

Challenges and Issues in Teaching Home Economics: Basis for Policy Enhancement in Secondary Schools

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Abstract: This study examined the challenges and issues encountered in teaching Home Economics in secondary schools as basis for policy enhancement. Home Economics, as part of the Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) curriculum, plays an important role in developing students' practical life skills, such as food preparation, family resource management, livelihood skills, and entrepreneurship. Despite its significance, the effective implementation of the subject is often affected by instructional, resource-related, and institutional concerns that limit both teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. This study aimed to identify these challenges, determine their effects on the teaching-learning process, and propose policy recommendations to improve the quality of Home Economics education. A qualitative research design using a case study approach was employed to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of teachers and students. The participants included selected Home Economics teachers and students from secondary schools who were chosen through purposive sampling. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with teachers and focus group discussions (FGDs) with students. These methods enabled the participants to openly share their experiences, opinions, and observations regarding the issues encountered in teaching and learning Home Economics. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed four major themes: inadequate resources, instructional challenges, learner-related issues, and systemic challenges. The study found that limited facilities, lack of instructional materials, large class sizes, insufficient time allocation, low student engagement, and inadequate administrative support negatively affect the delivery of Home Economics education. These interconnected challenges hinder teachers from effectively implementing practical activities and reduce students' opportunities for meaningful learning experiences. Based on the findings, the study recommends enhanced resource allocation, continuous teacher training, strengthened curriculum support, and increased administrative involvement. The study emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts among educators, school administrators, and policymakers in improving Home Economics education and preparing students for real-life challenges and future opportunities.

Keywords: Home Economics, Teaching Challenges, Policy Enhancement, Secondary Education, Qualitative Research and Quantitative with Case Study.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Home Economics is an essential component of the Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) curriculum offered in secondary schools, including Palompon National High School. The subject aims to equip learners with practical life skills and competencies necessary for daily living, employment, and entrepreneurship. It includes areas such as food preparation, nutrition, clothing, family resource

management, and livelihood education that contribute to students' holistic development and productivity. According to UNESCO (2015), technical and vocational education plays a significant role in enhancing learners' practical competencies and employability. As a performance-based subject, Home Economics emphasizes experiential and hands-on learning experiences that promote skill development and knowledge retention.

The experiential learning theory of David Kolb (1984) explains that learning is achieved through direct experience and reflection. This concept is highly relevant in-Home Economics because students acquire practical skills through active participation in activities such as cooking, budgeting, sewing, and household management. Likewise, John Dewey (1938) emphasized that meaningful learning occurs when learners actively engage in real-life experiences. Through these activities, students develop critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and decision-making skills needed in the 21st century.

Despite its importance, several challenges affect the effective implementation of Home Economics at Palompon National High School. These include inadequate facilities, insufficient instructional materials, limited laboratory equipment, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient time allocation for practical activities. According to the Department of Education (2020), insufficient resources negatively affect the delivery of skill-based instruction and reduce students’ engagement in practical learning activities.

Teacher-related concerns, such as limited professional development opportunities, also affect instructional effectiveness. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018) emphasized that continuous teacher training improves teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

Furthermore, learner-related issues such as low participation, lack of motivation, and limited exposure to hands-on experiences hinder effective learning. Administrative support and adequate funding are also necessary in strengthening technical and vocational education programs. The World Bank (2021) stressed that strong leadership, sufficient funding, and effective educational policies are essential in improving the quality of vocational education. These challenges collectively affect teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes; therefore, addressing them is necessary to strengthen Home Economics education and better prepare students for future opportunities and real-life challenges.

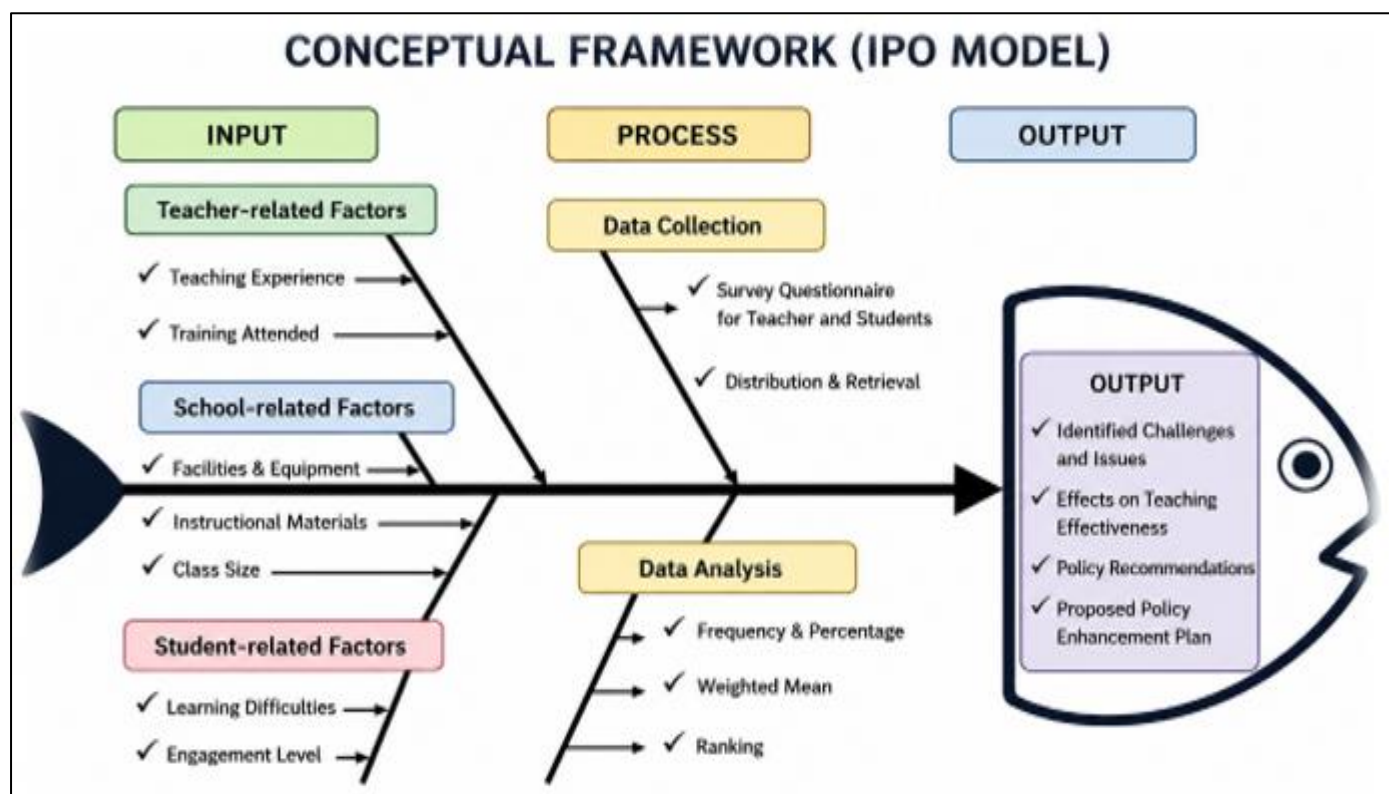


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework (IPO Model)

➤ *Statement of the Problem:*

This study aims to identify the issues and challenges encountered in teaching Home Economics. Specifically, it seeks to:

- What challenges do teachers face in teaching Home Economics?
- What issues affect student learning in the subject?
- How do these challenges impact teaching effectiveness?
- What policy recommendations can be proposed?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching Home Economics in secondary schools plays a crucial role in developing students’ practical life skills, including food preparation, family resource management, and entrepreneurship. However, several studies have identified persistent challenges and issues that affect the effective delivery of this subject.

One of the most commonly cited challenges is the lack of adequate facilities and equipment. Practical subjects

require hands-on learning environments supported by appropriate tools and laboratories. According to UNESCO (2020), technical and vocational subjects such as Home Economics are highly dependent on the availability of functional facilities to ensure effective skills training. Similarly, Orbeta and Paqueo (2017) emphasized that inadequate school resources in the Philippines limit the quality of teaching and learning in skills-based subjects.

Another significant concern is the insufficiency of instructional materials. Instructional materials play a vital role in enhancing students' understanding, particularly during practical demonstrations. Corpuz and Salandanan (2015) noted that the use of varied and updated instructional materials improves student engagement and learning outcomes. However, many schools continue to rely on outdated resources, which negatively affects lesson delivery and student learning experiences.

In terms of teacher development, numerous studies have highlighted the importance of continuous professional training. Teachers who participate in regular professional development programs are more effective in implementing contemporary teaching strategies and improving student performance. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), sustained professional development significantly enhances teaching quality and student achievement. In the Philippine context, Bilbao et al. (2015) stressed that teacher competence is strengthened through continuous learning and training opportunities.

Time constraints also pose a major challenge in the teaching of Home Economics. Practical subjects require sufficient instructional time to facilitate hands-on activities and skill development. Killen (2016) explained that inadequate instructional time limits the depth of learning and hinders the mastery of practical skills, particularly in performance-based subjects.

Additionally, large class sizes affect the effectiveness of instruction. Managing practical activities becomes more challenging when teachers handle a large number of students. Blatchford et al. (2011) found that large class sizes reduce teacher-student interaction and negatively affect classroom management and learning outcomes.

From the students' perspective, issues such as low engagement and lack of interest have also been identified. Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) emphasized that student engagement is a critical factor in academic success. When students are not actively involved in learning activities, the learning process becomes less meaningful and effective.

Furthermore, administrative and institutional support plays a vital role in the success of educational programs. According to Hallinger and Heck (2010), strong school leadership and policy support contribute significantly to improved teaching practices and enhanced student performance. Conversely, inadequate administrative support often results in persistent instructional challenges and limited program effectiveness.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that the challenges encountered in teaching Home Economics are multifaceted, encompassing resource limitations, teacher preparedness, student engagement, and institutional support. These findings underscore the need for comprehensive policy interventions and strategic educational reforms to enhance the quality of Home Economics education in secondary schools.

III. METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Design*

This study employed a mixed-methods case study design, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to comprehensively examine the challenges and issues encountered in teaching Home Economics in secondary schools. The integration of these approaches enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth insights from teachers and measurable data from students, thereby providing a balanced and comprehensive.

The qualitative component of the study focused on Home Economics teachers and utilized a case study approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which provided participants with the opportunity to share their experiences, challenges, and perspectives regarding the teaching of Home Economics. This approach enabled the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of real-life situations, particularly those related to inadequate facilities, insufficient instructional materials, classroom management challenges, and administrative support. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, through which responses were coded, categorized, and organized into key themes and patterns.

On the other hand, the quantitative approach was applied to students through a descriptive survey method. A structured questionnaire was administered to measure students' level of engagement, interest, and learning difficulties in Home Economics. The data gathered were analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and mean, to identify trends and determine the most common issues experienced by students.

The Case study combination of qualitative data from teachers and quantitative data from students ensured triangulation, strengthening the validity and reliability of the findings. Teachers' narratives provided explanations and context, while students' responses offered measurable evidence of the challenges.

Overall, this case study design is appropriate for the study because it allows the researcher to examine the issues and challenges in teaching Home Economics within the real-life context of Palompon National High School. The design combines the lived experiences and insights of teachers with the observable patterns and responses of students, providing both detailed qualitative information and measurable quantitative data. Through this approach, the study gains a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the problem, which serves as a strong basis for policy

enhancement and instructional improvement in Home Economics education in secondary schools.

➤ *Research Respondents of the Study*

The respondents of this study were composed of Home Economics teachers and selected secondary school students from Palompon National High School. They were chosen to provide relevant and accurate information regarding the challenges and issues encountered in teaching and learning Home Economics within the said institution.

For the qualitative part of the study, the respondents were the Home Economics teachers of Palompon National High School. They were selected through purposive sampling, as they are directly involved in teaching the subject and have firsthand experience in its implementation. These teachers participated in semi-structured interviews, which allowed them to share their insights and experiences regarding instructional challenges, lack of facilities, availability of instructional materials, classroom management issues, and administrative support.

For the quantitative part of the study, the respondents were selected students enrolled in Home Economics subjects at Palompon National High School. They were chosen through random sampling to ensure equal opportunity and representation. The students answered a structured survey questionnaire that measured their engagement, interest, learning difficulties, and overall experiences in Home Economics classes.

The combination of teacher and student respondents provided a balanced perspective of the study. Teachers contributed in-depth qualitative information, while students provided measurable quantitative data. This ensured a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges affecting Home Economics education in the school.

➤ *Data Gathering Procedure*

This study adopted a mixed-methods case study design to examine the challenges and issues encountered in teaching Home Economics at Palompon National High School. By integrating quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, the study provided a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by both teachers and students.

For the quantitative component of the study, data were collected from students using a structured survey

questionnaire. The instrument was designed to assess students' levels of engagement, interest, learning difficulties, and experiences in Home Economics classes. Prior to its administration, the questionnaire was validated by experts to ensure its clarity, relevance, and reliability. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the school administration before the survey was administered. The questionnaires were distributed to the selected student respondents, retrieved upon completion, and reviewed for completeness prior to data analysis.

For the qualitative component of the study, data were collected from Home Economics teachers through semi-structured interviews. An interview guide was developed to ensure consistency across interviews while allowing participants to freely share their experiences and insights. The interviews focused on challenges related to instructional materials, facilities, classroom management, professional development, and institutional support. With the participants' informed consent, the interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data.

Additionally, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with selected participants to further validate and enrich the data collected from both teachers and students. These discussions facilitated the identification of common themes, patterns, and shared experiences regarding the challenges encountered in Home Economics instruction.

All collected data were handled with strict confidentiality and were used exclusively for academic purposes. The integration of survey questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) facilitated data triangulation, which strengthened the validity and reliability of the study's findings.

➤ *Data*

For Quantitative data gathered from student respondents through survey questionnaires, descriptive statistics were used to analyze and interpret the data. Specifically, frequency count, percentage, and weighted mean were employed to describe the responses of the participants regarding the challenges and issues encountered in Home Economics. These statistical tools were used to determine the level of students' engagement, interest, learning difficulties, and classroom experiences in the subject.

Table 1 Students' Responses on the Challenges and Issues in Teaching Home Economics

Question	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Q1	3.40	Agree
Q2	3.40	Agree
Q3	3.20	Neutral
Q4	4.50	Strongly Agree
Q5	4.10	Agree
Q6	4.70	Strongly Agree
Q7	3.40	Agree
Q8	3.80	Agree

Q9	3.60	Agree
Q10	4.60	Strongly Agree
Q11	4.50	Strongly Agree
Q12	4.70	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.08	Agree

Table 2 Emerging Themes from Teachers' Responses on the Challenges and Issues in Teaching Home Economics

Emerging Themes	Consolidated Teacher Responses
Inadequate Facilities, Tools, and Equipment	Lack of tools, equipment, and facilities affects practical activities.
Insufficient and Outdated Instructional Materials	Materials are outdated, insufficient, and difficult to reproduce.
Large Class Sizes and Limited Class Time	Overcrowding and time constraints hinder instruction and supervision.
Student Engagement and Learning Difficulties	Students show low motivation and experience learning difficulties.
Reduced Teaching Effectiveness and Skill Development	Challenges affect lesson delivery and skill mastery.
Need for Teacher Training and Professional Development	Teachers require continuous training and professional growth opportunities.
Policy and Administrative Support	Additional funding, facilities, and stronger policies are needed.

➤ *Students Responses*

Table 3 Students Responses

Question	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Q1	3.40	Agree
Q2	3.40	Agree
Q3	3.20	Neutral
Q4	4.50	Strongly Agree
Q5	4.10	Agree
Q6	4.70	Strongly Agree
Q7	3.40	Agree
Q8	3.80	Agree
Q9	3.60	Agree
Q10	4.60	Strongly Agree
Q11	4.50	Strongly Agree
Q12	4.70	Strongly Agree

Overall Weighted Mean

Total of all weighted means:

$$3.4 + 3.4 + 3.2 + 4.5 + 4.1 + 4.7 + 3.4 + 3.8 + 3.6 + 4.6 + 4.5 + 4.7 = 48.9/12 = 4.08$$

Overall Weighted Mean = 4.08

Verbal Interpretation: Agree

➤ *Interpretation of Results*

The survey results indicated that students generally had a positive perception of Home Economics classes. Students strongly agreed that hands-on activities help them understand lessons better (Q6, mean = 4.70) and that Home Economics helps them develop useful life skills (Q12, Mean = 4.70). They also strongly agreed that their teacher explains lessons clearly and guides them effectively during practical activities (Q10 and Q11).

However, responses under facilities and learning difficulties reveal some concerns. Students only gave a neutral response regarding updated instructional materials (Q3, mean = 3.20), indicating that some learning resources

may be outdated or insufficient. Students also agreed that limited materials and time constraints affect their learning experience during practical activities. Overall, the findings suggest that while teaching effectiveness and student engagement are strong, improvements in facilities, instructional materials, and laboratory resources are still needed to enhance the quality of Home Economics education.

➤ *Thematic Analysis for Qualitative Data*

For the qualitative data gathered from Home Economics teachers through focus group discussions (FGD) and semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis was utilized to analyze and interpret the responses. The collected responses from the eight teacher-participants were carefully transcribed, reviewed, coded, and categorized to identify recurring ideas, experiences, and patterns regarding the challenges and issues encountered in teaching Home Economics.

The analysis revealed several major themes based on the common responses of the teachers. These themes are presented below together with the supporting responses from the participants.

Table 4 Thematic Analysis for Qualitative Data

Emerging Themes	Consolidated Teacher Responses
Inadequate Facilities, Tools, and Equipment	Teachers commonly identified the lack of complete tools, kitchen equipment, sewing machines, and modern facilities as major challenges in teaching Home Economics. Limited resources affected the conduct of practical activities and reduced students' opportunities for hands-on learning.
Insufficient and Outdated Instructional Materials	Many teachers shared those instructional materials, modules, and visual aids were outdated, insufficient, or difficult to reproduce. Preparing materials also required additional time, effort, and personal expenses from teachers.
Large Class Sizes and Limited Class Time	Teachers reported that overcrowded classes and limited class hours made classroom management, supervision, demonstrations, and assessment difficult during practical activities. These conditions reduced opportunities for individualized instruction and adequate practice.
Student Engagement and Learning Difficulties	Teachers observed that some students lacked interest, motivation, confidence, and focus during Home Economics activities. Students also experienced difficulties in understanding instructions and using tools properly, especially when materials were limited and shared among groups.
Reduced Teaching Effectiveness and Skill Development	The challenges encountered negatively affected lesson delivery, classroom interaction, demonstrations, and achievement of lesson objectives. Teachers emphasized that students' practical competencies and skill mastery remained underdeveloped because of limited practice opportunities.
Need for Teacher Training and Professional Development	Teachers expressed the need for seminars, workshops, ICT integration training, classroom management training, and competency-based teaching strategies to improve instruction and enhance their teaching skills.
Policy and Administrative Support	Teachers recommended additional funding, improved laboratory facilities, updated equipment, smaller class sizes, regular monitoring programs, and stronger school support policies for Home Economics and TLE subjects.

Through thematic analysis, the researcher was able to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences, perceptions, and insights of Home Economics teachers regarding the challenges affecting teaching effectiveness and student learning. The identified themes provided comprehensive qualitative evidence that served as a basis for policy enhancement and instructional improvement in secondary schools.

➤ *Ethical Considerations*

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and their rights as respondents. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by not disclosing personal identities in the report. Participation was voluntary, and respondents had the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. All data collected were used solely for academic purposes.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study examined the challenges and issues encountered in teaching Home Economics in secondary schools and their implications for policy enhancement. Findings from the quantitative data revealed that students generally have positive perceptions of Home Economics and recognize its importance in developing practical life skills. Students strongly agreed that hands-on activities enhance their understanding of lessons and that teachers effectively guide them during practical activities. However, concerns were noted regarding the availability of updated instructional materials, adequate facilities, and sufficient resources for practical learning.

The qualitative findings further revealed that Home Economics teachers face several challenges, including inadequate facilities and equipment, insufficient and outdated instructional materials, large class sizes, limited instructional time, low student engagement, and inadequate administrative support. These challenges negatively affect teaching effectiveness, classroom management, lesson delivery, and students' opportunities to develop practical competencies and skills.

Overall, the study concludes that while Home Economics remains an essential component of the secondary school curriculum, its effective implementation is constrained by resource-related, instructional, learner-related, and institutional challenges. Addressing these concerns through improved facilities, updated instructional materials, continuous teacher professional development, stronger administrative support, and enhanced educational policies can significantly improve the quality of Home Economics education and better prepare students for future careers and real-life responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ *The Recommendations are Based on the Findings that Showed:*

- Lack of facilities and equipment,
- Insufficient instructional materials,
- Overcrowded classes,
- Limited time for practical activities,
- Low student engagement, and
- The need for teacher training and policy support.

➤ *Major Findings, the Recommendations Focused on:*

- Improving facilities and resources,
- Providing updated instructional materials,
- Reducing class sizes,
- Strengthening student engagement,
- Conducting teacher training, and
- Enhancing school policies and administrative support.

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PALOMPON NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Palompon, Leyte

Student Survey Questionnaire

Research Title: Challenges and Issues in Teaching Home Economics: Basis for Policy Enhancement in Secondary Schools

Name (Optional): _____

Grade & Section: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Date: _____

➤ *Instructions:*

Please read each statement carefully and choose the response that best describes your experience in Home Economics class. Put a check (✓) in the appropriate box.

➤ *Rating Scale:*

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

➤ *Facilities and Resources*

No.	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
1	Our school has enough tools and equipment for Home Economics activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	The facilities (e.g., kitchen/lab) are suitable for practical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Instructional materials used in class are updated and helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

➤ *Student Engagement and Interest*

No.	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
4	I am interested in Home Economics lessons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I actively participate during class activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Hands-on activities help me understand the lessons better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

➤ *Learning Difficulties*

No.	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
7	I find some Home Economics lessons difficult to understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Limited materials make it hard for me to learn skills properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I do not have enough time to complete practical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

➤ *Teaching Effectiveness*

No.	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
10	My teacher explains lessons clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	My teacher guides us well during practical activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Home Economics helps me develop useful life skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your Participation!

PALOMPON NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Palompon, Leyte

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) INTERVIEW FORM FOR TEACHERS

Research Title: Challenges and Issues in Teaching Home Economics: Basis for Policy Enhancement in Secondary Schools

Name (Optional): _____

Position: _____

Years of Teaching Experience: _____

Date: _____

➤ *Instructions:*

Please answer the following questions based on your experiences in teaching Home Economics. You may elaborate your answers. All responses will be treated with confidentiality and used only for academic purposes.

➤ *Challenges in Teaching Home Economics*

- What are the common challenges you encounter in teaching Home Economics?
- How do limited facilities and equipment affect your teaching?
- What difficulties do you experience in using instructional materials?

➤ *Issues Affecting Student Learning*

- What issues do you observe among students that affect their learning in Home Economics?
- How does students' level of interest or engagement influence their performance?
- What challenges do students face during hands-on or practical activities?

➤ *Impact on Teaching Effectiveness*

- How do these challenges affect your ability to deliver lessons effectively?
- In what ways do large class sizes or limited time affect your teaching?
- How do these issues influence students' skill development and learning outcomes?

➤ *Policy Recommendations*

- What support or resources do you think the school should provide to improve teaching Home Economics?
- What training or professional development do you need to enhance your teaching?
- What policies or programs would you recommend to improve Home Economics education in your school?

Thank you for your Participation!