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Reconceptualizing Home Science Education in School Curriculum: Educators Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Home Science is the study of science involved within the area of domestic living. Being aware of the principles which enable sustainable and smooth daily survival. The subject of Home Science also is capable of promoting life skills, experiential and transdisciplinary learning within the school curriculum. The present study explores educators' perspectives about Home Science as a skill-based subject and its role in fostering holistic and well-rounded education which can be applied daily. A mixed-method research approach was adopted to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights from educators, including teachers and principals from CBSE-affiliated schools in Noida. Data was collected through a validated questionnaire based on a five pointer Likert-scale. The findings revealed a highly positive perspective among educators regarding the subject's potential to develop life skills. Teachers, particularly demonstrated a strong support in favour of the subject as a medium for development of life-skill and its great potential as a transdisciplinary subject in the curriculum. The study highlights the need to reposition the subject of Home Science as a core component of future-ready, competency-based education in alignment with the vision of NEP 2020 and recommends stronger policy support for its inclusion within mainstream school education.

***Keywords**: Home Science, Skill Education, Transdisciplinary Learning, Holistic Education, NEP 2020.*

Introduction

शिक्षा ताले की वह कुंजी है जो प्रगति, समृद्धि और सशक्तीकरण के द्वार खोलती है:

भारतीय उपराष्ट्रपति जगदीपधनखड़

"Education is the key that unlocks the doors of progress, prosperity, and empowerment," said Indian Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar.[1]

The above quote projects the need and role of education for the development of any nation. It is the most powerful tool which can be used for personal, societal and national development. It promotes growth, progress, prosperity and empowerment for its members and lays the foundation for a strong, successful, and progressive nation.

Education has a vital role to play in developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and value that enable people to contribute towards and inclusive and sustainable future. Education needs to aim to do more than prepare young people for the world of work; it needs to equip students with the life skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens [2].

Education is the transmission of knowledge and skills and the development of character traits. Where knowledge is the awareness of facts, a familiarity with individuals and situations or a practical skill.

A skill is the learned or innate ability to act with determined results and good execution often within a given amount of time, energy, or both.

NEP 2020 defines Education as the fundamental requirement for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society, and promoting national development. [3]

Educational sector has seen numerous reforms over the years to meet the demands of society. Learner-centeredand skill-oriented approach to teaching learning coupled with context-based education is being practiced currently. Within this curriculum framework, interdisciplinary and hands-on real-life learning experiences have gained popularity as effective means of imparting holistic education.

Home Science, as a field of study, aligns very closely with the above-mentioned pedagogy. It encompasses all the various aspects needed for an independent and self-sustainable survival. Home Science integrates knowledge from various core subjects' life sciences, social sciences, and the arts. It provides the learners with opportunities to apply concepts in everyday situations, thus enabling them to connect to the concept and learning which can be applied. It is therefore essential for its integration into school curriculum.

Despite its relevance, the subject has often been linked to gender types, and its complete potential has not been recognized within the curriculum. This perception has limited its acceptance as a core subject in the academic mainstream.

Its potential to foster life skills, be it hard or soft, makes it highly relevant for all learners, making it a mandatory subject with powers to support transdisciplinary learning and skill enhancement. This study aims to understand how various stakeholders of an educational institution perceive the subject.

Literature Review

Educational sector has seen a major shift over the years from rote learning to emphasis on skill-based education. This new approach emphasizes that learners not just acquire conceptual knowledge but also develop basic life skills. Critical thinking, collaboration, decision making and real-world problem-solving are few to name. Skill-based education is the demand of the 21st-century demands, where workplaces increasingly require individuals who can adapt, communicate effectively, think creatively, and work in teams (GRAAM et al., 2021) [4].

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, students should acquire not only academic knowledge, but also skills and dispositions such as ethics, resilience, adaptability, and digital literacy (Government of India, 2020) [3]. Self-management and self-efficacy, which are key to life skills, are strongly associated with higher academic achievement (Zhao et al., 2024) [5]. Studies emphasize the development of skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and technical expertise (Ali, 2024) [6]. In short, life skills strengthen young people to take positive action to promote health and positive social relationships (Prince et al.) [7].

Early childhood experiences such as household chores contribute meaningfully to the development of life skills and promote self-competence, prosocial behaviour, and academic outcomes. Shared responsibilities help children develop greater self-worth, confidence, work ethic, and empathy (Brandes, 2024) [8]. Students who perform chores show stronger executive-function performance, including working memory, planning, attention control, persistence, and cognitive flexibility (Tepper et al., 2022) [9]. Everyday family practices and structured routines help children regulate emotions, sustain attention, and develop lifelong self-regulation skills (Semenov et al., 2019) [10].

Home Science provides an authentic platform for experiential learning and life skills development. Students learn time management, budgeting, teamwork, and self-care, along with financial literacy, resource management, and self-reliance (Ithy, 2024). Integrating mindfulness into Home Science can build emotional regulation, patience, and persistence, while also supporting mental well-being (MDPI, 2023). Through collaborative activities and inquiry-based learning, students develop empathy, self-awareness, social skills, and a sense of agency, supporting holistic development (Zhao et al., 2024) [5].

Home Science also equips students with practical competencies such as nutrition, hygiene, resource management, and sustainable living practices like recycling and energy efficiency (Salma & Mumtaz, 2023). These skills promote resilience and responsible citizenship. The subject further inculcates values of responsibility, empathy, self-care, and interdependence, while fostering inclusive and sustainable communities (Connell, 2014; UNESCO, 2021).

Integrating chores, structured responsibility, and self-management into school curricula through Home Science provides a meaningful pathway for building life skills that support academic success, well-being, and long-term social competence.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine educators' awareness about Home Science as a subject for skill development
- To analyze perceptions regarding role of Home Science in life skill development

Methodology

The present study examined educators' knowledge and perceptions regarding Central Board of Secondary Education **(CBSE)** school educators about Home Science as a subject that supports life-skill development among students in Noida, India. A **mixed-method research approach** was adopted to obtain both quantitative and qualitative insights.

The **population of the study** comprised educators with CBSE-affiliated schools in Noida. These included teachers and principals from middle school in Noida, India.

Data weas collected using a **structured questionnaire** prepared to meet the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was based on **Likert-scale questions** along with a few open-ended items to capture deeper insights. Options ranging from agree to disagree and strongly disagree.

The questions focused on four major dimensions namely-

- Awareness and knowledge of Home Science,
- Its transdisciplinary integration with other subjects
- Life-skill development through the curriculum of Home Science
- Attitudes toward implementation and policy support.

The questionnaire was administered through **online forms** after taking approval from concerned authorities. Ethical considerations were carefully maintained while collecting the data from the respondents. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection and their confidentiality was maintained. Convenience sampling techniques were employed for data collection. The approved sample size for the study was 220. Since the questionnaire was administered digital, a total of 301 responses were collected within a short span of time.

Results and Discussion

The statistical analysis of the data collected was carried out under four key dimensions:

- Awareness and Knowledge
- Transdisciplinary Integration
- Life Skills Development
- Attitudes Toward Implementation and Policy Support

This provided an insight into how Home Science is perceived by educators. Each dimension was analyzed individually and comparatively as variables to understand their relationships and inferential outcomes. The findings gave meaningful insights into stakeholders' perceptions of Home Science. This could form the basis for future educational reforms and policy interventions.

A total of 301 educators responded to the survey, which is a fair number to ensure the reliability and representativeness of the findings.

Table 1: Comparative Perception Scores of Principals and Teachers

	Principals		Teachers	
Section	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Awareness and Knowledge of Home Science at School Level	4.3	0.52	4.02	0.34
Transdisciplinary Integration of Home Science with Other Subjects	4.32	0.56	4.33	0.46
Life Skills Development through Home Science Curriculum	3.69	0.3	4.2	0.46
Attitudes Toward Implementation and Policy Support	3.77	0.42	4.23	0.47

The table 1 represents the mean scores and standard deviations of principals and teachers across four key sections related to Home Science education.

- **Awareness and Knowledge of Home Science at School Level**

Principals'data shows a higher mean score of 4.3, as compared to mean score of teachers 4.02. This indicates that principals have slightly greater awareness and understanding of Home Science at the school level. Their hierarchy and experiences may be the reason behind this higher data. The lower standard deviation among educators supports the consistent responses.

- **Transdisciplinary Integration of Home Science with Other Subjects**

Both principals and teachers reported almost identical high mean scores of 4.32. This reflects a strong and shared perception that Home Science can be effectively integrated with other core subjects. The relatively moderate standard deviations indicate some negligiblevariation in responses.

- **Life Skills Development through Home Science Curriculum**

Teachers rated this section higher of skill development through Home Science curriculum (M = 4.2, SD = 0.46) than principals (M = 3.69, SD = 0.3). This suggests that teachers perceive Home Science as more effective in developing life skills, likely due to their direct classroom engagement and interaction with students. Principals' lower mean may indicate a comparatively moderate perception, may be because of more managerial involvement currently.

- **Attitudes Toward Implementation and Policy Support**

Teachers again showed a higher mean score of 4.23 as compared to their boses (mean of principals' 3.77). This data supports the positive attitude of teachers towards implementation and policy support, whereas principals appear slightly more cautious or critical about the implementation. May be because they are more aware of managerial policies and practical challenges that could be encountered.

Both groups demonstrate generally positive perceptions (means above 3.5 across all sections).

Principals show higher awareness, but teachers exhibit stronger belief in practical outcomes such as life skills development and policy implementation.

Teachers' responses are slightly more consistent in some areas, while principals show more variability in perceptions.

The strongest consensus between both groups is seen in the transdisciplinary nature of Home Science.

Conclusion

The data collected during the study and critical analysis of the same reveals the educators' positive perception regarding the potential held by the subject of Home Science.

To begin with data from both principals and teachers showcase a **high level of awareness and knowledge** about Home Science. Above average mean scores indicate that Home Science is no longer viewed merely as a traditional or gender specific subject, but increasingly recognized as a **relevant and contemporary branch of education**.

Secondly, the findings strongly support that Home Science is perceived as an **effective medium for life skills development**. Teachers, in particular, reported higher agreement regarding its role in fostering essential life skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and self-reliance. They recognize subjects' strong potential to support real-life applications and connection to conceptual knowledge of other core subjects. Thus reinforcing its **transdisciplinary nature**. The consistently high scores in transdisciplinary integration indicate that Home Science is well-positioned to function as a **bridge between academic knowledge and practical life skills**. Positive attitudes toward implementation and policy support further support a **favourable and conducive environment for curricular inclusion of the subject. This educational reform** saw a slight reservation among school leaders indicating the need for clearer policy frameworks and institutional backing.

To conclude the study achieved its objectives by showcasing the perspective of educators, who are not only aware but also firmly believe in the **transformative potential of Home Science education** in fostering holistic development among students. It advocates for a shift from viewing Home Science as a peripheral subject to recognizing it as a **core component of skill-based, experiential, and future-ready education**. To fully realize this potential, the study recommends strengthening awareness across all subject domains, promoting interdisciplinary teaching practices, and aligning educational policies to support its integration within the school curriculum.

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