high school, elementary, etc.) must be formed. Goodlad (1994) recognized three key elements for the functions of partner schools: 1) preparing educators, 2) providing professional development, and 3) providing an exemplary education to K-12 students.

Effective partnerships must have clear and mutual goals. McGowan (1990) identified essential elements for effective collaboration which include: formalized administrative support; encourage mutual respect; input from all participants; perks to support the development of the collaboration; constant communication; and a sense of reality for the student-teacher.

In recognition of the increased demands being placed on the cooperating teacher, partnership incentives give the cooperating teacher perks for their time, energy, and effort. An example of a perk is a tuition wavier applied to a University class, thus providing professional development opportunities for that cooperating teacher.

As pre-service teachers participate in early field experiences as a teacher-in-training, cooperating teachers are their first exposure to the classroom. Thus, this initial entry into the classroom, the role of cooperating teachers is important as they are a model from which the pre-service teacher will learn. With early field experiences of pre-service teachers, cooperating teachers have a prominent role to ensure a positive experience so that pre-service teachers want to continue forward with their chosen career choice.

Cooperating teachers may perceive their role in early field experiences in different ways, for example, as a model, mentor, guide, or facilitator (Koskela & Ganser, 1998). Through the cooperating teacher’s guidance during early field experiences, pre-service teachers are exposed to a variety of teaching activities, are shown effective teaching methodologies, and witness the daily routines of a teacher’s role in the classroom and the school. Early field experiences are intended to provide the pre-service teachers with an introduction to the teaching profession.

As the cooperating teacher gives more responsibility to the pre-service teacher, colleagueship can develop. The pre-service teacher will feel more comfortable and in turn take part ownership in the classroom. Anderson, Cole, Fischer, and Ingram (2000) found the more time spent in the classroom, the pre-service teacher’s confidence levels about the realm of teaching increase. Furthermore, pre-service teachers are simultaneously learning subject matter and pedagogy skills at the university while participating in a real classroom under supervision of a veteran teacher. Thus, a cooperating teacher and pre-service teacher can collaborate on ways to teach content and how to handle student behavior. Ideally, the relationship would help the cooperating teacher and the pre-service teacher develop reflective practice (Stern, 1997).

Cooperating teachers provide a setting for a pre-service teacher’s initial exposure to the teaching role. The benefits of working with cooperating teachers early in their teacher education program are that it provides pre-service teachers with a role model and a professional contact.

Theoretical Framework: Reflective Practice

Wolf stated, “Reflection is what allows us to learn from our experiences: it is an assessment of where we have been and where we want to go next” (as cited in Schon, 1996). Students involved in early field experiences begin to think of themselves as future teachers and have early opportunities to collect authentic experiences they can use as a foundation for the theory they will be exposed to in future education courses.

Reflective practice, introduced by Schon (1996), is a term often used in education pedagogy. It is a continuous process from a personal perspective of considering critical incidents within one's life experiences. As defined by Schon, reflective practice involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences in applying knowledge to practice while being coached by professionals in the discipline. The primary benefit of reflective practice for teachers is a deeper understanding of their own teaching style and ultimately, greater effectiveness as a teacher. Not only pre-service teachers, but all teachers should reflect on each class in terms of activities, content, and teaching strategies to improve themselves as a teacher but more importantly, to ensure transfer of knowledge to the students.

Research Question

What are the early field experience reflections of family and consumer sciences (FCS) pre-service teachers?

Method

<u>Participants and Pre-service Experience</u>

Two female FCS pre-service teachers assisted a FCS secondary teacher in one course for three consecutive days. Both pre-service teachers were enrolled in their second semester in a master's degree alternative certification program at a Midwestern university. The classroom experience involved a lesson presentation, monitoring and managing students, and compilation of grades.

<u>Data Collection and Procedure</u>

Qualitative data from informal interviews were collected individually from two FCS pre-service teachers. The purpose was to gain in-depth insight into their experiences in the classroom. The interview questions were derived from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards (1992) for new and beginning teachers. Each interview was approximately thirty minutes in length. Interviews were conducted by the primary investigator. Interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Transcripts were analyzed for themes. Interview questions included:

- Describe the perceived benefits of participating in this early field experience.
- What did you perceive as challenging?
- What did you not expect from your experience in the classroom?
- Do you feel the lessons in your methods course mirror what goes on in the classroom? Is your teacher education program adequately preparing you for your role as a future teacher?
- From this experience, what will you seek to improve on or want to know more about?
- Did this early field experience clarify your desire to teach?

Results and Discussion

This study explored early field experiences of two FCS pre-service teachers. A qualitative technique of interviewing provided the responses to the questions.

Both interviewees appreciated the opportunity to have an experience with real students. They suggested that instructional materials are best tested in a real classroom. For example, one interviewee stated the following.

> I was excited about having direct contact with the students. Even the best-designed lesson plans can read well, but are perceived differently when delivered in the classroom. I was looking forward to the opportunity to 'think on my feet.' I have learned that it is impossible to anticipate every question or reaction.

This response supports what professional educators indicate for pre-service teachers. The more real classroom experience received by new recruits to teaching, the better it will be for their ultimate decision to pursue a career in teaching and for the overall development of the teaching profession itself (Bruckerhoff & Carlson, 1995). By providing early field experiences, pre-service teachers can practice choosing appropriate instructional strategies and have a better understanding of high school students' social and cognitive background (Liston & Zeichner, 1991).

Pre-service students involved in early field experiences begin to think of themselves as future teachers. Social modeling occurs during the practicum, in that the pre-service teacher wants to blend into the class based on the expectations of the cooperating teacher. One challenge for pre-service teachers is stepping into an established classroom. One pre-service teacher described her challenge.

> Knowing what the classroom teacher/supervisor expected was difficult. It is difficult to step into a classroom and complete their teaching style or compliment the way they handle their students. I've always felt that it will be easier when classroom management, attitude, goals, and objectives are mine.

Research suggests that pre-service teachers are more likely to have unrealistic optimism about dealing with problems of teaching. Encountering classroom challenges during this training time can empower the pre-service teacher with the feeling of self-efficacy. For example, one interviewee explained her perceptions.

> First, presenting a lesson that students' would be interested [in] and enjoy was a challenge. Secondly, how students perceived me as an interim teacher, meaning did they take me seriously. Lastly, the challenge of classroom management, more specifically with student discipline ranging from talking to being defiant.

From this experience, the pre-service teacher did not view herself as a classroom teacher yet. One pre-service teacher explained what she did not expect from her classroom experience. "I did not expect to be nervous or anxious as I was. I did not expect the students to refuse to answer questions or respond, and…there were no surprises the students were very attentive and courteous."

Often, lessons in university based methods course do not mirror real life in the classroom, thus leaving pre-service students with an untrue perception of teaching. One interviewee reflected on her teacher education program.

> The method techniques course within my discipline was a good preparation course. As far as the overall teacher education program in preparing me to teach was not as beneficial, the course content helped with understanding why students act they way they do, but not how to manage students. You do not know what it is really like until you step in the classroom.

The other interviewee shared her experience in the teacher education program.

> Methods classes reflect a perfect situation with well-behaved students, ready to learn, and more often than not this is not the case. Methods classes are a good place to begin, but perhaps taking the same lesson to a real teaching situation would reveal much more to the 'teacher in training.' Teacher education students could benefit greatly from early direct

> exposure to students in a classroom setting, for example developing ways to present information, ideas, or concepts would be more effectively written if real students were the subjects of motivation.

Early field experiences can provide pre-service teachers with an early opportunity to collect authentic experiences they can use as a foundation for the theory they will be exposed to in future education courses. One interviewee described an area to continue further professional development.

> I will definitely learn more about technology. Today, students know more about computers and their applications. I feel if I knew more about technology I could effectively incorporate technology into my classroom, to make the lessons more interactive; therefore, I feel my lessons are limited because I do not feel comfortable integrating technology. Also, teachers are required to develop teacher web pages for their classes. In my program of study, I do not have the time to fit in another course, so I will seek additional coursework at a junior college to learn about web page design and technology in general.

The first-hand experience and knowledge about the public school environment and secondary school students that are gained during practicum provide the pre-service teachers with a frame of reference for the skills they are building. One interviewee commented.

> I am very curious about learning styles as they apply to each individual student, I anticipate trying to provide the information in customized formats as much as possible for my students. I also look forward to seeing a few of the results of my teaching, for example the lesson on “dressing for success” was great and as the students seek jobs it would be wonderful to get feedback on how they applied the information that I presented.

This early field experience was designed to give the pre-service teachers the opportunity to observe and work with teachers and students; to become better acquainted with the roles of a family and consumer sciences teacher. Research has suggested that early field experience is beneficial for pre-service students to examine and clarify their teaching desire. One interviewee stated.

> I enjoyed the experience very much, as an example gaining a response from a quiet and withdrawn student was a small instant reward. I look forward to working directly with students and feel honored to maybe influence tomorrow’s adults as an FCS teacher.

The confidence levels of the realm of teaching increase as a pre-service teacher continues through the practicum (Anderson, et al., 2000). A positive relationship results as a pre-service teacher spends additional time in the classroom. One interviewee explained her classroom experience in a positive way. “Yes, any classroom experience is beneficial. This experience has given me the confidence in knowing I can instruct a class.”

Conclusions and Implications

The primary benefit of reflective practice for pre-service teachers in this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the teaching realm and ultimately, greater effectiveness as a teacher. With federal and state mandates, increased existing teacher attrition rates, and the decline of enrollments in family and consumer sciences university programs, the profession cannot afford to lose potential FCS teacher candidates.

The study confirmed, based on the reflection responses that incorporating early field experiences during pre-service teacher preparation is beneficial. University-based methods classes are important in practicing teaching, but providing students real teaching experience would reveal much more to the *teacher in training*.

The reflection process identified teaching skills areas the pre-service teachers should target for development. One skill to develop is the knowledge and use of technology in the classroom. The incorporation of technology in the classroom includes devices such as smart-boards, personal response gaming systems (PRS), audio enhancements, educational software, and interactive websites. Our students have grown up in the technology age, as teachers we need to embrace and incorporate technology into the classroom to enhance the lesson by applying the content to real life without stepping outside the classroom. Additionally, it is becoming common as part of a teacher's responsibility to develop and maintain a teacher's webpage. Parents and students can keep abreast of assignments and activities in the class and provides a communication tool through email and conversation at home. Pre-service teachers need exposure to technology and how to integrate technology into the classroom in their teacher education program.

Exposing pre-service teacher students to the classroom before the student teaching practicum with more than passive activities (such as observations) can help pre-service teachers gain a clearer understanding of the classroom. Tran (2003) cited classroom management issues as the second most common reason for leaving the teaching profession, and this same issue was a concern raised among the pre-service teachers. By providing classroom opportunities for pre-service teachers, they can become better teachers by articulating their purpose, choosing appropriate classroom management strategies, and understanding high school students' social and cognitive background (Liston & Zeichner, 1991).

Producing highly competent FCS teachers is essential to the survival of the profession. Through this early field experience each pre-service teacher gained confidence in their ability and role of educating students. Preparing well-qualified, confident teachers for the challenges of today's classroom is the task facing teacher preparation programs (Pickard, 2004). The more exposure to the classroom pre-service teachers encounter, the better they can further target teaching skills areas for development throughout their teacher education program, thus building their confidence.

This study afforded the opportunity to bridge together a university teacher educator, a secondary teacher, and pre-service teachers, also promoting the development of university-school partnerships. The bridge creates a win-win situation in that two pre-service teachers gained valuable experience by entering the classroom early in their program, the cooperating teacher participated in professional development, the university developed a relationship with the school, and the high school students were exposed to additional application knowledge through another instructional approach.

The implementation of early field experience in collaboration with the university and school is imperative in the development of a well-rounded teacher candidate. The relationship of the student teacher and cooperating teacher is important in facilitating the student's development. By providing meaningful field experiences in conjunction with the partnering school and university, the teacher candidates are better prepared for the rigors of teaching in the 21st century.

Parents, the general public and educational leaders recognize that the quality of teaching determines the quality of education. Overwhelmingly, Americans believe that knowing *how to teach* is more important that knowing *what to teach* (Hart & Teeter, 2002). By providing *early* field experiences prior to the student teaching practicum for pre-service teachers can be a beneficial part of the teacher education programs. In addition, early field experiences can provide the opportunity to become better acquainted with the roles of a family and consumer sciences teacher. Involving pre-service teachers early in the classroom is one step to take in improving teacher quality and increase the longevity of a FCS teaching career.

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HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SERVICE LEARNING IN INTERIOR DESIGN

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Students enrolled in an introductory Interior Design course completed a project in which they planned the interior decorating for a Katrina Cottage. A Katrina cottage is a design developed by Andres Duany to provide emergency housing along the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. Students interviewed individuals who served as their "clients," developed a floor plan for the project, selected items within their $2000 budget, developed a presentation board for the project and wrote a reflection paper about the experience. The project allowed students to consider the tragedy that impacted their area and to see the challenges that many in the area experienced related to housing. Student reflections indicated that they found this to be a valuable experience.

The importance of service-learning in higher education has been studied by numerous professionals and proven to be valuable to participating students as well as the community. Seifer and Connors (2007) define service-learning as "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities" (p. 5). The concept of service learning for economic and social benefits can be incorporated in introductory level courses to form the foundation for higher level courses where students can expand on the concept. Martin (2001) indicates that "competing resources and societal problems are forcing the mission of the academic community to refocus its mission, draw upon and apply the findings of pedagogical resources" and that "the new scholarship of engagement encompasses application and dissemination through outreach, community service, and service learning" (p. 38).

Students enrolled in an Introduction to Interior Design course in a university in an area impacted by Hurricane Katrina had an opportunity to gain a different perspective on the impact of the hurricane. The final project for the course required students to plan the interior decorating for a Katrina cottage. A Katrina cottage is a small permanent house, which is considered safe and affordable and can be assembled quickly. Architect and planner Andres Duany developed the concept for the Katrina cottage in response to the overwhelming need for emergency housing along the Gulf Coast after the hurricane. The Katrina cottage design used for this project was the one bedroom cottage with 576 square feet of living space designed to be wheelchair accessible. (http://www.cusatocottages.com).

Service learning activities require purpose, responsibility, objectives and reflection or evaluation by students. The purpose of this academic learning project was for students to better understand the purpose of planning and completing housing suitable for hurricane victims. Students were required to select two individuals to serve as their "clients". These individuals were not individuals who had lost their homes to the hurricane but individuals who were well aware of the tragedy that occurred in the surrounding area. This allowed the student and the "clients" to realize the loss that many in the area suffered. A client profile was compiled by the student using information gathered during a client interview concerning their color preferences, style preferences and activities which would occur in the home. Many students used their parents or other family members as their “clients”. Students found working with two individuals, with each of the individuals having varying preferences related to color, style, and activities, to be challenging.

The budget for the project was $2000 to furnish and decorate the cottage. (This was imaginary money). Documentation of the cost of all materials used to furnish the cottage was required. Students were allowed to have one item donated from a family member or friend. Most students choose for the donated item to be the mattress which was the most expensive item in many cases. The following items were required for the home: Sofa, chair, dining room furniture, one bed, dresser or other storage unit for bedroom, bed, bathroom, and kitchen linens, flooring, rugs and accessories as needed. Students were encouraged to select furniture which served a dual purpose such as a futon that could be used as a sofa and as a bed or a bed with built-in storage since storage is at a premium in small spaces. A floor plan with all furnishings and accompanying pictures or swatches for the furnishings, paint, floor, accessories etc. were required for the final project presentation board as shown in figure 1 and 2. In order for students to check their progress throughout the project the grade sheet was given at the beginning of the course.

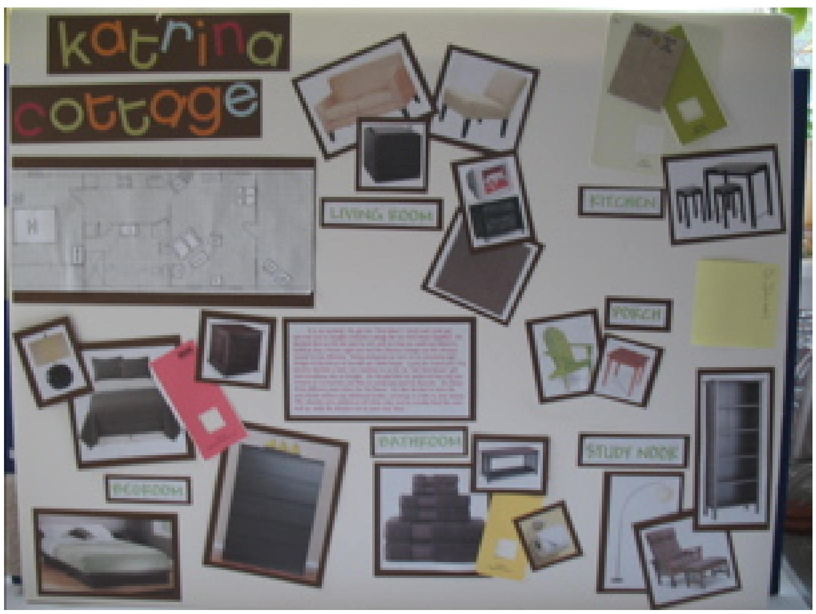

Figure 1. Presentation Board for Katrina Cottage

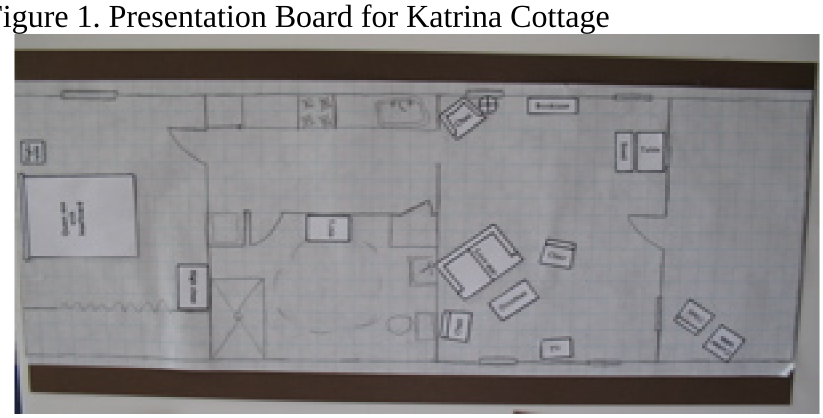
Figure 2. Floor Plan for Katrina Cottage

In addition to students applying what they knew about space planning and interior decorating, this project allowed students to see the challenges of living in a small space. Students were required to write a reflection paper on their thoughts about the project. Various comments indicated a clearer understanding of the challenges, not only of recovery from the storm, but housing issues as well. One student wrote the following statement that reflected so well the feelings of many students in the class, “I really enjoyed putting together my Katrina Cottage home. It did remind me of the things my parents and I went through after Katrina, but it also gave hope for the future and for those who haven’t been able to come home yet”. A second student wrote, “listening and understanding are key elements to creating a space for someone else …. at times this was a tough job but a good experience”. Other students indicated the challenge of the project was huge but the value was worth the effort and that the project should be continued in future courses. These comments reinforce the statement by Martin (2001) that “Service learning should promote civic responsibility and address community needs, all the while instilling a life-long commitment to service” (p. 39).

While every student was able to stay within the $2000 budget, many indicated the project was very challenging due to the limited amount of money and space they had to utilize for the project. The reality of the cost of decorating a home became very evident to the students. One student indicated that the “most stressful and challenging part of this entire project was choosing furniture that was pleasing to the client, but was still manageable to the budget. It was a good challenge, but one that took time and effort to find what I was looking for.” Another student indicated, “At one point during the project, I was wishing that I was actually decorating this house. That was the point that I realized that this was actually fun! Overall the most difficult part of the project was the budget. ….. It was also interesting to try and incorporate what both clients’ wanted into the home”. Students learned to shop in discount stores, outlet stores, warehouse stores and to look for sales or discounted items so that they could purchase the extras they wanted for the home such as towel sets, bath rugs, mirrors, and other accessories for the home.

Service learning activities often serve to further students’ knowledge about community. Through completing this activity, students were able to understand some of the challenges that individuals in their region had to face after Hurricane Katrina. Some students used the summary to write a story about a fictional family that had lost their home to Hurricane Katrina and how having the Katrina cottage helped them to feel at home again. The project inspired one student to write a fictional story about herself and her fiancé choosing the cottage as their first home. Other students reflected on what it was like for their family after the storm.

Working on this project allowed students to consider the human side of interior decorating, as well as the aesthetic side, of interior decorating. A similar project which helped students see the human side of interior decorating took place in a 4-year interior design program using nursing homes as the focus of the project with the purpose to better the lives of the residents through redesign. Teams of students were assigned a facility to evaluate and re-design for the project. Each team designed a renovation for each perspective nursing home. The project allowed students the learning experience of working in teams and with clients, as well as interacting with and observing a special population. As a result of this project, students also reported heightened awareness of personal family situations where nursing home stays might be eminent (Nussbaumer & Rowland, 2007).

Service learning provides an opportunity for students to recall and apply more of what they learn than in traditional curriculum and the academic dialog in the classroom is enhanced through the service experience (Moser, 2005). The holistic dimension evidenced by student reflections concerning not just practical application but personal feelings made this a project that students will not soon forget. One student commented “I never really had a big interest in interior design so I was just in complete shock, and I was wondering how I would ever get this project done. ….Overall, I really enjoyed doing this. I even thought about taking more classes dealing with design”.

This project could be modified to fit the many different challenges faced in various communities where there is a need. One such example from the literature is another southern university interior design program in which students developed a hurricane relief project for an interior design class. They worked with Habitat for Humanity in building and finishing a home for Hurricane Katrina victims (Peng, 2007). Communities that are impacted by natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, tornadoes, etc, could use the Katrina cottage or a similar design to quickly provide housing for individuals who have lost their homes. The challenge of furnishing a small space with a limited amount of money is one that can be lessened by family and consumer sciences teachers and students that have the knowledge and skills to meet this challenge. family and consumer sciences teachers could develop a service learning project to work with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity to decorate a home within a fixed budget. The rewards for a project such as this go beyond the knowledge gained to the lives that are touched and changed in and out of the classroom.

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NEW DIRECTIONS IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

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No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 has forced states to hire "highly qualified" teachers and many states had added additional requirements for certification. In addition, some states are incorporating specific license renewal requirement. The need for teachers has created a proliferation of alternative certification programs in the past two decades but research raises concern about alternative certification programs.

The National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences (NATEFCS) lead a collaborative effort in the development of the National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences (NSTFCS). The standards provide a model for new Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers (Fox, Stewart & Erickson, 2007). The standards identify knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of an initial teacher. However, the implementation of these standards will be left to states and many states have revised teacher preparation requirements in response to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. This article will highlight some recent changes in teacher preparation programs, the surge of alternative certification programs, and the impact of these changes on teacher preparation.

Teacher certification is the way in which individual states evaluate the credentials of individuals to ensure they meet the professional standards as identified by the state education agency. Some states have developed their own standards for approval of teacher preparation programs; however, many states look to standards developed by other organizations such as the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) to develop standards for teacher programs.

Most of us acknowledge that quality teaching is one of the cornerstones of a solid educational experience and many of us can identify teachers that had positive influence on our lives. Unfortunately, one ineffective teacher may jeopardize the entire educational process for a young child (Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997). Darling-Hammond (1999) identified that teacher quality accounts for 67 to 87 percents of total variance in student achievement. Teacher quality has been an on-going issue for parents, educators, policy makers, and the American public. Fifty-five percent of Americans identified that the quality of teachers as the greatest influence on student learning (NEA, 1999).

Congress addressed the issue of teacher preparation in the 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Section 207n of the Higher Education Act requires colleges and state governments to report the passing rate on licensure examinations and the number of teachers holding emergency or alternative certificates. Additional scrutiny regarding teacher quality was adopted on the 2001 NCLB Act that called for schools to hire "highly qualified" teachers. The NCLB Act defines highly qualified teacher as

> One who has full state certification as a teacher (including certification through alternative routes); or passed state teacher licensing exam and holds a license in that state; and has not received a certification/licensure waiver on an emergency, temporary or provisional basis. (http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/tb-qual-teachers.pdf)

Requiring teacher preparation programs to be held accountable for the quality of their graduates in not necessarily a bad idea nor is the hiring of certified teachers but the reliance on typically one or two test; most often the Pre-Professional Skills tests (PRAXIS I) and PRAXIS II tests forces high stakes testing. Teacher preparation programs may lose funding if they have unacceptable passing rates on licensure examinations. Students must pass the test often time to secure student teaching placement or prior to apply for a teacher license. The fairness of the tests comes into question as teachers from historically black colleges and universities score lower on these tests (Wakefield, 2003).

The Center on Education Policy (2005), reported that 88% of school districts will have met the NCLB definition of "highly qualified" teachers of core academic subject by the new of the 2005-06 school year. Subject areas of concern include special education teachers, high school math and science teachers and teacher in rural area who teach multiple subjects. In spite of this achievement, most district expressed doubts that this compliance will improve the quality of teaching and many states have include additional requirements.

Changes in Teacher Preparation Programs

Many teacher preparation programs have redesigned their traditional programs by moving to a system based on meeting benchmarks and standards rather than simply requiring students to complete courses. The changes resulted from state departments of education /public instruction requiring students to meet specific standards of performance on standardized test prior to obtaining a teaching license. The pre-license requirements (see Table 1) vary from state to state but the vast majority of the states require the passing of PRAXIS I, and/or PRAXIS II or a specific state test prior to obtaining a teaching license.

The PRAXIS I tests measure basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics and is available in two formats, paper-based or computer-based**.** The test consists of four separately timed sections: reading (multiple-choice questions), mathematics (multiple-choice questions), writing (multiple-choice questions), and writing (essay questions). Individual scores are reported for reading, mathematics, and writing and test takers receive a score regardless of the number of questions answered and no penalty is incurred for answering a question incorrectly. Twenty-nine states currently use the Praxis I as part of the pre-license requirements. States determine the passing scores and these scores vary from state to state. Passing reading scores range from a high of 178 to 170 on the paper-based format; math scores range from 176 to 169 on the paper-based test and the writing scores range from 178-170 on the paper based test.

Table 1.
States' Pre-license Requirements

State	Praxis I	Praxis II (Subject)	Praxis II (other)	State Test(s)
Alabama		x		
Alaska	x	x*		
Arizona				x
Arkansas	x	x		
California				x
Colorado		x**		x
Connecticut	x	x		
Delaware	x		x	
Florida				x
Georgia	x			
Hawaii	x	x	x	

Idaho		x		
Illinois		x		x
Indiana	x	x		
Iowa	approved program***			
Kansas		x	x	
Kentucky	x	x	x	
Louisiana	x	x		
Maine	x	x	x	
Maryland	x	x	x	
Massachusetts				x
Michigan				x
Minnesota	x	x	x	
Mississippi	x	x	x	
Missouri		x	x	
Montana	approved program			
Nebraska	x			
Nevada	x	x	x	
New Hampshire	x			
New Mexico				x
New Jersey		x		
New York		x**		x
North Carolina	x	x		
North Dakota	x	x		
Ohio	x	x**	x	
Oklahoma	x			
Oregon	x	x		
Pennsylvania	x	x		
Rhode Island		x	x	
South Carolina	x	x		
South Dakota		x		
Tennessee	x	x		
Texas			x	x
Utah		x	x	
Vermont	x			
Virginia	x	x		
Washington		x		
West Virginia	x	x		
Wisconsin	x	x		
Wyoming			x	

* if not from approved program **depend on license sought
***beginning in 2006-07 elementary teacher required to take tests
Data for the table was generated by visiting each state's education department in the summer of 2006 and revisited spring of 2007

The *PRAXIS II: Subject Assessment Tests* measure knowledge of specific subjects that K-12 educators will teach, as well as general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge. Tests included are *Subject Assessment Tests, Principles of Learning and Teaching* (PLT) tests and *Teaching Foundation Tests*. The *Subject Assessment Tests* measure general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge and include both multiple-choice and constructed response test items. The *Principles of Learning and Teaching* (PLT) tests measure general pedagogical knowledge at four grade levels, early childhood, K-6, 5-9, and 7-12. The tests use a case study approach and feature constructed-response and multiple-choice items. The *Teaching Foundations Tests* measure pedagogy in five areas: multi-subject (elementary), English, language arts, mathematics, science and social science and feature constructed-response and multiple-choice items. As with the PRAXIS I tests, states determine the passing score rates on the PRAXIS II tests. For example, the family and consumer subject assessment paper-based test is used by 34 states and passing scores range from 440 to 630.

Alternative Certification Programs

Traditionally, future teachers completed teacher preparation programs at an institution of higher education but the demand for teachers and the need to "fast track" individuals through the process has forced some states to provide legislation that allows different ways to become a teacher. Language in the California legislation S.B. 57 includes "by successfully completing tests and classroom observations in lieu of traditional teacher preparation coursework and student teaching" Alternative certification programs have significantly increased over the past two decades from the eight states offering programs in 1983 to 43 states offering alternative certification programs for 200,000 students in 2003 (Humprey, 2007).

Baines (2006) identified two of the most common types of alternative certification routes; a) those delivered by agencies not affiliated with an institution of higher education or b) a scaled-down version offered over the internet by an institution of higher education or a for-profit corporation. Those programs not affiliated with a higher education institution are sometimes called NUCPs –non-university certification programs. Baines (2006) identified a great variation in requirements for programs with some programs with some programs have rigorous admissions requirements while others have more lenient requirements. In California approximately one in five new teachers enter the professions through an alternative route, in Texas and New Jersey one in four (Baines, 2006).

Changes in License Renewal Requirements

Table 2 identifies what beginning teachers must do to renew their initial teaching license. Most often a new teacher is granted a 5-year license and then must meet requirements to renew this license, typically an additional 5 years, but states do vary on the length of renewal time. Historically, the majority of states have required teachers to obtain additional college credits, continuing education credits/ clock hours or a combination to renew a license. More states are identifying specific course requirements or specific programs as part of the renewal process. Three states offer National Board Certification as an option for renewal and five states have incorporated professional developments plans as part of the renewal process.

Table 2
State Requirements for License Renewal

State	Requirements
Alabama	combination of college credits, CEUs, teaching or National Board Certification.
Alaska	6 credits (3 upper division /graduate) may include CEUs
Arizona	180 clock hours, 12 credits or combination
Arkansas	teach (2 years) 6 credits, 60 clock hours
California	teach (1 semester), 150 clock hours, professional plan
Colorado	6 credits or 90 clock hours & induction program
Connecticut	90 hours - strict guidelines
Delaware	90 clock hours
Florida	6 credits or 60 in-service points

Georgia	6 credits or 10 Georgia Professional Learning Units or 10 CEUs
Hawaii	Professional Development Plan
Idaho	pass required test and 6 credits
Illinois	8 credits
Indiana	6 credits, Professional Development Plan
Iowa	6 credits & child abuse training
Kansas	8 credits
Kentucky	15 graduate hours
Louisiana	150 CLU
Maine	6 credits and approved plan
Maryland	6 credits
Massachusetts	150 Professional development points
Michigan	6 credits
Minnesota	125 clock hours
Mississippi	10 CEU or 5 CEU and 3 credits or 6 credits
Missouri	varies by license. min. 39 hours
Montana	3 credits and 15 Office of Public Instruction hours.
Nebraska	6 credits
Nevada	credits required
New Hampshire	75 CEUs
New Mexico	superintendent's recommendation
New Jersey	employed & enrolled in state approved training program
New York	175 clock hours
North Carolina	10 credits or 15 units of renewal credit
North Dakota	teaching experience plus 4 credits
Ohio	6 credits
Oklahoma	Professional Development Points
Oregon	125 PDU & professional plan
Pennsylvania	induction program, 24 hours
Rhode Island	I-plans - individual professional plan
South Carolina	120 renewal credits
South Dakota	6 credits or 90 CEU
Tennessee	90 renewal points
Texas	150 clock hours
Utah	EYE - Early Years Program, Praxis II, portfolio, evaluations
Vermont	combination of college credits CEUs, teaching or National Board Certification
Virginia	10 options -credits, experience, write book, etc.
Washington	150 clock hours
West Virginia	combination of college credits, CEUs, teaching or National Board Certification
Wisconsin	6 credits/ as of 2004 Professional Development Plans
Wyoming	recertification workshops

Data for the table was generated by visiting each state's education department in the summer of 2006 and revisited spring of 2007

National Board Certification

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan and nongovernmental organization that began in 1987. The goal of the organizations is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by developing professional standards for teaching. This is a voluntary system to certify teachers who meet standards in five core principles: a) commitment to student learning, b) knowledge of subjects they teach and how to teach subjects to students, c) responsibility for managing and monitoring student learning, d) think systematically about experiences and learn from experiences, and e) members of learning community. Cost include a $65.00 nonrefundable processing fee and a $500.00 non refundable initial fee that is applied to the $2500 assessment fee.

Professional Development Plans

Some states such as Hawaii, Indiana and Wisconsin now require a professional development plan as a means to renew licenses. These plans typically involve the initial teacher outlining a professional plan in conjunction with school and individual goals and objectives. The professional development plans typically include a time line, evaluative measures, and personal reflection. Various professional critique and approve the plans and checkout as the plan is completed. Professional development plan toolkits and information can be found at http://www.doe.state.in.us/dps/renewal/growth/docs/teacher_renewal.pdfnt, http://dpi.state.wi.us/tepdl/pdp.html, and http://www.htsb.org/licensing/relicense/elements.html.

Impact of Changes on Teacher Preparation Programs

Now that NCLB forces school districts to meet benchmarks, states must support teacher programs that help prepare future teachers for the various standardized testing requirements. Hopefully, teacher preparation programs will not focus on "teaching to the test(s)" but will provide a broad curriculum. Supervision of alternative certification programs must be addressed by states as Wenglinsky (2000) found that students from alternative certification programs were significantly outperformed by students from traditional preparation programs, and Darling-Hammond (2005) found that teachers graduating from alternative certification programs had negative effects on student achievement.

States have invested significant resources into the development of student academic standards and for these standards to be effective, teacher preparation and certification must be aligned with them (Murphy, 2006). Licensure and certification requirements must reflect individual state standards for states to feel confident that teachers in their state can help students be successful and meet benchmarks. State may be challenged to persuade colleges and universities to align teacher preparation programs with state standards for these institutions traditionally have a history of academic freedom and curricular autonomy.

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