

IMAGINING THE FUTURE OF HOME
ECONOMICS IN NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT

Home Economics is one of three subjects situated in the Health and Physical Education learning area in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (2007). As is the case internationally, Home Economics has a long history in the New Zealand schooling context and the subject has undergone significant shifts alongside changes in society. However the traditional perception of the subject as being about 'cooking and sewing' exists for many people. This thesis research aimed to give voice to Home Economics teachers in New Zealand secondary schools about possible future directions for the subject, against the backdrop of challenges for Home Economics documented in international literature in recent years as well as recent and current interest in future-focused teaching and learning.

The research employed a multiple case study design with socio-constructionist and transformative research underpinnings. Qualitative interviews captured the views of six participants who were teachers of Home Economics in New Zealand secondary schools, and researcher memos and teachers' course information were used as additional sources of data. The data was analysed using the three Cs method of coding, categorizing and concepts (Lichtman, 2013). Findings were presented theme-by-theme and three analytical frameworks were applied to the research findings.

The research found that the value of Home Economics for learners connected strongly to ideas posited by the international and national literature in relation to skills and dispositions needed for people to thrive in the 21st century. Challenges facing the Home Economics profession were found that focused on perennial problems such as ageing teachers and lack of teacher supply. Also prominent was an overarching theme of 'perceptions and misconceptions', which related to the attitudes of other teachers, whānau and the wider community towards Home Economics.

Implications of the research for a wide range of people were explored. A number of these focused on the need for advocacy in order to future-proof Home Economics in New Zealand. Areas for future research in the area of Home Economics were also explored, with the need for student voice, data to ascertain future teacher supply and further investigation of the key ideas that comprise Home Economics in New Zealand.

Key words: Home Economics, Health and Physical Education, advocacy, future-focused teaching and learning, perceptions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Home Economics is at a 'convergent moment'... a time of opportunity where several key societal factors are occurring at the same time... providing a moment of alignment that, when taken together, provide an unprecedented opportunity to re-vision the Home Economics profession (Pendergast et al., as cited in McGregor, 2014).

In New Zealand, Home Economics is a subject drawn from the Health and Physical Education learning area (HPE) in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). This represents a shift from earlier curriculum frameworks which positioned Home Economics in both the Technology and the HPE learning areas (*1993 New Zealand Curriculum Framework, 1997 Technology in the New Zealand Curriculum and 1999 HPE in the New Zealand curriculum*). This shift has resulted in senior subject legitimacy and a pathway for students to tertiary study through the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), but it has also led to misunderstandings about the positioning of Home Economics and its teachers in both schools and the curriculum (Hipkins, Conner & Neill, 2005). Misunderstandings about the identity of Home Economics is echoed by international literature, which speaks of the need to create a common vision and philosophy for Home Economics, as well as the need to 'future proof' and 'rebrand' Home Economics to meet multi-faceted needs and demands of 21st century societies (IFHE, 2013; IFHE, 2008; McGregor, 2014; McGregor, 2011; Pendergast, Seniuk, Eghan & Enberg, 2008). A New Zealand futures perspective is yet to be investigated for Home Economics.

1.2 Home Economics internationally

The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) defines Home Economics as *"a field of study and a profession, situated in the human sciences that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities"* (IFHE, 2008; p.1). In recent years, there has been a trend to rename the profession (McGregor, 2010). For example, the change of name from Home Economics to 'Family and Consumer Sciences' (USA), 'consumer sciences' (UK) and 'human ecology'

(Canada). However, the IFHE has retained the name 'Home Economics' with reference to the human sciences within its definition of the subject and profession. Internationally, Home Economics may include the disciplines of (for example) food, nutrition and health, textiles and clothing, design and technology, hospitality and human development (IFHE, 2008).

Home Economics in Australia shares similarities with New Zealand in relation to how the subject is embodied. For example, the central focus is the well-being of individuals and families in their everyday living, with an action-oriented, empowerment approach to enable students opportunity to be critical and creative in solving problems relating to concerns of individuals and families, both locally and globally (Home Economics Institute of Australia, 2010). Also in common with New Zealand is the positioning of Home Economics within the school curriculum. Since the mid 1990's, Home Economics has been aligned with Health and Physical Education and Technology, however this positioning is sometimes seen as problematic, due to a loss of the inter-disciplinary nature of the subject as advocated by the IFHE (Home Economics Institute of Australia, 2010). In contrast with Home Economics in New Zealand, clothing, textiles and fashion is also a feature of the subject in Australia.

1.3 Home Economics in New Zealand

Home Economics is one of three subjects that comprise HPE in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). Alongside Health Education and Physical Education, students have the opportunity to engage in learning experiences in Home Economics throughout years 1-10 of schooling and may have the opportunity to study the subject for credit towards the NCEA from years 11-13 of schooling.

In Home Economics, students use the context of food and nutrition, which is a 'key area of learning' in HPE to explore factors that influence the well-being of individuals, families and communities (Ministry of Education, 2007). The practical component of the subject involves not only the processes of selecting, preparing, cooking and serving food (Ministry of Education, 2007) but may also involve opportunities to engage in health promoting actions in the school and/or local community. The specialist area of textiles and clothing is not part of contemporary Home Economics in New Zealand, as textiles was integrated into the Technology curriculum in 1997 (Street, 2006).

Learning in HPE is underpinned by four interdependent underlying concepts: Hauora, attitudes and values, the socio-ecological perspective and health promotion. Through the context of food and nutrition, students studying in Home Economics apply the understandings of the underlying concepts within their learning in order to reflect on the nature of well-being and how to promote it (Ministry of Education, 2007) for self, families and wider communities. According to Robertson (2015), the underlying concepts are the “big ideas” that frame all Health Education (and by extension Home Economics and Physical Education) knowledge and the application of these concepts grows increasingly complex across the curriculum levels.

In regards to wider considerations in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), learning in Home Economics contributes to the development of the key competencies and reflects the vision, principles and values of the curriculum, collectively known as the ‘front end’. *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) is a framework curriculum (Hipkins, Bolstad, Boyd & McDowall, 2014; Wells, 2016) and is regarded as enabling and flexible (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012) and potentially transformative (Bull & Gilbert, 2012). For example ‘future focus’ is one of the eight principles upon which the curriculum is based (Ministry of Education, 2007). Learning in Home Economics relates to this principle in the exploration of issues around globalization and sustainability, as well as in encouraging citizenship through opportunities to engage in health promotion. According to Hipkins (n.d), undertaking critical action in Home Economics provides opportunity for authentic inquiry and fosters interest in social issues. The values of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) are explored in Home Economics when students are given opportunities to think critically about well-being related issues and participate for the common good. Similarly, key competencies are developed through opportunities afforded by Home Economics learning. Key competencies are defined in *The New Zealand Curriculum* as “capabilities for living and lifelong learning” (Ministry of Education, 2007; p. 12). Therefore, learning is not just about being capable while at school, but being capable and continuing to learn across one’s life (Hipkins et al., 2014). For example when students are given opportunities in Home Economics to explore issues such as food security, globalization, determinants of health and sustainability, they can develop skills in thinking critically by exploring their own views and those of others (Hipkins et al., 2014). Students can develop literacy skills in relation to recipes, nutritional information, decoding advertising messages and analysis of food and nutrition research (HEIA, 2010) and manage self and relate to others in a practical and theoretical learning environment. Students can develop the key competencies of relating to others and participating and contributing when given

opportunities to take collective action to enhance well-being through processes such as the action competence learning process (Hipkins et al; 2014; Street, 2006).

As was the case internationally, Home Economics in New Zealand emerged in response to social and well-being issues as a result of the industrial revolution and adjusted in focus throughout the 20th century in response to social issues of the time (Street, 2006). As discussed in the background above, the positioning of Home Economics in the curriculum in New Zealand has changed over time. At the time of the shift to align Home Economics with HPE, another significant development for contemporary Home Economics was the implementation of NCEA Achievement Standards in Home Economics starting with level 1 NCEA in 2002. Despite the contribution Home Economics can make to the NCEA, there remains some perception that Home Economics is not as academic as other subjects (Hipkins et al., 2005; Street, 2006), which is an on-going challenge faced by Home Economics teachers. In New Zealand, this is manifested in the lack of a Scholarship standard for the subject but contributing factors to the non-academic perception have not been researched. Internationally, Home Economics researchers have attributed this to two main causes. Firstly, Home Economics has traditionally been regarded as the domain of women and girls and the private rather than the public sphere. Secondly, the focus in many Home Economics curricula has traditionally been on practical skills and products rather than intellectual processes (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008; Grundy & Henry, 1995; Pendergast, 2001).

Home Economics however is a popular subject with students, who value the opportunities to engage in both practical and theoretical learning activities (Hipkins et al., 2005; Street, 2006). In 2015, up to 4645 students returned results for Achievement Standards in Home Economics at Level 1 NCEA. At Level 2 NCEA this figure was 1783 and at Level 3 NCEA this figure was 1426 (NZQA, n.d). See appendix 1 for tables showing the number of results returned for each Achievement Standard from 2012 – 2015 for each level of the NCEA. These tables show that numbers of students returning results for Home Economics Achievement Standards is reasonably consistent over the three years, however for most standards there appears to be a slight reduction in results returned (and by implication, the number of students studying Home Economics at NCEA level). See appendix 2 for the Home Economics matrix which provides the title, number of credits and type of assessment (internal or external) for each Achievement Standard.

1.4 Future-focused teaching and learning

During the latter years of the 20th century educational researchers, policy-makers and practitioners began talking about 21st century teaching and learning (Bolstad & Gilbert 2012). A variety of terms to represent this have been used in educational literature, for example, future-oriented (teaching and) learning (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; Gilbert & Bull, 2014), 21st century learning/education/schooling (Bull & Gilbert, 2012; Hipkins et al., 2014), future-focus in education (Bolstad, 2011), futures education (Matthewman & Morgan, 2014), future-focused learning (21st Century Learning Reference Group, 2014), future-building schools (Facer, 2011). This thesis research refers to “future-focused teaching and learning”. I have chosen to use this term because ‘teaching and learning’ encompasses the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and of the learner, as well as encompassing the ‘core business’ of educational policy-makers and schools. Moreover, the word ‘focus’ implies honing in on what is important, which is pertinent in order to provide direction for the future.

New Zealand educational researchers have defined future-focused teaching and learning as *“an emerging cluster of new ideas, beliefs, knowledge, theories and practices in schools and classrooms”* (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; p. 1). Key ideas upon which future-focused teaching and learning is premised include the following:

- We are now in a ‘knowledge age’, where a definition of ‘knowledge’ as learned and stored information and facts is no longer sufficient. ‘Knowledge’ now incorporates knowing, doing and being (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; Delors, 1996) and the ability to interact with (or do things with) knowledge (Bull & Gilbert, 2012; Gilbert, 2005) and adapt to a future where the type of knowledge needed to thrive in society is uncertain (Bolstad, 2011; Facer, 2011).
- Megatrends and wicked problems are integral characteristics of the 21st century world and the education system needs to allow opportunity to develop in students the competencies needed to cope with complex decision-making throughout their life that may relate to these (Bolstad, 2011). This links to the need for authentic and real learning opportunities in schooling (Hipkins et al., 2014) and new kinds of partnerships between schools and communities (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012). It also links to a need for an increasing emphasis on building a more mutually supportive world (Delors, 1996) where new views on equity, diversity and inclusivity exist and interdependence is valued (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012). Additionally, global competence is needed for people to

thrive in a rapidly changing world (OECD, 2016). See section 1.7 below for definitions of ‘megatrends’, ‘wicked problems’ and ‘global competency’.

- The ubiquity of access to information, as well as rapid technological advancements have implications for education including the need to equip learners with skills to gather information then select, arrange, manage and use it critically and effectively (Delors, 1996). Digital competencies are critical for people to prosper in 21st century teaching, living and working environments (21st Century Learning Reference Group, 2014).

This research applies a future-focused lens to Home Economics in New Zealand for three reasons. Firstly, as outlined in section 1.1 above, now is viewed as a time of opportunity for Home Economists to re-brand and future-proof the profession. Secondly, *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) offers ample opportunities for the subject to provide learning opportunities congruent with 21st century imperatives, in terms of pedagogy and content, and the development of key competencies, as discussed in section 1.3 above. As asserted by Hipkins (n.d), the learning area of HPE is future-focused because of the “*many coherent learning opportunities, contexts and strategies it uses to explore the ‘self’ in relation to a rapidly changing, complex world*” (p. 1). Finally, there is a paucity of New Zealand literature in the field of Home Economics. New Zealand literature is from the mid-2000s, against the background of curriculum and NCEA development and implementation in New Zealand (Hipkins et al., 2005; Hipkins, Vaughan, Beals & Ferral, 2004; Street, 2006). It would be timely, ten years after this literature was published, to revisit some of the issues and ideas raised in these reports and to present a contemporary and future-focused view of Home Economics in New Zealand, in line with international literature.

1.5 My relationship to the research

My personal interest in this research has come about from working as a professional learning and development (PLD) facilitator with teachers of secondary Home Economics in New Zealand for the past four years. My role, alongside a counterpart in the Northern region of New Zealand, is national co-ordinator for HPE. This role includes activities such as developing and facilitating national workshops on topics of interest to teachers in the learning area, engaging with subject associations and providing PLD to their members on requested topics and working in an in-depth way with individual teachers of Health Education, Physical Education and Home Economics.

From the beginning of my time in my national co-ordinator role, I have been cognisant of the fact that Home Economics teachers may not have had equitable opportunities for subject-specific PLD in comparison with teachers of Health Education and Physical Education. I was also aware that teachers of Home Economics may or may not have had formal pre-service teacher training in HPE. As a result, I have always considered the PLD needs of Home Economics teachers as a priority in my work and I have connected with many Home Economics teachers and have shared with them a wide range of resources to support their pedagogy, content knowledge and conceptual understanding.

My teaching background is in Health Education, and as such, I am an outsider researcher in relation to the Home Economics teaching community. Over the past four years in my role I have however learned a lot about Home Economics as a subject and about how it relates to Health Education and Physical Education learning. I have had many discussions with teachers regarding issues and challenges facing them as Home Economists, the value of the subject for their learners and how they want the subject to evolve. As a result of these discussions, and in realising there is a gap in New Zealand research in the area of Home Economics, my interest in undertaking this research project developed.

1.6 Research focus, aims and design

The overall aim of this thesis research was to give voice to Home Economics teachers in New Zealand secondary schools about possible future directions for the subject.

This research addressed one overarching question, *how do teachers envisage the future of Home Economics in New Zealand?* Three sub questions informed the overarching research question:

1. How do teachers define contemporary Home Economics?
2. How do teachers want to be positioned in the school context and curriculum?
3. How do teachers view the value of Home Economics for learners in the 21st century?

In order to meet the research aim stated above, this research used a qualitative case study approach within the transformative research paradigm as described by Donna Mertens (Mertens 2007, 2009, 2015). Basic beliefs of transformative research include the need to incorporate qualitative methods, with an interactive link between researcher and participants. Knowledge is viewed as socially and historically situated, and issues of power are addressed. Furthermore, the ethical principle of beneficence is defined in terms of what is socially just for participants and wider stakeholders related to the research outcome (Mertens, 2009). Transformative researchers position themselves side-by-side with participants (Mertens, 2015) with an aim to bring about social transformation to a community pushed to society's margins or is oppressed (Mertens, 2009). I chose to work within the transformative research paradigm for two main reasons. Firstly, it is an exaggeration to say that Home Economics educators are 'pushed to society's margins' and are an 'oppressed' group. However, it is fair to say that, as a subject in New Zealand schools and as a subject and profession internationally, Home Economics faces issues relating to status and misunderstandings about its place, purpose and outcomes. The second reason I chose transformative research is that the social justice, critical and emancipatory nature of this research approach links to many ideas posited by researchers in the area of Home Economics internationally (Cornnelissen, 2012; McGregor et al., 2008; McGregor, 2009). It is also congruent with ideas relating to the front-end of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), HPE in *The New Zealand Curriculum* and future-focused teaching and learning (Culpan & Bruce, 2007; Facer, 2011; Hipkins et al., 2014). I believe the use of the transformative research paradigm allows me to meet the aim of giving voice to Home Economics educators in New Zealand about their perspectives on future directions for the subject.

Methodological details and theoretical underpinnings for the research are explained in detail in Chapter 3. The research explored the challenges Home Economics teachers (and the subject) currently face, their perspectives on the subject's value for learners in the 21st century, how they define contemporary Home Economics and how they want to be positioned within the school context and the curriculum.

1.7 Definition of key terms

Key terms relating to the research are defined below in order to convey how the terms have been interpreted for this research project.

21st century skills

Skills valued in 21st century societies, such as knowledge creation, complex problem-solving, innovation, communication and collaboration – these go hand-in-hand with technological advances (21st Century Learning Reference group, 2014). The “Four Cs” is commonly cited as a framework for highly valued skills: Critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity (National Education Association, n.d.).

Achievement Standards

Drawn from *The New Zealand Curriculum*, each Achievement Standard describes what a student needs to know, or what they must be able to achieve, in order to meet the standard. Having met it, they will gain credits towards the NCEA. Some standards are internally assessed by teachers during the year while other standards are assessed externally by NZQA at the end of the year (NZQA, n.d.b).

Critical thinking

In a HPE context, means "examining, questioning, evaluating, and challenging taken-for-granted assumptions about issues and practices" (Ministry of Education, 1999; p. 56).

Decile rating

A measure of the socio-economic position of a school's student community relative to other schools throughout the country (Ministry of Education, 2016), from 1 (most deprived) to 10 (least deprived).

Food (nutritional) literacy

A collection of interrelated knowledge, skills and behaviours required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet needs and determine intake (Vidgen, 2013). Inclusive of social justice, food literacy brings together interconnecting elements such as food skills, food culture and global food systems, health-related behaviours and environmental sustainability (Pendergast & Dewhurst, 2012).

Future-focused teaching and learning

“An emerging cluster of new ideas, beliefs, knowledge, theories and practices” (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; p. 1).

Global competence

“Being able to analyse global issues critically and from multiple perspectives, to understand how differences affect judgements and ideas of self and others, and to engage in effective interactions with others from different backgrounds on the basis of a shared respect for human dignity” (OECD, 2016; p. 4).

Hard skills

Skills and abilities that are objective and readily defined, measurable and reliable (Claxton, Costa & Kallick, 2016).

Health Education

Any combination of learning experiences designed to help individuals and communities improve their health, by increasing their knowledge or influencing their attitudes (World Health Organisation, n.d.).

Health literacy

The cognitive and social skills that determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to, understand and use information in health-maintaining and health-enhancing ways. By improving people's access to health information and their capacity to use it effectively, health literacy is critical to empowerment (Nutbeam, 1998).

Health promotion

“The process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health” (WHO, 1986; p.1).

Health and Physical Education (HPE)

The learning area in *The New Zealand Curriculum* that encompasses three different but related subjects: Health Education, Home Economics and Physical Education (Ministry of Education, 2007).

HETTANZ

The Home Economics and Technology Teachers' Association of New Zealand. The professional association for teachers of Home Economics.

Home Economics (New Zealand)

Learning in the context of food and nutrition where students develop understanding of the factors that influence well-being and of health-promoting actions to enhance well-being for individuals, families and communities (Ministry of Education, 2007). Note that overseas the term 'Home Economics education' may be used for the subject (to distinguish between the subject and the wider profession).

Home Economics (international)

A field of study and a profession, situated in the human sciences that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities (IFHE, 2008).

Knowledge age/society

Also known variously as post-industrial age or post-modernity. It is a new, advanced form of capitalism in which knowledge and ideas are the main source of economic growth. In the knowledge age, 'knowledge' is defined—and valued—not for what it *is*, but for what it can *do* (Gilbert, 2005).

Megatrends

Larsen (2006) defines megatrends as *"the great forces in societal development that will very likely shape the future in all areas (the state, market, civil society)... for many years to come"* (p. 8). Examples of megatrends are ageing, globalization, technological advancement, urbanization and commercialisation.

NCEA

An abbreviation of *National Certificate of Educational Achievement*. This is the main secondary school qualification in New Zealand and can be awarded at three levels; usually aligning with a student's final three years of secondary schooling (NZQA, n.d.c).

NZQA

An abbreviation of *New Zealand Qualifications Authority* - the national government organisation that administers the NCEA.

Practical perennial problems

A practical, moral problem that endures from one generation to the next (McGregor et al., 2008).

Secondary school

The level of schooling that students enter when they are 12 or 13 years old; lasting for about five years, from Year 9 to Year 13 (NZQA, n.d.b).

Soft skills

Dispositions that enable people to communicate and collaborate; interact effectively with others (Claxton et al., 2016).

Teacher

A person who educates and provides learning experiences for students in school.

Technology

The learning area in *The New Zealand Curriculum* that involves the use of resources to develop products and systems (Ministry of Education, 2007).

The New Zealand Curriculum

The current statement of official policy relating to teaching and learning in English-medium New Zealand schools.

Whānau

A Māori term that encompasses parents, caregivers, family members. This is also one wall of te whare tapa whā, usually translated as the 'social' aspect of well-being.

Wicked problems

Very complex problems that are difficult or impossible to solve, or even define, using the tools and techniques of one organisation or discipline. They span multiple domains: social, economic, political, environmental, legal and moral (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; Bull & Gilbert, 2012; Hipkins et al., 2014) and relate to the four future-focused issues in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007): sustainability, enterprise, globalization and citizenship (Bolstad, 2011). Examples of wicked problems that link explicitly to learning in Home Economics include climate change, public healthcare, poverty and food insecurity, sustainability, issues arising from globalization, social inequalities.

1.8 Thesis structure

This thesis comprises six chapters: Introduction, literature review, research design and methods, findings, discussion, and implications and conclusions. Appendices that provide supporting information are also included.

Chapter two: *Literature review* provides a summary of perspectives, issues and priorities from the literature. The chapter is divided into three main sections which align with areas of general literature and research that are pertinent to explore: International Home Economics literature, the literature from Home Economics and the Health and Physical Education Learning Area in New Zealand, and future-focused education and learning literature.

Chapter three: *Research design and methods* includes explanation of the research paradigm (theoretical underpinnings and methodology) and details about setting and participants, data collection, ethical considerations, data analysis and rigour and trustworthiness.

Chapter four: *Findings* presents the findings of the study. Findings from interview data are presented theme-by-theme, having been analysed using codes, categories and concepts. Supplementary to this is a document analysis, which presents conclusions drawn from data depicted in four word clouds.

Chapter five: *Discussion* makes meaning of the key findings in relation to the HPE underlying concept of the socio-ecological perspective, the six emerging principles (and two sub-themes) for a 21st century education described by Bolstad and Gilbert (2012) and three systems of action (McGregor et al., 2008). Links are made throughout this chapter to the existing body of knowledge outlined in the literature review.

Chapter six: *Implications and conclusions* provides an overall summary of the key findings as linked to the research questions and the literature. The significance and implications of the study for a range of stakeholders are discussed, as are strengths and limitations of the study. Lessons learned during the research process are explored and finally suggestions are made for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary and critical analysis of perspectives, issues and priorities from the literature in order to provide background and context for the current research by exploring what others have already discovered in this area. The chapter is divided into three main sections which align with areas of general literature and research that are pertinent to explore: International Home Economics literature, the literature from Home Economics and the Health and Physical Education Learning Area in New Zealand, and future-focused teaching and learning literature. These three areas of research were chosen in order to develop a comprehensive overview of the research topic and critique of a range of literature. The three areas provide distinct but relevant perspectives to the current research and give the research a future-focused context within HPE in New Zealand but also within the international Home Economics field.

The literature review was carried out by identifying areas of interest within the research topic to decide upon key search terms. Searching tools for pertinent literature included ERIC and other databases, the library catalogue, the New Zealand Council for Educational Research website and Google Scholar, using key words and/or searching by author. Relevant readings were also found by using reference lists within literature that had been found. Literature that was chosen for inclusion in the literature review encompassed journal articles, position statements, books and reports commissioned by the Ministry of Education (New Zealand). Criteria for inclusion included being contemporary, significant pieces of work or cited by others, as well as pieces of work that challenged or extended my perspective and understanding of topics and issues pertinent to the current research.

2.2 International Home Economics literature

International literature on Home Economics in recent years has focused on ideas relating to future-proofing the profession to ensure its sustainability in the 21st century, including from the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE), who has articulated the need to future-proof the profession at a strategic level. Future-proofing Home Economics means to

protect the profession against being “taken over, replaced, surpassed or displaced” (McGregor, 2014; p.67) or “anticipating future developments to minimise negative impacts and optimise opportunities” (IFHE, 2008; p. 2). This section of the literature review will present and critique re-occurring ideas from the international Home Economics literature relating to future-proofing, separated into two sections:

- Perennial problems in Home Economics, such as low status, its gendered nature and fragmentation of the profession, and the need to embrace common branding, vision and purpose for Home Economics.
- Systems of action and philosophical orientations: The need to shift to emancipatory practices and to an individual and collective empowerment orientation.

2.2.1 Perennial problems in Home Economics.

The curriculum area or subject of Home Economics is concerned with “*practical perennial problems*”, a term which refers to practical, moral problems that endure from one generation to the next (McGregor et al., 2008; p. 51). Alongside this, Home Economics itself suffers from perennial problems such as low status, gender bias (Pendergast, 2001; Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008; Ma & Pendergast, 2011) and fragmentation. The latter relates to the different ways in which Home Economics is conceived across international curricula, diverse names for the subject and a shortage of teachers trained specifically in Home Economics (McGregor, 2015; McGregor, 2010; Pendergast, 2001). Another significant issue within the profession is that the baby boomer generation, a demographic approaching retirement, is currently dominating the profession (McGregor, 2015; Pendergast, 2009). Academics and professional bodies such as the IFHE advocate for the need to embrace common branding, vision and purpose for Home Economics, in order to act upon the converging factors (McGregor, 2014) that are providing the opportunity Home Economics to be relevant for 21st century learners and for future-proofing the profession.

The perennial problems of low status and gender bias in Home Economics are considered connected (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008) and criticisms of the subject as ‘preparing girls for women’s (domestic) work’ have been extensively commented upon, particularly by feminists (Pendergast, 2001). The gendered nature of Home Economics refers both to the fact that it is more commonly taught by women than men, as well as higher enrolments in Home Economics school courses by girls than boys. Research in Hong Kong has shown that the under-participation of males in Home Economics courses relates to negative attitudes from

teachers, peers and parents, as well as systematic issues such as curriculum documents and school administration (Ma & Pendergast, 2011). Low status of Home Economics has been viewed within a dualistic framework (Pendergast, 2001) where one side is privileged and the other marginalised (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008). In addition to the male/female binary (where patriarchy is privileged), the low status of Home Economics has been attributed to the fact that the subject is concerned with the private domain of the home (rather than the more valued public domain) and is viewed as a practical rather than an academic subject (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008; Pendergast, 2001). As articulated by Pendergast (2001), "Home Economics is often seen for its product rather than its intellectual processes" (p. 4). A survey of 302 teachers in Australia found that negative perceptions of the field affected the status of the subject within their school (Pendergast, 2001). Issues included principals, students, parents and other teachers misinterpreting the subject as merely 'cooking and sewing' and perceiving Home Economics as non-academic, leading to negative attitudes about the place and purpose of the subject in contemporary schooling.

In considering Home Economics in *The New Zealand Curriculum* at NCEA level, one can question the private/public and the practical/academic binaries as actual and continuing contributors to low status of the subject, even though perceptions by those unfamiliar with the subject may likely concur with the international observations. The first justification for questioning the reasoning for low status connects to the private/public binary. Although Home Economics involves the well-being of individuals and families, importance is placed upon societal aspects - from the school to local community, to New Zealand as a nation and to global levels. This societal lens is increasingly applied as a student progresses through the schooling levels and is the predominant focus at level 8 of HPE in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). Contemporary international curricula also appear to echo this. At a strategic level, the IFHE position statement refers to Home Economics being concerned with contemporary local and global (glocal) society, political, social, cultural and economic systems, poverty, gender, social justice and sustainability issues (IFHE, 2008). At a curriculum level, issues tackled by Home Economics courses include sustainability, food security, international development (Hustveldt as cited in McGregor, 2015) and other aspects relating to 'megatrends' (McGregor, 2014). The second justification for questioning the reasoning for low status connects to the practical/academic binary. Home Economics in the NCEA levels of schooling is academic and non-practical in terms of what is formally assessed - by level 2 NCEA, there is no practical component to any assessed units of work in the subject. Instead, assessment focuses on a student's ability to demonstrate understanding, explain, analyse, evaluate and take health-promoting action in nutrition-

related contexts. At level 3 NCEA, it is expected that an evidence-based and critical lens be applied to the issue under consideration.

Home Economics comprises not only disciplinary but inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary work (IFHE, 2008; McGregor, 2011). While this yields significant potential for 21st century learning experiences for students, it has also contributed to fragmentation of the subject and profession (Murnane as cited in McGregor, 2015), in relation to divergence in content and names for the subject across nations (McGregor, 2010), a shortage of courses in tertiary institutions to specifically train teachers in Home Economics, and subsequent teacher shortages (Pendergast, 2001). The latter is exacerbated by the impending retirement of the pre-dominantly baby-boomer Home Economics teaching demographic (McGregor, 2015; Pendergast, 2009). The above issues relating to fragmentation of the subject were explored in a qualitative cross-cultural comparative case study in Scotland and Australia (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008). The study aimed to investigate Home Economics educators' level of agreement with the ideas put forward in the IFHE position statement *Home Economics in the 21st Century* (IFHE, 2008). Although the researchers found general agreement across the two study populations, particularly in relation to the nature and purpose of Home Economics, one area in which the two populations differed in opinion was in relation to the name 'Home Economics'. Another issue raised in the study was the shortage of trained Home Economics educators and the fact that the Home Economics teaching profession is ageing. Both of these findings are relevant in the New Zealand context, given the different names given to Home Economics courses across the country, and the lack of initial teacher education courses for Home Economics alongside the ageing teaching profession.

In order to future-proof Home Economics, address issues of fragmentation and alleviate some of the perennial problems affecting the profession, there is a need for Home Economists to embrace common branding, vision and purpose (IFHE, 2008; IFHE Think Tank Committee, 2013; McGregor, 2014b; Pendergast, 2001). Alongside the IFHE's 2008 position statement, which clearly articulates a common name for, and dimensions of, the subject, academics have asserted the importance of the development of a Body of Knowledge (BOK) (McGregor, 2014; Roubanis as cited in McGregor, 2015). A Body of Knowledge for a profession is a "collection of key, high-level ideas that come to define the intellectual foundation of (the) profession" (McGregor, 2014; p. 17). Roubanis (as cited in McGregor, 2015) considered that a BOK provides a philosophical platform for shared practice and McGregor (2014) asserted that creating BOKs across Home Economics professional associations would assist the creation of a well-articulated philosophy and intellectual

foundation. This is likely to address problems with Home Economics such as splintering of knowledge and specialisations, dissention over the purpose, definition and content of the subject, and loss of common professional purpose (Pendergast, 2001). According to McGregor (2014), The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences is the only professional association to have developed a BOK. However, the Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA) has prepared a comprehensive position statement. This document defines Home Economics, justifies its position in the curriculum, describes capabilities students develop through its study, and outlines core content and pedagogy (Home Economics Institute of Australia, 2010). Therefore, the HEIA position statement, alongside the American BOK and IFHE position statement, could be useful starting points for HETTANZ if they were to develop a BOK as a way of moving forward and future proofing Home Economics in New Zealand. Developing a BOK for the New Zealand Home Economics context would be valuable not only for the reasons described above, but because it would require members of the professional association to reflect upon and articulate their views and hopes for the future of the subject.

2.2.2: Systems of action and philosophical orientations.

Two theoretical lenses that have been used to inform the Home Economics profession are systems of action and philosophical orientations. These two theories dovetail in the recognition that, in order to future-proof the subject, there is an argument for Home Economists to shift to emancipatory practices and to an empowerment orientation.

Systems of action is an approach described as a triad of practice; three ways of thinking about a practical perennial problem (McGregor et al., 2008). These three ways are technical, interpretive and emancipatory and all are needed in order to future-proof the profession, however with a shift to more emphasis on the latter. This approach draws from Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests - technical, practical and emancipatory (Grundy & Henry, 1995). The technical system is concerned with the teaching of new skills and techniques (McGregor, 2010). This is considered an important aspect of Home Economics, but on its own not adequate in the 21st century and over-relied on in the past (McGregor et al., 2008). Interpretative practice is concerned with interaction between people (Ma & Pendergast, 2011), which is important for effective functioning in living and working environments. Critical/emancipatory practice involves understanding power imbalances and helping people to take social actions to address injustices and help people

reach their full potential as global citizens (McGregor et al., 2008). The IFHE position statement *Home Economics in the 21st Century* explicitly advocates for “critical/transformational/emancipatory action to enhance wellbeing and to advocate...at all levels and sectors of society” (IFHE, 2008; p.2).

The three systems of action link to Home Economics in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), both through the front-end aspects, as well as the HPE concepts and the content of the subject. For example, the technical system relates to skills of preparing and cooking food or understanding food labels, the interpretive system involves relating to others and developing interpersonal skills, and the critical/emancipatory system links to students being connected and actively involved, participating and contributing as well as the HPE ideas of social justice, ethics and health promotion. Home Economics courses in New Zealand that rely too heavily on the technical approach are more likely to perpetuate the issue of low status of the subject and less likely to allow students opportunities to think and act critically, and ensure the intent of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) is upheld. In alignment with the ideas posited by international researchers and academics, to future-proof Home Economics in New Zealand, all three systems of action need to be incorporated into learning programmes, but with an emphasis on the critical/emancipatory aspect. Students would be involved in critiquing the received wisdom of their culture and learning to act strategically to empower themselves and others rather than learning a set of skills (Grundy & Henry, 1995). This would enable issues such as megatrends and wicked problems to be explored and help prepare students to be lifelong, capable learners (and consumers, workers, parents etc.) in an uncertain future.

Vaines (1990, 1993) introduced the idea of philosophical orientations towards being a Home Economist. These are technical, empowerment or no orientation. A technical orientation towards Home Economics places utmost importance on the maximization of economic growth (Vaines, 1993). Other terms associated with the technical orientation are efficiency, consumption, technology and management (McGregor, 2009). Therefore, the technical orientation links to the technical system of action because the development of skills is important in being able to manage resources efficiently and effectively. An empowerment orientation towards Home Economics views people as inextricably linked, with inclusive leadership and shared power (Vaines, 1993). Within this worldview, people work together for the common good and Home Economists are active participants and collaborators in communities (McGregor, 2009). The third orientation refers to choosing not to choose an

orientation, meaning Home Economists practice individualised interpretations of the field (Vaines, 1993). This links to the idea of fragmentation of the profession, discussed above, and is considered to be a powerless position (McGregor, 2009) and therefore detrimental to future-proofing Home Economics. An empowerment orientation is seen as the most compatible with the mission of Home Economics (Vaines, 1993). This is even more the case now, considering the IFHE's 2008 position statement. Moreover, the empowerment orientation is congruent with the critical/emancipatory system of action described above. According to Cornnelissen (2012), empowerment is at the centre of critical and emancipatory action.

McGregor (2009) suggested that a possible definition for empowerment in a Home Economics context is "a process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources and control over their lives" (p. 104). This definition is similar to how the Ottawa Charter defines health promotion: "*Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health.*" (World Health Organisation, 1986; p.1). Given that health promotion is a prominent idea for Home Economics in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), this definition of empowerment seems a useful one for the New Zealand context. Furthermore, a focus on the empowerment orientation is congruent with Home Economics in New Zealand, in relation to its links in HPE not only with the underlying concept of health promotion, but that of social justice, as well as and the achievement objectives in strand D: Healthy communities and environments (Ministry of Education, 2007). Links can also be made to front-end aspects of the curriculum, such as learners being actively involved in the "*community and participat(ing) for the common good*" (Ministry of Education, 2007; p. 10).

A small number of international studies have investigated people's understanding and perception of Home Economics in recent years (for example Slater & Hinds, 2014). The findings of these studies are weighted heavily in favour of the technical system of action and philosophical orientation, which may indicate that international Home Economics curricula is yet to move into an emancipatory or empowerment space. This is despite the publication of the 2008 position statement from IFHE (IFHE, 2008). For example, Slater and Hinds (2014) described a mixed-methods survey undertaken with Canadian University students to explore their experiences and perceptions of Home Economics at secondary school. 95% of respondents agreed that the subject belonged in schools, with the dominant justification for this being that it taught important life skills relating to food preparation and healthy eating.

The researchers concluded that Home Economics is a valuable way to develop skills regarding food and nutrition, especially against the landscape of increasing obesity levels.

Another study investigated the role of Home Economics in developing food literacy (Pendergast & Dewhurst, 2012b). Over 1000 people from 36 countries responded to an online survey which identified that a number of food preparation and cooking skills included in Home Economics were seen as important for building food literacy, alongside development of understanding about nutrition. Again, the authors highlighted the value of Home Economics as a vehicle for “tackling the obesity problem” (p. 257).

A qualitative cross-cultural comparative case study was conducted in Scotland and Australia to investigate Home Economics educators’ level of agreement with the ideas put forward in the IFHE (2008) position statement (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008). The researchers found general agreement across the two study populations, particularly in relation to the nature and purpose of Home Economics. Comments from respondents stressed the importance of life skills, but at the same time the majority advocated for the amplification of academic aspects of the subject. The authors concluded that teachers need to move from a focus on technical practice and also consider interpretive and critical practices in order to fully embrace the intent of the IFHE position statement.

A less recent publication is Faoagali’s 2004 research, in which she investigated the perspectives of Samoan Home Economics teachers and conducted a document analysis post-curriculum reform. She categorised the teachers’ views using Habermas’ theory of knowledge constituent interests. Like the research conducted more recently, the technical aspect was dominant due to teachers’ emphasis on the importance of practical skills in pre-reform Home Economics (Faoagali, 2004). For the document analysis, Faoagali compared Home Economics with post-reform Food and Textiles Technology and found that the former was more congruent with Habermas’ technical domain, however the latter was more consistent with the practical (interpretive) domain and, to an extent, the emancipatory domain. The positioning of Food and Textiles Technology in the interpretive domain was justified in terms of the curriculum document outlining collaborative activities, interaction with the environment and shared problem-solving. The reasoning behind the positioning in the emancipatory domain was the inclusion (in the curriculum document) of critical thinking in tasks and activities. However, Faoagali asserted that the extent to which this translated into pedagogical practice was questionable, given the teachers’ emphasis on practical skills and the finding that *“teachers saw no difference apart from the name and the (existence of)*

new curriculum documents” (Faoagali, 2004; p. 60). As posited by Faoagali, this represented a gap between the teachers’ way of thinking, and the worldview espoused in the curriculum document, with a ‘bridge’ needed to link the two.

These studies, which highlighted a focus on the technical, skills-based aspect, raise questions about the purpose of contemporary Home Economics. It would appear as though many teachers and researchers believe that a central purpose of Home Economics is related to an attempt to address health issues in society (such as the obesity epidemic). This point was also made in the Journal of the American Medical Association, where Lichtenstein and Ludwig (2010) wrote an opinion piece called “Bring Back Home Economics Education”, calling for greater access to Home Economics as an investment for society to reverse the trends of obesity and diet-related diseases. It is important to note that the practical component of Home Economics is highly valued for its contribution to the development of food literacy (for example developing skills in food selection, preparation, cooking and serving). However, by justifying the importance of Home Economics as a way to address health issues in society through the development of food literacy, curricula will likely continue to focus on the technical aspect at the expense of moving towards a more critical, empowerment-based approach. This will therefore contradict the ambitions described in the IFHE position statement and the ability to future-proof the subject. There are parallel positionings in Health and Physical Education internationally as well. Michael Gard, an Australian researcher in HPE, asserted that the call to fight obesity in schools is misguided and naïve, despite the belief by some academics and policy-makers that HPE learning contexts are a viable space for weight management (Gard, 2011). This issue is pertinent in the New Zealand context, where misunderstandings about the purpose of students learning experiences in the HPE learning area exist. This will be explored further in the review of literature from New Zealand in section 2.3 below.

2.3 The literature from Home Economics and HPE in New Zealand

As identified in section 1.4 above, there is a paucity of New Zealand literature in the field of Home Economics. Therefore this section of the literature review will not only explore literature relating to Home Economics in New Zealand, but also literature relating to the Health and Physical Education learning area. The latter is organised into two categories: The purpose of HPE learning and future focus links to HPE.

2.3.1 Home Economics literature from New Zealand.

Two studies investigating issues relating to learning, teaching and assessment in Home Economics were undertaken against the background of curriculum and NCEA development and implementation in New Zealand in the mid-2000s.

Firstly, the *Learning Curves* project used a case study approach in six schools to explore how school subject choices (in policy and in practice) changed as a result of the implementation of the NCEA (Hipkins et al., 2004). The study found that Home Economics as a subject at year 11 (NCEA level 1) was popular with students due to its 'lifeskills' and practical aspects. Home Economics courses in the case study schools were generally comprised of a mixture of Achievement and Unit Standards. The researchers attributed the popularity of Home Economics to this mixture, which allowed student interest to be captured by the opportunity to engage in (and be assessed through) practical food experiences. This contrasted with the subject of Food Technology, a less popular subject choice that was described as being 'intellectual'. The conclusions drawn by the study's authors appear to perpetuate the idea that Home Economics is less academic than Technology. This dichotomy would be interesting to explore in the present time, especially since the majority of Unit Standards that used to be assessed in Home Economics courses no longer exist.

The second study had a more specific focus on Home Economics (alongside Geography) and was commissioned by the Ministry of Education. In the study, New Zealand Home Economics teachers' views were explored in relation to the impact of NCEA implementation on teaching practice in the subject (Hipkins et al., 2005). A qualitative case study methodology was used to explore the 'shifting balances' of 10 teachers' practice as a result of what were, for Home Economics, significant changes to teaching, learning and assessment. As noted by one teacher, the NCEA implementation and the move to being drawn completely from the HPE learning area occurred at the same time and therefore a steep learning curve ensued. In terms of new curriculum content, a number of traditionally-taught practical skills were eschewed in favour of the socio-critical content afforded by the HPE learning area – critical thinking skills, attitudes and values, determinants of health and exploration of nutritional issues that were more "*cutting edge*" (p. 42). It is important to note however that practical aspects of the subject such as preparation and cooking of meals were still a valued part of Home Economics. Teachers reported that the introduction of the Home Economics Achievement Standards allowed opportunity for students to have greater ownership and input into units and learning contexts that suit their own interests. One

teacher noted that *“the more authentic you make it, the more they own the learning”* (p. 63). This observation has links to future-focused aspects of learning and is therefore still pertinent today.

Alongside the challenge of shifting curriculum and the introduction of NCEA, teachers also reported that members of the community (policy-makers, other teachers, deans and parents) had perceptions of Home Economics that impacted negatively on the status of the subject and therefore the calibre of students attracted to study the subject. For example, one teacher asserted that parents and school deans still viewed Home Economics as *“cooking and sewing”* (p. 42). This was reinforced by the omission of the subject from the universities’ ‘approved subjects’ list (it took until 2012 to gain inclusion on the list) and the lack of a scholarship standard being developed. One further critical insight from this research was that the teachers surveyed were convinced that learning drawn from the Technology learning area did not reflect the intent of Home Economics, whereas positioning in the HPE learning area did so. This research provided a small group of Home Economics teachers with a voice at a time of significant change in senior secondary education in New Zealand. A limitation of the research was the small number of teachers in the research sample (10) and the nature of the Home Economics educators involved. All teachers were heads of departments and had been involved in the Beacon Schools project, a professional learning and development project to support senior secondary programme design including NCEA assessment (Ministry of Education, 2003). Additionally, research participants had been involved in marking and moderation in the subject. This was a limitation as it did not provide a representative sample of Home Economics teachers in New Zealand. However, it could also be seen as a strength, as the views expressed were articulate and well-informed by experience and involvement in the subject at a national level, thereby presenting an authoritative perspective on the issues.

Also in the mid-2000s, Street developed a position statement for Home Economics in New Zealand as part of the New Zealand Curriculum Marautanga Project for the Ministry of Education (Street, 2006). As well as providing a detailed history of Home Economics internationally and nationally, this document identified a number of barriers and enablers to students’ learning in Home Economics, which remain pertinent at the present time in New Zealand as well as resonate with findings from international literature.

Street (2006) identified gender imbalance (more female students studying the subject as well as more female teachers) as an issue for Home Economics, as has been found in more

recent overseas research (for example Ma & Pendergast, 2011; Pendergast, 2001). Access to professional learning and development was also identified as an issue facing teachers of Home Economics. It was noted that the Beacon Schools project was available to selected schools in specific regions, but opportunities were needed nationally. Street also identified that clear learning pathways, sustainability and perceptions of Home Economics were problematic. Street (2006) explained that Home Economics was often perceived as non-academic, suffered from inconsistency in naming between schools and lacked the recognition afforded to other school subjects for University Entrance (which, 10 years later, is no longer the case). A further barrier related to teacher supply. In line with overseas commentators, Street (2006) asserted that a shortage of Home Economics teachers was an issue for the profession due to retirement of teachers and the lack of new Home Economics teaching graduates to fill their roles.

Home Economics, however, was considered to be popular with students and created meaningful courses and authentic learning experiences, which are enablers to student learning in the subject. Street (2006) explained that students chose Home Economics for a variety of reasons, including interest, relevance and the challenge that the subject provides, as well as enjoyment of the practical aspects. Street (2006) cited evidence from a review of the Beacon Schools project, in which students reported that learning in Home Economics changed the way they viewed the world and increased their understanding of issues at personal, interpersonal and societal levels (Ministry of Education, 2005 as cited in Street, 2006).

A more recent publication is a 2013 literature review which explored the idea that curriculum change in New Zealand in the area of Home Economics and Technology reduced opportunities for practical cooking skills which in turn has the potential to impact on food literacy and dietary behaviour in society (Hashimoto & Wham, 2013). This review drew upon research from New Zealand and international sources with the premise being that learning experiences in Technology have overtaken those available in Home Economics. This ignored the existence of Home Economics as a senior (NCEA) subject option in New Zealand and the assumption, therefore, is that the authors focused instead on learning in years 1-10 of schooling. The authors acknowledged that it is likely that learning experiences even if named 'Technology' would still include a practical food preparation component and aspects linked to Home Economics. However, they argued that the higher-status afforded to the theoretical components of Technology creates a marginalization of practical experiences. The authors asserted that a reduction of practical cooking experiences in schools might be

linked to health status in society by being a contributor to issues such as the obesity epidemic. This idea links to the position asserted by Lichtenstein and Ludwig (2010) discussed above in section 2.2.2 and similarly raises questions about the role and purpose of Home Economics. The authors concluded that research was needed in order to examine the link between school-based practical cooking experiences and the development of food literacy and healthy food-related behaviours.

2.3.2 The purpose of HPE learning.

A number of papers have been published that describe the purpose of learning in HPE (Burrows, 2005; Quennerstedt, Burrows & Maivorsdotter, 2010; Robertson, 2005; Sinkinson & Burrows, 2011). Several of these were written as part of the New Zealand Curriculum Marautanga Project for the Ministry of Education in the mid 2000's (Burrows, 2005; Robertson, 2005). Others were more recent, written against the landscape of rising health issues in society and the perceptions (and misunderstandings) of the connection between learning in HPE and solutions to these issues (Quennerstedt, Burrows & Maivorsdotter, 2010; Sinkinson & Burrows, 2011). Again, this is idea linked to the position asserted by Lichtenstein and Ludwig (2010) discussed above in section 2.2.2.

Jenny Robertson (2005) argued that the process of health promotion in HPE is designed to provide students the opportunity to learn as they moved through the action competence learning process. This position amplifies the 'learning' rather than predicating student success (or lack thereof) upon the effectiveness on their health promoting actions. She argued cogently that while the purpose of learning in HPE is for educational outcomes for students, rather than health sector outputs, these separate outcomes intersect: *"while teachers measure student achievement in health promotion against learning outcomes, research evidence suggests it is also a way to sustain changes in health behaviours as well, because the process empowers people to do so."* (p. 23).

While Robertson's work focused on a specific context (and underlying concept) for HPE learning, Burrows (2005) referred more widely to learning in HPE in relation to the learning area's contribution to students' development of the key competencies (of the draft *New Zealand Curriculum*). Burrows reiterated Robertson's point that learning in HPE is for educational purposes, not as a solution for individual and social problems. Burrows argued that the proposed key competencies and the HPE learning area were a good fit, both

conceptually and practically: *“in some ways the key competencies seem like they were written for Health and Physical Education”* (p. 10). A student who is an effective learner in HPE contexts is able to think critically about well-being related situations and the world around them, can relate to others, can experience participating and contributing in the classroom, the wider school and communities through (for example) health promotion, is able to manage their own well-being and can use symbols and texts to develop skills in health literacy. This is consistent with the links between the key competencies and learning in Home Economics as discussed in section 1.3. It would be interesting to re-visit these connections in the present time to determine the extent to which the key competencies are embedded in HPE programmes of learning and developed in HPE learners.

Burrows, with other authors, have also written on the purpose of HPE learning in more recent publications. These papers explored both the purpose of contemporary Health Education as well as future directions for the subject, many ideas of which also link to Home Economics.

Quennerstedt, Burrows and Maivorsdotter (2010) use the context of Health Education curricula in Sweden and New Zealand to make a case that the purpose of contemporary Health Education should focus more on the knowledge, skills and values students develop as they negotiate learning in health-related contexts rather than the idea that Health Education is about “teaching young people to be healthy” (p. 98). Quennerstedt, Burrows and Maivorsdotter (2010) provided an informative history of Health Education in the two countries, illustrating that many similarities have existed in the way in which Health Education has been conceptualized over time. In both countries, Health Education as it exists in formal policy documents, has shifted from a bio-medical and moralistic approach to an holistic, socio-critical approach. The former takes the position that individuals are responsible for their own health – largely measured by physical wellness and the latter recognizes that factors operate at different levels of influence to impact on overall well-being (not only physical, but social, mental and emotional and spiritual measures). Quennerstedt, Burrows and Maivorsdotter (2010) cautioned, however, that moralistic, individualistic discourses around physical activity and nutrition exist in schools and in society. This means that there is a danger that the socio-critical underpinnings of contemporary Health Education are superseded by the interests of a wide group of people who misconceive the purpose of Health Education (alongside Physical Education and Home Economics) and who have ideas around ‘being healthy’ which may not fit with diverse worldviews or the concept of hauora upon which HPE (in New Zealand) is grounded. As a

solution, the authors proposed that health be viewed as a socio-cultural process rather than an individual matter and a lifelong process rather than an outcome of education and product of curriculum.

Sinkinson and Burrows (2011) discussed challenges and obstacles faced by health educators, the purpose and aims of contemporary Health Education and possible future directions for the subject in New Zealand. As has been raised internationally in regard to Home Economics, the authors stated that Health Education faces challenges relating to low status of the subject, its trans-disciplinary nature, being controversial due to its links with the personal/private sphere and tensions with other related subjects (in this case, Physical Education). Furthermore, Sinkinson and Burrows discussed several challenges faced by health educators. For example, issues relating to an over-emphasis on discourses of risk and teacher positioning in relation to opportunities to explore diversity issues and take a critical stance. The authors proposed that the purpose of Health Education, moving into the future, should be conceived as resulting in outcomes relating to the achievement of health competencies for a 21st century world rather than a means of addressing health concerns in society. This links to the assertion by Quennerstedt et al. (2010) that the development of knowledge, skills and values for health is a lifelong process. Some examples of health competencies given by the authors are: Autonomy, health literacy, critical literacy, resilience and self-management. A close examination of HPE and 'front-end' aspects of *The New Zealand Curriculum* would indicate a plethora of opportunities for the exploration and development of these skills in a range of health-related contexts. The extent to which teachers explicitly and deliberately plan for learning experiences in these areas would be an interesting avenue for future research.

2.3.3 Future-focus links to HPE.

This section discusses three papers with strong future-focus themes written in the mid 2000's while *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) was being developed. Culpan and Bruce (2007) explored critical pedagogy in Physical Education, Tasker (2006) investigated student learning experiences, links to key competencies and 'knowledge age' themes in senior secondary Health Education courses and Hipkins (n.d) discussed opportunities in the three HPE subjects to integrate 'knowledge age' ideas and learn about 'the self'. Although these are now around 10 years old, a lack of more recent New Zealand

literature in the future-focused HPE area ensures that they remain pertinent in the context of this research.

The paper by Culpan and Bruce (2007) is of relevance to this research due to its discussion of critical pedagogy, which links to the critical/emancipatory system of action and empowerment orientation for Home Economists discussed in section 2.2.2 above. Of particular interest is the exploration of how HPE in the 1999 curriculum document links to critical pedagogy and the challenges to successfully be a critical pedagogue. Culpan and Bruce defined critical pedagogy as understanding the relationship between power and knowledge, questioning assumptions and power relationships, empowering people to take social action to achieve social justice and having the skills and knowledge to gain greater control over their lives. The implementation of the 1999 curriculum document for HPE, with its socio-critical perspective including being underpinned by the socio-ecological perspective, allowed opportunities for aspects of critical pedagogy to be explored in movement, health and nutrition-related contexts. Students are afforded the opportunity to ask critical questions, locate themselves in their community and critically reflect on their actions. A critical stance within HPE teaching and learning practice is not without its challenges, however. The authors identified several challenges worthy of further research that remain relevant today. The first challenge relates to the idea explored in 2.2.2 above, the need for teacher philosophical shift. As with Home Economics, Physical Education practice could more closely align with an empowerment, social justice, critical approach, rather than a focus on skills and knowledge associated with earlier scientised curricula. Another challenge the authors identified which is relevant to this research is the relationship between physical activity and Physical Education in schools, the former being implicated in discussions around the obesity epidemic. Culpan and Bruce (2007), like Robertson (2006) and Burrows (2005), stressed that the educative outcomes of Physical Education need to be emphasised, and a critical approach to teaching and learning in the subject can help achieve this.

Tasker's (2006) paper "It makes you think outside the square" explored students' perceptions of their learning in senior secondary Health Education in relation to thinking about learning needs in the 'knowledge age', the (then proposed) key competencies and The Ministry of Education's 2005-2010 Schooling Strategy. Of most relevance to this research are the connections made in this paper between students' self-reported learning experiences in Health Education and 'knowledge age' learning ideas. However, Tasker (2006) made two points regarding Health Education that link to ideas from both the New

Zealand and international literature relating to Home Economics. The first is that Health Education is a new subject discipline for many teachers who have little or no academic background in the subject. The second is that Health Education suffers from low status in schools and consequently a large number of 'non-academic' students study the subject. This means that Health Education struggles for a valued place within a school's curriculum. These two challenges aside, student voice reported in this paper illustrated that students were engaged in learning experiences that developed their research and critical thinking skills, allowed them to view the world with new eyes, see others' perspectives and become more open to difference. In terms of links to 'knowledge age' learning ideas, Tasker (2006) asserted that the learning experiences afforded by Health Education allow students to effectively engage with these themes. For example, the development of a strong sense of self and knowing one's place in the world, being able to see things from others' perspectives, the development of critical literacy skills and opportunities to openly explore, share and question Health Education concepts and ideas in order to construct new knowledge in social interactions.

The final paper of relevance is an essay that explored the opportunities afforded in the three subjects of HPE learning area for meeting the learning needs of the 'knowledge age' in relation to the concept of 'self' (Hipkins, n.d.). Although the essay is not dated, it was published around the same time as Tasker's (2006) paper examined above. Like Tasker's work, Hipkins' essay explored aspects of the HPE curriculum and links to the 'knowledge age', such as the need to do things with knowledge (performativity), be critically literate and learn about the 'self' in social contexts. Some examples that Hipkins (n.d.) gave of how learning in HPE affords these three things, respectively, are: Using new knowledge to take health-promoting action, engage in critical thinking and learning about social justice, and learn through inquiry and interaction with others. This essay is theoretical in focus, as opposed to Tasker's (2006) paper, which used students' voice to illustrate links between learning in HPE and learning needs in the 'knowledge age'. While Hipkins' (n.d.) work provides a useful point of view and theoretical basis from which to explore the value of learning in HPE with a future-focused spin, the essay is limited due to the lack of real life examples from teachers and learners in HPE and this could be a potential area for research.

2.4 Future-focused education and learning literature

Section 1.4 above introduced key ideas relating to future-focused education and learning. This section of the literature review builds upon this introduction by exploring in more depth and critiquing a selection of international and New Zealand future-focused education and learning literature.

2.4.1 International future-focused education and learning literature.

An influential and early piece of work on 21st century teaching and learning is known as the Delors Report (Delors, 1996). This report considered the notion of 'lifelong learning' as one of the keys to prosperity in the 21st century and saw education as being critical in enabling a mutually-supportive world and a learning society to be built and maintained. The centrality of education is illustrated in the following quotation from the report: *"Education must, as it were, simultaneously provide maps of a complex world in constant turmoil and the compass that will enable people to find their way in it"* (p. 85). The Delors Report proposed four pillars of education – learning to know, do, be and live together; with a greater emphasis on the latter in recognition of people's interdependence. Education has traditionally been linked to learning to know and do, with learning to be and live together more future-focused ideas, contributing alongside the first two pillars to an encompassing view of learning. The concepts within the report seem to have influenced *The New Zealand Curriculum*, with links to its vision of lifelong learners, principles, values and key competencies (Ministry of Education, 2007). The dispositions integrated into the four pillars also share commonalities with HPE as a learning area, for example the importance of a strong sense of self, effective relationships with others, understanding the world, being empathetic towards others and having a strong sense of social justice. The report makes several interesting observations about secondary schooling. The authors assert that while secondary education is seen as a gateway to the future, it is not egalitarian and does not adequately set young people up for future study and work. Subjects taught at secondary school are irrelevant and over-emphasis on these comes at the expense of the teaching of attitudes and values. This links to the traditional emphasis on learning to know and do, rather than to be and to live together, and would indicate that the authors believe secondary education needs a significant shift in order to meet the needs of 21st century citizens and societies. Given that attitudes and values is an underlying concept of HPE and a feature of the front-end of *The*

New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007), it could be suggested that learning in Home Economics in New Zealand goes some way towards meeting this desire.

The Nature of Learning (Dumont, Istance & Benavides, 2010) was written to bridge the gap between research and practice in education in relation to the design of learning environments in the 21st century. The authors synthesised existing research and developed seven core principles for designing learning environments. The principles were premised on the beliefs that learning is social, effective learning is a distributed activity and learners are central and active in the learning process. Of utmost importance to effective learning is the recognition of learners' individual differences, the need to challenge students and provide substantial and timely formative feedback. Of particular relevance to this research are the principles relating to building horizontal connections across subjects and to the community and wider world, as well as the need to facilitate well-organised co-operative learning. Andrew Furco (in Dumont et al., 2010) described 'service-based learning' which links to opportunities afforded by Home Economics and HPE to take health-promoting action to enhance well-being. He described this as a contextualized, personalized opportunity to learn authentically by addressing a real-life need in a community. In this context, the community becomes a resource for learning and students take a central and active role as producers of knowledge. Service-based learning is highly personalized and empowering for learners, and is trans-disciplinary in nature, as the community or societal need is generally multifaceted and complex. This student-centered pedagogy is highly social, and its need for co-operation between students and partnerships with community members relates to the discussion by Robert Slavin (in Dumont et al., 2010) about what makes group work effective. Slavin asserted that active engagement for students in group work is an essential requirement for 21st century learning environments. Co-operative learning, with an emphasis on group goals and individual accountability, should play a central role in order to help students to master traditional skills and knowledge as well as develop the skills needed to function effectively in today's society. This has clear connections to HPE and *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), for example being evident within the key competency 'relating to others', the value of 'community and participation for the common good' and strand C: 'Relationships with Other People'.

Keri Facer (2011) referred to 'future-building schools' as the formal learning environments of the 21st century. Alongside developments in technology that are allowing an increasing number of informal learning opportunities, there is a need to rethink education in order to foster in young people skills in discernment, multiliteracy and responsibility. Congruent with

the ideas asserted by Dumont et al. (2010) and Delors (1996), Facer stated that the development of partnerships and strategic alliances between school and community are critical. A future-building school would value interdependence where networks and partnerships were established and students and communities could connect, work collaboratively and take achievable steps towards building “*more sustainable and equitable futures*” (p. 106). This learning environment was envisioned as a laboratory for experimenting, exploring and building in relation to social change. Facer used the term “future-building” rather than “future-proofing”, as the future is dynamic, emergent and on-going, and each community has different needs, strengths and challenges and people can create their own futures. Once again, this connects to learning in Home Economics and HPE through valuing learning experiences that are collaborative in nature and learning tasks connected to problem-solving and taking action to enhance well-being for self, others and communities.

2.4.2 Future-focused education and learning literature from New Zealand.

Three publications from the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) are discussed below in this section of the literature review. Two are books published by NZCER (Gilbert, 2005 and Hipkins et al. 2014) and one is a report prepared by NZCER researchers for the Ministry of Education (Bolstad et al., 2012). These three publications were selected for inclusion from a number of New Zealand publications due to their relevance to this research and their connection to ideas discussed in section 2.4.1 above.

Gilbert’s 2005 book, *Catching the Knowledge Wave? The Knowledge Society and the future of education* focused on the changing nature of ‘knowledge’ and implications of contemporary thinking about knowledge and learning for schools, teachers and students. Published around the same time as *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) was being developed and implemented, this book provided an in-depth exploration that challenges traditional beliefs about knowledge and stimulates thinking about the future of education and the need to shift away from learners mastering pieces of knowledge towards a focus on skills and competencies – being able to do things with knowledge. This is consistent with the ‘front-end’ of the curriculum, including the development of key competencies and values in order to develop young people’s ability to become lifelong learners. As also commented upon by overseas authors (for example Facer, 2011), Gilbert stated that schools are no longer the only (or even the main) source of knowledge for many

young people. Thus, the ability to learn how to learn, to keep learning and to learn with others is what is valued in the 21st century. The implications of these new views of knowledge and learning are what make this book relevant to this research as well as provide future-focused guidance for schools in New Zealand. For example, the need for individualised learning plans and personalised learning experiences, the recognition that learning can and does happen away from schools and teachers, that the aims of learning should include developing the ability to innovate, solve problems and work collaboratively with others. Gilbert stated that the main aim of teachers was no longer to facilitate the learning of knowledge, but to ensure that learning environments cater to the diverse needs of their students. Teachers need to be able to pose problems, assist students in their research and possess sound pedagogical content knowledge. They need to be big picture thinkers, work collaboratively with teachers across the curriculum and keep learning themselves. One further insight provided by Gilbert relates to the academic knowledge versus applied knowledge (or high status, low status) binary. Gilbert referred to the *Learning Curves* research discussed in section 2.3.1 above as a case study of how this binary still exists in New Zealand secondary schools, but also how innovation can occur in schools by offering contextually-focused courses that meet learners' needs. What was yet to happen, according to Gilbert, is that there was little evidence of teachers putting academic and non-academic forms of knowledge together. However, given that this book was published over 10 years ago, it would be timely to revisit this to determine how innovative teachers and schools are being in packaging the curriculum for their learners in terms of fostering 'front-end' aspects of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) and resonating with future-focused ideas about learning.

Bolstad and Gilbert (2012) prepared a report to the Ministry of Education, which explored understandings of learning and knowledge in the 21st century and suggested six principles (and two sub-themes) to guide the education system in providing learning environments needed to support future-orientated teaching and learning. The conceptualization of knowledge and aspects of the principles are congruent with the ideas discussed in section 2.4.1 as well as the assertions of Gilbert (2005). The authors provided a useful definition of 21st century teaching and learning: "*an emerging cluster of new ideas, beliefs, knowledge, theories and practices*" (p. 1) and suggested that these practices are visible in some schools and classrooms. The fact that only some schools and classrooms were embracing new ideas about learning and knowledge means that the status quo in education systems, structures and practices is not adequate, hence the development of future-focused guiding principles for education. The principles are relevant to this research as they are highly applicable to

the HPE learning area, *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) and the New Zealand educational context. For these reasons, the principles have been selected as an analysis framework for the findings of this research and more detail is provided as to the nature of these principles and subthemes in Chapter 5 of this thesis. The principles and subthemes are:

1. Personalising learning
2. New views of equity, diversity and inclusivity
3. A curriculum that uses knowledge to develop learning capacity
4. “Changing the script”: Rethinking learners’ and teachers’ roles
5. A culture of continuous learning for teachers and educational leaders
6. New kinds of partnerships and relationships: Schools no longer siloed from the community.

Subthemes: The role of current and emerging technologies and the role of collaborative practices.

Bolstad and Gilbert also argued that coherence and connectedness are important across all aspects of schooling in order for innovation to thrive and for 21st century learning needs and ideas to be fully realised. This coherence and connectedness was needed in relation to the principles and subthemes above, as well as wider school systems. Although pockets of innovative practice existed in New Zealand schools, the future-oriented ideas explored by the authors were yet to be implemented in a widespread manner, although this is likely to change as new schools are built and existing schools are adapted in accordance with innovative learning environments (see, for example, <http://mle.education.govt.nz/>) and the recognition of 21st century learning needs such as those articulated in this literature review.

A recent publication is the book *“Key Competencies for the Future”* (Hipkins et al., 2014). This is useful to include in this literature review as it is directly pertinent to *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), it is future-focused and it provided several vignettes from HPE, including from Home Economics. The authors described the curriculum as a flexible and enabling framework that is future-focused in respect to the vision, principles, values and key competencies (the ‘front-end’). The authors viewed the fostering of key competencies as a means by which students can *“develop the capabilities they need to engage productively with wicked problems”* (p. 24). They went on to provide examples of this within learning areas, for example the development of critical thinking, literacy and collaborative skills in the context of a food security unit in Home Economics and the development of problem-solving and teamwork skills, and the capability to participate and contribute to the community in the context of health promotion. Several examples of

learning opportunities that support the development of key competencies were also described in general terms, and these had explicit links to learning in Home Economics (and HPE). For example taking collective action to tackle real problems in a community (health promotion), using knowledge in new ways for new purposes (developing recipes to cater for specific dietary needs), revisiting ideas over time (exploring the underlying concepts of HPE in a variety of contexts) and creating links between learning in different contexts (links between learning in the three HPE subjects, links between the theoretical and practical aspects of Home Economics).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a summary and critical analysis of perspectives, issues and priorities from the literature in the areas of international Home Economics literature, the literature from Home Economics and HPE in New Zealand, and future-focused education and learning literature from both New Zealand and overseas. Across the sections, a number of ideas have reoccurred.

The perennial problems articulated in international Home Economics literature such as low status, teacher supply and fragmentation of the profession (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008; Ma & Pendergast, 2011; Pendergast, 2001) have also been reported in the New Zealand literature (Hipkins et al., 2005; Street, 2006) as being a challenge and concern for the future of the subject. Also of concern internationally and locally are misunderstandings that exist about the purpose of Home Economics and HPE learning. This was prominent across the sections in this literature review, especially in relation to the contribution that subjects in the learning area make to addressing health issues such as obesity (Gard, 2011; Hashimoto & Wham, 2013; Lichtenstein and Ludwig, 2010; Quennerstedt, Burrows & Maivorsdotter, 2010; Robertson, 2005; Sinkinson & Burrows, 2011).

The need to shift to emancipatory practices and to an empowerment orientation in Home Economics identified by international authors (IFHE, 2008; McGregor, 2009; McGregor et al., 2008) links to a variety of aspects of future-focused learning ideas and needs from both New Zealand and overseas. Aspects of the emancipatory and empowerment approaches explicitly link, within the context of HPE, to criticality and social justice (Culpan & Bruce, 2007), taking collective health-promoting action (Robertson, 2005) and the health competencies proposed by Sinkinson and Burrows (2011). In regards to more general

future-focused themes, these approaches link to service-based learning (Furco in Dumont, Istance & Benavides, 2010), the 'future-building' aspects of learning discussed by Facer (2011) and the examples given by Hipkins et al. (2014) in relation to students' development of the key competencies in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007).

An extensive range of literature was covered in this review. However, the majority of the literature represents big-picture thinking as well as positions taken by researchers and professional associations such as the IFHE, rather than primary field research. Moreover, the majority of the New Zealand literature in this review is from the mid-2000s, against the background of curriculum and NCEA development and implementation in New Zealand. This thesis research seeks to present a contemporary and future-focused view of Home Economics in New Zealand and as a result, address the gap that exists in Home Economics research in New Zealand as well as inform the international body of research of a New Zealand perspective on the future of Home Economics.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design of the study. It will begin by outlining the theoretical position and research paradigm underpinning the study. A discussion of the research setting and participants follows, along with data collection and analysis methods. Ethical considerations and issues relating to rigour and trustworthiness are also addressed in this chapter.

The overall aim of the research was to give voice to Home Economics teachers in New Zealand secondary schools about possible future directions for the subject. This research addressed one overarching question, *how do teachers envisage the future of Home Economics in New Zealand?* Three sub questions informed the overarching research question:

4. How do teachers define contemporary Home Economics?
5. How do teachers want to be positioned in the school context and curriculum?
6. How do teachers view the value of Home Economics for learners in the 21st century?

3.2 Theoretical framework

This research was based upon a social constructionist approach in which individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences socially, culturally and historically (Creswell, 2014). Key assumptions inherent in the social constructionist position will be considered in relation to this study: a critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge, understandings of the world are historically and culturally specific, knowledge is constructed between people through social processes and interactions, and knowledge and social action are related (Gergen, as cited in Burr, 1995).

Social constructionism is a useful theoretical position for this research in the New Zealand context for three main reasons. Firstly, HPE is anchored in socio-critical underpinnings (Burrows, 2005; Culpan & Bruce, 2007). As a result, learning experiences in which teachers engage students in Home Economics align with the social constructionist approach.

Secondly, the in-service learning opportunities provided for teachers of Home Economics in recent years have focused on strengthening communities of Home Economics practice by developing clusters and sharing best practice among teachers of the subject as well as with teachers across HPE. The latter is congruent with international Home Economics literature that advocates a shared empowerment orientation for the profession (Vaines, 1993). This involves strengthening communities of practice whereby Home Economists work together for the common good of the profession (McGregor, 2009) and building collaboration and belonging within a community of enquiry (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008). This inevitably involves harnessing social processes to construct shared beliefs and practices. Thirdly, literature on 21st century teaching and learning reflects the need to focus on teachers and schools working together to build communities of practice, where ongoing interaction between members deepens understanding and develops best practice and become learning communities, where individuals work together to change their practice (Bull & Gilbert, 2012).

3.3 Research paradigm

The research employed a qualitative case study approach with transformational research foundations. Transformational research seeks the voice of the oppressed in a strengths-based way to advocate for social justice and change (Mertens, 2009). Transformational research design allowed opportunity for Home Economics teachers participating in the case study to have their voice heard regarding a number of issues relating to the subject. This also potentially provides opportunity to inform educational policy and practice in New Zealand, depending on the extent to which the research findings can be disseminated.

Transformative researchers use a range of qualitative methods and are flexible in their approach (Mertens, 2015). An essential element of transformative research methodology is the involvement of participants across all parts of the research process. This was achieved in the thesis research in several ways:

- Requesting participant feedback on proposed interview questions
- Asking participants to check the interview transcripts for accuracy and making changes to these if requested
- Requesting comments on initial analysis of data
- Asking the teachers in the individual interviews to analyse the word clouds

- Questioning participants as to whether being involved in the research changed their thinking, or provided impetus to take action, in relation to the future of Home Economics.

By asking these questions and allowing for participant involvement in the shaping of interviews and analysis of data, there was potential for the participants' thinking and actions to be transformed, as I hoped this would allow them to feel some ownership within the research (both in the process and the findings). Mertens (2007) asserted that involving community members in initial discussions of the research focus is also a feature of the transformative approach. As discussed in section 1.5 above, many discussions I have had in recent years with Home Economics teachers have related to their hopes and concerns for the future of the subject in New Zealand schools, which ultimately sparked my interest in this as a research topic. Therefore it is pertinent that this thesis research employed the transformative research approach.

Care was needed, however, in order to avoid conveying a deficit perspective, which occurs, according to Mertens (2009), when researchers focus on problems rather than strengths in relation to the issues under investigation. This is a particular danger when employing the transformative research approach, due to its focus on issues or injustices facing a research population. Rather, a strengths-based lens was foremost in my mind throughout the research process.

Four basic belief systems help to define a research paradigm (Mertens, 2015):

1. Axiology
2. Ontology
3. Epistemology
4. Methodology.

These four areas provide a framework to explain and justify the theoretical underpinnings for this research, as explained below.

1. Axiology:

Of utmost importance to the transformational research paradigm are notions of social justice, respect, beneficence and justice (Mertens, 2009). This research was purposefully designed to foster these values by careful consideration of ethical issues in design as well as throughout the research process. Moreover, the research was designed to provide opportunity for participants to co-construct interview questions in order to ensure that what

they want heard and represented is taken into account. Ethical considerations are explored in more detail later in this chapter.

2. Ontology:

Ontology refers to the reality of what we accept as true (Mertens, 2015). This reality is constructed by social processes within the social constructionist perspective (Burr, 1995). In this study, historical, political, cultural, gender and social aspects were considered in order to present the reality of Home Economics in New Zealand today and to present teachers' ideas about future directions for the subject.

3. Epistemology:

This study was premised on the belief that knowledge is culturally and socially bound, defined and constructed. It is subjective, and is socially and historically located within a complex cultural environment (Mertens, 2009). Schools are political, cultural and social institutions, where, inevitably, there are power relationships between learners and educators, and educators and school leaders. The research explores how knowledge and power relates to Home Economics in New Zealand.

4. Methodology

A case study has been used as it provides a mechanism for understanding complex social phenomena. A case study can be defined as an in-depth examination of a case, as identified by the researcher (Lichtman, 2013). A case study design is useful when a researcher has little or no control over behavioural events and when the focus of the study is a contemporary set of events (Yin, 2014). Case studies add to existing experience and humanistic understanding (Stake, 1978) and create descriptions of events that are complex and holistic. This aligns well to the transformational research design because a range of aspects of participants' experiences can be captured. Moreover, as Mertens (2009) asserts, "case studies allow for the type of relationships to develop that are needed for data collection for the purpose of social transformation" (p. 173). For this reason, qualitative methods are critical within a transformative research paradigm (Mertens, 2009). Qualitative methods allow exploration of individual meaning and help to explore and understand "the meaning individuals ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2014; p.4). This suits the exploration of issues relating to Home Economics in New Zealand because it allows opportunity for teachers' perspectives to be explored to add to understandings about the subject in New Zealand (as well as potentially explore misunderstandings that exist about the subject).

Transformative research is linked to social constructionism. According to Burr (1995), social constructionism is a theoretical orientation that underpins 'new' research approaches in the social sciences, of which transformational research is one. Transformational research relies on (in this case) Home Economics teachers having a shared understanding of the world, constructed through their professional conversations, beliefs/values and actions as Home Economics educators in New Zealand. This is because of the very aims of transformational research – to have a collective voice heard in order to advocate for change and inform (and provide direction for) future research in the field.

3.4 Setting and participants

3.4.1 Defining the 'case'.

Setting the boundaries for a case study refers to selecting the relevant social group, organisation, area and type of data to be collected (Yin, 2014). For this research, multiple cases are examined, each case being a teacher of NCEA Home Economics in a school in New Zealand. The type of data to be collected is qualitative; in keeping with a case study's purpose of answering questions of 'why' and 'how' and understanding complex phenomena (Yin, 2014).

3.4.2 Accessing participants.

I contacted the president and several board members of the Home Economics and Technology Teachers Association of New Zealand (HETTANZ) to recruit participants for the study. I gave HETTANZ information about the proposed research, with a request to invite members of the association to contact me by email if they were willing to participate in the study (see appendix 3). The six participants were selected from among those who responded to this invitation.

3.4.3 The schools.

Participants in this study were teachers from six different schools across two urban centres in New Zealand (one in the lower North Island and one in the South Island). The schools range in decile rating from 6-10 and in size from approximately 600 students to approximately 1800 students. Two of the schools are state integrated and four are state schools. Three of the schools are co-educational and three are single-sex (two girls' schools and one boys' school). All of the schools offered Home Economics as an NCEA subject across level 1, 2 and 3 NCEA (however not every level of NCEA would necessarily be taught in any given year due to numbers opting into the course).

3.4.4. The participants.

The six participants in this study represented Home Economics teachers of a range of ages, backgrounds, experience, positioning within the school and responsibilities within the department in which they teach. This diversity enabled me to capture a wide range of perspectives. All six participants were women and their ages ranged from mid-30s to late-50s. While one teacher had obtained a Physical Education degree and teaching qualification, the remaining five had studied home sciences/consumer and applied sciences (two of whom had worked in the food industry prior to entering into teaching and two of whom were currently building upon their Home Sciences and teaching qualifications by studying in the area of public health). Years teaching Home Economics ranged from 8 – 30 years and all of the teachers had taught the subject in New Zealand only. Three of the teachers had in the past been involved in Home Economics at a national level through involvement in HETTANZ and/or the development and marking of NCEA examinations and/or other leadership opportunities in the subject. Five teachers were positioned within the Technology learning area/department in their school, and one teacher was positioned within the Health and Physical Education learning area/department. One teacher was the Head of Department (Technology) and one was the assistant Head of Department (Technology). Two other teachers held 'teacher in charge' responsibilities for Home Economics in their schools.

3.5 Data collection.

In keeping with qualitative research design, semi-structured interviews were used as the primary tool for data collection in this case study. According to Mertens (2015), interviews are used when the researcher wants to fully understand someone's impression or experiences, which is congruent with the aims and objectives of the research. In fitting with transformative methodology, the interview questions were checked by participants before the interviews in order to ensure that their voice was heard and that what they wanted to tell could be told. The semi-structured approach allowed for flexibility in questioning during the interviews but also ensured that the relevant topics were addressed in the interviews (Mertens, 2015).

Firstly, interviews were conducted individually with three teachers. One focus group interview followed, which comprised three different teachers from those interviewed separately. I developed an interview guide (Lichtman, 2013) for the interviews after having sought feedback on the proposed questions from the participants. The participants were interviewed twice, each interview lasting approximately one hour in length. The purpose of the follow-up interview was to discuss initial research findings with the participants and allow them opportunity to expand upon, clarify or challenge the ideas raised as well as capture further voice on aspects of future-focused teaching and learning, which were missing or scarce from the data collected in the first round of interviews.

Additionally, document analysis was used as a secondary data collection tool. I asked the three teachers who were involved in the individual interviews to provide me with their NCEA course outlines and subject selection booklet information in order for these to be analysed for key and recurring words/terms relating to Home Economics.

3.5.1 Individual interviews.

The first interview for the three teachers involved in individual interviews took place in November 2015. This timing was chosen as the teachers had a reduced teaching load due to senior students having left for the year. Each interview took place in the teacher's school; for two teachers the interview location was the Home Economics classroom and for one teacher the interview took place in the school library. All interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder. Two teachers had prepared notes for the interview, which were given

to me as 'additional notes'. The interview guide for the first round of individual interviews is presented in appendix 5.

The second interview for the three teachers involved in individual interviews took place in February 2016. Each teacher made time during the school day to meet with me, and the interviews took place in the school's staff room, the Home Economics office and the Home Economics classroom. All interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder. See appendix 7 for the interview guide for the follow-up individual interviews.

3.5.2 Focus group interviews.

The first interview with the three teachers involved in the focus group interview sample took place in November 2015 for the same reason as described in 6.5.1 above. The interview location was a meeting room in the school of one of the participants. The interview was recorded on a digital voice recorder. The interview guide for the first focus group interview is presented in appendix 6.

The second interview was scheduled and rescheduled several times, before I conceded that it was not going to be possible to conduct a face-to-face interview with the three teachers as a group. As a compromise, I interviewed one of the teachers face-to-face, using the digital voice recorder to capture the interview discussion. After transcribing the interview, I extracted key points that she made for each question posed to her. I then transferred them to a secure Google Document for the remaining two teachers to add their thoughts to. This Google Doc was accessible solely to the focus group teachers and me. This method allowed for somewhat of an online conversation between the three teachers and enabled the three teachers to have input into this second round of questioning, despite not being able to meet face-to-face as a group. The interview guide for this follow-up interview is the same as for the follow-up individual interviews (appendix 7).

3.5.3 Transcription.

I transcribed the digital recordings for all interviews as Microsoft Word documents. The process of transcription enabled me to become familiar with the data and begin making sense of the teachers' positioning and thoughts. Once transcribed, these documents were

emailed to the participants to check for errors and confirm their accuracy. On the basis of feedback gained from the participants, minor changes were made to the transcriptions. This mainly involved the removal of several statements made that the participants did not want 'on the record'.

3.5.4 NCEA course information.

Participants in the individual interview sample group provided me with their NCEA Home Economics course information. This was information given to students considering opting into Home Economics courses as well as information provided to students once they are studying the subject. This information was given to me in three forms: One teacher emailed the information, the second teacher directed me to the school website where I downloaded the relevant information and the third teacher provided me with a hard copy.

The information was compiled into three separate Microsoft Word documents – one per teacher/school. For the information provided in hard copy, I retyped this into a Microsoft Word document and for the information provided via the school website, I copied and pasted this into a Microsoft Word document. The analysis of these documents is described in Section 3.7.2 below.

3.6 Ethical issues

Consideration of ethical issues encompasses the research processes of planning, undertaking and dissemination (Cullen, Hedges & Bone, 2009). At each stage, diverse and unique ethical tensions, conflicts and dilemmas can potentially arise. Therefore, I paid attention to the possibility of these occurring as the research is undertaken. Ethical approval for the research was gained from the University of Canterbury's Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC).

Specific ethical issues that were considered when carrying out this research were:

- Power relationships. All participants knew me before volunteering to be part of the research via previous professional contact. Approaching teachers directly to ask if they want to take part may have created pressure for them to do so. It was therefore more ethical to recruit participants through the subject association (HETTANZ).

- Confidentiality and anonymity. The Home Economics teaching community in New Zealand is small so care was needed to avoid participants being able to be identified (for example by giving limited information about their school or their background). No identifying features exist in the research. Hard copies of files were stored in a locked cabinet and electronic documents were password protected during the research process.
- Informed consent. The consent form and information letter outlined all the information needed in order to fulfill the need for informed consent about the aims and methods of the research, the nature of participant involvement and how the findings were to be presented and/or disseminated (see appendix 4).
- Respect, beneficence and justice. Utmost attention was paid to this in an on-going manner, in accordance with transformative methodology. This meant that processes and procedures concerning informed consent, confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the research were robust. I acted with the intent of 'doing good' by the participants, and participants were treated fairly across the research process.

3.7 Data analysis

3.7.1 Analysis of interview transcripts.

Consistent with the grounded theory approach described by Corbin and Strauss (2008), the data analysis was carried out in an on-going way using what Marilyn Lichtman (2013) refers to as the three Cs of analysis: from coding, to categorising, to concepts. This process is iterative, inductive and reductive, whereby a researcher can organise data into codes and categories of codes. From this, concepts (themes), descriptions and theories can be constructed (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). For this study, focus is given to concepts rather than the development of theory. The lack of theory development therefore means that the grounded theory approach has been drawn upon only, and not fully adhered to, but a thematic analysis has been used.

The process described by Charmaz (as cited in Mertens, 2015) whereby coding involves two phases: initial coding and focused coding has been used. Lichtman (2013) refers to this as 'initial coding' and 'revisiting initial coding'. For the initial coding phase, codes were placed next to words, phrases and segments (Mertens, 2015) from the interview transcripts. The purpose of this is to help identify pertinent themes, patterns and actions to enable the

organisation of the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). For the focused coding phase, the initial codes were collapsed and renamed by removing redundancies, renaming synonyms and clarifying terms (Lichtman, 2013) in light of the full body of interview data, in preparation for the development of meaningful categories.

After coding was complete, the next stage in data analysis was the organisation of the codes into categories. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), categories are higher-level concepts or themes under which analysts group lower-level concepts (the focused codes) according to shared properties. This process was achieved by using mind-maps that grouped the focused codes into similar ideas for each interview under three different headings. In the end, I decided that these headings were the categories, but needed to be renamed slightly: *“I think the best categories are what I’ve come up with already, as a result of organising my (focused) codes in the sketches from each transcript... I have decided to rename the categories in order to ensure best fit with the future-focused angle for this research”* (memo 11, 9 January 2016).

Corbin and Strauss articulate the importance of concept formation as part of data analysis because *“concepts form the basis for generating common understandings (and are) tools that people use to...understand the worlds they live in”* (2008; p. 20). It is useful to note how concepts differ from categories. While categories provide a way of organising codes under labels, concepts reflect the meaning the researcher attaches to the data (Lichtman, 2014) and thus are the product of refinement (the final step of the three Cs). In order to develop the concepts, I asked myself the following questions: *(How) do the ideas fit together? Do I need to use all of these ideas? How many do I want? Which ones fit better with the future-focused themes and systems of action? What will I call them?* (memo 12, 9-10 January 2016).

Analytical memos were used alongside the three Cs of analysis. The analytical memo assists a researcher to record observations and emerging thinking and to make links between analysis and the literature (Mills & Morton, 2013). Memo writing enables researchers to record thoughts about ‘what is going on here?’ and ‘how can I make sense of it?’ (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014). The construction of memos alongside the coding and categorising of interview transcripts allowed me to capture my thinking, raise questions about meaning, begin to develop links between data and take note of important quotes (Mertens, 2015). This links to Corbin and Strauss’ assertion that coding and categorising involves interacting with the data and digging below the surface to find meaning (2008) as well as Coffey and

Atkinson (1996) who state that coding allows a researcher to interact with and think about data. As a result, the memos were a valuable tool that enabled me to document my thoughts and questions, and supported the development of concepts drawn from the interview data. These memos took the form of written notes and mind-maps drawn with a stylus on an iPad. The mind-maps were exported from the iPad as .jpg files and inserted into a Microsoft word document containing the written notes. In total, I wrote 35 pages of memos.

3.7.2. Document analysis.

Word clouds are a visualization of text in which the more frequently used words (ideas, concepts or terms) are highlighted by having more prominence in the word cloud (McNaught & Lam, 2010). Word clouds can be used as a tool for preliminary analysis or a supplementary tool to further confirm research findings and find out differences between responses. Pendergast (2010) investigated the use of word clouds in a Home Economics research context and concluded that word clouds are a useful way to present concise summaries of key messages in a way that appeals to a digitally literate reader. I was interested in their use for the document analysis component of this study because representation of ideas in a word cloud offers a visually-appealing and contemporary way to analyse and communicate data, this provides a point of difference as compared with the analysis of data gained from the interviews and because word clouds are familiar to teachers and are commonly used in educational contexts.

For the word clouds I wanted only adjectives, verbs and nouns related to the learning in Home Economics in the three schools (the purpose, concepts, content and learning/skill development outcomes of the subject). All other words were removed, including the names of the courses. Occasionally, words were hyphenated to retain their meaning when transferred into the word cloud (e.g. think-critically, Achievement-Standard). See appendix 8 for the list used to generate the word clouds.

One word cloud was created which compiled all words from across the three schools to illustrate the words used in combination to describe the learning in Home Economics. Three additional word clouds were generated – one for each school to illustrate how learning in the subject was conceptualized by each teacher as well as to explore similarities and differences between schools.

The online word cloud generator www.wordle.net was used to create the word clouds. This software was chosen because not only do clouds generated through this tool give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text (Feinberg, 2014), but the word clouds generated can be refined by font, colour and layout, and can be downloaded as .png files.

There is no set structure or protocol of how schools or teachers present information about their subject to students, therefore the type and quantity of information varied according to school. For example, School 2's quantity of information was larger than School 1 or 3's, and this is reflected in the number of words depicted in the respective word clouds. This inconsistency of data sourced was a limitation of using this type of information in the research.

3.8 Rigour and trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) pose the following question: *"How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?"* (p. 290). For this purpose, they propose four criteria that can be applied to qualitative research in order to establish rigour and trustworthiness:

1. Credibility
2. Transferability
3. Dependability
4. Confirmability.

Credibility was established in several ways. For example, the use of two interviews per participant rather than relying on one interview per participant to collect data. There were several opportunities during the research process for 'member checks', which Lincoln and Guba refer to as the most crucial technique for establishing credibility (1985). These member checks occurred by the participants checking the interview transcripts, as well as offering opportunity at the beginning of the follow-up interview to challenge or add further ideas in relation to my analysis of findings of the first round of data collection: *"Is there anything that jumped out at you in the 'initial findings' that you want to discuss/challenge or elaborate upon?"* (Interview guide – follow-up interviews, Appendix 7). Finally, the use of the word clouds as a supplementary analysis allowed for the collection of more than one source of data (triangulation). Alongside this, the 'member check' was used once again; this

time by giving participants the opportunity to analyse the word clouds themselves. One further source of data was the extensive memos that I wrote throughout the research process.

Transferability refers to the extent to which findings can be transferred to other contexts (Lichtman, 2013). With this research being a case study design with social constructionist underpinnings, it does not naturally mean that one participant's experience will reflect another's, or be able to be generalised to a larger population. However, this was addressed by the diversity evident in the study's sample. For example the six participants were from a range of schools, two different geographical locations, ranged in age and in how many years they had been teaching Home Economics. They had come into the profession via different qualifications and pathways.

Dependability and *confirmability* are more difficult to ascertain within this thesis research, given the multiple social contexts within which the participants are located. Indeed with a case study design, it is more likely that subjective points of view are captured than objective (and therefore less likely to be proven dependable and confirmable). However, I perceive an acceptable degree of dependability and confirmability to have been achieved by the high level of agreement between participants (inter-subjective agreement) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This level of agreement was evident through the member checks described above. Moreover, the findings (see Chapter 4 following) were congruent with the themes and issues raised in the literature review in Chapter two of this work, which reinforces my view that the findings are dependable and confirmable across New Zealand Home Economics teachers' contexts.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) describe a wide range of alternative (and more contemporary) criteria for determining the rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research, including the recognition that this is not a one-size-fits-all approach (different qualitative methodologies lend themselves to different validation approaches). Furthermore, Lichtman (2013) raises the concern that Lincoln and Guba's four criteria omit the researcher's role and standpoint. However the use of the transformative approach calls for the need to consider the researcher's position, attention to voice and reciprocity (Mertens, 2015) as well as the inclusion of diverse viewpoints. Because I have followed the transformative approach, I am able to address this criticism as well as apply more contemporary thought to the determination of rigour and trustworthiness than had I solely applied Lincoln and Guba's criteria (1985).

Throughout this research, I was cognisant that I was an outsider researcher in the Home Economics community. My position, thus, was one of someone trying to gain further understanding, rather than impose my views into the research. At the same time, it was impossible for me to approach the research entirely without bias or completely objectively, given my professional background and current role within the Health and Physical Education learning community. This research included diverse viewpoints, as outlined above in the discussion of transferability. One further consideration was the notion of reciprocity; me as the researcher giving back to the Home Economics community (Mertens, 2015). I considered this a key aspect of the transformative approach within which I was researching. To capture the participants' ideas of how this could occur, I asked the following question in the follow-up interviews: *"How do you think the findings of this research can be disseminated to benefit the HEC community?"* (Interview guide – follow-up interviews, Appendix 7). I intend to use the participants' responses to shape avenues for dissemination of the study.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter described the research design and methods of this qualitative multiple case study. After outlining the study's aim and research questions, the chapter described and justified the social constructionist underpinnings of the research and the use of the transformative paradigm. In essence, the transformational research design allowed opportunity for Home Economics teachers participating in the case study to have their voice heard regarding a number of issues relating to the subject. Four basic belief systems were used to locate the research within the transformative paradigm: Axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology (Mertens, 2015).

The chapter discussed the research setting and six participants, including the methods used to access participants, details about the schools in which participants teach and information about the participants themselves. Data collection and analysis methods were outlined in depth. The methods involving the data collection by use of semi-structured participant interviews (primary data collection tool) and NCEA course information (secondary data collection tool) were outlined and located within the theoretical underpinnings of the research. Additionally, analytical memos written by me provided a further source of data. The use of the three Cs of data analysis was described: Coding, categorising and concepts (Lichtman, 2013). The chapter concluded with a discussion of ethical considerations and

issues relating to rigour and trustworthiness, with strong connections made between these aspects and the transformative research paradigm.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the study. Examples of data from the participants' interviews are provided along with the presentation of results from the thematic analysis undertaken (coding, categorizing, concepts) to address the research questions as outlined in section 1.6 above. Findings are presented theme-by-theme. Supplementary to this is a document analysis, which presents conclusions drawn from data depicted in four word clouds.

4.2 Participants' interviews.

4.2.1 Introduction.

The categories that emerged from the qualitative interview data analysis could be grouped into three categories:

- Learners
- Teachers and the education system
- Community.

Within these categories, a number of themes are evident, reflecting positive aspects of Home Economics, current and future challenges for Home Economics and links to a wide range of future-focused teaching and learning aspects.

Table 1 below provides a summary of the categories and themes found after analysing the participants' interviews. Following this is a commentary of key themes within each category, supported by quotations from the participants. The three participants from the individual interviews are referred to as the teachers from school 1, 2 and 3. The three teachers involved in the focus group are referred to as teachers A, B and C.

Learners		Teachers and the education system			Community	
<i>Perceptions and misconceptions about Home Economics</i>						
<i>Learning experiences</i>	<i>Learning outcomes</i>	<i>Home Economics profession</i>	<i>Place and visibility in The New Zealand Curriculum</i>	<i>Wider school</i>	<i>Whānau</i>	<i>Wider society</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspective taking • ICTs support learning, self-direction and assessment • Team/group work • Health promotion • Cross-curricular learning • Hands-on learning • Inquiry learning • Student-led learning • Practical activities • Flexible/open internal assessments • Meeting learners' needs • Tension between practical and academic • Sharing cultural knowledge • Critical thinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Understanding diversity of people and ideas • Passion for Home Economics • Understanding of underlying concepts • Soft skills • (Nutritional) literacy skill development • Empowerment • Advocates • Lifeskills • Awareness • Academic (links to tertiary & NCEA qualifications). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher learning from students (experiences, culture, ICTs, knowledge from economics, cooking skills) • Teacher study • Clusters • Subject association • PLD • Fragmentation/losing or losing identity • Need to advocate • Home Economics name • Future of Home Economics (ageing profession, learning and growing, shifts in subject, lack of teacher supply). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension between Home Economics and Technology, textiles, hospitality, PE • Situated in HPE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetabling tensions • Selling subject • Low literacy students • Disengaged students • Rooming issues • Losing students • In-school collaboration (in department) • Working across the curriculum • Others' attitudes towards Home Economics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with whānau • Pressure from parents (to take the 'right' subjects) • Whānau involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to community • Partnerships with community • Societal role models • Community connections • Links to health issues in society • Determinants of health (Government/media messages).

Table 1: Summary of categories and themes from the participants' interviews.

4.2.2 Learners.

This data generally focuses on strengths and positive aspects of Home Economics. As well, it highlights ideas consistent with a range of aspects of 21st century teaching and learning in response to the research questions around defining contemporary Home Economics and exploring the value of learning in the subject for their students. This data has been divided into two themes: learning experiences in Home Economics and learning outcomes of Home Economics.

4.2.2.1 Learning experiences in Home Economics.

The teachers discussed their use of a wide range of learning experiences in Home Economics. They viewed these as being innovative pedagogies that they were using to meet the needs of their (diverse) 21st century learners. Across the participants, there was a spectrum of confidence and experience with innovative practices in the classroom, and all of the teachers were applying these with their Home Economics learners.

Participants raised the importance and extensive use of practical learning experiences in Home Economics. These practical experiences were seen much more broadly than solely 'cooking' in the Home Economics classroom. For example these encapsulated hands-on inquiry learning, student selection of learning contexts, a variety of ways in which to learn and be assessed (group work, research and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)) *as well as* practical food preparation experiences.

Hands-on, inquiry-based learning was reported as providing engaging, authentic learning experiences in Home Economics. The teacher from school 2 reported that she had moved to teaching all of her Home Economics classes in this way:

We're all doing by inquiry... the question I gave them was something like why can you eat a steak blue and can you eat mince red? So we've had the BBQ out... the patties... one class did them today and there was a competition to see who could get the highest temperature in their patty... they just learnt so much... they are just loving it. I think teaching by inquiry, inquiry learning is the way to go.

The teacher from school 3 also discussed her use of hands-on learning experiences: *"What I'm doing is starting with the experience first... I am not giving them the theory."*

The participants reported an increase in student selection of learning contexts in NCEA Home Economics, alongside more innovative and 'open' internal assessment tasks and research. Teacher C in the focus group said that *"I think there's a lot more choice in the topics for the students, so they can pick something they are interested in. And I think that grows as teachers' confidence grows."* This was reinforced by teacher A from the focus group when she commented *"my year 12 for high energy have chosen their own sport and interviewed their own athlete, for some this worked really well and they really owned the work."*

Increasing student access to and competence with ICTs was viewed as an enabler for these more student-led emerging modes of learning and assessment.

When I first came here I made them (hand) write the assessments... But last year I changed that. I shared the Google Docs and they were doing it on there. And also while they were doing their research I could see what they were doing and given them guidelines so that's been really good, it's helping them... that's the shift that I've made because I've realised this is the 21st century, this is the way to go (teacher from school 3).

Practical food preparation experiences were, as expected, highly valued by the participants as providing key learning experiences in Home Economics, as well as providing an opportunity to practice working with others and select learning contexts of interest. The teacher from school 1 discussed the social bonds developed in her classroom through sharing food. *"We make them cook in partners and move around...I just think food, like sitting at a family meal table, that whole thing of sharing of food can ... it does start conversations."* Teacher C in the focus group explained student selection of practical cooking experiences: *"I've adapted the programme from having set practicals each week to allowing students to follow their interest, you know, so if they've got an interest in baking, then they can bake every week."*

However, a tension was raised around the need to balance practical food preparation activities with the 'academic' demands of the subject at NCEA level. For example, this was evident in the following exchange between teachers A and C in the focus group:

I still seem to have the practicals as this separate component and I just think we need to do a lot of work around those practicals to make sure they really do add value (teacher A). I agree. I have such good intentions every term on how (the practicals) will fit into the course but we seem to run out of time and they need a lot of help with literacy (teacher C).

Teacher B in the focus group reinforced this tension when she explained the frustrations students experience when they realise there are fewer practical (cooking) experiences than they had expected:

You say we're only going to cook once a fortnight, because there's no practical component to any of our standards... you have a riot on your hands. So you say OK, you're going to do a year's worth of work with two less periods a week, every week? And they sort of understand that, but they don't like it at all.

Learning experiences that were related to the underlying concepts of HPE were discussed as affording students the opportunity to engage in real-life learning contexts of societal significance, perspective-taking and critical thinking; as well as share cultural knowledge. The teacher from school 1 drew upon the socio-ecological perspective when she stated:

We try and get them to step inside other people's shoes and see it from their point of view... seeing it from another perspective... I have a Chinese boy doing year 12... and we were doing determinants of health and how they are interconnected... He wrote about being a refugee, a whole paragraph about how you feel social isolation... At level 2 I get them to do their food landscape. They look at it from a P, IP and then societal and then I say how do the determinants of health fit in?

The teacher from school 1 linked socio-ecological perspective learning to the application of critical thinking when she stated:

I think we push them outside of their comfort zone when we look at issues like food security, determinants of health, unemployment – challenges their ideas about who the unemployed are. So I think we do a lot of challenging assumptions and myths.

Opportunities for cross-curricular (or across the Health and Physical Education subjects) learning experiences were also widely discussed by participants. The teachers reported that they were either beginning discussions for this with other teachers in their school or that they were already implementing these in conjunction with others. The teacher from school 1 was at the point of thinking about initiating conversations around connecting the learning across HPE: *"I'd like to work more collaboratively with the PE department... there is opportunity for a sports module – sports nutrition as a component of that."* At the other end of the spectrum, the teacher from school 2 had already collaborated with teachers within HPE (on a sports nutrition course at level 2 and 3 NCEA) and across the curriculum:

I've worked in with RE because they did ethics at the same time as me. We looked at intensive farming and they were looking at euthanasia... some of my kids submitted their essays for English – they have to submit pieces of writing so the students have been using the writing they've done for me...I have a really good collaboration with Geography at level one - coffee, fair trade.... So they come in and they use the coffee machine and talk about different types of coffee and things and use my resources about coffee.

This data illustrates that, while the participants had varying experience with cross-curricular learning experiences, the potential for designing and teaching units of learning across the curriculum was valued.

4.2.2.2 Learning outcomes of Home Economics.

The participants reported a wide range of expected and actual learning outcomes for students who study Home Economics in the senior secondary school. These outcomes can be divided into three sections:

- Learning linked to the underlying concepts of HPE
- Soft skills
- Hard skills.

Learning linked to the underlying concepts of HPE:

In terms of the HPE underlying concepts, a strong theme that emerged was students' development of mindsets connected to empowerment, awareness and advocacy. These learning outcomes link to the underlying concepts of attitudes and values, the socio-ecological perspective and health promotion. As the teacher from school 2 explained:

I feel it is opening these guys' eyes to society. Several of my students from the past have come back and said to me, you know, that paper (advertising) opened our eyes so much to what's happening out there in the big, wide world.

Links to health promotion and its advocacy and empowerment aspects were evident in this comment from teacher A in the focus group:

When we do the L3 action plan with the kids, we're not going to solve some big problem but we might be able to take some tiny little small steps in our school community and wouldn't that be great if we could. I guess that's our whole idea, we are not going to solve the world's issues but we might start to make a little impact in our little part of the world.

Teacher C in the focus group reinforced this sentiment when she said *teaching the students, empowering them that this is the process and you could go into public policy or some sort of line of work where you use those skills.*

Teacher C in the focus group continued to explore learning outcomes linked to the underlying concepts of attitudes and values, health promotion and the socio-ecological perspective:

I hope that Home Economics students would always be open to working with people with different ideas... just sowing that seed of always stepping back and listening, walking in someone else's shoes, non-judgmental, social justice. Talking about the haves and the have nots and that hand of cards that you're dealt as a baby and you know what you do with that hand of cards and what can help you change.... seeing their eyes open a little bit... and looking at points of view before being... that things aren't black and white. So I feel our subject is fantastic with that.

Links to the underlying concept of hauora were also evident across participants' responses, including the importance of key content knowledge around nutrition and the development of nutritional literacy for lifelong well-being. The teacher from school 1 noted that her hopes for student learning in her classes included students *"making choices that will enhance their well-being, their family's, their community's. To be nutritionally literate so they have a feel for portion sizes."* The teacher from school 3 continued this sentiment by commenting that learning in Home Economics had the potential to *"make them so aware of what's going on and to make those choices. So from that point it's just everyday life, for well-being...the importance of taking care of their bodies. It may not be all that important to them now but it will be."*

Soft skills:

Participants in this study made both explicit and implicit reference to potential and actual outcomes in Home Economics for students' development of soft skills, for example the development of empathy, communication skills, the ability to work in a group and understand a variety of perspectives held by people and groups in society.

I first heard the term 'soft skills' used when the teacher from school 1 commented, in my first interview with her, *"I think maybe it makes them a little more accepting, and before they make a judgement they stop and think about it; more inclusive... we model the soft skills such as inclusion, social justice, fairness, participation, resilience... practical and problem-solving skills."* Teacher C in the focus group reiterated soft skills as outcomes of learning in Home Economics that will be valuable for their future lives: *"Being able to communicate clearly and confidently, problem-solving,*

being creative, setting goals and taking action, reasoned argument. They are all things they will need... effective group work."

Hard skills:

An alternative skillset raised by participants as potential and actual learning outcomes of Home Economics can be understood by use of the term 'hard skills'. For example, teachers discussed skills related to research, critical thinking and literacy.

Last year I followed six students who had left school the previous year... (I) asked them what had we helped them with. And all of them said this subject helped them the most in their first year of university in terms of their academic, research, being able to write critically. I couldn't believe it. It blew me away (teacher from school 2).

Lifeskills were also discussed as another type of hard skills developed in Home Economics, as articulated by the teacher from school 3 when she also recounted feedback from previous students:

I've had students come back to me that have gone to university and are now flatting and all that kind of stuff.... They've said it's been so amazing what they learned in Home Economics and that it's been really, really useful. I suppose it's the practicalities of everyday learning.

However it was also acknowledged by teacher B in the focus group that many lifeskills taught historically in Home Economics curricula are no longer a feature of learning in Home Economics in New Zealand: *"The traditional ironing, folding, cleaning and hygiene and all of that but also running a family/household budget and all that type of thing, none of our kids get that anymore."*

The development of technical food preparation or cooking skills was not specifically discussed as an outcome of Home Economics learning at NCEA level, however the use of practical food-related learning contexts were seen as facilitating valuable learning which extends across the soft and hard skillsets. For example, the teacher from school 2 stated that *"it's those skills to investigate further and to practice ... teaching those skills makes them so resourceful and makes them try... (through sharing food) they learn a lot of etiquette, manners, food presentation, eating with their eyes, different portion sizes, so much."*

Finally, misconceptions surrounding Home Economics (and the HPE learning area) arose across the interviews in relation to the perceived contribution that learning outcomes in Home Economics might make towards solving societal issues such as the obesity epidemic. For example, teacher C in

the focus group stated that *“it’s like the whole HPE curriculum is seen to be responsible, particularly with the obesity epidemic.”* This theme of misconceptions is prominent across the two categories of data that follow.

4.2.3 Teachers and the education system.

This data is focused on opportunities, issues and concerns. These arose in multiple responses across all research questions but especially the questions relating to how teachers defined contemporary Home Economics, how teachers wanted to be positioned in the school context and curriculum and the teachers’ hopes and concerns for the future of Home Economics. This category of data has been divided into three themes: The Home Economics profession, place and visibility in the NZC, and wider school. Additionally, ‘perceptions and misconceptions’ is identified as an overarching theme within this category. I have positioned this accordingly as a lot of the problematic issues and concerns reported to be associated with Home Economics are related in some way to others’ ideas about what the subject is about.

4.2.3.1 The Home Economics profession.

As outlined in Table 1 on page 56, ‘the Home Economics profession’ was the most extensive theme within this category. The data within this theme can be sorted further into two sections:

- Teachers’ on-going learning
- Current issues and concerns facing the Home Economics profession.

Teachers’ on-going learning:

The teachers actively participated in a wide variety of professional learning and development opportunities, which ranged from informal opportunities of learning from (and with) students in the Home Economics classroom to formal post-graduate University papers. These also included involvement in departmental collaboration, clusters, the subject association and Ministry of Education PLD.

Teachers discussed the knowledge that students brought with them into the Home Economics classroom and how they often learnt from the students in a variety of ways. The teacher from school 1 encapsulated this when she commented:

The boys taught me Padlet actually... I gave them a group task and they had the computers, and I saw them recording their answers on Padlet, talking to each other on Padlet, and I said, show me how to do this.... They would think of things I'd never thought of, attitudes and perspectives, that's what I want – I don't know everything. Some of them were doing Economics... they brought in all this knowledge about taxes and how it works, so that was good.

It was also evident that teachers were learning with students, as learning environments increasingly moved from relying less on teacher-dominated pedagogies to more student-centred ones. Teacher C in the focus group said: *“So I see that I am learning alongside them with literacy. I am learning alongside them with content; interesting topics they are choosing. And I think we're also learning alongside with ICTs, where we are trying, you know, different things.”*

Several participants mentioned their ongoing learning through involvement in clusters. For example, Teacher C in the focus group stated: *“I'm a strong believer in working in a cluster. My cluster, we worked really hard with the roll in of the new L1, L2, L3... we're in a period of consolidation now, just to support each other.”* Other teachers were more likely to work with others in their own school. *“I am in a great department where we collaborate a lot. But due to our location we find it difficult to do clusters”* (Teacher C, focus group Google Doc).

Participants discussed the access to PLD afforded by The Ministry of Education PLD provided through the Secondary Student Achievement contract (2012-2016) and the NZQA Best Practice Workshops. The teacher from school 1 thought that *“access to a subject advisor has improved opportunities for teachers to engage in subject-specific PLD and has improved teachers' confidence and understanding.”*

However, teacher C in the focus group raised the insecurity of ongoing access to such PLD opportunities as a concern when she stated that:

We've been very lucky to have really good professional learning opportunities over the years with the moderator doing BPWs, with Ed Plus; with you and your role. There's always that slight worry that, you know, it might not be there, that things always seem to be changing and that there's no guarantee that, we've had great PD this year but will we have any next year?

This comment is of particular relevance and concern given the Ministry of Education's redesign of PLD to be implemented from 2017 (Ministry of Education, 2016b).

Three of the six participants were currently involved in post-graduate University papers, having been awarded study leave from all or some of their classes. This was viewed as a chance to up-skill in areas relating to Home Economics and HPE and also to challenge what one teacher viewed as others' (in-school) perceptions of her:

I've got study leave. I am carrying on with my post-grad in health promotion from Otago. I start my first paper next Thursday... The reason I am doing (this qualification) is to give me more advanced standing with my peers... that will just give me the confidence, having that extra qualification (teacher from school 2).

It is evident from the findings above that the teachers had access to, and valued, supportive networks and PLD opportunities.

Current issues and concerns facing the Home Economics profession:

These were wide and varied, for example issues and concerns relating to the 'Home Economics' name, the ageing nature of the profession and lack of teacher supply and the limitations of the subject association. These issues were seen to have a likely negative impact on the future of Home Economics in New Zealand. In contrast, the need for Home Economics teachers to be advocates for the subject was raised across the interviews - this may provide a way forward in relation to these challenges.

The name used for Home Economics courses across the schools was a point of divergence. The teacher from school 2 asserted that she called it "*food and nutrition because Home Economics would not go down well.*" As she explained, she personally was comfortable with the Home Economics name, but others in the school perceived this to be 'cooking', thus she chose to call the subject Food and Nutrition. However the teacher from school 3 uses the Home Economics name:

The name Home Economics is obviously a problem because it has this association with cleaning and cooking and that. But I felt that I wanted to build up an understanding of what it means so that we don't confuse them even further because if I called it Food and Nutrition and then they come to the exam and it's called Home Economics again, what are we trying to do?

Within the focus group the teachers used different names for the subject in their schools as they explained:

Teacher C: *I think there are inconsistencies with naming which is an issue... so there'll be Home Economics teachers who call themselves Food Tech. but they do actually teach Home Economics. There's an issue around the shame of the name, and people renaming their subject Food Studies or Food and Nutrition, and I think there's an issue that if teachers have no pride then who else will – so students will be in a subject that's called Food Studies all year but then they go into the exam and it's called Home Economics. What's that sort of saying to the students?*

Me: You call it Home Economics at your school – what do you (B&A) call it?

Teachers A and B: *Food and Nutrition.*

Teacher A makes the following comment at the end of this exchange, indicating that teachers felt strongly either way, in relation to the name of the subject:

From different HODs I've worked under in three different schools... I've had one that's very Home Economics and now I have one who's very Food and Nutrition and they tend to be very passionate either side – there's no grey area in between...

The variety of names that were used to identify Home Economics in the participants' schools and the reasons given for these names demonstrated that there are divergent perspectives among teachers of Home Economics regarding the identity of the subject in New Zealand.

The ageing nature of the current Home Economics teaching community and the lack of teachers being trained as Home Economists in New Zealand teacher training institutions to replace teachers who are retiring, or who will be retiring in the coming years, was a recurring item of discussion. The three teachers from the individual interviews each referred to the possibility of impending death of the subject:

I'm not getting any student teachers coming through. I've had maybe three in ten years and they tend to be Technology, not Home Economics, and only one of them is still teaching now. So I dunno, how are we filling...? Cause there's this whole demograph, my age, teachers in their mid-fifties...

In response to the teacher saying this, I asked "what implications might that have for the subject?" She replied "I think it might die. I hate to say it" (teacher from school 1).

The teacher from school 2 also expressed the same concern:

I think we'll be dead because there's not enough people to drive it.... I don't know where we've gone, we just haven't been trained... I certainly don't want the subject to die. But I am going to be one of the ones that leave in the not too distant future. Unfortunately we're an ageing population and there's not many of us left.... I think from next year onwards we're going to notice a real... and where are these people coming from?

Finally this concern was raised by the teacher from school 3 when she explained:

In the eight years I've been here I haven't seen one student teacher coming into my classroom.... At every single workshop it's all my age group. So is there going to be a continuation? If we are looking to the future of Home Economics, if you're not going to have the teachers, it won't carry on.

These comments reinforce the need for strong support and representation from the subject association, HETTANZ. However, the limitations of their professional body were mentioned as a barrier to 'moving forward' as a subject and as a profession. The teacher from school 2 asserted:

I have concerns about HETTANZ... I know how hard it is, we all work fulltime. And that's a real issue... (A past president) was amazing, really proactive, going to government and all that. We don't seem to have that anymore. They should be in there. Where's our voice? This is our time in the sun and we're not there.

The teacher from school 1 echoed this sentiment: *"I think there's a huge role for HETTANZ... I think they have spread themselves too thinly and they are teachers... They lack the resources and capacity to meet the needs of its large and diverse membership base."*

As noted in the first comment above, subject associations are reliant on members' commitment to representing the interests of the subject on top of a busy fulltime workload. This means that advocacy actions are needed at every level of the profession, from within the school, to the local community, to the national level. In response to the interview questions about whether participating in the research had changed their thinking about the future of Home Economics and whether they would change any aspect of their practice, advocacy was discussed by all participants.

The teacher from school 3 stated *"I think if we can keep promoting it... maybe it's relooking at how we actually promote the subject and that is something I will think about and talk more about with*

other teachers as well.” The teacher from school 2 echoed this when she articulated the need for Home Economics teachers to *(be) “as supportive of each other as we always have been and sticking together because we’re a diminishing group... that’s the only thing I can do really. I can keep pushing in my school, but there’s only so much pushing you can do.”* Finally, advocacy was raised in the focus group, via the Google Doc: *“I suppose it just reinforces for me that I need to be a strong advocate for my subject. Yes within my school, but also outside”* (Teacher C). In response to this comment, teacher A said *“I agree we need to be constant advocates for our subject. So, so many people always say you are the cooking teacher. You have to be nicely strong actually no... it’s a bit more than that.”*

Finally in terms of the Home Economics profession, the participants held onto hope that recent shifts could provide a way forward for the subject in New Zealand. For example, the following exchange in the focus group:

Teacher C: *Food science, nutrition, is a new, relatively new science. And that’s so exciting that we are learning and growing.*

Teacher B: *But exhausting as well.*

Teacher C: *...I think there’s been such a huge shift with the curriculum and we need to bring principals and staff and parents along with that shift. We are now a University Entrance approved subject. We have access to a Learning Area Scholarship...*

The above findings have demonstrated that the participants access a wide range of opportunities to be ongoing learners. They also see the importance for them, other teachers and the subject association to be fierce advocates within the Home Economics community in the face of a number of issues and concerns facing the Home Economics profession.

4.2.3.2 Place and visibility in The New Zealand Curriculum.

The data contained in this theme includes a number of tensions between Home Economics and other subjects in the school contexts of the participants and their perspectives of where they see Home Economics as being situated in the curriculum, now and in the future.

The teacher from school 3 discussed the confusion that exists for teachers, students and schools around the positioning of Home Economics in the curriculum: *“There was Food Technology and Hospitality as well, so I was totally confused... everything was called Food Technology and I thought, well, I wanted to get rid of all this confusion.”* This links not only to issues relating to the variety of

names used for Home Economics courses discussed above, but the positioning of teachers within the Technology department when in fact they are teaching from HPE.

Tensions were raised between Home Economics and Technology and various subjects that sit in the Technology Learning Area. As discussed in section 3.4.4, five of the participants were members of the Technology department in their schools and one was a member of the Health and Physical Education department.

The teacher from school 1 justified her positioning in the Technology department by saying *“I’m under the umbrella of Technology but I don’t really fit there, but I’d rather be here because it’s a better department to be in, in this school.”* However, the units she taught within her Home Economics courses had changed in recent years. She discussed her removal of Hospitality aspects in her Home Economics courses in order to increase the standing of the subject within her department: *“I needed to set up that clear L1, L2, L3, University (pathway)... otherwise I wouldn’t even be on equal footing with the Technology subjects I’m in with.”*

Other participants discussed the philosophical conflicts between Home Economics and Technology/Hospitality: *“I think there’s an issue between the fundamental philosophical differences between Home Economics and Technology – they are not a natural fit”* (teacher C in the focus group). The teacher from school 1 affirmed this with her statement that *“you have to be careful about the Technology projects you choose if you do Technology, as it’s a total mixed message, you are working at cross purposes... I try to do things that fit in with Home Economics learning, we do gnocchi and cheese making, but others do biscuits, unhealthy stuff.”* Further to this, the teacher from school 2 asserted *“I think Hospitality has ruined Home Economics. Because Hospitality is all about eating, and using fat, sugar and salt.”*

Tensions within the subject association were also raised, in relation to HETTANZ being the professional association for a range of subjects, with differing philosophical bases: *“Textiles... we’ve always got this tension with HETTANZ of the different disciplines”* (teacher C in the focus group).

In terms of positioning in the curriculum, teacher C in the focus group explained her thoughts about how Home Economics is located in New Zealand in contrast with how it is viewed in an interdisciplinary way internationally, and the implications of this for her practice:

I’m a standalone subject and that’s because of the (1999 and then 2007) curriculum, it’s how they split us... I feel a bit devastated that my subject has narrowed. At (previous school) I was able to teach junior Textiles and senior Home Economics and at my current

school I've only been able to teach Home Economics... I see real value in (nutrition) and I love the HPE curriculum. I don't particularly like the Technology curriculum. So what a lot of Home Economics teachers don't realise is that Home Economics, in the old manner of the 'family' has been around and it's an international thing... so we've got the IFHE which isn't nutrition, it's much bigger than that... (In New Zealand) it's gone very singular. It's all political isn't it? In some ways it's nice to be able to specialize. I did find, keeping a really good knowledge of both Technology and the HPE curricula was problematic really – a bit more like primary teaching where you've got to have that knowledge of multiple curricula.

Despite predominantly being situated in the Technology department in their respective schools, the teachers saw themselves as teachers within HPE (curriculum-wise). However, the lack of visibility of Home Economics is an issue, according to the teacher from school 3:

If you look at the curriculum, you see PE and Health in the title. Home Economics doesn't even feature.... So Home Economics in it's own way is there, but it's not there and I think that's another problem... it's even more confusing when (I am) the HOD Technology. So I go to my meetings and it's all Technology – I don't talk about my subject at all... PE, that's where I should be really... I still think it fits under Health and PE... not everything that they learn in Home Economics is under Health but I think a large portion of it is. So I still feel that it should be there but it must be there in its own capacity.

It is clear from the data above that the teachers of Home Economics experience a number of different tensions within their school contexts. The teachers however view themselves as teaching from HPE in terms of curriculum content, despite the majority of them being physically located in the Technology area in their schools.

4.2.3.3 *The wider school.*

This theme raises further issues relating to perceptions and misconceptions of Home Economics within the participants' schools as well as systems issues, and concerns linked to students studying the subject. Opportunities for collaboration across the curriculum were also raised.

The negative attitudes of others in the schools towards Home Economics, based possibly on their perceptions and misconceptions of the subject, were reported across the participants in the study. The teacher from school 1 discussed how this continued in the school, despite younger teachers coming in, who presumably were never exposed in their own schooling to more traditional courses

in Home Economics:

I think the perceptions and misconceptions are still there, and they change every time you get different management, when deans change. And what's more worrying is that I am getting young teachers, who are our new leaders, and they haven't got a clue. The same old assumptions are being made. She went on to say that I am hoping that (through this research) it will come through about people's attitudes and perceptions – and this isn't good enough.

The perceived lack of others' knowledge about the nature of Home Economics was encapsulated in the following comment by teacher C in the focus group: *"I feel there is still a real lack of knowledge by management, staff, parents and students. I think that's a real challenge that we face – a real lack of knowledge about what Home Economics is."* This was reinforced by the teacher from school 1 when she explained that *"in the staffroom they just look at me as... and say 'are you making cakes today?' and I say no, not really... it's that old fashioned perception and placement, it's what they grew up with."*

However, teacher C in the focus group asserted the view that Home Economics teachers need to embrace and be proud of the practical nature of the subject when challenged by other teachers. *"That's OK, we do do practical. It's OK to be asked that. We can hold our heads up high and say no, I am not doing practical today but yep, we're making stir fries tomorrow. We don't need to cringe that we cook."*

Comments by participants regarding Home Economics learning were not confined to staffroom conversations between teachers: *"The teacher said to him I'm not sure why you are doing such a cabbage subject... That teacher came into my class and was talking to the boys... it's not all bad, but he shouldn't have said that to the student"* (teacher from school 3).

This data demonstrates the existence of perceptions and misconceptions about Home Economics on the part of other staff in schools. This is presumably founded upon the greater emphasis on the practical components of the subject (cooking, looking after the household) that may have existed when they themselves were at school. Despite this, the participants continue to value the practical nature of the subject, as encapsulated by the comment from the teacher from school 3: *"The attitude towards Home Economics that it is more about cooking and practical and it's not academic. But then on the other hand one doesn't want to put it as purely academic because we want to reach everybody really."*

Systems issues in relation to timetabling and rooming for students studying (or wanting to study) Home Economics were raised across the interviews. The three teachers who were interviewed individually each only had one specialist Home Economics classroom in their school and this caused pressure on the teaching space. This meant that the teachers needed to teach NCEA classes outside of the Home Economics room. *“I only teach my specialist subjects in the room one day a week because we have all these other classes coming in.... I’ve only got one room”* (teacher from school 2). *“We have huge pressure on the room. I have to teach my senior classes outside of this room but I don’t mind. I teach in English rooms and I find that is more conducive to all the work we are doing... they get in here and they think they are just going to eat or think about food”* (teacher from school 1). The latter comment demonstrates that this was not always problematic.

One further systems issue related to timetabling and the impact of timetable clashes on numbers (and the nature) of students studying Home Economics. As discussed by the teacher from school 1: *“My year 13 students who wanted to do Home Economics – they put PE on at the same time so they had this dilemma.”*

Dilemmas faced by students when they had to decide which subjects to study at NCEA level linked to concerns related to students studying (or not studying) the subject. The teacher from school 3 spoke at some length about not being able to attract the more ‘academic’ students, due to them being dissuaded from studying Home Economics. For example, she asserted that:

I can’t compete with the other subjects... I lost four of my best students who have been with me so enthusiastic, so passionate and then it came to level 3 – it’s the only year they haven’t taken it with me, they’ve been with me since year 9. Senior management need to support and understand the importance of the subject. There needs to be clear pathways for careers... I asked some of the girls who are coming into year 10 next year... and they said Miss, I really want to do it, but it’s not going to help me with my future... at the Universities they are not saying that this is one of the subjects that is required, you don’t need to have Home Economics.

This linked to perceptions and misconceptions about Home Economics held by a variety of stakeholders, as well as the lack of alignment to tertiary courses. Although Home Economics is a University Approved domain of study at level 3 NCEA, it is not recognised on University-preferred subject lists (much like is the case for Health Education; see Robertson, 2015) despite its complex literacy demands and conceptual understanding that would be relevant for students moving into health, education and social sciences, to name a few areas.

One further issue raised relates to concerns about students studying in Home Economics. The teacher from school 1 discussed the nature of students who chose (or were placed into) her NCEA Home Economics courses:

I have English Language Learners who are really struggling with all the technical terms, or I have very low ability readers... dyslexic, dyspraxic... it would be nice to have a balance, to get the whole spectrum rather than having this huge tail, which is what I seem to get... At year 11 I am getting a lot of the disenfranchised and I am focusing more on literacy, vocabulary and engagement.

Despite the above challenges, opportunities exist within the wider school for collaboration with other teachers, both curricular and co-curricular. As explained by the teacher from school 2: *“I feel I can collaborate with anyone in this school – the maths all the halves and quarters, the English – all the literacy.”* The teacher from school 1 discussed this in relation to health promotion: *“Some English and Social Studies teachers are really into the issues... and I’d really like to set up some sort of health promotion committee where we look at... getting a consistent message across the curriculum areas.”*

The data relating to the wider school and overall this category of teachers and the education system demonstrates that a number of challenges and opportunities exist for Home Economics teachers in New Zealand schools.

4.2.4 Community.

This is a smaller data set, with two themes emerging: Whānau and wider society. This data encapsulates both concerns about and opportunities in Home Economics for parental involvement and connections to the community and the New Zealand milieu as related to food/well-being issues of concern to society. This data arose from research questions relating to the teachers’ hopes and concerns for the future of Home Economics, as well as the value of learning in the subject for their students. In common with the data for the category in 4.2.3 above, ‘perceptions and misconceptions’ is identified as an overarching theme as this arises in both themes in this category.

4.2.4.1 Whānau.

Participants reported that they connected with whānau, seeking out opportunities to inform (and discuss with) parents their child's learning in Home Economics through regular email contact, school learning management systems, parent-teacher interviews, open evenings, fono (meetings for Pasifika families) and hui (meetings for Māori families). The teacher from school 2 told me that she had *"already sent out three emails saying this is what we are doing, and this is how we are doing it... a couple have thanked me very much, especially those parents who are new to NCEA."*

Moreover, the practical (food preparation) components of Home Economics were mentioned as affording opportunities for students to take their learning into the home. Teacher A in the focus group: *"We encourage students at all levels to take recipes home so they can make and share with families"*. Opportunities also arose for cultural knowledge from home to enter the classroom, as discussed by the teacher from school 3 when she stated that *"one of the girls was saying her grandmother makes mozzarella cheese, she's Italian, so I said "do you think your gran would be able to come in?" and she said "oh, I think she'd really like that"."* Opportunities also arose for teachers to collaborate with parents on food and well-being related issues. As the teacher from school 3 explained:

At (a parent fono evening) one of the mums said, what is the school doing to (ensure) the school is serving food that is healthy... So I called her afterwards and said please support me; if you can send an email to management, I need those kinds of supports. So maybe that is a way that I could be working with parents out there as well.

However participants spoke of some barriers and untapped potential in engaging meaningfully with whānau in relation to students' learning in Home Economics.

I feel that there are opportunities for students, parents, communities to be consulted, I don't think it's easy to do so... I also don't know how much they want to be consulted... Often when you contact a parent they think that there's something wrong or their student's been naughty. So I think we've got a long way to go (teacher C in the focus group).

I don't consult parents and maybe I should. I know health does, every two years and we are not really part of that and maybe we should be (teacher from school 1).

One further finding in relation to whānau relates to the idea of perceptions and misconceptions of Home Economics. Parental perceptions of Home Economics were mentioned as impacting

negatively on the number and nature of students studying the subject at NCEA level. Teacher A from the focus group had experienced hearing from parents, at open evenings, comments like “we don’t need to go in there, that’s just cooking.” The teachers from school 1 and school 3 spoke of family members actively discouraging their students from studying Home Economics.

We’ve got fairly conservative academic parents who don’t always see the value in this area, so their kids are encouraged to do other things... they don’t see the value in this subject” (teacher from school 1).

Some parents really from year 9 are so anxious about their girls doing the right subjects... I remember one of the girls who was a good student, she was dying to take Home Economics... her mother said you don’t need to go to school to learn those things (teacher from school 3).

These findings illustrate both the opportunities and the challenges that exist for the participants when engaging with whānau of both prospective students of the subject and of learners who are already studying Home Economics.

4.2.4.2 Wider society.

Participants spoke of the connections they have established in the community or their use of community and national bodies or initiatives to facilitate and support learning in Home Economics. Several teachers spoke of regular visits to the local supermarket, for example as encapsulated by the following comment made by the teacher from school 2:

We take them across to the supermarket heaps for different activities. We’ve been looking at the health star rating so we went over at the start of the year and couldn’t find any packaging, half-way through couldn’t find any, but there’s heaps now. And they’ve been excited to look for it as well.

Wider community initiatives, commercial entities and public figures were also discussed as having potential for Home Economics learning. As the teacher from school 1 explained:

The ‘Just Cook’ things is good, even My Food Bag with Nadia Lim. And we’ve had Super Size Me, Fast Food Nation, That Sugar Movie, Food Inc. And people like Michael Pollan and Marion Nestle. You hear them on National Radio.

Community connections had particular relevance for student-led health promotion action. As the teacher from school 3 noted: *“I actually take them to the food bank, we’re there working with them.”* The teacher from school 2 reiterated this point when she explained:

I think Home Economics has a huge role to play in the community... health promotion is huge... a couple of years back we were doing these boxes where we’d get (cans of food) and we’d do recipes for the cans that were in there and then we’d go deliver them to the food banks.

As well as teachers making use of community organisations for learning experiences in Home Economics, the teacher from school 2 discussed how groups in the community called upon her expertise. *“I had a woman email me from (a local community group) and they were wondering... what was my advice.... I’ve been doing some work with a dietician and she’s written this article... with my help.”*

However connections to community organisations were also viewed as an area for development in relation to making learning pathways visible to students and harnessing the potential for Home Economics learning of ‘what’s out there’ in society. The teacher from school 3 likely drew upon her past experience working in the food industry when she commented *“we need to have more connections with industry. Food companies play such a huge role in our lives – we need to have more involvement with them.”* Teacher C from the focus group backed up this sentiment:

We really do need to seize opportunities – people like Nadia Lim... and Dr. Libby Weaver – we need to be tapping into that and moving along with them... I just don’t think we are making enough of those sorts of opportunities to tap into those sorts of people and get them on board.

Another finding was participants’ discussion of the New Zealand milieu as related to food/well-being issues in society. This created opportunities that could be capitalised upon in relation to Home Economics learning, as explained by the teacher from school 1:

Media conversations around obesity and sugar tax – everything’s very topical now, we can ride the crest of that wave... that’s a platform for us to build on and push and promote our subject... a groundswell of public health professionals and high profile public figures who are positioning themselves to take on the food industry on nutritional issues.

But at the same time, the current milieu highlights tensions that exist between community structures (determinants of health) and learning in Home Economics. Teacher C in the focus group spoke of this tension in relation to the political determinant of health:

We are not really helped by changing governments as well. You know how we were saying about the canteen – the PTA was running it and all of a sudden it's a commercial contractor... I wonder if other learning areas feel as buffeted by the political ideology of the time as we seem to be?

Teacher B in the focus group raised this tension in relation to the economic determinant of health:

We're next to a (shopping centre) and you know, everything we teach them in class, yet every kid walks into my class with a can of Mother, and they hide it because they know how I feel about it, and they are still buying it.

The data relating to wider society highlighted the potential of Home Economics learning to take advantage of what and who is 'out there' in the community to make learning more authentic and connected to life outside of school. Opportunities for involvement in the community through health promotion were also illustrated above, giving prominence to this underlying concept of HPE.

4.2.5 Summary of findings: Participants' interviews.

It is evident from the rich excerpts from the participants' interviews, and my analysis and positioning of these into categories and themes, that a wide range of ideas were found through interviewing the six participants. The findings indicated that the teachers were cognisant of issues, challenges and concerns relating to Home Economics in New Zealand both currently and in the future. Likewise, the teachers spoke with passion for the myriad of opportunities afforded by the subject for learners in terms of educational and well-being outcomes. Although mainly being positioned in the Technology department in their schools, the teachers agreed that, in terms of curriculum, they wanted to be positioned in HPE. They enjoyed teaching from this learning area and they were passionate about learning experiences that promoted students' understanding of the underlying concepts and the skills needed to make choices conducive to lifelong well-being. Teachers were aware of the value of Home Economics for learners in the 21st century, evidenced for example by their willingness to increasingly use student-centred pedagogies and enable students to connect with their communities when learning.

4.3 Word clouds

4.3.1 Introduction.

The following word clouds depict adjectives, verbs and nouns related to the learning in Home Economics in the three schools who were part of the individual participant interviews sample for this study. These words illustrate the purpose, concepts, content and learning/skill development outcomes of the subject, as described by the teachers in the Home Economics course selection booklet and course outline provided to students studying the NCEA level courses in each school.

The first three word clouds present the words for each of schools one, two and three. The final word cloud is a compilation of all words from across the three schools. These word clouds illustrate how each teacher conceptualized learning in the subject as well as demonstrate similarities and differences between schools. The software used to generate the word clouds (www.wordle.net) includes in each cloud every word that was inputted from a list (see appendix 8), with the prominence of words directly related to the number of times they occurred in the inputted list.

A commentary is provided below each word cloud with observations and deductions from the data depicted in the word clouds. This is separated into two parts: Comments from the teacher whose school contributed to the word cloud and my comments. Following this is an overall summary which makes comparisons between this set of data and the findings from the participants' interviews.

4.3.3 Word cloud for school two.



Comments from the teacher at school two:

The 'well-being' is huge, isn't it. That's just what we're all about, totally. 'Skills' and 'knowledge' is quite interesting, 'challenging' – I love seeing that. 'Families' – I like seeing that a bit bigger, 'communities' – that's so cool. I'm interested to see that my 'food' is not very big. I did have a lot more words (than the other schools) and who's to say whether that's right or wrong. Even if you asked for my course outlines this year you'd see they are different again.

My comments:

It is clear from this word cloud that students are provided with more information (than schools one and three) about learning in Home Economics. Again, 'well-being' is the most prominent word, with other noticeable standouts including others, influence, skills, knowledge, develop and understandings. Unlike the previous two word clouds, the words 'practical' and 'food' are not prominent. This can be described as a conceptual word cloud, with many of the words contained linking directly to ideas from the NZC (HPE concepts and the Home Economics essence statement).

4.4 Summary of findings: Comparison between word clouds and participant interview findings.

The ideas depicted in the word clouds link closely to the findings from the participants' interviews, as categorised into learners, teachers and the education system and community.

Linking to the *learners* category, learning outcomes and learning experiences of Home Economics were prominent in the word clouds. This is unsurprising, as the purpose of the course information (from which the words were inputted for the clouds) includes information for students about the nature of learning in the subject. For example, references to learning experiences of practical food preparation skills, taking action, problem-solving, thinking critically and inquiry. References to learning outcomes included reference to the underlying concepts of HPE (attitudes, social justice, health promotion, influences and well-being) as well as nutrition.

A number of ideas from the *teachers and the education system* category also arose in the word clouds. These linked predominantly to the positioning of Home Economics within HPE and the academic nature of the course, with links to possible careers. For example, University Entrance, Health and Physical Education, food journalism, academic, nutritionists.

Finally, links to the *community* category also appeared across the word clouds. This linked to ideas from both subsections of the participants' interview data analysis, whānau and wider society. For example, families, communities, societal, world, making a difference, community health, health promotion.

The existence of a wide range of overlapping ideas demonstrates that the use of the word clouds as a supplementary analysis was useful in order to reinforce the findings and the categorisation of data from the participants' interviews.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and analysed the findings of the participants' interviews as related to the research questions outlined in section 3.1 of this thesis. The three categories and the themes within these, chosen after coding the data were illustrated using a wide range of quotations from the six participants involved in the interviews. The supplementary document analysis, which used data depicted in four word clouds, reinforced these findings.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The key findings outlined in Chapter Four above illustrate a wide range of participant viewpoints on a number of issues of importance to the Home Economics community in New Zealand. This chapter uses three analytical frameworks to make meaning of the key findings. These three frameworks were chosen in order to provide connection and coherence between different aspects of this thesis: Home Economics, HPE and future-focused teaching and learning.

The first framework is the HPE underlying concept of the socio-ecological perspective. The second framework is the six emerging principles (and two sub-themes) for a 21st century education identified by Bolstad and Gilbert (2012). Finally, systems of action, a triad of technical, interpretive and emancipatory practices (McGregor et al., 2008), is applied to the research findings, a framework which intersects findings relating to Home Economics, HPE and future-focused teaching and learning.

Links are made throughout the sections in this chapter between the key findings, analytical frameworks and the existing body of knowledge outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2.

5.2 The socio-ecological perspective

The HPE underlying concept of the socio-ecological perspective can be used as a helpful analogy to make meaning of the key findings by demonstrating how the three categories of findings connect to each other and to ideas from the literature relating to future-focused teaching and learning, Home Economics and HPE.

Robertson (2015) described the socio-ecological perspective as interrelated considerations of personal (individual), interpersonal (interactions between people), and community or societal layers (population level). The three categories from the participants' interviews outlined in the previous chapter map to the socio-ecological perspective as follows:

- Learners (personal layer)
- Teachers and the education system (interpersonal layer)
- Community (societal layer).

The diagram below demonstrates instances where research findings overlap between the three categories. The arrows are used to indicate the layer (direction) from which the influence originates and has an impact. For example, *the determinants of health and health issues in society* originate from the community layer and work their way inside the circles to have an impact on not only teachers and the education system, but also learners.

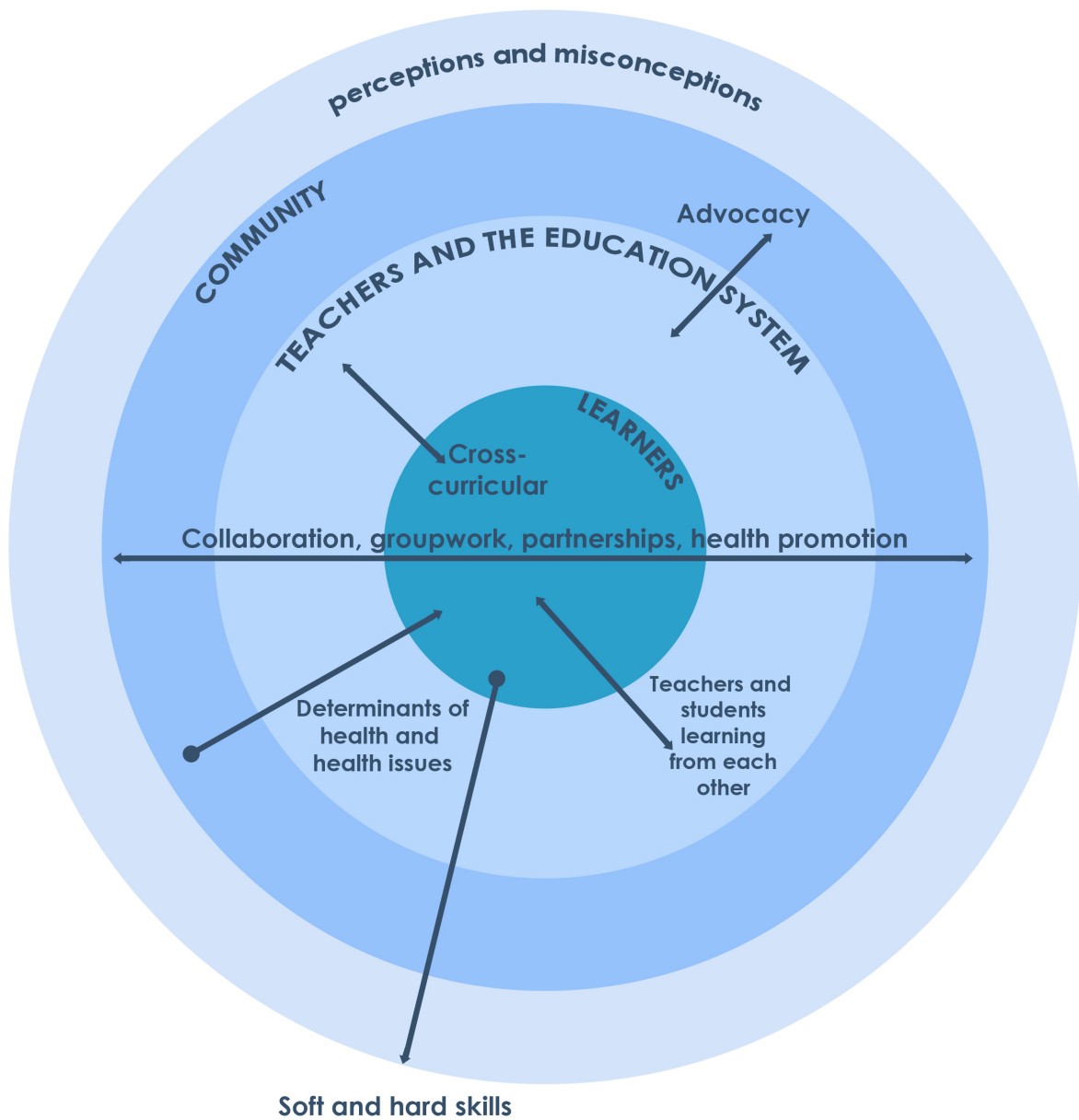


Figure 1: Illustrating the connections between findings using the socio-ecological perspective

The diagram shows that learning outcomes of Home Economics (soft and hard skills) link to teachers and the education system, but also to the wider community, as students move beyond school. Several findings go both ways across the categories. Collaboration, group work, partnerships and health promotion cross the layers in both directions, demonstrating that students and teachers work with others in and out of school, and that community structures likewise have an influence on teachers and learners. Cross-curricular collaboration intersects learners and teachers as this was seen to be a learning experience for students as well as an opportunity to work with other teachers. Advocacy moves from community to teachers when societal structures provide opportunities for teachers to advocate, and from teachers to the community when teachers use these opportunities to speak up. 'Teachers learning from students, and students learning from teachers' was also evident in the findings and as the name suggests, goes both ways between the *learners* and *teachers and the education system* categories. Finally, the theme 'misconceptions and perceptions' is positioned above and around (enveloping) the categories. I have placed this above the diagram in accordance with my assertion in sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 of the thesis that this is an overarching theme for the two categories *teachers and the education system* and *community*.

A variety of connections can be made between the ideas depicted in the diagram and the literature discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. A number of ideas pertinent to the future-focused teaching and learning literature are illustrated in the diagram above. The importance of not only 'hard skills' but also 'soft skills' such as empathy, communication, perspective taking, and the need for collaboration and partnerships were highlighted in the literature review. For example, the 'learning to work together' pillar identified by Delors (1996) and the proposition that learning co-operatively and developing effective relationships are essential for people to thrive in the 21st century (Dumont et al., 2010). Connections between school and community, depicted in the diagram as advocacy, partnerships and collaboration were asserted by Facer (2011) to be critical for a learning environment in the 21st century. Finally, the idea of health promotion connects to participation and contribution in community contexts raised by Hipkins et al. (2014) in their discussion of key competencies for the future in the context of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007).

The positioning of 'misconceptions and perceptions' as a theme enveloping the three layers of the diagram relates to a number of concerns raised in both the international and national literature in relation to Home Economics. This was defined in the international literature as one of the perennial problems facing the subject and wider profession (McGregor et al., 2008). As in the findings from this research, misinterpretations of Home Economics included school leaders, staff and parents viewing the subject as 'cooking and sewing' and non-academic (Pendergast, 2001).

This was echoed in New Zealand, where teachers of Home Economics reported that others' perceptions of the subject as 'cooking and sewing' impacted on the calibre of students studying the subject in the senior secondary years (Hipkins et al., 2005) and the subject was viewed as 'non-academic' (Street, 2006). The enveloping positioning of 'perceptions and misconceptions' therefore is an issue facing the future of Home Economics. Much like in the early-mid 2000s when researchers wrote of misinterpretations of the subject (for example Pendergast, 2001), the findings from this research indicate that these not only still exist, but have a potentially significant impact on Home Economics teachers and the future of the subject due to them enduring for teachers in their schools and the wider Home Economics community.

Finally, connections between the ideas depicted in the diagram above and the literature on HPE exist. Both determinants of health and health promotion are key concepts within HPE subjects (Robertson, 2005; Sinkinson & Burrows, 2011) the latter of which involves competencies also identified in the diagram such as collaboration, teamwork and partnerships. In terms of future-focused HPE literature, these concepts are congruent with the need for 21st century learners to 'do things with knowledge' (Hipkins, n.d.; Tasker, 2006) as they engage in critical thought and collective action to address identified health issues in their school or community.

The discussion above has used the socio-ecological perspective as an analogy to illustrate connections between a selection of key findings. The use of this concept has proven to be helpful for making meaning of these connections. This is both in the context of Home Economics and HPE literature and in relation to the literature about future-focused teaching and learning, both of which will be explored further in section 5.3 that follows.

5.3 The six emerging principles and two sub-themes for a 21st century education

As discussed in section 4.4.2 above, Bolstad and Gilbert (2012) proposed a set of future-focused guiding principles (and sub-themes) for education as the result of a Ministry of Education commissioned research project. These principles and sub-themes provide a useful framework for analysis in this thesis research due to their relevance to HPE and the New Zealand educational context as well as the context of future-focused teaching and learning. The discussion that follows briefly describes each principle and sub-theme and connects these to relevant research findings. This demonstrates the extent to which teachers in the research were using (or were contemplating using) pedagogies and practices valued in the 21st century. To conclude this section, I suggest ideas that extend upon Bolstad and Gilbert's (2012) framework based on the thesis research findings.

Bolstad and Gilbert (2012) assert that the principles and sub-themes come together in a 21st century teaching and learning environment in order to provide coherence for designing a future-focused education system. The findings of this study suggest that not only are teachers beginning to value these guiding principles, the principles are connecting to each other in Home Economics learning environments.

The first principle is *personalising learning*. Bolstad and Gilbert (2012) state that this requires educational experiences to be shaped around a learner rather than a learner fitting into pre-determined educational experiences. A number of the research findings suggest that teachers are personalising learning experiences in Home Economics. For example, discussion of meeting students' needs, increasing use of student-centred pedagogies with student input into courses, learning and assessment contexts, adopting flexible internal assessment for NCEA and the use of ICTs to provide opportunities for self-directed learning. These ideas are congruent with the assertions of Gilbert (2005) that teachers need to ensure learning environments are tailored to students' identified needs.

The second principle is *new views of equity, diversity and inclusivity*. This involves not only including all learners' perspectives in shaping teaching and learning experiences, but considering the need for 21st century citizens to work with diverse people and ideas (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; OECD, 2016). The findings of this study demonstrate that teachers are cognisant of the need to be responsive to learners' needs and to capitalise on their strengths and interests in Home Economics learning. This was done for example through the on-going collection of student and whānau voice and by providing flexible learning experiences in both the practical and theoretical learning tasks. Preparing students to work with diverse people and ideas was prominent in the research findings. This arose in relation to learning experiences in Home Economics, such as working collaboratively with others, perspective taking and sharing cultural knowledge. Additionally, this arose in relation to learning outcomes of Home Economics, for example empathy for others and valuing diverse viewpoints. These links were expected given the links in HPE to social justice and relationships with other people (Tasker, 2006) as well as the values and key competencies in the NZC that emphasise the importance of valuing diversity and interacting effectively with others (Hipkins et al., 2014; Hipkins, n.d.).

The third principle is *a curriculum that uses knowledge to develop learning capacity*. This is one of the key premises of the Knowledge Age literature: Knowledge as a verb rather than a noun; 21st century citizens need to be able to 'do things with' rather than solely acquire knowledge (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; Delors, 1996; Gilbert, 2005). The research findings suggested strong correlation with Home Economics learning and this principle. Again, this arose in terms of learning experiences and

learning outcomes, for example critical thinking, empowerment, advocacy, student-led learning and health promotion. This was reinforced by the finding that there has been a shift in Home Economics from learning content to understanding concepts and applying knowledge, understanding and skills to a range of contexts, as well as the importance of the development of nutritional literacy and other skills for lifelong well-being.

The fourth principle, *“changing the script”: Rethinking learners’ and teachers’ roles* links to the idea of student-centred pedagogies, balance of power and the need for teachers and learners to learn together in a knowledge-building learning environment (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012). Several findings from this research resonate clearly with this principle. The findings demonstrated that teachers had begun to shift from more teacher-directed pedagogies to those that place the learner at the centre. Students were taking some control of their learning and were contributing to key decisions about what and how was being learned and assessed. Learning experiences in health promotion and with ICTs afforded students the opportunity to guide their own learning. Moreover, the finding that teachers and students were learning from each other across a range of practical and theoretical examples demonstrated a shift in power in the Home Economics learning environment. This relates to the assertions of Culpán and Bruce (2007) that learning in HPE offers the opportunity for aspects of critical pedagogy to be employed – empowerment, taking social action, and challenging traditional power structures – so that learners have more active roles and are seen more as equals in the learning process.

The fifth principle is *a culture of continuous learning for teachers and educational leaders*. Bolstad and Gilbert (2012) state that educational systems need to enable teachers to access on-going PLD experiences that meet their needs. As suggested by the research findings, this is not a one-size-fits-all approach. This research found that Home Economics teachers were engaged in a wide range of PLD activities, from within their department and school, to local clusters and involvement in national PLD initiatives. PLD needed to be timely and relevant to the teachers’ needs. The link between teacher PLD and students’ needs was not explicitly made. However as raised by the Home Economics literature from the mid-2000s (Hipkins, et al., 2005; Street, 2006), PLD has been highly valued in Home Economics due to the steep learning curve that ensued with the introduction of NCEA and the positioning of the subject in HPE. It can therefore be assumed that students’ learning needs (as guided by the NCEA achievement standards and HPE) have been a key area of interest for teachers’ PLD.

The sixth principle is *new kinds of partnerships and relationships: Schools no longer siloed from the community*. This principle involves the importance of authentic and community-based contexts and partnerships for 21st century learning experiences (Bolstad & Gilbert, 2012; Facer, 2011). As

expected, numerous examples of this arose in the research findings, predominantly in relation to community partnerships and students' health promotion learning experiences. The findings demonstrated that teachers were using external expertise and sites outside of school to support learning in Home Economics. Students were involved in advocacy actions and health promotion tasks, for example at local food banks. Learning in the subject was connected to health issues of concern in New Zealand and the determinants of health that contribute to these. This connects to what Culpan and Bruce (2007) describe as the opportunity for learners in HPE to locate themselves in their community.

Finally, the two subthemes are: *The role of current and emerging technologies* and *the role of collaborative practices*. This research found that ICTs were being used widely in learning experiences and to support learning and assessment outcomes in Home Economics. ICTs enabled students to be more self-directed than they may have been in the past, and therefore this sub-theme connects strongly with principles one and four above. The research findings also demonstrated that Home Economics teachers valued collaborative practices in shaping and enhancing their teaching practice. Teachers were developing cross-curricular learning and assessment opportunities in collaboration with others in their school and were working across schools in clusters and through involvement in the subject association and other opportunities for PLD. This connects with principles two and five above as teachers themselves valued diversity of ideas and the role of collaborative practices in on-going learning.

The findings of the research can be used as a lens through which to extend upon this framework of principles and sub-themes. The two sub-themes were prominent in the research findings, suggesting that it is worth investigating whether these could alternatively be considered as stand-alone principles for a framework of 21st century teaching and learning or more explicitly woven into the principles themselves. As demonstrated above for the six principles, connections were made between the sub-themes and a number of principles, in the context of the research findings.

The second sub-theme, collaborative practices, was focused on collaboration between teachers and the systems that facilitate networking. It may be relevant for collaboration and networks between learners could be further emphasised in this framework, either within the principles themselves or within the second sub-theme. This would be reinforced by important ideas from the future-focused teaching and learning literature such as learning to work together Delors (1996), active engagement in co-operative learning and group work (Slavin in Dumont et al., 2010) and taking collective action while developing team work skills (Hipkins et al., 2014). It would also be supported by the vision, values and key competencies in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, for example valuing diversity, community and participation, relating to others, and participating and

contributing (Ministry of Education, 2007). As the research findings demonstrated the value of group work, empathy, perspective taking and sharing of knowledge by learners in Home Economics, after applying the framework to this study it would seem pertinent for collaboration amongst learners to be more prominent.

It is clear that the findings of this research resonate with the principles and sub-themes described by Bolstad and Gilbert (2012). The findings suggest that Home Economics teachers and learners are situated within a 21st century teaching and learning framework across a variety of indicators. The application of the final framework below makes further links to future-focused teaching and learning ideas while using an idea from the Home Economics profession itself.

5.4 Systems of action: technical, interpretive and emancipatory practices

Section 2.2.2 of this thesis introduced the idea of *systems of action*, a triad of practice developed from within the Home Economics profession as three ways of thinking about a practical, perennial problem (McGregor et al., 2008; McGregor, 2010; Ma & Pendergast, 2011). The three systems are *practical*, *interpretive* and *emancipatory* and each is recognised as having a role to play in future-proofing Home Economics (McGregor et al., 2008). I will apply my interpretation of this framework to the thesis research findings to determine the extent to which teachers in this study fit within each, and discuss possible implications of the teachers' positioning for the future of Home Economics in New Zealand.

The *technical* approach refers to skills and techniques; 'how to' meet needs as determined by meeting criteria set by an 'expert' (McGregor et al., 2008). The research findings suggest that a number of skills defined by the teacher continue to be valued in Home Economics learning in New Zealand. For example, those related to practical food preparation experiences and literacy skill development, as well as how to take action to enhance well-being. The need to be nutritionally literate is also relevant; for example understanding food labeling or the health star rating system. However, Home Economics learning that involved the development and refinement of specific skills relating to practical food experiences did not come through strongly in the research findings. This contradicts the perceptions and misconceptions that exist in relation to Home Economics being about 'cooking and sewing skills'.

The notion of 'skills to be mastered' congruent with the technical approach is not a key idea within the future-focused teaching and learning literature, as instead the emphasis is on skills for working

collaboratively with diverse people and ideas, skills in critical thinking and flexibility in problem-solving as well as to use knowledge to generate new ideas and modify skills to cope with an uncertain world (Bolstad, 2011; Facer, 2011; Gilbert, 2005 and others).

The *interpretive* approach refers to relating to others and working together for the common good of society (McGregor et al., 2008). This aspect emphasises the 'soft skills' that arose in the research findings as key learning outcomes in Home Economics, for example the development of empathy, communication skills, the ability to empathise with others and understand a variety of perspectives held by people and groups in society. This also connects to the research findings that highlighted the use and importance of collaborative practices in several ways. Collaboration in the learning environment between students and when teachers and students learned from each other; as well as amongst teachers when they engaged in collaborative practices with other teachers, connected with whānau and partnered with a range of people in the community.

The interpretive approach links to a number of ideas from the literature discussed in Chapter Two. For example, the key competency of relating to others (Hipkins et al., 2014; Hipkins, n.d.), learning to live together (Delors, 1996), the need for co-operation and partnerships (Slavin in Dumont et al., 2010) and working collaboratively with others to innovate and solve problems (Gilbert, 2005).

Finally, the *emancipatory* approach involves understanding power dynamics and taking moral, ethical actions to address social injustices and being citizens who participate and contribute to the common good in the global community (McGregor, 2008). Given that Home Economics in New Zealand is positioned within HPE with its socio-critical underpinnings, it was not surprising that a number of research findings connected to this system of action. For example, learning experiences and outcomes for learners such as critical thinking, advocacy, empowerment, social justice and health promotion involve this approach. In relation to teachers, the need to advocate (in the face of practical perennial problems facing the profession) and the teachers' assertions that they taught from HPE relate to the emancipatory approach. Finally, links can also be made between this system of action and the health issues and determinants of health that link to the communities within which the teachers and their learners were situated.

Propositions congruent with the emancipatory system of action are evident across the literature relating to Home Economics, HPE and future-focused teaching and learning. Firstly, Home Economics literature that speaks of future-proofing the profession leans heavily on the emancipatory approach. This includes advocacy actions needed to respond to the perennial problems facing the profession such as low status, fragmentation and teacher supply (Pendergast, 2001) and the links in the IFHE position statement (2008) between Home Economics and the

'wicked problems' facing global societies. This also connects to the assertion by Vaines (1993) that Home Economists need to adopt an empowerment orientation. This is possibly more relevant than ever, given the misunderstandings that exist about the purpose of Home Economics from the literature (Gard, 2011; Hashimoto & Wham, 2013; Quennerstedt et al., 2010) and as found in this thesis research. In the New Zealand context, many explicit links can be made between HPE and the emancipatory approach. Home Economics teachers' positioning in HPE, as reported in Hipkins et al., (2005) afforded them the opportunity to explore what one teacher referred to as 'cutting edge' issues and provide students with learning opportunities that changed the way they viewed the world (Ministry of Education, 2005 as cited in Street, 2006). Learning in HPE affords students opportunities to take health-promoting action, engage in critical thinking and learn about social justice (Burrows, 2005; Hipkins, n.d; Robertson, 2005; Tasker, 2006). The connection between the emancipatory approach and HPE is most evident in the assertions by Culpan and Bruce (2007) and Culpan and Bruce (2014; in Chin and Edginton) that HPE, in its intent at least, links to critical pedagogy, critical social action and social justice. Finally, links between future-focused teaching and learning literature and the emancipatory approach are extensive. For example, understanding the world and having a strong sense of social justice (Delors, 1996), critical service-based learning (Furco in Dumont et al., 2010) and taking collective action to tackle real problems (Hipkins et al., 2014).

It is evident from the application of the systems of action framework that the practice of teachers in this research was positioned within each of the three approaches. In keeping with the propositions from the literature in Chapter 2, teachers' positioning demonstrated less emphasis on the practical and more on the interpretive and emancipatory systems of action. This positioning indicates that the teachers in this research were aware of the need to move towards future-proofing Home Economics in New Zealand by embracing opportunities afforded by the subject to encourage their learners to be aware of factors impacting on well-being, be critical and to take health-promoting action to promote social justice and enhance the well-being of self, families and communities.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has used three analytical frameworks to make meaning of the key findings in relation to the body of literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Across the three frameworks, discussion of the research findings would suggest that Home Economics in New Zealand affords learners with significant potential to engage in learning that is valued in the 21st century.

The use of the three frameworks has illustrated the meaning that can be made of the research findings in relation to the HPE concept of the socio-ecological perspective, future-focused teaching and learning and systems of action, a theory developed internationally for Home Economics. Moreover, the discussion above has also demonstrated that connections can be made between the three analytical frameworks, particularly in relation to the value of Home Economics for learners in the 21st century. I believe the key intersecting ideas relate to the use of community and society as a context for authentic learning in Home Economics, engagement in critical thinking and collaboration across a range of contexts involving wicked problems and megatrends and the importance of teachers' advocacy actions to empower the Home Economics teaching community and future-proof the subject in New Zealand.

The concluding chapter below will extend upon this discussion in relation to the challenges ahead for teachers of Home Economics in New Zealand.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 provides an overall summary of the key findings as linked to the research questions. The chapter explores the significance and implications of the study for a range of stakeholders. Strengths and limitations of the study, as well as lessons learned during the research process are discussed. Finally, possible avenues for future research are suggested.

6.2 How do teachers envisage the future of Home Economics in New Zealand?

This research addressed one overarching question, *how do teachers envisage the future of Home Economics in New Zealand?* Three sub questions asked the participants how they define contemporary Home Economics, how they want to be positioned in the school context and curriculum and how they view the value of Home Economics for learners in the 21st century. The study's findings were arranged in three categories, within which the answers to the research questions were located: *Learners, teachers and the system and community.*

6.2.1 Defining contemporary Home Economics and teachers' positioning.

In defining contemporary Home Economics, the teachers raised both strengths of and challenges for the subject moving into the future. Strengths of Home Economics related to the opportunities afforded by the subject for diverse, meaningful learning experiences and outcomes for students, as well as the ability for teachers to be on-going learners and members of the Home Economics teaching community, something they were all passionate about. Challenges focused on perennial problems facing the Home Economics profession such as ageing teachers and lack of teacher supply. These challenges were also raised in the international literature on Home Economics (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008; McGregor, 2015; Pendergast, 2001 and others). The above challenges connect to how the teachers define Home Economics given their importance as perceived by the teachers and their significant implications for the future of the subject.

Prominent in the research findings was an overarching theme of ‘perceptions and misconceptions’, which related to the attitudes of other teachers, whānau and the wider community towards Home Economics. Put simply, these attitudes were based on the idea that Home Economics is about ‘cooking and sewing’. Again, this links to the overseas experience of low status for the subject (Dewhurst & Pendergast, 2008; Pendergast 2001) as well as reported in the limited national literature in Home Economics (Hipkins et al., 2005; Street, 2006). Although five out of the six teachers were members of the Technology department in their schools, all of the teachers in the study asserted that they were teaching from HPE in terms of curriculum content. This peculiarity may contribute to ongoing misconceptions in their school communities about the nature of learning in Home Economics, which could be further exacerbated by the divergence in names for the subject in the six teachers’ schools.

6.2.2 The value of Home Economics for learners in the 21st century.

Across the findings of the research, the value of Home Economics for learners connected strongly to ideas posited by the international and national literature in relation to skills and dispositions needed for people to thrive in the 21st century. This related to not only learning experiences and learning outcomes for students in Home Economics, but to the connections to the community that learning in Home Economics afforded. Learning in Home Economics was reported to offer opportunities to practice and develop students’ abilities in critical thinking, collaboration and communication, as well as creativity through practical experiences – the 4Cs (National Education Association, n.d). Partnerships in the community (for example, students undertaking health promotion in local foodbanks or using local supermarkets as sites for learning) that were reported in the findings connects to the idea of authentic and real learning (Hipkins et al., 2014) and learning to work together (Delors, 1996). This also enables students opportunities to practice decision-making, problem-solving and ‘doing things’ with the knowledge they had gained in Home Economics (Gilbert, 2005).

Overall, the application of the underlying concepts and the socio-critical leaning of HPE afforded teachers the ability to design learning experiences for students that connect to the skills and dispositions that stand them in good stead for a dynamic and uncertain world in the future. Home Economics therefore has a significant and valuable role to play in a future-focused curriculum. However, as identified in this research, there are challenges to be overcome in order to realise the potential of Home Economics learning in New Zealand.

6.2.3 What is the future of Home Economics in New Zealand?

The future of Home Economics is, in a word, uncertain. Despite the plethora of future-oriented learning experiences and learning outcomes for students who study Home Economics in New Zealand, the subject and the teaching community is facing a number of challenges. Despite being positioned within HPE, Home Economics is less visible than Health and Physical Education in the learning area by virtue of not featuring in the title of the learning area. In school contexts, compounding this is the misunderstanding of what it is that the Home Economics teachers are teaching. This may be due to traditional understanding of the subject as being 'cooking and sewing', divergence in names for courses using the Home Economics matrix of achievement standards and the likelihood of the Home Economics teachers being physically located in the Technology department. To add to this, there is likely a future lack of teacher supply due to few Home Economics teachers graduating from ITE courses and the impending retirement of a large number of Home Economics teachers. As is also evident in the international context, Home Economics also continues to suffer from low status as a subject in the national curriculum and may be seen as a vehicle for solving nutritional issues currently facing society, thus limiting the ability for the subject to stand on its academic merits.

In combination, this is a perfect storm for the loss of identity and fragmentation for the subject, a phenomenon also being experienced internationally (Pendergast, 2001; McGregor, 2015; McGregor, 2010) for much the same reasons as in New Zealand. This means that in order to future proof Home Economics in New Zealand, action is needed to counteract these pressures on the subject. This is likely to involve uniting the teaching community so that they see a way forward for the subject and advocate accordingly. This idea will be explored across the implications in section 6.3 below.

6.3 Significance and implications

While I acknowledge that more research is needed in this area, it is possible that the findings of the study have significance and implications for a range of stakeholders. In keeping with the transformative methodology implications are considered in relation to actual or potential transformations resulting from the study. In this section, significance and implications for the following groups of people are considered.

- Teachers in the thesis study
- Current and future students of Home Economics

- The Home Economics community in New Zealand
- The tertiary sector
- Schools and the Ministry of Education
- Me as a researcher and practitioner.

6.3.1 Teachers in the thesis study.

In order to reflect on the significance and implications of the study for the teachers in this research, I asked two questions in the follow-up interviews regarding possible transformations in their thinking and practice: *How has being involved in this research changed your thinking about the future of Home Economics? And what might you change, now that you've had a chance to think about the issues raised?*

In relation to their thinking about the future of Home Economics, the participants commented that being involved in the research brought their concerns for the future of Home Economics to the surface, but also gave them some hope for the future of the subject. The teacher from school 2 commented *"it has brought to the forefront my concerns that I've put to the back of my head. And also it makes me feel guilty about wanting to leave teaching, because what state am I going to leave it in"*. However, in email communication the day following the interview, she wrote *"thanks again for helping make me realise that there is a place for me to stay in teaching for now."* The teacher from school 3 commented that she was hopeful, despite also being concerned: *"Maybe what I should say is that I am hopeful. I am still concerned about the future, but I am hopeful because I think you only need one person or two to help try and move the system and I think if we can keep promoting it..."*

In relation to possible changes in their practice as a result of being involved in the research, comments were made about the need to be staunch advocates and challenge others' perceptions and misconceptions about Home Economics. For example, the following exchange in the focus group:

I suppose it just reinforces for me that I need to be a strong advocate for my subject. Yes, within my school but also outside (teacher C).

I agree we need to be constant advocates for our subject. So so many people always say you are the cooking teacher, you have to be nicely strong actually no... it's a bit more than that (teacher A).

One further possible action that the teachers intended taking was to remain active in the Home Economics community: *“There’s a HETTANZ meeting coming up, just being as supportive of each other as we always have been and sticking together, because we’re a diminishing group”* (teacher from school 2). The teacher from school 3 echoed this when she said *“maybe it’s relooking at how we actually promote the subject and that is something that I will think about and talk more about with other teachers as well.”*

This reflection by the participants on the significance and implications of the study for them has demonstrated that being involved in the study has to an extent transformed their thinking and their practice in relation to raised awareness of the need to advocate, challenge others’ perceptions and be active members of the Home Economics community. This resonates with work in the international Home Economics field, such as by IFHE who advocate for common branding, vision and purpose for Home Economics (IFHE, 2008) and the idea of developing a Body of Knowledge (McGregor, 2014).

6.3.2 Current and future students of Home Economics.

This study has significance and implications for current, and particularly future, students of Home Economics. It is evident from the findings of the research that students who currently study the subject are engaged in authentic and meaningful learning experiences which can contribute to NCEA qualifications and University Entrance, as was also found in the early years of NCEA when Home Economics established itself as a subject in HPE (Hipkins et al., 2005; Street, 2006). The implications for future Home Economics students are tied to the future of the subject itself. If the challenges arising in this research come to fruition on a wide scale, the opportunities for learning in Home Economics could be reduced for students across the country.

6.3.3 The Home Economics community in New Zealand.

This research is significant for the Home Economics community in New Zealand given that it is one of very few studies conducted in this subject and therefore is a useful contemporary piece of work for the community to use as they see fit. A number of important and somewhat converging implications exist for individual teachers of the subject as well as for the collective group of Home Economics teachers, represented by the subject association HETTANZ.

For individual teachers, this study points to the need to be an advocate within and outside of their school to challenge the negative perceptions and misconceptions that exist about Home Economics as well as find ways to communicate to others the nature of learning in the subject – that it is more than ‘cooking and sewing’ (Pendergast, 2001; Hipkins et al, 2005). This is also pertinent at subject association level. Implications of this research may include the recognition that change and action is needed from within the Home Economics community in order to future-proof the subject. This may involve a range of advocacy tasks, collaboration and partnerships with a range of stakeholders. For example, the need to advocate to the tertiary sector, to the Ministry of Education and other relevant bodies, organisations and people. Another possible action would be the development by HETTANZ of a position statement (Home Economics Institute of Australia, 2010) or a Body of Knowledge (McGregor, 2014).

6.3.4 The tertiary sector.

Two aspects came through strongly in this study that have significance and implications for the tertiary sector. The first is lack of knowledge that tertiary institutions possess about the nature of learning in senior secondary Home Economics. The second is initial teacher education – the current lack of teacher supply for Home Economics (also evident internationally, for example see McGregor, 2015; McGregor, 2010; Pendergast, 2001). These two aspects present opportunities for the tertiary sector to connect productively with secondary school learning in Home Economics. If the tertiary sector had greater understanding of learning in Home Economics at secondary school, then they may be able to develop a wider range of pathways from school to tertiary study in relevant areas. This could include offering initial teacher education courses in Home Economics. This would have benefits not only for the tertiary sector with Full-Time Equivalent enrolments, but also for the future of Home Economics in schools, given the current concerns surrounding the impending retirement of a significant number of Home Economics teachers, with a lack of teacher supply to replace them.

6.3.5 Schools and the Ministry of Education.

This study has some significance and implications for schools and the Ministry of Education, if nothing else to raise awareness about the nature of learning in the subject and as a reminder that even though teachers of Home Economics may be positioned in the Technology department, they are teaching from HPE. It may also be relevant, therefore, for schools (or teachers) to consider where they best fit within the departmental/faculty structure in their school. For the Ministry of

Education, it is important that the subject is recognised as one of three subjects comprising HPE. Once again, the development of a BOK (McGregor, 2014) or position statement (HEIA, 2010) may be a useful way forward.

6.3.6 Me as a researcher and practitioner.

In order to reflect on the significance and implications of the study for me, I asked myself *how has my thinking and professional practice been transformed by undertaking this research?*

I have felt humbled by the teachers' openness and their trust in my research methods. This has come through in what they have said in response to the data collection questions, but also in various email communications I have had with them and their responses to the questions about how their own thinking or practice has been transformed by being involved in this research.

By conducting this research with transformative methodology, I feel as though I am now an able and articulate advocate for Home Economics. I feel a professional and moral responsibility to not only disseminate the findings of the research in a way that is useful for the Home Economics community, but to support the subject association to flourish and to continue working with Home Economics teachers to grow their confidence and develop their practice as pedagogues within HPE. This research is one of very few conducted in the area of Home Economics in New Zealand – and the only study done in recent years – and this further solidifies the need for me to be an advocate for the subject or at the very least to continue to work alongside teachers of Home Economics.

I am the co-chairperson of the Health Education Association and this research has changed the way I approach my role within my own subject association. I feel as though I am now able to be a more effective leader by recognising to a greater extent the importance of being a passionate advocate for your subject – to speak up when needed, to support the development of teachers' confidence and capability and to work in partnerships with others to shape the future of the subject and work towards the 'common good' for the association; to try as much as possible within my own limitations to future-proof the profession.

Being involved in this research has changed the way I think about Home Economics as a subject and Home Economics teachers, which has implications for my practice as a PLD facilitator. I have recognised a number of challenges and opportunities that Home Economics has in common with Physical Education and Health Education and therefore I have more empathy with Home Economics educators. I understand more fully the challenges Home Economics teachers face in their schools as well as those challenges that are 'big picture' issues. I have also learnt a lot about what Home

Economics teachers want for the future of their subject and how they see Home Economics learning fitting in with future-focused teaching and learning. I think this has better equipped me to be an effective change agent in my work with Home Economics teachers. I am now more confident in knowing what questions to ask to dig below the surface of their teaching programmes and practices and have more ideas to explore with them to ignite innovation in their teaching.

6.4 Strengths and limitations

6.4.1 Strengths.

The use of the transformative research paradigm (Mertens 2007, 2009, 2015) was a strength of the research, in so far as I was able to adhere to this approach. Transformative research was well suited to the research aim of giving voice to the Home Economics community as well as being connected to the *attitudes and values* underlying concept of HPE - social justice, respect, care and concern (Ministry of Education, 2007) and the wider socio-critical intent of HPE (Culpan & Bruce, 2007). This also connected well to the need articulated in the international Home Economics literature for an empowerment orientation for the profession (Vaines, 1993) and a critical/emancipatory approach (McGregor, 2008).

Using data triangulation and creativity (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) in my presentation of the research was also a strength. As well as the primary data collection tool of qualitative interviews, I used word clouds and extensive researcher memos. These three distinct forms of data all contributed to the credibility and quality of the research.

Finally, conducting focus group interviews rather than solely interviewing participants individually was a strength of the research, in keeping with the social constructionist underpinnings (Burr, 1995). Although some complications arose (see section 6.5 below), the bouncing off each other's ideas that occurred in the focus group discussions was a valuable source of data for the research.

6.4.2 Limitations.

This was a small case study and therefore the findings are limited to the experiences of the six teachers participating in the study, and cannot reliably be applied to the New Zealand Home Economics community as a whole. However, the sample of teachers encompassed a wide range of experiences in the Home Economics and wider education sector, thus I feel that the views that

were captured are somewhat representative of the situation and perspectives as they exist at a national level for Home Economics.

In qualitative research, there is a danger of researcher bias impacting on the research process and outcomes (Lichtman, 2013). However, I was cognisant of this throughout the research process and took steps to minimise the risk of bias. This was particularly pertinent given the use of the transformative research approach. For example, the use of audio recording and careful transcription of the participants' interviews, a number of member checks (discussed in section 3.8) and adherence at all times to the ethical considerations for the research described in section 3.6.

Another limitation of the research was the degree to which I adhered to the transformative paradigm. Mertens (2007) presents a diagram that depicts 'community participation' as wrapping around the transformative research approach. As such, it is critical that participants are involved in all steps of the research process within the transformative approach but I found that this was very difficult to achieve. This was captured as a memo as follows:

I have found that, due to teachers' limited time, energy and space to think over these things, they have not taken me up on the opportunities to shape the interview questions. I think for this to occur, and for me to truly embrace the transformative approach, it would need to be a true collaboration – what Mertens (2014) refers to as transformative participatory research (memo 15, 22 February 2016).

However I was reflexive throughout the research process, critically reflecting on my research practice (Lichtman, 2013), and with the guidance of my supervisors, I was able to create opportunities for participants to be more involved in the research.

Finally, a limitation of the study exists in relation to the aim of the research, to give voice to Home Economics educators in New Zealand about their perspectives on future directions for the subject. This limitation exists in relation to the extent to which the findings of this research can be disseminated in the Home Economics (and wider) community. Thus, there is work still to do in ensuring that the research findings can be communicated to the sector.

6.5 Lessons learned during the research process

As a novice researcher, planning and conducting this research was a steep learning curve. I learned that it was important to be flexible and reflexive and I learned that writing researcher memos was

an extremely valuable tool for documenting my thinking and posing myself questions throughout the research.

I learned that it was not easy to schedule interviews that involved more than one teacher in one place at one time (focus group interviews). The first round of interviews took place in November 2015, when the teachers had a reduced teaching load. Even then, it was difficult to find a time that suited the three teachers to meet. For the follow-up interview, I began organising a time in February 2016 and by April it was obvious that another approach was needed. Using a Google Doc to capture some dialogue was a useful compromise, and worth considering for future research projects for asynchronous sharing of ideas.

Finally, I learned that despite my finding it difficult to fully involve the participants in all aspects of the research (see section 6.4.2 above), I was able to be creative in order to find interesting ways of involving the teachers as the research progressed. For example, this memo:

I thought of a way to include the participants in the analysis – through the word clouds. I have printed and laminated these, and will use them with the corresponding teachers (school 1-3) in my interviews this week. I will ask them for their take/analysis of them. I think the word clouds are very accessible to the teachers and this can be a real contribution to the analysis (memo 16, 23 February 2016).

Alongside the guidance of my supervisors, I also involved the participants more fully when I created the interview guide for the follow-up interviews, by asking them questions about them being involved in the research. This enabled me to capture rich information presented in section 6.3.1 above.

6.6 Avenues for future research

This study explored six teachers' perspectives on Home Economics in New Zealand. It would be valuable to explore students' views of the value of Home Economics learning in order to further articulate the importance of the subject and provide the student voice that is missing from this research.

The issues that arose in this research relating to teachers' positioning in their schools and divergence in naming of the subject are presumably nationwide occurrences and would be relevant to consider for future research. It would also be valuable to carry out a demographic-type survey of

teachers of Home Economics in order to establish the extent of the problem relating to future teacher supply.

Finally, the word clouds were an interesting discussion point in the follow-up interview and it would be interesting to use data from a much wider number of schools to generate word clouds that depicted key ideas from Home Economics course information.

6.7 Conclusion

This final chapter has used the research questions to provide an overall summary of the study's findings. Implications of the research for a range of people and groups have been explored, as have strengths and limitations of the study. A number of lessons learned during the research process were discussed and suggestions were made for possible future research in the area of Home Economics in New Zealand.

The findings of this study have demonstrated that Home Economics in New Zealand has a lot to offer students, schools and communities as we move further into the 21st century. The ability for the subject to engage students in authentic learning, critical thinking and health-promoting action in relation to wicked problems and megatrends demonstrates that the subject matter itself is future-focused. The ability for the subject to engage students in collaborative problem-solving and a range of practical tasks demonstrates that the subject affords learning opportunities to develop in learners skills that are valued in the 21st century. Home Economics being situated in HPE offers learners the ability to be critical of the world around them in relation to food contexts and develops in learners an appreciation for lifelong well-being for self, others and society. Despite this, a number of challenges exist for Home Economics, which need to be addressed in order for the subject to be future-proofed in New Zealand.

I would like to end this thesis on a positive note and by pointing to the need for more voices in the Home Economics community to be heard, which would be a useful way forward. In the words of the teacher from school 3 regarding the future of Home Economics:

Maybe what I should say is that I am hopeful. I am still concerned about the future, but I am hopeful because I think you only need one person or two to help try and move the system and I think if we can keep promoting it...

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Number of results returned for Home Economics Achievement Standards

Level 1 NCEA	2015	2014	2013
90956	3771	4095	4631
90957	1336	1545	1541
90958	2082	2064	2296
90959	4645	4736	4976
90960	354	363	368
90961	3033	2982	3642

Table 1: number of results returned for L1 NCEA Home Economics Achievement Standards 2012-2015.

Level 2 NCEA	2015	2014	2013
91299	1783	2052	2094
91300	862	856	787
91301	956	1311	1233
91302	1466	1559	1752
91303	206	356	288
91304	877	789	982

Table 2: number of results returned for L2 NCEA Home Economics Achievement Standards 2012-2015.

Level 3 NCEA	2015	2014	2013
91466	1426	1264	1296
91467	602	694	774
91468	819	755	664
91469	1015	736	608
91470	154	143	189
91471	1070	986	1118

Table 3: number of results returned for L3 NCEA Home Economics Achievement Standards 2012-2015.

Appendix 2: The Home Economics Matrix

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
AS90956 Demonstrate knowledge of an individual's nutritional needs. 5 Credits	AS91299 Analyse issues related to the provision of food for people with specific food needs. 5 credits	AS91466 Investigate a nutritional issue affecting the well-being of New Zealand society. 5 credits
AS90957 Demonstrate understanding of societal influences on an individual's food choices and well-being. 5 Credits	AS91300 Analyse the relationship between well-being, food choices and determinants of health. 4 credits	AS91467 Implement an action plan to address a nutritional issue affecting the well-being of New Zealand society. 5 credits
AS90958 Demonstrate understanding of how cultural practices influence eating patterns in New Zealand. 5 credits	AS91301 Analyse beliefs, attitudes and practices related to a nutritional issue for families in New Zealand. 5 credits	AS91468 Analyse a food related ethical dilemma for New Zealand society. 5 credits
AS90959 Demonstrate knowledge of practices and strategies to address food handling issues. 5 credits	AS91302 Evaluate sustainable food related practices. 5 credits	AS91469 Investigate the influence of multinational food corporations on eating patterns in New Zealand. 5 credits
AS90960 Demonstrate understanding of how an individual, the family and society enhance each other's well being. 4 credits	AS91303 Analyse practices to enhance well-being used in care provision in the community. 5 credits	AS91470 Evaluate conflicting nutritional information relevant to well-being in New Zealand society. 4 credits
AS90961 Demonstrate understanding of how packaging information influences an individual's food choices and well-being. 4 credits	AS91304 Evaluate health promoting strategies designed to address a nutritional need. 4 credits	AS91471 Analyse the influences of food advertising on well-being. 4 credits

Source: http://ncea.tki.org.nz/content/download/3713/12012/file/homeec_matrix_jan14.doc

Appendix 3: Letter of approach to HETTANZ

Dear HETTANZ national executive member,

My name is Rachael Dixon and I am a student at the University of Canterbury. Over the past four years I have worked with many teachers in the Home Economics community as part of my role as National Coordinator for Health and Physical Education, providing professional learning and development in the area of NCEA Home Economics.

As part of my Master of Education degree, I am researching in the area of secondary Home Economics education.

I am writing to you to ask whether you are able to pass on to your members in your local region my request (below) for participants. I would like to include seven teachers in my sample. The results of this research may be used at conferences or in national/international journals and I hope that it will make a valuable contribution to the Home Economics literature in New Zealand and potentially inform policy and practice within educational contexts.

Request (please copy and paste the below into an email to your members):

My name is Rachael Dixon and as part of my Master of Education degree, I am researching in the area of Home Economics. I am interested in Home Economics teachers' views and perspectives of the subject at the NCEA level. For example, I am interested in finding out about the challenges Home Economics teachers (and the subject) currently face, teachers' perspectives on the subject's value for learners in the 21st century, how the teachers define contemporary Home Economics and how they want to be positioned within the school context and the curriculum.

I am looking for seven teachers of NCEA Home Economics, from a range of backgrounds and geographical locations. I am looking for two samples of participants:

1. Christchurch-based, four teachers who are willing to participate in two focus group interviews (approximately one hour for each interview; participants are interviewed together).
2. Three teachers who are willing to be interviewed individually (two interviews, approximately one hour for each). Additionally, these teachers will be willing to share with me their NCEA course outlines and course information published in the year 11-13 student course selection booklet(s).

The participants will have the opportunity to help shape the interview questions and the research will be conducted with utmost attention to ethical procedures.

If you are interested in being part of my research, or would like to ask me any questions before volunteering, please email me. Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you will have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I will send you a participant information form which will outline in more detail the research, as well as a consent form. My email: rac96@uclive.ac.nz

Kind regards,
Rachael

Appendix 4: Selection of information letters and consent forms

Imagining the future of Home Economics education in New Zealand:

Information letter for teachers (individual interviews)



I am a student at the University of Canterbury. As part of my Master of Education degree, I am researching in the area of secondary Home Economics education.

I am interested in Home Economics teachers' views and perspectives of the subject at the NCEA level. For example, I am interested in finding out about the challenges Home Economics teachers (and the subject) currently face, teachers' perspectives on the subject's value for learners in the 21st century, how the teachers define contemporary Home Economics and how they want to be positioned within the school context and the curriculum.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research. If you agree to take part you will be asked to do the following:

- Preview and provide feedback on the interview questions
- Take part in two face-to-face or Skype interviews
- Check the transcript of the interview sessions to ensure accuracy
- Provide a hard or electronic copy of your NCEA course outlines and Home Economics course information published in your school's year 11-13 student course selection booklet(s).

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will do my best to remove any information relating to you, provided this is practically achievable.

I will take particular care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. I will also take care to ensure your anonymity in publications of the findings. All the data will be securely stored in password protected facilities and locked storage at the University of Canterbury for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

The results of this research may be used at conferences or in national/international journals and I hope that it will make a valuable contribution to the Home Economics literature in New Zealand and potentially inform policy and practice within educational contexts. All participants will receive a report on the study.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me (details above) or my supervisor, Professor Lindsey Conner (lindsey.conner@canterbury.ac.nz). This study has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee. If you have a complaint about the study, you may contact the Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the envelope provided by 23/10/2015. Thank you for considering taking part in this research.

Rachael Dixon

University of Canterbury Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 8140, New Zealand. www.canterbury.ac.nz

Imagining the future of Home Economics education in New Zealand:

Consent form for teachers



- I have been given a full explanation of this project and have been given an opportunity to ask questions.
- I understand what will be required of me if I agree to take part in this project.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.
- I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me.
- I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities at the University of Canterbury and will be destroyed after five years.
- I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study. I have provided my email details below for this.
- I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Rachael Dixon. If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee.

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Yes, I would like to receive a report of the findings of this study (please tick)

Email address for receiving report: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Rachael Dixon in the envelope provided by 10/11/2015.

Appendix 5: Interview Guide – first individual interview

Demographic information about the participant(s)

- Years teaching Home Economics
- Age (age range)
- Position within the school (e.g. HOD Home Economics, teacher)
- Pathway into Home Economics teaching (prior work background, University study)
- Type/location/decile of school

(Note: Will be prudent about any use of this information in any published findings, as the size of the Home Economics community means this may make participants identifiable).

Safety guidelines/scene-setting

- Reminder about the purpose of the study (*give voice to HEC teachers about possible future directions for the subject*) and the purpose of the interview (*capture participants' experiences, opinions and knowledge*)
- Thank you for agreeing to take part and reminder that they can withdraw at any time
- Reminder regarding confidentiality and anonymity
- I am going to record the interview. I will transcribe it and offer the participant opportunity to check the transcript for accuracy
- Warm-up conversation – this might include gathering of the demographic info above.

Questions

[Three types of probes I might use are elaboration, clarification, completion].

1. How do teachers define contemporary HEC?

- What are the big ideas that shape HEC?
- (*if needed*) What are key concepts and content knowledge in HEC learning?
- What skills are valued in HEC learning?
- (*if needed*) What would a graduate of NCEA HEC learning know, understand and be able to do?
- How has your background and teaching experience shaped your ideas about HEC?
- How do you see HEC changing to better provide the knowledge and skills that students need in the 21st century?
- (*if needed*) How do you see HEC evolving to meet the needs of 21st century students and issues?

2. How do teachers want to be positioned in the school context and curriculum?

- What challenges does HEC face in your school and in the wider educational context?
- How do you (as a HEC teacher) fit into the curriculum/learning areas at your school and has your positioning in the school changed over time?
- Where do you envisage HEC fitting into the curriculum in the future? Why is this the case?

3. How do teachers view the value of HEC education for learners in the 21st century?

- Why is learning in HEC valuable for young people in NZ?
- How can learning in HEC prepare learners for life, further study and work in the 21st century?
- What do you think needs to be done differently or emphasised more in HEC?
- (*if needed*) How can learning in HEC contribute to people's well-being and the effective functioning of families and communities?
- (*if needed*) How can learning in HEC contribute to solving local and global issues?
- (*if needed*) How can HEC learning reflect cultural diversity and promote positive attitudes towards difference in NZ?

Conclusion

-Is there anything else you want to add about any of the issues/topics discussed in this interview?

-Thank you.

Appendix 6: Interview Guide – first focus group interview

Demographic information about the participant(s)

- Years teaching Home Economics
- Age (age range)
- Position within the school (e.g. HOD Home Economics, teacher)
- Pathway into Home Economics teaching (prior work background, University study)
- Type/location/decile of school

(Note: Will be prudent about any use of this information in any published findings, as the size of the Home Economics community means this may make participants identifiable).

Safety guidelines/scene-setting

- Reminder about the purpose of the study (*give voice to HEC teachers about possible future directions for the subject*) and the purpose of the interview (*capture participants' experiences, opinions and knowledge*)
- Thank you for agreeing to take part and reminder that they can withdraw at any time
- Reminder regarding confidentiality and anonymity, esp in relation to the group process
- I am going to record the interview. I will transcribe it and offer the participant opportunity to check the transcript for accuracy
- Warm-up conversation – this might include gathering of the demographic info above.

Questions

[Three types of probes I might use are elaboration, clarification, completion].

1. How do teachers define contemporary HEC?

- What are the big ideas and skills that shape HEC learning?

2. How do teachers want to be positioned in the school context and curriculum?

- What challenges does HEC face in your school and in the wider educational context?
- What solutions might there be to address these challenges?
- Where do you envisage HEC fitting into the curriculum in the future?

3. How do teachers view the value of HEC education for learners in the 21st century?

- How can learning in HEC prepare learners for life, further study and work in the 21st century?
- How can learning in HEC contribute to solving local and global issues?
- How can HEC learning reflect cultural diversity and promote positive attitudes towards difference in NZ?

Conclusion

-Is there anything else you want to add about any of the issues/topics discussed in this interview?

-Thank you.

Appendix 7: Interview Guide – follow-up interviews

Safety guidelines/scene-setting

- Reminder about the purpose of the study (*give voice to HEC teachers about possible future directions for the subject*) and the purpose of the interview (*capture participants' experiences, opinions and knowledge*)
- Thank you for agreeing to take part and reminder that they can withdraw at any time
- Reminder regarding confidentiality and anonymity
- I am going to record the interview. I will transcribe it and offer the participant opportunity to check the transcript for accuracy
- Warm-up conversation.

Questions

[Three types of probes I might use are elaboration, clarification, completion].

Follow-up:

- Is there anything that jumped out at you in the 'initial findings' that you want to discuss/challenge or elaborate upon?

Future-focused education questions:

- How are students, parents, communities engaged/consulted with to ensure HEC learning opportunities meet learners' needs?
- How does HEC learning prepare students to work with diverse people and diverse ideas in the future?
- To what extent does HEC learning reflect a shift from learning 'content' to developing the ability to learn and 'do things with knowledge'?
- Do learners and their teachers in HEC have the opportunity to work together to build knowledge? How? If not, how could this happen?
- To what extent do HEC teachers draw upon their students' strengths and knowledge to best support learning?
- Can you think of times when you have collaborated with people or groups to provide expertise, knowledge or learning opportunities in community contexts?
- How do you think ICTs can enable students in HEC to learn in 21st century ways?

Questions about being involved in the research:

- How has being involved in this research changed your thinking about the future of HEC?
- What might you change, now that you've had a chance to think about the issues raised?
- How do you think the findings of this research can be disseminated to benefit the HEC community?

Conclusion

-Is there anything else you want to add about any of the issues/topics discussed in this interview?
-Thank you.

Appendix 8: List for generating word clouds

School 1	School 2	School 3
academic inquiry development practical food nutrition skills personal community health well-being Health-and-Physical-Education Achievement-Standards University-Entrance think-critically food-choices people consider impacts health individuals families communities apply sustainable food practices everyday-life enhance well-being food-preparation practical food-preparation-skills academic inquiry development practical food nutrition skills personal community health societal well-being Health-and-Physical-Education Achievement-Standards think-critically food-choices people consider impacts health individuals families communities	develop understanding factors influence well-being individuals families home community actions people enhance sustain environments food-and-nutrition evaluate current-issues theories-of-nutrition identify reflect-on factors influence people's choices behaviours knowledge informed-decisions processes selecting preparing cooking serving food creativity experience accomplishment develop personal interpersonal understandings skills well-being Health-and-Physical-Education develop knowledge skills inspire challenge contribute local national global communities making-meaning making-a-difference use	cookery-skills food nutrition health well-being University-Approved Achievement-Standards Health-and-Physical-Education practical theoretical food-and-nutrition skills knowledge enable set-goals make-decisions solve-problems everyday-situations informed-consumers cookery-skills promote healthy-eating healthy-lifestyles food nutrition health well-being Achievement-Standards Health-and-Physical-Education key-concepts big-ideas social-justice sustainability health-promotion career-opportunities teaching food-science dietetics nutrition food-journalism health-promotion consumer-marketing community-health consumerism childcare food nutrition health well-being University-Approved Achievement-Standards Health-and-Physical-Education key-concepts big-ideas social-justice sustainability

<p> apply sustainable food practices everyday-life enhance well-being food-preparation practical food-preparation-activities practical food-preparation strategies enhance well-being attitudes values beliefs practices selection food food-preparation-skills academic inquiry development practical food nutrition skills personal community health societal well-being Health-and-Physical-Education Achievement-Standards University-Entrance think-critically food-choices people consider impacts health individuals families communities New Zealand apply sustainable food-practices everyday-life enhance well-being yourself others practical food-preparation-activities food-preparation strategies enhance well-being </p>	<p> knowledge skills understand make-a-difference themselves world learn practical-activities experiences needs actively-explore challenging situations develop understandings themselves others society learn think-critically informed-decisions skills take-action promote positive well-being self others society think-creatively constructive solutions confidence competence enhance well-being hauora taha-wairua taha-hinengaro taha-whānau taha-tinana minimise-risk-factors develop-protective-factors resilient coping-with-adversity bounce-back access-support themselves use-strategies support others explore attitudes values model-behaviours equity respect care-and-concern social-justice relevant challenging </p>	<p> health-promotion career-opportunities teaching food-science dietetics nutrition food-journalism health-promotion consumer-marketing community-health consumerism childcare </p>
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<p>attitudes values beliefs practices selection food food-preparation-skills</p>	<p>enjoyable interesting useful meaningful real-life make-connections daily-lives future world competencies live well experience success ownership learning understandings food-choices affect personal family community well-being New Zealand issues influence actions improve well-being individuals whānau families communities environments academic research write-essays nutrition ethical food-issues multi-national food production health-enhancing nutritional innovations evaluate-evidence data surveys statistics health-promotion strategies presentations contribute debates practical food-preparation-knowledge cooking-skills real-life food-safety-practices preservation</p>	
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	dietary-needs vocational nutritionists teachers dieticians medical-professionals caterers hospitality early-childhood food-technologists food-writers food-stylists baristas bartenders restaurant-managers sporting successes	
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