

# Key Milestones in Indian Home Science Education

---

**Dr. Sandesh Madhavrao Wagh**

*Professor,  
Department of History,  
University of Mumbai  
Kalina Santacruz (East) Mumbai  
sandeshwagh7@gmail.com*

## **Abstract**

*Home Science is an expanding discipline that deals with issues related to resources, nutrition, health, clothing, education, and well-being within the home environment. Currently, Home Science is taught at secondary to postgraduate levels in many states of India. It has been recognised in various national curricula as an important subject for school students. Home Science education was formalised in India in 1913, when it was introduced as a subject at the School of Home Science, the first Home Science College, at Punjab University, Lahore. Since then, several initiatives have been taken to promote the discipline and ensure its systematic, logical, and scientific development. This work highlights key milestones that have significantly contributed to the growth and development of Home Science education in India. These milestones can be categorised into four groups:*

- (1) early roots and conceptual foundations,*
- (2) policy milestones and institutional reforms,*
- (3) Expansion at the school level: secondary and senior secondary education, and*
- (4) research and professionalisation of the discipline.*

**Keywords:** *Home Science, India, Education, Milestones, Women's Empowerment*

## **1. Introduction**

Home Science is the synthesis of science and technology related to the home. Home Science Education intends to

equip the individuals with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to manage, technology, housing industry, food service and equipment, human development, clothing, textiles and

interior designing, health and nutrition, house hold and Environmental sanitation, population education, family life and community living and the utilization of the technology for the betterment of the living of the family.

The study of Home Science is essential for ensuring good, clean, and nutritious food, health and nutrition for individuals and families, prevention and awareness of foodborne illnesses, food safety practices, health and hygiene for individuals and families, food preservation and new models, health education and community participation for healthiness and cleanliness, cleaning and sanitisation of household surfaces and equipment, good household water management and water treatment, health and nutrition education for vulnerable families, disinfection of household water, family budgeting for awareness, food preservation, and investment, Utilisation of available food through extension and home gardening, Managing disposable and reusable waste materials, textile preservation and utility, promoting gender independence for children, household and colourful drinking water and skin health, family life education, and community activities for kids (Fooladi et al., 2023).

Home Science should be made a compulsory elective subject at the school level to help students identify their basic

needs at a young age and understand and practice ideal homekeeping. In Home Science, reducing societal illiteracy will increase awareness, positive attitudes, feelings, and values, thereby promoting healthier lifestyles. This will contribute to the sustainable development of the global economy. Additionally, this stream will address issues such as intolerance, discrimination, the dowry system, child and women trafficking, and HIV/AIDS.

## **2. Early roots and conceptual foundations**

The first women's college in Asia, the Women's College at Punjab University, Lahore, was established in 1914. This formal association between Home Science and women's education led to the formulation of a curriculum that remains in use today. With the proliferation of home science programs at other universities, it has been noted that regional differences in areas of study and courses offered require variation in syllabi. In response, Home Science specialists from several Indian universities were engaged to help develop standardised syllabi for various subjects, which were then distributed to all universities across India. The first meeting of this national committee took place at the University of Pune in October 1950, marking the start of a coordinated national effort to develop syllabi and

textbooks in Home Science. A uniform syllabus and criteria for a coordinated postgraduate program were drafted in the following year and submitted to the Indian University Grants Commission. These syllabi received formal approval and were gradually adopted by several universities by 1953, leading to the publication of a common textbook on House Management. Afterwards, the national committee focused on organising and distributing reading materials and coordinating activities among all universities offering postgraduate courses in Home Science (Suneeta, 2022).

### **3. Establishment of formal curricula in higher education**

Formal curricula for homemaking were introduced at the higher education level in India with the launch of a three-year Degree Course in Home Science at Punjab University in 1956. The curriculum was based on theoretical perspectives on the behaviour of individuals, families, and communities across various sociocultural contexts. It was therefore valuable for understanding individual and community issues and for suggesting solutions. The significance of Home Science increased further after India's independence, when Youth, Family Welfare, and Women's Development Programmes were initiated.

On 21st August 1948, the first National Conference on the Programme of Family & Children Welfare was held in New Delhi to emphasise the importance of examining 'Home Science' subjects in schools, colleges, and universities. The Home Science subject was officially introduced at the undergraduate level on 19th January 1956 at the University of the Punjab, Lahore (pre-partition). The course was transferred to the University of Ludhiana after the partition. Initiatives in Home Science gained momentum with the establishment of Home Science colleges at various universities that year. The syllabi prepared by Punjab University were recommended, which included Household Management, Food and Nutrition, Health and Hygiene, Family Relations, Textiles and Clothing, Fine Arts, H.D. and H.M. (Husband & wife relationship), Rural Life, Housing, Community Development, 4-H Clubs, and Experimentation Centres for village extension work (Indira Gandhi National Open University, n.d.).

The question paper patterns at the university level were standardised, and books were prepared by a committee appointed by the Director of Extension Education in Punjab to prevent duplication of effort and to avoid subject-matter similarities across colleges. Standardised question papers and textbooks established an identity for

Home Science colleges. The All India Home Science Text-Book Committee was established to standardise the textbooks used in colleges. Five Home Science Colleges prepared 1030 working papers on various subjects, which were published in different journals. Two

groups were formed to continuously discuss the role of Home Science in Family Welfare, Nutrition, and Health; to inform extension workers about conventions; and to address questions and doubts through discussion. These discussions were published in journals.

### **Punjab University Syllabus (1956).**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Focus Area</b>
Household Management	Resource budgeting, home planning.
Food and Nutrition	Preparation and preservation techniques.
Health and Hygiene	Sanitation, disease prevention.
Family Relations	Dynamics, welfare programs.
Textiles and Clothing	Design, maintenance.

The National Policy on Education (NPE,1986) emphasised the importance of an integrated approach to women's education and its representation in textbooks. Home Science education was recognised as a vital means of expanding women's education nationwide. The then Chairman of the National Commission for Women visited Home Science colleges at various universities. He

established a committee to solicit feedback on the Home Science curriculum for higher education.

### **3.1. Growth of Home Science in state universities**

The First All-India Conference on Home Science Education was held in Baroda in 1946. This conference, along with the establishment of the women's wing of the

Indian Council of Agricultural Research, contributed to the growth and establishment of Home Science Colleges within the state universities. Increasing enrollment gained widespread recognition among students and educational planners. The rapid expansion of Home Science Colleges led to the admission of many well-prepared women graduates educated in advanced college facilities. Attractive and concise syllabi were developed for various branches, and teaching was coordinated with the neighbouring Agricultural College to prevent unnecessary duplication. In addition to training well-equipped Home Science teachers for the growing number of colleges at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, these colleges also opened new avenues in social service education, actively engaging in guiding, tutoring, and training young women. Between 1936 and 1947, the need for Home Science instruction at the school level was emphasised (Hancock, 2001).

School syllabi in Home Science were first introduced in 1934, following recommendations from the colonial government. Great thought and effort were put into preparing suitable pedagogical materials. During this period, syllabi for classes VIII, IX, and X were developed, with classes IX and X later treated as a combined course for

boys and girls in industrial schools. By 1958, syllabi for various levels of Home Science instruction in Indian schools, including those at the senior secondary stage, had been refined. The syllabus for the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education examination reflected this (Shree, 2018). The examination and its syllabus were unique because the voluntary association of the ICSE confederation of schools enabled the ICSE to adopt a flexible, experimental approach to education, thereby introducing subjects of socio-economic importance, such as Home Science, at the school level.

### **3.2. Standardisation of syllabi and textbooks**

Home Science education in India underwent a significant change in the 1950s, when syllabi and textbooks were standardised across various educational levels. Recognising the importance of conserving educational resources and ensuring academic quality, the central government initiated efforts to regulate the discipline rather than allowing institutions to develop their own curricula. At the university level, the Ministry of Education chose the Indian Institute of Home Science (now the Institute of Home Economics), University of Delhi, to develop a model syllabus. Two drafts were created in 1955-56: one for a three-year degree

programme in Home Science and another for a one-year diploma course. These drafts were widely circulated among universities and colleges offering Home Science education to gather suggestions for their finalisation.

In 1958, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), through its All-India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Home Science, appointed the Institute of Home Economics to develop a teaching syllabus for the subject at the higher secondary level. A team of specialists from various states drafted a curriculum proposal. The syllabus was subsequently updated to incorporate modern developments; this revised document was adopted by the Council of Education and Training in 1968 as a key component of the recommended Curriculum for the Higher Secondary Stage of Organised Study (Indian Council of Agricultural Research, 2014).

#### **4. Policy milestones and institutional reforms**

Four major policy milestones opened new avenues for Home Science Education: post-independence educational planning marked by the Kher Commission Report (1956); integration with women's education and empowerment initiatives; inclusion in national educational frameworks and accreditation processes; and the

emergence of the School of Architecture and Planning, Gujarat, under the aegis of TATA, which initiated multi-disciplinary studies leading to the design and establishment of the National Institute of Design. The Kher Commission Report (1956) emphasised the need for formal education for women, resulting in the introduction of Women's Studies Units at universities, the establishment of a newly formed section for the work of the All-India Women's Conference and World University Service, and collaboration with the Government of India to set up the Indian Council for Research on Women. Other initiatives included the induction of a Women's Studies Organiser, a study on Women Workers in the Economic Life of the Nation in cooperation with the Planning Commission, the creation of the Institute for Development Studies in collaboration with the Ford Foundation, and the founding of the Centre for Women's Studies and Development, later renamed the Women's Research Institute.

The establishment of the National Institute of Design (1961) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, marked another milestone in the development of design education in the country. Designed and developed by an internationally renowned team of architects and planners led by Louis Kahn and his colleagues, the Institute offers

multidisciplinary studies in industrial and communication design. The initial focus of undergraduate education was on product design for consumer goods. However, over the years, specialisation has expanded into nearly all major areas of design, and more postgraduate courses have been introduced, including management and design, interior and exhibition design, and textile design. First-time cinematographers, designers, product planners, and instructors in training, education, and exhibition design have all been key contributors to these institutions.

#### **4.1. Post-independence educational planning**

The first educational planning exercise in independent India took place shortly after the country gained independence in 1947, based on the understanding that education was vital for economic progress and national unity. The Government of India established the Education Commission on the recommendation of the Bhore Committee, which was formed in 1944 to consider general principles of health and education. It appointed Dr K. L. Sethi as the Secretary for Education (Suneeta, 2022). By then, Home Science's distinct integration into the educational system had been officially recognised by the State of Jammu and Kashmir. However, there was a greater need to expand the

discipline nationwide. Ultimately, Home Science Education gained a significant role in policy documents arising from the Commission's discussions.

Over the years, the narrative of Home Science Education and allied subjects in India, particularly during the early years of independence, has come a long way despite limited support from government departments. The early developments apparently generated their own individuality but were nevertheless relevant to Home Science Education in the State systems. Besides, they were germane to related fields. As a result, in India after 1947, the initial focus of planned development was not only on Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce but also on Nutrition, Health, Housing, and Family Welfare. Home Science plays a crucial role in it.

#### **4.2. Integration with women's education and empowerment initiatives**

The strong commitment to women's education and empowerment in India, launched around the time of independence, persisted through the 1960s. In December 1972, the Indian Association for Women's Studies was established as the leading organisation for women's studies, and the Committee for the Concerns of Women and Development was formed at the national level. Although Home Science was a

subject in women's colleges even before independence, it was not officially part of the women's education programme until 1975 (Ahmad Bhat, 2015). This period of increased focus on women and gender issues was heavily influenced by the United Nations General Assembly, which declared the decade 1976 to 1985 the "International Decade for Women's Development. The Government of India launched several initiatives to address women's concerns and to raise awareness of their rights and constitutional protections through various committees. Women's literacy, participation in development, and empowerment were designated as key goals of the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1979).

According to the National Workshop held in New Delhi in February 1995, sponsored by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, Home Science is an important subject for women. Home Science was identified as a thrust area, as it creates awareness of educational and vocational opportunities, self-employment, self-financing, and economic independence for women, and empowers women through Home Science and Extension Education. It therefore significantly empowers women. Home Science offered a broad base that enabled women to develop skills for active involvement

in the management and governance of socio-economic, political, and human resources.

#### **4.3. Inclusion in national frameworks and accreditation processes**

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, revised in 1992 and recognised in various other national policies and perspectives, emphasised the achievement of universal access, retention, and quality. The policy further recommended implementing animal husbandry and agriculture at the school level, along with courses in Home Science, Environmental Education, and Consumer Education, in accordance with local and societal needs. These courses were to be offered in a modular form and linked to vocational courses at the higher secondary and graduate levels. Consumer Education continued to receive recognition, and input was obtained to incorporate it into teacher-training curricula at the primary, secondary, and graduate levels. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe development agencies recognised the importance of Home Science Education in women's development, and its integration into various Women-Development Programmes was considered important. At the national level, Home Science Education contributed to increasing the availability of trained women at both technical and

non-technical levels (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1992). Post-school facilities across various levels of the Home Science discipline were also provided to ensure an adequate supply of trained women to meet the nation's needs.

The inclusion of Consumer Education and Home Science Education in the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2000, the National Curriculum Framework 2005, and the guidelines of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has heightened awareness of their importance. The committee on consumer protection for the 10th five-year plan of the Planning Commission recommended integrating Consumer Education across various educational disciplines to ensure that future citizens understand their consumer rights and responsibilities through a deliberate approach. The NCFSE emphasised the importance of instilling values and developing skills among young consumers. Consumer Education was seen to encompass three key areas: the organisation of the Consumers' Council; consumer education related to contemporary consumerism and globalisation; and the fostering of active young consumers with a knowledgeable understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

## **5. Expansion at the school level: secondary and senior secondary education**

Home Science was first introduced at the secondary school level in the Madras Presidency in 1913, but its widespread adoption happened only after independence. In 1948, it was included as an optional subject in forms I and II of the Certificate of Education Examination of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (now Cambridge Assessment International Education). Later, the Central Board of Secondary Education and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations also made it an optional subject at the secondary level. The syllabus for Home Science (Forms I and II) of the National Open School was designed similarly. The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) followed suit. By the mid-1950s, Home Science was being taught at the secondary level in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, and several other states. To address evolving educational needs and prepare adolescents for adulthood, the subject was extended to the senior secondary stage. As a result, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) developed a syllabus and textbook for Home Science under the New Education Policy in 1981 for classes IX and X, and for classes XI and XII (Bisht, P. 2021). The implementation

began in 1984. The syllabi prescribed by other state boards at the secondary level were also revised and updated by various states. Periodic updates to curricula and textbooks were carried out in 1991, 1995, and 2000.

All secondary-level syllabi included theoretical, practical, and project components. Moreover, efforts were made to develop pedagogical materials for Home Science at both the secondary and senior secondary levels. Teaching-learning programmes were created to support instruction across various subjects. A pedagogical handbook for Home Science teaching and two teaching kits, comprising audio cassettes and transparencies, were also prepared. The enhancement of the Home Science curriculum, particularly at the secondary level, was linked to the adoption of the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, updated in 1992.

### **5.1. Curriculum adoption and pedagogical shifts**

India pioneered women's education in Asia. Following independence, two new areas were opened for experimentation. One was to reflect newly evolved values in education, with encouragement for liberal arts to occupy the centre stage. The second was to recognise the growing importance of consumer education amid rapid economic development and the emergence of new opportunities. Home

Science played an important role in the socio-economic development of women through teaching, research, guidance, and motivation. State universities in India filled these gaps in postgraduate education in the subject (Suneeta, 2022). The need to provide women with consumer education and to prioritise vocational subjects was further emphasised.

Women played a key role in the economy. According to the 1971 census, 40 per cent of women participated in the workforce. As a result, the Consumer Advisory Programme was integrated into Home Science curricula. The Home Science curriculum has been diversified, especially to help women find paid employment or pursue career-oriented subjects such as Hotel Management, Food Science and Nutrition, Child Development, and Garment Technology. The shift from traditional to modular teaching methods began. The basic framework for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses remained consistent nationwide, with an emphasis on multidisciplinary and subject integration. Recognising the urgent need for curriculum reform, considering consumer awareness and these significant changes, the faculties of Home Science decided in the early 1990s to phase out some traditional areas, such as Family Resource and Management,

Household Science, and Home Science Extension Education.

## **5.2. Skill-based, vocationally oriented components**

Expansion at the school level includes secondary and senior secondary education. The National Curriculum Framework 2000 proposed a new focus on the psycho-educational and self-developmental aspects of education. Special emphasis was also placed on an education system providing vocational education at the secondary stage. This education would enable learners to acquire construction, maintenance, and entrepreneurial skills across various work areas. Home science was mandated at this level due to its emphasis on practical skills and its proximity to everyday life. Home science would thus further children's knowledge and promote the development of various working skills. An exploration of the benefits of pupils expressing and sharing their feelings was identified as a key goal alongside the development of psychomotor skills.

## **6. Research and professionalisation of the discipline**

Research in Home Science remained in a developmental stage until the late 1980s, with few universities offering doctoral-level programs. The creation of the University Grants Commission (UGC)

for higher education and research funding in Indian universities led several institutions to introduce doctoral courses in Home Science. The Home Science Association of India, founded in 1967, provided a platform for academicians, researchers, and professionals, helping to promote research. An initiative by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), supported by six Agricultural Universities, produced a series of research publications on Home Science that enhanced the quality of doctoral research. A breakthrough came during the Seventh Plan, when ICAR sponsored 85 positions, 14 Chairpersons, 28 Research Coordinators, and 43 Research Associates across various research areas of the discipline.

Numerous international projects undertaken by Home Scientists in collaboration with organisations such as the International Society for Tropical Root Crops, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, all United Nations agencies, and the International Development Research Centre (Canada) addressed the country's food and nutritional problems, strengthened the connection between research and discipline development, and helped create a student group focused on fundamental research. The enhancement of the Home Science department at Allahabad University and

the launch of a five-year integrated degree in Home Science at Lady Irwin College (Delhi) laid the foundation for higher education in the field. Extensive growth of the master's programme and the establishment of doctoral education in Home Science by Punjab Agricultural University (Ludhiana) and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (Coimbatore) spurred similar developments at other Agricultural Universities.

Consequently, Home Science was later offered as a postgraduate subject by several Agricultural Universities, the main centres of research and development in the discipline in the country. During the late 1980s, Home Science became an integral part of the eighty-nine postgraduate programmes at these universities, and the first time-bound research proposals were formulated. The degree awards in Home Science in Agriculture and Dairy Technology development subsequently received high recognition in the relevant areas. In recent years, the role of research in Home Science within Agricultural Universities has changed, with new thrust areas being defined.

### **6.1. Development of Home Science as an academic discipline**

Home Science emerged as an independent discipline in India through the efforts of institutions. The first formal degree programme began in 1930 at the

University of the Punjab, Lahore, while the first postgraduate programme was initiated during 1935-36. The first doctoral degree was awarded in 1939. Later, B.sc. Home Science degree programmes were introduced at the University of Delhi and the University of Allahabad in 1947 and 1956, respectively. The first full-fledged College of Home Science was established in 1941 in Delhi, amidst great struggle, to prepare teachers and educate women by offering them scientific education relevant to their household responsibilities. The first College of Home Science under the auspices of a State Government was started in 1945 at Dehradun by the then Government of Uttar Pradesh.

The concept of Home Science was first recognised in 1921, when the Indian Education Commission acknowledged the need to teach 'art and science of home-making'. The Commission recommended expanding the scope of Home Science to include the planning and design of houses, teaching household crafts, and health education. The introduction of Home Science at the secondary level began in 1941-42, when the Government of India provided financial support to Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta, to develop the subject. The All India Council of Education, New Delhi, appointed a Committee in 1952-53, chaired by Sri M.L. Vora, Director of Education,

Government of Bihar. This Committee created the first all-India syllabus for Home Science in secondary schools, emphasising its functional aspects. Based on this syllabus, the National Book Trust, New Delhi, developed and published textbooks, which were later adopted by several states.

## **6.2. National and international collaborations**

A systematic effort to develop Home Science as an academic discipline in India began with a series of workshops and training-cum-research camps conducted by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the ICSSR from 1964 to 1977. A distinctive partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) during 1988–1990 resulted in a series of workshops involving approximately 500 university teachers and 50,000 college students nationwide. The Global Academy for Women's Studies and Development was established in 1992 through cooperation with the Government of Kerala and the University of Kerala. The Home Science College and Research Institute, Madurai, engaged in international collaborations with Canada, Germany, Norway, and the USA for the Southern Region of the Consortium Project, which included Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka.

Professional organisations greatly facilitated developments through local, national, and international collaboration. The Indian Society of Home Science, the Indian Association of Life Sciences, the Indian Dietetic Association, and the Association of Basic Health Care Services and Education established mutual exchanges and links with sister organisations worldwide. The International Federation for Home Economics sent its representatives to various international conferences and seminars and established linkages with universities in the USA, Canada, and Germany. The Indian Association for Research in Home Science organised conferences and training programmes in association with the ICSSR, ICAR, ICMR, and many international centres.

## **7. Technological integration and innovative pedagogy**

Until recently, most Indian Home Science colleges focused on classroom instruction in theory and practice, with limited use of technology. In response to the Information Technology boom in the late 1990s, professional emphasis shifted toward the development of holistic family and community welfare. In March 1990, the Indian Association of Home Science Education and Extension held workshops where participants demonstrated innovative educational strategies. Feedback indicated that

integrating audio-visual and IT-based pedagogy increased student interest, retention, and achievement. College faculty campaigned for multimedia projects, and part-time system installations became widespread.

The University Grants Commission and the Department of Electronics launched the country's first Web Education Program in Home Science in February 1998. Although all fourteen key topics remained essential for Master's students, teaching-the-teacher projects were recommended because the diversity of undergraduate curricula influenced the selection of materials. Home Science teachers conducted needs assessments and compiled lists of teaching-learning resources, which were sent weekly via e-mail to subject-oriented directories established in three Indian universities. Courses started in July 1999 and were initially transmitted via satellite. Later, videotapes of classroom lectures were quickly exchanged among 14 access points, and participants saved 70 per cent of their travel time. Web-based home science education later became common across Indian universities. Additional measures included upgrading Home Science colleges to university status for women and offering options such as e-learning, energy conservation, need-based training models for cottage and small-scale industries, and technologies to enhance women's efficiency and well-

being while also conserving energy and resources.

### **7.1. Digital resources and e-learning platforms**

The Indian educational system demonstrates a rich heritage of continuously evolving curricula and innovative use of media to deliver content in emerging areas. As early as 1997, the National Council of Educational Research and Training pioneered the Interactive Multimedia Programme to integrate appropriate media into school syllabi. This multimedia initiative included components of Home Science, Health Education, and Physical Education.

The Home Science education system in India exemplifies a non-conventional approach implemented at different levels during pandemics such as COVID-19. An AV lecture on Indian Cooking Media, highlighting on-screen instructions for the preparation of "Cheese Puri/Paneer Puri," was created, recorded, and shared on a popular YouTube channel with a national audience. The lesson also featured a story that covered several concepts from the Home Science Nutrition syllabus and was shared on various platforms, including YouTube and the official social media pages, in a PowerPoint presentation containing clip art and a sequence of images to illustrate the story (Pandey, 2021).

## **7.2. Sustainable practices and consumer education**

Consumer education has become a key part of Home Science education. It plays a vital role in building capacity by developing awareness and skills in selecting products, making purchases, and critically analysing advertisements. The rise in consumerism has increased interest in consumer education.

Consumer education since the 1970s has emphasised the social aspects of consumers, based on the social welfare perspective. The Home Science faculty at the University of Georgia played a key role in global consumer education efforts and initiated several projects to distribute materials broadly.

## **8. Contemporary challenges and opportunities**

Home Science Education has evolved continuously over the years to meet society's changing demands. It has been highly successful in meeting the needs of economically and educationally disadvantaged groups in society. An effective strategy was developed to deliver Home Science Education through the Community Development Programme as informal and non-formal education to every community. Home Science education is regarded as an educational strategy for empowering women and improving family life.

Gender equity issues have been further emphasised. The educational approach has shifted from a discipline-based to a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approach. Curricula have been redesigned to include job- and skill-oriented programs to promote self-employment among both educated and illiterate women. Efforts have focused on developing packages tailored to different agro-climatic and socio-economic zones, as well as on developing teaching materials and methods suitable for children and the elderly. There is a need to develop new courses in Home Science Education at various levels. Programmes for people with disabilities have been created (Suneeta, 2022). Food safety education and sustainable development have become increasingly important. Market surveys and assessments of training and production units have become essential.

### **8.1. Access, equity, and gender considerations**

Ensuring equitable access to Home Science education across all sections of society cannot be achieved by merely comparing institutions, courses, and competitive exams. Education opportunities should be understood within the broader framework of girls' education, which is constrained by multiple interconnected factors. These include the economic situation of

households, discrimination, violence against girls, child marriages, family sizes, the attitude of parents towards education and the availability of trained teachers. The broad macro-economic environment shapes family and community priorities, creating additional challenges. Different groups experience different conditions, with access significantly restricted for the poor, those from weaker castes, and tribal communities.

Even if Home Science education is available, it is doubtful. The needs, expectations, security, self-worth and aspirations of the family, community, and society enable girls to take this subject. Decisions about mobility, the space for Home Science classes, and perceptions of the training as enabling families to live with dignity are influenced by these factors. The desire to serve, to become a professional, or to be self-employed is also economic. Various social aspects that deserve examination, even when the constraint is perceived chiefly as an economic one, to see whether and how far Home Science education will remain relevant (Bandyopadhyay & Subrahmanian, 2008).

## **8.2. Globalisation and comparative perspectives**

Home Science is an important subject influenced by globalisation, which affects

other consumer-oriented subjects. The education system and associated fields have a substantial impact of globalisation in the current time. We must not overlook the international experience of the subjects that inform the Home Science syllabus. Thus, studying related subjects is important.

In the late 1900s, Home Economics emerged in Ireland and was known as Domestic Subjects. In 1968, a new syllabus was issued, and the title was changed to Home Economics to reflect the changes in the social scenario and the role of women. A Home Economics syllabus was introduced at primary level one in the 1990s. In India, while Home Science is central, Home Economics is sidelined at the tertiary level.

## **9. Conclusion**

Home Science education in India has evolved and expanded since the nineteenth century, as evidenced by key milestones that examine achievements, challenges, and opportunities. This study examines the globalisation of home science in state universities; policy developments; institutionalisation in women's education and national policies; expansion at the secondary and senior secondary levels; research and professionalisation; technological substitution; and contemporary challenges and opportunities, drawing on an understanding of its history,

conceptual foundations, and early days. Over these decades, each milestone demonstrates how government and non-government institutions, as well as individuals, have played an important role in bringing about social change through education. Despite persistent challenges posed by access, equity, and gender issues, the increasing prominence of e-learning, vocational training, and skills training is creating new opportunities for marginalised groups. Home Science has always been an important subject within the Social Sciences. In the future, efforts should be made to network nationally to share best practices and conduct comparative studies with other countries.

## References

1. Fooladi, E. C., Tuomisto, M., & Haapaniemi, J. (2023). Food in science, science in food: Interdisciplinarity in science/chemistry, and home economics lower-secondary curricula across three countries. *International Journal of Science Education*, 45(17), 1485-1505. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09500693.2023.2213801>
2. Bhat, R. A. (2015). The role of education in empowering women in India. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(11), 94-99. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1081705.pdf>
3. Bisht, P. (2021). Home Science: The history, discipline, career opportunities and national development. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*, 8(12), c347-c352. <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2112245.pdf>
4. Suneeta, S. (1922). History of Home Science in the Indian context. *Asian Journal of Early Childhood Education & Care*, 7(12), 277-284. <http://www.ajeee.co.in/index.php/ajeee/article/download/5880/4778/>
5. Directorate of Distance Education, University of Jammu. (2020). *Home Science: Course No. HS-101: Introduction to home science* (Revised & reviewed by R. Dhingra & S. Bhasin). <http://www.distanceeducationju.in>
6. Pandey, P. (2021). COVID-19 outbreak: E-learning resources and challenges for students in Indian universities. *Indian Journal of Educational Technology*, 3(1), 45-56. <https://journals.ncert.gov.in/IJET/article/view/554>
7. Indian Council of Agricultural Research. (2014). *Minimum standards for Home Science*

- Education*. [PDF]. [https://icar.org.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/MSHAE\\_Home\\_Science.pdf](https://icar.org.in/sites/default/files/inline-files/MSHAE_Home_Science.pdf) .
8. Ministry of Human Resource Development. (1992). *National policy on education 1986 (modified)*. Government of India. [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/NPE86-mod92.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/NPE86-mod92.pdf)
  9. Hancock, M. (2001). Home science and the nationalization of domesticity in colonial India. *Modern Asian Studies*, 35(4), 871-916. [https://www.academia.edu/23843255/Home\\_Science\\_and\\_the\\_Nationalization\\_of\\_Domesticity\\_in\\_Colonial\\_India](https://www.academia.edu/23843255/Home_Science_and_the_Nationalization_of_Domesticity_in_Colonial_India)
  10. Shree, S. (2018). Role of home science in rural development. *Review of Research*, 7(11), 1-5. <https://oldror.lbp.world/UploadedData/9521.pdf>
  11. Bandyopadhyay, M., & Subrahmanian, R. (2008). *Gender equity in education: A review of trends and factors* (CREATE Pathways to Access Research Monograph No. 18). Centre for International Education, University of Sussex. [http://www.create-rpc.org/pdf\\_documents/PTA18.pdf](http://www.create-rpc.org/pdf_documents/PTA18.pdf).